

online Journal of Cosmology (<http://journalofcosmology.com/Life100.html>). Another scientist states that a good time to have published this report might be April 1.

Arch-skeptic P.Z. Myers, a biologist at University of Minnesota-Morris, described the website as "the ginned-up website of a small group of crank academics."

So who to believe? Unfortunately this situation is too common and that Hydra of Misinformation rears its many ugly heads in many areas of science. The "life on a meteorite controversy" is but a tempest in a teapot when compared to more significant society impacting issues ... vaccinology and global warming to name but two.

Is it any wonder that sometimes the public is distrustful of science? When misinformation is generated by superstition that is bad; when generated by scientists it is worse.

Gambling Notes

♣ Get a load of this gambling story from the Philippines: Catholic church joins drive vs illegal gambling—Recently, the parish priest of St. Mary Magdalene Parish here has issued a pastoral policy banning the conduct of funeral mass to members of the Catholic Church if there is gambling during the wake. This measure is to help eradicate gambling in the capital town. Gambling during wakes is a practice and part of the culture in the province that sometimes law enforcers are confused on how to implement the anti-gambling law.

<http://www.pia.gov.ph/?m=1&t=1&id=17360>

One wonders what they are betting on and the odds.

♣ Band teacher steals, pawns instruments - A former high school music teacher (26) in Florida is accused of stealing musical instruments from his students to feed his gambling addiction. The Volusia County School District says it does not have the money to help replace the stolen equipment, and they will have to find the money themselves. <http://www.kpletv.com/Global/story.asp?S=14097441>

♣ Problem gamblers, others benefit from treatment - Fact Checker - The claim is Problem gambling treatment programs don't work, and even if they do, problem gamblers got themselves into their own messes and thus don't deserve state help. However, Bo Bernhard, director of gambling research at UNLV's International Gaming Institute, said there's no question treatment programs help. It isn't easy, but people who have gone through these programs report significant improvements, not only in their personal life and relationships, but also with their job, housing situation, financial situation and many other important areas of everyday functioning."

<http://www.rgj.com/article/20110301/NEWS20/102270365/1321/NEWS>

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DEADLY CHOICES

— HOW THE —
ANTI-VACCINE
— MOVEMENT —
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— US ALL —

PAUL A. OFFIT, M.D.

Deadly Choices: How the Anti-Vaccine Movement Threatens Us All By Paul A. Offit, M.D.

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In the second book this season (after journalist Seth Mnookin's *The Panic Virus*) to attack vaccine paranoia, Offit—who drew antivaccinist fire for *Autism's False Prophets*—presents a smart, hard-hitting exposé of vaccine pseudoscience. Offit brings outstanding credentials to the subject: he's a vaccinologist at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia and an expert in infectious diseases, and he tackles claims that childhood inoculations cause brain damage, autism, diabetes, and cancer, finding a farrago of misinformation, faulty research, and sly deceptions fed to distraught parents by media hype, ax-grinding activists, and personal-

injury lawyers. He embellishes his account with a sprightly history of paranoid medical populism—19th-century critics of the cowpox-derived smallpox vaccine insisted it could turn people into cows—and a blistering attack on celebrity antivaccine ideologues Jenny McCarthy, Jim Carrey, and Bill Maher and the medical writers who pander to parental anxieties. Offit dwells less than Mnookin on the sociology of the controversy and more on the science. The result is a thorough dismantling of antivaccine notions and a sober warning about the resurgence of deadly childhood infections stemming from declining vaccination rates. Worried parents, especially, will find this a lucid, compelling riposte to antivaccine fear-mongering.