

Liberty or Death: The French Revolution

By Peter McPhee

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A strikingly new account of the impact of the French Revolution in Paris, across the French countryside, and around the globe

The French Revolution has fascinated, perplexed, and inspired for more than two centuries. It was a seismic event that radically transformed France and launched shock waves across the world. In this provocative new history, Peter McPhee draws on a lifetime's study of eighteenth-century France and Europe to create an entirely fresh account of the world's first great modern revolution—its origins, drama, complexity, and significance.

Was the Revolution a major turning point in French—even world—history, or was it instead a protracted period of violent upheaval and warfare that wrecked millions of lives? McPhee evaluates the Revolution within a genuinely global context: Europe, the Atlantic region, and even farther. He acknowledges the key revolutionary events that unfolded in Paris, yet also uncovers the varying experiences of French citizens outside the gates of the city: the provincial men and women whose daily lives were altered—or not—by developments in the capital. Enhanced with evocative stories of those who struggled to cope in unpredictable times, McPhee's deeply researched book investigates the changing personal, social, and cultural world of the eighteenth century. His startling conclusions redefine and illuminate both the experience and the legacy of France's transformative age of revolution.

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Liberty or Death: The French Revolution By Peter McPhee Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #117280 in Books
- Brand: imusti
- Published on: 2016-05-24
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.30" h x 1.80" w x 6.50" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 488 pages

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Review

“McPhee . . . skillfully and with consummate clarity recounts one of the most complex events in modern history. . . . [This] extraordinary work is destined to be the standard account of the French Revolution for years to come.”—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)
(*Publishers Weekly*)

“Richly detailed... finds way to both revivify and dissect the revolutionary passions through not just Paris, but throughout France, it’s colonies and eventually the rest of the world.”—Ruth Scurr, *Financial Times*
(Ruth Scurr *Financial Times* 2016-04-23)

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(Robert Aldrich *Australian Book Review* 2016-08-01)

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(Malcolm Crook *History* 2016-10-01)

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(Jonathan Wright *Catholic Herald* 2016-12-02)

About the Author

Peter McPhee serves as a professorial fellow at the University of Melbourne, and is an internationally esteemed historian of modern France. He lives in Abbotsford, Australia.

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