

## Book Review

# Terminal Neglect, by Michael Rushnak

By Jack Kearns

A tale of pillory by a non-pill pushing doctor is played out by a new author who has adapted the page turner approach in novels: let the characters introduce themselves by their actions.

In "Terminal Neglect," Dr. Michael Rushnak weaves reality with — well, more reality — the medical business and its manipulative pharmaceutical brigands. His wish is to tell a story, make some money at the task, and build his campaign to change medical practice and attack any greedy pill-pushers in the drug industry.

Rushnak was recently at Borders in Eatontown, autographing copies of "Terminal Neglect."

The book is a real run at John Grisham's style. Rushnak, a former doctor in private practice and in a state health department, left his black bag behind and closed his copy of Gray's Anatomy

when he pulled this novel of greed in the health care industry into focus. His first book illuminates the talked-about villainous nature of the pharmaceuticals business.

Rushnak said he based his tale on his own experiences.

His main character is a candidate for the job of US Surgeon General, and he comes into contact with secret society bullies, The Health Club, and the politicians looking out for their personal interests instead of the health and well being of the general public.

True fiction, it raises questions in this reader's mind about how the country uses or abuses the skills and professionalism of our health purveyors. Many remember as a youth the Dr. Getbetters who made you feel good, even when he had to give you a tetanus shot or push that stick in your mouth that almost made you

chuck your cookies. The bitter stuff they gave you to take at least made the icky feelings go away. The litany of side effects had not yet reached the marketing masters.

Now it's waiting rooms that are always jammed full, and appointment lists that are fiction themselves. And according to Rushnak, the deal is pills for everyone and everything, even the calluses on your bottom from sitting and waiting.

I wish Rushnak had a magic bullet, white or blue, or even pink that could add humor, but the subject seems to not allow it. Mystery is mystery, and guys like John Grisham and Michael Rushnak make it good reading.

The next book he plans to publish is "Turn From Evil," coming soon to Borders in Eatontown and other bookstores.



Author Dr. Michael Rushnak at a book signing with Roberta Traversa, Long Branch. She enjoyed "Terminal Neglect."