Popular sovereignty, or sovereignty of the peoples' rule, is the principle that the authority of a state and its government are created and sustained by the consent of its people, through their elected representatives (Rule by the People), who is the source of all political power. It is closely associated with social contract philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Popular sovereignty expresses a concept and does not necessarily reflect or describe a political reality Hobbes' theory was that the people mutually agreed to create a state, giving it only enough power to provide protection of their well-being. However, in Hobbes' theory, once the power was given to the state, the people then relinquished any right to that power. In effect, that was the price of the protection they sought. John Locke also based his political writings on the idea of the social contract. He stressed the role of the individual and the idea that in the "State of Nature," people are essentially free. However, they might decide to form a government to punish any individuals who go against the laws of nature and harm others. Locke further posited that if this government no longer protected each individual's right to life, liberty, and property, then revolution was not just a right but an obligation. Alexander Hamilton, in The Federalist #22, presents the ratification of the constitution by conventions specially elected by the people, a mode recently pioneered by the states, as crucial to its legitimacy. The Federalist both opens and closes remarking that for a whole people so to choose their constitution by voluntary consent, far from being typical, is an unprecedented prodigy.
He recreates the evolution of a government based on popular consent and popular control in the 1770s and 1780s, an evolution that began in 1620, not in 1776. His aim is to correct the studies of American political theory and constitution. Donald S. Lutz provides an examination of formal documents and local history in America before 1800. He recreates the evolution of a government based on popular consent and popular control in the 1770s and 1780s, an evolution that began in 1620, not in 1776.