

Major Issues in Colonization: Comparing Spain, France, England, and the Netherlands

This table provides a way for you to think through the differences in the colonies. The table also tells you **who will eventually win in North America**. Look at each row in the table. Ask yourself what is the **difference in the practical consequences** if the Europeans are:

- Predominantly individual **males OR** come with their **families**?
- Few in number and spread out **OR** concentrated in one place?
- Doing agriculture **OR** trading with the native population?
- Are individual farmers **OR** large-scale agriculture such as tobacco or later cotton with many laborers needed?
- Believe they **must** convert the Indians **OR not**?

Trait	Spanish	French	English	Dutch
Where they went?	Central and South America	Canada and down the Mississippi River to the Gulf of New Mexico	Atlantic sea coast	Area later called New York (Most of their colonies are in the Far East.)
Demographics of the colonies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 450,000 through mid-1600s • Mainly male 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15,000 by 1700 • Mainly male 	Families¹: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,000 in early 1600s • 50,000 by mid-1600s 	Families: > 300 in early 1600s
Demographics of the colonies? (Why would ordinary people come?)	Catholicism dominated Spain, so mainly men, came not families	Protestants lived safely in France until the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, so until that time mainly men came, not families	With persecution, families have a reason to take the risk of taking women and children across the Atlantic and of living in a wilderness.	Although the initial settlers were some Protestant refugees, ²
Economy of colonies?	Conquest – the conquistadors Mining Agriculture, large scale	Fur trade—the coureurs de bois (runners of the woods)	Agriculture Shipbuilding	Fur trade Breweries Agriculture
Large landholdings? (feudal landholdings)	Yes	Yes, attempted but fails	Attempted, fails as feudalism but occurs with slavery in the South	Yes, called patroonships
Local governance?	Primarily a Spanish administration	Primarily a French administration	Local governance in the colonies, particularly in New England with its town meetings. (Covered with the English settlement.)	No, a Dutch administration
Missionary effort?	Yes, sometimes by forced conversion	Yes, but they adapt the religion to the Native Americans	Some, but generally separate from the Native Americans	—
Mix with the native population, including intermarriage?	Yes. Mainly a male population migrated.	Yes. Mainly a male population migrated.	Rarely. Among the reasons, migration of families in all areas but the South.	—

¹ The religions of the English kings varied so who was being persecuted varied—and who wanted to get out of England varied. Click [here to see for yourself](http://www.cjbibus.com/1485_1776_English_Rulers.pdf). (Link Address: http://www.cjbibus.com/1485_1776_English_Rulers.pdf)

² Once the Spanish—those who were persecuting the Dutch Protestants—were forced out of the Netherlands, Protestant families were safe without moving to colonies. This and the remaining entries in the column are from the Oxford Companion to United States History, p. 199.

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