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*Includes pictures *Includes contemporary accounts of the plague *Includes online resources and a bibliography for further reading "The trend of recent research is pointing to a figure more like 45-50% of the European population dying during a four-year period. There is a fair amount of geographic variation. In Mediterranean Europe, areas such as Italy, the south of France and Spain, where plague ran for about four years consecutively, it was probably closer to 75-80% of the population. In Germany and England ... it was probably closer to 20%." - Philip Daileader, medieval historian In the 14th century, a ruthless killer stalked the streets of England, wiping out up to 60% of the terror-stricken nation's inhabitants. This invisible and unforgiving terminator continued to harass the population for hundreds of years, but nothing could compare to the savagery it would unleash 3 centuries later. This conscienceless menace was none other than the notorious bubonic plague, also known as the "Black Death." The High Middle Ages had seen a rise in Western Europe's population in previous centuries, but these gains were almost entirely erased as the plague spread rapidly across all of Europe from 1346-1353. With a medieval understanding of medicine, diagnosis, and illness, nobody understood what caused Black Death or how to truly treat it. As a result, many religious people assumed it was divine retribution, while superstitious and suspicious citizens saw a nefarious human plot involved

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and persecuted certain minority groups among them. Though it is now widely believed that rats and fleas spread the disease by carrying the bubonic plague westward along well-established trade routes, and there are now vaccines to prevent the spread of the plague, the Black Death gruesomely killed upwards of 100 million people, with helpless chroniclers graphically describing the various stages of the disease. It took Europe decades for its population to bounce back, and similar plagues would affect various parts of the world for the next several centuries, but advances in medical technology have since allowed researchers to read various medieval accounts of the Black Death in order to understand the various strains of the disease. Furthermore, the social upheaval caused by the plague radically changed European societies, and some have noted that by the time the plague had passed, the Late Middle Ages would end with many of today's European nations firmly established. In the mid-17th century, the heart of England fell victim to the mother of all epidemic catastrophes. The city of London was a ghost town, deserted by those who knew better than to hang around in a breeding ground that offered near-certain doom. Those who were confined within the city's borders had to make do with what they had, and the pitifully low morale seemed appropriate; the reek of rot and decomposition pervaded the air day in and day out, while corpses, young and old, riddled with strange swellings and blackened boils, littered the streets. For Londoners, to say it was hell would be an understatement. The Great Plague of London: The History and Legacy of England's

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Independence started in Edward I's reign, and under Edward III there were triumphs at Crecy and Poitiers. Outside of politics, English society was developing a structure, from the great magnates at the top to the peasantry at the bottom. Economic changes were also significant, from the expansionary period of the thirteenth century to years of difficulty in the fourteenth century, culminating in the greatest demographic disaster of historical times, the Black Death. In this volume in the New Oxford History of England series, Michael Prestwich brings this fascinating century to life.

All you need for a plague to go pandemic are population clusters and travelers spreading the bacterial or viral pathogens. Many prehistoric civilizations died fast, leaving cities undamaged to mystify archeologists. Plague in Athens killed 30% of the population 430-426 BCE. When Roman Emperor Justinian I caught bubonic plague in 541 CE, contemporary historian Procopius described his symptoms: fever, delirium and buboes - large black swellings of the lymphatic glands in the groin, under the arms and behind the ears. That bubonic plague killed 25 million people around the Mediterranean. Later dubbed Black Death, it killed 50 million people 1346-1353, returning to London 40 times in the next 300 years. The third bubonic plague pandemic started 1894 in China, claiming 15 million lives, largely in Asia, before dying down in the 1950s after visiting San Francisco and New York. But it also hit Madagascar in 2014, and the Congo and Peru. The cause, *Yersinia pestis* was identified in 1894. Infected fleas from rats on merchant ships were blamed for

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spreading it, but Porton Down scientists have a worrying explanation why the plague spread so fast. Any disease can go epidemic. Everyday European infections brought to the Americas by Cortes' conquistadores killed millions of the natives, whose posthumous revenge was the syphilis the Spaniards brought back to Europe. The mis-named Spanish 'flu, brought from Kansas to Europe by US troops in 1918 caused more than 50 million deaths. Fifty years later, H3N2 'flu from Hong Kong killed more than a million people. One coronavirus produces the common cold, for which neither vaccine nor cure has been found, despite the loss of millions of working days each year. That other coronavirus, Covid-19 was NOT the worst pandemic. Chillingly, historian Douglas Boyd lists many other sub-microscopic killers still waiting for tourism and trade to bring them to us.

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This encyclopedia provides 300 interdisciplinary, cross-referenced entries that document the effect of the plague on Western society across the four centuries of the second plague pandemic, balancing medical history and technical matters with historical, cultural, social, and political factors. • 300 A–Z interdisciplinary entries on medical matters and historical issues • Each entry includes up-to-date resources for further research

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people had no knowledge of the microbiological agents - unseen bacteria and viruses - which afflicted them, and thus the maladies were often ascribed to wrathful supernatural forces. Even when advances in knowledge posited natural causes for epidemics and pandemics, medicine struggled to deal with them, and for hundreds of years religion continued to work hand-in-hand with medicine. Inevitably, that meant physicians tried a variety of practices to cure the sick, and many of them seem quite odd by modern standards. By the time Rome was on the rise, physicians understood that contagions arose and spread, but according to Galen, Hippocrates, and other Greco-Roman authorities, pestilence was caused by miasma, foul air produced by the decomposition of organic matter. Though modern scientists have since been able to disprove this, on the face of it there was some logic to the idea. Physicians and philosophers (they were very often the same, Galen being an example) noticed that disease arose in areas of poor sanitation, where filth and rotting matter was prevalent and not disposed of, and the basic measures to prevent disease - waste removal, provision of clean food and water and quarantining - would have been obvious to them. The scenting of miasmatic air with incense and other unguents to expel the foulness would also have thus made sense, though people now know that can't stop the

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spread of a disease. Ancient physicians at the time believed that miasma was not the direct cause of disease but rather a catalyst. Maladies were caused by an imbalance of what Galen called the four humors. According to him (and Hippocrates before him), the body contained four kinds of fluids: black bile, yellow bile, blood, and phlegm. These corresponded to the four elements of which the entire universe was composed: earth, fire, water, and air. Black bile was tied to earth, yellow bile to fire, blood to air, and phlegm to water. It was believed that the balance of the humors in the body not only determined an individual's health, but their behavior and temperament as well. A melancholic (from melanos, the word for "black") disposition was caused by an excess of black bile. Yellow bile made a person fiery or choleric (from khole, the word for bile), while a phlegmatic (from phlegma, body moisture) temperament denoted a surplus of phlegm. The most desirable temperament was the sanguine (sanguis, blood), which exhibited happiness, calm and enthusiasm. The ancient Romans thought miasma caused an imbalance in these fluids, and disease resulted. For the ancient physician, as indeed for all physicians for the next 1,500 years or so, illness was not the direct result of external agents. The High Middle Ages had seen a rise in Western Europe's population in previous centuries, but these gains were almost entirely

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erased as the plague spread rapidly across all of Europe from 1346-1353. With a medieval understanding of medicine, diagnosis, and illness, nobody understood what caused Black Death or how to truly treat it. As a result, many religious people assumed it was divine retribution, while superstitious and suspicious citizens saw a nefarious human plot involved. Fighting the Plague in Antiquity and the Middle Ages: The History of Ancient and Medieval Efforts to Prevent the Spread of Diseases looks at the ways past societies have striven to cope with epidemics and the various remedies - some bizarre, some desperate, others logical but nonetheless misguided - they employed. The approaches include an eclectic mix of medicine, supernatural rituals, religion, and philosophy.

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fire engines. There were even vendors of such machines who advertised in papers of their machines' abilities to quench great fires. Of course, even with trained firefighters and new devices, the most skillful efforts could still prove limited in the face of a giant fire, as Rome had learned over 1500 years earlier and as Chicago would learn nearly 200 years later. In fact, one of the primary reasons London developed ways to fight fires was the fact that the city was particularly vulnerable. Although London was over 1500 years old and sat at the heart of the British Empire, most of the buildings were made of wood, and the city was overcrowded, in part due to the fact that city planners worked with and around the ancient Roman fortifications that had been constructed to defend it. As such, while there were spacious areas for the elite and rich outside of the city, London itself had narrow streets full of wood buildings that were practically on top of each other. With some bad luck and bad timing, a potential disaster awaited the city, and that finally came in September 1666. As it turned out, the Great Fire of London was so bad that one author who studied the blaze described it as "the perfect fire," referring to the convergence in the largest city in England of spark, wood and wind in such a way that no one could stop the fire or even fight it effectively. The fire lasted three days, and by the end of it, Londoners were shocked by the wide-scale destruction, which

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was so great that Samuel Pepys remarked, "It made me weep to see it." In the aftermath, people looked for scapegoats, ranging from King Charles II to the Pope and his Catholic supporters, while England's leaders looked to rebuild the city.

The Black Death, 1346-1353 The Complete History Boydell Press

This engrossing book provides a comprehensive history of the medical response to the Black Death. John Aberth has translated plague treatises that illustrate the human dimensions of the horrific scourge, including doctors' personal anecdotes as they desperately struggled to understand a deadly new disease.

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In this monograph, the alternative theories to the established bubonic-plague theory as to the microbiological identity of historical plague epidemics are intensively discussed in the light of the historical sources and the medical primary research and standard works.

Epidemic infectious diseases have shaped human history, but studies on the history of diseases were in the past limited to indirect evidence due to the elusiveness of the causative agents. This has fundamentally changed through the emergence of ancient pathogen genomics which allows us to reconstruct genomes of microorganisms from ancient DNA.

This dissertation focuses on *Yersinia pestis*, responsible for at least two historical pandemics. The first paper presents eight *Y. pestis* genomes of the First Pandemic (541-750) covering at least the first century of this pandemic. The results suggest that the Justinianic Plague (541-544) already reached the British Isles, show that the causative lineage diversified early during the pandemic in multiple strains, and give indications for its persistence in Europe or close-by. A deletion

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discovered in the youngest strains might hold clues for ecological adaptations. The second paper presents 34 genomes of the Second Pandemic (1346-18th c.), recovered from ten sites dating to the 14th-17th c. A genome from Russia testifies the initial entry through East Europe, the low diversity during the Black Death (1346-1353) shows a rapid spread. The close relationship of all Second Pandemic strains suggests a local persistence and diversification. A deletion in one clade similar to the one detected in the first paper, coinciding with an accelerated substitution rate, could be interpreted as convergent evolution. The third paper challenges previous claims in a recently published paper about the origin of the Justinianic Plague through a reanalysis of the two presented genomes. The phylogenetic analysis of one sample suggests rather an identification as a strain potentially basal to the Black Death. The essay gives a short introduction on the history of plague research and a comprehensive overview of the recent discoveries of archaeogenetic studies, including insights into the evolution of the bacterium enabled by prehistoric plague genomes. This monograph represents an expansion and deepening of previous works by Ole J. Benedictow - the author of highly esteemed monographs and articles on the history of plague epidemics and historical demography. In the form of a collection of articles, the author presents an in-depth monographic study on the history of plague epidemics in Scandinavian countries and on controversies of the microbiological and epidemiological fundamentals of plague epidemics.

Could a few fleas really change the world? In the early 1300s, the world was on the brink of change. New trade routes in Europe and Asia brought people in contact with different cultures and ideas, while war and rebellions threatened to disrupt the lives of millions. Most people lived in crowded

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cities or as serfs tied to the lands of their overlords. Conditions were filthy, as most people drank water from the same sources they used for washing and for human waste. In the cramped and rat-infested streets of medieval cities and villages, all it took were the bites of a few plague-infected fleas to start a pandemic that killed roughly half the population of Europe and Asia. The bubonic plague wiped out families, villages, even entire regions. Once the swollen, black buboes appeared on victims' bodies, there was no way to save them. People died within days. In the wake of such devastation, survivors had to reevaluate their social, scientific, and religious beliefs, laying the groundwork for our modern world. The Black Death outbreak is one of world history's pivotal moments.

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The first paperback edition of this unique and shocking guide to the Black Death in Europe.

The Black Death was the worst pandemic in recorded history. This book presents a major reevaluation of its immediate impact and longer-term consequences in England.

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*Includes pictures *Includes accounts of the plague written by survivors across Europe *Includes a bibliography for further reading "The trend of recent research is pointing to a figure more like 45-50% of the European population dying during a four-year period.

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If it is true that nothing succeeds like success, then it is equally true that nothing challenges like change. People have historically been creatures of habit and curiosity at the same time, two parts of the human condition that constantly conflict with each other. This has always been true, but at certain moments in history it has been abundantly true, especially during the mid-14th century, when a boon in exploration and travel came up against a fear of the unknown. Together, they both introduced the Black Death to Europe and led to mostly incorrect attempts to explain it. The Late Middle Ages had seen a rise in Western Europe's population in previous centuries, but these gains were almost entirely erased as the plague spread rapidly across all of Europe from 1346-1353. With a medieval understanding of medicine, diagnosis, and illness, nobody understood what caused Black Death or how to truly treat it. As a result, many religious people assumed it was divine retribution, while superstitious and suspicious citizens saw a nefarious human plot involved and persecuted certain minority groups among them. Though it is now widely believed that rats and fleas spread the disease by carrying the bubonic plague westward along well-established trade routes, and there are now vaccines to prevent the spread of the plague, the Black Death gruesomely killed

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Description Are you interested in learning about the worst pandemics that have accompanied human history? Do you want to know how the different epidemics have been dealt with in the past? If so, this is the book you need to read! Within this book, you will be provided with the necessary information to understand how the different pandemics have followed one another in past years. Based on extensive research, this book takes readers through the battles faced by mankind throughout history, focusing mostly on the most famous viruses. You will find the history of: - Malaria - Tuberculosis - History of Smallpox - Plague and Black Death (1346-1353) -

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Cholera - Spanish influenza (1918-1920) - The Spread of the Plague through the Byzantine Empire - Hong Kong Flu (1968 Influenza Pandemic) - HIV and AIDS - Serious Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) - EBOLA Even if we talk about past events, it is always important to know these historical events, from which we can glean many teachings.

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