

# CURRENT BOOKS

## FELLOWS' CHOICE

*Recent titles selected and reviewed by Fellows of the Wilson Center*

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**AMERICAN SLAVERY  
AMERICAN FREEDOM:  
The Ordeal of  
Colonial Virginia**

by Edmund S. Morgan  
Norton, 1975, 464 pp.  
\$11.95 cloth, \$3.95 paper

L of C 75-17534  
ISBN 0-393-05554-X  
0-393-091560-2 pbk

Local institutions run by local men became the hallmark of English colonization in America, writes Yale historian Morgan. But the Virginia settlers who early made it to the top as tobacco planters used their control of the colony's assembly and the county courts to defraud and overwork the thousands of indentured servants lured to the New World from Britain. Before the 1670s, opposition to the laws passed by Virginia's assembly did not come from the crown; it came from the discontented small farmers and freemen who wanted to dislodge the oligarchy that monopolized local offices, speculated in land, levied taxes, and restricted the franchise. Bacon's Rebellion (1676), the most serious colonial conflict prior to the American Revolution, was the consequence. Later, slavery helped to calm the colony's uneasy social order as planters turned to exploiting black slaves rather than other Englishmen; the assembly, responding to the small planter, reduced taxes and enlarged the franchise. Local politics was still intensely factional, but now rivals fought to control, not disband, the lower house. The Old South, says Morgan, was forged in Virginia, where slavery for blacks made democracy for white farmers possible.

—James N. Lang ('78)

**GERMANY 1866–1945**

by Gordon A. Craig  
Oxford, 1978  
840 pp. \$19.95

L of C 78-58471  
ISBN 0-19-822113-4

Throughout the 75-year history of united Germany, argues Craig, a Stanford historian, the national emphasis on power corrupted the values and stunted the political growth of the German people so thoroughly that they came to tolerate both "the irresponsible absolutism" of Kaiser William II and the crimes of the Nazis. A masterful blend of political commentary and cultural history, this book is