

**“A GENUINE REPUBLICAN”: BENJAMIN
FRANKLIN BACHE’S REMARKS (1797),
THE FEDERALISTS, AND REPUBLICAN
CIVIC HUMANISM**

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George Washington was perhaps in a more petulant mood than usual when he wrote of Benjamin Franklin Bache, Benjamin Franklin’s grandson, in 1797: “This man has celebrity in a certain way, for his calumnies are to be exceeded only by his impudence, and both stand unrivalled.” The ordinarily reserved ex-president had similarly commented four years earlier that the “publications” in Philip Freneau’s *National Gazette* and Bache’s daily newspaper, the Philadelphia *General Advertiser*, founded in 1790, which added the noun *Aurora* to its title on November 8, 1794, were “outrages on common decency.” The new nation’s second First Lady, Abigail Adams, was hardly friendlier, denouncing Bache’s newspaper columns as a “specimen of Gall.” Her husband, President John Adams, likewise considered Bache’s anti-Federalist diatribes and abuse of Washington “diabolical.” Both seemed to have forgotten the bygone, cordial days in Paris during the American Revolution, when their son John Quincy, two years Bache’s senior, attended the Le Coeur boarding school

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with “Benny” (family members also called him “Little Kingbird”). But the ordinarily dour John Quincy remembered. Offended that the *Aurora* had denounced his father’s choosing him U.S. minister to Prussia as nepotism, he murmured that Bache had betrayed their “ancient friendship.”¹

Bache’s *Aurora*, which became the most influential Jeffersonian Republican journal after Philip Freneau’s *National Gazette* closed its doors in November 1793, angered most “friends of order.” They despised “Lightning Rod, Jr.,” as English expatriate radical-turned-conservative William Cobbett called him, alluding to Bache’s famous grandfather. Bache’s foes deplored his support of Jefferson, “friend to the Rights of the People,” for the presidency in 1796 against the “monarchist” Adams. They despised him as an intemperate, fanatical democrat, co-conspirator of Jefferson and the French revolutionists. They labeled him an opportunist who printed scurrilous diatribes against the Washington administration, especially its unpopular Jay Treaty, to garner increased circulation and party patronage. Rachel Bradford, sister-in-law of the prominent New Jersey Federalist congressman Elisha Boudinot, vividly expressed the party’s view. Demonstrating literary flair and knowledge of classical mythology, in 1795 Bradford acerbically compared Bache to the ferocious dog that guarded the gates of Hades:

The Cerberus of Democracy, Bache barks more furiously than ever, and snaps so much that its fangs will loose [*sic*] their power of wounding by continual gnashing—unless it makes a speedy exit by madness for I think the symptoms of that disease increase in it daily. The President is the continual mark of his abuse, to which no bound is set; it is to be hoped, that like some other party papers have done here before Bache’s will destroy itself and its insolent publisher, be sent into the contempt he deserves.²

Federalist pundits dreaded the *Aurora*’s invective, especially when zealots like James T. Callender and Dr. James Reynolds filled its columns. Experts on the history of the press during the 1790s agree with Donald H. Stewart, author of a massive study of Jeffersonian journalism, that after Freneau’s *National Gazette* collapsed, the *Aurora* became “the most influential newsheet in the country.” At its heyday in 1797 the *Aurora* was the Republican paper of greatest circulation, boasting some 1,700 subscribers, while the average daily drew only about 500. The *Aurora* carried the most reliable transcriptions of congressional debates, often copied by Bache’s competitors. Free copies

circulated extensively in taverns and via the postal frank of Republican congressmen.³

Yet Bache's opposition to Washington and the Federalists came late. The above criticisms all date from 1795 onward, after Bache first leaked and then vigorously opposed the Jay Treaty. Indeed, among those from whom he requested advice and assistance in setting up a Philadelphia newspaper was the Federalist elder statesman Robert Morris. As superintendent of finance during the American Revolution, Morris championed a stronger central government and worked closely with Bache's grandfather, Benjamin Franklin, to obtain vital grants and loans from France. Morris told Bache he would be glad to help him obtain a share of the public printing, except that Secretary of State Jefferson, who was in charge of printing the laws, had already employed other printers, among them John Fenno, who would soon become one of Jefferson's most bitter enemies. "Some of your friends here are rather sorry for your intention of printing a newspaper," Morris paternalistically advised. "There are already too many of them published in Philadelphia and in these days of scurrility it is difficult for a press of such reputation as you would choose yours to be to maintain the character of freedom and impartiality connected with purity."⁴

Following the advice of Morris and Benjamin Franklin, who during the colonial period had run his newspaper in an impartial manner so as to gain advertising revenue and public printing, and not alienate would-be subscribers, at the outset Bache instructed correspondents to "deliver their sentiments with temper and decency," to advance the "public good."⁵ But in large measure, his paper at first embraced Federalist views. The *General Advertiser* endorsed Hamilton's fiscal policies, including the funding of the public debt, the Bank of the United States, and Hamilton's famous Report on Manufactures (December 1791), neutrality during the French Revolution, and suppression of the Whiskey Rebellion. In fact, the most recent scholarly study of Bache depicts him as a thoroughgoing Hamiltonian in the early 1790s, who joined his "fellow nationalist," the diehard Federalist Fenno, editor of the *Gazette of the United States*, in praising Washington's administration. Indeed, the *General Advertiser* denounced the radical *National Gazette* and its editor, Philip Freneau, as a partisan, anti-administration nuisance that wagged "the tongue of prejudice and error" against the government. "Can it possibly be considered a criterion of patriotism to excite jealousies and suggest aspersions respecting the general government?" Bache lectured Freneau. During the first years of his newspaper Bache reprinted many articles and

editorials, both informational and opinionated, from Fenno's paper, engaging in what Marcus Leonard Daniel inelegantly calls "literary cannibalism," while seldom printing criticisms of Hamiltonian finance.⁶ Appalled by Bache's refusal to print a smaller, cheaper, weekly "country paper" for circulation in rural areas, as well as by the preponderance of pro-Hamilton essays in the *General Advertiser*, Jefferson mournfully concluded, "Freneau's two [semi-weekly] papers contain more good matter than Bache's six."⁷

Only twenty-one when he started the newspaper, young Bache devoted himself to defending popular government. He sought fame and public regard rather than financial advancement. In 1789, confessing that his ambition was not to accumulate wealth but to secure public esteem and fame, he confided his zeal for civic virtue and the public good to his journal, "Mélanges." "Ambition is I think my strongest passion," he wrote.

To be great truly great by being virtuous, I want sufficient money to show these virtues in their very brilliant appearance, & a Wife who may by partaking increase the bliss I expect by their exercise. I shall aim at being a public character to shew how I could choose the good of my Country in opposition to my private interest, which is a rare thing nowadays. . . . My principal object shall be to be esteemed virtuous, reputed learned, & to be useful thro' these means to my Country & Mankind.

He was also wary of the corrupting effects that power might have on his good intentions, should he ever acquire power. "If I was elevated in any eminent Station I should, I fear have a new, a contrary set of Ideas." He began his newspaper career with an avowedly nonpartisan view. He supported the Constitution, and, contrary to the statements of his later political opponents, opposed the Anti-Federalists.⁸

On a more personal note, young Bache, who had a reputation for sociability, organized celebrations of Washington's Birthday as manager of the Philadelphia City Dancing Assembly as late as 1795, although his newspaper had begun criticizing Washington's "aristocratic" habits. Earlier, in 1792, when Bache, then still in Washington's camp, conducted a birthday ball for the president by the populist New City Dancing Assembly, the *General Advertiser* praised Washington for attending his celebration as well as the older, socially elitist City Dancing Assembly's more elaborate fête, commenting that he showed himself a truly "republican magistrate." The

Aurora's opposition to Washington grew unrelenting only after the violent debate over the Jay Treaty in 1795.⁹

Even after the Jay Treaty, the *Aurora* did not become a purely Republican organ. After the election of 1796 Bache began a campaign to rally the Republicans in a nonpartisan union with President John Adams, who “brought to his presidency . . . a detestation of political parties—Federalist and Republican alike.”¹⁰ Previously, the *General Advertiser* mentioned Adams with respect. Supporting his vice-presidential candidacy on the eve of the election of 1792, it decried what it called “Antifederalist abuse” of him in the newspapers. Bache also reprinted editorials from the Federalist *Gazette of the United States* in 1792, on education and public schools, which favorably cited Adams's well-known, multivolume *Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States* (1787–88), a somewhat conservative endorsement of bicameral legislatures.¹¹

Surprisingly enthusiastic in their response to the peaceful transfer of power from Washington to Adams, in early 1797 Bache and other Republican editors affirmed their trust in the new president to revive the patriotic ideals of the Revolution, in which Adams had played an indispensable role. Thomas Greenleaf's *New York Journal*, for example, hoped that the incoming administration would be “propitious to the spirit and intention of our late revolution.” Bache's own *Aurora* evoked Adams's outstanding career as a Revolutionary statesman and signer of the Declaration of Independence as omens that “the cause of Republicanism will acquire important vigor” under his leadership. A “Communication” from an enthusiastic Wilmington Democratic-Republican claimed that, had Washington's “particularly great character” not been pro-Federalist, and had the voters directly chosen the electors in all the states, Jefferson would have won easily. Still, he optimistically predicted that Adams would “disappoint the British faction, act like a genuine Republican, and not prove himself an apostate to the Liberty and Independence of his country, by disgracing his conduct during our late glorious revolution.” A “Correspondent” argued that, unlike Washington, Adams would reject the humiliating stance of a “tool” or “head of a party” mindlessly obeying Hamilton, and instead pursue an independent position more respectful of the U.S. alliance with France. “Mr. Adams is not an automaton for Hamilton,” another “Correspondent” asserted. “He is too much the *friend of virtue* and his country to be under such influence.” Professing confidence in Adams's impartiality, the *Aurora* derided “the royal British faction's” miserable failure to convert the new president into their puppet or automaton. Adams “has a will and understanding of his own,” Bache's newspaper observed,

and “he is by no means disposed to become the pupil of Mr. [Alexander] Hamilton.”¹²

Bache and his contributors cautiously hoped that Adams would fill the role of James Harrington’s prototypical “natural aristocrat,” and work to revive the “sleeping” republican virtue of the people. One among many writers in the Democratic-Republican press who voiced Jeffersonian approval of the conciliatory, pro-republican tone of Adams’s inaugural address, “A Correspondent” declared, “[Adams] avows himself the friend of equal rights, the protector of our constitution, the friend of peace, and the enemy of party. And can acknowledgments and sentiments like these pass unapproved by any friend to his country and the principles of a free government?” “His Rotundity,” as Republicans earlier derisively called Adams, thus briefly emerged as an unlikely Republican hero.¹³

Although scholars have much discussed Bache’s role as a Republican supporter beginning in 1795, they have neglected his reluctance to engage in full-scale partisanship and the *Aurora*’s brief conciliatory honeymoon with Adams after his election.¹⁴ Bache was not alone. Other Republicans, including Jefferson, directed their hostility against Washington and Hamilton, for Adams as vice president had played a relatively minor role in the administration. As historian Lance Banning wrote, they “saw cause to hope that anger over Hamilton’s attempt to slip Thomas Pinckney into the presidency would combine with Adams’s undeniable independence of mind to make his administration less subservient to Britain than Washington’s had been.”¹⁵

Adams and his family had long been regular readers of Bache’s paper. As one might expect, John Adams’s opinion of it depended on whether it agreed with him. At the outset, Adams was disturbed by Bache’s occasional “ill tempered” denunciation of Washington’s ostentatious levees, which made the *General Advertiser* “nearly as bad as Freneau’s” paper, although he was relieved to be no longer the sole object of Republican calumny (“I have held the office of Libellee General long enough,” he drolly wrote Abigail). Applauding the *Aurora*’s denunciation of the Democratic societies during the Whiskey Rebellion, he observed, “Bache’s Paper tells Us it is The Spirit of the Times to Support the constituted Authorities against self created, usurping rival Pretensions.” When on the anniversary of the Franco-American alliance of 1778 a Philadelphia militia company proposed a toast to the “unwearied exertions” of Jay, whose Treaty’s invidious terms were yet unknown, at the same time praising victorious French generals, Adams said, “I Admire the French Wit & Ingenuity of a Toast this Morning in Bache’s paper.” In June

1795 John Quincy Adams's brother Charles alluded to “your friend Bache” when informing him of the *Aurora's* opposition to Jay's Treaty.¹⁶

Although Bache was a Jeffersonian Republican, he was personally friendly with Vice-President Adams before 1797. The Bache and Adams families were on familiar terms rooted in the childhood friendship between John Quincy Adams and Benny in Paris. In 1792 young Bache offered the Adamses the rental of Grandfather Benjamin's house on Franklin Court, which Franklin had left to his son-in-law, Benny's father, Richard Bache, and Benny had temporarily occupied. Adams's son, Thomas Boylston Adams, a Philadelphia resident, reported Bache's offer to his mother: “His Father [Richard Bache] directed him to give you the first offer, and until he gets an answer, will not feel himself at liberty to look farther.”¹⁷ In July 1795, on the road from Philadelphia to Boston, Bache encountered the Adams family on their way to Quincy for summer vacation. He was selling copies of Jay's Treaty, which he had printed up a few days before, first publishing a detailed summary of its contents in the *Aurora*, one of the first newspaper “scoops.” They were unaware that Bache had obtained the Treaty and published it even before the State Department released its contents. “At Worcester, a very pretty town of Massachusetts, I overtook the Vice President & breakfasted with him & Mrs. [Abigail] Adams,” Bache playfully informed his wife. “He [Adams] asked me whether the treaty had leaked out in Philadelphia. I told him a little. He assured me the generality of the people would like it very well after a trial of a few months.”¹⁸ There was no animus in the encounter, despite the *Aurora's* occasional criticism of Adams.

Bache was more than appreciative of Adams's political successes: he admired his political thought. In the summer of 1797 he published a lengthy essay historians have generally overlooked: *Remarks Occasioned by the Late Conduct of Mr. Washington as President of the United States: MDCCXCVI*. Although Bache composed the polemic during the summer of 1796, anticipating that Washington would run for a third term and hesitant about directly attacking him, he postponed its publication until a year later. In this pamphlet Bache expounded more clearly and in greater detail than elsewhere his views on presidential power, its potential for helping or hindering American republicanism and the American people, and Washington's purported misuse of it. Bache's biographers have generally ignored *Remarks* and credit him with adherence to “enlightenment egalitarianism” and a “radical ideology” derived from the ferment of “immediate, abstract, skeptical, and revolutionary Enlightenment” thought. They assume that Bache was

primarily influenced by such radical thinkers as Thomas Paine, the marquis de Condorcet, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.¹⁹ Although Bache published Paine and Condorcet's writings and corresponded with Paine briefly in 1795–96, there is little direct evidence in his writing that they influenced his political concepts.²⁰ In fact, a careful examination of *Remarks* shows that Bache borrowed considerably from Adams's political writings.

Bache's *Remarks* demonstrated his eclectic and wide-ranging ideas. His essay merged the idioms of the Aristotelian Classical Republican and the egalitarian democrat. Bache adopted Adams's preference for a bicameral legislature and a strong executive, although he did not follow him slavishly: he proposed to modify these institutions in a democratic and, espousing a plural executive, anomalous direction. Also, worried about popular support for the Federalists and their aristocratic pretensions and the Jay Treaty that violated the alliance the United States had made in 1778 with France, Bache believed that checks and balances needed to be added to the people's direct voice. Here, too, Bache agreed with Adams, whose political theory historians Stanley Elkins and Eric McKittrick characterized as "the dogma of balance." "To control the passions and encourage virtue" in a nation required "balancing each of the powers of government against the others."²¹ In many ways his republican ideology, most thoroughly elucidated in *Remarks*, combined elements of Adams's thought with classical Republican ideas as well as strains of Jeffersonian Republicanism. In examining Bache's work more closely, we may increase our understanding of the nuances and ambiguities of Republican (and *republican*) ideology as political parties emerged in the 1790s.²²

Sources of Bache's Political Ideology in *Remarks*

The only substantive book attributed to Bache, *Remarks Occasioned by the Late Conduct of Mr. Washington as President of the United States: MDCCXCVI*, an eighty-five-page tract, combined a moderately anti-Washington philippic with proposals for institutional reform. Bache received a copyright for the book on June 23, 1797, and he published it a few weeks later, on July 7, at the low price of thirty-one cents on "coarse paper; 37 cents, vellum paper," suggesting that Bache hoped the laboring classes might purchase it.²³ Around a month later, another Republican newspaper, Thomas Greenleaf's *New York Journal and Patriotic Register*, advertised the book for sale: "Just

Received From Philadelphia, and for sale at Greenleaf's Book Store, Price 2s/6 coarse, or 3s fine. REMARKS Occasioned by the Late conduct of Mr. WASHINGTON as President of the United states. The work is just from the press, & we have no doubt but it will excite the curiosity of [every] citizen.”²⁴ Jefferson himself owned a copy of Bache's *Remarks*; at least at the time of his death Adams did not.²⁵

The four theorists that Bache cites most favorably in *Remarks*—Francis Bacon, James Harrington, Baron Charles Montesquieu, and John Adams—adhered to the viewpoint that a “natural aristocracy” of property, virtue, and ability should have a powerful voice in government. (Harrington and Montesquieu were also particular favorites of Adams.) They also believed that the passion for fame was a crucial consideration in the responsible exercise of leadership, and that the people, assisted by an impartial, independent executive, needed a separate branch of government to represent their interests against potentially refractory elites. Bache explicitly subscribed to Adams's view, propounded in *Defence of the Constitutions*, that a bicameral legislature was a better medium for the expression of the people's will than the unicameral system Benjamin Franklin favored.²⁶

Bache had read Adams's *Defence* carefully and made copious notes on it. In undated memoranda, perhaps written during his college years or after the election of 1796, he outlined and indexed the main themes of *Defence*, especially its third volume's “Marchamont Nedham” chapters, which discussed the comparative merits of bicameral and unicameral legislatures at length. Among Bache's notes, several reveal his concentration on Adams's view of the executive power and the pitfalls of direct democracy, for example: “No man safe when gov. in People alone (221),” and “INDEPENDENT EXECUTIVE to hold the balance (240).” Again, he wrote, summarizing Adams's ideas and quoting several passages without criticizing him: “LIMITED MONARCHY A REPUBLIC (22). ‘If the people wish more than to introduce a democratical branch in monarchies of Europe, they wish too much.’” He also abstracted Adams's injunctions against a hereditary presidency: “Because property equal executive in America should not be hereditary—Could not be & therefore should not be attempted (71).”²⁷

Bache not only read Adams, but widely in the classical, Renaissance, and Enlightenment political theory. He had graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in November 1787 and was also a member of the Library Company of Philadelphia, having inherited his grandfather's share in Franklin's will. Bache thereby gained access to a collection that held numerous editions of

the works of Bacon, Harrington, Adams, and Montesquieu. *Remarks* also cited the works of Scipio, Plutarch, and Voltaire.²⁸

Bache drew heavily on Bacon and Harrington. Bacon was known for his devotion to empiricism, epitomized by his comment that “true knowledge is useful knowledge,” and for his witty essays. Mentioning him and the great classical republican James Harrington (whose most famous aphorism was that “power naturally and necessarily follows property”) in the same footnote, Bache observes, “Lord Bacon makes great account of the power arising from *knowledge*, as Harrington does of that arising from *property*; and *numbers* are of the essence of a democracy.” The context of this statement was Bache’s attack on Washington for allegedly surreptitiously plotting with his councilors to make himself king. The “cloud” of deceit with which they obscured their devious acts would eventually burst and expose Washington’s “counterfeit character.” As founders of the world’s first republican government, the American people would reject a revival of “monarchy and hereditary aristocracy,” especially when Europeans were overthrowing their rulers and emulating the U.S. example. Bache angrily insisted, “It [the U.S.] will not see Europe abrogating its monarchies and aristocracies, one after another, and then lap up the offals [*sic*] as the dog turns to its vomit” (3–4). He summoned Bacon and Harrington to delineate his concept of democracy in opposition to Washington’s monarchical ambitions; since “the weight of *property*, of *numbers*, and even of *knowledge*, is on the side of the American democracy” (4). Bache mentions Harrington more specifically (and pedantically) when he emphasizes rotation in office as an inherent aspect of representative democracy, although he relegates him to a footnote: “*Rotatory* is a favorite word with Harrington. It means moving round like a *wheel*. It corresponds with the word *circulatory* or *circulating*; or with the word *renewable*” (39n).

***Remarks* and “Mr. (John) Adams” on the Presidency: Democratizing the “Elective Monarch”**

John Adams was Bache’s guide in determining the proper role for the executive. Both men thought that he should typify a patriot president. Adams emphasized the chief executive’s indispensable role in protecting the poor from the “avarice and ambition” of the rich in the legislative upper house, going so far as to dub a popularly chosen executive “the natural friend of the people, and the only defence which they or their representatives can

have against the avarice and ambition of the rich and distinguished citizens.” Unconventionally for his time, Adams lamented that the people, contrary to their self-interest, tended to side with the legislature in its conflicts with the executive, especially when that body was unicameral. Nevertheless, he insisted that the executive was intrinsically the “independent mediator” between the representatives of the rich in the upper house and the poor in the lower.²⁹

While adhering to Adams’s view of the executive power’s importance, Bache also perceived its darker side, warning that a president lacking political uprightness—“virtue”—would manipulate or override constitutional protections of popular rights. Charging that the “mask” of “Washingtonian credit” won the Federalists victory, Bache deprecated inordinate “confidence in individuals” like Washington or his cabinet, whose propensity to “intrigue and corrupt” and invidiously influence him undermined the presidency’s integrity. He feared that the Founders had unduly strengthened the executive office without sufficiently contemplating the danger of tyranny, and “whether vigor, secrecy, celerity, and the other fine things talked of by monarchists cannot be had otherwise than through a *monocratic* president.” Bache differed from Adams, and almost everyone else in the new republic, by touting the idea of a plural presidency. He ingenuously praised France’s Directory, which, he claimed, exemplified “a chief executive power which is both representative and composite” (34, 36, 38–39).

Bache groped for a means to assuage the partisan, social, and sectional conflicts that plagued the young republic and threatened its survival. Undoubtedly, he would have welcomed Adams’s paradigmatic nonpartisan, stalwart “patriot president,” capable of uniting the country. Although for many Washington embodied this type of leader, in Bache’s view he had joined with the aristocratic Senate to defeat the public interest. Confuting Adams’s writings, Washington’s single executive had failed to protect the people against the upper classes. Therefore, Bache concluded, a more numerous, directly elected executive body was more likely to safeguard the people’s liberties. With this exception, Bache’s prescription for republican renewal adhered closely to Adams’s recommendations in *Defence of the Constitutions*, *Discourses on Davila*, and other writings.

Bache utilized Adams’s ideas on the legislative and executive branches as a point of departure for elaborating his views on the presidency and the relationship between the executive, the legislature, and the people. Immediately before citing Adams, Bache referred to Montesquieu in the

context of discussing the debate in the United States over an upper house. “The name of *Senate* likewise brought to mind what the ancients, and their follower Montesquieu had said of a certain permanency in the office of Senator as favouring the *preservation not only of a constitution but of manners*,” he wrote. “The effect upon the *American* federal Senate,” he continued, “is in direct opposition to this theory” (39).

Espousing an ideological position that both his radical Republican comrades and present-day historians might consider anomalous, Bache upheld Adams’s view that a bicameral legislature and a veto-wielding executive were more likely to protect the people than a one-house legislature. First, he first pointed out that the conduct of the U.S. Senate, which represented special interests and (he believed) preferred monarchy to republicanism, refuted Montesquieu’s alleged guarantee that long-termed “senates” would preserve the “constitution” and republican “manners.” (Montesquieu was probably referring to Britain’s hereditary House of Lords.) Nonetheless, Bache endorsed Adams’s “theoretical” contention that a bicameral legislature was better equipped than a unicameral body to protect public liberty. In this instance, he had chosen Adams’s position over that of his grandfather and the radical, unicameral Constitutionalists who controlled Pennsylvania politics during the 1780s. He considered Adams’s theories on “mixed” and balanced government compatible with democracy. He specifically argued that the “interesting [i.e., important] work of Mr. (John) Adams” lent “theoretical” support to the idea that governments consisting of several “branches”—his term for legislative powers—might rest on a “popular,” “representative,” “plural and rotatory basis” (39). In a footnote, Bache observed that the idea of rotation in office and term limits was British Commonwealthman James Harrington’s “favorite” concept. Bache attempted to give it a mechanistic, Newtonian turn: “Rotatory is a favorite word with Harrington: It means moving round like a *wheel*. It corresponds in sense with the word *circulatory* or *circulating* or with the word *renewable*” (39n).³⁰

Reconciling Adams’s adherence to balanced government with the Revolutionary ideology of representative democracy and direct elections, to which Adams also subscribed, albeit with qualifications, Bache asserted:

In proving that a government should consist of several branches, it is by no means proved that it ought not to be popular; (by a popular government meaning one which is representative, and of which the parts are in their composition plural and rotatory; for thus only will

a government have common objects with the people.) It is nothing difficult to demonstrate that governments separated from the people by the constitution (if it can then be called a constitution,) will be centered against the public interest, if they are single [i.e., unicameral]. (39)³¹

Employing terminology that recalled the “triple balance” between the executive and the bicameral legislature described in Adams’s *Discourses on Davila*, Bache focused on the “tripartite” lawmaking partnership of House, Senate, and president, the republican counterpart of king, lords, and Commons. When legislative power was distributed between two or more bodies, the likelihood increased that one of them would support the people against an ambitious, wealthy minority: “If they [the legislative houses] are divided into two branches, the chance is, that one of the two least shall call in the people to aid it against the other; and when they are *tripartite*, or in three parts, a disposition of this sort is still more probable,” he explained, reiterating Adams’s view that the popular “branch” and the executive were natural allies. In a sense, Bache republicanized the venerable concept that the legislative process required the cooperative participation of the “king-in-Parliament,” from which the theory of “mixed” or “balanced” government was derived. A legacy of Charles I’s counselors in *His Majesty’s Answer to the Nineteen Propositions of Both Houses of Parliament* (1642), the bicameral theory, with its antagonism between a democratic lower house supported by a high-minded patriot king against a power-hungry aristocratic upper house, was later adopted by Locke, Bolingbroke, and other “republican” thinkers (40).³²

Apparently, Bache adhered to Adams’s dictum that “sovereignty,—that is, the legislative power,—is divided into three branches” by the Constitution. Though Adams considered the president, with his veto power, “as a branch of the legislative,” he pointed out that the veto might be “overruled” by a two-thirds majority of Congress. Moreover, the president could not ratify treaties or make appointments to office without senatorial consent; Adams therefore concluded that his “power to defend himself” was inferior to that of the legislature. Consequently, Adams proposed that the president exercise an “absolute negative” on congressional acts, enabling him to expand his lawmaking authority. This followed from Adams’s view that “the legislative power is naturally and necessarily sovereign and supreme over the executive; and, therefore, that the latter must be made an essential branch of the former, even with a negative, or it will not be able to defend itself.”³³

In *Discourses on Davila*, Adams employed the phrase “triple balance” to expound his view that the legislative was the most essential governmental power, and Bache’s term “triple governments” probably derived from that. Like Adams, Bache referred to three “legislative” bodies—a bicameral legislature and an executive who could propose and reject laws. Bache, again following Adams, explicitly denied that the judiciary, which lacked legislative power, constituted a separate governmental “branch” or “division.” As he put it, “speculatively speaking, the American governments,” state and national, “have in them only two leading divisions, the legislative and executive. The judicial is not named upon these occasions, as being of only secondary weight; for we are speaking here only of such branches of the government as can preponderate against the people.”³⁴ Evidently, Bache did not foresee the enormous expansion of the judiciary’s legislative power, in the form of judicial review. Although Montesquieu, whom Bache cites in *Remarks*, is usually regarded as the father of the “separation of powers” doctrine, in fact he disparaged the judicial power as “in some measure next to nothing,” and proposed that the hereditary nobility (House of Lords) hold the key “regulating power.”³⁵

Bache again reflected Adams’s influence, and anticipated modern political science, with his appreciation of the executive’s role as third “branch” of the legislative triad. Bache decried one-house bodies and, to a lesser extent the two-house “double governments” James Harrington (Adams’s favorite political writer) championed in his utopian *Commonwealth of Oceana*, which had also existed in ancient Greek city-states like Sparta and Corinth, where bicameral legislatures made laws but which lacked an independent executive. Espousing a democratic-oriented perspective, which did not really distance him from Adams’s kindred view, Bache concluded that “the triple and double governments . . . are each likely to be better than a single, from the superior attention which each will probably pay to the people” (40).³⁶ Bache and Adams agreed that a bicameral legislature and a strong, popularly elected president would embody the people’s will in a representative democracy more accurately than a unicameral legislature.

To ensure that governing bodies obeyed and represented the people’s will, Bache proposed constitutional amendments for the direct popular election of the president and the upper house, to mold them in the image of the traditionally popularly chosen lower house. He considered it “evident that where the double and triple governments become elected by the people, *such an union with the* WHOLE PEOPLE, must be much more

useful than mere connections of intrigue with a few of the people”—that is, the Senate or cabinet members. Like Adams, who wished to prevent the “aristocratical” Senate’s hegemony in matters of legislation, Bache deplored the possibility that the “corrupt influence” of the “few” might gain the upper hand, which he considered especially likely while electors and state legislatures respectively chose the president and the Senate. In adopting this position, Bache followed in the footsteps of conservatives such as Adams, Gouverneur Morris, and James Wilson, who had been the leading advocates of popular election of the executive, albeit based on a restricted suffrage, as a far preferable alternative to election by state legislatures known for their parochial interests. Bache now echoed their view that the United States proved “that a government which is popular may *de facto* be divided into two or more principal parts, as easily as any other government.” However, he went one step farther, and framed his case in a more populist direction (40).³⁷

Bache’s Plural Executive

Unlike some leading Federalists, Bache concluded that a plural executive had become essential to the preservation of liberty. He argued that history taught that those who govern should never “have a *separate* interest” from the people, and “never to trust too much power in the hands of a *single* man, and especially one not of the public choice.” While acknowledging Washington’s popularity, Bache insisted that Washington’s apparent amenability to Hamiltonian direction suggested that, held by a single individual, the executive power lent itself to the flouting of public responsibility, contradicting Adams’s assumptions in *Defence of the Constitutions* and Hamilton’s in the *Federalist Paper*, no. 70 (41).³⁸

Interestingly, Adams did not endorse a plural executive, but in contrast to his denunciation of the unicameral legislature proposed for France by Turgot and Richard Price, his opinion on a one-man executive was surprisingly hesitant and undogmatic. He favored a single executive because that would concentrate public attention and responsibility for wrongdoing on one person. Adams considered the idea of a plural executive carefully but rejected it: “I had almost ventured to propose a third assembly for the executive power,” he wrote, “but the unity, the secrecy, the dispatch of one man has no equal; and the executive power should be fixed upon one point; and the blame and

censure, as well as the impeachments and vengeance for abuse of this power, should be directed solely to the ministers of one man.”³⁹

Although Bache disdained monarchy, like Adams he was in favor of a strong executive power if it were kept within moderate bounds and divided among several administrators. Perhaps reflecting David Hume’s influence, Bache argued that kingship originated when a soldier, politician or priest employed “force and habit” to gain power and begin a hereditary succession. Apparently opposed to the single executive set up by the U.S. Constitution, Bache asserted that to entrust a single individual rather than a committee to administer “important business” contradicted both “reason and nature” (incidentally, a favorite phrase of John Adams). Although his argument was less than compelling in light of the Continental Congress’s difficulty in conducting the Revolution, he patriotically reminded his readers that the president of the nation’s first legislature lacked executive powers; Congress had governed as a group (36).⁴⁰

Bache regarded it as unfortunate that the U.S. Constitution had reversed this fragile precedent by granting the executive inordinate power. In Bache’s inflated rhetoric, the president’s veto and military and patronage powers approached “terrestrial omnipotence,” while his right to perpetual reelection “encourages him to intrigue and to corrupt” in a quest for lifetime office. Though Washington had seldom exercised the veto, Bache perceived its potential for abuse, damning it as “an influence which he [the president] may employ to purposes of ambition, favoritism, vengeance, corruption, or faction” (36, 37n).⁴¹

Bache expressed misgivings about the resemblance both the national and state executives bore to monarchs. He feared that the Framers had been unduly influenced by the British constitution, and that the office of national executive “evidently had its formation before the United States had sufficiently *un-monarchized* their ideas and habits. They had dismissed the name of king, but they retained a prejudice for his authority. Instead of keeping as *little*, they kept as much of it as possible for their president.” Bache deplored such autocratic structures, placing his trust in directly elected officials. Like Hamilton and Adams, he distinguished between the Constitution as a document and the individuals who administered it. Apparently including both state and national regimes within his purview, he feared that, “generally speaking, American constitutions affect to impress an awe in favour of their governments which ought only to belong to these when they are in the hands of men who *administer them*

with propriety.” According to Bache, appropriate rulers, epitomizing the “natural aristocracy” depicted in James Harrington’s *Oceana* (1656), whom Adams and Jefferson famously espoused in their later correspondence, included “the rich and studious.” Bache believed that such members of the elite would support the “honest cultivator and artisan,” seeking the public interest in opposition to avaricious “*towns led by luxurious traders or land-jobbers,*” or those who had become rich by corruption or unearned wealth. Unfortunately, the Washington administration represented these selfish groups, Bache asserted (38, 83–84).⁴²

Even before slavery emerged as a supremely divisive issue, Bache was painfully aware of the possibility that sectional, class, and occupational conflicts might destroy the fragile republican union. This portentous situation inspired him to propose an original, albeit eccentric, amendment to the Constitution. Unlike his grandfather, who eschewed the issue of states’ rights, Bache anticipated John C. Calhoun’s concept of the “concurrent majority” by suggesting that at least two presidents (a “plural directory”), one of them the individual polling the second-highest number of popular votes, be chosen to represent the country’s diverse interests. Seeking a more direct democracy at the national level than prevailed at the time, Bache proposed rotation in office and direct election of a multiple executive, as well as direct popular election of the Senate, which at the time was chosen by the state legislatures. He considered these desirable constitutional amendments that would bring politicians into closer contact with their constituents’ wishes. During the late 1790s, when the Constitution had been in effect for nearly a decade, Bache almost alone among his contemporaries dared suggest the replacement of the single president with several men (35).⁴³

Bache espoused this proposal not from fear of the executive *power*, but because he feared its confinement in the hands of a *single*, potentially corruptible individual. Despite his Federalist enemies’ charge that his ideas were rooted in Francophile bias, his version of a “plural directory” hardly resembled the weak French Executive Directory created in 1795, which was chosen by the nation’s two legislative houses (“Councils”). Nonetheless, Bache briefly alluded favorably to the French Directory, primarily to suggest that the United States emulate the Directory’s treaty ratification process, by which treaties were submitted for ratification by both houses of the French legislature, the Council of Five Hundred and the Council of Elders. This procedure would permit the U.S. House of Representatives to veto treaties, such as the recently enacted, invidious Jay Treaty. Ironically, Bache simultaneously

pointed out that even the king of Great Britain had to submit treaties to both houses of Parliament before they became law (39).⁴⁴

Unlike the five-man French Directory or the British monarch, Bache's national executive(s) would be elected directly by the voters. Innovatively applying the observations contained in such treatises as Madison's *Federalist Paper*, no. 10 and Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*, he argued that the foreign and domestic affairs of a complex "nation of nations" were too intricate for competent management by one man. Therefore, the single, constitutional chief executive ought to be replaced with a multiple, "gradually renewed" (i.e., renewable by rotation in office) elective presidency. As Bache put it, "A federation whose frontiers run through many climates and districts; which contains many varying interests; and has to do with many foreign nations . . . must necessarily call for more information and attention than can belong to any one man." Creatively merging the insights of Madison and Montesquieu, Bache developed a unique concept for a revised executive branch. A multiple presidency, more likely to reflect the diverse American population, would "no longer exhibit the fluctuating character of an *individual*, but approach nearer to the fixed abstract of the American nation" (35, 36).

Bache's distrust of a single executive was exacerbated by what he viewed as Washington's pro-British foreign policy. Appalled by the president's ratification of the Jay Treaty, Bache considered this proof of a weak, malleable character, devoid of civic virtue. He charged that the president had succumbed to the baleful influence of his Anglophile cabinet members Alexander Hamilton, Oliver Wolcott, and Timothy Pickering, and "ended in making his government subordinate to his passions." Bache proposed to confine the unharnessed power of such "dangerous politicians" by amending both the state and national constitutions to stipulate popular elections for multiple executives who would, he hoped, restrain the excesses of a single individual. "Until this is effected," Bache warned, "America must remain the prey of internal factions, in consequence of her governments being separated too much from the people," and her foreign policy continue "dependent upon the caprices and imperfections of particular persons." (2, 65).

Bache argued that the well-being of officeholders as well as the electorate required periodic rotation in service, a Harringtonian idea, previously only put into practice by the radical Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776 that limited representatives to serving four years out of seven. Even a president whose policies were popular should not serve too long in isolation from the voters, thereby estranging himself from the people's needs. "None should enjoy the

chief executive *uninterruptedly* even by the voice of their fellow citizens,” he asserted. “Politicians refresh their knowledge and feelings by mixing for a time with their fellow citizens, and in the interval may attend to their families and private affairs.” Although this traditional republican argument for the benefits of rotation in office had been popular among Anti-Federalists during the debate over the Constitution, Bache’s revival of this line of reasoning stressed the importance of term limits to a republic. If new candidates did not obtain an opportunity to win election, incumbents would gain a monopoly on experience and wield “excessive influence” (2, 65, 24–35n).

Another means of reducing the danger of a single executive was to increase the vice president’s power (not an especially democratic proposal), making him, in effect, a coordinate president. This was the essence of Bache’s concept of a plural presidency, which was antithetical to the ideas of both Federalists and Anti-Federalists. “The person at present chosen as *vice-president* would in this case, no longer as now, be an inert personage, and the *ministers* under the president would no longer as now, in many instances, be personages *too active* (usurping a part even of the functions of the President).” Many reformers, such as the radicals George Mason and James Monroe in 1788, believing the vice-presidency was a potential center of intrigue and “foreign influence,” desired to abolish the office, as did the conservative Connecticut Federalist senator James Hillhouse. During the pamphlet war over the Constitution, Mason, thinking the office of vice president superfluous, proposed to replace it with a six-man Council of State appointed by the House of Representatives, consisting of two members from each section of the country, to act merely as advisers to the president. Bache alone perceived the vice president potentially useful to curb the monarchical propensities of the chief executive and the cabinet’s conspiratorial proclivities. Acutely aware of the president’s amenability to manipulation by his advisers and the vice presidency’s constitutional fecklessness, Bache wished to transform the latter office in revolutionary fashion. Perhaps he was retrospectively wishing that former Vice President Adams, who had termed his post “the most insignificant office that ever the Invention of Man contrived or his Imagination conceived,” could have prevented some of the evils of Washington’s presidency (35).⁴⁵

In *Remarks*, Bache stressed that he had no objection to a strong executive power per se, despite regretting that “evil counselors” had “perverted” Washington’s “reputation to a fatal public use.” In turn, Washington had “corrupted” the Senate, a coterie of selfish would-be aristocrats whom constitution-makers had myopically modeled on the prerevolutionary royal

governors' councils. The latter had allegedly possessed independent powers as "consultative bodies of which the governor was bound to take the opinion." Like John Adams, whose political theories heavily influenced *Remarks*, Bache—undoubtedly thinking of the "advice and consent" of the Senate required to approve the obnoxious Jay Treaty—thought the Constitution had given the Senate inordinate power. Citing Montesquieu, whose *Spirit of Laws* (1748) advocated a strong upper house composed of virtuous nobility as essential to a just government, Bache lamented that the U.S. Senate had reneged on its intended role as an austere republican aristocracy. Contrary to traditional expectations regarding "permanent" or semi-permanent bodies, depraved American senators were disinclined to uphold "*preservation . . . of a constitution*" or encourage benign "*manners*." Like Adams, Bache viewed the upper house as potentially the preserve of a dangerous aristocracy of upper-class citizens, whom the executive or "monarchical" power was responsible for keeping in check with the assistance of the "democratic" part of the legislature, the lower house. "No partizans [*sic*] for a *change* of the American governments [state and federal] are more violent than many Senators;" Bache warned, "nor is any class of men more advanced in *political* corruption, or more disposed to spread such corruption (as their luxury may partly testify), than the Senators." With amazing coincidence, on July 7, 1797, the day Bache's *Remarks* appeared in print, the House of Representatives voted to impeach Senator William Blount of Tennessee for conspiring with the British and Creek Indians to overthrow the U.S. government. He was removed by the Senate the next day, with fellow Tennessean Andrew Jackson the only dissenting vote (35, 29, 39).⁴⁶

Washington's "Character" and the Decline of Public Virtue

Washington, however, the "monocratic executive" who had abused his powers as commander-in-chief and patronage dispenser to thwart opposition, was Bache's chief offender. The latter had become subservient to Washington's "tactics and his new spirit of party" (38).

More sweepingly, Bache charged that Washington and his party encouraged an obsession with material gain and a decline in public and private morality that discredited the United States' reputation for virtue abroad, particularly since European opinion did not perceive any compensating evidence of progress in the arts and sciences. The "Washingtonian" Federalists

had merely engendered a “mean or factious politics, an increase of general selfishness . . . at which even Europe is scandalized because unaccompanied with refinement.” Such were the cyclical cultural symptoms of a republic’s decline, when cynical absorption in material concerns obliterated the citizen’s devotion to the community. The ensuing apathy toward public affairs permitted devious aristocrats, demagogues, and finally a despotic monarch to gain control (64).⁴⁷ Implementing the Classical Republican views of Harrington and Adams, Bache regretted that many Americans had acquired a reputation as vulgar, greedy philistines devoid of a sustained concern for the “public good.” Together with Jay’s perfidious Treaty, this behavior, especially in the cities where the people were most observed by foreigners, had compromised their character for integrity and patriotic republicanism.

If Bache’s political opponents denounced him as an unreasoning fanatic, in turn he pronounced Washington an intemperate, irresponsible leader whose character poorly suited him to revive the people’s republican virtue. He depicted Washington as an irrational egotist, who assumed austere regal airs merely to aggrandize himself, and “accordingly ended . . . in making his government subordinate to his passions.” By turning for advice to the Society of the Cincinnati, a hereditary veterans group open only to Revolutionary War officers and their descendants, and seeking counsel from his most fulsome flatterers, Washington had become the rallying point for an “American aristocracy” hoping to “found itself” on his alleged support (2).⁴⁸

Despite Washington’s great symbolic, semi-mythical value in leading the republic and maintaining national unity during and after the Revolution, Bache depicted him as a mediocre general. Striking at Washington’s strongest claim to renown, Bache insisted he had been incompetent, overly cautious, indecisive and unimaginative as commander of the Revolutionary army. “He relates, he argues, and sometimes he even projects,” Bache described Washington’s war record, “but how seldom does he *act* with success.” Refuting the traditional view of Washington as epitomizing masculine courage and fortitude, Bache suggested that his susceptibility to his emotions and his sensitivity to criticism revealed an unmanly defect in his public virtue. Bache argued that even Washington’s conduct during the American Revolution had been passive. He lacked the masculine traits of courage and resolution that most observers, seeking to capitalize on his craving for “personal incense” and adulation, eagerly granted him. Instead, he was insufficiently assertive in deciding matters of strategy and unduly deferential to Congress, “a mere civil body.” Sounding an unusually militaristic note for

a Republican, Bache derided the “amiable delicacy” and “gentle style” of the general’s letters to Congress from the field. Their tone suggested “that he is much more fitted for a *court* than for a *republic*; and his [later] political conduct justifies this suspicion” (73).

In his wrath at Washington, Bache seemed unaware that this indictment of Washington’s vacillations as a general denied him the persona of the man-on-horseback whom Bache dreaded would overthrow the republic. Professing admiration for the young, victorious generals who won battles for Revolutionary France, as well as the classical Greek and Roman republicans, “the great commanders in Plutarch,” who risked their lives for their people’s freedom, Bache contrasted their much-lauded youthful heroism with Washington’s refusal to praise his younger wartime colleagues (9–10, 11).

Nevertheless, Bache expressed a modicum of praise for Washington’s loyalty and courage during the American Revolution, notwithstanding claims by contributors to the *Aurora* that he had privately favored George III. Despite Washington’s ineptitude in the field, Bache attested, “It shall be allowed that upon occasion he can be firm; and that in difficult moments of the American revolution, he has had the praise of never despairing of the republic.” Avowing the general’s patriotism, Bache granted that he was “firm, brave, [and] prudent,” suitable to command in peace, but lacking in “penetrating observation, large views, or a promptness and fertility in resources,” essential in wartime (31–32).⁴⁹ Unlike many other critics of Washington, Bache gave him credit for patriotic loyalty to the “Glorious Cause” and conceded that he played a vital role in the Revolutionary War’s successful outcome.

But that was past. As president, Washington “has at length become treacherous even to his own fame, what we lent to him as a harmless general, must be withdrawn from him as a dangerous politician.” Blaming the president for the rise of political parties, Bache regretted the ensuing disruption of national harmony. “Mr. Washington may thank himself” for the uproar against him, Bache asserted. “Whoever forms *one* party, necessarily forms *two*, for he forms an antagonist party; and parties always end in the scrutiny of character.” Assuming the stridently antiparty tone that he attributed to John Adams, Bache asserted, “He [Washington] will fall therefore as a principal because he has chosen to be a party-man” (3).⁵⁰

Dreading monarchical conspiracies, Bache hoped to “deprive speculators of every description, of the support derived from the present reputation of Mr. Washington” (5). By denigrating Washington’s pretensions

to primacy in political and military leadership, Bache hoped to thwart his imputed monarchical ambitions. “The first republic formed upon representative principles, will not restore the system of monarchy and hereditary government in America in favour of a counterfeit character,” Bache scathingly asserted. In deflating Washington’s *individual* virtue and abilities, Bache believed he was most effectively undermining potential support for the revival of monarchy as an institution. His intent was to desanctify the persona of the presumably benign, most likely first choice of the people for king. His vitriolic excursions had a deeper meaning than the mere rant that many scholars ascribe to them. They were designed to save the republic from a Washingtonian monarchy—which, however, had proven groundless by the time the pamphlet was finally published.⁵¹

In assessing Washington’s motives for approving the Jay Treaty, the original reason he ceased supporting Federalist policy, Bache’s strictures on his character increased in intensity. Condemning Washington’s dilatoriness in securing free navigation of the Mississippi River from Spain, he was irate that the president had ratified the treaty only after an altercation with Republican secretary of state Edmund Randolph, precipitated by the British minister and Federalist secretary of war Timothy Pickering. Washington’s notorious temper tantrums revealed that he rendered “national interests subservient to his little passions” (12).⁵²

Bache considered Jay’s Treaty and its advocates as *prima facie* immoral individuals who betrayed the public interest and opposed republican government. The treaty had won the United States neither new friends nor “honorable and permanent advantage.” Washington’s support manifested his opposition to the French Revolution abroad and to republican government at home, “which indicates either his *personal views*, or else his *hostility to the principles* of the French government, and consequently to those of America.” “Whatever ground human nature had been gaining against self-legalized free-booters for a century past, is abandoned by it [Jay’s Treaty] in an instant,” Bache asserted, denouncing Treaty provisions that abandoned the “free ships, free goods” principles American diplomats had supported since 1776 (17).⁵³

Bache’s Critique of Washington’s Leadership

According to Bache’s exegesis of Washington’s conduct, the president was more preoccupied with praise and flattery than with exercising disinterested

leadership. Bache claimed that Washington opposed the French Revolution, not from sincere ideological conviction, but because he considered himself slighted by French ministers Edmond (“Citizen”) Charles Genet and Joseph Fauchet. On the other hand, his devious advisers, Hamilton and Pickering (the real “administration”), genuinely opposed the Revolution’s egalitarianism. Offended by French arrogance, Washington had refused to advance grain shipments to France in payment of the U.S. Revolutionary War debt, even though the U.S. ally had suffered famine in 1795—an execrable dereliction of duty. Moreover, Jay’s Treaty legalized British ships’ confiscation of American food shipments to France and its colonies, which were dependent on U.S. grains. Bache summarized his unflattering version of the motives for Washington’s hostility:

The American *administration* detested French politics, and the *President* was jealous of French *individuals*. Mr. Genet and Mr. Fauchet had wounded the self-love of this cold philosopher. From that moment the rights of man, the nourishment of mankind, and the sustenance of life seemed as nothing. In the eye of Providence all men are equal; in the eye of self-love one man is equal to all. (20)⁵⁴

Upholding his right to criticize the Father of his Country, Bache believed that Americans must finally recognize that their paragon “often acts ill from his own judgment and feelings” as well as from the influence “of others.” Insisting that no man was exempt from public scrutiny, Bache argued that republican virtue, both in ancient and modern times, entailed bearing public censure with resilience. Since a virtuous republican persevered in his duty indifferent to public acclaim, Washington’s abuse of his critics betrayed a lack of fortitude. Again citing Plutarch’s *Lives*, Bache observed, “Mr. Washington also, if a real republican, must confess that republicans should be trained even as to their tempers; and be able to bear hardships of the *mind* as well as of the *body*; looking for the reward of virtue in itself, whenever the public decides ill concerning him.” In measured language, Bache charged that the president’s resentment of newspaper attacks betrayed a lack of disinterested devotion to the public good and a puerile obsession with his own feelings. His advisers took advantage of his personal shortcomings to augment their own power. “To be effeminately tender of the individual is to be unpitiful towards the public; and it is even an encouragement to individuals to make the public subordinate to their personal ambition,” he protested. Again, Bache questioned Washington’s masculinity (31).⁵⁵

Following the Classical Republican, neo-Harringtonian tradition described by such scholars as J.G.A. Pocock, Lance Banning, Gordon S. Wood, and Drew McCoy, Bache emphasized the primacy of public over private virtue. He asserted, “What is said of the impropriety of transferring one virtue to stand in the place of another, applies still more against an attempt to make private hold in the place of public virtue.” Ironically comparing Washington to his erstwhile foe George III—practitioner of scientific agriculture, a good family man, faithful to his wife, who bore him fifteen children, but another erstwhile “Patriot King” and “Father of his Country” who accelerated his nation’s decline—Bache again alluded to the American Revolution. “The supposed private virtues of the present monarch of Great Britain have so little served his empire, that we have repeatedly during his reign seen it on the brink of ruin; and *America knows* that it is during this boasted period, that its own safety required a separation from him.” George III’s “apposite example” ought to alert Americans “respecting the private pretensions of general Washington,” whose adherence to norms of private morality was insufficient to qualify him as a statesman. “In truth to be sober and chaste and church-going, can be no security for a *complete* catalogue of the private virtues; and how much less for such virtues (and talents too) as are of a public nature,” he declared (31).⁵⁶

Among the first public intellectuals of the period to distinguish clearly between public and private virtue, Bache defined the former as encompassing Classical Republican ideals of honorable, independent, political conduct, seeking harmony of interests in society without regard to one’s self-interest. By contrast, “private virtue” merely entailed fair dealing in private business transactions, decent conduct toward one’s family, personal morality and a modicum of church attendance. Although Joyce Appleby has prominently argued that Jeffersonian “liberal capitalist” ideology subordinated public virtue to the exercise of private honesty and personal probity, Bache granted public virtue priority. He insisted that private virtue could not substitute for devotion to the public interest, even assuming that Washington possessed the former.⁵⁷

Although they may seem harsh to contemporary historians, Bache’s observations on Washington in *Remarks* were relatively restrained by comparison with contemporary attacks on Washington’s character in Thomas Paine’s public *Letter to George Washington* and William Duane’s *Letter of Jasper Dwight*, the latter primarily concerned with discrediting Washington’s Farewell Address. Decrying the retiring president’s denunciation of partisanship and

the Democratic Societies, and his implied disapproval of the Franco-American alliance, Duane argued that the Farewell Address evinced signs of mental illness, and “discharged the loathings of a sick mind.” Directly addressing Washington, “Jasper Dwight” asserted, “You have collected the aggravating recollections of wounded pride, and warmed to the inveteracy of hatred, discharged the whole burden of your blazing spirit against the object of your personal hatred [the Democratic societies] under the form of advice to your beloved country!” Duane upbraided Washington’s denunciation of the Democratic societies’ support for the French Revolution, which was, like the American Revolution, an act of an “oppressed people” compelled to repel foreign invaders, among them the British, who had also “sought to enslave us” but whom the Thirteen Colonies had defeated thanks to France’s help.⁵⁸ Duane viewed Washington’s excessive use of presidential power as founded on an immoral “maxim,” which “tended to perpetuate the miseries of society and degrade and enslave mankind”: a Calvinistic belief in “the innate depravity of man.” By contrast, the urge to form voluntary associations arose from “the love of our kind,” in opposition to the dogmas of “corrupt despotism.” Duane concluded that, as manifested by the Democratic societies, “the spirit of party must be the same as the spirit of resistance to oppression,” a sacred principle of republicanism.⁵⁹

Unlike Paine and “Jasper Dwight,” Bache, while depicting Washington as an archetypal conservative capable of underhanded tactics in upholding the rights of property, also credited him with a modicum of integrity. Evincing good psychological insight rather than the irascibility with which he was often charged, Bache noted that Washington was careful never to appear ambitious: “He is too artful to have the air of seeking office, “and yet . . . when possessed of office, he appears to have availed himself to the utmost of all its authority and pomp.” Bache also credited Washington with a consistent political philosophy, albeit a perverse one. Emphasizing Washington’s identification with aristocracy, Bache observed, “He loves in the aristocratical sense of the word, what is called *order*; that is, he wishes that every man should remain in his place, and especially that the aristocracy should remain in *their* places; thinking with all of the latter, that the smallest change in this would dissolve society” (32).⁶⁰

A man of aristocratic temperament, Washington lacked the generosity of spirit that typified Classical Republicans and democrats. Although Republicans proclaimed, “Every mortal is thy brother, always extend to him the helping hand,” the president generally showed contempt for the

masses.⁶¹ “He loves good faith in pecuniary transactions, being himself a man of property,” Bache argued. “He has no hatred to the lower orders of society, but neither has he any active philanthropy for them; since few really love what they do not also *respect*.” Yet despite his snobbery, Washington was just an average individual, possessing the typical tastes and abilities for his social class, “incapable of either grandeur or originality in his ideas, or his measures,” Bache asserted. Still, although his ideas conformed to “the class of grave men [a phrase Bache borrowed from Francis Bacon] of his age and country,” Washington nevertheless was not lazy: he “possessed considerable habits of application.” Summing up, Bache concluded, “He is but a man, and certainly not a great man.” He had not earned power by his “intrinsic worth.” He was no “natural” aristocrat (32–33).⁶²

Since Washington had condoned wicked policies as president, Bache warned, his departure from the political scene was urgent. “Willingly to permit evil is a guilt little short of committing it,” he commented, “and”—justifying Republican polemics—“to calumniate him who detects evil, is a still more active step towards a participation in it.” By shielding his promonarchical advisers from punishment or dismissal, Washington had been an accessory to their plan for a royal restoration. Bache hoped that Americans had learned to place less “confidence in individuals” after their disappointment with Washington’s errant republicanism (34). Americans had already paid their debt of gratitude to Washington, Bache implied; they ought to send him quickly back into retirement, especially since he had shown signs of a desire to establish kingship.⁶³

Upholding his generation’s fear of antilibertarian conspiracies, Bache warned that the greatest danger to republicanism was that the public might be deceived by the *appearance* of virtue. In the quest for “positive good” in government, he considered it essential to “extinguish” the “credit” of Washington’s exalted reputation, which had served as “the passport of so many weak or bad measures” (34).⁶⁴ He questioned the selflessness of Washington’s wartime patriotism, observing that “pride,” passion, and anger at being denied a commission in the British Army contributed to his decision to rebel. With rhetoric redolent of American Whig fears of British tyranny, Bache argued, “his [Washington’s] pride alone was sufficient to prevent his becoming the slave of the English; and his pride and his vanity together have since led him into measures which tend to enslave his countrymen” (62).

Washington’s dissimulation rendered him unsuitable for high office, Bache warned. An ambitious man who kept up a “farce of disinterestedness” and

piety to gain election to an office for which his “want of talent” disqualified him, Washington was essentially a hypocrite, an insincere actor devoted to deception and appearances—the bane of a political romantic like Bache, who was obsessed with authenticity and individuality (62).⁶⁵ Ironically, Washington was too naïve to succeed at games of deception. “Under the pantomime of a grave man, Mr. Washington conceals much negative intrigue,” Bache said, “yet happily when he thinks to deceive the world, it is without himself possessing much knowledge of it.” Despite an incongruous veneer of “stoicism,” Washington’s infatuation with pomp, pageantry, and “state etiquette” made clear that the histrionic president would not prefer “*to be, rather than to seem.*” (62). Washington’s devotion to ceremony—the levees of the Republican Court at which he stiffly greeted visitors—exposed his disillusioned constituents to his monarchical proclivities. A monarch *manqué*, Washington “has in short only differed from kings in wanting a kingdom, which his friends were seeking to provide for him.” Meanwhile, his jealousy of rivals impelled him, like a wary monarch, to “drive men more able, as well as more honest than himself from the field of politics.” This exaggerated depiction of Washington as a self-conscious, irascible blunderer was *Remarks*’ harshest criticism of him. However, Bache’s hyperbole was in the tradition of Real Whig and “Country Party” rhetoric, popularized by such illustrious British pamphleteers as Viscount Bolingbroke, John Trenchard, and Thomas Gordon, Alexander Pope, and Jonathan Swift in those Augustan writers’ campaign against Sir Robert Walpole’s Whig oligarchy earlier in the century (62).⁶⁶

Yet, Bache said, Washington’s wickedness was of a pedestrian, “moderate” kind. Lacking “*original vices,*” his ambition was more bumbling than dangerous. Despite being hot-tempered, avaricious, and vain (traits that Washington’s adherents often applied to Bache), Washington was nevertheless concerned primarily with his fame and property, rather than in exercising dominion over his countrymen or fighting ideological battles. He had inadvertently fallen into the “snares” of fanatical Federalists and Hamiltonian policymakers. “For a long time he appeared to be of no party,” Bache reminisced, remembering the years he had supported him, but eventually his naive egotism, “the weakness of his understanding . . . led him into snares and projects, where party support is his only resource, and it is here that his obstinacy will prove his ruin” (64).

Washington’s patent shortcomings in lacking great intelligence or noble temperament would have merely rendered him an innocuous leader in

ordinary times, Bache argued. However, by short-sightedly and passively permitting “certain characters to govern him” during the republic’s critical early struggles, he became “dangerous” should their plot remain “undetected.” Fortunately, Washington’s recent conduct had “begun to betray him”; the people would soon renounce their hero worship; and history would ultimately reverse its favorable judgment. Unlike the president, who was more fixated on his popularity than the probity of his actions, “The world . . . will profit by his fall, should he himself apply it to no use.” Public opinion would learn the lesson that the common good was superior to private self-interest or egotism, even Washington’s. “False characters must sooner or later come to an end,” Bache asserted, “and . . . since the possibility of deception as to men is so great, private persons must never be suffered to weigh an instant against the public interest, but every person must judge of public affairs by public considerations” (65). Bache thereby expressed the views of both the character-oriented political romantics of the sentimental Scottish Common Sense school and of Classical Republicanism, with its stress on the concept of the “common good.” Like his inspiration, John Adams, Bache rejected the unrestricted pursuit of individual self-interest or permitting popular leaders *carte-blanche* to pursue profit and material gain.

Enacting Republican Renewal: Bache’s Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

Bache’s analysis of Washington, and of his fellow Americans, revealed his pained recognition of the power of human selfishness in public and private affairs. Perhaps this awareness was the reason that, far from upholding a quixotic unlimited faith in popular judgment, Bache advocated rotation in office. He feared that the voters might be easily misled, even when electing the president. Possessing the powers of commander-in-chief, which “ancient republics” had prudently denied his classical counterparts, the president also held “many other high prerogatives, internal and external.” “Characters are often mistaken in the first instance by the best of judges,” Bache advised his readers. In any event, eventually the incumbent might become corrupt or fall under the domination of venal advisers. “It is certainly difficult to foresee . . . what accidents are to arise through bad health, the corrupting influence of power, the rise of extraordinary cases, or the advice of evil counselors,” Bache asserted. Unfortunately, similar circumstances had transformed Washington

from a well-meaning public servant to a would-be aristocratic demagogue who sought to conceal his desire for lifetime power behind a “mask” of devotion to popular rule. “We must no longer be deceived by masks,” Bache tersely warned, “and simulated merit or dissembling crime must equally stand bare to the touch of truth.” In order to limit the scope of clandestine self-interest, Bache proposed that future presidents and U.S. senators be required to pledge publicly that, during their tenure, they “should engage that during office, they shall neither solicit, receive, nor stipulate for favours from any *bank*, directly or indirectly, for themselves or others; which engagements should be *bona fide*” (35, 34–35nn).⁶⁷

Eschewing the Senate as a tribunal, Bache wanted the “federal constitution” revised to more severely punish “public crimes.” Bache considered the Constitution’s weak impeachment provisions an incentive for despotic use of the executive power and illicit conduct by the president and other officials. Bache proposed strengthening the impeachment provisions, which he believed were too similar to Britain’s. He preferred criminal prosecution of corrupt officials, and feared that impeachment proceedings would delay indictments and perhaps allow the guilty to escape justice (81).

More significantly, Bache revealed that, more than merely criticizing his political enemies, he had a constructive program in mind. He recommended several constitutional amendments, based partly on the Virginia assembly’s resolutions of 1795. He proposed the popular election of U.S. senators and the reduction of their terms to three years instead of the current six, changes that would make them more responsive to the people. He also insisted on the direct election of his multiple presidents. He hoped these reforms would help sustain American liberty, whose fragility had been exposed by ratification of Jay’s Treaty, which, Bache said (incorrectly) even the Anglophile Hamilton had opposed. These amendments would relieve Americans from a dangerous dependence on “the caprices and imperfections” of demagogic rulers, facilitating their mission to preserve republicanism. Rhetorically alluding to Enlightenment doctrines of cause and effect famously expounded by Isaac Newton, Bache observed, “If she [the United States] wishes to be *tranquil, pacific, useful, and renowned*, she must take (and with vigor) the necessary measures for the purpose; for in politics *where causes are neglected, we must cease to look for great effects*.” As David Hume might have put it, Bache’s essay’s reform proposals sought to “reduce politics to a science” (34–35, 65, 83).⁶⁸

Having publicly embraced constitutional reform, Bache considered it the responsibility of the American people and their leaders to follow his advice.

“Should she [America] be plunged into new misfortunes under her *present* federal constitution, the fault will no longer be that of Mr. Washington, or of senators continued too long in office,” he expostulated. “If, after receiving due warning, the American nation fails to regulate with firmness what concerns its *servants*; it will become a principal in their criminality; and must answer for it to its maker and its countless offspring” (83).

Although Bache considered his recommendations sensible and rational, if the past was any guide he was not certain that they would prevail. He apparently accepted the theory—expounded most succinctly in the marquis de Condorcet’s *Sketch of the Progress of the Human Mind* (1793), a work that Bache published—that history comprised a record of horrors. Bache complained that history “exhibits the excentricities [*sic*] of mankind and not their acts of reason; their deeds of violence and fraud, and not their works of meditation and consequently it contains matter of warning rather than of precedent” (40).⁶⁹

Bache’s Demand for “Equal Liberty”

Despite his pessimism, Bache mustered some confidence in the American people’s integrity and virtue. He charily predicted that they would reject Federalist control and adopt his amendments. Asserting that the forces of “democracy” would thwart Washington and his cabinet’s schemes to restore monarchy “by surprise,” Bache argued: “America is indolent, but not base; she may be deceived but cannot willingly be a deceiver; and as the weight of *property*, of *numbers*, and even of *knowledge*, is on the side of the American democracy, victory belongs to it, whenever it seems of consequence to seek it” (4).⁷⁰

Aflame with righteous indignation on behalf of the unprivileged classes, Bache seemed disappointed at the apathetic response of most of the American people to Hamilton’s business-oriented fiscal system, which he had come to despise. He lamented that Federalist policies had enriched wealthy insiders while whetting the public’s appetite for material gain. Recalling Washington’s first term, he now denounced as unjust, counterrevolutionary measures the whiskey excise tax and the funding system, which failed to reimburse original Revolutionary War creditors, many of them impoverished. Comparing the Federalists with the British ministry of 1764–1774, Bache pointed out, “If it be a merit to have recommended a tax, which raised

an insurrection [the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794], it is a merit possessed in common with the British ministers, who caused the revolt of America." Fueling class conflict, Bache charged that, by refusing to distribute public debt payment equitably to veterans and those who had originally trusted the government, Washington had favored the rich against the poor, imposing upon war veterans the "lot of Belisarius, but [Washington] sanctioned the *order of Cincinnatus*, because it decorated the rich (including himself) with the badge of courts." Bache mocked the Society of the Cincinnati's pretensions to disinterested patriotism: the members of this officers' organization, unlike the ancient Roman hero Cincinnatus, were rich men, not farmers; sought public praise for performing ordinary military service; and harbored political ambitions (63).⁷¹

Admitting that the Washington administration had restored government credit through regular interest payments on the national debt, Bache believed that if anyone deserved acclaim, it was Dutch bankers who had lent the money. He criticized the Federalists' alleged emulation of the British funding system, which was designed to attract "aristocratic" support. "If it be a merit to have attached the American aristocracy to the government, by a large and eternal debt," Bache charged, "it is a merit meanly copied from the British sovereigns who replaced the Stuarts, who trusting to the sordidness of him who lends a capital forgot the dissatisfaction of him who pays the interest" (63).⁷²

Unfortunately, Bache lamented, the success of these mercenary speculators, who were often also officeholders, encouraged a decline in public and private morality under Washington, accompanied by "an increase of general selfishness, and a growing luxury and corruption of manners," besmirching the Revolutionary legacy. Warning that such vices might foreshadow the "suicide of liberty," he depicted Americans in the merchant-controlled cities as pawns of British venality. Possibly on the basis of letters he had received from Thomas Paine and others in Europe, he concluded that the United States' reputation abroad for republican virtue had declined. In August 1796 Paine, irate at Washington's failure to intervene to secure his release from the Luxembourg Prison, where he was imprisoned during the Reign of Terror, mailed Bache his notorious denunciation of Washington as a cold-hearted aristocrat, *A Letter to George Washington*. Instructing Bache to print it at a cheap price to facilitate increased circulation, he charged that Washington's acceptance of Jay's Treaty had degraded the American character. "I shall not publish it in France—and I am sorry there is occasion to publish it in America—but it is

necessary to speak out,” Paine explained. “The American character is so much sunk in Europe that it is necessary to distinguish between the Government and the Country.”⁷³ Bache’s brother, William, traveling in Paris at this time, also reported that Washington’s “character suffers much in Europe.” Of course, this information came from revolutionary France.⁷⁴

Dismayed by Washington’s rejection of membership in a League of Armed Neutrality, consisting of Baltic powers aligned against British maritime omnipotence, Bache feared such pusillanimity evinced the “wise and virtuous republic’s” moral decline, and indicated that “the personal views of the American government have prevailed, owing to a gross ignorance or a sordid supineness in the American nation” (63, 83–84). Bache implied that the United States was on the road to insignificance, its citizens self-indulgent, egotistical, and susceptible to “monocratic” corruption. There seemed little hope that Americans, even by following virtuous leaders, would resume their road to greatness.

Moreover, prevailing sectional tensions endangered the republic’s survival. “Jealousies between the different parts of the union . . . must lead to embarrassments at home and weakness abroad,” discrediting America’s reputation for magnanimity. Bache warned, “Such are the *evils*, the *punishment*, and the odium, which America must continue to incur, unless it alters its constitution, reforms its administration, and improves its morals,” through structural revision and the election of public-spirited individuals (84).

Bache therefore applied the ideas of Machiavelli, the Classical Republicans, and Bolingbroke to the American scene. He demanded that the American people return to a republic’s “first principles”—morality and virtue. In Bache’s view, virtue and commerce were antipodes in the struggle to restore Americans’ self-respect. As he put it,

The gold of the ancient enemy of American liberty [Great Britain], the influence of *two or three American cities* sinking into a coarse luxury or selfishness (which excite the contempt or concern of *every well educated stranger*.) and the intrigues of a federal government, of which only one or two members have been heard of in Europe; have been stealing away rights bought with the blood of both hemispheres [U.S.A. and France], merely because American voters have been too confiding or too indolent.

He was convinced that wealthy town merchants and financiers, whom he regarded as personifications of avarice, exerted inordinate influence on

government policies. "Little can be expected from *towns* led by *luxurious traders or land-jobbers*, whose profession consists so much in buying and selling, that they scarcely know where to put bounds to it," he warned (83–84).⁷⁵ Bache, who had lived all his life in Paris and Philadelphia, had come to espouse Jefferson's attitude toward cities.

Bache in Politics

Bache did more than write about the Federalists. In the fall of 1796 he sought a seat on Philadelphia's twenty-man common council, which, annually chosen by freeholders, along with the newly created, triennially elected twelve-member select council, formed a municipal legislature.⁷⁶ At a Republican nominating meeting attended primarily by local artisans at Litle's schoolhouse on September 27, 1796, in which Bache acted as secretary, Republican merchant John Swanwick was chosen for reelection to Congress and Bache was nominated one of the twenty candidates for the common council. Other nominees from the skilled trades included Jacob Bright, a baker, bookbinder Andrew Guyer, and soap-boiler Andrew Kennedy. Tobacconist Thomas Leiper, a leading Republican and one of the richest men in Philadelphia, was also a candidate on this ticket.⁷⁷

Swanwick won reelection to Congress in October by a slim margin, but Bache's city ticket, the one most representative of the working classes, went down to defeat. The twenty candidates with the highest number of votes out of the forty candidates were declared winners. Bache's showing was unimpressive. He won 1,113 votes, coming in at number thirty-five in the tally, in an election where only 38 percent of the eligible voters participated. Bache apparently received votes solely from the "middling" artisans and mechanics, rather than from the more "respectable" citizens.⁷⁸ Bache was again defeated in his second and final attempt in 1797, when Laurence Herbert, a Federalist, with 1,321 votes, took first place for the common council. Even Federalist Joseph Hopkinson, a political unknown who became famous for composing the song "Hail Columbia" in 1798, received 812 votes, far more than Bache's meager 511. In 1801, three years after Bache's death, the Republicans for the first time won control of Philadelphia's common council along with the state government.⁷⁹

The Republicans, whose 1796 candidates for the common council possessed a "middling" average wealth of \$4,891, sought to attract votes from every class of society. (The more affluent Federalist nominees boasted

a mean wealth of \$9,626, nearly twice as great.) Writing in the *Aurora*, “A Citizen” praised the democratic process and the “truly republican” spirit of public nominating assemblies, arguing that it was preferable to choose public servants from the majority rather than follow the European maxim that “a certain description of men ought always to manage the public concerns.” “A Citizen” inveighed against the current city council, which had rendered decisions favorable to the wealthy, prohibited construction of low-cost wooden housing out of class prejudice (although the ordinance’s actual motive was to reduce the threat of fire rather than placate Federalist elitism), and tended to fix wages at lower levels than workingmen desires. He denounced constables who profited from collecting heavy and sometimes illegal fines for “very trivial faults.”⁸⁰ Bache himself may have initiated this Jeffersonian appeal to Philadelphia’s unprivileged socioeconomic groups, to which he directed much of the discourse in his concomitantly composed pamphlet, *Remarks*.

To members of the working classes like Bache, advocacy of classical republican values of independence, impartiality, and individual merit (“virtue”) apart from wealth or inherited status signified that the “middling” classes were as well qualified as the rich to vote on political issues and select competent candidates. During the nominations for the local contests, “Romulus,” an *Aurora* contributor, urged “the Electors of the City of Philadelphia” to eschew party labels in making their choice. In a classical republican plea to the voters for impartiality and independence of thought, he said, “Let your votes originate with yourselves, and let them be the result of your own reflection. Examine with candor into the abilities and integrity of a candidate, and decide for him on whose side you find the balance of these requisite qualities, without deigning to listen to the intrigues of corruption, or the solicitations of ignorance.” Emphasizing his impartiality, the author asserted,

It is not intended here to recommend any particular man to the notice of the public. I should consider such a recommend[ation] as impertinent, because we all know the candidates, and know their characters. All I would wish is, that the decision of every individual, to whatever side it inclines, may be free, and not dependent on the will of others.⁸¹

For Bache, who frequently printed nonpartisan appeals in the following months side by side with fierce attacks on the Federalists and their candidate

Adams, essays like that of “Romulus” evinced his ambivalence toward irretrievably committing himself to party warfare, which classical republican ideology depicted as fatally disruptive to young republics.⁸²

As part of his philippic against mercantile/fiscal domination of the U.S. government, Bache denounced the burgeoning profit motive, which he believed had not yet infected the masses. Positing a correlation between political and relative economic equality, Bache relied on the honest artisans and farmers, whose objective was “equal rights” not profit, to set the republic on the proper course:

The change must be set on foot by the honest cultivator and artisan, who being by their situation undebauched by the private profits and private ambition annexed to those in place, value a government only in proportion to the *public* blessings which it confers upon all; and who being little accustomed to luxury or superiority, are duly prepared for a system of equal rights. (84)⁸³

“Equal rights.” Bache believed that the promise of the Declaration of Independence had been betrayed by the Federalists, and that a new “system”—both a revised Constitution and virtuous Republicans to run the government—was required to achieve this goal.

Although Bache expected the silent “middling” majority of farmers and artisans to effect the crucial moral reformation he envisaged, he relied on upper-class intellectuals to join them in a peaceful revolution. “There are many, who when these [modest property-holding] classes exert themselves, will join them from among the rich and studious,” he predicted, “bringing to their aid a tried virtue and an enlightened administration.” Both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson might fall under the rubric of “rich and studious” recruits to the cause of anticapitalist constitutionalism, who would help restore the republic’s virtue, which “is not dead, but sleeping” (84). Ideally, men of their caliber and dedication to the public good might become members of the plural executive whom Bache relied on to set the nation on a virtuous, harmonious republican course. Had they continued the honeymoon of early 1797, they would have made an excellent plural executive.

Adams, however, began the Quasi-War against France and then supported the Alien, Sedition, and Naturalization acts, winning the approval of the Federalists and odium of the Republicans. Dying of yellow fever in September 1798, at the age of twenty-nine, Bache lived only to see his enemies in

triumph. A mob smashed his office windows, he was assaulted by the son of Federalist printer John Fenno, whose father he criticized, and was under indictment for sedition and free on bail at the time of his death. Ultimately to his and his family's disadvantage, Bache invariably put the fulfillment of his egalitarian democratic mission ahead of material gain or physical well-being. Explaining to his father, “Not having been brought up as a man of business has proved a considerable disadvantage to me,” he eventually died in poverty. After Bache's death, his colleague William Duane calculated that subscribers to the *Aurora* owed Bache between \$15,000 and \$20,000 in overdue payments.⁸⁴ Had he lived another two years, he would have seen Thomas Jefferson elected president, finally vindicating the earnest young editor's fragile hope for reviving the people's faith in human liberty (4, 29, 34–35).⁸⁵

APPENDIX JEFFERSON, BACHE, AND THE HISTORIANS

Bache put his hopes in Jefferson beginning in 1797. Biographers of Bache have assumed, based on the similarity of their opinions in the late 1790s, that Thomas Jefferson had a close relationship with Bache, just as they assume that because he accompanied his grandfather to Paris and followed his trade as a printer, he must have been close to Benjamin Franklin. Accepting the traditional view that Bache was Jefferson's confidant, Jeffery A. Smith writes, “Jefferson had a working relationship with Bache, Franklin's grandson, even before the paper was founded in 1790.”⁸⁶ Smith also concludes that his grandfather was the most significant influence in forming Bache's “Enlightenment libertarian thought.” Smith's main evidence is a romanticized version of their relationship during Bache's boyhood, when he accompanied Franklin to France, residing in genteel boarding schools at Passy and Geneva for the duration of the American Revolution. However, Franklin's neglect of Bache during this period, his failure to visit him at school, and his partiality toward an older cousin, William Temple Franklin, are amply documented.⁸⁷

As this article shows, Bache acquired his ideas from his own reading and independent reflection rather than from the specific influence of such towering figures as Franklin, who left him his printing press but not much else; or Jefferson, who, in contrast to his assistance to Philip Freneau, generally ignored Bache. Bache was only twenty years old when Franklin died, too young to expect preferment for public office. He seemed content to undertake

the career of a printer and newspaper editor, at least for the time being; in his last years, Franklin encouraged him to pursue this vocation, which he argued was more secure than the vicissitudes of politics and public office. Indeed, Franklin was distraught over the failure of Congress or President Washington to offer an appointment either to his grandson William Temple Franklin, William Franklin's illegitimate son; or his son-in-law Richard Bache, Benny's father, who expected reappointment as postmaster general, an office he held during the Revolution.⁸⁸

Although many historians (with the recent exceptions of Jeffrey L. Pasley and Marcus L. Daniel) assume that Jefferson showed a preference for Bache's newspaper, he and other Republican leaders remained unimpressed with the *Aurora* for most of the 1790s. As secretary of state from 1790 to 1793, Jefferson, who hired the radical Republican Philip Freneau as a translator in the State Department to subsidize him while he edited a radical Democratic-Republican newspaper, the *National Gazette*, did not even choose the *Aurora* as one of the five papers he paid to print the nation's laws. He bestowed that patronage plum primarily on the political independent, Andrew Brown and his *Federal Gazette*. The only special attention Jefferson rendered Bache while in the cabinet was to send him copies of the *Gazette de Leide*, a reform-minded Dutch newspaper, which was done more to keep the public informed than to increase Bache's circulation. (The radical New Englander Benjamin Vaughan, who lived in Paris during the 1790s, also sent Bache European newspapers.) Jefferson had previously supplied extracts from the paper, as well as translations, to John Fenno's *Gazette of the U.S.*, providing him a source of foreign news and opinion before Fenno's turn to Hamiltonian Federalism and his newspaper "monocratic" attacks on Jefferson. By mid-1791, when Fenno made his allegiance to Hamilton clear, and before Freneau's arrival on the scene, Jefferson sporadically noticed the *General Advertiser*, which he said was the only newspaper that printed articles defending Thomas Paine's book, *The Rights of Man*, against the criticisms of "Publicola." He sent his protégé William Short, U.S. chargé d'affaires in Paris, clippings of the dozens of articles that appeared under pseudonym defending Paine that appeared in Bache's newspaper. "I have desired Mr. Remsen [State Department clerk Henry Remsen,] to make up a complete collection of these pieces from Bache's paper, the tory-paper of Fenno rarely admitting any thing which defends the present form of government in opposition to his desire of subverting it to make way for a king, lords & commons," he explained.⁸⁹ But in allocating patronage, Jefferson preferred Freneau's *National Gazette*, James

Carey's *Universal Recorder*, and even nonpartisan newspapers like Andrew Brown's Philadelphia *Federal Gazette* and Thomas Bradford's *Merchants' Daily Advertiser* to Bache's *General Advertiser*.⁹⁰

Surprisingly, during the controversy over Thomas Paine's book, *The Rights of Man* in 1791—which Jefferson had inadvertently incited by sending a brief blurb to its Philadelphia publisher praising the radical pamphlet—he criticized Bache's *General Advertiser*'s “very indecent attacks” on “Publicola,” a shrill opponent of Paine. Perhaps regretting that his view of Vice President John Adams as antirepublican had reached the public, Jefferson defended a writer who he believed was his old friend (it was actually Adams's son, the precocious John Quincy). When Jefferson defended his support for Freneau's inflammatory journal in an important letter to President Washington in September 1792, he merely mentioned Bache as a publisher to whom he had lent copies of the *Leyden Gazette* to enable the public to have accurate news of foreign events; he said he soon considered this plan unsatisfactory because Bache's *General Advertiser*, a daily, had insufficient readership outside Philadelphia, and Bache's attempts to start up a weekly “country paper” with greater circulation proved abortive.⁹¹

Although Jefferson was aware that Bache, as Franklin's grandson, was committed to republicanism, he seems to have had several objections to the fledgling *General Advertiser*. As a daily, he believed it was too expensive and printed too many advertisements to be useful in disseminating Republican points of view to the lower classes. By mid-1791 he was nonetheless aware that John Fenno's *Gazette of the United States*, which he had previously given some State Department patronage, was controlled by his foe Hamilton, and become a “paper of pure Toryism.” “Bache's is better,” he advised his son-in-law, but too expensive for mass circulation. “In the mean time Bache's paper, the principles of which were always republican, improves in it's [*sic*] matter,” his relatively lukewarm endorsement continued. “If we can persuade him to throw all his advertisements on one leaf, by tearing that off the leaf containing intelligence may be sent without over-charging the post and be generally taken instead of Fenno's. I will continue to send it [*General Advertiser*] to you, as it may not only amuse yourself, but enable you to oblige your neighbors with the perusal.” Given that Bache had supported Hamilton's financial program and Washington's policy toward France, Jefferson's attitude was understandable.⁹²

Jefferson's attitude changed when, having obtained copies of the treaty from Virginia senator Stevens T. Mason and Pierre Adet, French minister to

the United States, Bache printed a virtually complete text of the treaty in the *Aurora* on June 29, 1795, and published it for sale as a pamphlet on July 1, even before the State Department released its contents. He then went on a tour of the northern states, selling copies of the allegedly disgraceful treaty for propaganda purposes. Around this time, Jefferson made him friendly overtures, promising to send him a “Chinese gong” that Benjamin Franklin had left with him for safekeeping at the time of his death. He also requested that Bache mail him a set of the *General Advertiser* for the entire year 1794, indicating that he had not purchased it before this time (newspaper subscriptions had to be paid for a year in advance). He also inquired of him when Franklin’s *Works* would be published, because he wanted to buy a copy.⁹³

Jefferson again wrote Bache at the end of the year, on the same topics. This time, using State Department clerk Sampson Crosby as a conduit, he desired to purchase an edition of Bache’s newspaper for 1795, seemingly not having subscribed in advance for that year either. “Independent of this I shall be glad to become your subscriber from the 1st day of this month [December] for another set to be forwarded to me by post,” he wrote. Anticipating postal mishaps, the methodical Jefferson wanted to make sure he had a full run of the paper. “As some of these will miscarry, I shall hope that on forwarding to you at the end of the next year a list of the papers wanting you will be so good as to furnish them at the *pro ratâ* price that I may have the whole year bound up here.” He also sent him payment for a second copy of that year’s subscription through his agent John Barnes.⁹⁴

Jefferson did not fully appreciate the *Aurora*’s usefulness as a “whig press” in support of the Republicans until passage of the Sedition Act in 1798, when, writing to his comrade Madison, he observed that it was the “main object” of Federalist “suppression,” with Bache one of its principal victims. His most enthusiastic comments about Bache occurred only a few weeks before the heroic editor’s death, and several weeks after passage of the Sedition Act, in a letter to Maryland Republican congressman Samuel Smith. Denying Federalist newspaper charges that he had plotted with Bache and other Republicans (Dr. Michael Leib and Dr. James Reynolds) in his hotel room in Philadelphia on a strategy to defeat the Adams administration’s war measures against France, he praised Bache and Leib as “men of abilities, and of principles the most friendly to liberty & our present form of government. Mr. Bache has another claim on my respect, as being the grandson of Dr. Franklin, the greatest man & ornament of the age and country in which he lived,” he noted.⁹⁵ Indeed, this instance, which was essentially a eulogy

of Bache’s grandfather, was perhaps the only time that Jefferson gave Bache more than cursory notice in his extant correspondence.

NOTES

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1. Washington to Jeremiah Wadsworth, March 6, 1797, in *Papers of George Washington: Retirement Series*, ed. Dorothy Twohig et al. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 1:17; and in *Writings of George Washington*, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931–44), 35:421, and Washington to Henry Lee, July 21, 1793, in *ibid.*, 33:24; this quote also appears in *Papers of George Washington: Presidential Series*, ed. Theodore J. Crackel et al. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 13:261. For the anti-Bache commentary quoted in this paragraph, see Abigail Adams to Mary Cranch, November 15, 1797, in *New Letters of Abigail Adams, 1789–1801*, ed. Stewart Mitchell (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1947), 112–13; John Adams to Abigail Adams, January 18, 1797, reel 383, Adams Family Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society; John Quincy Adams to Charles Adams, August 1, 1797, in *Writings of John Quincy Adams*, ed. Worthington C. Ford (New York: Macmillan, 1913–27), 2:196, quoted in James Tagg, *Benjamin Franklin Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), ix. On Bache’s sobriquet, “kingbird,” and on the childhood friendship between Bache and John Quincy Adams in Paris, see Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 25 and 28 respectively; Samuel F. Bemis, *John Quincy Adams and the Foundations of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Knopf, 1949), 10; Claude-Anne Lopez and Eugenia W. Herbert, *The Private Franklin: The Man and His Family* (New York: Norton, 1975), 221; and Claude-Anne Lopez, “A Story of Grandfathers, Fathers, and Sons,” *Yale University Library Gazette* 53 (1979): 189. On the name change, see Jeffrey L. Pasley, *The “Tyranny of Printers”: Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2001), 164–65. The addendum to the masthead did not signify Bache’s adoption of a new radicalism; for months afterward, his paper tended to support the Washington administration’s measures, including military action against the Whiskey rebels.
2. Rachel Bradford to Samuel Bayard, November 26, 1796, in *The Life, Public Services, Addresses and Letters of Elias Boudinot*, ed. J. J. Boudinot, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1896), 2:114. On the antipathy between Bache and the Federalists see, in general, James D. Tagg, “Benjamin Franklin Bache’s Attack on George Washington,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 100 (April 1976): 191–230. Pasley denies that Bache sought material gain. On the contrary, he argues that his partisanship was a “costly result of convictions that required great courage.” Pasley, “Tyranny of Printers,” 79.
3. On the *General Advertiser’s* reputation, see Donald H. Stewart, *Opposition Press of the Federalist Period* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1969), 17, 610–11, 613–14, 654n; Clarence S. Brigham, *Journals and Journeymen* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1950), 20–21; James E. Pollard, *The Presidents and the Press* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), 36–51; Bernard Fäy,

- The Two Franklins* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1933), 310. James Morton Smith, *Freedom's Fetters: The Alien and Sedition Laws and American Civil Liberties* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1956), 9, 189, calls Bache's paper "the leading Republican journal," and James D. Tagg, in "Benjamin Franklin Bache and the Philadelphia *Aurora*" (PhD diss., Wayne State University, 1973), concludes that after 1793 the *General Advertiser/Aurora* "assumed undisputed leadership among Republican newspapers" (325).
4. Robert Morris to Bache, July 28, 1790, reel 2 (microfilm), Benjamin Franklin Bache Papers (hereafter Bache Papers), Castle Collection, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia (hereafter Bache Papers). While warning of a newspaper's likely unprofitability, Morris advised Bache to apply to Jefferson for assistance. On American politicians' preoccupation with fame and the approval of posterity, see Douglass G. Adair, "Fame and the Founding Fathers," in *Fame and the Founding Fathers: Essays by Douglass Adair*, ed. H. Trevor Colbourn (New York: Norton, 1974), 3–26; Gerald Stourzh, *Alexander Hamilton and the Idea of Republican Government* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1970), 95–106, 201–5, 240, 267; and Peter McNamara, ed., *The Noblest Minds: Fame, Honor, and the American Founding* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999).
 5. Bache, *Proposals for Publishing a News-Paper, to be entitled the Daily Advertiser, and Political, Commercial, Agricultural, and Literary Journal* (Philadelphia, n.p., July 1790), quoted in Marcus Leonard Daniel, *Scandal and Civility: Journalism and the Birth of American Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 116. For Franklin's strategy to profit by avoiding controversy, see the classic essay by Stephen Botein, "'Meer Mechanics' and an Open Press: The Business and Political Strategies of Colonial American Printers," *Perspectives in American History* 9 (1975): 127–225.
 6. *General Advertiser*, January 16 and 19, 1792, October 2, 1790, and August 30 and September 7, 1791; and "fellow nationalist," all cited in Daniel, *Scandal and Civility*, 116, 117. On Bache's "literary cannibalism," see Daniel, *Scandal and Civility*, 117–18. Philip Freneau, the "Poet of the Revolution," differed little from Bache in his views of the national government at the outset of Washington's Administration. He was silent on the question of the Constitution, siding with neither Federalists nor Anti-Federalists. In 1789 at least, he praised Washington as a great Revolutionary leader and applauded his election to the presidency. Philip M. Marsh, *Philip Freneau: Poet and Journalist* (Minneapolis, MN: Dillon Press, 1967), 103–4; Jacob Axelrad, *Philip Freneau: Champion of Democracy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967), 179.
 7. Thomas Jefferson to Martha Jefferson Randolph, November 13, 1791, in *Jefferson Papers*, ed. Boyd, 22:294, quoted in Daniel, *Scandal and Civility*, 118; see also the discussion on 118–19.
 8. Bache's "Notebook of Resolutions and Plan for Self-Improvement" (subtitled "Mélanges" [1789]), reel 2 (microfilm), Bache Papers.
 9. Historians, even those who depict Bache as a fanatic, have recently pointed out that Bache's *Aurora* consistently supported enforcement of the whiskey excise tax, despite its unequal distribution of the tax burden, from its passage in 1791 until the Whiskey Rebellion's suppression in 1794. The newspaper's writers argued that it was incumbent on the people to obey the laws passed by their elected representatives. Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 210–17; see also Pasley, "Tyranny of Printers," 90–91. Tagg dates the *Aurora's* assumption of an unwavering Democratic-Republican stance from the Jay Treaty debate in 1795 (*Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 275–76, 297). On the *Aurora's* support for Washington's policies, see also Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 136, 160–62, 183–87; Jeffery A. Smith, *Franklin and Bache: Envisioning the Enlightened Republic*

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- (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 138; and Thomas P. Slaughter, *The Whiskey Rebellion: Frontier Epilogue to the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 102–3. A recent excellent study that emphasizes Bache’s “desacralization” of Washington’s persona after the Jay Treaty affair but, I believe, inaccurately links it as well to the Republicans’ commitment to the separation of church and state, is Daniel, “Benjamin Franklin Bache and the Desacralization of George Washington,” chapter 3 of *Scandal and Civility*, esp. 138–47. For Bache, the City Dancing Assembly, and Washington’s birthday, see *Philadelphia General Advertiser*, February 24, 1792, quoted in Daniel, *Scandal and Civility*, 121; and Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 72, 74, 84 n. 41, 223.
10. Quotation from Stanley Elkins and Eric McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism: The Early American Republic, 1788–1800* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 536. For Bache’s opinion of Adams during the 1790s, see Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 149–50, 154–55, 159–60; Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 133, 158, 160, 163, 222, 295–97, 304, 318–19; Harry M. Tinkcom, *Republicans and Federalists in Pennsylvania, 1790–1801: A Study in National Stimulus and Local Response* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1950), 165–73; Arthur Scherr, “Inventing the Patriot President: Bache’s *Aurora* and John Adams,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 109 (1995): 369–99, and Scherr, “‘Vox Populi’ versus the Patriot President: Benjamin Franklin Bache’s *Philadelphia Aurora* and John Adams (1797),” *Pennsylvania History* 62 (1995): 503–31. For good summary accounts of the presidential election of 1796, see Manning J. Dauer, *The Adams Federalists* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1953), 92–111; Stephen G. Kurtz, *The Presidency of John Adams* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1957), chaps. 6–9; Noble E. Cunningham Jr., *The Jeffersonian Republicans: The Formation of Party Organization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957), 89–115; and Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), 213–28.
 11. On the *General Advertiser*’s position in support of Adams and the Federalists in 1791–92, see Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 159–60. For early favorable mention of Adams’s *Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States* (1787–88) (hereafter *Adams, Defence*), see *Philadelphia General Advertiser*, November 27, 1792, quoted in Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 135, 154 n. 52. In this instance, Bache republished an editorial on education from the *Federalist Gazette of the United States* that quoted from Adams’s *Defence*. For the view that Bache opposed Adams’s candidacy in 1792, see Pasley, “*Tyranny of Printers*,” 84.
 12. *Greenleaf’s New York Journal*, March 4, 1797; “Wilmington, March 1,” in *Philadelphia Aurora*, March 3, 1797; “From a Correspondent,” *Aurora*, March 14, 1797; “From a Correspondent,” *Aurora*, March 23, 1797; “From a Correspondent,” *Aurora*, March 18, 1797.
 13. Bache, *Remarks Occasioned by the Late Conduct of Mr. Washington as President of the United States: MDCCXCVI* (hereafter *Remarks*), 84 (subsequent page numbers appear in the text); “A Correspondent,” *Philadelphia Aurora*, March 18, 1797. The *Aurora* alluded to Adams’s nickname, “His Rotundity,” during the 1796 election campaign. “A Pleasant Anecdote,” *Aurora*, November 4, 1796.
 14. David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fêtes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 139–40, 147, 156. Waldstreicher observes of the strictures on the political violence of the 1790s, “Antipartyism exerted a strong centralizing

- appeal, as did the need to compromise in order to celebrate and publicize convincingly" (p. 139). Even Pasley, who tends to view Bache as a consistent radical, admits that he "had grave reservations about joining fully in the partisan battle": "*Tyranny of Printers*," 86.
15. Banning, *The Jeffersonian Persuasion: Evolution of a Party Ideology* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), 244 (quotation). For Bache's ambivalence about presidential power, see *Remarks*, 4. Public opinion unfairly exaggerated Adams's preference for monarchy after his brief effort to endow the presidency with monarchical titles. James H. Hutson, "John Adams' Title Campaign," *New England Quarterly* 41 (1968): 30–39. On the idea of the president as a natural aristocrat who embodied the public interest, see Ralph Ketcham, "Executive Leadership, Citizenship, and Good Government," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 17 (1987): 267–69.
 16. *Adams Family Correspondence*, ed. C. James Taylor, 10 vols., in progress (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963–2011): John Adams to Abigail Adams: January 1, 1794, 10:2; January 2, 1793, 9:366–67; December 16, 1794 (citing the *Philadelphia Aurora*, December 15, 1794), 10:308. On "French Wit," see John to Abigail Adams, February 9, 1795, 10:372; Charles Adams to John Quincy Adams, June 30, 1795, 10:471. I thank Sara Georgini of the Adams Papers, the Massachusetts Historical Society, for pointing me toward these items and those cited in the next two notes.
 17. Thomas Boylston Adams to John Quincy Adams, May 27 [1792], in *Adams Family Correspondence*, ed. Taylor, 9:289–90. On Benjamin Franklin's real estate holdings on High (Market) Street in Philadelphia at the time of his death, see Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 59–61.
 18. Benjamin Franklin Bache to Margaret Markoe Bache, July 15, 1795, reel 3, Bache Papers; see also Arthur Scherr, "'The Most Agreeable Country': New Light on Democratic-Republican Opinion of Massachusetts in the 1790s," *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 35 (2007): 158–59. On Bache's journalistic "scoop," see Everette E. Dennis, "Stolen Peace Treaties and the Press: Two Case Studies," *Journalism History* 2 (1975): 6–14.
 19. General studies of the 1790s ignore Bache's *Remarks*, and his biographers gloss over its ideas, viewing it mainly as an anti-Washington diatribe. Indeed, Tagg unaccountably claims that Bache's *Remarks* vigorously espoused "the benefits of a unicameral legislature . . . with a blunt insistence that his grandfather would never have exercised," when it actually defended bicameralism and Adams. Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 11, 140–41, 275, 286–87, 316; Tagg, "The Limits of Republicanism: The Reverend Charles Nisbet, Benjamin Franklin Bache, and the French Revolution," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 112 (October 1988): 540–41; Tagg, "Bache's Attack on Washington," 195, 225–26, 229; Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 124–27, 139–40.
 20. Thomas Paine to Benjamin Franklin Bache, July 13 and 25, September 20 and 24, 1795, August 7, 1796, in reel 3, Bache Papers; on Bache's radical proclivities, see Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 193; Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 116–17. For the influence of radical thinkers on Bache, see Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 124–27, 131, 282 (Condorcet, Paine); Tagg, "Bache's Attack on Washington," 207 (Paine); Tagg, "Limits of Republicanism," 535–36, 538 (Paine, Condorcet, Rousseau); and Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 115–16, 130, 154 (Condorcet, Paine). Bache continued to publish Paine's controversial religious opinions, although they alienated many God-fearing people. He printed part 2 of *The Age of Reason* in 1796, which he received from Paine in the mail from Paris. Bache's advertisement noted, "The editions are published under the eye of the author, and are therefore correct." See Charles Henry Evans, comp., *American Bibliography, 1639–1800*, 14 vols. (New York: Peter Smith, 1942), 11:15.

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21. Quotation from Elkins and McKittrick, *Age of Federalism*, 536, who entitle their chapter on Adams's thought, “John Adams and the Dogma of Balance,” 529–39. Bache was alarmed by pro-monarchical talk in the United States, believing that it placed Americans in an unfavorable light after France declared itself a republic, but he hesitated before fully embarking into the rough-and-tumble of partisan politics. Bache to Richard Bache, February 3, 1793, Bache Papers, cited in Pasley, “*Tyranny of Printers*,” 85. Daniel (*Scandal and Civility*, 114–25) emphasizes Bache's persevering attempts to run an impartial, pro-administration newspaper, despite his strong attachment to France, where he had spent his childhood and adolescence.
22. On the “Classical Republicans” and their support of a “natural aristocracy,” a term first found in James Harrington's *Oceana* (1656), see J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975); Pocock, “Civic Humanism and Its Role in Anglo-American Thought,” in *Politics, Language, and Time: Essays on Political Thought and History* (New York: Atheneum, 1971), 80–103; and Zera S. Fink, *The Classical Republicans* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1945). Banning, *Jeffersonian Persuasion*, esp. 21–69, was the first study to emphasize the affinity between the neo-Harringtonian eighteenth-century Opposition Whigs, Bolingbroke's “Country Party,” and Democratic-Republican political ideas.
23. That Bache intended the lower classes to purchase *Remarks* is indicated by the comparatively much higher price he charged for the much briefer pamphlet edition of Jay's Treaty, which he priced at twenty-five or fifty cents depending on the paper's quality. This may be why he failed to sell all of his copies of Jay's Treaty. Pasley, “*Tyranny of Printers*,” 94–95. Generally, pamphlets were far cheaper than newspapers, which cost from six to eight dollars for an annual subscription, a sum that most publishers required to be paid in advance. This meant that newspapers could be afforded only by the middle and upper classes, mostly businessmen. That was why even Bache, seeking to attract entrepreneurial readership, called his paper the *General Advertiser* rather than by some more populist title. In general, see Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 15.
24. Greenleaf's *New York Journal and Patriotic Register*, August 15, 1797. On Thomas Greenleaf, a zealous Anti-Federalist-turned-Republican, see Jeffrey L. Pasley, “Thomas Greenleaf: Printers and the Struggle for Democratic Politics and Freedom of the Press,” in *Revolutionary Founders*, ed. Alfred E. Young et al. (New York: Knopf, 2011), 355–73.
25. E. Millicent Sowerby, *Catalogue of the Library of Thomas Jefferson*, 5 vols. (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1952–59), 3:294; *Catalogue of the John Adams Library in the Public Library of the City of Boston* (Boston: Boston Public Library, 1917). Jefferson's library at the time he sold it to the Library of Congress in 1815 numbered over 6,000 volumes, and he tended to retain most of his books, newspapers, and other paraphernalia. Adams's library was less than half that size at the time of his death and, unlike Jefferson, he did not keep old newspapers like Bache's *Aurora* for years on end.
26. For example, in a 650-page selection, George W. Carey, ed., *The Political Writings of John Adams* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2001), Harrington appears twenty-one times and Montesquieu fifteen. Bache's undated “Notes on John Adams' *Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States*,” reel 5, Bache Papers; for Franklin's support of a plural executive body and a unicameral legislature in Pennsylvania, see “Queries and Remarks Respecting Alterations in the Constitution of

- Pennsylvania [1789],” in *Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. Albert H. Smyth, 10 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1905–7), 10:54–60; and Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 92. During the 1790s, Paine reasserted his earlier support (at the Pennsylvania Constitutional Convention of 1776) for a plural executive; this may have influenced Bache. See Thomas Paine, *Letter to the People of France and the French Armies, on the Event of the 18th Fructidor and its Consequences* (Paris, 1797; New York, 1798), 6, 8; Paine’s *Letter to George Washington*, July 30, 1796, in *Writings of Thomas Paine*, ed. Moncure D. Conway (New York: AMS Press, 1967), 3:214n; David F. Hawke, *Paine* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), 184–85. On Franklin’s support of a plural executive, see also Max Farrand, ed., *Records of the Federal Convention of 1787*, 4 vols. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1937), 1:99, 102n; Franklin’s speech on salaries at the U.S. Constitutional Convention, June 2, 1787, in *Benjamin Franklin: Writings*, ed. J. A. Leo Lemay (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1987), 1131–34; Franklin’s “Queries and Remarks Respecting Alterations in the Constitution of Pennsylvania”; Gerald Stourzh, *Benjamin Franklin and American Foreign Policy*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 22–26.
27. Bache [n.d.], “Notes on John Adams’s Defence of the Constitutions of Govt.,” reel 5, Bache Papers. I hope to write a brief article about Bache’s consideration of Adams’s *Defence* in his generally overlooked notes.
 28. Bache’s (undated) “Notes on John Adams’s *Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States*,” reel 5, Bache Papers. For Bache’s mention of Scipio, Plutarch, and Voltaire, see *Remarks*, 31. On Bache and the Library Company of Philadelphia, see *A Catalogue of the Books Belonging to the Library Company of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1807), xxxi; Library Company of Philadelphia to Bache, July 2, 1792, reel 2, Bache Papers. Franklin’s last will and testament, in *Writings of Franklin*, ed. Smyth, 10:498–99. See also John D. R. Platt, *The Home and Office of Benjamin Franklin Bache, America’s First Modern Newswoman* (Washington, DC: Office of History and Historic Architecture, Eastern Service Center, 1970), 64, 85; Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 66; and Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 89–90.
 29. See Adams, *Defence*, in Charles F. Adams, ed., *Works of John Adams*, 10 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1850–56), 4:585; 5:473, and 6:340–41, 430–31, 533. For a good brief selection of excerpts from Adams’s writings on the optimal government that has aged well, see George A. Peek, ed., *The Political Writings of John Adams* (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1954). On the executive’s role in preserving democracy, see the following, all in Peek, *Political Writings*: John Adams to Roger Sherman, July 17, 1789, 168; Adams, *Defence*, 110, 115–16, 139–40, 143, 156–57; and *Discourses on Davila*, 192–93. The Patriot-President ideal is an important theme of several scholarly works, such as Ralph Ketcham, *Presidents above Party: The First American Presidency, 1789–1829* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984); Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969); and Clinton Rossiter, *The American Presidency* (New York: New American Library, 1961), 202–3.
 30. In the eighteenth century, the term “interesting” was synonymous with “important” (see *Oxford English Dictionary*). For a brief discussion of Franklin’s political ideas, see Esmond Wright, *Franklin of Philadelphia* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of [Harvard University Press, 1986), 239, 252–53, 343.
 31. Although *Remarks* preferred a bicameral legislature, a brief article in the *Aurora* several years before, probably not written by Bache, defended France’s unicameral National Convention against

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- the aspersions of Noah Webster's *New York Minerva*, a Federalist newspaper that constantly feuded with the *Aurora*. "For the *Aurora*," *Philadelphia Aurora*, April 14, 1795. The article supported the French revolutionary constitution against Great Britain's "corrupt" bicameral legislature, but did not propose unicameralism for the United States.
32. *Discourses on Davila*, in *Works of Adams*, ed. Adams, 6:340–41; Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*, 361–71, 377, 478–92; Corinne C. Weston, *English Constitutional Theory and the House of Lords, 1556–1832* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 9–43, 88, 92, 121–37; Edward S. Corwin, *The President: Office and Powers*, 4th rev. ed. (New York: New York University Press, 1957), 7–9; Isaac Kramnick, *Boltingbroke and His Circle: The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 169–81; and Harvey C. Mansfield Jr., *Statesmanship and Party Government: A Study of Burke and Bolingbroke* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), chaps. 4–5. For a recent, provocative study that (perhaps implausibly) emphasizes the devotion of the Patriots in the American Revolution to the "balanced constitution" and especially to the Stuart concept of the king's "prerogative," see Eric Nelson, "Patriot Royalism: The Stuart Monarchy in American Political Thought, 1769–75," *William and Mary Quarterly* 68 (2011): 533–72.
 33. John Adams to Roger Sherman, July 18, 1789, in *Works of Adams*, ed. Adams, 6:430–31; Adams, *Defence*, in *Political Writings*, ed. Peek, 143.
 34. *Discourses on Davila*, in *Works of Adams*, ed. Adams, 6:340–41; Bache, *Remarks*, 39–40.
 35. Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws*, ed. Franz Neumann (1748; New York: Hafner Publishers, 1949), book 11, chap. 6, 156.
 36. On the modern view of the president as legislator, see, e.g., Corwin, *President*, 120–30, 263–305. On Harrington's "mixed republic," see Banning, *Jeffersonian Persuasion*, 25–33; Fink, *Classical Republicans*, 52–89; and Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*, 383–400. Harrington is cited twice in *Remarks*, suggesting his influence on Bache.
 37. Adams often expressed the view that the U.S. Senate's powers were excessive by comparison with the president and the House of Representatives. "Indeed, I think the aristocratical power is greater than either the monarchical or democratical," he warned. "That will, therefore, swallow up the other two." John Adams to Roger Sherman, July 18, 1789, in *Works of John Adams*, ed. Adams, 6:431. He constantly warned that the "ardent aristocratical ambition" of upper houses generally tended to subvert the powers of the executive and the people if left unchecked. See, e.g., Adams, *Defence*, in *Political Writings*, ed. Peek, 126–28, 139–40. On the demand for popular elections, see John E. Selby, "Richard Henry Lee, John Adams, and the Virginia Constitution of 1776," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 84 (1976): 388–94; Shlomo Slonim, "The Electoral College at Philadelphia: The Evolution of an Ad Hoc Congress for the Selection of a President," *Journal of American History* 73 (1986): 35–58; Corwin, *President*, 11–13, 316–17.
 38. See Adams, *Defence*, in *Works of Adams*, ed. Adams, 4:585–86; and Jacob E. Cooke, ed., *The Federalist* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), 471–80.
 39. *Works of Adams*, ed. Adams, 4:585. For Adams's ideas on the executive power, and his political thought in general, see C. Bradley Thompson, *John Adams and the Spirit of Liberty* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998); John R. Howe Jr., *The Changing Political Thought of John Adams* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966); Edward Handler, *America and Europe in the Political Thought of John Adams* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964); Gordon S. Wood,

- Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), 567–92; Joyce Appleby, “The New Republican Synthesis and the Changing Political Ideas of John Adams,” *American Quarterly* 25 (1973): 578–95.
40. Clinton Rossiter, “The Legacy of John Adams,” *Yale Review* 46 (1957): 528–50, emphasizes Adams’s fondness for the phrase, “reason and nature.” For Hume’s opinion, see “Of the Original Contract,” in *David Hume’s Political Essays*, ed. Charles W. Hendel (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1953), 52–53.
 41. On the president’s veto power, see (all in *Presidential Studies Quarterly*) Harry C. Thomson, “The First Presidential Vetoes,” 8 (1978): 27–32; Richard A. Watson, “Origins and Early Development of the Veto Power,” 17 (1987): 401–12; and Raymond B. Wrabley Jr., “Anti-Federalism and the Presidency,” 21 (1991): 459–70.
 42. For the classic dialogue between Adams and Jefferson on “natural aristocracy,” see Lester J. Cappon, ed., *Adams-Jefferson Letters* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 371–72, 387–92, 400–401.
 43. At the Constitutional Convention in 1787, however, several prominent delegates, including George Mason, Franklin, Roger Sherman, Hugh Williamson, and Edmund Randolph, had advocated a three-man executive chosen by Congress from different sections of the country. Richard B. Morris, *The Forging of the Union, 1781–1789* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), 287–88.
 44. Nevertheless, Bache favorably compared the Directory’s ostensible success “in uniting the French Republic” after the Reign of Terror to the policies of the divisive, “monocratic Mr. Washington.” *Remarks*, 39, 84. Article 333 of France’s Constitution of the Year III (1795) stipulated that both councils must ratify treaties negotiated by the Directors.
 45. George Mason, *Objections to the Proposed Federal Constitution*, in *Pamphlets on the Constitution of the United States*, ed. Paul L. Ford (New York: Da Capo Press, 1968), 329–32; James Monroe, speech in the Virginia ratifying convention, June 18, 1788, in *Debates in the Several State Conventions, on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution . . .*, ed. Jonathan Elliot, 5 vols. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1891), 3:488–90; *Propositions for Amending the Constitution of the United States; Submitted by Mr. Hillhouse to the Senate, on the Twelfth Day of April 1808, with his Explanatory Remarks* (New Haven, 1808). John Adams commented negatively on Hillhouse’s proposal. See *Works of Adams*, ed. Adams, 6:533. For the final quotation, John Adams to Abigail Adams, December 19, 1793, see *Works of Adams*, ed. Adams, 1:460.
 46. Adams had long contended that an upper house invariably conspired to weaken the executive and subvert public liberty. See, in *Works of Adams*, e.g., Adams, *Defence*, 4:584–87; Adams to Roger Sherman, July 18, 1789, 6:430–31, and Adams to Thomas Brand Hollis, June 11, 1790, 9:570. For a pithy example of Adams’s argument that the executive *would instinctively* join with the “people” or the lower house of the legislature to prevent abuses or injustices on the part of the “aristocratic” senate or upper house, see Adams’s commentary on Hillhouse’s propositions in *Works of John Adams*, ed. Adams, 6:533.
 47. On intellectuals’ preoccupation with the corruption of virtue and republican decline, see Michael Lienesch, *New Order of the Ages: Time, the Constitution, and the Making of Modern American Political Thought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988); Thomas M. Allen, *A Republic in Time: Temporality and Social Imagination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); John E. Crowley, “Classical, Anti-Classical, and Millennial Conceptions of

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- Change in Revolutionary America,” in *Classical Traditions in Early America*, ed. John W. Eadie (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1976), 213–53; John R. Howe Jr., “Republican Thought and the Political Violence of the 1790s,” *American Quarterly* 19 (1967): 147–65; and Stow Persons, “The Cyclical Theory of History in Eighteenth-Century America,” *American Quarterly* 6 (1954): 147–63. Congressman John Holmes from the Maine district of Massachusetts, who helped pass the Missouri Compromise in 1820, summarized the cyclical concept of history in a Fourth of July speech praised by Jefferson. “Governments, like individuals,” he said, “are born, progress, become stationary, and die. They have their infancy and manhood, strength and debility, innocence and depravity, health and sickness; and they have their old age.” John Holmes, *An Oration Pronounced at Alfred, on the 4th of July 1815* (Boston, 1815), 1; for Jefferson’s praise of Holmes, see Jefferson to Benjamin Waterhouse, October 13, 1815, in *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Paul L. Ford, 10 vols. (New York: Putnam, 1892–99), 9:532–33.
48. For studies that emphasize the priority of reason, as opposed to *sensibilité*, in the Framers’ worldview, see Daniel Walker Howe, “The Political Psychology of *The Federalist*,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 44 (1987): 485–509; Drew R. McCoy, *Last of the Fathers: James Madison and the Republican Legacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); and Morton White, *The Philosophy of the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press 1978). For interpretations that emphasize the emotional bases of American thought and action at this time, see Sarah Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), and Nicole Eustace, *Passion Is the Gale* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).
 49. For charges by writers in the *Aurora* in 1795–1796 that Washington had favored reconciliation with the Mother Country during the Revolution, see Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 277, 263–84, 304n, and Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 140–41, 160.
 50. For examples of antiparty rhetoric in Bache’s newspaper, see *Aurora*, February 22, 24, March 3 (“Communication, Wilmington, March 1”), March 16, 18, 23, 1797 (“From a Correspondent”). For *Remarks*’ aspersions on Washington’s military prowess, see also Pasley, “Tyranny of Printers,” 88. Many studies exist of Washington’s popular idealization by the media in life and after his death; appositely, they seldom mention Bache. See Barry Schwartz, *George Washington: The Making of an American Symbol* (New York: The Free Press, 1987); Lawrence J. Friedman, *Inventors of the Promised Land* (New York: Knopf, 1975), 44–78; Melvin Yazawa, *From Colonies to Commonwealth: Familial Ideology and the Beginnings of the American Republic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985); Garry Wills, *Cincinnatus: George Washington and the Enlightenment* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1984); Simon P. Newman, “Principles or Men? George Washington and the Political Culture of National Leadership, 1776–1801,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 12 (1992): 477–507.
 51. Numerous scholars impute irrational or unworthy motives to Bache. This is particularly the case with Tagg’s early work. In “Bache’s Attack on Washington,” he impugns him as mentally unbalanced, a resentful “failure,” who childishly idolized his grandfather and vented his disappointment on Washington. Bache’s rage at Washington’s ratification of Jay’s Treaty precipitated his newspaper’s attack on the president, which was “not chiefly an attempt to rally republican sentiment; it was a black campaign of despair and frustration, of defeat and revenge. For Bache, bitterness and contempt remained the main feature of his politics” (230). Tagg overlooks the fact that Bache was not in Philadelphia for much of the time that the *Aurora* was attacking Washington, including the famous March 5, 1797, issue, edited by Dr. James Reynolds, which acclaimed

- Washington's retirement as "a JUBILEE in the United States." Colonel Robert Carr, who worked in Bache's office as a young man, said that Reynolds and another Democratic-Republican leader, Dr. Michael Leib, brought the article to the *Aurora* office. Scharf and Westcott wrote, "It was published during the absence from the city of the editor, Mr. Bache, who, on his return, expressed great anger and annoyance at its appearance in the columns of the *Aurora*." J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts, 1884), 1:489n. Tagg later included this information in *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 285-86. Pasley ("Tyranny of Printers," 88) nonetheless assumes that Bache wrote the editorial. Michael and Edwin Emery's popular history of journalism considers Bache unstable. "Bache was a mercurial young man—impetuous, brilliant, and often intemperate in expression," they write. "His paper was even more violently partisan than the *National Gazette* [a Republican paper edited by Philip Freneau from 1791 to 1793] had been. Too often he was downright vicious." Michael and Edwin Emery, *The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Media*, 6th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1988), 80-81. Elkins and McKittrick, *Age of Federalism*, 420, mimics Bache's Federalist foes, labeling him "a hot Republican noted neither for moderation nor scruple."
52. On the Randolph scandal, in which Randolph was seemingly implicated in treasonable activity with French minister Joseph Fauchet, see Mary K. Bonsteel Tachau, "George Washington and the Reputation of Edmund Randolph," *Journal of American History* 73 (1986): 15-34.
 53. For contrasting views on the significance of neutral rights in early American diplomacy, see Felix Gilbert, *To the Farewell Address: Ideas of Early American Foreign Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961); James H. Hutson, "Intellectual Foundations of Early American Diplomacy," *Diplomatic History* 1 (1977): 1-19; and Daniel G. Lang, *Foreign Policy in the Early Republic: The Law of Nations and the Balance of Power* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985).
 54. For a detailed examination of Washington's refusal to accommodate the French, see Samuel F. Bemis's old but reliable article, "Payment of the French Loans to the United States, 1777-1795," *Current History* 23 (1926): 824-36.
 55. Among Bache's objectives as a radical newspaper editor was to uphold every individual's right to engage in politics and criticize the government. Pasley, "Tyranny of Printers," 85. Perhaps Bache's harsh critique of Washington's alleged inertia and deference to Congress during the Revolution was inspired by the Democratic-Republican consensus that the American Revolution was a unique, unprecedented emergency, unqualifiedly good in its outcome, which justified extraordinary undertakings by all who could contribute to its success. For contemporary perceptions of the Revolution's uniqueness, see Simon P. Newman, *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Political Culture in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997); Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fêtes*; Frederick R. Black, "The American Revolution as 'Yardstick' for the Debate on the Constitution, 1787-1788," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 117 (1973): 162-85; Michael G. Kammen, *A Season of Youth: The American Revolution and the Historical Imagination* (New York: Knopf, 1978); Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 1992); Peter C. Hoffer, *Revolution and Regeneration: Life Cycle and the Historical Vision of the Generation of 1776* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1983); and David Waldstreicher, "Rites of Rebellion, Rites of Assent: Celebrations, Print Culture, and the Origins of American Nationalism," *Journal of American History* 82 (1995): 37-61.

56. Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*, 74–76, 329, 472; Pocock, “Civic Humanism and Its Role in Anglo-American Thought,” 80–103; Banning, *Jeffersonian Persuasion*, and “Some Second Thoughts on Virtue and the Course of Revolutionary Thinking,” in *Conceptual Change and the Constitution*, ed. Terence Ball and J.G.A. Pocock (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1988), 194–212; Wood, *Creation of the American Republic*, 65–96, 415–28; Drew McCoy, *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), esp. 68–73. Similar viewpoints may be found in Ketcham, *Presidents above Party*, 186–87; John Ashworth, “The Jeffersonians: Classical Republicans or Liberal Capitalists?” *Journal of American Studies* 18 (1984): 425–35, who calls the Republicans “precapitalist commercialists”; and Andrew W. Foshee, “Jeffersonian Political Economy and the Classical Republican Tradition: Jefferson, Taylor, and the Agrarian Republic,” *History of Political Economy* 17 (1985): 523–50. On the transfer of popular affection from George III to Washington during the Revolution, see William D. Liddle, “‘A Patriot King, or None’: Lord Bolingbroke and the American Renunciation of George III,” *Journal of American History* 65 (1979): 951–70.
57. Appleby argues that, for the Jeffersonians, “virtue had lost its public character and attached itself instead to the private rectitude essential to a system of individual bargains.” *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s* (New York: New York University Press, 1984), 96; see also 15, 94. Other studies that agree with Appleby’s emphasis on republicanism’s replacement of public virtue with simple honesty, business acumen, and other private virtues are Rowland Berthoff, “Independence and Attachment, Virtue and Interest; From Republican Citizen to Free Enterpriser, 1787–1837,” in *Uprooted Americans: Essays to Honor Oscar Handlin*, ed. Richard L. Bushman et al. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), 79–96; Jan Lewis, “‘The Blessings of Domestic Society’: Thomas Jefferson’s Family and the Transformation of American Politics,” in *Jeffersonian Legacies*, ed. Peter S. Onuf (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993), 111–17, 133–34, 139; John P. Saillant, “Letters and Social Aims: Rhetoric and Virtue from Jefferson to Emerson” (PhD dissertation, Brown University, 1989); and John P. Diggins, *The Lost Soul of American Politics: Virtue, Self-Interest, and the Foundations of Liberalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1984). Schwartz, *George Washington*, 188–206, provocatively argues that, taking Washington’s public virtue for granted, his countrymen automatically projected on him private virtues (charity, humility, personal morality). Unlike Bache, whom he overlooks, Schwartz notes that most Americans considered Washington the epitome of self-mastery, “moderation, resoluteness, and strength of will” (203).
58. Jasper Dwight [William Duane], *A Letter to George Washington, President of the United States: Containing Strictures on his Address of the Seventeenth of September 1796, Notifying His Relinquishment of the Presidential Office* (Printed at Philadelphia, for the Author, and Sold by the Booksellers, December 1796), 26–27. As Pasley points out, use of pseudonyms “depersonalized” political contention and helped writers of low social status criticize the social elite on a more level playing field, with readers evaluating their arguments without being influenced by their authors’ identities. “*Tyranny of Printers*,” 87, 103–4.
59. Dwight, *Letter to Washington*, 22, 23, 24.
60. For a “deconstructionist” study of Paine’s attack on Washington, arguing that Paine metaphorically replaced Washington, see Steven Blakemore, “Revisionist Patricide: Thomas Paine’s Letter to George Washington,” *CLIO* 24 (1995): 269–89. Twentieth-century historians who follow Bache in emphasizing Washington’s negative traits— self-righteousness, vanity, hypersensitivity to

- criticism, ambition, deviousness, and malleability— include Bernhard Knollenberg, *Washington and the Revolution: A Reappraisal* (New York: Macmillan, 1940); John E. Ferling, *The First of Men: A Life of George Washington* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988), 58, 253, 262; Ferling, *The Ascent of George Washington: The Hidden Political Genius of an American Icon* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2009); Alexander DeConde, *Entangling Alliance: Politics and Diplomacy under George Washington* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1958), 507–11; and Joseph Charles, *Origins of the American Party System* (1956; New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), 37–53.
61. “Precepts of Reason,” in *Barber and Southwick’s Almanack for 1798* (Albany, 1797), quoted in Alfred F. Young, *The Democratic-Republicans of New York: The Origins, 1763–1797* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), 581.
 62. Bache specifically cites Francis Bacon at 32n. Pasley observes, “As the living embodiment of the great Franklin, Bache differed from other Republicans in feeling no awe of Washington’s reputation and position” (“*Tyranny of Printers*,” 87). However, this is to ignore that numerous radical Republican editors, among them Freneau; Thomas Greenleaf of the *New York Journal*; the unsung Eleazar Oswald, editor of the Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*; and even the purportedly neutral Andrew Brown, editor of the Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, consistently denounced Washington years before Bache adopted that stance.
 63. On the place of “gratitude” among the “affections” civic-minded republicans felt during this period, see Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution against Patriarchal Authority, 1750–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 93–106, 177, 214–19, 233, 250–54; Yazawa, *From Colonies to Commonwealth*; and Schwartz, *George Washington*, 54, 98–101.
 64. The potentially sinister divergence between appearance and reality in self-representation is a theme of Jay Fliegelman, *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language, and the Culture of Performance* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993). Glenn A. Phelps, in *George Washington and American Constitutionalism* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993), discusses Washington’s preference for a strong president in the mold of a constitutional monarch rather than one restricted by the checks and balances of the Constitution. On the prevalent fear of deceitful leaders, see Gordon S. Wood, “Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style: Causality and Deceit in the Eighteenth Century,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 39 (1982): 401–41; James H. Hutson, “The Origins of ‘The Paranoid Style in American Politics’: Public Jealousy from the Age of Walpole to the Age of Jackson,” in *Saints and Revolutionaries: Essays on Early American History*, ed. David D. Hall et al. (New York: Norton, 1984), 332–72; J. Wendell Knox, *Conspiracy in American Politics, 1787–1815* (New York: Arno Press, 1972); David B. Davis, *The Slave Power Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969).
 65. As Tagg remarks in a slightly different context, “there was a romantic hue in the passion of his [Bache’s] vision not to be found among the many who embraced mere party politics after 1800. . . . He was an ideologue who shared a democratic *mentalité*, an intuitive vision of a new order and a new way of thinking,” positing harmony between “natural collective morality” and individual well-being. Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 401; see also 197.
 66. Excellent studies of the rhetoric of Bolingbroke and his “Country Party,” which included Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope, are Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and his Circle*; Bernard Bailyn, *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967); Jeffrey Hart, *Viscount Bolingbroke: Tory Humanist* (London: Routledge Kegan Paul,

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- 1965); H. T. Dickinson, *Bolingbroke* (London: Constable, 1970); and Peter N. Miller, *Defining the Common Good: Empire, Religion, and Philosophy in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
67. Bache did not list this provision among his constitutional amendments, although he mentioned it along with them.
 68. For Hume, see David Hume, “That Politics May Be Reduced to a Science,” in *David Hume: Essays Moral, Political, and Literary* (1777), ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1987), 14–31. Richard Striner, “Political Newtonianism: The Cosmic Model of Politics in Europe and America,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 52 (1995), 583–608, discusses the influence of Newtonian physics on political discourse.
 69. For Bache’s relationship with Condorcet, see Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 115–16, and Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 27, 131. Condorcet’s ideology and influence are examined in Paul M. Spurlin, *The French Enlightenment in America* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984), 35, 37, 121–29, and Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, 2 vols. (New York: Knopf, 1966–69), 2:112–23.
 70. Unlike most of his contemporaries, Bache perceived favorable connotations in the noun “democracy,” as in the above quotation. See also, “Lord [Francis] Bacon makes good account of the power rising from *knowledge*, as [James] Harrington does of that arising from *property*; and *numbers* are of the essence of a democracy”(4n). For more on eighteenth-century usages of “democracy,” see Simon Peter Newman, “American Popular Political Culture in the Age of the French Revolution” (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1991), 335–37, and Robert R. Palmer, “Notes on the Use of the Word ‘Democracy,’ 1789–1799,” *Political Science Quarterly* 68 (1953): 203–26.
 71. Pasley (“*Tyranny of Printers*,” 95) notes Bache’s disappointment at the people’s ostensible embrace of the Federalists, which he claims he gauged by his failure to make a profit on his newspaper and bookselling business. Nevertheless, Pasley essentially sees Bache as an idealistic democrat, going so far as to claim that Bache was the *real* leader of the Republican Party during the 1790s, and molded it into an “imagined community” of the people (96). For the debate on Hamilton’s funding system, see E. James Ferguson, *The Power of the Purse: A History of American Public Finance, 1776–1790* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1961), and Roger H. Brown, *Redeeming the Republic: Federalists, Taxation, and the Origins of the Constitution* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993). The best study of the Society of the Cincinnati is Minor Myers Jr., *Liberty without Anarchy: A History of the Society of the Cincinnati* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1983). On the Whiskey Rebellion, the most thorough study is Slaughter, *Whiskey Rebellion*. Like most educated Americans of his time, Bache was familiar with Roman history, as is revealed by his mention of Belisarius (c. 505–565), an ascetic Byzantine Roman general under Emperor Justinian I. He defeated the Germanic tribes but was disgraced and briefly imprisoned as a result of political intrigues by envious conspirators at Court.
 72. For details on the controversy over the public debt in the 1790s, see Whitney K. Bates, “Northern Speculators and Southern State Debts: 1790,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 19 (1962): 30–48; E. James Ferguson, “Political Economy, Public Liberty, and the Formation of the Constitution,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 40 (1983): 389–412; and Ferguson, *Power of the Purse*.
 73. Thomas Paine to Bache, Paris, August 7, 1796, reel 3, Bache Papers.
 74. William Bache to Benjamin Franklin Bache, June 11, 1796, quoted in Richard Bache to Benjamin Franklin Bache, September 27, 1796, reel 3, Bache Papers.

75. J.G.A. Pocock, "Virtue and Commerce in the Eighteenth Century," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 3 (1972): 119–34.
76. Richard G. Miller, *Philadelphia, the Federalist City: A Study of Urban Politics, 1789–1801* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1976), 80–81.
77. On the nominees for city council, see *Philadelphia Aurora*, September 29, 1796; Miller, *Philadelphia, the Federalist City*, 81.
78. On Bache's defeat for city council in 1796, see *Philadelphia Aurora*, October 13 and 14, 1796; Miller, *Philadelphia, the Federalist City*, 86; Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 294; Pasley, "Tyranny of Printers," 97. For his defeat in 1797, see *Philadelphia Aurora*, October 12, 1797 ("Philadelphia. General Elections"), 4; and Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 150. For the turnout in 1801, see Richard G. Miller, "The Federal City," in *Philadelphia: A 300-Year History*, ed. Russell F. Weigley (New York: Norton, 1982), 166, 202–3; and Miller, *Philadelphia, the Federalist City*, 139–44.
79. For nominations and election results, see *Aurora*, October 4, 13, and 14, 1796; *Philadelphia Gazette of the United States*, October 5 and 6, 1796; Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 294; Miller, *Philadelphia, the Federalist City*, 86.
80. "A Citizen" in *Philadelphia Aurora*, September 29, 1796, quoted in Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 149–50. On Federalist versus Republican wealth, see Miller, *Philadelphia, the Federalist City*, 81; See also "A Mechanic," quoted in Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 149.
81. "Romulus," in *Philadelphia Aurora*, Thursday, September 29, 1796 ("To the Electors of the City of Philadelphia").
82. For other panegyrics to nonpartisanship appearing in the *Aurora*, see, e.g., "Dialogue Between an Aristocrat and a Republican," *Philadelphia Aurora*, November 12, 1796; "Philadelphia," in *Philadelphia Aurora*, February 24, 1797; *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*, reprinted in *Aurora*, February 6, 1797. See also Scherr, "Inventing the Patriot President," 374–76; and Scherr, "'Vox Populi' versus Patriot President," 505–6.
83. "Equal rights" had become a rallying cry of the emerging journeymen's labor movement by this time. See Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788–1859* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Young, *Democratic-Republicans of New York*, 468–545; and Ronald G. Schultz, *The Republic of Labor: Philadelphia Artisans and the Politics of Class, 1720–1830* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). See also Ketcham, *Presidents above Party*, 186–87, who finds nonpartisanship consistent with localistic "family and community" norms and alienation from individualist ideals of "Acquisitive Man." On Jeffersonian anticapitalism, see also Claudio A. Katz, "Thomas Jefferson's Liberal Anticapitalism," *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 1 (2003): 1–17.
84. Bache to Richard Bache, January 10, 1793, reel 2, Bache Papers, quoted in Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 102. Bache's courage had disastrous personal consequences. Advertisers repelled by his criticism of Washington abandoned him, and he received no printing contracts from Federalist political regimes. In retrospect, Philadelphia printer and bookseller Mathew Carey judged that the *Aurora's* denunciation of Washington caused Bache great financial losses. Pasley, "Tyranny of Printers," 88–90; Mathew Carey, *Autobiography* (1834; reprint, Brooklyn: E. L. Schwaab, 1942), 39, quoted in Pasley, "Tyranny of Printers," 88. Bache's financial difficulties as an entrepreneurial printer, bookseller, newspaper publisher, and editor are also described in Tagg, *Bache and*

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- the Philadelphia Aurora*, 65–66, 93–109; Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 109, 158–59; and Stewart, *Opposition Press*, 18, 655n. On unpaid subscriptions, see Peter J. Parker, “The Revival of the *Aurora*: A Letter to Tench Coxe,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 96 (1972): 521–25.
85. For Bache’s response to the crisis of 1798, see Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 367–405; Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 162–69; Richard N. Rosenfeld, *American Aurora* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998); and Smith, *Freedom’s Fetters*, 189–203. On the presidential election of 1800 as a watershed, see Freeman, *Affairs of Honor*, 227–61; Appleby, *Capitalism and a New Social Order*; and Banning, *Jeffersonian Persuasion*, 264–90.
 86. Jeffery A. Smith, “Jefferson, Thomas,” in *Encyclopedia of American Journalism*, ed. Stephen L. Vaughn (New York: Routledge, 2008), 231.
 87. Bernard Fäy’s popularized, semi-fictional biography, *The Two Franklins*, 310–12, 375–76, suggests that Jefferson utilized Bache as his mouthpiece after 1796. For more recent statements of the traditional view of Bache’s relationship with Jefferson, see, e.g., Stewart, *Opposition Press*, 10, 646n, and Jeffery A. Smith, “The Enlightenment Education of Benjamin Franklin Bache,” *PMHB* 112 (October 1988): 483–501. For Smith on Franklin’s preeminent influence, see his “Enlightenment Education.” For a detailed discussion of Franklin and Bache in Paris, see Lopez and Herbert, *Private Franklin*, 215–48; and Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, chap. 2.
 88. Lopez and Herbert, *Private Franklin*, 286; Smith, “Enlightenment Education,” 494–96.
 89. Jefferson to William Short, July 28, 1791, in Julian P. Boyd et al, eds., *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Julian P. Boyd et al., 37 vols., in progress (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1950–), 20:692 (hereafter *Jefferson Papers*). When Short received the clippings, he decided to send them to Thomas Paine (20:309n). For Jefferson’s meager assistance to Bache, see Bache to Jefferson, August 20, 1790 (17:397); Henry Remsen Jr. to Benjamin Russell and Others, November 23, 1790 (18:66n). For Jefferson’s perfunctory correspondence with Bache, see Jefferson to Bache, April 22, 1791 (20:246); Jefferson to Bache, June 2, 1795 (28:377); and Jefferson to Bache, December 26, 1795 (28:560–61). For Vaughan’s efforts, see Benjamin Vaughan to Bache, September 1 and 3, 1790, reel 2, Bache Papers. Pasley (“*Tyranny of Printers*,” 98–100) emphasizes that Bache received little financial assistance from Jefferson or the Republicans. His conclusion that Jefferson refused aid to partisan printers because they were beneath his social class ignores Jefferson’s substantial assistance to Freneau, for which Hamilton denounced him in the press. While Pasley argues that Jefferson neglected to assist Bache because the Philadelphia printer was too radical and empathized too much with the lower classes, Daniel (*Scandal and Civility*, 118–19) takes the opposite view, claiming that Jefferson suspected Bache was too sympathetic with Washington and the Federalists.
 90. On Secretary of State Jefferson’s preference for other newspaper editors than Bache in disbursing his praise and patronage, see the following, all in *Jefferson Papers*: “Contingent Expenses of the Department of State” (17:359–76); Benjamin Rush to Jefferson, August 15, 1790, and notes (391–92); Jefferson’s Report on Memorial of Andrew Brown, February 5, 1791 (19:251–52); Jefferson to Madison, July 21, 1791; Memorandum for Henry Remsen Jr., September 2, 1791; Jefferson to Martha Jefferson Randolph, November 13, 1791; Jefferson to Thomas Mann Randolph Jr., November 20, 1791, 20:657; 22:122, 294, 310; John Carey to Jefferson, January 31, 1793, 25:106. See also Jefferson to Peregrine Fitzhugh, June 4, 1797, in *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Ford, 7:135, and Jefferson to Madison, April 26, 1798, *ibid.*, 8:245.

91. For Jefferson's defense of "Publicola," see Jefferson to Madison, June 28, 1791, in *Papers of James Madison*, ed. J.C.A. Stagg et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press; and Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1961-), 14:38. Jefferson to Washington, September 9, 1792, in *Jefferson Papers*, 24:356. See also Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, 107-8; Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 98, 113n; Stewart, *Opposition Press*, 11; Culver H. Smith, *The Press, Politics, and Patronage: The American Government's Use of Newspapers, 1789-1875* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1977), 17, 19; and William D. Sloan, "'Purse and Pen': Party-Press Relationships, 1789-1816," *American Journalism* 6 (1989): 103-27.
92. Jefferson to Thomas Mann Randolph Jr., May 15, 1791, *Jefferson Papers*, 20:416. Jefferson used the phrase "whig-vehicle of intelligence" in this letter. Earlier than most historians, and prior to the publication of several books specializing on Bache, Lance Banning's important survey, *Jeffersonian Persuasion*, 231-33, insightfully summarized the gradual drift of initially nonpartisan newspapers, among which he included the *Aurora*, to an anti-Federalist stance. On Bache, he observes, "Until 1793, he impartially admitted contributions from the slight amount of controversy that he published, and he maintained a personal position that might be characterized as moderately pro-administration" (232).
93. Jefferson to Bache, June 2, 1795, in *Jefferson Papers*, 28:377. For Bache's activities concerning Jay's Treaty, see Tagg, *Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora*, 246-47, 267-29; and Pasley, "Tyranny of Printers," 91-92.
94. Jefferson to Bache, December 26, 1795, *Jefferson Papers*, 28:560-61. Jefferson's *Memorandum Books*, or Account Books, confirm that he had not previously paid in advance for Bache's papers, hence was not a subscriber until December 1795. By contrast, he paid for Freneau's *National Gazette* in advance during the brief period it existed, from October 1791 to September 1793. James A. Bear and Lucia C. Stanton, eds., *Jefferson's Memorandum Books*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1997), 1:888, 905; 2:935, 955, 956, 959, 961, 971, 973, 976, 990.
95. Jefferson to Madison, April 26, 1798; Jefferson to Madison, May 3, 1798; Jefferson to Samuel Smith, August 22, 1798, in *Jefferson Papers*, 30:300, 324, 484.