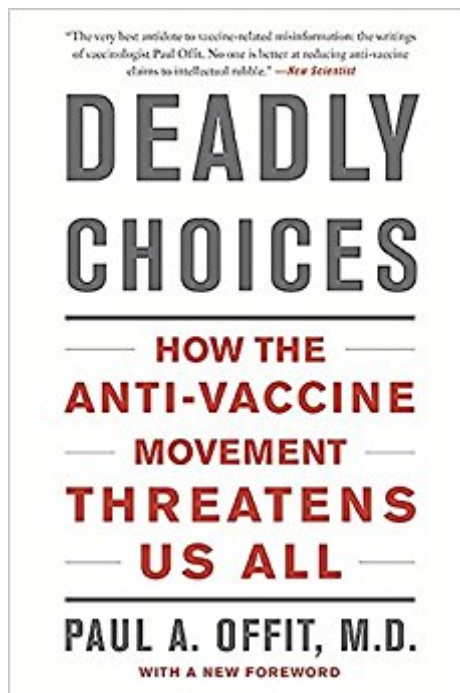




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Deadly Choices: How The Anti-Vaccine Movement Threatens Us All



Synopsis

In 2014, California suffered the largest and deadliest outbreak of pertussis, also known as whooping cough, in more than fifty years. This tragedy was avoidable. An effective vaccine has been available since the 1940s. In recent years other diseases, like measles and mumps, have also made a comeback. The reason for these epidemics can be traced to a group whose vocal proponents insist, despite evidence to the contrary, that vaccines are poison. As a consequence, parents and caretakers are rejecting vaccines for themselves and their families. In *Deadly Choices*, infectious-disease expert Paul Offit takes a look behind the curtain of the anti-vaccine movement. What he finds is a reminder of the power of scientific knowledge, and the harm we risk if we ignore it.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. In the second book this season (after journalist Seth Mnookin's *The Panic Virus*) to attack vaccine paranoia, Offit—who drew antivaccinist fire for *Autism's False Prophets*—presents a smart, hard-hitting exposé of vaccine pseudoscience. Offit brings outstanding credentials to the subject: he's a vaccinologist at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia and an expert in infectious diseases, and he tackles claims that childhood inoculations cause brain damage, autism, diabetes, and cancer, finding a farrago of misinformation, faulty research, and sly deceptions fed to distraught parents by media hype, ax-grinding activists, and personal-injury lawyers. He embellishes his account with a sprightly history of paranoid medical

populism—19th-century critics of the cowpox-derived smallpox vaccine insisted it could turn people into cows—and a blistering attack on celebrity antivaccine ideologues Jenny McCarthy, Jim Carrey, and Bill Maher and the medical writers who pander to parental anxieties. Offit dwells less than Mookin on the sociology of the controversy and more on the science. The result is a thorough dismantling of antivaccine notions and a sober warning about the resurgence of deadly childhood infections stemming from declining vaccination rates. Worried parents, especially, will find this a lucid, compelling riposte to antivaccine fear-mongering. Photos. (Feb.) (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Starred Review Infectious disease expert Offit, long an outspoken and prolific (Vaccinated, 2007) champion of universal immunization via vaccines, ratchets up the urgency of his crusade by taking on the loudest and highest-profile spokespersons for the anti-vaccine movement. He spares no one, not Jim Carrey, not Jenny McCarthy, television's Dr. Oz, or even Dr. Bob Sears, as he tosses salvo after salvo of scientific evidence across the bow of their anti-vaccine ships. Their anti-vaccine arguments, he says, consist of nothing more than anecdotal drama combined with conspiracy theories that pander to parents' most emotional fears. What they should be doing, he says, is encouraging parents to trust the huge bank of scientific data proving the safety of vaccines and their efficacy in eliminating many deadly infectious diseases. Armed with his own arsenal of anecdotal horror stories that focus on worst case histories of the unvaccinated, mostly children, in addition to pages of scientific study citations supporting his premise, Offit pulls no punches. His tone is edgier than usual this time, his arguments more virulent. It is clear that he wants his message and the facts, not rumors or infectious diseases, to go viral. --Donna Chavez
--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As a grandmother with a grandson under 2 and a new baby coming in the late spring, I am horrified by the anti-vaccine movement and the potential to reintroduce illnesses that we believed were a thing of the past and put my grandchildren at risk. This account of the history of the anti-vaccine movement is actually a page-turner--I read it in just a few days. As a medical writer and editor, I would have enjoyed even more detail about the scientific studies but the book as written is perfect for the majority of the readers who will be interested in the topic. I bought it because I was impressed after watching an interview with Dr. Offit on Democracy Now. This sort of evidence-based presentation is exactly what needs to be brought to the debate--I just wish the people we want to reach would read it!

As a story about the importance of vaccinating my children, this is an amazing book in its own right. It has another important quality. It's the best example of a sustained, critically examined, rational exploration of an argument that I've read in at least two years. "This," I would say to freshmen college students, "is how you get it done. I want to see papers that show a similar commitment to hooking the truth in a sea of noise."

The history of the anti-vaccine movement was very interesting. I read it more to address the question of why it threatens all of us, even those who get vaccinated, and found Dr. Offit's answers to this question very concerning and a little disheartening. But overall, very educational while being a good read.

well done , everyone should read this who has children or grandchildren to expand their understanding of the issues .

A must read. This book remarks the importance of vaccination for ours kids and everybody else. It is always easy to think that we don't need vaccines when disease is under control because of them and sad to realize that many people is jeopardizing kids' lives based on false believes.

Carefully researched, honest and thoughtful. If you've read too many books to vaccinate your kids, you're reading the wrong books.

If you are in doubt about vaccines this is a great, very direct, well documented book on the anti-vaccine movement. No surprise, he is pro-vaccination, but the science is carefully documented. Paul Offit systematically reviews a dissects the anti-vaccine arguments and provides a very comprehensive review of the facts. About 20% of the book are the references to information provided in the text and you can review for yourself.

This information is vitally important in the face of increasing outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases. The misinformation of the anti-vaccine movement has been given a voice long enough, it's time for parents to learn the truth, become inspired to fight for our nation's children, and begin speaking out for the prevention of diseases in our communities. This book will lay to rest many fears instilled by the anti-vaccine movement, and inspire parents towards protecting the most vulnerable.

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