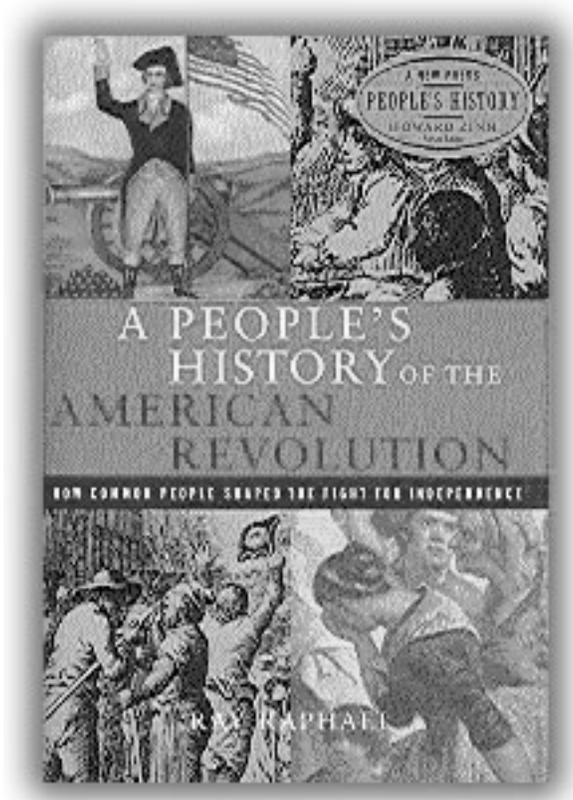


A People's History of the American Revolution:



A Guide for Teaching and Readers' Groups

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2004

INTRODUCTION

Review:

1. How were the personal lives of Lydia Mintern Post, Abner Beebe, Phebe Ward, and the “youth from Massachusetts” affected by the political events of the American Revolution?

2. Freedom was in the air. What did Joseph Plumb Martin, James Barr, and the four African Americans from Massachusetts do about it?

3. How was the Revolution in the South similar to the Civil War?

4. In their “selective memory” of the Revolutionary War, what did leaders of the new nations leave out?

5. Which were the two most destructive wars in United States history, judging by the percentage of the population that died?

6. When we think of the American Revolution, we generally conjure up images of scruffy farmers fighting off the King's redcoated soldiers, or perhaps the wigged “Founding Fathers” signing the Declaration of Independence. Who else was involved in the American Revolution, whether voluntarily or not?

7. With “a simple shift of the lens” to include a view of common people, we discover a very different American Revolution from the one depicted in most textbooks. List five of the new “discoveries” which will be discussed in this book.

Historical Reasoning/ Discussion:

1. Based on the introductory vignettes, discuss some of the ways in which private lives can be affected by public events, particularly warfare.

2. Why do you think Charles Thomson burned his papers? What might they have revealed that he wished hidden from history?

3. Why have Americans of different political persuasions been so quick to claim the Revolution as a precedent for their particular beliefs and actions? (If you wish, refer to footnote #16.)

4. Discuss Raphael's definition of “common people.” Would you like to alter it?