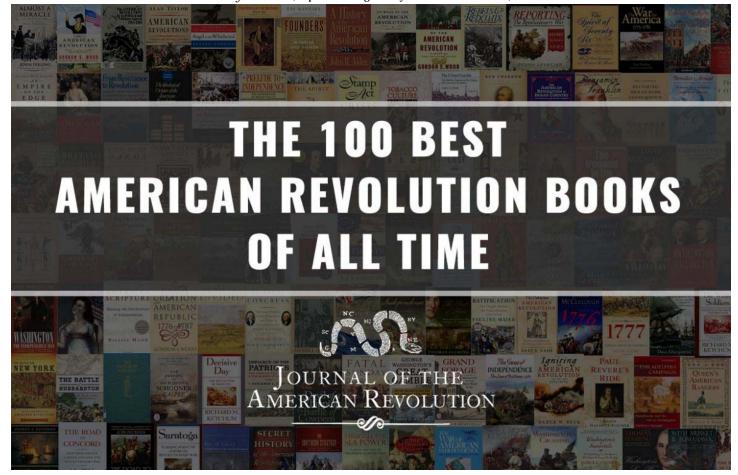


/ March 9, 2017

# THE 100 BEST AMERICAN REVOLUTION BOOKS OF ALL TIME

by Editors(https://allthingsliberty.com/author/allth55/)



ur readers are avid consumers of history, continually hunting for the next great book about the Revolutionary War. And there's no shortage of options. Amazon alone sells more than 12,000 books categorized as "Revolution and Founding." With so many choices, where does any student of the Revolution begin? Which tomes are the most credible for their impeccable research and unbiased scrutiny of the era?

As editors of Journal of the American Revolution, we read and sample a lot of history books. We also schmooze with many early American historians and subject matter experts, who have strong book opinions and recommendations. From our years of publishing, writing, reading, researching, interviewing and gabbing, we've compiled a list of what we consider to be the best American Revolution books of all time. Ok, maybe not of all time, but certainly our time. And this is arguably the most exciting time in history for history.

Modern technology has made an unprecedented amount of primary source material conveniently available to researchers, thus improving the depth, breadth and accuracy of information being published. So, it's no surprise that many books on this list were published in the last two decades.

While we



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originally set out to identify the top 100 American Revolution books, we will undoubtedly add more to this list over time. Groundbreaking work is being published with greater frequency than ever and there may be titles that we missed (let us know which ones you think we missed

in the comments). That said, while the headline will remain the same, you will count more than 100 books and that tally will certainly grow in the years ahead.

To make the list more manageable, we split the books into five broad categories, which we've sorted by our recommended reading order:

- 1. Start with some <u>all-in-one</u> books to gain a broad-brush understanding of the era, its timeline, its challenges and its characters. You'll also pick up a strong synthesis of cultural, economic and political analysis.
- 2. Learn the <u>origins</u> and causes of the Revolution. How did a small regional rebellion escalate into a widespread revolution? What were the key inputs and influences?
- 3. Next, meet the <u>people</u>—individuals and groups—who made the Revolution; what were their motivations, their inspirations and so forth. It's important to observe the Revolution from many perspectives.
- 4. Fully understand the <u>politics</u> of the revolution, locally, nationally and globally. A lot of political ground is covered in the other four categories and volumes dedicated to this topic are not as prevalent as biographies or battle books, so naturally this section is lighter than others. If you want, save the post-war political books for later. We've highlighted a few of those below, but there are many other excellent Constitution and Federal period books to consider beyond this list.
- 5. Finally, more than just strategy and tactics, appreciate what all participants sacrificed by understanding the <u>conflict and war</u>, from small skirmishes and large campaigns to bloody massacres and epic battle scenes.

Reading through our book list will inevitably invite a variety of curiosities. We encourage you to keep a tablet or computer close by with allthingsliberty.com pre-loaded on your browser so you can quickly search <u>our archives(https://allthingsliberty.com/archives/)</u> for additional background and narratives on newly discovered people, places and events. With more than 1000 articles published since 2013, Journal of the American Revolution is the leading source of knowledge about the era. Plus, our content is conveniently categorized in similar buckets of people(https://allthingsliberty.com/category/people/), politics(https://allthingsliberty.com/category/politics/), culture(https://allthingsliberty.com/category/culture/), economics(https://allthingsliberty.com/category/conflict-war/) and critical thinking(https://allthingsliberty.com/category/critical-thinking/).

The best books under each sub-section below are listed alphabetically by title. And in most cases we've included the original publisher and publication year even though a more recent paperback or reprint edition is available. Be sure to leave a comment with your favorite American Revolution history book as well as anything you think we missed or got right. Cheers to fascinating American Revolution history and happy reading!

# All-in-one

- Almost a Miracle: The American Victory in the War of Independence(http://amzn.to/2mgeQD9) by John Ferling (Oxford University Press, 2007)
- <u>The American Revolution: A History(http://amzn.to/2n31WZg)</u> by Gordon S. Wood (Modern Library, 2002)
- The American Revolution in Its Political and Military Aspects, 1763-1783(http://amzn.to/2IV5BH3) by Eric Robson (W. W. Norton, 1966)
- American Revolutions: A Continental History, 1750-1804(http://amzn.to/2n37rr3) by Alan Taylor (W. W. Norton, 2016)
- Angel in the Whirlwind: The Triumph of the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mUIIIs) by Benson Bobrick (Simon & Schuster, 1997)
- <u>The Birth of the Republic, 1763-89(http://amzn.to/2nbT5UA)</u> by Edmund Morgan (University of Chicago Press, 1956)
- Founders: The People Who Brought You a Nation(http://amzn.to/2mUzSdY) by Ray Raphael (The New Press, 2009)
- <u>A History of the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mDB5Wh)</u> by John R. Alden (Knopf, 1969)
- Journal of the American Revolution, Annual Volume 2015(http://amzn.to/2mjfUrw), 2016(http://amzn.to/2mgkCEQ), 2017(http://amzn.to/2n3bPq0) by Various (Westholme Publishing)
- The Radicalism of the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mgn4LG) by Gordon S. Wood (Knopf, 1991)
- Rebels and Redcoats: The American Revolution Through the Eyes of Those That Fought and Lived It(http://amzn.to/2nbU1Z6) by George F. Scheer and Hugh F. Rankin (Da Capo Press, 1987)
- Reporting the Revolutionary War: Before It Was History, It Was News(http://amzn.to/2IBKnCL) by Todd Andrlik (Sourcebooks, 2012)
- Spirit of Seventy-six: The Story of the American Revolution as told by <u>Participants(http://amzn.to/2IBGCgv)</u> by Henry Commanger and Richard Morris (The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1958)
- <u>The War for America</u>, 1775-1783(http://amzn.to/2mgpCcw) by Piers Mackesy (Harvard University Press, 1964)

# Origins

■ The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution, 1763-1776(http://amzn.to/2mUC2dB)

- by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr. (Columbia University, 1917)
- An Empire on the Edge: How Britain Came to Fight America(http://amzn.to/2IBWDCW) by Nick Bunker (Knopf, 2014)
- First American Revolution: Before Lexington and Concord(http://amzn.to/2IBFVDM) by Ray Raphael (The New Press, 2002)
- From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American

  Opposition to Britain, 1765-1776(http://amzn.to/2n356vY) by Pauline Maier (Knopf, 1973)
- Ideological Origins of the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2nbtZVF) by Bernard Bailyn (Harvard University Press, 1967)
- The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American

  Independence(http://amzn.to/2mCKhKE) by T. H. Breen (Oxford University Press, 2004)
- Prelude to Independence: The Newspaper War on Britain, 1764-1776(http://amzn.to/2IBAIMu) by Arthur M. Schlesinger (Knopf, 1958)
- The Spirit of '74: How the American Revolution Began(http://amzn.to/2mjgYfa) by Ray Raphael and Marie Raphael (The New Press, 2015)
- <u>The Stamp Act Crisis: Prologue to Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mUEEIc)</u> by Edmund Morgan and Helen Morgan (The University of North Carolina Press, 1953)
- The Urban Crucible: The Northern Seaports and the Origins of the American

  Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mUvQSS) by Gary B. Nash (Harvard University Press, 1979)

# People

- Alexander Hamilton(http://amzn.to/2|Unqpz) by Ron Chernow (The Penguin Press, 2004)
- American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson(http://amzn.to/2niCSNp) by Joseph Ellis (Knopf, 1996)
- The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities(http://amzn.to/2mgbkJ5) by Colin G. Calloway (Cambridge University Press, 1995)
- Becoming Men of Consequence: Youth and Military Service in the Revolutionary
   War(http://amzn.to/2nbyjo5) by John A. Ruddiman (University of Virginia Press, 2014)
- Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community During the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2n5PU48) by Holly Mayer (University of South Carolina Press, 1996)
- Benedict Arnold, Revolutionary Hero: An American Warrior Reconsidered(http://amzn.to/2lUlex0) by James Kirby Martin (NYU Press, 1997)
- Benjamin Franklin: An American Life(http://amzn.to/2nblMAL) by Walter Isaacson (Simon & Schuster, 2004)

- Black Patriots and Loyalists: Fighting for Emancipation in the War for
   Independence(http://amzn.to/2IUCjIr) by Alan Gilbert (University of Chicago Press, 2012)
- British Soldiers, American War: Voices of the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mCtjMC)
   by Don N. Hagist (Westholme Publishing, 2012)
- Brothers at Arms: American Independence and the Men of France and Spain Who Saved
   <a href="http://amzn.to/2mCt304"><u>It(http://amzn.to/2mCt304</u></a>) by Larrie D. Ferreiro (Knopf, 2016)
- Dangerous Guests: Enemy Captives and Revolutionary Communities During the War for Independence(http://amzn.to/2IBo1Ba) by Ken Miller (Cornell University Press, 2014)
- The Drillmaster of Valley Forge: The Baron de Steuben and the Making of the American Army(http://amzn.to/2mUhTEv) by Paul Lockhart (Smithsonian Books, 2008)
- A Few Bloody Noses: The Realities and Mythologies of the American

  Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mj2mN2) by Robert Harvey (The Overlook Press, 2002)
- The First American: The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin(http://amzn.to/2mfZG0U) by H. W. Brands (Doubleday, 2000)
- First Entrepreneur: How George Washington Built His—and the Nation's
  —Prosperity(http://amzn.to/2mU67K3) by Edward G. Lengel (De Capo Press, 2016)
- Forgotten Allies: The Oneida Indians and the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mg4TG6) by Joseph T. Glatthaar and James Kirby Martin (Hill and Wang, 2006)
- Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation(http://amzn.to/2mpifBp) by Joseph Ellis (Knopf, 2000)
- The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family(http://amzn.to/2m3oS9h) by Annette Gordon-Reed (W. W. Norton, 2009)
- Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mVeeGs) by Kathleen DuVal (Random House, 2015)
- Inventing Ethan Allen(http://amzn.to/2nboyGm) by John J. Duffy and H. Nicholas Muller III (UPNE, 2014)
- <u>The Iroquois in the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mUrQBT)</u> by Barbara Graymont (Syracuse University Press, 1972)
- John Adams(http://amzn.to/2lBkF1c) by David McCullough (Simon & Schuster, 2002)
- Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World(http://amzn.to/2nbAmlt) by
   Maya Jasanoff (Alfred A. Knopf, 2011)
- Masquerade: The Life and Times of Deborah Sampson, Continental Soldier(http://amzn.to/2mfYBGb) by Alfred F. Young (Knopf, 2004)
- Memoir of Joseph Plumb Martin(http://amzn.to/2nbCKiD) (1830; since republished by many)
- The Men Who Lost America: British Leadership, the American Revolution, and the Fate of the Empire(http://amzn.to/2mg4mnw) by Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy (Yale University Press, 2014)

- <u>The Minutemen and Their World(http://amzn.to/2mj0K5W)</u> by Robert A. Gross (Hill and Wang, 2001, originally 1981)
- The Minute Men: The First Fight: Myths and Realities of the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mCquei) by John R. Galvin (Brassey's, 1989)
- <u>The Negro in the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2miZorD)</u> by Benjamin Quarles (The University of North Carolina Press, 1961)
- <u>The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson(http://amzn.to/2lUvZAF)</u> by Bernard Bailyn (Harvard University Press, 1976)
- Patriots: The Men Who Started the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2n3KpAl) by A. J.
   Langguth (Simon & Schuster, 1988)
- Paul Revere and the World He Lived In(http://amzn.to/2nbD5Sw) by Esther Forbes (Houghton Mifflin, 1943; now Mariner Books, 1999)
- Revolutionary Founders: Rebels, Radicals, and Reformers in the Making of the
   Nation(http://amzn.to/2mg08Mu) by Alfred F. Young, Gary B. Nash and Ray Raphael (Vintage, 2012)
- Revolutionary Mothers: Women in the Struggle for America's Independence(http://amzn.to/2nk5ZQg) by Carol Berkin (Knopf, 2005)
- Rochambeau: America's Neglected Founding Father(http://amzn.to/2nbmUEI) by Arnold Whitridge (Collier Books, 1974)
- The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2nbimxZ) by Alfred F. Young (Beacon Press, 1999)
- Washington—A Life(http://amzn.to/2mg7IMs) by Ron Chernow (Penguin Press, 2010)
- Washington and Hamilton: The Alliance that Forged America(http://amzn.to/2mCvLTn) by Stephen F. Knott and Tony Williams (Sourcebooks, 2015)
- Washington: The Indispensable Man(http://amzn.to/2mCqnQ4) by James Thomas Flexner (Little, Brown and Company, 1974)
- Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America(http://amzn.to /2IUxwqn) by Linda K. Kerber (The University of North Carolina Press, 1980)

# **Politics**

- American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence(http://amzn.to/2mgzTFJ) by
   Pauline Maier (Vintage Books, 1998)
- <u>The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787(http://amzn.to/2mzgXnU)</u> by Gordon S. Wood (University of North Carolina Press, 1969)
- An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean(http://amzn.to /2n3jO6g) by Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000)

- The First Congress: How James Madison, George Washington, and a Group of Extraordinary Men Invented the Government(http://amzn.to/2mCLDVS) by Fergus M. Bordewich (Simon & Schuster, 2016)
- The Founding of a Nation: A History of the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mjcl4W) by Merrill Jensen (Oxford University Press, 1968)
- From Revolution to Reunion: The Reintegration of the South Carolina
   Loyalists(http://amzn.to/2nbGEIr) by Rebecca Brannon (University of South Carolina Press,
   2016)
- Independence: The Struggle to Set America Free(http://amzn.to/2mh2cUo) by John Ferling (Bloomsbury Press, 2011)
- The Perils of Peace: America's Struggle for Survival After Yorktown(http://amzn.to/2mjs43S) by Thomas Fleming (Harper Perennial, 2008)
- Ratification: The People Debate the Constitution, 1787-1788(http://amzn.to/2mCUUxf) by
   Pauline Maier (Simon & Schuster, 2010)
- Revolutionary Summer: The Birth of Independence(http://amzn.to/2n3kiN0) by Joseph Ellis (Knopf, 2013)
- The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America(http://amzn.to/2mgs2rD) by Gary B. Nash (Viking, 2005)

# Conflict & War



(https://allthingsliberty.com/2017/03/100-best-american-revolution-books-time/)

- <u>1776(http://amzn.to/2mjD94W)</u> by David McCullough (Simon & Schuster, 2005)
- 1777: Tipping Point at Saratoga(http://amzn.to/2mgJdcX) by Dean Snow (Oxford University Press, 2016)
- After Yorktown: The Final Struggle for American Independence(http://amzn.to/2ncbAlo) by
   Don Glickstein (Westholme Publishing, 2015)
- The Battle for New York: The City at the Heart of the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mVe7KL) by Barnet Schecter (Penguin Books, 2003)
- The Battle of Hubbardton: The Rear Guard Action that Saved America(http://amzn.to/ /2mVdeSu) by Bruce M. Venter (Arcadia Publishing, 2015)

- The Battles of Saratoga(http://amzn.to/2mjNWfz) by John Elting (Philip Freneau Press, 1977)
- The Burning of His Majesty's Schooner Gaspee: An Attack on Crown Rule Before the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2nccnsR) by Steven Park (Westholme Publishing, 2016)
- Decisive Day: The Battle for Bunker Hill(http://amzn.to/2mjFSLS) by Richard M. Ketchum (Doubleday, 1974)
- Defiance of the Patriots: The Boston Tea Party and the Making of America(http://amzn.to/ /2mV99xD) by Benjamin L. Carp (Yale University Press, 2010)
- Devil of a Whipping: The Battle of Cowpens(http://amzn.to/2mjNDkD) by Lawrence Babit (The University of North Carolina Press, 1998)
- <u>Fatal Sunday: George Washington, the Monmouth Campaign, and the Politics of Battle(http://amzn.to/2mgLzsa)</u> by Mark Edward Lender and Garry Wheeler Stone (University of Oklahoma Press, 2016)
- George Washington's Great Gamble: And the Sea Battle that Won the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2lUsRoA) by James Nelson (Ragged Mountain Press, 2010)
- Grand Forage 1778: The Battleground Around New York City(http://amzn.to/2mVdUax) by
   Todd W. Braisted (Westholme Publishing, 2016)
- Guns of Independence: The Siege of Yorktown, 1781(http://amzn.to/2IC37IB) by Jerome
   Green (Savas Beatie, 2009)
- Igniting the American Revolution, 1773-1775(http://amzn.to/2IVtH4n) by Derek W. Beck (Sourcebooks, 2016)
- A Naval History of the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mjAgRs) by Gardner Allen (Houghton Mifflin, 1913)
- Paul Revere's Ride(http://amzn.to/2mjKB05) by David Hackett Fischer (Oxford University Press, 1994)
- The Philadelphia Campaign: Volume One(http://amzn.to/2mgQg5k) and Two(http://amzn.to/2mgQg5k) by Thomas J. McGuire (Stackpole Books, 2006/2007)
- Revolution on the Hudson: New York City and the Hudson River Valley in the War of American Independence(http://amzn.to/2n3FsYk) by George C. Daughan (W. W. Norton, 2016)
- The Road to Concord: How Four Stolen Cannon Ignited the Revolutionary War(http://amzn.to/2mVasww) by J. L. Bell (Westholme Publishing, 2016)
- The Road to Guilford Courthouse: The American Revolution in the Carolinas(http://amzn.to/2nbVONA) by John Buchanan (Wiley, 1999)
- Saratoga: Turning Point of America's Revolutionary War(http://amzn.to/2mD68Se) by Richard
   M. Ketchum (Henry Holt and Co., 1997)
- Sea of Glory: A Naval History of the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2nbTK8e) by Nathan Miller (Naval Institute Press, 1992)

- Secret History of the American Revolution: An Account of the Conspiracies of Benedict Arnold and Numerous Others Drawn from the Secret Service Paper(http://amzn.to/2mV1Whk) by Carl Van Doren (Viking, 1941)
- The Southern Strategy: Britain's Conquest of South Carolina and Georgia, 1775-1780(http://amzn.to/2mgFkEP) by David Wilson (University of South Carolina Press, 2008)
- The Struggle for Sea Power: A Naval History of the American Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mjAatb) by Sam Willis (W. W. Norton, 2016)
- Victory at Yorktown: The Campaign that Won the Revolution(http://amzn.to/2mgMGbe) by Richard M. Ketchum (Henry Holt and Co., 2004)
- War of American Independence: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice,
   1763-1789(http://amzn.to/2IBS0sV) by Don Higginbotham (Macmilian, 1971)
- Washington's Crossing(http://amzn.to/2mgw8jS) by David Hackett Fischer (Oxford University Press, 2004)
- Washington's Immortals: The Untold Story of an Elite Regiment Who Changed the Course of the Revolution(http://amzn.to/2IBPTFu) by Patrick K. O'Donnell (Atlantic Monthly Press, 2016)
- Washington's Secret War: The Hidden History of Valley Forge(http://amzn.to/2mjLgyk) by
   Thomas Fleming (Smithsonian Press, 2005)
- Way of the Fox: American Strategy in the War for America, 1775-1783(http://amzn.to/ /2mgRD3Y) by Dave Palmer (Praeger, 1975)
- The Winter Soldiers: The Battles for Trenton and Princeton(http://amzn.to/2IC1Rip) by Richard M. Ketchum (Doubleday, 1973)
- With Musket and Thomahawk, Volume II: The Mohawk Valley Campaign in the
   Wilderness War of 1777(http://amzn.to/2mgSEJ9) by Michael O. Logusz (Casemate, 2012)
- With Zeal and With Bayonets Only: The British Army on Campaign in North America, 1775-1783(http://amzn.to/2mjEXuT) by Matthew H. Spring (University of Oklahoma Press, 2008)
- Year of the Hangman: George Washington's Campaign Against the Iroquois(http://amzn.to/2mgMpFk) by Glenn F. Williams (Westholme Publishing, 2005)