Chapter 4: Creating the Empire, 1660-1720

Overview
During the first half of the seventeenth century, England’s colonies developed without any real governmental plan or control. The British state became stronger and more centralized. The economic theory of mercantilism guided Britain’s economic development and was implemented in the Navigation Acts (1651-1696). As Britain regained political stability at the end of the seventeenth century she tried to gain some control over her colonies. Between 1689 and 1713 Britain fought two wars against France and her allies. Neither the French nor Spanish had thriving North American colonies vital to their nation’s economy. Spain’s colony in New Mexico was the location of the only successful Indian revolt in North America, the Pueblo Revolt. The Pueblos held off the Spanish for thirteen years, but in 1696 Spain reconquered New Mexico. Spain’s settlements in New Mexico were always precarious.

Key Topics
• Britain’s plan for empire, and the effect of the English Revolution, Restoration, and the Glorious Revolution on the colonies
• New patterns established by the colonies founded in the second half of the seventeenth century
• Political instability in most of the American colonies including Spain’s colony of New Mexico
• The conflict between the role envisioned for Indians in the British empire and the ambitions of colonial settlers in Virginia and New England
• The Salem witchcraft trials as an expression of tensions in late seventeenth-century Massachusetts
• The distinctive society of New Mexico

Review Questions
✓ What was Britain’s plan of empire? What role were the American colonies supposed to play in it?
✓ Many of the American colonies experienced a period of political instability in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Describe the rebellions and other examples of political instability and explain what caused them.
✓ Describe the Indian-white relations in the American colonies in the second half of the seventeenth century. What was the Covenant Chain, and how did Edmund Andros’s vision of Indian-white relations differ from that of settlers in New England?
✓ What effect did political turmoil and the change of leadership in Britain have upon the American colonies in the second half of the seventeenth century?
✓ What were the primary causes of the witchcraft trials in Salem in 1692? What were the primary results?
✓ Describe the causes and results of Pope’s Rebellion of 1680 and describe New Mexican society in the early eighteenth century.

Annotated chapter outline
Tituba Shapes Her World and Saves Herself: Tituba was accused of practicing witchcraft in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692. Tituba got caught up in a hysterical witchcraft scare -- one in which she was accused of practicing witchcraft. In order to save herself, she told the magistrates what they wanted to hear. Her explanation was one of cultural mixing and self-preservation.
The Plan of Empire: During the first half of the seventeenth century, England’s colonies developed without any real governmental plan or control.
• The economic theory of mercantilism guided Britain’s economic development.
• Mercantilism held that the colonists were to provide the raw materials; manufacturers back home made the finished product.
• Mercantilism also held that if the colonists came to manufacture things that competed with manufacturers back home, those colonial industries were restricted (see the Hat Act and Wool Act).
• The Navigation Acts (1651-1696) were passed in order to implement mercantilism and regulate the colonists’ trade.

New Colonies, New Patterns: In the absence of strict British control new colonies developed in the second half of the seventeenth century. New Netherland, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina were developed, each in a different manner from the others. The most successful offered opportunity and religious toleration to its colonists.

• Britain cut the Dutch trade, became the primary slave trader, and moved to take New Netherland, and in 1665 New Netherland became New York.
• Pennsylvania demonstrated the potential of a colony that offered both religious toleration and economic opportunity.
• Carolina was founded in 1670 and was the first English colony to recognize slavery from the outset.
• Carolina became a slave society and slavery stood at the center of its political economy.

The Transformation of Virginia: By the end of the seventeenth century, Virginians had lived through a rebellion designed to secure economic opportunity and a legitimate government that would protect that opportunity and Virginia had developed into a slave society. Economic opportunity for whites came at the denial of liberty to Indians and Africans in Virginia.

• Bacon’s Rebellion failed to accomplish government reform, but succeeded in dispersing the Indians on the frontier and opening up their land for Virginians.
• By 1700 Virginia was a slave society -- a society in which slavery was central to the political economy and the social structure. As the population of Africans in Virginia grew, so, too, did the laws controlling Africans. A slave code further defined slaves’ roles and codified what they could and could not do.

New England Under Assault: The Puritans lost control of their world by the last quarter of the seventeenth century. They had to contend with prosperity, conflicts with their neighbors, and the region’s deadliest war in 1675.

• Prosperity brought the need for more land, resulting in the region’s deadliest Indian war, King Philip’s War. It was part of a much larger British concern.

The Empire Strikes: As Britain regained political stability at the end of the seventeenth century she tried to gain some control over her colonies and to secure her place in European competition for resources. The result was a series of Anglo-French wars (1689 to 1763) that drew the colonies into the empire.

• Between 1689 and 1713 Britain fought two wars against France and her allies which resulted in endemic conflict on the colonial frontiers as English and French forces contended with one another and each other’s Indian allies.

Massachusetts in Crisis: The Salem witchcraft trials illustrate the tensions in Massachusetts at the end of the seventeenth century. Economic development, conflict between religious and scientific views of the world, political instability, imperial war, and conflict with the Indians worked together to heighten the environment in which the witchcraft hysteria broke out. In 1692 twenty people were executed who had been convicted of witchcraft.

• By the fall of 1692, 156 people had been accused of witchcraft and jailed in Salem, an economic backwater town in Massachusetts. Of the 156, nineteen had been hung and one crushed to death. With the accusations becoming more widespread and perhaps outlandish, a four-year-old child and Lady Phips, the wife of the Massachusetts Governor were among the accused, the church and the governor stepped in and put an end to the trials.

French and Spanish Outposts: The Spanish focused their attentions on Mexico and Latin America while settlements in New Mexico and Florida languished. For the French the West Indies were valuable possessions; not so much Quebec and Louisiana.

• The fur trade, which the French controlled for much of the sixteenth century, had changed, and revenues declined. New France was an expensive investment.
• The center of France’s New World political economy was in the Caribbean.
• Spanish Florida existed until 1763, when at the end of the French and Indian War, Spain abandoned its Florida colony.

Conquest, Revolt, and Reconquest in New Mexico: Also financially insignificant, Spain’s New Mexico colony was a candidate for abandonment. Like in Florida, the Franciscan missionaries prevailed. Spain was the only European power in the southwest and the Indians there could not play one European power against the other as Indians had done in the east. Nor were there African slaves in New Mexico. When the Pueblo Indians rose up in rebellion in 1680, the survival of New Mexico was in doubt.
• Known as the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, it was the most successful Indian revolt in North America.
• The Pueblos held off the Spanish for thirteen years, but in 1696 it was reconquered and was always precarious.

Conclusion: By the end of the seventeenth century, almost all of the British colonies had developed the political economies that they would maintain until the American Revolution. They were prosperous and had a well-developed middle class. Slavery was the solution to labor shortages. France’s and Spain’s colonies on the other hand were poorly developed, and in New Mexico the best example of Old World social hierarchies was in place.

Analytical reading These questions refer to the passage “Bacon’s Rebellion and the Abandonment of the Middle Ground” on pages 77-78.

1. By beginning the paragraph with “when the revolt came,” the authors suggest that violence between the landed and the landless was bound to happen. Does the evidence in this part of Chapter Four suggest that violence was inevitable? Explain your answer.
2. Did the fact that Nathaniel Bacon was a member of the socially elite in England and Virginia give him additional credibility in gathering supporters to his cause?
3. Was the event dealing with the hog the cause of Bacon’s Rebellion, or was it just the spark that set off the violence? Discuss the conflict environment in which this rebellion occurred.
4. Why didn’t the custom of providing restitution help prevent violence from breaking out this time?

Lecture Strategies
In Chapter Four, England solidified her claim on the Atlantic coastline of North America and Spain proved that her claims on the southeast and southwest were tenuous at best. Building on the concepts you discussed in Chapter Three, overcoming the obstacles of colonization, you now have the opportunity to look at three new English colonies, New York, Pennsylvania, and Carolina, and at a maturing colony, Virginia. The economic theory of mercantilism (introduced in Chapter Two) is expanded to include the Navigation Acts. Whether the Navigation Acts enhanced or retarded colonial trade is an interesting topic for discussion with your students. Social upheavals came along with the economic maturity of the Virginia and the Chesapeake colonies. Bacon’s Rebellion, Leisler’s Rebellion, and Coode’s Rebellion reflect tensions between the advantaged and disadvantaged, and these tensions illustrate the maturing of the colonial economies. The Salem witch trials, a perennial favorite among students, is an interesting study in the anxieties of social change. You could also use Bacon’s Rebellion and King Philip’s War to discuss social, political, and economic change and the need white colonists had for Indians’ land. The evolution of Virginia from a society with slaves to a slave society is the continuation of the topic begun in previous chapters. The Pueblo Revolt can be discussed as an example of ethnocentrism: Spanish priests judged the Pueblo Indians by the Spaniards’ own personal codes of moral behavior and definitions of civilization. The Pueblo Revolt is also an example of native people empowering themselves to do something about their Spanish overlords. The Pueblo Revolt is an interesting example of one people unified against a European power. Unlike the alliances of the Hurons and Algonquins each with their own political and social agendas, for example, the Pueblos were similar both culturally and spiritually and this enhanced their unity. It also enhanced their ability to throw out the Spanish for over a decade.
With the exception of the frontier outposts in Florida and New Mexico, Chapter Four presents a maturing British colonial population whose successes will take them into the next half century.

Supplements: Prentice Hall has developed a number of supplements that can enhance your lectures as well as your students’ comprehension and performance.

Penguin Classics See Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola, editor. Women's Indian Captivity Narratives, edited with an introduction and notes by Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola. New York: Penguin Books, 1998. Here are ten captivity narratives written by women between the years 1682 and 1892. See especially Mary Rowlandson, Hannah Dustan, and Elizabeth Hanson for captivity narratives from the colonial period. See also Olaudah Equiano, The Interesting Narrative and other Writings, edited with an introduction and notes by Vincent Carretta, New York: Penguin Books, 1995. Published in 1789, Equiano's account is among the earliest autobiographical accounts of the colonial slave trade and the effects on its victims. Equiano's slavery spans the period from about 1755 to 1766 but it is also his life story that is interesting.

For a collection of slave narratives, see Henry Louis Gates, Jr., The Classic Slave Narratives, edited with an introduction by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. New York: A Mentor Book, 1987. The first-hand stories of Olaudah Equiano, Mary Prince, Frederick Douglass, and Harriet Jacobs introduce the reader to slavery from the inside (and over the period of American slavery) and more importantly what it means to be free.

American Stories: Biographies in United States History by Katheryn A. Abbott and Patricia Hagler Minter. See Chapter 2, Making an Old World New, 1580-1770, for a biography of John Winthrop and Olaudah Equiano.

Documents Collection see Part Three: Colonial America

- Navigation Act of September 13, 1660
- *Nathaniel Bacon’s Challenge to William Berkeley and the Governor’s Response 1676
- Early French Explorations of the Mississippi River 1673
- Edward Randolph Describes King Philip’s War 1685
- Excerpts From Cotton Mather’s “Memorable Providences, Relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions” 1689
- *William Penn’s Charter of Privileges 1701
- *William Byrd II, Diary 1709
- *Manners and Etiquette in the Eighteenth Century
- “The Storm Arising in the West,” George Washington Delivers a Warning to the French 1753
- The Closing of the Frontier 1763
- The Adventures of Daniel Boone 1769
- *Alexander Falconbridge, The African Slave Trade 1788
- *Olaudah Equiano, The Middle Passage 1788

The documents of particular relevance to this chapter are identified with an asterisk, although previous and subsequent parts have relevant documents.