I. The Deep Roots of Revolution

• America was a revolutionary force from the day of its discovery by Europeans:
  – The New World nurtured new ideas about the nature of society, citizens, and government.
  – Republicanism—defined a just society as one in which all citizens willingly subordinated their private, selfish interests to the common good.
  – Stability and government depended on the virtue of the citizenry.

I. The Deep Roots of Revolution (cont.)

• Virtue of the citizenry—its capacity for:
  – Selflessness
  – Self-sufficiency
  – Courage
  – Appetite for civic involvement

• Republicanism was opposed to hierarchical and authoritarian institutions such as aristocracy and monarchy.

I. The Deep Roots of Revolution (cont.)

• Radical Whigs: British political commentators whose ideas fundamentally shaped American political thought:
  – They feared the threat to liberty posed by the arbitrary power of the monarch and his ministers relative to elected representatives in Parliament.
  – They warned citizens to guard against “corruption” and conspiracies to take away their liberties.

I. The Deep Roots of Revolution (cont.)

• Americans had grown accustomed to running their own affairs.
  • The great distance from Britain weakened royal authority.

II. Mercantilism and Colonial Grievances
I. The Deep Roots of Revolution (cont.)

• Americans had grown accustomed to running their own affairs.
• The great distance from Britain weakened royal authority.

II. Mercantilism and Colonial Grievances (cont.)

• Mercantilism:
  – Rested on the belief that wealth was power.
  – A country’s economic wealth (and its military and political power) could be measured by the amount of gold or silver in its treasury.
  – To amass gold or silver, a country needed to export more than it imported.

II. Mercantilism and Colonial Grievances (cont.)

• Colonies conferred distinct advantages:
  – Could supply raw materials to mother country, reducing need for foreign imports.
  – Could provide guaranteed market for exports.
  – London government viewed American colonies as tenants.

II. Mercantilism and Colonial Grievances (cont.)

• From time to time Parliament passed laws to regulate the mercantilist system:
  – Navigation Law (1650)—aimed at Dutch shippers—said that all commerce flowing to and from colonies could be transported only in British (including colonial) vessels.
  – European goods destined for America first had to land in Britain, where tariff duties could be collected and British middlemen got profits.

II. Mercantilism and Colonial Grievances (cont.)

• Other laws stipulated that American merchants must ship “enumerated” products, notably tobacco, exclusively to Britain, even though prices might be better elsewhere.
  – British policy inflicted a currency shortage on the colonies.
  – This situation forced the colonies to issue paper money.

II. Mercantilism and Colonial Grievances (cont.)

• But Parliament prohibited colonial legislatures from printing paper currency.
• The British crown reserved the right to nullify any legislation passed by colonial assemblies if it would harm the mercantilist system.
II. Mercantilism and Colonial Grievances (cont.)

- Royal veto was rarely used, but just the idea of a veto incited colonial anger.

III. The Merits and Menace of Mercantilism

- The British mercantile system seemed oppressive, but its laws were loosely enforced.
- Americans also reaped direct benefits:
  - London paid liberal bounties to colonial producers.
  - Colonies had protection of the world’s most powerful navy and a strong, seasoned army.

III. The Merits and Menace of Mercantilism (cont.)

- The mercantile system burdened colonists with annoying liabilities:
  - It stifled economic initiative and imposed a rankling dependency on British agents and creditors.
- Colonists found it to be debasing:
  - They felt used and kept in a state of perpetual economic adolescence.

IV. The Stamp Tax Uproar

- After the Seven Years’ War, Britain held one of world’s largest empires and the biggest debt.
- It moved to redefine its relationship with the colonies.
- 1763: Prime Minister George Grenville ordered the navy to strictly enforce the Navigation Laws.

IV. The Stamp Tax Uproar (cont.)

- 1764: He secured from Parliament the Sugar Act, the first law passed by Parliament to raise revenue for the crown from colonies:
  - Increased duty on sugar from the West Indies.
  - After bitter protests, duties were lowered substantially, and agitation died down.
- Resentment renewed when the Quartering Act (1765) required colonies to provide food and quarters for British troops.
17  IV. The Stamp Tax Uproar (cont.)
• 1765: Stamp tax was imposed:
  – It aimed to raise revenue to support the new military force.
  – It mandated the use of stamped paper or affixing of stamps, certifying tax payment.
  – Stamps were required on bills of sale for about 50 trade items.
  – Grenville regarded these measures as reasonable.
  – People in England paid a higher stamp tax.

18  IV. The Stamp Tax Uproar (cont.)
• But Americans were angry:
  – The new law pinched pocketbooks and seemed to strike at local liberties.
  – Some colonies refused to comply with the Quartering Act; some voted only to supply a fraction of the supplies requested.
  – The acts also seemed to jeopardize the basic rights of colonists as Englishmen.
  – Offenders were tried in admiralty courts without juries and “innocent until proven guilty” concept.

19  IV. The Stamp Tax Uproar (cont.)
• With French and Indians defeated, what need was there for a military force in the colonies?
  – Colonists feared a conspiracy to strip them of their historic liberties.
  – The Stamp Act became the chief target of their anger.

20  IV. The Stamp Tax Uproar (cont.)
• Americans made a distinction between “legislation” and “taxation”:
  – They conceded the right of Parliament to legislate matters related to the entire empire.
  – They denied the right of Parliament, in which no Americans were seated, to impose taxes on Americans.
  – Such taxes were seen as robbery.
– Only colonial assemblies could tax colonists.

IV. The Stamp Tax Uproar (cont.)
• Grenville used the theory of “virtual representation”:
  – All citizens were represented by Parliament.
• The dispute eventually caused Americans to:
  – Deny the authority of Parliament
  – Consider their own political independence

V. Forced Repeal of the Stamp Act
• Colonial protest against the hated stamp tax took various forms:
• Stamp Act Congress of 1765:
  – Stated the rights and grievances of colonists
  – Beseeched the king and Parliament to repeal the repugnant legislation
  – Was ignored in England
  – Was a significant step toward intercolonial unity

V. Forced Repeal of the Stamp Act (cont.)
• Nonimportation agreements:
  – Agreements against importing British goods
  – Were a promising stride toward union
  – Helped unite the American people for the first time in common action
  – Gave Americans new opportunities to participate in colonial protests

V. Forced Repeal of the Stamp Act (cont.)
• Sons of Liberty and Daughters of Liberty:
V. Forced Repeal of the Stamp Act
(cont.)
• Sons of Liberty and Daughters of Liberty:
  – Took law into their own hands
  – Cried, “Liberty, Property, and No Stamps”
• Shaken by colonial commotion, the machinery for collecting the tax broke down.
  – By the time the act was to go into effect (1765), all stamp agents had been forced to resign.
• The boycott also hurt the English economy.
• Parliament repealed the Stamp Act in 1766.

VI. The Townshend Tea Tax and the Boston “Massacre”
• 1767: Townshend Acts:
  – Imposed a light import duty on glass, white lead, paper, paint, and tea
  – Was an indirect customs duty payable at American ports
• Colonists refused any taxes without representation.
• They were especially concerned because these taxes would pay salaries of royal governors.

VI. The Townshend Tea Tax and the Boston “Massacre” (cont.)
• Nonimportation agreements were renewed against Townshend Acts, but
  – Colonists took the light new tax less seriously.
  – They found they could get cheap tea via smuggling.
• To enforce order, British then landed two regiments of troops in Boston in 1768.
March 5, 1770: A clash erupted that became known as the Boston Massacre.

VI. The Townshend Tea Tax and the Boston “Massacre” (cont.)
- Crispus Attucks, a “mulatto” and a leader of the mob, was one of the first to die.
- Both sides shared blame for the incident, but only two redcoats were found guilty.
- The soldiers were then released after being branded on the hand.

VII. The Seditious Committees of Correspondence
- By 1770, young King George III was attempting to assert the power of monarchy.
- He surrounded himself with “yes men,” notably his prime minister, Lord North.
- Townshend Acts:
  - They failed to generate revenue.
  - But they did produce near-rebellion.
  - Nonimportation actions hurt English economy.

VII. The Seditious Committees of Correspondence (cont.)
- Parliament eventually repealed most Townshend duties but kept the tax on tea.
- But flames of discontent continued because:
  - British officials increased efforts to enforce the Navigation Laws.
  - Zealous Samuel Adams continued to incite what was called his “trained mob.”
- Adams organized first committees of correspondence in Massachusetts.

VII. The Seditious Committees of Correspondence (cont.)
- Committees of correspondence:
  - After one was organized in Boston (1772), some 80 towns set up similar organizations.
– They exchanged letters that kept alive opposition to British policy.
– Intercolonial correspondence committees were the next logical step.
– Virginia led the way in 1773.
– Twelve other colonies soon joined the effort.

VII. The Seditious Committees of Correspondence (cont.)
• They played a key role in stimulating and disseminating sentiment in favor of united action.
• They evolved directly into the first American congresses.

VIII. Tea Brewing in Boston
• By 1773, the powerful British East India Company was facing bankruptcy:
  – It had 17 million pounds of unsold tea.
  – British ministry awarded it a complete monopoly of the American tea business.
  – It could sell its tea at a very low price.
  – But colonists saw this as an attempt to trick them into accepting taxes.

VIII. Tea Brewing in Boston (cont.)
• British authorities decided to enforce the law:
  – Colonists rose up in anger.
  – Mass demonstrations forced tea-bearing ships to return to England with their cargo.
  – Only in Boston did a British official refuse to be cowed.
  – Governor Thomas Hutchinson refused to budge.

VIII. Tea Brewing in Boston (cont.)
• Hutchinson infuriated Boston’s radicals when he ordered tea ships not to leave Boston until they had unloaded their cargoes:
  – December 16, 1773: About 100 Bostonians, loosely disguised as Indians, boarded the ships.
  – They smashed open 342 chests of tea and dumped the contents into the harbor.
  – This action became known as the Boston Tea Party.
VIII. Tea Brewing in Boston (cont.)

- Reaction varied:
  - Sympathetic colonists applauded.
  - Referring to tea as “a badge of slavery,” they burned the hated leaves in solidarity with Boston.
  - Hutchinson, chastened and disgusted, retreated to Britain, never to return.
  - The British chose a perilous path that led only to reprisals, bitterness, and escalating conflict.

IX. Parliament Passes the “Intolerable Acts”

- Parliament responded with measures in 1774 that brewed a revolution:
  - It passed a series of acts to chastise colonists, especially in Boston.
  - The acts were branded in colonies as “the massacre of American Liberty.”
- Most drastic was the Boston Port Act:
  - It closed the port until damages were paid.

IX. Parliament Passes the “Intolerable Acts” (cont.)

- Other Intolerable Acts limited rights traditionally practiced in Massachusetts:
  - Restrictions were placed on town meetings.
  - Unlike before, officials who killed colonists in line of duty could now be sent to Britain for trial.
  - New Quartering Act gave local authorities power to lodge soldiers anywhere, even private homes.

IX. Parliament Passes the “Intolerable Acts” (cont.)

- Quebec Act (1774) covered French subjects in Canada:
  - It guaranteed their Catholic religion.
  - They could maintain institutions (which did not include representative assembly or trial by jury).
  - Québec’s boundaries extended to the Ohio River.
- From French viewpoint, the Quebec Act was a shrewd and conciliatory measure.
IX. Parliament Passes the “Intolerable Acts” (cont.)
• From American viewpoint, the act was noxious:
  – It had a much wider range.
  – It set a dangerous precedent by denying jury trials and by allowing unrepresentative assemblies.
  – It alarmed land speculators by snatching a huge trans-Allegheny area from their grasp (Map 7.1).
  – It angered anti-Catholics by extending Catholic jurisdiction south into a region about the size of the 13 colonies.

X. Bloodshed
• American dissenters responded to the plight of Massachusetts:
  – Colonies sent food to the stricken city of Boston.
  – Rice was shipped from faraway South Carolina.
• Most memorable was summoning of the First Continental Congress in 1774:
  – It met in Philadelphia to redress grievances.

X. Bloodshed (cont.)
• First Continental Congress (cont.):
  – Deliberated for 7 weeks in fall 1774.
  – Not a legislative but a consultative body.
  – A convention rather than a congress.
  – John Adams played a key role.
  – It drew up a Declaration of Rights as well as a solemn appeal to other British colonies, to the king, and to the British people.

X. Bloodshed (cont.)
• Most significant action was creation of The Association:
  – Called for complete boycott of British goods: nonimportation, nonexportation, nonconsumption
• Delegates were not calling for independence.
• They sought merely to repeal offensive legislation.
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X. Bloodshed (cont.)
– But fatal drift toward war continued:
  – Parliament rejected Congress’s petitions.
  – Violators of Association were tarred and feathered.
  – Muskets were gathered and men began to drill openly.
  – April 1775: British commander in Boston sent troops to Lexington and Concord to seize stores of gunpowder.

X. Bloodshed (cont.)
– Troops were also supposed to arrest ringleaders Samuel Adams and John Hancock.
  – At Lexington, “Minute Men” refused to disperse.
  – Shots were fired, killing 8 Americans and wounding several more.
  – Redcoats then pushed on to Concord, where they suffered heavy losses.
  – Britain now had a war on its hands.

XI. Imperial Strength and Weakness
– Americans brashly rebelled against a mighty empire:
  – Population: 7.5 million Britons to 2.5 million colonists
  – Monetary wealth and naval power overwhelmingly favored England.
  – Britain’s professional army equaled some 50,000 men as compared to numerous but poorly trained American militia.

XI. Imperial Strength and Weakness (cont.)
– Mighty empire (cont.):
  – George III could also hire foreign soldiers, including some 30,000 Germans (the Hessians).
  – British enrolled about 50,000 American Loyalists and enlisted some Indians.
– Yet Britain was weaker than it seemed:
  – Oppressed Ireland required troops to maintain British control.
– France was waiting to get even with Britain.

57 XI. Imperial Strength and Weakness (cont.)
• Britain’s weakness (cont.):
  – The London government was weak and inept.
  – There was no William Pitt, only stubborn George and his pliant prime minister, Lord North.
  – Many Britons had no desire to kill Americans.
  – English Whigs opposed Lord North’s Tories.
  – Whigs believed a battle for British freedom was being fought in America.

58 XI. Imperial Strength and Weakness (cont.)
• Britain’s army in America operated under numerous difficulties:
  – Generals were second-rate.
  – Soldiers were brutally treated.
  – Provisions were often scarce, rancid, and wormy.
  – Britain had to operate 3,000 miles from home.
  – Distance greatly increased delays and uncertainties from storms and mishaps.

59 XI. Imperial Strength and Weakness (cont.)
• Difficulties of British army (cont.):
  – Military orders issued in London but received months later did not fit a changing situation.
  – America’s geographical expanse was enormous: roughly 1,000 by 600 miles.
  – Colonies had no urban nerve centers.
  – British armies took every city of any size.
• Americans wisely traded space for time.

60 XII. American Pluses and Minuses
• American advantages:
  – They had outstanding leaders: George Washington, Benjamin Franklin.
  – Eventually they had foreign aid from France.
XII. American Pluses and Minuses

- European officers volunteered to fight for pay.
- Marquis de Lafayette proved invaluable in securing further aid from France.

XII. American Pluses and Minuses (cont.)

- Other conditions aided Americans:
  - They were fighting defensively, with odds favoring the defender.
  - Colonies were self-sufficient in food.
  - Americans enjoyed a moral advantage from belief in a just cause.
- But American rebels were poorly organized:
  - Continental Congress was mostly a debating society.

XII. American Pluses and Minuses (cont.)

- Americans poorly organized (cont.):
  - Disorganized colonists fought almost the entire war before adopting a constitution—the Articles of Confederation—in 1781.
  - Jealousy hindered the war effort:
    - Individual states, regarding themselves as sovereign, resisted attempts by Congress to exercise its powers.
    - Sectional jealousy boiled over the appointment of military leaders.

XII. American Pluses and Minuses (cont.)

- Economic difficulties:
  - Metal money had been drained away.
  - The Continental Congress, unwilling to raise taxes, massively printed “Continental” paper money.
  - Confusion proliferated when individual states issued depreciated paper money.
  - Inflation skyrocketed prices.

XIII. A Thin Line of Heroes

- Military supplies in colonies were scanty:
  - In earlier wars, England provided funds and weapons.
  - Rebels were caught: the cost of home defense mounted just as the
supply of British funds and war material evaporated.
–Sufficient stores of gunpowder, cannon, and other armaments could 
not be found in agricultural colonies.

XIII. A Thin Line of Heroes
(cont.)
• Lack of military supplies (cont.):
  –Among the reasons for alliance with France was need for a reliable 
    source of military supplies.
  –At Valley Forge, Pa., soldiers went without bread for 3 days in the 
cruel winter of 1777–1778.
  –In one campaign, some men fainted for lack of food.
  –Manufactured goods were in short supply.
  –Clothing and shoes were appallingly scarce.

XIII. A Thin Line of Heroes
(cont.)
• Militiamen were numerous but unreliable:
  –They received only rudimentary training.
  –Besides desertion, troops were hit by smallpox.
• Women played a significant part in the Revolution:
  –They maintained farms and businesses while fathers and husbands 
    fought.

XIII. A Thin Line of Heroes
(cont.)
• The part of women (cont.):
  –Many female camp followers accompanied army:
    • They Cooked and sewed in return for money and rations.
    • One Massachusetts woman dressed in men’s clothing and served 
in the army for 17 months.
  • Seven to eight thousand regulars were finally whipped into shape by 
    stern drillmasters:
    –German Baron von Steuben was an organizational genius.

XIII. A Thin Line of Heroes
(cont.)
• Blacks fought and died for the American cause:
  –Many states initially barred them from the military.
  –But eventually more than 5,000 blacks enlisted.
The largest contingents came from northern states with substantial numbers of free blacks.
Blacks fought at Trenton, Brandywine, Saratoga, and other important battles.

African Americans also served on the British side:
– In November 1775 the governor of Virginia promised freedom for any slave who joined the British army.
– Eventually thousands of slaves fled to the British.
– At the end of the war, the British evacuated 14,000 “Black Loyalists.”

Morale in the Revolutionary army was undermined by American profiteers:
– They sold to the British because British could pay in gold.
– Speculators forced prices sky-high.
– Some Bostonians made profits of 50% to 200%.

Brutal truth: Only a minority of colonists selflessly devoted themselves to the cause of independence.
Seldom have so few done so much for so many.