11 BENEFICIARIES OF CATASTROPHE: THE ENGLISH COLONIES IN AMERICA

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MOST AMERICANS REGARD OUR COLONIAL ERA AS A HEROIC PERJOD. BOLD MEN and women, often fired by a sense of divine mission or by a quest for a fuller and juster life than Europe could offer, braved the severities of an Atlantic crossing, attacked the "howling wilderness," erected their tiny settlements, established large and thriving families, and somehow still found time to create the free institutions that remain even today the basis for our democratic society. Eighteenth-century Europeans saw things differently. The generation that witnessed the American Revolution also debated the moral significance of the discovery of the Americas and the establishment of European trade and settlement in both the East and West Indies. Abbe Guillaume Thomas Franois Raynal in France and William Robertson in Scotland found little to praise and much to condemn. "I dare to state it," agreed Joseph Mandrillon, a minor philosophe, "the discovery of America was an evil. Never can the advantages it brought about (no matter how one considers or depicts them) compensate for the harm it has caused." To educated and thoughtful Europeans, the opening of the Americas seemed one of the greatest moral monstrosities of all time.

The philosophes estimated that the conquest and settlement of the Americas cost the lives of 20 million people, most of them Amerindians.

They admitted that the process led to swift improvements in mapmaking, shipbuilding, navigational techniques, and related skills and that it certainly quickened the pace of European commerce. But, they insisted, most of these positive assets were used only to exchange vices between lll<': hcmispltcrcs. Europeans carried greed and cruelty, slaves and enslil Vctnent, disease and death Lo the Americas. They brought back syphilis, gold nnd silver to fuel inflation and an interminable cycle of destructive wars, and such products as tobacco and sugar to undermine the henltlt of people who never even got close to the New World. Early A:n1erlca waN n catastrophe–a horror story, not an epic.

i\.11w1Wa's revolutionary leaders-such as Benjamin Franklin and Thu11ns Jefferson, who both served the new republic as ministers Lo the court of Louis XVI resented these arguments and the related claim that the environment of te New World was so enfeebling that, over time, it caused all forms of life tO degenerate. American plants and animals had less variety and vitality than those of Europe, Asia, or Africa, insisted most careful observers, who were particularly struck by the paucity of large mammals in the Western Hemisphere. Humans who moved to the Americas would surely inflict the same degeneracy upon their descendants, the philosophes warned. Jefferson once met this criticism by persuading a friend to ship a moose to France as a typical example of an American deer. But European sentiment was already beginning to shift by then. Many philosophes readily conceded that the American Revolution might herald a daring new departure for all mankind. Its message of liberty and equality, constitutionalism married to popular sovereignty, reverberated throughout much of Europe. Indeed, the success of the Revolution encjed the oebate over whether America was a hideous mistake, or at least banished that perception to what is now the Third World. Even historians usually regard this controversy as more amusing than instructive.

Until recently, American colonial history recounted the activities of Europeans in America: the institutions they established, the liberties they fought to secure, the ideas they propounded about God, man, and society. But since the 1960s, as in other fields of American history, scholars have turned to large problems of social history. Who were the settlers? Where did they come from? What sort of communities did they struggle to create? Who was here when they arrived? Where did the colonists get their slaves? What happened when these very different cultures came together?

Research in elementary numbers during the 1970s and 1980s ought to revive the Enlightenment controversy about early America. Reasonable estimates now exist for the flow of people across the Atlantic, including the volume of the African slave trade from the fifteenth

through the nineteenth century. Some of the most imaginative scholarship of the past generation has gone into reconstructing the qpproximate size of the pre-Columbian Indian population in several major portions of the Americas, a necessary prelude to m_e;.uring the impact of European intrusion. Together these materials tell a story a good deal more dismal than even the philosophes had quite imagined.

The figure of 20 million dead falls far short of the true *w(a1,* which was at least double and perhaps triple that number. Of course, many Europeans on both the eastern and western shores of the Atlantic benefited immensely from the settlement process. Most actors on all sides of the transatlantic drama made rational choices in their own best interests, including even enslaved Africans, once they understood what..few options they still retained. But using the elementary utilitarian criterion of the greatest good for the greatest number as a crude but revealing way of assessing the overall process, nobody can now make a compelling case that the settlement of the Americas was a net benefit to mankind until sometime in the nineteenth century. In aggregate terms, losers far outnumbered winners until then. Unlike the philosophes, today's historians see what happened in early America not as a moralistic melodrama but as a tragedy of such huge proportions that no one's imagination can easily encompass it alt. The truest villains were microbes, whose predations acquired an inevitable momentum that quickly made human motivation all but irrelevant for the deadliest part of the process.

Before 1820 nearly 12 million people crossed the Atlantic from Europe and Africa to the Caribbean, North America, and South America (Table 1). The overwhelming majority, more than 8 million, came against their will-in chains. Africans constituted over two-thirds of the entire migration. And to the 8 million who arrived in the Americas must be added several millions more who died on the cruel middle passage across the Atlantic or in wars of enslavement within Africa. Only in the period between 1820 and 1840 would the number of free passengers landing in the Americas catch up with and then decisively surpass the volume of the Atlantic slave trade. For mor thrin three centuries, in other words, the slave trade was no unfortunate excess on the periphery of free migration. It was the norm.

The situation was less extreme in the English colonies, at least on the mainland, than elsewhere. About 380,000 people left the British Isles for England's North American and Caribbean colonies before 1700. A huge majority came from England and Wales, not Scotland or Ireland. They were joined by 10,000 to 15,000 other Europeans, mostly from the Netherlands and France. During the seventeenth century almost 350,000 slaves, or about 47 percent of the people crossing the Atlantic to the

TABLE 1
Migration Stream to the Americas, 1492-1920

European settlers	
To Spanish and Portuguese colonies	1.3 million
To British AmeriFa ·	1.9 million
To other Eu ropea n col onies in the Americas	0.3 million
Total Europeans	3.5 million
Overall pa ttern: Af ricans = 70% of total; settlers = 30%	
African slave imports to all Eu ropean colonies in the America s before Anglo-American abolition of the slave trade in 1808	8+ mil lion

English colonies, lef t 'Africa to provide coerced labor for these new societies. Three-fourths of the entire hu ma n wave went to the West Indies, which attracted over 220,000 settlers (roughl y 56 percent of the E u ropeans) and nearly 320,000 slaves (abou t 91 percent of the Africans) . The Chesapeake colonies drew nearly 120,000 settlers (32 percent) a nd over 20,000 slaves (7 percent). The Middle Atlantic regi on claimed a net of some 20,000 colonists (just over 5 pe rcent) and a few thousand slaves. Af ter subtracting outmigrants, probably fewer than 20,000 Europea ns and an insignifica nt trickle of Africans went to New England.

Pa tterns changed during the eighteenth century. The African slave trade hit its all-time peak as over 6.1 million people were draggep nboard ships headed for the Americas-nearly 45 percent of them traveling on B ri t ish or. North American vessels. Losses in transit proba bly approached or exceeded 20 percent until a t least midcen tu ry but improved somewhat af ter that. Africans were not the only u nwilling migr p n l.s. Between 1718 and 1775 Great Britain shipped 50,000 convicts to No1·t11 Amerlra, most of them to Maryland or Virginia.

Hccen l i:stima tes indicate that over 150,000 Europeans entered the mainland colonies from 1700 to 1760, fairly close to the probable minimum of 180,000 slaves imported during the same period. Most of the voluntary immigrants came from new sources in the eighteenth century. Between 1700 and 1760 nearly 60,000 Germans and more than 30,000 Irish settlers and servants sailed for the Delaware Valley alone. Thousands of others-Irish, Scottish, English, and German-landed in New York, the Chesapeake, and the lower South. London registra tion records indica te that the British capital contin ued to send perhaps 800 indentured servants a year to the colonies from 1718 to 1759. No doubt the capital and the home counties provided other migrants as well. Northern England probably contributed a sizable (as yet untabula ted)

Af ter the fall of New France in 1760, immigra tion exploded: 55,000 Irish, 40,000 Scots, 30,000 English, 12,000 Germans, and 84,500 Africans swarmed into North America. Totaling more than 220,000 people, the newcomers equaled nearly a seventh of the t lpopula tion of just under 1.6 million people in the mainland colonies iii 1760. Their story-where they came from, how they got to America, and where.)hey went af ter they arrived -has been marvelously told in Bernard Bailyn's Pulitzer Prize-winning study, *Voyagers to the West* (1986). The typical colonist from southern England was an unmarried male in his teens or early twenties who of ten possessed artisanal skills and brought with him a set of optimistic expecta tions. He was most likely to settle in Virginia or Maryla nd, and he probably left home beca use of the pull of the New World, hot ou t of exasperation with England. The characteristic emigre stream.

from north Britain (Ulster, Scotland, and northern England) sailed to America as part of an intact family. The head of the household was typically in his thirties, was frequently a farmer, and carried bitter memories of the social environment he was leaving—heavy taxes, rack-renting landlords, and unemployment or underemployment. He usually led his family to Pennsylvania, New York, or North Carolina.

Statistically, the British colonial world as a whole approximated the dismal norm set by other Atlantic empires in the eighteenth century. Over 1.5 million enslaved Africans crossed the ocean to British colonies in the West Indies and North America, outnumbering by three to one the half million free migrants who sailed for the same provinces. In the islands, however, slave imports overwhelmed free immigrants by about ten to one. On the mainland, slaves probably outnumbered other newcomers in most decades between 1700 and 1760, but for the continent and the century as a whole, free migrants exceeded slaves by a margin of roughly four to three over the entire period, with most of the edge for voluntary migrants coming after 1760.

Settlers and slaves carried with them microbes that were far more deadly than muskets and cannon to Indian peoples with virtually no immunities to smallpox, measles, and even simple bronchial infections. The result was the greatest known demographic catastrophe in the history of the world, a population loss that usually reached or exceeded 90 percent in any given region within a century of contact with the invaders. In warm coastal areas such as the West Indies and much of Brazil, it sometimes approached complete extinction in a much shorter time. By Russell Thornton's careful estimates, the pre-Columbian population of the Americas exceeded 70 million, or about one-seventh of the
500 million people then inhabiting the globe. High estimates for the Americas run to double this number, and low estimates to about 50 million. Mexico probably had more than 15 million when Hernan

Cortes arrived in 1519, Peru between 8 million and 12 million, the Caribbean several millions, the continent north of the Rio Grande close to 8 million (with about 5.7 million in what is now the lower forty-eight states). Brazil over 3 million, and the rest of South America several millions more. By comparison, Europe west of the Urals probably had about 55 million people in 1500-living, to be sure, in a much smaller geographical area. The Indian population of 1492 thus outnumbered all European immigrants to 1820 by a ratio of perhaps fifteen or twenty to one, and all Afri"cans who arrived by at least six and perhaps even nine to one. .

Disease demolished these numerical advantages. The Carib Indians had virtually disappered from the Greater Antilles by 1550. Mexico's 15 million had plummeted to 730,000 by 1620, and Peru's 10 million to 600,000. The Americas were never a "virgin land"; in Francis Jennings's melancholy but telling phrase, they became a "widowed land." By the mid-eighteenth century, Europeans outnumbered Africans except in Brazil, the West Indies, and South Carolina, but nearly everywhere south of Pennsylvania (except in Mexico and a few other locations that did not rely heavily on African slavery) blacks outnumbered Indians within regions of European settlement.

Interaction among the three cultures was extensive. The plants and animals of the Western Hemisphere seemed so strange to Europeans that without knowledgeable occupants to tell them what was edible and how it could be prepared, the intruders would have found far greater difficulty in surviving. The first explorers or settlers to arrive in a region, for instance, nearly always had to barter for food. Indian trails showed them the easiest ways to get from one place to another and where to portage streams and rivers. Indian canoes and snowshoes displayed an ingenuity and utility that Europeans quickly borrowed. Settlers also learned from their slaves. Africans, for example, may well have taught South Carolina planters how to cultivate rice. From their masters, in turn, Africans acquired knowledge of the prevailing European language and, more slowly, Christian convictions. Catholicism also spread to Africa in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, especially to the Kingdom of the Kongo where the ruling elite was converted by Portuguese missionaries. By contrast, very few Africans in either hemisphere embraced any form of Protestantism before the late eighteenth century.

For their part, Indians greatly valued firearms whenever they could get them. Those who acquired them early, such as the Iroquois, won huge advantages over neighboring nations. Indian women quickly discovered the benefits of European pots, and soon iron pots as well as textiles found a steady Indian market. Alcohol established an insatiable demand. Almost by itself, it committed Indian men to active participation in the fur trade. It also exacted a fierce toll from peoples who had no prior cultural experience with its intoxicating powers.

Yet Indian society had many built-in immunities to European influences. Although most Indian peoples in North America were agricultural, they also spent part of the year hunting. Their crops gave them a strong attachment to the land but not the European sense of exclusive ownership of individual plots. The need to move every year also prevented Indians from developing large permanent dwellings and necessarily restricted their desire and capacity to consume European goods. Because women erected and controlled the home environment (wigwam, longhouse, tepee, or pueblo in North America), they had no wish to own any more possessions than they were willing to carry from one place to another several times a year. Women also did the routine agricultural labor in Indian societies, a practice that seemed degrading to male European observers. The consequences of their attitudes were significant: however well intentioned, European efforts to "civilize" the Indians by converting warriors into farmers seldom succeeded, for at the deepest cultural level these demands amounted to nothing less than an attempt to turn men into women. When Indians did copy the agricultural practices of the settlers, slavery often provided a necessary intermediating mechanism. Nineteenth-century Cherokee warriors, for instance, were willing to become planters, provided they could force others-African men and women-to work for them in the fields.

War provided a grisly but frequent point of cultural contact, and perhaps no activity did more to intensify mutual misunderstanding. European geopolitical norms had little resonance among Indians who, like Africans, were far more likely to fight for captives than for territory or trade. Aztecs waged continuous war to provide thousands of sacrifices for their gods every year. Most North American Indians practiced analogous rites but on a much smaller scale, and they were far more likely to keep their prisoners. Indeed, Indians often fought in order to replace losses from death, a phenomenon that anthropologists now call "the mourning war." Epidemics, which utterly demoralized some nations, accelerated warfare among others, such as the Iroquois in the northern or the Catawba in the deep southern region of what is now the United States. As the death toll from imported disease climbed at appalling rates, these Indians waged *wat* to replace their losses. These wars became so ferocious that in the seventeenth century they all but depopulated the huge area between the Great Lakes and the Ohio Valley.

In this process Indian societies proved far more openly assimilationist than European colonies were. The Iroquois, for example, seem to have begun by absorbing such similar peoples as the Hurons and other neighbors who spoke Iroquoian dialects. When that supply ran thin, the

Iroquois turned to Algonquian nations. As early as the 1650s or 1660s, most of the people who claimed to be members of the Five Nations of the Iroquois Confederation had not been born Iroquois. They were adoptees. Only in this way could the confederacy preserve its numbers and its strength.

Even this strategy was failing by the 1690s, when New France provided virtually all of the Iroquois' northern enemies with muskets and gunpowder. Suddenly the price of war became heavier than its benefits. In 1701 the Five Nations chose a policy of neutrality toward both the English and the French, and thereafter they usually confined their wars with other Indians to fighting distant southerly tribes, such as the Catawbas in the CaroFna backcountry. As the Iroquois wars ceased in the north, many Algonquian peoples returned to the Great Lakes and the Ohio Valley, where., they formed new communities, virtually all of mixed ethnic backgrounds.

During the eighteenth century some Indian communities adopted significant numbers of Europeans and granted them and their descendants full equality with other members of their communities. Women usually decided which captives to adopt and which to execute, often after deliberate torture. Most of those tortured and killed were adult men; most of those adopted were women and children, whether Europeans or other Indians. European women who spent a year or more in captivity quite often made a voluntary choice to remain. This decision baffled and dismayed the European men they left behind, including in many cases a husband and children. Adult male settlers found it inexplicable that "civilized" women, some of whom were even church members in full communion, could actually prefer a "savage" life and would not object to toiling in the fields. In fact, Indian women enjoyed greater respect within their villages than European housewives received from their own communities, and Indian women worked fewer hours and participated more openly in making important decisions, including questions of war and peace. Adoptees shared fully in these benefits; some adopted males even became chiefs.

On the other hand, Indian fondness for torture shocked and enraged most settlers. Warriors took pride in their ability to withstand the most excruciating torments without flinching. The ideal brave chanted defiant war songs or hurled verbal abuse at his tormentors until the end. Captured Europeans did not share these values, and they screamed horribly, wept, and begged for mercy until they finally endured a miserable death. The only major exceptions were Jesuit martyrs, who sang the praises of the Lord and forgave their enemies while dying. This courage made them the most effective missionaries in North America. They alone measured up to Indian standards of masculinity. Nevertheless, Europeans won every major war. From an Indian perspective, the weak were indeed inheriting the earth.

Each European empire formulated its own distinctive Indian policy in North America. Catholic Spain and France PPlll!ed considerable resources into missions, run mostly by Franciscans in'.northern New Spain and by Jesuits in New France. By 1630 about 86,000 Puebjrii, Apache, and Navajo Indians had been baptized in New Mexico, and by 1650 perhaps 26,000 in Florida. Small garrisons of soldiers protected the missionaries, but the Spanish government actively discouraged trade and refused to sell firearms to Indians. The labor demands and severe discipline of the missions, which included the whipping of adults, touched off a massive uprising among the Pueblos in 1680, the most successful Indian tevolt in American history. Spanish missionaries and settlers were either killed or driven from New Mexico for a decade. In Florida the English settlement of South Carolina finally undermined the Spanish missions. The English armed their Indian allies with muskets and attacked the missions between 1702 and 1704, enslaving thousands and dispersing the rest. By the early eighteenth century the Spanish presence in North America was marked more by military garrisons than by thriving missions. Yet Spain tried again to establish a mission frontier in Texas in the 1720s and in California in the 1770s.

In New France commerce gained priority over missions after Louis XIV took charge of the colony in the 1660s, although mission activity remained important throughout the colonial era. Frenchmen journeyed far into the continent to swap brandy, muskets, textiles, and pots for beaver pelts. Because the French were always heavily outnumbered in the interior, they learned that only through careful negotiation could they survive at all, much less prosper. By 1700 they had established what Richard White calls a "middle ground" between the Great Lakes and the Ohio, and they helped to direct the process by which that region was resettled. No society, Indian or European, exercised sovereignty over the middle ground. French diplomacy followed Indian customs and, in effect, established the governor of New France as the supreme alliance chief among the Indian nations of the area. According to Indian traditions, the most powerful chief had to be the most generous. Indian presents cost the French government more than the fur trade could return in profits, but the amicable relations of the middle ground enabled the Algonquians to defeat the Iroquois and hold back the English well into the eighteenth century.

Among the Protestant empires, the Dutch emphasized trade even more than the French did but made no effort to convert Indians. The English were quite willing to trade and, especially in New England, a few of them put great energy into missionizing. But within a few years

on either side of 1620, both Virginia and Plymouth decided to make land available to virtually all free adult male settlers. Sooner or later, this policy led to wars of conquest against the Indian inhabitants of the continent. In England only the eldest son was likely to inherit land. In North America, all sons expected land, and all daughters hoped to marry young men of a status equal to that of their own brothers. This quest for land made the English mainland colonies distinctive, and it turned the colonial household into British North America's most important institution. Because nearly every head of a household owned land and enjoyed the "independence" that went with it, he could not easily be forced into doing something that displeased him. Social life, including politics, involved a n ethic of voluntarism, or voluntary cooperation in public projects. Even colonial wars were usually fought by short-term volunteers.

The English were accustomed to fighting for trade and territory. Unlike [11Clln llS, they showed almost no inclination to capture opponents, adopt them, and assimilate them fully into their culture. Their Indian captives became slaves instead and seldom lived long. Exceptions to this pattern did occur, though rarely as a result of war. On Martha's Vineyard and nearby Nantucket, for instance, most Indians did convert to Protestantism in the seventeenth century, and in the eighteenth until disease radically reduced their number-many of them went to sea as skilled harpoonists on colonial whaling vessels.

Such examples of peaceful cooperation and borrowing did little to mitigate the ferocity of war when it occurred. Because the settlers regarded themselves as "civilized" and all Indians as "savages," they saw little point in observing their lingering rules of chivalry in these conflicts. Often encumbered in the early years by armor and heavy weapons, they could not keep up with Indian warriors in the forests and were not very skillful at tracking an opponent through dense cover. But they could find the Indians' villages, burn them, and destroy their crops. In early Virginia, New England, and New Netherland, the intruders-not the Indians-introduced the tactic of the deliberate and systematic massacre of a whole community, which usually meant the women, children, and elderly who had been left behind when the warriors took to the forest. The intruders went even further. Often women and children became their targets of choice, as in the Mystic River campaign of 1637 during the Pequot War in New England, when Puritan soldiers ignored a fort manned by warriors to incinerate another a few miles away which was packed with the Pequots' noncombatants. The motive for this kind of warfare was not at all mysterious. It was not genocide in any systematic sense; settlers relied too heavily on Indians to try to get rid of all of them. The real purpose was terror. Outnumbered in a hostile land, Europeans used deliberate terror against one Indian people to send a grim warning to any others nearby. As Virginia's Governor Sir William Berkeley put it in anticipating a war that never quite happened in 1666, "I thinke it is necessary to Distroy all these Northerne Indians for . . . twill be a great Terror and Example of Instruction to all other Indians." He also proposed selling all women and children' slaves to defray the cost of the expedition. These practices struck Indians as at least as horrible and senseless as torture seemed to the Europeans, but they could be cruelly effective. Until the arrival of pacifist Quakers in the Delaware Valley after 1675, the English colonies were all founded by terrorists.

Americans like to see their history as a chronicle of progress. Indeed it is. Considering how its European phase began, it could only improve. The internal development of the settler communities is a story of growth and innovation. Ordinary free families in the English colonies achieved a level of economic autonomy and well-being difficult to match anywhere else at that time. Starvation, for example, was never a problem after the very early years, but it continued to threaten most other communities around the world. The main reason for the contrast was, of course, the availability of land in North America, which made subsistence relatively simple once the newcomers understood what crops to grow.

Before 1700, however, the human cost was immense for most colonists, and it got much worse for Africans in the eighteenth century, the period in which the Atlantic slave trade peaked. The same principle that liberated Europeans enslaved Africans. Cheap land meant scarce labor, and the coercion of outsiders became the most obvious answer to the shortage. Voluntarism prevailed among householders of roughly comparable autonomy, but force governed relations between masters and their servants or slaves. The quest for material improvement motivated the vast majority of settlers and servants who crossed the ocean, and they had few scruples about depriving outsiders of their liberty in order to achieve their own goals. That is, they did in America what they would not have dared try in Europe; they enslaved other people. Even Puritans and Quakers, driven by powerful religious commitments, found prosperity quite easy to bear. To the extent that they resisted slavery, they acted less from principle than from a dislike of "strangers" who might cause them moral difficulties.

Historians have worked with patience and imagination to reconstruct the community life of English North America. Paying close attention to settler motivation, demography, family structure, community organization, local economy and social values, they have uncovered, not a single "American" colonial experience, but an amazing variety of patterns. Current scholarship is now beginning to link the diversity of colonial North America to specific regional subcultures within the British Isles. In some respects the American environment even intensified these contrasts.

The numbers are striking (see Tables 2 and 3), particularly the contrast between those who came and those who survived. Within the English colonies before 1700, the huge majority of settlers that chose the West Indies over the mainland had become a distinct minority by century's end. The 220,000 Europeans and 320,000 slaves who had sailed for the islands left a total of fewer than 150,000 survivors by 1700, and the preponderance of slaves over free colonists, which already exceeded three to one, grew more overwhelming with each passing year. The 135,000 Europeans and at least 25,000 slaves who had gone to the southern mainland colonies before 1700 had just over 100,000 survivors at that date. By contrast, only 40,000 people had gone to the Middle Atlantic and New England colonies in the seventeenth century, but the survivors and their descendants numbered almost 150,000 by 1700, just over 5,000 of whom were Africans. Founded by some 10 percent of the free migration stream and only 5 or 6 percent of the total number of free and enslaved passengers, the northern colonies by 1700 accounted for considerably more than half of all the European settlers in English North America and the West Indies.

This sudden and quite unexpected expansion of the area of free-labor settlement was the greatest anomaly yet in two centuries of European overseas expansion. The Middle Atlantic colonies in particular, which had gotten off to a slower start than New England, were by 1700 poised to become the fastest-growing region on the continent and probably in the world over the next century and a half. One paradox is

TABLE 2
Migration to British America to 1780
(in thousands)

	Immigrated before 1700	*Immigrated 1700-1780*	*Total*	
To West Indies				
From Europe	220	101	321	(19.3%)
From Africa	316	1,029	1,345	(80.7%)
Total	536	1,130	1,666	(100%)
To mainland				
From Europe	175	337	512	(62.9%)
From Africa	28	274	302	(37.1%)
Total	303	611	814	(100%)
To all British America				
From Europe	395	438	833	(33.6%)
From Africa	344	1,303	1,647	(66.4%)
Total	739	1,741	2,480	(100%)

TABLE 3
Pattern of Settlement in the English Colonies to 1700
(in thousands)

	Immigrated before 1700		*Settled by 1700*	
Europeans				
To West Indies	220	(29.8%)	33	(7.8%)
To the South	135	(18.3%)	104	(24.7%)
To the Mid-Atlantic	20	(2.7%)	51	(12.1%)
To New England	20	(2.7%)	91	(21.6%)
Total Europeans	395	(53.5%)	279	(66.2%)
Africans				
To West Indies	316	(42.8%)	115	(27.3%)
To the South	25	(3.4%)	22	(5.2%)
To the Mid-Atlantic	2	(0.3%)	3	(0.7%)
To New England	1	(0.1%)	2	(0.5%)
Total Africans	344	(46.6%)	142	(33.7%)
Grand total	739	(100.1%)	421	(99.9%)

Note: Percentages do not total 100 because of rounding.

striking. Almost certainly, intense religious motivation was underrepresented among those leaving the British Isles. Puritans (and Quakers later on) were a tiny percentage of the transatlantic migration, but their coreligionists who remained at home were numerous enough to generate a revolution and execute a king between 1640 and 1660. Protestant dissent acquired its power in American life not because of its prominence among the migrants in general but because of the amazing ability of this small number of people to survive and multiply.

These enormous differences in rates of population growth stemmed from patterns of migration, family structure, and general health. Among the colonists, sex ratios tended to get more unbalanced the farther south one went. Men outnumbered women by less than three to two among the first settlers of New England, most of whom arrived as members of organized families. In New Netherland the ratio was two to one, and it was probably somewhat lower in Pennsylvania. Early Maryland and Virginia attracted perhaps six men for every woman, a ratio that fell slowly. Because most Chesapeake women arrived as indentured servants, they were not legally free to marry and bear children until they had completed their terms. Most were in their mid-twenties before they could start to raise legitimate families. Not surprisingly, both the bastardy rate and the percentage of pregnant brides were quite high, cumulatively affecting something like half of all immigrant servant women. In the early West Indies, women were even scarcer, sometimes

outnumbered by ten or twenty to one. To move from that situation to all-male buccaneering communities, as in Tortuga and parts of Jamaica in the 1650s and 1660s and in the Bahamas later on, did not require a radical transition.

Life expectancy and rates of natural increase also declined from north to south.' The New England population became self-sustaining during the first decade after the founding of Boston in 1630. Immigration virtually ceased after 1641, and for the rest of the colonial period the region exported more people than it imported. Yet its population grew at an explosive rate, from fewer than 20,000 founders to nearly 100,000 descendants (including outmigrants to the middle colonies) in about seventy years. New Netherland entered a similar cycle of rapid natural increase in the 1650s. Early New Jersey townships and Pennsylvania's first farming communities were almost certainly demographically self-sustaining from the decade of their founding between the 1660s and 1680s.

By contrast, the Chesapeake colonies took most of the century to achieve natural growth. Although settled longer than any other part of English North America, Virginia remained a colony dominated by immigrants until the decade after 1700, when native-born men (those born after 1680) finally took charge. Immigrants had already survived childhood diseases in England, but their life expectancy as young adults in the Chesapeake was much lower than that of Englishmen of the same age who stayed behind or those who went to more northerly colonies. Men could expect to live only to about age forty-five in Maryland and Virginia, and women died even sooner, especially if they were exposed to malaria while pregnant. This situation improved slowly as, for example, settlers planted orchards and replaced contaminated drinking water with healthy cider, and as a native-born population with improved immunities gradually replaced the immigrants. ln the West Indies, life expectancy may have been as much as five years shorter. From the Chesapeake through the islands, even the men in power were often quite yt)l1ng.

Th1 c differences powerfully affected family size and structure. Although New England women married only slightly younger than their Bnglish counterparts, they averaged about one or two more pregnancies per marriagt 1, fewer women died in childbirth, and families lost fewer of tl1cil· children to disease. Thus eighteen of Andover's twenty-nine fdl1t1dll1H fo1'nllies had at least four sons who survived to age twenty-µne, and fourteen of these twenty-nine families had at least four daughters who lived that long. The average age at death for the heads of these households was seventy-two years, and a third of Lhem lived past eighty.

As these settlements matured, power gravitated naturally to their founders, who, as respectable grandfathers, continued to ru.n, most towns until the 1670s and even the 1680s. They often retained economic control over adult sons by withholding lamt.itles until their own deaths, by which time their oldest children could' be middle-aged or even elderly. They retained religious control, at least in the/Massachusetts and New Haven colonies, by tying voting rights to church membership and by insisting on a publicly verified conversion experience before granting that membership. Most ministers and magistrates (the Puritan gentry who administered justice) favored a degree of compromise on this question. What later came to be called the Half-Way Covenant, a measure approved by a New England synod in 1662, encouraged second-geI1eration settlers to have their children baptized even though neither the father nor mother had yet experienced conversion. The parents did have to be orthodox in doctrine and willing to accept the discipline of the church. But lay saints-the grandparents who still numerically dominated most churches-resisted the implementation of this policy. They believed in infant baptism, but only for the children of proven saints. Thus very few people took advantage of the Half-Way Covenant until the founding generation began to die and lose control in the decade after Metacom's (or King Philip's) War (1675-76).

In brief, New England families tended to be patriarchal, authoritarian, and severely disciplined at the same time that the region's adult males were becoming a fairly egalitarian community of aging farmers. Few towns were inclined to tolerate any significant. degree of religious nonconformity. Those who could not accept local standards often made their way to Rhode Island, where they explored the difficulties of trying to find some basis for unity other than sheer dissent from someone else's values. It took time.

In the Delaware Valley, Quaker families shared many of the demographic characteristics of New England Puritans, but the family ethos was very different. Far less troubled by the doctrine of original sin, Quakers tried to protect the "innocence" of their numerous youngsters and give them a warm and nurturing environment. This goal included the acquisition of enough property to provide each son with a basis for genuine independence at a fairly young age and each daughter with an early dowry. Quakers amassed more land and built larger and more comfortable houses than either their Anglican neighbors or the New Englanders. Those who failed to achieve these goals had difficulty marrying their children to other Quakers. Poor Quakers lost status within the Society of Friends, but if they married an outsider, as many were forced to do, they were "disowned," or expelled from the meeting.

The colonies created largely by Quakers-the provinces of West

New Jersey and Pennsylvania-were far less authoritarian and patriarchal Lhan those in New England. Quakers did not suppress religious cli srn t excerit occasionally within their own midst. As pacifists, they objected to nny formal military institutions, and the Pennsylva nia government created none until the 1750s. But the governor, who had to d<1al regularly with a war-making British government, was seldom a Q\H1knr. Non-Quaker governors did not easily win deference or respect l"run1 \.he members of the Society of Friends who continued to dominate \ht: 1111l1T1bly, and who insisted on winning for it a body of privileq tha t greatly exceeded those claimed even by the British House of Commons, though they seldom converted these powers into actual legislation. Qu.aker asse111blymen were far less interested in making laws than in preventing others from using the powers of govern ment against their constituents. Even te court system existed mostly for the use of non-Quakers, and taxes remained low to nonexistent. Pennsylvania acquired its reputation as the world's best poor man's country while almost abolishing everything that the eighteenth century understood by government-the ability to wage war, collect taxes, pass laws, and, to a lesser ex.tent, to settle disputes and punish crime.

Family structure in the Chesapeake colonies differed greatly from either of these patterns. Unbalanced sex ratios before 1700 and short life expectancy even into the eighteenth century meant that almost no settlers lived to see their grandchildren. Among indentured servants arriving during the seventeenth century, many men never married at all, and others had to wait until their late twenties or thirties. Servant women also married late, out as the native-born population came of age and grew in size, its women married very young, usually in their middle to late teens. A typical seventeenth-century marriage endured only seven or eight years before one of the partners died, often leaving the surviving spouse in charge of the property and thus in a strong position to remarry. Death might also dissolve the second marriage before the oldest child by the first one had reached adulthood. Although the experience was not typical, a child could grow up in one household but by age twenty-one not even be related by blood to the husband and wife then running the household. Under these conditions, Chesapeake families tended to spread their loyalties among broader kinship networks. Uncles, aunts, cousins, and in-laws could make a real difference to an orphan's prospects. Even the local tradition of lavish hospitality to visitors may have derived some of its intensity from these imperatives.

Although the organizers of both Virginia and Maryland believed in a hierarchical and deferential social and political order, demographic realities retarded its development. True dynasties of great planters began to take shape only as the seventeenth century faded into the eighteenth.

The slave population became demographically self-sustaining about a generation later than the EuropeaD' and thereafter multiplied almost as rapidly, a phenomenon that made the American South unique among Europe's overseas empires. Only as this process neared maturity could a planter be reasonably certain of passing on propetfy, prestige, and authority to a lineal son. Not even then was he likely to retajn;significant power over the lives of his adult children. Until the era of the American Revolution, he was not likely to live long enough.

Yet the men who governed seventeenth-century Virginia achieved considerable success in holding the colony to at least an elementary Anglican loyalty. Maryland, by contrast, officially favored toleration under the Roman Catholic dynasty of the Calvert family (the first three Lords Baltimore), until Anglicans finally gained control in the 1690s and established their church. In the West Indies the Church of England also became an established institution, but contemporary commentators thought that its moral hold on the planters was rather weak. Mostly because sugar was a more lucrative crop than tobacco, while the supply of land was much more limited than on the mainland, extremes of wealth emerged early in the Caribbean. Slavery was already becoming well entrenched by the 1650s, and by the end of the century the richest planters were beginning to flee back to England to live affluently as absentees off their island incomes.

Regional differences extended to ethnicity as well. New England may have been more English than England, a country that had sizable Scottish, Irish, Welsh, French Huguenot, and Dutch Reformed minorities. The Middle Atlantic region was more diverse than England. It threw together most of the peoples of northwestern Europe, who learned, particularly in New York, that every available formula for active government was likely to antagonize one group or another. Pennsylvania's prescription of minimal government for everyone worked better to preserve ethnic peace until war with frontier Indians threatened to tear the province apart between 1754 and 1764. The Chesapeake settlers, while predominantly English in both tidewater and piedmont, contained sizable ethnic minorities from continental Europe and, in the back country, large Scottish, Irish, and German contingents. But after 1700 their most significant minority was African. The southern colonies mixed not just European peoples but newcomers from different continents. Slaves came to constitute about 40 percent of Virginia's population in the late colonial era. In coastal South Carolina, Africans had become a majority of two to one by the 1720s, but not even South Carolina approached the huge African preponderances of the s11gar islands.

The economies of these regions also varied from north to south. In

somewhat different ways, New England and the Middle Atlantic colonies largely replicated the economies of northern Europe in their urban and rural mixture, their considerable variety of local crafts, and their reliance on either fish or cereal crops as a major export. Within the Atlantic colonial world these free-labor societies were unique, but they could not have• sustained themselves without extensive trade with the more typical staple colonies to the south. New Englanders learned as early as the 1640s that they needed the islands to sustain their own economy, a process that would eventually draw Rhode Islanders into the slave trade in a major way. Tobacco, rice, and sugar-all grown by forms pf unfree labor-shaped Chesapeake, South Carolina, and Caribbean society in profound, almost deterministic ways.

ln. effect, then, the colonists sorted themselves into a broad spectrum of settlement .,with striking and measurable differences between one region and its neighbors. All retained major portions of their English heritage and discarded others, but what one region kept, another often scorned. David Hackett Fischer traces this early American regionalism to its origins in British regional differences. East Anglia and other counties on the east coast of England gave New England their linguistic peculiarities, vernacular architecture, religious intensity, and other folkways as diverse as child-naming patterns and local cuisine. Tobacco and slaves aside, the distinctive features of Chesapeake society derived in a similar way from the disproportionate recruitment of planter gentry from England's southern counties. The Delaware Valley, by contrast, drew its folkways from the midJand and northern counties and the contiguous portions of Wales that gave shape to the Quaker movement. Beginning about 1718 the American backcountry from New York south took most of its social character from the people of north Britain: the fifteen Ulster, Scottish, and north English counties that faced each other around the Irish Sea and shared both numerous cultural affinities and deep-seated hostilities. These people were used to border wars, and they brought their expectations to the American frontier, where they killed Jndians-including peaceful Christian Indians-with a zeal that shocked other settlers. particularly the Quakers.

These contrasts affected not only demographic and economic patterns and an extensive list of major folkways but also religion and government. England contained both an established church and eloquent advocates for broad toleration, mostly among the dissenting population. By the end of the seventeenth century, toleration for Protestants had finally became official policy, and England emerged as one of the most pluralistic societies in Christendom. All these tendencies crossed the ocean, but they clustered differently in particular colonies. Until the middle of the eighteenth century most colonies were more uniform in

religion and, certainly in formal policy and often in practice as well, more repressive than the mother country. By 1710 the Church of England had become officially established from Maryland south through the islands, but Virginia was less willing than Eng nQ to tolerate dissent. In New England, by contrast, England's dissen.te'Fs ·became the established church, and the Anglican Church had to fight hanJi and .occasionally share an awkward alliance with Quaker and Baptist dissenters to win any kind of official toleration. But in Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, and for most purposes the entire mid-Atlantic region, the triumph of toleration meant death for an officially established church. Only in the aftermath of the Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s did pluralism and toleration take firm hold throughout the entire continent.

Provincial governments also varied along the spectrum. Corporate forms predominated in seventeenth-century New England, where virllally all officials were elected and charters-whether officially granted by the crown or unofficially adopted by the settlers-provided genuine antecedents for the written constitutions of the American Revolution. As of about 1670 the rest of the mainland except Virginia had been organized under proprietary forms, devices whereby the Crown bestowed nearly the totality of its regal powers on one or more "lords proprietors," who organized the settlement and, less easily, tried to secure the cooperation of whatever settlers they could attract.

Because the Caribbean was the most viciously contested center of imperial rivalries, the West Indies in the 1660s and 1670s emerged as the proving ground for royal government, a form in which the Crown appointed the governor and the council, a body that both advised the governor and served as the upper house of the legislature. The governor and council appointed the judiciary, and the settlers elected an assembly Lo join with the council and governor in making laws. Crown efforts to control these societies led by the end of the century to standardized sets of commissions and instructions and to the routine review of provincial legislation and the less frequent hearing of judicial appeals, both by the English Privy Council. These routine procedures, especially as organized under the Board of Trade after 1696, largely defined what royal government was, and they could be exported to or imposed on other settlements as well. But as late as 1678, Virginia remained the only royal colony on the mainland of North America.

The American continents had taken one exceptionally homogeneous people, the Indians (whose genetic similarities were far greater than those of the people of western Europe or even the British Isles) and transformed them over thousands of years into hundreds of distinct linguistic groups and tribal societies. As the emerging spectrum of settlement revealed, the New World was quite capable of doing the same

thing to European intruders, whose own ethnic identities were but a few centuries old. The process of settlement could, in other words, create new ethnicities. not just distinct regions. By 1700 it had already magnified a select number of regional differences found within Great Britain. The passage of time seemed likely to drive these young societies farther apart, riot closer together. To take a single example, the institution of slavery, although it existed everywhere in at least a rudimentary form, tended to magnify these regional contrasts, not reduce them. The main counterpoise to increasing diversity came not from any commonly shared "American" experience but from the expanding impact of empire. Only through closer and continuous contact with metropolitan England-,.London culture and the central government-would the colonies become more like one another. After England and Scotland united to form the single Kingdom of Great Britain in 1707, Scots also had a profound impact on the colonies, taking over most of the tobacco trade and contributing greatly to the North American version of Europe's Enlightenment.

Dtirlng the last half of the seventeenth century, England discovered Its colonies. Unlike the Spanish Empire, which subordinated trade lo religious and political uniformity, the English government reversed 1it(•st• prlmlties. Parliament's interest in these tiny settlements derived 1>yt•rwltt'lrnlngly from its determination to control their trade, which, l'rolll Ilie lfrstornlion of the monarchy in 1660 to the American Revolution, was Indeed the most dynamic sector of London's rapidly expanding commerce and thus a major factor in propelling London past Paris as Europe's largest city. Through a series of laws called the Navigation Acts, Parliament confined all trade with the colonies to English shipping (a major benefit- to colonial shipbuilders as well). compelled major staple crops (especially tobacco and sugar) to go to Britain before leaving the empire for other markets, and tried to make Britain the source of nearly all nonlocal manufactures consumed in the colonies and the entrep6t for other European or Asian exports shipped to America. Despite ferocious resistance at first, these policies had achieved an extremely high level of compliance by the early eighteenth century. Later attempts to restrict colonial manufacturing and regulate the molasses trade were much less successful.

Crown efforts to assert political control over the colonies arose mostly out of frustration at early attempts to enforce these mercantilistic policies. Virginia had been a royal colony since 1624, but it drew almost no attention from the home government until Nathaniel Bacon's Rebellion of 1676-77 severely threatened the king's very considerable revenues from the tobacco trade. In subsequent years the Privy Council imposed on Virginia the same kind of close oversight that had emerged in

the West Indies after 1660. New England attracted London's interest not because of its religious peculiarities- which seemed to sophisticated Londoners both anachronistic and embarrassing-but because it controlled far more shipping than all the rest of .the .Eµglish colonies. Yankee skippers could undermine the Navigation Act'ii:.-".To destroy that possibility, England revoked the charter of Massachusetts Ba)Y in 1684, merged all the New England colonies into one enlarged Dominion of New England in 1686, added New York and East and West New Jersey to this union in 1688, and tried to govern the whole in an authoritarian manner without an elective assembly. The model for this experiment came from the autocratic proprietary colony of New York under James, Duke of York and brother of King Charles II. The English conquered New Netherland in 1664, renamed it New York, and, except for a brief interlude from 1683 to 1685, the duke governed his province without an elective assembly. When the duke became King James II in 1685, he saw a way of salvaging thesi:: faltering efforts by imposing them on a broader constituency.

He got a revolution instead. After William of Orange landed at Torbay in November 1688, drove James from England, and accepted the throne as King William III, Boston and New York copied this example and overturned James's representatives, Sir Edmund Andros and Sir Francis Nicholson, respectively, in the spring of 1689. A few months later, Maryland Protestants overthrew the proprietary government of the Catholic Lord Baltimore. Thereafter, government by elective assembly was no longer in doubt. Massachusetts had to accept a new charter that imposed a royal governor on the province. Although the two leaders of the New York rebellion, Jacob Leisler and Jacob Milborne, were both hanged in 1691, the upheavals of 1689 permanently discredited autocracy in America. By the 1720s the Crown's only other option for effective control, the West Indian model of royal government, had become the norm on the continent as well. Only proprietary Pennsylvania and Maryland (the latter restored to the Calverts in 1716 when the fifth Lord Baltimore converted to Protestantism) and corporate Connecticut and Rhode Island held out from this pattern. Except for Pennsylvania, even they went formally bicameral, and all of them reorganized their court systems along stricter common-law lines. Throughout North America, government was acquiring structural similarities that it had never had in the seventeenth century.

This absorption into empire dramatically altered political culture in North America. The struggles surrounding the Glorious Revolution persuaded most Englishmen that they lived on an oasis of freedom in a global desert of tyranny. Eighteenth-century political ideology emerged as an effort to explain this anomaly and give it a solid historical founda-

Lion. In Brita in and the colonies everyone in pu blic life affirmed the "Revolu tion principles" of 1688, which always mea n t some va ri ant of the tria d of liberty, property, and "no popery." Ca tholics were disfra nchised and ba rred from office. The English gloried in thei r "mixed and ba lanced constitu tion," whi ch preven ted any monarch from corru pting a virtu ctus Parliament. This theme ha d both "cou rt" (sta tist) and "country" (an tista tist) celebrants and in terprete rs, and both crossed the ocea n to Ame rica. Vi rgin ia and Sou th Ca rolina beca me the pu rest embodiments of coun try ideology. They idealized the pa triotic role of the trul y independen t planter-ci tizen and allowed vi rt ually no holders of profi ta ble pu blic offices to sit in their assemblies. In New Ham pshi re, Massa ch.usetts, a nd New York, by con trast, roya l su ccess usu a lly depe nded -as in Grea t Britain -on the loyal su pport of a corps of t hese "placemen" in t he k>wer house. Especia lly i n New England, the governor ga ined strength from defense needs, which were m u ch grea ter the re tha n in the Chesapeake colonies. In th is environ ment, cou n try id eology became the creed only of a minori ty opposi tion th ro u gh the 1750s, b u t its a ppea l wou l d expa nd dra ma tica lly a fter 1763, whe n the en tire impe rial estab lishment ca me to seem a direct threa t to provincia l liberties instead of a bu lwark for defending them.

Other forces a lso drew t he separa t e pans of the empire closer together i n the eighteen th centu ry. Trade with Britai n grew enormously. It d id not qu ite keep pace with per ca pita popu la tion growth in the colon ies from the 1690s to 1740, b u t thereaf ter it expanded even more exp losively. Port ci ties became a dyna mic pa rt of the Atlan tic cu l tu ra l world in a way tha t had simpl y not been possi ble in the seven teenth cen tu ry when New York City, for instance, regu la rly received only a bou t half a dozen ships from E u rope ea ch yea r. By the mid -eigh teen th century, with these a rri vals almost da i ly occu rrences, the colonists tended to divide in to two distinct blocs: "cosmopolita ns, " who n urtured strong contacts with the rest of the world, and "localists," who were rela ti vely isola ted from su ch expe riences and of ten suspicious of wha t ou tsiders wished to impose on them. This cleavage would powerf ull y a ffect the revol u tionary genera tion.

Almost by defini tion, colonia l newspa pe rs reflected cosmopol itan val ues. They rarely reported loca l even ts i n any systema tic wa y. Instead the y informed thei r comm uniti es wha t was happe n i ng elsewhere, pa r ticula rly in Eu rope. The *Boston Newsletter*, esta blished in 1704 by a n enterprising postmaster na med John Cam pbell, beca me America's first successf ul pape r. By the 1720s a ll the major northern ports had a t least one, a nd by the 1750s three or fou r newspa pers. Sou th Ca rolina and Virgi n ia each acquired one i n the 1730s, and Maryla nd a deca de la tei.

By the end of the 1760s every colony nort h of Dela wa re ha d also

established its own college, bu t from Delaware sou th only Willia m and Mary in Virginia provided higher educa tion for the settlers. This diffe rence was symptoma tic. On the whole, northern colonies *replicated* the institu tiona l potential of Eu rope. With New .Englap.d setting the pace, they trained their own ministers, lawyers, physicians, and master craf tsmen. Pla nta tion societies *imported* them instead, even thougl) .white per ca pi ta weal th was considerably higher from Ma ryla nd sou th. Northern provinces were already becoming modernizi ng societies capa ble of interna lizing the institutional momentum of the mother country. Southern provinces remained colonies, specialized prod ucers of non-E uropea n crops and i mporters of professionals and craf tsmen who could provide necessa ry servi ces. Bu t all ma inland colonies grew a t a prodigious ra te. In 1700 'they had only 250,000 settlers and slaves. Tha t figu re topped one million i n the 1740s and two million in the la te 1760s.

Among la rge even ts, both northern and southern colonies shared in the Grea t Awa kening and the fina l cycle of wa rs tha t expelled Fra nce from North America. Some historians like to interpret the Awakening — a powe rf u l concentra tion of evangelical revivals tha t swept th rough Brita in and the colonies mostly between the mid-1730s and early l 740s-a s a direct prelude to the America n Revolu tion, bu t even though awa kened settlers overwhelmingly suppor ted independence in the 1770s, the rela tionship was never tha t simple or direct. "Old Lights," or oppone nts of the revivals, would provide both the loyalists and nea rly all of the most conspicuo us pa triots. At no point in its u nfolding did the Awa kening seem to pit Britain against America. It divided both.

By J 763 Britain had emerged victorious from its midcentury cycle of wa rs with Fra nce and Spain, struggles tha t pulled together most of the trends towa rd imperial integration that had been emerging since the 1670s. Wh en Britain declared wa r on Spain in 1739, the Spanish empire proved a formida ble enemy. Spain repulsed attacks against Ca rtagena, Ha vana, and St. Augustine and brought the struggle into the bowels of the British coloni es by off ering freedom to a ll slaves who could escape from their Bri tish masters a nd reach Florida. This news triggered the Stano revolt in South Ca rolina, the la rgest slave uprising in the history of Brita i n's ma i nland colonies. It was led by Catholics from the Kongo who rega rded Spain, not Britain, as a beacon of liberty. Spain's message of liberation also con tribu ted to the New York slave conspira cy trials of 1741, which were tou ched off by a series of suspiciou s fires, some of which proba bl y had been set delibera tely to provide cover for an interracial la rceny ring. B ut the settlers believed they faced a monstrous "popish plot" to free the slaves, kill a ll the settlers, and turn New York City over to Spain. Before the tri als ended, fou r whites and eighteen bla cks were ha nged, thirteen bla cks were bu rned alive, and seven ty were ba n-

ished to the West Indies. Some of the victims were black Spanish mariners who had been captured and enslaved by New York privateers. Apparently their real crime was their insistence that they were freemen.

The last of these wars, what Lawrence Henry Gipson called the Great War for the Empire (1754-63), marked the fourth greatest mobilization and the third highest rate of fatality of any American military struggle from then to the present. (Only World War II, the Civil War, and the American Revolution mustered a higher percentage of the population. Only the Civil War and the American Revolution killed a larger proportion of participants.) This time Spain remained neutral until 1762, too late to accomplish anything through intervention. The British Empire did not have to disperse its resources against multiple enemies but could concentrate its overwhelming manpower against New France, which the British colonies outnumbered by more than twenty to one. Despite widespread friction in the first three years of the conflict, no other event could rival that war in the intensity of cooperation it generated between imperial and provincial governments. Both New Light and Old Light preachers saw nothing less than the millennium issuing from the titanic struggle. The result was more prosaic but still as unique as the effort. Great Britain expelled the government of France from North America and took Havana from Spain. In the Peace of Paris of 1763, Britain won control of the entire continent east of the Mississippi except New Orleans, which France ceded to Spain along with the rest of Louisiana west of the great river. Spain ceded Florida to Britain in exchange for Havana.

The war left several ironic legacies. The Empire did not know how to cope with so overwhelming a victory. To North Americans who had participated, the war seemed a powerful vindication of the voluntaristic institutions on which they had relied for their success. To London authorities, it seemed to demonstrate the inability of North Americans to meet their own defense needs even under an appalling emergency. The British answer would be major imperial reforms designed to create a more authoritarian empire, capable of answering its vast obligations whether or not the settlers chose to cooperate.

Neither side noticed another heritage. During the struggle the Indians throughout the northeastern woodlands had shown a novel and intense distaste for shedding one another's blood. The Iroquois ideal of a collective peace among the Six Nations of the Confederacy (the Tuscaroras had joined the original Five Nations in the early eighteenth century) scelllccl to be spreading throughout the region, fired by universalistic religious justifications for resisting all encroachments from the east. The Delawares and Shawnees in the upper Ohio Valley provided most of this religious drive for Indian unity, which had a striking impact as early as Pontiac's war of resistance in 1763-64.

As events would show, it was too little, too late. But for the next half-century, this movement inflicted one disaster after another on the settlers and subjected first the empire and then the United States to a rate of defense spending that would have enormous political consequences. Considering the limited resources on which Indian resistance could draw, it was at least as impressive as the effort toward unity undertaken by the thirteen colonies themselves after 1763. It also suggests a final paradox. Without Indian resistance to seal British commitment to imperial reform, there might have been no American Revolution at all.

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Gu tierrez, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford, Calif.: Stan[ord Un iversity Press, 1991). All three recognize that the India n experience is absolu tely central to thei r story.

On regiona lism, see Da vid Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxrord Un iversity Press, 1989). On cultu ra l cha nge, the best recen t studies a re Richa rd L. Bushma n, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Knop[, 1992); and Cha rles E. Cla rk, *The Public Prints: The Newspaper in Anglo-American Culture, 1665-1740* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). For the Grea t A wa keni ng, see Fra nk J. La m bert, *"Ped lar in Divinity": George Whitefield and the Transatlanlic Revivals* (Pri nceton, N.J.: Pri nceton University Press, 1994); a nd Na tha n 0. Ha tch, *The Sacred Cause of Liberty: Republican Thought tmd the Millennium in Revolutionary New England* (New Ha ven, Conn.: Yale Uni versity Press, 1977). The best introd u ction to colon ial politics remai ns Bernard Ba il,n, *The Origins of American Politics* (New York: Knopf, 1968), a lthough i t i s now aging. Newe r pe rspectives include Jack P. G reene, *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Polilies of the British Empire and the United States, 1607-1788* (Atbens: Un iversity or Georgia Press, 1986), a nd Alan Tu lly, *Forming American Politics: Ideals, Interests, and lnslitutions in Colonial New York and Pennsylvania* (Baltimore, Md.: Joh ns Hopkins University Press. 1994). For the midcen tu ry wa rs and u pheava l s, see T. J. Da vis, *A f?umor of Revolt: The "Great Negro P/01" in Colonial New York* (New York: Free Press, 1985), and Lawrence H. Gipson, *The British Empire before the American Revolu tion*, 15 vols. (New York: Knopf, 1936-70), vols. 6-8. Fred Anderson, *A People's Army: Massachuseus Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years' War* (Chapel Hill: Universi ty of North Carolina Press, 1984), is a thoughtf u l study. On t he India n bid for spiritual re-newa l, see Gregory E. Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The Norlh American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815* (Balti m ore, Mel.: Joh ns Hopki ns University Press. 1992).

2

THE REVOLUTIONARY GENERATION: IDEOLOGY, POLITICS, AND CULTURE IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC

Linda K Kerber

THB TALBS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY GENERATION ARE AMONG THE CENTRAL LEGends of the American comm unity. The midnight ride of Paul Revere, Lexi ngton and Concord, John Hancock signing his name so large that King George could read it without spectacles: these stories ha ve become our basic lessons in citizenship. The founding generation articulated enduring political questions and provided the structures by which we still conduct our political lives. Some of the enduring questions are philosophical: How best can people put limits on power and authority? How can a person be understood to be free and yet at the same time subject to law and to constraint? What is the appropriate relationship between ruler and ruled? Others are historical: Why did the least-taxed people in the Western world make a revolution about a modest increase in taxes? Is the American Revolution best understood as a conserva tive or a radical upheaval? How did a dispa rate set of newly independent states stabilize their revolution and create a lasting nation?

At least since 1913, when Charles Beard's *Economic Interpretation of the Constitution* linked support for the Constitu tion with the Pounders' economic self-interest, historians have understood the revolution to {have involved class interests as well as political theory. Beard's interpreta tion was based both on archival research and on his understanding