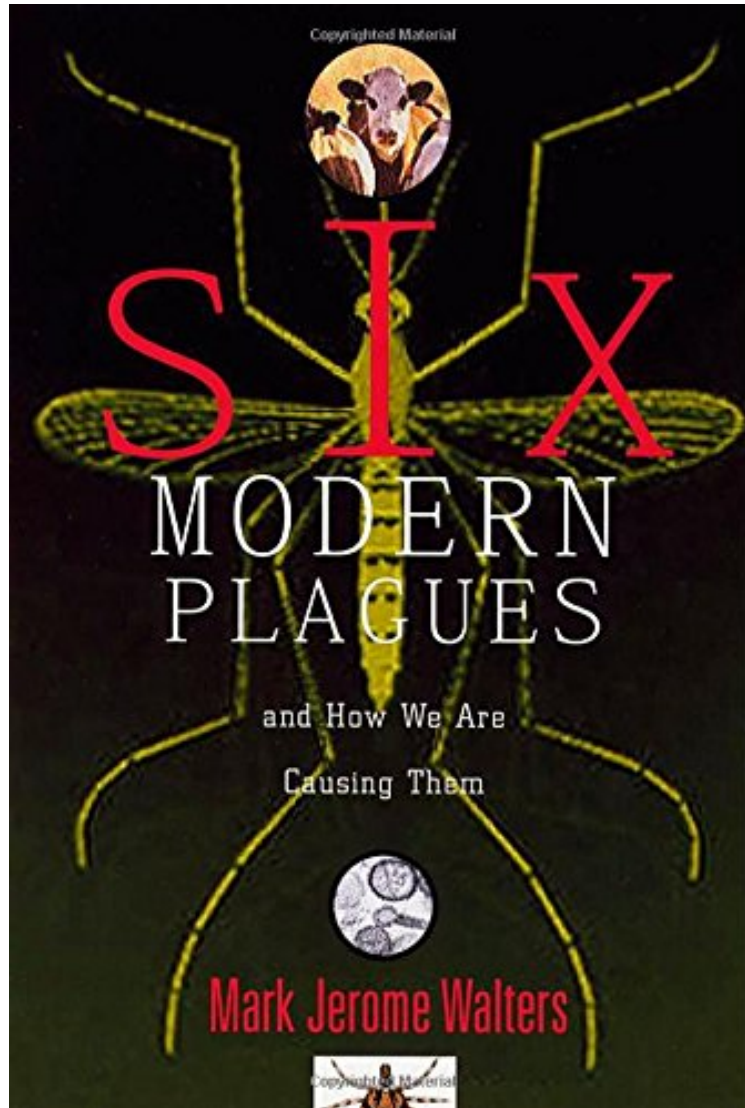


## Six Modern Plagues and How We Are Causing Them

Mark Jerome Walters

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**Mark Jerome Walters : Six Modern Plagues and How We Are Causing Them** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Six Modern Plagues and How We Are Causing Them:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great value, interesting read. By A Customer I purchased this for one of my college courses and I was so glad this book was available at 10% the cost of a new book from my school. This book has taught me one thing, don't take anything for granted. Those of us that live in the first world countries usually don't have to deal with these modern plagues that devastate third world countries. Overall, a fun book to read, even if it was just for my class. 4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A compelling read By Gregory Alan Wingo I

was turned on to the book by Mark's older brother, John Walters, who is executive director of the Lightstone Foundation, an environmental organization based in West Virginia. I was expecting a deary medical discourse for the mass consumer culture. What I got was a compelling read about critical problems facing and caused by our society. Mark's writing style is very engaging and I had the pleasure of reading it straight through. The thoughts evoked are not terrifying or hysteric but rather give one the basis to weave the subject matter into our everyday decisions on how to live in an ever more complex and mobile world. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. FantasticBy Dr of ThingsThis was actually a fantastic read. Bought it for a class and really enjoyed reading it. I would recommend it to anyone with an interest in biomedical science

"In a clear, engaging style, Dr. Walters tells the tale of each disease like a detective story. He allows each mystery to unfold as it did in reality, often slowly, through the lives of the plants and animals involved, the first human victims, the government officials who tried to respond, and the scientists who ultimately explained what was happening." - NEW YORK TIMES "...a fascinating work of ecological journalism, utterly convincing in its argument: that our health and the health of the environment are intimately linked, and we overlook that link at our peril." -MICHAEL POLLAN, AUTHOR OF SECOND NATURE AND THE BOTANY OF DESIRE"Mark Jerome Walters weaves a fine thread of human disturbances through the quilt work of modern pandemics. After being drawn engagingly into the explosive symptoms of global environmental change, readers will come to understand that we have no choice but to make peace with nature." -PAUL R. EPSTEIN, M.D., M.P.H., CENTER FOR HEALTH AND THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT, HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL West Nile Virus -- Mad Cow Disease -- HIV/AIDS -- Hantavirus -- Lyme Disease ... and a new strain of Salmonella. Such modern epidemics have emerged over the past few decades as mysterious, yet significant risks to human health. These "plagues" are forcing us to modify our lifestyles in ways that minimize our chances of becoming a statistic in the latest tally of the afflicted. In *Six Modern Plagues*, Mark Jerome Walters offers us the first book for the general reader that connects these emerging health risks and their ecological origins. Drawing on new research, interviews, and his own investigations, Mark Jerome Walters weaves together a compelling argument: that changes humans have made to the environment, from warming the climate to clearing the forests, have contributed to, if not caused a rising tide of diseases that are afflicting humans and many other species. According to Mark Jerome Walters, humans are not always innocent bystanders to infectious disease. To the contrary, in the case of many modern epidemics, we are the instigators. *Six Modern Plagues*, a ground-breaking introduction to the connection between disease and environmental degradation should be read by all those interested in their health and the health of others.

From Publishers WeeklyThe SARS outbreak earlier this year was a classic illustration of how disease can spread around the world via intercontinental travelers and how diseases can jump from animals to humans. Walters, a veterinarian and Harvard Medical School visiting lecturer, describes how human actions affecting the environment and the animals that live in it have exacerbated the spread of six diseases that have jumped in similar fashion to our species from their original hosts, creating serious new threats to public health. He begins with perhaps the most frightening one of all, mad cow disease, which attacks victims' brains. Many scientists believe the biological agent that causes the disease spread from scrapie-infected sheep to cows when sheep by-products were put in high-protein livestock feed. A virulent new strain of salmonella, DT104, has been created in part through the food industry's feeding antibiotics to chickens and livestock. Walters also explains that as hunters and laborers in central Africa continue to eat bush meat, new diseases will almost surely emerge from out of the jungles, as HIV did. The author also looks at hantavirus, its outbreaks thus far restricted to parts of the Southwest; Lyme disease, spread by deer ticks that live on and are spread by mice; and the mosquito-borne West Nile virus, which made its way to America from the eastern Mediterranean a few years ago. Walters presents a compelling case that the "deep ecological, demographic, and industrial roots" of these diseases must be considered if we are to minimize the danger of future emerging diseases. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Scientific AmericanIn the late 1960s the U.S. surgeon general declared that Americans could "close the book on infectious diseases." In 1999 the World Health Organization reported that "diseases that seemed to be subdued ... are fighting back with renewed ferocity." And then there are the new or transformed diseases that have made headlines in recent years. Walters, a veterinarian and journalist, focuses on six of them: mad cow disease, AIDS, salmonella DT 104, Lyme disease, hantavirus and West Nile virus. In an epilogue, he briefly describes the latest headline maker, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). "The larger story," he writes, "is not simply that humans and other animals are falling victim to new diseases; it is that we are causing or exacerbating many of them, not least of all through the radical changes we have made to the natural environment." Editors of Scientific AmericanFrom BooklistIn sharp, readable accounts of six recent "plagues," Walters points at the 1,000-pound gorilla customarily ignored in modern epidemiological discussions: underlying ecological causes. Those include industrial agriculture, with its pursuit of money rather than wholesome food; industrial forestry, with its pursuit of money rather than biosystem integrity; and industrial pharmacology, with its pursuit of money rather than human, animal, and plant health. Meat animals were made cannibals to increase output, and mad cow disease erupted.

African forests were virtually strip-mined; bush-meat (wild animals) became essential to feeding work gangs and then hoards of displaced forest dwellers; and HIV/AIDS exploded (in North America, forest liquidation is also behind Lyme disease). Crops and livestock were massively injected with antibiotics to increase yields, and an antibiotic-resistant strain of salmonella flared up to kill animals and humans with astonishing speed. Walters also traces the lines of connection and causation back from epidemic outbreaks of West Nile virus and the hantavirus to the ecological depredations of modern industry. He never rants, he is always calm, and he is scarily cogent. Ray Olson Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved