Why you have never heard of the drug Spasfon and what it can tell us about medicine

In this talk, I investigate the history of a peculiar French pharmaceutical drug, *Spasfon* (phloroglucinol) and what we can learn from it at a philosophical level. *Spasfon* is one of the most prescribed and sold pharmaceutical drugs in France, while remaining almost completely unheard of in other countries. It is prescribed for relieving painful spasms in the digestive system, the urinary tract as well as gynecological pain. Despite its efficacy judged low by French health authorities and new clinical studies, it remains funded by the French health system. My goal is twofold: first, study what historically led to this situation. Second, reflect on what it means for medicine and for philosophy of medicine overall. I suggest new ways the field could study the limits of evidence-based medicine.