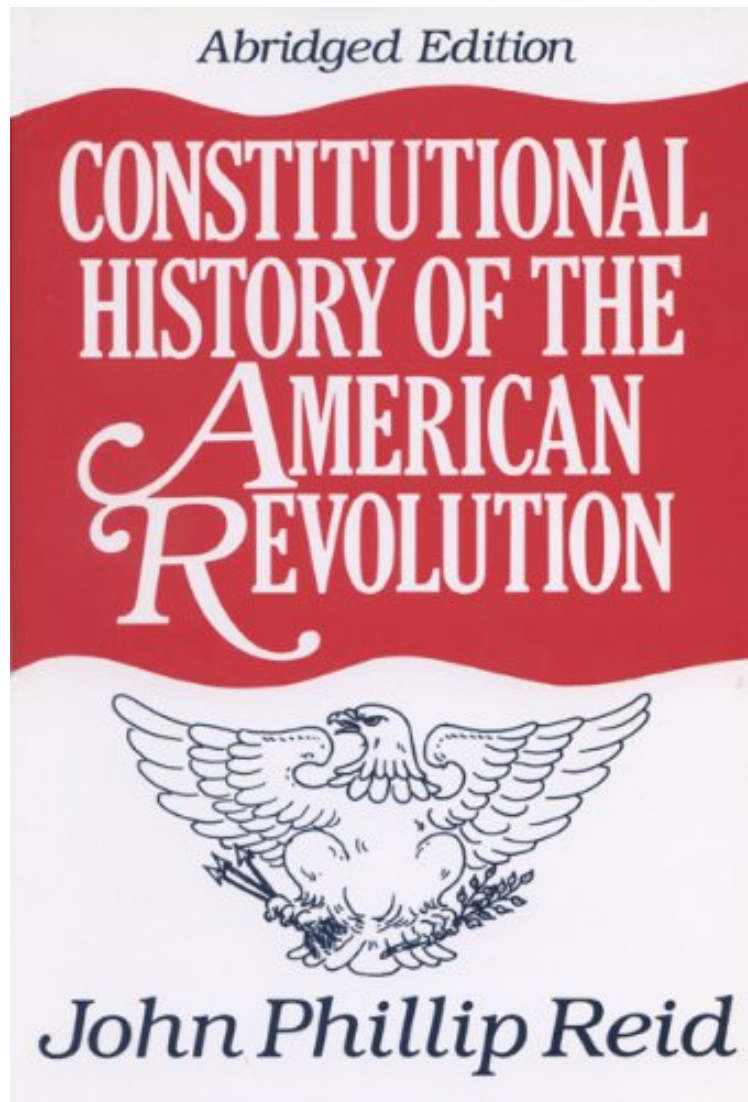


(Download) Constitutional History of the American Revolution

Constitutional History of the American Revolution

John Phillip Reid

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John Phillip Reid : Constitutional History of the American Revolution before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Constitutional History of the American Revolution:

4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. It was not the economy, stupid, it was the ancient constitution! By Csar Gonzalez Rouco It is difficult nowadays to get an objective opinion on the USA, neither flattering nor biased against it. If I were to recommend a way to try and achieve this, I would suggest reading several good books on the matter, including this work among them. I wanted to understand the US Revolution. On the one hand, most of the US Founding Fathers seemed to have been an amazingly brilliant generation - politically speaking. On the other hand, the

blunders and mistakes committed by the British government in the years before the American independence war seemed unfairly magnified. Exaggerating a little bit what I had understood from common explanations in history books, I had the misperception (or was on the verge of thinking) that touchy ungrateful colonials started a heinous war for a trifle, miserly struggling with heroic stubbornness just in order not to pay very moderate taxes on stamped paper and tea! I felt puzzled, among other reasons because other people had suffered abuses far greater than those invoked by the 13 colonies and did not rebel. Besides, I have recently read that Alexander Hamilton, a few years after the independence war, praised (somehow extravagantly) the British Constitution as the best in the world. Then, why to fight against such a well governed mother country? Reid's "Constitutional History of the American Revolution" provides an abridged and easy to understand explanation of what went wrong. "It was not the economy, stupid, it was the ancient constitution!", as traditionally understood by the American, but which was in the process of being changed by the British people. If you like, a shift of constitutional paradigm was at stake, the American colonies in favor of the constitution of the days of yore, based on the rule of law, and the British government, somehow unconsciously, moving towards one based on parliamentary supremacy ...which the American were afraid would lead to unchecked government treading on their liberties earned as property by their parents' blood and sacrifices to colonize the New World. And war eventually became the only way out to that battle of principles, in which both sides were unable to find a political solution to constitutional riddles without losing face before the other party. Probably the above is only my simplified interpretation, without enough knowledge to appreciate Reid's nuances, but in any event I enjoyed this insightful little book a lot. I could not put it down and read it in less than a week's time (content: 5 stars; pleasure: between 3 and 4). So I highly recommend it. Other books on the USA I would also recommend are the following: A) Dealing with constitutional and political ideas: 1) "America's Constitution: A Biography" by Akhil Reed Amar; 2) "Liberty's Blueprint: How Madison and Hamilton Wrote The Federalist, Defined the Constitution, and Made Democracy Safe for the World" by Michael Meyerson; and 3) "Lincoln's Constitution" by Daniel A. Farber. B) Other books chosen with an approach historically impressionistic: 4) "The Death Penalty", by Stuart Banner; 5) "The Churching Of America, 1776-2005: Winners And Losers In Our Religious Economy" by Roger Finke and Rodney Stark; 6) "American Colonies. The settling of North America", by Alan Taylor; and 7) "Battle cry of freedom. The Civil War Era" by James M. McPherson. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. The heart of the "constitutional debate." By Michael E. Johnson The condensing of Reid's work from the four volume set allows a student to see the major point of the constitutional debate between the colonists and their British rulers in the late colonial period; the conception of a constitution of Parliamentary Command/Sovereign Authority (Britain) versus a constitution of Customary Rights (American Whigs). It also deftly explains the concept of "constitutional avoidance" as a basis and strategy of resistance. Some of the depth in Reid's development of the five "authority" bases may be lost in the abridged edition, but that hardly detracts from the value of this edition for the student of the American Revolution.

Designed for use in courses, this abridged edition of the four-volume Constitutional History of the American Revolution demonstrates how significant constitutional disputes were in instigating the American Revolution. John Phillip Reid addresses the central constitutional issues that divided the American colonists from their English legislators: the authority to tax, the authority to legislate, the security of rights, the nature of law, the foundation of constitutional government in custom and contractarian theory, and the search for a constitutional settlement. Reid's distinctive analysis discusses the irreconcilable nature of this conflict irreconcilable not because leaders in politics on both sides did not desire a solution, but because the dynamics of constitutional law impeded a solution that permitted the colonies to remain part of the dominions of George III.

"Reid persuasively argues that students of the Revolution have moved too quickly from constitutional arguments to economic interests, ideology, and social psychology. Reid's Constitutional History is essential reading for any serious student of the American Revolution." Peter S. Onuf, Journal of American History