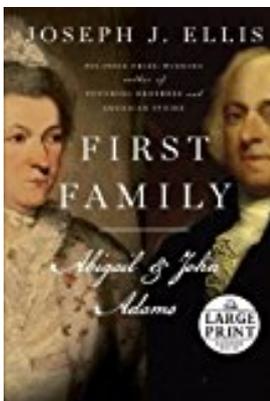


[PDF] First Family: Abigail And John Adams (Random House Large Print)

Joseph J. Ellis - pdf download free book



Books Details:

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Description:

From **Publishers Weekly** Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Ellis (Founding Brothers) gives "the premier husband-wife team in all American history" starring roles in an engrossing romance. His Abigail has an acute intellect, but is not quite a protofeminist heroine: her ambitions are limited to being a mother and helpmeet, and in the iconic correspondence she often strikes the traditional pose of a neglected wife who sacrifices her happiness by giving up her husband to the call of duty. The

author's more piquant portrait of John depicts an insecure, mercurial, neurotic man stabilized by Abigail's love and advice. Ellis's implicit argument--that the John/Abigail partnership lies at the foundation of the Adams family's public achievements--is a bit over-played, and not always to the advantage of the partnership: "Her judgment was a victim of her love for John..." Ellis writes of Abigail's support for the Alien and Sedition Acts, the ugliest blot on John's presidency, all of which explains little and excuses less. Still, Ellis's supple prose and keen psychological insight give a vivid sense of the human drama behind history's upheavals.

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From When so much has been written—and televised—about John and Abigail Adams, do we need another book? Yes, when the author is distinguished historian Ellis. Although Ellis notes that any study of either John or Abigail is necessarily about them both since their partnership was so central to their story, his focus is on that partnership (an approach also taken by Edith B. Gelles in *Abigail and John: Portrait of a Marriage*, published last year). The letters John and Abigail exchanged are the chief documents—an ongoing conversation that ceased (to the frustration of historians) when they were together but also sometimes when they were apart. John was not a good correspondent when he was in Europe, for example, and what letters he did write often took six months to arrive, when they were not lost at sea. In addition to looking at the strengths of the Adams' marriage, the book examines the toll taken by their years apart and the misfortunes in the lives of all their children except John Quincy. Ellis has produced a very readable history of the nation's founding as lived by these two. --Mary Ellen Quinn --This text refers to the edition.

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