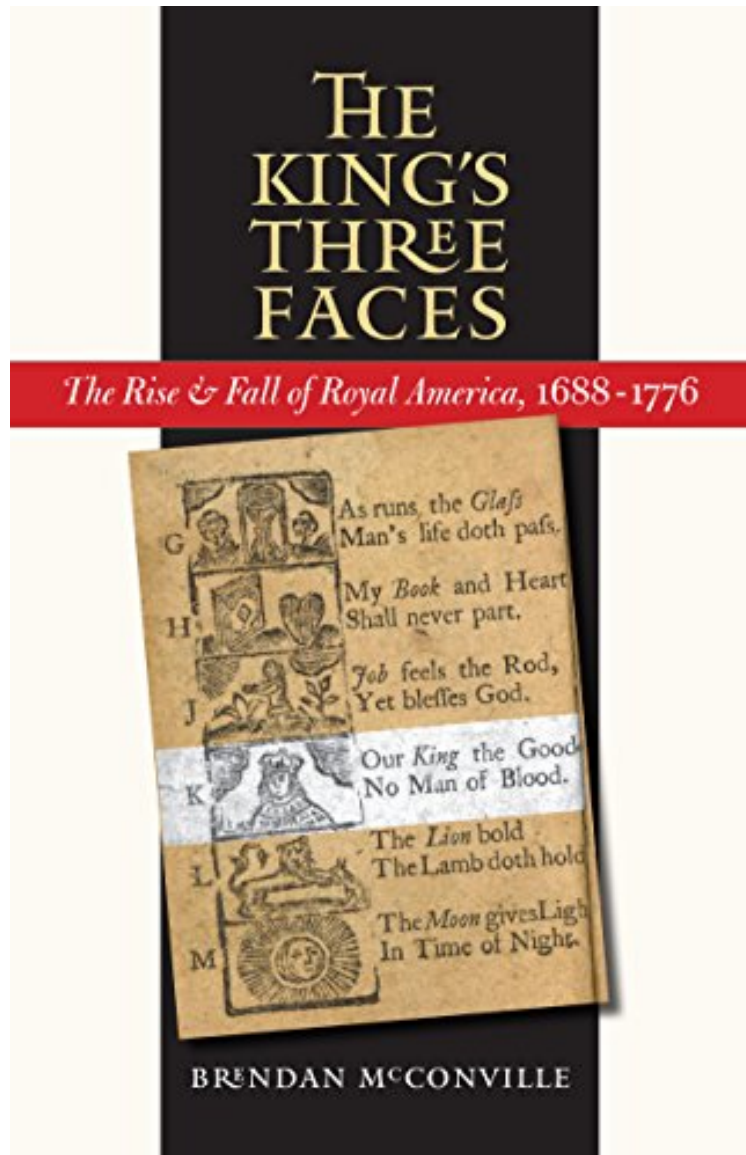


(Download ebook) The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776 (Published by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and the University of North Carolina Press)

## The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776 (Published by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and the University of North Carolina Press)

Brendan McConville

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#428783 in Books The University of North Carolina Press 2007-08-27 Original language: English PDF # 1  
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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Published by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and the University of North Carolina Press):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An Eye-Opening Examination of Attitudes During the American Revolution  
By RDD  
In *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (2006), historian Brendan McConville sought to examine how provincials thinking about monarchy changed in the short century between the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the American Revolution. Contrary to previous historical understanding that framed colonial America as leading inevitably toward the Revolution and democracy, McConville argues, In the royal America that existed between the Glorious Revolution and 1776, that which we call political culture, the milieu in which politics takes place, was decidedly monarchical and imperial, Protestant and virulently anti-Catholic, almost to the moment of American independence. McConville structures his argument into three sections, examining first the origins of the colonial cult of personality that developed around the Protestant king, secondly the fragmentation in understanding of the monarchy and the imperial order, and finally the collapse of England's empire in America. McConville states in his first section, The growth of a political culture focused on the monarchy brought stability to the settler colonies in the four decades after the Glorious Revolution. This led individuals and groups to repeatedly reconceive their relationship to the king and the British constitution along a spectrum running from forms of divine-right monarchy to belief in an extralegal, extrainstitutional monarch at one with his meanest subjects. Unfortunately, the cult of monarchy, designed to link subjects harmoniously to the empire, often intensified rather than alleviated the stresses caused by these transformations. McConville attributes to this the misunderstanding colonists had of the relationship between king and Parliament. As McConville writes, the colonists demanded that the imperial father of their imagination restrain a tyrannical Parliament and the king's failure to do so led to a collapse of royal institutional legitimacy in 1773 and 1774. The result of the collapse of legitimacy in the eyes of the colonists was a series of symbolic regicides conducted in numerous communities [that] announced the end of royal America and the first British empire to a startled world. McConville summarizes his argument, stating, What began as an effort to preserve the nation, honor the constitution, and revere the king by collectively resisting Parliament ended in terror and imperial dissolution. Despite this dissolution, American culture continued to maintain elements of the monarchical cult until the Jacksonian era. McConville argues, The American democracy that emerged in the 1820s was a fusion of past and present and future containing an eighteenth-century style of patronage system under Jacksonian democracy and a craving for European cultural and fashion. To McConville, this trend has continued throughout American culture, reaching to the present and allowing the past to be historically recoverable. McConville, using primary sources such as journals, personal letters, and pamphlets, is able to demonstrate the prevalence of the cult of monarchy prior to the Revolution and how the American understanding of the monarchy was different than that in the British Isles, eventually leading to the sense of betrayal at the beginning of the Revolution.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fantastic title but lacks the documentation and for that matter ...  
By Customer  
Never really clearly understand just exactly what the King's three faces are. Fantastic title but lacks the documentation and for that matter a CLEAR THESIS to back it up.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The King's Three Faces  
By J. Lindner  
In *The King's Three Faces*, author Brendan McConville takes the traditional whig approach to the American Revolution and sets it aside and looks at our colonial past as an imperial British past and not a predestined march towards patriotism and liberty. Actually, patriotism and liberty were always part of the colonial era but the emphasis was first to king and country instead of freedom and independence. McConville examines nearly every aspect of society, from toasting the king on his birthday to religious expression to gender relations to race relations and beyond then combines them all into his recipe that emerged as the United States. But it was a long and arduous process not a fast track to July 4, 1776. History was alive in the world of colonial America. And it was predominantly British history complete with oaths to king, the impact of the Glorious Revolution, fear of papacy and Catholicism, and trust that the king would look out for all of his children. It was the King who most colonials saw as the representative of empire, not parliament and certainly not the prime minister. The King's likeness appeared in colonial halls of justice, on colonial tableware, in art, on public documents, and other places. Counties, roads, even entire colonies were named in his honor. The empire was as embedded in America equally as much as it was in England, and possibly more embedded than it was in Scotland, given the Scots' tendencies towards supporting the former Stuart pretenders. McConville weaves an intricate history that touches so many parts of the imperial relationships because those relationships were so strongly connected. It wasn't always that way and McConville starts by showing how Puritan New England, much to the chagrin of their religious consciences, had to make room for king and empire to enter into their daily lives. He goes on to show how the transformation of America from remote outposts to imperial integration took place. Even when the bonds of empire began to crumble after 1763, many in America looked to the King to protect their interests and constitutional rights. Reformers put forth plans to solve imperial problems, but it was the imperial officials who failed to recognize that problems existed and thus did far too little to sustain the empire's existence. Readers will likely be surprised by much of this book. McConville cites sources that are contrary to many traditional liberal teachings of

liberty and independence. He shows how "British" colonial America truly was. He then further breaks with tradition when he describes the realities of revolutionary America. He covers the violence citizens had towards one another, he shows how the rejection of the King led to destruction of property. Violence against churches and clergy, against public officials that included their houses and possessions, against anything that reminded people of a love affair gone bad all were present at every level of revolutionary society. Committees authorized violence and the legal system really had nothing in place to prevent the destruction. The King's Three Faces is really a bit of a misnomer. The King had far more than three faces, perhaps he had dozens of faces depending on who was considering the royal persona. But McConville is a master at the historian's craft and his work should become an important part of our understanding of our colonial past. I once heard a college professor say to his students that colonial America is perhaps the most difficult part of our history to understand because of its complexities and dynamics. McConville's book will not simplify understanding of colonial America, indeed it will likely muddy the waters even more. But for those of us who appreciate just how complex American society truly is, this book is a necessary contribution into our historical knowledge.

Reinterpreting the first century of American history, Brendan McConville argues that colonial society developed a political culture marked by strong attachment to Great Britain's monarchs. This intense allegiance continued almost until the moment of independence, an event defined by an emotional break with the king. By reading American history forward from the seventeenth century rather than backward from the Revolution, McConville shows that political conflicts long assumed to foreshadow the events of 1776 were in fact fought out by factions who invoked competing visions of the king and appropriated royal rites rather than used abstract republican rights or pro-democratic proclamations. The American Revolution, McConville contends, emerged out of the fissure caused by the unstable mix of affective attachments to the king and a weak imperial government. Sure to provoke debate, *The King's Three Faces* offers a powerful counterthesis to dominant American historiography.

This well-researched and scrupulously detailed work.--"Library Journal"Here is a work so controversial that some will barely be able to sit still as they turn the pages.--Rhys Isaac, Emeritus, LaTrobe University, and College of William and Mary"A worthwhile book for anyone with a solid interest in the early US. . . . Highly recommended." -- "CHOICE""Inspires a string of adjectives: provocative, original, clever, iconoclastic, and querulous." -- "American Historical ""Salient and compelling. . . . An important contribution to the field of colonial American history." -- "New England Quarterly""Creative and erudite. . . . Its new perspectives makes it all the more stimulating for historians of early America and beyond." -- "William and Mary Quarterly""Expands commonplace observations about the political tactics of resistance and revolution into a revisionist view of eighteenth-century American development. . . . An interesting book." -- "International History ""In elucidating the origins of 'the empire's cult of Monarchy, ' McConville is at his boldest and most innovative. . . . This innovative and thought-provoking book should be required reading for all those with an interest in the British Atlantic world. It will surely be central to any future discussions of early American politics, religion, popular culture, and the coming of the Revolution." -- "Pennsylvania Magazine of History""This well-researched and scrupulously detailed work."--"Library Journal""Here is a work so controversial that some will barely be able to sit still as they turn the pages."--Rhys Isaac, Emeritus, LaTrobe University, and College of William and Mary A worthwhile book for anyone with a solid interest in the early US. . . . Highly recommended.--CHOICEHere is a work so controversial that some will barely be able to sit still as they turn the pages. We are challenged to think of late colonial America as not proto-republican but devoutly committed to British monarchy. Very well written, McConville's ambitious new paradigm may see this become the most important book on colonial and revolutionary political culture since Bailyn's *Ideological Origins*.--Rhys Isaac, Emeritus, LaTrobe University, and College of William and MaryCreative and erudite. . . . Its new perspectives makes it all the more stimulating for historians of early America and beyond.--William and Mary QuarterlyThis innovative and thought-provoking book should be required reading for all those with an interest in the British Atlantic world. It will surely be central to any future discussions of early American politics, religion, popular culture, and the coming of the Revolution.--Pennsylvania Magazine of HistoryThis well-researched and scrupulously detailed work. . . . is an insightful and provocative read, challenging our attitudes and assumptions about the mind-set of American Colonists.--Library JournalMcConville beams new light on the royalist side of colonial political culture over three eras. In the wake of 1688, he argues, Americans formed direct political and emotional ties to their Protestant queens and kings, leading to 'a cult of benevolent monarchy.' But as perceptions of the king deteriorated, and finally shattered, rebellious Americans reacted like jilted lovers--tearing down statues and royal symbols in a spasm of anti-monarchical passion. McConville's imaginative restructuring of provincial politics around a royalist core will foster both interest and debate.--Patricia U. Bonomi, Emerita, New York UniversityThis study, highly original in both conception and content, may well restore political change to a central place in the historiography of colonial America. McConville argues that the British colonists were, by the middle decades of the eighteenth century, more thoroughly royalist than the king's subjects in England, Scotland, or Ireland. How and why this royalism eroded becomes a major part of the story and is

certain to intensify the controversy that the first part of McConville's argument is bound to arouse.--John M. Murrin, Emeritus, Princeton UniversitySalient and compelling. . . . An important contribution to the field of colonial American history.--New England QuarterlyInspires a string of adjectives: provocative, original, clever, iconoclastic, and querulous.--American Historical Expands commonplace observations about the political tactics of resistance and revolution into a revisionist view of eighteenth-century American development. . . . An interesting book.--International History From the Inside FlapIn a provocative reinterpretation of the first century of American history, McConville argues that colonial society developed a political culture marked by strong attachment to Great Britain's monarchs. This intense allegiance continued almost until the moment of independence, an event defined by an emotional break with the king. By reading American history forward from the 17th century rather than backward from the Revolution, McConville shows that political conflicts long assumed to foreshadow the events of 1776 were in fact fought out by factions who invoked competing visions of the king and appropriated royal rites rather than used abstract republican rights or pro-democratic proclamations. The American Revolution, McConville contends, emerged out of the fissure caused by the unstable mix of affective attachments to the king and a weak imperial government.