

LEQ

1. Analyze the influence of TWO of the following on the development of a democratic society in the English colonies during the period from 1607 to 1745.
 - Bacon's Rebellion
 - Enlightenment
 - Great Awakening
 - Zenger Case

#4 Outline

Task: Illustrate how a democratic took shape

Democratic Society = self-government, elected assemblies, rule of the people, majority rule, free elections

1607 - 1745

THESIS: During the colonial period, colonists exhibited a will to express ideas, fight for representation, separation of church and state, freedom of press, and power by the people in contrast to the absolute power of a monarchy. Bacon's Rebellion expressed a desire for the common frontiersman to have great freedom and access to land, while questioning the elitism of the ruling class. Enlightenment began in Europe and planted ideas related to democracy, such as popular sovereignty, natural rights, and separation of power. The Great Awakening was an evangelical movement connected colonies through this shared experience while also calling into question the power of ministers over the people and authority in general. The Zenger case questioned the rights of people to publish criticism of government officials and sparked the beginning of ideas related to freedom of press. Democracy represents a government that embraces power by the people over tyranny, fair representation by elected legislatures, individual freedom, and a government that seeks to serve all people, not just the elite.

Bacon's Rebellion 1676 -

The House of Burgesses, elected assembly of Virginia and Governor William Berkeley were attacked by impoverished backcountry farmers. Nathaniel Bacon and his followers fought for better representation from the ruling class who failed to provide equal access to land, voting, and protection from American Indians.

- Chesapeake area > Virginia colony > Jamestown
- Nathaniel Bacon, farmer - organized a rebellion by impoverished backcountry farmers who were often indentured servants who were freed
- Issues:
 - unfair taxes
 - lack of access to good land to grow tobacco,
 - constant American Indian attacks (had to settle further west),
 - lack representation (1670 law limited vote to landowners)
- Governor Berkeley - wealthy tobacco planter, elite group has access to best land, restricting voting to wealthy elite (landowners), conducted trade with Amer. Ind.
- Actions - farmers raided and massacred American Indian villages in frontier (handle Amer. Ind. conflict) , burnt Jamestown and Bacon takes over (rebel authority), English warships intervene, Bacon dies of dysentery
- Led to use of African slavery over indentured servants

Enlightenment (1700's / 18th Century) was an intellectual movement that began in Europe in the 18 century and was read by educated Americans. Reason and science was a better solution to social discord, while the ways of the old hierarchy in a monarchy were questioned. Ideas related to self-government, natural rights, separation of powers, and popular sovereignty came to enter the political sphere and later resonate into the design of a Republican Constitution.

- began in Europe, expressed eventually in the development of a Republican form of government
- expressed reason and science over religion
- John Locke, Two Treatises of Government, government should reflect natural rights: Life, Liberty and Property / government that represents the people and protects rights people have just for being human
- Montesquieu - separation of powers among three branches
- Rousseau - popular sovereignty (government ruled by the people)
- Question the divinity of the King or Monarchy and place more value on the power of people to form government

Great Awakening (1730's - 1740's) was an evangelical movement that affected a wide range of British colonies in North America. It caused Protestants or Anglicans to seek God outside of the traditional bounds of church, threatening the authority and power of the minister. Divisions within the church led to Baptist and Methodist denominations and arguments for separation of church and state. In a way, ideas of power or representation of the common people and questioning authority transferred to the political realm influencing ideas later found in the American Revolution and the power of the king.

- religious revival, Protestantism, occurred outside bounds of traditional church, threatened position of traditional ministers, separation of church and state
- Virginia supported religious freedom and ending government funding via taxes to churches by 1780's
<http://www.vahistorical.org/collections-and-resources/virginia-history-explorer/thomas-jefferson?legacy=true>
- shared experience of evangelicalism connected common people and led many to question the authority of ministers
- Authority and representation questioned by common people (landless) transfer this thought to the power of the King and Parliament 3 decades later
- Jonathan Edwards (New England, Massachusetts) - Reverend, Congregationalist (Puritan), "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God", Only those who devoted to a life of moral, religious, and repent sins could be saved by the grace of God, all others would go to hell, humans born sinful,
- George Whitefield - fiery sermons reached large crowds, some as large as 10,000, collect outside traditional churches (barns, fields), only true followers of Christ could be saved and avoid being damned to hell, believed regular people could understand the bible without help of ministers
- Old Lights (traditional churches, Anglican, Congregationalists), New Lights (Methodist, Baptist)

Zenger Case (1735) began as a case against a publisher who was convicted of breaking English law by printing articles that criticized the New York Governor and smeared his reputation. Convicted of libel, the final conclusion of the jury was that people have the right to express facts, even if they are critical of government. This led to the birth of free press and ultimately the 1st Amendment of the Constitution.

- Newspapers were a mode of communication
- Libel - writing/publishing a false statement about someone that hurts his/her reputation
Colonial Libel - English law made it illegal to publish criticism of government officials (true or false)
- John Peter Zenger - New York Editor, arrested because he published a articles that argued that the NY Royal Governor was corrupt, rigged elections, and was dumb (kept authors anonymous)
- Question - Was Zenger guilty of printing articles, then guilty of libel
- Argument - Liberty is at stake and telling the truth and exposing corruption is important to the people
- Jury - acquitted him (establish the beginning of the development of freedom of press, 1st amendment)
- Freedom of Press - not established to the extent that we accept it today, was a spark of an idea via the conclusion of this case