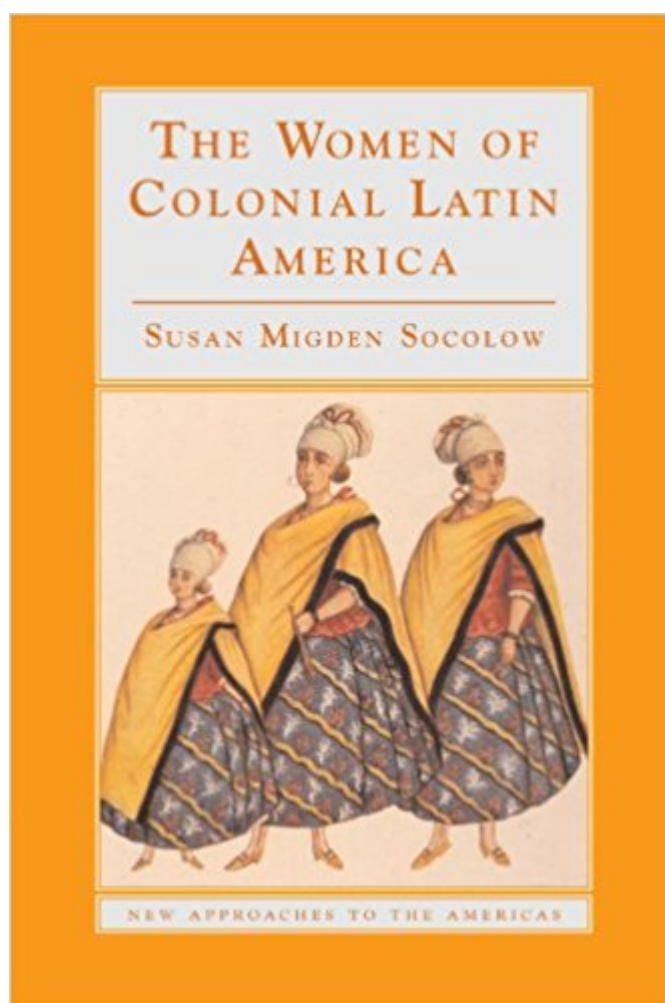


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# The Women Of Colonial Latin America (New Approaches To The Americas)



## Synopsis

This book presents an overview of the varied experiences of women in colonial Spanish and Portuguese America. Beginning with the cultures that would produce the Latin American world, the book traces the effects of conquest, colonization, and settlement on colonial women. The book also examines the expectations, responsibilities, and limitations facing women in their varied roles, stressing the ways in which race, social status, occupation, and space altered women's social and economic realities.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This text will be especially useful to teachers of Latin American survey courses. The book rests solidly on the expanding base of articles and books now available to scholars. This is a good first book on the topic for readers at all levels." Choice  
"Drawing upon a wealth of scholarship produced in the past thirty years, this engagingly written volume provides the best synthesis to date of its ambitious and wide-ranging topic...Specialists and non-specialists alike will come away from this text with a richer understanding of the opportunities and challenges that shaped the lives of women in the America ruled by Spain and Portugal." Luso-Brazilian Review

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examines the expectations, responsibilities, and limitations facing women in their varied roles, stressing the ways in which race, social status, occupation, and space altered women's social and economic realities.

Fun read; also do not miss Dr. Luis Martin's "Daughter of the Conquistadors" an earlier book that touches on same fascinating and ignored subject

It's a complete new perspective of the conquest and colonization. I read it for my history class and I loved it. It's an interesting reading.

I'll be honest, and say that I had to get this books bcause of an assignement I was doing in school. The professor just asked me to write on a couple of chapters, kind of like a book review, but I was hooked! After I was done with the assignment I HAD to read the whole book, because It was really imformative, and interesting to read. I'm a history major, and as other historians know, the subject of women historically, has been in the dark since the beginning of time. Only recently have historians began to write about women. Socolow does a great job in her book, which focuses on women in Latin America She begins with the Spanish conquest of the New world and talks about the indigenous people before Columbus. Socolow includes the arrival of African women along with European ones. She goes on to talk about women, marriage, and family, the religious women and all about how the elite ones spent their time. Socolow touches on women and work and about slavery, and of course about their social deviance, like crime, witchcraft and rebellions. It really is an outstanding book and I truly recommend it!

After reading books on the Aztecs and Maya civilizations by the like of J.Soustelle, I wanted to discover the next chapter of the Spanish American history. Beginning with the *Women of Colonial Latin America* was a good start. Alas Professor S. Socolow is not an historian. Her small book would have greatly profited had she explored the work of Marc Bloch and others masters! It is indeed a very disappointing reading: full of generalities, contradictions, vagueness repetitions and useless chapters. She paints the Hispano-American women with a very large brush mixing periods, countries, races, etc. that may make one dizzy. Did Professor Socolow ever study the European history? She would have saved the 15 pages of paper describing convent life that applies as well to any French, Spanish or Italian similar institution: nothing special in Nueva España. She details the bureaucratic marriage process for the Spanish

officers and from that she arrives at conclusions no applicable to the common gentes. Besides, had she studied the European military for the same period, she would have concluded differently! (By the way "military personnel" then and now receives a PAY not WAGES!). Regarding divorce and separation a third way out was available and not mentioned: Church annulment! (It was rarely granted and mostly to the "grandes"). The status of the Latinas, whether whites or negras, mestizas, mulatas, Indians, Zambos, or even nobles, was not that much different with that of their European sisters. Mrs. Socolow could have simply underlined the differences when warranted. For example, the hacienda life so prevalent throughout Nueva España and Nuevo México is insufficiently explored. Women there were (1850-1800) the de facto keystone of the system. But rural life did not interest the author. One redeeming value is hidden in the "documents" presented at the end of the book. The wonderful letters from wives and lovers sometimes separated for years from their mate can be heartbreaking. However, this correspondence is mostly irrelevant as the writers were from the very few "elite", not representative of the "Women of Colonial Latin America". Then a certain "feminist" undertone here and there blurs the picture. What's more, the author seems to enjoy stuffing her work with fancy vocabulary or obsolete Spanish words: this book needs a glossary. I understand some American genealogical societies are recommending the work. In my opinion, it is of no use, whatsoever, for that particular purpose.

The book was a very good collection of stories of the women of Colonial Latin America-but the stories were dull at times, and I just thought that there should have been more detail in regard to the actual women's lives.

Excellent condition, barely any wear on cover of book, no bent pages, no writing in book

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