

Northern and southern colonies of the americas essay sample

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The class system of colonial America followed the British model very closely - those who had more money tended to hold the power in the colonies. The colonial elite consisted of larger landowners, as well as successful planters and growers - they were typically found in the South. In the North, wealthy merchants made up the colonial elite.

This class system was typically confined to seaports like Philadelphia and New York - due to the prosperity that came with the expanding populations of these cities (25, 000 people in Philadelphia by 1750, 15, 000 in New York and so on), the goods and supplies that these merchants provided made them extremely wealthy. It was not uncommon to see gigantic Georgian mansions owned by many a merchant during this time in these cities.

Between the mercantile culture of New England and the farm culture of the South, those who held the most economic power tended to determine the social and economic cultures of those areas.

Political policy in the colonies during the time of early America was largely determined by the social and economic elite. Because these wealthy merchants and big planters had so much wealth to go around, and to use to contribute to the community, their opinions held sway over many decisions in colonial politics. Despite the fact that suffrage was in effect, and every man who owned a particular percentage of property could vote, the elite tended to be favored in colonial elections due to their financial means. These colonial elites were conservative nature, and had good heritage - they owned the fishing grounds, the forests, and fluid capital by which the colonies ran.