

Comparison Tables for Provincial America

The challenge in understanding history is not just the details, but how the details come together and how details often come together in more than one way.

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Demographics: What were the basic population patterns?

Issue	New England (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI)	Middle Colonies (DE, MD, NY, NJ, PA)	South (GA, MD, NC, SC, VA)
What was the difference in population trends (birth and death and male and female) in New England and the South and in proportions of blacks to whites in the three colonial regions?	Life expectancy = 70 (high for England).	—	Life expectancy = 40
	Population increases 1650-1700 = 4X (Family = 6 to 8 children to maturity)	—	Death rate = 1 in 4 dead in infancy; 1 in 2 dead before 20
	Male to female = 6 of 10 (early period), or a ratio of 3 males to 2 females	—	Male to female = 7.5 of 10 (early period), or a ratio of 3 males to 1 female
	Blacks - 16,000 (1763). Example: 3% MA	Blacks - 29,000. Example: 8% PA	Blacks - 205,000. Example: 40% VA, 60% Carolina (South)
	Age – ½ of population under age 16 Total non-Indian population = 2,000,000 in 1775 – Increase from about 1700 = 8 to 10X (depending on the estimate) Total black population = 25,000 in 1700; 250,000 in 1760 – Increase = 10X; 1750 20% slaves - 40% in Chesapeake, lower South		
Why did the non-English immigrants (approximately after 1670s) come?	Religious persecution: French Huguenots, a Calvinist group, after 1685 (revocation of an agreement – Edict of Nantes – that had given them protection). Est. 100,000 German Protestants from Rhineland area mainly to PA (and called PA Dutch because of a name confusion). Minor groups as well. <i>Note:</i> Later Germans (mainly Lutherans) came for financial opportunity rather than escaping persecution. Financial distress (Scotland; Ireland) – Scottish Presbyterians (called Scotch-Irish) – est. 150,000. Primarily move into “backcountry” – rural frontier – from PA through GA.		
Where did most of them go?	French Huguenots – MA	French Huguenots – NY Dutch Reform – NY, NJ German, Moravians/Mennonites – PA German – PA Scotch-Irish – PA (“backcountry”)	French Huguenots – Charleston area Scotch-Irish – VA, NC (“backcountry”) Some Germans, Moravians – GA
Where did the indentured servants who came before and after the 1670s go?	After 1670s, indentured servants immigrated primarily to northern colonies.		Before 1670s, 7-8.5 of 10 colonists were indentured (owing their masters 4-7 years’ service, depending on their age, with young people owing longer).
In which colonial regions were the cities?	Boston = 16,000 (Data in this row from the 1770s)	Philadelphia = 28,000 New York = 25,000 Newport (RI) = 11,000	Charles Town = 12,000 with trade actually controlled by merchants from Britain/New England
What was the population distribution of planters and slaves?		Slaves in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eastern NJ—iron work ▪ Narragansett region of RI 	Ratio planter to # of slaves/servants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1600s, 1 to usually under 30 ▪ Early 1700s, 1 to 10-50+ Early 1700s, slaves and plantation size: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ¾ on plantations of 10+ slaves ▪ ½ on plantations of 50+ slaves

Economy: How did they make a living? What was the infrastructure for their economy?

Issue	New England (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI)	Middle Colonies (DE, MD, NY, NJ, PA)	South (GA, MD, NC, SC, VA)
Where were tobacco, rice, and wheat grown and where were they sold?	Wheat grown = Connecticut Valley Wheat sold = New England, South, West Indies. (Also shipped meat to South.)	NY, PA – Same as Connecticut Valley. Tobacco grown = Chesapeake (includes MD)	Tobacco grown = Chesapeake (VA) Rice grown = Carolina (South) and GA. Post-1754, South Carolinians migrated into GA; 1773 GA = 33K – with 45% slaves. Rice and tobacco sold = Northern colonies and Europe Trading managed by London, later northern colonies.
Where were there industries, such as metals manufacturing, lumbering, mining, and fishing?	Lumbering, mining, and fishing – on the coast. 1640s – Iron works established MA.	1760s, NJ iron plant; other small ones in NJ, PA – this in spite of the Iron Act (1750).	Some iron plants in South. Not major industry. Some lumbering, naval stores.
What was the difference both in the type of trades and crafts industries in the North and in the South and who was involved in those occupations?	In general, workers = white laborers or entrepreneurs in colonial towns. Types of trades and crafts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Blacksmiths, cabinet makers, cobblers, rifle makers, silversmiths ▪ Owners of mills for processing grain, cloth, or lumber 		In general, workers = slaves on or from large plantations earning money for their owners and possibly their own freedom Types of trades and crafts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Blacksmithing, carpentry, cobbling ▪ Small shopkeepers selling services
What was the difference in the infrastructure for trade (merchants, the ports) in the North and South and in the effect of English rules (Navigation Acts, Iron Act, woolens control) in the North and in the South?	In Massachusetts, later in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. 1750 – Iron Act and other acts restricted processing of metals, woolens, and hats, but Navigation Acts protected merchants from foreign competition. 27% colonial exports (from Boston, Newport, Philadelphia) to West Indies. Colonies importing from Britain heavily after 1740. Also some hauling overland (Great Wagon Road) in 1600s, but limitations on hauling grain because of weight.		South imports/exports directly to merchants (first English, later Northern).
	Had an infrastructure—that is, had commercial or merchant class with ships, contacts, and expertise required for global trade. Ship builders – 40% of British merchant vessels.		Trade was handled by London merchants and later by Northern merchants.
What was the difference in transatlantic slave trade before and after 1700?	1672 – The Royal African Company received charter (monopoly) and then lost it by 1698, with any English merchant able to sell slaves. Most trading by English merchants; some by colonial merchants. Chief sales to VA, MD, the Carolinas. Reminder: Barbados planters brought their slaves with them to the Carolinas.		

Social Order: How was the society organized?

Issue	New England (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI)	Middle Colonies (DE, MD, NY, NJ, PA)	South (GA, MD, NC, SC, VA)
What was the difference in marriage and family in New England and the South?	Emphasis on family, marriage. Long lives. Economic responsibilities for women, but no legal protections (no divorce, no control over family property).	—	Women more often widows – younger than husbands at their marriage. Average marriage length 7 years (with death of one of the partners); remarriage and reforming of families accordingly.
What were early landowning patterns (an issue on the economy as well)?	Whether closed or open field system, common decisions by families about land use. Land allotment by hierarchical position.	—	Headright – VA, MD 1720s: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 40-50% - white families with no land ▪ 5% - gentry with large land holdings
What happened in the late 1600s to indicate pressures on society?	Insufficient land available to divide up among subsequent generations. Decline of religious intensity in 2 nd generation – 1662 – Halfway Covenant. Salem witchcraft trials – 20 dead (19 hanged). <i>Note:</i> Just to keep this in perspective, witchcraft laws were not repealed in England until the 1730s.	—	Signs of pressure: Insufficient land for the landless, change in voting rights.
What was happening with the permanence of slavery and slave codes or black codes and what kinds of actions by planters did those codes potentially permit?		—	Slavery shift post 1700 based on race. Death to slave for disobedience; no death to the master for killing a slave.
What was the slave response (or white fear of response)?		NY – 1712 – arson – 9 whites dead. Later 13 slaves, hanged; 3, burned at stake; 6, suicide. NY – 1741 – arson rumored by blacks/poor whites. Trial: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 30+ executed (13 blacks burned alive; 18 black/4 whites hanged) ▪ 70+ banished 	1739 – SC – Stono Rebellion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rebellion by 100-150 blacks; killed some whites ▪ Were themselves killed in transit to Spanish Florida
What was happening with the Indians?	—	Missionary effort, such as Rev. David Brainerd Migration west by some tribes, such as the Iroquois	—

Government: How did they govern themselves locally and as colonies? Was there an infrastructure for government? What were their ideas on government?

Note: Voting at this time was not by secret ballot, but by stating aloud the name of the person that you favored.

Issue	New England (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI)	Middle Colonies (DE, MD, NY, NJ, PA)	South (GA, MD, NC, SC, VA)
What were some examples of local government and town organization? What about ownership of property and involvement of the population in the well-being of the local community?	New Englanders had meetinghouse and centralized community. Annual "town meetings," where they selected governing group. Widespread ownership of land, plus 1630s voting granted based on church membership; 40% colony's males could vote.	—	Dispersed population. Land ownership more difficult, plus stable incomes required owning slaves. With economic limitations and dependency, came political dependency. Bacon's Rebellion was partly the landless indentured servants being disenfranchised.
What happened in the English colonies with both local and colonial government?	Colonial assemblies with most governors royally appointed. Council declined in power in 1700s and assemblies increased, primarily because of "power of purse" as the governors needed money for colonial wars. Size of franchise was large because most owned land – therefore hard to control the electorate, who could throw out those who did not listen.		
What was different about the colonies and criticism of government compared to the British tradition?	1730s – John Peter Zenger, newspaper editor, criticized the royal governor of NY. Attorney Andrew Hamilton argued successfully that criticism of government, if true, isn't libelous. Result: "Last colonial printer prosecuted by the royal authorities" (p. 859 of Boyer's <i>Oxford Companion to United States History</i>). The royal government in New York took the position held by the British traditions. The colonial jury did not. This is a sign of the developing American recognition that a free and attentive press is essential for small-r republicanism and small-d democracy.		
What was different about the colonial and British governmental systems?	Colonies – 50-75% white males – qualified voters (compared to England with 15-30%). Colonies – direct representation (compared to England's "virtual representation")		

Knowledge: What kind of knowledge had they gathered?

Also see the Voices ... link on the Enlightenment.

Issue	New England (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI)	Middle Colonies (DE, MD, NY, NJ, PA)	South (GA, MD, NC, SC, VA)
What did this society know about medicine and scientific observation?	1728 – Cotton Mather, Puritan minister, advocate of inoculation for smallpox 1761, 1769 – John Winthrop, Harvard College, part of experiment to calculate sun-earth distance	1747 – experiments with electricity – Benjamin Franklin; PA scientist, publisher 1728 – John Bartram, PA, naturalist, established botanical garden; lifetime of work with native plants	—
What vehicles existed for spreading knowledge (or even news)?	Weekly journals increased in mid-1700s in NY, MA. (Example: Benjamin Franklin gained his fortune as a printer.)		Note: Region had a slower start – In the 1600s, VA had no printing press.

Education: How did they teach their young and educate the next generation of leaders?

Issue	New England (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI)	Middle Colonies (DE, MD, NY, NJ, PA)	South (GA, MD, NC, SC, VA)
What did Massachusetts and some Quakers do about basic education for the young and what other basic education was occurring?	Massachusetts set the pattern to support public education in this country. 1647 law – required towns to support a school. Similar laws = CT and Plymouth. Indenture, done locally with people known to the parents, was a means of training for the young.	Some were educated in dame schools set up in women’s homes. Dame = widows or unmarried women. Teaching = way they could earn a living.	Private tutors for those with money. Reminder: Few white children and few towns.
What were the colleges and when and why were they formed?	Harvard (1636) – Cambridge, MA – established as a school for ministers - Congregationalist Yale (1701)-New Haven, CT – established as school for ministers, with Harvard viewed as too liberal – Congregational College of Rhode Island (or Brown) (1764) – Baptist. Dartmouth – NH (1769) – Congregational.	Princeton (or College of New Jersey) (1746) – established because other schools viewed as too liberal - Presbyterian Columbia (or King’s College) (1754) – NY – secular curriculum - Anglican Queen’s College (or Rutgers) (1766) – Dutch Reform Univ. of PA (or Academy and College of Philadelphia) (1755) – secular curriculum	William and Mary College (1693) – Williamsburg, VA – established by Anglicans as an academy to train clergymen No college level until 1720s.

Religion: What were the major religious patterns?

Also see the Voices ... link on the Great Awakening.

Issue	New England (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI)	Middle Colonies (DE, MD, NY, NJ, PA)	South (GA, MD, NC, SC, VA)
What were the major religious patterns?	Predominantly Calvinist. In general, the section was religious and had religious organizations readily available.	Varied religions including Quaker, Anglican, Catholic, Dutch Reform, with additional groups coming in during the post-1700 period with European immigrants. In general, the section was religious and had religious organizations readily available.	Officially Anglican and sometimes not having a church because of cost issues. Only 72 churches had ministers. Note: Influences such as Methodism did not occur until post -1730s, with the Methodists using circuit riders to take church services (marriage, baptism, etc.) to the people even though there was no church. 1750s, VA, NC – Baptist
What were the changes in religion with the Great Awakening?	1734, MA – Jonathan Edwards 1740 – George Whitefield to MA	1720s, NJ – Theodore Jacob Frelinghausen 1720s, CT – Tennant brothers preached; father established “Log College” – New Light 1739+ – George Whitefield, English preacher, to Middle Colonies	—

How to Use the Comparison Tables

Tables are written in sentence fragments **on purpose** in this type of study tool. You may find using fragments helps in creating your own study tools; however, do not use fragments for your Writing Assignments.

Follow these steps in using these comparison tables:

1. Read all about a specific attribute of provincial America by reading each row across. – Data applicable to all colonial sections is in a cell across all 3 columns; to 2 colonial sections, in a merged cell for those 2 sections. Click [here](#) for what years are covered by the terms *18th century*, *19th century*, etc.
2. Read all about each section by reading down each column.
The () in the headings contains the current abbreviations for the names of states that these colonies became.
MD is italicized and included in both the Middle Colonies and the South because it has some attributes of both.
3. Compare attributes from left to right individually and all the rows together. Which sections are alike; which are different?
4. Read the table as a whole. What is this new nation like?
5. If you have questions, please ask.

Sources Used for This Data

The data in the tables is from:

- Robert A. Divine's *The American Story*
- Alan Brinkley's *The Unfinished Nation*
- Edward L. Ayers' *American Passages*
- General reference books, including the *Encyclopedia of American History* (edited by Jeffery B. Morris and Richard B. Morris)

What Years Are Covered By The Terms *18th Century*, *19th Century*, Etc.?

The convention coming from those who long ago set up the time terminology follows this pattern:

18th century = 1700s

19th century = 1800s

20th century = 1900s

21st century = 2000s

Because this convention is known for causing human error, it's safest to think about and write dates as numbers, such as 1600s (and not 17th century).

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