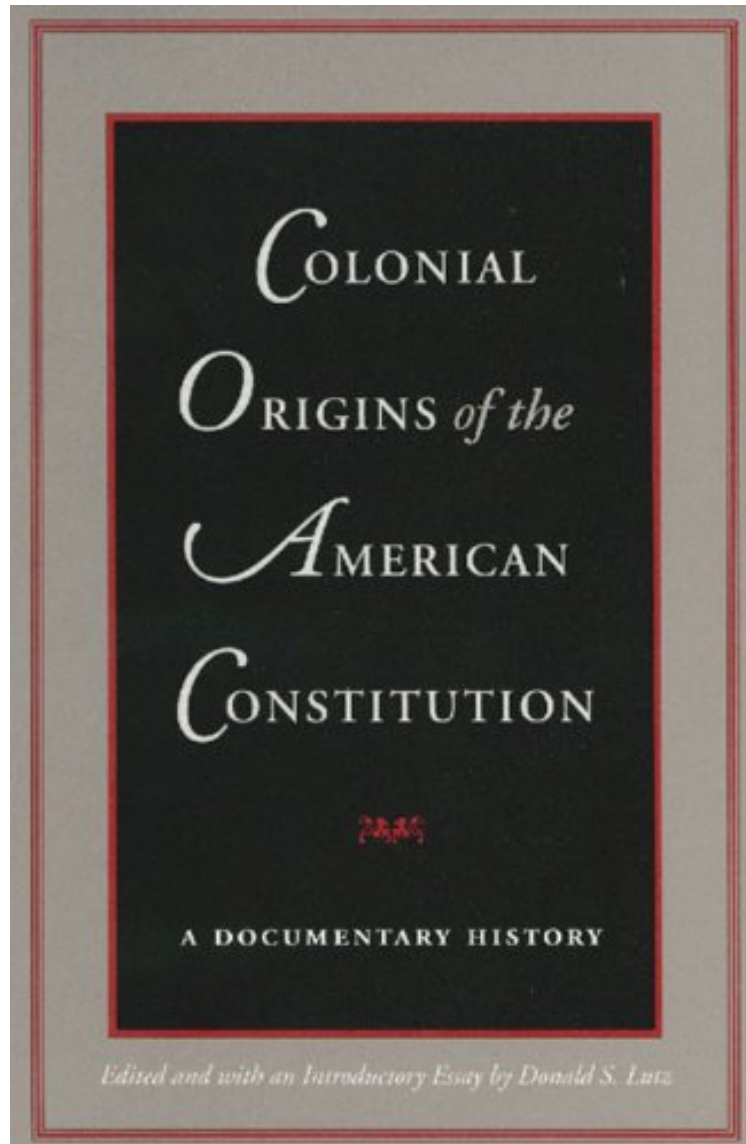


[Download free ebook] Colonial Origins of the American Constitution: A Documentary History

Colonial Origins of the American Constitution: A Documentary History

Von Donald S. Lutz

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Von Donald S. Lutz : Colonial Origins of the American Constitution: A Documentary History before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Colonial Origins of the American Constitution: A Documentary History:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Superb

resource for those studying the Constitution's roots. Von R. B. Bernstein
Donald S. Lutz, professor of political science at the University of Houston, has long studied the colonial antecedents and development of American constitutionalism. In this fine documentary anthology, he presents the fullest collection of sources yet published to document the Americans' constitutional experiments from the 1630s through the 1770s. Many Americans forget that the time span between the first permanent English settlement in America and the declaration of American independence, (1607-1776, or 169 years), is the same length as the time span between independence and the death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1776-1945). That long, contentious, and intellectually fruitful history deserves to be better known, and Lutz is eminently qualified to present and interpret it. This fine book is a worthy companion to his monographs *POPULAR CONSENT AND POPULAR CONTROL* (Louisiana State University Press, 1980), *THE ORIGINS OF AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONALISM* (Louisiana State University Press, 1988), and *A PREFACE TO AMERICAN POLITICAL THEORY* (University Press of Kansas, 1991). The book begins with an excellent and lucid analytical introduction and then presents the full texts, with informative headnotes, of eighty documents of American political foundation -- organized by individual state, with a final grouping devoted to "confederations." A fine brief bibliography of editions of colonial and state documents concludes the book. My only regret is that the volume lacks an index. Finally, a word about the other review of this book. It is grotesquely antihistorical to claim that the United States is a Christian nation. To be sure, the vast majority of the settlers of the colonies founded in North America were Protestant Christians -- and most of the remainder were Roman Catholics. However, in Rhode Island and in Pennsylvania, the colony's founders and later governors carefully preserved religious liberty (under the label of toleration) for anyone "demeaning themselves peaceably." Furthermore, the generally libertarian and enlightened members of the Revolutionary generation of Americans went beyond the model of a majority's toleration for a dissenting minority. In such states as Virginia, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, and New York, they embraced religious liberty to protect the church from the corrupting influence of the state, and the state from the corrupting influence of organized religion, and the individual human mind from the dangerous alliance between the two.-- Richard B. Bernstein, Adjunct Professor of Law, New York Law School

Kurzbeschreibung "Local government in colonial America was the seedbed of American constitutionalism." So begins the introductory essay to this landmark collection of eighty documents created by the American colonists and not English officials that are the genesis of American fundamental law and constitutionalism. Most of these documents, commencing with the Agreement of the Settlers at Exeter in New Hampshire, July 5, 1639, and concluding with Joseph Galloway's Plan of Union, 1774 "the immediate precursor to the Articles of Confederation" have never before been accessible to the general reader or available in a single volume. As Professor Lutz points out, the documents are chosen to make possible "a careful examination of [the American] people's attempt at self-interpretation." All of the principal colonial documents are included, as are all documents attempting to unite the colonies, beginning with the New England Confederation of 1643. Bicameralism, popular sovereignty, the separation of powers, checks and balances, limited government, and religious freedom in sum, the hallmarks of American constitutionalism were first presented to the world in these writings. Donald S. Lutz is Professor of Political Science at the University of Houston.