

Text: "Common Sense"

Passage: “As parents, we can have no joy, knowing that this government is not sufficiently lasting to insure anything which we may bequeath to posterity: and by a plain method of argument, as we are running the next generation into debt, we ought to do the work of it, otherwise we use them meanly and pitifully” (Paine 710).

Question: How does Paine justify calling fathers and sons to arms against their motherland in hopes of forming a new nation?

Issue: Issue of Social Policy. The question deals with Paine’s view that living under Great Britain’s authority will lead to a future without the promise of succession. Paine believes it is the duty of the colonist to stand up and fight for a constitution regardless of personal consequence. Paine believes Great Britain has absolutely no right to control the colonies – that they are an independent nation not subject to the social and political whims of Great Britain.

Critical Approach: The Deconstruction approach is the most appropriate approach. Deconstruction deals with clear-cut good and bad classifications, in that sense that deconstructionists argue that we, as readers-interpreters need to transcend thinking in terms of binaries, but instead, need to look at the gray areas. Paine believes that if fathers and sons fight for the colonist freedom, they will be securing a future for their new nation. Paine’s style of “plainness” simplifies the issues of his time. Hindsight shows us that wars, even for just causes, do not always run the course predicted of them.

Answer: Paine’s view of the future under Great Britain’s rule is so dim and insecure that he believes it to be a future unworthy of pursuing. He justifies the calling to arms with the hope of a

secure future that will be guaranteed for generations to come. The risks taken by the colonist obviously paid off in the birth of the new nation.