

# Sex and Honor in Latin America, 1600-1900

History 483, CRN 17475

Winter 2021, TR 10:00-11:20am, Villard 300

Professor Reuben Zahler  
[rczahler@uoregon.edu](mailto:rczahler@uoregon.edu), 346-5907  
Office: McKenzie 363

Office Hours via Zoom:  
M 11am – 1pm  
or by appointment

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the honor code, the most important social value in colonial Latin America, over several centuries. Honor dictated the rules of gender, sex, justice, decency, religion, politics, commerce, family, etc. There was no distinction between being a decent man or woman, and being an honorable man or woman. Those who embraced the honor code would rather die than lose their honor. However, like all things, the rules of honor change over time. What happens to the honor code, gender roles, and racial hierarchies when a society undergoes dramatic political and economic changes? In the early nineteenth century, Spain's empire collapsed and the independent countries of Latin America arose. Spanish America then experimented with the "modern" ideals of liberty, equality, representative government, open markets, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, etc. They also had to find a place within a world economy that was rapidly industrializing and globalizing. Under these circumstances, people wanted to be "honorable" as much as ever, but the honor code was very much in flux. The rules of honor went through rapid change, which also meant the rules for being a decent man or woman changed, though the importance of honor did not change. What did it mean to be a good, modern, honorable citizen? Could young women now choose their own husbands? Did "equality" include women? Could husbands no longer hit their wives? If a husband couldn't control his wife and children, could he still be a good man and enjoy full rights as a citizen? If a couple separated and there was property to divide, did women now have a natural right to property the same as men? Would the country slip into chaos if illiterates got the vote? Could the republic stand if non-whites ran for political office, just like whites? Why should non-whites fight in national wars if the country's leaders still considered them to be inferior? We will consider this period, and these questions, through an examination of original sources and scholarly research. In so doing, we will explore issues that resound in our contemporary world, as many peoples today struggle with the conflicts between their traditional values and the new realities that come from democracy, a globalized economy, and the very troublesome ideals of equality and freedom.

## READINGS:

The following items are available for purchase in the campus bookstore.

- Course Packet: "Sex and Honor..."
- Boyer, Richard, and Geoffrey Spurling. *Colonial Lives: Documents on Latin American History, 1550-1850*. NYC: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Johnson, Lyman, and Sonya Lipsett-Rivera. *The Faces of Honor: Sex, Shame, and Violence in Colonial Latin America*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1998.
- Murray, Pamela, ed. *Women and Gender in Modern Latin America*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2014.

## EVALUATIONS

Participation	3%
Map quiz (Oct 7)	2%
Reading Notes	15%
In-class document analysis	15%
Full Paper (45%)	
Skeleton (Oct 31)	7%
Draft 1 (Nov 14)	10%
Draft 1 revision statement (Nov 14)	2%
Peer Edit (Nov 21)	4%
Final Draft (Nov 28)	20%
Final Draft revision statement (Nov 28)	2%
Final Exam	20%

**NOTE:** Find a description of these assignments in Canvas >> Supplementals >> “Assignments – Description”

- 1) Due dates:
  - a) Reading Notes are due before every class by 9am.
  - b) Full Paper assignments are due on Sunday 11:59pm.
- 2) Full Paper
  - a) The Full Paper is composed of six separate assignments: Skeleton, Draft 1, Draft 1 Revision Statement, Peer Edit, Final Draft, Revision Statement Revision Statement.
  - b) You must complete all six of these assignments in order to receive credit for any of them. If you fail to submit any of the six Paper assignments, you will receive a 0 on all of the parts (which will result in a failing grade in the course).
- 3) Final exam: Will be comprehensive, based on both reading and lecture materials. The format will imitate that of the “Link” essays and the “Final Draft” essay.

Grading: Numbered scores correspond to letter grades as follows: Numbers in the 90s are As, the 80s are Bs, the 70s are Cs, the 60s are Ds, and below 60 is an F. Plusses and minuses work as follows: 80-82 = B-; 83-86 = B; 87-89 = B+. Any decimal below .5 gets rounded down, any decimal of .5 or above gets rounded up. So 86.4 becomes 86, which is a B; 86.5 becomes 87, which is a B+.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

- 1) Attendance: You are expected to attend each class, to have finished the reading assignment before class, and to participate in discussion.
- 2) Respect: Mutual respect and courtesy are necessary for the course to be a success.
  - a) I hope that you will question me, the reading, and each other, as doing so is essential to the learning process. We should do so in an environment that is safe and respectful of our varied opinions. Let's challenge each other based on ideas, analysis, and evidence, and not based on insults or personal attacks.
  - b) All enrolled students are warmly welcome in this course, regardless of gender, ethnicity, immigration status, national origin, religion, class, race, disability, etc.
  - c) No side conversations, listening to music, or reading outside materials in class.
  - d) Cell phones: Turn off your cell phones before class starts; Professor Zahler and the GE have the right to answer any in-class calls or messages that you receive.
- 3) **Computers:** Do *not* use a computer during class time.
  - a) Computers are wonderful, powerful machines. Unfortunately, they are also very distracting and can reduce our ability to think and learn. Numerous studies have found that, during class, students spend most of the time using the computer for activities unrelated to the class, which distracts them and nearby students.
    - i) Articles on the subject: [Article 1](#); [Article 2](#); [Article 3](#)
  - b) Numerous studies have also found that students learn more when they take notes using pen and paper than when they use a computer.
    - i) Articles on the subject: [Article 1](#); [Article 2](#); [Article 3](#)
  - c) I will make exceptions to this policy for students that have specific, documented need to use a computer in class. In this circumstance, you should sit at the back of the class in order to distract fewer other students.
- 4) Late assignments:
  - a) You will lose points on late assignments at a rate of 10pts/24-hours. You can get an extension if you have a legitimate reason (e.g. health problems, a death in the family, imprisonment, alien abduction, etc.). Contact your professor or GE to request an extension. Snowboarding on Mt. Bachelor is not a legitimate reason.
- 5) Commerce
  - a) You may not sell class notes to other students. You may not use Canvas for commercial purposes or to advertise items for sale. Use of services that sell course notes is prohibited because they contradict the educational purpose of this course.

## **COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY**

Our class will communicate through our Canvas site. Announcements and emails are archived there and automatically forwarded to your UO email, and can even reach you by text. Check and adjust your settings under Account > Notifications.

At the beginning of each week, I will post a recording called "Starting Week 2," "Starting Week 3," etc. In this video I will provide information about upcoming assignments, give important class announcements, review any necessary information, etc.

Your GE and professor will host scheduled “live” office hours through Zoom each week, and you can also contact us directly to request a meeting. Get in touch with us to ask about assignments, course content, something in the reading or lecture you want to discuss further, or just to let us know how you’re doing.

### Using Canvas

Log into [canvas.uoregon.edu](https://canvas.uoregon.edu) using your DuckID to access our class. If you have questions about accessing and using Canvas, visit the Canvas support page:

<https://service.uoregon.edu/TDClient/2030/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet?ID=38635>

Canvas and Technology Support also is available by phone or live chat: 541-346-4357 | [livehelp.uoregon.edu](https://livehelp.uoregon.edu)

If you face Internet access challenges: companies are offering free access during this challenging time. To learn more about options visit Information Services’ web page on going remote:

<https://service.uoregon.edu/TDClient/2030/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=101263>

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center at 541-346-1155 or [uoac@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoac@uoregon.edu).”

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

Any work you submit must be your own and must be produced exclusively for this class – plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. All ideas from other sources must be properly cited. For the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly. Be aware that consequences for plagiarism or cheating can include an F in the course, suspension, or expulsion. For further information on this subject, as well as guidelines for proper citation, see the web sites:

Student Conduct Code for Academic Misconduct:

<https://dos.uoregon.edu/conduct>

Student Conduct Code and Procedures:

<https://dos.uoregon.edu/code-procedures>

Plagiarism Guide for Students:

<http://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism>

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

In this course, we will learn not only a body of historical information but also will refine a set of intellectual skills that apply to any professional career path you will pursue. In this course you can expect to learn:

- Major political, economic, and cultural trends in Latin America of the long nineteenth century.

- How the honor code, particularly those aspects that dictated masculine/feminine roles and race relations, evolved and how it affected political, economic, and social trends across Latin America's long nineteenth century.
- How to use gender and honor as analytical lenses to gain deeper understanding of the interaction of political, economic, cultural, and social forces more broadly
- How the discipline of history uses primary and secondary sources, and works with inconsistent or contradictory evidence.
- How to discuss socially-sensitive topics such as race, gender, sex, and violence in a respectful manner that promotes learning and inquiry.
- How to participate in a discourse with dissenting opinions in a manner that is respectful and intellectually productive, whether those opinions come from historical actors, scholars, or fellow classmates.
- How to use critical questions and evidence-based analysis to investigate complex situations.
- Improved communication skills: how to write a clear essay with an evidence-based argument and (hopefully) how to answer/ask questions in public.

## SCHEDULE

### A brief note on the reading assignments:

- Before each class time, you are expected to have completed the day's reading and to have posted Reading Essay.
- At the beginning of the week, watch the "Getting Started" video for notes on the week's readings and assignments.
- Look at the Readings Suggestions (Canvas Supplementals) before you start the weekly readings for background and context.

### Reading Codes:

"CL" for Colonial Lives

"CP" for Course Packet

## **Colonial Period**

### **Week 1: Spanish America's Late Colonial Period**

Sept 28: Introduction

Sept 30: Colonial structures

- *Faces of Honor*: Introduction, Ch 3

### **Week 2: Colonial gender and honor**

Oct 5:

- *Faces of Honor*: Ch 5 & 7
- CP: *Siete Partidas* [excerpts from Partidas 4 and 7]

Oct 7:

- *Faces of Honor*: 2 & 4
- CL Ch 9

\* Map Quiz

### **W3: Sex, violence, breaking the rules**

Oct 12:

- CL Chapters 6, 7, 12

Oct 14:

- CL Chapters 10, 13

### **Week 4: Changes in Late Colonial Period**

Oct 19:

- CL Chapters 17, 18, 21

Oct 21:

- CP: *Early Modern Spain*
  - Benito Feijóo (pp210-11)
  - Josefa Amar (pp238-241)
  - Laws of the Bourbon Monarchy (pp225-33)
- CP: *The Mangy Parrot*, pp11-15

### **Week 5: Independence**

Oct 26:

- *Women and Gender*, Ch 1

Oct 28:

- CP: *Latin American Independence*: Ch 17, 18, 26, 32

❖ Oct 31 11:59pm: Paper Skeleton

### **Week 6: Instability**

Nov 2:

- *Women and Gender*, Ch 2

Nov 4:

- CP: Juana Manuela Gorriti, *Dreams and Realities*, Ch 4 and 5
- The Slaughterhouse, Esteban Echeverria

### **Week 7: What did Independence Mean for Women?**

Nov 9:

- *Women and Gender*, Ch 3

Nov 11: No class

- CP: Elizabeth Dore, “One step Forward, Two Steps Back”

❖ Nov 14 11:59pm: Draft 1 + Revision Statement

### **Week 8: Family Order and Violence**

Nov 16:

- CP: Sarah Chambers, “To the company of a man like my husband”
- CP: *Documenting Latin America*, v2 Chapter 10

Nov 18:

- CP: *Documenting Latin America*, v2 Chapters 11 & 12

❖ Nov 21 11:59pm: Peer edit of Draft 1

## **Week 9: End of Century: Honor, Gender, and Race**

Nov 23

- *Women and Gender*, Ch 4
- CP: Gertrudis Avellaneda in *Madres del verbo*: pp144-48, 171-88 (1839-44)
- CP: *Rereading the Spanish American Essay*
  - Gertrudis Avellaneda, Intro and “Women,” pp23-39 (1860)
  - Soledad Acosta de Samper, Intro and “The Mission of the Woman Writer in Spanish America, pp67-76 (1880s)

Nov 25: Thanksgiving (no class)

❖ Nov 28 11:59pm: Final Draft + Revision Statement

## **Week 10: End of Century: Honor, Gender, and Race**

Nov 30:

- CP: *Modern Spain*. Emilia Pardo Bazán, “*The Education of Men and Women*,” pp74-80 (1892)
- José Martí: [My Race](#) (1893)

Dec 2: Wrap up and Review