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Connections in History: Past to Present

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Connections in History:
Past to Present

by

Cheryl A. Raleigh
August 2007

A thesis submitted to the Department of Education and Human Development of the State University of New York College at Brockport in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education
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The Black Death

and its Role in History

Cheryl Raleigh
The Black death of the fourteenth century took the lives of over 1/3 of the population in Europe alone. In medieval times poor sanitation was a factor in the rapidly spreading disease. No one had any clue as to what was causing this terrible disease. Many thought the Apocalypse had come. Some blamed the plague on the Jews. Others thought it was a punishment by God, flagellants wandered around publicly whipping themselves as punishment for their sins. Acts of debauchery and promiscuous activities were common scenes of the time, assuming life was going to end many thought they mine as well live it up now. Peasants left fields to waste and for those worst five years between 1347- 1352 time almost stood still. The impact of the plague on society would be everlasting. How do historians today and in the past view the importance of the Black Death?

No one today would deny that the Black Death was of great influence on the economic and social impact of the fourteenth century. The Black Death devastated Europe from 1347-1351, killing nearly half of the population. Although, Historians may disagree to the extent of its nature the plague had an impact on the economic, social and culture of the fourteenth century. Most Historians would agree that the plague played an important role in European history however; there is controversy over its precise importance. Historian’s have debated about the nature, timing and long-term effects of the plague. Some historians attribute the plague to the ending of an era while others see it as playing a much smaller significance in the realm of plagues. Earlier writings find the role of the plague to be much more influential to Europe. Recent writings on the plague tend to focus more on a specific region or location in Europe and its impacts. Research today has become much more varied in scope. Books and articles have been published on Art, Education, Psychology, Religion and climate to name a few. Other
Historians are now arguing that many of the common beliefs originally held about the plague are no longer true. Some even go as far as saying that the Bubonic Plague never actually existed in many places that were once believed. A question that many historians have asked is what type of role has the plague played in history. For the first part of my thesis I will examine and discuss books and articles written on the plague to see how the emphasis has changed over the course of history.

Throughout history plagues have caused havoc and destructions to millions of people. Towns would suddenly fall ill and die and no one seemed to know why. One of the leading factors to these epidemics was the sanitary conditions of early civilizations. Running water, sewage systems and garbage pick seem like second nature to people today however it was not long ago that these commodities did not exist. Every where you look today you see lotions and soaps made with anti-bacterial agents. In the second part of my thesis I will complete my original work. Here is where I plan on looking at how the Black Death played a role in future epidemics and society's reactions. I examine how society's reactions and responses to epidemics have changed and evolved over the last six centuries. How has our society today responded to these terrible epidemics and pandemics? I hope to draw on comparisons by using current epidemics such as the Bird Flu and Aids.

When faced with a disaster such as an epidemic it is apparent that there will be devastating consequences. Historians have analyzed the effects of the Black Death at great length and its important role on European society, economy and culture. Although historians have disagreed on the overall importance of the plague all believe there is some significance that it left behind. In the following pages, I will attempt to lay out the different roles and importance historians have assigned to the Black Death.
Earlier Historical writings on the Black Death see it as playing a much larger role in the development of Europe than latter writers. They regard the Black Death as an epoch making event in history and a major factor in bringing about significant change in history. Dr. Francis Aidan Gasquet, a cardinal, described the Black Death in his book *The Great Pestilence* (1893) as a turning point in history. Gasquet sees the plague as an end to the Middle Ages. Much of his writing focuses on the devastation to the church. He blames the disease for the decline of the Christian Church and especially monasticism. To Gasquet the plague shattered the existing religious institution. He quotes “that the steady progress of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries suddenly checked in the fourteenth… the Black Death swept off half the population and the whole social structure was disorganized.”

Gasquet felt strongly that the plague was a revolution of religious feeling and thought that brought about the dawn of a new era. Gasquet, a representative of the Benedictine order in England, is inevitably prone to see things from a sympathetic point of view for the past and the church. He spends little time discussing the origins of the plague or describing the symptoms. Much of his book is devoted to tracing the progress of the plague across Europe and its toll on lives specifically concentrating on church documentation. Gasquet’s weakness is apparent to other writers in that his

“tendency to exaggerate the effects of the plague, which is temptation of almost any student who has given to much time and thought to amass details of evidence on such a dreadful calamity, has surely led Dr. Gasquet into theories which cannot stand the test of sober scrutiny… It is a serious overstatement to assert that ‘the black death…produced nothing less than a revolution of feeling and practice, especially of religious feeling and

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practice.’ Even more untrue is that it formed the real close of the medieval period and the beginning of our modern age.”

Similar in significance to Gasquet, George Coultan sees the plague as a turning point which brought about the Renaissance and the Reformation. Coultan’s book *The Black Death* (1929) focuses on the economic success of the survivors of the great pestilence and the social impact that it had on history. Coultan wrote,

“This catastrophe contributed to the hasten that impulse of independent research which we call the Renaissance... It will probably be more and more recognized that the Black Death does, in fact, begin a new epoch in medieval society. The plague shook, even shattered, many things which are already decaying or unstable.”

According to Coultan, the greater per capita wealth for the citizens who lived through the plague advanced Europe into the Renaissance. As a result of the depopulation brought about by the plague, many survivors became wealthier. Land was much more available and because there was less labor people and their work became more valuable. Although some may disagree, Coultan believes it was the wealth from the plague that sent Europe into the Renaissance.

Like Coultan, Yves Renuoard also sees the plague as a turning point in history. However, he sees it more as a psychological and moral crisis that caused a demographic collapse throughout the Western World. Where as Coultan saw the effects of the Plague as a turning point for the better, leading Europe into the new ideas of thought in the Renaissance, Renuoard saw the effects as bringing an end to a thriving 13th century. The Black Death Renuoard argues,

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2 Jessop, A. *The English Historical Review, Vol. 9, No. 35. (Jul.1894), pp. 567-570*

"It ended the prosperity which prevailed in the West during the end of the thirteenth century and the first part of the fourteenth. It brought great misery everywhere and for a time impeded the course of political and military events."

He goes on to say social changes were also major. Nobility and clergy were ruined by the loss of lives which opened up positions to unfit replacements. There also became a rise in social strife between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. He concludes his argument stating this is why many historians argue the Black Death separates what we know of medieval society from modern civilization. All three of these authors Gasquet, Coul tan and Renuoard view the role of the plague as a lasting event that forever changed the course of European history. They may differ on the specific change, but they agree on its lasting impact as a turning point in history.

Another common theme historians of the early twentieth century wrote about was the connection and parallels of the Black Death to that of World War One. T.D.A. Cockerell published an article *The Black Death, and it's Lessons for To-Day* (1916). Although the cause of deaths and the loss of lives were different; the results, Cockerell states, were in many respects similar. Cockerell argued that historians looked at how people of the fourteenth century ineffectively dealt with the immediate situation of the plague and pity their ignorance. While writing during World War One Cockerell asks people to question whether future historians will judge the management of World War One as any better than the way the plague was handled in the fourteenth century. He also asks them to recognize the great changes that came out of the plague as a result of a decrease in power that the church held over their knowledge. This absence has now led Europe into a freer mindset, which allowed the Renaissance to begin. "Is it not a fact to-day that a similar cult, that of the necessity and propriety of war, acts as a like inhibitor to

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4 Renouard, Yves. *Consequences et ineret demographique de la Peste Noire de 1348.* Translated by William M. Bowsky, 1950.119
those mental reactions which might otherwise clarify the atmosphere and make easy the way to peace?" The point Cockerell is making, is that what men then, as in his time, accepted as inevitable may have been prevented. So how could we have made sure we followed the right path in dealing with the war? He goes on to connect parallels of the two tragedies such as the changes in labor and the power that could arise for a new class from the First World War. Cockerell concludes his argument that they must make the most of this opportunity and realize the necessity for reform.

"... It will make all the difference in the future whether we now approach our problems intelligently or with ignorance and prejudice. A great catastrophe, whether plague or war, breaks many links with the past, and gives the surviving generation new power and new opportunity." Cockerell clearly sees the Black Death as a lesson and turning point in history. It is now as he viewed it, it was up to the society to look at the mistakes and inevitably great changes made after the plague and apply them to the First World War.

James Westfall Thompson also writes about the Black Death and uses it as a comparison to the Great War. The slaughter, upheaval and turmoil of World War One would remind historians of other devastating events the world had lived through such as the Black Death. World War One would serve as a model to demonstrate what it was like for the people living in Europe during the middle of the fourteenth century.

"It is surprising to see how similar the complaints are then and now: economic chaos, social unrest, high prices, profiteering, depravation of morals, lack of production,

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6 Cockerell, 85.
industrial indolence, frenetic gaiety, wild expenditure, luxury, debauchery, social and religious hysteria, greed, avarice, maladministration, decay of manners.”  

Thomson focuses on the social, economic, political and psychological impact of the plague on Europe and how World War One had similar impacts on those forces. First he points out the most immediate effects, the loss of lives and mortality are comparable and the impact on the loss of life by survivors. The economic effect was also similar although initial effects were different. “The moment the war began prices soared. This was not so in 1349. The immediate effect of the Black Death was to lower prices and glut the market with commodities.”

However, the survivors soon began to realize the wealth they had now acquired. Soon society engaged in gluttony and debauchery with their newly found wealth. Europe however, had become measurably poorer, there were fewer workers available and eventually prices began to soar, resembling the economy of World War One. Social effects of the plague were also mirrored. The population had decreased and been displaced all throughout Europe as a result of the plague. “In addition … the plague opened the door of opportunity to many to get into new lines of employment, or to establish themselves in new kinds of business.”

Just as new jobs became open as a result of the Great War, women and men alike could now find new business opportunities. In the line of politics Thompson points out, “The late fourteenth century strikes a familiar note in the protest against political corruption and administrative inefficiency.” As a result of the loss of so many lives government jobs were being filled with incompetent and dishonest men who were not qualified for government positions. The church was no better off. They too suffered great losses and had positions filled with unfit replacements. Psychologically

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8 Thompson, 566.
9 Thompson, 568.
10 Thompson, 569.
the acts of debauchery, flamboyant and luxurious lifestyles are similar to the "shell shock"
suffered by so many in the Great War. Complaints of these effects, psychological, political,
social, and economic were just as after the war, Thompson argues, as they were in the fourteenth
century. There are enormous parallels he argues that can be drawn from the aftermath of the
Black Death and the Great War. Cockerell and Thompson both articulate similarities between the
Black Death and WWI as having profound devastations in Europe. The role of the plague should
be a lesson in how to grow and deal with the events they have gone through and what changes
they should make in society, politics and the economy.

Writings regarding the plague seem to change after the 1940's. The role of the Black
Death in history begins to diminish. As well, the unanimity of writers concerning the role of the
plague begins to widen. Many of the more recent works on the Black Death have been focused
on intensive studies of specific regions in Europe. Analyses today often involve interrelated
disciplines from environment to psychology. Modern historians shift away from previous
historians views on the impacts of the plague.

that the plague was part of a general crisis in rural economy and society which centered on
Europe’s hierarchal social structure. Kosminskii attacks the commonly held theory that the time
period of the Black Death was a period of economic depression. He uses examples in Germany
and Italy to argue against the theory of economic depression. There may have been a loss of jobs
and markets but places like Italy quickly recovered and had great economic expansion in the
fifteenth century. Kosminskii believes there is a definite lack in studies that do not correspond
with the characteristics of a general economic depression. Kosminskii believes,
"What appears as a decline was basically a shift into another branch, or indeed, a market displacement. The decline of former economic centers was compensated for by the growth of new ones... he would find it difficult to admit the possibility of a general depression on the eve of the greatest economic boom in the history of Low Countries."\(^{11}\)

The economic fluctuations were advantageous for some and difficult for others, but this is not sufficient enough to label the Black Death as a cause to economic depression.

He goes on to examine England and the economy of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Although times of economic despair are clear in the entirety they were not a period of economic stagnation. "Rather this was a time in which decisive changes evolved, changes that moved England to first place in the process of European capitalist evolution."\(^{12}\) Instead he holds a Marxist theory and plays down the importance of the plague in the role of economic history.

Michael Postan also lessens the role of the plague and states in his writings and lectures that plague developed when population levels exceeded food supplies. He agrees with the Malthusian theory that the economic depression started well before the arrival of the plague. He argues that increasing population led to an increase in the cultivation of land. When the population began to decline sources were plentiful but soon diminished with the shortage of labor. "In some ways the movement of population was more fundamental than any of the other economic changes; yet it would be difficult to treat the population trends as the sole or final cause."\(^{13}\) The reason the recovery of the Black Death was slow according to Postan is because both population and production were moving downwards.

\(^{12}\) Kosminskii, 568.
While Michael Postan supports the Malthusian theory, David Herlihy completely rejects the Malthusian theory. Herlihy believes a low birth rate and later marriages are the major cause of the population decline, not the plague. The population decline had begun almost a century before the plague had arrived in Europe. Herlihy concentrates on the town of Pistoia to prove his argument. “The population had been stable or even declining at Pistoia for a century before the Black Death.” Birth rates according to Herlihy were by no means fixed and they were highly sensitive to a variety of influences. It is a fact Herlihy states that, “…even apparently small fluctuations in births can have profound effects on the direction and degree of population changes.” Herlihy admits that there was a growing population prior to the plague in certain areas of Europe; however, he connects it directly to his theory of a low birth rate. “The importance of overpopulation was probably greater in worsening social and economic conditions, and thus adversely influencing the birth rate, rather than a direct provocation of plague and famine.” Whether or not a historian supports or denies the Malthusian theory much time has been spent studying the role of the population and its effect on the economy during Europe as a factor to the cause of the Black Death.

While some historians have focused heavily on the economic role of the Bubonic Plague, Raymond Delatouche argues the plague was not an economic crisis but a moral crisis, with roots in philosophical and religious tensions of the thirteenth century. “One cannot seriously believe that agriculture was no longer able to nourish a population supposedly grown too numerous.” Agriculture is in no way to blame for the plague according to Delatouche. According to Delatouche, the crisis occurred half a century before the plague began. The plague did not strike

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15 Herlihy, 115
16 Herlihy, 120
17 Delatouche, Raymond. *La crise du XIVe siecle en Europe occidentale*. 
a healthy body; it struck an already weakening organism. The Black Death was simply a further factor in the decline of morality. "The decline in moral potential was accompanied by the growth of individualism, by the relaxation of social, religious, familial, feudal, rural, and urban bonds."\(^{18}\)

One example Delatouche uses to cite his theory of moral decline is rooted in the decline of feudalism. Under feudalism, communities were forced to group together to work on projects such as the construction of churches or organizing drainage ditches and irrigation. However, the decline in feudal power and the decreasing creativity led to a decline in communal associations. Society, Delatouche argues, became too relaxed; they lost their creativity and became selfish. This is the reason for the decline of society and the economy in the fourteenth century. The Black Death is merely a factor in the larger picture of an ongoing moral decay.

Elisabeth Carpentier is concerned with the late medieval economic and social history. Carpentier believes that in order to see the significance of the plague it must be viewed as a cyclical recurrence. The Black Death of 1348 produced vast human losses but Europe should have recovered quickly if it was just a one time occurrence. Europe had seen great mortalities in 1315 and in 1340 and the population quickly recovered. The reason you don’t see the population rebound is due to the plague systematically returning approximately every ten years. "In order to understand better the consequences of the plague as well as the slow disappearance of these consequences, it is necessary on the one hand to emphasize that the effects of the epidemics were cumulative..."\(^{19}\) The Black Death alone can not be blamed for the lasting fall of demographics but when looked at as cyclical with the later outbreaks of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it ensures depopulation and a change into the beginning of modern Europe.

\(^{18}\) Delatouche,

J.F.D. Shrewsbury argues in his book, *A History of the Bubonic Plague in the British Isles* (1970), that the plague was not as violent as many historians believed and reported. Shrewsbury focuses on the epidemic history of Britain from the middle of the fourteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century concentrating on the role of the plague. The high mortality rate may have been due to other epidemic diseases such as the typhus fever. Shrewsbury bases his argument on the known behavior of the modern disease and the carrier. The plague Shrewsbury argues is a summer disease most likely to become an epidemic in hot weather. In colder climates the flea becomes dormant and hibernates, which would have caused the plague to lay dormant. He also argues that you need a large population of house rats to bring the plague to epidemic status. The house rat’s subsistence was dependent upon three things in the British Isles protection from natural predators, shelter from the cold and a regular food supply. All of these factors could only be supplied by the human population. “As a rule therefore the human disease must have been proportionate in its extent to the density of the human population, and as the density was uneven so the incidence of bubonic plague was uneven.”

Many places reported to have suffered from the epidemic could not have done so in regards to the uneven population distribution.

“It is absolutely certain therefore that the great national outburst of bubonic plague in 1348-1350 afflicted only a part, and in all probability much the smaller part of the population of England, and that statements that it destroyed three-quarters or even one half of the nation are flights of fancy boosted by the age-old terror that the name ‘plague’ still excites.”

As far as judging whether an epidemic was the plague or another disease, the time of year it happened is critical according to Shrewsbury. He does not see it likely that an outbreak of the

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21 Shrewsbury, 36
plague happened outside of the summer months and suggests that those epidemics which had their onset in the winter were typhus or other diseases.

"The January-February peak represents the mortality from smallpox, typhus fever, and infections of the respiratory tract; the October-November peak represents the mortality from diphtheria, measles, St. Anthony’s fire, and infections of the intestinal tract. It is a cardinal mistake therefore to assume that because a person died in 1348 or 1349 he or she necessarily died of bubonic plague." 22

Although, not all of Shrewsbury’s arguments are valid he makes a strong stand that the plague was not as devastating as many historians build it up to be.

Charles Verlinden also downplays the role of the plague. Verlinden studies the effects of the Black Death in Spain. Measures were taken to cope with the impact of the plague. Labor problems were addressed; legislation was passed to regulate the prices of products and salaries of workers. The issue of the reaction by the masses was a concern but overall the plague did not have a significant impact. Verlinden argues,

"The great plague caused considerable disturbances in Spain but no real changes in the fundamental character of any political, social or economic institution. If it momentarily retarded economic evolution, it did not modify the orientation of this evolution. Moreover, we believe that this is a conclusion that is valid for all of Europe." 23

Not only does he believe the impact was minimal for Spain, Verlinden states that the Black Death had only minor effects on all of Europe.

William J. Courtenay focuses more specifically on the effects of the Black Death on higher education in England. For his study he focuses on the college of Oxford. Courtenay

22 Shrewsbury, 50
studies the population trends of students of theology. According to his studies, of the 87 theologians known to have been residence before the plague, 61 are known to have survived beyond 1350. This leaves a total of twenty-eight percent of students missing, which is not substantially higher than decades prior to the plague. “There is no evidence that the Black Death took any more than an additional five to ten percent.” Courtenay attributes the apparently low mortality rate to a number of factors. First, most students were of a good age and in good health they ate well diets and lived in good conditions. Secondly, they could escape quickly if need be. Also the high point of the Black Death was in the summer months when the students were not at school, they usually did not return until mid-October. Courtenay also looks at the level of populations attending by decade throughout the fourteenth century. Although there is a slight dip between the years 1340-1359 and a larger increase between the years 1380-99 he argues that the increase is due to the growing number of new colleges. “Putting the evidence together, one can conclude that the Black Death had only a marginal impact on the population of the University of Oxford.” Courtenay’s study clearly lessons the role of the plague, at least in the death toll of students attending Oxford.

Robert Gottfried takes another approach when looking at the role of the plague in history by focusing on the environment. Gottfried believes he adds a more balanced perspective when studying the plague. Weather patterns, Gottfried argues, have a lasting impact on the movement and effects of the plague. The rat will abandon his nest if the temperatures are too cold therefore plague outbreaks were are usually designated to particular seasons. “It is important to stress that

25 Courtenay, 702
26 Courtenay, 705
an outbreak of plague occurs only in confluences with a variety of environmental conditions."^{27}

Gottfried discusses at length the environmental conditions and their influence on the plague. Because of many wet seasons in the early 1300’s, many crops were destroyed leading to famine, which in turn made them more vulnerable and susceptible in contracting the plague. Some historians argue that the plague could not be responsible for the deaths in colder climates such as the Netherlands, because the rat and flea, the main culprits for spreading the disease, would not survive in these cooler climates. Gottfried argues on the other hand that the high mortality rate, over 50% in Holland was a result of the colder northern climate, “which facilitated pulmonary complications and, hence, pneumonic plague.”^{28} In correlation to Elisabeth Carpentier’s theory Gottfried notes that the plague was cyclical and the number of years was dependent upon the local insect and rodent ecological and climatic conditions. Gottfried sums up his view of the importance of the environment by stating from the thirteenth century through the fifteenth century Europe, North Africa and the Middle East suffered the most severe environmental crisis in history. “Biological and climatic determinants influenced virtually every aspect of human life, and did so to a greater degree than at any time since the beginning of civilization.”^{29} The key Gottfried concludes to understanding this terrible devastation is man’s helplessness before nature.

Many of the recent scholarly writings on the plague have focused in on specific regions across Europe where the plague surfaced. Recently, there has also been an increase lately in books published on the Black Death focusing on debunking commonly held misconceptions of the plague. The next series of authors devote their studies to the Black Death to disprove the

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28 Gottfried, 57
29 Gottfried, 161
falsely held accusations regarding the plague. Among them are the role of the rat, the existence of the bubonic plague and other possible explanations as to the causes of this great epidemic.

The Black Rat has been labeled as the main carrier of the Black Death transporting the disease from Asia to Europe. David Davis argues that one should look closer at the statistics of rats living during this time before blaming the rat for the plague. Davis writes about the plague focusing specifically on data that proves the Black Rat is falsely accused of spreading the plague. He argues that the rat was rare or absent in most of Europe where the plague spread and is therefore not responsible for the epidemic. He states that the pneumonic plague can occur in the absence of the rodent and that it is likely that the Pneumonic plague was the leading killer and not the Bubonic plague. Davis examines several sources of evidence to support his thesis that the rat was not responsible including archaeological, written texts, pictures and epidemiology. "The fact that only one or two rats were found at an archeological site would suggest that the rats were rare and thus may not have reached the number required for the maintenance of plague." 30 As well there are few pictures and writings noted that many rodents were referred to as rats including, the muskrat, kangaroo rat, cotton rat, rice rat and others. 31 Davis concludes his argument by stating, "The available evidence indicates that Rattus rattus was rare and erratically dispersed both geographically and temporally at the time of the Black Death... Furthermore, the spread and distribution of the Black Death does not match the ecological requirements of the rats." 32

Susan Scott and Christopher Duncan set out to debunk the popular misconceptions of this ancient terror, the Black Death. In their book, Return of the Black Death the Worlds Greatest

31 Davis, 465
32 Davis, 470
Serial Killer, one of the mystery's they uncover is the fact that the plague actually had an incubation period of 32 days. Because of this exceptionally long incubation period the plague was able to jump significantly long distances and could then seem to appear suddenly as if out of nowhere. A person who was infected could possibly pass on the infection to any and everyone they came into contact without even realizing they were carrying the plague. "We had discovered the plague's secret weapon," writes Scott and Duncan. Scott and Duncan go on to talk about other myths. The credit Shrewsbury, who deemphasized the role of the plague in the British Isles, for noting that many of the epidemics were incorrectly reported as being the Bubonic plague when in fact they were likely typhus. Scott and Duncan agree with David Davis that the rat was wrongly accused. The credit Dr. Twigg a distinguished zoologist for coming up with his theory that the pandemic was not caused by bubonic plague. The plague must be spread by a rodent but with the absence of the rat due to climatic reasons the bubonic plague was not possible to have caused an epidemic. Why then do so many historians still credit the rat as the main carrier of the bubonic plague?

"Most historians lack detailed knowledge of the complex biology of the bubonic plague and it is for this reason that we have devoted a whole chapter to explaining the interactions between fleas, resistant rodents, rats, humans and the environment that are necessary for an epidemic of this disease to occur."  

There is no telling whether the rat will continue to be blamed for the plague or if history will start to examine alternative theories.

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34 Scott, Duncan, 163
35 Scott, Duncan, 184
Dr. Graham Twigg, is a zoologist who specializes in the biology of rodents. Twigg is seen as a very controversial but refreshing author to write about the plague. He poses a series of arguments to certain characteristics of the plague. Among them, he questions the environmental climate and whether it would have permitted such a serious and widespread epidemic. How could the plague spread so rapidly after it first arrived on the shores in Italy, before it had time to establish itself in the local population? And how could the plague cause such high mortality rates even in the winter months? Twigg argues that the plague was not the disease responsible for the Black Death. He believes there were not enough rats or fleas to sustain an epidemic. As well it spread much too fast to be the bubonic plague. Instead Anthrax, Twigg suggests, was the cause of the epidemic of the fourteenth century. He states that many of the clinical descriptions of the Black Death are comparable to that of Anthrax. However, Twigg is criticized by many historians for not using enough first hand resources to support his theory. As well, he is criticized for focusing on the Black Death only in England. Although his theory was originally rejected by most historians his view and perspective continues to grow in popularity.

Norman Cantor also points out many problems with the current beliefs about the origins, transmission and nature of the plague. Cantor also questions the historical consensus that regards the bubonic plague as being the leading cause of the Black Death. Cantor, like Graham Twigg, addresses the theory that anthrax may have been the cause of many deaths as oppose to the Bubonic plague. There was an enormous increase in cattle ranching according to Cantor, which led to congested conditions which was a likely remedy for the spreading of anthrax. The question however remains; can anthrax be spread from cow to person? “The answer appears to be in the affirmative. Eating tainted meat from sick herds of cattle was a form of transmission to humans just as eating chimpanzees, in the modern day Republic of Congo, is believed by scientists to
have started the AIDS disease in East Africa in the 1930’s.”\(^3^6\) Cantor is arguing that if chimpanzees can transmit Aids, then cows can transmit anthrax to people. Anthrax also answers the question, if rats were hard to find, or are now believed to have been incapable of spreading the bubonic plague, why did such large death tolls still exist. Cantor believes, “Thompson’s conclusion that bubonic plague and anthrax probably coexisted during the fourteenth century is the best that science can currently prove.”\(^3^7\)

As a result of so many diverse new theories on the plague and the scrutiny that comes along with publishing controversial works there are still historians that try to present the basic facts with as little bias as possible. Philip Ziegler’s, *The Black Death*, attempts to do just this. Ziegler traces the basic origins of the epidemic, symptoms and its spread throughout Europe. A large portion of his book is devoted to the plague in England. In one chapter he even creates an imaginary town to demonstrate the effects of the plague. He is very cautious in his inferences and makes no attempt to develop large sweeping statements. He claims right away that he is not a professional historian on the subject matter and that he has done very little original research. Although, the writings continue to grow in diversity regarding the role of the plague there are also books that are aimed at the general overview of the plague with little predisposition.

It is certain that the Black Death has had a lasting impact on the social, economic and political society of Europe. Since the time of the Black Death of 1348, countless research has been spent on studying the exact role that the plague has had. The plague has been labeled a turning point from the medieval to the modern era. It has been credited as the main push that sent Europe into the Renaissance. The plague has been accounted as a result of overpopulation. Some have referred to the plague as a result of the moral and religious crisis that took place a

\(^3^6\) Cantor, Norman. 2001. *In the Wake of the Plague*. New York: The Free Press, 15

\(^3^7\) Cantor, 17
decade before it even struck Europe. Then there are those that say the effects of the plague have been exaggerated, claiming that nowhere near 50 percent of the population perished. It has been argued that the bubonic plague was likely not the cause of the epidemic, but rather anthrax was. No matter where a historian placed the role of the plague into history it will continue to have a lasting impact on society; because society today continues to suffer from the same type of epidemics experienced in 1348.

Today we live in a society where we still fear epidemics and are currently watching them destroy lives around the world. AIDS, an epidemic that became a world wide fear in the 1980’s, continues to be a major threat to humans, especially in Africa today. The Bird Flu could easily turn into a world wide pandemic. It has already spread from Asia into Europe and is estimated to enter the United States by the end of the year 2006. Is our society better prepared today, then the people of the fourteenth century, for current epidemics? In some ways one could argue no. For example, even with all of our modern medicine we are still unable to create vaccines for certain strands of the flu. Yet what about the sanitation standards of today? Are we not better off in the way we live, take care of our health and bodies? Or have we used too many anti-bacterial soaps and gels that we have actually weakened our immune system? For the next part of my thesis I will look at the measures taken after epidemics such as the Black Death, the Spanish Influenza and Aids. How did society react? What preventative measures were taken and have we prepared sufficiently for future epidemics? I then plan to examine the most recent epidemic on the horizon the Bird Flu, and how prepared our society is and what impact it could have on our society, economy and government?
Comparing a Modern Epidemic AIDS to the Black Death

Cheryl Raleigh
Throughout history plagues have caused havoc and destruction to millions of people. Towns would suddenly fall ill and die and no one seemed to know why. As a way to explain the unknown cause of these terrible epidemics societies would generally place blame on a particular group. Theories would become exaggerated and stigmas would be used. One of the leading factors to these epidemics, of early civilizations, was the sanitary conditions. Running water, sewage systems and garbage pickup seem like second nature to people today, however it was not long ago that these commodities did not exist. Every where you look today you see lotions and soaps made with anti-bacterial agents. Has society changed in its reaction to modern day epidemics? Or are we as a society today still faced with many of the same stigmas and social reactions that plagues in the past faced? Upon examining society’s reactions and responses to the current epidemic AIDS, it is evident that while some attitudes have changed and evolved over the last six centuries, other responses are still very similar in regards to the way they were dealt with in the past.

The Black death of the fourteenth century took the lives of over one third of the population in Europe alone. In medieval times poor sanitation was a factor in the rapidly spreading disease. No one had any clue as to what initially caused this terrible disease. Many thought the Apocalypse had come. Some blamed the plague on the Jews. Others thought it was a punishment by God, flagellants wandered around publicly whipping themselves as punishment for their sins. Acts of debauchery and promiscuous activities were common scenes of the time, assuming life was going to end many thought they might as well live it up now. Peasants left fields to waste and for those horrific years, between 1347- 1352, time almost stood still. It is clear that the Bubonic Plague of the fourteenth century had many lasting effects on society. It continues to be remembered today as one of the most devastating epidemics in history. The
Plague is often compared when looking at society’s reactions and impacts to more modern epidemics. AIDS is one of the most serious epidemics that our current society faces. When looking at society’s reaction to this modern day epidemic it becomes evident that there are similarities to that of the Bubonic Plague.

AIDS is a modern day plague that began in the twentieth century and continues to be a major epidemic of the twenty first century. It has taken the lives of millions of people around the world and continues to do so. As of today there is still no cure for the virus. When AIDS was first discovered in America, in 1979, panic and fear spread across the nation. No one knew what was causing the virus. No one knew how it was transmitted. Worst of all no one knew how to stop it. In looking at the initial outbreak of the AIDS epidemic it is clear that one can draw similar parallels to how the fourteenth century society reacted to the Bubonic Plague. Both epidemics caught the world by surprise. In addition there was initially no cure for either disease. The Bubonic Plague as well as AIDS resulted in much superstition and myths surrounding the causes of the epidemics. Although it would be inaccurate to compare the two epidemics on a medical level it is evident that both draw many similarities on a social scale.

An examination of the initial outbreak of AIDS, looking closely at the first five years from 1980 to 1985, will prove that society reacted in fear, blame and bigotry which was similar to society’s reaction to the outbreak of the Bubonic Plague. Looking both locally as well as nationally at newspapers, articles and writings regarding AIDS will lead to the theory that AIDS can be seen as a modern day plague.

The single outstanding characteristic of AIDS is that the patient’s cellular immune system, which normally fights off diseases, is severely damaged. It leaves the victims unprotected from cancers, pneumonia and other infections, when combined with a weekend
immune system this can be fatal. Not all people who are exposed to the virus develop the disease. The American Center for Disease Control (CDC) was first alerted to AIDS in 1981, although it would not be called AIDS for another year. In March of 1981 it had been reported that there were at least eight cases of a rare cancer found in young gay men living in New York City. This uncommon cancer was Kaposis Sarcoma, a relatively benign cancer that tended to occur in older people. Around the same time there was a strange increase in the demand for Pentamindine, a drug used to help fight Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia. “A doctor was treating a gay man in his twenties who had pneumonia. Two weeks later, he called to ask for a refill of a rare drug that I handled. This was unusual- nobody ever asked for a refill. Patients usually were cured in one ten day treatment or they died.”

More and more doctors were seeing an increase in infections that healthy people were normally immune to. AIDS was first announced in print on June 1st 1981 in the CDC’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. The article suggested that there was some connection between the lifestyle of homosexuals and Pneumocystis Carinii Pneumonia in this population. Again a month later they reported discussing Kaposis Sarcoma in 32 new cases among gay men living in New York and California.

In the beginning of 1982 AIDS had still not been given a name. It was commonly referred to as being associated with being gay. Names included the “gay cancer” “gay plague” “gay compromise syndrome” or GRID (gay related immune deficiency). These early reports on AIDS tended to set the tone for future journalism categorizing AIDS with being gay.

“Press headlines from the early days tell the story: “Gay Plague Baffling Medical Detectives” (Philidelphia Daily News, August 9, 1982), “Being Gay Is a Health Hazard” (The

38 Daniel McGinn, 'MSNBC: AIDS at 20: Anatomy of a Plague; an Oral History', Newsweek Web Exclusive
Saturday Evening Post, October 1982), “Gay Plague Has Arrived in Canada” (Toronto Star, November 26, 1982).”

Around this time there began to develop a number of theories as to what was the possible cause of these opportunistic infections and cancers. The CDC conducted studies among homosexual men with and without the disease. “After testing for more than 130 potential risk factors, they found that the median number of lifetime male sexual partners for affected homosexuals was 1,160, compared to 524 for male homosexuals who did not have the syndrome.”

Doctors were finding that the more anonymous sexual encounters a homosexual person had, clearly had a connection to the disease. One of the CDC’s early theories included the use of amyl nitrite or butyl nitrate “poppers” as a cause for the infection. These were often used to help intensify an orgasm and were reportedly often used by men who had contracted AIDS. Other theories suggested that too many drugs and STD’s had resulted in an immunological meltdown in those fast lane individuals, this became known as the ‘overload theory’. At the time the disease seemed to strike only homosexuals, and as a result there were even far reaching conspiracy theories. One claimed that the federal government had released a chemical agent that was sprinkled on the bath house floors and was absorbed by the men’s skin. As a result of so little knowledge regarding causes and transmission of the disease and with information changing so quickly many assumptions would be made and a few months later would be unfounded.

At this time the disease was appearing only in gay men. Therefore, it posed no immediate threat to anyone outside of the gay community. In July of 1981, Dr. Curran from the CDC reported, “There was no apparent danger to non homosexuals from contagion. The best evidence against contagion is that no cases have been reported to date outside the homosexual community or women.”\(^{43}\) However, just five months later the first case of AIDS was reported in an intravenous drug user that had no history of homosexuality. This would stir more theories and create more negativity.

Then came the report of two new groups who had contracted AIDS in 1982, the Haitians and Hemophiliacs. The occurrence of the disease in non homosexuals meant that names such as “Gay Plague” and GRID were unfounded. The acronym AIDS was suggested at a meeting in Washington, D.C. in July.\(^{44}\) By August it was being used by the Media. The acronym AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

As a result of the disease appearing at first only in gay men the media did not give much attention to the disease at all. The Gay Press reported briefly on the disease from the beginning but the Strait Press wasn’t even mentioning it. Gay news or anything associated with it was not viewed as interesting or important to the public. Therefore, stories about AIDS were not front page news. Newsweek was the first of the nation’s magazines to put AIDS as the cover story but not until, April 13, 1983. Gay activist’s argued that stories relating to Legionnaire’s Disease in 1976 and the cyanide-laced Tylenol scare in 1982 made front page news because they were ‘epidemics’ that threatened white, middle class, heterosexual families and therefore, were judged to be newsworthy. “One estimate claimed that in the first eighteen months of the epidemic the Times ran only seven articles on AIDS, compared with fifty-four articles during the three-month

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\(^{44}\) Time. A Name For The Plague”, March 30, 1983.
scare about poisoned Tylenol." Not until AIDS appeared in groups other than homosexuals did it become front page news. “Once the illness appeared among infants and those who had received blood transfusions, this attitude changed dramatically, and from early 1983 on AIDS has been the continuing preoccupation of the media.” James Kineslla argues,

“Why did AIDS become news? Not because young men were dying from it. Not because the death rate was terrifyingly high. Not because it presented a fascinating medical puzzle. It became news only when journalist decided that AIDS posed a threat to themselves, their families, and friends.”

Had AIDS been put on front page covers and more stories run on the virus from the beginning, then maybe the awareness would have increase, resulting in fewer cases developing as a result of simply not knowing about the disease and how it was spread.

The Government’s response to AIDS was less than ambitious as well. Ronald Reagan, the President at the time, had never used or mentioned the word AIDS in public. October 15, 1982 was the first public mention of AIDS in the Regan House. The word was used by Larry Speakes, Regan’s Press Secretary. When asked does the President have any reaction to the fact that the CDC had now diagnosed over six hundred cases, Mr. Speakes replied, “What’s AIDS?”

As the briefing went on Mr. Speakes continued to make fun of the disease and laughed in reference to the “Gay Plague”. The negative and condescending reaction from the Whitehouse set a tone for the rest of society. The Government’s response to the epidemic was bleated and inadequate. There were disputes each year between the legislative and executive branches over funding for AIDS. “But it is notable because it reflects the sense of urgency with which many

45 Altman, 19
46 Altman, p16
members of congress have come to view the disease in the last few months. The President would not mention AIDS publicly until 1985 at a news conference. In the conference the President was questioned about the funding for AIDS research. He was criticized for his monetary contribution to the research foundation for AIDS. The President responded by saying, that his $126 million had to be something of a vital contribution. “In a different sort of society AIDS would be perceived as a crisis of public health rather than a gay issue.” However under the administration of Regan, the coincidence of a weak public health sector and a strong emphasis on community identity shaped the particular form the epidemic would take. “AIDS hit those outside the mainstream American society at a time when the generosity of that society to its outcasts is declining to a level previously unknown.” As one person with AIDS put it in an appeal to President Regan,

“Like our fist President, you are the father of this country. Do you hear me when I say your children are dying? This problem transcends politics. I ask for more than a simple release of funds; I am asking for an act of love. If you are my father, Mr. President, I am your son. Please help me save my life.”

Sadly under the administration of Regan, your health was seen as your responsibility and not that of the governments.

Fear was still predominant because no one was quite sure how the disease spread. Then in December of 1982 came a breakthrough.

“The CDC received a report that a 20 month old infant from San Francisco who had developed unexplained cellular immunodeficiency and opportunistic

infection. This occurred after multiple transfusions, including a transfusion of platelets derived from the blood of a male subsequently found to have AIDS."52

This case provided clearer evidence that AIDS was caused by an infectious agent. As well the report raised serious speculation about the possible transmission of AIDS through blood and blood products. By the end of 1982 many more people were taking notice of the disease. It was becoming clearer that AIDS could affect more groups of people. “When it began turning up in children and transfusion recipients, that was the turning point in terms of public perception. Up until then it was entirely a gay epidemic, and it was easy for the average person to say ‘So what?’ Now everyone could relate.”53 With the new evidence attitudes about AIDS started to change.

The CDC began warning multiple groups that were at high risk of contracting the infectious agent. Among those groups were sexual partners of AIDS patients, sexually active homosexuals or bisexuals with multiple partners, Haitian entrants to the United States, abusers of IV drugs, and patients with hemophilia. In a report following this announcement they stated, “Each group contains many people who probably have little risk of acquiring AIDS… Very little is known about risk factors for Haitians with AIDS.”54 The inclusion of Haitians as a risk group caused much controversy. Haitian Americans complained of stigmatizations, officials accused the CDC of racism, and Haiti suffered a serious blow to its tourism industry.55

As reports surfaced that children were developing AIDS, a panicked theory began that AIDS could be transmitted through casual household contact. “Both Dr. James Oleske of the New Jersey School of Medicine and Dr. Anthony Fauci of the National Institutes of Health

52 MMWR Weekly. “Epidemiologic Notes and Reports Possible Transfusion-Associated Acquired Immune deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) —California. December 10, 1982; 31(48);652-4
suggested that AIDS might be communicable through ‘routine close contact’.”

The fear of transmission was increased across the nation. In San Francisco, Police Departments were equipped with gloves and masks to use when dealing with a possible suspect. “The officers were concerned that they could bring the bug home and their whole family could get AIDS.”

In New York City the fear was just as high. “Landlords have evicted individuals with AIDS” and “the Social Security Administration is interviewing patients by phone rather than face to face.”

Closer to home in Rochester, firefighters feared catching the disease from fire victims. “A firefighter who was not wearing gloves carried a bloodied victim out of a recent fire. He then became overwrought, believing that the victim may have had acquired immune deficiency syndrome and that he may have contracted it.”

Medics too became overly cautious. The belief that AIDS could be transmitted by casual contact had some doctors and nurses overly cautious in their treatment of victims. “Some health care workers were reluctant to treat AIDS patients and were doing less than expected on the job.”

Morgues and morticians feared contracting the virus, especially when handling the deceased who possessed the virus. The State Health department stopped all practices of embalming for some time and then reinstated it with strict orders on the process. They were to wear two pairs of gloves when draining blood from the body among other procedures. Prison facilities were another location where fear spread. “Some inmates at Auburn Correctional Facility boycotted meals after a prisoner died of AIDS, saying they feared the disease would be transmitted to them by the food.”

The CDC tried to calm fears, although the cause of AIDS was still unknown, they believed there was no solid evidence

56 Altman, 17.
to support the belief that AIDS was passed through casual contact. More likely they believed the occurrence of AIDS in young children was due to the mother being affected and transmitting it to her child before, during or shortly after birth.

Other fears stemmed from misleading reports, such as, one could catch AIDS from saliva. In a Hollywood reporter’s column, Marilyn Beck reported the death of actor Rock Hudson. His death from AIDS was causing panic among some Hollywood actors, who worked with homosexual actors. In her article she quoted the anonymous husband of a leading lady saying, “I wouldn’t want my wife to kiss a gay actor in a romantic scene out of fear the disease could spread.” She also quoted anonymous medical experts saying that AIDS could “conceivably” be spread through a wet kiss. This misrepresentation of how the disease spread continued to stir fear and stigmas of the virus.

The concern about AIDS and public health continued. In San Francisco all the gay bath houses and private sex clubs were closed down. Bath houses brought in anywhere from 100 to 1,000 men every night.

“Bath houses were havens for anal intercourse. The institutions were designed to expedite many partners, thus ensuring that everyone there had a higher chance of being infected because they were exposed to many others. Bathhouses guaranteed the rapid spread of AIDS among gay men.”

After numerous studies all pointing to clear evidence that there was an increased risk to catching a sexually transmitted disease in bathhouses and multiple violations of warnings to bathhouses, the health department felt they had no choice but to shut them down. Some gay men

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felt this was violating their civil rights, but the public health department felt it was best and that closing down of these facilities was in no way a violation of their civil liberties.

The CDC had a continuing investigation as to the cause of AIDS. They were following the sexual contact of gay men in New York City as well as Los Angeles. When the CDC identified a single man as the link between a number of cases they gave him the name “patient zero”. Gaetan Dugas was a flight attendant who had been linked to more than forty of the first 248 men to contract AIDS. This began a theory that AIDS had developed from one single man, a French Canadian flight attendant. Ads were run about this mystery ‘patient zero’ in newspapers as well as magazines. Although this theory would later be expelled, the CDC’s study helped in gaining insight as to how the virus was spread.

In 1984 the French announced that they believed to have a cure for AIDS. The French had discovered the virus, LAV (Lymphadenopathy-Associated Virus). Just after the announcement came that the French had discovered the virus, Dr. Gallo from the National Cancer Institute announced that he had isolated the virus which caused AIDS and named it HTLV-III (Human T-Cell Leukemia Virus). Both applied for a patent and were hopeful that within two years there may be a cure for AIDS. In January of 1985 it became clear that LAV and HTLV-III was the same virus. The following year both names would be dropped and the virus would be given a new name, HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus). Soon to follow was the first blood test which could reveal the presence of antibodies to HIV. With the new blood test came concerns about confidentiality and the meaning of a positive result.

“Richard Dunne, director of the Gay Men’s Health Crisis, said that the group would not object to the wider availability of the procedure provided that certain safeguards were assured: informed consent, good counseling and confidentiality, ‘which means
anonymity,' he said. He stressed that the city must prevent insurance companies, employers, schools and others from gaining access to test results."64

Despite measures to keep results confidential, discrimination was imminent.

There was criticism that too much was going to be expected from these blood test results. One legislation proposed that all people applying for a marriage license would have to have a blood test. However, this bill ignored the fact that many couples were having sex before marriage and that the majority of AIDS patients were homosexual who would not likely marry. State assemblymen in New York proposed legislation that all prison inmates be tested for AIDS and those who showed signs needed to be isolated. However, this could set a dangerous precedent and perpetuate misconceptions about how AIDS is transmitted and who is at risk for catching the virus. "It’s like saying we should test all food service employees and all barbers and hairdressers because of their contact with the public. That’s nonsense, Dr. William Valenti, co-chairman of the Rochester Area Task Force on AIDS, said."65 Normal daily contact with prisoners as well as many other professional jobs did not pose jeopardy to the workers, yet many could not help but fear for their lives. It was a deadly disease, with no known cause or cure.

By the end of 1985, 16,558 cases of AIDS had been reported.66 At the time 85% of people who had developed AIDS had died. Medical Researchers were aware that the AIDS disease destroyed the body’s immune system, leaving it open to fatal infections.

Early symptoms could include night sweats, fever, chronic diarrhea and hairy leukoplakia, in which thick, white, hairy-looking patches appear on the tongue or mouth.

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Later stages were characterized by the development of diseases such as a form of cancer known as Kaposi's sarcoma and Penumocystis carinii pneumonia.¹⁷ There was still a long way to go in the medical world and the AIDS epidemic would continue to grow.

Upon examining the first five years that the AIDS epidemic surfaced in the United States it is clear that there are a number of similarities to the Bubonic Plague. AIDS can be considered a modern day plague. The following pages will compare similarities as well differences between two major killers AIDS and the Bubonic Plague. Both epidemics caught the world by surprise with no cure. Many different theories and myths developed as a way to explain the cause of the Bubonic Plague and AIDS. Although it would be inaccurate to compare the two epidemics on a medical level it is evident that both draw many similarities on a social scale.

The way that the world initially handled the AIDS epidemic is similar to the way the world handled the Bubonic Plague-with denial, blame, fear and shunning. Both of these epidemics caught the world by surprise and initially there were no known cures for either disease. The unknown quality of a disease without a cure is what makes it so frightening. At first, societies dealt with the epidemic by denial. Towns in Europe did not believe the Bubonic Plague would reach them. Similarly, when AIDS first appeared it was seen as a Gay Plague. As long as you were not a homosexual you did not have to worry about the virus affecting you.

Once these societies began to accept the existence of the disease, they then started to assign blame. In response to the Bubonic Plague many Europeans blamed the Jews as the cause. They believed that the Jews were poisoning the wells in which people retrieved their water. Jews often lived apart from the rest of society and therefore were not as easily exposed to the plague.

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¹⁷ Times Union. "AIDS Hits Home" February 18, 1986
When whole towns would become struck with the plague, and the Jews would survive, speculation became rampant that the Jews were at fault.

While Europeans blamed the plague on the Jews, Americans blamed AIDS on homosexual men. Homosexual men were the first group to contract the virus and almost immediately the virus was associated with being gay. The gay community had previously confronted such problems as violence, discrimination and minimal government support. Now they had a new issue to face. “The equation of AIDS with gay men carried with it a strain of blaming gays for the introduction and spread of the disease, and the concomitant idea that others who fell sick were somehow ‘innocent victims.’” In the San Francisco Chronicle, the report of the death of a woman shows clearly how she is an innocent victim. “The death of a woman from AIDS in the fall of 1984 following a blood transfusion was the worst nightmare of the AIDS crisis.” Hemophiliacs were portrayed as the victims, while gays who contracted AIDS were seen as deserving it because of the risky lifestyle they took part in.

Society can be very cruel to anything that seems unusual or abnormal. Indeed when both the Bubonic Plague and the AIDS epidemic surfaced victims who contracted the disease suffered much criticism and outcast from society. When people of the thirteen hundreds contracted the plague they were often abandon by their families. No one knew what was causing the disease and therefore they did not want to run the risk of catching it. Husbands would abandon wives, mothers would leave children and friends would turn their backs on one another. Doctors would not want to handle patients out of fear they might in turn contract the plague. The story is very similar in how society initially reacted to AIDS.

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68 Altman, p.25
69 Altman, p.20
Discovering you had contracted the AIDS virus was devastating, however, facing society and your family and friends’ reactions could be even worse. Many nurses and doctors would refuse to handle patients with AIDS. One victim describes his experience, “Health care workers called me a fagot and I overheard others saying that, ‘They asked for it. Why should we have to risk exposing ourselves’?”

AIDS would force some victims to announce for the first time that they were gay, exposing their families to deal not only with the fact that their son had AIDS but that he was also gay. Scare stories in the media did not make matters much easier. One newspaper article wrote about the connection of “Fisting” as a sexual practice of some gay men. Fisting is the practice in which the entire or partial fist is inserted into the anus.

“Of 27 AIDS cases a Los Angeles doctor studied, 81.5 percent had engaged in fisting before they became ill. The average person who picks that up does not see the word ‘maybe’ or that this is only 175 guys in one club. They immediately think all gays fist.

Now my family and friends look at me, wondering whether or not I fisted.”

This was embarrassing and humiliating to some gays who took no part in the practice of fisting. AIDS did not only affect the victim’s relationship with family member, it also had an effect on the family members’ relationships with outsiders. “I would almost say this is having more of an effect on my family than it is on me.” The victim goes on to tell how one man wore a plastic bag when he handed something to his mother that had belonged to her son. People did not know what was safe and what was not. Family members would refuse to come visit my parents out of fear that they may have caught the disease from me and that my parents would pass it on to them.

Victims of AIDS were also faced with legal issues resulting from society’s paranoia.

“One local man was told he could not come back to work without proof that he was not an AIDS

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72 Democrat and Chronicle. “AIDS sufferer, 26, faces possibility that his life may be nearing an end.” June 12, 1983.
carrier. Another local family was evicted from their apartment because one of the family members has AIDS. Many victims were fired as a result of a positive test result for HIV. Civil rights were being violated on a consistent basis, as a result several victims of discrimination against AIDS took their cases to court. Ryan White is one victim who took his case to court and won. Ryan White was born December 6, 1981 as a hemophiliac. He grew up having hemorrhages and would receive blood containing clotting matter twice a week. During a surgery in 1984 Doctors discovered that Ryan had AIDS. Doctors did not give him long to live but Ryan was determined. Ryan wanted to attend school as every other child did but found much discrimination. His school tried to keep him from attending and his town was not very supportive or sympathetic. After several legal battles Ryan and his mother settled with the school to allow Ryan to attend. However, he would use a separate facility and eat from plastic silverware. Regardless of the legal agreement discrimination continued. "Students vandalized his locker with the word 'FAG' and restaurants threw his dishes away after he left. A bullet was even fired into his home." Sadly the mysteries of plagues continue to have a way of casting both victims and their families in the role of social outcasts.

People believed that God played a role in both epidemics as well. During the Bubonic plague of the fourteenth century some believed it was God who had presented the plague upon them. They believed they were being punished for sins that they had committed. Out of this there arose much upheaval in society. Some became flagellants, who would go around whipping themselves in public, as a sign that they were willing to suffer for whatever crimes they had committed. Others figured that because God had not punished them with the plague then they were superior to those that suffered from the epidemic.

74 http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Exhibit/8222/ryan.htm
Just as God had punished the sinners during the Bubonic Plague, some believed that AIDS was a punishment by God for the lifestyles that homosexuals led. AIDS was seen as a Godsend to the religious right. AIDS was a disease sent to bring about the condemnation of homosexuals. In the words of an editorial in the Southern Medical Journal: “Might we be witnessing, in fact, in the form of a modern communicable disorder, a fulfillment of St. Paul’s pronouncement: ‘the due penalty of their error’?”75 AIDS was a divine punishment argued Ronald Godwin, “What I see is a commitment to spend our tax dollars on research to allow these diseased homosexuals to go back to their perverted practices without any standards of accountability.”76 While some believed AIDS was a punishment sent by God, others thought of it as a blessing that helped turn them towards God. “I was always searching for God, but it took AIDS to bring it out.”77 Sean argues that against religious fundamentalist belief that AIDS is a punishment. “I don’t look at it as a punishment or guilt. If the Lord decided to punish straight people for their sins, we’d be filled with plagues and diseases.”78

Another theory that ties these two epidemics together is the belief of their origins. Norman Cantor addresses the theory that anthrax may have been the cause of many deaths as oppose to the Bubonic plague. There was an enormous increase in cattle ranching according to Cantor, which led to congested conditions which was a likely remedy for the spreading of anthrax. The question however remains; can anthrax be spread from cow to person? “The answer appears to be in the affirmative. Eating tainted meat from sick herds of cattle was a form of transmission to humans just as eating chimpanzees, in the modern day Republic of Congo, is

75 Altman, p.13.
76 Altman, p.25.
believed by scientists to have started the AIDS disease in East Africa in the 1930’s.” Cantor is arguing that if chimpanzees can transmit Aids, then cows can transmit anthrax to people.

Although, this is only one scientist theory it is worth noting that both epidemics can trace their roots to an animal or rodent.

Although there are many similarities between the way in which society reacted to the Bubonic Plague as well as AIDS, there are also some differences. It would be inaccurate to say that the Bubonic Plague and the AIDS epidemic are mirror images of one another.

Medically there is no way to compare the two epidemics. During the Bubonic Plague medicine consisted of herbs and superstitious remedies. Doctors and physicians would wear leather costumes with a beak, which would contain sweet smelling herbs thought to filter contamination. They would walk around with a wand which contained incense to ward off impurities. Special chants were also a remedy thought to cure one from contracting the plague. Doctors of the time had no idea what was causing the disease and it would be years before anyone would come up with a cause and solution to the plague. Not until the end of the nineteenth century was the cause of the plague discovered.

AIDS however, made advances much quicker in the field of medicine. At first doctors were unaware as to what was causing the plague, but the CDC began gathering data and testing theories almost immediately. Looking at their facts, at the time, they narrowed down the cases to be only in homosexual men. Slowly they started seeing cases where it appeared in intravenous drug users and Haitians. When AIDS appeared in Hemophiliacs they believed that they had narrowed down the transmission to sexual contact and blood. Within five years doctors had figured out the routes and transmission of the disease. This was much faster than any other disease. To the gay community’s dismay though, these cases involving other social groups

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appeared after the gay community had suffered much bigotry and criticism. Although there is still no cure for the AIDS epidemic many people today with treatment are living with the virus as a chronic illness.

The rate at which these two epidemics spread as well as the size of population affected is also another difference. The Bubonic Plague swept across towns in Europe and within ten days whole villages would be dead. In the worst five years of the plague, 1347-1352, it killed an estimated 25 million people in Europe alone a number equaling almost two-thirds of the population. As quick as the Plague came it would be gone. Although it appeared randomly for the next four hundred years and there are still a few cases today, the Plague burnt itself out quickly. AIDS as an epidemic surfaced in 1980 and has continued to the present day. It has become systematic and has now lasted over two decades without slowing down. However, in the first five years that AIDS appeared its death tolls were no where near that of the Bubonic Plagues. As of 1985, 16,558 people had contracted the AIDS virus with approximately 85 percent of those victims dying. Sixteen thousand is a large number but in order for “AIDS to equal the desolation of the plague, AIDS would have to kill 79 million Americans from 1981 to 1985.”

It is evident that these two epidemics can be linked. AIDS is a modern day plague. Both have taken society by surprise. Fear and bigotry as a result, have mirrored one another in the way in which society reacted. Certain groups were seen as scapegoats for blaming the epidemic. Victims suffered psychologically and physically. God, was witness to both epidemics and credited as a playing a role in the cause. It can be said then that the AIDS epidemic and the Bubonic Plague resulted in consistent societal reactions.

As a conclusion to my research, for the final part of my thesis I plan to create a year long research project devoted to the study of history based upon themes. The students will be required to study one theme in history. Once they have selected a theme they will look at events of the past and present analyzing how they are similar. The project is inspired by my research comparing a Theme of Epidemics, the past being the Black Death and a more modern epidemic AIDS. The project will require students to analyze both primary and secondary source documents. They will complete many steps along the way leading to a culminating project at the end of the year.
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Jessop, A. *The English Historical Review, Vol. 9, No. 35. (Jul.1894).*


MMWR Weekly. *Epidemiologic Notes and Reports Possible Transfusion-Associated Acquired Immune deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) -California.* December 10, 1982


http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Exhibit/8222/ryan.htm


Connecting Research to Teaching

Cheryl Raleigh
Part 1: Connecting to Teaching

As an educator it is our duty to instill in our students the skills needed to succeed in the world in which we live. Offering our students opportunities to apply the material they are studying in the classroom to real life is imperative. One way to promote this type of learning in the classroom is to allow students to become actively involved in what they are learning. To apply the material of the past to the present allows the students to make these connections first hand by using their critical thinking skills. The theme magazine project has been developed to promote this type of rigorous and relevant learning within the classroom. It is a year long project centered on the students’ involvement in their own deductive reasoning. This project is broken down into several parts. The students will build upon each part with a culminating project at the end of the year followed by a reflection on the students and their participation in the assignment.

Global History and Geography focus on many themes throughout the course. Themes are defined as a distinct, recurring and unifying quality or idea. They are imperative in making connections and drawing upon recurring ideas as we examine our past. These themes that we study in Global History and Geography have not ended. They are still very much a part of the world that we live in today. Events of the past, based on a particular theme, continue to occur today and share many similar traits. The theme magazine assignment is centered on the students drawing these connections of events over the course of history by focusing in on one particular theme.

Once each student has selected a theme they will devote a year to the study, researching and analyzing both primary and secondary source documents to illustrate the connection of perspective, historical concepts, and events across time. The first documents the students are required to examine are current events. They must find five current events that are based on the theme they have chosen. For each current event that they select the student must complete a
current events form which requires the students to analyze the event at hand. They must summarize the article and then examine it and decide what bias and perspective the article is written in. Then they must draw upon the material they are currently learning in the course and relate how this current event which they have selected can be connected to a similar event from the past.

After the students have developed a good understanding of the theme they have selected in the present day they will then turn to the past in look more closely at how this theme has affected our history. In order to have a thorough understanding of the continuing relevance of their theme across history the students must complete substantial research on events of the past. It is crucial that students learn the process of how to accurately complete research, which in turn will develop their critical thinking skills when analyzing historical documents. The students must select no less than two, no more than four events from the past. Having selected the events students will receive a lesson on how to approach the research process of this assignment. Then they will be given a month to examine these events and summarize the information. For each event that they have selected the students must turn in a three page summary with at least eight different sources. When conducting their research the students should focus on what biases or differing opinions they come across on a particular event. They must then use their critical thinking skills to decipher what causes the opinions of a particular event to be different from one author to the next. What outside influences or values makes their ideas differ? What biases are evident? After the students have completed the historical research portion of the assignment they must then select five historical documents from this research that illustrates their selected theme. They will complete a historical document analysis form similar to the form for their current events.
The next component of this project requires the students to analyze art of many forms and its relation to their theme. Students can draw from a number of artistic expressions including, cartoons, paintings, music, poems, etc. They will then submit four pieces of artistic expression relating to their theme along with an art analysis form. Students will be required to distinguish and articulate how each piece of art work relates to their selected theme. Once the students have thoroughly articulated both primary and secondary sources relating to their theme they will then compile all of the information they have gathered into an essay. The Theme essay will focus on comparing and contrasting how these events across the course of history relate to a common theme. Beginning with historical research they should illustrate the pattern that history has followed by concluding with current events related to the same theme.

To connect all the research the students have gathered they will complete a culminating project in which they assemble a Theme Magazine, devoted to their theme and all the components of their year-long research. The magazine format itself requires the students to create a cover page depicting a visual representation of their theme. Within the magazine there will be a historical document section, a current events section and an artistic expression section. In addition they will have an editorial section where they will put their essay connecting all the themes. They will also be given the opportunity to complete a choice section. Within the choice section the students may create a cartoon, famous quotation, crossword puzzle or a horoscope for the future, all of which must correlate with their theme.

For the final piece of this year long project the students will be required to write a reflective essay based on two components. The first part of the reflection deals with the content of the theme project. The second component deals with the process by which the student completed the steps along the way and what they will take away from this project. Quality
reflection is a life long skill that students will use throughout school and beyond. It enables the students to examine the process by which they approached this assignment. What they liked and did not like. It requires students to put themselves out there. At first it may be difficult. But with enough practice the skill of reflection can prove very beneficial throughout life's many journeys.

The Theme Magazine assignment follows both New York State and National Standards in education for Global History and Geography.

**Specific NYS Curriculum addressed:**

**Standard 2**
Social Studies

Students will: use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in world history and examine the broad sweep of history from a variety of perspectives.

1. Define culture and civilization, explaining how they developed and changed over time. Investigate the various components of cultures and civilizations including social customs, norms, values, and traditions; political systems; economic systems; religions and spiritual beliefs; and socialization or educational practices

2. Analyze changing and competing interpretations of issues, events, and developments throughout world history

3. Analyze evidence critically and demonstrate an understanding of how circumstances of time and place influence perspective

3. Examine the social/cultural, political, economic, and religious norms and values of Western and other world cultures

4. Analyze different interpretations of important events, issues, or developments in world history by studying the social, political, and economic context in which they were developed; by testing the data source for reliability and validity, credibility, authority, authenticity, and completeness; and by detecting bias, distortion of the facts, and propaganda by omission, suppression, or invention of facts (Taken from National Standards for World History)
The Theme Magazine assignment encourages students to use chronological and synthetic thinking throughout the assignments many components. It is an assignment aimed at both rigorous and relevance. It motivates students to take an active role in their history as well as life in the present. In completing this project the students are surrounding themselves with real life applications. They are taking an active role in their citizenship and becoming a life long learner in the process. Giving students this hand on approach to their learning is beneficial in so many ways. When students are able to become an active participant in their learning they are much more understanding of the subject matter. The assignment enables students to understand why the past is so important to study and how the past affects their future. Drawing upon these connections in our history is crucial in today’s classroom. It enables the students to understand the purpose of why we examine our past in today’s classrooms. It is the past that gives us windows into our future.
Part 2: Teaching Component

THEME MAGAZINE
CONNECTING THE PAST TO PRESENT

It is imperative that students are able to analyze and synthesize both primary and secondary source documents. In addition they should be able to relate historical events to those of the present. As a year long project you will create a magazine centered on a Global Theme connecting events of the past to events of the present through documents and research. This assignment encourages you to think on a broader scale. You are expected to draw connections and comparisons between events over the course of history. This project will further enable you to analyze events that may occur in the future based upon your thematic study of history.

Global History & Geography Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geography</th>
<th>Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Golden Ages</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief Systems</td>
<td>Political Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Systems</td>
<td>Interdependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Diffusion</td>
<td>Science and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement of People and Goods</td>
<td>Change &amp; Turning Points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMPONENTS

- Historical document forms
- Current event forms
- Artistic Expression forms
- Essay connecting events of theme
- Magazine
- Reflection

OUTLINE

- Theme description
- Identify 5 events in history reflecting theme
- Complete 5 historical document forms
- Find 5 current events reflecting theme
- Complete 5 current events forms
- Find 4 art forms reflecting theme
  - 2 from past
  - 2 from present
- Complete 4 artistic expression forms
- Write essay connecting events throughout history
- Assemble magazine
  - Cover page
  - Information Page
  - Historical Document Section
  - Current Events Section
  - Art Section
  - Editorial Section
  - Choice Section
- Write a reflection
Theme Description

Theme Choice:

Definition of theme: ____________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

Examples of theme:
  • __________________________________________________________________
  • __________________________________________________________________
  • __________________________________________________________________
  • __________________________________________________________________
  • __________________________________________________________________
  • __________________________________________________________________
  • __________________________________________________________________
  • __________________________________________________________________

Ideas for visual representation of theme:
CURRENT EVENTS FORM

Directions: You will be required to read a newspaper, newsmagazine story, or internet article that addresses a world history issue.

After reading the story, fill in the information below with careful detail.

Headline: __________________________________________

Date: ________________ Source: ____________________________

Where and When (locate on the map) __________________________________

Who (list all people involved): ________________________________________

EXPLAIN AND SUMMARIZE THE ARTICLE IN YOUR OWN WORDS.

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

WHAT BIAS CAN YOU DETECT OR WHAT PERSPECTIVE IS MISSING/INCOMPLETE? THIS IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT.

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
CURRENT EVENTS

Connect this article to a similar event in history.

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

What theme does this article address and HOW does it address it?

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

**ON THE MAP BELOW, MARK THE LOCATION(S) OF THE ARTICLE**
HISTORICAL RESEARCH OF THEME

To have a thorough understanding of the continuing relevance of your theme across history you must complete substantial research of events in the past relating to your theme. You will need to focus on a minimum of two and a maximum of four events in our history that relate to your theme.

1. Select 2-4 events in history relating to your theme. You MUST okay them with me prior to researching them.

2. For each event you should find at least three different authors and examine their opinions of the event. Do they differ? If so how and why?

3. You need to have a total of eight sources for each event.

4. You must submit a three page summary, with sources, for each event that you research.

The following are helpful websites for research:

New York Archives  
http://www.archives.nysed.gov/aindex.shtml

National Archives  
http://www.archives.gov/index.html

Smithsonian Institutional Libraries  
http://www.sil.si.edu/

Organization of American Historians  
http://www.oah.org/

You can also click on our high school media link:  

This link gives you a list of helpful sites to visit including:  
EBSCO  
NOVEL Databases  
SIRS Knowledge Source  
News Bank-School Library Collection
GLOBAL HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY 9H

THEME MAGAZINE-HISTORICAL DOC.ANALYSIS

DIRECTIONS: Attach your Historical Document to the worksheet and answer the questions provided.

1. Who created the source and why? Was it created through a spur-of-the-moment act, a routine transaction, or a thoughtful, deliberate process?

2. Did the recorder have firsthand knowledge of the event? Or, did the recorder report what others saw and heard?

3. Was the recorder a neutral party, or did the creator have opinions or interests that might have influenced what was recorded?

4. Did the recorder produce the source for personal use, for one or more individuals, or for a large audience?

5. Was the source meant to be public or private?

6. Did the recorder wish to inform or persuade others? (Check the words in the source. The words may tell you whether the recorder was trying to be objective or persuasive.) Did the recorder have reasons to be honest or dishonest?

7. Was the information recorded during the event, immediately after the event, or after some lapse of time? How large a lapse of time?
Analyzing Artistic Expressions in History and Present Day

Identifying the Main Idea of the Artistic Expression

Art is used to present a strong visual message or point of view on a topic of current interest.

1. What historical event or idea is the art referring to?

2. What key people or groups are part of the artistic message?

3. How does this form of art depict these people? Explain any symbols used by the artist to portray people or countries.

4. Identify any captions, titles, labels, or speech bubbles in the art work. How do these contribute to the artist's message?

5. What is the message of this art form? How is the artist trying to persuade the reader?

Analyzing the Method Used by the Artist (Applicable if art form is a drawing)

Artists use a number of methods to convey their message including humor, caricature (an exaggerated drawing in which features are distorted), satire, and symbolism. Use the questions below to help analyze the cartoonist's method.

6. Is the cartoon drawn realistically or are the characters distorted? Does the way the characters are drawn cast them in a positive or a negative light? Why do you think the cartoonist chose to use this style?

7. Is the cartoon funny or is it serious? Explain how the method chosen by the cartoonist effectively conveys their message. What drawings, captions, or labels does the cartoonist use to grab the reader's attention? What did you notice first about the cartoon?
Theme Essay

Directions: Write a well-organized essay that includes an introduction, several paragraphs addressing the task below, and a conclusion.

THEME:

Task:
- Write an essay centered on your theme, which connects events throughout history.
- Provide a historical context which clearly identifies and defines the theme
- Identify and analyze 3-5 historical events and 1-2 current events
- Make explicit the connection between the historical and current events
Theme Magazine

1. Magazine Cover Page
   a. Name of magazine
   b. Theme should be clear to reader
   c. Visual representation of theme

2. Information Page
   a. Editor
   b. Publication Date
   c. Table of Contents

3. Historical Document Section
   a. 5 historical documents
   b. Explanation of each document in relation to the theme

4. Current Events Section
   a. 5 current events
   b. Summary of each current event
   c. Connect theme to the past

5. Artistic Expression Section
   a. 2 art forms from the past
   b. 2 art forms from the present-day

6. Editorial Section
   a. Essay comparing theme throughout history

7. Choice Section
   a. Design a cartoon relating to theme
   b. Famous quotation(s)
   c. Crossword puzzle
   d. Prediction of future events
   e. Other (to be approved by teacher)
# THEME MAGAZINE RUBRIC

**Grading Criteria:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>91 - 100</th>
<th>81 - 90</th>
<th>71 - 80</th>
<th>65 - 70</th>
<th>51 - 64</th>
<th>Below 50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The sections included all items contained in the section using 7 or more examples</td>
<td>The sections included all items contained in the section using 5-6 examples</td>
<td>The sections included all items contained in the section using 3-4 examples</td>
<td>The sections included all items contained in the section using 2 examples</td>
<td>The sections included all items contained in the section using 1 example</td>
<td>The sections included all items contained in the section using 1 or more examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>All sections use accurate information.</td>
<td>All sections use accurate information.</td>
<td>The sections include mostly accurate information with some minor errors.</td>
<td>Sections mix accurate and inaccurate information.</td>
<td>Sections use mostly inaccurate and/or incomplete Information.</td>
<td>Sections use no accurate information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Demonstrates creativity through the use of graphics and other additions.</td>
<td>Demonstrates an attempt at creativity through a limited use of graphics or additions.</td>
<td>No creativity demonstrated</td>
<td>No creativity demonstrated</td>
<td>2 sections are submitted</td>
<td>No creativity demonstrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The sections are not complete.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No creativity demonstrated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No creativity demonstrated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THEME MAGAZINE REFLECTION

Reflect on your year-long THEME Project. There will be two components to your reflection. The first will deal with the content of the theme project. The second component will deal with the process by which you completed the steps along the way. This reflection will be completed in a well-organized, well-thought out reflective analysis. Single sentence answers to the prompts will not be acceptable. The prompts below will guide your thinking and additional ideas you may want to include in your writing. This paper should be 2 – 3 pages long, word processed, 12 pt. font, and double-spaced. (Do not exceed 3 pages)

PART I- CONTENT OF THE THEME PROJECT

Paragraph 1: What did you learn about this THEME?

  a. How does it play a role in our history?
  b. Why is this theme important to study?

Paragraph 2: In what ways has your theme shaped history?

PART II- PROCESS OF THE THEME PROJECT

Paragraph 3: What has been the most valuable aspect of this project? What would you do differently if you could start over?

   What did you learn about the theme that is most interesting to you?

Paragraph 4: What did you learn about that you will carry with you beyond school?

   What did you learn about yourself as a reader or a writer or a historian that you did not know before?

Paragraph 5: Describe how you will use any of what you learned in this project in the future.

   What have you discovered about your ability to plan? Explain.

Paragraph 6: What have you learned during this project about using different resources?

   What problems did you have to solve in order to complete this project?

Paragraph 7: What have you discovered about your own thinking? Identify the most significant thing you learned from this research project. Based on the information above, what grade would you give yourself on this task? Explain why you deserve this grade.
I. **Selection of THEME and Theme description** form is due by **September 14**th

II. **Current Events Forms**  
   a. Your first current event form is due by **September 24**th  
   b. The remaining 4 are due by **October 12**th

III. **Researching your THEME in history** is due by **November 9**th

IV. **Historical Documents forms**  
   a. Your first historical document form is due by **November 14**th  
   b. The remaining 4 are due by **November 20**th

V. **Artistic Expression forms**  
   a. Your first artistic expression form is due by **December 3**rd  
   b. The remaining three are due by **December 14**th

VI. **Essay connecting events of THEME**  
   a. Your first copy (rough draft) is due by **January 4**th  
   b. Your final copy is due **January 31**th

VII. **THEME Magazine** is due by **March 15**th

VIII. **Final Reflection** is due **April 8**th

**Redo Option:**

*In the event that the quality of work turned in is unsatisfactory you will be given the opportunity to redo that portion of the assignment. If you choose to take advantage of this opportunity your work must be resubmitted to me no latter than three school days after having the original assignment returned.*
THEME MAGAZINE REFLECTION

Part 3: Impact of teaching component

Reflect on your year-long THEME Project. There will be two components to your reflection. The first will deal with the content of the theme project. The second component will deal with the process by which you completed the steps along the way. This reflection will be completed in a well-organized, well-thought out reflective analysis. Single sentence answers to the prompts will not be acceptable. The prompts below will guide your thinking and additional ideas you may want to include in your writing. This paper should be 2 – 3 pages long, word processed, 12 pt. font, and double-spaced. (Do not exceed 3 pages)

PART I- CONTENT OF THE THEME PROJECT

Paragraph 1: What did you learn about this THEME?

c. How does it play a role in our history?
d. Why is this theme important to study?

Paragraph 2: In what ways has your theme shaped history?

PART II- PROCESS OF THE THEME PROJECT

Paragraph 3: What has been the most valuable aspect of this project? What would you do differently if you could start over?

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