

# How radical was the american revolution? essay sample

[History](#), [Revolution](#)



“ Young man, what we meant in going for those Redcoats was this: we always had been free, and we meant to be free always. They don’t mean we should” (Levi Preston, 1842, Doc. 10). Levi Preston was a veteran of the American Revolution who, when interviewed by historian Mellen Chamberlain, revealed that most of the patriots knew not and fought not because of the taxes and acts from the British, the famous literature written by founding fathers, or for a governmental change, and instead fought for their right to be free. He states that most patriots did not want or care about any other changes made except the ones that would take away their freedom. The American Revolution was not radical because the way state governments continued to run, views on African American slaves stayed the same, and people were still stereotyped and prohibited from certain actions because of their class and income.

The Revolutionary war did not change how the State government was run, the atmosphere of Congress, or who ran it. Document four shows that the post-revolution state government remained nearly the same as it had before; people argued, fought, and only rich whites held power, so not much was accomplished. The state Congress was composed of men from all different backgrounds and with all different levels of education and professions, resulting in much disorder and dissent from the congressmen. Sessions could often result in violence with the occasional sword fight, and they almost always took place in a church, where they has been since the beginning of the colony’s founding. Finally, there were many men who looked down upon members of Congress because they were deemed uneducated. One man even reviled the government with these harmful words, “... We send to

congress not one man of letters” (Benjamin Latrobe) stating that all the congressmen were uneducated. Despite the fact that the founding fathers wanted America to be a place where “ All men are created equal,” most of the African American population continued their life in slavery and were not legally free until the Emancipation Proclamation, almost a century after the American Revolution.

After the American Revolution, the colonist’s views on African American slaves stayed the same, they were not granted any right to participate in government, vote, or be freed from their unjust “ profession.” They could not live as equals among the people without having to purchase their freedom. Most negroes living in the colonies at this time remained in slavery and as a result, had none of the rights white men did. The few free black men who could vote and attempted to participate in government were shunned and not allowed because of their “ lowly” skin color. One free negro man, by the name of Prince Hall, wrote a letter to the State House of Representatives saying, “ They [the negroes] cannot but express their astonishment that it hath never been considered, that every principle from which America has acted in the course of their unhappy difficulties with Great [Britain], pleads stronger than a thousand arguments in favor of your petitioners.” (Prince Hall, 1777, Doc. 8). Mr. Hall wanted freedom for slaves and thought that the government should acknowledge his plea because it believes that all men are equal and free. From the American Revolution to the Civil War, slaves as well as working class whites remained victims of stereotyping and prejudice

from the upper class citizens, and therefore did not experience a radical revolution.

Despite the colonists best efforts, stereotypes and prejudice were still present and downgrading for mechanics after the American Revolution. “When a ship is in storm, and near the rocks, who, but a fool, would put the helm in the hands of a landsman?” (William Henry Drayton, 1767, Doc. 1). Stereotypes in the colonies after the Revolution did not change for mechanics, or people in the working class, because the rich, power-hungry white men did not want “inexperienced and uneducated” men to have say in the government. Even after the Revolutionary War, most rich white men viewed the working class as lower than them and not entitled to certain “unalienable rights” such as the pursuit of happiness. While the mechanics were permitted to join the state Congress, officials rarely listened and continued to be arbitrary towards their ideas and proposed bills. “...States have been obliged to establish certain qualifications, whereby some, who are excluded from voting; in order to set other individuals, whose wills may be supposed independent, more thoroughly upon a level with each other” (Alexander Hamilton, 1775, Doc 5). This quote shows that people who cannot earn the required annual income (40 shillings) were not intelligent enough to “vote the right way.” The American Revolution did not change lives of most people living in the colonies for centuries, and therefore was not a radical war.

The American Revolution was not radical because state governments continued to run like an aristocracy, slaves were not given their freedom,

and the mechanics were still classified as less than the wealthy. The Revolutionary War also made no immediate change to the colonies except for their government and allegiance. Many colonists did not even acknowledge certain taxes, authors, or militants as important to their daily lives and instead fought for their freedom from the Constitutional Monarchy that held them in a firm grasp. " Their [colonists] 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." (Clinton Rossiter, 1953, Secondary Source 1).