

# The American Revolution: The Stories Behind the Story

## Readings for the 4<sup>th</sup> class (May 4)

1. From Joseph Ellis, *The Cause: The American Revolution and its Discontents, 1773-1783*, profile of Harry Washington.
2. Heather Cox Richardson (January 14, 2026), Letters from an American (on Ratification Day and the Peace of the 1783).  
<https://heathercoxrichardson.substack.com/p/january-14-2026>
3. From Joseph Ellis, *The Great Contradiction: The Tragic Side of the American Founding*. (This is interesting and perhaps controversial; we should talk about it.)
4. Adria Walker: Book Review on *Jefferson: A Reader* by Annette Gordon-Reed from the *Guardian*.

## Questions to Think About:

- How do we evaluate the Revolution? What did it mean to Americans in the end (and which Americans); to Britons; to the rest of the world?
- Ellis talks about two great failures – the institution of slavery and Indian land. How do you assess his ideas?