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The American Home Guard: The State Militia in the Twentieth Century (review)

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***Children and War: A Historical Anthology.*** Edited by James Marten. New York: NYU Press, 2002. ISBN 0-8147-5667-0. Photographs. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xvi, 313. \$20.00.

Erik Erikson claims “It is human to have a long childhood. It is civilized to have an ever longer childhood.” James Marten’s edited anthology *Children and War* demonstrates not only the enormous variation in the ways in which children’s lives are affected by warfare but also just how short a time-span may be allocated to “childhood” in many supposedly civilized cultures. In addition to the great differences in scale and in the geographic and chronological locations of the conflicts covered in this anthology, their child subjects range from two-year-old *enfants de troupe* in the eighteenth century French army to teenagers in the siege of Leningrad. Although a small number of chapters deal with more familiar topics, such as *Kindertransporte* and child evacuees, many others illuminate less extensively researched areas, often utilising evidence from children’s diaries or oral testimonies. Michael Schroeder, for example, draws on the oral accounts of boys who, in the 1920s, joined the army of General Augusto Sandino in Nicaragua whilst Chris O’Brien utilises American children’s recollections of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In an attempt to impose some order on this diverse collection, Professor Marten has divided the volume into three sections—“Memory and Meaning,” “Lesson and Literature,” and “Actors and Victims.” In this way essays from a wide range of locations and periods are successfully linked by a common theme introduced in a short overview by the editor. Although a small number of contributions, such as Dominique Marshall’s essay “Humanitarian Sympathy for Children in Times of War and the History of Children’s Rights, 1919–1959,” sit a little uneasily in their allocated sections, the device generally benefits the reader by bringing together a diversity of thematically linked essays.

Professor Marten himself acknowledges that the decision to include such a wide variety of contributions has meant that the authors have been severely constrained in terms of the length of their essays. Nevertheless, the contributions effectively illustrate an impressive range of issues in relation to the overarching topic of children and war and all are adequately referenced to allow the reader to pursue the arguments further.

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***The American Home Guard: The State Militia in the Twentieth Century.*** By Barry M. Stentiford. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002. ISBN 1-58544-181-3. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xii, 319. \$44.95.

Since the founding of the U.S. Army in 1775, the nation’s defense has relied upon a dual system of Regulars and citizen-soldiers. Throughout much

of the twentieth century, the complementary and often contentious relationship between the Regular Army and the National Guard reflected the shared responsibilities between the states and the federal government for national defense. However, historians have overlooked one interesting dilemma inherent in defense policy. When the National Guard is called into federal service en masse and Regulars are unavailable, who is to provide security in the states? In *The American Home Guard*, Barry Stentiford, a former Army National Guard officer, tells the story of those local and state forces—known collectively as State Guards—mustered in times of national crisis to carry out homeland defense missions.

The need for State Guard forces first arose in World War I, when President Woodrow Wilson ordered the entire National Guard into federal service. State governments and federal officials alike grew concerned over the need for military forces capable of providing domestic security. The states raised State Guard units that responded to natural disasters, quelled civil unrest, guarded public facilities, maintained armories and training sites, and monitored the activities of subversive groups. The creation of the State Guards often resulted in confusion and animosity between the states, the National Guard, and the War Department. Still, State Guard forces eased public fears and provided valuable service during emergencies. The State Guards rose to prominence again during World War II, languished during the early Cold War, and enjoyed a resurgence in the 1970s and 1980s. Today, State Guard units in selected states are postured to support the deployment of National Guard units. Unlike most histories of the National Guard, Stentiford resists the tendency to dwell exclusively on the federal aspects of state forces and presents a balanced view from the state and national perspectives.

The author's analysis of State Guard forces comes at a particularly opportune time. Since the horrific events of 11 September 2001, homeland defense has been near the top of the U.S. national agenda. However, most writings on the subject reveal a disturbing lack of historical perspective or suggest that homeland defense is without precedent. On the contrary, citizen-soldiers have always stepped forward during national emergencies to provide homeland defense, a point that Stentiford conveys in a convincing manner. *The American Home Guard* is the best account yet of state and local forces mobilized in times of crisis to maintain domestic order, and should be required reading for all those seriously pondering the difficulties of homeland defense. To paraphrase an old adage, leaders who do not understand past mistakes associated with homeland defense will be doomed to repeat them. *The American Home Guard* provides an excellent perspective on those mistakes as well as on the many successes.

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