

Roger Schlesinger. *In the Wake of Columbus: The Impact of the New World on Europe, 1492-1650.* Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1996. Pp. xx, 128. Paper, \$11.95; ISBN 0-88295-917-4.

As a social studies educator and trainer of teachers, I am always looking for materials that enhance classroom instruction and further professional development. When asked to review a book from the European History Series, endorsed by the American Historical Association, I looked forward with anticipation to see if I could find another resource that would improve what I can offer to others. Because of the movement towards national history standards and political correctness, European history has taken a beating over the last few years, so I wanted to see if any "new" interpretations were now being offered. What I found was a resource I grew to like better as I read it.

In the foreword, series editor Keith Eubanks, profoundly offers that "now more than ever there is a need for books dealing with significant themes in European history, books offering fresh interpretations of events which continue to affect Europe and the world." The European History Series is designed to introduce "readers to the excitement of European history through concise books about the great events, issues, and personalities of Europe's past" by examining "an issue, event, or era which posed a problem of interpretation for historians." Series authors are supposed to use primary and secondary sources in their writing in an attempt to "bring alive ... great moments in European history rather than simply cram factual material into the pages of their books."

Schlesinger's book contains four short, easy-to-read chapters. Each chapter begins with a quote from a primary source that usually sets the theme for what the author intends to discuss. Occasionally, several other primary sources are either cited or quoted throughout the chapters. For example, Schlesinger quotes from Karl Marx's *The Communist Manifesto* in his first chapter titled "European Economics and America," a chapter devoted to the discussion of the "The Price Revolution" and mercantilism. The author then weaves the story of European rivalries and political change in Chapter Two, "European Politics and America." Leading political figures, explorers, and religious influences are discussed here. "European Conceptions of Native Americas" is rich in stories and descriptions and includes lesser known figures that usually do not appear in standardized textbooks. Unfortunately, no maps, graphs, charts, paintings, or other graphics are utilized in this quick read format, and this chapter, in particular, could have been enhanced by the inclusion of some illustrations. Schlesinger's concluding chapter, "Europeans' Daily Life and America," explores the "seeds of change" study and details the "Columbian exchange" of food, plants, animals, and diseases.

The bibliographic essay references mostly books and some journals on various themes presented in the work. I would have preferred more journal entries because I believe bibliographies are useful guides for students into professional journals and organizations. There are no footnotes to clutter up the pages; however, with as much content information as was being presented, footnotes might have proven beneficial. The index proved useful.

Despite some flaws, Schlesinger's brief monograph has much to offer both the practitioners and students of Clio. Teachers, especially pre-collegiate educators, will find Schlesinger's work a quick way to catch-up in the field. Graduate and undergraduate students will probably find *In the Wake of Columbus* helpful in preparing for exams. As the author points out, "this brief study examines many of the most important, intriguing, and sometimes startling ways in which Europe's relationship with America changed European life in the century or so after Columbus's expeditions."

Maryland Center for the Study of History & Civic Education

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Charles Royster. *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996 (hardcover 1980). Pp. xi, 452. Paper, \$17.95; ISBN 0-8078-4606-6.

This is a curiously belated, unrevised paperback edition of a highly acclaimed, award-winning work of synthesis on the nature of the American revolutionary character and the revolutionaries' ambivalence toward the army created to protect that culture. Now an established historian with several well-received books to his credit, Charles Royster years ago demonstrated his considerable scholarship in this carefully reworked version of his doctoral dissertation.

As Royster notes in his preface, this book does not lend itself to easy summarization. Throughout his presentation, Royster deftly addresses questions concerning the uneasy relationship between American ideals and actions in the Revolution, particularly in the development of the army. The organization of the book is primarily chronological, beginning with the beliefs that led to revolutionary action against Great Britain and tracing developments through the long years of warfare to final victory and beyond.

Early chapters deal with the popular *rage militaire* (passion for arms) of 1775, the concept of "citizen soldier," and the contrast between the ideals of 1775 and the realities of war. Royster demonstrates how the revolutionaries were able "to rely on the army more than they liked and to support it less than required." In a chapter entitled "Valley Forge," he discusses not only the hardships endured in that encampment but also the nature of the substantial training accomplished during the time there. He shows that Baron von Steuben recognized that Americans' love of liberty and vision of communal happiness were the impetus for war but could not guide conduct within the army. Steuben helped the army become "an internally disciplined group apart, more self-consciously virtuous than the society at large." He based his approach to discipline not on the Prussian model of fear of officers but rather on the American soldier's "dignity as a citizen and a volunteer" and his "willing attachment to both the cause and his superiors." This discussion is vital to the full understanding of the final third of the book that deals with treason and lesser forms of betrayal, final victory in the war, and problems regarding demobilization.