



Chapter 11 After You Read

Read each section carefully, then write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

Comprehension Review

1. Explain the relationship between prohibitions and civil codes.
2. What is the meaning of the author's statement that "the only rule on the plantation was that of the enslaver"?
3. Why were most laws passed in the colonies beneficial to slaveholders?
4. What was the purpose of laws that specifically identified the amount of food and the type of shelter the enslaved needed?
5. What would cause a slaveholder to sever a an enslaved African's Achilles tendon?
6. Why might a slaveholder have an enslaved African's mouth wired shut?
7. Which colony had the greatest African population in 1750?
8. What significant difference existed in the 1750 population of South Carolina compared to the other colonies?

9. What happened to most enslaved Africans when the slaveholders died?

Center Your Thinking

10. Slaveholders were a powerful group that greatly affected colonial legislatures. Such powerful special interest groups still exist today. Often they hire lobbyists to persuade legislators to pass laws that will benefit their organizations. Share your feelings on this common practice with a partner. Discuss whether organizations such as the American Rifle Association and the tobacco industry should be allowed to lobby their causes. Share your feelings in a persuasive letter to the editor of a local newspaper.

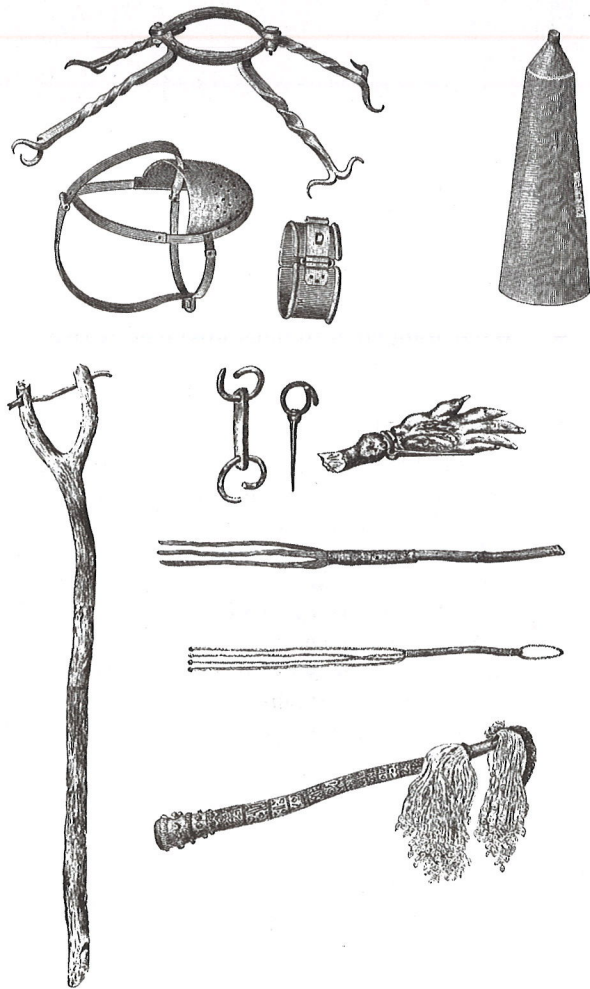
Vocabulary and Concept Development

1. What was the result of the **consolidation** of legal codes against Africans during the 18th century?
2. Describe the relationship used to form the following analogy: **Prohibition** is to *restriction* as **recourse** is to *remedy*.
3. What are some real-life situations in which you have seen the term **refrain** used? How does the author use this term?
4. What is **manumission**? How was it determined during the 18th century?

Reading a Timeline

Use Unit 3 and Chapter 11 timelines to complete the following:

1. What state passed legislation in 1723 that supported death of enslaved Africans in the name of punishment?
2. How many years after Africans were legally declared inferior were the slave codes introduced, attempting absolute domination of the Africans in the last of the colonies?

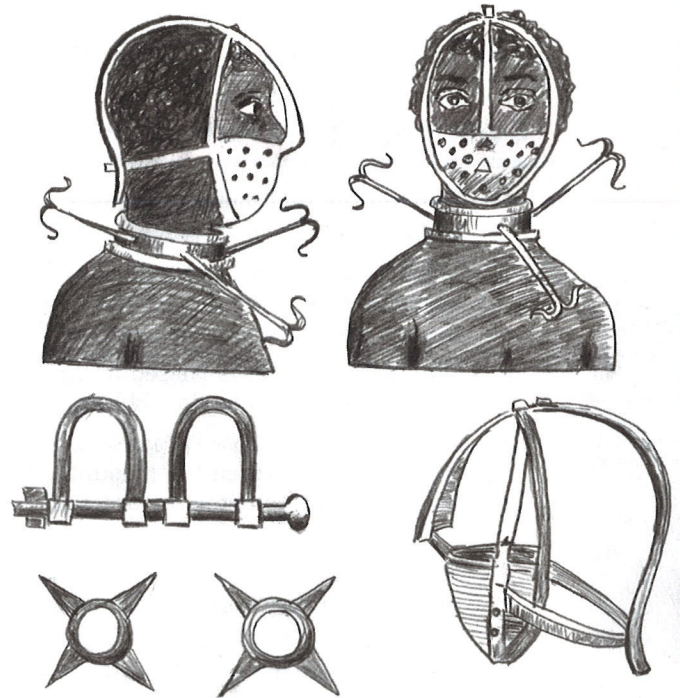


Barbaric instruments of torture were used by the cruellest slaveholders for such minor offenses as eating sugarcane while working. A slaveholder could sever body parts, burn, whip—even kill—Africans with little fear of punishment.

unmercifully. An enslaver could actually kill an African and not be charged with a crime.

Gaining Freedom

The desire for freedom was a constant **refrain**, a note that was repeated many times in the lives of the enslaved. Yet there was almost no possibility of gaining freedom. **Manumission** (man-yoo-MI-shun), setting the enslaved free, was entirely dependent upon the white slaveholders. Given the nature of enslavement, unless a slaveholder made provision for the liberation of



the enslaved in his will, there would be no freedom. Even in death, slaveholders rarely helped the enslaved gain freedom. The will of a slaveholder who wanted to free the enslaved after his death was often misread or not read at all. The vast majority of slaveholders willed the enslaved to their heirs.

DID YOU KNOW?

James Madison, who was president of the United States from 1808 to 1816, said that the annual cost to maintain an enslaved child in Virginia ranged from \$8 to \$10. He believed that an enslaved child became “gainful to his owner” at nine or ten years of age.



The backbreaking and painstaking task of picking cotton in a field is seen in this photograph.

| African and White Population in the English Colonies in 1750 | | |
|---|----------------|--------------|
| New England Colonies | African | White |
| New Hampshire | 550 | 26,955 |
| Massachusetts | 4,075 | 183,925 |
| Rhode Island | 3,075 | 29,879 |
| Connecticut | 3,016 | 108,270 |
| Middle Colonies | | |
| New York | 4,014 | 65,682 |
| New Jersey | 5,354 | 66,039 |
| Pennsylvania | 2,872 | 116,794 |
| Southern Colonies | | |
| Delaware | 1,496 | 27,208 |
| Maryland | 43,450 | 97,623 |
| Virginia | 101,452 | 129,581 |
| North Carolina | 19,800 | 53,184 |
| South Carolina | 39,000 | 25,000 |
| Georgia | 1,000 | 4,200 |

from them, occurred during the 18th century. By 1750, laws were in place to permanently establish Africans as inferior within the American legal structure. It would take nearly 200 years to change the unjust laws which were written in the middle of the 18th century.

Crime and Punishment

In their attempts to instill fear, slaveholders often used extremely cruel punishment against Africans. Enslaved Africans had fingers and toes regularly cut off for stealing. The **Achilles tendons**, located at the back of the heel just below the ankle, were severed on Africans who ran away, feet were cut off for not returning to the plantation after using a pass to visit another plantation, and the mouths of some were wired shut to keep them from eating sugarcane while working. In 1723, Virginia decided that “manslaughter of a slave [death resulting from corrective punishment] is not deemed to be a punishable offense.” In addition, Africans were branded with hot irons, starved, and whipped



Laws regulated the treatment of the enslaved, but slaveholders were rarely punished for providing inadequate shelter (shown here) or food or for mistreating Africans.

Laws also specified the conditions of chattel slavery. Technically, slaveholders did not have the right to make their own laws. They had to follow the laws of the colony. However, the laws created by the colonies were dictated by the very slaveholders who held Africans in bondage. Rarely would a law be passed by the colonial legislatures against the wishes of the slave-owning class.

Because many cruel slaveholders sought to work Africans to death,” legislation was often enacted to set standards. What clothes

slaveholders had to provide for Africans was spelled out in some of the laws. How much food and what type of shelter should be provided were other considerations that had to be written into law. Yet there is no evidence that slave holders were ever punished for starving the Africans who worked for them. The evidence is, however, overwhelming that they greatly mistreated Africans. Even the minimum standards of care were not enforced (see Journey, pp. B3).

The **consolidation** of the legal codes against Africans, which took all of their human rights

11



AS YOU READ

- What was the legal status of enslaved Africans in the colonies?
- How did most slave owners treat enslaved Africans?
- How might an enslaved African gain freedom?

Chapter Outline

- Legal Definitions
- Crime and Punishment
- Gaining Freedom

Vocabulary

- prohibitions • civil codes • recourse • consolidation
- Achilles tendons • refrain • manumission

Legal Definitions

As the enslaved population grew, the colonies increased the legal **prohibitions**, or restraints, on Africans. **Civil codes**, or laws, were introduced to state explicitly that slaves had to be Africans. Rarely in the Americas was a white person ever enslaved. In fact, the idea of one person belonging to another was never applied to whites in the colonies. Only Africans were burdened with the legal status that allowed them to be sold or bought at the will of another.

Imagine what it was like for a person to know that his or her person, labor, creativity, or very life could be disposed of by another without so much as a murmur from the surrounding society. Children were sold away from mothers. Men had fingers or a foot cut off with no **recourse**, or remedy from the law. The only rule on the plantation was that of the enslaver. Since the enslaver “owned” the African person, the “owner” could by law dispose of his “property” in any way he saw fit.

1750

Laws are in place to permanently establish Africans as inferior.

1723

1723
Enslavers in Virginia cannot be legally punished for deaths resulting from punishments to the enslaved.

1750

1755

1755
Slave codes are introduced in Georgia.

The Quakers, a religious group known formally as the Society of Friends, opposed enslavement in America just as they had opposed injustice in their native England. Using the Internet and other reference tools found in your local or school library, write a paragraph about the Quakers in England, giving their reasons for coming to America, and include their reasons for

their strong antislavery stand once they reached the colonies. How did the philosophy of the Quakers differ from the Puritans who came to Massachusetts or the Catholics in Maryland? In what way did the religion of the Quakers impact their treatment of other human beings and their view of African enslavement?

Multiple Perspectives

Imagine that you are three different people witnessing a slave auction: a Quaker, a free African American, and a colonial plantation owner. Write a page expressing the feelings you would imagine each of these people would have seeing such an event. Be as descriptive as possible. Which person would probably be the saddest, the most angry, or the least disturbed by the sale of humans?

Is anything in today's world comparable to the slave auctions where enslaved Africans were bought and sold? Research and discuss the forced labor of Chinese immigrants in the United States, the forced prostitution of young girls from northern Russia into Europe or the United States, and the religious practices of some Arab countries that hold young women physically and emotionally captive. How do these practices compare to the European Slave Trade?

CENTER YOUR WRITING

Conduct research on the legislation passed in 1740 in South Carolina to enslave Native Americans and Africans. Write a letter to the South Carolina legislature protesting this action. Also conduct research into laws currently on the books in various states concerning enslavement. Do laws still exist affecting the equality of African Americans or other ethnic groups

in America today? What about employment or social customs? Can African Americans marry whites legally in all 50 states? Write a one-page essay citing a particular example in one of these areas. In your essay state your expectation and answer to one of the two questions posed. Provide the results of your research and discuss your findings.