



## 24<sup>th</sup> Pumphandle Lecture 2016



**“The Syrian conflict and its effects on the future of humanitarian response: we need a new pumphandle”** by Paul Spiegel

Thu 8 September – 5:30 pm

John Snow Lecture Theatre, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

Book online via <https://pumphandle-2016.eventbrite.co.uk>

Dr Paul Spiegel is a medical epidemiologist who has responded to crises and undertaken field work and research in humanitarian emergencies in many countries around the world. He served for the past 14 years as Deputy Director of the Division of Programme Support and Management and the Chief of Public Health at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Geneva, Switzerland, after experience with the International Emergency and Refugee Health Branch at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), with Médecins Sans Frontières, and with several other organisations. He has recently been appointed Director of the Center for Refugee and Disaster Response at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

The lecture will be followed by the Society's Annual General Meeting, held in the John Snow Public House (at the corner of Broadwick and Lexington Streets, in Soho) to which all are invited. The lecture will be recorded and placed on the Society's website.

## 23<sup>rd</sup> Pumphandle lecture and AGM 2015

**“On Removing the Pumphandle: Innovation in implementation”** by Atul Gawande

The 23rd annual Pumphandle Lecture was given on the 8th of October 2015 by Dr Atul Gawande, Professor of Surgery and of Public Health at Harvard, well known author (eg *The Checklist Manifesto* and *Being Mortal*), and Executive Director of Ariadne Labs, a joint centre for health systems innovation, as well as Chairman of Lifebox, a UK-based nonprofit devoted to making surgery safer globally.

Dr Gawande began by referring to Snow's work on cholera, and the subsequent evolution of the complex health care systems of today.

He highlighted the effectiveness of a simple checklist approach in three key areas – surgery, maternal and childcare, and primary healthcare - emphasising that a checklist is not a protocol, but a list of the most common things that experts miss, and which should be tailored for particular activities and institutions.

Drawing from experience in the airline industry, the checklist approach was adapted by Dr Gawande's team and recently introduced, first in surgical practice. The explicit checking of a list of just 19 items, in theatre, has led to important reductions in surgical mortality in many countries. He emphasised the necessity of monitoring the system through setting targets, continued contact and data feedback.



In the case of maternal and child health, he emphasised the importance of identifying a set of “minimum required guidelines” and the collection of data to identify what is missing in the real world. He described studies in areas of India where one in 20 newborns die in utero or soon after birth. Critical analysis led to agreement on a series of actions before admission, during birth, after birth and when the mother was being discharged. Improved results were not from additional skills training or supplies but the use of a 30-item checklist at different stages.

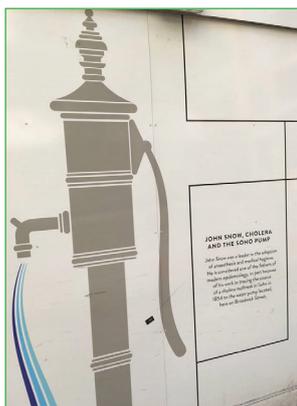
In assessing primary healthcare, it is common to consider four S categories: staff; stuff; structure and systems. However, users typically ask about four

C's: contact (is there a place to go that is open); continuity (do staff recall medical histories); coordination (is information transmitted to add to wider public health discussion) and comprehensiveness (can a primary healthcare institution take care of the majority of medical needs). To address these concerns, Dr Gawande and colleagues have recently launched the primary healthcare performance initiative, which has been approved by the UN General Assembly, in order to identify which is the simplest system to follow to close the gap between aspiration and achievement.

All these are examples of innovative ways by which to remove crucial pumphandles confronting public health.

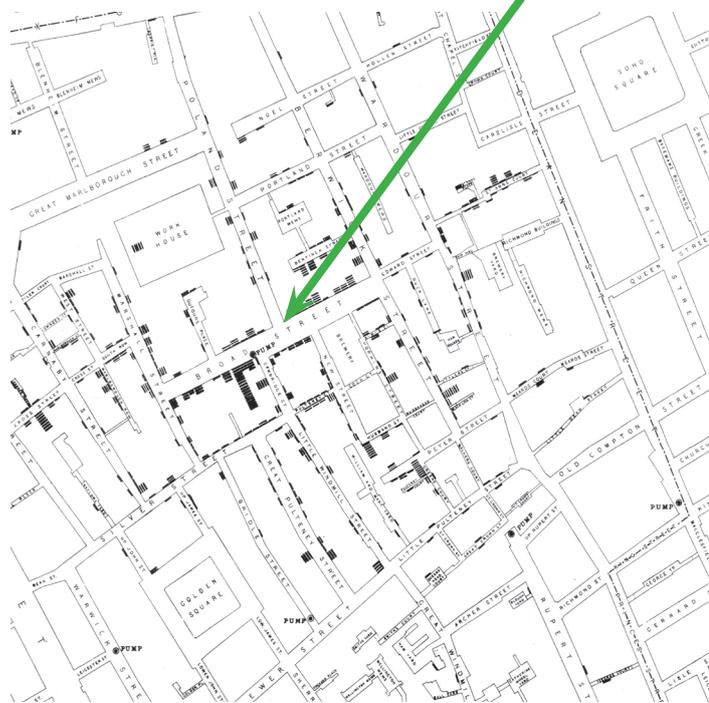
The vote of thanks was proposed by Professor Dilys Morgan, using a checklist, and Dr Gawande was invited to remove the handle of the pump to close the lecture. Society members then adjourned to the John Snow pub in Soho for the Annual General Meeting of the society. A video of the lecture is available on our website: [www.johnsnowsociety.org](http://www.johnsnowsociety.org)

# The saga of the missing pump... continued



**Pump picture on hoarding surrounding construction site on corner of Broadwick and Poland Street**

Members and visitors to the site of the 1854 cholera outbreak in Soho are waiting anxiously for the return of the much loved pump statue in Broadwick (ex Broad) Street. It was removed because of building work in January 2015. The developers of a large block between Poland St and Berwick St have put an image of the pump on the hoarding, but when is the pump itself coming back? The answer is that it will return after completion of other works in the street, possibly by the end of 2016. The City of Westminster Council has ensured us that the pump is safely stored while plans are prepared for its reinstatement, hopefully at a site closer to where the pump stood on Broad Street in Dr. Snow's time.



**Portion of original map in 2nd edition (1855) of Snow's On Cholera, showing the position of the replica pump placed in 1992 at intersection of Poland and Broadwick Streets. Note that this edition of the map showed the pump at the intersection of Broad (now Broadwick) and Cambridge (now Lexington) Streets, whereas it was actually some 5 meters west of the intersection, outside what was then #40 Broad Street.**

The bronze rectangular plaque on the wall of the John Snow Pub and the nearby pink granite kerbstone mark the site of the pump identified as the source of the 1854 outbreak. The pump statue removed from the corner of Poland Street was erected in 1992 and is a replica of a Victorian pump, typical of those that stood in Soho streets and squares in the 19th century. The Society was consulted about the image on the hoarding and has requested to be involved with plans for the design and location of the pump's return.

## Chapters of the Society

According to our Constitution (<http://www.johnsnowsociety.org/constitution.html>): we have not given detailed guidance on Chapter formation, but two statements are particularly relevant: "Eligibility to join the Society is defined as wishing to celebrate the memory of John Snow." And: "Members of the Society are encouraged to establish informal groups, chapters (divisions) and meetings in their own countries and localities. Local groups may levy an additional fee to finance their local activities." We are aware of at least 10 chapters that have been organised in various places over the years, including in Kampala Uganda, Norway, Iceland, Finland, Auckland New Zealand, Heidelberg Germany, Bethesda Maryland, San Francisco California, Texas and South Carolina USA, but we have not always been kept informed of their activities or status.

It is useful in this context to acknowledge another principle enshrined in the Society's Constitution: "A John Snow Society meeting can be declared wherever and whenever at least two Members of the Society are present. A photographic record of meetings and events may be sent to the Secretary for inclusion in the Society's archives."



**Finland**  
(Terhi Lohela)

Greetings from Finland! Summer was lovely as always, but unfortunately this year it was on a Tuesday, about 500 miles from Helsinki. I wish to report the following actions to serve the JSS to the best of my abilities:

To recruit bright new minds into the Society, I travelled across the mighty Baltic Sea to Tartu of Estonia, and attended a course in statistical practice in epidemiology. I am delighted to report that my journey was successful and the society is about to expand its influence in Denmark, Germany, Hungary and Sweden. With these enthusiastic new members, we naturally felt the urge to declare JSS meetings in the plethora of Tartu's pubs and restaurants post statistical practice. We expect to continue our fruitful discussions after Pumphandle lectures in the John Snow Pub in the years to come.

As a pilgrimage I then decided to follow in Snow's footsteps to Dubrovnik in Croatia, only to find out that I had actually followed in Jon Snow's footsteps. I have been told since that he is a hero influential in Dubrovnik in the Game of Thrones, and, as it turned out, he is totally unrelated to pump handles, epidemiology, or cholera! But every cloud has a silver lining, just like every pump has a handle to be removed: I found sun in Croatia that had been missed during the Finnish summer on that Tuesday.



**New Zealand**  
(Ross Lawrenson)

New Zealand Chapter champion Ross Lawrenson has taken up a new role as Professor of Population Health with the University of Waikato. After eleven years at the University of Auckland, he has taken up a joint appointment working as the Clinical Director of Strategy and Funding for the Waikato District Health Board while continuing his academic research with the local University. Ross has focused his research into the influence primary care can have on the diagnosis and management of cancer. He has joined the National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis (NIDEA) where he is pleased to be able to link with a group of population experts who are keen to use their demography skills to help predict future health demand.



**The John Snow Society**  
at USC School of Medicine Greenville



### South Carolina (Julia Robison)

The South Carolina chapter at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine in Greenville has had its inaugural year. With their own pump mascot, they have been able to make each meeting very special. They introduced themselves to the school by showing the film "Snow", followed by two lunch and learn events that educated attendees about the specific needs and challenges faced by five under-served communities surrounding the main campus of the Greenville Hospital System. With this information, they hope to design interventions aimed at educating those living in these



### Scandinavia (Asle Aasen)

The Scandinavia Chapter's annual Pumphandle Award for 2016 will be awarded in Reykjavik, Iceland, on 28. September 2016 to Illka Tapani Miettinen of Finland's National Institute for Health and Welfare, for his work to promote good drinking water as our best and safest food article. The jury responsible for the award focused upon:

- Illka Tapani Miettinen is known for his thoroughness and technical skilled work for Finnish and international water supply with an effort and contribution far beyond the duty adjacent to his position.
- Miettinen enjoys confidence in the specialist environment/research community and has contributed to put safe drinking water supply on the agenda.
- The Jury will especially underline Miettinen's contribution and work as a specialist in water quality and water treatment through research and work in relation to waterborne microbes and health risks.
- Illka Miettinen is a leader in a national task group (founded in 1996), which participates and deals dealing with all waterborne outbreaks in Finland. During 1996-2010 this group has participated 69 waterborne outbreaks. The task group also helps health authorities to solve other microbial problems (heterotrophic bacteria, coliforms, fungi and actinomycetes) of drinking water (on average 30 cases/year).
- The Jury will also underline Miettinen's engagements in national and international societies and works
- His enthusiasm and engagement, far beyond duty, is in the Spirit of John Snow.

We congratulate Illke Miettinen for his work and this award.

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## John Snow Steering Committee

The John Snow Society Steering Committee ("J3SC") met on 23 October 2015 and 7 June 2016, continuing its work to make the Society sustainable into the future. The current committee comprises Jimmy Whitworth and Oliver Cumming (Co-Chairs), James Hargreaves and Paul Fine (co-Secretaries), John Watson and Michael Edelstein (co-treasurers), Sandy Cairncross and Stefan Flasche (co-"historical liaison and web-site officers"), Ros Stanwell Smith (Pump Ambassador), Stephen Jeffreys (anaesthesia rep), Dilys Morgan, Mary O'Mahoney.

No members reach the end of their 3-year term this year, and thus there is no call for nominations at this time (<http://www.johnsnowsociety.org/constitution.html>).

## Other News

### A chance meeting at the Pub after the 2015 Pumphandle Lecture

Chance intervened at last year's AGM gathering when two strangers sat next to each other. One was Amanda Thomas, author and historian of cholera in the Victorian era. The other was Julie Cliff, Pumphandle Lecturer in 2013. Julie had used Amanda's book [The Lambeth Cholera Outbreak of 1848-49](#) (McFarland, 2009) to prepare for the historical part of her lecture on the death of her ancestor, James Linnett, in the epidemic.

Amanda's latest book [Cholera: The Victorian Plague](#) (Pen & Sword, 2015) has been influenced by the work of the Society and much inspiration was drawn from the 2013 commemorative lectures 'The Legacy of John Snow: Epidemiology Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow' at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

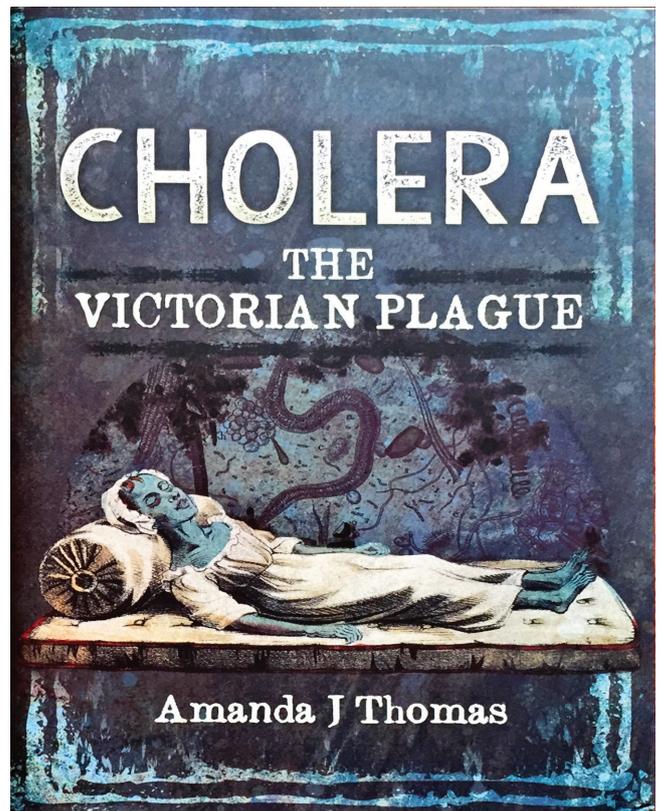
[Cholera: The Victorian Plague](#) gives an overview of the major cholera outbreaks of 1831-3, 1848-9, 1853-4 and 1866. The work compares first-hand accounts from the nineteenth century with the latest research on cholera and includes contributions from leading experts and epidemiologists in the UK and the United States. It looks at many of the forgotten human stories, including a full account of the cholera outbreak in the Infant Pauper Asylum at Tooting, London, where some 180 children perished in 1849. The book also re-visits and re-examines the 1854 story of Dr John Snow and his work in London's Soho to establish cholera as a waterborne disease. This has attracted much attention and on Thursday October 6 at 7.30 pm - in conjunction with the Museum of Soho ([www.themuseumofsoho.org.uk](http://www.themuseumofsoho.org.uk)) - Amanda will be giving a talk at Soho's Blacks Club entitled, 'Cholera: Soho's Victorian Plague.'

Since that meeting, Amanda and Julie have found much in common. Amanda's interest in cholera had been sparked by the death of a relative, Anne Osmotherly, in the 1849 epidemic. By coincidence, James Linnett and Anne were buried on the same day in the graveyard on Lambeth High Street, now Old Paradise Gardens,

### The Ghost Map – to go on stage!

An adaptation of Steven Johnson's *The Ghost Map* is currently in development at the National Theatre.... It will be a complex and immersive piece of theatre encompassing music, dramatic scenes and a choric narrative super structure to tell the story of John Snow's investigation into the Soho Cholera Outbreak of 1854, his battle with the miasma-obsessed establishment, and the rampaging epidemic itself, resulting in the eventual drawing of his famous map. The production will explore how our collective response to these kinds of catastrophes gave birth to the modern city. What happens when we are forced to reimagine our future in the face of shocking and brutal changes? Look out for it!

Ryan Craig and Katie Greenland



probably in one of the mass graves dug for cholera victims. They are now in touch about Amanda's proposed trilogy on emigration to Australia. Like James Linnett's son, who left in the 1850s, her family also migrated to Australia to escape poverty and cholera. Our families in Australia lived only a short distance from each other in Melbourne. Who would have thought that John Snow would have the power to bring such people together in this way!

Amanda Thomas and Julie Cliff

### RSPH "Water Webinars"

We wish to draw the attention of Members to the RSHP water hygiene education programme, profiling international experts to debate and share best practice from a global perspective and offering delegates the opportunity to ask questions. The programme of free 60 minute water webinars was established in 2014 and accessed in 2015 by 41 countries. Forthcoming seminars include:

On 6 September 2016: "Legionnaires disease and Legionella guidelines: a global update" (Speaker: Dr Susanne Lee, Director of Leegionella Ltd)

On 15 November 2016 "Data and Resource management: how to generate a cost effective water safety plan."

For more information, see <https://www.rsph.org.uk/resources/special-interest-groups/water/water-webinars.html>

## Other News

### New Honorary Members: Nobel Laureates Jimmy Carter and Angus Deaton

We have been blessed to welcome two notable honorary members to the John Snow Society during the past year. Professor Angus Deaton of Princeton University spoke at the society's bicentenary event at LSHTM in 2013. He followed this up by winning the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences in 2015 for his lifetime analysis of consumption, poverty, and welfare. At the end of 2015, with fellow economist Anne Case also of Princeton University, Professor Deaton published a widely reported and provocative paper documenting rising mortality among white non-Hispanic Americans since the turn of the 21st century. He was delighted to accept an honorary membership of the society in 2015.

In addition, Former US President Jimmy Carter accepted an honorary membership of the Society in 2016. Already an Honorary Fellow of LSHTM, President Carter has been instrumental in a range of global peace and health initiatives. Perhaps most notably, his Carter Center has led the international campaign to eradicate Guinea worm disease which has averted at least 80 million cases of this devastating water-related illness. He received his mug when in London marking the opening of "Countdown to Zero", an exhibition focused upon the eradication of infectious diseases, assembled by the American Museum of Natural History in cooperation with the Carter Center. Mr Carter has written to us saying that he was "pleased to accept [our] invitation to join the John Snow Society."

We are confident that John Snow would be proud to welcome these esteemed colleagues and spiritual heirs to the society bearing his name.

## Reminder to Members – update your email address

Our cumulative membership total, to whom we will send notice of this Broadsheet, is now approaching 3500. Unfortunately, more than 20 % of emails bounce. We suspect that a few members may have crossed the great divide, but we also suspect that some have changed their email addresses. Or some email addresses may have been illegible or otherwise in error from the start.... So – if you are/have been a member, but do not receive one email a year from us – please let us know your appropriate (personal generally better than job-related) email address.

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#### Contact Details for the John Snow Society

The John Snow Society, Royal Society for Public Health, John Snow House, 59 Mansell Street, London, E1 8AN • Tel: +44 (0)20 7265 7300 • Email: [johnsnowsociety@rsph.org.uk](mailto:johnsnowsociety@rsph.org.uk)

[www.johnsnowsociety.org](http://www.johnsnowsociety.org)

## Exclusive to Members

The 10th edition mugs have proven popular as ever.... Free to new members, additional mugs can be purchased if you wish to add to your collection or as insurance policy against breakage (which, according to our constitution, deactivates your membership). Members can purchase up to 3 additional mugs. The elegant pump design silk ties and the illustrated book by Dr Spence Galbraith (John Snow: his early years) are also available for purchase. See website for details.

