

Historical Content Narrative: This is a reflection of the content focus of the lesson that is developed as a result of your research. It is designed to assist you in the development of the lesson content and to clarify the content focus for a colleague who might use this lesson. It should include engaging historical content, anecdote and essential questions that can be used during the lesson. It also must include the Binary Paideia.

Content Narrative:

BINARY PAIDEIA		
Society Patriots	Time Period 1765-1774	Society British & Loyalists
Colonial Government	<i>Politeia/Regime</i>	Monarchy & Parliament
Landowning White Colonists	<i>Politeuma/Ruling Class</i>	Monarchy & Parliament
John Locke	<i>Paideia/What makes a society what it is</i>	Mercantilism
Self-control Self-governing	<i>Virtue/ The highest moral excellence</i>	English Bill of Rights Tradition

The American Revolution is often told as a myopic occurrence with a clear cast of heroes and villains. The oppressive British government subjected the unfortunate and abused Patriots to unfair discipline and taxation. Unfortunately, this view leaves a lot to be explored and is a disservice to the complete, complex, and true narrative of the American Revolution. Under the rule of the oppressive empire were also individuals and families loyal to the crown who were also subjected to the same burdens of taxation and inconvenience. Furthermore, their allegiance often led to further oppression from

revolutionary firebrands seeking to exacerbate change through violence, manipulation of the press, and intimidation. By focusing on the Boston Massacre and the escalation to it as a frame of reference, it becomes clear how the domineering voice of the patriots often dominates the narrative.

At the time of the Boston Massacre, the American colonies had already taken actions directed at Parliament and their continued imposition of new and heftier taxes as well as ever more oppressive British governance. These reactions relied heavily upon the press and its ability to distribute information, serve as a medium for potentially incendiary correspondence (with authors often anonymously hidden behind pseudonyms), and generally propagandize the public into thoughts of reaction, and eventually revolution, against Great Britain. Over the period of 1764-1773 Massachusetts printers were consistently responsible for approximately 32% of all colonial printing output, leading the nearest competition, Pennsylvania, by between seven and eight percentage points (approximately 84% of all printing in that period was centered in the colonies of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut, and Rhode Island).¹ Throughout the revolutionary period, the press would be a crucial battleground for colonial victories, especially in intellectual hotbeds such as Boston, Philadelphia, and New York. In February of 1766, an anonymous writer submitted an article entitled "The Trial of the Stamp Act" to both the *Boston Gazette* and the *Country Journal* that described in vivid (albeit imaginary) detail the trial, conviction, and

¹ Thomas G. Tanselle "Some Statistics on American Printing, 1764-1783." *The Press and the American Revolution*. Eds. Bernard Bailyn and John B. Hench. (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1980), p. 334.

execution of the Stamp Act by the Sons of Liberty.² The Sons of Liberty was a secret organization of Bostonian liberal firebrands comprised primarily of merchants, lawyers, and printers, many of whom were prominent figures both in the revolutionary landscape and their community such as Samuel Adams, Paul Revere, and John Hancock. Still in its first year of existence at the article's publication date in 1766, the Sons of Liberty play the role of the prosecuting body that heroically stands up to the tyrannical Stamp Act and condemns the "Piece of Paper mark'd with America's Oppression"³ to a fiery execution beneath the Liberty Tree. This, as much as anything else, is an example of the propagandistic nature of colonial presses. From the formation of the Sons of Liberty in 1765 through the Revolutionary War itself, The Sons of Liberty published numerous works in colonial newspapers pertaining to the injustices of Britain's treatment of the American colonies. While the majority of these writings were written under the guise of pseudonyms, the writing styles share a common thread of dissent laced with the scorching wit that is unmistakably the revolutionary voice of the Sons of Liberty. To readers of the time, these writers, or at very least the organizations and views they held, were hardly anonymous.

Colonial newspapers also served the purpose of rallying colonists towards more direct forms of action against British imposition. On September 12, 1768 the *New-York Gazette* and the *Weekly Mercury* published "A Copy of RESOLVES subscribed by the Merchants in New-York" outlining a rigorous boycott plan in response to the new duties

² David A. Copeland, *Debating the Issues in Colonial Newspapers* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), p. 200.

³ David A. Copeland, *Debating the Issues in Colonial Newspapers* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), p. 200.

that were to be collected by Great Britain called for by the Townshend Acts.⁴ This clearly outlined boycott plan which closes with the line “*Subscribed by nearly all the Merchants and Traders in Town,*”⁵ shows a case where colonial newspapers were used to call for specific and direct action against the British and their Loyalists (as well as thinly the veiled subtlety demanding compliance). In both cases outlined here, “The Trial of the Stamp Act” and “A Copy of RESOLVES...”, the press served the tripartite purpose of addressing the unjust taxation practices of the British, bringing the issue to the forefront of public debate, and working towards the incitement of resolution of those injustices. While there were Loyalist publications that served the same purpose with the contrasting political allegiance, the heavily biased court of colonial public opinion (the same court the Sons of Liberty convicted the Stamp act in) combined with the mounting pressures surrounding noncompliance (as alluded to in “*A Copy of RESOLVES...*”) led to their impact lessening as British domineering became more apparent in daily colonial American life and Loyalist supporters fell under heavier public scrutiny, specifically in Boston and especially as the Massacre and its aftermath grew closer.

On October 1, 1768, merely three days after a colonist convention held in Boston’s Faneuil Hall had publicly decried the imposition of unfair British taxation practices along with expressed fear of standing armies, approximately 700 British troops arrived in Boston with another thousand arriving as a part of two Irish regiments six

⁴ David A. Copeland, Debating the Issues in Colonial Newspapers (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), pp. 239-240.

⁵ David A. Copeland, Debating the Issues in Colonial Newspapers (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), p. 240.

weeks soon after.⁶ Paul Revere was quick to publish an engraving (found in the appendix: **Figure 1**) depicting the strong, tyrannical arm of Great Britain, the Royal Navy, surrounding Boston Harbor with firepower while landing troops on the march into the heart of a piously heavily steepled and wharved town.⁷ Revere's intent was clear: expose the excessive show of British power on its own colony of Boston as a heavy, unmerited act without reasonable cause on the religious and commercially equipped (an important colonial trait) city. Even before trouble between troops and colonists had really begun, the Sons of Liberty and their supporters had already begun the fight in the press to remove them through propagandistic interpretations of British action distributed on a city-wide scale.

Thomas Cushing, a Bostonian of the time, was quoted in John Shy's *Toward Lexington* as writing, "Nothing would so soon throw the people into a flame. No one measure I could think of, would so effectually drive them into resolutions which in the end would prove detrimental to Great Britain."⁸ That sentiment, written in reaction to simply the word the Parliament had approved the occupation of the city of Boston by British troops, would prove a truthful prediction in more of a way than Cushing could have possibly known. The immediate and major problem the arrival of nearly 2000 soldiers presented was the issue of quartering them in a way that would be both logistically feasible and, most importantly, effective to their purpose as a Parliamentary police force in the city of Boston. In Massachusetts Governor Thomas Hutchinson's

⁶ Bernard W. Sheehan, ed., *Growth of the American Revolution: 1766-1775* (Indianapolis: The Liberty Fund Inc., 2003 *Originally printed by The Free Press, 1975*), pp. 82-83.

⁷ David Hackett Fischer, *Paul Revere's Ride* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p.23.

⁸ John Shy. *Toward Lexington* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 303.

History of the Colony and Province of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Hutchinson

explained the Parliamentary terms of the troops' quartering:

“Until the [provided convenient barracks] were filled, the inhabitants ought not to be burdened. The civil officers...were, therefore, required to quarter and billet the troops in the barracks, and if there should not be sufficient room in them, then, and in such a case only, to quarter and billet the residue, in inns, livery stables, &c.”⁹

The issue that the Massachusetts Bay colonists' political council found fault in was that the barracks at Castle William were suited for 1000 men, ample space for the first two regiments of British regulars that arrived from Halifax and that “although General Gage had ordered one of those regiments to Boston, it was no disrespect to him, to say, that no order whatever, coming from a less authority than his majesty and parliament, can supersede an act of parliament.”¹⁰ While the troops from Halifax would arrive in Boston without incident, the Sons of Liberty and supporters of the removal of British troops had their first angle for trying to rouse colonial support for removal.

The troops themselves were not the problem so much as it was the act of the Crown and Parliament to put them in the city to begin with. As Shy correctly assesses, “A year and a half went by after the troops arrived before there was a Massacre, and that amount of time is itself suggestive. There were forces operating to prevent open

⁹ Thomas Hutchinson. *History of the Colony and Province of the Massachusetts Bay Colony: volume III* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), p150.

¹⁰ Thomas Hutchinson. *History of the Colony and Province of the Massachusetts Bay Colony: volume III* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), p150.

conflict[:] ...Boston fear and the economic value of the garrison.”¹¹ The primary targets of the Sons of Liberty, an organization who had demonstrated sound comprehension of Parliamentary overrule already through their writings in the press, remained the Crown and Parliament; after all, it was the British government who had ordered the troops in, and similarly it would have to be someone in the high ranks of British government who would have to be the one(s) to remove them. Additionally, the troops were not a total burden upon their seemingly unwelcoming cohabitants; their economic contributions were more than welcome in a depressed global economy made worse by the nonimportation agreements against British goods, the ever-rising cost of ongoing wars in Europe, and falling commodity prices.¹² On a local level in Boston, the problem with the economic support was that it tended to be most favorable for the liquor markets¹³, a definite recipe for the unruliness and disorder necessary for a massacre. Drunkenness would be a major factor in the antagonisms and subsequent deterioration of patience between colonists and troops, especially as the massacre grew nearer.

This may be the opportune time to reassert that most of the debate surrounding the Boston Massacre, both of the time and contemporarily, accumulates in and around the issue of blame for the actual events of March 5, 1770. Both Hiller Zobel and John Shy’s research, while often faulted for being unsubstantiated in their claims of widespread conspiracy (a strong loyalist assertion of the time) due to heavy reliance on

¹¹ John Shy. Toward Lexington (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 310.

¹² John Shy. Toward Lexington (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 309.

¹³ John Shy. Toward Lexington (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 309.

“largely circumstantial and ultimately unconvincing” evidence,¹⁴ but Shy specifically does raise a vital insight into colonist-army relations and the argument of a continued effort by the Sons of Liberty and anti-British colonists to subdue the tyrannies of the British government through effective use of the press, and thus his research holds a pertinent relevance in this area. However due to the criticisms of Shy’s writings, in as many cases as possible where Shy has cited direct references to support his larger claims, those original works have been personally referenced for verification of proper context.

That being said, Edes and Gill, publishers of a “Journal of the Times” created in their publication a substantial record of colonial-British troop malice.¹⁵ The accounts in the publication span the eighteen months prior to the Boston Massacre and contain nearly one hundred entries thereafter. These publications were far from unbiased (in fact, Shy alludes to Samuel Adams’ personal puppeteering of the “Journal...”) however they shed a light onto a more humanistic problem within the troops themselves. Ultimately the British troops were in place to serve as military police, and with that came the possibility of violent suppression of civilians, a detriment to any soldier’s morale. With rampant cases of desertion already in his second week in command of the Boston-deployed regiments, British General Thomas Gage sought to make an example of a deserting soldier named Ames. The execution was a spectacle, Ames was dressed in white, led to the Commons, executed by firing squad, and then was laid before the

¹⁴ Paul Aron. More Unsolved Mysteries of American History (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.), p. 28.

¹⁵ John Shy. Toward Lexington (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 306.

troops in attendance to solidify Gage's horrid consequence for desertion.¹⁶ Shy identifies the colonial sympathy that followed from the press' coverage of the British cold-hearted internal justice perpetrated by General Gage: "The execution of Ames had been widely reported, and had had an effect, but not the one intended. Whatever their opinion of British Government and army, or of Boston radicals, no civilian was willing to turn a soldier over to the firing squad or the hangman."¹⁷ In the case of Ames, Gage had actually served to draw more sympathizers to colonial press who were eager to engage in discourse over the widely witnessed Boston Commons execution while at the same time strongly reaffirming the Sons of Liberty's focus on the British power structure rather than the doubly-victimized pawns it controlled in the occupying military force. It would be the dual-victimization of the soldiers by both their superiors and the colonial antagonists that the press and the firebrands of revolution would exploit and eventually lean on to incite hatred for the controlling heads of the British empirical state while at the same time realizing the already friendless soldiers could be drawn to fire the first shot at an inevitable Boston Massacre effectively removing both thorns from the city's side.

The narrative of the American Revolution often fails to acknowledge the skewed manipulation of the press by colonial leaders. Many of the primary documents of the period contain the propagandistic fervor of the Sons of Liberty and their cause without acknowledging the hardship of the British and British loyalists in the colonies. It becomes important when in pursuit of a well-balanced take on the events leading up to

¹⁶ John Shy. Toward Lexington (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 307.

¹⁷ John Shy. Toward Lexington (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 308.

the Boston Massacre and the Revolutionary War to acknowledge that there were other voices largely silenced in the historical conversation in the aftermath of defeat. The British soldiers quartered in Boston were in an unenviable spot, alone and targeted. Similarly, British loyalists found themselves in a silenced minority and still victims of the same “tyrannical” taxes and overrule of the British Empire. To achieve a fair vision of pre-Massacre Boston pre-Revolutionary War America, these voices must be acknowledged.

APPENDIX



Figure 1: Paul Revere's Engraving of the Troops Landing in Boston Harbor¹⁸

¹⁸ David Hackett Fischer, Paul Revere's Ride (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p.23.

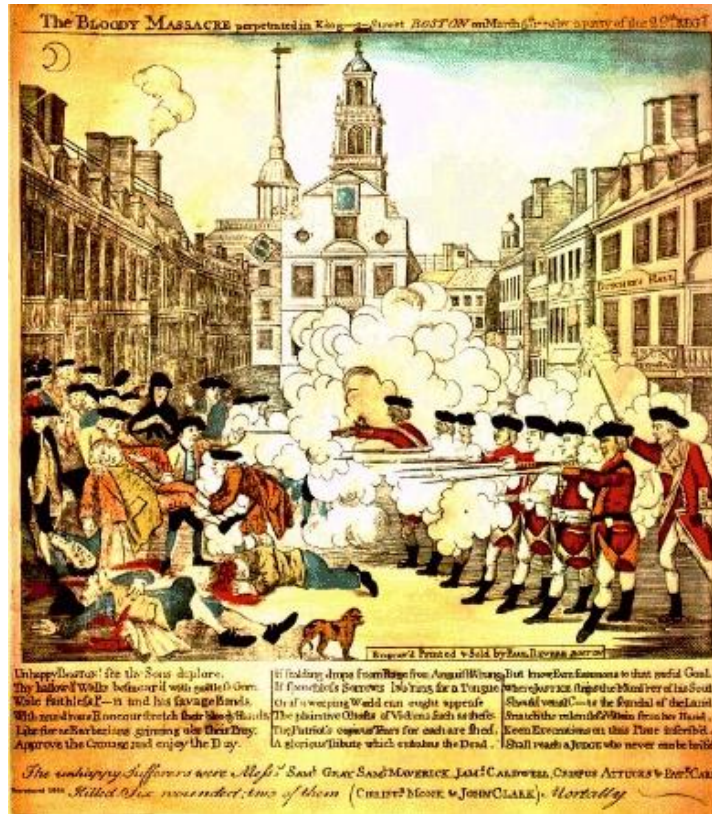


Figure 2: Paul Revere's Engraving of the Boston Massacre¹⁹

¹⁹ Paul Clemens. Prof. History, Rutgers University, [Boston Massacre \(American Revolution\) Homepage](http://fas-history.rutgers.edu/%7Eclemens/ProtectedPages/BostonMassacreHomepage.html) [cited 7 December 2004]. Available from <http://fas-history.rutgers.edu/%7Eclemens/ProtectedPages/BostonMassacreHomepage.html>

WORKS CITED

Primary:

John Adams, Pres. U.S. Legal Papers of John Adams L. Kinvin Wroth and Hiller B. Zobel, ed., (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 3.

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 Queen-Street, and T. & J. Fleet, in Cornhill, 1770.

Paul Clemens, Prof. History, Rutgers University, Boston Massacre (American Revolution) Homepage [cited 7 December 2004]. Available from <http://fas-history.rutgers.edu/%7Ecllemens/ProtectedPages/BostonMassacreHomepage.html>

David A. Copeland, Debating the Issues in Colonial Newspapers (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), pp. 239-240, 249, 252, 254, 260.

Thomas Hutchinson, History of the Colony and Province of the Massachusetts Bay Colony: volume III (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), p. 150.

Secondary:

Paul Aron. More Unsolved Mysteries of American History (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.), p. 28.

Bernard Bailyn. The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), pp.157-158, 160.

David Hackett Fischer, Paul Revere's Ride (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp.23-24.

Bernard W. Sheehan, ed., Growth of the American Revolution: 1766-1775 (Indianapolis: The Liberty Fund Inc., 2003 *Originally printed by The Free Press, 1975*), pp. 82-84.

John Shy, Toward Lexington (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 290, 298, 303, 306-308, 310, 312-314, 316-317.

Page Smith, A New Age Begins (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1976), pp. 316-318, 332-335.

Thomas G. Tanselle, "Some Statistics on American Printing, 1764-1783." The Press and the American Revolution. Eds. Bernard Bailyn and John B. Hench. (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1980), p. 334.

Hiller B. Zobel, The Boston Massacre (New York : W. W. Norton, 1971, c1970.), p. 29-30.

Sheldon Soper & Sharron Knauss

How many sides are there?

Abstract: Students will listen to the story of a loyalist girl living in America and play the role of a fact-gathering colonial slave on the website "Loyalty or Liberty"²⁰

Essential Questions:

- What is it that leads people to revolution? (EU2) (EU4)
- What do different types of leaders in a society look like? (EU3) (EU5)
- How do revolutions look to the revolted against? (EU5) (EU6)

Objectives: Students will demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives with a Revolutionary context by participating in activities that expose them to perspectives of a loyalist and an undecided slave. Students, presented with a virtual experience of a fact-gathering slave, will synthesize information to choose a side for themselves.

Procedure:

1. Begin the lesson by reading the students *Katie's Trunk* by Ann Turner
 - a. Encourage the students to record any questions they may have while the book is being read on a sheet of paper (remember: the Stamp Tax is still in effect!)
2. Upon completion, ask the students to work with their groups of 4 to compile a list of questions that they had that were unanswered.
3. After completing their lists, have each group switch lists with another group. Have each group divide the other group's questions into ones that could be answered with research, ones that could be inferred from the story, and ones that cannot be definitively answered.
4. As a class, invite each group to share their favorite question from each of the 3 categories.
5. At this point it is up to the teacher to work through the questions in a class discussion. This is something that cannot be wholly planned in

KATIE'S TRUNK
by Ann Turner



illustrations by Ron Fimler

²⁰ <http://www.history.org/history/teaching/revolution/loyalty.html>

- advance, but the teacher should pick out pertinent questions to the big ideas and engage the students to flesh them out with hypothesis and prior knowledge.
6. Following the discussion, if not mentioned in the discussion, the teacher should address the fact that Katie was an example of someone whose family was affected by the same taxes and unfair treatment as the rebels, but chose not to rebel. As a result how was Katie's family treated? Was that fair? Why would someone chose to stay loyal to Britain?
 7. With this acknowledgement that loyalty or rebellion is an individual choice, not a default geographical status, students will complete the "chose your own adventure"-esque website activity Loyalty or Liberty found at the footnoted website address below. (teachers may opt to coordinate this lesson with a scheduled computer lab day or have students complete the activity in groups at classroom computers...this is strictly a logistical choice although individual completion is recommended)

Assessment:

Following the completion of "Loyalty or Liberty," students should write a diary entry, explaining why they made the ultimate decision of allegiance they chose, what the result of this choice was, and who were some of the additional perspectives the people they met (What were their occupations? Which side would they have chosen? Why?).

The two possible endings are as follows:

1. Choosing to give the secrets to the Patriots

"Mr. Pendleton," you ask, "Will the Committee of Safety grant me my freedom?"

Mr. Pendleton looks at you and replies, "I know that you have worked diligently and perhaps even risked your life to bring us this information. And I know that your master was a devoted Loyalist. You have taken quite a chance by going against him in this way.

He sighs. "However, the Committee of Safety is not prepared to grant you, or any other slave, their freedom. Maybe one day lad, but not now."

2. Choosing to give the secrets to the British

"My Lord Dunmore," you ask, "will you grant me my freedom?"

"Yes, lad," the Governor replies. "I grant freedom to any slave belonging to rebels who joins my forces. The information you have delivered today makes clear that you are a loyal subject of His Majesty, King George III."