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The Revolution: Conservative or Radical

by Joe Escobar - Friday, November 11, 2016, 2:45 PM

This thread is for discussions on the The Revolution: Conservative or Radical topic. 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, something that describes which question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: The Revolution: Conservative or Radical

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What should I compare it too?

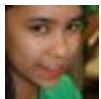
by Emily Phan - Saturday, November 12, 2016, 2:59 PM

In looking at the question, “Was the American Revolution a conservative movement?” we must decide what we are comparing the Revolution too.

First I am going to assume we are comparing it to other revolutions of that time period, most notably the French Revolution. The French Revolution was a personification of the Enlightenment philosophies. It contained great social upheavals where the poor killed the rich and took their lands. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tM4xOBWYwI>) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Revolution) The American war for independence is not revolutionary in comparison to this movement. It was a reinstating of the way society had been before England taken more control of the colonies (after the period of salutary neglect.) Carl N. Degler says, “For the most part, the society of post-Revolutionary America was but the working out of social forces which were already evident in the colonial period.” (pg.125) Meaning America was not fundamentally changed from its prior form by the Revolution. France’s social form was radically changed by their revolution. Also it is important to notice that “No new social class came to power through the door of the American Revolution.” (Carl N. Degler pg. 125) And “Important social institutions were left untouched,” (Carl N. Degler pg. 127) The poor did not try and step into the rich’s place. No blood thirsty upheaval where the poor slaughtered the aristocracy like in the French revolution. Some loyalists left but “the Loyalist departure did not decapitate the colonial social structure.” (Carl N. Degler pg 125) Society did not **radically** change, it approximately returned to what it had been before England took more power with only minor differences. So the Revolution was a conservative movement.

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Re: What should I compare it too?

by Emily Phan - Saturday, November 12, 2016, 3:00 PM

Now I am going to compare the state of the colonies before the Revolution to after the Revolution. England had been busy with affairs in Europe and had been ignoring the colonies - Salutary Neglect. The colonists were prospering. They considered themselves one of the “Freest people on earth” (Liberty, Equality, Power, pg. 157) Then England began imposing internal taxes on them like the Stamp Act Townshend Revenue Act, (Liberty, Equality, Power, pg. 159). The colonists didn’t want the Crown interfering with their lucrative internal commerce. It was also seen as a taking away of the **rights** they had possessed before England had begun to interfere. The colonist wanted England to take away the taxes that they had imposed. England did so to a point but never fully. These things are some of the main reasons the revolution came about. So would not say “the Revolution was the most radical and most far-reaching event in American History.” (Gordon S. Wood pg. 134) It was not a radical movement it was an attempt to get back the freedom they had possessed in the first place. Yes, some more radical events did occur during this time like the governments allowing for

freedom of religion, and declaring all are created equal in the Declaration of Independence but even when they declared these things colonial society did not drastically change. The Revolution was a conservative movement.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Minor differences and before England took power?

by Jeff Johnson - Thursday, November 17, 2016, 10:36 PM

I think u mean before England lost power. I would have a hard time calling the creation of the first democratic republic since the Romans and Greeks the same social structure of the Monarchies of Europe. Even knowing the failures of the Greeks and Romans the founding fathers still embarked on this racial experiment. Even though the social structure didn't change overnight it was the groundwork for the modern U.S. which for good or bad has become one of the most influential countries in our modern history. Calling the Revolution conservative just because it wasn't hijacked by ultra-radicals like in most cases, shows u there must have been enough change in the people minds or we would have descended into chaos. If u had been in any country in Europe and asked for religious tolerance at that time u would have been labeled radical.

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A revolution, but is it a strict or loose one?

by Justin Stewart - Monday, November 14, 2016, 11:24 AM

I had a hard time deciding which way I wanted to go on this but not because I couldn't make up my mind on what I thought, rather just more of which side it placed me under. let's first start with the definition of revolution. Revolution is defined as "a forcible overthrow of a government or social order in favor of a new system." Per dictionary.com Because of this definition I would have to say that my side on this would be yes however it isn't exactly that black and white. I do agree that the American revolution was indeed a true revolution but I also feel that what the revolution set out to do was accomplish this under strict constructionist's terms but in the end accomplished it under loose constructionist terms. As a reference to this I will take the information from the issue 6 handouts posted on Moodle. "strict constructions, for example, perceive revolution as producing significant and deep

societal change, while loose constructionists define the term as “any resort to violence within a political order to change its constitution, rulers, or policies””. So, picking a side I would place myself on the yes aspect like I said but just barely.

I would be interested in hearing people’s thoughts on this so that I may ultimately make a well-informed thought on this after some discussion.

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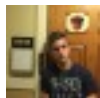
Re: A revolution, but is it a strict or loose one?

by Jonathan Whittington - Wednesday, November 16, 2016, 1:30 PM

I'm glad that you gave us the definition of revolution because I think the answer you might find yourself agreeing with is in the definition. "Overthrow of government in favor of a new one" This right here would tell me that it was a radical movement. Again by my own definition conservative means staying the same and not wanting change so in that sense this was a radical movement in my opinion.

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Re: A revolution, but is it a strict or loose one?

by Grant Garcia - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 10:42 PM

I completely agree with this post, I think people are getting so caught up in each individual event of the revolution like the wars and rallies that they are overlooking how simple this really is. It has nothing to do with how much change is being made, or whether that change is equally distributed between class, race, religion or any other grouping. The most important fact is that people are trying to change the political standing of the government they are subject to which by definition is radical.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Re: A revolution, but is it a strict or loose one?

by Justin Stewart - Thursday, November 17, 2016, 8:59 PM

The American revolution pathed the way to what we now call our government however I do not stand by the definition of a revolution as strongly as I did in my first post. Nonetheless my side on this is Yes, there were a few quotes within Carl

N. Degler's article that I found quite interesting and helped me make this choice. the first being.

"The ratification of the federal Constitution in 1788 constituted the first step in the acceptance of the principle that a man's religion was irrelevant to government"

This quote I found interesting because this is something that we know, yet sometimes I feel is taken for granted. We all believe that practicing religion freely without repercussions as a right but this appears to be previously not the case. The second quote further backs this up saying.

"All this weighty precedence was boldly overthrown by Americans in 1789-91 when they erected a government wherein "a man's religious tenets will not forfeit the protection of the laws nor deprive him of the right of attaining and holding the highest offices that known in the United States," as George Washington said."

This is something that we have had the right to our entire life's however I have seen in my lifetime argued amongst people whether we should. Something that according to this article was established well over 200 years ago.

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Re: A revolution, but is it a strict or loose one?

by Cameron McCord - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 1:04 PM

I like the definition of "revolution", but I would argue that it is conservative in way, because conservative means staying the same, and to a degree things did change. Although some stuff did stay the same so saying it is radical is a pretty big stretch considering radical is a pretty strong term. So saying its conservative mostly with a hint of some radical actions is a better way to explain it.

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Re: A revolution, but is it a strict or loose one?

by Benjamin McKenzie - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 7:42 PM

I was on the fence too but leaned more towards the idea that it was a radical movement and after reading your post I'm more convinced that it was. When I read the bit that told us the definition of a revolution included a "social order in favor of a new system" it reminded me of a present day example. In this past election when Bernie Sanders gained so much support he often described the need for a revolution. He wasn't talking about a violent uprising, but change in a political and social school of thought. I would still very much consider this to be a revolution and if a social change was extreme enough to lead to the revolutionary war, I would consider that to be radical.

**Yes, the American Revolution was a Conservative Movement.**

by Kyle Schneider - Monday, November 14, 2016, 12:09 PM

Yes, the American Revolution was a Conservative Movement. Carl N Degler writings opposed to Gordon S. Wood writings I find more realistic and straight forward thinking. Mr. Degler talks about religion and the constitution on page 122 of the hand out, "The ratification of the federal Constitution in 1788 constituted the first step in the acceptance of the principle that a man's religion was irrelevant to government..." (pg. 122) Mr. Wood I feel is constantly comparing other nation's revolutions to our own as well as over simplistic views of the 1800's. However, Mr. Wood carries a Whig like support to the Revolution where as Mr. Degler, an Imperialist type view of the Revolution and I feel I tend to lean more towards the Whig side of the thinking even though I agree with Mr. Degler's writings.

When approaching the studies of the American War for Independence I feel it is important to carry a neoprogressive attitude and carry with that an open mind since I was not there and did not have to encounter the everyday life of a colonist.

Mr. Degler provided many reasoning that I agree with including a passage from page 126 of the handout, "...conclusion that the Revolution was a thoroughly upper-middle-class affair in leadership and aim is inescapable. A further and perhaps more important conclusion should be drawn from this analysis of the political careers of the signers after the Revolution. These conservative, upper-class leaders who proclaimed the Revolution suffered no repudiation in the course of the struggle..." (pg. 126) The fact that the separation of Church and State was a social side effect of the Revolution, people tend to get hung up that the Revolution was "a religious" one and not one due to political and constitutional purposes.

**Yes, the American Revolution was a Conservative Movement; and possibly a little religiou**

by Tyger Gruber - Wednesday, November 16, 2016, 4:23 PM

Keeping in line with the suggestion of keeping a neoprogressive outlook while considering controversial actions and reactions of the past, I would like to interject that there may have been a religious component to the revolution. In the last paragraph of your elaborate post, I see "people tend to get hung up that the Revolution was 'a religious' one and not one due to political and constitutional purposes." (Forum 3). While I think this holds some ground, there lies the fact that the centuries of migration to America was foremost a striving for a free religious land for all. When Britain wanted to keep hold of the colonies they were okay, but

as Britain tightened the reigns the colonists (predominantly religious folk) may have feared that the absolute power of Europe's affairs in the new world may eventually change the religion in America.

Though this is all speculation it is fair to assume that the majority of daily life was affected by religion in colonial America near the turn of the century. Taking this a step further would be to connect a major occurrence with this same religious affiliation.

Even the quoted text involves religious wherein Gordon Wood states that "the principle that a man's religion was irrelevant to government..." (122). Though this explicitly states that religion is not a factor in government, after the revolution the phrase "one nation, under god" still remains in the song kids sing in classrooms and fans before ball games. Proving an underlying motif of God and religious experience in general in relation to the daily lives of colonial Americans.

That being said, it helps prove your point that it was a conservative movement. Conservatives are traditionally religious people of one faith or another.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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You had to bring religion into it ;)

by Kyle Schneider - Wednesday, November 16, 2016, 7:42 PM

In Mr. Degler's writings he says, "...a man's religion was irrelevant to government." (pg. 122) But as you said Europe's affairs in the new world were affecting religion, in order to prevent that they had to instill a form of government. Funny how that works out. The catch 22 with that is the Whig party had "god" on their side and any strict or loose constructionists siding with them would benefit them either way. With the Anglican Church (state-supported religion) being a disestablishment and Virginia passing a law that guarantees religious freedom....that doctrine ultimately paved the way for separation of Church and State.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: You had to bring religion into it ;)

by Justin Stewart - Friday, November 18, 2016, 8:36 PM

Throughout history, we have a similar pattern, freedom of religion promised yet somehow not often truly achieved. Religion and government as much as they claim to be separate are intertwined throughout our history and this not being the exception of course. I spoke about religion in one of my posts but had not looked towards the direction of the Whig party when I did. Freedom to practice your religion is what is promised yet bias towards political parties

was something that wasn't addressed and is something that we still see today. So I wonder how much good Virginia passed a law guaranteeing religious freedom did?

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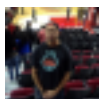
Re: You had to bring religion into it ;)

by Tyger Gruber - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 12:36 AM

Apropos to the comment on the struggle of maintaining balanced power. We saw a video in class that showed where when asked, George Washington said that America was "A republic, if you can keep it" I don't have a pager number (715) or a time in the video or the link. But I took notes and it's in there. I feel that he was implying that the republic will eventually fall, as many have in the past.

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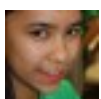
Re: The Revolution: Conservative or Radical

by Jonathan Whittington - Monday, November 14, 2016, 1:37 PM

I do not think the revolution was a conservative movement. I think this was a extreme radical movement because of the times. if this happened in todays age it might be a different story. This was radical because at the time England was one of if not the most powerful country in the world. The fact that Americans who had a relatively good life under Great Britain were wanting to break away just because they were unhappy with taxes would seem crazy to me at the time. I would imagine there were so many other countries that would love to have the lifestyle that Great Britain could offer. I've always interpreted conservative as not wanting change and being happy with the way things are. To me this movement was as radical as it gets, the people themselves might not have been liberal or radical, but the movement itself surely was.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: The Revolution: Conservative or Radical

by Emily Phan - Wednesday, November 16, 2016, 9:28 PM

I might agree with you but for the fact that the colonists were not originally trying to create a whole new social society. In the beginning they just wanted England to stop taxing them. They wanted to return to the state of salutary neglect where England pretty much ignored the colonies except for some external taxes. Also, "important social institutions were left untouched by the Revolution". Now "It

is true that social and political changes accompanied the Revolution... but these had been implicit in the pre-Revolutionary society.” (Carl N. Degler pg. 127) So the revolution was not intended to bring about some sort of radical change. They wanted things to return to how they had been. So the Revolution fits very well with your definition of conservative, in my opinion.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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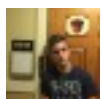
Re: The Revolution: Conservative or Radical

by Jonathan Whittington - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 1:10 PM

I'm glad you made these points, this certainly made me rethink my definition of conservative. You are correct when it was originally just about not wanting taxes and wanting to be salutary neglect, but I think the change occurred when colonists saw the redcoats come out to "protect them from the west" but really they ended up just hanging out in the major cities. I think then the idea became more of wanting to start their own country and stop having to live by England rule which did not let them expand west even though the colonists were the ones actually living here.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: The Revolution: Conservative or Radical

by Grant Garcia - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 10:51 PM

I believe everything you said is right about how the intentions of the colonists and the outcomes they were intending were conservative, but I would argue that the revolution and whether it was radical or conservative has little to do with intentions and much more to do with the outcomes that came from it. Change was intended to be minimal as you suggested in the taxing of the colonies, that is in my opinion conservative as well, but this idea of speaking out led to a lot of other people voicing their opinions and pushing for much larger political and equality based change. The intentions weren't radical, but the outcomes and what happened through the course of the revolution was.

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Tax

by Kyle Schneider - Friday, November 18, 2016, 12:25 PM

Upper/middle class colonists led the conservative Revolution, opposed to the lower class. Tax was tax, regardless if you were deemed rich or poor. The “extreme” radical movement as you said I think is a bit of an oversimplification.

What was originally begun as a limited political and constitutional purposes (the revolution) turned into a full blown out imperialist battle between Britain and the America's. Hamilton himself already had called for the "excise tax" passed in 1791 on wines, coffee, tea, and spirits. Tax was tip of the iceberg so to speak.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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Re: Tax

by Justin Stewart - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 5:45 PM

I thought that It was interesting that we had the uprising over the tea tax of 3% but yet we had a whiskey tax of 25% and that was to be assumed ok. We even spoke about that exact thing in class. The American revolution led to many changes in tax as well as the structure that we had in our government. The tricky thing that needed to be addressed and Hamilton plan was attempting to do was to fund this newly growing government. Looking back at the taxes they had then I think most of us could agree were nothing compared to today. It will be interesting for people to look back at us in another 100 years and see if they can say the same.

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Re: The Revolution: Conservative or Radical

by Cameron McCord - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 10:03 PM

After reading this i would actually have to agree with you. I never thought of seeing it as them leaving Great Britains laws which were pretty futuristic in the time period. Looking at the fact the Washington even tried to attack the most powerful country in the world was very "radical" if i may. Also seeing that Washington even said " 9 bullets per man" shows how out gunned they were.

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Revolution was not conservative.

by Andres Ibarra - Monday, November 14, 2016, 3:38 PM

NO, the American Revolution was not a conservative movement mainly because the colonist were not sticking to traditional values and they wanted change. As Gordon S. Wood stated they wanted to be able to "make money, pursue happiness, and be self governed"(wood)

The American Revolution was a radical movement because of the democratic society that they had built. There was a lot of social change that took place in the 18th century being caused by abuses of government, social honors, social distortions, monopolies, etc.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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A Radical Social Change

by Benjamin McKenzie - Monday, November 14, 2016, 6:41 PM

I lean more towards the idea that the American Revolution was not a conservative movement. I believe this largely because of the point made by Gordon S. Wood when he describes the radical nature of the revolution as being a social change. The idea for America that was being proposed was unheard of at that time. I think that it might be hard for us today to look at their ideas as being radical but at the time they were. While there were aspects that were conservative compared to revolutions that had/were happening around the world the social change that took place leads me to believe that the American Revolution should not. be considered a conservative movement.

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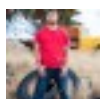
Re: A Radical Social Change

by Justin Stewart - Friday, November 18, 2016, 8:57 PM

It is always hard to try to place ourselves in the proper shoes of people of the past to understand where they are coming from. For the first time, America was forming in this way so no one really knew what to expect and naturally from this you will have both sides of the spectrum for and against. I think this is the part we can relate to the most. As we see very clearly these days with the amount of knowledge we have it is easy to form a opinion fairly quickly about a matter and for the most part an educated one if we did attempt to look at the education and amount of knowledge the average person was exposed to back then I think most people would not find it much of a stretch to assume simple things could become radical so I would agree this is radical for their time even if is not for ours.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Re: A Radical Social Change

by Cameron McCord - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 10:15 PM

I guess after all i have read i would have to agree with that. It is very difficult to think the way colonists thought back then considering all they had to go through and what they were going through. So i guess looking at it it would just be easiest to say it is a radical movement considering all the change going on.

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Radical Revolution

by Breana Kobold - Monday, November 14, 2016, 8:33 PM

After reading both schools of thought I have to say I agree most with Gordon S Wood that the revolution was not a conservative movement but rather a radical one. Carl Degler stated that the revolution was a natural and expected event in history, which rings true to some extent. The simple fact that the colonists were living in an unconnected land from the motherland is suggestion enough for a complete separation. But it takes a really assertive and radical group to actually rebel and pursue the independence that they sought. This was an event that could have had major consequences within social structures, religious structures, property distribution and certainly the economy but the revolutionists were determined. I believe it was a radical movement because no such revolution has come about in my lifetime even though the masses complain about nearly everything and we have the advantage of historic revolutions to guide us.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Radical Revolution

by Justin Stewart - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 5:44 PM

Americans have since the start of our country been very outspoken on opinions and because of that we have and will continue to have radical movements in our history. Looking back in time the consequences of actions in the radical movements have changed quick drastically, though. Previously you might be tossed in jail or even executed if the actions warranted. Both of these are possible outcomes today however we more see property damage and fighting as outcomes with small if any criminal charges being places compared to a number of people participating. I found it interesting that you stated it wasn't a radical movement because you have not seen such a revolution in your lifetime so I wonder would your opinion have been changed if such an activity had been?

Sum of ratings: (1)

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The Radical Revolution



by Riley Stromvig - Monday, November 14, 2016, 8:45 PM

Americans had always been rebellious in ways to avoid oppression from the 'mother country'. The revolution was no different. Some of the reasons for the war being radical include: it was the first successful war for liberation against imperialism, it was started by the majority of Americans who had the courage to stand up against a government that supposedly had everything right and was all powerful, it also was the first display by the Americans of guerrilla warfare. Guerilla warfare completely changed how battles were fought and how countries approached them. Britain, who had the strongest military in the world, did not know how to fight against this foreign style of combat. The war was not a peaceful way to get their freedom, obviously. It left the country split in two, the loyalists and the patriots. The patriots also stole land from those who supported the British and redistributed it throughout the rest of the patriot community. Nothing about that is conservative. Americans wanted freedom, they wanted to be independent, and it is quite obvious that they did not care as to how they got it.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: The Radical Revolution

by Emily Phan - Wednesday, November 16, 2016, 10:09 PM

I like all the examples you wrote but I feel that there may be a few inaccuracies. Not all Americans were rebellious. Our professor said that only 1/3rd of Americans were patriots. The South was considered a loyalist stronghold because they got along with England quiet well. Their trade with England brought in a lot of money. So I would not say the Revolution was “Started by the majority of Americans.”

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: The Radical Revolution

by Emily Phan - Wednesday, November 16, 2016, 10:10 PM

Secondly, though land was taken from the Loyalists, “The more significant question to be answered is who got the land?... it would appear that most often the land went to speculators or men already possessing substantial acreage, not to the landless or even to the small holder.” (Carl N. Degler pg. 127) The land wasn’t taken by the poor, like in the bloodbath that was the French Revolution. They didn’t “redistribute it throughout the rest of the patriot community.” The important wealthy guys took it.

Lastly, I do think that they cared how they got out from under England's control. They sent the Olive Branch Petition trying to get England to see their side of things and let them remain under the rule of England under more favorable terms. (pg 193. *Liberty, Equality, Power*) They tried to solve matters without violence at first. Even when violence began they did not acknowledge that it was the violence that was getting England's attention. They preferred to think that it was economic boycotts that brought change. After the first few battles they tried to fight in the traditional European style of stand and be shot at. This was considered the more correct, honorable, and brave way to fight. The colonists certainly cared how they got their independence. (I got most of the info in the last few sentences from my lecture notes)

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Guerrilla Warfare plus French help won the war.

by Kyle Schneider - Friday, November 18, 2016, 12:45 PM

I couldn't agree more with the guerrilla type warfare used by the Americans and the way it destroyed the British. But that would have been all for nothing if not from the help we received from France with the gunpowder they supplied.

Mr.Degler in his writings state "The men who engineered the revolt were largely members of the colonial ruling class." (pg 125 of the handout) The war was not a peaceful way to get their freedom as you said but being a radical in this being the first war for liberation and guerrilla warfare plus French help paved the way for patriots and loyalists alike.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: The Revolution: Conservative or Radical

by Zachary Sielicky - Monday, November 14, 2016, 9:50 PM

If we are going strictly off definitions, the revolutionary war was not a conservative act in any sense of the definition. Considering the definition of conservative is: *holding to traditional attitudes and values and cautious about change or innovation, typically in relation to politics or religion*. And the revolution and especially the constitution that followed the revolutionary war was anything but conservative. But as Carl Deger's essay is titled, *Conservatives can be innovators*, which in the case of the American Revolution, is exactly the truth. The revolutionaries of America were I believe were the most forward thinking men of their time, no doubt, but their idea of a new America, one that wasn't controlled by the crown was conservative in the sense that the use of labor of the middle and lower class would be essential to their traditional liberalist ideologies for a functional capitalist country. In a way they conserved that tradition from the crown. Though the movement against the crown arose out of a very 18th century whigist platform. If you look at the ideology of radical

whigs in in the 18th century you would come to the conclusion that they had a motive to challenge a traditional monarchy and establish a "contract formed government and that sovereignty resided with the people." These views were obviously a commonly held belief amongst a large portion of our founding fathers. This type of ideology really came to light and resinated with many colonist during the three acts that were implemented by the crown throughout the 1760-70s.

All in all after reading the two articles I would say that the revolution was a radical move that had some more conservative goals in mind of the founders when constructing the constitution. I am looking forward to seeing what others think about this topic.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Conservative yes, Radical... Maybe.

by Jake Preciado - Monday, November 14, 2016, 10:25 PM

I believe that the American Revolution was indeed a conservative movement. I don't believe it was radical, from a social or economic standpoint. A Revolution yes is considered radical but I don't believe it was, or at least the way it was painted in our history books growing up. Some of the reasons why are "no new social class came to power through the door of the American revolution." Very few powerful white men controlled the colonies before the American Revolution and those same few controlled it after. On top of the few controlling the colonies slavery was still prominent and growing after the American revolution. Also women still had no rights. Life remained fairly the same post Revolution. I would agree with Mr. Degler It was more of an "American revolt." Assuming that after the Revolution many felt free it still was very much the same form of government during the reign of the British Crown. Some extremest, Like the one we saw on the video in class; might state that we, as Americans, would have been better off staying apart of The British Monarchy. Was it a complete conservative movement? I don't believe so. What I do believe is that history calls it a revolution because defying a governing body in most cases IS considered a revolution. I guess one of the only truly radical ideas was the idea of leaving The Royal Crown.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Conservative yes, Radical... Maybe. What about perspective?

by Jeff Johnson - Friday, November 18, 2016, 7:40 PM

After the war when the creation of an actually government began conservative forces were able to hold onto the power and wealth they had previously possessed. To go straight to the creation of a government without once talking about the army that was raised the battles that were fought and the blood that was shed leaves out the whole reason we were able to create this government in the first place. There may have not been a whole lot of direct change immediately after the revolution but the constitution and the government created would lay the

ground work for one of the most radical experiments in human history. Comparing a democratic republic to the British Monarchy is just as absurd as saying things like we would be better off now if we were British. It has a lot to do with perspective as an American we are able to look back at it as a conservative movement but know one in the world at that time would have called the revolution conservative.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Conservative yes, Radical... Maybe. What about perspective?

by Jake Preciado - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 6:26 PM

I completely agree with your opinion on perspective! As seen in the video shown in class perspective plays a vital role in how we view things. We saw a young man on a bus completely backing the Royal Crown. He made sweeping generalizations about health care and gun laws. Claiming that we would be better off under the reign of the British. An obvious bias toward the British agenda really showing that perspective means everything. So yes I can agree with you. It (the revolution), like all things, revolve around perspective.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Somewhere in the middle

by Tyger Gruber - Monday, November 14, 2016, 11:03 PM

I feel that both sides bring up some good arguments. If I were forced to pick a side I would say radical because Gordon S. Wood elaborates that "In fact, the colonists knew they were freer, more equal, more prosperous, and less burdened with cumbersome feudal and monarchical restraints than any other part of mankind in the 18th century." (131). Which, aside from the possibility of this changing because of the political election outcome, we are in a similar situation. We as a world though, not only a country are very free, less violent, and less constrained than we've nearly ever been. Instead of a revolution, we are facing a fight for global climate change laws instead of freedom laws.

It's not like the people proposing that we need to enforce carbon emission laws are radical OR conservative. They are logical people with a firm grasp on reality and that we will run out of fossil fuels eventually anyways, so why not make the transition sooner rather than later? I think a similar situation was going on back then when the rational people realized that an island could not govern an entire continent and an ocean

away; and so change was inevitable. These rational directions that humanity heads in is neither conservative nor radical. It is humanitarian and just a consensus of the people as humanity grows more aware of the issue.

My question is, what will be the spark (or three consecutive sparks) that ignites the revolution for global climate change laws similarly to how the three crisis' that occurred in colonial America to spark the revolution for freedom?

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Somewhere in the middle

by Tyger Gruber - Friday, November 18, 2016, 11:50 PM

Great point, and well elaborated.

In my humble opinion, the three sparks that may eventually slingshot America into a revolution would be

~Trump Elect

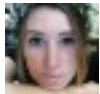
~Water crises

~Economic downfall as a result of water crisis

Hopefully this won't happen though.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Viewed as more radical

by Jaclyn Bahn - Monday, November 14, 2016, 11:14 PM

I would say “No”, the War of Independence was not primarily conservative. I believe that the Declaration of Independence created a lot of freedoms (of its time) for the colonist who I don’t see as being under intense restrictive rule by the British but more as unorganized rule. By creating a document it was a revolutionary and radical act in favor of the colonist.

A quote by Gordon S. Wood in his essay states that David Ramsay spoke of “All offices being open to men of merit, of whatever rank or condition” (pg.8). This is one of many example from after the Declaration of Independence that showed valuable steps forward toward a more equal way of living.

I do not believe myself to be consciously influenced by the Whig, imperialist, or progressive-conflict school of historical interpretation.

I see myself as being neo-progressive because my beliefs is to move forward as a society toward a more equality based way of living and Wood gives a few good examples in his essay that describe that equality coming to light after the Declaration of Independence.

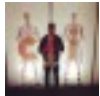
I agree with Wood because of the two examples he brings up in his essay. The one I stated previously on the equal opportunity to get a chair in office and also another quote on the start to equality for slaves, "Americans now recognized that slavery in a republic of workers was an aberration ... and that if any americans were to retain it ... they would have to explain and justify it in new radical and anthropological ways that their former monarchical society had never needed"(pg9).

The things that stood out to me the most in Wood's essay was actually his lack of examples which made me questions my thought process.

I see the example of how much freedom we acquired from creating a document that was for the rights of the people as being a huge pillar to support my choice. It was a very progressive step forward in my mind.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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No

by Jeremy Goodwin - Monday, November 14, 2016, 11:33 PM

I agree with the school arguing no. First off the American Revolution does not match up with other revolutions. According to historian Gordon S. Wood, "The American Revolution does not seem to have the same kinds of causes-the social wrongs, the class conflict, the impoverishment, the grossly inequitable distributions of wealth-that presumably lie behind other revolutions. There were no peasant uprisings, no jacqueries, no burning of chateaux, no storming prisons." (Pg 130). I am influenced by the loose constructionist definition of the word revolution. In our current age i am more neoprogressive in my approach to my studies of the American war for independence and it aftermath. I agree with historian Gordon S Woods dimensions of neoprogressive studies, so thats why i would say that.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: It was a radical movement

by Jeremy Goodwin - Friday, November 18, 2016, 7:01 PM

The expert i agree the most with is Gordon S Wood. Gordon S Wood argues no, and that instead of thinking that the American Revolution was a conservative movement, he looks at it as a radical and social movement instead and makes very good points. One point that i would like to highlight from Gordon S wood says, "By the time the Revolution had run its course in the early nineteenth

century, American society had been radically and thoroughly transformed. One class did not overthrow another; the poor did not supplant the rich. But social relationships-the way people were connected one to another-were changed, and decisively so. By the early years of the nineteenth century the Revolution had created a society fundamentally different from the colonial society of the eighteenth century. It was in fact a new society unlike any that had ever existed anywhere in the world." (Pg. 132).

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Re: No

by Zachary Sielicky - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 11:06 AM

I would argue in a way that the Vietnam revolution was very similar in many aspect to the American revolution. France colonized Vietnam for decades along many western European Countries and they fought France and the United States for their Independence. Ho Chi Min even resisted many lines from our Declaration of Independence and Constitution and said that we (the Vietnamese nationalists) were a lot more like the United States in the 1760-70s than we think. Ho Chi Min and many others considered themselves nationalist apposed to revolutionaries or radicals then and these two revolutions are very much alike wouldn't you consider our founding fathers more on the nationalist side, which would lean them more on the conservative side of the spectrum? Though Vietnam did claim themselves to be communists, but possibly only to gain support from the USSR and China.

So I basically argue your point and Gordon wood's point that *the American Revolution does not seem to have the same kinds of causes.....* In hienz sight it absolutely does.

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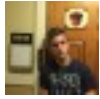
Conservative

by Cameron McCord - Monday, November 14, 2016, 11:34 PM

I believe I stand with the conservative view of the revolution as they saw not changing the pre war economics as well as the social class structure. Even to this day i find myself very convinced by the conservative views. Looking at the whig party and the imperialist parties you find that both had similar reasons for a revolution saying "the primary causes were from political differences". although looking deeper into the text I find myself more convinced by the Progressive view point hat says the revolution created struggle not only for home rule, but also for one who should rule at home. I still see myself more neoconservative even after the readings, because I believe in doing things the same way we have always done them.

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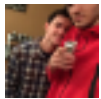
Why the Revolution was Radical

by Grant Garcia - Monday, November 14, 2016, 11:36 PM

In my opinion the Revolution was Radical for several reasons. I think the most prevalent rests at the intentions of the Revolution. In this massive event in history people were trying to change not only what freedom meant but also who was able to enjoy freedom. That is making a change to the very foundation of a problem or structure, that by definition is Radical.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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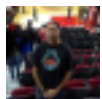
Re: Why the Revolution was Radical

by Zachary Sielicky - Friday, November 18, 2016, 10:20 AM

but this "freedom" that you are talking about was only granted to white land owning men. The freedoms that you are talking about I am assuming are the freedoms of a democracy, like the right to vote. Would yo still consider it radical when they conserved the idea that men should hold the power. Yes their idea of separated church and state was radical for its time, but like out professor says all the time, is there really a separation of church and state? I Think that the pure act of these men was radical, but their plans for a new country were still to conserve more traditional values.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Why the Revolution was Radical

by Jonathan Whittington - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 2:33 PM

I agree, I think that the act of war and breaking away from England was radical, but the ideas and logic of all these men at the time was still very conservative. Again though the movement itself I think we would have to say is radical but you make a great point about the ideals of these people at this time still being conservative.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Re: Why the Revolution was Radical

by Benjamin McKenzie - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 7:19 PM

In class we've talked about slavery being "relative" depending on where in the world it was taking place. I believe that this is an example of what could be described as relative freedom. Yes, by today's standards (in the United States at least) people would not be considered to be very free, but at the time they were. You also pointed out while the law said there was a separation between church and state, it still didn't really exist. That's true, but again it's relative. Compared when Britain had rule over the colonies this was a pretty radical change regardless of how strict the rule was enforced. While their values at the time seem "traditional" to us today, at the time the change that was taking place was, in my opinion, radical.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Conservative

by Tannon Rounsaville - Monday, November 14, 2016, 11:43 PM

I stand with the Conservative view of the revolution in not changing the economic and social class structure. In present day I still see myself having more conservative values then progressive or liberal. Because I think we should do things we have always done them. Both whig and imperialist parties have similar reasons for a revolution. "the primary causes were from political differences". But as I read deeper into the text I found myself more convinced in the progressive view point that says the revolution created struggle not only for home rule, but also for one that should rule at home.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Re: The Revolution: ConRevolution cause by radical events but became more conservative.servative or Radical

by Jeff Johnson - Monday, November 14, 2016, 11:45 PM

The beginning of the revolution and the tipping points that caused it like the Boston tea party and mob justice were radical events caused by the felt oppression from the British. As the movement became organized and leaders like George Washington emerged it became more conservative. The revolution could not have started without radical events nor could it have ended with little bloodshed without the conservative movement. This problem was never solved we created a government after the revolution but left very broad interpretation of what that government was supposed to be. This fight would lead to the later Civil War and still persists today exemplified by our recent elections.

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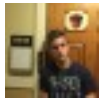
Re: The Revolution: ConRevolution cause by radical events but became more conservative.servative or Radical

by Cameron McCord - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 12:39 PM

I very much agree in this post seeing the comparison to both sides, and explaining that without both the revolution wouldn't have even been a thing. like most things during a revolution some type of fighting, and turmoil is going to happen. But that what has shaped this country to how it is today.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Re: The Revolution: ConRevolution cause by radical events but became more conservative.servative or Radical

by Grant Garcia - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 10:33 PM

I understand what you are saying when you say that as figures like Washington emerge the revolution became more conservative, but I also disagree on the reasoning. I think it is important to not that just because acts of terrorism or major refutes for change aren't occurring in as great of quantities doesn't all of a sudden make something conservative. Radical simply put is trying to change the base understanding, or function of the way something runs and that is exactly what was happening in the United States, regardless of how man Boston Tea Party type events took place people were still fighting to make a change as to how the government is run and functions on a day to day basis which is radical.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Only an American Could Call the Revolution Conservative Conservative or Radical

by Jeff Johnson - Thursday, November 17, 2016, 9:25 PM

The founding fathers and many who joined the revolution had much to lose and being willing to take on the most powerful country in the world on the battlefield is not only one of the most radical things a person could do. George Washington was willing to train a constantly rotating, unfunded, out manned and ill equipped army to take on what at the time was the strongest country on Earth. I don't know how Degler can go on and on about the Revolution without talking about one battle, life lost or the thousands of loyalists who fled.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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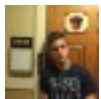
what to lose

by Tannon Rounsaville - Friday, November 18, 2016, 8:09 PM

I agree completely. Washington was living the high life and taking on, arguably, the most powerful country in the world at that time with what he had, "9 bullets per man", and without guaranteed help from France was extremely radical. He had everything to lose and terrible odds for gains.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Only an American Could Call the Revolution Conservative Conservative or Radical

by Grant Garcia - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 10:36 PM

I agree with what you are saying and that fact that this event in specific is very radical but to add to it I think again it is important to mention that if something was conservative that means that people maybe want change but try not to push for it, and try not to reshape the fundamental aspects of something as big as a government. Regardless of how many major wars are fought or lives are lost the fact that people are pushing for a change in the running of the political system and the rights given to those subject to it is extremely radical.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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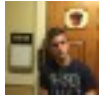
Who I agree with

by Cameron McCord - Friday, November 18, 2016, 8:19 PM

Looking through the material i find what Gordon S wood said very interesting. In the fact that he does not call it an American revolution that was either conservative or neoconservative, but instead uses wording that more defines it as a radical movement or a social movement. Although there was a lot of trials, and fighting between the two according to Mr. Gordon states that although this was a fight one class never overthrew the other. the only thing that really changed was the peoples attitudes towards each other, and you can even see that today through our political parties with republican, and democrats. So in conclusion i think Gordon makes very interesting points

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Re: Who I agree with

by Grant Garcia - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 10:39 PM

I agree with what you are saying in many aspects because a lot of what was occurring during this time period much like what we see a lot of today is simply differences in social class and the rights and treatments of those classes. That may be a more important point than whether this revolution was radical or conservative but I still think that even taking that into effect the way that colonists went about this revolution and the changes they are pushing for like new political systems, definitions of equality and constitutional rights makes it very radical. I do agree that whether it is radical or not may not be the most important matter but I still think it can be made clear that it was a radical movement, what do you think?

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Both are correct.

by Cameron McCord - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 12:35 PM

Looking through our material yes you can definitely choose a side in answering if it radical or conservative, but i argue you can say that it was both. Seeing the revolution as a radical yes it did change peoples lives but didn't really change that much, and seeing it as conservative can be viewed in the same way. Although looking at how things were treated back then this could easily be like a country to country thing meaning that maybe some people more in the north were treated a way that led them to believe it was radical, but in the middle more people saw it as a conservative movement.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Both are correct

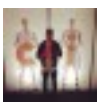
by Tannon Rounsaville - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 1:01 PM

I agree it was very radical to leave and start the colonies and very radical in taking on GB in the war but they were still conservative in establishing a similar government. They even wanted to make George Washington a King.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Radical movement



by Jeremy Goodwin - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 5:49 PM

Gordon S. Wood argues that the American Revolution was not a conservative movement, but instead a radical and social movement. The debate should be about whether or not the American Revolution was a radical movement. According to Wood, "One class did not overthrow another." (Pg. 132). Which makes sense because after the war for independence, men were all equal and free. I like the term the war for independence more because Americans gained independence from the royal crown. A revolution indeed, but it sounds more remarkable.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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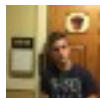
Re: Radical movement

by Jake Preciado - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 6:11 PM

How could it be a radical movement if vitally everything stayed the same. The essence of radicalism is to change. Not much changed. America stayed the same, for the most part. We as a people kept most all of the social norms that were in place when the British crown was in power. As stated in the document attached, Women and African americans still had no rights. Where as in England slavery was on its way out the door. When it comes to revolutionizing the way of life in America. It wasn't until after the constitution was written, and even then it didn't change the social way of life.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Radical movement

by Grant Garcia - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 10:27 PM

I understand what you are saying, but the argument isn't whether or not the revolution was equal to all involved, it is simply whether it was radical as a whole or not. I understand your argument in the sense that not everyone got the same benefits if any at all from the revolution but large change was still made in many ways. As stated in the video the political structure was reshaped and legislatures were introduced to that system giving more people a voice, even if these things hadn't occurred the revolution would still be radical because the way people viewed government and how it should be run changed dramatically in this time period. I think its important to note that just because change isn't made immediately doesn't mean that the idea of change isn't being pushed for, which in it self is radical.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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American revolution was based on conservative principles

by Name Withheld-0716 - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 10:57 PM

I will preface by saying I identify with traditional conservative philosophy, that I believe the founding fathers operated under in the American revolution. If we look at a revolution as any means of resistance to a foreign power or influence, and traditional conservatism as checking the power of government whilst endorsing policies that maintain the social order and the freedom of the individual, it is fair to say that a revolution can be conservative in nature and not necessarily a radical effort to bring forth fundamental changes to all of society. I think the modern, neoconservative approach to politics and governing society is in many ways a departure from what the founding fathers envisioned for the nation. The function of a republican government is to empower individual liberty, economic freedom, educational opportunities and an improved quality of life and public welfare for its tax-paying citizens. As John Adams argued, "governments exist to promote the happiness of the people. Happiness depends on virtue, both public and private. the form of government that rests entirely on virtue, is a republic." (Liberty, equality, power pg. 225 ch. 6 pp. 3)

But to achieve this ideal, to work against suppression of the minority, and limit the concentration of power to certain groups in government, there need to be built in checks to authority, a notion known as separation of powers, a concept that still applies today with our branches of federal government. It is true that separation of powers and separation of church and state were revolutionary concepts in this time period of monarchy and imperialism, but were they really radical? I do believe the founding fathers were intent on preserving their existing status and way of life through implementing these ideas into their new government, and therefore I believe the American revolution as a whole was more conservative in nature than radical. It is even famously said in the declaration of independence that all men are created equal, and this remark has influenced other governments around the world in forming their own independence from imperialism, yet the man who wrote this document was a slave owner and was more intent on ensuring his nation's liberation from the British crown, rather than instituting sweeping social and radical reforms to affect the lives of all individuals in society. The intention behind the events of the American revolution was to erect a government that was favorable to preserving the democracy-based, free market society conditions that would allow the colonists to thrive, while rejecting the British imperialist stranglehold that lingered. I think American nationalism was a bigger driving force in the revolution and war for independence, than the discontented masses trying to uproot society with radical intentions.

There is no questioning that the American revolution had long lasting social, economic and political imprints that came to define America and the Western world at large. But I do not believe it was the intention of the founding fathers and the key players in the revolution to institute systemic changes to the social fabric of the nation, and therefore I do not believe the pioneers of the American revolution were radical at their core. Gordon Wood argues extensively that the American revolution

and the french revolution were intrinsically linked, and that the global spread of republicanism over monarchy was tied to the american revolution, so it must be radical for invoking such global upheaval on a geopolitical, social and economic scale. But the concern of the colonists was not to abolish monarchy internationally, and spread their ideals world-wide. It was to prevent Great Britain and other foreign nations from regaining imperial power in the lands they believed were theirs to settle and establish and govern. The constitution and the bill of rights expressly reflect the fear of monarchy and centralized power, the fear of the growth of the state, and looks to protect the rights of individuals against tyranny. The colonists were concerned with egalitarianism, and checks to government power in their own nation, not proliferating these concepts to other nation-states with religiously led governments or absolute monarchies. in the french revolution, the social masses banded together to execute their monarch and cripple the aristocracy that was linked to it. In the american revolution, it was spearheaded primarily by well educated, land-owning, high socioeconomic status colonial elites with an enlightened worldview. and while the republican government that germinated from it was revolutionary and restored popular sovereignty, the movement itself was not inherently socially radical, and did not involve or concern all denominations of people, so I hold the stance that the the american revolution was conservative in nature and I concur with Carl Degler. he states that "it is true that social and political changes accompanied the revolution, some of which were destined to work great influence among the american institutions in the future, but these changes had been implicit in pre-Revolutionary society. Important social institutions were left untouched by the revolution, the class structure, the distribution of property, the capitalistic economy, the ideas of the people concerning government." (Carl N. Degler Pg. 127 pp. 5) The distinction that the social and ideological backbone of the American colonies remained unchanged in this time of turmoil/revolution, and was in fact strengthened by their new republic government, helps affirm my view that the american revolution was of a predominantly conservative bent.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: American revolution was based on conservative principles

by Jeff Johnson - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 11:53 PM

How can u at one point say that a concept is completely revolutionary but not radical? What about all the people who were actually conservative and were labeled as loyalist and forced to leave the continent. Washington, lead a small army against the greatest power on earth. They fought hard and watched people die for the ability to create this new nation. Sure when it was finally time to form a

government some conservative views along with others formed a government. The fact that they were able to come together with such different views and form a stable union without descending into anarchy like most revolution was an amazing feat. I think that in any revolution to think that overnight u are going to have instant change only leads to the chaos that cause dictators. For the first time in modern history we created a country rule not by a dictator, monarch or church but by a President what would be elected every four years. Without the constitution and the belief that all men are created equal we might not be even having the debate we are today. Allowing new territories to have the same power as an older one when given statehood is a radical challenge to power. I don't know how u can compare it to the French revolution where we didn't have a King to hang and thousands of loyalists fled or fought during the war. Yes our revolution wasn't overnight but it laid the ground work for an amazing social experiment that even they knew might fail like the Greek and Romans.

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Forgot To Post More Than Once

by Riley Stromvig - Saturday, November 19, 2016, 11:52 PM

I forgot to post in the forum other than my initial one. I really think it was a conservative movement because, despite the fact they were changing from colonies to a separate nation, they still had lots of the same laws in place. Such as: women couldn't vote, slaves could not vote, etc.

Hopefully that will get me a few more points.

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◀ The Revolution: Conservative or Radical

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