

(upper division or graduate seminar)

Ordering Empire: Science, Nature, and the People of the Spanish Empire

Professor: Dr. Amanda L. Scott • **Office:** Sampson 332
e-mail: scotta@usna.edu • **Phone** • 410-293-6260 • **Office Hours:** by appointment

Course Description

This course invites students to reconsider Spanish and Latin American contributions to the Enlightenment. We begin by examining early modern Spanish scientific culture which sought to protect state secrets by tightly controlling the dissemination of cartographic, geographic, medical, and botanical knowledge, but which ultimately contributed to the mischaracterization of the Spanish empire as scientifically backwards and stagnant. In following the projects undertaken by nuns, natural scientists, doctors, administrators, slaves, indigenous, and lay people, we examine the ways in which people in Spain and the broader Spanish Empire thought about medicine, disease, race, religion, social organization, and empiricism.

Assessment

- **Participation** (15%)
- **Discussion leader** (15%) – *twice throughout the semester students will lead discussion (all days will be divvied up on the first day of class).*
- **Book Reviews and Short Essays** (25%) – *a review of each week's secondary reading, or an analysis of primary source readings, due by the beginning of class.*
- **Research Proposal** (10%)
- **Final Paper** (35%) – *on a topic chosen in consultation with the professor.*

Academic Integrity

Students are required to abide by the University's policies on academic integrity.

Cheating and plagiarism are serious, and they rarely go uncaught. It's not worth it to risk your academic and professional careers, so don't even think about trying it. If you have any questions about how to properly use sources and cite references, I will be more than happy to help you. In addition, one of the class periods will be devoted to citing and writing academic papers.

Changes to the Syllabus

The professor reserves the right to make alterations to the syllabus throughout the semester. Students will be given ample notification should any changes be made.

Course Calendar

- Week 1 ***Introduction: Sources and Science in the Spanish Empire***
These sources will be distributed to you by email:
Selections from Dr. Francisco Hernandez, *The Mexican Treasury*
“Relación de Xonotla”
Selections of Conquest narratives
- Week 2 ***Imperialism and Enlightenment in Public Spaces***
Selections from Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*
Dorinda Outram, “The Enlightenment Our Contemporary”
Miruna Achim, “Making Lizards into Drugs: The Debate on the Medical Uses of Reptiles in Late Eighteenth Century Mexico”
- Week 3 ***Reason and Display in the Early Modern World***
Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature*
Selections from *Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz: Selected Works*
- Library visit: meet with the subject librarian**
- Week 4 ***Imperial Science in the Early Colonial Period***
Paula de Vos, “The Science of Spices: Empiricism and Economic Botany in the Early Spanish World”
Daniela Bleichmar, “Visible Empire: Scientific Expeditions and Visual Culture in the Hispanic Enlightenment”
Selections from Londa Schiebinger ed., *Colonial Botany*
David Weber, *Bárbaros*, chps. 1-2.
- Week 5 ***Imagination and Invention***
Selections from Alix Cooper, *Inventing the Indigenous*
Selections from Surekha Davies, *Renaissance Ethnography and the Invention of the Human*
- Research Proposals due**
- Week 6 ***Transatlantic Investigations***
Selections from Neil Safier, *Measuring the New World*
Selections from Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World*

Meet with the professor to go over your research proposals

Week 7

Empire and Science

Selections from Antonio Barrera-Osorio, *Experiencing Nature*
Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *Nature, Empire, And Nation*

Week 8

SPRING BREAK – no class

Week 9

Slavery and Science

Selections from Andrew Curran, *The Anatomy of Blackness*
Londa Schiebinger, *Secret Cures of Slaves*

Revised Research Proposals Due

Week 10

Ordering People

David Weber, *Bárbaros* (the rest)

Week 11

Race and Social Order

Selections from Iona Katzew, *Casta Paintings*
Douglas Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination*

Week 12

Bourbon Reform and Religion

Brian Larkin, *The Very Nature of God: Baroque Catholicism and
Religious Reform in Bourbon Mexico City*

Week 13

Enlightened Social Control

Juan Pedro Viqueira Albán, *Propriety and Permissiveness in
Bourbon Mexico*

Week 14

In-class Peer Review

Bring a copy of your final paper for a peer review with your
classmates.

Final paper due: check final exam schedule