

Reflecting the Light of Virtue

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A Note from Our Team

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119:105) The entire passage from which this simple line is taken glorifies the Law of God — the clarity, protection, and comfort that comes from knowing right from wrong. Guiding principles make life clear.

Today, the concept of absolute right and wrong is an unpopular one. Our culture has bought into the idea that morals restrict us from free expression of our individuality. But nothing could be further from the truth! And if you're reading this, you probably know that.

You are a mother, or grandmother, a sister, a friend, surrounded by people you care about. You see the detrimental effect that straying from God's principles has had on our country and you want to do something about it.

Well, we're glad you're here because that's what Mom Links is all about.

As Benjamin Franklin once said, "Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom." This month, we are taking a closer look at why that is and how to cultivate virtue in our own lives and in our families.

If you're new to learning about the foundations of our liberty, no worries! Mom Links has tools and resources for every stage of learning. You can find more information about the different programs available on our website. For now, take a look at the articles, lesson plans, and resources included in the all new Mom Links Magazine. We've got a little something special for you on page 10 as well!

Thanks for joining us on this journey!

- The Moms for America Team



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Stay in touch!

Questions or comments?
Connect with the MFA
Mom Link team by email at
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Benjamin Franklin

Reflecting the Light of Virtue

One night, long before street lighting was heard of, as Benjamin Franklin sat cooling himself by an open window, he heard a man stumble and fall on the uneven cobblestones in front of his door. The man obviously hurt himself judging by the words he growled while picking himself back up.

Franklin made note of what had happened and said to himself, "It is evident that I am, in a sense, the cause of this man's fall. Had there been a light in my window it would have shone on the street and so prevented his misfortune."

The next morning he hurried to the lantern maker's shop. The shopkeeper asked if he was looking for a small lantern to light his way as he walked in the night. "Oh, no," was Franklin's reply. "My friend, I want a huge lantern with wide light spaces on four sides and I want a good strong rack to hang it from." Mr. Franklin then pointed to the largest lanterns in the shop.

The keeper laughed. "There's not a room big enough in all Philadelphia for that lantern."

Franklin replied, "It's not too big for the out-of-doors. Please prepare the rack and hang it over my front door before nightfall. Make sure it carries out well onto the street, but high above every passing head. I shall personally tend to lighting it each evening."

The keeper was puzzled but agreed to do just as he was told.

Soon, people came from far and near to see the light Franklin had swung out in front of his own door.

"What an idea," said one.

"I shall do the same," said another.

"Why stumble over these cobbles when a little light over each man's door makes the dark way plain?"

"Why didn't someone think of this before?"

"Trust Old Ben to think up a scheme like this to get the citizens of this town busy on street lighting. Any other person would have talked and argued, but Old Ben--well--he just went ahead and hung up a light."*

As confusion and contention increases in our nation and world, Moms for America offers a simple solution: Don't underestimate the power and influence that one home reflecting the light of virtue can have on an increasingly dark world.

* Adapted from Wings of Flame by Joseph B. Egan, 1929.





Cottage Meeting

The Cottage Meeting is our signature program, teaching women about our nation's foundation of liberty. Each of our foundational presentations lays the groundwork for understanding the principles that made our country great.

Follow this link for the outline, notes, and materials you'll need to inspire and equip your Cottage Meeting group with the understanding of the role that virtue plays in establishing a republic.

The Roots of Virtue



Virtue. Who uses that word anymore? It sounds ancient, archaic. Certainly, it's too old fashioned to be used in our modern, progressive world. Right? What does that word even mean? And how does being virtuous impact our life?

Merriam Webster defines virtue as a "conformity to a standard of right: Morality," "strength or courage: valor," "a commendable quality or trait: merit," "a capacity to act:

potency," "chaste." In Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary, virtue is also described as "nothing but a voluntary obedience to truth."

Proverbs poses the familiar question, "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies." Interestingly, the Hebrew root word for virtuous is Chayil which means 'a force;' strong or powerful. So, a virtuous woman is a powerful force for good.

Benjamin Franklin, among his many talents, inventions and civil obligations wrote, "The Art of Virtue." He said, "I believe there is one Supreme most perfect being. ... I believe He is pleased and delights in the happiness of those He has created; and since without virtue man can have no happiness in this world, I firmly believe He delights to see me virtuous. - " Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion" (1728)

To put it simply, virtue is about our thoughts and behaviors based on moral principles. So then we must ask, in a free society, whose morals do we adopt and what are the principles?

Continued on page 11

Benjamin Franklin's 12 Principles of Virtue

- 1) There is no happiness but in a virtuous and self-approving conduct.
- 2) Acquiring the qualities of virtue requires a good plan and consistent effort
- 3) Religion is a powerful regulator of human conduct
- 4) Correct action is dependent upon correct opinion
- 5) Motives of personal gain tend to be the opposite of one's true self-interest.
- 6) Where truth and honesty are wanting, everything is wanting
- 7) The proper acquisition and use of money may be a blessing, but the opposite is always a curse.
- 8) It is, by far, much easier to preserve health than to regain it.
- 9) Happiness springs immediately from the mind.
- 10) Life is immeasurably more satisfying to those who get along well with others than to those who do not.
- 11) Of all human relationships, the most enduring and satisfying are those of the family.
- 12) In the process of aging and dying the fruits of a virtuous life are most sensibly felt.



Mother's Day Fun

Mother's day is right around the corner! We've put together a simple activity to bless your momma heart and help you to see the impact of your influence through the eyes of a child.

Ask your kids these questions:

- 1) What are 3 words you would use to describe me (mom)?
- 2) What is your favorite memory with me (mom) and you (kid)?
- 3) If you (kid) and I (mom) were to make a memory together, what would that be or look like? Where would we go and what would we do?



Momi U

Our national team has assembled the very best articles to help you reflect on the virtue that made our country great. Download the Momi U Discussion Guide before your next meeting to help your group create a meaningful discussion.

Week 1 Liber & Public Virtue by Oliver DeMille

On July 4, 1776 John Hancock, as head of the Continental Congress, signed his name at the bottom of the newly written Declaration of Independence and sent it to the world. The rest of the signers didn't sign until Congress reconvened on August 2. So, for a month John Hancock's name stood alone declaring independence from the greatest power on the face of the earth. What motivates a man to voluntarily sacrifice his own safety, jeopardizing his family and all his earthly possessions on the lean hope that his neighbors and nation will support him, and even if they do, that his side has any chance of winning? Read more.

Week 2 White Wigs and Fat Cats

A few years ago, while in the midst of reading the Federalist Papers, I taught a class to a group of high school students on the U.S. Constitution. As I began the class I asked the students what they knew about the Constitution. One of the boys in the class raised his hand and said, "It's just an old document written but a bunch of fat cats in white wigs." My heart sank. How could such an amazing document written by those remarkable men be dismissed with such callous disrespect? Continue reading.

Week 3 Nathan Hale

"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country" were the last words of 21-year-old American patriot Nathan Hale, who was hanged by the British without a trial on September 22, 1776. When the Revolutionary War began in 1775, Nathan Hale joined a Connecticut militia and served in the siege of Boston. On July 4, 1775, Hale received a letter from his Yale classmate, Benjamin Tallmadge, who was now General Washington's chief intelligence officer, "Was I in your condition...I think the more extensive service would be my choice. Our holy Religion, the honour of our God, a glorious country, & a happy constitution is what we have to defend." Read the full article here.

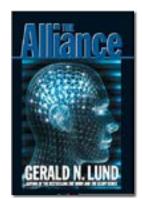
Week 4 A Perfect Gentleman

Excerpted from the Book "Teaching the Child Patriotism" 1918, p. 43
During the last few years magazines have published many helpful series on politics and a number of these deserve special credit for their work in this area. In one of these articles the writer reminds us that though the sins of our time are the same old sins which were denounced by Jeremiah and Ezekiel, they are likely now to be enameled with fine new exteriors and called by new names. Read further here.



Mom Reads

If your Mom Link group is interested in a book club, May is the perfect time to start! These great picks for our Mom Reads program will spark excellent discussion for a group at any level of learning. We also have a children's read aloud option that will emphasize this month's theme - growing in virtue.



The Alliance by Gerald N. Lund

It's eighteen years after the end of civilization as we know it. And in the aftermath of a nuclear holocaust, survivors are being relocated to a new society known as the Alliance. For Eric Lloyd and the members of his village, the Alliance seems like a dream come true. There is work and safety and food enough to spare. But the utopia is not what it seems. Though crime, anger, and prejudice appear to have been eliminated, under the mask of perfection is a society chafing with discontent. Eric vows to destroy the Alliance. But is there any hope of withstanding the Alliance's power structure and its computerized control of its citizens? And what of Eric's growing attachment to Nicole, a Guardian of the Alliance? Author Gerald N. Lund invites you into a futuristic setting where he explores the principle of moral agency through a gripping tale of good and evil, danger and escapes, and the power of one person to change the world.

Alliance is an excellent book helps us understand the principle of virtue in a deeper and more meaningful way than ever before. It is an easy read; a captivating, attention-grabbing story richly woven together with exceptionally well-developed characters—an excellent read! Highly recommended! Pick up your copy here.



Read-A-Loud: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis

In this classic C.S. Lewis tale, children learn the value of virtue, good character and consequences of our choices in a captivating story full of talking animals and mythical creatures. Whether you've read it a hundred times or this is your first time, this is a timeless classic worth reading again and again! After reading the book with the children you can enjoy popcorn and a movie with the film adaptation available to watch on Prime Video.

Purchase the book <u>here</u> and learn more about the movie adaptation at <u>this link</u>.

It's man's most basic and sacred stewardship-to serve as the guardian of his own behavior. And it's man's blackest and most fundamental evil to try and overthrow that stewardship

- Gerald Lund, The Alliance



Listen as Candy Carson shares how a faithful mother instilled virtue in Nathan Hale's life





Family Lobby

Family Lobby is the Mom Links group that engages the entire family and provides stories and projects for families to read and do throughout the month to promote the monthly theme. Once a month, families can join together in a 3 hour "Activity Day" to engage in projects and fun activities in a group setting. Family Lobby is organized by stories and activities individual families can participate in all month long, followed by an Activity Day Plan in co-op type setting where multiple families can share what they've learned and enjoy a fun day of activities, stories and games highlighting the monthly theme.

Monthly Theme Activities

Book of the Month: Alliance by Gerald N. Lund This is a GREAT read-aloud book for 10 and up. Also great read-alone for ages 12 and up. See description in Mom Reads section on page 7.

Read-Aloud Book of the Month: The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis

This classic series has many valuable lessons about virtue! See description in MomReads section.

Additional Books on Ben Franklin:

- Childhood of Famous Americans: Ben Franklin
- Benjamin Franklin by Ingri & Edgar Parin d'Aulaire

Writing Activity: Read "A Story of George Washington." Rewrite the story using different characters, time period, and setting but with the same subject, theme and conclusion. Story and Story Boarding exercise are attached here.

Activity Day

Make learning memorable for your family by gathering with a small group for a day of educational and uplifting fun! We've got Activity Day projects and games to make it simple and resources to help you teach your kids about Virtue.

Take a look at our Activity Day Agenda, and follow the links on the next page instructions for the games and projects. A full schedule for the day will fill about three hours, but feel free to switch things up and pick the activities that work best for your age group.

Your kids will have a blast and learn the imporance of virtue!



Click here for a complete Activity Day Lesson Plan!

"Virtue alone is sufficient to make a man Great, Glorious, Happy and Wise,"- Benjamin Franklin Benjamin Franklin, became an incredibly commendable individual despite humble beginnings. He was the youngest of seventeen, and only received two years publish his witty and insightful newspaper articles.

of formal schooling, and yet rose above meager circumstances to become a successful printer, inventor, musician and author, not to mention playing an irreplaceable role in the founding of America, and serving as a diplomat.

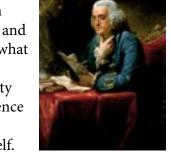
One defining characteristic allowed Benjamin such overwhelming success. One that we can replicate that success in our own daily lives. That characteristic is virtue.

Benjamin Franklin endeavored to live a life centered on virtue. He made it his life's mission to maintain high moral standards, and this fortitude allowed him to accomplish unimaginable things with his life. Virtue played an important role in his accomplishments in three main ways.

Firstly, virtue compelled him to better himself. From the beginning of his life and career, Franklin did not wait for

a prestigious position to invest in the things that were important to him. At the young age of 12 he began to publish his witty and insightful newspaper articles under the pseudonym "Silence Dogood," while still bound as a printer's apprentice under his half brother James. After working for several printers in New England and beyond, he eventually set up his own print shop along with Hugh Meridith at the age of 22, buying out his partner a year later. He also began printing "Poor Richard's Almanack" at the age of 26, a publication that continued for more than

His creativity and determination also led him to many inventions and scientific discoveries, including what became known as "The Franklin Stove." High standards of morality allowed him to build the confidence to persevere under pressure and pursue the goals he set for himself.



Continued on page 10

Homemade Lanterns

"For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:"

Portrait of a Man of Virtue

20 years.

Virtuous principles make it clear how to live rightly and even how answer difficult questions. Knowing right from wrong is essential for making wise decisions and building a successful life. That is why we selected home made lanterns for our Activity Day project! These lanterns will be a constant reminder to your family that virtue helps you see life more clearly.

Making a lantern with your kids for for Activity Day? Check out this video with kid-friendly instructions for a meaningful activity to remind your children about the importance of virtue. We have three different designs to match the skill level and creativity of your group. There is a simple paper option for younger groups, an elegant style made from spare jars, and an adorable, rustic tin can version. Watch the video now!



Mam of Virtue Cont.

Next, virtue allowed him to create good relationships. This ability was essential in his small print business, and later his political career. Because of his consistent strength of character he easily won the trust of others. He was entrusted with positions of leadership and responsibility. He served as a commander of militia forces and supervisor of construction while building stockades for defense against the Indians during the French and Indian War. He was also appointed as a diplomat during the Revolutionary War and held multiple elected offices throughout his life. He negotiated treaties with the French and English over the course of 30 years.

Finally, Benjamin Franklin left a long legacy of virtue, that endures many years after his death. Though he passed away in 1790, and yet his legacy of wisdom and steadfast service continues today. His life had an immediate impact that outlived him through his Philosophical Society, founded in 1743, and the Pennsylvania Abolition Society in 1790, calling for the end of the greatest evil of his day. He was, and is, an influential figure in our national history and his wise words and stalwart convictions are a benefit to us all.

Benjamin Franklin's life was a reflection of well used virtue. He decided to make it his mission in life, and the effects of that decision are still positively affecting our world after nearly 300 years. If you would like to practice the kind of virtue Franklin exhibited, you can imitate his habit of daily personal assessment. Each day, Franklin would make a mark on his chart next to the areas he neglected to reflect. Over the years, his improvement was visible as he kept these virtues in mind from day to day. Click here for your own 'Pursuit of a Virtuous Life' chart that you can use with your family, as a fun activity, to help learn to practice virtue!



Temperance
Silence
Order
Resolution
Frugality
Industry
Sincerity
Justice
Moderation
Cleanliness
Tranquility
Chastity

Temperance
Godliness
Obedience
Faith
Knowledge
Diligence
Brotherly Kindness
Love/Charity
Hope
Cleanliness
Patience
Virtue

The virtues that Benjamin Franklin strove to personify are very similar to the attributes that Jesus Christ taught.





The Roots of Virtue Cont.

Benjamin Rush, Signer of the Declaration of Independence and Father of Education said,
"[T]he only foundation for a useful education in a republic is to be laid in religion. Without this there can be no virtue, and without virtue there can be no liberty, and liberty is the object and life of all republican governments. Without religion, I believe that learning does real mischief to the morals and principles of mankind."

All this leads us to some basic foundational truths.

Godly (religious) education establishes morals. Those morals give us a principles to live by. The principles build virtue. Virtue give us strength, courage, truth, liberty, and purpose—which bring us back to God!

At the age of 12, young Ben Franklin came upon a book entitled "Essays to do Good." In a letter to Samuel Mather he said of the book "[it] gave

me such a turn of thinking, as to have an influence on my conduct through life; ... and if I have been, as you seem to think, a useful citizen, the public owes the advantage of it to that book."

Benjamin Franklin's understanding of virtue was built over his entire life. Because of what he learned, he desired to share with the youth what he considered principles that could be applied, with reward, to anyone willing to work for it. He introduced twelve foundational principles of virtue which became the guiding principles of his life. We encourage families to acquire a copy of Benjamin Franklin's "The Art of Virtue," which details Franklin's thoughts on each of these virtues and leads to great family discussions.

Living a virtuous life, in times such as we are living now can influence the world for good. It can raise our hope, give us power, and lesson our fear. It will stretch and extend us to become better, and be better, for our homs and our country.

Table Talk

Former president, Ronald Reagan stated, "All great change in America begins at the dinner table." At Moms for America® we wholeheartedly embrace this truth and that is why we created Table Talk; turning family dinner into a place of change through thought-provoking conversation. You can check out our free download "Table Talk Sampler" with 30 Days of questions, quotes and stories to spark dinner conversation. Click here more info on Table Talk.

7 Days of Table Talk!

Here are some great stories and quotes on this month's theme to spark dinner conversation and discussions on personal and public virtue.

- 1. Public or Civic Virtue is the dedication of citizens to the common good of the community even at the cost of their individual interests. What are some examples of public virtue?
- 2. Share the Story: "Reflecting the Light of Virtue"
- 3. "Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently." Maya Angelou

- 4. Share the Story "The Nobility of a Boy"
- 5. "It is not always the same thing to be a good man and a good citizen." Aristotle
- 6. Share the Story "A Perfect Gentleman"
- 7. "Men acquire a particular quality by constantly acting a particular way... you become

just by performing just actions, temperate by performing temperate actions, brave by performing brave actions."

- Aristotle

Table Talk



Mothers: the Last Best Hope for America

When Matthew Vasser founded Vasser Women's College, he said, it was because he realized that the "Mothers of a nation mold its citizens, determine its institutions, and shape its destiny."

What better place to invest in the future of America then with the mothers who are shaping her future?

If we want to know what America will look like in twenty years, look at the homes of America today

We spend so much time looking to the federal government to solve our problems that we have completely overlooked where our real power lies – with us. America wasn't founded by a government. It was founded by families uniting together in communities, who then formed a government, organized into states and united those states into a union. But it all started with families. Families founded America and it is families that will save her. Home is the center of the society and mothers are the center of the home.

If we want to know what America will look like in twenty years, look at the homes of America today. Are you concerned? You should be.

I have a friend who teaches at Schofield Army Barracks in Hawaii. The school, like many around the country, no longer requires the students to pledge to the flag. But my friend, being the patriotic soul she is, had her fifth grade class come in every morning and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. She said the students grumbled wanting to know why they had to pledge the flag when none of the other kids had to. All I could think when she told me this was that the parents of those children put their lives on the line every day for that flag and everything it stands for. If those children don't have love and appreciation for the flag what hope do we have in America? It is only a matter of time before we lose freedom and everything we hold dear.

Liberty begins at home and if we

don't start there, nothing else we do will matter. No election, no law, no court can save us.

Mothers, we must teach our children to love liberty because no one else will. The proof is in the fact that thousands of millennials enthusiastically supported a self-proclaimed socialist for president – the leader of the free world. How is this possible? It is because our schools are not teaching liberty. Society, schools, the media, even churches that once taught these things are no longer doing so, and in many cases teaching the exact opposite. The result is that we now have a nation of children and young parents who wonder why America is so special and what there is to love about it.

Liberty begins at home and if we don't start there, nothing else we do will matter. No election, no law, no court can save us.

Watch this beautiful video about a mother's influence featuring the song, "Hands of Heaven."

Home is the center of society and at the center of the home is a mother. That mother is more powerful than any president for she is literally shaping the future. As former First Lady, Barbara Bush said, "Our success as a society depends not on what happens at the White House, but what happens inside YOUR house."

If our schools aren't teaching our children about America's history and heritage, then we need to be doing it. If the media is not going to present truth and facts, then we need to. If liberty is to prevail, if America is to prosper, then we need to foster a love of liberty in our home.

In his book, The Silent Majority
Survival Handbook, Peter Wolf
says parents must become the
first line of defense. "Parents," he
said, "need to devote time and
effort to teach their children that
America is a good country and to
teach them about American heroes
and history. They can front-load
liberty loving values through strong
association and participation in
the 4th of July and Memorial Day
activities. Parents need to teach
their children how liberty and
personal responsibility are linked

and how tyranny can evolve without them."

As proclaimed in the Declaration of Mothers, "A nation is but a magnified home."

What the future will look like for our children and grandchildren is all being decided, right now, in homes and families across America. If freedom is what we want to see, then we need to nurture and foster the principles and ideals of freedom in our homes. Moms for America has many resources to support you from the Patriot's Reading List to the Hearthstone Education Plan. Libraries of Hope has a beautiful collection of stories to promote a love of liberty in the hearts of our children.

As proclaimed in the Declaration of Mothers, "A nation is but a magnified home."

If all we want are short term results that wax and wane in two and four year cycles then we can put all our hope in elections. But if we want real solutions with lasting results, then we need to look to the homes of America; because that is where the real hope for America lies.

E.T. Sullivan expressed this so well. He said, "We fancy that God can only manage his world with battalions, when all the while he is doing it by beautiful babies. When a wrong wants righting, or a truth needs preaching or a continent wants opening, God sends a baby into the world perhaps in a simple home and of some obscure mother. And then God puts the idea into the mother's heart, and she puts it into the baby's mind. And then God waits. The greatest forces in the world are not the earthquakes and thunderbolts. The greatest forces in the world are babies."

Never underestimate your influence as mothers. Never undervalue your importance. We are the last best hope for America. The future of our nation is your hands. God has put the idea is in your heart. And now... God waits.

K Flee

Kimberly Fletcher
President of Moms for America



Founders on Virtue

Before God, I believe the hour has come. My judgment approves this measure, and my whole heart is in it. All that I have, and all that I am, and all that I hope in this life, I am now ready here to stake upon it. And I leave off as I began, that live or die, survive or perish, I am for the Declaration. It is my living sentiment, and by the blessing of God it shall be my dying sentiment. Independence now, and Independence forever!

~John Adams

The time is now near at hand which must probably determine whether Americans are to be freemen or slaves; whether they are to have any property they can call their own; whether their houses and farms are to be pillaged and destroyed, and themselves consigned to a state of wretchedness from which no human efforts will deliver them. The fate of unborn millions will now depend on God, on the courage and conduct of this army. Our cruel and unrelenting enemy leaves us only the choice of brave resistance, or the most abject submission. We have, therefore, to resolve to conquer or die.

~George Washington

Principally, and first of all, I resign my soul to the Almighty Being who gave it, and my body I commit to the dust, relying on the merits of Jesus Christ for the pardon of my sins.

~Samuel Adams

Freedom is not a gift bestowed upon us by other men, but a right that belongs to us by the laws of God and nature.

~Benjamin Franklin

A...virtuous citizen will regard his own country as a wife, to whom he is bound to be exclusively faithful and affectionate; and he will watch...every propensity of his heart to wander towards a foreign country, which he will regard as a mistress that may pervert his fidelity.

~Alexander Hamilton

To the corruptions of Christianity I am, indeed, opposed; but not to the genuine precepts of Jesus himself. I am a Christian in the only sense in which he wished any one to be; sincerely attached to his doctrines in preference to all others...

~Thomas Jefferson

The patriot who feels himself in the service of God, who acknowledges Him in all his ways, has the promise of Almighty direction, and will find His Word in his greatest darkness, a lantern to his feet and a lamp unto his paths.' He will therefore seek to establish for his country in the eyes of the world, such a character as shall make her not unworthy of the name of a Christian nation....

~Francis Scott Key

The cause of America is in a great measure the cause of all mankind. Where, some say, who is the king of America? I'll tell you, friend, He reigns above.

~Thomas Paine

The brief exposition of the Constitution of the United States, will unfold to young persons the principles of republican government; and it is the sincere desire of the writer that our citizens should early understand that the genuine source of correct republican principles is the Bible, particularly the New Testament or the Christian religion.

~Noah Webster