

**Global Scale and Lasting Legacy:** The Atlantic slave trade, from the late 15th to mid-19th century, forcibly brought over 10 million Africans to the Americas, profoundly impacting slaves, their descendants, and global economies and histories.

**European Demand for Labor:** The intensive labor required for crops like sugarcane, tobacco, and cotton in new American colonies led Europeans to seek labor from Africa after Native Americans died from disease or resisted enslavement.

**Transformation of African Slavery:** While various forms of slavery existed in Africa, the European demand for slaves, fueled by manufactured goods, weapons, and rum, transformed the practice. Capturing slaves became a motivation for war rather than a result, and an "arms race" developed as kingdoms bought firearms with slaves to defend against raids.

**Unimaginable Brutality and Dehumanization:** Slaves faced extreme cruelty, including forced marches, branding, and horrific conditions on ships to the Americas, where about 20% died. Many captives, fearing cannibalism or to avoid suffering, committed suicide or starved themselves. Survivors were dehumanized and treated as cargo.

**Impact on Africa's Future:** Africa lost tens of millions of its able-bodied population, with a disproportionate number of men. The collapse of slave trade-dependent economies left African kingdoms vulnerable to conquest and colonization. The increased warfare and instability from European weapons continue to affect the continent.

**Development of Racist Ideology:** Europeans, needing to justify the contradiction of slavery with their ideals of equality, developed the racist ideology that Africans were biologically inferior and destined for slavery. This racial basis made it impossible for slaves and their descendants to achieve equal status.