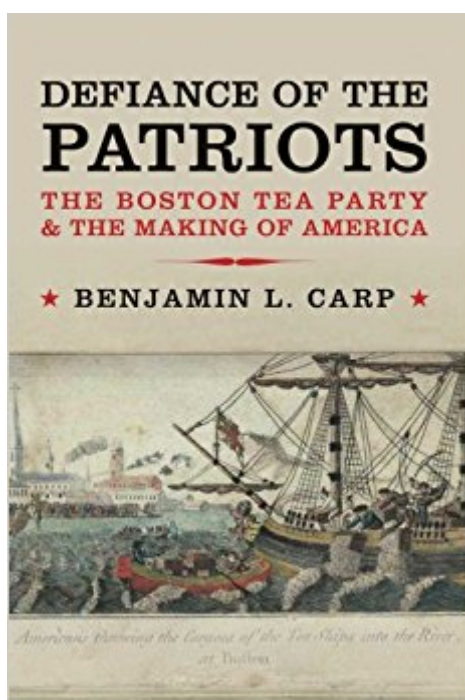


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# Defiance Of The Patriots: The Boston Tea Party And The Making Of America



## Synopsis

This thrilling book tells the full story of the an iconic episode in American history, the Boston Tea Party—exploding myths, exploring the unique city life of eighteenth-century Boston, and setting this audacious prelude to the American Revolution in a global context for the first time. Bringing vividly to life the diverse array of people and places that the Tea Party brought together—from Chinese tea-pickers to English businessmen, Native American tribes, sugar plantation slaves, and Boston's ladies of leisure—Benjamin L. Carp illuminates how a determined group of New Englanders shook the foundations of the British Empire, and what this has meant for Americans since. As he reveals many little-known historical facts and considers the Tea Party's uncertain legacy, he presents a compelling and expansive history of an iconic event in America's tempestuous past.

## Book Information

Paperback: 328 pages

Publisher: Yale University Press (October 25, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0300178123

ISBN-13: 978-0300178128

Product Dimensions: 8.2 x 5.5 x 0.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars 25 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #185,433 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #41 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > International & World Politics > Trades & Tariffs #337 in Books > History > Americas > United States > Colonial Period #488 in Books > History > Americas > United States > Revolution & Founding

## Customer Reviews

"A wise and illuminating study."—Simon Schama, Newsweek  
"A sterling account."—Michael Kenney, The Boston Globe  
"Assiduously researched."—Caleb Crain, The New Yorker  
"A thoughtful, balanced corrective to partisan treatments of the Boston Tea Party."—Maya Jasanoff, The Guardian  
"Carp is a historian with a talent for people and place."—David Aaronovitch, The Times  
"His vivid reimagining of this weird event evokes the smell of the tea, the creaking of decks and groaning of ropes, and even the satisfying plunk, slap, hiss as the clumps of tea made contact with the water."—The

Guardian"Was tea a social elixir or a deadly drug? How do you heft a 400-pound barrel overboard? Myriad questions are raised in this thoughtful look at global economics meeting Beantown's unique society."

•American History"It is arguably the most in-depth, detailed and accessible book on the subject. . . . Carp has created a fascinating look at one of the most famous acts of defiance in history. The book is both a global epic and an intimate look at the people involved and deserves a place on the shelves of anyone interested in the history of the United States."

•Darren Jones, The Herald-Dispatch"A fresh, insightful perspective on why the Boston Tea Party occurred and its outcome...Meticulously researched and rich in detail...a coherent, engaging story."

•Christine LaHue, Common-place"Sophisticated and highly readable, Defiance of the Patriots is a model of research, analysis, and narration that may well be a crossover book, attracting a general readership. It deserves to reach that level of success."

•Edward Countryman, Journal of American History"Benjamin Carp has written the definitive book on the Boston Tea Party, the epic event that catapulted colonists and mother country toward a war that changed the world."

•John Ferling, author of The Ascent of George Washington"In this vivid, dramatic and superbly researched book, Benjamin Carp provides fresh insights into important subjects that have long puzzled historians: the collective character of patriot leadership, the marathon meetings of the five thousand Bostonians who deliberated on a course of action and the men who actually did the heavy work of destroying the tea. Essential reading for anyone who takes the American Revolution seriously."

•Alfred F. Young, author of The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution

Benjamin L. Carp is associate professor of history at Tufts University.

"Drank Green Tea from Holland - I hope - but don't know" - John Adams, 1771 (pg 77)"An exasperated people, who feel that they possess power, are not easily restrained within limits strictly regular." Thomas Jefferson, 1773 (pg 118)"Is it Lawful for a weary traveler to refresh himself with a Dish of Tea provided it has been honestly smuggled, or paid no Duties?" - John Adams, 1774 (pg 178)As an American History enthusiast, I thoroughly enjoyed this particular accounting of the Boston Tea party and the events leading up to it. Not only does it give another, very interesting and well-written historical accounting, it also delves into the origins of the tea trade - the monopolies, the wealth, the incredibly lucrative opportunity to levy tax on it, and why it became so important to the Colonists in the first place. There's a lot more to the tale of tea than just a cup and saucer. And it provided the perfect excuse for a group of people struggling to be free of monarchies, "taxation

without representation" and a "governing body" half a world away - to separate themselves once for all and seek a government "for the people, by the people"

The Boston Tea Party remains one of the iconic events of American history 250 years later. It is one of the few events that nearly every American recognizes and for which she can provide at least a summary description. Benjamin Carp's *Defiance of the Patriots* provides a detailed rendering of not only the events of the "tea party" itself, but a comprehensive look at the state of the British Empire, the city of Boston, and the American colonies in general to give us a better understanding of why the Tea Party came about when and where it did and what it meant in the grand scheme of events leading to the American Revolution and what it still means today. Carp devotes an intriguing chapter on the history of the British East India Company (EIC) and the important role it played in helping a not quite mature system of government maintain its empire for many years prior to the Revolution. EIC's antics will remind American readers of companies such as Halliburton, Enron, and others whose escapades have made headlines and been the subject of intense political controversy. The economic power the EIC enjoyed as a chartered company with certain monopoly rights intensified the attention paid to it by the American colonists and in Parliament. *Defiance of the Patriots* also does a good job explaining why Bostonians felt so strongly opposed to legislation that gave the EIC a monopoly on the American tea trade, the Tea Act, which actually LOWERED the price of tea even with the attachment of taxes dedicated towards general revenue (distinguished in colonists' minds from those used for purposes of regulating trade). The reduction in price came with strings that could, in a less benign setting, lead to London's dominance over the colonial legislatures and the loss of liberties enjoyed by the colonists. Carp details England's reprisals and the events that followed the Tea Party, demonstrating how it set off events that led directly to Lexington and Concord less than two years later. While detailing the events before and after the Tea Party, Carp also explains the tea trade itself and tea's important role in colonial society. Put simply, Americans were tea crazy, and the ritual of tea service and drinking permeated colonial life from top to bottom. It was not a coincidence that tea was at the center of the controversy. Americans' relationship with tea and their determination to wean themselves from it as a matter of principle is another major theme as tea became synonymous with British tyranny and abstention with determined resistance. Other topics Carp explores are less fruitful, such as the symbolic importance of the choice of Indian disguises and the gender issues that arose resulting from the determination made by men to boycott something central to the lives of women, who had little say in the matter. In fact, the entire final chapter detailing the limits of the Revolution and the Founders' conceptions of freedom has the

feeling of being tacked on solely for the purposes of allowing Carp to avoid charges that he's just interested in "dead white men" because he wrote a book about events concerning, well, mostly dead white men. In a few places the writing can be dry and academic (mostly those pertaining to issues of race and gender). Happily, though, these parts are short and the reader's attention never flags even if it might falter from time to time. If you're looking for a more narrative driven "story" focused on famous individuals, you might be a little disappointed in *Defiance of the Patriots*. Readers seeking a better understanding of the Tea Party's causes and importance and a robust discussion of the many related issues involved will enjoy *Defiance of the Patriots*.

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