



The Counter-Revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States of America

Gerald Horne

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The successful 1776 revolt against British rule in North America has been hailed almost universally as a great step forward for humanity. But the Africans then residing in the colonies overwhelmingly sided with London. In this trailblazing book, Gerald Horne complements his earlier celebrated *Negro Comrades of the Crown*, by showing that in the prelude to 1776, the abolition of slavery seemed all but inevitable in London, delighting Africans as much as it outraged slaveholders, and sparking the colonial revolt.

In the prelude to 1776, more and more Africans were joining the British military, and anti-slavery sentiments were deepening throughout Britain. And in the Caribbean, rebellious Africans were chasing Europeans to the mainland. Unlike their counterparts in London, the European colonists overwhelmingly associated enslaved Africans with subversion and hostility to the status quo. For European colonists, the major threat to security in North America was a foreign invasion combined with an insurrection of the enslaved. And as 1776 approached, London-imposed abolition throughout the colonies was a very real and threatening possibility—a possibility the founding fathers feared could bring the slave rebellions of Jamaica and Antigua to the thirteen colonies. To forestall it, they went to war.

The so-called Revolutionary War, Horne writes, was in large part a counter-revolution, a conservative movement that the founding fathers fought in order to preserve their liberty to enslave others—and which today takes the form of a racialized conservatism and a persistent racism targeting the descendants of the enslaved. *The Counter-Revolution of 1776* drives us to a radical new understanding of the traditional heroic creation myth of the United States.



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