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## WHO WAS JUNIUS ?

Sixty-nine letters, signed *Junius*, sent to a British newspaper during 1769-72, criticized and ridiculed English government, particularly the monarchy and aristocracy. A few scholars have suggested that Paine was this writer, Junius. Notably, shortly before her death, Professor Klara Rukshina, a Thomas Paine Friends board member and a Paine scholar, was composing her thesis that Junius was indeed Paine. She asked that TPF try to assemble an essay for publication from her papers, but so far TPF has not obtained the papers from her family.

Last June, TPF received an email from Professor Kenneth Cust, who has published his own research to clear up just who Junius was. *My paper proves that Thomas Paine was the author of the "Junius Letters". My name is Dr. Kenneth Cust, Professor of Philosophy at University of Central Missouri. I have just published a paper entitled "Junius Unveiled". This paper proves with irrefutable evidence that Paine wrote the "Junius Letters". The paper may be read on-line at, [http://aijssnet.com/journals/Vol\\_3\\_No\\_1\\_January\\_2014/5.pdf](http://aijssnet.com/journals/Vol_3_No_1_January_2014/5.pdf).*

In his article, Professor Cust makes a literary-text-word comparison of the *Junius Letters* and *Common Sense*. Cust also examines the known activities and whereabouts of Paine during the three years when Junius was publishing in England.

Some terms that occur in both the *Junius Letters* and *Common Sense*, Cust considers significant in identifying Junius as Paine.

hereditary: 15 times in *JL* / 19 times in *CS*  
viz. : 29 times in *JL* / 17 times in *CS*  
reason: 21 times in *JL* / 14 times in *CS*  
common sense: 24 times in *JL* / 3 times in *CS*  
prostitution: 22 times in *JL* / 2 times in *CS*

Most convincing of all to Cust is the use of the word *risk* and its French form *risqué*. Junius uses *risk* twice in two *Letters*, and Paine uses it twenty times, in several different writings. Most telling, Cust believes, is the use of *risqué*: three times in three *Letters*, and by Paine four times in one letter to James Monroe ("Memorial to Monroe", 1794). We should remember that this letter was written more than 20 years after the *Junius Letters* were published. And we should realize that Paine was writing from Luxembourg Prison, Paris, and he may have used the French form out of custom to being in France or even out of caution in the face of his plight, or, *risqué*. Cust asserts that *risqué* is not used by other English authors of the period (1769 to 1794, 25 years). He concludes that the word analysis, particularly on *risk* and *risqué*, provides the "irrefutable evidence" that Paine and Junius are one and the same.

This very short *Bulletin* summary is of course insufficient to allow readers to form a conclusion about the identity of Junius, and we recommend that readers study Professor Cust's paper in the on-line journal.

--by Martha Spiegelman