

Chapter 5: The American Revolution

Structure of Colonial Society:

- Period of optimism and growth post- 7 years War for colonists
- 60 % population was under 21
 - o What does this mean or tell us about the American society and identity?
- Southern colonies ranked the highest standard of living, although all colonies were experiencing a rise in the standard of living

Breakdown of Political Trust-

- George III trouble running government
 - o Dull
 - o Muddled through government, when imagination was needed
- Whigs
 - o Set policy and controlled citizens of society
 - o George III ruined this relationship with appointing Bute as chief minister in Parliament
- Mutual responsibility for the rift between colonies and Britain
 - o Sheer ignorance of the colonies
 - o Lack of information
 - o Rumors and misunderstanding between the colonies and GB
- The idea of *parliamentary sovereignty* was also a major factor in the breakdown of political trust
 - o Idea that Parliament was supreme in all decisions
 - o This idea was not acknowledged in the colonies
 - o This caused major tensions between GB and the colonies
 - o No room for compromise
 - o No middle ground

No Taxation Without Representation: The American Perspective-

- The colonists had no interest in the “supremacy of parliament”
- 1763, Americans had their own views on legislation and assemblies
 - o Not in conjunction with Parliaments views on authority
- Mid-century, American cities and assemblies are like mini parliaments
- Idea of *virtual representation* (representatives chosen to represent the Americans in Parliament) made Americans irate
- No taxation without representation!

Ideas About Power and Virtue-

- Struggle between those who wanted to defend Americans freedom clashed with *Loyalists* who sided and supported the British
- Americans were shaping their political ideals and freedoms from that of John Locke
 - o Natural and inalienable rights
 - Life, liberty, pursuit of happiness
 - To attain these contracts had to be made
- Prescribed to the “commonwealthman” tradition
 - o Power was dangerous
- Americans more virtuous than British
- Pamphlets started spreading on the patriot perspective of freedom and liberty from the oppression of England
 - o Used ordinary men, not necessarily educated