

Thomas Hutchinson and the Origins of the American Revolution (The American Social Experience)

Andrew Stephen Walmsley



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Rarely in American history has a political figure been so pilloried and despised as Thomas Hutchinson, Governor of Massachusetts and an ardent loyalist of the Crown in the days leading up to the American revolution.

In this narrative and analytic life of Hutchinson, the first since Bernard Bailyn's Pulitzer-Prize-winning biography a quarter century ago, Andrew Stephen Walmsley traces Hutchinson's decline from well-respected member of Boston's governing class to America's leading object of revolutionary animus. Walmsley argues that Hutchinson, rather than simply a victim of his inability to understand the passions associated with a revolutionary movement, was in fact defeated in a classic political and personal struggle for power. No mere sycophant for the British, Hutchinson was keenly aware of how much he had to lose if revolutionary forces prevailed, which partially explains his evolution from near- Whig to intransigent loyalist. His consequent vilification became a vehicle through which the growing patriot movement sought to achieve legitimacy.

An entertaining and thought-provoking view of revolutionary events from the perspective of the losing side, **Thomas Hutchinson and the Origins of the American Revolution** tells the story of the American Revolution through the prism of one of its most famous detractors.

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