

Society/Environment/Biology

Colloquium of the Chair in Science and Technology Studies

The Homelands of the Plague: Soviet Disease Ecology in Central Asia, 1920s–1950s

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University Library Veranstaltungssaal (1. OG), 16.00

P r o f . D r . D r . S U S A N J O N E S

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

Program in History of Science and Technology

Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior

Guggenheim Fellow

This presentation analyzes the development of an important Russian/Soviet school of “disease ecology” at the intersection of human medicine, veterinary medicine, and ecological fieldwork. Part of a larger study in progress, Prof. Jones will argue that (1) although entanglements with the dynamic Soviet political system directly affected scientists’ work and ideas, analysis of their local activities in the borderlands demonstrates a surprising independence and autonomy; and (2) initial analysis also points to the importance of indigenous nomadic peoples’ knowledge and lived experience in informing scientific theories about endemic diseases. The talk concludes with a discussion of how collaboration between graduate students in the history of science, technology, and medicine, scientists, and informants in Kazakhstan have been essential to this historical project.

The lecture is free and open to the public.



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