

SALEM PRESS

Published & Distributed by Grey House Publishing

For Immediate Release

March 9, 2023

Contact: Jessica Moody, VP Marketing
(800) 562-2139 x101
jmoody@greyhouse.com

Salem Press Announces a New Addition to the *Critical Insights* Series *Critical Insights: The Plague*

Sales of Albert Camus's *The Plague* surged during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. The novel's prescient descriptions of isolation camps and public panic resonated with those living with lockdowns and constant fear. Considered a classic of the existentialist movement (though Camus objected to this label), scholars have long engaged with the novel's absurdist elements. On one level a simple tale of the universal, ultimately unwinnable, struggle against death, *The Plague* also explores individual moral courage, secular and religious, in the face of overwhelming tragedy. As an advocate for personal integrity despite an absence of religious or philosophical meaning, Camus became a spokesman for the generation that had witnessed the Holocaust and other horrors of World War II.

This volume, like all others in the *Critical Insights* series, is divided into several sections. It begins with an introductory "About This Volume" essay, followed by another work titled "Camus and Plague Literature," by Rebecca Totaro. This is followed by a Biography of Albert Camus written by volume editor Robert C. Evans.

A collection of six critical contexts essays are intended to treat the novel

- 1) From a historical vantage point
- 2) In terms of its critical reception
- 3) Using a specific critical lens
- 4) And by comparing and contrasting it with another important work.

This section opens with an essay by Maciej Kałuża titled, "Benefitting from Plague in Camus's *The Plague*" followed by a piece by Robert C. Evans, "The Earliest American Newspaper Reviews of Albert Camus's *The Plague*," This essay explores early reviews of *The Plague* in American newspapers and the importance of such reviews once the book was translated into English from French. The following two essays are written by Edwin Wong and Rafeeq O. McGiveron respectively. The first, "'From Thucydides to Simone Weil: Friendship and Heroism in Albert Camus's *The Plague*,'" compares Camus's two novels *The Stranger* and *The Plague*, especially in how the main protagonist confronts their struggles whether in solitude or seeking out help from others, and how these decisions impact them later on in the story. In the next essay, "'A Grim-Jawed Angel of Mercy' or 'There's No Question of Heroism in All This'? Crisis and Response in Albert Camus's *The Plague* and Robert A. Heinlein's 'Sky Lift,'" McGiveron compares Camus's *The Plague* and Robert A. Heinlein's short story "Sky Lift" in

regards to each story's differing response to an impending plague, but also explore the shared stance between the authors when it comes to the nature of human responsibility.

Following these four Critical Context essays is the **Critical Readings** section of this book, which contains the following essays:

- Life Can Be the Plague: Camus's Reification, by Susan Howard Moss
- Camus's *The Plague* and the Health Humanities, by Robert C. Evans
- *States of Plague*, by Kaplan and Marris: An Overview and Review, by Robert C. Evans
- "Is a Priest Justified in Consulting a Doctor?" Reflections on the Case of Paneloux and Rieux in *The Plague*, by Mark Orme
- The Women in *The Plague*, by Gene Fendt
- The Absent Wife: An Embarrassing Oversight or Fundamental Other in *The Plague?*, by Meaghan Emery
- Albert Camus's Augury of Post-Truth Necropolitics: Reading *The Plague* in the Twenty-first Century, by Harry Fairless and James Gourley
- "There are more things to admire in men than to despise": The Optimistic Satire of *The Plague* by Albert Camus, by Matthew M. Thiele
- Language and the "duty of memory" in *The Plague*, by Peter Dunwoodie
- Rereading Camus's *The Plague* with Its Artistry in Mind, by Robert C. Evans

Each essay in *Critical Insights: The Plague* includes a list of **Works Cited** and detailed endnotes. In the final section, **Resources**, easy-to-follow lists are provided to help guide the reader through important dates and moments in the author's life, beginning with a **Chronology of Albert Camus's Life**. This is followed by a list of **Works by Albert Camus** and a **Bibliography**. Finally, this section closes with an **About the Editor** section, **Contributors**, and a detailed **Index**.

The *Critical Insights* Series distills the best of both classic and current literary criticism of the world's most studied literature. Edited and written by some of academia's most distinguished literary scholars, *Critical Insights: The Plague* provides authoritative, in-depth scholarship that students and researchers will rely on for years. This volume is destined to become a valuable purchase for all.

BUY THE PRINT AND GET FREE ONLINE ACCESS

Libraries and schools purchasing the printed version of any Salem Press title get complimentary online access to that title on our new online database, <http://online.salempress.com>. Combining Salem's Literature, History, Health, Science and Careers titles, students and researchers can now access all of their Salem content in one comprehensive site. Any school or library with print reference content in Salem Press' database is entitled to online access to that content. This access is an inherent part of our product.

Critical Insights: The Plague

Pub. Date: March 2023

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1-63700-432-6 265 pages \$105.00

Ebook ISBN: 978-1-63700-433-3