



Journal of Science & Popular Culture Special Issue: Vaccine Hesitancy

Opposition to vaccination is nothing new, with the practice prompting public concern from its very inception. Various debates over vaccination have taken place since, driven not by scientific disputes over evidence but rather by a range of cultural, political and social motivations. Opposition to vaccination is deceptively varied and entails a range of claims including the infamously inaccurate autism/vaccine connection which has been dubbed 'the most damaging medical hoax of the last 100 years' (Flaherty 2011) and 'one of the deadliest conspiracy theories of the modern era' (*The Atlantic* 2020).

Cited by the World Health Organization (WHO) as one of the top ten global health threats of 2019, vaccine hesitancy has become a prominent and dangerous form of science denial. The unfolding COVID-19 pandemic that began the following year only gave the public debates greater significance and urgency, especially as one core response has been to rely on vaccines and vaccination as a solution. Vaccine hesitancy has been usefully reframed as a matter of mistrust rather than misinformation (Goldenberg 2021), thus it is more than a science communication issue – vaccine hesitancy is rooted in and spread through cultural perceptions of science and modern medicine.

Vaccine hesitancy is one of the most immediately pressing global issues where science and popular culture intimately entwine and this special issue seeks to provide new insights on vaccine hesitancy by examining how, where and why these attitudes manifest as a part of contemporary popular culture.

Potential topics include (but are not limited to):

- Cultural history of vaccine hesitancy
- Social media and vaccine hesitancy
- Representations of vaccination and vaccine hesitancy in fiction
- Celebrity opposition or promotion of vaccination

We welcome expressions of interest comprised of an abstract (around 250 words) along with a bio (up to 150 words) by **28 February 2022**. Authors of successful abstracts will be notified by **31 March**, with full papers due **30 June**. Publication of the special issue is planned for late 2022.

Articles should be a minimum of 6000 words (not including notes and references). Shorter pieces can range from 1000–3000 words.

To submit a proposal visit:

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