

0. MEDIEVAL PROFESSIONALS - Story Preface

1. HUMAN DEVASTATION

2. WHAT IS BUBONIC PLAGUE?

3. WHAT IS BLACK DEATH?

4. WHERE DID IT ORIGINATE?

5. MEDIEVAL EUROPEANS

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7. PEOPLE FLEE

8. SOCIETY BREAKS DOWN

9. SCAPEGOATS

10. LIFE GOES ON

11. WAS IT JUST THE RATS?



Image depicting copper engraving of Doctor Schnabel [i.e., "Dr. Beak"], a plague physician in seventeenth-century Rome, circa 1656. Included in *Die Karikatur und Satire in der Medizin: Medico-Kunsthistorische Studie von Professor Dr. Eugen Holländer* ("Caricature and Satire in Medicine: Medical-Art History Study by Professor Dr. Eugene Holländer"), 2nd edition (Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke, 1921), figure 79 (at page 171). Online, courtesy archive.org.

The Church was an important part of life for everyone, regardless of class. Clerics were a respected part of the community in both town and country. Scholars in the universities wrote and read Latin. Doctors had only a rudimentary understanding of how to diagnose illnesses.

But when the Black Death descended on Europe, the plague did not respect class distinctions. Both rich and poor, educated and ignorant, were targets of its insatiable appetite.

Doctors, who tried to wear protective garb, were struck down anyway. (The link depicts protective clothing worn during a seventeenth-century outbreak of Bubonic plague.) Those who made house calls on the sick were unable to stop family members from contracting the deadly disease.

Historians note that only Guy de Chauliac a famous French surgeon whose *Chirurgia Magna* (the "Great Surgery") was used by doctors for 300 years, was somewhat successful in treating people with plague. Although he had no clue about the cause, he at least realized there were two main forms (Bubonic and Pneumonic).

He also knew there was little, if anything, he could do for a person with pneumonic plague. Once a victim's lungs were infected, no doctor could help.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/MEDIEVAL-PROFESSIONALS-Black-Death>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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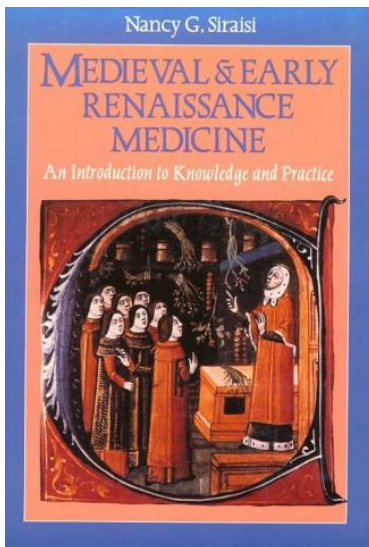


Physicians' Protective Garb to Ward-off Plague

Physician garb, 17th-century. On display at a museum in Jena (a university city in central Germany).

View this asset at:

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Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine

Book cover image, courtesy Amazon.com.

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