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American Revolution

In regards to the numerous successful Revolutions that have occurred, they all share in common a broad general pattern, causes and characteristics. The American Revolution to a certain extent aligned with this broad pattern and had some identical causes and characteristics. In regards to the preliminary and advanced symptoms of revolutions, the American Revolution exhibited characteristics of discontent and the creation of mobs that was in response to taxes imposed upon them by the British government. The steps that followed although displaying characteristics and causes that identify with revolutions, digresses from the general pattern. The Declaration of Independence, Battle of Saratoga and Siege of Yorktown though somewhat associating themselves with their respective step within the broad pattern, for best part does not fit in with the overall pathology. The American Revolution displayed that certain stages matched with the broad general pattern and throughout its duration exhibited characteristics and causes normally attributed to revolutions. Other parts of the Revolution however tended to deviate from the generally accepted pattern.   
As a prelude before the Revolution itself, there were already preliminary symptoms of unrest within America that followed the first step in the general pattern of revolutions. Prior to the first shots at Lexington and Concord in 1775, growing discontent with the British Government passing certain acts that the Americans perceived as unfair had already risen to a substantial degree. With the majority of acts incurring economic and financial costs, by 1767, the Townshend Acts had been passed, putting further taxes on paper, glass and tea. Upon the taxes that the Stamp Act of 1965 incurred on such items as newspapers, official documents and almanacs, the American people became highly agitated and a feeling of resentment quickly spilled over the masses, several person were for dying rather than submitting to it. Additionally, the Colonialist became increasingly violent. By 1970, the preliminary symptom of unrest displayed through protest and discontent was evident. The Colonialist did not feel that they were obligated to be subject to these taxes without representation in British Parliament. Additionally, the psychological pre-condition associated with the cause of war was present in the Colonialist discontent regarding the numerous Acts bearing economic consequences. Not only had the events up till 1770 displayed active protests and early mob activity, it also hinted at the potential oncoming violence the growing mob could inflict which was the next step in the general broad pattern of revolutions.   
Following on from active demonstrations and protests, the American Revolution followed the general pathology through to the advanced symptoms of unrest which was characterised by the creation of a violent mob during the Boston Massacre in 1770. Taking place on the March 5th 1770, the massacre found its backdrop against a dispute between a colonialist and British soldier. After a misunderstanding between Edward Gerrish and Captain Lieutenant John Goldfinch, Private White mishandled the dispute by striking Gerrish on the head. Resulting from this a growing crowd of American colonialist gathered taunting White. Being relieved, Captain Preston went down to relieve the crowd. Amongst the crowd, one of Preston’s men was struck down. Immediately after this, Preston’s men fired on the crowd killing five and injuring a further six men. The response to the massacre was self-evident, with numerous artists drawing upon this incident for numerous pieces of anti-British propaganda. The massacre was the final straw for both radical politicians and simple American colonialists in Boston. The word massacre used by the Americans was not describing those killed; it was instead referring to the current mood held by many of the colonialists. The colonialists had been massacred in a sense that they were no longer going to tolerate British government’s power. Upon the previous acts that implied economic sanctions, the blood of American lives was indeed the last straw. The display of violence acted as both a political pre-condition and characteristic that identified a successful revolution. As a political pre-condition, the murder of five Americans displayed the conflict between the Colonialists and their Imperial masters. Under characteristics, the violence witnessed in Boston fulfilled one of the four characteristics of revolution.   
With the Colonialist all but effectively severing ties with Britain, the next step of the pathology was met, overthrowing the incumbent government in the form of the drafting and signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Written by Tomas Jefferson, the Declaration of Independence proclaimed that the thirteen colonies of America were no longer a part of the British Empire. Distributed to the public, the Declaration of Independence was signed by fifty-six signatories from all thirteen American colonies. Differing to the pathology, the Declaration of Independence was a passive but firm way of legally and officially severing ties with Britain. Unlike other revolutions, the American Revolution did not physically overthrow the Britain as British parliament still resided in London. We have not raised armies with the ambitious design of separating from Great Britain. Nevertheless, the Declaration of Independence was a significant milestone in the American Revolution. The Declaration of Independence displayed two of the characteristics of revolution; ideology and leadership. Foundational to the Declaration were two philosophical themes individual rights and the right of revolution derived from the English philosopher John Locke. Locke advocated that an individual’s rights rose above the power of any group or government. The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges everyone. That individual was entitled to his or her own course of action, not bound to a third party. As part of his social contract theory, Locke expounded that according to natural law, people had a right to life, liberty and estate. He maintained that people could instigate a revolution if a government acted against the interests of its people and replace it with one it deemed fit. Additionally, the importance of leadership is seen within the implementation of the Declaration. Without the brains Committee of Five which drafted the original declaration, the American Revolution would not have taken the next step in its successful progression. The Declaration of Independence was indeed an important part of America’s Revolution. Not only did it fulfill the overthrow of existing government step within the revolution pathology, it also displayed two of the four integral characteristics associated with revolution. 