Democracy and the Revolution
when the movement became more democratic, it was against the wishes of the leaders

Politicization of the Masses

"rights of Englishmen" vs. “natural rights”

resistance movements

formal agencies

some extralegal--Stamp Act Congress in which more widespread participation was the rule

wider participation started even if not ideal
Representation

Provincial assemblies:
--2/3 had > £2,000 sterling in property
--1/3 >£5,000 sterling in property
--general population preponderantly composed of small farmers and artisans
--mass of people not electing people like themselves; electing their 'betters'.
--between 2/3 and 3/4 of gen. pop. small artisans, farmers, tradesmen
--top 10% of economic order composed 50-80% of provincial assembly
--merit equaled economic status
--by 1786 start to elect men who are more like themselves
--50% - 70% on average from the artisan class
--don't elect somebody who is better than you--deadly; abuse of power
--elite thinks that there is an "excess of democracy"
Self-Evident Truths:

--what the Revolutionary generation considered self-evident is enumerated in the “Declaration of Independence”

--articulated by John Locke

"Essay on Human Understanding"--a kind of truth that requires reasoning

--limits to self-evident truths--known only to those instructed to see the truth
--bulk of human population would never understand self-evident truths

"The People": Philosophs thought most humans stupid retches; more animalistic than human

Jefferson celebrates yeoman farmer
--he who owns land and works it for family
--when Jefferson talks of "the People," he's speaking of the yeoman
--did not favor manufacturing b/c wage-earning classes were not independent; were subject to the will of employers
--revolutionaries' statements regarding the poor were not kind
Madison on Democracy

"wise" politicians would favor a republic

two arguments in favor of a republic:

1) small # of elected officials could administer details of government

2) large geographic space

--opinions of public would be filtered through a select group of folks

--the larger the pool you have to choose from, the more likely you are to find quality officials
"All men created equal..."

--for revolutionary generation truths self-evident only to the instructed self

--all men naturally unequal in nature

--unequal in nature--wanted no social leveling

used phrases like:

--"all men by nature free and independent"
Republic v. Democracy

18th cen. | 19th cen.
---|---
--republic | --representative democracy
--inequality | --equality
--natural aristocrats | --public servants not better than us
--exclusive | --inclusive
--revolutionary generation moves from monarchy to republic, not to democracy
--democratic characteristics may have been a consequence of the Revolution, but an inadvertent consequence
Occupational Composition of Several State Assemblies in the 1780s

- Massachusetts
- New York
- Pennsylvania
- Virginia
- South Carolina

- Farmer
- Planter or large landowner
- Artist, manufacturer, miscellaneous nonfarmer
- Doctor, lawyer, other professional
- Entrepreneur, innkeeper, shopkeeper
- Merchant or trader
- Unknown

Percentages for each occupation vary across the states.

- Massachusetts: Farmer (20.0%), Planter or large landowner (47.0%), Artist, manufacturer, miscellaneous nonfarmer (7.0%), Doctor, lawyer, other professional (13.0%), Entrepreneur, innkeeper, shopkeeper (12.0%), Merchant or trader (1.0%), Unknown (1.0%)
- New York: Farmer (19.4%), Planter or large landowner (18.1%), Artist, manufacturer, miscellaneous nonfarmer (9.9%), Doctor, lawyer, other professional (8.2%), Entrepreneur, innkeeper, shopkeeper (21.7%), Merchant or trader (2.3%), Unknown (3.0%)
- Pennsylvania: Farmer (13.5%), Planter or large landowner (37.1%), Artist, manufacturer, miscellaneous nonfarmer (7.3%), Doctor, lawyer, other professional (6.6%), Entrepreneur, innkeeper, shopkeeper (21.4%), Merchant or trader (2.3%), Unknown (3.0%)
- Virginia: Farmer (6.5%), Planter or large landowner (19.9%), Artist, manufacturer, miscellaneous nonfarmer (10.0%), Doctor, lawyer, other professional (6.5%), Entrepreneur, innkeeper, shopkeeper (11.7%), Merchant or trader (14.9%), Unknown (32.4%)
- South Carolina: Farmer (11.7%), Planter or large landowner (22.3%), Artist, manufacturer, miscellaneous nonfarmer (13.8%), Doctor, lawyer, other professional (36.3%), Entrepreneur, innkeeper, shopkeeper (14.9%), Merchant or trader (32.4%), Unknown (1.6%)