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Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution

Hill and Wang **Average Americans Were the True Framers of the Constitution** Woody Holton upends what we think we know of the Constitution's origins by telling the history of the average Americans who challenged the framers of the Constitution and forced on them the revisions that produced the document we now venerate. The framers who gathered in Philadelphia in 1787 were determined to reverse America's post-Revolutionary War slide into democracy. They believed too many middling Americans exercised too much influence over state and national policies. That the framers were only partially successful in curtailing citizen rights is due to the reaction, sometimes violent, of unruly average Americans. If not to protect civil liberties and the freedom of the people, what motivated the framers? In *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution*, Holton provides the startling discovery that the primary purpose of the Constitution was, simply put, to make America more attractive to investment. And the linchpin to that endeavor was taking power away from the states and ultimately away from the people. In an eye-opening interpretation of the Constitution, Holton captures how the same class of Americans that produced Shays's Rebellion in Massachusetts (and rebellions in damn near every other state) produced the Constitution we now revere. *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution* is a 2007 National Book Award Finalist for Nonfiction.

Liberty Is Sweet

The Hidden History of the American Revolution

Simon and Schuster **A “deeply researched and bracing retelling”** (Annette Gordon-Reed, Pulitzer Prize-winning historian) of the American Revolution, showing how the Founders were influenced by overlooked Americans—women, Native Americans, African Americans, and religious dissenters. Using more than a thousand eyewitness records, *Liberty Is Sweet* is a “spirited account” (Gordon S. Wood, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*) that explores countless connections between the Patriots of 1776 and other Americans whose passion for freedom often brought them into conflict with the Founding Fathers. “It is all one story,” prizewinning historian Woody Holton writes. Holton describes the origins and crucial battles of the Revolution from Lexington and Concord to the British surrender at Yorktown, always focusing on marginalized Americans—enslaved Africans and African Americans, Native Americans, women, and dissenters—and on overlooked factors such as weather, North America's unique geography, chance, misperception, attempts to manipulate public opinion, and (most of all) disease. Thousands of enslaved Americans exploited the chaos of war to obtain their own freedom, while others were given away as enlistment bounties to whites. Women provided material support for the troops, sewing clothes for soldiers and in some cases taking part in the fighting. Both sides courted native people and mimicked their tactics. *Liberty Is Sweet* is a “must-read book for understanding the founding of our nation” (Walter Isaacson, author of *Benjamin Franklin*), from its origins on the frontiers and in the Atlantic ports to the creation of the Constitution. Offering surprises at every turn—for example, Holton makes a convincing case that Britain never had a chance of winning the war—this majestic history revivifies a story we thought we already knew.

Summary of Woody Holton's Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution

Everest Media LLC **Please note: This is a companion version & not the original book.** **Sample Book Insights:** #1 The American Revolution was supported by many private creditors, who were among the Constitution's most ardent supporters. However, Beard's interpretation does not explain the enthusiasm that the proposed national government inspired in men such as Madison and Alexander Hamilton. #2 The American economy was in dire need of capital in 1787, and the framers believed that a national government was the only way to attract it. They believed that a virtuous government would attract capital, and that cracking down on debtors and taxpayers would end the terrible recession that had followed the Revolutionary War. #3 In 1786, Madison and Monroe bought land on the Mohawk River, nine miles from the site of the Stanwix treaty. They knew their plan contained a fatal flaw, as Americans were becoming more and more reluctant to lend money to their fellow citizens. #4 Americans, just like James Madison, were frustrated with the economic situation in their country. They were unable to borrow money, and this led to many ambitious men trying to find ways to get loans so they could buy land and expand their trade networks.

Abigail Adams

Simon and Schuster **Winner of the Bancroft Prize** *The New York Times* Book Review, *Editor's Choice* American Heritage, Best of 2009 In this vivid new biography of Abigail Adams, the most illustrious woman of the founding era, Bancroft Award-winning historian Woody Holton offers a sweeping reinterpretation of Adams's life story and of women's roles in the creation of the republic. Using previously overlooked documents from numerous archives, Abigail Adams shows that the wife of the second president of the United States was far more charismatic and influential than historians have realized. One of the finest writers of her age, Adams passionately campaigned for women's education, denounced sex discrimination, and matched wits not only with her brilliant husband, John, but with Thomas Jefferson and George Washington. When male Patriots ignored her famous appeal to "Remember the Ladies," she accomplished her own personal declaration of independence: Defying centuries of legislation that assigned married women's property to their husbands, she amassed a fortune in her own name. Adams's life story encapsulates the history of the founding era, for she defined herself in relation to the people she loved or hated (she was never neutral), a cast of characters that included her mother and sisters; Benjamin Franklin and James Lovell, her husband's bawdy congressional colleagues; Phoebe Abdee, her father's former slave; her financially naive husband; and her son John Quincy. At once epic and intimate, Abigail Adams, sheds light on a complicated, fascinating woman, one of the most beloved figures of American history.

Black Americans in the Revolutionary Era

A Brief History with Documents

Bedford/St. Martin's In this fresh look at liberty and freedom in the Revolutionary era from the perspective of black Americans, Woody Holton recounts the experiences of slaves who seized freedom by joining the British as well as those — slave and free — who served in Patriot military forces. Holton's introduction examines the conditions of black American life on the eve of colonial independence and the ways in which Revolutionary rhetoric about liberty provided African Americans with the language and inspiration for advancing

their cause. Despite the rhetoric, however, most black Americans remained enslaved after the Revolution. The introduction outlines ways African Americans influenced the course of the Revolution and continued to be affected by its aftermath. Amplifying these themes are nearly forty documents — including personal narratives, petitions, letters, poems, advertisements, pension applications, and images — that testify to the diverse goals and actions of African Americans during the Revolutionary era. Document headnotes and annotations, a chronology, questions for consideration, a selected bibliography, and index offer additional pedagogical support.

Forced Founders

Indians, Debtors, Slaves, and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia

UNC Press Books In this provocative reinterpretation of one of the best-known events in American history, Woody Holton shows that when Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and other elite Virginians joined their peers from other colonies in declaring independence from Britain, they acted partly in response to grassroots rebellions against their own rule. The Virginia gentry's efforts to shape London's imperial policy were thwarted by British merchants and by a coalition of Indian nations. In 1774, elite Virginians suspended trade with Britain in order to pressure Parliament and, at the same time, to save restive Virginia debtors from a terrible recession. The boycott and the growing imperial conflict led to rebellions by enslaved Virginians, Indians, and tobacco farmers. By the spring of 1776 the gentry believed the only way to regain control of the common people was to take Virginia out of the British Empire. *Forced Founders* uses the new social history to shed light on a classic political question: why did the owners of vast plantations, viewed by many of their contemporaries as aristocrats, start a revolution? As Holton's fast-paced narrative unfolds, the old story of patriot versus loyalist becomes decidedly more complex.

The American State Constitutional Tradition

The first comprehensive study of all 114 state constitutional conventions for which there are records--from Connecticut's in 1818 to New Hampshire's in 1984. By integrating state constitution-makers with the federal constitutional tradition, this path-breaking work yields a superior understanding of how American citizens have chosen to govern themselves.

A Leap in the Dark

The Struggle to Create the American Republic

Oxford University Press It was an age of fascinating leaders and difficult choices, of grand ideas eloquently expressed and of epic conflicts bitterly fought. Now comes a brilliant portrait of the American Revolution, one that is compelling in its prose, fascinating in its details, and provocative in its fresh interpretations. In *A Leap in the Dark*, John Ferling offers a magisterial new history that surges from the first rumblings of colonial protest to the volcanic election of 1800. Ferling's swift-moving narrative teems with fascinating details. We see Benjamin Franklin trying to decide if his loyalty was to Great Britain or to America, and we meet George Washington when he was a shrewd planter-businessman who discovered personal economic advantages to American independence. We encounter those who supported the war against Great Britain in 1776, but opposed independence because it was a "leap in the dark." Following the war, we hear talk in the North of secession from the United States. The author offers a gripping account of the most dramatic events of our history, showing just how closely fought were the struggle for independence, the adoption of the Constitution, and the later battle between Federalists and Democratic-Republicans. Yet, without slowing the flow of events, he has also produced a landmark study of leadership and ideas. Here is all the erratic brilliance of Hamilton and Jefferson battling to shape the new nation, and here too is the passion and political shrewdness of revolutionaries, such as Samuel Adams and Patrick Henry, and their Loyalist counterparts, Joseph Galloway and Thomas Hutchinson. Here as well are activists who are not so well known today, men like Abraham Yates, who battled for democratic change, and Theodore Sedgwick, who fought to preserve the political and social system of the colonial past. Ferling shows that throughout this period the epic political battles often resembled today's politics and the politicians--the founders--played a political hardball attendant with enmities, selfish motivations, and bitterness. The political stakes, this book demonstrates, were extraordinary: first to secure independence, then to determine the meaning of the American Revolution. John Ferling has shown himself to be an insightful historian of our Revolution, and an unusually skillful writer. *A Leap in the Dark* is his masterpiece, work that provokes, enlightens, and entertains in full measure.

American Capitalism

New Histories

Columbia University Press The United States has long epitomized capitalism. From its enterprising shopkeepers, wildcat banks, violent slave plantations, huge industrial working class, and raucous commodities trade to its world-spanning multinationals, its massive factories, and the centripetal power of New York in the world of finance, America has come to symbolize capitalism for two centuries and more. But an understanding of the history of American capitalism is as elusive as it is urgent. What does it mean to make capitalism a subject of historical inquiry? What is its potential across multiple disciplines, alongside different methodologies, and in a range of geographic and chronological settings? And how does a focus on capitalism change our understanding of American history? *American Capitalism* presents a sampling of cutting-edge research from prominent scholars. These broad-minded and rigorous essays venture new angles on finance, debt, and credit; women's rights; slavery and political economy; the racialization of capitalism; labor beyond industrial wage workers; and the production of knowledge, including the idea of the economy, among other topics. Together, the essays suggest emerging themes in the field: a fascination with capitalism as it is made by political authority, how it is claimed and contested by participants, how it spreads across the globe, and how it can be reconceptualized without being universalized. A major statement for a wide-open field, this book demonstrates the breadth and scope of the work that the history of capitalism can provoke.

Cultures in Conflict

The Seven Years' War in North America

Rowman & Littlefield Publishers The Seven Years' War (1754-1763) was a pivotal event in the history of the Atlantic world. Perspectives on the significance of the war and its aftermath varied considerably from different cultural vantage points. Northern and western Indians, European imperial authorities, and their colonial counterparts understood and experienced the war (known in the United States as the French and Indian War) in various ways. In many instances the progress of the conflict was charted by cultural differences and the implications participants drew from cultural encounters. It is these cultural encounters, their meaning in the context of the Seven Years' War, and their impact on the war and its diplomatic settlement that are the subjects of this volume. *Cultures in Conflict: The Seven Years' War in North America* addresses the broad pattern of events that framed this conflict's causes, the intercultural dynamics of its conduct, and its profound impact on subsequent events—most notably the American Revolution and a protracted Anglo-Indian struggle for continental control. Warren R. Hofstra has gathered the best of contemporary scholarship on the war and its social and cultural history. The authors examine the viewpoints of British and French imperial authorities, the issues motivating Indian nations in the Ohio Valley, the matter of why and how French colonists fought, the diplomatic and social world of Iroquois Indians, and the responses of British colonists to the conflict. The result of these efforts is a dynamic historical approach in which cultural context provides a rationale for the well-established military and political narrative of the Seven Years' War. These synthetic and interpretive essays mark out new territory in our understanding of the Seven Years' War as we recognize its 250th anniversary.

Liberty Tree

Ordinary People and the American Revolution

NYU Press In **Pagan Theology**, Michael York situates Paganism—one of the fastest-growing spiritual orientations in the West—as a world religion. He provides an introduction to, and expansion of, the concept of Paganism and provides an overview of Paganism's theological perspective and practice. He demonstrates it to be a viable and distinguishable spiritual perspective found around the world today in such forms as Chinese folk religion, Shinto, tribal religions, and neo-Paganism in the West. While adherents to many of these traditions do not use the word “pagan” to describe their beliefs or practices, York contends that there is an identifiable position possessing characteristics and understandings in common for which the label “pagan” is appropriate. After outlining these characteristics, he examines many of the world's major religions to explore religious behaviors in other religions which are not themselves pagan, but which have pagan elements. In the course of examining such behavior, York provides rich and lively descriptions of religions in action, including Buddhism and Hinduism. Pagan Theology claims Paganism's place as a world religion, situating it as a religion, a behavior, and a theology.

Taming Democracy

"The People," the Founders, and the Troubled Ending of the American Revolution

Oxford University Press Americans are fond of reflecting upon the Founding Fathers, the noble group of men who came together to force out the tyranny of the British and bring democracy to the land. Unfortunately, as Terry Bouton shows in this highly provocative first book, the Revolutionary elite often seemed as determined to squash democracy after the war as they were to support it before. Centering on Pennsylvania, the symbolic and logistical center of the Revolution, Bouton shows how this radical shift in ideology spelled tragedy for hundreds of common people. Leading up to the Revolution, Pennsylvanians were united in their opinion that “the people” (i.e. white men) should be given access to the political system, and that some degree of wealth equality (i.e. among white men) was required to ensure that political freedom prevailed. As the war ended, Pennsylvania's elites began brushing aside these ideas, using their political power to pass laws to enrich their own estates and hinder political organization by their opponents. By the 1780s, they had reenacted many of the same laws that they had gone to war to abolish, returning Pennsylvania to a state of economic depression and political hegemony. This unhappy situation led directly to the Whiskey and Fries rebellions, popular uprisings both put down by federal armies. Bouton's work reveals a unique perspective, showing intimately how the war and the events that followed affected poor farmers and working people. Bouton introduces us to unsung heroes from this time--farmers, weavers, and tailors who put their lives on hold to fight to save democracy from the forces of “united avarice.” We also get a starkly new look at some familiar characters from the Revolution, including Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and George Washington, who Bouton strives to make readers see as real, flawed people, blinded by their own sense of entitlement. Taming Democracy represents a turning point in how we view the outcomes of the Revolutionary War and the motivations of the powerful men who led it. Its eye-opening revelations and insights make it an essential read for all readers with a passion for uncovering the true history of America.

Whose American Revolution was It?

Historians Interpret the Founding

NYU Press “This moving account of a key figure in American history contributes greatly to our understanding of the past. It also informs our vision of the servant leader needed to guide the 1990s movement.” --Marian Wright Edelman, President, Children's Defense Fund
 “First-rate intellectual and political history, this study explores the relations between the practical objectives of SNCC and its moral and cultural goals.” --Irwin Unger, Author of *These United States and Postwar America*
 “Robert Moses emerges from these pages as that rare modern hero, the man whose life enacts his principles, the rebel who steadfastly refuses to be victim or executioner and who mistrusts even his own leadership out of commitment to cultivating the strength, self-reliance, and solidarity of those with and for whom he is working. Eric Burner's engrossing account of Robert Moses's legendary career brings alive the everyday realities of the Civil Rights Movement, especially the gruelling campaign for voter registration and political organization in Mississippi.” --Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, Eleonore Raoul Professor of the Humanities, Emory University, author of *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South*
 Next to Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X, Bob Moses was arguably one of the most influential and respected leaders of the civil rights movement. Quiet and intensely private, Moses quickly became legendary as a man whose conduct exemplified leadership by example. He once resigned as head of the Council of Federated Organizations because “my position there was too strong, too central.” Despite his centrality to the most important social movement in modern American history, Moses' life and the philosophy on which it is based have only been given cursory treatment and have never been the subject of a book-length biography. Biography is, by its very nature, a complicated act of recovery, even more so when the life under scrutiny deliberately avoids such attention. Eric Burner therefore sets out here not to reveal the “secret” Bob Moses, but to examine his moral philosophy and his political and ideological evolution, to provide a picture of the public person. In essence, his book provides a primer on a figure who spoke by silence and led through example. Moses spent almost three years in Mississippi trying to awaken the state's black citizens to their moral and legal rights before the fateful summer of 1964 would thrust him and the Freedom Summer movement into the national spotlight. We follow him through the civil rights years -- his intensive, fearless tradition of community organizing, his involvements with SNCC and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, and his negotiations with the Department of Justice --as Burner chronicles both Moses' political activity and his intellectual development, revealing the strong influence of French philosopher Albert Camus on his life and work. Moses' life is marked by the conflict between morality and politics, between purity and pragmatism, which ultimately left him disillusioned with a traditional Left that could talk only of coalitions and leaders from the top. Pursued by the Vietnam draft board for a war which he opposed, Moses fled to Canada in 1966 before departing for Africa in 1969 to spend the next decade teaching in Tanzania. Returning in 1977 under President Carter's amnesty program, he was awarded a five-year MacArthur genius grant in 1982 to establish and develop an innovative program to teach math to Boston's inner-city youth called the Algebra Project. The success of the program, which Moses has referred to as our version of Civil Rights 1992, has landed him on the cover of *The New York Times Magazine* emphasizing the new, central dimension that math and computer literacy lends to the pursuit of equal rights. And *Gently He Shall Lead Them* is the story of a remarkable man, an elusive hero of the civil rights movement whose flight from adulation has only served to increase his reputation as an intellectual and moral leader, a man whom nobody ever sees, but whose work is always in evidence. From his role as one of the architects of the civil rights movement thirty years ago to his ongoing work with inner city children, Robert Moses remains one of America's most courageous, energetic, and influential leaders. Wary of the cults of celebrity he saw surrounding Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X and fueled by a philosophy that shunned leadership, Moses has always labored behind the scenes. This first biography, a primer in the life of a unique American, sheds significant light on the intellectual and philosophical worldview of a man who is rarely seen but whose work is always in evidence.

An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States

Courier Corporation This classic study — one of the most influential in the area of American economic history — questioned the founding fathers' motivations and prompted new perceptions of the supreme law of the land.

Power and Liberty

Constitutionalism in the American Revolution

Oxford University Press New York Times bestseller and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Gordon S. Wood elucidates the debates over the founding documents of the United States. The half century extending from the imperial crisis between Britain and its colonies in the 1760s to the early decades of the new republic of the United States was the greatest and most creative era of constitutionalism in American history, and perhaps in the world. During these decades, Americans explored and debated all aspects of politics and constitutionalism--the nature of power, liberty, representation, rights, the division of authority between different spheres of government, sovereignty, judicial authority, and written constitutions. The results of these issues produced institutions that have lasted for over two centuries. In this new book, eminent historian Gordon S. Wood distills a lifetime of work on constitutional innovations during the Revolutionary era. In concise form, he illuminates critical events in the nation's founding, ranging from the imperial debate that led to the Declaration of Independence to the revolutionary state constitution making in 1776 and the creation of the Federal Constitution in 1787. Among other topics, he discusses slavery and constitutionalism, the emergence of the judiciary as one of the major tripartite institutions of government, the demarcation between public and private, and the formation of states' rights. Here is an immensely readable synthesis of the key era in the making of the history of the United States, presenting timely insights on the Constitution and the nation's foundational legal and political documents.

Shays's Rebellion

The American Revolution's Final Battle

University of Pennsylvania Press During the bitter winter of 1786-87, Daniel Shays, a modest farmer and Revolutionary War veteran, and his compatriot Luke Day led an unsuccessful armed rebellion against the state of Massachusetts. Their desperate struggle was fueled by the injustice of a regressive tax system and a conservative state government that seemed no better than British colonial rule. But despite the immediate failure of this local call-to-arms in the Massachusetts countryside, the event fundamentally altered the course of American history. Shays and his army of four thousand rebels so shocked the young nation's governing elite—even drawing the retired General George Washington back into the service of his country—that ultimately the Articles of Confederation were discarded in favor of a new constitution, the very document that has guided the nation for more than two hundred years, and brought closure to the American Revolution. The importance of Shays's Rebellion has never been fully appreciated, chiefly because Shays and his followers have always been viewed as a small group of poor farmers and debtors protesting local civil authority. In *Shays's Rebellion: The American Revolution's Final Battle*, Leonard Richards reveals that this perception is misleading, that the rebellion was much more widespread than previously thought, and that the participants and their supporters actually represented whole communities—the wealthy and the poor, the influential and the weak, even members of some of the best Massachusetts families. Through careful examination of contemporary records, including a long-neglected but invaluable list of the participants, Richards provides a clear picture of the insurgency, capturing the spirit of the rebellion, the reasons for the revolt, and its long-term impact on the participants, the state of Massachusetts, and the nation as a whole. Shays's Rebellion, though seemingly a local affair, was the revolution that gave rise to modern American democracy.

The Framers' Coup

The Making of the United States Constitution

Oxford University Press Americans revere their Constitution. However, most of us are unaware how tumultuous and improbable the drafting and ratification processes were. As Benjamin Franklin keenly observed, any assembly of men bring with them "all their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests and their selfish views." One need not deny that the Framers had good intentions in order to believe that they also had interests. Based on prodigious research and told largely through the voices of the participants, Michael Klarman's *The Framers' Coup* narrates how the Framers' clashing interests shaped the Constitution--and American history itself. The Philadelphia convention could easily have been a failure, and the risk of collapse was always present. Had the convention dissolved, any number of adverse outcomes could have resulted, including civil war or a reversion to monarchy. Not only does Klarman capture the knife's-edge atmosphere of the convention, he populates his narrative with riveting and colorful stories: the rebellion of debtor farmers in Massachusetts; George Washington's uncertainty about whether to attend; Gunning Bedford's threat to turn to a European prince if the small states were denied equal representation in the Senate; slave states' threats to take their marbles and go home if denied representation for their slaves; Hamilton's quasi-monarchist speech to the convention; and Patrick Henry's herculean efforts to defeat the Constitution in Virginia through demagoguery and conspiracy theories. The Framers' Coup is more than a compendium of great stories, however, and the powerful arguments that feature throughout will reshape our understanding of the nation's founding. Simply put, the Constitutional Convention almost didn't happen, and once it happened, it almost failed. And, even after the convention succeeded, the Constitution it produced almost failed to be ratified. Just as importantly, the Constitution was hardly the product of philosophical reflections by brilliant, disinterested statesmen, but rather ordinary interest group politics. Multiple conflicting interests had a say, from creditors and debtors to city dwellers and backwoodsmen. The upper class overwhelmingly supported the Constitution; many working class colonists were more dubious. Slave states and nonslave states had different perspectives on how well the Constitution served their interests. Ultimately, both the Constitution's content and its ratification process raise troubling questions about democratic legitimacy. The Federalists were eager to avoid full-fledged democratic deliberation over the Constitution, and the document that was ratified was stacked in favor of their preferences. And in terms of substance, the Constitution was a significant departure from the more democratic state constitutions of the 1770s. Definitive and authoritative, *The Framers' Coup* explains why the Framers preferred such a constitution and how they managed to persuade the country to adopt it. We have lived with the consequences, both positive and negative, ever since.

Intellectual Origins of American Radicalism

Cambridge University Press Now an established classic, *Intellectual Origins of American Radicalism* was the first book to explore this alternative current of American political thought. Stemming back to the seventeenth-century English Revolution, many questioned private property, the sovereignty of the nation-state, and slavery, and affirmed the common man's ability to govern. By the time of the American Revolution, Thomas Paine was the great exemplar of the alternative intellectual tradition. In the nineteenth century, the antislavery movement took hold of Thomas Paine's ideas and fashioned them into an ideology that ultimately justified civil war. This updated edition contains a new preface by the author, which describes the inquiries that he undertook in his books of the 1960s and their conclusions. David Waldstreicher has contributed a new historiographical essay that discusses the book's lasting importance and contrasts its ideas with the work of Bernard Bailyn and Gordon Wood.

"From the Labours of Others"

The War Bonds Controversy and the Origins of the Constitution in New England

The Royalist Revolution

Monarchy and the American Founding

Harvard University Press The founding fathers were rebels against the British Parliament, Eric Nelson argues, not the Crown. As a result of their labors, the 1787 Constitution assigned its new president far more power than any British monarch had wielded for 100 years. On one side of the Atlantic were kings without monarchy; on the other, monarchy without kings.

The Counter-Revolution of 1776

Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States of America

NYU Press The successful 1776 revolt against British rule in North America has been hailed almost universally as a great step forward for humanity. But the Africans then living in the colonies overwhelmingly sided with the British. In this trailblazing book, Gerald Horne shows that in the prelude to 1776, the abolition of slavery seemed all but inevitable in London, delighting Africans as much as it outraged slaveholders, and sparking the colonial revolt. Prior to 1776, anti-slavery sentiments were deepening throughout Britain and in the Caribbean, rebellious Africans were in revolt. For European colonists in America, the major threat to their security was a foreign invasion combined with an insurrection of the enslaved. It was a real and threatening possibility that London would impose abolition throughout the colonies—a possibility the founding fathers feared would bring slave rebellions to their shores. To forestall it, they went to war. The so-called Revolutionary War, Horne writes, was in part a counter-revolution, a conservative movement that the founding fathers fought in order to preserve their right to enslave others. The Counter-Revolution of 1776 brings us to a radical new understanding of the traditional heroic creation myth of the United States.

Conceived in Crisis

The Revolutionary Creation of an American State

University of Virginia Press Conceived in Crisis argues that the American Revolution was not just the product of the Imperial Crisis, brought on by Parliament's attempt to impose a new idea of empire on the American colonies. To an equal or greater degree, it was a response to the inability of individual colonial governments to deliver basic services, which undermined their legitimacy. Factional bickering over policy, violent extralegal regulations, and the dreadful experiences of conducting an imperial war while governing a demographically growing and geographically expanding population all led colonists and imperial officials to consider reforming the colonial governments into more powerful and coercive entities. Using Pennsylvania as a case study, Christopher Pearl demonstrates how this history of ineffective colonial governance precipitated a process of state formation that was accelerated by the demands of the Revolutionary War. The powerful state governments that resulted dominated the lives of ordinary people well into the nineteenth century. Conceived in Crisis makes sense of the trajectory from weak colonial to strong revolutionary states, and in so doing explains the limited success of efforts to consolidate state power at the national level during the early Republican period.

The Radicalism of the American Revolution

Vintage In a grand and immensely readable synthesis of historical, political, cultural, and economic analysis, a prize-winning historian describes the events that made the American Revolution. Gordon S. Wood depicts a revolution that was about much more than a break from England, rather it transformed an almost feudal society into a democratic one, whose emerging realities sometimes baffled and disappointed its founding fathers.

Liberty's Blueprint

How Madison and Hamilton Wrote the Federalist Papers, Defined the Constitution, and Made Democracy S

Basic Books Aside from the Constitution itself, there is no more important document in American politics and law than The Federalist—the series of essays written by Alexander Hamilton and James Madison to explain the proposed Constitution to the American people and persuade them to ratify it. Today, amid angry debate over what the Constitution means and what the framers' "original intent" was, The Federalist is more important than ever, offering the best insight into how the framers thought about the most troubling issues of American government and how the various clauses of the Constitution were meant to be understood. Michael Meyerson's Liberty's Blueprint provides a fascinating window into the fleeting, and ultimately doomed, friendship between Hamilton and Madison, as well as a much-needed introduction to understanding how the lessons of The Federalist are relevant for resolving contemporary constitutional issues from medical marijuana to the war on terrorism. This book shows that, when properly read, The Federalist is not a "conservative" manifesto but a document that rightfully belongs to all Americans across the political spectrum.

The Bill of Rights

A User's Guide

Hachette UK With a foreword by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg of the U.S. Supreme Court. An Engaging, Accessible Guide to the Bill of Rights for Everyday Citizens. In The Bill of Rights: A User's Guide, award-winning author and constitutional scholar Linda R. Monk explores the remarkable history of the Bill of Rights amendment by amendment, the Supreme Court's interpretation of each right, and the power of citizens to enforce those rights. Stories of the ordinary people who made the Bill of Rights come alive are featured throughout. These include Fannie Lou Hamer, a Mississippi sharecropper who became a national civil rights leader; Clarence Earl Gideon, a prisoner whose handwritten petition to the Supreme Court expanded the right to counsel; Mary Beth Tinker, a 13-year-old whose protest of the Vietnam War established free speech rights for students; Michael Hardwick, a bartender who fought for privacy after police entered his bedroom unlawfully; Suzette Kelo, a nurse who opposed the city's takeover of her working-class neighborhood; and Simon Tam, a millennial whose 10-year trademark battle for his band "The Slants" ended in a unanimous Supreme Court victory. Such people prove that, in the words of Judge Learned Hand, "Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court, can save it." Exploring the history, scope, and meaning of the first ten amendments—as well as the Fourteenth Amendment, which nationalized them and extended new rights of equality to all—The Bill of Rights: A User's Guide is a powerful examination of the values that define American life and the tools that every citizen needs.

The Cabinet

George Washington and the Creation of an American Institution

Harvard University Press **The US Constitution never established a presidential cabinet—the delegates to the Constitutional Convention explicitly rejected the idea. So how did George Washington create one of the most powerful bodies in the federal government? On November 26, 1791, George Washington convened his department secretaries—Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, Henry Knox, and Edmund Randolph—for the first cabinet meeting. Why did he wait two and a half years into his presidency to call his cabinet? Because the US Constitution did not create or provide for such a body. Washington was on his own. Faced with diplomatic crises, domestic insurrections, and constitutional challenges—and finding congressional help lacking—Washington decided he needed a group of advisors he could turn to. He modeled his new cabinet on the councils of war he had led as commander of the Continental Army. In the early days, the cabinet served at the president's pleasure. Washington tinkered with its structure throughout his administration, at times calling regular meetings, at other times preferring written advice and individual discussions. Lindsay M. Chervinsky reveals the far-reaching consequences of Washington's choice. The tensions in the cabinet between Hamilton and Jefferson heightened partisanship and contributed to the development of the first party system. And as Washington faced an increasingly recalcitrant Congress, he came to treat the cabinet as a private advisory body to summon as needed, greatly expanding the role of the president and the executive branch.**

A Machine That Would Go of Itself

The Constitution in American Culture

Routledge **In this volume, Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Michael Kammen explores the U.S. Constitution's place in the public consciousness and its role as a symbol in American life, from ratification in 1788 to our own time. As he examines what the Constitution has meant to the American people (perceptions and misperceptions, uses and abuses, knowledge and ignorance), Kammen shows that although there are recurrent declarations of reverence most of us neither know nor fully understand our Constitution. How did this gap between ideal and reality come about? To explain it, Kammen examines the complex and contradictory feelings about the Constitution that emerged during its preparation and that have been with us ever since. He begins with our confusion as to the kind of Union we created, especially with regard to how much sovereignty the states actually surrendered to the central government. This confusion is the source of the constitutional crisis that led to the Civil War and its aftermath. Kammen also describes and analyzes changing perceptions of the differences and similarities between the British and American constitutions; turn-of-the-century debates about states' rights versus national authority; and disagreements about how easy or difficult it ought to be to amend the Constitution. Moving into the twentieth century, he notes the development of a "cult of the Constitution" following World War I, and the conflict over policy issues that persisted despite a shared commitment to the Constitution.**

Birthright Citizens

A History of Race and Rights in Antebellum America

Cambridge University Press **Explains the origins of the Fourteenth Amendment's birthright citizenship provision, as a story of black Americans' pre-Civil War claims to belonging.**

For Fear of an Elective King

George Washington and the Presidential Title Controversy of 1789

Cornell University Press **In the spring of 1789, within weeks of the establishment of the new federal government based on the U.S. Constitution, the Senate and House of Representatives fell into dispute regarding how to address the president. Congress, the press, and individuals debated more than thirty titles, many of which had royal associations and some of which were clearly monarchical. For Fear of an Elective King is Kathleen Bartoloni-Tuazon's rich account of the title controversy and its meanings. The short, intense legislative phase and the prolonged, equally intense public phase animated and shaped the new nation's broadening political community. Rather than simply reflecting an obsession with etiquette, the question challenged Americans to find an acceptable balance between power and the people's sovereignty while assuring the country's place in the Atlantic world. Bartoloni-Tuazon argues that the resolution of the controversy in favor of the modest title of "President" established the importance of recognition of the people's views by the president and evidence of modesty in the presidency, an approach to leadership that fledged the presidency's power by not flaunting it. How the country titled the president reflected the views of everyday people, as well as the recognition by social and political elites of the irony that authority rested with acquiescence to egalitarian principles. The controversy's outcome affirmed the republican character of the country's new president and government, even as the conflict was the opening volley in increasingly partisan struggles over executive power. As such, the dispute is as relevant today as in 1789.**

Past and Prologue

Politics and Memory in the American Revolution

Yale University Press **How American colonists reinterpreted their British and colonial histories to help establish political and cultural independence from Britain In Past and Prologue, Michael Hattem shows how colonists' changing understandings of their British and colonial histories shaped the politics of the American Revolution and the origins of American national identity. Between the 1760s and 1800s, Americans stopped thinking of the British past as their own history and created a new historical tradition that would form the foundation for what subsequent generations would think of as "American history." This change was a crucial part of the cultural transformation at the heart of the Revolution by which colonists went from thinking of themselves as British subjects to thinking of themselves as American citizens. Rather than liberating Americans from the past--as many historians have argued--the Revolution actually made the past matter more than ever. Past and Prologue shows how the process of reinterpreting the past played a critical role in the founding of the nation.**

The Bill of Rights

The Fight to Secure America's Liberties

Simon and Schuster "Narrative, celebratory history at its purest" (Publishers Weekly)—the real story of how the Bill of Rights came to be: a vivid account of political strategy, big egos, and the partisan interests that set the terms of the ongoing contest between the federal government and the states. Those who argue that the Bill of Rights reflects the founding fathers' "original intent" are wrong. The Bill of Rights was actually a brilliant political act executed by James Madison to preserve the Constitution, the federal government, and the latter's authority over the states. In the skilled hands of award-winning historian Carol Berkin, the story of the founders' fight over the Bill of Rights comes alive in a drama full of partisanship, clashing egos, and cunning manipulation. In 1789, the nation faced a great divide around a question still unanswered today: should broad power and authority reside in the federal government or should it reside in state governments? The Bill of Rights, from protecting religious freedom to the people's right to bear arms, was a political ploy first and a matter of principle second. The truth of how and why Madison came to devise this plan, the debates it caused in the Congress, and its ultimate success is more engrossing than any of the myths that shroud our national beginnings. The debate over the Bill of Rights still continues through many Supreme Court decisions. By pulling back the curtain on the short-sighted and self-interested intentions of the founding fathers, Berkin reveals the anxiety many felt that the new federal government might not survive—and shows that the true "original intent" of the Bill of Rights was simply to oppose the Antifederalists who hoped to diminish the government's powers. This book is "a highly readable American history lesson that provides a deeper understanding of the Bill of Rights, the fears that generated it, and the miracle of the amendments" (Kirkus Reviews).

The Debate on the American Revolution

Manchester University Press The Debate on the American Revolution is the first in-depth study of the way in which historians dealt with the coming of the American Revolution and the formation of the U.S. Constitution. The approach is thematic, examining how historians in different periods interpreted these events, their causes, and their meaning. Making accessible the work of often-neglected by early historians, this book examines how the emergence of history as a professional discipline led to new and competing versions of the Revolution. It spans from the first generation of writers--whose ideas about history were shaped by the Enlightenment--to those of the 21st century--who drew on the rich legacy provided by black studies, gender and women's studies, cultural studies, and ethno-history.

Our Sister Republics: The United States in an Age of American Revolutions

W. W. Norton & Company A major new interpretation recasts U.S. history between revolution and civil war, exposing a dramatic reversal in sympathy toward Latin American revolutions. In the early nineteenth century, the United States turned its idealistic gaze southward, imagining a legacy of revolution and republicanism it hoped would dominate the American hemisphere. From pulsing port cities to Midwestern farms and southern plantations, an adolescent nation hailed Latin America's independence movements as glorious tropical reprises of 1776. Even as Latin Americans were gradually ending slavery, U.S. observers remained energized by the belief that their founding ideals were triumphing over European tyranny among their "sister republics." But as slavery became a violently divisive issue at home, goodwill toward antislavery revolutionaries waned. By the nation's fiftieth anniversary, republican efforts abroad had become a scaffold upon which many in the United States erected an ideology of white U.S. exceptionalism that would haunt the geopolitical landscape for generations. Marshaling groundbreaking research in four languages, Caitlin Fitz defines this hugely significant, previously unacknowledged turning point in U.S. history.

The American Revolution

A History

Modern Library NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER "An elegant synthesis done by the leading scholar in the field, which nicely integrates the work on the American Revolution over the last three decades but never loses contact with the older, classic questions that we have been arguing about for over two hundred years."—Joseph J. Ellis, author of *Founding Brothers* A magnificent account of the revolution in arms and consciousness that gave birth to the American republic. When Abraham Lincoln sought to define the significance of the United States, he naturally looked back to the American Revolution. He knew that the Revolution not only had legally created the United States, but also had produced all of the great hopes and values of the American people. Our noblest ideals and aspirations—our commitments to freedom, constitutionalism, the well-being of ordinary people, and equality—came out of the Revolutionary era. Lincoln saw as well that the Revolution had convinced Americans that they were a special people with a special destiny to lead the world toward liberty. The Revolution, in short, gave birth to whatever sense of nationhood and national purpose Americans have had. No doubt the story is a dramatic one: Thirteen insignificant colonies three thousand miles from the centers of Western civilization fought off British rule to become, in fewer than three decades, a huge, sprawling, rambunctious republic of nearly four million citizens. But the history of the American Revolution, like the history of the nation as a whole, ought not to be viewed simply as a story of right and wrong from which moral lessons are to be drawn. It is a complicated and at times ironic story that needs to be explained and understood, not blindly celebrated or condemned. How did this great revolution come about? What was its character? What were its consequences? These are the questions this short history seeks to answer. That it succeeds in such a profound and enthralling way is a tribute to Gordon Wood's mastery of his subject, and of the historian's craft.

Daniel Shays's Honorable Rebellion

An American Story

On January 25, 1787, in Springfield, Massachusetts, militia Major General William Shepard ordered his cannon to fire grapeshot at a peaceful demonstration of 1,200 farmers approaching the federal arsenal. The shots killed four and wounded twenty, marking the climax of five months of civil disobedience in Massachusetts, where farmers challenged the state's authority to seize their farms for flagrantly unjust taxes. Government leaders and influential merchants painted these protests as a violent attempt to overthrow the state, in hopes of garnering support for strengthening the federal government in a Constitutional Convention. As a result, the protests have been hidden for more than two hundred years under the misleading title, "Shays's Rebellion, the armed uprising that led to the Constitution." But this widely accepted narrative is just a legend: the "rebellion" was almost entirely nonviolent, and retired Revolutionary War hero Daniel Shays was only one of many leaders. *Daniel Shays's Honorable Rebellion: An American Story* by Daniel Bullen tells the history of the crisis from the protesters' perspective. Through five months of nonviolent protests, the farmers kept courts throughout Massachusetts from hearing foreclosures, facing down threats from the government, which escalated to the point that Governor James Bowdoin ultimately sent an army to arrest them. Even so, the people won reforms in an electoral landslide. Thomas Jefferson called these protests an honorable rebellion, and hoped that Americans would never let twenty years pass without such a campaign, to rein in powerful interests. This riveting and meticulously researched narrative shows that Shays and his fellow protesters were hardly a dangerous rabble, but rather a proud people who banded together peaceably, risking their lives for justice in a quintessentially American story.

American Honor

The Creation of the Nation's Ideals during the Revolutionary Era

UNC Press Books **The American Revolution was not only a revolution for liberty and freedom, it was also a revolution of ethics, reshaping what colonial Americans understood as "honor" and "virtue." As Craig Bruce Smith demonstrates, these concepts were crucial aspects of Revolutionary Americans' ideological break from Europe and shared by all ranks of society. Focusing his study primarily on prominent Americans who came of age before and during the Revolution—notably John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington—Smith shows how a colonial ethical transformation caused and became inseparable from the American Revolution, creating an ethical ideology that still remains. By also interweaving individuals and groups that have historically been excluded from the discussion of honor—such as female thinkers, women patriots, slaves, and free African Americans—Smith makes a broad and significant argument about how the Revolutionary era witnessed a fundamental shift in ethical ideas. This thoughtful work sheds new light on a forgotten cause of the Revolution and on the ideological foundation of the United States.**

Virginia's American Revolution

From Dominion to Republic, 1776-1840

Lexington Books **Virginia's American Revolution focuses on the remaking of colonial Virginia into a republican society. It considers this topic with a focus on particular episodes, such as the Richmond Ratification Convention of 1788 and the adoption of the Virginia Resolutions of 1798, that brought the question 'What does it mean to be republican?' to the fore.**

Emancipating Slaves, Enslaving Free Men

A History of the American Civil War

Open Court **This book combines a sweeping narrative of the Civil War with a bold new look at the war's significance for American society. Professor Hummel sees the Civil War as America's turning point: simultaneously the culmination and repudiation of the American revolution. While the chapters tell the story of the Civil War and discuss the issues raised in readable prose, each chapter is followed by a detailed bibliographical essay, looking at all the different major works on the subject, with their varying ideological viewpoints and conclusions. In his economic analysis of slavery, Professor Hummel takes a different view than the two major poles which have determined past discussions of the topic. While some writers claim that slavery was unprofitable and harmful to the Southern economy, and others maintain it was profitable and efficient for the South, Hummel uses the economic concept of Deadweight Loss to show that slavery was both highly profitable for slave owners and harmful to Southern economic development. While highly critical of Confederate policy, Hummel argues that the war was fought to prevent secession, not to end slavery, and that preservation of the Union was not necessary to end slavery: the North could have let the South secede peacefully, and slavery would still have been quickly terminated. Part of Hummel's argument is that the South crucially relied on the Northern states to return runaway slaves to their owners. This new edition has a substantial new introduction by the author, correcting and supplementing the account given in the first edition (the major revision is an increase in the estimate of total casualties) and a foreword by John Majewski, a rising star of Civil War studies.**

The Power to Die

Slavery and Suicide in British North America

University of Chicago Press **The history of slavery in early America is a history of suicide. On ships crossing the Atlantic, enslaved men and women refused to eat or leaped into the ocean. They strangled or hanged themselves. They tore open their own throats. In America, they jumped into rivers or out of windows, or even ran into burning buildings. Faced with the reality of enslavement, countless Africans chose death instead. In *The Power to Die*, Terri L. Snyder excavates the history of slave suicide, returning it to its central place in early American history. How did people—traders, plantation owners, and, most importantly, enslaved men and women themselves—view and understand these deaths, and how did they affect understandings of the institution of slavery then and now? Snyder draws on ships' logs, surgeons' journals, judicial and legislative records, newspaper accounts, abolitionist propaganda and slave narratives, and many other sources to build a grim picture of slavery's toll and detail the ways in which suicide exposed the contradictions of slavery, serving as a powerful indictment that resonated throughout the Anglo-Atlantic world and continues to speak to historians today.**

The American Revolution Reader

Routledge **The American Revolution Reader is a collection of leading essays on the American revolutionary era from the eve of the imperial crisis through George Washington's presidency. Articles have been chosen to represent classic themes, such as the British-colonial relationship during the eighteenth century, the political and ideological issues underlying colonial protests, the military conflict, the debates over the Constitution, and the rise of political parties. The volume also captures how the field has been reshaped in recent years, including essays that cover class strife and street politics, the international context of the Revolution, and the roles of women, African Americans and Native Americans, as well as the reshaping of the British Empire after the war. With essays by Gordon S. Wood, Mary Beth Norton, T.H. Breen, John M. Murrin, Gary B. Nash, Woody Holton, Rosemarie Zagari, John Shy, Alan Taylor, Maya Jasanoff, and many other prominent historians, the collection is ideal for classroom use and any student of the American Revolution.**