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# The Society of the Cincinnati: Conspiracy and Distrust in Early America

**The Society of the Cincinnati: Conspiracy and Distrust in Early America** . By Hünemörder Markus. (New York: Berghahn, 2006. 256 pp. \$75.00, ISBN1-84545-107-4.)

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*Journal of American History*, Volume 93, Issue 4, 1 March 2007, Pages 1223–1224,  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/25094638>

**Published:** 01 March 2007

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The Society of the Cincinnati, a fraternal organization for former

The Society of the Cincinnati, a fraternal organization for former Continental Army officers, was the target of remarkable amounts of criticism from various quarters during the 1780s. Despite the fact that the Society centered mostly on social and charitable activities, it was portrayed as a threat to the revolutionary order by an array of anxious republicans—who saw it as a hereditary, militaristic nobility—concerned that the fruits of the Revolution stood threatened in the volatile climate of the crisis-filled decade. Markus Hünemörder probes the reasons behind this vituperation toward what seemed to be, on its surface, a benevolent organization of patriotic veterans. In a tightly argued and briskly written examination of the debate surrounding the Cincinnati during the 1780s, Hünemörder succeeds in placing the controversy within the era's larger political culture and thereby contributes to a more nuanced understanding of this unsettled, formative...

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Online ISSN 1945-2314

Print ISSN 0021-8723

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