

Digital American Literature Anthology  
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Unit Two: Explorers, Invaders, and Colonists

When American literature was first defined as a discipline in the nineteenth century, the first writers covered were mostly born within and were citizens of the new minted United States. The fledgling nation wanted its own unique brand literature that it could call its own. Names like Irving, Cooper, Bryant, Longfellow, and Lowell all led off the early anthologies of this field. Later, as definitions of American literature expanded, the canon of writers grew and came to include those Europeans adventurers, conquerors and settlers who first observed and recorded their interactions in what would eventually become portions of this country. Much of the positive Eurocentric viewpoint that we once took for granted about these writers and what they wrote still very much remains in the popular imagination. However, in the academy over the last few decades, we have come to view the interactions of Europeans and native peoples and places with a somewhat more critical eye.

Explorers like Christopher Columbus, Bartolome de las Casas, Alvar Nunez Cabeza De Vaca, and John Smith all wrote with particular audiences and specific purposes in mind. Those original audience and purposes are certainly worth our consideration. But today we also read their chronicles and observations through other lenses, with a fuller understanding that the glories of conquest and the rewards of colonization, for some, come at a steep cost for others.

As the American Passages website asks, in studying these writings:

*How do [these texts] represent the violence and exploitation that were part of the European exploration of the New World? What kinds of beliefs and expectations did European colonizers bring with them to the Americas? How did the sophisticated and varied cultures of native peoples impact the settlements Europeans created in America? How do European writers represent the experiences and cultures of indigenous peoples? How does gender complicate power relations in contact zones and borderlands?*

[American Passages, Unit Two, Exploring Borderlands](#)

Some other themes of this unit on exploration, conquest, and colonization are described in the Heath Anthology Online Instructor's Guide:

[Two themes are] *the newness of the experience and the need to relate it in European terms. Columbus initiated the dialogue between American reality and the European codes of signification.*

*Another theme would be the strategies utilized to convince powerful readers of the benefits of the New World. Again, Columbus marks the beginning. These authors are constantly selling the unknown to potential investors and visitors. Here begins the tradition of hawking new property developments beyond the urban blight of the reader's familiar surroundings.*

*Cabeza de Vaca introduces the familiar theme of wandering the back roads of the country--a sixteenth-century Kerouac. It is the theme of finding oneself through the difficult pilgrimage into*

*the wilderness--a Carlos Castaneda avant la lettre. Cabeza de Vaca is transformed through suffering, perseverance, and the ability to acculturate.*

[Other] texts introduce inter-European rivalries as a major theme of American culture. Competition over territory resulted in violent encounters. The encounters with the Native American population were equally violent, introducing the theme of the subjugation of the native peoples, who would rather retain their own way of life. The arrogant assumption that one's own system is naturally superior to the native's way is again an indisputable characteristic of U.S. history.

*Another theme is the sincerity of religious motivation, in spite of the contradicting evidence of economic ambitions. This conflict between the philanthropic ideals and the exploitative motivation still underlies U.S. foreign policy.*

See the rest of the essay at:

<http://college.cengage.com/english/heath/syllabuild/iguide/litdiscx.html>

To summarize and expand a bit, we can also read these sets of texts as examples of travel writing, as examples of writing about conquests, and as examples of writing to persuade its readers of the benefits of coming to these newly discovered shores.

Elements of these types (of explorers, conquerors, and colonists) of writing include:

1. travel writing

- a. writing about the unknown
- b. comparisons made to the known
- c. language is inadequate, old words for new things
- d. things in the new world must be named (possessed)

2. writing of conquest

- a. conquering a new land, claiming it for king/queen
- b. role in life to subdue and dominate, convert "heathens" to Christianity
- c. self-justification
- d. new land like a woman's body, accepting bride to the European groom (see: [American Passages, "The Romance of Colonization"](#))

3. writing as economic perspective and salesmanship/rhetoric

- a. it all boils down to money: spices, gold, crops, fish
- b. salesmanship very important, rhetoric of convincing more people to come to America

Why is it called "America" instead of Columbia?

Columbus refused to believe in his lifetime that he had not made it to the Far East in his voyages. As such, the European name for this new land, America, comes from Amerigo Vespucci (1454 – 1512), an Italian explorer and cartographer, who argued that the New World was actually a newly discovered land mass. The widespread publication of letters written by Vespucci led German map maker Martin Waldseemüller to name the new continent America on his world map of 1507. The rest, so to speak, is history.

## **Selections from Explorers, Invaders, and Colonists**

### **Christopher Columbus (1451? – 1506)**

[[image](#)] Christopher Columbus was born in or around Genoa, in what is now Italy, probably around 1451. He is best known for completing four voyages across the Atlantic Ocean, and was long called the discoverer of the New World. His famous first voyage in 1492, sponsored by Spain's King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, brought him to the Bahaman and Caribbean Islands southeast of Florida. Throughout his life, he thought he had arrived in the Indies, far to the east of Europe, and he mistakenly called the indigenous peoples he found there Indians. Columbus was a better sailor than politician. After he was appointed a colonial governor by the Spanish monarchy, he became embroiled in political intrigues while trying to maintain his authority and positions. His opponents eventually found ways to remove him from power and even had him arrested. He died in 1506, in Spain, in poverty and poor health, a number of years after returning from his last voyage. The United States, especially in its first century of existence, was long nicknamed Columbia. It celebrates Columbus Day on the second Monday of October, commemorating October 12, 1492 as the day Columbus arrived in the Americas. This holiday is not without controversy, since Columbus represents the first of many Europeans who claimed and colonized lands long occupied by others and who enslaved and tortured natives and dispossessed them of their own cultures and religious beliefs. Though his original journal is lost, a copied version exists written by Bartolomé de las Casas. Works actually penned by Columbus include a number of letters, which are some of the oldest written accounts of the New World penned by a European. Works about Columbus include Joel Barlow's imaginative poem, *The Columbiad* (1807), Washington Irving's semi-factual biography, *A History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (1828), and Filson Young's *Christopher Columbus and the New World of His Discovery* (1906). Scholarly books include Kirkpatrick Sale's *The Conquest of Paradise: Christopher Columbus and the Columbian Legacy* (1990), Barry Lopez's *The Rediscovery of North America* (1992), William and Carla Phillips' *The Worlds of Christopher Columbus* (1993), and Miles Davidson's *Columbus Then and Now: A Life Reexamined* (1997).

*illustration: [First landing of Columbus on the shores of the New World by Dióscoro Teófilo Puebla Tolín, 1862.](#)*

## from "Letter of Columbus, Describing the Results of His First Voyage" (1493)

Columbus, Christopher. "Letter to Luis de Santangel Regarding the First Voyage." *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, Translated by Cecil Jane. London: The Argonaut Press, 1930.

source of electronic text:

[http://mith.umd.edu/eada/html/display.php?docs=columbus\\_santangel.xml&action=show](http://mith.umd.edu/eada/html/display.php?docs=columbus_santangel.xml&action=show)

SIR:

Since I know that you will be pleased at the great victory with which Our Lord has crowned my voyage, I write this to you, from which you will learn how in thirty-three days I passed from the Canary Islands to the Indies, with the fleet which the most illustrious king and queen, our sovereigns, gave to me. There I found very many islands, filled with people innumerable, and of them all I have taken possession for their highnesses, by proclamation made and with the royal standard unfurled, and no opposition was offered to me. To the first island which I found I gave the name "San Salvador," in remembrance of the Divine Majesty, Who had marvelously bestowed all this; the Indians call it "Guanahani." To the second, I gave the name the island of "Santa Maria de Concepcion," to the third, "Fernandina," to the fourth, "Isabella," to the fifth island, "Juana," and so each received from me a new name.

When I came to Juana, I followed its coast to the westward, and I found it to be so extensive that I thought that it must be the mainland, the province of Cathay. And since there were neither towns nor villages on the seashore, but small hamlets only, with the people of which I could not have speech, because they all fled immediately, I went forward on the same course, thinking that I could not fail to find great cities and towns. At the end of many leagues, seeing that there was no change and that the coast was bearing me northwards, which I wished to avoid, since winter was already approaching and I proposed to make from it to the south, and as, moreover, the wind was carrying me forward, I determined not to wait for a change in the weather and retraced my path as far as a remarkable harbour known to me. From that point, I sent two men inland to learn if there were a king or great cities. They travelled three days' journey, finding an infinity of small hamlets and people without number, but nothing of importance. For this reason, they returned.

I understood sufficiently from other Indians, whom I had already taken, that this land was nothing but an island, and I therefore followed its coast eastward for one hundred and seven leagues to the point where it ended. From that point, I saw another island, distant about eighteen leagues from the first, to the east, and to it I at once gave the name "Española." I went there and followed its northern coast, as I had followed that of Juana, to the eastward for one hundred and eighty-eight great leagues in a straight line. This island and all the others are very fertile to a limitless degree, and this island is extremely so. In it there are many harbours on the coast of the sea, beyond comparison with others that I know in Christendom, and many rivers, good and large, which is marvellous. Its lands are high; there are in it many sierras and very lofty mountains, beyond comparison with that of Teneriffe. All are most beautiful, of a thousand shapes; all are accessible and are filled with trees of a thousand kinds and tall, so that they seem to touch the sky. I am told that they never lose their foliage, and this I can believe, for I saw them

as green and lovely as they are in Spain in May, and some of them were flowering, some bearing fruit, and some on another stage, according to their nature. The nightingale was singing and other birds of a thousand kinds, in the month of November, there where I went. There are six or eight kinds of palm, which are a wonder to behold on account of their beautiful variety, but so are the other trees and fruits and plants. In it are marvellous pine groves; there are very wide and smiling plains, and there is honey; and there are birds of many kinds and fruits in great diversity. In the interior, there are mines of metals, and the population is without number. Española is a marvel.

The sierras and the mountains, the plains, the arable and pasture lands, are so lovely and so rich for planting and sowing, for breeding cattle of every kind, for building towns and villages. The harbours of the sea here are such as cannot be believed to exist unless they have been seen, and so with the rivers, many and great, and of good water, the majority of which contain gold. In the trees, fruits and plants, there is a great difference from those of Juana. In this island, there are many spices and great mines of gold and of other metals.

The people of this island and of all the other islands which I have found and of which I have information, all go naked, men and women, as their mothers bore them, although some of the women cover a single place with the leaf of a plant or with a net of cotton which they make for the purpose. They have no iron or steel or weapons, nor are they fitted to use them. This is not because they are not well built and of handsome stature, but because they are very marvellously timorous. They have no other arms than spears made of canes, cut in seeding time, to the ends of which they fix a small sharpened stick. Of these they do not dare to make use, for many times it has happened that I have sent ashore two or three men to some town to have speech with them, and countless people have come out to them, and as soon as they have seen my men approaching, they have fled, a father even not waiting for his son. This is not because ill has been done to any one of them; on the contrary, at every place where I have been and have been able to have speech with them, I have given to them of that which I had, such as cloth and many other things, receiving nothing in exchange. But so they are, incurably timid. It is true that, after they have been reassured and have lost this fear, they are so guileless and so generous with all that they possess, that no one would believe it who has not seen it. They refuse nothing that they possess, if it be asked of them; on the contrary, they invite any one to share it and display as much love as if they would give their hearts. They are content with whatever trifle of whatever kind it may be that is given to them, whether it be of value or valueless. I forbade that they should be given things so worthless as fragments of broken crockery, scraps of broken glass and ends of straps, although when they were able to get them, they fancied that they possessed the best jewel in the world. So it was found that for a strap a sailor received gold to the weight of two and a half castellanos, and others received much more for other things which were worth less. As for new blancas, for them they would give everything which they had, although it might be two or three castellanos' weight of gold or an arroba or two of spun cotton. They took even the pieces of the broken hoops of the wine barrels and, like savages, gave what they had, so that it seemed to me to be wrong and I forbade it. I gave them a thousand handsome good things, which I had brought, in order that they might conceive affection for us and, more than that, might become Christians and be inclined to the love and service of your highnesses and of the whole Castilian nation, and strive to aid us and to give us of the things which they have in abundance and which are necessary to us.

They do not hold any creed nor are they idolaters; only they all believe that power and good are in the heavens and are very firmly convinced that I, with these ships and men, came from the heavens, and in this belief they everywhere received me after they had mastered their fear. This belief is not the result of ignorance, for they are, on the contrary, of a very acute intelligence and they are men who navigate all those seas, so that it is amazing how good an account they give of everything. It is because they have never seen people clothed or ships of such a kind.

As soon as I arrived in the Indies, in the first island which I found, I took by force some of the natives, in order that they might learn and might give me information of that which there is in these parts. And so it was that they soon understood us, and we them, either by speech or signs, and they have been very serviceable. I still carry them with me, and they are always assured that I come from Heaven, for all the intercourse which they have had with me. They were the first to announce this wherever I went, and the others went running from house to house, and the neighbouring towns, with loud cries of, "Come! Come! See the men from Heaven!" So all, men and women alike, when their minds are set at rest concerning us, came, not one, small or great, remaining behind, and they all brought something to eat and drink, which they gave with extraordinary affection.

In all the islands, they have very many canoes, which are like rowing fustas, some larger and some smaller; some are greater than a fusta of eighteen benches. They are not so broad, because they are made of a single log of wood, but a fusta would not keep up with them in rowing, since their speed is a thing incredible. In these they navigate among all those islands, which are innumerable, and carry their goods. One of these canoes I have seen with seventy and eighty men in it, each one with his oar.

In all these islands, I saw no great diversity in the appearance of the people or in their manners and language. On the contrary, they all understand one another, which is a very curious thing, on account of which I hope that their highnesses will determine upon their conversion to our holy faith, towards which they are very inclined.

I have already said how I went one hundred and seven leagues in a straight line from west to east along the seashore of the island of Juana, and as a result of this voyage I can say that this island is larger than England and Scotland together, for, beyond these one hundred and seven leagues, there remain to the westward two provinces to which I have not gone. One of these provinces they call "Avan," and there people are born with tails. These provinces cannot have a length of less than fifty or sixty leagues, as I could understand from those Indians whom I have and who know all the islands.

[text omitted]

In all these islands, it seems to me that all men are content with one woman, and to their chief or king they give as many as twenty. It appears to me that the women work more than do the men. I have not been able to learn if they hold private property; it seemed to me to be that all took a share in that which any one had, especially of eatable things.

In these islands I have so far found no human monstrosities, as many expected, but on the contrary the whole population is very well formed, nor are they negroes as in Guinea, but their hair is flowing and they are not born where there is intense force in the rays of the sun. It is true that the sun has there great power, although it is distant from the equinoctial line twenty-six degrees. In these islands, where there are high mountains, the cold was severe this winter, but they endure it, being used to it and with the help of meats which they consume with many and extremely hot spices. As I have found no monsters, so I have had no report of any, except in an island "Quaris," which is the second at the coming into the Indies, and which is inhabited by a people who are regarded in all the islands as very fierce and who eat human flesh. They have many canoes with which they range through all the islands of India and pillage and take whatever they can. They are no more malformed than are the others, except that they have the custom of wearing their hair long like women, and they use bows and arrows of the same cane stems, with a small piece of wood at the end, owing to their lack of iron which they do not possess. They are ferocious among these other people who are cowardly to an excessive degree, but I make no more account of them than of the rest. These are they who have intercourse with the women of "Martinio," which is the first island met on the way from Spain to the Indies, in which there is not a man. These women engage in no feminine occupation, but use bows and arrows of cane, like those already mentioned, and they arm and protect themselves with plates of copper, of which they have much.

In another island, which they assure me is larger than Española, the people have no hair. In it there is gold incalculable, and from it and from the other islands I bring with me Indians as evidence.

In conclusion, to speak only of that which has been accomplished on this voyage, which was so hasty, their highnesses can see that I will give them as much gold as they may need, if their highness will render me very slight assistance; moreover, I will give them spices and cotton, as much as their highnesses shall command; and mastic, as much as they shall order to be shipped and which, up to now, has been found only in Greece, in the island of Chios, and the Seignory sells it for what it pleases; and aloe, as much as they shall order to be shipped; and slaves, as many as they shall order to be shipped and who will be from the idolaters. I believe also that I have found rhubarb and cinnamon, and I shall find a thousand other things of value, which the people whom I have left there will have discovered, for I have not delayed at any point, so far as the wind allowed me to sail, except in the town of Navidad, in order to leave it secured and well established, and in truth I should have done much more if the ships had served me as reason demanded.

[text omitted]

This in accordance with that which has been accomplished, thus briefly. Done in the caravel, off the Canary Islands, on the fifteenth of February, in the year one thousand four hundred and ninety-three. At your orders.

THE ADMIRAL.

After having written this, and being in the sea of Castile, there came upon me so great a south-south-west wind that I was obliged to lighten ship. But I ran here today into this port of Lisbon, which was the greatest marvel in the world, whence I decided to write to their highnesses. In all the Indies, I have always found weather like May. There I went in thirty-three days and I should have returned in twenty-eight, save for these storms which have detained me for fourteen days, beating about in this sea. Here all the sailors say that never has there been so bad a winter nor so many ships lost. Done on the fourth day of March.

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Original Source: *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus, Being the Journals of his First and Third, and the Letters Concerning his First and Last Voyages, to Which is Added the Account of his Second Voyage* Written by Andres Bernaldez. Now newly Translated and Edited, with an Introduction and Notes, by Cecil Jane. London: The Argonaut Press, 1930.

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### **from Letter of Columbus, Describing His Fourth Voyage (1503)**

Columbus, Christopher. "Letter to Ferdinand and Isabella Regarding the Fourth Voyage." *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, Translated by Cecil Jane. London: The Argonaut Press, 1930

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[http://mith.umd.edu/eada/html/display.php?docs=columbus\\_4thvoyage.xml&action=show](http://mith.umd.edu/eada/html/display.php?docs=columbus_4thvoyage.xml&action=show)

[text omitted]

With a month of fair weather, I shall complete all my voyage. I did not persist in delaying to enter on it, because there was a lack of ships, and for all that concerns your service, I hope in Him Who made me, that I shall be of use. I believe that your highness will remember that I wished to order the construction of ships in a new manner; the brevity of the time did not give room for this, and I foresaw certainly that which has come to pass. I hold that in this trade and mines of such extent and such dominion there is more than there is in all else that has been done in the Indies. This is not a child to be left to the care of a stepmother.

Of Española, Paria, and the other lands, I never think without weeping. I believed that their example would have been to the profit of others; on the contrary, they are in a languid state although they are not dead; the infirmity is incurable or very extensive; let him who brought them to this state come now with the remedy if he can or if he knows it; in destruction, everyone is an adept. It was always the custom to give thanks and promotion to him who imperilled his person. It is not just that he who has been so hostile to this undertaking should enjoy its fruits or that his children should. Those who left the Indies, flying from toils and speaking evil of the matter and of me, have returned with official employment. So it has now been ordained in the

case of Veragua. It is an ill example and without profit for the business and for the justice in the world.

The fear of this, with other sufficient reasons, which I saw clearly, led me to pray your highnesses before I went to discover these islands and Tierra Firme, that you would leave them to me to govern in your royal name. It pleased you; it was a privilege and agreement, and under seal and oath, and you granted me the title of viceroy and admiral and governor—general of all. And you fixed the boundary, a hundred leagues beyond the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands, by a line passing from pole to pole, and you gave me wide power over this and over all that I might further discover. The document states this very fully.

The other most important matter, which calls aloud for redress, remains inexplicable to this moment. Seven years I was at your royal court, where all to whom this undertaking was mentioned, unanimously declared it to be a delusion. Now all, down to the very tailors, seek permission to make discoveries. It can be believed that they go forth to plunder, and it is granted to them to do so, so that they greatly prejudice my honour and do very great damage to the enterprise. It is well to give to God that which is His due and to Caesar that which belongs to him. This is a just sentiment and based on justice.

The lands which here obey your highnesses are more extensive and richer than all other Christian lands. After that I, by the divine will, had placed them under your royal and exalted lordship, and was on the point of securing a very great revenue, suddenly, while I was waiting for ships that I might come to your high presence with victory and with great news of gold, being very secure and joyful, I was made a prisoner and with my two brothers was thrown into a ship, laden with fetters, stripped to the skin, very ill—treated, and without being tried or condemned. Who will believe that a poor foreigner could in such a place rise against your highnesses, without cause, and without the support of some other prince, and being alone among your vassals and natural subjects, and having all my children at your royal court?

I came to serve at the age of twenty—eight years, and now I have not a hair on my body that is not grey, and my body is infirm, and whatever remained to me from those years of service has been spent and taken away from me and sold, and from my brothers, down to my very coat, without my being heard or seen, to my great dishonour. It must be believed that this was not done by your royal command. The restitution of my honour, the reparation of my losses, and the punishment of him who did this, will spread abroad the fame of your royal nobility. The same punishment is due to him who robbed me of the pearls, and to him who infringed my rights as admiral. Very great will be your merit, fame without parallel will be yours, if you do this, and there will remain in Spain a glorious memory of your highnesses, as grateful and just princes.

The pure devotion which I have ever borne to the service of your highnesses, and the unmerited wrong that I have suffered, will not permit me to remain silent, although I would fain do so; I pray your highnesses to pardon me. I am so ruined as I have said; hitherto I have wept for others; now, Heaven have mercy upon me, and may the earth weep for me. Of worldly goods, I have not even a blanca for an offering in spiritual things. Here in the Indies I have become careless of the prescribed forms of religion. Alone in my trouble, sick, in daily expectation of death, and encompassed about by a million savages, full of cruelty, and our foes, and so separated from the

Blessed Sacraments of Holy Church, my soul will be forgotten if it here leaves my body. Weep for me, whoever has charity, truth and justice.

I did not sail upon this voyage to gain honour or wealth; this is certain, for already all hope of that was dead. I came to your highnesses with true devotion and with ready zeal, and I do not lie. I humbly pray your highnesses that if it please God to bring me forth from this place, that you will be pleased to permit me to go to Rome and to other places of pilgrimage. May the Holy Trinity preserve your life and high estate, and grant you increase of prosperity.

Done in the Indies, in the island of Jamaica, on the seventh of July, in the year one thousand five hundred and three.

*Original Source: The Voyages of Christopher Columbus, Being the Journals of his First and Third, and the Letters Concerning his First and Last Voyages, to Which is Added the Account of his Second Voyage Written by Andres Bernaldez. Now newly Translated and Edited, with an Introduction and Notes, by Cecil Jane. London: The Argonaut Press, 1930.*

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[Resources for Explorers, Invaders, and Colonists](#)

## Bartolome de las Casas (1484 – 1566)

[[image](#)] Bartolome de las Casas was born in 1484, in Seville, Spain and became a Dominican friar and later the Bishop of Chiapas, in what is now southern Mexico. During his life, he wrote extensively about the brutal treatment of indigenous peoples at the hands of Spanish colonists and he often campaigned for laws to prevent ongoing atrocities against the natives living in America. Casas' key works expose cruelties and injustices perpetuated by European explorers and settlers against natives and argued that they should be treated as equals, all in order to lay a better foundation for missionary work in the New World. His most famous works are *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (1552) and *The History of the Indies* (1561). Today, Casas is sometimes considered one of the early advocates for universal human rights through his writings.

*Illustration: [The Destruction of the Indies by Theodor de Bry, 1552](#)*

### **from A Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies**

Casas, Bartolome de las. *A Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies*. London: Printed for R. Hewson at the Crown in Cornhil, near the Stocks-Market. 1689.

source of electronic text: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/20321>

"Of the Island HISPANIOLA"

In this Isle, which, as we have said, the *Spaniards* first attempted, the bloody slaughter and destruction of Men first began: for they violently forced away Women and Children to make them Slaves, and ill-treated them, consuming and wasting their Food, which they had purchased with great sweat, toil, and yet remained dissatisfied too, which every one according to his strength and ability, and that was very inconsiderable (for they provided no other Food than what was absolutely necessary to support Nature without superfluity, freely bestow'd on them, and one individual *Spaniard* consumed more Victuals in one day, than would serve to maintain Three Families a Month, every one consisting of Ten Persons. Now being oppressed by such evil usage, and afflicted with such greate Torments and violent Entertainment they began to understand that such Men as those had not their Mission from Heaven; and therefore some of them conceal'd their Provisions and others to their Wives and Children in lurking holes, but some, to avoid the obdurate and dreadful temper of such a Nation, sought their Refuge on the craggy tops of Mountains; for the *Spaniards* did not only entertain them with Cuffs, Blows, and wicked Cudgelling, but laid violent hands also on the Governours of Cities; and this arriv'd at length to that height of Temerity and Impudence, that a certain Captain was so audacious as abuse the Consort of the most puissant King of the whole Isle. From which time they began to consider by what wayes and means they might expel the *Spaniards* out of their Countrey, and immediately took up Arms. But, good God, what Arms, do you imagin? Namely such, both Offensive and Defensive, as resemble Reeds wherewith Boys sport with one another, more than Manly Arms and Weapons.

Which the *Spaniards* no sooner perceived, but they, mounted on generous Steeds, well weapon'd with Lances and Swords, begin to exercise their bloody Butcheries and Strategems, and overrunning their Cities and Towns, spar'd no Age, or Sex, nay not so much as Women with Child, but ripping up their Bellies, tore them alive in pieces. They laid Wagers among themselves, who should with a Sword at one blow cut, or divide a Man in two; or which of them should decollate or behead a Man, with the greatest dexterity; nay farther, which should sheath his Sword in the Bowels of a Man with the quickest dispatch and expedition.

They snatcht young Babes from the Mothers Breasts, and then dasht out the brains of those innocents against the Rocks; others they cast into Rivers scoffing and jeering them, and call'd upon their Bodies when falling with derision, the true testimony of their Cruelty, to come to them, and inhumanely exposing others to their Merciless Swords, together with the Mothers that gave them Life.

They erected certain Gibbets, large, but low made, so that their feet almost reacht the ground, every one of which was so order'd as to bear Thirteen Persons in Honour and Reverence (as they said blasphemously) of our Redeemer and his Twelve Apostles, under which they made a Fire to burn them to Ashes whilst hanging on them: But those they intended to preserve alive, they dismiss'd, their Hands half cut, and still hanging by the Skin, to carry their Letters missive to those that fly from us and ly sculking on the Mountains, as an exprobaton of their flight.

The Lords and Persons of Noble Extract were usually expos'd to this kind of Death; they order'd Gridirons to be placed and supported with wooden Forks, and putting a small Fire under them, these miserable Wretches by degrees and with loud Shreiks and exquisite Torments, at last Expir'd.

I once saw Four or Five of their most Powerful Lords laid on these Gridirons, and thereon roasted, and not far off, Two or Three more over-spread with the same Commodity, Man's Flesh; but the shril Clamours which were heard there being offensive to the Captain, by hindring his Repose, he commanded them to be strangled with a Halter. The Executioner (whose Name and Parents at *Sevil* are not unknown to me) prohibited the doing of it; but stopt Gags into their Mouths to prevent the hearing of the noise (he himself making the Fire) till that they dyed, when they had been roasted as long as he thought convenient. I was an Eye-Witness of these and and innumerable Number of other Cruelties: And because all Men, who could lay hold of the opportunity, sought out lurking holes in the Mountains, to avoid as dangerous Rocks so Brutish and Barbarous a People, Strangers to all Goodness, and the Extirpaters and Adversaries of Men, they bred up such fierce hunting Dogs as would devour an *Indian* like a Hog, at first sight in less than a moment: Now such kind of Slaughters and Cruelties as these were committed by the Curs, and if at any time it hapned, (which was rarely) that the *Indians* irritated upon a just account destroy'd or took away the Life of any *Spaniard*, they promulgated and proclaim'd this Law among them, that One Hundred *Indians* should dye for every individual *Spaniard* that should be slain.

[Resources for Explorers, Invaders, and Colonists](#)

## Alvar Nunez Cabeza De Vaca (1490?-1558?)

[[image](#)] Cabeza De Vaca was a Spanish explorer of the New World, whose ventures abroad mostly met with disaster. He was involved in a long struggle for survival mostly in western portions of the Gulf of Mexico, around the Galveston area . He accompanied the Narvaez Expedition to the Tampa Bay region in 1528, but the expedition splintered, enduring sickness, starvation and shipwreck, as various factions sought out gold or other Spaniards in Mexico. As their numbers dwindled, Cabeza De Vaca and three other men were enslaved by various native tribes along the Gulf coast and worked their way to the Gulf of California over the course of many years, finally reaching Mexico City and returning to Europe in 1537. This tale of survival was written down and published in 1542 as *La Relacion* (The Report) and later renamed *Naufragios* (Shipwrecks). This writer is known today for his chronicles of the interactions he recorded with the peoples, lands, plants and animals of the American south and southwest. Writings about Cabeza De Vaca include David Howard's *Conquistador in Chains: Cabeza de Vaca and the Indians of the Americas*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996, and Paul Schneider's *Brutal Journey, Cabeza de Vaca and the Epic First Crossing of North America*, New York: Henry Holt, 2007.

### from **The Journey of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza De Vaca, (1542)**

Cabeza De Vaca. *Journey of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca and his companions from Florida to the Pacific, 1528-1536*. Translated From His Own Narrative by Fanny Bandelier. New York: Allerton Book Company, 1904.

source of electronic text: <http://archive.org/details/journeyalvarnue01bandgoog>

To this island we gave the name of the Island of Ill-Fate. The people on it are tall and well formed; they have no other weapons than bows and arrows with which they are most dexterous. The men have one of their nipples perforated from side to side and sometimes both; through this hole is thrust a reed as long as two and a half hands and as thick as two fingers; they also have the under lip perforated and a piece of cane in it as thin as the half of a finger. The women do the hard work. People stay on this island from October till the end of February, feeding on the roots I have mentioned, taken from under the water in November and December. They have channels made of reeds and get fish only during that time; afterwards they subsist on roots. At the end of February they remove to other parts in search of food, because the roots begin to sprout and are not good any more.

Of all the people in the world, they are those who most love their children and treat them best, and should the child of one of them happen to die, parents and relatives bewail it, and the whole settlement, the lament lasting a full year, day after day. Before sunrise the parents begin to weep, after them the tribe, and the same they do at noon and at dawn. At the end of the year of mourning they celebrate the anniversary and wash and cleanse themselves of all their paint. They mourn all their dead in this manner, old people excepted, to whom they do not pay any attention, saying that these have had their time and are no longer of any use, but only take space, and food from the children.

Their custom as to bury the dead, except those who are medicine men among them, whom they burn, and while the fire is burning, all dance and make a big festival, grinding the bones to powder. At the end of the year, when they celebrate the anniversary, they scarify themselves and give to the relatives the pulverized bones to drink in water. Every man has a recognized wife, but the medicine men enjoy greater privileges, since they may have two or three, and among these wives there is great friendship and harmony.

When one takes a woman for his wife, from the day he marries her, whatever he may hunt or fish, she has to fetch it to the home of her father, without daring to touch or eat of it, and from the home of the father-in-law they bring the food to the husband. All the while neither the wife's father nor her mother enter his abode, nor is he allowed to go to theirs, or to the homes of his brothers-in-law, and should they happen to meet they go out of each other's way a crossbow's shot or so, with bowed heads and eyes cast to the ground, holding it to be an evil thing to look at each other or speak. The women are free to communicate with their parents-in-law or relatives and speak to them. This custom prevails from that island as far as about fifty leagues inland.

There is another custom, that when a son or brother dies no food is gathered by those of his household for three months, preferring rather to starve, but the relatives and neighbors provide them with victuals. Now, as during the time we were there so many of them died, there was great starvation in most of the lodges, due to their customs and ceremonials, as well as to the weather, which was so rough that such as could go out after food brought in but very little, withal working hard for it. Therefore the Indians by whom I was kept forsook the island and in several canoes went over to the mainland to some bays where there were a great many oysters and during three months of the year they do not eat anything else and drink very bad water. There is lack of firewood, but great abundance of mosquitoes. Their lodges are made of matting and built on oyster shells, upon which they sleep in hides, which they only get by chance. There we remained

to the end of April, when we went to the seashore, where we ate blackberries for a whole month, during which time they danced and celebrated incessantly.

On the island I have spoken of they wanted to make medicine men of us without any examination or asking for our diplomas, because they cure diseases by breathing on the sick, and with that breath and their hands they drive the ailment away. So they summoned us to do the same in order to be at least of some use. We laughed, taking it for a jest, and said that we did not understand how to cure.

Thereupon they withheld our food to compel us to do what they wanted. Seeing our obstinacy, an Indian told me that I did not know what I said by claiming that what he knew was useless, because stones and things growing out in the field have their virtues, and he, with a heated stone, placing it on the stomach, could cure and take away pain, so that we, who were wiser men, surely had greater power and virtue.

At last we found ourselves in such stress as to have to do it, without risking any punishment. Their manner of curing is as follows: When one is ill they call in a medicine man, and after they are well again not only do they give him all they have, but even things they strive to obtain from their relatives. All the medicine man does is to make a few cuts where the pain is located and then suck the skin around the incisions. They cauterize with fire, thinking it very effective, and I found it to be so by my own experience. Then they breathe on the spot where the pain is and believe that with this the disease goes away.

The way we treated the sick was to make over them the sign of the cross while breathing on them, recite a Pater noster and Ave Maria, and pray to God, Our Lord, as best we could to give them good health and inspire them to do us some favors. Thanks to His will and the mercy He had upon us, all those for whom we prayed, as soon as we crossed them, told the others that they were cured and felt well again. For this they gave us good cheer, and would rather be without food themselves so as to give it to us, and they gave us hides and other small things. So great was the lack of food then that I often remained without eating anything whatsoever for three days, and they were in the same plight, so that it seemed to me impossible for life to last, although I afterwards suffered still greater privations and much more distress, as I shall tell further on.

The Indians that kept Alonso del Castillo, Andres Dorantes and the others, who were still alive, being of another language and stock, had gone to feed on oysters at another point of the mainland, where they remained until the first day of the month of April. Then they came back to the island, which was from there nearly two leagues off, where the channel is broadest. The island is half a league wide and five long.

All the people of this country go naked; only the women cover part of their bodies with a kind of wool that grows on trees. The girls go about in deer skins. They are very liberal towards each other with what they have. There is no ruler among them. All who are of the same descendency cluster together. There are two distinct languages spoken on the island; those of one language are called Capoques, those of the other Han. They have the custom, when they know each other and meet from time to time, before they speak, to weep for half an hour. After they have wept the one who receives the visit rises and gives to the other all he has. The other takes it, and in a little

while goes away with everything. Even sometimes, after having given and obtained all, they part without having uttered a word. There are other very queer customs, but having told the principal ones and the most striking, I must now proceed to relate what further happened to us.

### [Resources for Explorers, Invaders, and Colonists](#)

## John Smith (1579–1632)

[[image](#)] John Smith was born at Willoughby, near Alford, Lincolnshire, England in 1580, and left for the sea at age 16. An adventurer all his life, he served as a French mercenary, fought for the Dutch, sailed on the Mediterranean Sea as a pirate and trader, and fought in Hungary. At one point he was captured as a slave for a Turkish nobleman but escaped to return to England in 1604. In 1606, Smith set sail with the Virginia Company of London Expedition, with three small ships, to eventually settle in Jamestown. During the voyage, Smith was charged with mutiny, but his life was saved by sealed orders opened upon arrival in the New World, naming him as one of the leaders of the new colony. Smith writes of the struggles of the Jamestown Colony and his impact on their survival, including the famous incident with the local native leader, Powhatan, and his daughter Pocahontas. Smith's adventures and explorations in America are delineated in his many books, the most famous of which include *A True Relation of Such Occurrences and Accidents of Note as Happened in Virginia* (1608), *A Description of New England* (1616), and *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles* (1624). Today, these works are notable for Smith's descriptions of interactions with the native peoples on these shores, along with his rhetorical passages for advancing the continued colonization of the New World. Smith died in London on June 21, 1631 and is buried there in St. Sepulchre's Church. Recent books about Smith include Leo Lemay's *The American Dream of Captain John Smith*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991, Everett Emerson's *Captain John Smith*. New York: Twayne, 1993, and Helen Rountree's *John Smith's Chesapeake Voyages 1607-1609*. Charlottesville: U of Virginia Press, 2007.

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electronic source of text: <http://archive.org/details/generalhistorieo01smit>

*Editor's note: passage has been modernized for enhanced readability.*

### **What happened till the first supply [ship arrived]**

Being thus left to our fortunes, it fortuned that within ten days scarce ten amongst us could either go, or well stand, such extreme weakness and sickness oppressed us. And there at none need marvel, if they consider the cause and reason, which was this, whilst the ships stayed, our allowance was somewhat bettered, by a daily proportion of biscuit, which the sailors would pilfer to sell, give, or exchange with us, for money, sassafras, furs, or love. But when they departed, there remained neither tavern, beer-house, nor place of relief, but [only] the common Kettle [the stores of food]. Had we been as free from all sins as gluttony, and drunkenness, we might have

been canonized for Saints. But our President would never have been admitted, for engrossing to his private [stores of] oatmeal, sack, oil, aquavita, beef, eggs, or what not, but the Kettle - that indeed he allowed equally to be distributed, and that was half a pint of wheat, and as much barley boiled with water for a man a day, and this having [been] fried some 26 weeks in the ship's hold, contained as many worms as grains; so that we might truly call it rather so much bran than corn. Our drink was water, our lodgings castles in the air.

With this [lack of] lodging and diet, our extreme toil in bearing and planting Pallisadoes [a wall of wooden stakes used as a defensive barrier], so strained and bruised us, and our continual labor in the extremity of the heat had so weakened us, as were cause sufficient to have made us as miserable [whether] in our native country or any other place in the world. From May to September, those that escaped lived upon sturgeon and sea-crabs. Fifty in this time we buried, the rest seeing the President's projects to escape these miseries in our Pinnacle [small boat] by flight (who all this time had neither felt want nor sickness) so moved our dead spirits, as we deposed him; and established Ratcliffe in his place, (Gosnoll being dead) Kendall deposed. Smith newly recovered, [both] Martin and Ratcliffe were by his care preserved and relieved, and the most of the soldiers recovered, with the skillful diligence of Mr. Thomas Wotton, our Surgeon general. But now was all our provisions spent, the sturgeon gone, all help abandoned, each hour expecting the fury of the savages; when God the patron of all good endeavors, in that desperate extremity, so changed the hearts of the savages that they brought such plenty of their fruits, and provision, [so] as no man wanted.

And now where some affirmed, it was ill done of the Council to send forth men so badly provided, this in-contradictable reason will show them plainly they are too ill advised to nourish such ill conceits. First, the fault of our going was our own. What could be thought fitting or necessary we had, but what we should find, or want, or where we should be, we were all ignorant, and supposing to make our passage in two months, with victual to live, and the advantage of the springtime to work; we were [instead] at sea five months, where we both spent [all] our victuals and lost the opportunity of the time and season to plant, [all] by the unskillful presumption of our ignorant transporters, that understood not at all what they undertook [to do].

Such actions have, ever since the world's beginning, been subject to such accidents, and everything of worth is found full of difficulties, but nothing so difficult as to establish a commonwealth so far remote from men and means, and where men's minds are so untoward as neither do well themselves, nor suffer others. But to proceed.

## **The building of James Towne**

The new President and Martin, being little beloved, of weak judgment in dangers, and less industry in peace, committed the managing of all things abroad to Captain Smith, who by his own example, good words, and fair promises, set some to mow, others to bind thatch, some to build houses, others to thatch them, himself always bearing the greatest task for his own share, so that in short time, he provided most of them lodgings, neglecting any for himself. This done, seeing the savage's superfluties [provided supplies] begin to decrease (with some of his workmen) [Smith] shipped himself in the shallop [light sailboat] to search the [nearby] countryside for trade. The want of the language, knowledge to manage his boat without sails, the

want of a sufficient power, (knowing the multitude of the Savages) apparel for his men, and other necessaries, were infinite impediments, yet no discouragement. Being but six seamen in company, he went down the river to Kecoughtan, where at first they scorned him, as a famished man, and would in derision offer him a handful of corn, a piece of bread, for their swords and muskets, and such like proportions, also, for their apparel. But seeing by trade and courtesy there was nothing to be had, he made bold to try such conclusions as necessity enforced, though contrary to his Commission. [He] let fly his muskets, ran his boat on shore, where they [the Indians] all fled into the woods. So marching towards their houses, they [saw] great heaps of corn. Much ado he had to restrain his hungry soldiers from present taking of it, expecting as it happened that the savages would assault them, as not long after they did with a most hideous noise. Sixty or seventy of them, some black, some red, some white, some parti-colored, came in a square order, singing and dancing out of the woods, with their Okee (which was an Idol made of skins, stuffed with moss, all painted and hung with chains and copper) borne before them: and in this manner being well armed, with clubs, targets, bows and arrows, they charged the English, that so kindly received them with their muskets loaded with Pistol shot, that down fell their God, and [it] lay sprawling on the ground. The rest fled again to the woods, and ere long sent one of their Quiyoughkasoucks to offer peace, and redeem their Okee. Smith told them, if only six of them would come unarmed and load his boat, he would not only be their friend, but restore them their Okee, and give them beads, copper, and hatchets besides, which on both sides was to their contents performed: and then they brought him venison, turkeys, wild fowl, bread, and what [else] they had, singing and dancing in sign of friendship till they departed.

### **How Pocahontas saved his life**

At last they brought him [Smith] to Meronocomoco, where was Powhatan, their Emperor. Here more than two hundred of those grim courtiers stood wondering at him, as [if] he had been a monster, till Powhatan and his train had put themselves in their greatest braveries. Before a fire upon a seat like a bedstead, he sat covered with a great robe, made of raccoon skins, and all the tails hanging by. On either hand did sit a young wench of 16 to 18 years, and along on each side [of] the house, two rows of men, and behind them as many women, with all their heads and shoulders painted red; many of their heads bedecked with the white down of birds; but everyone with something: and a great chain of white beads about their necks. At his entrance before the King, all the people gave a great shout. The Queene of Appamatuck was appointed to bring him water to wash his hands, and another brought him a bunch of feathers, instead of a towel to dry them. Having feasted him after their best barbarous manner they could, a long consultation was held, but the conclusion was, two great stones were brought before Powhatan. Then as many as could laid hands on him, dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs, to beat out his brains, Pocahontas, the King's dearest daughter, when no entreaty could prevail, got his head in her arms, and laid her own upon his to save him from death: whereas the Emperor was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper; for they thought him as well of all occupations as themselves. For the King himself will make his own robes, shoes, bows, arrows, pots; plant, hunt, or do anything so well as the rest.

They say he bore a pleasant show,  
But sure his heart was sad.

For who can pleasant be, and rest,  
That lives in fear and dread:  
And having life suspected, doth  
It still suspected lead.

*illustration: [John Smith Saved by Pocahontas by Alonzo Chappel, circa 1865](#)*

## **How Powhatan sent him to James Towne**

Two days after, Powhatan having disguised himself in the most fear fullest manner he could, caused Captain Smith to be brought forth to a great house in the woods, and there [sat] upon a mat by the fire to be left alone. Not long after from behind a mat that divided the house, was made the most dole fullest noise he ever heard. Then Powhatan, more like a devil then a man, with some two hundred more as black as himself, came unto him and told him now they were friends, and presently he should go to James Towne, to send him two great guns, and a grindstone, for which he would give him the Country of Capahowosick, and forever esteem him as his son, Nantaquoud. So to James Towne with 12 guides Powhatan sent him. That night they quartered in the woods, he still expecting (as he had done all this long time of his imprisonment) every hour to be put to one death or other, for all their feasting. But almighty God (by his divine providence) had mollified the hearts of those stern barbarians with compassion. The next morning betimes they came to the fort, where Smith having used the savages with what kindnesses he could, he showed Rawhunt, Powhatan's trusty servant, two demi-culverings [cannons] and a millstone to carry to Powhatan. They found them somewhat too heavy; but when they did see him discharge them, being loaded with stones, among the boughs of a great tree loaded with ice sickles, the ice and branches came so tumbling down, that the poor savages ran away half dead with fear. But at last we regained some conference with them, and gave them such toys, and sent to Powhatan, his women, and children such presents, as gave them, in general, full content.

Now in James Towne they were all in combustion, the strongest preparing once more to run away with the Pinnacle; which with the hazard of his life, with Sakre falcon [large gun] and musket shot, Smith forced now the third time to stay or sink. Some no better than they should be, had plotted with the President, the next day to have put him to death by the Levitical law, for the lives of Robinson and Emery, pretending the fault was his that had led them to their ends. But he quickly took such order with such lawyers, that he laid them by the heels till he sent some of them [as] prisoners for England. Now, ever once in four or five days, Pocahontas with her attendants, brought him so much provision, that [this] saved many of their lives, that else for all this [they would have] starved with hunger.

## **from A Description of New England.**

excerpt from Trent, William P. and Benjamin W. Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Volume 1. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1901.

AND lest any should think the toil might be insupportable, though these things may be had by labor and diligence, I assure my self there are who delight extremely in vain pleasure, that take much more pains in England, to enjoy it, than I should do here to gain wealth sufficient: and yet I think they should not have half such sweet content: for, our pleasure here is still gains; in England charges and loss.

Here nature and liberty affords us that freely, which in England we want, or it costeth us dearly. What pleasure can be more, than (being tired with any occasion a-shore in planting vines, fruits, or herbs, in contriving their own grounds, to the pleasure of their own minds, their fields, gardens, orchards, buildings, ships, and other works, etc.) to recreate themselves before their own doors, in their own boats upon the sea, where man, woman and child, with a small hook and line, by angling, may take diverse sorts of excellent fish, at their pleasures? And is it not pretty sport, to pull up two pence, six pence, and twelve pence, as fast as you can hale and veer a line? He is a very bad fisher, cannot kill in one day with his hook and line, one, two, or three hundred cods: which dressed and dried, if they be sold there for ten shillings the hundred, though in England they will give more than twenty; may not both the servant, the master, and merchant, be well content with this gain?

If a man work but three days in seven, he may get more then he can spend, unless he be excessive. Now that carpenter, mason, gardiner, tailor, smith, sailer, forgers, or what other, may they not make this a pretty recreation though they fish but an hour in a day, to take more than they eat in a week: or if they will not eat it, because there is so much better choice; yet sell it, or change it, with the fishermen, or merchants, for any thing they want. And what sport doth yield a more pleasing content, and less hurt or charge than angling with a hook, and crossing the sweet air from isle to isle, over the silent streams of a calm sea Wherein the most curious may find pleasure, profit, and content.

Thus, though all men be not fishers: yet all men whatsoever, may in other matters do as well. For necessity doth in these cases so rule a commonwealth, and each in their several functions, as their labors in their qualities may be as profitable, because there is a necessary mutual use of all.

For gentlemen, what exercise should more delight them, than ranging daily those unknown parts, using fowling and fishing, for hunting and hawking and yet you shall see the wild hawks give you some pleasure, in seeing them swoop (six or seven after one another) an hour or two together at the schools of fish in the fair harbors, as those ashore at a fowl: and never trouble nor torment yourselves, with watching, mewing, feeding, and attending them: nor kill horse and man with running and crying. See you not a hawk? For hunting also: the woods, lakes, and rivers afford not only chase sufficient, for any that delights in that kind of toil, or pleasure: but such beasts to hunt, that besides the delicacy of their bodies for food, their skins are so rich, as may well recompense thy daily labor, with a captain's pay.

For laborers, if those that sow hemp, rape, turnips, parsnips, carrots, cabbage, and such like: give 20, 30, 40, 50, shillings yearly for an acre of ground, and meat, drink, and wages to use it, and yet grow rich: when better or at least as good ground, may be had, and cost nothing but labor: it seems strange to me, any such should there grow poor.

My purpose is not to persuade children from their parents: men from their wives: nor servants from their masters: only, such as with free consent may be spared: but that each parish, or village, in city or country, that will but apparel their fatherless children of thirteen or fourteen years of age, or young married people, that have small wealth to live on: here by their labor may live exceeding well: provided always that first there be a sufficient power to command them, houses to receive them, means to defend them, and meet provisions for them: for any place may be overlain: and it is most necessary to have a fortress (ere this grow to practice) and sufficient masters (as, carpenters, masons, fishers, fowlers, gardeners, husbandmen, sawers, smiths, spinsters, tailors, weavers, and such like) to take ten, twelve, or twenty, or as there is occasion, for apprentice. The masters by this may quickly grow rich: these may learn their trades themselves, to do the like: to a general and an incredible benefit for king, and country, masters, and servant.

### **Specific Questions and Considerations**

Questions of Fact (often the stuff that quizzes are made of)

For each assigned piece of writing, try to record any relevant information related to reporting the facts: who, what, when, where, why, and how?

Also, for each assigned piece of writing, consider these broader questions:

Context

When did the author write and what are his or her key works?

What overall subject, concept or question is the work about?

Does the writing fall within a particular genre or subgenre and, if so, which elements of that genre are being utilized or ignored?

Considering the Craft of Writing

What is the time/place of the setting?

Who are the major characters? Is there a clear protagonist and antagonist?

Is there clear narrator? Is the narrator/speaker understood to be reliable?

Is the narrator/speaker an intentionally crafted persona.

How are plot expectations met, challenged, or exceeded?

Are there repeated images/concepts/symbols in the work?

If verse, how are the elements of poetry utilized and illustrated?

Reflection and Application

What is the theme, point, or moral of the writing?

How does the author wish readers to consider the subject?

## Broader Questions and Considerations

Find specific examples of "travel writing," or "writing in the language of conquest," or "writing to persuade," as described above, in the readings completed for this unit. Be prepared to share these specific examples in class.

Do some quick research on any of these other early European explorers for information on their lives and discoveries:

John Cabot,  
Jacques Cartier,  
Samuel De Champlain,  
Francisco Vasquez de Coronado  
Robert de La Salle  
Ponce De Leon  
Hernando De Soto  
Leif Eriksson  
Henry Hudson  
Louis Joliet  
Peter Stuyvesant  
Amerigo Vespucci

Likewise, do some quick research on the later influence Columbus would have on the United States. What is Columbus Day? What is controversial about it? How many states have cities named Columbus or Columbia? What is "Columbia," at least in its associations with this country?

### Post-Colonial Theory through Science Fiction

In the world of science-fiction, the fictional universe of Gene Roddenberry's many Star Trek programs and movies metaphorically comment on the past human history of contact and conquest by the creation of a guiding principle called the Prime Directive, or non-interference act. One of the fictional captains of this world states:

"The Prime Directive is not just a set of rules. It is a philosophy, and a very correct one. History has proven again and again that whenever mankind interferes with a less developed civilization, no matter how well intentioned that interference may be, the results are invariably disastrous." - Jean-Luc Picard, "Symbiosis." Star Trek The Next Generation. Season One.

Since the premise of this television program is about exploration and contact with "others," this governing principle forms a sharp critique of human history through the story lines of these modern day science-fiction fables.

How do you think the world would have been different if European countries had a guiding principle like the Prime Directive in the 15th century?

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