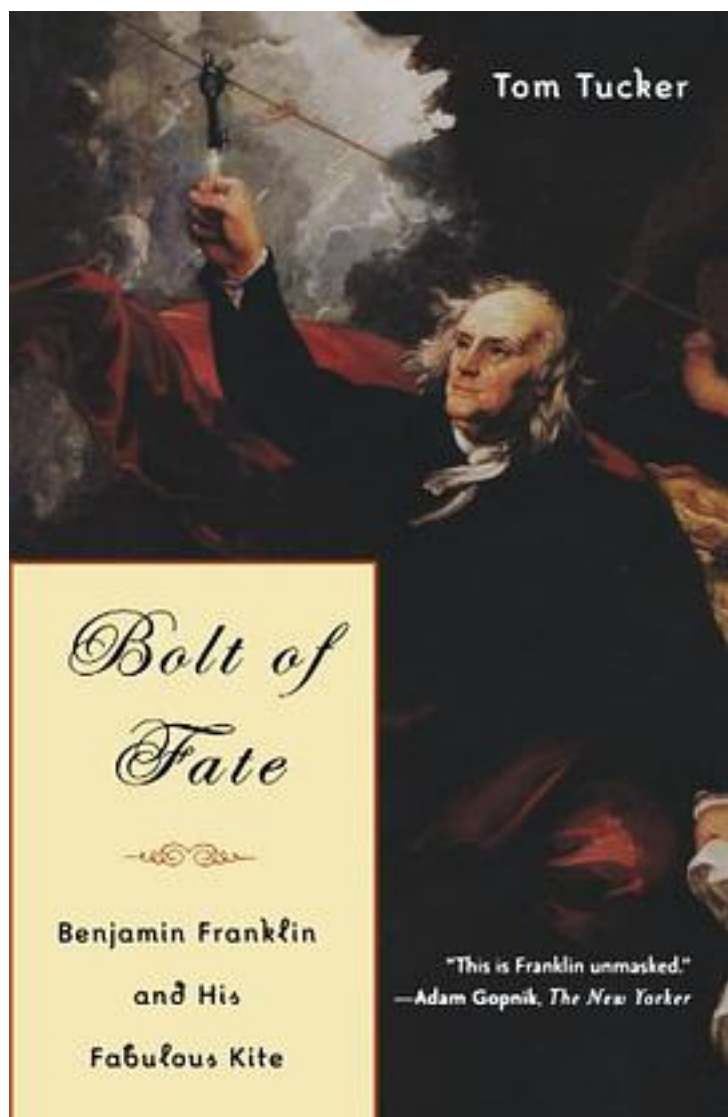


Bolt Of Fate



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著者:Tucker, Tom

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Now in paperback: "This is Franklin unmasked" (The New Yorker) Benjamin Franklin flying his electric kite is one of the most celebrated images of any Founding Father's life. Yet, as Tom Tucker argues convincingly in Bolt of Fate , the kite may never have existed and that, oddly enough, its absence tells us more about Franklin than its presence might. Franklin was an enthusiastic and capable hoaxter-regularly running stories from fabricated personalities in his own periodicals. He was also sly, witty, and used to outthinking the competition. He knew that a scientific feat of this magnitude would propel him to the front of the era's international, intensely competitive scientific community. The Franklin that his experiment presented to the world-a homespun, rural philosopher-scientist performing an immensely important and dangerous experiment with a child's toy-became the Franklin of myth. In fact, this presentation on Franklin's part so charmed the French that he became an irresistible celebrity when he traveled there during the American Revolution. The crowds and the journalists, and the ladies, cajoled the French powers into joining us in our fight against the British. As Tucker shows, this trick illuminates all of Franklin's life and much of his era; and it may even have helped the Americans with their Revolution.

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