

Bushido would prove a useful supplement in both upper-division Japanese and East Asian history courses, especially those emphasizing the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The book would also be helpful in a specialized course on samurai history and the history of *bushido* as an example of revisionist history, illustrating challenges any culture faces recovering its own past as a guide to the present and/or future. Theoretical resemblances to Epicetus's *Enchiridion*, Hsun Tzu's *Art of War*, Mushai's *Book of Five Rings*, and Tsunetomo's *Hagakure* also make *Bushido* an appropriate text for a course in military ethics.

Kennesaw State University

Tom Pynn

Winthrop D. Jordan & Leon F. Litwack. *The United States: Conquering a Continent*. Redding, CA: Northwest Publishing, 2003. Volume I—to 1877. Pp. xiv, 397. Paper, \$19.99; ISBN 1-931910-15-4.

The choice of a textbook in an American history survey course is an important decision. Both instructors and students would benefit from this text. The book's clearly written narrative and interesting sidebars work well in a class that depends on dynamic lecturing supplemented with minimal textbook reading assignments and periodic discussion of primary sources.

Many professors have stopped assigning textbooks in American history surveys after hearing students report that they fail to keep up with assignments and find the books boring and too costly. Before following this course of action, professors might take a look at the benefits offered by this work.

Students will enjoy this easy-to-read history written by two noted figures in the profession. The authors do a fine job presenting the major characters as well as the lesser known personalities in American history. The maps and illustrations will enable students to situate history geographically and to visualize American life and culture. Each chapter contains shaded sections that provide pertinent primary sources and interesting descriptions of word and name origins. Finally, undergraduates burdened by the rising cost of textbooks will appreciate the affordable price of the volume—\$19.99.

Professors also will profit from this textbook in a number of different ways. After reading assigned chapters, students will come to class familiar with essential factual material. Energetic lecturers will be able to delve into greater detail during class because undergraduates will have a firm grasp of background information. Instructors who seek material for lectures from this book will find suggested readings at the end of every chapter. These bibliographies tend to note the essential historical monographs written before the 1980s; nonetheless, the instructor will find reference to the classics in American history. This latest edition promises to deliver more detailed analyses of women's history and the history of ethnic, racial, and religious minorities. While it

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partially delivers on this pledge, instructors might want to direct students interested in these topics to more detailed historical studies. Teachers also can use the included primary sources as discussion documents. Finally, professors can take advantage of test banks, instructor manuals, transparencies, and study guides offered by the publisher; teachers who integrate the latest technology into their classes also might consider using the online student tutorials.

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Richard Middleton. *Colonial America: A History, 1565-1776.* Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2002. Third edition. Pp. x, 558. Cloth, \$42.95; ISBN 0-631-22141-7.

This third edition of *Colonial America* contains a new chapter on Spanish and French colonization of continental North America, although the focus remains on the English colonies. Middleton has also retained the divided organizational structure employed in earlier editions. *Colonial America* treats the colonies chronologically up through the end of the seventeenth century and then turns to a thematic treatment of "provincial America" during the eighteenth century before concluding his book with two chapters on the revolutionary crisis leading to independence. The revised and updated bibliography serves as a competent guide to recent work as well as a few old classics.

Middleton begins with a brief treatment of Columbus, Spanish and Portuguese exploration, and Elizabethan efforts at colonization. Most of the first half of the book relies on a fairly conventional account of the development of the thirteen colonies, structured around the colonial dimensions of England's seventeenth-century political and religious upheavals. Themes covered in the second portion of the book include the economy, intellectual and religious life, women, slavery and African-American life, and Native American society and culture. A political and military historian, Middleton gives primacy to political events and institutions, but without neglecting social, cultural, and intellectual history. The prose, while uninspired, moves the reader steadily and clearly through complicated events.

Colonial America possesses some distinctive and useful features. Middleton occasionally discusses differing historical interpretations of a given event or phenomenon. For instance, he briefly summarizes the debate over whether or not the struggle over the Stamp Act "unleashed a struggle between rich and poor, giving ordinary people an opportunity to demand political rights." Many of the footnotes, besides suggesting additional reading, also provide clear and insightful commentary on the political and cultural contexts shaping historians' debates. Instructors might find such discussions useful in raising students' awareness of the ways in which historians interpret information and disagree over conclusions. Middleton includes 35 excerpted