Free Labor and Slave Labor

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I

Among the key decisions made with the founding of the new nation were policies regarding the desired size of the labor force, the nature of human capital that it would embody, and the amount of the land that would be utilized for productive purposes. In a land that was labor scarce it was considered necessary to attract more population to utilize the surplus of land that existed. Land itself served as a means of attracting labor. The changing magnitude of the labor input to the settlement of what became the U.S. was influenced by legislation, as well as natural forces. The major forms of labor supply were:

- Rates of natural increase of the population, (the difference between fertility and mortality) for European descendents as well as Native-Americans and slave labor.
- Immigration from abroad:
  - of free whites, free or subsidized in families and in groups
  - indentured labor, of white individuals in England and elsewhere in Europe, trading labor time for a set number of years for transport costs
  - convict labor
  - slaves from Africa
- Native-Americans as slaves, free workers, or traders

The basic forms of human capital, in addition to physical labor, will be determined by:

- education
- medical and health practices
- migration-internal and external
- on-the job training at employment

II

Before 1492, and the start of the European settlement of the Americas, the European population density was relatively high, that of the Americas was quite low. And within the Americas population density differed significantly. In the regions including Mexico, the Andean areas, and Brazil the density was considerably higher than in mainland North America, where the numbers of Native-Americans was very low and where European settlement became diffused. The populated areas of Latin America had rather sophisticated societies, with developed agriculture, military force, and slavery. Even after the demographic collapse due primarily to the introduction of European diseases to a population not previously exposed to these diseases, these areas still had a disproportionate large share of the population of the Americas. Of course, after the decline in population the population density in the Americas became even lower compared to Europe than it had been prior to Columbus's arrival.

[TABLE I]

The European settlement of the America's took place in several steps, and with different countries leading in terms of numbers and political controls. Spain and Portugal, were the initial settling nations, leading the nations of Northwest Europe by about one century, going to the most populated and richest areas of the Americas and introducing African slaves into Brazil and Spanish-America. It was only after one hundred years of the Iberian settlements that the British, French, and Dutch arrived in the Americas, generally into the still available areas of the Caribbean and mainland North America. The French and Dutch sent few Europeans – the Dutch being considerably more heavily involved in the East

Indies – and about ninety percent of the migrants to the Dutch and French colonies were slaves purchased in Africa. The British, after their late start, ultimately had the largest number of immigrants, the structure by race and status varying by geographic regions. The colonies in the West Indies attracted few white workers and came to depend on attracting a large number of slaves from Africa, to become primarily sugar producers. This immigration stream occurred most dramatically in the first half-century of British migration, when British migration to the West Indies exceeded that to the mainland. And, unlike the migration to the British West Indies, the migration to the mainland of the whites exceeded that of slaves, even in the southern colonies. This pattern, of predominant white migration was unusual for the pre-nineteenth century Americas, making the thirteen British colonies a somewhat unique region.

[TABLE 2]

As with the other European colonies, those of the British were interested in generating income for the home country, and, to accomplish this, meant acquiring a larger population of productive individuals. This could be accomplished by several types of measures – purchases of slaves from Africa, enslavement of Native-American, attracting free white workers to come by various forms of subsidies, by arrangement for indentured servants, or by acceptance of convicts, among the principal measures. Given the great abundance of land relative to the size of the population, land was often used as the primary means of attracting population. The scarcity of land in Europe made this an attractive measure for Europeans. To take advantage of available land to provide benefits to possible

migrants was, however, not the original British policy introduced in a number of areas, which initially followed European landholding patterns. The Spanish and Portuguese provided large grants to settlers. The French in Quebec carried over the seignorial system from France, while several of the British American colonies followed the precepts of the manorial system from England. These systems, in the thirteen colonies and Canada, however, soon ended, with a movement to smaller, owner-operated, farms.

These colonies, with a high ratio of land to labor, characterized most of the Americas, but they were not the only type of colony settled by Europeans at the time. Outside of the American colonies, colonies such as India and the East Indies had quite high population densities, so high that there was no need to attract more labor, and no need to adopt liberal land policies to attract new workers. Many colonies in Asia and Africa had similarly high population densities, suggesting that rather distinct land policies would be applied in different parts of the world, and the political systems imposed by the Europeans would differ.

With the limited number of Native Americans to enslave or use as free labor, in North America, and the inability to pay the high prices for slaves that Latin American and Caribbean sugar producers could and because of the limited number of slaves sent by Africans in the transatlantic slave trade, the British North Americans had to depend upon white British laborers to provide their labor force. The British Islands main concern in much of this period with overpopulation, so that transatlantic migration was encouraged. Spain, on the other hand, was concerned with the changes in its domestic population and introduced constraints on migration to the New World, while outmigration from France and the Netherlands was also relatively small.

British outmigration in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries took two major forms. There was some free migration, often of religious groups, to the colonies, but more

important in numbers, accounting for an essential three-quarters of migrants, most often to the southern and middle Atlantic states, was the many indentured servants. There were also limited numbers of redemptioners from Germany after 1720. These indenture contracts generally were for four to seven years, and during this period the laborers could be bought and sold. There were, at times, subsidies paid in land or cash to the initial purchasers of these servants, and at the end of the indenture period the laborers were given "freedom dues" of land or cash to establish themselves as free workers or landowners. To encourage transportation of free or indentured labor the colonies could provide land grants, tax exemptions, acceptance of religious tolerance, financial assistance, and easier terms of naturalization and voting privileges; all to make transatlantic settlement more desirable. Not all migrants were considered acceptable, some colonies having restrictions based on religion, generally Catholic and Quaker, and against public charges, poor and indigent immigrants, as well as paupers and criminals. There would be excluded or else required some security or bond. Another source of immigrants from England, often unpopular but amounting to about 50,000, mainly to southern states, were British convicts who served out their term of labor in the colonies. Several colonies limited convicts imports, and, after the Revolution, when given the opportunity to still receive British convicts, this offer was refused by the new republic, leading to the larger, longer term shipment of convicts to Australia.

Two other forms of labor were used. Native-Americans were sometimes enslaved, but these were limited in numbers and were not regarded as a successful labor source. Unlike in Latin America, where they were the major component of the labor force though not generally enslaved legally, few Native-Americans in North America were members of the labor force, either as slaves or as free workers. The other forms of considerable importance in the South were slaves originally purchased from Africa or earlier from the West Indies.

Slave labor was legal in all the colonies, but the major constraint on the numbers arriving were the limited profitability to their owners relative to that obtained from the slaves in the West Indies and Brazil. The crops in North America, commonly grains and livestock, did not have the profitability of those in the rest of the Americas. While slaves were legal in all the Americas and all regions did have some slaves, the overall share of slave arrivals in North America was only about 5 percent of all slaves in the Americas, and the amount of slave labor in commerce there was smaller than elsewhere. Slave labor was of primary importance for crops grown on larger than family-sized farms, but these were much smaller than the sugar plantations in Latin America. The British colonies, at the end of the seventeenth century produced mainly tobacco, then at the middle of the eighteenth century, an expansion into rice production in South Carolina, and, of greatest importance, cotton throughout the South in the nineteenth century, the latter presumably not anticipated by the Founders.

[TABLE 3]

III

There was a significant difference between the rates of growth of the population in the North American colonies and those elsewhere in the Americas. North America, for free whites and black slaves, had rates of natural increase that were quite spectacularly high by any world standard, and this meant that their population numbers greatly exceeded the number of immigrants received or the initial members of the labor force. Thus the major increase of the labor force over time came about from natural increase of the initial arrivals rather than the number of immigrants. Without this high rate of natural increase the growth

of the labor force would have been considerably lower. The U.S. thus had a much larger share of population – white and black—than its share of immigrants, and came to demographically dominate the Americas. To Malthus, the North American white population grew at close to what was thought to be the maximum possible for a people under favorable conditions – available land, and circumstances permitting relatively early and frequent marriages — without leading to a demographic crisis situation. The U.S. slave population, unlike all other slave populations, also grew at a very rapid rate, with many surviving children per female, whereas in the Caribbean and Brazil it was needed to maintain imports of slaves to keep its population from falling. This type of decline was never an issue for North America.

IV

As a new area of colonization, with considerable amounts of still unsettled land, a basic concern of early settlers was to increase the number of potential producers, either as workers or as landowners. Coming relatively late to the settlement process, over a century behind Spain and Portugal, and even for British North America, late compared to the British West Indies, the British could observe what the practices of the others, particularly Spain, had been. The English colonies lacked the large Native-American populations of those in Mexico and South American, even after the depopulation caused there by disease. Also, on the mainland, they initially lacked the climate and soil to produce those marketable crops sufficiently in demand in Europe and were not able to pay the high prices required to purchase the limited number of slaves coming from Africa. The labor force and population in the U.S. would thus consist of fewer Native-Americans and slaves than in most other places in the Americas, with a larger role to be played by European immigrants and their

descendents. As suggested by Malthus, population growth was influenced by the high ratio of land to labor, leading to early marriage and high fertility by those people able to acquire landholdings at a low price, and to a favorable living standard for both the free and enslaved population. The policies introduced to encourage immigration by taking advantage of land availability were highly beneficial to achieving a high rate of population growth, both by attracting new migrants and by permitting early marriage and high rates of childbearing.

[TABLE 4]

An early appraisal of the high rate of population growth in the U.S. was made in 1751 by Benjamin Franklin, with arguments similar to those developed later by Thomas Malthus. The key point to Franklin was the availability and cheapness of land, permitting settlers to own and farm their own land, and leading to high fertility relative to mortality. There were no direct subsidies granted for this natural increase, but a generous land policy did provide favorable conditions for marriage and fertility.

The magnitude of free labor migration and the continued increase reflected the nature of immigration policy. The colonies were long open to migrants, more so than were the colonies of the other settling nations, leading to large inflows and, since there were no restrictions on religious or national origins, open to migrants from diverse countries and religions. It is estimated that the English and Scots accounted for two-thirds of the 1790 population, and the Irish about ten percent, the Germans six percent, and other Northwestern European about six percent. The thirteen colonies each had their own rules regarding immigration and other matters, and it was only after the revolution that central control over migration occurred. Various types of legislation did have some influence on the

size of the inflow, including safety restrictions and space limits on transatlantic vessels imposed by states, and later national policy, and then after Independence the setting of the period of years it would take for immigrants to achieve citizenship and voting rights. Migration patterns included individuals, families and various groups, religious and otherwise, some of whom paid their way in full, although in other cases subsidies in full or in part had been provided.

The Native-Americans, present in quite small numbers relative to those in Latin America, less then one-tenth that number, were sometimes used as slaves, generally purchased from Indian tribes, but the numbers used near home locations as nominally free workers were very limited, and unlike in Latin America, these Native-Americans were not considered to be important quantitatively in the labor force.

As noted, there were two other forms of migrant labor that played a role in settling the mainland. Indentured labor, mainly from the UK, involved a period of four to seven years of labor time (depending on personal characteristics) in exchange for the cost of transportation to the colonies. At the end of the contract period the individual was regarded as a free person, often given some "freedom dues" to help get started as a free worker. In some states the importer of the individual labor was given a cash subsidy or a subsidy in land for contributing to the regions population increase. Redemptioners, mainly from Germany, arrived after the 1720's, came without signed contracts but contracted themselves after arrival to pay their transport costs. The colonies were also the recipients of convicts from England, who served their time as purchased laborers before being freed. This was not always a popular source of labor increase, at least to Benjamin Franklin, who compared convicts to rattlesnakes, to their detriment. When the independent U.S. refused to take in British convicts the British then used them to settle Australia. There also some small number

of domestic convicts who could be used for various types of labor by governments or else hired to private individuals by governments.

The most debated of the sources of labor were the slaves imported from Africa and their rapidly-growing descendents. The slave trade from Africa to the New World had begun with the period of initial Spanish and Portuguese settlement, and the British colonies had basically followed the previous set of legal arrangements developed elsewhere. Slavery was legal throughout the colonies and each colony had some slaves, although the numbers varied considerably, based on conditions related to crop possibilities and the required scale of production. The first colonies to end slavery were in the New England, which had relatively few slaves, starting with Vermont in 1777, and then by 1804 most northern states had legislation ending slavery. The U.S. ended the transatlantic slave trade in 1808, the same year ended by the British (only about 5% of total slave imports) due to their differences in crop and climate conditions from Latin America and the Caribbean, North American slave labor generally worked on small units producing crops such as tobacco but also rice, for export, and they did not directly compete in the production of rice with free white labor. The regulations imposed by the state and colonial governments did distinguish between the slave trade and slavery itself, and, in North America, the slave trade was ended about one half-century before slavery.

Table 3 presented data on slave and free migration and population for the four major regions of the British colonies (including the West Indies), presenting the racial breakdown of the pre-independence migrations and populations. The late settlement of the British mainland by whites, and the relatively limited number of slaves there, are the most striking characteristics of the North America population pattern, as was the relatively high rate of population growth of both whites and blacks and the small number (compared to Latin

America) of Native-Americans, who did not provide much of the North American population or labor force. And while most immigrants came from the British Isles, a higher population came from the other European nations than was the case for the Spanish and other areas of settlement. The British colonies did have fewer restrictions on migrants then did the colonies of other European nations, helping to account for differences in magnitude and in diversity of origins.

V

The concept of human capital, as defined most recently by economists, relates to forces that increase the productivity of labor and/or its well-being. The four most important categories of human capital are considered to be education, health, migration, and on-the-job training which can be reflected by age-income profiles. Education in the colonies was widely available, from both secular and religious forces, compared to the other colonial regions where education lagged for several centuries. Relative to most European nations, the colonies provided more schooling for both males and females. There were variations in regard to who organized schools, religious and secular and who paid for education, but colonial levels of literacy were, by world standards, quite high, particularly for women. The sense of obligation for education developing out of the colonial period was indicated by the fact that 7 of 16 state constitutions in 1800 mentioned the provision of education, and it rose to 13 out of 23 by 1820. States such as Massachusetts had required domestic education laws by 1642 and required schooling by 1647. By 1671 all New England States but Rhode Island

had compulsory education legislation. Most other states had education systems in place before the Revolution and these were most often formed by Protestant churches. It is estimated that Massachusetts had a literacy rate for males of about 60% in 1650 and 90% by 1789, compared to female rates of 30% and 50%, respectively, rates above those for other states. These literacy rates in New England colonies compared favorably with those in Europe and Latin America. The Spanish colonies devoted most educational expenditures to the university level, while the North American colonies spent considerably more at the primary level, in addition to funding some colleges. Between 1636 and 1769, in the thirteen colonies, there were nine colleges formed, each with some religious affiliation, all of which still remain in existence. The number of colleges increased to about 29 by 1829.

While there were few direct government expenditures by the colonies on healthcare, several colonies did introduce provisions for quarantine and vaccination (e.g. Massachusetts in 1641 and 1647 and Connecticut after 1663) most frequently as part of the fight against smallpox. The first hospital which handled private and poor patients, opened in Philadelphia in 1751, and the first medical school opened in Philadelphia in 1765. Municipal boards of health were formed by the 1790's in several states to aid the flow of information on public health related issues. The concern of some colonies with the health on immigrant vessels meant benefits not only for immigrants but also for those already resident, including former immigrants. The positive advantages of health in the colonies was indicated by the high life expectation and the greater heights of the population in the period of settlement.

Migration, both internationally and internally, often meant movement to areas of higher income, raising individual incomes as well as national output. We have discussed international migration, and will say more about it below. In the pre-Revolutionary period migration controls, both internal and external, were colonial decisions. Important in the

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were restrictions on outmigration from several European nations, either limits based on the migration of entire populations, or, as in the case of Britain, only of skilled mechanics. There were relatively few specific restrictions in the USA on intercolonial or interstate migration. There were, in some locations, restrictions regarding pauper and residence parish inflows, as in the English Poor Laws, and rules about times of residence needed for voting. In the nineteenth century there were laws concerning the movement of free blacks and of slaves, based on state laws, but in general, there were no restrictions for whites.

VI

The Constitution contained several discussions of policies that had a significant influence on the magnitude of labor supplies and on the nature of human capital. Some of the measures described were part of the Constitution, other measures were due to legislation by Congress at the national level, and some reflected legislation at the state level; some but not all of the new states followed the same policies.

The discussions at the Constitutional Convention included the setting of rules regarding immigration to be imposed by the national government. Except for slaves, there were basically no provisions on population inflows and their sources. A major discussion which influenced immigration concerned the period of time to achievement of citizenship, an issue which did lead to several changes in subsequent decades. Later, in 1798, some limit was imposed permitting the deportation of enemy aliens at time of war, as well as preventing aliens from entering. There were discussions to limit immigrants from monarchies as well as to limit land ownership and voting by recent migrants, but these attempts were not successful. It was believed that subsidies to immigrants were not necessary, since, as Hamilton argued, the favorable economic conditions, including the prospect of higher

incomes, lower taxes, "greater personal independence", and the "equality of religious privileges," as well as the availability of land in the U.S., would serve to attract labor from abroad.

[TABLE 5]

In his 1791 Report on Manufactures Alexander Hamilton pointed to the probability of immigration from Europe as a means to keep agricultural employment high, while at the same time permitting a movement of labor into manufactures. This development was also to be aided by attracting women and children into the labor force, as in Great Britain. This policy of open immigration was maintained for those not diseased whose entry was limited after 1838, while after 1891 constraints due to literacy, insanity, and paupers were introduced. The first limitations on immigration by nationality came with restrictions of Chinese immigrants in 1882. There were also limits on the form of contract labor that was introduced in 1864, and reversed in 1885. The major changes in immigration policy, by numbers and by sources, came in the twentieth century. Throughout the nineteenth century the U.S. received the largest share of immigration from Europe, and this immigration accounted for up to one-third of overall U.S. population growth. In the early antebellum period, the largest population of immigrants came from Ireland with large numbers also from Great Britain and Germany. The years 1847-1854 had the highest ratio of immigrants to population of any period in U.S. history.

There was no mention of indentured servitude in the Constitution or in Hamilton's Report. Perhaps this was because it seemed to have lost its importance with the Revolution. Nevertheless, some indentured labor did persist into the 1810's and 1820's. Then due to some combination of legal changes in the U.S. and higher European incomes, indentured

labor became limited as a source of labor. With the U.S. decline, indentured servitude faded from the world scene, only to be revived with movements to the West Indies and elsewhere from India and China after the 1850's, following the ending of slavery in many parts of the world. In the U.S. there was, after the Civil War, attempts to bring in contract labor from Europe, mainly as strikebreakers, but these were limited in number, and the recruitment of this form of contract labor did end with the passage of the Foran Act prohibiting contract labor in 1885.

Convicts were also not mentioned in the Constitution. The British did want to resume sending convicts to the new nation, but this was not acceptable to the U.S. and after a brief period of storage on barges in the Thames they became the settlers of Australia. There was a particular role for convicts described in the Northwest Ordinance, since those convicted of crimes could be considered involuntary servants, a provision carried forward in the Thirteenth Amendment. Convict labor by residents did surface as an issue in later years, generally involving the performance of harsh work (particularly in the South) as a form of punishment whether working for governments or through rental arrangements with private individuals.

Similarly, little was said at this time about Native-American labor, and this remained a limited source of the overall labor supply in North America. The issues related to Native-Americans debated at the time of the Constitution concerned Indian reservations, and later, the impact of the westward movement on land policy, not the influence on the labor supplied.

It was regarding slavery that major constitutional debates took place, particularly that concerning the international slave trade. The key provision in the Constitution was that the slave trade could not be ended for at least 20 years, and a limit was placed on the tariff

that could be imposed on slave imports. As was expected, the slave trade was ended in 1808, the same year as for Great Britain, a few years after the ending of the Danish slave trade. To some, closing the slave trade would mean, eventually, the ending of slavery, though the specific time-span was not spelled out. The timing and arguments of the relation between the end of the slave trade and slavery was similar to that of the British. In regard to slavery itself there was not a constitutional debate, and this was a matter left to state governments. There were, even before the end of the Revolution, several states that ended slavery and also the slave trade, albeit with some differences in specific provisions. Vermont, in 1777, was the first state to end slavery, although with some period of apprenticeship. This freed, at most, 19 slaves. Within the next decade, New Hampshire and Massachusetts had, in theory, immediate emancipation, but legal issues meant some delay in the time of its accomplishment. Pennsylvania (1780), Rhode Island (1784), Connecticut (1784), New York (1799), and New Jersey (1804) passed legislation that freed those born after a specified date, subject to a period of apprenticeship, but did not free those already enslaved. This meant, in effect, that most of the costs of emancipation were born by slaves, and not by taxpayers or slave owners. By 1804 state legislation in all of the Northern states to end slavery had passed, although because of the graduation provisions, slavery was still existing in some northern states in the census into the 1840's. The Northwest Ordinance had limited the legality of slavery in the North, but not the South, and it was not until the Thirteenth Amendment that the national government provided for the national ending of slavery.

VII

Education was not discussed in the Constitution, although the Northwest Ordinance did provide some set asides from land sales to go towards educational expenditures, with 1/16 from land sales to be used for common schools, and two townships in each new state for colleges. Discussions of education were mainly at the state and local levels, which had the responsibility for determining who would organize the schools (secular or religious), the mix of fees and taxes, and what taxes could be collected for this purpose. As seen by literacy and enrollment rates, educational expenditures and literacy in the U.S. were quite high by world standards. Compulsory education was not widespread until the end of the nineteenth century, but it did not seem necessary for the achievement of high rates of enrollment in most states.

Medical and health care was primarily a state and local, not federal, function before the twentieth century. One exception was the creation in 1798 of hospitals for merchant seamen, basically a continuation of earlier British practices regarding the navy.

Until the 1880's there were no general restrictions on foreign migration, although there was some use of the timing of citizenship and voting rights to influence the process of migration. The Constitution provided no limit on internal migration, but several states had laws to prevent to admission of slaves and of free blacks, and also did prohibit the entry of some undesired groups. There were no federal limits on the interstate slave trade between states where slavery was legal, and none on white internal migration.

Indeed, Lincoln's policy to limit and then end slavery in the U.S. was based on the prohibition of slavery in territories. Presumably by increasing the ratio of labor to land in the existing areas slave prices would ultimately fall and slavery become unprofitable, although Lincoln thought that this might take up to about one hundred years.

Internal migration was encouraged by a land policy that made land more easily accessible to settlers of smaller farms. Over time, the price per acre fell, the minimum size of

land to be purchased fell, and legislation regarding squatters' rights and graduated prices for lands unsold for long periods made for easier acquisition. This meant that the pace of growth of eastern manufacturers was slowed, but the steady inflow of immigrants and the use of women and children meant that any declines in labor in the east were not marked. Debates on land policy also had political implications, since population affected the amount of representation by states.

The introduction of labor standards regarding ages, hours, and conditions of work at the state level did not occur until the mid-nineteenth century, and then mainly for women and children. Federally-based controls, such as worker's compensation, came even later, at the start of the twentieth century.

VIII Postscript

The most pronounced characteristic of U.S. immigration policy was the absence of any major constraints on free migration until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These were no limits on the total number allowed into the country, as would be the case after 1920, and, also, no constraints based upon ethnicity or nationality, except for the ending of slave imports from Africa and elsewhere after 1808. There had been some discussions at the state level regarding restrictions of migrants from various countries and religions, as well, based on arguments about the interests of population homogeneity, particularly regarding imports of slaves from Africa.

What might have been the result if either type of restriction, in magnitude or of a specific group on immigration, had been achieved at the time of Independence? If the composition of immigrants was constrained, no doubt the reduced number of slave imports could have influenced the nature of southern production of plantation crops, although to what extent is somewhat unclear. After the ending of slavery whites increased the production of

upland cotton, and this could have been undertaken earlier if necessary. Probably rice and sugar productions would have declined, but neither was a central crop for the Southern economy.

The major discussion concerns what would have happened if the total number of immigrants was reduced. A variant of this debate took place in the late nineteenth century when Francis A. Walker, the first president of the American Economic Association argued that increased immigration would lead to a decline in fertility of the native-born, and, presumably overall population growth of those already resident. This would reduce the average quality of the stock of human capital. One mechanism would be that the increased number of immigrants would increase the labor supply and lower wages and thus economically-induce population growth. While overall population could be maintained, the composition would be changed. Alternatively if immigration is reduced, it is possible to argue that population would be reduced, to the extent that domestic population growth is not directly influenced by the number of migrants. A lower population could mean a more limited land settlement and greater urbanization, slowing agricultural growth while increasing density in older regions where limited numbers increased wages.

Immigration could be limited by direct action or by policies to increase the difficulty of obtaining migrants by raising the price of land, as suggested by Wakefield and Carey. These measures would spur urban industry and growth at the expense of limiting agricultural development and land settlements.

Table 1

THE ESTIMATED DISTRIBUTION OF THE ABORIGINAL AMERICAN POPULATION, C. 1492

North America (the U.S., Canada, Alaska, and Greenland)	4,400,000
Mexico	21,400,000
Central America	5,650,000
Caribbean	5,850,000
Central Andes	11,500,000
Lowland South America	8,500,000

Source: William Denevan, ed., The Native Population in the Americas in 1492 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1976), p. 291.

Table 1 European Directed Transatlantic Migration, 1500–1760, by European Nation and Continent of Origin[a]

Period and country	(1) Africans arriving in the New World, by region		(2) Europeans leaving each nation for New World (net)		(3) Total flow of migrants to New World (col.1 + col.2)		(4) Flow of Africans relative to Europeans (col.1 / col.2)
	in thousands	*in percent*	*in thousands*	*in percent*	*in thousands*	*in percent*	*in percent*
1500–1580							
Spain	45	77.6	139	59.9	184	63.4	0.32
Portugal	13	22.4	93	40.1	106	36.6	0.14
Britain	0	—	0	—	0	—	0
Total	58	100.0	232	100.0	290	100.0	0.25
1580–1640							
Spain	289	59.7	188	43.7	477	52.2	1.54
Portugal	181	37.4	110	25.6	291	31.8	1.65
France	2	0.4	4	0.9	6	0.7	0.50
Netherlands	8	1.7	2	0.5	10	1.1	4.00
Britain	4	0.8	126	29.3	130	14.2	0.03
Total	484	100.0	430	100.0	914	100.0	1.13
1640–1700							
Spain	141	18.4	158	30.7	299	23.3	0.89
Portugal	225	29.3	50	9.7	275	21.5	4.50
France	75	9.8	45	8.8	130	10.1	1.67
Netherlands	49	6.4	13	2.5	62	4.8	3.77
Britain	277	36.1	248	48.2	525	41.6	1.12
Total	767	100.0	514	100.0	1,281	100.0	1.49
1700–1760							
Spain	271	10.5	193	21.7	464	13.3	1.40
Portugal	768	29.7	270	30.3	1,038	29.8	2.84
France	414	16.0	51	5.7	465	13.4	8.12
Netherlands	123	4.8	5	0.6	128	3.7	24.60
Britain	1,013	39.1	372	41.8	1,385	39.8	2.72
Total	2,589	100.0	891	100.0	3,480	100.0	2.91
1500–1760							
Spain	746	19.1	678	32.8	1,424	23.9	1.10
Portugal	1,187	30.5	523	25.3	1,710	28.7	2.27
France	491	12.6	100	4.8	591	9.9	4.91
Netherlands	180	4.6	20	1.0	200	3.4	9.00
Britain	1,249	33.2	746	36.3	2,040	34.2	1.73
Total	3,898	100.0	2,067	100.0	5,965	100.0	1.89

Source: Eltis (1999).

a. These now-published estimates include some minor adjustments to the original estimates prepared by Eltis, which we cite in earlier papers.

Table 3. Patterns of Net Migration to Categories of British Colonies

	Destination of migrants							
	New England		*Middle Atlantic*		*Southern*		*West Indies*	
Ethnic group and period	*in thousands*	*row percent*	*in thousands*	*row percent*	*in thousands*	*row percent*	*in thousands*	*row percent*
Whites								
1630–1680	28	11.0	4	1.6	81	31.9	141	55.5
1680–1730	–4	–1.8	45	19.9	111	49.1	74	32.7
1730–1780	–27	–10.7	101	40.1	136	54.0	42	16.7
Total, 1630–1780	–3	–0.4	150	20.5	328	44.8	257	35.1
Blacks								
1650–1680	0	—	0	—	5	3.7	130	96.3
1680–1730	2	0.5	5	0.9	64	12.0	461	86.7
1730–1780	–6	–0.9	–1	– 0.2	150	23.4	497	77.7
Total, 1650–1780	–4	–0.3	4	0.3	219	16.8	1088	83.2
Total								
1630–1680	28	7.2	4	1.0	86	22.1	271	69.7
1680–1730	–2	–0.3	50	6.6	175	23.1	535	70.6
1730–1780	–33	–3.7	100	11.2	286	32.1	539	60.4
Total, 1630–1780	–7	–0.3	154	7.6	547	26.8	1345	66.0

Source: Galenson (1995).

Table 4. The Distribution and Composition of Population in New World Economies
In percent

	Composition of population			
Colonial region and year	*White*	*Black*	*Indian*	*Share in New World population*
Spanish America				
1570	1.3	2.5	96.3	83.5
1650	6.3	9.3	84.4	84.3
1825	18.0	22.5	59.5	55.2
1935	35.5	13.3	50.4	30.3
Brazil				
1570	2.4	3.5	94.1	7.6
1650	7.4	13.7	78.9	7.7
1825	23.4	55.6	21.0	11.6
1935	41.0	35.5	23.0	17.1
United States and Canada				
1570	0.2	0.2	99.6	8.9
1650	12.0	2.2	85.8	8.1
1825	79.6	16.7	3.7	33.2
1935	89.4	8.9	1.4	52.6

Source: Engerman and Sokoloff (1997).

Table 5
Immigration Volume and Rates

Years	Average Yearly Total - All Countries	Immigration Rates (Per 1000 Population)	Percent of Average Yearly Total			
			Great Britain	Ireland	Scandinavia and Other NW Europe	Germany
1630-1700	2,200	----	----	----	----	----
1700-1780	4,325	----	----	----	----	----
1780-1819	9,900	----	----	----	----	----
1820-1831	14,538	1.3	22	45	12	8
1832-1846	71,916	4.3	16	41	9	27
1847-1854	334,506	14.0	13	45	6	32
1855-1864	160,427	5.2	25	28	5	33

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