



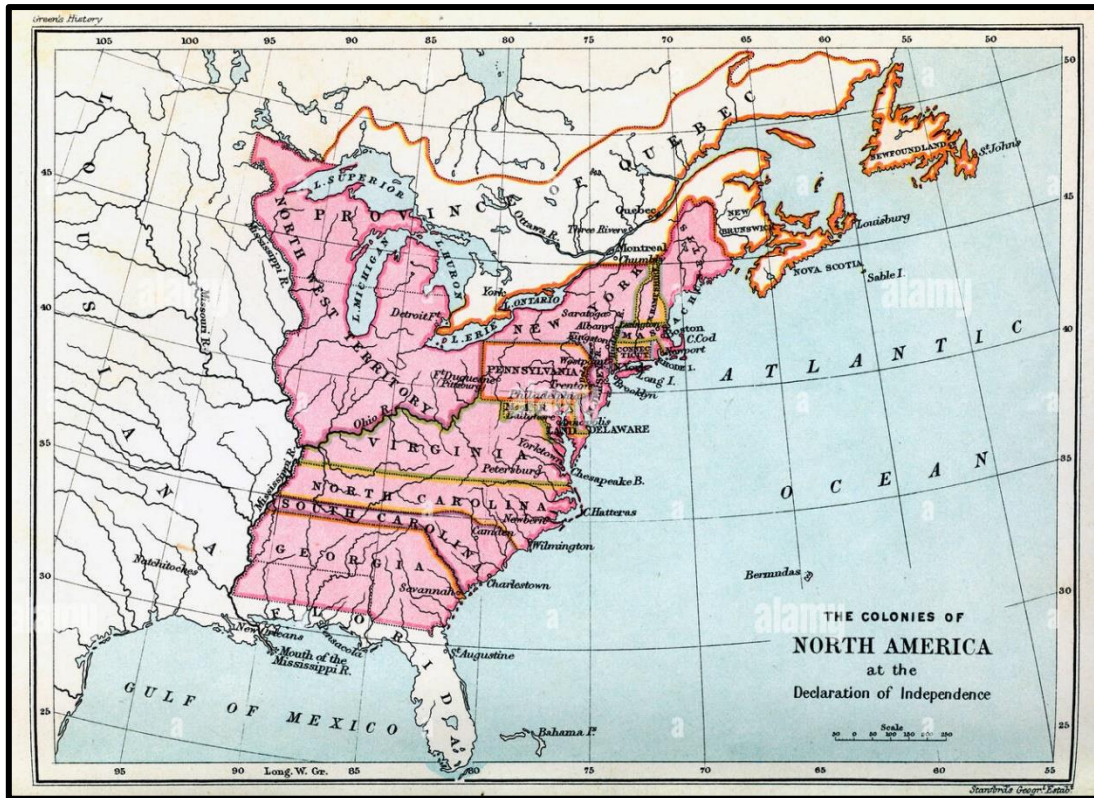
The American Revolution

Crisis Director – Tom Fallon

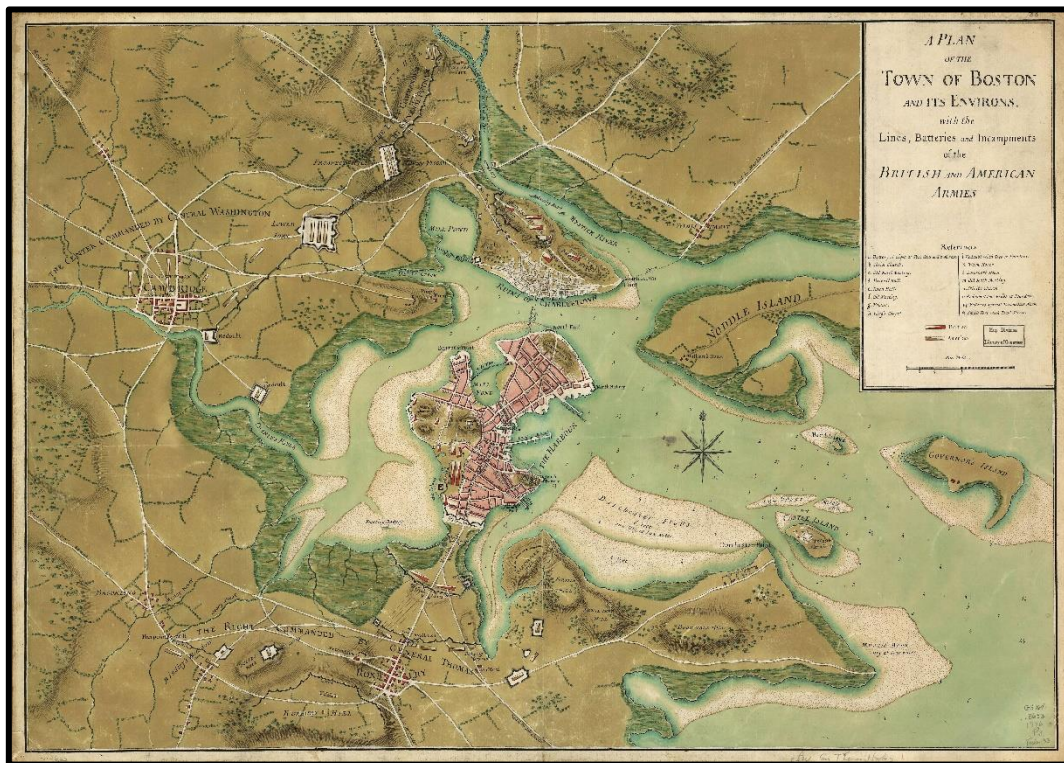
Crisis Chair – Albert Salimov

NOTTSMUN 2024 CRISIS





The United States of America



Boston



New York



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Introduction

“The Eyes of all our Countrymen are now upon us, and we shall have their blessings, and praises, if happily we are the instruments of saving them from the Tyranny meditated against them. Let us therefore animate and encourage each other, and [show] the whole world, that a Freeman contending for Liberty on his own ground is superior to any slavish mercenary on earth.” – George Washington

Hello! If you're reading this, you're joining the Crisis cabinet of NottsMUN 2024. The Crisis begins in April 1775 following the “shot heard round the world”, after American militiamen engaged British redcoats in open combat, sparking the American War of Independence, and creating the United States of America as we know them today. You, delegates, will represent the military leaders and political visionaries later known as the ‘Founding Fathers’, guiding your fledgling nation’s people through a campaign of rebellion against the tyranny of the British and their ruler, King George III.

However, this revolution will be by no means a simple task. The Second Continental Congress, which the delegates will make up, is little more than a *de facto* government of the American colonies, with no organized legislature, executive, or judiciary. Furthermore, the Second Continental Congress has no standing army, instead relying on the bravery and might of farmers and volunteers to defend their proto-state from the overwhelming force of the British military, who were supported by the strongest navy in the world. To further compound their problems, there are British loyalists at all levels of American society; a military victory over the British will be worthless if the American people will not follow their new government.

This study guide will give you a broad background on British occupation of the American colonies up to 1775, as well as information about contemporary political discourse that would have inspired the Founding Fathers to strive for independence. A small biography will be provided for each committee member, although I stress the ahistorical nature of the Crisis. As your Director, I will aim for a creative and engaging alternate history to the American Revolution, and will let ultra-realism and strict adherence to historical events take a backseat. I hope that all members of this Crisis will really flex their political innovation skills, and create an America they truly believe in.

At the end of this study guide, I will provide a general set of rules with which myself and the Crisis Chair will conduct the committee with. Crisis members will be expected to follow these



rules, and treat their fellow members of the Crisis with respect and decency. Concluding the study guide will be a range of historical texts that the Founding Fathers themselves would have read and developed their beliefs from. It is not a mandatory reading list, but rather a source of inspiration for Crisis members to draw from.

Above all else, I wish for members of this Crisis to enjoy themselves in their creation of a land of the free, and a home of the brave.

Tom Fallon

Crisis Director



The Thirteen Colonies

The first established colony by English speakers was Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607, after the failed establishment of Roanoke by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1585. While the establishment of the Virginian colony came from a royal charter bestowed upon the London Company, many of the colonists moving to the Americas were Puritans, who believed in the establishment of a religious homeland for their sect of Protestantism. Religious motivations played key roles many of the colonies that were subsequently established, with the strongest religious influence lying in the Northern colonies known as 'New England'. The Thirteen Colonies, followed by their establishment dates, are listed chronologically below. Note how the Province of Carolina was divided into separate colonies early into the 18th century.

- Colony of Virginia, 1607
- Province of New Hampshire, 1629
- Province of Maryland, 1632
 - o Province of Carolina, 1629
- Connecticut Colony, 1636
- Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, 1663
- Lower Counties on Delaware, 1664
- Province of New York, 1664
- Province of New Jersey, 1664
- Province of Pennsylvania, 1681
- Province of Massachusetts Bay, 1691
 - o Province of North Carolina, 1712
 - o Province of South Carolian, 1712
- Province of Georgia, 1732

The largest driving factors in the establishment of almost all of the colonies were financial. As the Native American tribes were forcefully driven from the east coast, so too were their sustainable hunting and farming practices, leaving behind a vast and fertile land ripe for plundering by the European settlers. Lumber, tobacco, cotton and animal furs were harvested by the tonne for processing and shipping back to the United Kingdom on Atlantic trade routes, with industrial outputs bolstered by the kidnapping and indentured servitude of millions of African slaves, who were worked to their deaths on American plantations in the name of profit. Sure enough, the value of American exports to Britain tripled in the first half of the 18th century.



The American populace was not solely made up of British immigrants and African slaves; small but noticeable proportions of the population came from Ireland, Germany, and many other European countries, guided to America with the promises of a new life and economic prosperity. However, by this point Britain had muscled out many other European competitors in America, absorbing many Dutch, Swedish and French colonies into the rule of the Crown. Later French claims to British territory led to the American extension of the Seven Years' War, known as the French and Indian War, with Britain attempting to defeat their foe at every corner of the globe. By the Treaty of Paris in 1763, Britain had managed to gain control of all American territory east of the Mississippi.

Throughout the French and Indian War, American colonists became increasingly aware of the authority that Britain held over them, and began to trust the British soldiers garrisoned in the colonies less and less. American soldiers who served with the British found that they had more in common with their fellow colonists than they did with the royal rulers; these sentiments were expressed by the young lieutenant colonel of the Virginia Regiment George Washington, who was said to “[bubble] with fury when British regular officers expressed their disdain of provincial officers and soldiers”.



“Washington as Captain in the French and Indian War” – Junius Brutus Stearns, 1858



British Rule and Early Rebellion

Following their victory over the French, the British government were left with huge debts as a result of reckless military spending, and decided that taxation of the valuable American colonies was the solution. The Sugar Act of 1764, the Currency Act of 1764, the Stamp Act of 1765, and the Townshend Acts of 1767 all imposed increasingly larger taxes upon the American populace, who were not consulted during any part of the legislative procedure due to their status as a colony. Parliament claimed that the colonists enjoyed ‘virtual representation’, meaning that while they could not vote, they were still represented by the members of parliament. The American colonists made several requests for parliamentary representation to no response, and claimed a violation of the Rights of Englishmen that British citizens across the Atlantic enjoyed.

Colonial protestors against the Stamp Act called for “no taxation without representation”, and were supported by early American newspapers, who published and dispensed revolutionary material after the printers had been heavily affected by the Act. Unfortunately, their cries were not heard in London, and in 1773 the British parliament passed the Tea Act in a mistaken attempt to encourage acceptance of British legislation in the Thirteen Colonies, lowering prices of tea with reduced tax rates. Citizens of Boston, Massachusetts, were already infuriated with British occupation following the Boston Massacre three years prior, in which five American colonists were killed after soldiers fired upon a crowd of hundreds of protestors; only two soldiers were found guilty of manslaughter, and were even given reduced sentences.

Following the Tea Act, a band of revolutionaries known as the Sons of Liberty, dressed as Mohawk warriors to express their American identity (or possibly to incriminate the Native American tribe for their actions), boarded a merchant ship belonging to the East India Company in Boston harbour, and dumped its 600,000lb shipment of tea into the ocean in protest against the new law, causing over £1.3 million worth of damages in today’s money. The ‘Boston Tea Party’, as it came to be known, inspired radicals across the continent with the bravery shown by the Sons of Liberty in the face of the British, with further ‘tea parties’ across the colonies sending the tea back to England.

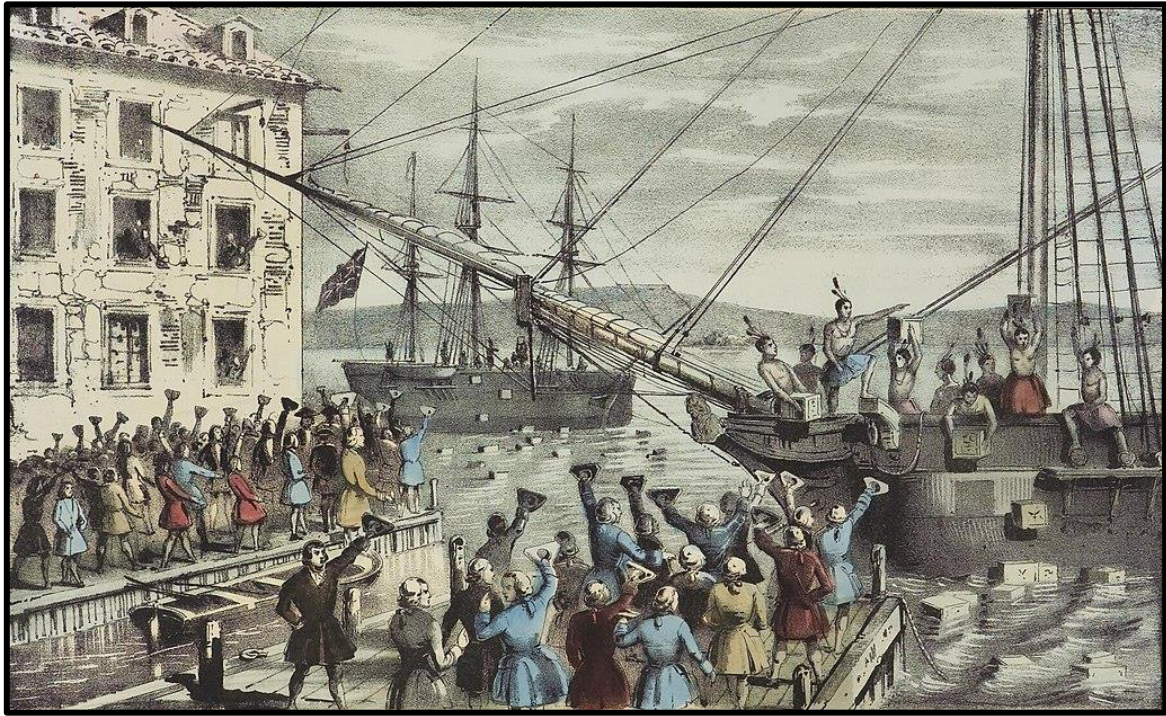
The crackdown by the British government was harsh. Parliament passed a series of legislation known as the Intolerable Acts, which aimed to restore British control over Massachusetts at all costs. The colonists were ordered to cover the costs of the tea destroyed, and removed their



right of self-governance by rendering all positions in the colonial government to royal or parliamentary appointment. Furthermore, the British military were given far greater powers, including the ability to claim lodgings in any colonist's house against their will, and prohibiting the colonists from taking any soldiers or royal officials to trial. General Thomas Gage, commander of the British forces in the Thirteen Colonies, was also made Governor of Massachusetts. Tensions between the Americans and the British were at an all-time high, and Boston would later become the crucible where true revolution began.

However, an important consideration to be noted is the attitude of the American citizen, rather than that of the Founding Father, to whom the various Acts and persecutions seemed more insignificant. The average colonist could not read or write, let alone hold opinions of the proceedings of the British parliament. To them, the Revolution was simply a matter of self-determination. Levi Preston, a 91-year-old veteran of the Revolutionary War, was interviewed by historian Mellen Chamberlain in 1843, stating:

“Oppressions? I didn't feel them. I never saw one of those stamps, and always understood that Governor Bernard put them all in Castle William. I am certain I never paid a penny for one of them. Tea tax! I never drank a drop of the stuff; the boys threw it all overboard. We read only the Bible, the Catechism, Watt's Psalms and Hymns, and the Almanack. Young man, what we meant in going for those redcoats was this: we always had governed ourselves, and we always meant to.”



“The Destruction of Tea at Boston Harbour” – Nathaniel Currier, 1864



Revolutionaries and Radicals

Political thought in the Thirteen Colonies, and the development of an American cultural identity had begun long before the Boston Tea Party. Since their establishment, every colony had slowly but surely wrested power away from the royally-appointed governors through the creation of local assemblies, which were largely funded and influenced by American merchants and landowners. The most famous of these assemblies was the Virginian House of Burgesses, which is considered the oldest continuously active legislative body in America. However, due to the availability of land in the Thirteen Colonies, the number of landowners eligible to vote in the assemblies were three times greater than those in England; ~60% of white men could vote.

While education was a scarce resource to the American colonists, with only three thousand graduates from nine colleges in 1775, the Founding Fathers of the American Revolution were incredibly well read, and drew many inspirations for their idyllic new society from Classical Greek and Roman political thought; George Washington supposedly based his political persona on that of Roman senator Cato the Younger.

“While some famous colonists, like Thomas Paine, eschewed “classical citations and allusions, relying more on references to the Bible and images from farm life,” others returned to the principles of “Aristotle and Plato, of Livy and Cicero, of Sydney, Harrington and Lock,” as John Adams once wrote.” – Michael Vaccari

The idea of political power being held by citizens from the ancient Athenian direct democracy greatly inspired the Founding Fathers, as did the concepts of checks and balances in the Roman Republic; we can look upon the works of Classical scholars such as Plato, Pericles and Cicero, as well as later interpretations of ancient societies such as those by Machiavelli to better understand the Founding Fathers influences.

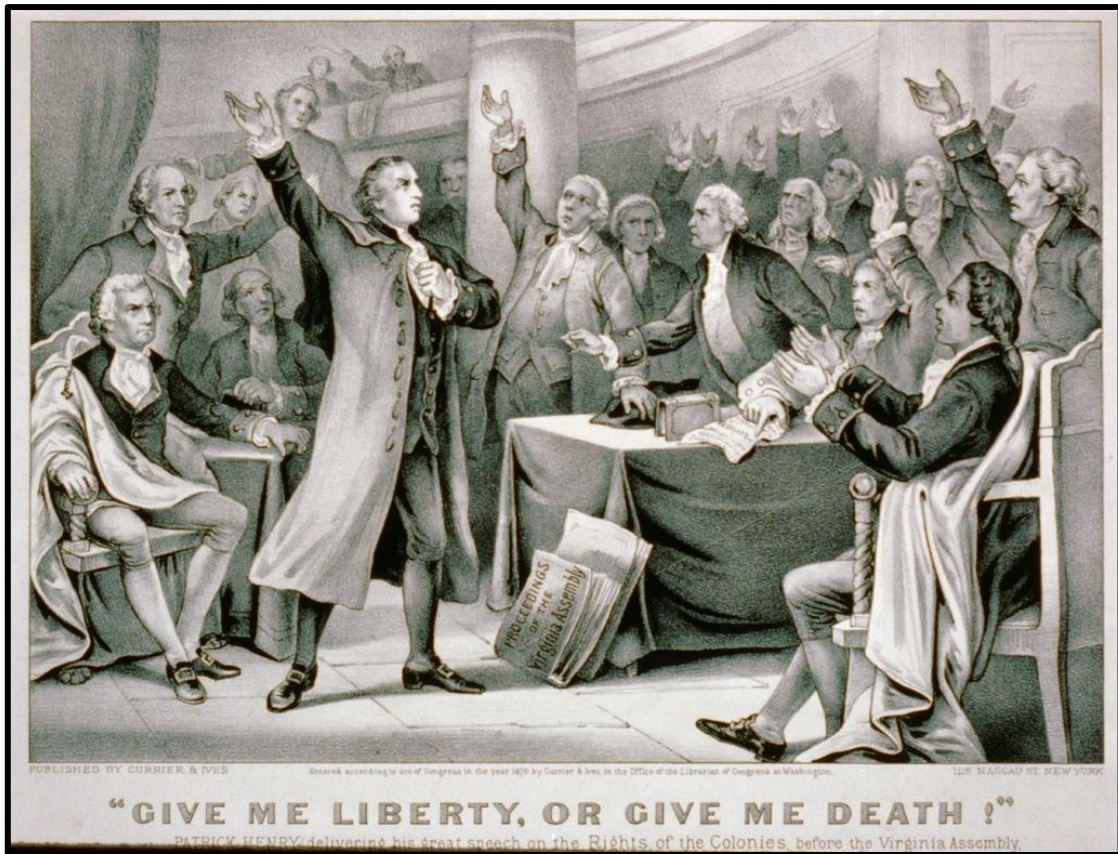
Enlightenment thinkers had been developing theories of politics and government for centuries before the American Revolution. Ideas of ‘natural rights’ that every man possessed were developed by theorists such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Locke, while theorists such as Montesquieu advocated for separation of powers and dissolution of the monarchy. Closer to the time of the revolution, pamphlets became a powerful tool of political activists, such as *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents* by English MP and American sympathizer Edmund Burke, who called for limits to the executive authority of the King, or *Common Sense*



by Thomas Paine, in which a call for an independent, egalitarian American government was seriously proposed for the first time. *Common Sense* was read aloud in many public meetings, and to this day remains the most widely sold and published American text ever.

This is not to say that monarchy received no scholarly support. From the Renaissance (*The Prince*, Machiavelli) to the Enlightenment (*Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes), many scholars argued in favour of monarchic authority, believing that as a divinely appointed ruler, the monarch may treat their subjects in any way they see fit for the betterment of their nation. Noted British loyalist Samuel Seabury wrote a number of letters criticizing the congresses and assemblies established by the American colonists under the pen name of ‘a Westchester Farmer’, or ‘A. W. Farmer’; Founding Father Alexander Hamilton authored the scathing reply, *The Farmer Refuted*, a year later.

As democratic beliefs spread throughout the colonies, aided by printers and inter-colony newspapers, public support for the British occupiers and the Crown waned. In wake of the Intolerable Acts in September 1774, every colony except Georgia sent a delegate to the First Continental Congress, where the delegates adopted the Suffolk Resolves, calling for a boycott of imports from Britain, and for each colony to establish a militia force. A petition was also written by the Congress to King George III to repeal the Intolerable Acts and make right the hardships that the colonists had been put through. They received no reply.



“Patrick Henry speaking before the Virginia Assembly” – Nathaniel Currier and James Merritt Ives, 1876



The First Shot

By February 1775, Parliament declared Massachusetts to be in a state of rebellion. Militias to the northwest of Boston known as the ‘Minutemen’ (due to their oath to protect the American people at ‘a minute’s notice’) had become the colony’s rapid response force to the British threat, and possessed a number of small armouries and munitions stores in the neighbouring towns of Concord and Lexington, which Governor and General Thomas Gage sought to seize to deter the American uprising. Through what Gage believed to be secret channels, orders were given to Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith to take a company of 700 British redcoats from their encampment on Boston Common to Lexington, although American intelligence had managed to discover the plot weeks in advance, potentially through the colonial sympathies of Gage’s New Jersey-born wife Margaret.

As the British forces began their march on the night of the 18th of April, lanterns was hung in the steeple of the Old North Church in Boston, signalling to the revolutionaries’ messengers in Charlestown the movement of the British; “one if by land, two if by sea”. By midnight, the riders Paul Revere and Samuel Prescott were relaying the message to the Minutemen in Concord, who quickly distributed the munitions among nearby stockpiles and prepared for the British army’s advance. The revolutionaries’ message relay system of riders, bells, bonfires and even music was so effective that the warning of the incoming British forces was relayed 25 miles before the British had even crossed the Charles River.

By sunrise, the Lexington militia of French and Indian War veteran Captain John Parker had assembled on the common to meet the British; Parker declared “don’t fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war, let it begin here.” There is no historical consensus as to which side fired the first shot, but chaos ensued and soon after eight militiamen lay dead, with a further ten wounded after a British bayonet charge. The British reorganized and began to march on to Concord, where the militia had withdrawn to the North Bridge to await reinforcements. They watched the British burn and destroy what was left of their stockpiles, before beginning their advance towards the British troops across the Concord River. A shot rang out, likely in panic from an exhausted British soldier, and the colonists, now vastly outnumbering the British, returned fire. This was later known as “the shot heard round the world”; the British fled, and the Americans, stunned with their victory, had their spirit bolstered. The revolution had begun.



As the British retreated to Boston, more and more companies of militia began opening fire on the fleeing redcoats, ambushing them from the forest and upstairs windows. The British morale was broken, and soldiers began looting taverns and churches, killing any colonist they believed to be a revolutionary conspirator. By the next morning, thousands of American militiamen had gathered outside Boston to besiege the British forces, and that is where our Crisis begins.



“The Battle of Lexington” – William Barnes Wollen, 1910



Crisis Rules

For crisis rules refer to the official NOTTSMUN 2024 Rules of Procedure (ROP) document.



Reading List

If you are feeling extra revolutionary, take a look at the suggested texts below to consult the same treatises and political works that inspired the Founding Fathers, for better or for worse.

Common Sense, Thomas Paine (1776) Available at: <https://americainclass.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Common-Sense-Full-Text.pdf>

Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius, Niccolo Machiavelli (1531) Available at: <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10827>

Free Thoughts on the Proceedings of the Continental Congress, Samuel Seabury (1775) Available at: https://archive.org/details/bim_eighteenth-century_free-thoughts-on-the-pro_seabury-samuel_1775

Intolerable Acts, UK Parliament (1774) Available at: https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/admin_of_justice_act.asp , https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/mass_gov_act.asp , https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/boston_port_act.asp , <https://www.ushistory.org/declaration/related/q74.htm>

Leviathan, Thomas Hobbes (1651) Available at: <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/3207>

Republic, Plato (360 B.C.E.) Available at: <https://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.html>

Second Treatise of Government, John Locke (1690) Available at: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/7370/7370-h/7370-h.htm>

Stamp Act, UK Parliament (1765) Available at: <https://ia903406.us.archive.org/26/items/stampact176500grea/stampact176500grea.pdf>

The Farmer Refuted, Alexander Hamilton (1775) Available at: <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Hamilton/01-01-02-0057>

The Social Contract, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1762) Available at: <https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/rousseau1762.pdf>

The Spirit of Laws, Charles Louis de Secondat, Baron de La Brède et de Montesquieu (1748) Available at: <https://archive.org/details/spiritoflaws01montuoft>

Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents, Edmund Burke (1770) Available at: https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Thoughts_on_the_Cause_of_the_Present_Discontents