

# *Banning Traditional Birth Attendants: Obstetric Violence and Maternal Health in Kakuma Refugee Camp*

*Dr. Elizabeth Wirtz, Purdue University*



*This lecture will highlight structural factors influencing poor maternal health in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya. Dr. Wirtz explores the impacts of national and humanitarian policies on the design and delivery of medical systems. Wirtz's research shows that the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that deliver aid often operate as a tool of surveillance and control over the populations they intended to assist. Wirtz demonstrates that when political agendas are integrated into medical systems, maternal health declines and refugee women are caught in a 'cycle of maternal morbidity.' Through participant observation in NGO compounds, refugee homes, and sites of health care delivery, coupled with extensive conversations with aid workers and refugees, Wirtz provides an intimate picture of the politics of life, sickness, and death in exile.*

**October 25<sup>th</sup>**

**12-1 pm**

**Old Main 3320**



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