



working seven long years to bring us this most amazing collection of American literature. I originally stumbled across the paperback edition of Andrew's book in an airport bookstore and minutes later, landed in a city three hours away! I've now purchased copies for all my friends since I've never encountered a more wonderful gift. Buy this book for your mate. Buy another copy for a friend. Buy another one for your parents and be sure to get a copy for yourself. You'll laugh. You'll cry. You'll never be the same again. Roy H. Williams0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Gives a nice, well rounded view of Americans through timeBy InisheerlassBought as a gift for a cousin in Ireland. Gives a nice, well rounded view of Americans through time.

Timeless. Powerful. Intimate. Unforgettable. "Letters of a Nation" is the most comprehensive collection of American letters ever assembled, featuring over 200 extraordinary letters--many published here for the first time--by presidents, slaves, soldiers, prisoners, explorers, writers, revolutionaries, Native Americans, artists, religious and civil rights leaders, and Americans from all walks of life.

.com The letters in this treasure-trove date from September 1630--when John Winthrop, newly ensconced as governor of Massachusetts, wrote to his wife in England--to August 1996, when a young adopted woman named Michelle Song addressed a moving letter to her yet-undiscovered birth mother. In between are more than 200 other epistles--written by the celebrated and the obscure, the powerful and the powerless--that in aggregate paint a revealing portrait of the United States. The collection's range is enormous--from Groucho Marx's hilarious 1947 tirade to Warner Brothers, which was trying to block him from using *A Night in Casablanca* as a movie title, to a June 1744 letter from "The Indians of the Six Nations" to William Mary College, politely declining an offer to educate some of their young (and noting that some previous white-educated Indians "were bad Runners, ignorant of every means of living in the Woods, unable to bear either Cold or Hunger, knew neither how to build a Cabin, take a Deer, or kill an Enemy, spoke our language imperfectly, were therefore neither fit for Hunters, Warriors, or Counsellors.") Whenever possible, editor Andrew Carroll presents the letters in their original form, complete with capitalization and spelling quirks (including misspellings), which adds to their vividness. His brief introductions tell just enough about each letter without overshadowing their subjects. This splendidly presented piece of research offers a revealing, eminently readable window onto America's past. From Library Journal For readers who enjoy reading a wide variety of letters, this book will prove satisfying; those looking for a balanced selection of epistles on specific eras, events, or emotions in the American past will more likely be disappointed. Carroll, executive director of the American Poetry and Literacy Project, has selected and provided superior brief introductions for more than 200 historical and personal letters, arranged in ten categories. The variety is extraordinary. For example, we read Bill Clinton's 1969 draft letter and Elvis Presley's admiring 1970 note to Richard Nixon; the famous, "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus" letter and Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." While some of the letters are previously unknown gems, many choices seem to reflect a desire to include the expected and famous. A clearer explanation of the intended reader and the selection process would have been helpful. Not an essential purchase. Charles K. Piehl, Mankato State Univ., Minn. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.