A critical look!
in the American...
Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look

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To the Teacher:
Until recently, the colonization of the Americas was generally taught as a positive accomplishment. Columbus, broadly recognized as the "discoverer" of America, despite the earlier claims of Leif Eriksson, is admired as a great navigator. His role as a slave trader and an instigator of forced labour among the Arawak people is seldom mentioned. The explorers who followed are similarly lauded. The perspective of the indigenous people, who for the most part welcomed and helped the early Europeans only to find their lands stolen and their people enslaved, is often missing from the picture.

This resource attempts to help readers look critically at the pattern established 500 years ago, and to look at the continuing effects of colonialism in today's world.
It's been 500 years since Columbus founded the first colony in the Americas. Should we be celebrating?

In 1492
Columbus sailed
The ocean blue . . .

Wow, half a millennium of progress! Just think, if Columbus hadn't discovered America, we'd still be living in the trees, in tents and longhouses. I mean, we wouldn't have any education or knowledge or famous literature or — well, just civilization generally...

So you think the only civilization is white people's civilization? Listen, if Columbus and his cronies hadn't plundered North and South America, we'd have more trees, more native people, and a whole lot less pollution. Columbus . . . civilized?! That guy was a disaster!

Well, I might try to explain. But you're going to have to be ready to think about a different viewpoint, o.k.? After all, you're probably descended from one of the colonizers, and I'm descended from one of the colonized. Try stepping into my moccasins, and things are bound to look a little different.

What do you mean, a disaster?
Let's start with this guy Christopher Columbus. He was quite a sailor, all right. But from the point of view of America's first people, there was something wrong with his mind. All he could think of was gold and slaves!

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**Voyage I: Columbus "Discovers" America**

When Columbus and his 39 crew members landed on the little Caribbean island of Guanahini, they were welcomed by Arawak Indians, who brought them food, water and gifts. The Arawak lived in villages, and grew corn, yams, and cassava. They could spin and weave. In their ears, they wore tiny gold ornaments.

![Gold! Seize them—We'll find the source!]

With a hold full of imprisoned Arawaks, Columbus and his men sailed to Cuba, then to Hispaniola (now Haiti and the Dominican Republic). But they didn't find very much gold. They built a little outpost (La Navidad), Columbus filled his ships with more Indian prisoners, and they started home.

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**Log — 1492:**
As soon as I arrived in the Indies, on the first Island which I found, I took some of the natives by force in order that they might learn and might give me information of whatever there is in these parts.

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**co-lo-ni-al-ism (-iz'm) n.**
the system by which a country maintains foreign colonies, esp. for economic exploitation.
(Webster's New World Dictionary)

Sounds like another word for takeover!

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**Think about it:**
Why did Columbus think he had the right to colonize the Arawaks' country? Do you think colonization is ever right?

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*Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look*
Voyage II:
Looking for the Nugget

Columbus' second voyage was a bigger one — 17 ships, more than 1200 men. What were they looking for? Slaves and gold.

The Slave Snitch
Columbus set up a base in Haiti. In 1495 he rounded up 1500 Arawak men, women and children, and picked out the 500 healthiest to send home to Spain. Of these “pick of the crop,” 200 died on the way. But profits soared, anyway.

The Gold Grab
Meanwhile, Columbus decreed that all people 14 or older must bring a measure of gold every 3 months.

And if you don't bring enough, we'll hack your hand off!

And when the gold ran out...

Planting Disaster

Columbus brought with him some roots of a very valuable plant — sugar cane. Sugar in Columbus' times was so valuable that it was sold in pharmacies, and weighed out by the gram. He and his followers set up huge sugarcane plantations. And guess who did all the work? Not the Spaniards!

The Arawaks showed "as much lovingness as though they would give their hearts... they remained so much our friends it was a marvel. From here, in the name of the Blessed Trinity, we can send back all the slaves that can be sold... for these people are totally unskilled in arms."

— Christopher Columbus

Think about it:
What does this quote tell us about the attitude of many of the Europeans in the New World?

By 1650, all of the 250,000 Arawaks of Haiti had died.
Cause of death:
• massacre
• overwork in the mines and on the plantations
• suicide
• European diseases

Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look
The African Connection:

In 1442 the Portuguese had started capturing African slaves. Soon after the sugar cane industry was established in the West Indies, African slaves started to pour in. It was the beginning of the 3-Way Trade.

The 3-Way Trade: A Great Triple Feature

1. Slaves were shipped from West Africa to the islands of the West Indies, and later to the Southern United States.
2. Coffee, cotton, sugar and rum were shipped from those areas to Europe.
3. Manufactured products—especially guns—were shipped from England to West Africa, to pay Arab slave traders for the slaves.

The European shippers did a great trade; their ships just kept going.

The European manufacturers got their raw materials and their markets.

Infact, there were only a few complainers.

Think about it:

Over the next 400 years, 12 million African slaves arrived to work on New World plantations. It is estimated that 48 million young and able-bodied people were captured, and the rest died on the way. What effect might this have on Africa's development?

Well, I guess Columbus wasn’t so hot. I never realized that he was a slave-trader! But what about those other brave explorers who came to the Americas?

Clones... all clones. What Columbus did to the Arawaks in the Bahamas, Cortés did to the Aztecs of Mexico, Pizarro did to the Incas of Peru, and the English settlers did to the First Nations of North America. So let’s look closer at the indigenous people of the Americas, and the effects of these “brave explorers.”
**The Very First People of the Americas**

According to one theory, the earliest Americans came from central Asia, via Siberia, anywhere from 12,000 to 40,000 years ago. First Nations people themselves believe that they have always lived in the Americas.

Some of these first Americans remained hunters and gatherers; others, especially in the southern US region and Central and South America, got tired of hunting and went into farming.

By 1000 B.C. They were growing corn with cobs about the same size as we have today. Then they launched into the trimmings: avocados, beans, squash, tobacco and tomatoes.

There were many great civilizations in Latin America: the Olmecs, the Zapotecs, the Mayans. But the two civilizations that knocked the socks off the Spaniards were the Aztecs and the Incas. To find out more, read on.

Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look
The Aztecs also believed in Quetzalcoatl, a white-skinned, bearded god who—according to their legend—would one day return. Unfortunately for the Aztecs, Hernando Cortés looked a lot like Quetzalcoatl.

The Lure of Gold: Cortés Arrives in Mexico

The Aztec emperor, Moctezuma II, tried to appease the invading "gods" with gifts. But the gifts seemed to have an odd effect on the newcomers.

The unstoppable Spaniards moved on towards the City of Gold.

They didn't have much choice. Cortés burned all the ships so they couldn't go home.

The City of Gold

When the Spaniards beheld Tenochtitlán, they couldn't believe their eyes. This was the biggest city they had ever seen, with stone pyramids, canals, causeways, and bridges. The emperor Moctezuma, carried on a litter, met Cortés with necklaces of gold. The soldiers were each given gold collars, and places to stay in the city. But Cortés and his men were uneasy. They took Moctezuma hostage.

From then on, the relationship between the Aztecs and the gold-greedy Spanish went downhill. The Spaniards killed 600 unarmed Aztecs, the Aztecs then defeated the Spanish, and Cortés withdrew. However, Cortés had a few more tricks up his sleeve. 1,000 Spanish reinforcements landed on the coast. During the next year Cortés and his men enlisted the peoples hostile to the Aztecs and conquered the cities loyal to the Aztecs, preventing them from sending food to Tenochtitlán. Tenochtitlán was placed under siege, and bitter fighting took place for 75 days. Street by street, the Spaniards destroyed the city of Tenochtitlán. What was left was burned. Over 200,000 Aztecs were estimated to have died. The last of the Aztec emperors, Cuauhtemoc, surrendered on August 13, 1521. He was tortured to get him to tell where more gold was hidden, but he refused to speak. Finally, he was hanged.
THE INCREDIBLE INCAS

The Incas were colonialists themselves. They had conquered other peoples over a huge area, stretching from what is today central Chile in the south, through the Andean highlands of Bolivia and Peru to northern Ecuador and southern Colombia in the north. When the Spaniards arrived, Inca lands were 5000 km in length, and varied in width from 160 to 650 km.

Like the Aztecs, the Incas were spectacular engineers and builders. Roads and bridges spanned great distances in the Inca lands, and the Inca stonemasons built huge buildings of enormous rocks which fit together so tightly that a knife wouldn’t fit between the stones. The Incas were also skilled surgeons and doctors.

In the Inca system of rule, everyone had a place. People were organized into community work squads to farm and to build roads, bridges, and buildings. Land was farmed by all the community. The Incas farmed steep mountainous areas by building terraces and irrigation systems. In times of good harvest, food would be dried and stored, along with wool, shoes and armaments, for future times of poor harvest. Every Inca had a right to food, clothing and shelter.

The Inca worshipped the sun, sacrificing animals and a very occasional person to it. The great Temple of the Sun in Cuzco contained a large sun studded with precious stones, and walls covered with gold.

I guess that didn’t last long after the Spaniards arrived!

You’re right! The gold was all stripped off the temple and melted down into bricks.

Think about it:

In what ways were the values of the Aztecs and Incas different from those of the Europeans? How did they organize their societies differently? How did they feel about gold? about beauty? If their civilizations hadn’t been destroyed by the Spaniards, do you think the world might be very different now? In what ways?

Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look

The Secret Weapon

In conquering all the peoples of Latin America, the conquerers — or conquistadores, as they were called in Spanish — were helped by the secret weapon of the Europeans —

SMALLPOX.

It killed off thousands of Amerindian people and led to mass starvation because people were too sick to grow crops. Because they had never been exposed to European diseases before, the Aztecs, Incas and others had no resistance to fight smallpox, measles, or any of the other bacteria that the Spanish brought with them.

“That we discovered these realms in such condition that there was not in all of them one thief, one vicious man, nor idler . . . That the lands and mountains and mines and pastures and hunting grounds and woods and all manner of resources were governed or divided in such a way that everyone knew and had his property, without anyone else occupying or taking it . . .”

Mando Serra de Leguizamo, last survivor of Pizarro’s army
THE SPANISH ARRIVE

1524: The first sign of the Spanish was SMALLPOX. It spread like wildfire throughout Inca lands, killing about 200,000 people, including the ruler, his son and heir, and much of the government. Francisco Pizarro and his small raggedy band of adventurers from Panama were on their way. His first trip was unsuccessful. 20 men starved to death. But he had caught sight of some of the Inca wealth.

Gold! I won't stop until I get my hands on it!

Pizarro headed back to Spain, and presented gold and silver jewelry, llamas, and beautiful tapestries to King Charles I of Spain. Charles made Pizarro Governor of Peru, and told him to keep the wealth rolling in.

In 1531, Pizarro was once more in Peru. He invited the Inca ruler, Atahualpa, to visit him in the town of Cajamarca. Atahualpa was tempted, not just by natural curiosity to see a close-up view of these strange men on strange animals, but by a hope that one of them might be the creator-god Viracocha, who had promised to return someday. Atahualpa arrived, attended by thousands of unarmed Inca soldiers. The priest, Vicente de Valverde, was sent out to inform Atahualpa that he must accept Christianity and Spanish rule. Atahualpa examined the Bible which was handed to him, and threw it to the ground. This was the signal for the armed Spanish soldiers to swoop in on their horses, slice up 7,000 unarmed soldiers, and take Atahualpa prisoner.

Colonialism and the Church

The part played by the priest Valverde in the Cajamarca massacre was one which was repeated over and over in Latin America. According to orders from the King of Spain, the native people of the Americas had to be given a chance to accept Christianity and to surrender to the King before they were attacked. After that, massacre was acceptable.

The survivors of the attacks were forced to become Christians, and were tortured or killed if they were discovered reverting to their old religion. It was considered part of the purpose of colonialism to convert all the "heathen" to Christianity.

However, the church also played an important part—in many cases—in attempting to protect the native people against the abuses of the Spaniards. To read about how a priest, Bartolomé de Las Casas, supported the native people, turn to page 12.

Think about it:
How would you feel if you were Atahualpa, and were told you must immediately change your religion and accept the rule of some faraway king?
Atahualpa: A Ransomed King

It took Atahualpa a while to realize what the Spaniards were after, but finally he got it.

I GET IT! YOU GUYS ARE GOLD-CRAZY! IF I FILL THIS ROOM UP WITH GOLD, WILL YOU SET ME FREE?

KEEP THE FIRE BLAZING, MEN!

WELL, HE'S FILLED UP THE ROOM, BUT THERE MIGHT BE MORE GOLD THAT HE'S HIDING!

THE SPANIARDS, AS ALWAYS, WANTED MORE. IN THE END, PIZARRO KILLED ATAHUALPA.

LATER...

When all the gold was melted down, each soldier got more than Prince Philip of Spain made in a year, and Pizarro became the richest man in the world. He owned 83 kilos of solid gold.

So now these people — the Aztecs and the Inca — were all conquered, what happened next? Did things settle down a bit?

Things settled down, all right, but life for most native people became barely worth living.

Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look
Life and Death in the New Colonies

For the indigenous people, the next century could be summed up in a word.

**EXTERMINATION.**

Cortés, Pizzaro, and the other conquistadores awarded the men who came with them with *encomiendas* — grants of land, including the native people who lived on the land. Theoretically, these native people were not slaves. It was the responsibility of the Spaniard to teach them Christianity and to take care of them.

Life for the native people now became one endless round of work and pain. Their cultural dances and ceremonies were outlawed. Their role was to become docile, Christian servants, content to slave obediently for the Spanish.

But really, most Spaniards thought of native people as disposable. You worked them until they wore out, then you threw them away!

1603, Santiago, Chile:
Santiago’s town council purchases a new branding iron, to brand Indian slaves on the face. Slaves are captured from the outlying areas and brought to Santiago to be marked.

1614, Lima, Peru:
The Archbishop of Lima announces that the native people of Peru may no longer perform their traditional songs or dances. All native musical instruments are burned, and terrible punishments are promised for any who disobey.

1625, Samayac, Guatemala:
Juan Maldonado, a judge, declares it illegal for Indians to do their traditional dances. The Indians, he claims, “lose much time in rehearsals and drinking bouts, which keep them from reporting for work at the haciendas, paying their tribute, and maintaining their households.” Anyone disobeying will get 100 lashes.

**GENOCIDAL NUMBERS**

- In one century, the Incas were almost wiped out. The population fell from 6 million at the time of the Spanish arrival to 600,000 by 1620.
- In the Bahamas, where Columbus originally landed, the population went from 3 million to 300 within 12 years.
- In Puerto Rico and Jamaica, the original population of 600,000 people was reduced to 200 in half a century.
- In Mexico the population was reduced from 21 million in 1519 to 2.6 million in 1565.

All in all, experts calculate that the number of indigenous American people in 1492 was between 90 and 120 million. Today, there are 30 to 40 million indigenous people in the Americas.

That’s incredible! How did they all die?

- Thousands died from pneumonia and malnutrition after being enslaved to work in the mines.
- Many were killed outright by the Spaniards.
- Many committed suicide, and others refused to have children.
- But the biggest killers were the new diseases brought by the invaders.

**Think about it:**
The European colonialists practised *ethnocide* — the attempt to stamp out the culture of the people they conquered. What made them do this, do you think? Are there any ways in which people in Canada are also guilty of ethnocide?
Bartolomé de Las Casas — The People's Voice

1510: The Church of Santo Domingo, in Haiti
Bartolomé de Las Casas, a wealthy young landowner, slave-owner and adventurer, goes to church and listens to a sermon. The sermon is about the native people, and the cruelty of the Spaniards. The sermon changes Bartolomé's life.

Bartolomé goes home and frees his slaves, sells his property, gives the money away, and asks to become a priest. He is the first priest to be ordained in the New World. And what a priest! Fearlessly, he battles the Spanish landowners of the New World and the Spanish nobility and church leaders in Spain. The new king, Charles the Fifth, is pressured by Las Casas to draw up some new rules to protect the native people. Slavery is to be stopped.

But it is a long way from the Old World to the colonies of the New World, and the landowners of the Americas choose to ignore the new laws.

Heck! These boys in Spain don't know what they're talking about!

Bartolomé continues to write and to pressure.
At 70 he becomes Bishop of Chiapas, where the landowners of prosperous plantations keep thousands of Indian slaves. Bartolomé instructs his priests that they are not to give mass to anyone who owns slaves. The landowners, who believe they will go to hell if they can't receive mass, are furious, and chase Bartolomé out of the region. The only people in the New World who don't hate Bartolomé are the native people. They follow him around in crowds, and kiss the hem of his robe.

Finally, Bartolomé goes to Spain. He decides that the best way he can help the native people is to write about their conditions. He publishes the Breve Relación de la destrucción de las Indias occidentales (A Brief History of the Destruction of the West Indians), showing the total picture of extermination.

This book causes a great stir in Spain, with many people attempting to discredit Bartolomé, and to present the conquistadores (conquerors) as brave and just warriors.

At the age of 92, Bartolomé de Las Casas dies. He is mourned by the few native people left in the Spanish colonies.

"The cries of so much spilled human blood reach all the way to heaven: those burned alive, roasted on grills, thrown to wild dogs..."

"Spanish noblemen would bet on their ability to completely cut an Indian in half with a single blow of the sword; babies were snatched from their mothers and dashed against the rocks, natives would be hung from gibbets, 13 at a time, to commemorate Christ and 12 apostles."

But, though Bartolomé complained about the conditions of colonialism, he never complained about colonialism itself.
### The Seven Pillars of Colonialism

1. **Grabbing the Land**
   The most important colonial aim in both Mexico and Peru was to grab the resources (including land) from the people who lived there. This resource-grab also included the labour of the people, who were expected to make the colonists and mother country rich by contributing free, or almost-free, labour.

   **Think about it:**
   The creation of huge plantations owned by a few people might have some effect later on. Can you think what that effect would be?

2. **Growing for Europe**
   When the conquistadores arrived in Latin America, a wide variety of corns, squashes, cassava and other crops were grown. The people were well-fed and healthy. But you wouldn't find many Spaniards who wanted to eat cassava! So the crops were replaced by a single crop to be sent to the colonizing country: sugar, tobacco, or rubber.

   **Think about it:**
   What are the drawbacks to relying on a single crop? to growing crops for export?

3. **Developing Europe**
   The minerals and crops produced in the colonies were all loaded on ships for “home.” The riches of Latin America were used to develop Europe.

   **Think about it:**
   How might things be different today if these resources had been used to develop Latin America?

4. **Consuming Colonialy**
   The purpose of colonies, as well as to provide raw materials to enrich the mother country, was to buy the products manufactured in the mother country (at a high price, of course). So local industries weren’t encouraged in the colonies.

   **Think about it:**
   How might the lack of industries affect these countries today?

5. **Hatching Hierarchies**
   The whole system in the colonies depended on a small number of rich colonists at the top, and large masses of poor native people and African slaves on the bottom. The rich dined lavishly on silver platters, while the poor were lucky to get anything at all.

   **Think about it:**
   How would this “elite” affect development later on?
Killing Cultures

Although the conquerors were small in number, they made everyone learn their language, they converted everyone (often with threats) to their religion, and they outlawed much of the culture and tradition of the native people.

"Well, my goodness, you can't be a civilized person unless you speak Spanish, worship Jesus, and wear clothes!"

Think about it:
What effect might this policy of "ethnocide" have on the way that the native people feel about themselves and their culture?

Exploiting the Land

In all parts of the world, explorers discovered indigenous people who felt themselves connected to the land and to other creatures in a spiritual sense. They did not regard the land as "property" or "exploitable resources," but as a fertile source of life. The colonizers, on the other hand, thought differently.

"Land, give me land! I want to own it, I want to mine it, I want to chop the trees down and grow tobacco on it. This land will make me rich!"

Think about it:
How might this "grab & exploit" attitude towards land have an effect today?

What about resistance? Didn't any of the people revolt?

It's hard to revolt when the other people have all the guns, but many of the native people did continue to revolt for centuries.

¡rebelión!

Peru, 1780:
José Gabriel Condorcanqui, who also calls himself Túpac Amaru II after the last of the Inca leaders, stirs up massive rebellion of the Indian and black people of Peru. They join with common people of Spanish and Mestizo (mixed) blood, who have risen up in a tax revolt. Túpac Amaru II is finally captured and executed in Cuzco.

Bolivia, 1781:
Julián Apaza proclaims himself viceroy and organizes an army of 20,000 Indians to combat the troops of the official viceroy.

El Salvador, 1833:
Aquino, the chief of the Indians of El Salvador, raises 3,000 men to fight against the colonialists. He proclaims that Indians will never again be slaves, nor soldiers, nor farmed, nor drunk. Betrayed by his lieutenant, he is captured and beheaded.

Mexico, 1848:
15,000 Mayans of the Yucatan rise up and attack the colonialists. The battles continue for years, at a cost of over 150,000 dead.
The English settlers of New England start a land-grab that spreads

1607:
THE FIRST PERMANENT ENGLISH SETTLEMENT IN NORTH AMERICA IS ESTABLISHED AT JAMESTOWN, VIRGINIA

Colonial Problem 1: Getting Land

The Puritans of New England lived in an uneasy truce with the nearby Pequot people. But really, they wanted the Pequots out of the way—they wanted land. Then came the excuse. Captain Stone, a frequent kidnapper and harasser of Indians, was killed by the Pequot. The English attacked, raiding the Narraganset Indians on Block Island and Pequot villages along the coast, destroying crops as they went. War had begun.

1637: Captain John Mason and his British forces, with the help of some Mohegan and Narraganset Indians (there’s that divide and rule tactic again!) attacked a Pequot village at Mystic, Connecticut. He set fire to the wigwams, and the five or six hundred people who tried to escape—men, women and children—were killed.

"Those that scaped the fire were slaine with the sword; some hewed to pieces, other rune throw with their rapiers, so as they were quickly dispatchte, and very few escaped... It was a fearful sight to see them thus frying in the fyre..."

— William Bradford, a Plymouth settler writing about the Mystic Connecticut battle (his own spelling)

In 1972 there were 21 Pequot people left in Connecticut. And that was how it was—all over the U.S. The settlers wanted land; the native people didn’t want their land taken. Sometimes treaties were made, sometimes not. Often treaties were broken.
Colonial Problem 2: Getting Labour

1607: You there, boy. Dig these fields! You've got to be kidding!

What's the matter with these Indians? We should get a few of them Spaniards here — show them a thing or two!

1611: Sir Thomas Dale arrives to whip the new colony of Jamestown into shape.

Every man, woman or child will work in the fields or else!!!

The settlers finally get to work, planting the wonder crop — tobacco.

BUT Mother, this sure is awful hard work. I still feel there must be an easier way!

WILL THE JAMESTOWN COLONISTS FIND AN ANSWER? WE WON'T KNOW UNTIL THE EARLY 1700s!

1700: Mother! Put your feet up. We're through with all this working!

1765: Blacks outnumbered whites 2 to 1 in Virginia.

Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look
Meanwhile, the European nations were quarreling about how the rest of the world should be divided up.

**Colonial Problem 3: Defeating Rival Colonists**

**1756-1763: The 7 Years' War**

In Europe, Britain and Prussia battle France, Austria and Russia. But the French and the British didn't fight it out in France and Britain. They preferred to have it out in North America and India, where they were quarrelling over who should have control.

**1759: VICTORY!**

The forces of James Wolfe captured Quebec from the French army of Marquis de Montcalm.

**Fight well, lads! This war will decide who owns Canada!**

**1763: The Treaty of Paris**

"Britain now holds title to Canada, East and West Florida, territory east of the Mississippi, the Caribbean islands of St. Vincent, Tobago, Dominica, to say nothing of the lands of India . . . ."

**Think about it:** How do you think the French-speaking colonists felt about the Treaty of Paris? How might the native people have felt about it?
And then, to top it off, the colonists on the coast started to quarrel with Britain over who should pay what taxes.

Gee, isn't it great that colonization finally ended for the people in the United States!

The United States of America got independence early. Later, all these colonies we've been talking about will get their independence. But the question is: Independence for whom?

During the next 150 years, nearly all the world's colonies will become independent. What do you think US independence meant for the African slaves and the native people? What did Canadian independence mean for the First Nations people of Canada? For those people to feel independent, what things would have to change?
Moving On

In the 1830s, over 200 Indian communities in Alabama and Georgia were relocated. U.S. President Andrew Jackson decided that — in spite of treaties and agreements — he wanted them out of their traditional lands to make way for white settlers. About 100,000 people were to be moved across the Mississippi River to Oklahoma — land which was totally different to any they had known, and among peoples whom they didn’t know. The three major Indian nations in the Alabama-Georgia region were the Choctaws, the Cherokees and the Creeks.

The Choctaws

In 1831, 13,000 Choctaw people began the long journey west. The army was supposed to organize their trek, but it turned over its job to private contractors who charged the government as much as possible and gave the Choctaws as little as possible. The first winter was one of the coldest on record, and people died of pneumonia. In the summer, cholera broke out, and many more died.

The Cherokees

The Cherokee people initially refused to move. The State of Georgia put pressure on them. Their lands were taken, their Cherokee government was abolished, all meetings were prohibited, Cherokee houses were burned and schools were closed. White missionaries in Cherokee territory who expressed sympathy for the Cherokees were imprisoned. At the same time the Creek people were being harassed, their land invaded by looters, thugs and whiskey sellers. The federal government did nothing to protect them.

In 1838, the US army drove the 17,000 Cherokees across the Mississippi. As they moved westward, they began to die — of sickness, of drought, of the heat, of exposure. Survivors told of halting at the edge of the Mississippi in the middle of winter, the river running full of ice, “hundreds of sick and dying penned up in wagons or stretched upon the ground.” It is estimated that 4,000 Cherokees, almost a quarter of those who set out, died.

The Creeks

Finally, a small group of Creeks, driven to desperation by attacks, harrassments, and takeovers by whites, attacked some white settlers. This gave the US government the excuse it needed to drive the Creek people, in chains, west of the Mississippi. Starvation and sickness killed many.

What happened on the other side of the Mississippi? Didn’t they get good land?

Well, some of them may have found a place to settle for awhile, but it didn’t last long.

1848:

Jamestown Times
Gold Discovered in California!

Hitch up the wagon, Mother. We’re heading west!

When the wagon trains moved west, the land-grab moved west, too.
The Treaty: Made to be Broken
The Sioux nation, of all the Indian nations, was one of the most determined to resist the spread of the whites onto their lands. There were Sioux revolts in the 1860s, and peace was made by the signing of the Second Treaty of Ft. Laramie in 1868. The Sioux were granted ownership of a piece of their original land — the Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming.

Then gold was discovered in the Black Hills, and hundreds of miners came streaming into Sioux territory. The U.S. government, instead of keeping its treaty with the Sioux, broke this treaty — as it did most others — and backed the miners. In 1875 it sent the army to take over the rich black hills. General George Custer and his 260 men, riding into a trap, were completely wiped out by a force under Chief Sitting Bull, in the famous Battle of the Little Bighorn.

The Treaty: Made to be Broken

The Sioux won the Battle of the Little Bighorn, but they hadn’t won the war!

We can't let them get away with killing Custer! Call in more army!

How can we keep fighting when the buffalo are gone and there's nothing left to eat?

LATERS THAT SUMMER, THE SIOUX WERE BEaten AND IN THE FALL THEY SURRENDERED.

Victory! Now we can cut down the size of the reserves, and take over the Black Hills.

Starving on the Reserves
All the Sioux were ordered onto the reduced reserves. But the reserves were now so small that it was hard for the Sioux to survive. In 1889 a new agreement gave away even more Sioux land. There was so little land that people were beginning to starve.
The Ghost Dance
Then along came a native prophet, Wovoka, with welcome tidings:

If you do certain traditional dances and rites, the white man will leave, and the lands and buffalo will come back to you!

These dances—particularly one called the Ghost Dance—alarmed the white settlers.

The army stopped the dancing, but killed Chief Sitting Bull when they were trying to arrest him.

Some of the Sioux were so anxious and upset that they left their reserve and went to hide in the Badlands.

December 29, 1890
The group of Sioux, many of them women and children, surrendered at a place called Wounded Knee, and agreed to return to their reserve. On December 29, they were surrounded when a scuffle broke out over a young brave’s new rifle. A shot rang out.

The soldiers opened fire on the unarmed Sioux. Those who ran away were killed. The final toll? About 200 Sioux and 30 soldiers.

The Downward Spiral
What happened to the Sioux then was similar to what happened to First Nations People all over North America. Sioux children were taken from their homes by force and put in residential schools. The Sun Dance, the annual ceremony which bound together all the Sioux communities, was banned by law and made a criminal offence.

More Sioux lands were removed from the reserve and handed over to cattle dealers. By the 1920s nearly all prime grazing lands and water rights had been seized by non-Indian cattlemen.

A Rising Anger
February 27, 1973: 200 members of the American Indian Movement (AIM) take over the reservation of Wounded Knee by force. They refuse to leave until the US Government agrees to examine the conditions of native people in the US.

Once again, native people are surrounded by troops at Wounded Knee. Over 2 months later, the AIM members surrender, and the US government says that it will negotiate some of the native grievances. For many native and non-native people today, Wounded Knee has become a symbol of the injustices of colonialism.
First Peoples in Canada

The native people of Canada, pushed aside by development, demand their aboriginal rights.

Invading Native Lands and Cultures

In Canada, the native people faced a lot of the same problems as native people in the US and in Latin America. The Beothuk people of Newfoundland were hunted down and killed like animals. The last Beothuk died in 1829.

Other First Nations people endurred, but with difficulty: their land was taken, often without treaty; huge numbers died in measles and smallpox epidemics; their culture was suppressed; their children were taken away from them and put into boarding schools where the teachers tried to make them "think white." As always, the white people assumed that their culture and values were superior to those of the native people.

"In the long hundred years since the white man came, I have seen my freedom disappear like the salmon going mysteriously out to sea. The white man's strange customs, which I could not understand, pressed down on me until I could no longer breathe. And when I fought to protect my land and home, I was called a 'savage.' When I neither understood nor welcomed the white man's way of life, I was called lazy. When I tried to lead my people, I was stripped of my authority."

— Chief Dan George, Vancouver

Who are the Native People?

The native peoples in Canada are the Indians, the Inuit (northern people), and the Métis (with blood from both Indians and early French explorers or settlers). According to the 1981 Canadian census, there are 491,440 aboriginal people in Canada:

Indian: ..........367,810
Métis: ............98,260
Inuit: .............25,370

However, many experts agree that this number is too low; there may be as many as 840,000 native people in Canada.

Registered bands .... 596

Languages:
There are 10 different Indian language groups, each containing up to 52 distinct dialects.

Aboriginal Rights

But, although every effort was made to crush the native people, they weren't about to give up. Through protests, petitions, letters, and court cases, they pursued their rights. In 1982, the Constitution Act of Canada acknowledged for the first time that aboriginal people have certain rights.

"The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed."

Good question. Different people have different ideas about what "aboriginal rights" means.
Defining Aboriginal Rights

In 1983, a series of First Ministers Conferences discussed aboriginal rights. The 10 provincial premiers, the prime minister and native representatives couldn’t come to any agreement about just what they were.

Generally, aboriginal people feel that the rights they had when the white people arrived are the rights they should have now:
- land rights (including title to lands and resources that were never sold);
- rights to hunt, fish and trap on traditional lands;
- political rights (such as the right to self-government).

“What we feel is that aboriginal title or aboriginal right is the right to collective ownership of land, water, resources, both renewable and non-renewable. It is right to self-government, a right to govern yourselves with your own institutions, whichever way you want your institutions to run; the right to language, to culture, the right to basically practice your own religion and customs, the right to hunt, trap and fish and gather are certainly part of that, but it is not all of it.”
— Clem Chartier, Métis National Council, 1983

Traditional Native Governments

Indian cultures in Canada were generally very democratic, requiring participation and consensus of all the people. Issues were discussed by all people and decisions reached by consensus.

The Europeans couldn’t understand this:

“Call this a government? Where’s your king? You can’t have a government without a king, can you?”

But many native people — then and now — consider native government and justice systems to be much better than the “white” systems.

Some Indian tribal councils have already gained some self-government. The Nisga’a people of northern B.C. have their own School District, and control of their own social services.

Think about it:
What government powers do you think that native tribal councils should have? Can you figure out a system that would work?
But self-government is only part of what native people are looking for. Right now, a big question in Canada is the question of land claims.

Land Claims

Canada was colonized by the English and French. The French weren’t primarily out for the land, but for trade; the English wanted land. In 1763, at the end of the 7 Years’ War, the native people began to realize that the victorious English were different to deal with than the defeated French. They were moving in and taking over land. The Ottawa chief, Pontiac, organized the native people to resist the spread of the English.

To help clear the air, King George III of Britain issued the Royal Proclamation of 1763.

I reserve for the Nations or Tribes of Indians “all the Lands and Territories lying to the Westward of the Sources of the Rivers which fall into the Sea from the West and North West.” *

And that was quite a chunk! This land could be sold by the native people to settlers, but only through certified government agents.

* This was identified at the time as the land west of the Appalachian Mountains, — most of North America except for the Eastern seaboard.

No. Most of the Ontario and the Prairie bands signed treaties, but large parts of northern Quebec, the northern regions, the Maritimes and B.C. were left without treaties. Sometimes even when treaties were signed the wording was so unclear that its meaning is now being disputed.

Treaties —

From 1763 on, there were attempts to make treaties with the native people, rather than simply taking over the land without payment. Often the treaties involved the payment of a lump sum of cash, a small annual cash payment (usually $5 per year), and a reserve — part of the original land to be set aside for the native people to live on. And the treaties often allowed for hunting and fishing rights on the ceded land.

Often native people were coerced into signing treaties. Since they didn’t think of the land as something to be owned, they didn’t always understand what they were giving up. Most of the time they only signed treaty agreements because they felt they had no choice. If they didn’t sign the treaties, the whites would take the land anyway.

A major problem with the signing of treaties was that native people didn’t know how to read or write. Using an “x,” they had to sign pieces of paper without knowing exactly what was on them. Often what the interpreter told them was different from what the signed treaty said.

In 1867, when Canada became a country, crown representatives were sent across Canada to meet with native delegations and agree on treaties.
Trutch the Terrible
Douglas tried to protect the native people by setting aside reserves, but when he retired, the native peoples of B.C. fell on hard times. B.C. got a new Lieutenant Governor, Joseph Trutch, who tried to reduce the size of reserves, and resisted Ottawa’s attempts to get treaties signed with the native people.

“Our Indians are sufficiently satisfied and had better be left alone…”

Thanks to Trutch, the First Nations people of B.C. were left without treaties, and with small reserves (4 hectares per person, compared to 52 hectares in the Prairies).

But the native people weren’t going to take all of this lying down! Right from the beginning they contested the takeover of their lands.

Fighting for the Land
In the early 1900s, there is a lot of land claim activity. Three chiefs of the Salish people go to London to present a petition to Edward VII, pointing out that white people have settled on their land against their wishes. Others follow. Edward says he’s sorry, but only the Canadian Government can help them.

1907:
The Nisga’a people begin to raise money to go to court. Into the 1920s, papers are prepared and petitions presented.

1927:
A Joint Committee of Parliament dismisses all land claims, and makes it illegal for native organizations to raise money to pursue their land claims.

1951:
Raising money is finally legal again. The Nisga’a Tribal Council goes to court in 1969, and to the Supreme Court of Canada in 1973. There is a split decision—3 judges for, 3 against, and 1 bowing out on a technicality. The closeness of this decision gives hope to other native peoples of B.C. and the North. They begin to prepare cases.

1973:
An Office of Native Claims is established in Ottawa. But the process is very, very SLOW.

1990:
The government of B.C. agrees, for the first time, to participate in the negotiation of native land claims. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney announces that the federal government hopes to resolve Indian land claims throughout Canada by the year 2000.
But despite government assurances that land claims will be negotiated, it often seems that development — logging, mining, dam-building — just can’t wait for the negotiations.

THE HAIDA

November 28, 1985:
Lyell Island, one of the South Moresby archipelago, Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia

Twenty-eight Haida people — many of them elders dressed in their traditional ceremonial blankets — spread across a logging road. Some stand, some sit, one beats out a rhythm on a traditional drum. Out of the silence comes the sound of engines. The loggers are coming to cut the huge old rainforest trees of Lyell Island. At least, that’s what they think. But the Haida won’t let them.

The RCMP arrive, and the elderly natives are arrested and helped off the road. Since the blockade began on October 30, 72 Haida have been charged.

[At the end of the court hearings, South Moresby is made a national park, and discussion of Haida aboriginal rights continues.]

We have not been here for only two hundred years or seven thousand years or five years. We have been here from the beginning of time. We do not have a piece of paper that legalizes in your system our ownership of the area that we are talking about, or of the Queen Charlotte Islands as you name it, and we call it Haida Gwaii.

— Levina Lightboun, Haida
In the Supreme Court of British Columbia, re. Lyell Island

THE LUBICON

The Lubicon Cree live in Alberta, near Lubicon Lake, between the Peace and Athabasca rivers. In 1899, a delegation set out to sign up all the Indians living in the region. One group went up the Peace River, and the other went up the Athabasca. What about the native people living in between the rivers? While other bands were getting small reserves and gifts of money, the Lubicon were left out. In 1933, they wrote to the federal government:

Dear Prime Minister,
You may not know that we exist, but we do. We need a reserve of our own.
Yours respectfully,
The Lubicon Cree

But the government didn’t grant a reserve. So the Lubicon lived in an “Indian settlement” at Little Buffalo. They managed to make their living by hunting and trapping. But they had no rights to the land.

Then, in 1980

Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look
The huge trucks and oil rigs came charging in, scaring away the animals. Much of the land was burned in oil-related fires. 400 oil wells were built within 14 km of Little Buffalo.

For the oil companies, the Little Buffalo oil find meant big profits.

Hey, fellas, we're making $1.3 million a day!

For the Lubicon Cree, the oil meant DISASTER.

Last year, we made $255,000 on our trapping; this year we made $20,000. The moose are all gone, too. We're going to have to go on welfare!

Finally, the Alberta government offered a very small reserve — 263 square km — but the Lubicon claim that they have unextinguished aboriginal title to over 10,000 sq km. The government refuses to negotiate on a larger area.

Then in 1989,

YEE-HAW!
TREES, TREES, TREES!

Daishowa Canada Co. decided to set up a huge pulp mill in northern Alberta. The Alberta government gave them the right to log a huge area, including — guess where — the Lubicon Cree land claim. In November 1990 the loggers started to log right through Chief Ominayak's trap lines.

On November 24, one of the logging camps was mysteriously set on fire, and $20,000 worth of damage done. Thirteen Lubicons were charged with arson.

Meanwhile, the Lubicon people wonder if they will ever have a home.

THE MOHAWKS

March 11, 1990
Oka, Quebec

Mohawks from the Kanesatake Reserve set up a road block in order to stop Oka Township expanding a golf course on land they claim is theirs. Before this flashpoint ends

• a Quebec police officer will be killed;
• the army will be called in;
• the Mercier Bridge, an important bridge entering Montreal, will be barricaded;
• a crowd of 500 whites will stone a convoy of Mohawk families leaving the Kanesatake reserve;
• Native people all the way to B.C. will put up barricades in solidarity with the people of Kanesatake.

The Warriors at Oka are "armed terrorists treading a path of tribal blackmail, escalating a golf course dust-up to the brink of aboriginal war in Canada."

— J. Patrick O'Callaghan, former publisher of the Calgary Herald, Edmonton Journal and Windsor Star

"How many times have these colonizing powers gone around the world and colonized in the name of Jesus Christ or in the name of Christianity, or in the name of whatever? It's a very, very aggressive culture. And yet we're [the native people] the ones that are the criminals. For what? For defending what little bit we have left? There's always been this feeling and this mentality that you gave us lands, you gave us reservations, Western man gave us something. They didn't give us anything. That's all that we got left and even what we got left they want to take."

— "Sugarbear," one of the Mohawk Warriors at the Kanesatake Reserve, August 28, 1990
"The potential for a Mohawk-type crisis is all over Canada. We have a government which has neglected aboriginal peoples and as long as that continues there could be crises."
— Lubicon Chief Bernard Ominayak

Think about it:
The Oka resistance was different from other native protests because it was armed, rather than unarmed, resistance. Is this kind of armed resistance ever justified? What lessons do you think Canadians can learn from Oka?

Meanwhile,
- The Innu people of Labrador are arrested for protesting the low-level test flights by F-18 Fighters over their land, Nitassinan.
- The James Bay Cree take a stand against the Quebec government, which wants to start Phase II of the dam project which has already silted up rivers, flooded traplines, endangered wildlife, and poisoned the fish supply with mercury.

So, you see, the more things change, the more they stay the same. When there are resources to be grabbed, the native people often still get left out in the cold.

Canada: A Rich/Poor Nation

Like the native people of South and Central America, the indigenous people of Canada often live on lands filled with rich minerals and covered with thick forests. Although these are their lands and their resources, they don’t get rich. Who does? Generally, the multinational corporations and the government, which collects the tax reve nues. The native people, on the other hand, are the poorest people in Canada.

Life & Death Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>average family income:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Average (1987) $43,604</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native Average (1988) $10,382</td>
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<tr>
<th>average life expectancy:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Canadian Average: 75.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native Average: 70.0</td>
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<th>infant mortality:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Canadian Average: 7.9/1000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native Average: 17.2/1000</td>
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<th>teen suicide:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Native people between the ages of 15 and 24 are 5 to 6 times more likely to commit suicide than non-natives.</td>
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<th>homely facts:</th>
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<tr>
<td>One-third of reserve homes have no running water. Nearly 40% of reserve homes have no central heating.</td>
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Getting the Vote:

Although all sorts of decisions were being made by governments about their lands and their lives, native people for many years weren’t allowed to vote.

1949:
Native people are given the right to vote in B.C. provincial elections.

1960:
Native people are given the right to vote in federal elections.

But when you list all these sad figures about how poor native people are, you’re not showing the whole picture. Native people in Canada—like other indigenous peoples of North, Central and South America—are down, but not crushed. And they’re getting back up! (Read more on page 41.)

Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look
Although colonialism began 500 years ago, we're still feeling the effects today.

1. Grabbing the Land

When the Spanish and Portuguese took over the land and people — organizing it into huge plantations — they set up a pattern that is still with us. In Latin America today, 7% of the landowners control 93% of the arable land. What does this mean for the people?

“My children are dying from hunger, yet I have no land to grow food. The land is leased to big companies which grow sugar to export to the rich countries!”

“Because all the best land is owned by the rich landowners, the only land I can cultivate is the poor land in the hills. I know it causes erosion, but what can I do? My children must eat!”

2. Growing for Europe (and Other Rich Regions)

Do you remember how the Europeans wiped out the native food crops and began growing huge plantations of sugar, cocoa, tobacco and coffee? Where has that led?

**BRAZIL**

Then
The Northeast of Brazil, when the Portuguese settlers arrived, was fertile growing area, much of it covered with forests. The forests were cleared to plant huge sugar plantations. By the end of the 16th century Brazil had 120 sugarmills, and all food had to be imported; all the land was used for sugar. The workers were fed a starvation diet of manioc starch and beans.

Now
The Brazilian Northeast is one of the poorest areas in the world. There are a few rich people, all right — the rich owners of the land and the sugar mills. Much of the land is left uncultivated; since the prices of sugar are often too low it doesn’t make sense to plant it. Food is still imported, and so expensive that the sugar workers, who make starvation wages, can’t afford to buy much of it.
The Cost of Sugar

When you plant all your land in a single crop, what happens when the price of that crop goes down? In the past decade the prices of commodities — raw goods such as crops and minerals — have gone down, down, down on the world market. The “First World”— rich countries like North America and Europe — have paid less and less for their sugar and cocoa.

Commodity Export Prices

The average prices of commodities in 1987 were only 57% of what they were in 1980, and 52% of what they were in 1965.

Falling commodity prices have had a spin-off effect — debt. To most Latin American people, debt is a new way for rich western countries to squeeze the poor countries.

Debt: The Current Killer

1970s:
Western bankers have lots of money they want to move around (they need to get interest!) so they urge Latin American governments to borrow:

Look, you need to build factories and schools. Borrow now, then you can pay us back later. You can always raise the money from all your sugar and cocoa!

1980s:
The Western bankers come back

What do you mean, you don’t have the money! Cut your whining and pay!

LATIN AMERICA NOW OWES $450 BILLION!

Think about it: Whose fault is the Third World debt problem? Do you have any ideas for a solution?

Who pays?

In order to pay the debt, the Latin American governments have to export even more commodities, and cut down on spending for schools, health clinics and services for the poor.

We could call this second stage colonialism. Whole Latin American countries are having to produce and send products to the rich western countries just to pay the interest on the debt!
The NIEO
Since 1973, the world's poorer countries (all of them ex-colonies) have called for a New International Economic Order — or NIEO.

- How come the price of commodities is always going down, and the price of manufactured goods made in western industrialized countries is always going up?
- We should have a system of trade that gives us fair prices for our commodities.
- When we do try to manufacture products, you rich countries won't accept them.

But, just like in the old days of colonialism, the rich western nations have all the power. And they don't want the trading system to change.
3 Developing Europe

When the explorers and settlers arrived in both North and South America, they found lands rich with minerals. But because the whole idea of colonies was to enrich the mother country, the minerals all got shipped out to refineries across the sea to make European countries rich.

Think about it:
Bolivia is poor because all its resources were drained from it. Some ex-colonies think that the colonizing countries should pay compensation for what they did to the economies of their colonies. What do you think?

Bolivia — Shipping Out the Ore

In Bolivia, go to the town of Potosí and you’ll see the Cerro Rico — once a mountain of silver. In 1545 the Indian Huallpa discovered a shining vein of pure silver, passed on the information to the Spaniards, and a "silver rush" was begun. Guess who did the mining? For the native people, Cerro Rico was a death sentence. In 3 centuries, Potosí’s Cerro Rico consumed 8 million lives. The Indians, including women and children, were torn from their agricultural communities and driven to the Cerro. Of every 10 who went up into the freezing wilderness, 7 never returned. The work was exhausting, and poison mercury was used to extract the silver.

The Cerro Rico is now a warren of tunnels. All the wealth from that silver was used by Europe to build cities, to develop technology such as the steam engine, and to build factories. And Bolivia was left with the holes.

But Bolivia wasn’t finished. Tin was discovered in the 1880s. The tin wasn’t refined in Bolivia, but shipped raw to Liverpool, England. Even today, the Bolivian tin miners work in terrible conditions; most of them die of lung disease. The profits from the tin don’t go to the workers or to the government of Bolivia, but to the large mining corporations with offices in overseas countries. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the International Mining Corporation made $900 million.

Meanwhile, Bolivia continues to be one of the poorest countries in the world. The average annual income is $570, life expectancy is 53, and over 10% of all babies die before they are a year old.

"Bolivians die with rotted lungs so that the world may consume cheap tin."
— Eduardo Galeano, Latin American historian

4 Consuming Colonially

Many westerners think that the purpose of colonialism was to lead "backward" countries into the industrialized age. But when you look at the real purposes of colonialism, you’ll soon see that the last thing that the European countries wanted was competition from the colonies. They wanted to be able to sell manufactured goods made in Europe to the colonies.

Keeping Tabs on Textiles

Then
1785, Lisbon, Portugal:
The Portuguese crown orders Brazil’s textile workshops closed down; in the future they must only produce rustic clothing for slaves.

My Dear Subjects,
If Brazil keeps on producing fine clothes, the inhabitants will become totally independent of Portugal. Please stop.
Her Majesty

Now
Since they became independent, Latin American countries have struggled to change from resource-based economies (economies which ship out products raw). But it’s not easy. The machinery and technical advice must often be imported, and it’s hard to find the money to build. So often countries which started out as colonies still continue to be raw exporters. Brazil is the world’s largest exporter of coffee, and also a major exporter of cotton, cocoa and sugar.

Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look
Meanwhile, closer to home...

Canada, too, has a resource-based economy which harks back to colonial times. In 1985, 48% of Canada’s export earnings came from commodities, the largest of which is forest products. British Columbia is disparagingly known as "Brazil of the North" as environmentalists and native people struggle to keep the last bits of virgin rainforest from being cut down and shipped out of the country in unprocessed form. The problems of being a resource-based economy are many:

- low world prices;
- lack of employment (the jobs go to the other countries who receive the raw logs);
- competition from other resource-based countries (Brazil has huge forests and lower wages).

5 Hatching Hierarchies

In the colonies there was a colonial elite—a small, wealthy group at the top who controlled everyone else for their own benefit. In most ex-colonies the pattern continues. In Latin America, the rich landowners are often linked with the military.

So you shape up, you hear! Or else I’ll call in my buddies in the army!

And guess who’s usually at the bottom of the hierarchy? The native people.

Who Gets the Wealth?

This table shows how the wealth is shared around. In the Philippines, for instance, the wealthiest 20% of the population gets 48% of the total wealth, while the bottom 20% gets only 5.5%. Brazil has the dubious honour of having the greatest disparity in the world between rich and poor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Top 20%</th>
<th>Bottom 20%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>62.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>54.5</td>
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<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>55.0</td>
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<td>Philippines</td>
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<td>Canada</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
<td>36.9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
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(Figures from World Bank, World Development Report, 1990)

6 Killing Cultures

Just as Spanish and Portuguese colonists outlawed native dances, so — in the Indian Act which lasted from 1884 to 1951 — the Canadian Government outlawed the Potlatch, the most important ceremony of the coastal peoples. Indigenous children all over the Americas were schooled to think like the colonizers. The policy was one of assimilation — training the native people to "fit in" with the culture of the colonizers.

Shirley’s Story

"In the school we were not allowed to speak our own language or practise our religion. Nor were we allowed to talk to our own relatives, especially the boys. The ceremonies we have at the age of puberty which celebrate the change from childhood to adulthood were denied us. It was as if we were not human beings. We are a very affectionate people; we walk arm in arm and so on. These gestures were completely forbidden. They did their best to make you lose your self-esteem, your sense of being Inidian.

When we did not obey the rules we were hit and pushed and shouted at. This was a shock because in our community we do not raise our voice at children or hit them. And to punish us they would cut our hair because they know it would bring shame for a long time. So we were afraid even to speak our language... . . . The legacy is with us still. We are dealing with the problems today: people who have lost direction, had their culture denigrated. Of the group of girls in my grade at the residential school, only I am still alive. I am 38 years old."

—Sharon Venne, Cree, 1988 —from The Gaia Atlas of First Peoples

Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look
Think about it:
Why is it that the Europeans tried to make the native people dress and act as much as possible like Europeans? Why did they consider their religion and their culture superior to the native cultures? How might some of the current problems of native people in North America—suicide and alcoholism—be related to government policies of assimilation?

West is Best:
And not only did native people get their culture knocked out of them, but all colonial peoples—from Africa to the Americas, began to get a “west is best” mentality. Maybe this is why, when many countries became independent, they began to copy the west.

- More dams!
- More tractors!
- Big is Beautiful!

All over the world the European values of competition, exploitation, and progress began to take hold. People started thinking that their old ways of living with the land and each other weren’t as good as the new, modern, western ways. In many ways, everybody right around the world started to become more the same in their thinking and in the way they lived.

Think about it:
Do you think this world-wide sweep of western ideas will be good or bad for the world in the long run? Why?

Exploiting the Land

"Let me ask you this—why are there only 8 inches of top-soil left in America, when there once were some 18 inches at the time of the Declaration of Independence in 1776? Where goes our sacred earth?"

—Hobart Keith, Oglala Sioux

"I am trying to save the knowledge that the forests and this planet are alive, to give it back to you who have lost the understanding."

—Paulinho Paiakan, Kayapo leader, Brazil

After hundreds of years of using up the earth’s resources, the descendents of the colonists are now realizing that they didn’t have all the answers to how to live on earth.

Hey, what do we do when all the trees are gone?

“The white man’s advanced technological capacity has occurred as a result of his lack of regard for the spiritual path and for the way of all living things. The white man’s desire for material possessions and power has blinded him to the pain he has caused Mother Earth by his quest for what he calls natural resources.”

—Thomas Banyacya, Hopi village leader
9 looking outward
Meanwhile, the U.S. turns from internal conquest to external expansion

What does that mean — “external expansion”? Well, just as the Europeans took over countries belonging to other people, the U.S. in the 1800s began to look around and see that it could take over other countries, too. Only their style of colonialism was a little more indirect.

American Expansion Part I
Conquest of Mexico — The Sequel

1846:
The US is growing. They have already bought Louisiana from France, and now they look to the southwest, to Mexico. Mexico has recently become independent in a war against Spain in 1821. Mexico at this time no longer includes Texas, which broke away in 1836 to become part of the US, but it does include New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, California, and part of Colorado.

That’s a lot of land there, and we could sure use it! Plus, that new country has outlawed slavery. That might give some of our slaves some mighty unhealthy ideas!

The US President, James K. Polk, is dying to get his hands on California. He waits for an excuse.

WAR!

Differing American Views on the Mexican War:

Pro:
“Yes: Mexico must be thoroughly chastised! . . . Let our arms now be carried with a spirit which shall teach the world that, while we are not forward for a quarrel, America knows how to crush, as well as how to expand!”
— Walt Whitman, American Poet

“The universal Yankee nation can regenerate and disenthral the people of Mexico in a few years; and we believe it is a part of our destiny to civilize that beautiful country.”
— New York Herald: 1847

Con:
This war is being “waged solely for the detestable and horrible purpose of extending and perpetuating American slavery throughout the vast territory of Mexico.”
— The American Anti-Slavery Society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Houston Enquirer</th>
<th>April 5, 1846</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Soldier Killed by Mexicans! James K. Polk.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Today, American blood was shed on Mexicanoil. “This is an outrage!” asserts US president</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is only one solution, and that is to take over Mexico!</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look
Early Civil Disobedience

Henry David Thoreau of Concord Massachusetts—one of America's well-known philosophers—refused to pay his Massachusetts poll tax because some of the money went to the Mexican war. While he was in jail, his friend Ralph Waldo Emerson visited him and asked "What are you doing in here?" Thoreau replied, "What are you doing out there?"

Think about it:
Social activists often tell this story about Thoreau to show that when you feel strongly that a law is wrong, it is your duty to disobey it. Do you think Thoreau was right? Why or why not?

American Expansion Part II
Taking Over from Where Spain Left Off

1895:

Cuba Revolts Against Spain
Today, the Cuban people rose up against the crushing regime of the Spaniards. "Independence or die!" was the rallying cry...

The US flag should be changed. The white stripes should be black and the stars should be skulls and crossbones."
—Mark Twain, author of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn

Think about it:
Why would the US want to have power in these countries?

SURRENDER!

After many deaths on both sides, Mexico surrendered. There were calls among Americans to take all of Mexico. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed February 1848, took half.

1898:

Now, quick! Let's grab Puerto Rico

Now, onto the Philippines!

The Spanish give up. On August 12, 1898, they declare Cuba independent. They give Puerto Rico to the US, and they sell the Philippines to the US for $20 million.

Takeover Proceeds

1898: Hawaii is annexed

1900: Puerto Rico is given "limited self-government."

Now, you can decide anything you want, as long as the governor here (appointed by the U.S.) approves.

The Philippines proves to be more difficult:

Those dam Filipinos. Why are they fighting us? Don't they know it's an honour to be taken over by our great country?

1902: The Philippine resistance surrenders. The Philippines is given "limited self-government."
American Expansion Part III — The Indirect Method

1901:
Pres. Theodore Roosevelt to the President of Colombia:

We want to take over your territory of Panama to build ourselves a little canal. What do you say?

1901:
Roosevelt to his advisors:

I'm sure we can engineer a little revolt in Panama! Send in a few guns, pay out a bit of money!

1903:
Roosevelt to the President of the brand new Republic of Panama, which has recently — with the help of the US — broken away from Colombia:

Now, sir, if you'll just sign on the dotted line...

A No-Fail Technique
The Americans get their canal, and at the same time learn a new technique — sometimes known as neo-colonialism — for dealing with Latin American countries.

Only send in the marines when it's really necessary. We can usually get what we want by exerting... shall we say... a more subtle influence.

1903:
Cuba is forced to sign a treaty putting itself in the care of the U.S.

Think about it:
Should large nations have the right to influence the affairs of smaller countries within their "spheres of influence"?

Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look

Por favor, Senor, if only you could pay a little less attention to us Latin Americans!

1905: US marines land in Honduras
1906: US troops occupy Cuba
1908: US troops sent to Panama
1909: US-backed troops overthrow Zelaya in Nicaragua
1910: US troops land in Honduras
1912: US troops sent to Panama
1912: US troops occupy Cuba
1912: US marines occupy Nicaragua
1914: US marines occupy Haiti
1916: US marines occupy Dominican Republic
1917: US marines occupy Cuba
1918: US troops sent to Panama
1926: US marines occupy Nicaragua and set up National Guard under Somoza
1924: US marines land in Honduras
1932: US warships stand by during El Salvador massacre of 30,000 Indians
1954: US troops invade Guatemala
1961: CIA-backed Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba
1973: CIA-backed military coup in Chile
1980: US finances and trains Contra troops to fight against the government of Nicaragua
1985: US invades Grenada
1990: US troops invade and occupy Panama
ne-o-co-lo-ni-al-ism

n. the policy of a strong nation in seeking political and economic hegemony over an independent nation or extended geographical area without necessarily reducing the subordinate nation or area to the legal status of a colony.

(Random House College Dictionary)

GUATEMALA
The First Invasion
To the Mayan people of Guatemala, the Spanish — when they arrived in 1524 — were very bad news. It was the same old takeover story — epidemics, stamping out of the Mayan culture, and dividing of the land into huge plantations worked by poor Mayans. One of the first things the Spanish priests did was burn all the Mayan books, thus wiping out almost all written records of the Mayan culture, with its advanced system of mathematics and astronomy. But the Mayans didn’t go down without a fight. Right into the 19th century, they kept rebelling against Spanish control.

¡INDEPENDENCIA!
Independence, when it came in 1821, was worked out between the wealthy landowners and the colonial officials. As far as the Mayans were concerned, nothing had changed. There was a small wealthy class of landowners who ran the country. Two percent of the people owned two-thirds of the land. Although the Mayans and other poor mestizos (people of mixed blood) weren’t exactly slaves, they weren’t much better off.

The United Fruit Company
El Pulpo, the Octopus
The largest landowners in Guatemala were foreign fruit companies, and the largest of these was the United Fruit Company — known to Central Americans as el pulpo (the octopus) — with its head office in the United States. El pulpo took over thousands of hectares of land in Central and South America and used them to grow bananas.

The United Fruit Company — like many multinational corporations * — had on its board important US government people. It also made sure that it was friendly with the various Latin American governments — most of which were run by the wealthy upper class backed by the army.

*Multinational corporations (MNCs) are large businesses with a home base in one country (usually a rich country such as Japan, the U.S. or a European country) and branches in other countries.
Lands Owned and Leased by the United Fruit Company, 1913

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>IMPROVED</th>
<th>UNIMPROVED</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>65,081</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>106,186</td>
<td>149,073</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>10,362</td>
<td>38,391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>17,329</td>
<td>17,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>28,233</td>
<td>97,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td></td>
<td>193,000</td>
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<td>Panama</td>
<td>38,906</td>
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<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>IMPROVED</th>
<th>UNIMPROVED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>3,321</td>
<td>2,071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td></td>
<td>67,392</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>16,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>10,887</td>
<td>10,723</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Figures from Frederick Adams, Conquest of the Tropics, NY: Doubleday, 1914.)

What does it mean — "unimproved"?

That means that the company wasn’t even using those acres. It was just letting them sit there!

Think about it:
Do you think that lands should be allowed to lie unused while people go hungry? What would you have done if you took over at this time as president of Guatemala?

Friends in High Places
The United Fruit Company (UFC) has powerful friends in the U.S. Government:
- John Foster Dulles (US Secretary of State), has done legal work for the company;
- Allan Dulles (John’s brother), is on the UFC board;
- John Moors Cabot (Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs), is the brother of the president of the United Fruit Company;
- Henry Cabot Lodge (US Senator), is a shareholder in the United Fruit Company.

Guatemala’s Goons, Part 1
Guatemala certainly had its share of dictators! In the 1930s—under the dictator Jorge Ubico—each Indian had to carry a book listing his days of work. If he didn’t have enough days, he either went to jail or did half a year of free labour. Plantation owners were exempt from criminal responsibility — they were allowed to kill workers who didn’t “shape up.”

1944: ¡Revolución!
The people take control, and elect a new government.

Under the governments of Presidents Arevazo and later Arbenz, trade unions are allowed and the United Fruit Company — for the first time — is taxed. Idle lands are taken over by the government, the owners paid off, and peasant families given land. By 1954, 100,000 families have benefited.

Land! Finally we have our own land again!

The Second Invasion
BUT the United Fruit Company is angry. Powerful friends in high places complain to the US government.

We want our land back!
Get those Commies out of Guatemala!

1954: Guatemala is invaded by a military force from Honduras. The invasion is planned and commanded by the CIA — the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. President Arbenz is replaced by a “friend of the White House,” Carlos Castillo Armas. During the following year:
- land reform stops, and lands are returned to the large landowners;
- 533 unions are banned;
- anyone who calls a strike is put to death;
- political parties are outlawed.
Guatemala's Goons, Part 2

Since then, the people in power in Guatemala have been

THE ARMY.

Violence against the Mayan people of Guatemala has continued every since. Hundreds of Mayan villages have been cleared, as the government has required their land for mining or plantations. Over 100,000 people have been killed. Several hundred thousand refugees have fled to Mexico City. Almost a million people are "internally displaced"—fleeing from their areas to Guatemala City or other towns. When people struggle for change, they are labelled "communist" and become the target for right-wing military death squads.

Think about it:
In what ways is neo-colonialism like this different from old-fashioned colonialism? In what ways is it the same?

1986: ¿democracia?

In 1986, the military government was replaced by an elected government. But under the governments of Cerezo and later Serrano, the terror continues.

You may be an elected government, but you'd better do what we say if you want to stay in power!

Guatemala Today
—Rich vs. Poor

The Land

22% of Guatemala is made up of 482 huge farms. But 54% of all farms are less than 1.4 hectares. They are, according to historian Eduardo Galeano—plots of a grave—unable to support the families who grow their food there.

According to USAID estimates, there are 3,000,000 acres of idle land in Guatemala, almost all of it on large estates.

The Wealth

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Guatemalan economy boomed. But instead of growing richer, the poor grew poorer. In 1960 the wealthiest 20% received 47% of the national income and in 1984 they received 57%. In 1970 the poorest 50% received 24%, and in 1984 they received 18%.

"If the rich would just pay taxes, that would help us. But the Guatemalan elite pay less than any other upper class in the Western Hemisphere."

Picture of Poverty:

- UNICEF, in a 1982 Study, found that Guatemala had the lowest "quality of life" in Central America, and the third lowest in Latin America.

- A national survey in 1980 found that only 27% of children under 5 years showed normal physical development,

Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look
"They took away our fruit . . . they cut our branches . . . they burned our trunk . . . but they will not be able to kill our roots."

- Comité de Unidad Campasina, (Committee of United Women Peasants), Guatemala

**Turning the Tide**

Increasingly, indigenous peoples in North, Central and South America are organizing to resist the pressures of uncontrolled development. They are joined by non-indigenous people who care about the environment and about fairness. After all these centuries, indigenous people still haven’t stopped caring about their land. They still continue to guard parts of their culture that they have kept alive — often secretly — throughout centuries of repression. And increasingly they are getting together to organize for change.

**ORGANIZING FOR SURVIVAL — THE KAYAPO OF BRAZIL**

In the next 25 years, Brazil plans to quadruple its electricity supply to meet the needs of mining companies and cities. How? Why, dams of course. Of the 136 planned dams, 68 of them are on indigenous land.

In 1988 the Kayapo People began a campaign to stop the building of the Barbaquara and Kararao dams which threatened their land. Their leaders visited the headquarters of the World Bank to request the withdrawal of a US$500 million loan. They met US senators, toured European capitals, talked to members of parliament, and explained their concerns to environmentalists and human rights groups. In February 1989, at the site of the proposed dam, the Kayapo convened an international meeting. The dam had become international news.

In March 1989, the World Bank announced that it had decided not to fund the dam. Instead, it would support improvements in electricity transmission and distribution. The Kayapo had won the battle for their land.

— Information from Julian Burger, The Gaia Atlas of First Peoples

*Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look*
Getting Together Around the World

1975, Port Alberni, B.C.: The small Vancouver Island town of Port Alberni is buzzing. Delegates are arriving from 19 countries in different parts of the world for the First General Assembly of WCIP, the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, hosted by the First Nations People of the Alberni region. This meeting will be the first of many.


1990, Quito, Ecuador: Representatives from 120 Indian Nations and organizations meet and adopt the Declaration of Quito, which proclaims 500 years of resistance and rejects the Quincentennial celebration of Columbus’ arrival.

One of the ways that non-indigenous people can support the indigenous people is to look critically at the 500th Birthday of Columbus’ landing.

This cartoon, drawn in Columbia, shows how many Latin American indigenous people feel about the 500th Anniversary. “Here’s to America’s 500 years!” says the over-fed First World man. (“And here’s to another 500 years!”)

¡QUE VIVEN LOS 500 AÑOS DE AMÉRICA! (Y QUE VIVEN 500 AÑOS MÁS!)

WHO ARE THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE?

There are about 500 million indigenous peoples worldwide — 8% of the global population.

“Until recently we didn’t have much reason to think that the white man would ever understand, in fact want to understand, the Indians, our ways of thinking and living .... It is true, though, that recently we have seen groups of Indian and white people working together and organizing in order to try and change the way people think.”

— Paulinho Paiakan, Kayapo leader

It’s been quite a 500 years. Let’s hope that the next 500 are better ones!
Happy Birthday, America!

1992, Seville, Spain: Expo '92 is going full swing. Countries from all over the world have built expensive pavilions; visitors from all over the world come to admire them. Canada's pavilion in Expo '92 has a $40 million price tag. All of the money, all of the excitement, are in celebration of a crucial event: the landing of Columbus and his men on a Caribbean island in 1492.

But, while the celebrations go on in Seville, groups of indigenous people all over the Americas protest the event. In Canada, the Assembly of First Nations has this message:

"Our message for 1992 is simple: 'For First Nations to celebrate the near destruction of our culture and identity would be insane.' The concepts we associate with Columbus' voyage are... invasion, conquest, colonization, assimilation and genocide...."

Imagine a conversation between Christopher Columbus and a modern "Indian" from North or South America. With a partner, write and perform the conversation between them on the benefits and costs of colonialism. (You might want to expand this conversation to include others: Pizarro, an early Jesuit priest, Sir James Douglas, an Arawak... the choice is yours!)

Colonial Logos

In July 1990, representatives from 120 Indian Nations and organizations met in Ecuador to discuss "500 Years of Indian Resistance." Here is the logo they used for their meeting.

With a partner or a small group, discuss the meaning of this logo. What do the three symbols on the sails represent? What does the crown stand for?

What symbol do you think would make a good logo to represent 500 Years of Colonialism? Discuss this with your partner or small group, come up with some ideas, and draw your logo.

Colonial Collage

Put together a collage which draws together images of colonialism and its effects in the Americas. Here are some sources:

- photocopies of portraits and illustrations of the colonizers and the colonized;
- quotes;
- pictures of modern-day plantation workers;
- pictures and headlines concerning indigenous people.

You'll probably think of more!

Colombia in the Americas: A Critical Look
The Incredible Incas
Read about the Inca civilization. One thing that stands out about it is that every Inca had a right to food, clothing and shelter. The same could be said of most of the indigenous cultures of the Americas. This sharing of resources was amazing to the Spanish explorers, who came from a culture where there were a lot of cold, hungry people (see the quote by Leguizamo, page 8.)

With a partner, draw up a "list of rights of the individual," which includes economic rights (the right to things like food and shelter) as well as political rights (e.g. the right to express an opinion). Rank the rights in order of importance. When you and your partner have finished, meet with another pair of partners and compare your lists. Try to work out a common list of the important rights. Put your common list on the board, where it can be compared to those written by other groups. What do you think the Incas would have thought of your list of rights? the Spaniards?

Early Civilizations
Find out more about one of the indigenous civilizations of the Americas. Here is a list of just some of the many peoples who have lived in the Americas for many centuries before Columbus.
In South and Central America: the Zapotecs, the Mayans, the Aztecs, the Incas, the Huichol
In North America: the Yaqui, the Hopi, the Navajo, the Pueblos, the Apache, the Cherokee, the Iroquois, the Algonquins, the Sioux, the Cree, the Kwakiutl, the Nootka, the Haida, the Dene, the Inuit

Write a report describing as much as you can about the group of people you choose:
• How did they get food, clothing and shelter?
• How did they organize themselves? (Who made the decisions, and how? How were things like food and clothing distributed in the community? What was the justice system like?)
• What was their attitude towards the land?
• What were some of their customs?
• What were some of their games and stories?
• How did they communicate? (Did they have a written language?)
• How did their lives change once the white people came into the picture?
• What are the things that societies of today could learn from them?

Forecasting Colonial Futures
At the bottom of each of the Seven Pillars of Colonialism (page 13) is a Think about it question. In small groups, try some forecasting.
• Choose a group recorder.
• Read the section and the question at the bottom.
• In your group, brainstorm some answers to the question. (Brainstorm means to quickly suggest some ideas. The recorder will write down all the ideas.)
• In a brief discussion, boil down the ideas to one “educated guess.” When all the groups in your class have come up with a set of forecasts, share these in the class. Then turn to Chapter 8 (page 29), which gives some of the outcomes which actually happened.

Genocide Graph
Read page 11, then enlarge and complete this graph putting in bars

<table>
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<th>PEOPLE (in billions)</th>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
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<td>12</td>
</tr>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Before After
Incas Bahamas Mexico

Colonialism & Slavery
When the Europeans took over the lands of the Americas, they were stuck with a labour problem. Read pages 4 and 16, which explain how African slaves became part of the colonization plan for the Americas.

Imagine that you’re a sailor on one of the British ships of the 16th century. Your ship starts out from Portsmouth, England filled with guns, cloth and beads, and heads for West Africa, where your captain will bargain with African and Arab slave traders. Then, your hold filled with slaves, your ship will go on to the Caribbean. From there you will return to England with a cargo of sugar and rum. Write a log or diary describing your feelings and experiences on this 3-way run.
Racism

When we wonder why the Europeans felt that they could grab land from indigeneous people and slaves from Africa, one of the answers which we come up with is RACISM. The Europeans felt that their race, their culture and their religion were better than anyone else's. One of the characters in The Heart of Darkness, a famous novel by Joseph Conrad, says this about colonialism:

"The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you think of it too much."

With a partner or a small group, discuss the following:

Racism then: What evidences can you find of European racism in the conquest of North and South America?

Racism now: What evidences can you find of racism in your own community?

Improving the Future: What are some of the ways that racism can be wiped out in the future?

Then, on your own, write a paper entitled: Racism yesterday, racism today, wiping out racism tomorrow

Aboriginal Rights

To the European colonists, the native people of Canada were an impediment to their farming and logging activities; they were "heathen" people to be bought off or pushed aside. But the native people saw themselves as a group of nations with their own language, culture and system of justice. They didn't see then, and they don't see now, why the white people didn't treat them as nations.

In groups of 4, take the following roles:

- An early B.C. colonist, eager to get 320 acres of land and push the native people aside, with little understanding of native culture or right to the land;
- An early B.C. native, bitter at the rapid encroachment of whites;
- A present-day descendent of the B.C. colonist, who has little patience with the idea of aboriginal rights ("All that's water under the bridge, now; let's forget about it");
- A present-day native person, who feels that his or her people continue to suffer because of the seizure of native lands and the attempt to wipe out native cultures.

Enact their discussion.

Colonialism & Environment

1992 is not only the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' arrival in America; it is also the year of a major United Nations conference on the environment. Is there a link between these two events? Did colonialism bring with it a state of mind that was harmful to the environment?

Re-read pages 14 and 34. Keeping in mind the way in which North and South America were colonized, prepare a short speech or paper on this topic:

Colonialism — a History of Environmental Disaster
Narrowing the Gap

According to the World Watch Institute, poverty grew rapidly in the 1980s, and by 2050, one third of the people on Earth could be living in absolute poverty. The poor countries of the world — almost all of them ex-colonies — are getting poorer while the rich countries get richer. Read pages 30 and 31 to understand some of the reasons why countries which were encouraged when they were colonies to export raw crops and resources are still poor.

Now, in small groups, think about possible actions for change.

- What could CANADA be doing to help the poor ex-colonies narrow the rich-poor gap?
  - What kind of trade policy could Canada support?
  - What kind of aid projects could Canada support?
  - What directions could Canada encourage the governments of poor countries to move in?
- What could YOU, as an individual, be doing to help combat the effects of colonialism?
  - What kind of products could you buy?
  - What kind of organizations could you support, and how?
  - What kind of letters could you write, and what kind of lobbying could you do?

To Assimilate or Not to Assimilate?

Read “Killing Cultures” and Shirley’s Story, on page 33. The question of assimilation is one which is still a hot one in Canada. Should our education systems try to produce “white Indians”? More and more, native people are taking control of their own educational systems. The Nisga’a in northern B.C., for instance, have their own school district.

Think about this question: Should indigenous people be educated differently from non-native people? Why or why not?

Write your thoughts in a poem, a short essay, or a conversation between 2 people with different points of view.

Neo-Colonialism

Read pages 38 to 40. Guatemala, like many Latin American countries, has been a double victim of colonialism: first, when the Spaniards invaded in the early 16th century; second, when the efforts of the poor people to gain control of their own country were ripped in the bud by a large, powerful neighbour.

Find out more about one of these countries: Dominican Republic, Chile, Cuba, Nicaragua, Panama. What effect has neo-colonialism had on these countries?

Indigenous Peoples Bulletin Board

Despite the march of “progress” which threatens their lands and lives, indigenous peoples in Canada and around the world are pulling together and insisting on their rights to land and to self-determination. Start a bulletin board on Indigenous Peoples. Cut out clippings about the struggle of Canadian First Nations for aboriginal rights, and also the struggles of other indigenous peoples, like the Kayapo of Brazil, for their land and their rights.

The Fourth World

Often, the poorer countries of the world, including Central and South American countries, are called the Third World. Some indigenous people now refer to themselves as the Fourth World. The fourth world people are “.. indigenous peoples descended from a country’s aboriginal population .. who today are completely or partly deprived of the right to their own territory and its riches.”

Explain why the First Nations people of Canada, as well as other indigenous people, might feel that they are part of a “fourth world.” Then list, in point form, the changes that must be made for native people of the Americas to feel that they are no longer colonized people.

Banana Blues

“No barrel of sugar reached Europe that is not stained with blood.”
(Helvetius, 18th c.)

What Helvetius said in the 18th c. may still be true today. What’s more, the same may be said of bananas and pineapples. Discuss.
TIFF: Colonialism Hits Home

MATERIALS for a Class of 30
- 30 “neckbands” — strips of heavy paper
- 10 large sheets of newsprint
- 5 felt pens
- 1 copy of Notes About Tiffs and Tiffplan for Tiffs; 4 copies of Earthplan for Earthlings
- scrap paper for secret messages
- 5 sets of 6 nametags in different colours, one for each group: Wheatville, Kneebone, Metropolis, Riotown, Tiff, and a matching sign to stand on a desk with the name in large letters
- 5 copies of page 50, the Development Graph and Questions for Discussion

ROOM SET-UP
5 desks are across the front of the room for the Mayors and Great Tiffing. On each desk is the large coloured sign indicating the name of the group. The rest of the desks or chairs are arranged in groups suitable for strategizing.

TIME REQUIREMENTS
1. Understanding Culture: 25 min.
2. Meeting 1: 10 min.
3. Strategy Session 1: 10 min.
4. Meeting 2: 10 min.
5. Strategy Session 2: 10 min.
6. Meeting 3: 10 min.
7. Strategy Session 3: 10 min.
8. Final Meeting & Discussion: 30 min.

TOTAL: 1 hour 55 minutes

NOTE: This time frame is for groups with a minimum of time; the game can easily be stretched to 3 hours. Teachers may want to follow up with another period in which students write about some of the things they felt and learned about colonialism during the game.

GROUPS
Participants should be divided into groups: 1 group of Tiffs and 1 to 4 groups of Earthlings (Town Councils). A class of 30 should be divided into 5 groups of 6 students.

Tiffs: Extra-terrestrial beings who have landed on earth with an eye to major zucchini production (See Notes about Tiffs). The Tiffs will wear neckbands, and will have extra neckbands to distribute if they wish to.

Earthlings (Town Councils of Metropolis, Riotown, Wheatville and Kneebone): You are members of a typical town council. Many of you have families, and they are like most earth families, earning money to live and to enjoy doing the things they like doing. Your towns are in an agricultural area, and so you are concerned with maintaining healthy, productive farms, and also maintaining factories and businesses in your community so that your young people can find jobs.

Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look
NOTES ABOUT TIFFS

Why They Came to Earth:
- Tiffs come from the planet Tiff, which is now so covered with factories and homes that there is no longer enough land to grow food. And the favourite food of the Tiffs is ... you guessed it ... zucchini. Their economic purpose on Earth is to produce huge quantities of this delicacy, process it by drying, salting, or pickling it, and send it back to Tiff. It is important to realize that the Tiffs don't intend to fit into the Earth economy and pay for zucchinis; in fact, they don't have any Earth money. They have to think of other methods.

The Tiffs are very proud of the Tiff culture and social organization, and their social purpose on Earth is to "civilize" the Earthlings to become more like Tiffs.

Tiff Culture:
- In Tiff culture, necks are considered very private parts of the body, and it is considered extremely indecent to appear in public without wearing a neckband.
- Tiffs have little patience with celebrations and gift-giving occasions which they observe on earth; these seem to them a great waste of time and resources and they feel that earthlings would be far better off without them. They are also amazed at the time Earthlings spend on sports when they could be better employed working.
- Tiffs pride themselves on their music, which is entirely based upon two notes sung in a variety of different rhythms. They also dance to this music, in the distinctive Tiffdance, which consists of standing still and letting their arms rise and fall in time to the 2-note rhythms.

Tiff Social Organization:
- Tiffs follow their emperor Great Tiff, who, they feel, is responsible for the maintenance of all order in the Galaxy. Each sentence in their language begins with the words: "In obedience to Great Tiff . . . ."
- On each planet where the Tiffs land, they install a representative of the Great Tiff to maintain Tiff law and order. This person — Great Tiffing — is responsible (with advice from his council of Tiffs) for maintaining a system of justice on the outer planets, of which Earth is one.
- Tiff society is organized around the State-Unit. At birth, children are put in groups of 8, each group supervised by a Tiff Leader. Children are instructed in the ways of Great Tiff and in Tiff language, sciences, music, and responsibilities. The Tiffs who land on earth are surprised to observe that earth children live with their birth families. They consider this a very unhealthy emotional and educational situation.

Tiff Technology:
- Tiffs are very scientifically advanced, and have recently developed two inventions which give them great power:
  — the Tiffship, which allows them to travel almost instantaneously between their home planet of Tiff and other planets;
  — the Tiffgun, which allows them to immobilize large segments of population.

THE GAME
Understanding Culture (25 min.)
- Divide into groups (see above). In this Time-Block, the task of each group will be to try to understand the culture that they represent.

Tiffplan
— Read over the Notes About Tiffs.

— Choose roles:
- Great Tiffling: will make laws and administer justice, with the advice of your fellow Tiffs;
- Agricultural Representative: will figure out laws and methods of getting farmers to switch from growing grain and other crops to growing zucchini to be sent back to Tiff. (You may want to consider land takeovers, taxes to be paid in Tiffdollars — which are only paid for things like zucchini, changing the laws, etc.)
- Industrial Representative: will consider how to change many of the Earth factories into zucchini-processing plants, to get the zucchini ready to be shipped back to Tiff. You may want to talk to the Agricultural Representative about methods.
- Morality Representative: will try to get these Earthlings into decent moral shape, i.e. get them to cover their necks with neckbands and make sure they preface each sentence with the words "In obedience to Great Tiff . . . ."
- Cultural Representative: will try to replace all this crazy, disorganized Earth music with proper Tiff music and dance. Also, you
Earthplan
For the Town Councils of Metropolis, Riotown, Wheatville and Kneebone

Select a Mayor, Recorder, and Messenger
• Mayor: will announce by-laws, after receiving advice from his/her councillors
• Recorder: will record major decisions and announcements on newsprint, using felt pens. The recorder will also fill in the Development Graph at the end of each Strategy Session
• Messenger: will carry secret messages to the Tiffs and other Town Councils

The entire council is concerned about 2 major areas:

• Economic
You want a good variety of different industries and businesses in the town and a good variety of crops and good crop prices in the surrounding countryside. You also want the fruit and vegetables from the farms to come to the town to provide food for the townspeople, and to be canned and frozen in the town factories. This way, young people will be able to get jobs in the town or on the farms, and your community will be prosperous.

• Social/Cultural
You want the people in your community to be happy, well-fed, secure in their families, and participating in a variety of musical and educational events.

All of you, since you are Earthlings, are used to certain things about Earth Culture. Spend the first time-block developing your Town Plan, outlining the most important things about your culture that you wouldn’t want to change. Use these headings:

Economic: What kind of industries and businesses do you want to have in your town? What services (grain storage, roads and transportation, etc.) do you think are necessary to help the farmers?

Social/Cultural:
Cultural: What kind of celebrations do you want to support (e.g. Christmas, birthdays, special events)? What kind of musical or sports facilities?
Social Organization: What is important to you about families? How should people be elected to make decisions?
Education: What kind of education do you think your citizens need?
Rights and Freedoms: What kind of human rights and freedoms do you support in your community?

On one or two large sheets of newsprint, draw up a Town Plan using the headings above. Make sure your plan includes the main things that you think are important for a healthy community.
Part 2 First Meeting (10 Minutes)

The Daily Herald  June 20, 1996

PEOPLE FROM OUTER SPACE!!!
Representatives of the planet of Tiff arrived unexpectedly today in the small town of Kneebone, Alberta. "I was just looking out over my wheat field," said farmer John Smart, "and all of a sudden this grey saucer whizzed in from nowhere. According to them, we should all be happy that they're here, but we aren't."

The Mayors and Great Tiffing take the chairs in front of the class. Tiffing speaks first, outlining the 2 changes the Tiffs require immediately of the Earthlings. He or she also promises eternal friendship with the Earthlings. The Mayors respond, mentioning some of the main points of their Community Plans and expressing any concerns they may have about the Tiffs. (Each speech 1 minute maximum.)

REMEMBER TO EARTHLINGS:
• If you push the Tiffs too far, they will use their Tiffguns.
• The Tiffs need your cooperation, because they want you to provide the labor to grow and process their zucchinis. This is your one point of strength.

Part 3 First Strategy Session (10 minutes)

The Tiffs and the Community Councils meet in their groups to record on the Development Graph the effects of the 2 changes and to plan their future strategies.

• Development Graph
As a group, decide what effect the 2 changes announced by the Tiffs will have on your economic future and your social future. Record these decisions on the Development Graph. (Do not show your Development Graph to other groups until requested to do so by the Facilitator.)

• Plan Strategies
The Tiffs — Plan your next 2 required changes.
The Earthlings — Survey your options:
  • resistance
  • banding together with the other communities
  • revolt
  • negotiation with the Tiffs for future economic and social guarantees (You could do this together with other communities, or you could try to get better terms by negotiating separately.)

Plan your strategy. You may meet with other groups at this time, or send secret messages by messenger.

Part 4 Meeting 2 (10 minutes)
Follow outline of Meeting 1

Part 5 Strategy Session 2 (10 minutes)
Follow outline of Strategy Session 1

Just before Meeting 3, the Facilitator should produce a "Disaster Flash." See The Facilitator below.

Part 6 Meeting 3 (10 minutes)
Follow outline of Meeting 1

Part 7 Strategy Session 3 (10 minutes)
As above, but students are also asked to go over their original Town Plan, and to cross out the points that have been wiped out by the Tiffs.

Part 8 The Final Meeting (30 minutes)

It is important to link the experience of the game with the realities of colonization.

In small groups (10 minutes)
Staying in their groups, participants try to stand back from the experience of the game and examine some of the questions raised by it. Discuss the Questions for Discussion (the recorder should take brief notes).

In the whole group (20 minutes)
• Go over each of the Questions for Discussion, making sure that each group has a chance to respond.
• It might be useful to extend the time-line: Ask the group what would have happened had the game gone on for several more sessions? What would the final outcome have been?
Development Graph
Using as your starting point your general situation at the beginning of the game, map the up or down progress of your town (if you are Earthers) or Tiff group (if you are Tiffs). Is the economic health of your community getting worse or better? How about the social and cultural aspects of your lives — things like family life, music, traditions, etc.?

Questions for Discussion
- How did the people in your group feel as the game progressed?
- What happened to the economic and socio-cultural health of your community as recorded on the Development Graph?
- What important points from your Town Plan were lost because of changes imposed by the Tiffs?
- Using most of the land to grow zucchini for export might have some environmental effects. What are they?
- How is what happened in the game like what happened to the Arawak people or the other indigenous people of the Americas?

The Facilitator
Your role is to keep everything going smoothly and within a strict time-frame, and also to stir up and challenge the players.

1. Make suggestions to keep things moving
   e.g. Urge the Tiffs to think more about how they will force farmers to grow zucchini for nothing, and businesses to convert their factories to zucchini processing plants. What laws can they make? How might they win cooperation from the mayors?

   Move through the room during strategy sessions, urging town councils to send secret messages to the Tiffs and to each other with suggestions of joint actions, etc.

2. Point out Consequences
   e.g. When more land is used for zucchini growing, what will that do to the local food supply?

3. Disaster Flashes
   Halfway through the game it might be a good idea to produce a “disaster flash”
   e.g. Tifflos, a disease fatal to humans, strikes. One-third of your town dies.
   or
   Message from Tiff: We’re not getting enough zucchini! Grow more!

4. Link with the Real World
   In final discussion, help the students make as many links as possible to the real colonization process.

The idea for TIFF came from an article by Stephen Hume, “We are all the proud purveyors of Klingon justice,” Vancouver Sun, February 11, 1991.
Selected Resources

Print


Galeano, Eduardo. Memory of Fire (3 volumes). Translated by Cedric Belfrage. New York: Pantheon Books, 1985. A literary account of the colonization of the indigenous people of both North and South America (with emphasis on the latter). Galeano’s earlier work — Open Veins of Latin America — is also an important work.


Project North. Aboriginal Issues in British Columbia: A Resource Kit, 1991. An excellent current compilation of information about B.C. aboriginal land claims. Contains a historical overview, a comprehensive bibliography, concise answers to many questions on aboriginal rights, and suggestions for working towards social change. Available for $12 from 1611 Quadra St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 2L5


Audio-Visual

Days of Future Past (30 minutes): This video traces the colonial histories of three countries: Peru, Malaysia, and Niger, and shows some of the problems which each country has been left with. Days of Future Past is part of the Paths of Development series which has been placed in major public libraries across Canada by CIDA. For B.C. teachers, this video is also available through Image Media Services.

The Mission (Rating: PG)
A feature movie based on the experience of the Guarani living in the lands at the very southern limit of Brazil. In 1750, the Treaty of Madrid between Spain and Portugal changed the ownership of the territory occupied by the Guarani missions. The film raises a number of interesting questions:
• What does the experience of the Guarani show about what it’s like to be under a colonial power?
• How did the white slave traders view the Guarani? How was their view related to economic gain?
• What was the role of the church? In what ways did the church make it easier for the business people and slave owners to take over? In what ways did the church provide protection for the Guarani?

Dances With Wolves (Rating: PG-13)
Set at the end of the American Civil War, this feature movie depicts some of the culture of the plains Sioux just a few years prior to the case study on pages 20 to 21, and documents the effects of white encroachment on this culture.
• What was the Sioux culture like, according to this movie? (How were decisions reached? What status did women have in the community? What things were important to the Sioux?)
• How did the Sioux people relate to the animals and to other peoples? How did their attitudes contrast to those of the white people in the movie?
• There were two native peoples depicted in the movie: the Sioux and the Pawnee. How did the groups compare? Did you notice how the American Army took advantage of the differences between these peoples?

(Note: Each of these movies contains some sex and violence. The teacher is encouraged to preview them before use.)
Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look

Through lively dialogue and illustrations, Colonialism in the Americas: A Critical Look traces the history of the first peoples of South, Central and North America. How did these people live before the Europeans arrived? What was the impact of Columbus and his successors on their lives and cultures? What are the continuing effects of colonialism in today’s world?

This examination of colonialism and its effects is broadened by case studies, class activities and a colonial simulation game.

VIDEA
(Victoria International Development Education Association)

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