

Spring 2017

HIST 585-005: Special Topics in History:

Topic: Medicine & Empire, 1500-1750

Instructor	Day(s)	Time(s)	Maximum Enrollment
Strocchia	W	1:00 – 4:00 pm	12

Semester Description:

What role did medicine play in the expansion of global trade networks and the establishment of early colonial projects stretching from Surinam to Goa between 1500 and 1750? How did the circulation of peoples, medicinal commodities, therapeutic knowledge and healing practices create new, hybridized medical cultures, on the one hand, and advance European interests on the other? Among the questions we will explore is the ways in which local healing knowledge and practices—both European and indigenous—were transformed as they moved between continents. Our readings will introduce us to the wide range of knowledge brokers involved in these exchanges, from physicians, apothecaries and traditional healers to slaves, sailors, gardeners, merchants and missionaries. We also will consider how European medical thinking about tropical climates and bodily complexions contributed to constructions of race, especially in the Atlantic World. Readings include primary sources in translation as well as recent secondary works. Students will write a research paper of approximately 5000 words geared toward their programmatic interests.

Possible Required Textbooks, Articles, and Resources:

1. Londa Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World* (online access via Emory Libraries).
2. James Sweet, *Domingos Alvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World*. University of North Carolina Press.
ISBN: 9781469609751.
3. Selections from Garcia de Orta, *Colloquies on the simples and drugs of India* (1563); excerpts from Hans Sloane's Jamaican medical journals (1707); and other primary texts, all available online.
4. Other assigned readings will be posted on our course site.

Grading:

Class discussion	45%
Weekly BlackBoard posts	10%
Discussion leader	5%
Primary source analysis	5%
Research paper (5000 words)	35%