

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-13246-6 - Settlers, Liberty, and Empire: The Roots of Early American Political Theory, 1675-1775

Craig Yirush

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Settlers, Liberty, and Empire

Settlers, Liberty, and Empire traces the emergence of a revolutionary conception of political authority on the far shores of the eighteenth-century Atlantic world, based on the natural right of English subjects to leave the realm, claim indigenous territory, and establish new governments by consent, linked to the center in a loose confederation of equal states. This radical set of ideas culminated in revolution and republicanism. But Craig Yirush eschews the traditional scholarly focus on the late eighteenth century. Instead, he examines how the political ideas of settler elites in British North America emerged out of an imperial world characterized by constitutional uncertainty, geopolitical rivalry, and the ongoing presence of powerful Native American peoples. By taking seriously the often-forgotten years between the Glorious Revolution in America and the American Revolution against Britain, Yirush provides a long-term explanation of the distinctive ideas of the American Revolution.

Craig Yirush is Assistant Professor in the Department of History at the University of California at Los Angeles. He is the author of several articles and book chapters focusing on early American political and legal ideas. He previously served as a Library Associates Fellow at the John Carter Brown Library and a Fellow at Harvard University's Charles Warren Center for American History.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-13246-6 - Settlers, Liberty, and Empire: The Roots of Early American Political Theory, 1675-1775

Craig Yirush

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Settlers, Liberty, and Empire

*The Roots of Early American Political
Theory, 1675-1775*

CRAIG YIRUSH

University of California at Los Angeles



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-13246-6 - Settlers, Liberty, and Empire: The Roots of Early American Political Theory, 1675-1775

Craig Yirush

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521132466

© Craig Yirush 2011

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2011

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

Yirush, Craig, 1968–

Settlers, Liberty, and Empire : The Roots of Early American Political Theory, 1675-1775 / Craig Yirush.

p. cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-19330-6 (hardback) – ISBN 978-0-521-13246-6 (paperback)

1. Political science – United States – History – 17th century. 2. Political science – United States – History – 18th century. 3. United States – Politics and government – To 1775. I. Title.

JA84.U5Y57 2011

320.0973-dc22 2010044678

ISBN 978-0-521-19330-6 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-13246-6 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>page vii</i>
Introduction: Jasper Maudit’s “Instructions”: The Imperial Roots of Early American Political Theory	i
PART I RESTORATION AND REBELLION	
1 English Rights in an Atlantic World	29
2 The Glorious Revolution in America	51
PART II EMPIRE	
3 Jeremiah Dummer and the Defense of Chartered Government	83
4 John Bulkley and the Mohegans	113
5 Daniel Dulany and the Natural Right to English Law	142
6 Richard Bland and the Prerogative in Pre-Revolutionary Virginia	158
PART III REVOLUTION	
7 In Search of a Unitary Empire	183
8 The Final Imperial Crisis	215
Conclusion	263
<i>Index</i>	271

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-13246-6 - Settlers, Liberty, and Empire: The Roots of Early American Political Theory, 1675-1775

Craig Yirush

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

In writing this book, I have incurred many debts. My dissertation advisor, Jack P. Greene, showed an early interest in my research and provided sage advice at every point along the way. Without his support and scholarly example, this book would never have seen the light of day. I would also like to thank Alan Tully, who was responsible for introducing me to early American history and for encouraging a rather callow undergraduate to enter graduate school and pursue an academic career. Alan also expertly supervised an M.A. thesis, which was the first tentative step toward the argument developed in these pages.

The department of history at Johns Hopkins was a great place to be a graduate student. In his seminar and in many subsequent conversations, John Marshall taught me about the complexities of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English and European political thought. I was fortunate that Anthony Pagden, whom I first met in Cambridge and who is now a colleague, arrived at Hopkins just after I did. Over many years, I have learned much from him, both in person and in print, about early modern empires. Mathew Lauzon, Paul Tonks, Francois Furstenberg, and Neil Safer all made sure that the years at Hopkins were full of fun as well as substance. Steve Jolivet's insight into the political theory of the American founding is profound. Our conversations about history and philosophy over many years have influenced me immeasurably. Jason Gadd and I have been friends for longer than either of us cares to remember. Over the years, I have benefited from his wide-ranging knowledge of history, as well as his ability to fix old sports cars and appreciate fine ales. He found the time to read an entire draft of this book and to assure me that it did in fact make sense. The Borsos family – Londie, Pete, Delaney,

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-13246-6 - Settlers, Liberty, and Empire: The Roots of Early American Political Theory, 1675-1775

Craig Yirush

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Spencer, and Connor – always provided timely reminders that there is more to “Uncle Craig’s” life than old books. Marc and Nina Lerner made me feel at home in my first years in L.A. and have remained good friends from afar. Pat and Mary Geary provided a home away from home in L.A. when I first arrived and have continued to offer superlative hospitality ever since. Ted and Courtney Balaker were always ready to have a pint at the usual place and to remind me that beyond the academy there is a world of intellectual creativity.

Many years ago, Howard Singleton showed faith in a young historian and generously made possible a year of study in Cambridge. I am also grateful for the support I have received from the University of British Columbia, the Johns Hopkins University, and the Institute of Humane Studies. I was fortunate enough to receive a fellowship from the John Carter Brown Library, which allowed me to complete the research for the dissertation on which this book is partly based. My thanks to Norman Fiering, the Director, and the always helpful staff of the library. David Hall and Jim Kloppenberg were kind enough to invite me to spend a wonderful year at Harvard’s Charles Warren Center, where I was able to do some much-needed thinking and writing. Mark Schmeller made the year in Boston a real pleasure.

The history department at UCLA has been a wonderful academic home. For financial support during the research and writing of this book, I would like to thank the Department of History, the Dean of Social Sciences, and the Academic Senate’s Council on Research. My colleagues at UCLA provided more than material sustenance. Ruth Bloch and Michael Meranze both gave me much-needed advice and support in a difficult time. I am also indebted to (among many others) Teo Ruiz, Ned Alpers, David Myers, Bill Summerhill, Nile Green, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Michael Salman, Kevin Terraciano, Naomi Lamoreaux, Gabi Piterberg, Peter Reill, Muriel McClendon, Daniel Walker Howe, and Joan Waugh.

My editor, Eric Crahan, took a chance on a first-time author. For that, and for much valuable advice and encouragement, I am deeply grateful. The comments of the two anonymous readers for Cambridge improved the manuscript greatly. I am also indebted to those who took time out of their busy schedules to read all or part of this book. I would like to thank (in no particular order) Alan Taylor, Eric Hinderaker, Andrew Fitzmaurice, Richard Bushman, Joyce Appleby, Paul Grant-Costa, and Richard Samuelson. Elizabeth Mancke and Trevor Burnard provided crucial support at just the right time. I also benefited from the comments

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-13246-6 - Settlers, Liberty, and Empire: The Roots of Early American Political Theory, 1675-1775

Craig Yirush

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

ix

of audiences at the Charles Warren Center Seminar at Harvard, the Legal History Workshop at UCLA, the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, and the Newberry Library.

I am incredibly fortunate to share with Jessica Stern her passion for ideas, her laughter, and her love. I owe her more than words can say.

My father long ago instilled in me a passion for reading and an interest in history. And he has always been there for me, from standing on the sidelines of countless rainy soccer pitches, to making long-distance phone calls full of good cheer. My mother has been such a source of love, support, and intellectual stimulation over the years that it is hard to put into words. In gratitude, I dedicate this book to them.