Introduction

Into Charleston's sun-drenched harbor on April 8, 1793 sailed the French warship *L'Embuscade*. Crowds gathered by the dock, anxious to hear news of whether the French Republic had declared war on the British monarchy. Before them appeared Edmond-Charles Genêt, younger brother of Marie-Antoinette's best friend and prior French diplomat in Russia, who despite his upbringing had been expelled from the Court of St. Petersburg for revolutionary enthusiasm. Returning to Paris, Genêt spent the summer of 1792 imbing the revolutionary atmosphere in the Jacobin Club, becoming friendly with the leaders of its Girondin faction. Taking appointment as French ambassador to the United States, Genêt's ship had been blown 600 miles off course from Philadelphia to a news-starved city passionately invested in the outcome of European events.

Not leaving the grand announcement of war between France and Britain (that had begun in late January) to a subordinate, Genêt orated the affirmative to loud applause. Charleston, sufferers of British siege, occupation, and atrocities during America's War of Independence, had become a hotbed of pro-French sentiment, boasting a French Patriotic Society by December 1792 becoming known as the "*Amis de la Constitution*," corresponding with the Paris Jacobins and affiliated with Bordeaux's Society of the Friends of Liberty and Equality.[1] Now, the port town extended Genêt the finest southern hospitality. The French ambassador spent eleven days participating in Charleston banquets, reviewing parades, arranging relief shipments for France's Caribbean islands, and commissioning pirating expeditions against British shipping. A new Charleston Republican Society formed during his stay.[2]

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[1] Archives nationales de France, AF ET B(I) 372 439.

[2] "Correspondence of the French Ministers to the United States, 1791–1797," Frederick Jackson Turner, ed. *Annual Report of the American Historical Association* 7 (1904), 212; Archives départementales de la Gironde, 12 L 30 207 and 209; Robert J. Alderson, *This Bright Era of Happy Revolutions: French Consul Michel-Ange-Bernard Mangourit and International Republicanism in Charleston, 1792–1794* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), 43; Stanley Elkins and Eric McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism: The Early American Republic, 1788–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 335; National Archives (UK), FO 91/1 139.

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Rather than taking *L'Embuscade – The Ambush* – north to the American capital in Philadelphia, Genêt instead made a weeks-long journey overland, where he "every where received the most flattering marks of attention" from the populace.[3] Genêt enthusiastically confirmed to the French government that Americans considered them "friends, allies, brothers" in the quest for freedom.[4] The citizens of Georgetown, in the under-construction Federal District, fêted Genêt and his nation for enacting "a government founded on the bases of equality and happiness."[5] Camden, New Jersey, presented Genêt with an address proclaiming Americans' "gratitude" for French aid in the War of Independence and celebrating the "noble example" France "now gives to the world, of hatred to tyrants and abhorrence of oppression." The French Revolution, they asserted, would make "man happy, by making him free."[6] With partisans having prepared festivities for his arrival in the City of Brotherly Love, the bells of Christ Church rang as Genêt crossed the Delaware by ferry. A Francophillic crowd met Genêt with tricolor ribbons on their hats and hair, carrying him in triumph over the last four miles to the capital and festivities at City Tavern.[7]

With Genêt embodying trans-Atlantic revolutionary possibilities, partisans capitalized on the effervescence to impact America's political order. With the country still lacking a Jacobin-style network of allied political societies, some believed the time ripe to promote a national network. Philadelphia's German Republican Society sought Genêt's allegiance, presenting an address asserting their hope that "the French nation will give an example to the European world" by fixing "the Rights of Man upon an immovable basis" for all people.[8] Genêt accepted their invitation to help plan a new political network. With "German Republican Society" too particular a name for the group's universal ambitions, club members initially suggested readopting the "Sons of Liberty" moniker, hearkening back to the revolutionary era's first integrated corresponding society network. Genêt, however, proposed a new name, reflecting the group's principles: "the Democratic Club."[9]

Thus, the renegade revolutionary French ambassador Genêt helped inspire – and personally named – a new club network, which laid the groundwork for America's Democratic Party. One in a chain of transnational inspirations that

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[3] *General Advertiser*, May 17, 1793.
[4] Archives des affaires étrangères, P4666 425.
[5] NA FO 91/1 148.
[6] *City Gazette*, May 4, 1793.
[7] Turner, "Correspondence," 284; *Federal Gazette*, May 16, 1793.
[8] *Federal Gazette*, May 18, 1793.
[9] Philip S. Foner, *The Democratic-Republican Societies, 1790–1800: A Documentary Sourcebook of Constitutions, Declarations, Addresses, Resolutions and Toasts* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976), 7; George Clinton Genet, *Washington, Jefferson and "Citizen" Genet, 1793* (New York, 1899), 34.

created modern social movements across the second half of the eighteenth century, American political parties arose through inseparable links with international – in this case, French Revolutionary – exemplars. Across the Revolutionary Atlantic, the era's most prominent social movements arose as part of an explicitly linked effort pursuing visions of liberty, as friends of freedom.

The Atlantic Creation of Modern Social Movements

As eighteenth-century historians have made the "global turn," portions of Atlantic history have received more attention than others. Studies of trade, empire, and state-building have proliferated, but the interconnected histories of resistance against that world's greatest concentrations of power remain disproportionally overlooked. This book aims to be the first to demonstrate the rich web of interrelations between the increasingly inclusive and cosmopolitan social movements of the Age of Revolution. Liberty and rights, concepts previously restricted to certain nations and privileged groups, became potentially applicable to anyone, anywhere. Only low barriers existed between movements and countries: indeed, many activists desired the reduction of borders, boundaries, and old hatreds to right past abuses. Exuberant hopes spread that the political, economic, class, religious, racial, national, and other Old Regime barriers could be abolished – perhaps quickly.

In the creative destruction of eighteenth-century empires, radical new possibilities seemed at hand. Old cultures and practices became suddenly vulnerable before waves of increasingly inclusive movements for greater freedom. Political crises loosened the hold of old elites, while growing strata of literate, prosperous, and aware citizens combined their efforts to advocate significant changes. If the public could be sufficiently aroused and instructed, virtually any enlightened change appeared possible. Embracing distant examples, organizers readily borrowed new methods and causes for regional and national mobilization. Whereas previously most politicized protest had been local, episodic, and loosely organized, now affiliated organizations arose on nationwide scales – winning wide swaths of the populace unprecedented political voice.

Mobilizing large groups across great distances was not new but had usually been undertaken in prior eras for religious rather than primarily political purposes. Reformation-era congregational networks and the confraternities of their Catholic counterparts brought together passionate adherents for acts of piety, advocacy, and community strengthening.[10] Especially when coordinating action across long distances – the Huguenots of sixteenth-century France

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[10] David Garrioch, "'Man Is Born for Society': Confraternities and Civil Society in Eighteenth-Century Paris and Milan," *Social Science History* 41, no. 1 (2017), 103–19.

developed a tiered synod network on local, provincial, and national levels that mobilized their civil wars against the Catholic government – such organizations in many respects anticipated their revolutionary successors.[11] Yet, in these earlier contestations, civil politics remained subordinate to religious concerns, and such activism declined after the Wars of Religion. The first half of the eighteenth century largely lacked widespread, interconnected popular movements for political change.

Anglo-American political clubs developed from Reformation-era religious societies but expanded into sites for debate and learning that became the British Enlightenment's most emblematic organization.[12] Crossing into politics during the English Revolution of the 1640s, political clubs became generally tolerated by British authorities following the Glorious Revolution of 1688–1689. Profiting from broader British tavern and coffeehouse culture, it would be difficult to underestimate clubs' popularity across the eighteenth century. Aided in their "pub-assemblies" by "wine, beer, tea, pipes and tobacco," those united by "conformity of tastes, schemes of life, and ways of thinking" engaged in wide-ranging discussions.[13] Affection, fraternity, and common interests aided such groups' development.[14] Yet these clubs – usually composed exclusively of men – boasted of their independent and particular nature, limiting participation to those sharing their political, class, occupational, and local affiliations. Strangers without invitation were typically excluded.

By the mid-eighteenth century, the British developed clubs for an incredible variety of applications. Organizations spread from elite caucuses to local debating societies and a broad variety of other concerns at most only tangentially concerned with politics – from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, to the Anti-Gallicans, Lunar Society, Poker Club, Hellfire Clubs, Medical Society, and the Society for the Discharge and Relief of Persons Imprisoned for Small Debts. As French *philosophe* Pierre-Jean Grosley wrote during his 1765 British tour, "public affairs generally furnish the subject of conversation; every Englishman gives as much attention to these matters, as if he were the prime minister: and this is the case even amongst the lowest class and country people."[15] These organizations profited from broader British free speech traditions, in which "Britons have a Right to complain as well as to be heard, whenever any Thing is in

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[11] Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562–1629.* 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 52.

[12] F. W. B. Bullock, *Voluntary Religious Societies, 1520–1799* (St. Leonard's on Sea: Budd & Gilatt, 1963), 3.

[13] Pierre-Jean Grosley, *A Tour of London, or New Observations on England and Its Inhabitants.* (London: Lockyer Davis, 1772), Vol. 1, 146–47, 260.

[14] Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Edinburgh, 1767), 3.

[15] Grosley, *Tour*, Vol. 1, 148–49.

Question," as one pamphlet asserted.[16] Historian Peter Clark has estimated more than twenty-five thousand varied clubs formed across the English-speaking world during the eighteenth century.[17] In the American colonies, organizers like Benjamin Franklin founded a dizzying array of organizations, from artisan clubs to literary societies to political caucuses to scientific organizations to firefighting and other pragmatic civic concerns.[18] Britons came to believe they had a rightful voice in politics and made their opinions known. Yet, their pride in reputably being Europe's freest people may have deterred them from combining their efforts against the elite coteries still controlling British politics. No integrated networks of political clubs arose before 1765.

Euro-Americans in the eighteenth century increasingly felt part of an interconnected world, and many of their social practices deeply influenced the forms revolutionary social networks took. Mercantile trade and colonial administrative networks already produced a dense Atlantic web of exchange and correspondence across five continents, while many colonists kept in regular contact with their European counterparts.[19] Freemasons, though cloaking their actions in allegory, by mid-century constructed a formidable trans-Atlantic network of secret societies, while promoting egalitarianism among their members.[20] In an era of falling postal rates and growing print circulation that inspired a communication revolution, scientific societies, literary correspondence networks, the growing newspaper trade, and broadly inclusive spirit of the "Republic of Letters" multiplied long-distance interactions and accustomed participants to socializing in virtual communities.[21]

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[16] *The Right of British Subjects to Petition and Apply to Their Representatives, Asserted and Vindicated* (London: Smith, 1733), 3, 6, 13.

[17] Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies, 1580–1800: The Origins of an Associational World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 2.

[18] Jessica C. Roney, *Governed by a Spirit of Opposition: The Origins of American Political Practice in Colonial Philadelphia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014).

[19] Peter A. Coclanis, ed. *The Atlantic Economy during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Organization, Operation, Practice and Personnel* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2005); John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power; War, Money and the English State, 1688–1783* (London: Routledge, 1989).

[20] Margaret Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Kenneth Loiselle, *Brotherly Love: Freemasonry and Male Friendship in Enlightenment France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016).

[21] Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000); Roy Porter, *The Creation of the Modern World: The Untold Story of the British Enlightenment* (New York: Norton, 2001); Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993); Jacob, *Strangers Nowhere in the World: The Rise of Cosmopolitanism in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

Eighteenth-century literature furthered interest in foreign examples, making many increasingly receptive to new ideas, often from faraway places.[22] Indeed, the Early Modern Atlantic world has been conceptualized as a "continuous interplay" between groups – from local to global in scale.[23] All these processes influenced the forms revolutionary societies took.

The chief innovation of the Age of Revolutions' social movements lay in connecting and radicalizing recognizable Anglo-American organizations to more effectively pressure authorities. American Sons of Liberty in 1765–1766 revolutionized movement organizing, affiliating hundreds of clubs across the colonies to enunciate their grievances, embolden local direct action, and develop a mutual defense network in case British authorities attempted to repress the budding Patriot movement. Though local meetings could resemble older clubs, the broader organization's methods substantially diverged. Coordination through correspondence, deputations, and common activities created a powerful model surpassing what local, divided debating societies and social circles could accomplish. To be successful, the new organizations needed to minimize disagreements between members and differences across regions, while crafting common messages to inspire broad coalitions. Only by working together in unprecedented ways could they challenge entrenched political regimes.

Each of the social movements examined here took fundamental inspiration from their predecessors. The corresponding society model innovated by America's Sons of Liberty and Committees of Correspondence from British origins over the decade preceding 1775 sparked a first wave of social movements. In Britain, the Wilkes and Liberty cause borrowed American tactics to pursue greater liberties and soon sympathizers organized petitioning movements for peace and reconciliation with the colonies. Amid the war's reversals, activists redirected their efforts into the first organized push for British Parliamentary reform mobilized around American-style organizations. Concurrently, British imperial weakness encouraged Irish nationalists to develop a nationwide militia network similar to their American brethren that won Ireland parliamentary independence. Debates over American freedom's meaning motivated the rise of organized abolitionist movements first in revolutionary America and then in postwar Britain. Minority churches' agitation for religious freedom in America led British Protestant Dissenters into comparable campaigns.

The French Revolution – with its Jacobins taking explicit inspiration from recent Anglo-American movements – ignited a second wave of unprecedentedly dense, radical, and universalistic organizing both in their own country

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[22] Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: Norton, 2008).
[23] J. H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492–1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), xiv.

and around much of the Atlantic basin. The United Irishmen applied French universalism to overcome religious divides and pursue national independence. The "British Jacobins" sought Parliamentary reform to open their political system. Free-black and mixed race *Gens de couleur* in the French colony of Saint-Domingue organized to demand voting rights and helped spark the Haitian Revolution. The American Democratic Party developed as activists borrowed French models to more effectively oppose ruling Federalists. Each cause, recognizing their international origins, adapted preexisting examples for their national political purposes, bringing prior methods together in unprecedented and dynamic ways. Atlantic conversations led these movements to innovations they would likely not have discovered on their own. Through exploring such connections, we can better understand how – via precedent, impersonation, invention, adaptation, and evolution – the revolutionary era's most influential movements functioned as a totality.

Corresponding societies benefitted from both their simplicity of design and potential complexity in practice. As first developed by America's Sons of Liberty in late 1765, the network model brought together autonomous local branches to develop common messaging, tactics, lobbying, and public protests. While some proved more influential (with larger city branches becoming regional centers for their hinterlands), no local was dependent on another, and could freely correspond across the network. Repressing such a hydra-like organization appeared nearly impossible. This New World mutation on older British club life shocked Europe: political organizing would never be limited to small, elite coteries again. While some Sons of Liberty successors tried to centralize power more than others, all depended on their local affiliates' vitality. Though in some respects a family of movements – some revolutionary, some reformist, some special-interest and some (dialectically) conservative in scope, flexible in degree of inclusion across time, space, nationality, race, gender, and class – the model's inclusivity allowed the Age of Revolutions' grandest ambitions to be projected through and onto a common format.

In so doing, organizers forged new standards for pursuing enlightenment through activism. As "friends of humanity" and "friends of freedom," they commonly pledged to support their national and international brethren in sister movements against the era's worst excesses and participated in multiple campaigns themselves. An activist like Anglican antislavery stalwart Granville Sharp built connections with both London and Philadelphia Quakers, advocated for American political rights in the 1770s, participated in British Parliamentary reform movements, campaigned for English Protestant Dissenter civil rights, encouraged American action against slavery, and only then helped craft the British abolitionist societies that became the era's broadest and most inclusive cause. Soon, he also supported abolitionism and revolution in France. Frenchman Jacques-Pierre Brissot interacted with British abolitionists and reformers while living in London, and travelled across much

of the United States (meeting revolutionary veterans and budding abolitionists), before founding France's first abolition society, becoming a prominent Jacobin Club member, and leading its breakaway Girondin faction. Despite national pride, local particularity, and sometimes-selfish defense of their own interests, reformers and revolutionaries privileged models that stretched beyond their own causes, regularly cheering advancements elsewhere, pursuing distant interactions, and integrating useful international examples into their own movements.

While the product of a century of Enlightened liberal exchanges and reasoned discussion, the new societies' effects would be more radical still, encouraging democratization and the diffusion of political power. In an era before elite theorists became comfortable with the subject of democracy, activists succeeded in implementing largely democratic society networks in practice: commonly featuring elected leaders, open debating, participation across social classes, and a willingness to challenge the status quo.[24] By creating broadly based political forces more powerful than those governing elites possessed, revolutionary societies repeatedly captured political momentum to advocate for often-radical changes. As "democracy" advanced from an epithet, to an aspiration, to a governing system, activists modeled – and occasionally succeeded in enacting – their preferred modes of governance.

"Freedom" remained a contested concept throughout the era, as in our present day. The Sons of Liberty's conception rested predominantly upon their rights as freeborn Britons for self-rule, yet by the American War of Independence natural rights ideals had raised the thorny question of what it really meant for all men to be created equal.[25] Atlantic social movement networks would be founded for both abolitionism and the maintenance of slaveholder rights. Freedom in politics, however, became associated with collective action: few expected the elite cabals and intimate lobbying of prior eras to prevail indefinitely. As the extent and nature of freedom remained to be determined, the future seemed to belong to those who could shape associational politics for their ambitions. The social movements of the late-eighteenth century were experiments in democratization, attempting to shape a new science of participation.

The Potential of Atlantic History

Amazingly, given their rich respective historiographies, this is the first time these movements have been the subject of a single book. Famed historian-

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[24] Joanna Innes and Philp, eds. *Re-Imagining Democracy in the Age of Revolutions: America, France, Britain, Ireland, 1750–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[25] See Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (New York: Norton, 1999); Annelin de Dijn, *Freedom: An Unruly History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020).

sociologist Charles Tilly, in his magisterial *Social Movements, 1768–2004*, claimed Wilkes' Society of Supporters of the Bill of Rights invented the social movement – overlooking preceding American Sons of Liberty agitation that had mobilized a far larger campaign, ignoring successive movements in Ireland and Haiti, and asserting French Revolutionary examples remained too episodic for his model.[26] Yet his core definition of a "social movement" – associated groups making a sustained public effort to convince authorities of their cause's (and their own) worthiness to advocate for legal and policy changes – applies to each movement analyzed in this book.[27] While William Warner has highlighted the innovations of American Revolutionary activism, David Brion Davis famously described an "Anti-Slavery International" among abolitionists, and scholars have broadly discussed French Revolutionary ideas' reception in Britain, Ireland, and (to a lesser extent) the United States, the transnational inspirations motivating social movement creativity across the full era have been overlooked.[28] Only by examining this broad range of cases together can we achieve an integrated understanding of the Age of Revolutions' development and the extent to which the era's most important movements functioned as an interconnected phenomenon.

As most historians are trained as specialists in a single national history, and much scholarly sociability and publishing remains organized around national distinctions, the Age of Revolutions' international dimensions have remained underserved. The most prominent early exception to this norm was R. R. Palmer's two-volume *The Age of the Democratic Revolution*, published in 1959 and 1964. With "Atlantic" having become a favored shorthand for shared Anglo- and European-American cultural and democratic traditions during the two world wars, Palmer employed such rhetoric to describe a common eighteenth-century "Revolution of Western Civilization," examining how Anglo-American and then French waves of democratic change swept across Europe and North America.[29] Written amid the Cold War, his book was celebrated in the United States and pilloried by the European left as a NATO

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[26] Charles Tilly, *Social Movements, 1768–2004* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Press, 2004), "Britain Creates the Social Movement," CRSO Working Paper No. 232 (Ann Arbor, 1981), and *Popular Contention in Great Britain, 1758–1834* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

[27] Tilly, *Social Movements*, 3–4.

[28] William Warner, *Protocols of Liberty Communication Innovation and the American Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014); David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770–1823* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), 213. Rich works in this vein include Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), and Robin Blackburn, *The American Crucible: Slavery, Emancipation and Human Rights* (London: Verso, 2013).

[29] R. R. Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760–1800. I: The Challenge* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), Vol. 1, 5.

origins story.[30] Yet Palmer considered the revolutions (despite their overlapping Enlightenment origins) more simultaneous than interrelated and showed little interest in examining interconnections. Beyond his North Atlantic focus, Palmer's work now appears woefully incomplete for overlooking questions of colonialism and slavery – almost completely excluding the Haitian Revolution and subsequent Latin American independence movements.[31] Nevertheless, *Democratic Revolution* has retained a gravitational pull for younger generations of scholars through its erudition and daringness to work across national and thematic boundaries that many scholars still fear to tread.

Palmer's work inspired few followers until the 1990s, when "Atlantic" and "transnational" themes became among academic history's hottest topics. Responding to growing interest in – and concern about – globalization, Atlantic connections no longer seemed outliers to national histories, but rather forerunners of an increasingly borderless world.[32] Explaining modern capitalism and industrialization's development came to require oceanic and global foci.[33] Early Atlantic World studies tended to focus on trade and colonialism across broad areas – and those, especially Native Americans, enslaved Africans, and diasporas of marginalized Europeans, they displaced.[34] David Armitage, synthesizing the first decade of reinvigorated research in 2002, famously asserted, "We are all Atlanticists now," heralding that the approach could "supplement and even replace" national histories.[35]

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[30] Marcel Reinhard, review of Robert R. Palmer, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution*, *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* 32 (1960) 220–23. More sympathetically, see Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concepts and Contours* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

[31] Palmer's rare Caribbean and Latin American missives were dismissive, including: "The hanging of numerous rebel slaves was regarded as a police action, of no political consequence; just as the desire of slaves for liberty, having nothing to do with American politics, was not even to be dignified by the epithet of Jacobinism." *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760–1800. II: The Struggle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 518.

[32] See, for example, Hunt, *Writing History in the Global Era* (New York: Norton, 2015).

[33] David Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor* (New York: Norton, 1998); Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[34] Prominent works include Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon, 2000).

[35] David Armitage, "Three Concepts of Atlantic History," in Armitage and Michael J. Braddick, eds. *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 11.

Yet, with longer-duration studies dominant, scholarship on "Atlantic Revolutions" has revivified more slowly. From the early 2000s, a British-Imperial turn in early American studies intensified, building on the classic work of Bernard Bailyn and Pauline Maier to show the extent to which American Revolutionaries interacted with British models both preceding and following independence, contesting parochial understandings of American and British politics and society.[36] Haitian revolutionary studies concurrently proliferated, as Laurent Dubois, Jeremy Popkin, and a host of other scholars examined history's only successful slave revolution as a mirror for the French Revolution's values and shortcomings, while calling attention to its manifold legacies for race relations across the Atlantic basin.[37] Other subjects, however, have been less transformed: although the Haitian Revolution has become an accepted dimension of French Revolutionary studies, still, as Suzanne Desan, Lynn Hunt, and William Max Nelson have noted, the Revolution within France's European hexagon remains predominantly "explained by reference to French factors," instead of Atlantic contexts.[38] Aside from studies of abolitionism, no major works in this new wave have focused on exploring transnational connections between social movements. Except for a small number of "comparative" studies, projects focused on interconnections between the British and French imperial systems during the revolutionary era have remained few.[39]

This study is greatly indebted to the proliferation of scholarly work on the "Atlantic World" over the past three decades, yet much of its inspiration came

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[36] Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967); Pauline Maier, *From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American Opposition to Britain, 1765–1776* (New York: Knopf, 1972); Eliga H. Gould, *The Persistence of Empire: British Political Culture in the Age of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 2000); Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution in the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), Gould and Peter S. Onuf, eds. *Empire and Nation: The American Revolution in the Atlantic World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

[37] Laurent Dubois, *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787–1804* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Jeremy Popkin, *You Are All Free: The Haitian Revolution and the Abolition of Slavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); James Alexander Dun, *Dangerous Neighbors: Making the Haitian Revolution in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

[38] Suzanne Desan, Lynn Hunt, and William Max Nelson, "Introduction," in *The French Revolution in Global Perspective*, Desan, Hunt and Nelson, eds. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), 1, 11.

[39] Lester D. Langley, *The Americas in the Age of Revolution, 1750–1850* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Susan Dunn, *Sister Revolutions: French Lightning, American Light* (New York: Faber & Faber, 1999); Wim Kooster, *Revolutions in the Atlantic World: A Comparative History* (New York: NYU Press, 2009).

from the persistent sentiment (widespread even among scholarly specialists) that histories of the Atlantic World during the Age of Revolutions have not gone far enough. The prominent French Revolutionist Hunt has called attention to how "We still know so little" about the interplay between revolutionary movements, as most studies have dealt with such phenomena at most in passing.[40] David A. Bell argues, "we do not yet have a satisfying model for casting the French Revolution as part of a larger Atlantic or global process," asserting Atlantic origins have not yet been shown to have conclusively affected the shapes revolutionary politics finally took.[41] Grand declarations about France's Revolution being "Constitutively Atlantic" have not been adequately backed by detailed studies.[42] For the American Revolution as well, Bailyn, despite having spent much of his illustrious career explaining Atlantic connections, concluded his *Atlantic History: Concepts and Contours* by conceding "the full account of this story – which is not the aggregate of several national histories, but something shared by and encompassing them all – is a tale yet to be told."[43] Pathbreaking world historian William McNeil similarly considered that many of the most promising Transatlantic approaches "are yet to be successfully carried out."[44] Historians' Atlantic reach has often exceeded their empirical grasp – a lacunae still greater for the lesser-studied movements in this book.

The interplays between Atlantic revolutionary movements have remained under-examined. Most work to date – building from popular interest in America's core "Founding Fathers" and scholarly focus on European elite political culture – has centered on small coteries of trans-Atlantic intellectuals, garbled misunderstandings of events abroad, or else retreated into comparative history. Many studies, like their "global" history bedfellows, have been criticized for implicitly following neoliberal celebrations of economic integration, cosmopolitan elitism, and "disruptive" network construction[45] – while underserving the Age of Revolutions' transgressive potential, popular appeal, and social upheaval. After two decades as a hot concept, discussions of "Atlantic Revolutions" still focus more on the model's potential than its

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[40] David A. Bell, "Questioning the Global Turn: The Case of the French Revolution," *French Historical Studies* 37, no. 1 (2014), 6.

[41] Ibid., 11.

[42] Dubois, "An Atlantic Revolution," *French Historical Studies* 32, no. 4 (2009), 655–61; Bell, ibid., 8.

[43] Bailyn, *Atlantic*, 111.

[44] William H. McNeill, "Transatlantic History in World Perspective," in *Transatlantic History*, Steven G. Reinhardt and Dennis Reinhartz, eds. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2006), 4.

[45] Paul Cheney, "French Revolution's Global Turn and Capitalism's Spatial Fixes," *Journal of Social History* 52, no. 3 (2018), 575–83. See, for example, Niall Ferguson, *The Square and the Tower: Networks and Power, From the Freemasons to Facebook* (New York: Random House, 2018), esp. 9.

realization – increasingly, with a level of frustration that threatens the field's future.

Nevertheless, among recent Atlantic historiography's most inspiring trends has been the recapturing of revolutionary universalism. Whereas prior generations of national historians had typically dismissed eighteenth-century revolutionaries' international pretensions, scholars are now taking their inclusive rhetoric seriously for understanding their worldviews. Janet Polasky has alluringly traced such cosmopolitanism's power in *Revolutions without Borders*, by portraying revolutionaries' common enthusiasm (whether in person, through publication or correspondence) across national boundaries.[46] With passion for freedom and few hardened ideological distinctions, such movements' potential appeared virtually unlimited.[47] Seth Cotlar, studying the early United States, demonstrated the diffusion of "popular cosmopolitanism," informed by newspapers, orations, festive gatherings, and socialization.[48] This study explores how such adaptations inspired bourgeoning political groups to seek new connections across continents and mobilize in new ways.

More work is necessary on the application of animating examples across national boundaries, which repeatedly led to the genesis of new political combinations and movements.[49] Moving beyond elite intellectual history, this work highlights the vast number of individuals, groups, and interests working in concert to animate the era's national and international movements. Only those campaigns capturing popular grievances and/or the public imagination prospered. The Age of Revolutions consisted of people's revolutions challenging political, economic, and innumerable cultural constraints. The revolutionary era's social movements need a history as big as their ambitions.

Even in a manuscript as large as this one, some may consider it not expansive enough. Many groups examined here privileged male sociability, often

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[46] Janet Polasky, *Revolutions without Borders: The Call to Liberty in the Atlantic World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015).

[47] More controversially, see Jonathan Israel, including *Democratic Enlightenment: Philosophy, Revolution, and Human Rights, 1750–1790* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[48] Seth Cotlar, *Tom Paine's America: The Rise and Fall of Transatlantic Radicalism in the Early Republic* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), esp. 49–81.

[49] Nathan Perl-Rosenthal's pathbreaking dissertation, "Corresponding Republics: Letter Writing and Patriot Organizing in the Atlantic Revolutions, circa 1760–1792" (PhD dissertation: Columbia University, 2011), fascinatingly explores eighteenth-century social networks, but whereas Perl-Rosenthal sees separate origins from different national pre-revolutionary epistolary and associational traditions for each American, French, and Dutch network examined, my study foregrounds transnational connections and common inspirations. While in a recent article Perl-Rosenthal considers eighteenth-century cultures as "durable and slow to change," this work instead views the era's rapid shifts as indeed revolutionary. Perl-Rosenthal, "Atlantic Cultures and the Age of Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly* 74, no. 4 (2017), 667–96.

admitting few female members (or none at all), while marginalizing the poor and refusing to admit slaves – though in subsequent eras suffragettes, socialists, and civil rights activists adopted social movement models largely inspired by eighteenth-century revolutionaries. A still-longer work could include movements for liberty in Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Poland, each of which corresponded and shared personnel with those described in this book, and/or continue into Latin American independence movements.[50] Exchanges across the British and French imperial systems (creating the major movements examined here in the nascent nations of the United States, Britain, Ireland, France, and Haiti) appear the most extensive, diverse, and fertile, however, both in their direct political impact and as models for social change that continue being adapted by groups across the world.

Despite the vast historiographies dedicated to each campaign studied here, the direct connections between the age's principal social movements have been little pursued by scholars – partially due to the difficulty of conducting detailed primary-source research across so many locales. Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan, in a sentiment shared by many historians, introduced an edited volume a decade ago by asserting that studying the Atlantic World, "even if some small share of it – will always be extraordinarily difficult to accomplish."[51] Twenty-first-century digital revolutions, however, are making geographically broader studies more feasible. Whereas few scholars in earlier eras could afford to conduct extensive research across several nations, now the broad digitalization of American and British newspapers, alongside vast numbers of pamphlets and political tracts for each movement examined, has made the present study achievable for even a full-time professor without sabbaticals. Historians, as Sarah Knott has described, now have "more information, from more places, than at any previous moment" before.[52] Even where digitization remains incomplete, pairing online-accessible materials with summertime archive tours permits strikingly new combinations of sources. The ability to study wide swaths of the Atlantic basin has come within reach.

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[50] See especially Annie Jourdan, *La revolution batave entre la France et l'Amérique, 1795–1806* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2014); Jane C. Judge, *The United States of Belgium: The Story of the First Belgian Revolution* (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 2018); Marc Lerner, *A Laboratory of Liberty: The Transformation of Political Culture in Republican Switzerland, 1750–1848* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Anna Maria Rao, *Folle controrivoluzionarie: le insogenze populari nell'Italia giacobina et napoletana* (Roma: Carocci, 1999); Bogusław Leśnodorski, *Les Jacobins Polonais et leurs confrères en Europe* (Wroclaw: Ossolineum, 1964); Jaime E. Rodriguez O., *The Independence of Spanish Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[51] Philip D. Morgan and Jack P. Greene, "Introduction: The Present State of Atlantic History," in *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal*, Greene and Morgan, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 10.

[52] Sarah Knott, "Narrating the Age of Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly* 73, no. 1 (2016), 6.

Movement by movement – on a large canvas attempting to recapture the era's grand ambitions – this work aims to rediscover the interconnected chain of social movements that inspired the Age of Revolutions. It attempts to recapture the internal dynamics of each campaign and the linkages that helped make the Age of Revolutions a Transatlantic event. Only in light of the accelerating flow of ideas, tactics, and events across international boundaries, challenging and often reconfiguring politics and society in each nation they touched, can the development of a common revolutionary era be understood.