



Epidemics and Pandemics: Their Impacts on Human History

Jo N. Hays

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Great pandemics have resulted in significant death tolls and major social disruption. Other "virgin soil" epidemics have struck down large percentages of populations that had no previous contact with newly introduced microbes. Written by a specialist in the history of science and medicine, the essays in this volume discuss pandemics and epidemics affecting Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Asia, covering diseases in ancient times to the present. Each entry combines biological and social information to form a picture of the significance of epidemics that have shaped world history.

The essays cover the areas of major pandemics, virgin soil epidemics, disruptive shocks, and epidemics of symbolic interest. Included are facts about what an epidemic was, where and when it occurred, how contemporaries reacted, and the unresolved historical issues remaining. This fascinating material is written at a level suitable for scholars and the general public.

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