The Class System in Colonial Latin America

What is the Columbian Exchange?
What was the social / economic organization of colonial Latin America?
Columbus’ Arrival in the New World
How did the discovery of the New World effect Europe?

- The discovery of the New World will have a profound impact on Europe
  - Politically
  - Economically
  - Socially

- The New World will also effect the way Europeans look at the world
What is the Columbian Exchange?

- The Columbian Exchange was a massive exchange of plants, animals, and people between the Old World and the New World 1492-present.

- Mercantilism - An economic idea that stresses trade and control of overseas markets (colonies).
The Columbian Exchange

Europe, Africa, and Asia to the Americas:
- Disease (Smallpox, Influenza, Typhus, Measles, Malaria, Diphtheria, Whooping Cough)
- Livestock (Cattle, Sheep, Pigs, Horses)
- Grains (Wheat, Rice, Barley, Oats)
- Vegetables (Onions, Olives, Turnips, Peaches, Pears)
- Coffee Beans
- Beans
- Honeybees
- Sugar Cane
- Citrus Fruits
- Tobacco
- Bananas
- Grapes
- Cacao
- Peppers
- Peanuts
- Potatoes
- Tomatoes
- Corn
- Squash
- Sweet Potatoes

North America to Europe, Africa, and Asia:
- Turkeys
- Pumpkins
- Peaches
- Peppers
- Tobacco
- Citrus Fruits
- Onions
- Olives
- Turnips
- Peaches
- Peppers
- Tobacco
- Citrus Fruits
- Onions
- Olives
- Turnips
- Grains
- Coffee Beans
- Beans
- Honeybees
- Sugar Cane
- Bananas
- Grapes
- Cacao
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- Potatoes
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Mercantilism

Control of foreign colonies / trade = wealth and security
The Spanish Conquistadors
How did the Spanish organize social classes in Latin America?

- Following their conquests, Spanish organized themselves into “encomiendas”
  - Large plantations or ranches
- Indian / African laborers
  - Importation of slaves
- Spanish intermarried & discriminated against these laborers
  - Created a new class system
Destruction of Native Culture
Many Spaniard who came to Latin America were driven by the idea of "saving souls".

This prompted them to convert Native Americans to Christianity as a way to morally justify their actions.
Spanish Use of Slave Labor
The Spanish “encomiendas”
Punishment on the encomiendas was usually harsh, involving whippings or floggings, branding, or other forms of physical discipline.
Another example of the harsh punishments inflicted by the Spanish on their Native American servants on the encomiendas. This type of punishment was reserved for severe crimes like stealing, murder, or runaways.
Work with the Spanish mind was incredibly dangerous with thousands of native & African workers perishing on a daily basis.
As many of their Native American forefathers did to ward off hunger and sickness, these Latin American miners chew the leaves of the coca plant.
What where the social classes of Latin America?

- **Peninsulares** (European-born whites)
- **Creoles** (Whites born in Latin America)
- **Mestizos** (Mix of European & Indian)
- **Mulattoes** (Mix of European & African)
- **Indians** (Native Americans)
- **Negroes** (African slaves)
The Peninsulares
The Creoles
Mixing of Cultures
New Cultures: Voodoo
Issues of New Cultures
Who set up the class systems/expectations of Latin America?

- The Roman Catholic Church
  Assigned at baptism

- Gender roles were developed for social organization
  Provided a basic order for Latin America society still followed today
Why did Latin American society develop gender roles?

- Gender roles were developed social organization
- Provided a basic order for Latin America society still followed today
  - Strongly influenced by the Catholic Church
What were the traditional roles of men in Latin America?

- Latin America is considered a “patriarchal” society
  Male dominated society

- Main supporter of the family
- Leader of the family
- Formal education
- Full participation in government
What were the traditional roles of women in Latin American society?

- Women’s role in Latin American society was as “care-givers”
  - Managed the home
  - Raised the children
  - Cared for elderly
  - No formal education
  - No participation in government
Due to the experience of colonization, Latin American will be forever changed

- Deep issues of race / racial equality
- Deep divisions between the rich and poor
- Deep divisions between the genders