

BOOKLIST

STARRED REVIEW

Blumrosen, Alfred W. and Blumrosen, Ruth G. *Slave Nation: How Slavery United the Colonies and Sparked the American Revolution*. Feb. 2005. 304p. index. Sourcebooks, \$24.95 (1-4022-0400-0). 973.3.

In a startling and necessary book, one of the most important publications on the topic of black history to appear this season, the authors, both law professors with backgrounds in civil rights, chart a bold course through the history of the revolutionary period in American history and arrive at nontraditional but effectively expressed and well-defended conclusions. Their basic premise is that slavery cast its shadow over the founding of the republic, not simply the proceedings of the Constitutional Convention. The Blumrosens peer further back than that convocation in Philadelphia, convened to revise the union of former colonies, and discover within the early provenance of the movement toward revolution--the movement toward one united nation free and independent, that is--the southern colonies' fear that Britain would outlaw slavery and the northern colonies' acceptance of the continuation of slavery where it previously existed. Although this work is not for the casual reader, the serious student of history will come away informed and challenged. See also Steven Wise's *Though the Heavens May Fall* (below) for another historical account of the issue of slavery within the British Empire. --Brad Hooper