

Brianna boyle  
chesapeake vs  
massachusetts bay  
colony



Massachusetts Bay (New England) and Chesapeake colonies were both the foundation for the economic and social influences in America.

However, their differences are far more numerous than the commonalities.

Where the Massachusetts Bay Colony was formed primarily for religious purposes, the Chesapeake Colony was formed for profit. This one difference had an extensive effect when related to the life of each colony in the new world. The Massachusetts Bay Colony, a haven for Puritans escaping from religious persecution, proved to be prosperous and a foothold for America. Mass migration of families to this colony occurred between 1620 and 1640.

The land was suitable for farming as was the climate, resulting in very livable conditions for the new peoples of the new world. Families were able to grow and the settlement expanded. On the other hand, the Chesapeake Colony, created in a more swamp-like area began with Jamestown. Sending primarily males to settle the area, no families were created or grown in this settlement. Though, in 1611, John Rolfe saved what he could of the colony and started growing tobacco, a huge cash crop.

Unlike New England, Chesapeake was more interested in profit. New England, filled with primarily Puritans but also included separatists and congregationalists, centered their daily life around the Church. Their goal when coming to America was to create a model for what was, in their mind, an ideal community. Moreover, John Winthrop, the leader of the migrating Puritans, referred to the community as a "city upon a hill".

His belief was the families must come together to work as one in order to have success in religion and business. Even though religion was extremely

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important to the Puritans, commerce was also significant, making much of their profit off of their harvests. Soon, with the ability to support itself and grow, towns and cities formed in a concentrated area. On the contrary, The Chesapeake colonies never really did emphasize religious affiliations.

Arriving primarily for gold and profit, its settlers were not as focused on the religious aspect like the Massachusetts Bay Colony was. However, the colony of Maryland was one of the few Chesapeake Colonies that did have religious significance. Maryland was created as a haven for persecuted Catholics by Cecilius Calvert (a. k.

a. Lord Baltimore). Massachusetts Bay and Chesapeake had very different environments that affect the longevity and way of life for its settlers. New England, located farther north, did not have to endure the tropical climate and diseases that came with it like in the South. In result, immigrants to New England would gain five years on their life expectancy, while Chesapeake settlers lost around ten years. Ages in the Massachusetts Bay colony varied due to the immigrants arriving in family groups.

However, Chesapeake ages ranges were around the same. Most women in Chesapeake were married in result of the extreme ratio between many men to the few women. Differences in environment and way of life had a large impact on the similarities did exist among all the differences between the two colonies. Both settlements were primarily populated by English searching for a better life and they retained a predominance of English culture. Furthermore, both settlements would face conflicts with the Native

Americans in the area. Specifically, The Pequot War for New England and the Chesapeake's conflict with the Powhatan Confederacy.

In conclusion, both Massachusetts Bay and the Chesapeake Colonies had their trials and victories in the New World.