Lesson 2 – Case Study: The 1918 Influenza Pandemic – Factors Beyond the Biological that Influence the Spread of Disease

GLOSSARY

**Antigenic drift**
The accumulation of small genetic changes in a virus so that antibodies resulting from prior viral exposure may no longer be protective. Influenza viruses are particularly good at employing this as a means of maintaining a reservoir of susceptible people to infect.

**Antigenic shift**
A reassortment or recombination of viral genes resulting in dramatic changes in a virus. The result is that antibodies resulting from previous infections do not recognize the virus. This is the primary mechanism by which influenza pandemics arise.

**Epidemic**
A high incidence of disease in a particular place and time.

**Genotypes**
Genetic differences among types of a pathogen that allow for a diversity of surface antigens. This variation means that antibodies against one version may not protect against another version of the same pathogen.

**Hemagglutinin**
One of two surface proteins used to identify influenza viruses. Identified in the naming process using “H”.

**Neuraminidase**
One of two surface proteins used to identify influenza viruses. Identified in the naming process using “N”.

**Pandemic**
A worldwide epidemic that results when virtually an entire population is susceptible to an infection.

**1918 Influenza pandemic**
The most deadly worldwide epidemic in history, estimated to have caused 50 million deaths worldwide.