



# **The Quest For Power: The Lower Houses of Assembly in the Southern Royal Colonies, 1689- 1776**

*Jack P. Greene*

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**The emergence of the lower houses of assembly is a major theme in American history: their quest for power became the most significant single feature of political and constitutional development in the colonial era. Miniature imitations of the House of Commons, these assemblies were not content to play a minor role in the affairs of their respective colonies and sought to increase their authority at the expense of both the colonial executives and the London government. They took the lead in defending American rights and liberties when they were challenged by Crown and Parliament and they served as a training ground for the remarkable political leaders of the nation's first quarter century.**

In this book, Jack P. Greene describes the rise of the lower houses in the four southern royal colonies--Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia--that reflects a process occurring throughout the colonies in the period between the Glorious Revolution and the American War for Independence. To determine what it was the Americans were defending in their debate with Britain between 1763 and 1776, Professor Greene defines the specific powers acquired by the lower houses, measures the extent of their authority at the close of the Seven Years' War, and examines the British challenge. He explores the theoretical foundations as well as the practical results of the assemblies' moves, and offers an important new interpretation of the relationship between their rise to power and the coming of the American Revolution.

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