

# Blood Money, Experimentation For Profit



by Kelleigh Nelson

*The concentration camps were a laboratory for the Nazis. They put the minorities and intellectuals in there because the general population wouldn't mind losing those people. The Nazi leaders knew people needed targets for their own self-hatred.*  
—Wendy Hoffman, *Survivor of Criminal Abuse*

*We slow the progress of science today for all sorts of ethical reasons. Biomedicine could advance much faster if we abolished our rules on human experimentation in clinical trials, as Nazi researchers did.* —Paul Nitze, *served under Truman, Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson*

The above quote by Nitze is the reality of how the government and medical scientists think of American citizens...we are cash cows to be used and disposed of for their own experiments. Joseph Mengele, the Angel of Death, would be proud.

In 1951, I was sitting on the kitchen table in our apartment in Chicago swinging my legs as little girls will do. My mom was reading the very conservative Chicago Tribune newspaper, and often would read aloud to me as a child. I distinctly remember her reading an article that stated the federal government had sprayed a flu virus over the Rogers Park area of Chicago to see how the contamination worked on the population. It was a very small article in the back pages, and I remember my mother's anger at reading it. I believe Americans have been experimented on by our government, for many, many decades, and I also believed it would get far worse

with Obamacare and it has.

## The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks

In 1951, a 31-year-old woman and mother of five by the name of Henrietta Lacks, died of cervical cancer in Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. Without her or her family's permission, portions of her cancer cells were taken by her doctor prior to her treatment, as well as after her death and during autopsy. Throughout our history, the poorer citizens, many of whom were black, were especially targeted for experimentation. Henrietta had two of the most virulent strains of Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) that cause cervical cancer. There are over 100 different strains affecting 90% of today's sexually active population. Henrietta's family did not learn of her cells being taken until over 20 years after her death.

Unlike normal cells which are extremely difficult to grow, the cancer cells from Henrietta grew exponentially. They are called the HeLa cell line, the first two letters from the patient's name were used for cell lines back then. Henrietta's cells have helped to conquer various illnesses with new drugs, helped create the polio vaccine, uncovered secrets of cancer, viruses, and the atom bomb's effect, and have been bought and sold by the billions. There are so many of them now that they would wrap around the earth three times. They also easily contaminate other cell lines so their use is now in a sterile and controlled environment.

Henrietta's family has never received one dime from any laboratory or Johns Hopkins in all the years since her death



despite the fact that her cells were taken without the family's knowledge, until now...

In 2013, the National Institute of Health announced it was, at long last, [making good with Lacks' family](#). Under a new agreement, Lack's genome data will be accessible only to those who apply for and are granted permission. And two representatives of the Lacks family will serve on the NIH group responsible for reviewing biomedical researchers' applications for controlled access to HeLa cells. Additionally, any researcher who uses that data will be asked to include an acknowledgement to the Lacks family in their publications. And in 2020, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute gave a six-figure donation as [reparations to the Lacks family](#).

There are still no laws on the books stating that any piece of your body that is removed cannot be used without your express permission. Today, labs sell countless biopsies for various uses in cell line cultures, but there is no benefit to the patient.

Back in 1954, Dr. Chester Southam, a cancer researcher and chief of virology at Sloan Kettering Cancer Institute had a frightening thought. What if the researchers working with HeLa cells could be infected? He and many other scientists believed that cancer was caused by either a virus or an immune system deficiency, so Southam decided to use HeLa to test those theories.

He loaded a syringe with saline solution mixed with HeLa. He injected millions of HeLa cells into the forearm of a leukemia patient telling her he was testing her immune system. Within a short period of time, nodules like Henrietta's showed on the arm. He removed them. He injected several other patients who had cancers to see whether or not their own immune system would fight them off. In many cases they did, but in four they had to be removed but kept growing back, and in one they

metastasized to her lymph nodes.

Southam continued injecting patients at Sloan-Kettering and James Ewing Hospitals. It wasn't until three Jewish doctors refused to do Southam's protocols, citing the [Nuremberg Code](#), that the experiments were halted. In the ensuing media mess and trial, Southam nearly lost his medical license, and the wars about patient consent began.

Southam went on to solicit prisoners in Ohio State Penitentiary in order to inject healthy patients with HeLa. As Rebecca Skloot, the author of, "[The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks](#)" states, his tactics reminded her of Dr. Josef Mengele, the notorious "Angel of Death," in Nazi Germany who conducted horrid experiments on prisoners and especially twins.



Men included in a syphilis study pose for a photo in Tuskegee, AL, in this 1950s photo released by the National Archives.  
National Archives via AP

You can even order Henrietta's cells on the web today, and we still have no proper laws governing parts of our bodies that are excised and discarded, but are not put in the biohazard garbage!

## **The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment**

At the White House on May 16, 1997, President Clinton addressed five elderly African American men, ages 89 to 109, and the family members of others that couldn't be present. He apologized for one of the most shameful episodes in U.S. medical history. In 1932, the government used 623 men as human guinea pigs in a 40-year medical experiment. This, in itself, is bad enough, but for 40 years these black men,

predominately poor and uneducated, were deliberately kept in the dark about what was happening to them. This "experiment" continued for 20 years after the Nuremburg trials and the set of standards that came out of the trials called the Nuremburg codes. The civilized world agreed that human beings would not be used as research animals and that doctors would never forget their first duty to heal their patients.

The United States Public Health Service (PHS) conducted this experiment (now the CDC). More than half of the 623 men had syphilis, the others, a control group, did not. They were told they were being treated for "Bad Blood." The men were told they'd get free lunches, free medical care, free burial and 100 dollars. That may sound odd, but at the time burial money and free medical care were coveted. Despite the development of penicillin in the early 40's and the availability of it by 1944, the men were never treated. In actuality, the "experiment" was to see what illnesses developed and how long it took the men to die. [Here](#) is the timeline.

By the end, in 1972, 28 of the men had died of syphilis, 100 were dead of related complications, 40 of their wives had been infected, and 19 of their children had been born with congenital syphilis. At first, they were given the choice of the medicine of that day to treat syphilis, but in such small amounts that only 3% showed any improvement. To ensure the men would show up for potentially dangerous spinal taps, the PHS doctors misled them with a letter full of promotional hype...their "last chance for special free treatment." The men were also never told their bodies would be required for autopsy. Even the Surgeon General of the U.S. participated in enticing the men to remain in the experiment by sending them certificates of appreciation after 25 years in the study.

To read about this experiment on poor uneducated blacks in our country is to become outraged at the cruelty and the inhuman tactics, not to mention the fact that they purposely lied to

these men as though their lives were less important than anyone else's life...i.e., white men. Yet, the times were quite different, and even after the experiment, many within the medical community felt absolutely no regret. And, what did the "experiment" succeed in doing?

On July 27, 1972, one survivor, Charlie Pollard went to see attorney Fred D. Gray who became the attorney for the plaintiffs in what became known as Pollard vs. United States of America, a \$1.8 billion class action civil suit filed in federal court in Montgomery, Alabama. Gray demanded \$3 million in damages for each living participant and the heirs of the deceased. The case never went to trial and was settled out of court in December, 1974. The government agreed to a \$10 million out-of-court settlement. Sadly, the living participants received \$37,500 in damages, the heirs of the deceased, \$15,000. Gray received nearly \$1 million in legal fees for two years of hard work. No PHS officer who had been directly involved in the study felt any contrition.

While working as a producer for the Roger Fredinburg show some years back, we interviewed attorney Fred D. Gray. I will never forget what he said when we were told the small number of awards from the lawsuit. He said, "How can you expect to get a fair settlement when the judge hearing the case works for the people you're suing?"

In 1990, a survey found that 10% of black Americans believed the U.S. government created AIDS as a plot to exterminate blacks and another 20% could not rule out the possibility that this might be true. Is it any wonder after the government's experiment at Tuskegee?

President Clinton nominated Dr. Henry W. Foster for Surgeon General in 1995. The mainstream media reported that Dr. Foster, an ob/gyn was present at a meeting in 1969 in which a small number of local doctors were informed of the infamous Tuskegee experiment.

Dr. Luther C. McRae said in an interview that Dr. Foster learned some details of the experiment at the 1969 meeting. Dr. McRae said that like all the doctors present that day, including himself, Dr. Foster did not express any moral qualms about the study. At the time, Dr. Foster was chairman of the department of obstetrics and gynecology at Tuskegee University. He did not become surgeon general because of this fact.

### **Medical Apartheid**

The experiments on black Americans began in the early days of our Republic and by the time of the War of Northern Aggression, blacks were being used, almost exclusively for experimental surgeries, and it was never consensual, but rather to expand medical knowledge.

One surgeon from Alabama, James Marion Sims, did all his experimentation with his slaves. He took the skulls of young black children (only blacks) and opened their heads and moved the bones around. He even decided to remove the jawbone of a slave who protested loudly, so the doctor had him tied to a barber's chair and operated on him without anesthesia.

There have been many stellar physicians and surgeons throughout American history who have never suffered any consequences for their experiments and surgeries on people without their permission.

Prison experiments have been off limits for a number of years, but a federal panel is now considering loosening the regulations around prisoner experiments. The history of research in prisons has been the worst of abuses. There were experimental agents administered, men were crippled and killed. There were even mind control experiments.

In Holmesburg Prison in Philadelphia, prisoners there were injected with Staphylococcus and Monilia, herpes, and other viruses. Dr. Kligman was in charge and he injected men at the

behest of pharmaceutical and cosmetic companies with dangerous chemicals. These men had a type of checkerboard on their backs where different chemicals were tested. Dr. Kligman has never been successfully sued, but rather honored.

Another Mississippi neurosurgeon, Orlando J. Andy, was doing experimentation in the 1960's and 70's. He was taking institutionalized young black boys and cutting out parts of their brain. His rationale was to find "behavior problems," but there's no psychologist report. And he was not a psychologist, but a neurologist. Also, there was no indication any of them had behavioral problems. The University of Mississippi is very proud of their revered hero, Dr. Andy. His medical literature never shows that he did anything untoward.

There are countless horror stories of experiments on black Americans from the beginning of our Republic, but there are also countless experiments that are done on the general population of America. I'm not talking about conspiracy theories; I'm talking about documented proof of government experiments on the general population.

The SV-40 monkey virus contamination of the polio vaccines, the plutonium experiments during the cold war on military and others, and the fluoride deception perpetrated by the majority of towns and cities of America, are only a few of the horrors perpetrated on American citizens.

The US governments [secret history of grisly experiments](#) on both animals and humans remains hidden from most citizens.

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