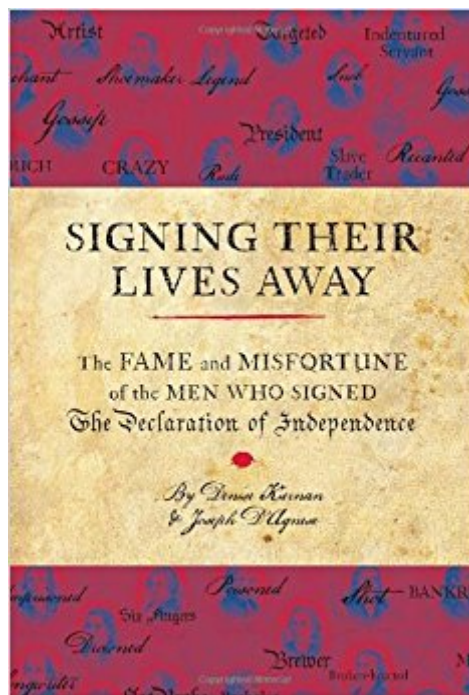




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# Signing Their Lives Away: The Fame And Misfortune Of The Men Who Signed The Declaration Of Independence



## Synopsis

In the summer of 1776, fifty-six men risked their lives and livelihood to defy King George III and sign the Declaration of Independence--yet how many of them do we actually remember? *Signing Their Lives Away* introduces readers to the eclectic group of statesmen, soldiers, slaveholders, and scoundrels who signed this historic document--and the many strange fates that awaited them. Some prospered and rose to the highest levels of United States government, while others had their homes and farms seized by British soldiers. Signer George Wythe was poisoned by his nephew; Button Gwinnett was killed in a duel; Robert Morris went to prison; Thomas Lynch was lost at sea; and of course Sam Adams achieved fame as a patriot/brewer. Complete with portraits of the signers as well as a facsimile of the Declaration of Independence, *Signing Their Lives Away* provides an entertaining and enlightening narrative for history buffs of all ages. From the Hardcover edition.

Is the U.S. Constitution important to you? Then you'll want to see the second book in this series, also by the authors: *Signing Their Rights Away: The Fame & Misfortune of the Men Who Signed the U.S. Constitution*. "An extraordinarily fascinating study of America's lesser-known founding fathers alongside the more well-known ones, *Signing Their Rights Today* is a welcome and enthusiastically recommended contribution to public and college library shelves." -- *Midwest Book Review* (Reviewer's Choice) "[The authors]...maintain a refreshing reverence for the Constitution itself. Rather than ask readers to believe that an 'assembly of demigods' (Jefferson's words) wrote the Constitution, Ms. Kiernan and Mr. D'Agnese challenge the notion that the group that crafted this document of enduring genius was uniquely brilliant or visionary. If this raises the question of how exactly the miracle was accomplished, it should at least give readers some hope for our own seemingly uninspired political era." -- *The Wall Street Journal*

## Book Information

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Age Range: 11 - 17 years

Grade Level: 6 - 12

## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Grade 5 Up  
On that immortal "Second of July," in 1776, 56 men described by King George III as daring and desperate affixed their names to the most celebrated document in American history. Or did they? With this work, Kiernan and D'Agnese present readers with astonishing individual portraits of all the signers in an attempt both to dispel some of the mythology surrounding the document as well as to establish a place in the historical discourse for those men not named Jefferson, Hancock, Franklin, or Adams. The marvelously arranged work lends itself to either straightforward reading or skipping around. The table of contents, divided by state, sparks readers' interest from the very beginning with its "the Signer who" format, a feature that also allows great accessibility for reports and assignments. An entertaining and effective narrative of about three to five pages per individual is presented, and the full text of the document, a brief time line, and a section on the "Miscellany of Independence" are appended. Readers will delight as they discover just which signer "was the first to die," "slept in caves," "had the worst penmanship," and "went broke on shady land deals."  
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Denise Kiernan and Joseph D'Agnese have been published in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Village Voice, Wired, Discover, and other national publications.

D'Agnese's work has twice been included in the anthology "Best American Science Writing." Both are winners of Educational Press Association awards. They live in North Carolina.

Good quick read about a subject and people that all Americans should know about. The cost of and the courage it took for these men and their families to do what they did probably is not known by very many citizens of the U.S.A. Quite honestly this book should be History 101 in every High School in the United States.

Meh... I was interested in reading this book as I am an amateur Revolutionary War buff. While I didn't expect the author to give a full biography on each person, I also expected a bit more about the people. I feel as you read through the colonies and the men signing the Declaration of Independence, an awful lot of the information is repeated. If there was not enough information on a certain person, paragraphs from the previous signers story were also repeated. In my opinion, the book has great potential to be more than repetitive and disappointing.

I really enjoyed this book. Getting to know the men who risked their lives to give us freedom from England was interesting and sometimes even funny. I will read it again.

Great book that eliminates all the false information that has been running around the internet forever. It's easy to read with short chapters so you can pick it up and read a little at a time. The cover is spectacular!!!! What an impression. It folds open to hold a copy of the Declaration on the back side and is heavy duty so it will last. I'm the treasurer of a DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) chapter and we bought multiple copies to be used as speaker gifts. Great price, Great subject, Great presentation, and a Great gift for a friend or for a grandchild.

Wonderful book. The authors have done an exceptional job condensing the historical information into a quick read. I believe this book should be mandatory reading for high school students. It's too bad that the men and women who represent us today are not like these men. They were men from different and diverse backgrounds who were elevated to heroes when they set aside their personal selves and together created a document with the "rules" that over 200 years later we still live by. After creating this magnificent document, unlike our representatives today who consider they public service as a profession, they slipped back into their ordinary lives. Today money is the reason most people are able to be elected and money is the reason most want to continue to "serve."

I have to admit, I loved this book. This is not a work for *Àf*ber serious scholars. But, for the average person, it was a great overview of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. These brief sketches made the signers "come alive" for me. Who were the "cool kids?" Which signers have famous descendents? What else did they do besides signing the Declaration (as if that was not enough!) Check out this easy, pleasant read and find out.

Interesting facts about the Declaration signers retold in a logical and humorous manner. (

For someone loving Colonial history the book was great.

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