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The Progress of Inequality in Revolutionary Boston

Allan Kulikoff*

ON February 2, 1785, the *Massachusetts Centinel* in Boston complained that "We daily see men speculating, with impunity, on the most essential articles of life, and grinding the faces of the poor and laborious as if there was no God," yet five months later to the day, Sam Adams wrote to his cousin John, "You would be surprizd to see the Equipage, the Furniture and expensive Living of too many, the Pride and Vanity of Dress which pervades thro every Class, confounding every Distinction between the Poor and the Rich."² As these quotations suggest, opinion divided sharply in post-Revolutionary Boston on the direction of major social change, and impressionistic evidence can be found to sustain a broad range of interpretation. Relying on this material, historians have perpetuated the contemporary diversity of opinion. Scholars of the Progressive era, like J. Franklin Jameson, tended to agree with Adams that the Revolution had a leveling effect, while more recent studies have found some change as whigs replaced tories and a new propertied class emerged, but less democratization than had been supposed.²

This essay attempts to discover the magnitude of change in Boston from 1771 to 1790 by testing controllable, quantitative materials to answer the following questions: How did the town's occupational structure change? Did the distribution of wealth become more or less equal? How closely related were wealth and status? Did political power become more democratically shared? By how much did population increase?

* Mr. Kulikoff is a graduate student at Brandeis University. He would like to thank Stuart Blumin, M. I. T.; John Demos, Marvin Meyers, and members of the graduate seminar, Brandeis University; Kenneth Lockridge, University of Michigan; and Paul Kleppner and Alfred Young, Northern Illinois University, for their advice and criticism. David Fischer, Brandeis University, who directed the paper, made numerous helpful criticisms.

¹ *Massachusetts Centinel* (Boston), Feb. 2, 1785; Samuel Adams to John Adams, July 2, 1785, *The Writings of Samuel Adams*, ed. Harry Alonzo Cushing, IV (New York, 1908), 315-316.

² J. Franklin Jameson, *The American Revolution Considered As a Social Movement* (Princeton, 1926); Richard D. Brown, "The Confiscation and Disposition of Loyalists' Estates in Suffolk County, Massachusetts," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser., XXI (1964), 534-550, surveys the relevant historiography.

What social and economic patterns of residence could be found? What changes occurred in the rate of geographic and economic mobility?

✓ / Before the Revolution, Boston had been an intensely unequal society. Wealthy men of high status dominated government and social life. The top 10 per cent of the taxpayers in 1771 owned nearly two-thirds of the wealth and held most of the important town offices. While demanding respect from the poor, many of the wealthy lived in the center of town, ✓ segregated from the impoverished. Poorer men possessed no significant political power, but held numerous minor town offices. And largely because many poor men and women were migrating from nearby towns, the poor in Boston were becoming more numerous.³ These trends continued and accelerated during the war and the Confederation period. Not a less stratified, but an even more unequal society developed in Boston \ after the Revolution.

Late eighteenth-century Boston was a typical "consumer city" in Max Weber's phrase. It was a town of under 20,000 inhabitants in which "the purchasing power of its larger consumers rests on the retail for profit of foreign products on the local market . . . the foreign sale for profit of local products or goods obtained by native producers . . . or the purchase of foreign products and their sale . . . outside."⁴

The economy of Boston still rested squarely on foreign trade. Close to a quarter of her workers—merchants, mariners, captains, chandlers, and wharfingers—earned their livelihood from commerce. Another 15 per cent were indirectly concerned with trade. Retailers sold and distributed foreign goods; coopers made barrels bound for the sea; laborers supplied the manpower necessary to unload ships; and distillers used foreign sugar in their product.

Unlike Weber's "producer city," Boston was not an exporter of the goods she produced.⁵ Most of those not engaged in commerce produced goods and services for the local market. No industrial group included large numbers of workers. About 7 per cent worked with cloth, 4 per

³ James A. Henretta, "Economic Development and Social Structure in Colonial Boston," *Wm. and Mary Qly.*, 3d Ser., XXII (1965), 75-92.

⁴ Max Weber, *The City*, trans. and ed. Don Martindale and Gertrud Neuwirth (New York, 1958), 69.

⁵ *Ibid.* Philadelphia closely resembled a "producer city." See James T. Lemon, "Urbanization and the Development of Eighteenth-Century Southeastern Pennsylvania and Adjacent Delaware," *Wm. and Mary Qly.*, 3d Ser., XXIV (1967), 504-510.

TABLE I
BOSTON'S OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE, 1790^a

<i>Occupational Group</i>	<i>Number in Group</i>	<i>Number of Trades in Group</i>	<i>Percentage of Work Force</i>
Government Officials	67	4	2.6
Professionals ^b	105	8	4.1
Merchants-Traders	224	3	8.7
Retailers	184	7	7.1
Sea Captains	114	1	4.4
Other Business ^c	66	6	2.6
Clerks and Scribes	66	2	2.6
Building Crafts	245	7	9.3
Cloth Trades	182	8	7.1
Leather Crafts	113	5	5.1
Food Trades	175	11	6.8
Marine Crafts	219	13	8.5
Metal Crafts	132	11	5.1
Woodworkers	106	7	4.1
Other Artisans	105	35	4.1
Transportation Service	80	6	3.2
Mariners	103	4	4.0
Unskilled	188	4	7.4
Total Artisans	1,271	96	49.1
Total Other	1,314	49	50.9
Total Employed	2,585	145	100.0
Servants (white)	63		
Unemployed and Retired ^d	106		
Total	2,754		

Notes: ^a Boston Tax Taking and Rate Books, 1790, City Hall, Boston, Mass. Hereafter cited as Tax and Rate Books, 1790. These records were checked with the Boston city directories for 1789 and 1796, *Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston* (Boston, 1876-1909), X, 171-296. Hereafter cited as *Record Commissioners' Report*. A total accounting of each trade is found in the Appendix.

^b Includes 20 untaxed clergymen counted in Thomas Pemberton, "A Topographical and Historical Description of Boston, 1794," *Massachusetts Historical Society, Collections*, 1st Ser., III (1794), 256-264.

^c Includes groups such as wharfingers, chandlers, brokers, and auctioneers.

^d Includes 23 gentlemen, 27 poor, 28 sick and poor, and 28 little or no business.

cent with leather, and 5 per cent with metals. Construction workers were under a tenth of all those employed. The small proportion of innkeepers (3 per cent) and men in the food trades (7 per cent) showed that Boston was not a major food market; nor had a large bureaucracy developed, since only 3 per cent of the labor force was employed in government—and many of these worked only part-time.

Large enterprises were uncommon: the median number of workers in ninety-six artisan crafts was only three, and the mean number thirteen. The typical middling artisan employed his sons and several other workers. These young apprentices and journeymen lived with the families of master craftsmen, not alone in rented rooms.⁶

There was an excess population in the working ages, composed mostly of women and including many widows, who were outside the occupational structure. Between 1765 and 1800, the proportion of people in the productive ages above fifteen years increased by 17 per cent, thereby providing workers for any factories that might open. There were 19 per cent more women than men of working age in 1765, and 14 per cent more in 1800. About a tenth of these women were widows, and three-quarters of them supported dependents.⁷

⁶ Tax and Rate Books, 1790, compared with *Heads of Families At the First Census, 1790. Massachusetts* (Washington, 1906), 188-195; and "Names of the Inhabitants of the Town of Boston in 1790," *Record Commissioners' Report*, XXII, 443-511. Numerous dependent males over 16 years of age are found in the census, but not in the tax lists. Almost all of them were in homes of artisans of middling wealth. This suggests that many of them were transient journeymen and apprentices and not older sons hidden from the assessor. Tax and census records are the source for any uncited comments.

⁷ Lemuel Shattuck, *Report to the Committee of the City Council Appointed to Obtain the Census of Boston for the Year 1845, . . .* (Boston, 1846), 4, 45. A sample of every sixth column of the Washington edition of the census was checked for widows; three-quarters had dependents. Joseph J. Spengler, "Demographic Factors and Early Modern Economic Development," *Daedalus*, XCVII (1968), 440-443, defines productive ages as from 15 to 65 years. Data in Shattuck does not allow such fine distinctions, but the percentage of people over 65 is probably too small to materially change the following statistics:

Age Ratios	Percentage over 15 yrs. old			Sex Ratios	Number of Men/100 Women		
	1765	1790	1800		1765	1790	1800
Total	44.30	...	61.93	All ages	95.48	82.07	90.27
Male	41.71	56.13	60.42	Over 15	81.42	...	86.14
Female	47.26	...	63.31				

Two small factories were operating in 1790, but they were not part of a general industrialization, and only one of them utilized this surplus laboring population. At a "duck cloth manufactory" employing four hundred workers in 1792, there were only seventeen male employees two years before. A few of the others were young girls; the rest were women. The factory had been established to promote American manufactures and at the same time to aid the poor. According to the *Massachusetts Centinel* in 1788, it and a small glass works "promise soon to be completed and to give employment to a great number of persons, especially females who now eat the bread of idleness, whereby they may gain an honest livelihood." By 1800, the duckcloth factory was out of business.⁸

About three-quarters of the one thousand workers in the other large enterprise, a cotton and wool card factory, were children. About a fifth of all the children in Boston from eight to sixteen years of age were probably employed there. The owners chose to hire them rather than women, since children could easily run the machinery and were paid less.⁹

At least until 1820, Boston's occupational structure remained close to the "consumer city" model. Less than one-tenth of 1 per cent of men listed in the 1820 directory were manufacturers, and the proportion of merchants, retailers, and building tradesmen remained almost the same. Domestic commerce was becoming more important as foreign trade declined. A reduction in the percentage of mariners, captains, and marine tradesmen from 17.4 per cent in 1790 to 10.6 per cent in 1820 illustrates the trend. Meanwhile, the town had become more important as a food market, with the proportion of men in the food trades climbing from 6.8 per cent to 10.7 per cent.¹⁰

Most of Boston's taxable wealth—real estate, stock in trade, and income from trade¹¹—rested in fewer and fewer hands as time passed.

⁸ *Mass. Centinel* (Boston), Sept. 6, 1788, quoted in William R. Bagnall, *The Textile Industries of the United States*, . . . (Cambridge, Mass., 1893), 112-116; Pemberton, "Description of Boston," *Mass. Hist. Soc., Collections*, 1st Ser., III (1794), 252-253, 279; Samuel Breck to Henry Knox, Sept. 12, 1790, Knox Papers, *Mass. Hist. Soc.*, Boston.

⁹ Nathaniel Cutting, "Extracts from a Journal of a Gentleman visiting Boston in 1792," Sept. 6, 1792, *Mass. Hist. Soc., Proceedings*, 1st Ser., XII (1871-1873), 61-62.

¹⁰ See Table I; David Reed, Membership in the Massachusetts Peace Society, 1816-1820 (unpubl. seminar paper, Brandeis University, 1968), 60-63.

¹¹ *The Acts and Resolves, Public and Private, of the Province of Massachusetts Bay*, V (Boston, 1886), 1163, 1165.

Boston followed a pattern similar to both American towns and rural areas. Although in the seventeenth century wealth in American towns was typically less concentrated than in sixteenth-century English towns, where the poorer half of the population owned less than a tenth of the wealth and the richest tenth owned between half and seven-tenths, the English pattern soon reappeared in America and intensified.¹²

TABLE II
A. DISTRIBUTION OF TAXABLE WEALTH IN BOSTON, 1790^a

<i>Assessment in Pounds</i>	<i>Number in Category</i>	<i>Percentage of Taxpayers in Category</i>	<i>Wealth in Category in Pounds</i>	<i>Percentage of Wealth in Category</i>
0	892	29.8	0	0.0
25	388	12.9	9,700	1.0
26-50	240	8.0	11,162	1.2
51-75	148	4.9	11,012	1.2
76-100	167	5.6	16,662	1.8
101-150	186	6.2	24,938	2.7
151-200	147	4.9	27,887	3.0
201-300	186	6.2	49,113	5.3
301-400	128	4.3	46,713	5.0
401-500	116	3.9	54,300	5.9
501-700	124	4.1	75,775	8.3
701-999	71	2.4	58,775	6.1
1000-1,999	122	4.1	159,875	17.2
2000-4,999	58	1.9	165,250	17.8
5000+	22	0.8	217,775	23.5
Totals	2,995	100.0	928,937	100.0

¹² W. G. Hoskins, *Provincial England* (London, 1963), 90-91; J. F. Pound, "The Social and Trade Structure of Norwich 1525-1575," *Past and Present*, No. 34 (July 1966), 50-53; Donald Warner Koch, "Income Distribution and Political Structure in Seventeenth-Century Salem, Massachusetts," *Essex Institute Historical Collections*, CV (1969), 54, 59; James T. Lemon and Gary B. Nash, "The Distribution of Wealth in Eighteenth Century America: A Century of Changes in Chester County, Pennsylvania, 1693-1802," *Journal of Social History*, II (1968-1969), 9-12; Stuart Blumin,

B. DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH IN BOSTON, 1687 TO 1830^b

Percentage of Taxpayers	Percentage of Wealth Held			
	1687	1771	1790	1830
Bottom 30	2.48	0.10	0.03	0.00
Low-Mid 30	11.29	9.43	4.80	7.92
Upper-Mid 30	39.63	27.01	30.47	26.94
Top 10	46.60	63.46	64.70	65.14
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Top 1%	9.51	25.98	27.14	26.15
Schutz Coefficient	.4896	.5541	.6276	.6370

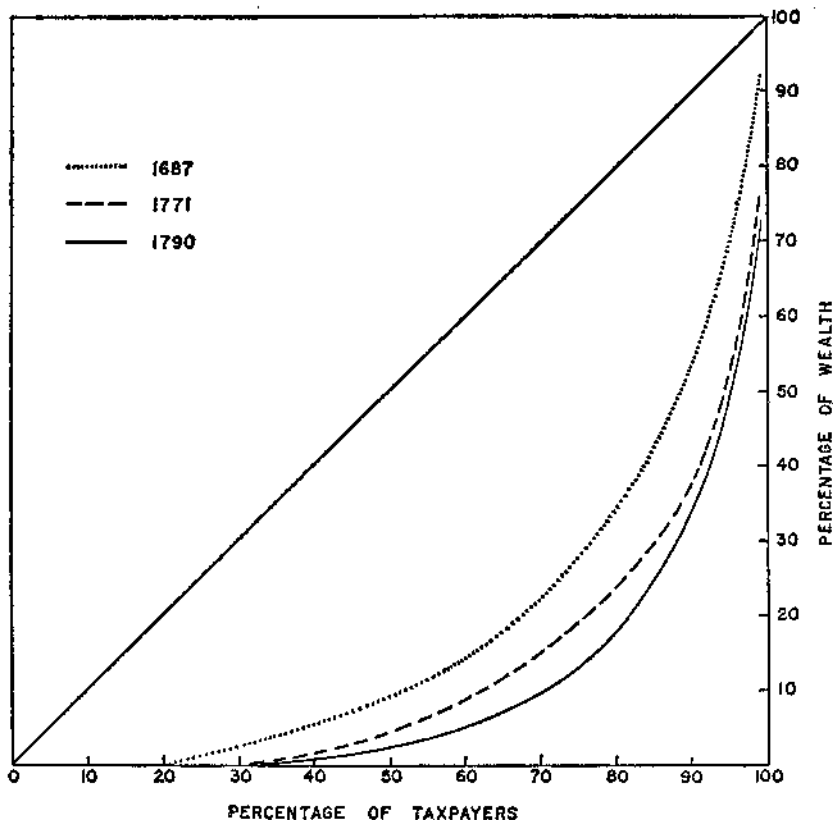
Notes: ^a Tax and Rate Books, 1790. Group at 0 paid only poll tax; £25 was the first assessment. Untaxed widows found on the census are not included.

^b See Table II A for 1790 figures; 1687 and 1771 figures are from Henretta, "Economic Development and Social Structure," *Wm. and Mary Qtr.*, 3d Ser., XXII (1965), 80, 82, with those paying only poll tax added; 1830 figures were estimated from imprecise, grouped data in Shattuck, *Report*, 95. The Schutz coefficient of inequality measures income concentration—0 equals total equality, 1 total inequality. Robert R. Schutz, "On the Measurement of Income Inequality," *American Economic Review*, XLI (1951), 107-122; Blumin, "Mobility and Change," in Thernstrom and Sennett, eds., *Nineteenth-Century Cities*, 204.

From 1687 to 1790, Boston's wealth became very concentrated. A glance at the Lorenz curves shows that the amount of change between 1687 and 1771 was similar to that between 1771 and 1790. Statistically, changes in the distribution of wealth measured by increases in the Schutz coefficient (see Table II B) were greater between 1771 and 1790 (.0735) than during the preceding 87 years (.0647). However, the proportion of wealth held by the richest tenth of the taxpayers had almost reached its peak by 1771 and 29 per cent were without taxable property both before and after the Revolution. The wealth of the lower middle group, where assessments

"Mobility and Change in Antebellum Philadelphia," in Stephan Thernstrom and Richard Sennett, eds., *Nineteenth-Century Cities: Essays in the New Urban History* (New Haven, 1969), 204-206; Robert E. Gallman, "Trends in the Size Distribution of Wealth in the Nineteenth Century," in Lee Soltow, ed., *Six Papers on the Size Distribution of Wealth and Income* (New York, 1969), 22-23; Merle Curti, *The Making of an American Community: A Case Study of Democracy in a Frontier County* (Stanford, Calif., 1959), 78.

Chart I
Distribution of Wealth in Boston, 1687-1790^a



Note: ^aDrawn from Table II. The diagonal indicates an equal distribution; the area between the dotted and dashed lines shows change between 1687 and 1771; and the space between the dashed and solid lines shows change between 1771 and 1790.

ranged from £25 to £100, was cut in half. Three-quarters of this decline was gained by the upper middle group, assessed between £100 and £500.

The sale of forty-six loyalist estates in Suffolk County to ninety-six men, two-thirds of whom already owned land in the county, had little effect on the overall distribution. The sale may have permitted a few poorer

men to enter the upper middle group, but the small gain in wealth between 1771 and 1790 made by the top tenth suggests that a wealthy group of patriots replaced an equally wealthy group of Tories.¹³

Were the relatively poor becoming poorer? Brissot de Warville discovered full employment in Boston in 1788 and "saw none of those livid, ragged wretches that one sees in Europe, who, soliciting our compassion at the foot of the altar, seem to bear witness . . . against our inhumanity."¹⁴ Brissot's European standard of comparison allowed him to underestimate the extent of poverty in Boston. At this time, a fifth to a third of those living in English and French towns were beggars, paupers, and others who could not make a living for themselves. Another third were the near poor of the English towns and the *sans-culottes* and *menu peuple* in French towns—persons who could become destitute in times of crisis.¹⁵

The poor and near poor were growing more numerous in Boston. The percentage of poor can be roughly estimated at 7 per cent of the population in 1771 and 10 per cent in 1790. The change is illustrated by the slow increase in the numbers of destitute, old, and sick men and women, and dependent children in the poorhouse at a time of relatively little population increase (see Table V): 146 in 1742, never over 180 before the Revolution, and 250 in August 1790, with 300 to 400 expected the following winter.¹⁶ Because personal property was not taxed, it is difficult to determine the percentage of near poor, but an estimate can be made.¹⁷ Composed of widows, blacks, seamen, laborers, and poorer arti-

¹³ Brown, "Confiscation of Loyalists' Estates," *Wm. and Mary Q. J.*, 3d Ser., XXI (1964), 546-549.

¹⁴ Jacques Pierre Brissot de Warville, *New Travels in the United States of America, 1788*, trans. Mara Soceanu Varnos and Durand Echeverria, ed. Durand Echeverria (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), 87, 98-100.

¹⁵ In this paper, "poor" refers to the destitute, "near poor" to those living at or near the minimum level of subsistence. For Europe see Hoskins, *Provincial England*, 90-93; Hoskins, *Industry, Trade and People in Exeter, 1688-1800*, . . . (Manchester, Eng., 1935), 119; Pound, "Structure of Norwich," *Past and Present*, No. 34 (July 1966), 50-51; George Rudé, "La population ouvrière de Paris de 1789 à 1791," *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*, XXXIX (1967), 21-27; Jeffrey Kappelow, "Sur la population flottante de Paris, à la fin de l'Ancien Régime," *ibid.*, 7-8; Pierre Deyon, *Amiens, Capitale Provinciale. Etude sur la Société Urbaine au 17^e Siècle* (Paris, 1967), 349-357. I am indebted to Gerald Soliday, Brandeis University, for the French materials.

¹⁶ See Table VI; *Record Commissioners' Report*, XXXI, 239.

¹⁷ Since the total amount of property remains unknown, any "poverty line" chosen from Table II would be arbitrary. Instead, estimates of poor have been calculated by adding poorhouse and unemployed figures from Table I and of near poor

sans who might dip below the minimum level of subsistence when unemployment increased, this group probably ranged from 30 to 40 per cent in 1771 and from 37 to 47 per cent in 1790.

Unemployed, old, or sick, most of the poor and their families lived outside the poorhouse. Alexander Lord, a poor laborer, had "gone broke, wife as broke"; they had a son under sixteen to share their misery. Jacob Bull, an old shoemaker, and his wife were both ill, but two other women lived in their household. And Samuel Goddard, "shoemaker, no business, poor and supported by charity," could provide his family of five with few comforts.¹⁸ Only the very old, the totally destitute, and the terminally ill entered the poorhouse, for the social conditions there steadily declined. In 1790, the poorhouse was filthy, dark, crowded, and odoriferous. "Persons of every description and disease are lodged under the same roof and in some instances in the same or Contiguous Apartments, by which means the sick are disturbed, by the Noise of the healthy, and the infirm rendered liable to the Vices and diseases of the diseased, and profligate."¹⁹

The lives of the near poor were only somewhat better than those of the poor. While the number of people per dwelling declined from 9.53 in 1742 to 7.58 in 1790 (see Table V), many of the near poor lived in grossly inferior housing. The tax assessors found 90 families living in single rooms. Sixty-five of the same families were also counted by the census taker; three-quarters of this group had families of fewer than five members. Joseph Blayner, carpenter, lived with his wife and two children in a kitchen chamber while John Cartwright, cooper, his eight children, wife, and a boarder, crowded into the back of a house. Elijah Tolams, a "very poor carpenter," lived in one room with his three children, and Ebenezer Pilsbury, shoemaker, slept and worked with his six children in only two rooms.

There was a close relationship between wealth and status. Although status was not legally defined as in England, and the reputations of vari-

by adding the number of widows from the census to the number of persons without taxable property and of those in the lowest category of taxpayers. A fifth of the propertyless and 15% of the lowest category have been subtracted from the near poor figure to account for upward mobility. The figures, especially for 1771, are very rough, but the direction of change they indicate is accurate, and the estimates are minimal figures of the extent of poverty.

¹⁸ "Gone broke, wife as broke," and all similar short comments are marginalia from the Tax and Rate Books, 1790.

¹⁹ *Record Commissioners' Report*, XXXI, 239.

ous trades were unstable,²⁰ the order of precedence in a parade honoring President Washington in 1789 gives some indication of the prestige of various groups. The military, town and state officers, professional men, merchants and traders, and sea captains led the parade. They were followed by forty-six different artisan crafts, "alphabetically disposed, in order to give general satisfaction." No mechanical art was deemed better than the next. Sailors brought up the rear, and laborers were not included in the line of march.²¹

As Table III shows, the eleven wealthiest occupations included professional men of high status, merchants, retailers, along with several arti-

TABLE III
MEAN ASSESSED WEALTH OF SELECTED OCCUPATIONS IN BOSTON, 1790^a

Rank	Occupation	Mean Assessment in Pounds	Number of Persons in Category
1	Merchant	1,707	206
2	Lawyer	846	21
3	Doctor	795	26
4	Apothecary	657	17
5	Distiller	642	47
6	Broker	622	16
7	Retailer	601	133
8	Taverner	522	26
9	Grocer	472	33
10	Chandler	347	17
11	Wharfinger	335	24
12	Tobacconist	260	17
13	Boarder-keeper	258	24
14	Printer	247	17
15	Sea Captain	240	114
16	Hatter	233	29
17	Clerk	232	28
18	Chaisemaker	188	16
19	Baker	170	64
20	Goldsmith	166	23
21	Painter	154	34

²⁰ Jackson Turner Main, *The Social Structure of Revolutionary America* (Princeton, 1965), *passim*, esp. 200-211.

²¹ Committee to Arrange a Procession, *Procession* (Boston, 1789).

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Mean Assessment in Pounds</i>	<i>Number of Persons in Category</i>
22	Cabinetmaker	131	15
23	Cooper	130	70
24	Founder	120	15
25	Sailmaker	112	30
26	Mason	95	44
27	Carpenter	92	140
28	Schoolmaster	89	16
29	Truckman	84	50
30	Blacksmith	83	59
31	Shipwright	78	65
32	Scribe	77	38
33	Barber	65	42
34	Blockmaker	63	16
35	Tailor	61	100
36	Caulker	53	14
37	Sea Cooper	46	16
38	Shoemaker	45	78
39	Mate	41	20
40	Ropemaker ^a	35	37
41	Duckcloth maker	25	16
42	Fisherman	15	37
43	Sailor	9	58
44	Laborer	6	157

Notes: ^a Computed from Tax and Rate Books, 1790.

^b Excludes 5 ropewalk owners with a mean wealth of £760.

san trades. Most of those in the economic elite—men assessed over £1,000—were in these groups. Sea captains, with a mean wealth of £240, were lower on the list than their status might indicate. Most others whose wealth fell between £100 and £260 were artisans. Immediately below a mean of £100 were the building trades, schoolmasters, and shipwrights. Other sea artisans, and such traditionally poorer trades as tailor, shoemaker, and barber, fell between £40 and £75. Bringing up the rear were the industrial trades of ropemaker and duckcloth maker, and mariners and laborers.

An analysis of variance showed a highly significant relationship be-

tween occupation and wealth, but the magnitude of this relationship was small. Only about 19.4 per cent of the variations in the wealth of all the individuals included in Table III was accounted for by differences between occupations. The rest of the variation was within each occupation.²² In most trades, a few men had wealth far above the group mean; a number of hatters, printers, and bakers, for example, owned large establishments. As a result, in all but three trades below chaisemaker on the table, the median wealth was fifty pounds or less. Most fishermen, sailors, and laborers had no taxable wealth at all.

Those who possessed the highest status, reputation, and wealth expected visible differences of "Equipage, Furniture, . . . and Dress" between themselves and the rest of society. They socialized mostly with each other and separated themselves from the masses by forming exclusive organizations. One of these, a dinner club that encouraged members to relax and enjoy good conversation, was open to only sixteen men, each admitted by a unanimous vote. Another, the Massachusetts Historical Society, was incorporated in 1794 by ministers, doctors, lawyers, and a scientist to diffuse historical learning. This group limited its membership to thirty.²³

Wealthy artisans were granted substantial respect. In the parade honoring President Washington, each trade was led by a member whose wealth averaged 225 per cent more than the mean wealth of his group: the leader of the tailors, Samuel Ballard, was assessed £500; goldsmith

²² An F test was significant at less than the .01 level. This means there is less than a 1% chance that the differences shown in Table III are random. The test is a comparison of two quantities: 1. the sum of the squared variations of each case in each occupation subtracted from the group mean; and 2. the sum of the squared variations of each group subtracted from the grand mean. Eta^2 , calculated from the same data, tests the strength or degree of relationship. In this case, Eta^2 was .194, which means that about 19.4% of the difference between the means in Table III is accounted for by the differences between occupational groups. See Herbert M. Blalock, Jr., *Social Statistics* (New York, 1960), 242-252, 255-257. Stuart Blumin's calculations of Eta^2 on Philadelphia data from 1860 were almost identical (.17). "The Historical Study of Vertical Mobility," *Historical Methods Newsletter*, I, No. 4 (Sept. 1968), 8-10.

²³ Brissot de Warville, *New Travels*, 90; *Handbook of the Massachusetts Historical Society* (Boston, 1949), 1-3. On the continuation of deference see Josiah P. Quincy, "Social Life in Boston: From the Adoption of the Federal Constitution to the Granting of the City Charter," in Justin Winsor, ed., *The Memorial History of Boston, Including Suffolk County, Massachusetts, 1630-1880*, IV (1886), 2, 4; David Hackett Fischer, *The Revolution of American Conservatism: The Federalist Party in the Era of Jeffersonian Democracy* (New York, 1965), xiv-xv, 4-10.

Benjamin Bert, £400; shoemaker Samuel Bangs, £500; and carpenter William Crafts, £400. Nathaniel Balch, who was assessed £925, not only led his fellow hatters in the parade, but his shop was described as "the principle lounge even of the finest people in the town. Governor Hancock himself would happen into this popular resort, ready for a joke or a political discussion with Balch."²⁴

While poorer groups were expected to defer to the elite, they in turn were accorded little respect. Not only did poorer artisans have less status than those who were richer, the elite tolerated insults and attacks on black men and old black women by lower-class whites. Prince Hall, leader of the black masonic lodge, nevertheless urged Boston's Negroes to ignore their white attackers and trust "men born and bred in Boston," because we "had rather suffer wrong than to do wrong, to the disturbance of the community and the disgrace of our reputation."²⁵

Did the elite demonstrate any sense of social responsibility toward the poor? Noblesse oblige was practically nonexistent. The Massachusetts Humane Society, founded mainly to save people from drowning, chose to build three small huts on islands where shipwrecks were common, rather than aid the poor sailors who populated Boston's North End.²⁶ Men often complained to the assessors that they were poor, sick, lame, or had "little or no business." The only relief granted them was tax abatement; seventy men found on both the 1790 census and 1790 tax lists paid no taxes.

However, benevolence to widows was considered a community responsibility. A husband's death, commented one minister, "deprives a weak and helpless woman . . . of the sole instrument of her support, the guide of her children's youth, and their only earthly dependance."²⁷ Any charity granted by town or church went to them. The overseers of

²⁴ *Independent Chronicle* (Boston), Oct. 28, 1789 (I am indebted to Alfred Young for the source); Samuel Breck, *Recollections of Samuel Breck with Passages from His Note-Books (1771-1862)* (London, 1877), 108.

²⁵ Prince Hall, *A Charge Delivered to the African Lodge . . .* (Boston, 1797), 10-11; and Hall, *A Charge Delivered to the Brethren of the African Lodge . . .* (Boston, 1792). About half the blacks were servants and therefore had little choice but to be respectful.

²⁶ M. A. DeWolfe Howe, *The Humane Society of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: An Historical Review, 1785-1916* (Boston, 1918), Chaps. 1-2; *The Institution of the Humane Society of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts . . .* (Boston, 1788).

²⁷ Peter Thacher, *A Sermon, Preached in Boston, . . .* (Boston, 1795), 13.

the poor distributed minimal aid from bequests. In 1787, for example, they gave money to sixty-six different widows, most receiving nine or twelve shillings, and only fifteen women were helped more than once. The First Church, perhaps typical, collected donations for the poor quarterly and on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Several dozen women received a pittance of two or three shillings each month from this money.²⁸

Who held political office in Boston after the Revolution? In pre-Revolutionary Boston, wealthy men of high social status monopolized important positions. Minor offices went to those of less wealth and status and gave their holders a sense of belonging in the community. After the Revolution, recent research indicates, the Massachusetts legislature included more moderately wealthy men than before the war.²⁹ Did Boston officeholding become more widely distributed?

TABLE IV
ASSESSED WEALTH OF BOSTON OFFICEHOLDERS, 1790^a

Office	Mean Wealth	Median Wealth	Number in Group
State Legislators	4,044	1,750	9
Overseers of Poor	3,398	1,610	12
Fire Wards	2,850	1,350	15
School Committee	1,633	1,000	9
Clerks of Market	954	875	12
Selectmen	642	500	9
Cullers of Hoops and Staves	208	175	21
Assessors, Collectors	207	200	9
Fire Companies	125	50	138
Constables	115	75	12
Surveyors of Boards	78	50	15

Note: ^a Tax and Rate Books, 1790; *Record Commissioners' Report*, XXXI, 217-224; X, 207-211. Information for a few officers could not be determined. These included 14 members of the fire companies, 4 cullers of hoops, 3 surveyors of boards, and 3 untaxed ministers who were members of the school committee. Four legislators are missing from the table: 3 were Suffolk County senators, probably residents of other parts of the county, and the other was a representative whose name was too common to identify. All other officers are included.

²⁸ *Record Commissioners' Report*, XXVII, 11-12, 15, 20, 25-26, 31, 33, 37, 40; First Church Poor and Sacramental Fund, First Church, Boston.

²⁹ Henretta, "Economic Development and Social Structure," *Wm. and Mary Qly.*, 3d Ser., XXII (1965), 84, 89; Jackson Turner Main, "Government by the

As Table IV shows, the economic elite still dominated the most important town offices. All the state legislators from Boston were assessed over a thousand pounds and were among the wealthiest 6.8 per cent of the population. Four were merchants, two were wealthy gentlemen, one was a doctor, one a lawyer, and one a hardware store owner. Only a quarter of the firewards, who protected valuable property in case of fire, dipped below a thousand pounds; most of them were merchants, wharfingers, and wealthy shipwrights. The school committee, a newly created agency of the government, included three clergymen, three lawyers, three doctors, and two businessmen.

Probably the two most important town offices were the selectmen and the overseers of the poor. In 1790, only one of the overseers was assessed below a thousand pounds. From 1785 to 1795, eight merchants, three hardware store owners, one auctioneer, two distillers, one apothecary, one ropewalk owner, and a wealthy baker served as overseers. During the same period, selectmen included five merchants, two lawyers, the county treasurer, a captain, a retailer, an apothecary, a wharfinger, and a wealthy hatter. Five others were probably retired businessmen, whose low assessments reduced the selectmen's mean wealth.³⁰

Remarkably little turnover occurred in these two time-consuming, nonpaying positions. From 1760 to 1770, the average selectman served between three and four years; there was a small rise in tenure between 1785 and 1795. Overseers served even longer terms. In the decade 1760 to 1770, the average overseer served four or five years; after the war tenures increased to from six to eight years. At annual elections, both before and after the Revolution, typically only one or two selectmen or overseers were replaced. Bostonians served longer and replaced their officials less frequently than did the citizens of many other Massachusetts towns before the Revolution.³¹

People: The American Revolution and the Democratization of the Legislatures," *Wm. and Mary Qly.*, 3d Ser., XXIII (1966), 404; and Main, *The Upper House in Revolutionary America, 1763-1788* (Madison, Wis., 1967), 162-174.

³⁰ The profile of officers was drawn from sources cited in Table IV; Boston city directories, 1789 and 1796, *Record Commissioners' Report*, X, 171-296; XXXI, 53, 59-60, 65, 97, 102, 133-134, 147, 160-161, 185, 200, 217, 224, 232, 243-245, 253, 276-277, 283, 319, 349-350, 384, 391; "Assessors' 'Taking Books' of the Town of Boston, 1780," *Bostonian Society Publications*, 3d Ser., IX (1912), 9-59. Hereafter cited as Assessors' Books, 1780.

³¹ See n. 30; Robert Francis Seybold, *The Town Officials of Colonial Boston, 1634-1775* (Cambridge, Mass., 1939), 289-305. For other Massachusetts towns before

The middling artisans, assessed between £100 and £500, were a group far larger than the economic elite, yet after the war they still held only a small percentage of major offices. Assessors and tax collectors, full-time paid officials who determined and collected taxes, were the only powerful officers of middle-class wealth. Other positions gave artisans some recognition of their special talents, but no political power. Carpenters, joiners, and cabinetmakers dominated the position of surveyor of boards; shoemakers were sealers of leather, and coopers were cullers of hoops and staves. Marine artisans formed a majority in the fire companies, the only agencies dominated by the poor and near poor. These jobs, dirty and unpaid, gave the economic elite an opportunity to share civic participation while keeping political power in its own hands.

The elite was suspicious of any attempt to organize the laboring force politically, however deferential the organizers initially were. Artisans of middle wealth, whose share of the town's taxable property had increased since 1771, founded the Mechanics Association in 1795. Only two members of the group had belonged to the economic elite in 1790, at which time the assessments of 63 per cent of those who became members fell between £100 and £500. In 1796 the group petitioned the General Court for incorporation because "the disconnected state of the mechanics of the town of Boston . . . retarded the mechanic arts of the state" whose "situation as a manufacturing country promised the greatest extension." Twenty leading merchants were personally urged to support the petition, "to patronize an institution formed for the reciprocal benefits of the merchant and mechanic." But despite the Association's broadly conceived purpose, the legislature feared the group's potential political power and three times

the Revolution, see Michael Zuckerman, *Peaceable Kingdoms: New England Towns in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1970), 274-276. Boston turnover and service rates were as follows:

Years	Number of Offices	Number of Officeholders	Years of Service		Rate of Turnover/Year	
			mean	median	mean	median
<i>Selectmen</i>						
1760-70	7	19	4.0	3.0	1.7	1.5
1785-95	9	23	4.3	4.0	2.2	1.0
<i>Overseers of the Poor</i>						
1760-70	12	28	4.7	4.0	1.6	1.0
1785-95	12	23	6.3	8.0	1.2	0.5

refused to grant incorporation. The Association finally succeeded in obtaining a charter in 1806.³²

The poorer sort commanded no political resource other than ineffective deferential appeals to the wealthy. The accumulated grievances of poor mechanics were partially relieved by harassing the black population; only the middling artisans were able to organize successfully. Pressure from below on the elite was nonexistent after the Revolution, and criminal activity was rare. Between 1787 and 1790, nine men were hanged, all for robbery, while twenty-six were punished for other crimes.³³

Boston's population steadily increased from 1630 to 1740 as the townsmen settled the entire Shawmut Peninsula, but after 1740 people migrated from eastern New England in large numbers, so that from 1742 to 1790 Boston's population grew only 8.4 per cent, a gain of 1.68 per cent per decade. (See Table V) During the same period, the American population overall expanded at the Malthusian rate of 34.7 per cent per decade. Migration patterns bypassed eastern New England; people generally traveled up the Connecticut Valley into western Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. The results may be seen in the differential population growth of areas of Massachusetts between 1765 and 1790: Massachusetts's total population increased 54.1 per cent; Boston's (based on the smaller population of 1765) 16.2 per cent; the surrounding towns of Brookline, Cambridge, Charlestown, Chelsea, and Roxbury, 18.3 per cent; and the eastern Massachusetts counties of Suffolk, Essex, Plymouth, and Middlesex, 28.5 per cent.³⁴ Boston's population fell after 1742 but recovered by 1771 until the British occupied the city in 1776, when people left en masse for the countryside and only slowly returned. The exodus postponed major population growth until after recovery from the effects of the war. Between

³² Joseph H. Buckingham, *Annals of the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanics Society* (Boston, 1853), 6-10, 12-14, 57-58, 80, 94-97.

³³ Edward H. Savage, *Police Records and Recollections; or, Boston by Daylight and Gaslight . . .* (Boston, 1873), 40-42. Savage lists only punishments, not unsolved crimes.

³⁴ J. Potter, "The Growth of Population in America, 1700-1860," in D. V. Glass and D. E. C. Eversley, eds., *Population in History: Essays in Historical Demography* (London, 1965), 636-641; Evarts B. Greene and Virginia D. Harrington, *American Population Before the Federal Census of 1790* (New York, 1932), 21-24, 46; Herman R. Friis, *A Series of Population Maps of the Colonies and the United States, 1625-1790*, American Geographical Society Mimeographed Publication, No. 3 (New York, 1940), 16 and maps 10a, 10b, 12a, 12b.

1790 and 1820 the town's population increased at the rate of 31.3 per cent per decade.³⁵

Although the population remained nearly stationary until 1790, Bostonians began to live in less settled areas. Most, however, still crowded onto about two-thirds of the peninsula. Streets in the North End and the center of town were filled with houses; yet many areas remained uninhabited, and the empty common was almost as large as the entire North End. In 1794, Boston was still "capable of great increase as many large spots of land remain vacant." Without the pressure of large population growth, there was no need to build on inaccessible areas like Beacon Hill. The relatively high population density that resulted allowed people to conduct their business with ease by walking.³⁶

TABLE V
POPULATION AND DENSITY IN BOSTON, 1742 TO 1810^a

Year	Population	Number of Houses	Number of People Per House
1742	16,528	1,719	9.53
1752	15,731
1760	15,631
1765	15,520	1,676	9.26
1771	16,540	1,803	9.12
1776	2,719
1780	10,000
1784	14,000	2,178	6.43
1790	18,038	2,376	7.58
1800	24,937	3,000	8.31
1810	33,788	3,970	8.51

Note: ^a Shattuck, *Report*, 5, 54; Greene and Harrington, *American Population*, 31; Worthington C. Ford, ed., *Writings of John Quincy Adams*, I (New York, 1913), 62; Valuation of Towns, 1768-1771: Boston, 1771, Massachusetts Archives, Statehouse, Boston, CXXXII. The 1771 figure was derived by multiplying the number of polls by 5.75, a figure suggested by the larger number of houses that year, and the large immigration between 1765 and 1771.

³⁵ Leo F. Schnore and Peter R. Knights, "Residence and Social Structure: Boston in the Ante-Bellum Period," in Thernstrom and Sennett, eds., *Nineteenth-Century Cities*, 250.

³⁶ Pemberton, "Description of Boston," *Mass. Hist. Soc., Collections*, 1st Ser., III (1794), 249-250. The North End (wards 1-5) and the West End (ward 7) were contemporary geographical areas (*ibid.*, 267). To allow analysis the South End of

Boston expanded slowly, gradually consuming her open spaces. The mean number of people per dwelling decreased from 9.53 in 1742 to 7.58 in 1790. From 1740 to 1760 few houses were built, and many were destroyed in the 1760 fire, but from 1765 to 1790 a net total of 700 new houses were constructed. A small housing boom took place between 1771 and 1790 when an average of 28.7 houses per year were built.

The new housing was probably built mostly in the open West and South Ends. As Table VI shows, these areas were gaining population. In 1742 61 per cent of the people lived in the small, crowded North End and the center of town; the remaining 39 per cent resided in the West and South Ends, about two-thirds of the town's area. Population slowly moved west and south. Ward twelve, closest to the Roxbury Neck, gained 73 per cent from 1742 to 1790; the West End gained 21 per cent; and the center of town lost population. As a result, only 43 per cent of the population lived in the North End and the center by 1790. In 1802, William Bentley, a minister from Salem, while on a walking tour, "saw the increasing wealth of the south end, so called, but the growth of West Boston by the new Bridge from Cambridge is very great. Where the popu-

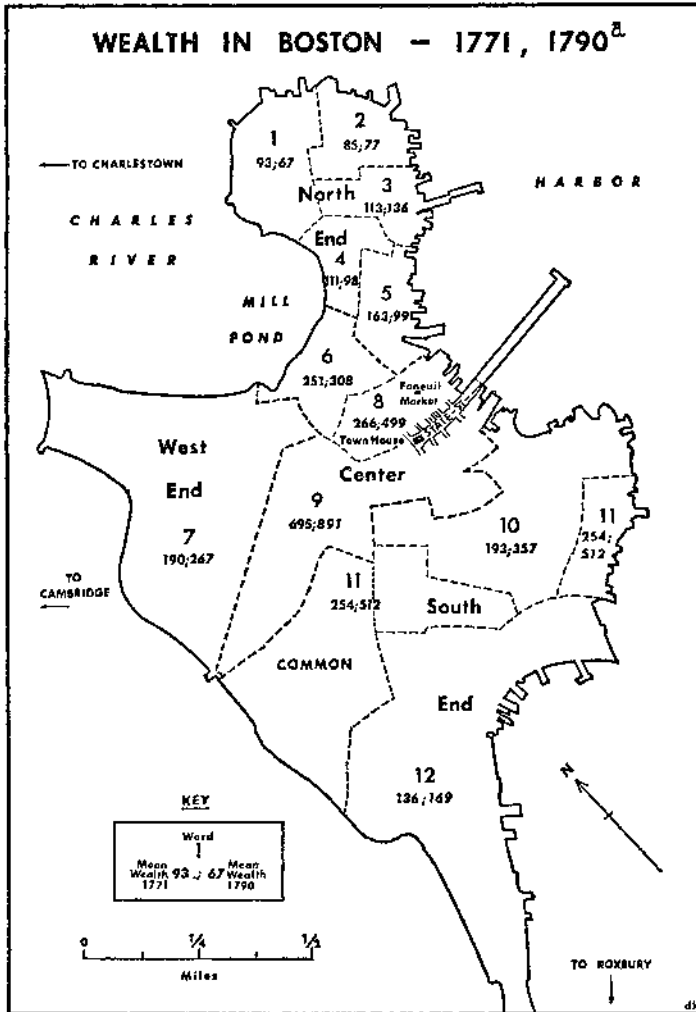
TABLE VI
POPULATION OF BOSTON'S NEIGHBORHOODS, 1742 TO 1790^a

	1742	1771	1790	Percentage of Change, 1742-1790
North End	6,229	6,165	6,331	+2
West End	1,204	1,386	1,456	+21
Center	3,843	3,796	3,304	-14
South End	5,106	5,193	6,625	+30
Other ^b	146	...	322	+120
Total	16,528	16,540	18,038	+8

Notes: ^a Shattuck, *Report*, 3-5; Valuation of Towns, Mass. Archives, CXXXII; Tax and Rate Books, 1790; 1790 *Census*. For 1771, total polls in ward were multiplied by 5.75; the 1790 figure is based on name-by-name comparison of tax and census records, with interpolations where necessary.

^b Poorhouse in 1742; poorhouse and jail in 1790.

the 1790s was divided into the center of town (wards 6, 8, and 9) and the South End (wards 10-12). Houses are drawn on Price's 1769 map reprinted as frontispiece to *Bostonian Society Publications*, 1st Ser., IX (1912).



^aMass. Archives, CXXXII; Tax and Rate Books, 1790; 1790 Census. The 1771 means were calculated by dividing the wealth of the ward by the number of polls; the 1790 means by dividing the ward's wealth by the number of people taxed with the addition of widows from the census. Untaxed widows were not included in the 1771 list, but the two sources are comparable because all polls (including each poll in multiple poll households and "polls not rateable") were included in the 1771 figure, but not in the 1790 figure. This seems to have underestimated the 1771 wealth.

lation was thin . . . and there were fields and marshes, are now splendid houses and crowded Streets.³⁷

Boston's social geography was similar to other preindustrial towns. In those towns, wealthy merchants, lawyers, retailers, and noblemen lived on or near the main business streets. Residents of middling wealth generally lived next to them. On the outskirts, farthest away from the economic center of town, resided poor artisans and laborers.³⁸ In Boston, both before and after the Revolution, the farther one walked from State Street, the lower the ward's mean and median wealth became.

The center of town, with a median wealth of £125 in 1790, was the richest section. The Massachusetts Bank, the Statehouse, the market, and various retail shops were located there, mostly along State and Cornhill Streets. Families of retailers lived over their shops. Unlike

TABLE VII
RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS OF ECONOMIC AND OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS, BOSTON, 1790^a
A. ECONOMIC GROUPS

1790 Assessment in Pounds	Percentage by Area				Number in Group
	North End	West End	Center	South End	
0	46	6	14	34	1,364
1-75	41	10	13	36	776
76-275	33	8	21	38	627
276-999	20	7	35	38	498
1000+	6	9	40	45	202
Total of All Groups	37	8	18	37	3,467

³⁷ William Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley, D.D.*, II (Gloucester, Mass., 1962 [orig. publ. 1907]), 426.

³⁸ Gideon Sjöberg, *The Preindustrial City, Past and Present* (Glencoe, Ill., 1960), 95-102; Deyon, *Amiens*, 247-252, 543, 566; Hoskins, *Exeter*, 113, 116-117; Hoskins, *Provincial England*, 92-93; D. V. Glass, "Notes on the Demography of London at the End of the Seventeenth Century," *Daedalus*, XC VII (1968), 583; Richard L. Bushman, *From Puritan to Yankee: Character and Social Order in Connecticut, 1690-1765* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), 57-58; Charles A. Beard, *Economic Origins of Jeffersonian Democracy* (New York, 1915), 384-386; Blumin, "Mobility and Change," in Thernstrom and Sennett, eds., *Nineteenth-Century Cities*, 186-190.

B. OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

Occupation	Percentage by Area				Number in Group
	North End	West End	Center	South End	
Bakers	38	18	5	39	66
Blacksmiths	46	3	8	43	59
Building Trades	31	10	11	48	245
Coopers	70	0	3	27	70
Laborers	47	7	8	38	157
Leather Workers	33	5	10	52	108
Mariners	68	5	8	19	117
Marine Crafts ^b	72	2	6	20	193
Merchants ^c	9	12	28	51	206
Professionals	15	13	38	34	68
Retailers ^d	28	4	46	22	144
Sea Captains	46	10	16	28	114
Tailors	41	11	16	32	100
Transportation	32	4	14	50	80
Total of All Groups	40	7	16	37	1,727

Notes: ^a Tax and Rate Books, 1790. Variations in residential patterns can be seen by comparing the percentage of the total of all groups in each area with the percentage of each subgroup in the area. In Table VII A, widows from the census are included; Table VII B includes about two-thirds of all employed. A Chi Square test run on the raw data of Table VII A yielded a result that was significant at less than the .01 level. This means the probability that the distribution occurred by chance is less than 1%.

^b Excludes ropemakers, concentrated in the West End.

^c Includes only merchants, not other groups included under "Merchants-Traders" in Table I.

^d Retailers and hardware store owners only.

those in the rest of the town, the buildings were predominantly brick.³⁹ Ward nine, on the south side of State Street, was the wealthiest in town, with a fifth of its residents assessed over a thousand pounds each, but it was closely followed by surrounding wards. The richest merchants and professional men and almost half the retailers lived in these wards, but in proportion to their numbers in the total population, fewer artisans made their homes there.

³⁹ Pemberton, "Description of Boston," *Mass. Hist. Soc., Collections*, 1st Ser., III (1794), 248-250.

Part of the South End was far from the center of town and quite poor, but a number of retailers and merchants, mostly of middling wealth, lived in wards ten and eleven. The area's median wealth in 1790 was only fifty pounds; but over half the people in ward twelve were assessed twenty-five pounds or less. This ward, almost as populous as the two others together, contained large numbers of laborers, truckmen, and leather workers. In 1790, the ward must still have seen intense building activity, because a third of the town's masons, carpenters, and painters resided there.

The undersettled West End, with a median wealth of twenty-five pounds, was poorer than the South End. Most of the town's ropemakers lived there, close to the ropewalks. This was the only part of town not to lose black population between 1742 and 1790; in 1790 blacks were most concentrated there. As the area became more densely settled, merchants and professional men also moved into the area; by 1790 both groups were settled there in greater proportion than throughout the town generally.

The North End was the poorest section of town in 1771, and by 1790 the wealth of its inhabitants seems to have declined. The median wealth of the area in the latter year was twenty-five pounds, but over half the people in the remote wards one and two were without taxable wealth. Most of the town's transient sailors, shipwrights, sailmakers, and other marine artisans lived there. An area dominated by marine interests, it also housed proportionately higher percentages of coopers, sea captains, laborers, tailors, and poor widows than there were in the population as a whole.

How strong was this pattern? Even though the town was small, and a few members of every economic and occupational group lived in every section, substantial economic segregation could have existed. As Table VIII shows, no group was as segregated as blacks are today.⁴⁰ There was no necessary relationship between occupation and degree of segregation. Professional men were more integrated than merchants; blacks, laborers, and tailors clustered far less than their lower-class status might indicate. Marine artisans, with their special ship-related functions, were the most segregated trade. Wealth rather than occupation determined

⁴⁰ For figures in Philadelphia see Sam Bass Warner, Jr., "If All the World Were Philadelphia: A Scaffolding for Urban History, 1774-1930," *American Historical Review*, LXXIV (1968-1969), 36-37. Figures for the index of dissimilarity for blacks in ghettos 1940-1960 run between 75 and 90. Karl E. and Alma F. Taeuber, *Negroes in Cities: Residential Segregation and Neighborhood Change* (Chicago, 1965), 37-41.

TABLE VIII

INDEX OF DISSIMILARITY OF ECONOMIC AND OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS, BOSTON, 1790*

Unpropertied	56.8	Marine Crafts ^b	35.5	Transportation	11.6
Assessed £1-75	26.4	Merchants	25.9	Professionals ^c	9.8
Assessed £76-275	16.7	Building Crafts	18.6	Sea Captains	8.8
Assessed £276-999	41.7	Mariners	17.3	Tailors	8.8
Assessed £1000+	28.5	Retailers	16.7	Leather Crafts	8.3
Blacks	10.4	Laborers	15.2	Bakers	6.7
Widows	19.1	Coopers	11.8	Blacksmiths	6.4

Notes: ^a Tax and Rate Books, 1790. For details on the construction of the index, which measures the average deviation within wards of the percentage of each group from its mean percentage in the total population and runs from 0 (perfect integration) to 100 (total segregation), see Taeuber and Taeuber, *Negroes in Cities*, 235-237.

^b Excludes ropemakers, concentrated in the West End.

^c Lawyers, doctors, an accountant, an apothecary, and an architect.

residence. Boston's propertyless residents—nearly 40 per cent of the population—were the most segregated group and mostly lived in economic ghettos at either end of town. Wealthier, and thus smaller, economic groups were less concentrated and spread more evenly across the city.

In late eighteenth-century Boston, individuals were becoming increasingly more mobile, moving from place to place and from one economic position to another, while society itself was becoming more stratified. Almost all newcomers to Boston were "warned out," officially informed that the town would not care for them if they ever needed charity.⁴¹ Since there is no indication that warnings out were limited to the poor, they are rough measures of migration into Boston. While the scrutiny of the overseers may have increased over the period, the pattern found in Table IX is too strong to be discounted. The number of migrants remained small until 1755, then in terms both of numbers and rates, rapidly increased. After 1765, at least a tenth of Boston's residents had been in town five years or less.⁴²

⁴¹ Josiah Henry Benton, *Warning Out in New England* (Boston, 1911), 55-62; *Record Commissioners' Report*, XXV, 28, 34, 166, 212, 242.

⁴² Rates for 1765-1790 were almost as great as in early modern London, but less than those in antebellum Boston. E. A. Wrigley, "A Simple Model of London's Importance in Changing English Society and Economy 1650-1750," *Past and Present*, No. 37 (July 1967), 45-49; Peter R. Knights, "Population Turnover, Persistence and

TABLE IX
WARNINGS OUT IN BOSTON, 1745 TO 1792^a

Year	Number Warned	Number Warned/1000 Population
1745-1749	363	23.1
1750-1754	528	33.6
1755-1759	1,160	74.2
1760-1764	765	49.3
1765-1769	2,499	151.1
1770-1773	1,587	95.9
1791-1792	2,405	133.9

Note: ^a Warnings Out in Boston, 1745-1792, Records of the Overseers of the Poor of Boston, Mass., Mass. Hist. Soc. From 1745 to 1773, children and wives were listed with husbands; the 1791-1792 lists often include many entries under a single family name, but the relationships are not indicated. The 1791-1792 number/1000 population is comparable with the others; at that time a resident could be warned until he resided in the town four years. Robert W. Kelso, *The History of Public Poor Relief in Massachusetts, 1620-1920* (Boston, 1922), 59. This table represents minimum migration into Boston.

What would explain this dramatic change in the intensity of migration? Migrants in most modern societies tend to travel short distances, going from remote villages to nearby towns and from towns to more distant cities. They stop and settle at the first place where a job is offered, and travel farther only if the opportunity disappears.⁴³ These generalizations apply to post-Revolutionary Boston. Almost three-quarters of the migrants entering Boston in 1791 came from Massachusetts, and a third traveled ten miles or less. In point of origin, the other quarter principally divided between foreign lands and more distant American cities like New York and Philadelphia.

The migrants formed three distinct streams. Twenty-eight per cent arrived from foreign ports. The other two groups, totaling 71.2 per cent of all migrants, traveled from Massachusetts towns. Most of them,

Residential Mobility in Boston, 1830-1860," in Thernstrom and Sennett, eds., *Nineteenth-Century Cities*, 258-274.

⁴³ E. G. Ravenstein, "The Laws of Migration," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, XLVIII (1885), 167-227, esp. 198-199; Ravenstein, "The Laws of Migration: Second Paper," *ibid.*, LII (1889), 241-305; Samuel A. Stoffer, "Intervening Opportunities: A Theory Relating Mobility and Distance," *American Sociological Review*, V (1940), 845-867; George Blackburn and Sherman L. Ricards, Jr., "A Demographic History of the West: Manistee County, Michigan, 1860," *Journal of American History*, LVII (1970), 616-617.

TABLE X
BIRTH PLACES OF THOSE WARNED OUT OF BOSTON, 1791^a

<i>Foreign</i>	237	<i>Other States</i>	62	<i>Massachusetts</i>	740
England	84	Philadelphia	28	Within 10 miles of Boston	341
Ireland	52	New York City	19	Southeast of Boston	181
Scotland	31	Carolina	4	North of Boston	143
Africa	29	Maryland	3	West of Boston	75
Germany	16	New Hampshire	3		
France	14	Albany	3		
Nova Scotia	3	Hartford	2		
West Indies	8				
Total: 1,039					

Note: ^a Warnings Out in Boston, Overseers of the Poor Records, Mass. Hist. Soc.

39.8 per cent of the total, migrated from nearby coastal areas such as Charlestown, Plymouth, Cape Cod, Ipswich, Salem, and Newburyport. This seaport-to-seaport stream probably brought numerous marine artisans and mariners into Boston. If the mobility of this group was as great in the 1760s, it may help to explain the number and volatility of the crowds in pre-Revolutionary Boston.⁴⁴ The final group, constituting 31.4 per cent of all migrants, came from neighboring agricultural areas that were experiencing population pressure on land. In these areas during the late eighteenth century, poverty and geographical mobility increased as the average size of landholdings fell.⁴⁵ Forced off the land and unaccustomed to urban life, these men at least temporarily joined and augmented the number of poor and near poor.

Though Boston drew many people from smaller ports, declining agricultural areas, and foreign lands, her own opportunities were limited. By 1790, 45 per cent of the taxpayers in town in 1780 had dis-

⁴⁴ Pauline Maier, "Popular Uprisings and Civil Authority in Eighteenth-Century America," *Wm. and Mary Qly.*, 3d Ser., XXVII (1970), 3-35.

⁴⁵ Kenneth Lockridge, "Land, Population and the Evolution of New England Society 1630-1790," *Past and Present*, No. 39 (Apr. 1968), 62-80; Philip J. Greven, *Four Generations: Population, Land, and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts* (Ithaca, N. Y., 1970), 212-214; Charles S. Grant, *Democracy in the Connecticut Frontier Town of Kent* (New York, 1961), 94-103; Bruce E. Steiner, "New England Anglicanism: A Genteel Faith?" *Wm. and Mary Qly.*, 3d Ser., XXVII (1970), 122-135.

appeared from tax lists. Some had died; the rest left town. The figure is higher than that found in stable, rural communities where land is plentiful, but is low compared to nineteenth-century American cities or frontier areas.⁴⁶ Those who moved out of Boston were the poorest and least successful members of the community. As Table XI shows, only 42 per cent of those without real estate (rents) in 1780 remained in town in 1790. In Newburyport between 1850 and 1880, 41 per cent of the laborers persisted during each decade, a rate almost identical to that of the unpropertied in Boston seventy years earlier.⁴⁷ As the amount of rent reported increased, the rate of persistence rose; only one-quarter of the upper 10 per cent of those listed in 1780 had moved or died by 1790. Even if the death rates of the poor were higher, and their slippage from one list to another greater, this table suggests that a larger proportion of the poor than the rich were mobile.

TABLE XI
GEOGRAPHIC MOBILITY IN BOSTON, 1780 TO 1790^a

<i>Rent in Pounds in 1780</i>	<i>Number Reported in 1780</i>	<i>Number Missing in 1790</i>	<i>Persistence Rate</i>
0	546	318	42
1-20	448	215	52
21-40	360	169	53
41-60	217	83	62
61-80	219	83	62
100-199	226	78	66
200+	209	54	74
Total	2,225	1,000	56

Note: ^a Assessors' Books, 1780, compared with Tax and Rate Books, 1790. The persistence rate is the percentage of the number reported in 1780 found on the 1790 list.

⁴⁶ Other rates, all expressed in terms of per cent per decade: 51% in 17th-century English towns; 22% in Dedham, Mass., 1670-1700; 56% in Boston, 1830-1860; 73% in Trempealeau Co., Wis., 1860-1880. Peter Laslett and John Harrison, "Clayworth and Cogenhoe," in H. E. Bell and R. L. Ollard, eds., *Historical Essays 1600-1750, Presented to David Ogg* (London, 1963), 173-177; Kenneth Lockridge, "The Population of Dedham, Massachusetts, 1636-1736," *Economic History Review*, 2d Ser., XIX (1966), 322-324; Knights, "Population Turnover," in Thernstrom and Sennett, eds., *Nineteenth-Century Cities*, 262; Curti, *American Community*, 68.

⁴⁷ Stephan Thernstrom, *Poverty and Progress: Social Mobility in a Nineteenth Century City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), 85.

Inward and outward mobility suggests a small, but significant, floating population of men and women at the bottom of society who moved from seaport to seaport and town to town in search of work. Many of the 278 men who were assessed for only the poll tax in 1790, but who disappeared before the census was taken, were probably among them.⁴⁸ The nature of this floating population was very similar to that in nineteenth-century Newburyport.⁴⁹ Impoverished, unemployable men dominated the wanderers in both places. The fifteen men whipped for various offenses in Boston in September 1790 were transients who had not been listed by the assessors a few months earlier.⁵⁰ Other migrants from Boston landed in the poorhouses of neighboring towns, triggering angry correspondence between their overseers and those of Boston.⁵¹

Uprooted, unwanted, unhealthy migrants could call no town their home. The potent identity given an individual by his community was not theirs. Thomas Seymore, an old man living off poor relief in Abington in 1805, was born and attended school in Boston, and later moved to Barnstable, Sandwich, Weymouth, and Abington, but never "gained a settlement" by paying taxes for five successive years. In his whole life, he never found a home. Similarly, Braintree demanded in 1804 that Boston "remove Stephen Randal belonging to your town." Since his arrival there in 1802, he had received relief from the town. "He has been wandering about from place to place. . . . Some part of the time chargeable. About four weeks ago he froze himself very bad in the feet and is att the Expense of two Dollars and 50 cents per week, Besides a Dollar attendance, there is no prospect of his being better very soon."⁵²

After the Revolution, the old laws used to deal with migrants fell apart. Even though the state accepted responsibility for transients without legal residence anywhere in the commonwealth, the time limit for towns to present migrants with warnings out was extended from two years to three, four, and ultimately five years between 1790 and 1793.

⁴⁸ The census was taken between Aug. 2 and 22 (*Record Commissioners' Report* edition of census); when assessments were made is unknown, but assessors were elected in March and some widows of men who were taxed appear in the census.

⁴⁹ Thernstrom, *Poverty and Progress*, 84-89.

⁵⁰ *Boston Gazette* (Mass.), Sept. 20, 1790.

⁵¹ Overseers of the Poor of Boston, Mass., *Miscellaneous Papers, 1735-1855*, Mass. Hist. Soc. Most letters are from the period 1800-1805; for similar examples in the 1760s see *Record Commissioners' Report*, XX, 201-202, 281-289.

⁵² Overseers of the Poor, *Misc. Papers, 1735-1855*, Mass. Hist. Soc.

In 1794, when the state became responsible for all migrants, warnings out were finally eliminated. Instead, legal residency required payment of taxes on an assessed estate of sixty pounds for five successive years. A former apprentice who practiced his trade for five years or anyone over twenty-one years of age who lived in town for ten years and paid taxes for five became a resident. The law discouraged transients, but encouraged artisans with capital to remain.⁵³

But did "expensive Living . . . [pervade] thro every Class, confounding every Distinction between the Poor and the Rich," as Samuel Adams insisted? Enough examples could be found to keep him worried. Thomas Lewis was a shoemaker assessed for £40 rent in 1780 and a wharfinger taxed on £700 in 1790; Josiah Elliot was an agent for a merchant in 1780 and owned no real estate, but in 1790 he operated a hardware store and was assessed for property worth £450; Robert Davis was a leather dresser with £30 rent in 1780, and a merchant assessed £600 in 1790.

Adams failed to see more modest gains. "Mechanics of sober character, and skilled in their trades, of almost every kind, may find employment, and wages equal to their support," wrote the Boston Immigrant Society.⁵⁴ The society was partially right. When the Mechanics Association, open only to master craftsmen, was founded in 1795, a fifth of its original members were not on the 1790 tax list; they had either been apprentices in 1790 or had entered town since that time.

A comparison of 1780 and 1790 tax lists shows that occupational mobility was very moderate and that opportunity may well have been declining. Since only those who remained in town for ten years are considered, the results are biased toward success. Only 28 per cent changed jobs, while merely 14 per cent made even minor changes in status. Changes from one artisan job to another and changes among merchants, grocers, retailers, and captains were typical—and rather trivial. Other changes resulted in new status; and about the same number rose as declined. Seventeen artisans became small shopkeepers, wharfingers, and merchants, and four advanced to professional status, while thirteen declined to laborer status. Twenty-eight tradesmen and professionals declined to artisan status, and one became a laborer.

Some new men from outlying areas probably migrated to Boston, bought tory estates, and joined the elite classes immediately after the

⁵³ Kelso, *Public Poor Relief*, 55-61.

⁵⁴ Immigrant Society in Boston, *Information for Immigrants to the New-England States* (Boston, 1795).

TABLE XII
OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY IN BOSTON, 1780 TO 1790^a

Occupation in 1790	Occupation in 1780				Total in 1790
	Pro- fessional	Tradesman	Artisan	Marine- Laborer	
Professional	42	15	4	0	61
Tradesman ^b	0	162	17	0	179
Artisan	5	23	311	9	348
Marine-Laborer	0	1	13	24	38
Total in 1780	47	201	345	33	626

Notes: ^a Assessors' Books, 1780; Tax and Rate Books, 1790. Table XII represents only about half the people who remained in Boston during the decade. Wards 5, 6, and 10 do not have occupations listed for 1780, and Negroes and widows were rarely listed. The columns are 1780, the rows 1790 (e.g., 61 professionals in 1790, 47 in 1780, 311 artisans remained artisans over the decade, 23 tradesmen became artisans). Lateral changes within the groups, which included no change in status, involved 4 professionals, 37 tradesmen, 42 artisans, 4 marine-laborers. Total changes of status: 87. Total lateral changes: 87. Total changes: 174.

^b Retailers, merchants, businessmen.

Revolution,⁵⁵ but opportunity soon diminished and the situation became critical. As population grew, more men competed for fewer jobs; many, according to Samuel Breck, became unemployed, "so much so that several gentlemen who associated for the purpose of building three ships had solely in view the occupation of the carpenters and tradespeople."⁵⁶ Breck may not have greatly exaggerated. The percentage of laborers and other unskilled men more than doubled: between 2 and 3 per cent were in the group in 1780; the number had grown to 7.4 per cent in 1790.⁵⁷ Within the groups staying in town for the ten years, opportunities seem to have been slightly closing at the top and opening at the bottom. While ten merchants and traders became government functionaries (all

⁵⁵ Brown, "Confiscation of Loyalists' Estates," *Wm. and Mary Qly.*, 3d Ser., XXI (1964), 546-549; Oscar and Mary F. Handlin, "Radicals and Conservatives in Massachusetts after Independence," *New England Quarterly*, XVII (1944), 352-355.

⁵⁶ Breck, *Recollections*, 178.

⁵⁷ Laborers constitute 6.1% of the people whose occupations in 1780 are known. However, the three wards from which there is no occupational data housed only 11% of the laborers in 1790. The figure of 6.1% is therefore far too high. A number of

but one in a full-time position), the total number of tradesmen declined by 11 per cent. On the other hand, the number of men in the marine-laborer category declined 12 per cent.⁶⁸

Upward mobility among sons of artisans was somewhat greater. Jackson Main discovered that the fathers of about a quarter of the merchants sampled from the 1789 directory had been artisans such as brewers, coopers, hatters, carpenters, and tailors. Since each of these trades included a few wealthy members whose sons should have risen in the normal course of events, and Main discovered none from his sample among the wealthiest merchants, his findings, like mine, point to very modest upward mobility.⁶⁹

While a small minority changed their status, almost two-thirds of the group changed their relative economic position in the community. Table XIII shows that 30 per cent lost and 31 per cent gained wealth. However, these figures are deceptive; probably most of those who moved during the decade feared economic decline. When geographic mobility is considered, more men lost than gained wealth. In each of the three middle categories of Table XIII, the number who fell slightly approximated the number who gained slightly. Unpropertied men who left town were probably those who could not gain a foothold in Boston, for 71 per cent of those who remained became property owners. Most made minor gains; the twenty-eight men who entered the top categories were mostly merchants who had not yet bought property in Boston in 1780. The very top category—as Sam Adams asserted—was in a state of flux; less than half the men in that group in 1780 managed to remain there in 1790, but men from the next lower category rushed to fill their places.

What all these changes meant to most workers was buying—or losing—a small piece of real estate, finding a new, somewhat different job, or receiving a small profit from one's trade. Joseph Snelling, an unpropertied joiner in 1780, gained £25 of real estate by 1790; John Scutter,

others in other wards have no occupations listed, and some of them may have been laborers. For a conservative estimate of the proportion of laborers, I added 30% to the number listed (38), and divided that number (50) by 2,225, the total number of males on the 1780 list. The result was 2.3%.

⁶⁸ These percentages, based on a small number of cases, must be taken as indicative only of the direction of change, not of the extent of change. It is probable that some of the difference is random. However, the figures may be minimums; Table XII probably underestimates the extent of downward mobility. See note to Table XIV.

⁶⁹ Main, *Social Structure*, 191-192.

a propertyless fisherman in 1780, was a journeyman goldsmith with £25 of real estate in 1790. Tailor Samuel Beales owned £12 10s. of real estate in 1780; by 1790, he owned property assessed at £125 and had six children and four apprentices or journeymen in his house. Small losses were equally common. John Douglass, a cooper with real estate worth £12 10s. in 1780, was a combmaker without taxable property in 1790. Samuel Clark, tailor, lost real estate worth £20 over the decade, and Richard Salter, a merchant with a rent of £180 in 1780, was a small shopkeeper with property worth only £25 in 1790.

What pattern explains these small changes? Men in some trades—merchants, professional men, builders, coopers—tended to gain wealth, while others—bakers, shoemakers, tailors—tended to lose it. Whole classes, however, neither rose nor fell; some individuals in most groups became prosperous and some poor.⁶⁰ As Table XIV illustrates, over 70 per cent of Boston's workers assumed different occupations or economic conditions over the decade. While there is a significant (and expected) ten-

TABLE XIII
PROPERTY MOBILITY IN BOSTON, 1780 TO 1790^a

1790 Income Groups	1780 Income Groups					Total in 1790
	High				Low	
	1	2	3	4	5	
High 1	55	39	15	3	7	119
2	43	85	63	7	21	219
3	12	46	107	59	39	263
4	4	17	51	87	55	214
Low 5	7	14	32	71	51	175
Total in 1780	121	201	268	227	173	990

Note: ^a Assessors' Books, 1780; Tax and Rate Books, 1790. Some persons could not be ranked. Columns are 1780, rows 1790. The income groups were determined by comparing 1780 rents (hypothetically 1/6 of the real estate assessment) with total assessments in 1790. In the table, 1 is the highest and 5 the lowest group. The real figures for each group in 1780 and 1790 respectively are: 1, £200+ and £1000+; 2, £75-£199 and £276-£999; 3, £30-£74 and £76-£275; 4, £1-£29 and £1-£75; 5, £0 for both years.

⁶⁰ The problem is discussed in Blumin, "Historical Study of Mobility," *Hist. Meth. Newsletter*, I, No. 4 (Sept. 1968), 1-13.

TABLE XIV
OCCUPATIONAL AND PROPERTY MOBILITY IN BOSTON, 1780 TO 1790^a

	<i>Occupation Up</i>	<i>Occupation Same</i>	<i>Occupation Down</i>	<i>Total</i>
Wealth Up	32	164	14	210
Wealth Same	26	186	33	245
Wealth Down	12	84	52	148
Total	70	434	99	603

Note: ^a Assessors' Books, 1780; Tax and Rate Books, 1790. Occupations in Table XIV are ranked as in Table III, and ranks for other occupations have been interpolated to determine direction of mobility. The occupational mobility figures are not identical to those of Table XII because of the differences in the categories of Table III; the method used here allowed inclusion of cases of lateral mobility mentioned in n. a to Table XII. Some cases have been lost, and several cases of men employed in 1780 and unemployed in 1790 added. Ratios of downward/downward and upward mobility in Tables XII-XIV show that Table XIV may be biased toward upward property mobility (51.7% downward/downward and upward mobility in Table XIII and only 41.3% downward in Table XIV). Since Table XIII has the larger number of cases, it should be more accurate. But with its more exact methodology, Table XIV points to a bias toward upward occupational mobility in Table XII (48.2% downward mobility in Table XII, 58% in Table XIV). Chi Square was significant at less than .01.

dency for some to rise or fall both in wealth and occupation, 74 per cent of those changing in one variable did not change the other.

Though occupational mobility had little relationship to economic mobility, age in most occupational groups was probably related to wealth.⁶¹ A young man might begin working with little money, gain wealth, and perhaps change occupations as he grew older, lose wealth when he became an old man, and leave his widow with few worldly goods. Some impressionistic evidence supports this thesis. John Hooton followed his father's trade of oarmaker in 1780 and lived at home, but by 1790 he was a wharfinger taxed for £275. In 1780 Benjamin Jervis was a propertyless journeyman working for merchant Pascol Smith; by 1790 Jervis had set up as a merchant himself and was assessed £450. Aged Joseph Morton, propertyless in 1790, had been a taverner with a rent of £200 in 1780; John Maud, an old tailor, had a £30 rent in 1780 but was propertyless in 1790.

⁶¹ Age and mobility were related in 19th-century Canada. Michael Katz, "The Social Structure of Hamilton, Ontario," in Thernstrom and Sennett, eds., *Nineteenth-Century Cities*, 209-244.

The social condition of the town's widows also supports this thesis. In 1790, only 76 of Boston's 575 widows owned any taxable property. Widows of very successful men managed to hold on to some property: of the widows taxed, 17 were assessed under £125, 23 from £125 to £200, 21 from £201 to £500, 10 from £500 to £1,000, and 5 over £1,000. Probably some husbands lost wealth before they died; widows quickly lost the rest. Their decline in wealth and status was steeper than almost any experienced by their husbands; the resulting loneliness and unhappiness appear in the assessor's marginal comments. Widow Gray was a "dogmatic lady," and Widow Turrell was a "talking woman." A number of widows followed callings that allowed contact with the public. Twenty-eight of them combated poverty and isolation by operating boarding houses; five others owned taverns; three managed millinery shops; and eight owned other types of retail establishments.

Inequality rapidly advanced in Boston during the Revolutionary period. Wealth was less evenly distributed than before the war, and the proportion of wealth held by the poor and middling classes declined. The growth of poverty was a major problem. As continued migration increased the numbers of poor, a surplus female population of working age was only temporarily helped by the duckcloth factory. Many citizens were able to gain economic security, but unsuccessful families lived in crowded housing or wandered from place to place in search of employment.

Rich and poor were divided by wealth, ascribed status, and segregated living patterns. Individuals could rarely breach a status barrier in fewer than two generations. While social mobility may have been relatively easy for a few immediately after the Revolution, these extraordinary opportunities tended to disappear as population returned to its pre-Revolutionary size. Since political power was monopolized by the wealthy, the poor could only deferentially appeal for aid. The economic elite socialized only among themselves, never showed visitors the semi-ghetto of the North End, and rode through the South End without seeing the poor. But increased segregation could eventually undermine deference by eliminating opportunities for the lowly to defer to their superiors.

A class system based primarily on economic divisions slowly developed. Occupation and wealth determined a man's position in the community; the few titles that survived became functional descriptions of groups, not indicators of a special status. Tax records show that "gentleman"

ceased to be a social distinction, but was instead a term reserved for retired tradesmen; "esquire" was a title generally limited to lawyers and public officials. Increased wealth alone could bring higher status to tradesmen and artisans—a fact probably behind Samuel Adams's complaints.

At the same time Boston was becoming more stratified, a new political philosophy emerged. Whig theory divided society and government into three orders, democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy, and demanded that each be perpetually a check and balance on the others. After the Revolution this theory slowly gave way to a model that put the people above the entire government. They held "constituent power," enabling them to call conventions to write constitutions restraining the powers of government. Sovereignty was transferred from the king (or a branch of the legislature) to the people, and political equality was enshrined in the country's legal documents.⁶²

Yet the city of Boston, increasingly democratic in theory, and increasingly stratified and divided economically and socially, managed to avoid major civil disturbances after the Revolution. Not only did social and political trends seem to run in opposite directions, but the groups of near poor who manned preindustrial crowds in Europe—apprentices, journeymen, and artisans—lived in greater profusion in Boston than in contemporary European towns.⁶³ What social forces kept these groups quiet after the Revolution?

Definitive answers to this question await further research, but at least some speculation is in order. Before the Revolution, crowd action was considered a legitimate means for producing social change and protecting the community. When the monarchical order seemed to deny the people their liberties, the people took to the streets. The resulting disturbances were not class conflicts, for pre-Revolutionary crowds in America were supported by the upper classes and peopled by the near poor.⁶⁴

After the Revolution, the ideological props for violence slowly disintegrated. If the people were sovereign, if they held "constituent power," crowd action was a revolt against the people, not a conflict to

⁶² Robert R. Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760-1800* (Princeton, 1959), I, Chap. 8; Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (Chapel Hill, 1969), Chaps. 8-9.

⁶³ George Rudé, *The Crowd in History: A Study of Popular Disturbances in France and England, 1730-1848* (New York, 1964), *passim*, but esp. Chap. 13; Ralf Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society* (Stanford, Calif., 1959), 216-218.

⁶⁴ Maier, "Popular Uprisings," *Wm. and Mary Qly.*, 3d Ser. XXVII (1970), 3-30.

restrain one branch of government. This change did not eliminate violence, but it altered its nature.⁶⁵ Crowds would no longer be the weapons of one order, composed of elements from many economic classes, to be directed against another, but would be revolutionary instruments of class conflict.

Post-Revolutionary Boston, however, provided several structural restraints against this development. The possibility of moderate economic success and the safety valve of short-distance migrations probably limited the chance for confrontation. Unless economic disaster strikes a large number of men (and there is no evidence of this in Boston at this time), group conflict can be generated only when two organized interests compete for the same goods or power.⁶⁶ But Boston's only organized society of workers—whose members were of firm middle-class standing—willingly deferred to their social superiors.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 30-33.

⁶⁶ Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict*, Chaps. 5-6.

APPENDIX
OCCUPATIONS OF BOSTON MALES, 1790^a

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Number</i>
I. Government ^b	67	Peddler	6
Federal Officers	11	Retailer	133
Law Enforcement	10	Stationeer	5
State Officers	13	Tobacconist	17
Town Officers	33	Trader	13
II. Professional	219	Underwriter	1
Accountant	3	Wharfinger	24
Apothecary	17	IV. Clerical	66
Architect	1	Clerk	28
Dentist	1	Scribe	38
Doctor	26	V. Artisans A to G	1,271
Lawyer	21	A. Building Crafts	245
Minister	20	Carpenter	140
Schoolmaster	16	Glazier	12
Sea Captain	114	Mason	44
III. Tradesmen	474	Painter	34
Auctioneer	7	Joiner	5
Banker	1	Sawyer	7
Broker	16	Stonecutter	3
Bookseller	2	B. Cloth Trades	289
Chandler	17	Cardmaker	24
Hardware Shop	11	Combmaker	2
Lemondealer	10		
Lumber Merchant	5		
Merchant	206		

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Number</i>
Duckcloth Maker	17	Carver	4
Furrier	3	Chairmaker	11
Hatter	29	Cooper	70
Leather Dresser	13	Turner	1
Shoemaker	78	Upholsterer	4
Shoedealer	6	Woodsealer	1
Silkdyer	3	G. Misc. Crafts	5
Tailor	100	Bookbinder	103
Tanner	10	Chaisemaker	16
Weaver	3	Huckster	4
C. Food Trades	175	Instrument Maker	3
Bacon Smoker	1	Musician	3
Baker	64	Paper-stainer	3
Bonecutter	1	Printer	17
Butcher	10	Saddler	6
Confectioneer	1	Soapboiler	6
Distiller	47	Watchmaker	8
Gingerbread Baker	2	Wheelwright	8
Grocer	33	Misc. Trades	28
Miller	4	VI. Service	183
Slop Shop	4	Barber	42
Sugar Boiler	8	Boarder-keeper	24
D. Marine Crafts	219	Carter	9
Blockmaker	16	Chaise-letter	3
Caulker	14	Coachdriver	6
Head Builder	5	Hackdriver	7
Mastmaker	7	Sexton	11
Rigger	11	Stablekeeper	3
Sailmaker	30	Taverner	26
Sea Cooper	16	Truckman	50
Oarmaker	1	VII. Mariners	117
Pumpmaker	4	Fisherman	37
Shipjoiner	7	Mate	20
Shipwright	65	Pilot	2
Staysmaker	1	Sailor	58
Ropemaker	42	VIII. Unskilled	188
E. Metal Crafts	132	Chimney Sweeper	6
Blacksmith	59	Gardener	15
Coppersmith	4	Laborer	157
Founder	15	Lightman	7
Goldsmith	23	Total Employed:	2,585
Gunsmith	1	Unemployed and Retired	106
Ironmonger	1	Gentlemen	23
Jeweler	3	Poor (no trade)	27
Silversmith	5	Poor, sick, lame	28
Tinner	14	Unemployed	28
Whitesmith	1	Servants (white)	63
Pewterer	6		
F. Woodworkers	106	Grand Total	2,754
Cabinetmaker	15		

Notes: ^a Tax and Rate Books, 1790; *Record Commissioners' Report*, X. The groups are in approximate order of status. There is some unavoidable overlapping in the appendix; a few trades in parts III and VI might well be placed under the artisan category.

^b Includes only those with no other listed occupation.