

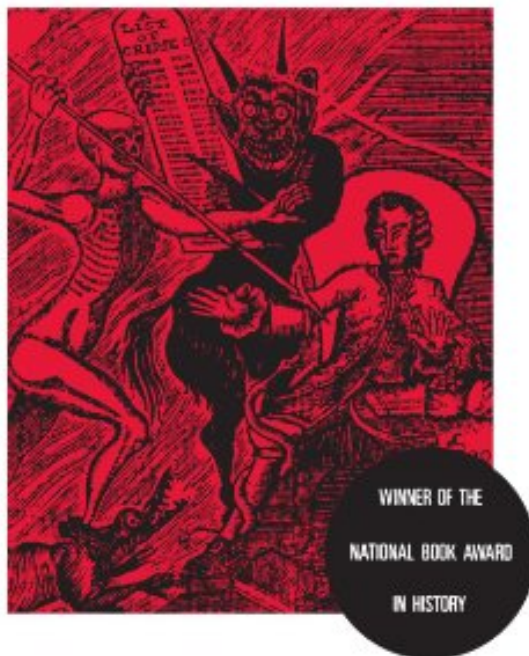
(Mobile book) The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson

The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson

Bernard Bailyn

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THE ORDEAL OF
Thomas Hutchinson



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Bernard Bailyn : The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Province of Massachusetts Bay Colony's Last Civilian GovernorBy Ronald Wheatley AttyBernard Bailyn's "The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson" is a compelling read for anyone interested in American history and particularly that period from 1760, the end of the French and Indian War, to

1773 the eve of the Revolution. Governor Thomas Pownall had appointed Hutchinson Lt. Governor in 1757 when Lt. Governor Phips fell ill and died. As the last civilian Governor of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, Thomas Hutchinson, was at the epicenter of the schism in Boston trying to fulfill his duties as Governor and to the King, as he saw them, amidst the growing frenzy resulting from misguided policies, such as the Stamp Act, that emanated from the British Parliament in the sixties. An irony is that Governor Hutchinson was condemned by James Otis, Jr. and Sam Adams for holding two powerful offices at the same time - Governor and Chief Justice of the Province of Massachusetts Bay Colony. However he did not seek the post of Chief Justice. When his name was put forward he told Governor Bernard that he felt he was unqualified and he supported Barnstable attorney James Otis Sr. But Bernard had been advised that the problem with that appointment was the political activities of James Otis' son James Otis Jr. Further Hutchinson knew he would be following the respected Justice Stephan Sewall whose recent death opened the position. When Bernard informed Hutchinson he was to be selected, Hutchinson still wasn't sure, Bernard told him that even if he (Hutchinson declined) Bernard would not select James Otis, Jr. According to the author holding these two important posts at the same time was seen as a violation of Montesquieu's edict: "when the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person or body, there can be no liberty." The "Spirit of the Laws." Against a backdrop of a mob ruled Boston, the author deftly describes the characters and action of this drama, with James Otis and Sam Adams leading the charge against Hutchinson, motivated by long-held personal and political differences, particularly the fact that Hutchinson had been appointed Chief Justice over much more qualified lawyers, James Otis, Sr. and his son. Hutchinson is portrayed as a dedicated public servant with great attention to detail, but lacking the ability to understand the political temper of the time. As the author observes "Over time when the great events of that critical half a decade beginning in 1760 through 1765: the Writs of Assistance, the Stamp Act through the other edicts of Parliament ending in 1765. . . . [T]hat coincided with his time as both Governor and Chief Justice. His qualities such as respect for facts, prudence, candor scrupulous adherence to the spirit and letter of the laws. These qualities were against him when during this period he was being challenged" by firebrands, Sam Adams, and James Otis, who could read the political temper of the times. Hutchinson appears a tragic figure who is no match for his enemies determined to drive him from power. The Governor's lament is illustrative, "There is nothing so easy as to persuade people that they are poorly governed. Take happy and comfortable people and talk to them with art of the Evil One, and they can soon be made discontented with their government, with their rulers, with everything around them, and even with themselves. This is one of the weaknesses of human nature of which factious orators make use of to serve their purposes." A message still relevant. The cast of characters is rich with such personages as John Hancock, at first a reluctant treasurer to the budding Revolution, Sir Francis Bernard, Hutchinson's predecessor and former mentor, Andrew Oliver, Lieutenant Governor, not up to the challenge - still in shock from having his house burned to the ground by the mob. Ebenezer Mackintosh, charismatic leader who controls the Sons of Liberty, the enforcement arm that one commenter called "similar to the Brown shirts of Nazi Germany" who ruled the streets of Boston using force to intimidate any opposition to the call for independence. One thing I missed in the book was any reference to slave poet Phillis Wheatley. It was Thomas Hutchinson who in November 1772 presided at a hearing attended by 17 of the most eminent men of Boston including some the characters in this book, for example John Hancock, Andrew Oliver and James Bowdoin to determine whether or not he and his fellow "jurors" believed that John Wheatley household slave, Phillis Wheatley - just 10 years removed from Africa - could be the true and sole author of her manuscript of poems. Not only did the "jurors" have to agree unanimously on the outcome of the hearing but they had to sign an Attestation to that effect. Further the Boston publishers required that this attestation be published as a preface in Phillis' manuscript. The publishers made this demand for fear that no one would believe that a slave from Africa could write poetry evocative of England's great poets, especially Alexander Pope. If Hutchinson had not participated Phillis Wheatley, the matriarch of African American literature, might never have been published. I would argue this was certainly one of if not Hutchinson's finest hour and remains an extraordinary tribute to his legacy. Ronald Wheatley Author of "A Song of Africa" Author of "The Trial of Phillis Wheatley" a play produced by in 2003 by Bridgewater University and scheduled for publication in February 2013, in honor of Black History month and the tenth anniversary of the Play's first production. A Song of Africa 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. lost wonder: Hutchinson reviewed By Richard Scott If I have missed this when published and only found it when I regained time to read in the literature of this period. There are lots of voluminous biographies and historical reviews of the founders, particularly after the fired up mob took to the Boston Harbor. Hutchinson is now and was in the 1760s seen as a horrific person. to understand a period requires looking at all sides from different vantages. So it is with Thomas Hutchinson. Bailyn has a body of work full of insight and scrupulous scholarship. So sorry it eluded me for half my life. It should be required reading for students in any course discussing the origins of the American Revolution 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A deserving classic By JBoswell 1740 Bernard Bailyn's study of the brilliant but tone-deaf royal governor of Massachusetts has long been acclaimed as a masterpiece of biography and Revolutionary-era scholarship. But it is also compellingly readable even if you are not an academic. It explains much in revealing ways about the rebellion and those in power in the colonies who were unable (or unwilling) to comprehend what was occurring under their administration. The book scarcely needs further praise, but it certainly

warrants it.

This book, Mr. Bailyn writes, depicts the fortunes of a conservative in a time of radical upheaval and deals with problems of public disorder and ideological commitment. It is at the same time a dramatic account of the origins of the American Revolution from the viewpoint, not of the winners who became the Founding Fathers, but of the losers, the Loyalists. By portraying the ordeal of the last civilian royal governor of Massachusetts, Mr. Bailyn explains what the human reality was against which the victors struggled and in doing so makes the story of the Revolution fuller and more comprehensible.

Professor Bailyn has written a biography that is a work of art: exquisitely written, delicate in insight, and imbued with a wisdom about men and affairs that is the true hallmark of a great historian. (J. H. Plumb Times Literary Supplement) As political biography, *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson* is without equal in the voluminous literature on the Revolution. No other public figure of the Revolution has found such skillful and sensitive attention. (Jack P. Greene History) Writing this kind of history requires discipline, imagination, and sensitivity, and it presupposes that there is an inner world of intellect and of moral and emotional sensibility which is intimately responsive to external events... His probing, taut yet luminous prose weaves together into a single fabric finished explanations, analyses of evidence, flashes of insight, and intuitive understandings. A triumph of historical and literary artistry... *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson* is that rare achievement which is at once original and nearly definitive, masterful and provocative. (Robert M. Calhoun in *American History*) About the Author Bernard Bailyn is Adams University Professor, Emeritus, and James Duncan Phillips Professor of Early American History, Emeritus, at Harvard University.