

## CHAPTER 3

# North America in the Atlantic World, 1640–1720

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After you have studied Chapter 3 in your textbook and worked through this study guide chapter, you should be able to:

1. Discuss developments in England between 1640 and 1720, and explain their impact on colonial society.
2. Explain the reasons behind the new wave of English colonies founded after 1660, and identify the major political, social, and economic characteristics of those colonies.
3. Discuss the development of colonial political structures from 1640 to 1720.
4. Examine the relations between Europeans and North American Indians between 1640 and 1720.
5. Discuss the causes and consequences of Bacon's Rebellion.
6. Explain the introduction and evolution of African slavery in the North American British colonies.
7. Describe the mechanics of the Atlantic slave trade, the characteristics of North American slavery, and the impact of slavery on those enslaved.
8. Examine the social, political, economic, and cultural impact of slavery on American, West African, and European societies.
9. Explain the political and economic bases for the relationship between England and its colonies from 1640 to 1720.
10. Analyze the forces responsible for the Salem Village witchcraft crisis.

### THEMATIC GUIDE

Chapter 3 deals with events in the British colonies in North America from 1640 to 1720. But it is important to recognize the themes and interpretations offered in this chapter and to see the facts as evidence used to support those themes.

The theme of the interaction among different cultures, important in Chapters 1 and 2, continues in Chapter 3, but the focus shifts to the period 1640 to 1720. As in the previous chapters, it is not just the fact of interaction that is important, but what the participants bring to the interaction (their frames of reference), the way in which the participants affected each other, and the way in which they change and are changed by each other.

Keeping that in mind, we deal with the impact of the English Civil War (1642–1649) and the Commonwealth period (1649–1660) on the relationship between England and its colonies. These periods of political turmoil were followed by the Stuart Restoration (1660–1685), which brought Charles II to the English throne. The return to political stability during Charles's reign witnessed the founding of six new proprietary colonies, known as the Restoration colonies. Discussion of the reasons for the founding of these colonies, their political, social, and economic evolution, and the interaction of

peoples within them demonstrates the emergence of an even more diverse and heterogeneous colonial society.

We then consider a second interaction theme: relations between Europeans and American Indians. The subject is complex because of the variety of Native American cultures and because of their interaction with various European countries vying for power in North America. The discussion centers on the economic uses the Europeans made of Indian cultures. The dynamics of five specific white-Indian relationships are discussed: (1) the French colonists in the areas of the Great Lakes and Mississippi Valley and the Indians of those regions; (2) the Spanish and the Pueblos of New Mexico; (3) the colonists of the New England coastal region and the Indians of that region; (4) the colonists of Virginia and the Indians of that area; and, (5) in the section entitled “Enslavement in North America,” the colonists of North and South Carolina and neighboring Indian peoples.

Another interaction theme, the emergence of chattel slavery in colonial America, is considered in the sections entitled “African Slavery on the Mainland,” “The Web of Empire and the Atlantic Slave Trade,” and “Enslavement in North America.” We discuss the factors that led the English to enslave Africans, the emergence of mainland slave societies, how the slave trade was organized and conducted, and the consequences of the interaction between English and Africans. These consequences include the impact of the interaction on (1) West Africa and Europe; (2) enslaved Africans; and (3) the development of colonial society and of regional differences between North and South.

In the last section of the chapter, we return to the relationship between England and its colonies. In the discussion of the general political evolution of the colonies, we discover that England was no longer merely *acting on* its colonies but was beginning to *react to* colonies that were maturing socially, politically, and economically. As a consequence, those colonies became increasingly difficult to administer. In addition, the fact that England was engaged in a war with France—a war fought in Europe and in North America—was a complicating factor. At the end of the chapter, the impact of this complex set of interrelationships on New England society is discussed through an analysis of the Salem Village witchcraft crisis.

## IDENTIFICATION AND SIGNIFICANCE

After studying Chapter 3 of *A People and a Nation*, you should be able to identify *and* explain fully the historical significance of each item listed below.

- Identify each item in the space provided. Give an explanation or description of the item. Answer the questions *who*, *what*, *where*, and *when*.
- Explain the historical significance of each item in the space provided. Establish the historical context in which the item exists. Establish the item as the result of or as the cause of other factors existing in the society under study. Answer this question: *What were the political, social, economic, and/or cultural consequences of this item?*

1. the Atlantic slave trade

2. the middle passage

3. mercantilism
4. the Navigation Acts
5. vice-admiralty courts
6. the Glorious Revolution

## IDEAS AND DETAILS

### Objectives 6 and 8

1. African slaves supplanted white indentured servants in the Chesapeake in the 1670s for which of the following reasons?
  - a. Africans were better workers than the white indentured servants.
  - b. The initial cost for African slaves was less than that for white indentured servants.
  - c. Getting an adequate supply of white workers became more and more difficult.
  - d. England outlawed the practice of white servitude.

### Objective 6

2. The decision by Europeans to enslave Africans is explained, in part, by which of the following?
  - a. By the seventeenth century, slavery was already well defined in law in all European nations.
  - b. European Christians were able to justify in religious terms the enslavement of non-Christians.
  - c. The Pope issued a proclamation calling for the enslavement of Africans so that they could be more easily Christianized.
  - d. Leaders from the various European settlements in the Americas met and decided that slavery was the best way to solve their labor problems.

### Objective 7

3. Records of the slave trade reveal that
  - a. the mortality rate was high for both slaves and their white captors.
  - b. slave ships were kept immaculately clean in order to reduce the incidence of disease.
  - c. the slave diet during the Middle Passage consisted largely of beef, pork, and corn.
  - d. African captives usually came from the states of North Africa.

### Objective 9

4. Which of the following is true of the Navigation Acts?
  - a. Their intent was to encourage foreign trade with the British colonies.
  - b. They were an effort by England to encourage colonial assemblies to make their own decisions about colonial trade.
  - c. They were designed to decrease the influence of British merchants on colonial trade.
  - d. They were designed to put England at the center of American trade.

### Objective 8

5. The increasing reliance of the southern colonies on black slaves
  - a. caused white southern society to become more egalitarian.
  - b. caused a steadily widening gap between rich and poor.
  - c. led to economic diversification in the South.
  - d. made indentured servants affordable to most white southerners.

## ESSAY QUESTIONS

### Objective 6

1. Explain the emergence of African slavery in the British colonies in North America.

### Objective 8

2. Examine the social and political impact of African immigrants on South Carolina and the Chesapeake.

### Objectives 6, 7, and 8

3. Examine the following statement:

*The traffic in enslaved human beings served as the linchpin of the Atlantic trading system.*

### Objective 10

4. Discuss the economic philosophy of mercantilism and examine Parliament's attempts to apply mercantilist theory to the economic relationship between England and its American colonies.

## ANSWERS

### Multiple-Choice Questions

1. c. Correct. The number of white servants migrating to the Chesapeake fell in the 1680s. The resulting labor shortage led Chesapeake planters to turn increasingly to African slaves to fulfill their labor needs.
  - a. No. There is no evidence to indicate that Africans were better workers than white servants. In fact, the enactment of the slave codes, which were designed to control the slave labor force, suggests that slaves presented a labor problem not posed by indentured servants.
  - b. No. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, African slaves usually cost about two-and-a-half times as much as indentured servants.
  - d. No. Although it was used principally in the Chesapeake colonies and the middle colonies, white indentured servitude continued in the British colonies in North America throughout the colonial period and was not outlawed by England.

- Error! Reference source not found.** b. Correct. European Christians, including the English, justified their enslavement of Africans, whom they viewed as heathens, on religious grounds.
- a. No. The word *slavery* was not present in seventeenth-century English law, and slavery as an institution did not exist in England.
  - c. No. One way Europeans justified their enslavement of Africans was to say that they wanted to Christianize “heathen” peoples. However, the Pope never issued a proclamation calling for the enslavement of Africans as a means to Christianize them. In fact, the papacy condemned slavery as early as the fifteenth century.
  - d. No. The decision by Europeans to enslave Africans was not the result of a meeting among leaders from the various European settlements.

- Error! Reference source not found.** a. Correct. The evidence indicates that the death rate among whites involved in the slave trade was as great as, and sometimes greater than, the death rate among slaves. Why was the mortality rate sometimes greater for white Europeans than for black Africans?
- b. No. Although it was important to keep slaves healthy, seventeenth-century Europeans did not know the germ theory of disease. Although there were attempts to keep the ships clean, such attempts were not very successful because of overcrowding, sickness, and lack of proper sanitation.
  - c. No. A slave diet consisting of unspoiled meat was rare. The slave diet during the Middle Passage usually consisted of beans, rice, yams, or corn cooked together to create a warm mush.
  - d. No. Throughout the history of the Atlantic slave trade, the vast majority of slaves came from sub-Saharan West Africa.

- Error! Reference source not found..** d. Correct. Mercantilist theory held that colonies exist solely for the good of the mother country. The Navigation Acts were an attempt to apply this theory to the colonies by ensuring that England was at the center of colonial trade and profited from that trade.
- a. No. Foreign trade with the British colonies was contrary to the mercantilist theory because it was believed such trade would aid foreign countries and enrich the colonies at England's expense. Therefore, the Navigation Acts were not designed to encourage foreign trade with the colonies.
- b. No. The Navigation Acts attempted to centralize economic decision making in the hands of Parliament.
- c. No. British merchants were to remain important in colonial trade because, according to the theory of mercantilism, colonies are important as a market for the mother country's manufactured goods. Such goods would be supplied to the colonies by British merchants as well as by colonial merchants.

- Error! Reference source not found..** b. Correct. Slaves usually cost about two-and-a-half times more than indentured servants. This made owning a slave beyond the reach of many planters. At the same time, the number of indentured servants coming to the southern colonies decreased. This meant that less affluent southern settlers could not even afford to buy indentured servants because their scarcity made them too expensive. Therefore, the South's increasing reliance on slavery caused the gap between rich and poor to widen and caused southern society to become more and more stratified.
- a. No. An egalitarian society is one in which all people have social and political equality. The presence of slavery in the southern colonies created a more stratified society rather than a more egalitarian society.
- c. No. The South's reliance on slave labor accentuated the region's reliance on staple-crop production and did not lead to economic diversification
- d. No. The high demand for labor in the South during the late seventeenth century, coupled with the decrease in the number of indentured servants, meant that the cost of indentured servants increased. Therefore, indentured servants did not become more affordable to most whites.