

COVID vaccine roulette: Here's why so many people are wary of a coronavirus shot

A June [poll](#) by University of Miami researchers found that 42 percent of Black respondents agreed with the statement: “The coronavirus is being used to force a dangerous and unnecessary vaccine on Americans.” Just 22 percent of White and Latino respondents agreed.

“African-Americans feel they are second-class citizens and that they are not well served by the medical community,” says [vaccine expert Paul] Offit. The other element fueling resistance “is the American public doesn’t trust Donald Trump or the administration regarding science, and they don’t trust the Food and Drug Administration because they’ve watched the FDA get arm-twisted by the Trump White House.”

...

This is an unfortunate turn of events considering that Americans have long relied on life-saving vaccines... Even though there were always pockets of resistance, the deep vein of skepticism we see today didn’t take root until [the 1982 documentary] DPT: Vaccine Roulette, according to Offit. Ironically, there had been serious complications with vaccines before — related to the [1976 swine flu outbreak](#) and a bad batch of polio vaccines in 1955 — yet these incidents didn’t shake the public’s confidence in science.

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Still, Offit is hopeful we can overcome the doubts around a COVID-19 vaccine. “Once the vaccine gets out there and starts to be given to people, attitudes will change,” he believes.

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