Is Anyone Sitting Here?

Sponsored by the UNCW Science, Humanities and Society Minor, The College of Arts and Sciences and the Center for Teaching Excellence

October 21, 2003
Presenters

- William McCarthy, History
- Midori Albert, Anthropology
- Larry Usilton, History
- Robert Argenbright, Earth Sciences
- Carrie Clements, Psychology
- Oliver Speck, Foreign Languages and Literatures
- Patricia Turrisi, Philosophy and Religion
Transportation Systems and the Spread of Epidemic Disease

William McCarthy
★ Pandemics have become global: Global transport and interaction
★ The Silk Road and maritime trade routes: Pre-modern travel conditions
★ Mechanized transport: Speed of transfer, non-contiguous routes
Tranporting Microbes: Back to the late 15th Century
Midori Albert

A Physical Anthropology Perspective
Europeans Arrive in the New World and Disease Strikes...
Europeans Arrive in the New World and Disease Strikes and Kills
Europeans Arrive in the New World

Why Native Americans were more Affected (Infected) by European Pathogens and not Vice Versa…

Native Americans
- Relatively Isolated
  - Relatively healthy
- Few domesticated animals
- Less resistance

Europeans
- Travels over the Millennia
  - Greater pathogen exposure
- Many domesticated animals
- Greater resistance
  but not immunity…many Europeans died of European diseases, too; it had just been happening longer…
The Black Death
Larry Usilton
Death on the Rails: Trains and Typhus in the Russian Revolution

Bob Argenbright
Railroads and modernization
Railroads and modern war: refugees
Why typhus was the worst
Disintegration of the imperial army 1917
October Revolution, “War of the Trains,” Civil War and Foreign Intervention
The Struggle For Bread, “Baggers,” and Refugees from Hunger
Flight from the Cities, Homeless Children, Refugees from Famine
Discourse and Disease: A Comment
Is Anyone Sitting Here?
Transportation Systems and the Spread of Disease: Psychology Gets on the Bandwagon
SYPHILIS ....

SIX OUT OF TEN CURED

BECAUSE THEY DID NOT

WAIT TOO LONG
“Civilization may have been grand and glorious, but it also waded in shit.”

›Jonathan Lee
World Distribution of Plague, 1998

- Regions where plague occurs in animals.
People With HIV/AIDS, Cumulative Regional Totals

Millions

Population Reference Bureau, 2003
Map of HIV Prevalence Worldwide

Adults (ages 15-49) with HIV/AIDS
- 15.0% - 39.0%
- 5.0% - 14.9%
- 1.0% - 4.9%
- 0.5% - 0.9%
- 0.0% - 0.4%
- Not available

Population Reference Bureau, 2003
Psychological Responses to Disease Threat

- Magical thinking about pathogens
- Fear of invisible agents
- Fear of contagion
- Loss of perceived control
- Misattribution of arousal to infection
- Panic and paranoia
- Loss of faith in social/medical institutions

Source: Holloway et al. JAMA 1997;278(5):425-7
Individual Responses to Global Issues

Initial response

Individual

Sociocultural

Selfish altruism

“The trouble with the future is that it usually arrives before we’re ready for it.”

Arnold H. Glasow
Parasites and Para-Sites

by Oliver C. Speck

Biological Parasites (ecto- and endoparasites)

Sociological Parasites (Tartuffe)

Technical Parasites (White Noise)


Don’t touch that – you don’t know where it’s been

Was your mother right?

OR

How I learned to stop worrying and love the bomb

provocation courtesy of Patricia Turrisi
"I can no longer sit back and allow Communist infiltration, Communist indoctrination, Communist subversion, and the international Communist conspiracy to sap and impurify all of our precious bodily fluids... "

-Base Commander Ripper
“When traveling internationally, remember the old saying, "if you can't boil it, cook it or peel it - don't eat it!“”

Magellan's

MODERN FOOD SAFETY: Travel Behavior

Jennifer Jensen

We are at particular risk for food-borne infection while traveling. Observe all of the safety warnings you've ever heard, plus as many other neurotic behaviors as you can imagine. For example, if you're flying, the food served on the airplane is probably sufficiently awful that not eating it should be no problem. But if you're so hungry you're willing to tolerate the faulty taste, eat only the HOT foods served they've been micro waved or nuked. Be suspicious of water and ice cubes.
Safety first!


Local Link - FS-11.pdf
Agriculture a #1 cause of disease!

http://www.coopext.colostate.edu/arapahoe/cfe/cfefoodsafety.html
“It was proven beyond question that we aren’t dealing with a new emergence of a disease like the one that occurred in Britain. [McEwen’s] CJD is sporadic. Anything else you might think is speculation on speculation. Our country is four times the size of Britain. If there were any growing numbers of CJD, we’d be all over it.”
-Dr. Lawrence Schonberger, epidemiologist with the CDC, reported in USA Today, January 19, 1999

“There has never been a [mad cow] case in the United States. We’ve looked now at about 12,000 [cow] brains with no evidence.”
- Dr. Linda Detwiler, senior staff veterinarian with the USDA, in the Denver Rocky Mountain News, December 31, 2000

“We don’t have mad cow disease. We probably never will have mad cow disease, and therefore it is a non-problem in the United States.”
Dr. Paul Brown, National Institutes Of Health, speaking on CNN, January 7, 2001
For your consideration . . .

• Do transportation systems spread disease or do pathogens spread disease?

• Which is worse: the agora or the agoraphobia?

• Do transportation systems encourage xenophobia or does travel and transport minimize xenophobia?

• In general, how do transportation systems represent either progressive or regressive social and political attitudes?
Thank you for your attention.

Let’s all go to the lobby for a healthy snack!