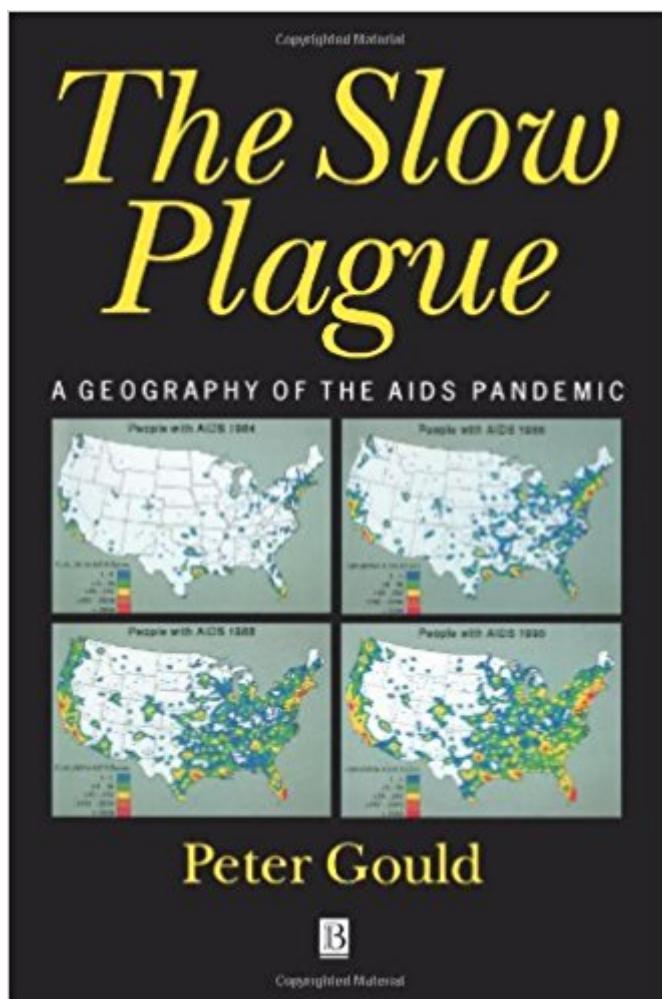


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# The Slow Plague: A Geography Of The AIDS Pandemic



## **Synopsis**

Based on research by a leading geographer and specialist in diffusion theory, *The Slow Plague* discloses the geographic dimension of the AIDS pandemic. It provides a lucid description of the HIV, its origins, and the extent to which it has now permeated our lives. The author shows how the virus jumps from city to city, creating regional epicenters from which it spreads into surrounding areas. Four case studies at different geographic scales demonstrate the devastating effects of the disease. In Africa the situation is catastrophic, in Thailand it is rapidly becoming so. In the US there are over 300,000 people with AIDS and more than one million infected by the HIV. The relationships between poverty, drugs and HIV infection are brought out poignantly in a chapter about the Bronx. The author argues that a real understanding of AIDS has been hampered by conscious or unconscious beliefs that those affected are, and will continue to be, confined to specific minority groups and to parts of the Third World. He shows that such views have led to fundamental misconceptions about the pattern of the spread of the disease and about those who will be most at risk, now and in the immediate future.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

AIDS epidemiology is a compelling and timely subject. Certainly even AIDS researchers find the scope of the present and future epidemic hard to comprehend. While providing some interesting maps and figures, Gould has written a rambling, self-conscious, and overly digressive account of the origin and spread of AIDS. He seems to favor compulsory AIDS testing and patient quarantine.

A better choice might be Mirko Grmek's *History of AIDS: Emergence & Origin of a Modern Pandemic* (Princeton, 1990), supplemented by more recent journal and newspaper articles. This title is not recommended, given the rapidity of change in this area of research and the deficiencies of the title. --Mary Chitty, Biotrends Research, Natick, Mass. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Stimulating, with sharp and pungent writing. The author's wide-ranging observations and speculations are full of energy and passion." *Nature* "The Slow Plague is a clearly written introduction to geographical understanding in HIV/Aids research." *Abstracts on Hygiene & Communicable Diseases* "This fascinating book should attract a wide readership." *Applied Geography* "The book would work nicely in an undergraduate geography or interdisciplinary topics course. It would certainly generate enough material to keep lively discussions going throughout the semester and provide every student with something to pursue in more detail for a course paper." *Journal of Regional Science* "This makes reading this alarming book a truly fascinating experience. I use the term 'alarming' because the book is about a catastrophic pandemic which, according to World Health Organization estimates, may claim 40 million lives world-wide by the year 2000." "Gould is exceptionally good at presenting the 'forest' and never letting the reader get lost in the 'trees'." "This book would work nicely in an undergraduate geography or interdisciplinary topics course. It would certainly generate enough material to keep lively discussions going throughout the semester and provide every student with something to pursue in more detail for a course paper." *Journal of Regional Science* "The Slow Plague is the most interesting and provocative publication by an academic that I can recall reading. Without any mincing of words, Gould lifts the lid on HIV, on bumbling bureaucracies and narrow-minded investigators." *Australian Geographical Studies*

Super interesting! The middle is a bit slow but otherwise it kept me hooked. This book will really surprise you!

Written in 1992, this book is still well worth reading by anyone, lay or expert, interested in the spread of HIV/AIDS. Readers with scanty technical knowledge of the virus, and no familiarity with what geographers do or how they think, need not fear. Gould is a master of exposition. Four especially illuminating chapters take us through the spread of HIV/AIDS within continental Africa, the nation of Thailand, the state of Ohio and the limits of the Bronx. As a geographer, Gould shows how grappling with the spatial dimension of HIV/AIDS yields both insight and useful knowledge. His

criticisms of policies which foster disease, impede prevention, and often misdirect AIDS research and AIDS programs are still, I suspect, valid. This is a spirited and humane work which lives up to its dedication 'Liber geographicus pro bono publico'.

Having emerged from highschool Science with a largely mystifying impression of AIDS and HIV, this has to be an enjoyable but very effective wakeup call for me. With next to no understanding of the scientific details, I found what should have been dry and uninteresting a convincing and thoughtprovoking read. Even though Gould seems openly political and states his opinions in no uncertain terms, the issues he raises are compelling, and his style entertaining. His mildly biting humour, descent at every opportunity to the layman's perspective, and somewhat stream-of-consciousness style makes this book not only easy to understand but very enjoyable. The reader emerges much more informed and aware, without feeling as if they have swallowed reams of ink and paper. :D

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