

## The Great Mortality An Intimate History Of The Black Death

Chronicles the Great Plague that devastated Asia and Europe in the fourteenth century, documenting the experiences of people who lived during its height while describing the harrowing decline of moral boundaries that also marked the period. 40,000 first printing. PULITZER PRIZE FINALIST NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST A NEW YORK TIMES TOP 10 BOOK OF 2018 LOS ANGELES TIMES BOOK PRIZE WINNER ALA CARNEGIE MEDAL WINNER THE STONEWALL BOOK AWARD WINNER Soon to Be a Major Television Event, optioned by Amy Poehler “A page turner . . . An absorbing and emotionally riveting story about what it’s like to live during times of crisis.” —The New York Times Book Review A dazzling novel of friendship and redemption in the face of tragedy and loss set in 1980s Chicago and contemporary Paris In 1985, Yale Tishman, the development director for an art gallery in Chicago, is about to pull off an amazing coup, bringing in an extraordinary collection of 1920s paintings as a gift to the gallery. Yet as his career begins to flourish, the carnage of the AIDS epidemic grows around him. One by one, his friends are dying and after his friend Nico’s funeral, the virus circles closer and closer to Yale himself. Soon the only person he has left is Fiona, Nico’s little sister. Thirty years later, Fiona is in Paris tracking down her estranged daughter who disappeared into a cult. While staying with an old friend, a famous photographer who documented the Chicago crisis, she finds herself finally grappling with the devastating ways AIDS affected her life and her relationship with her daughter. The two intertwining stories take us through the heartbreak of the eighties and the chaos of the modern world, as both Yale and Fiona struggle to find goodness in the midst of disaster. Named a Best Book of 2018 by

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The New York Times Book Review, The Washington Post, NPR, San Francisco Chronicle, The Boston Globe, Entertainment Weekly, BuzzFeed, The Seattle Times, Bustle, Newsday, AM New York, BookPage, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Lit Hub, Publishers Weekly, Kirkus Reviews, New York Public Library and Chicago Public Library

A New York Times/PBS NewsHour Book Club Pick From award-winning memoirist and critic, and bestselling author of *The Lost*: a deeply moving tale of a father and son's transformative journey in reading--and reliving--Homer's epic masterpiece. When eighty-one-year-old Jay Mendelsohn decides to enroll in the undergraduate *Odyssey* seminar his son teaches at Bard College, the two find themselves on an adventure as profoundly emotional as it is intellectual. For Jay, a retired research scientist who sees the world through a mathematician's unforgiving eyes, this return to the classroom is his "one last chance" to learn the great literature he'd neglected in his youth--and, even more, a final opportunity to more fully understand his son, a writer and classicist. But through the sometimes uncomfortable months that the two men explore Homer's great work together--first in the classroom, where Jay persistently challenges his son's interpretations, and then during a surprise-filled Mediterranean journey retracing *Odysseus's* famous voyages--it becomes clear that Daniel has much to learn, too: Jay's responses to both the text and the travels gradually uncover long-buried secrets that allow the son to understand his difficult father at last. As this intricately woven memoir builds to its wrenching climax, Mendelsohn's narrative comes to echo the *Odyssey* itself, with its timeless themes of deception and recognition, marriage and children, the pleasures of travel and the meaning of home. Rich with literary and emotional insight, *An Odyssey* is a renowned author-scholar's most triumphant entwining yet of personal narrative and literary exploration. Named a

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Best Book of 2017 by NPR, Library Journal, The Christian Science Monitor, and Newsday A Kirkus Best Memoir of 2017 Shortlisted for the 2017 Baillie Gifford Prize

The Black Death of 1348–49 may have killed more than 50% of the European population. This book examines the impact of this appalling disaster on England's most populous city, London. Using previously untapped documentary sources alongside archaeological evidence, a remarkably detailed picture emerges of the arrival, duration and public response to this epidemic and subsequent fourteenth-century outbreaks. Wills and civic and royal administration documents provide clear evidence of the speed and severity of the plague, of how victims, many named, made preparations for their heirs and families, and of the immediate social changes that the aftermath brought. The traditional story of the timing and arrival of the plague is challenged and the mortality rate is revised up to 50%–60% in the first outbreak, with a population decline of 40–45% across Edward III's reign. Overall, *The Black Death in London* provides as detailed a story as it is possible to tell of the impact of the plague on a major medieval English city.

A New York Times Notable Book from the author of *A Stolen Tongue: A tale of crime and survival in nineteenth-century England* “as unsettling as it is brilliant” (*The Washington Post Book World*). In Sunderland, England, a city quarantined by the cholera epidemic of 1831, a defiant, fifteen-year-old beauty in an elegant blue dress sells her body to feed her only love: a fragile baby boy. When the surgeon Henry Chiver offers Gustine a different kind of work, she hopes to finally change her terrible circumstances. But Chiver was recently implicated in the famous case of Burke and Hare, who murdered beggars and sold their corpses for medical research. And soon, Gustine's own efforts to secure cadavers for Chiver's anatomy school

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will threaten the very things she's working so hard to protect . . . "Reminiscent of Wuthering Heights . . . or the novels of Dickens . . . An even better book than Holman's first, with prose that's more limber and vivid—and with, appropriately, even more heart." —The New York Times Book Review "As unsettling as it is brilliant. Holman attempts Herculean feats of plot and character, and the resulting novel is seamlessly crafted." —The Washington Post Book World "Holman seduces you. Her prose, tart, racy and somber, will sing in your soul a long while." —Frank McCourt, author of Angela's Ashes "Holman's style is risky and direct . . . with unflinching emotional precision. This dazzlingly researched epic is an uncommon read." —Publisher Weekly, starred review

A series of natural disasters in the Orient during the fourteenth century brought about the most devastating period of death and destruction in European history. The epidemic killed one-third of Europe's people over a period of three years, and the resulting social and economic upheaval was on a scale unparalleled in all of recorded history. Synthesizing the records of contemporary chroniclers and the work of later historians, Philip Ziegler offers a critically acclaimed overview of this crucial epoch in a single masterly volume. The Black Death vividly and comprehensively brings to light the full horror of this uniquely catastrophic event that hastened the disintegration of an age.

"Edge Books are published by Capstone Press."

The definitive history of the virulent and fatal plague outbreaks that wiped out half of London's populations from the medieval Black Death of the 1340s to the Great Plagues of the seventeenth century.

The Black Death was the fourteenth century's equivalent of a nuclear war. It

wiped out one-third of Europe's population, taking millions of lives. The author draws together the most recent scientific discoveries and historical research to pierce the mist and tell the story of the Black Death as a gripping, intimate narrative.

A special fiftieth anniversary edition of Kurt Vonnegut's masterpiece, "a desperate, painfully honest attempt to confront the monstrous crimes of the twentieth century" (Time), featuring a new introduction by Kevin Powers, author of the National Book Award finalist *The Yellow Birds* Selected by the Modern Library as one of the 100 best novels of all time *Slaughterhouse-Five*, an American classic, is one of the world's great antiwar books. Centering on the infamous World War II firebombing of Dresden, the novel is the result of what Kurt Vonnegut described as a twenty-three-year struggle to write a book about what he had witnessed as an American prisoner of war. It combines historical fiction, science fiction, autobiography, and satire in an account of the life of Billy Pilgrim, a barber's son turned draftee turned optometrist turned alien abductee. As Vonnegut had, Billy experiences the destruction of Dresden as a POW. Unlike Vonnegut, he experiences time travel, or coming "unstuck in time." An instant bestseller, *Slaughterhouse-Five* made Kurt Vonnegut a cult hero in American literature, a reputation that only strengthened over time, despite his being banned

and censored by some libraries and schools for content and language. But it was precisely those elements of Vonnegut's writing—the political edginess, the genre-bending inventiveness, the frank violence, the transgressive wit—that have inspired generations of readers not just to look differently at the world around them but to find the confidence to say something about it. Authors as wide-ranging as Norman Mailer, John Irving, Michael Crichton, Tim O'Brien, Margaret Atwood, Elizabeth Strout, David Sedaris, Jennifer Egan, and J. K. Rowling have all found inspiration in Vonnegut's words. Jonathan Safran Foer has described Vonnegut as “the kind of writer who made people—young people especially—want to write.” George Saunders has declared Vonnegut to be “the great, urgent, passionate American writer of our century, who offers us . . . a model of the kind of compassionate thinking that might yet save us from ourselves.” Fifty years after its initial publication at the height of the Vietnam War, Vonnegut's portrayal of political disillusionment, PTSD, and postwar anxiety feels as relevant, darkly humorous, and profoundly affecting as ever, an enduring beacon through our own era's uncertainties. “Poignant and hilarious, threaded with compassion and, behind everything, the cataract of a thundering moral statement.”—The Boston Globe

In this extraordinary novel, Karen Maitland delivers a dazzling reinterpretation of

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Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*—an ingenious alchemy of history, mystery, and powerful human drama. The year is 1348. The Black Plague grips the country. In a world ruled by faith and fear, nine desperate strangers, brought together by chance, attempt to outrun the certain death that is running inexorably toward them. Each member of this motley company has a story to tell. From Camelot, the relic-seller who will become the group's leader, to Cygnus, the one-armed storyteller . . . from the strange, silent child called Narigorm to a painter and his pregnant wife, each has a secret. None is what they seem. And one among them conceals the darkest secret of all—propelling these liars to a destiny they never saw coming. Magical, heart-quickenning, and raw, *Company of Liars* is a work of vaulting imagination from a powerful new voice in historical fiction. Praise for *Company of Liars* “[Maitland] brings to life a medieval England of muddy streets and half-naked children fighting each other for pieces of dog dung to sell to the tanners, as sheep-stealers swing purple-faced from the gallows. . . . She neatly catches the spirit of primitive superstition that governed every aspect of 14th century life and then rolls on with it for her own story-telling ends. . . . *Company of Liars* is a richly evocative page-turner which brings to life a lost and terrible period of British history, with a disturbing final twist worthy of a master of the spine-tingler, such as Henry James.”—Daily Express (UK) “Transports readers

back to the days of the Black Death . . . Paying homage to The Decameron and The Canterbury Tales, this is a gripping read. . . . As a reader you are taken as close to the plague as you would ever wish to go.”—Bookseller

Looking beyond the view of the plague as unmitigated catastrophe, Herlihy finds evidence for its role in the advent of new population controls, the establishment of universities, the spread of Christianity, the dissemination of vernacular cultures, and even the rise of nationalism. This book, which displays a distinguished scholar's masterly synthesis of diverse materials, reveals that the Black Death can be considered the cornerstone of the transformation of Europe. A fascinating account of the phenomenon known as the Black Death, this volume offers a wealth of documentary material focused on the initial outbreak of the plague that ravaged the world in the fourteenth century. A comprehensive introduction that provides important background on the origins and spread of the plague is followed by nearly 50 documents organized into topical sections that focus on the origin and spread of the illness; the responses of medical practitioners; the societal and economic impact; religious responses; the flagellant movement and attacks on Jews provoked by the plague; and the artistic response. Each chapter has an introduction that summarizes the issues explored in the documents; headnotes to the documents provide additional background

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material. The book contains documents from many countries — including Muslim and Byzantine sources — to give students a variety of perspectives on this devastating illness and its consequences. The volume also includes illustrations, a chronology of the Black Death, questions to consider, a selected bibliography, and an index.

Beginning with the absolutely critical first moments of the outbreak in China, and ending with an epilogue on the vaccine rollout and the unprecedented events between the election of Joseph Biden and his inauguration, Lawrence Wright's *The Plague Year* surges forward with essential information--and fascinating historical parallels--examining the medical, economic, political, and social ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"A groundbreaking and illuminating look at the state of abortion access in America and the first long-term study of the consequences--emotional, physical, financial, professional, personal, and psychological--of receiving versus being denied an abortion on women's lives"--

Sweeping across the known world with unchecked devastation, the Black Death claimed between 75 million and 200 million lives in four short years. In this engaging and well-researched book, the trajectory of the plague's march west across Eurasia and the cause of the great pandemic is thoroughly explored.

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Inside you will read about... ? What was the Black Death? ? A Short History of Pandemics ? Chronology & Trajectory ? Causes & Pathology ? Medieval Theories & Disease Control ? Black Death in Medieval Culture ? Consequences Fascinating insights into the medieval mind's perception of the disease and examinations of contemporary accounts give a complete picture of what the world's most effective killer meant to medieval society in particular and humanity in general.

In his trademark character-rich narrative style, John Kelly tells the story of how the relationship among Allied leaders forged victory in World War II -- and created a new and dangerous post-war world. In the summer of 1941, Harry Hopkins, Franklin Roosevelt's trusted advisor, arrived in Moscow to assess whether the US should send aid to Russia as it had to Britain. And unofficially he was there to determine whether Josef Stalin -- the man who had starved four million Ukrainians to death in the early 1930s, another million in the purges of the late 1930s, and a further million in the labor camps of the Gulag -- was worth saving. Hopkins sensed that saving Stalin was going to be a treacherous business. In this powerful narrative, author John Kelly chronicles the turbulent wartime relationship between Britain, America, and the Soviet Union with a unique focus on unknown and unexplored aspects of the story, including how

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Britain and America employed the promise of a second front in France to restrain Soviet territorial ambitions and how the Soviets, in their turn, used threats of a separate peace with Germany to extract concessions from the western allies. Kelly paints a vivid picture of how the war impacted the relationship between the leaders and war managers among the Allies. In *Saving Stalin*, for the first time, the war becomes a major character, co-equal with the book's three other major characters: Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill.

An equal parts haunting and hilarious deep-dive review of history's most notorious and cold-blooded serial killers, from the creators of the award-winning *Last Podcast on the Left* Since its first show in 2010, *The Last Podcast on the Left* has barreled headlong into all things horror, as hosts Henry Zebrowski, Ben Kissel, and Marcus Parks cover subjects spanning Jeffrey Dahmer, werewolves, Jonestown, and supernatural phenomena. Deeply researched but with a morbidly humorous bent, the podcast has earned a dedicated and aptly cultlike following for its unique take on all things macabre. In their first book, the guys take a deep dive into history's most infamous serial killers, from Ted Bundy to John Wayne Gacy, exploring their origin stories, haunting habits, and perverse predilections. Featuring newly developed content alongside updated fan favorites, each profile is an exhaustive examination of the darker side of human existence. With

appropriately creepy four-color illustrations throughout and a gift-worthy paper over board format, *The Last Book on the Left* will satisfy the bloodlust of readers everywhere.

A magisterial account of one of the worst disasters to strike humankind--the Great Irish Potato Famine--conveyed as lyrical narrative history from the acclaimed author of *The Great Mortality*. Deeply researched, compelling in its details, and startling in its conclusions about the appalling decisions behind a tragedy of epic proportions, John Kelly's retelling of the awful story of Ireland's great hunger will resonate today as history that speaks to our own times. It started in 1845 and before it was over more than one million men, women, and children would die and another two million would flee the country. Measured in terms of mortality, the Great Irish Potato Famine was the worst disaster in the nineteenth century--it claimed twice as many lives as the American Civil War. A perfect storm of bacterial infection, political greed, and religious intolerance sparked this catastrophe. But even more extraordinary than its scope were its political underpinnings, and *The Graves Are Walking* provides fresh material and analysis on the role that Britain's nation-building policies played in exacerbating the devastation by attempting to use the famine to reshape Irish society and character. Religious dogma, anti-relief sentiment, and racial and political ideology

combined to result in an almost inconceivable disaster of human suffering. This is ultimately a story of triumph over perceived destiny: for fifty million Americans of Irish heritage, the saga of a broken people fleeing crushing starvation and remaking themselves in a new land is an inspiring story of revival. Based on extensive research and written with novelistic flair, *The Graves Are Walking* draws a portrait that is both intimate and panoramic, that captures the drama of individual lives caught up in an unimaginable tragedy, while imparting a new understanding of the famine's causes and consequences.

“WWII scholar John Kelly triumphs again” (*Vanity Fair*) in this remarkably vivid account of a key moment in Western history: The critical six months in 1940 when Winston Churchill debated whether England should fight Nazi Germany—and then decided to “never surrender.” London in April, 1940, is a place of great fear and conflict. The Germans have taken Poland, France, Holland, Belgium, and Czechoslovakia. The Nazi war machine now menaces Britain, even as America remains uncommitted to providing military aid. Should Britain negotiate with Germany? The members of the War Cabinet bicker, yell, and are divided. Churchill, leading the faction to fight, and Lord Halifax, cautioning that prudence is the way to survive, attempt to usurp one another by any means possible. In *Never Surrender*, we feel we are alongside these

complex and imperfect men, determining the fate of the British Empire, and perhaps, the world. Drawing on the War Cabinet papers, other government documents, private diaries, newspaper accounts, and memoirs, historian John Kelly tells the story of the summer of 1940. Kelly takes readers from the battlefield to Parliament, to the government ministries, to the British high command, to the desperate Anglo-French conference in Paris and London, to the American embassy in London, and to life with the ordinary Britons. We see Churchill seize the historical moment and ultimately inspire his government, military, and people to fight. Kelly brings to life one of the most heroic moments of the twentieth century and intimately portrays some of its largest players—Churchill, Lord Halifax, Hitler, FDR, Joe Kennedy, and others. *Never Surrender* is a fabulous, grand narrative of a crucial period in World War II and the men and women who shaped it. “For lovers of minute-by-minute history, it’s a feast” (Huffington Post).

The past is a foreign country: this is your guidebook. Take a step back into Ian Mortimer's guide and experience the middle ages like never before.

This complex and lyrical coming-of-age novel portrays the messiness of teenage life as V learns to confront her problems. Virginia “V” Dunn is alone when a hit-and-run accident leaves her dog, Lucky, bleeding and helpless. Suddenly, the

monotony of her suburban life dissolves: Lucky is in a cast, her best friend is avoiding her, her mother's drinking is getting worse, and her father is sick with a mysterious illness. Although V is surrounded by family, she is the loneliest girl in town. In her search for answers to life's difficult questions—about death, friendship, family and betrayal—V is floundering. Until she meets the captivating Jane. But her new love also leads to confusion, until V realizes the only way forward is to dive in, even if it means breaking every rule. Acclaimed author Stacey Donovan's thought-provoking novel, *Dive* is filled with the poetry, drama, and beauty of young love, and touches on the importance of finding out who you really are.

**INSTANT NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER** A moving account of resilience, hope, fear and mortality, and how these things resonate in our lives, by actor and advocate Michael J. Fox. The entire world knows Michael J. Fox as Marty McFly, the teenage sidekick of Doc Brown in *Back to the Future*; as Alex P. Keaton in *Family Ties*; as Mike Flaherty in *Spin City*; and through numerous other movie roles and guest appearances on shows such as *The Good Wife* and *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. Diagnosed at age 29, Michael is equally engaged in Parkinson's advocacy work, raising global awareness of the disease and helping find a cure through The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, the world's

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leading non-profit funder of PD science. His two previous bestselling memoirs, *Lucky Man* and *Always Looking Up*, dealt with how he came to terms with the illness, all the while exhibiting his iconic optimism. His new memoir reassesses this outlook, as events in the past decade presented additional challenges. In *No Time Like the Future: An Optimist Considers Mortality*, Michael shares personal stories and observations about illness and health, aging, the strength of family and friends, and how our perceptions about time affect the way we approach mortality. Thoughtful and moving, but with Fox's trademark sense of humor, his book provides a vehicle for reflection about our lives, our loves, and our losses. Running through the narrative is the drama of the medical madness Fox recently experienced, that included his daily negotiations with the Parkinson's disease he's had since 1991, and a spinal cord issue that necessitated immediate surgery. His challenge to learn how to walk again, only to suffer a devastating fall, nearly caused him to ditch his trademark optimism and "get out of the lemonade business altogether." Does he make it all of the way back? Read the book.

A look in to the history behind the village of Eyam when the plague came killing the majority of the population.

The Great Mortality An Intimate History of the Black Death, the Most Devastating Plague

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of All Time Harper Collins

From the acclaimed author of *Miracle Cure* and *The Third Horseman*, the epic story of the collision between one of nature's smallest organisms and history's mightiest empire. During the golden age of the Roman Empire, Emperor Justinian reigned over a territory that stretched from Italy to North Africa. It was the zenith of his achievements and the last of them. In 542 AD, the bubonic plague struck. In weeks, the glorious classical world of Justinian had been plunged into the medieval and modern Europe was born. At its height, five thousand people died every day in Constantinople. Cities were completely depopulated. It was the first pandemic the world had ever known and it left its indelible mark: when the plague finally ended, more than 25 million people were dead. Weaving together history, microbiology, ecology, jurisprudence, theology, and epidemiology, Justinian's Flea is a unique and sweeping account of the little known event that changed the course of a continent.

A "lively and engaging" history of the Middle Ages (*Dallas Morning News*) from the acclaimed historian William Manchester, author of *The Last Lion*. From tales of chivalrous knights to the barbarity of trial by ordeal, no era has been a greater source of awe, horror, and wonder than the Middle Ages. In handsomely crafted prose, and with the grace and authority of his extraordinary gift for narrative history, William Manchester leads us from a civilization tottering on the brink of collapse to the grandeur of its rebirth: the dense explosion of energy that spawned some of history's greatest poets,

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philosophers, painters, adventurers, and reformers, as well as some of its most spectacular villains. "Manchester provides easy access to a fascinating age when our modern mentality was just being born." --Chicago Tribune

"A higher education history book on the Black Death, giving not just a narrative account but also a thorough examination of the latest forensic, historical, and DNA evidence to date"--

This book will become the standard account of the way disease has transformed societies and of how the structuring of society, politics, the economy and the medical profession has shaped the spread and containment of epidemics.

A fascinating work of detective history, *The Black Death* traces the causes and far-reaching consequences of this infamous outbreak of plague that spread across the continent of Europe from 1347 to 1351. Drawing on sources as diverse as monastic manuscripts and dendrochronological studies (which measure growth rings in trees), historian Robert S. Gottfried demonstrates how a bacillus transmitted by rat fleas brought on an ecological reign of terror -- killing one European in three, wiping out entire villages and towns, and rocking the foundation of medieval society and civilization.

The Black Plague is a depressing read but it's something that's forever embedded in history. It happened. People died. Lessons learned and discoveries made. The last two points are what will make the Black Plague an interesting reading. Be there to guide

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your child through the circumstances and end-results of one of the most unfortunate events in history. Grab a copy today.

A REESE'S BOOK CLUB PICK WINNER OF THE NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD One of the Best Books of the Year NPR, Time, Esquire, BuzzFeed, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel A romance unexpectedly sparks between two wounded friends. A marriage ends for what seem like noble reasons, but with irreparable consequences. A young woman holds on to an impossible dream even as she fights for her survival. Two lovers reunite after unimaginable tragedy, both for their country and in their lives. A baby's christening brings three generations of a family to a precarious dance between old and new. A man falls to his death in slow motion, reliving the defining moments of the life he is about to lose. Set in locales from Miami and Port-au-Prince to a small unnamed country in the Caribbean and beyond, here are eight emotionally absorbing stories, rich with hard-won wisdom and humanity. At once wide in scope and intimate, *Everything Inside* explores with quiet power and elegance the forces that pull us together or drive us apart, sometimes in the same searing instant. "Haunting, profound—an answered prayer for those who have long treasured [Danticat's] essential contributions to the Caribbean literary canon." —O, The Oprah Magazine "A beautiful book. . . . Danticat's birthplace, Haiti, emerges in an almost mythic fashion. . . . She has curated this slim volume, bringing its elements together to create a satisfying whole." —The New York Times Book Review "A master of the short

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story form. . . . In these eight narratives of unexpected romance, personal tragedy, and family complications, Danticat's compassionate sensitivity to the ties that bind us shines through." —Esquire Immensely rewarding. . . . Clear-eyed . . . gorgeous. . . . A stunning collection that features some of the best writing of Danticat's brilliant career." —NPR

From the author of the acclaimed *Insectopedia*, a powerful exploration of loss, endurance, and the absences that permeate the present When Hugh Raffles's two sisters died suddenly within a few weeks of each other, he reached for rocks, stones, and other seemingly solid objects as anchors in a world unmoored, as ways to make sense of these events through stories far larger than his own. A moving, profound, and affirming meditation, *The Book of Unconformities* is grounded in stories of stones: Neolithic stone circles, Icelandic lava, mica from a Nazi concentration camp, petrified whale blubber in Svalbard, the marble prized by Manhattan's Lenape, and a huge Greenlandic meteorite that arrived with six Inuit adventurers in the exuberant but fractious New York City of 1897. As Raffles follows these fundamental objects, unearthing the events they've engendered, he finds them losing their solidity and becoming as capricious, indifferent, and willful as time itself.

1666 was a watershed year for England. The outbreak of the Great Plague, the eruption of the second Dutch War and the Great Fire of London all struck the country in rapid succession and with devastating repercussions. Shedding light on these dramatic

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events, historian Rebecca Rideal reveals an unprecedented period of terror and triumph. Based on original archival research and drawing on little-known sources, *1666: Plague, War and Hellfire* takes readers on a thrilling journey through a crucial turning point in English history, as seen through the eyes of an extraordinary cast of historical characters. While the central events of this significant year were ones of devastation and defeat, 1666 also offers a glimpse of the incredible scientific and artistic progress being made at that time, from Isaac Newton's discovery of gravity to Robert Hooke's microscopic wonders. It was in this year that John Milton completed *Paradise Lost*, Frances Stewart posed for the now-iconic image of Britannia, and a young architect named Christopher Wren proposed a plan for a new London - a stone phoenix to rise from the charred ashes of the old city. With flair and style, *1666* shows a city and a country on the cusp of modernity, and a series of events that forever altered the course of history.

In this fresh approach to the history of the Black Death, John Hatcher, a world-renowned scholar of the Middle Ages, recreates everyday life in a mid-fourteenth century rural English village. By focusing on the experiences of ordinary villagers as they lived - and died - during the Black Death (1345 - 50 AD), Hatcher vividly places the reader directly into those tumultuous years and describes in fascinating detail the day-to-day existence of people struggling with the tragic effects of the plague. Dramatic scenes portray how contemporaries must have experienced and thought about the

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momentous events - and how they tried to make sense of it all.

Once known as the "great fire" or "spotted death," smallpox has been rivaled only by plague as a source of supreme terror. Although naturally occurring smallpox was eradicated in 1977, recent terrorist attacks in the United States have raised the possibility that someone might craft a deadly biological weapon from stocks of the virus that remain in known or perhaps unknown laboratories. In *The Greatest Killer*, Donald R. Hopkins provides a fascinating account of smallpox and its role in human history. Starting with its origins 10,000 years ago in Africa or Asia, Hopkins follows the disease through the ancient and modern worlds, showing how smallpox removed or temporarily incapacitated heads of state, halted or exacerbated wars, and devastated populations that had never been exposed to the disease. In Hopkins's history, smallpox was one of the most dangerous-and influential-factors that shaped the course of world events. On June 8, 2010, while on a book tour for his bestselling memoir, *Hitch-22*, Christopher Hitchens was stricken in his New York hotel room with excruciating pain in his chest and thorax. As he would later write in the first of a series of award-winning columns for *Vanity Fair*, he suddenly found himself being deported "from the country of the well across the stark frontier that marks off the land of malady." Over the next eighteen months, until his death in Houston on December 15, 2011, he wrote constantly and brilliantly on politics and culture, astonishing readers with his capacity for superior work even in extremis. Throughout the course of his ordeal battling esophageal cancer,

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Hitchens adamantly and bravely refused the solace of religion, preferring to confront death with both eyes open. In this riveting account of his affliction, Hitchens poignantly describes the torments of illness, discusses its taboos, and explores how disease transforms experience and changes our relationship to the world around us. By turns personal and philosophical, Hitchens embraces the full panoply of human emotions as cancer invades his body and compels him to grapple with the enigma of death.

MORTALITY is the exemplary story of one man's refusal to cower in the face of the unknown, as well as a searching look at the human predicament. Crisp and vivid, veined throughout with penetrating intelligence, Hitchens's testament is a courageous and lucid work of literature, an affirmation of the dignity and worth of man.

A compelling history of the Black Death that scoured Europe in the mid-14th century killing 25 million people. It was one of the worst human disasters in history.

La moria grandissima began its terrible journey across the European and Asian continents in 1347, leaving unimaginable devastation in its wake. Five years later, twenty-five million people were dead, felled by the scourge that would come to be called the Black Death. The Great Mortality is the extraordinary epic account of the worst natural disaster in European history -- a drama of courage, cowardice, misery, madness, and sacrifice that brilliantly illuminates humankind's darkest days when an old world ended and a new world was born.

"Terror, disaster, memory, selfhood, happiness . . . leave it to a poet to tackle the

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unthinkable so wisely and so wittily."\* A literary guide to life in the pre-apocalypse, *The Unreality of Memory* collects profound and prophetic essays on the Internet age's media-saturated disaster coverage and our addiction to viewing and discussing the world's ills. We stare at our phones. We keep multiple tabs open. Our chats and conversations are full of the phrase "Did you see?" The feeling that we're living in the worst of times seems to be intensifying, alongside a desire to know precisely how bad things have gotten—and each new catastrophe distracts us from the last. *The Unreality of Memory* collects provocative, searching essays on disaster culture, climate anxiety, and our mounting collective sense of doom. In this new collection, acclaimed poet and essayist Elisa Gabbert explores our obsessions with disasters past and future, from the sinking of the Titanic to Chernobyl, from witch hunts to the plague. These deeply researched, prophetic meditations question how the world will end—if indeed it will—and why we can't stop fantasizing about it. Can we avoid repeating history? Can we understand our moment from inside the moment? With *The Unreality of Memory*, Gabbert offers a hauntingly perceptive analysis of our new ways of being and a means of reconciling ourselves to this unreal new world. "A work of sheer brilliance, beauty and bravery." \*—Andrew Sean Greer, author of *Less*

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