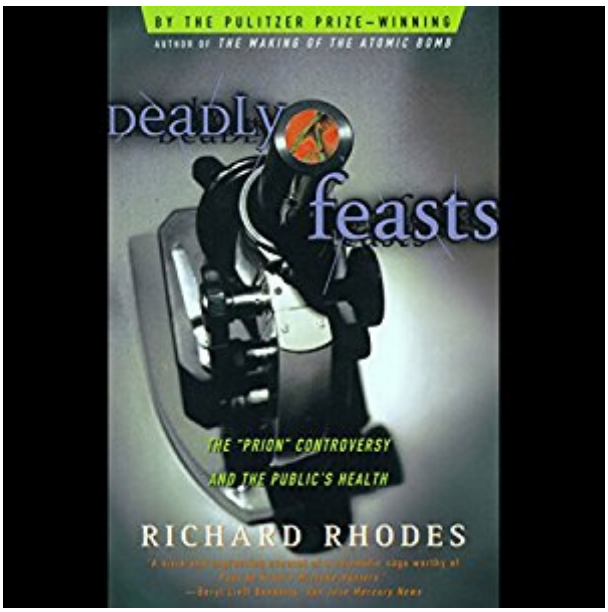
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Deadly Feasts: Tracking The Secrets Of A Terrifying New Plague



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Synopsis

ore frightening than The Dead Zone. Absolutely arresting, full of gripping material, this work traces the twisting trail of a deadly group of "stealth" diseases far more terrifying than the ebola virus. Richard Rhodes will discuss Deadly Feasts on Dateline on March 11, 1997. 2 cassettes. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition
Listening Length: 3 hoursÃ Â andÃ Â 9 minutes
Program Type: Audiobook
Version: Abridged
Publisher: Simon & Schuster Audio
Audible.com Release Date: April 7, 2010
Language: English
ASIN: B003FX6IBE
Best Sellers Rank: #54 inÃ Â Books > Medical Books > Basic Sciences > Virology #832 inÃ Â Books > Audible Audiobooks > Science > Medicine #2928 inÃ Â Books > Medical Books > Medicine > Internal Medicine > Neurology

Customer Reviews

Ok I admit it, I’m a science geek. This is my third copyof this book because I keep lending my coffee out and never getting it back. So I finally bought it on Kindle so I will always have it . Once you read this book you may never eat beef again. Yes it’s heavy on the science but you really don’t need to be a scientist to understand Deadly Feasts. It is the scientific studies of what we now call mad cow disease . Something we all need to seriously be concerned about . It is some heavy reading , but you don’t need a science degree to understand the basics behind it . A fascinating look at an emerging problem we need to face . Don’t read it after your family barbecue or steak dinner.

Deadly Feasts is a very readable condensation of decades of research into the bizarre, elusive class of diseases usually referred to as "prion" diseases or "transmisible spongiform encephalopathies" (TSEs). The story is a pageant of brilliant personalities, scientific heroes and villains, bold explorers and relentless researchers, which could well depict the romance of the scientific world in microcosm. As someone medically educated, this atypical, mysterious class of diseases has long captured my fascination, shimmering as they do with the tantalizing aura of the

unexplained. Nowhere have I found a more comprehensive, scientifically precise summary of the data and theories about TSEs than in Richard Rhodes's book. The narrative begins with Kuru, a fatal, wasting disease of the stone age Fore tribe in New Guinea. The story journeys to the laboratories of North America, to the pages of scientific journals, and the research centers of Great Britain, until the astonishing connection is made with Creutzfeld-Jacob disease, an apparently congenital neurologic wasting disease of humans, and scrapie, a shockingly similar disease of sheep! To anyone with a passing familiarity with the topic, the twin suns of the Nobel Laureates Carleton Gadjusek and Stanley Prusiner are well known, but how they outshine so many stars of equal brilliance in the prion saga, such as Bill Hadlow, the first to make the serendipitous connection between Kuru and Scrapie. Why a sheep veterinarian happened to be reading the British medical journal Lancet, I'll never know, but it should be an inspiration to us all to study harder! As the epic moves forward, the prion enigma, before a scientific curiousity, is cast into the public limelight by the public health crisis surrounding mad cow disease. The famous political controvery surrounding some possibly questionable activities of the ambitious Stanley Prusiner is reviewed, but not in nearly as much depth as some of the other reviews have suggested. Also, Gadjusek's arrest for allegedly molesting a teenage boy in his care is reported, but not to discuss this subject in great detail was a tasteful decision on the part of the author, as it is peripheral to the scientific story. The book provides an admirably detailed account of the hard science behind the TSEs. For example, every biological text or review article I have read about the subject has concluded that mad cow disease is scrapie, resulting from horizontal transmission from sheep to cattle, but this is not the truth. The cellular changes in the brains of individuals with mad cow are more similar to those of kuru than scrapie, suggesting that it is a separate disease entity. Likewise, I never realized there are many different strains of scrapie, similar to conventional viruses. All in all, Deadly Feasts will be a profitable read for anyone with interest in the medical sciences, especially for those who enjoyed books like De Kruif's Microbe Hunters, a favorite of Gadjusek himself.

I was quite glad that this book was offered in audio format. It helped me to get to the point of the book quicker, and actually helped me learned that alot of this book was repetitive...and that I could more quickly skim through whole sections of this book (I have the hardback version). That saved me time. So, that was well worth the price of this audiobook.I am pretty well versed with CJD and Kuru. This audiobook details how much of these prion diseases were finally discovered to be what they are. It highlighted areas that I may want to more closely scrutinize in the book.However, that being said, I don't think that you need both. Most people will get what they need from the audio version

(mine was abridged). I surely did.

I am an infectious disease specialist, and first read this book 7 or 8 years ago. I couldn't put it down then. It is a compelling historically and scientifically accurate saga of the unravelling of the mystery of what was once called a "slow virus" infection which in fact is not an infection at all....but a deadly transmissable ultimately fatal condition called spongioform encephalopathy, made popular by the world-wide attention to "Mad Cow Disease" which was recognized to be caused by a transmissable agent or 'prion.' The discovery of this agent, and it ubiquity amongst animals affecting farming, and the prion's slow and delayed effects, mimicking an infection is clearly and effectively explained in this little book. Recently treating a patient with this condition, I purchased this paperback edition to share with the neurologist with whom I collaborated in the care of our patient. She, like me, "...couldn't put it down.." reading it to completion in a few days time. Jacob Creutzfeld disease as it is also called is a treacherous condition, and worthy of every neurologist's library or attention.

I first read 'Deadly Feasts' a few years ago. I gave the book to someone and they didn't return it. I bought another copy. For anyone interested in real science, this is a book that deserves reading. Since the landmark discovery of Watson and Crick re the structure of DNA, we've been thought this substance is the blueprint of life. DNA is the stuff that cells use to cause themselves to be replicated; it is also the material that codes for all of our cell's protein. It's a master molecule and without it, life would not exist. This is a wholesale truth in biology, though there are some virus that cause themselves to be replicated using a closely related RNA template. This book deals with prions. They a kind of unusual protein--the kind that causes diseases including mad cow disease, scrapie in sheep and staggering deer disease. The author traces the existence of these diseases, and the human variant, called Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, in a historical way. Though the science in 'Deadly Feasts' is real, it reads like science fiction. It's hard to believe these rogue proteins have existed for eons and their existence not previously know before Stanley Prusiner's groundbreaking research--research for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1997. Good book; worth reading.

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