



Southwest

The making of North America was set in motion by tall tales of a land north of Mexico reportedly peppered with cities of grandeur and gold. Upon hearing word of such riches, Francisco de Vasquez Coronado assembled an expedition in search of these cities which would take his crew of over 1,300 from central Mexico all the way to present day Kansas. Leaving a trail of destruction behind them, Coronado's party never found the riches they were looking for, but they did find native populations fiercely resistant to their plan to extract labor and natural resources from this vast, rugged terrain. *Conquest of America, Southwest* charts the epic course Coronado traversed as the landscape of North America was transformed forever.

Conquest of America, Southwest is the first in a series of programs which bring to life the riveting stories of daring, risk, and violence which characterized the European quest to control the North American land mass. Featuring first-person testimonies drawn from primary sources, journals, and Native American oral histories, this one-hour presentation has integrated the words and documents of this historical period into the stories it recounts. The 16th century Spanish explorations of the Southwest were vital chapters in the eventual settlement and development which established California as an economic, social, and cultural stronghold. This program is an excellent resource for classroom use, introducing students to the rich and complex history of West Coast of North America.

Curriculum Links:

Conquest of America: Southwest would be useful for courses on U.S. history, global studies, World Civilization, World Cultures, and California history. It is appropriate for middle school and high school. This documentary fulfills several National Standards guidelines as outlined by the National Council for History Education including: Values, Beliefs, Political Ideas and Institutions, Conflict and Cooperation, Human Interaction with the Environment and Comparative History of Major Developments.

Vocabulary:

conquistadors
defiant
dowry

expedition
lucrative
nobility
privilege
requirimiento
traverse
viceroy

Discussion Questions:

1. What was the main thing Coronado was looking for when he assembled his team in search of Cibola?
2. What were the biggest risks and challenges Coronado faced as he and his group traveled North?
3. Why do you think Coronado needed so many people to accompany him on the expedition?
4. What happened when in the Zuni pueblo? Do you think Coronado and his followers should have been convicted for the violence against the Zuni?
5. Why did “the Turk” lead Coronado and his team astray? Who were his allegiances to when he decided to betray them?
6. This documentary suggests that word traveled throughout the Southwest that Coronado was a destructive force against native peoples. How do you think this information was spread across such a vast territory?
7. What were some of the tensions between missionaries in the documentary and Coronado?
8. How do you think the Spanish communicated with native peoples when they couldn’t speak English?
9. How would you compare Coronado’s experience to that of Lewis and Clark?
10. As the documentary discusses, a settlement was not achieved in the Southwest for 57 years after Coronado’s expedition. Why do you think it took so long for a European settlement to be established?

Extended Activities:

1. This documentary traces the expedition of Coronado and his crew from central Mexico all the way to present day Kansas. At the library or using the Internet, locate a map which shows the route Coronado and his followers took. Using this map as a guide, create your own map of the Coronado expedition on a poster-board or a large piece of construction paper. On the sides of your map, include a timeline of relevant dates related to Coronado’s travels, starting with his initial quest for Cibola through the conclusion of the expedition in 1542.
2. Coronado was only one of many Spanish explorers in the Southwest. At the library or using the Internet, research the Spanish exploration of this region. Identify another explorer who traveled through this area. Write a short essay on your chosen explorer describing their discoveries, including their interactions with native peoples.
3. One of the most controversial and violent chapters in Coronado’s story concerned his ransacking of the Zuni pueblo Hawikuh. Research the history of the Zuni pueblo and the history of pueblo architecture. Use your creativity to build a

- representation of a pueblo style house or church. Clay or paint would be particularly good mediums to reconstruct your building, but you could also draw your design on a piece of construction paper or poster-board. Share your designs with your larger class or group.
4. One of the tensions discussed in this program was between the Spanish explorers and missionaries such as Bartholome de Las Casas who criticized the violent approach of Coronado and other explorers. Las Casas detailed his views in many writings, including letter entitled “Concerning the Only Way of Drawing All Peoples to the True Religion,” published in 1537. Locate this or one of Las Casas’ other writings which express his views. Write a short essay of 2-3 pages describing his thoughts on Christianizing native peoples. You can also create a mini-biography of Las Casas which includes a brief timeline, key writings, and quotes from one of his writings.

Resources

Books:

Doak, Robin S. *Coronado: Francisco Vazquez de Coronado Explores the Southwest*, (Compass Point Books, 2002).

Morris, John M. *From Coronado to Escalante: The Explorers of the Spanish Southwest (World Explorers Series)*, Chelsea House Publications (May 1, 1992).

Preston, Douglas J. *Cities of Gold: A Journey Across the American Southwest*, (University of New Mexico Press: 1999).

Roberts, David. *The Pueblo Revolt: The Secret Rebellion That Drove the Spaniards Out of the Southwest*, (Simon & Schuster, 2004).

Weber, David J. *What Caused the Pueblo Revolt of 1680? (Historians at Work Series)*, (Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999).

Web sites:

An informative site with background on Coronado’s expedition:
<http://www.desertusa.com/mag98/sep/papr/coronado.html>