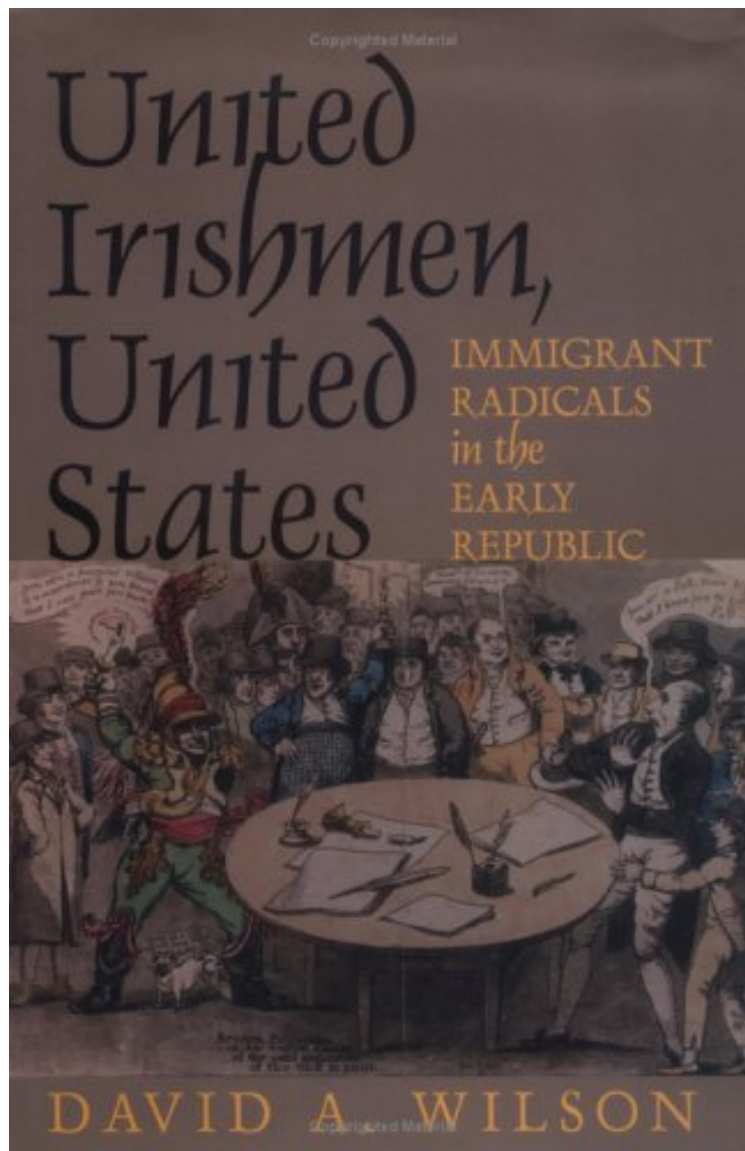


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United Irishmen, United States: Immigrant Radicals in the Early Republic

David S. Wilson

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David S. Wilson : United Irishmen, United States: Immigrant Radicals in the Early Republic before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised United Irishmen, United States: Immigrant Radicals in the Early Republic:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A Very Strong Effort By A Customer Wilson's take on the early Irish

immigrants to America is both thought provoking and important. Some of his points are a little strong: I'm not certain that the United Irishmen can be seen as a primary reason for the downfall of the Federalist Party. Still, he backs up his assertions with reasonable facts, and in so doing certainly opens debate on the matter. He does a fine job of showing both the radical nature of these immigrants as well as their scattered geographic nature (Denis Driscoll, who became editor of the Augusta [Georgia] Chronicle is a perfect example of both). Wilson's book also emphasizes the Irishness of the United Irishmen, a point which should not be overlooked, given how the Dissenters in Ireland were appropriated by the establishment after 1798, and how modern America wants to emphasize the "Scots-Irishness" of the Dissenters. Wilson reveals these men as truly IRISH in thought and action.³ of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Revealing book
By Andrew Scott Wilson does a very good job of putting the political turmoil of the early American Republic into a global context. The Alien and Sedition Acts of the Adams administration are put into a very different focus when viewed alongside the 1798 rising in Ireland. United Irish exiles saw the pro-English Federalist agenda in a very personal light and the bulk of them became the "most God-provoking Democrats this side of Hell" in the words of one Federalist. All too often Irish influence in American politics is dated from the Famine immigrations, a situation Wilson attempts to rectify. An interesting book for both students of early American and Irish history.

Among the thousands of political refugees who flooded into the United States during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, none had a greater impact on the early republic than the United Irishmen. They were, according to one Federalist, "the most God-provoking Democrats on this side of Hell." "Every United Irishman," insisted another, "ought to be hunted from the country, as much as a wolf or a tyger." David A. Wilson's lively book is the first to focus specifically on the experiences, attitudes, and ideas of the United Irishmen in the United States. Wilson argues that America served a powerful symbolic and psychological function for the United Irishmen as a place of wish-fulfillment, where the broken dreams of the failed Irish revolution could be realized. The United Irishmen established themselves on the radical wing of the Republican Party, and contributed to Jefferson's "second American Revolution" of 1800; John Adams counted them among the "foreigners and degraded characters" whom he blamed for his defeat. After Jefferson's victory, the United Irishmen set out to destroy the Federalists and democratize the Republicans. Some of them believed that their work was preparing the way for the millennium in America. Convinced that the example of America could ultimately inspire the movement for a democratic republic back home, they never lost sight of the struggle for Irish independence. It was the United Irishmen, writes Wilson, who originated the persistent and powerful tradition of Irish-American nationalism.