Course description:

This class studies colonial Latin America through “objects” to gain new insights on the operations of colonial culture. Objects such as maps, buildings, textiles, books, machines, blueprints, and images often shed brighter light on the past than do written documents. Objects will allow us to reconstruct the complex and often strange social, political, religious, technical worlds of these societies.

Goals:

This course seeks for you to partake of the excitement of being a scholar and a historian. It is my goal to give you the tools to learn how to read objects critically and how to reconstruct and understand bygone cultures using images and texts. These are two basic skills in the historian’s tool-kit that will serve you well the rest of your life, regardless of the profession you end up choosing.

Assignments:

Students shall turn in three essays, each devoted to studying a colonial object. Anything from a particular building, church, town, painting, ceramic, dress, or machine may be selected. Other objects related to the class might be chosen. Students need to get each of the objects approved by the instructor. In the essay, students should explore how their chosen object sheds light on each of the three assigned aspects of colonial culture and history (politics, gender, race).

To identify objects, I suggest you use the following catalogues:

Joseph J. Rishel, ed. The Arts in Latin America, 1492-1820 (Yale University Press, 2006)

Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Art of Colonial Latin America (Phaidon, 2005)

Sally Price and Richard Price, Maroon Arts: Cultural Vitality in the African Diaspora (Beacon press, 1999)

Black is Beautiful: Rubens to Dumas (Amsterdam, 2008)

Barbara Mundy, The Mapping of New Spain (University of Chicago, 2000)

Samuel Edgerton, Theaters of Conversion: Religious Architecture and Indian Colonial Artisans (New Mexico University Press, 2001)


Painting a New World: Mexican Art and Life, 1521-1821 (Denver Art Museum, 2004)
Suzanne L. Stratton-Pruitt (Editor), *The Virgin, Saints and Angels: South American Paintings 1600-1825 from the Thoma Collection* (Skira, 2006)

*Sacred Spain: Art and Belief in the Spanish World* (Indianapolis Museum of Art, 2010)

Marjorie Trusted, *The Arts of Spain: Iberia and Latin America 1450-1700* (Penn State University, 2006)

**Grading**

Attendance and Class Participation: 25 %

First Assignment (object on colonial politics and analysis): 25 %

Second assignment (object on gender and analysis): 25 %

Third Assignment (object on race and analysis): 25 %

**Grading scale:**

- 100-90: A
- 89-80: B
- 79-70: C
- 69-60: D

**Rules on Participation and Attendance:**

25 % of your grade depends on participation and attendance. For every 3 lectures you miss, you will be deducted 5 % off your grade (For instance, from an A+ (98%) to an A- (93%)). Make sure you prepare well for in-class discussion (images will be posted on blackboard) prior to each class lecture. To help you prepare, I will provide you with questions about specific images for the next class meeting. I will call on students during each and every class for answers to these discussion questions.

**Rules on Semester Assignments:**

Students should identify different colonial objects that speak to three different aspects of colonial culture: politics, gender, and race. Each object needs first to be approved by the instructor. The deadlines to get objects approved are: February 8 (politics); March 8 (gender); April 19 (race). Once you get an object approved you need to study it in detail. Be sure to explain the ways the object relates to the various aspects of colonial culture.

Deadlines to turn in assignments are: February 22 (politics); March 24 (gender); May 5 (race). You have to turn in an image of the object along with your 4-page analysis of how the object relates to the assigned topic (between 800 and 1,000 words).
Disability:
Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259

Schedule:
January 18: Intro
January 20: New World, New Stars (Sky charts)
January 25: Cartography
January 27: Hybrid Cartographies
February 1: On Ships, Demons, and Cosmographers
February 3: Ports and Markets
February 8: Urban Life (first object approved)
February 10: Urban Life
February 15: Rural Life
February 17: Clothing and Self-fashioning
February 22: Clothing and Self-fashioning (first assignment due)
February 25: Spices and Natural History
March 1: Spices and Natural History
March 3: Mining technologies
March 8: Mining technologies (second sermon approved)
March 10: Sheep, Dyes, Textiles
March 15 (spring break)
March 17 (spring break)
March 22: Missions
March 24: second assignment due)
March 29: Sacred Cartographies
March 31: Sacred Cartographies
April 5: In class assignment
April 7: In class assignment
April 12: Books and Libraries
April 14: Writing without Words
April 19: Writing without Words (third object approved)
April 21: Medicine and Healing
April 26: Medicine and Healing
April 28: Gardens and Landscapes
May 3: Mules and Rivers
May 5: third assignment due.