The Heroic Interpretation—George Bancroft

The men of Boston, whose fathers came to the wilderness for freedom to say their prayers would not fear to take up arms against a preamble (set of laws) which implied their servitude....These men were more than of a noble blood, proving by their spirit that they were of a race Devine. They gave their life in testimony to the rights of mankind bequeathing to their country an assurance of the success in the mighty struggle which they began. They fulfilled their duty not from accidental impulse of the moment; their action was the slowly ripened fruit of Providence and of time. The light that led them on was combined of rays from the whole history of the race from the example of Him (Jesus) who laid down his life on the cross for the life of Humanity; from the religious creed which proclaimed the Divine presence in man.

An Economic Interpretation—Andrew Hacker

The events of 1763-75 can have no meaning unless we understand that the character of English imperial policy never really changed: that Pitt and his successors at White Hall were following exactly the same line that Cromwell had laid down more than a century before. The purpose of their general program was to protect the English capitalist interests which now were being jeopardized as a result of the intensification of colonial capitalist competition, and English statesmen yielded quickly when no fundamental principle was at stake, but became insistent only when one was being threatened. If in the raising of a colonial revenue lay the heart of the difficulty, how are we to account for the quick repeal of the Stamp Tax and the Townsend Acts and the lowering of the molasses duty? And, on the other hand, how are we to account for the tightening of enforcement on the Acts of Trade and Navigation at a dozen and one different points, the passage of the Currency Act, the placing of iron on the "enumerated" list, English seizure of control of the trade, and the attempt to give the East India Company a monopoly over the Colonial tea business?

The struggle was not over high-sounding political and constitutional concepts: over the power of taxation or even, in the final analysis, over natural rights. It was over colonial manufacturing, wild lands and furs, sugar, wine, tea, and currency, all of which meant, simply, the survival or collapse of English mercantile capitalism within the imperial-colonial framework of the mercantilist system.

The Class Struggle Interpretation—Merill Jensen

The American Revolution was far more than a war between colonies and Great Britain; it was also a struggle between those who enjoyed political privileges and those who did not...Colonial radicalism did not become effective until after the French and Indian War. Then, fostered by economic depression and aided by the bungling policy of Great Britain and the desire of the local governing classes for independence within the empire, it became united in an effort to throw off its local and international bonds. The discontented were given an opportunity to express their discontent when the British government began to enforce restrictions upon the colonies after 1763. The colonial merchants used popular demonstrations to give points to their more orderly protests against such measures as the Stamp Act, and it was only a stop from such riots, incited and controlled by the merchants, to the organization of radical parties bent on the redress of local grievances which were of far more concern to the masses than the more remote and less obvious effects of British policy of more than ordinary ability, men who were able to create issues when none were furnished by Great Britain, and who seized on British acts as heaven-sent opportunities to attack the local aristocracy—too strongly entrenched to be overthrown on purely local issues—under the guise of a patriotic defense of American liberties. Thus, used as tools at first, the masses were soon united under capable leadership in what became as much a war against the colonial aristocracy as a war for independence.

The American Revolution thus marks the ascendancy of the radicals of the colonies, for the
first time effectively united. True, this radical ascendancy was of brief duration, but while it lasted an attempt was made to write democratic ideals and theories of government into the laws and constitutions of the American states.

A Democratic Movement Interpretation — Robert Brown

[After] the Tea Act and the Coercive Acts, there was no doubt whatever that the British intended to curtail colonial democracy as a necessary step toward recovery of British authority and the prevention of colonial independence. The result was the very thing the British had tried to prevent—American independence.

Obviously democracy played an important part in the events before 1776, not as a condition to be achieved but as a reality which interfered with British policies. If the British had been successful, there would undoubtedly have been much less democracy in Massachusetts—hence the interpretations that the Revolution was designed to preserve a social order rather than to change it. We search in vain for evidence of class conflict that was serious enough to justify revolution; we do not have to look far for copious quantities of proof that colonial society was democratic and that the colonists were attempting to prevent British innovations.

Ideology and Mutual Suspicions Interpretation — Bernard Bailyn

The colonists believed they saw emerging from the welter of events during the decade after the Stamp Act a pattern—whose meaning was unmistakable. They saw in the measures taken by the British government and in the actions of officials in the colonies something for which their peculiar inheritance of thought had prepared them only too well, something they had long conceived to be a possibility in view of the known tendencies of history and of the present state of affairs in England.

They saw about them, with increasing clarity, not merely mistaken, or even evil, policies violating the principles upon which freedom rested, but what appeared to be evidence of nothing less than a deliberate assault launched surreptitiously by plotters against liberty both in England and in America.

The danger to America, it was believed, was in fact only the small, immediately visible part of the greater whole whose ultimate manifestation would be the destruction of the English constitution, with all the rights embedded in it.

The opponents of the Revolution—the administration itself—were as convinced as were the leaders of the Revolutionary movement that they were themselves the victims of conspiratorial designs. Officials in the colonies, and their superiors in England, were persuaded as the crisis deepened that they were confronted by an active conspiracy of intriguing men whose professions masked their true intentions. Thomas Hutchinson had little doubt that at the root of all the trouble in the colonies was the maneuvering of a secret, power-hungry cabal that professed loyalty to England while assiduously working to destroy the bonds of authority and force a rupture between England and her colonies. The beliefs and fears expressed on one side of the Revolutionary controversy were as sincere as those expressed on the other. The result was an escalation of distrust toward a disastrous deadlock: The Americans," Burke said, "have made a discovery, or think they have made one, that we mean to oppress them: we have made a discovery, or think we have made one, that they intend to rise in rebellion against us. We know not how to advance; they know not how to retreat. Some party must give way."
Find the thesis or main point of each interpretation of the American Revolution:

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<th>Interpretation</th>
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<td>c. Class Struggle</td>
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<td>d. Democratic Movement</td>
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<td>e. Ideology and Mutual Suspicions</td>
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Using the information from the text, create a pie chart that properly address the question of “What caused the Revolutionary War for Independence?”

**Key:**
- □Heroic Struggle ____%
- □Economic ____%
- □Class Struggle ____%
- □Democratic Movement ____%
- □Ideology ____%