



America Goes to War: A Social History of the Continental Army (The American Social Experience)

Charles Patrick Neimeyer

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One of the images Americans hold most dear is that of the drum-beating, fire-eating Yankee Doodle Dandy rebel, overpowering his British adversaries through sheer grit and determination. The myth of the classless, independence-minded farmer or hard-working artisan-turned-soldier is deeply ingrained in the national psyche.

Charles Neimeyer here separates fact from fiction, revealing for the first time who really served in the army during the Revolution and why. His conclusions are startling. Because the army relied primarily on those *not* connected to the new American aristocracy, the African Americans, Irish, Germans, Native Americans, laborers-for-hire, and "free white men on the move" who served in the army were only rarely altruistic patriots driven by a vision of liberty and national unity.

Bringing to light the true composition of the enlisted ranks, the relationships of African-Americans and of Native Americans to the army, and numerous acts of mutiny, desertion, and resistance against officers and government, Charles Patrick Neimeyer here provides the first comprehensive and historically accurate portrait of the Continental soldier.

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