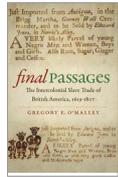


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Final Passages: The Intercolonial Slave Trade of British America, 1619–1807

Gregory E. O'Malley

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. The North American Periphery of the Caribbean Slave Trade, ca. 1700–1763

Gregory E. O'Malley

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[–] Abstract and Keywords

This chapter focuses on the British slave trade which was centered in the Caribbean during the period 1700–1763, while North America's colonies remained on the periphery. From 1701 to 1775, more than 1.5 million enslaved Africans were delivered by British traders to the Americas. Over 80 percent of these slaves disembarked from the Atlantic crossing in the Caribbean, compared to only about 16 percent (equivalent to more or less 250,000) who landed on the North American mainland. This discrepancy suggests that sugar occupied a central place in the British slave system. The chapter examines three types of slave-trading relationships that linked the West Indies and North American colonies: deliveries from the islands to slave-trading entrepôts on the mainland, deliveries to northern colonies that were less dependent on enslaved labor, and deliveries to southern backwaters with a growing desire for slaves but not enough money to pay for them.

Keywords: slave trade, Caribbean, North America, colonies, Africans, slaves, sugar, West Indies

Negroes may be said to be the Bait proper for catching a Carolina Planter, as certain as Beef to catch a Shark.—Anonymous, Charleston, 1738

We are under a Necessity to buy the refuse, refractory, and distemper'd Negroes, brought from other Governments. —George Burrington, North Carolina, 1733

To be Sold for Cash or Jamaica Fish, Two likely Negro Boys

—Advertisement, Boston, 1765

In the eighteenth century, the British slave trade reached its awful apogee, but North American colonies remained on the margins of a British colonial slave system centered in the Caribbean. From 1701 to 1775, British traders delivered just over 1.5 million African people to the Americas as slaves. More than 80 percent of them disembarked from the Atlantic crossing in the Caribbean, whereas only about 16 percent (~250,000) landed on the North American mainland. This discrepancy reflects the primacy of sugar in the British slave system but also overstates it. Far more Africans were indeed put to work on Britain's sugar islands than on the British mainland, but a significant portion of the people landing in the British Caribbean would not stay there. By the eighteenth century, a systematic, routinized network of intercolonial trade dispersed people outward from the British Caribbean. Some left the British Empire altogether, but within the empire, the most significant route of this intercolonial trade linked the Caribbean heart of the slave system with its North American periphery. From 1701 to 1775, thousands of intercolonial voyages carried nearly 50,000 enslaved African people from the Caribbean to North America—accounting for 1 in 6 African immigrants to the mainland. This robust intercolonial trade is somewhat surprising: with the British emerging as world leaders in the slave trade, why did transatlantic traders not supply all North American colonies with captives directly from Africa? Of course, many transatlantic traders did exactly that, with Virginia's James River and Charleston, South Carolina, becoming particularly important centers of direct importation. Nonetheless, direct African trade to North America did not fully (p.172) meet demand, so the intercolonial trade from the Caribbean actually grew even as direct African arrivals increased.¹

This continued importance of Caribbean sources for North America's African immigrants hinged upon the mainland's economic development as a periphery of the Caribbean sugar complex. With Britain's sugar islands generating staggering wealth and increasingly specializing on cultivating cane, many North American colonies found economic niches in selling provisions and supplies to the Caribbean. The New England colonies sent salted fish, livestock, and timber; mid-Atlantic settlements earned the name "bread colonies" for shipments of flour and other grains; Chesapeake planters outside the prime tobacco regions raised corn and livestock for the Caribbean; the Carolinas exported naval stores and livestock. All of these regions received sugar, rum, and tropical fruits in exchange. Including transshipments of African laborers in such commerce was no major leap. As William Byrd had done in the Chesapeake–West Indian trade of the late seventeenth century, other merchants in a wider range of British

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colonial ports would do in the eighteenth: monitor the prices of goods in various colonies, seek opportunities for profitable exchange, and trade African people when it seemed advantageous. Meanwhile, the presence of North American traders selling provisions and supplies in Caribbean ports only increased the allure of such markets for transatlantic slave traders. They could not only count on the sugar islands for the wealthiest plantation owners with the largest labor needs, but they could also count on the strong sugar economy (built upon slave labor) to draw North American traders to the islands.²

(p.173) Although most North American colonies provisioned the Caribbean, their connections to the islands, and to the trade in African people, were distinct. This chapter sketches three types of slave-trading relationships connecting the West Indies and North American colonies: deliveries from the islands to slave-trading entrepôts on the mainland, deliveries to northern colonies less dependent on enslaved labor, and deliveries to southern backwaters with burgeoning desire for slaves but little capital to pay for them. The organization of such commerce, and the ethnic and demographic mix of the captives it carried, varied in accordance with the type of North American market being targeted. An intercolonial trader incorporated slave trading into his business differently based on whether he targeted a place like Charleston, like Philadelphia, or like Edenton, North Carolina.

For African people arriving in the Caribbean, the patterns of this traffic had important implications. Centralization through hubs was efficient for traders and the economy—just as it is for modern passenger airlines and shipping companies—but for captives caught in the commercial migration, the complex network of Atlantic trade made for convoluted, multistage journeys with sorting and separations at each stage. The majority remained at the island where they arrived, especially young men, whom owners and overseers of sugar plantations preferred. Children faced higher odds of journeys to the northernmost British colonies; young women might be chosen for ventures to developing regions where planters valued fertility or lower prices; older captives were often sent to economically marginal colonies where prospective slaveholders had few options. All of this sorting increased the likelihood that kinship, cultural, and linguistic ties severed after the Atlantic crossing.³

(p.174) ■ The least intuitive of the intercolonial slave trades linking the Caribbean and North America were the routes to colonies that also drew people directly from Africa—namely, Virginia, South Carolina, and Maryland. As these colonies became regular targets of traders from Africa in the eighteenth century, the transatlantic deliveries did not render intercolonial shipments obsolete. Intercolonial merchants showed remarkable willingness to compete against direct African trade. In fact, Virginia and South Carolina not only led the British mainland colonies in importing people directly from Africa but also continued to import the most captives from the Caribbean (Tables 8 and 9). Intercolonial deliveries did not keep pace with transatlantic arrivals, fluctuating in reaction to the transatlantic trade's volume and the state of local economies, but intercolonial arrival in Virginia and South Carolina remained considerable nonetheless. Maryland, meanwhile, occupied something of an intermediate position between the primary slave importing colonies of North America and the more marginal territories. The smaller Chesapeake colony drew captives from transatlantic traders with some regularity, but since traders from Africa targeted South Carolina and Virginia more frequently, Maryland supplemented the direct trade with a higher proportion of arrivals from the Caribbean (Table 10).

European traders in Africa acquired captives at vastly cheaper prices than intercolonial merchants could find in the Caribbean, so the persistence of intercolonial slave trading to Virginia, South Carolina, and Maryland in the eighteenth century involved factors other than cost. Nor can a dependence on exporting provisions to the Caribbean entirely explain the sustained transshipments because these colonies did not rely on that commerce to the same degree as their neighbors. Virginia, South Carolina, and Maryland led the British mainland in importing Africans because they also led in the production of staples for export to Europe. Three considerations, however, encouraged intercolonial traders to compete with the so-called "Guineamen" in North America's largest markets for enslaved laborers: First, intercolonial traders possessed an advantage in the proximity of their markets of supply and demand, which allowed timelier knowledge of market conditions. Second, although the Virginia, Maryland, and South Carolina economies depended less on the export of provisions to the Caribbean than some neighboring colonies, this provision trade still formed a considerable part of their commerce. Chesapeake planters grew wheat and corn and raised livestock on lands ill **(p.175)**

TABLE 8. Estimated Numbers of African Captives Arriving in Virginia, 1701–1765

Year	Enslaved Africans directly from Africa	Enslaved Africans via the Caribbean	Total	% from the Caribbean
1701–1705	4,500	275	4,775	6
1706–1710	5,525	250	5,775	4
1711–1715	975	600	1,575	38
1716–1720	7,150	1,625	8,775	19
1721–1725	6,750	675	7,425	9
1726–1730	11,125	300	11,425	3
1731–1735	10,600	725	11,325	6
1736–1740	11,700	650	12,350	5
1741–1745	5,625	750	6,375	12
1746–1750	4,650	1,575	6,225	25
1751–1755	8,150	750	8,900	8
1756–1760	3,500	50	3,550	1
1761–1765	7,525	225	7,750	3
TOTAL	87,775	8,450	96,225	9

Sources: Figures for direct transatlantic migration derive from the *Voyages* website, but that site presents estimates of African arrivals by region (in this case, the Chesapeake) rather than by individual colony. To derive an estimate for Virginia alone, I analyzed the raw data in *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* on documented shipments to Virginia and Maryland (<http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1701&yearTo=1765&njslptmp=2100021100>, accessed May 2011) to calculate Virginia's proportion of the documented arrivals in the Chesapeake for each five-year period. I then assumed that Virginia received the same proportion of the estimated total arrivals in the Chesapeake in the same period (<http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1701&yearTo=1765&disembarkation=202>, accessed May 2011). Estimates of intercolonial trade derive from Gregory E. O'Malley, "Beyond the Middle Passage: Slave Migration from the Caribbean to North

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America, 1619–1807,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., LXVI (2009), 141.

(p.176)

TABLE 9. Estimated Numbers of African Captives Arriving in South Carolina, 1701–1765

Year	Enslaved Africans directly from Africa	Enslaved Africans via the Caribbean	Total	% from the Caribbean
1701–1705		625	625	100
1706–1710	225	625	850	74
1711–1715	775	625	1,400	45
1716–1720	1,450	875	2,325	38
1721–1725	3,025	425	3,450	12
1726–1730	4,825	500	5,325	9
1731–1735	13,825	875	14,700	6
1736–1740	14,050	225	14,275	2
1741–1745	875	125	1,000	13
1746–1750	2,125	300	2,425	12
1751–1755	7,675	2,275	9,950	23
1756–1760	14,450	1,275	15,725	8
1761–1765	18,100	2,500	20,600	12
TOTAL	81,400	11,250	92,650	12

Sources: Figures for direct transatlantic migration derive from the *Voyages* website, but that site presents estimates of African arrivals by region (in this case, the Carolinas—/Georgia) rather than by individual colony. To derive an estimate for South Carolina alone, I analyzed the raw data on North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia (<http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1701&yearTo=1765&mjslptmp=21200.21300.21400,accessedMay2011>) to calculate South Carolina’s proportion of documented arrivals in the region for each five-year period (100 percent, in most cases). I then assumed South Carolina received the same proportion of the estimated total arrivals in the region in the same period (<http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1701&yearTo=1765&disembarkation=203,accessedMay2011>). Estimates of intercolonial trade derive from Gregory E. O’Malley, “Beyond the Middle Passage: Slave Migration from the Caribbean to North America, 1619–1807,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., LXVI (2009), 142.

(p.177)

TABLE 10. Estimated Numbers of African Captives Arriving in Maryland, 1701–1765

Year	Enslaved Africans directly from Africa	Enslaved Africans via the Caribbean	Total	% from the Caribbean
1701–1705	1,075	250	1,325	19
1706–1710	1,700	250	1,950	13
1711–1715	0	300	300	100
1716–1720	900	800	1,700	47
1721–1725	1,375	350	1,725	20
1726–1730	2,325	150	2,475	6
1731–1735	2,450	350	2,800	13
1736–1740	3,625	325	3,950	8
1741–1745	1,800	250	2,050	12
1746–1750	0	525	525	100
1751–1755	1,000	200	1,200	17
1756–1760	1,950	75	2,025	4
1761–1765	1,975	225	2,200	10
TOTAL	20,175	4,050	24,225	17

Sources: Figures for direct transatlantic migration derive from the *Voyages* website, but that site presents estimates of African arrivals by region (in this case, the Chesapeake) rather than by individual colony. To derive an estimate for Maryland alone, I analyzed the raw data in *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, on Virginia and Maryland (<http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1701&yearTo=1765&mjslptmp=21000.21100,accessedMay2011>) to calculate Maryland’s proportion of documented arrivals in the Chesapeake for each five-year period. I then assumed Maryland received the same proportion of the estimated total arrivals in the Chesapeake in the same period (<http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1701&yearTo=1765&disembarkation=202,accessedNovember2011>). Estimates of intercolonial trade derive from Gregory E. O’Malley, “Beyond the Middle Passage: Slave Migration from the Caribbean to North America, 1619–1807,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., LXVI (2009), 146.

(p.178) suited to tobacco. South Carolina rice sold not only in Britain and southern Europe but also fed the enslaved populations of the Caribbean. Carolinians supplemented the grain with livestock. As a return trade from the Caribbean, enslaved people offered a logical choice. Third, intercolonial slave traders were rarely specialists; they were general merchants for whom the slave trade complemented other activities. They paid more for captives in American markets than their rivals paid for them in Africa, but they were willing to accept slimmer profit margins because selling African people facilitated other commerce. The trade in enslaved people, intercolonial merchants realized, opened other avenues of trade.⁴

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To exploit their proximity to the American markets for enslaved laborers, intercolonial traders monitored variations in local economies and fluctuations in the transatlantic slave trade. In any given year, a colony might fail to receive its usual number of Africans or see local demand spike because of a great harvest. Sometimes the resulting price discrepancies lasted for years, as transatlantic traders adapted slowly to the economic emergence of a new colony (or a new staple within a colony). In 1738, an anonymous writer to the *South-Carolina Gazette* explained that merchants had delivered thousands of Africans annually to South Carolina over the previous decade owing to a “much greater Price here than in any other Part of America.” These high prices attracted transatlantic traders, to be sure, but they also allowed for profitable intercolonial trade. “I have known many Slaves bought in Barbadoes, etc. and sent here for Sale,” the letter to the *Gazette* continued, “which have been sold with good Profit.” Apparently transatlantic traders did not always find or saturate the markets where prices were highest; their slow reaction to changed market conditions presented opportunities for their intercolonial counterparts.⁵

Charleston again offered such an opportunity in the 1750s and 1760s. The expansion of indigo to supplement rice cultivation pushed up demand (and prices) for African labor in South Carolina, and Governor James Glen noted in 1754 that intercolonial merchants seized the moment. “As Negroes are sold at higher Prices here than in any part of the King’s Dominions,” he reported, “we have them sent from Barbadoes, the Leeward Islands, Jamaica, Virginia and New York.” Glen wrote partly to pat himself on the back by showing that “this Province is in a flourishing condition,” but import records reveal the (p.179) surge of transshipments was no figment of his self-aggrandizing imagination. Throughout the 1740s, voyages transshipping Africans to Charleston had numbered in the single digits annually, with none at all in some years (even after the end of King George’s War in 1748). In the 1750s, the high prices in South Carolina brought increased intercolonial deliveries alongside the transatlantic trade’s acceleration.⁶

Sustained economic growth such as South Carolina experienced in the 1750s could create an opening for intercolonial trade over several years, but other market fluctuations had narrower windows, making them particularly suited to intercolonial traders operating over short distances. For example, intercolonial traders could time voyages for periods within the year when enslaved people sold to greatest advantage. The slave trade was more seasonal to North America than the Caribbean because northern ports could be obstructed by ice in the winter and because even mainland planters farther south avoided buying slaves in the colder months, fearing mortality among their investments. But once the spring growing season arrived, demand for new slaves in North American plantation colonies was strong. As such, South Carolina merchant John Guerard explained in 1754 that shipments arriving in the spring “come in at the best Time as the Planters have just Pitch’d their Crops and will give the more as the Negroes will be of Greater Service in hoeing thro’ the whole Season.”⁷

Traders to Africa faced many constraints on their ability to time arrivals in America with precision, such as irregular supplies in Africa and variable speeds crossing the Atlantic, so intercolonial traders from the Caribbean often achieved the coveted first delivery of the season. At the end of February 1757, South Carolina’s first captives of the year arrived from Barbados rather than Africa, aboard the snow *Hannah*, prompting Charleston (p.180) merchants Austin and Laurens to report with envy on the high prices this group of people fetched. The strong local economy and lack of African arrivals over the winter “has given such spirits to our Planters” that “when there was a sale of 200 Negroes from Barbados, mostly Calabars, they [buyers] were induced to give [£]280, [£]270, and £260 for the men that were tolerable.” Such high prices for “Calabars”—captives from the Bight of Biafra, the African region South Carolina planters least preferred—led Austin and Laurens to predict, “The first Gambias that arrive we expect the prime Men will bring £300.” In Carolina, Senegambia was the favored source of enslaved people. Regardless of ethnicity, timing was crucial. That the *Hannah* completed its venture from Barbados to South Carolina at precisely the moment when demand peaked in the Lowcountry was no coincidence. Intercolonial traders enjoyed greater control over their timing than transatlantic traders.⁸

In some years, the end of the season for deliveries also presented an opportunity. If transatlantic arrivals fell short of expectations, planters could get desperate toward harvest time. In May 1755, Austin and Laurens notified Caribbean correspondents that the only vessels to reach South Carolina from Africa that year had delivered “but a trifle to the number wanted.” As a result, Austin and Laurens bemoaned a missed opportunity to transship captives at the beginning of the season but anticipated another chance toward the end of the year. They complained to partners in Saint Kitts that “Could you have sent 60 or 70 fine Slaves ... as you propos’d We think we must have render’d an agreeable Account of them.” Looking forward, however, “If we see two or three months hence that our Imports are but small, it may be worth while to take a share with you in One or two hundred to be here in the month of October and November.” To compete with transatlantic traders, intercolonial merchants monitored markets carefully and rushed deliveries when prices spiked—or, better yet, when they anticipated such a peak.⁹

When timing was not ideal, traders to regions that also imported people directly from Africa simply opted out. John Guerard jumped in and out of the intercolonial slave trade between the Caribbean and South Carolina as the moment dictated. With various partners in England, Guerard invested in (p.181) numerous trading ventures, including a number of transatlantic slaving voyages. One venture that Guerard financed repeatedly, with his partner William Jolliff of Poole, was a four-legged trade that sent English manufactures to Madeira, wine from Madeira to Barbados, enslaved Africans or Caribbean produce to Charleston, and Carolina produce back to England. The route remained the same whether the vessel carried Africans on the third leg or not. People became interchangeable commodities with rum or sugar. On such a four-legged journey in 1752, the captain of Guerard’s ship *Molly*, Richard Watts, purchased one hundred captives from the ship *Africa* in Barbados for transshipment to South Carolina. But in 1754, when Captain Watts was completing the circuit again, Guerard wrote to him in Barbados with far less enthusiasm about slave transshipment to Charleston. Guerard pondered what

might answer best from Barbados about which I am greatly at a Loss seeing we are so over Stock with Rum ... ; Muscovado Sugar Sells at [moderate prices] but I reckon it is Dear [expensive] at the Islands; Negroes I imagine will also fall in Price [in South Carolina] as the Planters Produce here is now Lower than has been for a few Years Past.

Befuddled, Guerard left the decision to Watts as the man on site, but his thinking illustrates that his primary consideration was just the relative prices of goods—including enslaved people—in Barbados and Charleston. Whether South Carolina planters wanted slaves was not the question; surely they did, but Guerard feared that low prices for Carolina’s crops would keep planters from paying enough for Africans to make transshipment profitable. Since Guerard was not a slave-trading specialist, he bowed out. Virginia merchant Charles Stuart acted similarly, writing to correspondents in many colonies in 1752 and “advising that negroes are in great demand,” only to report the following year, “The great number of Slaves imported last year ... almost drained the Country of Cash, ... [and prices] fell considerably.” To these merchants, enslaved African people were one commodity among many to round out intercolonial cargoes.¹⁰

(p.182) But they were not quite like any other, because when market conditions were favorable, Guerard (and others) considered enslaved Africans the most advantageous of merchantable “goods.” When Guerard organized Watts’s venture in 1752, he pinned high hopes on the

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transshipment of people. The first two legs of that venture—from England to Madeira and from Madeira to Barbados—had not gone well, and Guerard explained to his partner that he saw only one way for the voyage to end profitably. “If he [Capt. Watts] does but ma[ke] choice of the right Sort of Negroes,” Guerard prayed, “I may make some small Profit upon the Voyage and that is all the Chance I have.” Discussing a similar proposed transshipment with Thomas Rock, a partner in Bristol, Guerard again attached high hopes to slaves. He suggested not only that African people could bring high prices but also that having them to sell facilitated the acquisition of crops for export, which avoided an unprofitable trip to England in ballast. When Rock’s ship *Carolina* arrived from Antigua without the planned transshipment of people, Guerard complained that if the vessel had “brought Some [slaves] it would have been the most Likely means to have given her a Dispatch [i.e., to have quickly obtained a cargo for export], but now I shalle be under great Difficulty to Effect it.” Merchants offering slaves in exchange for planters’ crops had the advantage in reloading their vessels.¹¹

Other merchants agreed that the high demand for labor in the colonies gave enslaved people a unique value for acquiring export cargoes. In 1749, James Murray of Cape Fear cautioned a ship captain in the West Indies against venturing to North Carolina as planned, reporting, “There ... is now greater plenty of ships in the River than ever was known,” which “occasions a great Scarcity of all the Produce of this Port fit for a foreign Markets.” As a result, vessels in North Carolina that summer were forced to offer cut rates on shipping to avoid departing in ballast. If “necessity obliges you to come,” Murray added, “I advise you to bring instead of Rum and Sugar some cheap Negroes but not old ones. If any thing brings a loading here they will.” Similarly, in the (p. 183) spring of 1755, Austin and Laurens discouraged vessels from coming to South Carolina: “Our Country is So well drain’d of the Produce that we are Certain nothing Can be got on Freight for Europe worth Acceptance.” If a vessel came despite this warning, they suggested, “the most Certain Article we can recommend to be Sent by her is a few fine Negro Men.” There was no rice or indigo available for export unless a trader was selling Africans. In such cases, the discrepancy between the price paid and price received for captives was less important than using them to ensure an export cargo.¹²

For traders, a corollary to this was that buyers of slaves often paid with crops at the moment of a sale, minimizing the extension of credit. Charles Steuart and Alexander McKenzie of Virginia explained this advantage to prospective partners in the Caribbean when seeking to expand their intercolonial slave trading. Describing “our trade to the Islands,” Steuart and McKenzie stated that Caribbean “produce generally sells higher here [in Virginia] than in any other part of the Continent, but” lamented, “One great misfortune attending our Trade is the long Credits we are obliged to give.” One special commodity evaded this problem of waiting to collect debts: “Negroes are the only Article that will command ready money.” As such, Steuart and McKenzie invited large transshipments, predicting that enslaved Africans “will continue in great Demand all this Season and a parcel of choice Slaves early in the Spring will come to a great Market.... Our Planters here have had great prices for their Tobacco ... and are full of Cash, which nothing but Negroes will draw forth.” To traders, who described them as an “Article” or “a parcel,” African people stood out from other commodities only for their ability to convince planters to let go of their cash.¹³

Observing this phenomenon, an anonymous writer to the *South-Carolina Gazette* argued that high prices were not the only factor attracting slave shipments to his colony. In a 1738 editorial, he suggested,

Negroes may be said to be the Bait proper for catching a Carolina Planter, as certain as Beef to catch a Shark. How many under the Notion of 18 Months Credit, have been tempted to buy more Negroes

(p. 184) than they could possibly expect to pay [for] in 3 Years! ... Yet so great is the Infatuation, that the many Examples of their Neighbours Misfortunes and Danger by such Purchases do not hinder new Fools from bringing themselves into the same Difficulty.

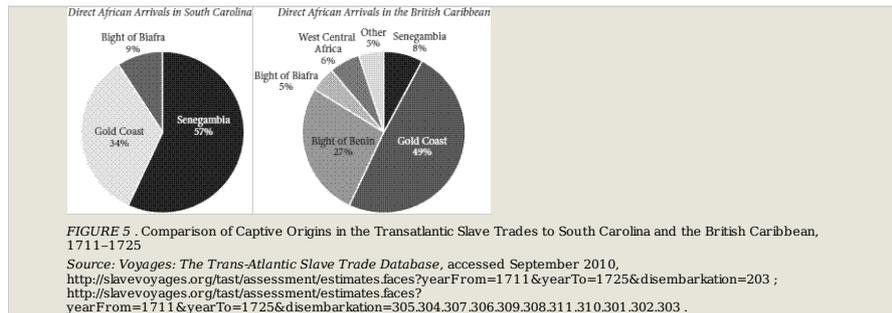
The writer did not differentiate here between transatlantic and intercolonial arrivals of Africans, but the “bait” metaphor was equally applicable to both. From the planters’ perspective, the “trap” was debt. Slaves were expensive, and if a planter purchased several African laborers from a merchant on credit, he was “caught.” He had committed himself to paying that merchant at least a portion of future harvests. From the merchants’ perspective, the quarry was, not the planter himself, but his produce. Shipping colonial staples back to Europe was a profitable branch of trade, and the sale of people helped traders “catch” a share of this commerce. Merchants preferred immediate payment but offered credit when necessary. In either case, they secured crops—present or future—for export. Merchants in the intercolonial trade could accept slim profit margins on slave sales if such transactions ensured them a share of staple exports to Europe.¹⁴

When carrying captives to a port where people also arrived directly from Africa, intercolonial traders’ profits hinged on offering captives that suited planters’ desires. Slaveholders in North American colonies that received people directly from Africa felt no compulsion to accept infirm, graying, or otherwise rejected people from other markets. As a result, intercolonial traders to major slaveholding colonies marketed the people they transshipped as only the best of who was available in the Caribbean. In 1750, Robert Pringle and Company of Charleston boasted in a newspaper advertisement of “About One Hundred choice healthy Negroes, most of them Gambia and Gold Coast Slaves, just imported from Barbadoes.” Pringle did not elide these captives’ transshipment; he announced it, hinting that purchasing captives in Barbados allowed him to select only people of the most desired African backgrounds. Another Charleston merchant, Joseph Pickering, extolled the advantages of transshipment more explicitly, emphasizing that his “seventy choice healthy Negroes from the West Indies [were] mostly of the Gold Coast and were the choice of two cargoes.” Pickering implied that, unlike transatlantic traders, who inevitably reached the Americas with a number of captives suffering ill effects of the Middle Passage, transshipment traders made a “choice” of which people to transport a much shorter distance to market. Economic incentive (p. 185) encouraged intercolonial traders to exaggerate the quality of their wares, but private correspondence substantiates their intent to send only the healthiest captives, preferably young adult males, from Barbados to South Carolina. The perceived quality of captives was crucial in a competitive market.¹⁵

For the African migrants chosen for such journeys—and who survived the final passage—arrival in eighteenth-century Virginia or South Carolina held varied implications, depending on their African background and that of the people they joined. Between 1710 and 1724, when direct deliveries of enslaved people from Africa to South Carolina emerged, an inordinate number of them (nearly 60 percent) came from Senegambia. Another third of the direct arrivals came from the Gold Coast, and perhaps one in ten hailed from the Bight of Biafra. Complicating this fairly simple tripartite picture of transatlantic arrivals, however, was intercolonial trade from the Caribbean, which continued to supply about half of South Carolina’s enslaved immigrants in this formative period. The ethno-linguistic composition of the intercolonial migration differed markedly. Although Senegambian people predominated in direct African trade to South Carolina, they composed only a small share of the forced migration from Africa to the British Caribbean in these years. Traders headed to the islands tended to acquire captives in African regions where larger cargoes of people could be assembled. Akan-speakers from the Gold Coast accounted for half of the captives disembarking in the British Caribbean, and another quarter of arrivals comprised people from the Bight of Benin (Figure 5). Peoples from a smattering of other African regions made up the remainder of the Caribbean migration. Assuming that the intercolonial trade from the British Caribbean to South Carolina reflected the ethnic composition of the transatlantic migration to the British Caribbean, this intercolonial trade must have diversified the enslaved

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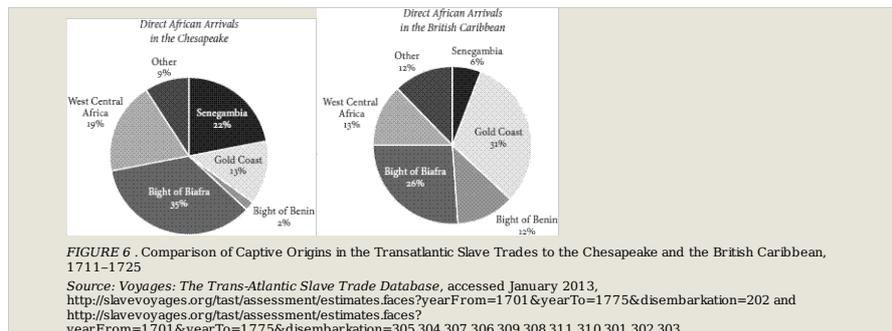
population in South Carolina considerably. For captives from the Bight of Benin, in particular (mostly Aja in this period), transshipment to South Carolina was no doubt profoundly alienating. They composed more than a quarter of the slave trade to the British Caribbean, but no known voyages linked their home region and South Carolina directly. Transshipment for any of these people likely caused a traumatic severance from most countrymen and -women, and from heritage and history. For Senegambians, by contrast, such transshipment had the opposite (p.186)



effect, carrying them away from a region where they would have been a tiny minority and toward a region where people of similar background predominated. After 1725, the intercolonial trade accounted for much less of the forced migration to South Carolina, and the contrast between the ethnic composition of each region's arriving Africans lessened, mitigating such effects. Nonetheless, South Carolina still received a much larger proportion of captives from Senegambia and far fewer from the Bight of Benin than was typical of the British Caribbean.¹⁶

(p.187) The intercolonial slave trade to the Chesapeake held similar implications for captives. In the eighteenth century, the Chesapeake's direct African trade relied on the Bight of Biafra for about 35 percent of captives, far more than any other region, and west central Africa and Senegambia each accounted for a little less than half that proportion. Vessels from the Bight of Biafra also predominated in trade to the British Caribbean (though not by as wide a margin), but for captives from other regions, the implications of transshipment from the Caribbean to the Chesapeake would have been profound. Any of the small number of Senegambians arriving in the Caribbean who were transshipped to the Chesapeake would have increased their odds of settling among people of shared backgrounds. Meanwhile, people from the Gold Coast—who composed one-quarter of the migration to the Caribbean—would have faced greatly decreased odds of settling near people who spoke their languages or shared their cultures. Those from the Bight of Benin faced similar risks, moving from a region where they accounted for about one in ten of arriving Africans, to a region where they made up only one of forty (Figure 6).

■ Looking beyond the largest North American slave markets, intercolonial traders' decision to include Africans in their cargoes is more intuitive because traders from Africa ignored many North American ports. The unmet demand for exploitable laborers elevated prices, enticing American speculators. What requires more explanation is why transatlantic traders did not target such markets themselves. Why leave some markets to intercolonial traders? The primary consideration was speed. Rapid sale was essential to the profitability of slaving voyages from Africa because longer trips (including stays in ports) meant increased payments to ship crews and higher captive mortality, not to mention the cost of provisions. With this in mind, most transatlantic slavers—whose average cargo in the eighteenth century exceeded three hundred people—sought ports capable of consuming an entire shipment quickly. This expectation required not only a region with strong demand for African laborers but also an economy robust enough to pay for them. In 1763, Henry Laurens (Plate 4) of Charleston explained the reasoning to merchant Joseph Brown of Georgetown, South Carolina, a much smaller port up the coast. Brown sought to attract a direct shipment from Africa, but Laurens insisted that transatlantic (p.188)



traders would resist "sending a Vessel to your port without a warrantee both as to the price and remittances ... especially while there is so fine a Market for slaves in the Center of the province and in the old beaten Track... The Affrican Traders ... always seek for that Market where there is most money stirring and where there are men of Fortune who in Case of a Glutt will take off [f] a Cargo at some rate or other and pay for them." Even when prices were high at small ports, transatlantic traders feared being "forced to sell for long Credit in order to maintain the prices." Georgetown was a minor destination for the slave trade, and its situation relative to Charleston mirrored that of numerous other

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secondary ports throughout British America.¹⁷

A merchant such as Laurens had incentive, of course, to discourage Brown from directing African trade away from his established entrepôt, but data suggests that Laurens accurately described transatlantic traders' preferences. More than 97 percent of shipments from Africa to the Carolinas, for example, disembarked the captives in Charleston. For British America as a whole, (p.189)



PLATE 4 . Henry Laurens. By V. Green, based on a painting by J. S. Copley. Laurens (1724–1792) was one of the most prolific slave traders in mid-eighteenth-century Charleston before going on to play a major role in the American Revolution, including serving as president of the Continental Congress. Courtesy, Library of Congress

large markets also predominated. Between 1701 and 1765, well over half of all Africans surviving the Middle Passage landed in one of just two colonies—Barbados or Jamaica. Of those arriving in North America in the same period, nearly 80 percent landed in Virginia or South Carolina. In other words, most transatlantic slavers headed to big markets and ignored others. Prices in the overlooked colonies could rise quite high, however, so intercolonial traders capitalized by transshipping Africans from major entrepôts. To avoid glutting the limited markets of secondary ports, intercolonial traders just kept such ventures smaller than was viable for transatlantic traders. The average intercolonial voyage from the Caribbean to North America between 1701 and 1765 carried just twelve people. And, of the 808 of these voyages for which the complete cargo is known, 90 percent carried inanimate commodities—usually rum, sugar, molasses, or tropical fruits—alongside the human kind.¹⁸

(p.190) If the fear of glutting small markets warned transatlantic slavers off delivering full African cargoes to smaller American markets despite high prices, selling captives at multiple ports in the Americas offered a possible alternative, but it was not a popular choice. Hopping from port to port to find the highest prices rarely compensated for the higher operating costs, which merchants measured in increased port fees, seamen's wages, and mortality among their human cargo. Selling agents in the Americas railed against the practice. Such protests were self-serving, of course, since agents sought to garner more business themselves by encouraging transatlantic traders to ignore other ports, but the factors also saw the effects of prolonged voyages on African captives. Their beleaguered condition evoked little expression of sympathy, but the agents nonetheless wanted captives healthy on arrival out of concern for their salability.¹⁹

Perhaps none expressed their opposition to port hopping more forcefully than the Jamaican traders Tyndall and Assheton, who berated their partners in Bristol for the state in which a group of Africans from the port of Bonny, on the Bight of Biafra, reached them in 1729:

(p.191) The *Aurora* is arrived with 270 Slaves: the worst cargoe of Bonny Slaves have been seen this long time, which You may guess by the ship's touching at every Place to Windward.... She was a month from B[arbadoes] hither, which Capt. Davis says was a great measure to Impare the Slaves.

Lest the Bristol owners suspect that the Jamaica traders hoped to monopolize commissions by diverting more business to their island, Tyndall and Assheton continued to emphasize the debilitating effects of a journey prolonged by port hopping in later letters. "[We] do assure you, the Owners of the *Aurora* suffer much by touching from Place [to] Place[;] there's not two thirds of her Cargoe now Living." In Tyndall and Assheton's eyes, the dangers of shipboard mortality during weeks of searching for higher prices outweighed the potential profits. Meanwhile, one can imagine the growing outrage and horror of the captives shackled aboard the *Aurora*, as each new harbor brought hope for release from the ship, but then despair, as the journey dragged on and disease spread. Heeding the lesson of disastrous voyages like this, fewer and fewer transatlantic traders sold enslaved Africans at multiple American ports as the eighteenth century wore on, perhaps contributing to the declining mortality in the slave trade.²⁰

African slave traders' concentration on a limited number of American ports left openings for intercolonial exchanges elsewhere, but not all smaller (p.192) American markets required the same strategies. Trading to colonies where enslaved people composed a major part of the labor force but where transatlantic arrivals were nonetheless lacking, intercolonial traders could rely on pent-up demand to make finding buyers fairly easy. The smaller economies of such colonies, however, meant currency was scarce, so that extending credit and collecting debts were problems. By contrast, targeting colonies with healthier economies but where slavery was a minor institution required aggressive marketing. Especially in the North, people had money to pay for slaves, but intercolonial traders had to convince prospective buyers to want them.

North Carolina and Georgia (after it legalized slavery in 1750) both fell into the former category, relying considerably upon enslaved labor,

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wishing to rely on it more, but struggling to steer African shipments away from larger, wealthier markets in South Carolina and Virginia. For Georgia, this problem was fleeting; after the Seven Years' War, the colony experienced an economic boom that attracted African traders. For North Carolina, the problem was chronic, with only nine known vessels—most of them much smaller than average ships in the transatlantic slave trade—ever delivering captives directly to the colony from Africa. The colony's hazardous coastline limited shipping, and development lagged without direct access to transatlantic trade or commerce with the Caribbean, which facilitated other colonies' starts with slavery. Settlers in North Carolina's Albemarle region complained in 1731 that a lack of access to Atlantic networks stymied the local economy, forcing them to rely on "the Merchants on James River in Virginia [to] Supply most of the Inhabitants ... with British Commodity's at unreasonable Rates ... by Land or in Little Canoes." Planters at the more southerly, and newer, Cape Fear settlement hardly felt more connected. They often described living in a "remote part of the world." A deficit of trade and slave importation was central to this sense of isolation. The 1740 lament of Cape Fear planter John Watson was typical, when he said, "The want of the Negroes this Summer has been a Considerable Los[s]." Facing isolation, but still hoping to import Africans for forced labor, planters and merchants in such colonies had to be aggressive in courting (or organizing) deliveries of enslaved people.²¹ (p.193)

TABLE 11. Estimates of Enslaved People Arriving in North Carolina from Various Sources, 1721–1765

Year	Arrivals directly from Africa	from the Caribbean	from mid-Atlantic colonies	from Virginia and South Carolina	Estimated enslaved population
					2,000 (as of 1720)
1721–1725	0	50	10	1,100	
					6,000 (as of 1730)
1726–1730	0	50	15	1,900	
1731–1735	0	50	20	700	
1736–1740	0	50	0	900	
1741–1745	0	125	5	1,100	
1746–1750	0	75	0	1,500	
					19,000 (as of 1755)
1751–1755	200	200	0	1,200	
1756–1760	450	100	0	3,900	
1761–1765	200	200	60	5,700	
					41,000 (as of 1767)
TOTAL	850	900	110	18,000	

Sources: For arrivals directly from Africa, see *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, accessed May 2011, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1866&mjslptmp=21200>. For arrivals from the Caribbean, see Gregory E. O'Malley, "Beyond the Middle Passage: Slave Migration from the Caribbean to North America, 1619–1807," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., LXVI (2009), 147–151. Arrivals from the mid-Atlantic colonies were also calculated from my database of intercolonial voyages, but no estimates were added to the documented voyages since the traffic was so small. For arrivals from Virginia and South Carolina, quantifying migration is much more difficult, since much of this movement was overland and not within the purview of port officials. Even when seaborne, such traffic was often aboard small vessels that escaped official notice. To derive an estimate of the traffic from South Carolina and Virginia, population data for North Carolina was compared with the estimates of imports from other sources. Population data was derived from Marvin L. Michael Kay and Lorin Lee Cary, *Slavery in North Carolina, 1748–1775* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1995), 19, including their estimate of natural population growth of 2.5 percent annually. There are numerous assumptions built into this calculation, so these estimates must be seen as quite tentative. Nonetheless, even if one modifies the estimate of natural population growth significantly, the overall picture changes little; the vast majority of enslaved Africans in North Carolina must have entered via Virginia and South Carolina.

(p.194) The trials and travails of James Murray, a North Carolina merchant and planter, are illustrative of the colony's remoteness. Murray had lived a peripatetic life and maintained a broad mercantile correspondence but still had difficulty drawing African workers to North Carolina. And despite his desire to see the colony prosper (which, in his mind, required enslaved Africans), he always recognized its shortcomings as a market for slave traders. Born in Scotland, Murray had worked in a London merchant house, and he made several return trips to Britain after settling in North Carolina in 1735. He also possessed contacts in the West Indies, since his London employers had engaged in Caribbean trade. If anyone could draw African workers to North Carolina—for toil on his own plantation or for sale to others—surely a man of Murray's connections could, especially since he arrived in the Americas with a cargo of English goods to sell, to get himself established. Yet Murray struggled. After twenty years in the province, Murray claimed ownership of just fourteen African people. By the 1760s, when he moved to Massachusetts, Murray had amassed a workforce of about thirty individuals and had imported others for fellow settlers, but he went to great lengths to accomplish this and saw many efforts rebuffed. The colony amassed an enslaved population of about 40,000 people by 1770—fifth among British North American colonies—but nonetheless failed ever to attract steady supplies of people directly from Africa. Most importations came in small shipments (overland or in small boats) from neighboring colonies, supplemented by occasional ventures from the Caribbean or more distant parts of the mainland.²²

The key problem, Murray soon realized, was that his colony lacked wealthy merchants willing to speculate on shipments of Africans, largely because the colony was not producing enough to complete the circuits suited to the slave trade. Given his West Indian connections, Murray

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initially viewed the islands as his most promising option for acquiring Africans. Optimistic in his first weeks in America, Murray wrote to Antigua merchant David Tullideph, "In a little time with some cash and goods which (if I can get a vessel) shall send you in corn and pork to purchase Negroes." So many colonists desired African workers in his fledgling settlement that Murray regretted not having (p.195) stopped at "the Islands in my way [to North Carolina] and sold all my goods for Negroes Rum and Sugar which are the best of Articles" for sale in Cape Fear. Instead, Murray's English goods "brought ... a very good price" in Carolina" but required him to wait "for a year at least" for payments. In the ensuing weeks, Murray reiterated his impression that "quick remittance ... could not be made for anything but Negroes," but his confidence in North Carolinians' ability to pay even for coveted Africans waned quickly. Just months later, he was very cautious in encouraging London merchant Henry McCulloh to undertake a delivery of enslaved people to Cape Fear, presumably directly from Africa. "As to the consignment of negroes," Murray warned, "nothing could be of more service, to the country [Cape Fear] ... but it is the Misfortune of the planters, on this river, to be much indebted to the traders." Many North Carolinians desired enslaved Africans, but their shortage of money or marketable staples made "it dangerous, for a man to undertake anything on their payments." Even though he was a merchant looking to spur North Carolina's commerce, Murray discouraged correspondents from the slave trade to North Carolina in the 1730s, only requesting a few small shipments of people for his own exploitation from South Carolina.²³

By midcentury, the Cape Fear economy had grown, but Murray was only slightly more optimistic. In 1752, London merchant Richard Oswald contacted Murray to inquire about North Carolina's market. Because Oswald was one of the principal investors in the British slave-trading fort at Bunce Island, in modern Sierra Leone, his decision to contact Murray attested to the latter's Atlantic connections, and the letter offered a promising opportunity to draw exploitable labor to Cape Fear. But Murray's reply sent mixed messages. At first he seemed encouraging: "As to the Negroes you mention—the Prices are (p.196) now high every where but highest here for we have no supply but from the West Indies or the Neighbouring Colonies." Pent-up demand left planters so eager that, "if the Negroes are healthy," North Carolinians would buy them "without great enquiry or distinction of Country" of origin. Beggars could not be choosers, Murray suggested, so North Carolina offered a seller's market. But then Murray struck a more cautionary tone. A reputation for honesty meant everything to an eighteenth-century merchant, and Murray refused to paint a rosy and incomplete picture. Murray warned Oswald that no North Carolina merchant was likely to "Contract for them [Africans]" in advance, "as there are few Men of Substance among us." Local traders could not afford to guarantee payments. They also rarely offered cash or even the most valuable American staples. Instead, Murray suggested selling any Africans delivered, "for Country produce (tar for Instance) to be shipt you in Six or 8 Months on Accot and risque of the buyer." If Oswald sent an African vessel to North Carolina, he could expect to sell the captives for tar—not a very lucrative staple—and to offer long credit. Not surprisingly, Oswald demurred.²⁴

Murray's discouragement of slave trading to North Carolina despite a strong desire for slaves illustrates the vital role of speculators in dispersing captives on the American side of the Atlantic; aspiring slaveholders seeking exploitable people were not enough to ensure robust trafficking. Even high prices were not sufficient to attract speculators—transatlantic or intercolonial. The traders also needed to acquire commodities in exchange that would help them complete trade circuits. Since North Carolina produced little for export that excited merchants, few would speculate on deliveries of Africans to the province. Similar concerns about the reliability of payments also prevented most traders from targeting Georgia in the decade after that colony legalized slavery in 1750. When a small slave trade finally emerged from the Caribbean to North Carolina at midcentury, tellingly, many of the merchants who undertook such ventures were traders based in the colony, such as Richard Quince, Frederick Gregg, and Thomas Wright. Of 131 documented slave-trading voyages from the Caribbean to North Carolina in the eighteenth century for which the vessel's port of registration is known, more than 40 percent were registered in North Carolina, a remarkable number considering the colony's notoriously underdeveloped mercantile sector. Few others were willing to speculate on (p.197) trade to the economically marginal colony, but North Carolinians were eager to export their naval stores, livestock, and other provisions to the wealthy markets of the Caribbean. Enslaved Africans offered one commodity among many in which (or in whom) such traders took their returns.²⁵

Prospective buyers in colonial backwaters faced a disadvantage in the marketplace even when Africans arrived. Such neglected regions remained captive markets to which slave traders came only when they sought to unload captives they had trouble selling in markets with other options. As North Carolina governor George Burrington explained in 1733, "We are under a Necessity to buy the refuse, refractory, and distemper'd Negroes, brought from other Governments." If aspiring North Carolina slaveholders hoped for better selection, they generally chose between two options for acquiring Africans. They could venture to entrepôts in other colonies to make purchases themselves, or they could place orders for slaves with merchants in the entrepôts, trusting those traders to make wise decisions on their behalf. Given his mercantile connections, James Murray often opted to trust merchants in other ports. In 1736, Murray and Samuel Johnston asked Charleston merchants Ribton Hutchison and Frederick Grimké, "If you can meet with four men and two women, or two men, two boys and two women, we desire you will buy them on our Joint accot: and send them by the first vessel," noting that they would pay the "freight" charges when the people arrived. Such an arrangement required buyers to grant significant authority to agents in the entrepôts. To facilitate their transaction, Murray clarified for Hutchison and Grimké, "We chuse not [to] confine you to any price nor to load you with Instructions about them being perswaded that you will do your best for our Interest." Desperate for labor, Murray made it clear that he was not picky.²⁶

(p.198) To avoid handing over such power, other planters from bypassed colonies ventured to the entrepôts themselves to buy enslaved people. Murray noted neighbors' making several such trips from North Carolina to Charleston, reporting in 1739 that "Mr [Thomas?] Clark and Mr [Archibald?] Douglass has Set out for Sot Carolina in order to purchase Negroes." Cape Fear planter John Dalrymple apparently made similar excursions. In 1737, colony officials ordered Dalrymple to quarantine a group of Africans that he ferried from South to North Carolina when illness broke out among them, and other records suggest that this was not an isolated venture. Such journeys offered a planter the opportunity to choose captives for himself out of vessels arriving from Africa (or the Caribbean), but the travel would have been costly in terms of both time and money, ensuring that many planters resorted to agents for purchases, unless other business took them to a major slave market.²⁷

Regardless of whether planters from the poorly capitalized provinces traveled to the entrepôts or relied on distant agents to acquire slaves, unique patterns emerged in the demographics of the enslaved population introduced to such backwaters. With limited buying power and often limited choices, planters at a distance from the entrepôts purchased more women and children than was typical of planters in regions importing Africans directly. James Murray's advice to traders on selling Africans in his province was that they send "cheap Negroes, but not old ones." These criteria excluded male captives of prime working age as too expensive, and, as ever, women and children (or the ill and disabled) were the alternatives, besides the aged, whom Murray explicitly rejected. The balance between eventual reproduction and immediate affordability in the decision making of remote planters who opted for women and children is unclear. Great efforts to acquire enslaved laborers might have made North Carolina planters particularly sensitive to encouraging natality. When Murray ordered slaves from James Rutherford in Jamaica in 1751, he specified a desire for significant numbers of women and children. He asked Rutherford to invest "two hundred pounds Sterling" in "a Cliver (p.199) boy of twelve years and one girl from twelve to fourteen, three Wenches from fifteen to twenty, and the Remainder in men from eighteen to twenty one." That "Remainder" left for purchasing men would not have been considerable. So-called "prime slaves" sold for as much

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as forty pounds sterling in the early 1750s, so even if Murray managed to purchase the two children specified for twenty pounds each and the three young women for thirty pounds each, he would have been lucky to have enough money remaining for the purchase of two men. In other words, Murray's age and gender specifications determined a group skewed female and young. He did not articulate reasons for choosing people of this description, but price might not have been the only consideration. Slaveholders throughout the Americas valued enslaved women for their combination of labor and fertility, and planters in less developed slaveholding regions exhibited a pronounced interest in acquiring enslaved females. To those developing slave regimes, women captives promised not only work—but also a next generation of workers.²⁸

To captives, it made little difference whether price or fertility was foremost in the minds of planters like Murray, but the implications of the bias toward women and children had profound consequences for life in their strange, new land. In the slave trade to the Caribbean in the eighteenth century, males accounted for more than 60 percent of arriving captives. That meant there were fewer than two females for every three males who stepped off vessels arriving from Africa, profoundly limiting the possibilities for family formation, reproduction, and the maintenance of traditional gender roles. If planters in North Carolina—and other colonies on the margins of the Atlantic slave system—acquired disproportionate numbers of women, this tendency contributed to (p.200) more balanced gender ratios and higher fertility among the enslaved population. (The pattern might also have further skewed Caribbean gender ratios toward males.) As a result, despite the hardship of transshipment, survivors of intercolonial voyages to North Carolina, Georgia, and other marginal regions of the slave system might have enjoyed greater prospects for family formation than their counterparts who remained in the Caribbean (or other centers of transatlantic importation).²⁹

Less-developed colonies' preferences for relatively low-priced slaves had implications for African American populations beyond gender and age. When James Murray told his suppliers in other colonies, "I shall not confine you to any Country," he increased the odds of receiving captive people from backgrounds that buyers in the entrepôts preferred least. As such, Igbo people from the Bight of Biafra might have faced a particular likelihood of transshipment (or overland march) from an entrepôt of the slave trade—such as Charleston, the James River, or Bridgetown—to one of the marginal slave-holding colonies of the mainland, such as North Carolina or Georgia. This bias toward Igbos might have been most pronounced in the earliest decades of North Carolina slavery, when Virginia was an especially important source of captives. People from the Bight of Biafra accounted for nearly half of the Africans shipped directly from Africa to Virginia between 1660 and 1730; surely, they accounted for a major portion of the North Carolina trade. In addition to ethnicity, another factor that lowered the prices of some captives relative to others was health. Given Governor Burrington's complaints that North Carolina received the "refuse ... and distemper'd Negroes" from other colonies, ill or aged slaves might also have been likely to endure final passages from the centers of slave importation to developing slave societies, contributing to the risk of mortality in such migrations and at their destinations.³⁰

(p.201) ■ Colonies in the North also relied primarily on Caribbean transshipment for African immigration, although some northern colonies saw transatlantic trade briefly overtake Caribbean shipments in the mid-eighteenth century. For all of these colonies, African arrivals from the Caribbean played a complementary role to exports of provisions to the islands. For the mid-Atlantic bread colonies, a growing export trade in flour and other provisions facilitated captive transshipments in return. The cycle was evident in 1741, when Philadelphia merchant Robert Ellis sent turpentine, "Ship Bread," and pork to Barbados, instructing his correspondent there to "Bring the Net Proceeds in Good Likely young Negroes if cheap, or ... bring me good Rum." From New England, traders shipped salted fish to the islands, incorporating enslaved Africans to the mixed cargoes of return voyages. A pithy Boston advertisement encapsulated the cycle of New England seafood for slaves: "To be Sold for Cash or Jamaica Fish, Two likely Negro Boys." The designation of a local catch as "Jamaica Fish" suggests the importance of Caribbean markets to New England fishermen, and accepting payments for slaves in only such fish or cash points to a return trip to the Caribbean to continue the cycle.³¹

Northern colonies' dependence upon the Caribbean for enslaved Africans over most of the eighteenth century is visible from many sources. Surviving port records from both the islands and some northern colonies allow fairly rigorous quantification of the traffic, and imperial correspondence, newspaper advertising, and merchant papers describe the commerce, as well. New York governor William Burnet prepared a report "of what Negro Slaves have been Imported" in the early eighteenth century, based on information "taken from the Custom House Books," and he noted more than four hundred Africans arriving from the islands between 1700 and 1715. From 1715 to 1741, surviving port records show that Caribbean transshipments outpaced transatlantic deliveries to New York almost two to one. For Pennsylvania, which included Delaware until 1776, no port records survive to document the traffic, but newspapers exist from 1720 onward and suggest a similar pattern. Caribbean sources supplied most captives, and Charleston sent numerous shipments, as well. Such deliveries peaked in the late 1730s, when several dozen Africans reached Pennsylvania annually from the West Indies. Spotty import records imply the same for New Jersey, whose slave trade was closely linked (p.202)

TABLE 12. Estimates of Enslaved People Arriving in Northern Colonies from the Caribbean, 1701–1770

Year	New York	Pennsylvania / New Jersey	New England	
1701–1705		225	275	250
1706–1710		25	275	250
1711–1715		200	200	250
1716–1720		725	150	250
1721–1725		450	75	250
1726–1730		825	150	375
1731–1735		600	200	375
1736–1740		250	600	375
1741–1745		20	125	125
1746–1750		9	200	200
1751–1755		4	375	125
1756–1760			125	125
1761–1765	17		225	125
1766–1770			100	75

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TOTAL	3,350	3,075	3,150
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Sources: Derivation of these estimates is discussed in Gregory E. O'Malley, "Beyond the Middle Passage: Slave Migration from the Caribbean to North America, 1619–1807," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., LXVI (2009), 157–165.

to Pennsylvania's, since both colonies bought people and merchandise from vessels sailing into the Delaware River. New Jersey saw extensive slave transshipments to the colony in the early 1730s, but then a decline.³²

Given the marginality of slavery in New England, one might expect greater reliance on intercolonial deliveries there, but those colonies—especially (p.203) Rhode Island—stood out from their mid-Atlantic counterparts; several New England merchants plied the transatlantic slave trade in the first half of the eighteenth century, making direct African deliveries to the region feasible. These traders rarely consigned whole shipments from Africa to New England, but they often carried a few people home after selling most enslaved Africans in the plantation colonies. As Rhode Island merchant James Brown instructed his ship captain and brother, Obadiah, in 1717: "If you cannot sell all your slaves [in the West Indies] ... bring some of them home; I believe they will sell well."³³ Autobiographer Venture Smith arrived in New England this way; he survived the Middle Passage to Barbados with two hundred fellow captives but was one of just four to remain on board to Rhode Island. Nevertheless, Caribbean transshipments supplemented this African trade to New England throughout the eighteenth century. The account book of ship captain Nathaniel Harris suggests that merchants or slaveholders in the entrepôts sometimes hired captains engaged in intercolonial trade to ship enslaved people to New England for sale. In 1712, "Mr. Nathanael Humphry of Antigua" paid Harris to deliver two captives from that island to Boston and to sell them on his behalf. Harris earned four pounds sterling for the "freight of 2 Negro's" from Antigua to Boston, reimbursement for the import duty on them, and a "Commission for Selling the Negro Man" of just less than two pounds. The other enslaved person apparently remained in Harris's possession at the time the account was recorded.³⁴

Northern colonies resembled North Carolina and Georgia in their reliance on intercolonial deliveries of Africans, but the northern colonies did not lack the capital to attract merchants. Instead, transatlantic slavers ignored them (p.204) because they lacked a major reliance on slavery. This fundamental difference gave their branch of the intercolonial trade a different character. Most notably, merchants proved willing to speculate on small slaving ventures from the Caribbean to the North, and because demand was not pent up, they had to be aggressive in marketing. This offshoot of the intercolonial slave trade was especially appealing to merchants because the northern colonies' export of provisions to the Caribbean made a return trip with African people a viable corollary. As exports of flour, salted fish, and timber to the Caribbean grew increasingly important, return shipments brought rum, sugar, and tropical fruits. Especially at times when abundance limited the prices for such Caribbean commodities, transshipments of enslaved Africans offered a compelling alternative. Hence, advertisements for enslaved Africans in the North generally offered the people in small groups alongside Caribbean produce, at the home or store of a New England merchant or, less frequently, aboard the ship that carried them. In 1739, Philadelphia's *American Weekly Mercury* printed Captain Benjamin Christian's advertisement of "TWO verly [sic] likely Negroe Boys ... [and] Also a Quantity of very good Lime-juice." Willing, Morris, and Company paid the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1761 to announce their offering of "A Negroe Man, and two New Negroe Boys" along with "Madeira, and an Assortment of other Wines, Rum, and Sugar, etc." In 1765, the *New-York Gazette; or, the Weekly Post-Boy* publicized the availability of "A Choice Parcel of Muscovado and Powder Sugars ... and a Negro Wench and Negro Boy." To intercolonial traders between the Caribbean and northern North America, African people offered one among several commodities that suited their northward journeys, and such advertisements to the general public suggest speculative transshipments. In the eighteenth century, even smaller northern markets saw Africans delivered without special requests from prearranged buyers.³⁵

In some cases, merchants boarded their captives awaiting sale with free people of African descent. For instance, in Philadelphia in 1751, John Strutton advertised "TO BE SOLD, A Parcel of likely Negroes, very reasonable." The advertisement then added that the "Said Negroes may be seen at a Free Negroe Woman's, in Chestnut-Street, opposite to Mr. Anthony Benezet's." In 1759, Strutton placed a similar ad for "A Parcel of likely strong Negroe Men and Women," some of whom possessed skills suggesting they were born in the Americas or had at least resided there for many years. In this case, Strutton informed buyers, "The said Negroes are to be seen at Emanuel Woodbe's (p.205) (Negroe) in Water street." Such involvement of free people of African descent in the slave trade raises questions about their attitudes toward slavery. Surely many free blacks sympathized with the plight of those caught up in the slave trade, especially given the wave of emancipations in Pennsylvania in the 1740s and 1750s, inspired by the Quakers' antislavery turn. Most of Philadelphia's free blacks in the 1750s had recently escaped enslavement themselves, and many attended churches with mixed congregations of the free and enslaved. In that atmosphere, slavery was unlikely to be treated as an unquestioned fact of life. For Emanuel Woodbe and the unnamed "Free Negroe Woman," housing Africans to be sold was likely an uncomfortable source of income, betokening the difficulty many free blacks faced in earning a living in societies that discriminated against them. That being said, since many Pennsylvania free blacks had embraced Christianity in the Great Awakening, they might have felt a considerable cultural distance from new Africans. From Strutton's perspective, the choice to board enslaved people with free black Philadelphians suggests a measure of trust. This willingness to lodge slaves with a free person of color is particularly interesting in the wake of New York's slave conspiracy scare of 1741, since that event saw New Yorkers suspicious of free black collusion in rebellion. In Strutton's mind, at least, enslaved people residing in the homes of free blacks were not feared to be dangerously unsupervised. African captives boarded in such a home might have been surprised at seeing free blacks assimilated into Euro-American society, but given their recent enslavement in Africa, black overseers would not have been a major departure from their experience. Regardless of skin color, they might have perceived these free blacks as simply part of a long line of captors, despised and feared, especially if language barriers separated them.³⁶

Advertisements for such small groups of captives, in addition to exemplifying the intercolonial slave trade's integration with other branches of commerce, also show slave traders seeking to create a market for exploitable African workers. Traders to southern markets rarely bothered to advertise small groups of captives; they could rely on informal marketing and word of mouth to attract eager buyers. Only the importation of hundreds of Africans at once demanded that they advertise far and wide. Traders to northern markets, by contrast, worked harder to entice propertied men to become slaveholders and (p.206) could not dump the enslaved Africans deemed undesirable elsewhere; the northern markets were not desperate for enslaved labor. When Saint Croix merchant Thomas Shute sent two captives to Thomas Riche in Philadelphia, Riche scolded him for sending "half dead negroes," reporting that "th[e]y fetch little more than paid the duty's and freight." Shute earned almost nothing. The problem was their perceived quality and not the Philadelphia market, as Riche pointed out: "At the same time good likely Slaves would fetch from 40 to 50 pounds." Despite the unwillingness to accept African people considered substandard commodities, northern markets attracted traders because they could expect timely payments. These colonies were marginal regarding the slave trade, but not in more general economic terms. Slavers were keen to siphon off this wealth.³⁷

For instance, Philadelphia merchants in search of potential customers often dispersed Africans across the region. In the 1710s, when the slave

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trade to Pennsylvania was still minimal, trader Jonathan Dickinson somewhat reluctantly handled a number of sales of arriving Africans. Dickinson routinely discouraged merchants in other colonies from sending such captives, warning one correspondent about “a plarjell of Negroes that lay on my hands a yeare,” and lamenting to his brother-in-law in Jamaica, “The Negroes thou Sent mee have been on hand most of this Wint’r.” Dickinson was more blunt to John Lewis of Jamaica. After selling people for him, Dickinson said, “I request Y’e not to Send any more, as ... but few people Care to buy Negroes.” To find buyers for those Africans who did arrive, Dickinson often looked well beyond Philadelphia. In the sale for Lewis, Dickinson reported selling “the three Negroes ye Sent” to some “Low’r Countey [Delaware] men at Thirty Pounds P head.” Dickinson did not make clear whether he sent Lewis’s captives to Delaware for sale or whether the “Low’r Countey men” had come to Philadelphia, but in other cases, Dickinson transshipped Africans within or even beyond his region in order to sell them. For one of his brother-in-law’s enslaved women sent from Jamaica, Dickinson suggested that to find a buyer, he “must send her to Lower Countys or Maryland.” Whether Dickinson would target the Chesapeake overland or by sea is unclear, but regardless he resorted to a broad hinterland to find markets for even small numbers of captives reaching Philadelphia.³⁸

(p.207) In the 1730s and 1740s, Robert Ellis was the most prolific slave importer in Pennsylvania, acquiring Africans from Barbados, Antigua, Saint Kitts, and South Carolina. The market for enslaved workers in Pennsylvania was more developed during that era, so Ellis encouraged transshipments, but he still pursued buyers aggressively. Ellis advertised even small slave sales in Philadelphia newspapers, and he also distributed people throughout the region for sale by his agents on commission. In September 1736, Ellis informed a Mr. Shaw, who was either up or down the Delaware River from Philadelphia, of having “Sent [you] four Negroes, Two Garls and Two Boys, which I Desire you will Dispose of them if you can, [for] not Less than Twenty Six Pounds Each.” Ellis sold some of the other captives from the same shipment in Philadelphia but apparently spread the imported people around to avoid glutting the small Philadelphia market. Ellis again dispersed African captives for sale in January of 1739, when he handled two shipments, probably one from Charleston and the other from the Caribbean. He sent some Africans to Lewes, in what is now Delaware, for Jacob Kollock to sell on commission. Apparently Kollock succeeded, as Ellis’s partner in Philadelphia, John Ryan, later complained about the high commission Kollock charged for his “Sales of 16 Negroes.” Nor was Lewes the only destination for these Africans who disembarked at Philadelphia. To punctuate his complaint against Kollock, Ryan pointed out, “There are Others concern’d with us (Mr. Ellis and I) who have been at Vast Pains and Trouble in ... Selling ’em up and down in Several Parts of the Country [who] can’t pretend to Charge more than 5 P Cent Commission.” For the African captives, this dispersal across the region presaged relative isolation from other African people. In the northern colonies, especially outside urban areas, most enslaved people resided with few other bondmen and -women, working on farms or at trades where they were vastly outnumbered by Europeans.³⁹

(p.208) With the aggressive pursuit of buyers in the North came a decline of the seventeenth-century trend of sending special requests to an entrepôt for slaves. Rather than place themselves at the mercy of a distant merchant, more potential buyers in the North could count on a local market offering them a choice of captives for sale. This subtle power shift in the slave marketplace was illustrated by a small shipment in 1731. Walter Nugent of Antigua transshipped two Africans to Abraham Redwood, an absentee plantation owner living in Rhode Island. The delivery was apparently unsolicited, or at least the deal was not binding on Redwood, as Nugent informed him, “I send you two Negroes; if you like them, keep them, and give my Account credit for what you think they are worth. The Negroe man is a Peice [sic] of a Saylor and a fine Papa Slave [i.e., from near the modern nation of Ghana], [who] cost thirty pounds Sterling out of the Ship. The Negroe woman is a fine Slave.” The discretion here was Redwood’s. Rather than being at the mercy of his correspondent in the entrepôt, hoping that Nugent would buy Africans prudently on his behalf in Antigua, Redwood could assess the value of the people and decide for himself. In sending a man and a woman together, Nugent might have been hoping that Redwood would see the captives’ potential as a breeding pair who would produce another generation of slaves for his family. Slaveholders, especially those buying their first slaves, often sought slaves in male-female pairs, regardless of whether the captives in question saw themselves as a couple or in any way connected.⁴⁰

This decline in special orders in the North mirrored most of British America. Outside the most economically marginal markets, requests for merchants in the entrepôts to select and transship arriving Africans were increasingly rare in the eighteenth century. They were not obsolete, but potential buyers typically only solicited merchants with an unusual request—often, seeking a worker with specific skills. When John Frederick Pinney, an absentee plantation owner in England, noticed wages paid to a free white cooper in his account books, he scolded the manager of his Nevis plantation, James Browne. “For God’s Sake, good Sr.,” Pinney exclaimed, “buy me a negroe Cooper or two in any of the four Islands if you Can at any Price.” Presumably, **(p.209)** Pinney expected Browne to write correspondents in the other Leeward Islands in search of such a cooper, not travel from island to island himself. Likewise, in 1760, Charleston merchant Robert Raper bought “a very quick, good [slave] boy” named Johnny at the request of Governor Thomas Boone of New Jersey, who sought a domestic servant. Raper also took the initiative of purchasing the boy’s father, Sampson, on Boone’s account, who, Raper suggested, “with a little instruction, will make a Gardiner.” The liberty Raper took in purchasing this second captive for Boone suggests that those making requests for slaves remained somewhat beholden to the whims of their agents in the entrepôts, but a buyer could protest such charges unless he had granted the merchant permission to use such discretion.⁴¹

Unstated in Raper’s account is what role Sampson played in preventing the shipment of Johnny to New Jersey without him. Did his son’s skill or potential give him some leverage, or was he able to appeal to Raper’s humanity to convince the trader to send father and son together? Nineteenth-century accounts of slave sales demonstrate that American-born slaves made pleas from the auction block, urging slaveholders to buy family members together, but it is crucial to consider that in the eighteenth century, such persuasion was often more difficult. To manipulate their own sales, nineteenth-century slaves capitalized on their command of English, growing sentimentality about family ties in American culture, and slaveholders’ desire to imagine themselves as paternalistic. People disembarking from eighteenth-century slave ships were less likely to possess enough linguistic ability or understanding of their enslavers to appeal effectively. Perhaps skilled slaves chosen for intercolonial trade had such knowledge and influenced their own sales. In several ways, then, the market for skilled slaves differed from the one for recently arrived Africans (whose skills mostly went unrecognized by Europeans).⁴²

(p.210) Philadelphia merchant John Yeates regularly dealt in this market. In the early 1740s, numerous Caribbean merchants sent skilled people to Yeates—among them an unnamed sailor, “Sarah ... a good Slave for House work,” “Peter and Sambo ... very Choice Brick makers,” and “Margarett, a very Ingenious and Valueable Girl ... [who] Can Work at her needle Very Well and Take Care of things in a house.” The sellers in such cases usually paid freight charges and trusted Yeates to obtain high prices commensurate to the skills of the enslaved. Small, specialized transactions like these marked exceptions to intercolonial traders’ usual avoidance of dealing in American-born slaves, and market considerations alone did not shape such transactions and migrations. In the case of Margarett, she was not only a skilled domestic worker but also the daughter of the man who sent her—Edward Polegreen—suggesting that his motives extended beyond profit and loss, especially since he acknowledged the family tie in his letter to Yeates. Was Polegreen sending Margarett north to remove her from the harsher regime of the Caribbean? Was he removing a reminder of his indiscretions with enslaved women from his own sight or from the sight of his wife? Was banishment a punishment for

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Margaret? Polegreen did not explain, only stating, "I humbly Begg the favour of you ... to dispose of her ... [to] a good Master or Mistress." Polegreen added that his daughter "is a very Carefull Girl and will make a very Good Slave to any Good Owner." Whatever the exact circumstances, Margaret's case marks a crucial difference in the market for skilled and American-born slaves versus that for recent African arrivals. American-born slaves were more encumbered with relations between enslavers and the enslaved. In most of the intercolonial slave trade—dealing in Africans—traders managed to keep captives more fully commodified in their own minds. Personal connections rarely bridged the sense of distance between slavers and the people they traded.⁴³

Linked to this desire for skilled slaves and to the limited demand for plantation laborers in northern colonies was a preference in the North for enslaved children recently arrived from Africa. When Jonathan Dickinson discouraged shipments of enslaved people from the Caribbean in 1715, he qualified his (p.211) demurrals, noting, "Our people Don't Care to buy Except boys and Girls." Courting transshipments a generation later, Robert Ellis routinely specified an interest in children. In 1748, he advised Charleston merchants, "If you should have a Ship wth Negroes this Spring, you may send Twenty or Thirty Young Boys and Girls, and I shall Endeavour to dispose of them to Advantage." Likewise, newspaper advertisements often touted the availability of "likely young Negroes of about 10 or 12 Years of age" or "likely Negro Boys and Girls" to entice buyers. Since northern slaveholders did not put their captives to the physically demanding toil associated with rice or sugar plantations, they had little incentive to pay the high prices that the market demanded for adults. Enslaved children cost less and could be trained for domestic service or artisanal trades.⁴⁴

This predilection guided the invisible hand of the market that dragged a young James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw into northern slavery. Born in Borno (in what is now northeastern Nigeria), Gronniosaw survived a Middle Passage from the Gold Coast to Barbados as a boy. Whereas most captives from his ship likely settled on sugar plantations, Gronniosaw's youth made him ill suited to cane work. Instead, he was purchased for transshipment:

My new master's name was Vanhorn, a young Gentleman; his home was in New-England in the City of New-York; to which place he took me with him. He dress'd me in his livery, and was very good to me. My chief business was to wait at table, and tea, and clean knives, and I had a very easy place.

With the benefit of hindsight, Gronniosaw perceived his migration from Barbados to New York as advantageous—an escape from harder labor in the Caribbean cane fields—but his account gives no hint of how he experienced it as a child, separated from those with whom he had crossed the Atlantic, who perhaps had eased his fears at sea, told him stories of home, or ensured his (p.212) share of the meager shipboard provisions. Selection of children for transshipment must have separated young captives from older relatives or other adults who cared for them.⁴⁵

For the development of African American cultures, the implications of children's prominence in this branch of the intercolonial trade were profound. Sold without their elders, young captives like Gronniosaw were more fully cut off from their origins. Furthermore, they typically took up residence as domestic servants in households with few, if any, other Africans. It is not surprising that some of the earliest African American Christian preachers (such as Gronniosaw) or English-language poets (such as Phillis Wheatley) emerged in northern colonies. Many such African-born children would grow up with more exposure to the English language and to Euro-American culture and values (and less connection to African ways) than was the case for enslaved people in plantation colonies.⁴⁶

In the mid-eighteenth century, most northern colonies saw a brief period in which direct African shipments predominated, leaving intercolonial shipments in a subordinate role. Such transatlantic trade to northern colonies was small by the standards of the plantation settlements but still delivered unprecedented numbers of African people to the North. There were several reasons for its emergence. For one, the region experienced enormous population growth over the course of the eighteenth century, expanding its demand for all commodities—enslaved people included. Northern colonies also expanded their exports to Europe (of marine products, naval stores, and grain), making the region more attractive to transatlantic shippers. Finally, growing (p.213) numbers of those transoceanic carriers were northern colonists themselves as the region's merchant class expanded and diversified, enhancing northern colonies' connections to all Atlantic commercial networks. For New England, particularly Rhode Island, the transition to direct African imports came earliest, with the late 1730s heralding the shift. Thereafter, significant arrivals from the islands diminished (with the exception of seventy Africans in one apparently anomalous shipment from Barbados to Piscataqua—now Portsmouth, New Hampshire—in 1749). From the late 1730s through the early 1760s, voyages from Africa delivered close to five thousand captives to New England.⁴⁷

In New York, intercolonial slave deliveries declined sharply after 1741. The slave conspiracy scare in Manhattan that year might have left colonists reluctant to import people from the West Indies, but the collapse of the British *asiento* and increasing competition from transatlantic traders were probably more significant factors. During the years when the British South Sea Company monopolized the slave trade to Spanish America, New York exported a great deal of flour to Jamaica, which the South Sea Company then smuggled to Spanish America under cover of the slave trade. Some of the proceeds were invested in enslaved Africans for return journeys to Manhattan. The outbreak of the War of Jenkins' Ear in 1739, and then King George's War (1744–1748), disrupted this flour trade as well as other Caribbean commerce, helping to explain the lull in importations. When peace returned, New Yorkers increased their imports of African people but no longer looked to the Caribbean. Instead, the colony's growing demand for slaves (and expanding exports) facilitated direct links with Africa, diminishing the need for transshipments. African trade to New York predominated for the remainder of the colonial period. New Jersey's experience mirrored New York's but involved more transshipments. As in New York, captive arrivals in New Jersey slowed to a trickle during King George's War and recovered in the late 1740s and early 1750s. In New Jersey, however, the postwar arrivals still came from the Caribbean. Only (p.214) in the late 1750s and early 1760s did the colony receive people directly from Africa, at which time transshipments ceased altogether.⁴⁸

Pennsylvania's window of direct African trade came slightly later. The 1740s and 1750s saw sporadic and declining arrivals from the West Indies, but in the mid-1760s, such transshipments shot up again as employers replaced indentured servants who gained freedom in exchange for military service in the Seven Years' War. Broad participation in slave trafficking from the Caribbean among Pennsylvania merchants was suggested by a 1761 petition of "Divers Merchants of the City of Philadelphia, Trading to His Majesty's Colonies in the West Indies." The twenty-four signers urged the colony's deputy governor to veto a bill taxing slave imports, suggesting that they viewed carrying Africans as a vital part of Caribbean trade. Still, enslaved people from the West Indies met only a portion of the demand created by departing indentured servants; direct African shipments also arrived during the five years after the Seven Years' War. The trade then halted abruptly; no known slave shipments—direct or intercolonial—entered Pennsylvania after 1767. The nonimportation pacts of the Revolutionary era surely contributed to the decline, along with the emergence of antislavery sentiment in the colony (and, to a lesser degree, across the North). The Quakers in Pennsylvania were among the first European settlers to vocalize antislavery arguments in the 1750s and 1760s, and such ideas gained currency in the years leading up to the Revolution.⁴⁹

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The rise of direct African shipments to the northern colonies undercut the transshipment trade from the Caribbean but triggered new routes of intercolonial trafficking. Although the transatlantic deliveries reflected increased demand in the North, slave traders still struggled to sell whole cargoes from (p.215) Africa in northern ports. Africans surviving the Middle Passage to northern colonies thus often faced transshipment along the American coast. With the emergence of African deliveries to New York, for example, slave traders devised a number of strategies to disperse captives beyond the Manhattan market. When discussing a proposed African venture in 1762, New York merchant John Watts explained to his prospective partner in Barbados, “We cannot easily vend” an entire cargo, but “from fifty to a hundred would run high enough.” In other words, Watts anticipated that one hundred captives was the maximum for his market before prices would fall considerably. To avoid a glut, Watts noted, “Virginia could take off a great many,” suggesting that a vessel from Africa to New York should also sell people in another colony. Similarly, in 1765, New York traders advertised “A Parcel of likely Negro Men, Women, Boys, and Girls Slaves” who had recently arrived from Sierra Leone aboard the brigantine *Matty*. Some would be sold at “Coenties Pier” in New York, whereas others were available “at Second-River in the Province of New-Jersey.” Whether the *Matty* stopped at both ports or whether another vessel transshipped captives from New York to New Jersey is unclear, but the dispersal from a northern port was typical. Boston shipping lists show a similar pattern. The first African vessel listed entering that harbor arrived in 1762, followed almost immediately by the first small shipments of enslaved Africans out of that harbor, bound to colonies as far away as Virginia and North Carolina.⁵⁰

In the early 1760s, when Pennsylvania received its only regular direct African shipments, importer Thomas Riche dispersed arriving Africans within the Delaware River region as his predecessors had done but also targeted colonies further afield, commensurate with the larger groups of captives in the direct African trade. When Riche served as selling agent for the schooner *Hannah*, which delivered one hundred Africans directly to Philadelphia in 1761, he informed Samuel Tucker—up and across the Delaware River in Trenton, New (p.216) Jersey—“I intend Sending 15 or 20 up to you for Sale, for which we shall Furnish you with advertisements by the Post on Monday.” Two weeks later, hearing that Tucker had “sold most of the negros,” Riche “Furnish’d [him] with a fresh Parcell.” Presumably, Tucker earned commissions for his efforts. Riche also marched African captives about the countryside himself. After he received shipments, several days often passed without Riche’s recording any letters in his letter book, and these gaps were typically followed by apologies for his delay in responding because of time spent “in the country.” In most cases, Riche did not give reasons for such travel, but he suggested an explanation when a shipment of captives from Africa arrived during a cold spell in late 1763. Owing at least partly to the inclement weather, thirty-three captives from the small shipment had perished on the voyage to Pennsylvania, and many remained sick upon arrival. Riche reported that, because of the chill and the captives’ ill health, “we Cannot move them about the Country for sale.”⁵¹

Riche also looked farther afield for markets, regularly transshipping enslaved people to North Carolina, capitalizing on that market’s limited supply of exploitable labor. Between 1761 and 1765, Riche transshipped recently arrived Africans on at least ten occasions to merchant Samuel Cornell, of New Bern, North Carolina, in groups ranging from a single person to twenty captives at once. Riche also occasionally sent people to Cape Fear. In addition to helping him avoid glutting Delaware River markets, such transshipment might have offered a way to vend captives deemed undesirable by buyers closer to home. For Captain John Burroughs’s voyage from Philadelphia to New Bern aboard the schooner *Nelly*, Riche instructed the sailor, “If you have easy weather take care of the slaves and get them shaved and greased before you get up to Newburn lest they discover old age by their heads.” For these nine enslaved people, uprooted from distant communities, graying hair about their temples brought subjection to further demeaning treatment (Plate 5). Meanwhile, slaves of advancing age might not have been the only people that Riche unloaded in the captive market of North Carolina. In a 1766 letter to Cornell, Riche defended himself against a complaint that one of the Africans he sent was “Subject to Fitts.” These transshipments add to the impression that (p.217)



PLATE 5 . Frontispiece, *The Maroon*. The mid-nineteenth-century engraving depicts the demeaning preparation of human commodities for sale. Traders often oiled or greased the skin of captives and used dyes and makeups to mask signs of age or ill health. Mayne Reid, *The Maroon; or, Planter Life in Jamaica* (New York, 1864). The Library Company of Philadelphia

the enslaved migration to economically marginal colonies skewed away from people judged to be prime workers by traders and slaveholders. On the other hand, elders might have been a rare and welcome presence in communities of the enslaved, with their wisdom and rich knowledge of homelands left behind. Given the traders’ emphasis on youthful vigor in choosing slaves, few elders endured the Atlantic crossing, and patterns in the intercolonial slave trade might have concentrated enslaved migrants of middle age or older in the more marginal colonies.⁵²

The trend of coastal transshipments following direct African deliveries to northern ports possibly peaked in 1764, when Riche wrote to correspondents (p.218) far and wide, panicking about reports that “five Sail of Guinea Men ... Two of which are mine” were all bound for the Delaware River that summer. The result, he feared, would be that prices for “Slaves will Come Lower here then from the Islands.” To prevent such a crash, in addition to his usual strategies for diffusing captives, Riche wrote to merchants about possibilities for transshipments from Philadelphia to the British Caribbean, Maryland, and even Cuba. Riche’s adaptation to changing conditions and pursuit of new partners for dispersal underscore both the importance of intercolonial trade to making transatlantic slaving profitable and the role of such commerce in elaborating Atlantic commercial networks.⁵³

■ These similar, yet distinct, intercolonial slave trades from the Caribbean to various North American regions highlight the varied ways in which American colonies connected to networks of Atlantic trade. Whether a colony’s economy oriented toward producing staple crops for export to Europe or toward the export of provisions to the Caribbean; whether a region’s commercial sector was highly capitalized or less developed; whether a colony exploited enslaved people as a primary or supplementary labor force—such local variations shaped patterns in the slave trade, not only with regard to whether enslaved Africans arrived directly or through intercolonial channels but also with regard to how the intercolonial

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slave trade sorted the African people trapped within it. As greater numbers of transatlantic slavers targeted ever more American ports, and as intercolonial traders linked the British mainland and Caribbean settlements ever more tightly to one another, they integrated a British American market for enslaved African people—and for many other goods, often produced by those Africans' labor. Captives were sorted according to desired or undesired attributes for various roles and swept into existing commodity flows. Here was a market for labor par excellence. Workers themselves were bought, sorted, moved, and sold wherever they would be most valued, with the only value that mattered calculated in pounds sterling.

Notes:

- (1) . For estimates of the British transatlantic slave trade to the Caribbean and North America, see *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, accessed August 2012, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1701&yearTo=1775&flag=3.5&disembarkation=205.204.201.203.202.402.403.401.404.405.804.702.805.703.701.801.802.803.305.304.307.306.309.308.311.310.705.704.501.502.600.301.302.303>. For estimates of the slave trade from the Caribbean to the North American mainland, see Gregory E. O'Malley, "Beyond the Middle Passage: Slave Migration from the Caribbean to North America, 1619–1807," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., LXVI (2009), tables I–X.
- (2) . John C. Coombs notes that nonelite planters in the Virginia regions growing provisions for the Caribbean enjoyed more success in acquiring slaves than nonelite planters growing tobacco, owing to their connections to Caribbean sources of slave importation: "The Phases of Conversion: A New Chronology for the Rise of Slavery in Early Virginia," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XLIII (2011), 343. David Richardson notes that, between 1768 and 1772, for example, the West Indies accounted for 64 percent of New England's total exports; he argues that New England's reliance on Caribbean markets for exports increased over the eighteenth century. See "Slavery, Trade, and Economic Growth in Eighteenth-Century New England," in Barbara L. Solow, ed., *Slavery and the Rise of the Atlantic System* (New York, 1991), 237–264, esp. 250. On the growth of intercolonial trade and the mainland colonies' export of provisions and supplies to the Caribbean more generally, see John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607–1789* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1991), 78–80, 92–110, 174, 198–203; Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1988), 62, 67, 126, 144–145, 184; Richard Pares, *Yankees and Creoles: The Trade between North America and the West Indies before the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956); Stephen Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth: The Economic Culture of Puritan New England* (New York, 1998), chap. 7; Herbert C. Bell, "The West India Trade before the American Revolution," *AHR*, XII (1917), 272–287. North America was so significant to the provisioning of Caribbean plantations that, when the American Revolution disrupted trade networks linking the regions, starvation was a major problem (mostly affecting enslaved people) in some Caribbean colonies; see Richard B. Sheridan, "The Crisis of Slave Subsistence in the British West Indies during and after the American Revolution," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XXXIII (1976), 615–641.
- (3) . On the sadness and anxiety of captives being separated after the Middle Passage, see "The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself," in Vincent Carretta, ed., *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings* (New York, 2003), 126; Stephanie E. Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, Mass., 2007), 202–207.
- (4) . On the export of provisions from the Chesapeake and Carolina to the West Indies, see McCusker and Menard, *Economy of British America*, 130, 174.
- (5) . *South-Carolina Gazette*, Mar. 9, 1738.
- (6) . James Glen to Board of Trade, Aug. 26, 1754, in Elizabeth Donnan, ed., *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1930–1935), IV, 313. Demand for slaves might also have spiked at this time owing to slow importation during the 1740s, thanks to King George's War (1744–1748), but this alone is an unsatisfactory explanation because shipments did not accelerate immediately following the war. Indigo production was introduced in South Carolina during the war, taking off as a secondary crop and buffering the region's economy against rice market fluctuations. See Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness*, 144; McCusker and Menard, *Economy of British America*, 186–188.
- (7) . John Guerard to William Jolliff, May 6, 1754, John Guerard Letter Book, 1752–1754, 34/0321 OvrSz, fol. 258, South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston. Stephen Behrendt shows that demand for slaves in North American plantation colonies intensified in spring and summer, emphasizing crop cycles as the cause (Behrendt, "Markets, Transaction Cycles, and Profits: Merchant Decision Making in the British Slave Trade," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., LVIII [2001], 192–193).
- (8) . Austin and Laurens to Augustus and John Boyd and Co. [of London], [Charleston], Mar. 14, 1757, in Philip M. Hamer et al., eds., *The Papers of Henry Laurens*, 16 vols. (Columbia, S.C., 1968–2002), II, 493 (hereafter cited as *Laurens Papers*). For the *Hannah's* arrival, see "Negroes Imported into South Carolina, 1757," in Donnan, ed., *Documents*, IV, 365. On the many factors limiting transatlantic slavers' control over the timing of their departure from Africa, see Behrendt, "Markets, Transaction Cycles, and Profits," *WMQ*, LVIII (2001), 171–204.
- (9) . Austin and Laurens to Smith and Clifton, May 26, 1755, in *Laurens Papers*, I, 255–256.
- (10) . Guerard to Capt. Watts, Mar. 6, 1754, John Guerard Letter Book, fol. 235. Guerard and Jolliff were not alone in this "square" trade, linking England, Africa's Atlantic islands, the Caribbean, and the North American mainland. Shipping records for Virginia in 1732 note that two vessels transshipping slaves there from the Caribbean had come from Madeira before that. Such notation of previous stops is rare, though, so the frequency of such voyages is unclear; see "Negroes Imported into Virginia, 1727–1769," in Donnan, ed., *Documents*, IV, 189. On the symbiotic relationship of the trade in colonial staples from America to Europe and Madeira wine for the return back across the Atlantic, see David Hancock, *Oceans of Wine: Madeira and the Emergence of American Trade and Taste* (New Haven, Conn., 2009), 108–110. For Guerard's investments in the transatlantic slave trade, see *Voyages*, accessed May 2011, Voyage ID nos. 24010, 24011, 26018, and 26019. "Negroes are in great demand": Charles Steuart to Thomas Oglivie, [Saint Kitts], Mar. 9, 1752, in Charles Steuart Letter Book, I, 1751–1753, microfilm, M-32, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library, Williamsburg, Virginia; see also Steuart to Mrs. Menvielle and Co., [Barbados], Mar. 26, 1752. "Great number of Slaves imported last year": Steuart to Susanna Menvielle and Elias Menvielle, [Barbados], Feb. 13, 1753, *ibid.*

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- (11) . Guerard to Joliff, Mar. 26, 1752, John Guerard Letter Book, fol. 7; Guerard to Mr. Thomas Rock and Co., Mar. 17, 1752, *ibid.*, fols. 3–4. In letters to Rock in the following weeks, Guerard continued to complain about the difficulty of obtaining a cargo for the *Carolina* (fols. 6–7, 11–12).
- (12) . James Murray to David Hunter, Jul. 21, 1749, in Bradford J. Wood, ed., *James Murray in North Carolina: Letters, 1732–1781*, vol. XIII of *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*, 2d Ser. (forthcoming). For another example, see Austin and Laurens to Smith and Clifton, May 26, 1755, in *Laurens Papers*, I, 255–256.
- (13) . Charles Steuart, Alexander McKenzie and Co. to Blackman and Adams, [Barbados?], Jul. 5, 1751, in Charles Steuart Letter Book, I. For another, similar example from Georgia, see Joseph Clay to William Fox, Junior, and Co., Sept. 1, 1774, Joseph Clay and Co. Letter Books, 1772–1776, II, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah.
- (14) . *South-Carolina Gazette*, Mar. 9, 1738.
- (15) . “Negroes Imported into South Carolina, 1749–1751,” in Donnan, ed., *Documents*, IV, 301–302. Discussing Captain Watts’s 1752 voyage, for example, John Guerard encouraged a partner that “if he [Watts] does but bring a good Sort I flatter my Self they [will] Sell well” (John Guerard Letter Book, fols. 17–18).
- (16) . On the Ajas’ predominance among captives from the Bight of Benin, see Patrick Manning, *Slavery, Colonialism, and Economic Growth in Dahomey, 1640–1960* (New York, 1982), 30. On the preference of transatlantic slave traders to match the size of their enslaved cargo with the size of their American market, see Behrendt, “Markets, Transaction Cycles, and Profits,” *WMQ*, LVIII (2001), 188–194; Lorena S. Walsh, “The Chesapeake Slave Trade: Regional Patterns, African Origins, and Some Implications,” *ibid.*, 155. For South Carolina’s direct African trade from 1726–1775, see *Voyages*, accessed September 2012, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1701&yearTo=1775&mslptimp=21300>; for the British Caribbean trade 1726–1775, see *ibid.*, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1726&yearTo=1775&mslptimp=33400.33500.33600.33700.33800.34200.34400.35100.35200.35500>. In the most influential study of African cultures transferred to North American slave quarters, Michael A. Gomez emphasizes the formation of “African ethnic enclaves” due to patterns in the slave trade that concentrated people of similar African backgrounds in the same American regions (Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* [Chapel Hill, N.C., 1998], 11, 38, 150); the intercolonial traffic complicated that picture by tangling the lines of transatlantic migration.
- (17) . Laurens to Joseph Brown, Charleston, Dec. 24, 1763, in *Laurens Papers*, IV, 103–105.
- (18) . On the proportion of arrivals in the Carolinas who disembarked at Charleston, see *Voyages*, accessed May 2011, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1866&mslptimp=21200.21300>. Of the 466 shipments to the Carolinas documented in *Voyages* for which a specific port of disembarkation is listed, 453 went to Charleston. Another 369 voyages list only “South Carolina,” not a specific port, as their point of disembarkation, so they were left out of this calculation. (The editors of *Voyages* assume that such ventures delivered slaves to Charleston, since merchants—not to mention the researchers reading their documents—used the name of a region and its major port interchangeably. If we accept that assumption, the proportion of vessels to the Carolinas that delivered to Charleston climbs to more than 98 percent.) On the proportion of Africans arriving in Barbados or Jamaica, see *Voyages*, accessed April 2011, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces?yearFrom=1701&yearTo=1765&disembarkation=205.305.204.304.307.306.309.201.308.311.203.310.202.301.302.303>. On the proportion of North American arrivals in Virginia and South Carolina, see *ibid.*, accessed May 2011, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1701&yearTo=1765&mslptimp=20000>. On slave traders’ logic in choosing ports for sales, see Richard Nelson Bean, *The British Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: 1650–1775* (New York, 1975), 63; Daniel C. Littlefield, “Charleston and Internal Slave Redistribution,” *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, LXXXVIII (1986), 93–105; Behrendt, “Markets, Transaction Cycles, and Profits,” *WMQ*, LVIII (2001), 191–197; Kenneth Morgan, “Slave Sales in Colonial Charleston,” *English Historical Review*, CXIII (1998), 905–927, esp. 908–909; Trevor Burnard and Kenneth Morgan, “The Dynamics of the Slave Market and Slave Purchasing Patterns in Jamaica, 1655–1788,” *WMQ*, LVIII (2001), 205–228; John C. Coombs, “Building ‘the Machine’: The Development of Slavery and Slave Society in Early Colonial Virginia” (Ph.D. diss., College of William and Mary, 2003), 42–43, 52–54. On the average sizes of transatlantic cargoes, see Herbert S. Klein, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (New York, 1999), 148–149.
- (19) . Alexander X. Byrd notes the high mortality of captives aboard vessels that hopped between multiple American ports; see Byrd, *Captives and Voyagers: Black Migrants across the Eighteenth-Century British Atlantic World* (Baton Rouge, 2008), 52–55.
- (20) . Tyndall and Assheton to Hobhouse and Tyndall, Aug. 22, 1729, Jeffries Collection, XIII, fol. 111, Bristol Central Library, U.K.; Tyndall and Assheton to Isaac Hobhouse, Nov. 1, 1729, “Letters to Messrs. Isaac Hobhouse and Onesiphovous Tyndall, Merchants of Bristol from Their Agents in the West Indies,” MSS 8029/16e, Bristol Record Office, U.K. For Tyndall and Assheton’s earlier warnings about multiple stops, see Jeffries Coll., XIII, fol. 91, 97. In the seventeenth century, port hopping in search of high prices was somewhat more common. Ralph Davis, for example, notes the attraction of the Jamaican market for transatlantic traders in the late seventeenth century because of its size, but also shows that some investors in the trade instructed ship captains to island hop in search of the best prices (Davis, *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* [London, 1962], 294–296). Conversely, Richard S. Dunn notes the importance of a large economy to Royal African Company ships choosing American ports in the seventeenth century, noting that they often avoided smaller islands in part because they considered those buyers less likely to pay their debts (Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624–1713* [1972; rpt. Chapel Hill, N.C., 2000], 235). Richard Pares states that port fees made port hopping for high prices (for any commodity) cost-prohibitive, at least by the early nineteenth century: *A West-India Fortune* (New York, 1950), 226. On the general decline in mortality in the transatlantic slave trade from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century, see Herbert S. Klein et al., “Transoceanic Mortality: The Slave Trade in Comparative Perspective,” *WMQ*, 3d Ser., LVIII (2001), 93–118, esp. table II; see also Klein, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 139–140.
- (21) . *Voyages*, accessed April 2011, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1776&mslptimp=21200>; petition from people of Albemarle, N.C., July 27, 1731, CO 5/293, fol. 24, National Archives, Kew. Bradford J. Wood not only uses the phrase “remote part of the world” as the title of his book on the colonial Cape Fear region; he also quotes many settlers’ use of the word “remote” to describe their relative isolation from the broader Atlantic world. “This remote part of the world” was penned by leaders of a newly formed parish in the region (Wood, *This Remote Part of the World: Regional Formation in Lower Cape Fear, North Carolina, 1725–1775* [Columbia, S.C., 2004], 4–5, 226). “The want of the Negroes”: Thomas Clark to John Watson and John Mackenzie, June 23, 1740, in Wood, ed., *James Murray*

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Letters.

- (22) . On James Murray's life, see Wood's introduction to *James Murray Letters*. I thank Professor Wood for calling my attention to Murray and sharing the forthcoming edition of Murray's letters. Murray was not alone among North Carolina settlers in possessing connections around the Atlantic; see Wood, *Remote Part of the World*, 18. For the relative size of North Carolina's enslaved population by the late colonial period, see *ibid.*, 6.
- (23) . Murray to David Tullideph, [Antigua], Brunswick, Feb. 21, 1735/6, Murray to William Dunbar, Brunswick, Feb. 23, 1735/6, Murray to Henry McCulloh, Brunswick, May 28 1736, and Murray and Samuel Johnston to Ribton Hutchison and Frederick Grimké, July 14, 1736 and July 4, 1739, all in Wood, ed., *James Murray Letters*; Wood, *Remote Part of the World*, 18, 226–228. On Virginia, South Carolina, and New York as sources of transshipment, see Marvin L. Michael Kay and Lorin Lee Cary, *Slavery in North Carolina, 1748–1775* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1995), 21; Wood, *Remote Part of the World*, 38–40; Walter E. Minchinton, "The Seaborne Slave Trade of North Carolina," *North Carolina Historical Review*, LXXI (1994), 7. I have documented seventeen transshipments from New York to North Carolina, primarily from the Naval Office Shipping Lists for New York, CO 5/1222–1228. Arrivals from Virginia and South Carolina rarely appeared in port records (I have documented twenty-three shipments from Charleston and just six from various ports in Virginia), so most of that traffic likely occurred overland or in small boats that escaped the attention of customs officials. Anecdotal sources indicate that port records vastly underreport slave migration from neighboring colonies.
- (24) . Murray to Richard Oswald and Company, Nov. 16, 1752, in Wood, ed., *James Murray Letters*. For more on Oswald, see David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735–1785* (New York, 1995). Instead of North Carolina, Oswald directed most of his dealings to Austin and Laurens in Charleston; see *Laurens Papers*, esp. I–IV.
- (25) . On the slow development of Georgia's slave markets due to a lack of capital after 1750, see Darold D. Wax, "New Negroes Are Always in Demand": The Slave Trade in Eighteenth-Century Georgia," *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, LXVIII (1984), 197. Only a few hundred Africans reached Georgia via the Caribbean in the 1750s, but such trafficking accelerated dramatically as the Seven Years' War (1755–1763) waned, with nearly one thousand captives ferried between 1761 and 1765. Regular transatlantic deliveries quickly outcompeted such intercolonial deliveries thereafter. See O'Malley, "Beyond the Middle Passage," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., LXVI (2009), 150–152. Data on shipments from the Caribbean to North Carolina derives mainly from Naval Office Shipping Lists for Caribbean colonies since few colonial North Carolina port records survive. See Appendix, below; see also Minchinton, "Seaborne Slave Trade of North Carolina," *North Carolina Historical Review*, LXXI (1994), 7.
- (26) . "Captain [Governor George] Burrington's Represent'n of the Present State and Condition of North Carolina," Jan. 1, 1733, CO 5/294, fols. 67–70; Murray and Johnston to Hutchison and Grimké, July 14, Aug. 27, Dec. 15, 1736, in Wood, ed., *James Murray Letters*. For similar examples, see Murray to Rutherford, Jan. 19, 1750/1, and Murray to John Watson, Dec. 2, 1740, *ibid.* Minchinton also notes North Carolina planters' placing orders for slaves with merchants in other colonies, especially in the early eighteenth century ("Seaborne Slave Trade of North Carolina," *North Carolina Historical Review*, LXXI [1994], 23). Laurens also received requests from North Carolina planters; see Laurens to John Rutherford, Nov. 23, 1762, *Laurens Papers*, III, 168–169.
- (27) . Murray to Andrew Bennet, Sept. 6, 1739, in Wood, ed., *James Murray Letters*; Mr. Clark was presumably Thomas Clark, Murray's brother-in-law, and Mr. Douglass was presumably Archibald Douglass. For mention of a similar trip, see Murray to McCulloch, June 23, 1740, *ibid.* For Dalrymple, see Wood, *Remote Part of the World*, 39.
- (28) . Murray to James Rutherford, Jan. 19, 1750/1, in Wood, ed., *James Murray Letters*. Average colonial slave prices at that date are found in a 1753 report on the trade by John Pownal, secretary of the Board of Trade ("Mr. Pownal's Account of the Slave Trade," in Donnan, ed., *Documents*, II, 507). Bean estimates a slightly lower average price of £34 for enslaved adult males in Jamaica in 1751, but that price still suggests that Murray could have only purchased two men (*British Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade*, 202). Wood notes a preference among North Carolina settlers for enslaved women and suggests that might have been crucial to population growth (*Remote Part of the World*, 101–102). Philip D. Morgan and Michael L. Nicholls note a similar bias toward less expensive female and youthful slaves in the early decades of European settlement of the Chesapeake piedmont (Morgan and Nicholls, "Slaves in Piedmont Virginia, 1720–1790," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XLVI [1989], 221–233). Likewise, Jennifer L. Morgan demonstrates that, when many slaveholders thought about enslaved women's work and value, "no rigid distinction between the procreative and the agricultural existed" (*Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* [Philadelphia, 2004], 75). She also notes that, in developmental periods across many colonies and regions, slaveholders showed particular interest in acquiring slave women, presumably with an eye to procreation as well as field labor (77–92).
- (29) . On gender ratios in the slave trade to the Caribbean, see David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (New York, 2000), 95–97. On the benefits to enslaved people of more balanced gender ratios and the unique memories and traditions carried by women and girls, see Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 6, 64–65.
- (30) . For the African regional origins of captives shipped to Virginia from 1661 to 1730, see *Voyages*, accessed September 2012, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1661&yearTo=1730&mjlsptimp=21100>; see also Walsh, "Chesapeake Slave Trade," *WMQ*, LVIII (2001). Kay and Cary note some survival of Igbo (and other African) naming practices among enslaved North Carolinians in the eighteenth century (*Slavery in North Carolina*, 276–277). For more discussion of stages in the North Carolina slave trade and their implications for the captives' regional origins, see Gregory E. O'Malley, "Diversity in the Slave Trade to the Colonial Carolinas," in Bradford J. Wood and Michelle LeMaster, eds., *Creating and Contesting Carolina* (Columbia, S.C., 2013), 243–245, 247–248.
- (31) . Robert Ellis to Joseph Marks, May 12, 1741, Ellis Letter Book, 1736–1748, Am 9251, fol. 292, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (hereafter cited as HSP); *Boston-Gazette*, and *Country Journal*, Sept. 16, 23, 1765 (the advertiser specified that the enslaved boys "have been in the Country about three Months").
- (32) . "Negroes Imported into New York, 1701–1726," in Donnan, ed., *Documents*, III, 444. James G. Lydon argues that West Indian deliveries for 1715 to 1741 outpaced direct African shipments by even more, but *Voyages* documents more direct African arrivals than Lydon found. See Lydon, "New York and the Slave Trade, 1700 to 1774," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XXXV (1978), 382; *Voyages*, accessed April 2011, <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1866&mjlsptimp=20600>. Edgar J. McManus notes the connection between northern exports of provision to the islands and the slave trade in return; see McManus, *Black Bondage in the North* (Syracuse, N.Y., 1973), 20. On the problems with newspapers for estimating the trade's volume, see the Appendix, below.

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- (33) . Quoted in William D. Piersen, *Black Yankees: The Development of an Afro-American Subculture in Eighteenth-Century New England* (Amherst, Mass., 1988), 4; see also Lorenzo Johnston Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England, 1620–1776* (New York, 1942), 34–35.
- (34) . “A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Venture, a Native of Africa: But Resident above Sixty Years in the United States of America; Related by Himself” (1798), in Vincent Carretta, ed., *Unchained Voices: An Anthology of Black Authors in the English-Speaking World of the Eighteenth Century* (Lexington, Ky., 2004), 375; “Accounts of Nathaniel Harris, 1712,” in Donnan, ed., *Documents*, III, 26. Voyages like Smith’s are not included in the estimates of intercolonial slave movements in this book because it was a continuation of a transatlantic endeavor; Smith changed neither vessels nor ownership in Barbados. The *Voyages* database includes such movements in its statistics for the transatlantic slave trade, so omitting such shipments here makes this intercolonial data more complementary with the information available through *Voyages*. On the preponderance of arrivals from the Caribbean before the mid-eighteenth century, see Robert E. Desrochers, Jr., “Slave-for-Sale Advertisements and Slavery in Massachusetts, 1704–1781,” *WMQ*, 3d Ser, LIX (2002), 623–664.
- (35) . *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), June 14–21, 1739; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Mar. 12, 1761; *New-York Gazette; or, the Weekly Post-Boy*, Mar. 21, Apr. 18, 25, 1765.
- (36) . *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Oct. 10, 1751, May 17, 1759; Gary B. Nash, *Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia’s Black Community, 1720–1840* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988), 16–37. See also Shane White, *Somewhat More Independent: The End of Slavery in New York City, 1770–1810* (Athens, Ga., 1991), 182–183; Jill Lepore, *New York Burning: Liberty, Slavery, and Conspiracy in Eighteenth-Century Manhattan* (New York, 2005).
- (37) . Thomas Riche to Thomas Shute, Jan. 1, 1763, Thomas Riche Letter Book, I, 1750–1764, Am 9261, HSP. Desrochers notes that eighteenth-century Boston received few captives deemed “refuse” by traders (“Slave-for-Sale Advertisements,” *WMQ*, LIX [2002], 649).
- (38) . Dickinson to John Beswick, Apr. 26, 1715, Jonathan Dickinson Letter Book, 1715–1721, Y12–/–1628, alcove 4, shelf 12, fol. 12, Library Company of Philadelphia; Dickinson to “Deare Brother” [Isaac Gale?], May 2, 1715, *ibid.*, fols. 13–14; Dickinson to John Lewis, May 2, 1715, *ibid.*, fols. 21–22.
- (39) . Ellis to “Mr. Shaw,” Sept. 18, 1736, in Ellis Letter Book, fol. 8. The slaves Ellis was selling probably reached Philadelphia via transshipment from the Caribbean and from Charleston aboard the sloop *Elizabeth and Lavenia*, which delivered twenty-eight “Negro Boys and Girls”; see *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Aug. 5–12, 1736; John Ryan to Jacob Kollock, Jan. 25, 1739, in Ellis Letter Book. For other examples of Ellis’s acquiring Africans in South Carolina, see Ellis to Mess’rs Cleland and Wallace, July 1, 1738, and Ellis to Thomas Gadsden, July 1, 1738, *ibid.*, 104–105; for the same in Antigua and Saint Kitts, see Ellis to David Hall, Apr. 22, 1740, 197–198; for the same in Barbados, see Ellis to Captain Meas, Apr. 1740, 203. For more on Ellis, see Darold D. Wax, “Robert Ellis, Philadelphia Merchant and Slave Trader,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, LXXXVIII (1964), 52–69. On the proportions of enslaved Africans in northern colonies and their concentration in urban areas, see McManus, *Black Bondage in the North*, 14–17; Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998), 47–63; after about 1750, however, Berlin emphasizes that enslaved Africans grew as a proportion of northern populations (177–179).
- (40) . Walter Nugent to Abraham Redwood, Antigua, Apr. 11, 1731, in Donnan, ed., *Documents*, III, 121–122. On slave buyers’ interest in pairing male and female slaves, see Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 84–85.
- (41) . John Frederick Pinney to James Browne, Bath, Oct. 27, 1755, Pinney Collection, Letter Book I, John Frederick Pinney, 1740–1742, 1754–1755, Special Collections, Bristol University Library, U.K.; Robert Raper to Governor Boone, Charleston, Feb. 24, 1761, Robert Raper Letter Book, 1759–1770, MSS 34/51 1, fol. 65, South Carolina Historical Society.
- (42) . On the ability of American-born slaves in the nineteenth century to use subtle social cues in assessing potential new owners, see Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999), chap. 6. See also Johann David Schoepf, *Travels in the Confederation*, ed. and trans. Alfred J. Morrison, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1911), II, 148; Wood, *Remote Part of the World*, 100–101; Daina Ramey Berry, “‘We’m Fus’ Rate Bargain’: Value, Labor, and Price in a Georgia Slave Community,” in Walter Johnson, ed., *The Chattel Principle: Internal Slave Trades in the Americas* (New Haven, Conn., 2004), 55. On the contrasting silence of most arriving Africans at their sales, see Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery*, 179.
- (43) . John Bayley to John Yeates, July 7, 1743, Urbin Strict to Yeates, July 26, 1743, John Franklin to Yeates, July 25, 1743, Edward Polegreen to Yeates, Aug. 13, 1742, and see also Stephen Butcher to Yeates, Sept. 1, 1743, all in John Yeates Correspondence, 1738–1749 (unpaginated), Yeates Papers, no. 740, HSP. For an example of the freight charges in such a case, see Ellis to Robert Horry, July 25, 1738, Ellis Letter Book, 114; Ellis mentions receiving forty shillings for the passage of an enslaved boy on one of his vessels. By contrast, “a passenger” paid £3 for travel aboard the same ship. Morgan highlights the importance to slave traders of an exaggerated sense of the differences between themselves and Africans (*Laboring Women*, chap. 1).
- (44) . Dickinson to “Deare Brother,” Apr. 30, 1715, Dickinson Letter Book, fol. 20; Ellis to Benjamin and John Savage, Apr. 25, 1740, Ellis Letter Book, 208 (Ellis’s letters include many other examples of the preference for children: see, for instance, 197–198, 212, 213, 227, 253–255); *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 14–21, 1733; *American Weekly Mercury*, July 5–12, 1733. On northerners’ preference for children and training for artisanal trades, see McManus, *Black Bondage in the North*, 21, 36, 42–46; Darold D. Wax, “Preferences for Slaves in Colonial America,” *Journal of Negro History*, LVIII (1973), 401; Desrochers, “Slave-for-Sale Advertisements,” *WMQ*, 3d Ser, LIX (2002), 649; Wilma King, “African Children and the Transatlantic Slave Trade across Time and Place,” in David T. Gleeson and Simon Lewis, eds., *Ambiguous Anniversary: The Bicentennial of the International Slave Trade Bans* (Columbia, S.C., 2012), 53.
- (45) . “A Narrative of the Most Remarkable Particulars in the Life of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, an African Prince, as Related by Himself” (1772), rpt. in William L. Andrews and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., eds., *Slave Narratives* (New York, 2002), 1–34. Gronniosaw does not specify the age at which he crossed the Atlantic. Andrews and Gates suggest he was “still a boy” (1006), which fits with my reading. Adam Potkay and Sandra Burr estimate that Gronniosaw was born between 1710 and 1714 and note that, after living in New York with Van Horn, he was sold again around 1730. His age then would have been between sixteen and twenty, so he was younger when he crossed the Atlantic—but how much younger is unclear (Potkay and Burr, eds., *Black Atlantic Writers of the Eighteenth Century* [New York, 1995], 23. On English slaveholders’ dressing enslaved Africans in livery as a marker of status, see Catherine Molineux, “Hogarth’s Fashionable Slaves: Moral Corruption in

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Eighteenth-Century London," *ELH*, LXXII (2005), 497–499.

(46) . Paul Lovejoy notes that children surviving the slave trade to Cuba, especially those who settled in urban environments, tended to acculturate quickly and exploit their knowledge of local ways to purchase their freedom (Lovejoy, "The Children of Slavery: The Transatlantic Phase," *Slavery and Abolition*, XXVII, no. 2 [August 2006], 208–209). Children arriving in North American cities probably acculturated with equal rapidity, especially when not living among African adults; see Peter H. Wood, *Strange New Land: Africans in Colonial America* (New York, 2003), 67.

(47) . McCusker and Menard, *Economy of British America*, 101–103, 107–109, 189–199, 203–205. *Voyages*, accessed April 2011, shows nearly five thousand captives reaching New England on vessels directly from Africa. This does not include the many small shipments in which slave traders delivered most captives farther south but kept some for delivery to New England (<http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1730&yearTo=1770&mjslptmp=20100.20300.20400.20500>) . McManus asserts that the rise in African shipments to northern colonies was linked to the rupture of the British asiento and the resulting close of Spanish markets to British slave traders. That northern merchants entered this trade in large numbers suggests that the driving force might have been increased northern demand rather than the closure of Spanish markets (*Black Bondage in the North*, 22–23).

(48) . Lydon attributes New York's shifting trade patterns to lingering fear after the 1741 conspiracy scare ("New York Slave Trade," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XXXV [1978], 387). For the South Sea Company's flour smuggling trade under the asiento, see Chapter 6, below; see also Elena Andrea Schneider, "The Occupation of Havana: War, Trade, and Slavery in Eighteenth-Century Cuba" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2011), 42–48. For New Jersey's African imports, see *Voyages*, accessed April 2011, <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1514&yearTo=1866&mjslptmp=20800> . One should note that these mid-eighteenth-century African deliveries to New York were not the first transatlantic slaving ventures to the colony. In the late seventeenth century, independent slave traders circumventing the Royal African Company's monopoly by acquiring slaves in East Africa occasionally delivered their captives to New York.

(49) . Darold D. Wax, "Negro Imports into Pennsylvania, 1720–1766," *Pennsylvania History*, XXXII (1965), 254–287; "Petition of the Merchants of Philadelphia," 1761, in Donnan, ed., *Documents*, III, 453–454. On the emergence of abolitionism in Pennsylvania, see Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550–1812* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1968), 271–280.

(50) . John Watts to Gedney Clarke, New York, Mar. 30, 1762, in Donnan, ed., *Documents*, III, 457; *New York Mercury*, Oct. 7, 1765; *New York Gazette or Weekly Post-Boy*, Oct. 3, 10, 1765; *Voyages*, accessed May 2011, <http://slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces?yearFrom=1765&yearTo=1765&shipname=Mattey> ; Naval Office Shipping Lists for Massachusetts, 1686–1765, microfilm, CO 5/850, fol. 14. McManus also notes regular transshipments from New York to New Jersey after New York received slaves directly from Africa (*Black Bondage in the North*, 23). Several scholars have noted Rhode Island slave traders' transshipping captives down the coast; see Jay Coughtry, *The Notorious Triangle: Rhode Island and the African Slave Trade, 1700–1807* (Philadelphia, 1981); McManus, *Black Bondage in the North*, 21–22; Wax, "Preferences for Slaves," *Journal of Negro History*, LVIII (1973), 375; Piersen, *Black Yankees*, 4; see also "Instructions to Captain Pollipus Hammond," 1746, in Donnan, ed., *Documents*, III, 138–139.

(51) . Riche to Samuel Tucker, Aug. 1, Aug. 18, 1761, Riche Letter Book. For other transactions with Tucker, see *ibid.*, letters dated Aug. 13, 16, Sept. 2, 14, 1762; Riche to Gampert and Heyman and Co., Oct. 21, 1763; and see also Riche to Gampert, Heyman, Hill, and Jacob Miller, Oct. 8, 1763. For an example where Riche refers to being in the country shortly after importing slaves, see Riche to Mr. Lewis, Aug. 6, 1761. See also *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 3, 1762. For these captives' voyage from Africa to Pennsylvania, see *Voyages*, accessed February 2013, Voyage ID no. 28045.

(52) . Riche to Samuel Cornell, June 10, 1766, Riche Letter Book. For Riche's other shipments of Africans to North Carolina, see his letters to Cornell, dated Sept. 1, 1761, Sept. 29, Nov. 11, 1762, Aug. 23, Sept. 17, Dec. 13, 1763, Apr. 23, Aug. 18, Oct. 11, 1764, all *ibid.* For Cape Fear, see Riche to Anthony Mobson, Oct. 22, 1765, *ibid.* See also Riche's assorted bills of lading in Ports of Philadelphia and Barbados, Bills of Lading, 1716–1772 (unpaginated, loose sheets), no. 515, HSP. "Get them shaved and greased": Riche to John Burroughs, [October 1765], Riche Letter Book.

(53) . Riche to Cornelius Coppinger, Apr. 2, 1764, *ibid.*; see also Riche to Henry White, Aug. 14, 24, 1764.



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