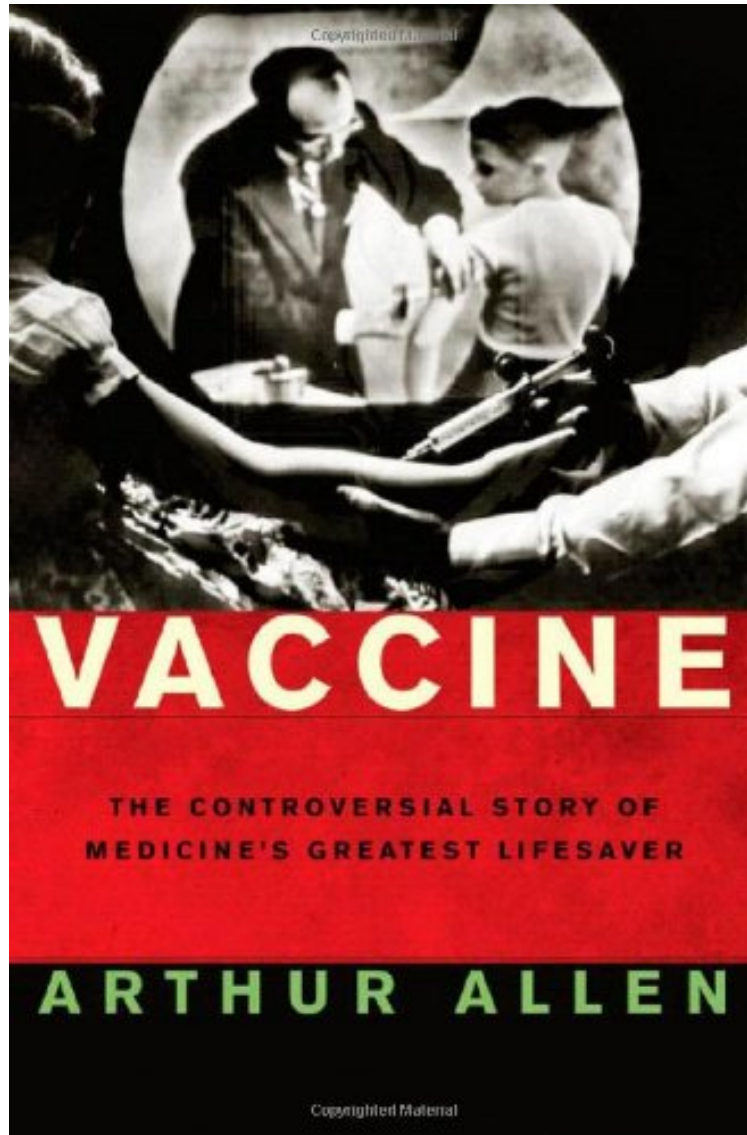


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Vaccine: The Controversial Story of Medicine's Greatest Lifesaver

Arthur Allen

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Arthur Allen : Vaccine: The Controversial Story of Medicine's Greatest Lifesaver before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Vaccine: The Controversial Story of Medicine's Greatest Lifesaver:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A fair look at vaccine history for more than two centuries By Sara I enjoyed reading this book for its historical perspective as well as for the few chapters of investigative journalism done during recent whooping cough outbreaks. I think Allen portrayed anti-vaccinating parents somewhat unfairly during

the whooping cough epidemic, but perhaps his account was accurate based on what he experienced. More interesting was the history and the arguments for/against vaccines that have been brought up over the past 2+ centuries since variolation was in practice to protect against smallpox. A lot of the arguments from the early days have persisted, and he fairly points out, with skepticism, how some concerns just don't make much sense. One thing I was pleased with is that, even though this book seems to come out in favor of vaccines overall, he didn't shy away from some of the serious issues with vaccines: such as SV40 in polio vaccine in the 60's which was found to cause tumors, and Hepatitis B being introduced during the course of vaccination because of the use of human blood serum and the routine re-use of needles for vaccinating in low-resource areas. A great book for anyone who wants a fair look at vaccine history. The only con is that it could get a bit dry during long discussions of the process of creating some vaccines and the politics involved. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An incredible account. Well told! By Jeanine R. Whitney Arthur Allen provides a highly accurate history of vaccinations. He doesn't mince words yet conveys the world of diseases honestly. This book reads like a good news paper article. The footnotes are incredible. I use this as a text book for my clinical students. An incredible account, well told. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Bijay Tilak Bhattara good book.. super fast shipping.

A fascinating account of vaccination's miraculous, inflammatory past and its uncertain future. In 1796, as smallpox ravaged Europe, Edward Jenner injected a child with a benign version of the disease, then exposed the child to the deadly virus itself. The boy proved resistant to smallpox, and Jenner's risky experiment produced the earliest vaccination. In this deftly written account, journalist Arthur Allen reveals a history of vaccination that is both illuminated with hope and shrouded by controversy from Jenner's discovery to Pasteur's vaccines for rabies and cholera, to those that safeguarded the children of the twentieth century, and finally to the tumult currently surrounding vaccination. Faced with threats from anthrax to AIDS, we are a vulnerable population and can no longer depend on vaccines; numerous studies have linked childhood vaccination with various neurological disorders, and our pharmaceutical companies are more attracted to the profits of treatment than to the prevention of disease. With narrative grace and investigative journalism, Allen explores our shifting understanding of vaccination since its creation. 16 pages of illustrations.

From Publishers Weekly Vaccines are one of the most important and controversial achievements in public health. Washington-based journalist Allen explores in depth this dark horse of medicine from the first instances of doctors saving patients from smallpox by infecting them with it to the current controversy over vaccinating preteen girls against the sexually transmitted virus that causes cervical cancer. One thing becomes very clear: fear of vaccination is not a recent problem. In colonial America, inoculations against smallpox were seen by many as a means of deflecting the will of God. In the 20th century, the triumphs of the Salk polio vaccine and the eradication of smallpox may actually have led to current antivaccination movements: "as infectious diseases disappeared, in part thanks to vaccines, the risks of vaccination itself were thrown into relief." Allen's comprehensive, often unexpected and intelligently told history illuminates the complexity of a public health policy that may put the individual at risk but will save the community. This book leaves the reader with a sense of awe at all that vaccination has accomplished and trepidation over the future of the vaccine industry. 16 pages of illus. (Jan.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Pulling together years of accumulated research on a topic he has written about for several national publications, Allen recounts the 200-year history of vaccination, from its first employment to combat smallpox, "the first and only contagious disease ever eradicated" by a vaccine, to the present, in which decades of unanswered questions plus low profit margins for vaccine development threaten its future. Allen undertakes a ponderous mission indeed because there has been so much controversy, most recently regarding an alleged link between autism and a vaccine, and disagreement over the efficacy of various vaccines. A 2005 study found little difference in fatality rates between elderly flu shot recipients and those who didn't get the shots, and then there's the whole discussion about how much social responsibility the individual must bear when getting a vaccination that puts the recipient at risk of unwanted side effects but also helps protect the community from an epidemic. Thorny issues all, which Allen deftly maneuvers as he wrangles myriad aspects of a very complicated issue into a comprehensible text. Donna Chavez Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "This is a well-researched portrayal of immunisation, from the earliest pioneers to an arm of preventive medicine now thoroughly entangled in politics, commerce and public relations." New Scientist "For those interested in the politics and debate of compulsory vaccination, and the personalities involved in all sides of the fight, Vaccine is a good read." Nature "One of the joys of Allen's well-researched but never boring 500-page history is that he pricks both camps, taking a critical look at both the anti-vaccinists' championing of pseudo-science and the medical establishment's repeated tendency to downplay the genuine dangers of vaccine side-effects." The Guardian "A fascinating, meticulously researched history of vaccination which is admirable for its even-handedness." The Independent"