The age of revolution challenged the ancien régime’s political world, introducing Europeans to new ideals of citizenship. German society was no less affected. Following the Napoleonic era, a political culture of partisan choice undermined the official restoration of absolutism. Bourgeois and popular classes took part in the new political landscape of civil society, producing an impressive social base for participatory politics by the 1830s. Because of severe restrictions on speech and assembly, ordinary Germans formed political opinions in irregular ways. This book looks at the sites and forms of culture that facilitated political communication. With chapters devoted to reading, singing, public space, carnival, tumult, and religion, James Brophy argues that popular culture played a critical role in linking ordinary Rhinelanders to the public sphere. Moving beyond conventional explanations of opinion formation, he breaks new ground by exposing the broad cultural infrastructure that enabled popular classes to join the political nation.

JAMES M. BROPHY is Associate Professor of History at the University of Delaware. He is the author of Capitalism, Politics, and Railroads in Prussia, 1830–1870 (1998) and is co-editor of the primary source reader, Perspectives from the Past: Readings in Western Civilizations (3rd edition, 2005).
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To my parents
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Abbreviations

ADB  Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie
AEK  Historisches Archiv des Erzbistums Kölns
AfS  Archiv für Sozialgeschichte
AHR  American Historical Review
BM  Bürgermeister, Mayor
CEH  Central European History
DVA  Deutsches Volksliedarchiv Freiburg im Breisgau
GiK  Geschichte in Köln
GLA  General Landesarchiv Karlsruhe
GS  Graphische Sammlung
GSKP  Gesetz-Sammlung für die Königlichen Preussischen Staaten
GStAPK  Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz Dahlem-Berlin
HASstK  Historisches Archiv der Stadt Köln
HStAD  Hauptstaatsarchiv des Rheinland-Westfalens Düsseldorf
HStAM  Hessisches Staatsarchiv Marburg
HZ  Historische Zeitschrift
IM  Innenminister, Minister of the Interior
JbwL  Jahrbuch für westdeutsche Landesgeschichte
JMH  Journal of Modern History
JSH  Journal of Social History
KSM  Költnisches Stadtmuseum
LAS  Landesarchiv Speyer
LHAK  Landeshauptarchiv Koblenz
LR  Landrat, Prefect
NDB  Neue Deutsche Biographie
OBM  Oberbürgermeister, Lord Mayor
OP  Oberpräsident, Provincial Governor
P&P  Past & Present
List of abbreviations

PD Polizeidirektor, Police Director
Pr Präsidialregistratur
RA Regierung Aachen
RBSCPU Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University
RD Regierung Düsseldorf
RhBA Rheinische Briefe und Akten zur Geschichte der politischen Bewegungen
RK Regierung Köln
RP Regierungspräsident, District Governor
Fig. 1 Map of the Rhineland in 1832.