
TIMOTHY RELUGA, Penn State

New comments on old pathometry

Given the maturity of mathematical epidemiology today, it is sometimes interesting to look back on the history of the field and reflect on its development. While we tend to remember history as punctuation (Kermack and McKendrick's 1932 article, for instance), the actual progress was messy and mysteries still persist. What was William Farr's actual "normal law" of epidemics? Was Alfred Lotka really responsible for the Reed–Frost epidemic model? Did Kermack and McKendrick knowingly mislead their readers regarding their data on plague incidence? Who was Ross's coauthor H. Hudson? In this talk, I'll discuss these and other tidbits from my recent studies of the gestation (prior to 1904) and infancy (up to 1952) of the field.