



GOODBYE, COLUMBUS DAY

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Thanksgiving. Independence Day. Memorial Day.

Holidays are a great time to riddle Americans with needless, oppressive guilt.

But the one that stands head and shoulders above the rest is Columbus Day—the day where progressives indoctrinate your children into believing Columbus to be Satan incarnate, the USA to be his evil spawn, and the Native Americans to be pacifists. And so now we have “Indigenous Peoples Day” or, as it would have been named thirty years ago, “Aboriginals Day,” or, as it would have been named ten or fifteen years ago, “Native Americans Day,” or, as it could be named tomorrow in Canada, “First Nations Peoples Day.”

Feeling the urge to self-inflict grievous bodily harm yet? That’s only natural, because the whole charade has become an exercise in hating Western civilization, which is really just an exercise in hating yourself.

First, as far as Columbus goes, the guy deserves some credit, right? Flawed, to be sure, but he was the greatest navigator of his age—the first person to cross the Atlantic from the continent of Europe. And he did so without any maps and only three small ships. If you can name them, by the way, comment below, as I’m sure your professor can’t.

But your professor probably has taught you the tale of Columbus as a villain, usually as a starting off point to indict the United States as a whole, often relying on a few key myths and some pivotal lies by omission.

So, to start with, I’ll bet that you probably believe Columbus and other European settlers to simply have committed mass genocide against Native Americans...sorry; *Indigenous*.

But here’s the truth: While there were many examples of brutal warfare between Europeans and Native Americans, neither side actually committed genocide; in fact, there was never an outright policy of Indian extermination.

The Native Americans were mostly wiped out through infectious diseases that the settlers had inadvertently brought with them. Of the estimated 250,000 natives in Hispaniola, Columbus’s first stop in the Americas in 1492, new infectious diseases wiped out a staggering 95% of their population by 1517.

As far as the genocide by violence, you can look at any historical account of even the most one-sided battles and find that they were still just that—battles. Take Wounded Knee

(although hundreds of years later, I only bring it up because I know that if I don't, you will). It's become ubiquitous with the idea of Native Americans' genocide. After all, there were 150-350 Aborigines killed or wounded. That's terrible, but there were also 25 American soldiers killed and 39 wounded. That's not genocide; that's a one-sided beatdown with Old Glory wielding the hammer.

And sometimes the "massacres" went the other direction. See the Apaches for reference, or the Comanches, or a dozen or so other tribes. So, the natives often gave as good as they got—not exactly the way genocide usually tends to work.

Here's another thing I bet you've been made to believe: that many Native Americans...sorry; American Indians...sorry; I don't know what take your pick lived in harmony with the environment until Columbus arrived, and European settlers destroyed the land with their evil technology.

Truth? Not only did the Natives brutally take out PEOPLE, but they took out entire forests and hunted species to extinction.

Squatting Bear and his First Nations buddies weren't hopping into kayaks to block whaling ships, probably because they were too busy killing seals to waterproof their kayaks.

You also probably believe that the Native American...sorry; Two-Spirited-First Nations-something-or-other culture was a beautiful, pantheistic one of peace.

The truth is... not so much. When Columbus arrived, the islands were inhabited by two main tribes: the Arawaks, who were passive and friendly, and the Caribs, who were vicious cannibals. The Arawaks actually lived in fear of the Caribs for—you guessed it—the reasons being that they hunted them down to enslave them and eat them. Yes—eat them. Ironically, we get the name "Caribbean Islands" from those famous people-eaters.

The only way settlers were able to conquer this land was through the help of Native Americans who teamed up with them to settle the score with other tribes who were even bigger jerks than they were!

That's not even to mention the populations in Central and South America, famous for ritual human sacrifice. You think Cortes was able to command and conquer with only 500 or so Conquistadors? Of course not! It took 50,000 screaming, ANGRY allied natives who'd had it up to here with being tortured, enslaved and forced to carry gold for the *other* native Aztecs. At some point, they decided to roll the dice and go with the guys sporting funny beards and metal hats.

None of this is to say that the early settlers were perfect, or that they didn't carry out their fair share of pretty scummy stuff. But to use America's mistakes as the brush with which to paint the entirety of its history while completely ignoring the indigenous lifestyle of barbarism and borderline evil is inaccurate at best, dishonest at worst. There were plenty of bloody, horrendous

battles between the Europeans and the Indians. When a Neolithic tribe encounters a more technologically advanced people, the guys with the boom-boom sticks usually win.

Columbus is not the issue here, and never was. This whole “Indigenous Peoples Day” charade is about teaching your children to despise Western civilization and anybody who dare defend it.

But then again, that could just be my Western civ privilege talking.

Happy Columbus Day.

I’m Steven Crowder for Prager University.