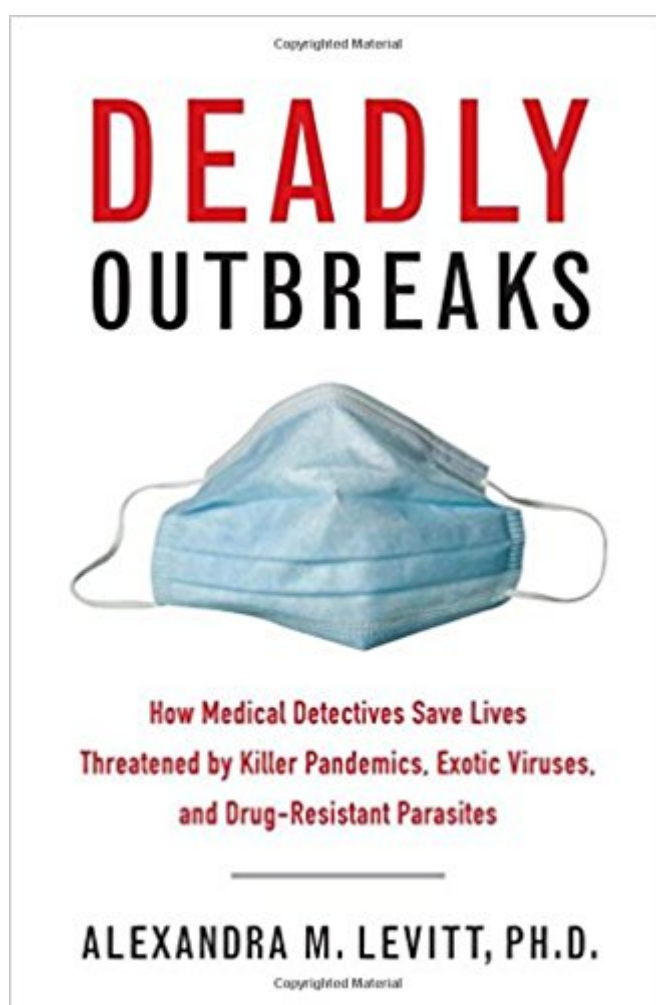


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Deadly Outbreaks: How Medical Detectives Save Lives Threatened By Killer Pandemics, Exotic Viruses, And Drug-Resistant Parasites



Synopsis

Despite advances in health care, infectious microbes continue to be a formidable adversary to scientists and doctors. Vaccines and antibiotics, the mainstays of modern medicine, have not been able to conquer infectious microbes because of their amazing ability to adapt, evolve, and spread to new places. Terrorism aside, one of the greatest dangers from infectious disease we face today is from a massive outbreak of drug-resistant microbes. *Deadly Outbreaks* recounts the scientific adventures of a special group of intrepid individuals who investigate these outbreaks around the world and figure out how to stop them. Part homicide detective, part physician, these medical investigators must view the problem from every angle, exhausting every possible source of contamination. Any data gathered in the field must be stripped of human sorrows and carefully analyzed into hard statistics. Author Dr. Alexandra Levitt is an expert on emerging diseases and other public health threats. Here she shares insider accounts she's collected that go behind the alarming headlines we've seen in the media: mysterious food poisonings, unexplained deaths at a children's hospital, a strange neurologic disease afflicting slaughterhouse workers, flocks of birds dropping dead out of the sky, and drug-resistant malaria running rampant in a refugee camp. Meet the resourceful investigators—doctors, veterinarians, and research scientists—and discover the truth behind these cases and more.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

ScienceThrillers review: Dr. Alexandra Levitt narrates the true stories of seven medical mysteries

solved by field epidemiologists, investigators for the CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service. These stories demonstrate the importance, danger, and excitement of public health efforts to understand infectious disease outbreaks and other disease clusters. Levitt unashamedly admits that one goal of this book is to inspire young people to consider careers in public health. On that count, *Deadly Outbreaks* succeeds. Put this book in the hands of a high schooler who already is thinking about a STEM career and you might make a convert. Personally, I love this stuff. Several of these stories I'd heard before (the Sin Nombre virus, Legionnaire's Disease) but I was delighted to read in more detail about the scientist/physician/detectives who actually were on the ground in the center of these outbreaks, trying to assemble the knowledge needed to stop the deaths. Most of the tales were new to me and carried a lot of emotional impact. Babies dying in a Canadian hospital. Laborers paralyzed by work in a pig slaughterhouse. This is a fascinating book, easy to read in one chapter pieces, perfect for the bedside table. It's competently written but it doesn't have the narrative genius of a Malcolm Gladwell or Mary Roach popular science book. It also has a fair amount of real science in it. Thus I recommend this book for science thriller fans, but it might not appeal to readers who do not have a pre-existing interest in the subject matter. FCC disclaimer: An advance reader copy of this book was given to me for review. As always, I made no guarantee that I would read the book or post a positive review.

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