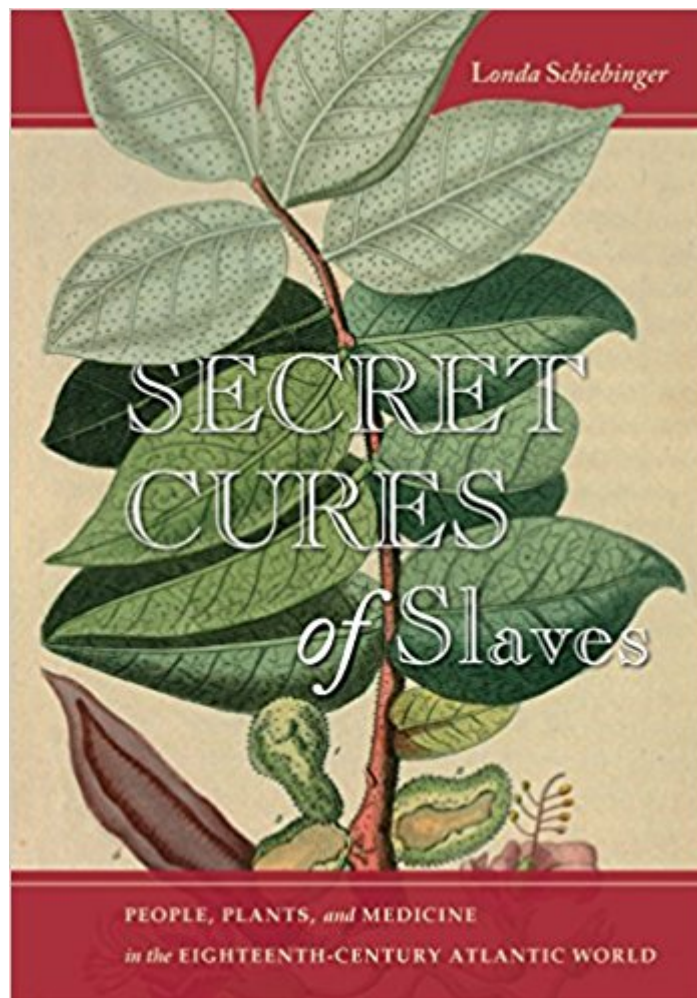




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# Secret Cures Of Slaves: People, Plants, And Medicine In The Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World



## Synopsis

In the natural course of events, humans fall sick and die. The history of medicine bristles with attempts to find new and miraculous remedies, to work with and against nature to restore humans to health and well-being. In this book, Londa Schiebinger examines medicine and human experimentation in the Atlantic World, exploring the circulation of people, disease, plants, and knowledge between Europe, Africa, and the Americas. She traces the development of a colonial medical complex from the 1760s, when a robust experimental culture emerged in the British and French West Indies, to the early 1800s, when debates raged about banning the slave trade and, eventually, slavery itself. Massive mortality among enslaved Africans and European planters, soldiers, and sailors fueled the search for new healing techniques. Amerindian, African, and European knowledges competed to cure diseases emerging from the collision of peoples on newly established, often poorly supplied, plantations. But not all knowledge was equal. Highlighting the violence and fear endemic to colonial struggles, Schiebinger explores aspects of African medicine that were not put to the test, such as Obeah and vodou. This book analyzes how and why specific knowledges were blocked, discredited, or held secret.

## Book Information

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Stanford University Press; 1 edition (July 25, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1503602915

ISBN-13: 978-1503602915

Product Dimensions: 7 x 0.6 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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## Customer Reviews

"Londa Schiebinger's insightful book provides us with a conceptual grid for understanding the production and distribution of medical knowledge and the ethics of experimentation, opening up many fertile new avenues for research." (Mark Harrison University of Oxford)"Engaging unique

sources from both the English and French worlds, Londa Schiebinger untangles the complex relationships between European and local physicians, healers, plants, and slavery. Her work offers a deep dive into how the Atlantic World emerged as a crucible for medical innovation as well as pressing ethical questions." (François Regourd Université Paris Nanterre)"Racism is the belief that certain people are not fully human, and that infamously opportunistic opinion is evident whenever some people are selected to be unwilling subjects of medical experimentation, as Londa Schiebinger makes clear in her important new study." (Joyce E. Chaplin Harvard University)"In this urgent, probing and visually striking volume, Londa Schiebinger, one of the pioneers of feminist and colonial science studies, shifts our understanding of Enlightenment racial attitudes to the domain of the medical, making a vital contribution to the dynamic new wave of research on science and slavery in the Atlantic world." (James Delbourgo Rutgers University)

Londa Schiebinger is the John L. Hinds Professor of History of Science at Stanford University. She is the author of the award-winning *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World* (2004), among many other works.

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