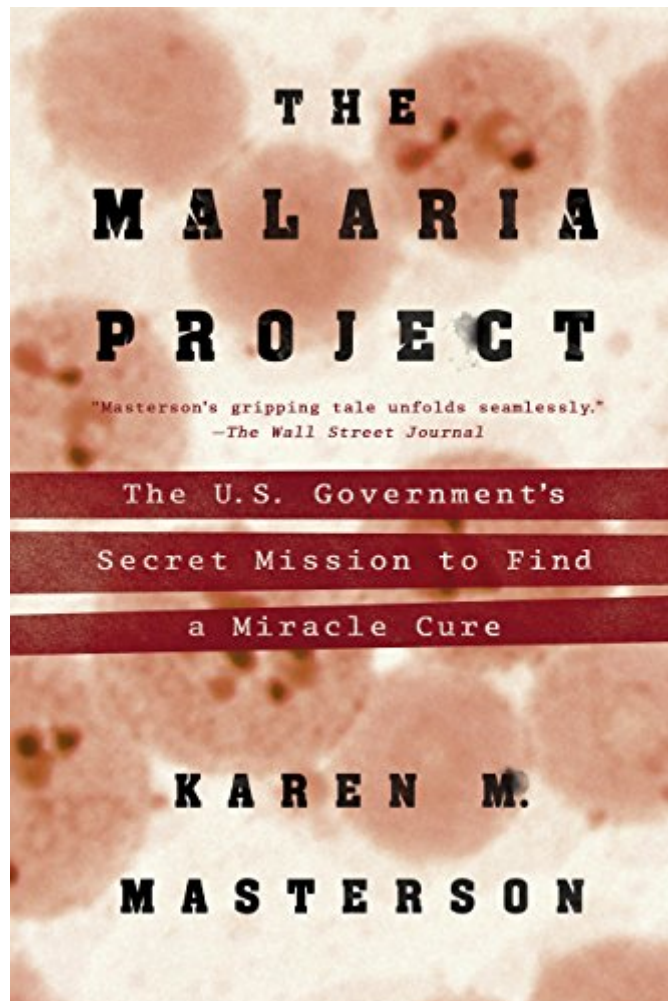


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# The Malaria Project: The U.S. Government's Secret Mission To Find A Miracle Cure



## Synopsis

A fascinating and shocking historical exposé, *The Malaria Project* is the story of America's secret mission to combat malaria during World War II—a campaign modeled after a German project which tested experimental drugs on men gone mad from syphilis. American war planners, foreseeing the tactical need for a malaria drug, recreated the German model, then grew it tenfold. Quickly becoming the biggest and most important medical initiative of the war, the project tasked dozens of the country's top research scientists and university labs to find a treatment to remedy half a million U.S. troops incapacitated by malaria. Spearheading the new U.S. effort was Dr. Lowell T. Coggeshall, the son of a poor Indiana farmer whose persistent drive and curiosity led him to become one of the most innovative thinkers in solving the malaria problem. He recruited private corporations, such as today's Squibb and Eli Lilly, and the nation's best chemists out of Harvard and Johns Hopkins to make novel compounds that skilled technicians tested on birds. Giants in the field of clinical research, including the future NIH director James Shannon, then tested the drugs on mental health patients and convicted criminals—including infamous murderer Nathan Leopold. By 1943, a dozen strains of malaria brought home in the veins of sick soldiers were injected into these human guinea pigs for drug studies. After hundreds of trials and many deaths, they found their magic bullet—but not in a U.S. laboratory. America's best weapon against malaria, still used today, was captured in battle from the Nazis. Called chloroquine, it went on to save more lives than any other drug in history. Karen M. Masterson, a journalist turned malaria researcher, uncovers the complete story behind this dark tale of science, medicine and war. Illuminating, riveting and surprising, *The Malaria Project* captures the ethical perils of seeking treatments for disease while ignoring the human condition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The story of the United States' effort to combat the malaria that wreaked havoc on American troops during World War II is one that describes heroic efforts by scientists in their battle against Plasmodium as well as detailing the questionable conduct of those responsible for testing the drugs that might cure malaria. It is ironic that the German doctor who experimented on prisoners at Dachau was hanged for his efforts, while no American scientist was taken to task for their use of demented syphillitics or insane people as guinea pigs. I guess you have to remember that history is written by the winners. Ms. Masterson seems to recognize this irony, but it is not a major concern for her. The scientists who wrought such havoc on their subjects are presented as generally good guys, but one wonders if they ever really thought about the moral dilemma of their work. The copy editing of the book let a few grammatical slips pass, and the use of italics for some species names and not for others seemed strange. It was as though the author had forgotten the word anopheline. The use of A. as an abbreviation for Anopheles was odd as there is another "A" mosquito that has long been important in the transmission of disease: *Aedes aegypti*. Standard abbreviations are An. and Ae. This is a book that all mosquito workers should read and ponder.

Karen Masterson's book is a fascinating read, a deep dive into the lively history of the U.S. government's efforts to discover a wonder cure for malaria, the greatest scourge in human history. The section on how research into a cure for malaria led, almost accidentally, to a partially effective treatment for syphilis is a real-life page-turner. The careful descriptions of malaria research in the Nazi death camps versus U.S. programs using prisoners is a compelling tale in shades of dark gray. But the most important part of Masterson's book is her conclusion: that the search for a miracle cure, while it has real value, is in the end less vital than the real answer, which is economic

development. That is, to cure malaria, the answer is not a pill or a shot, but reasonable housing and sound land and water practices. As malaria (and, to a lesser extent, its more shocking distant cousin, ebola) continue to ravage the world, Masterson's thoughtful book offers that lesson to all who want to address the problem.

This seemed more like a textbook than an actual book you would pick up at the library. Very interesting and highly recommend it to anyone who is into medicine or history. My only concern is that the author switches from science to history several times in one chapter that gets the reader very confused at times

This is a very important book. Anyone who is interested in world health or medical research would find this fascinating. I also enjoyed the history involved. I learned as much about WWI and WWII from this book as I did from any one of fifty others I have read. It tells an incredible story in a highly readable fashion.

This is an extremely interesting book because it tells in great detail the early antimalarial campaigns from the 1920's to the end of WWII. The author found many stories in archives and personnel interviews with family members that have not been made available to the public until now. The stories of the development of antimalarial drugs using US prisoners and Hitler's antimalarial drug development programs is very interesting. The fact that more US soldiers were hospitalized for malaria than battle wounds is astounding. A lot of history concerning the impact of malaria on the movement of US troops from Brazil to Africa and in the South Pacific Islands is explained as never before. The book is well written and has many old photographs of the people mentioned.

A very interesting and good read about an important topic. Very relevant for understanding how to address other public health issues.

It was the best book I have read in a long time.

Very well written. Detailed without bogging down the story. Author's knowledge of the subject was evident. Recommend for readers who enjoy science and history.

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The Malaria Project: The U.S. Government's Secret Mission to Find a Miracle Cure Herpes: Herpes

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