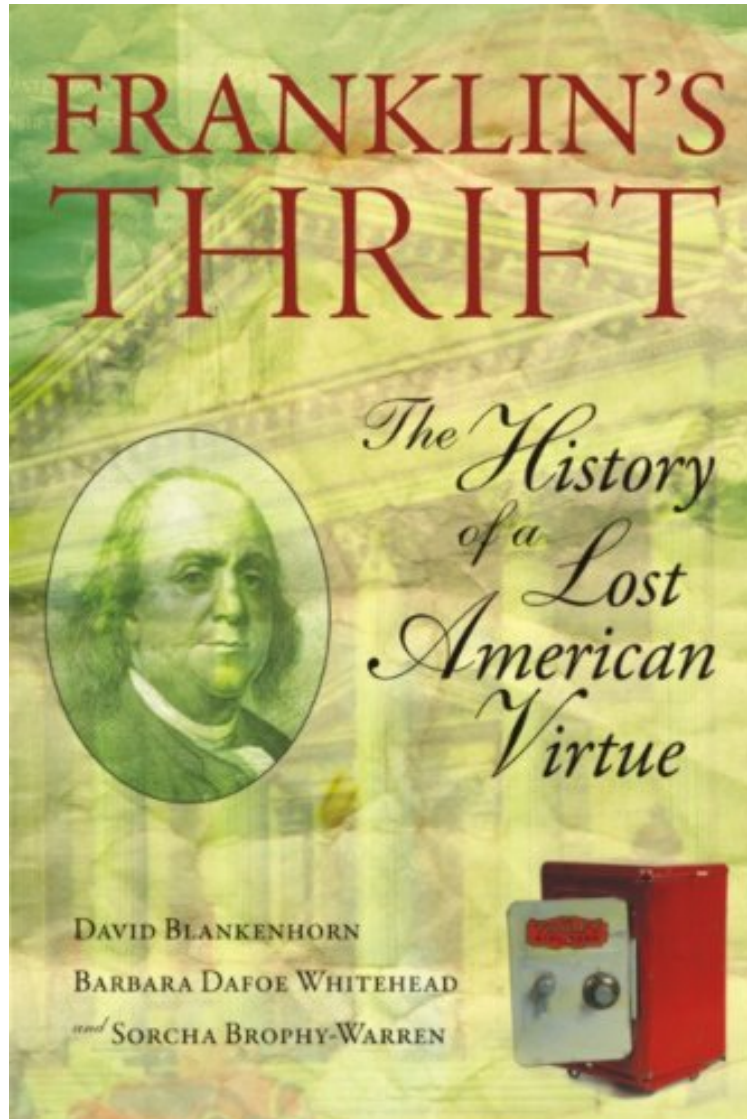


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## Franklin's Thrift: The Lost History of an American Virtue

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**From Templeton Press :** **Franklin's Thrift: The Lost History of an American Virtue** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Franklin's Thrift: The Lost History of an American Virtue:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Excellent  
By P. E. Fisher  
This book is a must read. Starting with Franklin and showing the importance of thrift in American History and some ideas to get it back.

Americans today often think of thrift as a negative value—a miserly hoarding of resources and a denial of pleasure. Even more telling, many Americans don't even think of thrift at all anymore. Franklin's Thrift

challenges this state of mind by recovering the rich history of thrift as a quintessentially American virtue. The contributors to this volume trace how, from the eighteenth century on, the idea and practice of thrift has been a robust part of the American vision of economic freedom and social abundance. For Benjamin Franklin, who personified and promoted the idea, thrift meant working productively, consuming wisely, saving proportionally, and giving generously. Franklin's thrift became the cornerstone of a new kind of secular faith in the ordinary person's capacity to shape his lot and fortune in life. Later chapters document how in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, thrift moved into new domains. It became the animating idea behind social movements to promote children's school savings, create mutual savings banks and credit unions for working men and women, establish a federal savings bond program, and galvanize the nation to conserve resources during two world wars. Historians, enthusiasts of Americana or traditional American virtues, and anyone interested in resolving our society's current financial woes will find much to treasure in this diverse collection, with topics ranging from the inspirational lessons we can learn from the film *A Wonderful Life* to a history of the roles played by mutual savings banks, credit unions, and thrift stores in America's national thrift movement. It also includes actual policy recommendations for our present situation.

**About the Author** David Blankenhorn is founder and president of the Institute for American Values, a nonpartisan organization devoted to strengthening families and civil society in the U.S. and the world. For the past three years, he has led an initiative at the institute to study thrift. A 1998 profile in the *New York Times* described Blankenhorn as a "consensus builder for a moral base in society." He lives in New York City with his wife, Raina, their son, Raymond, and their two daughters, Sophia and Alexandra. Sorcha Brophy-Warren is a doctoral student in sociology at Yale University. Previously she was an affiliate scholar at the Institute for American Values, where she researched thrift and wrote a literature review of business ethics curricula. Barbara Dafoe Whitehead is codirector of Rutgers's National Marriage Project and an award-winning journalist. Her books include *Why There Are No Good Men Left: The Romantic Plight of the New Single Woman* and *The Divorce Culture*.