

Colonial Society

- Social Classes—birth and wealth determined social status
 - Upper class were the **gentry**
 - **Middle class**
 - farmers who worked own land
 - skilled craftsmen
 - tradespeople
 - Lower social classes
 - farmhands
 - Indentured servants
 - slaves



Colonial Life



- **Life in the City**
 - Men worked in trades
 - As cities grew more became bankers and businessmen
 - Women sometimes worked outside the home
- **Life in the Countryside**
 - Most colonists were farmers
 - Men—agricultural work
 - Women—worked at home
- **Life in the Backcountry**
 - Men and women worked side by side in the fields

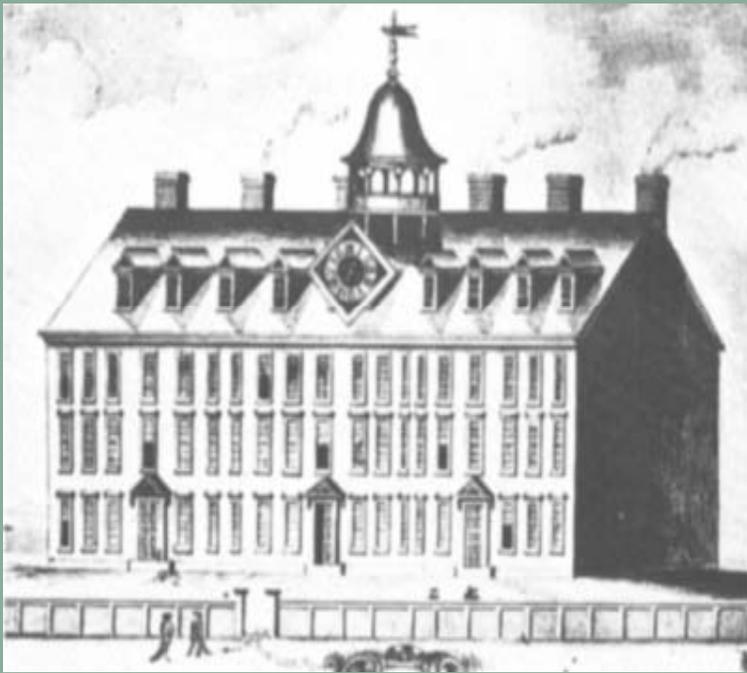
Women in the Colonies



Margaret Brent, an unmarried woman and freeholder of land appeared before the Maryland Assembly to request the right to vote—the first woman to do so. Her request was denied. (1648)

- Colonial laws and customs limited women's economic activities.
 - Women did not work outside the home without husband's permission
 - Husband had the right to keep the money his wife earned (household items)
 - 1733~*Colonial Women of Affairs*~called for voice in colonial politics.

Education in the Colonies



Yale College
1701

- New Englanders were most concerned about education
 - 1642 law: parents must teach children “to read and understand the principles of religion.”
 - First public schools begin as a result
- Middle Colonies – churches and families set up private schools
- Southern Colonies—planters hired tutors
- Colleges founded at first to educate future ministers.
 - Harvard, Yale, William & Mary

English Colonies



Member of the Privy Council

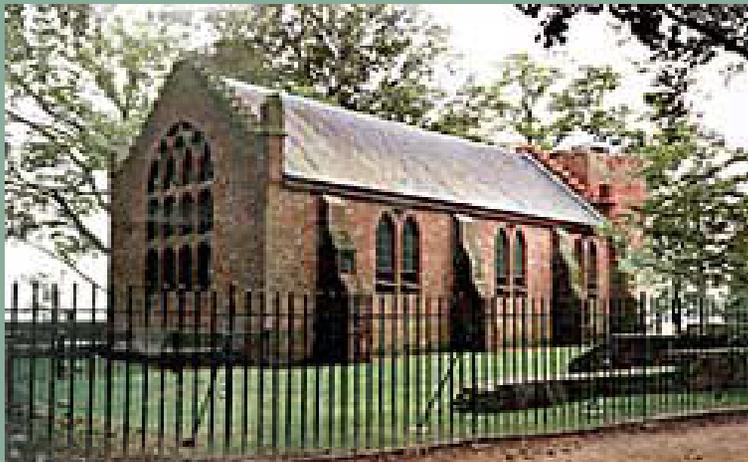
- All of the English Colonies in America fell under the ultimate authority of the King. However, some were more directly ruled than others
- **Privy Council** - a group of royal advisors who set English policies in the colonies

Types of Colonial Charters

- **Proprietary Colonies** – charter given to one or more individuals (proprietors) (i.e. Pennsylvania, New Hampshire)
- **Company (charter) Colonies** – charter given to a group of investors—joint-stock company (i.e. Virginia, MA Bay Company)
- **Royal Colonies** – colony directly controlled by the crown (i.e. New York)

Colonial Governments

- Most Colonial Governments had three parts
 - Governor – selected by the crown, proprietor, or joint-stock company/group
 - Advisory Council – selected by those in power
 - Colonial assembly – selected by the citizens, laws must be approved by Governor and Advisory Council



Reconstructed church in Jamestown where the first meeting of the House of Burgesses was held in 1619

Colonial Government

- **Town Meetings** – men of colonies met once or more a year
 - Made decisions about schooling, local taxes, future of unsettled land, etc.
 - Center of politics in New England
 - County level decisions in the southern colonies
- Colonial Courts
 - Mostly royal colonies
 - Upheld town laws and English laws
 - 1689~**English Bill of Rights**—reduced king's power
 - 1733~John Peter Zenger—tried in New York for printing negative comments about the governor
 - Not guilty of libel—colonists have freedom of press

English Trade Laws

- **Mercantilism** – economic system where a nation creates and maintains wealth by controlling trade, resulting in a favorable balance of trade (**exports** > imports)
 - **Navigation Acts** – trade laws passed by England between 1650-1696
 - High duties (import taxes)
 - Required the bulk of Colonial trade to be done with England
 - Creates an unfavorable balance of trade for the Colonies (**imports** > exports)

Colonial Trade

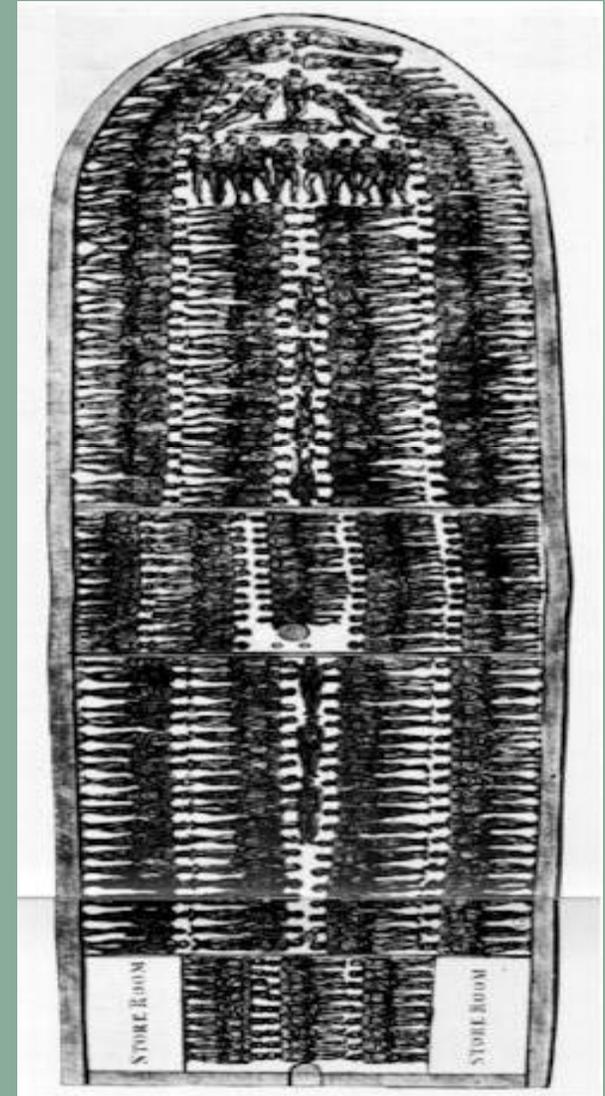
- Triangular Trade – a system in which goods and slaves were traded among the Americas, Britain, and Africa.
 - Several triangular trade routes cross the Atlantic
 - Triangular trade brought over 10 million slaves to the Americas



That long, terrifying journey bringing slaves across the Atlantic was called the Middle Passage

The Middle Passage

- Roughly 1/3 died in transit
- Could last as long as 3 months
- Each slave was shackled to other slaves below deck and confined to a space of 18" high, 16" wide, and 5 ½ feet long
- Sometimes, slaves were not able to go above the deck for the entire voyage
- Slaves sometimes attempted to fight back
 - Some would refuse to eat and die of starvation, or jump overboard to commit suicide.
- [Slave Trade](#)



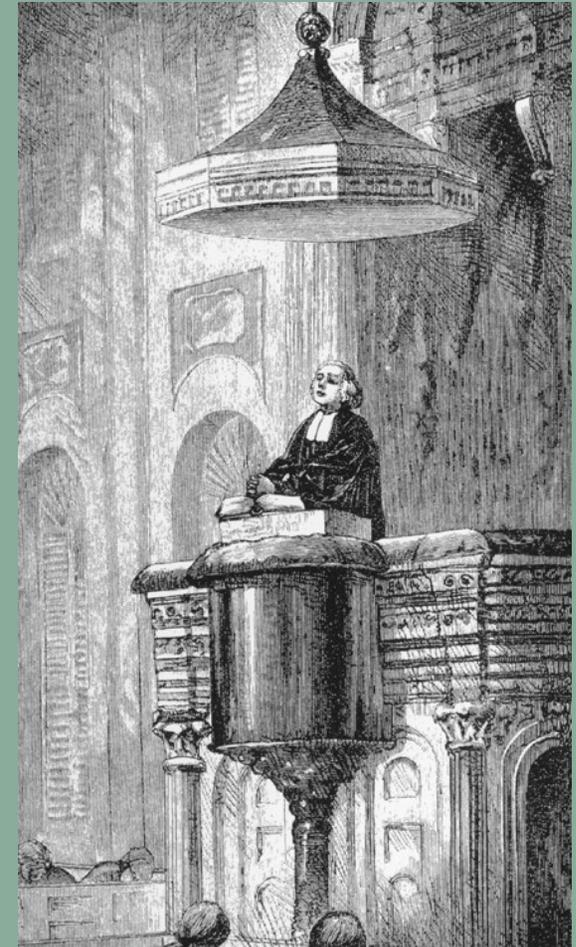
Slavery in the Colonies

- The first enslaved Africans arrived in Virginia in 1619. Some slaves were able to purchase their freedom during the 1600s.
- By the 1700s plantations in the Southern Colonies began relying heavily on slaves as a source of labor
- Slaves became the majority of population in South Carolina and Georgia



The Great Awakening

- Widespread Christian movement of the 1730's and 1740's involving sermons and revivals that emphasized faith in God.
 - Began because Church Leaders wanted to restore the sense of religious duty held by previous generations.
 - Spiritual revival caused a division in the churches between traditionalists and those with new ideas
 - New England Colonies—traditionalists
 - Middle & Southern Colonies—new ideas greatly increase church membership
 - Significant increase in communication between people in different colonies—traveling preachers.



The Great Awakening Changes Society



- Jonathan Edwards
 - Preached that all people were born sinners to be saved by the will of God
 - Believed in free will
 - Opportunity to be saved was available to all—rich and poor alike—led to demands for political equality as well.
 - *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*

American Political Thought

- Scientific Revolution—began in math and astronomy, but led to advances in all areas of natural science.
- The Enlightenment—reason and logic used in scientific observation is applied to human actions and events to improve society.
- Social Contract—exists between government and her citizens
- John Locke: people had natural rights such as equality and liberty.
 - “...life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness...”