



THE SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT COLLOQUIUM PRESENTS:

## **Epidemics and the Myths we Create: Confronting the Sociology of Global Health's Modern Consciousness**



**Alexandre White**

Assistant Professor of Sociology  
Johns Hopkins University

Wednesday, February 23, 2022

12:30-1:50 PM Central Time

Zoom: <https://bit.ly/3ESHBwC>

Whether intentional or not, much of the thought produced within the sociology of global health upon infectious disease, by its focus on the “developing world” perhaps would over-assume the differences in dynamics shaping health around the world. This has been buttressed to varying degrees by scientific discourse as well as historical precedent. To bear witness uncritically to the history of global health in the West is to participate in an exercise in myth making. It is to take part in believing that through biomedical intervention, sanitary development and international controls, the West is able to separate itself from the parts of the world suffering from infectious diseases and other ills and is thus superior in its civilization. The elimination of many disease threats over the course of the 19th and 20th century are some of the most powerful signifiers of western modernity’s capacity for progress through scientific rationality and bureaucratization. This presentation seeks to raise critical questions of the theoretical frameworks of the sociology of global health while calling for a need to re-orient the epistemological foundations of the field to incorporate postcolonial, historical and non-western scholarship on the field.

*This event is co-sponsored by the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture.  
Contact Meredith Clason with questions or for assistance at [mclason@uchicago.edu](mailto:mclason@uchicago.edu).*