



Not Your Usual Founding Father: Selected Readings from Benjamin Franklin

Benjamin Franklin

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This engaging book reveals Benjamin Franklin's human side—his tastes and habits, his enthusiasms, and his devotion to democracy and the people of the United States. Three hundred years after his birth, we may remember Franklin's famous *Autobiography*, or his status as framer of the Declaration of Independence and the peace with Great Britain, or his experiments in electricity, or perhaps his sage advice on diligence and thrift. But historian Edmund S. Morgan invites us to meet the man himself, a sociable, good-natured, and extraordinary human being with boundless curiosity about the natural world and a vision of what America could be.

Drawing on lifelong research in the vast Franklin archives, Morgan assembles both famous and lesser-known writings that offer insights into this founding father's thinking. The book is organized around four major themes, each with an introduction. The first section includes journal excerpts and letters revealing Franklin's personal tastes and habits. The second is devoted to Franklin's inexhaustible intellectual energy and his scientific discoveries. The third and fourth chronicle his devotion to serving the people who became the United States both before and after the Revolution and to advancing his democratic vision of their future. Franklin's humanity and genius have never seemed more real than in the pages of this appealing anthology.

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Karen Lawless:

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