

# DID ABIGAIL SEE GOODY PROCTOR WITH THE DEVIL?

*What caused the Salem Witch  
Crisis of 1692?*

# PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

- What do you know about colonial New England?
- What do you know about the Salem Witch Trials?
- Whole class discussion:
  - Why do you think the people of Salem believed the girls' accusations of witchcraft?
  - Even if the people of Salem truly believed in witchcraft, why would there be so many accusations all at once, all of a sudden?

# READ DOCUMENT A & B

- Based on these two documents, why did the people of Salem believe the girls' testimony?

## **Salem Evidence A: "Discourse on Witchcraft" (Modified)**

*In the speech below, Cotton Mather, an influential leader of the Puritans, argues for the existence of witchcraft:*

I will prove that Witchcraft exists. Those who deny it exists argue that they never saw any witches, therefore there are none. That would be as if you or I said: We never met any robbers, therefore there are none.

I have two pieces of evidence that witchcraft exists: First, the Scripture mentions witchcraft. Secondly, many people have experienced the horrors of witchcraft.

Source: Cotton Mather, "Memorable Providences relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions," from *A Discourse on Witchcraft*, (Boston, 1689), pp. 4-9. Cotton Mather was one of the most influential religious leaders in America at the time.

## Salem Evidence B: Testimony of Abigail Hobbs (Modified)

*Below is the testimony of a teenager accused of witchcraft, Abigail Hobbs, on April 19, 1692.*

**Judge:** Abigail Hobbs, you are brought before Authority to answer to various acts of witchcraft. What say you? Are you guilty, or not? Speak the truth.

**Abigail Hobbs:** I will speak the truth. I have seen sights and been scared. I have been very wicked. I hope I shall be better, if God will help me.

**Judge:** What sights did you see?

**Abigail Hobbs:** I have seen the Devil.

**Judge:** How often, many times?

**Abigail Hobbs:** But once.

**Judge:** What would he have you do?

**Abigail Hobbs:** Why, he would have me be a witch.

**Judge:** Would he have you make a covenant with him?

**Abigail Hobbs:** Yes.

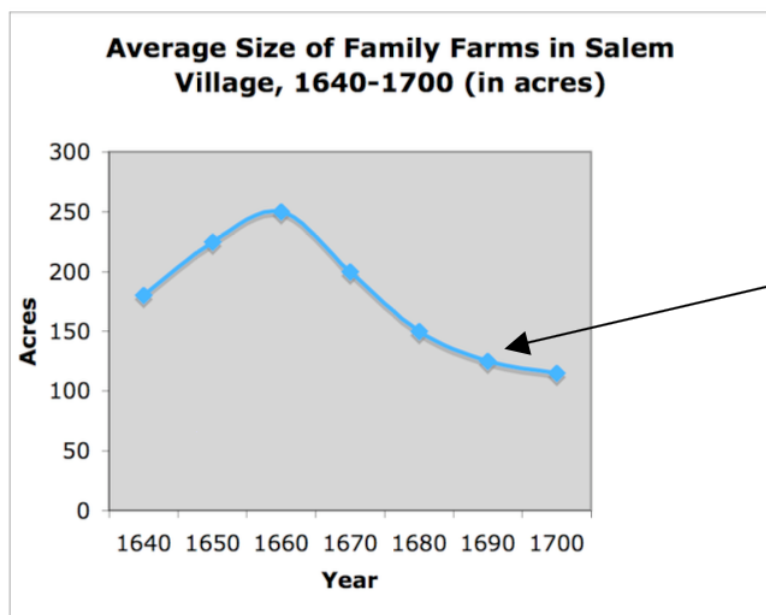


GILLES COREY  
PRESSED TO DEATH  
SEPT. 19, 1692

# READ DOCUMENT C & D

- What else was happening in 1692?
- Why might economic concerns have contributed to the witch crisis?

**Average Size of Family Farms in Salem Village, 1640-1700**



1692: Salem  
Witchcraft  
Trials

Map 1 The Geography of Witchcraft: Salem Village, 1692

Sources: Residential map of Salem Village in 1692 included as a frontispiece to volume one of Charles W. Upham, *Salem Witchcraft*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1867); W. Elliott Woodward, *Records of Salem Witchcraft Copied from the Original Documents*, 2 vols. (Roxbury, Mass., Privately printed, 1864; reissued in one volume, New York, Da Capo Press, 1969).

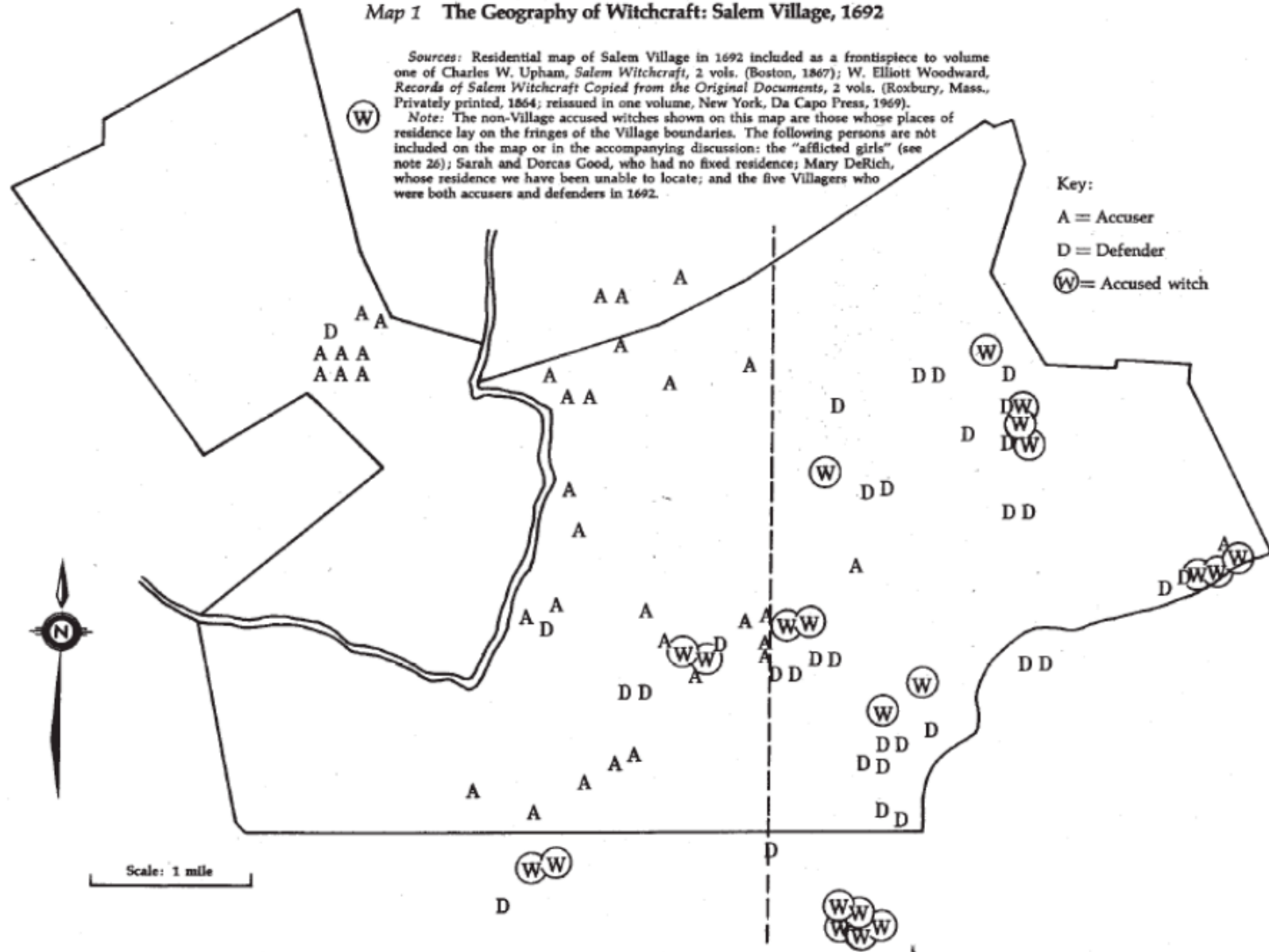
Note: The non-Village accused witches shown on this map are those whose places of residence lay on the fringes of the Village boundaries. The following persons are not included on the map or in the accompanying discussion: the "afflicted girls" (see note 26); Sarah and Dorcas Good, who had no fixed residence; Mary DeRich, whose residence we have been unable to locate; and the five Villagers who were both accusers and defenders in 1692.

Key:

A = Accuser

D = Defender

⊙ = Accused witch



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# OTHER SOCIETAL FACTORS

- Calendar
  - No one had ever made a definitive calendar of events! Shift from Gregorian.
- Indian Wars
- “In the Devil’s Snare”

# SOURCES

- Testimony of Abigail Hobbs, April 19, 1692, in *Verbatim Transcripts of the Legal Documents of the Salem Witchcraft Outbreak of 1692*, ed. Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum. [http://testetext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbin/ot2www-salemname?specfile=/texts/english/salem/public/salem.o2w&act=text&offset=3207915&t\\_extreg=div3&query=hobabi](http://testetext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbin/ot2www-salemname?specfile=/texts/english/salem/public/salem.o2w&act=text&offset=3207915&t_extreg=div3&query=hobabi)
- Cotton Mather, “Memorable Providences relating to Witchcrafts and Possessions,” from *A Discourse on Witchcraft*, (Boston, 1689), pp. 4-9. <http://books.google.com/books?pg=RA2-PA2&lpg=RA2-PA2&dq=mather+%22discourse+on+witchcraft%22&sig=rwWdjDW94kUMgnTViV3JCVGZbjo&ei=dGV4SrDGHYWotgP0y9DwBA&ct=result&id=7I9hAAAAMAAJ&ots=4kzbg3H NPb&output=text>
- *In the Devil’s Snare*, by Mary Beth Norton
- Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum. *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1974.
- See also: <https://sites.google.com/site/sechssalem/>

# OPENSTAX CH. 4

## GROUP DISCUSSION

- What were the effects of the consumer revolution on the colonists?
- How did the ideas of the Enlightenment and Great Awakening offer opposing outlooks to British Americans? What similarities were there between the two schools of thought?
- What was the impact of the wars for empire in North America, Europe, and the world and what role was played by Native Americans in those conflicts?
- What shared experiences, intellectual currents, and cultural elements drew together British subjects on both sides of the Atlantic during this period? How did these experiences, ideas, and goods serve to strengthen these bonds?

# COLONIAL COMPARISONS

- 1. Based on the data in the charts, what was the difference between rich and poor in America compared to Europe?
  - 2. What wealth differences can you see between the three different colonial regions?
  - 3. What social attitudes might this wealth distribution cause Americans to develop?
  - 4. How might the income data have impacted the population growth data?
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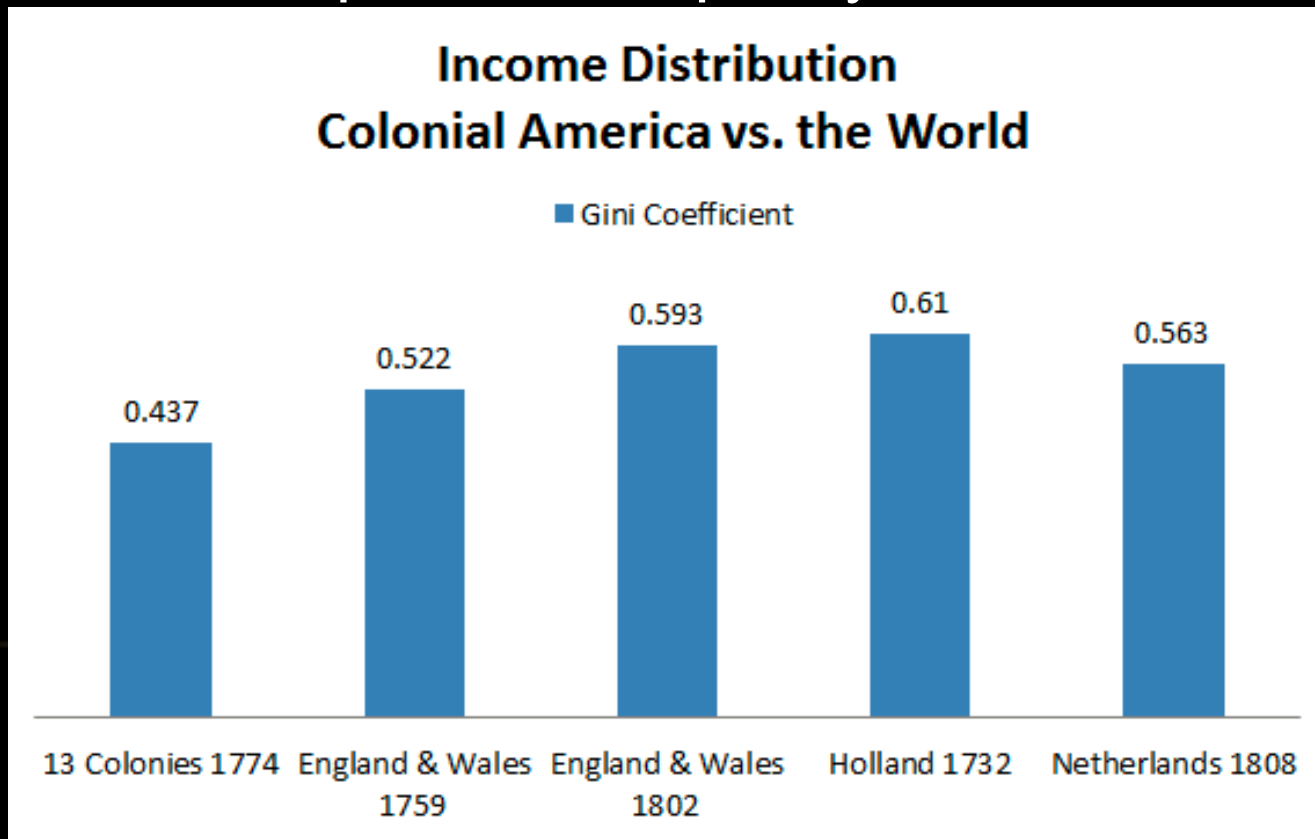
# ECONOMIC COMPARISONS

- Taken from research by professors Peter Lindert of the UC- Davis and Jeffrey Williamson of Harvard.
  - <http://www.nber.org/papers/w18396>
  - Sources: occupational directories, tax lists, post-revolutionary census documents
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# THE GINI COEFFICIENT

- The Gini Coefficient is a measure of inequality
  - 0 means perfect equality
  - 1 means perfect inequality

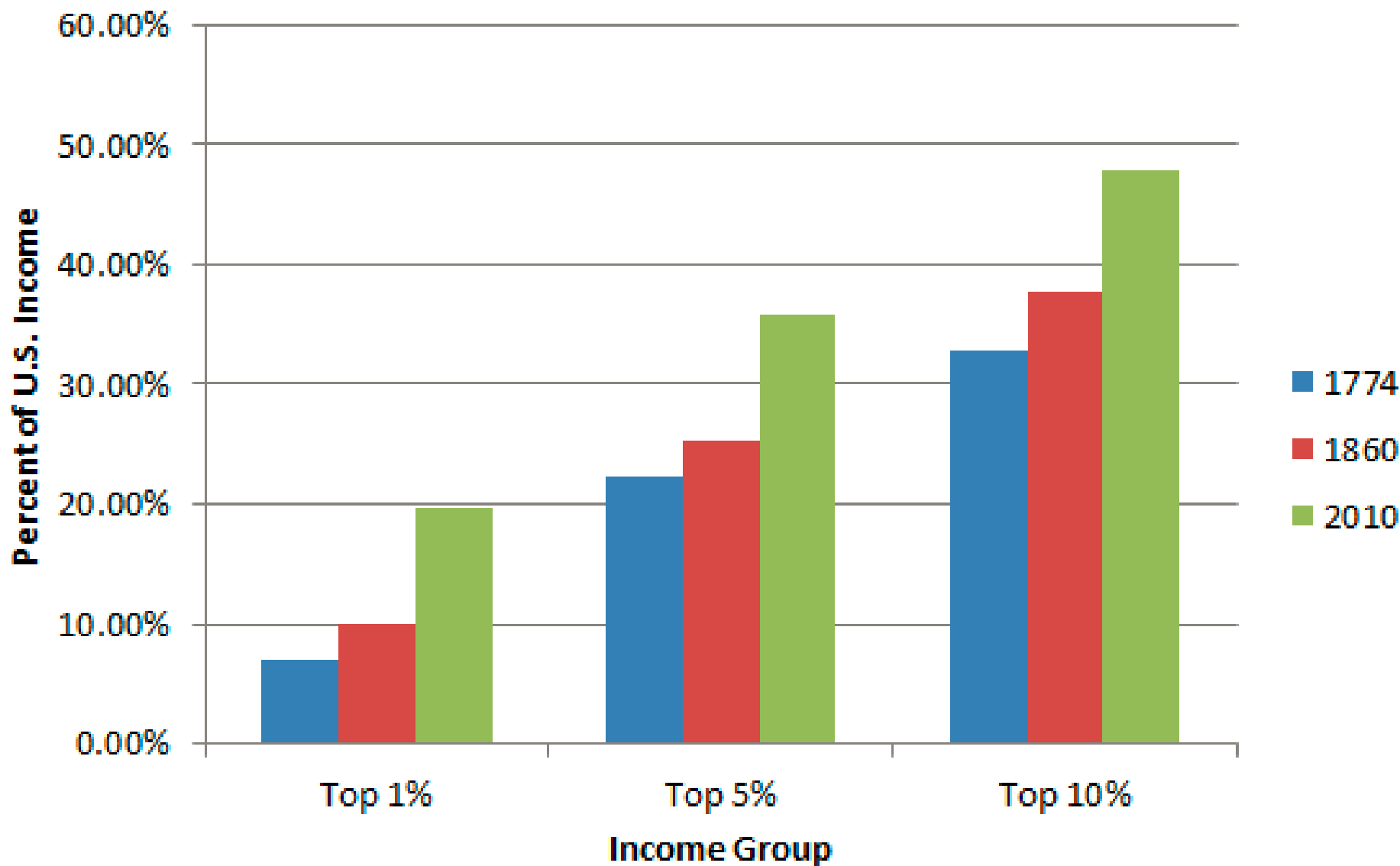


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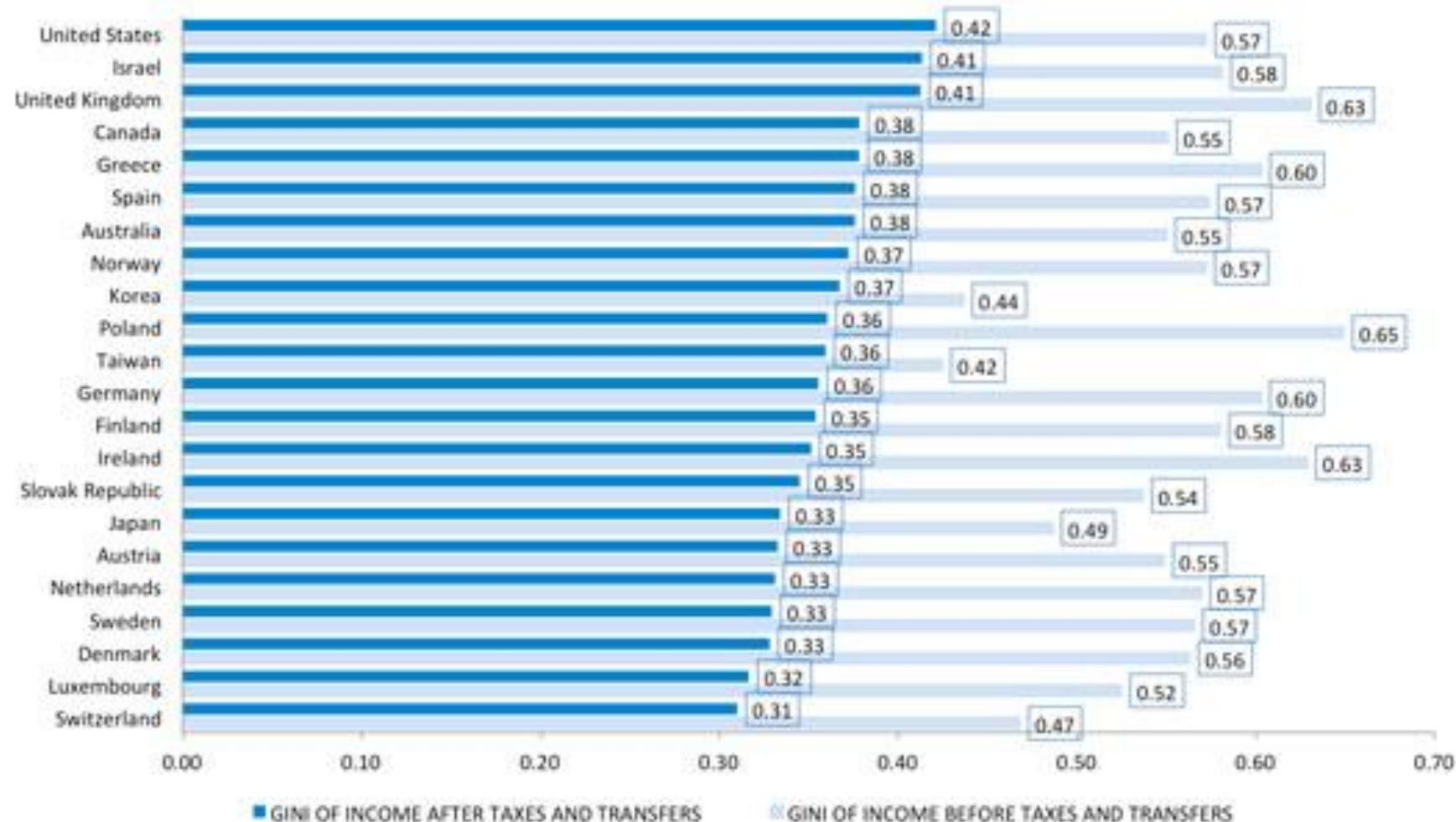
# U.S. Income Distribution 1774, 1860 & 2010

(Sources: Lindert and Williamson 2012; Piketty and Saez 2012)



## Income Inequality and Redistribution

The U.S. government does less than many other rich countries to reduce market-generated income inequality.



Source: Author's calculations, 2013, based on LIS microdata, most recent datasets available (early to mid-2000s)

# COMPARING COLONIAL REGIONS

- B
  - What do you think were the four most significant similarities among the colonies?
  - What were the four most important differences between the colonies in your opinion?
  - A society is characterized by similar values, mutual interests, shared institutions, and common culture. To what extent did the North Middle, and Southern colonies merge to create a single American Society by the outbreak of the Revolution?
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