

Twelve Authors Explore a Year of
REBELLION, REVOLUTION & CHANGE



EDITED BY MARC ARONSON AND
SUSAN CAMPBELL BARTOLETTI

1789



1789



TWELVE AUTHORS EXPLORE
A YEAR OF REBELLION,
REVOLUTION, AND CHANGE

EDITED BY
MARC ARONSON AND
SUSAN CAMPBELL BARTOLETTI



CANDLEWICK PRESS

Compilation copyright © 2020 by Marc Aronson and Susan Campbell Bartoletti
“The Fishwives Make the Rules: The October Days of the French Revolution”
copyright © 2020 by Tanya Lee Stone
“The Contradictory King: Gustav III and the Unlikely Beginnings of Class Equality
in Sweden” copyright © 2020 by Karen Engelmann
“Pi, Vega, and the Battle at Belgrade” copyright © 2020 by Amy Alznauer
“The Queen’s Chemise: Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, Portraitist of Marie Antoinette”
copyright © 2020 by Susan Campbell Bartoletti
“The Choice: Paris, 1789” copyright © 2020 by Marc Aronson
“All Men Are Created Equal: The Global Journey of Olaudah Equiano”
copyright © 2020 by Joyce Hansen
“The Wesleyans in the West Indies” copyright © 2020 by Summer Edward
“Who Counted in America? The Beginning of an Endless Conversation”
copyright © 2020 by Cynthia Levinson and Sanford Levinson
“Mary Jemison and the Seneca Nation: 1789” copyright © 2020 by Christopher Turner
“Challenging Time: Dr. James Hutton, the Father of Geology” copyright © 2020 by Sally M. Walker
“Mutiny on the *Bounty*: Breadfruit, Flogging, Impossible Navigation, and Revolutionary Ideas—
There Ought to Be a Musical” copyright © 2020 by Steve Sheinkin

Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, *Marie Antoinette in Court Dress*; Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun,
Self-Portrait with a Straw Hat; Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, *Marie Antoinette with a Rose*,
printed with permission from Getty. Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, *La reine en gaulle*, 1783,
printed with permission from Niday Picture Library, Alamy Stock Photos.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, transmitted, or stored in an
information retrieval system in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including
photocopying, taping, and recording, without prior written permission from the publisher.

First edition 2020

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number pending
ISBN 978-1-5362-0873-3

20 21 22 23 24 25 LBM 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in Melrose Park, IL, USA

This book was typeset in Didot.

Candlewick Press
99 Dover Street
Somerville, Massachusetts 02144

www.candlewick.com



A JUNIOR LIBRARY GUILD SELECTION

*For Greta Thunberg and Malala Yousafzai,
two modern revolutionaries*



T A B L E O F

INTRODUCTION: THE AGE OF REVOLUTIONS 1

EXHILARATION 6

“THE FISHWIVES MAKE THE RULES”

BY TANYA LEE STONE 9

THE CONTRADICTIONARY KING

BY KAREN ENGELMANN 20

PI, VEGA, AND THE BATTLE AT BELGRADE

BY AMY ALZNAUER 32

ABOMINATION 42

THE QUEEN’S CHEMISE

BY SUSAN CAMPBELL BARTOLETTI 45

THE CHOICE

BY MARC ARONSON 63

“ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL”

BY JOYCE HANSEN 76

C O N T E N T S

INSPIRATION 88

THE WESLEYANS IN THE WEST INDIES

BY SUMMER EDWARD 91

WHO COUNTED IN AMERICA?

BY CYNTHIA LEVINSON AND SANFORD LEVINSON. . . . 103

MARY JEMISON AND THE SENECA NATION

BY CHRISTOPHER TURNER 116

CONCLUSIONS 126

CHALLENGING TIME

BY SALLY M. WALKER 129

MUTINY ON THE *BOUNTY*

BY STEVE SHEINKIN 141

AUTHOR NOTES 155

SOURCE NOTES 174

BIBLIOGRAPHY. 186

INDEX 195



INTRODUCTION

THE AGE OF REVOLUTIONS

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, the Declaration of the Rights of Man, the European slave trade; the American Revolution, the Bill of Rights, slavery in America. When these subjects come up in a US classroom, they are treated as separate topics—one set arrives in world history, the other in American history. But, as the chapters in this book show, such a separation is entirely artificial. Events in America influenced those in Europe, the Caribbean, and Africa; events in the Pacific were shaped by those in Europe and America. Ideas, people, and money were shuttled across the world's great oceans.

In all of this movement, two great forces swelled and clashed: ideas of liberty, freedom, and rights; and the fact of enslavement and subjugation. The two opposing forces crystallized a single

question—one still furiously debated today: What is a man? If, as first America and then France declared to the world, all men are equal, who is a man? Males? White males? Rich males? Christian males? Each partial answer opened a new question: If men, why not women? If Christian, could anyone become equal by converting? Who gets to be “white,” and why should that matter?

The idea that there are some “rights” that every person owns simply by being a person challenged every order based on noble birth. Soon enough the idea of such rights would do battle with hierarchies of wealth, age, race, and gender. The idea of who or what has rights continues to evolve. Today some people believe that everyone has a right to economic security and that the earth—the environment—has rights, as do animals. Hundreds of years from now when someone writes about our time, what obvious violations of rights will they see?

The thinkers of the eighteenth century opened a door we are still peering through today. In this anthology, readers will encounter ideas, beliefs, and causes rippling across thousands of miles. People, events, and topics come up in a certain way in one chapter and then differently in another. You begin to feel how much was shifting in that tumultuous year of 1789. Today newscasts endlessly announce “breaking news.” We hope that these chapters give readers the sense of how ideas “broke” across continents, of how immediate and alive the world was then.

We begin with France. In the opening chapter, Tanya Lee Stone sets the stage, and you’re there, in the streets of Paris, amid the fishwives who lead a protest march that helps to launch a revolution. Next Karen Engelmann extends and reverses the story of 1789, showing how a contradictory Swedish king changed his country and earned the anger of noblewomen who, driven by a desire to retain their status and privileges, protested *against* expanding rights.

Amy Alznauer takes us across Europe to a battlefield where amid the bombing, we view a different side of that dramatic year—revolutions in thought—as a mathematician traces the digits of pi. Susan Campbell Bartoletti shifts our attention to a new way of examining events in Paris: through the portraits of the queen being painted by a talented female artist. Then as now, how a powerful woman presented herself—or was presented—to the public caused endless debate. Marc Aronson begins in Paris that same year, where a pregnant American teenager faces a choice that points directly to the central question in this book: the expansion of rights and freedoms, the reality and consequences of enslavement.

The central issue of slavery expands as Joyce Hansen recounts the life of a former slave whose autobiography, published in 1789, became a key tool in the abolitionist movement. Summer Edward takes us inside an arena of the global contest against slavery as she describes the journeys of a Methodist minister who brought ideas of equality to the Caribbean.

Cynthia Levinson and Sanford Levinson take us to one of the seemingly more familiar events of 1789: the passage of the US Bill of Rights in Congress. They show how keeping an eye on France helps us to view the bill, its limitations, and the ongoing conversations about its meaning in new ways. Christopher Turner's piece shines a new light on the issues around rights in North America, looking at the year 1789 and the American Revolution through the eyes of the Seneca and the other nations of the Haudenosaunee, the Six Nations.

Back in Europe, Sally M. Walker traces the findings of a British geologist whose persistent explorations prove that the earth is far older than had been believed and has evolved over millions of years. Challenging the biblical understanding of the earth's age was as revolutionary as challenging the rule of a king. Finally, linking Europe, the Pacific, and the Caribbean, Steve Sheinkin gives us the drama

of a mutiny on board a British ship and leaves us with one more mystery to ponder: How much were people, spread throughout the planet, shaped by the explosion of new ideas?

In this book we present France, the United States, and the world at the tipping-point moment when so much seemed possible, and yet such profound issues remained to be faced—a bit like the possible tipping-point moment we face today.

To give some sense of how people at the time responded to these events, ideas, and conflicts, we have included four sets of contemporaneous quotations. The sources range from poems to political arguments, essays to books. The quotations are grouped based on their tone: exhilaration, abomination, inspiration, conclusions.

One of the most important quotation threads is the debate that had Thomas Paine and Mary Wollstonecraft on one side and Edmund Burke on the other. Paine loved the French Revolution of 1789 and all it promised, though he opposed its later turn to violence. Burke, who had supported the American Revolution and created the first serious and detailed plan to abolish slavery in lands controlled by the United Kingdom, thought the French Revolution was a terrible idea that would lead to ever greater violence and death until a dictator took over, which proved to be right. Burke believed that it was too dangerous to utterly disrupt the existing habits and structures of a society—no matter how flawed. Paine and Wollstonecraft disagreed with Burke; society had to be restructured. Paine argued for the rights of those abused and deprived under current conditions. Wollstonecraft furthered Paine's position but argued that women deserved the same rights and privileges of men. Versions of this debate continue to this day.

This is the second nonfiction anthology that we have created. Just as we did with our first anthology, *1968*, we invited authors to

explore aspects of the year 1789 that interested them. Each chapter is an opening, a window, to people, ideas, and events that were central then and are still of interest now. We encourage readers to browse—to find which topic, which writing style, excites their curiosity, and then return again as one chapter speaks to another, and that tumultuous year of 1789 comes alive.

—*Marc Aronson and Susan Campbell Bartoletti*