History 1301
U.S. to 1877

Lecture 3

~

Colonial Culture in Early 1700s
The Colonial Population:

- English were established in N. A.:
  - Little infrastructure hindered large firm growth / local & regional business
  - Economy tied directly to England – not each other
    - Few upper / middle class emigrants
    - Many dissenters and some Protestant foreigners
      - Geographic isolation allowed settlements to prosper / “Minority Majorities”
- Immigration:
  - 1690s 300K Fr. Huguenots & German Protestants to PA
  - 1710 “Scotch-Irish” from N. Ireland during recession
Colonial Population (continued):

- Population Growth: 250K in 1700 / 25% Slave

- Soil productivity ~ never had intense agriculture

- 1650 birthrate highest source of people
  - Average of 8-12 live births
  - 60% children didn’t live past 5 years of age
  - NE Longer life expectancy (70) with Southern diseases
  - Family hope and economic mobility
The nature of the American colonies:

• Increased yield by from 4/1 to 10/1 due to tools and technique (scientific) advances
  – Literate farm communities
  – Rotation / clover / Scythe from Sickle
• Frontier was a rough, open, mobile life
  • Limited housing / privacy / furniture
  • Dairy products dangerous
  • Pork, Corn, Tomatoes & Whiskey
  • Peltry rampant provided profit till clearing complete

• 8 Major social groups in America:
  – Merchants, Artisans (owns tools), Farmers, Indentured servants, Slaves, Laborers (65% to 85% of workforce full & part time), Sailors and Women
  – All displayed & pursued upward mobility through a culture that valued savings, strong market orientation, positive attitudes toward wealth
Colonial Families:

- Female generated “Domestic manufacture” provided profit / luxury
- Pregnancy averaged every two years
  - average 8 successful in lifetime / 60% infant mortality
- Gender roles highly developed in rural communities
  - Higher technology increased gender separation
  - Household materialism / consumer goods became women’s sphere
- Farms and inheritance kept family ties tight and parental control high
- North more “family” than South. Puritans, higher life expectancy and more stable conditions, less land
The Colonial Economy: Labor

- Even after 1650 40% did not live out contract
- Few became landowners, most laborers
- Avoided South because of health conditions
- As 18th C continued IS declined:
  - Slavery favored in South
  - Wage cheaper than Indentured

Slavery:
- Tobacco & Rice (both require constant attention) demanded more slaves
- Middle passage dangerous and cruel
  - Less than 5% came to North America, most to Caribbean / Brazil
- Till 1690s Monopoly from Royal African Company kept legal prices high & supply low:
  - 1700 only 25K slaves in English N.A.
  - 1700 profit on slave voyage 30%(even with 20% death)
  - 1760 250K slaves
Colonial Economic Models:

- Slavery increasingly seen as racial and life-long through legal evolution and economic practice 1650 – 1720
  
  
  
  
  

- Economic advantage of slaves v IS

• The South: - Plantation based slavery
  - Chesapeake – Tobacco (boom & bust)
  - South Carolina / Georgia – Rice
  - North Carolina – production for sugar islands

• The North: Multiple models
  - Agriculture – intensive crop farming for domestic use and export to coast
    - Investments in infrastructure
  - Urban commercial services
  - Widely practiced winter-work / crafts / technologies / rudimentary manufacture / profit
  - Lumber / lumber process / ship building
  - Fishing / Transport – long and short haul
  - Metal works & forges for local fabrication

• Technology:
  - Americans imported everything
  - Fabrication began because of importation cost
Colonial Society:

- New England Merchant Class
  - Molasses and Rum from imported sugar
  - Subscription insurance companies
  - Triangle Trade – “carrying trade” lost vessel in 1 of three voyages, but still profitable
  - Smuggling

- Sea Port Cities grew in economic power and in consumer expectations / Retail & Wholesale
  - Personal Capitalism protected by lack of infrastructure
  - Staples / Luxuries / Communication & Media

- Stratified Society:
  - Based on money – mostly self-made
  - Consumer items became a major business stimulus
Colonial Society III

- Large Plantations did much better than small ~ expansion to compensate for lower yield

- Smaller farmers
  - Pre-plantation cash crop
  - Develop, sell, invest in land or slaves
  - Food for ancillary plantation or “Indies” consumption

- Adjuncts / Craftsmen – marginal impact with competition from slaves

- Slaves
  - 75% on plantations of 10 or more slaves / 50% on 50 or more
  - Separate culture and society
  - Mutual dependence – working relationship, though slaves had no real power and based on fear / oppression
Colonial Society - IV

•
  
  • Town Church – Congregational with community guidance / home of town mtg.
  
  – Infrastructure investment based on manufacture and retail
  
  – Inheritance went to all children
    • Generations migrated

• Cities: - Commercial Centers
  
  – Philadelphia – 28K, New York 25K, Boston, Charleston, Newport all important centers
  
  – Mixed economy
  
  – Wealth & materialism create consumer demand
    • Supply from “hinterland” and import
    • Media / diversion / entertainment
Colonial Society V

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-
Colonial Society - VI

- Emphasized each ability to break away from old and start a “new” relationship with God
  - No easy salvation – personal fight with sin & sinners
- John & Charles Wesley – founders of Methodism visited in 1730s
  - Preaching Tour of seaboard colonies 1739 – 42
  - Newspaper / Pamphlet advertising and publications
Colonial Society - VII

• The Enlightenment 1740 – 1770s:
  – Scientific and intellectual surge among the leaders and educated
  – Questioned ideas and customs – towards Rational
  – Human Reason dominated all spheres
    – look to one’s own intellect and reason – not just to God
  – Deism invited man to act in order to alter world
Colonial Society - VIII

- 
- 
- 

- Education:
  - Public education in NE / Town & Church Schools in Mid-Atlantic / Plantation schools in South
  - Colleges – for wealthy and usually for Church leaders – but spread practical knowledge – Natural Science (s) for local leaders
    - 1636 Harvard
    - 1693 William and Mary
    - 1701 Yale
    - 1746 Princeton
    - 1749 Liberty Hall – Lexington, Va – now Washington and Lee University
    - 1754 Columbia
    - 1755 University of Pennsylvania
  - Social focus on personal achievement
Colonial Politics – Pre 1756:

• Politics: Independence inside “Benign Neglect”