

students to both the bad and the good in site and artifact interpretation, while providing a model for those who are interested in bringing public history to the classroom.

Butler University

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Harry M. Ward. *The American Revolution: Nationhood Achieved, 1763-1788*. New York: St. Martin's 1995. Pp. xiv, 432. Cloth, \$35.00. ISBN 0-312-12259-4.

Stephen Conway. *The War of American Independence, 1775-1783*. London & New York: Edward Arnold, 1995. Pp. xvi, 280. Cloth, \$49.95. ISBN 0-340-62520-1. Paper, \$16.95. ISBN 0-340-57626-x.

These two broad synthetic works have much in common. Both seek to explain why thirteen of Britain's North American colonies rebelled, how they won their independence, and what that struggle meant for the participants. Both authors rely most heavily on secondary sources published over the last half century for analysis. Each quotes from the papers of participants to convey a sense of their feelings concerning the war and their part in it. Finally, both of the books are well written, and the authors render sound assessments of controversial individuals and events.

Harry M. Ward's scope is the broader. He devotes a quarter of *The American Revolution* to the coming of the war, half to the military conflict, including a section on "The Underside of the Revolution," and the final 25 percent to the Confederation period and the framing and ratification of the Constitution. He finds the roots of rebellion in the development of an "American" culture separate from that of Great Britain and in the removal of the French threat from Canada, which came at a time when the transitional state of the British economy, unstable political system, and society rendered Great Britain unable to respond intelligently to events in America. Once the Stamp Act crisis of 1765 "clarified the American and British positions on the constitutional relationship between the mother country and the colonies," war became virtually inevitable, though neither side realized it for a decade.

In his account of the war, Ward, the author of biographies of American generals George Woodon and Adam Stephen, skillfully weaves quotations from participants with assessments by historians into a clear and interesting narrative. He judges American leaders, especially Washington, to have usually employed good judgment and British leaders to have failed to understand the war and to have missed opportunities that possibly could have altered its outcome. Ward's social history of the Revolution makes extensive use of recent works on local, labor, ethnic, and women's history to discuss the effects of the war on common soldiers and non-combatants, Loyalists, and everyday life on the home front.

After surveying the structure of state governments and the Continental Congress, he concludes that the government under the Articles of Confederation might have been able to continue serving the U.S. had "its shortcomings been correctable by an adequate amending process." Ward devotes the final section of the book to drafting and ratification of the Constitution.

Ward's many quotations from historians and extensive bibliography make this an excellent tool for accessing the sources upon which it is based. Sections of the book could be assigned to advanced high school students with great profit.

Conway's military history of *The War of American Independence* places the conflict in an international context. He contends it was the first modern war because it was the war in which ideology became a force for political polarization and a people's war with an intensity more akin to the French Revolution and wars of the twentieth century than to the limited wars of previous eras. He also notes how the desire of "British commanders in America . . . to knock out the Continental army" marked a significant departure from the limited war paradigm of previous conflicts. Looking for indications of modernism led Conway to the conclusion that Britain called into service a greater proportion of her manpower than in previous conflicts and devoted a higher percentage of her national income (12.5%) to the war than she did to the French Revolutionary War (10.4%) a decade later. The composition of the American army, with conscripts drawn from across class lines, and the opening of its officer corps to non-aristocrats (sometimes

drawn from the ranks!) made the war "not the last of the old order [as Piers Mackesy and others argue], but the first of the new." Thus this volume is an excellent choice to launch the publisher's "Modern Wars" series.

Conway demonstrates that the belligerents were more evenly matched than often depicted, even after other European powers entered the war against Britain. While those nations possessed larger populations, armies, and navies, Britain continued to have the stronger economy and a tax and credit system better able to sustain a world-wide struggle. Indeed, Conway devotes much more attention to operations in the Caribbean, Africa, and India than does Ward.

Historians have long assessed the impact of the War on American society, but Conway extends this analysis to Great Britain where the "war's impact was both wide-ranging and profound." It significantly altered the economy, made it possible for Ireland to gain greater independence, led to pressure for constitutional reform, and increased the popularity of the monarchy. The most important change it wrought in warfare in general involved not technology or tactics, but society: It was the first "people's war" not just for the new United States but also for Britain where "a higher proportion of Britons and Irishmen served as soldiers, sailors, militiamen or volunteers than in any previous war." It was for them, as well as for Americans "an ideological struggle . . . that divided the political nation." These conclusions, amply supported by extensive quotations from common people and leaders on both sides, make Conway's book a worthy companion to Piers Mackesy's *The War for America 1775-1783* (1964), the standard study of strategy and operations from the British perspective.

The books nicely complement one another. Very few quotations from primary sources appear in these works. Each offers clues to the authors' respective nationality—Ward's is betrayed, in one example, by his locating Whitehaven, the town raided by John Paul Jones, in Scotland rather than in England, an error few Britons would make, and Conway's by his reference to Jones as a privateer (Jones never held a letter of marque), rather than as a commissioned officer in the Continental Navy. Minor cavils aside, both books can be read for profit to refresh one's memory of events as a summary of the historiography concerning the war, and even to gain apt quotations for supporting points made in the classroom.

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Stanley Harrold. *The Abolitionists and the South, 1831-1861*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995. Pp. x, 245. Cloth, \$29.95. ISBN 0-8131-1906-5.

Doubtless the abolitionists and the antislavery crusade before the Civil War represented the most important reform movement in nineteenth-century American history. Harrold's work focuses on Southern abolitionists, the men and women who were the most outspoken opponents of slavery, and on their efforts within the South to do away with the institution altogether. In so doing, he attempts to modify some current considerations and understandings of abolitionists and of their role in the coming of the Civil War. To him, two older perceptions that need revision stand out, the first that, after Nat Turner's revolt in 1831, abolitionists pulled out of the South and concentrated on immediatism, mainly through Garrison's propaganda efforts, and, lastly, that they little influenced the coming sectional struggle, especially in the South.

Emphasizing analysis and not chronological summary, Harrold's chapters do not add up to a history of the antislavery movement or of abolitionists in the South. Instead, a topical arrangement points to the integration of southern antislavery efforts within northern immediatism during the three decades before the Civil War. Purely historiographical, his first chapter reviews the historical literature related to the antislavery movement. The next two highlight images of southern white emancipators and black liberators, thereby establishing that northern abolitionists did not lose interest in noninterventional efforts in the South after 1831 and, further, that blacks and whites in the South worked together in an effort that helped shape a more aggressive northern abolitionist reform culture as well. The last chapters dramatize