

Maxine N. Lurie, *Taking Sides In Revolutionary New Jersey: Caught in the Crossfire*.  
Discussion and Lesson Questions  
7-14-2022

As you read the book consider these questions and how you would explain your answers.

### **Chapter 1. Overview of the Revolution in New Jersey.**

What is the main thesis of the book?

Historiography is the history of how historical interpretations, explanations, have changed over time. What are some of the changes in views of the Revolution?

What was distinctive about New Jersey in the colonial and revolutionary periods?

During the Revolution how and why was location important?

What kind of war was this?

How would you summarize the course of the war? How did 1776 differ from 1778 or 1781?

How and why was the role New Jersey played important?

Could the Revolution have turned out differently?

### **Chapter II. Patriots Part I: The Adamant and Determined.**

Who was most likely to be a Patriot?

Why? What was the importance of status (economic and social), religion, family, other factors?

What were the costs?

Which were the most interesting examples of people's experiences during the war?

Considering their experiences would you have wanted to live in New Jersey during this war?

### **Chapter III. Patriots Part 2: Into the Maelstrom.**

Consider whether Richard Stockton was a traitor.

What were his options under the circumstances?

What have historians said about the treatment of prisoners?

How were they treated by both sides?

Why was their treatment complex and difficult?

What did Stockton's relatives and friends do about that treatment?

### **Chapter IV. Straddlers, Trimmers, and Opportunists.**

Why did some individuals in this war change sides?

Why did others try to "straddle" the differences?

Who succeeded, who did not?

What influenced them?

Were the decisions for selfish reasons, for simple preservation, or did they have other motives?

### **Chapter V. The Society of Friends (Quakers): Pacifists and Participants.**

How were Quakers doubly caught in the war?

What was the impact of their religious beliefs?

Did all react in same way?

Were they all pacifists?

How did those who fought justify their actions?

When does a government become illegitimate (or legitimate) and in whose eyes?

### **Chapter VI. Loyalists Part I: The Irreconcilables.**

Why did some people remain loyal to Britain?

If they left was it voluntary or forced?

Where did they go?

What were the costs?

In the end were they successful or not?

Think about why some and not others?

### **Chapter VII. Loyalists Part II: Remained or Returned.**

Why did they stay?

Who came back, when, and why?

Were they all welcomed or not? If not, why not?

How long after the war did attitudes change?

### **Chapter VIII. Epilogue**

Was the Revolution important?

What changed and what did not?

Could more have changed? Or less?

This book integrates women, Blacks, and Native Americans into the story. How does this complicate our understanding of the past?

Was New Jersey a good place to be during the Revolution? Why?

Before you read this book which side would you have taken?

After reading this book which side would you have taken?

What did you learn from this book that you did not expect?

Does the book help understand the present? In what ways? What issues are still with us?