Franklin Gazette

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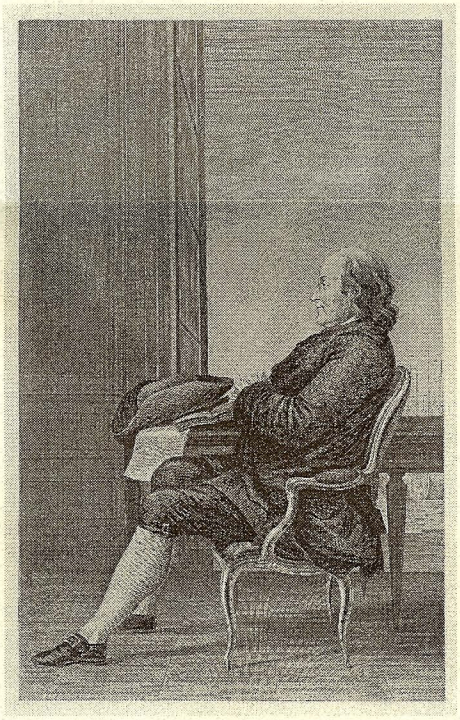
"As often as we do good, we sacrifice." Poor Richard, January, 1745.

Message From the President

By Roy E. Goodman

Recently, several teachers in a Franklin-themed summer workshop asked me how they might make history more relevant for their students. The teachers, who lacked resources in the past, were of course delighted with the bounty of material, both digital and printed, currently available for their classes. In fact, they joked that they were overwhelmed with the richness, quality and diversity of Franklin-oriented lesson plans, bibliographies, texts, exhibits, videos etc.



Engraving of Franklin seated after Carmontelle. Engraved by Née. *Courtesy of the American Philosophical Society.*

My response was to first immerse their students in 18th-century life through primary sources. Also, to have the students work in small groups of three or four to cover more material, discuss their research and share ideas with their classmates and teacher. Newspapers, almanacs, diaries, religious and political tracts, ***The Franklin Papers***, visual materials and artifacts all come into play for this project. The teachers, noted that 18th-century primary sources could prove quite difficult for their students to comprehend. I agreed that might be the case, and getting a grasp of history is never an easy task.

At this point, I switched direction by suggesting a look at current issues in America and the world, as a springboard to the past. Have the students put Franklin, or for that matter any one of his many colleagues or family in a 21st-century context and run with the scenario. Call it the 'Franklin factor.' The idea met with general approval and much discussion ensued.

In fact, let the general public, with the assistance of the **Friends**, explore Franklin's spin on contemporary issues of personal finance, education, natural resources, immigration, diplomacy, science, religion and whatever one wishes to broach.

Where and how might the **Friends** pursue this project, with the objective of maximizing its impact? Obviously, meetings, blogs, talk radio, popular publications and video are among the possible options. Our fine website serves many purposes, but the ability to reach a greater audience is an organizational goal. Please offer your feedback, and initiate the 'how would Franklin handle this?' interchange with family, friends, or anyone interested in a better America and a peaceful, productive planet.

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March, June, September and December. Newsletter submissions are encouraged. Deadlines are the 15th of the month preceding publication. Submissions by e-mail or computer disks (text-only format) are preferred.

Benjamin Franklin Math Puzzle Problems

(Compiled by Aziz S. Inan)

Editor's note: In the last few issues we've run Franklin based math problems created by Aziz Inan. Here's the newest one and the solution to the last.

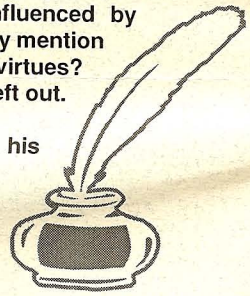
Problem # 3. What is the year *x*? A Person lived a long time ago before you were born. In the year x, at age 46, this person did something extremely dangerous. The sum and the product of the digits of the number x are 15 and 70. Also, the sum of the prime factors of the number x equals this person's death age minus two. What is the year x?

Answer to problem posed in the Spring issue: What year was Abiah born?
Answer: Ben was 46 years when his mother Abiah died at age 84 and his daughter Sally was 46 years old when he died at age 84. In the year 1781, Abiah's age would have been equal to the sum of Ben's and Sally's ages. What year was Abiah born?
Answer: 1667.
Solution: Let the ages of Ben, Abiah and Sally in the year 1781 be represented by B, A and S respectively. Note that A = B + S. Note also that A – B = 84 – 46 = 38 and B – S = 38. Solving these three equations simultaneously yields B = 76, A = 114, and S = 46. Therefore, since Abiah's age would have been 114 in the year 1781, then, her birth year is 1781 – 114 = 1667. Note that Ben is Ben Franklin, Abiah is Ben's mother, Abiah Folger, and Sally is Ben's daughter.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

RE David Wang's article on Franklin and his moral philosophy raises an interesting question: If indeed Franklin was so deeply influenced by Confucius, as Dr. Wang suggests, why then did he leave out any mention of Confucius in his *Autobiography*, especially in his list of virtues? Virtue #13 states, "Imitate Jesus and Socrates." Confucius is left out.



Also, where did Franklin get his Chinese gong that he lists in his will?

Thanks, AEIOU,

Mark Skousen
Life Member, Friends of Franklin

Editor:

Thanks to Mark Skousen for inaugurating our Letters to the Editor column. I posed your queries to several people and Friend David Wang provided the following information.

Franklin's familiarity with and admiration for Confucius is documented by his letter to George Whitefield in 1749, found by clicking on the following link: http://www.historycarper.com/resources/twobf2/letter10.htm. Because there is little in Confucius's writings that relates to humility and greater references to those subjects in the works of Socrates and Jesus, David Wang believes that Franklin chose to use Jesus and Socrates as his examples, and that he was guided in this by the Confucian moral precept--Endeavor to imitate the wise (From *The Morals of Confucius,* 2nd edition, 1708, p. 151). As Dave comments, "Who were the wise whom he should imitate? For Franklin, they were Jesus and Socrates."

Unfortunately no one has been able to come up with a definitive answer for where Franklin obtained the Chinese gong he lists in his will; Dave Wang believes Jefferson introduced Franklin to it. Readers, any suggestions?

The Friends' Annual Appeal is underway. Your contribution helps with the Friends' general operating support and as always is tax-deductible.

WANTED:
Participants in a Seminar on Franklin's Circle

Friend Robert B. Craig has submitted a proposal for a seminar to be held during the forthcoming American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies annual meeting in Portland, Oregon (March 27-30, 2008). His proposal, outlined below, will be reviewed by June 1. If it is accepted, Mr. Craig seeks an audience for the papers that will be presented. For more information on the organization and the annual conference click on http://asecs.press.jhu.edu/

"The Families of Benjamin Franklin"

For the man who has been called "The Essential American," Benjamin Franklin was many things to many people. His intimate circle included both his biological family and surrogate family members. The eighth of ten children born to Josiah Franklin and Abiah Folger, Ben showed little interest in having a big family like one in which he was raised. His nuclear family consisted of his illegitimate son, William, his common law wife, Deborah Read Rogers, and their two children, Francis and Sarah. Francis died at the age of four; Sarah survived to old age.

During Franklin's years in England (roughly mid-century to 1775) he represented several colonies. Ben became very close to his landlady, Margaret Stevenson of Craven Street, London, and her circle of friends, and he was especially fond of her daughter, Mary (always called Polly). Polly eventually married, then was widowed, but through all the years she sustained her role as Franklin's adoptive daughter. She was at his bedside when he died in 1790.

During Franklin's service to the fledgling American government while in France, Ben also acquired another "daughter," Madame Brillon. Although their banter sometimes suggests something more than a platonic relationship, Madame Brillon and her circle popularized Franklin's new nickname, "Mon Cher Papa."

How did these families influence this great personage? Was there more to their influence over Franklin than his writings reflect? Who was William's mother – Deborah or some other woman who became part of one of Franklin's surrogate families?

The purpose of this seminar is to bring together informed and well qualified individuals to discuss the roles of each Franklin family group, their influence on this great American, and to reflect on some of the possibilities whereby the role of certain "family members" may have had a different impact on Franklin and in turn caused a change in his lifestyle, politics, and character.

Robert B. Craig
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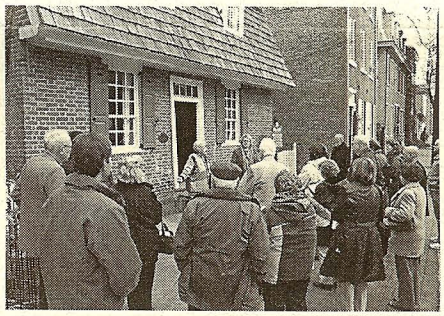
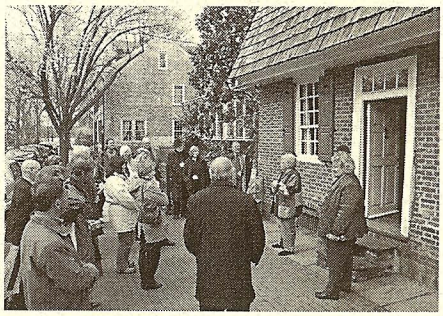
Friends Trip to Burlington

The Friends of Franklin spent a lovely day in Burlington, NJ last April tracing William and Benjamin's connections there. Lectures, tours and wonderful meals provided an unforgettable day.

Guest speakers Roy E. Goodman, curator of print material, The American Philosophical Society and Persident, Friends of Franklin, Inc.; Sheila Skemp, Professor of History, University of Mississippi; Library Company of Burlington Director Sharon Vincz; Jeff Macechak, Education Director, Burlington County Historical Society; and Kathy DeLuca.

Left to Right: Pamela Hartsock; Lee Knepp; Benjamin Franklin (Ralph Archbold); Roy E. Goodman, and Kathy DeLuca.





Friends of Franklin "The Franklin Family and Burlington" tour stands before Burlington County's oldest residence, the Revell House, 1685. At this legendary stop where Ben Franklin bought gingerbread and supped with a kindly old woman, Grace Shultz pointed out the details and Rhett Pernot provided background information about the 17th Century. Within, the group marveled at the diminutive scale of construction and authentic appointments. The box and herb garden to the rear provided the backdrop.

The American Revolution as a Civil War

by Sheila Skemp

Everyone is talking about "the Founders" these days—so much so that a couple of years ago *Newsweek* even named the phenomenon "founders chic." Benjamin Franklin, of course, is a founder. William Franklin is *not* a "founder." He is merely the *son* of a founder, a man who somehow took the "wrong side" during the American Revolution, and as a result, forever lost his claim to fame and glory. While it would be hopeless to resurrect his name, it is nevertheless possible to assert that William had a defensible, logical—dare I say it, even *honorable*—perspective on the events of his time. Perhaps even more importantly, the story of the relationship between father and son tells us a great deal about—indeed is emblematic of the Revolution itself.

The story of Benjamin and William Franklin tells us two things in particular.

First, it reminds us that the American Revolution was not inevitable. When historians examine the struggles, and the herky jerky steps each man, father and son, took to arrive at his position, they become aware of just how difficult a process this was. I would be willing to bet that virtually all colonists—at least those who *cared*—went through the same, agonizing steps before they came down on one side or another.

It was not easy for colonists to declare independence from the only country, the only power, they had ever known. It was not easy, especially, when they had been raised to love that country, that empire—and yes, even, that King—and to step out into the great unknown. It was downright scary for our founders to imagine a country without a King, when they had never known anything but a country with a monarch at its helm. It was possible to love America passionately—and yet end up on opposite sides of the equation. Loyalists, we need to remind ourselves, were not "un American" or "anti" American. They were not, as John Adams so nicely put it, people with their body in America, their head in England, and with a neck that ought to be stretched. They cared about the welfare of the colonies as much as any patriot did. But their prescription for the welfare of the colonies was simply different.

Second, we need to pay greater attention to something William Franklin told the members of the New Jersey assembly in January of 1775. By that time, there were many who were contemplating independence, even in New Jersey, which was actually quite a moderate colony as these things go. By this time—without any right to do so—the First Continental Congress had met. Americans were boycotting British goods, punishing those people who refused to agree to boycott those goods, and generally taking the law into their own hands. William called his assembly together and lectured them—as was increasingly his wont. He told them in words that were eerily prophetic, that they had two choices, "two roads" before them. One road led to a peaceful effort to resolve the differences that divided England from America. The other road, he said, led to "anarchy, misery, and all the horrors of a Civil War."

He was right. The American Revolution was not simply a war for independence and a war against monarchy. It was a Civil War with all the horror and violence and pathos that the term "civil war" means in our own history and in the history of people who continue to experience such a phenomenon around the world even today.

This war, despite all the romantic talk of "the" Civil War of the nineteenth century, was much more a war of brother against brother, father against son, than any war we have ever fought. "The" Civil War was *primarily* regionally based. To be sure, there were people in Kentucky, Missouri, and southern Indiana and Illinois—the border states—where some families were split. But the American Revolution divided towns, churches, families, friends in every part of the country. Indeed, Franklin's New Jersey was a particularly divided colony, with all-out guerilla warfare between the American supporters of the king's men and American supporters of congress devastating the countryside. It was not only a war of America vs. England, but one of American vs. American. Nothing reveals that truth more than the relationship between Benjamin and William. And this is the story I am especially interested in telling.

At least at first glance, William's decision to remain loyal seems to require more explaining than Benjamin's decision to break with England. (In fact, I would argue just the opposite—but more of that later.) William Franklin, son of Benjamin Franklin, New Jersey's last—and I would argue rather good—royal governor, was born in Philadelphia in 1730, the illegitimate son of a prosperous middle class printer, writer, and rising politician by the name of Benjamin Franklin. Despite his son's "base" origins, Benjamin raised William in his own home, providing him with the education and opportunities that he himself had never enjoyed. He even used his influence to get his son appointed royal governor of New Jersey—quite a coup for a man who himself had started life as the son of a lowly candle maker.

Benjamin was proud of his son, and William was proud of his father. Neither imagined in 1762, when the *royal* governorship came through, that there would be a time when they both would have to choose between loyalty to England and loyalty to America. Even less did they imagine that they would support opposite sides.

And for years—decades--there was no hint of a conflict—between father and son, between king and country. These two men were friends, companions, and staunch supporters of one another. They shared the same general political philosophy, the same interest in science and agriculture, the same temperament. They were both moderates. They didn't pick fights unnecessarily. They were interested in resolving differences rather than widening breaches. Both found the fiery rhetoric of men like Samuel Adams and Patrick Henry simply anathema. And both loved England. Both were proud of America's position in the empire and hoped that in time, as America inevitably grew richer and more populated, it would play an equal, perhaps even a dominant role in empire affairs.

William Franklin was a pretty good governor. He "steered his little bark" carefully, he said, between the

demands of England and the colonies. He was truly his father's son. He was, until late in the game, non-ideological, pragmatic. He kept a low profile, and did everything he could to avoid controversy. And he *listened*. Moreover, he loved New Jersey—he made New Jersey his home, bought a farm outside Burlington, calling himself a New Jersey farmer. It is here, he told a friend, "if I return to a private station, that I propose to spend the Remainder of my Days." He learned about New Jersey's customs and needs, and argued for the colony's interests whenever he wrote to the King's men back in London.

Unlike most colonial governors, he was an American. Most were Englishmen who looked at provincial colonists with ill-disguised disdain and could hardly wait to get back to London. William knew and understood the colonial perspective, and generally—at least in the beginning—sympathized with it. In a letter to his father in September of 1771, he admitted that he, like Benjamin, opposed all those parliamentary limits and regulations on trade. He even recognized the importance of that colonial slogan we all remember from grade school—"no taxation without representation." Only one little hint of future problems appears in that September letter. He said that he believed in the law. "I think," he told his father, "that all Laws until they are repealed ought to be obeyed and that it is the Duty of those who are entrusted with the executive part of government to see that they are so." But at the time, Benjamin did not disagree. Both men believed in colonial rights. Both also believed in the law.

William's term as governor was helped by his ability to rely on excellent advice from his father who lived in England, and who could always tell him which way the wind was blowing. Benjamin gave him information and advice that no other colonial governor had. He read every letter William sent to administration authorities, making sure that each one was calculated to achieve the best results. William used his father to keep him informed about what was going on. Both men were heavily involved in land deals—initiated by William and eagerly latched on to by Benjamin. They were both convinced that, if the London administration would ever see things the "right" way, these deals would make them very wealthy men indeed.

And Benjamin, in turn, relied on William. He confided in his son, telling him more about his own hopes and disappointments, his attitudes toward administration officials, than he told anyone else. William gave him news about the colonies, especially Pennsylvania. When some people accused Benjamin of being the author of the hated Stamp Act, William intervened, riding to Philadelphia and telling anyone who would listen that this was not the case. As one enemy of both men put it, "he is as bad as his father." William at the time took this as a compliment. William also helped Deborah, his step mother, and Sally, his sister. When Deborah died, it was William, not Benjamin, who rushed to Philadelphia to bury her and to take care of all the financial matters that needed attending to in his father's absence.

These men, in other words, were partners, even soul mates, who both loved and respected one another. If William rebelled against his father by refusing to rebel against the King, he did so reluctantly, sadly. There was no Freudian motive. If anything, from William's perspective, it was his father who rebelled against him—not the other way around. He did what his father had *raised* him to do. To be a moderate. To be loyal to king and empire. To be true to his convictions. William had learned to love the empire at his father's knee. He was raised to be proud of his service to that empire. Both men saw England's and America's interests as one and the same.

In the end, of course, neither William nor Benjamin could "steer their little barks" between the competing demands of king and colony forever. As early as August of 1767 William was telling his father that the assemblies in America were demanding more rights from the Governors than the House of Commons demanded from the King in England. There is "no telling where they will stop," he said—although in 1767 he surely did not imagine when he wrote those words that the Americans would ever go so far as to demand independence!

By the mid-seventies, the colonists were becoming more radical, more demanding, less willing to listen to the other side. The King and his men were becoming equally hardened, determined to make the colonies behave like colonies, to govern as a colonial power. When that happened, William and Benjamin—like all Americans, had to make a choice. William chose to remain loyal to the King. Benjamin did not.

The question, of course, is why? It's a hard question to answer, in part because the vast majority of people who remained loyal and the vast majority who became patriots were very much alike. They read the same books, had the same experiences, and shared a similar political philosophy. They believed that good government must have a balance between what they called "liberty" and "power." Power was dangerous—it was in the hands of government, and if it was not watched, it would destroy the fragile liberty of the people. Liberty was more vulnerable—but too much liberty was as bad as too much power. Too much liberty would degenerate into chaos, anarchy, lawless confusion. A little democracy was a good thing, but it went a very long way. Thus it was essential to maintain the balance, or the best government in the world would be a thing of the past.

Everyone believed this. And yet different experiences led them to interpret what was happening on the ground in different ways. In the beginning, William found himself sympathizing more with the colonies than with his administrators in England. Like most future loyalists, he opposed the Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts and even the Tea Act. He thought England was probably wrong and certainly stupid to tax without representation. He was depressed by his failure to get the administration to open up the American west to colonial settlement—and to the efforts of some colonists like himself and his father, to the making of much money. William was most angry most of the time at the King's men. They were acting in a stiff necked, supercilious manner, insisting on making the colonists follow the letter

of the law instead of dealing with them in a pragmatic way. And they were making his life miserable, threatening him with the loss of his job if he didn't do the impossible, making his own, quite moderate, quite reasonable colony follow useless instructions that did no one any good at all.

He especially hated Lord Hillsborough. Hillsborough was in charge of all England's colonial affairs. He was a stickler for detail. He berated William for every tiny failure. In 1768, in really a quite extraordinary letter, William, thinking he was about to be fired, struck out, defending himself and his colony, berating Hillsborough for his obstinacy.

He really laid it on the line. "Men's minds are soured," he said. There is no force on earth to "make the Assemblies acknowledge by any Act of theirs that the Parliament has a Right to impose Taxes on America." While he would never tolerate an attack on the King, neither would he attack the rights of the colonial legislatures. Balance was necessary. This was no doubt the low point of William's relationship with the Crown, and the high point of his relationship with New Jersey. But by the early 70s, that began to change.

William was not fired—Hillsborough was. The home government began treating him better. This was proof, in William's mind, that although England made mistakes, it was not beyond hope. It could be reformed. It was not, as the radicals were saying, out to destroy colonial liberty. Meanwhile, his own legislature was treating him worse. New Jersey was not a hot bed of radicalism. But eventually, even this moderate colony became angry at the Crown—and at the governor who represented that Crown. The members of the legislature listened to William less and less. They took the power of government more into their own hands, ignoring him, attacking him, whenever he pled for moderation. Now, he said, the balance was tipping dangerously toward liberty, and hence—as that 1775 speech put it—descending into "anarchy, misery, and all the horrors of a Civil War."

That speech was a desperate argument for what William saw as a return to balance. He warned his legislature that if it continued, it would destroy its own form of government, its "constitution" as he called it. If they listened to the Continental Congress, they would be letting an "outsider"—not the king, but an unelected, unauthorized, self-constituted, body of hooligans tell them what to do. That body was not appointed. It was not elected. It was just there. You, he admonished, are the legally elected representatives of your people. Don't throw that authority away. If you want to petition the king in your legal capacity, he continued, I'll support you. But don't obey an illegal Congress. They had a choice. Two roads lay open to them. Clearly New Jersey was on the "wrong road."

The problem for William, and for all the other loyalists, was simple. For whatever reason, they could not, they did not change. As a result, he was arrested, thrown into jail. It was Benjamin who changed. William *remained* loyal. He remained true to his convictions and to his oath of office. Unlike most royal governors, he had a choice. Benjamin begged him to renounce his loyalty. But it was something he was simply unable to do. He remained true to the values with which his own father and his entire experience had trained him.

When William was arrested in 1776 at the orders of the Continental Congress, Benjamin did not lift a finger to free his son or even to secure better conditions for him. And so William remained in a Connecticut jail cell, living part of the time in solitary confinement. His wife, Elizabeth, died not long after his incarceration. William's farm and all the rest of his New Jersey property were confiscated by the new patriot government. He was finally exchanged for a patriot prisoner, made his way to New York, served as head of the Board of Associated Loyalists, a terrorist group that disrupted the lives of civilian patriots in the New York and New Jersey area. At war's end, he fled New York, ended up in London, and died in exile in 1814. He was estranged from his own illegitimate son, William Temple—but had a good relationship with Temple's illegitimate daughter, Ellen. Most importantly, he was estranged from his own father. This was not William's doing. He wanted to forgive and forget, and wrote to his father hoping to revive that "affectionate intercourse and connection" they once had shared. He refused to apologize for his decision to oppose independence. "I uniformly acted from a strong sense of what I conceived my duty to my king and regard to my country," he said. "If I have been mistaken, I cannot help it." But "were the same circumstances to occur tomorrow, my conduct would be exactly similar to what it was heretofore." Still, he hoped for personal friendship.

Benjamin would have none of it. "Nothing," he said, "has hurt me so much and affected me with such keen sensations as to find myself deserted in my old age by my only son." Had William been neutral, he might have forgiven him. But active—public—disloyalty—was more than he could bear. The two met once, briefly, in order to conduct some business. Benjamin virtually wrote his son out of his will. Even then, William hoped for a rapprochement with his father. But it never happened. He thought seriously about writing a biography of his father. He looked at his granddaughter, and thought he saw traces of Benjamin in her appearance. William Franklin did love America. "For King and country," was his motto, and it was one he clung to until the end. When he went to England, he remembered his days in America, especially New Jersey, with fondness. He listened for American accents in the coffee houses. His best friends were Americans, exiled like he was. He died believing that he had acted in America's best interest. He may have been wrong. But he was not un-American. Benjamin had raised his son to have principles, to follow his conscience. And he had also raised his son to be a proud member of the British empire. One could argue, that he had done his job too well.

Editor's Note: Sheila Skemp, Professor of History at the University of Mississippi presented this talk at the Friends of Franklin tour of Burlington, NJ on April 15, 2007. We are very grateful to her for allowing us to share it with all the Friends.

Ben Franklin—Early Bioethicist?

by Arthur L. Caplan, Ph.D.

There can be no doubt that when we think of Ben Franklin we think of Franklin the founder, Franklin the diplomat, Franklin the scientist, Franklin the printer and newspaper magnate. We may even think of Franklin the good citizen of Philadelphia creating fire departments and hospitals. But what does not come readily to mind is Franklin the ethicist.

Why is it so hard to recognize this aspect of this polymath's genius? Even people who don't really understand Franklin's work with electricity or his analysis of ocean currents or his work with ovens and heating systems know that he made major contributions to science. Yet, despite the huge amount of time Franklin spent advancing his ethical views he is not someone we think of when we think of famous moral philosophers or even famous American moral philosophers. Why?

I think there are a few reasons why Franklin's contributions to ethics are either ignored or undervalued. First, Franklin was cool toward religion and theology. He was as tolerant a person as has ever existed in America, but not someone who found moral certainty in the pronouncements of any of the dominant Christian denominations of his day. In fact, he was rather suspicious of the moral commitments of some of the more vociferous theologians of his time arguing that they spent more time praying about the good than actually doing good.

In addition to his fierce secularism Franklin oriented his ethical concern to the here and now. He felt the purpose of ethics was trying to find ways to improve the lot of humanity, not please a divine being or remain consistent with a code or doctrine. He argued that each person has an obligation to improve the overall well-being of his fellow man.

Still another problem confronting Franklin as ethicist—and it is a serious if somewhat uncomfortable one to raise--is his personal moral failings. Having a child out of wedlock, spending many years away from his wife, being seen by some as a huge flirt and possibly a womanizer, and eliciting some criticism from his fellow co-founders as something of a media hog—these are not flaws, failings and misdeeds that are easily overcome if one wants to lay claim to the mantle of ethicist. It is not that one cannot contribute to morals without being beyond moral criticism, but rather that aspects of Franklin's life make that a difficult accomplishment.

Still, Franklin was usually honest and transparent about his personal flaws and failings. In fact, I am comfortable mentioning them because he was. Sometimes he featured them in his writing and advice as a way to let others learn from his slips and falls. The only exception was sex. He was circumspect about his sex life but no more so than any other politician or prominent citizen of his time—or today for that matter.

Perhaps the most interesting reason that we don't today see Franklin included among the ranks of moralists or theorists of ethics is that his view of ethics is so out of step with that which prevails today. You see, Ben Franklin was a believer in virtue ethics. He thought that the way to moral conduct was through moral character. To put it simply, he believed that good people will do the right thing and that good people, given the time to reflect and consider their choices and options, would come to value the common good over their own self-interest.

Today, moral theory is dominated by two schools of thought in the United States. In the first, consequentialism, it is the outcomes of acts and behavior that determine what is good or bad. The second is deontology, whereby if people adhere to the right rules or principles (the ten commandments, the injunctions of the Koran, the principles discerned in the Bible, or secular versions of the same such as don't treat others as a means to an end, and always tell the truth), they are moral. Kantian principles are often invoked today. Americans tend to believe that it is either the bottom line that determines whether a person or an act or a policy is good—that is why so many worship at the church of economics! Or, that by following a clear set of rules, and strictly sticking to them, you are doing right, and thus are good.

Not Franklin. He thought sticking to rules at best quaint and at worst a moral dodge since it put too much emphasis on the individual. Consequences counted, he would concede, but again, self-interest would tend to dominate individual calculation, tending to actions and policies not in the best interest of the community.

It was virtue, personal character, that was the key for Franklin. A person of character paying attention to the consequences would get things right more often than not, or at least provide the best chance at doing so.

Thus we get Franklin's *Autobiography* and his *Poor Richard's Almanack* brimming with injunctions to virtue. Franklin himself set out on an experiment to try to inculcate virtue in himself. When a young man he measured his day against a grid of virtues that included (1) Temperance, (2) Silence, (3) Order, (4) Resolution, (5) Frugality, (6) Industry, (7) Sincerity, (8) Justice, (9) Moderation, (10) Cleanliness, (11) Tranquillity, (12) Chastity, and (13) Humility. His glosses on each of these are in his inimitable style. For example, for temperance: "Eat not to dullness, drink not to elevation"; order: "Let all your things have their places, let each part of your business have its time"; moderation: "Avoid extremes, forbear resenting injuries, so much as you think they deserve"; tranquillity: "Be not disturbed at trifles or at accidents common or

Bioethicist cont.

unavoidable"; humility: "Imitate Jesus and Socrates."

This elevation of the virtues and the project of teaching oneself to be virtuous strikes many oriented toward forms of principalism that dominate ethics today as corny at best and bourgeois at worst. But not for Franklin. His hero was Socrates, with Jesus coming in a close second. Neither were particularly adept at advancing moral theories. Both did much better with the well placed question, the parable, the story, or simply an exhortation. They questioned authority, remained humble, and counseled peace, duty and consistency with one's values, even to the point of dying at the hands of the societies in which they lived.

In an important sense Ben Franklin is not an early bioethicist. His moral view is not one that is often invoked in bioethical debate or even in any moral debate these days.

However there is a link between bioethics as it is done today and Franklin's belief in a virtue ethics. That link is in the role assigned to the ethicist. While today's bioethicist often peddles a theory or has a set of principles to ground his or her thinking, he or she still often functions in the Socratic or Jesus-like role that Franklin so admired about Socrates and Jesus. Challenge accepted wisdom—ask questions of authorities and experts—show by example that sustained inquiry is not inimical to values but is the very key to finding them. Those are Franklinesque values that are present in bioethics today.

Franklin wrote with bite. He could be funny but he could toss out a zinger with the best of them. He might well have looked at bioethics today and said—I don't see the point of arguing abstract principles—it is in reflection about cases and practical affairs that the truth is to be found. Should little wisdom emerge from the mouths of those who profess to do bioethics today, then perhaps the answer lies in replacing them with those with a more practical, engaged, and grounded view of things.

Editor's note: Dr. Arthur Caplan, chair of the Medical Ethics Department at the University of Pennsylvania, was the recipient of this year's Franklin Founder award presented by the Celebration! of Benjamin Franklin, Founder for his work in bioethics and for continuing the role embraced by Franklin of not fearing scientific advances but using them for the improvement of society. We are grateful to Dr. Caplan for allowing us to reprint his lecture from the Celebration's morning program.

Reading Franklin

New Books:

David O. Stewart, *The Summer of 1787: The Men Who Invented the Constitution* (Simon & Schuster, April, 2007).

Graham Stewart, *Friendship and Betrayal: Ambition and the Limits of Loyalty* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, published in Britain, April, 2007). The publisher's web site quotes David Lloyd George, "The nearer a person gets to the summit of power, the more hazardous they will find conflicts between personal attachments, political expediency, and their own interpretation of the common good." This book is a series of studies of powerful people and how they resolved conflicts in their lives. The second section focuses on the friendship between Franklin and Joseph Galloway, which did not survive the pressures of the Revolutionary War.

For a good roundup of the recent books on Franklin, Friends may wish to consult a pair of reviews that have recently appeared. One is by Professor Michael Zuckerman of the University of Pennsylvania, and it is published in the April, 2007 issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* under the title of "Benjamin Franklin at 300: The Show Goes On: A Review of Reviews". Zuckerman surveys Edmund S. Morgan's *Benjamin Franklin* (New Haven, Conn., 2002), Gordon S. Wood's *The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin* (N.Y., 2004), Walter Isaacson's *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life* (N.Y., 2003), David Waldstreicher's *Runaway America: Benjamin Franklin, Slavery, and the American Revolution* (N.Y., 2004), Stacy Schiff's *A Great Improvisation: Franklin, France, and the Birth of America* (N.Y., 2005), and J.A. Leo Lemay's *The Life of Benjamin Franklin*, volume 1, *Journalist*, 1706-1730 (Philadelphia, 2006). Individual issues of the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* are available for purchase from the Historical Society of Pennsylvania: http://www.hsp.org/

David Waldstreicher's "American Genius Studies: Benjamin Franklin at 300," appeared in *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, xl (2007), no. 2. Like Zuckerman, he looks at Leo Lemay's *Life*, but he considers both volumes 1 and 2 (the second subtitled *Printer and Publisher, 1730-1749*). Waldstreicher also introduces readers to Jerry Weinberger's *Benjamin Franklin Unmasked: On the Unity of His Moral, Religious, and Political Thought* (Lawrence, Ks., 2005) and Joyce Chaplin's *The First Scientific American: Benjamin Franklin and the Pursuit of Genius* (N.Y., 2006).

In His Own Words:

Franklin's Advice to a Scholar

In October, 1781, Franklin began a letter to his friend and fellow scientist, Jan Ingenhousz. The letter was not completed and mailed until June of the following year. It contains as much advice about how to get through life as it does other matters, and is evidence of the devotion that Franklin felt for the younger man. We think this advice would be beneficial to all readers, not just scholars.

"It is a long time, my dear Friend, since I have had the Pleasure of writing to you...But I cannot afford to lose your Correspondence in which I always found so much Pleasure & Instruction... I have now before me your several Favours [letters]...I was glad to find by the first, that you enjoy'd a good State of Health, and that you had Leisure to pursue your Philosophical Enquiries. I wish you that continued Success which so much Industry, Sagacity & Exactness in making Experiments, have a Right to expect. You will have much much Pleasure immediate by that Success, & in time great Reputation. But for the present, the Reputation will be given grudgingly & in as small Quantity as possible, mix'd too with some Mortification. One would think that a Man so labouring disinterestedly for the Good of his Fellow-Creatures, could not possibly by such means make himself Enemies; but there are Minds who cannot bear that another should distinguish himself even by greater usefulness; and tho' he demands no Profit, nor any thing in Return but the Good Will of those he is serving, they will endeavour to deprive him of that, first by disputing the Truth of his Experiments, then their Utility, & being defeated there, they finally dispute his Right to them, and would give the Credit of them to a Man that liv'd 3000 Years ago, or at 3000 leagues distance, rather than to a Neighbour or even a Friend. Go on, however, & never be discouraged. Others have met with the same Treatment before you, and will after you. And whatever some may think & say, it is worth while to do Men Good, for the Self Satisfaction one has in the Reflection. ...Those whom I have heard speak of your Book, speak well of it. But I think it has not been so much talkd of as might have been expected. This however is a Matter that is subject to accidents. The Death of a Prince, a Battle, or any other important Event happening just on the Publication of a new Book, tho' a very good one, occasion it to be little spoken of, and for sometime almost forgotten. We Printers & Booksellers are well acquainted with this. ... I am sorry that any Misunderstanding should arise between you & Dr Priestley. The Indiscretions of Friends on both sides often occasion such Misunderstandings. When they produce public Altercation, the Ignorant are diverted at the Expense of the Learned. I hope therefore that you will omit the polemic Piece in your French Edition [which Ingenhousz had allowed his translator to insert in the German edition on condition that it did not mention Priestley by name], and take no public Notice of the improper Behaviour of your Friend; but go on with your excellent Experiments, produce Facts, improve Science & do good to Mankind. Reputation will follow, and the little Injustices of contemporary Labourers will be forgotten. My Example may encourage you, or else I should not mention it. You know that when my Papers were first published, the Abbé Nollet, then high in Repute, attack'd them in a Book of Letters. An Answer was expected from me, but I made none, to that Book nor to any other. They are now all neglected, and the Truth seems to be established. You can always employ your time better than in Polemics. ...You have yet a Prospect of many Years of usefulness still before you, which I hope you will fully enjoy; and I am persuaded you will ever kindly remember your truly affectionate Friend B Franklin"

You can read the letter in its entirety in vol. 35 of The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, pp. 544-51, or on line; search in the list of Franklin's correspondants and click on his letter to Ingenhousz of Oct. 2, 1781[-June 21, 1782]: http://www.franklinpapers.org

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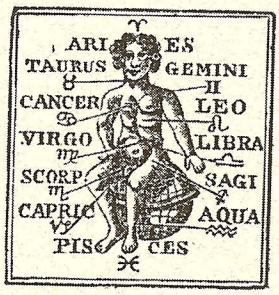

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 17-September 17
Auray, France: Path to Discovery, "Franklin and the Sea" Since many of Franklin's ideas were inspired by the sea, selected writings on a maritime theme have been chosen and hidden in the Saint-Goustan neighborhood. The public is invited to follow in Franklin's footsteps and find these texts. The Franklin discovery trail will open during a Breton celebration of the sea, which encourages visits to many picturesque ports of call: http://www.semainedugolfe.asso.fr/portsgb.php

September 24, 2007
Cecilia Brauer will play the glass armonica in the Metropolitan Opera's "Lucia di Lammermoor" on opening night. There will be 12 subsequent performances. The glass armonica was originally scored into the "mad scene"in 1835 by the composer, Donizetti. "Lucia" will be sung by Natalie Dessay, soprano, and James Levine will conduct.

January 17, 2008
Celebration! Of Benjamin Franklin, Founder. Annual event commemorating Franklin's birthday with a seminar, procession to his grave and luncheon.

ONGOING:
"Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World," will open in Atlanta, where the Atlanta History Center will host the show from July 4 through Oct. 14. The exhibit's last stop is Paris, where it will open on Dec. 4, at the Musée des Arts et Métiers and the Musée Carnavalet. It closes March 30, 2008.

Through January 1, 2008
"The Curiosity Show." Franklin Institute, Philadelphia; shown daily, it reenacts some of Franklin's famous experiments. Check for show times.

FRANKLIN TIDBITS

Star Power: And this news flash from Philipp Ziesche, assistant editor of *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*: According the Internet Movie Database, British actor Tom Wilkinson was cast as Benjamin Franklin in the HBO-miniseries "John Adams," based on David McCullough's bestseller, currently filming in Richmond, Williamsburg, London, and Paris. Wilkinson was nominated for an Academy Award for his role as a father avenging his murdered son in "In the Bedroom" (2001) and is best known for his portrayal of hapless middle-aged men in "The Full Monty" (1997), "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" (2004), and "The Last Kiss" (2006). He also played such Franklin-esque historical figures as Lord Cornwallis in "The Patriot" (2000) and Joseph Goebbels in the forthcoming satire "Jackboots on Whitehall" (2008). John Adams will be portrayed by Paul Giamatti, most recently seen in "Sideways".

In Auray, France, the celebration of Benjamin Franklin went on, and on May 18 the town sponsored a showing of a film in which Franklin was a main character, Edouard Molinaro's 1996 "Beaumarchais ou l'Insolent" (Beaumarchais the Scoundrel).

Franklin's Leads Pursued by Scientists Today: Are vegetarians smarter? Franklin thought so; he claimed in the *Autobiography* that a vegetarian diet brings a "greater clearness of head and a quicker apprehension". Now a study in the *British Medical Journal* has traced 8,000 people from birth and found that taken as a group, those who became vegetarians by age 30 had an average IQ 5 points higher than those who didn't.

Those in the field of geoengineering have suggested a solution to global warming that is a natural extension of Franklin's theories on the causes of the severe winter of 1783-84. Scientists have conjectured that it would be possible to create a solar shield to compensate for the greenhouse effect that is causing global warming. Back in 1784 Franklin hypothesized that the unusually cool summer of 1783 and the following harsh winter were caused by a volcanic eruption that gave rise to a "dry fog" that shrouded much of the northern hemisphere during the season of solar heating, keeping the earth from storing as much heat as usual. Two North American scientists, Ken Caldeira of the Carnegie Institution, and Damon Matthews of Concordia University in Canada, used computer modelling to simulate the effects of an engineered solar shield. Deploying such a shield as a last resort to global warming would require distributing into the atmosphere something similar to the sulphate particles that come from a volcanic eruption. Scientists have concluded that the eruption of Mount Pinatubo cooled the Earth by a few tenths of a degree for several decades. See Catherine Brahic's report in the June 5, 2007 on line edition of *New Scientist*.

Franklin Being Used to Deny Some New Immigrants Their Dreams? People for the American Way administered selected questions from the redesigned naturalization test to 246 New Yorkers in December, because they questioned whether the new test should determine whether or not someone received American citizenship. One of the questions was, "Can you name one thing Benjamin Franklin is famous for?" Only 3% gave a correct answer according to Immigration and Naturalization's guidelines. If you answered "diplomat, oldest member of the Constitutional Convention, first postmaster general of the U.S., or author of Poor Richard's Almanac," you would have gotten the question correct. However, if you said that he designed the Franklin stove, or that he was a signer of the Constitution or the Declaration of Independence, or even that he is the man whose face is on the $100 bill, your answer would have been marked as incorrect.

Franklin Co-opted to Law Enforcement: The sale of the Franklin Life Insurance Building in Springfield, Illinois to the State Police led to questions about the future home of James Earle Fraser's bronze sculpture of Franklin. It stands on the west lawn of the office building, and has since 1949. Although his name may be unfamiliar to people today, Fraser's works are probably not. He was the designer of the Buffalo nickel, as well as of a number of large and captivating sculptures of important historical events that have been seen by most visitors to Chicago. Great men were often the subject of Fraser's work; the Mayo brothers statue in front of their Minnesota clinic, General Patton at West Point, Theodore Roosevelt at the Museum of Natural History in New York. Fraser was the designer of the great marble seated Franklin on view at Philadelphia's Franklin Institute. Fraser's Illinois Franklin was cast at a foundry in New Jersey and sent by truck to Springfield, but the statue was so huge that it almost didn't make it to its destination. A low overpass caused the work to be transferred to a vehicle with a lower bed, and even then the air had to be let out of the tires until Franklin's head cleared the overpass. The statue was dedicated with great ceremony, and the attendees included Alben Barkley, vice-president of the U.S., Governor Adlai Stevenson, and Franklin descendant Ann Otway Byrd Castle. Mrs. Castle was the one chosen to unveil the statue. When the insurance building was sold, the statue was not included. **Postscript**: In late May the former owners of the complex agreed to donate the statue to the Illinois State Police Heritage Foundation, a nonprofit group begun in 2000 to establish a state police museum. The organization will raise money for the maintenance of the statue. Joe Davis, a retired state police officer and president of the foundation said, "Mr. Franklin is going to stay right where he is. I think a lot of Mr. Franklin's sayings go along with the Illinois State Police." Read the whole story in the May 24 issue of *Industry Watch*.

Franklin in Bronze: In 2003 the City of Philadelphia commissioned artist James Peniston to do a new bust sculpture of Franklin to replace the beloved "Penny Benny" statue that stood in the park adjoining the fire house at Fourth and Arch Streets. "Penny Benny" had been commissioned in 1971 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Philadelphia Fire Department and Philadelphia school children contributed pennies which formed a part of the statue but over the years, exposure to ultraviolet light caused the statue to disintegrate beyond the point of conservation. Peniston drew inspiration from the prior statue, entitling his new project Keys to Community. Like the prior statue Peniston's bust of Franklin involved Philadelphia's school children who contributed pennies and keys. The keys will form a part of the statue, and symbolize the many contributions that together make a city great. Funds are being raised to prepare the site, dedicate the statue and provide for ongoing maintenance. For more information on this project or to find out how to become a contributor visit www.fireman'shallmuseum.org.

Franklin on Exhibit:
The Ephemera Society of America's website includes an interesting article on the design of the Franklin exhibit by Barbara Fahs Charles, one of the exhibit's principal designers. Check it out at: http://www.ephemerasociety.org/articles/benfranklin.html.

The American Numismatic Association offers the American public a chance to host its Benjamin Franklin numismatic exhibit by downloading panels from the site that can be used as a backdrop for your own Franklin related numismatic materials. Click on the following link: http://www.money.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Search&template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=594

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