THE TORO HISTORICAL REVIEW

CSUDH
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, DOMINGUEZ HILLS

Families and Households in New England and the Chesapeake

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Historians have regarded the household institution as one of the most critical forms of authority during British Colonial America. Two prominent regions studied during Colonial America are the New England and the Chesapeake regions. Historians such as Philip Greven, Gloria Main, Carol Shammas, and Daniel Scott Smith have studied these families and have significantly contributed to the understanding of Colonial American Families and Households.[1] Laying out the foundation, Greven and Main argued that the patriarchal household structure transformed into the primary form of authority that governed people's lives. Thirty years later, Carol Shammas showed historians how to view the household as a "governing institution."[2] Shammas analyzed the "household government" between the eighteenth and early twentieth centuries.[3] By broadening who should be considered as part of the family unit, (dependents, slaves and indentured servants,)-Shammas reflected the extended authority of the household head.[4] However, when servitude and slavery ended, the authority of the household head shrunk back to their original nuclear families. Shammas's argument strongly focused on the impact the state had on household control and authority. This research is organized into two major historical questions which further analyzes the household structure.

The first question compares and contrasts the characteristics of families and households in the Chesapeake and New England in early America. The research aims to answer how different characteristics contributed to the development of household governments in both regions. The second research question closely examines free and unfree children within the household. Using Shammas' definition of a household government, the second question asks how the experiences of free children and apprentice children contributed to the strengthening of the household government. This paper argues that although New England and the Chesapeake

began with different demographics, economies and political systems, both areas had similarities in creating a stronger household government by the eighteenth century through the use of various dependents. The household became the most significant for of authority regardless of geography, due to a lack of a dominant governmental institution. To answer both historical questions, quantitative data retrieved from HSUS, as well as the Pennsylvania Gazette and qualitative data such as letters, sermons, legal codes, and newspaper advertisements have been utilized.

Characteristics of New England and the Chesapeake

The development of demographics, economics, and political systems varied between both regions, effecting how the household developed. By comparing and contrasting New England and the Chesapeake colonies throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, historians concluded that there was not one household model that was uniform across colonial America. Historians have agreed that although the household structure differed between New England and the Chesapeake, there are general conclusions to be drawn. The development of the colonial household structure shows that an emphasis of the household government became an influential institution to all of the dependents.

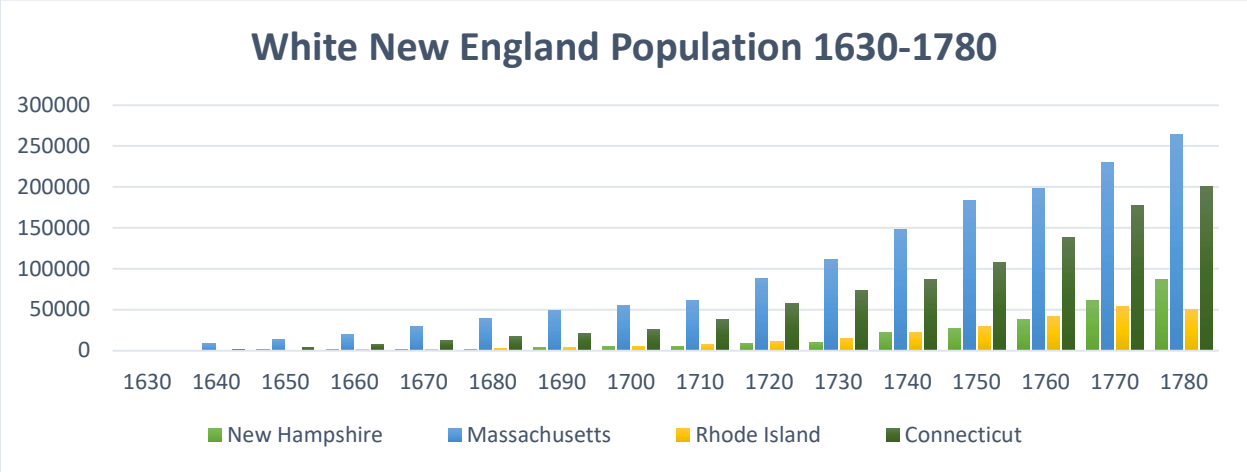
Demographics

The demographics of New England and the Chesapeake regions allows historians to understand the conditions of the household structure and government. The population is one of the defining factors which affected colonies and the rate that households developed. Migrants, population, sex ratios, and dependents are key characteristics when examining demographics.

Migration Patterns: New England vs. Chesapeake

Migration patterns impacted the demographics, between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in New England and the Chesapeake. According to historian Philip Greven, the first generation of migrants in the seventeenth century New England tended to migrate as families; due to families migrating together, New England colonies had a stable population and sex ratios in comparison to the Chesapeake.[5] Figure 1 portrays the white population in New England from 1630-1780 shows that from the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries, New England had a growing population from 1630-1780.

Figure 1

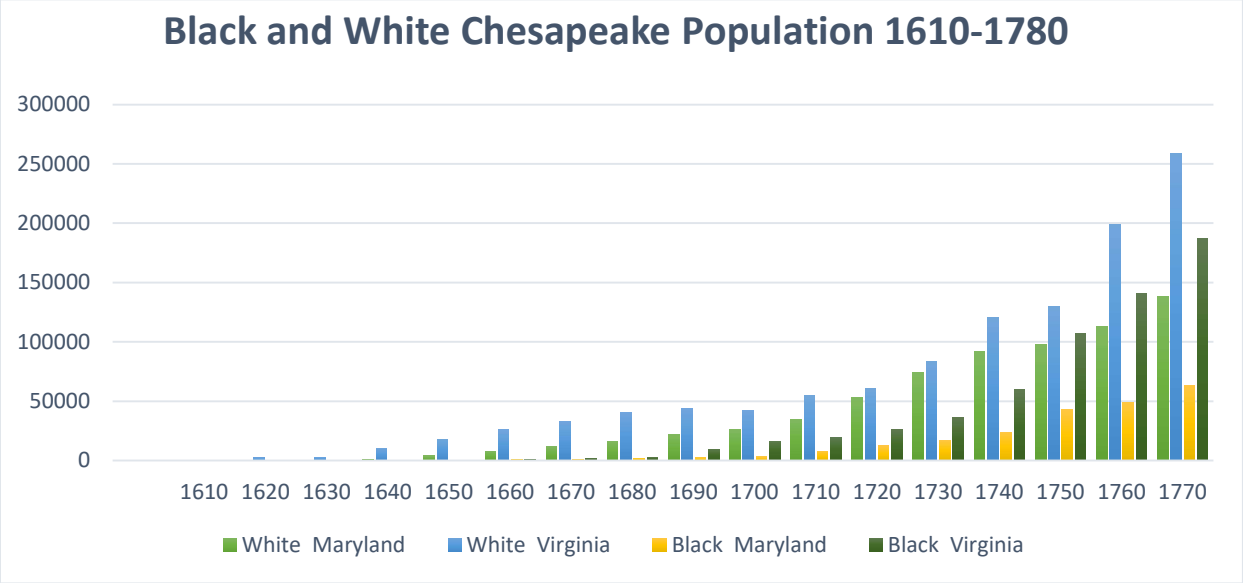


Source: John J. McCusker, " Population, by race and by colony or locality: 1610-1780," Table Eg1-59 in Historical Statistics of the United States, Earliest Times to the Present: Millennial Edition, edited by Susan B. Carter, Scott Sigmund Gartner, Michael R. Haines, Alan L. Olmstead, Richard Sutch, and Gavin Wright. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/ISBN-9780511132971.Eg1-193.

According to the data, New England colonies had a 51% population increase between 1640-1780. As Carol Shammas discussed in *A History of Household Government in America,* the term "household government" not only includes the number of dependents, such as slaves, apprentices, or in some cases, orphans, extended the patriarch's authority.[6] As the population

grew, the household authority needed to expand in order to keep control over the growing household size.

Figure 2



Source: John J. McCusker," Population, by race and by colony or locality: 1610-1780, " Table Eg1-59 in Historical Statistics of the United States, Earliest Times to the Present: Millennial Edition, edited by Susan B. Carter, Scott Sigmund Gartner, Michael R. Haines, Alan L. Olmstead, Richard Sutch, and Gavin Wright. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/ISBN-9780511132971.Eg1-193.

In contrast to New England, Chesapeake migrants typically consisted of single indentured servants, which affected the marriage rates.[7] As shown in Figure 2, Virginia and Maryland had a significant population increase due to the rise in slaves. The black population had a 99.99% increase and the white population had a 99.92% increase from 1610-1780. Plantation demands led to the population consisting of predominantly men. Previously mentioned, the household included not only blood relatives but other dependents such as slaves.[8] The transition into slavery in the Chesapeake supported a strong household government due to the addition of dependents. The addition of dependents expanded the household size, therefore increasing the authority of the household head.

Sex Ratios

Another demographic characteristic that affected the household in New England and the Chesapeake was the sex ratios. New England during the seventeenth century had a growing population due to low mortality rates and families migrating together.[9] Migrating with families and having low sex ratios led to universal marriage. Low sex ratios allowed a high marriage frequency, which led to a strong household government beginning in the seventeenth century and continued throughout the eighteenth century. Under these conditions, New England patriarchs could establish firm control over their households.

In comparison to New England region, Chesapeake migrants consisted of indentured servants, and individuals rather than families.[10] Between 1624-1701 in Virginia, the white sex ratio was 2.45:1.[11] High sex ratios led to low marriage rates in the seventeenth century. Although Virginia lacks data regarding marriage rates, we can use available data from Connecticut to examine if lower sex ratios leads to a higher marriage rate. In 1774, Connecticut had a 0.98:1 sex ratio.[12] Data from Connecticut shows that 73% of the adult population aged 20-70 were married.[13] According to accessible data, lower sex ratios do equate to a higher number of marriages.[14] The sex ratios changed in the eighteenth century with improved mortality rates. Low sex ratios and longer life expectancy led to patriarchs having more opportunity to establish control over households.

Compared to New England, the Chesapeake only saw a stable household beginning in the early eighteenth century when life expectancy increased, and the sex ratios declined. According to historian Allan Kulikoff, the patriarchal household structure seen in New England only appeared in the Chesapeake after the slave trade expanded and added more dependents to the

planter household.[15] Declining mortality rates allowed longer marriages providing the opportunity for patriarchs to ascertain solid authority within the household.[16] As the demographics changed and expanded, the economy needed to sustain that population.

Economics

New England Family Farms

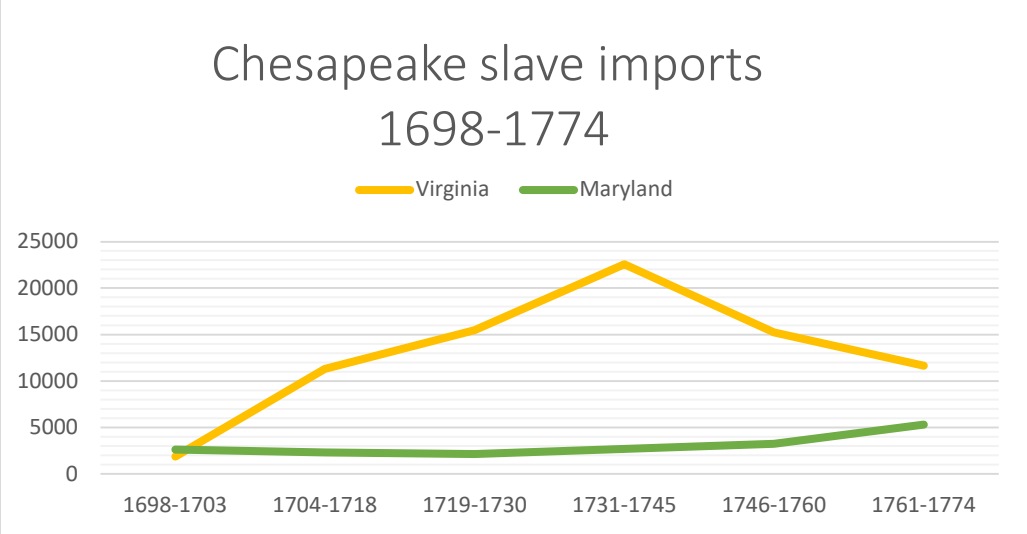
As New England and Chesapeake colonies developed, the economic conditions directly affected the household government. The first noticeable difference between the two regions was that New England had an agricultural economy, dependent on family land transmissions, and the Chesapeake had a plantation system. According to Philip Greven's study of Andover, Massachusetts, land transmissions (inheritance) were notable not only for making money but also for sons to become independent.[17] Transferring land when sons became of age not only granted them freedom, but also gave them the opportunity to start producing their own income. Receiving land granted sons independent financial security, and the opportunity to create their own households. In the article "Parental Power and Marriage Patterns: An Analysis of Historical Trends in Hingham, Massachusetts," Daniel Scott Smith used quantitative data to provide concrete evidence of shifts within marriages. In the article, Smith argued that although parents would lose laborers and money when their sons married, it cannot be proven that parents directly controlled their son's marriages.[18] Whether or not the goal of fathers had been to control their sons, until the eighteenth century, fathers wanted direct control of their property until they died.[19]

When examining New England, historians do not view the economy as a stable institution compared to other tobacco and sugar colonies. *From Dependency to Independence: Economic Revolution in Colonial New England,* Margaret Newell argued that in the early seventeenth

century, New England did have a weak agricultural economy, but by the eighteenth century, it transformed into a strong economy.[20] Newell also stated that although the economy of New England eventually became sophisticated, the individual household "remained as a unit of production."[21] Household authority/control was essential in order for households to remain as a form of production. Contrary to New England, the Chesapeake had large plantations and required a large labor force.

Chesapeake Plantation Economies

Figure 3



Source: John J. McCusker, " Slaves imported into Virginia and Maryland: 1698-1774," Table Eg214-216 in Historical Statistics of the United States, Earliest Times to the Present: Millennial Edition, edited by Susan B. Carter, Scott Sigmund Gartner, Michael R. Haines, Alan L. Olmstead, Richard Sutch, and Gavin Wright. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/ISBN-9780511132971.Eg194-216.

Due to the labor demands created by plantations, the Chesapeake region had significant growth in slave imports. Between 1698-1774 in Virginia and Maryland, the number of slave imports grew drastically.[22] Figure 3 portrays the slave imports into the Chesapeake between 1698 and 1774. Not only did the Chesapeake have a higher number of slaves, but Virginia had a

higher number of slave imports compared to Maryland. The economy of a staple crop system created a need for a large labor force along with inter-colony (inner-plantation) slave trade.[23] Throughout the Chesapeake, many plantation owners made an additional income by buying or leasing slaves.[24] The economy in the Chesapeake heavily relied on slave labor. The Chesapeake household model differed from New England, but both regions had a strong household government. Although New England's economic output did not match the Chesapeake's, both regions used indentured servitude and apprenticeship as a means of labor, which further expanded the household government.

The household size and government grew due to the additional dependents within the household, and examining the dependents in both regions helps historians further understand how the financial system of apprentices and servants contributed into creating a strong household government. Apprentices' and indentured servants' contracts had strict rules and harsh punishments for those who fail to follow the contracts. One example of an indentured apprentice contract is from New York 1778, where William Matthews agreed to a seven-year apprenticeship.[25] Although apprenticeships were for learning a trade and eventually gaining freedom, signing under a seven-year contract that states they must follow their master had close similarities to indentured servant contracts. Parents essentially allowed their children to live away from home and masters gained a form of free labor, and extra dependents to control. Another letter from September 22, 1756, in Maryland, showed the complaints of a female indentured servant. In the letter, a young woman named Betty, begs her father to send clothes after she discussed how her treatment was worse than the blacks.[26] Many indentured servants have similar complaints, and when further examining the Pennsylvania and Virginia Gazette,

there are many cases of indentured servants running away or punished for breaking their master's rules.

Although New England and the Chesapeake did not have similar economic models, the economy of both regions aided in the establishment of a strong household government. New England began with a weak economic structure dependent on family labor, which allowed for household heads direct authority over his dependents. Due to the economy being dependent on family production, household heads had a greater authoritative hold over their dependents. In contrast, the Chesapeake's formation into a slave society expanded the household size and extent of the patriarch's authority. Giving the household heads the role as masters over servants and apprentices further expanded the household government in New England and the Chesapeake.

Patriarchy: Law and Inheritance

The household government transformed into a robust authoritative unit, and the political system during colonial America reinforced that authority. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, different jurisdictions created the Chesapeake and New England colonies. For example, Virginia during the seventeenth century was created for capitol, and in theory, under a hierarchy, but the actual colony had a provincial government in charge.[27] The provincial government was patriarchal, in which it gave men the role of heads of households.[28] Historians have concluded that colonists viewed a patriarchal system as the only system that would allow for a functioning society.[29] Between both regions, the extent of the household authority grew due to the additional dependents in the household. In order to understand how the legal system reinforced the patriarchal household structure in both regions, it is necessary to understand how the laws affected dependents.

New England: Common Law

Gloria Main, in *People of a Spacious Land,* argued that during the eighteenth century, patriarchy declined between fathers and sons, but at the expense of women.[30] When first settling in New England, due to the labor demands of the new environment and economy, women worked alongside men.[31] This demonstrates that women had some importance in early New England life. In the seventeenth century, widowed women executed the wills of their deceased husbands themselves, whereas, in the eighteenth century, women lost that privilege to other male household members.[32] Examining the decline in women's legal involvement, Main demonstrated that compared to the seventeenth century, patriarchal control increased over women, further expanding the authority of the household head.

During the seventeenth century in New England, widows had many regulations when it came to their inheritance. In *A History of a Household Government in America*, Shammas argued that during the eighteenth century, colonial women did not have economic power over any property or dowries that they brought into the marriage.[33] Men had control over women's "lineage property," which led to equity laws.[34] Although equity laws mainly affected the wealthy, the purpose of the laws meant to give women some control over their wealth.[35] Other historians such as Marylynn Salmon examined marriage settlements to analyze how often colonists practiced equity laws. Salmon argued that in many cases, marriage settlements gave men control over the property.[36] Salmon also stated that although there had been equity laws, colonists practiced common law instead, which prevented many women from owning property.[37]Although laws created by the end of the American Revolution ensured equal land shares amongst sons and daughters, fathers still overturned those laws and distributed land

however they wanted.[38] Fathers wrote wills that stated how to divide their land, and in doing so, they actively limited daughters' shares to give their sons more land.[39] Similar to women in New England, women in the Chesapeake also had to deal with laws consistently regulating their inheritances, from dowries and wills.

Chesapeake: Inheritance

As previously mentioned, during the seventeenth century, most of the immigrants into the Chesapeake were indentured servants that had no personal freedoms until they completed serving their masters. When examining how the legal system affected the household structure, living in a society that allowed for ownership over another person created a strong authoritative head, and reinforced the patriarchal household structure. The extension of the household head's authority directly affected all the dependents within the household, especially women and children.

One difference between both regions was that Chesapeake widows inherited property from their deceased husbands. Widows had access to lands, and slaves that came with the land, however, they had certain restrictions. For example, a Virginia law from 1705 stated that any slaves a widow inherits could not be sold or leased outside of the colony.[40] This law proves that even during the eighteenth century, women's status did not improve. Another act from Maryland in 1698 stated that only after debts and funeral expenses are paid, if there is a widow, she shall get one part of the estate, and the rest divided among children, never gaining any property herself.[41] Even after becoming widows, women rarely gained independence and financial autonomy. Although the Chesapeake and New England had different societies, women had similar experiences in that women were placed in dependent roles for the entirety of their lives.

The legal codes prove New England and Chesapeake colonies aided in the establishment of a strong household government between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Colonial Children

The development of a strong household affected all the dependents. Historian Holly Brewer in "Children and Parents," stated that childrearing and child labor are areas that need further research. Examining how childhood differed regionally, and how unfree children were affected, can lead to a better understanding of household governments. This section will look into the question of how children, free and indentured, expanded the household government. A larger number of dependents provided household heads additional responsibility, authority, and ownership, which reinforced a strong household government.

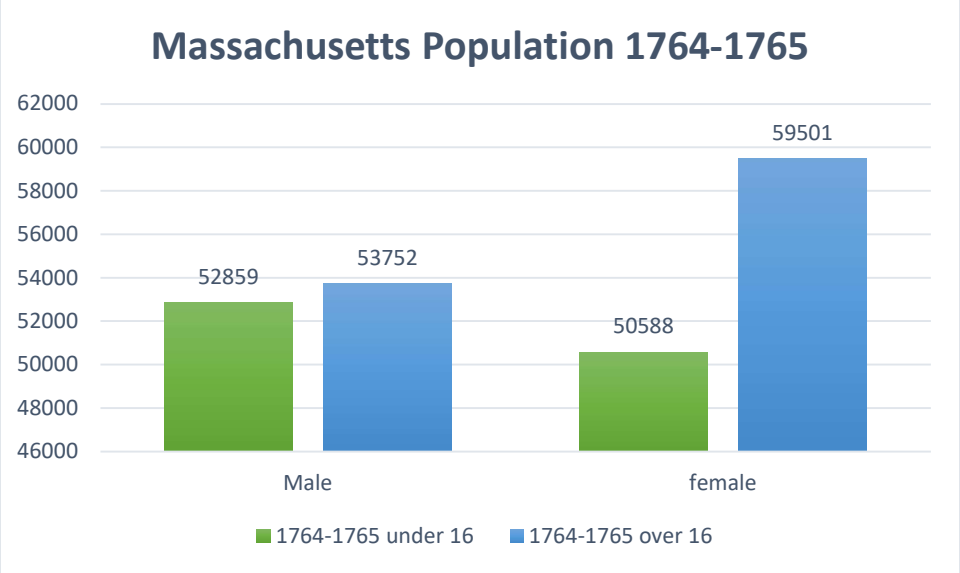
According to Karlsen in "Women and Gender," family historians tended to focus on New England colonies.[42] Danial Blake Smith stated that before the nineteenth century, the Chesapeake region had few written documents about life because colonists focused on surviving, rather than keeping written information.[43] Historians have agreed that by the eighteenth century, attitudes towards families and children shifted so that the household did not solely revolve around the head. Although colonial Americans' views on families changed, historians emphasized the importance of the extent of power the heads of households held. Other historians such as Carr and Walsh have done further research regarding family and households in the Chesapeake area. Analyzing the historiography as well as demography and the experience of children portrays how children, free and unfree, aided in strengthening the household government.

Population of Children

When analyzing the experience of childhood, free or unfree, it is essential to distinguish what age childhood ends. According to Main, children came to the legal age of eighteen for women and twenty-one for men.[44] In order to carefully examine how children allowed the household government to become stronger, a close analysis of the characteristics of children in New England and the Chesapeake regions will be conducted. In "Government in Comparative perspective," by Carole Shammas demonstrates the dependents in 1774 North American colonies. The table created by Shammas shows that the total minor population (under age twenty-one) made up 57% of the population in North American colonies.[45] Children made up the majority of the population, and parents needed strong control over them.

New England Population

Figure 4



Source: John J, McCusker, " Population of Massachusetts, by age, sex, race, and ethnicity: 1764-1784, " Table Eg117-131 in Historical Statistics of the United States, Earliest Times to the Present: Millennial Edition, edited by Susan B. Carter, Scott Sigmund Gartner, Michael R. Haines, Alan L. Olmstead, Richard Sutch, and Gavin Wright. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/ISBN-9780511132971.Eg1-193.

As previously discussed, during the seventeenth century, the majority of New England's population migrated together, which created lower sex ratios. Although there is a lack of data regarding the population of children during the seventeenth century, there is data about children beginning in the eighteenth century. Figure 4 portrays the population of children under the ages of sixteen in Massachusetts between the years 1764-1765.

According to Robert Wells, the census in 1767 only categorized males by age and women through marital status, but with the available data, we can still analyze sex ratios during the eighteenth century.[46] In New Hampshire, the males under the age of 16 made up 49% of the population in 1767.[47] The sex ratio from 1767-1776 rose from 1.02 to 1.04, which is still a low sex ratio.[48] To reiterate, New England colonies did not have a high sex ratio or an unstable population during the seventeenth century. Understanding the population characteristics and marriage rates is important in order for historians to examine the growth of households.

Chesapeake Population

Unlike New England, Maryland and Virginia had an unstable population during the seventeenth century. In 1701 the first census in Maryland was taken and showed that between 1701 and 1712, the population expanded from 32,258 to 46,147.[49] Between 1704 and 1755, the percentage of children under the age of sixteen rose from 40.2% to 49.3%. As the population rose of children rose, by 1755, the sex ratio declined from 1.54 to 1.13 for adults and 1.09 for children. Unlike New England, the sex ratios started to decline by the mid-eighteenth century. Virginia conducted its census at the beginning of the seventeenth century, unlike other colonies. In 1624 only 3.6% of children were recorded, with an overall sex ratio of 5.3.[50] By the eighteenth century, white sex ratios in Virginia declined as the population became stable.[51]

Lower sex ratios led to an increase in marriage which contributed to an expanding household. As the population grew, researching the experiences of children provides further insight as to how the household government expanded.

Experience of Free Children

Historians have concluded that between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, dependents such as children, extended the authority of the household heads. Gloria Main in, *People of a Spacious Land,* argued that cultural aspects such as religion, impacted parent and child relationships and that English immigrants in New England wanted to create a religious community.[52] In 1693, John Locke wrote that in order to raise obedient children, parents must start governing their children while they are still very young.[53] Locke stated that in order for children to grow and become obedient, it is the father's job to establish his authority over them and that children need to "look to their parents as their lords and absolute governors."[54] This sermon given by Locke proves the argument made by Main in which religion heavily influenced how the parents viewed authority. The rhetoric of having fathers seen as a master and someone that needs to be obeyed, reinforced the household as a strong authoritative institute. Another example of what children experienced in the household came from John Cotton, a pastor in Massachusetts in 1656. He explained that children should not be left to themselves and be able to do as they please, and children are to obey their parents. Children were expected to obey their parents' any form of disobedience was met with complete abandonment from parents and, in some cases, legal corrective action.

The experience of childhood during the seventeenth century was set up to give parents complete authority, thus reinforcing a strong patriarchal household government. Historians have

debated that by the eighteenth century, the household structure became more family-oriented, placing the children in the forefront. Shammas analyzed changing familial attitudes by examining conversation pieces from the mid-eighteenth to the nineteenth century. In the early eighteenth century, family paintings tended to be centered around the head of the household. In contrast, by the late eighteenth century, the focal point of the pieces switched to mothers and children.[55] Shammas' work on conversation pieces provided insight into how colonial Americans changed their view about the importance of family members. Other historians, such as Shammas and Main, have agreed that by the eighteenth century, attitudes towards families and children changed so that the household did not solely revolve around the head. Although the colonist's views on families transformed, historians emphasized the importance of the extent of power the heads of households held. Households heads exerted this power through childrearing practices.

Expectations for childrearing

The expectation of children to be obedient and non-defiant subjects to their parents also established expectations for parents and childrearing. Parents were expected to govern their children, educate and work them. Having children both fear and love their parents was the goal of childrearing.[56] As Philip Greven stated in "Breaking Wills in Colonial America," evangelical childrearing depended on complete parental domination over children.[57] A letter from 1732, from a mother to her son, portrays the ways parents normally governed their children. The letter states that to form a child's mind, parents must first tame the child's will, and bring them to an obedient position.[58] The letter is from an Evangelical woman, and in addition to claiming that children need to be forcefully subdued, she also argues the importance of a religious education.[59]

During the seventeenth century, the desire to create a community that revolved around the teachings of the bible affected the education system.[60] For religious purposes, New Englanders established a school system, however, due to New England's focus on labor, a universal school system did not develop until the eighteenth century.[61] Shammas' argument is similar to Main's in that creating an education system affected childrearing practices. Sermons and letters from the seventeenth century focus heavily on the obedience of children, and the education children received from their parents revolved heavily around religion and bible studies. One excerpt from a grammar school in Massachusetts in 1645, portrays specific rules and expectations for schoolmasters on how to handle education.[62] Similar to how parents had certain expectations on how to discipline their children, teachers had to follow strict guidelines to reinforce authority.

Unlike New England, other colonies did not establish a school system early on. During the seventeenth-century colonists believed that school systems interfered with parental authority. Shammas argued that creating an education system affected childrearing practices and directly affected parental authority over children.[63] Parents' concern regarding authority over children demonstrates the extent of how children were needed in establishing a strong household government. As Shammas stated in *A Household Government,* the household did solely include the nuclear family and kin but also included other dependents such as apprentices and indentured servants. Not only did blood-related children affect the strength of the household government, unfree white children also contributed to the establishment of a strong household government.

Unfree White Children

To further the current historiography regarding families and households, it is important to examine understudied dependents, such as unfree children. In order to analyze how the

experience of unfree children affected the establishment of the household government, it is necessary to understand the circumstances in which children entered the household. In the Middle and New England colonies, middle-class parents made their children learn a craft through either the parents or a traditional apprenticeship.[64] There were different types of apprentice contracts and one form was parish apprentices. The foundation of parish apprentices derived from the poor laws in England which placed poor children and orphans into apprenticeships through parishes in order to educate the children and learn a trade[65]. Another form of apprenticeships was trade or occupation apprenticeships where parents placed their children with a craftsman in order to master a trade.[66] In order to analyze how indentured children reinforced to the household government of New England and the Chesapeake, this section will examine demographics, experience within in household, and the legal aspects regarding indentured and apprentices.

Demographics of Indentures and Apprentices

Table 1

Runaway Apprentices from the Pennsylvania Gazette 1729-1799		
Year	Males	Females
1720-1729	1	
1730-1739	4	
1740-1749	20	
1750-1759	36	1
1760-1769	73	1
1770-1779	58	2
1780-1789	22	1
1790-1799	12	1
Total	226	6

Source: Benjamin Franklin, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, 1729-1800. Malvern, PA: Accessible Archives, https://www.accessible.com/

A closer examination of the unfree status of children in the colonial household requires an analysis of indentured children and apprentices. Shammas found that in 1774, 27,000 children lived as indentured servants in North American households.[67] An analysis of runaway advertisements from the Pennsylvania Gazette provides basic demographic characteristics of the average colonial apprentice. Table 1 portrays runaway apprentices between 1729-1800. The table shows that the majority of runaway apprentices were male, and only six of them female. Table 1 also shows that the majority of runaways occurred between 1760 and 1769. Data from *The Pennsylvania Gazette* displays that apprentices were common until the eighteenth century, which portrays that apprentices were still common dependents within households.

Table 2

Distribution of Male Runaway Apprentices by Age from 1720-1799			
Age	1720-1750	1751-1780	1781-1799
Under 10	0	0	0
11-20	33	148	33
21+	1	11	2
Total 226	**34**	**159**	**35**

Source: Benjamin Franklin, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, 1729-1800. Malvern, PA: Accessible Archives, https://www.accessible.com/.

Table 2 demonstrates that the predominant age of runaway males fell between eleven and twenty years. The percentage of the runaways were males under the age of 10 is 0%, which suggests that the older the apprentice, the more likely they would run away. The predominant years for running away was 1751-1780. Out of a sample size of 226, from the Pennsylvania Gazette between the years 17920-1790, only six female runaways appeared.

Table 3

Percent Distribution of Male Runaway Apprentices by occupation 1720-1800		
Occupation	Number of Apprentices	%
Cooper	17	10.24
Shoemaker	47	28.30
Joiner	11	6.63
Carpenter	11	6.63
Potter	4	2.40
Shipwright	17	10.24
Fuller	1	0.60
Tailor	31	18.70
Smith	14	8.43
Paper making	5	3.01
Hatter	8	4.82
Total	166	100%

Source: Benjamin Franklin, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, 1729-1800. Malvern, PA: Accessible Archives, https://www.accessible.com/.

Table 3 shows the occupation and percentage distribution of male runaway apprentices from 1720-1800.The most predominant trades for apprentices included shoemaker (28.30%), tailors (18.70%), coopers (10.24%), and shipwrights (10.24%). Unlike men who learned different trades, female apprenticeships acquired household skills such as cooking and sewing.[68]

By the eighteenth century, both New England and Chesapeake regions had lower sex ratios and a high percentage of children. The data reiterates that the majority of runaway apprentices are men within 10 to 20 in age. Although the children are no longer in the direct care of their parents, placing them under the authority of other households in the form of apprentices still strengthens the household's government and extends the authority of the patriarch. The child may not be under the care of their own parents, but still counted as a dependent within their master's households. The continuous expansion of households provided more opportunities for

heads to exert control, leading the household government to become the primary authoritative institution in colonial America.

Legal restrictions on child labor

Beginning in the seventeenth century, religious groups, such as Puritans, saw it necessary for children to work at young ages because of their evil natures.[69] Because children were deemed evil, parents wanted to exert control from young ages. As formerly stated, two kinds of apprenticeships allowed children to be placed in different households. Young girls and boys were often sent away to learn crafts from different households during the seventeenth century.[70] Females learned household tasks such as sewing, housewifery, reading, and writing.[71] Instead of focusing on learning how to read and write, boys learned different crafts such as smiths or tailors.[72] Depending on the contract with the masters, some children were guaranteed education, such as reading and writing.[73] Similar to indentured servitude and slavery, different legal codes regulated child labor. According to Jernegan, contracts made in New England had to be recorded in town records as a way to ensure both parties followed their contracts.[74] Children were bound to masters from ages as young as nine years old.[75] The length of apprenticeship depended on the contracts between parents and masters. One example of an apprentice contract from 1671, stated that a three-year-old child was to be under the apprenticeship for eighteen years.[76] The contract expected masters to teach different trades and ensure the obedience of the child.

Children directly related to the household and apprentices had similar experiences in which they both had to obey their parents/masters. One court order from Massachusetts in 1654, stated that if any servant misbehaves and acts disobedient toward masters, they may request

"corporal punishment by whipping …at the court of the county."[77] These kinds of laws that allowed masters to request official punishment ensured the importance of household authority. As the close investigation of children and apprentices continues, both dependents are expected to fully obey and regard their parent/master as the highest form of authority. Experiences of children within the household helps historians understand one way that the household government as an institution was able to grow.

Conclusion

Leading historians such as Greven, Main, and Shammas have examined the colonial household structure and agreed that the household government made up a large portion of colonial authority. Comparing and contrasting New England and Chesapeake colonies demographics, economies and legal systems contributes to the historiography by proving that by the eighteenth century, the household structure in both regions transformed into a stronger model. Despite the fact New England and the Chesapeake regions consisted of different demographics and economies, both regions expanded the household government. Closely examining specific dependents within the household, such as white free and unfree children, illustrated that their experiences contributed to the strengthening of the household government. Children experienced strict control from household heads and contributed to the expansion of the household size through apprenticeships and child labor.

Placing additional dependents in the household extended the household head's authority. Extending the role of the patriarch to act as masters over his dependents reinforced the household government as one of the most influential institutions of colonial America between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Allowing household heads full control over their

dependents, with little interference from the state reinforced the household as an authoritative institution. As the household grew due to additional dependents such as indentured children, the extent of patriarchal authority grew and solidified, thus reinforcing the strong household government structure. The development of a strong household government is significant because there was no other dominant governmental institution.

Notes

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