

BULLETIN

OF THOMAS PAINE FRIENDS

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WINTER 2018-2019



NEEDED: A THOMAS PAINE MEMORIAL IN NATION'S CAPITAL

"The Literary Instigator of the American Resistance: Thomas Paine Writes a Letter",

Lapham's Quarterly, July 4, 2018,

"Capitol Hill Needs Thomas Paine Memorial", *The Hill*, October 21, 2018

The full articles are online at, www.laphamsquarterly.org/roundtable/literary-instigator-american-resistance and, thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/politics/412443-capitol-hill-needs-thomas-paine-memorial

JEFF BIGGERS, AUTHOR OF THESE ARTICLES, is an American Book Award-winning journalist, cultural historian, editor, and playwright. He has written several volumes of memoir and history. His articles are found in diverse periodicals, the two listed here, also *The Bloomsbury Review*, most notably. His most recent book is *Resistance: Reclaiming an American Tradition* (2018, Counterpoint Press). A comment from Amazon.com: "With *Resistance*, Biggers opens a new window into American history and its meaning today. In a recovery of unsung heroes, including Revolutionary forefather Thomas Paine, *Resistance* is a provocative reconsideration of the American Revolution, bringing alive early Native American, African American, and immigrant struggles, women's rights, and environmental justice movements..." The articles celebrate Thomas Paine's pivotal writings, and point out his importance in forming a new sort of government and society, and make a bid, as well, for public recognition of his achievements.

Marking the 282nd Birthday of Thomas Paine, January 29, 1737 ~ Wishes for a Memorial in the Nation's Capital

THE JULY 4th PIECE REMARKS ON PAINE'S LETTER TO ABBÉ RAYNAL This article is an excerpt from Biggers' book, *Resistance. Paine's letter, written in 1782, when the United States and Britain were engaged in peace negotiations in Paris, answers Raynal's uncomplimentary picture of American independence. Paine said his letter would correct and clear up the mistakes in the Abbé's account of the Revolution. Biggers chose several sentences from Paine's letter to show how broad and deep he thought about a new kind of political system and citizen. Paine wrote:*

"Our style and manner of thinking have undergone a revolution more extraordinary than the political revolution of the country. We see with other eyes; we hear with other ears; and think with other thoughts, than those we formerly used. We can look back on our own prejudices, as if they had been the prejudices of other people. We now see and know they were prejudices and nothing else; and, relieved from their shackles, enjoy a freedom of mind, we felt not before."

Biggers writes of Paine's certainty: The future of the United States of America--and consequently the world--rested in the hands of "science, the partisan of no country, but the beneficent patroness of all," which served as the great "temple where all may meet".

IN A LONG ARTICLE IN THE HILL, BIGGERS PONDERES THAT PAINE IS NOT MEMORIALIZED IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL.

"As a phalanx of new war memorials rise in Washington, DC, over the next few years, including long overdue recognition of Native American and African American veterans, the American Revolution's foremost patriot still remains locked out of our nation's capital. Amazingly, there is still no statue or memorial in Washington to Paine..."

Later, Biggers writes:

"Paine's enduring challenge to our nation to resist duplicitous authority, uphold inalienable freedoms of speech and the press, recognize our country as a sanctuary for refugees, and "reinvent" the world in our own times, remains as vital as in his own Revolutionary times. By finally correcting Paine's erasure from the historical record....we can begin to reconstruct a fuller picture of history for others left out of its official rendition.

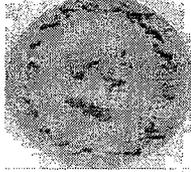
A monument to Paine, in effect, would be an act of reclaiming the commons for "we the people," recognizing the need for multiple viewpoints of history, especially in times when our nation—and its leaders—need to be held accountable for the unfulfilled challenges of the American Revolution for all Americans."

Continued on page 7, *Seeking a Paine Memorial*

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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@gmail.com.

[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.

historyonourside.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.

thomaspainesociety.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.

thomaspainesocietyuk.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 in Hungary holds 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 its new Paine statue in 2018.

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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THOMAS PAINE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS 2019



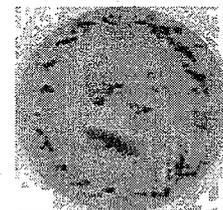
AMHERST, MA On Sunday, January 27, 1:30 - 3:30, at Jones Library, Woodbury Room, 43 Amity Street. Celebrating Thomas Paine's 282nd birthday with "Who wrote the *Declaration of Independence*?" and other intriguing topics. Everyone is welcome to take part in an open roundtable discussion about Paine as author of the *Declaration*, and related subjects. Birthday cake at 3 PM. Always free and open to the public. **Contact:** spiegelmanmartha@gmail.com / 413-253-7934

FORT LEE, NJ From Tom Myers, Director, The Fort Lee Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs and the Fort Lee Historical Society. Fort Lee's annual Thomas Paine birthday celebration will take place this year at Fort Lee Public School #4 at 10 am on January 29th. Mayor Mark Sokolich will introduce this program organized by Tom Meyers. Included in the program is Thomas Paine re-enactor Ken Miller. Palisade Interstate Park musical troubadour Thaddeus McGregor, in period costume, will perform. Sculptor David Frech told Myers this year would see the Paine statue model completed as well as more progress. **Contact:** Tom Myers, ftleefilm@gmail.com



KENT STATE, OHIO From Rick Robyn, Professor of History and Political Science. As usual this January, I'll be doing a small celebration with all of my students in Washington DC, and following it up with a more in-depth discussion with a select group of them about the life of Paine in general and his involvement with DC in particular. The latter includes a discussion of the reason why there are no markers for him in the federal city. I use the Paine lapel buttons as prizes for my students when I do a class quiz bowl and include Paine with a question. Winners always seem happy with their prize.

MORGANTOWN, WV From Tim Nelms. Our Thomas Paine birthday party this year! At Evansdale Black Bear Café, Tuesday, January 29th, at 6 - 8:30 pm. Order your meal on your own, then meet in the private front room. The general format will be meet 'n' greet until about 7 pm, then we will have a Paine focused discussion for about one hour. Bring your favorite quotes, readings, learnings, and questions.



Contact: Tim Nelms, 304-685-9673



PASADENA, CA Thomas Paine Society. The Headstrong Evening Club will celebrate Thomas Paine's Birthday at Castle Green, 99 S. Raymond Ave, Pasadena, CA, on Saturday, January 26th, 7 to 10 pm. Topic: "Who Writes History and How Much of It is True?" Join Thomas Paine (Ian Ruskin), and a cast of historical characters for an evening of rousing conversation, good food, libations, and fun while we re-create Thomas Paine's 18th century English haunt, the White Hart Inn. Speak your mind in this audience participation event like no other. Admission: \$35 per person. Thomas Paine Society Members, CFI Members and Castle Green Owners and Residents, \$30. For tickets and information, www.thomaspainesociety.org

SARASOTA, FL Florida Veterans for Common Sense. Thomas Paine Birthday Celebration and Dinner, Saturday, Feb. 2nd, 6 to 9 pm, at IMG Academy Golf Club, 4350 El Conquistador Way, Bradenton FL. Keynote speaker is Andrew Bacevich, retired U.S. Army Colonel, professor emeritus of international relations and history, Boston University, author of *America's War*, a stinging critique of the invasion and occupation of Iraq. AND, you'll be able to meet Thomas Paine reincarnated. Music by Pine View School Jazz Quartet. Dinner, cash bar, and dancing. Price, \$75. Tickets at EventBrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/thomas-paine-birthday-celebration-dinner-tickets-53507131270/> FLVFCS advances the promise of America in the tradition of Paine. Examples of projects: Courts Assisting Veterans; Homeless Stand Down for Veterans in Sarasota; First ever Statewide Women's Veterans Conference; and Green Path Veterans Farms. We pushed hard to pass Florida Constitutional Amendment 4 which restores voting right to many felons who have completed their sentences; over one million more Florida voters! Now, we are working to ban assault weapons for civilian use. **Contact:** Hector Muniz, 941-349-4774 /FLVeterans@aol.com/website: floridaveteransforcommonsense.org



SAUK CENTER, WI The Free Congregation celebrates the 167th Painesfest, Sunday morning, 10 am, January 20th, at Park Hall, 307 Polk St, Sauk City. It is the longest running celebration of the birthday of patriot Thomas Paine and his contributions to the founding of the United States of America and to the worldwide campaign for human rights and freedoms. He was a major influence behind the Declaration of Independence and an outspoken advocate for women's rights, women's suffrage, the abolition of slavery, and even an early form of social security, all of which took a century or more to come to pass. Our guest speaker will be Kriss Marion, who recently ran for the Wisconsin State Senate from the 17th District. She will share her views on the state of democracy, Wisconsin's rural communities, and the changing electoral playing field, especially for women--in Wisconsin and nationally. As always, the Painesfest is free and open to the public. A potluck meal follows the program--bring a dish to share.

Contact: Fritz Parks, Administrator, free_congregation@frontier.com / 608-643-3131

THOMAS PAINE AND THE NEW MEDIA

A Report from Mariam Touba

About a Wide-Ranging Conference Organized by the Institute for Thomas Paine Studies, Iona College, New Rochelle, NY

The large conference program can be viewed at,

iona.edu/microsites/institute-for-thomas-paine-studies/events/international-conference-of-thomas-paine-studies.aspx

"Revolutionary Texts in a Digital Age: Thomas Paine's Publishing Networks, Past and Present" was the theme for a very full three days in October at Iona College in Thomas Paine's late-life hometown of New Rochelle. The gathering was well-managed and well-funded, a very promising sign for the long-term life of the Institute for Thomas Paine Studies. The stacked program gathered several principal constituencies of scholars: documentary editors (providing a primer for a much-needed new edition of Paine's collected works), young scholars of the early republic, academics in the newly-defined field of Digital Humanities, and those who are actively studying and writing on Thomas Paine.



The panels and speakers worked best when these themes intersected, as when keynote speaker, noted Paine scholar Seth Cotlar, took a dark look at the question of whether Paine would have embraced the new media. Back in the 1990s, the answer was "Of course," and Cotlar read from articles from that era, bursting with optimism about all the possibilities for democracy and widespread dialogue. The prognostications now make us wince as we consider the "fake news," trolls, and extreme

partisanship that pervade the Internet. A related roundtable on how historians can stay engaged with public issues through both traditional forums, such as newspapers, and social media was full of good-sense suggestions from actual practitioners.

While I love learning more about the Revolutionary period and the early republic, I was most engaged by those relatively few panels that dealt exclusively with Thomas Paine. There, the papers spoke to each other, and the discussion was focused. A panel on abolitionism encouraged us to look at the antislavery movement of the Founding era as a force for communitarian good without judging it by the uncompromising moralistic framework of individual rights put forth by William Lloyd Garrison and later activists. In this way, we can appreciate Paine and those who worked for gradual abolition as colonies became states. These discussions, however, were marked by some disputation on attribution, as there is no longer a consensus on what writings are actually Paine's, an issue that is likely to affect Paine scholarship going forward.

I was intrigued by the panel featuring French scholars who provided insight into how Paine's works were translated and distributed; here we heard interesting remarks on the composition of *Agrarian Justice*, where one portion of the text leaves us only

with Paine's prose as it was translated into French and back to English. Among the three academics from France was Carine Lounissi, who has just published *Thomas Paine and the French Revolution* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). Her Paine focus is on political theory rather than biography, but it is groundbreaking. I hope the volume will get wide distribution in university libraries; her own findings and her summary of French Paine scholarship that has followed on Bernard Vincent's writings make this the most important work on the subject—in English or French—since the days of Moncure Conway and Alfred Owen Aldridge. Overall, these French scholars are decisively putting to rest the idea that Paine was a marginal figure who was "in over his head" among the participants in that revolution.

I presented two papers, one that examined Thomas Paine's wartime journalism for the Pennsylvania press in the fall of 1776. Biographers have remarked on these articles but no one had compiled or examined them. My second paper was given at the request of the organizers of a panel on "commemorations," a growing topic for interest of scholars of the American Revolution and early republic. Outlining how my longtime employer, the New York Historical Society, treated Paine over the centuries (the Society was founded during Paine's lifetime, in 1804) turned out to be a pleasure. Even with Federalists among its founders and presidents, I did not find examples of disrespect, and there was always an interest in collecting whatever N-YHS could on Paine. A little-known fact is that the Society's founder, John Pintard, accompanied John Wesley Jarvis and fellow artist Alexander Anderson to Greenwich Village at the news of Paine's death in June 1809, presumably for the purpose of paying his respects.

Finally, and hardly least, was the "bombshell" revelation of a document, still in private hands, that, once validated, places Thomas Paine among the five known framers of the first draft of the Declaration of Independence in June 1776. More on this elsewhere in the *Bulletin*.

[See below ...*Paine and the Declaration*... ALSO, see page 5, for an outline of an unpublished paper by the late Klara Rukshina.]

THOMAS PAINE AND THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

"The Declaration of Independence and Thomas Paine's Influence"

by Gary Berton in *The Freethought Society News*, January-February issue,
www.ftociety.org/wp-content/uploads/January_February-2019-Ezine-Web.pdf

and "Exploring the Origins of Paine's Forgotten Text; The Declaration of Independence"

by Michael Bruno and Alison Robles in *The Ionian*, student newspaper of Iona College, October 31, 2018

"The Institute for Thomas Paine Studies [of Iona College, New Rochelle, NY] hosted an international conference from Oct. 11 to 13. At the conference, Gary Berton, a coordinator for the ITPS, announced his claim that a newly discovered, authenticated and partial draft of the Declaration of Independence proves that Thomas Paine was involved in its creation." (*The Ionian*)

The document is page 1 of what was probably a two-page copy of a draft of the Declaration which had been in use by Roger Sherman, one of the five members of the committee assigned in June 1776 by the Continental Congress to draft a Declaration. (The five were: Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston.)

Most exciting about this page 1 is the note on the reverse, in

John Adams' handwriting: "A beginning perhaps -- Original with Jefferson -- Copied from original with T.P.'s permission." And the page was initialed by Benjamin Franklin. This document is called "the third draft" (albeit a partial draft), being the third now known. It is also called the "Sherman draft", although it had been

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...Paine and the Declaration, from page 4

in the hands of both Adams and Franklin before becoming Sherman's copy.

What of other drafts? Copies of the Declaration were created during the Carpenters' Hall meetings (June 18 to 25, 1776), but few have survived or been recovered. The "original first draft" has been lost; it was presumably what Jefferson used in penning his "Rough Draft". So what now exist are: the John Adams copy held at the Massachusetts Historical Society; the Jefferson copy which is the text for the Rough Draft; and the Sherman copy.

Berton believes that Paine didn't receive public credit for a role in drafting the Declaration because he was not a member of the Continental Congress. "[Paine] should not have been there, which adds even more weight to his involvement." "He probably acted as Franklin's representative." Berton claims the third draft was circulated to Franklin, who was ill at that time; he initialed the copy as his, and thereafter transferred it to Sherman. (From email interview with *The Ionian*.)

Later events, as Berton recounts, are as follows. Sherman gave the copy to Colonel Alexander Lowery, who passed it on to his relatives. It was later discovered in a box of papers by an elderly man in Bowden, Georgia. It was in an Estate Auction booklet of General Hugh White, a brigadier general in the War of 1812. The current owner, who is anonymous, purchased these items in 2009 from the elderly finder. Col. Lowery had been a member of the Committee of Correspondence (of Lancaster County, PA), an organization that challenged colonial rule prior to the American Revolution. He was present in Carpenters' Hall on June 24, 1776 when discussions concerning the Declaration took place.

According to Berton, "It has been commonly accepted that his *Common Sense* led to the Declaration in content and language,

but now we see him an active, even leading, organizer."

[The document] has been entered into the Declaration Resources Project at Harvard University, which focuses on "creating innovative and informative resources about the Declaration of Independence," according to the Project's website. The Project finds that the only T.P. in Philadelphia political circles then was Thomas Paine, so "T.P." on the Sherman document must refer to him.

A major part of the Berton Freethought Society article lays out some of the politics in America of 1776 (and later), with Paine, Thomas Young, Timothy Matlack, among many more, as leaders of a revolutionary-democratic-declaration group in opposition with the conservatives--separatist but hardly democratic--such as Benjamin Rush, John Adams, John Jay, and others. In large part, the opposing poles can be represented by Paine and Adams, although Adams yielded eventually on the Declaration, possibly due to the influence in the drafting committee of Franklin, a powerful leader in the policymaking and strategies of the Congress. Berton submits that another reason for the absence of Paine's name in the Declaration process was due to his radical positions; he had many political enemies and his name would not aid in bringing around the timid members in support of a Declaration.

Ed: So far, we have not found a publication of the ITPS conference available, nor is there any new information at the Declaration Resources Project at Harvard University. Obviously, the document is of major interest to scholars, historical societies and Paine societies, so stay tuned, particularly at these websites,

iona.edu/microsites/institute-for-thomas-paine-studies.aspx and declaration.fas.harvard.edu/resources

—by Martha Spiegelman

"WHO WROTE THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE?"

So asked Klara Rukshina in her paper of that provocative title

At the time of her death in January 2010, Klara Rukshina had several nearly complete manuscripts to comprise her monograph, *The Origin of Modern Democracies*. She was a highly regarded historian and Paine authority, and was a member of the TPF Board of Directors. TPF is working on the publication of the full book, *The Origin of Modern Democracies*.



Klara Rukshina's paper, *Who Wrote the Declaration of Independence?*, is a meticulously well-documented presentation. Here, I offer a small sample of her extensive, detailed paper because it relates to the revelation, noted above, of a document placing Paine as a writer of the *Declaration*.

First reviewing thoroughly the arguments in *Common Sense*, the political landscape in 1776 America, the content of the *Declaration*, and the positions and activities of the five members of the committee assigned to draft a declaration, she then posits three possibilities:

"So, we have three versions regarding the authorship of the *Declaration of Independence*:

the first one is most generally recognized: the author is Thomas Jefferson;

the second one is at least not disputed and presents authorship as collective work;

the third is invariably neglected: the author is Thomas Paine. We will examine them in this order."

Covering several pages, Rukshina shows that Jefferson, by his own letters to individuals, was too busy, not interested, not informed sufficiently, not convinced for independence, to fulfill the task of writing a declaration. She quotes Pauline Maier [Professor of American History, Harvard], in doubt of Jefferson as the author:

[the Committee] "left no minutes of its proceedings, and the account of its work written nearest the event, Thomas Jefferson's 'Notes of Proceedings in the Continental

Congress' is succinct to a fault ... Both Jefferson and John Adams later helped flesh out that bare-bones story. However, most of their testimony on the drafting process was written between a quarter and a half century later, which even at that time raised questions about its accuracy, and, it turns out, for good reason. What they said *contains one mistake after another.*" (*Italics by KR*)

Rukshina asks: "What do the authors (John Adams and Thomas Jefferson) try to hide and why are they doing it!?! Would not it be much simpler and unequivocal to declare earlier: "It is I, Thomas Jefferson, who wrote the *Declaration of Independence*." Or, "I am Thomas Jefferson, the author of the *Declaration of Independence*."

In an emphatic point, Rukshina again turns to Maier:

"Learning how the *Declaration of Independence* was written is more like assembling an immensely complex jigsaw puzzle in which some pieces are 'teases,' serving only to mislead, while others necessary to complete the picture have probably been lost forever."

Then, having rejected Jefferson, Maier makes the assumption: "...the story of how the *Declaration* was written – is reasonably clear. It includes not a single talented writer

Continued on page 6, *Who Wrote the Declaration*

...Who Wrote the Declaration, from page 5

but a group of men working under tight time constraints to complete this one of many assignments the Continental Congress gave them"... "In the end, considering... the number of people who actively intervened in defining its text, the *Declaration of Independence* was the work not of one man but of many."

But clearly, at no point does Maier ever consider any role that Paine may have played. Perhaps she can be pardoned, as Paine was not a member of the Congress and was a newcomer in America. Besides, his *Common Sense* was still an anonymous composition. Nevertheless, as Rukshina swiftly notes, Paine was close to Benjamin Franklin, and was in fact called Franklin's "political son".

With scrupulous detail, Rukshina demonstrates the line-by-line parallels between the grievances as well as the independence and governing concepts in *Common Sense* and the *Declaration*. She introduces her case:

"...the pamphlet *Common Sense* (January 10, 1776), which for the first time put forward the idea and reasoned

the necessity of creating the document under the title "*Declaration of Independence*," contains the main items of the future document. They are presented in the official "*Declaration of Independence*" absolutely in the same logical sequence, literally item after item.

In some letters from Jefferson to Paine, in later years, there seems to be a secretive tone that could suggest an earlier relationship, one that might even pertain to the writing of the *Declaration*. Rukshina writes:

"It was to him that Jefferson wrote in 1788 from Paris: "...but you know such a correspondence between you and me cannot pass through the post, not even by the couriers of Ambassadors." And later Jefferson remarked: [Paine] "rendered useless almost everything written before on the structures of government." "

I leave Klara Rukshina's final discussion for the eventual posthumous publication of this paper. Her questions:

"It is left for us to answer the question: *Why is Paine's authorship concealed? Why is the author of the "Declaration" considered to be Thomas Jefferson?*"

---by Martha Spiegelman

OF NOTE, FOR A BIRTHDAY, JANUARY 29, 1737

From Sid Moss: Some quotations selected from *Common Sense* for Thomas Paine's Birthday

Perhaps the sentiments contained in the following pages, are not YET sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favor, a long habit of thinking a thing WRONG, gives it a superficial appearance of being RIGHT, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defense of custom. But the tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason.

When men yield up the exclusive privilege of thinking, the last shadow of liberty quits the horizon.

The cause of America is in a great measure the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances hath, and will arise, which are not local, but universal, and through which the principles of all Lovers of Mankind are affected, and in the Event of which, their Affections are interested. The laying a Country desolate with Fire and Sword, declaring War against the natural rights of all Mankind, and extirpating the Defenders thereof from the Face of the Earth, is the Concern of every Man to whom Nature hath given the Power of feeling; of which Class, regardless of Party Censure, is the Author.

Who the Author of this Production is, is wholly unnecessary to the Public, as the Object for Attention is the DOCTRINE ITSELF, not the MAN. Yet it may not be unnecessary to say, That he is unconnected with any Party, and under no sort of influence public or private, but the influence of reason and principle.

From Victor Madeson's October Newsletter: "Oligarchs vs. *Common Sense*"

In 1802, after Paine returned to his adopted country from eventful years in France, he wrote a series of letters (see volume 10 of Daniel Wheeler's *Life and Writings of Thomas Paine, 1908*, NY: Vincent Parke & Company; and at, www.archive.org/details/lifewritingsofth10pain/page/n11), some of which are powerful attacks on the oligarchs of his day. Seven letters are addressed "To the People of the United States". Two letters regard the purchase of the Louisiana territory that peacefully doubled the size of the U.S. Also, in a short note from New Rochelle, NY to a newspaper publisher (E. Babcock of the *American Mercury* in Hartford, CT, July 2, 1805), Paine refers to an eighth letter (said to be of June 5, 1805) that "is the most important of any I have published". But there is some confusion about the provenance of that letter, its date and to whom it was addressed.

It was likely a letter that would have resembled a later one, in August 1805, "To the Citizens of Pennsylvania on the Proposal for Calling a Convention", wherein Paine notes that he has "now

presented ..."a collection of thoughts and historical references, adding a small compass that they may circulate more conveniently." In short, it is possible that the "important letter", mentioned to Babcock, was likely a version intended to be "To the Citizens of Connecticut..." because that state had not supported Jefferson in the 1804 election. (CT did not even get a Constitution until 1818, after the War of 1812 had disgraced local Federalists.) Bottom line: Paine regarded the oligarchy, represented by Federalists, as being an enemy of the democratic-republican form of government, so he probably wrote, for Connecticut, his "most important" letter, adding a *Compass* on "Constitutions, Governments, and Charters". The Connecticut letter and the Pennsylvania letter, therefore, would be very similar, and "most important". The vast corruption in the country could be overcome with *Common Sense*, which is why we should care about Thomas Paine.

From Edward Dodson, a reminder of a Paine biography

Some time ago I acquired a copy of this biography of Paine (1988), written by British philosopher Alfred J. Ayer. He offers some insight into the evolution of Paine's thinking in the context of his times.

I have scanned the book and uploaded it to a page of online books available at my School of Cooperative Individualism website. So, if you are looking for something to read that offers a unique perspective on Paine, here is the page link. The Ayer book appears near the top of the available selections. www.cooperative-individualism.org/books-online.htm.

Madeson, Moss, and Dodson are TPF members

ACTIVISTS FOR THOMAS PAINE

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

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To Know Paine, Read Him ~ Florence Stapleton, Thomas Paine Chronicler

...Seeking a Paine Memorial, from page 1

Biggers recalls that Common Sense and the Crisis papers were foundation documents---it was not only separation but also a new kind of government, derived from consent of the people, that was a main argument in these writings. And in Common Sense, Paine laid out the blueprint for a representative government and citizen sovereignty.

IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL, ITS MOST IMPORTANT FOUNDING FATHER CANNOT BE FOUND AMONG THE MULTITUDE OF STATUARY AND PLAQUES. But not so long ago there was an effort to correct this incredible omission. A long campaign for a Paine Memorial started in 1991 under the name of the Thomas Paine Memorial Foundation organized by the Thomas Paine National Historical Association. With the adept leadership of consultant and Paine specialist David Henley, a Paine Memorial on the Mall was approved by two congresses and signed into law by two presidents. A large number of political figures, historians and scholars, journalists, Paine advocates and organizations took up the endeavor. Eventually, however, after years of testimony at

federal commission hearings, and design revisions, and fund-raising, the time limit ran out. By 1998, the Paine Memorial campaign had to close.

Since then, movement for a Paine Memorial in the nation's capital has not been formally organized again. Nevertheless, ideas have been brought forth every so often. For instance, a very generous TPF member, the late Martin Brod, donated money explicitly for a Paine memorial. A Thomas Paine Memorial Committee is exploring what kind of memorial to advise as well as the feasibility of mounting an effort for a Washington location. Rick Robyn, TPF Board member, is, with his students, looking into potential Washington locations for a Paine plaque. Edward Dodson, TPF President, suggests contacting colleges in Washington for cooperation in establishing a Memorial, in the form of a physical entity or perhaps as an annual symposium. All ideas are welcome. Contact TPF President Edward Dodson, edod08034@gmail.com

--by Martha Spiegelman

OF NOTE, FOR A BIRTHDAY, JANUARY 29, 1737

From Ian Ruskin's Thomas Paine Newsletter January 2019

"When my country, into which I had just set my foot, was set on fire about my ears, it was time to stir. It was time for every man to stir." --Thomas Paine

Some of our aims for 2019

- Use the England Tour, April 25 - 27, particularly the performance of "The Life of Thomas Paine" for the British Association for American Studies (https://baas2019.org/events/), to develop new relationships with English universities and scholars that might lead to another tour.
-- Offer free performances to libraries and museums.
-- Work towards making the script available to other individuals and groups -- repertory theatres, community theatres, educational institutes and citizen's groups -- for performances, a new idea!

As we veer toward yet another election cycle, Paine's words about the right to vote and the attempts to suppress that right continue to be needed everywhere!

Thomas Paine Friends, Inc.
185 Middle Street
Amherst MA 01002-3011



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



12-31-22

EDWARD J.
and DEBORAH DODSON
202 Horse Shoe Court
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BULLETIN

NEWSLETTER OF, BY, FOR THOMAS PAINE FRIENDS, INC.

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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.

AUTHOR OF RECENT BOOK SAYS PAINE NOT AN ORIGINAL

In his *Thomas Paine—Britain, America, and France in the 18th Century* (2018, Oxford University Press), author J.C.D. Clark, professor at the University of Kansas (KU), takes down Thomas Paine. Publisher's note:

- *A revisionist, demythologized history of Thomas Paine, England's greatest revolutionary
- *Offers a brand new account of the "age of revolution", and of the alleged political implementation of "the Enlightenment"
- *Provides a new interpretation of the American and French Revolutions
- *Explains how the politics of the eighteenth century (Enlightenment, natural rights) related to those of the nineteenth (utilitarianism, socialism)
- *Takes intellectual control of the radical and revolutionary traditions



TPF President Ed Dodson sent the *Bulletin* a review appearing in the *Kansas University News* (kunews@ku.edu). Dodson wrote: "Perhaps one of our members would acquire and review this book for the *Bulletin*. I do agree that Paine took many of his main ideas from his predecessors and contemporaries, but that in no way diminishes his accomplishment of expressing the views he embraced in a manner that was well reasoned and persuasive."

In the meantime, here are a few sentences from the KU News review, with some of author Clark's remarks that devalue Paine:

English philosopher Thomas Paine's name is attached to individual documents that spell out the idea of natural rights not dependent on the laws or customs of any particular culture of government. (The reviewer—who is not named—at least does call Paine a "philosopher", a title he is not often accorded.--MS)

For those reasons, many historians associate him as one of the most influential figures in helping instill natural rights as catalysts for both the American and French revolutions in the late 18th century.

Clark avers, "It seems entirely natural for people committed to rights language to look back to Thomas Paine as the patron saint".... but "...you're not allowed to think historically about Paine for precisely that reason. He has been turned into an iconic figure." (Clark overdoes it, "patron saint" and "iconic figure" are not in standard use for Paine's status.--MS)

Clark said there is important evidence that points to Paine not even writing certain passages in *Rights of Man*. In a 2015 essay, Clark claimed that prose of a 6,000-word section does not match Paine's style and is probably that of a native-French speaker, such as Marquis de Lafayette, who sought to make a name for himself in the French Revolution. (Frances Chiu, Paine scholar and TPF Board member, answered Clark on this point but he caustically dismissed her research. Some of the dialog was in the TPF *Bulletin*. *Would LaFayette be writing material for a book written and published in England?--MS*)

"If you look closely you see Paine is not formulating a new idea of human rights," Clark said. "He's talking the old language of rights in which rights are much closer to what we call privileges." "Paine was more the inheritor of an old house than the architect of a new house." From review, kunews@ku.edu, Kansas University, Lawrence, KS, 08-27-2018

Portrait by John Wesley Jarvis

--by Martha Spiegelman