



For our November 1 meeting, we will be discussing David Hackett Fischer's book, *Washington's Crossing*. Prepare to have your understanding of what happened on that fateful night turned upside down as Fischer replaces American myth with the far more amazing and awe inspiring historical account of what happened at Trenton. (Hint: The Hessians were not drunk, and there is a good reason that Washington was standing in that boat in the painting.)

Once again, as we did with Barbara Tuchman in *The Guns of August*, we will travel the battlefields, learning the stories of the officers (watch for Hamilton) and the soldiers from their own accounts. Fischer takes us first to the disastrous campaigns in New York and then on to the two battles at Trenton, the battle at Princeton, and the Forage Wars. You will learn much about the British and Hessian military as well as the young American army, and you will watch General Washington create a uniquely American way of command.

*Washington's Crossing* is our first book by an academic historian and so includes appendices that are almost as long as the book. For those of you reading on your Kindle, when you hit 54%, you will have finished! Look at the appendices if they interest you—who knew all of these facts about Delaware ice? I would recommend that, if you have the time and the interest, you read the *Historiography* section which explains the differing ways that these events were interpreted by successive schools of historians representing the values of their times.

In our discussion, we will focus, as Fischer does, on the ways that these battles changed the war and changed us as a nation. And we will have some fun marveling at how different the real story was from what we were all taught, and from what Fischer himself taught for 40 years. Bring your list of “things I did not know” to our November 1 meeting as we enjoy uncovering the extraordinary story of *Washington's Crossing*.

*Donna McBride*