

SHOULD COLUMBUS DAY BE RENAMED TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY?



By Moubon Kurukumbi

Columbus was a man who is credited with discoveries and ideas he did not make. Why should we honor a man who has not done anything for us? Why not honor the Native peoples who have faced so many struggles with settlers, disease, and deforestation? The day revives years of oppression, terror, and sadness for people already inhabiting the new world. Instead, they changed it to acknowledge a people who fought for their rights when no one else cared. I think we should rename the day to honor the people who have fought so hard but their struggles continue today.

Columbus was a man of many sides. When he and his men arrived, they robbed villages, enslaved the kind indigenous people, and did not make any worthy discoveries while doing so. When Columbus went to the new world, he was looking for gold. Since he couldn't find much, he brought back slaves and robbed goods from the Native People's villages. Columbus never actually set foot in America. He is credited for being the first person in the new world. This is not true for many reasons. Number one, there were already Native Americans living there. Number two, he thought he was in India, and he didn't even know where he was. Number three, people say he was the first European, but this wasn't true. Vikings arrived in North America before him. Lastly, he never touched America. He landed near the Bahamas!

Native people have been harassed and treated poorly for decades. Explorers brought disease, destruction, and death to the natives. It was known as the Columbian exchange or the Biological Exchange because of all of the life exchanged. Many settlers killed Natives, enslaved them, and took their land. Their rights were not recognized. Although they were in America before America was formed, they were not allowed to vote, to assimilate, and their land shrunk as America grew. Many Native Americans were killed. They have fought so hard and so long for

rights that should have been unalienable rights. Thomas Jefferson wrote that all men are created equal. Are these people not considered people?

Columbus should not be honored by a holiday. He did nothing worthy of receiving a holiday. He killed thousands of Native Americans, ravaged thousands of villages, and set up a government which led to a genocide. None of these actions are worthy of putting in a book. He did not discover the world was round, he didn't even know he was in America, and he did nothing else worthy of recognition. Native Americans, on the other hand, deserve this and more. They have fought for ages for rights that should belong to everyone. They have been forced to give up their culture and follow religions and ideals they do not identify with. Their struggles of keeping their culture alive and their success at keeping their identity is an inspiring story that deserves to be told.



In conclusion, Columbus was a man of very little accomplishments, but many more wrongdoings. He should not be honored by a holiday that he does not earn, but Native Americans deserve recognition. That is why Columbus Day should be renamed to Indigenous Peoples Day.

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<https://www.npr.org/2019/10/14/769083847/columbus-day-or-indigenous-peoples-day>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2013/10/14/christopher-columbus-3-things-you-think-he-did-that-he-didnt/>