



# Forged in War: The Continental Congress and the Origin of Military Supply and Acquisition Policy (Contributions in Military Studies)

*Lucille E. Horgan*

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Three policy actions taken during the Revolutionary War period helped form the military supply and acquisition structure still in place today. These include the formation of a management structure; the choice of management methods; and debates related to ancillary issues such as R&D, fostering of expertise, encouraging innovation, and the role of the federal government in the development of an industrial base. To provide valuable context, Horgan looks not only at decisions made by the Continental Congress, but also at the environment in which these plans were made. Of the wide range of methods used to procure the supplies needed for war, many were harsh measures taken by beleaguered policy makers, forced to desperate steps by the demands of war.

The organizational structure created to manage the supply effort was, Horgan reveals, in constant flux, characterized by the abandoning of one failed experiment in favor of another that would soon be exposed as equally unsuccessful. The two major weapons of the period, the big guns of Army artillery and navel ordnance and Navy ships, are examined within this framework. Horgan explores how the Congress managed their acquisition, including procedures related to the manufacture of artillery in private sector founders and government facilities, as well as the construction projects for Navy ships. She demonstrates how policy decisions made during these early years relate to the present policy environment for the acquisition of major weapon systems.

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