



# RE~DISCOVERING AMERICA

## Understanding Colonization

A supplemental program for grades 6-12

Through this program, in one class period, students symbolically experience the colonization of North America as the Native peoples and the European colonists experienced it.

During a 25-minute participatory exercise, students hear the voices of Indigenous leaders and European popes, monarchs, presidents, generals, and Western historians as the story unfolds. They learn about the Doctrine of Discovery and how it was employed to take lands away from non-Christian peoples. They learn how this Doctrine continues to violate the rights of Indigenous peoples in our country and around the world. And they learn how Indigenous peoples organized to claim their rights through passage of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The exercise is followed by a 20-minute response period, when students share what they learned, how they feel, and what they think about the reality of Native peoples in our society today.

This program is a valuable hands-on supplement to lessons in history, civics, diversity and inclusion, racism, social justice movements, current events, and to commemorate Indigenous Peoples Day/Columbus Day (Oct. 12), United Nations Day (Oct. 24), and Human Rights Day (Dec. 10).

*“The script is GREAT! The activity was such a success. The students were excited about the interactive component. They really enjoyed the opportunity to participate. Please let me know what else I can do to help you further your work.”*

– Middle School Teacher, Boulder CO

*“I really enjoyed the workshop and was inspired by the work you are leading. I think your simulation and readings (with such great primary sources) was excellent.”*

– Middle School Teacher, Louisville CO

*“You did an absolutely amazing job! The kids had some very insightful and valuable things to say.”*

– Program Administrator, Reading to End Racism, YWCA of Boulder Valley

*“The lesson today was really powerful and moving. I learned a lot and this has inspired me to dig deeper and take actions to help end prejudice and racism.”*

– Middle school student, Boulder CO

For information and to request a presentation of “Re-Discovering America,” contact Paula Palmer, [paulaRpalmer@gmail.com](mailto:paulaRpalmer@gmail.com), or Jerilyn DeCoteau, [decoteau\\_jerilyn@hotmail.com](mailto:decoteau_jerilyn@hotmail.com), and visit [www.boulderfriendsmeeting.org/ipc-right-relationship](http://www.boulderfriendsmeeting.org/ipc-right-relationship)

# Re-Discovering America: Understanding Colonization

## About the Presenters

**Paula Palmer** is a sociologist, writer, and activist for human rights, social justice, and environmental protection. As director of Toward Right Relationship, a project of the Boulder Friends Meeting (Quakers), she created and facilitates workshops titled, "*Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change: Toward Right Relationship with America's Native Peoples*" (for adults) and "*Re-Discovering America: Understanding Colonization*" (for middle schools and high schools, clubs, and religious education programs).

As executive director of the non-profit organization, Global Response, Paula directed over 70 international campaigns to help Indigenous peoples defend their rights and prevent environmental destruction. In Costa Rica, where she lived for 20 years, she published five books of oral history in collaboration with Afro-Caribbean and Bribri Indigenous peoples, through a community empowerment process known as Participatory Action Research.

Paula served as editor for health and environment of *Winds of Change* magazine, a publication of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES). She holds an M.A. degree in sociology from Michigan State University. She is a recipient of the Elise Boulding Peacemaker of the Year Award (given by the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center), the Jack Gore Memorial Peace Award (given by the American Friends Service Committee), and the International Human Rights Award (given by the United Nations Association of Boulder County).

**Jerilyn DeCoteau** is a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians in North Dakota. As a lawyer, she has pressed for the rights of Indian tribes to govern themselves, control their resources, and insure human rights for their members. She practiced and taught Indian law at the U.S. Department of Justice, Native American Rights Fund, Indian Law Clinic at the University of Colorado, Yale Law School, University of Denver Law School, and Turtle Mountain Community College. She is currently an Associate Justice for the Pueblo of San Ildefonso Supreme Court, a judge on the Turtle Mountain Tribal Appeals Court, and does consulting on issues of tribal governance and capacity building.

Jerilyn is active in community organizations, serving on the boards of the YWCA of Boulder Valley, Reading to End Racism, Natural Law Resources Center, and the Denver Indian Health and Family Resource Center. In 2002 she received the Multicultural Award for Government by Boulder County Community Action Programs. She currently lives in Eldorado Springs CO, serves on the Board for the Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition.

Jerilyn's goals in life are to help make Indian communities stronger and healthier with greater opportunity for all tribal members, and to make Boulder county communities stronger by participating in organizations that promote awareness, acceptance through education, learning and shared experiences. Toward that end, she co-facilitates the Toward Right Relationship workshops.

