Southern Colonies in the 17th and 18th Centuries

APUSH 2017
Southern Plantation Economies

- Plantation economy
  - tobacco and rice
- Indentured servitude until 1676ish, then slave colonies
- Aristocratic atmosphere
- Small population
- Religious Toleration
  - Anglican Church
Chesapeake-Virginia

- **Virginia 1607**
  - Jamestown 1607, first successful British colony
  - Founded by Virginia Company charter from James I
  - Looking for gold and to convert natives

- **Virginia Charter**
  - Gave Englishmen rights to colonists
  - Tragic few years: disease, war, famine
  - John Smith
    - Pocahontas and Powhatans
  - Charter eventually taken back, became royal colony

- **House of Burgesses**
  - Small Parliament in colonies
  - Representative self-government
Chesapeake-Maryland

- Sir George Calvert given land for Catholic haven
- Act of Toleration (1649)
  - Toleration for ALL Christian religions, but must recognize divinity of Jesus (not Jews or atheists)
Life in the Chesapeake

- Disease—malaria, dysentery, typhoid
- Short life span
- Mostly men, scarce women
- Women marry early
Tobacco Plantation Economy--Chesapeake

- Headright system
  - A person who paid for the passage of a white indentured servant received 50 acres of land

- Indentured Servants
  - Men agreed to specific years of service in exchange for passage to America
  - End of contract often given money or land
Bacon’s Rebellion--Virginia (Chesapeake)

- Many indentured servants did not get what they were due, or were very poor
- Men v women ratio still low
- Many looked for land ou west but were threatened by Indians
- Governor Berkeley and Nathaniel Bacon
- Significance
  - Increase use of slaves, decrease use of indentured servants
  - Racial superiority attitude begins
Bacon's Rebellion
The Carolinas

- 1670, slave code adopted 1696
- Influenced by sugar planters from British West Indies
- Major rice exporter
- Charles Town (Charleston)---aristocratic
North Carolina

- 1712
- Poor whites and religious dissenters
Georgia

- Last British colony founded 1733
- James Oglethorp
- Haven for debtors and buffer from Spanish
Rise of Colonial Slavery

- West African slaves
- 50 million died en route or became slaves in the 17th and 18th century
- Middle Passage
  - Chains
  - Coffin like space
  - ⅓ died
- Charleston SC slave market
- Largest slave trade after 1700
Slave Codes

- African pop. grew, whites become threatened
- Examples:
  - Blacks AND their children ae property for life
  - Crime to teach literacy to slaves
  - Conversion to Christianity does not mean freedom
- Root of racism as legal until 1960s
Slave Life

- Harsh in deep south (SC)
  - Fresh imports daily, so why treat them well?
  - Rice and indigo farming brutal
- Less harsh in middle colonies
  - Tobacco farming not as bad
  - Plantations closer together, slaves given more freedom to build relationships
  - Natural reproduction, slave pop. grows
Slave Culture

- Tribal/ethnic for a time
- Then mixing cultures
- Examples
  - Gullah language—blend English with African language Ibo
  - Banjo and Bongo from Africa
  - Ringshout dance→ Jazz
  - Mixing Christianity and African afterlife
Slave Rebellions

- 250 smaller revolts
- Stono Rebellion 1739
  - Escape to Spanish Florida
  - Stopped by militia and slaughtered
  - Frightened whites, they tighten control
The most significant slave uprising that took place in Colonial America was the Stono Rebellion in SC, 1739.
Southern Society 18th Century

- Southern Social Ladder
  1. Plantation Owners
  2. Small farmers (majority)
  3. Landkess Whites
  4. Indentured Servants
  5. Freed Blacks and Black Slaves
Southern Society 18th Century

- Underdeveloped
- Poor transportation
- Life revolved around plantations
Big Idea Questions

1. Defend this statement. Provide support.
   a. “The cultures of the colonial south were quite unique. In fact, there were two ‘Souths’”
Big Idea Questions

2. Trace the development of indentured servitude and black slavery in the 17th and 18th century.
Big Idea Questions

3. To what extent was 18th century southern society different from 17th century southern society?
4. What characteristics did all of the Southern colonies share?