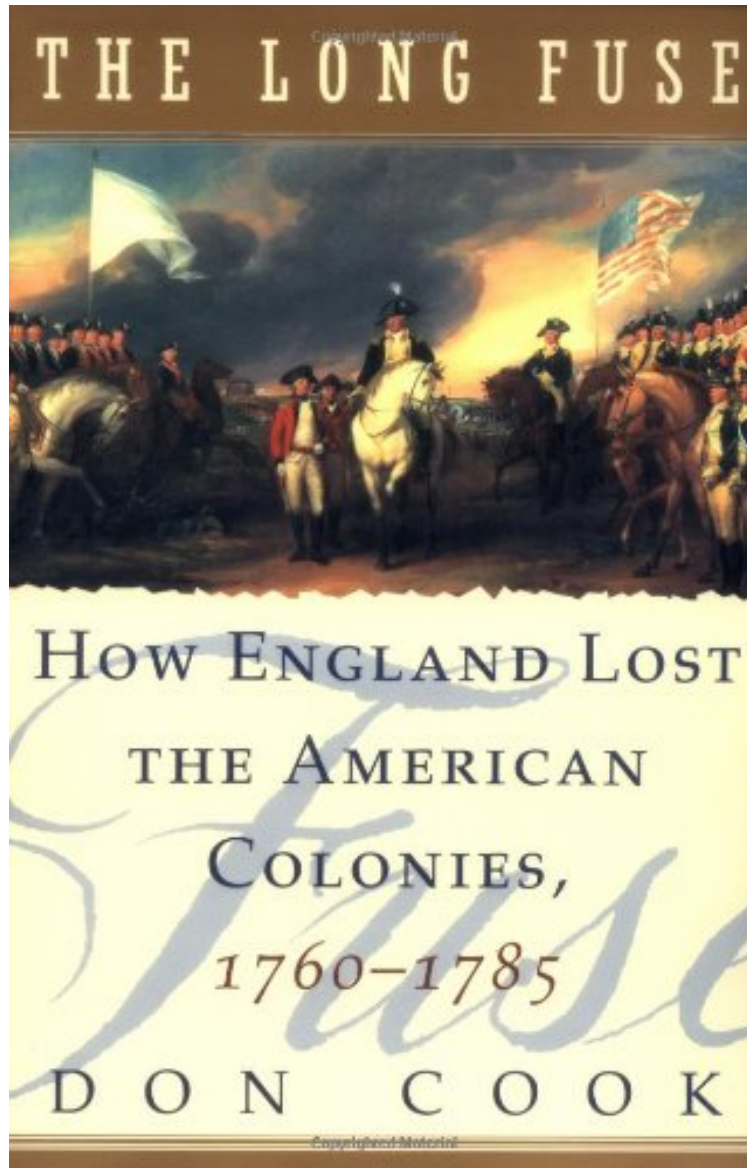


(Download) The Long Fuse: How England Lost the American Colonies 1760-1785

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Don Cook

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This is a brilliant book - well researched, very well written and a powerful read! Drawing on a wealth of British primary sources, Don Cook shows clearly that King George III and his Generals and Admirals were fighting two wars between 1775 and 1783; one against the American rebels and another, equally important conflict, against a Parliament and British press that had a great deal of sympathy for the Americans. As the war progressed and the British Army and Navy were unable to subdue Washington, his Continental Army and Navy, and a host of State militia forces, opposition to the conflict in Parliament and among the British people grew. That opposition undermined the war effort by causing the Government to send mixed signals to commanders in the field regarding the use of force and negotiations against and with the Americans. Certainly, the Americans had a great deal to do with British political setbacks, for as the British suffered defeat after defeat, first at Bunker Hill and Boston, and later at Saratoga and Yorktown, the King and his Government found it harder and harder to continue the war. Don Cook's brilliance is in compiling a narrative that is crisp, clear and extremely compelling. Anyone interested in the Revolutionary War or the linkage between political and domestic opposition to a war and commanders in the field will find this a great read!
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The facilitator chose this book as one of the core readings for my American History Book Club. The entire group is so appreciative of this book. I am learning from page to page. In the context of our present history, it is a marvelous touchstone.

In *The Long Fuse*, Don Cook investigates the American Revolution from the British side, throwing new light on this colorful age and its players. He draws from a multitude of primary sources, including personal correspondence and political memoranda, to show how Britain, at the height of her power but suffering from internal political strife, made one mistake after another, culminating in the loss of her prized colonies. In opposition to King George's American policies were such towering figures as William Pitt, Edmund Burke, and Charles James Fox; their speeches in the House of Commons are some of the best oratory in the English language. But despite their eloquence and forcefulness, they did not have the votes to prevail. In the end, the Americans rebelled as much against an English political state of mind as against the British Army. Cook takes us through the war years: King George's decision that "blows must decide" the colonies' future; Lord North's futile effort to negotiate peace after the British defeat at Saratoga, which only hastened the American alliance with France; the secret letter from Washington to Lafayette that the British intercepted, perhaps altering the outcome of the Battle of Yorktown; and the peace negotiations masterminded by Franklin and John Jay. Winner of the Colonial Dames of America Annual Book Award 1996. "The Long Fuse is a marvelous new way of understanding the Revolutionary War. Many Americans have no idea of the extraordinary combination of brilliance, ignorance, stubbornness and intelligence on the British side. We won with a majestic collection of heroes, fools, geniuses, and rogues; they lost with an unforgettable cast of colorful characters. This eye-opening book is a splendid historical synthesis." - John Chancellor

From Publishers Weekly
Retelling the saga of the American Revolution from the viewpoint of Mother England, Cook ingeniously portrays the 13 colonies' breakaway as a succession of inexorable blunders and collective missteps in London that led to an unnecessary, unwinnable war. Former political correspondent for the Los Angeles Times and the New York Herald Tribune, Cook lays the lion's share of blame at the feet of autocratic King George III, who prodded his government into war-provoking acts, refusing all suggestions of compromise. Cook's vivid, wonderfully readable narrative sheds new light on the origins of the American Revolution and is peopled with memorable characters: Anglophile diplomat/scientist Benjamin Franklin, testifying before the House of Commons in London against the oppressive Stamp Act in 1766; Isaac Barre, fierce, rough-talking, one-eyed British colonel, sympathetic to the American cause, who warned Parliament that a revolution could be brewing; amiable, indecisive British prime minister Lord North, totally unfit to wage war, who repeatedly tendered his resignation in vain; parliamentarian William Pitt, who dared to question the king's wisdom in fiery oratory. Cook provocatively concludes that with a more conciliatory policy, England might well have reached an accommodation that would have kept the American colonies in the British Empire. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.
From Scientific American
Delineating the political culture of corruption and bribery that pervaded London and disgusted Americans like Benjamin Franklin, Cook convincingly concludes that the war was lost as much in London as on the colonial battlefields. Illuminating new perspective on an old topic.
From Booklist
A compelling historical document that recounts the saga of the American Revolution from the British point of view. Employing a host of primary British sources, including personal correspondence, private papers, military dispatches, and parliamentary speeches and debates, the author chronicles the multitude of mistakes George III made in dealing with the colonies. Despite the opposition of such political heavyweights as Edmund Burke, William Pitt, and Charles James Fox, the stubbornly autocratic monarch formulated a

disastrous series of policies that eventually incited the colonists to rebel, plunging the British into a foolish, costly, and unwinnable war that would strip the empire of its premium possession. An enlightening new perspective on the American Revolution as well as a fascinating overview of the lively tenor of British political life during this critical era. A valuable addition to the literature of the American Revolution. Margaret Flanagan