



Dr. Joshua Lederberg
The Rockefeller University
1230 York Avenue
New York, New York 10021-6390

THE ROCKEFELLE

1230 YORK AVENUE · NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10021

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Please favor me with a reprint of the following item, which has come to my attention through Current Contents.

AU Bernstein, Barton J.
TI The Swine Flu Vaccination Campaign of 1976:
Politics, Science, and the Public
SO CONGRESS & THE PRESIDENCY V10, #1, p95
YR Spring '83 CC 24/57

Sam 76

Thank you.

I don't know what drug you're taking but I have little doubt that the vaccination (± the "swine part") is an excellent bargain for

my family + myself. The political frenzy is ignoring a persuasive benefit etc a few visible missteps.

cal research has a responsibility to perfect its tools to a higher standard, even while the best ones available are distributed as widely as possible. Where vaccination is legally compulsory, as it is against smallpox; or virtually so, as against polio, we can observe an interesting question of social policy. When a large fraction of the population is already vaccinated, the chain of infection is broken—with great benefit to unvaccinated people as well. If one individual then refuses vaccination, he no longer exposes himself to very great risk, but is exploiting his fellow citizens who have taken the trouble to be immunized. Some individuals may have their own reasons to refuse to participate in this kind of social insurance; and if so, it might be perfectly reasonable to impose a special tax as an alternative contribution to the general welfare.

The same strains used for Sabin vaccine have been selected empirically for having lost this propensity to travel, but we know nothing about the biochemical basis of the viruses' tastes for one tissue versus another. We are in a very poor position to predict what might happen to reawaken a virus's appetite for brain. However, we are beginning to understand dimly some of the ways in which virus genes interact with those of host cells, which is obviously fundamental to eventual knowledge of these relationships. We also know that viruses of different strains can interact with one another and produce new strains. This opens the possibility that harmless strains could cross-breed and produce virulent progeny. This kind of result is easily demonstrated in the laboratory.

is almost unknown to the general public. ALTHOUGH we should be avidly seeking new knowledge, there is a great deal we do know that is not now applied in practical vaccine production. We know how to purify viruses as chemical entities; but most vaccines are crude products harvested directly from infected cultures. For example, there is no regulation that a vaccine be examined under an electron microscope for uniformity of its virus particles, or that it be analyzed for its nucleic acid composition or for the molecular weight of its particles. The routine application of similar techniques would have led to a much earlier detection of the SV-40 contamination of polio vaccines. Cost is the main excuse for neglect. But cheap vaccines