

**UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL BULLETIN**  
**ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Florida International University**  
*University Graduate School*

Doctoral Dissertation Defense

**Abstract**

Manufacturing Sin on the Frontier of Heresy: Bishops, Franciscans, and the Inquisition in Cuba  
During the Long Sixteenth Century, 1511 – 1611.

by

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This dissertation examines the history of the Inquisition in the Diocese of Santiago de Cuba paying special attention to its leadership amid the series of religious reforms undertaken by the Spanish empire on both sides of the Atlantic. Through the long sixteenth century (1511 – 1611) bishops, Franciscan friars, and other officials employed or manipulated the Inquisition in Cuba to satisfy the needs of the Spanish Empire or their personal agendas. Along the way, the business of manufacturing sin in Cuba – that is, charging people with fabricated and/or exaggerated religious crimes – evolved into a useful imperial tool that served as a deterrent against heretical individuals who challenged Spain’s Catholic hegemony. Along with fortifications and armed military posts, the Inquisition developed the systemic function of upholding the Catholicity of the Spanish Empire, and of protecting the colonial fringes from foreign threats and infiltration. Thus, the protective role of the Holy Office of the Inquisition in the Diocese of Cuba went hand in hand with the strategies of the Spanish empire in its defense of its frontiers.

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**Department:** History  
**Major Professor:** Dr. Sherry Johnson