



Lingnan 嶺南大學
University 香港 Hong Kong

Lingnan University
Institute for Advanced Study

Lingnan Foundation Distinguished Lecture Series

From Silent Spring to Silent Night: A Tale of Toads and Men

Speaker

Professor Tyrone B HAYES

Professor of Integrative Biology

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Letters and Sciences

Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Group in Endocrinology &

Judy Chandler Webb Distinguished Chair for Innovative Teaching and Research

University of California, Berkeley

Date | 14 October 2026

Time | 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Language | English

Mode | Face-to-face

Venue | MBG19, Patrick Lee Wan Keung Academic Building
Lingnan University



Abstract

The herbicide, atrazine is a potent endocrine disrupter that chemically castrates and feminizes exposed male amphibians. Though many factors likely contribute to amphibian declines, pesticides (such as atrazine) likely play an important role even in populations that appear to decline for other reasons, such as disease. Pesticides like atrazine are ubiquitous, persistent contaminants and, though more pronounced in amphibians, the effects described above occur in all vertebrate classes (fish, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals) examined, via common mechanisms. These observations demonstrate the critical impact that pesticides have on environmental health. Furthermore, reproductive cancers and birth defects associated with exposure to many of these same chemicals (e.g. atrazine) via identical mechanisms demonstrate that the impact on environmental health is an indicator of a negative impact on public health.

Biography

Prof Tyrone B Hayes was born and raised in Columbia, South Carolina, where he developed his love for biology. He received his Bachelor's degree from Harvard University in 1989 and his PhD from the Department of Integrative Biology at the University of California, Berkeley in 1993. After completing his PhD, he began post-doctoral training at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health and the Cancer Research Laboratories at UC Berkeley (funded by the National Science Foundation). He was hired as an Assistant Professor at UC Berkeley in 1994, promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in 2000, and to full Professor in 2003. Hayes' research focuses on developmental endocrinology with an emphasis on evolution and environmental regulation of growth and development. For the last twenty years, the role of endocrine disrupting contaminants, particularly pesticides, has been a major focus. Hayes is interested in the impact of chemical contaminants on environmental health and public health, with a specific interest in the role of pesticides in global amphibian declines and environmental justice concerns associated with targeted exposure of racial and ethnic minorities to endocrine disruptors and the role that exposure plays in health care disparities. Hayes is currently serving as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and holds the Judy Chandler Webb Distinguished Chair for Innovative Teaching and Research. He is an elected fellow of the California Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the National Academy of Sciences.

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