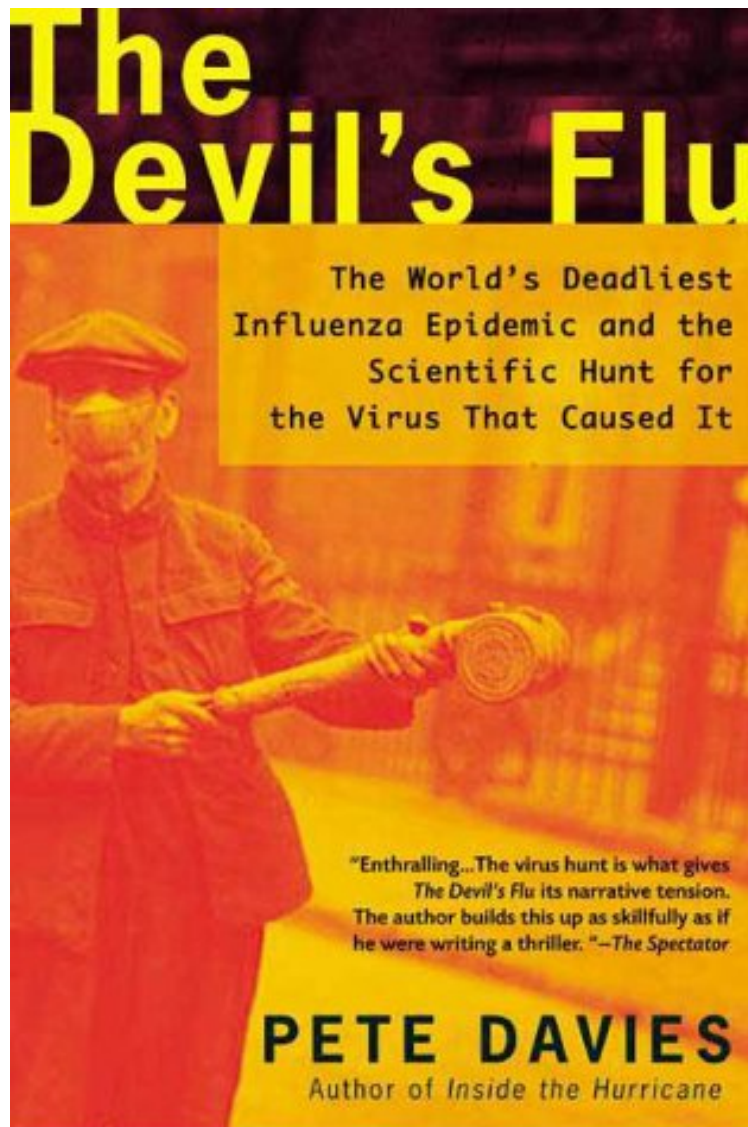


[Ebook pdf] The Devil's Flu: The World's Deadliest Influenza Epidemic and the Scientific Hunt for the Virus That Caused It

# The Devil's Flu: The World's Deadliest Influenza Epidemic and the Scientific Hunt for the Virus That Caused It

*Pete Davies*

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#1414463 in Books 2000-10-15 2000-10-15Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.50 x .3 x 5.50l, .95 #File Name: 0805066225320 pages | File size: 38.Mb

**Pete Davies : The Devil's Flu: The World's Deadliest Influenza Epidemic and the Scientific Hunt for the Virus That Caused It** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Devil's Flu: The World's Deadliest Influenza Epidemic and the Scientific Hunt for the Virus That Caused It:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fast and Captivating read.By FarfromthefarA fascinating read that

opens up a world of science I had largely ignored. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars  
By Victoria Moorhead interesting read 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good information. Needed book for paper for a graduate ...  
By Vicki M Good information. Needed book for paper for a graduate class.

A gripping account of the 1918 flu pandemic and the modern-day hunt for this elusive and deadly virus In 1918, a flu virus more lethal than any that has come along since swept through the world, from the remotest villages in Arctic climates to crowded U.S. cities to the battlefields of Europe, killing forty million people. Yet, despite its devastating toll and the probability that other deadly pandemics await on the horizon, it was relegated to a footnote in history. The Devil's Flu is the extraordinary story of 1918's forgotten tragedy and of the global scientific community's effort to avert another such disaster. The 1918 flu still so intrigues and frightens experts in the field that in 1998, a group of respected scientists journeyed to the Norwegian Arctic Circle in search of the mysterious killer. In *The Devil's Flu*, Davies captures the excitement of the hunt and the intense rivalries within the scientific community, and paints a vivid portrait of the eccentric scientists bent on capturing the prize information that could hold the key to our future safety. And as far as the next pandemic is concerned, scientists agree: it's not a question of if, but when.

From Library Journal Originally published in England in 1999 as *Catching Cold*, this edition has the bad luck of competing with two similar American publications, Lynette Iezzoni's *Influenza 1918: The Worst Epidemic in American History* (LJ 6/15/99) and Gina Kolata's *Flu: The Story of the Great Influenza Pandemic of 1918 and the Search for the Virus That Caused It* (LJ 11/15/99). Davies, who has written on subjects as diverse as hurricanes, British politics, and soccer, here covers much the same territory as Kolata. He recounts the horrors of the worldwide 1918 epidemic; the efforts at identifying the virus strain, which led to the exhumation of long-frozen corpses in Alaska and Norway; and the 1997 outbreak of a deadly flu mutation in Hong Kong in which 1.6 million chickens and other birds were sacrificed to avert what seemed to be an emerging epidemic. Although Davies writes with the flair of a talented journalist, Kolata, science reporter for the *New York Times*, is more authoritative, while Iezzoni focuses primarily on the American influenza story. Libraries that have purchased Kolata's book will find *The Devil's Flu* an optional purchase. A  
Kathy Arsenault, Univ. of South Florida, St. Petersburg Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Davies' book, published in Britain last year as *Catching Cold*, doesn't mention Gina Kolata's *Flu* [BKL N 1 99], though it covers much of the same ground, albeit differently. Davies devotes substantial space to Kirsty Duncan's expedition to Spitsbergen in 1998 to dig up the coffins of seven miners, victims of the 1918 flu, to see whether the virus was still present in them. Davies was on hand for much of the subsequent scientific failure and stonewalling. His descriptions of Duncan, John Oxford, and the other expedition members enliven his book in a way that Kolata's later interviews in the U.S and Europe don't quite match. Both authors cover the swine flu debacle in 1976, the 1998 Hong Kong flu, and such major players as Taubenberger, Hultin, Webster, and Laver. Both discuss work on vaccines and the possibilities of a successful one, and both agree that another flu pandemic is in the wings. Given the fame of their topic, many libraries will have no trouble accommodating both books. William  
Beatty Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved From Kirkus sA cautionary tale by novelist Davies (Dollarville, not reviewed), who tries to unravel the mystery of the 20th century's greatest epidemic. On the surface, this is a treasure hunt for tissue samples sufficient to map the genome of the influenza virus that caused the forgotten influenza pandemic estimated to have killed 40 million people worldwide in 1918. The story itself is a good one—scientific hubris, political meddling and miscalculation, and truly adventurous spirits—if only the author would tell it. Although the casualties of the "Spanish flu" (as the 1918 virus came to be known) rivaled those of the trenches (hundreds dead daily in single towns, the living too sick to keep up with the burials), it is the war we remember. Most of us nowadays look upon the flu as an inconvenience rather than a morphing creature that can periodically reappear in devastating strains, but, as the author makes clear, it is not a question of if so much as when the next virulent flu will kill millions. In Hong Kong, in 1998, one of these million-killer strains may have popped up—but thanks to extreme and highly unpopular decisions on the part of the government (including the slaughter of virtually all the island's millions of chickens), it was apparently halted. In a tiny mining town in the Arctic permafrost, the author joins a quixotic quest to exhume bodies of miners who died in the 1918 plague. Kirsty Duncan, an obsessive Canadian who increases her daily regimen of 1000 sit-ups to 2000 during endless days in the tundra, is the leader of that expensive expedition. Unfortunately she didn't know that two other scientists, Jeffrey Taubenberger and Johan Hultin, had already got sufficient samples in Alaska—Hultin having made it to the same difficult region of Alaska in 1951. Gerald Ford's Swine Flu debacle is also considered. Despite confusing chronological leaps, frequent blurring of purpose, and much repetition (particularly in digressions on genetics), the information provided here is ignored at our own peril. --  
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