

Revolutionary Communication: Thomas Paine and the Forging of a New Political Language

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Arriving in America as a penniless immigrant, Thomas Paine invented a new political language by addressing politics through a variety of literary forms and rhetorical techniques. By doing so, he introduced revolutionary ideologies to the common men and women of America. Despite criticism from some Americans, most patriots considered Paine's pen crucial to the success of the American Revolution.

A year ago, I was studying revolutions at a humanities institute at Stanford. After reading barely comprehensible sources from the English Civil War, we turned to the American Revolution and were given a short read—*Common Sense*. This work was drastically different from the previous ones: its language plain and easy to understand and its style clear and persuasive. For my National History Day project, I decided to study this revolutionary pamphlet through its author—Thomas Paine. Specifically, I decided to focus on the origin and evolution of Paine's political language from his British roots to his arrival in America and to the publication of *Common Sense*.

The stories of Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, and the American Revolution relate to the theme "Communication in History: the Key to Understanding" because the revolutionary pamphlet not only convinced many colonists to join the revolutionary cause but also utilized an accessible political language that appealed to the common people of revolutionary America. With the help of Paine, colonists with average literacy could understand the ideologies of the revolution.

The major components of my research were an analysis of Paine's writings during his early years in America, colonists' response to *Common Sense*, and scholars' commentaries on

Paine's publications. I reviewed the works by major scholars on Paine, including those by Philip Foner and Moncure Conway, and read contributions by other historians such as Edward Larkins, Frank Smith, and James Ferguson on Paine's early writings in the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, a magazine he worked for before publishing *Common Sense*. In addition, I surveyed scholarly literature on the pamphlet *Common Sense* itself, including those by Professor Sophia Rosenfield that analyzed the how the work made radical ideas commonsensical through populist approaches. With insights from these secondary sources, I read primary sources including articles Paine wrote and edited for the magazine, researched colonists' responses to *Common Sense*, and found contemporary criticism on *Common Sense*—particularly that contributed by John Adams. Through Adams's letters and writings, I discerned the reasons why he was objected to Paine's writings.

Lastly, I studied Paine's political language's short-term effect on the American Revolution and analyzed its role in defining the nature of the revolution. Then, I turned to other events in history that featured transformational changes in political or social sentiments from sectional divisions on slavery in antebellum America to the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. I was surprised to find in every movement that radically changed public perception on certain social and political subjects, there were efforts like that of Thomas Paine's, inventing new approaches to political communication and revolutionizing the ideological and political realities of their time.

“The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people ...The radical change in the principles, opinions, sentiments, and affections of the people was the real American Revolution.”¹

-John Adams

From arriving in the new land as a penniless immigrant to becoming one of the most significant figures in the American Revolution, Thomas Paine (1737-1809) dedicated himself to forging a channel through which ordinary people could understand and participate in the revolutionary cause. As a destitute citizen of the world, Paine addressed politics through a variety of literary forms and rhetorical techniques to introduce revolutionary ideologies to the common man and woman of America. Despite criticism from some Americans, most patriots considered Paine’s pen crucial to the success of the American Revolution. Paine’s revolutionary communication not only transformed the role of populism in the Revolution but also set a lasting precedent for efforts to mobilize public support amid social and political upheavals around the world.

Bound for the New Land: Paine’s Early Life

Despite his success as a writer in America, Paine received little formal education. His father, a poor corset-maker, could only afford him an education at the tuition-free Thetford Grammar School up to age thirteen.² Nonetheless, the school taught Paine limited yet necessary rhetorical techniques.³ Determined to further his education, Paine self-studied Newtonian science

¹ John Adams to Hezekiah Niles, "Letter to Hezekiah Niles on the American Revolution," February 18, 1818, <https://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/ows/seminars/revolution/Adams-Niles.pdf>.

² Philip S. Foner, "Thomas Paine--World Citizen and Democrat," introduction to *The Complete Writings of Thomas Paine*, by Thomas Paine (New York: Citadel Press, 1945), 9.

³ Robert A. Ferguson, "The Commonalities of Common Sense," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (2000): 473, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2674263>; Melvyn Bragg, "Thomas Paine's Common Sense (In Our Time)," August 6,

by attending lectures on astronomy.⁴ With only a modest education, however, Paine did not enjoy a prosperous career in Britain. By his departure from Britain, he had attempted but failed at teaching, shopkeeping, sailing, the corset trade, and governmental services.⁵ Indeed, it is his lack of deep learning and affiliation to the lower social classes that taught Paine how to communicate with the ordinary people, who would become his most prominent audience.

Religion also decisively shaped Paine's perception of the world. He was raised by a Quaker father and an Anglican mother, the latter whom he never mentioned in his writings.⁶ Quakerism played a more influential role in Paine's beliefs. Key Quaker tenets, such as humanitarianism and anti-establishmentarianism, collided with Paine's observation of the misfortunes of the lower classes in 18th century England that had been caused by the enclosure system, corruption, and the privileged Anglican Church.⁷ Witnessing the struggles of common people motivated him to write for them as a pamphleteer.

In fact, Paine's first political writing was a work of labor activism. In 1772, when he was serving as a tax collector for the government, he wrote and distributed *The Case of the Officers of Excise* in which he argued for an increase in wages for him and his fellow excise officers "supporting [themselves] and [their] [families]."⁸ Sympathizing with the excise officers' miseries, Paine also demonstrated understanding of the British economic system by bitterly pointing out the affluence of the "wealthy and humane" had become the "misfortune of others."

2018, in *In Our Time: History*, narrated by Kathleen Burk, Nicholas Guyatt, and Peter Thompson, produced by Simon Tillotson, podcast, audio, 45:48, accessed April 18, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVlcEY3T7T4>.

⁴ Ferguson, "The Commonalities," 473.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Foner, "Thomas Paine--World," introduction, 10-11.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Thomas Paine, "Case of the Excise Officers," Thomas Paine National Historical Association, accessed April 18, 2021, <https://thomaspaine.org/essays/other/case-of-the-excise-officers.html>; Foner, "Thomas Paine--World," introduction, 10-11.

However, the work was unsuccessful in persuading Parliament and cost Paine his job. By 1774, he had divorced two times and descended into bankruptcy. To avoid imprisonment for debts, he decided to emigrate to America with a letter of recommendation from Benjamin Franklin, who he knew from his Newtonian science studies.⁹

Paine arrived in America in November of 1774 intending to start a school.¹⁰ Four months after his arrival, Robert Aitken, a printer from Philadelphia, hired him as the editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*—a magazine of little success at the time. Paine finally found enjoyment in the process of writing. In a letter to Franklin a month after he started working for Aitken, the pamphleteer expressed pride for his role in the magazine: “[Aitken] had not above six hundred subscribers...We now have upwards of fifteen hundred, and daily increasing.”¹¹ Little did he know, the editorship of the magazine would pave his way to become a founding father of America.

Political Discourse Through Poetry, Dialogue, and Allegory

Paine’s works in his early years in America discussed political topics using a variety of literary forms, including poems, dialogues, and allegories. On January 4th, 1775, Paine published “A Dialogue Between General Wolfe and General Gage” in the *Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser*.¹² In the article, the ghost of General James Wolfe, a deceased British Army officer prominently remembered for his service in the Seven Years’ War, appears in front of

⁹ Foner, "Thomas Paine--World," introduction, 11.

¹⁰ Ferguson, "The Commonalities," 473.

¹¹ Edward Larkin, "Inventing an American Public: Thomas Paine, the 'Pennsylvania Magazine,' and American Revolutionary Political Discourse," *Early American Literature* 33, no. 3 (1998): 260-261, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25057128>.

¹² Foner, "Chronological Table," 47; Frank Smith, "New Light on Thomas Paine's First Year in America, 1775," *American Literature* 1, no. 4 (1930), <https://doi.org/10.2307/2920115>. Frank Smith summarized Moncure Conway's efforts to recognize Paine’s authorship among anonymously published articles.

General Gage, loyalist governor of Massachusetts.¹³ Throughout the dialogue, Wolfe sides with the patriots while Gage with the loyalists:

Gen. GAGE. The inhabitants of the province of Massachusetts Bay... have refused to obey my proclamations.

Gen. WOLFE. The inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay were once a brave and *loyal* people... If you value, the sweets of peace and liberty... I conjure you immediately to resign your commission.¹⁴

Paine embedded many common arguments for patriotism into Wolfe's lines, such as the natural right argument: "The American colonies are entitled to all the privileges of British subjects."

Using the universal reverence for a colonial war hero, Paine wished to foster a sense of American patriotism.

By September of 1775, the Continental Army had fought the British troops at Bunker Hill, which convinced Paine to continue his patriotic effort by publishing "Liberty Tree."¹⁵ The poem describes the Greek goddess of liberty planting the "liberty tree" on the "peaceful shore" of America and urges all colonists to "blow the trumpet to arms."¹⁶ The poem demonstrates Paine's active efforts in calling the people to take up arms and boosting morale during the war. "Liberty Tree" was just the beginning of the pamphleteer's fervent support for the war cause. After publishing his seminal work *Common Sense*, he volunteered to serve as the personal assistant to General Nathaniel Greene.¹⁷ His contribution to the war culminated in *The American*

¹³ Edward Bujak, "The Fifth Nation in the Four Nations Approach?," Four Nations History Network, last modified July 4, 2016, accessed March 14, 2021, <https://fournationshistory.wordpress.com/2016/07/04/the-fifth-nation-in-the-four-nations-approach/>; John Richard Alden, *General Gage in America: Being Principally a History of His Role in the American Revolution* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1948), 202.

¹⁴ Thomas Paine, "A Dialogue Between General Wolfe and General Gage In a Wood Near Boston," in *The Writings of Thomas Paine*, ed. Moncure Daniel Conway, vol. 1, *The Writings of Thomas Paine* (n.p.: Liberty Fund, n.d.), 15-16, <https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/paine-the-writings-of-thomas-paine-vol-i-1774-1779>.

¹⁵ Foner, "Chronological Table," 47.

¹⁶ Thomas Paine, "Liberty Tree," ed. Philip S. Foner, Thomas Paine National Historical Association, accessed March 14, 2021, <https://thomaspaine.org/essays/poetry/liberty-tree.html>.

¹⁷ "Thomas Paine," Biography, last modified May 19, 2016, accessed April 18, 2021, <https://www.biography.com/scholar/thomas-paine>.

Crisis, a series of papers by Paine that George Washington ordered be read to the soldiers troubled by hunger, disease, and the weather during the encampment at Valley Forge. Without Paine's writing to sustain morale, the revolutionary cause could have easily perished that winter.¹⁸

Not only did Paine use a multitude of literary forms to engage with politics, but he also used allegory to subtly portray his political views. To maximize profits of the *Pennsylvanian Magazine* in the market, Aitkin insisted Paine avoid addressing the political quarrels between Britain and America.¹⁹ However, the rebellious Paine managed to express partisan opinions with allegories that subtly introduced revolutionary ideologies to readers. For instance, Paine frequently employed the institution of marriage as an allegorical reference to the bond between Britain and the colonies. In his essay "Consolation for the Old Bachelor" published in June 1775, Paine wrote about a quarrel between a merchant and his wife in which the merchant could only remain "silent" because his wife would not listen to him—similar to how American pleas for representation were ignored by the British crown. In "Reflection on Unhappy Marriages," which was published in the same month, Paine took the allegory further in urging colonists to "dissolve the band" when marriages become unhappy. Having learned from his own marital failures, he also emphasized the necessity of true affection instead of economic motivations in a marriage: "There are persons...[who] inter-marry fortunes, not minds... I would not advise any one to call this state of insipidity happiness."²⁰ Paine would connect this argument to independence in his later works.²¹ Frequently adopting the analogy of the British-American relationship to human

¹⁸ Robert Dehenny, Sandra Morgan, and Pauline Assenza, "Thomas Paine: Creating the New Story for a New Nation," *Tamara: Journal for Critical Organization Inquiry* 5, no. 4 (2006): 184, accessed May 18, 2021, <https://tamarajournal.com/index.php/tamara/article/view/279>.

¹⁹ Foner, "Thomas Paine--World," introduction, 12.

²⁰ Thomas Paine, "Reflections on Unhappy Marriages," in *The Writings of Thomas Paine*.

²¹ Larkin, "Inventing an American," 264-265. See Page 9.

interaction, Paine was practicing techniques instrumental to explaining complex intellectual arguments to everyday colonists. These unconventional approaches to political discourse became the origins of Paine's political language.

From the *Pennsylvania Magazine* to *Common Sense*

In October of 1775, Paine openly expressed the need for America to separate from Britain through a short article named "A Serious Thought."²² "Call it independence or what you will," declared Paine, "I hesitate not for a moment to believe that the Almighty will finally separate America from Britain."²³ No longer concealing his revolutionary fervor, Paine started outlining a piece of writing he envisioned would change the mind and action of the people. Its name was *Common Sense*. In John Adams's words, the pamphlet struck the American continent like a "meteor."²⁴ At a time when the largest colonial publication had a circulation under 2,000, the pamphlet sold more than 120,000 copies in the first year after its publication.²⁵ *Common Sense* demonstrated the full potential of Paine's political language to transform revolutionary sentiments throughout the continent.

Paine's skillful use of rhetorical devices rendered *Common Sense* irresistible to many. His vivid similes painted a picture of governmental evil with religious undertones: "Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence." He dismissed constitutional monarchy by comparing the form of government to a piece of machinery in which "all the wheels of a machine are put in motion by one." Furthermore, he adapted the argument from "Reflection on Unhappy Marriages" that mutual affection rather than commercial motivations should take precedence in the

²² Foner, "Chronological Table," 48.

²³ Thomas Paine, "A Serious Thought," in *The Writings of Thomas Paine*.

²⁴ Memorandum by Adams, "John Adams."

²⁵ Ferguson, "The Commonalities," 466.

formation of a bond: “We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without considering, that her motive was interest not attachment.” Lastly, Paine urged colonists to seize the opportunity by rationally arguing “debts [America] [has] none,” “no country on the globe is so happily situated... of raising a fleet as America,” and “[American] land force is more than sufficient.”²⁶ Thus, Paine appealed to his audience with a variety of easily comprehensible metaphors and logical arguments to reach a broad swath of the public.

Unlike many of his contemporaries who wrote with great intellectual depth, Paine deliberately avoided the use of carefully reasoned arguments, specialized knowledge, and learned references to history in *Common Sense* so that the common people of America would perceive his language as “plain truth” offered in “plain terms.” Professor Sophia Rosenfield points out Paine repeatedly denounced “complexity or ambiguity in reasoning... as evidence of falsity or manipulation.”²⁷ However, as *Common Sense* became a best-seller throughout the colonies, it pushed Paine’s political language into the spotlight of sophisticated intellectuals, which met with a mixed response.

A Prodigious Miracle or a Disastrous “Meteor”?

Most Americans responded to *Common Sense* with excitement. One Marylander wrote that Paine had “done wonders and worked miracles.”²⁸ Benjamin Rush, who helped Paine publish the pamphlet, acknowledged the pamphlet “burst from the press with an effect which has rarely been produced by any types and papers in any age or country.” Apart from common readers, leaders of the revolution praised *Common Sense* as well. George Washington found the

²⁶ Thomas Paine, “Common Sense,” in *The Writings of Thomas Paine*.

²⁷ Sophia Rosenfield, *Common Sense: A Political History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 143.

²⁸ “Philadelphia, February 13,” *Pennsylvania Evening Post* (Philadelphia, PA), February 13, 1776, 77.

pamphlet “working a wonderful change... in the minds of many men.” Thomas Jefferson exclaimed, “no writer has exceeded Paine in ease and familiarity of style...and in simple and unassuming language.”²⁹ Paine’s writing managed the impressive task of reaching the minds of Americans from every walk of life.

Nevertheless, some intellectuals, after carefully examining the pamphlet, would find the piece not a step closer to liberty, but a “star of disaster.”³⁰ For example, *Plain Truth*, a loyalist response to *Common Sense* by Marylander James Chalmers, attacked Paine as a political “quack.”³¹ But criticism of *Common Sense* did not solely come from the loyalist side, as a fellow revolutionary became the most famous critic of the pamphlet.

John Adams, a leader of the revolution and later the second president of the United States, objected to much of Paine’s language. To illustrate, Paine utilized numerous arguments from the Old Testament.³² To Adams, these biblical references were “ridiculous.” Paine later expressed to Adams “a contempt of the Old Testament and of the Bible at large,” revealing to the future president the “knavish hypocrisy” of the pamphleteer who utilized evidence he himself did not find trustworthy.³³

Adams also found Paine’s arguments unoriginal and lacking a coherent political ideology. He described Paine’s political arguments as hastily composed: “[Paine found] the great question was concerning Independence...[and] gleaned from those he saw the commonplace arguments concerning independence.” As a result, Adams noticed “not a fact nor a reason stated

²⁹ Ferguson, “The Commonalities,” 466.

³⁰ Memorandum by Adams, “John Adams.”

³¹ New M. Christopher, “James Chalmers and ‘Plain Truth’ A Loyalist Answers Thomas Paine,” Archiving Early America, accessed April 18, 2021, <https://www.varsitytutors.com/earlyamerica/early-america-review/volume-1/james-chalmers-plain-truth>.

³² Gordon S. Wood, *The American Revolution: A History* (New York: Modern Library, 2003), 55-56.

³³ Memorandum by Adams, “John Adams.”

in [*Common Sense*] which had not been frequently urged in Congress.”³⁴ Historian Alfred Aldridge agreed that Paine had borrowed liberally from so many sources that "even himself may not have been cognizant of the ultimate source of many of his concepts."³⁵ The fact that much criticism on *Common Sense* targeted the pamphlet’s lack of intellectual profundity suggests Paine’s strategies resemble propaganda; *Common Sense* focuses on persuasion and mobilization rather than the meticulous reasoning of political philosophies. Therefore, although Paine’s forgoing of learned references appealed to the common man, it created a backlash among educated Americans who valued political writings for their ideological proficiency rather than inflammatory rhetoric.

Paine’s Legacy

Despite his criticism, Adams admitted that “there is a great deal of good sense, delivered in a clear, simple, concise and nervous style” in *Common Sense*.³⁶ Such “good sense” provided the publication a dramatic effect on the revolution. In January 1776, fear and residual loyalty to Britain prevailed and “slowly congeal[ed] the revolutionary movement.”³⁷ It was Paine who changed the situation and “set Americans to [think] of the possibility and desirability of an independent place among the nations.”³⁸ Indeed, after the publication of *Common Sense*, colonists quoted and reprinted paragraphs from the pamphlet to urge separation. The popularity of the pamphlet even pushed the Second Continental Congress to draft the Declaration of Independence the following summer.³⁹

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Alfred Owen Aldridge, *Thomas Paine's American Ideology* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1984), 19.

³⁶ John Adams to Abigail Adams, "John Adams to Abigail Adams, 19 March 1776," March 19, 1776, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/04-01-02-0235>.

³⁷ Rosenfield, *Common Sense*, 136; Foner, "Thomas Paine--World," introduction, 14.

³⁸ Foner, "Thomas Paine--World," introduction, 15.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

But perhaps the most significant contribution Thomas Paine and his *Common Sense* made was transforming the role of the common people in the revolution. The cause of liberty once belonged to educated, radical minorities like Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin.⁴⁰ When most colonists still viewed the movement as a betrayal, Paine's revolutionary communication allowed the aristocratic ideas to morph into a popular revolution, encouraging even the poorly educated to participate in the cause. His pen guided the new nation to find its place in the world, inspiring other republican movements fighting tyrannical oppression around the globe in the name of democracy and the rights of men.

Like the ideals of the American Revolution, the pamphleteer's legacy reverberates across the history of worlds in upheaval. Paine set a precedent for the means and importance of mobilizing public endorsement amid political and social transformations. In 1852, Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a story about a long-suffering black slave, to agitate public sentiments over the Fugitive Slave Law during the intensifying sectional debate over slavery. In the 1920s, the Committee on Public Information created films and magazine advertisements, transforming conventional adherence to Wilsonian isolationism to public support of U.S. participation in World War I.⁴¹ In the Eastern Bloc under Soviet influence, the Czechoslovakian dissident Vaclav Havel's essay *The Power of the Powerless* became the theoretical cornerstone of anti-authoritarian sentiments that would eventually lead to the collapse of communist regimes throughout Europe in 1989.⁴² In the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, Facebook and various social media literature played crucial roles in gathering rebellious momentum among

⁴⁰ Rosenfield, *Common Sense*, 136.

⁴¹ Katherine H. Adams, *Progressive Politics and the Training of America's Persuaders* (Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates, 1999).

⁴² "'The Power of the Powerless' - Vaclav Havel," The Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities, last modified December 23, 2011, accessed May 17, 2021, <https://hac.bard.edu/amor-mundi/the-power-of-the-powerless-vaclav-havel-2011-12-23>.

protestors of all socio-economic and religious backgrounds. Almost two hundred and fifty years have passed, yet individuals continue to follow Paine's footsteps, inventing distinct approaches to political communication that time and again brought revolutionary thoughts into the "minds and hearts of the people."⁴³

⁴³ Adams to Niles, "Letter to Hezekiah."

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources

Adams, John. Memorandum, "John Adams on Thomas Paine's Common Sense," n.d. <https://americainclass.org/sources/makingrevolution/rebellion/text7/adamscommonsense.pdf>.

This source is an excerpt from John Adams's autobiography written in the late 1800s in which he described his sentiments on *Common Sense*. He criticized Paine's political language and Paine's intention for adopting such a language. This memoir is a major source I found on criticism of Paine's political language.

Adams, John. Letter to Abigail Adams, "John Adams to Abigail Adams, 19 March 1776," March 19, 1776. <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/04-01-02-0235>.

In this source, John Adams gives some compliments on the composition of *Common Sense*. I used this source to demonstrate even though Adams was not fond of Paine's political language, he had to admit the pamphlet was a masterpiece.

Adams, John. Letter to Hezekiah Niles, "Letter to Hezekiah Niles on the American Revolution," February 18, 1818. <https://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/ows/seminars/revolution/Adams-Niles.pdf>.

In this letter, John Adams reflects on the American Revolution. He concludes that the revolution was a transformation in the way of thinking of the American people. Adams's reflection resonates with Paine's constant effort in educating the common men and women of America on revolutionary ideologies and allowing them to participate in the revolution. It also inspired the title of this paper.

Paine, Thomas. "Common Sense." In *The Writings of Thomas Paine*, edited by Moncure Daniel Conway, 49-84. Vol. 1 of *The Writings of Thomas Paine*. N.p.: Liberty Fund, n.d. <https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/paine-the-writings-of-thomas-paine-vol-i-1774-1779>.

Common Sense is one of Thomas Paine's most important works. It is different from other revolutionary pamphlets in that it uses a political language that appealed effectively to the common men and women of the colonies. It was the inspiration for me to investigate the origin of Paine's political language and examine how Paine took his early arguments from publications on *Pennsylvania Magazine* into *Common Sense*.

Paine, Thomas. "Case of the Excise Officers." Thomas Paine National Historical Association. Accessed April 18, 2021. <https://thomaspaine.org/essays/other/case-of-the-excise-officers.html>.

This pamphlet is an important part of Paine's biography, as it is Paine's first political composition in which he criticized administrative abuse.

Paine, Thomas. "A Dialogue Between General Wolfe and General Gage In a Wood Near Boston." In *The Writings of Thomas Paine*, edited by Moncure Daniel Conway, 15-16. Vol. 1 of *The Writings of Thomas Paine*. N.p.: Liberty Fund, n.d. <https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/paine-the-writings-of-thomas-paine-vol-i-1774-1779>.

This fictional dialogue between General Wolfe's (who was a deceased yet respected British colonial officer) ghost and General Gage (who was a loyalist and the governor of Massachusetts) embeds many common arguments for the colonial cause into General Wolfe's lines. This work of Paine's was used to illustrate Paine's adoption of a variety of literary forms to educate his readers on revolutionary ideologies.

Paine, Thomas. "Liberty Tree." Edited by Philip S. Foner. Thomas Paine National Historical Association. Accessed March 14, 2021. <https://thomaspaine.org/essays/poetry/liberty-tree.html>.

This poem champions the revolutionary cause by attributing it to the protection of a "liberty tree" planted on the American continent that is under the threat of tyranny and foreign invasion. I used this poem to demonstrate Paine's adoption of poetry in supporting the revolution. This work also played a role in boosting the morale of the Continental Army once the war began.

Paine, Thomas. "Reflections on Unhappy Marriages." In *The Writings of Thomas Paine*, edited by Moncure Daniel Conway, 40-41. Vol. 1 of *The Writings of Thomas Paine*. N.p.: Liberty Fund, n.d. <https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/paine-the-writings-of-thomas-paine-vol-i-1774-1779>.

In this article, Paine draws on the allegory between marriage and the British-American relationship. He proposes divorce and separation as important measures to terminate unhappy bonds, implying his sentiments for American independence. This source was used to demonstrate Paine's skillful use of allegories.

Paine, Thomas. "A Serious Thought." In *The Writings of Thomas Paine*, edited by Moncure Daniel Conway, 48. Vol. 1 of *The Writings of Thomas Paine*. N.p.: Liberty Fund, n.d. <https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/paine-the-writings-of-thomas-paine-vol-i-1774-1779>.

In this article, Paine defied his previous approach of political discourse, which heavily adopted concealment and allegories, and openly declares his support for American independence. This publication is a sign of Paine's determination to make significant contribution to the revolutionary cause, which resulted in the composition and eventual publication of *Common Sense*.

Pennsylvania Evening Post (Philadelphia, PA). "Philadelphia, February 13." February 13, 1776, 77.

This source includes a Marylander's compliment on *Common Sense*. It is used to demonstrate the fact that the pamphlet and its political language was well received by its intended audiences—the ordinary people of the colonies.

Secondary Sources

Alden, John Richard. *General Gage in America: Being Principally a History of His Role in the American Revolution*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1948.

This source introduces General Thomas Gage's background and helps me understand the historical context behind "A Dialogue Between General Wolfe and General Gage In a Wood Near Boston".

Adams, Katherine H. *Progressive Politics and the Training of America's Persuaders*. Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates, 1999.

This source provides information on means through which the Committee on Public Information educated and inspired the common people of American through means that were legacies of Paine's political language.

Aldridge, Alfred Owen. *Thomas Paine's American Ideology*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1984.

In this source, Alfred Aldridge elaborates on his observation that Paine's *Common Sense* barely represents any specific ideology, which resonates with John Adam's criticism on the revolutionary pamphlet.

Bujak, Edward. "The Fifth Nation in the Four Nations Approach?" Four Nations History Network. Last modified July 4, 2016. Accessed March 14, 2021. <https://fournationshistory.wordpress.com/2016/07/04/the-fifth-nation-in-the-four-nations-approach/>.

This commentary by Dr. Edward Bujak provides a literature review and historical context on "A Dialogue Between General Wolfe and General Gage in a Wood Near Boston". It proved to be very helpful in understanding the dialogue and its implications.

Bragg, Melvyn. "Thomas Paine's Common Sense (In Our Time)." August 6, 2018. In *In Our Time: History*, narrated by Kathleen Burk, Nicholas Guyatt, and Peter Thompson, produced by Simon Tillotson. Podcast, audio, 45:48. Accessed April 18, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TV1cEY3T7T4>.

This is a podcast with several historians with expertise on Paine's biography. They discuss Paine's early education, and I used this source to research how different scholars evaluated the impact of formal schooling on Paine's career differently.

Christopher, New M. "James Chalmers and 'Plain Truth' A Loyalist Answers Thomas Paine." Archiving Early America. Accessed April 18, 2021.
<https://www.varsitytutors.com/earlyamerica/early-america-review/volume-1/james-chalmers-plain-truth>.

This is an introduction to *Plain Truth*, a loyalist response to *Common Sense* and a very popular pamphlet in the American Revolution. I used this source to demonstrate loyalists' criticism on the arguments of *Common Sense*.

Dehenny, Robert, Sandra Morgan, and Pauline Assenza. "Thomas Paine: Creating the New Story for a New Nation." *Tamara: Journal for Critical Organization Inquiry* 5, no. 4 (2006): 183-92. Accessed May 18, 2021.
<https://tamarajournal.com/index.php/tamara/article/view/279>.

This source provides the information that George Washington ordered Paine's work *The American Crisis* to be read to the Continental Army soldiers at Valley Forge.

Foner, Philip S. Introduction to *The Complete Writings of Thomas Paine*. New York: Citadel Press, 1945.

In the introduction to this collection, Philip Foner provided a detailed chronology of Paine's publications. The chronology was important in determining the historical context behind many of Paine's writings. Foner also provided an abbreviated biography of Paine, providing information on Paine's early life in Britain, his encounter with Robert Aitken, and his journey of creating and publishing *Common Sense*.

Ferguson, Robert A. "The Commonalities of *Common Sense*." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (2000): 465-504. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2674263>.

This source provides another biography of Paine, which adds details to Foner's version. Ferguson also includes information on the significance of *Common Sense* in the American Revolution and the public's impression on this pamphlet.

Larkin, Edward. "Inventing an American Public: Thomas Paine, the 'Pennsylvania Magazine,' and American Revolutionary Political Discourse." *Early American Literature* 33, no. 3 (1998): 250-76. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25057128>.

In this paper, Larkin focuses on the *Pennsylvania Magazine's* influence on public opinion during the Revolution. It gives valuable background and interpretation on many of Paine's work. It also provides insights into allegories Paine used in his writings. I retrieved "Consolation for the Old Bachelor" from this secondary source.

Rosenfield, Sophia. *Common Sense: A Political History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011.

Professor Rosenfield is a dedicated scholar on the philosophical interpretation of *Common Sense* and Paine's ideologies. In this work, she analyzes the language utilized by *Common Sense* and why it became so popular among colonists. She is also an expert on how Paine utilized common sense in his populist approaches of communication. I used this work to research the significance of *Common Sense* in the revolution and analyze the effect of *Common Sense* on populism and propagandas in America.

Smith, Frank. "New Light on Thomas Paine's First Year in America, 1775." *American Literature* 1, no. 4 (1930): 347-71. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2920115>.

In this work, Smith summarizes the efforts of Moncure Daniel Conway, one of the most important scholars on Paine, on recognizing Paine's works among anonymously published articles. His work provides valuable insights on typical evidence behind Paine's authorship and editorship, and it was crucial to evaluating Paine's literature when the historical society still had debates on whether some articles published in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* were the work of Paine or not.

"'The Power of the Powerless' - Vaclav Havel." The Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities. Last modified December 23, 2011. Accessed May 17, 2021. <https://hac.bard.edu/amor-mundi/the-power-of-the-powerless-vaclav-havel-2011-12-23>.

This source included a brief introduction to *The Power of the Powerless*, the work by political dissident Vaclav Havel that became the manifesto of anti-communistic forces throughout Eastern Europe under Soviet control. I used this source to demonstrate how individuals like Paine who transformed public sentiments existed in the prequel to Revolutions of 1989 as well.

"Thomas Paine." Biography. Last modified May 19, 2016. Accessed April 18, 2021. <https://www.biography.com/scholar/thomas-paine>.

This source includes some information on Paine's participation in the War of Independence. I used it to demonstrate Paine's passion for the war cause.

Wood, Gordon S. *The American Revolution: A History*. New York: Modern Library, 2003.

In this source, Historian Gordon Wood points out Paine utilized evidence from the Old Testament heavily in *Common Sense* and framed the pamphlet like a sermon.