The Freedom to Destroy Freedom
Atlantic Origins
--labor transport
--Mediterranean beginnings
--an established institution
Slavery in Africa:
--varied widely, but of great importance
--performed the same variety of tasks as family members
--many times specialized in a single craft
--could become recognized members of the household
--slaves’ status rose markedly with that of the family
--one could find slaves serving in offices of state
--usually acquired during warfare
--enslaved for condemnation through judicial or religious proceedings
--traded among tribes and kingdoms—African diaspora
two general routes:
1. from the West Indies
2. directly from Africa—roughly four of every five
Carefully planned Big Business
--the Renaissance and the Commercial Revolution in Europe helped create the modern institution of slavery
--characterized by:
--the rise of towns, the end of feudalism, and exploitation of any commodities
--the rise of powerful nation-states
--the rise of big businesses or guilds
--an ideology of freedom
The Atlantic Slave Trade

--began around 1450 with the export of African slaves to continental Europe and sugar plantations
--in rough terms over 11.5 million people exported from the Atlantic coast of Africa

--annual averages to New World:
--late 1500s--2,000
--1540--10,000 to West Indies alone
--1780--80,000

--Portugal and Spain dominate slave trade in sixteenth century
--Dutch--seventeenth century
--English--eighteenth century
Techniques:
-- established trading posts or “factories” on the African coast

Portuguese: Axim and Elimna
Dutch: Fort Nassau and Elmina
French: St. Louis, Goree
English: Fort Kormantse, Cape Coast

--would establish contacts with local officials and arrange for securing the desired slaves
--learned what different African nations valued

Results:
--loss of African resources--”brain drain,” labor, morale
--commodification of human beings for the Americas
--vast social change for Africa
General rule: two slaves per ship tonnage formula

--Most captains are “tight packers”

--Slaves ride on planks 66” x 15”

--only 20”– 25” of headroom

High mortality rates

--1/3 perish between capture and embarkation

Insurance and Reparations
Mortality: higher before 1750

Poor sanitation
--- No germ theory
--- Malaria, yellow fever, smallpox, dysentery

after 1750:

Faster ships
Hygiene and diet better understood
Early forms of smallpox vaccinations
Slavery and the Slave Trade: Latin America

Bitter-Sweet: Sugar, Slavery and the Case of Brazil

--Madeira, Cap Verde, Sao Tome

--1520s and 1530s: Brazilian coastal regions

--from Indian to African: Brazil, Hispaniola, Cuba, Jamaica and Puerto Rico

African labor:

--1600 the labor force on the Brazilian plantation was overwhelmingly African

--cyclical: more sugar; more slaves
During the 1600s—\( \frac{1}{2} \) million

During the 1700s—1.7 million

By 1800 = 2.5 million Africans

General:

Chile, Central America and Paraguay:

Most important centers of slavery:

--those colonies that both were export-oriented and had insufficient Indian labor to meet local demand

--Brazil from the late 1500s

--true of Venezuela by early 1600s
--Cuba and of Puerto Rico--by 1750s
--highly developed centers of plantation-based exports production
--became the largest importers of African slaves
--heartlands of Afro-Latin America