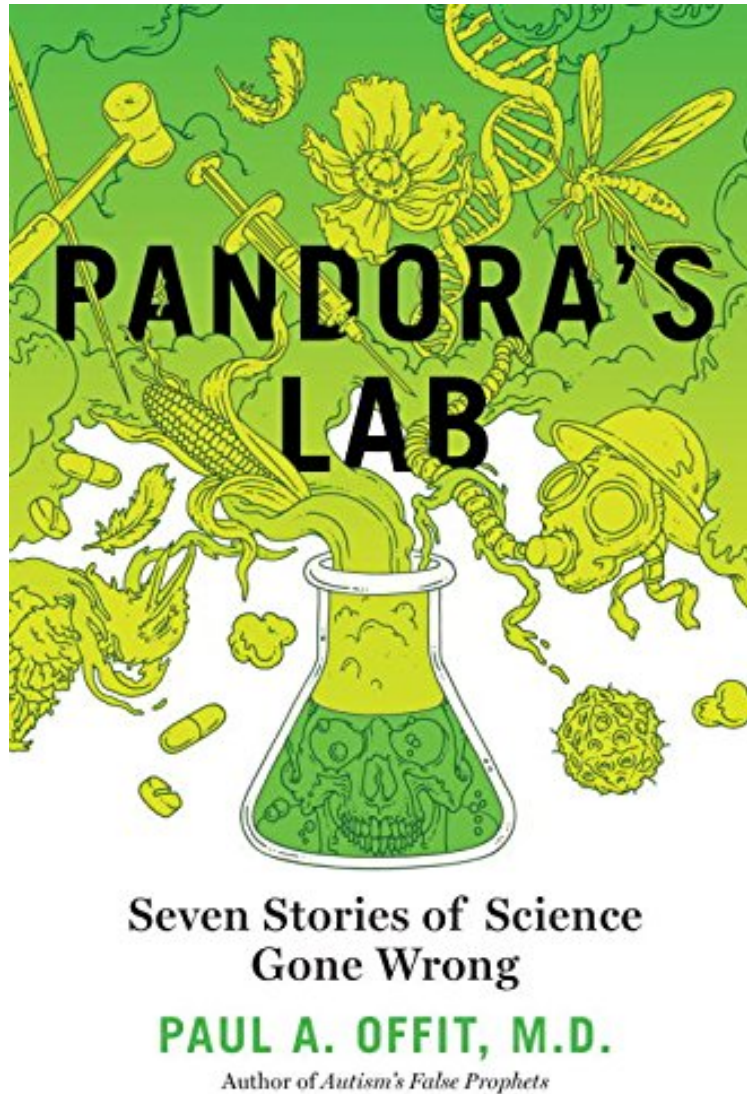


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Pandora's Lab: Seven Stories of Science Gone Wrong

Paul A. Offit MD

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What happens when ideas presented as science lead us in the wrong direction? History is filled with brilliant ideas that gave rise to disaster, and this book explores the most fascinating and significant missteps: from opium's heyday as the pain reliever of choice to recognition of opioids as a major cause of death in the U.S.; from the rise of trans fats as the golden ingredient for tastier, cheaper food to the heart disease epidemic that followed; and from the cries to ban DDT for the sake of the environment to an epidemic-level rise in world malaria. These are today's sins of science as deplorable as mistaken past ideas about advocating racial purity or using lobotomies as a cure for mental illness. These unwitting errors add up to seven lessons both cautionary and profound, narrated by renowned author and speaker Paul A. Offit. Offit uses these lessons to investigate how we can separate good science from bad, using some of today's most controversial creations—e-cigarettes, GMOs, drug treatments for ADHD—as case studies. For every "Aha!" moment that should have been an "Oh no," this book is an engrossing account of how science has been misused disastrously—and how we can learn to use its power for good.

"This is a much needed book—especially now."—NPR
"After spending years compiling a list of 50 of the world's worst inventions, [Offit] conducted his own sad version of March Madness to whittle it down to just a handful of finalists—all have proved to be disastrous for human health."—The Washington Post
"A fascinating and sometimes shocking look at how science can sometimes lead to disaster."—Booklist
"In warning the public of pseudoscientific danger, Offit urges the public to examine available data; beware of quick fixes, fads, and charismatic health gurus; and understand that every advance comes at a price."—Publishers Weekly
"Another rousing, pull-no-punches piece from a physician set on educating the public about the fallibility of scientists."—Kirkus
About the Author
PAUL A. OFFIT is a pediatrician specializing in infectious diseases and an expert on vaccines, immunology, and virology. He is the co-inventor of a rotavirus vaccine that has been credited with saving hundreds of lives every day. Offit is the Maurice R. Hilleman Professor of Vaccinology, professor of Pediatrics at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases, and the director of the Vaccine Education Center at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. He has been a member of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. Offit is a board member of Every Child By Two and a founding board member of the Autism Science Foundation (ASF).