

21H421  
Spring 2004

### **Assignment 1**

Due in class February 19  
At least 5 pages

The black death, as it was known in the medieval period, struck England first and most catastrophically in 1348. Excerpts from several different accounts of that initial epidemic have been posted on the class website. In Journal of the Plague Year Daniel Defoe chronicled England's final experience with this contagion. Use these sources as the basis for a comparison of these two experiences of epidemic diseases, in terms of impact, understanding, and response. Where appropriate, buttress your argument with reference to the readings in Herlihy and the McNeills. When you are discussing the 17<sup>th</sup> century visitation, you may also wish to consult the collection of primary documents in the "Backgrounds" section of the Norton Critical Edition of Defoe's Journal.

BE SURE TO PROVIDE REFERENCES FOR ALL QUOTATIONS AND INFORMATION.  
The excerpts on the website all come from the following anthology:

Rosemary Horrox (translator and editor), The Black Death (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994).