This study examines travelers' perceptions of distance as they moved about the British Atlantic World in the period from the founding of the first English settlement in North America at Jamestown in 1607 to the American Declaration of Independence in 1776. Distance here is understood to encompass the familiar expressions (physical space, time between locations) and alternate conceptions, including the sense of distance created by differing cultural markers and levels of economic development. Perceptions of distance arising from attributional factors illuminate how observers, using England broadly and London specifically as cultural benchmarks, understood the place of the various components of the First British Empire and an emerging trans-Atlantic imperial British national identity. Travelers' experiences confirm the existence of internal peripheries within the Atlantic Archipelago, conforming to the so-called "Celtic fringe" that includes the Scottish Highlands, Ireland, Welsh uplands, and Cornwall. Across the Atlantic, observers understood attributional distance, perceptible from the late seventeenth century, between Britain's North American colonies and the metropole made retention of these colonies in the imperial framework increasingly challenging. Most surprisingly, I argue that in the late eighteenth century, travelers perceived the Caribbean colonies, long denigrated in the historiography as degenerate and displaying no signs of British social norms, as the most physically proximate to Britain due to the Caribbean colonists' ability to replicate British norms and customs.
Colonial Period 1607-1776 Trends, Events and Ideas that Influenced the Founders Liberty, Equality, Rights, Democracy and Opportunity

Essential Question: What elements of colonial society affected the thinking of the nation’s founders and their articulation of the 5 ideals? Geography  Native Americans  Puritan heritage  British tradition  enlightenment thought  – Capitalism  Colonial Social Structure

Geography

1. LAND!!!
2. ISOLATION

With so much land available, colonial society had a much higher percentage of land owners. And a much different conception of opportunity

Geographic Isol Superb, pioneering historical geography of English and British America that did much to introduce the concept of the Atlantic world into historical discourse. Miller, Perry. The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century. Important study of how the British Civil War played itself out in the English Atlantic. Makes the significant point that a vacuum in imperial authority in the 1640s allowed English America to develop its political and social institutions outside imperial oversight. Steele, Ian. The English Atlantic, 1675–1740: An Exploration of Communication and Community. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986. E-mail Citation ».

Period 2:1607-1754 Key Concept

2.2: The British colonies participated in political, social, cultural, and economic exchanges with Great Britain that encouraged both stronger bonds with Britain and resistance to Britain's control. II. Like other European empires in the Americas that participated in the Atlantic slave trade, the English colonies developed a system of slavery that reflected the specific economic, demographic, and geographic characteristics of those colonies. B) As chattel slavery became the dominant labor system in many southern colonies, new laws created a strict racial sys