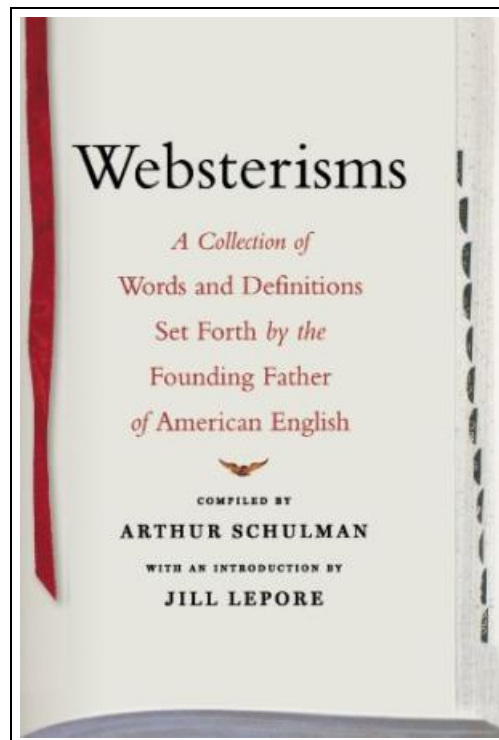


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Free Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 304 pages. Dimensions: 8.9in. x 6.0in. x 0.8in. A national language is a national tie, and what country wants it more than America - Noah Webster What makes American English American In 1800, irascible patriot Noah Webster set out to answer this question by tirelessly recording the vocabulary of a novel breed - the American citizen. Though he was a political conservative, his American Dictionary of the English Language was born out of his deeply held and profoundly democratic conviction that language was by and for the people. A words popularity, no matter how lowly its origins, was its criterion for inclusion. Websters original American dictionary, the granddaddy of them all, helped define the American character. In a light-footed introductory essay, Harvard historian and New Yorker contributor Jill Lepore brilliantly revives the curmudgeonly Webster: his rigor, his passion for words, and his paradoxical ideas about language and politics. Arthur Schulman, longtime crossword puzzle creator for The New York Times, has culled fifteen hundred of Websters entries from the original book, revealing Websters interpretive powers as well as his pervasive moralism. Incisively annotated and delightfully illustrated with quotes from contemporary American sources, these excerpts paint a fascinating picture of a budding Republic. For everyone whos ever gone to look it up in Websters Websterisms offers a crisp new view both of the man justifiably called the Founding Father of American English and of his magnum opus. It took Webster twenty-eight years to compile and publish his monumental work, during which time he was much mocked: what could American English be but a perversion of the Kings English But his dictionary stuck, and its influence grew and grew. We still use most of the words Webster defined, like spank and caucus. Others, like musquash, havent fared...

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