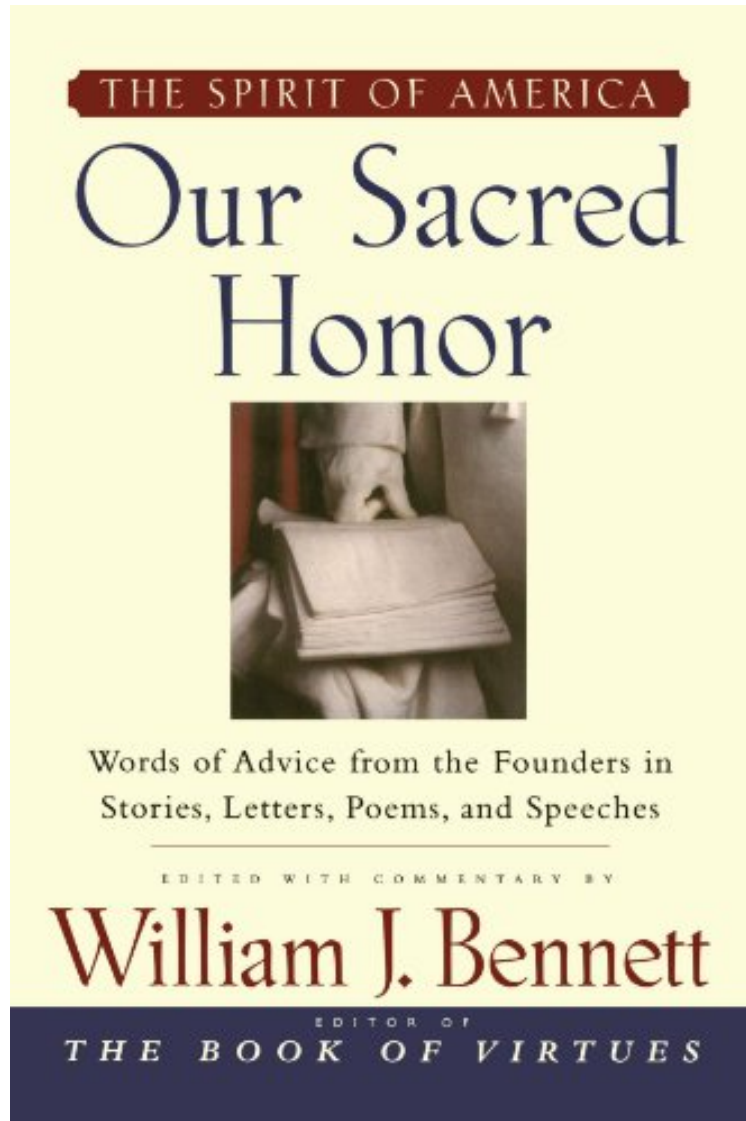


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From Brand: Simon n Schuster : Our Sacred Honor: "The Stories, Letters, Songs, Poems, Speeches, and before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Our Sacred Honor: "The Stories, Letters, Songs, Poems, Speeches, and:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy maryellenLove all William J Bennett's books. Have all so far. Thanks,0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A MARVELOUS COLLECTION OF QUOTES FROM THE FOUNDERSBy Steven H ProppWilliam John Bennett (born 1943) is a conservative commentator and former politician, and who served as Secretary of Education during Reagan's second term, and was "Drug Czar" under President George H. W. Bush. He has written many books, such as *Our Sacred Honor: Words of Advice from the Founders in Stories, Letters, Poems, and Speeches*, *The Book of Virtues*, *The Moral Compass*, *The True Saint Nicholas: Why He Matters to Christmas*, *Why We Fight: Moral Clarity and the War on Terrorism*, *The Fight of Our Lives: Knowing the Enemy, Speaking the Truth, and Choosing to Win the War Against Radical Islam*, *America: The Last Best Hope (Volume III)*, etc. [NOTE: page numbers below refer to the 431-page hardcover edition.]He wrote in the Introduction to this 1997 book, This is a book of advice. It is a collection of the thoughts of our Founders, some of the most thoughtful men and women who ever walked our nation. Their learning, their passion, and their sense of honor shine through this collection. In their advice for our nation, there is a vision of greatness and dedication to high purpose. Their words aim highthey instruct and inspire. In this book, we---all Americans---can see both our patrimony and our basic civic obligations: to keep our country safe and to hold its purpose high The question of how to secure the republic is then the question of what sort of people we must be. This is why I have chosen to offer the American public a book on the Founders vision of the virtues that they believed necessary for sustaining the American experiment in preparing this book, I reviewed the private letters, public addresses, and pamphlets of the Founders to bring to light once again their answers. My aim was to share with a new generation of Americans the private and public reflections of the founding generation on what we must do to make America great. (Pg. 15-16)He continues, My goal was to include selections on the virtues most important to the future vitality of the country There is much here that is moving, memorable, worthy, and perhaps unfamiliar to most Americans. Ready-made answers, however, are not to be found. Instead, the reader will look on as different Founders struggle with the timeless questions of love, friendship, piety, and so on This book then is neither history nor homily; it is a book of my favorite words and deeds and struggles of the Founders Those seeking for a comprehensive and definite portrait of the Founding generation will have to seek elsewhere This book deals with the men and women involved in the events of 1776 through 1787. I decided not to include material relating to matters that arose later, such as the War of 1812, because I wanted to focus on the remarkable period of Founding. There is something sui generis about the Founding Generation. (Pg. 19-20)He quotes Patrick Henry's famed March 23, 1775 speech, Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace---but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle?... Is life so dead, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?... I know not what course others may take; but as for me give me liberty, or give me death! [Bennett acknowledges, however, that The accuracy of the speech cannot be attested to---some attribute the famous last lines to an early biographer] (Pg. 34-35)He quotes Tom Paine's *The American Crisis* [available in [[ASIN:0672600048 *Common Sense and Other Political Writings*]: These are the times that try mens souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: 'tis dearness only that gives everything its value (Pg. 36)John Adams wrote to his wife, But the day is past. The Second Day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable Epoque, in the History of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the Day of Deliverance by solemn Acts of Devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this time forward forever more. (Pg. 64) [NOTE: the Second Continental Congress voted for independence on July 2; but the signing ceremony didn't happen until July 4---which is the day we now celebrate as Independence Day.]Benjamin Franklin's famous comments on the Constitution: I confess that there are several parts of this constitution which I do not at present approve, but I am not sure I shall never approve them. For having lived long, I have experienced many instances of being obliged by better information, or fuller consideration, to change opinions even on important subjects, which I once thought right I agree to this Constitution with all its faults, if they are such; because I think a general Government necessary for us, and there is no form of Government but what may be a blessing to the people if well administered, and believe farther that this is likely to be well administered for a course of years, and can only end in Despotism, as other forms have done before it, when the people shall become so corrupted as to need despotic Government, being incapable of any other. I doubt too whether any other Convention we can obtain, may be able to make a better Constitution Thus I consent Sir, to this Constitution because I expect no better, and because I am not sure, that it is not the best. The opinions I have had of its errors, I sacrifice to the public good. I have never whispered a syllable of them abroad. Within these walls they were born and here they shall die I can not help expressing a wish that every member of the Convention who may still have objections to it, would with me, on this occasion doubt a little of his own infallibility, and to make manifest our unanimity, put his name to this instrument (Pg. 79-81)Benjamin Rush wrote to John Adams in 1808: You and I, in the Revolution, acted from principle. We did our duty, as we then believed, according to our best information, judgment, and consciences. Shall

we now repent of this? God forbid! No! If a banishment to Cayenne or to botany Bay, or even the guillotine, were to be the necessary consequences of it to us, we ought not to repent. Repent? This is impossible. How can a man repent of his virtues? (Pg. 89) Abigail Adams famous 1776 letter to her husband: I long to hear that you have declared an independency---and by the way in the new Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the Ladies we are determined to foment a Rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or representation. That your Sex are Naturally Tyrannical is a Truth so thoroughly established as to admit of no dispute, but such of you as wish to be happy willingly give up the harsh title of Master for the more tender and endearing one of Friend Men of Sense in all Ages abhor those customs which treat us only as the vassals of your Sex. Regard us then as Beings placed by providence under your protection and in imitation of the Supreme Being make use of that power only for our happiness. (Pg. 135) Thomas Jefferson wrote to Benjamin Banneker in 1791, Nobody wishes more than I do to see such proofs as you exhibit, that nature has given to our black brethren, talents equal to those of the other men, and that appearance of a want of them is owing merely to the degraded condition of their existence, both in Africa America. (Pg. 260) He quotes Thomas Jefferson's 1779 Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom: the holy author of our religion chose not to propagate it by coercion but to extend it by its influence on reason alone to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions he disbelieves and abhors, is sinful and tyrannical: that even the forcing him to support this or that teacher of his own religious persuasion, is depriving him of his comfortable liberty of giving his contributions to the particular pastor whose morals he would make his pattern, and whose powers he feels most persuasive to righteousness the opinions of men are not the object of civil government, nor under its jurisdiction truth is great and will prevail if left to herself (Pg. 324-326) Benjamin Franklin's 1731 Doctrine to Be Preached: That there is one God Father of the Universe. That he is infinitely good, Powerful and wise. That he is omnipotent. That he ought to be worshipped both in public and private. That he loves such of his Creatures as love and do good to others, and will reward them either in this World or hereafter. That Mens Minds do not die with their Bodies, but are made more happy or miserable after this Life according to their Actions. That Virtuous Men ought to league together to strengthen the Interest of Virtue, in the World: and so strengthen themselves in Virtue. That Knowledge and Learning is to be cultivated, and Ignorance dissipated. That none but the Virtuous are wise. That Mans Perfection is in Virtue. (Pg. 370-371) Franklin's Invocation for Prayer at the 1787 Constitutional Convention: I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth---that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid?... I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the Builders of Babel I therefore beg leave to move---that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business (Pg. 385) Franklin also wrote to Ezra Stiles in 1790, Here is my Creed. I believe in one God, Creator of the Universe. That he governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable Service we render to him is doing good to his other children. That the soul of Man is immortal, and will be treated with Justice in another Life respecting its Conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental Principles of all sound religions, and I regard them as you do in whatever Sect I meet with them. As to Jesus of Nazareth I think the system of Morals and his Religion, as he left them to us, the best in World ever saw or is likely to see, but I apprehend it has received corrupting Changes, and I have, with most of the present Dissenters in England, some Doubts as to his Divinity; tho it is a question I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now I see no harm, however, in its being believed, if that Belief has the good Consequence of making his Doctrines more respected and better observed respecting myself having experienced the Goodness of that Being in conducting me prosperously thro a long life, I have no doubt of its Continuance in the next (Pg. 407) There is a great deal more in this book: he divides the book into sections on Patriotism and Courage; Love and Courtship; Civility and Friendship; Education of the Head and Heart; Industry and Frugality; Justice; and Piety. Bennett's introductions to each quotation are very helpful. Although occasionally I wish he had given more specific footnoted SOURCES of the quotations, this is a very attractive and useful book of some of the most famous quotations (and many not-so-famous) of the Founders.

Millions of American families have turned to *The Book of Virtues* and *The Moral Compass* by William J. Bennett for moral guidance in troubled times. Our Sacred Honor offers inspiration and instruction as well...this time of a particularly American sort. The lessons it contains are especially welcome. We live in a time when the practice of representative government in the United States of America is under siege from both the left and the right. Scandals abound. We are first shocked, then wearied, to learn that our national leaders have feet of clay. We live in a time, in short, which demands that we return to our origins to discover the common principles that make us essentially American. Our Sacred Honor reveals those common principles. They are articulated by the flawed but deeply admirable men and women who first wrote what it is to be American. The pledge made by the Founders to one another

that hot July day in 1776 the pledge of "our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor" has been redeemed many times in the centuries since, but the nation they founded has never failed to profit from their example. It is time to profit from their advice. In *Our Sacred Honor*, William J. Bennett has collected the best that has been thought and said by and about the men and women who founded America. And what a group they are: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, John and Abigail Adams, and so many more that otherwise first-rate intellects such as John Dickinson, Benjamin Rush, and George Mason are relegated to the status of footnotes in the popular imagination. Not since Periclean Athens has such a small nation been led by so many larger-than-life figures. The only characteristic they shared more widely than revolutionary ardor was their talent (and inclination) for advice. Here is that advice on virtually every aspect of "the good" good government, good relations between individuals and nations, and what it means to live a good life. Here are Thomas Jefferson on piety ("Adore God. Murmur not at the ways of Providence"); James Madison on justice ("It ever has been, and ever will be pursued, until it be obtained, or until liberty be lost in the pursuit"); and Patrick Henry on patriotism ("Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?"). Here are Abigail Adams on love ("When he is wounded, I bleed..."); Benjamin Franklin on industry ("Have you somewhat to do tomorrow, do it today"); and George Washington on friendship ("Be courteous with all, but intimate with few"). Here are the lyrics to "Yankee Doodle," Longfellow's celebration of the midnight ride of Paul Revere, and the Declaration of Independence. Here are the stories of the Liberty Bell, Washington at Valley Forge, and Nathan Hale. Here are selections from *The Federalist Papers*, and Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Concord Hymn," with "the shot heard round the world." Here are Poor Richard's Almanack, the extraordinary correspondence between John and Abigail Adams, and George Washington's Farewell Address. The stories, songs, letters, and speeches collected in *Our Sacred Honor* are an inspiring celebration of American exceptionalism, produced by a collection of exceptional Americans. It is the best book of advice in more than two hundred years.

About the Author William J. Bennett served as Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy under President George H. W. Bush and as Secretary of Education and Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities under President Reagan. He holds a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy from Williams College, a doctorate in political philosophy from the University of Texas, and a law degree from Harvard. He is the author of such bestselling books as *The Educated Child*, *The Death of Outrage*, *The Book of Virtues*, and the two-volume series *America: The Last Best Hope*. Dr. Bennett is the host of the nationally syndicated radio show *Bill Bennett's Morning in America*. He is also the Washington Fellow of the Claremont Institute and a regular contributor to CNN. He, his wife, Elayne, and their two sons, John and Joseph, live in Maryland.