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978-0-521-15357-7 - Thomas Paine and the Literature of Revolution

Edward Larkin

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Thomas Paine and the Literature of Revolution

Although the impact of works such as *Common Sense* and *The Rights of Man* has led historians to study Thomas Paine's role in the American Revolution and political scientists to evaluate his contributions to political theory, scholars have tacitly agreed not to treat him as a literary figure. This book not only redresses this omission, but also demonstrates that Paine's literary sensibility is particularly evident in the very texts that confirmed his importance as a theorist. And yet, because of this association with the "masses," Paine is often dismissed as a mere propagandist. *Thomas Paine and the Literature of Revolution* recovers Paine as a transatlantic popular intellectual who would translate the major political theories of the eighteenth century into a language that was accessible and appealing to ordinary citizens on both sides of the Atlantic.

Edward Larkin is Assistant Professor of English and American Studies at the University of Richmond. He received a B.A. from Harvard University in 1990 and a Ph.D. from Stanford University in 1998. He was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to lecture on American studies and literature at Tallinn University in Tallinn, Estonia, during the 2004–05 academic year. Larkin is the editor of a new edition of *Common Sense* (2004) and has published articles in *Early American Literature* and the *Arizona Quarterly*.

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