
History 1301
U.S. to 1877

Lecture 4

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Empire in Transition

British Empire at mid-century:

- Popularity of “British Empire”:
 - Protection against French / Indians Benefits of trade / prosperity
 - Relative non-interference
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- Rule from London
 - Under George I and II, 1714 ~ 1760 “Whig Aristocracy”
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 - Royal appointees were absent, bribable and were not working for any directive policy
 - In America, local assemblies filled the vacancy
 - Passed laws, collected taxes, set policies for Colonial Administration
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 - - Contiguous settlement
 - Coastal and Intra-colonial trade cooperation
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 - 1754 Albany Plan – PA, MD, NY, MA met to jointly conclude a treaty with Indians and common gov’t
- Seven Years War 1756 – 1763:
 - Empire based global war between France and Great Britain
 - “French and Indian War” 1754 - 1763

Anglo – French Conflict:

- New France surrounded the English Colonies
 - Canada in North – St. Lawrence Valley - Mississippi River valley on west – loose posts down to New Orleans - South in Alabama / Mississippi – Biloxi and Mobile
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 - Key elements were Great Lakes and Ohio Valley
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 - To counter-act British, French built Forts, settlements
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- Imperial Wars:
 - King William’s War ~ 1689 – 1697: indecisive clashes in NE against French sponsored Indians
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 - King George’s War ~ 1744 – 1748: indecisive, but greater conflicts – unresolved animosities
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- American Campaign of 1754:
 - George Washington, VA militia, built Fort Necessity to counter Fort Duquesne
 - Washington defeated and began American side of the war.
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French and Indian War:

- American conflict 1754 – 1763 – a superset of the European Seven Year’s war
- Indians were on the French side except for Iroquois
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- Seven Years War 1756 – 1763 “The First World War”
 - Fighting in Europe, India, West Indies & America
 - William Pitt, Sec of State took over centralized control of the war
 - British forces in America acted as in England 1756 - 7
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 - By 1758 the level of colonial resistance reached high level
 - 1758 Policy switch
 - Compensation for supplies / lodging
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 - Washington liaison between colonials and British
 - British successes (little colonial help):
 - Colonial forces over-running French outposts – Fort Duquesne ~ 1758
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 - Peace of Paris 1763:
 - English get some West Indies Islands / Canada
 - English get all land east of Mississippi
 - Spanish get New Orleans & Mississippi hinterland
 - Overwhelming British victory embitters French

New Imperialism:

- Seven Year's war spawned reorganization and re-defining relationships
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 - Huge increase in world-wide empire – land and peoples – more complex entity
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 - Unparalleled size and cost of Navy / Army
 - American experience during war
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- George III ~ 1760
 - Philosopher, Activist and “King to all”
 - Removed long-standing Whigs from power and tried to rule directly through ministers / parliament
 - - Colonists should be compelled to obey the law and shoulder their share of debt ~ popular in Parliament
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 - Judges tenure “Good Behavior” to “King’s Pleasure”
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 - American Bishops proposed to “help” American church

Frontier Conflict & Imperial Involvement:

- Indian Conflicts
 - Colonial expansion in Ohio Valley 1763
 - Ottawa chief “Pontiac” resisted English expansion
 - Proclamation of 1763
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 - Helped Rich eastern merchants by limiting migration
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 - Whites ignored line / British couldn’t enforce it
 - 1768 New line and others creeping west
- Trade and Taxes: Grenville Acts
 - Organized attempt increase revenue and treat America as if it was part of England
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 - Intellectual v Actual impact of Taxation (1% of trans. cost)
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 - Sugar / Revenue Acts of 1764
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 - Open-ended “Writs of Assistance” for search warrants
 - Customs service reorganized and strengthened to fight smuggling & Vice Admiralty courts for violations
 - Royal Officials required to take up residence in Americas
 - Restriction of American manufacturing

New Imperialism – II:

- Currency Act of 1764 ~ stop colonial administrations from printing money causing a shortage of money
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 - Hurt the lower classes / small farmers / store keepers
 - More foreign specie came into use
- Mutiny Act of 1765
 - Permanent troops in American at local expense
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- American response
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 - Fight through courts (Writs of Assistance by Sam Adams)
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- Stamp Act of 1765:
 - General tax on all public & printed documents in America
 - Almost any transaction required “Stamp”
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 - Forecasted 10X previous revenue.
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 - Public display of authority and power

Stirrings of Revolt:

- Stamp Act Crisis:
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 - Virginia Resolves: Patrick Henry 1765
 - Taxed by own representatives
 - Inter-colonial boycott of all British goods
 - Stamp Act Congress of 1765
 - Petitioned Parliament over representation issue
 - Mob Action and Sons of Liberty
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- Repeal & Rockingham's Declaratory Act – 1766
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 - Declaratory Act Proclaimed Parliament sovereign
- Townsend Plan 1767:
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 - Townsend Duties ~ taxes on imports from England: Lead, paint, paper and tea – claimed them as “External” taxes
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 - Colonial reaction was this was a new threat –
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 - North, succeeding Townsend, repealed all except tea tax in 1770

Stirrings of Revolt – II:

- Boston Massacre:
 - Customs Commissioners being harassed / British put four regiments in Boston
 - March 5, 1770
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 - Scuffle left 5 dead / Massive inter-colony propaganda campaign
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 - Committees of Correspondence 1772
 - Gaspee` destruction ~ 1772 trials to be in England
- Philosophy of revolt:
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 - Country Whigs in Great Britain concerned about crown taking power / rights from people
 - Government to protect people from evil and each other ~ John Locke & others of Enlightenment
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 - English Constitution ~ balance of power between Monarchy, Aristocracy, Commons ~ good but now out of balance
 - Social Contract concept of Gov't authority
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 - Greater England or Commonwealth of Communities
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 - Flood of pamphlets, books, newspapers, etc.

Tea Crisis:

- Tea Act of 1773
 - Ability to sell tea directly without colonial merchants or their taxes ~ undercut the current model
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 - Townsend tax on tea survived and it would be included in the price
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 - Colonial ports denied East India ships from unloading
 - NYC / Phil strike kept ships from unloading
 - Boston Tea Party December 6, 1773
- Retaliatory Acts of 1774 “Coercive or Intolerable”
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 - Reduced MA legislature powers – made Gage, a soldier, Royal Governor
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- Quebec Act 1774
 - Pushed borders of Quebec to Ohio Valley
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- Results:
 - MA seen as martyr for all colonies / Boycotts
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New Authority:

- Local authority was passed to “Committees of correspondence” or Sons of Liberty
 - Same people and social leadership
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 - Simply left off reference to the crown
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- First Continental Congress 1774:
 - Internal divisions and disagreements
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 - Military preparations be made through local militia authorized, advertised and acknowledged
 - Continental Association to see boycott enforced
- Conciliatory Propositions from London
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- Lexington & Concord April 18th, 1776
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 - Shot heard around the world – 8 Minute Men died on Lexington Green.