

[PDF] The Ghost Map: The Story Of London's Most Terrifying Epidemic--And How It Changed Science, Cities, And The Modern World

Alan Sklar, Steven Johnson - pdf download free book



Books Details:

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Author: Alan Sklar, Steven Johnson

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Description:

From Publishers Weekly Starred Review. On August 28, 1854, working-class Londoner Sarah Lewis tossed a bucket of soiled water into the cesspool of her squalid apartment building and triggered the deadliest outbreak of cholera in the city's history. In this tightly written page-turner, Johnson (*Everything Bad Is Good for You*) uses his considerable skill to craft a story of suffering, perseverance and redemption that echoes to the present day. Describing a city and culture experiencing explosive growth, with its attendant promise and difficulty, Johnson builds the story around physician John Snow. In the face of a horrifying epidemic, Snow (pioneering developer of surgical anesthesia) posited the then radical theory that cholera was spread through contaminated water rather than through miasma, or smells in the air. Against considerable resistance from the medical and bureaucratic establishment, Snow persisted and, with hard work and groundbreaking research, helped to bring about a fundamental change in our understanding of disease and its spread. Johnson weaves in overlapping ideas about the growth of civilization, the organization of cities, and evolution to thrilling effect. From Snow's discovery of patient zero to Johnson's compelling argument for and celebration of cities, this makes for an illuminating and satisfying read. B&w illus. (Oct.)

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From In books such as *Emergence: The Connected Lives of Ants, Brains, Cities, and Software*, Steven Johnson neatly draws connections between seemingly unconnected aspects of life—think of James Burke in the digital age. *The Ghost Map* is no different in applying a 21st-century sensibility to a 19th-century cholera epidemic. According to critics, Johnson makes a single tactical error in the last pages, where he attempts to link the events he describes to too many other contemporary historical trends while ignoring some real-world realities. Regardless, the story is in capable hands, and the lives of individuals and a culture on the cusp of technological and medical advance resonates with readers 150 years later.

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