

Pequot Library

Riot, Sediton, and Insurrection: Media and The Road to the American Revolution

Educator Guide

School Programs

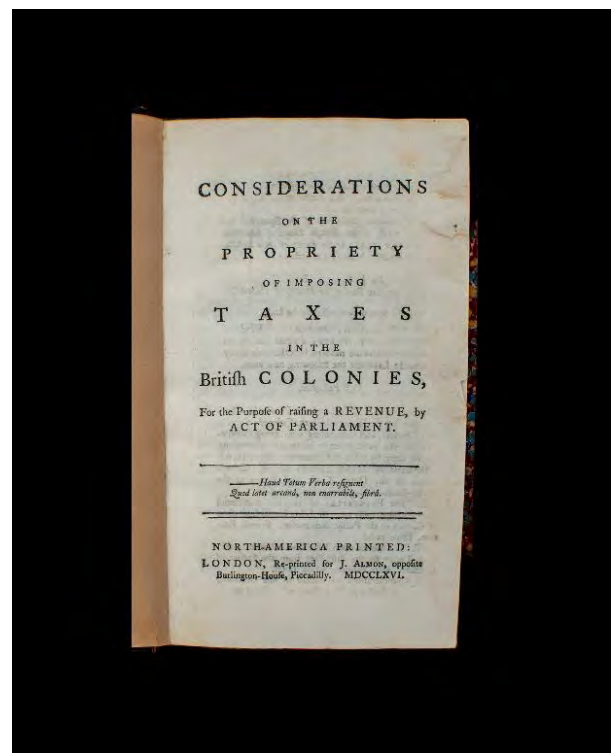
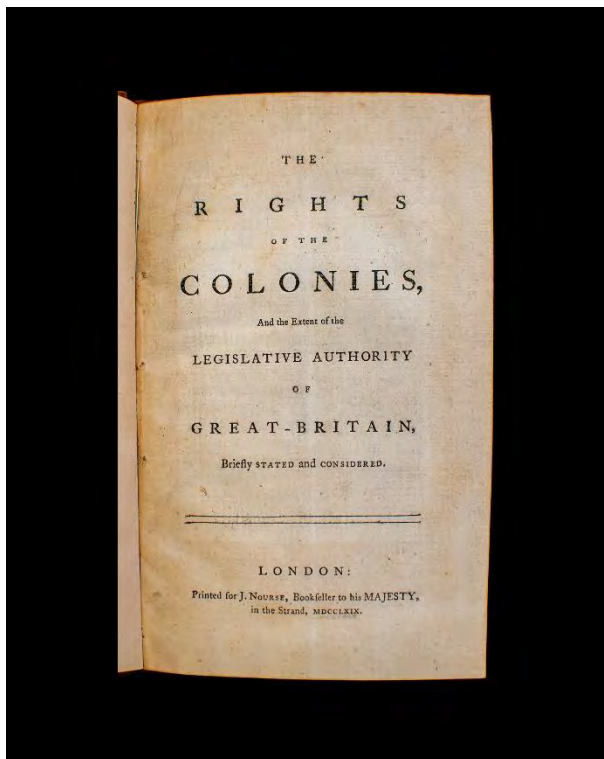
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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Discussion Questions:	3
Vocabulary.....	4
Pamphlet Culture and the American Revolution.....	6
Background Information.....	7
Causes and Events	7
Intellectual Culture	9
Influences on Revolutionary Era Political Thought.....	9
Internet Resources.....	14
Activities for School Groups.....	15
George vs. George	15
Gallery Guide.....	25
Memorializing the Revolutionary War.....	27
Pamphlets and Pamphlet Culture.....	32
John Almon.....	32
The Revolutionary Library	50
The War Itself	55
Intellectual Culture	59

Introduction

In the years preceding the American Revolution, printing presses in the thirteen colonies churned out a wave of seditious literature. A swirl of pamphlets, posters, newspapers, and other print media, not often grounded in fact, fomented a climate of rebellion against the British crown. This exhibition will bring visitors through the pamphlets that memorialized and politicized key events in the early years of Revolution, from the Stamp Act to the Boston Massacre to the Battle of Bunker Hill. By looking at the same works that circulated in the streets, coffeehouses, and homes of Revolutionary-era Americans, we can experience the media environment that shifted public opinion from loyalty to rebellion.



Discussion Questions:

- What were some of the causes and events that led to the American Revolutionary War?
- How did news and opinion about these causes and events spread throughout the American colonies and across the Atlantic?
- What role did print play in establishing American independence?
- Who was writing and why? Who were their intended audiences?
- What was written and how did it sway public opinion toward the American cause?
- What was the Loyalist perspective?

Vocabulary

Broadsheet	A large sheet of paper printed on one side only. Historically significant in 18 th century, when they provided an important medium of both American and British propaganda during the American Revolutionary War.
Democracy	Government by the people; a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents under a free electoral system.
Enlightenment	Eighteenth century thought movement when European scientists and philosophers began examining the world through reason, or human intellect, rather than religious or spiritual faith. Enlightenment thinkers believed in the political concept known as “ natural rights ”. The theory of natural rights argues that people are born with certain rights that the government cannot take away such as life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness , mentioned in the American Declaration of Independence. The majority of Enlightenment thinkers worked towards gaining civil liberties , such as free trade, freedom of religion and freedom of expression , from Europe's existing kings.
Ideology	The body of doctrine, myth, belief, etc., that guides an individual, social movement, institution, class, or large group. Such a body of doctrine, myth, etc., with reference to some political and social plan, as that of fascism, along with the devices for putting it into operation.
Independence	Freedom from the control, influence, support, aid, or the like, of others.
Insurrection	An act or instance of rising in revolt, rebellion, or resistance against civil authority or an established government.
Liberty	Freedom from oppressive government control. Freedom from external or foreign rule; independence.
Loyalist	A supporter of the sovereign or of the existing government, especially in time of revolt. (<i>sometimes initial capital letter</i>) A person who remained loyal to the British during the American Revolution; Tory.
Media	(<i>usually used with a plural verb</i>) The means of communication, as radio and television, newspapers, magazines, and the Internet, that reach or influence people widely.
Oration	A formal speech, especially one given on a ceremonial occasion.
Pamphlet	A complete publication of generally less than 80 pages stitched or stapled together and usually having a paper cover.

	A short treatise or essay, generally a controversial tract, on some subject of contemporary interest: <i>a political pamphlet</i> .
Patriot	A person who loves, supports, and defends his or her country and its interests with devotion. A person who regards himself or herself as a defender, especially of individual rights, against presumed interference by the federal government.
Philosophy	A system of principles for guidance in practical affairs.
Propaganda	Information, ideas, or rumors deliberately spread widely to help or harm a person, group, movement, institution, nation, etc. The deliberate spreading of such information, rumors, etc.
Pseudonym	A fictitious name, especially one used by an author.
Reconciliation	An act of reconciling, as when former enemies agree to an amicable truce.
Republicanism	A representative form of government organization. It is a political ideology centered on citizenship in a state organized as a republic. Historically, it ranges from the rule of a representative minority or oligarchy to popular sovereignty.
Revolution	An overthrow or repudiation and the thorough replacement of an established government or political system by the people governed. <i>Sociology</i> . A radical and pervasive change in society and the social structure, especially one made suddenly and often accompanied by violence.
Riot	A noisy, violent public disorder caused by a group or crowd of persons, as by a crowd protesting against another group, a government policy, etc., in the streets. <i>Law</i> . A disturbance of the public peace by three or more persons acting together in a disrupting and tumultuous manner in carrying out their private purposes. Violent or wild disorder or confusion.
Sedition	Conduct or speech inciting people to rebel against the authority of a state or monarch.

Source: Dictionary.com; Wikipedia.org, Classroom.com

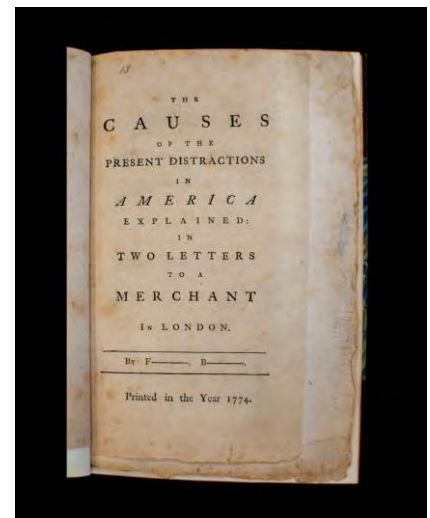
Pamphlet Culture and the American Revolution

To truly imagine the road to American independence, it's important to understand print in colonial America during the mid-18th century. According to David Ramsay, one of the first historians of the American Revolution, "in establishing American independence, the pen and press had merit equal to that of the sword."¹ Print connected resistance groups to one another and provided a reliable network for communication across the colonies, cementing their mutual support when war with Britain broke out in 1775. Two major types of print dealt with the political process of the American Revolution: pamphlets and newspapers. For the purposes of this program, we will focus on pamphlet culture.

Typically, a pamphlet is a short text printed on fewer than 10 sheets of paper, folded twice or three times to create a small book. The longest book we might reasonably call a pamphlet would have fewer than 90 pages, and the shortest only five or six. These small, portable tracts could be printed within the space of a week and, because they used little paper, were inexpensive for even a small printer to produce.

The pamphlet was an ideal format for persuasive writing. Because of their small size, pamphlets could be printed quickly and cheaply, distributed widely, sold at low cost, and read quickly, both silently and out loud. Pamphlets were also small enough that they could be concealed with relative ease, whether in a print shop, bookstore, or private home. These were ephemeral items, rarely bound in anything sturdier than paper, and intended for immediate, broad consumption.

By the late eighteenth century, the pamphlet was a well-established medium for social, political, and religious propaganda and debate. When we talk about 'pamphlet culture', we are talking about the world in which these kinds of texts were written, read, and circulated, as well as the dialogue around them. At the time of the American Revolution, this was the world of public spaces like coffee houses, where a clientele of mostly men from a cross-section of social positions could read, debate, and drink coffee for the low admission price of a penny. It was also the world of clandestine smuggling of seditious literature through unsupervised channels. The "paper bullets" of persuasive pamphlets had the power to make a major impact on the way people thought and communicated,



and could be read and discussed in large groups thanks to how easily they could be reproduced and transmitted.

1. Source: <https://oxfordre.com/americanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-9?mediaType=Article>

Background Information

Causes and Events

Pamphlets have been found to be grouped especially around three events leading up to the Revolution: the Stamp Act crisis (1765-1766), the Townshend Duties and Boston Massacre (1767-1770), and the Boston Tea Party and Parliament's response to the Intolerable Acts (1774). They presented powerful arguments that drove the colonies toward independence, clarifying abstract ideas about government and focusing the American response.

The Stamp Act (1765)

The Stamp Act was passed by the British Parliament on March 22, 1765. It required American colonists to pay a tax on every piece of printed paper they used, including ship's papers, legal documents, licenses, newspapers, and even playing cards. A majority of Americans considered being taxed without their consent to be a violation of their rights as Englishmen. Their slogan was "**No taxation without representation.**" Adverse colonial reaction to the Stamp Act ranged from boycotts of British goods to riots and attacks on the tax collectors.

Watch a video to learn more: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vLvBihkSg6M>

The Townshend Acts (1767)

The Townshend Acts were a series of laws passed by the British government in 1767. The laws imposed new taxes on imports of paper, paint, lead, glass, and tea. They were passed after Parliament has repealed the Stamp Act due to heated protests from the previous year, reigniting the colonists' ire against England.

Watch a video to learn more: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWF6211XZxM>

The Boston Massacre (1770)

On March 5, 1770, a regiment of British Army soldiers fired on a group of American civilians in Boston. Five Americans died in the conflict. This event, the “Boston Massacre,” influenced colonial Americans seeking liberty from Great Britain and eventually led to the Revolutionary War. Merchants and politicians in Boston had been resisting new taxes imposed by the British government for years. These tensions set the stage for the



“massacre”. The British soldiers were brought to trial and were defended by future U.S. President John Adams, who argued that they were defending themselves against an angry mob. Adams later wrote that the “foundation of American independence was laid” on March 5, 1770.

Watch a video to learn more: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O05rNWygHF4>

The Intolerable Acts (1774)

The **Intolerable Acts** were punitive laws passed by the British Parliament in 1774, to punish the Massachusetts colonists for their defiance in the Tea Party protest. The laws were aimed at isolating Boston, the seat of the most radical anti-British sentiment, from the other colonies. Colonists responded with a show of unity, convening the First Continental Congress to discuss and negotiate a unified approach to the British.



Watch a video to learn more: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JbJkh7RCCaE>

Intellectual Culture

“The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people.”

- John Adams (1735-1826), Founding Father and 2nd American President

Many pamphlets referenced political theories from republicans of the ancient world with Enlightenment philosophy from the 17th and 18th centuries to argue on behalf of the American cause. They asserted that liberty was at risk because Great Britain was infringing on the natural rights of the colonists - especially their right to participate in a government in which they were represented. In general, pamphlets assumed a significant amount of historical knowledge on behalf of the reader, in addition to a deep understanding of constitutional law. The most successful pamphlet writers, though, were those who geared their message toward a wider public of Americans. Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* is the classic example. In his incendiary pamphlet, Paine used plain language and referenced more accessible sources, especially the Bible, to reach a larger audience.

Influences on Revolutionary Era Political Thought



Marcus Tullius Cicero (106 BC – 43 BC)

Cicero was a famous orator and writer on the politics and society of the Roman Republic. His opinions on politics were not always popular, and he was declared a public enemy and executed in 43 BC.

Cicero's political works and court orations were of great interest to America's founding fathers. He admired Rome's republican form of government, which he believed was the greatest protector of liberty.



John Locke (1632- 1704)

John Locke was an English philosopher and physician, widely regarded as one of the most influential of Enlightenment thinkers and commonly known as the "Father of Liberalism". Locke argued that men are by nature free and equal against claims that God had made all people naturally subject to a monarch. In his renowned political theory, Locke presented the idea of governmental checks and balances, which became a foundation for the U.S. Constitution. He also argued that revolution in some circumstances is not only a right but an obligation. He published his arguments concerning the natural rights of man in his 1680 work, *Second Treatise on Government* (or *Two Treatises on Government*), a book that Thomas Jefferson read at least three times.



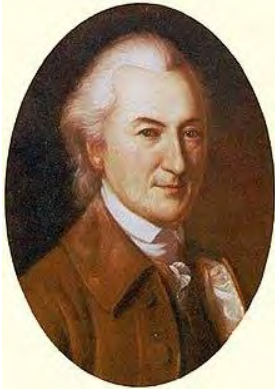
David Hume (1711-1776)

David Hume was a Scottish essayist, historian, and philosopher who was one of the most important figures in the Scottish Enlightenment. He influenced the founding fathers, building on the philosophy of John Locke and the scientific theory of Isaac Newton. Hume believed that thought and the structure of society came from what he called “ideas and impressions” from the human senses, rather than from nature. He believed truth to be and equality to be grounded in reason, rooted in the principles of the scientific revolution, rather than based on religious faith.



Thomas Paine (1737-1809)

Thomas Paine was an English writer who emigrated from England to America in 1774. In 1776, he published *Common Sense*, an influential pamphlet that convinced many American colonists that the time had come to separate from British rule. His writing is said to be one of the greatest influences on moving the American people from a spirit of rebellion to one of revolution. Paine was the first prominent pamphleteer to advocate for a complete break with England. In his pamphlet, Paine associated the corrupt monarchy with the despised taxation policy, persuading many readers to become proponents of the world's first republican government. Importantly, Paine was a master of transforming the complicated philosophical and scientific principles of the Enlightenment—individuality, reason, and liberty—into plain words that the masses could comprehend and rally around.



John Dickinson (1732-1808)

John Dickinson was a lawyer who became a leading political figure in both Pennsylvania and Delaware. He was a delegate to the First Continental Congress and to the U.S. Constitutional Convention. While he refused to sign the Declaration of Independence because he hoped for reconciliation with the king, he led the committee that provided the rough draft for the Articles of Confederation. He was a vocal supporter of the U.S. Constitution. Before the Revolution, Dickinson criticized the British government. In 1765, he wrote a pamphlet protesting the Sugar and Stamp Acts. While he served on the Stamp Act Congress and helped draft the petitions to the king, he opposed violent resistance to the law. After the Townshend Acts passed in 1767, he published his famous *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*, posing as an average farmer and addressing his fellow colonists. In these letters, he argued that the laws were inconsistent with the English constitution. Still, he continued to press for non-importation agreements rather than violent revolt. As such, he was considered a conservative who disagreed both with the British as well as the more radical ideas and tactics of many Patriots.



John Adams (1735-1826)

John Adams was the second President of the United States and a fervent supporter of the American Revolution. A Massachusetts lawyer, Adams acted as the defense attorney for Captain Preston and the eight other British soldiers on trial for their roles in the Boston Massacre. Adams felt that giving the soldiers the fairest possible trial under the law would win support for his cause. He gained prominence as a brilliant defender of American rights under British law. As a member of the Continental Congress, he helped draft Declaration of Independence; during the Revolutionary War, he served as a commissioner to France. In his *Thoughts on Government* (1776), he wrote that the purpose of government was the "greatest quantity of human happiness," a notion which he derived from Cicero, an ancient Roman philosopher.



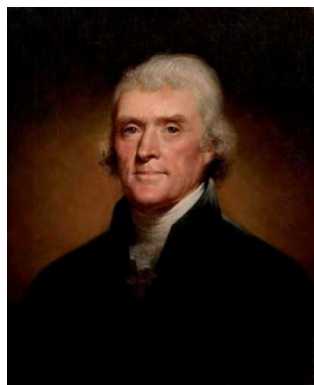
Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)

Benjamin Franklin was a successful inventor, scientist, printer, politician, and diplomat. He helped to draft both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States, and is one of the most celebrated of America's Founding Fathers. Franklin and a few others brought Pennsylvania on board to pass a unanimous vote for American independence on July 2nd, 1776 in the Continental Congress. Inspired by friend and philosopher David Hume, Franklin changed Jefferson's language in the Declaration of Independence from "we hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable" to "we hold these truths to be self-evident." The change reflected a statement grounded in reason and rooted in the principles of the scientific revolution, rather than the notion that the equality of all men was an article of religious faith.



John Hancock (1737-1793)

A leading figure during the Revolutionary War and the first signer of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, Hancock served as chairman of the Boston town committee that formed immediately after the Boston Massacre in 1770 to demand the removal of British troops from the city. In 1774 and 1775 Hancock was president of the first and second provincial congresses, and he shared with Samuel Adams the leadership of the Massachusetts Patriots. He was a member of the Continental Congress from 1775 to 1780 and served as its president from May 1775 to October 1777. Hancock was a member of the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention of 1780 and in the same year was elected governor of the state. He served in Congress under the Articles of Confederation in 1785–86 and then returned to the governorship. He presided over the Massachusetts Convention of 1788 that ratified the federal Constitution, although he had been unfriendly at first toward the document. Hancock died while serving his ninth term as governor. (www.britannica.com)



Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)

Thomas Jefferson is considered one of the most important Founding Fathers of the United States of America for the central role he played in drafting the Declaration of Independence. During the American Revolution, Jefferson was elected Governor of Virginia and, after the war, he was appointed minister to France. He also served as the nation's first secretary of state, its second vice president, and its third president. As chairman of the committee to draft the Declaration, Jefferson wrote the historic document in solitude. Jefferson was strongly influenced by John Locke, who argued that humans were born in a state of nature and enjoyed certain natural (Jefferson would call them "inalienable") rights that no government could take away from them.

Internet Resources

Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*:

<https://oll.libertyfund.org/pages/1776-paine-common-sense-pamphlet>

<https://cptv.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/americon-vid-thomas-paine/video/>

James Chalmers' *Plain Truth*:

<https://www.amrevmuseum.org/collection/common-sense-and-plain-truth>

<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/evans/N11951.0001.001?rgn=main;view=fulltext>

Benjamin Franklin's *Present Distractions*:

<https://www.wywl.com/minute-man/race-details/>

Dickinson's *Late Regulations*:

<https://www.wywl.com/minute-man/race-details/>

John Hancock's *Oration*:

<https://classroom.monticello.org/media-item/john-hancocks-boston-massacre-oration/>

Massachusetts Historical Society:

<http://www.masshist.org/revolution/index.php>

Colonial Williamsburg Teaching Resources:

<https://history.org/history/teaching/tchcrone.cfm>

American Revolution Museum:

<https://www.amrevmuseum.org/education-museum>

Print, the Press, and The American Revolution:

<https://oxfordre.com/americanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-9?mediaType=Article>

Rome's History and America's Founding fathers:

<https://allthingsliberty.com/2018/10/romes-heroes-and-americas-founding-fathers/>

Lexington and Concord: April 19, 1775

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/revolutionary-war/battles/lexington-and-concord>

The Battle of Bunker Hill: June 17, 1775

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/revolutionary-war/battles/bunker-hill>

Activities for School Groups

George vs. George

Which George? King George III or George Washington? Use the following fun facts to make flashcards for students to use in a game to test their knowledge about the two Georges!

*** Born George William Frederick
on June 4, 1738.**

*** Died January 29, 1820,
at age 81.**

*** Mentioned once in the
Declaration of Independence,**

as "the present King of Great Britain."

*** Became king in 1760, at age 22.
Succeeded his grandfather.**

*** Ruled as king until his death in 1820.**

*** Had light blue eyes.**

*** Mother was Queen Augusta**

*** Founded the
Royal Academy of Arts during his reign.**

*** Married a German princess named Charlotte in 1761. They never met before their wedding day.**

*** Fathered 15 children with Charlotte.**

*** Loved gardening and farming (agriculture) and was sometimes mockingly called "Farmer George."**

*** Collected tens of thousands of books for his royal library.**

*** Was declared unfit, due to mental illness, for the last 10 years of his reign. His "madness" may have been a rare disease now known as porphyria.**

*** A study of samples of his hair in 2005 revealed high levels of arsenic, and the deadly poison may be to blame for the bouts of apparent madness he suffered.**

*** John Hancock signed the Declaration of Independence large enough "for King George to read without spectacles."**

*** A statue of King George III that stood in Bowling Green in Lower Manhattan was torn down by the Sons of Liberty in July**

1776, and the 4,000 pounds of metal were turned into 42,088 musket balls.

*** Became blind and deaf in his last 10 years, which he spent at Windsor Castle.**

*** Buried at St. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle in Windsor, a town in England.**

*** Over 30,000 people attended his funeral.**

*** Was born two months' prematurely.**

*** Became heir to the throne at age 12, when his father died.**

*** Was urged by his prime minister to impose taxes on the American colonies to gain revenue because Britain faced a huge financial debt following the Seven Years' War (1756-1763).**

*** Was England's longest-running monarch (59 years) until his granddaughter, Queen Victoria (63 years), surpassed him. His reign is presently third longest of all time, behind Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II (68 years and counting).**

*** Was interested in science and had his own astronomical observatory.**

*** His collection of mathematical and scientific instruments are housed in the Science Museum in London.**

*** Spoke English, German and French.**

*** Born February 22, 1732 in Virginia.**

*** Died December 14, 1799 in Virginia.**

*** Died from a throat infection.**

*** Nickname is Father of His Country.**

- * The famous portrait of him was made by Gilbert Stuart.**

- * He married Martha Dandridge Custis, a widow.**

- * Served as president from 1789-1797.**

- * Had two stepchildren.**

- * Led the Continental Army over the British in the American Revolution.**

- * Was 11 years old when his dad died.**

- * Worked as a surveyor (creating maps) when he was 16.**

- * Virginia estate is called Mount Vernon.**

- * Only president unanimously elected.**

- * Did wear dentures, but did not have wooden teeth.**

- * Did not have a middle name.**

- * Barbados is the only foreign country that he visited. He went there in 1751, and he contracted smallpox when he did.**

*** Had two horses shot out from underneath him at the Battle of Monongahela in 1751.**

*** Only president who did not occupy the White House. During his presidency, the U.S. capital was New York City and then Philadelphia.**

Gallery Guide

The story of the American Revolution is one with which we are all familiar: in response to increasing pressure from the British government, the thirteen American colonies banded together in shared opposition to rule from across the Atlantic. The major inciting incidents were several bundles of import duties and restrictions: The Stamp Act (1765), The Townshend Acts (1767), and The Intolerable Acts (1774). The first two represented attempts by Parliament to recoup expenses after the French and Indian War (1754-1763), but The Intolerable Acts, called The Coercive Acts in Britain, responded to the increasingly violent resistance mounted by America's pro-independence activists. Though the duties that the British government imposed on its American colonists were lighter than what many citizens living in England had to pay, and certainly lighter than the taxes that the fledgling American government imposed in its early years, the argument against them hinged on a lack of voting representation for colonists in Parliament: "Taxation without representation," as it says on Washington D.C. license plates today. Tensions came to a head in 1775 with skirmishes in Lexington and Concord, and a bloody siege referred to as the "Battle of Bunker Hill" in Boston. By 1776, the year Thomas Paine published *Common Sense*, the colonies declared themselves independent from Britain.

Before 'the shot heard 'round the world' could trigger a war of independence, a shared media environment had to be built, one that could amplify dissenting voices and unify the separate colonial governments. Many of the colonial political figures we know as the founding fathers were already in contact with one another in some form. Different communities centered around different local legislatures, but the Committees of Correspondence, which created a separate mail carrying service unsupervised by Britain, created a vital link across all of them. These elite networks helped solidify the message and aims of the growing movement for independence, but the revolutionary project needed to reach a wider audience in order to create the broad support needed to separate from an international superpower. This is where print became indispensable to the revolutionary cause, and the polemical pamphlets on view in this exhibition show a selection of the diet of information and propaganda flooding the colonies in the years leading up to the outbreak of war.

One of the themes running through this exhibition is clandestine printing and the measures that printers and authors went to protect themselves against backlash from authorities. You will notice several cases where printers disguised themselves under false names and claimed that their work

came from different cities. In other cases, this information has been left off altogether, though a pamphlet without a printer's name and place of printing was a dead giveaway of illicit content. Several of the authors who penned these works used false names, sometimes tongue-in-cheek puns, descriptive pseudonyms, or vague sets of scrambled initials. As the powerful legacy of Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* shows, print was an indispensable tool for distributing and amplifying persuasive words, and authorities used censorship, fines, and imprisonment to try and combat its power.

The printed pamphlets you will see in this exhibition appeared both in Britain and in the American colonies, as presses on both sides of the Atlantic amplified the ideological battle being fought between loyalists and patriots, Tories and Whigs. Though some English printers were sympathetic to American concerns, like the radical Whig printer John Almon, it was crucial to the dissemination of pro-independence rhetoric that domestic American presses be able to distribute seditious literature. The first printing press in America had been established in the late 1630s in Cambridge, Massachusetts, but most books had to be imported from Europe for much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The early years of colonial print were slow, and only four print shops were in operation before 1680. But, as the colonies grew in population and economic power, the printing industry grew alongside them, putting in place the information infrastructure that the founding fathers would exploit.

The rise of newspapers changed the fortunes of many American printers, and altered the print landscape of the colonies. The first attempt to create a colonial newspaper came in 1690 when Benjamin Harris, proprietor of the London Coffee House in Boston, started printing single-sheet quarto pamphlets discussing local news and gossip. Harris's initial project, *Publick Occurrences Both Forreign and Domestick*, failed financially; there was not yet enough of a market to support a regular newspaper. However, the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries proved to be a time of tremendous growth in the colonial population. The total number of colonists in America tripled between 1680 and 1720. This population growth meant more readers and more purchasing power, which enterprising printers like Benjamin Franklin saw as an opportunity to try printing newspapers again. After the initial success of John Campbell's *Boston News-Letter* in the early eighteenth century, a suite of publishers across the eastern seaboard began printing their own small periodical pamphlets. These pamphlets, which were cheap to produce and generated steady income, became a financial basis for an explosion in the domestic print industry. In 1722 there were eight printing

shops spread across four cities, with the majority clustered in Boston. By 1740 there were 15 working printers across nine cities, reaching as far south as Charleston, South Carolina. When the founding fathers needed to amplify their messages in the late eighteenth-century, the domestic print world was well established, financially viable, and experienced at producing and distributing pamphlets to a variety of buyers. In short, the powder was dry and the fuse was lit for a revolution. Now, we invite you to explore the incendiary world of revolutionary print, from the Stamp Act crisis to the early years of the war itself, as warring rhetoric turned into real-world violence.

Memorializing the Revolutionary War

All of the images you see here are from some hundred years after the events leading up to the American Revolution and its flurry of polemical pamphlets. Rather than contributing to a climate of revolution, these printed images encourage us to reflect on its legacy. Just as Americans today invoke the memory of the Revolution both in politics and in popular culture, Americans of the past used stories and images of the earliest years of our national history as a way of understanding their present. Many of the images shown here date from the mid to late nineteenth century, when the United States was embroiled in another period of violent conflict. While several of these images were made as part of marketing campaigns on and around the 1876 centenary of the Revolutionary War, it is also worth thinking about the role that rousing stories about the “heroes of the American Revolution” might have played in a nation recently wracked by Civil War. The artistic interpretations of the Revolution that these images give speak to the attitudes of the people who created them, and the messages they wanted to send about heroism, national unity, and sacrifice.



“Revolutionary Heroes at Bunker Hill, Fighting Under Our Country’s First Flag, The Rattlesnake Flag”

Picture postcard c. 1908

On Loan from John Herzog



“Battle of Bunker Hill” From the series “Memories of the War for Independence”

Embossed picture postcard

[Plainfield, NJ]: Fred C. Lounsbury [Crescent Embossing Company], 1907

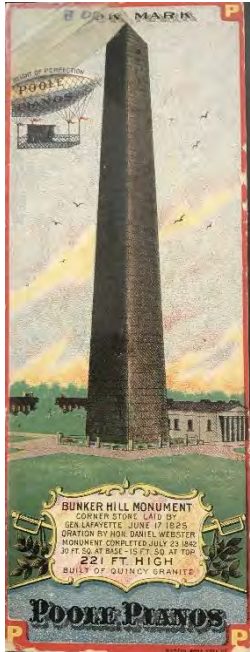
On Loan from John Herzog

“The Announcement of the Declaration of Independence”

July page of the 1876 Centennial Home Insurance Company Calendar
Chromolithograph

New York: Kronnem & Co., 9 Dey Street, 1876

On Loan from John Herzog



Poole Pianos advertising bookmark with blimp flying over Bunker Hill

Chromolithograph

Boston, Boston Bank note co., [between 1893 and 1917]

On Loan from John Herzog

Bunker Hill Monument with portrait of General Joseph Warren

Engraving excised from

“Boston Notions: Being an Authentic and Concise Account of that Village”

Nathaniel Dearborn

Boston: N. Dearborn sold by W. D. Ticknor & Co., 1848

On Loan from John Herzog



“Battle of Bunker’s Hill”
Handcolored steel engraving
New York: Johnson, Fry & Co., [1859]
On Loan from John Herzog



“Battle of Bunker Hill”
Hand colored steel engraving
[New York]:[Johnson, Fry, & Co.], [between 1869 and 1871]
On Loan from John Herzog

“The Battle of Lexington”

Hand colored steel engraving

New York: Martin, Johnson & Co, 1856

On Loan from John Herzog



“Boston Massacre”

Hand colored steel engraving

New York: Johnson, Fry & Co., 1857

On Loan from John Herzog



“Destruction of the Tea in Boston Harbour”

Hand-colored steel engraving excised from

“Life of George Washington”

Washington Irving

New York: G. P. Putnam & Co., 1857

On Loan from John Herzog

Pamphlets and Pamphlet Culture

Nearly every book on view in this exhibition can be described as a “pamphlet”, but what do we mean when we call an early printed book a pamphlet? Typically, a pamphlet is a short text printed on fewer than 10 sheets of paper, folded twice or three times to create a small book. The longest book we might reasonably call a pamphlet would have fewer than 90 pages, and the shortest only five or six. These small, portable tracts could be printed within the space of a week and, because they used little paper, were inexpensive for even a small printer to produce.

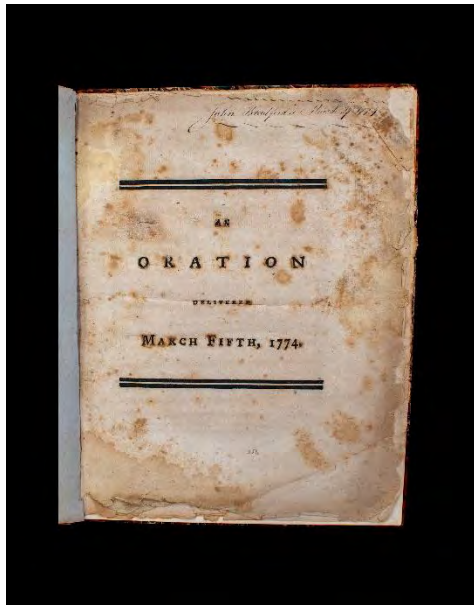
The pamphlet was an ideal format for persuasive writing. Because of their small size, pamphlets could be printed quickly and cheaply, distributed widely, sold at low cost, and read quickly, both silently and out loud. Pamphlets were also small enough that they could be concealed with relative ease, whether in a print shop, bookstore, or private home. These were ephemeral items, rarely bound in anything sturdier than paper, and intended for immediate, broad consumption.

Pamphlet wars had been a fixture of the Western world since the early sixteenth century, when an abundance of cheaply printed, brief, inflammatory texts played a pivotal role in the Reformation. By the late eighteenth century, the pamphlet was a well-established genre for social, political, and religious propaganda and debate. When we talk about ‘pamphlet culture’, we are talking about the world in which these kinds of texts were written, read, and circulated, as well as the dialogue around them. At the time of the American Revolution, this was the world of public spaces like coffee houses, where a clientele of mostly men from a cross-section of social positions could read, debate, and drink coffee for the low admission price of a penny. It was also the world of clandestine smuggling of seditious literature through unsupervised channels, like the Committees of Correspondence. The “paper bullets” of persuasive pamphlets had the power to make a major impact on the way people thought and communicated, and could be read and discussed in large groups thanks to how easily they could be reproduced and transmitted.

John Almon

Many of the pamphlets on view in this exhibition were the work of John Almon, a prominent English bookseller and journalist, who earned both fame and notoriety as a political activist. Almon’s cause celebre was press freedom. He fought for the right to report on and distribute the texts of parliamentary debates, which had been illegal in Britain after a resolution passed in 1738. In direct defiance of parliament, Almon published anonymous reports of debates in the House of Commons three times a week in the London Evening Post. He occasionally ran afoul of government officials for printing unauthorized accounts of parliamentary business and of individual acts of corruption by MPs, and had to pay a series of fines and even served a short stint in prison. Despite these setbacks, his tenacity and his friendly relationship with prominent members of the Whig party had won the day. By 1771, Parliament ceased its attempts to censor reporting on its debates.

In addition to being a crusader for freedom of the press in London, Almon was an important link between Britain and the colonies for political communication. His vast personal network of political contacts extended throughout the British Empire, and one member of the House of Lords once quipped that anyone who wanted to know what was going on in America would be better off asking Mr. Almon than him or another MP. John Almon was also the first English publisher of *Common Sense*. However, in order to avoid being accused of libel or treason, he removed passages that directly refer to the king and to the British government.



An Oration; Delivered March 5, 1774, at the Request of the Inhabitants of the Town of Boston: to Commemorate the Bloody Tragedy of the Fifth of March 1770

By John Hancock

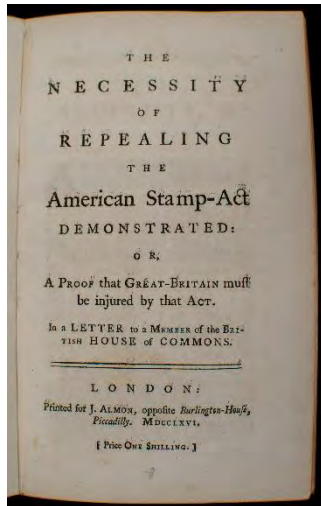
Boston, Printed by Edes and Gill, in Queen Street, MDCCLXXIV [1774]

Pequot Library Special Collections

Presented by Virginia Marquand Monroe

In 1774, the people of Boston chose the prominent pro-independence politician John Hancock to give the fourth annual speech commemorating the Boston Massacre. In his contribution, Hancock sets out a number of the principles that would later feature in the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Not only does he call for freedom of religion, but, with an eye to the specter of impending conflict with Britain, for the necessity of mounting an armed defense. The speech was written as a kind of call to arms, addressed not to fellow British citizens, but to fellow Americans. He asks his countrymen to honor the memory of the Massacre victims by standing up for what they believe to be right and form a well-trained militia to protect themselves as, Hancock says, he knows they will.

This would become one of Hancock's most famous speeches, and a number of Hancock's co-conspirators, like Samuel Adams, are said to have had a hand in drafting it. It met with applause from the crowd assembled in Boston and re-appeared in print both in pamphlets like this first edition, and transcribed in periodicals like *The Royal American Magazine*. The next year, Hancock was elected President of the Continental Congress.



The Necessity of Repealing the American Stamp-Act Demonstrated: Or, a Proof that Great-Britain must be injured by that Act. In a Letter to a Member of the British House of Commons

London, Printed for J. Almon, opposite Burlington-House, Piccadilly, 1766

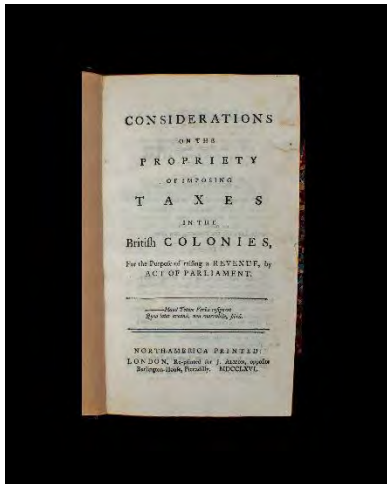
Pequot Library Special Collections

Presented by Virginia Marquand Monroe

This pamphlet and the *Rights of Parliament Vindicated* illustrate opposing views of the momentous Stamp Act of 1765, the internal tax levied by Great Britain on British colonies in America that required printed materials, including newspapers and commercial and court documents, have an official stamp obtained by appointed commissioners. The Stamp Act was interpreted by the majority of colonists as the most oppressive decree yet, since a tax enforced without consent was considered a violation on their rights as Englishmen. Although not exactly a costly tax, colonists overwhelmingly viewed the measure as setting a precedent for more taxes in the future.

Suggested by Benjamin Franklin in 1754, the fundamental argument against the stamp tax centered on the point that colonists were not represented in Parliament, establishing the familiar political slogan, “no taxation without representation.” More so than earlier imposed maritime trade agreements, such as the Navigation Acts and monopoly attempts like the Molasses Act; the detested Stamp Act had the potential to adversely impact the finances of all Americans, including everyday merchants, farmers, and laborers.

The author of the “Necessity of Repealing” text, a British sympathizer, fervently supported repealing the Stamp Act arguing that doing so would be most advantageous to the imperial nation writing, “...we should not barely consider how the Stamp Act may affect our American colonies, but how it must affect the future strength and prosperity of His Majesty’s dominions.” The author, who positions this text as a rebuttal to the reasons Parliament presents for justifying the duty cautions that enforcing the act, “...may have troublesome consequences.”



**Considerations on the Propriety of Imposing Taxes in the British Colonies
[by Daniel Dulany]**

**London, Re-printed for J. Almon, opposite Burlington-House, Piccadilly.
MDCCLXVI [1766]**

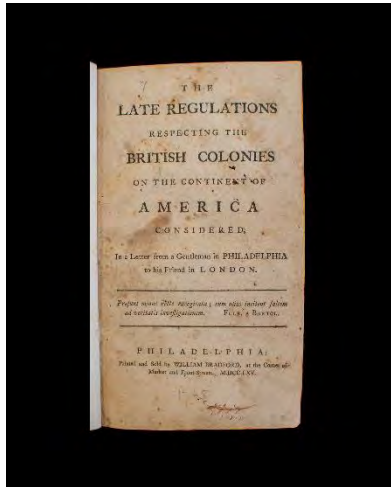
Pequot Library Special Collections

Presented by Virginia Marquand Monroe

Proclaimed by Mathew Page Andrews in *History of Maryland* written in 1929 as “the ablest effort of this kind produced in America,” this pamphlet was one of the most influential responses to the Stamp Act of 1765. Written by loyalist Daniel Dulany the Younger, (1722-1797) it serves as an argument against taxing the colonists without representation in Parliament. A wealthy landowner, politician and attorney, educated in England, Dulany wrote, “...but what right had the Commons of Great Britain to be thus munificent at the expense of the Commons of America?”

Dulaney, who served as a member of the Maryland legislative assembly from 1751 to 1754 and was appointed to Governor’s Council in 1757 in recognition of his support of the colony’s proprietary government, was disturbed that the rights of Englishmen as under the Bill of Rights of 1689 were being discounted. Concerned that the Crown’s subjects should not be taxed without

their consent and proper representation Dulaney asserts, "...the notion of a virtual representation of the colonies must fail, which in truth is a mere cobweb, spread to catch the unwary, and intangle the weak." Dulaney was mayor of Annapolis in 1764 and opposed to revolutionary action and ultimately had his property confiscated in 1781 as retribution for his loyalty to British causes.



The Late Regulations Respecting the British Colonies on the Continent of America Considered, In a Letter from a Gentleman in Philadelphia to his Friend in London

[By John Dickinson]

Philadelphia, Printed and Sold by William Bradford, at the Corner of Market and Front-Streets, MDCCLXV [1765]

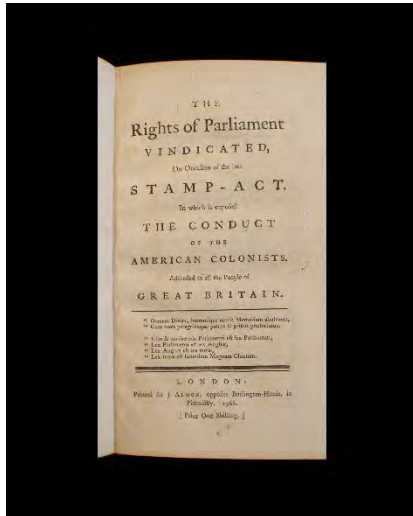
Pequot Library Special Collections

Presented by Virginia Marquand Monroe

The first time Dickinson's words appeared in print came the year before with the publication of a speech he gave at the Pennsylvania House of Assembly, but this is the first essay he wrote for the general public in his long and influential political career. Here, he marries a discussion of economic theory, covering international trade, paper money, and the effects of taxation with the vivid language of political polemic. The success of this pamphlet led to the Pennsylvania legislature appointing him as a delegate in the Stamp Act Congress, for which he would draft the formal resolutions.

Dickinson's work is characteristic of early arguments against the Stamp Act, before a majority of colonial citizens supported independence from Britain. Though he was categorically opposed to taxation without representation, his fundamental goal was reconciliation and compromise. He and his colleagues, like Benjamin Franklin, saw the political pamphlets they wrote in these early years as part of a dialogue with their fellow British citizens. Indeed, after its initial publication in Philadelphia, Franklin acted swiftly to have it published in London in the same year.

Following the success of his Stamp Act pamphlet, Dickinson would go on to write his most acclaimed political essay, *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*, in response to the Townshend Acts. The next year, he continued to build his reputation as an indispensable voice in colonial politics by writing the first ever American patriotic song, “The Liberty Song” in 1768.



The Rights of Parliament Vindicated, on Occasion of the late Stamp-Act. In which is exposed the Conduct of the American Colonists. Addressed to all the People of Great Britain.

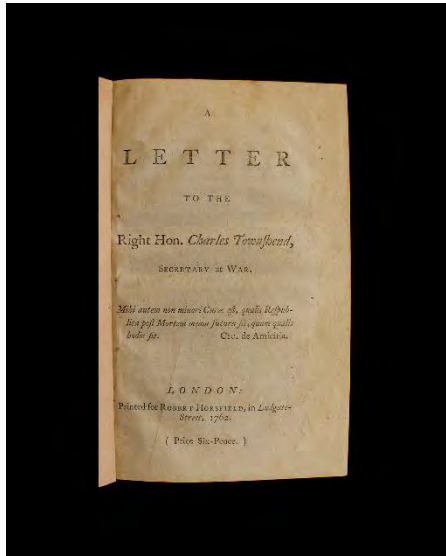
[by ?]

London, Printed for J. Almon, opposite Burlington-House, in Piccadilly, 1766

Pequot Library Special Collections

Presented by Virginia Marquand Monroe

Modeled after the British Stamp Act, which had been successful for Britain, the Crown’s argument was that the Stamp Act was necessary considering the substantial debt incurred from the Seven Years’ War. According to the unknown author in support of the tax, the pamphlet addresses the “lower class of people not capable of deep reasoning, yet they have a right to be informed in all great constitutional points, and that in such a manner as shall be adapted to their understandings” ending the condescending text, “...a great empire is in imminent danger when the executive power is executed by the people.”



A Letter to the Right Hon. Charles Townshend, Secretary at War

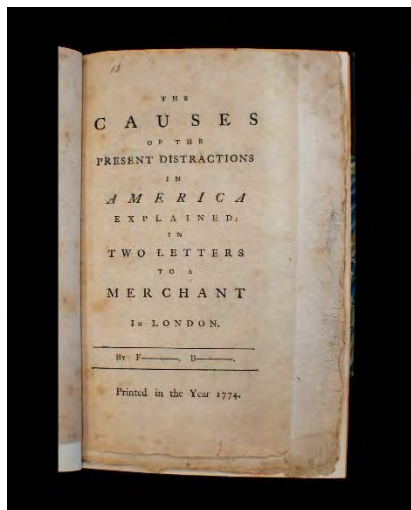
By Eboracensis

London, Printed for Robert Horsfield, in Ludgate-Street, 1762

Pequot Library Special Collections

Presented by Virginia Marquand Monroe

This political pamphlet predates the Stamp Act controversy, but it is an excellent example of British political discourse immediately before the seeds of an independence movement took root in the American colonies. Unlike many of the pamphlets on view in this exhibition, particularly those published in the late 1760s and early 1770s, it is framed as a somewhat insular debate among political insiders. Its author, a newspaper writer taking the pseudonym “Eboracensis”, in reference to the Latin name for York, writes in the form of a letter to Charles Townshend, future architect of the Stamp Act and eponymous Townshend Acts. It concerns British military administration, a hot button issue after six years of costly, international war. However, the debate is situated firmly in the world of London politics for an audience of parliamentarians, political commentators, and newspaper writers. Whereas writers like John Dickinson, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Paine used accessible metaphors and clear language to reach a wide audience, this pamphlet relies on dense references to parliamentary debates and is only truly legible in its very specific political context.



The Causes of the Present Distractions in America Explained: in Two letters to a Merchant in London

[By Benjamin Franklin]

[New York], [James Rivington], 1774

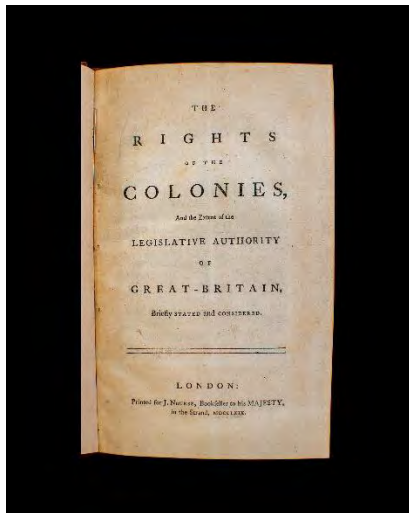
Pequot Library Special Collections

Presented by Virginia Marquand Monroe

Two things that you should notice right away when you look at this title page are the absence of a printer's name or place of publication, and the curious byline that reads "F____. B____." Being deliberately vague and evasive about who was responsible for the text and its publication was a way of protecting clandestine or controversial works. "F.B." (aka Benjamin Franklin) first wrote the text for the *London Chronicle* in 1768, though the newspaper censored parts of the text and weakened his language. Though this particular pamphlet was printed in 1774, the "Present Distractions" referred to are the Stamp Act, the Townshend Act, and the subsequent mobilization of prominent politicians both in the colonies and by members of the Whig party in Britain for their repeal. Franklin wrote this piece as part of his work liaising between politicians on both sides of the Atlantic. He hoped to repeat his earlier success in persuading Parliament to repeal the Stamp Act by once more presenting the opinions of furious colonists in a way that could inspire Parliament to compromise.

Reprinting Franklin's work in 1774 served what had become, by that time, an even more controversial political end. Not only does this edition restore Franklin's original text in full, with its rhetorical flourishes intact, but it connects the more controversial acts of resistance from the intervening years, like the Boston Tea Party, to colonists' previous victory of the Stamp Act. Given the heightened tensions in the years immediately preceding the outbreak of war, Franklin's words took on new meaning in a changed political atmosphere. We have only to look at how both

Franklin and the printer, James Rivington of New York, anonymized themselves on its title page to see how dramatically the landscape had changed over the course of only six years.



The Rights of the Colonies, and the Extent of the Legislative Authority of Great-Britain, Briefly Stated and Considered

[by Richard Phelps]

London, Printed for J. Nourse, Bookseller to his Majesty, in the Strand, MDCCLXIX [1769]

Pequot Library Special Collections

Presented by Virginia Marquand Monroe

This pamphlet by an English author appeared in the midst of mounting tensions and widespread boycotting British imports in the American colonies in the wake of the Townshend Acts. While it represents a more extreme version of loyalist views, it played to popular fears that the act of splitting from the British Empire would spell ruin for colonists, and about potentially losing the benefits of British citizenship. The pamphlet's core argument challenges the legality of colonial resistance to Parliament's laws. Law, it argues, was the ultimate authority, without which there would only be anarchy. In contrast to law-abiding British citizens, who enjoyed the liberty that the law protected, rabble-rousing colonists were ungrateful and self-destructive. If the law represented a necessary fixed standard between government and governed, it would be illegal for the colonies to leave the Empire. Even though recent, restrictive laws had hurt the colonies financially, colonists should still be thankful for the freedoms and benefits that the British Empire had given them. Without Britain, the author is quick to remind his readers, there would be no colonies to begin with, and surely they would struggle to continue to survive without Britain's continued support. Though its position and rhetoric is far more extreme, this pamphlet echoes the language of moderate voices that called for reconciliation and unity in one important respect: it concedes the point that the Crown was responsible for creating the current situation of political unrest.

[Boston Massacre]

Orations delivered at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston, to commemorate the evening of the fifth of March, 1770, when a number of citizens were killed by a party of British troops quartered among them in a time of peace.

Boston : W.T. Clap, 1807.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

Every year between 1771 and 1783, the city of Boston commemorated the Boston Massacre with a public event featuring an oration by a prominent Revolutionary activist. This collection of commemorative speeches was first published in 1785, and celebrates the effect that their words had on increasing support for separation from the British crown. The collection sold well and the revolutionary speeches it contained continued to be popular into the 19th century, leading to the production of a second edition printed in 1807, [on view here](#).

We might think about these public speeches as companion pieces to Paul Revere's famous engraving of the event. What Revere accomplished with his not completely accurate image, which was reproduced widely and distributed throughout the colonies, these printed speeches attempted to do with anti-governmental rhetoric. Potential allies of the revolution outside of Boston, who had not seen the incident take place nor heard the speeches when they were given, learned about them through calculated, propagandistic printing campaigns.

The trial of William Wemms, James Hartegan, William M'Cauley, Hugh White, Matthew Killroy, William Warren, John Carrol, and Hugh Montgomery, soldiers in His Majesty's 29th Regiment of Foot, for the murder of Crispus Attucks, Samuel Gray, Samuel Maverick, James Caldwell, and Patrick Carr, on Monday evening, the 5th of March, 1770, at the Superior Court of Judicature, Court of Assize and general Goal Delivery, held at Boston. The 27th day of November, 1770, by adjournment. Before the Hon. Benjamin Lynde, John Cushing, Peter Oliver and Edmund Trowbridge, esquires, justices of said court. Pub. by permission of the court. Taken in shorthand by John Hodgson.

By William Wemms

Boston : Printed by J. Fleeming, and sold at his printing-office, nearly opposite of the White-horse tavern in Newbury-street, 1770.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

This pamphlet recounts the trial of the British soldiers who fired into the crowd assembled outside the Boston Custom House, killing the five victims of the Boston Massacre. Framing this event as a grisly 'massacre' was a core part of propaganda efforts by printers and engravers like Samuel Adams and Paul Revere, but John Adams took a different approach. As the defense attorney for Captain Preston and the eight other British soldiers, Adams hoped to demonstrate the Enlightenment

political principles of figures like John Locke that underpinned the revolutionary ethos. Adams felt that giving the soldiers the fairest possible trial under the law would win support for his cause.

To demonstrate the soldiers' innocence, Adams drew attention to the days leading up to the incident. He argued that the soldiers were the victims of mob violence and had acted in self-defense. Not only had the people of Boston verbally harassed the soldiers, but they had thrown stones and other objects. Witnesses attested that it was not, in fact, Captain Preston, who yelled, "Fire!" but the crowd itself, taunting them. In the end, his defense was successful. The sequestered jury acquitted Captain Preston, based on "reasonable doubt." This was the first time that an American judge used this term, one we know well today. In the second trial, six of the eight soldiers under Preston's command were also acquitted, though two were found guilty of manslaughter. Luckily, their sentences were commuted to a branding of the thumb. Somewhat understandably, Adam's law practice suffered after this event.

A fair account of the late unhappy disturbance at Boston in New England : extracted from the depositions that have been made concerning it by persons of all parties : with an appendix, containing some affidavits and other evidences relating to this affair, not mentioned in the narrative of it that has been published at Boston.

London : Printed for B. White, 1770.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

At the same time that revolutionaries in Boston were rushing to document their perspective on the Boston Massacre, loyalists were doing the exact same thing. Lieutenant Colonel William Dalrymple of the British army ordered his men to collect their own depositions. The accounts collected in this pamphlet were meant to exonerate the actions of the British soldiers. Acting swiftly, Dalrymple was able to leave Boston Harbor with the text his men composed on March 15th, ahead of the rebels. In England, Dalrymple prepared a pamphlet edition with the English lawyer Frances Meneras. It included 31 testimonies and presented a very different of the incident.

In his introduction, Meneras encouraged readers to let go of their outrage over the event, and consider it calmly and reasonably. Like the publications put out by revolutionaries, the authors Dalrymple's pamphlet acknowledged the high tensions in Boston prior to the event, and lamented the subsequent loss of life. After this common point, however, the narratives greatly diverge. This pamphlet depicts the British soldiers as victims of mob violence and refutes the claim that Captain Preston yelled "Fire!" Neither Dalrymple's account nor the accounts of Bostonians gives an unbiased, unvarnished account. With such contrasting reports and statements, we may never know the exact truth of what transpired up to and during the Boston Massacre on March 5, 1770.

A short narrative of the horrid massacre in Boston : perpetrated in the evening of the fifth day of March, 1770 : by soldiers of the XXIXth regiment : which with the XIVth regiment were then quartered there : with some observations on the state of things prior to that catastrophe.

Printed by order of the town of Boston, and sold by Edes and Gill in Queenstreet : and T. & J. Fleet ; in Cornhill, 1770.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

The selectmen of Boston ordered the creation of this pamphlet within days of the Boston Massacre. Its aim was to present the Patriots' perspective of the event to garner support for their position. This pamphlet gives not only a narrative of the events of that day and immediately before it, but also includes an appendix with 96 dispositions from Bostonians. The text was approved at a Boston town meeting on March 19th, and was quickly sent off for circulation in Britain. Its contents painted the British soldiers as cruel, vengeful, and out for colonists' blood. Framing the event in these terms was meant to inspire an outraged, emotional response and to align British peoples' sympathies with Boston and not Dalrymple.

In an effort to appear neutral, Boston's leaders did not circulate the pamphlet in Boston. Because they knew the trial was imminent, they did not want to be seen as trying to influence the outcome. However, the attorney Robert Treat Paine ended up using it in his prosecution of Captain Preston and the other soldiers.

An oration delivered April 2d, 1771 : at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston : to commemorate the bloody tragedy of the fifth of March, 1770

By James Lovell (1737-1814)

Boston : Printed by Edes and Gill, 1771.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

James Lovell, a Massachusetts delegate to the Continental Congress, gave his commemorative speech about the Massacre in 1771. With the event fresh in the minds of Bostonians, Lovell took a mournful tone, and expressed a hope to avoid open warfare. He went on to discuss the history of democracies falling to tyrants, and warned listeners that Great Britain seemed to be going down that path. Though he condemned the quartering of troops during peacetime, an imposition from the British government that he blamed for causing the Massacre, there is clear lack of advocacy for an open, armed fight against the British Army. Lovell's somber, almost pacifist stance contrasts dramatically with the speeches given in following years, which laud the war and its heroes, urging the fight to go on.

[Grouped label for all three]

An oration delivered at Watertown, March 5, 1776 : to commemorate the bloody massacre at Boston : perpetrated March 5, 1770

Peter Thatcher (1752-1802)

Watertown [Mass.] : Printed and Sold by B. Edes, 1776.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

An oration, delivered March 5th, 1779, : at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston; to commemorate the bloody tragedy of the fifth of March, 1770

William Tudor (1750-1819)

Boston : Printed by Edes & Gill, in Court-street, M.DCC.LXXIX. [1779]

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

An oration delivered March 5th, 1781, at the request of the inhabitants of the town of Boston : to commemorate the bloody tragedy of the fifth of March, 1770

Thomas Dawes (1757-1825)

Boston : Printed by Thomas and John Fleet, MDCCLXXXI [1781]

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

The Boston Massacre commemorative speeches following Lovell's pacifistic 1771 oration continued to touch upon the same topics and themes, and were given by prominent figures in Revolution. Of the three on view here, Peter Thacher helped to draft the Massachusetts Constitution, William Tudor was the former Judge Advocate General of the Continental Army, and Thomas Dawes was a prominent Massachusetts politician. In their speeches, all of these men invoked past democracies that had fallen to tyrants, talked passionately about the effects of the Boston Massacre, and portended the downfall of British democracy.

All three of these speeches were given when the Revolutionary war was already underway, and their tone reflects the changed political circumstances of the colonies. Unlike Lovell, when these speakers talked about the Boston Massacre, they began to glorify it as the catalyst for their great fight for freedom and liberty. They also show consistent use of terms like "Americans", "my countrymen", "fellow citizens", and "our nation," reflecting the rising new identity of the young nation. They all laud the efforts of the Patriot militias and the war's heroes, and urge their fellow Americans to continue the fight.

Letter to John Hancock, 1736/7-1793

By John Adams (1735-1826)

York, PA, 19 Oct. 1777

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

John Adams and John Hancock, two very familiar figures of the American Revolution, were longtime friends and collaborators. Their friendship, and Hancock's turn to the revolutionary cause, began in 1768, when Hancock's ship was seized in the Boston harbor on suspicion of smuggling wine. John Adams, responding to popular outrage within Boston on Hancock's behalf, agreed to defend him in the smuggling case. Adams won the case by arguing that the crown taxed the wine without consent in the first place. When Adams later defended the soldiers involved in the Boston Massacre, Hancock helped to collect observations about Boston's climate in the days prior to the incident.

This letter between the two friends refers to a debate at the Continental Congress three days prior, where Adams had come into conflict with James Duane, a delegate from New York, over a proposal to establish a permanent Board of War. Adams and Hancock were allies in Congress and champions of the more radical pro-independence movement, often standing at odds with Duane who, along with John Dickinson, had initially opposed splitting from Britain. October of 1777 was a difficult time for the fledgling American government, and Adams and Hancock harbored fears that, if the Continental Army did not win a major victory soon, their move for independence would fail. Fortunately, they would receive triumphal news of the Battle of Saratoga only days after this letter was written.

[Bunker Hill & Lexington & Concord]

A diary of Peter Edes : the oldest printer in the United States, written during his confinement in Boston, by the British, one hundred and seven days, in the year 1775, immediately after the battle of Bunker Hill

Peter Edes (1756-1840)

Bangor : Samuel S. Smith, printer, 1837.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

As a young man, Peter Edes was familiar with the revolutionary political climate in Boston. His father, Benjamin Edes, was a journalist and printer responsible for producing the radical newspaper the *Boston Gazette*, as well as other revolutionary propaganda. In fact, you may have noticed that many of the editions on view in this exhibition were printed by "Edes" or "Edes & Gill," referring to Benjamin's collaborator John Gill.

As a central member of Boston's radical revolutionary instigators, Benjamin Edes was a primary planner and funder of the Boston Tea Party. Benjamin evaded the British by slipping out of Boston, but two days after the Battle of Bunker Hill, 18-year-old Peter was imprisoned for harboring a

weapon. He remained in prison for three and a half months and was one of only eleven of the thirty-nine prisoners to survive. His diary recounts the grisly conditions he experienced in prison, which he described as a “suburb of hell.”

After his imprisonment, Edes continued in the family business establishing his own printing shops in Newport, Maine, and Boston. In addition to printing some of the later editions on view in this exhibition, in 1792 he also printed Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*. Later in life he suffered financial difficulties and his friends encouraged him to print his prison diary as a way to raise money. He died three years after its publication.

An impartial and authentic narrative of the battle fought on the 17th of June, 1775, between His Britannic Majesty's troops and the American provincial army, on Bunker's Hill, near Charles Town, in New-England

By John Clarke of Grantham

London : Printed for the author: and sold by J. Millan, Whitehall; J. Bew, in Pater-Noster Row; and-- Sewel, in Corn-hill, 1775.--Price 1 s.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

British First Lieutenant John Clarke advanced on the colonists at the Battle of Bunker Hill and wrote his account shortly after. Although his Majesty’s Troops easily defeated the Provincial American army, Clarke notes the unusually high number of British officers killed or wounded in the brief battle, foreshadowing the unexpected strength of the American militia:

“...a man, whom the Americans called a Marksman, or Rifleman, was seen standing up on something near three feet higher than the rest of the troops... this man had no sooner discharged one musket, than another was handed to him, and continued firing in that manner for ten or twelve minutes; and in that small space of time, by their handing to him fresh loaded muskets, it is supposed that he could not kill or wound less than twenty officers; for it was at them particularly that he directed his aim....”

Americans killed or wounded at Bunker Hill: 450

British killed or wounded at Bunker Hill: 1054

The fate of blood-thirsty oppressors, and God's tender care of his distressed people : a sermon, preached at Lexington, April 19, 1776. To commemorate the murder, bloodshed, and commencement of hostilities, between Great Britain and America, in that town, by a brigade of troops of George III, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, on the nineteenth of April, 1775. To which is added a brief narrative of the principal transactions of that day

By Jonas Clark (1730-1805)
Boston : Printed by Powars & Willis, 1776.
Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

Jonas Clark, the pastor of the Church of Christ in Lexington, was related by marriage to John Hancock who, with John Adams, was a guest in Clark's home on the night of April 18, 1775. Warned by Paul Revere that British troops were advancing, Hancock and Adams made their escape to avoid capture. One year after the attack on Lexington, Clark delivered this sermon reminding his parishioners of the brutality of the British troops:

They approach with the morning' light; and more like *murderers* and *cut-throats*, than the troops of a *christian king*, without provocation, without warning, when no war was proclaimed, they draw the *sword of violence* upon the inhabitants of this town, and with a *cruelty* and *barbarity*, which would have made the most hardened savage blush, they *bled* INNOCENT BLOOD!

Divine judgments upon tyrants : and compassion to the oppressed : a sermon, preached at Lexington, April 20th, 1778 : in commemoration of the murderous war and rapine, inhumanly perpetrated, by two brigades of British troops, in that town and neighborhood, on the nineteenth of April, 1775

By Jacob Cushing (1730-1809)
Boston : Printed by Powars & Willis, 1778.
Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

A number of the popular propaganda pamphlets that supporters of American independence used to advance their cause began as speeches. Given in clear, accessible prose designed to elicit an emotional response, public talks translated into print well. Many of these printed "orations" were not just public speeches, but sermons by popular American clergymen. Sermons on political topics had the added advantage of being able to connect the Revolutionary cause to religious and moral imperatives. Here, Reverend Jacob Cushing references Deuteronomy 32 to talk about the ongoing Revolutionary War, vengeance, and the righteousness of the colonists' cause.

Cushing was a minister in the Congregationalist church of Waltham, Massachusetts, a town near Lexington. His sermon drew on the recent memory of the so-called battle three years earlier. Much in the same way that this relatively minor skirmish became the symbolic beginning of the Revolutionary War, Cushing's sermon used the battle of Lexington to valorize the soldiers who had fallen in battle since then and to create impassioned support for the ongoing war effort.

Though 15 of Cushing's sermons appeared in print and though he was friendly with a number of revolutionary figures like John Hancock and James Bowdoin, this was his only printed political sermon. Pequot's copy originally belonged to Anna Cushing, Jacob's wife, before it was bound together with other sermons and speeches about the Battle of Lexington.

Letter to Landon Carter, d.ca. 1778

Richard Henry Lee (1732-1794)

Sabine Hall, Richmond Co., VA, 18 Feb. 1769

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

Richard Henry Lee, who would later be president of the Continental Congress and act as Virginia's first Senator, was a core figure in fostering a revolutionary climate in the years leading up to the Revolutionary War. As a driving force behind the Intercolonial Committees of Correspondence, Lee was instrumental in creating and protecting information networks in the American colonies. Lee, who coordinated his efforts with John Dickinson in Pennsylvania and Samuel Adams in Massachusetts, worked to set up a postal service that would be entirely separate from the Royal Post, thus giving revolutionaries a secure line of communication. The Intercolonial Committees of Correspondence not only allowed potentially seditious information to travel, but also cemented unity among the disparate colonies. These new networks for news, both handwritten and printed, meant that when the Coercive or 'Intolerable' Acts closed Boston's port in 1774, it was possible to stir up support in cities across the eastern seaboard with a coordinated campaign of circular letters distributed by the Committees.

In this letter, Lee writes to a fellow member of the Virginia House of Burgesses and noted supporter of revolutionary causes, Landon Carter. Lee shares concerns he has about the political leanings of Charles Scott, a former hero of the French and Indian War who would later go on to be an officer in the Continental Army. Carter and Lee were longtime correspondents and collaborators, and this kind of information sharing about potential allies and enemies within Virginia politics was an instrumental part of coordinating their efforts to support colonial liberties.

[French newsletter on the American Revolution]

Manuscript produced c. 1777

On Loan from John Herzog

This is an example of one of the many handwritten newsletters that communicated developments in the American War for Independence across oceans, national borders, and languages. Circulating news through letters was an important and time-honored means of communication before the rise of the printed newspaper in the seventeenth century, and manuscript newsletters continued to thrive alongside printed periodicals. Important information about international wars, diplomacy, and other political events would circulate through chains of letter writers and receivers, and were copied many times in the course of transmitting the news. Readers could subscribe to receive these professionally-produced letters, and often copied and redistributed the information themselves. In fact, diplomatic correspondence and manuscript newsletters were also the primary source for most publishers of printed newspapers, and patrons of coffeehouses could find handwritten as well as printed periodicals available to complement their diet of news and opinion.

This French newsletter reports on events from the capture of General Charles Lee by British forces in December 1776, to the capture and hanging of a spy in Philadelphia working for General Howe in March 1777. It closes with a note that, though the events reported do not concern any major battles or developments, that this newsletter constitutes the finest possible report on the state of affairs in America. The French, as suppliers of the Continental Army and supporters of the Revolution, had a vested interest in keeping up with American military developments.

The examination of Doctor Benjamin Franklin, relative to the repeal of the American Stamp Act in MDCCLXVI.

London, J. Almon] 1767.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

On February 13, the final day of hearings before a vote to repeal the stamp act, Parliament called Benjamin Franklin to testify. Members of parliament asked him 174 questions, including questions about the potential effectiveness of military force. In response, Franklin effectively predicted the Revolutionary war, saying

“Suppose a military force sent into America; they will find nobody in arms; what are they then to do? They cannot force a man to take stamps who chooses to do without them.

They will not find a rebellion; they may indeed make one”

His performance in parliament solidified his reputation both at home and abroad, and contemporary journalists attributed the swift repeal of the stamp act to his persuasiveness as a witness.

Franklin’s testimony was widely publicized on both sides of the Atlantic, with editions springing up first in Boston before John Almon printed this London edition. However, Almon’s name does not appear on the title page of this pamphlet. Both this and the Boston pamphlets were published anonymously, suppressing the identifying details of who published it and where in order to escape punishment from and detection by authorities.

It should come as no surprise that Almon was the first to circulate Franklin’s testimony in England. The two men had been apprentices together in the printing workshop of John Watts in London. They remained in frequent communication after Franklin left for the American colonies, and even distributed each other’s work.

[Collected label for both]

A list of the minority in the House of Commons, who voted against the bill to repeal the American Stamp Act.

A Paris : Chez J.W. imprimeur, rue du Colombier, Fauxbourg St. Germain, à l'hotel de Saxe, 1766.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

Second protest, with a list of the voters against the bill to repeal the American Stamp Act, of last session.

Paris [i.e. London?]: Chez J.W. imprimeur, rue du Colombier, Fauxbourg St. Germain, à l'hotel de Saxe, 1766.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

These pamphlets appeared in quick succession, some while Parliament was still sitting, to deliver news about this debate as quickly as possible to a hungry public. Whigs, then the opposition party in British politics, used these texts as a way to stir up a public political response to the Tory majority's decisions. Both the texts of the debates and lists of how individual members voted gave crucial ammunition for coffee house debates and other popular forms of political mobilization.

For colonial issues, these debate texts were not only effective for Whig activists in Britain, but also for revolutionary-minded colonists. Benjamin Franklin read the two "Protest" pamphlets with great care, and he sent a copy of each to the Pennsylvania Committee of Correspondence on April 12, 1766. Through the Committee of Correspondence, several American newspapers were able to reprint the texts of the debates, and keep colonists engaged and informed in the ongoing political turmoil.

Though all bear a Paris imprint that claims they are the work of a "J. W. Imprimeur", in reality, John Almon printed all three in his London workshop. This false imprint is a bit cheeky, as "imprimeur" is French for "printer". Using such a clearly fake name was a way of signaling to readers in the know that this was a clandestine pamphlet printed close to home, while avoiding consequences from local authorities.

The Revolutionary Library

Though colonial printing operations grew in the eighteenth century, Benjamin Franklin lamented that:

"there was not a good bookseller's shop in any of the colonies to the southward of Boston...the printers were indeed stationers; they sold only paper, etc., almanacs, ballads, and a few common school-books. Those who lov'd reading were oblig'd to send for their books from England"

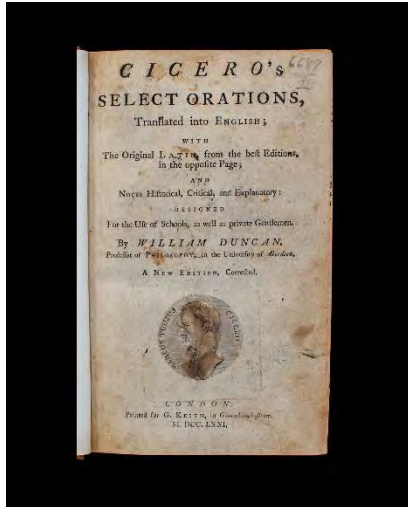
Most colonists bought and read books that had been imported from Europe, and many new arrivals to the American colonies brought their libraries with them. Despite the expense of importing books and the limitations of early colonial printing operations, literate people living in the American colonies had access to a wide variety of books.

Intellectually and politically engaged colonists did not necessarily need to own books themselves in order to be able to read them. The mid-eighteenth century saw the formation of private lending

libraries, called subscription libraries, where a group of members donated books and funds to build a shared collection. The Library Company of Philadelphia, founded in 1731 by Benjamin Franklin's Junto Club is an excellent example of such a library, and, after Franklin published a catalog of the library in 1740, it inspired similar projects in other cities. These collections supplemented existing university and ecclesiastical libraries, which had been in existence since the seventeenth century, broadening access to books outside of these institutions. Some book collectors also formed clubs to share their libraries, like Alexander Hamilton's Ancient and Honorable Tuesday Club of Annapolis. Some large private libraries also became accessible to the public in the years following the Revolution, like John Adams' library which would become part of the Boston Public Library, and Jefferson's library, which became the Library of Congress.

Based on their correspondence, published writing, and, in some cases, inventories of their libraries scholars have gotten a sense of what the architects of the Revolutionary War were reading and which thinkers left the greatest impression on their ideologies and approaches. As children of the Enlightenment, the founding fathers drew on a combination of classical writers, contemporary philosophers, and legal scholars, as well as British historians and polemicists. Like generations of formally educated men before them, the founding fathers read Thucydides, Plutarch, Tacitus, Sallust, and Cicero for classical examples of rhetoric, history, and political maneuvering. They married these canonical Latin authors with a varied diet of moral and political philosophy that ranged from the Ethics of Aristotle to much more recent works by Scottish Enlightenment thinkers like David Hume. The political and economic philosophy of the eighteenth century had a profound impact on the way they understood core concepts like liberty, justice, and citizenship. They had access to cutting-edge new works of political and economic theory from continental Europe, like Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*, and Rousseau's *Social Contract* and writings on natural law by Cesare Beccaria and Emmerich de Vattel. In addition to current theory, the key penman of the Revolution referenced British political writers and legal scholars. They drew on writers responding to the English Civil War, like John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon, and marshalled popular interpretations of British Law, like William Blackstone's *Commentaries*, to ground their arguments in familiar discourses.

In addition to high-minded works of philosophy and scholarship, many of the writers collected in this exhibition also read for pleasure. Daniel Dulaney was fond of Milton and of French literature, and Richard Lee collected poetry. John Adams was a notorious fan of "romances," and a passionate devotee of Shakespeare. This was not the case for all founding fathers, however. Adams' friend Thomas Jefferson, by contrast, hated novels, and called contemporary literature a "mass of trash" and "poison that infects the mind".



Cicero's Select Orations, Translated into English

By Marcus Tullius Cicero

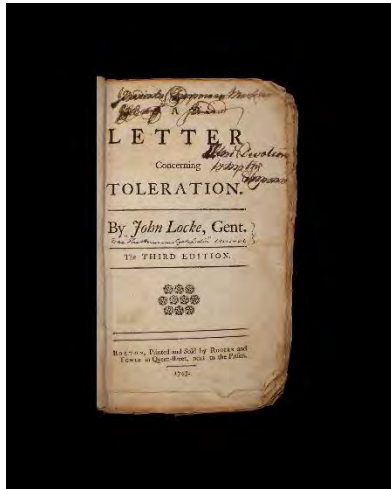
Trans. William Duncan

London: Printed for G. Keith, in Gracechurch-street, MDCCLXXI [1771]

Marcus Tullius Cicero was a Roman politician, lawyer, and philosopher famous for his skill as an orator. He was a central figure in Roman politics in the final years of the Republic, but his greatest legacies were his impact on rhetoric and on the Latin language. His essays, letters, and speeches have served as models for classical education for the past two thousand years, and writers and public figures imitated his prose style not only in Latin, but adapted his lessons to a variety of vernacular languages.

For the rhetoricians of the American Revolution, Cicero did not just serve as a model for effective public speaking, but also as an example of a skilled politician who navigated a challenging political climate. When Cicero served as Consul in 63 BC, he was a leader at a time of sedition and intrigue. One of his most famous orations, which several writers of pro-independence polemic drew upon, dates from this period. The speech was a response to a conspiracy within the senate, led by the patrician Catiline, who, burdened with debts and without a legitimate road to power, attempted to overthrow the government. Upon learning of the plot, Cicero gave a speech exposing the conspiracy that was so powerful that Catiline was driven from the city and his coup thwarted. The figure of Catiline, the greedy conspirator, became a metaphor for loyalists, whom pro-independence politicians accused of conspiring with British military forces to undermine liberty and allow their fellow colonists to be murdered or enslaved by a standing army run wild. John Adams, denouncing Tories in his home state of Massachusetts, encouraged his readers in 1775 to “Consider the Tumults in ancient Rome...and compare them with ours”.

Many of the founding fathers read Greek and Latin with ease, but the text of this particular edition comes from one of Cicero's most popular English-language translators of the eighteenth century: the Scottish philosopher and classicist William Duncan. Duncan's translation first appeared in 1756, and was widely available in the American colonies. This very copy is a fine example, having belonged to a succession of Farifielders in the late eighteenth century.



A Letter Concerning Toleration

By John Locke

Boston, Printed and Sold by Rogers and Fowle in Queen-street, next to the Prison, 1743

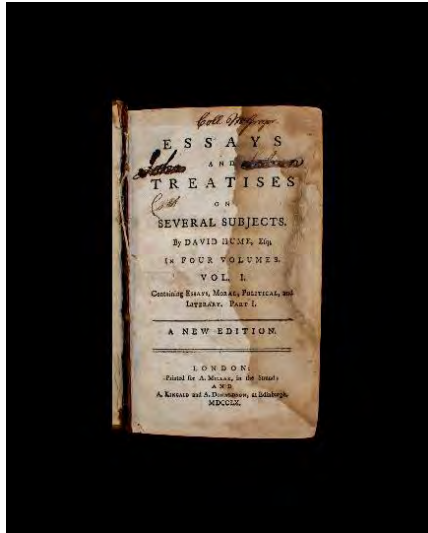
Pequot Library Special Collections

John Locke was one of the most revered and esteemed political philosophers in revolutionary circles. Thomas Jefferson once expressed that Locke, along with Francis Bacon and Isaac Newton, were the three greatest men who ever lived. Locke was a seventeenth-century British philosopher and one of the principal thinkers shaping Liberal political philosophy. His works were so popular and his name so well respected that many Revolutionary-era pamphlets would invoke his name offhandedly as a way of legitimizing whatever point the writer might be making.

Locke's legacy looms large in the writings of the founding fathers, and in the theoretical basis of the Constitution they would eventually write. This particular work sets out Locke's argument for the separation of Church and State. This relatively short text first appeared in print in 1689 in two separate editions: one in Latin printed in Amsterdam, and one in English printed in London. Locke was writing at a time when there was great tension between violent religious persecution and experimental religious toleration in Europe, and had gone through his own conversion from Puritanism to Anglicanism. The *Letter Concerning Toleration* argues that Church and State had entirely separate jurisdictions, the Church over souls and the State over laws. A cornerstone of this argument is that there can be no state religion, since every religion will claim to be the true faith and

only God can prove which is right. We can see echoes of Locke’s Letter Concerning Toleration in the First Amendment to the Constitution:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof



Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects

By David Hume

London: Printed for A. Millar, in the Strand; and A. Kincaid and A. Donaldson, at Edinburgh, MDCCLX [1760]

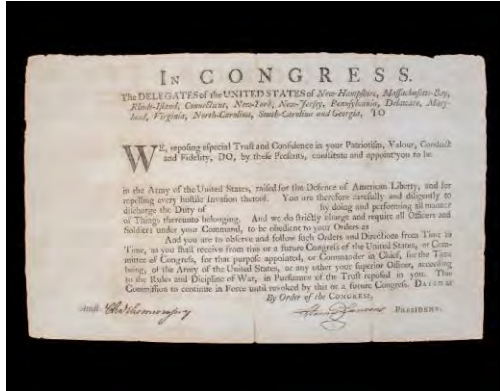
David Hume, or, as Alexander Hamilton once called him “The Judicious Hume”, was a major contemporary influence on politicians and intellectuals in the American colonies. He was one of the most famous voices of the Scottish Enlightenment, an outpouring of intellectual activity in eighteenth-century Scotland that also produced Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations*. Though Hume first established his reputation writing about theories of the mind and cognition, he became popular in America only after he turned to political and historical topics. Many of the ideas he laid out in his political essays were incredibly useful for the kinds of principled arguments that many polemicists of the American Revolution were trying to make. He wrote about the limits on governmental authority, the realities of oppressive governments, and that systems of government should change if the good of society demands it. Though Hume died in 1776, he had quickly become a supporter of American independence in the wake of the Stamp Act repeal, unofficially endorsing the use of his political philosophy for revolutionary ends.

This edition collects a number of previous publications under the broad heading *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects* in a set of four small, portable volumes. Similar to popular anthologies series like

Library of America editions, or, indeed, a “greatest hits” record of today, this collection of Hume’s most popular social, historical, and political works gave late eighteenth-century readers a crash course in Hume’s most discussed texts.

The War Itself

These three items are distinct from the rest of the works featured in this exhibition, which represent what people read and were influenced by when the Revolutionary War broke out. What these ephemeral documents show us is the official, administrative side of the war and its cost. Many of the propaganda pamphlets on view were written to encourage the inhabitants of the colonies to shoulder this cost. It was no small feat to convince people to forgo their misgivings about entering into a war against a better financed, much larger imperial superpower to pursue self-governance. Without an established system for generating revenue, or a trained army, the fledgling American government had its work cut out for it. Twenty first century estimates put the total cost of American participation in the Revolution at the equivalent of \$2.7 billion in 2019 dollars. We see some of the traces of that cost here, as well as some of the same kinds of persuasive language seen in pro-independence pamphlets.



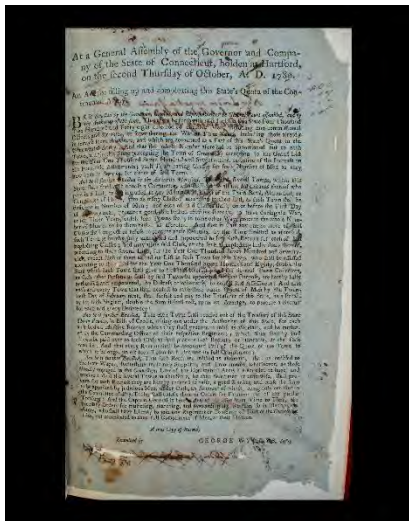
[appointment as officer in the continental army, “In Congress. The Delegates of the United States of New-Hampshire, Massachusetts-Bay, Rhode-Island, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North-Carolina, South-Carolina, and Georgia”, signed by Henry Laurens as president of continental congress and Charles Thomson as witness]

[Philadelphia, John Dunlap, 1777]

On Loan from John Herzog

This broadsheet - a document printed on only one side of a single sheet of paper, often used for posters and forms - offers a glimpse into the day-to-day military activities of the Continental Congress and the early days of the United States Army. The Army had copies of this form printed in 1777 so that they could be used as part of the official appointment of officers in the Continental Army. The three blank spaces provided were meant to be filled out with a new appointee’s name, rank, command, and duties. As you can see here, these spaces are still blank, indicating that this particular copy was never used. However, we can also see that the Army prepared the copies in advance by having them signed by Henry Laurens, President of the Continental Congress. Laurens was a delegate from South Carolina between 1777 and 1790, and served as president for one year. He was later captured by the British and held prisoner in the Tower of London for a year, until he was exchanged for General Cornwallis.

Note the passionate use of language to emphasize the Army’s heroic efforts: “...the Army of the United States, raised for the *Defence of American Liberty*...”, language that mirrors the provocative writing style found in Revolutionary-era propaganda.



“At a General Assembly of the Governor and Company of the State of Connecticut, holden at Hartford, on the second Thursday of October, A. D. 1780.”

Hartford, Printed by Hudson and Goodwin, [1780]

Presented by Virginia Marquand Monroe

Pequot Library Special Collections

The act displayed here calls for 4,248 “able-bodied effective Men” to complete the state of Connecticut’s quota of soldiers for the Continental Army. It goes on to require that each town enact a committee to place the enlisted men into appropriate divisions, including “Train-Band, Alarm-Lift, or Companies of Home...”, and sets the “Wages, Refreshments, family Supports, and Emoluments” that each enlisted man is entitled to. At the same General Assembly of the Governor and Company of the State of Connecticut in October, 1780, where this act was passed, it was also decided how many men each town within the state would provide to reach the 4,248 quota. This particular copy of the act was sent to New London, where town officials needed to find new recruits from its population to supplement those already in the service.

On the back of the official act, we see where the town government drew up figures to try and meet these new requirements. These hastily scrawled columns and jumbles of numbers correspond to the number of men the town needed to find, in addition to those already serving in the Army. New London was expected to provide 68 men, so the town government had to find 37 new recruits. Any town unable to deliver the number of men promised would be fined double the cost of procuring the missing recruits, adding to a climate of urgency and need for the kind of ongoing, enthusiastic support that printed propaganda attempted to provide.

Intellectual Culture

Common Sense; Addressed to the Inhabitants of America, on the following interesting Subjects. I. Of the Origin and Design of Government in general, with concise Remarks on the English Constitution. II. Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession. III. Thoughts on the present State of American Affairs. IV. Of the present Ability of America; with some miscellaneous Reflections

By Thomas Paine

Norwich, Conn., Re-printed and Sold by Judah P. Spooner, and by T. Green, in New-London, [1776]

Pequot Library Special Collections

Presented by Virginia Marquand Monroe

Like many inhabitants of the British colonies in North America, Thomas Paine was originally born in England, but sought his professional fortunes across the Atlantic. He first came to Philadelphia in 1774 at the invitation of Benjamin Franklin, who helped him find work as editor of *The Pennsylvania Magazine*. Franklin encouraged Paine to write *Common Sense*, the work that has made him one of the single most famous political writers in history.

Paine, who originally published anonymously, used *Common Sense* to give an open challenge to the authority of the British government and the monarchy over the colonies. True to his radical ideas around democratic participation and representation, he wrote in plain language in order to appeal to ordinary people. It struck an immediate chord with contemporary readers, garnering widespread praise from advocates of independence, as well as formal responses from loyalists. General George Washington even reportedly read it to his troops on the battlefield to boost morale and strengthen their resolve.

This 1776 edition of Thomas Paine's incendiary pamphlet *Common Sense* is one of the many that spread like wildfire across in the American colonies after its initial publication in Philadelphia. Although this copy is not the first edition ever printed, it acts as an excellent example of how editions of the pamphlet actually reached a wide audience. Here, a pair of Connecticut printers banded together to finance their own edition of *Common Sense*, which they were able to re-print so quickly because the text is relatively short. When we think about how this exact same phenomenon played out in other small presses, with each new edition from a new printer adding 1,000 or more copies to the market, we catch a glimpse of the power of print!

Plain Truth: or, a Letter to the Author of Dispassionate Thoughts on the American War

By James Chalmers

London, Printed for G. Wilkie, in St. Paul's Church-Yard; and R. Faulder, in Bond-Street,

MDCCLXXX [1780]

Pequot Library Special Collections

Presented by Virginia Marquand Monroe

Plain Truth was written to be a rebuttal to Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, and quickly became the most popular loyalist counter to Paine's pro-independence tract. It first appeared in print in 1776 under the pen name "Candidus", but this later edition gives the author's true identity: James Chalmers, a loyalist officer from Maryland. Both *Common Sense* and *Plain Truth* were first printed by Robert Bell in Philadelphia, but it went into several editions in Britain. This particular edition, printed in London in 1780, would have appealed to a British reading public following political developments in the colonies and includes a map of the ongoing conflict across the Atlantic.

In this short pamphlet, which is longer than Paine's, Chalmers lambastes *Common Sense* and launches a spirited defense of the British legal and political systems. He asserts that war with Great Britain would be an impossible feat for the colonies - they were outgunned and outmanned - and that independence would be disastrous, leaving America estranged from its most valuable trading partner and exposed to invasion by France or Spain. While Paine wrote his pamphlet in plain language and relied on simple, accessible metaphors, like comparing George III to a bad father, Chalmers used more traditional literary and historical references, appealing to an audience with high levels of formal education. In his rebuttal he denounces Paine, as well as prominent members of the Whig party, writing:

"I will humbly attempt to describe good Kings by the following unerring rule. The best Princes are constantly calumniated by the envenomed tongues and pens of the most worthless of their subjects. For this melancholy truth, do I appeal to the testimony of impartial historians, and long experience. The many unmerited insults offered to our gracious Sovereign; by the unprincipled [John] Wilkes, and others down to this late Author; will forever disgrace humanity."

The freeholder's political catechism: very necessary to be studied by every freeman in America.

By Henry St. John, Viscount of Bolingbroke (1678-1751)

London : Printed ; New-London : Re-printed and sold by T. Green, 1769

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

Henry St John, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke (1678 – 1751) was an English statesman and political philosopher whose published works were widely available in the American colonies. His political philosophy was especially popular in colonial intellectual circles, and he influenced the

thinking of figures like John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison. Bolingbroke was a prominent member of England's "country party," a group of Tories who opposed what they perceived as self-interest and corruption among parliamentary leaders. The party's ideology was significant to the development of the political philosophy of Republicanism in the America: the belief that citizens elect their leaders and are entitled to certain inalienable rights that cannot be infringed upon by any form of government.

Bolingbroke's political thought not only inspired the founding fathers' idea of republicanism, but also their concept of liberty. In this pamphlet, originally published in 1733, Bolingbroke outlines a system of government founded on the principle of liberty, famously stating, "In laws made by the Consent of the People, and the due Execution of those Laws; I am free not from the law, but by the law".

The Rambler

By Samuel Johnson

London, Printed for W. Locke, no. 12, Red Lion Street, Holborn; and C. Lowndes, no 66, Drury Lane, 1791

Pequot Library Special Collections

Presented by Mr. Cyrus Sherwood Bradley

The Rambler, a British essay periodical edited and primarily written by acclaimed English wordsmith Samuel Johnson (1789-1784), is an excellent example of the kind of standard reading available to patrons of eighteenth-century coffeehouses. A total of 208 issues were published in London from 1750-1752, on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Essay periodicals were similar to 21st century blogs - each issue was written by a single person, on whatever topic they liked. Here, the essays are compiled in one of two volumes, published in London in 1791.

The Rambler was not commercially successful upon first publication. Its writing was more serious than that of other essay periodicals, which tended to deal more in gossip and satire. More instructive in nature, *The Rambler* discussed subjects including morality, literature, society, politics, and religion.

These essays comprise the finest writing of one of the most renowned eighteenth-century English prose stylists, and were re-printed many times. In fact, Samuel Johnson is quoted more often than any other English writer except Shakespeare. Notably, in 1755 Johnson also published the 'Dictionary of the English Language' - one of the most famous dictionaries in history.

Observations on the Reconciliation of Great-Britain, and the Colonies

By Jacob Green

Philadelphia, Printed by Robert Bell, in Third-Street, MDCCLXXVI [1776]

Pequot Library Special Collections

Presented by Virginia Marquand Monroe

Jacob Green, (1722-1796) was a Harvard-educated Presbyterian minister who served in the Provincial Congress and was instrumental in drafting New Jersey's first constitution. Rev. Green was a key advisor to General George Washington and was sought for capture by the British for his participation in the Revolution.

Green was a theologian first and foremost, and before 1776 he held the belief that clergy should not get involved in political debates. However, his commitment to independence drove him to reverse his stance, and enter the political fray with this very pamphlet. To preserve his anonymity and the appearance of abstaining from politics, Green used the pseudonym “A Friend of American Liberty”

The pamphlet is a series of counter-arguments to loyalist rhetoric in favor of mending the rift with Britain, like Thomas Chandler’s *Friendly Address to All Reasonable Americans* on view in the Perkin Gallery. From this excerpt, we see Green’s celebrated rhetorical talents, as well as the way he applied his own ethical stances to his political writing:

“If we are independent, this land of liberty will be glorious on many accounts: Population will abundantly increase, agriculture will be promoted, trade will flourish, religion unrestrained by human laws*, will have free course to run and prevail, and America be an asylum for all noble spirits and sons of liberty from all parts of the world”

*I wish that I could add, that the guilt of slavery would be banished from us, and I cannot help but hope that in time it may. What a dreadful absurdity! What a shocking consideration, that a people who are so strenuously contending for liberty, should at the same time encourage and promote slavery!”

Interestingly, this work was issued by the same Philadelphia printer that originally published both *Common Sense* and *Plain Truth*, Robert Bell, demonstrating how printers would often invest in a text not so much because they believed in its contents, but because printing it would turn a profit. Note the advertisement for *Plain Truth* shown here.

An Essay on the Constitutional Power of Great-Britain Over the colonies in America with the Resolves of the Committee for the Province of Pennsylvania, and their Instructions to their Representatives in Assembly

By John Dickinson

Philadelphia, Printed and Sold by William and Thomas Bradford, at the London Coffee-House, MDCCLXXIV [1774]

Pequot Library Special Collections

John Dickinson, who represented Pennsylvania in the Continental Congress and would play a key role in drafting the Articles of Confederation, was a lawyer, statesman, and celebrated essayist. Unlike his more radical contemporaries, Dickinson did not initially advocate for separation from Great Britain or violent protest of any kind. Rather, he believed that appeals should first be made to the King to remind him of his obligation to the American colonies, so that they may live in harmony. For this reason, he abstained from voting on and signing the Declaration of Independence. It was only after appeals to King George failed and military troops were sent to New York that Dickinson acknowledged that the social contract had been dissolved. At that point, he became one of the first to defend the new nation.

This pamphlet comes out of a meeting of delegates from every county in Pennsylvania, who met in Philadelphia in July of 1774. Their aim was to lay out their specific grievances with Britain and present what they believed to be their rights as citizens. Dickinson was one of the delegates selected to prepare the list of grievances in an essay form that could be read and circulated. True to Dickinson's own political philosophy at the time, the goal in publishing this essay was to call for colonial unity to resist the recent actions of the British government while negotiating a compromise that would allow them to live in peace as British citizens. Dickinson carefully tempered his fellow delegates' language in an effort to maintain the possibility of reconciliation. Here, he acknowledges both the sovereign power of Great Britain and the limits of that power: that it should not infringe upon the natural rights and civil liberties of its citizens.

“We acknowledge the prerogatives of the sovereign, among which are included the great powers of making peace and war, treaties, leagues, and alliances *binding* us...”The prerogatives are *limited*” * as a learned judge observes - “by bounds so certain and notorious, that it is impossible to exceed them, without the consent of the people on the one hand, or without, on the other, a violation of that *original contract*, which in all states impliedly, and in ours most expressly, subsists between the prince and subject.”

Jerusalem Coffee-house exchange rates

London, 1727

On Loan from John Herzog

The Jerusalem Coffee House in Cowper's Hill, Cornhill, was one of the oldest coffee-houses in London and was frequented by merchants and captains connected with the China coast, India, and later Australia. It was destroyed by the second London fire of 1748, but remained the favorite meeting place of ship-owners and brokers. Out of these meetings developed the London Shipping Exchange. While the foundation of the London Stock Exchange in 1773 reduced the financial role of London coffee-houses, the Jerusalem Coffee House continued as a shipping exchange, finally closing in 1892.

This document gives a window into the everyday world of the coffeehouse, where political debates thrived and pamphlet literature circulated. It is a printed list of exchange rates for bonds of the South Sea and East India Companies as they changed over the course of one day, Wednesday, May 3rd, 1727. The rates of exchange would be filled in by hand for the morning, afternoon and night, and two trade commodities are added by hand on the foot of the leaf with their respective prices. Places like the Jerusalem Coffee House were spaces to transact business as much as they were spaces to catch up on current events and discuss politics, making them an important anchor in the lives of voting citizens, for whom owning property was a prerequisite.

A letter to a friend : giving a concise, but just, representation of the hardships and sufferings the town of Boston is exposed to, and must undergo in consequence of the late act of the British-Parliament : which, by shutting up it's port, has put a fatal bar in the way of that commercial business on which it depended for its support : shewing at the same time, wherein this edict, however unintended, is powerfully adapted to promote the interest of all the American colonies, and even of Boston itself in the end. by T.W., a Bostonian

Charles Chauncy (1705-1787)

Boston, N.E. : Printed and sold at Greenleaf's printing-office, 1774.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

Though the stated author of this pamphlet is given as "T.W., a Bostonian", its true author was the Reverend Charles Chauncy. Chauncy was an influential and well-connected figure allied with the Revolutionary cause. He was born into a prosperous, well-established Boston family, and quickly rose to prominence in Boston's religious community. As minister of the First Church of Boston, Chauncy became popular for his simple and direct style, which made his sermons very easy to circulate in print to a wider reading public.

Here, Chancy turns his skill as an effective communicator to writing a propaganda pamphlet in support of the revolutionary agenda. This pamphlet gives his account of the Boston Port Act,

which attempted to punish the citizens of Boston for the Boston Tea Party by closing the port to anything but food and firewood until damages had been repaid to the British East India Company. The Port Act was one of what revolutionaries and their sympathizers would call the Intolerable Acts, which included an act revoking Massachusetts' charter, relocated trials of royal officials to Great Britain, and expanded the power of the military to quarter troops in private buildings. In a telling illustration of different attitudes and media climates on either side of the Atlantic, in Britain these were known as the Coercive Acts.

Chauncy wrote this account of the consequences of the port acts on the lives of Bostonians to try and drum up popular sympathy and support for rebellious Bostonians, changing the popular narrative from a story about troublemakers being punished to one about an aggrieved, virtuous people being oppressed by a tyrannical government.

No standing army in the British colonies : or an address to the inhabitants of the colony of New-York, against unlawful standing armies.

By "An Antidespot"

New-York : Printed by John Holt, at his printing-office, in Water-street, 1775.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

Like Chauncy's "Letter to a Friend," this pamphlet was an anonymous attack on the British government's actions in the wake of the Boston Tea Party, as well as an impassioned defense of new actions that colonial representatives took in response. It begins by quoting from *The Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress*, passed in October of 1774. Like the declarations adopted by the Stamp Act Congress, also called the Continental Congress of 1765, this set of resolutions represents the united response of the colonies to the specific injustices visited upon them by recent acts of the British government. Whereas the Stamp Act Congress formed in response to the stamp act, the First Continental Congress formed in response to the Intolerable Acts.

The anonymous orator, who takes the provocative pseudonym "An Antidespot", rails against what would prove to be one of the single most contentious parts of the Intolerable Acts: The Quartering Act. This particular iteration of the act built upon an earlier resolution from 1765, but extended the powers of the Governor to enforce the sheltering of British troops on privately owned land. The very phrase "standing army" referred back to an earlier period in British history between the 1650s and 1680s, when Oliver Cromwell overthrew the government and was eventually replaced by William of Orange's "Glorious Revolution." By invoking the language that earlier authors had used to describe a military force overthrowing the rule of law, American propagandists connected the threat of increased British military presence with recent histories of violence and control. The 'Antidespot' also used a similar argument seen in late seventeenth-century writings. The most famous of these, John Trenchard's 1697 *An Argument Shewing that a Standing Army is Inconsistent with a Free Government*, suggests that a continuous military presence could lead to the literal enslavement of the English people. This particular pamphlet makes the same argument about the British army in colonial America:

“When they are ordered to butcher us, and destroy our habitations, then, they will not listen to us; self-preservation, and even revenge, must impel them to imbrue their hands in our blood; and our destruction, or slavery, attended with the curses of posterity, may be the fatal consequences”

Thoughts on the Letter of Edmund Burke, esq; to the sheriffs of Bristol, on the affairs of America.

Willoughby Bertie, Earl of Abingdon (1740-1799)

Oxford, printed ; Lancaster [Pa.] : Reprinted and sold by J. Dunlap, 1778.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

The “Letter of Edmund Burke” referred to in this pamphlet is Burke’s famous “Letter to...the Sheriffs of Bristol, on the Affairs of America” (1777). In it, he claimed that it was wrong for the British to use force against the colonists, and that universal disobedience and unrest should not be treated as criminal because it implies misgovernance. According to Burke, the best course of action was for Parliament to listen to the complaints of the colonists, thereby restoring their faith in the monarchy. Burke’s letter captured the position of his fellow members of the Whig party, who agreed that the colonial resistance was justifiable and that the tax laws they objected to were illegal. In short, Burke supported the rights of the colonies, but not the revolution itself.

In his letter of response, the Earl of Abingdon asserts that Burke did not go far enough in his arguments. He specifically felt that Burke should have criticized Parliament more vehemently on discussions about colonial rights and the suspension of habeas corpus in the Colonies. This publication proved to be extremely popular and was subsequently reprinted multiple times, in both the colonies and England.

A friendly address to all reasonable Americans, on the subject of our political confusions : in which the necessary consequences of violently opposing the king's troops, and of a general non-importation are fairly stated

By Thomas Bradbury Chandler (1726-1790)

America: [New York] : Printed [by James Rivington] for the purchasers, 1774.

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

Thomas Bradbury Chandler was a priest in New Jersey for the Church of England in the Colonies, also called the Episcopal Church. It was his lifelong efforts that led to the creation of a separate American Episcopal Church in 1789. During the Revolution, Episcopalians were one of the groups that continued to support the British Crown during the war. Northern Episcopalians, in particular, remained loyal due to the funding they received from the English Missionary Society. In contrast, Southern Episcopal churches were funded by their congregations. It was partially due to their reliance on British funding that the Northern Episcopalians felt it was their duty to support the

crown. As a leader within the Church, Chandler published multiple pamphlets similar to “a friendly address” urging his congregants to continue to support the British crown. Supporters of the revolution reacted strongly to his pamphlets, creating a serious backlash against him. In response to escalating threats made by the Sons of Liberty, Chandler fled to England for the duration of the war.

Letter to Jared Ingersoll, 1722-1781

William Smith Jr (1728-1793)

New Haven, CT, 29 Aug. 1767

Monroe, Wakeman, Holman Collection

William Smith, Jr., a trained lawyer, was a loyalist from New York, a colony whose population was equally divided between loyalists and rebels at the time of the Revolution. This was a higher concentration than in other states; overall, historians currently estimate that about one fifth of the white population in the Colonies were against the Revolution. These people were also known as Tories, royalists, and Whigs and were a large and varied group.

In this letter to a fellow loyalist, Smith expresses his concern that the current tension between the Colonies and Britain will escalate further, into what he calls an “unfortunate situation.” Smith, like many, attempted to stay neutral despite a polarizing climate. As tensions came to a head, people like Smith were forced to choose, and many ultimately sided with the British. These loyalists believed that the colonists’ wish for independence was “unnatural” and illegal. Many preferred an approach based on peaceful protest and were put off by the escalating violence. In fact, very few colonists who sympathized with the British government were vocal in their political opinions or fought in battle for either side. In 1783, Smith evacuated New York with the British, first to London, and then, like many others, he settled in Canada. Smith’s story is similar to those of many other like him; about 100,000 loyalists left the colonies at this time.