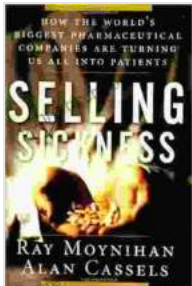


# How The World's Biggest Pharmaceutical Companies Are Turning Us All Into Patients



## Selling Sickness: How the World's Biggest Pharmaceutical Companies Are Turning Us All Into Patients by Ray Moynihan

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 2232 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 352 pages



### By John Abramson

The pharmaceutical industry is a trillion-dollar behemoth that has a profound impact on our lives. It funds research that leads to new drugs and treatments, and it employs millions of people around the world. But the industry also has a dark side. It is driven by profit, and it often puts its own interests ahead of the needs of patients.

In his groundbreaking book, *How The World's Biggest Pharmaceutical Companies Are Turning Us All Into Patients*, investigative journalist John Abramson exposes the dark side of the pharmaceutical industry. He reveals how the industry uses marketing and advertising to create new diseases and convince us that we need to take more drugs. He also shows

how the industry influences doctors and regulators to ensure that its products are prescribed and approved.

Abramson's book is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand the pharmaceutical industry and its impact on our lives. It is a powerful indictment of an industry that is more interested in making money than in helping people.

### **The Pharmaceutical Industry's Marketing Machine**

The pharmaceutical industry spends billions of dollars each year on marketing and advertising. This spending is designed to create new diseases and convince us that we need to take more drugs.

One of the most common ways that the pharmaceutical industry creates new diseases is by expanding the definitions of existing diseases. For example, the definition of ADHD has been expanded to include children who are simply fidgety or impulsive. This has led to a dramatic increase in the number of children who are diagnosed with ADHD and prescribed stimulant medications.

The pharmaceutical industry also uses marketing and advertising to convince us that we need to take more drugs for conditions that we already have. For example, the industry has convinced us that we need to take statin drugs to lower our cholesterol, even though these drugs have serious side effects and do not provide any significant benefit for most people.

### **The Pharmaceutical Industry's Influence on Doctors**

The pharmaceutical industry also has a significant influence on doctors. The industry provides doctors with free samples of drugs, pays them to

speak at conferences, and funds their research. This influence can lead doctors to prescribe more drugs than necessary.

For example, a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that doctors who received free samples of drugs were more likely to prescribe those drugs to their patients. The study also found that doctors who were paid to speak at conferences sponsored by pharmaceutical companies were more likely to prescribe the drugs that were being promoted at the conferences.

### **The Pharmaceutical Industry's Influence on Regulators**

The pharmaceutical industry also has a significant influence on regulators. The industry spends millions of dollars lobbying politicians and regulators. This influence can lead to regulations that favor the industry and make it more difficult for generic drugs to enter the market.

For example, the pharmaceutical industry has lobbied against legislation that would allow Medicare to negotiate drug prices. The industry has also lobbied for regulations that make it more difficult for generic drug companies to enter the market.

### **The Pharmaceutical Industry's Impact on Patients**

The pharmaceutical industry's marketing, advertising, and influence on doctors and regulators has a significant impact on patients. Patients are taking more drugs than ever before, and they are paying more for them. They are also more likely to experience side effects from drugs.

For example, a study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that the number of people taking prescription drugs in the United

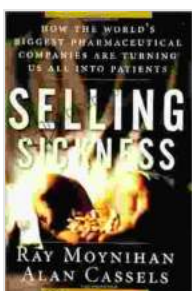
States increased by 50% between 1999 and 2010. The study also found that the average cost of prescription drugs increased by 250% during the same period.

## What Can We Do?

There are a number of things we can do to reduce the influence of the pharmaceutical industry and protect ourselves from its harmful practices.

- Be skeptical of marketing and advertising claims about drugs.
- Talk to your doctor about the risks and benefits of drugs before taking them.
- Choose generic drugs over brand-name drugs whenever possible.
- Support organizations that are fighting for drug reform.
- Educate yourself about the pharmaceutical industry and its practices.

By taking these steps, we can help to reduce the influence of the pharmaceutical industry and protect ourselves from its harmful practices.



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