

2.5

Economic & Social Life in the Colonies



As a Young Historian, I will be able to...

- **Analyze the economic relationship between England and its colonies.**
- **Explain the impact of geography on the economies of the New England, Middle, and Southern colonies.**
- **Compare and contrast differences in the social structure of the three major colonial regions.**

The British Economy

Mercantilism- The idea a nation builds wealth by developing industry, exporting goods for gold & silver

Parliament- British type of Government that enacts laws

The Navigation Acts!- ONLY English ships with English sailors could trade with English colonies

European goods had to be imported via an English port to gain custom duties

The Consumer Revolution!

**Colonists had to build surplus to trade
“expensive exotic” goods**

**The expanding transatlantic trade led to a
“Consumer Revolution!” that
brought more cheap goods to colonies**

**In about 70 years colonist trade with
Britain went from 10% to 37%!**

However, debts began to skyrocket!

Regional Differences in Economy

New Englanders worked small farms, raised livestock, & grew agriculture for their own good.

They would instead export lumber & fish.

Middle Colonies had better farming than New England.

Primarily would export wheat from the colonies (think Quakers)

Regional Differences in Economy

The southern colonies were **VERY** successful in agriculture!

They grew **staple crops**, crops in steady demand.

As well as **cash crops**, crops grown for sale.

Regional Social Differences

African Americans were few in the North & Middle Colonies, but large in the South

Most poor immigrants -south, middle class-New England. European immigrants-middle colonies

Women begin to have SOME rights, couldn't vote, hold office, own property, or serve on a jury though.

Regional Social Differences

New England granted land to those who wanted to create towns. More adults were literate in this colony.

New England had largest amount of economic equality

The South was spread out & illiteracy was more prevalent as was economic inequality

Education in the Colonies

Education was important in New England as it enabled people to read the Bible

Dame Schools- Schools operated out of a woman's home

Elsewhere people homeschooled children or hired a tutor

College was rare, & very expensive & students had to live a moral life or be expelled