



# American Nerd: The Story of My People

*Benjamin Nugent*

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## **American Nerd: The Story of My People** Benjamin Nugent

Most people know a nerd when they see one but can't define just what a nerd is. *American Nerd: The Story of My People* gives us the history of the concept of nerdiness and of the subcultures we consider nerdy. What makes Dr. Frankenstein the archetypal nerd? Where did the modern jock come from? When and how did being a self-described nerd become trendy? As the nerd emerged, vaguely formed, in the nineteenth century, and popped up again and again in college humor journals and sketch comedy, our culture obsessed over the designation.

Mixing research and reportage with autobiography, critically acclaimed writer Benjamin Nugent embarks on a fact-finding mission of the most entertaining variety. He seeks the best definition of nerd and illuminates the common ground between nerd subcultures that might seem unrelated: high-school debate team kids and ham radio enthusiasts, medieval reenactors and pro-circuit Halo players. Why do the same people who like to work with computers also enjoy playing Dungeons & Dragons? How are those activities similar? This clever, enlightening book will appeal to the nerd (and antinerd) that lives inside all of us.

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