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“How bioinformatics helped crack the Amerithrax case”

In the fall of 2001, at least five letters laced with deadly anthrax spores were mailed across the United States. Five died, many others were sickened, and a nation already reeling from 9-11 was further terrified. The resulting investigation was the most complex and expensive in U.S. history. I will retell the story of how The Institute for Genomic Research (TIGR) sequenced multiple whole genomes of *Bacillus anthracis* to determine the source of these attacks—an incredible feat at the time. This work pioneered the field of microbial forensics and foretold the future of outbreak genomics, for which this type of analysis is now routine.

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1:30
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Questions? Contact Brian Giebel at bgiebel@uw.edu or visit the Combi website at http://www.gs.washington.edu/news/combi.htm

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