



# Our America: A Hispanic History of the United States

By Felipe Fernández-Armesto

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**Our America: A Hispanic History of the United States** By Felipe Fernández-Armesto

**“A rich and moving chronicle for our very present.” ?Julio Ortega, *New York Times Book Review***

The United States is still typically conceived of as an offshoot of England, with our history unfolding east to west beginning with the first English settlers in Jamestown. This view overlooks the significance of America’s Hispanic past. With the profile of the United States increasingly Hispanic, the importance of recovering the Hispanic dimension to our national story has never been greater.

This absorbing narrative begins with the explorers and conquistadores who planted Spain’s first colonies in Puerto Rico, Florida, and the Southwest. Missionaries and rancheros carry Spain’s expansive impulse into the late eighteenth century, settling California, mapping the American interior to the Rockies, and charting the Pacific coast. During the nineteenth century Anglo-America expands west under the banner of “Manifest Destiny” and consolidates control through war with Mexico. In the Hispanic resurgence that follows, it is the peoples of Latin America who overspread the continent, from the Hispanic heartland in the West to major cities such as Chicago, Miami, New York, and Boston. The United States clearly has a Hispanic present and future.

And here is its Hispanic past, presented with characteristic insight and wit by one of our greatest historians.

3 illustrations

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## **Our America: A Hispanic History of the United States** By Felipe Fernández-Armesto **Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

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Most high-school and college survey texts for U.S. history continue an Anglocentric approach, although recent efforts have been made to acknowledge the contribution of non-English and non-European groups to our cultural heritage. A giant swath of current U.S. territory, from California to Florida, was once part of the Spanish Empire, and subsequently much of it was part of the Mexican Republic. Fernandez-Armesto, a professor of history at Notre Dame, provides a useful and absorbing counterperspective. He utilizes a chronological approach beginning with the first Spanish explorers and conquistadors in the sixteenth century and finally analyzes the effects of the current “second Hispanic colonization” as our Latino population surges. He touches on various aspects of Latin American achievements and contributions to our country. His assertions that the U.S. should be and soon will be viewed as part of the broader Spanish-speaking American continents is unlikely to win broad acceptance but will certainly provoke interesting debate. --Jay Freeman

### Review

“With a lucid, engaging style, [Fernández-Armesto] seeks to understand the continuity between the Spanish colonization and the fight for justice led by the Chicano movement in the sixties and by immigration advocates today... This is an invitation to look at America in full!” (Ilan Stavans, general editor of The Norton Anthology of Latino History)

“In enviably lyrical prose, Felipe Fernández-Armesto has written a bold and compelling synthesis of our nation’s Hispanic past, from the Spanish arrival in the late fifteenth century to the current and contentious debate over immigration reform. Marshaling famous and forgotten individuals and events, he reminds us that there is much more to America’s story than simply Massachusetts Pilgrims and Virginia Cavaliers.” (Andrew R. Graybill, director, Clements Center for Southwest Studies, Southern Methodist University)

“A rich and moving chronicle .... Perhaps the first history to make the case for this nation’s becoming a bright Latin American country.” (Julio Ortega - New York Times Book Review)

“Exceedingly well-written and engaging.” (Hector Tobar - Los Angeles Times)

“Triumphantly rescues Hispanic America from obscurity.” (The Economist)

“A valuable contribution to those seeking a broader understanding of U.S. history.” (Janet Napolitano - The Wall Street Journal)

### About the Author

Felipe Fernández-Armesto, the William P. Reynolds Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame, is the author of *Pathfinders: A Global History of Exploration* and *Our America: A Hispanic History of the United States*. He lives in South Bend, Indiana, and London.

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