



Is
Henrietta
Lacks
an Angel?



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The **Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks**
by *Rebecca Skloot*

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Educational Materials

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Study Questions

Medical Ethics

What are the ethical standards that guide medicine? What forces threaten these standards and how have they evolved over time?

Influence of Race and Social Class in the Distribution of Healthcare

How does race and socio-economic status impact access to healthcare? Is healthcare a basic human right that society should provide regardless of income?

Impact of the Death of a Parent on Children

How do families carry on after a parent dies? What are the long term consequences on a child? How do single parents carry on, and how do children without parents carry on?

Spiritualism in Understanding Life and Death

The Lacks family views Henrietta as an angel who lives on helping people. How does spiritualism help us cope with death? How does spiritualism give us a framework for dealing with life's events?

Methodology of Medical Research

How does medical research make progress? What is used for evidence in the creation of knowledge? How do we understand medical "facts" and how do these facts change?

Public Health and Individual Rights

What is the balance we strike between the need for broad public health, medical advancement and the need to protect individuals? Should the government be able to mandate treatments or vaccines to protect the wider population even if the individual does not want the treatment?

Living with the Legacy of the Past

What responsibility do we hold for decisions that were made 50 or 100 years ago? When we benefit from unethical acts of the past, what responsibility do we have to make reparations?

The Journalist and their Sources

Skloot had to earn the trust of the Lacks family in order to tell their story. What is the ethical responsibility of the journalist to sources? How do journalists earn the trust of their sources and what constraints do sources place on journalists?

Resources

Overviews

Home page of Rebecca Skloot: Contains links to reviews, interviews and FAQs

<http://rebeccaskloot.com>

Q&A How Henrietta Lack's Cells Fueled Medical Breakthroughs -- overview of issues associated with book

http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2010-03-09-lacks09_ST_N.htm

HeLa Cells 50 years on: the good the bad and the ugly

[http://o-search.ebscohost.com.library.morainevalley.edu/login.aspx?](http://o-search.ebscohost.com.library.morainevalley.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=9061183&site=ehost-live)

[direct=true&db=aph&AN=9061183&site=ehost-live](http://o-search.ebscohost.com.library.morainevalley.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=9061183&site=ehost-live) (Moraine Valley ID Required from off campus)

Gene Patents

Judge Invalidates Human Gene Patent

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/30/business/30gene.html?emc=eta1>

After Patent on Genes is invalidated, taking stock

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/31/business/31gene.html?hp>

Lawsuit attacks patent giving company control over genetic test for cancer risk

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/01/AR2010030102925.html?wpisrc=nl_tech)

[dyn/content/article/2010/03/01/AR2010030102925.html?wpisrc=nl_tech](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/01/AR2010030102925.html?wpisrc=nl_tech)

Journalism

Society of Professional Journalists: Code of Ethics

<http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>

Desperately Seeking Ethics: a Guide to Media Conduct

<http://library.morainevalley.edu/record=b229764~So>

Medical Ethics

Code of Medical Ethics – American Medical Association

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/physician-resources/medical-ethics/code-medical-ethics.shtml>

Commercial Use of Human Tissue

American Medical Association

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/physician-resources/medical-ethics/code-medical-ethics/opinion208.shtml>

Classic cases in medical ethics : accounts of the cases and issues that define medical ethics

<http://library.morainevalley.edu/record=b239772~So>

Penn Center for Bioethics

<http://www.bioethics.upenn.edu/about.shtml>

Medical Tourism

Medical Tourism: A New Role for Nursing?

<http://o-search.ebscohost.com.library.morainevalley.edu/login.aspx?>

[direct=true&db=aph&AN=48458649&site=ehost-live](#)

Ethnocentrism Is an Unacceptable Rationale for Health Care Policy: A Critique of Transplant Tourism Position Statements

[http://o-search.ebscohost.com.library.morainevalley.edu/login.aspx?
direct=true&db=aph&AN=32458756&site=ehost-live](http://o-search.ebscohost.com.library.morainevalley.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=32458756&site=ehost-live)

Health Care Disparity

Access to Health and Health Care: How Race and Ethnicity Matter [http://o-search.ebscohost.com.library.morainevalley.edu/login.aspx?
direct=true&db=aph&AN=48836970&site=ehost-live](http://o-search.ebscohost.com.library.morainevalley.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=48836970&site=ehost-live)

2008 National Healthcare Quality and Disparities Reports – Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

<http://www.ahrq.gov/QUAL/qrdro8.htm>

At the Front Lines of Medicine: How the Healthcare System Alienates Doctors and Mistreats Patients ... and What We Can Do About it

<http://library.morainevalley.edu/record=b230758~So>

Health, Luck, and Justice

<http://library.morainevalley.edu/record=b257767~So>

**Impact of the Death of a Parent on Children
Helping a Child or Adolescent Deal with Death**

[http://o-search.ebscohost.com.library.morainevalley.edu/login.aspx?
direct=true&db=aph&AN=32636013&site=ehost-live](http://o-search.ebscohost.com.library.morainevalley.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=32636013&site=ehost-live)

Evidence-Based Practices for Parentally Bereaved Children and Their Families

[http://o-search.ebscohost.com.library.morainevalley.edu/login.aspx?
direct=true&db=aph&AN=31738473&site=ehost-live](http://o-search.ebscohost.com.library.morainevalley.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=31738473&site=ehost-live)