



INTERFAITH
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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities

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Religious Worlds of New York • *Curriculum Development Project*

Religious Identities in Colonial America

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Abstract:

The goal of this project is to expose students to a variety of early American religious perspectives through primary sources (letters, legal documents, autobiographies) and secondary sources (textbook excerpts, informational articles, documentary films). By analyzing these documents, students will understand how a range of Native American, African, and European religious experiences during this period of American history helped motivate the fight for independence, and continues to inspire Americans’ struggle for social justice today. Students will also practice civic skills (cooperative learning, active listening, and democratic discourse) that will enable them to work together for the common good.

Classroom Context and State Standards:

I teach four 8th grade social studies classes in a Title I urban visual and performing arts magnet middle school (grades 6-8) in Louisville, Kentucky. The course covers American history from exploration to Reconstruction. Each class lasts 50 minutes. Besides a laptop computer, document camera, and projector, I have limited access to technology that students can use. We utilize two sets of textbooks (differentiated by text complexity), which we supplement with photocopies of primary and secondary sources. I follow a district-created curriculum map, which sets the pacing for the course, and provides learning goals, essential questions, and key focus standards within four units or “cycles.” The district also provides assessments for each cycle that include multiple-choice and extended-response questions. Students are grouped homogeneously based on state assessment data, so most students in each class read and write on similar levels. 75% of student enrollment is based on an arts-integrated application process; the rest of the students attend our school because it is within their zoning area. Socio-economic status ranges from affluent to government assistance; home residences span every corner of our school district; reading levels range from second to twelfth grade.

I began to develop the instructional materials featured in this project during a summer institute sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities (“Religious Worlds of New York”). We read and discussed the works of various religious studies scholars who advocate for a cultural studies

approach to teaching about religion, such as Diane Moore and Robert Orsi. We also deepened our knowledge of religious identities in America, both in the past and today. While participating in this summer institute, I recognized new opportunities to teach about religion in my US History course that I previously had not noticed, and I began to seek resources that would fit within a 9-week unit on European exploration and colonization (late 15th-18th century).

The Kentucky state standards for the unit include:

- **SS-08-2.1.1** Students will explain how elements of culture (e.g., language, the arts, customs, beliefs, literature) defined specific groups in the United States prior to Reconstruction and resulted in unique perspectives.
- **SS-08-2.2.1** Students will compare how cultures (United States prior to Reconstruction) developed social institutions (family, religion, education, government, economy) to respond to human needs, structure society and influence behavior.
- **SS-08-2.3.1** Students will explain how conflict and competition (e.g., political, economic, religious, ethnic) occurred among individuals and groups in the United States prior to Reconstruction.
- **SS-08-2.3.2** Students will explain how compromise and cooperation were possible choices to resolve conflict among individuals and groups in the United States prior to Reconstruction.
- **SS-08-5.1.1** Students will use a variety of tools (e.g., primary and secondary sources) to describe and explain historical events and conditions and to analyze the perspectives of different individuals and groups (e.g., gender, race, region, ethnic group, age, economic status, religion, political group) in U.S. history prior to Reconstruction.
- **SS-08-5.2.1** Students will explain events and conditions that led to the "Great Convergence" of European, African and Native American people beginning in the late 15th century, and analyze how America's diverse society developed as a result of these events.

Learning Goals and Essential Questions:

Initially, the purpose of the unit was to expose students to a variety of religious perspectives through primary sources (letters, legal documents, autobiographies) and secondary sources (textbook excerpts, informational articles, documentary films). By analyzing these documents, students would understand how the convergence of varied Native American, African, and European religious experiences contributed to the development of American society, as well as how religious diversity continues to influence American society today. Students would also practice civic skills (cooperative learning, active listening, and democratic discourse) that would enable them to work together for the common good. The unit featured two essential questions:

1. How did religious beliefs and practices inform the experiences of different groups in colonial America?
2. How did religious diversity shape colonial American history, and how does it influence people in America today?

I later modified this unit to incorporate the six-point framework¹ of religious literacy more directly. Although I kept the same standards and learning goals, I added some of the language from the six-point framework to the daily learning targets (see Appendix p. 1) to build students' working vocabulary for analyzing religious traditions. I also changed the essential question: *How did competing religious identities inform the experiences of different groups in colonial America?* I added the word "competing" to guide students toward examining the influence of religious power dynamics during this time, and the phrase "religious identities" to broaden the scope of religious data we could analyze. Unfortunately, the execution of this unit was haphazard, at best. I did not appropriately differentiate the instructional materials to meet my students' learning needs, partially because it was the beginning of the year and I was still learning their abilities, and partly because I had to create/modify almost all of the materials (see Appendix). While all of the instructional materials address the six-point framework with varying degrees of success, they lack a cohesiveness that lends itself to critical thinking and comparative analysis, and fail to make meaningful connections to American society in the present day. I measured student achievement of the unit learning objectives with daily formative assessments (see Appendix pp. 1-3). In the annotated bibliography that follows, I describe the instructional materials I developed, explain ways my pedagogical approach influenced my instructional decisions, and identify potential areas of improvement.

1. VTS – Religious Imagery²

VTS or "Visual Thinking Strategy" is a research-based instructional strategy for teaching students how to think critically about works of art. I asked students a series of guiding questions to help them analyze paintings, sculptures, and artifacts. I often use this instructional strategy in my lower-level classes where students demonstrate limited English proficiency. The painting I selected to introduce this strategy is the center part of a religious-themed triptych. I selected this painting because the religious symbolism is not obvious if students examine the fragments of the painting; I wanted students to start thinking about religion more abstractly. After we analyzed it as a class, we looked at religious symbolism and themes in paintings from the early colonial period. Once students pointed out "what's going in the picture," we attempted to identify examples of belief, behavior, and belonging in the paintings. While students enjoyed the activity, they did not possess enough background knowledge at the time to identify religious symbols and themes without significant guidance from me. Students struggled to identify examples of belief, behavior, and belonging because none of the paintings concretely depicted these elements concretely enough for my students to understand. We also looked at how the paintings depicted diverse religious identities and exchanges between European and Native American groups. One problem I ran into was that not all students could clearly see the paintings on the projector from their seats. In the future, I would try to check out a class set of Nooks or Chromebooks from the school library and upload the visuals onto Google Classroom.

¹ For a more detailed description of the theory informing this pedagogy (i.e., the six-point framework), see my presentation "Religious Literacy Pedagogy in K-12 Public Schools" at https://youtu.be/s9H_ULAbGBk.

² Appendix pp. 4-14

2. QFT – Competing Religious Identities in Colonial America³

The Question Formulation Technique is a research-based instructional strategy for teaching students how to develop and analyze complex questions. I typically use this strategy in my higher-level classes, as these students are less likely to feel frustrated by the open-endedness of this strategy (there is no magic bullet to asking the “right” questions). Students analyzed the following prompt:

“The fate of North America hung on a series of shifting alliances and a closely calculated balance of power between three major competitors: French, English, and Indian... these competitors were forced to rely less on dreams of total military conquest than on the slower stratagems of diplomacy and cultural conversion.”⁴

I selected this prompt because it relates directly to the revised unit essential question. Incidentally, I found the quotation for this prompt in a text suggested by a colleague at the NEH summer institute. Several students’ questions were about specific vocabulary in the prompt, and very few made connections between the prompt and the essential question. I tried to probe students to consider how the prompt might reflect examples of belief, behavior, and belonging. They struggled to make these connections because they felt the prompt did not describe any of these religious elements aside from the use of the word “conversion.” Going forward, I might supplement this prompt with a visual that highlights the religious influences on the Great Convergence (potentially one of the paintings I used in the VTS activity described above), or choose a different prompt altogether that more directly connects to the six-point framework. I would also ask more probing questions to guide their thinking, such as “When generating questions, consider the subjects named in the prompt. What do you already know about the subjects? What have we learned about politics, economics, culture, and religion during this period? How are they similar or different?” I think this activity would be more successful if it was not the first time students practiced QFT; had they been more familiar with the strategy, they might have been more comfortable to “think outside the box” and consider ways the six-point framework might come into play in the prompt.

3. Close Read – “Religion and Identity”⁵

This informational article is adapted from two different articles created by *Facing History and Ourselves*. I combined parts of both articles that related to the unit learning goals and essential questions, simplified the sentence structure and vocabulary to meet my students’ reading levels, and I added visuals to stimulate student engagement. I began developing this article before our more in-depth discussions of the six-point framework, so I did not incorporate the language of the six-point framework as directly as I could have. For example, the triangle diagram defines the framework of religious identity in terms of individual belief, community practice, and national law. While these concepts touch on the six-point framework, in the future I would like to modify this visual so it more directly reflects the six-point framework, or create a discussion question at the end of the article that asks students to explore where the article reflects elements of six-point framework. Even though I

³ <https://therightquestions.org/>

⁴ James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America*, pp. 3-4.

⁵ Appendix pp. 15-16

simplified the text complexity of the article, several of my students still struggled to comprehend it because the vocabulary and sentence structure was still too complex, and/or because they lacked sufficient background knowledge to understand the beliefs, behaviors, and experiences of belonging that the article describes. Going forward, it might be better for students to jigsaw the article by paragraph instead of reading it together as a class, and then create a visual to represent what they learned in the paragraph they read that they would share with the rest of the class. Once students have developed deeper background knowledge (especially about European religious identity) later in the unit, we can revisit the article and read it entirely.

4. Close Read – Elements of Discovery Chart⁶

I developed this chart from an informational reading created by the Upstander Project. I converted the informational reading into chart format, simplified the vocabulary and sentence structure of the chart, and eliminated extraneous information that was irrelevant to the unit learning goals and essential question. I also created a space for students to restate the information in the chart into their own words to help them personalize their learning. We analyzed the chart after watching two videos about the Doctrine of Discovery, both of which feature Native Americans living in the present day. I decided to use these videos to highlight the dynamism of Native American religious identity (i.e., these identities are not relegated to the past). Overall, the chart effectively communicates the cultural embeddedness of European religious identity by making connections between religion and international law. Even though I simplified the text in the chart, it was still too complex for many of my struggling readers, so we wound up paraphrasing the rows together as class (and subsequently ran out of time; we were not able to analyze every row on the chart). To support these students, it might be helpful to use the same annotation strategy I learned in the Religious Freedom Center’s blended learning course, EDU 300: Teaching about Religion in Public Schools.

5. Native American Religious Identity⁷

I created the first two slides that incorporate the six-point framework and language or religious identity, and the other 8th grade social studies teacher at my school created the rest of this presentation. I included this instructional material to show how the majority of teachers I know develop resources for teaching about religion. The other teacher searched the internet and found this pre-made presentation, and supplemented with information from the textbook. It oversimplifies Native American religious identity, fails to address its dynamism and diversity, and overly emphasizes the importance of belief in Native American identity formation. One of my areas of professional growth will be to deepen my content knowledge of Native American religious identity so our instruction does not perpetuate stereotypes by providing students with superficial levels of information. I created the first slide in the presentation to activate students’ prior knowledge based on the “Religion and Identity” article we read earlier. I utilized the same triangle diagram in the article, and supplemented it with language from the six-point framework. Even though the presentation lacked depth and rigor, students answered the questions at the end of each slide about the belief, behavior, and/or belonging with more success than any other lesson. Going forward, I would like to restructure the presentation

⁶ Appendix p. 17; <http://www.religiousfreedomcenter.org/>

⁷ Appendix pp. 18-28

so it more accurately depicts the diversity and dynamism of Native American religious identity, perhaps highlighting differences in belief, behavior, and experiences of belonging across tribes/cultural regions.

6. Video Analysis – Prince Among Slaves⁸

I learned about this documentary from a colleague at the NEH summer institute. I have subsequently purchased the book on which it is based, but have not had the opportunity yet to read it. While students watched the documentary, they answered questions about the film that I found online already created by another teacher. Originally, I planned to show the video to the students, stopping every 10-15 minutes so students could turn and talk about the answers to the questions, and so we could discuss elements of the six-point framework in the film together as a class using the Four Corners strategy described below. Unfortunately, I was out sick the day I planned to show the film and the substitute did not follow my lesson plans (she just played the video straight through without stopping to review and discuss). Upon my return, the feedback I received from students was overwhelmingly positive. Year after year, my students show the highest engagement whenever we discuss anything related to slavery. Several students admitted that they did not realize that many African slaves were Muslims. To highlight the dynamism and diversity of African religious identity, I originally planned to compare this film with excerpts from Olaudah Equiano's slave narrative where he describes his own religious identity; unfortunately, we ran out of time and had to move on per the district curriculum map.

7. Instructional Strategy – Four Corners⁹

I planned to use this strategy in conjunction with the video analysis described above. Middle school students (especially in the beginning of the year) struggle to sit still for extended periods of time, so this instructional strategy would break up the video analysis by giving students an opportunity to think critically about the film while moving around the room. I planned to use the 3B's (i.e., belief, behavior, belonging) for three of the four corners, and "IDK" ("I don't know") for the fourth. After each segment of the film, students would move to the corner they felt the film described the most, and discuss with other students who went to the same corner when they saw elements of belief, behavior, or belonging. I created the IDK corner for students who were not confident enough yet in their understanding of the 3B's; I would conference with them while the other corners discussed. After the small group discussion, I would randomly ask students in each corner to share what they discussed and try to convince the students in the IDK corner to "convert" to their corner. Although we did not complete this activity with the video analysis, we did complete it when we re-read the "Religion and Identity" article later in the unit. Students in my higher-level classes showed higher engagement in this activity than in my lower-level classes because they struggle less than my lower-level students to think abstractly with confidence.

⁸ <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Prince-Among-Slaves-Movie-Questions-377133>

⁹ <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/four-corners>

Resources & Draft Unit Plan

Acronym Key:

CFA = Common Formative Assessment

LT = Learning Target

I. Columbian Exchange

A. Background Information

- a. Native American Religion in Early America

<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/eighteen/ekeyinfo/natrel.htm>

B. Lesson Materials

- a. The First Americans (LT Reflection)

i. <https://ket.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/36377754-fb7c-47a9-9ab1-421620620788/the-first-americans-first-peoples-americas/#.WZII9FF942w>

ii. <https://ket.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/a9185b61-2395-40fb-a293-870e4c23acf9/how-the-first-americans-arrived-first-peoples-americas/#.WZIoCFF942w>

- b. Doctrine of Discovery (CFA: silent conversation → LT Reflection)

i. Doctrine of Discovery: In the Name of Christ

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvM4SJN76Yg> 0:00-9:38

ii. (Digital Wampum Series) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3gF7ULVrl4>

- c. The Columbian Exchange Activity (CFA: Multiple choice – History Alive! textbook assessment, Ch. 1)

<http://www.econedlink.org/teacher-lesson/1291>

- d. Reading Like A Historian: Moctezuma and Cortéz (CFA: writing)

i. <https://sheg.stanford.edu/history-lessons/moctezuma-and-cortes>

- e. Generation Global: Lesson 1, Main Activity 1 <https://sheg.stanford.edu/moctezuma-and-cortes>

II. Triangular Trade

A. Background Information

- a. Religion and Slavery

<http://georgiahistory.com/education-outreach/online-exhibits/online-exhibits/interpreting-the-gullahgeechee-heritage-in-the-21st-century/religion/>

- b. An Introduction to the Church in the Southern Black Community

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/church/intro.html>

B. Lesson Materials

- a. Triangular Trade Activity (CFA: LT Reflection → multiple choice)

<http://www.huntington.org/uploadedFiles/Files/PDFs/LHTHTriangularTrade.pdf>

- b. Olaudah Equiano excerpt: Indigenous/conversion to Christianity (CFA: Socratic seminar with “Prince”)

• <http://newsreel.org/guides/equiano.htm#The Strong>

• <http://www.huntington.org/uploadedFiles/Files/PDFs/LHTHTriangularTrade.pdf> pp. 28-29

- c. Prince Among Slaves: Muslim/forced assimilation (CFA: Socratic Seminar with Equiano) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awKs8-bLGHE> 00:00-25:50

- d. Generation Global: Lesson 1- Main Activity 2, Reflection Activity 2

III. British Colonies

- A. Background Information
 - a. The Legacy of Puritanism
<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/eighteen/ekeyinfo/legacy.htm>
 - b. Religious Pluralism in the Middle Colonies
<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/eighteen/ekeyinfo/midcol.htm>
- B. Lesson Materials
 - a. British Colonies Overview (CFA: cereal box project)
 - Letters from an American Farmer
<http://web.utk.edu/~mfitzge1/docs/374/creve.pdf> **modify
 - b. Virginia - Capitalist (CFA: Socratic Seminar)
 - i. Reader's Theater
<http://www.huntington.org/uploadedFiles/Files/PDFs/LHTHEarlyVirginia.pdf> pp. 6-11
 - ii. Nova Britannia
<http://www.huntington.org/uploadedFiles/Files/PDFs/LHTHEarlyVirginia.pdf> pp. 14-15
 - c. Massachusetts - Puritan/Separatist (CFA: Socratic Seminar)
 - i. John Winthrop
<http://www.huntington.org/uploadedFiles/Files/PDFs/LHTHMassBay.pdf> pp. 18-19
 - ii. Mayflower Compact
<http://www.huntington.org/uploadedFiles/Files/PDFs/LHTHMassBay.pdf> pp. 12-13
 - d. New York & Rhode Island – Pluralist (CFA: Socratic Seminar)
 - i. Flushing Remonstrance
http://schools.nycenet.edu/offices/teachlearn/ela/Flushing_Remon.pdf
 - ii. Bloody Tenant: Lesson from *Teaching About Religion in American Life*, pp. 20-29
 - e. Generation Global: Lesson 1 - Reflection Activity 1, Worksheet 2.3

IV. The (First) Great Awakening

- A. Background Information
 - a. <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/eighteen/ekeyinfo/grawaken.htm>
- B. Materials
 - a. RLAH George Whitfield (CFA: Hypothesis Chart) <https://sheg.stanford.edu/great-awakening>
 - b. EDSITEment: The First Great Awakening <https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/first-great-awakening#sect-thelesson>

	LESSON 1	LESSON 2	LESSON 3	LESSON 4	LESSON 5
LEARNING TARGET	Describe the framework for religious identity.	Describe causes that gave rise to the Age of Discovery.	Describe how indigenous religious identities influenced the experiences of Native Americans during the Great Convergence.	Use primary sources to analyze indigenous and colonial perspectives during the Great Convergence.	Describe how Abdul Rahman’s religious identity influenced his experience of slavery in the film <u>Prince Among Slaves</u> .
CLASS AGENDA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Visual Thinking Strategy (Lower) 2) Question Formulation Technique (Higher) 3) Close Read: “Religion and Identity” (¶ #1-4) 	<p>Silent Conversation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video Analysis: Doctrine of Discovery, In the Name of Christ • Video Analysis: Digital Wampum Series • Close Read: “Elements to Discovery” 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Native America Religious Identities PPT 2. Video Analysis: God In America, Episode 1 	<p>Reading Like A Historian: Cortez & Montezuma</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Document A • Document B • Document C <p>For materials: https://sheg.stanford.edu/history-lessons/moctezuma-and-cortes</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Video Analysis: Prince Among Slaves 2. 3 B’s Four Corners
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT	LT Reflections	LT Reflections	LT Reflections	LT Reflections	LT Reflections
DIFFERENTIATION	<p>Multiple Intelligences</p> <p>Sentence starters</p> <p>Modified task</p> <p>Graphic organizer (FA)</p>	<p>Multiple Intelligences</p> <p>Sentence starters</p> <p>Graphic organizer (FA)</p>	<p>Multiple intelligences</p> <p>Sentence starters</p> <p>Graphic organizer (FA)</p>	<p>Homogenous grouping</p> <p>Multiple intelligences</p> <p>Sentence starters</p> <p>Graphic organizer (FA)</p> <p>Modified task and text</p>	<p>Sentence starters</p> <p>Multiple Intelligences</p> <p>Graphic organizer (FA)</p>

Weekly Vocabulary: identity, sacred, ritual, scriptures, convert, observance, sovereign, international law, denomination, secular

SOCIAL STUDIES

*Due every **Friday!***

Name: _____

Week of: _____

to _____

1. Copy the Learning Target (LT) each day.
2. *During the first 5 minutes of class:* use the **Box Strategy** to breakdown the LT, and **pre-assess** your mastery of it by checking one box above the dotted line.
3. *At the end of class:* **post-assess** your mastery of the LT by checking one box below the dotted line.
 - Mastery reflections include **Box labels** and a unique term from the **Word Wall**
 - Missed reflections include a detailed **explanation** and a **clarifying question**

****If you are absent, make arrangements the same day you return to meet with me during lunch or after school****

MONDAY

Learning Target:

- I know it!
 I kind of know it.
 I don't know it!
- *****
- I mastered the LT!
 I missed the LT!
 I was absent and need to meet with you to catch up (request specific day/time):

TUESDAY

Learning Target:

- I know it!
 I kind of know it.
 I don't know it!
- *****
- I mastered the LT!
 I missed the LT!
 I was absent and need to meet with you to catch up (request specific day/time):



Visual Thinking Strategy

KELLY O'RILEY

8TH GRADE US HISTORY

2017-2018

Visual Thinking Strategy is an opportunity to...

- **Identify** what you see in the art you examine and **express your opinions** about it.
- Experience a class where your thoughts are **heard, understood, and valued**.
- Provide **evidence to explain** your interpretive comments.
- **Participate** in the group process of mining the art for multiple meanings.

Steps to VTS

1. What's going on in this picture?
2. What do you see that makes you think that?
3. What more can we find?

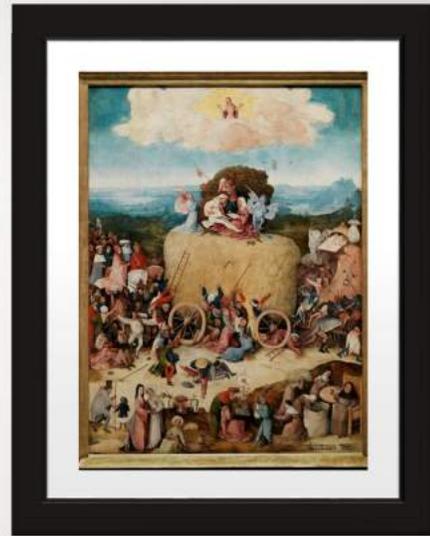






The Haywain Triptych

An oil panel painting by Hieronymus Bosch in 1516, currently housed in the Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain. Bosch shows how man, regardless of his social class or place of origin, is so controlled by the desire to enjoy and acquire material possessions that he allows himself to be deceived or seduced by the Devil. Thus the artist proposes that we should renounce earthly goods and the delights of the senses in order to avoid eternal damnation.



Source: <https://www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/art-work/the-haywain/7673843a-d2b6-497a-ac80-16242b36c3ce>



Title: First landing of Columbus on the shores of the New World: At San Salvador, W.I., Oct. 12th 1492

Creator(s): [Currier & Ives.](#)

Date Created/Published: New York : Published by Currier & Ives, c1892.



The Founding of the Colony of Maryland, 1853, by Tompkins Harrison Matteson The Annapolis Complex Collection Maryland State Archives



The Founding of Maryland, 1634. Oil on canvas, 132 x 185 cm. Painted by Emmanuel Leutze in 1860 while visiting St. Mary's City, Maryland, the site of Maryland's first colonial settlement.



WILLIAM PENN (1644-1718). English religious reformer and colonialist; founder of the colony of Pennsylvania. William Penn's Treaty with the Native Americans, 1682. Oil on canvas, c1830-40, by Edward Hicks.

Religion also shaped slavery. Many settlers felt contempt⁸ towards all religions other than Christianity. This, combined with the use of violence against slaves and their social inequality among whites, “resulted in destructiveness of extraordinary breadth, the loss of traditional religious practices among the half-million slaves brought to the mainland colonies between 1680s and the American Revolution.”⁹ Slaves were often a silent majority, even in churches that reached out to convert Africans to their congregations. If slaves received any Christian religious instruction, it was often from their owners rather than in a public Sunday school.

In Europe, Catholic and Protestant nations often persecuted and/or outlawed each other's religions. Similarly, British colonists frequently made restrictions against Catholics in America. In England, the Protestant church was bitterly divided between traditional Anglicans and reforming Puritans, which led to an English civil war in the 1600s. Differences between Puritans and Anglicans remained in the British colonies as well.

From 1680 to 1760, two branches of the English Puritan movement—Anglicanism and Congregationalism—established themselves as the main denominations¹⁰ in most of the colonies. Yet over time, Protestantism also gave rise to new movements, such as the Baptists, Methodists, Quakers, Unitarians and more. The church was at the heart of most colonial communities; at the heart of the calendar was the Sabbath, or a period of intense religious and nonreligious (or “secular”) activity that lasted all day long. In communities where one existing faith was dominant,¹¹ new groups often were seen as unfaithful troublemakers who upset the social order.

Christianity in colonial America was complicated even more by the widespread practice of astrology, alchemy, and witchcraft. The fear of magical practices by outsiders led to the famous witch trials held in Salem, Massachusetts in 1692 and 1693.

At the same time, the influence of the clergy and their churches increased as more people settled in the colonies. As European immigration to America increased, religious diversity grew among white settlers who did not share ethnicities nor religious practices. Religious identities varied from region to region (and even town to town) due to factors such as wide distances, poor communication/transportation, harsh weather, and clerical shortages.

With French Huguenots, Catholics, Jews, Dutch Calvinists, German Reformed pietists, Scottish Presbyterians, Baptists, Quakers, and other denominations arriving in growing numbers, most colonies with Anglican or Congregational establishments began to embrace religious tolerance—though some did so more than others. Only in Rhode Island and Pennsylvania was toleration rooted in principle rather than convenience. Indeed, Pennsylvania’s first constitution stated that all who believed in God and agreed to live peacefully under the civil government would “in no way be molested or prejudiced for their religious persuasion or practice.”

However, reality often fell short of that ideal.¹²

Discussion Questions:

1. *Whose voices are not included in this article? Why might that be?*
2. *What was the relationship between religion and government in colonial America? Religion and the economy?*
3. *Do colonial religious identities continue to inform religious identities in America today? Why or why not?*
4. *Why is national law the part of the religious identity in America? Where else do we see this in the world?*

⁸ **contempt** – a lack of respect for or fear of something that is usually respected or feared

⁹ As historian Jon Butler put it, institutionalized slavery was “a holocaust that destroyed collective African religious practice in Colonial America.” *Awash in a Sea of Faith*, 157. This “collective” included tribal religious practices as well as Islam, as many Africans who survived the Middle Passage came from North African kingdoms.

¹⁰ **denomination** – a religious group

¹¹ **dominant** – more common or powerful than most or all others

¹² Article adapted from <https://www.facinghistory.org/holocaust-and-human-behavior/chapter-1/religion-and-identity> and <https://www.facinghistory.org/nobigotry/religion-colonial-america-trends-regulations-and-beliefs>, 2 September 2017.

Elements to Discovery

The Doctrine of Discovery originated with the Christian church and was based on Christian *scripture*, including Romans 13 and the Exodus story. It is one of the earliest examples of *international law* because it guided European exploration of America, and gave legal authority to English, French, and Spanish Crowns to establish its colonies in America. These *sovereign* countries developed the Doctrine of Discovery to control non-European countries and justify the domination of non-Christian, non-European peoples as they searched for riches and power in America. This systemic injustice continues to this day.

ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION	PARAPHRASE
<i>First discovery</i>	The first European country to “discover” new lands unknown to other Europeans, gained property and sovereign rights over the lands...	
<i>Actual occupancy and current possession</i>	To fully establish a “first discovery” claim and turn it into a complete title, a European country had to actually occupy and possess newly found lands...	
<i>Preemption / European title</i>	The discovering European country gained the power of preemption, or the sole right to buy the land from the native people...	
<i>Loss of Indian title</i>	European and American legal systems considered Indian Nations and the indigenous peoples to have lost the full property rights and ownership of their lands. They only retained rights to occupy and use their land...	
<i>Limited tribal rights</i>	Europeans considered Indian Nations and native peoples to have lost some of their self-governing (sovereign) and trading (commercial) powers after first discovery...	
<i>Contiguity</i>	...Europeans had a Discovery claim to a reasonable and significant amount of land contiguous to and surrounding their settlements and the lands that they actually possessed in the New World...	
<i>Terra nullius</i>	...Euro-Americans often considered lands that were actually owned, occupied, and being actively utilized by native people to be “vacant” and available for Discovery claims if they were not being “properly used” according to European and American law and culture.	
<i>Christianity</i>	...Under Discovery, non-Christian people were not deemed to have the same rights to land, sovereignty, and self-determination as Christians...	
<i>Civilization</i>	...Euro-Americans thought that God had directed them to bring civilized ways, education, and religion to indigenous peoples and often to exercise paternalism and guardianship powers over them.	
<i>Conquest</i>	...It can mean a military victory. “Conquest” was also used as a “term of art,” a word with a special meaning, when it was used as an element of Discovery.	

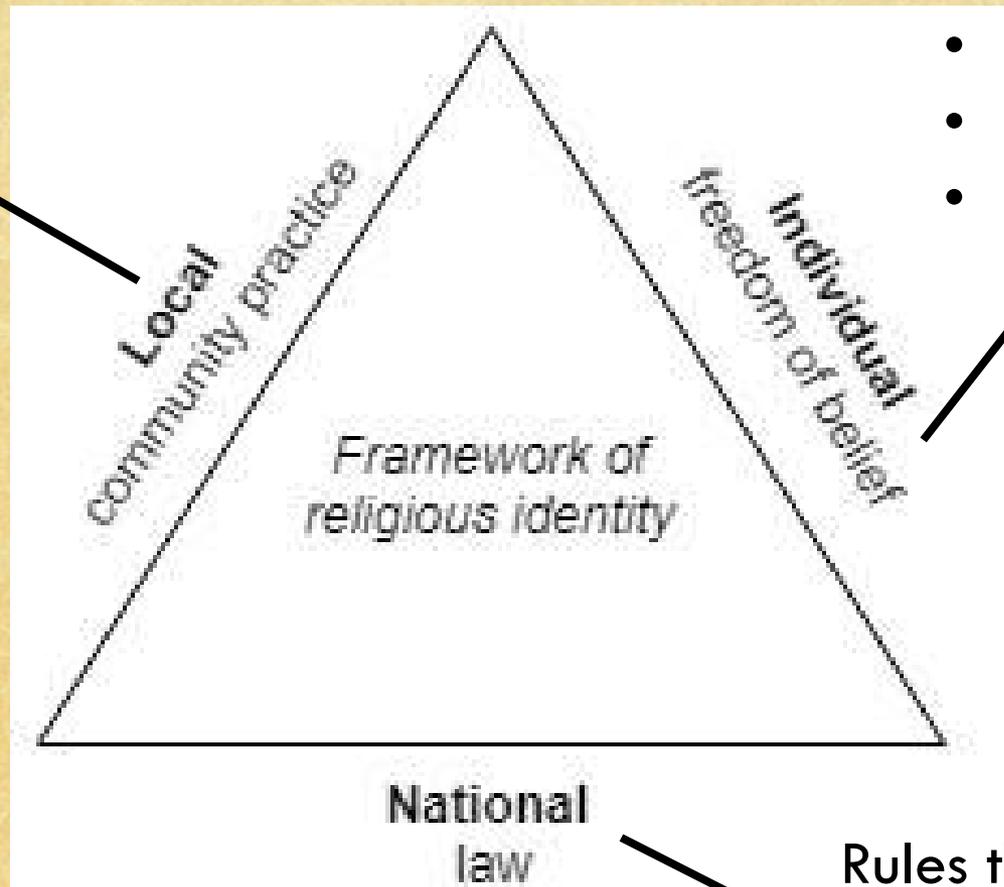
Adapted from *Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, and Manifest Destiny*, a book by Robert J. Miller, pp. 2-5, 12, 25.
See also: <http://upstanderproject.org/firstlight/doctrine>

What is *religious identity*?

- ◆ Turn and talk:
 - ◆ What does “religious” mean?
 - ◆ What does “identity mean?
 - ◆ What do you think “religious identity” means?
- ◆ “Religious identity” refers to the way religious beliefs, religious practices, and religious communities can influence who people are.
 - ◆ It also influences how people see themselves and their relationship to others → also known as “perception”

Framework for American Religious Identity

- Rituals & sacred ceremonies
- Places of worship
- Belonging



- What is true?
- What is good?
- What is right?

Rules that govern people's behavior



Native American Indians



- ♦ The first people to live in a land are called indigenous. The Native Americans are the indigenous people of the United States.

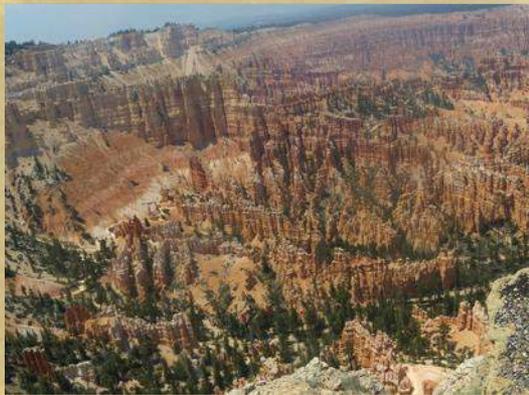
Cultural groups

- ◆ Although they differed culturally and geographically, Native American had some shared beliefs.
 - ◆ Property
 - ◆ Religion

Property

- ♦ Native Americans believed that people could not own land, only the crops
 - ♦ Example: They owned the corn, not the corn fields
- ♦ The land was for community usage, and individual right to use the land was only temporary
- ♦ Land should be preserve for future generations

Native Americans modified the land to suit their needs. They rarely harmed the environment and tried not to waste anything taken from nature.



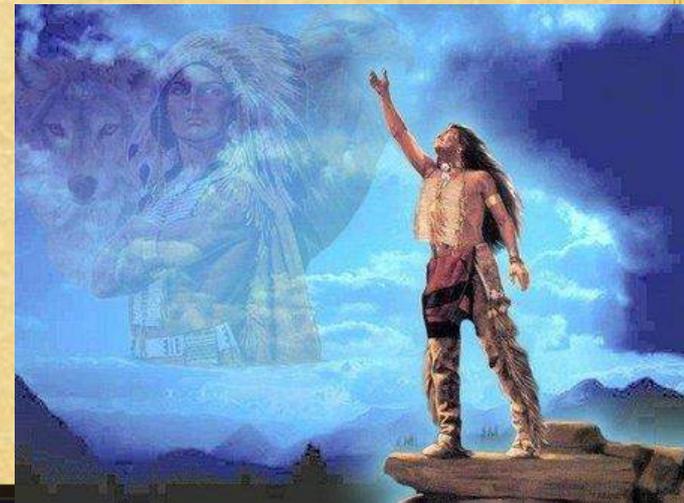


- ◆ The Native Americans used natural resources to meet their needs. Natural resources are materials in nature that people can use. However, they strongly believed in taking great care of the earth and only using what they truly needed.



RELIGION

- ♦ Most Native Americans believed that in the universe existed an Almighty, a spiritual force, that was the source of all life. All things (living and nonliving) contained this spiritual force. The Native Americans believed that once you died your soul went to another part of the universe and had a new existence.
- ♦ Which aspect of religious identity does this describe?



Religion

- ♦ Native Americans developed a sense of community and belonging by performing various rituals and sacred ceremonies.
- ♦ Southwest farmers made corn a part of every ceremony.
- ♦ Hunters gave thanks for the animals they killed.
- ♦ Which aspect of religious identity does this describe?



Religion

- ♦ The Doctrine of Discovery was an international law that granted European countries the right to invade and conquer non-Christian territory
- ♦ Spain, France, and England relied on the Doctrine of Discovery to justify the seizure of land from Native Americans and their (forced) conversion to Christianity during the 1600s and 1700s
- ♦ The United States relied on the Doctrine of Discovery to justify the seizure of land from Native Americans and their (forced) conversion to Christianity during the 1800s