



Stealing God's Thunder: Benjamin Franklin's Lightning Rod and the Invention of America

Philip Dray

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“We forget, living in this era of heavily patented research and closely guarded results, how wonderfully exciting the scientific world used to be. In *Stealing God’s Thunder*, the story of Benjamin Franklin’s invention of the lightening rod and the resulting consequences, that sense of wonder and excitement and even fear comes beautifully to life. Philip Dray does a remarkable job of illuminating the ever-fascinating Franklin and, more than that, the way that he, and his invention, helped create the new scientific world.”

–**Deborah Blum**, author of *Love at Goon Park: Harry Harlow and the Science of Affection*

Stealing God’s Thunder is a concise, richly detailed biography of Benjamin Franklin viewed through the lens of his scientific inquiry and its ramifications for American democracy. Today we think of Benjamin Franklin as a founder of American independence who also dabbled in science. But in Franklin’s day it was otherwise. Long before he was an eminent statesman, he was famous for his revolutionary scientific work, especially his experiments with lightning and electricity.

Pulitzer Prize finalist Philip Dray uses the evolution of Franklin’s scientific curiosity and empirical thinking as a metaphor for America’s struggle to establish its fundamental values. Set against the backdrop of the Enlightenment and America’s pursuit of political equality for all, **Stealing God’s Thunder** recounts how Franklin unlocked one of the greatest natural mysteries of his day, the seemingly unknowable powers of electricity and lightning. Rich in historic detail and based on numerous primary sources, **Stealing God’s Thunder** is a fascinating original look at one of our most beloved and complex founding fathers.

From the Hardcover edition.

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