

Factors behind Stamp Act

- French and Indian War left Britain £140,000,000 in debt (Savelle and Middlekauff 1964, 503).
- Over half of government's yearly budget was used to pay interest on debt (Divine et al. 2002, 148)
- Britain didn't expect colonies to pay debt but help pay for administrative costs. (Savelle and Middlekauff, 1964, 503)
- The Prime Minister of Great Britain, George Grenville, predicted the Stamp Act would raise £60,000 per year, or about one fifth of the total administrative costs to defend colonies and new territories acquired in Treaty of Paris. (Divine et al. 2002, 150-151).

Arguments against Stamp Act

Colonial Arguments against Stamp Act:

- Only local assemblies should tax colonists– “No taxation without representation.”
- Shortages of hard currency (specie) prevented colonists from being able to afford stamps. The purchase of stamps would further reduced the supply of hard currency (specie), affecting trade.

Arguments for the Stamp Act

British Response to Colonial Arguments.

- The taxes are for the colonists benefit.
- Parliament had the right to tax colonies. The elected members of Parliament represent everyone in Britain and across the empire, not just those who elected them. This principal is called “virtual representation”
 - (“Soame Jenyns, The Objections to the Taxation of our American Colonies by the Legislature of Great Britain, briefly consider’d.”)

Colonists protested the Stamp Act in many ways.

Some were violent & others were nonviolent.

Stamp Act Congress

- Massachusetts called for a meeting of the colonies to discuss Stamp Act in New York in October 1765.
- Colonies present included Massachusetts Pennsylvania New York, Rhode Island Delaware New Jersey, Connecticut Maryland, and South Carolina.
- Colonies absent included Virginia, New Hampshire, North Carolina, and Georgia.
 - (Commons House Journal, 1765, 12)

Stamp Act Congress

The Stamp Act Congress endorsed a

1) Joint Resolution

This document petitioned King George III and Parliament to repeal the tax. It also encouraged merchants to boycott British goods.

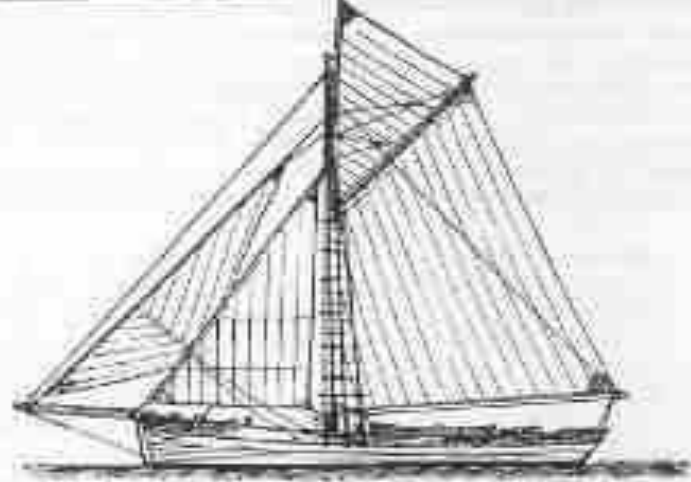
- A **boycott** is a form of protest where individuals or groups refuse to use a service or product. Boycotts against British goods created economic pressure that hurt trade and encouraged authorities to cancel, or **repeal** the tax.

Boycotts have been effective in history....

Lackey, D.H. Rosa Parks Being Fingerprinted by Deputy Sheriff D.H. Lackey After Being Arrested on February 22, 1956, During the Montgomery Bus Boycott. February 22, 1956. Wikimedia Commons. Accessed September 9, 2024. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rosa_Parks_being_fingerprinted_by_Deputy_Sheriff_D.H._Lackey_after_being_arrested_on_February_22,_1956_during_the_Montgomery_bus_boycott.jpg.



- The Montgomery Bus Boycott was a civil rights protest that began in December 1955, when African Americans in Montgomery, Alabama, refused to use the city's public buses to challenge racial segregation. It was sparked by Rosa Parks' arrest for refusing to give up her seat to a white person, the boycott lasted over a year and significantly contributed to the Supreme Court's decision to desegregate public transportation.



A SHIP HAS BEEN SIGHTED
in this quarter
ENGAGING IN THE UNLAWFUL ACT OF
SMUGGLING

whosoever can lay information
leading to the capture of this ship
or its crew

will receive a reward of

£500

From His Majesty's Government

This 19th day of October 1782

Boycotts

Individuals and groups

2) Smuggled illegal goods like paper, tea, and sugar **into America** from countries other than Britain to support the boycott against British goods.

Robert Sayer et. al., A society of patriotic ladies, at Edenton in North Carolina. North Carolina United States Edenton, 1775. London: Printed for R. Sayer & J. Bennett. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/96511606/>.



A SOCIETY OF PATRIOTIC LADIES.
AT
EDENTON IN NORTH CAROLINA.

Plate V.

Boycotts

Women in particular supported boycotts by

3) purchasing or making homemade alternatives

For example, wealthy women would have “spinning bees” to make colonial cloth and would drink coffee instead of tea.

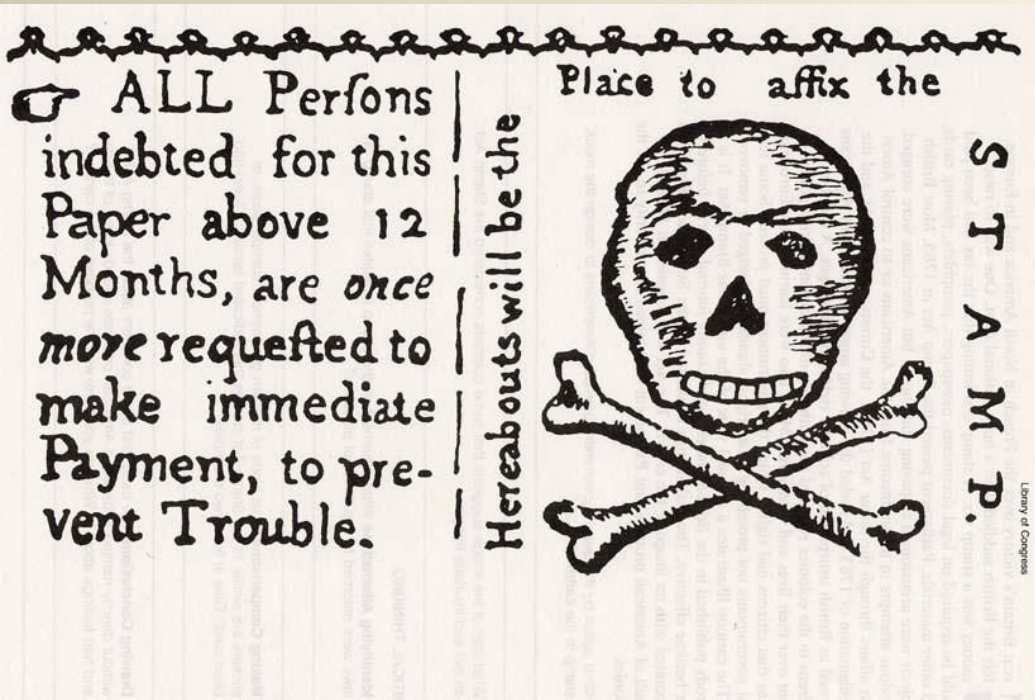
Sons of Liberty



DONT TREAD ON ME

Groups of men in many of the bigger cities, including Boston and Charles Town, formed groups called the Sons of Liberty to protest the Stamp Act.

Sons of Liberty

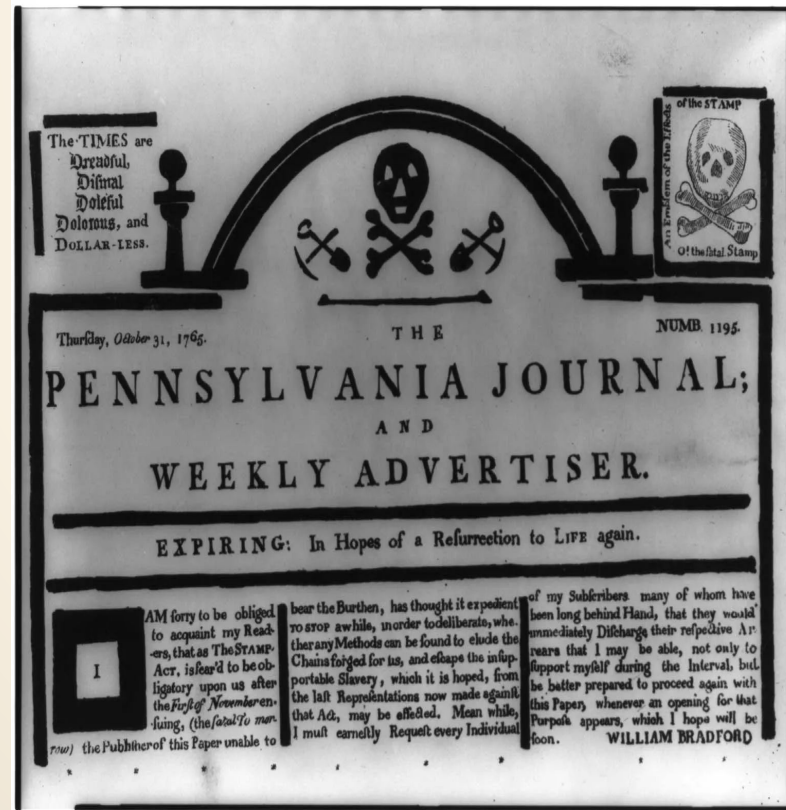


4) Spread propaganda

Bradford, William. *This Is the Place to Affix the Stamp*. United States, 1765. Cartoon.
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2004672606/>.

Sons of Liberty

5) Wrote articles & letters in the newspapers



Bradford, William. *The Pennsylvania journal and weekly advertiser - expiring: in hopes of a resurrection to life again.* Philadelphia United States Pennsylvania, 1765. Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2004672607/>.

Sons of Liberty

**6) Made posters and
signed petitions
that were hung around
the city in protest**

Sons of Liberty

7) Gave speeches

In many cities, a symbolic “Liberty Tree” became the meeting site for these speeches



INDIGNATION MEETING UNDER LIBERTY TREE, BOSTON.

Cassell, John. *The Colonists Under Liberty Tree*.
Illustration from *Illustrated History of England*. c. 1865.
Wikimedia Commons. Accessed September 9, 2024.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Colonists_Under_Liberty_Tree_Cassell.jpg.

Sons of Liberty

8) Burned effigies (pretend bodies) of tax collectors

The Sons of Liberty burning the effigy of the tax collector Andrew Oliver. From APUSH Canvas.





Bikas Das. Associated Press. 2010.



Gareth Fuller. PA Images, November 2016.

These pictures are taken in modern times, but it is an example of burning effigies. What does it symbolize? Is it violent or non-violent?

Sons of Liberty

9) Harassed tax collectors & destroyed private property

An artist's depiction of the tarring and feathering of loyalist John Malcolm in Boston. The Granger Collection, NYC



Can you tell what these men are doing?

Why is this in the picture?

What is the significance of the words carved into the tree?



The BOSTONIAN'S Rying the EXCISE-MAN, of TARRING & FEATHERING

Plate I.

London: Printed for Robt. Sayer & J. Bonomi in, Strand & Pall-mall. MDCCLXXIII. Sold at the Art-Shop in Pall-mall.

An artist's depiction of the tarring and feathering of loyalist John Malcom in Boston. The Granger Collection, NYC

Who is the man in white?
Why is he “fluffy”?

Sons of Liberty

10) Intimidated civilians who followed the law

“The opposition to the Stamp Act has been most violent, and the passions of the people are inflamed to such a degree that I fear the consequences will be dire. The damage done to property and the threats against individuals involved in the enforcement of the Act are deeply troubling.”

Washington, George. Letter to James Mercer. 19 November 1765.

“Is violence an effective form of persuasion during protests?”

Stamp Act is Repealed on March 18, 1766

- The Nonimportation Agreements endorsed by the Stamp Act Congress caused a decrease of £1 million in British exports to America, which exacerbated unemployment in Britain due to the decrease in trade, and led an overall decline in tax revenue.
 - (Savelle and Middlekauff 1964, 514)
- The Declaratory Act of 1766 was passed by Parliament on the same day the Stamp Act was repealed. It asserted Parliament's authority to make laws and statutes for the American colonies "in all cases whatsoever" effectively asserting its power to legislate and impose taxes on the colonies despite the repeal of the Stamp Act. Subsequently, in 1767, Parliament taxed paper, paint, glass, lead, and tea in the Townsend Act.
 - (Declaratory Act, 1766)