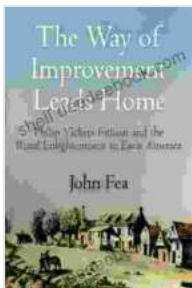


Philip Vickers Fithian and the Rural Enlightenment in Early America

Philip Vickers Fithian was born in 1747 in Greenwich, New Jersey. He graduated from Princeton University in 1772, and in 1773 he traveled to Virginia to tutor the children of Robert Carter III, a wealthy plantation owner.



The Way of Improvement Leads Home: Philip Vickers Fithian and the Rural Enlightenment in Early America (Early American Studies) by John Fea

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 2761 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 278 pages



Fithian's diary, which he kept during his time in Virginia, provides a fascinating glimpse into the lives of both the planter class and the enslaved people who worked their plantations. Fithian's observations on the social and economic conditions of Virginia are invaluable to historians, and his diary has been used to shed light on the complex relationship between slavery and the Enlightenment in early America.

The Rural Enlightenment

The Enlightenment was a philosophical movement that emphasized reason and science over tradition and superstition. It began in Europe in the 17th century, and by the 18th century it had spread to the American colonies.

The Enlightenment had a profound impact on American thought and culture. It led to the development of new ideas about government, religion, and education. It also inspired a new interest in science and technology.

The Rural Enlightenment was a movement that sought to apply the principles of the Enlightenment to rural life. Rural Enlightenment thinkers believed that reason and science could be used to improve the lives of farmers and other rural people.

Philip Vickers Fithian was a product of the Rural Enlightenment. He believed that education was essential for the progress of rural society. He also believed that farmers could use science to improve their agricultural practices.

Fithian's Diary

Fithian's diary is one of the most important sources of information about the Rural Enlightenment in early America. Fithian wrote about his experiences teaching the Carter children, his interactions with the enslaved people on the plantation, and his observations on the social and economic conditions of Virginia.

Fithian's diary provides a unique glimpse into the lives of both the planter class and the enslaved people who worked their plantations. Fithian's observations on the social and economic conditions of Virginia are invaluable to historians, and his diary has been used to shed light on the

complex relationship between slavery and the Enlightenment in early America.

The Impact of Slavery on the Enlightenment

The Enlightenment was a time of great intellectual ferment and social change. However, the Enlightenment also coincided with the rise of slavery in the American colonies.

The growth of slavery in the colonies had a profound impact on the Enlightenment. Slavery was a brutal and dehumanizing institution that contradicted the Enlightenment ideals of reason and liberty.

Some Enlightenment thinkers, such as Thomas Jefferson, owned slaves themselves. However, other Enlightenment thinkers, such as Benjamin Franklin, spoke out against slavery. Franklin believed that slavery was incompatible with the principles of the Enlightenment.

The debate over slavery continued throughout the Enlightenment period. However, the institution of slavery persisted in the American colonies until the end of the Civil War.

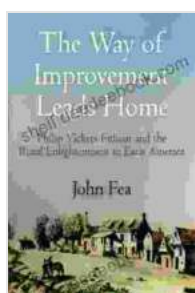
Fithian's Legacy

Philip Vickers Fithian was a complex and contradictory figure. He was a product of the Enlightenment, but he also lived in a society that was based on slavery.

Fithian's diary provides a valuable glimpse into the lives of both the planter class and the enslaved people who worked their plantations. His observations on the social and economic conditions of Virginia are

invaluable to historians, and his diary has been used to shed light on the complex relationship between slavery and the Enlightenment in early America.

Fithian's legacy is a reminder of the complex and often contradictory nature of the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment was a time of great intellectual ferment and social change, but it was also a time of slavery and oppression.



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