American “Revolution”: A Message From Below
--defeat of slave revolts and urban insurrections of the 1730s and 1740s
  --allows slavery and maritime trade to expand
--Britain confirmed its primacy as the world’s greatest capitalist power by defeating France in the Seven Year’s War in 1763
  --protects and enlarges its lucrative colonial empire
--opens vast new territories in North America and the Caribbean
--imperial triumph at time of a new cycle of sailor and slave rebellion
--riots destabilized imperial civil society
--pushed America toward the world’s first modern colonial war for liberation
--America Revolution was neither an elite nor a national event
--the motley crew: the driving force of a revolutionary crisis in the 1760s and 1770s
   --multi-ethnic, sociopolitical formation of the 18th century port or town

Sailors:
   --led a series of rots against impressment beginning in the 1740s
   --Thomas Paine in *Common Sense* and Thomas Jefferson in the *Declaration of Independence* list impressment as a major grievance

England declared war against Spain in 1739
   --sailors battled press-gangs in every English port
“...the highest notions of the rights and liberties of Englishmen, and indeed are almost Levellers...” Admiral Peter Warren, 1745

--naval vessels pressing in the Caribbean “have had their Boats haul’d up in the Streets and going to be Burned, & their Captains insulted by 50 Arm’d Men at a time, and obliged to take shelter in some Friends House...” Commander Charles Knowles, 1743

--captain of the H.M.S. Shirley “dared not set foot on shore for four months for fear of being prosecuted...or murdered by the mob for pressing.”
Adams used the riots to formulate a new “ideology of resistance, in which the natural rights of man were used for the first time in the province to justify mob activity.”

--the mob “embodied the fundamental rights of man against which government itself could be judged.”

dilemma: how to watch a crowd of Africans, Scotsmen, Dutchmen, Irishmen, and Englishmen battle the press-gang and then describe them as being engaged simply in a struggle for the “rights of Englishmen”?

1748: “All Men are by Nature on a Level; born with an equal Share of Freedom, and endow’d with Capacities nearly alike.”
A DISCOURSE CONCERNING UNLIMITED SUBMISSION AND NON-RESISTANCE TO THE HIGHER POWERS:

With some Reflections on the Resistance made to King Charles I. and on the Anniversary of his Death:

In which the Mysterious Doctrine of that Prince's Saints'hip and Martyrdom is Unriddled.

The Substance of which was delivered in a Sermon preached in the Well Meeting House in Boston the Lord's Day after the 30th Day of January, 1649-50.

Published at the Request of the Hearers.

By JONATHAN MAYHEW, D. D., Pastor of the Well Church in Boston.

Farewell, honour the King. Saint Paul.
He that ruleth over men, must be just, ruling in the Fear of GOD.

I have said, ye are Gods—but ye shall die like Men, and fall like one of the PRINCES.

Quid sit meminisse insignis eadem? quid satis TYRANNI
Effera! Dil CAPITI ipsius GENERIQUE referentes—
Nec non Thracius longo cum acris SACERDOS
Obsequerit.—

BOSTON: Printed and Sold by D. Fowke, in Queen-street, and by D. Goodin ever against the South Meeting-house, 1750.
--not a sin to transgress an iniquitous law such as the one that legalized impressment

--agued for both civil disobedience and a right to resistance that utilized force

--passive nonresistance, he claimed, was slavery