



Rebecca Skloot

Bestselling Author | Journalist | Educator

Award-winning science writer Rebecca Skloot has made a career of probing the intersections between hard science and human experience; the resulting stories have been as varied as cellular research and cancer, medical care for pet goldfish, and the science behind personal motivation.

In her bestselling book *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (2010), Skloot tells the story of a young black woman who died of cervical cancer in 1951—and left behind an inexplicably immortal line of cells known as HeLa. Skloot spent more than ten years researching Henrietta Lacks, whose cells—harvested without her knowledge or consent—contributed to scientific advancements as varied as the polio vaccine, treatments for cancers and viruses, in-vitro fertilization, and the impact of space travel on human cells. Part detective story, part scientific odyssey, and part family saga, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* raises fascinating questions about race, class, and bioethics in America.



Dwight Garner of the *New York Times* said, “I put down Rebecca Skloot’s first book, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, more than once. Ten times, probably. Once to poke the fire. Once to silence a pinging BlackBerry. And eight times to chase my wife and

assorted visitors around the house, to tell them I was holding one of the most graceful and moving nonfiction books I’ve read in a very long time... It has brains and pacing and nerve and heart.”

In engaging, simple language, Skloot takes readers along on her journey of discovery and perseverance to find out the truth about Henrietta’s life, death, and ultimate immortality. More than 50 communities, schools, and universities have chosen *TILHL* for their common read programs; Skloot’s multi-layered approach incorporates important and teachable themes about religion, research ethics, medical care, memory and history.

The *Journal of the American Medical Association* wrote, “With a sensitive heart, a knowledge of science, an investigative reporter’s zeal, and a novelist’s skill, Skloot combines biography, medicine, science, detective thriller, social critique, and medicolegal inquiry. This layered approach is at once moving, sad, funny, and deeply unsettling...an irresistible read.”

I could not put the book down ... The story of modern medicine and bioethics—and, indeed, race relations—is refracted beautifully, and movingly.

—*Entertainment Weekly*

Science writing is often just about ‘the facts.’ Skloot’s book, her first, is far deeper, braver, and more wonderful.

—*New York Times Book Review*

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks is a triumph of science writing ... one of the best nonfiction books I have ever read.

—*WIRED.COM*

Skloot narrates the science lucidly, tracks the racial politics of medicine thoughtfully, and tells the Lacks family’s often painful history with grace ... Science writing is often just about “the facts.” Skloot’s book, her first, is far deeper, braver and more wonderful ... Made my hair stand on end.

—*Lisa Margonelli, New York Times Sunday Book Review*

Riveting ... a tour-de-force debut.

—*Chicago Sun-Times, Favorite Book of the Year*

TILHL was selected as a best book of 2010 by over 60 media outlets including: *The New York Times*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *American Library Association*, *People*, *Washington Post Book World*, *O, The Oprah Magazine*, and *The Boston Globe*. TILHL is currently being translated into more than 25 languages, adapted into a young reader edition, and being made into an HBO film produced by Oprah Winfrey and Alan Ball.

Rebecca Skloot has written more than 200 feature articles, personal essays, book reviews, and news stories for *The New York Times Magazine*; *O, The Oprah Magazine*; *Discover*; *Columbia Journalism Review*; *Seed*; *New York Magazine*; *Slate*; *Popular Science*; *Chicago Tribune*; and other publications. Her work has been anthologized in several collections, including *Best Food Writing* and *The Best Creative Nonfiction*.

She is co-editor of *The Best American Science Writing 2011* and has worked as a correspondent for NPR's Radiolab and PBS's Nova ScienceNOW. She was named One of Five Surprising Leaders of 2010 by *The Washington Post*.

Rebecca Skloot has a B.S. in biological sciences and a MFA in creative nonfiction. She has taught creative writing and science journalism at the University of Memphis, the University of Pittsburgh, and New York University. Skloot is currently working on a new book from her home in Chicago, and remains in close contact with the Lacks family.

Rebecca Skloot is also founder and president of the Henrietta Lacks Foundation, established to recognize those individuals (and their descendents) who "have made important contributions to scientific research without their knowledge or consent". This tax-exempt organization "gives those who have benefited from those contributions—including scientists, universities, corporations, and the general public—a way to show their appreciation to such research subjects and their families." To learn more, visit www.henriettalacksfoundation.org.

Selected Topics

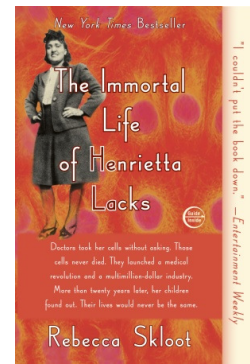
- *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*
- Immersion and science journalism
- Ethics, healthcare and medical research
- Inspirational/commencement address

Selected Writings

- *The Best American Science Writing 2011* (Editor; Ecco, 2011)
- *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (Broadway, 2010)

Awards

- 2011 Puddly Award for Nonfiction
- 2010 *Chicago Tribune* Heartland Prize for Nonfiction
- 2010 Wellcome Trust Book Prize
- 2010 Indie Lit Award for Nonfiction
- 2010 American Association for the Advancement of Science's Award for Excellence in Science Writing



Extraordinary.

—*The New Yorker*

A deftly crafted investigation of a social wrong committed by the medical establishment, as well as the scientific and medical miracles to which it led.

—*Washington Post*

Science journalist Skloot makes a remarkable debut with this multilayered story about faith, science, journalism, and grace. ... Skloot tells a rich, resonant tale of modern science, the wonders it can perform and how easily it can exploit society's most vulnerable people.

—*Publishers Weekly*,
Starred Review

For more information about Rebecca Skloot and her work, please visit www.lyceumagency.com or rebeccaskloot.com.

TODD LECTURE SERIES

Spring 2012

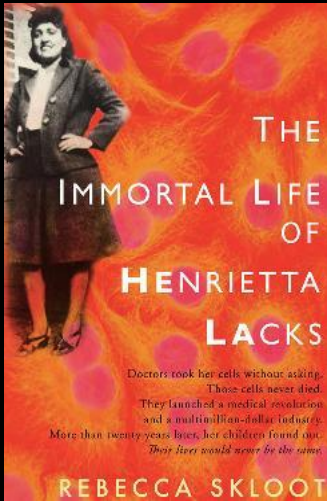
The School of Mathematics
and Sciences
and
The School of Humanities
Present

Rebecca Skloot

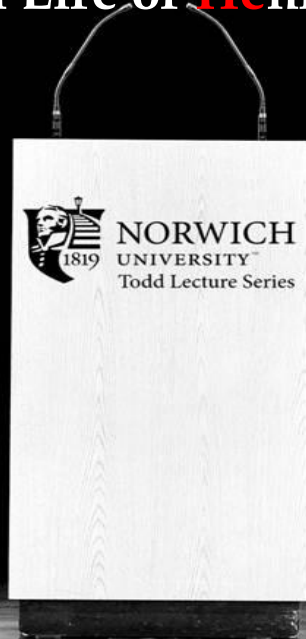
Thursday, March 29th

Plumley Armory, 7:00 pm

~ The Immortal Life of **Henrietta Lacks** ~



Rebecca Skloot is an award-winning science writer whose work has appeared in *The New York Times Magazine*; *O, the Oprah Magazine*; *Discover*; and many others. Skloot is the founder and president of the Henrietta Lacks Foundation. She has a B.S. in biological sciences and an MFA in creative nonfiction.



“Doctors took her cells without asking. Those cells never died. They launched a medical revolution and a multimillion-dollar industry. More than twenty years later, her children found out. Their lives would never be the same.”

For more information or to make large group arrangements:

802-485-2310, mathscience@norwich.edu

The Todd Lecture Series is named in honor of US Army retired Major General and President Emeritus W. Russell Todd, '50, and his wife, Carol, in gratitude for their dedicated service to Norwich University and the Northfield community. With this series, Norwich reaches out to bring important, significant lecturers to the University. The programs will always be free and open to the greater Vermont community as well as the Norwich student body.

Book signing reception will immediately follow the talk, copies of *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, will be available for sale at that time.

Norwich University - Northfield, Vermont