

Thomas Paine Friends, Inc.
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22 MAY 2018 PM 2 L



*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.
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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.

Paine-Prometheus, Friend to Man...by Frances Chiu

Below are the opening paragraphs of *Critical Introduction of Thomas Paine* by Frances Chiu, a 1,300-word article in *Scribner's British Writers Supplement XXIV*, pp. 199-221, Ed: Jay Parini, 2017, New York: Gale Cengage Learning



If, as Oscar Wilde famously suggested, "life imitates art far more than art imitates life," the life of Thomas Paine could most certainly be said to reproduce the broad outlines of the tragic Greek hero of *Prometheus Bound*. With his publication of the three largest best sellers of the eighteenth century--*Common Sense* (1776), *Rights of Man* (1791-92), and *The Age of Reason* (1794-95)--the renegade writer was hailed as "The great, immortal Paine" (quoted in Moncure Conway, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, vol. I, p. 26). But he was also branded a "wicked, malicious, seditious, and ill-disposed person" (Erskine, *Speeches*, vol. 2, p. 3) before being banished from England. Or as John Adams put it most famously,

I know not whether any man in the world has had more influence on its inhabitants or affairs of the last thirty years than Tom Paine....*For such a mongrel between pig and puppy, begotten by a wild boar on a bitch wolf, never before in any age of the world was suffered by the poltroonery of mankind, to run through such a career of mischief. Call it then the Age of Paine.*

Who was this Prometheus who came to be bound and proscribed by the various establishments of America, Britain, and France but lauded by the diverse likes of William Blake, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, Ronald Reagan, Afrika Bambataa, and (more recently) by the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street?

Frances Chiu, a TPF Board member, has taught history and literature at The New School since 2002. She has taught an online course on Paine and the Enlightenment (probably the first course in the US to focus on Paine). Her other courses focus on 19th century horror literature as well as on 17th-18th century social and democratic movements. In 2009, she organized a colloquium, "A New Era for Politics: Thomas Paine and the Rise of Modern Liberalism." In 2011, she was nominated for a Distinguished University Teaching Award. She is now completing a book on *Rights of Man* for Routledge Books.

