

Cold War Indigeneity *in Science and Medicine*

3-4 September 2015 | Medical Historical Library, 333 Cedar Street, Yale University

Thursday, September 3

9:00 to 9:15 Welcome (Joanna Radin, Ned Blackhawk, and Ricardo Ventura Santos)

PLENARY SESSION: BETWEEN HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND INDIGENOUS STUDIES

9:15 to 9:45 **Vulnerable bodies: The technical marks of the Cold War**
Susan Lindee, University of Pennsylvania

9:45 to 10:15 **Combatting Colonial Technoscience—Lessons from the Frontlines**
Kim TallBear, University of Alberta

10:15 to 10:30 Coffee

SESSION 1: ATOMIC FALLOUT

10:30 to 12:45 Chair and Commentator
David Jones, Harvard University

**Contesting Isolation and Empty Space: Demography and Indigeneity
in the Pacific Islands during the Cold War**
Sandra Widmer, York University

**Casting Value/ Valuing Caste: Ritual Endogamy and the Genetic
Hazards of Radiation**
Projit Mukharji, University of Pennsylvania

Toxic Settler Colonialism: Atmospheric Affects in the Mojave
Kristen Simmons, University of Chicago

12:45 to 1:45 Lunch

SESSION 2: DIPLOMACY AND DEVELOPMENT

1:45 to 4:00 Chair and Commentator
Christian McMillen, University of Virginia

Cold War Technoscience, Soviet Orientalism, and Post/Coloniality in Kazakhstan

Susanne Bauer, Goethe University Frankfurt am Main

Melting the Ice Curtain: Indigeneity and the Alaska-Siberia Medical Research Program, 1983-1989

Tess Lanzarotta, Yale University

Testing Indians, Diagnosing Change: Experimental Systems and Modernization in Cold War Peru, 1951-1966

Jason Pribilsky, Whitman College

4:00 to 4:30 Coffee

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI PUBLIC LECTURE

4:30 to 6 :00 **Run in My Moccasins This Morning: My Journey as A Navajo Physician in Creating Healthier Environments For Native Communities**

Dr. Patricia Nez Henderson

Vice President, Black Hills Center for American Indian Health
and 2010 Henry Roe Cloud Alumni Award Recipient

6:30 to 8:00 Dinner at Yale Native American Cultural Center, 26 High Street

Friday, September 4

9:00 to 9:15 “Field notes” from the previous day
Hi‘ilei Hobart, New York University
Adrianna Link, Johns Hopkins University

SESSION 3: BODIES OF KNOWLEDGE

9:15 to 10:45 Chair and Commentator
Ann Kakaliouras, Whittier College

“Why did they die?”: Debates on the causes of high mortality in Amazonian indigenous populations in Cold War Brazil

Ricardo Ventura Santos, FIOCRUZ

“Life Given Straight from the Heart”: Indigeneity, Race, and Public Health in Hawai‘i

Juliet Nebolon, Yale University

10:45 to 11:00 Coffee

SESSION 4: PUBLIC HEALTH AND POST/COLONIALITY

11:00 to 12:30 Chair and Commentator
Yin Paradies, Deakin Univeristy

“An indictment of this country”: Aboriginal Health at the Center of Medical Research and Indigenous Political Activism in Cold War Australia

Maria John, Columbia University

“Pathfinders for Health”? Diabetes and the Co-Construction of Health Knowledge in Cold War North America

Matthew Klinge, Bowdoin College

12:30 to 1:30 Lunch

SESSION 5: EPISTEMIOLOGIES IN ACTION

1:30 to 3:45 Chair and Commentator
Joanna Radin, Yale University

The reservation as population laboratory: Experimenting with biomedical information technologies in the Papago Nation, 1968-1978

Jeremy Greene, Johns Hopkins University

Human Biology and Aboriginal studies in 1960s Australia

Emma Kowal, Deakin University

Identifying Genocide: Cold-war Terror, Forensics, and the Indigenous body in Argentina and Guatemala

Lindsay A. Smith, University of New Mexico

3:45 to 4:00 Coffee

4:00 to 4:15 “Field notes” from today
Hi‘ilei Hobart and Adrianna Link

CONCLUDING ROUNDTABLE: REFLECTIONS AND PROJECTIONS

4:15 to 5:00 Joanna Radin, Ned Blackhawk, Ricardo Ventura Santos, Susan Lindee, Kim TallBear

Abstracts

(Abstracts are listed in alphabetical order by last name.)

BAUER, Susanne | Goethe University Frankfurt am Main
COLD WAR TECHNOSCIENCE, SOVIET ORIENTALISM, AND POST/COLONIALITY
IN KAZAKHSTAN

Today national museums of Kazakhstan actively promote a multiethnic and multireligious idea of Kazakhstani citizenship. Cultural heritage programs establish new historiographies of the Kazakh and Kazakhstan, mobilizing categories of belonging both from Soviet and pre-Soviet time. Drawing from writings by anthropologists from the Kazakh SSR, museum exhibits, and biomedical research endeavors, this paper attends to the different versions of indigeneity, modernity and postcoloniality, as they have taken shape and have been remade and remixed in Soviet and post-Soviet Central Asia. While much research has been done on early Soviet demography concepts, nationality policies and ideas of nation building, this paper historicizes the politics of indigeneity by examining its mobilizations in the human sciences during the Cold War. I will explore concepts of indigeneity within Cold War biological anthropology and human population genetics as well as Soviet science policy debates on those from around 1960 to the 1990s. Starting from archival and published materials, this is a first survey of how Soviet anthropologists both from Russia and Kazakhstan negotiated indigeneity. Taking inspiration from postcolonial STS and Cold War studies I try to locate Soviet Cold War sciences symmetrically, both in terms of science/society, east/west and north/south relations. What were the various half-presences, such as Russian imperialism, colonial continuity, as well as early Soviet anticolonialism, and Cold War rivalry that linger in knowledge practices and scientific methodologies and state science policy? Was indigeneity mobilized at all in Soviet modernity and, if so, how? Building on previous work on biological anthropology and population genetics, I will focus on how Soviet and post-Soviet science negotiated and managed its relations with indigeneity. While Soviet orientalism was embedded in an agenda of modernization (as struggles against class differences) in the Soviet east, Cold War science mobilized Kazakh indigeneity both in the Soviet framework of a fraternal union of nations and, especially in the 1990s, for nation building. Thus, the case of Soviet Central Asia complicates western historiographies of sciences and their relations to indigeneity during the Cold War.

GREENE, Jeremy | Johns Hopkins University *in collaboration with Victor E. Breitberg* (University of Arizona), *Charles Doarn* (NASA/University of Cincinnati), *Stephen J. Garber* (NASA), and *Andrew Simpson* (Duquesne University).

THE RESERVATION AS POPULATION LABORATORY: EXPERIMENTING WITH BIOMEDICAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES IN THE PAPAGO NATION, 1968-1978

In May of 1973, an unusual collaboration between the NASA, the Indian Health Service, and the Lockheed Missile and Space Company promised to transform the way that members of the Papago (now Tohono O'odham) Nation accessed modern medicine. Through a system of state-of-the-art microwave relays, slow-scan television links, and mobile health units, the residents of this vast reservation—roughly the size of the state of Connecticut—would access physicians remotely via telemedical encounters instead of traveling to distant hospitals. The STARPAHC (Space Technology Applied to Rural Papago Advanced Health Care) partnership lasted from 1973 to 1977.

Its mission was twofold: first, to help NASA test out its new Integrated Medical and Behavioral Laboratory Measurement System for use in future manned space flight, second, to help the IHS assess the role of new technologies for providing care across a vast rural landscape.

While other accounts have explored the role of STARPAHC as an early telemedical system, little has been written on how or why the Papago reservation became an experimental site for biomedical communication technologies. I argue that STARPAHC was not entirely unprecedented, and had roots in other Cold War investigations into the role of health technologies in domestic and international health policy. Well before NASA became involved on the Papago reservation, the IHS had designated the site a “population laboratory” for testing new communications technologies in public health and primary health care, and tribal leadership had developed that laboratory role through engagements with other forms of prototype electronic medical technologies.

This paper explores the configuration of the Papago reservation as an experimental site whose value derived in part from the ability of stakeholders in the IHS, the Peace Corps, and NASA to generalize its terrain to stand in for any number of other Native American reservations, villages in Malawi, Liberia, and Korea, or extra-terrestrial landscapes, respectively, as a proving ground for health communications technologies. This talk, drawn largely from archival materials and published articles is part of a larger project on the uses of communications technologies to resolve disparities in access to health care in the late 20th century.

JOHN, Maria | Columbia University

“AN INDICTMENT OF THIS COUNTRY”: ABORIGINAL HEALTH AT THE CENTER OF MEDICAL RESEARCH AND INDIGENOUS POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN COLD WAR AUSTRALIA

Between 1950 and 1970, events at home and overseas awakened the Australian medical community and the broader Australian public to the abysmal state of Aboriginal health across the nation. In 1968—a highly politicized year across much of the world—E. Gough Whitlam (soon-to-be Australian Prime Minister, but then the leader of the opposition party), encapsulated this moment of national awakening when he criticized the current government for being indifferent to the reality that, “The health of Aboriginals is an indictment of this country.”¹ This paper seeks to explain how by the 1970s, Aboriginal health came to be one of the most pressing issues confronting Australia’s medical community and its national politicians. The paper argues that much of this history turned on the ability of Aboriginal health advocates and activists to challenge some rather fundamental (and racist) beliefs about the causes of, and thus the appropriate responses to, Aboriginal health problems. On the one hand, this required shifting the political discourse around Aboriginal health from one that blamed the victim, to one that recognized the social determinants of health. On the other hand, it required convincing those in power, or who were in a position to help, that they had a social and moral responsibility to do so.

To bring this history to life, the paper focuses on the critical role of new knowledge and data generated about Aboriginal health during the 1950s-1970s. For example, it considers a landmark scientific expedition undertaken in 1948, co-sponsored by the National Geographic Society and the Smithsonian Institution in the United States, in partnership with the Commonwealth Government of Australia. An event thickly inscribed with the political complexities of its epoch, historians have typically considered the political significance of the 1948 American-Australian Scientific Expedition in terms of its diplomatic objectives, particularly the way in which it cemented much broader allied collaboration in an era of great mistrust. By contrast, this paper draws attention to its political significance specifically as a site of medical research. Famously, the Expedition revealed that across the Northern Territory, “leprosy is considered endemic” among the Aboriginal population.² Such

findings spurred medical researchers over the course of the 1950s and 1960s, to investigate a wide spectrum of health issues common in Aboriginal communities across the country. Yet, critical as these studies were, the paper highlights the ways in which this new knowledge constructed Aboriginal health as problematic only in rural settings, thereby disregarding the health struggles and needs of the growing urban communities. It considers how Aboriginal health activists in Sydney therefore simultaneously challenged the urban invisibility created by this new knowledge, while also using the political momentum generated by this research, to raise the urgency of Aboriginal health problems in general. By simultaneously resisting and capitalizing on this health research, the paper argues that Aboriginal health advocates wielded this new data as a sharp tool to turn the dire state of Aboriginal health into one of Australia's greatest national embarrassments by the 1970s. Further, I show that they also used their health activism as a platform for advancing the cause of Aboriginal self-determination in the urban context. Indicating the dramatic impact of this new knowledge and its deployment by health activists, a National Plan for Aboriginal Health was proposed by the Commonwealth government in 1973, to "raise the standard of the health of Aboriginals of Australia to the levels enjoyed by their fellow Australians."³ This was the first time in Australian history that Aboriginal health was officially recognized, at the level of government policy, as a national priority. In this time, the activist community in Sydney also succeeded in making one of the most significant interventions into the history of healthcare delivery to Aboriginal communities nationwide. In 1971, in Sydney, they established Australia's first Aboriginal community-controlled health service, *The Aboriginal Medical Service*. Today, more than 160 such organizations exist across both urban and rural Australia, and their impact over the last 40 years arguably stands as one of the greatest contributions towards the political project of Aboriginal self-determination in Australia.

1. E. Gough Whitlam. 'Statement by Leader of the Opposition to the House of Representatives: "Aboriginals. Discussion of Matter of Public Importance" 13 August 1968'. *Whitlam Institute e-collection*. Accessed 06.23.2015.

2. Mountford C.P. (ed.). *Records of the American–Australian Scientific Expedition to Arnhem Land, Vol. 2, Anthropology and Nutrition*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1960.

3. Australian Department of Health. *Ten Year Plan for Aboriginal Health*. Canberra: AGPS, 1973.

KLINGLE, Matthew | Bowdoin College

"PATHFINDERS FOR HEALTH"? DIABETES AND THE CO-CONSTRUCTION OF HEALTH KNOWLEDGE IN COLD WAR NORTH AMERICA

In 1965 scientists from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) discovered exceptionally diabetes incidence and prevalence among Native residents of the Gila River Indian Community in Arizona. Over the next forty-plus years, NIH researchers, alongside U.S. Indian Health Service physicians, launched several prospective cohort studies of the Pima (Akimel O'Odham) people that would redefine basic understandings of diabetes etiology, epidemiology, genetics, prevention and treatment. These same studies also helped to create, sometimes intentionally and sometimes unwittingly, the pervasive stereotype of the "diabetic Indian." Yet while the NIH publicly acknowledged the importance of Native participation, calling the Pima "pathfinders for health," researchers also built their theories upon the foundation of indigenous peoples as timeless and primitive. The active participation of Native peoples not only as research subjects but also as co-creators and users of scientific health knowledge, however, is another part of this study. In this paper, I explore how the production of scientific knowledge of diabetes as a "disease of civilization" afflicting Native peoples unfolded alongside the co-production of indigenous knowledge to combat the disease. Scientists may have cast their indigenous subjects as primeval, but Native uses of biomedical knowledge, created with their bodies and in their communities, were thoroughly modern.

KOWAL, Emma | Deakin University

HUMAN BIOLOGY AND ABORIGINAL STUDIES IN 1960S AUSTRALIA

In Cold War Australia, the conservative federal government was convinced to revive scholarly efforts to salvage Aboriginal knowledge. Although Australian tribes had received global scholarly attention since the late nineteenth century, research efforts were largely halted by WWII and remained neglected by cash-strapped funding bodies into the 1950s. In the late 1950s, prominent Australian anthropologists and, crucially, charismatic conservative politician Bill Wentworth made public pleas for funding to record and preserve the languages and cultures of Aboriginal tribes. Wentworth argued they were “unique” among “primitive tribes” and perhaps “the most interesting... in the world.” The study of Aborigines, believed to be “Archaic Caucasians”, promised knowledge of human origins more relevant to Europeans than the study of Africans or Asians could reveal. More importantly, the “catastrophic social transition” facing Australian tribes made studying them an urgent national duty, lest “humanity...lose something of permanent value.” In 1961 the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (AIAS) was created by an Act of Parliament. Rebadged as a new discipline – Aboriginal Studies – and supported by generous funding, AIAS’s research agenda nonetheless followed the classic four fields: linguistics, cultural anthropology, archeology, and physical anthropology/human biology.

By 1970, public opposition to the Vietnam War heralded the reconfiguration of Australia’s role in Cold War geopolitics. A parallel social transformation affected AIAS as a generation of urban, university-educated Aboriginal people began to populate the Institute. In a few short years, its central research goal shifted from scientific knowledge to Aboriginal benefit. Linguistics and social anthropology survived the recalibration reasonably well; archeology was largely and publicly transformed by repatriation. Human biology, however, was supplanted by Aboriginal health and disappeared from public view as a stigmatized science.

This paper charts the rise and fall of mid-century Aboriginal human biology through the history of the Human Biology Advisory Committee of AIAS. It asks, what are the *epistemological* legacies of human biology, once a major pillar of Aboriginal studies? At the workshop I will discuss this paper in the context of my 20-year engagement with Aboriginal health and activist worlds, and in particular, the last 5 years of my engagement with the *material* legacies of Aboriginal human biology – thousands of blood samples collected in the 1960s and stored in the freezers of a major Australian university. The latter project has led to the formation of the world’s first Indigenous-governed genome facility and may be reconstituting the contribution of human biology to Indigenous research.

LANZAROTTA, Tess | Yale

MELTING THE ICE CURTAIN: INDIGENEITY AND THE ALASKA-SIBERIA MEDICAL RESEARCH PROGRAM, 1983-1989

In 1983, a delegation of medical scientists from the University of Alaska-Anchorage (UAA) arranged to visit to their counterparts in the Soviet Union for the first time. After the trip, the Siberian Branch of the Academy of Medical Sciences and the UAA began to share information about the common medical concerns that both Alaska and Siberia were facing. This collaboration culminated in the establishment of the Alaska-Siberia Medical Research Program (ASMRP) in 1987, a formal agreement which generated long-term joint research projects, conferences, medical exchanges, and data-sharing efforts. The program had a mandate to study how life in the Far North

- with its extended periods of light and darkness, remote communities, and extreme weather - impacted human health; in particular, the ASMRP identified studying and improving the health of arctic indigenous populations as one of its primary goals.

This paper focuses on the early years of the ASMRP and explores how its members situated the program as a unique tool for explaining the relationship between health, place, and race in arctic environments. Human adaptation to the arctic, researchers insisted, could be properly understood only through comparative studies of the bodies of indigenous peoples, long-term residents, newcomers, and transient workers. ASMRP scientists also regularly invoked both biological and cultural notions of shared indigeneity to emphasize the political importance of their efforts. They argued that health matters, especially those effecting indigenous populations, transcended the geopolitical concerns of the Cold War. Sharing medical, biological, and anthropological knowledge, in the words of ASMRP scientists, would “rebuild the bridge over the Bering Strait” and remind Alaskans and Siberians that they were part of “one Northern family.”

LINDEE, Susan | University of Pennsylvania

VULNERABLE BODIES: THE TECHNICAL MARKS OF THE COLD WAR

I begin my commentary attending to the Cold War's vulnerable bodies--the bodies understood by technical experts as marked by their possession *by* knowledge. We might even call it a haunting. Things seemed to be known by these bodies even if those who lived in them could not speak of it. Technical markings in practice constructed particular bodies as informative, rich in data, *precious*. The marking could take many forms but commonly involved people seen as biologically unique--isolated, raced, bombed. They included hungry people in field laboratories; residents in the many weaponized terrains of the nuclear age; highly adapted bodies in strange places (cold, hot); or bodies believed to be ephemeral, about to disappear, weighed down by modernity, to be captured in a freezer if nowhere else. As Avery Gordon asks, "how do we reckon with what modern history has rendered ghostly?" (Gordon, 2008, 18). In my commentary I reflect on the haunted technical surrogacies of the Cold War, when the risks faced by some were leveraged as protection for others.

MUKHARJI, Projit | University of Pennsylvania

CASTING VALUE/ VALUING CASTE: RITUAL ENDOGAMY AND THE GENETIC HAZARDS OF RADIATION

In the wake of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki scientists became interested in the long-term effects of radiation upon a population. By the early 1960s there had emerged a notion of a ‘genetic load’ as a key concept through which such long-term effects could be mapped. As this key notion was developed however, scientists led originally by LD Sanghvi, a student of Theodor Dobzhansky, begun to critique and redefine it through studies of endogamous populations in India. In the formulation of this critique and the mathematical calculations of ‘genetic load’, casted populations allegedly produced through centuries of ritualized endogamy became an extremely valuable resource. Though long denounced by India’s political and scientific elite as a form of ‘primitive’ anachronism that needed to be speedily weeded out in order to make India fully modern, it was these very ‘primitive’ forms of caste and its attendant marriage forms that were now mobilized as a valuable resource through which the hazards of nuclear radiation could be worked out. It is this contradictory deployment of caste by modernist elites that demonstrates the ways in which bifurcated regimes of value serve to frame the postcolonial subaltern as both politically backward

and yet scientifically valuable to the project of modernity. Besides illuminating the Cold War politics of value in postcolonial India, this episode also prefigures the current assignation of biovalue to endogamous groups by Indian Genome Variation Consortium, even as the same modernizing elites pose ‘caste’ as an anachronism to be overcome.

NEBOLON, Juliet | Yale University

“LIFE GIVEN STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART”: INDIGENEITY, RACE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH IN HAWAII

My work is on the expansion of public health under martial law during World War II, in which I explore the colonial biopolitics of wartime public health programs that targeted health and hygiene practices as a new domain for military surveillance, organization, and control. Public health projects such as the mandatory vaccination program and the Honolulu Blood Bank pathologized people in Hawai‘i as diseased, while simultaneously producing new corporeal requirements for wartime citizenship in Hawai‘i, such as its standards of health and bodily sacrifices.

How were these wartime public health projects also “knowledge projects” that constructed discourses of indigeneity and race in Hawai‘i? During World War II, hypervisible racializations of the Japanese as “enemy aliens” and potential subversives rationalized U.S. martial law and its surveillance of the Japanese immigrant population, while also contributing to the erasure of Hawaiian sovereignty and claims to lands currently occupied by the U.S. military. I discuss how we can see these politics of race and indigeneity embedded in public health projects. For example, I argue that by keeping monthly statistics of blood donations according to “racial extraction,” the Honolulu Blood Bank created a colonial taxonomy of human “types,” which cast “Caucasian blood” as the dominant majority, “Hawaiian and Part-Hawaiian blood” as diluting, and “Japanese blood” as immutable and perpetually foreign.

How did these programs continue and change in the postwar period, and how did these World War II-era knowledge projects pave the way for Cold War changes in ideas of race and indigeneity? I discuss postwar plans for public health in Hawai‘i, and also place my work in conversation with that of scholars such as Dean Saranillio, Candace Fujikane, and Jonathan Okamura, in order to reflect upon the role of these public health discourses in Cold War projects such the civil rights movement, Hawaiian statehood, the growing political influence of Japanese Americans in Hawai‘i’s communities, and the continued erasure of Native Hawaiian sovereignty.

PRIBILSKY, Jason | Whitman College

TESTING INDIANS, DIAGNOSING CHANGE: EXPERIMENTAL SYSTEMS AND MODERNIZATION IN COLD WAR PERU, 1951-1966

This paper concerns one of anthropology’s perfect dreams, awash in 1950s scientific optimism and Cold War anxiety. It explores the history of how a group of Cornell University anthropologists assumed the lease and the role of *patron* for an ailing hacienda in the Peruvian highland community of Vicos and transformed it into a so-termed ethnographic “laboratory” for the study of modernization and culture change. With just a few targeted developments (or variables) – modern healthcare, Green Revolution-style agriculture, and education – the project ultimately sought mimicry and efficiency: the induction of natural processes of culture change, delivered in a deliberately hot-house fashion, that otherwise would presumably take centuries to produce. For modernization theorists fixated on the problem of the world’s peasantries, Vicos held the promise of a quick and low-cost model for shepherding “backwards peoples” through land reform, generic

enough to export globally anywhere the twin threats of violent revolution and collectivization might take hold. For anthropology and the nascent world of Cold War “behavioral sciences,” Vicos vied for showcase status of how state-of-the art research in a unique fieldsite-cum-laboratory could generate key indices for isolating and identifying the forces of modernization.’

I trace how the unique conditions of Cornell’s hold over the community prompted researchers to draw imaginative comparisons between the peasant hacienda and other intentional and malleable communities. In the Vicos ‘laboratory’, researchers traded standard tools of anthropology for tests and experiments to validate their assumptions. Marrying cybernetics and modernization theory, they looked for ways to not merely induce culture change, but to create wholly new cultural forms – ones that privileged indigenous peasants as self-actualized, self-maximizing individuals, over their usual depiction as sociocentric and conservative. These ranged from the commonplace, such as thematic apperception tests (TAT) and psychoanalysis, to the bizarre – including projective typing tests and erotic art analysis. Together these tests stood in the service of uncovering the butterfly wing traces of culture change and “modern thinking” that presumably lurked beneath the exterior forms of Andean culture. This paper ultimately aims to inform debates in development studies and global health with respect to evidence-based policymaking and in particular, the current excitement generated by widespread use of randomized control trials (RCTs), asking how indicators of development become commensurate and comparable across space and time and with what consequences for research subjects.

SANTOS, Ricardo Ventura | FIOCRUZ

“WHY DID THEY DIE?”: DEBATES ON THE CAUSES OF HIGH MORTALITY IN AMAZONIAN INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS IN COLD WAR BRAZIL

Starting in the late 1960s, Francis Black, a virologist and epidemiologist from Yale University, carried out highly influential immunologic and genetic research on indigenous populations in the Brazilian Amazon region. One of the main scientists involved in the measles vaccine trials coordinated by the World Health Organization in the 1960s, Black was interested in the role played by genetic-evolutionary processes in the high mortality rates of indigenous peoples after contact with Western societies. In this paper, I present a historical and anthropological study aiming at contextualizing Black’s research in Brazil and ascertaining how it relates to the global research agenda on the human biology of indigenous populations in the post WWII period. At a historical moment when vaccine development and other medical technologies created an optimistic scenario for the control and even eradication of major contagious infectious diseases, interpretations derived from field investigation carried out by Black in Amazonia were marked by highly pessimistic perspectives about the future of indigenous populations, as their biologies came to be seen as too frail to face the challenges posed by epidemics of introduced infectious diseases. In a paper published in *Science* in 1992 entitled “Why did they die?” Black provided an overview of his theoretical perspectives and proposed what he envisioned as the possible future for indigenous peoples: “...with reduced polymorphisms at many loci and exposure to diverse mutable pathogens, it is not surprising that previously isolated people fared poorly. Inter-marriage between populations reduces the problem, but an unfortunate consequence of inter-marriage is often the loss of indigenous culture” (p. 1740). As I will argue, these perspectives were highly contentious, attracting criticism by other important scientists involved in human biological research in Amazonia at the time, including human geneticist James Neel. A main point of the paper is to explore the debates

about the political implications of Black's interpretations as it relates to the permanence and rights of indigenous peoples in South America, in particular through its emphasis on the notion of miscegenation. Human biological research on indigenous communities in Brazil from mid-1960s to the mid-1980s took place during a period when the country was under a military dictatorship closely associated with the Cold War context, when issues related to indigenous populations were deemed as having high geopolitical relevance.

SIMMONS, Kristen | University of Chicago

TOXIC SETTLER COLONIALISM: ATMOSPHERIC AFFECTS IN THE MOJAVE

The Mojave Desert is a site of violent dispossession of indigenous nations from their homelands and continues to be a key site of settler state nation-making projects. As Joseph Masco notes in *The Theater of Operations* (2014), Nevada largely consists of U.S. military space devoted to counterterrorism. In total, 85% of lands in Nevada are federally controlled, the highest amount in the nation. The majority of that control falls under the auspices of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Department of Defense (DOD). This paper recognizes the Cold War project of the Nevada Test Site (now the Nevada National Security Site) as the colossal actor in transforming the desert, and seeks to examine the narrative (and lack thereof) of indigenous nations in relation to the project, as well as the real-life repercussions still being felt today. Privileging a precise indigenous standpoint as an enrolled member of the Moapa Band of Paiutes, I hope to illuminate a way into understanding the particular history of how indigeneity as a concept in Nevada comes to be articulated today by multiple actors in the public sphere.

SMITH, Lindsay A. | University of New Mexico

IDENTIFYING GENOCIDE: COLD-WAR TERROR, FORENSICS, AND THE INDIGENOUS BODY IN ARGENTINA AND GUATEMALA

In the last half of the twentieth century, Latin America suffered untold levels of violence as dictatorial leaders and military juntas waged brutal cold-war counter-insurgency campaigns to eradicate the perceived threat of communism on the continent. Through the years of civil war in Central America and South America and the “dirty wars” of the Southern cone hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children went missing; entire families, communities, and peoples were massacred. Although cold-war scholarship has predominantly focused on Europe, scholars working in Latin America have brought renewed attention to the intensity of violence, economic dispossession, and destruction of civil society wrought by the counter-insurgency style warfare that engulfed the continent. Cold-war Latin America acted as a global laboratory for military interventions, the cultivation of a culture of terror, and ideological and economic transformation. Old sciences—forensic anthropology and human genetics—were made new in this crucible of disappearance and state terrorism. Linking objectivity, rigorous methods, and technological determinism with a politics of human dignity and rights, forensic scientists inaugurated an unprecedented, ungoverned project of data collection about Latin American bodies leading to renewed attention to the presence and erasure of Indigenous peoples. Drawing on 2 years of ethnographic fieldwork in Argentina and Guatemala with forensic scientists and human rights communities, this paper examines the coproduction of indigenous threat and revival and the intensity of anthropometric and genetic knowledge production about indigenous groups necessary for human rights identification.

TALLBEAR, Kim | University of Alberta

COMBATting COLONIAL TECHNOSCIENCE—LESSONS FROM THE FRONTLINES

In May 2013, historian Ian Mosby published a research article in *Social History* that detailed shocking unethical nutrition experiments done on First Nations people, including residential school children, during the mid-20th century. Chronically malnourished Aboriginal people—victims of colonial interference in their traditional lifeways and subsequent government deprivation—were used as a living human laboratory for nutrition scientists to pursue their research. This is but a recent revelation in a long history of unethical technoscientific research done on indigenous people by scientists whose assumptions and goals are shaped by a colonial state. However, problematic research on indigenous peoples is not always so explicit in its *unethics*. This talk highlights how even seemingly collaborative or benign research on and representations of indigenous peoples can constitute subtle but not inconsequential 21st century colonial acts in which indigenous peoples are still viewed as the natural resources upon which to build scientific nations. Ironically, part of resisting the colonial state is for indigenous peoples themselves to colonize technoscientific fields and to appropriate the resources of those fields to build indigenous peoples' own capacities, institutions, economies, and knowledges.

WIDMER, Sandra | York University

CONTESTING ISOLATION AND EMPTY SPACE: DEMOGRAPHY AND INDIGENEITY IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS DURING THE COLD WAR

Nuclear testing programs were a defining cold war research agenda in the Pacific islands. Geneticists also worked in the expansive region, cataloguing populations before they became “too heterogeneous” to be useful to science. These research agendas shared a conception of the Pacific as isolated, virtually empty islands. ‘Isolation’ allowed Pacific Islanders, and their indigeneity to stand for the past of humanity and a resource for research. Between 1950-70, many people living in the Pacific islands were made legible through official censuses for the first time. These undertakings were conducted through the South Pacific Commission, in cooperation with colonial governments. While ‘isolation’ was an enabling trope for the first two research agendas, the SPC worked to show the islands were inhabited by people capable of economic (capitalist) modernization. With a focus on the first census in the New Hebrides, this paper focuses on the significance of indigeneity in demographic research. It asks what was at stake in conducting research on some islands to show that they were inhabited by indigenous communities.

Sivasundaram's suggests (2014) that researchers' narrations of Pacific islands as isolated scientific laboratories missed the living material relationships of ocean and human life. Inspired by his claim, I examine how research practices, even the censuses, reproduced the land centric trope of geographic isolation. This was accomplished by downplaying the expansive relationships between humans, land and ocean environments even while spreading an institutional web of influence and knowledge over the islands. By examining how demographers' connected isolation and indigeneity, I join with Pacific and other Indigenous experts and hope we might know otherwise.