



HeLa Cells of Henrietta Lacks

Nishi Singh

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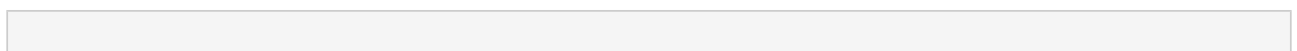
Rebecca Skloot and her best-seller, '**The Immortal life of Henrietta Lacks**' has created a lot of interest in the **immortal HeLa cells** that were taken from a 31 year old black woman called Henrietta Lacks without her family's consent at the *Johns Hopkins Hospital* at Baltimore in 1951. She describes the story of how **Henrietta Lacks** died and how her cells were sent around the world for medical research. She goes through the life stories of Henrietta and the Lacks family and the pain they endured when they found out about Henrietta's cells. Skloot's narration of the entire account is powerful, emotional, painful and even heart breaking. Her book has become a notable science reading for high school children and science undergraduates in the United States. And rightly so, Henrietta's story is a case of medical racism, violation of ethical obligation, segregation, ignorance, poverty and painful American history.

Today, **HeLa cells** are the most widely used cell line in the world and has been instrumental in many of the world's medical discoveries. It was the first cells to be sent to space, has helped eradicate polio and has been used in 70,000 medical studies including the development of drugs for herpes, Parkinson's disease, leukaemia and influenza.

The title 'The Immortal life of Henriette Lacks' actually refers to the immortalization of cancer cells and we look at how HeLa cells are cultured and are able to divide indefinitely. This book looks at the **life of Henrietta Lacks** and describes **HeLa cells** in more detail.

Topics covered in this book:

- What are HeLa cells?
- Where did HeLa cells come from?
- Who was Henrietta Lacks?
- Epithelial adenocarcinoma and HeLa
- Life of Henrietta
- The family of Henrietta Lacks
- Dr. George Otto Gey - The man behind HeLa cells
- How are HeLa cells grown in culture?
- Why are HeLa cells immortal?
- HeLa cell controversy
- HeLa genome data use agreement
- Discoveries made from HeLa cells
- Ethical issues behind the use of HeLa cells
- About the book "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks"
- Review of "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks" by Rebecca Skloot
- Summary and characteristics of the HeLa cell line
- Timeline in the life of the HeLa cell
- References and further reading



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