

Pembroke Center Seed Grant Recipients: 2013-14

Discovering East Asia in American History and Visual Culture



Original in the John Carter Brown Library.

Bartholomew Burges, *Series of Indostan Letters*,
New York, 1790.

Image courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library

By retrieving the significance of Asian interaction with the Americas to the cultural, political, and economic development of American societies from the 16th through the 19th centuries, researchers will re-examine prevailing historical narratives from a new perspective that challenges the dominant colonial/imperial legacies and framework of U.S. and Latin American histories. The project will examine resources in the John Carter Brown Library, devoted to the study of the Americas, that relate to Asia. European discovery of the Americas took place within the context of trying to reach Asia and exploration of the Americas was framed by maritime and commercial ambitions regarding Asia. Scholars will explore how these two regions were intertwined during this period.

Seed grant funding will support a symposium and related workshops as steps toward the goal of forming an interdisciplinary, transnational consortium for the study of East Asia and the Americas, to be housed in Brown's Department of American Studies. The consortium will bring valuable archival and visual resources reflecting the important historical place of Asian interaction with Americans to the forefront, placing them in an academic context which allows scholars to use them.

- **Evelyn Hu-DeHart** (project director), Professor of History
- **Caroline Frank**, Visiting Assistant Professor of American Studies
- **Robert G. Lee**, Professor and Chair of American Studies
- **Margot Nishimura**, Deputy Director and Librarian of the John Carter Brown Library

The Global Lowlands in the Early Modern Period: 1300-1800



Hendrik van Schuylenburgh, *Factory of the Dutch East India Company at Hougly in Bengal, 1665*.

During the early modern period, the Global Lowlands (now Belgium and the Netherlands) connected outwards to every part of the globe through trade, colonization, expanded knowledge, material culture, and consumption. Trade enabled the Lowlands to import many things into its culture, art, and science. Exotic eastern objects such as Turkish scimitars and rugs were prominently features in Dutch art, and physicians formed botanical collections with specimens from as far away as China, Africa, and the Americas. Likewise, indigenous communities around the globe were changed forever through exchanges with the Lowlands.

This project will organize a yearlong seminar for faculty, graduate students, and scholars from other institutions that will culminate in an international conference, “The Global Lowlands: Dutch and Flemish History and Culture in a Worldwide Perspective,” to explore this period of global exchange. Its interdisciplinary approach will encourage scholars to take up questions germane to religion, language, gender, commerce and labor that transcend contemporary notions of national boundaries and traditional field-bound methodologies.

- **Evelyn Lincoln** (project director), Professor of the History of Art and Architecture and Italian Studies
- **Hal Cook**, Professor of History; Director of the Program in Renaissance and Early Modern Studies
- **Jeffrey Muller**, Professor of the History of Art and Architecture

Incarceration, Disparities, and Health in America in the Age of Healthcare Reform



A complex array of laws, policies, and practices has resulted in an epidemic of incarceration and recidivism in the U.S. criminal justice system. The lack of adequate access to community-based care for mental illness and addiction has contributed to this devastating epidemic, and created a public health and human rights crisis in both criminal justice settings and in the largely poor, nonwhite communities from which most criminal justice populations come and to which most will return. The Affordable Care Act extends Medicaid coverage to most low-income citizens, which should lead to increased availability in the community of Medicaid-financed mental health and substance abuse treatment services for former prisoners and others at risk of criminal justice involvement. But financial barriers are not the sole reason people fail to get healthcare. Health behaviors are embedded in social, economic, cultural and policy frameworks.

Seed grant funds will be used to bring together medical, public health, and social science researchers at Brown to identify and address non-financial barriers to care. The Miriam Hospital's Center for Prisoner Health and Human Rights will organize a series of interdisciplinary symposia on campus, drawing on Brown's proven strengths in researching issues affecting criminal justice involved populations. This forum will provide an opportunity to explore the potential synergies among medical, public health, and social science faculty and researchers to develop the multidisciplinary response required by the nation's entwined epidemic of incarceration and the health crisis in its most vulnerable communities – low income and predominantly of color. Drawing on the expertise and experience of practitioners in corrections and public health, the project hopes to translate research into practical solutions to barriers to care that will be of direct utility to policymakers and public agencies that implement the new healthcare laws.

- **Josiah D. Rich** (project director), Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology
- **Nicole Alexander**, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and Internal Medicine
- **Curt Beckwith**, Associate Professor of Medicine
- **Lundy Braun**, Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine and Africana Studies
- **Jennifer Clarke**, Associate Professor of Medicine
- **Jennifer Johnson**, Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Human Behavior
- **David Lewis**, Professor Emeritus of Community Health and Medicine
- **Glenn Loury**, Professor of Social Sciences and Economics
- **Amy Nunn**, Assistant Professor of Medicine
- **Nickolas Zaller**, Assistant Professor of Medicine

Medicine and Social Movements



Doctors and medical staff treating injured rebel fighters and civilians in Aleppo, Syria.

Medicalization has been studied as a consequence of the ever-expanding reach of medical institutions in post-industrial capitalist societies, whereby processes such as birth, emotion, or poverty are recast as objects of medical intervention. Medical professionals have long been involved as clinicians in a range of political, social, and nationalist projects where they have used the language and authority of medicine to counter repressive and problematic governmental practices. This project will examine the role of medicine in movements for social change – be they progressive, radical, conservative, or reactionary.

Seed grant funding will support a working group that will examine a range of clinician-led and -affiliated social movements, such as: attacks on Arab doctors who are perceived to side with the rebels in the Syrian conflict; U.S. and European based surgeons who provide surgical care as part of social justice agendas in poor countries; race-based genomic medicine and attempts to address health disparities and inequalities with implications for pathologizing and medicalizing race and racial difference; and, the socialization of doctors in the U.S. and the de-politicization of community health and social medicine. The working group will bring together faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students to engage in a year-long facilitated reading group and conclude with a symposium that brings together participants and invited scholars to workshop papers and new projects related to the project theme.

- **Adia Benton** (project director), Assistant Professor of Anthropology
- **Sherine Hamdy**, Assistant Professor of Anthropology
- **Soha Bayoumi**, Lecturer in the History of Science (Harvard University)
- **Dianne Ritchie**, Adjunct Clinical Assistant Professor of Family Medicine
- **Harold Cook**, Professor of History
- **Lundy Braun**, Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine and Africana Studies