



The American Pageant  
Seventeenth edition



CHAPTER 5  
Colonial Society on  
the Eve of Revolution,  
1700–1775

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## JAMES II

- James II was Charles' son, a Catholic.
- He had a Protestant daughter, Mary, and a Catholic son.
- Parliament didn't want his son taking over, so they gave the crown to Mary and her husband, William III of Orange.

**James II**  
(1685 - 1688)

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## ENGLISH BILL OF RIGHTS



- Parliament offered the monarchy to William and Mary in 1686.
- This was known as the "Glorious Revolution." (Revolution because they overthrew the last Catholic monarch, Glorious because no one died.)
- Had to agree to certain conditions which limited their power.

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## ENGLISH BILL OF RIGHTS



- No standing armies during peace time.
- Parliament elected by the people and law making body
- King cannot tax without the permission of Parliament.
- Guarantees of trial by jury, fair and speedy trial, freedom from excessive bail, cruel and unusual punishment.
- Promoted limited, ordered & representative government.
- Influenced our "Bill of Rights"

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## BASIC CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRACY



The English colonists who settled America brought with them three main concepts:

- The need for an ordered social system, or government.
- The idea of limited government, that is, that government should not be all-powerful.
- The concept of representative government or a government that serves the will of the people.

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## I. A CONTINENT IN FLUX (SLIDE 1 OF 2)

- European cartographers claimed great swaths of land in the New World, but most settlements clustered near the Atlantic and a few interior rivers.
- Most Native American still had little direct contact with Europeans, but even indirect contact could have important consequences.
  - Disease and warfare wiped out groups like the Powhatans and the Wampanoags.
  - European goods also changed Indian politics and culture.

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## I. A CONTINENT IN FLUX (SLIDE 2 OF 2)

- Indians living closest to the growing European settlements faced tough choices.
  - Some moved westward. ( Watch for more on this in 1830s)**
  - Some assimilated.
- A few took advantage of their location in the **borderlands** to play Europeans off each other.
- The Iroquois made peace with both the English and French, becoming an important neutral power for 50 years.



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## Conquest by the Cradle

- By 1775, Great Britain ruled 32 colonies in North America.
- Only 13 of them revolted (the ones in what's today the U.S.).
- Canada and Jamaica were wealthier than the "original 13."
- All of them were growing by leaps and bounds.
- By 1775, the population numbered 2.5 million people, and **as a result of the rapid population growth in colonial America, a momentous shift occurred in the balance of power between the colonies and the mother country.**



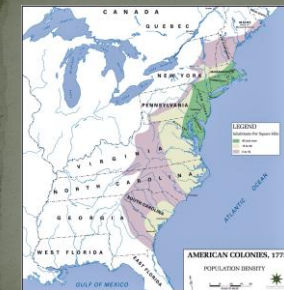
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## Conquest by the Cradle

- Colonies' population was doubling every 25 years
- Average age 16 (1775)
- 20 English : 1 colonist (1700)
- 3 English : 1 colonist (1775)
- How do these numbers CHANGE "the colonist" from "the English"?**



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- The average age was 16 years old (due mainly to having several children).
- Most of the population (95%) was densely cooped up east of the Alleghenies, though by 1775, some had slowly trickled into Tennessee and Kentucky.
- About 90% of the people lived in rural areas and were therefore farmers.**

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## III. A MINGLING OF CULTURES (SLIDE 1 OF 7)

- America was a melting pot from the beginning, with numerous foreign groups (see Map 5.2).
- Germans** were about 6% or 150,000 by 1775:
  - They fled religious persecution, economic oppression, and war in the 1700s and settled chiefly in Pennsylvania.
  - They were primarily Lutherans.
  - Known as Pennsylvania Dutch, they were 1/3 of the colony's population, living in the backcountry.



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## A Mingling of the Races

- Colonial America, though mostly English, had other races as well.
- Germans accounted for about 6% of the population, or about 150,000 people by 1775.
- Most were Protestant (primarily Lutheran) and were called the "Pennsylvania Dutch" (a corruption of Deutsch which means German).



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## III. A MINGLING OF CULTURES (SLIDE 2 OF 7)

- **Scots-Irish** numbered around 175,000, or 7% of the population, by 1775:
  - Although non-English, they spoke English.
  - Over centuries they had been transplanted to northern Ireland.
  - Their economic life had been hampered.
  - In the early 1700s, tens of thousands came to America.
  - They became the first settlers of the West.

**Remember the Scotland and Ireland are not big fans of Britain – think back to World History and AP Euro. How does this impact thoughts about revolting against Britain in the future?**

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## III. A MINGLING OF CULTURES (SLIDE 3 OF 7)

- Scots-Irish (cont.):
  - When they came up against the Allegheny Mountains, they moved southward to Maryland and down Virginia's Shenandoah Valley.
  - They built flimsy log cabins.
  - They proved to be superb frontiersmen.
  - By the 1800s, they had settled along the eastern Appalachian foothills.

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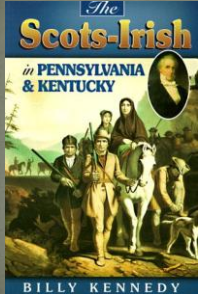
## III. A MINGLING OF CULTURES (SLIDE 4 OF 7)

- Scots-Irish (cont.):
  - Pugnacious, lawless, and individualistic, they brought the Scottish secret of whiskey distilling.
  - They cherished no love for the British government, or any other government.
  - 1764: The **Paxton Boys** marched on Philadelphia.
  - A few years later, they spearheaded the **Regulator movement** in North Carolina.

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- *The Scots-Irish were about 7% of the population, with 175,000 people, and they shared no love for the British, or any other government for that matter.*
- Over many decades, they had been transplanted to Northern Ireland, but they had not found a home there (the already existing Irish Catholics resented the intruders).
- Many of the Scots-Irish reached America and became squatters, quarreling with both Indians and white landowners.

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They seemed to try to move as far from Britain as possible, trickling down to Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas.

In 1764, the Scots-Irish led the armed march of the **Paxton Boys**. The Paxtons led a march on Philadelphia to protest the Quaker' peaceful treatment of the Indians. They later started the **North Carolina Regulator** movement in the hills and mountains of the colony, aimed against domination by eastern powers in the colony.

They were known to be very hot-headed and independent minded.

Many eventually became American revolutionists.

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## III. A MINGLING OF CULTURES (SLIDE 5 OF 7)


- **About 5% were other European groups:**
  - **French Huguenots, Welsh, Dutch, Swedes, Jews, Irish, Swiss, and Scots Highlanders**
- **49% of population = Anglo-Saxon** (Figure 5.1)
- **Africans were the largest non-English group:**
  - They were 20% of the colonial population in 1775.
  - The South held 90% of slaves.
- New England had the least ethnic diversity.

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- About 5% of the multicolored population consisted of other European groups, like French Huguenots, Welsh, Dutch, Swedes, Jews, Irish, Swiss, and Scots-Highlanders.
- The most ethnically diverse region of colonial America was the South, whereas New England was the least ethnically diverse.*
- Americans were of all races and mixed bloods, so it was no wonder that other races from other countries had a hard time classifying them. And *though remaining predominantly Anglo-Saxon, America possessed probably the most diverse population in the world.*

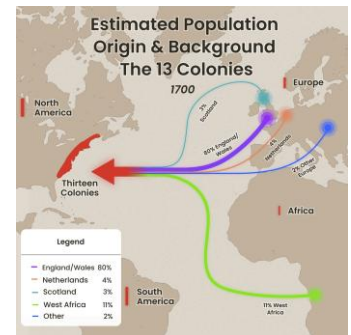


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An estimated background of the British Thirteen Colonies in 1700. The overwhelming majority of Colonists hailed from England and Wales, with also a sizeable amount of those enslaved in West Africa.

The 4% from the Netherlands is most likely attributed to Great Britain acquiring New Amsterdam and all other Dutch Territories in North America in 1674. The 2% of other Europe is most likely attributed to Swedish (from former colonies) and Huguenot French.

Source: The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People (8th ed.). The book can be checked out here for free: <https://archive.org/details/enduringvision/h00001unse>



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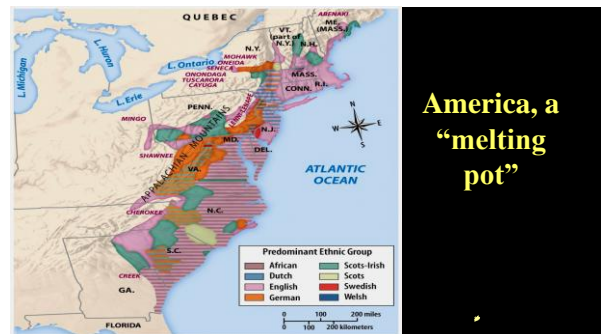
### III. A MINGLING OF CULTURES (SLIDE 6 OF 7)

- The middle colonies, especially Pennsylvania, received the bulk of later white immigrants.
- Outside of New England about one-half were non-English in 1775.
- Of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, 18 were non-English and 8 were not born in the colonies.**

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**America, a “melting pot”**

### III. A MINGLING OF CULTURES (SLIDE 7 OF 7)

- These immigrants laid the foundations for a new multicultural American national identity as different groups intermingled.
- Likewise, the African *American* community was quite variegated in its cultural origins.
- In New England “praying towns” and in Great Lakes villages, different groups of displaced Native Americans intermingled.

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### IV. AFRICANS IN AMERICA (SLIDE 1 OF 2)

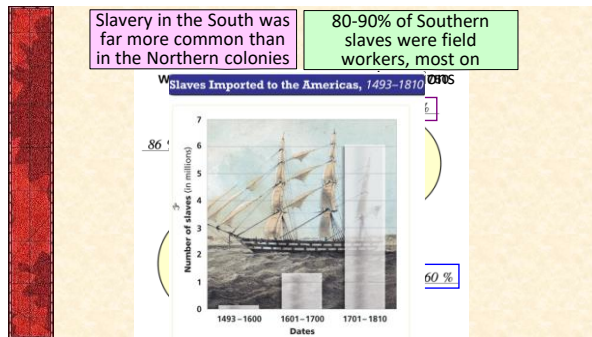
- In the deepest South, slave life was severe:
  - The climate was hostile to health.
  - The labor was life-draining.
  - The rice and indigo plantations were a lonely life.
- Blacks in the Chesapeake fared slightly better:
  - Tobacco plantations were larger and closer to one another than rice plantations.
  - As the population of female slaves rose by 1720, family life was possible.
  - Growth was then mainly by natural increase, while the deeper South still depended on importation of slaves.

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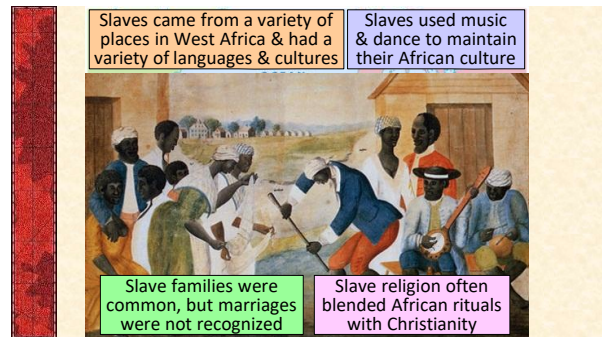
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## IV. AFRICANS IN AMERICA (SLIDE 2 OF 2)

- Number of slaves in the North grew as well.
- The language *Gullah* evolved among South Carolina blacks.
- Slaves helped build country with their labor:
  - Some artisans: carpenters, bricklayers, tanners.
  - Mostly manual laborers: cleared swamps, etc.
- Slaves resisted their oppression:
  - 1712: **New York slave revolt**
  - 1739: **South Carolina slave revolt on Stono River**



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## V. THE STRUCTURE OF COLONIAL SOCIETY (SLIDE 1 OF 3)

- **America seemed a shining land of equality and opportunity, except for slavery.**
- But on the eve of revolution, America was showing signs of stratification and barriers to mobility.
- In New England, with open land less available, descendants faced limited prospects:
  - Farms got smaller.
  - Younger children were hired out as wage laborers.



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## V. THE STRUCTURE OF COLONIAL SOCIETY (SLIDE 2 OF 3)

- In the South, large plantations continued their disproportionate ownership of slaves:
  - The largest slaveowners increased their wealth.
  - Poor whites increasingly became tenant farmers.
- Lower classes further swelled by the stream of indentured servants:
  - Many ultimately achieved prosperity.



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### The Structure of the Colonial Society



- *In contrast to contemporary Europe, America was a land of opportunity. The number of poor people remained tiny compared with the number in England.*
- Anyone who was willing to work hard could possibly go from **rags to riches**, and poverty was scorned.
- Class differences did emerge, as a small group of aristocrats (made up of the rich farmers, merchants, officials, clergymen) had much of the power.
- Also, armed conflicts in the 1690s and 1700s enriched a number of merchants in the New England and middle colonies.
- War also created many widows and orphans who eventually had to turn to charity.

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### Structure of Colonial Society

- Yet compared to 17<sup>th</sup> century, some barriers to mobility
- New social pyramid:
  - **Top:** Wealthy merchants, lawyers, clergy, officials joined large planters, aristocrats at top
  - **2<sup>nd</sup>:** Lesser professional men
  - **3<sup>rd</sup>:** Yeoman (own land) farmers, though farm sizes decreasing due to family increase, lack of new land
  - 4<sup>th</sup>:** Lesser tradesmen, manual workers, hired hands
  - 5<sup>th</sup>:** Indentured servants and "jaylor birds," convicts exiled to America by punitive English justice system
  - 6<sup>th</sup>:** Black slaves – some attempts to halt imports for fear of rebellion

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### Structure of Colonial Society

- 18<sup>th</sup> century society very equal compared to Europe (except for slavery)
- Most Americans were small ("yeoman") farmers
- Most striking feature: opportunity for **"rags to riches"**

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- In the South, a firm social pyramid emerged containing...
- The immensely rich plantation owners ("planters") had many slaves (though these were few).
- "Yeoman" farmers, or small farmers. They owned their land and, maybe, a few slaves.
- Landless whites who owned no land and either worked for a landowner or rented land to farm.

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#### V. THE STRUCTURE OF COLONIAL SOCIETY (SLIDE 3 OF 3)

- Less fortunate were 50,000 paupers and convicts ("jaylor birds") involuntarily shipped to America.
- Least fortunate of all were the black slaves:
  - They enjoyed no equality with whites.
  - Some white colonists worried about the growing number of slaves in colonies.
  - British authorities, however, resisted any attempt to limit the transatlantic slave trade.

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#### VI. WORKDAY AMERICA (SLIDE 1 OF 3)

- **Agriculture was the leading occupation, employing 90% of people** (see Map 5.3):
  - **Tobacco was the main crop of Maryland and Virginia.**
  - **Middle ("bread") colonies produced much grain.**
  - Overall, Americans enjoyed a higher standard of living than the masses of any country.
  - Fishing ranked far below agriculture, yet was rewarding, with a bustling commerce.
  - **Commercial ventures were another path to wealth.**

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### Workaday America

- 90% of population involved in agriculture ~ led to highest living standard in world history
- Fishing pursued in all colonies, major industry in New England ~ Stimulated shipbuilding
- Commerce successful, especially in New England ~ Triangular trade was very profitable

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### Workaday America

- Manufacturing was secondary: Lumbering most important, also rum, beaver hats, iron, spinning/weaving
- England reliant on American products – NAVAL STORES - (tar, pitch, rosin, turpentine) to build ships and maintain mastery of seas
- 1730s: growing American population demanded more English products

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#### VI. WORKADAY AMERICA (SLIDE 2 OF 3)

- **Triangular trade** (Map 5.4) was very profitable.
- Manufacturing was of secondary importance.
- Household manufacturing (spinning and weaving by women) was significant.
- Skilled craftspeople few and highly prized.
- Lumbering was the most important manufacturing activity.
- **Colonial naval stores were also highly valued.**

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### The Triangular Trade

- New England merchants gain access to slave trade in the early 1700s
  1. **Rum brought to Africa, exchanges for slaves**
  2. **Ships cross the Middle Passage, slaves traded in the West Indies.**
    - Disease, torture, malnourishment, death for slaves
  3. **Sugar brought to New England**
- Other items traded across the Atlantic, with substantial profits from slavery making merchants rich



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#### VI. WORKADAY AMERICA (SLIDE 3 OF 3)

- But an imbalance of trade developed by 1730s.
- 1733: British passed **Molasses Act** to squelch North American trade w/French West Indies.
- Americans responded with smuggling.
- This foreshadowed the impending imperial crisis.

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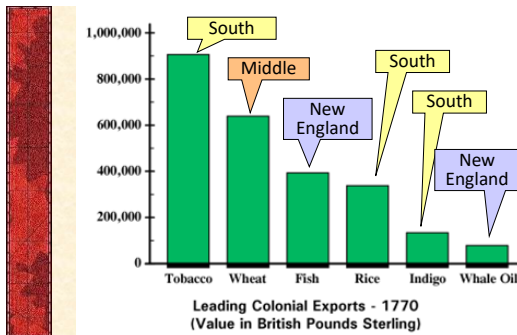
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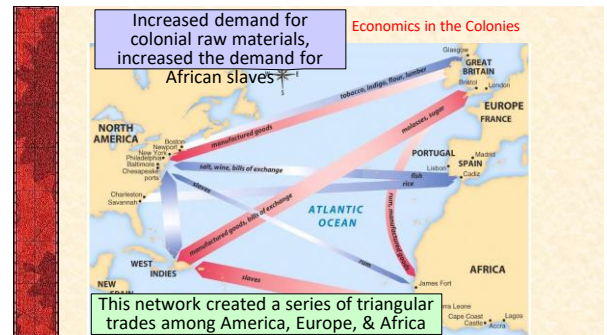
### Problems

- Growing American population could not get enough British products
- Britain was being saturated with American products
- Result: trade imbalance
- Solution: seek out other markets (e.g., France, West Indies)
- Britain's reaction: Molasses Act (1733)

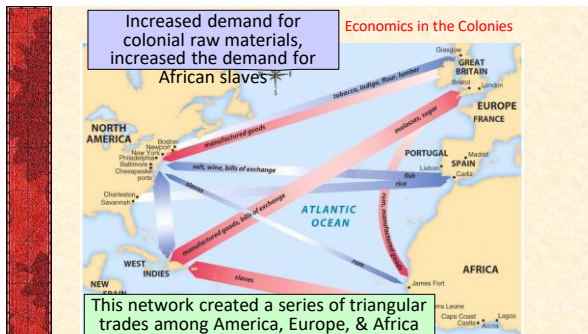
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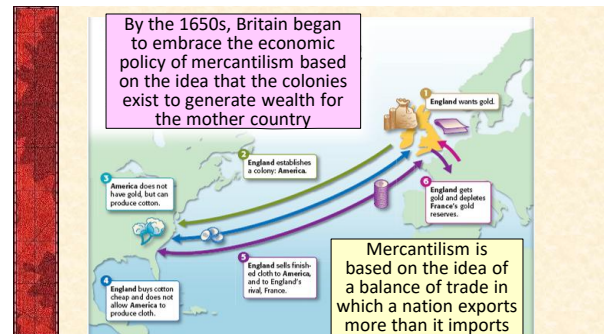
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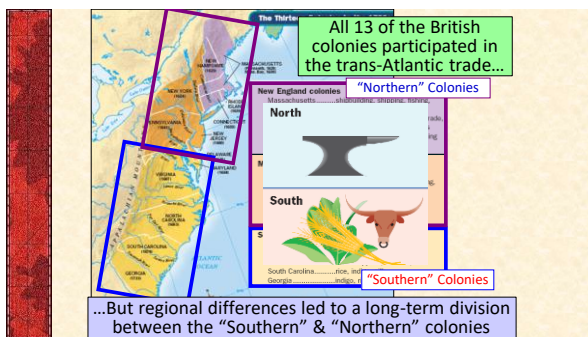
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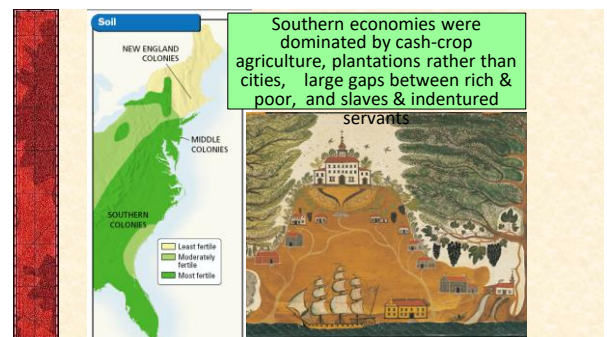
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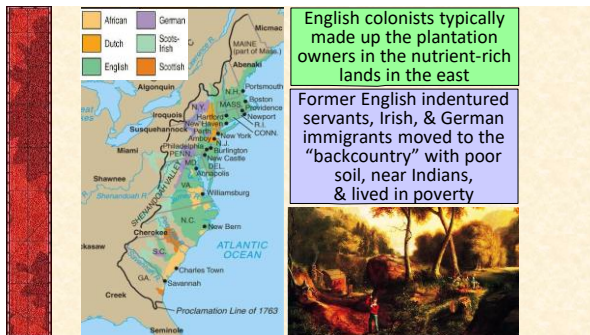


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### Workaday America

- However, English population did not need more imports from America: trade imbalance – Americans needed to find non-English markets for their goods
- Sending timber & food to French West Indies met need
- 1733: Parliament passes **Molasses Act** to end trade with French West Indies
- Americans responded by bribing and smuggling, foreshadow of revolt against government who threatened livelihood

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## VII. CLERICS, PHYSICIANS, AND JURISTS

- Colonial professions:
  - Most honored was the **Christian ministry**, but by 1775 ministers had less influence than earlier.
  - Most **physicians** were poorly trained.
  - First medical school was established in 1765.
  - At first, **lawyers** were not favorably regarded.

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VIII. HORSEPOWER AND SAILPOWER  
(SLIDE 1 OF 2)

- America, with a scarcity of money and workers, suffered oppressive transportation problems:
  - Roads did not connect to major cities until 1700s.
  - Roads were often clouds of dust in summer and quagmires of mud in winter.
  - Dangers included tree-strewn roads, rickety bridges, carriage overturns, and runaway horses.
  - Population clustered along banks of navigable rivers.

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### Horsepower & Sailpower

- No roads connecting major cities until 1700, even then they were terrible
- Heavy reliance on waterways, where population clusters formed
- Taverns along travel routes: **mingling of social classes**
- Taverns also served as cradles of democracy, clearinghouse of information, hotbeds of agitation

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VIII. HORSEPOWER AND SAILPOWER  
(SLIDE 2 OF 2)

- Taverns sprang up along main routes.
- **Taverns helped crystallize public opinion and proved to be hotbeds of agitation as the revolutionary movement gathered momentum.**
- Mid-1700s: Intercolonial postal system started.

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## IX. DOMINANT DENOMINATIONS (SLIDE 1 OF 3)

- 1775: Anglican and Congregational the tax-supported “established” churches (Table 5.1).
- Most people did not worship in any church.
- In colonies that had established churches, only a minority belonged (Table 5.2).
- The Church of England:
  - Members were called Anglicans.
  - Official faith in Georgia, North and South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, part of New York.

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## Dominant Denominations

- Two denominations “established” (**tax-supported**):  
Anglican (GA, NC, SC, VA, MD, NY) & Congregational (New England except RI)
- Anglican church served as prop of royal authority
- Anglican church more worldly, secure, less zealous, clergy had poor reputation (College of William & Mary)
- Congregational church grew out of Puritan church, agitated for rebellion

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Table 5.1 established (tax-supported) churches in the colonies, 1775\*

Colonies	Churches	Year Disestablished
Massachusetts (incl. Maine)	Congregational	1833
Connecticut		1818
New Hampshire		1819
New York	Anglican (in New York City and three neighboring counties)	1777
Maryland	Anglican	1777
Virginia		1786
North Carolina		1776
South Carolina		1778
Georgia		1777
Rhode Island	None	
New Jersey		
Delaware		
Pennsylvania		

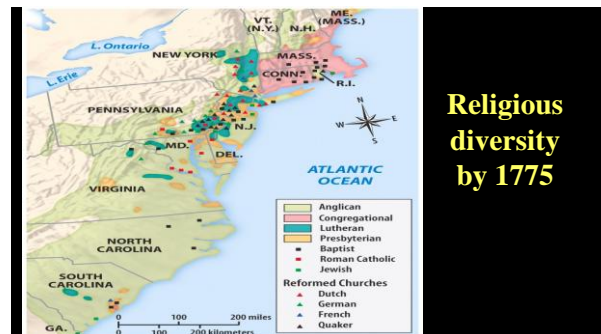
Table 5.1 p87

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\*Note the persistence of the Congregational establishment in New England.

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**Religious  
diversity  
by 1775**

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## IX. DOMINANT DENOMINATIONS (SLIDE 2 OF 3)

- Church of England (cont.):
  - In England, it was a major prop of kingly authority.
  - In America, the Anglican Church fell short of its promise.
  - It was less fierce and more worldly than the religion of Puritanical New England.
  - Sermons were shorter.
  - 1693: The college of William and Mary (Virginia) was established to train a better class of clergy.

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## IX. DOMINANT DENOMINATIONS (SLIDE 3 OF 3)

- Congregational Church:
  - It grew out of the Puritan Church.
  - It was formally established in New England (except Rhode Island).
  - At first it was supported by taxing all residents.
  - Congregational and Presbyterian ministers grappled with political questions.
  - Anglican ministers hesitated to resist the crown.
  - For the time, the colonies were relatively tolerant religiously.

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Name	Number	Chief Locale
Congregationalists	575,000	New England
Anglicans	500,000	N.Y., South
Presbyterians	410,000	Frontier
German churches (incl. Lutheran)	200,000	Pa.
Dutch Reformed	75,000	N.Y., N.J.
Quakers	40,000	Pa., N.J., Del.
Baptists	25,000	R.I., Pa., N.J., Del.
Roman Catholics	25,000	Md., Pa.
Methodists	5,000	Scattered
Jews	2,000	N.Y., R.I.
EST. TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	1,857,000	
EST. TOTAL POPULATION	2,493,000	
PERCENTAGE CHURCH MEMBERS	74%	

Table 5.2 p97

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Does any  
of this  
Religious  
Thought,  
impact  
Political  
Thought  
in the  
Colonies?



## The Great Awakening

- Religious revival – 1730's & 1740's
- Started by Jonathan Edwards, Mass. Pastor
- No salvation through good works
- To be saved, you had to have complete dependence on God's grace



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### X. THE GREAT AWAKENING (SLIDE 1 OF 5)

- In all colonial churches, religion was less fervid in early eighteenth century than before.
- The Puritan churches in particular sagged under the weight of two burdens:
  - Their elaborate theological doctrines
  - Their compromising efforts to liberalize membership requirements

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### X. THE GREAT AWAKENING (SLIDE 2 OF 5)

- Clerical intellectualism sapped the spiritual vitality from many denominations.
- **Arminianism**—Jacobus Arminius challenged the Calvinist doctrine of predestination:
  - He claimed that *all* humans, not just the “elect,” could be saved if they accepted God's grace.
  - This doctrine was considered a “heresy.”

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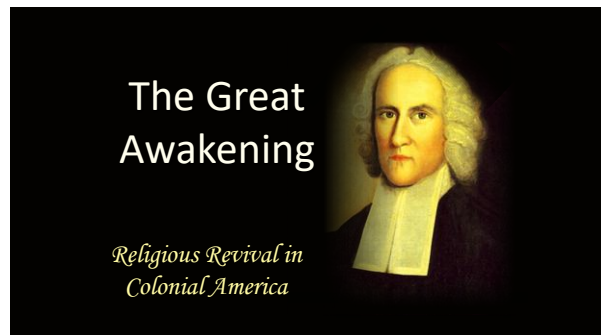
### X. THE GREAT AWAKENING (SLIDE 3 OF 5)

- 1730s–1740s: **Great Awakening** exploded:
  - Started by Jonathan Edwards in Massachusetts.
  - Sermon “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”:
    - Warned that relying on “good works” was a folly
    - Said Christians must depend solely on God's grace
    - Provided lurid detail on hell
- George Whitefield's evangelical preaching revolutionized spiritual life in the colonies.

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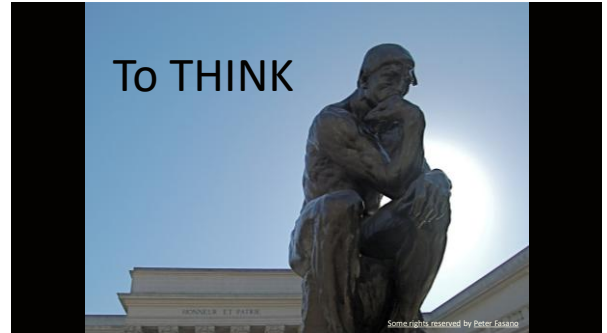
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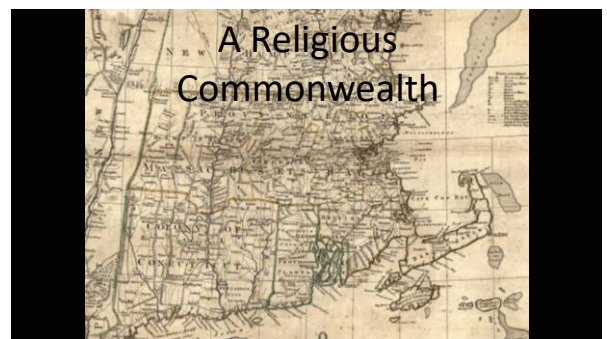
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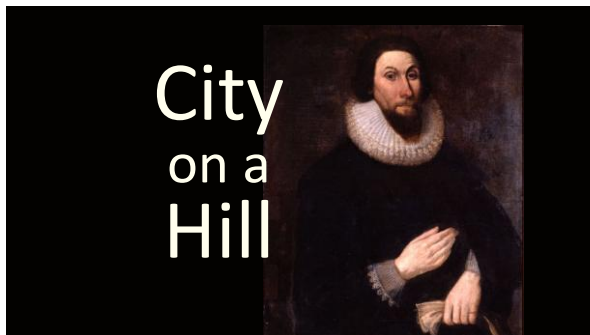


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## Harvard College

*Est. 1636*

**PURPOSE:**  
*Educate and train  
Puritan ministers*



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"After God had carried us safe to New England and we had builded our houses, provided necessities for our livelihood, reared convenient places for God's worship, and settled the civil government: One of the next things we longed for and looked after was to advance learning and perpetuate it to posterity; dreading to leave an illiterate ministry to the churches, when our present ministers shall lie in the dust."

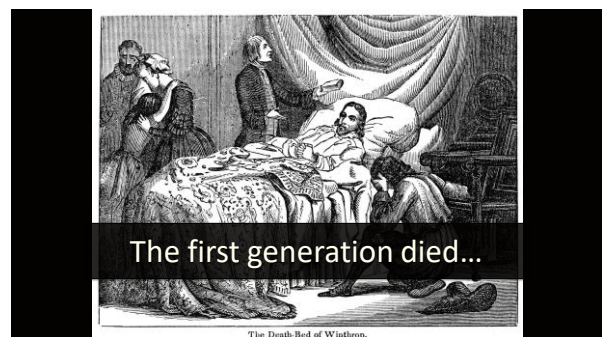
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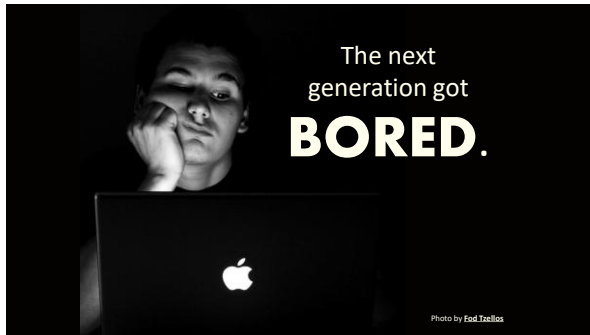
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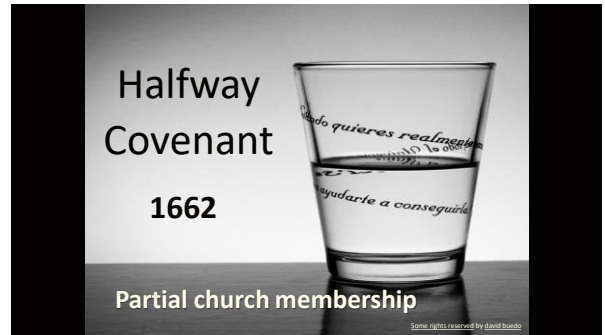
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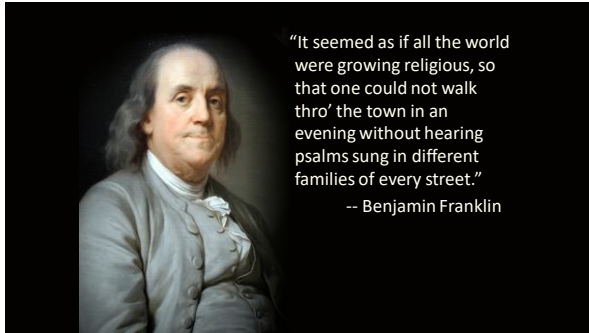
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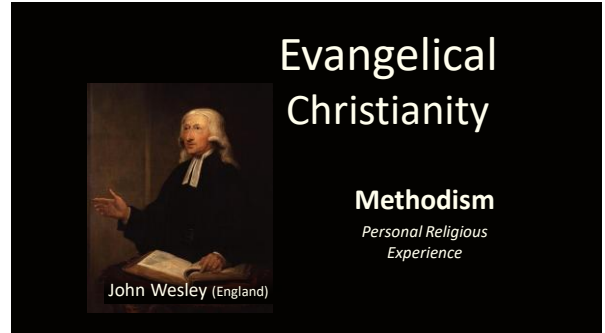
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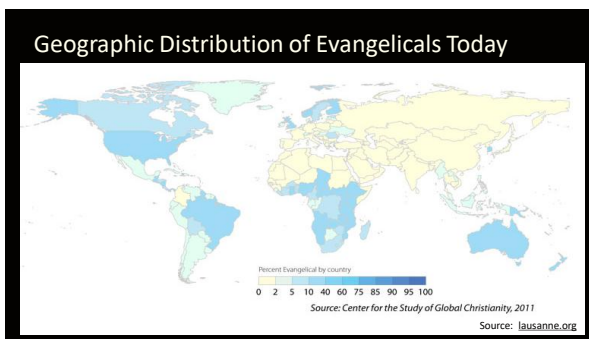
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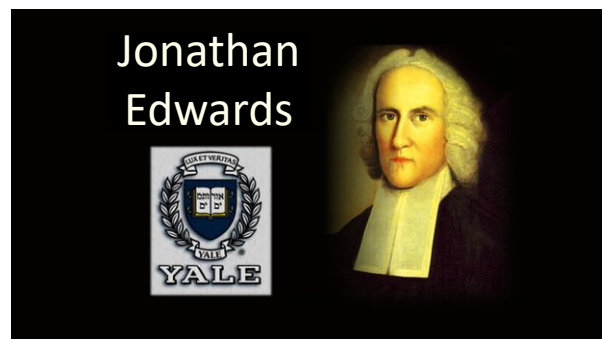
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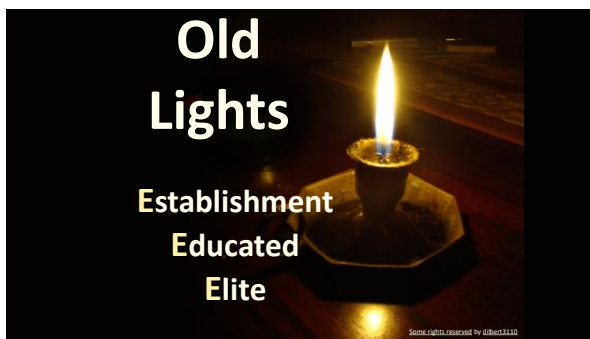
## X. THE GREAT AWAKENING (SLIDE 4 OF 5)

- Orthodox clergymen (**old lights**) were skeptical of the emotionalism and theatrical antics used by revivalists.
- **New lights** defended the Awakening for revitalizing American religion.
- Congregationalists and Presbyterians split over this issue, and many joined the Baptists or Methodists.

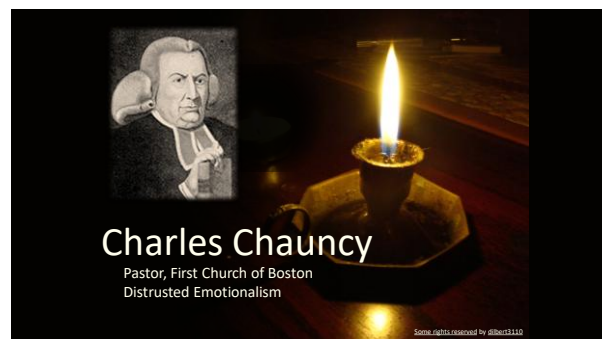
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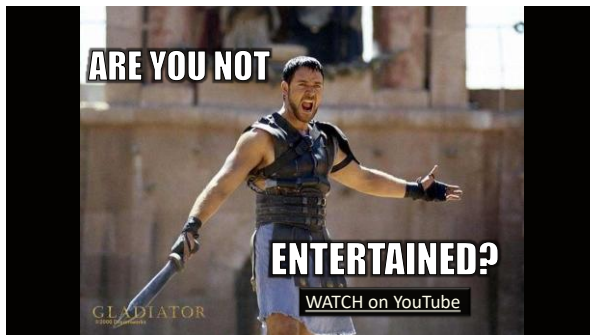


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Old Lights		New Lights
<i>Rational Appeal</i>		<i>Emotional Appeal</i>
<i>Educated Ministry</i>		<i>Converted Ministry</i>
<i>Established Classes</i>		<i>Dispossessed Classes</i>

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## X. THE GREAT AWAKENING (SLIDE 5 OF 5)

- The Awakening left many lasting effects:
  - The emphasis on direct, emotive spirituality seriously undermined the old clergy.
  - Many schisms increased the number and competitiveness of American churches.
  - It encouraged new waves of missionary work.
  - It led to the founding of colleges.
  - It was the first spontaneous mass movement.
  - It contributed to a growing sense of Americanism.

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**College of New Jersey**  
(Princeton)

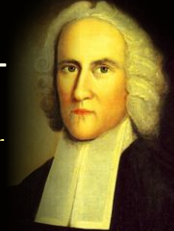
Founded by *New Light* Presbyterians to train ministers



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**PRESIDENT**

*Edwards briefly served as the College of New Jersey's third president.*



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## XI. SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES (SLIDE 1 OF 3)

- Education was first reserved for the aristocratic few:
  - Education should be for leadership, not citizenship, and primarily for males.
  - Puritans were more zealous in education.
  - The primary goal of the clergy was to make good Christians rather than good citizens.



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## XI. SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES (SLIDE 2 OF 3)

- **Educational trends:**
  - **New England established schools**, but the quality and length of instruction varied widely.
  - **The South**, because of geography, was severely hampered in establishing effective school systems.
  - **Wealthy southern families leaned heavily on private tutors.**



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## XI. SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES (SLIDE 3 OF 3)

- The general atmosphere in colonial schools and colleges was grim and gloomy:
  - They focused on doctrine and dogma, not reason and experiment.
  - College education was geared toward preparing men for the ministry.
- Nine colleges were established during the colonial era.
  - **Ben Franklin helped launch the University of Pennsylvania, first college free from any church.**



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## XII. A PROVINCIAL CULTURE (SLIDE 1 OF 2)

- Art and culture still had European tastes, especially British.
- Colonial contributions:
  - John Trumbull (1756–1843) was a painter.
  - Charles Willson Peale (1741–1827), known for his portrait of George Washington, ran a museum.
  - Benjamin West (1738–1820) and John Singleton Copley (1738–1815) were famous painters.



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## XII. A PROVINCIAL CULTURE (SLIDE 2 OF 2)

- Other colonial contributions:
  - Noteworthy literature was the poetry of enslaved Phillis Wheatley (ca. 1753–1784).
  - Benjamin Franklin wrote **Poor Richard's Almanack**.
- Science slowly made progress:
  - A few botanists, mathematicians, and astronomers won reputes.
  - Benjamin Franklin was considered the only first-rank scientist produced in the American colonies.



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## XIII. PIONEER PRESSES (SLIDE 1 OF 3)

- Americans were generally too poor to buy books and too busy to read:
  - Byrd family of Virginia had largest collection, about 4,000 volumes.
- **Benjamin Franklin established in Philadelphia the first privately supported circulating library.**
- By 1776 there were about 50 public libraries and collections supported by subscription.



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Benjamin Franklin represented opportunity in America by rising to fame through his printing business, scientific inventions, & political writings



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### XIII. PIONEER PRESSES (SLIDE 2 OF 3)

- Printing presses:
  - They first printed **pamphlets, leaflets, and journals.**
  - **40 newspapers** existed on eve of the Revolution.
  - Newspapers were a **powerful agency** for airing colonial grievances and rallying opposition.

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### XIII. PIONEER PRESSES (SLIDE 3 OF 3)

- **Zenger trial** (1734–1735): John Peter Zenger assailed the corrupt royal governor.
- The Zenger decision helped establish the doctrine that true statements about public officials could not be prosecuted as libel:
  - It was a banner achievement for freedom of the press and for the health of democracy.

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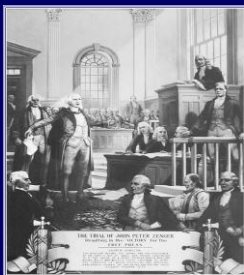
## ZENGER TRIAL

- **John Peter Zenger, a New York publisher charged with libel against the colonial governor**
- **Zenger's lawyer argues that what he wrote was true, so it can't be libel**
- **English law says it doesn't matter if it's true or not**
  - **Jury acquits Zenger anyway**
- **Not total freedom of the press, but newspapers now took greater risks in criticism of political figures.**



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## ZENGER TRIAL



Zenger decision was a landmark case which paved the way for the eventual freedom of the press.

Zenger Case, 1734-5: New York newspaper assailed corrupt local governor, charged with libel, defended by Alexander Hamilton



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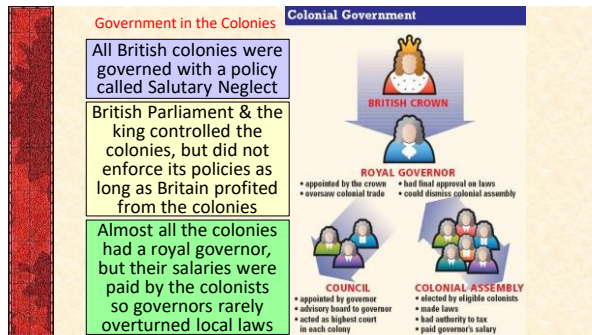
### XIV. THE GREAT GAME OF POLITICS (SLIDE 1 OF 5)

- There were three kinds of colonial governors:
  - By **1775, eight colonies** had royal governors appointed by the king.
  - **Three** had governors selected by **proprietors** (Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware)
  - **Connecticut and Rhode Island** elected their own governors under self-governing charters.

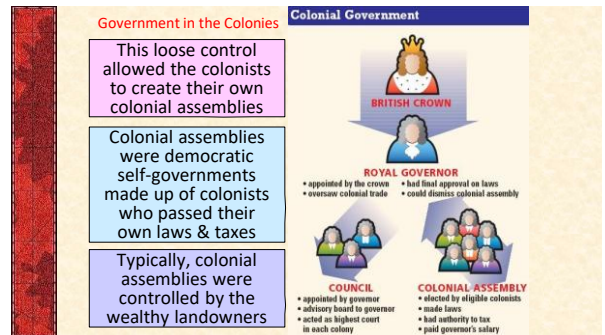
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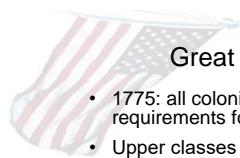
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## Great Game of Politics

- 1775: all colonies had property requirements for voting, office holding
- Upper classes afraid to give vote to "every biped of the forest," ½ adult white males had vote
- Not true democracy, but more so than England

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XIV. THE GREAT GAME OF POLITICS(SLIDE 2 OF 5)

- Each colony had a **two-house legislature**:
  - Upper house was appointed by the crown in eight **royal colonies** and by the proprietor in three **proprietary colonies**. It was chosen by voters in two self-governing colonies.
  - Lower house was the popular branch, elected by the people (property-owners).
  - In some colonies the backcountry areas were seriously underrepresented and resented the colonial elite.

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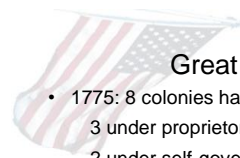
XIV. THE GREAT GAME OF POLITICS(SLIDE 3 OF 5)

- **Self-taxation through representation** was a privilege Americans cherished above most others.
- London generally left colonial governors to the mercies of the legislatures.
- **Colonial assemblies asserted authority over governors by withholding their salary.**

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## Great Game of Politics

- 1775: 8 colonies had royal governors,
  - 3 under proprietors (MD, PA, DE), and
  - 2 under self-governing charters (CT, RI)
- Used bicameral legislatures – upper house (council) chosen by king, lower house by elections
- Self-taxation through elected legislatures was highly valued
- Conflicts between Governors & colonial assemblies: withheld governor's salary to get what they wanted, had power of purse

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## XIV. THE GREAT GAME OF POLITICS(SLIDE 4 OF 5)

- Administration at the local level varied:
  - **County governments** remained the rule in the **South**.
  - **Town meetings** predominated in **New England**.
  - The **middle colonies** used a **mixture of the two forms**.
- Town meetings, with open discussion and open voting, were a cradle of self-government.

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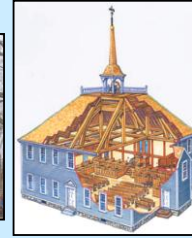
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## Two Examples of Colonial Government



The Virginia House of Burgesses



Massachusetts Town Meetings

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## XIV. THE GREAT GAME OF POLITICS(SLIDE 5 OF 5)

- **The ballot was by no means a birthright:**
  - Upper classes, fearful of democratic excesses, were unwilling to grant the ballot to everyone.
  - **1775: Still religious and property qualifications.**
  - **About half of adult white males disfranchised.**
- But right to vote was not impossible to attain because it was easy to acquire land.
- Yet, eligible voters often did not exercise this privilege; instead they deferred to the elite.

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## XV. COLONIAL FOLKWAYS (SLIDE 1 OF 2)

- Everyday life was drab and tedious:
  - Food was plentiful, but the diet was coarse and monotonous.
  - Basic comforts were lacking.
  - Amusement was eagerly pursued where time and custom permitted.

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## XV. COLONIAL FOLKWAYS (SLIDE 2 OF 2)

- By 1775, British North America looked like a patchwork quilt:
  - Each colony was slightly different, but all were stitched together by common origins, common ways of life, and common beliefs in toleration, economic development, and self-rule.
  - All were physically separated from the seat of imperial authority.
  - **These facts set the stage for the struggle to unite.**
    - **What factors are going to bring all this diversity together!?**

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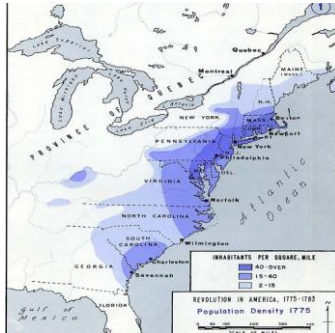


## Colonial Folkways

- Mid-1700s similarities of colonies:
  - English in language/customs
  - Protestant
  - Some ethnic/religious tolerance
  - Unusual social mobility
  - Some self-government
  - 3,000-mile moat separated them from England



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**WHERE are most  
"Americans"  
Living?**

**HOW does this  
impact the  
upcoming  
Revolution?**

[https://brilliantmaps.com/population-density-1775/?fbclid=IwZX0bGhNzWOCMTAAAR1dFKKmAZ8o3bH9PQWhDyPimQ-5toSISPSmbTAKyINUBPHN8PogFKOM\\_aem\\_PPu3ysXpZhaumZ8E\\_24NVQ](https://brilliantmaps.com/population-density-1775/?fbclid=IwZX0bGhNzWOCMTAAAR1dFKKmAZ8o3bH9PQWhDyPimQ-5toSISPSmbTAKyINUBPHN8PogFKOM_aem_PPu3ysXpZhaumZ8E_24NVQ)

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## Colonial Similarities

- English-speaking
- Protestant
- Similar customs
- Celebration of Thanksgiving
- Ethnic and religious toleration
- Some self-government

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## Colonial Society on the Eve of Revolution 1700-1775

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