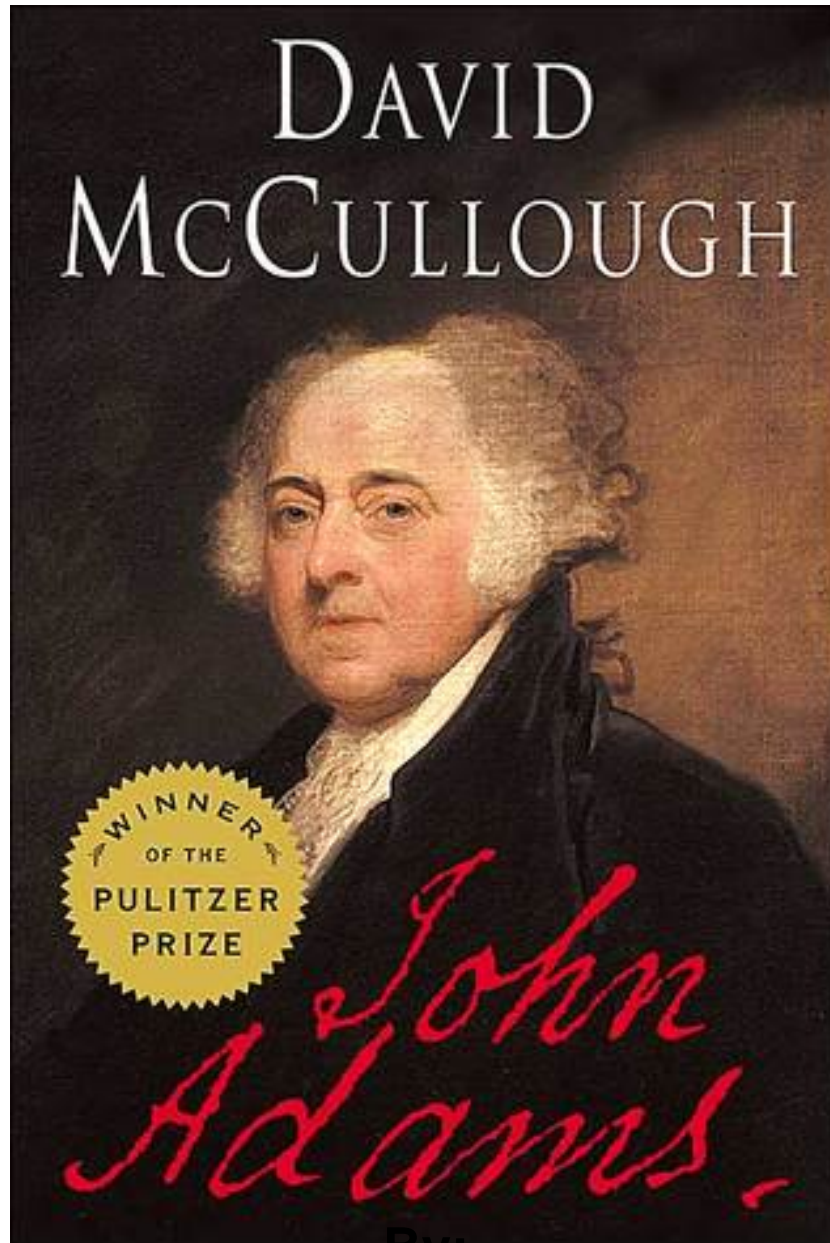


## John Adams Book PDF Download



By:  
**David McCullough**

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## What people Say:

### Stephen

Tidy up your prose, sharpen your story-telling, knowledge up on your source material and bring your entire bag of game, because the gauntlet has been chucked, the bar has been raised and David McCullough has taken off his literary glove and pasted all of you upside your second rate heads. The challenge is before you.

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, the best story on the American Revolution and the creation of the United States of America that I have ever read.

The breadth, depth and detail of this biography is unbelievable. Epic does not begin in describe it. It is epic epicness on an epically epic scale. This is only appropriate given the subject matter.

After finishing this book, I believe the John Adams is the "founding father" I most admire. By making that statement, I do not want to downgrade the importance of the others. Jefferson was arguably more intelligent and was clearly the better writer. Washington was the most beloved and admired figure and without his leadership, the fledgling country would not have had a much needed symbol to rally around and the revolution may very well have failed. Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Paine, James Madison, Samuel Adams, John Jay and all the rest deserve to be acknowledged for their significant contributions.

### Mary Etta

Since reading John Adams I have continually been reminded of my delusion of our country's history. Today as I saw the conclusion of the John Adams' series on HBO I realized I was one of those John Adams saw as "deluded" by the artistic portrayal of our history in Trumbell's "Declaration of Independence." Adams was right. Too many of us believe Trumbell's view of the Declaration of Independence not acknowledging the many difficulties over many years before and after the signing of that great docu

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I'm reminded of that as we too often expect other countries to simply get their act together over a short space of time to form a more free country such as we enjoy. It was never easy. It shall never be easy. There must be always those within the country who are willing and able to do something to make a difference. It takes many making a difference and it takes respect for one another--never simple. Much happens in the process in the making of people. God raises up good and able men and women to make a difference among every people.

An important book to read.

## **Diane**

This is a must-read for anyone interested in the American Revolution. I would call this David McCullough's masterpiece, except I've read several of his remarkable books, including  
and

, and they are all so good I don't think I could pick a favorite.

But let's get back to John Adams, who, along with Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, was a critical founder of America. If you've seen the impressive HBO miniseries based on this book (starring Paul Giamatti and the ama

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But let's get back to John Adams, who, along with Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, was a critical founder of America. If you've seen the impressive HBO miniseries based on this book (starring Paul Giamatti and the amazing Laura Linney as Abigail Adams), you already know the outline of events. John Adams was a lawyer in Massachusetts, and after the Boston Massacre in 1770, he agreed to defend the British soldiers, arguing that "facts are stubborn things." Despite widespread anger toward the British, John Adams won the case.

Meanwhile, the colonists were growing increasingly dissatisfied with their English overlords, especially with their "taxation without representation." When a Continental Congress was formed in Philadelphia, Adams was chosen to represent Massachusetts. It was there that he found his voice in politics, and met the other men who helped design the American government we know today.

Adams was also sent to France and England as an ambassador, and the stories of him abroad were charming in their fish-out-of-water-ness. Oh, and let's not forget Adams became our second president (and his son, John Quincy Adams, became our sixth).

## Michael

A solid and satisfying biography of a key leader in the birth of the American Republic. This book helps make him my favorite of the bunch because of his paradoxical mix of humility and ambition, idealism and pragmatism. Unlike Washington, Jefferson, and Hamilton, he didn't have aristocratic bearings and valued honesty, sincerity, and free thinking as the highest virtues. He appreciated the simple things in small town life and farming and liked doing his own physical tasks like chopping wood. I a

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aristocratic bearings and valued honesty, sincerity, and free thinking as the highest virtues. He appreciated the simple things in small town life and farming and liked doing his own physical tasks like chopping wood. I also admire his 50-plus years of devotion to his wife Abigail and his family. By contrast, Franklin effectively abandoned his family for 17 years in Europe and was allured by the high life and ladies in France.

The book is at its best in explicating Adams's character. He came from a 100-year line of farmers and common Puritan folk in Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston now part of Quincy. His father was devout, a deacon of his Protestant church, and expected John to become a minister. Instead he chose law after graduating from Harvard College and a boring stint as a schoolteacher. He wanted to accomplish something of lasting significance and law was a more likely path. On the one hand he criticized himself for the sins of vanity and selfish ambition, while on the other was always driven to fulfill the image and succeeded like few others. Taking Abigail for his wife kept him down to earth, as she was his sounding board and most significant advisor through the rest of his active life. The letters between them are the main window to Adams thinking and personality, and McCullough harnesses them well to reveal his steady good humor, love of people in general, and overall moral optimism

Soon his cases began radicalizing him against the powers exerted by the colonial government, like customs searches without a warrant and the imposition of import taxes without representation. I liked his courage in acting on his belief in a fair trial to the point of defending the British soldiers who killed several colonists who were protesting the Stamp Act in 1770 in a dangerously rowdy manner. He learned the arts of public speaking, of applying logic to negotiation, and of reading people's motivations and likely actions. His ability to inspire trust and his reputation for honest dealings contributed to his becoming a leader among the Patriot crowd. His effective service as a Massachusetts provincial legislator led to his being included in their delegation to the Continental Congress. And the rest is history, as they say.

After the violence of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill, Adams could readily lead efforts to build-up the local militias into an integrated Continental Army and was responsible for nominating the Virginian Washington for command. One last hurrah of the Loyalists had to play out with a failed petition to King George to relent before the majority was ready to assert independence. Compared to Adams, Franklin and Jefferson were surprisingly restrained and inarticulate in terms of pushing their ideas in debate. When it came to drafting the Declaration of Independence with them and two others on the committee, it fell to Jefferson to compose most of the writing, but Adams was its chief advocate and most responsible for its passage.

When the British response was cutting off trade and blockade, the key to success and survival as a nation became recognition of American independence by countries like France, including a source of naval muscle to assert rights of free trade. Adams was sent with the delegation to France to help pull this off. The dangerous trip, accompanied by his young son John Quincy, in a stormy February crossing was nicely covered in the book. Success in Paris came slow, and he only had a junior role. Upon return, he took up the task of drafting a constitution for Massachusetts, which was one of his accomplishments he was most proud of. In 1779 he was sent back to head up negotiations for a

peace treaty with Britain. This time he took Abigail and their daughter along. McCullough is especially engaging in probing for the changing reactions of their plebian family to the fashionable and decadent lifestyles of Parisian society and the state of filth and misery of the lower classes.

The book seems to lose energy after this point. His languishing as the first vice president and tenure as president have few high points. The dissension between his Federalist Party and the Republican Party of his vice president Jefferson is given short shrift. When the French began seizing American merchant ships doing trade with Britain, Adams broke with his cabinet advisors (and Abigail) in refusing to join Britain in their war against Napoleon's forces. The libelous press became a target with the Sedition Act, which he felt violated the First Amendment, and did not support aggressive prosecutions as even Abigail wished. Life winds down for Adams after losing the next election to Jefferson. The high point in this book for the long succeeding decades of private life was his ten-year correspondence with Jefferson starting in 1812 through the encouragement of mutual friend Benjamin Rush to put aside their differences. I wish McCullough had done even more than pulling out a few choice sections on their play of ideas.

In the end, I felt the book was great for conveying a sense of the man in his times, but it was missing the elements of critical analysis and perspectives that provided a better balance in his biographies of Truman and Teddy Roosevelt. For example, in Isaacson's biography of Franklin Adams comes off a bit as a drudge and moralistic party pooper in his time with Franklin in Paris. And the Wiki summary on Adams reveals unclear or contradictory positions of Adams on slavery and heredity legislators like Britain's House of Lords. For readers interested in the American Revolution, McCullough's "1776" is a better resource for the drama and broader understanding of how it was that ordinary rural people in a diverse set of colonies came together to form an independent nation. I loved Philbrick's "Bunker Hill" even more. These relative judgments are subject to the caveat that I did this "read" as an abridged audiobook. I am only aware of missing sections that cover what his reactions and activities were during the period of British blockage of Boston and early battles of revolt, the course of his contentious relations with Jefferson and with Hamilton, and much of Adams' time as an ambassador to England.

## Chrissie

I haven't read a book this good in years!

I cannot imagine anyone who wouldn't enjoy this book.



This is a book about a man, John Adams, but it is also much, much more. It is a book about American Independence, the American Revolution and

the Founding Fathers, the seven most important being George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, John Jay, Alexander Hamilton, George Madison and Benjamin Franklin. The book follows all the events from the Declaration of Independence and the Revolutio

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This is a book about

, each very different in character, but the author brings each one of them to life. I adore learning about people. I loved the book for this reason alone. You understand how the individuals think, what they feared, what they loved, what made each one special. You understand their differences. It is the little details that will make you LOVE this book. John Adams, this guy wrote volumes in the margins of his books. Jefferson loved his books too, but rarely did he write in them. The relationship between these two men is extraordinary. John Adams relationship with his wife Abigail is extraordinary too!