

advice books for young men. The fifth chapter demonstrates the shift in guidance manuals' messages from an emphasis on public virtue to that of becoming a self-made man. This promotion of self-interest, Hessinger argues, was the consequence of shifting market values that required authors to create appealing messages to sell their books. In chapter six, Hessinger focuses on the popular manuals about the dangers of city life aimed at those flocking to the cities. Overwhelmingly, colonial authors focused on masturbation as the worst vice of urban life. By noting that reformers saw the world of consumption as one of emotion, and therefore as feminine, Hessinger concludes that condemnations against masturbation represented warnings against destroying one's manhood through indulgence in the metropolitan lifestyle. He asserts that colonial authors believed that masturbation "would cause the loss of vital energies that were needed for consumption in the marketplace" (175). Connections such as this clearly illustrate that colonial reformers not only used a language of virtue, but also that of gender. Throughout the book, Hessinger notes shifting patterns of masculinity and femininity, but this treatment lacks the layered analysis that class receives.

*Seduced, Abandoned, and Reborn* traces how youth, exposed to an increasingly consumer culture, began to slip from patriarchal control. Seduction literature, educational and religious institutions, and guidance manuals attempted to assert authority by connecting success with virtues such as chastity, determination, and self-control. Well written, engaging, and conscientiously researched, Hessinger brings a novel approach to the consideration of the role consumerism played in class formation, reform, and attempts at socializing the early republic's youth.

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David Hackett Fischer. *Washington's Crossing*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. Pp. 576. Illustrations, appendices, notes, index. Cloth, \$35.00.)

David Hackett Fischer keeps producing engaging, readable, controversial works of history. In this volume, an entry in Oxford University Press's "Pivotal Moment Series," Fischer moves effortlessly through that portion of the Revolutionary War's 1776 campaign that featured George Washington's beleaguered rebel troops trying to stand up against the powerful British and

Hessian forces under the command of William Howe. The story of Washington's ineffective defense of New York, the desperate retreat of his collapsing army across New Jersey to eastern Pennsylvania, and the amazing turnabout victories at Trenton and Princeton are well-known. It is how Fischer treats these events and the people involved that makes for intriguing yet, in the end, not wholly convincing reading.

According to Fischer, the concept of "contingency," defined as "people making choices, and choices making a difference in the world," resides at the heart of his analysis. (p. 364) For example, Fischer notes "an old American folk tale . . . that George Washington crossed the Delaware on Christmas night, and that his victory at Trenton revived the Revolution." In actuality, he argues, the "great revival grew from defeat, not victory," and got underway days before the Trenton triumph when "ordinary people in the valley of the Delaware" rose up in partisan bands and started harassing the advancing British host. (pp. 142–43). This popular outpouring, in the form of "many small attacks on [British/Hessian] patrols and outposts," exhausted the enemy. When Washington's force struck them just after dawn on December 26, the Hessians, engulfed in driving wind and pelting snow, were fatigued from "days of constant alarms and little sleep," rather than hung over from Christmas celebrations and thus were not fully vigilant. The Hessians, thinking that Washington's force would never "attack in such weather," simply relaxed (pp. 204–05). With monumental consequences for both sides, angry patriots, even before Trenton, *chose* to help rescue their cause, while the Hessians *chose* to relax at the wrong time.

Fischer is at his best in describing and analyzing the rebel revival in the context of the first Trenton engagement. He also shines in his detailed presentation, including a gripping account of the second Trenton battle (January 2, 1777) and the action at Princeton (January 3, 1777), of people and events in the days that immediately followed. Surely Fischer's highly informed narrative and detailed analysis will stand for years to come as the definitive history of these critical patriot victories.

On the other hand, many readers will ask why Fischer relied so heavily on various kinds of ethno-social-cultural stereotypes in his analysis. An early warning sign of caricatures to come appears in the first three chapters. While Washington's rebels embodied "an army of liberty," British forces constituted "an army of order," the Hessian units were "an army of honor and profit." Defining national military organizations in general terms represents a form of type casting that oversimplifies reality. Despite the latest scholarship

regarding who actually served in the ranks, Fischer repeated the age old myth that the Continentals of 1776 "came mostly from middling families who cherished the revolutionary principles of liberty and freedom." (p. 364) Ignoring the scholarship of Mark E. Lender, John R. Sellers, Edward C. Papenfuse, and Gregory A. Stiverson, among others, he likewise dismisses the important findings of Charles P. Neimeyer about the "real" Continentals as pandering to multiculturalism while engaging in "rituals of iconoclastic rage as expressions of academic grace." (pp. 454–55). Unfortunately for Fischer's analysis, the best modern scholarship does not support the ever persistent myth of a Continental army full of strong-jawed, middle-class farmers, like those of the day of Lexington and Concord, especially after the virtual disintegration of Washington's army during its retreat across New Jersey in November 1776.

Fischer's maintenance of the middle-class Continental myth fits well with other caricatures that appear along the way. "Free Americans in 1776," writes Fischer, "were a restless, striving, entrepreneurial people," a "practical people" who viewed "war as something that had to be done ... for a particular purpose or goal." Their European opponents, by comparison, "thought of war as a nobleman's vocation and a pursuit of honor." (p. 370). Apparently, they fought to enhance their reputations, something akin to the approximately 65,000 Celtic Scots who "had been bred to the warrior tradition," and supposedly begged to enlist when the Revolutionary War began. (p. 47) If so many thousands of mad warrior Scots thus presented themselves to the King's recruiters, then readers should surely ask why British policy makers felt compelled to supplement their forces with 30,000 Hessian mercenaries.

Some of Fischer's thinking about social-cultural differences between Europeans and American colonists relates to his assumptions about the alleged openness, in comparison to highly stratified, class bound Europe, of provincial society. Readers, for example, will find Charles, Lord Cornwallis, acting as a spoiled British aristocrat who "arrogated the major decisions entirely to himself" and made critical mistakes because he held superior rank in the English social order. Washington, the product of "a more open polity" and "a less stratified society" who was also deeply committed to the "expanding ideas of liberty and freedom," naturally listened to his fellow officers in councils of war and "encouraged a free exchange of views." Thus, claims Fischer, this penchant for "open discourse," apparently a reflection of the supposedly more egalitarian colonial world in which Washington lived, allowed the Virginian to outdo the haughty Cornwallis when it came to the quality of command decisions. (pp. 315–16)

In the process of articulating such an analysis, Fischer eschews other options. Perhaps Washington, in reality a rigid disciplinarian smart enough to listen when the right people presented ideas, simply received better advice than Cornwallis. Perhaps he outgenerated Cornwallis because he had divined the latter's aggressiveness in field, which was as much a matter of successfully reading an opponent as listening to the commentary emanating from war councils. Many such explanatory possibilities exist, but Fischer prefers to use his own caricatures to contend that a whole new American "way of war," denoted by "boldness and prudence, flexibility and opportunism, initiative and tempo, speed and concentration, force multipliers, and intelligence" emerged from the campaign (p. 375). Not addressing the large body of published literature on the American way of war, Fischer offers no explanation regarding how Washington learned so quickly, and then applied universally, the core components of the American military tradition. In the end, this kind of commentary is representative of many points of analysis that fail to convince in this otherwise major reconsideration of the campaign that yielded the remarkable rebel victories at Trenton and Princeton.

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Brian Lockman, with additional text by Dan Cupper. *World War II In Their Own Words: An Oral History of Pennsylvania's Veterans*. (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2005. Pp. 272, 10 maps, bibliography, index, resources. \$19.95 pb).

Each week, hundreds of World War II veterans pass on and their experiences during that conflict are gone forever. It is important to preserve the veterans' stories about World War II and *World War II In Their Own Words* keeps those war memories alive. This collection of oral histories is the print companion to the Pennsylvania Cable Network series about Pennsylvania World War II veterans.

The thirty-plus accounts describe the necessary daily tasks that insured Allied victory in World War II. These ranged from bombing missions and paratrooper operations to supplying the Chinese-Burma-India theater with vital war material. Some veterans discussed their involvement in major engagements such as the Battle of the Bulge, Okinawa, and Pearl Harbor. Photos of veterans today and when they served, along with a short description of their pre-war lives, begins each selection. A short concluding paragraph