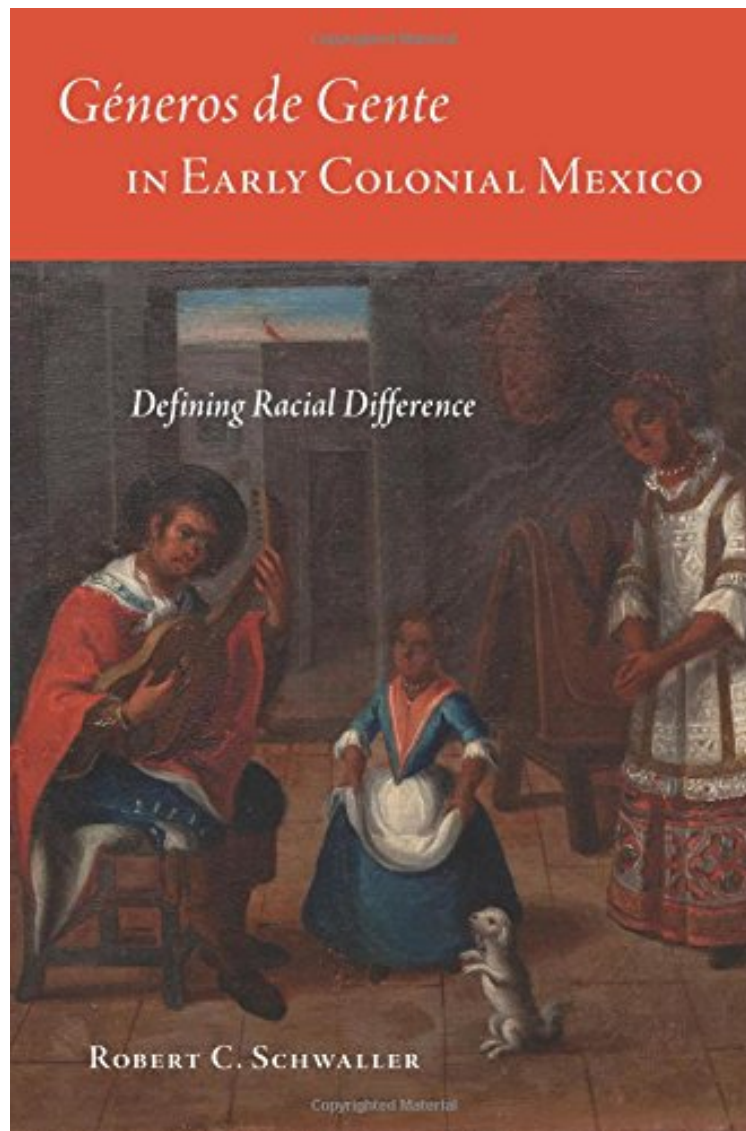


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Gneros de Gente in Early Colonial Mexico: Defining Racial Difference (Latin American and Caribbean Arts and Culture)

Prof. Robert C. Schwaller Ph.D.

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Prof. Robert C. Schwaller Ph.D. : Gneros de Gente in Early Colonial Mexico: Defining Racial Difference (Latin American and Caribbean Arts and Culture) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gneros de Gente in Early Colonial Mexico: Defining Racial Difference (Latin American and

Caribbean Arts and Culture):

On December 19, 1554, the members of Tenochtitlan's indigenous cabildo, or city council, petitioned Emperor Charles V of Spain for administrative changes to save us from any Spaniard, mestizo, black, or mulatto afflicting us in the marketplace, on the roads, in the canal, or in our homes. Within thirty years of the conquest, the presence of these groups in New Spain was large enough to threaten the social, economic, and cultural order of the indigenous elite. In *Gneros de Gente in Early Colonial Mexico*, an ambitious rereading of colonial history, Robert C. Schwaller proposes using the Spanish term *gneros de gente* (types or categories of people) as part of a more nuanced perspective on what these categories of difference meant and how they evolved. His work revises our understanding of racial hierarchy in Mexico, the repercussions of which reach into the present. Schwaller traces the connections between medieval Iberian ideas of difference and the unique societies forged in the Americas. He analyzes the ideological and legal development of *gneros de gente* into a system that began to resemble modern notions of race. He then examines the lives of early colonial mestizos and mulattos to show how individuals of mixed ancestry experienced the colonial order. By pairing an analysis of legal codes with a social history of mixed-race individuals, his work reveals the disjunction between the establishment of a common colonial language of what would become race and the ability of the colonial Spanish state to enforce such distinctions. Even as the colonial order established a system of governance that entrenched racial differences, colonial subjects continued to mediate their racial identities through social networks, cultural affinities, occupation, and residence. Presenting a more complex picture of the ways difference came to be defined in colonial Mexico, this book exposes important tensions within Spanish colonialism and the developing social order. It affords a significant new view of the development and social experience of race in early colonial Mexico and afterward.

More than a history, *Gneros de Gente in Early Colonial Mexico* stands as a veritable clarion call summoning historians and laypersons alike to fathom new ways of assessing caste, as well as new ways of envisioning how race came to be configured in the Spain's New World colonies. This book will transform readers' views and assumptions. Ben Vinson III, author of *Bearing Arms for His Majesty: The Free-Colored Militia in Colonial Mexico*