**Declaration of Independence:**

June 11, 1776: Continental Congress appoints committee to write DOI, includes Thomas Jefferson

July 4, 1776: DOI adopted by Congress

Thomas Jefferson:

* Main author of DOI
* Congress only accepted the DOI after the cut portion attacking slavery

*Enlightenment Influence:*

* Jefferson used the ideas of John Locke
  + Natural rights (life, liberty, property)
  + Social Contract
  + Right to rebel

Purpose: To show why the colonies were revolting against Britain and declaring their independence.

4 parts of DOI:

1. Preamble
2. Declaration of Natural Rights
3. List of Grievances
4. Resolution of Independence

The Signers:

* John Hancock first to sign (largely so King George could see it from England)
* 56 signers from 13 colonies
* Signing it was considered treason and punishable by death

Landmark:

* First time group of revolutionaries explained why they had a right to change their government
* Ideas of the DOI influenced the French Revolution and revolutions in South America

**Question: Were there female revolutionaries working behind the scenes? Is it the question of if there were, or if they were given credit or recognition?**