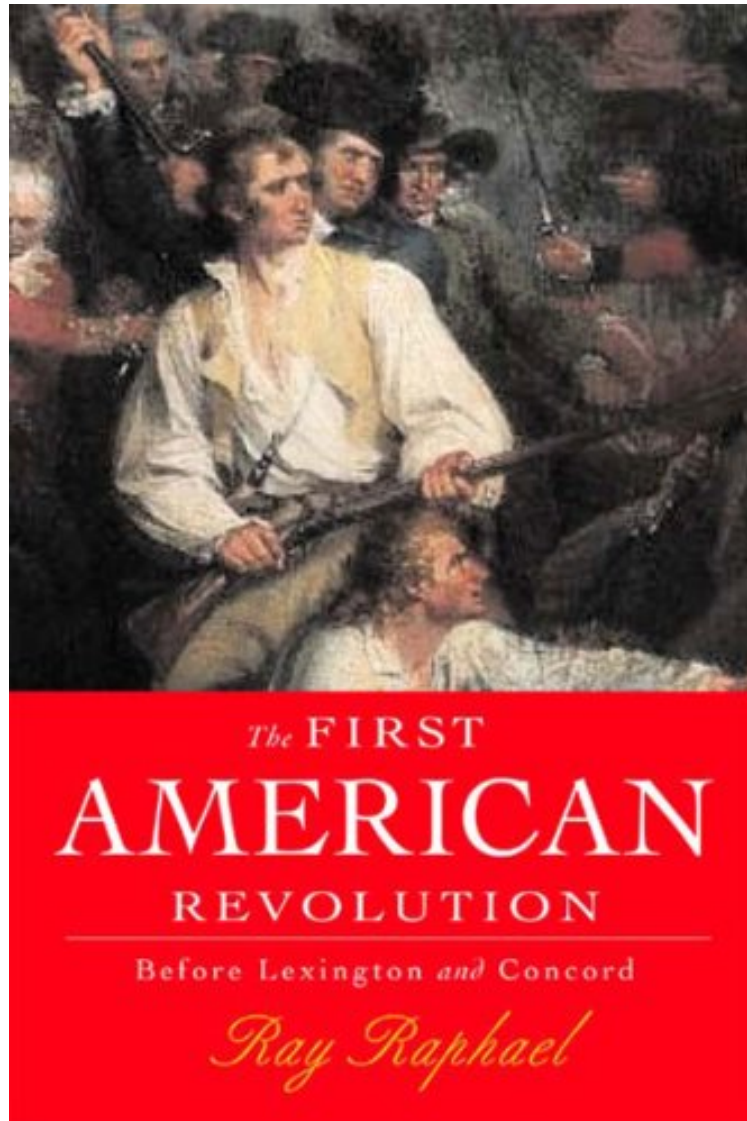


(Read ebook) The First American Revolution: Before Lexington and Concord

## The First American Revolution: Before Lexington and Concord

*Ray Raphael*

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**Ray Raphael : The First American Revolution: Before Lexington and Concord** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The First American Revolution: Before Lexington and Concord:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Who knew?By Phineas R. FiskeThis book details an essentially ignored aspect of the Revolution: The complete rejection by the Massachusetts colonists of British rule in 1774, almost two years before Independence was declared in Philadelphia, without a shot being fired.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The First And ONLY Truly Revolutionary Stage of the So-Called American RevolutionBy

Stacyvery well written study of a totally forgotten -- but amply documented -- stage of what we call the American "revolution" but which was mostly a war of independence and not "revolutionary" at all (at least, not in the traditional sense of that word). Yet Raphael's study of the actions of Western Massachusetts farmers in the second half of 1774 is convincing in its portrayal of a truly revolutionary movement that succeeded in ending both British colonial rule and the politics of deference accorded to the wealthy American-born minions and agents of British imperial rule in 95% of Massachusetts (excluding only the town of Boston that was ruled by Gen. Thomas Gage and his British troops) -- American-born minions who then re-asserted their power to a large degree after the war was over, leading inexorably to Shay's Rebellion in 1786/87 by those same Western Massachusetts farmers -- this time crushed by Boston's wealthy merchant class and its mercenary militia -- and thence to the counter-revolution we call the 1787 Constitutional Convention. This is heady stuff! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I can only conclude from the lack of general awareness of this is that the powers that be are afraid that the masses might get ideas from this that they would not like to face.

According to the traditional telling, the American Revolution began with "the shot heard round the world." Now in paperback, Ray Raphael's *The First American Revolution* uses the wide-angle lens of a people's historian to tell a surprising new story of America's revolutionary struggle. In the years before the battle of Lexington and Concord, local people--men and women of common means but of uncommon courage--overturned British authority and declared themselves free from colonial oppression, with acts of rebellion that long predated the Boston Tea Party. In rural towns such as Worcester, Massachusetts, democracy set down roots well before the Boston patriots made their moves in the fight for independence. Richly documented, *The First American Revolution* recaptures in vivid detail the grassroots activism that drove events in the years leading up to the break from Britain.

From Publishers WeeklyHistorian Raphael contends that the United States' war for independence did not begin in April 1775 with the "shot heard round the world." Rather it began the previous summer in rural towns like Worcester as patriots forced royal appointees to publicly resign their offices. These actions brought to a standstill the courts and public bodies established under the Massachusetts Government Act. The thousands of farmers and artisans then reclaimed the Charter of 1691 to democratically reopen the courts, establish new governmental bodies and organize a network of militias. Raphael thus brings into clear focus events and identities of ordinary people who should share the historic limelight with the Founding Fathers. This successful rebellion has until now remained obscure, the author says, because "[t]he telling of history cries out for individual protagonists" while this revolution was decentralized and nonhierarchical, creating not leaders but a participatory democracy that, in Raphael's view, "far outreached the intentions of the so-called `Founding Fathers.'" Moreover, unlike Lexington and Concord, this revolution involved no dramatic shedding of blood. Whether or not "the transfer of political authority to the American patriots" in 1774 was the "real revolution" making the clash in April 1775 a British counter-revolution to regain lost territory Raphael (*A People's History of the American Revolution*) makes a compelling case that these early events were critical to the success of the war that followed and should no longer escape our notice. His liberal use of primary sources (excerpts from town records, newspapers, letters, etc.), authoritative secondary sources and his meticulous care in footnoting will prove extremely useful for further study. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. A cracking good read....Ray Raphael writes about the American Revolution as if he had been in the thick of it. His no-nonsense approach and style clarify the big issues and reveal their personal dimensions. This is truly history of the people for the people.About the AuthorRay Raphael is the author of numerous books, including *A People's History of the American Revolution*, *An Everyday History of Somewhere*, *Men from the Boys*, and *Tree Talk*. He lives in northern California.