



The Forgotten Founding Father: Noah Webster's Obsession and the Creation of an American Culture

Joshua Kendall

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Noah Webster's name is now synonymous with the dictionary he created, but his story is not nearly so ubiquitous. Now acclaimed author of *The Man Who Made Lists*, Joshua Kendall sheds new light on Webster's life, and his far-reaching influence in establishing the American nation.

Webster hobnobbed with various Founding Fathers and was a young confidant of George Washington and Ben Franklin. He started New York's first daily newspaper, predating Alexander Hamilton's *New York Post*. His "blue-backed speller" for schoolchildren sold millions of copies and influenced early copyright law. But perhaps most important, Webster was an ardent supporter of a unified, definitively American culture, distinct from the British, at a time when the United States of America were anything but unified-and his dictionary of American English is a testament to that.

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