

SURVIVORS

A film by Arthur Pratt, Banker White, Barmmy Boy and Anna Fitch



This list of fiction and nonfiction books, compiled by Tracy Stegeman of the San Diego Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *Survivors*.

Through the eyes of Sierra Leonean filmmaker Arthur Pratt, *Survivors* presents an intimate portrait of his country during the Ebola outbreak, exposing the complexity of the epidemic and the sociopolitical turmoil that lies in its wake. During one of the most acute public health crises of the modern era, *Survivors* reveals the bureaucratic missteps that took place, as well as remarkable stories of individual bravery and the deep humanity of those caught in the middle of this unfolding crisis.

ADULT NONFICTION

Quammen, David. *Ebola: The Natural and Human History of a Deadly Virus*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2014.

In 1976 a deadly virus emerged from the Congo forest. As swiftly as it came, it disappeared, leaving no trace. Over the four decades since, Ebola has emerged sporadically, each time to devastating effect. It can kill up to 90 percent of its victims. In between these outbreaks, it is untraceable, hiding deep in the jungle. The search is on to find Ebola's elusive host animal. And until we find it, Ebola will continue to strike. Acclaimed science writer and explorer David Quammen first came near the virus while he was traveling in the jungles of Gabon, accompanied by local men whose village had been devastated by a recent outbreak. Here he tells the story of Ebola—its past, present, and its unknowable future.

Hatch, Steven. *Inferno: A Doctor's Ebola Story*. St. Martin's Press, 2017.

Dr. Steven Hatch, an infectious disease specialist, first came to Liberia in November 2013 to work at a hospital in Monrovia. Six months later, several of the physicians he had served with were dead or unable to work, and Ebola had become a world health emergency. *Inferno* is his account of the epidemic that nearly consumed a nation, as well as its deeper origins.

Shah, Sonia. *Pandemic: Tracking Contagions, from Cholera to Ebola and Beyond*. Sarah Crichton Books, 2016.

Pandemic interweaves history, original reportage, and personal narrative to explore the origins of contagions, drawing parallels between cholera, one of history's most deadly and disruptive pandemic-causing pathogens, and the new diseases that stalk humankind today. To reveal how a new pandemic might develop, Sonia Shah tracks each stage of cholera's dramatic journey, from its emergence in the South Asian hinterlands as a harmless microbe to its rapid dispersal across the nineteenth-century world, all the way to its latest beachhead in Haiti. Along the way she reports on the pathogens now following in cholera's footsteps,

from the MRSA bacterium that besieges her own family to the never-before-seen killers coming out of China's wet markets, the surgical wards of New Delhi, and the suburban backyards of the East Coast.

Oldstone, Michael B. A. *Viruses, Plagues, and History: Past, Present, and Future*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2010.

The story of viruses and humanity is a story of fear and ignorance, of grief and heartbreak, and of great bravery and sacrifice. Michael Oldstone tells all these stories as he illuminates the history of the devastating diseases that have tormented humanity, focusing mostly on the most famous viruses. Oldstone begins with smallpox, polio, and measles. Nearly 300 million people were killed by smallpox in this century alone and the author presents a vivid account of the long campaign to eradicate this lethal killer. Oldstone then describes the fascinating viruses that have captured headlines in more recent years: Ebola, Hantavirus, mad cow disease (a frightening illness made worse by government mishandling and secrecy), and, of course, AIDS.

Forna, Aminatta. *The Devil That Danced on the Water*. Atlantic Monthly Press, 2002.

Mohamed Forná was a man of impeccable integrity and enchanting charisma. As Sierra Leone faced its future as a fledgling democracy, he was a new star in the political firmament, a man who had been one of the first black students to come to Britain after the war. He stole the heart of Aminatta's mother, to the dismay of her Presbyterian parents, and returned with her to Sierra Leone. But as Aminatta Forná shows with compelling clarity, the old Africa was torn apart by new ways of Western parliamentary democracy, which gave birth only to dictatorships and corruption of hitherto undreamed-of magnitude.

ADULT FICTION

Preston, Richard. *The Hot Zone*. Anchor Books, 1995.

A highly infectious, deadly virus from the central African rain forest suddenly appears in the suburbs of Washington, D.C. There is no cure. In a few days 90 percent of its victims are dead. A secret military SWAT team of soldiers and scientists is mobilized to stop the outbreak of this exotic "hot" virus. *The Hot Zone* tells this dramatic story, giving a hair-raising account of the appearance of rare and lethal viruses and their "crashes" into the human race. Shocking, frightening, and impossible to ignore, *The Hot Zone* proves that truth really is scarier than fiction.

Cook, Robin. *Outbreak*. Putnam, 1987.

When the director of a Los Angeles health maintenance clinic succumbs, along with seven patients, to an untreatable—and virulently contagious—virus, Atlanta's Center

for Disease Control goes on red alert. Unless the virus is isolated and checked, mankind may be facing its gravest medical crisis since the Black Death. Assigned by the CDC to investigate the disease, Dr. Melissa Blumenthal is soon caught up in the ultimate nightmare.

Camus, Albert. *The Plague*. Vintage Books, 1991. Originally published 1947.

A haunting tale of human resilience in the face of unrelied horror, Camus' novel about a bubonic plague ravaging the people of a North African coastal town is a classic of twentieth-century literature.

Stewart, George R. *Earth Abides*. Ballantine Books, 2006.

A disease of unparalleled destructive force has sprung up almost simultaneously in every corner of the globe, all but destroying the human race. One survivor, strangely immune to the effects of the epidemic, ventures forward to experience a world without man. What he ultimately discovers will prove far more astonishing than anything he'd either dreaded or hoped for.

Beah, Ishmael. *Radiance of Tomorrow*. Sarah Crichton Books, 2014.

At the center of *Radiance of Tomorrow* are Benjamin and Bockarie, two longtime friends who return to their hometown, Imperi, after the civil war. The village is in ruins, the ground covered in bones. As more villagers begin to come back, Benjamin and Bockarie try to forge a new community by taking up their former posts as teachers, but they're beset by obstacles: a scarcity of food; a rash of murders, thievery, rape, and retaliation; and the depredations of a foreign mining company intent on sullyng the town's water supply and blocking its paths with electric wires. As Benjamin and Bockarie search for a way to restore order, they're forced to reckon with the uncertainty of their past and future alike.

Arimah, Lesley Nneka. *What It Means When A Man Falls from the Sky: Stories*. Riverhead Books, 2017.

This acclaimed short story collection from Nigerian author Lesley Nneka Arimah uses magical realism and traditional storytelling to explore themes like family, economic inequality, and what it means to call a place home.

NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Hand, Carol. *Epidemiology: The Fight Against Ebola & Other Diseases*. Essential Library, An Imprint of Abdo Publishing, 2015.

This title presents the history of epidemiology. Vivid text details how early studies of the spread of disease led to vaccines and medications that can halt pandemics. It also puts a spotlight on the brilliant scientists who made these advances possible. A case study on the current Ebola outbreak is also included. Useful sidebars, rich images, and a glossary help readers understand the science and its importance.

Laine, Carolee. *Ebola Outbreak*. Essential Library, an

imprint of Abdo Publishing, 2016.

Ebola Outbreak covers the history of the Ebola virus, the devastating 2014 epidemic, and the quarantine controversies that captured national headlines, exploring how the fear of a disease can sometimes be as dangerous as the disease itself.

Willett, Edward. *Ebola Virus*. Enslow Publishing, 2003.

Discusses the history and symptoms of the viral hemorrhagic fever known as Ebola, from its emergence in 1976 to the attention it has garnered in recent times, explaining the precautions and treatments that are used to slow the spread of this deadly virus.

Butcher, Tim. *Chasing the Devil: The Search for Africa's Fighting Spirit*. Vintage International, 2011.

For many years Sierra Leone and Liberia have been too dangerous to travel through, bedevilled by a uniquely brutal form of violence from which sprang many of Africa's cruellest contemporary icons—child soldiers, prisoner mutilation, blood diamonds. With their wars officially over, Tim Butcher sets out on a journey across both countries, trekking for 350 miles through remote rainforest and malarial swamps.

FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Martini, Clem. *The Plague*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2005.

In the second installment of *Feather and Bone: The Crow Chronicles*, a mysterious plague hits the Kinaar family. Crows lie dead all around the Gathering Tree and the terrified survivors scatter. Sick and alone, Kyp knows only that he must find Kym, who has been captured by humans and taken far to the east. A crow without a flock flies on only one wing, and Kyp has no one to keep watch or provide warning when danger threatens. But gradually other crows join him in his relentless journey—deep into the heart of a vast and frightful human colony.

Dixon, Heather. *Illusionarium*. Greenwillow Books, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers, 2015.

Jonathan is perfectly ordinary. But then—as every good adventure begins—the king swoops into port, and Jonathan and his father are enlisted to find the cure to a deadly plague.

Kessler, Cristina. *No Condition is Permanent*. Philomel Books, 2000.

When shy fourteen-year-old Jodie accompanies her anthropologist mother to live in Sierra Leone, she befriends a local girl but encounters a cultural divide that cannot be crossed.

Musgrove, Margaret, illustrated by Diane and Leo Dillon. *Ashanti to Zulu: African Traditions*. Picture Puffin Books, 1992.

This Caldecott Medal-winning A to Z picture book explores the rich variety of African traditions with engaging and educational illustrations.