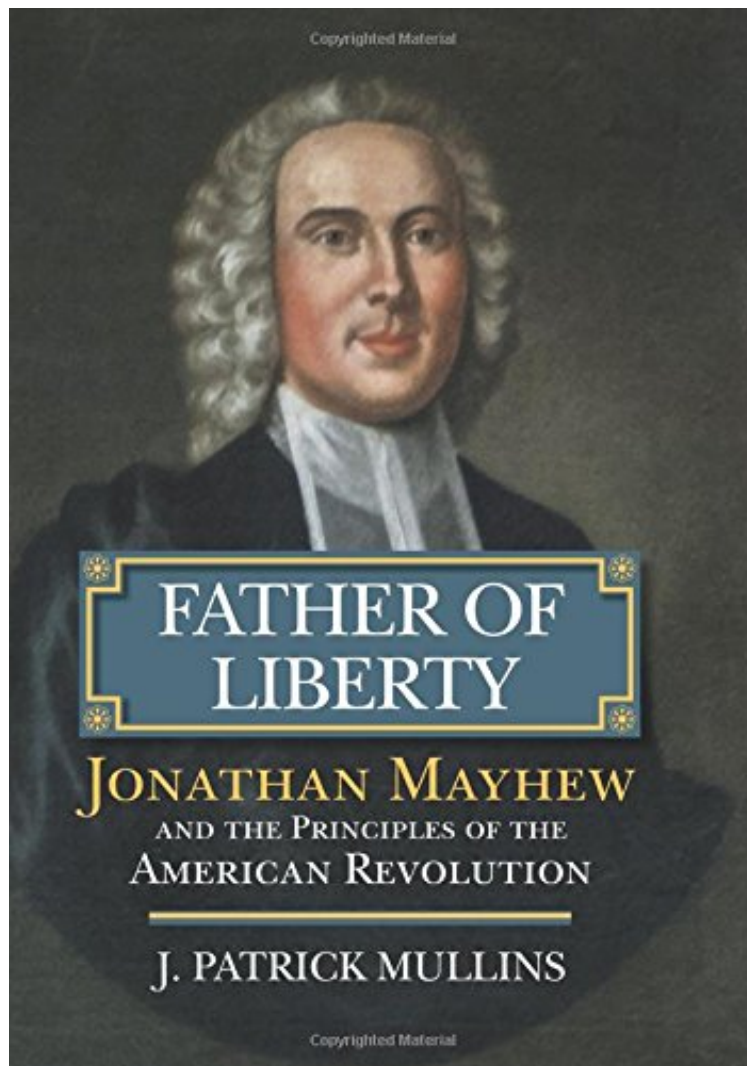


[Ebook free] Father of Liberty: Jonathan Mayhew and the Principles of the American Revolution (American Political Thought)

## Father of Liberty: Jonathan Mayhew and the Principles of the American Revolution (American Political Thought)

*Patrick Mullins*

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**Patrick Mullins : Father of Liberty: Jonathan Mayhew and the Principles of the American Revolution (American Political Thought)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Father of Liberty: Jonathan Mayhew and the Principles of the American Revolution (American Political Thought):

Dr. Jonathan Mayhew (1720-1766) was, according to John Adams, a transcendental genius . . . who threw all the weight of his great fame into the scale of the country in 1761, and maintained it there with zeal and ardor till his death. He was also, J. Patrick Mullins contends, the most politically influential clergyman in eighteenth-century America and the intellectual progenitor of the American Revolution in New England. *Father of Liberty* is the first book to fully explore Mayhew's political thought and activism, understood within the context of his personal experiences and intellectual influences, and of the cultural developments and political events of his time. Analyzing and assessing his contributions to eighteenth-century New England political culture, the book demonstrates Mayhew's critical contribution to the intellectual origins of the American Revolution. As pastor of the Congregationalist West Church in Boston, Mayhew championed the principles of natural rights, constitutionalism, and resistance to tyranny in press and pulpit from 1750 to 1766. He did more than any other clergyman to prepare New England for disobedience to British authority in the 1760s and should, Mullins argues, be counted alongside such framers and fomenters of revolutionary thought as James Otis, Patrick Henry, and Samuel Adams. Though many commentators from John Adams on down have acknowledged his importance as a popularizer of Whig political principles, *Father of Liberty* is the first extended, in-depth examination of Mayhew's political writings, as well as the cultural process by which he engaged with the public and disseminated those principles. As such, even as the book restores a key figure to his place in American intellectual and political history, it illuminates the meaning of the Revolution as a political and constitutional conflict informed by the religious and political ideas of the British Enlightenment.

Long before the first shots were fired at Lexington and Concord, the Reverend Jonathan Mayhew preached a message from his Boston pulpit that powerfully blended a defense of religious liberty with an emerging notion of constitutional resistance to British tyranny. His ideas shaped the thinking of future leaders of the American Revolution such as John Adams, James Otis, Robert Treat Paine, Josiah Quincy, Paul Revere, and many others. Seamlessly integrating political, intellectual, and religious history, Mullins's elegant and illuminating study restores Mayhew to his rightful place in the emergence of Revolutionary protest while also conveying the full complexity and originality of Mayhew's thought. Rosemarie Zagari, University Professor and Professor of History, George Mason University *Father of Liberty* imaginatively connects Massachusetts political history, including the events directly instigated by Mayhew, with the ministers' radical preaching. Mullins shows how Mayhew, in attempting to recapture an elusive and virtuous past, propelled New Englanders into uncharted political and religious territory. Christopher Beneke, author of *Beyond Toleration: The Religious Origins of American Pluralism* The panegyrics of John Adams and Robert Treat Paine that the Rev. Jonathan Mayhew was instrumental in changing popular opinion in pre-Revolution America were not empty words. As Professor Mullins demonstrates with skill and flair, Mayhew obliged the revolutionary generation to consider rather than confront the inconvenient truths of their times: that religious faith and political cause were inextricably matters of individual liberty. Mayhew's early death dimmed his visibility to posterity but not to contemporaries on both sides of the Atlantic who took to Mayhew's rationalism and liberalism following the Great Awakening. Mayhew was much more than a popularizer of ideas or iconoclast of Loyalist propaganda. By the 1760s, he probably reached further than any preacher of his day. His sermons delivered, printed, circulated, discussed, criticized, gossiped, nourished commonplace debates, helping to alter the religious sentiments Adams believed accompanied the political transformation. Mayhew was the forgotten hero of a generation fondly remembered for their own heroics. Colin Nicolson, author of *The Infamous Governor: Francis Bernard and the Origins of the American Revolution* About the Author J. Patrick Mullins is assistant professor of history at Marquette University.