Christopher Columbus consults his Lonely Planet guide.
[“Columbus lands on Las Indias,” by Wayne Healy]

When did the ‘Americas’ come into being? Who created ‘them’ and how? What other geographic units of analysis might we consider in thinking about what Iberian explorers and intellectuals initially called the ‘fourth part’ of the world? Given the scope and extent of the Spanish and Portuguese empires, could ‘the Americas’ extend from the Caribbean to the Philippines? This course takes up such questions as a means to explore the history of what would become—only in the nineteenth century—‘Latin America.’ We move from the initial “encounters” of peoples from Africa and Iberia with the “New World,” the creation of long-distance trade with, and settlement in, Asia, and the establishment of colonial societies, through to the movements for independence in most of mainland Spanish America in the early 19th century and to the collapse of Spanish rule in the Pacific and Caribbean later that century. Through lectures, discussions and the reading of primary sources and secondary texts, the course examines the economic and social organization of the colonies, intellectual currents and colonial science, native accommodation and resistance to colonial rule, trade networks and imperial expansion, labor regimes and forms of economic production, and migration and movement.
Assignments and grading
Map exam (10%): to be given in class. A list of places to know will be handed out during the first week of class. You will be expected to consult an atlas in the library or at home to learn where to locate place names on the map.

4 briefs (5% each). Two due prior to the mid-term; two due after the mid-term. Each brief is to be no longer than 750 words and must address the question posed on the syllabus. Briefs that do not respond to the question will be returned with no credit. Please note that the brief is due at the beginning of the class for which we are reading the text to which it pertains. Due to the structure of the assignment, there is no option to submit a brief late. There are eight (8) brief options prior to the mid-term; and seven (7) after the mid-term. Plan accordingly.

Mid-term in-class exam (20%): The exam (in class, closed book) will cover the first half of the semester and will include both short identification questions (people, events, places, etc.) and an essay question.

Final take-home exam (30%): The exam will be in the form of a take-home, open-book essay. You will have a choice from two different questions. The essay (no more than 3,500 words in length) will need to address the breadth of the semester and the question will ask you to draw from lectures, readings, discussions, and films. Any student who attends all lectures, watches the films, reads the material closely, and participates in class discussions should have no problem with the essay.

Discussions (20%). There are no outside section times for the course. Class time itself is your opportunity to discuss, debate, and critique the material you are reading. It is meant to be an active, participatory forum for you to share ideas, to ask questions, and to learn from one another. If I feel at any point that the reading assignments are not being fulfilled, I will give quizzes which will factor in to your discussion/participation grade.

On reading in history
One of the major goals of this class is to help you improve your critical reading skills. As well as discussing factual details, we will critically engage the texts by discussing issues related to methodology, sources, biases, and historiography. Thus, just a few suggestions to keep in mind while reading:

First, while details are often important, do not get bogged down in every date, name, or event the authors cover. (I will alert you to when you should remember certain names, dates, etc.) Rather, try to focus in on the major issues, themes, and historical questions the author addresses and raises. Look at how the text is organized and notice how the author structures his or her material and argument. Whether a book or an article, it is in the introductory pages that an author will most explicitly voice his or her intentions, conceptual frameworks, and engage the historiography within which his or her work operates.

Second, be critical! This doesn't mean a free-for-all on the author's personal life or intellectual capacity but simply that you should not take the author at his or her word. Is the argument convincing? How does the author make the argument? Does the author do what he or she says or implies s/he is going to do? What assumptions lie behind the text and the questions the author asks? What are the primary units or categories of analysis and how does this effect the conclusions? What sources does the author use? Does he or she use them with skepticism and care?
Third, look for the silences. What or whom is missing in the text? What kinds of sources could potentially have been used but were not? Can you imagine voices or sources that would potentially shift the argument and/or conclusions?

Finally, be an active reader. Pass on the Lazy-Boy recliner and head for your desk; don’t treat the text like a work of art to be hung on the wall but rather as an active document which you mark up, scrawl on, and otherwise ask questions of. Make the author convince you!

**Required texts**
The following texts, or a substantial portion of them, are required reading for the course. They are available—tax-free—at **Buffalo St. Books**, a local book cooperative at **215 N. Cayuga St.** in Dewitt Mall in downtown Ithaca (an easy and relaxing walk down Buffalo St. from campus and a nice work-out coming back). Their phone number is (607) 273-8246. Buying from them will help support the only independent bookstore in the greater Ithaca area (a good thing for a community of readers and thinkers and for small presses and local authors) and the only bookstore collectively owned (to the best of my knowledge) in the state of New York. A recent study has shown that for every $100 spent at local bookstores, $45 remains in the local economy; by comparison, only $13 out of every $100 spent in chain bookstores remains in the local economy and $0 (nothing! nada! zip!) remains in the local economy if you order on-line. Regardless of how you choose to acquire the books, please ensure you have access to the readings by the dates required. In addition, all books are available on 3-hour reserve at Uris Library.

Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests*
Greg Grandin, *Empire of Necessity*
Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, *Selected Works*
Steve J. Stern, *Peru’s Indian Peoples and the Challenge of the Spanish Conquest*
Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*
Charles Walker, *The Tupac Amaru Rebellion*

**Required Films**
As well as the required texts, there are three films assigned in the course:

*Cabeza de Vaca*
*Yo, la peor de todas*
*The Mission*
*Even the Rain*

These are required viewing and will be screened for the class on the dates shown on the course schedule below. It is your responsibility to ensure you see all the films required for the course. If you cannot attend the public screenings at the time scheduled, please be sure to view the films on your own time at the Uris Media Center. All films will be on 3-hour reserve at Uris for your convenience. Please note that the films will form a part of your take-home essay so please be sure you do not miss them.
1. The Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity states:

“Absolute integrity is expected of every Cornell student in all academic undertakings. Integrity entails a firm adherence to a set of values, and the values most essential to an academic community are grounded on the concept of honesty with respect to the intellectual efforts of oneself and others.

A Cornell student’s submission of work for academic credit indicates that the work is the student’s own. All outside assistance should be acknowledged, and the student’s academic position truthfully reported at all times.

Students are encouraged to discuss the content of a course among themselves and to help each other to master it, but no student should receive help in doing a course assignment that is meant to test what he or she can do without help from others. Representing another’s work as one’s own is plagiarism and a violation of this Code. If materials are taken from published sources the student must clearly and completely cite the source of such materials. Work submitted by a student and used by a faculty member in the determination of a grade in a course may not be submitted by that student in a second course, unless such submission is approved in advance by the faculty member in the second course.”

2. Taping of lectures is prohibited without the professor’s express, written consent. Sale or distribution of any materials provided (in class or on Blackboard) by the professor—lecture outlines, hand-outs, exams, and/or study guides—is prohibited. This includes uploading any such material to sites like Coursehero.
Course schedule

*Denotes readings on electronic reserve

T 8/25: Introduction to the course
Handout of places to know for map exam

Th 8/27 On History
Read: Trouillot, *Silencing the Past* [chaps. 1 and 5]

Old and New Worlds

T 9/1 Old and New Worlds
Read: *Henry Kamen, Empire* [preface]
*Charles Mann, 1491* [chap 1]
Stern, *Peru's Indian Peoples* [chap. 1]

Th 9/3 Expansion and Exploration
Read: *Ricardo Padrón, “A Sea of Denial”*
*John Hébert, “America,” in Jordana Dym and Karl Offen, eds.,* *Mapping Latin America*

Brief 1: What work do maps do in the assigned essays? How does cartography relate to the workings of empire, if at all?

T 9/8 Indigenous Visions and Military Conquests
Read: *Olivia Harris, “The coming of the white people”*

Brief 2: What is Harris’s main thesis? What implications does her argument have for how we think about Spanish and Portuguese—and European—expansion and encounters with native peoples?

Th 9/10 Indigenous Visions and Military Conquests (cont’d)
Read: Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests* [chaps. 1-4]

Map exam. Be ready!

Brief 3: How does Clendinnen explain the relative success of the Spanish conquerors in the Yucatecan peninsula? Compare her discussion of explorers, conquerors, settlers and missionaries with that of Harris from last week.
M 9/14  Film screening: Cabeza de Vaca. 7:00pm.

T 9/15  Religious Conquests and Controversies
Read:    Clendinnen, Ambivalent Conquests [chaps 5-8, epilogue to Part I]

Th 9/17  Religious Conquests (cont’d)
Read:    Clendinnen, Ambivalent Conquests [Part II, all]

Brief 4: Compare how Clendinnen recounts the history of the Maya as compared to that of the Spanish? What sources does she use for the respective histories she recounts? Would you argue that she is successful (or not successful) at capturing the perspective of Mayan peoples in her work?

From conquest to colony

T 9/22  Colonial bureaucracy
Read:    Stern, Peru’s Indian Peoples [chap. 4]

Brief 5: Stern writes: “In the 1570s, the local peoples of Huamanga finally became Indians.”[80] What does he mean? What were they before the 1570s? And why—according to Stern—did they become Indians only in the 1570s? (In other words, what makes them Indians?)

Th 9/24  Colonial economy
Read:    Stern, Peru’s Indian Peoples [chap 5]

Brief 6: Stern notes with deep ambivalence the success of native peoples in their use of the Spanish legal system. Why? What is his ambivalence? Why and how did this ‘achievement cost them a great deal,’ as he puts it?

T 9/29  Social worlds: Gender and the family
Read:    Stern, Peru’s Indian Peoples [chap 6]

Brief 7: Stern concludes his chapter by observing that the new system of dependency he discusses had made the exploited ’need’ their exploiters. How so? What did this relationship of ‘dependency’ look like and how did it come about?

Tuesday evening:   Film screening: Yo, la peor de todas.
**Th 10/1**  **Social worlds: Gender and the family (cont’d)**
Read: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, “Introduction,” “Letter from Sor Filotea,” “Response to Sor Filotea”

**Brief 8:** Sor Juana is a figure who challenges the conventions of the society in which she lives. What are these conventions and how does she challenge them? How ‘political’ are her acts—i.e., how self-conscious is she of the meaning of her acts? Please be sure to draw on specifics from the texts (and film) to make your point.

**T 10/6**  **Mid-term review session**

**Th 10/8**  **Mid-term**

**T 10/13**  **Break**
No class on Tuesday (fall break)

**Th 10/15**  **TBD**

**T 10/20**  **Social worlds: Afro-Latin America**
Read: *Brian Owensby, “How Juan and Leonor won their freedom” [begin]*

**T 10/22**  **Social worlds: Afro-Latin America (cont’d)**
Read: *Brian Owensby, “How Juan and Leonor won their freedom” [finish]*

**Brief 9:** In his article Owensby writes: “power in seventeenth-century New Spain may perhaps be best understood not as merely a projection from above but as constituted through the dense interactions among individuals at all layers of a community.” What do you think he means by this, especially in the context of the court cases he analyzes? Compare Owensby’s understanding of how the legal system operates to that offered to you by Stern in chapter 5 of his book.

**T 10/27**  **Social policing: The Inquisition**

**Th 10/29**  **Social ordering: Castas**
Read: *Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, “How Derivative was Humboldt? Microcosmic Nature Narratives in Early Modern Spanish America and the (Other) Origins of Humboldt’s Ecological Sensibilities”*

**Brief 10:** Why does it matter if Humboldt was ‘derivative’? What are the implications—inTELlectual, historical, political, and epistemological—of recognizing
the role of Ibero-American scientists and intellectuals in the formation of Humboldt’s ideas and science?

Reform and Revolution

T 11/3 Imperial Outposts?
Read: *Pekka Hamalainen, The Comanche Empire* (chap 2)

Brief 11: Hamalainen makes it clear that for too long historians have seen native peoples as primarily collective victims of European conquest. If you were to compare Hamalainen’s efforts to give the Comanche ‘agency’—that is, to make them actors in the historical drama through which they lived—with those of Stern vis-à-vis native peoples in Peru, what differences and similarities do you see? How might you explain those differences?

W 11/4 Film: *The Mission*

Th 11/5 Imperial Outposts? (cont’d)
Read: *Julio Djenderedjian, “Roots of Revolution: Frontier Settlement Policy and the Emergence of New Spaces of Power in the Río de la Plata Borderlands, 1777-1810”*

Brief 12: What does a perspective ‘from the frontier’ offer us in Djenderedjian’s article? What are these “new spaces of power” to which he refers?

T 11/10 The Bourbon Reforms
Read: Walker, *The Tupac Amaru Rebellion* [pp. 1-64]

Th 11/12 The Bourbon Reforms (cont’d)
Read: Walker, *The Tupac Amaru Rebellion* [pp. 130-167; conclusion]

Brief 13: Who are the followers of Tupac Amaru? How would you describe their demands or grievances? What role, if any, do the Bourbon Reforms play in the rebellion? How does the rebellion—and efforts to quash it—change over time and why?
**Revolution and Independence**

Read: Eric Van Young, “The Cuautla Lazarus”
Begin Grandin, *Empire of Necessity*

**Brief 14:** The question of why people rebel is a huge and vexed one. It is a topic that has been taken up by myriad social scientists and political theorists for generations. Using Van Young’s essay as your guide, discuss why it is so difficult to make sense of why people rebel, particularly in the past. With Van Young’s critiques in mind, go back to Walker’s work on the Tupac Amaru rebellion. Do you think he was successful at getting at motivation, meaning, and ideology?

**Revolution and Independence (cont’d)**

Read: Trouillot, *Silencing the Past* [chap. 3]
Continue Grandin, *Empire of Necessity*

**Brief 15:** Explain Trouillot’s thesis. What does he mean when he says the Haitian revolution was “unthinkable”? Be careful to read his argument carefully! Are you persuaded by his argument. If so, why? If not, why not?

**Film: Even the Rain**

**Film discussion**

Read: Continue Grandin, *Empire of Necessity*
Come to class prepared to discuss the film *Even the Rain*.

**Age of Independence? End of Empire?**

Read: Finish Grandin, *Empire of Necessity*

We will spend the full class period discussing Grandin’s text. I will ask groups of you to take on the positions of particular figures from the book. You should be prepared to discuss the background, perspectives, ideals, and presence of your group’s figure during our class discussion. The figures are: Amaso Delano, Hippolyte Mordeille, Alejandro de Aranda, Benito Cerreño, and Babo and Mori.

**Review session and hand-out of final exam**