

UNIVERSITY OF BERN

TO VACCINATE OR NOT?

*Historical, Religious, and Social Aspects of
Vaccination Hesitancy*

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES



PUBLIC LECTURES

The discovery of modern vaccination in the late 18th century is regarded well beyond the medical profession as a great human achievement that was able to save millions of lives. And yet, skepticism and distrust toward vaccines and the sheer refusal of inoculation pose major questions for science and for societies as a whole. From its beginning, the practice of vaccination sparked heated debates on its safety, its efficacy, and the right of governments to coerce their citizens to undergo a medical procedure. Hesitancy against vaccination draws on medical, political, philosophical, and religious discourses and avails itself of the media technologies of its time. Using these resources, it can construct and spread false narratives while, at the same time, providing a sense of cohesion. Accordingly, to study these (re)actions and understand them against the background of global and local realities, we need to mobilize the knowledge and competences of numerous disciplines. This lecture series provides a glimpse in the complex, fascinating, and urgent matter of vaccination hesitancy.

Organizers:

Prof. Dr. Thomas Abel, Institute for Social and Preventive Medicine

Prof. Dr. Andrea Rota, Institute for the Science of Religion

Prof. Dr. Hubert Steinke, Institute for the History of Medicine

Tuesday, October 19, 18:30–20:00, UniS – Room S 003

Prof. Dr. Robert D. Johnston, University of Illinois at Chicago

Pox, Populism, and Politics: Three Centuries of American Vaccination Controversies

Tuesday, November 16, 18:30–20:00, UniS – Room S 003

Prof. Dr. Andrea Kitta, East Carolina University

God is My Vaccine: Religious Belief and COVID in the United States

Tuesday, November 30, 18:30–20:00, UniS – Room S 003

Dr. Katharina Paul, University of Vienna

Der (Stellen-)Wert von Impfungen: Politik, Wissenschaft, und Öffentlichkeit

Participation to the lectures is free. A valid COVID certificate is required of all participants.