

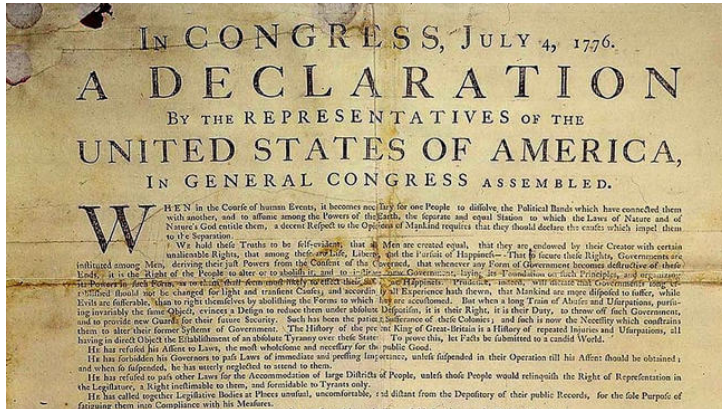
## Power-Hungry Counter-Revolutionaries or Bourgeois Radicals?

Posted on July 5, 2016 by Chad Pearson

Readers of the LAWCHA blog will be interested in a few of the different leftist interpretations of the meaning of American independence and the revolutionary experience. Writing in the *New York Times*, [Robert G. Parkinson makes the case](#) that, for the founders, "separation from Britain was as much, if not more, about racial fear and exclusion as it was about inalienable rights."

In many ways, Parkinson's essay reinforces the central argument of Gerald Horne's 2014 [\*The Counter-Revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States of America\*](#)

Parkinson's *New York Times* editorial prompted James Livingston to push back against what Livingston calls ["The new intellectual fashion on the academic Left."](#)



## The Declaration of Independence, 1776

One does not need to search far to find others on both sides of this debate. [Over at Jacobin](#), [William Hogeland](#) takes a critical view of the founders. “Egalitarian goals,” he maintains, “were not on the minds of any of the well-known founders, for all of their other differences. That includes mutually divided nationalists like Washington, Hamilton, Madison, and Adams and state-sovereigntist, anti-nationalists like Patrick Henry.”

Writing for the [World Socialist Website](#), [Joseph Kishore](#), complementing Livingston, views the period much more favorably. In his view, “The Declaration of Independence marked a major turning point in history, not only for the people of what would become the United States of America, but for the entire world.”

What do you think?

## Author



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