

Deadly Feasts: The "Prion" Controversy and the Public's Health

By Richard Rhodes

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In this brilliant and gripping medical detective story. Richard Rhodes follows virus hunters on three continents as they track the emergence of a deadly new brain disease that first kills cannibals in New Guinea, then cattle and young people in Britain and France—and that has already been traced to food animals in the United States. In a new afterword for the paperback, Rhodes reports the latest US and worldwide developments of a burgeoning global threat.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
The British epidemic of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or "mad cow" disease, is only one in a series of mysterious and often fatal afflictions that have baffled scientists for more than 40 years. *Deadly Feasts* is a compelling account of decades of research into a family of diseases ranging from kuru in primitive human tribes to scrapie in sheep. Richard Rhodes traces the attempts of scientists to understand these strange diseases, which are now known to be transmitted by ingesting the brain or nervous tissue of infected creatures, even though the pathogen itself is an enigma that seems to be neither bacterial nor viral. *Deadly Feasts* is packed with historical, anthropological, and epidemiological detail, and is graphic and occasionally even alarming in its speculations.

From Library Journal
Readers expecting the next The Hot Zone (LJ 8/94) may be disappointed in Rhodes's (Dark Sun, LJ 8/95) latest work. While it contains similar sensationalist elements (there's a gruesome account of a cannibal feast in New Guinea), the narrative lacks the hyperactive, dramatic pacing that made Richard Preston's title a best seller. Instead, Deadly Feasts is a sobering, straightforward if somewhat overly detailed acount of how scientists have tracked the emergence of a new group of fatal brain diseases?transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs)?that affect humans (Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease) and animals (mad cow disease). Noting that these diseases are spread via "industrial cannibalism" (e.g., infected animal remains fed to animals, humans eating contaminated meat), Rhodes warns that, unless the government takes action, we could face a new "Black Death" deadlier than Ebola. Plenty of food for thought here. [Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 2/15/97; the publication date was changed from June to coincide with the FDA's considering a proposed ban on feeding processed ruminant animal wastes to cattle.?Ed.]?Wilda Williams, "Library Journal. -*?Wilda Williams, "Library Journal"*
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From Booklist
So timely is the subject of Pulitzer Prize^-winning author Rhodes' new book, the publisher pushed its release date up several months. And when you read this chilling chronicle of the spread of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs), deadly brain diseases of the mad-cow variety affecting both people and animals, you'll realize that crucial as this exposeis, it is already too late: this is a crisis we will be living with for a long time. Rhodes' dramatic account of three decades of demanding research into the origins of these mysterious, cross-species killer diseases is animated by vivid portraits of the scientists involved, especially the brilliant and eccentric Nobel Prize winner Carleton Gajdusek. His quest began in the late 1950s in New Guinea, where a disease called kuru was eventually linked to the tribe's cannibalism, a connection that, in turn, revealed the cause of mad-cow disease: animal cannibalism, that is, the forced feeding of animal-protein supplements to cattle. Researchers eventually realized that the rendering of dead animals into meat-and-bone meal--which is used not only as animal-protein supplements but also as an ingredient in everything from butter to soap and the bone meal we spread on our gardens--can not only release the deadly infectious protein into our food, including lamb, pork, and chicken, but also can contaminate our blood and organ transplant supplies. Rhodes offers the first popular documentation of a disaster with profound implications, and the sooner the alarming facts are widely known, the better our chances are of combating this insidious plague. Expect heavy media coverage. *Donna Seaman*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jennifer Mendoza:

Reading a guide tends to be new life style on this era globalization. With studying you can get a lot of information which will give you benefit in your life. Using book everyone in this world may share their idea. Textbooks can also inspire a lot of people. Plenty of author can inspire their reader with their story as well as their experience. Not only the storyline that share in the textbooks. But also they write about advantage about something that you need example. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach children, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors in this world always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some exploration before they write with their book. One of them is this Deadly Feasts: The "Prion" Controversy and the Public's Health.

Virginia Doak:

The book Deadly Feasts: The "Prion" Controversy and the Public's Health has a lot of information on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of profit. The book was written by the very famous author. Mcdougal makes some research ahead of write this book. That book very easy to read you can find the point easily after reading this book.

Michael Clark:

In this time globalization it is important to someone to get information. The information will make you to definitely understand the condition of the world. The health of the world makes the information better to share. You can find a lot of sources to get information example: internet, classifieds, book, and soon. You can see that now, a lot of publisher in which print many kinds of book. The particular book that recommended for you is Deadly Feasts: The "Prion" Controversy and the Public's Health this book consist a lot of the information of the condition of this world now. That book was represented just how can the world has grown up. The language styles that writer value to explain it is easy to understand. The actual writer made some investigation when he makes this book. That is why this book acceptable all of you.

Piedad Trainor:

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