Review

- Ideas about nation, progress, modernity, in relationship to ideas of citizenship
- In Brazil: the Tropicalistas were concerned with how to expand the role of medicine in society
  - Was part of effort to show that their science was equivalent to that practiced in American, Europe, etc.
  - Science became a status tool, and the extent of its widespread adoption signs of progress, or ‘modernity’

Brazil

- Concerns about hygiene in Brazil: notions of tropical hygiene correlated with ideas of whether or not people in a certain region were capable of industrializing
- Tropicalistas targeted the family as sites of power to exert authority through the practice of medicine. In particular, they focused on lower class Brazilian families
- This was written about the historical period between the1860s-1890s
- Brazil at that time was moving away from colonialism, but still retained strong hierarchies and social systems from colonial era
- Gradually changing from slave population to citizenship state
- Tropicalistas dealt with the problem of how to integrate and categorize the populations with the rest of the social hierarchy

Tropicalistas

- They focused on families in particular
- Their ideas closely reflected changing social values in Brazil, but also were strongly influenced by trends in Western nations
  - Ex. Intermarriage within families was considered and condemned as degenerate
  - Focus on nuclear family, much like in Western systems, rather than any extended or other system
- Extensive application of biomedicine could control the desire for more social mobility: social order could be maintained through exertion of authority
- Tropicalistas used science to show that Brazilians and Europeans were equal
  - However, did not develop a separate medicine for slaves like Americans (Samuel Cartwright)

- Polygenism: blacks were human, but a separate branch
- **To what extent is the woman’s body a matter of national identity**
  - Tropicalistas sought to co-opt domain of birth, which was previously the realm of midwives
  - Childbirth and reproduction are medicalized, serving as a new way for the state to control its people
  - The traditional midwife was demonized, discredited by the state: this was a method of social control, a way to practice social hygiene
Example of medicine in Brazil demonstrates how there are different ways to work with or around medicine that can help solve certain problems specific to each culture

Ex. The hygienic family: Brazilians concerned with how to best support idea of ‘fit’ family through scientific techniques

Another main concern for Tropicalistas is how could Brazil enter the first world? How to demonstrate that it was fully qualified as much as other Western nations.

As part of campaign to ‘modernize’ Brazil, midwives came under attack: interesting how they depicted cases
  o Midwives perceived as backward, irrational, dangerous whereas science seen as symbols of reason, scientific method, modernity.
  o This campaign limited extent to which women were allowed into medicine, reflecting on how application of science and knowledge reflect notions of capacity (ie different capacities of men vs. women)

A Colonial Lexicon: gender, sexuality, health, and reproduction
  o Dealt with resolving questions of representation, symbols. Discusses how limited domain of reproduction was co-opted by Belgian travelers, doctors, and they made knowledge about these aspects and women’s bodies (also goes into how these were men making knowledge about women’s bodies)

Issues to consider:
  • How hygiene, reproduction, etc works to create a more sizeable population of laborers
  • How nurses wrote about birth: how they depicted this domain
  • Missionary zeal, but almost an idea of colonizing minds

Gender Policies
  • Tropicalistas promoted health and hygiene practices in reaction to perception that tropical medicine should be concerned with issues of insalubrity in tropical areas
  • Earlier on much more negotiation of meaning, not set in stone
  • Allowed more of a sense of body within traditional sense rather than strictly biomedical
  • Women were traditionally perceived as a source of pollution or danger
    o Female blood and female fluids were sources of danger or power: concern with stage of life
    o Woman’s body was vulnerable to outside influences, esp. after childbirth
    o Family policy became a matter of the state; promoting monogamous marriages, controlling reproduction

Congo was viewed like this in Fabian book: realm of adventure, realm of men (Belgian and Congolese)

Concerns for racial hygiene, eugenics. Idea that you can improve race through breeding