

American Revolution

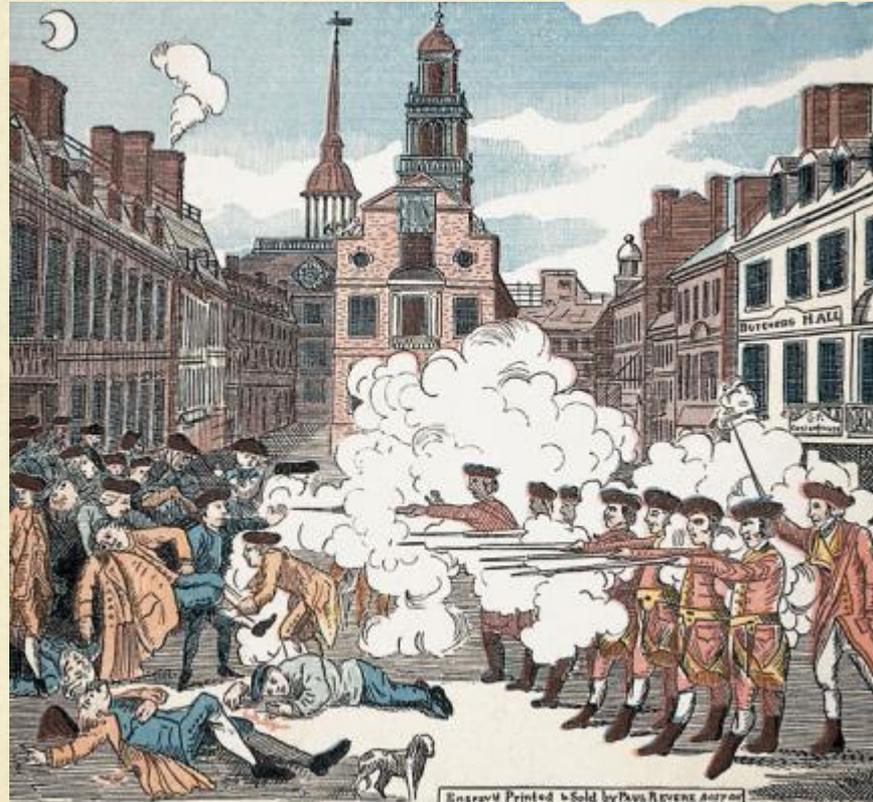
Background—Conflicting Ideas

- Britain in debt due to 7 Years War with France—turned to colonies to help pay it off
- King George believed Parliament represented and controlled all parts of the British Empire
- Colonists believed they had the right to control their own affairs

Taxes and Tensions

- Stamp Act—1765
 - First direct tax on the colonies, instead of trade regulation
 - Repealed—1766
- Townshend Acts—1767
 - Custom duties, instead of direct taxes, on items such as glass, paint & tea
 - Boycotts of British goods in the colonies (including female participation)
- Boston Massacre—March 1770
 - Snowball fight into gunfire
 - 5 colonists killed, including Crispus Attucks
- Boston Tea Party—1773
 - Coercive/Intolerable Acts
 - Closed port of Boston
 - Gave governor of Massachusetts right to appoint people to the council

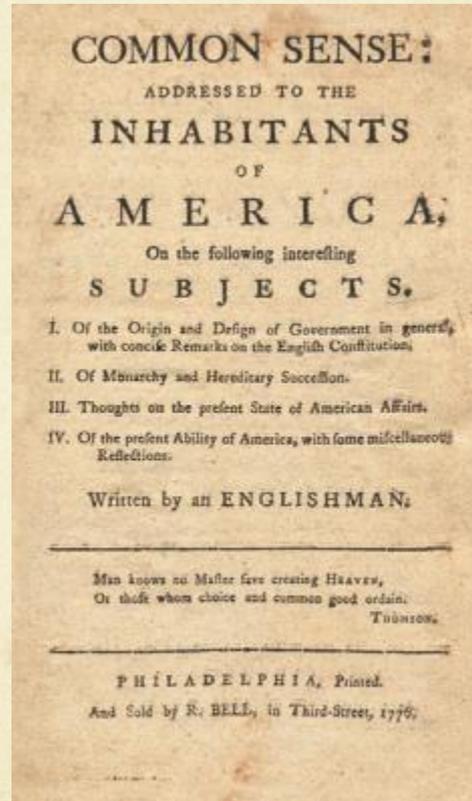
Paul Revere's Depiction of the Boston Massacre



Move toward Independence

- 1st Continental Congress—September-October 1774
- Battle of Lexington-Concord—April 1775
- 2nd Continental Congress—May 1775
 - Raised army, selected George Washington as commander, printed money
- Thomas Paine's Common Sense—January 1776
 - Written to be understood by “common man.”
 - Sold up to 150,000 copies
- Declaration of Independence—Approved July 4, 1776

Common Sense—Thomas Paine



A Few Details About the War

- African Americans fought for both sides
 - Some slaves managed to bargain for their freedom by agreeing to serve in place of their owners
 - Last time the American army was integrated until the Korean War in the 1950s
- French Assistance Critical to American Victory
 - Treaty of Amity and Commerce—1778—France recognizes the US as an independent country
- Treaty of Paris—1783—Ends War

Cultural Consequences of the Revolution

- Idea that “all men are created equal” unleashed forces that the founding fathers did not anticipate—but not immediately equality
- Still property requirements to vote even for white men
- Separation of Church and State
- Debates over slavery
 - Gradual of slavery in the North, evolution of free black communities

Women after the Revolution

- Coverture remains the law, though women participate in political discussions.
- Republican Motherhood
 - Women need to be educated to raise good citizens of the republic (the new country).
- Companionate marriage
 - While legally subservient to husband, middle class marriages often based on affection rather than male authority