

HST 201: History of the United States (Escobar Meta 21035 21036)

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The American Revolution



by Joe Escobar - Saturday, November 15, 2014, 11:29 AM

After studying the required materials, address the various questions. For purposes of encouraging discussion, you should break up your responses into SEPARATE posts.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post.

To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Do NOT simply leave it RE: The American Revolution

Sum of ratings: -

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Crazy...Colonial style



by Amy Trask - Saturday, November 15, 2014, 12:32 PM

After reading and watching the provided material, I found myself agreeing with a great number of points that Gordon S. Woodward had made. It has been repeated many times in class just how hard it is to put yourself in the time period we are discussing. It may seem conservative by today's standards, but I personally think this revolution was considered extreme during that time.

I think John Adams Quote from the online video backs my opinion perfectly.

"What do we mean by the revolution? The War? That was no part of the revolution; it was only an effect and consequence of it. The revolution was in the minds of the people, and this was effected from 1760-1775, in the course of 15 years before a drop of blood was drawn at Lexington."

I believe you can go back even further to the 1640's, during the English civil war. The colonists had gotten a taste of independence, and a confidence boost in self sustainability. "During the civil wars, nobody in England exercised effective control over the colonies. The mainland colonies already governed themselves. As the New England

settlements expanded, the new colonies did not even bother to obtain royal charters.”(Liberty Equality, Power. Pg.92 pg. 1) This further proves my point, that this radical way of thinking didn’t come about overnight, it was unavoidable, and a long time coming. To have success, and a taste of a new modern society, the minds and hearts of the American people had been changed forever. “ They saw themselves as the freest people in the world.”(Online video 2)

As Woodward points out, the Americans don’t fit the extreme, violent revolutionaries we imagine today, but by the standards of the time, I believe this was one of the most radical, least conservative movements to have taken place on U.S. soil thus far.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Crazy...Colonial style



by Adam Graves - Monday, November 17, 2014, 5:51 PM

I agree with all of your post, well written and on point. I honed in on the same John Adams quote but focused mainly on the words “The revolution was in the minds of the people” which seemed to be in line with Gordon Wood’s view on the debate. There was another great line from the same video General John Galvin said “We the strange mix of folks who end up calling ourselves Americans.” I found this to be very accurate for the time of the revolution and current time period. Another reason why I think that the colonists wanted to fight for a revolution was that they couldn’t relate to their British rulers and probably tired of paying taxes as well. But the main point of my reply was to say I enjoyed reading your post.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Conservative Definitions



by Connor Fields - Monday, November 17, 2014, 9:31 PM

I agree with many points in your post and the idea that the revolution was not a conservative movement. But I am hung up on how the revolution even today could seem conservative. I think that the american revolution then and even to this day would be a good definition of radical. The people at the time were deciding on whether or not to create an entirely new government, that to me is the opposite of conservative. How would you consider their actions to be conservative by today's standards?

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Crazy...Colonial style



by Caitlyn Craviotto - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 6:34 PM

I appreciated this post because it reminded me that in the 1700's the idea of

revolutionary and radical may have been something much different than in our world of 2014; where chaos and violence in warfare may be substantially more intense or of a different kind because of the technologies and mechanisms of today. The most intriguing point was in the idea of John Adams expressing that the revolution was in the mind of the people, over any of the physical outbreak, that the revolution was such a fascination and of importance because the attitudes and mentality of the people evolved.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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Not a Revolution? Come on...



by Jesse Bowman - Saturday, November 15, 2014, 7:40 PM

This debate almost seems nonsensical. The American Revolution is, at least in my opinion, fairly obviously a "Revolution" that I feel had great affect on the European psyche and helped prove that the enlighteners were more than just verbal rubbish.

More importantly, the definitions I've come to use for the terms "Revolution" and "Conservative Movement" are pretty much summed up by a google search of the two: "Revolution, a forceable overthrow of a government or social order in the favor of a new system."

"Conservative Movement,

a political philosophy or attitude emphasizing respect for traditional institutions, distrust of go I also believe more along the lines of "strict constructionists" belief of a deep rooted change in the social system.

Degler somehow interprets little impact on the social impacts of the American Revolution, "...It is quickly apparent that the social consequences were **meager** indeed. In both purpose and implementation they were not to be equated with the social changes that shock Russia & France in later years." (Delger, 137). Now, before I attempt protesting this argument I want to make it clear that my knowledge in area of the French Revolution and Russian Revolution is very minimal. I completely disagree the social consequences of the American Revolution were "meager", this is a time (1760-1783) when the ideology of the common man and men of wealth started to align more than ever in the spirit of belief in every mans divine right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, on which they acted upon by *overthrowing* their ruling monarchy, following Wood's argument that radicalism from the revolution had a major social impact on the transformation of relationships among colonists (Woods, 145). I believe that this ideology started to flourish and implement a deep social change in America the even carried over and could arguably be a fundamental element to the rise of the French Revolution eventually consumed most of Europe.

As to the statement about "not equating" the American Revolution to the French and Russian Revolutions? As I mentioned early, I do not know too much detail about these events, however, I do know that the French Revolution was depicted as a bloody revolution in which the own French revolutionaries beheaded King Louis XVI (Liberty, Equality, Power, 252), but an attempt to compare and scale the level of "social change" based on the PHYSICAL capabilities of the Frenchmen to overthrow their ruling king in their own territory to the American colonies' extensive battle over-throwing a ruling monarch fought from thousands of miles away across an ocean is just silly, there are just too many variables and

differences involved to do so.

Among this argument of radical vs. conservative I will argue that an attempt to establish such a largely diversely populated democratic-republic with given history of such experiments would more than likely be considered bold... if not one of the most **radical** revolutions and most certainly not conservative.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Radical change, in the most controlled way.



by Simone Reynolds - Sunday, November 16, 2014, 5:16 PM

Currently, I am agreeing with Gordon S. Wood. I believe that the revolution was something that drastically changed the united states. Even though the revolution was not as intense as a lot of other revolutions, there was obvious impact by this one as well.

Revolution, in the most simple terms means, "a single complete turn". This definition is saying that a revolution is complete change.

In the text on page 8, it says, "The revolution did more than legally create the United States; it transformed American society. Because the story of America has turned out the way it has, because the United states in the twentieth century has become the great power that it is, it is difficult, if not impossible, to appreciate and recover fully the insignificant and puny origins of the country."

This is why I agree with Wood, although he sees that this was not a very violent act, it still made a profound difference. It was a radical change, but in the most controlled way.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Radical change, in the most controlled way.



by Karla Logan - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 11:01 PM

I also agree that the revolution was a huge turning point. It changed our country very dramatically. There were other small events that we have previously discussed in forums and class that did have an effect on the direction our country went and the way everything has turned out. But I agree with you and Wood that this may not have been the most extreme but seems like it was the most affective.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Radical change, in the most controlled way.



by Simone Reynolds - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 11:32 PM

Exactly. I see The American Revolution as a small change that resulted into a drastic change in the long run. In order for something to have a great effect on something, it doesn't have to be violent or a huge war, it just has to have meaning. You can go to war for years and there still won't be any change in our world, but if there is something small yet SIGNIFICANT that happens, then that itself is a revolution, no matter the size.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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Re: Radical change, in the most controlled way.



by Brian Burt - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 11:30 PM

I totally agree with this the revolution was a huge turning point for the Americans it was huge turn from what they were used too. the revolution did transform the society in the movie it even says that the Americans developed a new political order and developed new legislators all of this transformed the society this was new then due to the fact of the Revolution. The social changes and relationships makes for a radical part in our history this changed America.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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A Revolution- Regulated and Radical



by Caitlyn Cravotto - Monday, November 17, 2014, 4:19 PM

Was the American Revolution a conservative movement?

No. I tend to feel most similarly to Gordon Wood's beliefs.

Through the articles and videos, I gained knowledge of the details and reasoning inside of the revolution. As I knew it was the overthrowing of the authority of the British Crown, turning in to the formalization of the United States of America, I saw significance in the happenings between 1765 and 1783 that the Rebels of the 13 Colonies performed; that is, that social, political, and intellectual transformations happened in a radical and brand new, fascinating way. The civilians came together to break from Great Britain. The coalition of new political order and materialism made for a society that was unlike any previous--and far from conservative. This place that developed into the USA was beginning to be filled with new political standards and economy, social contact, a development of modernism, and different nationalities forming into one. A true act and process of revolution. This was the most important event in our history. Why? As our nation was legally created, the most noble ideas came to life. Suddenly, the belief in liberty, equality, and happiness in the lives of ordinary people began to exist. The revolt of the rebels throughout the 13 colonies can be thanked for that. In the Constitutionism that was developing further, came optimism and authority to our formed nation. It was a pact-like creation, one that was determined and believed in the ability to come back from discouragement.

The colonists were progressing through a new knowledge for themselves: that wealth was accomplishable through hard work. That through hard work came movement, both socially and physically.

The rebels had a mindset of a grand revolution breaking through, before war was physically even broken out. This was *incautious* and *liberal*.

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Re: A Revolution- Regulated and Radical

by Caitlyn Cravotto - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 7:37 PM

In defining revolution, I have now sort of evolved my own personal definition. Before this discussion, I imagined a revolution as an absolute brutal physicality striking, one that took-over all previous battles and ended in tragedy. Boy was I wrong. I now have a description of a revolution being a process of rebelliousness throughout not only battleground, but of the mind. Revolution to me now means that a change occurred, and that momentum, motivation, and optimism was brought to life.

My position in siding with Gordon S. Wood, in the American Revolution being very un-conservative, leads me to the belief that I am a whig. I am in full support of The American Revolution and all of its meaning to our country. I believe it encouraged specific independence to many social classes and a broad range of civilians that might have instead never evolved and gained the excitement for life and for our country.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Rad America

by Adam Graves - Monday, November 17, 2014, 5:37 PM

I'm taking the Gordon S. Wood side on this debate. Not because it seems like the popular vote but because I think he made some convincing arguments. I believe the people of America were ready for new leadership and tired of wig wearing foes from across the pond spoon-feeding them their religion and politics. The idea that they wanted to be independent in thought, religion, and self-government might seem radical, I'm not sure that the colonists looked at that way. Maybe this is just my Pro-American view shining through. But colonists were looking for fundamental change in how they were being governed. As written in (Liberty, Equality, Power pg.232) they were tired of paying the Anglican church its taxes and letting it be the sole right to perform marriages. Mr. Wood in the short video talked about how the revolution infused into our culture everything we believe in like Equality, Liberty, and constitutionalism, which made sense. He even stated it was the most important event in American history, which I'm sure some historians would debate that. Although it seems like the vast majority don't know what the revolution means or their loose interpretation of it tends to swing in their personal beliefs. America does get freedom out of the revolution, ability of self government, and the pursuit happiness.

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Re: Rad America



by Karla Logan - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 11:08 PM

I like the point you brought up that Wood discussed some of the values we have today as issues they were trying to solve and facts colonists were trying to gain back during the American Revolution. Things that we as Americans hold so dear to us like Equality and liberty were part of what these individuals back then were fighting so hard for. They chose to stand up for what they believed in and changed their way of thinking for the good of the whole community. There were other things the revolution was about however I'm just happy to see that they were fighting for such great reasons and also reasons that we still hold important in our day to day lives.

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The American Revolution was the most radical event in history.



by Arianna Magana - Monday, November 17, 2014, 6:11 PM

As I continued to read Degler's article I believed that he made some good points. One being that "the post-Revolutionary America was but the working out of social forces which were already evident in the colonial period (pg, 137)." This quote I can tie in my reasoning as to why I side with Gordon Wood that the American Revolution was the most radical even in history. Gordon states on page 143 that we correlate America having of no social causes and no social consequences so therefore the American Revolution was an intellectual event. America did have social causes, the American Revolution just changed them. The American Revolution bettered our country and helped shape the society we have in America today.

The American Revolution can be proved to be the most radical even in history by simply looking at all the social change and transformations in relationships. The Americans had the odds against them the whole time against the British and our big victory at the Battle of Yorktown really gave us that confidence that we could do it. America stuck together. Of course, the disease and lack of food and water didn't make it ideal but the fact that we still walked out strong and won really says something about our country and leader, George Washington. I think that is where those social changes and relationships come from. The way the Americans connected with each other had significantly changed and after the American Revolution helped shaped the United States tremendously.

I like Gordon's quote on page 145. "The revolution did more than legally create the United States; it transformed American society." The American Revolution gave Americans hope and with leaders like George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson, it succeeded. The American Revolution might of happened in any case but we'll never know that. So you cant make an argument on just that. I believe that you have to look at the facts of how America changed overnight from the American Revolution. And because I do is why I agree with Gordon that the American Revolution was a radical event that forever changed history.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: The American Revolution was the most radical event in history.



by Amy Trask - Monday, November 17, 2014, 8:20 PM

Thank you for your post. I agree that Americans did have the odds stacked against them. This is why it is almost insulting to call this a conservative movement. These people were fighting for their new way of life. This was a modernistic lifestyle the world had never seen. "This astonishing transformation took place without urbanization, without railroads, without the aid of any of the great forces we usually invoke to explain "modernization." (Woodward pg. 145) This can, in part, be explained by the social transformations you mentioned. I don't believe that they could have seen what a monumental impact their ideas and actions would have on entire world.

It's clear that settlers had been adapting and evolving from the moment they stepped foot on solid ground. They didn't have a choice. Woodward made a great point on page 142 when he said "Living in a society that was already diverse and pluralistic, Americans realized that these attachments could not be the traditional ethnic, religious, and tribal loyalties to the old world." These people may have been the freest people in the world, but that doesn't make it less of a revolution. It actually explains why they were willing to fight so passionately for what they had come to know and what they believed in. This makes the American Revolution difficult to compare to other revolutions, and adds validity to it's radical nature.

You were spot on with Woodward's quote from (pg. 145) "The revolution did more than legally create the United States; it transformed American society."

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Radical and Conservative: BOTH CAN BE SEEN



by Michael Bennett - Monday, November 17, 2014, 10:24 PM

To say the Revolution was one without the other makes no sense to me. The war was fought with Patriots and Loyalists. Even before the war Patriots were standing up against the British Monarchy while Loyalists stayed out of the debate and were for the most part loyal to the crown. During the war Loyalists even sided and fought with the British.

In the first video clip, Sheila Skemp said "They loved being english," referring to the people of the colonies. If this is the case, why was their a Revolution? Because some people did not want change (conservatives) and others wanted change and were prepared to fight for it (radicals).

To say the American Revolution was one or the other is like saying either the conservatives were not Americans, or the Radicals were not Americans. Did the conservatives than get kicked out of America? If so, explain to the American Civil War.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Radical and Conservative: BOTH CAN BE SEEN



by Michael Bennett - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 9:57 PM

After looking into the question a lot more and reading other peoples posts, I realized that I was looking too much at the peoples thoughts and opinions. Not at the actual revolution and the affects of their after. The aftermath of the revolution had a huge affect on the American colonies and the people. Change is the definition of radical. So, since the Revolution brought forth so much change, it had to be a radical movement.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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American Revolution History



by Brian Burt - Monday, November 17, 2014, 11:07 PM

I seemed to lean one way and that was toward Gordon S. Wood. The reason I say this is because Gordon believed " that the American Revolution was a far reaching radical event that produced a unique democratic society in which ordinary people could make money, pursue happiness and be self governing." to be totally honest after reading all of what he said im on the same boat the American Revolution did change the society, on page 145 Gordon says " The Revolution did more the legally create the United States it transformed American Society. This gave all the Americans hope in the American Revolution even though the odds where not with them the Americans had to adapt to what was around them it wasnt easy to any means he even says that " Living in a society that was already diverse and pluralistic" living was hard work and staying alive was very hard. The American Revolution was not a conservative movement atleast thats what I believe the American Revolution changed history.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Definitely Radical



by Ashley Lazorchak - Monday, November 17, 2014, 11:17 PM

Before reading either article, I already knew what my answer to the question: "Was the American Revolution a conservative movement?" was. The answer being: absolutely not. Reading through the articles, I was more eager to get to the NO article than I was to read through the YES article considering I already had an idea of what article I would agree with more. Reading through the NO article, I believe that Gordon S. Wood shared his views perfectly and explained how the American Revolution was, indeed, a radical movement and exactly how I view the revolution to be. To say the American Revolution was conservative is ridiculous to me. A "conservative movement" is where people seek change, but the smallest of changes. The American Revolution was not a small change in the slightest. One of the first quotes from the article that stuck out to me was: *"If we measure the radicalism of revolutions by the degree of social misery or economic deprivation suffered, or by the number of people killed or manor houses burned, then this conventional emphasis on the conservatism of the American Revolution becomes true enough. But if we measure the*

radicalism by the amount of social change that actually took place – by the transformations in the relationships that bound people to each other – then the American Revolution was not conservative at all." (Pg. 144 – NO article by Gordon S. Wood) Although the Revolution was not as destructive as other wars could have been, it changed the society in a entirely new direction. Another quote: *"It was in fact a new society unlike any that had ever existed in the world."* (Pg. 145 – NO article by Gordon S. Wood) Considering the American Revolution completely changed society, and as Gordon S. Woods stated, completely changed society into one unlike any that had existed before, is proof in itself that the American Revolution was one of the most radical movements in history.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Definitely Radical



by Candice Oster - Tuesday, November 18, 2014, 7:02 AM

I have to say that while reading the articles, I too was more eager to read Wood's thoughts.

After I posted and read through the other posts I see that most of the thoughts agree with Wood and the radical side of the Revolution. Is this because of how we were taught history? I know that when I went through school the American Revolution was, after learning about Columbus year after year, the big event that we studied. It was harder for me to understand what Carl Degler was saying, I think because it is so far from what we had heard time and time again. It feels backwards from what I already had learned that the Revolution took place to conserve what was already in place for the colonies.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Definitely Radical



by Ashley Lazorchak - Friday, November 21, 2014, 3:55 PM

I agree with you when you say that it was hard to understand what Carl Degler was saying. Maybe it is because we already view the American Revolution as a radical event, therefore taking in his opinion is a bit harder than if we were to try to take in his opinion without having any background knowledge. I also agree with you when you say it might be because of how we were taught history involving the American Revolution. The American Revolution has stuck with me throughout all of my schooling as being one of the biggest events in history for the United States. When I think "history," the American Revolution is one of the events that pops into my head right away. Therefore without even thinking about it, I already determined The American Revolution to be radical regardless of Degler's points. Maybe it was wrong of me to keep my view limited and I should have been more open to his opinions as well.

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Sum of ratings:2 (1)



Spectrum of change



by Connor Fields - Friday, November 21, 2014, 12:57 PM

If we view the American Revolution on a spectrum with Radicalism on one side and social conservatism on the other and we look at the French and American Revolutions I think it would be rather easy to argue that the American Revolution is very conservative. the French Revolution was fought hard and incredibly bloody for both sides ending in the beheading of the monarch at the time. While the American Revolution, which was also bloody, ended in a peace treaty. Not nearly as radical as a revolution is stereotyped to be. In a lot of ways the revolution was fought as a war on principles than a true social reform. In France the royal family was dismantled and a republic was formed. In American we signed a treaty and kept more or less the same government that we were fighting. It was brought up in class by professor Escobar. "What really changed, we went from King to President from the House of Lords and Commons to the Senate and House of Representatives" In my opinion the only radical change was the place of the government that resided over the American population. It moved from England to America. There were some very minor changes to the nature of the government like the Constitution but many of the offices that we had a problem with over seas got a name change and an office within America and we called that a revolution.

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The Changing of Society...Radical



by Candice Oster - Tuesday, November 18, 2014, 5:17 AM

Was the American Revolution a conservative movement? From the readings and videos I agree with Gordon Wood. My first and basic thought is that it was war. It is hard for me to think of the decisions that brought the colonies to this mindset as being conservative. Change was what they were after, even if they did not realize what the changes would be. When we look at where the colonies were in that time they were ready for change to take place and they were gearing up for it, planning ahead for change. No one could have imagined the transformation the country would experience, but they were ready to move forward and make change happen.

Only because we can look back over the history can we see how much really changed as an effect of the Revolution. We can see how society was changed and I don't see it as just being a side effect. Grand sacrifices were made by Americans to move forward in the Revolution. Families picked sides and were separated by the choices they made. These were radical decisions, to step forward and not know what the outcome would be. Decisions this great bring about the changes we can see now, that have shaped our beliefs as a nation. I agree with what Wood says on page 144 about how the changes that took place in society as a result of the Revolution; the social changes and transformations in the relationships make for a radical part of history. Setting the stage for more changes to come in our country.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: The Changing of Society...Radical



by Candice Oster - Wednesday, November 19, 2014, 10:45 AM

Watching the video of Professor Maier and then the lecture in class yesterday, I think about how much does “sound familiar”. Of course things would sound familiar. I wouldn’t expect “everything” to change immediately after a revolution ended. So because things stayed similar, traditional, we should think of it as being conservative? Just as we need to be learning from history what worked then and trying to follow it or to stay away from the corrupt and self-centered that did not turn out well in the past, we need to remember that there are two sides (or more) to every decision that has been made in history. There are the cosmopolitans and the localists, the free and the slaves, and the Federalists and the Anti-federalists. Each issue had a great divide in what should be. Of course some decisions would be more conservative, traditional, because they believed in a way that already worked.

Wood says on page 145, “Of course, there were complexities and variations in early American society and culture-local, regional, sectional, ethnic and class differences that historians are uncovering every day-that make difficult any generalizations about Americans as a whole. This study is written in spite of these complexities and variations, not in ignorance of them.” I agree with Wood in the fact that society was a drastic change in the American society.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Carl Degler



by Adam Graves - Tuesday, November 18, 2014, 11:11 AM

Although I didn’t take the side of Carl Degler, I did find a lot of what he had to say interesting. He had some valid points and all of which were probably true effects of the revolution. The guy has a Pulitzer Prize, they don’t just hand those out. He had a very interesting point about how we still catered to the churches when it comes to government.

On page 133 of the reading material Carl stated the federal governments not taxing churches, why should they be exempt? From what I got from the lengthy portion of Carl’s side was that not a lot of changes with the economic status of individual colonists. I guess I wasn’t sure why there would be. The rich and wealthy remained that way, and probably in the most part had the most to gain from the revolution has far as cutting out the middle man on how they were getting taxed and controlling in some cases their businesses. But the poor weren’t just going to gain a higher economic status because of the war, just their independence.

Favorite Quotes from Carl’s readings-“all cannot be rich, but all have a right to make the attempt” pg.136

Abigail Adams in a letter to her husband to John Adams-“Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of Husbands” she urged “Remember all men would be tyrants if they could” pg134-135

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Forum Needs A Qualifier



by Jesse Bowman - Tuesday, November 18, 2014, 8:03 PM

I think that Degler had some very valid points as well. One of my main issues that I took with him, however, was that fact the he seemed to focus on the characteristics that did not change before and after the revolution, i.e., "These conservative, upper-class leasers who proclaimed the revolution **suffered no repudiations** in the course of the struggle; no mass from the bottom rose and seized control of the Revolutionary situation to direct the struggle into new channels." (Degler, 136) this statement is true, to some extent but I think it overshadows the risk the founding fathers were taking when they signed the Declaration of Independence, albeit they were mostly wealthy of high class individuals but they were still virtually signing their own death warrant. In fact, I think that because they were and could have entertained wealthy & healthy lives and chose not to in order to risk it all for a transformation of government should add to the radicalism of the revolution, not discount it purely because those men who started the course for change maintained power.

Overall, I think that the Revolution was a radical one that contained conservative elements, but those elements shouldn't take away from the radical feat the colonists were attempting.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Forum Needs A Qualifier



by Michael Bennett - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 10:05 PM

I did not even consider what the men who signed the declaration were giving up and the sacrifice they were making when signing such an important documentation. I always thought they were rewarded and loved by all Americans, at least that is how other history classes made it sound. After this class I now see even in America people were debating and arguing over what to do. But the signing of the Declaration of Independence is just another example of how radical the Revolution really was.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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A Revolution is still a Revolution



by Sullivan Paulson - Tuesday, November 18, 2014, 11:15 AM

After reading the material and watching the videos, I agree with Gordon Woodward far more then Carl Degler. There is a case for some conservative elements in the social structure before and after the American Revolution. The impact of this very much bloody and hard fought war however, to me at least, seems to be one composed overwhelmingly

of ideas and principals that were radical at that time. As Woodward says succinctly, "The Revolution not only radically changed the personal and social relationships of people, including the position of woman, but also destroyed the aristocracy as it had been understood in the Western world for at least two millennia."(p. 146 / 7)

I also think that it's important to note that the American Revolutionary War has many similarities to other revolutions before and after it. This was not some instantaneous shining victory for freedom as it was painted for a long time but, in numerous ways, a dirty multifaceted war with long running implications and just as much bloodshed and infighting as most other revolutions. The colonies were not very united in the beginning, for example even with the split between Loyalists and Patriots most people, even if they had an opinion one way or the other, just wanted to be left out of the fighting. The American Revolutionary War also follows in a long line of revolutions that were used as proxy wars for larger countries, for example France and Spain fought and or harassed the British while several Native American tribes and some German mercenaries fought on the side of the British.

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Re: The American Revolution



by Mariana Paredones - Tuesday, November 18, 2014, 11:43 AM

I personally want to start off by saying, that an opinion of whether or not the American Revolution was an actual 'revolution' and to make claims that it was or that it wasn't, is up to an individualized and institutionalized perception that was set historically when taught about the time period. Yes. The American Revolution was a Revolution, in every form. The collective efforts of people coming together and organizing tactics, although rash, it was NEW. A new fundamental idea evolved that these colonists, although they did not all consider themselves indifferent to the British crown, they had already started a separate entity and culture of people. It was inevitable and the socialization of the colonists had a unique form of intersectionality that lead to trying to formulate a government that would not oppress them the same way the crown did but there was No historical example that had attempted or succeeded in a democratic-republic structure.

I will be continuing this throughout the week...

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Re: The American Revolution



by Alex Wolderufiel - Tuesday, November 18, 2014, 11:49 AM

After watching and reading through The American Revolution, i dont belive it was a conservative movement. I agree with Gordan Woods points and beliefs on how it had major effects and even changed the world. Although the 13 colonies overthrowing the British cause many complications, i belive that without this historic event America wouldnt be the country it is today.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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A change of my opinion



by Arianna Magana - Friday, November 21, 2014, 2:57 PM

I should start off by saying that I made a mistake in saying that because of the American Revolution being the most radical event in history that it made the United States what it is today. I still stand true to my opinion that the American Revolution was one of the most radical events in history but I also cant say that it did make the United States what it is today. That is reaching a bit much. The American Revolution I feel like was the first historical event that brought the United States together. With a great leader like George Washington I truly think he gave the colonists hope and built a good solid foundation for the United States. And the fact that he did his job with compassion and was already one of the more wealthier men in the U.S. really stands out to me. We could trust him. He turned our army inside out and led them to win a war that forever would change American history. That in itself is radical to me so when you add in all of the other details its pretty clear that the American Revolution was a changing point.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: A change of my opinion



by Candice Oster - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 5:19 AM

I agree with you that there was a feeling of change after the American Revolution. It is also fair to say that the leadership of George Washington gave the people a foundational start as to what leadership meant. It is difficult to look at what changes the actual Revolution brought about and what took place afterwards as we are looking at history as a whole. We can see the "changes" that took place, but what it was like each step of the way is harder to see.

I tend to look at things from a social point of view. How the people were feeling and how the families that had been divided were able to move forward and trust in the new government. Of course there were two sides fighting for what they believed in. What happened to the Loyalist in the end? How did they feel about George Washington's leadership? There was now a place for them in government as well. We know that there were many that had differing opinions about how America government should be established. We know there was still a divide in beliefs, those that want government to look radically different from the English rule and those that want things to be developed in a more conservative way.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Loyalist point of view



by Arianna Magana - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 12:32 PM

You brought up a good point that I really had never thought of about the Loyalist point of view. I wonder what they thought of Washington as a leader and how the war changed their

government. Was the American Revolution a radical event in history for them as well? How did us beating them in the war affect their lives afterward. The video we watched online about the British point of view was very interesting but I would like to more. We have watched so many videos about the historians that study our point of view that it make me even more interested in a historian that has studied the Loyalist side. Has one of our American historians focused on the Loyalist side of the American Revolution? I am interested in seeing a documentary if there is one out there.

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A revolution will always be radical



by Simone Reynolds - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 1:07 PM

I would also like to point out that with any sociological or political change, there will always be some sort of uproar or disagreement within the community. So with that being said, the people who were being oppressed (colonists) against the powers that be: The British Empire, they did not stand there and allow them to walk all over their rights and lives. They did not allow themselves to be taken advantage of, so they revolted and fought for what they believed in.

As I stated earlier, with change comes unrest. No one will ever be in total agreement.

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A new light shone on the definition of the RADICAL Revolution?



by Brittany Newton - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 2:39 PM

I agree with Professor Wood's stand. Honestly I had never thought of the Revolution as 'radical'. In my mind I came to the realization this week that some people have such a negative attitude to the word radical. In some instances it is negative but looking up the definition of the word radical it simply means:

"advocating or based on thorough or complete political or social reform; representing or supporting an extreme section of a political part"

So by definition yes the American Revolution was a radical event. We were fighting for the right to "reform" our politics, our government and our lives. At the time when the men were fighting in the Revolution their motives were not Women's Rights or even abolishing Slavery but in my opinion they were unknowingly fighting to pave the way for those changes. They were the trail blazers for America's mind set, for the very basis of what I believe to be the very definition of America. We don't have to stick to the status quo. We can fight to go against the flow. We can truly be different.

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Re: A new light shone on the definition of the RADICAL Revolution?

by Brittany Newton - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 2:51 PM

I would also like to add that while for the most part I agree with the Professor's excerpt there is one comment I do not fully agree with. It is the last sentence of the last page. It says:

"In short, the Revolution was the most radical, and most far- reaching event in American history."

I slightly disagree, one point I already mentioned earlier was Women's Rights. More specifically their right to vote. The American Revolution officially ended in 1783, women did not even get the right to vote officially until 1920. There are many other 'Radical changes' (in my opinion) that are affiliated with American history. If it were my choice I would amend that statement and say 'one of the most' rather than *THE* most.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: A new light shone on the definition of the RADICAL Revolution?

by Jesse Bowman - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 11:35 PM

First off, great post!

I completely disagreed with that comment that Woods made as well, to simply describe any event as a "Most radical, and most far reaching event..." is bold and very subjective.

Both Woods and Delger seem to take all-or-nothing stances on whether or not the American Revolution was a conservative movement or not, and I think therein lies the problem, as you and many of the other students on this forum have pointed out the Revolution did not change EVERYTHING but it most certainly did radically change SOMETHINGS.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Still Want to Say Radical

by Ashley Lazorchak - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 4:08 PM

I'm having a hard time finding reasons to say that the American Revolution was conservative. Reading through Degler's article, his points are hard to pick out and I understood Wood's side a lot more. I can somewhat understand why the American Revolution can be considered conservative, considering that the French Revolution was most definitely radical in the sense of how gruesome it was along with the beheading. Although the American Revolution was not as intense in that sense, I still believe that the American Revolution is radical. Despite that, I also believe that the American Revolution

can be considered conservative in some parts. I suppose it's honestly based on your own individual opinion. I do not believe that we can ever really define and agree on whether or not the American Revolution is definitely "radical" or definitely "conservative." Everyone is going to have different view points and different ways of interpreting the American Revolution.

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Re: Still Want to Say Radical

by Michael Bennett - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 10:01 PM

I had a really hard time choosing a side as well. But after considering the actual definitions of radical and conservative, the revolution most fits the radical side. I completely agree with you that it has a lot of conservative aspects in it, specially if you consider the people's opinions. Many loyalists who did not want or care for change, yet change still happened.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Still Want to Say Radical

by Karla Logan - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 11:36 PM

I agree with the point you made that if you compare the American Revolution to other revolutions ours might not seem that bad as others were more extreme and gruesome. However for the American people of that time it was radical. As with any discussion our personal beliefs and opinions come into play with which side we will lean towards. I see points to both sides but in the end I have to stick with feeling that it was radical.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Why not both?

by Connor Fields - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 4:32 PM

Unfortunately after reading the material and seeing everyone's opinions I remain on the fence. I see points in each argument. It's hard to picture a revolution not being radical but ultimately little changed in the governmental structure during the switch. We had some name changes and a few doctrines listing out our rights specifically but the real problem that was echoed through out the colonies and can be argued as the force leading to revolution was the only thing that really changed. We moved from a monarch to a presidency and we moved the base of operations from England to the Americas eradication the problem of taxation without representation. This all leads me to agree with some of the conservative movement thinkers. as far as revolutions go especially when we see the French Revolution happen right after the American Revolution end with the beheading of the French monarch I would agree that the American Revolution is very conservative.

But out on the other hand this revolution was truly one of a kind it ended with wa free country and a civil rights document that would stay strong for over a hundred years. It's also very hard to think that the colonists at the time were not radical. They were trying to form an entirely new government evolving for thirteen individual colonies into a nation of 13 states of free men and women. And this, I believe, is where the true change and radicalism occurs. the people wanted freedom and while under the English monarchy they weren't given the opportunities to express their views because of the lack of representation.

All in in all i think that simply calling a war a revolution does not inanely make it radical. I believe that the war itself and the outcome of the war and policy change was rather conservative but what is radical is the change that occurred in the hearts and minds of the American people. Going from individuals from individual colonies to a united people.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Continuing Examples of My Radical Opinion



by Ashley Lazorchak - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 4:34 PM

Still wanting to call the American Revolution radical, I want to start off with defining "radical." Radical is defined as:

"thoroughgoing or extreme, especially as regards change from accepted or traditional forms." (http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/radical) Some of the synonyms for "radical" are: original, drastic, and extreme. In my opinion, the American Revolution was original in the sense of it being something that had never been done before which made that in itself, extreme and drastic. Even in the definition of radical, it states "change from traditional forms." The American Revolution completely changed traditional forms. It created an entirely new government. It was a rebellion. To me, rebellion is definitely radical.

Another few quotes from the readings that caught my eye was: "*Americans were not born free and democratic in any modern sense; they became so - and largely as a consequence of the American Revolution*" (Pg. 142 - NO article by Gordon S. Wood). As well as: "*It was the revolution more than any other single event, that made America into the most liberal, democratic, and modern nation in the world*" (Pg. 145 – NO article by Gordon S. Wood). All of the quotes that I have included in my posts about the American Revolution being radical gives me more of a solid reason to believe that the American Revolution is radical. It changed our society into a society unlike any had been before.

But as I have stated in my previous post, everyone is going to have a different opinion and come to a different conclusion based on how they view the American Revolution to be, regardless of what other people say. I believe some opinions can be swayed, but I believe that coming to a solid conclusion is impossible and that both sides can be seen with different individuals leaning more towards either one.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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The change in society



by Brian Burt - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 4:47 PM

Once again I find myself leaning towards the revolution being radical instead of conservativ. Why I say that is because in the movie that is provided for us woods says that people thought of the Revloution as a social change and a social change in relationship! Woods says that the Revloution society was like a modern society! On page 144 if you read it says by wood that the changes that took place in society resulted in the revolution, the social changes and relationships make for a radical part in history. To sum it up to say that the American revolution was a conservative is wrong conservative to my knowledge means that people want change but the smallest of change how was it a small change the American Revloution was a huge change in America!

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: The change in society



by Michael Bennett - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 9:53 PM

I have had a hard time deciding. In my post I said it was a little of both, but I was looking to much at what the peoples opinions were rather than the actual revolution. After looking up and reading the page 144 again, I realized that the revolution itself was really radical. If you go by the definition you presented, it could not have been conservative.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: The change in society



by Simone Reynolds - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 11:25 PM

I agree with you as well, because as you said... No matter how small the change might have been, A revolution is still a revolution. therefore it causes change within some sort of community or social aspect, which leads to a what...? A revolution. Change revolves, it turns.. And american turned into, in my opinion, a new America.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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On Gordon S. Wood



by Caitlyn Craviotto - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 7:28 PM

Within the argumentative argument, I found a section in Wood's standpoint that was not only clear and understandable, but that truly strenghtened my views on agreein with Gordon Wood. The paragraph went like this:

"If we measure the radicalism of revolutions by the degree of social misery or economic deprivation suffered, or by the number of people killed or manor houses burned, then this

conventional emphasis on the conservatism of the American Revolution becomes true enough. But if we measure radicalism by the amount of social change that actually took place-- by the transformations in the relationships that bound people to each other--then the american revolution was not conservative at all; on the contrary: it was as radical and as revolutionary as any in history. Of course, the American Revolution was very different from the other revolutions. But it was no less radical and no less social for being different. In fact, it was one of the greatest revolutions the world has known, a momentous upheaval that not only fundamentally altered the character of american society but decisively affected the course of subsequent history."

Wow. Okay, this reminded me of the importance of the revolution not being in the physicality, but how revolutionary truly was developed in the minds of americans? It was progressive and had deep movement in altering how civilians would go forward with lives and generations in the years to come.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Gordon and Society



by Brian Burt - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 8:14 PM

To add onto more of why I think the American Revolution was radical and why i agree more with Gordon S. Wood. big reason why is that on page 145 he says " the revolution did more then legally create the united states it transformed American society. the Revolution gave so much hope to the Americans with important leaders like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson these two people gave hope to Americans to keep battling. Woods believes that this event in history was very much radical. with that in mind in the video it talks about how some Americans viewed the revolution as a violent change in government and others thought of it as a change in society and a change in social relationships, it continues to say that they were proud to be Englishmen that right there caught my eye little bit the meaning that they where talking about the colonies they where willing to fight for change. during all this Americans developed a new political order and developed new legieslators this all happened because of the revolution this was a change in society a big one. toward the end of the movie it says that it was a modern society and I totally agree with that. I mean literally woods says on page 144 about how changes that took place in this society in result of the revolution of course the social changes and relationships makes for a radical part of history. making a platform for whats to come in our country.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Gordon and Society



by Sullivan Paulson - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 11:37 PM

I definitely agree with most of this, but I would add that it's important to remember some of the other factors that changed for the former colonists after the revolution. They not only had a new form of government with inspiring, if sometimes divisive, leaders they started to see the benefits from this new deal relatively quickly. The colonists no longer had to confine themselves as much with respect to where they could settle, whole new territories with all the natural resources they could wish for

were there for the taking. This taking was of course often by force, but still I think it was one of the keys ways this new country was able start up so fast and keep itself independent. This expiation kept the new citizens happy and occupied while their fledgling government went about establishing itself.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Gordon and Society



by Sullivan Paulson - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 11:51 PM

A successful revolution that produces a long lasting and stable government is rare. The new America was lucky is several ways, they were at least partly isolated from the other major world powers of their time by the expedience of a large ocean. Not only this, but after the dust from the revolution settled these aforementioned world powers went right back to their usual business of spying, sabotaging, and occasionally warring with one another. This along with their own political unrest at home, partly enflamed by the American Revolution, kept them far too busy to bother spending the time and capital on an attempt to take over. America's image was also one of strength after the war, they had just beaten back what was arguably the most powerful army on the face of the earth, so what little power vacuum did exist for a short time was quickly filled by America.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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American Revolution-one of the most radical events in history



by Arianna Magana - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 8:32 PM

As I have read everyone's comments and watched the necessary videos I still stand true to my decision that I think that the American Revolution was one of the most radical events in history. I cant say that it made America what it is today but It played a very significant part in shaping American government. I cant come up with a valid argument on the American Revolution being conservative. I enjoyed reading other people's thoughts though on this topic. It has helped me develop my opinion and look at different sides that I never thought of.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: American Revolution-one of the most radical events in history



by Simone Reynolds - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 11:19 PM

I agree with you 100%. The American Revolution was definitely a prominent act that changed America and the way we, as a country are now. Although everyone has their own opinions, I enjoy reading the thoughts of our classmates because it gives me a different way to view topics. It opens my eyes to new ideals of looking at, researching, and analyzing history and its events.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: American Revolution-one of the most radical events in history

by Karla Logan - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 11:31 PM

I am right there with you both that the revolution was a huge part in shaping the world we live in today. I've struggled with removing my modern day thoughts from my forum posts. I think that it is hugely important to do so though. When we look back on past events, for example the revolution, if we look at it with a modern day mind set then no it wasn't something radical compared to the lives we live now. But when we remove those thoughts and put ourselves in their shoes in their time it was a big deal for them.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Text evidence as to why the revolution was radical

by Simone Reynolds - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 11:16 PM

To back up my statements, I would like to share a few quotes from the reading that resonated with me.

"If we measure the radicalism of revolutions by the degree of social misery or economic deprivation suffered, or by the number of people killed or manor houses burned, then this conventional emphasis on the conservatism of the American Revolution becomes true enough." pg 144

"It was as radical and social as any revolution in history, but it was radical and social in a very special eighteenth century sense." pg. 144

"These changes were radical, and they were extensive. To focus, as we are today apt to do, on what the revolution did not accomplish- Highlighting and laminating the failure to abolish slavery and change fundamentally the lot of women- is to miss the great significance of what it did accomplish; Indeed, the Revolution made the anti-slavery and women's rights movements of the nineteenth century and in fact all of our current egalitarian thinking." pg. 146

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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by Karla Logan - Saturday, November 22, 2014, 11:26 PM

After watching the short clips and reading the article I am leaning towards Woods side of the argument. I think one of the biggest things we have to remember as we have discussed it in class; we have to remove ourselves and our current American thoughts. We need to put ourselves back in time and then answer these questions. Was this radical? If you're answering it by today's standards then no, but if you place yourself in a different time then yes for that time frame it was radical. This was a time for incredible change. Wood

states on page 145 that by the time the revolution had ended American society had changed. People treated each other differently. I think a huge part of success in any activity is how we treat each other and if after the revolution the way humans interacted had improved then I see benefit to the Revolution. I agree with him when he states that this revolution didn't change some very serious issues it did however change individuals thinking and open up for the possibility to end slavery and the women's rights movement.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

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(The American Revolution) Next >

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