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The American Revolution: A Concise History

By Robert Allison



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The American Revolution: A Concise History By Robert Allison

Here is a brisk, accessible, and vivid introduction to arguably the most important event in the history of the United States--the American Revolution.

Between 1760 and 1800, the American people cast off British rule to create a new nation and a radically new form of government based on the idea that people have the right to govern themselves. In this lively account, Robert Allison provides a cohesive synthesis of the military, diplomatic, political, social, and intellectual aspects of the Revolution, paying special attention to the Revolution's causes and consequences. The book recreates the tumultuous events of the 1760s and 1770s that led to revolution, such as the Boston Massacre and the Boston Tea Party, as well as the role the Sons of Liberty played in turning resistance into full-scale revolt. Allison explains how and why Americans changed their ideas of government and society so profoundly in these years and how the War for Independence was fought and won. He highlights the major battles and commanders on both sides--with a particular focus on George Washington and the extraordinary strategies he developed to defeat Britain's superior forces--as well as the impact of French military support on the American cause. In the final chapter, Allison explores the aftermath of the American Revolution: how the newly independent states created governments based on the principles for which they had fought, and how those principles challenged their own institutions, such as slavery, in the new republic. He considers as well the Revolution's legacy, the many ways its essential ideals influenced other struggles against oppressive power or colonial systems in France, Latin America, and Asia.

Sharply written and highly readable, *The American Revolution* offers the perfect introduction to this seminal event in American history.



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Editorial Review

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In a "concise" history of a seminal episode, there is always the danger of a narrative that is a mile wide and an inch thick. Allison, professor of history at Suffolk University, generally avoids this pitfall by effectively concentrating on the major issues and events of the American Revolution. In describing the political context of the British Empire in the 1760s, he wisely indicates how peripheral the 13 colonies along the Atlantic seaboard were to colonial officials in London; their attention was focused on the sugar islands of the West Indies and on India. As tensions rose, Allison illustrates the legitimate concerns of both sides. The military struggle cannot be covered in detail, but he covers the major campaigns and makes a strong case to show that the underrated strategic brilliance of Washington was vital to American success. This highly readable account is ideal for general readers and can also be utilized for college survey courses in U.S. history. --Jay Freeman

Review

"[Authors] have produced centuries of works on this subject, but none of the comprehensive descriptions are as surprisingly crisp as Robert J. Allison's version...Allison's organization of the book is excellent...Only outdone by his excellent organization is Allison's experience with this subject, which is qualitatively displayed throughout the book...Allison is an effective writer, and has produced a summary that captures most prevailing historical accounts in good form." --*Army History*

"Robert Allison's volume serves as an ideal introduction to the American Revolution. All the central events and participants come alive in this brisk narrative that illuminates the origins and meaning of the War for Independence." -Louis P. Masur, Trinity College

"Anyone looking for a compact, highly conceptualized, readable history of the American Revolution and its aftermath needs to look no further than *The American Revolution: A Concise History*. I would never have imagined that so big a picture could be conveyed in so few words, but Bob Allison has done it. That he has accomplished this feat without losing the voices and the character of individual people is an amazement indeed. A fine book." -Fred Anderson, University of Colorado, Boulder

"This highly readable account is ideal for general readers and can also be utilized for college survey courses in U.S. history." - Booklist

"A scholar has to master a lot of material to present it so concisely and authoritatively, and Allison's book is one of the best places to get a reliable introduction to the Revolution and the Constitution." -Thomas S. Kidd, *Books and Culture*

About the Author

Robert J. Allison is Professor of History at Suffolk University. His books include *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776-1815* (OUP, 1995); *Stephen Decatur, American Naval Hero, 1779-1820* (2005); *A Short History of Boston* (2005); and *Revolutionary Sites of Greater Boston* (2005). He lives in Boston, MA.

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