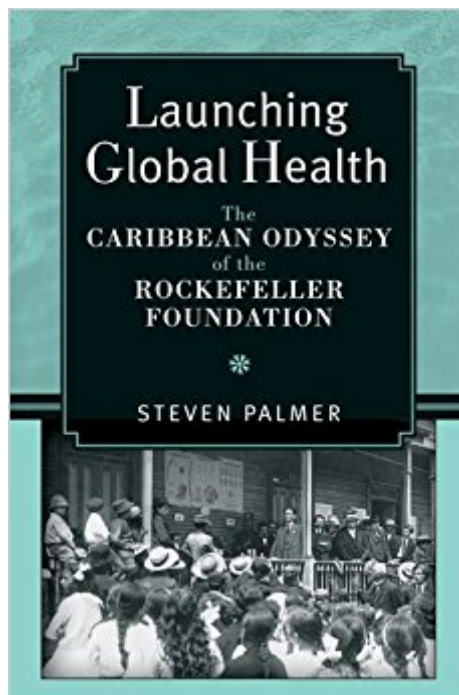




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Launching Global Health: The Caribbean Odyssey Of The Rockefeller Foundation (Conversations In Medicine And Society)



Synopsis

"With a clear and engaging narrative that delves into complex and debatable issues and, at the same time, tells very entertaining stories, this book is a wonderful addition to the historiography of international health."---Diego Armus, Swarthmore College

From the Rockefeller Foundation to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, U.S. philanthropies have played a leading role in the evolution of international health. Launching Global Health examines one of the earliest of these initiatives abroad, the Rockefeller Foundation's International Health Board. The flagship agency made its first call in British Guiana in 1914 to experiment with its new "American method" for the treatment of hookworm disease. Within months it was involved in ambitious hookworm programs in six Central American and Caribbean sites, its directors self-consciously choosing to test run the prototype for their global project in the nearest and clearest domain of American imperial influence. These efforts continued until 1930, when most of the International Health Board hookworm campaigns had evolved into public health projects of a different nature. Launching Global Health is the first book to explore the inaugural Rockefeller Foundation campaigns in depth and to treat them as an ensemble---as a laboratory for discovering and testing the elements of a global health system for the twentieth century. Orienting the study according to the priorities and perspectives of the social and cultural history of medicine and marrying the results with social science and institutional approaches, Steven Palmer rediscovers elements and dynamics in the original history of global health that were either discarded or that have continued to operate beneath the radar of scholarship. In particular, Palmer examines the extraordinary encounters that took place between the Rockefeller proselytizers of biomedicine and public health and the diverse populations whom they were attempting to help. Launching Global Health devotes special attention to the health narratives and practices of laboring people of different ethnicities and how they clashed and blended with the stories and rituals being promoted by the Rockefeller Foundation, ultimately showing the locally assembled health teams of microscopists, inspectors, and dispensers to have been active agents in the shaping of encounters between imperial and popular medicine. Steven Palmer is Canada Research Chair in the History of International Health at the University of Windsor and author of *From Popular Medicine to Medical Populism: Doctors, Healers, and Public Power in Costa Rica, 1800-1940*. Illustration: Lecture on hookworm disease on public building porch. Courtesy Rockefeller Archive Center. A volume in the series *Conversations in Medicine and Society*.

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