

## US HISTORY SUMMER READING 2010-2011

Dear future juniors:

We will be starting our journey through U.S. History by delving into the American Revolution. One of your first major assignments will be a research paper exploring one of the numerous causes of the Revolution. In order to introduce you to the Revolution and to provide you with context for the research paper, we have chosen two summer reading books that will give you good insights into the people and issues of this historic period.

Your summer reading assignment will be to read *one* of the two books recommended below.....*Rise to Rebellion* by Jeff Shaar *or* *Founding Mothers: The Women Who Raised Our Nation* by Cokie Roberts.

On your return to school you will be taking a test on the book you chose. This test will be given on the second day of class.

Please read the publisher's descriptions that follow before you make your choice, or feel free to look up other reviews on your own.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Mrs. Biernat and Ms. Townsend

### **Rise to Rebellion – Jeff Shaara (Historical fiction)**

Shaara dazzled readers with his bestselling novels *Gods and Generals*, *The Last Full Measure*, and *Gone for Soldiers*. Now the acclaimed author who illuminated the Civil War and the Mexican-American War brilliantly brings to life the American Revolution, creating a superb saga of the men who helped to forge the destiny of a nation.

In 1770, the fuse of revolution is lit by a fateful command — "Fire!" — as England's peacekeeping mission ignites into the Boston Massacre. The senseless killing of civilians leads to a tumultuous trial in which lawyer John Adams must defend the very enemy who has assaulted and abused the laws he holds sacred.

The taut courtroom drama soon broadens into a stunning epic of war as King George III leads a reckless and corrupt government in London toward the escalating abuse of his colonies. Outraged by the increasing loss of their liberties, an extraordinary gathering of America's most inspiring characters confronts the British presence with the ideals that will change history.

John Adams, the idealistic attorney devoted to the law, who rises to greatness by the power of his words...Ben Franklin, one of the most celebrated men of his time, the elderly and audacious inventor and philosopher who endures firsthand the hostile prejudice of the British government...Thomas Gage, the British general given the impossible task of crushing a colonial

rebellion without starting an all-out war...George Washington, the dashing Virginian whose battle experience in the French and Indian War brings him the recognition that elevates him to command of a colonial army...and many other immortal names from the Founding Family of the colonial struggle — Abigail Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Joseph Warren, Samuel Adams, Richard Henry Lee — captured as never before in their full flesh-and-blood humanity.

More than a powerful portrait of the people and purpose of the revolution, *Rise to Rebellion* is a vivid account of history's most pivotal events. The Boston Tea Party, the battles of Concord and Bunker Hill — all are recreated with the kind of breathtaking detail only a master like Jeff Shaara can muster. His most impressive achievement, *Rise to Rebellion* reveals with new immediacy how philosophers became fighters, ideas their ammunition, and how a scattered group of colonies became the United States of America.

### **Founding Mothers: The Women Who Raised Our Nation (Biography)**

Cokie Roberts's number one *New York Times* bestseller, *We Are Our Mothers' Daughters*, examined the nature of women's roles throughout history and led *USA Today* to praise her as a "custodian of time-honored values." Her second bestseller, *From This Day Forward*, written with her husband, Steve Roberts, described American marriages throughout history, including the romance of John and Abigail Adams. Now Roberts returns with *Founding Mothers*, an intimate and illuminating look at the fervently patriotic and passionate women whose tireless pursuits on behalf of their families -- and their country -- proved just as crucial to the forging of a new nation as the rebellion that established it.

While much has been written about the men who signed the Declaration of Independence, battled the British, and framed the Constitution, the wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters they left behind have been little noticed by history. Roberts brings us the women who fought the Revolution as valiantly as the men, often defending their very doorsteps. While the men went off to war or to Congress, the women managed their businesses, raised their children, provided them with political advice, and made it possible for the men to do what they did. The behind-the-scenes influence of these women -- and their sometimes very public activities -- was intelligent and pervasive.

Drawing upon personal correspondence, private journals, and even favored recipes, Roberts reveals the often surprising stories of these fascinating women, bringing to life the everyday trials and extraordinary triumphs of individuals like Abigail Adams, Mercy Otis Warren, Deborah Read Franklin, Eliza Pinckney, Catherine Littlefield Green, Esther DeBerdt Reed, and Martha Washington -- proving that without our exemplary women, the new country might never have survived.

Social history at its best, *Founding Mothers* unveils the drive, determination, creative insight, and passion of the other patriots, the women who raised our nation. Roberts proves beyond a doubt that like every generation of American women that has followed, the founding mothers used the unique gifts of their gender -- courage, pluck, sadness, joy, energy, grace, sensitivity, and humor -- to do what women do best, put one foot in front of the other in remarkable circumstances and carry on.