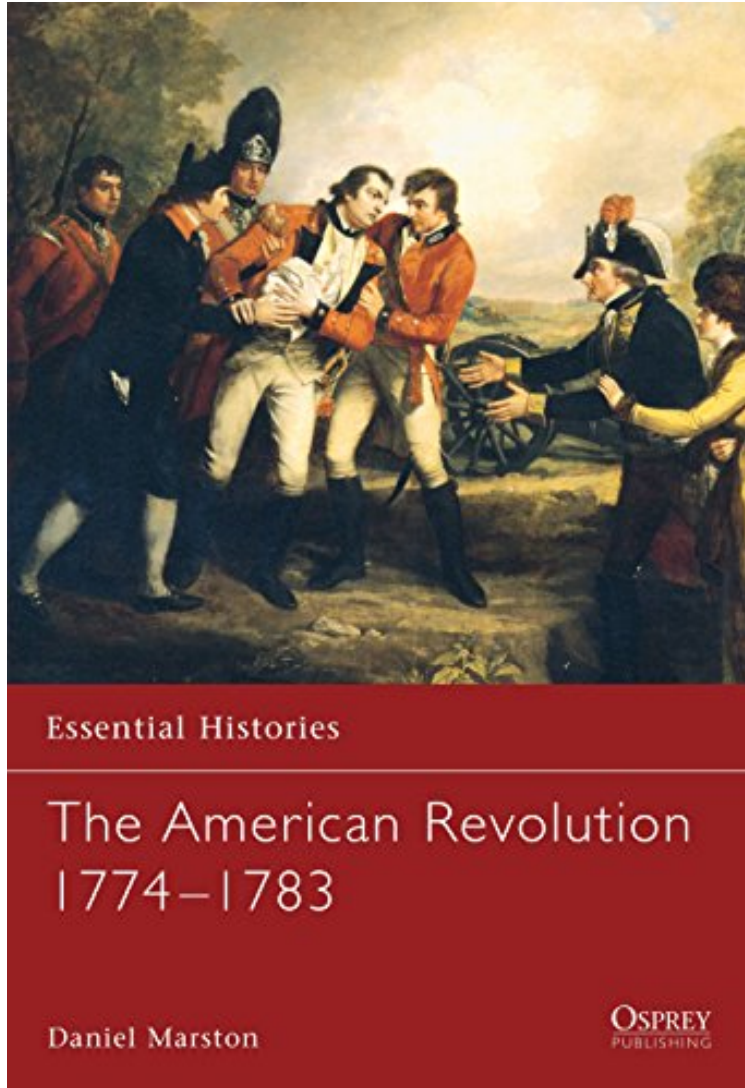


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Daniel Marston : The American Revolution 1774-1783 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The American Revolution 1774-1783:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Superficial But Informative ReadBy Nathan AlbrightThis book, the second of the series of Osprey historical guides that I have read, provides an intriguing and brief perspective on the American Revolution. For one, it is written from the British point of view, which means it tends to exculpate the British (at the expense of the Hessians) and tends to take a far more imperial view of the American Revolution that focuses almost as much on the Mediterranean, India, and the West Indies as it does on the main theater of operations

in North America. While this focus is not at all unusual for those who have studied the American Revolution in detail, it would be quite a shock for many Americans who know little about the broader implications of the American Revolution. Of immediate note, of course, is the fact that the author considers the American Revolution to have begun not with the Declaration of Independence or even with the battles of Lexington and Concord, but rather with the First Continental Congress. Although this is a short book (like the other members of its series) it manages to encourage the reader to examine its thoughts about the connection between the American Revolution and the Seven Years War, with the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, and also with the struggle for control of India. The book pays special attention to issues of logistics, naval concerns, and recruitment, areas that tend to be forgotten when one is examining warfare from the point of view as a reader. As someone with an interest in these matters, it is generally pleasing when I can find that these interests are shared in books that even in their brevity examine the larger side of military efforts rather than merely rehashing the same sort of tactics or operational concerns. The authors of this book even manage to discuss some grand strategy, greatly criticizing the British effort for underestimating the strength of rebellion and squandering their last chance to stop American independence in 1777. Readers who expect a lengthy and comprehensive treatment of the American Revolution, especially in battle tactics, are likely to be a little disappointed. The book, likewise, does not discuss in great detail the political debates on both sides of the Atlantic (including the substantial amount of British support among the Whigs for the American cause before the Declaration of Independence). Nevertheless, as a book that is brief, contains a few intriguing and unusual perspectives (a long-serving American soldier and a Boston loyalist) as well as a thoughtful overview of the war in a chronological and thematic fashion that whets the appetite of the reader for more reading. That appears to be the purpose of these guides after all, to provide a thoughtful start in examining a given subject and giving the reader a lot to think about and research in future works. This value makes it worthwhile to deal with its occasional typos (like misspelling the name of American General Nathaniel Greene, for example) as well as its generally superficial nature.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. For both sides, an awkward fight...By HMS Warspite "The American Revolution 1774-1783" is an Osprey Essential Histories Series book, delivering the Revolutionary War in just 90 pages of text. As a concise summary, it is a decent read. Author Daniel Marston covers the essentials. Of note, the author, an Australian with experience with the British Army, takes a balanced perspective on the war, including the fact that it became a global conflict for the British, one which they were simply not resourced to fight properly. Marston's narrative spares neither side its many mistakes. The Americans (both patriots and loyalists) were fighting on their own turf, but the Continental Army took years to build an army that could consistently face British regulars in a stand-up fight. On the other hand, the British were fighting at the far end of a three thousand mile supply line and made some serious strategic mistakes in prosecuting an insurrection. The text is complemented by a nice set of period illustrations, along with a limited but informative set of maps and battlefield diagrams. Inevitably, in a book this short, much gets left out; but this is a good introduction for the student or general reader, and recommended as such.

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. It's Amazing That We Won By Mike Dillemath Daniel Marston does a nice job of condensing this nine-year war into its essential elements. The book contains the usual assortment of drawings and maps that are common among Osprey publications. The war is told in a simple chronological order. Of note is that the author routinely documents his facts. The text contains numerous references to primary sources that can validate the author's point. The chapter on "The Fighting" breaks down the war by year. Within each year, the author further breaks down the conflict by geographic campaign (i.e.: Northern Campaign, Middle Atlantic Campaign, etc.). This writing technique segregates the war in a way that is easy for the reader to follow. The author also does a nice job of putting the Revolution in context of the wider global war. For example, a fair amount of time is spent on the engagements in the West Indies and India. Unfortunately, some major battles are only given a brief description. Camden is described in about one paragraph. Also, the author does not really describe General Gates' flight from the battle; a significant event. That said, the book does contain a nice color map to illustrate that engagement. The Battle of the Cowpens has one paragraph and no map. At least the book describes how Brigadier Daniel Morgan used his retreating militia to lure the British into a trap of waiting Continental troops. The Battle of Yorktown is described in detail, but the book would benefit from a graphic map. Only a photo of an 18th Century map supports the narrative of this battle. The ending chapters provide a nice perspective on events other than battles. The chapter on "Portrait of a Civilian" gives a dark view of patriot activities. Quotes are taken from letters of that period to illustrate the rather barbaric treatment of loyalists at the hands of patriots. An incident of tar and feathering points out that the victim most likely died. "The War on the Home Front" provides an interesting description of the economic impact of the war. For example, the colonies experienced an initial burst of prosperity due to unrestricted trade. As the war dragged on, coin money became depleted and the colonies were forced to print paper money, which became increasingly worthless. Bottom line: this is a pretty good synopsis of the Revolution. The author does cover all the major battles even though some engagements are given only a brief description. Other events, such as the treason of Benedict Arnold are also discussed in the briefest of detail. That said, the book is a relatively easy read and will provide the reader with an excellent overview of this conflict.

The American Revolution has been characterized politically as a united political uprising of the American colonies and militarily as a guerrilla campaign of colonists against the inflexible British military establishment. Daniel Marston argues that this belief, though widespread, is a misconception. He contends that the American Revolution, in reality, created deep political divisions in the population of the Thirteen Colonies, while militarily pitting veterans of the Seven Years' War against one another, in a conflict that combined guerrilla tactics and classic eighteenth century campaign techniques on both sides. The peace treaty of 1783 that brought an END to the war marked the formal beginning of the United States of America as an independent political entity.

"I am most favorably impressed by the Essential Histories series on the American Civil War. Written by four of the best historians of the military course of the war, these volumes provide a lucid and concise narrative of the campaigns in both the Eastern and Western theaters as well as penetrating analyses of strategies and leadership. Ideal for classroom use or fireside reading." From the Publisher This unique series studies every major war in history looking at all the aspects of war, from how it felt to be a soldier to the lasting impact of the conflict on the world around it. About the Author Daniel Marston completed both his BA and MA in History at McGill University, Montreal, Canada and his DPhil in the History of War at Balliol College, Oxford. His book 'The Seven Years' War, also in the Osprey Essential Histories series, was published in 2001. Daniel was born and raised in Boston, MA and now lives in Dorchester, MA