Period 1
(1491-1607)

✓ Native American Overview
✓ Native American Societies
✓ Cultures Meet & Collide
✓ Exploration & Early Colonization
PERIOD 1: 1491–1607

On a North American continent controlled by American Indians, contact among the peoples of Europe, the Americas, and West Africa created a new world.

Key Concept 1.1: Before the arrival of Europeans, native populations in North America developed a wide variety of social, political, and economic structures based in part on interactions with the environment and each other.

I. As settlers migrated and settled across the vast expanse of North America over time, they developed quite different and increasingly complex societies by adapting to and transforming their diverse environments.

Key Concept 1.2: European overseas expansion resulted in the Columbian Exchange, a series of interactions and adaptations among societies across the Atlantic.

I. The arrival of Europeans in the Western Hemisphere in the 15th and 16th centuries triggered extensive demographic and social changes on both sides of the Atlantic.

II. European expansion into the Western Hemisphere caused intense social/religious, political, and economic competition in Europe and the promotion of empire building.

Key Concept 1.3: Contacts among American Indians, Africans, and Europeans challenged the worldviews of each group.

I. European overseas expansion and sustained contacts with Africans and American Indians dramatically altered European views of social, political, and economic relationships among and between white and nonwhite peoples.

II. Native peoples and Africans in the Americas strove to maintain their political and cultural autonomy in the face of European challenges to their independence and core beliefs.
**Identifications**
**Comparison & Contextualization:**

**Directions** – For each of the following groups of vocabulary terms identify the relationship between the groups AND in your own words describe the significance of the group. How do they relate? Understand that each term DOES NOT need to specifically defined but your definition MUST demonstrate an understanding of all terms. See sample below. (pg. 5-64)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>maize</th>
<th>factories</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>Oñate</th>
<th>Virginia Company</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Aztec</td>
<td>reconquista</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Pueblo Revolt</td>
<td>Roanoke Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Incan</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Popé</td>
<td>A Discourse Concerning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cahokia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Apache</td>
<td>Western Planting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hopi/Zuni</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“kivas”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Iroquois</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>“Empire of Towns”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cherokee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>viceroy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>confederacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>peninsulares</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Great Spirit”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mestizo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>savages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ecomienda system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>“Christian Liberty”</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Martin Luther</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>dissenters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bartolome de las Casas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hereditary aristocracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Black Legend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“coveture”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hernando de Soto</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>“masterless men”</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>New Netherland Company</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zheng He</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>patroons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caravel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>wampum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mansa Músā</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Iroquois Confederacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sample Vocabulary:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>maize</th>
<th>Aztec</th>
<th>Incan</th>
<th>Cahokia</th>
<th>Hopi/Zuni</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The Aztecs in what is today Mexico and the Incans in what is today Peru demonstrate the diversity and complexity of the indigenous populations in the Americas. Before the introduction of European technology Native Americans had adapted to their environments developed cities the size of which rivaled European cities. Tenochtitlan, the Aztec capital, had roads and bridges to accommodate for a population of over 250,000. Along the Mississippi River Valley the “mound builders” capital of Cahokia constructed huge complex structures and had a population of up to 30,000. The environment of native groups such as Hopi and Suni required irrigation systems to grown the New World crops such as maize, beans and cotton. **Significance – Relationship** These terms highlight the diversity and complexity of the societies in pre-Columbian Americas.
**Short Answer Questions**

**Directions** – Using your knowledge of US History and information from the class and your textbook answer each of the following SAQ on a separate sheet of notebook paper. Be sure to use relevant and specific examples to support your response. Use complete sentences; an outline or bulleted list alone is not acceptable.

#1 – Use the statement below and your knowledge of United States history to answer parts A, B, and C.

European traders reached West Africa and partnered with some African groups to recruit slave labor for the Americas.

a. Briefly explain ONE important social response in the Americas to the statement above in the period 1492–1607.
b. Briefly explain ONE important economic response in the Americas to the statement above in the period 1492–1607.
c. Briefly explain the impact of the social response in Part A or the economic response in Part B on American society in the period 1492–1607.

#2 – Use the image above and your knowledge of United States history to answer parts A, B, and C.

Using the image above, answer a, b, and c.

a. Briefly explain the point of view expressed by the artist in the image above about the treatment of Native Americans by the Spanish.
b. Briefly explain ONE development from the period of 1491 to 1700 which led to the point of view expressed by the artist.
c. Briefly explain ONE outcome of the above brutality upon the Spanish colonies in the period of 1491 to 1700.
## Name ___________________________

## Period ____

### Document Analysis Sheet

#### Name of Document ___________________________

#### Date Written (if known) _______________________

#### Author (if known) ____________________________

### Historical Context

Where and when was the source created?
What was going on at the time?
What has just happened?
Is the document a reaction to some event?
How does this source represent the period?

### Intended Audience

To whom is the piece directed?
One person, a small group, a large group?
A certain person or certain people?
How might this affect the reliability or accuracy of the source?

### Purpose

Why was the source produced?
What was the author trying to accomplish?
Did he/she have ulterior motives?

### Point-of-View

What is the main idea?
What point is the author trying to make?
How does the author’s background or position impact the message?
(Race, class, gender, age, region, occupation, values, motives)

### Organization

How does your analysis of the document fit into your argument?
Does it provide a counter-argument?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Document</th>
<th>Historical Context</th>
<th>Intended Audience</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Point-of-View</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Name of Document**  
*Title:* Bartolomé de las Casas on Spanish Treatment of the Indians, from *History of the Indies*  
*Date:* 1528  
*Author:* Bartolomé de las Casas  
*V.O.F.* pg. 7-9 | Where and when was the source created?  
What was going on at the time?  
What has just happened?  
Is the document a reaction to some event?  
How does this source represent the period? | To whom is the piece directed?  
One person, a small group, a large group?  
A certain person or certain people?  
How might this affect the reliability or accuracy of the source? | Why was the source produced?  
What was the author trying to accomplish?  
Did he/she have ulterior motives? | What is the main idea?  
What point is the author trying to make?  
How does the author’s background or position impact the message? (Race, class, gender, age, region, occupation, values, motives) | How does your analysis of the document fit into your argument?  
Does it provide a counter-argument? |
| **Title:**  
*The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*  
*Date:* 1635  
*Author:* Father Jean de Brébeuf  
*V.O.F.* pg. 13-18 |  |  |  |  |  |

**H.I.P.P.O.**  
Native Americans: Cultures Meet & Collide
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Name of Document</strong></th>
<th><strong>Historical Context</strong></th>
<th><strong>Intended Audience</strong></th>
<th><strong>Purpose</strong></th>
<th><strong>Point-of-View</strong></th>
<th><strong>Organization</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>A Discourse Concerning Western Planting</em></td>
<td>Where and when was the source created? What was going on at the time? What has just happened? Is the document a reaction to some event? How does this source represent the period?</td>
<td>To whom is the piece directed? One person, a small group, a large group? A certain person or certain people? How might this affect the reliability or accuracy of the source?</td>
<td>Why was the source produced? What was the author trying to accomplish? Did he/she have ulterior motives?</td>
<td>What is the main idea? What point is the author trying to make? How does the author’s background or position impact the message? <em>(Race, class, gender, age, region, occupation, values, motives)</em></td>
<td>How does your analysis of the document fit into your argument? Does it provide a counter-argument?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date</strong>: 1584</td>
<td><strong>Author</strong>: Richard Hakluyt</td>
<td><strong>V.O.F. pg. 21-24</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda Belittles the Indians</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date</strong>: 1547</td>
<td><strong>Author</strong>: Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda</td>
<td><strong>T.A.S. pg. 3-4</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Aztec Chroniclers Describe the Spanish Conquest of Mexico</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date</strong>: 1519</td>
<td><strong>Author</strong>: Aztec Chroniclers</td>
<td><strong>T.A.S. pg. 12-15</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Homework – Revisiting Stimulus Multiple Choice
Gilder Lehrman

Re-Watch the Period 1 Video from Gilder Lehrman
http://ap.gilderlehrman.org/

First Skills Focus – Multiple-Choice Questions
- 55 minutes to answer 55 questions, answer ALL of the questions
- Map, timeline, political cartoon, painting
- Example: Graph, Define: primogeniture –
  - Step 1: look closely at the graph (markings, notations)
  - Step 2: read the questions carefully, identify key language on the graph, eliminate implausible answer choices (exclusive)

Step 1 – As you watch the video record THREE key factors to consider when completing a Stimulus Multiple Choice Question.

1) 

2) 

3) 

Step 2 – Follow the analysis of the Stimulus Multiple Choice Question and highlight the correct answer below:

1. The pattern on the graph reflects
   a. Conflicts with Native Americans
   b. Dependence on Indentured Servants
   c. Tradition of primogeniture
   d. The exclusive dependence on African Slavery

Step 3 – Using the skills from the video and your knowledge of US History answer the stimulus multiple choice on the next page.
**Exploration & Colonization**

**Stimulus Multiple Choice – Practice Quiz**

**Multiple Choice** – *Identify the choice that best completes the statement or answers the question.*

This question is based on the map below.

![Map of Spanish Explorations in North America, 1528–1542](image)


__1.__ The process illustrated in the map above
   a. triggered extensive demographic and social change.
   b. ended American Indian resistance.
   c. changed American Indian beliefs on the environment.
   d. led to the development of a hunter–gatherer economy.

This question is based on the following quotation.

“For I knew that they were a people who could be more easily freed and converted to our holy faith by love than by force, gave to some of them red caps, and glass beads to put round their necks, and many other things of little value, which gave them great pleasure, and made them so much our friends….It appeared to me to be a race of people very poor in everything….They have no iron, their darts being wands without iron, some of them having a fish’s tooth at the end….They should be good servants and intelligent, for I observed that they quickly took in what was said to them, and I believe that they would easily be made Christians as it appeared to me that they had no religion.”

Christopher Columbus upon reaching the West Indies, 1492


__2.__ After Columbus’s arrival in the West Indies, Spanish religion and Christian conversion were often used as a rationale to
   a. racially mix populations.
   b. trigger extensive demographic change.
   c. transform the diverse environment.
   d. justify the subjugation of American Indians.
Period 1 – Exploration & Colonization
SAQ Practice Question

1. Use your knowledge of United States history and analyze the illustration above to answer each of the following question:
   a. Identify one European group that benefitted from colonizing North America.
   b. Explain why the group you chose was successful.
   c. Pick one nation that was not as successful as the nation you selected and explain its lack of success.
   Confine answer to the period between 1500-1620
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories For Comparison</th>
<th>Spain</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>England-Jamestown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Areas Claimed in the New World &amp; Areas Colonized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Famous Explorers/Conquistadors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for Exploration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for Colonization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with the Native Americans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Settlement & Early Colonial: Photo Analysis

Historical Causation

Directions – Identify the European group in each picture and describe the motives that led to the exploration and colonization depicted in each illustration. *Also describe how the motivation impacted European – Native American relationships. (Spanish/French/English/Dutch)
Settlement & Early Colonial: Photo Analysis

[Image of a European ship and indigenous people on the shore]

[Image of a European settlement in a forest]

[Blank lines for notes]
### Historical Thinking Skills (H.T.S.): Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Type</th>
<th>Historical Thinking Skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I: Chronological Reasoning</td>
<td>1: Historical Causation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2: Patterns of Continuity and Change over Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3: Periodization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II: Comparison and Contextualization</td>
<td>4: Comparison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5: Contextualization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III: Crafting Historical Arguments from Historical Evidence</td>
<td>6: Historical Argumentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7: Appropriate Use of Relevant Historical Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV: Historical Interpretation and Synthesis</td>
<td>8: Interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9: Synthesis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Skill 1: Historical Causation**

Historical thinking involves the ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate the relationships among multiple historical causes and effects, distinguishing between those that are long-term and proximate, and among coincidence, causation, and correlation.

**Proficient students should be able to ...**
- Compare causes and/or effects, including between short- and long-term effects.
- Analyze and evaluate the interaction of multiple causes and/or effects.
- Assess historical contingency by distinguishing among coincidence, causation, and correlation, as well as critiquing existing interpretations of cause and effect.

**Skill 2: Patterns of Continuity and Change over Time**

Historical thinking involves the ability to recognize, analyze, and evaluate the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time of varying lengths, as well as the ability to relate these patterns to larger historical processes or themes.

**Proficient students should be able to ...**
- Analyze and evaluate historical patterns of continuity and change over time.
- Connect patterns of continuity and change over time to larger historical processes or themes.

**Skill 3: Periodization**

Historical thinking involves the ability to describe, analyze, evaluate, and construct models that historians use to organize history into discrete periods. To accomplish this periodization of history, historians identify turning points and recognize that the choice of specific dates gives a higher value to one narrative, region, or group than to other narratives, regions, or groups. How a historian defines historical periods depends on what the historian considers most significant — political, economic, social, cultural, or environmental factors. Changing periodization can change a historical narrative. Moreover, historical thinking involves being aware of how the circumstances and contexts of a historian’s work might shape his or her choices about periodization.

**Proficient students should be able to ...**
- Explain ways that historical events and processes can be organized within blocks of time.
- Analyze and evaluate competing models of periodization of U.S. history.

**Skill 4: Comparison**

Historical thinking involves the ability to describe, compare, and evaluate multiple historical developments within one society, one or more developments across or between different societies, and in various chronological and geographical contexts. It also involves the ability to identify, compare, and evaluate multiple perspectives on a given historical experience.

**Proficient students should be able to ...**
- Compare related historical developments and processes across place, time, and/or different societies or within one society.
- Explain and evaluate multiple and differing perspectives on a given historical phenomenon.
Skill 5: Contextualization

Historical thinking involves the ability to connect historical events and processes to specific circumstances of time and place and to broader regional, national, or global processes.

**Proficient students should be able to ...**

- Explain and evaluate ways in which specific historical phenomena, events, or processes connect to broader regional, national, or global processes occurring at the same time.
- Explain and evaluate ways in which a phenomenon, event, or process connects to other similar historical phenomena across time and place.

Skill 6: Historical Argumentation

Historical thinking involves the ability to define and frame a question about the past and to address that question through the construction of an argument. A plausible and persuasive argument requires a clear, comprehensive, and analytical thesis, supported by relevant historical evidence — not simply evidence that supports a preferred or preconceived position. In addition, argumentation involves the capacity to describe, analyze, and evaluate the arguments of others in light of available evidence.

**Proficient students should be able to ...**

- Analyze commonly accepted historical arguments and explain how an argument has been constructed from historical evidence.
- Construct convincing interpretations through analysis of disparate, relevant historical evidence.
- Evaluate and synthesize conflicting historical evidence to construct persuasive historical arguments.

Skill 7: Appropriate Use of Relevant Historical Evidence

Historical thinking involves the ability to describe and evaluate evidence about the past from diverse sources (including written documents, works of art, archaeological artifacts, oral traditions, and other primary sources) and requires students to pay attention to the content, authorship, purpose, format, and audience of such sources. It involves the capacity to extract useful information, make supportable inferences, and draw appropriate conclusions from historical evidence while also noting the context in which the evidence was produced and used, recognizing its limitations, and assessing the points of view it reflects.

**Proficient students should be able to ...**

- Analyze features of historical evidence such as audience, purpose, point of view, format, argument, limitations, and context germane to the evidence considered.
- Based on analysis and evaluation of historical evidence, make supportable inferences and draw appropriate conclusions.

Skill 8: Interpretation

Historical thinking involves the ability to describe, analyze, evaluate, and construct diverse interpretations of the past, and being aware of how particular circumstances and contexts in which individual historians work and write also shape their interpretation of past events. Historical interpretation requires analyzing evidence, reasoning, determining the context, and evaluating points of view found in both primary and secondary sources.

**Proficient students should be able to ...**

- Analyze diverse historical interpretations.
- Evaluate how historians' perspectives influence their interpretations and how models of historical interpretation change over time.

Skill 9: Synthesis

Historical thinking involves the ability to develop meaningful and persuasive new understandings of the past by applying all of the other historical thinking skills, by drawing appropriately on ideas and methods from different fields of inquiry or disciplines, and by creatively fusing disparate, relevant, and sometimes contradictory evidence from primary sources and secondary works. Additionally, synthesis may involve applying insights about the past to other historical contexts or circumstances, including the present.

**Proficient students should be able to ...**

- Combine disparate, sometimes contradictory evidence from primary sources and secondary works in order to create a persuasive understanding of the past.
- Apply insights about the past to other historical contexts or circumstances, including the present.
The Columbian Exchange

by Alfred W. Crosby

Detail from a 1682 map of North America, Novi Belgii Novaeque Angliae, by Nicholas Visscher. (Gilder Lehrman Collection)

Millions of years ago, continental drift carried the Old World and New Worlds apart, splitting North and South America from Eurasia and Africa. That separation lasted so long that it fostered divergent evolution; for instance, the development of rattlesnakes on one side of the Atlantic and vipers on the other. After 1492, human voyagers in part reversed this tendency. Their artificial re-establishment of connections through the commingling of Old and New World plants, animals, and bacteria, commonly known as the Columbian Exchange, is one of the more spectacular and significant ecological events of the past millennium.

When Europeans first touched the shores of the Americas, Old World crops such as wheat, barley, rice, and turnips had not traveled west across the Atlantic, and New World crops such as maize, white potatoes, sweet potatoes, and manioc had not traveled east to Europe. In the Americas, there were no horses, cattle, sheep, or goats, all animals of Old World origin. Except for the llama, alpaca, dog, a few fowl, and guinea pig, the New World had no equivalents to the domesticated animals associated with the Old World, nor did it have the pathogens associated with the Old World’s dense populations of humans and such associated creatures as chickens, cattle, black rats, and Aedes aegypti mosquitoes. Among these germs were those that carried smallpox, measles, chickenpox, influenza, malaria, and yellow fever.

The Columbian exchange of crops affected both the Old World and the New. Amerindian crops that have crossed oceans—for example, maize to China and the white potato to Ireland—have been stimulants to population growth in the Old World. The latter’s crops and livestock have had much the same effect in the Americas—for example, wheat in Kansas and the Pampa, and beef cattle in Texas and Brazil. The full story of the exchange is many volumes long, so for the sake of brevity and clarity let us focus on a specific region, the eastern third of the United States of America.

As might be expected, the Europeans who settled on the east coast of the United States cultivated crops like wheat and apples, which they had brought with them. European weeds, which the colonists did not cultivate and, in fact, preferred to uproot, also fared well in the New World. John Josselyn, an Englishman and amateur naturalist who visited New England twice in the seventeenth century, left us a list, “Of Such Plants as Have Sprung Up since the English Planted and Kept Cattle in New England,” which included couch grass, dandelion, shepherd’s purse, groundsel, sow thistle, and chickweeds. One of these, a plantain (Plantago major), was named “Englishman’s Foot” by the Amerindians of New England and Virginia who believed that it would grow only where the English “have trodden, and was never known before the English came into this country.” Thus, as they intentionally sowed Old World crop seeds, the European settlers were unintentionally contaminating American fields with weed seed. More importantly, they were stripping and burning forests, exposing the native minor flora to direct sunlight and to the hooves and teeth of Old World livestock. The native flora could not tolerate the stress. The imported weeds could, because they had lived with large numbers of grazing animals for thousands of years.

Cattle and horses were brought ashore in the early 1600s and found hospitable climate and terrain in North America. Horses arrived in Virginia as early as 1620 and in Massachusetts in 1629. Many wandered free with little more evidence of their connection to humanity than collars with a hook at the bottom to catch on fences as they tried to leap over them to get at crops. Fences were not for keeping livestock in, but for keeping livestock out.

Native American resistance to the Europeans was ineffective. Indigenous peoples suffered from white brutality, alcoholism, the killing and driving off of game, and the expropriation of farmland, but all these together are
insufficient to explain the degree of their defeat. The crucial factor was not people, plants, or animals, but germs. The history of the United States begins with Virginia and Massachusetts, and their histories begin with epidemics of unidentified diseases. At the time of the abortive Virginia colony at Roanoke in the 1580s the nearby Amerindians “began to die quickly. The disease was so strange that they neither knew what it was, nor how to cure it.”[1] When the Pilgrims settled at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1620, they did so in a village and on a coast nearly cleared of Amerindians by a recent epidemic. Thousands had “died in a great plague not long since; and pity it was and is to see so many goodly fields, and so well seated, without man to dress and manure the same.”[2] Smallpox was the worst and the most spectacular of the infectious diseases mowing down the Native Americans. The first recorded pandemic of that disease in British North America detonated among the Algonquin of Massachusetts in the early 1630s: William Bradford of Plymouth Plantation wrote that the victims “fell down so generally of this disease as they were in the end not able to help one another, no not to make a fire nor fetch a little water to drink, nor any to bury the dead.”[3]

The missionaries and the traders who ventured into the American interior told the same appalling story about smallpox and the indigenes. In 1738 alone the epidemic destroyed half the Cherokee; in 1759 nearly half the Catawbas; in the first years of the next century two-thirds of the Omahas and perhaps half the entire population between the Missouri River and New Mexico; in 1837–1838 nearly every last one of the Mandans and perhaps half the people of the high plains.

European explorers encountered distinctively American illnesses such as Chagas Disease, but these did not have much effect on Old World populations. Venereal syphilis has also been called American, but that accusation is far from proven. Even if we add all the Old World deaths blamed on American diseases together, including those ascribed to syphilis, the total is insignificant compared to Native American losses to smallpox alone.

The export of America’s native animals has not revolutionized Old World agriculture or ecosystems as the introduction of European animals to the New World did. America’s grey squirrels and muskrats and a few others have established themselves east of the Atlantic and west of the Pacific, but that has not made much of a difference. Some of America’s domesticated animals are raised in the Old World, but turkeys have not displaced chickens and geese, and guinea pigs have proved useful in laboratories, but have not usurped rabbits in the butcher shops.

The New World’s great contribution to the Old is in crop plants. Maize, white potatoes, sweet potatoes, various squashes, chiles, and manioc have become essentials in the diets of hundreds of millions of Europeans, Africans, and Asians. Their influence on Old World peoples, like that of wheat and rice on New World peoples, goes far to explain the global population explosion of the past three centuries. The Columbian Exchange has been an indispensable factor in that demographic explosion.

All this had nothing to do with superiority or inferiority of biosystems in any absolute sense. It has to do with environmental contrasts. Amerindians were accustomed to living in one particular kind of environment, Europeans and Africans in another. When the Old World peoples came to America, they brought with them all their plants, animals, and germs, creating a kind of environment to which they were already adapted, and so they increased in number. Amerindians had not adapted to European germs, and so initially their numbers plunged. That decline has reversed in our time as Amerindian populations have adapted to the Old World’s environmental influence, but the demographic triumph of the invaders, which was the most spectacular feature of the Old World’s invasion of the New, still stands.

New World Encounters—Spanish, French, & British Colonization in America

I. Dominant Native American Societies Before Conquest
A. Aztecs dominated the peoples of central America, used a hierarchal gov’t, with polytheistic religion

B. Eastern Woodland peoples lived in small mobile bands & were the first to encounter the English settlers

II. When Worlds Collide: Spanish, French, & English Colonization in the New World

A. Spanish colonial patterns
   1. The Spanish Conquistadores
   2. The Columbian Exchange increased trade & disease
   3. The Spanish transformed America:
      a. The Catholic Church & the Encomienda System
      b. Mestizos, mulattos, peninsulares, & creoles
      c. Strict government control of the colonies

B. French colonial patterns
   1. French Empire included St. Lawrence River, Great Lakes, Mississippi River
   2. The French gov’t used strict control; encouraged religious conversion but not settlement
   3. Fur trade led to a cooperative relationship with Native Americans

C. English colonial patterns
   1. The English gov’t loosely governed the colonies
   2. Population boom in the 1600s led to scarcity in land, jobs, opportunity & increased pressure to migrate
   3. Motivations to migrate to America included religious, economic, personal, & political turmoil
      Different values led to 4 distinct colonial subcultures in English America