

# American revolutionary war and urban artisans

[War](#), [Revolutionary War](#)



How did Britain attempt to restructure its colonial empire from 1688 to 1763? Were the years of the early eighteenth century a period of “ salutary neglect? ” Britain attempted to restructure its colonial empire from 1688 to 1763.

One of various attempts was constructing a more coherent administration. In 1696, a professional Board of Trade replaced the old Lords of Trade and Parliament created overseas vice-admiralty courts. This would help England control who its colonies traded with and the vice-admiralty courts would help, without juries, prosecute smugglers who evaded the trade regulations set forth in the Navigation Acts. By doing all this England was quietly installing a machinery of imperial management tended by a corps of colonial bureaucrats. Parliament was mainly concerned with economic regulation and so added new articles such as fur, copper, and hemp to the list of items produced in the colonies, which had to be shipped to England before being shipped to another country.

Parliament also curtailed colonial production of articles important to England’s economy but most importantly the passed the Molasses Act in 1733. Although Parliament tried to restructure its colonies by trying to stop colonial trade with other countries, it was unsuccessful because the acts, laws, and taxes were not enforced completely. For example, One attempt of stopping trade between New England and the French West Indies was by imposing a prohibitive duty of six pence per gallon on French slave-produced molasses. This turned many of New England’s largest merchants and distillers into smugglers.

The years of the early eighteenth century were a period of “salutary neglect.” This was a time of peace or was actually a period of time-out in which both England and France used in the years until 1739 to strengthen their war-making capacity. Though this was known as a period of “salutary neglect”, in reality it was an era when King and Parliament increased their control over colonial affairs. What made republicanism a revolutionary ideology in the eighteenth century? What criticisms did revolutionary Americans level against the British monarchy? Between 1763 to 1774 the colonists had been expressing many reactions to the crisis with Britain. Most of these reactions took the form of newspaper articles and pamphlets which were written by educated lawyers, clergymen, merchants, and planters.

But not just the educated expressed themselves, the middling and lower ranks of society did as well. This part of the society did so in printed broadsides, appeals on newspaper, and even ideologically laden popular rituals. From this, the colonists pieced together a political ideology, which borrowed partly from English political thought, the theories of the Enlightenment, and their own experiences. This new ideology was called “revolutionary republicanism”.

But no single coherent ideology united the colonists. Revolutionary Americans began to criticize the British monarchy because they believed that England was carrying out “a deep-land and desperate of imperial depotism for the extinction of all civil liberty.” Because of this belief, every ministerial policy and parliamentary act in the decade after the stamp act appeared as a subversion of English liberties. By 1774, John Adam was

writing of the “ conspiracy against the public liberty that was first regularly formed and began to be executed in 1763 and 1764.

” Another writer who shared his ideas from London was Benjamin Franklin. He described the “ extreme corruption prevalent among all orders of men in the old rotten state”. Many other writers like them expressed their thoughts as well. Merchants also expressed their beliefs. Since the attack on constitutional rights blended closely with the threats to their economic interest, many merchants saw a coordinated attack on their “ lives, liberties, and property. ” According to many, if a man was not secure in his property, he could not be secure in his citizenship, for it was property that gave a man the independence to shape his identity.

These were some of the various forms of criticisms made by the revolutionary Americans. How did the growing revolutionary sentiment from 1764 to 1776 impact urban artisans, women, and farmers. The growing sentiment from 1764 to 1776 had an impact on urban artisans, women, and backcountry farmers in America. The urban artisans played an important role in forging and enforcing a non importation agreement in 1768. They were the ones who called public meetings, published newspaper appeals, organized boycotts, and tarred and feathered their opponents. Many merchants complained on what the artisans were doing.

They said that mere artisans had “ no right to give their sentiments respecting an importation. ” But artisans did not care for what they had to say and forged ahead. By 1772 artisans began lobbying for reform laws, were filling elected municipal positions, and insisted on their right to participate in

nominating assemblymen and other important officeholders. And by 1774, the working class's meddling in state affairs reached a bold new stage- a defacto assumption of governmental powers by committees created by the people at large.

Women also played an important role in the movement toward revolution. Their most important role was to facilitate the boycott of English goods. Besides that, women also signed nonimportation agreements, harassed complying merchants and helped organize "fast days". Women were the key to making the nonconsumption pacts a success.

They would weave cloth and spin yarn. The women began to have contests to publicize their commitment and in 1769, the women of tiny Middletown, Massachusetts, set the standard by weaving 20, 522 yards of cloth, about 160 yards each. And after the Tea Act, the interjection of politics into the household economy increased as patriotic women boycotted their favorite drink. Nonetheless, women played a vital role in the movement toward revolution. Farmers formed associations after getting no satisfaction from legal forms of protest, which were called Regulators. Regulators forcibly closed courts, attacked the property of their enemies, and whipped and publicly humiliated judges and lawyers.

These actions were a key role in the movement toward revolution.