



The People and the King: The Comunero Revolution in Colombia, 1781

By John Leddy Phelan

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In *The People and the King*, John Leddy Phelan reexamines a well-known but long misunderstood event in eighteenth-century Colombia. When the Spanish colonial bureaucratic system of conciliation broke down, indigenous groups resorted to armed revolt to achieve their political ends.

As Phelan demonstrates in these pages, the crisis of 1781 represented a constitutional clash between imperial centralization and colonial decentralization. Phelan argues that the Comunero revolution was not, as it has often been portrayed, a precursor of political independence, nor was it a frustrated social upheaval. The Comunero leaders and their followers did not advocate any basic reordering of society, Phelan concludes, but rather made an appeal for revolutionary reform within a traditionalist framework.

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Review

“A major contribution to our understanding of late colonial Spanish America.”—John Fisher, *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*

“*The People and the King* skillfully unites narrative with analysis, and achieves its effects with a fine economy. It is Phelan’s best book and indeed it is one of the best and most readable books written on the eighteenth century in Spanish America.”—D. A. Brading, Centre for Latin American Studies, *Bulletin of the Society for Latin American Studies*

“A major contribution to our understanding of colonial Latin America. This well-written and well-documented history is recommended to both students and researchers of Latin American history and culture.”—*The Colonial Latin American Historical Review*

About the Author

John Leddy Phelan (1924–76) was professor of history at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and author of *The Hispanization of the Philippines*, *Portuguese Society in the Tropics*, and *The Kingdom of Quito in the Seventeenth Century*, all published by the University of Wisconsin Press.

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