

Excerpts from My U.S. History Discussion Board

Current Forum: Week Two: The Settlement of North America

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Date: Mon Sep 2 2002 12:55 am

Author: McKay, Edrene <esmnet@cox-internet.com>

Subject: Topic 2.1. The Background for Colonization

After reading **Topic 2.1 The Background for Colonization** in **Week Two: The Settlement of North America** in the **Course Documents** area, post your comments or questions to any part of that topic here by replying to this message. You may want to respond to one of the following questions included in that topic:

How do you explain the paradox that the transition from medieval to modern Europe was "the best of times" and "the worst of times?"

Who would have considered it the best of times? Who would have considered it the worst of times?

Do you think we also live in the best of times and the worst of times? Please explain your answer.

What motives for leaving their homes do you think the transition from medieval to modern Europe presented to many Europeans?

Track down some family history and tell us the specific conditions in Europe or elsewhere that brought your ancestors to America. Try to put their migration into a larger historical perspective by doing some online research, if necessary.

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Date: Mon Sep 2 2002 8:43 pm

Author: Student 1

Subject: Re: Topic 2.1. The Background for Colonization

I believe it is hard to say if it was "the best of times" or "the worst of times". I believe that everyone wanted to improve their current lifestyle just like now a days. I believe that they grew accustom to there social standing, back then they were born into their social class and had very little control on changing them. Where as now a days, we have some choice in what our social class is. I suppose that they did the same things we do now, you have to learn to deal with whatever hand life deals you. I think we make "the best of times" and "the worst of times" in our own life styles, in the way we handle each issue that is presented to us.

I believe they had several motives for living their home land. The book states that they were looking for a new beginning. Even with all the changes that were taking place, post people were still very poor. They could have lost most of their family to the bubonic plague.

My family came from Germany on the SS Kronpriny, Wilhelm Frederick on its second voyage to the United states. They were at sea for 19 days. They entered the U.S at the port of Baltimore, they traveled from there by train to Lockwood, MO. They were very poor, that is why they came to America, some came to escape military duty.

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Date: Tue Sep 3 2002 4:15 pm

Author: McKay, Edrene <esmnet@cox-internet.com>

Subject: Re: Topic 2.1. The Background for Colonization

Thanks, Andrea and Amy, for getting this topic off to a great start.

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Date: Wed Sep 4 2002 1:42 pm

Author: Student 2

Subject: Re: Topic 2.1. The Background for Colonization

I think that the nobility society lived the best of times out of all three "classes" because they were not as trapped in their lives; at least not as much as the clergy and peasant society. The nobles didn't have to worry about being so religious nor be a slave to anyone. They were still able to live a "normal" live and also have power and authority. Now of course, the peasants lived in the worst of times. Before the transition of time, I wouldn't be surprised to read that the suicide rate was high.

Up to September 11, 2001, I would have said that we are living in the best of times due to the fact of our accomplishments in all aspects. Now, it is hard to say. We still have all the good things from before 9/11, but we also have to live in "fear". No more relaxing, thinking nothing bad (9/11 bad) will ever happen to America. "We are ready for anything anyone can dish out", were words we would hear. So the worst of times were a year ago when all America realized that wasn't true and we have been proven wrong.

The Lotti family is originally from Italy. I'm not too sure of the relationship, but I do know that some time ago a Lotti opened a hotel in Italy and was named Lotti Hotel or Hotel Lotti. This was before my grandfather was born and then moved here as a young boy.

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Date: Wed Sep 4 2002 8:04 pm

Author: Student 3

Subject: Re: Topic 2.1. The Background for Colonization

To say that it was the best of times and the worst of times is to say that for some: they were going to be better off and that others would be worse off. The people that would be better off would be the lower class or down trodden. They would now have freedoms that they never had or maybe dreamed of. As one gains another has to lose, which leads me to the upper class, which would have to lose some of their power and possibly money over the things the lower class gained.

In today's standards I have often heard the saying "I wish I lived in the good ole days", but to what one may see as good another will see it as bad. Today we are better off in many ways but we have had to make many sacrifices to achieve what we've got. Some have sacrificed family and friends while others financial freedoms to reach their goals. The things that we have to be careful with are that we don't sacrifice the wrong things to reach any goals we set.

The motives for people to leave their homes in the transition from medieval to modern Europe are the same things that we struggle for today, which are the many freedoms we have. To think about it, if we had to go back and live under the same conditions we wouldn't like it either. Being told what to do, having no freedoms, told how to worship God, I don't believe this would work, do you?

Although I couldn't trace my family tree back that far, I did find a good site to do so. While going through their database, I did find some that were in the 1700's that could be on my mother's side of the family. While I was looking and thinking about this, I began to imagine what they are thinking, as they were packing up to look for a better life. Then I think isn't that what we are still trying to do, to live a better life and pass it on to our children. I also think are we really doing that or are we sometimes-making things worse.

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Date: Wed Sep 4 2002 8:08 pm

Author: Student 3

Subject: Re: Topic 2.1. The Background for Colonization

Andrea I agree about your assessment of our lives today we have made a lot of progress, but also have lost a lot along the way. Good Job

Current Forum: Week Two: The Settlement of North America

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Date: Wed Sep 4 2002 11:52 pm

Author: McKay, Edrene <esmnet@cox-internet.com>

Subject: Re: Topic 2.1. The Background for Colonization

Samantha, you and others have suggested that the nobility experienced the best of times and the peasants experienced the worst of times during this transition period. That would be very true if it were still the Medieval period.

But I'm going to suggest that you think about a different paradigm. Because it's a transition period from Medieval to Modern, everything is changing. There are upheavals. The apple carts are being over turned (to use an analogy). Might it not be possible that the nobility and/or clergy are losing power and authority and consequently experiencing the worst of times? Meanwhile, new opportunities are opening up to the peasants, so they are experiencing the best of times.

That would make coming to the New World an attractive proposition for both classes.

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Date: Wed Sep 4 2002 11:58 pm

Author: McKay, Edrene <esmnet@cox-internet.com>

Subject: Re: Topic 2.1. The Background for Colonization

Thank you, Jacky. I just suggested to some of your classmates that they consider that paradigm (i.e., the nobility and clergy are losing power, the peasants find new opportunities open to them). That's what happens during transition periods. There are shifts in power.
