



**Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists
2003 Annual Conference • Pre-Conference Workshop
Sunday, June 22, 2003**

“Epidemics: Lessons from the Past”

Theme:

To understand the public health response to epidemics, including epidemics that result from acts of bioterrorism, it is useful and necessary to have an appreciation for the history of epidemic disease and the historical construction of diseases and epidemics. One approach to the historical analysis of epidemics is to look for a pattern of events characteristic of epidemics. A second approach is to look for patterns in explanations for epidemics. Any explanation of an epidemic must account for collective as opposed to individual illness. The public health response is shaped by the beliefs held by those involved concerning the explanation of disease and epidemics.

Morning Activities: - Hike is Optional for Workshop Attendees

9:00 am – Shuttle Service provided to “Smallpox Hospital Rock” in Farmington, Connecticut. Guided hike ascending Rattlesnake Mountain to “Smallpox Hospital Rock” will be lead by Dr. Ralph Arcari. Look for carvings on the rock of patients of the Todd-Wadsworth Small Pox Hospital from 1792-94.



[Click here for more pictures of Smallpox Rock](#)

Afternoon Activities:

1:00 pm – Return to Hastings Hotel for boxed lunch

2:00 pm to 6:00 pm – Formal presentations.

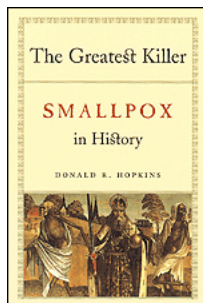
Confirmed speakers: Dr. Donald Hopkins and Dr. Elizabeth Fenn

Evening Activities: - All Conference Attendees Invited

7:00 pm – Meeting the Author Reception and Book Signing



Authors



In *The Greatest Killer*, **Donald R. Hopkins** provides a fascinating account of smallpox and its role in human history. Starting with its origins 10,000 years ago in Africa or Asia, Hopkins follows the disease on its rampage through both the ancient and modern worlds, including its spread to Europe and the Americas. He describes how smallpox often wiped out whole villages and decimated the populations of entire regions and how the disease disrupted agriculture and trade. Smallpox changed the course of history as it removed or temporarily incapacitated heads of state, halted or exacerbated wars, and devastated populations that had never been exposed to the disease. In Hopkins's history, smallpox was one of the most dangerous--and influential--characters that shaped the course of world events.

A horrifying epidemic of smallpox was sweeping across North America when the War of Independence began, and until now we have known almost nothing about it.

Elizabeth A. Fenn is the first historian to reveal how deeply Variola affected the outcome of the war in every colony and the lives of everyone on the continent. Her remarkable research shows us how the disease devastated the American troops at Quebec and kept them at bay during the British occupation of Boston, and how it ravaged slaves in Virginia who had escaped to join the British forces. During the terrible winter at Valley Forge, General Washington had to decide if and when to



attempt the risky inoculation of his troops.

The destructive, desolating power of smallpox made for a cascade of public-health crises and heartbreaking human drama. Fenn's innovative work shows how this mega tragedy was met and what its consequences were for the young republic.