The Black Death on CNN

Description: Students will be grouped into teams and will report on different aspects of the Bubonic Plague in CNN broadcast style.

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to describe the effects of the 14th Century Bubonic Plague on European society.
2. Students will be able to identify changes in the social, economic, political, and religious practices brought about by the Black Death.

Materials:

- videotaped segment of a typical CNN broadcast
- paper/pens
- Rubric
- Laptops / Desktops
- Proxima / Smartboard

Vocabulary:

1. Bulbos - Large swellings in armpit & groin areas.
2. Flagellants - Fanatical individuals who roamed Europe whipping themselves as penance for the plague.

Procedure:
Watch a 3-5 minute videotaped segment of a typical CNN broadcast (can be on any subject). Examine how the anchor introduces the report and does a wrap-up after completion. Look for the who, what, when, where, why, and how of a story and how personal/expert insights are injected via interviews on site.

Groups will have at least (1 anchor, 1 field correspondent, 2 interviewees).

- Spread of epidemic - causes
- Medical - what is being done (treatment, prevention)
- Flagellants - social and religious impacts
- Economy - how is it being affected?
- Social views and attitudes - how is it changing?
- Impact – then and on the future
- Symptoms

Each group will give a CNN style report to a global audience (5 minutes maximum).
Author's Note: Set the room up so that the anchor sits behind a desk and the field correspondent and interviewees are off to one side. You will take center stage when the broadcast switches “on”. You may make powerpoints with a street scene behind them to give an enhanced setting. Students need to write scripts and read from them rather than "wing it." I will review such written materials, but I will not collect them.

Assessment: Rubric

Useful Internet Resources:
* The Black Death: 1347-1350
Culprit: Oriental Rat Flea
http://www.insecta-inspecta.com/fleas/bdeath/
* The Black Death, 1348
http://www.eyewitnessstohistory.com/plague.htm