

## Chapter 5

Colonial Society on the eve of  
revolution  
1700-1775

## JAMES II



**James II**  
(1685 - 1688)

- 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.



## 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.

## 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**"

## 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.



## 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.*



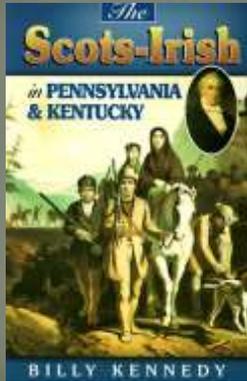


- The average age was 16 years old (due mainly to having several children).
- Most of the population (95%) was densely cooped up east of the Alleghenies, though by 1775, some had slowly trickled into Tennessee and Kentucky.
- **About 90% of the people lived in rural areas and were therefore farmers.**

### 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).



- **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.



- 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,.

- 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.**



### 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.



- 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.

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

### 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)

### A Mingling of the Races

- 6% German
- 7% Scots-Irish
- 5% other European
- 20% African
- = new multicultural identity



**America, a “melting pot”**

### 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

## 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”**

## 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 “jaye 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

## 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

## 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 trades in the West Indies.**
  - **Disease, torture, malnourishment, death for slaves**
- 3. **Sugar brought to New England**
- Other items trades across the Atlantic, with substantial profits from slavery making merchants rich 🌟

## Workaday America

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

## 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

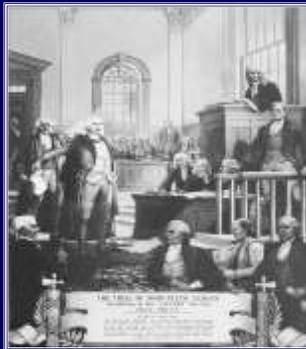
## Horsepower & Sailpower

- 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

## 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.

## 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

## Pioneer Presses

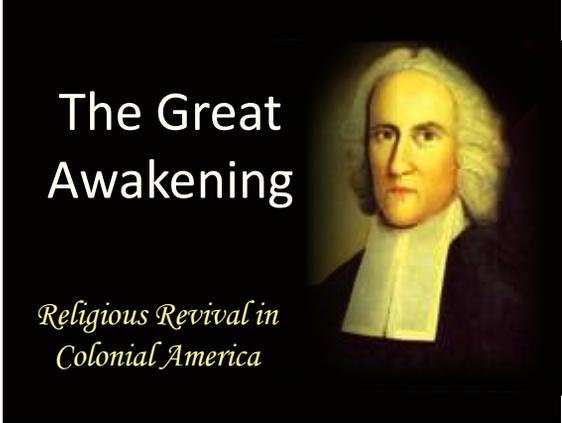
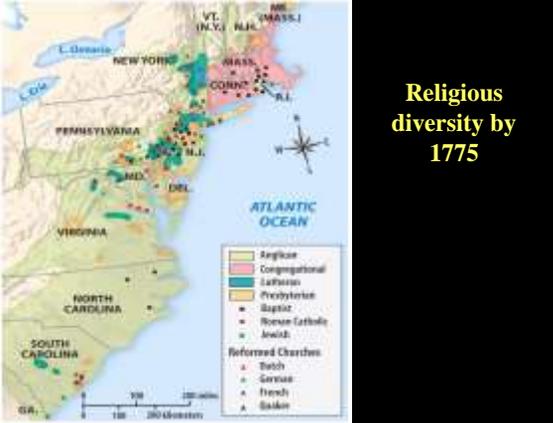
- John Peter Zenger
  - 1734-1735 accused of libel
  - Acquitted by jury
- Significance?

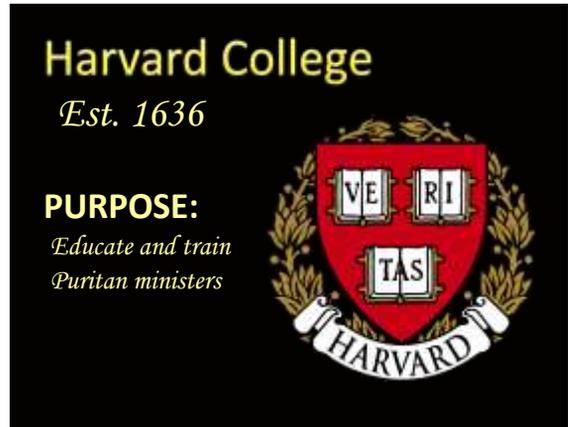
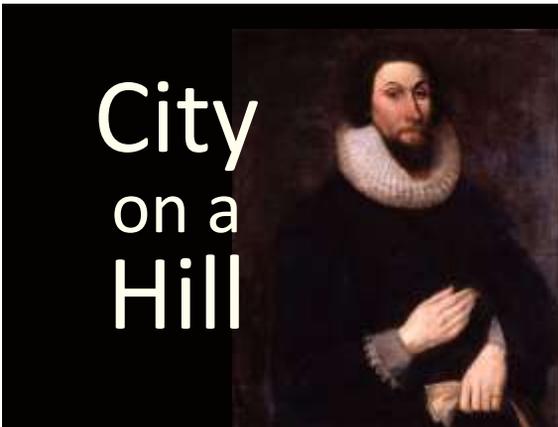
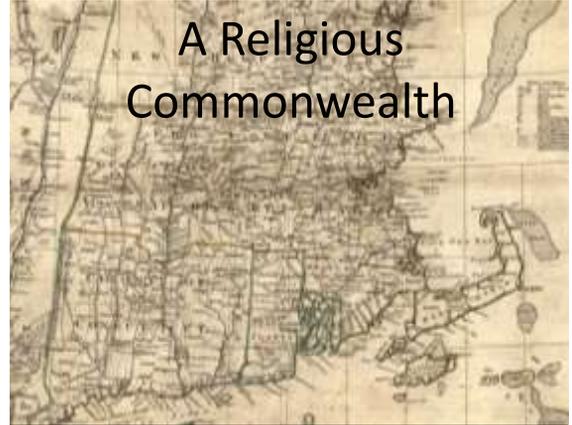
## The Great Awakening

- 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

## Dominant Denominations

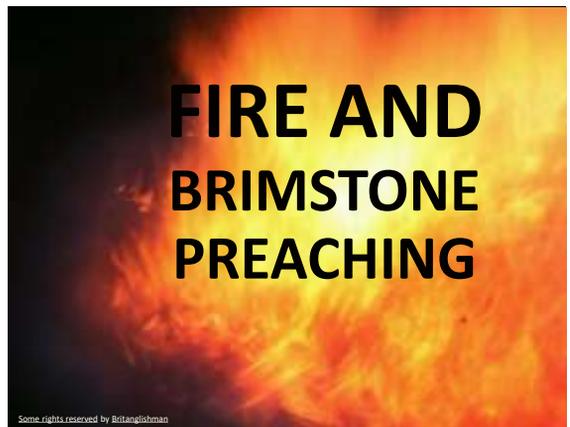
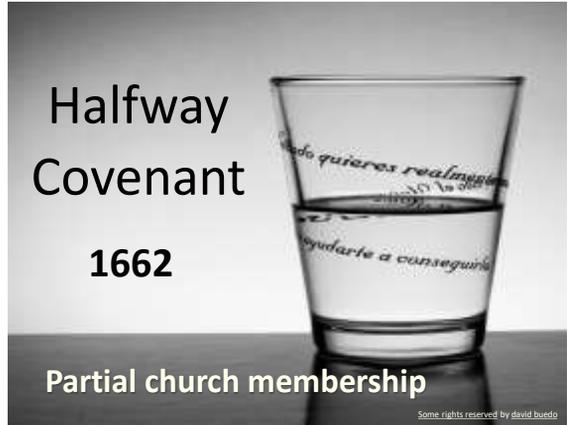
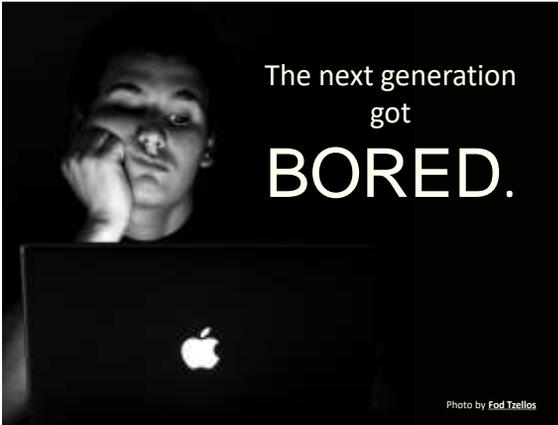
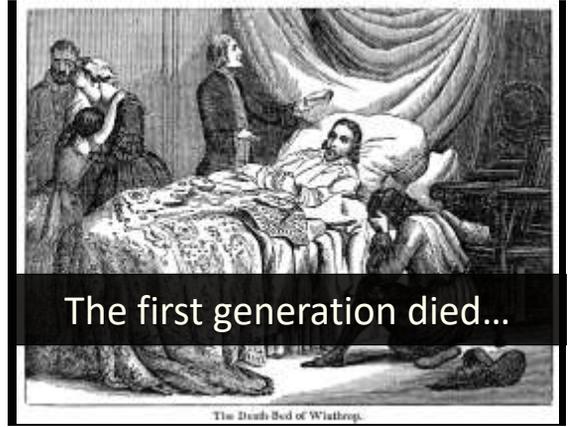
- Two denominations "established" (tax-supported): Anglican (GA, NC, SC, VA, MD, NY) & Congregational (New England except RI)
- Anglican church served as prop of royal authority
- Anglican church more worldly, secure, less zealous, clergy had poor reputation (College of William & Mary)
- Congregational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





"After God had carried us safe to New England and we had built our houses, provided necessaries 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."





**TURN OR  
BURN!**

*This could  
be YOU!!!*



Some rights reserved by Hello, I am Bruce

**George  
Whitefield**

**English  
Minister**

**Emotional  
Appeals**



*"It seemed as if all the world  
were growing religious, so  
that one could not walk  
thro' the town in an  
evening without hearing  
psalms sung in different  
families of every street."  
-- Benjamin Franklin*



**Evangelical  
Christianity**

**Methodism**

*Personal Religious  
Experience*

John Wesley (England)



**Open Air  
Preaching**

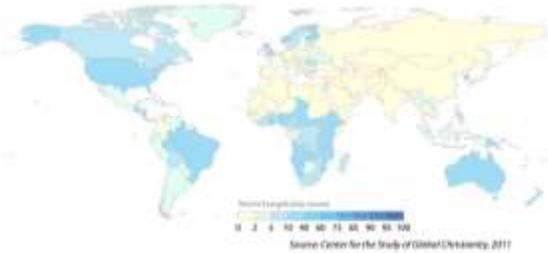


**Itinerancy**

*Methodist ministers  
are still transferred at  
regular intervals.*



# Geographic Distribution of Evangelicals Today



Source: [lausanne.org](http://lausanne.org)

# Jonathan Edwards



Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God

Some rights reserved by HI Media Studios

Afraid, yet?

Some rights reserved by TempusVolat

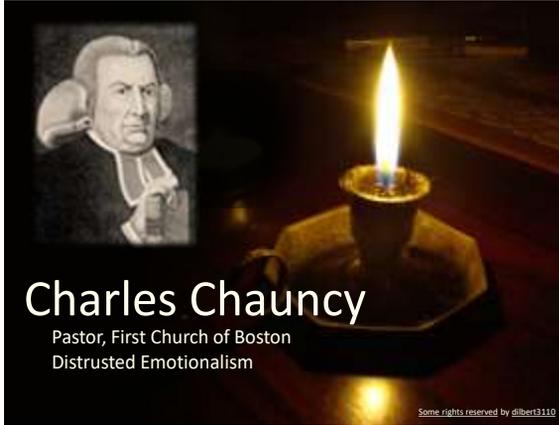
# Divisions

Some rights reserved by dlibert3110

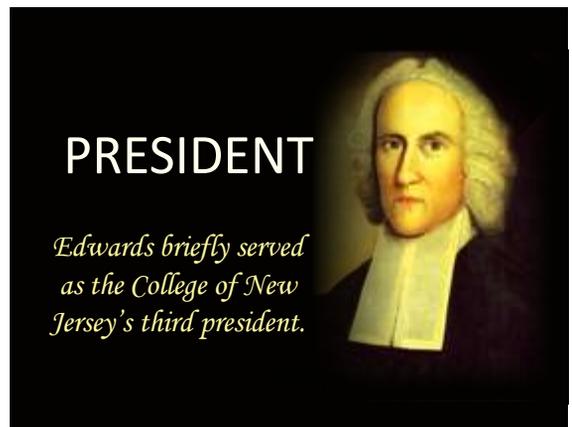
# Old Lights

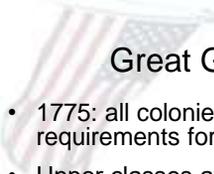
Establishment  
Educated  
Elite

Some rights reserved by dlibert3110



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>





## 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



## 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



## 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)



## Colonial Similarities

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