This week’s readings once again did not surprise me when I was shocked by some of what I read and we discussed. As an American, I am used to a society where working and making money is usually considered the number one priority. As for the colonial world, this has not been the focus of the reading at all, and was in fact mostly an afterthought in our assigned literature with a reference here or there talking about skill differentiation. This society, even though it is becoming so far removed, reminds me of Europe, where much of their culture revolves around enjoying life and family. For example, the one murder trial we discussed started out at a private party; everyone was drunk and carrying on having fun in a laid back home environment. This is something you never hear of in the US outside of a college student’s dorm or house!

Another aspect, that wasn’t so much a shock because of the function, but because of the closeness to how the Americas function, was the court system. Although everyone is considered innocent until proven guilty now, it wasn’t always that way. It used to depend on a collection of factors such as wealth, race, who you were, and who you knew that would determine the outcome of the trial. This is exactly how the colonial world seems to function as we have seen throughout several different court cases this semester. Many countries operate with a criminal system that assumes guilt until the accused can without a doubt prove innocence.

Finally, something that I found very strange, but at the same time almost comical was the classification of the members of society based on race. This almost seemed more like an obsession with documentation than a useful system of cataloging people and class status. I still, even after discussions, do not see how the gross amount of time spent on the research and classification, and amount of money poured into this was wasted, most times nobody cares if you were Indian 5 generations ago! I also wonder if more wasteful topics like this will come up that will better explain the poor financial situation Spain was in during the later years. I cannot imagine this is the only case of money spent with no return, so it is making me wonder!