



An Historical Perspective on Today's Tea Parties



In recent months, Tea (Taxed Enough Already) Parties have come under unrelenting criticism from the national media and several national organizations. (Significantly, Liberals and Progressives are the most fixated on discrediting Tea Parties.)

Yet, I find that the Tea Parties represent a welcome addition to the national political scene and public policy debate. I especially appreciate the fact that they focus more on principles than policies – that so many of their meetings are dedicated to learning more about the Constitution, American Exceptionalism, and the principles of limited government.



But like any new movement, they have made mistakes; and they have said things they did not understand that the national media would misportray; but that's understandable. The members of the Tea Parties are largely citizens who have been previously uninvolved in the political process and are therefore largely inexperienced with its lurking snares.

Is there an historical perspective on this "new" movement? I was asked by a newspaper to do an op-ed piece on that question. In case you're interested, I've enclosed that article below (which can also be [downloaded](#)). Enjoy!

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Tea Parties – Same Song, Second Verse

America's first Tea Party in 1773 was not an act of wanton lawlessness but rather a deliberate protest against heavy-handed government and excessive taxation. Its leaders took great care to ensure that nothing but tea was thrown overboard – no other items were damaged. The "Indians" even swept the decks of the ships before they left.

Tea Parties occurred not only in Boston but also in numerous other locales. And those who participated were just ordinary citizens expressing their frustration over a government that had refused to listen to them for almost a decade. Their reasonable requests had fallen on deaf ears. Of course, the out-of-touch British claimed that the Tea Parties were lawless and violent, but such was not the case.

Interestingly, in many ways, today's Tea Parties parallel those of long ago. But rather than protesting a tax on tea, today they are protesting dozens of taxes represented by what they call the Porkulus/Generational Theft Act of 2009 (officially called the "American Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act"). For Tea Party members (and for most Americans), that act and the way it was passed epitomizes a broken system whose arrogant leaders often scorn the