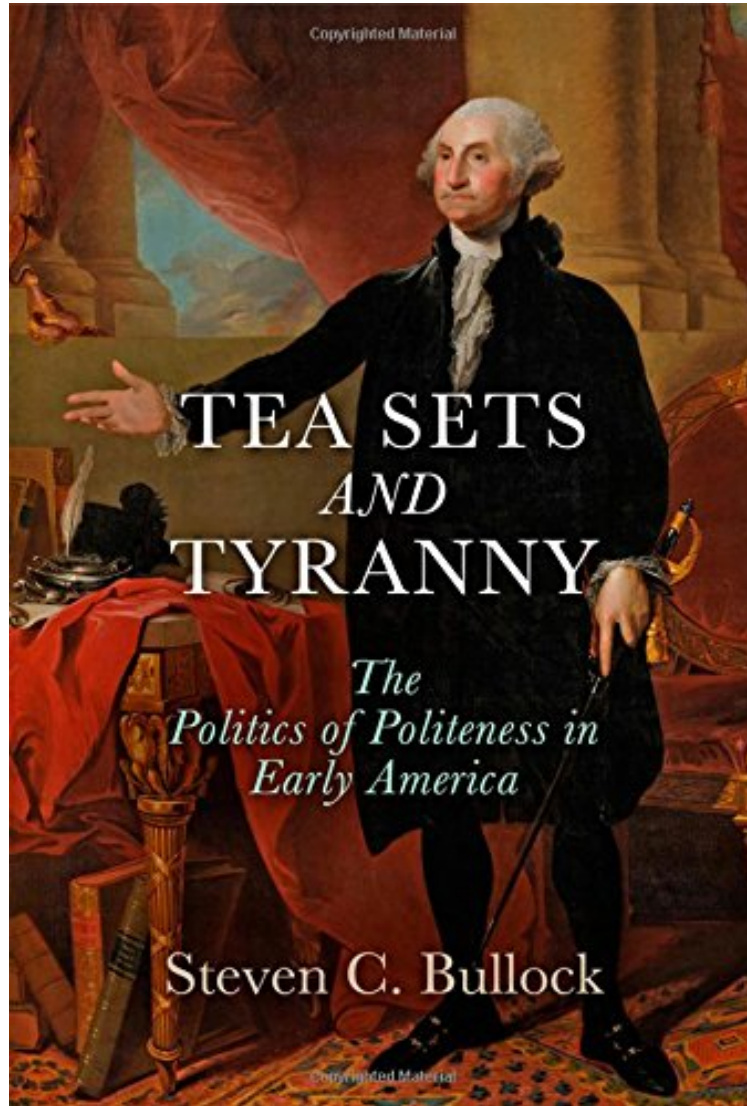


[E-BOOK] Tea Sets and Tyranny: The Politics of Politeness in Early America (Early American Studies)

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Steven C. Bullock

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Steven C. Bullock : Tea Sets and Tyranny: The Politics of Politeness in Early America (Early American Studies) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Tea Sets and Tyranny: The Politics of Politeness in Early America (Early American Studies):

Even as eighteenth-century thinkers from John Locke to Thomas Jefferson struggled to find effective means to restrain power, contemporary discussions of society gave increasing attention to ideals of refinement, moderation, and polished self-presentation. These two sets of ideas have long seemed separate, one dignified as political theory, the other primarily concerned with manners and material culture. *Tea Sets and Tyranny* challenges that division. In its original context, Steven C. Bullock suggests, politeness also raised important issues of power, leadership, and human relationships. This politics of politeness helped make opposition to overbearing power central to early American thought and practice. Although these views spanned the English Atlantic world, they were particularly significant in America, most notably in helping shape its Revolution. By the end of the eighteenth century, the politics of politeness was already breaking apart, however its ideals continued to be important. Opposition to arbitrary governing became central to American political culture; self-control became a major part of nineteenth-century values, but these ideals increasingly seemed to belong in separate spheres. This division between public power and personal life continues to shape thinking about liberty so fully that it has been difficult to recognize its origins in the eighteenth-century politics of politeness. *Tea Sets and Tyranny* follows the experiences of six extraordinary individuals, each seeking to establish public authority and personal standing: a cast of characters that includes a Virginia governor consumed by fits of towering rage; a Carolina woman who befriended a British princess; and a former Harvard student who became America's first confidence man.

"Deeply researched and engagingly written, *Tea Sets and Tyranny* explores the relationship between ideas about power and politeness, a social value that celebrated restraint and refinement. Ranging from Indian agents to colonial governors to plantation mistresses, Steven Bullock's fascinating cast of characters takes us into a world in which unfettered personal and political power yields to the practices of civility. A provocative and persuasive reinterpretation of British subjects as they became American citizens through the pursuit of politeness." Mary Kelley, University of Michigan
"In a series of fascinating cameos, Steven Bullock illuminates the rise and fall of the eighteenth-century culture of politeness, benevolence, and sympathy that reshaped a politics of violent hierarchy into one of restrained moderation. His erudite account of the role of emotion in the governing styles of central figures in the Anglo-American gentry will stand with the most evocative work that we have on power and personality in this formative epoch." John Brooke, The Ohio State University
"Drawing on a fascinating array of life stories, Steven C. Bullock examines the hidden patterns behind a wide range of social and political interactions in colonial British America. More than a code of elite social norms, 'politeness' expressed a deeply embedded set of cultural assumptions about colonial hierarchies of race, gender, and political authority. *Tea Sets and Tyranny* provides a whole new context for understanding the underlying forces that contributed to the coming of the American Revolution." Rosemarie Zagari, George Mason University
About the Author Steven C. Bullock is Professor of History at the Worcester Polytechnic University. He is author of *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730-1840* and *The American Revolution: A History in Documents*.