

Document Group 4A

Directions for Jury #4:

- Read your grievance. Decide as a group what it is accusing the King of and record that information on your Evidence Worksheet.
- Read each of your primary and secondary sources. Complete the Primary Source Analyzing Sheet that goes with it and then record which side it seems to support on your Evidence Worksheet. This will go quicker if your jury divides the sources and then shares the information gathered as a group.
- Share all collected information and discuss which side is MORE supported by the evidence given.
- On your evidence Worksheet, come up with your final verdict. Did the Colonists have a valid reason for including this grievance in the Declaration of Independence, or did the King have valid reasons for committing this “crime?” Is the grievance GUILTY or NOT GUILTY of falsely accusing the King? Be sure to use evidence from your sources to support your answer.

Excerpt from the Declaration of Independence

Grievance #4:

For imposing taxes on us without our consent

Primary Sources:

- Stamp Act
- Townshend Act
- Tar and Feathering instructions
- Political Cartoon

Secondary Sources:

- History of US “A Taxing King”



Document Group 4B

The Stamp Act, March 22, 1765

An act for granting and applying certain stamp duties, and other duties, in the British colonies and plantations in America, towards further [paying] the expenses of defending, protecting, and securing the same...

[Description and price of stamp duty on different types of paper, including]:

For every pack of such cards, the sum of one shilling.

And for every pair of such dice, the sum of ten shillings.

For every pamphlet and paper being larger than one whole sheet, and not exceeding six sheets...a duty after the rate of one shilling for every sheet of any kind of paper which shall be contained in one printed copy thereof.

For every advertisement to be contained in any gazette, news paper, or other paper, or any pamphlet which shall be so printed, a duty of two shillings.

[Commissioners are allowed to hire people to help collect the duty]

[Anyone caught forging the stamp shall be guilty of a felony and shall suffer death]

An Act Repealing the Stamp Act; March 18, 1766

Whereas an Act was passed in the last session of Parliament entitled, [The Stamp Act] and whereas the continuance of the said Act would be attended with many inconveniencies, and may be productive of consequences greatly detrimental to the commercial interests of these kingdoms; may it therefore please your most excellent Majesty...by and with the advice and consent of ...Parliament...that from and after the first day of May, one thousand seven hundred and sixty-six, the above-mentioned Act... shall be, and is and are hereby repealed...

THE TOWNSHEND REVENUE ACT

June 29, 1767

The Townshend Acts were a series of acts passed beginning in 1767 by the Parliament of Great Britain. The acts are named for Charles Townshend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who proposed the program. Historians vary slightly in which acts they include under the heading "Townshend Acts", but five laws are frequently mentioned: the Revenue Act of 1767, the Indemnity Act, the Commissioners of Customs Act, the Vice Admiralty Court Act, and the New York Restraining Act.

The purpose of the Townshend Acts was to raise revenue in the colonies to pay the salaries of governors and judges so that they would be independent of colonial control, to create a more effective means of enforcing compliance with trade regulations, to punish the province of New York for failing to comply with the 1765 Quartering Act, and to establish the precedent that the British Parliament had the right to tax the colonies. The Townshend Acts met with resistance in the colonies, prompting the occupation of Boston by British troops in 1768, which eventually resulted in the Boston Massacre of 1770.

Tar'd and Feather'd'

Beginning in 1765 with colonial opposition to the Stamp Act and continuing through the Revolutionary War, a number of men were "tar'd and feather'd." The statements in this resource describe what was typically done to someone who underwent this punishment. These descriptions reveal that being tarred and feathered was rarely all that was done to the person. Often they were paraded about the town or treated with disrespect in other ways. Although rare, women were also subjected to this treatment. There is no record of the total number of Tories (i.e., Loyalists) or rebels who were treated in this way. Consequently, we cannot accurately estimate the number who were killed because of the tarring and feathering process or the acts subsequent to feathering.

"First strip a person naked, then heat the Tar until it is thin, and pour it upon the naked Flesh, or rub it over with a Tar Brush. . . . After which, sprinkle decently upon the Tar, whilst it is yet warm, as many Feathers as will stick to it. Then hold a lighted Candle to the Feathers, and try to set it all on Fire; if it will burn so much the better. But as the Experiment is often made in cold Weather, it will not then succeed--take also an Halter and put it round the Person's neck, and then cart him the Rounds [meaning around to certain places in the community and put on public display]."

At this point the person was usually taken about the streets of the town in a cart surrounded by shouting people. In some cases he might be placed in the stocks, hanged or beaten. If he survived, he was finally left on his own. Most who got this far were barely alive, exhausted and severely burned. The tar was extremely difficult to get off the badly burned skin, which often got infected. Those that survived could not be helped by anyone. Giving comfort or first aid to a survivor often would result in the helper being attacked.

Tarring and feathering was done not only by people who opposed the Crown and actions of Parliament. For example, in March 1775 Crown troops and Loyalists in Boston tarred and feathered a countryman. Holt's New York Journal, March 30, describes the events a reporter witnessed followed by his opinions of what took place:

"After stripping him naked and covering him with tar and feathers, they mounted him on a one-horse truck, and surrounding the truck with a guard of twenty soldiers with fixed bayonets, accompanied with all the drums and fifes of the regiment and a number of officers, negroes, and sailors, exhibited him as a spectacle through the principal streets of the town. They fixed a label on the man's back, on which was written AMERICAN LIBERTY, or A SPECIMEN OF DEMOCRACY; and to add insult they played Yankee Doodle:--Oh Britain, how art thou fallen? Is it not enough that British troops, who were once the terror of France and Spain, should be made the instruments of butchering thy children! But must they

descend also to exploits too infamously dirty for any but the meanest of the mobility to practice? What a wretched figure will the Boston expedition hereafter make in the historic page!"

Questions:

1. What might cause a person or a group to tar and feather another human being?
2. What would be the purpose of tarring and feathering another human being?

