

**Switching Columbus Day
to “Indigenous Peoples Day”**

Summary

Christopher Columbus started his voyage to find India in 1492. His intention did not sail him correctly though, and he ended up on the island of Hispaniola, meeting what he presumed to be Indians, but were in fact the Taino. He used their kindness against them and forced them to convert to Christianity, give the crew gold and other riches, and made many of the Taino slaves (if he didn't kill them first). When he returned the next time, he slaughtered thousands and beat them into submission and in the process he was destroying native cultures and native artifacts. Christopher Columbus did vile things to the Tainos and repeated the same practice with every indigenous population he met in other places. But yet we still celebrate him.

Why we have Columbus Day

- ❖ Columbus Day is a holiday traditionally celebrated on the second Monday in October.
- ❖ The first official celebration of it was in New York City when a group honored the 300th anniversary of his landing in the Americas.
- ❖ In 1892, President Benjamin Harrison issued a proclamation encouraging Americans to mark the day with patriotic celebrations.
- ❖ It became an official federal holiday in 1937.
- ❖ For many, it is a way to honor the achievements of the explorer, Christopher Columbus and to celebrate Italian-American heritage.
- ❖ Not everyone agrees.

Why we want to get rid of Columbus Day

Columbus shipped over 500 native Taino people to Spain as slaves.

He was also the cause of diminishing a whole population that consisted of hundreds of thousands of people.

Because of Columbus's actions there are no full-blooded Taino people alive today and very few Native people left.

His actions led to the triangulated trans-Atlantic slave trade.

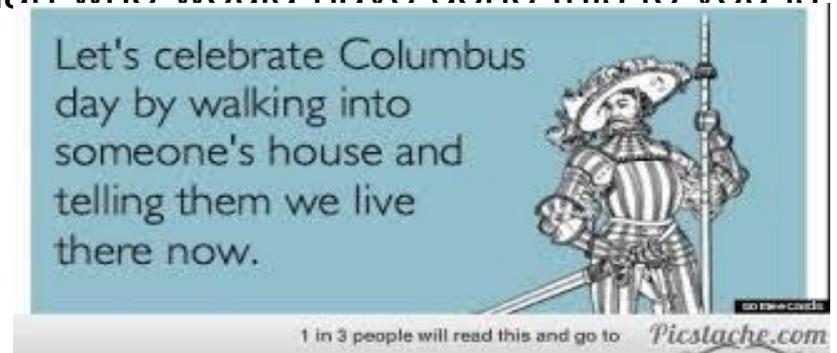
Columbus's interactions with the indigenous people he labeled "Indians" were full of violence and slavery, and forced conversion of native peoples to Christianity.

What if it happened you?

How long have you lived in Cambridge? Would you call it your home? I know I would.

So what if one day everything that you had was taken away from you? Your freedom. Your religion and eventually your life and the life of everyone around you. But that's not the saddest part; the man who would have done this to you is considered a hero.

Just think about that for a minute.



We are not the only people who want change

This year, the recast holiday known as Indigenous People's Day will take place in dozens of cities and towns across the United States, including in Albuquerque, N.M., Denver, Colo., Portland, Ore., St. Paul, Minn., Amherst Mass., and Olympia, Wash.,

[according to the Associated Press.](#)

If those cities made the change why can't we?



Indigenous People's
Day



*celebrating Indigenous Peoples around the world
from the Americas and beyond
who strive for self-determination and sovereignty*

Amherst Massachusetts changes Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day

AMHERST — By a majority vote, Amherst Town Meeting recently adopted a resolution to commemorate Indigenous Peoples' Day instead of Columbus Day.

Students in Matthew Venditti's eighth grade class brought the resolution after studying Christopher Columbus.

"Celebrating Columbus, we're celebrating genocide," Amherst Middle School student Aarti Lamberg told the meeting.

D'Lederman@repub.com, Diane Lederman | "Goodbye Columbus Day?: Amherst Town Meeting OKs Resolution to Commemorate Indigenous Peoples' Day." *Masslive.com*. N.p., 18 May 2016. Web. 24 May 2016.

An Italian Perspective

Columbus was Italian and many Italian-American people all around the country are proud to say that they are of the same nationality as him. As an Italian citizen, I obviously celebrate my Italian heritage, and take pride in that part of my identity, but I would like to change Columbus Day's name to Indigenous People's Day. When people are harmed and wronged, it should be up to them to decide what an acceptable apology is, and indigenous people would like to have this October holiday changed.

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