

Was the American Revolution Revolutionary?

Historical Deliberation in Forum 3

"The American Revolution seems fated to be remembered with an endless debate, about what kind of revolution it was, and whether it was a 'real' revolution at all..."

-Historian John Shy, 1976

Before you Deliberate with your group members in the forum, answer the following questions below:

What is a Revolution? Create a personal definition.

In your opinion, what makes change revolutionary?

Background

Historians have been debating the significance of the American Revolution since it occurred. Most fall into two categories. *Strict Constructionists* 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. Historians agree that American Revolutionaries fulfilled the second definition because they successfully fought a war that resulted in the overthrow of their British rulers and established a government run by themselves. However, historians disagree over the amount of social and economic changes that took place in America.

Key Questions to Consider:

- What is a revolution?
- How did American government change as a result of the Revolution? (evidence from your textbook)

- How did American society change as a result the Revolution? (evidence from your textbook)

- How did the American economy change as a result of the Revolution? (evidence from your textbook)

- Was the historical change that resulted from the American Revolution significant enough to be deemed "revolutionary?"