

**Zenger and Freedom of the Press** Colonists moved toward gaining a new right, freedom of the press, in 1735. That year, **John Peter Zenger**, publisher of the *New York Weekly Journal*, stood trial for printing criticism of New York's governor. Zenger's paper claimed that the governor accepted bribes. It also said that the governor had removed a judge and tried to fix an election.

### PRIMARY SOURCE

“A Governor turns rogue [criminal], does a thousand things for which a small rogue would have deserved a halter [hanging], and because it is difficult . . . to obtain relief against him, . . . it is prudent [wise] to . . . join in the roguery.”

—*New York Weekly Journal*, quoted in *Colonial America, 1607–1763*

At that time, it was illegal to criticize the king in print. Because the governor represented the king, some claimed that no one should criticize the governor. Andrew Hamilton defended Zenger at his trial, claiming that people had the right to speak the truth. The jury agreed, and Zenger was released. Freedom of the press became an important new right in America.

English rights were part of the colonial **heritage**, or tradition. Respect for these principles of law continues to unite the American people.

- ▼ **CAUSES AND EFFECTS** Explain how colonial rights were affected by political events in England.

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## Section Assessment



### ONLINE QUIZ

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### TERMS & NAMES

1. Explain the importance of
  - Magna Carta
  - Parliament
  - Edmund Andros
  - Glorious Revolution
  - English Bill of Rights
  - John Peter Zenger

### USING YOUR READING NOTES

2. **Sequence Events** Complete the diagram you started at the beginning of this section.



### KEY IDEAS

3. What English political traditions did colonists bring with them to America?
4. How did King James II restrict the colonists' rights?
5. How did the Zenger trial help expand the colonists' rights?

### CRITICAL THINKING

6. **Make Generalizations** How did England's policies toward the colonies change after the Glorious Revolution?
7. **Connect to Today** What rights enjoyed by modern Americans can be traced back to the Magna Carta of 1215?
8. **Writing Speech** Write a speech that Increase Mather might have delivered to the English Parliament, asking for a new charter that would protect the colonists' rights.