Chapter 4: Colonial Society on the Eve of Revolution
1720-1763
Clash of Empires: England, France and Spain

- Four wars from 1688 to 1763
- **King Williams War & Queen Anne’s War** - British fought against the French and their Indian allies for control of the S. Lawrence River
  - **Treaty of Utrecht (1713)** - ended the wars and brought about a period of “salutary neglect” by Britain towards the colonies.
  - **Robert Walpole** - leader of the Whig party in Brit. pushed for less governmental interference on the colonies.
- **King George’s War** (1744-48) France and Spain went to war against Britain. Started over arguments regarding Austrian succession. Colonists in New England invaded parts of New France.
- **French-Indian War** - (Seven Years War 1756-1763)
French-Indian War 1754 - 1763

- **French-Indian War** - (Seven Years War 1756-1763)
  - The most significant of the colonial wars. Fought over control of the Ohio Valley.
  - The British sought to control this fertile region of N. America and the French wished to control it to maintain a link between the region of Canada and the Mississippi.
  - Lt. Col. George Washington was sent by the gov’t of Virginia to build a defensive fort along the Ohio river to protect Brit. interests.
The Ohio Company

- Was granted 200,000 acres of land by the Virginia government and Privy Counsel in 1749.
- George Washington (22 yrs old) takes militia troops
  - Fort Duquense (violent, surprise attack by Washington) 1754
  - Fort Necessity (surrendered)
- Washington has now essentially started a world wide conflict.
Albany Congress

- June 1754 - The English Board of Trade calls together a collection of 19 different delegates from the colonies as well as the Iroquois to try and foster an intercolonial union.

- Iroquois refuse to commit to a union with the British.

- **Albany Plan for Union** - B. Franklin proposes a plan for colonial home rule under a unified state. Could deal with issues of Indian affairs and defense.

- Rejected by British as too much independence

- Rejected by colonies as not enough independence
War is officially declared in 1756

French enjoyed the best relations with Native Indians although natives exploit both sides

French intended to trade only, British wished to stay.

- Fr. pop only 6,000 vs. Br. colonies 2 million
- Br. General Braddock fails to defeat French forces near Fort Duquesne
William Pitt “the Great Commoner”

- Leader of British parliament
- Understood colonial concerns.
- He offered them a compromise.
  - Colonial loyalty and military assistance in exchange for Britain reimbursing the colonies financially
  - British recruit 25,000 colonists to bolster army

Colonists eager to show their allegiance to the crown.
British and Colonial Tension Builds

- Gen. Wolfe described the American soldiers as “the worst soldiers in the Universe”

- Discontent in the military ranks only grew as the war dragged on.
  - Colonial leaders unhappy with lack of promotion and mistreatment by British

- Colonial militia were used as frontline cannon fodder by the British regulars.
  - Colonists however, emerge from the war more confident in their own military strength.

The colonial militia are in general the dirtiest, most contemptible, cowardly dogs that you can conceive.
French-Indian War

- Battle of Quebec, Sept. 12, 1759 led to the British defeat of the French
- The most significant battle of the war.
- Gen. Wolfe and Col. Amherst surround Quebec and later Montreal by climbing the hills surrounding the city at night and having the advantage by daylight.
- Surprise attack at night by the British caught the French of guard
French-Indian War

- **Peace of Paris** ended the war in 1763

- France - loses Canadian possessions, empire in India, Philippines and east of the Mississippi river (expelled from N. Amer.)
  - France gifts Louisiana to Spain

- Britain - received all French land in New World and exclusive rights to Caribbean slave trade
Effects of the War on Britain

- Increased her colonial empire in the Americas
- It greatly enlarged England’s debt.
- Britain’s contempt for the colonials created bitter feelings. Lack of loyalty to the crown. Colonials seemed unruly and more focused on money vs. helping Britain

Therefore, England felt that a major reorganization of her American Empire was necessary
Effects of the War on the Colonists

- It united them against a common enemy for the first time
- It created a socializing experience for all the colonials (chance to politicize)
- It planted the seeds of bitterness towards Britain
  - British attempted to control New England trade as merchants were selling goods to the French and Spanish as well. **Economic gain vs. Loyalty emerges**
- Removal of French influence meant colonists should be able to expand
## British and American Tensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Colonials</th>
<th>British</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methods of Fighting:</strong></td>
<td>Indian-style guerilla tactics.</td>
<td>March in formation or bayonet charge.</td>
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<td><strong>Military Organization:</strong></td>
<td>Col. militias served under own captains.</td>
<td>Br. officers wanted to take charge of colonials.</td>
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<td><strong>Military Discipline:</strong></td>
<td>No mil. deference or protocols observed. Often rowdy and held low standards for cleanliness</td>
<td>Drills &amp; tough discipline.</td>
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<td><strong>Finances:</strong></td>
<td>Resistance to rising taxes.</td>
<td>Colonists should pay for their own defense.</td>
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<td><strong>Demeanor:</strong></td>
<td>Casual, non-professional.</td>
<td>Prima Donna Br. officers with servants &amp; tea settings.</td>
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Pontiac’s Rebellion 1763

- Colonial Expansion Westward after the war led to conflicts with Indians. French “barrier” removed.
  - Coastal colonies were unwilling to support the frontier settlers.
  - Settlers demand British protection against Indian attacks

- Chief Pontiac of the Ottowa tribe leads raids in the Ohio Valley. 9 forts lost and 2,000 lives within 6 mo.

- British send “gifts” of smallpox infested blankets to local villages

- **Paxton Boys** - frustrated by Indian attacks, they massacre an Indian village and march to Philadelphia to protest
To avoid further conflicts with the Indians, the British denied colonists access to land West of Appalachian Mtns.

- **Proclamation of 1763** signed by George III

- Proclamation created a “line” that made all newly acquired lands royal property and not for colonial settlement.

- British intended line to only be temporary; they wished to settle land disputes with Natives

- Colonists feeling betrayed and overly emotional saw the line as a stab in the back by the crown.

- Colonists felt the land was their birthright. Many died fighting for cash payments (and land). British refuted these claims escalating tensions.
Prior to the American Revolution

I. 18th c. - colonists were proud to belong to the British Empire

- American colonies were heavily integrated into the empire; “Britishness” not forgotten
- Americans had the world’s highest standard of living
  - Low cost for British imports
  - High amount of colonial exporting
  - Better landownership opportunities in New World
“Neglect” leads to self-reliance (which leads to defiance)

I. Salutary neglect of colonies begins as a result of Britain’s focus on European affairs and conflicts over those in the colonies.
   • Colonies were left alone; became self-reliant
   • Self-rule results in 13 separate colonial governments

II. Gr. Brit establishes Navigation Acts to control trade and enforce mercantile system in colonies
   • Limited trade to only American and English ships
   • All foreign imports to colonies had to go through England
   • Colonists could only sell goods to the British

III. Colonial self-reliance + Navigation Acts = defiance of Brit. law
Change in British Rule

• With **George Grenville**’s appointment to Prime Minister a new policy of enforcement began.

• Up until 1763 - mercantile laws had little negative impact

• Grenville imposes new “**enumeration**” laws - specifically restricting sale of goods such as tobacco. (fewer markets = lower prices)

• **Writs of Assistance** - gave warrants for British customs officers to inspect colonial shipping to end smuggling.
  - **James Otis** - demands appeal in courts, 1761
George Grenville - first lord of the treasury

- British debt from French-Indian War was tremendous. Brits sought to have colonists pay 1/3 the cost to maintain a British garrison of 10,000 troops in the colonies. 50% of all British debt was due to colonial protections.

- Grenville’s rationale for the series of taxes/acts passed on the colonies.

- “Protection and obedience are reciprocal. Great Britain protects America; America is bound to yield obedience. If, not, tell me when the Americans were emancipated? When they want the protection of this kingdom, they are always ready to ask for it. That protection has always been afforded them in the most full and ample manner. The nation has run itself into an immense debt to give them their protection; and now they are called upon to contribute a small share towards the public expense, and expense arising from themselves, they renounce your authority, insult your officers, and break out, I might also say, into open rebellion.” - Grenville to William Pitt
Sugar Act
1764
The Sugar Act 1764

- Attempted to address Britain’s fears of smuggling
- First act passed by Parliament that raised revenue for the crown.
  - 1. Lower Molasses tax on foreign imports
  - 2. Added taxes to other goods
  - 3. Colonists accused of smuggling were tried by a single British judge; not a jury. (admiralty courts)
Committees of Correspondence est. 1764 (1st)

- Established to warn neighboring colonies about incidents with the British and on how to interpret Br. actions
- Hope was to broaden the resistance movement through a common language and more established communication
- Established the idea of collective action among the colonies
Quartering Act- March 24, 1765

- Gen. Gage asks for additional troop support at the end of 1764.
- Parliament responds by enforcing Quartering Act
  - British soldiers are to be housed in American barracks
  - If soldiers outnumbered barracks, then troops are to be given quarter by town residents
The Stamp Act 1765/Stamp Act Crisis

• The First Parliamentary action aimed directly at the American colonists
  • Purpose: to raise revenues in colonies to support army
  • Also provided funding for Admiralty courts

• Provisions: Imposed a Tax on all paper documents and printed items. Ex: Newspapers, pamphlets, legal docs, etc.

• Colonists boycott British goods until act is repealed (1766). Reality was in Brit. paper taxes were far higher than in colonies

"no taxation without representation"
Virginia Resolves

- Virginia leaders felt attacked by the Stamp Act.
  - Rights were violated as act was imposed without colonial input in parliament
- Patrick Henry leads attack on Stamp Act.
  - Proposes 7 resolutions of which 5 are accepted in VA including non-importation of Brit. goods.
  - 8 other colonies adopt similar embargoes

“no taxation without representation”
Differing views of taxation

- Colonists distinguished between **Legislation** and **Taxation**.
  
  - Legislation (external taxes) were passed by British Parliament regarding things such as tariffs or empire-wide customs duties

  - Taxation (internal taxes only impacting colonies) should be passed exclusively by local gov’t where colonial representation was met.

- Grenville argued colonies had "**virtual representation**" in Parliament and therefore the taxes were just. [Colonists however, were also against "**direct representation**" for fear of being out numbered in Parliament]
Stamp Act Congress 1765

• 27 delegates from 9 colonies (colonies who adopted Virginia Resolves)

• Drew up documents asking King George III and Parliament to retract the Stamp Act.
  • Ignored by Brit.

• Congress was extremely important in familiarizing the colonies with each other as there was prevailing mistrust among them.

Sons of Liberty

• Led by Samuel Adams
  • Used violent methods to enforce non-importation agreements (tar & feathering; mob violence)

• Fear of growing civil unrest leads British to pass **Declaratory Act.** It rescinds Stamp Act but “declares” Parliament’s right to tax in the future.
Townshend Acts
1767
The Townshend Acts 1767-68

- New Prime Minister - **Charles Townshend** - wished to punish colonies for disobedience (paternal)

- **Provisions**: Series of import duties on glass, lead, paper, paint, tea and other items. Tax was indirect - per. customs duty/fee and therefore Townshend argued it was “external”
  - Tax revenue was to pay for appointed judges and royal governors as well as customs commission to find law breakers.
  - Inspectors also giving “writs of assistance” which allowed search and seizure for any home, warehouse or business.
  - Judges were also there to further enforce the Quartering Act of 1765
The Townshend Acts 1767-68

- John Dickinson - *Letter from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*
  - Challenged whether there was a distinction between “internal” and “external” tax rights.
    - A tax is a tax
  - No tax should be allowed for the purpose of revenue
- Dickinson’s letter was supported by Sam Adams and James Otis who circulated a letter demanding a repeal of the Townshend Acts.
- British troops sent to Boston to dissolve the legislature
Boston Massacre
1770
Boston Massacre March 5, 1770

- British military in Boston aroused heavy American resistance
  - Colonists fear British use of force to create a martial law state with no liberties
- Starts as a minor argument but attracts a crowd of several hundred. British officers are struck by and fire onto the crowd
- 11 colonists are killed (5) or wounded. Depictions of the event are spread by Sons of Liberty
- Colonial propaganda called the event a “massacre” to gain sympathy and support.
Fall out from Boston

- Lord North had Townshend Acts repealed
  - Colonial Non-importation agreements were impacting British economy and Parliament wished them to end.
- Half of the troops were removed and others moved to outskirts of Boston
- Tea still taxed but overall cost of tea was cheaper in colonies than in England
Gaspee Incident - June 9, 1772

- **HMS Gaspee** - was a British military enforcement ship.
- After running aground of the coast of Rhode Island - it is boarded, looted, and torched by American rebels.
- The ship had a reputation for stealing goods from smaller vessels
- Sons of Liberty (dressed in Indian clothes) burned ship
- Incident would lead to future outbreaks of violence in colonies
Committees of Correspondence, 1772 (2nd)

In response to Gaspee Incident, the British increase efforts to crack down on dissidents and smuggling.

- Samuel Adams rallied support through a “committee of correspondence” Nov 1772
- Committees spread propaganda and damaging accusations of Brit. opulence at colonial expense
Hutchinson Letter’s Scandal, 1773

In an effort to shift the focus of colonial anger away from British Parliament, Benjamin Franklin (an ardent Loyalist) sent a series of letters to Samuel Adams and Thomas Cushing.

The letters written in 1768-69 by Mass. Gov. Thomas Hutchinson to Lt. Gov. Andrew Oliver describe how impossible it was for the colonists to have full equal rights and instead should receive “abridged rights.”

Oliver’s response of edits to Gov. counsel further enraged the public.
Tea Act (Boston Tea Party)
1773
The Tea Act Crisis and Party- 1773

• British East India Company allowed to create a monopoly over the tea industry in the colonies
  • Although a monopoly occurred, tea prices still low.

• Colonial merchants argued that tea prices would increase, hurting profits

• Party - Dec 16, 1773 colonists (*again in Indian drag*) tossed several hundred chests of tea into harbor

Colonists throw British Tea into Boston harbor in protest
Intolerable Acts
1774

Why Were the Intolerable Acts So Intolerable?

The Boston Port Act closed Boston Harbor so all ships going to and from Britain had to pass through it. The weight of goods transported by ship would be sent to England for trial, showing that Britain had the right to tax the colonies. Goods stored for lack of goods to sell.

The British soldiersrafed the homes and businesses of the colonists and taxed the colonies.

The Intolerable Acts were passed in 1774, making it impossible for the colonists to continue to live in their homes and businesses.

The Intolerable Acts were a series of laws passed by the British Parliament in 1774 to punish the colonists for their resistance to taxation without representation. The acts included the closure of the port of Boston, the Quartering Act (requiring the colonists to house and feed British soldiers), and the Coercive Acts (thereby giving the authorities the power to try British subjects for crimes committed in the colonies). The Intolerable Acts did not remove the colonists' grievances against British taxes and policies, but rather, the Intolerable Acts strengthened the resolve of the colonists to win their independence.
The Intolerable (Coercive) Acts

1774

• King George III angry after Tea Party
  
• 1. Shuts down Boston Harbor
  
• 2. Quartering Act required British soldiers to be housed by colonists
  
• 3. Boston placed under martial law
  
• **Quebec Act** - extended freedoms to French Canada and Indians in frontier.
First Continental Congress, 1774

• Agenda  How to respond to the Coercive Acts & the Quebec Act?

  • Met to look at options at petitioning King George regarding the Coercive Acts.

  • Used boycotting as a means of protest - successful

  • Official expressed grievances to king and Parliament

• 55 delegates from 12 colonies
Lexington and Concord
November 1775

1775
April 18, 1775 - Lexington....

- British Troops (700 total) march towards Concord to seize colonial weapons stockpile and to arrest Adams and Hancock
  - Paul Revere “The Regulars are coming out”
- Minutemen engage British troops at Lexington
- “Shot heard ‘round the world”
And Concord 1775

- At Concord, British are overmatched
- 700 British to 4,000 Minutemen
- Dozens are killed on the way back to Boston
- Total Casualties 273 for British and 95 for rebels
  - British troops move in and seize Boston to prevent further conflicts (martial law)