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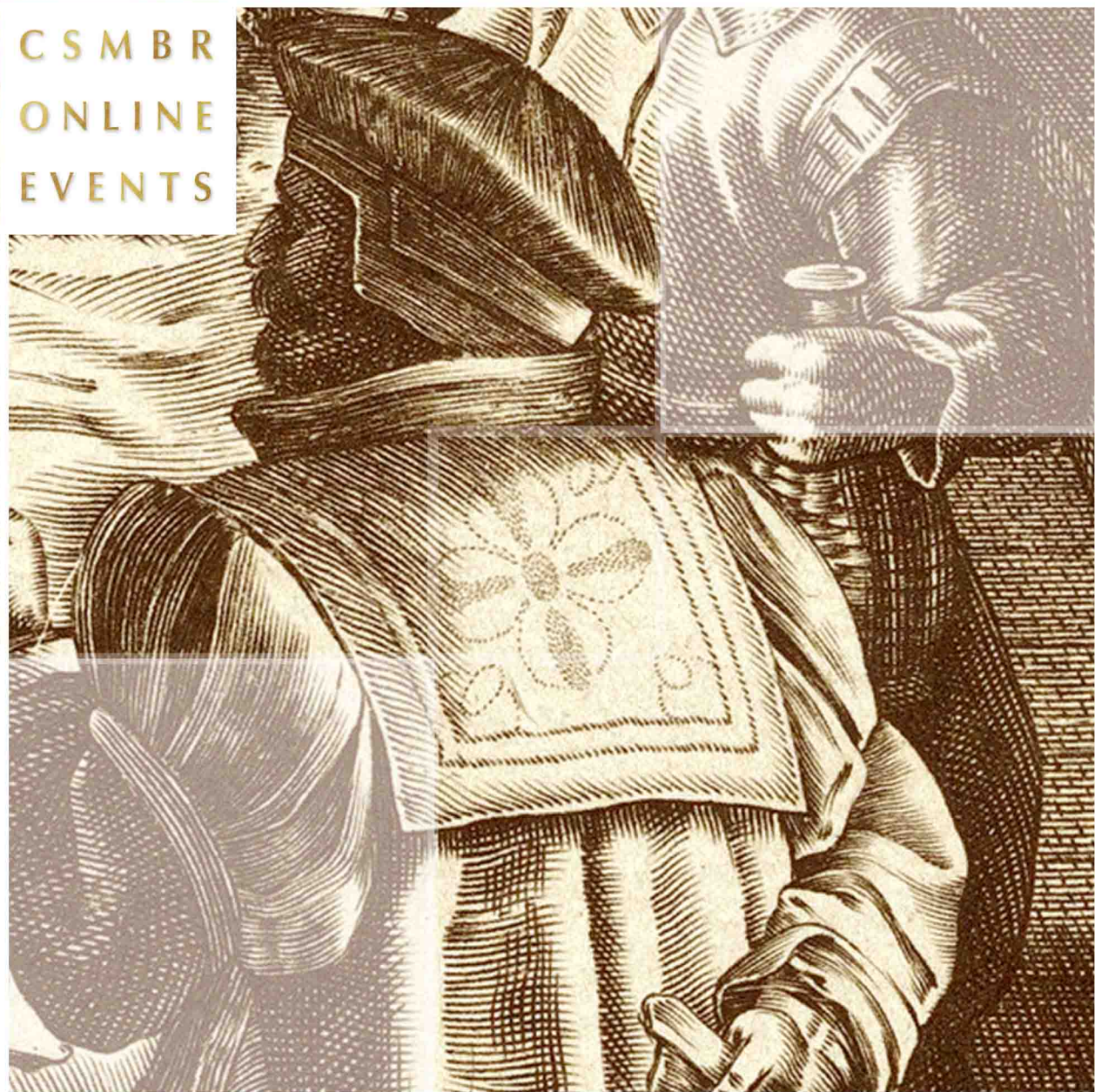
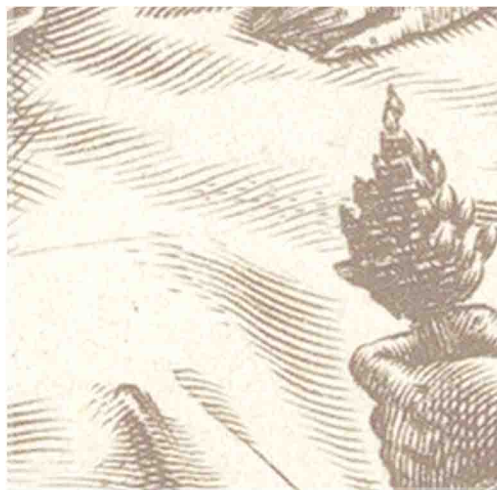


STUDIO FIRMANO
PER LA STORIA DELL'ARTE MEDICA E DELLA SCIENZA

CSMBR
ONLINE
EVENTS



CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF
MEDICINE AND THE BODY
IN THE RENAISSANCE



FROM THE FRENCH POX TO THE LUES VENEREA

MEDICAL AND GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSES TO THE FRENCH POX IN NUREMBERG, 1495-1700

MONICA O'BRIEN • University of Glasgow

**24
NOVEMBER
2026**

5.00 PM

CENTRAL EUROPEAN TIME

This talk explores responses to the French pox in Nuremberg from its first epidemic appearance in the twilight of the Middle Ages until the dawn of the eighteenth century when *morbo Gallico* became *lues venerea*. The presentation focuses on the medical and governmental responses to the disease, particularly understandings of its contagion and decisions about aid provided to the sick poor. Much of the historiography on the French pox has heretofore

focused on how theories of its sexual transmission influenced responses. This paper explores the sexual and non-sexual (e.g. through objects and non-sexual touch) theories of the pox's contagion, showing how both endured in medical texts and municipal authorities' thinking, even as the pox became *lues venerea*. Moreover, previous research has shown the influence of sexual theories of contagion on governmental responses to the

pox in western Europe. However, through analysis of city council records, this presentation argues that non-sexual theories of contagion significantly influenced the Nuremberg government's provision of aid to the poxed poor. Furthermore, *Ratsverlässe* (books of council decisions) show how, contagion theories intersected with concerns about resource limitations and morality, resulting in restrictions or increases in the charity provided to the sick. Overall, this presentation will show that contagion theories led to a response dominated by the provision of charity in Nuremberg throughout the period 1495-1700.

The event is free to attend but registration is required. Info at csnbr.fondazionecomel.org