

HST 201: US History F19 (Escobar)

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Forum 3

The Discussion Continues

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The Discussion Continues

by [Joe Escobar](#) - Wednesday, November 20, 2019, 9:43 PM

NEW MATERIALS, quotes from other historians and 2 short videoclips, are now available on the [Forum Materials and Questions](#) webpage.

To make your POSTS using these new materials, 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 specific historian or source you are using and whether they support the YES or NO position in the debate. Do NOT simply leave it RE: The Discussion Continues

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Daniel Boorstin's Claim

by [Jarod Doerner](#) - Wednesday, November 20, 2019, 11:33 PM

Daniel Boorstin had the most compelling and persuasive argument because it was all things that we the colonist saw and what we see today as conservative. We have a lot of ancient British traditions that we still use today. "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," all

are things we have now that the colonists kept after the revolution happened (Boorstin). With this, it shows that in the late 1700's, they still kept the ideas that they saw were beneficial to them. This also means the the revolution, for Boorstin, was a conservative one.

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Re: Daniel Boorstin's Claim

by [Eric Runes](#) - Friday, November 22, 2019, 8:05 PM

I agree with you... After studying the topic all week it is rather difficult to summarize into a single quote why the American Revolution was a conservative movement. However, I believe Daniel Boorstin does a good job by distilling it down to the idea that "Americans were fighting not so much to establish new rights as to preserve old ones" (document 3.). Boorstin then elaborates and mentions the long standing British traditions you brought up in your post. While from a debate standpoint I believe Denglers essay has more facts and figures to justify the argument, the direct nature of Boorstin's comments strike at the heart of the matter, and are more easily digestible.

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Re: Daniel Boorstin's Claim

by [Jarod Doerner](#) - Saturday, November 23, 2019, 6:17 PM

Carl N. Degler's essay did bring up quite a bit. While I'm not for his point that the American Revolution was a conservative one, I will admit that he does bring some good points to the table. For instance, "In the eighteenth century the American principle of separation of Church and State was indeed an audacious experiment" (Degler 2). That's what the American Revolution is, an experiment. We live in a country where we got our independence from the might of Great Britain. We did the impossible to achieve our own path to freedom like no one ever has. Being a conservative one however, I just do not see.

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British Traditions in American Revolution

by [Marcus Jackson](#) - Saturday, November 23, 2019, 9:39 PM

I think that Boorstin has some good points about the distinction between new ideas and merely reinforcing old ideas. Making it clear that some of the ideas of the movement were based in old British institutions and not created independently by the Americans. Which makes sense with other quotes such as that in the first video where Sheila Skemp states they were proud to be British (1:47). Though I don't think it adequately explains the American obsession with abolishing hierarchy in many ways, which was so important to the European culture at the time and for centuries before.

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Can the federalists be considered conservative?



by [Brontae Sodeman](#) - Thursday, November 21, 2019, 4:09 PM

Considering the new information we've received in class, I believe Degler's evidence is further supported. I thought of relating how the first two presidents were considered Federalists, both these men were heavily involved in the revolution. If we're considering the revolution a conservative movement, wouldn't we assume that federalists are inherently conservative? To stay within social tradition someone of the time would be pro-administration. John Adams passed the Alien and Sedition Acts in 1798, immigration reform is a traditionalist idea. George Washington's 1794 Jay Treaty is also aligned with the conservative free enterprise idea. By the time Thomas Jefferson makes it into office in 1801, the revolution had been over for about 20 years, giving Jefferson enough time to change alignment then bring America into the 19th century. From the information we've received in class, I believe federalists are conservative, which proves Degler's position.

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Preserving pre-established values

by [Eric Runes](#) - Thursday, November 21, 2019, 5:36 PM

With the new information presented, I am further convinced that The American revolution was a conservative movement, and would better have been labeled a "war for independence". Clinton Rossiter states that "However radical 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" (document #2). This backs up the essence of Carl Denglers essay where he provides many examples of the status quo of American life being relatively unchanged in many facets of society. I felt Dengler was attempting to illustrate that many of the positive areas of growth, and change that America experienced as a result of the revolution could be attributed to pre-established ideals, and an insistence on maintaining and growing our values as a people. Rossiter, backs up Denglers assertion by pointing out "Their (Americans) goal was simply to consolidate then expand by cautious stages, the large measure of liberty, and prosperity that was part of their established way of life" (Document 2). Finally Daniel Boorstin cleanly summarizes the nature of the revolution as a conservative movement with the assertion that "Americans were fighting not so much to establish new rights, as to preserve old ones" (Document 3).

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The Progression of the Revolution

by [Trevor Mejia](#) - Thursday, November 21, 2019, 9:14 PM

After continuing the new reading and Watching the new video clips, I would like to address some new information brought to the argument. I feel a good place to start is focusing on the what Sheila Skemp said in the first video clip "We loved being British, but looking back we could see the conditions were they're if the right things happened, or the wrong things happened. "

First off It all had to do with a sustained effort to reform Brittan that begins at the seven-year war, but picks up afterword's. Technically, in a way the American revolution is a radical response to reform. However, in time we see that the war turns more democratic, per say. This is due to how patriots tried to conserve a broad political class. So that people could vote and had some say in how the way the government was organized

and functioned to some degree over these distributions of resources mainly taxations. The people who were most sensitive to these British reforms. Were the leaders of the privational Assemblies who had traditionally fought against royal governors on behalf of themselves and fellow tax payers. Against efforts of the crown to prevent it from extending its authority. So, I conclude with the revolution starts a reactionary movement but later changes to a radical movement. Or as Miss Skemp said "if the wrong this happens", which they did which just furthered the push.

As a side note I've really enjoyed this topic and it reminds me of the recent protests in Hong Kong lately, I've been questioning myself if it is still a protest or a revolution at this point?

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Re: The Discussion Continues

by [Robert Whitney](#) - Friday, November 22, 2019, 11:16 PM

After reading the opinions of the historians, I would have to say that my opinion has not changed. While the right to suffrage was expanded immediately, it was largely exclusive (Jameson, Historians). It took almost 150 years for all Americans to achieve the right to vote, and almost 200 to actually have those rights protected (1965 & 6 Civil Rights Acts!). This shows proves to me that if it was a revolution at all, the effects desired were not felt immediately by all. Additionally, Daniel Boorstein from the new historians forum materials reading states that the Americans were fighting for rights already in British culture and that it was an affirmation that those rights were still alive. I perceive this as less of a revolution and creating more rights and more of a protection of what should have already been.

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Re: The Discussion Continues

by [Trevor Mejia](#) - Saturday, November 23, 2019, 10:16 AM

Well Said, I agree with your View point on "It took almost 150 years for all Americans to achieve the right to vote, and almost 200 to actually have those rights protected (1965 & 6 Civil Rights Acts!)." AS well as this seeming less like a revolution and more like American going its independence. Which although, can seem like the same at first. Are in fact drastically different.

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Seedtime of the Republic

by [Riley McQueen](#) - Saturday, November 23, 2019, 1:25 PM

After reading the second document by Clinton Rossiter, Seedtime of the Republic, I am more sure of my decision that the American Revolution was a conservative movement. I said in the other forum the big issue for the colonists was preserving their society. Rossiter has reinforced that by stating "Their goal therefore was simply to consolidate, then expand by cautious stages, the large measure of liberty and prosperity that was part of their established way of life" (Rossiter document #2). The colonists were fighting to keep and preserve the rights they had not to create new ones. The American

Revolution was a conservative movement because it wasn't promoting the complete overthrow of the Crown but to just keep the way of life the colonists had because they had "never known or had long since begun to abandon feudal tenures, religious intolerance," (Rossiter Document #2).

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Re: Seedtime of the Republic

by [Jarod Doerner](#) - Saturday, November 23, 2019, 6:51 PM

Clinton Rossiter's document did bring up quite a bit. While I'm not for their point that the American Revolution was a conservative one, I will admit that they do bring some good points to the table. For instance, Rossiter explains that, "their goal therefore was simply to consolidate, then expand on cautious stages, the large measure of liberty and prosperity that was part of their established way of life" (Rossiter Document). The colonists wanted to condense their size, then grow little by little in order to fill positions that need to be filled. They wanted more liberty and prosperity with their way of life. That's all they wanted. We did the impossible to achieve our own path to freedom like no one ever has. Being a conservative one however, I just do not see.

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Rossiter's Points

by [Marcus Jackson](#) - Saturday, November 23, 2019, 8:42 PM

I also agree with you that Rossiter does bring up some good points, though I similarly am not entirely convinced that the revolution was conservative. He makes the point that before the war America was made up as well as any "sensible man" could have wanted it in regards to them having supposedly abandoned or never had "feudal tenures, religious intolerance, and hereditary stratification." Which at points seems a bit preposterous, but that is aside from the overall point he is making that the war itself did not directly cause societal change.

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The American Revolution was a Social Movement?

by [Ryan Peel](#) - Saturday, November 23, 2019, 5:45 PM

This is a question I was not expecting to ask! Now, before I say yes or no, let me state that I still believe the American Revolution was a radical movement. It drastically changed how the world worked in the Colonies. Franklin Jameson's short paragraph is very interesting to me! When reading it, I'm starting to see a little more of the conservative side. Let's take a look at it, shall we? According to Jameson: "the status in which the electoral franchise was left at the end of the Revolutionary period fell far short of complete democracy." (Historians Document, page 2, document 6) That's true, the American government hadn't been fully formed yet. The Colonists were still building the governing system we have today. I've said it many times already, but none of the current governing officials in America lost their lives during the Revolution. They survived after

the War had ended and then began to build our current governing body and system. While it did fall short of today's democratic governments, it was still in the process of construction. The Founding Fathers were also learning how to build the system and run it themselves. So, while the Revolution isn't as radical as today's standards might have it, I still wouldn't say it's as conservative as today's standards would have it.

Let's take a look at another historian. One that looks at the "genius" of American politics, Daniel Boorstin. According to Boorstin, "the Americans weren't fighting so much to establish new right as they were fighting to preserve old ones." (Historians Document, page one, document 3) What can we take from this? Well, according to Boorstin, the right to a trial by jury, due process of law, representation before taxation, habeas corpus, which is a legal action, requires a person under arrest to be brought before a judge or into court, independence of the judiciary, freedom from attainder, is this sounding familiar? I could go on, but, I believe you're starting to get the idea. We've had these rights back then, they just weren't given equally to the Colonies. The Revolution, as I see it now, was a way for the Colonies to preserve these rights, and have them enforced by themselves. The Constitution enforced these rights and gave them, officially to the Colonies. This is pretty neat stuff!

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Does the Nature of the Beliefs Being Put Forward Change the Nature of the Revolution

by [Marcus Jackson](#) - Saturday, November 23, 2019, 5:59 PM

The different sources both video and text excerpts represent a good portion of both sides of the argument. Considering them both I still feel that the American Revolution was not a conservative movement in the end. I felt that there was no new information presented to completely dissuade me of my original view. With many of the same points in favor of it being a conservative movement as before being made. For example the problem of non-universal democracy for those who were not landholding white men (DePauw). As well as the idea that it was upholding American traditions, however radical, and thus conservative (Rossiter).

The historian I found the most persuasive personally was Clinton Rossiter who believed that the American Revolution was in fact Conservative. Which was the opposite of the view I initially held. His argument was that the beliefs, while radical, where the norm at the time in America, thus the fight for them was by nature conservative as it was to uphold the status quo. I found this argument quite interesting when discussing the nature of a revolution and whether the ideas being upheld as the status quo being relatively radical and revolutionary for the time changes anything. This argument came close to changing my overall opinion on the argument but the other bits of evidence ultimately kept me from changing my overall opinion. I would certainly say that my original viewpoint is not as strongly held as it was before, however.

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The rights they fought to protect.

by [Riley McQueen](#) - Saturday, November 23, 2019, 6:23 PM

I still believe that the American Revolution was a conservative movement. As I have said many times in this forum the revolution was about the colonists retaining the rights they had hold onto the society they had created. As the historian Daniel Boorstein said in his essay, "The Americans were fighting not so much to establish new rights as to preserve old ones..." like

trial by jury, habeas corpus, and due process of law just to name a few (Boorstein Document #3). These are just some of the things that the colonists were fighting to protect, which they obviously did, and made sure to put them in our constitution so they wouldn't be under threat again.

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Well, that's something new

by [Ryan Peel](#) - Saturday, November 23, 2019, 8:34 PM

After watching the first Revolution video, there were some good points made and some I wouldn't have expected. One point made by Ms. Sheila Skemp was that "the Americans in the 1760s were ripe for Revolution, even though they probably didn't know it at the time." (American Revolution Video #1, 1:35-1:40) Goodness gracious, that makes it seem as if the Revolution was going to happen no matter what the British tried. However, another point she makes is that they were "proud Englishmen." Well, Ms. Skemp, I'm pretty sure the wrong things happened, and we had the Revolutionary War or the War for Independence, whichever name you want to call it. So, the 3 crises leading up to the breaking point happened the Stamp Act Crisis, the Townshend Act crisis, and the Tea Act crisis. So, the three crises led up to the Colonies want to break away. As Englishmen, Britain already had the rights endowed in the Constitution, they just were never in writing, unless you count the Magna Carta as being in writing. I certainly wouldn't, it didn't apply to the Colonies at the time.

The second video is a little harder for me to dissect, so let's start with this... The Colonists thought themselves to be the freest people on earth. The white settlers had the whole of what is today's east coast to themselves. They had riches, land, resources all at their disposal. The wealthy took up the land near the coast to maximize their profit. Of course, money is power for some people. Others less fortunate took up as their servants in exchange for passage. At least, in the beginning. According to Mr. Thomas Fleming, "We fought to free everyone..." (American Revolution video #2 1:40) Well, if we did, then what about the slaves? Oh right, you also said that it would take another 100 years before we sorted that out. Geez, this subject is really intricate and deep. I like it!

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