



The Plague: Part Five



Part Five of *The Plague* chronicles the decline and end of plague in Oran.

There are two stand-alone activities in this section that can help meet Saskatchewan's English B30 curriculum indicators.

- **Historical Context: The Liberation of France** deepens the historical and political context of *The Plague*.
- **Historical Context: Denying Vichy and Creating the Fourth Republic** builds on ideas about the scientific method, as well as deepening understanding of the medical science behind the book.



These activities close out the guided path for understanding *The Plague*, and provide the final pieces to help approach the **Post-Reading Concepts to Consider**.



Part Five • Chapter 1

// destruction
is an
easier,
speedier
process
than
reconstruction //

(218)

The plague begins to retreat from Oran, though not before taking Othon's life. At this point, plague is mostly appearing in pneumonic form—its most virulent. However, patients such as Grand are eager to fight it off.

1. In the waning days of the plague, the people of Oran fluctuate between high optimism and extreme depression. Describe the disease's retreat. Is it a clear and steady trend?
2. The Medical Board declares the plague to be "definitely stemmed" (221). Why would the authorities still keep the town gates closed for two weeks and the strict measures in place for a month?
3. How is the decline of the disease a "Liberation" (222)? Can we be free if disease is allowed to ravage through society, unchecked?





Historical Context

The Liberation of France

Part Five Chapter 1 of *The Plague* is an allegory. The decline of plague in Oran represents the Nazis being driven out of France. More specifically, the chapter is comparable to the Nazi eviction from Paris.

Paris was returned to French hands on August 25th, 1944. On that day, the German forces in the city surrendered. Charles de Gaulle then famously proclaimed in a speech at Paris' city hall, the Hôtel de Ville:

Paris! Paris humiliated! Paris broken! Paris martyred! But now Paris liberated! Liberated by herself, by her own people with the help of the armies of France, with the support and aid of France as a whole, of fighting France, of the only France, of the true France, of eternal France.

As de Gaulle's words point out, liberation did not come about from a single military push. Rather, it was the end result of much work, by both the Allied armies and the Resistance on the ground, who had the support of the French people.

The Nazi Retreat

Paris was freed from Nazi rule nearly three months after D-Day, June 6th, 1944. D-Day was the moment that the Allies began their push into metropolitan France. Over 150,000 British, Canadian, and American troops stormed the beaches of Normandy, on the English Channel. A second front opened on France's Mediterranean shores on August 15th, with the landing in Provence of another 100,000 soldiers, including de Gaulle's Free French army.

The Allied battle plan was to drive the Nazis back into Germany as quickly as possible. This plan meant they would bypass Paris. A diversion into the city would slow their progress and prolong the war: troops would be tied up with urban warfare, and once they took the city they would become responsible for feeding and fuelling a city of millions, resources that would otherwise power their armies. Besides, only about 20,000 German troops were in the city, mostly de-motivated reservists. Allied commanders believed that Paris could remain a militarily-weak German island, to be returned to later.

However, Paris was strategically important. Hitler knew this well. He said two days before its liberation that "Historically, the loss of Paris always meant the loss of France."

Charles de Gaulle also knew this well. He believed that Paris must be taken by the Allies, and not just for symbolic reasons. German authority in the city was weak, leaving Paris on the brink of a civil war. French Communists, in particular, had hopes of taking control of the city, and using it as a power base to turn France into a communist state. De Gaulle was willing to cooperate with communists in France's government-in-exile, but he was opposed to communist control of the country.

On August 21st, De Gaulle convinced Dwight Eisenhower, the supreme commander of Allied forces in Western Europe, that a diversion into Paris was necessary. Eisenhower, who lived in Paris following the

first World War, understood the role that Paris played in the French psyche: whoever controlled Paris controlled France. Eisenhower pointed out to his superiors that Nazi-held Paris would be a “constant menace to our flank.”² A day later, he received the go-ahead from the Allied Combined Chiefs of Staff to take back the city.

French and American armies were nearby, and were immediately turned towards Paris. Upon their arrival on the 24th, the German general running the city, Dietrich von Choltitz, knew the war was already lost. Paris was surrendered to the Allies on August 25th.

The Nazi ouster from Paris marked the symbolic return of all of France to the French. Even though small pockets of Nazi forces could be found in France right up until World War II ended, after August 25th there was no question of who controlled France.

Nonetheless, this shift of control in France would not have happened—or at least would not have unfolded as quickly as it did—without the work of the French Resistance.



Dietrich von Choltitz signing the Paris surrender agreement, August 25th, 1944. Two days earlier, Hitler had ordered him to destroy the city. Von Choltitz was horrified by the idea, and used lies and manipulation to put off the command.

The Resistance Comes Out of the Shadows

Just as it says in *The Plague*, France was long harbouring “shadowy, half-hearted hopes” (219) of knocking back the Germans. Lurking in the shadows was the French Resistance. When the Allies landed in Normandy, the Resistance began to move into the light. As historian Robert Gildea notes, “D-Day was the signal for thousands of young French people to come out of the shadows and take to the *maquis* [Resistance fighters].”³

The emergence of the Resistance in Metropolitan France could be said to have begun a day earlier, on June 5th. That day, the BBC broadcast coded instructions across France to the *Forces Françaises de l’Intérieur* (FFI, the official Resistance organisation). The FFI was instructed to initiate the Green Plan (sabotage railways), the Tortoise Plan (sabotage roads), and the Purple Plan (sabotage telecommunications). As well, guerilla warfare against the Nazis was to begin.

The FFI, along with other independent resistance forces, went to work. But they did not always operate efficiently or with clear control. Recall that people of different backgrounds and beliefs made up the resistance. This led to some disagreements and feuds. Countless independent resistance groups simply marched to their own drum. The disarray resulted in many failures in the first weeks of their open fight against the Nazis.

Further complicating resistance efforts were Allied concerns about some FFI leaders. Many high-ranking FFI officials—including the FFI commander in Paris—were communists. This sometimes left the Allies leery of supplying them with weapons, for fears the weapons would be used in a communist revolution.

Even if the resistance was short of ammunition, it was not short of spirit. And as the war turned, so too did resistance fortunes. Much like how “Castel’s anti-plague injections scored frequent success” (219), the resistance started to score frequent success, especially in Paris. A watershed moment happened on July 1st, when thousands of protesters—many of them women—took to the street to demand more food. The Nazis recognised that they were losing their grip on power, and did little to quell the protests.

On Bastille Day—France’s July 14th national holiday—hundreds more came out to protest in Paris’s working class suburbs, the areas of the city where the communists had the most support. This time the Germans took hostages to stop the protests from spreading.

By August 10th, widespread strikes broke out in vital industries. Workers demanded more food, more pay, and the release of hostages. As well, railway strikes hindered Nazi efforts to move their armies around France. Paris police also went on strike, switching sides and taking the Paris police headquarters back from the Nazis.

By August 19th, the FFI launched a general insurrection in Paris. The general insurrection began a week of fierce fighting. The FFI had enormous success in taking back public buildings from the Nazis.

At this point it was clear that the Allied armies were close to the city. Paris was the transportation hub of all of France, and retreating Nazis were passing through the city. To slow their progress, many streets were barricaded, especially in working-class neighbourhoods. Watching Nazis flee through Paris created an atmosphere that oddly mirrored their 1940 arrival. In this sense, just like it says in *The Plague*, “The disease seemed to be leaving as unaccountably as it had come” (219).

As the fighting in Paris intensified, the Free French government-in-exile in Algiers feared that the communists could use the chaos to launch an all-out revolutionary battle. A fragile ceasefire between the FFI and the Nazis was negotiated on the 20th, but it was not fully accepted by all resisters, especially breakaway communists with an eye towards revolution.



Resisters fight with arms taken from the Germans in Paris, August 1944.

By the evening of August 23rd, Allied armies had Paris in their sight. At de Gaulle’s insistence, the French and not the Americans would be the first to march into Paris. The arrival of the French army would assert the authority of the Free French government. A few emissaries were first sent into the city, followed by the army who began rolling into Paris on the night of the 24th.

Aside from a few fierce battles on the morning of the 25th, there was relatively little German opposition. No doubt the efforts by the Resistance to destabilise Paris and take back parts of it from the Nazis made the Allied effort easier. Von Choltitz quickly surrendered, and de Gaulle made his famous liberation speech on the evening of August 25th.

De Gaulle’s well-received speech—along with his visits to the police headquarters and the National Council of the Resistance—established the Free French government’s authority in Paris, and by extension across all of France.



Warsaw's Old Town Market, 1945, following the Nazi destruction of the entire city.

Why was France's Second Armoured Division chosen to liberate Paris?

The choice was the result of many complex considerations, including its respected leader Philippe LeClerc. That said, modern European historian Lauren Henry has noted that its racial make-up may have played a role. France's armies were racially diverse, with many soldiers from France's African colonies. The Second Division, however, was its least-diverse unit. Henry says that "historians have speculated that U.S. officials may have been concerned about how the American public would react to newsreel footage of the liberation of Paris that showed racially integrated troops."⁴

With Paris back in French hands, several days of celebration began. Yet, the battle was not quite over. Just as *The Plague* discusses the disease's "bursts of activity for two or three days in some districts" (219), Paris was not immediately purged of all Nazis and their collaborators. In the days that followed, a few skirmishes broke out, attempts were made on de Gaulle's life, and Hitler launched an air attack on the city. Nonetheless, on August 25th, 1944, Paris was once again French.

Back to Oran

For all the horrors Paris experienced in World War II, many other cities and their inhabitants fared even worse. Within France, several towns and cities were completely destroyed by war. Outside of France, many major cities were blown to pieces. For example, the Nazis almost completely demolished central Rotterdam in 1940, damaged or destroyed all but 11 buildings in the Crimean city of Sevastopol in 1942, and blew up about 85% of Warsaw in late 1944. And this is to say nothing of the thousands upon thousands of lives lost. In Warsaw alone, the 1944 uprising left more people dead than the atomic blasts did in Japan.

None of this is meant to minimise the terrible experiences in Paris during World War II. The Paris liberation alone cost the lives of about 500-2,000 civilians, 1,000 Resistance fighters, and 100 French troops. But Paris was more fortunate than other cities in that its buildings, structures, and monuments were not heavily damaged during the occupation or liberation.

Really, the only sustained effort to destroy Paris's built heritage during the Occupation came through the destruction of statues. About 17,000 statues disappeared in Paris and across France during the war, as part of a Nazi/Vichy effort to ideologically purify public spaces.

That Paris was physically spared helps explain why Camus can allegorically say in *The Plague* that "It seemed as if nothing had changed in [Oran]" (220) when the plague lifts. To be sure, too many lives were lost. And those Parisians who survived were hungrier and more sickly after the war. However, unlike cities such as Warsaw, if a person left Paris in 1939 they would still very much recognise the city—at least as physically—upon returning in 1944. In this sense, Paris was very lucky.

Discuss

1. As part of *The Plague's* allegory, Oran's Medical Board declares plague defeated on January 25th.
 - a) How is this an allegory?
 - b) What other allegorical connections can you find in Part Five Chapter 1?
2. Look more deeply into towns and cities damaged or destroyed during World War II.
 - a) How do these communities compare to Paris?
 - b) Paris came out of the war physically intact. Does this tell us much about occupation's emotional damage on the people, though?

¹ quoted in Jean Edward Smith. *The Liberation of Paris: How Eisenhower, De Gaulle, and Von Choltitz Saved the City of Lights*. Simon & Schuster, 2019, p. 147.

² quoted in Jean Edward Smith. *The Liberation of Paris: How Eisenhower, De Gaulle, and Von Choltitz Saved the City of Lights*. Simon & Schuster, 2019, p. 117.

³ Robert Gildea. *Fighters in the Shadows: A New History of The French Resistance*. Faber & Faber, 2015, p. 377.

⁴ Lauren A. Henry. "The Liberation of Paris." *Origins: Current Events in Historical Perspectives*, August 2019. <https://origins.osu.edu/milestones/the-liberation-of-paris-wwii>

Part Five • Chapter 2

// the plague
was bound
to leave
traces,
anyhow, in
people's
hearts //

(227)

Cottard is disappointed that plague is leaving Oran.

1. Cottard comes to hope that the end of the plague means a fresh start. What then happens?
2. Are there people who stand to benefit from misfortune? Think of examples in real life.



Part Five • Chapter 3

// Hope had
returned,
and with it
a new zest
for life //

(229)

Despite being inoculated, Tarrou succumbs to plague.

1. Why would Rieux not send Tarrou to the isolation ward, despite the suspicion he has plague?
2. Rieux tells Tarrou “to become a saint, you need to live. So – fight away!” (231). How can Camus’ ideas about absurdism explain this statement?
3. Tarrou’s battle with plague is called “the last disastrous battle that ends a war” (233).
 - a) How is this battle an allegory for the end of the Nazi occupation of Paris?
 - b) What does Tarrou’s late infection tell us about eliminating disease, both literally and allegorically?
4. Think back to this statement attributed to Joseph Stalin, discussed in the handout **Plague and Excess Death**.

“One death is a tragedy, a million deaths a statistic.”

Why would Camus have a major character die in the book’s denouement?

5. Rieux receives word of his wife’s death at the close of the chapter. It receives much less attention than the death of Rieux’s close friend. Why would it be presented this way?



Part Five • Chapter 4

// Each was returning to his personal life, yet the sense of comradeship persisted and they were exchanging smiles and cheerful glances amongst themselves. //

(240)

When Oran's gates open up, the town enters into a time of great celebration.

1. What is the general mood as the townsfolk await the arriving train?
2. Is everyone in Oran celebrating? Why or why not?
3. Consider the closing two paragraphs of the chapter. What possibilities are presented for the purpose of life?





Historical Context

Denying Vichy and Creating the Fourth Republic

As the plague subsides in Oran, the narrator makes an observation about how people are looking back upon the disease. He says, in part, that

they denied that we had ever been that hag-ridden populace a part of which was daily fed into a furnace and went up in oily fumes, while the rest, in shackled impotence, waited their turn. (242-243)

The people of Oran have gone into a state of denial about what happened during the plague. This sense of denial can be allegorically linked to the occupation of France. As the occupation came to a close, a sense of denial set in for many French people. A belief formed that the French State—commonly called Vichy—was not actually France.



Vichy leader Marshal Pétain meeting with the United States' Ambassador to France, April 1942. Many countries—including the USA and Canada—had diplomatic relationships with Vichy until Germany's military occupied all of France in November 1942.

The End of Vichy

On the eve of D-Day, the Vichy regime still governed France. At least technically speaking. In reality, all of Metropolitan France—*Zone Occupée* in the north and *Zone libre* in the south—had been under German military control since November 1942.

With an Allied invasion imminent, de Gaulle's Free French government-in-exile, headquartered in Algiers, was making plans to govern France following the invasion. In preparation for the transition, the government-in-exile turned itself into the Provisional Government of the French Republic. This collection of Gaullists, French nationalists, socialists, communists, and anarchists hoped to take control of France as the Nazis were pushed out.

However, there was no guarantee that the provisional government would be given control. It was one of three options that were being considered by the Allies. A second option was having Allied powers negotiate a peace agreement with the Vichy regime. De Gaulle was not universally liked by Allied governments, and many American officials believed that if Vichy could be purged of its pro-German elements and renew democracy, it could be trusted to govern France. A third option was to establish a provisional military government, overseen by the Allies. This military government would control France until a new government could be established by the French.

The question of who would govern France was put to rest when de Gaulle and the Free French army marched into Paris in August 1944. The public's overwhelming support affirmed that de Gaulle's provisional government had the authority to govern France. The provisional government officially moved from Algiers to Paris on September 9th.

The provisional government set to work stabilising the country and building a social democracy, introducing all sorts of social reforms such as granting women the right to vote, nationalising key industries, and creating welfare programs.

To rid itself of Vichy, the provisional government passed an order that stated the French Third Republic never ceased to exist. All Vichy laws that were contrary to the French ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity—including all laws that discriminated against Jews—were declared void *ab initio*, a legal term meaning that these laws were never valid. As well, all special courts established by Vichy to persecute political enemies were dissolved. The “Eternal France” that de Gaulle referenced in his liberation speech was going to have nothing to do with Vichy.

Goodbye, Vichy?

Establishing a provisional government, instead of the Allies negotiating peace with Vichy, meant the end of Vichy France. However, it also led to one particularly interesting effect. It allowed the French to treat Vichy as an aberration, not the real France. Recall de Gaulle's words in his liberation speech:

Paris! Paris humiliated! Paris broken! Paris martyred! But now Paris liberated! Liberated by herself, by her own people with the help of the armies of France, with the support and aid of France as a whole, of fighting France, of the only France, of the true France, of eternal France.

By declaring the liberators the “true” and “only” France, de Gaulle's words had the effect of making Vichy not France.

If Vichy was not France, then what was it? France's post-war ruling class said that Vichy was a rogue state, established by Nazi-influenced traitors. The real France had never ceased to exist. It was pushed into exile, with its government first taking refuge in London before setting up in Algiers.

This view of Vichy as something other than the real France makes sense from de Gaulle's perspective. Recall that, as a junior minister in the Third Republic's last government, he fled for London in 1940 to set up a government-in-exile. There is a line of thought that de Gaulle's government-in-exile came to embody and thus maintain the French ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

However, it cannot be forgotten that the legislatures of real France, in 1940, overwhelmingly voted the Republic out of existence. To be sure, some debate still exists over the legality of the vote. But it is generally agreed that the public supported the move. This means that Vichy, though a blight on French history, was created in France, by French legislators, with broad public support. Public opinion only began to sour on Vichy about two years into its existence, about the same time that the war began to turn in favour of the Allies and Nazi excesses became woefully apparent.

Perspectives Shift

For fifty years following the war, the official French line continued to be that France held no responsibility for the Vichy years. As late as 1994, French President François Mitterand said “I will not apologize in the name of France.... The Republic had nothing to do with this. I do not believe France is responsible.”¹ Nonetheless, there was rising pressure within France for the government to take more responsibility for mistakes of the past.

A watershed moment came in 1995. That year, the French elected a new president, Jacques Chirac. Chirac was the first of a new generation of leaders, people who had not been adults or even alive during the Vichy years. Two months into his presidency, Chirac gave a speech marking the anniversary of the Vél d’Hiv roundup. In this speech, he said:

France, land of the Enlightenment and of Human Rights, land of hospitality and asylum, France, on that day, committed an irreparable act. It failed to keep its word and delivered those under its protection to their executioners.

Chirac went on to say that “Our debt to [the victims] is inalienable.”²

The weight of Chirac’s words cannot be understated. This was the first time that a French president acknowledged France’s role and responsibility for Vichy crimes. It was French police, after all, who rounded up 90% of Germany’s targets living in France during World War II, such as Jews, communists, Roma, and others. This includes their role in rounding up Jews for the Nazis and taking them to the Vél d’Hiv.

Two of France’s three presidents since Chirac have been even more forceful in their acknowledgment that Vichy crimes were crimes of the French government. On the 70th anniversary of Vél d’Hiv, in 2012, François Hollande said that “the truth is that this crime was committed in France, by France.” Hollande added that:

The Shoah [Holocaust] was not created from a vacuum and did not emerge from nowhere. True, it was set in motion by the unprecedented and terrifying combination of single-mindedness in its racist frenzy and industrial rationality in its execution. But it was also made possible by centuries of blindness, stupidity, lies, and hatred. It was preceded by many warning signs, which failed to alert people’s consciences.³

Five years later, President Emmanuel Macron also acknowledged France’s role in Vichy crimes. Speaking on the 75th anniversary of Vél d’Hiv, he said that “Vichy, of course, did not represent all French people... but it was France’s government and administration.” Macron went on to say that:



François Mitterand (right) with Marshal Pétain in 1942.

Like many French people, Mitterand was at one time a collaborator and later a Resister. He first worked for the Vichy regime, but then rejected it and joined the Resistance in 1943.

By acknowledging its faults, France has opened the way to repairing them. That is to its honour. That is the sign of a strong nation that can face its past. That is the courage of a people not afraid to examine its conscience and reach out to the victims and their children. Reaching out and reforming ties does not mean humiliating ourselves through some sort of repentance. It is standing tall and being strong.⁴

Macron also remarked that de Gaulle and Mitterand’s denial that Vichy was France was partially due to the complexities of healing a divided and polarised post-war society. Neither of these presidents had denied that the crimes took place. In fact, Mitterand established the annual day of commemoration for the Vél d’Hiv roundup. They only denied that the French government should take responsibility for it.

Jacques Chirac’s speech—and the ways in which his successors built on that speech—were key moments in French history. As legal scholar Rémi Rouquette has pointed out, Chirac’s speech “acknowledged the continuity of the State, even when the most horrible government is in power”⁵. The French Republic could not absolve itself of its Vichy history.

However, for all the importance these speeches hold in history, speeches are not acts of law. It took a court case to establish the French Republic’s legal responsibility. In a 2009 case, the *Conseil d’État* (Council of State)—France’s highest administrative court—ruled that the Republic was responsible for Vichy arresting and deporting Jews in World War II.

The ruling satisfied many people, including Serge Klarsfeld. Klarsfeld is considered France’s leading Holocaust historian. He said that “France is showing now that she is at the forefront of countries which are confronting their past, which was not the case even in the 1990s.”⁶

Changing Tides of History

In France, some controversy still remains over whether or not the French Republic is responsible for Vichy crimes. Some people still argue that Vichy was not France. Nonetheless, the words of three of its past four presidents, along with a ruling by the country’s highest administrative court, say otherwise. The sense of denial about Vichy is fading away, and the willingness of the French Republic to take responsibility for its mistakes of the past is something that should be admired.

There is no doubt that the events that led up to the creation of Vichy are complicated. France’s sudden defeat by the Nazis in World War II was traumatic for the nation. Nonetheless, people also are willing to understand that Vichy was not just a Nazi puppet state, created by Nazi collaborators and foisted upon France. Vichy was France’s government, created by France’s legislators with, at that time, broad public support.

Vichy set out on an authoritarian path, contrary to the French ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity. These ideals never fully died, but it took the weight and work of many brave people—both “great” people and average people—to bring back the French Republic, where these ideals formed the backbone of the French constitution.

France’s descent into Vichy should serve as a warning for all of us. In a perfect storm of circumstance, human decency—and along with it our rights and freedoms—could be swept away in a matter of days. The choices we make about our governments matter, and the support we either give or withhold from our governments matter. Liberal democracy and its embrace of free expression and minority rights should never be taken for granted.

Discuss

1. As the plague comes to an end in Oran, the sense of denial “anyhow, was what seemed evident to Rieux” (243). Think back to the handout “The Reliable Narrator and Objectivity.”
 - a) Can Rieux’s observation about the sense of denial be considered the whole truth of how people felt in Oran?
 - b) Can any one person’s perspective be considered the whole truth of a situation?
2. History does not change. But our perspectives on it do.
 - a) How do changing societal narratives change our relationship with the past?
 - b) Is it always fair to judge actions of the past with the values of today?
 - c) What uses and lessons does history have for us? How does literature help bring these lessons to life?
3. Read the speeches by Jacques Chirac, François Hollande, and Emmanuel Macron linked in the footnotes below.
 - a) What lessons from their speeches can we take as Canadians for grappling with our country’s historical treatment of Indigenous people and other minority communities?
 - b) What lessons could we offer to France as Canadians take steps to reconcile for our country’s past?

¹ quoted in Marlise Simons. “Chirac Affirms France’s Guilt In Fate of Jews.” *The New York Times*, 17 July 1995, p. A1. www.nytimes.com/1995/07/17/world/chirac-affirms-france-s-guilt-in-fate-of-jews.html

² quoted in “Speech of President Jacques Chirac, on July 16, 1995, during the commemoration of the Vél d’Hiv roundup.” www.levendel.com/En/html/chirac-s_speech.html

³ quoted in John Fanning. “Vel d’Hiv Roundup.” 21 August 2012. <https://johnfanning.me/vel-dhiv-roundup/>

⁴ quoted in President of the Republic. <https://www.elysee.fr/emmanuel-macron/2017/07/18/speech-by-the-president-of-the-republic-emmanuel-macron-at-the-vel-dhiv-commemoration.en>

⁵ Rémi Rouquette. “The French Administrative Court’s Rulings on Compensation Claims Brought by Jewish Survivors of World War II.” *Maryland Journal of International Law*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 2010, p. 307.

⁶ quoted in Lizzy Davies. “France faces its guilt for deporting Jews in war.” *Brisbane Times*, 18 February 2009. www.brisbanetimes.com.au/world/france-faces-its-guilt-for-deporting-jews-in-war-20090218-geau3g.html

Part Five • Chapter 5

// there are
more things
to admire
in men than
to despise //

(251)

Rieux reveals himself to be the narrator. Cottard seemingly goes mad, and is shot by the police.

1. Are you satisfied that Rieux “was well placed for giving a true account of all he saw and heard” (246)? Why or why not?
2. Were the police right to shoot Cottard? Was there any justification for punching and kicking him once he was in their custody? Think back to Camus’ positions on violence and the death penalty to help guide your thoughts.
3.
 - a) What is the narrator’s warning in the final two paragraphs?
 - b) How does this warning apply to diseases such as *Y. pestis*?
 - c) How does this warning apply to dangerous ideas and beliefs?



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