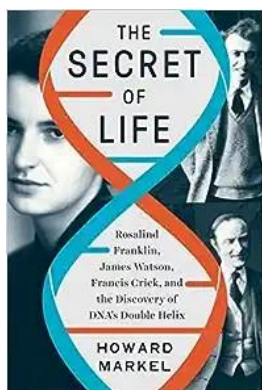


ACS Puget Sound Section Book Discussion led by John Shafer  
sponsored by the Diversity Equity Inclusion and Respect Committee

**The Secret of Life: Rosalind Franklin, James Watson, Francis Crick, and the  
Discovery of DNA's Double Helix**  
By Howard Markel

**Tuesday, January 23, 2024 @ 7 PM**



Book synopsis from Amazon. “James Watson and Francis Crick’s 1953 discovery of the double helix structure of DNA is the foundation of virtually every advance in our modern understanding of genetics and molecular biology. But how did Watson and Crick do it—and why were they the ones who succeeded? The Secret of Life is a story of genius and perseverance, but also a saga of cronyism, misogyny, anti-Semitism, and misconduct. Drawing on voluminous archival research, including interviews with James Watson and with Franklin’s sister, Jenifer Glynn, Markel provides a fascinating look at how science is done, how reputations are undone, and how history is written, and revised. Markel also provides colorful depictions of Watson and Crick—their competitiveness, idiosyncrasies, and youthful immaturity—and compelling portraits of Wilkins, Pauling, and most cogently, Rosalind Franklin. The Secret of Life is a lively and sweeping narrative of this landmark discovery, one that finally gives the woman at the center of this drama her due”.

**All are welcome.** Link to Zoom Virtual meeting room.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88213278482?pwd=SmlncDY2SzZkQTlxbWpHUlpOdVUyQT09>

John L. Shafer received a B.S. in Chemistry from Allegheny College in Meadville, Pa, and taught chemistry and maths for two years at St Augustine College, Cape Coast, Ghana as a Peace Corps Volunteer. He received a Ph.D. in Chemistry in 1971 from the University of California, Berkeley, and a M.S. in Petroleum Engineering from the University of Houston in 1991. During the past 45 years he has worked in the broad area of chemistry and mechanics of porous media with the energy industry (minerals, coal, oil shale, & petroleum). He retired from Exxon and then worked as a petrophysical consultant to oil companies for the next seventeen years. For 25 years, John was active in the International Society of Core Analysts and was their President for a year. John has also been an ACS member for 55 years. John and his wife Christie return to Ghana for two months most years since 1999. John has been involved with local Ghanaian University of Science and Technology mentoring Petroleum Engineering students and junior faculty. Twelve years ago, John and Christie moved from Houston to Anacortes, WA, to be near their two sons and their families.

