

Winter Quarter 2013 Colloquium Series



Rob Wallace

Institute for Global Studies, University of Minnesota

Monday, February 11, 2013

12:00 – 1:30 pm

Communications 202

Are we researching our way into a deadly pandemic?

Influenza strains operate across multiple levels of biocultural organization: molecularly, pathogenically and clinically; evolutionarily, geographically and economically; across wildlife biologies, agroecologies and circuits of capital. But influenza is more than just a complicated story. The expanse of influenza's causes and effects plays out to the virus's advantage. Influenza appears to use opportunities it finds in one domain or scale to help it solve problems it faces in other domains and at other scales. Scientific collaboration, then, is mission critical, even as the logistics are difficult. How do we get different research disciplines to talk to each other in such a way as to address influenza's full dimensionality? We should remind ourselves, however, that success isn't merely a matter of concatenating data sets that have long been segregated by disciplinary boundaries. Despite some commonalities, each discipline thinks in its own way. Each discipline imagines problems differently. And each is as much its own historical object as the objects it addresses. In discussing the difficulties in studying influenza across epistemological domains, Rob Wallace will identify some of the dangers in refusing the attempt.

Lunch will be served! Please **RSVP** by Thursday, February 7 to suzelong@uw.edu

Robert G. Wallace is an evolutionary biologist presently visiting the University of Minnesota's Institute for Global Studies. Among other topics his research has addressed influenza phylogeography and the economics of agriculture in China, epidemiological resilience across food production systems, the evolution of pathogen virulence across livestock landscapes, host-KSHV coevolution across Ugandan prehistory, the social geography of HIV/AIDS in New York City, and the evolution of infection life history in response to microbicides. Dr. Wallace is co-author of "Farming Human Pathogens: Ecological Resilience and Evolutionary Process" (Springer) and has consulted for the Food and Agriculture Organization and the CDC.

Dr. Wallace will also participate as a panelist in:

The Ethics and Politics of Influenza Research in a Global Context

Friday, February 8, 2013 | 2:30 – 4:00 pm | Communications 202

Moderated by Matt Sparke (Geography, UW), this "Flu Forum" panel will consider the ethics and politics of influenza research in the context of the global political and economic inequalities that condition devastating pandemics and determine how we respond to these threats.

- BioFutures events are free and open to the public.
- UW Graduate Students may register for a related one-credit microseminar: JSIS 586A "Influenza Pandemics in Perspective" taught by Celia Lowe (Anthropology)

For more information on the Biological Futures in a Globalized World initiative:
<http://tiny.cc/biological-futures>