

# THE STAMP ACT

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The British Parliament felt that it had the same right to tax American colonists as it had to tax British citizens. In their efforts to reclaim money spent on the French & Indian War, England passed the Stamp Act in 1765.

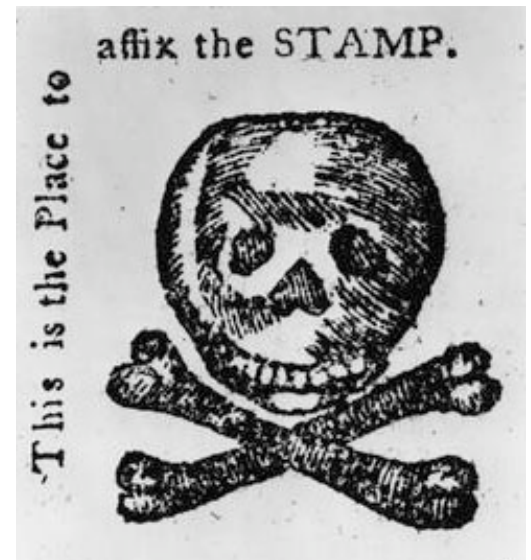
The tax stamps had to be put on 54 kinds of papers, including playing cards, newspapers, wills and licenses. The payments varied from one cent on a newspaper to ten dollars on a college diploma. The payments had to be made in gold or silver.

The actual cost of the stamp act to the colonists was relatively small. Still, the colonists began to speak out against the new taxes. Many viewed this new tax as a direct attempt by England to raise money from the colonies without approval of the colonial legislature.

Patrick Henry from Virginia spoke the loudest. He said the British Parliament made these laws, but no colonists were in the Parliament to represent the American colonies.

In October 1765 nine colonies sent people to a meeting in New York City to talk about the Stamp Act. They made the decision that the Parliament could not tax the American colonies since they had no representation in Parliament.

The colonists not only resisted the Stamp Act taxes, but also boycotted British goods to the point that Britain lost money. Within a year, the Stamp Tax was repealed.



Above: Based on the above graphic, what did colonists associate the Stamp Act with? Why?

Left: This cartoon published in a colonial paper depicts the quick repeal of the Stamp Act (it only lasted for 1 year) as a funeral, with the Stamp Act being carried in a child's coffin, marked "born 1765, died 1766." What kind of message is being sent by the American Colonists to England by such a cartoon?