

Chapter 2 Natives, Settlers, and Slaves

A brief introduction to the native peoples whose lands were “discovered” by European explorers, colonists and settlers, and the African slaves who were the third principal cohort in what became the United States.

Key words: Albion, African American, Black Codes, caricature, colonist, conqueror, Dred Scott Decision, Emancipation Proclamation, Executive Order 8802, Executive Order 9981, Harlem Renaissance, Jim Crow Laws, Native American, Plessy vs. Ferguson, Reconstruction, Red Power, reservation, slavery, Trail of Tears, WASP

Issues for Classroom Discussion

In 1892, many in this country celebrated the “discovery” of America by Christopher Columbus. In 1992, on the sesquicentennial of his arrival, many saw him in very different terms. He was termed a “crass exploiter” rather than “courageous explorer.” What caused this dramatic shift in attitude?

Why were Native Americans first characterized as “Indians”?

Discuss characteristics – and caricatures of “natives.” Discuss the characteristics – and caricatures of the colonists. What are the limits that ought to be placed on over generalizing about those in either cohort of people?

What were some of the principal reasons that African slaves were brought to the Americas?

Consider viewing “The Black Robe.” (see Part IV for description)