

COLONIAL SOCIETY IN THE 18TH CENTURY

The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas, and form new opinions. From involuntary idleness, servile dependence, and useless labor, he has passed to toils of a very different nature, rewarded by ample subsistence. This is an American.

J. Hector St. John Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, 1782

The Frenchman who wrote the above description of Americans in 1782 observed a very different society from the struggling colonial villages that had existed in the 17th century. The British colonies had grown, and their inhabitants had evolved a culture distinct from any in Europe. This chapter describes the mature colonies and asks: If Americans in the 1760s constituted a new kind of society, what were its characteristics and what forces shaped its “new people”?

Population Growth

At the start of the new century, in 1701, the English colonies on the Atlantic Coast had a population of barely 250,000 Europeans and Africans. By 1775, the figure had jumped to 2,500,000, a tenfold increase within the span of a single lifetime. Among African Americans, the population increase was even more dramatic: from about 28,000 in 1701 to 500,000 in 1775.

The spectacular gains in population during this period resulted from two factors: immigration of almost a million people and a sharp natural increase, caused chiefly by a high birthrate among colonial families. An abundance of fertile American land and a dependable food supply attracted thousands of European settlers each year and also supported the raising of large families.

European Immigrants

Newcomers to the British colonies came not only from England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, but also from other parts of Western and Central Europe. Many immigrants, most of whom were Protestants, came from France and German-speaking kingdoms and principalities. Their motives for leaving Europe were many. Some came to escape religious persecution and wars. Others sought

economic opportunity either by farming new land or setting up shop in a colonial town as an artisan or a merchant. Most immigrants settled in the middle colonies (Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, and Delaware) and on the western frontier of the southern colonies (Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia). In the 18th century, few immigrants headed for New England, where land was both limited in extent and under Puritan control.

English Settlers from England continued to come to the American colonies. However, with fewer problems at home, their numbers were relatively small compared to others, especially the Germans and Scotch-Irish.

Germans This group of non-English immigrants settled chiefly on the rich farmlands west of Philadelphia, an area that became known as Pennsylvania Dutch country. They maintained their German language, customs, and religion (Lutheran, Amish, Brethren, Mennonite, or one of several smaller groups) and, while obeying colonial laws, showed little interest in English politics. By 1775, people of German stock comprised 6 percent of the colonial population.

Scotch-Irish These English-speaking people emigrated from northern Ireland. Since their ancestors had moved to Ireland from Scotland, they were commonly known as the Scotch-Irish or Scots-Irish. They had little respect for the British government, which had pressured them into leaving Ireland. Most settled along the frontier in the western parts of Pennsylvania, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. By 1775, they comprised 7 percent of the population.

Other Europeans Other immigrant groups included French Protestants (called Huguenots), the Dutch, and the Swedes. These groups made up 5 percent of the population of all the colonies in 1775.

Africans

The largest single group of non-English immigrants did not come to America by choice. They were Africans—or the descendants of Africans—who had been taken captive, forced into European ships, and sold as enslaved laborers to southern plantation owners and other colonists. Some Africans were granted their freedom after years of forced labor. Outside the South, thousands of African Americans worked at a broad range of occupations, such as being a laborer, bricklayer, or blacksmith. Some of these workers were enslaved and others were free wage earners and property owners. Every colony, from New Hampshire to Georgia, passed laws that discriminated against African Americans and limited their rights and opportunities.

By 1775, the African American population (both enslaved and free) made up 20 percent of the colonial population. About 90 percent lived in the southern colonies in lifelong bondage. African Americans formed a majority of the population in South Carolina and Georgia.

The Structure of Colonial Society

Each of the thirteen British colonies developed distinct patterns of life. However, they all also shared a number of characteristics.

General Characteristics

Most of the population was English in origin, language, and tradition. However, both Africans and non-English immigrants brought diverse influences that would modify the culture of the majority in significant ways.

Self-government The government of each colony had a representative assembly that was elected by eligible voters (limited to white male property owners). In only two colonies, Rhode Island and Connecticut, was the governor also elected by the people. The governors of the other colonies were either appointed by the crown (for example, New York and Virginia) or by a proprietor (Pennsylvania and Maryland).

Religious Toleration All of the colonies permitted the practice of different religions, but with varying degrees of freedom. Massachusetts, the most conservative, accepted several types of Protestants, but it excluded non-Christians and Catholics. Rhode Island and Pennsylvania were the most liberal.

No Hereditary Aristocracy The social extremes of Europe, with a nobility that inherited special privileges and masses of hungry poor, were missing in the colonies. A narrower class system, based on economics, was developing. Wealthy landowners were at the top; craft workers and small farmers made up the majority of the common people.

Social Mobility With the major exception of the African Americans, all people in colonial society had an opportunity to improve their standard of living and social status by hard work.

The Family

The family was the economic and social center of colonial life. With an expanding economy and ample food supply, people married at a younger age and reared more children than in Europe. More than 90 percent of the people lived on farms. While life in the coastal communities and on the frontier was hard, most colonists had a higher standard of living than did most Europeans.

Men While wealth was increasingly being concentrated in the hands of a few, most men did work. Landowning was primarily reserved to men, who also dominated politics. English law gave the husband almost unlimited power in the home, including the right to beat his wife.

Women The average colonial wife bore eight children and performed a wide range of tasks. Household work included cooking, cleaning, making clothes, and providing medical care. Women also educated the children. A woman usually worked next to her husband in the shop, on the plantation, or on the farm. Divorce was legal but rare, and women had limited legal and political rights. Yet the shared labors and mutual dependence with their husbands gave most women protection from abuse and an active role in decision-making.

The Economy

By the 1760s, almost half of Britain's world trade was with its American colonies. The British government permitted limited kinds of colonial manufacturing, such as making flour or rum. It restricted efforts that would compete with English industries, such as textiles. The richness of the American land and British mercantile policy produced colonies almost entirely engaged in agriculture.

As the people prospered and communities grew, increasing numbers became ministers, lawyers, doctors, and teachers. The quickest route to wealth was through the land, although regional geography often provided distinct opportunities for hardworking colonists.

New England With rocky soil and long winters, farming was limited to subsistence levels that provided just enough for the farm family. Most farms were small—under 100 acres—and most work was done by family members and an occasional hired laborer. The industrious descendants of the Puritans profited from logging, shipbuilding, fishing, trading, and rum-distilling.

Middle Colonies Rich soil produced an abundance of wheat and corn for export to Europe and the West Indies. Farms of up to 200 acres were common. Often, indentured servants and hired laborers worked with the farm family. A variety of small manufacturing efforts developed, including iron-making. Trading led to the growth of such cities as Philadelphia and New York.

Southern Colonies Because of the diverse geography and climate of the southern colonies, agriculture varied greatly. Most people lived on small subsistence family farms with no slaves. A few lived on large plantations of over 2,000 acres and relied on slave labor. Plantations were self-sufficient—they grew their own food and had their own slave craftworkers. Products were mainly tobacco in the Chesapeake and North Carolina colonies, timber and naval stores (tar and pitch) in the Carolinas, and rice and indigo in South Carolina and Georgia. Most plantations were located on rivers so they could ship exports directly to Europe.

Monetary System One way the British controlled the colonial economy was to limit the use of money. The growing colonies were forced to use much of the limited hard currency—gold and silver—to pay for the imports from Britain that increasingly exceeded colonial exports. To provide currency for domestic trade, many colonies issued paper money, but this often led to inflation. The British government also vetoed colonial laws that might harm British merchants.

Transportation Transporting goods by water was much easier than attempting to carry them over land on rough and narrow roads or trails. Therefore, trading centers such as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston were located on the sites of good harbors and navigable rivers. Despite the difficulty and expense of maintaining roads and bridges, overland travel by horse and stage became more common in the 18th century. Taverns not only provided food and lodging for travelers, but also served as social centers where news was exchanged and politics discussed. A postal system using horses on overland routes and small ships on water routes was operating both within and between the colonies by the mid-18th century.

Religion

Although Maryland was founded by a Catholic proprietor, and larger towns such as New York and Boston attracted some Jewish settlers, the overwhelming majority of colonists belonged to various Protestant denominations. In New England, Congregationalists (the successors to the Puritans) and Presbyterians were most common. In New York, people of Dutch descent often attended services of the Reformed Church, while many merchants belonged to the Church of England, also known as Anglicans (and later, Episcopalians). In Pennsylvania, Lutherans, Mennonites, and Quakers were the most common groups. Anglicans were dominant in Virginia and some of the other southern colonies.

Challenges Each religious group, even the Protestants who dominated the colonies, faced problems. Jews, Catholics, and Quakers suffered from the most serious discrimination and even persecution. Congregationalist ministers were criticized by other Protestants as domineering and for preaching an overly complex doctrine. Because the Church of England was headed by the king, it was viewed as a symbol of English control in the colonies. In addition, there was no Church of England bishop in America to ordain ministers. The absence of such leadership hampered the church's development.

Established Churches In the 17th century, most colonial governments taxed the people to support one particular Protestant denomination. Churches financed through the government are known as established churches. For example, in Virginia, the established church was the Church of England. In Massachusetts Bay it was the Congregational Church. As various immigrant groups increased the religious diversity of the colonies, governments gradually reduced their support of churches. In Virginia, all tax support for the Anglican Church ended shortly after the Revolution. In Massachusetts by the time of the Revolution, members of other denominations were exempt from supporting the Congregational Church. However, some direct tax support of the denomination remained until the 1830s.

The Great Awakening

In the first decades of the 18th century, sermons in Protestant churches tended to be long intellectual discourses and portrayed God as a benign creator of a perfectly ordered universe. Ministers gave less emphasis than in Puritan times on human sinfulness and the perils of damnation. In the 1730s, however, a dramatic change occurred that swept through the colonies with the force of a hurricane. This was the Great Awakening, a movement characterized by fervent expressions of religious feeling among masses of people. The movement was at its strongest during the 1730s and 1740s.

Jonathan Edwards In a Congregational church at Northampton, Massachusetts, Reverend Jonathan Edwards expressed the Great Awakening ideas in a series of sermons, notably one called "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" (1741). Invoking the Old Testament scriptures, Edwards argued that God was rightfully angry with human sinfulness. Each individual who expressed deep

penitence could be saved by God’s grace, but the souls who paid no heed to God’s commandments would suffer eternal damnation.

George Whitefield While Edwards mostly influenced New England, George Whitefield, who came from England in 1739, spread the Great Awakening throughout the colonies, sometimes attracting audiences of 10,000 people. In barns, tents, and fields, he delivered rousing sermons that stressed that God was all-powerful and would save only those who openly professed belief in Jesus Christ. Those who did not would be damned into hell and face eternal torments. Whitefield taught that ordinary people with faith and sincerity could understand the gospels without depending on ministers to lead them.

Religious Impact The Great Awakening had a profound effect on religious practice in the colonies. As sinners tearfully confessed their guilt and then joyously exulted in being “saved,” emotionalism became a common part of Protestant services. Ministers lost some of their former authority among those who now studied the Bible in their own homes.

The Great Awakening also caused divisions within churches, such as the Congregational and Presbyterian, between those supporting its teachings (“New Lights”) and those condemning them (“Old Lights”). More evangelical sects such as the Baptists and Methodists attracted large numbers. As denominations competed for followers, they also called for separation of church and state.

Political Influence A movement as powerful as the Great Awakening affected all areas of life, including politics. For the first time, the colonists—regardless of their national origins or their social class—shared in a common experience as Americans. The Great Awakening also had a democratizing effect by changing the way people viewed authority. If common people could make their own religious decisions without relying on the “higher” authority of ministers, then might they also make their own political decisions without deferring to the authority of the great landowners and merchants? This revolutionary idea was not expressed in the 1740s, but 30 years later, it would challenge the authority of a king and his royal governors.

Cultural Life

In the early 1600s, the chief concern of most colonists was economic survival. People had neither the time nor the resources to pursue leisure activities or create works of art and literature. One hundred years later, however, the colonial population had grown and matured enough that the arts could flourish, at least among the well-to-do southern planters and northern merchants.

Achievements in the Arts and Sciences

In the coastal areas, as fear of American Indians faded, people displayed their prosperity by adopting architectural and decorative styles from England.

Architecture In the 1740s and 1750s, the Georgian style of London was widely imitated in colonial houses, churches, and public buildings. Brick and stucco homes built in this style were characterized by a symmetrical placement

of windows and dormers and a spacious center hall flanked by two fireplaces. Such homes were found only on or near the eastern seaboard. On the frontier, a one-room log cabin was the common shelter.

Painting Many colonial painters were itinerant artists who wandered the countryside in search of families who wanted their portraits painted. Shortly before the Revolution, two American artists, Benjamin West and John Copley, went to England where they acquired the necessary training and financial support to establish themselves as prominent artists.

Literature With limited resources available, most authors wrote on serious subjects, chiefly religion and politics. There were, for example, widely read religious tracts by two Massachusetts ministers, Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards. In the years preceding the American Revolution, writers including John Adams, James Otis, John Dickinson, Thomas Paine, and Thomas Jefferson issued political essays and treatises highlighting the conflict between American rights and English authority. The lack of support for literature did not stop everyone. The poetry of Phillis Wheatley is noteworthy both for her triumph over slavery and the quality of her verse.

By far the most popular and successful American writer of the 18th century was that remarkable jack-of-all-trades, Benjamin Franklin. His witty aphorisms and advice were collected in *Poor Richard's Almanack*, a best-selling book that was annually revised from 1732 to 1757.

Science Most scientists, such as the botanist John Bartram of Philadelphia, were self-taught. Benjamin Franklin won fame for his work with electricity and his developments of bifocal eyeglasses and the Franklin stove.

Education

Basic education was limited and varied among the colonies. Formal efforts were directed to males, since females were trained only for household work.

Elementary Education In New England, the Puritans' emphasis on learning the Bible led them to create the first tax-supported schools. A Massachusetts law in 1647 required towns with more than fifty families to establish primary schools for boys, and towns with more than a hundred families to establish grammar schools to prepare boys for college. In the middle colonies, schools were either church-sponsored or private. Often, teachers lived with the families of their students. In the southern colonies, parents gave their children whatever education they could. On plantations, tutors provided instruction for the owners' children.

Higher Education The first colonial colleges were sectarian, meaning that they promoted the doctrines of a particular religious group. The Puritans founded Harvard in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1636 in order to give candidates for the ministry a proper theological and scholarly education. The Anglicans opened William and Mary in Virginia in 1694, and the Congregationalists started Yale in Connecticut in 1701. The Great Awakening prompted the creation of five new colleges between 1746 and 1769:

- College of New Jersey (Princeton), 1746, Presbyterian
- King’s College (Columbia), 1754, Anglican
- Rhode Island College (Brown), 1764, Baptist
- Queens College (Rutgers), 1766, Reformed
- Dartmouth College, 1769, Congregationalist

Only one nonsectarian college was founded during this period. The College of Philadelphia, which later became the University of Pennsylvania, had no religious sponsors. On hand for the opening ceremonies in 1765 were the college’s civic-minded founders, chief among them Benjamin Franklin.

Ministry During the 17th century, the Christian ministry was the only profession to enjoy widespread respect among the common people. Ministers were often the only well-educated person in a small community.

Physicians Colonists who fell prey to epidemics of smallpox and diphtheria were often treated by “cures” that only made them worse. One common practice was to bleed the sick, often by employing leeches or bloodsuckers. A beginning doctor received little formal medical training other than acting as an apprentice to an experienced physician. The first medical college in the colonies was begun in 1765 as part of Franklin’s idea for the College of Philadelphia.

Lawyers Often viewed as talkative troublemakers, lawyers were not common in the 1600s. In that period, individuals would argue their own cases before a colonial magistrate. During the 1700s, however, as trade expanded and legal problems became more complex, people felt a need for expert assistance in court. The most able lawyers formed a bar (committee or board), which set rules and standards for aspiring young lawyers. Lawyers gained further respect in the 1760s and 1770s when they argued for colonial rights. John Adams, James Otis, and Patrick Henry were three such lawyers whose legal arguments would ultimately provide the intellectual underpinnings of the American Revolution.

The Press

News and ideas circulated in the colonies principally by means of a postal system and local printing presses.

Newspapers In 1725, only five newspapers existed in the colonies, but by 1776 the number had grown to more than 40. Issued weekly, each newspaper consisted of a single sheet folded once to make four pages. It contained such items as month-old news from Europe, ads for goods and services and for the return of runaway indentured servants and slaves, and pious essays giving advice for better living. Illustrations were few or nonexistent. The first cartoon appeared in the Philadelphia *Gazette*, placed there by, of course, Ben Franklin.

The Zenger Case Newspaper printers in colonial days ran the risk of being jailed for libel if any article offended the political authorities. In 1735, John Peter Zenger, a New York editor and publisher, was brought to trial on a charge of libelously criticizing New York’s royal governor. Zenger’s lawyer, Andrew Hamilton, argued that his client had printed the truth about the governor.

According to English common law at the time, injuring a governor's reputation was considered a criminal act, no matter whether a printed statement was true or false. Ignoring the English law, the jury voted to acquit Zenger. While this case did not guarantee complete freedom of the press, it encouraged newspapers to take greater risks in criticizing a colony's government.

Rural Folkways

The majority of colonists rarely saw a newspaper or read any book other than the Bible. As farmers on the frontier or even within a few miles of the coast, they worked from first daylight to sundown. The farmer's year was divided into four ever-recurring seasons: spring planting, summer growing, fall harvesting, and winter preparations for the next cycle. Food was usually plentiful, but light and heat in the colonial farmhouse were limited to the kitchen fireplace and a few well-placed candles. Entertainment for the well-to-do consisted chiefly of card playing and horse-racing in the southern colonies, theater-going in the middle colonies, and attending religious lectures in Puritan New England.

The Enlightenment

In the 18th century, some educated Americans felt attracted to a European movement in literature and philosophy that is known as the Enlightenment. The leaders of this movement believed that the "darkness" of past ages could be corrected by the use of human reason in solving most of humanity's problems.

A major influence on the Enlightenment and on American thinking was the work of John Locke, a 17th-century English philosopher and political theorist. Locke, in his *Two Treatises of Government*, reasoned that while the state (the government) is supreme, it is bound to follow "natural laws" based on the rights that people have simply because they are human. He argued that sovereignty ultimately resides with the people rather than with the state. Furthermore, said Locke, citizens had a right and an obligation to revolt against whatever government failed to protect their rights.

Other Enlightenment philosophers adopted and expounded on Locke's ideas. His stress on natural rights would provide a rationale for the American Revolution and later for the basic principles of the U.S. Constitution.

Emergence of a National Character

The colonists' motivations for leaving Europe, the political heritage of the English majority, and the influence of the American natural environment combined to bring about a distinctly American viewpoint and way of life. Especially among white male property owners, the colonists exercised the rights of free speech and a free press, became accustomed to electing representatives to colonial assemblies, and tolerated a variety of religions. English travelers in the colonies remarked that Americans were restless, enterprising, practical, and forever seeking to improve their circumstances.

Politics

By 1750, the 13 colonies had similar systems of government, with a governor acting as chief executive and a separate legislature voting either to adopt or reject the governor's proposed laws.

Structure of Government

There were eight royal colonies with governors appointed by the king (New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia). In the three proprietary colonies (Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Delaware), governors were appointed by the proprietors. The governors in only two of the colonies, Connecticut and Rhode Island, were elected by popular vote.

In every colony, the legislature consisted of two houses. The lower house, or assembly, elected by the eligible voters, voted for or against new taxes. Colonists thus became accustomed to paying taxes only if their chosen representatives approved. (Their unwillingness to surrender any part of this privilege would become a cause for revolt in the 1770s.) In the royal and proprietary colonies, members of the legislature's upper house—or council—were appointed by the king or the proprietor. In the two self-governing colonies, both the upper and lower houses were elective bodies.

Local Government From the earliest period of settlement, colonists in New England established towns and villages, clustering their small homes around an open space known as a green. In the southern colonies, on the other hand, towns were much less common, and farms and plantations were widely separated. Thus, the dominant form of local government in New England was the town meeting, in which people of the town would regularly come together, often in a church, to vote directly on public issues. In the southern colonies, local government was carried on by a law-enforcing sheriff and other officials who served a large territorial unit called a *county*.

Voting

If democracy is defined as the participation of all the people in the making of government policy, then colonial democracy was at best limited and partial. Those barred from voting—white women, poor white men, slaves of both sexes, and most free blacks—constituted a sizable majority of the colonial population. Nevertheless, the barriers to voting that existed in the 17th century were beginning to be removed in the 18th. Religious restrictions, for example, were removed in Massachusetts and other colonies. On the other hand, voters in all colonies were still required to own at least a small amount of property.

Another factor to consider is the degree to which members of the colonial assemblies and governors' councils represented either a privileged elite or the larger society of plain citizens. The situation varied from one colony to the next. In Virginia, membership in the House of Burgesses was tightly restricted to certain families of wealthy landowners. In Massachusetts, the legislature was more open to small farmers, although there, too, an educated, propertied elite held

power for generations. The common people everywhere tended to defer to their “betters” and to depend upon the privileged few to make decisions for them.

Without question, colonial politics was restricted to participation by white males only. Even so, compared with other parts of the world, the English colonies showed tendencies toward democracy and self-government that made their political system unusual for the time.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: WAS COLONIAL SOCIETY DEMOCRATIC?

Was colonial America “democratic” or not? The question is important for its own sake and also because it affects one’s perspective on the American Revolution and on the subsequent evolution of democratic politics in the United States. Many historians have focused on the politics of colonial Massachusetts. Some have concluded that colonial Massachusetts was indeed democratic, at least for the times. By studying voting records and statistics, they determined that the vast majority of white male citizens could vote and were not restricted by property qualifications. According to these historians, class differences between an elite and the masses of people did not prevent the latter from participating fully in colonial politics.

Other historians question whether broad voting rights by themselves demonstrate the existence of real democracy. The true test of democratic practice, they argue, would be whether different groups in a colonial town felt free to debate political questions in a town meeting. In the records of such meetings, they found little evidence of true political conflict and debate. Instead, they found that the purpose of town meetings in colonial days was to reach a consensus and to avoid conflict and real choices. These historians believe that the nature of consensus-forming limited the degree of democracy.

A third historical perspective is based on studies of economic change in colonial Boston. According to this view, a fundamental shift from an agrarian to a maritime economy occurred in the 18th century. In the process, a new elite emerged to dominate Boston’s finances, society, and politics. The power of this elite prevented colonial Massachusetts from being considered a true democracy.

The question remains: To what extent were Massachusetts and the other colonies democratic? Much of the answer depends on the definition of democracy.

KEY TERMS BY THEME

<p>Arts & Science (CUL) English cultural domination Benjamin West John Copley Benjamin Franklin <i>Poor Richard's Almanack</i> Phillis Wheatley John Bartram professions: religion, medicine, law</p> <p>Religion (CUL) religious toleration established church Great Awakening</p>	<p>Jonathan Edwards George Whitefield Cotton Mather sectarian nonsectarian</p> <p>The Land (GEO) subsistence farming</p> <p>Ethnicity (NAT) J. Hector St. John Crevecoeur colonial families Germans Scotch-Irish Huguenots Dutch Swedes Africans</p> <p>People (MIG) immigrants social mobility</p>	<p>Government (POL) hereditary aristocracy John Peter Zenger Andrew Hamilton Enlightenment colonial governors colonial legislatures town meetings county government limited democracy</p>
---	--	--

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Questions 1–3 refer to the excerpt below.

“To understand political power . . . we must consider what estate all men are naturally in, and that it is a state of perfect freedom to order their actions and dispose of their possessions . . . within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave, or depending upon the will of any other man. . . .

“Whosoever therefore out of a state of nature unite into a community must be understood to give up all the power necessary to the ends for which they unite into society, to the majority of the community . . . And this is done by barely agreeing to unite into one political society. . . . And thus that which begins and actually constitutes any political society is nothing but the consent of any number of freemen capable of a majority to unite. . . . And this is that . . . which did or could give beginning to any lawful government in the world.”

—John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, 1690

1. How is the topic of Locke’s writing similar to most writing in the colonies in the 18th century?
 - (A) He wrote about nature, and most writing was about nature or agriculture
 - (B) He wrote about the rights of the majority, and most writing was about rights and liberties
 - (C) He wrote about freemen, and most writing was about freedom and slavery
 - (D) He wrote about politics, and most writing was about politics or religion
2. Locke’s writings had the most direct influence on the
 - (A) American Revolution
 - (B) Great Awakening
 - (C) Mayflower Compact
 - (D) Zenger case
3. Which of the following groups in the colonies in the late 17th century would be most critical of Locke’s ideas?
 - (A) Slave owners
 - (B) Church leaders
 - (C) Merchants
 - (D) Women

Questions 4–6 refer to the excerpt below.

“[Lawyer for the prosecution:] Gentlemen of the jury; the information now before the Court, and to which the Defendant Zenger has pleaded not guilty, is an information for printing and publishing a false, scandalous, and seditious libel, in which His Excellency the Governor of this Province . . . is greatly and unjustly scandalized as a person that has no regard to law nor justice. . . . Indeed Sir, as Mr. Hamilton [Zenger’s attorney] has confessed the printing and publishing these libels, I think the jury must find a verdict for the King; for supposing they were true, the law says that they are not the less libelous for that; nay, indeed the law says their being true is an aggravation of the crime.

“[Mr. Hamilton:] Not so . . . I hope it is not our bare printing and publishing a paper that will make it libel. You will have something more to do before you make my client a libeler; for the words themselves must be libelous, that is false . . . or else we are not guilty.”

—James Alexander, lawyer for J. Peter Zenger,
The Trial of John Peter Zenger, 1736

4. Which of the following had an effect on attitudes toward traditional authority similar to the effect of the Zenger case?
 - (A) The arrival of new immigrants in the British colonies
 - (B) The growth of the legal profession
 - (C) The spread of the Great Awakening
 - (D) The westward movement of settlers
5. Which group would most strongly support Zenger’s position on the press?
 - (A) Farmers in New England
 - (B) Southern planters
 - (C) Settlers on the frontier
 - (D) Residents of cities
6. Which of the following was a long-term effect of the jury’s decision in the Zenger case?
 - (A) Zenger became a colonial leader
 - (B) The colonial press became more willing to criticize the British
 - (C) Restrictions on the press increased
 - (D) New York became the center of anti-British sentiments

Questions 7–10 refer to the excerpt below.

“For a nation thus abused to arise unanimously and to resist their prince, even to dethroning him, is not criminal but a reasonable way of vindicating their liberties and just rights; it is making use of the means, and the only means, which God has put into their power for mutual and self-defense. . . .

“To conclude, let us all learn to be free and to be loyal. . . . But let us remember . . . government is sacred and not to be trifled with. It is our happiness to live under the government of a prince who is satisfied with ruling according to law. . . . Let us prize our freedom but not use our liberty for a cloak of maliciousness. There are men who strike at liberty under the term licentiousness. There are others who aim at popularity under the disguise of patriotism. Be aware of both. Extremes are dangerous.”

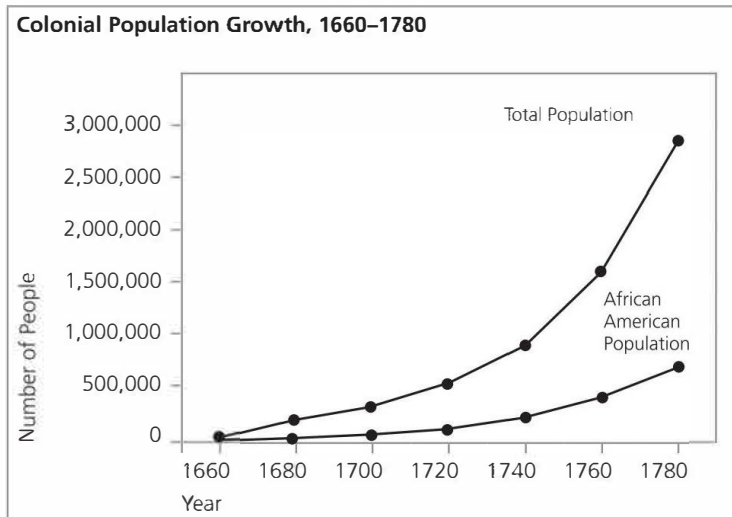
—Jonathan Mayhew, church minister, “On Unlimited Submission to Rulers,” 1750

7. According to Mayhew, the people should be willing to challenge abuses by the
 - (A) royal governors
 - (B) church ministers
 - (C) slave owners
 - (D) king
8. Which of the following possible influences on Mayhew is most clearly reflected in his statement?
 - (A) The Great Awakening
 - (B) The teachings in the colonial colleges
 - (C) The ideas of the Enlightenment
 - (D) The rulings by royal governors
9. Mayhew would probably apply his warning, “not use our liberty for a cloak of maliciousness” to
 - (A) the Mayflower Compact
 - (B) the Act of Toleration
 - (C) Bacon’s Rebellion
 - (D) the Zenger case
10. What was the context in which Mayhew was writing?
 - (A) democratic practices were slowly increasing
 - (B) opposition to British rule of the colonies was increasing
 - (C) the Great Awakening was making authorities stronger
 - (D) restrictions on voting were becoming tighter

SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

Use complete sentences; an outline or bulleted list alone is not acceptable.

Question 1 is based on the following graph.



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*

1. Using the graph, answer a, b, and c.
 - a) Briefly explain the role slavery played in the population growth of this period.
 - b) Briefly describe the sources of immigrants other than from Africa during this period.
 - c) Briefly explain the impact of the non-African immigration on ONE of the following sections of the colonies.
 - New England
 - Middle Colonies
 - Southern Colonies

Question 2. Answer a, b, and c.

- a) Briefly explain the role of ONE of the following factors in the growing colonial economy by the mid-18th century.
 - agriculture
 - monetary system
 - transportation
- b) Briefly explain ONE important difference between the economies of British colonies in the South and New England by 1750.
- c) Briefly explain ONE limitation placed on the colonial economy by British government policy.

Question 3 is based on the excerpts below.

“The design of erecting a college in this province is a matter of such grand and general importance that I have frequently made it the topic of my serious meditation. . . .

“It is, in the first place, observable that, unless its constitution and government be such as will admit persons of all Protestant denominations upon a perfect parity as to privileges, it will itself be greatly prejudiced and prove a nursery of animosity, dissension and disorder . . .

“Should our college, therefore, unhappily through our own bad policy fall into the hands of any one religious sect in the province; establish its religion in the college . . . it is easy to see that Christians of all other denominations among us, will, from the same principles, rather conspire to oppose and oppress it.”

—William Livingston, Presbyterian, 1753

“Colleges are religious societies of a superior nature to all others. . . . colleges are societies of ministers for training up persons for the work of the ministry . . . all their religious instruction, worship, and ordinances are carried on within their own jurisdiction by their own officers and under their own regulations . . . And we know that religion, and the religion of these churches in particular, both as to doctrine and discipline, was the main design of the founders of this college, . . . and this design their successors are bound in duty to pursue. And, indeed, religion is a matter of so great consequences and importance that the knowledge of the arts and sciences, how excellent soever in themselves, are comparatively worth but little without it.”

—Thomas Clap, president of Yale University, 1754

3. Using the excerpts, answer a, b, and c.

- a) Briefly explain the main point in passage 1.
- b) Briefly explain the main point in passage 2.
- c) Briefly explain another implication of this debate in the mid-18th century colonies beyond the immediate question of the governance of colleges.

Question 4. Answer a, b, and c.

- a) Briefly explain the advances made in ONE of the following cultural areas during the mid-18th century in the colonies.
 - architecture
 - painting
 - literature
- b) Briefly explain the role of formal education during the mid-18th century in the cultural development you indicated in (a).
- c) Briefly explain what groups in the colonies were generally unable to share in the growing pursuit of the arts and sciences.

THINK AS A HISTORIAN: QUESTIONS ABOUT PERIODIZATION

Historians divide the flow of past events into periods that share common traits. They identify key dates that mark turning points. The choice of those traits and turning points reflects a historian's point of view. Which THREE of the following essay questions asks for an answer that emphasizes periodization?

1. Compare and contrast the ideas and influence of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield.
2. How did the 1730s mark an important shift in colonial religious history?
3. The years from 1607 to 1733 can be called the Era of English Settlement. Explain whether you think this label fits the era.
4. Describe the trend in ethnic diversity in the English colonies between 1607 and 1775.
5. The Massachusetts school law of 1647 marked the beginning of a new era in American education.

PERIOD 2 Review: 1607–1754

LONG-ESSAY QUESTIONS

Directions: Respond to one of each pair of questions. The suggested writing time is 35 minutes. In your response you should do the following.

- State a relevant thesis that directly addresses all parts of the question.
- Support your argument with evidence, using specific examples.
- Apply historical thinking skills as directed by the question.
- Synthesize the elements above into a persuasive essay that extends your argument, connects it to a different historical context, or connects it to a different category of analysis.

Choose EITHER Question 1 or Question 2.

1. Compare and contrast the role of religion in the founding of the Spanish colonies in the 16th century with that of the English colonies in the 17th century.
2. Analyze why freedom of religion was important in the founding of some of the English colonies while being denied in others.

Choose EITHER Question 3 or Question 4.

3. Analyze the impact of geography and the environment on the development of at least two different regions of the English colonies along the Atlantic coast in the 17th and 18th centuries.
4. Analyze the influence of TWO of the following on the development of a democratic society in the English colonies during the period from 1607 to 1745.
 - Bacon’s Rebellion
 - Enlightenment
 - Great Awakening
 - Zenger case

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

Directions: Question 1 is based on the accompanying documents. The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise. You are advised to spend 15 minutes planning and 40 minutes writing your answer.

In your response you should do the following.

- State a relevant thesis that directly addresses all parts of the question.
 - Support the thesis or a relevant argument with evidence from all, or all but one, of the documents.
 - Incorporate analysis of all, or all but one, of the documents into your argument.
 - Focus your analysis of each document on at least one of the following: intended audience, purpose, historical context, and/or point of view.
 - Support your argument with analysis of historical examples outside the documents.
 - Connect historical phenomena relevant to your argument to broader events or processes.
 - Synthesize the elements above into a persuasive essay.
1. Analyze the similarities and differences in the various influences and approaches toward unity in the English colonies in the period of the 17th and early 18th centuries.

Document 1

Source: The Mayflower Compact, 1620

This day before we came to harbor, observing some not well affected to unity and concord, but gave some appearance of faction, it was thought good there should be an association and agreement that we should combine together in one body, and to submit to such government and governors as we should be common consent agree to make and choose, and set out hands to this that follows word for word. . . . [We] do by these present, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, offices from time to time as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony.

Document 2

Source: Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, 1639

As it has pleased the Almighty God . . . we, the inhabitants and residents of Windsor, Hartford, and Wethersfield are now cohabiting and dwelling in and upon the river of Conectecotte [Connecticut] and the lands thereunto adjoining; and well knowing where a people are gathered together the Word of God requires that, to maintain the peace and union of such a people, there should be an orderly and decent government established according to God, to order and dispose of the affairs of the people at all seasons as occasion shall require; do therefore associate and conjoin ourselves to be as one public state or commonwealth, and do, for ourselves and our successors and such as shall be adjoined to us at any time hereafter, enter into combination and confederation together, to maintain and preserve the liberty and purity of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus which we now profess.

Document 3

Source: The New England Confederation, 1643

The Articles of confederation between the Plantations under the Government of the Massachusetts . . . New Plymouth . . . Connecticut and . . . New Haven with the Plantations in Combination therewith. . . .

The said United Colonies . . . hereby enter into a firm and perpetual league of friendship and amity for offence and defence, mutual advice . . . upon all just occasions . . . and for their own mutual safety and welfare. . . .

It is by these Confederates agreed that the charge of all just wars, whether offensive or defensive, upon what part or member of this Confederation soever they fall . . . be borne by all the parts of this Confederation . . .

It is further agreed that if any of these Jurisdictions or any Plantation under or in combination with them, be invaded by any enemy whatsoever, upon notice and request of any three magistrates of that Jurisdiction so invaded, the rest of the Confederates without any further meeting or exposition shall forthwith send aid to the Confederate in danger.

Document 4

Source: William Penn, Plan of Union, 1697

A brief and plain scheme how the English colonies in the North parts of America... Boston, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jerseys, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and Carolinas—may be made more useful to the crown and one another's peace and safety. . . .

1. That the several colonies before mentioned do meet . . . at least once in two years in times of peace . . . to debate and resolve of such measures as are most advisable for their better understanding and the public tranquillity and safety.
2. That, in order to it, two persons . . . be appointed by each province as their representatives or deputies, which in the whole make the congress. . . .
6. That their business shall be to hear and adjust all matters of complaint or difference between province and province . . . to consider the ways and means to support the union and safety of these provinces against the public enemies.

Document 5

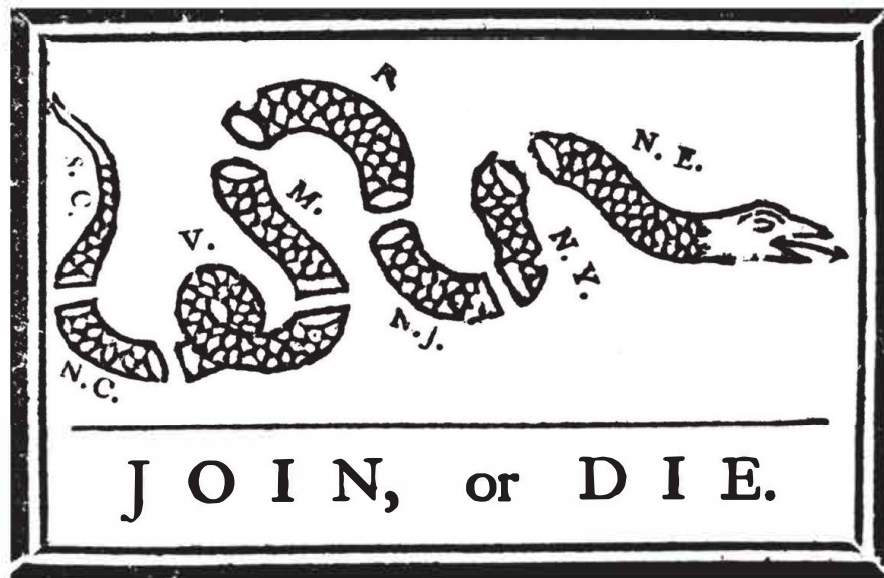
Source: The Albany Plan of Union, 1754

It is proposed that humble application be made for an act of Parliament of Great Britain, by virtue of which one general government may be formed in America, including all the said colonies, within and under which government each colony may retain its present constitution, except in the particulars wherein a change may be directed by the said act, as hereafter follows:

1. That the said general government be administered by a President-General, to be appointed and supported by the crown; and a Grand Council, to be chosen by the representatives of the people of the several Colonies met in their respective assemblies. . . .
15. That they raise and pay soldiers and build forts for the defense of any of the colonies. . . .
16. That for these purposes they have power to make laws, and lay and levy such general duties, imposts, or taxes, as to them shall appear most equal and just.

Document 6

Source: *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 1754. Library of Congress



Document 7

Source: Ben Franklin, "The Problem of Colonial Union," 1754

[On] the subject of uniting the colonies more intimately with Great Britain by allowing them representatives in Parliament, I have something further considered that matter and am of opinion that such a union would be very acceptable to the colonies, provided they had a reasonable number of representatives allowed them; and that all the old acts Parliament restraining the trade or cramping the manufacturers of the colonies be at the same time repealed. . . .

I should hope, too, that by such a union the people of Great Britain and the people of the colonies would learn to consider themselves as not belonging to different community with different interests but to one community with one interest, which I imagine, would contribute to strengthen the whole and greatly lessen the danger of future separations.

PERIOD 3: 1754–1800

Chapter 4 *Imperial Wars and Colonial Protest, 1754–1774*

Chapter 5 *The American Revolution and Confederation, 1774–1787*

Chapter 6 *The Constitution and the New Republic, 1787–1800*

In less than fifty years the British went from consolidating their control along the Atlantic coast of North America to watching 13 of their colonies unite in revolt and establish an independent nation.

Overview After the Seven Years' War ended in 1763, the British desired more revenue to pay for protecting their empire while many American colonists saw themselves as self-sufficient. These clashing views resulted in the colonies declaring independence, winning a war, and founding a new nation. Initially governed by Articles of Confederation with a weak federal government, the new United States soon replaced it with a new constitution that created a federal government that was stronger, though still with limited powers. Out of the debates over the new constitution and policies emerged two parties. The test of the stability of the American system came in 1800, when one party, the Federalists, peacefully transferred power to the other, the Democratic-Republicans. Throughout this period there was a continuous westward migration resulting in new opportunities, blended cultures, and increased conflicts with the American Indians and other European nations.

Alternate View Some historians start the story of the birth of the United States in 1763, at the end of the Seven Years' War. Starting in 1754 emphasizes that fighting the war drove the colonies and the British apart. While the United States declared independence in 1776 and ratified the Constitution in 1788, not until 1800 had it clearly survived the divisions of the early years.

Key Concepts

3.1: British attempts to assert tighter control over its North America colonies and the colonial resolve to pursue self-government led to a colonial independence movement and the Revolutionary War.

3.2: The American Revolution's democratic and republican ideals inspired new experiments with different forms of government.

3.3: Migration within North America and competition over resources, boundaries and trade intensified conflicts among peoples and nations.

Source: AP® *United States History Course and Exam Description, Updated Fall 2015*

IMPERIAL WARS AND COLONIAL PROTEST, 1754–1774

The people, even to the lowest ranks, have become more attentive to their liberties, more inquisitive about them, and more determined to defend them than they were ever before known or had occasion to be.

John Adams, 1765

What caused American colonists in the 1760s to become, as John Adams expressed it, “more attentive to their liberties”? The chief reason for their discontent in these years was a dramatic change in Britain’s colonial policy. Britain began to assert its power in the colonies and to collect taxes and enforce trade laws much more aggressively than in the past. To explain why Britain took this fateful step, we must study the effects of its various wars for empire.

Empires at War

Late in the 17th century, war broke out involving Great Britain, France, and Spain. This was the first of a series of four wars that were worldwide in scope, with battles in Europe, India, and North America. These wars occurred intermittently over a 74-year period from 1689 to 1763. The stakes were high, since the winner of the struggle stood to gain supremacy in the West Indies and Canada and to dominate the lucrative colonial trade.

The First Three Wars

The first three wars were named after the British king or queen under whose reign they occurred. In both King William’s War (1689–1697) and Queen Anne’s War (1702–1713), the British launched expeditions to capture Quebec, but their efforts failed. American Indians supported by the French burned British frontier settlements. Ultimately, the British forces prevailed in Queen Anne’s War and gained both Nova Scotia from France and trading rights in Spanish America.

A third war was fought during the reign of George II: King George’s War (1744–1748). Once again, the British colonies were under attack from their perennial rivals, the French and the Spanish. In Georgia, James Oglethorpe led a colonial army that managed to repulse Spanish attacks. To the north,

a force of New Englanders captured Louisbourg, a major French fortress, on Cape Breton Island, controlling access to the St. Lawrence River. In the peace treaty ending the war, however, Britain agreed to give Louisbourg back to the French in exchange for political and economic gains in India. New Englanders were furious about the loss of a fort that they had fought so hard to win.

The Seven Years' War (French and Indian War)

The first three wars between Britain and France focused primarily on battles in Europe and only secondarily on conflict in the colonies. The European powers saw little value in committing regular troops to America. However, in the fourth and final war in the series, the fighting began in the colonies and then spread to Europe. Moreover, Britain and France now recognized the full importance of their colonies and shipped large numbers of troops overseas to North America rather than rely on “amateur” colonial forces. This fourth and most decisive war was known in Europe as the Seven Years' War. The North American phase of this war is often called the French and Indian War.

Beginning of the War From the British point of view, the French provoked the war by building a chain of forts in the Ohio River Valley. One of the reasons the French did so was to halt the westward growth of the British colonies. Hoping to stop the French from completing work on Fort Duquesne (Pittsburgh) and thereby win control of the Ohio River Valley, the governor of Virginia sent a small militia (armed force) under the command of a young colonel named George Washington. After gaining a small initial victory, Washington's troops surrendered to a superior force of Frenchmen and their American Indian allies on July 3, 1754. With this military encounter in the wilderness, the final war for empire began.

At first the war went badly for the British. In 1755, another expedition from Virginia, led by General Edward Braddock, ended in a disastrous defeat, as more than 2,000 British regulars and colonial troops were routed by a smaller force of French and American Indians near Ft. Duquesne. The Algonquin allies of the French ravaged the frontier from western Pennsylvania to North Carolina. The French repulsed a British invasion of French Canada that began in 1756.

The Albany Plan of Union Recognizing the need for coordinating colonial defense, the British government called for representatives from several colonies to meet in a congress at Albany, New York, in 1754. The delegates from seven colonies adopted a plan—the Albany Plan of Union—developed by Benjamin Franklin that provided for an intercolonial government and a system for recruiting troops and collecting taxes from the various colonies for their common defense. Each colony was too jealous of its own taxation powers to accept the plan, however, and it never took effect. The Albany congress was significant, however, because it set a precedent for later, more revolutionary congresses in the 1770s.

British Victory The British prime minister, William Pitt, concentrated the government's military strategy on conquering Canada. This objective was accomplished with the retaking of Louisbourg in 1758, the surrender of Quebec to General James Wolfe in 1759, and the taking of Montreal in 1760. After these British victories, the European powers negotiated a peace treaty (the Peace of Paris) in 1763. Great Britain acquired both French Canada and Spanish Florida. France ceded (gave up) to Spain its huge western territory, Louisiana, and claims west of the Mississippi River in compensation for Spain's loss of Florida. With this treaty, the British extended their control of North America, and French power on the continent virtually ended.

Immediate Effects of the War Britain's victory in the Seven Years' War gave them unchallenged supremacy in North America and also established them as the dominant naval power in the world. No longer did the American colonies face the threat of concerted attacks from the French, the Spanish, and their American Indian allies. More important to the colonies, though, was a change in how the British and the colonists viewed each other.

The British View The British came away from the war with a low opinion of the colonial military abilities. They held the American militia in contempt as a poorly trained, disorderly rabble. Furthermore, they noted that some of the colonies had refused to contribute either troops or money to the war effort. Most British were convinced that the colonists were both unable and unwilling to defend the new frontiers of the vastly expanded British empire.

The Colonial View The colonists took an opposite view of their military performance. They were proud of their record in all four wars and developed confidence that they could successfully provide for their own defense. They were not impressed with British troops or their leadership, whose methods of warfare seemed badly suited to the densely wooded terrain of eastern America.

Reorganization of the British Empire

More serious than the resentful feelings stirred by the war experience was the British government's shift in its colonial policies. Previously, Britain had exercised little direct control over the colonies and had generally allowed its navigation laws regulating colonial trade to go unenforced. This earlier policy of salutary neglect was abandoned as the British adopted more forceful policies for taking control of their expanded North American dominions.

All four wars—and the last one in particular—had been extremely costly. In addition, Britain now felt the need to maintain a large British military force to guard its American frontiers. Among British landowners, pressure was building to reduce the heavy taxes that the colonial wars had laid upon them. To pay for troops to guard the frontier without increasing taxes at home, King George III and the dominant political party in Parliament (the Whigs) wanted the American colonies to bear more of the cost of maintaining the British empire.

Pontiac's Rebellion The first major test of the new British imperial policy came in 1763 when Chief Pontiac led a major attack against colonial settlements on the western frontier. The American Indians were angered by the growing westward movement of European settlers onto their land and by the British refusal to offer gifts as the French had done. Pontiac's alliance of American Indians in the Ohio Valley destroyed forts and settlements from New York to Virginia. Rather than relying on colonial forces to retaliate, the British sent regular British troops to put down the uprising.

Proclamation of 1763 In an effort to stabilize the western frontier, the British government issued a proclamation that prohibited colonists from settling west of the Appalachian Mountains. The British hoped that limiting settlements would prevent future hostilities between colonists and American Indians. But the colonists reacted to the proclamation with anger and defiance. After their victory in the Seven Years' War, colonists hoped to reap benefits in the form of access to western lands. For the British to deny such benefits was infuriating. Defying the prohibition, thousands streamed westward beyond the imaginary boundary line drawn by the British. (See map, page 76.)

British Actions and Colonial Reactions

The Proclamation of 1763 was the first of a series of acts by the British government that angered colonists. From the British point of view, each act was justified as a proper method for protecting its colonial empire and making the colonies pay their share of costs for such protection. From the colonists' point of view, each act represented an alarming threat to their cherished liberties and long-established practice of representative government.

New Revenues and Regulations

In the first two years of peace, King George III's chancellor of the exchequer (treasury) and prime minister, Lord George Grenville, successfully pushed through Parliament three measures that aroused colonial suspicions of a British plot to subvert their liberties.

Sugar Act (1764) This act (also known as the Revenue Act of 1764) placed duties on foreign sugar and certain luxuries. Its chief purpose was to raise money for the crown, and a companion law also provided for stricter enforcement of the Navigation Acts to stop smuggling. Those accused of smuggling were to be tried in admiralty courts by crown-appointed judges without juries.

Quartering Act (1765) This act required the colonists to provide food and living quarters for British soldiers stationed in the colonies.

Stamp Act In an effort to raise funds to support British military forces in the colonies, Lord Grenville turned to a tax long in use in Britain. The Stamp Act, enacted by Parliament in 1765, required that revenue stamps be placed on most printed paper in the colonies, including all legal documents, newspapers,

pamphlets, and advertisements. This was the first direct tax—collected from those who used the goods—paid by the people in the colonies, as opposed to the taxes on imported goods, which were paid by merchants.

People in every colony reacted with indignation to news of the Stamp Act. A young Virginia lawyer named Patrick Henry spoke for many when he stood up in the House of Burgesses to demand that the king's government recognize the rights of all citizens—including the right not to be taxed without representation. In Massachusetts, James Otis initiated a call for cooperative action among the colonies to protest the Stamp Act. Representatives from nine colonies met in New York in 1765 to form the so-called Stamp Act Congress. They resolved that only their own elected representatives had the legal authority to approve taxes.

The protest against the stamp tax took a violent turn with the formation of the Sons and Daughters of Liberty, a secret society organized for the purpose of intimidating tax agents. Members of this society sometimes destroyed revenue stamps and tarred and feathered revenue officials.

Boycotts against British imports were the most effective form of protest. It became fashionable in the colonies in 1765 and 1766 for people not to purchase any article of British origin. Faced with a sharp drop in trade, London merchants put pressure on Parliament to repeal the controversial Stamp Act.

Declaratory Act In 1766, Grenville was replaced by another prime minister, and Parliament voted to repeal the Stamp Act. When news of the repeal reached the colonies, people rejoiced. Few colonists at the time noted that Parliament had also enacted a face-saving measure known as the Declaratory Act (1766). This act asserted that Parliament had the right to tax and make laws for the colonies “in all cases whatsoever.” This declaration of policy would soon lead to renewed conflict between the colonists and the British government.

Second Phase of the Crisis, 1767–1773

Because the British government still needed new revenues, the newly appointed chancellor of the exchequer, Charles Townshend, proposed another tax measure.

The Townshend Acts Adopting Townshend's program in 1767, Parliament enacted new duties to be collected on colonial imports of tea, glass, and paper. The law required that the revenues raised be used to pay crown officials in the colonies, thus making them independent of the colonial assemblies that had previously paid their salaries. The Townshend Acts also provided for the search of private homes for smuggled goods. All that an official needed to conduct such a search would be a *writ of assistance* (a general license to search anywhere) rather than a judge's warrant permitting a search only of a specifically named property. Another of the Townshend Acts suspended New York's assembly for that colony's defiance of the Quartering Act.

At first, most colonists accepted the taxes under the Townshend Acts because they were indirect taxes paid by merchants (not direct taxes on consumer goods). However, soon leaders began protesting the new duties. In 1767 and 1768, John Dickinson of Pennsylvania in his *Letters From a Farmer in Pennsylvania* wrote that Parliament could regulate commerce but argued that because duties were a form of taxation, they could not be levied on the colonies without the consent of their representative assemblies. Dickinson argued that the idea of no taxation without representation was an essential principle of English law.

In 1768, James Otis and Samuel Adams jointly wrote the Massachusetts Circular Letter and sent copies to every colonial legislature. It urged the various colonies to petition Parliament to repeal the Townshend Acts. British officials in Boston ordered the letter retracted, threatened to dissolve the legislature, and increased the number of British troops in Boston. Responding to the circular letter, the colonists again conducted boycotts of British goods. Merchants increased their smuggling activities to avoid the offensive Townshend duties.

Repeal of the Townshend Acts Meanwhile, in London, there was another change in the king's ministers. Lord Frederick North became the new prime minister. He urged Parliament to repeal the Townshend Acts because they damaged trade and generated a disappointingly small amount of revenue. The repeal of the Townshend Acts in 1770 ended the colonial boycott and, except for an incident in Boston (the "massacre" described below), there was a three-year respite from political troubles as the colonies entered into a period of economic prosperity. However, Parliament retained a small tax on tea as a symbol of its right to tax the colonies.

Boston Massacre Most Bostonians resented the British troops who had been quartered in their city to protect customs officials from being attacked by the Sons of Liberty. On a snowy day in March 1770, a crowd of colonists harassed the guards near the customs house. The guards fired into the crowd, killing five people including an African American, Crispus Attucks. At their trial for murder, the soldiers were defended by colonial lawyer John Adams and acquitted. Adams' more radical cousin, Samuel Adams, angrily denounced the shooting incident as a "massacre" and used it to inflame anti-British feeling.

Renewal of the Conflict

Even during the relatively quiet years of 1770–1772, Samuel Adams and a few other Americans kept alive the view that British officials were undermining colonial liberties. A principal device for spreading this idea was by means of the Committees of Correspondence initiated by Samuel Adams in 1772. In Boston and other Massachusetts towns, Adams began the practice of organizing committees that would regularly exchange letters about suspicious or potentially threatening British activities. The Virginia House of Burgesses took the concept a step further when it organized intercolonial committees in 1773.

The *Gaspee* One incident frequently discussed in the committees' letters was that of the *Gaspee*, a British customs ship that had caught several smugglers. In 1772, it ran aground off the shore of Rhode Island. Seizing their opportunity to destroy the hated vessel, a group of colonists disguised as American Indians ordered the British crew ashore and then set fire to the ship. The British ordered a commission to investigate and bring guilty individuals to Britain for trial.

Boston Tea Party The colonists continued their refusal to buy British tea because the British insisted on their right to collect the tax. Hoping to help the British East India Company out of its financial problems, Parliament passed the Tea Act in 1773, which made the price of the company's tea—even with the tax included—cheaper than that of smuggled Dutch tea.

Many Americans refused to buy the cheaper tea because to do so would, in effect, recognize Parliament's right to tax the colonies. A shipment of the East India Company's tea arrived in Boston harbor, but there were no buyers. Before the royal governor could arrange to bring the tea ashore, a group of Bostonians disguised themselves as American Indians, boarded the British ships, and dumped 342 chests of tea into the harbor. Colonial reaction to this incident (December 1773) was mixed. While many applauded the Boston Tea Party as a justifiable defense of liberty, others thought the destruction of private property was far too radical.

Intolerable Acts

In Great Britain, news of the Boston Tea Party angered the king, Lord North, and members of Parliament. In retaliation, the British government enacted a series of punitive acts (the Coercive Acts), together with a separate act dealing with French Canada (the Quebec Act). The colonists were outraged by these various laws, which were given the epithet "Intolerable Acts."

The Coercive Acts (1774) There were four Coercive Acts, directed mainly at punishing the people of Boston and Massachusetts and bringing the dissidents under control.

1. The Port Act closed the port of Boston, prohibiting trade in and out of the harbor until the destroyed tea was paid for.
2. The Massachusetts Government Act reduced the power of the Massachusetts legislature while increasing the power of the royal governor.
3. The Administration of Justice Act allowed royal officials accused of crimes to be tried in Great Britain instead of in the colonies.
4. A fourth law expanded the Quartering Act to enable British troops to be quartered in private homes. It applied to all colonies.

Quebec Act (1774) When it passed the Coercive Acts, the British government also passed a law organizing the Canadian lands gained from France. This plan was accepted by most French Canadians, but it was resented by many in the 13 colonies. The Quebec Act established Roman Catholicism as the official

religion of Quebec, set up a government without a representative assembly, and extended Quebec's boundary to the Ohio River.

The colonists viewed the Quebec Act as a direct attack on the American colonies because it took away lands that they claimed along the Ohio River. They also feared that the British would attempt to enact similar laws in America to take away their representative government. The predominantly Protestant Americans also resented the recognition given to Catholicism.

BRITISH COLONIES: PROCLAMATION LINE OF 1763 AND QUEBEC ACT OF 1774



Philosophical Foundations of the American Revolution

For Americans, especially those who were in positions of leadership, there was a long tradition of loyalty to the king and Great Britain. As the differences between them grew, many Americans tried to justify this changing relationship. As discussed in Chapter 3, the Enlightenment, particularly the writings of John Locke, had a profound influence on the colonies.

Enlightenment Ideas The era of the Enlightenment (see Chapter 3) was at its peak in the mid-18th century—the very years that future leaders of the American Revolution (Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, and Adams) were coming to maturity. Many Enlightenment thinkers in Europe and America were Deists, who believed that God had established natural laws in creating the universe, but that the role of divine intervention in human affairs was minimal. They believed in rationalism and trusted human reason to solve the many problems of life and society, and emphasized reason, science, and respect for humanity. Their political philosophy, derived from Locke and developed further by the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, had a profound influence on educated Americans in the 1760s and 1770s—the decades of revolutionary thought and action that finally culminated in the American Revolution.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: WHY DID THE COLONIES REBEL?

Did America's break with Great Britain in the 18th century signify a true revolution with radical change, or was it simply the culmination of evolutionary changes in American life? For many years, the traditional view of the founding of America was that a revolution based on the ideas of the Enlightenment had fundamentally altered society.

During the 20th century, historians continued to debate whether American independence from Great Britain was revolutionary or evolutionary. At the start of the century, Progressive historians believed that the movement to end British dominance had provided an opportunity to radically change American society. A new nation was formed with a republican government based on federalism and stressing equality and the rights of the individual. The revolution was social as well as political.

During the second half of the 20th century, a different interpretation argued that American society had been more democratic and changed long before the war with Great Britain. Historian Bernard Bailyn has suggested that the changes that are viewed as revolutionary—representative government, expansion of the right to vote, and written constitutions—had all developed earlier, during the colonial period. According to this perspective, what was revolutionary or significant about the break from Great Britain was the recognition of an American philosophy based on liberty and democracy that would guide the nation.

KEY TERMS BY THEME

Colonial Unrest (NAT, POL)

Patrick Henry
Stamp Act Congress
Sons and Daughters of Liberty
John Dickinson;
“Letters From . . .”
Samuel Adams
James Otis
Massachusetts Circular Letter
Committees of Correspondence
Intolerable Acts

Rulers & Policies (WXT)

George III
Whigs
Parliament
salutary neglect
Lord Frederick North

American Indians (MIG)

Pontiac’s Rebellion
Proclamation of 1763

Empire (POL, GEO)

Seven Years’ War
(French and Indian War)
Albany Plan of Union
(1754)
Edward Braddock
George Washington
Peace of Paris (1763)

Economic Policies (WOR)

Sugar Act (1764)
Quartering Act (1765)
Stamp Act (1765)
Declaratory Act (1766)
Townshend Acts (1767)
Writs of Assistance
Tea Act (1773)
Coercive Acts (1774)
—Port Act
—Massachusetts Government Act
—Administration of Justice Act
Quebec Act (1774)

Philosophy (CUL)

Enlightenment
Deism
Rationalism
John Locke
Jean-Jacques Rousseau

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Questions 1–3 refer to the excerpt below.

“We apprehend that as freemen and English subjects, we have an indisputable title to the same privileges and immunities with His Majesty’s other subjects who reside in the interior counties . . . , and therefore ought not to be excluded from an equal share with them in the very important privilege of legislation. . . . We cannot but observe with sorrow and indignation that some persons in this province are at pains to extenuate the barbarous cruelties practised by these savages on our murdered brethren and relatives . . . by this means the Indians have been taught to despise us as a weak and disunited people, and from this fatal source have arisen many of our calamities. . . . We humbly pray therefore that this grievance may be redressed.”

—The Paxton Boys, to the Pennsylvania Assembly, “A Remonstrance of Distressed and Bleeding Frontier Inhabitants,” 1764

1. The protests by the Paxton Boys occurred during a period when many colonists were objecting to British policies that were a result of the
 - (A) Albany Plan of Union
 - (B) Great Awakening
 - (C) Seven Years’ War
 - (D) Enlightenment
2. The concern expressed in this excerpt helps explain why the British passed the
 - (A) Peace of Paris
 - (B) Proclamation of 1763
 - (C) Quartering Act
 - (D) Port Act
3. Which of the following leaders from an earlier period represented a group in a similar situation as cited in this excerpt?
 - (A) Edmond Andros
 - (B) Nathaniel Bacon
 - (C) John Smith
 - (D) Roger Williams

Questions 4–6 refer to the excerpt below.

“It is inseparably essential to the freedom of a People, and the undoubted Right of Englishmen, that no taxes be imposed on them, but with their own Consent, given personally, or by their representatives. . . . That it is the indispensable duty of these colonies, to the best of sovereigns . . . to procure the repeal of the act for granting and applying certain stamp duties, of all clauses of any other acts of Parliament . . . for the restriction of American commerce.”

—Resolutions of the Stamp Act Congress, 1765

4. The resolution of the Stamp Act Congress expressed respect for which person or group?
 - (A) Colonial merchants
 - (B) The king
 - (C) Leaders in Parliament
 - (D) Residents of England
5. For the first time, the Stamp Act placed on the colonies a tax that was
 - (A) indirect
 - (B) direct
 - (C) to regulate trade
 - (D) to support a church
6. Which of the following was a direct British response to the colonial views expressed by the Stamp Act Congress?
 - (A) Quartering Act for British soldiers
 - (B) Sugar Act taxing luxuries
 - (C) Coercive Act closing the port of Boston
 - (D) Declaratory Act stating the right to tax

Questions 7–8 refer to the excerpt below.

“The unhappy disputes between Great Britain and her American colonies . . . have proceeded to lengths so dangerous and alarming as to excite just apprehensions in the minds of His Majesty’s faithful subjects of this colony. . . .

“It cannot admit of a doubt but that British subjects in America are entitled to the same rights and privileges as their fellow subjects possess in Britain; and therefore, that the power assumed by the British Parliament to bind America by their statutes in all cases whatsoever is unconstitutional, and the source of these unhappy differences. . . .

“To obtain a redress of these grievances, without which the people of America can neither be safe, free, nor happy, they are willing to undergo the great inconvenience that will be derived to them from stopping all imports whatsoever from Great Britain.”

—Instructions to the Virginia Delegates to the First Continental Congress, Williamsburg, 1774

7. Which of the following actions by the colonists is most similar to the one recommended in the excerpt above?
- (A) The Boston Massacre
 - (B) The Boston Tea Party
 - (C) The formation of the Committees of Correspondence
 - (D) The distribution of the Massachusetts Circular Letter
8. Which of the following is the underlying goal of the colonists in the excerpt?
- (A) Win political representation
 - (B) Declare independence
 - (C) Promote free trade
 - (D) Reduce the overall level of taxes

SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

Use complete sentences; an outline or bulleted list alone is not acceptable.

Question 1. Answer a, b, and c.

- a) Briefly explain the British view of how the Seven Years' War fundamentally changed the relationship between Britain and its American colonies.
- b) Briefly explain the colonial view as a result of the war.
- c) Briefly describe an initial reaction taken as a result of the changing views by either the British or colonists.

Question 2 is based on the excerpts below.

“If the towns of Manchester and Birmingham, sending no representatives to Parliament, are notwithstanding there represented, why are not the cities of Albany and Boston equally represented in that Assembly? . . . Are they not Englishmen? Or are they only Englishmen when they solicit for protection, but not Englishmen when taxes are required to enable this country to protect them?”

—Soame Jenyns, member of the British Parliament, “The Objections to the Taxation of Our American Colonies Considered,” 1765

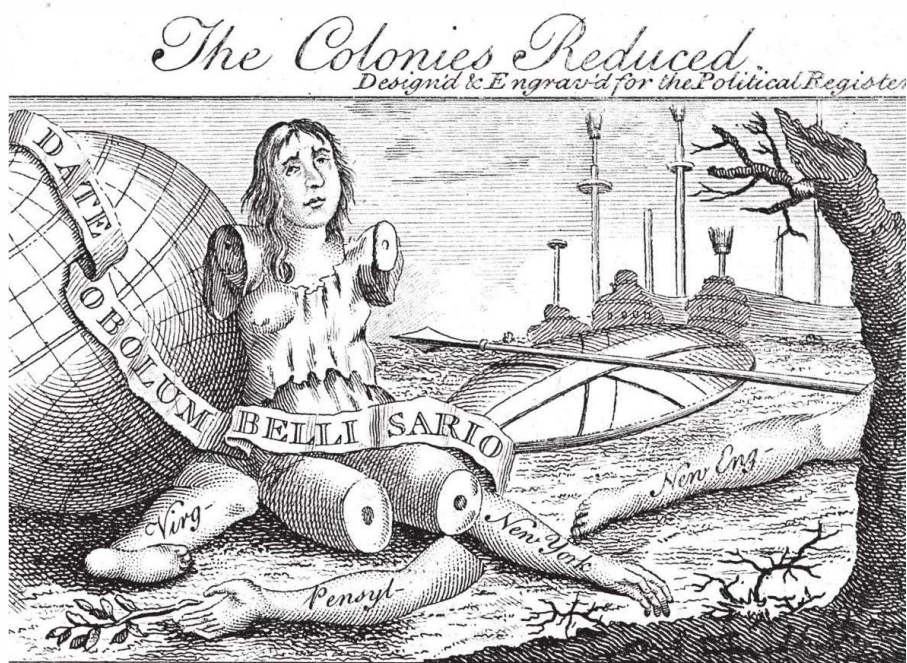
“That the petitioners have been long concerned in carrying on the trade between this country and the British colonies on the continent of North America; . . . From the nature of this trade, consisting of British manufactures exported and of the import of raw materials from America, many of them used in our manufactures and all of them tending to lessen our dependence on neighboring states, it must be deemed of the highest importance in the commercial system of this nation.”

—London Merchants Against the Stamp Act, 1766

2. Using the excerpts, answer a, b, and c.

- a) Briefly explain the main point in excerpt 1.
- b) Briefly explain the main point in excerpt 2.
- c) Briefly explain an action, in response to ONE of the two views expressed, taken by the British government from the period between 1763 and 1774.

Question 3 is based on the cartoon below.



Source: *Political Register*, London, 1767. Library of Congress

3. Using the cartoon, answer a, b, and c. In the cartoon, the labels on the limbs are “Virg,” “Pensyl,” “New York,” and “New Eng.”
- Explain the point of view reflected in the cartoon regarding ONE of the following.
 - British colonial policies
 - efforts at colonial unity
 - Seven Years’ War
 - Explain how ONE element of the cartoon expresses the point of view you identified in Part A.
 - Explain how the point of view you identified in Part A helped to shape ONE particular colonial government action between 1607 and 1774.

Question 4. Answer a, b, and c.

- Briefly explain the reasons why the British issued the Proclamation of 1763.
- Briefly explain why the colonists objected to the Proclamation.
- Briefly explain how effective the Proclamation was.

THINK AS A HISTORIAN: QUESTIONS ABOUT COMPARISONS

Historians often compare events to highlight similarities and differences. They might compare two contemporary developments or two developments in different time periods. Which **THREE** of the questions or statements below would be best answered with an essay that emphasizes comparison?

1. How did Pontiac's Rebellion support the British argument for the Proclamation of 1763?
2. Explain how the Declaratory Act was a cause of the Boston Tea Party.
3. Describe the similarities between Patrick Henry and James Otis.
4. How was the relationship between the colonies and Great Britain before and after the Seven Years' War different?
5. Analyze differences between Bacon's Rebellion and the Stamp Act Congress.