Hercules in the Cradle: The United States Before Nationhood
Pre-European Exploration

- 10-50 million Native Americans (1492)
- 1492 to 1650 ~ massive decline (disease, war, etc.)
- Numerous tribes throughout North America
- Very different and distinctive
- Example = Coastal vs. Plains

Focus Question = If Europeans viewed Columbus as a discoverer, how do you think the Native Americans viewed him?

- As we learn about history = keep in mind “perspective”
- Who’s telling the history?
Early European Exploration

- Dutch = New Amsterdam (NYC)
- Spanish = southwest areas of North America, Central & South America
- Portuguese = South America
- French & British = Eastern ½ of North America
Reasons for Early Settlement

- **God** = Spread their version of Christianity
- **Gold** = Gain wealth for themselves and their countrymen
- **Glory** = Add to the empires of their monarch (King or Queen)
Jamestown Settlements

Failure at Roanoke Island (3x), but the British try again!

*Remember: Britain (Protestant) direct competition with Spain (Catholic)

- 1607 = financed by the Virginia Company
- 150 settlers; very few survive the winter
- Completely ill-prepared for the climate and the land
- Spring of 1608 = reinforcements come from Britain
- Tobacco becomes king
- Eventually cotton in the South = cash crop
- Indentured servants
- African slaves
Massachusetts Colony

Pilgrims arrive in “Plimoth” in 1620:

• Separatists (different from the Puritans)
• Travel on the Mayflower
• Fleeing Britain because of religious persecution
• They want to separate from the Church of England (aka Anglican Church)
• Fortunately for them, Native American tribes are cordial
“Shining City Upon a Hill”

Massachusetts Bay Colony (late 1620s):
• John Winthrop = Puritan religious leader
• Puritans = purify the church
• Felt that the Anglican Church had become too worldly
• No separation of church & state
• Religious leaders were the government leaders
• Very serious lifestyle: no singing, dancing, etc.
The “city upon a hill” would become Boston, MA.
Growth & Regionalism

- 1600s to 1770s = 13 British colonies emerge
- Distinct regional differences
- North = shipping, refined goods
- South = agricultural, slavery as ingrained institution