

USF NEXUS INITIATIVE 2019 AWARD RECIPIENT

Michael Decker

Health in History Database

Using a combination of historical texts, archaeological skeletal materials, and advances in scientific technologies I will generate original research on past human populations, especially regarding public health. The period under investigation is marked by violence, political instability, climate change, and mass-migration, all issues which are especially pertinent to the present day. We can gain multiple insights into how humans adapted to serious challenges, including demographic shock and serious environmental disturbances. Using DNA analysis obtained from skeletal samples, microbiologists can detect an array of diseases present in ancient populations and from these, we can build a picture of population health with major potential implications for infectious disease, epidemics, human responses to pathogens, climate change, and human demography.

Partnership:

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