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Posted on 05 September 2017 By Daniel Defoe

*Read ? A Journal of the Plague Year ? Ebook or Kindle ePUB free

In the crowded , unhealthy, unclean, foul, pest dominated, filthy city of London, the Bubonic Plague breaks out, in 1665, no surprise, it has occurred before, in fact just a few years,

previously, but this escalates, felling some say, 100,000 people, who never rise again

Daniel Defoe, the inventor of the English language novel *Robinson Crusoe*, 1719, yet because of his earlier employment, was a journalist than a novelist, writes a memoir of this catastrophe, almost sixty years later The author was only five years old at the time, but his Uncle Henry Foe Defoe added De, to make himself seem a gentleman, his father was a butcher, takes this eyewitness account, from this relative's journal, the narrator is only described as H.F The inhabitants of the city, most of them flee for their lives, the rich first, King Charles the Second, to Oxford, others, to the nearby countryside, the poor survive in woods, old ruined shacks, in tents, even outside, the locals don't help at first, afraid to get sick too Many refugees starve to death, others succumb to the unmerciful disease, the very brave stay in London, those who work for the city government, the least well off remain, too, nowhere to go, the hardest hit, and die some in the streets, their minds inflamed by illness, babbling words incomprehensible, before dropping to the ground The Dead Carts, to pick up the victims and bury them in deep holes, mass graves that are quickly covered, and another one dug, for the next batch The narrator's brother, had urged him to get out of town like him, but H.F had a store to run, a house to take care of with servants, warehouses of his goods, how could he Still his sister would welcome him, she lived faraway in a different city The curious, frightened man roams the streets, seeing the dead, everywhere, hearing unearthly screams from women, in their homes, windows opened, moans flowing from above, men in nightshirts cursing, groaning, others asking God to save them, why did he not leave Whole families dying inside a house, fathers, mothers, children, servants, the stench, of the bodies spreading to passersby, they keep walking People afraid to come near strangers they believe, are infected, by their polluted air, not knowing that diseased rats, and fleas that bite them, and then the citizens of London, are the real killers Pitiful beggars, abound, asking for help, houses are shut with the owners in them, either by the government, with the sick people inside, or healthy ones, who try to avoid the plague by hiding there Vicious thieves break in, the empty homes, stealing all, not afraid of the danger, they are desperate, nothing to lose, thinking everybody is doomed And the Dead Carts continue to roll down the streets, the drivers throwing the deceased in, filling them to the top, until no living humans are left It was the most Serge Gainsbourg's preferred book. Daniel Defoe is not a only one book man *Robinson Crusoe*. It is an aesthete book which one exchanges the name between friends What is extraordinary, it is the realism of story All descriptions are extraordinary They agree elsewhere with what was described As of the appearance of the signs, death occurred in a few hours. The plague is well known since the Middle Ages as an apocalyps Ren Girard in the scapegoat says that people did not even dare to pronounce the name of it We have forgotten that the last plague epidemy in occident was in France Marseilles 1925 What is brilliant, it is that we live the epidemy in the middle of the population His style is perfect, descriptions are a seizing naturalism A masterpiece. One of the problems with reviewing the earliest authors of fiction is that they

were writing at a time before the rules had been properly worked out. Novels took on the form we know and love because of these writers' successes and because of their failures. It was up to them to forge the templates, and if a certain template didn't work then they could try a new one with the next book. *A Journal of the Plague Year* is a case in point. Although Defoe was alive at the time of plague, this is actually a fictional account written sixty years later but one which relies heavily on anecdotal reportage. Defoe gives us a narrator to guide us through, but this man is just a cipher, a pair of eyes and ears to relate what he sees and hears. We know where he lives, what he does, how many servants he has and that he has a brother, but not much else about him. He is there to tell the tales Defoe heard, to describe scenes that Defoe saw or at least had described to him by others. But the fact he has little definable character means there's an odd vacuum at the centre, a distance that stops the reader fully empathising. It's a decision few authors of a later vintage would have taken, if only because they'd learnt from this book's mistake. In addition, as perhaps befits the first person account of a tradesman, the tale is not separated into chapters and rambles constantly down odd little cul de sacs. With the result that it can often be an irritating read. That's not to say that there aren't good things in this book: the descriptions of the mass graves and a populous so caught in madness they will proclaim their own sins in the middle of the road will certainly stay with me. But this is not the most accessible of fictional histories and is a book that really makes you work hard for the treasures it has.

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In which I read for the first time a hundred so-called classics, then write reports on whether or not they deserve the label.

Essay 62 *A Journal of the Plague Year 1722*, by Daniel Defoe

The story in a nutshell. Although not actually written until sixty years later but on that in a bit, Daniel Defoe's 1722 *A Journal of the Plague Year* is pretty much what it sounds like: a purportedly true account of London's Great Plague of 1665, the last outbreak of the bubonic plague the city would ever see, supposedly written by an average middle classer who decided to wait things out instead of fleeing to the countryside like so many others. As such, then, the book doesn't really have a three-act plot per se, but is a rambling collection of observations, anecdotes, and actual hard data from an examination of the religious fervor that overtook the city during the worst months, to a detailed look at how home quarantines actually worked, to second-hand accounts of the equal amount of trouble awaiting poor peasants who tried living illegally in the rural wilds of England that year, to horror stories of people literally bursting into goo in the middle of public streets, or of cemetery workers who would literally die while on their way to mass graves with a cart full of corpses, leaving the city full of wandering teams of horses dragging dead bodies randomly to and fro. Although almost 300 years old by now, be warned that this is still not for the faint of heart. The argument for it being a classic: The case for this being a classic is a pretty simple one: it is arguably the very first historical novel in human history, and in fact it was the centuries of

passionate debate about whether this should be considered fact or fiction that even led to the term in the first place, and to this genre eventually becoming as popular as it now is. For example, although not proven, it's widely believed that our narrator H.F. is based on Defoe's relative Henry Foe, who actually was a young adult craftsman in London during the 65 plague, and who may or may not have left a detailed journal where Defoe culled many of these stories and for another example, Defoe even went to the trouble of including slang terms and intentional misspellings from the 1660s that had fallen out of favor by the 1720s. On top of this, though, say its fans, the book's simply one freaky nightmare of a read, a surprisingly plain spoken and readable book befitting the Enlightenment times when it was actually written that has had an enormous impact on not only historical novels but the horror genre and post apocalyptic fiction, and that has directly influenced everyone from Albert Camus to Cormac McCarthy to even Monty Python and the Holy Grail. That movie's famous line "Bring out yer dead" was lifted directly from this book. The argument against *The Plague Year* being a classic, although admittedly both of them weak ones first, that as a mere prototype of a genre that didn't acquire its main tropes until a century later, the book's digressive nature and outdated language is hard to read and follow and second, that although this book may be good enough on its own, it's Defoe's much famous and important *Robinson Crusoe* that should actually be considered the indisputable classic, in that that's the book widely considered to be the very first three act novel in the history of the English language. My verdict: As I've said in this essay series before, I think to truly enjoy books that are this old, it's important to understand the context in which they were written, and to know what kinds of things were influencing both the author himself and the original audience he was writing for and so in the case of *The Plague Year*, understanding this context makes the book much more fascinating than simply its writing quality may make it seem, and is crucial for understanding why I found this such a surprisingly fantastic read. Because, you see, Defoe was not only one of the first novelists in British history a format he came to know and love during his travels in southern Europe as a businessman in the late 1600s, but he chose to use this format specifically to comment on the hottest, trendiest issues of the day, making him essentially the Michael Crichton of the Enlightenment and it just so happens that just a year before this was written, the French city of Marseilles went through a major new outbreak of the bubonic plague, which inspired the British public and its newfound journalism industry to obsessively look back at their own plague of 56 years previous, and to examine all the ways that their society had profoundly changed since then. Now combine this with the Great London Fire just one year after this 1665 plague, a one two knockout to the city that left it largely empty of people and burned to the ground, and was the very thing that transformed it in those years into the post Medieval modern infrastructure we now know when you take all these things into consideration, then, *The Plague Year* suddenly becomes not just a horror story and important precedent in the development of historical fiction, but indeed serves as no less than a grand epic look at the

transformation of Britain in this 60 year period, from the last vestiges of the Middle Ages to the Age of Science of Defoe's own times. I mean, certainly a lot of this book suddenly starts making a lot sense when you assume that this was Defoe's actual goal he goes on and on in it, for example, about the shamefully superstitious way that 1600s Londoners actually reacted to this plague a common criticism among Enlightenment citizens about the generation before them, and also takes the trouble to point out all the faulty ways that people medically tried to deal with this plague, outdated hokum that had been disproven by the modern doctors of Defoe's own time, and one of the many sneakily brilliant things that Defoe gets away with by writing this in reality half a century after the events that it describes. I mean, don't get me wrong, the book just by itself is pretty great on its own it's unusually easy to read compared to books written in the same time period, and really does have a kind of slasher flick mentality that makes it still so engaging even three centuries later. But I have to admit, what makes it truly delightful is to imagine yourself as an average Enlightenment intellectual in the early 1700s yourself, to picture the ways that science and reason and philosophy were utterly transforming society at the time, literally wresting power away from the mysticism, fear and superstition that had mostly driven British life up to that point because let's never forget, it actually took several additional centuries for the principles of the Renaissance to truly catch on in Britain, after it first became popular in southern Europe in the late 1400s and then to imagine reading *The Plague Year* within such a context, the point not really to talk about plagues at all but rather to examine all the ways that British society had changed in the 60 years since, and to thank God that modern biological science was rapidly bringing an end to such plagues in the first place. When read in this spirit, it makes *The Plague Year* one of the most surprisingly great books in the entirety of this essay series so far, and it comes strongly recommended to those who can maintain this attitude themselves. Is it a classic? Yes. And don't forget that the first 33 essays in this series are now available in book form. *A Journal of the Plague Year* is actually a fictional account covering this time in history, and although Defoe was alive, we are given a narrator instead, and this was written near enough sixty years afterwards. We are certainly not told much about this narrator, apart from the fact he has family and servants, and we get a brief description of where he lives, but that is about it. I think due to this lack of character description, I was unable to completely empathise with him, and I also noticed there was a terrible amount of ramblings, where the narration went entirely off course, which made at times, for a rather bothersome and irritating read. I also did not appreciate that there were no clear chapters, and it all kind of flowed awkwardly, into a giant sludge. However, despite the negativity there, I do have some positives regarding this book. The plague and the history around it fascinates me. I cannot say exactly why, but it's just so interesting. I thought the detailed and grim descriptions of the mass graves were interesting, and, the madness and chaotic scenes that the plague caused humans to endure, were so frightening, and to be in the middle of that, I just cannot even begin to imagine what that

was like Overall, this book was let down mainly by the narrator and the layout, but, it does have some interesting snippets, but you ll need to dig rather deep to discover them.

"How wonderful has been the result!"
—EDGAR ALLAN POE

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Daniel DEFOE

Introduction by VIRGINIA WOOLF

DNF d at chapter 11 I taught this a couple times Soph Eng Lit survey , instead of Moll or Robinson or, indeed, Pamela or pt of Tristram Of course it s a historical reconstruction Defoe was 5 in the Plague Year, a year before the Great Fire, and two before the Dutch sailed to Chatham, on the Bay of Thames, and captured the Royal Charles, its transom still featured in Rijksmuseum I think those semesters AIDS featured in news Also useful for teaching Freshman Oedipus R, which begins in citywide mortality to be cured by executing the cause, a man hated by the Gods bec NOT aborted exposed until death Hmmm Might be a good approach Was Harry Whittington hated by the gods, or the drunk who shot him at cocktail hour in TX *Read ? A Journal of the Plague Year ? A Journal Of The Plague Year By Daniel Defoe This Novel Is An Account Of One Man S Experiences Of The Year , In Which The Great Plague Or The Bubonic Plague Struck The City Of London The Book Is Told Somewhat Chronologically, Though Without Sections Or Chapter Headings Presented As An Eyewitness Account Of The Events At The Time, It Was Written In The Years Just Prior To The Book S First Publication In March Defoe Was Only Five Years Old In , And The Book Itself Was Published Under The Initials H F And Is Probably Based On The Journals Of Defoe S Uncle, Henry Foe It Was About The Beginning Of September That I, Among The Rest Of My Neighbours, Heard In Ordinary Discourse That The Plague Was Returned Again In Holland For It Had Been Very Violent There, And Particularly At Amsterdam And Rotterdam, In The Year , Whither, They Say, It Was Brought, Some Said From Italy, Others From The Levant, Among Some Goods Which Were Brought Home By Their Turkey Fleet Others Said It Was Brought From Candia Others From Cyprus It Mattered Not From Whence It Came But All Agreed It Was Come Into Holland Again We Had No Such Thing As Printed Newspapers In Those Days To Spread Rumours And Reports Of Things, And To Improve Them By The Invention Of Men, As I Have Lived To See Practised Since But Such Things As These Were Gathered From The Letters Of Merchants And Others Who Corresponded Abroad, And From Them Was Handed About By Word Of Mouth Only So That Things Did Not Spread Instantly Over The Whole Nation, As They Do Now But It Seems That The Government Had A True Account Of It, And Several Councils Were Held About Ways To Prevent Its Coming Over But All Was Kept Very Private Hence It Was That This Rumour Died Off Again, And People Began To Forget It As A Thing We Were Very Little Concerned In, And That We Hoped Was Not True Till The Latter End Of November Or The Beginning Of December When Two Men, Said To Be Frenchmen, Died Of The Plague In Long Acre, Or Rather At The Upper End Of Drury Lane The Family They Were In Endeavoured To Conceal It As Much As Possible, But As It Had Gotten Some Vent In The Discourse Of The Neighbourhood, The Secretaries Of State Got Knowledge Of It And Concerning Themselves To Inquire About It, In Order To Be Certain Of The Truth, Two Physicians And A Surgeon Were Ordered To Go To The House And Make Inspection This They Did And Finding Evident Tokens Of The Sickness Upon Both The Bodies That Were Dead, They Gave Their Opinions Publicly That They Died Of The

Plague I have seen this taught as a non fiction account of the Great Plague of 1666 it isn't
What it actually is a very early historical novel Defoe was alive, but was a small child, in
1666 There s no reason why it shouldn't be taught in a history class as it has the virtue of
being short, among other things , but an eye witness non fiction account it isn't I guess that
s credit to Defoe s ability as a novelist. 1665 y l nda Londra da ya anm olan veba salg n n t
m ger ek ili iyle okuyucuya sunan Veba Y I G nl A Journal of the Plague Year , Daniel Defoe
nun buldu u g nl kleri bir araya getirerek ortaya kard edebi a dan olabildi ince ak c ve
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