
Chapter 3

The British Empire in America

1660–1750

Teaching Resources

Chapter Instructional Objectives

After you have taught this chapter, your students should be able to answer the following questions:

1. How and why did Europeans bring Africans to the American colonies as slaves?
2. How did African American communities in America respond to and resist their condition?
3. What was the structure of colonial government? How did it operate? Why did Englishmen and colonial citizens view the role of assemblies differently?
4. What was the role of the colonies within the British mercantilist system? How did economic considerations affect political decision making in both England and North America?

Chapter Annotated Outline

- I. The Politics of Empire, 1660–1713
 - A. The Great Aristocratic Land Grab
 1. Charles II gave the Carolinas to his aristocratic friends and gave his brother James, the Duke of York, the land between the Delaware and Connecticut Rivers.
 2. James took possession of New Netherland and named it New York; the adjacent land was established as New Jersey.
 3. The proprietors of the new colonies sought to create a traditional social order with a gentry class and an established Church of England.
 4. The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina (1669) prescribed a **manorial system** with nobility and serfs that were

governed by a small number of powerful nobles.

5. Poor families in North Carolina refused to work on large manors and chose to live on modest farms.
 6. South Carolinians imposed their own design of government and attacked Indian settlements to acquire slaves for trade.
 7. South Carolina remained an ill-governed and violence-ridden frontier settlement until the 1720s.
 8. Pennsylvania, designed as a refuge for Quakers persecuted in England, developed a pacifistic policy toward the Native Americans and became prosperous.
 9. Quakers believed that people were imbued by God with an inner light of grace and understanding that opened salvation to everyone.
 10. Penn's *Frame of Government* (1681) guaranteed religious freedom for all Christians and allowed all property-owning men to vote and hold office.
 11. Ethnic diversity, pacifism, and freedom of conscience made Pennsylvania the most open and democratic of the Restoration colonies.
- B. From Mercantilism to Imperial Dominion
 1. In the 1650s the English government imposed mercantilism, via the Navigation Acts, which regulated colonial commerce and manufacturing.
 2. The Revenue Act of 1673 imposed a "plantation duty" on sugar and tobacco exports and created a staff of customs officials to enforce the mercantilist laws.
 3. In commercial wars between 1652 and 1674, the English ended Dutch supremacy in the West African slave trade. The

English also dominated North Atlantic commerce.

4. Many Americans resisted the mercantilist laws as burdensome and intrusive. To enforce the laws, the Lords of Trade pursued a punitive legal strategy: in 1679, they denied the claim of Massachusetts to New Hampshire's territory, instead creating New Hampshire as a separate colony. In 1684, they annulled Massachusetts's charter.
 5. When James II succeeded to the throne, his insistence on the "divine right" of kings prompted English officials to create a centralized imperial system in America.
 6. In 1686 the Connecticut and Rhode Island colonies were merged with those of Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth to form the Dominion of New England, a royal province.
 7. Two years later, New York and New Jersey were added to the Dominion.
 8. Sir Edmund Andros, governor of the Dominion, was empowered to abolish existing legislative assemblies and rule by decree.
 9. Andros advocated worship in the Church of England, banned town meetings, and challenged land titles.
- C. The Glorious Revolution in England and America
1. In 1688, James's Catholic wife gave birth to a son, raising the prospect of a Catholic heir to the throne.
 2. To forestall such an event, Protestant Parliamentary leaders carried out a bloodless coup known as the "Glorious Revolution."
 3. Mary, James's Protestant daughter by his first wife, and her husband, William of Orange, were enthroned.
 4. Queen Mary II and William III agreed to rule as constitutional monarchs loyal to "the Protestant reformed religion" and accepted a bill of rights that limited royal prerogatives and increased personal liberties and parliamentary powers.
 5. Parliamentary leaders relied on John Locke's *Two Treatises on Government* (1690) to justify their coup. Locke rejected divine-right theories of monarchical rule.
 6. Locke's celebration of individual rights and representative government had a lasting influence in America.
 7. The Glorious Revolution sparked colonial rebellions against royal governments in Massachusetts, Maryland, and New York.
8. In 1689, Andros was shipped back to England, and the new monarchs broke up the Dominion of New England.
 9. The monarchs did not restore Puritan-dominated government; instead they created a new royal colony of Massachusetts whose new charter granted religious freedom to members of the Church of England and gave the vote to all male property owners instead of Puritans only.
 10. The uprising in Maryland had both political and religious causes; Protestants resented rising taxes and high fees imposed by wealthy, primarily Catholic proprietary officials.
 11. In New York the rebellion against the Dominion of New England began a decade of violent political conflict.
 12. The uprisings in Boston and New York toppled the authoritarian Dominion of New England and won the restoration of internal self-government.
 13. In England the new constitutional monarchs promoted an empire based on commerce; Parliament created a new Board of Trade (1696) to supervise the American settlements, but it had little success. The overall result was a period of lax administration.
- D. Imperial Wars and Native Peoples
1. Between 1689 and 1815, Britain and France fought wars for dominance of Western Europe.
 2. As the wars spread to the Americas, they involved a number of Native American warriors armed with European weapons.
 3. The War of the Spanish Succession (1702–1713) pitted Britain against France and Spain and prompted English settlers in the Carolinas to attack Spanish Florida.
 4. So that they might help to protect their English settlement, whites in the Carolinas armed the Creek peoples to fend off French and Spanish attacks.
 5. The Creeks took this opportunity to become the dominant tribe in the region.
 6. Native Americans also played a central role in the fighting in the Northeast; aided by the French, the Abenakis and Mohawks took revenge on the Puritans, attacking settlements in Maine and Massachusetts. New Englanders responded by joining British forces in attacks on French strongholds in Nova Scotia and Quebec.
 7. The New York frontier remained quiet because of the fur trade and the Iroquois'

policy of “aggressive neutrality”: trading with the British and the French but refusing to fight for either side.

8. Britain used victories in Europe to win territorial and commercial concessions in the Americas in the Treaty of Utrecht (1713). Britain obtained Newfoundland, Acadia, and the Hudson Bay region of northern Canada from France, and access to the western Indian trade. The treaty solidified Britain’s supremacy and brought peace to North America.
- II. The Imperial Slave Economy
- A. The South Atlantic System
1. The South Atlantic system had its center in Brazil and the West Indies; sugar was its main product.
 2. European merchants, investors, and planters ran the system in that they provided the organizational skill, ships, and money needed to grow and process sugarcane, carry the refined sugar to market, and supply the plantations with European tools and equipment.
 3. To provide labor for the sugar plantations, the British and French developed African-run slave-catching systems that extended far into the interior of Africa. They transported about 10,000 Africans per year to the Americas.
 4. Beginning in the 1620s, Dutch merchants introduced the sugar cultivation to English and French settlements in the West Indies, and a “sugar revolution” quickly transformed their economies.
 5. Sugar was the most profitable crop in Europe and America.
 6. As a result of the Navigation Acts, by 1750 re-exports of American sugar and tobacco accounted for half of all British exports.
 7. The South Atlantic system brought wealth to the European economy, but it brought economic decline, political change, and human tragedy to West Africa and parts of East Africa.
- B. Africa, Africans, and the Slave Trade
1. The slave trade changed West African society by promoting centralized states and military conquest by kingdoms such as Barsally, Dahomey, and Asante.
 2. Many of these African kingdoms participated in the slave trade in order to gain wealth and power. Others, such as Benin, opposed the trade in male slaves for over a century.
 3. In many African societies, class divisions hardened as people of noble birth enslaved and sold those of lesser status.
 4. The imbalance of the sexes that resulted from slave trading allowed some African men to take several wives, changing the nature of marriage.
 5. The Atlantic trade prompted harsher forms of slavery in Africa, eroding the dignity of human life there and in the Western Hemisphere.
 6. African slaves who were forced to endure the **Middle Passage**, the ship journey from Africa to the Americas, suffered the bleakest fate; many were literally worked to death after reaching the sugar plantations.
- C. Slavery in the Chesapeake and South Carolina
1. Planters in Virginia and Maryland took advantage of the increased British trade in slaves, importing thousands of slaves and creating a “slave society.”
 2. Slavery was increasingly defined in racial terms; in Virginia virtually all resident Africans were declared slaves.
 3. Living and working conditions in Maryland and Virginia allowed slaves to live relatively long lives.
 4. Some tobacco planters tried to increase their workforce through reproduction, purchasing female slaves and encouraging large families.
 5. By the middle of the 1700s, slaves constituted over 30 percent of the Chesapeake population, and over three-quarters of them were American born.
 6. South Carolina slaves were much more oppressed. Growing rice required work amid pools of putrid water, and mosquito-borne epidemic diseases took thousands of African lives.
 7. The slave population in South Carolina suffered many deaths and had few births; therefore, the importation of new slaves “re-Africanized” the black population.
- D. The Emergence of an African American Community
1. Slaves initially did not regard one another as “Africans” or “blacks” but as members of a specific family, clan, or people.
 2. The acquisition of a common language and a more equal gender ratio were prerequisites for the creation of an African American community.

3. As enslaved blacks forged a new identity in America, their lives continued to be shaped by their African past, influencing decorative motifs, housing design, and religious patterns.
- E. Resistance and Accommodation
1. African creativity was limited because slaves were denied education and had few material goods or leisure time.
 2. Slaves who resisted their rigorous work routine were punished with beatings, whippings, and mutilation, including amputation.
 3. The extent of violence toward slaves depended on the size and the density of the slave population; a smaller slave population usually meant less violence, while predominantly African-populated colonies suffered more violence.
 4. The Stono Rebellion (1739) in South Carolina was the largest slave uprising of the eighteenth century.
 5. White militiamen killed many of the Stono rebels and dispersed the rest, preventing a general uprising.
- F. William Byrd and the Rise of the Southern Gentry
1. As the southern colonies became slave societies, life changed for whites as well as blacks.
 2. As men lived longer, patriarchy within the family reappeared.
 3. The planter elite exercised authority over black slaves and yeomen—the American equivalent of oppressed peasants and serfs of Europe.
 4. To prevent rebellion, the southern gentry paid attention to the concerns of middling and poor whites.
 5. By 1770 the majority of English Chesapeake families owned a slave, giving them a stake in the exploitative labor system.
 6. Taxes were gradually reduced for poorer whites, and poor yeomen and some tenants were allowed to vote.
 7. In return, the planter elite expected the yeomen and tenants to elect them to office and defer to their power.
 8. By the 1720s the gentry took on the trappings of wealth, modeling themselves after the English aristocracy, and practicing **gentility**, a refined but elaborate lifestyle.
 9. The profits of the South Atlantic system helped to form an increasingly well-educated, refined, and stable ruling class.
- G. The Northern Maritime Economy
1. The South Atlantic system tied the whole British empire together economically in part through **bills of exchange**, a form of credit offered by London merchants and used by planters to buy slaves from Africa, and to pay North American farmers and merchants.
 2. West Indian trade created the first American merchant fortunes and the first urban industries—in particular, shipbuilding and the distilling of rum from West Indies sugar.
 3. In the eighteenth century the expansion of Atlantic commerce in lumber and shipbuilding fueled rapid growth in the North American interior as well as in seaport cities and coastal towns.
 4. A small group of wealthy landowners and merchants formed the top rank of the seaport society.
 5. Artisan and shopkeeper families formed the middle ranks of seaport society, and laboring men, women, and children formed the lowest ranks. Historians have tested this hypothesis by studying the **probate inventory** of selected individuals.
 6. Between 1660 and 1750, involvement in the South Atlantic system brought economic uncertainty as well as jobs to northern workers and farmers.
- III. The New Politics of Empire, 1713–1750
- A. The Rise of Colonial Assemblies
1. The triumph of the South Atlantic system changed the politics of empire; the British were content to rule the colonies with a gentle hand, and the colonists were in a position to challenge the rules of the mercantilist system.
 2. In England, a Declaration of Rights in 1689 strengthened the powers of the Commons at the expense of the crown.
 3. American representative assemblies also wished to limit the powers of the crown and gradually won control over taxation and local appointments.
 4. The rising power of the colonial assemblies created an elitist rather than a democratic political system.
 5. Neither elitist assemblies nor wealthy property owners could impose unpopular edicts on the people.
 6. Crowd actions were a regular part of political life in America and were used to enforce community values.

7. By the 1750s most colonies had representative political institutions that were responsive to popular pressure and increasingly immune from British control.
- B. Salutary Neglect
1. **“Salutary neglect”**—under which royal bureaucrats relaxed their supervision of internal colonial affairs, focusing instead on defense and trade—was a byproduct of the political system developed by Sir Robert Walpole, a British Whig.
 2. **Radical Whigs** argued that Walpole used patronage and bribery to create a strong Court Party.
 3. Landed gentlemen argued that Walpole’s high taxes and bloated, incompetent royal bureaucracy threatened the liberties of the British people.
 4. Colonists, maintaining that royal governors likewise abused their patronage powers, tried to enhance the powers of provincial representative assemblies.
- C. Protecting the Mercantile System
1. Walpole’s main concern was to protect British commercial interests in America from the Spanish and the French.
 2. Walpole arranged for Parliament to subsidize Georgia in order to protect the valuable rice colony of South Carolina.
 3. Resisting British expansion into Georgia and growing trade with Mesoamerica, Spanish naval forces sparked the War of Jenkins’ Ear in 1739.
 4. Walpole used this provocation to launch a predatory, but largely unsuccessful, war against Spain’s American Empire.
 5. The War of Jenkins’ Ear became a part of the War of Austrian Succession (1740–1749), bringing a new threat from France.
 6. The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748) returned the French naval fortress of Louisbourg to France after its capture by New England militiamen, but the treaty also reaffirmed British military superiority over Spain, effectively giving Georgia to the British.
- D. The American Economic Challenge
1. Colonial merchants took advantage of a loophole in the Navigation Acts that allowed Americans to own ships and transport goods. The loophole allowed colonists to cut dramatically into commerce in the Atlantic.
 2. The Molasses Act of 1733 placed a high tariff on imports of French molasses to make British molasses competitive, but sugar prices rose in the late 1730s, so the act was not enforced.
 3. The Currency Act (1751) prevented colonies from establishing new **land banks** and prohibited the use of public currency to pay private debts. This was in response to abuse of the land bank system by some colonial assemblies who issued too much paper currency and then required merchants to accept the worthless paper as legal tender.
 4. In the 1740s, British officials vowed to replace salutary neglect with rigorous imperial control.

Key Terms

manorial system A quasi-feudal system of landholding in the Hudson River valley in which wealthy landlords leased out thousands of acres to tenant farmers in exchange for rent, a quarter of the value of all improvements (houses and barns, for example), and a number of days of personal service. (70)

Middle Passage The brutal sea voyage from Africa to the Americas in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that cost nearly a million African slaves their lives. (82)

gentility A refined style of living and elaborate manners that came to be highly prized among well-to-do English families after 1600. (90)

bills of exchange Credit slips that British manufacturers, West Indian planters, and American merchants used in the eighteenth century in place of currency to settle transactions. (90)

probate inventory An accounting of a person’s property at the time of death, as recorded by court-appointed officials. Probate inventories are of great value to historians: these detailed lists of personal property, household items, and financial assets and debts tell us a good deal about people’s lives. (93)

salutary neglect A term often used to describe British colonial policy during the reigns of George I (r. 1714–1727) and George II (r. 1727–1760). By relaxing their supervision of internal colonial affairs, royal bureaucrats contributed significantly to the rise of self-government in North America. (94)

Radical Whigs An eighteenth-century faction in Parliament that protested corruption in government, the growing cost of the British empire, and the rise of a wealthy class of government-related financiers. (95)

land banks An institution, established by a colonial legislature, that printed paper money and lent it to farmers, taking a lien on their land to ensure repayment. (99)

Lecture Strategies

1. Write a lecture in which you explain how the broadening of mercantilist theory by means of the Navigation Acts was paralleled by British efforts to gain closer political control over the colonies. Then, demonstrate how American colonists expressed dissent over the political implications of the relationship between the mother country and its colonies dictated by mercantilism. Even though American colonials initially separated economic interaction from political status, over time they resisted a future that seemed to promise only second-class citizenship. This lecture will later help students to more easily understand the causes of the American Revolution.
2. Students need to understand the dynamics of the South Atlantic system and how that system affected everyone who came in contact with it. To help them comprehend the reciprocal and interconnected nature of the international slave trade, draw a large triangle on the board to accompany your lecture, then follow the lines of shipping across the Atlantic. In your lecture, you may wish to follow the operations of the slave ships as they stopped along the coast of Africa, picked up slaves, transported them on the Middle Passage, and deposited them in markets in the West Indies. A film clip from *Amistad* adds visual emotion to any verbal lecture on the subject. Note how the English used money or goods from the system to purchase slaves along the African coast and then sold them to planters for a much higher price to work on lands lost by Indians during an earlier time period. Then, follow the production of sugar, its shipment to London, and its sale to Europeans to help students understand the plantation system and the inflow of capital from Europe. By emphasizing the profitable nature of the South Atlantic system, you can effectively show how other factors shaped its development over time.
3. By using slaves, the South Atlantic system increased the disparity of wealth by enriching a

few people, increasing the wealth of many, impoverishing many, and exploiting even more. It is apparent why this disparity would happen on a sugar or tobacco plantation. It is less clear why and how exploitation would occur in small urban seaports in the North American colonies. Define the functions those ports played in the colonial system. Show how the class makeup of the ports would arise from the dominant economic functions of the city: merchants and some British officials; middling people, artisans, laborers, and workers in the shipping industry; and slaves. Indicate the extent of slavery in New York and its consequences for social order. It is important to note the appearance of a strong merchant class that created a thriving trade with the West Indies; this merchant class would seek autonomy and resist British efforts to increase imperial control.

4. Compose a lecture in which you explain the development of an African American society and culture in the context of the economics and demography of the South Atlantic system. After Bacon's Rebellion, the planters' desire to assert more social control over the workforce combined with increasing profits and the declining cost of slaves to make slavery more affordable. But because they were considerably less wealthy than West Indian planters, Virginians and Carolinians could afford fewer slaves, who were scattered on plantations across the colony. In contrast to the West Indies, the death rate among slaves in North America was low, facilitating family formation. As the conditions of the slave population improved, so did the birthrate. This gradually improved gender ratios, which continued to increase the birthrate, creating a natural population increase that enlarged the slave population. These demographic developments allowed slaves in North America to form families, develop kin relationships, and forge a new African American culture and society among Africans who came from different tribal groups and spoke different languages. Though viewed as an alien people who were legally enslaved and forced to work and live amid brutal repression and violence, African American slaves were gradually able to form a new subculture that would transform the character of American society after 1720.

Reviewing the Text

These questions are from the textbook and follow each main section of the narrative. They are provided in the Computerized Test Bank with suggested responses, for your convenience.

The Politics of Empire, 1660–1713 (pp. 70–77)

1. What was the role of the colonies in the British mercantilist system?
 - Colonies produced agricultural goods and raw materials, which English merchants would carry to the home country, where they would be re-exported or manufactured into finished products.
2. Explain the causes of the Glorious Revolution and how it affected England and America.
 - *Causes:* King James II revoked charters of many English towns, rejected the advice of Parliament, and aroused popular opposition by openly practicing Roman Catholicism. In 1688 his new son raised the prospect of a Catholic heir to the throne, giving rise to fears of political persecution.
 - *Results:* In England, as a result of a quick and bloodless coup, James II was forced into exile and Mary, his Protestant daughter by his first wife, became Queen. She increased personal liberties and parliamentary powers. The changes in England sparked rebellions by colonies in Massachusetts, Maryland, and New York. The Dominion of New England was broken up, creating the new royal colony of Massachusetts.
3. How did Native Americans attempt to turn European rivalries to their advantage? How successful were they?
 - Some accepted firearms from one European nation at war with another, hoping for greater control of territory. Several tribes then used the firearms to attack the settlements of their European and Native enemies, and sometimes even turned them against the allies who had supplied the guns. Other Native Americans, by maintaining a neutral position, managed to keep up a lucrative trade with both sides.
 - Native Americans were relatively successful in using European alliances to retain their territory and gain greater control of the fur trade, delaying European takeover by one or two generations during the early 1700s.

The Imperial Slave Economy (pp. 77–93)

1. Describe the major elements of the South Atlantic system. How did the system work? How did it shape the development of the various colonies?
 - The three major components of the South Atlantic systems were as follows: lands taken

- from Indians were turned into plantations; enslaved laborers were purchased in Africa; capital and ships were provided by Europeans. Europeans purchased Africans in Africa, transported them to the Americas, and carried raw materials produced on Indian land by enslaved Africans back to Europe for resale abroad.
- Because of climate and location, some colonies, such as Brazil, the Carolinas, Barbados, and Jamaica, were more suitable to plantation agriculture and slave labor, and grew rapidly into slave-based agricultural plantation colonies as a result. A monocrop agricultural system based on race and black chattel slavery developed in slave-based colonies.
2. What role did Africans play in the expansion of the Atlantic slave trade? What role did Europeans play?
 - Africans were enslaved by fellow African leaders who sought to trade them for Europeans' guns to enhance African military strength, arms which then allowed Africans to acquire more slaves to sell to Europeans, which expanded the slave trade over time.
 - Europeans provided the capital, trade goods, and ships to transport slaves purchased from Africans to the Americas. Europeans also created a plantation agricultural system in many American colonies. African slaves worked on the plantations.
 3. In what colonies were enslaved Africans most successful in creating African American communities? Where were they least successful? How do you explain the differences?
 - In places with large African populations, such as the West Indies and the Carolinas, the presence of large numbers of Africans from different tribes facilitated a broad-based African American culture based on a common Africanized language that transcended tribal differences. A high death rate and the relative absence of women, however, worked to slow the development of African American culture compared to the Chesapeake.
 - In the Chesapeake colonies where more American-born blacks lived, English became the common language, facilitating a more rapid development of African American culture. A lower death rate in the Chesapeake and a more equal sex ratio compared to the Carolinas enabled the development of stable families, facilitating a more rapid development of African American culture.

- In colonies with small black populations, such as the northern English colonies, Africans struggled to make new communities.

The New Politics of Empire, 1713–1750
(pp. 93–100)

1. How did the ideas and policies of the Whigs in England affect British and colonial political systems between 1700 and 1760?
 - Central control wielded by English monarchs was weakened, in part by the undermining of faith in the integrity of the political system brought by salutary neglect, a major Whig policy during the early 1700s. Higher taxes and a bloated bureaucracy alienated the British people, who felt their liberties were decreasing as a result.
2. What was the British policy of salutary neglect? Why did the British follow this policy? What consequences did it have for the British colonies in North America?
 - Salutary neglect, a Whig policy of relaxed supervision of the colonies in favor of defense and trade, facilitated the rise of self-government in the colonies. Royal appointees increasingly cared little about colonial obedience to the Crown, and more about making a profit from their office.
 - As Parliament and monarchs focused more on trade and defense, American colonists increased the powers of representative bodies, leading the way for later demands of political equality and independence.

Chapter Writing Assignments

These questions appear at the end of Chapter 3 in the textbook. They are provided in the Computerized Test Bank with suggested responses, for your convenience.

1. Describe the dramatic expansion of the British empire in North America in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. What role did the South Atlantic system play?
 - Expansion through imperial warfare with France and Spain, land taking from Indians, mercantilist policies, and salutary neglect helped the British monarchy expand from monocrop plantation colonies in the West Indies to a more diversified economic and social structure in the eastern colonies of North America.
 - The South Atlantic system was crucial to increasing the political powers of the English

government in key regions, such as the West Indies and the Carolinas. The arrival of thousands of African slave laborers facilitated the economic development of rural areas. The rapid proliferation of a plantation style economy enriched private landholders, who served as the impetus for expanding black chattel slavery and extending imperial control deeper into Indian communities.

2. In what ways did politics in the British empire change in the decades following the Glorious Revolution? How do you explain those changes?
 - After the Glorious Revolution, the British empire became increasingly decentralized, with colonial assemblies taking on greater responsibilities and powers over the Crown and Parliament. Thus, a new empire based on commerce resulted and colonial rebellions increased.
 - English Whigs challenged the hierarchical outlook of England as part of a general campaign to increase free trade. They also won the fight for a constitutional monarchy that limited the authority of the crown.

Class Discussion Starters

1. Was the South Atlantic system a success or a failure between 1650 and 1750?

Possible answers

- a. Economically, the system was a remarkable success. The sugar grown in the West Indies had a value considerably above the cost of labor and transportation and thus sent a river of wealth into England and the American colonies.
- b. Politically, it was also relatively successful. By implementing mercantilist policy, backing it up with trade wars, and developing a policy that encouraged the market to grow without supervision, the British encouraged development and contributed to political stability.
- c. Socially, the system empowered various groups in England and the American colonies—merchants, planters, artisans, and farmers—and tended to place wealth in the hands of a few people.
- d. The human cost to the enslaved peoples undermined any notion that the South Atlantic system was “successful.”
- e. As Thomas Jefferson remarked, the system undermined the character of the slaveholders: each generation “nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny.”

2. Why did Virginians and other southern planters make the decision to implement slavery in the seventeenth century? Did they have other options?

Possible answers

- a. The large planters wanted to establish a labor system that could be controlled instead of one that freed indentured servants to become demanding members of society.
- b. Slaves made southern planters appear more like the West Indian planters, enhancing their prestige and power.
- c. The labor market shifted. After other colonies began developing, more indentured servants went to those colonies. This made servants more expensive, when they could be found at all. Hence, slaves from the West Indies or Africa seemed to be more economical.
- d. Politically, planters increasingly stressed race and shared human rights in order to create solidarity with white freeholders, farmers, and laborers. Slavery thus enabled planters to consolidate their political power.
- e. There were other options. Slavery was a choice made by southern planters; it was not an inevitable outcome. The planters valued social standing, political power, and the accumulation of wealth over the human cost involved.

3. What factors influenced the creation and maintenance of an American colonial slave society and culture?

Possible answers

- a. American planters were not as rich as West Indian planters. Therefore, most planters could purchase only a few slaves and had to treat them with the expectation of keeping them for many years.
- b. Lower death rates combined with rising birthrates to cause a natural increase in the slave population. This brought gender ratios into balance, further increasing the birthrate of the slave population.
- c. The dispersal of slaves across the country necessitated that they learn English and interact with other Africans. This cultural interaction with the planters' language, culture, and religion, along with the mixing of traditions from different tribes or nations, combined to form the building blocks of a new African American culture and society.
- d. The dispersal of the slave population did, how-

ever, leave slaves at the mercy of the repression and terror many planters felt they needed to impose to establish order.

4. Did American colonials benefit economically from their participation in the South Atlantic system?

Possible answers

- a. Early production and trade in the colonies increased in direct response to the establishment of markets in England.
- b. The British interdiction against foreign shipping within the empire stimulated the British shipbuilding industry, much of which took place in Boston and in smaller ports along the New England coast.
- c. Direct sales of foodstuffs and lumber to the West Indies stimulated production and trade in the middle and northern colonies.
- d. By developing an integrated trading system, the Navigation Acts also stimulated agricultural development and market specialization in colonial ports, raising revenues, income, and capital investment.
- e. The colonials undertook a considerable amount of smuggling. The colonies also traded rice and fish directly in southern Europe, indicating that the American colonials could have developed their own trade with Europe without going through London or the West Country ports. Their place in the South Atlantic system would have enriched them regardless of their membership in the British system.

5. What were some of the causes of rising friction between the colonials and the British? Were the American colonials or the British more responsible for those frictions?

Possible answers

- a. The British and many colonials fundamentally disagreed about the colonials' civil status in the empire.
- b. The rising planter and merchant classes further empowered the colonial assemblies.
- c. Many British officials felt that the British needed to reassert power and control in the American colonies.
- d. It is nearly impossible to apportion responsibility for the rising friction between colonials and the British. Divisions of opinion that evolved in response to changing circumstances characterized each side.

Classroom Activities

1. Divide the class into two groups: white masters and African American slaves. Ask both groups to make a list of the problems experienced by their respective groups in surviving in colonial North America during the eighteenth century. After reconvening the class, ask one side to air their grievances. Then allow the other side a chance to rebut and comment on what they heard, then relate their list of problems and struggles.
2. Create a debate by asking one portion of the class to select a particular Indian nation (or nations) from the chapter and develop a perspective on the motivations for their historical actions during the era of imperial warfare in North America. Another group in class should do the same for the English. Be sure to have the students develop a written checklist of the important factors on either side.

Oral History Exercises

- Oral history is vital to the process of remembering the long-term family histories of modern African American people. Why do you think this is true? What factors surface from the chapter that help reveal a partial answer to this question?
- Imagine that you are an African American slave attempting to survive on a plantation in the Carolinas. In what ways would oral communication and oral history be important in your life?

Working with Documents

COMPARING AMERICAN VOICES

The Rise of Representative Assemblies (p. 96)

1. What policies did Spotswood want to pursue? Why couldn't he persuade the House of Burgesses to implement them? According to Spotswood, what was wrong with Virginia's political system? How did he propose to reform it?
 - Policies included improving the militia, making voting more of an elite activity, and collecting taxes more efficiently.
 - The assembly delayed and stalled on the actions Spotswood wanted, due in part to it being staffed by men of a lower class who served for the salary, disdained wealthy privilege such as

Spotswood enjoyed, and were careful to take no political action that would upset the people of their social class. The colony's auditor also refused to listen to the governor.

- Virginia's political system allowed any man with half of an acre to vote, enabling lower classes to elect representatives from within their own classes, which could lead to increases in taxation. Family relations also protected some men in office, such as the colony auditor.
 - Spotswood wanted to reform the system by increasing the voting qualifications and making the assembly more answerable to his dictates.
2. Unlike the House of Burgesses, whose members were elected by qualified voters, the members of the governor's council in Virginia were appointed by the crown, usually on the recommendation of the governor. What was the council's response to Spotswood's plan to reform the political system? Based on the Ludwell incident, where did the political sympathies of the council lie?
 - The council was wary of antagonizing the lower classes, bearing in mind Bacon's Rebellion a generation earlier. The Ludwell incident reveals that the council wanted to keep a modicum of popular sovereignty through the House in order to keep the population contented.
 3. What were Clinton's complaints about the actions of the New York assembly? Did those actions represent a more or less serious threat to imperial power than the activities of the Virginia Burgesses? Based on the material here, which governor was a stronger representative of the crown's interests?
 - Complaints: The assembly controlled the salaries and nominations of politicians of the colony, making Clinton's officers dependent on the assembly and reducing his control. The assembly also refused to add any amendments to money bills for colony resources. The assembly named the commissaries for the militia companies, thereby controlling the economy.
 - Compared to the Virginia House, it appears that the New York Assembly had more control over colonial finances, and thus the government. Clinton appears to have been powerless to deal with it.
 - Clinton appears to be a stronger representative of the crown's interests because he advocates the Crown "putting a stop to these usurpations of the assembly" and increase royal control.

VOICES FROM ABROAD

Olaudah Equiano: The Brutal
“Middle Passage” (p. 84)

1. In what ways is Equiano’s description of slavery in Africa consistent with the analysis in the text?
 - Slaves were seized by guerilla attacks. They were treated relatively well by African people, almost like family. It was common for them to speak the same language as their captors. Most were put to work doing household tasks. Slaves changed masters several times and were resold repeatedly.
2. What evidence does Equiano offer in his description of the Middle Passage that explains the average slave mortality rate of about 15 percent?
 - Slaves suffered on the ship from disease caused by improper disposal of human waste, as well as a suffocating lack of air below decks. Malnutrition, starvation, and suicide often resulted.
3. Assuming that scholars are correct in stating that Equiano was not born in Africa, why do you think he wrote this fictitious narrative of his childhood instead of describing the facts of his own life in slavery?
 - He wanted to add credibility to his work as an antislavery advocate by claiming that he experienced slavery in Africa as a child. He may also have wanted fame.

Reading American Pictures

Jumping the Broomstick:
Viewing an African Ceremony (p. 88)

1. The painting is set on a rice plantation in the low country of South Carolina. What clues can you see in the image that confirm the location?
 - In the background stand rows of slave quarters very near to plantation workshops, the master’s house, and sprawling fields. In the foreground stand two slave cabins. There is a large congregation of African Americans dancing without shoes. They wear hats and scarves for protection from the hot Carolina sun. Few material goods are present. No whites are present. African cultural practices indicate a slave scene. However, there is no evidence of rice.
2. Does the evidence in the picture suggest that these people are recent arrivals from Africa? What artifacts in the picture might be African in origin? What have you learned from the text about conditions on rice plantations that would contribute to a steady stream of African-born workers on those plantations?
 - Evidence/artifacts: musical instruments (drum and banjo), bottles on the ground, the head scarves of men and women, the stick held by the man in the center of image all point to recent arrival, as does the African dance ceremony.
 - Conditions: a high rate of disease, overwork, and malnutrition resulted in high death rate, requiring additional slaves to maintain the plantation. The expansion of rice cultivation during the mid-eighteenth century also required massive numbers of African-born slaves, increasing their population in southern British American colonies.
3. Many African peoples mingled with one another on large plantations. Do you see any evidence in the painting that suggests tribal differences? What suggests that the two dancers on the left—perhaps a bride and groom—come from different African peoples?
 - There is limited evidence of tribal differences, illustrated by the different shaped and colored head wrappings and scarves (three wear white, three wear blue-striped headdresses). The image-maker may also have attempted to show different hairstyles and facial complexions.
 - The reasons African dancers may come from different tribes stems from the mixing of tribes by slave masters to prevent resistance through common language, the random nature of slave sale and purchase, the specific skill base of certain tribes (e.g., rice cultivation), and the desire of African American slaves to marry outside of their tribe to prevent incest. Slavery shattered family bonds, leaving African Americans unsure of their real kin.
4. Around 1860, a Virginia slave recounted the story of her parents’ marriage: “Ant Lucky read sumpin from de Bible, an’ den she put de broomstick down an’ dey locked dey arms together an’ jumped over it. Den dey was married.” In the scene depicted in this painting, the man in the red breeches is holding a long stick. If this is a wedding, is there any evidence of Christianity in the ceremony? Look carefully at the men’s and women’s clothes. Do they reveal signs of European cultural influence?

- There is limited evidence of Christianity: the bride and groom stand side by side and face one another; the bride wears a long white dress. Musicians sit to the side.
- European influence on clothing: a hat is worn by the man playing the banjo; English breeches and waistcoats are worn by men; women wear European-style dresses and neck scarves.

Electronic Media

Website

- *Sunken Slave Ship Henrietta Marie*
melfisher.org/henriettamarie/overview.htm
A museum in Key West, Florida, relates the story of a sunken slave ship from 1700 recovered recently by archaeologists.

Films

- *Africans in America, Part 1: The Terrible Transformation, 1450–1750* (1998, PBS documentary, 150 minutes)
This PBS film covers the African American experience in the colonial period.
- *Amistad* (1997, DreamWorks, 152 minutes)
This film portrays the Middle Passage and the real-life struggles of a group of African slaves fighting for their freedom in the Americas.
- *Last of the Mohicans* (1992, Morgan Creek Productions, 112 minutes)
A Hollywood adaptation of the James Fenimore Cooper tale of Indian-white relations in northeastern North America during the turbulent imperial wars of the mid-eighteenth century.

Literature

- Alexander Falconbridge, *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa* (London, 1788), in *America through the Eyes of Its People: Primary Sources in American History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1997)
A doctor aboard a British slave ship, Falconbridge provides one of many firsthand accounts of the conditions experienced by African people during the Middle Passage.
- Colin G. Calloway, ed., *The World Turned Upside Down: Indian Voices from Early America* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1996)
A collection of documents from the perspective of Native American people and their leaders during a time of imperial warfare and

other major transitions for Native nations in colonial North America.

- Louis B. Wright, ed., *The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1709–1712* (Richmond, VA: Dietz Press, 1941)

One of the best examples of planter gentry life in the southern colonies, Byrd's diary sheds light on the formation of a plantation aristocracy in the mid-eighteenth century.

Additional Bedford/St. Martin's Resources for Chapter 3

FOR INSTRUCTORS

Transparencies

The following maps and images from Chapter 3 are available as full-color acetates:

- Power and Race in the Chesapeake
- Map 3.1 The Dominion of New England, 1686–1689
- Map 3.2 Britain's American Empire, 1713
- Map 3.3 Africa and the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1700–1810
- African Culture in South Carolina
- Map 3.4 The Rise of the American Merchant, 1750

Instructor's Resource CD-ROM

The following maps, figures, and images from Chapter 3, as well as a chapter outline, are available on disc in both PowerPoint and jpeg formats:

- Map 3.1 The Dominion of New England, 1686–1689
- Map 3.2 Britain's American Empire, 1713
- Map 3.3 Africa and the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1700–1810
- Map 3.4 The Rise of the American Merchant, 1750
- Figure 3.1 The Growth of Slavery in South Carolina, 1700–1740
- Figure 3.2 Family Connections and Political Power, New Jersey, 1700–1776
- Power and Race in the Chesapeake
- African Culture in South Carolina
- Rice Hulling in West Africa

Using the Bedford Series with *America's History*, Sixth Edition

Available online at bedfordstmartins.com/usingseries, this guide offers practical suggestions for incorporat-

ing volumes from the Bedford Series in History and Culture into the U. S. History Survey. Relevant titles for Chapter 3 include

- *THE INTERESTING NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF OLAUDAH EQUIANO, WRITTEN BY HIMSELF, with Related Documents*, Edited with an Introduction by Robert J. Allison, *Suffolk University*
- *The Diary and Life of Samuel Sewall*, Edited with an Introduction by Melvin Yazawa, *University of New Mexico*
- *The New York Conspiracy Trials of 1741: Daniel Horsmanden’s JOURNAL OF THE PROCEEDINGS, with Related Documents* by Serena R. Zabin, *Carleton College*

FOR STUDENTS

Documents to Accompany *America’s History*

The following documents and illustrations are available in Chapter 3 of the companion reader by Melvin Yazawa, *University of New Mexico*:

1. Edward Littleton, *The Groans of the Plantations* (1689)
2. Thomas Danforth, *The Glorious Revolution in Massachusetts* (1689)
3. Thomas Phillips, *A Journal of a Voyage Made in the Hannibal* (1693–1694)
4. *Slavery and Prejudice: An Act for the Better Order and Government of Negroes and Slaves*, South Carolina (1712)
5. *Conflicts between Masters and Slaves: Maryland in the Mid-Seventeenth Century* (1658)
6. Ayubah Suleiman Diallo, *An Early Slave Narrative* (1734)
7. William Byrd II, *The Secret Diary of William Byrd II* (1709–1711)
8. Benjamin Latrobe and Anonymous, *Plantation Life in the Eighteenth Century*
9. Martin Bladen, *A Plantation Parliament* (1739)
10. *Stono Rebellion in South Carolina* (1739)

Online Study Guide at bedfordstmartins.com/henretta

The Online Study Guide helps students synthesize the material from the text as well as practice the skills historians use to make sense of the past. The following map, visual, and documents activities are available for Chapter 3:

Map Activity

- Map 3.4 *The Rise of the American Merchant, 1750*

Visual Activity

- *Reading American Pictures: Jumping the Broomstick: Viewing an African Ceremony in South Carolina*

Reading Historical Documents Activities

- *Comparing American Voices: The Rise of Representative Assemblies*
- *Voices from Abroad: Olaudah Equiano: The Brutal “Middle Passage”*

Critical Thinking Modules at bedfordstmartins.com/historymodules

These online modules invite students to interpret maps, audio, visual, and textual sources centered on events covered in the U.S. history survey. Relevant modules for Chapter 3 include

- *The Stono Rebellion*
- *Colonial Landscapes*

