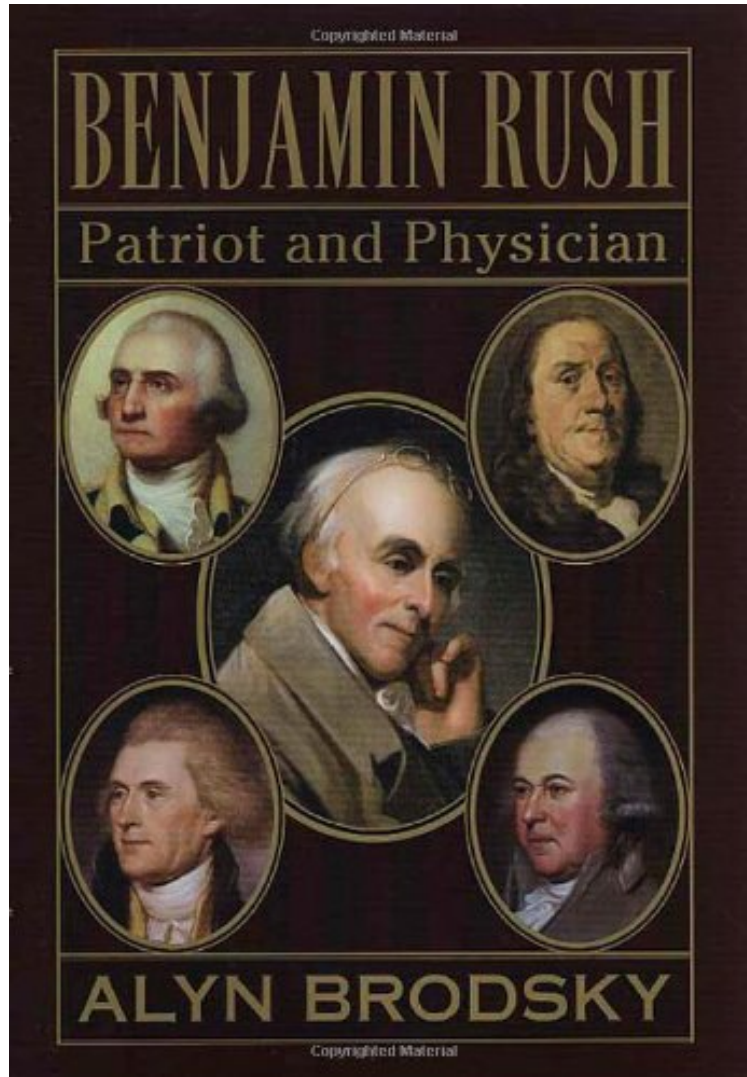


## Benjamin Rush: Patriot and Physician

Alyn Brodsky

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#1122032 in Books 2004-06-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.64 x 1.32 x 6.361, 1.60 #File Name: 0312309112416 pages | File size: 68.Mb

**Alyn Brodsky : Benjamin Rush: Patriot and Physician** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Benjamin Rush: Patriot and Physician:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Revolutionary GadflyBy VA Duck"Benjamin Rush was a congenital victim of two major personality flaws: impetuosity and a proclivity for indiscretion" (pg. 194). These flaws will prove, throughout this read, to be the factors that placed Dr. Rush forever on a 3rd tier of Founders. It is NOT that Rush was not an extraordinary man, he was, it may be rather that the 'Pantheon' tier of the Founders (Washington, Madison, Jefferson, Franklin, Hamilton and Adams) left contributions that have been judged for over two centuries to be not only extraordinary, but heroic. To the contrary, Rush's place in history (for the purpose of this book) is judged

principally as an essayist, polemicist revolutionary. In this context, Author Brodsky succeeds, perhaps unintentionally (?) in portraying Rush as notable in history principally through his 'connections' with the Great Men of the Revolution rather than through his own accomplishments; a "Revolutionary Gadfly": the title given by earlier biographer David Freeman Hawke (Benjamin Rush: Revolutionary Gadfly). Rush was trained in Philadelphia and Edinburgh as a physician. He achieved eminence in his profession, served in the 1st 2nd Continental Congress, was 'Patron' for Thomas Paine, signed the Declaration of Independence (though played no part in its formulation), served as a Surgeon General for the Continental Army, conspired to remove Washington as Commander-in-Chief (Rush's 'undoing') worked for ratification of the Constitution, and most famously, 'healed' the late-life rift between Adams and Jefferson (see Zarrow's, Friendship and Healing: The Dreams of John Adams and Benjamin Rush). Rush leaves behind a full resum, acting at the center of medicine, but only on the periphery of politics and in both often flawed by, "impetuosity and...indiscretion." The book's author, the late (April 12, 2011) Alyn Brodsky, delivers an even handed account of his subject written clearly and interestingly; only occasionally tipping the playing field in favor of Rush and then with military assessments who's victors are at least arguable and still questioned (Gates at Saratoga and Allen at Ticonderoga; see Randall's Benedict Arnold: Patriot and Traitor). Rush's ability to judge military leadership is summed by the selection of his favorite generals: Horatio Gates, Charles Lee and Thomas Conway; all three eventually disgraced. Brodsky struggles with Rush's story; the politics, often sniping and vindictive, are not enough to fill a volume; the medical seems unconnected - always primitive, frequently harmful and all too often tangential to the story of the Founding. If there is a (minor) criticism of the author's style, it is that the read is occasionally overly 'punctuated' with primary source material which brings to the story, in many instances, more cobwebs than clarification. The latter chapters struggle to give Rush a meaningful role in political events and go by s-l-o-w-l-y. Brodsky was interviewed by Brian Lamb on C-SPAN, Booknotes in 2009. That video (~58-min) is still available on their web site and worth watching prior to the read. I cautiously recommend this book to history buffs; it flows easily and provides a unique perspective to the events of the Revolution and Founding Period that the reader does not get to see when portrayed (typically) through the experiences of the 'pantheon' founders. By the end, the book comes up well short of establishing Rush as an indispensable Founder and leaves the reader questioning the criterion for 18th century medical efficacy.-----kindle edition-----Well done! The e-book publisher has taken pains to implement almost all of the electronic functionality that the buyer is charged for (and seldom receives). There is a well linked Table of Contents that functions as it should from a cross-swipe on the Fire versions. The notes are properly linked to their citations in the back of the book. The index is un-linked but the kindles "highlight", " search", "in-book" function delivers the same (or better) functionality. Even the seldom implemented page numbers are provided, as is text-to-speech. There are no illustrations in the e-book nor its paper siblings. Four typeface choices are provided, in 12 font sizes, though line spacing was ignored. Publication quality for publisher Macmillan USA, , excellent! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A glimpse of early America By MK Miller Who knows? Perhaps others ( that we never learned about ) among our colonial ancestors contributed greatly to early American society. I knew something of Jefferson, Madison, Franklin, the Adamases, and Washington, but there may be so many others. . .(Paine, Hamilton, Hancock. . .) Not many of us knew about Dr. Rush, probably. Thanks, Alyn Brodsky. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Joepau Great book

The only full biography of Benjamin Rush, an extraordinary Founding Father and America's leading physician of the Colonial era While Benjamin Rush appears often and meaningfully in biographies about John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin, this legendary man is presented as little more than a historical footnote. Yet, he was a propelling force in what culminated in the Declaration of Independence, to which he was a cosigner. Rush was an early agitator for independence, a member of the First Continental Congress, and one of the leading surgeons of the Continental Army during the early phase of the American Revolution. He was an constant and indefatigable adviser to the foremost figures of the American Revolution, notably George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams. Even if he had not played a major role in our country's creation, Rush would have left his mark in history as an eminent physician and a foremost social reformer in such areas as medical teaching, treatment of the mentally ill (he is considered the Father of American Psychiatry), international prevention of yellow fever, establishment of public schools, implementation of improved education for women, and much more. For readers of well-written biographies, Brodsky has illuminated the life of one of America's great and overlooked revolutionaries.

From Publishers Weekly Born in 1746 in Pennsylvania, Benjamin Rush became friends with Benjamin Franklin when Rush was studying for his medical degree in Scotland and Franklin was a representative to England. Armed with letters of introduction from Franklin, Rush met with many of the leading political and medical figures in Britain and France before returning in 1769 to Philadelphia, where he established a thriving medical practice. But Rush was just as interested in the colonies' budding independence movement as he was with medicine, and that interest led him to write an essay that, according to Brodsky (The Great Mayor), helped to instigate the Boston Tea Party. Rush is also credited with encouraging Thomas Paine to write Common Sense. During the first Continental Congress, Rush entertained

many of America's Founding Fathers, became especially close to John Adams and was a co-signer of the Declaration of Independence. After the war, Rush devoted himself to his medical practice, where he trained many of America's leading doctors and also explored new paths in mental health. One reason for Rush being so little known is that he ran afoul of George Washington as a participant in the failed Conway Cabal, which sought to oust Washington as commander in chief in 1777. Brodsky's sympathetic biography interweaves Rush's observations and experiences with the momentous events that led to the founding of the nation. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Booklist  
If Benjamin Rush isn't a household word, that isn't for lack of a written record. According to Brodsky, Rush wrote no fewer than 2,000 pages of published letters and essays, and hundreds of unpublished pieces are scattered worldwide in public and private collections. Why isn't he as famous as his fellow Declaration of Independence signers? Perhaps because every time he could have endeared himself to those who might perpetuate his name, he seemed to irritate them. Years before it was fashionable, Rush vociferously condemned slavery and held progressive ideas about public education, educating women, religion, and independence. As a physician and teacher, he eschewed popular medical theories about treatment of the mentally ill, physiology, and the origin and treatment of physiological disease, alienating many powerful and prominent people who clung to archaic notions. Furthermore, because he lacked the social connections necessary to establish a more prosperous clientele, his medical practice focused on the poor. Brodsky draws heavily from Rush's massive self-documentation to paint a compelling portrait of this medical and social activist. Donna Chavez  
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From the Back Cover  
Praise for *The Great Mayor: Fiorello La Guardia and the Making of the City of New York*: "A tribute....Brodsky is fluid and helpfully clear." - *The New York of Books* "A vivid portrait of La Guardia the man." - *The Boston Globe* "Both La Guardia the man and the politician come alive in this absorbing biography." - *Booklist* "A fitting memorial: solid, well-researched, and full of ably reconstructed plot turns, worthy of a place alongside Caro's *The Power Broker*." - *Kirkus* Praise for *Grover Cleveland: A Study in Character*: "Balanced, readable, and worthwhile." - *Library Journal* "Engaging and persuasively argued, this serves as an excellent introduction to Cleveland and his world." - *Kirkus* s