

HST 201: History of United States F18 (Escobar Meta 20749 22611)

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Continuing the Discussion

by [Joe Escobar](#) - Thursday, November 15, 2018, 9:20 AM

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Historian documents: Yes Conservative movement

by [Justin Oljace](#) - Thursday, November 15, 2018, 10:25 PM

These informed opinions were very helpful in giving me more information on this topic. I'm more sure of my original opinion that the American Revolution was a Conservative movement. In this post I will talk about two documents that really stood out to me, one of them being pro conservative movement and the other against it.

The first document that stood out to me was number four, and it is against the Conservative movement view. Gordon Wood says, "The Revolution had radically democratized the new state legislatures by increasing the number of their members and altering their social character. Men of more humble and more rural origins and less educated than those who had sat in the colonial assemblies now became representatives." This idea gives a convincing argument on how this shift of power was a radical approach. Gordon talks about how many of these new representatives were just ordinary farmers. The problem I have with document is that Gordon only talks about New Hampshire, what about the other 12 states. He then says, "In other states the changes was less dramatic..." I liked Gordon's document but it wasn't strong enough to change my opinion on the subject.

The fifth document was the second one that caught my attention. Carl Degler says, "Eighty-nine percent of those who filled an office before the Revolution also occupied an office under one of the new state governments." That number is shocking to me and really shouts Conservative movement. I found this document to be persuasive because I don't think many people would say that an 11% change in office after the war is very radical at all.

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1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**I Still Agree with Gordon Wood**by [Amanda Francis](#) - Thursday, November 15, 2018, 11:19 PM

After watching both video clips, I still agree with historian Gordon Wood that the American Revolution was a radical movement, not a conservative one. He begins the first video by defining a revolution as a "violent overthrow of government" and even more importantly a "fundamental change in the society." The American Revolution checks both of these boxes. Maybe it wasn't a "violent overthrow" in that no leaders were beheaded, but according to our textbook "The revolutionary war killed a higher percentage of Americans who fought in it than any other American conflict except the Civil War" (198). Independence from Britain wasn't won from a series of boycotts or from a refusal to pay taxes. American revolutionaries wanted a deep, fundamental change. They wanted freedom, and so, a war began.

Some argue that the post-war United States too closely resembled Britain for it to be considered a radical revolution, but historian Jon Butler further supports the lack of conservatism in regard to the American Revolution by describing the country after the war as, "...a society that looked utterly unlike any old-world society. This was a revolutionary society. Revolutionary in its social context. Revolutionary in its economy. Revolutionary in its politics." With the help of Secretary of Treasury Alexander Hamilton, post war United

States was focused on consolidating foreign and national debts. Hamilton wanted to “announce to the international community that the government of the United States would pay its bills” (textbook p. 242).

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

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The More I Think About It

by [Amanda Francis](#) - Saturday, November 17, 2018, 6:44 PM

After revisiting all materials given to us for this forum every day for the past week and reading the opposing viewpoints of historians and my classmates, I'm feeling conflicted on my original stance that the American Revolution was not a conservative movement. Historian Gordon Wood says a lot about the revolution being "the most radical and the most far-reaching event in American history" (p. 11), but he doesn't seem to give many concrete examples to support how that is true. And after second thought, the examples he does give really aren't that radical. Wood's quote in Document #4 says, "Men of more humble and more rural origins and less educated than those who had sat in the colonial assemblies now became representatives. In New Hampshire, for example, in 1765 the colonial assembly had contained only thirty-four members, almost all well-to-do gentlemen. By 1786 the state's House of Representatives had increased to eighty-eight members. Most of these were ordinary farmers or men of moderate wealth... In other states the changes was less dramatic but no less significant." Although I don't doubt the significance, I think for this to be considered a radical revolution, there would have had to have been more dramatic changes. Wood also credits the American Revolution to be the start of the abolition of slavery. Even if you can draw a line to the two, slavery wouldn't be abolished for almost a hundred years. The slow trickle of racial equality isn't enough to consider it radical. The same goes for women's rights. Women wouldn't gain the right to vote until 1920. I do still believe that the American Revolution was actually a revolution. The most significant post-revolution outcome, besides the formation of an entirely new country, was the groundbreaking governmental ideas.

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2



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The 3rd and 7th Documents

by [Justin Oljace](#) - Friday, November 16, 2018, 9:44 PM

In the third document Daniel Boorstin says, "The Americans were fighting not so much to establish new rights as to preserve old ones..." This stood out to me because it seems to be accurate. This event in history had great potential to be considered a radical movement but it just wasn't. Men with power before the war mostly stayed in power after. Slavery wouldn't be abolished for another 82 years. Women had minimal rights and wouldn't even be able to vote for another 137 years. In document 7 Linda Grant DePauw says, "Four groups – Negroes, servants, women, and minors together comprised approximately 80 percent of the two and a half million Americans in the year 1776." She also talks about how poor white adult males can be added to make the list five groups of

people that usually didn't have the ability to vote and didn't have full freedom within society. The Revolution aloud the United States to break away from its mother country, but it seems to have been a conservative movement.

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[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Maybe It Was a Little More Conservative than I Thought**by [Amanda Francis](#) - Saturday, November 17, 2018, 12:08 AM

Historian Daniel Boorstin argues in document three on the side of the conservative standpoint of the revolution because the patriots fought "not so much to establish *new* rights as to preserve old ones... The Revolution itself had been a kind of affirmation of faith in ancient British institutions... trial by jury, due process of law, representation before taxation, habeas corpus, freedom from attainder, independence of the judiciary, and the rights of free speech, free petition, and free assembly." While this does make me reevaluate my original stance that it was a more radical revolution, I still think that ultimately the government that was created after the war vastly differed from Britain in other very significant ways. The American Revolution "brought into existence for the first time in modern history a republican system of government in a large nation." (John Richard Alden, document one). My stance has changed a bit on the degree of radicalism of the revolution, but I still think it was radical.

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1

[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Conservative? Sure. Revolution? Yes.**by [Amanda Francis](#) - Saturday, November 17, 2018, 8:14 PM

While I do still stand by the fact that the post-revolution American government with popular sovereignty and separation of powers differed radically from Britain's monarchy, the influence that Britain did have on the U.S. does make the American Revolution less of a radical movement than I originally thought. It's important to note historian Carl Deger's side of the argument with some important statistics. "Eighty-nine percent of those who filled an office before the Revolution also occupied an office under one of the new state governments" (Document #5). Eighty-nine percent of unchanged office positions doesn't sound too radical. The power shifted from the hands of the monarchy to the hands of people who already had one hand in. The men in charge of the country were mostly a similar demographic post-war as they were pre-war. Deger describes them as "well-to-do". For it to technically be considered a radical revolution, there would have needed to be a major upheaval in the positions of power. We broke away from the mother country and tried something that had never been tried before which makes it very much a revolution falling somewhere on the spectrum between radical and conservative. The conservatism of the revolution doesn't take away from the fact that "As the Great Seal of the United States proclaimed, it was *novus ordo seclorum*, a new order for the ages" (textbook p. 236).

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**Re: Continuing the Discussion**by [Gerardo Morales-Martinez](#) - Saturday, November 17, 2018, 12:00 PM

After reading, I found continually to feel stronger about that the american revolution was a conservative movement. It had to be a conservative movement because it wasn't an attempt to overthrow or shift the power dynamic. The causes of the Revolution can be identified as to how Britain treated the colonists. Like having been forbidden to move to the west and how the tax system worked. An example that can be attributed to the taxing problem was the Boston Massacre. After an effort to continue to tax the colonist, they had enough and took action. We had covered the 3 crisis in class, and those are examples of how the taxing affected all of them. There wasn't any crazy shifts of power in the colonies, most of those who held power, stayed in power. This is seen when Degler mentions this on page 5, "those who held an office under the state governments after the Revolution, 75 percent had occupied office before 1774". Those who had a position prior to the revolution, kept their role in the colonies. With that being said, most revolution see a major change in power, yet in this one it stayed the same.

Sum of ratings: **1 (1)**

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[Permalink](#) | [Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Reasons the Revolution was Not Conservative**by [Ryan Monett](#) - Saturday, November 17, 2018, 3:31 PM

In pondering this week the Revolution, it was a process far different from other movements in history. In other societies throughout history "sought to remove a king and replace him with a republic, and yet both England and France would re-embrace monarchy. Granted, England's progress toward constitutional monarchy would continue, and France would eventually shelve monarchy altogether, but the English Civil War and the French Revolution were only steps toward these changes. Our revolution permanently removed a repressive, non-representative government, and replaced it with one that was representative and which secured those liberties the pursuit for which had animated the revolution itself." in the words of Joseph Dooley.

Also of note, "Think about the assertion in our Declaration of Independence that 'All men are created equal.' Note that our Constitution expressly states that 'No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States.' We do not have lords and ladies in America. This is not an accident. And it is radical." This was not a conservative notion - nor carried out successfully until the American Revolution. The Constitution is far from "conservative". It is nothing like anything any society has been built upon in history. To carry on the traditions and beliefs in a monarchical rule would be conservative.

Thomas Jefferson (as noted in our class lecture), proposed revolutionary ideas in his inaugural address. To limit the power of government, adhere to the Bill of Rights (radical in and of itself), and to pay its bills and not incur new ones is not "conservative." On the flip side, it can be said that the Federalist view (which was fairly pro-British and appreciated a large government) was way more conservative. Hamilton was likely the most

"conservative" thing to happen to America during the Revolutionary Period. Taxes, large government, the "necessary and proper clause", etc. were way more akin to British philosophy and limited our civil rights and ideals of Jefferson.

In summary, I believe that Joseph W. Dooley says it best: **"It was radical in that it broadened the base of those who could enjoy these civil liberties, and ultimately led to the development of a free and open society where everyone — regardless of race, gender, religion or 'social class' — may enjoy 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.'"**

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Sources:

Lecture: Escobar, J. Lane Community College.

<https://www.postindependent.com/news/local/history-american-revolution-radical-or-conservative/>

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3



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Further evidence helps to get closer to a definitive personal conclusion.

by [Anthony Armenta Williams](#) - Saturday, November 17, 2018, 3:32 PM

After reading and evaluating the additional material provided, I believe that this has helped me further get towards the idea of my last post in the first discussion. Two of the eight historians that gave their two cents had the biggest impact on my opinion. These two pieces being from both sides, because the Revolution cannot be definitively defined as a conservative or a radical movement. There is evidence that can be argued on both sides and can be used to prove one or the other.

Although the Revolution itself may have been a more conservative movement, it made way for the already inevitable radical changes to American society to happen in the nineteenth century. Document number 1 was in support of the radical movements that followed because of the Revolution. Alden states that it affected the course of the future not just for Americans, but for all people. "The American Revolution brought the first break in the European colonial system" (Document #1). This break in the system inspired other around the world seeking freedom from European domination. Thus helping change society further beyond just America. The Revolution brought the "first republican system of government in large nation in modern history (Document #1). Inspiring others to revolt against kings and emperors. Explained as a battle cry for social and political justice, the Declaration of Independence was explained as so by Alden. Although this alone does not support my overall conclusion of the American Revolution, Document number 3 helps support my opinion on how this issue can be argued in both ways with validation no matter what argument you support (with the right supporting evidence that is).

Boorstien argues that “Americans were fighting not so much to establish new rights as to preserve old ones ... The Revolution itself had been a kind of affirmation of faith in ancient British institutions” (Document #3). Some of these examples Boorstien is talking about are our rights such as trial by jury, due process, no taxation without representation, free speech, free petition, as well as free assembly. These stemming from British origins, he argues that we were fighting for already established rights rather than new ones that colonials wanted. The radicalism of the Revolution only comes after it is finished.

You may argue that the American Revolution as an event, itself alone, is a conservative movement; however you may not deny the fact that the American Revolution made inevitable but radical changes to American society as well as societies around the world.

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2



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These videos help me develop while the American Revolution itself, alone, may have been a conservative movement, that you cannot deny the Revolution made the nineteenth century social, ethical, political, and many more changes to American Society.

by [Anthony Armenta Williams](#) - Saturday, November 17, 2018, 4:26 PM

The first historian, Gordon S. Wood in Video number two, is the same historian who argues for the radicalism of the American Revolution in our initial document. He explains how constitutionalism stems from the Revolution. “So many aspects of who Americans are today can be seen in this Revolution,” Thomas Fleming explained in the second video. He connects this to Americans being widely optimistic, how we love liberty but yet we also love authority, and also our ability to come back from incredible discouragement. The video mentions that the Revolution “was in the minds of the people.” They give examples that relate and can clearly show how the radical ideas of the Revolution from that time are relevant to this day, proving its radicalism Wood claims it to have.

In comparison to the second, the first video on the Revolution is similar to the idea of radicalism in the Revolution as it says “this new society was revolutionary in the immigrants it included, the new world economy, in all aspects,” (Video #1). The first video differs as it talks about the “English tradition of rights” that we the American society adopt, and also the fundamental guarantee of rights and privileges coming from the Magna Carta. John Locke’s idea of right, liberty, and property. To this idea that these British views and rights was a conservative movement to establish these in the former colonies.

I still believe that the event discussed today be recalled as the American Revolution, rather the “War for Independence.” Stated in the second video, “the Revolution was in the minds of the people, for over fifteen years,” helps support this. People weren’t thinking about a “war” for their independence. Rather, they thought of the actions as they were revolting the motherland. Thus, why the event is the American Revolution.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2



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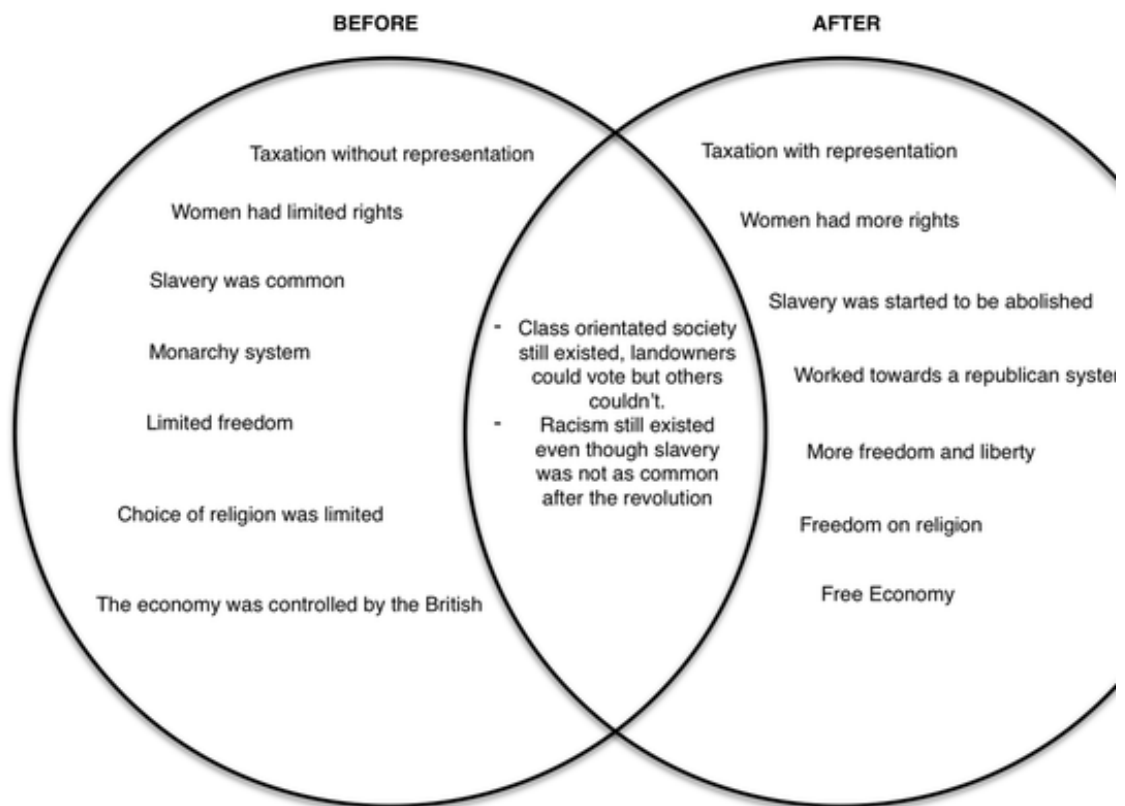


The Revolutionary Revolution

by [Ryan Monett](#) - Saturday, November 17, 2018, 4:49 PM

John Galvin notes that all of our ideals, domestically and internationally, came from the revolution. This is furthered by the Bill of Rights, the Constitution, the beliefs that set us apart from other countries throughout the course of history. Many of these began before the revolution (pre-revolution), and beliefs tend to grow. Out of beliefs come actions, decisions that alter and change things. But in order for things to change, they must first change from within. Beliefs are within us, a part of who we are. Not always things ingrained in us. This is especially true with America.

As the video describes, the war was only an effect of the American Revolution, the cause was in the hearts and minds of the people as ascribed by John Adams. The capitalistic views of hard work and perseverance furthered the radical case for the Revolution. Where else could you arrive with nothing but ideals for your life and meet and exceed the goals because of the liberty granted us here in America? The loosening of governmental restriction, of virtue, of life in "a choose for yourself to make it or break it" society? These are not "conservative" ideals. They are truly examples of a revolutionary Revolution.



Sources:

Image: <https://american--revolution.weebly.com/what-changes-did-the-revolution-bring.html>

Video: https://media.lanecc.edu/users/escobarj/201/forums/3/4.5_intro.mp4

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The American Revolution itself, alone, may have been a conservative movement, that you cannot deny the Revolution made the nineteenth century social, ethical, political, and many more changes to American Society.

by [Anthony Armenta Williams](#) - Saturday, November 17, 2018, 4:49 PM

You may argue that the Revolution is a conservative movement. "Eighty-nine percent of those who filled an office before the Revolution also occupied an office under one of the new state governments" (Page 5). Degler explains this statistic, helping you to realize that the same people were in office essentially. Further on page five of Degler's explanation he states that no mass from the bottom of colonial society rose to seize control of the Revolutionary situation. The status of men were merely shifted. From their statuses prior to the Revolution, to new positions after that were comparable, if not improved. On Document number three Boorstien argues that "Americans were fighting not so much to establish new rights as to preserve old ones ... The Revolution itself had been a kind of affirmation of faith in ancient British institutions" Saying that the same rules from these British ideals were the ones being preserved. Essentially already establish rights rather than new ones that they colonists didn't have before. The first video differs as it talks about the "English tradition of rights" that we the American society adopt, and also the fundamental guarantee of rights and privileges coming from the Magna Carta.

You may also argue about the radicalism of the American Revolution. Wood explains that it paved the way for changes in society in the future. "... In destroying monarchy and establishing republics they were changing their society as well as their governments. The broader social transformation that carried Americans from one century and one kind of society to another was "inevitable" (Page 10). My interpretation of this is that even though this change could have, or inevitably would have happened, the Revolution was a crucial, radical part in changes of society. As Wood states on page 11, "The American Revolution was integral to the changes occurring in American society, politics, and culture at the end of the eighteenth century." "So many aspects of who Americans are today can be seen in this Revolution," Thomas Fleming explained in the second video. He connects this to Americans being widely optimistic, how we love liberty but yet we also love authority, and also our ability to come back from incredible discouragement. The video mentions that the Revolution "was in the minds of the people."

The overall conclusion I have come to is that there are two answers, with supporting evidence to both. But definitively: The American Revolution itself, alone, may have been a conservative movement, that you cannot deny the Revolution made the nineteenth century social, ethical, political, and many more changes to American Society.

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Re: The American Revolution itself, alone, may have been a conservative movement, that you cannot deny the Revolution made the nineteenth century social, ethical, political, and many more changes to American Society.

by [Amanda Francis](#) - Saturday, November 17, 2018, 7:45 PM

Anthony, I agree with you when you say, "The American Revolution itself, alone, may have been a conservative movement, that you cannot deny the Revolution made the nineteenth century social, ethical, political, and many more changes to American Society." Originally I stood on the side the American Revolution being a radical movement, but after reevaluating all of the materials given to us, I'm starting to think that the revolution was more conservative. The British influence in our legal systems is very apparent. I think it was smart of the Founding Fathers to take what worked from an established country such as England like "trial by jury, due process of law, representation before taxation, habeas corpus, freedom from attainder, independence of the judiciary, and the rights of free speech, free petition, and free assembly" (Daniel Boorstin, Document 3), and change what did not work for them like a monarchy with Parliament having total control. A smart idea? Yes. A radical idea? Maybe not so much.

As far as social changes to the American society, much of them came at a slow trickle for women, slaves, and other minority groups. There were slight challenges to the patriarchy but as our textbook blatantly puts it, "nothing as dramatic as emancipation altered between the sexes" (p.221). Small victories happened within the issue of slavery such as The Pennsylvania Abolition Society which helped freed blacks from their southern abusers (p. 220). The emergence of the North and South after the war created stronger racial tensions. Historian John Richard Alden says, "The proclamation in the Declaration of Independence of the equality of men in the sight of the Creator continues to serve as a battle cry for social and political justice. The patriots won independence; they also made a good start on the long road toward establishing and securing 'the rights of mankind' (Document #1). "Long Road" is right and means that the revolution was more conservative.

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Review of the videos

by [Justin Oljace](#) - Saturday, November 17, 2018, 8:54 PM

At the beginning of the first video Gordon Wood talks about how people view Revolutions very differently. He says, "For some people it's just a change in government, and for others it's a fundamental change in society and relationships." I personally view a Revolution as more of both a change in government and society, which the American Revolution lacked. Towards the end of the video Jon Butler says, "Not yet revolutionary in political principle"... The American Revolution really lacked a free society to all the people.

Early in the second video Gordon Wood makes some good points about the Revolution including, "It was the most important event in American history". I think many people would agree with that statement. He kind of lost me a bit when he said "It established our believe in equality"(0.28). Thomas Fleming makes a conservative movement comment

when he says, "We fought to free everybody but we still had a lot of slaves, which took us another 100 years to solve"(1.40). These two video clips were broad but the historians shared a lot of knowledge, which helped me confirm my believe that this was a Conservative movement.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Historian Documents: Final thoughts

by [Justin Oljace](#) - Saturday, November 17, 2018, 9:22 PM

In document number two titled "Seedtime of the Republic" Clinton Rossiter says, "However radical the principles of the Revolution may have seemed to the rest of the world, in the minds of the colonists they were thoroughly preservative and respectful of the past . . . Their goal therefore was simply to consolidate, then expand by cautious stages"... I think Clinton made some good points because after the war it seems like many of the wealthy men remained in power wanting little change after evading Britain's grasp.

After reviewing all the informed opinions from the documents presented I can conclude that they did make me reevaluate my original position. Especially in document eight when Gordon Wood says, "The Revolution in effect set into motion ideological and social forces that doomed the institution of slavery in the North and led inexorably to the Civil War."

This made me question my thoughts but it wasn't enough to pull me to the radical side.

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