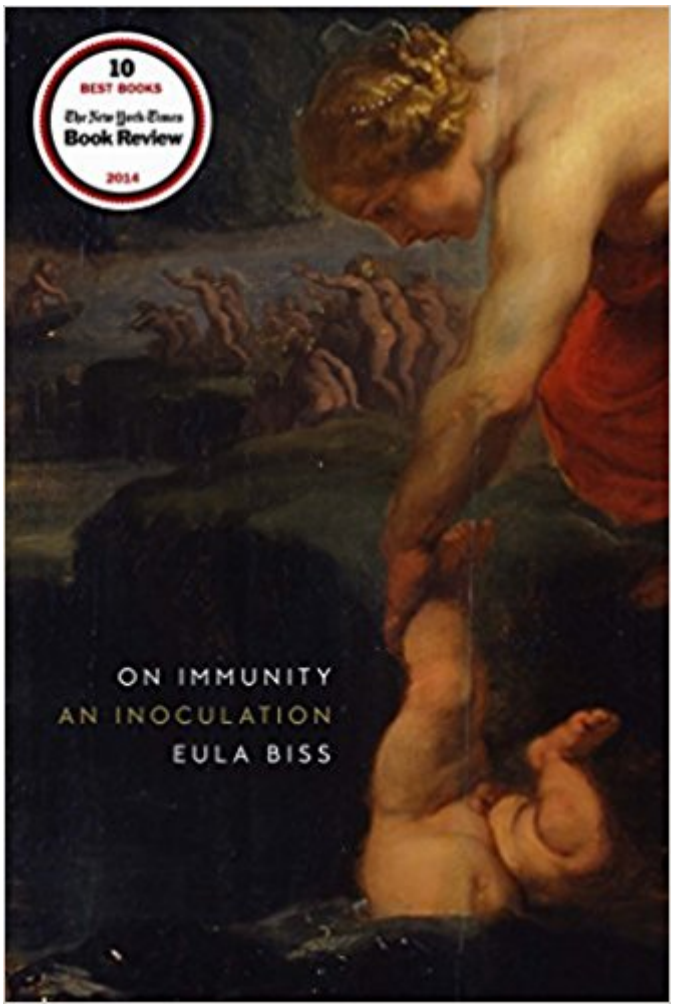
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On Immunity: An Inoculation



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Synopsis

The hugely acclaimed New York Times Best Seller, now available in paperback!*A National Book Critics Circle Award Finalist*ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF 2014:The New York Times Book Review (Top 10), Entertainment Weekly (Top 10), New York Magazine, Chicago Tribune (Top 10), Publishers Weekly (Top 10), Time Out New York (Top 10), Los Angeles Times, Kirkus, Booklist, NPR's Science Friday, Newsday, Slate, Refinery 29, and many more...In this bold, fascinating book, Eula Biss addresses our fear of the government, the medical establishment, and what may be in our children's air, food, mattresses, medicines, and vaccines. Reflecting on her own experience as a new mother, she suggests that we cannot immunize our children, or ourselves, against the world. As she explores the metaphors surrounding immunity, Biss extends her conversations with other mothers to meditations on the myth of Achilles, Voltaire's Candide, Bram Stoker's Dracula, Rachel Carson's Silent Spring, Susan Sontag's AIDS and Its Metaphors, and beyond. On Immunity is an inoculation against our fear and a moving account of how we are all interconnected-our bodies and our fates.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“Subtle, spellbinding . . . Sontag said she wrote Illness as Metaphor to Ã¢â ¬Ëœcalm the imagination, not to incite it,' and On Immunity also seeks to cool and console . . . [Biss] advances from all sides, like a chess player, drawing on science, myth, literature to herd us to the only logical end, to vaccinate.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Parul Sehgal, The New York Times Book ReviewÃ¢â ¬Å“By exploring the anxieties about what's lurking inside our flu shots, the air, and ourselves, [Biss] drives

home the message that we are all responsible for one another. On Immunity will make you consider that idea on a fairly profound level.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Entertainment Weekly (Grade: A)Ã¢â ¬Å“On Immunity . . . weaves metaphor and myth, science and sociology, philosophy and politics into a tapestry rich with insight and intelligence.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Jerome Groopman, The New York Review of BooksÃ¢â ¬Å“A philosophical look at the history and practice of vaccination that reads like Joan Didion at her best. If you are yourself a nonfiction author, your initial response to this book might be to decide immediately on another line of work; Biss is that intimidatingly talented . . . .This is cultural commentary at its highest level, a searching examination of the most profound issues of health, identity and the tensions between individual parenting decisions and society.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢The Washington PostÃ¢â ¬Å“[An] elegant, intelligent and very beautiful book, which occupies a space between research and reflection, investigating our attitudes toward immunity and inoculation through a personal and cultural lens.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢Los Angeles Times

Eula Biss is the author of The Balloonists and Notes from No Man’s Land, which won the National Book Critics Circle Award in criticism and which Salon deemed "the most accomplished book of essays anyone has written or published so far in the twenty-first century." Her work has appeared in The Believer, Harper’s Magazine, and The New York Times. She has received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Howard Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. She lives in the Chicago area and teaches at Northwestern University.

Written as though a poet, sociologist, historian, and immunologist collaborated to produce the truth -- physical and political -- of immunization and vaccination. Informative, often counterintuitive, and insightful.

This isn’t a history of vaccines. it isn’t even a scientific discussion of the pros and cons of vaccinating your kids. What is it, then? It’s one persons reflections on their journey through the process of getting a kid their shots. Biss is more sympathetic to people who decide to skip immunizing their kids than some would like, but she does cover the negative side of that decision. It’s well written and an easy read.I can’t give it 5 stars, because Biss could have given us a broader perspective on the history and science of vaccines than she did. Instead, she spends time reflecting on the burdens of 21st century parenting. So she should, but the percentage devoted to this is too high.Perhaps my expectations were the problem. It seems everyone had this as a top ten book of the year. It was a good book, I’m glad I read it, I don’t feel cheated and I would recommend it to you.

But - it’s not great. Very good. Not top ten great.

A good read, giving insight to our fears and feelings about immunization, the risk and social benefits compared. It does not force a conclusion but causes the reader to explore their own values, while providing history and knowledge to reach a decision.

A little lengthy with her discussion of her journey. But good background info and the decision to immunize is up to each family but the responsibility not to carries alot of weight that affects us all!!!

Awesome!!

Well written, well researched, timely and engaging dialogue. Seriously, Eula Biss can write. She weaves in bits of mythology, autobiography, science and social science reporting. It’s a well-crafted and engaging read. Highly recommended!

A well-written mix of the personal and the empirical. She presents an even-handed discussion of a complicated, and often contentious, topic and does so in a manner that is interesting to read.

Needed to read it for my microbiology class, but ended up liking it! Interesting read--Eula draws from her own experiences and passions to make a clear argument. It’s an easy read too.

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