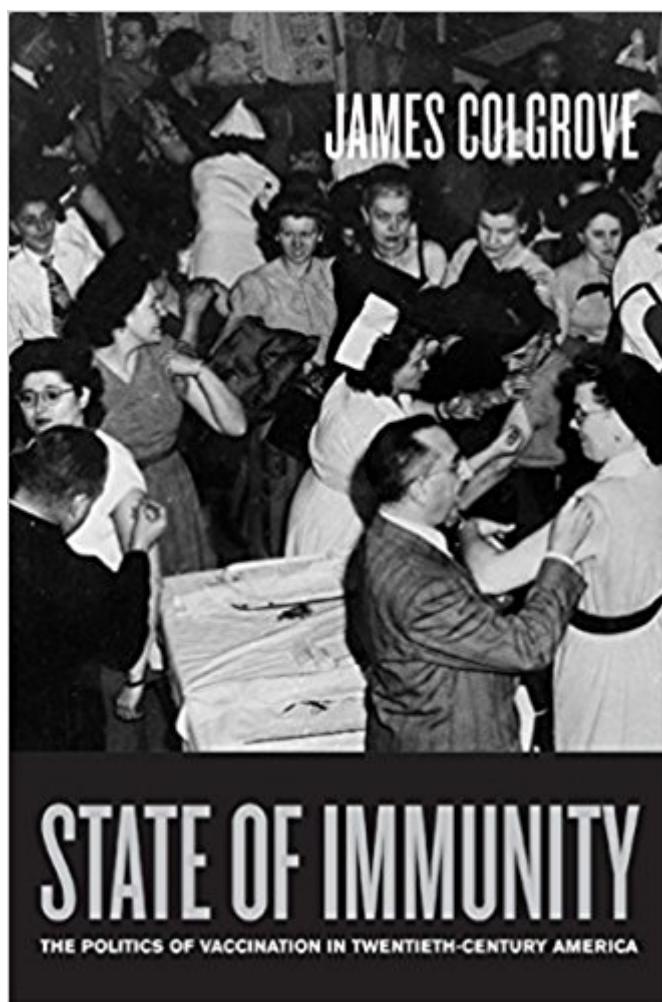


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# State Of Immunity: The Politics Of Vaccination In Twentieth-Century America



## **Synopsis**

This first comprehensive history of the social and political aspects of vaccination in the United States tells the story of how vaccination became a widely accepted public health measure over the course of the twentieth century. One hundred years ago, just a handful of vaccines existed, and only one, for smallpox, was widely used. Today more than two dozen vaccines are in use, fourteen of which are universally recommended for children. *State of Immunity* examines the strategies that health officials have used—ranging from advertising and public relations campaigns to laws requiring children to be immunized before they can attend school—to gain public acceptance of vaccines. Like any medical intervention, vaccination carries a small risk of adverse reactions. But unlike other procedures, it is performed on healthy people, most commonly children, and has been mandated by law. Vaccination thus poses unique ethical, political, and legal questions. James Colgrove considers how individual liberty should be balanced against the need to protect the common welfare, how experts should act in the face of incomplete or inconsistent scientific information, and how the public should be involved in these decisions. A well-researched, intelligent, and balanced look at a timely topic, this book explores these issues through a vivid historical narrative that offers new insights into the past, present, and future of vaccination.

## **Book Information**

Hardcover: 349 pages

Publisher: University of California Press; 1 edition (October 5, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0520247493

ISBN-13: 978-0520247499

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 0.8 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #422,405 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #36 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Vaccinations #169 in Books > Textbooks > Medicine & Health Sciences > Administration & Policy > Health Policy #229 in Books > Textbooks > Medicine & Health Sciences > Medicine > Special Topics > History

## **Customer Reviews**

James Colgrove is Associate Research Scientist at the Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University.

Good quality.

I love this book. I have recommended it to many. Coupled with the book, "Bodily Matters: The Anti-Vaccination Movement in England, 1853-1907 (Radical Perspectives)", by Dr Nadja Durbach, the two books give a very complete history of vaccination in the US. I used both to write my book, "Saying No to Vaccines." I highly recommend this book for those interested in "how we got here from there" about US vaccination policy.

I wanted a book on the history and politics of vaccinations, not some preachy polemic telling its readers which side of the debate to take. This is it- a most comprehensive history of vaccinations, from their discovery in 1800's to the latest debates over safety. Writing style is very readable and enjoyable, not too dense. Very highly recommended to anyone who wants to be well versed in the issues and have a deeper understanding (beyond what's in the media) of the bioethical dilemmas posed by vaccinations.

This is an interesting and competent book, useful to anyone interested in the subject. There have been valid reasons to be suspicious of particular vaccines but most of the opposition to vaccinations has been due to ignorance and prejudice. The smallpox vaccine saved hundreds of millions of lives and a great deal of suffering. Other vaccines, like the polio vaccine, were also extremely important. Eradicating infectious diseases has been a serious challenge and we should be very grateful to the brave people who have devoted their lives and careers to this work. I worked as an economist in St. Lucia with the Rockefeller project in the late 60s that was eradicating schistosomiasis which affected a large % of the population. They had a difficult job, starting with the fact that the people didn't trust Western doctors. We solved that by taking photographs of people when they came for exams and giving them copies. Since they didn't own cameras, they valued these photos and that made them willing to participate. Dr. Peter Jordan, an expert on tropical medicine, was the head of the project and wrote a book about it. Midwest Independent Research, educational websites. Health care information, mwir-healthcareinformation.blogspot. There are book lists, including one on infectious diseases.

This is my go-to book for historical information on vaccine policy. It has interesting details and examples and a smart, overarching framework. I am a huge fan of Colgrove's work and find this

book to be equal parts informative and captivating.

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