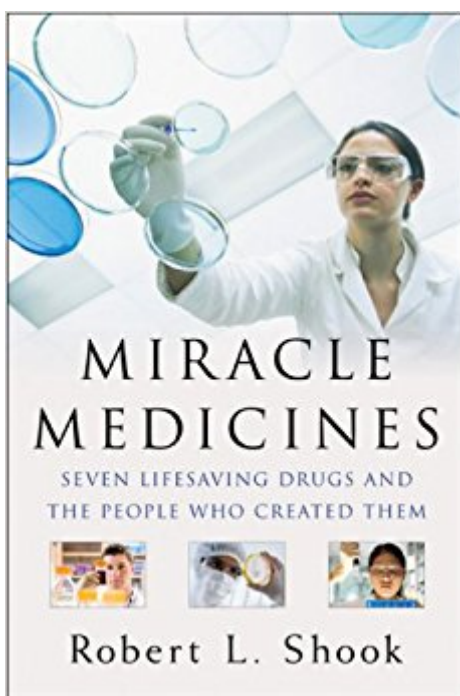


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Miracle Medicines: Seven Lifesaving Drugs And The People Who Created Them



Synopsis

It's the business of saving lives. *Miracle Medicines* goes behind the scenes of the pharmaceutical industry and into the high-security laboratories to tell the stories of the men and women---chemists, physiologists, medical and clinical researchers, engineers---who have chosen to toil for years in the lab in order to transform scientific theories into new lifesaving medicines. You'll witness the day-to-day labors, victories and defeats of the dedicated professionals who are waging a war against the diseases that still plague mankind. From the confines of their laboratories, these pharmaceutical adventurers explore unknown territories in health and science. *Miracle Medicines* reveals what really happens during the long and uncertain journey that each new drug and its creators must endure from theory, to research, to testing and, finally, FDA approval and delivery to the public. It's a very human story within the context of fascinating scientific innovation. Through first hand interviews you'll also meet the patients who benefit from these manmade miracles and learn how, within their bloodstreams, an ongoing battle is raging. The drugs profiled are: Advair: GlaxoSmithKline's revolutionary asthma medication, the first packaged as both a control and emergency drug. Gleevec: The Novartis' chronic myeloid leukemia treatment born from decades of medical research in a field of study that was once considered hopeless. Humalog: Eli Lilly's reinvention of insulin to control diabetes has been described as being better than nature. Lipitor: Pfizer's miracle antidote for high cholesterol that was nearly lost to the pharmaceutical vaults and has since become the world's top-selling medicine. Norvir: Abbott's contribution to the fight against HIV that nearly erases all traces of the disease from the bloodstream and prolongs the life of patients. Remicade: Created for the treatment of Crohn's disease, rheumatoid arthritis and other Immune Mediated Inflammatory Diseases, Johnson & Johnson's revolutionary biomedicine was developed from technology that once was only found in science fiction. Seroquel: AstraZeneca's treatment for both schizophrenia and bipolar mania that has given millions of psychiatrists a new lease on life. This compelling and truth-revealing book will forever change the way you view the medicines in your medicine cabinet, and the people who create them.

Book Information

Hardcover: 400 pages

Publisher: Portfolio Hardcover; 1 edition (March 1, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1591841577

ISBN-13: 978-1591841579

Product Dimensions: 6.3 x 1.3 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.5 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,460,394 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #49 in [Books > Medical Books > Pharmacology > Product Development](#) #2983 in [Books > Medical Books > History](#) #20043 in [Books > Medical Books > Basic Sciences](#)

Customer Reviews

After reading *Miracle Medicines*, you'll come away with a clear understanding about what it takes for a pharmaceutical company to come out with a new drug and when you do, you'll have deep appreciation for the men and women who make them. -- Montel Williams

Robert L. Shook, a prolific nonfiction writer, has authored more than 50 books. Several have been best sellers including *Longaberger*, a *New York Times* Number One best seller. He is currently working on a marketing book titled, *The Customer Rules*.

even with expedited shipping, the book was not shipped immediately. then, package was never delivered - tracking information said the package was undeliverable. money was refunded.

Corporate fawning of the worst sort. Smarmy. Repetitive. Inaccurate (for example, two big errors about HIV in the very first chapter). The audiobook narrator mispronounces words, most annoyingly "genome," which he renders as "ja-NOME." There are better books available if you're interested in the development of different drugs. This is the only book I've returned in recent years.

I expected to be enlightened by this book, but I never expected to enjoy it. I was in for a big surprise. Author Robert L. Shook's writing is always first rate. However, in this book he has accomplished three rather remarkable things. First, instead of simply presenting well-researched and well-organized information - which could have made for a dull read - he has brought the information to life, creating seven intriguing stories about the dedicated and talented people who embody the pharmaceutical industry. I'll offer one example. Over a relatively short period of time we have come to accept AIDS as a (tragic) feature of contemporary society. I was fascinated to read about how, when, and where AIDS actually began; how it spread in this country; how physicians eventually

identified HIV; and how pharmaceutical companies rushed to develop tools to diagnose and treat it. And, by the way, I found the profiles of the pharmaceutical companies quite inspiring - great things really can come from rather humble beginnings. Second, Shook takes technical information and makes it simple and easy to understand. This is no small feat. Finally, Shook helps the reader understand - yes, even appreciate - the contributions of pharmaceutical companies. In recent years, people have come to regard "Big Pharma" as they do "Big Oil" - i.e., as companies that exploit consumers who have no choice but to buy their products. Shook helps us to see pharmaceutical companies in a far more sympathetic light. I recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a good read and wants to learn about the ever-changing world in which we live.

I took many interesting courses in my early-1980s MBA program: strategy formulation, marketing, consumer behavior, and others. But the most exciting course was taught by Vijay Govindarajan. A star in higher education in India and later in the United States, VG (as we students called him) had us on the edge of our seats each and every class. Using the "case method," he embedded what he wanted us to learn inside interesting business problems, and he challenged us to solve them. My classmates and I energetically debated the cases both before and after class. The subject VG taught? Accounting. One might not expect the world of disease and pharmaceuticals to be exciting, either, but Robert Shook does the same thing with drugs and the people of the pharmaceutical industry that VG did with accounting. Each of the seven stories in *Miracle Medicines* describes a health problem that afflicts people all around us, perhaps family members - maybe even you. (Like the author, I suffer from asthma.) Shook introduces us to the people of Big Pharma (as insiders call the industry) and vividly describes their struggle to develop an effective drug and bring it to market. It is not an easy process, and, after reading this book, you will understand why pharmaceuticals can be so expensive. This book is a must read for three groups: those who want to know more about the drugs they depend upon for health, if not life itself; anyone who wants to understand the business side of the pharmaceutical industry and how drugs are developed; and readers who enjoy good short stories, for *Miracle Medicines* is really a collection of fascinating tales with a common theme - how people working together bring life and hope to others.

For years, the media has been knocking Big Pharma, and many of us are being duped into believing that the pharmaceutical companies are deceptive, devious and inherently evil. Even the movie, "The Constant Gardener," a fictitious story, has influenced public opinion to think that Big Pharma will do anything for the almighty dollar. Robert L. Shook, a highly respected independent business writer,

with no ties to the pharmaceutical industry has penned an eye-opening book that takes the reader behind the scenes of seven companies--Abbott, AstraZeneca, Eli Lilly, GlaxoSmithKline, Johnson & Johnson, Novartis and Pfizer to meet the real people who dedicate their lives to finding cures for diseases. In doing so, Shook puts a face on these dedicated men and women, most of whom spend their entire careers working in their labs without ever having a new drug ending up in our medicine cabinet. After reading MIRACLE MEDICINES, my take on these individuals is that they are truly committed to humankind. They are hard-working, decent people who spend their lives to benefit others. As the author states, these are highly educated people, many who have medical degrees and Ph.Ds and could earn far more in private practice or working elsewhere. Why do they work for pharmaceutical companies? To paraphrase one chemist in the book, "I could have made more money working for a chemical company, but I wanted to work where I could do the most good for humankind."The author does an excellent job in presenting an otherwise very complicated subject in a way that can be enjoyably read by all. This is a tribute to his writing skills. The book is very informative and interesting to read. I recommend that you buy it.

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