prophesied to Jefferson when their correspondence resumed in 1812, became a forgotten hero.

*Adams and Jefferson* will be greeted enthusiastically both by scholars and by the general public—and deservedly so. It is a superb addition to the bicentennial literature, and together with *The Adams-Jefferson Letters*, edited by Lester J. Cappon, it will become the starting point for anyone who desires to understand the relationship between these two giants of the American Revolution.

The University of Georgia Press deserves praise for producing a handsome, well edited book. It is rare when superior scholarship is so well complemented by the attractiveness of the volume itself.

*University of Southern Mississippi,  David J. Bodenhamer*  


This small book reproduces eight lectures presented by the Department of History, Indiana University-Purdue University at Fort Wayne in the fall of 1975. The purpose of the lectures was “to shed light on the background of the American Revolution and its meaning for the United States and other nations” (Preface). The topics are well suited to the stated purpose, and they are well developed. Doubtless the series contributed, as was hoped, to “a better public understanding of what it is that Americans are celebrating in these Bicentennial years” (Preface).

Inevitably the quality of this kind of book is uneven. Some of the writing is flawless, but there are errors. The error is literary when one writes that “Franco . . . is strongly anti-communist and that is sufficient justification to enamor him to us” (p. 103). It is chronological when one declares it unlikely that either the American or the French Revolution “would have . . . taken place without the other” (p. 137). It is mathematical when, regarding the relation between revolution and frustrated expectations, one asserts that “if you
start with zero and move to one, you have improved 100 per-
cent . . .” (p. 115). Extensive documentation raises addi-
tional questions. If the book was aimed at scholarly readers, 
the writers should not have relied on survey textbooks in 
world history for authority; if it was intended for popular 
consumption, quotations should have been translated into 
English.

Those who presented this series are to be commended 
for what must have been a very worthwhile local bicentennial 
event. It is doubtful, however, that publication of these lec-
tures, which offer little that is new, was needed.

Indiana Central University, Indianapolis Frederick D. Hill

Pathway to the National Character, 1830-1861. By Robert 
Lemelin. (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 

This little book, published early in 1975, promises a great 
deal more than it delivers. Using as his sources travel ac-
counts and works of descriptive writers during the three 
decades before the Civil War, Lemelin sets out to demonstrate 
that one of the most important themes in these multifaceted 
accounts is an American culture struggling for the first time 
to define its identity. A sense of cultural identity did in fact 
begun to emerge in that period, Lemelin further contends, 
and it has a validity for Americans even now.

Any book that deals with that will-o'-the-wisp, “national 
character,” is likely to be the subject of criticism, but Lemelin's 
failures are only partly attributable to the profound and 
inherent difficulty of the general subject with which he deals. 
In large part the problems in the present study are the result 
of the very questionable assumptions with which Lemelin 
begins. In the first place, many students of early American 
culture would seriously doubt that “the culture began con-
sciously to wrestle with defining the national character” 
(p. 3) only in the years from 1831 to 1860. Actually that 
quest for national identity began much, much earlier. More-
over, one has to wonder if travel and descriptive literature 
is a better place to go for clues about national character 
formation than sermons, orations, eulogies, newspapers, and 
popular fiction. There were certainly other sources closer