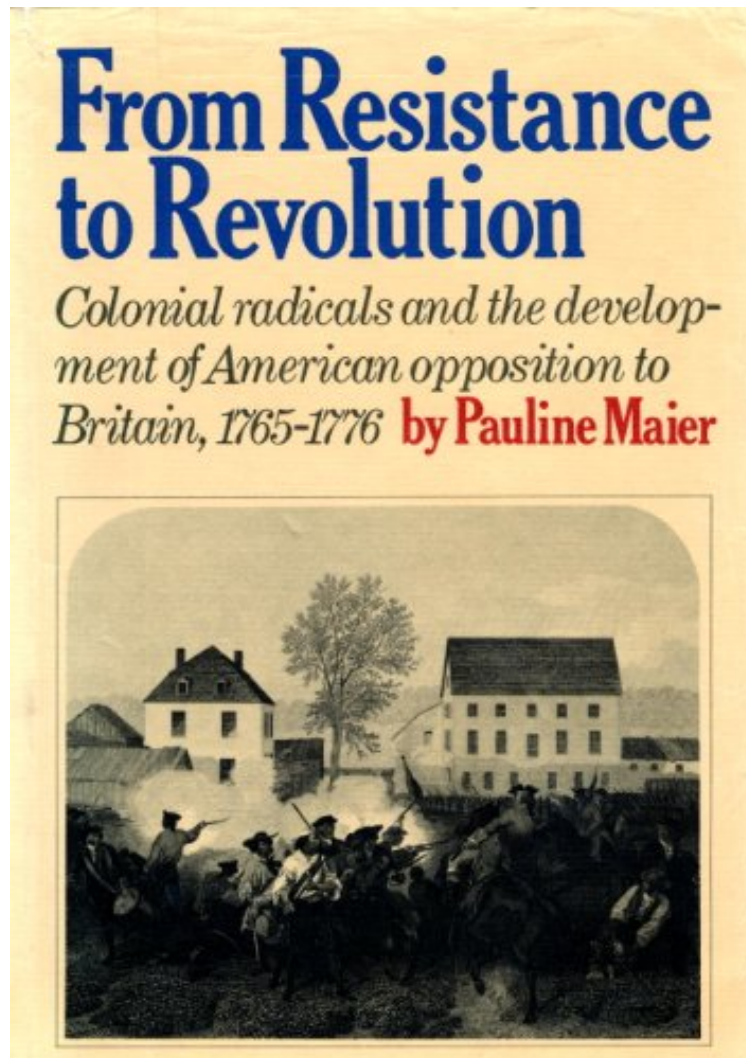


From Resistance to Revolution

Von Pauline Maier

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Von Pauline Maier : From Resistance to Revolution before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised From Resistance to Revolution:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Excellent and Pioneering StudyVon R. AlbinIn this very well written book, Professor Maier describes the evolution of colonial thought and political action from protest within an accepted formula of dissent to revolution. She shows how colonial actions were based upon a perceived constitutional pattern articulated by British dissident Whig intellectuals and political publicists. From the end of the Seven Years War to the outbreak of the revolution, she shows the leaders of colonial protest working step by step to maintain what they perceived as the proper relationship between rulers and governed. Their actions greeted usually with incomprehension by British officials and politicians. Eventually, the

colonials concluded that revolution was the only remaining option. Maier is particularly interested in the violent and coercive acts of the pre-revolutionary period. She shows nicely that this kind of activity (eg, the Boston Tea Party and similar events) took place within an established tradition of public violence that was usually constrained and sanctioned by community leaders and reflected a public consensus. These type of actions were 'extra-legal' as opposed to 'illegal', and were driven by the sense that the British government had violated a social contract between rulers and governed, thus legitimizing extra-legal action. Maier shows also the irrational elements of the colonial cause. For example, many believed that British actions were part of a conspiracy that included French bribery to obtain a suitable settlement at the end of the Seven Years War. There was also considerable fear of the imposition of Anglican and even Roman Catholic religion. The Quebec Act, granting religious freedom to the francophone inhabitants of Quebec, was regarded perhaps the most threatening of the so-called Intolerable Acts. Readers who have picked up recent surveys of the Revolutionary period such as Middlekauff's *The Glorious Cause* or Bobrick's recent book will find Maier's arguments familiar. This is because Maier's work is now fundamental to understanding the American Revolution.

1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. *The Framers: Neither Anarchists nor Statists* Von Glenn H. Reynolds As Gordon Wood pointed out in the *New York Times*, this is a terrific piece of work. It's also an underappreciated piece of work in today's debate over the scope of government. On the one hand we have people like Garry Wills arguing that, since the Framers weren't anarchists, the Constitution supports modern-day Big Government. On the other, we have equally-wacky people on the right arguing that, since the Framers were revolutionaries, Timothy McVeigh is some sort of hero. In fact, both are equally wrong. As Maier's book points out, the colonial era was not one in which people accepted the 20th Century Weberian notion of the state as holding a monopoly on legitimate violence. Many sorts of "insurrectionary" violence -- of the sort that Gordon Wood calls "out of doors" political action -- were implicitly, and explicitly, recognized as legitimate. But that's not the same as saying that all violence was okay. In fact, as Maier points out again and again, colonists recognized fundamental limits on the scope, degree, and targets of popular resistance. Violence might be okay, but mostly against property -- and when against individuals, only nonlethal violence in most situations. Maier's book shows a far more sophisticated theory than appears in today's left- and right-wing caricatures of the Framers. It's also wonderfully readable and copiously documented. It should get more attention -- and with luck it will.

Kurzbeschreibung Maintaining that the outbreak of revolution in 1775 was not the result of secret planning by radicals but rather the end product of years of painful evolution, Pauline Maier brilliantly traces the American colonists road to independence from 1765 to 1776 and examines the role of popular violence as political allegiances corroded and once-loyal subjects were gradually transformed into revolutionaries. Mrs. Maier presents a view of the American leaders different from that which prevailed a generation ago, when historians saw them as lawless demagogues who, already set upon independence at the outset of the conflict with England, manipulated the public toward their goal through propaganda and mob violence. She shows that none of the men in the forefront of American opposition to British policies favored independence when the colonies blocked England's efforts to impose a tax upon them in 1765. Their love of British institutions was undermined gradually and for reasons beyond their opposition to legislation affecting American interest. Developments in England itself, in Ireland, Corsica, and the West Indies also fed American disillusionment with imperial rule, until leading colonists came to believe that just government required casting loose from Britain and monarchy. Indeed, Mrs. Maier demonstrates that participants saw the American Revolution as part of an international struggle between freedom and despotism. Like independence, violence was a last resort. Arguing that colonial leaders, like many present-day revolutionaries, quickly learned that popular violence was counterproductive, Mrs. Maier makes it clear that they organized resistance in part to contain disorder. Building association to discipline opposition, they gradually made self-rule founded upon carefully designed social compacts a reality. Out of the struggle with Britain emerged not merely separation, but the beginnings of American republican government.

Pressestimmen Written gracefully and clearly, *From Resistance to Revolution* fills a significant need for professional historians and general readers alike. Its fresh interpretation of American radicals in the crucible of revolution, based on substantial research and subtle reasoning, transcends its immediate subject and illuminates the meaning of radicalism, violence, and rebellion in American history. --Michael Kammen

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