

11/22 Public Health Politics I: Plague in Chinatown

Guest Lecture: Anne Pollock

Bubonic Plague

- Pathophysiology

- History

- Rats, fleas, and *Yersinia pestis*, 1894/1898

Honolulu 1899

- Quarantine and fire: entire neighborhood destroyed

San Francisco, 1900: Plague in Chinatown

- Quarantine: fear of spread, vs. fear of lost trade

- Ethnic bias: irrational implementation of a quarantine

- What rights of Chinese individuals?

- Resistance to explanations and interventions

- Inoculation debates

Earthquake, 1906

- Chinatown destroyed, plague moves throughout city

- Epidemic transformed, managed differently: war against rats

Plague in 2005: Remains Endemic in Western US

Parallels to Plague

- SARS and Bird Flu: Asian epidemics

- HIV: disease and identity, public health and individual rights

- Epidemics expose social fault lines

- Public health measures imperfect and politicized

- Quarantine: appropriate measure, or punishment?