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# RESEARCH REPORTS AND NOTES

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## FAMILY BONDS AND THE BONDSMAN: The Slave Family in Colonial Colombia

*David L. Chandler*  
*Brigham Young University*

There has been much controversy over the nature of the institution of slavery, the relative humanity or lack of it in those slave holding nations which practiced it, and its benign or baleful effects upon the blacks on whom it was inflicted. Much has been said about the harshness of Anglo-American slavery and the relatively mild nature of Spanish American slavery, which respected a slave's basic humanity and rights of person, property, and family. Yet little has been done to quantify and document how those attitudes applied in practice. We have had little precise information about the slave family as it existed in the Spanish American colonies and the extent or use of slave property, or about the slaves' access to the legal system that might protect and defend his person, his property, or his family. New sources and methodology have begun to challenge long-held assumptions about both Anglo-American as well as Spanish American slavery. If any conclusion is warranted, it may be that slavery varied widely from place to place and was influenced perhaps as much by differing economic circumstances as by differences in cultural attitudes.

Colonial Colombia is an excellent case in point because the social and economic milieu in which slavery existed there was markedly different from other major slave areas of the Americas like Brazil, the Caribbean, or the English Colonies in North America. The economic development of colonial Colombia was slow, hampered by difficulties of transportation, unimaginative government, powerful and myopic vested interests, and sparse population. This slower pace seemingly precluded many of the excesses in exploiting slave labor that usually accom-

panied intense competition for markets and profits, as in the French and English sugar islands. These circumstances helped create in the colony an ambience in which medieval religious and legal attitudes and practices regarding slaves were able to survive and even evolve further toward protection and paternalism.<sup>1</sup>

In that regional, cultural, and economic setting, the institution of slavery seems to have been less harsh than in many other areas of the Americas, with greater acceptance of the slave as a human being with at least some rights recognized and respected by law. He could, for instance, own, control, and dispose of property, buy his freedom, and form family units and prevent their dissolution. Not only did the slave family exist, it was encouraged both by law and official policies and also in practice by society in general. Demographic data compiled from slave inventories of mines and haciendas allow us to construct a profile of the slave family and the slave population in general in Colombia during the last fifty years or so of the eighteenth century. The data also give insight into the nature of slavery in Colombia as well as into the effects of bondage on the slaves themselves. These inventories, together with bills of sale, wills, letters of manumission, and other documents in municipal notarial archives, give some indication of the property slaves were able to accumulate and how they used it. Legal suits and their outcome provide some measure of the humanity that society attached to the slave as well as his access to judicial process.<sup>2</sup>

As is well known, the Catholic Church took the position that slavery was a contractual arrangement whereby the slave placed his time and labor at the disposal of his master, but that he remained a human being with rights to life, limb, body, and reputation. A master could not keep his slaves from marrying, for example, for to do so deprived them of the rights of the body. For a violation of any of these rights the master must make restitution to the slave as if he were a free man.

In the eyes of the Church, the soul of the black man was equally as important as the soul of any man, and it attempted to catechize *bozales*, or new Negroes, among the slave gangs of the interior, to care for their spiritual and emotional needs, and to see that they led ordered, Christian lives in organized families. It encouraged owners of large mines and haciendas to construct private chapels and retain a priest to care for the needs of their families and their slaves,<sup>3</sup> and it assigned priests to mining and ranching districts to care for the slaves of Spaniards with too few slaves or without the means to retain a priest. These priests served all the various gangs in the parish, instructing the slaves in Christian doctrine and administering the sacraments.<sup>4</sup>

Parishes were to be small enough that the slaves could walk to

Sunday mass, or, failing that, no larger than would allow a dedicated priest to travel occasionally to the more remote gangs to give instruction, baptize the newborn, perform marriages, and attend the dying. The priest was supported by a fee charged to the master for each baptism, marriage, or burial performed, usually about three pesos each per slave.<sup>5</sup> In practice, however, parishes were not small, neither were priests generally noted for their dedication. Some mines and haciendas were visited only once a year, others even less often, if at all.<sup>6</sup> In some areas priests simply refused to make the long trip to isolated areas, even to administer last rites.<sup>7</sup> The problem stemmed from a shortage of priests as well as from human nature. Yet in spite of these shortcomings, the Church's influence was considerable. The religious conviction it inspired perhaps caused many slave owners to take a personal interest in the spiritual welfare of their slaves. They usually encouraged marriage and Christian family life among their slaves. Administrators of several mines in Barbacoas Province were instructed to see that slave children went to church every day to be taught Christian doctrine. Adult slaves were to go to morning mass on Sundays and holidays and to attend church to pray after work four nights a week.<sup>8</sup> On the large Certegui mine in the Chocó, slaves recited the rosary before and after work, and the owner urged the administrator to give "due example of Christianity and religion in order that the rest [of the slaves] might follow the same path."<sup>9</sup>

Government officials in the colony strongly backed the Church's efforts. Spanish law recognized the slave's innate right to a family and encouraged, indeed insisted, that eligible slaves be married and live in settled family life on the mines and haciendas of the colony. Moreover, slave inventories of the period (compiled when probating wills, gathering census information, seizing property for payment of debts, etc.) seem to indicate that slave owners by and large complied with the law. These inventories give much information about the slave population in general, and have been used to construct several profiles of the slave population for different periods in Colombian history. Figure 1, which shows the age and sex distribution of the slave population in the period 1650–1700, reflects a preponderance of men and few children. It is based on a relatively small number of cases and consequently may not merit great confidence, yet when viewed in sequence with the other population profiles, it does seem to suggest a trend. Figure 2, which shows the sex and age distribution for the period 1700–1749, reveals more children, but an even greater preponderance of males over females. Figure 3, depicting the age and sex distribution of the population for the period 1750–1826, reveals an unusually young population with few old people, though more than either of the earlier profiles, and nearly normal balance between the sexes. More than 36 percent of the population were

under fourteen years of age, nearly half had not yet reached their twentieth year, and more than 90 percent were younger than age fifty-five. Only 7 percent of the population were older than age fifty-six.

Viewed in sequence, these figures suggest that the slave population of Colombia was changing during the century and a half that the profiles span, and that by the latter half of the eighteenth century it was more or less "normal" for a young population with a high fertility rate and a high mortality rate. Only recently have scholars constructed age and sex distribution profiles for other slave populations.<sup>10</sup> They depict a greater imbalance between the sexes (more men) and fewer children (when African and Creole slaves are grouped together, as in this sample). The literature of slave areas yet to be analyzed in this way suggests an even greater difference. It is replete with references to few children, high imbalance between the sexes, low fertility, and lack of self-sustaining population growth. All of these factors, if true (and some have challenged them),<sup>11</sup> would suggest that a profile of those slave populations would be narrower at the base with greater irregularity as well as steeper slopes to the sides.

Within the Colombian population, over five thousand cases for the period from 1750 to 1826 allow us to make at least some preliminary conclusions about the slave family during the last seventy-five years of the colony. Usually inventories listed the slaves on an estate by family groups: the head of the household first, followed by his wife and children, single adults were added at the end of the inventory. On these inventories marital status was given for 90 percent of slaves, and often when not given it seemed to be due to some special procedural reason that required the listing of a specific group (all prime field hands, or all

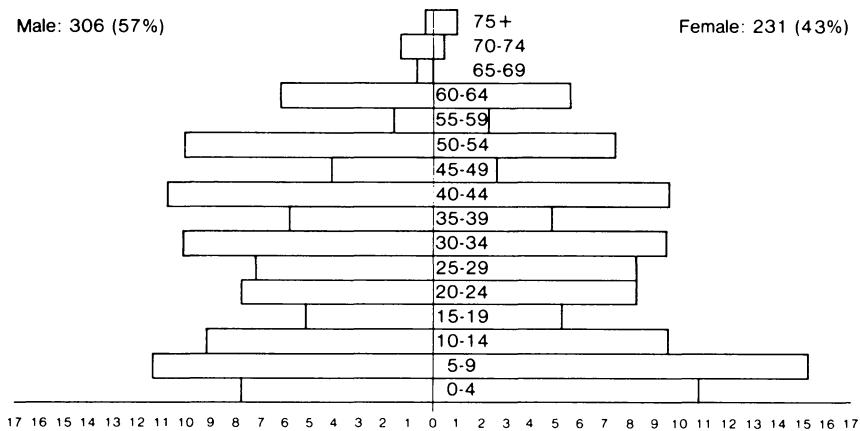


FIGURE 1 Percent Distribution by Sex and Age of Slave Population\* Colombia, 1650-1700 \*Total 537

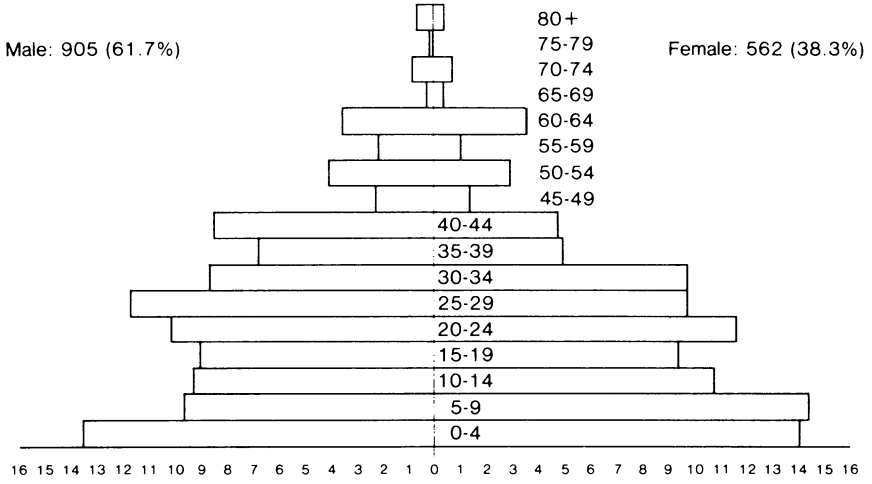


FIGURE 2 Percent Distribution by Sex and Age of Slave Population\*  
Colombia, 1700-1749

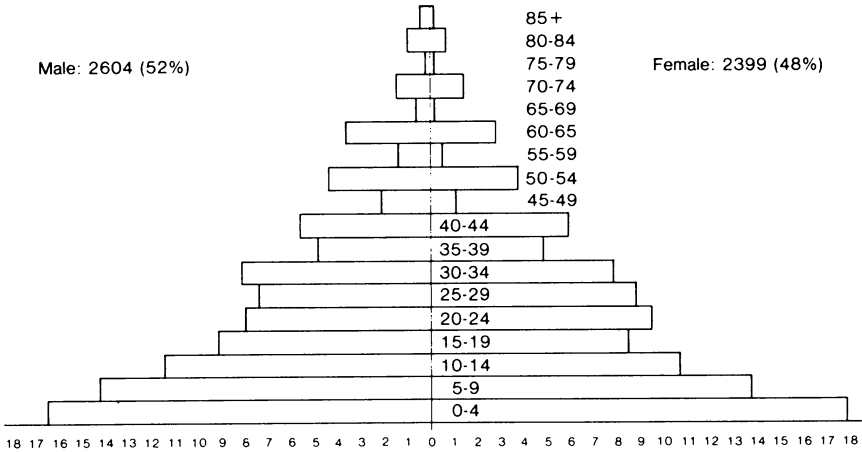


FIGURE 3 Percent Distribution by Sex and Age of Slave Population\*  
Colombia, 1750-1826

men, or all children) apart from their families but without indicating to which family they belonged.

Table 1 shows the marital status of slaves in various occupations. About half the slaves in this table worked in the placer mines of the Pacific coast, the Cauca Valley, and Antioquia; roughly half worked on haciendas in the Cauca and Magdalena Valleys, the eastern plains, Atlantic coast, and Pamplona province. Of the 5,554 slaves of this sub-population for which marital status and occupation were both noted, 37 percent were married or widowed and an additional 4 percent were single parents. Some of the spouses of these single parents may have been separated by sale or other reasons but most were probably slaves who had never been married. Nearly 40 percent of the total were children under age fifteen, and 21 percent were single persons over age fifteen, many of whom were still living with their parents and families.

Some of the haciendas were devoted to cattle ranching, some to sugar production, and others to varying mixtures of these activities. The old Jesuit estates were primarily enterprises devoted to cattle ranching and the production of agricultural crops such as cacao. They represented probably the least demanding labor system as well as the least rigorous form of slavery in Colombia. Some differences in slaves' marital status in these different types of work are worth noting and become even more apparent when children are excluded. Table 2 shows that at least 60 percent of all adult slaves had been or were married, most living in nuclear family units, and another 6 percent were single parents who could be considered married, though they were apparently not living with the father of their children; thus, two-thirds of all adult slaves were married. Craton found, surprisingly, that 54 percent of English slaves in the Bahamas were living in nuclear family units, and Higman placed 70

*TABLE 1 Marital Status of Colombian Slaves in Various Occupations, 1750–1826*

	<i>Haciendas</i> Percent (No.)	<i>Mines</i> Percent (No.)	<i>Domestic</i> Percent (No.)	<i>Jesuit</i> Percent (No.)	<i>Other</i> Percent (No.)	<i>Total</i> Percent (No.)
Married and Widowed	24.1 (194)	37.7 (1,024)	08.3 (4)	42.3 (804)	25.0 (21)	36.9 (2,047)
Single Parents	08.3 (67)	04.1 (111)	10.4 (5)	02.1 (40)	04.8 (4)	04.1 (227)
Single over 15 yrs. & older	35.1 (282)	18.8 (511)	25.0 (12)	16.6 (316)	35.7 (30)	20.7 (1,151)
Children 14 yrs. and under	32.5 (261)	39.4 (1,072)	56.3 (27)	38.9 (740)	34.5 (29)	38.3 (2,129)
Total	(804)	(2,718)	(48)	(1,900)	(84)	(5,554)

percent of English Jamaican slaves in single family households, most of them nuclear units. Conrad found only 10.4 percent of Brazilian slaves married with little family life among them, and Bowser, using an earlier and much narrower sample of largely notorial records, concluded that less than 10 percent of Peruvian slaves were married, even fewer were living in family units, and that Spaniards in Peru actively sought to prevent slave marriages.<sup>12</sup> All these surprising findings challenge many previously held conceptions, not the least of which is that harsh English slavery usually prohibited family life and that benign Latin slavery usually encouraged it. Clearly, more thorough, innovative research is needed in this area of social history and its implications.

It is not surprising that in these findings for Colombia the highest percent of married slaves was among slaves of the old Jesuit estates. But the fact that there was a higher percent of married slaves as well as children among slaves employed in mining, where life was reputedly harder, as compared to the haciendas, is surprising. Part of the explanation may be that, after 1785, decreasing profits from Chocó mines led mine owners to encourage slaves to buy their freedom in order to thin their over-extended *cuadrillas* and increase the profit margin.<sup>13</sup> This may well have been true for other mining areas as well. It is also significant that among single slaves, males outnumbered females by nearly two to one. This sexual imbalance among single slaves was heavily concentrated on haciendas and plantations, where the percent of single slaves was double that of the old Jesuit estates and among mining slaves. The male preponderance here was due to single male field hands being purchased through the slave trade to bolster the labor force to clear land and bring it into production. That did not occur on the old Jesuit estates because they were really held in a kind of trust arrangement in which there seemed to be little incentive or inclination to expand. Mining too was beginning to decline in the last decade of the eighteenth century.

TABLE 2 *Marital Status of Adult Slaves in Various Occupations, 1750–1826*

	<i>Haciendas</i> Percent (No.)	<i>Mines</i> Percent (No.)	<i>Domestic</i> Percent (No.)	<i>Jesuit</i> Percent (No.)	<i>Other</i> Percent (No.)	<i>Total</i> Percent (No.)
Married and Widowed	35.7 (194)	62.6 (1,024)	19.0 (4)	69.3 (804)	38.2 (21)	59.8 (2,047)
Single Parents	12.3 (67)	6.7 (111)	23.8 (5)	3.4 (40)	7.3 (4)	6.6 (227)
Single	51.9 (282)	31.0 (511)	57.1 (12)	27.2 (316)	54.6 (30)	33.6 (1,151)
	(543)	(1,646)	(21)	(1,160)	(55)	(3,425)

Though these data need to be explored further, they seem to suggest that the plantation-hacienda sector was one of the most dynamic branches of the colonial economy.

When marital status is noted by sex and age (see table 3), it can be seen that among prime field hands, females married earlier than men and that men remained single longer. In the middle-aged group the percentage of men and women married nearly equalized, though still a larger percent of males were single. In the older group a larger percentage of men were married than women, often with the husband substantially older than his wife.

Aside from the possible moral or humanitarian concerns that may have prompted slave owners to encourage marriage, owners also believed it had a settling effect and tended to stem discontent and discourage flight and rebellion.<sup>14</sup> It also served convenience and economic interests. The family was usually the administrative unit for distributing clothing and food rations on estates. Owners also hoped family life would encourage natural reproduction among their slaves and discourage elicit relations and promiscuity, which they believed reduced fertility in females.

The data do not record births and so do not allow the calculation of fertility rates. About the best that can be done is to indicate the child-woman ratio. For the whole population it is highest among women between the ages of 30 and 34, who each had an average family size of 2.47 living children with them at the time of the inventory. That number, adjusted for mortality by calculations based on a comparison to the south model life tables (which seemed the most appropriate for this population) with a life expectancy of about 30 years, suggests that the average slave woman in this population had given birth to five children by age thirty-three, but had lost half of them because of a high mortality of roughly fifty percent. The South Model Stable Population has a crude birth rate of 41 per 1000 (a relatively high fertility rate).<sup>15</sup> If these calculations and assumptions are correct, they indicate a rather slow-growing population with a net growth rate between .6 and 1.8 percent per year. The child-woman ratio is, in fact, probably too low. The data do not record how many children each woman ever produced. They do not take into account children who were sold off the estate or who had established families of their own even on the same estate. Moreover, the continuing addition through the slave trade of women in their fertile years (ages fifteen through forty-nine) who had not yet borne children in the population in which they themselves were enumerated would also lower the child-woman ratio. Moreover, there are many enumerations of very large families, some with as many as nine children. On the old Jesuit estates, fifteen families had seven children, forty-two had six, thirty-seven had five, and sixty-five had four. Thus, if the figure of 2.47



TABLE 3 *Marital Status of Adult Colombian Slaves According to Age and Sex*

Age	Married and Widowed				Single				Single Parent	
	M	%	F	%	M	%	F	%	M	F
<b>Fertility Age</b>										
10-14	0		7	100						
15-19	10	14	59	85	219	32	136	38	0	8
20-24	69	32	145	80	135	72	53	28	0	35
25-29	109	43	143	57	86	70.5	36	29.5	1	33
30-34	144	51	137	49	64	74	23	26	2	25
35-39	90	52	84	48	31	76	10	24	0	18
Subtotal	422	42	575	58	535	69	258	31	3	119
Total both sexes	997 (62%)				793 (43.4%)				122 (62%)	
<b>Middle Age</b>										
40-44	108	53	97	47	32	65	17	35	0	26
45-49	42	54	36	46	7	39	11	61	0	6
50-54	82	60	54	40	27	63	16	37	1	20
55-59	29	74	10	26	7	78	2	22	0	0
Subtotal	261	57	197	43	73	62	46	38	1	52
Total both sexes	458 (28%)				119 (18.8%)				53 (27%)	
<b>Old Age</b>										
60-64	59	68	28	32	32	57	24	43	0	13
65-69	9	82	2	18	5	100			0	2
70-74	26	67	13	33	11	37	19	63	0	4
75-79	2	68	1	33	1	100			0	2
Over 80	14	58	10	42	18	72	7	28	0	1
Subtotal	110	67	54	33	67	57	50	43	0	22
Total both sexes	164 (10%)				117 (38.8%)				22 (11%)	
<b>Grand Total</b>										
Total	793	49	826	51	675	66	354	34	4	2 193 98
Grand Total Both Sexes	2,845				1,029 (36%)				197 (7%)	

(living children) or 5.0 (actual births adjusted for mortality) is wrong, the error may be in giving an estimate of fertility that is too low rather than too high, which would suggest a slightly faster population growth rate.

The dependency ratio of .82 (the ratio of people under age fourteen and over age sixty-five to those more productive people between the ages of fifteen and sixty-four) in Colombia does not seem high (see

table 4), although there are few easily available figures on other slave populations with which to compare it. It indicates a large number of children and is highest among slaves in those occupations that had the highest percentage of marriage. Aside from the domestic slaves whose number is so small that it may not be reliable, the old Jesuit haciendas had the highest percentage of children (45.5%). The mines, however, had nearly as high a percentage. Even though slaves under the age of fourteen and slaves over the age of sixty-five were still very useful, the bulk of the work of the colony was done by only slightly over half (55%) of the slaves.

The dependency ratio, especially the number of children and the importance of the family which it reflects, might have been higher if the balance between the sexes had been more even, especially among slaves in their twenties and thirties; but, as we have seen, the sex ratio, or the number of men to each 100 women, did not always permit all slaves to be married, simply because there were not enough females for all males. Age differences and at least some respect for personal preferences restricted choices even more than the sex ratio implies. The ratio of men to women for the whole slave population of Colombia was 109 men for each 100 women (see table 5), not really very high when compared to other slaves areas. South Carolina in 1730–31 had sex ratios ranging anywhere from 180 to 250 or more men per 100 women.<sup>16</sup> In 1775, Jamaica had 132 men for each 100 women.<sup>17</sup>

In Colombia it is interesting to note the unexplained excess of females over males among the nonmining slaves in the youngest age group. That situation is usually reversed in most populations. The ratio of 101 men for each 100 women in their fertile years (between the ages of fifteen and forty-nine) was even more equal than among the general population as a whole. The exception was among hacienda slaves, where the ratio was considerably higher, but not radically so. This de-

TABLE 4 *Dependency Ratio of Colombian Slaves in Various Occupations, 1750–1817*

Occupation	Ages 0–14		Ages 65–99		Total Youth & aged	Ages 15–64		Ratio	Total
	No.	%	No.	%		No.	%		
Haciendas	260	33.1	32	4.0	292	492	62.8	.59	784
Mines	1,065	43.3	70	2.8	1,135	1,340	54.5	.85	2,475
Jesuit									
Haciendas	729	45.5	48	2.9	777	826	51.5	.90	1,603
Domestics	25	51	0		25	24	49	1.04	49
Other	29	3.6	0		29	51	63.8	.57	80
Total	2,108	42	150	3	2,258	2,733	55	.82	4,991

TABLE 5 Sex Ratios for Colombian Slaves in Selected Occupations, 1750–1826

Age	Haciendas			Mines			Jesuit Estates		
	Male	Female	M/F	Male	Female	M/F	Male	Female	M/F
0–4	52	55	94	210	204	103	152	160	95
5–9	48	33	145	193	179	108	124	112	111
10–14	42	30	140	158	121	131	90	91	99
15–19	42	29	145	130	103	126	59	62	95
20–24	36	41	88	90	119	76	77	68	113
25–29	39	35	111	102	91	112	54	76	71
30–34	33	24	138	102	98	104	68	54	126
35–39	30	22	136	62	59	105	34	34	100
40–44	20	24	125	61	73	83	5	39	131
45–49	17	15	113	30	24	125	8	16	50
Fertility Age									
Subtotal	(217) / (190) = (114)			(557) / (567) = (102)			(351) / (349) = (101)		
50–54	20	16	125	53	45	118	37	28	132
55–59	3	3	100	23	8	287	11	1	100
60–64	22	11	200	37	30	123	27	22	123
65–69	7	1	700	5	3	167	3	0	300
70–74	6	5	120	22	14	157	9	15	60
75–79	1	3	33	2	1	200	0	1	0
Over 80	2	7	29	14	9	156	16	4	400
TOTAL	430	354	121	1294	1181	110	820	783	105
	784			2475			1603		

spite the fact that, within the population of individual estates, single males often outnumbered single females. The fertility years corresponded to the age range of prime slaves (ages seventeen to thirty-five or thirty-nine). If slave owners intended to build up their slave gangs, this would likely be the age groups they would buy, and the imbalance probably reflected the imbalance of sexes supplied through the slave trade as well as the dynamic nature of the hacienda sector of the economy—the need to acquire laborers to carry the increased work load.<sup>18</sup>

Haciendas had the greatest imbalance between the sexes and the lower percent of married slaves and the lowest number of children; the old Jesuit estates had a virtually normal and equal balance between the sexes; and the sex ratio among slaves employed in the mines was only slightly above normal. The nearly even balance between the sexes working in the mines is surprising, but may be explained by the high rate of manumission through self-purchase. Opportunities were abundant and

it was usually the most robust slaves between the ages of fifteen and forty-nine who freed themselves.<sup>19</sup> William Sharp suggests that, in the mines of the Chocó, males and females participated equally in manumission, but this is difficult to verify. Surviving notarial records for the Chocó are scarce, but the notarial records from the neighboring region served by the Buenaventura notary show that 60 percent or more of the slaves purchasing their freedom were males and that even for manumitted females the "self-purchase" money was often paid by their husbands.<sup>20</sup> In Mexico, Lima, and Buenos Aires male manumissions also outnumbered those of females.<sup>21</sup> If more male slaves in the mines freed themselves it would help account for the nearly equal sex ratio. The nearly normal sex ratio of the population as a whole for the period from 1750 to 1826 suggests a balancing of the sex ratio due to natural population growth.

Thus the slave family seemed well established and pervasive on Colombian estates, fostered by Church, state, and colonist for whatever motives, whether religious, humanitarian, or economic, and seems to have been instrumental in "normalizing" the sex distribution of the slave population and in encouraging natural population growth.

Not only did the slave family exist in Colombia, it was frequently a free family, made so by legislation emanating from both Castilian and American sources. The Castilian legislation, most of which was codified in the *Siete Partidas* (promulgated in 1348), contained both repressive and protective elements. With the passage of time and the evolution of Castilian slavery and its transfer to America, the repressive elements, such as the legal inadmissibility of slave testimony and prohibition against slave ownership of property, seem to have fallen into disuse; however, many protective elements survived. According to these principles slavery was a necessary evil that did not diminish the human nature of the slave, nor his right to be treated as a human being. Masters who treated their slaves cruelly were liable for punishment and their slaves could demand that they be sold to another who would exercise his authority more benevolently. Liberty was one of the greatest of human possessions, and freedom was a legitimate goal for the slave, the attainment of which should be facilitated through manumission, self-purchase, and a variety of other means.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, the law that recognized the slaves' right to a family and allowed him to marry even when against his master's wishes, also allowed slave parents the first right to buy and free their children. It prohibited the separation of families by sale and provided avenues of legal recourse to reunite families if separation did take place.

The American legislation, contained principally in the *Recopilación de las Leyes de Indias*, was enacted to cope with particular problems arising in the Indies. Though repressive, like the *Partidas*, it also

contained protective provisions which required masters to Christianize their slaves, feed and clothe them adequately, and not abuse them, and it provided means of legal redress where these provisions were violated.<sup>23</sup> Municipal governments were required to appoint a Protector of the Poor to serve as guardian and legal counsel for slaves and other disadvantaged persons whose poverty or lack of sophistication might put them in need of legal advice and protection. Slaves seeking to protect their property, to buy their freedom, to reunite their families, to change masters, or to seek redress for cruelty, neglect, overwork, loss of property, or other damages, sought and received legal aid through this office. Consequently, many slaves found that the law could be used to protect them and ease their burdens while in slavery and also help them gain freedom from it. The law assumed a slave's "right" to buy his freedom, it excused him from sales tax (*alcabala*) on the price of his freedom, and allowed him to earn money and own property, which often enabled him to accumulate the price of freedom. These laws existed throughout Spain's new world colonies. Recent studies of Spanish slavery suggest that they were noble but ineffective measures seldom honored either because they were not widely known or used by slaves, or because they were prejudicial to the economic interests of the masters;<sup>24</sup> but that does not seem to be the case in Colombia.

Recent scholars of slavery in the English colonies and in the United States have, through the use of demographic techniques, revised widely held assumptions about the extent of slave families and slavery in general. More studies of the implementation of slave legislation in practice in various areas of Spanish America are needed as are more studies of notary records, slave demography, and slave families so that demographic data can confirm or modify findings and impressions gleaned from archival research.

Perhaps Colombian slavery was unique in Spanish America. The colony's economic growth was rather slow. Its extensive placer mines were made accessible to slaves to compensate for their meager rations which resulted in considerable property accumulations and the manumission of 75 percent of the blacks in the Chocó by 1804 (as opposed to far fewer in Buenos Aires).<sup>25</sup> In view of such widespread emancipation it can hardly be maintained that in Colombia slaves were generally ignorant of at least some of the laws in their favor. While knowledge of such laws favoring freedom, slave property, and the slaves' opportunity to acquire it may have been less widespread outside the Pacific lowlands, slaves throughout the colony acquired property and bought their freedom, and the official attitude in all areas seemed to be favorably disposed toward the slave. The same attitude seemed to be reflected by the larger society as well. Even if slaves did not generally know of laws protecting their marriages and their families, mine and hacienda owners

did know of them and seemed to agree with these laws. Slave inventories made of their estates reveal broad compliance with them, as did slave sales (see table 6).

The spirit of Spanish law as applied in practice in Colombia was movingly expressed in a decision handed down in 1809 in a suit for liberty of the slave Ramón Chacón. The slave asked the court to compel his master to accept his fair price which he was prepared to pay for his freedom. The court found in his favor on grounds that slavery was: "A violent and hateful condition and instead of being expanded and favored should be narrowed and restricted. In consequence no master can reasonably deny liberty to the slave that offers the fair price for that natural liberty to which all men are at first born and which we should desire to be enjoyed by all men. Considering that all are by nature equal we feel inclined naturally that it be the equal lot of all."<sup>26</sup>

This spirit seemed to pervade Colombian jurisprudence, and freedom claims were privileged cases in Colonial courts. Moreover, most of them arose because the paternalistic policies of both Church and state allowed the slave to acquire the property with which to buy his freedom. The Church's policy helped slaves by insisting they not be required to work for their master on Sundays or Church feast days, which were to be used for rest and religious instruction. The number of holy days varied from place to place but in Colombia it was customary to give slaves about ninety free days per year including Sundays.<sup>27</sup>

In mining areas slaves could work the mines on their free days and the gold they obtained belonged to them. So many slaves bought their freedom with this gold that mine owners in both the Pacific coastal mining provinces of Chocó and Barbacoas protested to the *audiencia* (high court) that the entire slave labor force would be freed, unless it required slaves to prove that they had acquired their money by honest means. They charged that slaves hid gold they had previously mined for their masters in the grounds where they would work on their free days. The *audiencia* refused to do that "because it would make the gaining of liberty impossible."<sup>28</sup>

In other areas, slaves produced fruits, vegetables, chickens, and hogs on their provision grounds either for their own tables or for sale, and with the money were sometimes able to accumulate considerable personal property and even some real property. Frequently they gave their masters a hog, cow, or a horse, or perhaps a crop of corn each year until they had paid the price of their freedom. This practice occasionally led to legal suits. Some slaves claimed their masters did not give proper credit for their payments or that once they had made full payment, the master refused to grant freedom.<sup>29</sup> In contrast, masters accused slaves of stealing produce from the hacienda to pay toward the price of their freedom.<sup>30</sup> There was some truth on both sides. Nevertheless whether

slaves acquired their property by hard work or by other means, it was not unheard of for slaves to own mines, coconut groves, corn fields, and other property worth more than their own value which they might have sold to buy their freedom outright. In some cases, however, they preferred to retain the property and use the annual produce from it to purchase their freedom over a period of years, thus retaining property on which to build their future after freedom.<sup>31</sup> If the property were part of the master's estate, as provision grounds were, the slave did not technically "own" it. He had the use of it, and what he produced on it was his. Occasionally slaves invested in real property off the estate. That was much harder to do, but at least the land and all on it was his, after he attained his freedom.

While it was true that a few slaves acquired considerable property, most had very little and could barely scrape together the price of their freedom in installments; yet whatever the extent of this property, mine and hacienda evaluations and notarial records show that the slaves used their property mainly to purchase freedom and that some, unlike Ramón Chacón, were able to do it without recourse to the courts. A systematic sample of 644 slave transactions notarized before one of the two notaries in the city of Cali shows that twenty-nine slaves bought their freedom, thirteen slaves bought an enslaved relative, and twenty-five slaves were given letters of manumission by their masters.<sup>32</sup> Of 95 slave transactions notarized before the Buenaventura notary (1743 to 1798), two slaves bought their freedom and five bought a relative. There were no gratuitous manumissions.<sup>33</sup>

When a master refused to give freedom in exchange for a fair price, or when there was disagreement on the price, the slave could petition the court to set a fair price and compel the owner to accept it. Antonia Delgado, the slave of Manuel Marmol of Guayaquil, learned of her master's intention to sell her for 450 pesos. She fled to Quito, possibly knowing that slaves were cheaper there, and threw herself on the mercy of the Protector of the Poor. She claimed to be very sick and was ordered to be examined before her evaluation. The doctor found her to have gonorrhoea, syphilis, and great blisters (herpes) over much of her body. She was evaluated for 150 pesos.<sup>34</sup> Andrés Holquin, another old slave suffering from "syphilis and other illnesses," asked to be evaluated so that he could buy his freedom and get rest and medical attention. The owner agreed to sell but asked too much money. Andrés petitioned the court to decide a fair amount, and the price was lowered by fifty *castellanos* (100 pesos).<sup>35</sup>

In these freedom cases the master and the slave, or the Protector of the Poor as his agent, named appraisors who tried to reach agreement on the fair value of the slave. When agreement could not be reached, the court decided the price. Miners complained to the audiencia that local



judges always favored liberty and so accepted the lowest price for slaves. Slaves, they said, took advantage of this leniency and chose persons to evaluate them who far underpriced them because of ignorance or sympathy or in return for a monetary kickback from the slave once he was free. The *audiencia* dismissed the miners' case on the grounds that judges frankly should favor liberty, although they should not permit fraud.<sup>36</sup> Whether the miners were right or not is hard to say, but, at the very least, slaves knew that the court usually split the difference between the two prices in cases of disagreement.<sup>37</sup> They knew, too, that seldom did the court require a slave to pay more for his freedom than his master had originally paid for him. Some slaves hoping to buy their freedom in the near future, obtained a court order preventing their masters from selling them at higher prices than they had paid for them.<sup>38</sup>

In this same spirit of opening avenues to the slave to escape "hateful servitude," a law as early as 1563 required that when slave children were sold, the parents were to have the first opportunity to buy and free them. Since infants and children were of relatively little monetary value, often less than fifty pesos, purchase by parents was quite frequent.<sup>39</sup> Often, too, bread cast upon the water returned, when freed children later paid the freedom price of parents. In the Cali notary sample of 644 transactions, twenty-nine slaves bought freedom for members of their family.

As already indicated, Spanish law tried in many ways to protect the slave family. It allowed slaves to marry and establish a family even against the master's wishes and once the slave family was established, it prohibited its separation through sale. Though the law was not always able to prevent it, separation of the slave family was not very common. For instance, the notary records for Cali indicate that of the 644 transactions, only five married slaves were sold without their spouse; one of these was purchased on the condition that he be allowed conjugal visiting rights. As shown in table 6, 42 percent of the total slave transactions involved the sale of children under the age of fourteen. However, of the sales of slaves of known marital status, 18 percent were sold with both parents, another 37 percent were sold with at least one parent (surprisingly, one out of four with the father only), and only 13 percent were sold without either parent. Over 30 percent of slaves sold (122) were single adults, and even then over 40 percent of them (51) were sold with, or to, another member of their family. Of the 248 slaves of unknown marital status, the great majority were probably not children. The sale of children without parents could cause legal problems for the seller. Indeed, in Peru Bowser finds evidence to suggest that slave owners aware of these complications discouraged marriage and family life among their slaves so they would be less hampered in buying and selling slaves with family attachments.<sup>40</sup> That does not seem to be the



case in Colombia. We know the ages for only fifteen of this group, of which only four were younger than age 15. One (age 2) was freed by his master, one (age 1) was bought and freed by his mother, and only two (age 4 and age 14) were sold without their mothers (they were mulattoes and may have been purchased by their fathers). Thus, in total, 68 percent of the slaves in Cali were sold as part of a family unit, and only a relatively small number of sales broke up families.

A similar pattern occurred in Buenaventura (see table 7). Of the 95 slave sales, only two married slaves were sold without their spouse and in both cases the new owner was informed of the marriage. Of the 70 sales of slaves for which marital status was known, half (35) involved children under 15 years of age: 41 percent (29) were sold with both parents; 4 percent (3) were sold with their mothers; and only 4 percent (3) were sold without either parent. Of the 35 single adults, 24 were sold with or to another member of their family. Of the 25 slaves of unknown marital status, we know the age of only one (age 92). Here, as in Cali, probably very few were children. Children were usually sold with their families and their ages carefully noted. Thus these data indicate that nearly 90 percent of minor children were sold with one or more of their parents and nearly 70 percent of adult slaves were sold with some other member of their family.

A slightly different pattern emerges in Bogotá and Quito (see table 8).<sup>41</sup> It is similar in its infrequent separation of slave marriages. Only twelve married slaves were sold—ten slaves were sold as couples and only two married couples were separated, though in one of these sales the new master was informed of the marriage and agreed to permit conjugal visiting rights; only 2 slaves bought their freedom; and one slave was bought and freed by a relative. Of the 286 sales of slaves of known marital status, 112 (39%) involved the sale of children under the

TABLE 6 *Slave Sales in First Notary of Cali, 1716–1800*

	No.	% Sales of Slaves of Known Marital Status	% of Total Sales
Single Parent Families	147	37.1	22.8
Complete Families	73	18.4	11.3
Children under 14			
without Either Parent	54	13.6	8.4
Single Slaves over 15	122	30.8	18.9
Slaves of Unknown Marital Status	<u>248</u>		<u>38.5</u>
Total	644		

TABLE 7 *Slave Sales in the Buenaventura Notary*

	No.	% Sales of Slaves of Known Marital Status	% of Total Sales
Single Parent Families	3	4.3	3.1
Complete Families	29	41.4	30.5
Children under 14 without Either Parent	3	4.3	3.2
Single Slaves over 15	35	50.0	36.8
Slaves of Unknown Marital Status	<u>25</u>		26.3
Total	95		

age of 14: 10 (3.5%) involved complete families; 55 (19%) involved the sale of children with at least one of the parents; and only 47 (16%) were sold without either parent. Of the slaves of known marital status, 174 (60%) were single adults, and, again, most of the 55 slaves of unknown marital status were probably not children. The greater number of single adults sold and the fewer number of children sold in Bogotá and Quito than in Cali and Buenaventura may be explained by the fact that about one-third of the data in these notary samples comes from the seventeenth century, when labor and general living conditions were harder; when there was greater sexual imbalance among the slave population; and when slave families were not as well established and thus there were fewer children. These data tend to confirm the conclusions reflected in the age-sex profiles given earlier. Clearly there are many unanswered questions regarding the implications of these findings for Colombia (and perhaps for our understanding of Spanish slavery in other areas as well), which can only be resolved with further research. Yet, a clear trend stands out in all four notary samples: the majority of slave sales consisted of single adults, few slave marriages were separated by sale, and few children were sold without their parents.<sup>42</sup>

If families were separated, a slave could, and often did, request the help of the courts in reuniting his family or in facilitating the purchase of a child where the child's master opposed it. These cases usually involved older children who were less dependent upon their mothers, and of course the older the child the greater his chances of being sold. The purchase of older children also required more money, considerable negotiating, and sometimes legal action. A good example was the case of Josefa Velasco, the slave of Juan José Guerrero. She asked the Protector of the Poor to have her seven-year-old son, José Antonio, evaluated so she could buy him and free him. He had been sold to another

TABLE 8 *Slave Sales in Bogotá and Quito, 1600–1820*

	No.	% Sales of Slaves of Known Marital Status	% of Total Sales
Single Parent Family	55	19.2	16.1
Complete Family	10	3.5	2.9
Children under 14 without Either Parent	47	16.4	13.8
Single Adults	174	60.8	51.0
Unknown Status	<u>55</u>		16.1
	341		

master, Don Juan Paz. Josefa had received permission to keep the boy on her master's estate once she had bought his freedom. He was evaluated at 112 pesos. That was more money than the mother had, so she appealed for another evaluation, hoping to lower the price even further, but her request was denied. Apparently the boy's master was cruel or stingy with rations, because she also petitioned that he be taken out of his power and placed in "deposit" (usually in jail or with some responsible person) until she could find a more acceptable master willing to buy him. She won her case.<sup>43</sup>

A similar, but even more striking, case was that of Nolberta Quiroga, the slave of Joaquín de la Flor. She and her daughter, Martina, became separated and were sold to different masters. In 1801 the mother learned that her daughter might be sold to a distant province where she would never see her again. She petitioned the Protector of the Poor to allow her to exercise her "right as a mother" to buy her daughter. "If Don Thomas has rights to her as a master," began her moving petition, "they do not deny my rights to her which nature and reason grant" as her mother. The court granted her request and ordered Don Thomas to sell Martina to her mother. Obstacles still remained, however. Don Thomas was asking 500 pesos; far more than the mother possessed. Nolberta then petitioned that her daughter be evaluated at a more fair price. She won that case, too, and got the price lowered to 350 pesos; still too much. She desperately appealed even that price, but reappraisal was denied. Still refusing to give up, the mother persuaded her own master to buy Martina with the understanding that she could gradually buy her daughter's freedom. She no doubt pointed out that the price was a real bargain, nearly 30 percent off. Whatever the turning point, Nolberta's master purchased Martina and reunited the family with the eventual hope of freedom for both.<sup>44</sup>

Married slaves who had been separated often asked the court to

require the master of one or the other to buy the spouse so they could be reunited.<sup>45</sup> These requests were seldom denied. If neither owner was willing or able to buy the other spouse, usually some arrangement was worked out to allow one of the slaves to make regular visits to the other spouse. A case that occurred on an estate near Cartagena in 1808 reveals much about the nature of Colombian society and the position of the Negro in it. Christiano Valvenda and Ana Escobas were slaves married to each other living on the estate of Juan Chacón, who sold Christiano because of “intolerable faults” to a neighboring estate owned by María Barraza. Christiano protested this sale and petitioned the ecclesiastical court for permission to live with his wife. The judge ruled that Ana Escobas must be permitted to visit her husband each Wednesday and Saturday on María Barraza’s estate. Chacón complied with this decision. After the second visit, however, his slave failed to come home. When Chacón went to get her, an angry encounter ensued, and Christiano insulted his former master and worse yet accused Chacón’s wife of having committed “indecencies” and irregularities with the slaves of her husband’s estate when she had been drunk. Infuriated, Chacón brought suit against the new owner of Christiano to force her either to sell him out of the area or to sell him back to Chacón so he could properly discipline and control him. The court ruled that it was possible due to human weakness that the slave’s statement about Chacón’s wife was not slander and that justice would be best served if Chacón sold Christiano’s wife to his new owner as well, which was done.<sup>46</sup>

If a slave’s spouse were sold out of the area, either spouse could ask that he also be sold to the same owner or to some owner close enough to allow some marital life between them. In that case the courts sometimes required their masters to grant them licenses which gave a specified amount of time off and written permission to travel within a specified area in search of a buyer.<sup>47</sup> Even when years had passed since the sale of the husband or wife the courts still honored slave reunions. Thus although the wife of the slave Andrés Porras had been sold ten years earlier, he requested in 1802 that he be sold to his wife’s master and his petition was granted.<sup>48</sup> In 1806 Guillermo Cantellos had sold the wife of his slave Miguel. Miguel petitioned the Protector to force his master to sell him to his wife’s owner. His request was granted. Indeed that decision seemed to summarize the attitude of the courts on marriage and family life—the family, even among slaves, should take precedence over private interests.<sup>49</sup>

A combination of motives—religious, humanitarian, paternalistic, and economic—prompted the Church, the crown, and the colonists in Colombia to foster family bonds among the bondsmen of the colony. By and large, they were remarkably successful. If the data are correct and representative, two-thirds of all adult slaves lived in family units.

Slave families not only existed, but were lasting, viable family units, with recognized rights of conjugal relations and rights over their children. Slaves' right to live as families not only enjoyed the legal protection of the Church and crown, but even more importantly, it was accepted by colonists as well. Slave families seem to have been limited only by the unfavorable sex ratio that prevented them from forming, rather than by their owner's or by society's indifference, hostility, or insensitivity or even by sale or economic considerations for that matter, which so often sundered slave families in other areas. Of course, economic considerations affected slave families but seem to have affected them more as family units than as individuals. If sale occurred, it was usually the sale of families. Only one sale in eight separated children from their parents.

The rights of slaves to maintain their families, to own property, and to buy their freedom had two effects. It created, in Colombia at any rate, an atmosphere in which blacks could free themselves with relative ease, though it was probably easier in mining areas than elsewhere. By 1778, 35 percent of the blacks of the Chocó were freedmen and by 1804, only thirty years later, 75 percent were freedmen;<sup>50</sup> rather different than in other areas. It also often created a cohesiveness among black families, which then worked together toward the freeing of other family members.

Norman Meiklejohn's excellent study of slave legislation in New Granada finds, rather surprisingly, that "very little, if anything, appears to have been done to foster the family life of slaves or keep family members from being separated."<sup>51</sup> He was searching for legal cases and found "only a handful," which he took to mean official disinterest and lack of concern. Demographic evidence and quantitative analysis of mine and hacienda slave lists and notarial records suggest that so few legal cases arose in these areas precisely because there were so few challenges, due to broad public acceptance.

It is true that many slaves, indeed most, never acquired the property to free themselves. Others may not have known of the laws which could be used by them to improve their situation. There must have been some, too, who had heard of laws and Protectors of the Poor, but for whom things were not bad enough to compel them to action. There were others who tried and failed, due to the local influence of masters and the timidity or friendship of local officials who would not, or could not, stand up to them. Nevertheless, one is impressed, when going through the endless legal documents of the time, with the pervasiveness of the slave family on Colombian estates and with the many slaves in colonial Colombia who did use the paternalistic and rather lenient laws, and the general milieu in which they existed and were enforced, to acquire property, gain freedom, free their children, and reunite their families. Even those thousands of slaves who made no use of these laws

benefited because the family, even of bondsmen, took precedence over private interests.

NOTES

1. Norman Meiklejohn, "The Implementation of Slave Legislation in Colonial New Granada," in Robert Brent Toplin, ed., *Slavery and Race Relations in Latin America* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1974), pp. 180–82.
2. Data on which this paper is based come from slave inventories of some sixty haciendas and eighty mines—inventories originating from probate cases, property suits, and seizure of property for debts or taxes—and from the inventories and account books of some fifty-two former Jesuit estates among those administered by the Junta de Temporalidades after the Jesuits were expelled in 1767. The inventories were made by appraisers representing each of the interested parties plus a knowledgeable, disinterested person, often the *alcalde*, all of whom jointly listed the slaves, usually by name, sex, age, marital status, and the fair market value, upon which the appraisers mutually agreed. These lists, appraising over eleven thousand slaves, provide a sampling both in time and place. The lists date from 1661 to 1826, though 70% of them are from the eighteenth century. Except for the age-sex profiles, all calculation and analysis are based on lists dated after 1750.

We cannot be sure of the bias of the sample, but it seems to be reasonably representative with regard to size and geographic region. No data come from the provinces of Panamá, Río Hacha, Santa Marta, or Tunja, but these were not major slave areas. According to the census of 1776, these combined provinces accounted for only 25% of the total slaves (56,750) in the colony. In the major slave holding areas (of New Granada plus Popayán Province of Quito), the Pacific lowlands, Antioquia, and the Cauca and Magdalena valleys, inventories made between 1700 and 1800 list 5,791 slaves, a number equal on the average to 18% of the number enumerated in these areas in the 1776 census (31,371).

These records have some advantages over other demographic records in that they were often more carefully recorded and witnessed since they usually dealt with rather sizeable investments and mutually agreed upon prices. Yet many slaves must not have known their ages, and neither did their owners. Ages, especially for adult slaves, sometimes tended to be estimated, rounded, or clustered in five-year increments. Whatever the case regarding age, however, the inventories represented a kind of consensus that the individual slave was the age stated, or at least that the owner and others were willing to accept him as that age and back their judgment with a considerable financial stake. For young children in the age group 0–4 and 5–9 years, where statistics are often most unreliable in Latin America, records seemed to be fairly accurate. Some estates kept birth records and even genealogies of their slaves for four generations or more, and in the case of the old Jesuit estates administered by the Junta de Temporalidades, from which about 40% of the data come, rather extensive accounting procedures were followed. Moreover, for young children, the memory of parents and owners and the physical stature of the child also worked for accuracy. The same was somewhat true for the 10–14 year age group, where physical development, especially the onset of puberty, would provide at least rough age guidelines, even in the absence of other aids.

These inventories list 11,206 slaves, of which 2,172 are duplicated on inventories made from one to ten years later. Although a case might be made for including these duplicated slaves due to high turnover of slaves on estates because of death and sale, they were not included. In the case of these duplicated lists, only the inventory that provided the most complete data was used. That left a sample of 9,034 slaves for which the data are not of equal completeness. The sex is noted for all slaves; the sex and marital status for 8,071 (90%); the sex, marital status, and age for 7,227 (80% of the total sample and 54% of the 1750–1826 subpopulation); the sex, age, marital status, and type of work for 5,554 (60%) of the 1750–1826 subpopulation and a considerably larger percentage for the total sample. In most cases the inventories do not



- record births or deaths or movement of slaves, so that vital rates are not readily determinable. Persons interested in a more precise documentation are referred to the author's Ph.D. dissertation, "Health and Slavery: A Study of Health Conditions among Negro Slaves of the Viceroyalty of New Granada and Its Associated Slave Trade, 1600–1810" (Tulane University, 1972).
3. Archivo Histórico Nacional de Colombia (hereafter AHNC), Miscelanea 74, fol. 22 (1714); Negros y esclavos de Santander 5, fol. 934–37 (1809).
  4. AHNC, Impuestos Varios—Cartas 23, fol. 801 (1770); Minas del Tolima 2, fol. 840–41 (1790); Negros y esclavos de Panamá 2, fol. 312–48 (1803).
  5. Archivo Histórico Nacional del Ecuador (hereafter AHNE), Real Audiencia, Gobernación de Popayán, Caja 198, "Joaquin Aguiar y Venegas en nombre del Cabildo, de la Ciudad de Barbacoas contra el Sr. Obispo, Dn. Luís López de Solís," fol. 16 (1805).
  6. AHNE, Minas del Cauca 4, fol. 371 (1801).
  7. AHNE, Real Audiencia, Gobernación de Popayán, Caja 143, "Visita de la Ciudad de Caloto obrada por el Gobernador de la Ciudad de Popayán, Dn. Pedro Vecaria," fol. 43 (1786).
  8. University of North Carolina, Southern History Collection, Popayán Papers, Box 9, "Instrucciones para el manejo de las Minas de Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes, San José y Santiago" (1810). Courtesy of William F. Sharp.
  9. AHNC, Minas del Cauca 5, fol. 347–48 (1804).
  10. For some that have been done, see Richard Graham, "Slave Families on a Rural Estate in Brazil," *Journal of Social History* 9 (Spring 1976):382–403; B.W. Higman, *Slave Population and Economy in Jamaica, 1807–1834* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 80–98; Michael Craton, "Changing Patterns of Slave Families in the West Indies," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 10, no. 2 (Summer 1979):1–35 and "Jamaican Slavery," in Stanley L. Engerman and Eugene D. Genovese, eds., *Race and Slavery in the Western Hemisphere: Quantitative Studies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 253. For other contemporary studies see, in the same work: Peter H. Wood, "More Like a Negro Country: Demographic Patterns in Colonial South Carolina, 1700–1740," and Richard Sutch, "The Breeding of Slaves for Sale and the Westward Expansion of Slavery, 1850–1860." Also useful is Jack E. Eblen, "New Estimates of the Vital Rates of the Black Population during the Nineteenth Century," *Demography* 11 (May 1974).
  11. See especially Jack E. Eblen, "On the Natural Increase of Slave Populations: The Example of Cuban Black Population. 1775–1900," in Stanley L. Engerman and Eugene D. Genovese, *Race and Slavery in the Western Hemisphere: Quantitative Studies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 211–47.
  12. Craton, "Changing Patterns," p. 7; Higman, *Slave Population*, p. 168; Robert Conrad, *The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery, 1850–1888* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p. 298; Frederick P. Bowser, *The African Slave in Colonial Peru, 1524–1650* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1974), p. 256.
  13. William F. Sharp, *Slavery on the Spanish Frontier: The Colombian Chocó, 1680–1810* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), pp. 184–87.
  14. *Ibid.*, pp. 140–41.
  15. The model life table selected is Model South, Mortality Level 7 (which seemed to be plausible for the demographic experience of this population) in Ansley J. Coale and Paul Demeny, *Regional Model Life Tables and Stable Populations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 740.
  16. Wood, "More Like," pp. 161–62.
  17. Craton, "Jamaican Slavery," p. 269. The imbalances between the sexes reflected the demand for men for heavier work, such as clearing land, in the early years of settlement and also the influence of the slave trade in which the general policy was to try to import slaves in a ratio of five males to three females (a sex ratio of 166).
  18. Slave import records for Colombia are spotty, but the cargo of seven ships of the Grillo Assiento Company arriving at Cartagena between the years 1663 and 1674 average 69 percent male, or a sex ratio of 222.5. A century later (1755–88), in Portobello, some forty vessels arriving during the period of this study delivered 67 percent males, or a sex ratio of 202.5.

19. Sharp, *Slavery*, pp. 142–43, 154.
20. Notaría Primera de Buenaventura, Libro de Protocolo, 1743–98. Unnumbered pages (very incomplete).
21. For a comparison of the several studies of slave manumissions, see Lyman Johnson, "Manumission in Colonial Buenos Aires, 1776–1810," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 59 (May 1979):258–79, esp. p. 262. The rate of manumission in Buenos Aires during the same period was between 0.4 and 1.37% of the slave population annually.
22. Meikeljohn, "The Implementation," pp. 182–83.
23. *Ibid.* In the 1780s, humanitarian motives and desires to promote the economic production and the wealth of the empire inspired abortive attempts to enact and enforce more systematic slave codes. They had little effect in Colombia, however.
24. Bowser, *The African Slave*; Colin A. Palmer, *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570–1650* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976); Leslie B. Rout, Jr., *The African Experience in Spanish America, 1502 to the Present Day* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
25. Sharp, *Slavery*, pp. 141–42.
26. Gobernación de Popayán, Esclavos, AHNE, Legajo 4, exped. 1, "Autos seguidos por Ramón Chacón de Mendoza con Dn. Francisco Paula Villavisencio sobre su libertad," fol. 3 (1809).
27. Pedro Fermín de Vargas, *Pensamientos políticos y memoria sobre la población de Nuevo Reino de Granada* (Bogotá, 1953), p. 53.
28. AHNE, Real Audiencia, Gobernación de Popayán, Caja 125, "Autos de recurso del Dr. Dn. Juan de las Cruz Díaz del Castillo sobre que ponga la regla conveniente para precaver el perjuicio con que se libertan algunos esclavos de las minas" (1782).
29. Archivo Histórico Departmental de Antioquia (hereafter AHDA), Colonia 33 (Esclavos), doc. 1059 (1799); 29 (Esclavos), doc. 955 (1759); 35 (Esclavos), doc. 1188 (1809); 32 (Esclavos), doc. 1039 (1790).
30. AHNC, Negros y esclavos de Cundinamarca 9, fol. 341–43 (1759), 566–67 (1758).
31. AHNC, Temporalidades 8, fol. 905–59 (1768); Aquiles Escalantes, *El negro en Colombia* (Bogotá, 1964), p. 127; Roberto Rojas Gómez, "La esclavitud en Colombia," *Boletín de Historia y Antigüedades* 14 (May 1922), p. 102.
32. Notaría Primaria de Cali. Protocolos, 1716, 1772–73, 1775, 1779–82, 1785–86, 1789, 1795, 1798. Cali was in the heart of the Cauca Valley, one of the major centers of slavery in colonial Colombia. Of the two notaries with colonial records, the first notary had the most complete set of surviving documents. Many of the records of the second notary were destroyed, and relatively few, sparse, and incomplete records remained. We attempted to sample systematically the records of the first notary between 1750 and 1800 by choosing every fifth year when available or combining years where necessary to get a statistically significant sample of fifty or more transactions. The year 1716 was also included because it was virtually the only complete year of records remaining from the first half of the century. The sample included all notarial transactions dealing with slaves (bills of sale, gifts, self-purchases, purchase of enslaved relatives, and freedom letters) in the years indicated.
33. Notaría Primaria de Buenaventura. Protocolo 1743–98.
34. AHNE, Real Audiencia, Gobernación de Popayán, Esclavos, Legajo 4, exped. 2, "Antonia Delgado, Esclava de Dn. Manuel Marmol, pide protección en virtud de la real cédula que manda que los señores procuradores sean los defensores de los esclavos" (1806).
35. AHDA, Colonia 34 (Esclavos), doc. 1122 (1803).
36. AHNE, Real Audiencia, Gobernación de Popayán, Caja 125, "Autos de recurso del Dr. Dn. Juan de la Cruz Díaz del Castillo . . ." fol. 1–9 (1782).
37. A good example is found in AHDA, 34 (Esclavos), doc. 1134 (1804).
38. AHNE, Real Audiencia, Gobernación de Popayán, Esclavos, Legajo 4, exped. 2, "Antonia Delgado . . ." fol. 1 (1806); Legajo 3, exped. 29, "Autos formados por Bonafacia Godoy, negra esclava de Dn. Felipe Ramón de Algeria, contra Dn. José Mariano Godoy sobre que devuelva el exceso de la cantidad en que la vendió" (1785); exped. 45, "Autos de Dorotea Rubio, negra de los bienes del Dr. Dn. Manuel Rubio, con Dn. Pedro Buendia sobre la nulidad de la venta hecha por Dr. Josepha Rubio"



- (1779); exped. 28, "Autos de Juan Fernandes y Bernanda Oñate, mulatos, con Dr. Juan Ruis sobre el valor de sus personas" (1782).
39. For one of many examples, see AHDA, Colonia 34 (Esclavos), doc. 1124.
  40. Bowser, *African Slave*, pp. 255–71.
  41. Bogotá, Notaria Primera, 1600–01, 1619–20, 1640–41, 1660, 1680, 1700, 1720–21, 1727, 1740–41, 1760, 1780, 1794, 1800, 1810, 1820. Quito, Notaria Primera, 1600–01, 1640, 1680, 1720, 1740, 1760, 1780, 1800. We took all slave transactions for every tenth year (as far as possible).
  42. For other studies of freedmen, see Johnson, "Manumissions," and Frederick P. Bowser, "The Free Person of Color in Mexico City and Lima: Manumission and Opportunity, 1580–1650," in Stanley L. Engerman and Eugene D. Genovese, *Race and Slavery in the Western Hemisphere: Quantitative Studies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 331–63.
  43. AHNE, Real Audiencia, Gobernación de Popayán, Esclavos, Legajo 5, exped. 1, "Josefa Velasco sobre que Dn. Juan Paz vende a su hijo" (n.d.).
  44. *Ibid.*, Legajo 4, exped. 3, "Nolberta Quiroga sobre que Dn. Thomas Villanos venda a su hija nombrada Martina" (1801).
  45. AHDA, Colonia 30 (Esclavos), doc. 970 (1769).
  46. AHNC, Negros y Esclavos de Bolívar 6, fol. 1053–80 (1808).
  47. For an actual license see AHDA, Colonia 33 (Esclavos), doc. 1076 (1799). See also 34 (Esclavos), doc. 1138 (1804).
  48. AHDA, Colonia 33 (Esclavos), doc. 1107 (1802).
  49. AHDA, Colonia 34 (Esclavos), doc. 1139 (1806).
  50. Sharp, *Slavery*, pp. 140–41.
  51. Meiklejohn, "Implementation," p. 194.