

# HST 201: History of United States ONLINE F17 (Escobar 20886)

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Using the Historian and Video Materials



## Week 9 Forum

### Using the Historian and Video Materials

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The Revolution - Conservative or Radical ►

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#### Using the Historian and Video Materials

by Joe Escobar - Wednesday, November 22, 2017, 8:42 PM

Continue to discuss the Degler and Wood Yes/No essay materials in the other thread. Use THIS thread to continue the Yes/No debate with your group members using the two pages of NEW materials.

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#### The American Revolution wasn't a Consecrative Movement

by Maribel Frickey - Thursday, November 23, 2017, 12:03 PM

Yes, after reading and viewing the remaining material I truly feel that the American Revolution was radical. "The Revolution had radically democratized the new state legislatures by increasing the number of their members and altering their social character... Men of more humble and more rural origins and less educated than those who had sat in the colonial assemblies now became representatives. In New Hampshire, for example, in 1765 the colonial assembly had contained only thirty-four members, almost all well-to-do gentlemen. By 1786 the state's House of Representatives had increased to eighty-eight members. Most of these were ordinary farmers or men of moderate wealth... In other states the changes was less dramatic but no less significant." (Gordon Wood, The American Revolution, 2002) The fact that the even people without exorbitant wealth would also be part of the government was a big deal. It made it so all voices could be heard. In that of itself was radical.

Another historian who helped strengthen my position was what John Richard Alden who stated, "The example of republicanism successful over the vast territory of the United States constituted a threat to monarchism everywhere, and stimulated revolt against kings and emperors. The proclamation in the Declaration of Independence of the equality of men in the sight of the Creator continues to serve as a battle cry for social and political justice. The patriots won independence; they also made a good start on the long road toward establishing and securing 'the rights of mankind.'" (Alden, The American Revolution, 1954) It shows that the fact that the United States had and has successfully maintained its new government made it a threat to monarchy because it was proof that things could be different. For me this does a great job at showing that the revolution was not a conservative movement but in fact radical.

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3

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### Historian arguments

by Marla Rogers - Friday, November 24, 2017, 1:41 PM

The arguments made by the historians only seem to bolster my thought that the American Revolution was a radical revolution. And they were undoubtedly able to put it much more efficiently and eloquently than I was able to. John Richard Alden explained it best. He wrote that Americans were the first to create their own republic system of government in a large nation. Such a profound movement was able to "inspire other colonials to seek freedom from European domination."

Gordon Wood (document #4) also mentions that by 1786, the House of Representatives increased greatly in numbers, and most of the members "were ordinary farmers or men of moderate wealth." Allowing common men to be a part of the government is a huge societal change. Such a thing would not have been found in a monarchical society.

An argument *against* the American Revolution being a liberal revolution, made by Daniel Boorstin, also seems to back up my thought that it was actually a liberal revolution. It may sound contradictory, but it seems as if he leaving out important information to make his point. And that to me is a direct blow to his argument. Boorstin states that "The Americans were fighting not so much to establish new rights as to preserve old ones." I don't feel that is accurate. They were also fighting to have freedom of religion, instead of the monarchy deciding for them. They were also fighting for their right to determine their own success in life. Even Thomas Jefferson, one of the founding fathers of America, believed in an agrarian society for America (Liberty, Equality, Power pg. 263). This was a huge societal change from the life in England. Wealth would be relatively equal, based on the land you had and the hard work put into it.

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### Final conclusion: The American Revolution was not conservative

by Marla Rogers - Saturday, November 25, 2017, 5:10 PM

After taking in all the material presented, I still find more information supporting the fact that the American Revolution was *not* conservative, and was in fact a radical revolution. In the first video clip, Butler says at 2:45 that "in a social context, it was a revolutionary society even

before it was revolutionary in a political principle." That's where the idea of strict constructionists and loose constructionists come into play. In the introduction text, it states that loose constructionists believe that a revolution is only something that, incited by violence, brings about political change. Strict constructionists however, believe a revolution produces significant and deep societal changes. Which is synonymous with the idea of a radical revolution.

In the second video, Wood mentions at 0:28 that "the American Revolution infused into our culture" in multiple ways. So there is that culture/society idea again. The Americans weren't just fighting for the sake of political change, they were fighting for a whole new way of life. They wanted a more fair opportunity to succeed, and they wanted to see everyone treated as equals. Thus the revolution was born.

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### **Re: Final conclusion: The American Revolution was not conservative**

by Maribel Frickey - Sunday, November 26, 2017, 2:20 PM

Yeah, I agree with you that the revolution was indeed a radical one. They were fighting for a new way of life and one where they all had the same opportunities to succeed.

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0

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### **twas a revolutionary revolution**

by Mason Peckels St.onge - Saturday, November 25, 2017, 10:54 PM

I understand the question a lot more clearly after reading the historian perspectives. So, was it really a revolution? Yes it was. They fulfilled the standards of a revolution by overthrowing a government and changing the lifestyles of the people. Not only did the lifestyles of the signers of the declaration see changes, but the people did too. They experienced not only a second revolution, but also the market revolution and shortly after the industrial revolution. People's lives were changing. They became a country that relied on wars to survive, then switched to relying less on exports and more on supplying their growing populations in the west. Women worked more in factories than ever before, and westward expansion grew an entirely new group of Americans. America is basically one big revolution. Chapter nine in our text really emphasizes the changes that occurred post revolution. It might not have been great for everyone, but it was a revolution nonetheless.

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### **A conservative movement**

by Madelyn Ball - Sunday, November 26, 2017, 12:53 PM

After reading the perspectives from more historians, I am less sure of my original position. As some of you may have seen I originally noted how Carl Degler made some great points, in the end I had found Gordon Wood's points to fit my understanding of The Revolution the best. Wood had spoken of how the change in government and society was what made The Revolution a radical movement. Wood's argument seemed sensible until I read, "The Americans were fighting not so much to establish new rights as to preserve old ones..."

(Boorstin, 1953) I then began thinking of reading our textbook and how the colonists were not in pursuit of a revolution until their "rights" began to change. From my understanding, radical movements tend to mean the people are ready for a complete change in government. "However radical the principles of the revolution may have seemed to the rest of the world, in the minds of the colonists they were thoroughly preservative and respectful of the past..." (Rossiter, 1953) Many historians follow the belief that The Revolution was a conservative movement and I can now better understand why and agree with them.

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### **Revolution; the birth of the American dream**

by Desiree Mantey - Sunday, November 26, 2017, 3:12 PM

A quote from the 12 second point in the American Revolution video #1 was, "Revolutions have very different interpretations. For some people it's just a change of government; a violent change, usually an overthrow of government. For others it's more than that, it's not simply a change in government it's a fundamental change in society and social relationships." In my opinion the American revolution fits both of these definitions. Although they didn't overthrow the government they had broken away Britain's monarchical ideals and created a new government for themselves. As stated in the American Revolution video #2 it was the most important event in American history because of what came with it. There was a new political order, a new world economy, a new diverse population, and a new social context. People were no longer stuck in the social status in which they were born into but had the chance to be successful through hard work and move up in the world. The American dream was born.

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### **Re: Revolution; the birth of the American dream**

by Mason Peckels St.onge - Sunday, November 26, 2017, 8:56 PM

I think you are making a really good connection with the revolution and the American Dream. The revolution opened many doors for every American. I think that after defeating one of the biggest and baddest armies of the age, they thought they could do anything, which is the core of the American Dream.

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### **Historian Video Supporting Previous Posts**

by Trevor Newton - Sunday, November 26, 2017, 9:10 PM

After reading the Historians document the historian that stood out the most to me was found in Document #1: John Richard Alden, The American Revolution, 1954. His statement has reaffirmed my belief that the American Revolution was not a conservative event even though I was open to changing my view. I believe that John Alden's statement was one of the better statements because the amount he wrote and how he used facts that seemed to go right along with Wood. One of the biggest things from Alden's statements that agreed with my second post was the fact that the revolution brought into existence for the first time in modern

history a republican system of government in a large nation. The example of republicanism successful over the vast territory of the United States constituted a threat to monarchism everywhere and stimulated revolt against kings and emperors.

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### Freedom

by Mason Peckels St.onge - Sunday, November 26, 2017, 9:12 PM

In the second American Revolution video Don Higinbotham says "the colonist saw themselves as the most free people in the world." (4.15) and John Adams is quoted saying "The revolution was in the minds of the people.". To me these are two very important aspects of the revolution. These show that it successfully fulfilled one of the requirements that a revolutions needs, which the first video quoted being a "fundamental change in society and social relationships" (Gordon Wood, .25). I think that the colonist were thrown into America with no idea of what the future would hold, but they didnt care, they were looking to start over, and create something new. I think that they were destine for revolution. Especially being apart of a controlling monarchy like Great Britan, it was bound to happen.

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### Video Materials Discussed

by Trevor Newton - Sunday, November 26, 2017, 9:35 PM

The statement in the second video that the revolution had nothing to do with the war, the revolution was in the minds of the people really made sense to me thinking of the American Revolution as a radical event. The revolution was not a big display of people fighting hand to hand to get the upper hand it was people fighting over radical political views and social change which are still influencing this country today. This not only brought a change in government but a fundamental change in society and social relationships as was mentioned in the first video.

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