AWESOME stories

RABIES - WHAT'S in a NAME?

0. RABIES - WHAT'S in a NAME? - Story Preface

1. RABIES - WHAT'S in a NAME?

2. RABIES in ANCIENT TIMES

3. WHAT IS RABIES?

4. LOUIS PASTEUR - EXPERIMENTER

5. LOUIS PASTEUR MEETS JOSEPH MEISTER

6. A TEEN HERO NAMED JEAN-BAPTISTE JUPILLE

7. LOUIS PASTEUR - WORLDWIDE BENEFACTOR

8. RABIES as a 21st-CENTURY PROBLEM

9. RABIES and ZOMBIES



This medieval illustration depicts an outdoor scene where a mad dog is biting a man; the calligrapher is Abdallah ibn al-Fadl. Created circa 1224, the illustration—an opaque watercolor, ink and gold on paper—is a folio from an Arabic translation of the *Materia Medica* by Pedanius Dioscorides. It is currently maintained at the Smithsonian's Freer Gallery of Art. Click on the image for a much-larger view.

Rabies is a greatly feared disease which has afflicted mankind since ancient times.

Its very name describes the dread it inspires, not to mention the raging behavior it causes:

- Ancient Sanskrit uses "rabhas," for rabies. It's a word meaning "to do violence."

- Ancient Greeks called rabies "lyssa." That's the same word they used for an extreme sort of murderous hate or animal rage (which seizes Hector in *The Illiad* and Herakles in Euripides's tragedy of the demigod who kills his own family).

- Ancient Romans used the Latin word "rabere," which means "to rave" (and the related Latin adjective "rabidus," meaning "furious, raging" leads to the English word "rabid").

- French speakers call it "La Rage."

- English speakers use the word "rabid" to also describe wrenching agitation. The 1621 edition of the Oxford English Dictionary includes "rabid with anguish," while the 1646 version reflects "rabid Griefe."



And ... in ancient Mesopotamia, before Hammurabi wrote his Code of Laws ... leaders in the town of Eshnunna (located on the bank of the Diyala River, a tributary to the Tigris) issued a series of laws (known as the "Code of Eshnunna") including this one:

> *If a dog is mad and the authorities have brought the fact to the knowledge of its owners; if he does not keep it in, it bites a man and caused his death, then the owner shall pay two thirds of a mina (40 shekels) in silver. If it bites a slave and causes his death he shall pay fifteen shekels of silver.*

The ancient words used to describe this terrible illness hold today. People who have rabies still become violently ill and, if they exhibit symptoms, they will die.

How did the ancient physicians treat people with rabies?

Credits:

In-text image of a rabid dog, terrifying people, depicts a scene at Cahors, France where a 16-year-old boy grabs, and tries to control, the animal. The work is by Eugene Damblans (1865-1945).

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/RABIES-WHAT-S-in-a-NAME-Louis-Pasteur-and-the-Rabies-Virus

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/RABIES-WHAT-S-in-a-NAME-Louis-Pasteur-and-the-Rabies-Virus

Media Stream



Rabies in England

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/

Law Code of Eshnunna and Mad Dogs

In the ancient town of Eshnunna—a Sumerian (later Akkadian) town and city-state in Mesopotamia identified today as Tell Asmar in Iraq—people had a code of laws which governed them.

The image, at the top of this page, depicts the two volumes of the Eshnunna Code. It is online via the University of Saskatchewan.

Scholars believe that the Laws of Eshnunna pre-date the Code of Hammurabi, although they are not sure by how many years. The likely date for the Eshnunna Code is sometime in the 20th Century B.C.



Votive statues from the Square Temple, Eshnunna (modern Tell Asmar, Iraq). c. 2900 - 2600 BCE.
Limestone, alabaster, and gypsum. The Oriental Institute of The University of Chicago; Iraq Museum, Baghdad.



One of the laws explicitly deals with the subject of mad dogs, verifying that rabies was a problem thousands of years ago. The law prescribes what the owner of a rabid dog must pay in compensation:
If a dog is mad and the authorities have brought the fact to the knowledge of its owners; if he does not keep it in, it bites a man and caused his death, then the owner shall pay two thirds of a mina (40 shekels) in silver. If it bites a slave and causes his death he shall pay fifteen shekels of silver.
This map depicts the location of Eshnunna in ancient Mesopotamia.



Click on the top image for a better view.
Image of the "Laws of Eshnunna," online via University of Saskatchewan.
Image of votive statues, found at Eshnunna (moder Tell Amar in Iraq), online via Wikimieda Commons.
Map depicting location of Eshnunna, in ancient Mesopotamia, by "Mapmaster." Online via Wikimedia Commons; license CC BY-SA 4.0
View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Law-Code-of-Eshnunna-and-Mad-Dogs



RABIES - WHAT'S in a NAME?
View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/