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White Coat, Black Hat: Adventures On The Dark Side Of Medicine



Synopsis

By New Yorker and Atlantic writer Carl Elliott, a readable and even funny account of the serious business of medicine. A tongue-in-cheek account of the changes that have transformed medicine into big business. Physician and medical ethicist Carl Elliott tracks the new world of commercialized medicine from start to finish, introducing the professional guinea pigs, ghostwriters, thought leaders, drug reps, public relations pros, and even medical ethicists who use medicine for (sometimes huge) financial gain. Along the way, he uncovers the cost to patients lost in a health-care universe centered around consumerism.

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Customer Reviews

While most people are vaguely aware of the uncomfortable symbiosis between doctors and the pharmaceutical industry, few would believe the flagrant bribery and brow-beating that occurs, according to Elliott's (Better Than Well) latest. Pharmaceutical companies have overwhelming influence over research studies, grant funding, and the decisions or suggestions that doctors make regarding the care of their patients. As the financial stakes continue to increase, the pharmaceutical industry has an even greater incentive to obfuscate potentially harmful findings about their products. Elliot, a professor of bioethics at the University of Minnesota, methodically exposes every aspect of the connection between Big Pharma and medicine, interviewing experiment subjects, doctors, pharmaceutical sales reps, and others on the frontlines of the issue to give readers a thorough understanding of what lies behind a simple prescription. Employing often shocking stories to reveal

larger ethical problems in the industry, Elliott offers no easy answers in an effort that informs and inflames in equal measure. (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Starred Review Any physician knows that the careless mingling of certain medical interventions can lead to unwantedâ "even fatalâ "consequences for the patient. That explains why physician-philosopher Elliott decided to pen this cautionary book, exposing example after example of the adverse effects of mixing capitalism with the practice of medicine. It leads, he says, to a situation where there is no true advocate for the patient. Patients have become health-care consumers shopping for â œthe best medical bargains they can find.â • In such an atmosphere, neither the pharmaceutical company nor the medical researcher, not even oneâ™s own doctor, can be relied upon to place a patientâ™s best interests above profits. Besides the obvious perils inherent when a physician accepts â œgiftsâ • from pharmaceutical and medical-equipment salespeople, there are risks when authorities trusted with oversight also have conflicts of interest. Many medical journals depend upon corporate advertising, and clinical-trial oversight committees are populated with people who are on a pharmaceutical companyâ™s payroll. Moreover, because medical research has become so proprietary, he notes, no one is sharing basic discoveries, resulting in needless duplication of efforts that can delay or kill advanced scientific developments. Elliottâ™s dim view ought to be a real eye-opener for health-care patients-cum-consumers. --Donna Chavez --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book discusses important topics that we all should know about;The nontrivial conflicts-of-interest between pharmaceutical firms and doctors and researchers need to have some more time in the sun so that we all know what they are (and the first step in finding a solution to a problem is to understand that you have a problem and what it is).The large-scale big-money push by pharmaceutical firms to get their drugs into the market, to get them recommended by medical professionals and researchers and into your prescriptions creates all sorts of conflicts-of-interest that consumers, patients and the general public need to know more about.The disclosure of the financial (monetary and other) arrangements between pharmaceuticals and doctors and researchers needs to be vastly improved.The treatment of medical (human) research subjects is, at times, seriously problematic, unethical and dangerous.The true authorship of medical and research papers "written" by the publicly named authors needs to be disclosed. The true conductors of the research needs to be acknowledged. The financial sponsorship of the research needs to be

disclosed and finally the raw data needs be disclosed so that different conclusions can be drawn as data can be cherry-picked to fit a conclusion. It is not the basic business of pharmaceuticals that is being challenged in this book, it is how some of this business is conducted. This is an important book because the more people who know about the issues discussed in it then the greater likelihood that appropriate solutions will materialize to the problems discussed. Sunshine (the disclosure of true and complete information) is a powerful disinfectant. Highly recommended!

I require all my residents and medical students read this book. Understanding every level of what goes into research and the potential bias it produces is so important. I also tell all of the pharmaceutical representatives I meet to read this book as well. What an eye opener!

This is a story about what goes on in the testing of pharmaceuticals prior to their approval for use and what the process of marketing new drugs is. It is disturbing. One of the factors in the high cost of health care is the cost of medications and one of factors that contributes to the high cost of drugs is marketing, particularly direct-to-consumer marketing. This book describes the shortcuts drug companies take in testing the products to determine safety and the techniques they use to persuade physicians to prescribe their products. The information in the book is scandalous. Every time I see an ad on TV that includes the phrase "ask your doctor about..." I think about this book and the seedy practices of drug companies and their enormous profits. A little known fact: when Congress passed Part D of Medicare, the prescription drug benefit, they agreed not to negotiate lower drug prices, which was a huge bonus to drug companies. Given the purchasing power of the Medicare program, it was in the position to bargain for lower costs of prescription drugs for Medicare beneficiaries and Congress didn't do it. One of the Congressmen who was the chief architect of the Part D legislation left congress and became a lobbyist for the pharmaceutical industry.

Not only does Carl Elliott paint a vivid and personal image of the deep relationships Big Pharma has with medicine as many are already aware, but he gives insight into areas of influence that I had never dreamed of. This book takes what could be some pretty dry information and puts a personal touch to it that makes it jump out at you. Would highly recommend this book!

Must read for anyone that trusts the AMA and big pharmaceutical companies. When the companies are paying for the testing, it's time to question how accurate the test results are. With ads for more drugs and vaccines daily, we should be asking why... With all the drugs of the last decades, why

isn't our population healthier instead of sicker? This book exposes one side of the drug manipulation in the name of profits.

This book was recommended to me by a doctor of Pharmacology. It is an amazing book which will educate you and horrify you at the same time. All the trials that are tainted and sold as life saving will shock you. Tons of knowledge for you to make up your own minds as to whether you want to take certain medications or not.

As a physician who's spent half my life in clinical practice and half as a physician executive in biotech, I laud the author's thorough preparation for writing this book. It is clear a lot of energy has gone into the research for the piece and it far surpasses similar treatises that deal only with anecdote and superficiality. Encyclopedic in its information, it provides the reader with an excellent overview of the topic. It is so thorough it is almost textbook in scope yet the author writes with a clear and straightforward style that makes it enjoyable for virtually anyone interested in the topic.

White Coat, Black Hat was a very disturbing read. How the pharmaceutical industry misleads us is abominable. What we can do about it is not revealed as it's a doctor and medical profession problem.

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