



# How to Win the Nobel Prize (The Jerusalem-Harvard Lectures)

*J. Michael BISHOP*

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## **How to Win the Nobel Prize (The Jerusalem-Harvard Lectures) J. Michael BISHOP**

In 1989 Michael Bishop and Harold Varmus were awarded the Nobel Prize for their discovery that normal genes under certain conditions can cause cancer. In this book, Bishop tells us how he and Varmus made their momentous discovery. More than a lively account of the making of a brilliant scientist, *How to Win the Nobel Prize* is also a broader narrative combining two major and intertwined strands of medical history: the long and ongoing struggles to control infectious diseases and to find and attack the causes of cancer.

Alongside his own story, that of a youthful humanist evolving into an ambivalent medical student, an accidental microbiologist, and finally a world-class researcher, Bishop gives us a fast-paced and engrossing tale of the microbe hunters. It is a narrative enlivened by vivid anecdotes about our deadliest microbial enemies--the Black Death, cholera, syphilis, tuberculosis, malaria, smallpox, HIV--and by biographical sketches of the scientists who led the fight against these scourges.

Bishop then provides an introduction for nonscientists to the molecular underpinnings of cancer and concludes with an analysis of many of today's most important science-related controversies--ranging from stem cell research to the attack on evolution to scientific misconduct. *How to Win the Nobel Prize* affords us the pleasure of hearing about science from a brilliant practitioner who is a humanist at heart. Bishop's perspective will be valued by anyone interested in biomedical research and in the past, present, and future of the battle against cancer.

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5. Paradoxical Strife

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Credits

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Reviews of this book:

Despite his book's encouraging title, Bishop--who won a Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine in 1989--cautions that "I have not written an instruction manual for pursuit of the prize." Instead, he has written an amiable reflection on the experience of being a Nobelist, intertwined with some history and anecdotes about

the award, and balanced by a wide-ranging review of his own career as an "accidental scientist"...Along the way, Bishop reflects on the history of our knowledge of microbes, cancer, the politics of funding research and present-day disenchantment with science. His main purpose in writing this book, Bishop says, is to show that "scientists are supremely human"--which he does with grace and charm.

--Publishers Weekly

Reviews of this book:

*How to Win the Nobel Prize* is typical Bishop: modest, funny, insightful and offering an extremely clear and brief explanation of the basic scientific achievement that won the 1989 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine for himself and longtime colleague, Harold Varmus, now president of the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

--David Perlman, San Francisco Chronicle

Reviews of this book:

In these pages Bishop reveals himself as a good writer blessed with enviable clarity, someone sensible and levelheaded who likes people and is enamored of his science.

--John Tyler Bonner, New York Times Book Review

Reviews of this book:

This is a treasure...Above all, *How to Win the Nobel Prize* is a civilised book and a lavishly rewarding one.

--Roy Herbert, New Scientist

Reviews of this book:

At its heart this analysis of science and the scientific world is a jewel. *How to Win the Nobel Prize* is an inspirational book, full of careful analysis and judgement.

--John Oxford, Times Higher Education Supplement

Reviews of this book:

Bishop is a gifted communicator and teacher, and he sets about his task of educating scientists and the public by describing his career in science and science politics...In the end, Bishop's book provides a...

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