

birds and other animals; agricultural practices are blamed for the threat of pandemic influenza. He neglects the fact that most of the cases of human infection with influenza A (H5N1) have come from family farms in Asia, rather than the large commercial ventures.

The science relating to the current subtype H6N1 is changing so rapidly that any book is out-of-date by the time it is published. The book contains 90 pages of references, mostly from the popular press. Few current peer-reviewed sources are cited.

The need for authoritative information on avian influenza (H5N1) for the lay public is great, but unfortunately, this book does not meet that need. It focuses heavily on doomsday scenarios and offers little in terms of practical advice to the public. For those interested in the book, it can be found online at www.birdflubook.com.

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Letters

Letters commenting on recent articles as well as letters reporting cases, outbreaks, or original research are welcome. Letters commenting on articles should contain no more than 300 words and 5 references; they are more likely to be published if submitted within 4 weeks of the original article's publication. Letters reporting cases, outbreaks, or original research should contain no more than 800 words and 10 references. They may have one Figure or Table and should not be divided into sections. All letters should contain material not previously published and include a word count.

A Country Story

Kenneth Fields

“When I was a little girl back in East Texas,”
My mother’s mother, Beulah, used to tell,
“There was an outbreak of the German measles,
Mama was pregnant, so I went away
To a neighbor lady’s, three or four miles from home
When the first signs showed. I was just eight, and sick,
And lonesome for Mama. One day she came for me.
My little sister had broken out, and Mama
Figuring she would die, and the baby, too,
Wanted us all together for those last weeks.
She wanted me home with her. As it turned out
My sister had been reading by the fire
And broke out from the heat, and it was me
That carried the measles home. After Mama died
I used to think of seeing her out the window
Talking to the neighbor lady on that day,
Crying and wiping her eyes with her apron hem.”

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