

Government: How did they govern themselves locally and as colonies? Was there an infrastructure for government? What were their ideas on government?

Note: Voting at this time was not by secret ballot, but by stating aloud the name of the person that you favored.

Issue	New England (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI)	Middle Colonies (DE, MD, NY, NJ, PA)	South (GA, MD, NC, SC, VA)
What were some examples of local government and town organization? What about ownership of property and involvement of the population in the well-being of the local community?	New Englanders had meetinghouse and centralized community. Annual “town meetings,” where they selected governing group. Widespread ownership of land, plus 1630s voting granted based on church membership; 40% colony’s males could vote.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dispersed population. Land ownership more difficult, plus stable incomes required owning slaves. With economic limitations and dependency, came political dependency. Bacon’s Rebellion was partly the landless indentured servants being disenfranchised.
What happened in the English colonies with both local and colonial government?	Colonial assemblies with most governors royally appointed. Council declined in power in 1700s and assemblies increased, primarily because of “power of purse” as the governors needed money for colonial wars. Size of franchise was large because most owned land – therefore hard to control the electorate, who could throw out those who did not listen.		
What was different about the colonies and criticism of government compared to the British tradition?	1730s – John Peter Zenger, newspaper editor, criticized the royal governor of NY. Attorney Andrew Hamilton argued successfully that criticism of government, if true, isn’t libelous. Result: “Last colonial printer prosecuted by the royal authorities” (p. 859 of Boyer’s Oxford Companion to United States History). The royal government in New York took the position held by the British traditions. The colonial jury did not. This is a sign of the developing American recognition that a free and attentive press is essential for small-r republicanism and small-d democracy.		
What was different about the colonial and British governmental systems?	Colonies – 50-75% white males – qualified voters (compared to England with 15-30%). Colonies – direct representation (compared to England’s “virtual representation”)		