Course Description

The world as we know it today is, in a very real sense, the offspring of colonialism, and one of the first colonial creations was "Latin America." This course will study the emergence of distinctive Latin American societies under Spanish and Portuguese rule, roughly the years 1492-1826. A central theme will be the ways in which social conflict--between and among colonizers in America, the peasant and slave populations they exploited, and metropolitan interests in Europe--shaped the historic evolution of colonial Latin America. Although we will touch on nearly all regions of Latin America, the course will devote special attention to Mesoamerican (Mexico--Guatemala), Andean (Peru--Bolivia), and Brazilian history. A special feature of the course will be a concluding unit on "Debates and Legacies." In this unit we will explore debates among historians about the colonial experience, and study the legacies and implications of that experience in 19th- and 20th-century Latin America.

Readings and lectures will provide broad exposure to factual, documentary, and interpretive materials. Discussion sections, papers, and exams will encourage independent analysis and critical evaluation of historians' interpretations.

Schedule

Introduction. Aug. 30--Sept. 3.

Week 1. Lectures: Why Study Colonial Latin America?
   Latin America: Myths, Realities, Human Geography

   Readings: Julio Cortázar, "The Night Face Up" (hand-out).
   Elman R. Service, "Indian-European Relations in Colonial Latin America," American Anthropologist, 13 (Spring, 1957), 103-121. (3-hr. reserve, Helen C. White Library)

Unit I. THE AGE OF CONQUEST

Week 2. The Coming Clash. Sept. 8-10. (Sept. 6 = holiday)
   Lectures: A Tale of Two Civilizations: Incas and Aztecs
   Iberian Expansion: Gold, Gospel, Utopia

   Readings: Steve J. Stern, Peru's Indian Peoples and the Challenge of Spanish Conquest: Huamanga to 1640 (Madison, 1982), 3-26.

   Recommended:
   Friedrich Katz, The Ancient American Civilizations.
   R.C. Padden, The Hummingbird and the Hawk.
   Jacques Soustelle, Daily Life of the Aztecs.
Schedule (continued):


Readings: Díaz, Conquest of New Spain, 138-180, 185-200, 208-237, 242-249, 263-277, 280-311, 326-332, 353-413. (You are invited to skim or browse through the unassigned pages.)


Lectures: The Encomienda of the Aristocrat-Entrepreneurs The Moral and Political Dilemmas of Conquest

Readings: Stern, Peru's Indian Peoples, xv-xix, (skim or review 3-26), 27-79.


Lectures: The Frontier as Backwater: Paraguay The Frontier as Magnet: "Chichimeca" Mexico


Note: Sept. 27 = Yom Kippur, so one class will be rescheduled.


Unit II. THE COLONIAL ORDER.

Lectures: Mines and Indians: Peru and Mexico Compared Indians and Haciendas: Conflict and Symbiosis

Readings: Stern, Peru's Indian Peoples, 80-193.

NOTE: AT LEAST ONE PAPER must be turned in no later than Friday, October 8.

Lectures: The Origins of Slave Societies: Brazil in Comparative Perspective
Rebel Slave Communities


DOCUMENT #1 (xerox packet)

NOTE: The SEMESTER EXAM, covering weeks 1-6, is scheduled tentatively for Monday evening, October 11.


Week 8. The New Social Order in the Tropics (Part II). Oct. 18-22
Lectures: The Evolution of Colonial Brazil
Afro-American Slavery and Freedom


Recomm.: Mona Etienne and Eleanor Leacock, eds., Women and Colonization.
Verena Martínez-Alier, Marriage, Class & Colour in ... Cuba.
Ann M. Pescatello, Power and Pawn: The Female in Iberian Families, Societies, and Cultures.

Lectures: The Culture of Pomp and Circumstance
The Culture(s) of Drinking


DOCUMENT #2 (xerox packet).

Recomm.: Pablo Joseph de Arriaga, The Extirpation of Idolatry in Peru.
Irving A. Leonard, Baroque Times in Old Mexico.
R.C. Padden, ed., Tales of Potosí.
UNIT III. THE CRISIS OF IBERIAN COLONIALISM.

Lectures: Decay of the Hapsburg Imperial System
The Bourbon Reforms: From Frying Pan to Fire?


Recomm.: Mark Burkholder and D.S. Chandler, From Impotence to Authority.
Brian R. Hamnett, Politics and Trade in Southern Mexico.

Week 11. The Crisis of Politics and Society, Nov. 8-12.
Lectures: Rise of Rebellion and Elite Factionalism
The Wars of Independence: Argentina, Venezuela, Peru


Kenneth R. Maxwell, Conflicts and Conspiracies: Brazil....

Week 12. From Independence to "Neo-Colonialism." Nov. 15-19.
Lectures: The Wars of Independence: Mexico, Cuba, Brazil
The Colonial Legacy in the 19th Century


Recomm.: Kenneth Duncan and Ian Rutledge, eds., Land and Labour Latin America.
Doris Ladd, The Mexican Nobility at Independence.
Domingo F. Sarmiento, Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of the Tyrants.

UNIT IV. DEBATES AND LEGACIES.

Lectures: The Debate on Feudalism and Capitalism
The Colonial Social Formation: An Interpretation


Optional: E. J. Hobsbawm, "The Crisis of the Seventeenth Century,"
Week 13 (continued)


Lectures: Introduction: The So-Called Closed Corporate Community Solidarity, Conflict, and Survival: An Interpretation of "Closed Corporate Communities"

NOTE: THE SECOND PAPER MUST BE TURNED IN NO LATER THAN FRI. DEC. 3

Recomm.: Frank Cancian, Economics and Prestige in a Maya Community. Eric Wolf, Sons of the Shaking Earth.

Lecture: Legacies and Nights Face Up
Readings: none assigned, but I suggest you re-read Week 1's readings.

NOTE: "THE LAST SUPPER," A FILM ABOUT SLAVERY IN CUBA, will be shown during Week 15.

Course Assignments

There are three course requirements: class participation, examinations, and papers. Class participation means contributing your presence, thoughts, and voice (!?) to weekly discussion sections. To participate effectively requires that one keep up with readings and lectures, think about the issues posed by the week's material, and volunteer for occasional assignments announced in section. The two examinations, one during the semester and covering Weeks 1-6, and the other a final examination covering the entire semester, will emphasize analysis and interpretation rather than memory of isolated facts and detail. (A solid grounding in the evidence, however, is a necessary though not sufficient condition for writing a compelling analysis or interpretation...) We will discuss the format of the exams well in advance of the exam dates.
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS (continued)

Students must also write two essays; one of them a short essay (about 4-5 pages, typed and double spaced) based on the assigned material of a given week, and the other a medium-length paper (about 8-12 pages) based on a given week's assigned material and approximately one supplementary book (or its equivalent) on a similar or closely related topic. Both essays should be well-reasoned "think-pieces" that present and defend your points of view, reading of the evidence, and insights. The topic is flexible: any aspect of a given week's readings, lectures, and issues is fair game. You might end up writing on an entire book as such, or on an issue raised in one paragraph of a book... Similarly, the format you choose to use is flexible: an argumentative critique of readings or lectures; a hypothesis or insight on a particular issue, based on available evidence; a comparison or contrast with historical experiences in other societies; a methodological discussion; a critical book review; etc. Consult with me before deciding what supplementary reading to choose for the medium paper; I can help you choose a book or articles that will both address your interests, and illuminate the issues raised in the week's assigned readings and lectures. The "recommended" readings listed on the schedule above provide a starting point for selecting supplementary readings, but many more titles are of course available.

You may write either the short or medium paper first. In addition to the general deadlines for papers noted on the schedule above, please note the following particular due dates:

SHORT PAPERS -- THE FRIDAY OF THE SAME WEEK WHOSE MATERIAL OR TOPIC IS DISCUSSED IN THE PAPER;

MEDIUM PAPERS--THE FRIDAY OF THE WEEK AFTER THE WEEK WHOSE MATERIAL OR TOPIC, ACCOMPANIED BY SUPPLEMENTARY READING, IS DISCUSSED IN THE PAPER.

In cases where the general deadline noted on the schedule and the particular due dates for specific kinds of papers conflict, the earlier deadline applies. I advise you not to ask for extensions except in cases of genuine and unforeseeable emergencies. I grant them with great reluctance, and late papers without an extension suffer a one-grade penalty.

Please bear in mind that quality of reasoning, use of evidence, clarity and grace of exposition, sensitivity and originality, and improvement since the last paper all impress me more than the length of a paper or its bibliography.
Grading

The weighting of grades at the end of the semester will be:

discussion---15%  semester exam--15%
short paper--15%   final exam-----30%
medium paper-25%

Office Hours:

I welcome visits during office hours, or by appointment (phone 263-1841; messages: 263-1800). Please do not hesitate to see me.

My office is 5105 Humanities. Tentatively, my office hours for the Fall semester are:

Mondays------------------1pm--2pm  Fridays---12-12:30pm
Wednesdays-----------------11am--12noon