

Epidemics: The SHAPES of Global Disease
(Socio-Historical, Artistic and Political Expressions and Epidemiologies)

An Interdisciplinary Conference

February 24-25, 2017
California State University Fullerton

In the past few decades, epidemics have played an increasingly urgent role at the intersections of human rights and global/national public health efforts. Recent epidemics of HIV and Zika (ZIKV) have impacted not only communities of health providers and their recipients, but more broadly, epidemics have altered social and political landscapes, artistic expressions and medical outcomes of lives in affected regions. The globalization of health is a subject that raises interdisciplinary concerns connecting health sciences, social sciences and the arts & humanities.

This interdisciplinary conference invites intersections among the natural sciences, social sciences and the arts & humanities to examine how epidemics shape global and/or national experience. Over three-decades have passed since HIV's symptoms first emerged and profoundly changed doctor-patient intersections, altered social relationships among citizens in the US and abroad, and fostered artistic expressions in poetry, theatre and art. Still rampant throughout the world, HIV continues to plague global communities. By examining the continuing effects of HIV, and contrasting with prior epidemics, we consider, what has been gained from studies of HIV, and what comparative studies of historical and alternative epidemic contexts offer continuing efforts to increase effective care, treatment and awareness.

The participants in this conference consider the subject of epidemics, its relationship to clinical, cultural and political movements, its transformations of science and medical treatments, and its situated understandings within epidemics of the past.

Some questions to be considered:

- What efforts are made to stop the spread of contagion or eradication of vectors?
- To what degree do international efforts at eradication conflict with local, ethical considerations of testing?
- How do issues of race and gender impact considerations of who is tested or treated?
- How does evidence from historically prior epidemics affect the way current epidemics are conceptualized?
- How do epidemics affect cultural practices and artistic expressions?
- What impact did HIV/AIDS have in shaping American culture?