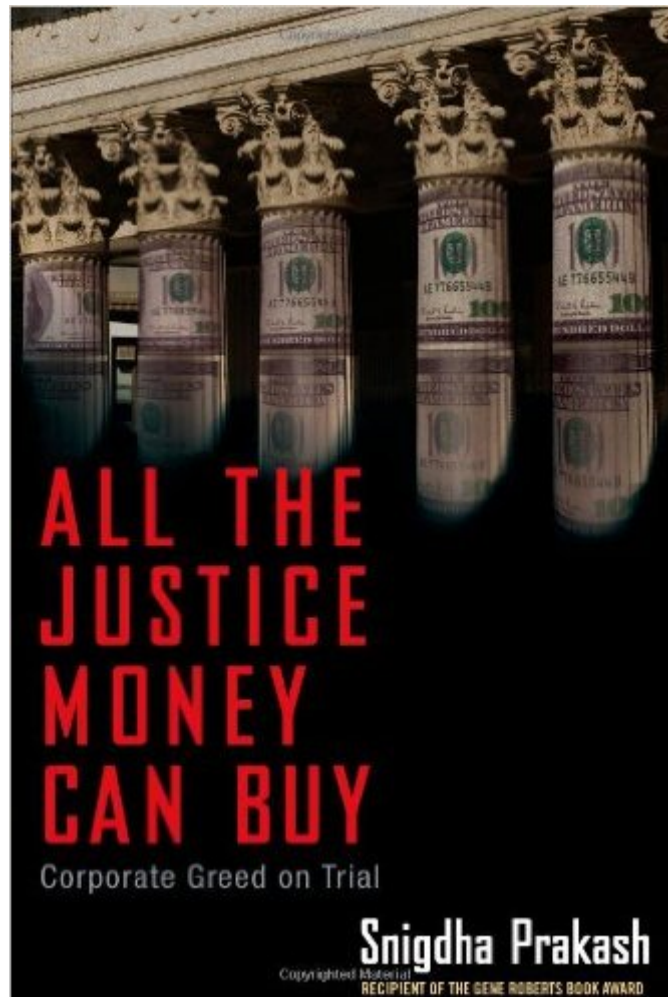


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All The Justice Money Can Buy: Corporate Greed On Trial



Synopsis

Snigdha Prakash was born and brought up in Delhi, India and has lived in the United States since she came here as an undergraduate. She got her start in journalism as a copy aide at the Washington Post writing for the paper's local and business sections. She covered the mortgage industry and its biggest players, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, for the American Banker, an independent, daily newspaper, from 1993 to 1998. Most recently, she was a reporter for National Public Radio (NPR) from 1998 to 2007, where she investigated and documented several important chapters in the history of the painkiller Vioxx on NPR's flagship news magazines, "All Things Considered" and "Morning Edition." In 2009, she was awarded the Gene Roberts Book Award by the Fund for Investigative Journalism. This is her first book.

Book Information

Hardcover: 336 pages

Publisher: Kaplan Publishing; 1 edition (June 7, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1607146304

ISBN-13: 978-1607146308

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.3 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars See all reviews (21 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,198,829 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #90 in Books > Business & Money > Industries > Pharmaceutical & Biotechnology #284 in Books > Law > Health & Medical Law > Medical Law & Legislation #1220 in Books > Medical Books > Pharmacology > Pharmacy

Customer Reviews

This is the true story of a legal battle (the trial itself took 7 weeks) between a respected corporation (Merck) and a man man consider the best trial lawyer (Mark Lanier) over whether Merck had adequately warned doctors and patients about heart attack risks associated with its Vioxx painkiller. The story begins by relating how Vioxx allegedly injured two individuals and killed a third, how those initially involved sought legal help, and then thousands of similar cases were consolidated from among the almost 20 million that had used it before Merck pulled the drug from the market. (A senior FDA scientist estimated Vioxx caused 88,000 - 140,000 serious cases, with almost half fatal.) Merck created a \$675 million legal fund in 2004, and by the end of 2006 had spent all of that plus an additional \$110 million. By the end of 2006 only 13 cases had been tried (first began in

2000), with Merck winning eight, two ending in mistrials, and the plaintiffs winning three. Merck then appealed all the cases it lost, and attempted to consolidate the remaining cases in federal court - easier to defend. Plaintiffs, however, managed to consolidate the majority of cases into a N.J. state court trial. That trial is the focus of the book. Lead attorney Lanier recognized he had to explain the science involved in simple terms, and that doing so required 25 - 30 such 'mini-lessons.' Lanier had made himself a student of such teaching, and believed only three such concepts/day could be absorbed and retained by jurors. (The federal trials were limited to three weeks - a length Lanier believed was insufficient for the complexity involved and teaching required.

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