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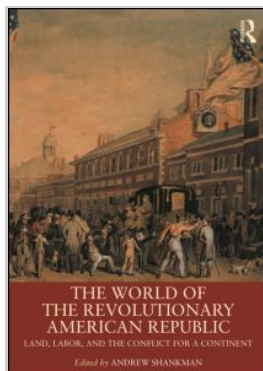
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## In This Chapter

Independence for Whom.



**Independence for Whom.**

**Expansion of the Northwest**

Authored by: **Alyssa Mt. Pleasant**

**The World of the Revolutionary American Republic**

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## **Abstract**

Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This familiar phrase from the Declaration of Independence served as the title for a traveling exhibit organized by the Yale University Art Gallery in 2008–2010. Featuring masterpieces of American art from the Yale collections, the exhibit included numerous works by John Trumbull. “The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776” and seven other paintings from Trumbull’s Revolutionary War series were placed prominently in the exhibit. Explaining the placement of the paintings and their significance, an entry in the exhibit catalog notes that Trumbull’s “vision of the Revolutionary war has been enshrined in our national imagination.”<sup>1</sup> Less well-known are his portrait miniatures, a series of studies Trumbull created in preparation for his celebratory paintings of the

Revolutionary period. Between 1789 and 1794, while Trumbull lived and worked in Philadelphia, he was “collecting ‘heads’” of prominent figures. <sup>2</sup> These diminutive images, admired by art historians who praise the spontaneity and sensitivity of Trumbull’s work, were painted in oil on wood and framed in groupings of five. <sup>3</sup> Visitors to the traveling exhibit could easily overlook these small portraits, which were placed unobtrusively in a far corner of the gallery. <sup>4</sup> However, those who paused to examine the ten framed groupings may have been surprised by what they found. Amid images of Presidents and First Ladies, Senators and Supreme Court Justices, are the portraits of three Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) men: The Infant, The Young Sachem, and Good Peter. <sup>5</sup> Their presence raises questions: Who were these men? What prompted Trumbull to ask them to sit for portraits? Why would Indians figure prominently in studies for a series of paintings intended to chronicle the history of the Revolution? These questions prompt us to think more broadly about the early history of the United States.



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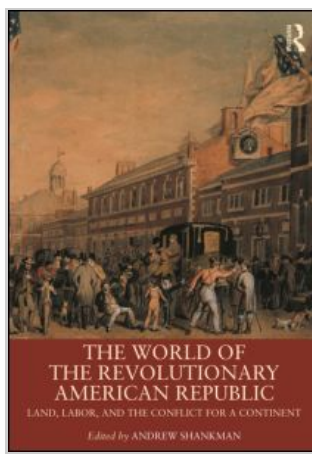
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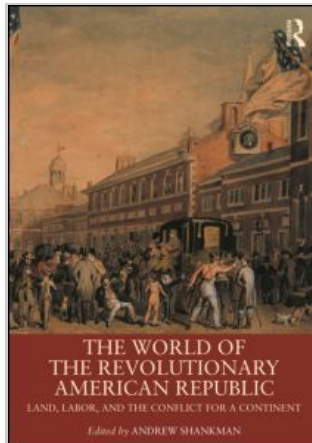
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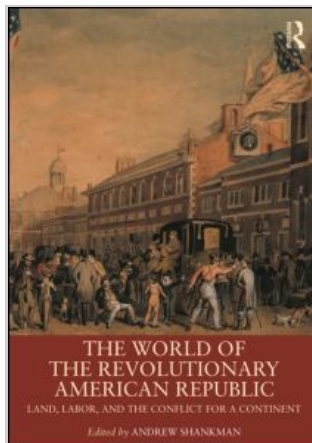
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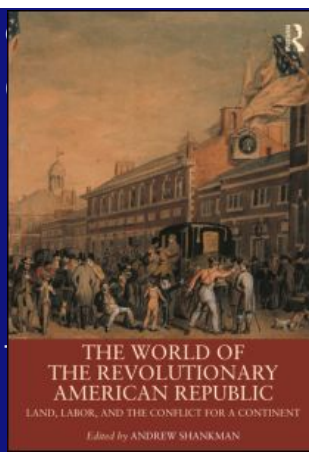


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