

# Book review on defiance of the patriots: the boston tea party and the making of a...

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## **Introduction**

Defiance of the Patriots: The Boston Tea Party and the Making of America is a book written by Benjamin L. Carp and published in the year 2010. In this elegant and thrilling book, Carp provides the reader with a vivid description of the Boston Tea Party. The book explodes various myths and explores the scintillating Boston city life.

Carp embarks on a phenomenal story telling session where he vividly brings to life the different individuals and places that have been brought together by the Tea Party -from English businesspersons to tea pickers from China, plantation slaves, native Americans and Boston's so called 'pleasure ladies'. Carp goes farther and illuminates how a very small but determined group managed to shake a huge and mighty empire's foundations. He then explains the effects that this has had on the Americans lives since its happening. By revealing a lot of little known details and historical facts and considering the uncertain legacy of the Tea Party, Carp is able to present a deeply expansive and compelling history of the iconic event rooted in the tempestuous past of America.

The Boston Tea Party grants Carp with an opportunity to examine and explore the political culture of Boston. This political culture is explored from a host of several viewpoints that include authority, rights, and taxes, both present and past.

The strongest part of the book is when the author looks up the Boston streets in a convincing way explains the greater contexts that stimulated the tossing of tea into the Boston Harbor by some Boston radicals. This tea tossing activity took place in the year 1773 when several individuals in

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disguise boarded several merchant ships and dumped tea weighing about 46 tons into the Boston Harbor. This came to be known as the Boston Tea Party and was seen as an audacious and revolutionary act.

Carp begins his elaboration with an interesting and fascinating discussion about the British famous trading company, the East Indian Company. He describes the company as the imperial agent of Britain and he then carefully delineates the power of sovereignty that the company had in India.

Instead of treating the East India Company's political ideologies as a just a background to colonial protest, the author finds a way to weave the story into an account of the imperial power of the British like both the EIC members and the Boston residents experienced it.

This universal and global perspective goes along way in assisting to explain the reason why the Boston radicals clogged tea into the Boston harbor. Carp also incorporates several other glimpses of global perspective to argue his case. These perspectives are also equally effective.

Throughout history, the Boston residents had consistently engaged in the violation of trade agreements that advocated for non-importation. This had inadvertently led to the emergence of distrust between other cities and Boston. This led to the branding of Boston as a trade violations ringleader. However in *Defiance of the Patriots: The Boston Tea Party and the Making of America*, Carp demonstrates in convincing terms that the city of Boston indeed protested so that they could prove their worth to the cities of Philadelphia and New York.

However, from a critical viewpoint, the narrative tone focus adopted by the author acts as the book's strength and at the same time its weakness.

Although the book is a very good read that gives the reader a lot of informed speculations and details, it however shares some limitations that are commonly associated with its genre. Just like his fellow American Revolution crossover scholars, the author struggles to make an inclusion of non-whites and women to his narration. At the little sections that he manages to include them, it is not done in a very comprehensive way. For example, he only talks about some of the women who were tea drinkers and who participated in the tea sprinkling in just a few chapters. He also gives a very brief melancholy of slavery and sugar in the last chapter of the book.

Benjamin Carp gives a definition of the Tea Party's radicalism as the capability of average and ordinary individuals to participate and engage in both democratic and defiant protests. However, his drive to establish the tea tossing participant's names leads to their rebellion definition in an inadvertent misleading but tidy way. Private property attacks are an aspect that cannot be fully understood without giving consideration to family relationships and slavery including coverture. Thus, the author's narrow and brief emphasis misses the power and property connection.

Despite these little discrepancies, it is overall a very good book that every fan of the American social, political, and economic history should make a point of reading.

## **Works Cited**

Carp, Benjamin L. *Defiance of the Patriots: The Boston Tea Party & the Making of America*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010. Print.