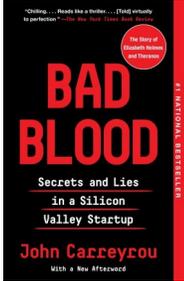


Books by the Stack



Bad Blood by John Carreyrou

This is the story of how Theranos CEO Elizabeth Holmes secured billions of dollars in investments to develop a revolutionary blood test that she likely knew was impossible and the lengths she went to protect her bottom line.

Why you'll like it: *Suspenseful. Well-researched. Shocking but true.*

About the Author: John Carreyrou is an American journalist and author. He was born in New York and raised in Paris. He graduated from Duke University in 1994 with a B.A. in political science and government. He has worked for The Wall Street Journal since 1999. Currently, he is based in New York, but has worked in Brussels and Paris. He has covered a wide number of topics. He was part of a team that won a Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory Reporting, for covering corporate scandals. In 2015, he and several colleagues wrote a series of articles on fraud and Medicare, for which they won the Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Reporting. He won the George Polk, Gerald Loeb, and Bartlett & Steele awards for his coverage of the company Theranos. (Bowker Author Biography)

Questions for Discussion

1. Do you think Elizabeth Holmes set out to do something impossible? Or just difficult? Do you think she had even a remote chance of developing a successful test?
2. Which professor do you think was right about Elizabeth Holmes, Channing Robertson or Phyllis Gardner? Do you think either of the professors were biased by personal experiences or had ulterior motives?
3. What do you think drove Elizabeth Holmes? Was she simply driven by a greed for money? For fame? Or fear that your life isn't worth living unless you make transformative change?
4. Why do you think Elizabeth Holmes dated Sunny Balwani? What role do you think he played in the devious path that Theranos took? If the roles had been reversed, do you think you would be as likely to consider that Elizabeth Holmes had similar influences on Balwani?
5. Why do you think Theranos was able to raise such a huge amount of capital?
6. What do you think of Richard Ruisz filing patents that he knew Theranos would need in the future? Were you surprised to find out that you can get a patent on an idea even if you haven't proven that it can work? Do you understand more about the patent process now after reading *Bad Blood*?
7. Why do you think the author included the following scene description about Richard Ruisz?

“When Underhill came back with the printed settlement, Richard and Joe read it and signed it. Afterward, Richard Ruisz looked utterly defeated. The proud and pugnacious former CIA agent broke down and sobbed.” (p. 204)

Do you feel sorry for Richard Ruisz?

8. If you were a venture capitalist, would you invest in companies with unproven technology? Let's say they even admit that they don't have it working yet.

9. Do you think the errors at Theranos are unique to them or do you think they are common in the startup world? Do you think what happened at Theranos indicates a larger problem? Or was this only a problem because Theranos was in a medical area? Do you think we should be concerned about this?

10. Do you think that Elizabeth Holmes was targeted, or made an example of, because she was a woman?

11. What do you think that Theranos', and by extension Elizabeth Holmes', worst error was?

Misrepresenting the technology capabilities to the investors? Performing patient blood lab tests on their own equipment before it was proven reliable? Performing patient blood lab tests on other companies' equipment? Threatening employees who want to leave with lawsuits and other intimidation? Or all they all equal? What are other errors that stood out to you?

12. Employees who left were pressured to sign non-disclosure agreements. Are non-disclosure agreements common in your line of work and what do you think of them? Do start-ups need them to protect their ideas?

13. Do you think *Bad Blood* was simply a recounting of facts in an impartial manner? Or did the journalists' bias influence the writing?

14. Who do you think was the hero or heroes in *Bad Blood*?

(Questions provided by mombehindthecurtain.com)



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