



Bendat, Jim

DEMOCRACY'S BIG DAY:

*The Inauguration of Our
President 1789-2009*

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Funny, knowledgeable volume of two centuries of presidential inaugurations.

There is quite possibly no single event that better symbolizes the United States's democratic idealism than the appointment of the president to office, yet very little has been written on the subject. Bendat (*Democracy's Big Day: 2005 Edition*, 2005, etc.) continues his focus on this overlooked topic with the latest release in his series about presidential inaugurations. At first glance, any book attempting to cover such a brief historical event would appear to be either trivial, unbearably dull or a mixture of both. Bendat, however, resists the urge to offer a boring textbook or tedious academic treatise, instead providing a detailed yet lighthearted approach to the material. His prose engages readers with short, extremely readable snippets, highlighting only the most entertaining facts and quotes. Readers will be regaled with tales of Herbert Hoover, who was so miffed about losing the election to Franklin Roosevelt that he wouldn't even talk to his successor on the ride to the Capitol, and George W. Bush, whose inauguration was attended by a large number

of protestors. Then there's Andrew Jackson, the "People's President," who thought it would be a grand idea to open up the White House to all of his constituents on the same day he was sworn into office; the public mauled the place and Jackson was forced to flee through a window. At its greatest moments, the United States has attempted to include all citizens in its political vision; Bendat continues that tradition with a salute and a wink. The author has an eye for humor, but he writes with a reverence for bipartisan patriotism that keeps the book from becoming a Washington gag reel. By resisting the urge to inject a personal agenda or use dense, flowery language, the author presents an accurate record of American history with a document that has mass appeal.

Sharp, witty look at an American political tradition.

