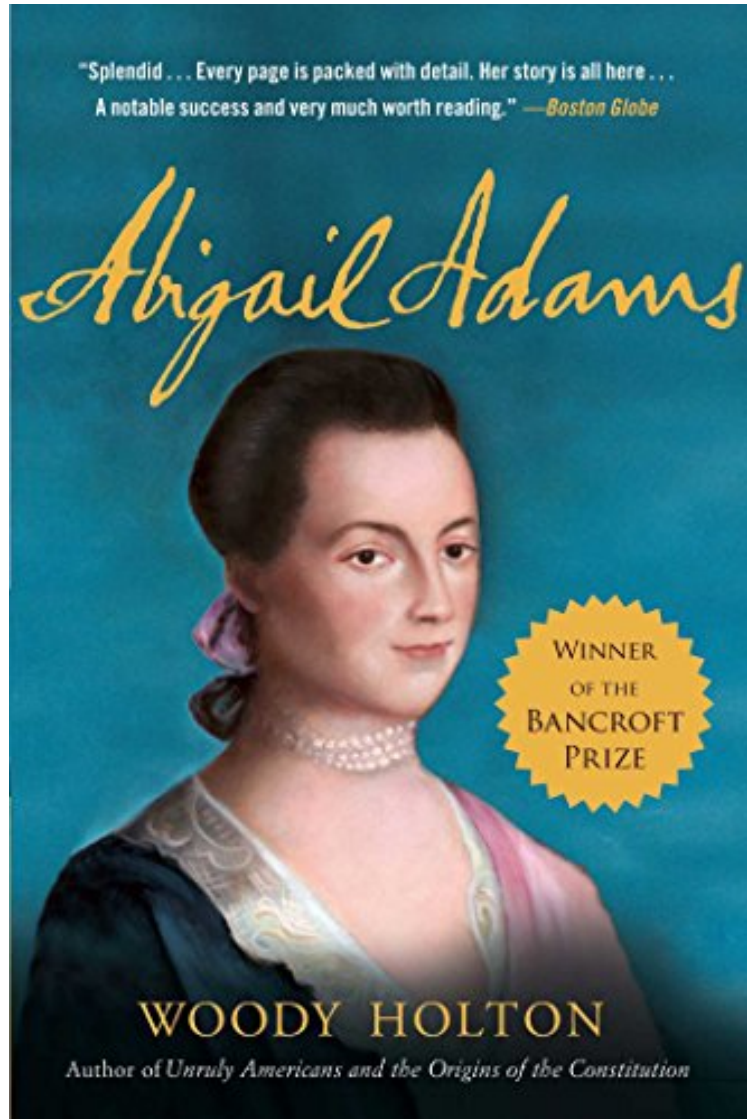


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## Abigail Adams: A Life

Woody Holton

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#174223 in Books Woody Holton 2010-06-01 2010-06-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x 1.30 x 6.00l, 1.11 #File Name: 1416546812512 pages Abigail Adams | File size: 17.Mb

**Woody Holton : Abigail Adams: A Life** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Abigail Adams: A Life:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Well researched. Well written By bookish nan Having read many books about leaders of the American Revolution, it was very interesting to read about a well-known woman. I learned a great deal about Abigail as a woman of her time. There was considerably more to her than her reminder to John "to remember the ladies." This book would be enjoyable to anyone with an interest in colonial and early U.S. history.

Although some reviews criticized the extensive use of her letters, I felt they lent an authentic voice to the writing. I have a greater appreciation of the woman and her time. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Could not put this book down! By Peacemaker With a couple of notable exceptions, I agree with most of the reviews of Woody Holton's wonderful biography of Abigail Adams. The other 5 star reviews say it better than I, so I will try not to repeat too much. Holton's "Abigail Adams" was immensely readable as well as thought-provoking: for example, it made me wonder how many other women of that era felt the same as she did about women's rights, or the lack thereof? AA might not have been an anomaly, were we able to ever know. The obvious fact is, her letters to her husband and other family members were preserved because the Adams family was famous. It's interesting just to wonder, since it can never be discovered, how many other women felt exactly the same way, especially about the lack of education, legal rights (especially regarding abuse), and the inability to own anything in their own right? Her sisters obviously felt the same way, and it stands to reason that other women did too. However, some might not have had the type of husband or families that would even "permit" a discussion of these rights, much less "allow" her to handle monetary transactions and advise others as well. (Witness the one or two star reviews by people who even now feel threatened by the "feminist" from over two-hundred years ago). I would think that it would have taken a lot of courage to express those kind of beliefs during a time when women were little more than slaves. AA had a loving and mostly supportive husband, but others could have risked their lives for saying and doing the same things. It also makes me wonder if any of her direct descendants, male or female, were especially inspired enough by her ideas to try to change anything? Finally, I learned so much history of the lives of real people from reading her letters. This book, however, was not just the letters; I've read other bios of AA, and I particularly liked the way Prof Holton interpreted and explained them. I'm a lifelong history lover/reader and I agree with another reviewer that it's books like this one that should be assigned EARLY in school history classes (middle school, at least?) so that people will grow up wanting to learn about the history of our country and world! It is so interesting and exciting, everyone should read this book and others like it. Thank you Professor Holton! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Founding Mother By Karathoner Actually listened to this as an audio book and felt as though Abigail were speaking herself. Many hours of research must have gone into this book. Excellent reading of Abigail's letters and all the business affairs she handled. She was quite an independent woman. You can realize all the family troubles she handled, her fight for women's rights and her family's dislike of slavery. While John was busy forming our country, Abigail was definitely running the home front. I gave it a four because of it's repetitive nature of some of the letters which probably could of been condensed.

In this new, vivid, nuanced portrait, now in paperback, prize-winning historian Woody Holton uses original sources and letters for the first time in a sweeping reinterpretation of Adams's life story and of women's roles in the creation of the republic. In this vivid new biography of Abigail Adams, the most illustrious woman of the founding era, Bancroft Award-winning historian Woody Holton offers a sweeping reinterpretation of Adams's life story and of women's roles in the creation of the republic. Using previously overlooked documents from numerous archives, Abigail Adams shows that the wife of the second president of the United States was far more charismatic and influential than historians have realized. One of the finest writers of her age, Adams passionately campaigned for women's education, denounced sex discrimination, and matched wits not only with her brilliant husband, John, but with Thomas Jefferson and George Washington. When male Patriots ignored her famous appeal to Remember the Ladies, she accomplished her own personal declaration of independence: Defying centuries of legislation that assigned married women's property to their husbands, she amassed a fortune in her own name. Adams's life story encapsulates the history of the founding era, for she defined herself in relation to the people she loved or hated (she was never neutral), a cast of characters that included her mother and sisters; Benjamin Franklin and James Lovell, her husband's bawdy congressional colleagues; Phoebe Abdee, her father's former slave; her financially naive husband; and her son John Quincy. At once epic and intimate, Abigail Adams, sheds light on a complicated, fascinating woman, one of the most beloved figures of American history.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . While Abigail Adams has always been viewed as one of the most illustrious of America's founding mothers, University of Richmond historian Holton (*Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution*), drawing on the rich collection of Adams's letters and other manuscripts, paints a strong-minded woman whose boldness developed in the context of the revolutionary era in which she lived. Holton offers a captivating portrait of a reformer both inside and outside the home. Best known for exhorting her husband, John Adams, to remember the ladies in devising America's new political system, she also, Holton has discovered, wrote a will leaving most of her property to her granddaughters, in defiance of the law that made her husband the master of all she owned. Furthermore, she was a businesswoman and invested her own earnings in ways John did not always approve of. Tracing Adams's life from her childhood as the daughter of a poor parson to her long and sometimes uncertain courtship with John, her joys and sorrows as a mother and her life as the wife of a president, Holton's superb biography shows us a three-dimensional Adams as a forward-thinking woman with a mind of her own. (Nov. 3) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Holton... allows Abigail's

voice to radiate off the page; the biography grips the reader from the beginning tale of Abigail writing her own will. A wonderful book for revolutionary history buffs, women's studies majors, and biography lovers." --Library Journal, starred review  
Holton vividly captures the brilliance, charm, and spunk of Abigail Adams, and shows why she deserves her place at the table along with her husband John and the other Founders. A must-read book for understanding the founding of our nation. --Walter Isaacson, author of Benjamin Franklin: An American Life "Captivating... biography and social history. Through his engaging prose, Holton provides a nuanced picture of Adams as representative of many women of her era yet also ahead of her time." --Journal of American History  
About the Author  
Abner Linwood "Woody" Holton, III, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Richmond in Virginia and is a member of the Richmond Research Institute. He has published two award-winning books: *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution* (2007), a finalist for the National Book Award; and *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia* (1999). Holton received his B.A. in English from the University of Virginia and his Ph.D. in History from Duke, and is currently an associate professor at the University of Richmond. Holton has received numerous awards, including three from the Organization of American Historians (OAH). His first book, *Forced Founders* (in which he argued that Jefferson, Washington, and other Virginia gentlemen rebelled against Britain partly in order to regain control of Native Americans, slaves, and small farmers), received the OAH's prestigious Merle Curti award for social history. In 2006, the OAH named Holton one of its Distinguished Lecturers. Holton's article, *Divide et Impera: The Tenth Federalist in a Wider Sphere*, was selected by a panel of distinguished scholars for publication in the OAH's Best American History Essays 2006. Holton received a Guggenheim Fellowship for the 2008-09 academic year to write *ABIGAIL ADAMS* and today lives in Richmond with his wife Gretchen Schoel (the director of an organization combating prejudice against Arabs and Muslims) and their daughter Beverly.