

1. In what ways has the U.S. contributed to inequality in countries Latin America?
What has the U.S. done to reduce inequality?

2. How does gender play a part in the politics of Latin America?

As shown by Malinche woman are often very influential in politics. With that however, woman were/are rarely shown in the center stage, to say. An example of a woman with influence in politics is Micaela Bastidas, "...was an incredible character in Latin America's history of combating Spanish colonialism. She led the Great Rebellion in Peru, alongside her husband Tupac Amaru, and did so with 'enormous zeal' (Bocanegra de Lazo de la Vega). More recently however woman have shown a strong presence in politics, "When Mexico's new Congress is inaugurated September 1, Latin America will be home to three of the four countries with the greatest proportion of congresswomen" (as-coa.org).

Men in politics are typically the center stage of politics. Men are able to make decisions based on their opinions and are not criticized or questioned because of their gender. In some cases, men actually had the opinions of their female counterparts influence their decisions regarding politics. As Malinche was for Cortes, or Micaela Bastidas. Though our times are changing, politics is still dominated mainly by men in most, if not all countries.

3. Pick one of the most influential women in Latin American political history and explain.

One influential woman in Latin America is Malinali, or “Malinche”. She was actually a gift to Alonso Hernandez Portocarrero, but helped Hernan Cortes with his expedition and struggles throughout. She helped him by interpreting the native language of the Aztec Empire, Nahuatl. While she was able to help in that sense she also helped by providing useful information regarding the politics and culture of Mexico, further helping Cortes.

Malinche was also the mistress to Cortes, and they had a love child together. Since Malinche helped Cortes so much, many Mexicans actually feel as if she’s a traitor to the Mexicans. With Malinches help Cortes was able to conquer Tenochtitlan. There are also a few different justifications for Malinches assistance to Cortes. Some say, since she was a slave she had to choose and being given away allowed her to be disloyal. Others say that she probably enjoyed actually doing something as in that time women were very rarely useful for anything other than household chores.

4. What distinguishes a political revolution from a social revolution? Provide one example of each. How is this difference significant to the independence of LAC?

A political revolution typically has a much smaller effect on the society and mainly just revolutionizes the political systems. Whereas, a social revolution has a larger effect on a variety of things, including politics, education and work related factors.

An example for a political revolution would be Bolivia, which actually started as a social revolution for have a more centralized society but it ultimately ended as a political revolution. An example of a social revolution would be Mexico’s which was the largest

social revolution in History. Mexico gained a better social circumstances in many realms in this revolution.

5. Explain what classifies a periphery, semi-periphery, and core country and provide an example of one country that is classified as such for each category.

By definition a Periphery country is "...are those that are less developed than the semi-periphery and core countries" (Wikipedia). Semi-periphery countries "...are the industrializing, mostly capitalist countries which are positioned between the periphery and core countries". Lastly, Core countries "...are the industrialized capitalist countries on which periphery countries and semi-periphery countries depend.

An example of a periphery country would be, Nicaragua. Nicaragua is still mostly undeveloped meaning they lack the resources found in core countries to categorize them as such. Some of these resources could be the lack of indoor plumbing or a lack of a stable or public education system. An example of a semi-periphery country is Argentina. Argentine is mostly developed, but can still lacks in certain. Semi-periphery countries are typically situated between periphery and core countries. Lastly, an example of a core country is the United States. The United States has the capitalist characteristics and the development to qualify under this definition. Core countries typically offer the most amount of financial support to the other countries.

6. Explain the complexity of Latin America's Casta System by listing some of the criteria for classifying its people. How does its legacy perpetuate racial and other social inequalities in Latin American countries today?

The Casta system was the separating of the different races in Latin America. The system was comprised of 3 main races, Africans, Spanish and Native people. Since the Casta system paginated with a Spaniard, it is to be expected that being of Spanish blood had you at the highest level. Furthermore, the more Spanish blood the higher up you would be. Native people were in the middle. Leaving Africans at the bottom of the Casta System.

Now, native people and African descendant people do comprise a good amount of the population still in those Latin countries. I actually noticed it a lot when I was in Panama in April. It was interesting because you can really tell the people who have either Native/African, African/Spanish or Native/Spanish influence in their families. Though many decades have passed since the Casta systems origins, many still hold biases/discrimination towards those of the lowers castes, the native people and those of African descendant.

7. What are some of the major factors responsible for poverty in Latin America?

The main cause of poverty in Latin America is the extremely unequal distribution of wealth within classes in Latin American countries. While there is money in these countries the amount that belongs to the wealthy is much larger than the amount of money belonging to the lower classes.

The vast separation between the classes has created much separation as well, which is exemplified in the following quote, "We propose that the two realities are an integral part of an underlying whole. In this integrated system, development and underdevelop-

ment are dialectically related, not as part of an abstract and mechanical system of international stratification but as concrete economic, social, and political structures of domination and resistance, exclusion and inclusion, and dependence and interdependence” (Chapter 1, Harris). Not only are there separations between wealth but it in turns becomes separation between treatment and way of living.

Give an illustrative example of U.S. interventionism in Latin American, and explain what some of the lasting consequences have been.

8. What consequences of colonization have had the most impact on Latin America?

The consequence of colonization which had the most impact on Latin America, was the diseases. Europeans brought over many diseases such as measles and small pox. While the Europeans had the immunity to those diseases the Native people of each Latin country did not. An example of the mass amount of deaths is shown in the following quote, “...where the Taino numbered at least 60,000 and possibly as many as 8 million, according to some estimates. But by 1548, the Taino population there had plummeted to less than 500. Lacking immunity to Old World pathogens carried by the Spanish, Hispaniola’s indigenous inhabitants fell victim to terrible plagues of smallpox, influenza, and other viruses.” (PringleJun, Heather)

Furthermore the devastation these diseases brought upon the native people took a longterm toll on the race. If it weren’t for the rapid demise of the native people are races today would look very different. Now we have more of a melting pot of race, where most

people are bi-racial. Imagine if the population of the native people had stayed at its original level, we would have much more influence from the native people of each Latin country.

9. How does unequal distribution of capital in the region affect Latin America's overall development?
10. Why has corruption become such an established and common aspect of Latin American politics?

11. What made the 1980's the "Lost Decade" in Latin American?

The "Lost Decade" in Latin American was caused by the decline in economic growth throughout the countries. With a neoliberalism mindset, the countries started using a free market to balance the economic stress, and instead of strengthening with those policies in place the economy was weakened.

Latin American countries began to take loans from the U.S., national and private banks. These loans were also given at such a low interest rate that they basically had nothing to lose. Once those countries couldn't pay their original loans they began taking out new loans which had higher interest rates than the previous ones. This was the main reason for the "Lost Decade" as the productivity with each countries began to slow as they had no money to afford it any longer. "... the so-called neoliberal reforms carried out during this period weakened their bargaining power..." (Chapter 3).

12. What was the triangular trade between the Americas, Europe and Africa during the 16th to 19th centuries?