

# [Colonists essay](https://assignbuster.com/colonists-essay/)

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The role of the Boston traders and merchants in opposing the actions of the British government and their ability to influence the colonists were the main factors behind the colonists taking up arms and declaring their independence in 1776  To what extend do you agree? The Boston traders and merchants opposition to the British Government were the main factors, which led the colonists to fight for their independence in 1776. The reason for this opposition is the obligation of taxes, which the British Government introduced in order to finance war debt. However, the traders saw this as an attempt by the British Government to restrict their ability to employ in free trade and practically make money. After introducing taxes, The Sugar Act, The Stamp Act, Quartering Act, and The Townshend Act, the British Government was basically asking for a war. The colonists were outraged and fought for their right and independence.

The Boston Traders and merchants were most affected by the taxes, as their businesses were already at a low, with having to pay more tax eventually they would become bankrupt. Events commenced by the Boston Traders incited colonists, such as the gangs of mobs, circling the streets burning prints on paper, violence broke out. Therefore their actions gained the support of the colonists and led them to declare their independence. The British Governments instigation of the first tax act, The Sugar Act, triggered this atrocity. The Sugar Act was a tax first established in 1733, so it was simply an old tax that had been revised in 1764. This act involved placing a tax on molasses, which the colonists used to make rum.

The rum trade with Europe and in America represented big business for businessmen in the colony. The Businessmen and merchants opposed to this act, written by the governor of Rhode Island, Hopkins, as it affected them the most. The reason for the opposition is that the government would tax 6pennys, with this the business would go bankrupt. He stated that the higher the duty is, the less the trade will be  meaning only 1/2 a penny should be taxed, therefore the company would be able to pay up and continue as it was reasonable making it more financially beneficial to the British Government. The businessmen and rum traders paid a great deal of their own profit/income in order to pay tax for the government. They ran riots to get rid of this tax, as it was greatly affecting their lives. .

Parliaments next response was the Stamp Act and the Quartering Act in 1765. The Stamp act was a tax on all written material. Once the users of printed material (the people who paid the tax) paid their tax, it then would be stamped as of proof, hence the name the Stamp act. It was compulsory due to the fact that people are obliged to pay taxes for financial reasons for the Government, raise money to protect, defend and secure the colony and to reinforce soldiers and weapons. The opposition to the Stamp Act was that it was the first internal tax, it affected everyone, but often paid most by the rich, merchants, lawyers and newspaper owners. However, these articulate members of society were then able to express their dispute to the act.

Although the Stamp Act eventually was repealed in 1766, after violence from the colonists, their demands were finally answered. The Quartering Acts purpose was for the colonial governments to contribute to the costs of the British troops stationed in their area. However it was opposed due to the fact that Britain just didnt have the soldiers to inflict it. These acts were starting points for the initiation of the outraged public (the colonists), which eventually lead to violence. Even after the introduction of the tax Acts, the British Parliament still needed funds. So in 1767 the Townshend Acts was established. This was not an internal tax but it was duties on trade goods that the colonists traded in, such as paint, paper lead and tea.

No real objection was held against this act. A group called the Sons of Liberty was formed (1765). The Sons of Liberty consisted of businessmen and merchants.

They organized boycotts of English Goods. This gang also planned mass protests at which custom officers were at times assaulted and threatened. There protest would commonly involve roaming streets, as in Boston, the records of Vice-Admiralty Courts were burnt to ashes by a rioting mob. Along with homes of the chief custom official and head judge were intruded, smashed and looted. The group eventually caused officers to resign due to the threats from the members, to their families, properties and life.

So when the Act was due to come into effect on 1st November 1765, no officers could be found to enforce it, expect for in Georgia. A member of the Sons of Liberty, Samuel Adams organized the Committees of Correspondence, which were to keep a look out for the colonists rights against any more actions of the British. Violence began to flare up in one crucial event, known as the Boston Massacre. It was first here where the merchants incited the colonists to take arms and defend their right.

The people of Boston resented the presence of the British soldiers. Groups of citizens were roaming the streets in search of casualties. On March 5th, 1770, a gang of civilians cornered a young British soldier and pelted him with stones and packed snowballs. The helpless soldier barely escaped and banged on the Customs House door to get some attention and he repeatedly screamed for help.

There, the town rang the bell summoning a crowd outside the Customs House. Other soldiers whom approached the house were continually pelted with rocks. Gunfire was shot, resulting in five citizens dead and numerous wounded.

The Sons of Liberty played a role in the massacre by acting quickly to obtain an painting of the event which illustrated the civilians innocence, presented that civilians were confronted and carelessly shot upon. The artist was a member of the Sons of Liberty, Paul Revere. His painting was sent to England, creating an image allover the media of overpowered British Soldier and their egotistical government, stating that violence had erupted due to the unfair views of tax. As tea still had a tax on it, smuggling continued. The colonies also began producing tea of their own, as many refused having to pay tax for tea! The East India was an enormous company that had influences in the east, its representative virtually ran India.

IN 1773, Parliament agreed to free the East India Company of the English tax on tea. American colonists were outraged by this special treatment and thought it was unfair as the Company would now steal a majority of the sales of tea in America. A member of the Sons of Liberty, Samuel Adams organized a group of colonists, to dress as Mohawk Indians- to prove that they were American too, and go down to the ships which carried the tea and throw their cargoes into the harbor (thus called the Boston Tea Party). As they tipped 10 000pounds of tea into the sea, they chanted a song testifying their right to not pay tax on tea. The farmers and townspeople began preparation as minutemen, ready to fight at minutes notice. Violence broke out, the British against the colonists. The colonist fought for their refusal to pay tax, and the British fought back demanding them to pay.

Many events at the Lexington occurred where the British general, Thomas Gage seized weapons before the people became organized, and sent orders for Samuel Adams to be arrested for his emotive plan. However, the Sons of Liberty found out and sent members of their group to warn the colonist of the attacks. On 19 April 1775, British troops marched through Lexington on their way to treaty, a group of minutemen awaited them. After a brief skirmish, eighteen minutemen lay wounded on the ground, eight of them dead. This was not the only case of violence which occurred in Lexington. The British continued on to Concord, burning and seizing a few arms, being harassed and shot at behind stone walls, hillocks and houses. After hearing about these events in Lexington, In June 17 1775 at Bunker Hill, sixteen thousand colonists rallied to the Boston area. The colonists were then attacked by the British troops.

After losing 1000 honored soldiers that day, the British had won. With the loss of their troops, it proved that the American civilians were as strong and fought till the end for their declaration of Independence. On July 4th 1776, the American Declaration of Independence product of Thomas Jefferson and a continental army was formed under George Washington. In conclusion the American colonists proved that they were powerful in society to stand up for their beliefs and beat the British Government if they fought against it long enough. The colonists also demonstrated that they would not be ruled or defeated easily by the British. The Boston traders and merchants played a crucial role, as secure leaders, in inciting colonists to rebellion.

It was the actions of the outraged merchants and traders which inflicted these events throughout history. They provoked the colonists to understand that the introduction of these taxes was ruining their financial life, also as it was unfair to control and inflict the nation with the power of the government. Therefore their actions gained the support of the colonists and led them to declare their Independence.