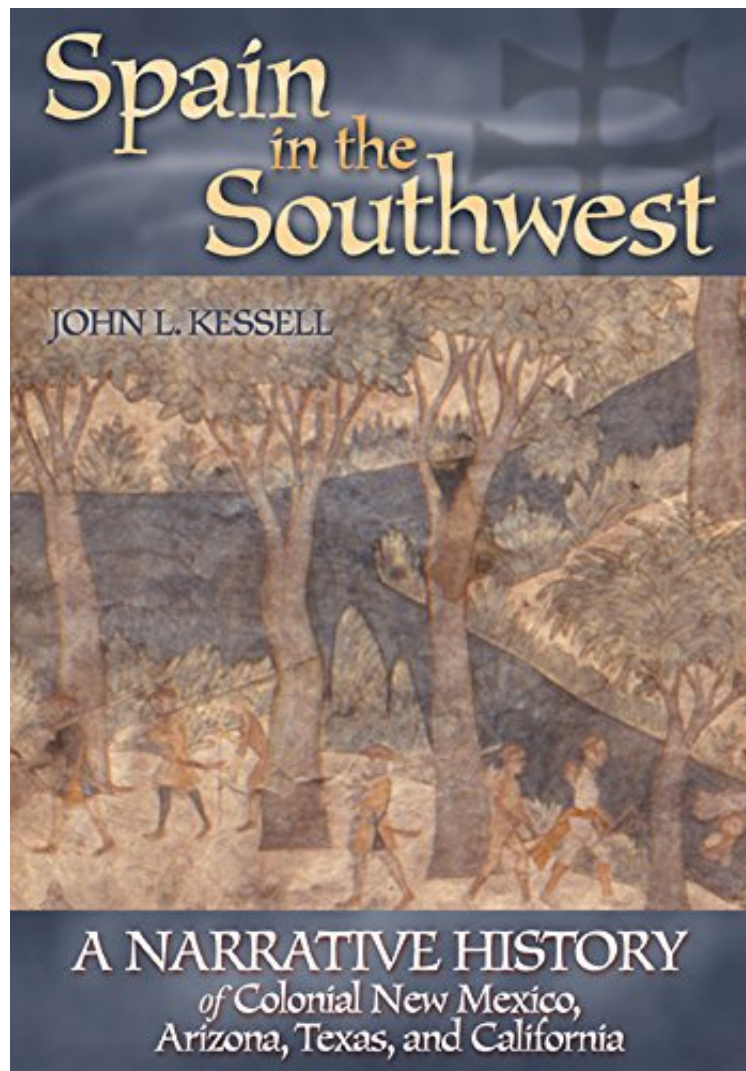


[Read free] Spain in the Southwest: A Narrative History of Colonial New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California

Spain in the Southwest: A Narrative History of Colonial New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California

John L. Kessell

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John L. Kessell : Spain in the Southwest: A Narrative History of Colonial New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Spain in the Southwest: A Narrative History of Colonial New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. I'm enjoying it By Tunes Plus It seems that people's reviews of the book reflect their own point of view. As someone with limited knowledge of this history, I appreciate that this book captures the flavor and complexity of those times. Its point of view "rings true" with other accounts of how Spanish

society worked at that time. Another reviewer said that there were better books out there but didn't bother to mention any. Scholars and poli-sci majors may have criticisms of it, but I'm glad I bought it. 18 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Colonial History is about Conquest . . . This is colonial history! By Splammo While I appreciate the comment about being frustrated, how can one possibly look at colonial history without talking about conquest and domination and killing Indian people (Sadly, this is almost a definition of colonial history)? The purpose of a colony, especially a mercantilist colony (which Spain, England, France, and Russia were, incidentally) is that the colony survives for the benefit of the mother country. But, unlike the English and French regions, Spaniards had to have contracts from the king to settle or explore, as Kessell makes very clear, and had to abide by over 8,000 rules and regulations about the Indies. No other European colony had accountability like the Spanish. This book is far from Black Legend (I have some suggestions for that). Colonial history is about conquest, domination (how else do you turn something into a colony?), control, exploitation (some worse than others), but they all had to follow the regulations set up in the Recopilacion de las leyes de las Indias—and even Onate was found guilty of using excessive force against the Acoma Pueblos, living immorally, executing two of his own colonists (and more—, even though he eventually got exonerated by King Philip IV). While this book delves into COLONIAL history from a Spanish perspective, it is about as balanced as one can get. My only complaint is also a compliment—Kessell is an amazing storyteller (the way history should be), but sometimes the storytelling gets the reader off track and it's hard to come back to the flow of the chapter. Good on ya, Kessell. Great book! 10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Engaging and a different perspective from the history I learned in school. By Jax I first came across this book when I was doing research at my local library for a novel I am currently writing that is set prior to 1848, before the U.S. took possession. I found this book to be truly insightful, easy to understand, and captivating. The huge nuggets of information gave me a different perspective about what really happened in the southwest. I could easily draw parallels with imperial Spain to that of the U.S. because of the author's way of presenting information in a very candid and non-biased point of view. I grow weary of the same "Imperial White America" condemnations found in many history books that many people don't realize that conquest is not partial to white dominance, but rather to man's insatiable quest for power and domination over other cultures most vulnerable to their highly advanced weapons. Overall, this is a book I'm adding to my collection. Worth reading if you want a refreshing perspective from the type of history you learned in school. JAX, Author, Freelance Writer, Entrepreneur Author of Heart of the Jaguar Learning Krav: Going Above and Beyond the Comfort Zone with the Israeli Art of Krav Maga , Black Belt Magazine, Jan 2010 issue Featured blog writer with [...], 2009 Sopa de Pollo para la alma latina , 2009 The Boy's Club , Writer's Digest Short Story Writing Competition, 2008 Alone, [...], 2007 A Shadow to Call Her Own , Shorts, 2006 Chicken Soup for the Latino Soul , HCI Publishing 2005

John L. Kessell's *Spain in the Southwest* presents a fast-paced, abundantly illustrated history of the Spanish colonies that became the states of New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California. With an eye for human interest, Kessell tells the story of New Spain's vast frontier—today's American Southwest and Mexican North—which for two centuries served as a dynamic yet disjointed periphery of the Spanish empire. Chronicling the period of Hispanic activity from the time of Columbus to Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821, Kessell traces the three great swells of Hispanic exploration, encounter, and influence that rolled north from Mexico across the coasts and high deserts of the western borderlands. Throughout this sprawling historical landscape, Kessell treats grand themes through the lives of individuals. He explains the frequent cultural clashes and accommodations in remarkably balanced terms. Stereotypes, the author writes, are of no help. Indians could be arrogant and brutal, Spaniards caring, and vice versa. If we select the facts to fit preconceived notions, we can make the story come out the way we want, but if the peoples of the colonial Southwest are seen as they really were—more alike than diverse, sharing similar inconstant natures—then we need have no favorites.

From *Publishers Weekly* It's hard to beat the early history of the American Southwest for its varied, colorful and historically important cast of characters. Soon after 1492, Spanish grandees, roughneck explorers, church friars, military troops, Anglo-American settlers, even African-Americans joined the native inhabitants who already peopled this land to create a new society. Kessell (professor emeritus at the University of New Mexico and author of *Mission of Sorrows*) chronicles their acts and relationships in a solid narrative that ends well into the national history of the U.S. when these Mexican borderlands became American territory. Covering 350 years of history is not easy, and Kessell brings the job off about as well as can be expected. He doesn't get us far into the heads of his historical figures or inside their societies and cultures, perhaps because there's so much to cover. But the result is a book that effectively draws together recent scholarship and tells in clear prose the required tale even if without grand themes or memorable vignettes. Kessell reminds us that what is now the U.S. was invaded from Mexico at about the same time as it was from the east by new peoples and that its history cannot be read simply as a tale of migration westward from the Atlantic. In an era of multiculturalism, therefore, this synthesis of the founding history of a large part of the nation not usually considered a seedbed of American culture is surely welcome. For a single narrative of its broad subject, the

book serves as a useful and pleasing introduction, brought alive by many well-chosen illustrations. Copyright 2002
Cahners Business Information, Inc. "For a single narrative of its broad subject, [Spain in the Southwest] serves as a
useful and pleasing introduction, brought alive by many well-chosen illustrations." About the Author John L. Kessel is
author of several books on the colonial Southwest, including *Pueblos, Spaniards, and the Kingdom of New Mexico*
and *Spain in the Southwest: A Narrative History of Colonial New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California*.