

Kathy Emery

SFSU PLSI 200.11

Lecture notes for September 10, 2007

HOME PAGE for course: [http://educationanddemocracy.org/Emery/Emery\\_SFSU.html](http://educationanddemocracy.org/Emery/Emery_SFSU.html)

**Why Government? Distribution of resources (criteria?)**  
**Motives of Framers of US Constitution? Protect Property (how?)**

**Jamestown, Virginia model for other colonies**

first settlement (1607), first slaves (1619), first elected legislature in colonies (1619), quintessential rebellion (1676),

- **Virginia Joint Stock Co** (1609 grant from King, 400 miles wide from sea to sea and investors = government)– transition from mercantilism to capitalism

Bacon's Rebellion illustrates PATTERNS

- **distribution of resources:** Indians, slaves, indentured servants, free whites, planters, (not men/women)
- **Ideology and legitimacy:** Relationship between “freedom” and “racism”
- **U.S. ideal** = get rich --- individuality, competition, greed, and cruelty (get rich regardless of consequences on others)
- **WESTERN frontier:** important safety valve – racism, divide and conquer.

Bacon's Rebellion

Colony barely survived in beginning – looking for a **staple crop** to make a **profit instead of survival**, learning how to live off the land in cooperation with Indians – no profit so reorganized

1619 -- elected legislature (house of burgesses) established to join governor (appt by England) and governor's council (friends and business associates of governor). Burgesses passed laws, establishing precedent that colonists would, in part, be governed by its own representatives

1624 -- King takes over colony from Virginia Co.

**Tobacco** finally hit upon -- Planters looking for **cheap labor** to make a **profit**

- Indentured servants - indenture limited, contemptuous of authority
- Indians – ran away too easily, wouldn't work
- Africans—for life, but less incentive to work, needed more cruel punishment

by 1670s –

1. all good land taken – tobacco wore out land fast (near port, good alluvial soil, freedmen provided buffer from Indians) newly indentured or newly arrived forced to go west into Indian land with inevitable friction

2. FALLING TOBACCO PRICES – speculation

MONOPOLY BY ENGLISH MERCHANTS – not allowed to trade with dutch

3. 1675 – a series of incidents led to full fledged war with various tribes.

Governor Berkeley (gov since 1640s) calls legislature to session and gets them to agree to raise taxes to build a series of forts and garrison them to create boundary between Indians and settlers. (PROTECT BEAVER TRADE NEED PEACE WITH INDIANS)

Frontier settlers DON'T WANT TO BE TAXED FOR INNEFFECTIVE MILITARY STRATEGY

1674 Nathaniel Bacon had arrived in Jamestown (in his 20s, two plantations near frontier)

1675 asks Berkeley for commission to raise army to fight Indians -- DENIED -- goes ahead anyway

1676 Berkeley calls for new election of legislature dropping property qualifications in the hope of undermining support for Bacon BUT BACON ELECTED TO BURGESSES

Bacon forces Berkeley and Leg to **give him commission** at head of 400 armed men

Bacon marches to Middleton Plantation with his men and issues a *Manifesto and Declaration to the People*

- All Indians were enemies and outlaws and ought to be wiped out
- The governor had treated them as “darling and protected” subjects
- Governor had used the beaver trade solely to enrich himself and a small group of friends.
- This trade had enable the Indians to arm and murder English settlers
- Solution: get rid of both group of traders
- Bacon ordered arrest of Berkeley and his associates and promised death to all Indians.

**Bacon marches on Jamestown** - -Berkeley and allies flee

- Calls for new elections, in the meantime
- goes west to fight Indians, returns to Jamestown to find Berkeley had head of british fleet

**Stalemate** – Bacon dies of dysentery, English reinforcements arrived, rebellion quashed, rebels hung.

**King/Privy Council sends commission** – upset with big planters for threatening his profits

**freedmen list grievances.** Freedmen want more democratic government/more equal distribution of resources. **King/Privy Council says no way.**

-----  
ESTABLISHING STATUS QUO in VIRGINIA – 1676 onwards -- lots of incompetence and inability to learn lessons from rebellion, however . . . .

### LESSONS OF BACON'S REBELLION

- Divide and conquer blacks and whites
- Need to use western frontier as safety valve
- Develop ideology of populism – slavery = fewer freedmen, cultivate support of freedmen with ideology of representation as legitimate form of government -- easier after 1688

**1688 – Glorious Revolution** – est primacy of parliament – John Lock 2<sup>nd</sup> treatise (basis for Declaration of Independence) – but at moment shifts LEGITIMACY from Divine right to natural rights. FROM GOD TO PEOPLE.

**because rel with colonies through King**, beginning of salutary neglect

**SEVEN YEARS WAR 1756-63** - end of salutary neglect - need to pay for war and govern new territory

- Series of taxes by PARLIAMENT, ignorant of colonial customs which had developed under salutary neglect.
- Proclamation of 1763 – no western safety valve (already a regulator movement—could become full fledged civil war).
- Quebec Act (1774) – British take over French territory – permanent govt established -- governor with NO LEGISLATURE, and extended territory into ohio river valley, shutting out western claims of colonies

British elite organize – **committees of correspondence** lead to continental congresses

1775 -- LEXINGTON AND CONCORD

1776 – Declaration of Independence

1777– Articles of Confederation