

BULLETIN

OF THOMAS PAINE FRIENDS

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From "A Letter to Mr. Erskine" relating to the prosecution of "The Age of Reason"

A long letter addressed to Thomas Erskine, prosecutor of Thomas Williams, bookseller, London, was written by Paine in Paris in June 1797. It contains several compelling arguments to challenge the contention that the Bible is the "Word of God." Paine concentrates especially on the creation stories and the tale of the great flood and the ark of Noah. A large point with Paine was that God would not be as cruel to his creatures as the Bible depicts and he takes the Bible as a fable, or "fabulous theology." Not surprisingly, the poor bookseller was judged guilty of blasphemy and sentenced to three years in prison.

Printed below are but some concluding paragraphs of the letter which then lead into the Society of Theophilanthropists.

Religion is a private affair between every man and his Maker, and no tribunal or third party has a right to interfere between them. It is not properly a thing of this world; it is only practiced in this world; but its object is a future world; and it is not otherwise an object of just laws than for the purpose of protecting the equal rights of all, however various their belief may be.

If one man choose to believe the book called the Bible to be the Word of God, and another, from the convinced idea of the purity and perfection of God compared with the contradictions the book contains---from the lasciviousness of some of its stories, like that of Lot getting drunk and debauching his two daughters, which is not spoken of as a crime, and for which the most absurd apologies are made---from the immorality of some of its precepts, like that of showing no mercy---and from the total want of evidence on the case---thinks he ought not to believe it to be the Word of God, each of them has an equal right; and if the one has a right to give his reasons for believing it to be so, the other has an equal right to give his reasons for believing the contrary.

Anything that goes beyond this rule is an inquisition. Mr. Erskine talks of his moral education: Mr. Erskine is very little acquainted with theological subjects, if he does not know there is such a thing as a *sincere* and *religious* belief that the Bible is not the Word of God. This is my belief; it is the belief of thousands far more learned than Mr. Erskine; and it is a belief that is every day increasing. It is not infidelity, as Mr. Erskine profanely and abusively calls it; it is the direct

reverse of infidelity. It is a pure religious belief, founded on the idea of the perfection of the Creator.

If the Bible be the Word of God it needs not the wretched aid of prosecutions to support it, and you might with as much propriety make a law to protect the sunshine as to protect the Bible. Is the Bible like the sun, or the work of God? We see that God takes good care of the creation He has made. He suffers no part of it to be extinguished: and He will take the same care of His word, if He ever gave *one*.

But men ought to be reverentially careful and suspicious how they ascribe books to Him as His *word*, which from this confused condition would dishonor a common scribbler, and against which there is abundant evidence, and every cause to suspect imposition. Leave the Bible to itself. God will take care of the sun and the moon, which need not your laws for their better protection.

As the two instances I have produced in the beginning of this letter, from the book of Genesis---the one respecting the account called the Mosaic account of the creation, the other of the flood---sufficiently show the necessity of examining the Bible, in order to ascertain what degree of evidence there is for receiving or rejecting it as a sacred book, I shall not add more upon that subject; but in order to show Mr. Erskine that there are religious establishments for public worship which make no profession of faith of the books called Holy Scriptures, nor admit of priests, I will conclude with an account of a society lately begun in Paris, and which is very rapidly extending itself.

Continued on page 8, *Theophilanthropists*

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Thomas Paine Friends, Inc., gratefully acknowledges recent dues and generous donations from
Martin Brod, Carol Moskowitz



A Short Mission Statement

The Mission of Thomas Paine Friends, Inc., is to encourage people to learn about and from Thomas Paine, his times and philosophy so that they may be inspired to participate in public affairs reflective of the spirit of Paine's life, thought and ideals.

To Know Paine, Read Him

Florence Stapleton -- Thomas Paine Chronicler

Some Websites and Blogs

thomas-paine-friends.org --Our TPF website is maintained by Ed Dodson. Anyone advocating for Paine can send Paine-related news to: edod08034@comcast.net.

[facebook.com/thomaspainefriends?ref=br_tf](https://www.facebook.com/thomaspainefriends?ref=br_tf) --Facebook page of TPF. Enter discussions here.

religionpaine.org --Maurice Bisheff maintains this site of several essays and seminar pieces by him and James Tepfer, about Paine's religious and philosophical views.

valorww2.com --This site, maintained by Victor Madeson, contains many articles about Paine, including Commonsense Clubs, Societies of Political Inquiry, and other subjects.

cooperativeindividualism.org --The School for Cooperative Individualism, Director, Edward J. Dodson, contains a large archive of articles about Paine. Also, summary of the life of Henry George and list of courses at the Henry George Schools.

historyisonourside.wordpress.com --Frances Chiu's blog has excerpts of writings of 18th century and later authors, such as James Murray, Richard Price, certainly Thomas Paine, with relation to our current political, social, cultural matters.

algerblog.blogspot.com --Blogger Algernon D'Amassa writes on a range of subjects, such as Paine's life, ideas, and influence, plus Zen Buddhism, politics, environment, arts, and more.

floridaveteransforcommonsense.org --In Sarasota FL, it sponsors an annual Paine birthday gala, as well as many human rights, peace and justice forums. TPF members Gene Jones and Mike Burns are president and vice president.

thomaspainsociety.org --Website of Thomas Paine Society, Pasadena CA. A Research Library is a major facility of TPS; see the website for details of its use and how to donate publications.

thomaspainsocietyuk.org.uk --This Thomas Paine Society in England publishes articles about liberal-progressive thinkers and movements in its Journal of Radical History.

rjlindsey.com --One-man show, "Thomas Paine, Voice of the American Revolution," by TPF member, Robert J. Lindsey. He has a new show, "Benjamin Franklin: Stories of Revolution".

thelifeofthomaspaine.org --Ian Ruskin performs his Paine monologue at many locations. News of the film schedule on PBS, plus related events, is at the website.

commonsensesociety.com --This Society organizes many international forums and workshops, including in the U. S.

[facebook.com/pages/Fort-Lee-Common-Sense-Society/199545953428717](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Fort-Lee-Common-Sense-Society/199545953428717) --Fort Lee NJ Common Sense Society is preparing to raise a new Paine statue in 2017.

thomaspaine.org --Thomas Paine National Historical Association, located in New Rochelle NY.

kenburchell.blogspot.com --The Thomas Paine Review posts recent publications and news on Paine and related subjects.

www.thomas-paine-friends.org
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The "Sussex Declaration" of Independence

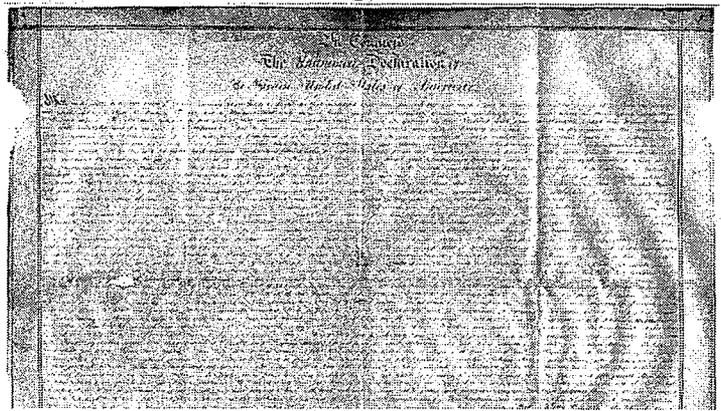
Two Harvard historians, **Emily Sneff** and **Danielle Allen**, are looking into how and why a handwritten parchment copy of the American Declaration of Independence, now dubbed the "Sussex Declaration", is located in the West Sussex Record Office in the city of Chichester, England, where staff were unaware of its significance.

In August 2015, Sneff and Allen stumbled upon an entry in the Chichester office: "Manuscript copy, on parchment, of the Declaration in Congress of the thirteen United States of America." They expected to see a simple paper copy but were quite fascinated when they viewed a true parchment document of the same size as the original Declaration of Independence although differently oriented, with some erasures, and without all of the signatures.

The "Sussex Declaration" is held with other papers of the "Radical Duke", the Third Duke of Richmond, Charles Lennox, who was a supporter of American independence. But the origin of the document as well as when and how it came to be in possession of the Third Duke are not known. Text removed at the top of the document may be recoverable by hyper-spectral imaging, and perhaps some questions will be answered.

Allen said that this document may have been produced about a decade after the original, and she posits that it may have been constructed by the federalists during the period of federalist and anti-federalist clashes over the U.S. Constitution.

HOWEVER, an intriguing theory, involving Thomas Paine, is under investigation by Sneff and Allen. Paine was a tax collector in Lewes, a town in Sussex, which was under the Duke of Richmond; and Paine was well acquainted with the Lewes hotel owners who dealt regularly with the Duke. The theory: the Duke



introduced Paine to Benjamin Franklin. Later, in America, Paine worked with Franklin and Declaration signer James Wilson. And, Allen avers that Wilson was behind the making of this copy. More theory: Upon returning to England, Paine wanted to work closely with the Duke. Allen: "[The Duke] was moving in similar political circles to Paine and he supported radicals, but he [later] moved away from that. Our suggestion is that Paine, who was collaborating with these reformers in the early 1790s, had been working with them to try to recruit Richmond back into the project of reform."

And might it have been a moment when Paine would have shared something like the Declaration with the Duke?

"There are other plausible pathways," Allen said. The two researchers are in England this summer to survey the Duke's library looking for evidence of a connection between the Duke and Paine.

See two articles: www.kansascity.com/news/politics-government/article159974074.html by Katie Watkins, *Medill News Service, The Kansas City Star* / July 6, 2017, and, <http://news.sky.com/story/rare-us-declaration-of-independence-copy-discovered-in-sussex-10850093> UK, 25 April 2017

Patriot Week ~ September 11 to 17

About eight years ago, **Judge Michael Warren** of Michigan and his ten-year old daughter, **Leah**, were conversing about the decline of and the importance of the civic calendar, that is, those days in the year when citizens would take note of special commemorations—Washington's birthday, Lincoln's birthday, Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Constitution Day, and so on. But Judge Warren reminded Leah that over time the civic holidays were "stripped of their meanings and commercialized—[made] empty excuses for appliance sales and three-day weekends." Leah took it to heart and vowed to do something about it. Patriot Week was born. The book-end dates chosen were September 11, marking the terrorist attacks in 2001, and September 17, Constitution Day, observing the signing of the Constitution in 1787.

During Patriot Week, each day is dedicated to a principle from the Declaration of Independence: revolution; rule of law; the social compact; unalienable rights; equality; limits of government. Each day considers, as well, the founding fathers and other patriots who made those principles come alive in America. Thomas Paine is celebrated in connection with the right to alter or abolish an oppressive government.

Since 2009, Patriot Week has grown from its simple beginnings in the Warren home in Michigan. At least thirteen states (MI, NY, WI, SC, OH, CO, AZ, GA, PA, WA, IL, MS, NH, plus DC) have recognized Patriot Week with official gubernatorial or legislative proclamations and resolutions, as have a number of county and municipal governing bodies. Some forms of participation occur in: K-12 schools, colleges, senior centers, libraries, business and professional organizations, and among other groups. Activities have included classroom lessons, school assemblies, panel discussions, guest speakers, essay contests, picnics, music, and more.

There is a wealth of Patriot Week resources online, but any group that wishes to plan a Patriot Week event is encouraged to try novel approaches. Thomas Paine Friends suggests that interested individuals and groups visit the website, and contact **Michael Warren**, who is a TPF member, for information about how to engage one's community.

Patriot Week is a 501 (c) (3) grassroots organization. www.PatriotWeek.org / mwarren@patriotweek.org

RECALLING KLARA RUKSHINA'S PAINE SCHOLARSHIP

by Irwin and Martha Spiegelman



Historian Klara Rukshina was an enthusiastic, painstaking Paine scholar and a member of the TPF Board from 2005 to her death in January, 2010. She was born near Minsk in Belarus in 1931 and spent World War II in Khazakistan. She earned an advanced degree in philology and became a university professor in Belarus until 1993, when she won an IREX (International Research and Exchange Board) grant to take up her research in the History Department at Harvard.

The TPF *Bulletin*, volume 11, number 1, Spring, 2010, contained a long article, "Thinking About Klara Rukshina and Her Legacy," and we follow-up here after seven-and-a-half years.

In 2010, members of the TPF Board agreed to help get many of Klara's Paine writings, which were published only in Russian, translated into English and published. The group would also try to find a journal for her unpublished manuscripts. In addition, the group would help in finding a secure and convenient repository for Klara's papers. Late in 2009, Klara asked friends to try to get her papers into publication. After her death, an initial fund, donated by Klara's friends, several of them not TPF members, was established with TPF to finance these efforts.

Sadly, nothing had been done since 2010. However, with a burst of new energy, largely driven by a \$1,500 donation from TPF member Martin Brod to help pay for a publication of some of her key Paine papers, the tasks concerning Klara's legacy have been revived. It is the aim to publish a volume, sponsored by TPF. Elina Gartsman, Klara's daughter, has been contacted, and she is now going through Klara's papers and organizing them. Collaborating with Elina, we hope to find translators as well as academics familiar with Klara's work who will lead the way in finding journals to publish Klara's papers and locate a home for them. The question of how the TPF can be involved in these efforts will be on the agenda of TPF Board meetings later in the year.

Two short samples of Klara's scholarship concerning "On the Origin of Modern Democracies", a subject of central importance in her research, reveal her careful attention to history and to words. The first excerpt below is taken from her paper, "On the Origin of Modern Democracies: Thomas Paine and Alexander Radishchev," dated March 27, 1998.

"Paine's "hints" [from *Common Sense*] include some radically new ideas in constitutional history.

"**First**, the American constitution should be a **written** one, unlike the "unwritten" constitution of England. In fact, as far as we know, until the American state and national constitutions no country had a written constitution.

"**Second**, that constitution should "come from some intermediate body between the governed and the governors, that is between the Congress and the people," in the form of a continental conference convened for that purpose.

"**Third**, Paine proposed that the continental conference was 'to frame a Continental Charter, or Charter of the United Colonies.' It should consist of two parts: a Bill of Rights for individuals, and a setting forth of the Structure, Powers and the terms of government offices. Since then the Constitutions of many democratic countries have been built on the same model.

"**Fourth**, The Law – the Constitution – should be supreme. Paine eulogized law: in America the law is king. Law must retain a royal aura by inspiring reverence and awe. The idea was influential for the future development of the American system, as America took the English respect for law one step further. In England, whatever Parliament passes becomes the law without further review. In America, all laws must meet the requirement that they be 'constitutional' – that is, not in conflict with the Constitution.

"So *Common Sense* outlined America's future development as a new type of state heretofore unknown in human history: a democratic, representative republic based on a written Constitution, as the Supreme Law, that ascribes the highest value to individual human rights."

The second excerpt comes from her paper, "Who Wrote the Declaration of Independence", third in her three-part series titled, "On the Origin of Modern Democracies". The paper opens boldly with the basic question and starts at the right end.

"...nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined **Declaration for Independence**,... setting forth the miseries we have endured, and the peaceful methods, which we have ineffectually used for redress; declaring at the same time, that not being able any longer to live happily or safely under the cruel disposition of the British court, we had been driven to the necessity of breaking off all connections with her; at the same time, assuring all such courts of our peaceful disposition towards them, and of our desire of entering into trade with them.' (The anonymous pamphlet *Common Sense*, January 10, 1776)

"The *Declaration of Independence*, proclaimed on July 4, 1776 was composed **in exact accordance with the aforementioned plan**.

Continued on page 5, *Rukshina's Paine Scholarship*

"About the Declaration of Independence: the contents and the logic of composition.

"The *Declaration of Independence* is a universally recognized document of historic significance. It starts with the words:

"*When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.*"

"This first passage was titled The Manifesto on the Proclamation of Independence.

"The second passage was generally titled the Bill of Rights and states:

"*We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its power in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.*"

"The ideas embraced in the two passages had their roots in Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*. Thus, the *Declaration* is the **first official state document known in history** which proclaimed as common and universal to all mankind the principles of a new form of government: the supreme power of the people, and the republic based on natural equality of all people. The provision of "unalienable rights" of all people was declared to be the main foundation of all governments. That is, for the achievement of this goal, the governments should be created. Moreover, in the usual triad of philosophy of the Enlightenment period (the XVIIIth century), the rights of "life, liberty, and property" were transformed into "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." The equality of people irrespective of their property was proclaimed in the *Declaration of Independence*.

"The next paragraphs of the *Declaration* ideally match the plan of this document as presented in the pamphlet *Common Sense*. The reader may compare the *Declaration* with the paragraph from *Common Sense* to verify this statement. In parentheses are numbers of the paragraphs of the *Declaration*, which correspond to the plan presented in *Common Sense*. So, the *Declaration* has to contain the following items:

"1, "the miseries we have endured" (Nos 3-22); 2, "and the peaceful methods, which we have ineffectually used for redress" (№.23); 3, "declaring at the same time, that not being able any longer to live happily or safely under the cruel disposition of the British court, we had been driven to the necessity of breaking off all connections with her" (№ 24); 4, "at the same time, assuring all such courts of our peaceful disposition towards them, and of our desire of entering into trade with them" (№ 25)."

Following is a list of copies of Klara's papers in our possession.

- ❖ *Thomas Paine and the First Russian Radical, Aleksander Radishchev* (51 pages)
- ❖ *On the Origin of Modern Democracies: Thomas Paine and, Alexander Radishchev*, March 27, 1998 (7 pages)
- ❖ *The Anonymous Pamphlet Common Sense (1776, January 10)* (10 pages) ---for the Russian version of the article see: Slovo/Word, N55
- ❖ *Milestones of Thomas Paine's Biography, with Some Unique Features of his Personality* (5 pages) includes extensive excerpts from *The Philosophy of Thomas Paine* by Thomas Alva Edison.
- ❖ *Who Wrote the Declaration of Independence?* (10 pages), the third article in the series, *On the Origin of Modern Democracies*
- ❖ *Thomas Paine and the Destiny-Determining Treatise, Rights of Man* (5 pages)

Klara Rukshina also wrote for the *Bulletin of Thomas Paine Friends*.

- "Common Sense as a Source of the Presidential Oath in the United States of America", in vol. 6, no. 2, July 2005, pp 3 – 8
- Comment on "Declaration of the Rights of Men and of Citizens", in vol. 6, no. 3, October 2005, p 3
- Review of the book, *My Pen and My Soul Have Ever Gone Together, Thomas Paine and the American Revolution* (2006) by Vikki J. Vickers, in vol. 7, no. 4, December 2006, pp 5, 10, 11
- Comment on Authorship of the Declaration of Independence, in vol. 11, no. 2, Summer 2010, pp 1 and 8



Let Them Call Us Rebels¹

We are the heirs of Thomas Paine — let's remember his words and spirit of resistance against injustice at the dawn of the Trump era.

By HARVEY J. KAYE, JANUARY 12, 2017 / At: billmoyers.com/story/let-call-us-rebels/

IN DECEMBER 1776, DURING THE DARKEST DAYS OF THE REVOLUTION, THOMAS PAINE WROTE THE FIRST OF HIS **AMERICAN CRISIS** PAPERS. Following devastating defeats by British forces in Brooklyn and Manhattan, George Washington and the Continental Army were retreating across New Jersey to the Delaware River and Pennsylvania. Paine rode with them, determined to continue the fight and defiantly reaffirming his disgust for Great Britain's King George III.



"Let them call me rebel and welcome," Paine wrote, "I feel no concern from it; but I should suffer the misery of devils, were I to make a whore of my soul by swearing allegiance to one whose character is that of a sottish, stupid, stubborn, worthless, brutish man." The greatest journalist of the Revolution knew how to call out the enemy.

Only 11 months earlier, Paine had published **Common Sense**, a pamphlet of just 50 pages that would turn the world

upside down. Calling on Americans to recognize that they were *Americans* not Britons, and that they were fighting not for British rights but for universal human rights, Paine — through words such as "The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth" and "The cause of America is in a great measure the cause of all mankind" — emboldened his fellow citizens-to-be to turn their colonial rebellion into a revolutionary war for independence and to make for themselves and their children a historically unprecedented democratic republic.

Now, however, it seemed America's cause was to collapse on the frozen fields of Tory-dominated New Jersey. Encouraged by Gen. Washington himself, Paine began to write again. On a drumhead by campfire light he penned words that would reinvigorate the struggle and resound through the generations: "THESE are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph."

As yet, we do not have our own pamphleteer for these soul-trying times. But we still have Thomas Paine's ever-timely words. We do not yet have a writer who can as magnificently express our outrage that a man whose character Paine would deplore is about to become president after losing the popular ballot by nearly 3 million votes. We do not yet have a writer to encourage us to not only resist the ambitions of both the man who would be king and his Tory allies in Congress, but also to turn our outrage into a sustained struggle that will fulfill the promise of democracy. Nonetheless, we have the words that burned like fire in the breast of a man who believed that to be an American in his time meant being a radical.

Really, who better to rally us than this former corset maker, privateer and tax collector who came to America for a second chance in life and gave away all his royalties on a little book that was to become one of the biggest bestsellers in American history so that Washington's army could be outfitted with mittens?

¹ Reprinted with the author's permission

Who better to call us out against a royal wannabe who lives in a palatial gilded tower named after himself, proudly boasts that he essentially pays no taxes (while refusing to release his tax returns) and after swearing to "drain the swamp," proceeds to fill it with bottom feeders — a cohort of billionaires, ideologues and cronies he has privileged to dismantle the very government they loathe?

Indeed, who better to mobilize our opposition than the immigrant writer who first envisioned true American greatness and projected achieving it by creating a nation committed to freedom, equality and democracy? "We have it in our power to begin the world over again," he wrote. "A situation, similar to the present, hath not happened since the days of Noah until now. The birthday of a new world is at hand, and a race of men, perhaps as numerous as all Europe contains, are to receive their portion of freedom from the events of a few months."

Pick up Paine's writings and prepare for Inauguration Day by immersing yourself in them. They remain as relevant today as when he wrote them, as Washington's army shivered in the coldest of winters while waiting once again to do battle with the British and their mercenaries.

Carry his works with you. Give copies to friends and family. Read them aloud just as yeomen and farmers and artisans and merchants did in the fields, workshops and taverns of 1776. Drink deeply from his **Common Sense**. Relish his attacks on kings and would-be monarchs. Delight in his belief that working people can govern themselves. Listen as he embraces America's ethnic and religious diversity. And note well his plans for establishing an inclusive, prosperous and expansive American democracy.

Then, when you once again hear Donald Trump revealing, and reveling in, his own ignorance, denying the truth of things and lying practically every time he opens his mouth, recall Paine's observation: "Men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent; selected from the rest of mankind their minds are early poisoned by importance; and the world they act in differs so materially from the world at large, that they have but little opportunity of knowing its true interests, and when they succeed to the government are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominions."

Then take to heart Paine's adage: "Of more worth is one honest man to society and in the sight of God, than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived."

When Trump talks of banning Muslim immigration and compelling Muslims to register with the authorities, heed Paine's warning that "Suspicion is the companion of mean souls, and the bane of all good society." Recite determinedly these words: "For myself, I fully and conscientiously believe, that it is the will of the Almighty, that there should be a diversity of religious opinions among us."

And when Trump announces he's going to build walls, institute mass deportations, and deny refuge to refugees, proclaim, as

Continued on page 7, *Call Us Rebels*

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Add your name to the Thomas Paine Friends network and news exchange.

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- YES, I want to work on a project of Thomas Paine Friends. Please contact me.
- YES, I want to participate in and suggest activities related to public recognition of Thomas Paine.
- YES, I want my Paine organization / group / project listed in the *BULLETIN*.
- YES, I have news of Paine activities to post in the *BULLETIN*; or a short article (about 1,000 words) for the *BULLETIN*.
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To Know Paine, Read Him ~ Florence Stapleton, Thomas Paine Chronicler

...Call Us Rebels, from page 6

Thomas Paine did, "O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose, not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia, and Africa, have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind."

As the Tories in Congress and state legislatures around the country move against the democratic achievements of generations — Social Security, the National Labor Relations Act, Medicare and Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act, the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts, consumer protections and a woman's right to choose — stand up and pronounce the very words that Washington's troops heard as they boarded longboats and crossed back over the icy Delaware to surprise and defeat the King's troops at Trenton: "Let it be told to the future world, that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive, that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet and to repulse it."

Let them call us rebels, for we are all the heirs of Thomas Paine.

Harvey J. Kaye is the Ben and Joyce Rosenberg Professor of Democracy and Justice Studies at the University of Wisconsin - Green Bay and author of *Thomas Paine and the Promise of America* (2006, Farrar, Straus and Giroux) and *The Fight for the Four Freedoms: What Made FDR and the Greatest Generation Truly Great* (2016, Simon & Schuster). He is currently writing *Radicals at Heart: Why Americans Should Embrace their Radical History* (The New Press). Drawn from work on his new book project, these words were delivered as the Keynote Address at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the Wisconsin League of Women Voters. Follow him on Twitter: [@harveyjkaye](https://twitter.com/harveyjkaye)



By Honoré Daumier

Thomas Paine Friends, Inc.
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*Independence Is My Happiness...
My Country Is The World,
My Religion Is To Do Good
Rights of Man, part 2, 1792*



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BULLETIN

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MEMBERSHIPS AND RENEWALS
THE DATE ON THE MAIL LABEL ABOVE IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL DATE.
PLEASE RENEW IF YOUR RENEWAL DATE HAS PASSED. DUES ARE \$10 PER YEAR.
THE BULLETIN IS A MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT.

...Theophilanthropists, from page 1

THEOPHILANTHROPISTS

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The society takes the name of Theophilanthropes...rendered in English by the word Theophilanthropists, a word compounded of three Greek words, signifying God, Love, Man...lovers of God and man....The society proposes to publish each year a volume, entitled *Annee Religieuse des Theophilanthropes*, Year Religious of the Theophilanthropists.

...they profess to believe. These are *gallies*, and are thus expressed....the Theophilanthropists believe in the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul.

...The first society of this kind opened in the month of Nivose, year 5 (January 1797), in the Street Denis, No. 34, corner of Lombard Street [Paris].

...The principles of the Theophilanthropists are the same as those published in the first part of "The Age of Reason" in 1793, and in the second part, in 1795. The Theophilanthropists, as a society, are silent upon all the things they do not profess to believe, as the *sacredness* of the books called the Bible, etc.

...The society adopts neither *rites* nor *priesthood*, and it will never lose sight of the resolution not to advance anything, as a society, inconvenient to any sect or sects, in any time or country, and under any government.

It is more than three years since the first part of "The Age of Reason" was published, and more than a year and a half since the publication of the second part: the Bishop of Llandaff undertook to write an answer to the second part; and it was not until after it was known that the author of "The Age of Reason" would reply to the Bishop, that the prosecution against the book was set on foot; and which is said to be carried on by some clergy of the English Church.

...The Theophilanthropists do not call themselves the disciples of such or such a man. They avail themselves of the wise precepts that have been transmitted by writers of all countries and in all ages.

If the Bishop is one of them, and the object be to prevent an exposure of the numerous and gross errors he has committed in his work (and which he wrote when report that Thomas Paine was dead), it is a confession that he feels the weakness of his cause, and finds himself unable to maintain it. In this case he has given me a triumph I did not seek, and Mr. Erskine, the herald of the prosecution, has proclaimed it.

The reader will find in the discourses, lectures, hymns and canticles, which the Theophilanthropists have adopted for their religious and moral festivals, and which they present under the title of *Annee Religieuse*, extracts from moralists, ancient and modern, divested of maxims too severe or too loosely conceived, or contrary to piety, whether toward God or toward man.

--THOMAS PAINE