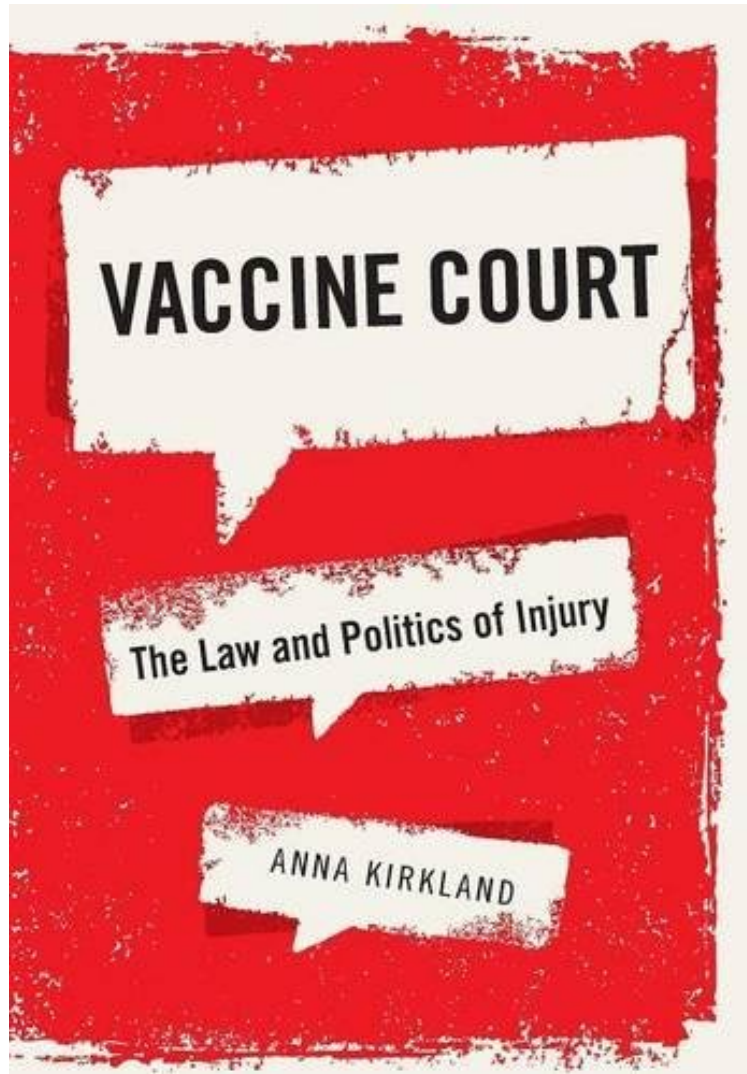


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Vaccine Court: The Law and Politics of Injury

Anna Kirkland

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Anna Kirkland : Vaccine Court: The Law and Politics of Injury before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Vaccine Court: The Law and Politics of Injury:

The so-called vaccine court is a small special court in the United States Court of Federal Claims that handles controversial claims that a vaccine has harmed someone. While vaccines in general are extremely safe and effective, some people still suffer severe vaccine reactions and bring their claims to vaccine court. In this court, lawyers, activists, judges, doctors, and scientists come together, sometimes arguing bitterly, trying to figure out whether a

vaccine really caused a persons medical problem. In *Vaccine Court*, Anna Kirkland draws on the trials of the vaccine court to explore how legal institutions resolve complex scientific questions. What are vaccine injuries, and how do we come to recognize them? What does it mean to transform these questions into a legal problem and funnel them through a special national vaccine court, as we do in the U.S.? What does justice require for vaccine injury claims, and how can we deliver it? These are highly contested questions, and the terms in which they have been debated over the last forty years are highly revealing of deeper fissures in our society over motherhood, community, health, harm, and trust in authority. While many scholars argue that its foolish to let judges and lawyers decide medical claims about vaccines, Kirkland argues that our political and legal response to vaccine injury claims shows how well legal institutions can handle specialized scientific matters. *Vaccine Court* is an accessible and thorough account of what the vaccine court is, why we have it, and what it does.

"In her highly original and meticulously researched book, Anna Kirkland takes us into the little-known but highly contested federal court system responsible for not just compensating individuals and families injured by vaccines, but also adjudicating competing claims of risk, science, and expertise. *Vaccine Court* exposes the myriad ways law must simultaneously build consensus and create dissent. Skillfully presented with detailed analysis and compelling examples, this book is a powerful vindication of the state as imperfect, indispensable to efforts to ensure public health, and in dire need of new ways to create greater access and equity for all."-Jennifer Reich, University of Denver
Drawing on rich original data, Kirkland examines how the specialized vaccine court addresses enduring tensions between science and law, popular beliefs and expertise, and fair process and desired outcomes, and how the right to sue is both an inspiration and a constraint on social movements. *Vaccine Court* is timely, fascinating, and important.-Charles Epp, The University of Kansas
"Vaccine Court provides historical, political, and social context to our countrys unprecedented attempt to resolve the conflict between those certain of vaccine harms and the science that may or may not support their claims. In a compelling and sympathetic manner, Kirkland explores the murky netherworld between science, where truths are often determined by decades of study, and court, where truths are determined after a few weeks of testimony."-Paul A. Offit, MD, author of *Deadly Choices: How the Anti-Vaccine Movement Threatens Us All*
"The book is a case study of one of many complex and obscure tasks that government performs."-Choice
"Highly recommend this book to anyone interested in contemporary vaccine hesitancy and refusal, and, more broadly, in questions about the intersection of science, law, and public policy in democratic societies."-Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences
About the Author
Anna Kirkland is Arthur F. Thurnau Professor and Associate Professor of Womens Studies and Political Science at the University of Michigan.