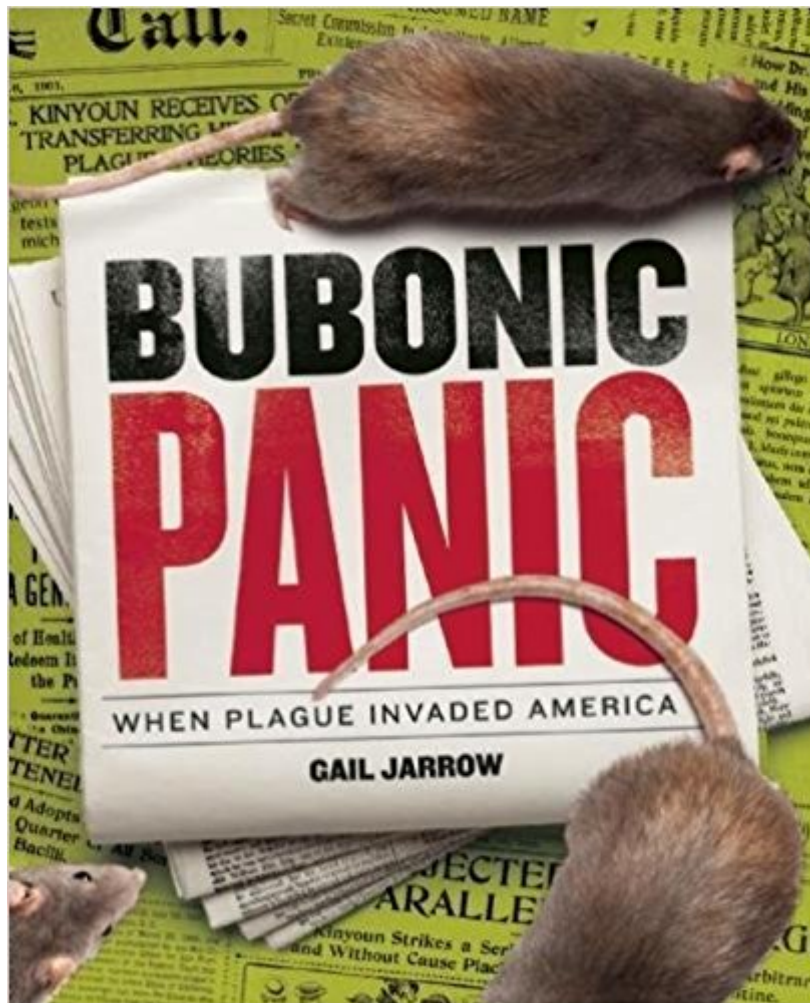


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Bubonic Panic: When Plague Invaded America



Synopsis

A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year A New York Public Library Best Book for Teens In March 1900, San Francisco's health department investigated a strange and horrible death in Chinatown. A man had died of bubonic plague, one of the world's deadliest diseases. But how could that be possible? Bubonic Panic tells the true story of America's first plague epidemic; the public health doctors who desperately fought to end it, the political leaders who tried to keep it hidden, and the brave scientists who uncovered the plague's secrets. Once again, acclaimed author and scientific expert Gail Jarrow brings the history of a medical mystery to life in vivid and exciting detail for young readers. This title includes photographs and drawings, a glossary, a timeline, further resources, an author's note, and source notes.

Book Information

Hardcover: 200 pages

Publisher: Calkins Creek (May 10, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1620917386

ISBN-13: 978-1620917381

Product Dimensions: 8.3 x 0.9 x 10.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #52,250 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in Books > Teens > Personal Health > Diseases, Illnesses & Injuries #11 in Books > Teens > Education & Reference > History > United States > 20th Century #16 in Books > Teens > Education & Reference > Science & Technology > Biology

Customer Reviews

Gr 5 Up •With a mesmerizing description of the suffering endured by bubonic plague victims, followed by several fascinatingly gruesome photographs depicting visible signs of the disease, Jarrow hooks readers from the start. This final installment of the author's "Deadly Disease" trilogy is as compelling as the first two titles, *Red Madness: How a Medical Mystery Changed What We Eat* (2014) and *Fatal Fever: Tracking Down Typhoid Mary* (2015, both Boyds Mills). Before describing the chaos the plague wrought on American shores, Jarrow recounts major plague outbreaks throughout history as well as early bacteriological advances, such as the identification by French scientist Alexandre Yersin of the microbe responsible for the bubonic plague. The plague arrived in

the port city of San Francisco in 1900 and claimed its first victim in Chinatown, a neighborhood near the wharves. Chinatown was quickly quarantined by the Board of Health, but with California Governor Henry T. Gage denying the existence of plague and Chinese officials bucking against perceived discrimination, tensions rose and containment efforts failed. Eventually Rupert Blue of the Marine-Hospital Service was brought in by the surgeon general to control the outbreak. When the plague returned to San Francisco in 1907 after the devastating earthquake of 1906, Blue came back. By this time scientists had determined that the fleas on rats were responsible for transmitting the plague, and the city mobilized to curtail the rat population, successfully containing the outbreak in a matter of months. Weaving in numerous photographs and newspaper clippings, Jarrow tells an absorbing story. VERDICT Nonfiction that reads like a thriller— not to be missed.—Ragan O'Malley, Saint Ann's School, Brooklyn, NY

* "With a mesmerizing description of the suffering endured by bubonic plague victims, followed by several fascinatingly gruesome photographs depicting visible signs of the disease, Jarrow hooks readers from the start. This final installment of the author's 'Deadly Disease' trilogy is as compelling as the first two titles... Weaving in numerous photographs and newspaper clippings, Jarrow tells an absorbing story. Nonfiction that reads like a thriller; not to be missed." —School Library Journal, starred review

* "Jarrow's detailed narrative and attention to the stories of the medical figures involved make this compelling reading. As in the previous volumes, the level of research on display is impressive... The large number of photographs and illustrations enhances the text, and the layout is graphically interesting without becoming distracting.... A richly detailed exploration of a fascinating subject." —Kirkus Reviews, starred review

* Jarrow concludes her Deadly Diseases trilogy with a harrowing, in-depth exploration of the reappearance of bubonic plague at the turn of the 20th century; her gripping narrative balances the clock-racing work of scientists and officials attempting to understand and stop the plague with entwined themes of fear, prejudice, and anger; Extensively researched, with numerous resources for readers looking to study the topic further." —Publishers Weekly, starred review

"Jarrow looks at plague throughout history and medical research into its causes, before zeroing in on its resurgence in the late nineteenth century, when it arose in Asia and reached Honolulu.... Thoroughly researched and clearly presented, the text offers a direct window into the period. The intertwined themes of prejudice against Asian Americans, public health officials hampered by politicians, and mistrust of scientific research... make the story complex, revealing a good deal about human nature as well as the period and the disease itself.... An informative book on an

unusual topic." —Booklist "The bubonic plague, or Black Death, seems conveniently trapped in history books, confined to Europe in the Middle Ages, where it famously killed a good portion of the population. In her third and final book in the Deadly Diseases trilogy (Red Madness, 2014; Fatal Fever, rev. 3/15), Jarrow covers that territory quickly before bringing us into the nineteenth century, where the plague continued to rear its ugly head in places like Hong Kong, Bombay (Mumbai), Honolulu, and finally San Francisco--where it first appeared in Chinatown in 1900…. Jarrow's treatment here is once again thorough and fascinating… an exemplary contribution to the genre of the history of science and medicine." — The Horn Book "Jarrow's latest disease presentation ...is appropriately broad in scope, deft in explanations, and sensitive in handling public health issues. A wealth of period and cringeworthy medical illustrations supplement the text." —The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

This was a page-turner. Less about the science of the plague bacteria and more about the history of communities that were impacted by the plague and how organizations/institutions of government/individuals worked tirelessly exploring, discovering, combating, eradicating the plague. Each contributor played a critical role in moving the world forward in saving its citizens from the plague. Jarrow's writing synthesizes the stories of these people, seamlessly, into a cohesive narrative of what happened and is still happening because the plague still plagues us! As I read this, I envisioned middle school classrooms of language arts or social studies or an ambitious science teacher providing space for student-led discussions around larger themes of perseverance, collaboration, global citizenship, displacement, compassion, racism, humanitarianism. Looking forward to reading Jarrow's Red Madness and Fatal Fever. This might make for an interesting text set in a language arts classroom that is partnering with a science or content area classroom. Questions related to the science of the plague could also be used to launch research...

4.5 stars rounded up to 5. Gail Jarrow hits you over the head within the first few pages with an image of physical expression of plague. It's morbidly mesmerizing because it is hard to believe that a tiny microscopic entity can wreck this much havoc on a human body within days. I honestly prepared myself for a gruesome account of how disease progresses anatomically and infects thousands, but instead I got surprisingly fast and engrossing narrative about history of plague and dramatic circumstances of fighting to rid of it. If you've been put off by that first picture - worry not, that's as graphic as the book gets. The rest of the photos dedicated to carry visual support of the

fight against pestilence. Photographs of the aftermath of San Francisco earthquake are especially striking and powerful. (I did not know that on top of dealing with rebuilding people had to deal with plague epidemic at the time). As a matter of fact, the whole book is full of facts and events that I haven't heard about before - even though plague is something that most everyone is at least remotely aware of. "Bubonic Panic" leads you through the evolution of disease, all along showing you the spectacular sacrifices and first-class drama all the scientists/researchers (all involved, really) had to go through to prove any little find. The fact that so many people bluntly REFUSED to believe in existence of plague even presented with conclusive results of doctors is still mind-boggling! I've never thought that I can call a non-fiction book about plague thrilling, but there is no way around it - you'll be very involved! I've never read Gail Jarrow before (and now I intend to read the rest of her deadly diseases trilogy), but I can't praise this book high enough. The research is thorough, the photographs are plentiful and invoking; and the narrative is superbly paced. The only reason I rated it 4.5 stars instead of 5 is the fact that this book only briefly refers to "drugs made in 1940s" that helped increase survival rate and significantly helped in treatment of plague cases. Considering the fact that a good portion of the book was spent on the race between scientists to determine the cause of the disease and finding a vaccine (with a lot of names and descriptions), I was slightly disappointed not to dedicate a special chapter on who, how and when discovered what was to be the crucial point in plague treatment. It might have made book a little lengthier, but I felt like that was too important of a point not to highlight. Other than that personal nitpick of mine, I believe everyone should own a book that manages to explain such a deadly part of our history in such an accessible and entertaining manner. I usually have a hard time with dry academic texts, so "Bubonic Panic" is what constitutes a perfect little book for me that delivers detailed research and photographic history with such an engaging narrative. It goes straight to my personal library. Watch out for rat fleas and Happy Reading!

Besides the fact that you can't eat while you read this I don't have any criticisms of this book. I think it's an excellent addition to any history curriculum. If you are reading through history on a four-year cycle, you could add it late in year 2 or anytime in year three. The history of the plague is interesting in that all the historical documentation matches what scientists today see when they observe patients in our modern times. I guess even ancient people knew that there was no "spinning" this into something it wasn't. Without spoilers I can tell you that the plague is just as scary as you think it is. Equal amounts science and history in a readable narrative format it makes a

subject which could be a boring list of facts become engaging in a gross and creepy way. Future scientists will be engaged and every reader will be informed. Side note- If you've read Kristin Lavransdatter this book really explains the science behind the plot. I borrowed this book from the Chicago public library in order to judge it for the 2016 Cybils Awards.

I liked this book. Majority of book dealt with bubonic plague outbreak in San Francisco and the efforts undertaken to control it and its spread to other parts of the USA. Especially interesting was the scope of the efforts in Chinatown and the trials and tribulations faced by the authorities in carrying out their duties towards this end. Easy to read and very informative as well. History I was not aware of. A good topic and a good presentation exploring it, too. I had little idea the plague was so misunderstood for so long.

I tend to get obsessed with plagues and pandemics of the past. If you are like me, and are somehow wildly interested in scary illnesses, then this might be a book for you. It's full of scary photos and scary facts and scary stories about the bubonic plague.

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