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## Dishonoured Americans: Loyalist Manhood and Political Death in Revolutionary America

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Graduate Program in History

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Doctor of Philosophy

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DISHONOURED AMERICANS: LOYALIST MANHOOD AND POLITICAL DEATH  
IN REVOLUTIONARY NORTH AMERICA

(Spine Title: Dishonoured Americans)

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by

Timothy J. Compeau

Graduate Program in History

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies  
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## Abstract and Keywords

The loyalists of the American Revolution have never been explored from the perspective of honour and masculinity. This dissertation offers a new reading of the loyalist experience by drawing on the insights and methodologies of cultural history and the anthropological study of honour, as well as the history of masculinity, to contextualize the class and gender-based concerns embedded in patriot and loyalist written records. American revolutionaries attacked loyalist men using deeply gendered language and symbols, and succeeded in dishonouring loyalism in general, while also driving individual loyalists from their communities. Male loyalists relied on the same culture of honour to rationalize their experiences, justify their continued allegiance to the Crown, and transform injuries intended as marks of shame into badges of honour.

This dissertation adds to the historiography of the loyalists, and to the wider study of eighteenth century masculinity and honour, by revealing that while the American Revolution was a deadly conflict, at the local level patriots often destroyed a loyalist's public existence and honour rather than kill him outright. Despite differences of political ideology, loyalists and patriots shared a common culture of manhood which made insults and humiliations exceedingly powerful. The combination of legal punishments and social ostracism is referred to in this dissertation as *political death*, an original theory which describes the process and consequences of the loss of citizenship, the negation of patriarchal power and privileges, financial ruin, and the cultural dishonour of white loyalist gentlemen and their families. Using the themes of household patriarchy, public and printed insults, captivity, and vengeance, this study explains how the benchmarks of manhood were systematically stripped from loyalists, and how the patriots formed their own masculine ideals in contrast to the dishonoured loyalists. This dissertation also reveals the importance of honour in the loyalists' self-perception, their official claims on the British government for compensation, and their political rebirth in Canada as they attempted to restore their privileged status with Britain's help. Loyalist honour has been described by American historians as being submissive and deferential, but this

dissertation argues that it was in fact as assertive and demanding as the patriot concepts of manhood formed in the American Revolution.

**Key Words:** American Revolution, Loyalists, honour, dishonour, gender, gentility, manhood, masculinity, culture, Revolutionary War, prisoners of war, insults, revenge, Pre-Confederation Canada.

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In many ways this project began long ago when I was a summer student working at the museum in Gananoque, Ontario and stumbled upon some undocumented records of the town's loyalist founder. Director Linda Mainse, Marcia Macrae, and the board of the Arthur Child Heritage Museum of the 1000 Islands in Gananoque have always kept a door open for me to visit, share my work, and continue exploring those letters and the history of the area ever since. I am grateful for their enthusiast support over the years.

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“A Man’s *honour* is his political life; and the moment he sacrifices it, he dies a political death – he is no longer a useful member of the community, but is truly a burden to society.”

*Spoooner’s Vermont Journal*, June 7, 1785.

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## 1. Political Death

On August 10, 1776, a funeral procession filed through the streets of Savannah, Georgia. According to one newspaper account “a greater number of people than ever appeared on any occasion before in this province” participated in the gathering, not to pay their respects to an esteemed local – but to mark the political death of their king. “Forasmuch as George the Third, of Great Britain hath most flagrantly violated his coronation oath, and trampled upon the constitution of our country, and the sacred rights of mankind” went the eulogy, “we therefore commit his political existence to the ground, corruption to corruption; tyranny to the grave...in sure and certain hope that he will never obtain a resurrection to rule again over these United States of America.” The King was dead, but not at the hands of the colonists. One year earlier a pseudonymous contributor to the *New York Journal*, “Amicus Constitutionis,” had expounded on the same idea. He explained: “When the King of Great Britain violates the constitution...he unking himself... The person remains, but the constitutional King of Great Britain no longer exists in him. Nor can he be recovered from that degradation, that moral and political death...”<sup>1</sup> For the funeral attendees and Amicus Constitutionis alike, the colonists had not committed symbolic regicide; rather the King had committed political suicide.

George III did not suffer his political death alone. In November 1774, with Boston harbour closed and Massachusetts under martial law, the *Essex Gazette* described the loyalist Supreme Court Justice William Browne as “politically deceased of a persistent and mortal Disorder, and now buried in the ignominious Ruins at Boston.” In 1779, two much lower ranking Connecticut loyalists, Hiel Camp and Joel Stone, were referred to by the probate court as “politically deceased, but now with the Enemies of this and the rest of the United States of America.”<sup>2</sup> Camp and Stone were both living in the little parish of Judea in northwestern Connecticut when they fled their homes in January 1777. Little information remains of Hiel Camp. He was a small farmer who later settled

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<sup>1</sup> *Connecticut Gazette*, October 25, 1776. This mock funeral is also described in Winthrop D. Jordan, “Familial Politics and the Killing of the King, 1776,” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 60, No. 2 (Sept. 1973): 294-308. *New York Journal*, October 19, 1775.

<sup>2</sup> *Essex Gazette*, November 22, 1774. Lorenzo Sabine, *Biographical Sketches of the Loyalists of the American Revolution*, (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1966 [1864]), 265. *Connecticut Journal*, June 23, 1779.

in New Brunswick after the Revolution.<sup>3</sup> Stone, on the other hand, was a rising young merchant who penned a detailed, (if self-serving), account of his experiences. He presents himself as a man of integrity surrounded by people possessed by an “invincible frenzy.” Because of his principled stand he was “perplexed and harassed” and forcibly dragged before the local Revolutionary committeemen for questioning, before being driven from his home and family. The state confiscated his property and he became a social outcast whose former friends “became the most implacable enemies.” To his neighbours, Stone had committed one of the most dishonourable acts imaginable: betrayal. The probate court treated him as if he was a deceased bankrupt, and invited creditors to claim what they could from a ruined fortune before the remainder of his property was auctioned. Though Stone recorded that he was pursued by men who considered him “unworthy to live”, Revolutionary authorities rarely followed through with their threats to execute loyalists.<sup>4</sup> Instead, those men who made the active choice to support the King and his government faced a concerted legal and social process of humiliation, emasculation, ostracism, and dishonour. Just as George III had “unkinged” himself, in the eyes of patriots, the loyalists had unmanned themselves and had killed the citizens within them by remaining royal subjects. This was the loyalists’ political death.

In modern usage political death usually “refers to the effective ending of political career possibilities,” because of resounding defeats or scandals.<sup>5</sup> In this dissertation “political death” is used in the ways eighteenth century commentators understood the

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<sup>3</sup> “Testimony of Hiel Camp” Loyalist Claims Diffusion Material, D12. Archives of Ontario. AO 12.1 b1155, 67-69.

<sup>4</sup> Joel Stone, “The Narrative of Joel Stone” in .J. Talman, *Loyalist Narratives From Upper Canada*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969 [1946]), 323-336, quotations from 325-326. For the career of Joel Stone see: Elizabeth Margaret Morgan, “Joel Stone: Connecticut Loyalist, 1749-1833,” MA Thesis, (Queen’s University, 1980). H. William Hawke, "Joel Stone of Gananoque: His Life and Letters" (Unpublished Manuscript, Gananoque Public Library, 1966). Kenneth Donovan, “Taking Leave of an Ungrateful Country’: The Loyalist Exile of Joel Stone” *Dalhousie Review*, No.4, Vol. 60, (1984):123-145.

<sup>5</sup> Daniel J. Elazar and Joseph Zikmund II, ed. “Introduction”, *The Ecology of American Political Culture: Readings* (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1975), 8. Another definition of political death which existed in the eighteenth century, as was noted in *The Works of Samuel Johnson* in his discussion of the test acts of Charles II, occurred if a Member of Parliament failed to take the required test oaths. He would be barred from sitting and another member elected “as if such member had naturally died.” Samuel Johnson and Sir John Hawkins, *The Works of Samuel Johnson, LL. D.: Political Tracts, Political Essays...* Vol. X (London, 1787), 17.

term. Empires, countries, and individuals could all die politically because of their moral defects. In May 1775, William Moore Smith, the provost of the College of Philadelphia, delivered a convocation address entitled “The End of Empires.” Though ostensibly about Rome, he was clearly speaking about the British Empire in America. “Empires carry in them their own bane,” he remarked, “and proceed . . . from virtuous industry and valour, to wealth and conquest; next to luxury, then to soul corruption and bloated morals; and last of all, to sloth, anarchy, slavery, and political death.”<sup>6</sup> Political death, according to Smith, was the tragic but inevitable result of unchecked wealth, power, and pride.

Once Americans had secured their independence, they continued to watch for signs of creeping immorality or apathy that could sink the infant republic. The post-Revolutionary economic crisis and the former colonies’ continued dependence on British goods led one writer, “The Spirit of ‘75”, to wish “to heaven I held the trumpet of an arch-angel and could rouze [sic] you from the slumbers of political death!”<sup>7</sup> This was a clear warning that the inexorable economic pull of Britain would slowly and almost clandestinely erode America’s hard-won liberty unless Americans were vigilant and rejected foreign luxuries. A similar sentiment was expressed in 1783 by “Moses”, who lamented America’s continued trade with Britain instead of France, and implored his countrymen to “awake, lest the sleep of political death be upon you.”<sup>8</sup> Like the loyalists, the fledgling republic could cause its own political death through unmanly dependence on Britain.

In a legal sense, political death was sometimes used as a synonym for “civil death.” A dictionary definition from 1771 explains that “when a person is sentenced to perpetual banishment, to work in the mines, or row in the gallies [sic], he is said to undergo a *civil* or political death.” The eighteenth century Irish politician Charles Lucas agreed, writing “As *Liberty* may be called *political Life*; so *Confinement*, or

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<sup>6</sup> *The Pennsylvania Ledger*, May 27, 1775. For more on the comparisons between Rome and Revolutionary America, see: Eran Shalev, “Thomas Jefferson’s Classical Silence, 1774-1776: Historical Consciousness and Roman History in the Revolutionary South,” in Peter Onuf and Nicholas P. Cole, eds., *Thomas Jefferson, the Classical World, and Early America* (Charlottesville: University press of Virginia, 2011), 221-231.

<sup>7</sup> *The New-Hampshire Mercury*, April 12, 1775.

<sup>8</sup> *New Jersey Gazette*, January 22, 1783.

*Imprisonment* may be looked on, as *political Death*.”<sup>9</sup> Patriot courts charged many loyalists with high treason and sentenced them to fates which clearly fit this legal definition. In the English legal tradition, traitors faced both execution and acts of attainder which recognized a moral stain, a “corruption of blood,” wherein the lingering heinousness of the offence destroyed the line of inheritance. Children of traitors would receive nothing from their dishonoured fathers. States shied away from directly applying “corruption of blood” to loyalist family members who remained behind, but confiscation essentially produced the same effect. Attainder was the complete negation of a man as the legal head of a household, and by extension the state’s relationship to a loyalist’s wife, children, servants and slaves became frighteningly uncertain.<sup>10</sup> Political death was a family affair.

Political death was not just a legal punishment, but represented deep moral corruption. A letter published in *Spooner’s Vermont Journal* in June 1785, shows a very personal understanding of political death. The author, “Justice,” argues that certain gentlemen in his community had dishonoured themselves through a duplicitous real estate deal. In response he declares that “A Man’s *honour* is his political life; and the moment he sacrifices it, he dies a political death – he is no longer a useful member of the community, but is truly a burden to society.”<sup>11</sup> This idea permeated the loyalist experience. To patriots, the active choice to support the Crown in the American Revolution displayed a level of moral bankruptcy that dishonoured the man and his household. Unapologetic loyalists could not be permitted to remain a part of the community, or else their presence might dishonour the whole.

The political death of the loyalists encompassed all of these definitions and was manifested in a variety of ways. It could occur all at once with a sudden and violent boiling-over of popular resentment towards a confirmed or rumoured loyalist. Or it could happen incrementally as the crisis deepened and local grievances became entangled with

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<sup>9</sup> Thomas Dyche and William Pardon, *A New and General Dictionary* (London, 1771), 154. Charles Lucas, *The Political Works of C. Lucas. Vol, III*. (Dublin: Henry Holmes, 1785), 470.

<sup>10</sup> Lisa Steffen, *Defining a British State: Treason and National Identity, 1608-1820* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 1, 11, 59.

<sup>11</sup> *Spooner’s Vermont Journal*, June 7, 1785.

the wider political conflict. The process leading to political death followed a common pattern throughout the colonies. Crowds and individuals mocked and insulted known or suspected loyalists. Tories could be shunned and their businesses boycotted. Depending on local conditions and what was happening in the wider conflict, patriots usually escalated their activities to vandalism and threats, and loyalists who remained in their communities could be subjected to shaming rituals normally reserved for social pariahs. Relatively few loyalists were subjected to the public dishonour of tarring and feathering, carting, or riding the rail, but the prospect of such humiliation provided a terrifying warning. These sorts of attacks and insults were normally directed at men, and the best surviving information from both loyalist and patriot sources, describes the experiences of public men of at least local significance. Political death was the total destruction of the public life of a man within society. It was the popular rejection of his authority as a householder, the rejection of his claims to personal honour through insults and shaming, the stripping of his citizenship and property, and his final ostracism from the company of his former peers. Added to this was the ignominy of being legally proscribed as a traitor. These were dishonours the loyalist Joseph Galloway described as “penalties more severe than death itself”, and this was what the patriots intended.<sup>12</sup> By degrading their internal enemy, the patriots elevated their own place in society. They created the archetype of a villainous Tory which stood in opposition to the righteous patriot.

This dissertation explores the political death experienced by loyalist men who considered themselves “gentlemen.” Colonial gentlemen comprised a loose collection of men from a variety of social ranks and levels of wealth. Men such as William Bayard or Oliver DeLancey were fabulously wealthy urban grandees, living off old money and Atlantic trading networks, who sat at the pinnacle of colonial America. Other loyalist gentlemen were like Amos Botsford, the son of middling sort of farmer, but who had entered the world of gentility as a Yale-educated lawyer with a thriving practice and government connections. Samuel Cornell was a South Carolina planter and slave owner. Jonathan Boucher was an Anglican clergyman in Maryland, a prominent planter, and an outspoken champion of the royalist cause. John Porteous was a Scottish merchant

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<sup>12</sup> Joseph Galloway, *A Candid Examination of the Mutual Claims of Great-Britain, and the colonies...* (New York: Rivington, 1775), 1.

engaged in frontier trading, while the young merchant Joel Stone kept a shop at a remote crossroads in Connecticut. Though separated by vast sums of money, education, regional culture, and political connections, these men and their patriot counterparts were connected by the pursuit of genteel respectability and adhered, as best they could, to the expectations of eighteenth century patriarchy.

Loyalists made a different political choice than patriots, but they shared the same culture. Indeed, it is this shared culture which made patriot attacks on loyalists so powerful – both sides spoke in the same cultural language of symbols and meanings, and attacks and insults to loyalist homes or bodies were charged with dishonour and emasculation. The inability of loyalists to effectively respond to these insults left them looking impotent and feeble. Nearly all of the loyalists explored in this dissertation fled their homes rather than stand and face the overwhelming numbers. By attacking symbols of the loyalists' honour and patriarchal power, the patriots undermined the legitimacy of loyalist men as householders and leaders. The language of honour fuelled and legitimized the persecution of men who were considered a sinful and poisonous social threat. The tactics used to drive them from their communities recognized that they were unworthy of the privileges of white, land-owning men.

Loyalists expressed bitterness, anger, and grief at their treatment, but they rarely mentioned feeling any shame for the consequences of their political choice. Instead they regarded the whole experience as a terrible injustice perpetrated against a virtuous minority by a deluded mob. Loyalists had few other options than to flee to the British forces for safety. Exiled from their communities, loyalists were unable to support their families without assistance, further undermining their role as independent providers. Some loyalists sought vengeance while others tried to rebuild their lives as best they could. For those loyalists who left America with the British in their final defeat, patriot attacks intended as expressions of shame and ridicule soon became marks of honour in the quest to prove the depth of their loyalty and willingness to suffer for the royal cause.

The loyalist experience is well known to historians, but that experience has not been explored from the perspective of eighteenth century concepts of honour and masculinity. Drawing on scholarship exploring manhood in colonial America and early modern Britain, as well as both historical and anthropological examinations of honour,

this dissertation offers a new reading of the loyalist experience. Loyalists faced a concerted campaign directed at destroying their honour and manhood. The patriot reliance on these concepts in their attacks on loyalists speaks to the continued cultural importance of masculine honour in the Atlantic world. “Tory” became the patriot shorthand for a fallen man, while patriots became archetypes of masculine accomplishment and virtue. Loyalists saw the situation in reverse, but despite their best efforts suffered total defeat in the conflict. The bewildered and defeated loyalists either reintegrated quietly into American society, or established new communities in the British Empire. The loyalists’ political rebirth in these new lands was built on the same traditional ideas of manhood and honour they had lost. This examination sheds light on the anatomy of eighteenth century masculine honour and patriarchy, and how it could be used to attack men as well as oppress women. The revolutionaries may have torn down the power of monarchy and notions of aristocracy in the colonies, but, like their loyalist counterparts, they were never radical enough to consider alternatives to these patriarchal ideals. Whigs and Tories, loyalists and patriots, were united in their concerns about their own masculinity and honour.

Loyalists were drawn from every strata of colonial society, and the vast majority were simple farmers. Yet most of what we know about the loyalists comes from the surviving records of the middling and upper ranks of society. Letters, diaries, government documents, pamphlets and other printed material which form the basis of most historical studies were produced by a comparatively privileged minority, and therefore histories have had to rely on the experience of white, literate, often wealthy men to explain the loyalist experience in general. Studies of loyalist women have been more exacting in their conclusions, noting how elite women had a very different experience from the humbler sort, but male loyalists have not yet had this same nuanced treatment. All men were required to meet basic standards of masculinity, but gentlemen needed to meet higher, more refined benchmarks of behaviour and conspicuous consumption in order to display their virtues as successful men. The persecution and defeat loyalist gentlemen suffered would have been interpreted and experienced differently from the lower sorts. This is not to suggest that the higher ranking loyalists faced a harsher situation during the conflict.

Indeed, gentlemen loyalists, despite their greater monetary losses, likely faced less material distress than the poorer loyalists in exile. British authorities were more willing to sympathise with fellow gentlemen than they were with the common people. But it was the middling or elite loyalists who were targeted by patriots in particular ways that will be seen throughout this dissertation. Their pretences to authority and honour were directly attacked by the patriots. In the American social memory that grew out of the Revolution, it was the aristocratic Tory who remained the face of the loyalists. The rank and file loyalists hardly left a trace on American history, while both the patriot propaganda and the evidence of the wealthy loyalist minority remained.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, the Canadian loyalist myth remembered the loyalists as America's most morally upstanding and righteous men, and for generations this idea was accepted by historians.<sup>14</sup>

Ninety percent of the white refugees who settled in Upper Canada and a similar number in the Canadian Maritimes were people of very modest means, mostly farmers and labourers.<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, the tiny minority of loyalist gentlemen who settled in the new provinces founded a colonial ruling class, and loom large in both the historiography and in the popular memory. They were the most vocal, and had the ability to record their thoughts at the time and for posterity. Towns, streets, and parks still bear their names. Loyalist histories are often reliant on this privileged minority to build a picture of loyalist thought in general, but do not engage with the important cultural aspects which separated

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<sup>13</sup> The idea of loyalist gentility is pervasive and has continued despite it being proven that the elite were only a small minority. This fact can be seen in Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 176. Wood argues that a "disproportionate number of [loyalists] were well-to-do-gentry" though does not provide any statistics, nor does he suggest what a proportionate number might be. To indulge in a counterfactual, it seems likely that had Britain won the Revolution, historians might now be discussing how a disproportionate number of rebels were wealthy Virginia planters, Boston merchants, and Pennsylvanian grandees.

<sup>14</sup> As early as the 1930s, historians began revising this heroic loyalist narrative. In 1937, R.O. MacFarlane rejected both American histories in which the "loyalists left because they were children of the devil..." and Canadian historians who argued that "they left because they were following the Lord". Though MacFarlane was conscious that his ideas may "savour of heresy, if not sacrilege," he was inspired by Progressive historians like Charles Beard to look for economic motivations for the loyalist movement into Canada, and found "land hunger" was the primary impetus for the influx of settlers. R.O. MacFarlane, "The Loyalist Migrations: A Social and Economic Movement," In L.F.S. Upton, *The United Empire Loyalists: Men and Myths*, (Toronto: The Copp Publishing Company, 1967), 158-161.

<sup>15</sup> See: Norman Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists: The Ontario Loyalist Tradition and the Creation of Usable Pasts*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 14-25. Ann Gorman Condon, *The Envy of the American States: The Loyalist Dream for New Brunswick*. (Fredericton: New Ireland Press, 1984), 2-3.



the elite or the aspiring elite from the common people of the eighteenth century. This dissertation, therefore, does not try to extrapolate from middling and upper class experiences to explain the white loyalists as a whole.<sup>16</sup> Rather, the experiences of this elite loyalist minority provide a fascinating look at the ways honour and status were constructed in the eighteenth century. The anatomy of patriarchy, honour, and masculinity can often be seen most clearly in negative, and this is certainly true in the case of the loyalists. The shared cultural values of honourable manhood became more explicit in times of crisis, and were claimed and challenged by both loyalists and patriots in the crucible of the American Revolution. The symbols and signs of respect which marked certain men as genteel and privileged were denied to loyalists, who in turn believed the whole moral order of their society was being overthrown. Whether or not this idea was shared by the thousands of lower ranking white loyalists remains an open question and is not directly explored in this study. The objective of this dissertation is to uncover the cultural sources of male power in eighteenth century America, how that power was conferred, claimed, and denied, and to explain the actions of elite loyalist men from the perspective of their cultural world-view as gentlemen.

This study is a cultural history and as such it explores “ways of thinking”. In the words of Robert Darnton, cultural history examines “not merely what people thought but how they thought – how they constructed the world, invested it with meaning, and infused it with emotion.”<sup>17</sup> Eighteenth century people fit themselves into complex hierarchies that were held together by symbols, rituals, and moral obligations. How people reacted to challenges and disruptions to these already fluid constructs tells us a great deal about what and how people thought. This dissertation is therefore an attempt to grasp the mentalities of the loyalists and the patriots; the moral, even cosmological justifications for their political positions and for their attacks on their adversaries. These mentalities were expressed as binary positions of the manly and effeminate, and of the

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<sup>16</sup> Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan, “Loyalism and the British Atlantic, 1660-1840” in *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 5.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 3. Also see Darnton, *George Washington’s False Teeth: An Unconventional Guide to the Eighteenth Century* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2003).

honourable and dishonourable. They were articulated in the print culture of the period, in personal writings, and can be read in the actions and behaviours of participants.

To flesh out these ways of thinking, this study draws from three areas of enquiry: the historiography of the loyalists and the American Revolution, the study of masculinity in the English Atlantic, and the historical and anthropological exploration of honour cultures. Masculinity and honour overlap in many ways, but studies tend to treat them separately, or consider one but neglect the other. Yet it is clear that masculine honour can only be achieved if one meets the benchmarks of manhood. The two concepts have a reciprocal relationship that cannot be separated, and both concepts are invested with ideas of power. R.W. Connell, one of the most cited authorities on the concept of masculinity, coined the term “hegemonic masculinity” to describe the culturally dominant form of masculinity within a society “which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women.” Furthermore, he later argued that there are competing forms of masculinity within societies based on class, culture, ethnicity, or race which lead to male hierarchies.<sup>18</sup> In colonial America, the hegemonic form of masculinity was the gentleman. That is not to say every man pursued this idea. Men on the frontiers had little use for such ideas in their day-to-day struggles, and gentility likely struck Native Americans as altogether pointless. Yet in settled regions, gentility and power had an inextricable relationship. The loyalists in this dissertation, like their patriot and British counterparts, were concerned with achieving and maintaining their position as gentlemen.

The pursuit of gentility became an obsession during the eighteenth century among the increasingly wealthy middling sorts and elite landholders in the colonies. Richard L. Bushman’s *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (1992) provides a systematic examination of the aspirations of colonial Americans (both men and women) to achieve levels of gentility – style, tastes, knowledge, and behaviour – that set them apart from the lower orders. Beginning in the early eighteenth century, elite colonials attempted to cultivate expressions of refinement that were meant to serve as both

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<sup>18</sup> R.W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1995), 77-81. R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept.” *Gender and Society*, Vol. 19, No. 6 (Dec., 2005): 829-859.

emblems of wealth and power, and as projected evidence of a “cultivated and refined inward life.” Speech, dress, and architecture all changed as wealth increased and widened the social chasm that separated the upper classes from the lower sorts. These aspiring colonials were deeply conscious of their behaviour, and books on manners and decorum were essential reading for their children. Most importantly, exhibitions of refined material culture and manners “bestowed concrete social power” and “lifted properly reared persons to a higher plane” while at the same time “gentility implicitly diminished the rest”.<sup>19</sup> Gentility was adapted slightly differently to the regional cultures: ostentatious homes in the slave societies of the south, compared with the more modest genteel expressions in New England. Variations aside, by the time of the American Revolution, as T.H. Breen has demonstrated, following the fashions and consumer goods of Britain was a common experience throughout the colonies.<sup>20</sup> Though Bushman does not explicitly use gender as a category of analysis, these ideas neatly complement Connell’s hegemonic masculinity. Rhys Isaac also noted the ways in which genteel displays distinguished the powerful from the low in colonial Virginia. In a slave society, exhibitions of wealth and even pastimes like dances and horseraces marked the sharp hierarchies and violence that underpinned the power relations between the different ranks and races of men and women.<sup>21</sup> Gentility was a marker for masculine accomplishment and prowess throughout the colonies.

As Michal J. Rozbicki explains, men could only attain power and be respected as leaders if they achieved what Pierre Bourdieu calls “cultural legitimacy.” This idea posits that adopting certain tastes and styles “reproduce power relations” within “the struggles for social position...”<sup>22</sup> As Rozbicki makes clear, the inherited notion of gentility had

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<sup>19</sup> Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities*, (New York: Knopf, 1992), xii, xix, 25.

<sup>20</sup> T.H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>21</sup> Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia*, 98, 88-114. Isaac’s chapter 5 “Occasions” is replete with examples of interactions between the various ranks and segments of Virginian society and the clear roles of marked out for men depending on their race and class.

<sup>22</sup> Michal J. Rozbicki, *The Complete Colonial Gentleman: Cultural Legitimacy in Plantation America* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 20.

“potent social and political uses as a tool of constructing and authorizing order, identity, and power.” There were simply no other cultural options open to colonial Americans.<sup>23</sup> Rozbicki and Bushman agree that the idea of gentility was not monolithic, but was as much a process as any aspect of culture, and “never existed in pure form.” The variations, vernacular adaptations, and contradictions of genteel culture make it a slippery subject to pin down, but the key idea is that these “culturally encoded concepts and symbols...structure reality” because individuals accept them as powerful.<sup>24</sup> The American Revolution altered these symbols, challenging them, democratizing them, but the pursuit of distinction and cultural power remained.<sup>25</sup> For Americans in the generations after the Revolution, it was the dimly remembered Tories, a privileged class of vain and cruel patricians, who embodied the hollowness and corruption of Old World gentility.

For more than a century after the events, the idea of the aristocratic Tory was one of the essential stereotypes in the social memory of the American Revolution. In the works of James Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Catherine Sedgwick and others, the loyalists, whether presented as villains or conflicted heroes, are wealthy and powerful landholders with strong ties to the Old World.<sup>26</sup> In Hawthorne’s tales the loyalists cavalierly salute their king while indulging in drink, plays, and merriment and thus are the polar opposite of austere New England Puritans. Along with their cosmopolitan fashion sense and gaiety, Hawthorne’s loyalists lack prudence and wisdom, and are

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 16-17.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 6. Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991). In particular see Chapter 15, “The Assault on Aristocracy”, 271-286. The second two-thirds of the book expand on the subject. Richard Bushman sees gentility becoming democratized by the rising middle class, and transforming into a concern for respectability, much as it did in England in the eighteenth century. *Refinement of America*, Chapters 7 through 12. Both Alan Taylor’s, *William Cooper’s Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (New York: A.A. Knopf: Distributed by Random House, 1995) and Joanne B. Freeman’s, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), explore the lingering notions of aristocratic honour in the early republic.

<sup>26</sup> Eileen Ka-May Cheng, “American Historical Writers and the Loyalists, 1788-1856: Dissent, Consensus, and American Nationality,” *Journal of the Early Republic* Vol. 23, No. 4 (Winter, 2003): 491-519. Donald G. Darnell “‘Visions of Hereditary Rank’: The Loyalist in the Fiction of Hawthorne, Cooper, and Frederic,” *South Atlantic Bulletin*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (May, 1977): 45-54.

cruelly dismissive of the lower rungs of the social ladder. In the short story “Edward Randolph’s Portrait” (1842), Massachusetts Governor Thomas Hutchinson exemplifies the Tory stereotype. Ignoring the pleas of his aides and his niece, Hutchinson decides to admit British soldiers into Boston, declaring that “upheld by [British] armed strength, I set my foot upon the rabble...” He is also unmoved by the ghostly visitation of Edward Randolph, the Crown official who advised Charles II to revoke Massachusetts’ Royal Charter in 1684 and place the colonies under tighter imperial control. Randolph’s portrait, covered in generations of black grime, is miraculously cleared to reveal the face “of a wretch detected in some hideous guilt, and exposed to the bitter hatred, and laughter, and withering scorn, of a vast surrounding multitude.” In spite of this “evil omen” and his niece’s insistence that Hutchinson “Behold [Randolph’s] punishment!” the Tory governor goes through with the betrayal and follows his predecessor into a cursed existence.<sup>27</sup>

The late nineteenth century author, Harold Frederic, depicts loyalists that share many similarities with Hawthorne’s Tories. In his work *In the Valley* (1890), Frederic describes the loyalists as men with “no restraining notion of public interest. Their sole idea is to play the aristocrat, to surround themselves with menials, to make their neighbours concede to them submission and reverence.” Frederic’s patriot narrator reflects on the nature of his genteel, two-faced adversary, who was “affable, honorable, generous, and likeable among his equals [and] cold, selfish, haughty, and harsh to his inferiors.” Perhaps this style may have worked for the loyalists in Europe, but “the cursed obligation to act like a ‘gentleman’” brought the Tory to his ruin in America.<sup>28</sup>

Not all loyalists are depicted as cruel aristocrats. James Fenimore Cooper, probably influenced by his marriage into the De Lancey family and his father’s Federalism, used loyalists as the main characters in several of his books. The Wharton family in *The Spy* (1821), though led by a weak patriarch, is a sympathetic, well-bred family torn between allegiances. A dashing though conflicted young loyalist is the title character in *Lionel Lincoln* (1825). Cooper presents his loyalists as stalwart men of

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<sup>27</sup> Darnell, “Visions,” 46-48. Nathaniel Hawthorne, “Legends of the Province House” Chapter II “Edward Randolph’s Portrait” in *Twice-Told Tales*, Vol. II (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1864), 36, 38.

<sup>28</sup> Darnell, “Visions,” 50-51. Quotations from Harold Frederic, *In The Valley* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1890), 402.

honour, bound to defend their king, even when confronted with sound and reasonable moral arguments as to why they should not. They are men of action, not philosophers.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, in Hawthorne's *Grandfather's Chair* (1840), the patriarch explains to his grandchildren that even though loyalists were "men of talent" who defended the "king's tyrannical proceedings" as best they could, "their hearts were faint and feeble..." Nonetheless, the wise old storyteller admits some grudging respect for these gentlemen who gave up their "country, friends, fortune, everything, rather than be false to their King."<sup>30</sup> Though they may have possessed an effeminate love of luxury, and were sometimes cruel, there was something alluring about the Old World charm of these cavaliers.

Nineteenth century novelists were doubtlessly inspired by folk tales and local lore, but they were also influenced by the early histories of the American Revolution. Mercy Otis Warren's *History of the Rise, Progress, and Termination of the American Revolution* (1805), was the first history to view Thomas Hutchinson as the archetypal Tory. She writes that he "was dark, intriguing, insinuating, haughty and ambitious, while the extreme of avarice marked his character." Interestingly, Warren describes how Hutchinson rose to power, not through his talents, which "were little elevated above the line of mediocrity" but by his adherence to the strictures of genteel behaviour. He cultivated an appearance of probity and piety, and "courted the public *eclat* [sic] with the most profound dissimulation, while he engaged the affections of the lower classes by an amiable civility and condescension, without departing from a certain gravity of deportment mistaken by the vulgar for *sanctity*."<sup>31</sup> When it came to other loyalists, Warren is more circumspect. She suggests that some patriots, who were "more zealous than judicious", pushed Americans just flirting with loyalism "under the banners of royalty," even though these lukewarm Tories were "without any fixed principles in

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<sup>29</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Spy: A Tale of Neutral Ground* (New York: Charles Wiley, 1824), 2 volumes. *Lionel Lincoln, Or the Leaguer of Boston* (London: Richard Bentley, 1832). Lionel Lincoln is an English-born aristocrat who returns to England after the war.

<sup>30</sup> Darnell, "Visions," 50. Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Whole History of Grandfather's Chair* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1887), 177-78.

<sup>31</sup> Cheng, "American Historical Writers," 496. Mercy Otis Warren, *History of the Rise, Progress, and Termination of the American Revolution*, Vol. 1 (Boston: Manning and Loring, 1805), 79-80.

religion or politics.” Nonetheless, once secure behind British lines in New York, the loyalists “were continually urging [the British commander] to deeds of cruelty...”<sup>32</sup> A generation later George Bancroft continued the same line of argument, describing the “malignant cruelty” of loyalists who belonged to “families of superior culture”.<sup>33</sup> There are few loyalists mentioned by name in Bancroft’s history, and their influence on events is muted, with the exception of Thomas Hutchinson. Like Mercy Otis Warren’s portrait of the Massachusetts governor, Bancroft describes how the great Tory corrupted America and “infuse[d] into its veins the slow poison of tyranny.”<sup>34</sup> The few loyalists mentioned in Bancroft’s history are shameful anomalies and do not receive much attention.

Other nineteenth century historians were more sympathetic to the loyalists. New Englanders such as Charles Francis Adams and Lorenzo Sabine, who were dismayed at the vulgarities of Jacksonian democracy and antebellum party discord, admitted that although the loyalists were mistaken in their political choices, their error was understandable.<sup>35</sup> In his compendious *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution* (1847), Sabine collected hundreds of brief biographical outlines of loyalists to create a far more nuanced and humanizing account of “outlaws, wanderers, and exiles” than had appeared before. Sabine did not defend loyalism *per se*, noting, for example, that loyalists and their descendants in their new homes continued to treat government offices as their privileged sinecures.<sup>36</sup> Such observations point to the fact that despite his stated policy “to exclude no one, whether of exalted or humble station,” Sabine’s loyalists remained firmly entrenched in the elite.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Warren, *History of the Rise*, 288, 356.

<sup>33</sup> George Bancroft, *History of the United States, from the discovery of the Continent*, Vol. 6 (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1885), 101.

<sup>34</sup> Cheng, “American Historical Writers,” 499.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 500-506. Charles Francis Adams wrote a series of articles for the *North American Review* on loyalists such as Peter Van Schaack, Samuel Curwen, and Thomas Hutchinson in the 1830s and 1840s.

<sup>36</sup> Lorenzo Sabine, *The American Loyalists, Or Biographical Sketches of the Loyalists of the American Revolution* (Boston: Thurston, Torry, and Co., 1847), ix, 39-40.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, xiii.

At the same time that some American historians were reconsidering their former loyalist countrymen, writers and politicians in British North America were publishing the first histories of their loyalist founders. The “Loyalist Tradition” that developed in what later became Ontario, as well as the Atlantic provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, held to the myth of the gentlemen exiles. Two of the earliest Canadian loyalist historians, William Canniff and Egerton Ryerson, shared the idea that the loyalists were the most industrious and morally upstanding people of American society.<sup>38</sup> Both men were evidently influenced by Sabine’s work and conclusions. Canniff, despairing of the “over-weening [sic] vanity” of American histories, personally thanks Sabine for his “redeeming words on behalf of the Loyalists”.<sup>39</sup> Entire sections of Canniff’s work are lifted directly from Sabine’s biographies, reflecting, again, the focus on the more famous and well-to-do of the loyalist settlers of Upper Canada. Yet Canniff is careful to point out that aristocratic gentlemen did not last in Upper Canada. Men who refused to believe that “agriculture and gentility may go together” and were unwilling to work with their hands did not prosper. These unnamed men dreamed of restoring their families to prominence, but “alas,” writes Canniff, “how rarely was the dream realized!”<sup>40</sup> Canniff’s loyalists are closer to the Victorian ideal of men who know the taste of luxury, but are thrifty, moral, and hard working. Ryerson, writing about a decade after Canniff, agreed that the loyalists were “strangely misrepresented” by American historians, but more or less concurs that the loyalists were “the most wealthy and intelligent...inhabitants of the colonies”<sup>41</sup> For Americans and Canadians alike, loyalists were Anglican in religion, conservative in politics, and gentlemen by nature.

The trope of the aristocratic Tory continued into the twentieth century. Claude Halstead Van Tyne’s *The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (1902) is, after Sabine’s

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<sup>38</sup> William Canniff, *History of the Settlement of Upper Canada, with special reference to the Bay of Quinte*, (Toronto: Dudgeon and Burns, 1869). Egerton Ryerson, *The Loyalists of America and their Times, From 1620-1816*, 2 Volumes, (Montreal: Dawson Bros., 1880). See also: Norman Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists*, 26-47. Murray Barkley, “The Loyalist Tradition in New Brunswick,” *Acadiensis*, Vol. 4, No. 2, (Spring 1975): 3-45.

<sup>39</sup> Canniff, *History of the Settlement*, 41 Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists*, 43-46.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 582.

<sup>41</sup> Ryerson, *The Loyalists of America*, Vol. 1, 507.



work, the earliest American attempt to trace the loyalists in general, but in many ways propagates the loyalist myth. Van Tyne argued that the “aristocracy of culture, of dignified professions and callings, of official rank and hereditary wealth was in a large measure found in the Tory party.” His loyalists were venal place men and grasping, servile types, who were completely out of touch with America’s political genius. Van Tyne confidently asserts that the loyalists, many of whom were not even born in the colonies, simply could not think like Americans who even at that stage had become so culturally distinct that “...neither Englishmen nor men recently immigrated [sic] from England could understand American political ideals.”<sup>42</sup> This is a nationalist and indeed ironic statement considering Tom Paine himself was a recent arrival from England.

This image of the loyalists as elite and British-born remained mostly unchallenged until the 1960s.<sup>43</sup> William H. Nelson’s *The American Tory* (1961) was one of the first to debunk the idea of the aristocratic loyalists. Nelson found that the average loyalist was no more genteel than the average patriot, but he also convincingly discovered that many loyalists were members of “conscious minorities.” As people from religious, ethnic, and linguistic enclaves surrounded by a threatening majority, Germans, Scots, and Dutch settlers often looked to the Crown as their defender.<sup>44</sup> Nelson’s findings have been cited in every major work on the loyalists since the publication of *The American Tory*.

Yet despite the clear evidence that the loyalists were not the aristocratic Tories of popular imagination, loyalist studies continued to be dominated by examinations of the elite to explain the entire body of the loyalists. Wallace Brown’s *The King’s Friends: The Composition and Motives of the American Loyalist Claimants* (1965) attempts to determine the identity and motivation of the loyalists through a quantitative analysis of the loyalist claims submitted to the Royal Commission after the Revolutionary War. He concludes that the loyalists were largely from urban seaports and were often not

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<sup>42</sup> Claude Halstead Van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution*, (Bowie MD.: Heritage Books Inc. 1989 [Imprint of The MacMillan Group, 1902]), 5, 7.

<sup>43</sup> One exception to this was Esther Wright Clark’s *The Loyalists of New Brunswick* (Fredericton, NB.: 1955). She challenges the loyalist myth, observing that only 8% of the loyalists submitted claims, and the vast majority of refugees were American-born small farmers.

<sup>44</sup> William H. Nelson, *The American Tory* (Ann Arbor, MI: Northeastern University Press [Imprint], 1992), 86, 91.

American born – findings that fit with the Van Tyne era of thought. His discussion of loyalist motivations was not particularly illuminating either, considering his main sources were the testimonies contained within the loyalist claims which were dominated by the elite (see chapter 6). Brown used the claims as a statistical sampling of the loyalists as a whole, as opposed to a record of the small portion of exiles with the connections and means to submit claims at all. In Brown's follow-up work, *The Good Americans* (1969), he more explicitly states that there was "a distinct aristocratic veneer to Loyalism."<sup>45</sup> In his review of Brown's work, William H. Nelson scathingly referred to the book as a restoration of "the old and foolish myths of Loyalist gentility..."<sup>46</sup> Perhaps this was too harsh, but Nelson's criticism is a sharp reminder of the pitfalls of reading the experiences of the majority into sources left by the privileged few.

When it comes to exploring loyalist ideology, as will be explored in more depth in chapter three, there is no way around the fact that the Crown's American spokesmen were drawn from genteel ranks. These men and their ideas were the focus of Robert Calhoun's *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America, 1760-1781* (1965). In this voluminous work, Calhoun divides the loyalist writers and leaders into three loose categories. There were loyalists like Thomas Hutchinson, whom Calhoun calls "enunciators of principle," men who advocated for the British constitution, Parliamentary supremacy, and the duty to obey. Others, such as the New York Chief Justice William Smith Jr., searched for accommodation between the Crown and colonies and to find a constitutional solution to the crisis. Finally there were the obstinate few, like the Anglican clergyman Jonathan Boucher, who stubbornly appealed to doctrines of submission and nonresistance to established imperial authority. Even with these identifiable categories, however, Calhoun asserts that loyalist thought never formed a "common, vital persuasion."<sup>47</sup> Other historians have seen more consistency in loyalist

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<sup>45</sup> Wallace Brown, *The King's Friends: The Composition and Motives of the American Loyalist Claimants* (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 1965), 257. *The Good Americans: The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1969), 64.

<sup>46</sup> W. H. Nelson, "Review of *The King's Friends: The Composition and Motives of the American Loyalist Claimants*," *The New England Quarterly*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (Dec., 1966): 558-560.

<sup>47</sup> Robert M. Calhoun, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America, 1760-1781*, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973), 50-67, 93-104, 505. Janice Potter-MacKinnon argues that in fact loyalist ideology was

political ideology, and pointed out that it was actually quite receptive to the same Lockean principles that undergirded Whig ideology.<sup>48</sup> Janice Potter contends that loyalist ideology was comprised of a coherent set of conservative, though mainstream principles which formed persuasive and motivating intellectual arguments.<sup>49</sup> These historians do not dwell on the elite status of the loyalist spokesmen, nor do they consider how their privileged perspective might affect how the common people would receive their message. Potter points to the signatures of simple New York farmers on loyalist associations as evidence of the effectiveness of loyalist arguments.<sup>50</sup> Without more evidence this is a tendentious argument considering the myriad pressures and fractured allegiances facing the common people in Revolutionary New York.

Uncovering the motivations of loyalists, intellectual or otherwise, is a recurring fixation that Potter shares with Calhoun, Wallace Brown, and Bernard Bailyn, but it is a question that few American historians have directed at patriots. In Calhoun's examination of loyalist ideology he writes that he seeks to "understand the *motivation* – the compelling reasons, influences, predispositions, and dictates of self-interest, temperament, conscience, intellect, fear, and plain confusion – that impelled loyalists to act as they did."<sup>51</sup> One way that Calhoun arrives at his conclusions is through examining the "loyalist perception" a concept he continued to explore in his *Loyalist Perception and Other Essays* (1989). This idea encompassed both how individual loyalists perceived the world as well as their "self-image, emotional and intellectual dexterity and stamina..." By examining the loyalists' recorded political ideas, he argues, historians could gain insight into their motivations.<sup>52</sup> Wallace Brown sought clues to loyalist motivation in the

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cohesive and consistent. Janice Potter, *The Liberty We Seek: Loyalist Ideology in Colonial New York and Massachusetts*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983).

<sup>48</sup> William A. Benton, *Whig-Loyalism: An Aspect of Political Ideology in the American Revolution* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1969).

<sup>49</sup> Potter, *The Liberty We Seek*, 10-11.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Calhoun, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America*, xi.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Calhoun, *The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), 4-5.

official claims they made to the British government. This approach is fraught with perils considering the way loyalists cited the purest motivations in their official claims for financial remuneration. Few loyalists admitted desires to maintain trading connections with British merchants or preserve their salaries from Crown offices as their primary motivations for loyalism. Bernard Bailyn, in his attempt to uncover the motivation of the greatly maligned Thomas Hutchinson, wrote incredulously that historians had not made it “clear why any sensible, well-informed, right minded American with a modicum of imagination and common sense could possibly have opposed the Revolution.”<sup>53</sup> To Bailyn, Hutchinson was not the tyrant described by Hawthorne or Bancroft, but was a bland conservative without much capacity for original thought. Bailyn quotes the arch-Tory himself who stated that he was “a quietist, being convinced that what is, is best” perhaps proving that he had very little intellectual ammunition to fire back at his opponents.<sup>54</sup> In 2004 Bailyn reconsidered his conclusions, and added that Thomas Hutchinson’s personality was dominated by “the Puritan virtues of self-restraint, personal morality, worldly asceticism, and above all, stubborn insistence on pursuing the truth however unpopular or dangerous it might be to do so.” In other words, it was the culture inherited from his New England roots that led him to resist rebellion, while this same culture inexplicably impelled others to embrace the Revolution.<sup>55</sup> The fundamental importance of culture in the political questions of the day has been explored more recently by literary scholars Edward Larkin and Philip Gould. They reveal how loyalist writers saw themselves as defenders of civilization against the forces of barbarity and chaos. Loyalism for these men was an “affective sensibility” and was one side in a culture war, which included issues of masculinity, as well as a political contest.<sup>56</sup> In the

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<sup>53</sup> Bernard Bailyn, *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1974), x.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 17, 380.

<sup>55</sup> Bernard Bailyn, “Thomas Hutchinson in Context: The ‘Ordeal’ Revisited,” *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 2004 114(2): 281-300. Compare to Edmund S. Morgan “The Puritan Ethic and the American Revolution,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Jan., 1967): 4-43. Morgan argues that the Revolutionary movement was strongly influenced by Puritan cultural traits.

end, discerning “the imperatives that govern him [a loyalist man] in moments of conscious choice,” as Calhoun wrote, is a tall order indeed, and is likely impossible to accomplish with any degree of certainty.<sup>57</sup> Exploring loyalist ideology and motivation through the lens of culture is more fruitful than political ideology on its own, but historians must also take note of culturally constructed ideas of masculinity and honour to enhance and qualify their understanding.

The attempt to understand the motivations and rationale of loyalists has spawned scores of individual loyalist biographies.<sup>58</sup> These have greatly illuminated individual experiences, but as Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan have recently pointed out, because biographies far outnumber general studies, this has contributed to what they argue is “the scattered and particularistic state of the field.”<sup>59</sup> As expected, elite loyalists are the subjects of nearly every biography. Taken together these studies highlight the experiences of a small minority and present a fairly consistent pattern of loyalist experience. In contrast, the equally numerous local and regional studies have provided impressive insights into the very local nature of allegiance and politics in the American Revolution.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> See: Edward Larkin, “The Cosmopolitan Revolution: Loyalism and the Fiction of the American Nation,” *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, Vol. 40, No. 1/2 (Fall, 2006 – Spring 2007): 52-76. Bannister and Riordan, “Loyalism and the British Atlantic” 9. Philip Gould, *Writing the Rebellion: Loyalists and the Literature of Politics in British America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>57</sup> Calhoun, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America*, xi.

<sup>58</sup> A short list of examples: Carol Berkin, *Jonathan Sewall: Odyssey of an American Loyalist* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974); Edward J. Cashin, *The King's Ranger: Thomas Brown and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989); Cynthia Dubin Edelberg *Jonathan Odell: Loyalist Poet of the American Revolution* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987); John E. Ferling, *The Loyalist Mind: Joseph Galloway and the American Revolution* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977); Elizabeth P McCaughey, *From Loyalist to Founding Father: The Political Odyssey of William Samuel Johnson* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980); Geraldine Meroney, *Inseparable Loyalty: A Biography of William Bull* (Norcross, GA: Harrison Co. 1991); Susan Burgess Shenstone, *So ObstinateLY Loyal: James Moody, 1744-1809* (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000); Bruce E. Steiner, *Samuel Seabury 1729-1796: A Study in the High Church Tradition* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 1972); Anne Y. Zimmer, *Jonathan Boucher: Loyalist in Exile* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978).

<sup>59</sup> Bannister and Riordan, “Loyalism in the British Atlantic,” 15.

<sup>60</sup> From the work of local antiquarians to professional historians, there have been hundreds of studies of the loyalists of individual states, regions, and cities produced over the last two centuries. A comprehensive list is not feasible, but a good starting point for the local study of loyalists is Robert M. Calhoun, Timothy M. Barnes, and George A. Rawlyk, eds., *Loyalists and Community in North America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994). Good examples for loyalist regional studies during the American Revolution

These social histories have revealed the broader appeal of loyalism among the wider population and how local circumstances created a variety of loyalist experiences. Pre-existing tensions and rivalries were routinely bound up in the revolutionary crisis, and the experience of loyalists could be markedly different even between towns in the same region.<sup>61</sup> These findings support William Nelson's contention that the Revolution "exposed rather than created [loyalist] conflict with other Americans..."<sup>62</sup>

Indeed historians of the loyalist diaspora have focused a great deal of attention in the last two decades on the polyglot, multi-cultural, and multi-racial nature of loyalism. The loyalists as a whole were clearly made up of Americans from all religions, races, and classes in America, though they are still largely regarded as a "one-dimensional" group in much of the American Revolution's historiography.<sup>63</sup> Recent work on the experiences of black loyalists in particular, has shown just how varied the exile experience could be. While white loyalists endured their political death in the colonies, black loyalists experienced a kind of political birth and for the first time many slaves had a direct relationship with the state and were treated as people with the agency to choose their own political allegiance. British strategy in freeing the slaves of rebels was hardly altruistic, and the black loyalists were chronically mistreated by both British officials and white loyalists, but their experiences underscore the vastly different backgrounds and

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include: Philip Ranlet, *The New York Loyalists* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1986); Ruma Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion: Loyalists in New York during the Revolution* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2011); Robert A. East, *Connecticut's Loyalists* (Chester, CT: Pequot Press, 1974); Adele Hast, *Loyalism in Revolutionary Virginia: The Norfolk Area and the Eastern Shore* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1982); And in exile, see: Neil MacKinnon, *This Unfriendly Soil: The Loyalist Experience in Nova Scotia, 1783-1791*. (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988); Ann Gorman Condon, *The Envy of the American States*; Jane Errington, *The Lion, the Eagle and Upper Canada: A Developing Colonial Ideology* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987); Stephen Kimber, *Loyalists and Layabouts: The Rapid Rise and Faster Fall of Shelbourne, Nova Scotia, 1783-1792* (Toronto: Anchor Canada, 2008).

<sup>61</sup> For specific examples see: Jean F. Hankins, "Connecticut's Sandemanians: Loyalism as a Religious Test" in Robert M. Calhoon, et al, ed.: *Loyalists and Community*, 31-44. Bruce G. Merritt, "Loyalism and Social Conflict in Revolutionary Deerfield, Massachusetts," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 57, No.2, (Sept., 1970): 277-289.

<sup>62</sup>Nelson, *American Tory*, xii, 13.

<sup>63</sup> Bannister and Riordan, "Loyalism in the British Atlantic," 5.

experiences found within the loyalist ranks.<sup>64</sup> Native American allies, too, formed a crucial element in the British war effort. Whether or not they would consider themselves loyalists in the same way that white refugees might, the fates of the Mohawks and other groups became inextricably bound to British fortunes in North America. The American Revolution divided Native communities as much as it did settler societies, resulting in a concurrent outbreak of civil wars from the Great Lakes to the southern Mississippi. The experiences, motivations, and goals of Britain's Native allies form another important and unique thread in the complex history of the American Revolution.<sup>65</sup>

There have been very few attempts to collect all of these different lines of inquiry into a general account of the loyalists. Even after forty years, the works of Nelson, Calhoun, and Brown remain the only broad academic surveys of the loyalists in the American Revolution. The most recent comprehensive study of the loyalist diaspora after the Revolution is Maya Jasanoff's *Liberty's Exiles* (2011), which synthesizes the disparate loyalist experiences. Jasanoff argues that loyalists participated in the creation of a reimagined British Empire which incorporated its many ethnicities while at the same time tightened and centralized imperial authority.<sup>66</sup> Yet even with the attempts to show the diversity of the loyalist experiences, the literate middling and elite loyalists effectively remain the spokesmen in these accounts. It is therefore essential to understand this class of loyalist on their own terms to decipher how much of what they wrote can be thought of as loyalist thought in general, or ideas that are contingent on their gender and class. This dissertation seeks to flesh out the experience of this group of the loyalist spokesmen by placing them and their experiences within the cultural context of manhood and honour, a culture they shared with their patriot adversaries.

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<sup>64</sup> John W. Pulis, ed., *Moving On: Black Loyalists in the Afro-American World* (New York: Garland, 1999); Cassandra Pybus, *Epic Journeys of Freedom: Runaway Slaves of the American Revolution and Their Global Quest for Liberty* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006); Simon Schama, *Rough Crossings: Britain, the Slaves and the American Revolution* (New York: Ecco, 2006); James W. St. G. Walker, *The Black Loyalists: The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone, 1783-1870*. (New York: Dalhousie University Press, Holmes and Meier, 1976; reprint, University of Toronto Press, 1992);

<sup>65</sup> Colin G. Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011 [1991]), 366-412. Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, 189-198.

<sup>66</sup> Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011).

To borrow Toby L. Ditz's general observation on historical literature, loyalist historiography has generally treated elite men as "representatives of their classes, their callings or their nations, and even as spokesmen for universal human aspirations, but not as gendered persons."<sup>67</sup> It was only with the examination of women in the American Revolution that the concepts of gender and culture were first incorporated into the patriot and loyalist experiences. Mary Beth Norton's *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1763-1800* (1980) and Linda Kerber's *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (1980), presented a common picture of the conditions faced by both loyalist and patriot women: the daily power men held over women, coupled with clear evidence of profound female agency in colonial and Revolutionary America. Indeed, it was the information gleaned from the several hundred claims made by loyalist women that revealed the shared political activism of women, and the often stultifying effects of patriarchy on their lives, regardless of political allegiance.<sup>68</sup> In the early 1990s, histories of women loyalists continued with Janice Potter-MacKinnon's examination of the agency of loyalist women in their migration from northern New York to Upper Canada. According to Potter-MacKinnon, patriarchal dominance resumed after their exile to Upper Canada and the sacrifices and contributions of women loyalists were largely forgotten or even suppressed. Her work attempts to focus on the common women, though the presence of the testimony of elite and middling women is again unavoidable. Katherine McKenna makes good use of the records of a gentlewoman in her exploration of elite concepts of womanhood. Her biography of Anne Murray Powell, *A Life of Propriety* (1994) shows the power of women in replicating class and gender roles – both male and female – in the household of a genteel family as North America entered into the Victorian era. What these and other studies of loyalist women point to is the essential importance of gender and class in understanding the behaviour of

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<sup>67</sup> Toby L. Ditz, "The New Men's History and the Peculiar Absence of Gendered Power: Some Remedies from Early American Gender History," *Gender & History*, Vol. 16 No. 1 (April 2004): 1-2.

<sup>68</sup> Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1763-1800*. (Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1980), 175-176, 213-219. Also "Eighteenth-Century American Women in Peace and War: The Case of the Loyalists." *The William and Mary Quarterly*, vol. 33, no. 3 (1976):386-409; *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 123-134.



historical actors.<sup>69</sup> To date, there has not been an examination of loyalist men that explores the intertwined elements of masculinity and class with an understanding of the cultural meanings of honour.

The study of masculinity is still relatively new and emerging, but has already produced some fascinating work within early American historiography.<sup>70</sup> Together these studies show that early American men were deeply conscious of the cultural attitudes towards masculinity and their own ability to live up to those standards. The construction of manliness on the frontier, in coastal settlements, between different regions, religions, and races created a confusing array of competing notions of the ideal man. This diversity of gender norms in America and the competing notions of ideal manhood underscore the usefulness of Connell's conception of hegemonic and multiple masculinities. As Joanna Burke pointed out in her study of early twentieth century British masculinity, this sort of competition oppressed women, but it also created "power structures [which] also oppress men."<sup>71</sup> This is now a widely accepted idea, but does have its pitfalls. Toby Ditz argues that the insistence on the idea that masculinity was "generated primarily in relationship to other masculinities" could cause "historians to downplay the deployment of gendered power over women by the men they studied." Ditz warns that this approach "is in danger of restoring men – however particularised, differentiated and socially constructed – to the

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<sup>69</sup>Janice Potter-Mackinnon, *While the Women Only Wept: Loyalist Refugee Women*. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993); Katherine McKenna, *A Life of Propriety: Anne Murray Powell and Her Family*. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994).

<sup>70</sup> E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: BasicBooks, 1993); Merrill Smith, ed., *Sex and Sexuality in Early America*, (New York: New York University Press, 1998); Michael Kann, *A Republic of Men: The American Founders, Gendered Language and Patriarchal Politics*, (New York: New York University Press, 1998); Lisa Wilson, *Ye Heart of a Man: The Domestic Life of Men in Colonial New England*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999). Anne Lombard, *Making Manhood: Growing Up Male in Colonial New England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Thomas A. Foster, *Sex and the Eighteenth-Century Man: Massachusetts and the History of Sexuality in America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006); Ann. M. Little, *Abraham in Arms: War and Gender in Colonial New England*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007); Lori Glover, *Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007); Richard Godbeer, *The Overflowing of Friendship: Love Between Men and the Creation of the American Republic*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Thomas Foster et al, *New Men: Manliness in Early America*, (New York: New York University Press, 2011).

<sup>71</sup> Joanna Burke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain, and the Great War* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996), 14.

center of our historical narrative.”<sup>72</sup> Bryce Traister agrees, noting how an exploration of masculinity that focusses on a “crisis theory” of unstable and conflicting masculine identities “effectively crowds out women”.<sup>73</sup> Effective discussions of masculinity must therefore recognize that “the engendering of men involves power over women, whatever else it might also concern.”<sup>74</sup> As will be seen throughout this dissertation, when patriots and loyalists attacked their enemy’s manhood, they did so with feminine tropes, what Ditz calls the “symbolic woman,” but they also treated women as extensions of their foe. As will be shown, the authority of patriarchs was rarely so injured as to lose power over women. Most loyalist wives followed their husbands and fathers into exile and were subjected to patriarchal authority even when the honour and manhood of their men was rejected by others in their communities.

Focussing on how the loyalists were dishonoured and unmanned in the American Revolution may at first glance seem to be falling into the “crisis theory” decried by Ditz and Traister, but the loyalists present a unique opportunity in the study of manhood in Revolutionary America. The dishonour and emasculation suffered by loyalists exhibits the changing expectations of hegemonic masculinity in American culture and reveals, in stark relief, what Toby Ditz refers to as “the ruses of masculine privilege.”<sup>75</sup> Men in the eighteenth century used the terms manhood and manly, and though “masculinity” was first printed on paper in 1748, it was not in the general vocabulary of eighteenth century men.<sup>76</sup> Rather they used the broad but powerful term “honour.” The sacralisation of manhood in the concept of honour was perhaps the most profound of the “ruses of masculine privilege.”

Honour in this dissertation is defined as a man’s feeling of pride, his reputation, and most importantly his “right to respect.” Honour was a demand placed on other men

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<sup>72</sup> Ditz, “The New Men’s History,” 3-4. 17.

<sup>73</sup> Bryce Traister, “Academic Viagra: The Rise of American Masculinity Studies,” *American Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 2, (June 2000): 276.

<sup>74</sup> Ditz, “The New Men’s History,” 17.

<sup>75</sup> Toby Ditz, “What’s Love Got to Do With It?: The History of Men, the History of Gender in the 1990s” *Reviews in American History*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (June, 2000): 168.

<sup>76</sup> Mary Beth Norton, Preface to Foster, *New Men*, ix.

and women to treat the bearer with the respect and deference that recognized his rank.<sup>77</sup> Eighteenth century men spoke of their honour so much, especially in times of conflict, that it is difficult to overstate its importance.<sup>78</sup> Yet honour was a surprisingly pliant concept that could be used to shame and to empower as well as to justify cruelty or hide malfeasance. Among the middling and upper ranks of society, honour was a particularly prized ethic. As Caroline Cox explains in her study of the Continental army, “all men had honour, even poor men, but a gentleman’s honour was of a more refined and delicate nature.”<sup>79</sup> This idea privileged a small group of men over others. While rank and file prisoners rotted in unsanitary cells, for example, the officer class were lodged in private homes and permitted freedom of movement on account of their honour. Judith Van Buskirk has shown how this gentlemanly culture of honour and politeness dictated that men, though differing in political ideas, were still worthy of being treated respectfully.<sup>80</sup> The intensification of the honour system between loyalists and patriots, and the intentional rejection of honour and privilege is a fascinating, but largely unexplored aspect of the American Revolution.

Inspired by the extensive literature exploring the importance of masculinity and honour to eighteenth century men, this dissertation set out with a few simple research goals in mind that soon uncovered complex and previously unexamined aspects of the loyalists in the American Revolution. The first was to explore how the loyalists interpreted their experiences within this cultural framework of honour, manhood, and patriarchy. How did they understand what was happening to them, and how did they

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<sup>77</sup> The idea of honour as a “right to respect” will be explored more in the following chapter, and relies heavily on the theoretical framework presented in Frank Henderson Stewart, *Honor*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

<sup>78</sup> Douglas Adair, *Fame and the Founding Fathers*, (Toronto: W.W. Norton & Co., 1974); Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *The Shaping of Southern Culture: Honor, Grace, and War, 1760s-1890s*, (Chapel Hill [N.C.]; London: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Caroline Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honour: Service and Sacrifice in George Washington’s Army*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*, (New Haven Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2001); Peter McNamara, *The Noblest Minds: Fame, Honor, and the Founding Fathers*, (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1999).

<sup>79</sup> Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honor*, 38.

<sup>80</sup> Judith Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).

reconcile their overwhelming defeat with their concepts of honour and even their cosmology? Though the loyalists displayed great moral certainty in their political allegiance, did they feel unmanned by their inability to persuade more people to their cause? Did they feel dishonoured by the insults hurled against them and emasculated by their own powerlessness to defend themselves and their families? Were they humiliated by the loss of independence and their reliance on British support? The partial answer to all of these questions is that loyalist gentlemen relied on the fundamental pliancy of honour to rationalize what had happened to them and justify their response. They took refuge in Christian values and redefined their concepts of honour, transforming insults and injuries intended as marks of shame into badges of honour. The loyalists did not regard their dependence on Britain during and after the war as evidence of effeminate weakness, rather the money and assistance they received was theirs by right. They had performed honourable service for the King and sacrificed all, and now it was the King who was duty bound to assist the loyalists. Though an honour system was built on strict hierarchies, it functioned only if all parties met their obligations.

In hunting for these answers it became apparent that this study was also shedding new light on the behaviour and thinking of the patriots. The written descriptions of both the legal and extra-legal forms of punishment and persecution inflicted on the loyalists contain deeply symbolic elements which provide insights into the revolutionary mentalities. People in the eighteenth century thought and expressed ideas through objects, through gestures, and folk rituals which are less apparent in the historical record than they would have been for the actual participants, but when teased out can help us better understand our subjects. Things like a wig plucked from a gentleman's head; a shoemaker driving a baronet's carriage; a landowner wearing a slave's hat; a tweaked nose; a cropped horse's tail; a hiss, a hoot, or an audible jibe, were revolutionary or rebellious acts imbued with meaning. For loyalists they warned of a world turning upside down. Gentlemen had a privileged right to respect by virtue of their unique moral standing and manly competence and these acts denied loyalists this status and respect, while conspicuously reinforcing or accentuating these rights for patriot gentlemen. The more significant crowd and legal actions which followed, such as vandalism, home invasions, imprisonment, and humiliating rituals like tarring and feathering were all

violations of the code of honour, of genteel bodies, and of the sacred privileges of gentlemen. These actions were made lawful, just, and necessary in the eyes of patriots by the heinous crime of loyalty to the Crown which grew like a cancer in their communities. The loyalist gentlemen explored in this study were transformed into a special kind of reviled outlaw. They were ostracized from their communities, and stripped of all the symbols of manhood and honour. They were unable to provide for their families, had their property confiscated, and ceased to be independent men, householders, and citizens. Even though they remained alive, and often maintained some social connections within their former communities, they had no legal existence. They were politically dead. The fact that patriots would go to such lengths to dishonour the loyalists rather than just kill them like in other revolutions, tells us a great deal about the value placed on these cultural conventions. In a world of slaves and citizens, or patriarchs and plebeians, honour and manhood cut to the very heart of eighteenth century cosmology. For a gentleman, to suffer a political death was worse than death itself.

This dissertation is organized around the key ideas and events of the loyalists' political death. The following chapter, "Honour and Dishonour" provides an in depth exploration of the concept of honour, its anthropological study, and how it was understood and used by eighteenth century gentlemen. There are many facets to this complex cultural virtue, but the most illuminating definition comes from Frank Henderson Stewart's theory of honour as a right to respect. An examination of some aspects of eighteenth century honour culture clearly shows this idea at work. While honour was a matter of public esteem as much as personal ethics, the construction of honour was built on the foundations of patriarchal power within the household. Manhood and gentility were projected as much by a man's house as by his person. The second half of the chapter turns to the concept of dishonour, and how the household became the site of the most virulent attacks on loyalist honour and patriarchal authority.

Chapter three explores the insults and the rituals of dishonour which heralded the loyalists' political death. Though the exact nature of the insults hurled at the loyalists in the street is unclear, the insults found in the patriot press are deeply gendered attacks on loyalist masculinity. Ritualized humiliations were equally intended to showcase both the shame and impotence of the loyalists and their political position. Yet an examination of

the printed record does reveal that the loyalist and patriot spokesmen valued opposite poles of the honour spectrum. Loyalists touted their masculine restraint, wisdom, fidelity, and maturity, and accused the patriots of juvenile ingratitude, child-like petulance, unrestrained passions, idle ambition, and an uncivilized and ungodly thirst for violent rebellion. The patriots characterized the loyalists as impotent old men who lacked the moral character to defend their honour, and as cowardly collaborators who had given up their right to manhood.

The study then turns to the experiences of loyalist prisoners of war. Gentlemen combatants expected to be treated well, but the legal and moral standing of loyalists meant their fate could be frightfully uncertain. Notions of honour could mitigate the severity of the prisoner experience, but dishonour often led patriots to deny loyalists the privileges of gentlemen prisoners. Though both sides attempted to maintain the honour system, competing claims of honour and legality complicated matters and nearly led to the breakdown of the entire prisoner system. Loyalists sometimes denied the right of their captors to hold them, and felt justified in breaking parole and attempting escape, an act normally considered deeply dishonourable in the eighteenth century. In reprisal patriots might mistreat their loyalist prisoners. This resulted in continual battles for the cultural and moral high ground between jailers and prisoners, fought using the language and finer points of honour.

Chapter five, "Vengeance," explores the popular idea in American social memory and history that loyalists were particularly cruel in seeking revenge against their former countrymen. While some loyalist gentlemen were determined to retaliate against the rebels for insults and injuries, just as many were concerned about the unchristian nature of revenge and the stain such bloodletting would have on their honour as gentlemen. Revenge was considered a passion that could transform a decent man into a savage. Britain's alliance with Native American warriors and escaped slaves added to the bloodthirsty reputation of the loyalists in patriot propaganda, further dishonouring them not only as traitors to their country, but also to their race.

Finally, chapter six explores how loyalist gentlemen worked toward political rebirth. They struggled to reconcile their defeat and seeming abandonment by Britain with their own sense of honour. In order to rebuild their positions as patriarchs, the

loyalist exiles needed compensation for their losses from the same government that had surrendered their property. Although loyalists felt betrayed by the Treaty of Paris, they had no other choice than to persist in their loyalty to the Crown if they wanted any compensation. Yet loyalist claimants sought more than monetary compensation from the British government: they also sought the restitution of their honour. They accomplished this through building personal and collective narratives that highlighted their virtues as loyal, suffering martyrs who were willing to sacrifice their privileges and even subject their families to the torments and privation of war on behalf of the King. They had done all they could to preserve royal authority in the colonies, and any dishonour they may have experienced had to be shared by the King and Parliament. Their loyalist claims placed an obligation, a debt of honour, on the British state. Thousands of loyalists received financial compensation from the British government (though far below what the loyalists felt they were owed), as well as free land and government offices that placed the loyalist gentlemen at the apex of their new communities. With British assistance, the loyalists were politically reborn as household patriarchs and as civic leaders who could claim their right to respect.

Loyalists and patriots lived and fought within a shared culture, and spoke in a common language of symbols, rituals, and customs. The loyalist experience has long been understood to have been traumatic, but by placing the events within the cultural context of honour and manhood, the depth of the loyalist experience, for men and their households, can be truly appreciated. In the eyes of their former communities, the loyalists lost not just the war and their homes, but their manhood. The patriots pressed their attacks and exiled the loyalists from American society using the gendered language of honour. The loyalists resisted, fought, and eventually fled to find common cause with others like them and reformulated their notions of honour to justify their allegiance, their actions in the war, and to transform their political death into an emblem of undying fidelity.

## 2. Honour and Dishonour

It is possible that the first shot in the American Revolution was fired inside a Charleston tavern. According to South Carolinian lore, on the night of August 16, 1771, a haughty Tory and a plucky Whig settled their political argument with a duel in a private dining room at Mr. Halliday's Tavern, a place of "genteel entertainments."<sup>1</sup> The duellists were Dr. John Haley, an Irish-born physician living in Charleston, and Peter De Lancey Jr., the son of one of the most well-connected gentlemen in the colonies.<sup>2</sup> The most well-known account of this duel appears in Joseph Johnson's 1851 collection *Traditions and Reminiscences* which romantically portrays the encounter as a microcosm of the American Revolution. The author describes De Lancey as an "elegant and accomplished royalist," while Haley is an ardent patriot who "warmly espoused the popular cause in opposition to royalty". Though a recent immigrant, the Irish doctor embodies the true revolutionary spirit against De Lancey's old-money Toryism.<sup>3</sup> When De Lancey is

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Johnson, *Traditions and Reminiscences; Chiefly of the American Revolution in the South* (Charleston, S.C.: Walker & James, 1851), 45.

<sup>2</sup> The De Lanceys were fabulously wealthy by colonial standards and were established as one of New York's most influential families. It was this influence that first brought Peter De Lancey, still in his early twenties, to Charleston as Deputy Postmaster General for the Southern Colonies. His younger sister, Alice, married Ralph Izard, a prominent planter in the Charleston region, and a future President of the United States Senate. Little is known about Haley aside from the fact that he came to Charleston around 1761, and served as a surgeon's mate in the South Carolina militia during the War of Independence. "Instructions given by Peter DeLancey, Esquire, His Majesty's deputy post-master general of the southern district of North-America..." (Charleston, S.C.: 1766). Peter DeLancey Jr., (1744-1771) served in the office of Deputy Post Master General from 1766 to 1771. Joseph Ioor Waring, *A History of Medicine in South Carolina, 1670-1825* (Columbia, S.C.: The South Carolina Medical Association, 1964), 241.

<sup>3</sup> Many of the retellings of the Haley-De Lancey duel repeat Johnson verbatim. Johnson, *Traditions and Reminiscences*...45-47; Henry Flanders, *The lives and times of the chief justices of the Supreme court of the United States, Volume 1* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co., 1855), 465-466; Charlotte St. Julian Ravenel, *Charleston: The Place and the People* (London: MacMillan & Co., 1906), 182-183; "Memorable American Duels," *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (March, 1877): 258; Benjamin Cummings Truman, *The field of honor: Being a complete and comprehensive history of duelling in all countries; including the judicial duel of Europe, the private duel of the civilized world, and specific descriptions of all the noted hostile meetings in Europe and America* (New York: Fords, Howard, & Hulbert, 1884), 109; H.E. Scudder, ed. *Men and Manners in America One Hundred Years Ago* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co., 1876), 307-308; Johnson's version of events has found its way into several scholarly works including Kenneth S. Greenberg, *Masters and Statesmen: The Political Culture of American Slavery* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 25; and Marvin Zahniser, *Charles Cotesworth Pinckney: Founding Father* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), 28-29.



“foiled in an argument,” he intentionally provokes the doctor “by giving him the ‘lie.’”<sup>4</sup> Calling a gentleman a liar in the eighteenth century was considered more than an insult; it was an assault on the very core and worth of a man: his honour. Depending on the social milieu, a gentleman’s failure to respond properly to such a public challenge could be perceived as a gross sign of weakness.<sup>5</sup> Haley instantly challenged the royal official to a duel, right then and there, in a private room in the tavern, with no witnesses and no seconds. Johnson writes that the two took their places at either end of a dinner table, fired at the same moment, and De Lancey fell dead.<sup>6</sup>

The general outline of Johnson’s tale is confirmed in an anonymous newspaper description published a month after the affair, but the duel is not presented as an early blow for American honour. Like many seconds’ testimonies it was intended to combat “a great number of contradictory and infamous reports,” but it leaves the cause of the duel a mystery. The author explains that the “dispute between these gentlemen, was so sudden, and so secret, that not one of the friends of either can pretend to give any certain account of the cause.” Indeed, far from being enemies, the account describes how Haley and De Lancey had spent the day together dining and drinking among a larger group of gentlemen. Around seven in the evening, the report states, the two men went out to a balcony and “were observed to converse rather gravely, & set their watches, but no high words passed nor was there the least appearance of any difference.” Unlike Johnson’s version of events, the duellists are restrained and engaged in sober reflection, calmly setting their watches, perhaps after agreeing to a time and terms. The article continues with De Lancey renting a private dining room at Halliday’s tavern where he acts the busy host, ordering in candles and refreshments. After Haley arrives, they dismiss the waiter, lock the door, “and presently the report of pistols was heard.” As in Johnson’s tale, Haley

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<sup>4</sup> Johnson, *Traditions*, 45-46.

<sup>5</sup> Kenneth S. Greenberg, “The Nose, the Lie, and the Duel in the Antebellum South,” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 95, No. 1 (Feb., 1990): 63. The significance of “giving the lie” cannot be overstated. As Greenberg points out, it was considered a deeply wounding charge throughout the early modern period into the antebellum South. He quotes a seventeenth century English source which testifies “that any other injury is canceled by giving the lie, and he that receiveth it standeth so charged in his honor and reputation, that he cannot disburden himself of that imputation, but by striking of him that hath so given it, or by challenging him to combat.”

<sup>6</sup> Johnson, *Traditions*, 46.

kills De Lancey, and flees the town stricken, apparently, by the gentlemanly paradox of a killer's dead aim and a poet's feeling heart. "[W]ith visible concern in his countenance," Haley, "called at several of his friend's houses, 'begging a Doctor might be sent to poor De Lancey,' whom he believed he had hurt." The article concludes by announcing that that a jury of inquest investigated and delivered their verdict the next morning, after which the Governor issued a proclamation for Haley's arrest on the charge of murder.<sup>7</sup> Johnson writes that Haley fled to "the Whigs" who "defended [him], and concealed him until his trial came on."<sup>8</sup> The doctor assembled an impressive legal team for his defense, though the contemporary sources are silent on whether or not the lawyers joined his cause because of their political principles. His defence included some of the most respected South Carolina lawyers, including "James Parsons, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Thomas Hayward and Alexander Harvey, Esquires." Other sources include John Rutledge among the defence.<sup>9</sup>

The chief difficulty for the defence was that the "duel" followed none of the commonly accepted guidelines, and Haley would have known that without witnesses he could be hanged as a murderer. Duels were not common in America prior to the Revolution, but the general customs would have been known: duels were to be conducted outside in the light of day, with "seconds" serving as partial witnesses for each participant. For gentlemen of De Lancey's standing, a surgeon would normally attend. There would also have been time allotted, perhaps several days, for the parties to come to an amicable resolution of the dispute.<sup>10</sup> The Haley - De Lancey affair followed none of

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<sup>7</sup> *New Hampshire Gazette*, October 4, 1771. The same newspaper article was printed throughout the colonies and can be found in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, September 9, 1771 and *The Connecticut Gazette*, September 27, 1771. William Bull, governor of South Carolina, published a proclamation in the *South Carolina Gazette* calling for the apprehension of Dr. John Haley who did "feloniously kill and slay Peter De Lancey, Esq." *South Carolina Gazette*, August 22, 1771.

<sup>8</sup> Johnson, *Traditions*, 46.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* *South Carolina Gazette*, November 7, 1771. Richard Barry, *Mr. Rutledge of South Carolina* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1942), 134-143. This work includes Rutledge among the defence council, but it presents a rather fanciful, detailed, and largely unsubstantiated version of the trial which calls this fact into question.

<sup>10</sup> Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 88. Duelling and its many rules have been written on from a variety of perspectives for centuries. A selection of sources on duelling in the Atlantic world would include: Donna Andrew, "The Code of Honour and Its Critics" in Paul Langford, A

these conventions. Was this simply an irregular duel fought by two reckless young gentlemen? Was it a hot-blooded argument propelled by alcohol into an impulsive shooting? Considering the politics of the time, could De Lancey's death have even been a political assassination, disguised as an affair of honour? Doctor Haley's Irish origins may be significant. With its quarrelsome and jealous Protestant ruling class, eighteenth century Ireland was known as "the land of [the] duel."<sup>11</sup> There are many examples of Irish duels that "bear closer comparison with assassinations than with ritualized combat," and there is recorded evidence of at least one dining room duel.<sup>12</sup> Haley may have brought the Anglo-Irish gentry's pugnacious culture with him to North America, as it appears that his encounter with De Lancey was not his only visit to the field of honour. David Ramsay, a member of the Continental Congress, wrote in 1776 that "Dr. Haley has at certain times a willingness to settle medical controversies with the sword."<sup>13</sup>

Late in 1771, colonial newspapers published the verdict. The jury convicted Haley of the lesser charge of manslaughter, and he was pardoned by the governor – the standard treatment of surviving duellists. Evidently the defence was able to frame the shooting match as a legitimate duel between gentlemen, and convinced the jury "that there was not the least Degree of Malice on [Haley's] part." De Lancey had consented to the terms, which, between gentlemen, served to absolve Haley of any underhandedness in

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*Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); V.G. Kiernan, *The Duel in European History: Honour and the Reign of Aristocracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Markku Peltonen, *The Duel in Early Modern England: Civility, Politeness, and Honour* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Thomas Fleming, *Duel: Alexander Hamilton, Aaron Burr, and the Future of America* (New York: Basic Books, 1999); James Kelly, "That Damn'd Thing Called Honour" *Duelling in Ireland, 1570-1860* (Cork, Ire.: Cork University Press, 1995); Jennifer Low, *Manhood and the Duel: Masculinity in Early Modern Drama and Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Kenneth S. Greenberg, *Masters and Statesmen...*; Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001); Evarts B. Greene, "The Code of Honor in Colonial and Revolutionary Times with Special References to New England," *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, Vol. 26 (1927): 367-388; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *The Shaping of Southern Culture: Honor, Grace, and War, 1760s-1890s* (Chapel Hill [N.C.]: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

<sup>11</sup> James Kelly, *That Damn'd Thing*, 1.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, 53.

<sup>13</sup> David Ramsay to Benjamin Rush, July 27, 1776 quoted in Waring, *A History of Medicine in South Carolina*, 241.

the eyes the colonial jury. Though irregular, this was considered an affair of honour.<sup>14</sup> According to Johnson, Haley's "acquittal was considered a great triumph by the Whigs and popular party," and his legal counsel "acquired no small Degree of Applause by their Pleading upon this Occasion."<sup>15</sup>

Though Johnson sees this personal quarrel in the larger context of the American Revolution, it was honour that justified the killing of Peter De Lancey Jr. Without this key element, the loyalist Governor William Bull would not have pardoned a man responsible for killing a fellow royal office holder. In spite of the dubious form of the duel, the court accepted the idea that the code of honour was not a static concept. In fact, as will be argued throughout this dissertation, it was a pliant idea that could be moulded to justify actions that under other circumstances would seem dishonourable, if not murderous.

If this was indeed a duel between a loyalist and a patriot, it is the only one of its kind known. That in itself is an important fact. A duel is ostensibly a contest between equals, where each participant is accorded respect and fairness. The De Lancey – Haley incident occurred in 1771, long before disagreements escalated into war. The loyalists and patriots rarely offered each other such generous terms later during the conflict, although the British and Continental forces sometimes did extend courtesies when it was appropriate.<sup>16</sup> Instead, the war between loyalists and patriots was a morally asymmetrical contest from both perspectives. The loyalists regarded the patriots as rebels; the patriots thought of the loyalists as traitors and collaborators.

The duel may be the most well-known and dramatic expression of honour in the early modern period, but it only explains a fraction of what honour meant. The first part

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<sup>14</sup> *South Carolina Gazette*, November 7, 1771. *South Carolina Court of General Sessions Journal, 1769-1776*: 154-155. South Carolina Department of Archives and History. The pardon is the only extant reference to the case in the South Carolina court records. Interestingly, some versions of the event included Haley's name, but, perhaps out of respect to the honoured family, omitted the De Lancey name altogether. *New Hampshire Gazette*, December 6, 1771.

<sup>15</sup> Johnson, *Traditions*, 46-47.

<sup>16</sup> An excellent discussion of the courtesies shared between the British and patriots can be found in Judith Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002): 73-105, (Chapter 3 "Gentlemen at War").

of this chapter sets out to explore the idea of honour from the perspectives of early modern commentators, colonial Americans, and modern social science to form an explanatory model for the experience of loyalist gentlemen. Honour, at its core, is a claim or demand made on others for respect; the claim is either accepted or denied. How this claim manifests itself and the criteria for honourable manhood differs between cultures and over time. For people in the eighteenth century honour was as a very real, if confusing, concept. Gentlemen inherited the traditional ideas of manly assertiveness, independence, and mastery over self and household. Yet traditional, primal honour was changing under pressure from newer cultural virtues like politeness and sensibility. As will be shown, rather than supplant honour as a virtue, these competing ideas became part of its construction. Polished manners, genteel homes, and fine clothing were badges of manhood and symbols of honour. They were expressions of competence, prowess, and mastery. Honour conferred power. Only by understanding what it meant to have honour and to be a gentleman can the full impact of the loyalists' political death be appreciated.

The second half of this chapter explores patriot attacks on these honourable symbols through acts of vandalism, home invasions, and finally confiscation of loyalist estates. Property confiscation served the practical purpose of denying a traitorous enemy assets and resources, but it also stripped a gentleman of some of the most important emblems of his status. Without a home and property, loyalist men lost their power over their family and dependants, as well as respect and authority in their community. Additionally, loyalist judges and lawyers were barred from practicing law, merchants were boycotted, and even clergymen who spoke for the Crown were denied the civil and ecclesiastic authority they enjoyed before the Revolution. The fundamental elements of eighteenth century patriarchy were torn away, and the loyalist gentleman was transformed into the antithesis of both the masculine and patriot ideal. Dependant on the British, unable to look after his family, and cast out from his community, the loyalist was dishonoured and unmanned. Many loyalists spent the rest of the war, and beyond, finding ways to restore their lost honour.

Honour, like all aspects of culture, is an ever-evolving process. Yet, for those who live in societies dominated by honour culture, called timocracies, the tenets seem firm

and tested.<sup>17</sup> If the “punctilios” or finer points of honour are sometimes confusing, complex, or even contradictory, adherents accept their authority based on a belief in the tenets’ ancient tradition, and more importantly, because the code is commonly accepted among a population. The concept of honour exists in some form in every culture and can be found at every point in recorded human history. Whether it is referred to as *timé*, *bushido*, *ird*, *pashtunwalli*, face, or honour, it is a masculine need for public esteem, good reputation, individual dignity, and acceptance in a peer group dominated by a system of reciprocal respect and deference. Western philosophers have struggled to define and articulate the meaning of this slippery idea from classical Greece to the post-industrial world. Part of what makes honour such a difficult concept is that it can be incredibly expansive. To borrow from a study of Mediterranean cultures: in honour “the whole man is contemplated.”<sup>18</sup> Modern uses of the term such as “honour system” or “honour roll” fall far short of what this word once meant in Western culture. According to the anthropologist Julian Pitt-Rivers, western European attitudes toward the concept changed radically in the early twentieth century. The “machine guns and artillery of the First World War” writes Pitt-Rivers, “opened a mass grave for honour.”<sup>19</sup> Yet it is clear from the historical record that eighteenth century men in the Atlantic World were deeply concerned with their personal and collective honour. The term appears regularly in the sources, but historians often do not engage with it, perhaps assuming it is rhetoric or bluster or a quirk of language. In reality men internalized this language and agonized over their personal honour, along with the honour of their families, communities, and nations. As a moral or ethical guiding principle, honour was a source of motivation that worked alongside other factors such as economics or religion. As Julian Pitt-Rivers and J.G. Peristiany write, honour cannot “be reduced and treated as an epiphenomenon of

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<sup>17</sup> Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 94-97. A timocracy is society where only property owners can hold positions of power, and this condition is fundamentally tied to honour. The Old South, ancient Athens, and the Roman Republic are all examples of timocratic societies.

<sup>18</sup> John Davis, *People of the Mediterranean: An Essay in Comparative Social Anthropology* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1977), 98.

<sup>19</sup> J.G. Peristiany and Julian Pitt-Rivers, eds., *Honor and Grace in Anthropology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 5.

some other factor.” Bertram Wyatt-Brown calls honour the “the missing element in the historian’s grasp of events” of the American Revolution.<sup>20</sup> If so, it is surprising that there has never been an exploration of the loyalist experience from the perspective of honour.

Loyalists have often been treated as being somehow culturally different from other British colonists in America, especially patriots. The loyalist mind, writes Bernard Bailyn, was dominated by an “ancient, honorable, and moribund philosophy”.<sup>21</sup> In this sense the loyalist idea of honour was an outmoded vestige of feudalism. In his work on Southern honour, Wyatt-Brown concurs, defining the loyalist honour code as centred on “submission to established authority.”<sup>22</sup> Yet loyalists and patriots were products of the same culture, and were actually animated by similar ideas of honour. Both the defence of individual rights and the authority of the King were ancient tropes in the English tradition, and, in the loyalist mind were not at odds. In fact the Crown was considered the defender of individual rights and property in the face of rebel usurpation. In a recent reappraisal of *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson*, Bernard Bailyn notes that many of the character traits that led the deeply conservative governor down the path to exile – clinging to unpopular beliefs, patient endurance of ridicule and spite – were ones that, in a different situation, would have been considered Christian virtues in New England.<sup>23</sup> The Puritan ethic was perhaps as strong in the loyalist camp as the patriot.

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<sup>20</sup> Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers *Honor and Grace*, 5. Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *The Shaping of Southern Culture: Honor, Grace, and War, 1760s-1890s*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 32. There were at least two studies that looked at concepts of honour in the American Revolution prior to Wyatt-Brown’s statement: Douglas Adair, *Fame and the Founding Fathers* (Toronto: W.W. Norton & Co., 1974) and Peter McNamara, *The Noblest Minds: Fame, Honor, and the Founding Fathers* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1999). Since Wyatt-Brown’s work there have been explorations of patriot honour in the American Revolution and among prominent men in the early republic. Caroline Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honour: Service and Sacrifice in George Washington’s Army* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (New Haven Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2001); Peter McNamara, *The Noblest Minds: Fame, Honor, and the Founding Fathers* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1999).

<sup>21</sup> Bernard Bailyn *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1992, [1967]), 312.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, 33.

<sup>23</sup> Bernard Bailyn, “Thomas Hutchinson in Context: The ‘Ordeal’ Revisited,” *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 2004 114(2): 281-300. On the Puritan Ethic see: Edmund S. Morgan, “The Puritan Ethic and the American Revolution.” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 24, No.1 (Jan., 1967): 3-43.

Michael Kammen wrote in 1976 that loyalists often faced a “*crise de conscience*” when brought before revolutionary committees and associations. Kammen does not use honour as an explanatory model for this phenomenon, but rather argues the loyalist conscience was influenced by “subtle and impalpable influences, for the most part unconscious and emotional, which so largely determine motive and conduct.” William Smith Jr., the chief justice for the Colony of New York and later Upper Canada, declared he “refused the [rebel] oath as contrary to my conscience, my honor, & my love to the country.”<sup>24</sup> Smith’s statement appears sincere. Even if his actions and political choices were consistent with his personal interests, or even hopes that his refusal might be rewarded by the British as patriots may have suggested, that does not detract from his use of honour to explain and defend his actions. As Douglas Adair explains in *Fame and Founding Fathers*, honour and interest were inextricably linked in the minds of public men of the eighteenth century. Members of the Continental Congress were motivated by personal interest for fame, and the material benefits that accompanied renown, while at the same time having the collective interests of the colonies in mind. They saw no contradiction. Alexander Hamilton wrote that the “love of fame...is the ruling passion of the noblest minds.” Adair argues that “[t]he pursuit of fame...was a way of transforming egotism and self-aggrandizing impulses into public service.” “[P]ublic service nobly (and selfishly) performed” continues Adair, “was the surest way to build ‘lasting monuments’ and earn the perpetual remembrance of posterity.”<sup>25</sup> The loyalist gentlemen examined in this study shared the same culture with their patriot brothers, and though they may have hoped for government preferment and lucrative offices from the Crown, they also believed they were acting in the best interests of the colonies as a whole. The arch-loyalist pamphleteer and Anglican minister Charles Inglis even included the sentiment “Loyalty and Interest United” on the cover of his response to Paine’s *Common Sense*, though it was dropped in the final printed version. This idea of self-interested service may seem counterintuitive or hypocritical, but an honour code is built upon a “logic of its

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<sup>24</sup> Michael Kammen, “The American Revolution as a Crise de Conscience: The Case of New York,” in Richard M. Jelison, ed., *Society, Freedom, and Conscience: The Coming of the Revolution in Virginia, Massachusetts, and New York* (New York: Norton, 1976), 125-89. Quotation is from page 125.

<sup>25</sup> Adair, *Fame and the Founding Fathers*, 7-8.



own which [can] dispel the paradoxes.”<sup>26</sup> The deep cultural traditions inherited by colonial gentlemen provided added assurances that they were behaving honourably.

The gentleman’s honour culture of the eighteenth century had evolved from aristocratic codes of medieval Europe and was preserved by early modern writers obsessed with honour. One historian of Elizabethan literature even described the playwrights and essayists of the period as being under a “fixed intoxication” with explaining and extolling the idea. One need only glance at Shakespeare’s plays to verify the Elizabethan preoccupation with aristocratic honour.<sup>27</sup> Yet medieval and early modern historians have noted the slow and uneven transformation of elite honour culture. According to Mervyn James, the fifteenth century honour culture based in violence and ferocity underwent a taming process which corresponded with the centralization of the English state. By the age of Elizabeth, the independent and quarrelsome lords were being civilized through education, Christianity, litigiousness, and a dedication to the Crown.<sup>28</sup> The transition from medieval warriors to courtly retainers was a product of the rise in civility, so that by the late seventeenth century a new and less violent elite culture had taken root. Linda Pollock has argued that this transformation should not be viewed as Christian virtue and civility winning out over medieval barbarity, but rather that English traditions of honour became a source of stability. “Honor was ubiquitous” writes Pollock, but it was not necessarily a violent ethic. Rather it was a day-to-day resource concerned with “restraint and reconciliation” and the preservation of familial and kinship bonds. English honour codes produced peacemakers more often than duellists.<sup>29</sup> As seen in Dr. Haley’s sorrow in killing De Lancey, men could have contradictory feeling towards

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<sup>26</sup> Peristiany and Pitt-Rivers, *Honor and Grace*, 5. Charles Inglis, *The Deceiver Unmasked* (New York: Samuel Loudon, 1776).

<sup>27</sup> Curtis Brown Watson, *Shakespeare and the Renaissance Concept of Honor* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960), 11.

<sup>28</sup> Mervyn James, “English Politics and the Concept of Honour, 1485-1642”, *Past and Present Supplement* 3, 1978.

<sup>29</sup> Linda Pollock, “Honor, Gender, and Reconciliation in Elite Culture, 1570-1700,” *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 1, (Jan. 2007): 3-29, 8-9. For a brief historiography of early modern English honour culture see: Brendan Kane, *The Politics and Culture of Honour in Britain and Ireland, 1541-1641* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 5-7.

violence, and the rise of civility, politeness, and sensibility during this period added to the confusion.

The eighteenth century witnessed remarkable changes to the idea of honour. Because wealth and literacy expanded into the growing ranks of the middling sort, historians have argued that traditional honour built on household patriarchy gave way to the idea of the “polite gentleman,” where honour shifted from a concern for reputation to the cultivation of an inner life and morals.<sup>30</sup> Helped along with the widely available courtesy literature derived from the advice books for Renaissance nobility, the middling sorts fused concepts of gentility, Christianity, and honour. Markku Peltonen argues, however, that the rise of polite culture simply provided new ways to give offense which then had to be answered in the older language and rituals of honour.<sup>31</sup> Yet, as Robert Shoemaker has shown, there was a notable decline in the incidents of public insult and duels in eighteenth century London.<sup>32</sup> As ever-increasing numbers of middling gentlemen adopted cultural forms of aristocratic politeness, it became apparent in the late eighteenth century that this code of conduct could be quite crass and shallow. Without a sound moral education, gentility, politeness, and attention to taste might just create a fop: a man more concerned with fashion and gaiety than with manly pursuits and integrity.<sup>33</sup> The various reactions to the publication of *Lord Chesterfield’s Letters* (1774) provide ample evidence of the contentious debate over the meaning and use of genteel behaviour. Chesterfield’s letters are full of advice to his illegitimate son on how to ingratiate himself with high ranking people. “I owe much more of the success which I have had in this world”, wrote Chesterfield, “to my manners, than to any superior degree of merit or knowledge.” “Half the business is done,” he advised his son, “when one has gained the heart and affections of those with whom one is to transact it.” Such instruction led Samuel Johnson to deliver

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<sup>30</sup> Karen Harvey, “The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800,” *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (Apr., 2005): 303.

<sup>31</sup> Peltonen, *The Duel in Early Modern England*, 52.

<sup>32</sup> Robert B. Shoemaker, “The Decline of Public Insult in London, 1660-1800.” *Past & Present*, No. 169 (Nov. 2000):97-131, and “The Taming of the Duel: Masculinity, Honour and Ritual Violence in London, 1660-1800” *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 3 (Sept., 2002): 525-545.

<sup>33</sup> Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, 1660-1800* (London: Pearson Education, 2001), 137-162 (“The Fop” and “The Function of Foppery”).

his scathing rebuke that Lord Chesterfield's letters "teach the morals of a whore and the manners of a dancing master."<sup>34</sup> The emergence of sensibility in the late eighteenth century challenged the culture represented by *Lord Chesterfield's Letters*. Sensibility did not dispense with the ideas of civility and politeness, but stressed a more honest connection with the emotions and empathy. Public displays of sorrow for another's pain, for example, became marks of distinction in some circles. This deeper feeling was considered the path to morality, and was, as David Hume wrote, the source of "true virtue and honour."<sup>35</sup> If sensibility merged with and altered the standards of politeness, it would seem reasonable that this new emotional ethic would curtail the more ancient demands of honour. Within elite circles the preoccupation with older ideas of honour declined, but Michèle Cohen argues that the rise of sensibility was actually accompanied with an increased interest in chivalry and the cultivation of more traditional manly virtues. With the ongoing struggles with France, the chattiness of polite society was considered effeminizing, and the laconic Englishmen became a vaunted masculine trope against the loquacious Frenchmen.<sup>36</sup> The old ideas of honour waxed and waned with the tides of fashionable behaviour, but distinction remained the goal of gentlemen.

The colonies imported England's changing mores, but the settler experience in America further transformed European concepts of masculinity and honour in ways that are only now coming into focus.<sup>37</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville would agree that Americans

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<sup>34</sup> Philip Dormer Stanhope, Fourth Earl of Chesterfield, *Lord Chesterfield's Letters*, ed. David Roberts, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 268-269. Letter to his son, July 21, 1752; Samuel Johnson quoted in Roger Coxon, *Chesterfield and His Critics*, (London: Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1925), 1. Also see: Charles Pullen, "Lord Chesterfield and Eighteenth Century Appearance and Reality", *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Summer, 1968):501-515.

<sup>35</sup> Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, 28. For an exploration of sensibility see: G.J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992); Paul Goring, *The Rhetoric of Sensibility in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>36</sup> Michèle Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1996). For example, 106-109.

<sup>37</sup> Toby Ditz. "Afterword: Contending Masculinities in Early America" in *New Men: Manliness in Early America* Thomas Foster ed. (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 256. The essays in this work provide an excellent starting point for the myriad and competing forms of masculinity in colonial and Revolutionary America. Democratic masculine ideals have been explored at length by Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York:

altered and adapted European honour codes to their own needs. In his famous antebellum study, *Democracy in America* (1835/1840), he notes that the old chivalric code of honour lingered in America “like a religion which has some temples left standing, though men have ceased to believe in it.” To Tocqueville, the non-slaveholding Americans of the North honoured commerce and hard work over the martial bravery and genteel idleness of the European elite. The American honour code even made room for the uneven fortunes of market forces, and while bankruptcy was considered a moral stain in the eighteenth century, Tocqueville observed that such stigma was largely absent in antebellum America.<sup>38</sup> Tocqueville’s appraisal of America may be coloured by the jarring differences he perceived from his native France and he is likely exaggerating American society’s blasé attitude towards bankruptcy, but he was picking up on a very real change in social attitudes caused by the commercial revolution of the early nineteenth century and the ruinous and baffling panics which followed.<sup>39</sup> Tocqueville’s discussion of both the “capricious” nature of honour and its variability are illuminating,<sup>40</sup> and show how much honour culture changed within two generations of the American Revolution. The gentlemanly honour of colonial Americans, however, still followed the European lead.

Throughout the cultural changes of the sixteenth to the late eighteenth centuries, there were two key elements of honour which persisted: a deep concern for a reputation of honesty and trustworthiness, and household patriarchy. A gentleman’s ability to keep promises, which would assure others that they could have “faith” in his word, was a consistent sign of character across the centuries. Gentlemen routinely used this quality as a benchmark of honour in their assessments of others.<sup>41</sup> Dishonesty was such an

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Basic Books, 1993) and Michael Kann, *A Republic of Men: The American Founders, Gendered Language and Patriarchal Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

<sup>38</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. Henry Reeve (New York: Bantam, 2000 [1835]), 776-777. Tocqueville engages in an interesting discussion of “American honor” in chapter 18, 770-784.

<sup>39</sup> The most recent discussion of the idea of debt, bankruptcy, and the lessening of the moral stigma towards insolvency is Bruce H. Mann, *Republic of Debtors: Bankruptcy in the Age of American Independence* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

<sup>40</sup> Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 773.

<sup>41</sup> Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 67-68.

important subject that writers expounded on its “pernicious consequences in society”, using language strikingly similar to that used in later attacks on loyalists. One colonial writer advised that liars “ought especially to be banished from that social intercourse among men, which the poison of this vice tends...to contaminate and destroy.”<sup>42</sup> As the revolutionary crisis intensified, loyalists and patriots often accused one another of lying and hiding their true motives. The dominance of the patriot press, as will be shown in chapter three, ensured that the idea of Tory predilections towards “deceit, flattery, [and] falsehood” became a common refrain throughout the colonies.<sup>43</sup>

In addition to the broad generalization of loyalists as liars, individual loyalists were branded as oath breakers and dissemblers. Thomas Brown of Georgia, a wealthy young gentleman, was beaten by a mob, humiliated with tar and feathers, and dragged before the townspeople of Augusta where he “repented of his past conduct” and pledged himself to the patriot cause. At Brown’s first opportunity he fled to British protection. The *Georgia Gazette* declared that Brown had “publicly forfeited his honor and violated the oath voluntarily taken... [and] is therefore not to be considered for the future in the light of a gentleman...”<sup>44</sup> The loyalist likely believed that any oath he had given was coerced and therefore non-binding, but the patriot authorities took this oath-breaking as an example of the essential treachery of men like Brown. Consequently, patriots reasoned that it was Brown’s own deceit, and not the crowd action, which caused his political death.

A reputation for honesty was essential to the political life of a gentleman, but so too was an ordered household. Historians have argued this period saw the emergence of the separate spheres of men and women, as men engaged more in a market economy and women turned their attention to cultivating virtue and orderliness within the home.<sup>45</sup> Yet

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<sup>42</sup> “He that is capable of telling a falsehood...” *The New York Gazette*, Dec. 7, 1767.

<sup>43</sup> *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, Nov. 18, 1775.

<sup>44</sup> Quoted in Catherine S. Crary, *The Price of Loyalty: Tory Writings from the American Revolution* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1973), 64-66.

<sup>45</sup> The idea of separate spheres and the cult of true womanhood: Barbara Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860” *American Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1966): 151-74. The particular manifestation of separate spheres as “republican motherhood” which arose around the time of the American Revolution was first observed by Linda Kerber, “The Republican Mother: Women and Enlightenment – An American

manhood was also inextricably linked with the home and family. Karen Harvey is probably the most recent and assertive English historian to argue that the “house literally and metaphorically generated masculine identities.”<sup>46</sup> Honour, patriarchy, and governance were deeply bound up in notions of family and household. This is not to say that women did not have an important role and authority in the home, but the projection of patriarchal dominance was essential for men. The spectre of being considered a “henpeck’d husband” or worse, a cuckold, were monstrous threats to a man’s status. Men could only claim authority in the community by keeping an orderly family.<sup>47</sup> Robert Cleaver, a seventeenth century essayist, argued that “it is impossible for a man to understand how to govern the commonwealth, that doth not know how to rule his own house.”<sup>48</sup> Sir Robert Filmer would have agreed. In his *Patriarcha*, (posthumously published in 1680), he famously argued that the male householder was the foundation for all civil authority, and was the basis for the divine right of kings. Yet as Linda Kerber argues, seventeenth century philosophers, as well as many people in the eighteenth century, did not believe this constituted absolute male power. John Locke, for instance, argued that the Fifth Commandment “to Honour thy Father and Mother” showed that parental authority was shared and not purely vested in fathers. Marriage, like civil society, was made up of voluntary associations.<sup>49</sup> Nonetheless, men continued to see the

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Perspective” *American Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 2, (Summer, 1976): 187-205 and Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1980). The English experience of this complex transformation has been deftly explored by Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (London: Routledge, 2002 [1987]).

<sup>46</sup> Karen Harvey, *The Little Republic: Masculinity and Domestic Authority in Eighteenth Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 167.

<sup>47</sup> The use of the term “henpeck’d” is explored by Benjamin Irvin, “Of Eloquence ‘Manly’ and ‘Monstrous’: The Henpecked Husband in Revolutionary Political Debate, 1774-1775.” In Foster, *New Men... 195-216*. For cuckoldry see Thomas A. Foster, *Sex and the Eighteenth-Century Man: Massachusetts and the History of Sexuality in America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006), 45-49. The menace of cuckoldry is also explored in Toby L. Ditz, “Shipwrecked; or, Masculinity Imperiled: Mercantile Representations of Failure and the Gendered Self in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia”, *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 81, No. 1 (Jun., 1994): 64-65.

<sup>48</sup> Elizabeth Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex, and Marriage*. (Harlow, UK: Addison Wesley Longman, Ltd., 1999), 4.

<sup>49</sup> Kerber, “Republican Mothers,” 189-190.

linkages between the idea of the King as father and their own household governance.<sup>50</sup> Honour was bound up in the concept of divinely sanctioned authority and the obedience of the members of his little commonwealth. The philosopher Thomas Hobbes very shrewdly noted that “to obey is to honour; because no man obeys them, whom they think have no power to help or to hurt them.” Disobedience, consequently, is “to Dishonour.”<sup>51</sup> As Rhys Isaac observes of colonial Virginia, the “wealth of the patriarch consists primarily of the accumulated obligations of dependents”.<sup>52</sup> Nancy Rhoden, Carole Shammas and others have noted that the American Revolution strained traditional patriarchy, even in elite patriot households, but the concept remained a powerful source of authority.<sup>53</sup> The attacks on loyalist households, which will be explored later in this chapter, present clear evidence of the importance colonial Americans placed on the household and its function as extensions or representations of men. Undermining loyalist patriarchy was a key factor leading to political death.

In the last few decades social scientists and humanists have directed considerable effort to understanding the general concept of honour in a variety of ways that inform this study of eighteenth century honour codes.<sup>54</sup> Honour is often differentiated between

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<sup>50</sup> Edwin G. Burrows and Michael Wallace, “The American Revolution: The Ideology and Psychology of National Liberation” *Perspectives in American History*, Vol. 6 (1972): 174, 261. Harvey, *Little Republic*, 62; Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, 119-120.

<sup>51</sup> Quoted in Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 10. For an extended discussion of Hobbes’ perspectives on honour see Laurie M. Johnson Bagby, *Thomas Hobbes: Turning Point for Honor*. (New York: Lexington Books, 2009).

<sup>52</sup> Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 21.

<sup>53</sup> Nancy Rhoden, “Patriarchal Authority in Revolutionary Virginia: Connecting Familial Relations with Revolutionary Crises” in Nancy Rhoden, ed. *English Atlantics Revisited: Essays Honouring Professor Ian K. Steele* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2007), 410-449. Rhoden observes that both Richard Henry Lee and Landon Carter were anxious about their inability to command obedience within their families, while their sons were actually quite dedicated to traditional ideas. Carole Shammas, *A History of Household Government in America*. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002): 59-60. Shammas notes that while 10 of the 13 colonies abolished primogeniture and entail, this actually strengthened the power of the patriarch, as he was no longer bound by law, but by his own decisions.

<sup>54</sup> For wider examinations of honour in addition to Persistany and Pitt-Rivers, *Honor and Grace*, see: Frank Henderson Stewart, *Honor*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994). Alexander Welsh, *What is Honor?: A Question of Moral Imperatives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008). Elvin Hatch, “Theories of Social Honor” *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 91, No. 2, (Jun. 1989): 341-353. Geoffrey

internal moral imperatives (conscience) and external projections (reputation, face, or status). Internal feelings of honour and the outward expression of social honour are not independent of one another. As the anthropologist Julian Pitt-Rivers observed “honor felt becomes honor claimed, and honor claimed becomes honour paid.”<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, men internalize the social response to their claim, feeling pride or satisfaction if honour is indeed paid to them, and shame or anger if denied.

Another way of thinking about honour is in “horizontal” and “vertical” categories. Horizontal honour is the sort of imperative felt as people strive to prove themselves among their peers. Vertical honour is the desire to perform well for superiors and be rewarded.<sup>56</sup> In eighteenth century social relations, this concept played out in the vast and complex system of patrons and clients. Whether a gentleman or a labourer, all men fit somehow into these systems, wherein ritualized expressions of deference and gratitude between the ranks were essential. A patron provided employment or prestige to his clients by purchasing their services and making it public knowledge that the two men were “friends.” In return the client performed services for his patron and publicly obeyed him. Gentlemen sometimes even replicated the *noblesse oblige* of Europe, a concept displayed in one of the memoirs of George Robert Twelves Hewes. After crafting a pair of shoes for the wealthy John Hancock, Hewes was invited to a brief and awkward toast on New Year’s Day at the gentleman’s manor. In a perfect example of the eighteenth century idea of condescension, Hancock himself poured a glass of wine for Hewes, before giving him a coin and sending the terrified young man on his way.<sup>57</sup> Gentlemen were beholden to even greater men for their advancement. Contemporaries described these connections in friendly terms, but they represented a system of unequal obligations and loyalties, or business relationships made solemn with the weight of honour and paternalism. The King

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Brennan and Philip Pettit, *The Economy of Esteem: An Essay on Civil and Political Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>55</sup> Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Honor and Social Status” in J.G. Peristiany ed., *Honor and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*. (London: Weidenfield & Nicholson, 1966), 22.

<sup>56</sup> Stewart, *Honor*, 54

<sup>57</sup> Alfred F. Young, “George Robert Twelves Hewes (1742-1840): A Boston Shoemaker and the Memory of the American Revolution” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 38, No. 4 (Oct., 1981): 561-562.



sat atop this massive and often vague system, and dispensed the most lucrative and honourable positions and sinecures.<sup>58</sup> The connection between honour and material wealth has been examined by scholars for centuries, and even in the eighteenth century social commentators knew that there was more to the pursuit of a fortune than physical comfort or luxury. According to Adam Smith, it was not “economic motivation that prompts a man to work, but status, respect, esteem, moral mettle, qualities which would allow him to be a man of worth and dignity.”<sup>59</sup> By European standards, America was a land rich in material but poor in structured hierarchy and this muddled the relationship between wealth and honour. The relatively widespread prosperity of the colonies meant that self-styled gentlemen sometimes found their pretences to authority questioned or denied by their fellow colonists. It has even been argued that deference was perhaps more of an abstract ideal in the minds of the elite than a reality in colonial America.<sup>60</sup> Colonial gentlemen could therefore be quite touchy when it came to matters of respect.

The interpretation which most informs this dissertation is the anthropologist Frank Henderson Stewart’s conception of honour as a “right to respect.” Stewart’s comparative study of European literature, nineteenth century German jurisprudence, and the concept of *ird* among the Bedouin of Arabia, shows that the right to respect is a common trait among honour-conscious societies. Honour is a man’s inner feeling of worth and a public appraisal of the man based on his expression of culturally specific virtues. Most importantly, as Stewart argues, honour operates as a claim-right, which in this case is a duty placed on others to treat an individual with respect. “On the one side is the bearer [of honour]” writes Stewart, “which gives him a right to respect; and on the other is the world, which has a duty to treat the bearer with respect.”<sup>61</sup> Whether or not anyone used this sort of phrasing at the time, this was how honour functioned in the colonies and

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<sup>58</sup> Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991): 57, 77-92.

<sup>59</sup> Hatch, “Theories of Social Honor,” 345.

<sup>60</sup> Michael Zuckerman, “Tocqueville, Turner, and Turds: Four Stories of Manners in Early America” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 85, No. 1 (Jun., 1998): 13-42.

<sup>61</sup> Stewart, *Honor*, 21.

throughout the English Atlantic. In the case of the loyalists examined in this work, a central element of their political death was the rejection of their claim-right to honour.

Building on the idea of honour as a claim-right, it becomes even more obvious that personal honour derives from the acclaim of a group. As Bertram Wyatt-Brown observes, “Kinlessness and solitude are the twin dangers to be avoided at all costs.”<sup>62</sup> Family and community are sources of honour, but so too are what Stewart calls “honour groups.”<sup>63</sup> In Alexis de Tocqueville’s exploration of American honour, he clearly describes this idea:

whenever men collect together as a distinct community, the notion of honour instantly grows up amongst them; that is to say, a system of opinions peculiar to themselves as to what is blamable or commendable; and these peculiar rules always originate in the special habits and special interests of the community.<sup>64</sup>

It is important not to think of honour groups as too rigidly demarcated. Men can belong to one or many honour groups, and they can overlap and conflict with one another. Distinctions are blurry and only rarely formalized. R.W. Connell’s idea of hegemonic masculinity is useful in helping to understand how honour groups operate. Connell posits that societies encourage men to strive towards an idealized set of behaviours to dominate women as well as other men who do not adhere to these standards. Not all men are willing or physically, intellectually, or economically equipped to live up to these criteria. Thus there are “multiple masculinities” which are in tension or competition with one another.<sup>65</sup> Honour groups operate in similar ways, but they are tied to specific locations, institutions, professions, or even larger groups with a shared culture like castes or religious confessions. Looking at the eighteenth century, a ship and its crew or a regiment could be considered an honour group, but so too could the Royal Navy or army as a whole. The officers thought of themselves as gentlemen who belonged to an

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<sup>62</sup> Wyatt-Brown, *The Shaping of Southern Culture*, 34.

<sup>63</sup> Stewart, *Honor*, 54.

<sup>64</sup> Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 775.

<sup>65</sup> R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept.” *Gender and Society*, Vol. 19, No. 6 (Dec., 2005): 829-859.

international fraternity of gentlemen. In that sense, community leaders in the colonies would feel themselves at the head of a local honour group, but also participate in a regional fraternity of leaders, which was connected to the wider Atlantic elite. Depending on the size of the honour group, each member shares in the triumphs and failures, and accepts the honours and dishonours of the group as a whole. Individuals, then, are conscious of their roles within the group, and how the behaviour of one member can reflect back on others.<sup>66</sup>

There were national, regional, and professional concepts of honour which existed side by side and overlapped throughout the Atlantic world. Soldiers had a code of honour, as did physicians, clergy and even fur traders and labourers.<sup>67</sup> Daniel Defoe, for example, laid out the best practices for an honourable merchant in *The Complete English Tradesmen*.<sup>68</sup> The use of honour among merchants is interesting considering their relationships were fraught with disputes. They regularly employed the language of honour, and because of the vast distances and spotty communication, relied on a system of trust and goodwill. Merchants had to be sure orders were filled and money was transferred and thus paid close attention to their associates' reputations for competence and honesty. Trust was vital in the Atlantic trade networks, but an honourable reputation was not always sufficient to quell the anxieties of merchants. Family networks could be reliable, and as Nuala Zahedieh notes, minority subgroups such as Quakers, Jews, and Huguenots were particularly strong in that they could command "loyalty, mutual support,

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<sup>66</sup> Stewart, *Honor*, 101. Stewart uses the analogy of a pie with many slices to explain how this function is understood among Bedouin tribesmen. Each member of the group shares the collective honour of the whole, though they each have their own slice. The idea of an honour group is also very similar to Max Weber's concept of a "status group." Weber includes the idea of a pariah group in his formulation, which can also be seen to work in the context of colonial American slavery. See: H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills trans. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 186-194.

<sup>67</sup> Barbara Donagan, "The Web of Honour: Soldiers, Christians, and Gentlemen in the English Civil War" *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 44, No.2, (Jun. 2001): 365-389. Arthur N. Gilbert, "Law and Honour Among Eighteenth-Century British Army Officers." *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 19, No.1, (1976): 75-87. The idea of "masculine capital" is presented in Carolyn Prodruchny, *Making the Voyageur World: Travelers and Traders in the North American Fur Trade* (Lincoln NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 13-14.

<sup>68</sup> Daniel Defoe, *The Complete English Tradesmen* (London: 1726).

and unconditional obedience” from their members, both from the fear of ostracism and duty to God.<sup>69</sup>

Negative reports of unsteady habits could sink the fortunes of any trader. Yet as John Smail has shown, merchants could act in extraordinarily selfish or even duplicitous ways, but continue to defend their actions using the vocabulary of honour. What was actually quite underhanded and dishonest behaviour could be seen as honourable when manipulated with significant doses of guile and casuistry. To modern eyes, the honour of the eighteenth century was fraught with logical paradoxes, and was sometimes less about doing “the right thing,” than to “be seen to be doing the right thing.”<sup>70</sup> While all men were expected to keep their word, pay their debts, and be loyal to their friends, gentlemen considered themselves guided by a higher sense of morality dictated by their strict and delicate code of personal honour. To accuse a gentleman of lying, as seen in the opening vignette, was to imply that he had no honour. Yet this same idea of honour could and did serve as a disguise or shield for all sorts of impropriety. Even if a gentleman was guilty of an ethical violation, he could deny it and hide behind his honour.<sup>71</sup>

Military officers followed their own stern, martial code of honour, derived from the romanticized notions of medieval knights, but this was also subject to the same tensions and contradictions experienced in the wider British society. Duelling was forbidden under military law and was generally on the decline among the upper social ranks in England, but it was not uncommon for British officers to visit the field of honour. Slightings and insults were regularly settled with swords or pistols, and though there were attempts to curb the custom, officers who refused a challenge were often ostracised by their peers, or even in some rare cases, brought up on charges for dishonouring of the

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<sup>69</sup> Nuala Zahedieh, *The Capital and the Colonies: London and the Atlantic Economy, 1660-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 94-97, 107-109.

<sup>70</sup> John Smail, “Credit, Risk, and Honor in Eighteenth Century Commerce.” *Journal of British Studies*, 44, (July 2005): 450-451.

<sup>71</sup> Mervyn James addresses this subject in *English Politics and the Concept of Honour...28*. The use of honour as a shield can be seen in the Robinson scandal in colonial Virginia. Joseph Albert Ernst, “The Robinson Scandal Redivivus: Money, Debts, and Politics in Revolutionary Virginia.” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 77, No. 2 (Apr., 1969):146-173.

regiment.<sup>72</sup> In the aristocratic European tradition, the gentleman who lived by the sword was far superior to those who might have worn fine clothes, but lived chiefly by trade. The comparative honour of warriors and merchants differed between regions and ethnicities, and the differences so clearly visible in the early modern period persisted into the eighteenth century. The French aristocracy, according to an Elizabethan observer, thought the merchant's "traffique ignoble", while Italian nobles were more comfortable with the idea of trade, though they left the chore of selling in the markets and "the gaine of Retailing to the [common] people."<sup>73</sup> The English and the Dutch were perhaps the most open to the rising power of merchants, though the old prejudices still lingered. Daniel Defoe, for instance, believed that a true gentleman gave up "ravening after money."<sup>74</sup> There are numerous examples during this period that show a vestigial echo of these ideas among military men. Officers in every European army expressed their exasperation at sutlers who bilked their poorly supplied soldiers or overcharged quarter masters. One peculiar instance which illustrates the gentleman soldier's disdain for commerce occurred when a Connecticut jailer's wife asked to purchase some wine from an imprisoned British officer. The officer recorded in his journal that it was only "with much difficulty [that] I could persuade her that British officers do not sell things."<sup>75</sup> If some officers loathed traders, the merchants were in fact adopting some ways of the sword. According to one elite observer, duelling had been transformed by the middling sorts into the "spurious chivalry of the compting house and counter."<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Gilbert, "Law and Honour," 79-80.

<sup>73</sup> Fynes Moryson, quoted in Watson, *Shakespeare*, 87

<sup>74</sup> Daniel Defoe, *The Compleat English Gentleman*, ed. Karl Daniel Bülbring, (London: Ballantyne, Hanson and Co., 1890), 258. Written in the 1720s but not published until 1890. For an exploration of the social movement from merchant to gentleman see: David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), Chapters 9 and 10, 279-382.

<sup>75</sup> Sheldon S. Cohen, ed. "The Connecticut Captivity of Major Christopher French," *The Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin*, Vol. 55, 3-4, (Summer/Fall 1990): 183.

<sup>76</sup> Lord Ellenborough quoted in Donna T. Andrew, "The Code of Honour and its Critics: The Opposition to Duelling in England, 1700-1850," *Social History*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (Oct., 1980): 433.

Professional and class-based honour groups were complicated further by cultural differences in the English Atlantic. Some rituals such as all-male drinking bouts were found everywhere in the Atlantic. These were common ways to build group cohesion among gentlemen, merchants, and military men, and involved friendly challenges, quaffing wine, rowdiness, and long chains of witty toasts intended to prove individual stamina and mettle among a peer group. Yet these same gatherings were just as commonly denounced as wasteful and dishonourable.<sup>77</sup> Other cultural understandings of honour were more closely tied to specific regions which reveal the poles of English honour cultures: the puritan and the cavalier. While the Southern planter, with his cavalier sensibilities, sought to show off his skill and manhood with ostentatious displays of prowess and wealth, his New England counterpart saw honour in the quiet, modest life of thrift, service, and prayer. For the planter elite, blood sports, insults, and gambling were common; among the New Englanders, these were rejected as ungodly.<sup>78</sup>

Part of these regional differences can be explained by religion, which also played a powerful role in constructing honour. Anthropological studies have articulated a “congenital relationship” between honour and a divine fount or source of honour described as “grace.” The idea of honour, according to C.B. Watson, transformed from a “secular morality” for medieval aristocrats, to a set of notions which “were inseparable from virtue itself” during the Renaissance. In colonial America, Calvinist Puritan societies in New England and the cavalier-influenced Anglican communities of the South

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<sup>77</sup> On colonial drinking see: Peter Thompson, “‘The Friendly Glass’: Drink and Gentility in Colonial Philadelphia,” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 113, No. 4 (Oct., 1989): 549-573; Sarah Hand Meacham, *Every Home a Distillery: Alcohol, Gender, and Technology in the Colonial Chesapeake* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Mark Lender and James Kirby Martin, *Drinking in America: A History* (New York: Free Press, 1987).

<sup>78</sup> For a thorough examination of the different folkways established in America see: See David Hackett Fischer, *Albion’s Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989). Everts B. Greene, “The Code of Honor in Colonial and Revolutionary Times with Special Reference to New England,” *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, Vo. 26, (1927): 367-388. The entirety of Bertram Wyatt-Brown’s *Southern Honor, and Honor and Grace: The Shaping of Southern Culture*, remain essential. Also see Richard E. Nesbitt and Dov Cohen, *Culture of Honor: The Psychology of Violence in the South* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996). Nesbitt and Cohen convincingly argue for the strength and persistence of Southern honour codes into the present day. Their study of white southerners in the 1990s shows the continued need for violent responses for “the protection of self, family, and possessions, for responding to insult, and for socializing children” (82) and a variety of other points of congruity that connect modern Southern culture with the Old South.

both developed different codes of honour which incorporated their Christian denomination's theology. Some Congregational preachers, for instance, saw it as a sign of honour to extend their sermons on particularly cold days to induce character-building suffering in their parishioners. Far from meek imitations of Christ, Puritan householders could find Godly approbation in the pages of the Old Testament as they violently defended their household honour and their position as divinely ordained patriarchs. The outward expression of humility and asceticism could, paradoxically, become an avenue for a sort of vanity.<sup>79</sup> A true gentleman needed to avoid all the traps which led to vanity, whether they were extreme indulgence or austerity. As the loyalist gentleman and Connecticut lawyer Amos Botsford instructed his son in the years after the Revolution, "I would not have a young Lad too close, nor yet too lavish, a Medium is always the best."<sup>80</sup> Restraint in all things was the way of the true gentleman.

The aristocratic code of honour found its most zealous adherents in the Southern colonies, but even amid the degradations of a slave society religious belief played an important part in fashioning honour.<sup>81</sup> Youthful gentlemen might eschew open religious piety in favour of displays of riding or dancing, but churchgoing was expected nonetheless. Virginia churches were theatres for projecting rank and power, and even the process of entering and leaving church was a ritual unto itself. The highest ranking gentry would enter last and sit nearest the pulpit in reserved seating, and depart first, creating a sort of procession for the lower ranks to observe.<sup>82</sup> With no American bishop, the governor and local vestrymen had the power to appoint clergy which fixed these men of

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<sup>79</sup> Peristiany, Pitt-Rivers, *Honor and Grace*, 3. C.B. Watson, *Shakespeare and the Renaissance Concept of Honor*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960): 3-5. Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, 120, 188. Lombard, *Making Manhood*, 120-145.

<sup>80</sup> Amos Botsford to William Botsford, New Haven, March 12, 1788. Amos Botsford Papers, UNBLC. FC LFR .B6A4C6.

<sup>81</sup> Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Southern Slaveholder's World View* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 312. After the American Revolution, Southern gentlemen regarded themselves as protectors of the people, not as aristocrats.

<sup>82</sup> Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia*, 60, 64.

the cloth in the dominant patron-client networks.<sup>83</sup> The deeply entwined relationship between ruling elite and church provided a kind of spiritual legitimacy to the social and economic hierarchy. Though austere Northerners might cluck their tongues at the fast horses, drinking, and dancing of the Virginia gentry, the Southern gentlemen were certain of their divine favour. At the very least they could turn to pious religious observance in their waning years, knowing that “a merciful God... would accept a few days or weeks of sincere repenting.”<sup>84</sup>

Perhaps most importantly for Southern culture was the religious justification for the enslavement of Africans. If God had cursed the sons of Ham to their fate as “servant of servants,” He also elevated their white masters with grace. The domination of Africans thus became a religious duty as well as one of the central pillars of their honour code.<sup>85</sup> Slaves were without honour, but they were not damned. The Southern conception of slavery evolved into a paternalistic ideology bound up in the mutual obligations between masters and slaves. Like their New England cousins, Southern gentlemen saw themselves as divinely ordained patriarchs.<sup>86</sup> In the slaveholder’s world view, African slaves were infantile and dependent creatures who relied on their masters to provide the necessities of life and a useful purpose.<sup>87</sup> Southern masters pointed to the biblical patriarch Abraham, a slave holder, as the foundation of all Godly societies and “a model of manly virtues.”<sup>88</sup> Masters could therefore feel confident that the honour they derived from their power over

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<sup>83</sup> Dell Upton, *Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1997), 5-6.

<sup>84</sup> Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia*, 120-121. Quotation from page 120. For examples of Northern disapproval, Isaac notes the reaction of the New Jersey Presbyterian Philip Fithian to a variety of Southern customs. See examples on pages 60, 85, 99. Internal religious dissenters also critiqued the Southern gentry’s customs. See: Rhys Isaac, “Evangelical Revolt: The Nature of the Baptists’ Challenge to the Traditional Order in Virginia, 1765-1775,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Jul., 1974): 345-368.

<sup>85</sup> Wyatt-Brown, *Shaping of Southern Culture*, xiii.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.* 142. Wyatt-Brown does not make the connection with the New Englanders, but the rhetoric is similar and is indeed derived from the same Biblical sources.

<sup>87</sup> Patterson, *Social Death*, 96.

<sup>88</sup> Fox-Genovese, Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class*, 507-508. Part Four, “A Christian People Defend the Faith,” 405-635, provides one of the most comprehensive examinations of the Christian philosophies of slaveholders in the Old South.



slaves was in keeping with Biblical precedent and was a sign of God's favour. Southern honour became inextricably linked with slavery. As Orlando Patterson so eloquently writes: "Those who most dishonor and constrain others are in the best position to appreciate what joy it is to possess what they deny."<sup>89</sup>

The presence of dishonoured black slaves in North America provided a clear antithesis to the honourable white man. According to Patterson, slaves were socially deceased persons who had been "alienated from all 'rights' or claims of birth" and did not belong to any legally recognized society of their own. Instead, they were perpetual aliens, placed at the very lowest rank of society and regarded by the state as having no existence except as the property of their masters. As Patterson argues, the "honor of the master was enhanced by the subjection of the slave."<sup>90</sup> Slaves, along with fine clothes and fast horses, became essential accoutrements to a gentleman's kit. One observer noted that when a wealthy Virginian's son reached fifteen years of age, he received a "horse and a negro" which were luxuries that displayed a young man's power. The slave was considered an extension of the master, just like other dependents and property. Runaways could dishonour a master, just as a slave's loyalty and obedience provided honour. How that loyalty was acquired, whether through cruelty or some variety of twisted benevolence, was a topic of debate throughout the history of slavery. A reputation for cruelty brought little honour, and slave traders themselves were considered a dishonourable lot. Nonetheless, in looking at the slave system of the South, whatever honour was derived by the master from the slave, as Philip Morgan reminds us, "violence was always part of their relationship."<sup>91</sup> That such a brutal system could exist concurrently with notions of politeness and civility is another example of the paradoxes inherent in honour cultures.

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<sup>89</sup> Patterson, *Social Death*, 94.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, 5, 79.

<sup>91</sup> Philip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth Century Chesapeake and Lowcountry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 379-380. 385. Chapter 7, "Social Transactions between Whites and Blacks" remains one of the more succinct, yet thorough, explorations of the daily contact and social relationship between masters and slaves in the eighteenth century, 377-437. For the dishonorable reputation of slave traders, see Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market*, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 24-25.

Just as religious belief and slavery helped shape honour, so too did genteel culture. Politeness and gentility were considered civilizing virtues, and in a land where civilization seemed to cling to the seacoast, besieged by the forces of nature and savagery, these ideas became a real source of power.<sup>92</sup> Bertram Wyatt-Brown considered gentility to be a separate kind of honour, derived from “the Stoic-Christian system” which sat in juxtaposition to the “primal honour” of a violent Indo-European ancestry.<sup>93</sup> Wyatt-Brown does not elaborate much on this dichotomy, but the notion that there were two competing and contradictory standards of gentlemanly behaviour has been noted by other historians.<sup>94</sup> As already mentioned above, eighteenth century England witnessed a shift in gentlemanly culture away from a fixation on traditional honour to ideas of politeness and then to sensibility, and these trends crossed the Atlantic as well. The friction and confusion between competing notions of proper behaviour can be glimpsed in a letter from the Boston loyalist Rev. Mather Byles II to his daughter Rebecca. Writing in response to news of some unnamed dispute, the Byles patriarch assures his daughter that she behaved well and that she had his continued confidence. He then seemingly rolls his eyes at his son’s attempts to gallantly defend his sister. “I suspect...” he writes, that “his ideas of punchilio [sic] & of a Brother’s prerogative are rather too high...” Traditional honour seemed rather outmoded to the aging Byles.<sup>95</sup> Another wry observation was printed in the *Pennsylvania Packet* in 1779 which shares a similar exasperation at the conflicting tenets of honour and civility. The author writes that he received a letter which delivered a “cavalier” challenge over a perceived insult. The challenger threatens to beat the author with a cane, yet closes the message with a standard expression of politeness. “[W]hat can be more truly ridiculous,” writes the author, “than,

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<sup>92</sup> Nicole Eustace, “The Sentimental Paradox: Humanity and Violence on the Pennsylvania Frontier.” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 65, No.1 (Jan., 2008):29-64.

<sup>93</sup> Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 34.

<sup>94</sup> William Guthrie Sayen, “George Washington’s ‘Unmannerly’ Behavior: The Clash between Civility and Honour.” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 107, No. 1, (Winter, 1999): 2-36. Carter, *Men and the Emergence...2*. Sarah Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Omohundro Insitute, 2009), 164-165.

<sup>95</sup> Mather Byles II to Rebecca Byles, undated letter. Possibly late 1760s. Byles Family Papers, Reel 1. (UNBLC). Originals MHS. The details of the dispute are not provided, neither is the outcome in the rest of the correspondence.

that a man has been venting on a sheet of paper every crudity imaginable, he should politely conclude with assuring you that he is your very humble servant.”<sup>96</sup> That men were even worrying about such things in the middle of a war is testament to the value they placed on sorting out these tangled customs.

Gentlemen could teach their sons the exacting standards of manners through private tutors who taught fencing and dance, and through dozens of available “courtesy books.” Some guide books were deeply spiritual in nature, such as Richard Allestree’s *The Whole Duty of Man*. This was an accessible work, designed to cultivate a moral and godly life for all men, rich and poor, but it was required reading for young gentlemen. Counselling modesty, charity, and faith, Allestree’s work was taught in conjunction with a variety of other instructional guide books.<sup>97</sup> Perhaps the best-known of the secular courtesy books (though it was never printed in the colonies, only imported) was *Youth’s Behaviour, or Decency in Conversation among Men*. George Washington famously copied his “Rules of Civility” from its pages as a teenager, and it is a prime example of the sort of education aspiring young boys would receive in politeness and behaviour. The book instructs the young gentleman in proper manners, but each rule is actually designed to bring honour to the reader or show honour to others. Some rules instruct on basic table manners and social interaction, such as the eternal maxim of rule 96: “Drink not nor talk with your mouth full...” Other rules explain the exacting etiquette which recognized rank and station within a consciously hierarchical society. Rule 37 informs the young reader that “In Speaking to men of Quality do not lean nor Look them full in the Face, nor approach too near them...Keep a full Pace from them.” Another rule describes the ideal interactions between different ranks and the mutual obligations required of all members of the hierarchy: “Artificers & Persons of low Degree ought not to use many ceremonies to Lords, or Others of high Degree but Respect and high[ly] Honour them, and those of

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<sup>96</sup>*The Pennsylvania Packet*, December 14, 1779.

<sup>97</sup> Bushman, *Refinement of America*, Chapter two, “The Courtesy Book World,” 30-60, for *Whole Duty of Man* see 59-60. For a typical printing of the book, see Richard Allestree, *Whole Duty of a Man* (Williamsburg, VA: W. Parks, 1746).

high Degree ought to treat them with affibility & Courtesie, without Arrogancy.”<sup>98</sup> These were basic instructions on rituals of deference and condescension.

Behaviour distinguished gentlemen, but fine possessions displayed economic power and refinement. Genteel homes, clothes, dinner ware, and the knowledge to recognize style and fashion served as marks of honour for the elite.<sup>99</sup> One can best read the importance of genteel accoutrements in the concerns of men who felt their possessions were somehow deficient. The seventeenth century Member of Parliament Samuel Pepys wrote that he considered himself “a little dishonoured” because he hired a carriage, rather than owned one.<sup>100</sup> It was less stylish, but he was also projecting the idea, perhaps, that he did not have the means to purchase and maintain his own carriage and driver, thereby revealing some defect in his abilities or power. When the loyalist exile Jacob Bailey and his family arrived in Halifax, his first impulse was to ask those who met them to “excuse the meanness [sic] and singularity of our dress” and account for his shameful appearance.<sup>101</sup> Through displays of wealth, manners, and refined tastes, men set themselves apart from common people and laid claim to authority within and beyond the household.

Gentility was inseparably linked with honour in the minds of eighteenth century gentlemen and so too was a liberal education. If they had the means, fathers sent their sons to one of colonial America’s premiere centers of higher learning such as Harvard or The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg. The wealthier still paid for their sons

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<sup>98</sup> Bushman, *Refinement of America*, 31. George Washington’s “Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation”, 1744. Rules 97, 37 and 36. There are 110 in all. George Washington Papers, University of Virginia. Original Images and Transcription can be found at <http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/civility/index.html>.

<sup>99</sup> For the genteel material culture of the eighteenth century and its meanings, along with Bushman, *Refinement of America*, see: John Styles and Amanda Vickery, eds., *Gender, taste, and material culture in Britain and North America, 1700-1830* (New Haven, CT: Yale Center for British Art/Yale University Press, 2006); Woodruff D. Smith, *Consumption and the Making of Respectability, 1600-1800* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 38; Robert Blair St. George, ed., *Material life in America, 1600-1860* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988).

<sup>100</sup> Faramerz Dabhoiwala, “The Construction of Honour, Reputation and Status in Late-Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth-Century England,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Sixth Series, Vol. 6, (1996): 203.

<sup>101</sup> Maya Jasanoff, “The Other Side of Revolution: Loyalists in the British Empire” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 65, No. 2 (Apr., 2008): 205.

to cross the Atlantic for a more illustrious education in Britain, and to pick up the finer manners and tastes of the Old World, but these men represented a small fraction of colonial society.<sup>102</sup> Most people had to content themselves with less formal education. Gentlemen of the Enlightenment were required to exhibit knowledge of science, philosophy, and the law. There was honour in expressing knowledge of the classics, literature, the Bible, and the wider world. It served almost as a kind of exclusive language for the initiated. Individual gentlemen might disagree on the comparative value of different educational pursuits, but they all understood the power a liberal education could provide. The loyalist Reverend Charles Inglis explained the importance of a proper education to students at King's College in New York prior to the Revolution, warning that "there are so many Branches of science which demand your Attention... that you have no time to lose." Inglis explained to the young gentlemen that knowledge was an elevating virtue, which allowed men "to rise above the common Herd on whom fair Science never shed its Influence [and] above those sordid minds, who never think anything Worthy of Pursuit but what pampers their appetites."<sup>103</sup> According to Rev. Inglis, faith, grace, and learning went hand-in-hand. Men from humbler backgrounds therefore smarted at their lack of education. The loyalist Joel Stone was a successful merchant and magistrate by the end of his life, yet he knew that his "want of a liberal education has obstructed that communicative knowledge" which provided other gentlemen the authority to speak on matters of religion and politics. Not to be cowed into silence, however, Stone justified his forays into these subjects on the basis of his "temporal experience, recollection and belief of Eighty-one Years past... [which had] obliged him to hear Politics discoursed frequently..."<sup>104</sup> Life experience surely gained one respect, but it could never replace the advantages of formal learning. John Harrower,

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<sup>102</sup> For a summary of colonial education see: Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education: The Colonial Experience, 1607-1783* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970). While a liberal education was a prized commodity among the rising groups of colonial Gentlemen, there was also a suspicion about the corrupting power of a cosmopolitan education among the urban English. See, Julie Flavell, *When London was the Capital of America* (New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press, 2010), 66-69.

<sup>103</sup> Charles Inglis. Address. No date. Charles Inglis Correspondence, Reel 1. UNBLC.

<sup>104</sup> Joel Stone, "Observations" March 1831. Transcribed in H. William Hawke, "Joel Stone of Gananoque: His Life and Letters, 1749-1833" (Unpublished Manuscript, 1966). Gananoque Museum Collection.

for example, was a penniless, though well-educated, Scottish merchant who came to Virginia as an indentured servant in the early 1770s. Because of his “abilities and...behaviour” he soon found himself dining with his master and serving as a tutor for the children of other nearby planters. By virtue of his knowledge, he was placed at a social level far above his station as an unfree servant. His education and manners alone provided him with honour.<sup>105</sup> That education was supposed to set men apart was a fact bitterly noted by the loyalist James Moody in his description of the execution of the “honest soldier and martyr, Robert Maxwell...” According to Moody, vengeful patriots refused to believe the man was innocent of plundering a local home, even though “he had a good education.”<sup>106</sup> This was yet one more sign for loyalists that the revolutionaries had abandoned civilization, and ignored the personal marks of honour and decency.

American gentlemen, both patriot and loyalist, were engaged in cultivating a set of virtues and achievements which earned them a privileged status. Only by meeting the benchmarks of genteel manners, education, mastery over the household, and accumulated wealth could men enter into the ranks of the colonial power brokers and leaders. As the New Hampshire loyalist Benjamin Thompson, (later Count Rumford), put it: “Men cannot bear to be commanded by others that are their superiors in nothing.”<sup>107</sup> Ideally, a man’s genteel status obliged others to respect or defer to him. The term “gentleman” was somewhat ambiguous, however, covering a whole spectrum of wealth and achievement, and the requirements for gentlemanly status differed considerably between professions and regions. Southern gentlemen found the New England elite inferior, prudish, and dull, while New Englanders found the Southern planter class vain, debauched, and lacking the morals of true gentlemen. The English gentry found all colonial gentlemen rustic and quaint. Yet men who claimed genteel status sought to belong to a defined group that commanded respect. In a gentleman’s ideal world, when he passed by lesser men, they would show signs of respect, doffing hats or stepping aside. The gentleman would be free from public insult, his dignified body would never be subject to corporal punishment, he

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<sup>105</sup>Zuckerman, “Tocqueville, Turner, and Turds,” 30-31.

<sup>106</sup> James Moody, *Lt. Moody’s Narrative* (London: Richardson and Urquhart, 1783), 19-21.

<sup>107</sup> Quoted in Edwin Burrows, *Forgotten Patriots: The Untold Story of American Prisoners during the Revolutionary War* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 27.

would be taken at his word, and his home would be an inviolable castle. He would command his household, and have a say in governing his town or region or even the empire depending on his rank. This status relied on the consent of others to accept him as the gentleman he claimed to be. If he failed to live up to the cultural standards, his honour would be impugned. One of the most important traits of honour that makes it so prized in any culture is that it can be lost.<sup>108</sup>

Men could lose their honourable reputations through their own vices, such as foolishness, incompetence, criminality, drunkenness, cowardice, or servility. The many shaming rituals found in various parts of colonial America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – affixing specific letters to clothing, shunning, the pillory, begging public forgiveness, ducking and so on – were employed to punish sexual transgressions, thievery, spousal cruelty or other dishonours.<sup>109</sup> A man could also be dishonoured by others through insults, slander, or some other trespass unless he responded appropriately with a challenge, lawsuit, or returned insult. All acts of dishonour were emasculating, but to be publicly “unmanned” by the disobedience of one’s wife or other dependent was a dreadful fate for a householder, regardless of his rank.<sup>110</sup> Eighteenth century Americans were fascinated by gossipy tales of unmanning, and extreme examples circulated through American newspapers. In 1768, a man from Shrewsbury, New Jersey, was “plied with strong Liquor by three Females,” which included his wife and mother-in-law. The women then “proceeded very deliberately to deprive him of his Manhood by C[astration]n” in revenge for his infidelity. A similar tale of physical “unmanning” was imported from England which recounted a feud between two suitors of a “buxom country wench.” After the young lady had made her choice and married one of the men, the spurned suitor attacked the drunken groom and performed “the same operation on him, that the Italians do on their male singers.”<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Stewart, *Honor*, 145.

<sup>109</sup> Hackett Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 121, 188, 195, 397, 540. Toni M. Massaro, “Shame, Culture, and American Criminal Law” *Michigan Law Review*, Vol. 89, No. 7, (Jun., 1991): 1912-1915.

<sup>110</sup> Rotundo, *American Manhood*, 2-3. (For Seventeenth century community censure see: Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England*, 107-115)

<sup>111</sup> *Boston News-Letter*, April 28, 1768. The same story appears in April editions of the *Boston Evening-Post*, April 25; *Boston Chronicle*, April 18; *Connecticut Gazette*, April 22; *New-York Journal*, April 21;

Emasculation in colonial America did not need to be so literal. Court records in both the New and Old World testify to common accusations of dishonourable conduct and the lengths men and women would go to defend their reputations. Though Tocqueville noted the absence of any social stigma against bankrupts in the early republic, Toby Ditz has shown that merchants in colonial America often used gendered language, even the term “cuckold”, to describe financial failure and bankruptcy. Incompetence in business was linked with all manner of male deficiencies, and the eighteenth century mind made a clear association between business reversals and disorderly household governance.<sup>112</sup> Men were equally concerned about imputations of cowardice. Ambrose Serle, General Howe’s personal secretary from 1776 to 1778, took a tour of Upper Bay between New York and New Jersey, “not far from [rebel] Batteries; too near in my Opinion, though I made no objection, lest it should be imputed to Cowardice, with which, I thank God, I am not much troubled...”<sup>113</sup> Serle chose to risk his life and the ship rather than wisely suggest a different course. Indeed, such ideas were quite common during the late eighteenth century. Hannah Lawrence Schieffelin considered the primary motive for Montgomery’s suicidal assault on Quebec in 1775 to be “the delicate sense of honour, and fear of reproach that influence the minds of the truly brave.”<sup>114</sup> Regardless of the changing fashions in manners, cowards remained objects of scorn in times of war.

Cowards, rakes, pirates, and other criminals provided popular contrasts for honourable men, but the most obvious foil for man was woman.<sup>115</sup> In the eighteenth

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*New-York Gazette*, April 18; and the *Connecticut Courant*, May 9, 1768. The report states that the women were in custody, but it did not describe any charges. The second story appears in *The Providence Gazette*, August 15, 1767. There are also some reports of self-castration by simple minded or “disordered” men. *Connecticut Journal*, June 14, 1787; *New-York Mercury*, December 31, 1764.

<sup>112</sup> Ditz, “Shipwrecked,” 51-80.

<sup>113</sup> Excerpt from the Journal of Ambrose Serle, Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September, 1776. Reprinted in John Rhodehamel, ed, *The American Revolution: Writings from the War of Independence*, (New York: Penguin Putnam, 2001), 208.

<sup>114</sup> Hannah Lawrence Schieffelin, “Narrative of Events...during a Journey through Canada.” (Unpublished Manuscript, ca. 1780): 11. Schieffelin Papers, Box 7, New York Public Library.

<sup>115</sup> For the disreputable sorts of men that were used to construct the virtues of the ideal gentlemen see: Erin Mackie, *Rakes, Highwaymen, and Pirates: The Making of the Modern Gentleman in the Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).



century, men and women were thought to have different vices which brought them dishonour. Men could be violent and prone to idleness and drink, whereas women were ever tempted towards luxury and lust. Honourable men and women restrained these passions. Men who appeared to exhibit feminine vices could be labelled unmanly, just as women who were too assertive or wrathful were denounced as harpies or viragos.<sup>116</sup>

In many cultures, women's honour is often centred on their sexual purity or chastity and this was a common idea in colonial America. A short poem in the *Boston Post-Boy* from 1774, entitled "Female Honor," clearly articulates this popular attitude. It begins by accepting the fact that the male libertine "may rove, Free and unquestion'd thro' the wilds of love," but a woman faces a much different fate,

If strongly charm'd, she leave the thorny way,  
And in the softer paths of pleasure stray;  
Ruin ensues, reproach and endless shame,  
And one false step entirely damns her fame:  
In vain with tears the loss she may deplore,  
In vain look back to what she was before,  
She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more.<sup>117</sup>

This concern for women's sexual purity was very powerful at the time, but historians have shown that a woman's honour in the Old and New Worlds consisted of more than just her sexuality. Women gained honour and good reputation through their work and comportment, just as men did.<sup>118</sup> Although women, like children, servants, and slaves had little relationship to the state other than through the male householder, usually their husband or father, a woman's situation was more negotiated than contemporary men were often willing to admit in public. As historian Elizabeth Foyster observed of

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<sup>116</sup> For an interesting discussion on the gendered concept of virtue in the Revolutionary Era see: Ruth H. Bloch, "The Gendered Meanings of Virtue in Revolutionary America" *Signs*, Vol. 13, No. 1, Women and the Political Process in the United States (Autumn, 1987): 37-58. For the effeminate vices of men see: Anne Lombard, *Making Manhood: Growing Up Male in Colonial New England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003):10-11,70, 164. The use of "virago" was quite common, but a decent example can be found in *The Norwich Packet*, November 20, 1774, which carries an excerpt from the *London Morning Chronicle* with a lampoon of a henpecked father, John Bull, with his "virago" daughter, Betts, standing in for a rebellious America.

<sup>117</sup> *Boston Post Boy*, January 31, 1774.

<sup>118</sup> Garthine Walker, "Expanding the Boundaries of Female Honour in Early Modern England" *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Sixth Series, Vo. 6, (1996): 235-245.

seventeenth century English householders, they “were all too aware that their honour depended on the actions and words of their wives,” and the same was true for their eighteenth century descendants. In fact, Foyster argues that the “language of ‘honour’ was how men and women talked about their gender roles” and that an honourable reputation was the reward for men and women who lived up to the expectations of a patriarchal society.<sup>119</sup> The same was true in colonial America, where women certainly had a “right to respect,” albeit one that differed from men. Yet as with so many of these cultural traits, the honour and dishonour men and women gleaned from their relationships was negotiated, and depended greatly on their social and economic status.

Hannah Lawrence was a woman who found herself torn between various honour groups in the American Revolution in ways that reveal how honour was subjective and negotiated. The daughter of a wealthy New York Quaker, she defied her religious community and was an outspoken supporter of the Revolution, while her father, ostensibly neutral, seemed to favour the Crown and remained in New York during the occupation. Lawrence penned scathing poems that she posted on a promenade popular with elite redcoats, lambasting British officers for their apparent debaucheries. And yet this stalwart Whig chose to marry a loyalist soldier, Jacob Schieffelin, a man of different political principles and a stranger to the Quaker family. Disowned by her congregation, Hannah Lawrence Schieffelin travelled with her husband to the remote outpost of Detroit where he served as a secretary of the Indian Department.<sup>120</sup>

Though rejected by her congregation, Hannah Schieffelin was quite welcome with the genteel sort at Detroit. The ladies and gentlemen at the outpost attempted to make the best of their isolation, holding dinners and parties, furnished with the best of what they could acquire in the wilderness. At one of these dinners sat an officer “rather past the bloom of youth,” Hannah recorded, “whose reserved air, and unaccommodating manners rendered him remarkable in an atmosphere where every other person wore the aspect of implicit subservience to unlimited power.” He was alone at the table, though his wife was

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<sup>119</sup> Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England*, 5.

<sup>120</sup> Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 34-35, 68-70. For a description of the Quaker experience in the American Revolution see Arthur Mekeel, *The Quakers and the American Revolution*, (York: The Ebor Press, 1996).

present in camp. The officer, whom she referred to as Captain B., had been spurned by another woman years past, and met his present wife when she was a captive among a group of Native warriors. The Captain managed to free the young woman, and, Schieffelin records “gratitude, if not a more lively emotion, induced her to remain with her deliverer.” Mrs. Schieffelin, raised amidst genteel manners and mores, could not help but express her feelings on the matter. “I remonstrated with him on [the] injustice of taking advantage of those sentiments, and her unprotected situation, to destroy her honour and peace of mind,” she records. The other ladies in the British outpost obviously thought the same, as the frontier woman was not welcome at the table. Captain B. looked at the gentlewoman “with the smile of conscious integrity” and replied that he preferred to keep his wife from the company of such women anyway, and in a wry retort, adapted a line from Joseph Addison’s *Cato*: “the post of honour is sometimes a private station.”<sup>121</sup>

The loyalist officer’s allusion to a line from Addison’s *Cato* certainly made an impression on the young poetess. She, like most other literate people involved in the American Revolution, knew the play well.<sup>122</sup> What this little vignette reveals, aside from the multiple claims on the meaning of *Cato*, is the collision of mores between metropolis and hinterland and the malleability of the concept of honour. Captain B., in his mind, was a gentleman soldier who saved a maiden in distress and she had returned his gallantry by giving him her hand in marriage. Mrs. Schieffelin, on the other hand, saw a man on the frontier, rejected by another woman, who satisfied his desires with a helpless girl, and because of her frontier manners or perhaps the stain of living among savages, she was never accepted into the company of the officers’ wives. In keeping with their elitist and patriarchal behaviour, neither Schieffelin nor Captain B. thought to share his wife’s opinion on the matter, but the match brought the young officer no honour in the camp.

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<sup>121</sup> Hannah Lawrence Schieffelin, “Narrative of Events...during a Journey through Canada.” (Unpublished Manuscript, ca. 1780): 43. Schieffelin Papers, Box 7, New York Public Library.

<sup>122</sup> The full line spoken by Cato is “When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway/ The post of honour is a private station.” Quoted from Act IV, Scene IV. Joseph Addison, *The Works of the late right honourable Joseph Addison*, Vol. 1, (London: Tonson, 1730), 355. Also see: M.M. Kelsall, “The Meaning of Addison’s Cato,” *The Review of English Studies*, New Series, Vol. 17, No. 66 (May, 1966): 149-162.; Frederic M. Litto, “Addison’s Cato in the Colonies,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 23, No. 3 (Jul., 1966): 431-449.

Part of Capatin B's problem may have been the perception that he had acted rashly, impetuously following his youthful passions by marrying a woman far below his station. Boyish qualities were perhaps even more widely used as a contrast to manhood than womanhood. Honour and dishonour did not weigh as heavily on boys, as indiscretion and error were part of the learning process. Defects in character and bad habits could be corrected in youth, and produce an honourable man. The hallmarks of boyhood were dependence, frivolity, unrestrained passions, and foolishness, but if these vices lingered into manhood they were cited as proof of emasculation.<sup>123</sup> An honourable man would recognize and restrain such proclivities. The popular enthusiasm and the outpouring of emotion that occurred during the lead-up to the American Revolution was used by several loyalist writers to show that Americans, like young boys, were rebellious and unprepared or unable to lead independent colonies.<sup>124</sup> In response to such attacks, Thomas Paine embraced the youthful analogy, declaring that the colonies were indeed young, but that "Youth is the seed time of good habits...in nations as in individuals" and therefore the colonies needed to throw off oppression and join together, or each colony would grow too large and too proud on their own to ever unite.<sup>125</sup> Indeed, in the American Revolution and the early years of the republic, the attitude towards young unmarried men became more ambiguous. Young bachelors played a celebrated role in the expanding new country, but they were still regarded warily by many.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> The transformation from boyhood to manhood in colonial and early republican America has been explored by Anne Lombard, *Making Manhood...* and Lori Glover, *Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007) among others. Even in retirement and old age, men who were considered unproductive could feel the stigma of uselessness and boyish dependence. Also see Lisa Wilson, *Ye Heart of a Man: The Domestic Life of Men in Colonial New England*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999). Specifically Chapter 7.

<sup>124</sup> As will be shown in more detail in chapter 3, the loyalist spokesmen often used the trope of filial ingratitude and youthful petulance. See for example: Seabury, *Free Thoughts, on the Proceedings of the Continental Congress* (New York, 1774), 6 and Seabury, *The Congress Canvassed: Or, An Examination into the Council of Delegates at their Grand Convention Held in Philadelphia, Sept. 1, 1774, Addressed to the Merchants of New-York* (New York, 1774), 4,6. Charles Inglis, Thomas Bradbury Chandler, and James Chalmers all invoked the same ideas. (See chapter 3).

<sup>125</sup> Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, (Philadelphia: Bell, 1776), 40.

<sup>126</sup> For an extended study of the changing attitude towards unmarried, often young men, see John Gilbert McCurdy, *Citizen Bachelors: Manhood and the Creation of the United States*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009). For a more problematic perspective on the vices of young men, but also their

Loyalist were collectively labelled effeminate cowards, corrupt and servile lovers of luxury, and likened to any number of shameful archetypes. Yet of all the ways loyalists were dishonoured, the most cutting were the attacks on their positions as patriarchs and householders. Their homes were attacked and their families abused with impunity, but patriots saw this as the result of loyalist immorality and not revolutionary malice. Patriot propaganda most famously pointed to Joshua Loring Jr. as the archetype of depraved loyalist manhood. Loring was a Boston loyalist transplanted to New York who acquired the lucrative, but infamous, position as the commissary for American prisoners of war. Historians more or less attribute his rise through the ranks to his wife Elizabeth, who allegedly had an extended sexual relationship with General William Howe.<sup>127</sup> The tale, spread far and wide, was made all the worse by the idea that Loring was a willing cuckold who eagerly traded his family honour for government preferment. *The Pennsylvania Evening Post* carried a satiric poem which described a British leadership more interested in banqueting than fighting the war. The poem took a particularly gleeful jab at the debauched arrangement between loyalist lady and royal General:

Sir William he, snug as a flea,  
Lay all this time a snoring;  
Nor dreamt of harm, as he lay warm  
In bed with Mrs. Loring.<sup>128</sup>

The story even made it to England where it was included in a published letter condemning the British army's failure to destroy the rag-tag remnants of the American army in late 1776. According to the anonymous author, the fault belonged to William Howe who "was at New York in the lap of Ease" it read "or, rather amusing himself in the lap of a Mrs. L\_\_\_\_\_, who is the very *Cleopatra* to this *Antony* of ours." Such an arrangement would not be unknown to an elite British audience. Faramerz Dabhoiwala has shown that high ranking ladies with a promiscuous reputation did not always suffer

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potential for virtue, see Rodney Hessinger, *Seduced, Abandoned, and Reborn: Visions of Youth in Middle-Class America, 1780-1850* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2005).

<sup>127</sup> Burrows, *Forgotten Patriots*, 10.

<sup>128</sup> "Battle of the Kegs" *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, July 18, 1778.

unduly in early modern England. The late seventeenth century author John Dunton noted that elite men and women engaged in illicit affairs out of “temptations of honour” – the idea that a carnal relationship with a superior might meet with financial or social rewards, and such arrangements were not unknown in the eighteenth century.<sup>129</sup> Nonetheless, the tale of the Loring and Howe was printed as a hand bill and distributed in Parliament, no doubt to raise awareness that a loyalist cuckold, an American Jezebel, and a high-ranking leech were sinking the honour of the British Empire in America.<sup>130</sup> The scandalous tale of Joshua and Elizabeth Loring was sensational, and perhaps unique, but patriots used this as one of many examples to prove that loyalists would sacrifice their personal and family honour for government rewards.<sup>131</sup>

Most men in colonial America, patriot or loyalist, would have been aghast at the thought of trading their wives’ virtue for a government office. Instead, men of all ranks jealously guarded their households which included dependents, their property and possessions, and the physical structure itself. The house was the most visible emblem of a gentleman’s status. As Henry Glassie explained in his study of American vernacular architecture, the style and location of a home “told you exactly where you stood in the social order.” The house projected power in a particular location, and, especially amid the privations of frontier life and the upheavals of the American Revolution, “the house beamed a message of control.” The emotional connection to a home cannot be overstated in the eighteenth century, especially for gentlemen who went to great expense to design and build them, and the women who were expected to maintain the domestic interior. In some respects the idea of the house as a living thing, as an analog to the human body with the hearth, window, and doors mirroring heart, eyes, and orifices, persisted into the eighteenth century: it was the expression of a family’s soul. An ordered, genteel house

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<sup>129</sup> Dabhoiwala, “The Construction of Honour,” 211.

<sup>130</sup> Letter with unnamed writer and recipient, New York January 25, 1778, in *Historical Anecdotes, Civil and Military: In a Series of Letters, Written from America in the Years 1777 and 1778...* (London: J. Bew, 1779), 40, 48.

<sup>131</sup> This was a common refrain in the Revolutionary press, and will be explored at length in the following chapter.

brought honour to a gentleman and his family.<sup>132</sup> The home was, to repeat the clichéd adage, a man’s castle, and as Amanda Vickery writes, the “external perimeter of the house was a frontier in custom and law.” The fences and walls of a home protected not only the physical well-being of a man and his family, but their privacy as well, which was a key component of respectability and status.<sup>133</sup>

The attacks on loyalist homes are covered extensively in the historiography, and a few examples should suffice to connect the theory described above with the actions of the patriots. In the early years of the crisis, Mathew Robinson of Newport, Rhode Island had his fences torn down, evidently as a symbolic gesture to inform him that he no longer had the power to claim boundaries or separate himself from the rest of the town. Edward Stow of Massachusetts discovered the exterior of his house frequently “bedaubed by Excrement and Feathers...and repeated again with Blubber Oil and Feathers...”<sup>134</sup> Peter Oliver recorded how Jonathan Sewell, Daniel Leonard and other loyalist grandees of Massachusetts had their homes vandalized by mobs. Sewell’s home, for instance, “was attacked by the Mob, his windows broke & other Damage done...”<sup>135</sup> These crowd actions bear many similarities with the folk practises of the “charivari” or “skimmington,” which were common in both England and the colonies, and were normally intended to ostracize or punish community members for adultery, spousal

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<sup>132</sup> Henry Glassie, *Material Culture* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), 325, 345. Another useful set of ideas referred to as “the social imaginary” is described in Robert Blair St. George, “Reading Spaces in Eighteenth-Century New England” in John Styles and Amanda Vickery, eds. *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America, 1700-1830* (New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 2006), 81-105.

<sup>133</sup> Amanda Vickery, “An Englishman’s Home Is His Castle? Thresholds, Boundaries and Privacies in the Eighteenth-Century London House” *Past & Present*, No. 199 (May, 2008): 152-154. This is not to suggest that women had no power in the home, but as Karen Harvey has argued “women were not the gatekeepers of the home” in the eighteenth century. The idea of separate spheres is explored earlier in this chapter, and references can be found in note 45.

<sup>134</sup> Wallace Brown, *The Good Americans: The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1969), 132. Wallace Brown, *The King’s Friends: The Composition and Motives of the American Loyalist Claimants* (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 1965), 34-35.

<sup>135</sup> Douglas Adair and John Schutz eds. *Peter Oliver’s Origin and Progress of the American Rebellion* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1967), 152.

abuse, or some other transgression not immediately punished by law.<sup>136</sup> When directed against loyalists, however, these crowd actions often took a decidedly more violent turn, exploding into direct attacks on the private space of the gentlemen and their families. The mob that harassed Leonard's home "fired Bullets into the House & obliged him to fly from it to save his Life." Another mob invaded John Peters' home while the local committee "searched my House for Letters of secret correspondence with General Carleton, with whom in fact I never had corresponded, they took away all papers found in my House, insulted me & required me to sign Deeds of some Lands I had bought; confined me to the Limits of the Town." The Anglican minister Samuel Peters of Hebron, Connecticut, (John Peters' uncle), "was stript of his Canonicals & carried to one of their Liberty Poles & afterwards drove from his Parish..." an act of ostracism from the community, but also a rejection of Peters' civil and ecclesiastical authority.<sup>137</sup> The most famous (or infamous) home invasion occurred during the Stamp Act crisis of 1765, when the stately manor of Lt. Governor Thomas Hutchinson was ransacked for hours. The mob destroyed every vestige of domestic gentility from trees and garden fences to the cupola on the roof. The destruction was so thorough that the mob even tore the wainscoting from the walls. No one was ever arrested or tried for any of these acts of vandalism or trespass as they were largely approved of by the vocal majority of the population.<sup>138</sup>

Committees of Inspection, Correspondence, or Safety as they were variously called, often led the mobs, and felt justified in violating the homes of suspected loyalists as they searched for banned items or proof of conspiracies. Yet loyalists noted the impertinent pride and venom with which the committeemen carried out their tasks. Loyalists regarded these violations of the household and the basic liberties of English subjects as evidence of the revolutionaries' hypocrisy and their true, power-hungry

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<sup>136</sup> For information on the charivari and skimmington see: Alfred F. Young, "English Plebeian Culture and Eighteenth-Century Radicalism" in Margaret Jacob and James Jacob, eds. *The Origins of Anglo-American Radicalism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1984), 185-212; Steven J. Stewart, "Skimmington in the Middle and Northern Colonies" in William Pencak, Matthew Dennis, and Simon P. Newman eds. *Riot and Revelry in Early America*, (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 41-86; E.P. Thompson, "Rough Music Reconsidered" *Folklore*, Vol. 103, No. 1 (1992):3-26

<sup>137</sup> Adair and Schutz, *Peter Oliver's Origin and Progress*, 154.

<sup>138</sup> Edmund Morgan, *The Stamp Act Crisis: Prologue to Revolution* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press), 165-169. Bernard Bailyn, *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson*, 35-36.



intentions. James Allen, a professed supporter of colonial resistance but an opponent of independence, saw the spectre of societal collapse in rebel action. “[T]he most insignificant now lord it with impunity & without discretion over the most respectable characters,” he wrote. Incensed at the confiscation of his friends’ estates, he bitterly noted that “Men who could scarcely maintain their families, now live in splendor. In short this Country is agitated to its foundations, & will probably soon be overturned.”<sup>139</sup> Loyalists often scoffed at the patriot’s claims of defending liberty, seeing instead a calculated plan to steal from the better sort.

The apparent disregard for rank and dignity even found its way into loyalist bed chambers. Edward Brimley of Massachusetts told the Claims Commissioners after the war that the rebels occupied his house in his absence, and kept a detachment of soldiers with his family, intruding even into his wife’s dressing room. To add to the misery, the rebels opened the loyalist’s home “exposing [his wife] to the view of the banditti; as a sight ‘See a Tory Woman.’”<sup>140</sup> James Allen noted that such outrages were “justified by the Whigs as necessary for the security of all Government...” but he felt this was a shallow excuse, and was leading to social collapse. “If necessity is a plea, who created it, or where will it stop?” he asked in his diary. “Massacres, proscriptions & every species of iniquity may be justified by necessity.”<sup>141</sup> Since men like Allen understood the home to be the basic building block of civilization, undermining household authority was the first step on the road to total anarchy.

One of the loyalists’ most prominent spokesmen, Reverend Samuel Seabury, who wrote under the pseudonym of “A Westchester Farmer,” denounced the committees’ violations. In 1774 he declared that any committeeman who might “condescend to go pimping, and peeping, into tea-canisters and molasses jugs,” would learn “better manners” with a “good hickory cudgel.” Seabury repeated this threat in two different

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<sup>139</sup> James Allen, “Diary of James Allen, Esq. of Philadelphia, Counsellor-at-Law, 1770-1778,” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 9, No.2 (Jul., 1885): 196. Entry of Jan 25, 1777. James Allen, “Diary of James Allen, Esq. of Philadelphia, Counsellor-at-Law, 1770-1778,” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 9, No.3 (Oct., 1885): 288. Entry of Sept. 5, 1777.

<sup>140</sup> Brown, *The King’s Friends*, 35.

<sup>141</sup> James Allen, “Diary,” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 9, No.3: 289.

pamphlets and was mocked by the teenaged patriot Alexander Hamilton in his pamphlet *A Full Vindication of the Measures of Congress*. Hamilton responded to Seabury's argument with profoundly masculine language, declaring that all loyalist ideas displayed "impotence" and a "defect in vigour," while the patriot cause was a "manly and virtuous struggle."<sup>142</sup> The image of an old man impotently waving a cane in the air could not compete with the romantic and youthful call to revolution.

A man unable to defend his home was publicly humiliated. Consequently, loyalist householders often fled on their own hoping that their dependents would be left in peace and in possession of their estates. Joel Stone, a young unmarried shopkeeper living in Judea, (now Washington), Connecticut shared his home with his sister, Rene. After assisting in the escape of a prominent loyalist prisoner in the area (see chapter 4) he fled an approaching mob in January, 1777. Though he "happily eluded" the patriot crowd, his sister "met the resentment of the mob who from language the most approbrious [sic] proceeded to actual violence breaking open every lock in the house and seizing all the property they could discover..." With the estate confiscated she was forced out of the house and had to return to her aged father's overcrowded home, where she and much of her family contracted smallpox.<sup>143</sup> Stone was powerless to protect his sister, and in exile it was impossible for him to help his suffering family. His political choices destroyed his patriarchal role in his family.

Banishment and property confiscation were the most profound and far reaching elements of loyalists' political death. Property rights were the foundation of citizenship and without land and possessions a man was hardly a man at all, and became a dependent wanderer. All loyalists considered the confiscation of their estates as the worst violation they experienced in that it removed them from society and destroyed any prospects for their families' future wealth. In 1777 the Continental Congress advised all states to

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<sup>142</sup> Samuel Seabury, *An Alarm* 6. Seabury, *Free Thoughts*, 19, *A View of the controversy*, 6. Alexander Hamilton, *A Full Vindication of the Measures of Congress from the Calumnies of their Enemies in Answer to A Letter Under the Signature A.W. Farmer*, (New-York: James Rivington, 1774), 6, 22.

<sup>143</sup> Joel Stone, "The Narrative of Joel Stone" in J.J. Talman, *Loyalist Narratives from Upper Canada* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), 325-26. "Dothe Stone's Diary," First entry, no date (probably sometime in 1781, judging by subsequent entries, but describing events from ealy 1777). Joel Stone Family Fonds, Reel One. Archives of Ontario.

confiscate the property of loyalists who had fled to the British or had otherwise assisted the enemy, but many states had already enacted such measures.<sup>144</sup> Patriots felt fully justified in the various confiscation acts, and published defences of their legal and moral position. According to a Virginia publication of 1782, the laws were not only “founded upon legal principles,” but the “common justice” of not allowing “vicious citizens” to partake in the victories earned by “virtuous citizens.”<sup>145</sup> These thoughts were shared by New Jersey governor Robert Livingston, who explained to Benjamin Franklin that there could “be little doubt, that every society may rightfully banish...those, who aim at subversion, and forfeit the property, which they can only be entitled to by the laws, and under the protection of the society, which they attempt to destroy.”<sup>146</sup> The justice and necessity of confiscation seemed obvious to the patriot leadership, although the application of the laws differed from state to state. In general, states which held more active and numerous loyalists tended to have harsher laws against them. The legal persecution of loyalists certainly stemmed from the practical concerns of state authorities who feared being undermined by their Tories, but it may also have been a reflection of revolutionary governments incensed or embarrassed because of the dishonourable presence of so many Crown supporters in their midst. They had to act swiftly and harshly or the state’s honour might have been impugned within the confederation. In Georgia and New Hampshire, for example, the few loyalists there were given time to sell off their property and depart. In Virginia, a state which also produced comparatively few Tories, the loyalist planter Jacob Ellegood testified that Tory property was not confiscated but went “immediately to the Wife & Children... upon the Spot & was vested in them one third to the Wife &c as if the father was dead...” New York, which saw the most loyalist activity of the war, eagerly confiscated loyalist estates. According to a nineteenth century

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<sup>144</sup> Brown, *The Good Americans*, 127.

<sup>145</sup> Almon’s *Remembrancer* Dec. 17, 1782. Quoted in Claude Halstead Van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution*, (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1902), 280-281.

<sup>146</sup> Robert Livingston to Benjamin Franklin, Jan. 2, 1782 in Jared Sparks ed. *The Works of Benjamin Franklin*, Vol. IX (Boston: Hilliard, Gray & Co., 1840), 139.

estimate, the seized property of the New York loyalists amounted to \$3.6 million, an incredible sum even factoring for war-time inflation.<sup>147</sup>

The legal attack on loyalists followed the precepts of attainder, which along with execution was the punishment for high treason, and had been a part of English Common Law since at least 1352. Attainder stripped a traitor of all property rights, and included a unique provision known as the “corruption of blood” which prevented the transgressor from passing on any property to his or her heirs. According to the historian J.R. Lander, attainder meant “the legal death of the family.”<sup>148</sup> The New Jersey legislature, which enacted some of the most virulent anti-Tory laws, including execution “without benefit of clergy,” specifically stated that acts of attainder would not include the corruption of blood, perhaps feeling that an attack on innocent members of the family was not in keeping with the ideals of the Revolution.<sup>149</sup> Yet loyalists believed confiscation had the same effect. The New York loyalist Peter Van Schaak argued that banishment should be enough to satisfy the patriots. “By removing the man,” he wrote, “the measure of public justice is full; by adding to that punishment [confiscation], it runs over.” Confiscation was not a necessary punishment, but an act of “vindictive justice”. Quoting from the Marquis di Beccaria, Van Schaak asked if there could be “a more melancholy spectacle... than a whole family overwhelmed with misery from the crime of their chief?” The true intention of the law, according to Van Schaak, was to perpetuate the loyalists’ “punishment down to innocent posterity” that the family “may forever be accompanied by the infamy of their father...”<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Brown, *The King's Friends*, 115, 7. Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011), 68. Hugh Edward Egerton, ed. Daniel Parker Coke, *The Royal Commission on the Losses and Services of the American Loyalists, 1783-1785* (Oxford, 1915), 71.

<sup>148</sup> J. R. Lander, “Attainder and Forfeiture, 1453-1509” *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1961): 119.

<sup>149</sup> *Pennsylvania Packet* Oct 22, 1776 “An Act to Punish Traitors and disaffected persons.” All loyalists “provably attained of open deed by people of his or her condition, shall be adjudged guilty of high treason, and be punished accordingly, saving the corruption of blood.” A later proclamation, also published in the *Pennsylvania Packet*, Oct, 19, 1782 declared that any loyalist “found within this state, shall be and is hereby declared to be guilty of high treason against this state, and being thereof legally convicted, shall suffer death (saving the corruption of blood).”

<sup>150</sup> Henry Cruger Van Schaak, *The Life of Peter Van Schaack, LL.D.: Embracing selections from his correspondence and other writings during the American Revolution, and his exile in England* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1842), 114-115. Parts of this section are also quoted in Van Tyne, *The Loyalists*, 281.

Revolutionary authorities faced the quandary of whether loyalist wives were guilty of treason, or were blamelessly following their husband's commandments. Under the English law of coverture, a married woman's legal identity was subordinate and inseparable from her husband's. Normally a woman's property and legal relationship to the state was turned over to the husband upon marriage. In matters of political allegiance, women were expected to abide by the decisions of husbands. "The fictive volition of the pair" as Linda Kerber describes it, "was always taken to be the same as the real will of the husband." Even though women could be guilty of treason against the state, wives who crossed enemy lines to be with their husbands were not considered traitors. Both British and Continental authorities were pleased to allow women to join their men as it freed up resources and left property abandoned which could be confiscated and put to use.<sup>151</sup> Loyalist wives who stayed behind could pose serious problems to this plan. In most states women could claim dower rights of a third of their husband's property at death, but how this would apply to political death was not at all clear. The Massachusetts confiscation laws passed in 1777 specifically held out the option for wives to effectively separate from their loyalist husbands to retain their dower rights as if their husbands had physically died.<sup>152</sup> This may have marked a brief recognition of women's political agency, but it also functioned as a direct attack on loyalist patriarchy.<sup>153</sup> Elsewhere, the treatment of loyalist women who remained on their lands depended greatly on local conditions. Women might be objects of sympathy and regarded as victims of their traitor husbands who abandoned their families as they did their country. Other women were suspected to be dangerous spies, passing intelligence and supplies to the enemy and were turned out and sent across the British lines.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, 119-120, 123.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid*, 124.

<sup>153</sup> The attack on loyalist patriarchy was limited by the fact that courts in late eighteenth century American increasingly favoured male inheritance rights. For an in depth exploration of women and inheritance law in colonial and early republican America, see Marylynn Salmon, *Women and the Law of Property in Early America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986).

<sup>154</sup> Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, 123, 50-51. That British and Revolutionary authorities also convicted women of spying shows the popular acceptance of women's political agency in other areas as well. For women's role as spies see: Norton, *Liberty's Daughters*, 174-175; Carol Berkin, *Revolutionary Mothers*:

Reports of loyalist women suffering privation and indignities are quite common in the loyalist records, but ultimately the patriot authorities perhaps regarded such events as collateral damage brought on by the wickedness of their Tory husbands and fathers. Just as a dependant's behaviour reflected on the honour of the patriarch, so too could the actions of loyalist patriarchs dictate and justify how patriots treated their families. If the loyalist himself could not be taken, then the family and estate could serve as a powerful substitute.<sup>155</sup> For example, the suspected loyalist John Peters accompanied the Continental Army in its invasion of Quebec, only to desert to the British at his first opportunity. Peters boasted in his narrative that he provided a British officer intelligence that "enabled him to form an Ambuscade whereby he took and killed near 150 Rebels." In retaliation for his desertion, the patriots confiscated his estate in Moorestown, New York (now Vermont) and evicted his wife, whom Peters described as "a small and delicate Woman", and their several children in January 1777. Stripped of their servants, they were left with "three Weeks provisions in a deserted House near fifty Miles from any Inhabitants between them and Canada." They were not reunited with John Peters until May 6, 1777.<sup>156</sup>

Loyalists also considered the devastating attack on the stately home of Brigadier General Oliver De Lancey as an act of reprisal. According to fellow loyalist officers, the De Lancey household was "a new House & very large" in which the family "kept a very good table & lived with great splendor." The furnishings alone were thought to be worth as much as £2000. On November 26, 1777, while De Lancey was absent, a raiding party "robbed and plundered his house of the most valuable furniture and money" before setting the house on fire. Few doubted that De Lancey's home was deliberately selected, and the British General James Robertson testified that he believed "the burning of his House was a mark of [rebel] Enmity."<sup>157</sup> The loyalist newspaper in occupied Philadelphia

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*Women in the Struggle for America's Independence* (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2007), chapter 9, 135-147.

<sup>155</sup> Janice Potter-MacKinnon comes to a similar conclusion in *While the Women Only Wept: Loyalist Refugee Women* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 53.

<sup>156</sup> John Peters, "Narrative," 3-5. John Peters Papers, New York Historical Society.

<sup>157</sup> Egerton, *The Royal Commission*, 116-117.

reported that in addition to the physical destruction of the house, “Mrs. De Lancey, her two daughters, and two other young ladies” had to escape “through the flames in only their bed-dresses; when they were most cruelly insulted, beat, and abused...[and] an infant grandchild in a most barbarous manner thrown on the ground.” The De Lancey women and children scattered into the woods where they were found the next day. The report blamed the outrage on “Continental Troops” who completed their foray into British territory by robbing “a poor man’s house...of all the family cloathing, blankets &c.”<sup>158</sup> The loyalist paper’s insistence that the assailants were uniformed Continental soldiers, and not irregulars or raiders, was intended to show the true mercenary colours of the patriot rank and file. The attack against the women of the house was a further sign of rebel depravity and dishonour. Because women were often considered innocents, with little political will of their own, the attack on the domestic sphere was viewed as extraordinarily savage by the loyalist press.

Loyalist families were sometimes taken hostage to check the actions of their absent patriarchs. The capture of Lieutenant Governor Philip Skene’s family is a case in point. A former Jacobite, Skene had atoned for his prior rebellion in the Seven Years’ War and was rewarded with the command of the forts surrounding Lake Champlain, and founded a large manorial settlement he called Skenesborough. It was a well-known fact that Skene was loathed by his tenants.<sup>159</sup> The loyalist was *en route* to England when the violence erupted in 1775, and in his absence, his family was arrested and forced out of their home. Like other important prisoners, (see chapter 4), the Skenes were sent to Connecticut. After the war, Lt. Gov. Skene testified that his family “suffered exceeding hardships from their Mode of travelling...and exposed to every insult and mortification from a licentious people by whom they were surrounded and threatened repeatedly.” The loyalist landlord was arrested upon his return to America, at which point his family was released, only to face another strenuous journey to Quebec, where they were besieged

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<sup>158</sup> *The Pennsylvania Ledger*, Dec. 13, 1777.

<sup>159</sup> For the particular issues pitting tenants and landlords against one another, see Edward Countryman, *A People n Revolution: The American Revolution and Political Society in New York, 1760-1790* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989), 48. Philip Skene’s household comprised forty-four dependents and servants, and his lands were worked by seventy-one rent paying tenants and their families.

with the rest of the city in late 1775.<sup>160</sup> Though certainly not a genteel practice, holding families hostage was a pragmatic way to compel enemies to surrender themselves as prisoners, or at the very least place a check on their freedom of action. Later in the war, for example, the family of John Butler was taken hostage after a string of outrages on the frontier allegedly perpetrated by Native warriors under his command.<sup>161</sup>

Families could also be punished for breaches of the honour code between genteel prisoners and their captors. When Sir John Johnson, the wealthy and powerful baronet of the Mohawk Valley, broke his parole and fled to Canada, his wife and children were taken prisoner. By breaking his parole, his word of honour, Johnson had committed a serious breach of gentlemanly conduct. In response, Johnson's regal home was pillaged and "robbed of his cattle, his negroes, his horses, hogs, sheep, and utensils of husbandry..." More despicable, according to a later sympathetic historian, was that "Lady Johnson," seven-months pregnant, was forced to share her carriage with a patriot lieutenant who prior to the war had been a lowly shoemaker. In an added insult, the rebel upstart dressed himself in Sir John Johnson's clothes "stolen at the Hall," and sat beside Mrs. Johnson in the carriage. Though this was perhaps a cruel joke at the expense of Sir John and Mary Johnson, donning the baronet's attire had a deeper significance in the eighteenth century. It is likely that the clothing in question was imported from England and would have been far beyond the means of the shoemaker-turned-officer. As Ann Little argues, attire "marked colonial bodies as bound or free, English or...Indian... as child or adult... and [was] a handy indicator of class rank." Clothes were badges of identity, and in the eighteenth century, spoke also to legal and social rights. Therefore to cross boundaries by donning the clothing of another race, gender, or class, was considered a violation of the social order.<sup>162</sup> Johnson's clothing would have projected power and status, but with the loyalist gentleman gone, the patriot officer transformed the meaning of the suit. Sitting next to the loyalist's wife in his carriage, the mockingly

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<sup>160</sup> Catherine Crary, *The Price of Loyalty: Tory Writings from the Revolutionary Era*, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1973), 37.

<sup>161</sup> See chapter 5. *The Independent Chronicle and the Universal Advertiser*, December 24 1778.

<sup>162</sup> Ann M. Little, "'Shoot that Rogue, for He Hath an Englishman's Coat On!': Cultural Cross-Dressing on the New England Frontier, 1620-1760" *The New England Quarterly*, Vol. 74, No. 2 (Jun., 2001): 241-242.



attired shoemaker gained honour by displaying Johnson's impotence and disgrace. To Lady Johnson it must have been a dreadful humiliation.

Mary Johnson and her family were held in Albany under the command of General Philip Schuyler. While there she complained bitterly about the indignities she suffered on her forced journey and in her captivity. The general's written reply blamed her circumstances on "the Pain Sir John's Conduct has occasioned me, and how I have been distressed at the sad necessity which obliges me to secure his Person." In his polite but cold letter, he reminds Lady Johnson that by breaking parole, her husband "has forgot the obligations he lays under to me" and as long Mrs. Johnson remains in the General's power she should "make [herself] perfectly easy" with her situation unless she wished to make the long overland journey to Canada on her own. Eventually some of Johnson's faithful tenants helped the family escape. Disguised as peasant women and children, the Johnsons slipped away with their servants and rejoined Sir John Johnson in New York City.<sup>163</sup> What significance the Johnsons placed on their disguises is not recorded, but it must have been noted among the indignities they suffered on account of the revolutionary upheavals, and would have served as a symbol of how far the Johnsons had fallen in the colonial hierarchy.

General Schuyler may not have cared much for Lady Johnson, who even went over his head at one point, writing directly to George Washington with her complaints, but she was not being held on her account, but because of Sir John Johnson's dishonourable conduct. This was a dispute between two men, Johnson and Schuyler, and holding the loyalist's family hostage was no doubt intended, at least partially, as an insult. Schuyler, not Johnson, had power over the loyalist's wife and children. It was a profound challenge to Johnson's patriarchy. In his letter to Mary Johnson, Schuyler presents the dispute in the language of a debt – Johnson had failed in his "obligations" to Schuyler, personally. Furthermore, Schuyler was "distressed" by Johnson's conduct, which had perhaps made the patriot general look foolish for not securing his prisoner properly, thus placing him under the "sad necessity" of holding women and children

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<sup>163</sup> Crary, *The Price of Loyalty*, 78-80. Philip J. Schuyler to Mary Johnson, May, 14, 1776. George Washington Papers, Library of Congress, Series 4.

hostage to collect what he was owed. To Schuyler, Lady Johnson and the children suffered because of Sir John Johnson's perfidy, not patriot malice.

The vulnerable place of loyalist families in the contest between patriots and loyalists can also be seen in an attack on the family of James Allen of Philadelphia in January 1776. Allen's wife and children were travelling in their carriage when the driver attempted to get around a group of patriot militiamen. In the ensuing traffic snarl, the militiamen attacked the Allens' chauffeur, Samson, who lashed out with his horsewhip. Incensed by the insult, the militiamen attacked the "Chariot, broke the glass & pierced [it]...in 3 places" and attempted to overturn it with the family inside. Eventually cooler heads prevailed, but when James Allen attempted to bring the matter to the local patriot commander, he received a much different response than the apology he expected. Perhaps realizing that Allen was a wealthy and influential opponent to independence, Major Boehm "a violent man, countenanced the attack," and even "attempted to draw his sword on me."<sup>164</sup> Although Allen feared this debacle would lead to further insults and attacks, he was later able to smooth things over with Boehm and "we buried the affair in Oblivion."<sup>165</sup> The Allen family was certainly not the first to fall afoul of a rowdy, possibly drunken band of militiamen, and it is not clear if the militia knew that the carriage belonged to the Allen family. Nor is the full identity or race of Allen's driver recorded. The militiamen were likely outraged at the prospect of being whipped by a servant or slave, and it only retroactively became a "countenanced" attack on a loyalist family once the father's identity became known. What started out as an unfortunate chance encounter transformed, after the fact, into a conflict between a wealthy Tory family and their republican adversaries, and further reveals how families and property were regarded as extensions of loyalist gentlemen.

These vignettes provide some consistent, important evidence of the loyalists as dishonoured householders. By seizing, vandalizing, or destroying a loyalist's home, or even appropriating a loyalist's fine clothing and carriage, patriots elevated their standing and dishonoured the loyalists. When loyalists fled, this was taken as a further sign of their

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<sup>164</sup> James Allen, "Diary," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 9, No.2, 195-196.

<sup>165</sup> James Allen, "Diary," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 9, No.3, 281.

immorality and cowardice, among other dishonourable traits. To the patriots, loyalists had abandoned their families like they had abandoned their country and the blame for their suffering dependents was charged solely to the exiled patriarchs. Loyalists, in turn, denounced the mistreatment of their families as savage acts of cruelty which unveiled the true depravity of the patriot cause. Most importantly these episodes reveal the loyalists' powerlessness to defend their property and families, and the total loss of any respect they once held in their communities. If a man's true wealth and power was measured in the number of people who obeyed and respected him, and that obedience was predicated on his ability to protect and provide, then loyalist manhood had suffered a fatal wound. There was a pragmatic reason for loyalist persecution, but there was also a clear intent to deny the loyalists' positions as men and householder. The concerted attacks on loyalist manhood indicate the importance patriots themselves placed on honour, manhood, and patriarchy. Revolutionaries created a powerful image of the emasculated Tory which was an inverted reflection of their own idealized image of virtuous manhood.

Some loyalist families buckled under the stress of persecution, and there are examples of dependents who chose a path separate from their patriarchs. Grace Galloway, the wife of the prominent Pennsylvania loyalist Joseph Galloway, lost much of her own inheritance and family wealth because of her husband's political choices. Already locked in an unhappy marriage before the Revolution, she recorded in her diary in 1779 that she was "truly set against him" for causing so much pain and loss to their family.<sup>166</sup> Even though she remained in Philadelphia and refused to follow her husband or abide by his political allegiance, patriot authorities still evicted her from her home and confiscated the property that she had inherited from her father. Patriots authorities were not about to overturn centuries of patriarchal tradition while they dismantled monarchical power in the colonies.<sup>167</sup> Galloway poured out her disdain for her absent husband in her diary, sharply noting that his absence "Makes even poverty more agreeable than any time

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<sup>166</sup> Ferling, *The Loyalist Mind*, 44.

<sup>167</sup> Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, 74-75.

I ever spent since I married.” Mr. Galloway’s exile marked a permanent separation, and the two never saw each other again.<sup>168</sup>

Rifts could also form between father and son. John Peters wrote that his “Father Colonel Peters of Hebron, wrote against me, and urged on the Mobbs...” The elder Peters seemed to be engaged in a sort of revolutionary tough-love, explaining to the patriots that his son “would soon become a Friend to America if severity was used.” From the lack of further correspondence, it appears that father and son never spoke again. More famously, Benjamin Franklin and his loyalist son William, the former governor of New Jersey, also became bitterly estranged.<sup>169</sup> James Allen’s family all shared loyalist sympathies, but they were still divided on how far to follow their political leanings. Allen’s brothers had been attained and exiled, while he remained in Philadelphia under suspicion, but still politically alive. He wrote in his diary that even though his family was “linked together by the purest & most disinterred [sic] affection,” because of the war they had become “totally unhinged.” Not only did his family seem to be disintegrating, but his wider authority was challenged. He recorded that “My tenants set me at defiance & I who am not the most patient man, am forced to bear all...” Unable to compel obedience and deference, Allen was dishonoured by the disrespect shown by his former subordinates. It seemed to Allen that “This convulsion has indeed brought all the dregs to the top.”<sup>170</sup>

To loyalist gentlemen, the rise of the “dregs” was accompanied by the painful fall of the better sort. In 1776 William Bayard, one of the wealthiest men in New York City, was forced out of his home and became a fugitive “Contending Fourteen weeks with unspeakable hardships in a dubious concealment, And often in Barns, Lofts, Hovels, Swamps and Forests...” The ignominy of a public man hiding in filth and skulking through the wilderness was dishonourable enough, but the nadir of Bayard’s humiliation occurred when he “entered [British occupied New York] in the Disguise and Habbit [sic]

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<sup>168</sup> Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty’s Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980), 217-18.

<sup>169</sup> John Peters, “The Narrative of John Peters,” John Peters Papers, NYHS. Sheila L. Skemp, *William Franklin: Son a Patriot, Servant of a King* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

<sup>170</sup> James Allen, entry July 15 1778 in “Diary of James Allen, Esq. of Philadelphia, Counsellor-at-Law, 1770-1778,” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 9, No.4 (Jan., 1886): 440, 427. James Allen, “Diary,” *The Pennsylvania Magazine* No.3, 285.

of one of my own Slaves.”<sup>171</sup> For William Bayard, the transformation from honoured to dishonoured was as stark as it could be. Crossing the frontier in disguise was a necessity, but crossing the sartorial line from gentleman to dishonoured slave was a powerful symbol of just how far the loyalist gentleman had fallen. Yet we know of it through both Bayard’s private correspondence and his official claim prepared for the loyalist commission. While the experience was certainly humiliating at the time, Bayard recast the experience as a badge of martyrdom. Bayard so loved the British constitution that he defiled himself in its cause. Though the dregs might gain material wealth, the loyalists retained their moral superiority.

Willingly suffering deprivation and humiliation for the royal cause with a clean conscience became a hallmark of loyalist self-perception, and they refused to be ashamed of the patriot attempts to dishonour them. A.D. Spalding wrote that though he had been driven from his home and family, and was threatened with death, he was “determined to suffer any thing rather than Comply” with the rebels. “I do from my Soul abhor the thought of Rebelling against my Prince” wrote Spalding. Yet he also deeply resented the fact that the British government had “strangely disappointed” the loyalists, offering no support or protection. Like other loyalists, Spalding lamented that being “absent from my Family & Business is Cruel, ‘tis hard...” but he felt no shame. He was bitterly sad and bewildered, but still remarked on the “sensations of a Good Conscience.”<sup>172</sup>

Gentlemen loyalists may not have felt ashamed of their predicament, but they consistently expressed grief over their losses. The exiled Jacob Bailey wrote how he could not contain his “bitter emotions of grief.” Joel Stone, reflecting on his flight from his Connecticut home, wrote that he “could not help considering my fate a peculiarly hard one thus being hunted as a common criminal and proscribed without cause...”<sup>173</sup> The wealthy New York loyalist Sylvester Gardiner wrote to a friend from his refuge in Halifax that he had been driven to a “miserable place...from a state of Affluence...”

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<sup>171</sup> William Bayard to unnamed recipient, Nov. 12, 1778. The details are also recorded in the “Schedule of Loss, No. 4”, which appears to be Bayard’s official claim to the British commissioners. Bayard, Campbell, Pearsall Collection. NYPL.

<sup>172</sup> Letter from A.D. Spalding to John Peters. No date. John Peters Papers, New York Historical Society.

<sup>173</sup> Jasanoff, *Liberty’s Exiles*, 7. Joel Stone, “Narrative,” in Talman, *Loyalist Narratives*, 326.

“God knows what I will do,” he concludes.<sup>174</sup> Some loyalist gentlemen could not cope with the traumatic loss of status and lifestyle. The prominent Connecticut loyalist, Filer Diblee, recorded that his brother-in-law, despairing at his ruined life “took a Razor from the Closet, threw himself on the bed, drew the Curtains, and cut his own throat.” Another loyalist, Millington Lockwood, reportedly drowned himself rather than continue in his state of indigence and exile.<sup>175</sup> These loyalist suicides are striking, but they were rare. Christian gentlemen were expected to embrace a sensitive, yet stoic perspective on loss. In 1783, William Bayard wrote to his daughter from exile in England that he was ill, alone and “Gloomy Indeed...” But his “Greatest Affliction...will be these thoughts of being Separated from you...” Nevertheless, Bayard obeyed the genteel strictures of stoic forbearance: “However bitter as the cup may be I must swallow.” Nicole Eustace describes the complex culture of genteel grief over the death of loved ones in the eighteenth century, and the process elites undertook to “reweave the rent social web” caused by death.<sup>176</sup> In many ways loyalists adopted the same attitude towards their political death as gentlemen might towards the death of a loved one.

While some loyalists reacted with grief to the threats and persecutions they underwent, others embraced their sense of righteous indignation. Elite loyalists regarded the entire contest as a battle between a genteel, professional, and moral minority and the uncouth and disordered majority. Loyalist narratives are full of descriptions of injured, yet persevering gentlemen, and the coarseness of their patriot adversaries. Perhaps one of the most telling examples is found in the memoir of the Reverend Jonathan Boucher, an English-born Maryland planter and Anglican rector of Queen Anne’s Parish. He was a hard-line Tory who preached non-resistance to his parishioners, and was hounded for his loyalty at every turn in the years leading up to the American Revolution. Both a man of the cloth and gentleman, Boucher was not the sort to back away from the demands of aristocratic honour. In one instance, he recorded that he found himself at a dinner with a

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<sup>174</sup> Crary, *The Price of Loyalty*, 125.

<sup>175</sup> Brown, *The King’s Friends*, 65.

<sup>176</sup> William Bayard to Elizabeth Cornell, September 20, 1783. Misc. Mss. Bayard, William Sr. NYHS. Nicole Eustace, *Passion is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 286.

“large company of men of different parties and opinions.” Boucher was verbally assaulted when he refused to partake in a toast damning General Gage and the troops in Boston. Osborne Sprigg, a “very great patriot” who had quarrelled with Boucher over some corn purchases earlier in the year, began to advance toward the minister, but was stopped in his tracks by Boucher’s suggestion that he would prefer to settle the matter the following day “*as a gentleman*,” and not fight at the table. Boucher took it as a particular satisfaction that Sprigg never answered his challenge, and he noted in his memoirs that it did not surprise him because he had never known “any instance” where Sprigg had acted “*as a gentleman*.” Boucher could rest in the knowledge that whatever the outcome of the larger conflict, by not agreeing to the duel, Sprigg had lost in this personal test of honour and manhood. And yet, like many gentlemen of his age, Boucher himself seems conflicted on the use of violence to defend his honour. Even though he later relished the tale of laying-out his uncouth neighbour for firing “swan shot” at his horse, and though he did indeed challenge Sprigg to a duel, Boucher remarked that “there is nothing I so much dread and detest” as fighting.<sup>177</sup> Just as with Dr. Haley, here again is one of the paradoxes of the gentleman – the eagerness to prove one’s mettle in combat combined with the sensibility to deplore the act.

Boucher and Sprigg encountered one another again on July 20, 1775, a fast day proclaimed by the Second Continental Congress. Boucher planned to deliver a sermon denouncing the rebellion and encouraging his parish to reject Congress. When he arrived he found “200 armed men, under the command of Mr. Osborne Sprigg, who soon let me know I was not to preach.” His honour was challenged. It was Boucher’s pulpit. He had the education, the wisdom, and the spiritual and intellectual authority to lead and teach, and he would not be cowed by barely literate men in hunting shirts.

His friends begged him not to ascend to his pulpit. They had been informed that some of the armed men present had been ordered to open fire the moment Boucher began to speak. Boucher recorded in his memoir that he replied with the argument “that once to

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<sup>177</sup> For a full biography of Jonathan Boucher see: Anne Zimmer, *Jonathan Boucher: Loyalist in Exile* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1983). The story of Boucher and Sprigg is detailed on pages 174-176. For Boucher’s conservative ideology see Jonathan Boucher, *A View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution in Thirteen Discourses* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1967[1797]). Boucher, *Reminiscences of an American Loyalist* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1967), 117-118.

flinch was ever to invite danger” and insisted that he would preach “with my sermon in one hand and a loaded pistol in the other.” Boucher never made it to his pulpit, however, and found himself surrounded by Sprigg and his men. Thinking quickly, he grabbed “Sprigg...by the collar, and with my cocked pistol in the other hand, assur[ed] him that if any violence was offered to me I would instantly blow his brains out.” Such a robust response from the minister must have come as something of a surprise to the patriot militiamen, who let Boucher use their commander as a human shield until he was safely on his mount. Boucher’s description of events, seemingly intended to show his own pluck and courage, lets an important and unedifying observation slip through. As he walked his prisoner towards his horse the crowd did not stare after him in stunned silence, cowed by a manly expression of supreme authority. Instead they jeered and were ordered “to play on their drums the Rogues March all the way we went, which they did.” Far from being impressed by the clergyman’s dash, it was yet another opportunity for the crowd to insult and dishonour him, perhaps seeing in the gesture a last feeble expression of Boucher’s impotence. Jonathan Boucher returned to preach the following Sunday, but his life in the colonies was over. He was saved from the ignominy of an act of attainder or banishment by being allowed to sell his property, and he left the colonies later in 1775, never to return.<sup>178</sup>

Boucher viewed this encounter as a matter of honour, or as a duel between the uneducated and unprincipled crowd and himself as a representative of refinement, moral decency, and fidelity. Just like the patriots, Boucher believed he was fighting a morally asymmetrical battle and was animated by a firm belief in his own merit and the authority of the Crown. The Anglican minister was not just defending his right to preach, but his personal honour, the status of his honour group – the Church of England – and the rightful status of loyal gentlemen like himself. He could have walked to the pulpit unarmed, as an imitation of Christ, but he did not. The same masculine honour that supposedly drove Peter De Lancey and John Haley to shoot at one another in a Charleston tavern compelled Boucher to defend his divinely and royally ordained rights with the threat of armed force. Boucher’s honour depended on deference from his

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<sup>178</sup> Boucher, *Reminiscences*, 121-123



parishioners, and if that meant holding a loaded gun to another man's head and using him as a human shield, so be it. He would claim respect, one way or another. That he failed so utterly is a testament to the power of the majority to decide, in the words of Tocqueville, "what is blamable or commendable." Boucher, and many like him, had fallen decidedly into the category of the dishonoured.

This chapter has explained the importance of concepts of honour and dishonour in the eighteenth century and provided a theoretical framework for considering the political death of the loyalists in the American Revolution. Honour was felt as an internal feeling of conscience and self-worth, but more importantly honour functioned as a gentleman's right to be respected. The degree to which he was respected indicated his position and power within his society. Gentlemen acquired honour by achieving patriarchal benchmarks such as marriage, household mastery, and prosperity, which are common traits in many cultures, but they also had to cultivate refined tastes, manners, fashions, and behaviours that served as badges of their honour and rank. The richest loyalist sources come from the elite and middling sorts who embraced these ideas, though this element of their experience has been largely overlooked by historians.

Scholars have explored the loyalists' statements of principle and the facets of their ideology; they have examined the local and regional variations of the loyalist condition; and they have documented loyalist persecution, legal status, confiscation, and exile. When these experiences are placed within their cultural context and the mentalities of the eighteenth century, a deeper and richer image of how the loyalists and patriots made sense of their reality and their conflict emerges. Drawing on the methods employed by historians such as Bertram Wyatt-Brown, the theories of anthropologist Frank Henderson Stewart, and by harnessing the insights found in the rich literature on gender in colonial and Revolutionary America, the meaning infused in patriot attacks on gentlemen loyalists is revealed. Patriots stripped loyalist gentlemen of the fundamental elements of manhood – property, honour, and patriarchy – when they targeted loyalist households, family members, possessions, and other symbols of authority. To do this to fellow white men required powerful justifications. The patriots thus attempted to first dominate and then eliminate the loyalists and their political arguments by dishonouring them. Like colonial

Americans who carried out traditional shaming rituals against adulterers and thieves, patriots believed the attacks on loyalist households and families were the just punishments for a kind of moral perversion. In a deeply symbolic culture, with stark gradations of freedom and power, the patriots created a new category of the ‘Tory’ – an effeminate, corrupted, and culturally divergent non-person. As will be explored in more detail in the following chapter, the archetype of the dishonoured loyalist, constructed in the print media and in the ritualized public humiliations of loyalist bodies, property, and effigies, served as a dark inversion of the patriot. The loyalist man became a negative trope which highlighted the bravery and honour of the revolutionary man.

Loyalists who once expected respect and deference were treated with insults and defiance. Bodies, clothing, possessions, and houses which once beamed power and authority, became objects of humiliation. To the loyalist gentlemen, this was evidence of a world turned upside-down, of the uncultivated mob seizing power from the rightful leaders. Yet patriots never intended their actions as generalized attacks on wealth or patriarchy. Instead they believed that men who espoused the cause of loyalism revealed a fatal corruption that had to be removed from their society. The shaming, ostracism, and exile separated the loyalists from other men and marked them as politically dead. All the cultural virtues that placed a gentleman at the apex of society – honour, gentility, virtue, competence – were systematically denied to loyalists. Cultural dishonour and legal punishment combined in the loyalists’ political death.

Most loyalist gentlemen regarded the American Revolution as a catastrophe which overturned not just a government, but the natural order. Men like James Allen, Jonathan Boucher, and Oliver De Lancey saw the American Revolution as an attack on decency and stability. To them it was a morally unequal contest between a minority of virtuous gentlemen and a crowd of grasping usurpers. Only rarely was it a battle between equals. The popular nature of revolutionary anger precluded more genteel forms of combat between individuals, such as the duel between the loyalist Peter De Lancey and the patriot John Haley. As the crisis progressed, both sides jockeyed for the moral and cultural high ground, and the conflict between loyalists and patriots became deeply personal. Unable to effectively respond to the threats, insults, and humiliations, and with

no lands or property, the loyalists became dependent on the British government. Politically dead in America, the loyalists would never find satisfaction with their patriot cousins in gentlemanly duels. Instead loyalist gentlemen had to hope for British victory in the protracted Revolutionary War. And war, according to the famous military strategist Carl Von Clausewitz, “is nothing but a duel on a larger scale.”<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (London: Oxford University Press, 2007 [Original 1832]), 13.

### 3. Insult

James Murray was a prosperous son of the British Empire. In 1735, the enterprising merchant left his genteel Scottish family and established a rice plantation in North Carolina, where he became deeply connected with the colony's governor and ruling clique. Thirty-four years later Murray was a Boston magistrate and a respected and influential member of the Massachusetts elite. He was the quintessential colonial gentleman: well-traveled, well-connected, well-dressed, and wealthy. The new taxes levied on the American colonies likely hurt his business interests, but he remained steadfastly loyal to the Crown and to its official representatives in Boston. Whether in South Carolina or in Massachusetts, Murray loathed the rebelliousness of the lower ranks of colonial society. The street protests, disturbances, and the open disdain for lawful authority he witnessed in Boston confirmed his prejudices. As a public figure and a magistrate, Murray felt honour-bound to stand up for his ideas of order and stability. This sense of duty brought him to Faneuil Hall on the evening of September 6, 1769 to attend the preliminary hearing for William Burnet Brown who was charged with assaulting John Gridley during a fight the previous evening. Normally, such a trifling affair would not have concerned Murray nor brought such a large crowd to witness the event, but Brown and Gridley had been involved in a sensational coffee-house brawl between the opposition firebrand James Otis Jr. and the royal official John Robinson.<sup>1</sup>

The affair began when Otis and Robinson encountered one another at the "British Coffee House" on September 5, 1769. Otis was furious with Robinson and other members of the Board of Customs for allegedly calling him a "rebel and a traitor" in their

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<sup>1</sup> James Murray to unnamed recipient. September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1769 in Nina Moore Tiffany, ed. *Letters of James Murray, Loyalist*, (Boston: 1901), 8-10, 16, 159-162. Otis was an early pamphleteer and champion of colonial rights against arbitrary taxation. His pamphlet *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved* (Boston: Edes and Gill, 1764) famously laid out the essential argument against taxation without representation. He later became deeply troubled by mental illness and alcoholism and his political arguments became inconsistent and contradictory. See: James R. Ferguson, "Reason in Madness: The Political Thought of James Otis," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 36, No. 2 (Apr., 1979): 194-214. John J. Waters, John A. Schultz, "Patterns of Massachusetts Colonial Politics: The Writs of Assistance and the Rivalry between Otis and Hutchinson Families," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Oct., 1967): 543-567. James Robinson was a prominent, though unpopular customs collector, having previously been forced to flee Newport, Rhode Island to British protection in 1765. He was appointed to the Boston of Commissioners between 1767 and 1769. Lorenzo Sabine, *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution*, Vol. 2 (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1864), 229-230. Robinson's entry is not included in the 1847 edition.

correspondence.<sup>2</sup> He took this to be a personal insult, used to damage his reputation and eliminate him as a competitor for government offices. Yet Robinson also felt aggrieved. The day before this encounter, Otis had published a tirade against Robinson and the Board of Customs in the *Boston Gazette*, in which he called Robinson a “blockhead,” and stated that “I have a natural right if I can get no other satisfaction to break his head.”<sup>3</sup> Robinson was incensed at the breach of honour, the insult, and the implied challenge. Had Otis and Robinson followed the *code duello* this encounter could have been remembered as another opening shot of the American Revolution. Instead, it devolved into a lowly row when Robinson, by his own admission, “attempted to take [Otis] by the nose.” Few things were more insulting and provoking to an eighteenth-century gentleman than nose tweaking: the fight was on. Some reports say that Robinson’s friends attacked Otis as a group, though Robinson avowed “that no man besides myself struck Mr. Otis nor even offered him the least unfair play.”<sup>4</sup>

John Gridley saw the outnumbered Otis catching the worst of the affray and ran to his aid. In the ensuing fight, William Brown, a Robinson ally, allegedly beat Gridley with a cane, gashing the would-be defender’s head and breaking his wrist. Otis suffered some bloody wounds as well. James Murray recorded that Robinson’s jacket was badly torn, which seemed to Murray equally worthy of record as Gridley’s bleeding forehead. In the days that followed, the Boston presses printed and reprinted various witness accounts and versions of events, including Gridley’s testimony which painted the royalists as cowardly bullies. Both sides spat on the honour of their opponents while touting their own.<sup>5</sup>

Needless to say, a charged atmosphere greeted Murray at Faneuil Hall. A large group of Otis’ supporters barred his entry, and it was only a selectman’s admonishment

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<sup>2</sup> *Boston Post-Boy & Advertiser*, September 11, 1769. *Boston Chronicle*, September 11, 1769.

<sup>3</sup> *Boston Gazette and Country Journal*, September 4, 1769.

<sup>4</sup> For a cultural explanation of the significance of nose tweaking see: Kenneth S. Greenberg, “The Nose, the Lie, and the Duel in the Antebellum South” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 95, No. 1 (Feb., 1990): 57-74. Though the article explains the significance of the act in the generations after the Revolution, the essential meaning was the same throughout the English Atlantic. *Boston Chronicle*, September 11, 1769.

<sup>5</sup> See: *Boston Evening-Post*, September 11, 1769. *The Boston Chronicle*, September 18, 1769. *The Boston Gazette and Country Journal*, September 25 1769. *Boston Evening-Post*, September 25, 1769. For Robinson’s torn coat see: Tiffany, *Letters of James Murray*, 160.

“For Shame, gentlemen, do not behave so rudely,” that convinced the men to allow Murray entry. Once inside, Murray reported that “I was hiss’d.” Always on stage, the gentleman responded with an ironic bow. “I was hiss’d again, and bowed around a second time. A small clap ensued.” James Murray was holding his own against the crowd for the moment. Once the hearing was over, “the justices thought fit to bind over Mr. Brown. He lookt about for bail. No one offered but I.” Murray was careful at this point to make clear to the justices that “I did not mean by this offer to vindicate what Mr. Brown had done, but only to stand by him now the torrent was against him.”<sup>6</sup> The torrent was in no mood to accept Murray’s statement of principle, and the angered crowd refused to disperse.

At this moment someone snatched Murray’s wig from his head “and a pate, clean shaved by time and the barber, was left exposed.” The sartorial insult was meant to leave more than his scalp exposed. The wig was a symbol of gentlemanly status, and when the crowd stole it directly from Murray’s head they dishonoured him. In an instant Murray was humiliated in front of a crowd of inferiors who, theoretically, owed him deference. If he lunged and snatched at the wig thief he would look even more like an impotent fool, so he tried to make his way through the crowd to escape further insult. His few friends formed an ineffective barrier while, Murray reported, “somebody behind kept nibbling at my sides, and endeavoring to trip me.” When the crowd emerged from the hall someone stuck Murray’s wig on a pole for all to see and followed him to his house. Later the *Boston Evening-Post* jeered the magistrate further, reporting that he and his men had been conveyed to their homes without “suffering a hair of their *exposed* pates to be touched.”<sup>7</sup>

James Murray was humiliated by the crowd. They had barred his entrance to a court hearing, even though he was a magistrate, and verbally insulted him with hisses, before escalating the ridicule and snatching away his wig. His inability to respond, or even call on enough friends and allies to assist him, exacerbated the image of helplessness and emasculation in front of the crowd. When the *Evening-Post* printed the details of the event, it broadcasted Murray’s humiliation while adding a few fresh insults.

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<sup>6</sup> Tiffany, *Letters of James Murray*, 160-161. Murray does not report the specific composition of the crowd, but because of the court proceedings it is likely that it was comprised mostly of men.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 161-162. *Boston Evening-Post*, Sept. 25, 1769. Original emphasis.

According to Murray bloodshed was only prevented by a prudent member of the throng who cried “No violence or you shall hurt the cause.”<sup>8</sup> Yet, in the symbolic theatre of eighteenth century social relations, this insult was as much an assault on Murray’s position as actual violence.

Eighteenth century gentlemen envisioned an ideal world of hierarchies in which those at the top had a distinctive right to respect: honour. The common people owed Murray deference, and Murray owed the common people leadership and direction. Along with his role as a magistrate he was meant to serve as a moral example. In this instance the crowd decided that Murray had abrogated his responsibilities as a gentleman and as a leader and therefore lost his elevated right to respect. In some regards this was a clash of competing notions of honour and the public good. Murray represented the chivalric code of honour, deference, and stability while the crowds of Boston displayed a zeal for corporatism and a popular notion of the collective good.<sup>9</sup> Though he remained in Boston until 1776, Murray was never free from insults on the street and he even resorted to maintaining an escort of British regulars, which no doubt confirmed and deepened public antipathy towards him. If the public life of a gentleman was measured in the number of people who paid him deference and owed him service or allegiance, the events of 1769 show that Murray was rapidly approaching political death. In 1778 he and hundreds of others were included in the Massachusetts Banishment Act, barred from ever returning. It was the public dishonour of insult that initiated this process.<sup>10</sup>

The Boston disputes entangled imperial politics, personal insults, and crowd action. Trying to parse through the layers to differentiate between the problems caused by British policy and the fuses lit by personal insults is nearly impossible. In colonial America, everything was personal. This chapter explores how loyalists were dishonoured in their communities by what Rev. Mather Byles Sr. described as the “public storm.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Tiffany, *Letters of James Murray*, 161.

<sup>9</sup> For a definition of the idea of corporatism and how it functioned in colonial America as a sort of “moral economy,” see Edward Countryman, *The American Revolution* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985), 29.

<sup>10</sup> For a concise biography of James Murray see: James H. Stark, *The Loyalists of Massachusetts and the Other Side of the American Revolution*, (Clifton, NJ: Augustus M. Kelley Publishers, 1972 [1910]), 354-360.

<sup>11</sup> Mather Byles Sr. to unnamed recipient, New York Dec. 4, 1780. Byles Family Papers, UNBLC.

Loyalists were buffeted in the streets, in their homes, and in the press by public insult, intimidation, and shaming rituals. One single plebeian on the street could not offer a meaningful insult to a gentleman like Murray. Men of his station were free to ignore affronts from the lower orders and were only honour-bound to respond to offences committed against them by other gentlemen. But when the insults came from a large crowd they were impossible to ignore. Murray attempted to defend his dignity with a bodyguard of redcoats, but force could not compel respect from the people of Boston, and without their consent, he could not claim any kind of leadership over them. Sociological and anthropological studies have shown that all insults enact a sort of culturally specific ritual with a few key elements: the insult, the response of the insulted, and the evaluation of other concerned parties and witnesses. Loyalists found that the insults they received from crowds were impossible to counter. If a gentleman in the English Atlantic was insulted and did nothing about it, his honour, his “face” or reputation, was diminished. For this to happen at the hands of a rabble was particularly galling. A gentleman who could not defend his personal reputation could not claim deference or respect from others, not even from men who were supposed to be his inferiors.<sup>12</sup>

Nearly every work of loyalist history refers at some point to the insults royal supporters suffered in the American Revolution, but there have only been a few examinations of the deeper cultural significance of those insults.<sup>13</sup> Of those, the gendered nature of the insults is not directly explored, though studies of public insults in England

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<sup>12</sup> Charles P. Flynn, *Insult and Society: Patterns of Comparative Insult* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1977), 21-28. For a linguistic examination of modern insult rituals see: William Labov, “Rules for Ritual Insults” in David Sudnow, *Studies in Social Interaction*, (New York: Free Press, 1972), 120-169. Frank Henderson Stewart, *Honor*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 64-65, 67-68. Stewart notes that for insults to be answered both parties must be in the same “honor group” otherwise the insult can be ignored or otherwise punished, but a personal answer is not always required or even permitted. One Italian thinker on honour created a hierarchy of insult. Physical insults, such as nose tweaking, were the most serious and the scale descended down to not responding to a greeting. Stewart, *Honor*, 84. Also see Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 41.

<sup>13</sup> Benjamin H. Irvin, “Tar, Feathers, and the Enemies of American Liberties, 1768-1776” *The New England Quarterly*, Vol. 76, No. 2 (June 2003): 197-238. Paul Gilje, *The Road to Mobocracy: Popular Disorder in New York City, 1763-1834* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 5-23. Peter Shaw, *American Patriots and the Rituals of Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 177-231.



do note the significant connection between gender, sexuality, and insults.<sup>14</sup> This chapter will therefore explore this overlooked facet of the loyalist experience and examine how the mockery, affronts, and indignities directed at loyalists were interpreted through the lens of manhood and honour. Dissecting epithets or indignities may not at first glance seem a significant pursuit when set among the upheavals of the wider conflict. Yet in the deeply symbolic world of colonial America, these insults provide a glimpse into the shared culture of loyalists and patriots. The campaign of insults experienced by loyalists illustrates “the systematic breaking of established rules of conduct” to degrade men holding specific political positions and opinions.<sup>15</sup> By ostracising formerly respected members of the community and subjecting even a few distinguished gentlemen to shaming rituals, patriots elevated their own status while also deepening their rejection of British power in the colonies. The ineffective loyalist response to verbal or physical insults, and their reliance on the British for protection and redress, served to exacerbate patriot contempt for Tories and their cause. The crushing psychological impact of these insults on honour-conscious gentlemen was enough to cause loyalists to flee their communities or recant, which was precisely the patriots’ intent.

Insults followed the loyalists from the streets into the print media of the Revolution. As seen in the case of James Murray, the crowds and the press often worked in tandem, sharing the insults with a much larger audience and preserving loyalist humiliation for posterity. Though the loyalists left us few clues as to the specific nature of the verbal insults hurled at them in the streets, the invectives we find in the patriot press likely reflect a more articulate version of the same themes. Loyalists were reviled as Judases and parricides, as corrupted and sneaking cowards, and as villains who prostituted their manhood for the sake of luxury and preferment. Loyalist publications

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<sup>14</sup> Laura Gowing, “Gender and the Language of Insult in Early Modern London,” *History Workshop*, No. 35 (Spring, 1993): 1-21. Robert B. Shoemaker, “The Decline of Public Insult in London, 1660-1800.” *Past & Present*, No. 169 (Nov. 2000): 97-131.

<sup>15</sup> Flynn, *Insult*, 6. Flynn adopts an ethnomethodological approach to the study of insults which posits, essentially, that all insults, in whatever culture, “consist largely of violations of...unspoken but very significant norms” that regulate society and maintain hierarchies. The situation of elite loyalists fits neatly with this theory. The vast amount of sociological work that examines social interaction cannot be included here, but the theory used by Flynn and others was introduced by Harold Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Engelwood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice-Hall, 1967).

compared the revolutionaries to brutes or rebellious children who could not control their passions. These were not just jibes and slights; these were powerful attacks on their enemies' manhood and honour. Both sides tried to emasculate and degrade the other, but the patriots were far more effective. The loyalists had access to very few friendly printing presses and, just as importantly, loyalist writers refused to adopt a more populist and aggressive style. The loyalist message was neither circulated widely enough nor was persuasive enough to take root. Whether on the street or on the page, the patriots waged a successful campaign of insult against loyalists. It was not just the fact that loyalists were insulted, but the manner in which they were insulted that drove so many loyalist gentlemen from their homes. The invectives and shaming rituals relied on symbols of dishonour and emasculation, which were intended to exhibit loyalist effeminacy, cowardice, treachery, and servility, and deny their cultural legitimacy. Gendered insults were a crucial part of a process to remove the politically dead from society.

In times of peace and war, a gentleman was expected to take personal insults very seriously. How he responded depended greatly on his rank within the complex hierarchy he inhabited. Plebeian insolence might be ignored or might be physically punished with the strike of a cane or a horsewhip. A slight from an equal could result in a challenge or linger as a long simmering vendetta carried out through gossip or intrigue. An insult from a superior often had to be endured.

The power of public insult and its relationship to the demands of honour groups and patron-client networks can be glimpsed in a "memorandum" recorded by the Scottish-born loyalist John Porteous. Porteous was one of the wealthiest merchants in Detroit and served as the unofficial spokesman for the other traders. In 1774 he had a very public dispute with Major Henry Basset, commandant of the British garrison, which in many ways represented not only a personal quarrel, but a conflict between the honour of the merchant and the soldier.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> "Description Jan'y 27<sup>th</sup> 1774 in Consequence of a Meeting of the trading People" and "Memorandum of what past Between Major Basset & all the trading People at Detroit..." January 27, 1774. John Porteous Papers, UNBLC (originals Library and Archives Canada, MG23, 6 III7).

On the morning of January 27, 1774, Major Basset assembled all of the merchants and officers, with the notable and intentional exception of Porteous. According to information passed to the spurned merchant, Bassett “then began a very unbecoming & ungrammatical [sic] discourse... which was intended to vilify & ridicule Mr. Porteous, which he compared to a Mushroom the production of a night & to a Cat that was always growling but could not mouse...” Porteous recorded a transcript of what happened later when he and the other merchants met again with Major Basset. In Porteous’ written record of the encounter, he presents himself as cool and measured, while the obstinate British officer is caustically abusive. “I despise you Sir & all you can do,” declared Basset, “I tell you so before all your Brother Merchants.” While another officer might have drawn his sword and challenged the Major at such an insult, Porteous had to tread carefully. Basset, in many respects, acted as the fort’s chief patron since no merchant could trade at Detroit without his consent. Porteous was also only one man in a larger partnership that relied on him. To respond warmly might allow him to save face in the immediate argument, but he would jeopardize his business and therefore his reputation as a competent merchant. Therefore, Porteous swallowed his pride and responded: “Sir, I am very much obliged to you. Adieu.” This was a pragmatic reply, but also one intended to maintain Porteous’ reputation among his fellow merchants. The Scottish trader knew to keep his mouth shut and restrain his emotions in the face of the Major’s intemperate and brutish emotional display, especially when profits were at stake.<sup>17</sup> What happened next is not recorded, but Porteous remained a steadfast loyalist throughout the American Revolution and continued to trade with the British military.

Yet Porteous’ “memorandum” may be rather selective. Many surviving letters to the merchant show him to be no shrinking violet. Robert Bartlett, writing to Porteous in November 1778, declares his “surprize” to have received “such treatment from Mr. Porteous” over some debts. John Stoughton wrote a year later chiding Porteous for displaying “so little appearance of friendship” and that his “Conjecture” over some irregularities in accounts “might have been couched in a more friendly manner...”<sup>18</sup> It is

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<sup>17</sup> “Memorandum,” John Porteous Papers.

<sup>18</sup> Robert Bartlett to John Porteous, Nov. 9, 1778. John Stoughton to John Porteous, Mar. 10, 1779. John Porteous Paper, UNBLC.

very likely that Porteous had managed to offend the commandant. Though Porteous obviously chafed at his treatment at Detroit, there was little he could do to redress the insult directly and still maintain his honour among his partner merchants.

Public insults directed at loyalists in the American Revolution were equally tied up in concepts of rank. Most often, loyalist insults bore similarities to traditional communal responses meant to restore stability and social order. Publicly calling someone out for illicit sexual conduct or unethical business practices was a long-standing practice in the English Atlantic, and though the rise of politeness and gentility had seen a decline in public defamation litigation in England during the eighteenth century, honourable reputations could still be jeopardized by gossip and slander.<sup>19</sup> Adulterers and rakes could face social ostracism and “rough music” from assembled crowds, the names of debtors could be published, and petty criminals could find themselves in the pillory. Whether officially sanctioned punishments or a crowd’s vernacular expression of disapproval, shame was the common goal. Patriots drew on these traditions to force loyalists to recant their political position and declare their support for the revolutionary cause, but it is also clear that patriots sought to punish and humiliate their intended converts and simply terrorize unbending loyalists. Revolutionary fervour intensified traditional insults. Ann Hulton, the sister of a prominent customs official in Boston, Henry Hulton, could see that “the Mobs here are very different than in O[ld] England where a few lights put into the Windows will pacify, or the interposition of a Magistrate restrain them, but here they act from principle & under Countenance, no person daring or willing to suppress their Outrages...”<sup>20</sup> “A Son of Liberty” advised the “Committees of Inspection in the several Towns on the Continent” to give the loyalists “no Quarter...convince, convert, or confound them. However dignified and environed with conceptions of their Importance, cause them to bow before you, and lick the Dust.”<sup>21</sup> Public humiliations were thought to

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<sup>19</sup> For a description of how the rise in polite culture influenced English urban society see: Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, 1660-1800* (London: Pearson Education, 2001).

<sup>20</sup> Ann Hulton to Mrs. Adam Lightbody, June 30, 1768, in Ann Hulton, *Letters of a Loyalist Lady: Being the Letters of Ann Hulton, Sister of Henry Hulton, Commissioner of Customs at Boston, 1767-1776* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927), 11.

<sup>21</sup> *Connecticut Gazette*, Sept. 29, 1775.

right a moral imbalance and serve as examples to others. From the Stamp Act of 1765 through to the conclusion of the American Revolution, insults and shaming rituals were used against political non-conformists who, like James Murray, argued for restraint and continued loyalty to the Crown.

Loyalist gentlemen were dismayed by the abuse they received from the lower orders, but they were equally conscious of their rejection by their former peers. When a mob forced the resignation of the Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts, Thomas Oliver, in September of 1774, the loyalist *Boston Weekly News-Letter* noted that “The mob was not mixed with tag, rag & Bobtail only. Persons of Distinction in the Country were in the Mass...”<sup>22</sup> The Revolution ended the privilege of the few royal office holders in America, but it was not necessarily a class-based struggle. The riots and mobs of the Revolution reflected a popular consensus of the public good which united people from all ranks, though an anti-aristocratic sentiment was often loud and clear.<sup>23</sup> Loyalists also smarted at their ostracism from the company of their fellow gentlemen. James Allen, a Philadelphia loyalist, wrote in his diary while isolated in Philadelphia that “I never knew... how painful it is to be secluded from the free conversation of one’s friends, the loss of which cannot be made up by any other expedients.” Ashbel Humphrey, a Connecticut loyalist, wrote how his rejection “almost brought him to the borders of despair.” George Watson certainly felt the loneliness brought on by his loyalism. When he attended church one day in Plymouth, Massachusetts, “a great number of the principal inhabitants left” as he entered. Nathaniel Whitworth Jr., writing to his father in December of 1775, described how he declined certain positions to avoid being “stigmatized with the names of Ministerial Friends, Enemies to their Country & which I have hitherto escap’d tho they are Titles which no honest man will regard yet they are such as every prudent one would

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<sup>22</sup> *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, Feb. 23, 1775. The same fact was repeated verbatim in Peter Oliver, *The Origin and Progress of the American Rebellion* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1961 [1781]), 153.

<sup>23</sup> Pauline Maier, “Popular Uprisings and Civil Authority in Eighteenth-Century America”, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Jan., 1970): 3-35. Gilje, *The Road to Mobocracy*, 3-68. An alternative to the “consensus” idea of crowd action can be seen in Thomas P. Slaughter, “Crowds in Eighteenth-Century America: Reflections and New Directions”, *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 115, No. 1 (Jan., 1991): 3-34.

wish to avoid...<sup>24</sup> Indeed, the hope of eluding public ridicule compelled some loyalists to flee their homes. William Bayard, the prominent New York loyalist and landholder fled the city in 1775 “to avoid being insulted.” Doctor John Caleff left his home in Maine “after having rec’d many insults.”<sup>25</sup> Others tried to show their tenacity in the face of abuse. Mather Byles dismissed his dishonours as “nothing more than insults in the Street” while Alexander Thompson of Savannah, Georgia testified that he did not “leave the province for these insults but from ill health.”<sup>26</sup>

Insults and social ostracism were common aspects of the loyalist experience, but that did not make them any less painful. The loyalist claims are filled with examples of gentlemen being subjected to “great insult,” “outrageous insults,” “shameful and degrading language” and there are numerous references to being pelted with stones, receiving “incendiary letters” and threats.<sup>27</sup> Yet, it is not at all clear what constituted an insult. The vagueness of the loyalists’ descriptions may be a result of the polite eighteenth century culture, wherein repeating vulgar insults was beneath a gentleman’s dignity. The opaque descriptions might also be due to the fact that any man who was publicly mocked or abused and could not respond lost something of his manhood. Anthropological studies have shown that the division between external honour (reputation) and internal honour (self-esteem) can erode under concerted disrespect.<sup>28</sup> It is impossible to tell whether the loyalists’ silence on the precise nature of their insults was due to their sense of decorum, or stemmed from the emotional stress of public emasculation and dishonour.

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<sup>24</sup> James Allen, “Diary of James Allen, Esq., of Philadelphia, Counsellor-at-Law, 1770-1778 (continued)” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Oct., 1885): 281; Robert Calhoun, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution*, 317; Brown, *The Good Americans*, 132; “Nathaniel Whitworth Jr. to N. Whitworth Sr., December 1775. Gideon White Papers, University of New Brunswick Loyalist Collection (UNBLC).

<sup>25</sup> Hugh Edward Egerton, ed. *The Royal Commission on the Losses and Services of American Loyalists, 1783-1785, Being the Notes of Mr. Daniel Parker Coke M.P.* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1915): 322, 173.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 182, 191.

<sup>27</sup> Egerton, ed. *The Royal Commission on the Losses and Services...* 19, n37, 27, 44, 84, and passim.

<sup>28</sup> Stewart, *Honor*, 18-21. Alexander Welsh, *What is Honor? A Question of Moral Imperatives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 10-14.

Loyalist gentlemen saw the collapse of social hierarchy and felt the sting of insult in simply being questioned by lesser ranks. When Benjamin Marston was brought before a committee, he regarded the whole experience as one extended insult. He recorded that one of the chief committeemen was a Captain Weston, who “owes his whole existence to the very people he is now insulting.” The contempt Marston felt towards his captors is evident in the way he connects their bodily appearance to their lack of virtue or even humanity, a typical mentality of the higher ranks in the eighteenth century. He refers to committeemen as “creatures” and provides individual descriptions like a “pious-looking whining body” or “a Simpering...kind of body.” Marston’s description of his interrogators as “bodies” fits with the wider elite conceptions of the poor and the genteel. In the eighteenth century those at the bottom were thought to be controlled by their bodily appetites. Their coarse manners and loafing ham-fistedness was considered evidence of moral weakness and intellectual torpidity. The bodies of people in the higher social ranks were thought to represent a more vaunted state of grace and were therefore sacrosanct. When Marston observed that Mr. Drew was wearing a “ragged Jackett & I think a leather apron” and another in the group “Can do dirty work” he was not simply casting aspersions on their fashion sense or their toleration of muck, but was making a pointed moral statement. The loyalist gentleman found it extremely galling to be at the mercy of such men and took their every attempt to restrict his movement as an egregious insult.<sup>29</sup> Those who were challenging the authority of Britain were not only insolent and petulant, but they were as a whole, according to the Reverend Thomas Bradbury Chandler, “ignorant men, bred to the lowest occupations, who have no knowledge of the general principles upon which civil society should be always established.” Question

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<sup>29</sup> The Diary of Benjamin Marston, Sept. 22, 1776. Winslow Papers, UNBLC. A convenient transcription with digitized images can also be found online at: [www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/marston/index.html](http://www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/marston/index.html). For attitudes towards poor and wealthy bodies in the English Atlantic see: Simon P. Newman, *Embodied History: The Lives of the Poor in Early Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: The University of Philadelphia Press, 2003), 1-15. Also see: Bushman, *The Refinement of America*, 63-72. Caroline Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honour: Service and Sacrifice in George Washington's Army* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), xi. For sartorial politics see: David Waldstreicher, “Why Thomas Jefferson and African Americans Wore their Politics on their Sleeves: Dress and Mobilization between American Revolutions.” Jeffrey Pasley, Andrew W. Robertson et al, *Beyond the Founders: New Approaches to the Political History of the Early American Republic* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 79-103. Michael Meranze, “A Criminal is Being Beaten: The Politics of Punishment and the History of the Body” Robert Blair St. George, ed. *Possible Pasts: Becoming Colonial in Early America*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 302-323.

seventy-five of Chandler's *American Querist*, neatly sums up his opinion of the matter by asking: "whether the old rule, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam* [The shoemaker should not go beyond his last], be not a good rule and proper for this day?"<sup>30</sup> The classical allusion might very well have gone over the heads of most colonists, but the sentiment is clear: government was the business of a privileged few, who from breeding and character were set apart to lead. Chandler later referred to the patriot leadership as the "beer-house gentry" and mused about the "extraordinary tavern expenses" which accrued at their meetings.<sup>31</sup> Loyalist elites believed that the royal cause was the only logical choice any sober, thoughtful gentleman could make.

Verbal insults and the household violations described in the previous chapter were intolerable for gentlemen loyalists, but the most infamous insults meted out against the loyalists were targeted at their bodies. There are few better ways to gauge a society's cultural mindset than in the way it treats the human body, and the stark contrast between the treatment of plebeian and patrician bodies is evidence of the chasm of rights and respect which separated people in colonial America. Slaves, vagrants, and the poor could be flogged, branded with hot irons, or otherwise disfigured, whereas a gentleman would never face such physical torments and permanent marking.<sup>32</sup> Murray's description of Robinson's torn coat is an example of a transgression against a genteel body, but the popular uprising employed far more severe insults. A man named Jesse Dunbar, who purchased an ox from a Tory councillor, was punished for violating the boycott by being shoved inside its hollowed carcass and carted through the streets of Plymouth, Massachusetts. He was then tied to a horse and dragged from the town. Peter Oliver recorded this and other outrages as an appendix to his *Origin and Progress of the American Rebellion* (1781). He reported how public officials were threatened by mobs and how prominent judges were forced to run gauntlets before being coerced into asking

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<sup>30</sup> Thomas Bradbury Chandler, *The American Querist: or, Some Questions Relative to the Present Disputes Between Great Britain and Her American Colonies* (Boston: Mills & Hicks, 1774), 26.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>32</sup> Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honour*, xi.



forgiveness for their errors.<sup>33</sup> Other loyalists reported similar abuses. The loyalist gentleman Cadwallader Colden Jr. was chained to a slave while a captive in New York. The Connecticut loyalist Peter Guire was reportedly branded with a “G.R.”, (George Rex), a punishment reserved for slaves, criminals, and cattle. In both of these examples, the symbolic connection with slaves or cattle was clearly a mark of dishonour and perhaps meant as a punishment for loyalists’ perceived servility to the Crown.<sup>34</sup> A list of reported bodily insults could go on for pages, but the most iconic form of shaming punishment was tarring and feathering.

Like effigy burning or other folk customs, tarring and feathering had a long history in the English world. Originally a maritime custom with roots going back to the medieval period, the ritual of tarring and feathering was painful and humiliating. Throughout the early modern period the punishment was used in England against drunkards, rapists, and thieves. The first recorded instance of it in the colonies was not until the mid-1760s, yet it quickly became familiar to the residents of seaside towns. Tarring and feathering was mostly directed at customs officials or other government agents, but it was also used on occasion to punish sexual transgressions. In 1769, a man was tarred and feathered for luring a woman into the clutches of the hated soldiers in the Boston garrison. *The Boston Evening-Post* described how the man was then “carried about the town for two or three Hours, as a Spectacle of Contempt and a Warning to others...” Tarring and feathering was normally reserved for low-born bodies, but with the intensification of the political crisis, some gentlemen found themselves at the end of the tarring brush. Crowds could sometimes satisfy themselves with stand-ins if the gentleman could not be found or the crowd lost their nerve. When a mob could not get their hands on Timothy Ruggles, they instead “cut his Horses Tail off & painted him all over. The mob found that Paint was cheaper than Tar and Feathers.” One of Samuel Seabury’s pamphlets was tarred and feathered as were the homes and stores of numerous

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<sup>33</sup> Peter Oliver, *The Origin and Progress of the American Rebellion*, 152-157. The material was taken, almost verbatim, from *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, Feb. 23, 1775.

<sup>34</sup> Eugene Fingerhut, *Survivor: Cadwallader Colden II in Revolutionary America* (Washington, D.C: University Press of America, 1983), 81. Robert Calhoon, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America*, 282.

merchants. Though tarring and feathering a house might seem little more than a sophomoric prank, it was intended as a very threatening act.<sup>35</sup>

One of the most brutal episodes of tarring and feathering took place outside of Augusta, Georgia in the summer of 1775. Thomas Brown was a young gentleman from a prosperous and wealthy English family, who established a plantation in 1771. When he flatly refused to sign an association supporting colonial resistance, a group of armed patriots attacked his home and after a brief melee Brown was knocked unconscious. When he awoke he was tarred and feathered, scalped, and then had his legs briefly set on fire, before being carted through the streets of Augusta. The burns to his feet were so extreme that he eventually lost two toes. Though he finally signed the patriot's association, he fled shortly after. *The Georgia Gazette* included a sarcastic note from the local committee, which like the insult done to James Murray's wig in Boston some years earlier, highlights the affront done to a gentleman's head, considered to be the part of the body most infused with honour.<sup>36</sup> In reference to Brown being scalped, the article reported that the loyalist "wears his hair very short and a handkerchief around his head in order that his intellect...may not be affected." Once again a patriot newspaper added insult to injury.<sup>37</sup>

The respected Connecticut doctor, Abner Beebe also experienced the terror of the tarring ritual after he cursed the local patriots in East Haddam for abusing his uncle. In response, the local committee posted advertisements in the *Connecticut Gazette* declaring him "inimical to the liberties of the people of America..." A short time later a mob "stripped [him] naked & hot Pitch was poured upon him, which blistered his Skin." The patriot mob then rolled him in a pig sty and forced him to eat dung. To complete the emasculation he was then "exposed to a Company of Women." Patriots attacked Beebe's house and destroyed his grist mill, financially ruining the man. Beebe was unmanned, but

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<sup>35</sup> Benjamin H. Irvin, "Tar, Feathers, and the Enemies of American Liberties," 199-200. *Boston Evening-Post*, November 6, 1769. Peters, *Origins and Progress*, 152-53.

<sup>36</sup> Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, 40.

<sup>37</sup> Edward J. Cashin, *The King's Ranger: Thomas Brown and the American Revolution on the Southern Front*, (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989), 27-28. Gary D. Olson, "Loyalists and the American Revolution: Thomas Brown and the South Carolina Backcountry, 1775-1776" *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 68, No. 4 (Oct., 1967): 207.

he was also dehumanized. Rolled in filth and blackened by pitch, he ceased to look like a man, but was transformed into a lesser creature, a thing. As will be seen, the comparison of loyalists to crawling vermin or frightened worthless animals was a recurring trope in the writings of Tom Paine and others. In response to these indignities, all Dr. Beebe could do was insert a note in the paper pleading his innocence and begging to be either granted a trial or left alone.<sup>38</sup>

Perhaps the most well-known image of tarring and feathering is a 1774 English print showing a man covered in tar and feathers being forced to drink tea from a kettle at the hands of a group of five grinning ruffians.<sup>39</sup> The image depicts the experience of John Malcolm, a customs official and former sea captain and army officer. He is unique in being one of the only loyalists to be tarred and feathered twice. The first time occurred in November, 1773, when he was “genteely tarr’d and feather’d”. Thomas Hutchinson noted that in this instance Malcolm “was not stripped and the chief damage he sustained was in his clothes...” Nonetheless, the humiliation followed Malcolm through the streets where he was “hooted at...for having been tarred and feathered.” On January 25, 1774, a young shoemaker named George Robert Twelves Hewes got into an altercation with Malcolm on the street and brought up the Captain’s humiliation. In response, Malcolm lashed out with his cane and badly wounded Hewes. An incensed crowd then invaded Malcolm’s house, stripped him, tarred and feathered his body, and paraded him about the streets in the dead of winter. Ann Hulton recorded that they whipped him, beat him with clubs, and threatened to hang him if he did not renounce the King and Parliament. “This Spectacle of horror & sportive cruelty was exhibited for about five hours,” she wrote. Hulton added in her letter that the doctors did not expect him to live and that “his flesh comes off his back in Stakes.” An advertisement appeared in the *Boston Post-Boy* shortly after from the “Committee for tarring and feathering” in which they disavowed their role in the treatment of Malcolm. Not that they disapproved of the action, but, they mockingly

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<sup>38</sup> Peter Oliver, *Origins and Progress*, 157. *Connecticut Gazette*, February 10, 1775. September 22, 1775. October 22, 1775. Calhoun, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America*, 282.

<sup>39</sup> “The Bostonian’s paying the excise-man, or tarring & feathering” (London: Sayer and Bennett, 1774). Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division. Digital Identification: cph 3a11950.

declared, “We reserve that Method for... Villains of greater Consequence.”<sup>40</sup> The exact nature of this committee is unclear, and it is possible that there was no “committee” at all, but rather this was a name borrowed at will by anyone seeking to legitimize their actions with an official-sounding title. The same name was used in newspapers throughout the colonies in printed threats against violators of the non-importation agreements.<sup>41</sup> This was yet another example of the press working with the crowds to continue to insult loyalists.

Though these assaults on genteel loyalist bodies are quite infamous, they were not the norm. In spite of the widely documented cases of tarring and feathering and other shaming rituals, comparatively few gentlemen loyalists were ever subjected to this fate. The fact that most victims of patriot mobs were from the lower orders is perhaps a testament to the abiding cultural respect for genteel bodies, or it could have just been due to the loyalists’ skill in eluding the mobs. Nevertheless, it only took a few examples to make the patriots’ point. The act of stripping a genteel body, of marking it with tar, feathers, or dung was a powerful attempt to take away the power of a loyalist gentleman. This was not an attack on gentility and the privileges it conveyed in general, but was specifically directed at loyalist gentlemen who were thought to have abused their positions for their own gain and were no longer worthy. In the same way that the stripes on a slave’s back showed the coercive power of the master class, these violent shaming rituals displayed the power of the crowd and transformed and degraded the loyalist body into an object of loathing and mockery. Even if very few loyalist gentlemen were tarred and feathered, those examples still terrified others of their rank. William Aitchison, a Norfolk merchant wrote that “A large tar mop was erected near the Capital wt a Bag of feathers to it and a Barl. of Tar underneath” in order to intimidate men into signing the

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<sup>40</sup> For a full rendition of the John Malcom’s ordeal see Alfred F. Young, “George Robert Twelves Hewes (1742-1840): A Boston Shoemaker and the Memory of the American Revolution” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 38, No. 4 (Oct., 1981): 561-623. “Genteely tarr’d” quoted on 593. And *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999), 46-51 (the specific dates are noted 46-47). Thomas Hutchinson to Earl of Dartmouth, January 28, 1774 in K.G. Davies, ed. *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783 (Colonial Office Series) Vol. VIII* (Dublin: Irish University Press, 1975), 25-27. Ann Hulton to Mrs. Lightbody, January 31, 1774 in *Letters of a Loyalist Lady*, 69-72. *The Boston Post-Boy*, January 24, 1774.

<sup>41</sup> Robert Middlekauf, *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution, 1763-1789* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 228.

patriot association. Such intimidation often had the desired effect. Aitchison complied with the committee, because, as he wrote “[t]here is no contending against such Numbers.”<sup>42</sup> Gentlemen were always in the minority, and loyalist gentlemen were particularly vulnerable to crowds politicized against royal or aristocratic symbols. The poor wore their rags and disease, slaves and criminals bore the marks of the lash, and the wealthy displayed their finery. All of these announced the individual’s place in a spectrum of distinction and degradation.<sup>43</sup> The cultural importance of clothing and appearance for eighteenth century people cannot be overstated. How a man or a woman presented themselves announced their place in society, their social and political rank, and their virtue. Therefore the prospect of a violent transformation at the hands of a mob was terrifying and loyalists went to great lengths to avoid such dishonour.<sup>44</sup>

Even if loyalists could escape direct insults and attacks, the patriot press continued to print screeds and diatribes against them. Just as loyalists often found themselves outnumbered in their communities, the print war was a lopsided contest since royal supporters could rely on very few friendly presses. Before the intensification of the colonial crisis, printers welcomed opinion columns from multiple points of view. This made their papers livelier and exhibited the sort of non-partiality expected of a free press.<sup>45</sup> By 1774 things had changed. Printers were under more pressure to refuse publication of loyalist arguments. Rather than see this as censorship, patriot thinkers invoked the idea of the “public good” and the press as a “bulwark” of American liberty. What was considered the public good, of course, was subjective, and during the

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<sup>42</sup> William Aitchison to James Parker, November 14, 1774 in Catherine Crary, *The Price of Loyalty: Tory Writings from the Revolutionary Era* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973), 58-59.

<sup>43</sup> Newman, *Embodied History*, 11. For a broader discussion of the body as text see: Anne Cranny-Francis, *The Body in the Text* (Carlton South, Australia: Melbourne University Press, 1995); Joanne Finkelstein, *The Fashioned Self* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1991); Chris Schilling, *The Body and Social Theory* (London: Sage, 1993).

<sup>44</sup> For a longer discussion on the abiding republican challenge to genteel finery in the early republic see Michael Zakim, *Ready-Made Democracy: A History of Men’s Dress in the American Republic, 1760-1860* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 1-36. And for an description of the methodologies reading bodies and sartorial politics in this era, see: Newman, *Embodied History*, 1-15; Waldstreicher, “Why Thomas Jefferson and African Americans Wore their Politics on their Sleeves,” 79-81.

<sup>45</sup> Robert Calhoun, “The Character and Coherence of the Loyalists Press,” in *The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), 111.

revolutionary crisis loyalist arguments were considered antithetical to that public good. Daniel Leonard, writing as “Massachusettensis,” noted how the Whigs of Boston had “become the licensers of the press... by playing off the resentment of the populace against printers and authors” and had turned the press into “an engine of oppression.”<sup>46</sup> The most prominent loyalist printer, James Rivington of New York, faced a campaign of direct intimidation. He was hanged in effigy in Rhode Island, and had his print shop vandalized, before his press was finally destroyed in November, 1775. Rivington fled to England, but returned as the King’s printer after the British captured New York City in the summer of 1776.<sup>47</sup> Patriots defended the assault on Rivington’s press by arguing that he had not simply printed for the British, but had “prostituted” himself and his print shop. The mercenary printer as prostitute was not a new idea. In 1753, William Smith Jr. (a loyalist during the Revolution), argued that any printer who “prostituted his art” should be censored and was effectively guilty of high treason since he was working against the society as a whole.<sup>48</sup> The comparison of a printer to a prostitute was intended not only to show the professional transgression of the printer, but it was also a deeply gendered insult which highlighted Rivington’s moral depravity and emasculation, and the dishonour he had brought upon the press as an institution.

In spite of the patriot dominated press and the intimidation, loyalist spokesmen were still able to publish some pamphlets, but never in the numbers enjoyed by their revolutionary adversaries. Prior to the outbreak of open hostilities, loyalists controlled approximately one-fifth of the colonial presses, but during the War of Independence loyalists could only print in British occupied areas. In all, there were approximately 15 loyalist newspaper titles printed between 1774 and 1783, though some, like the *Georgia Gazette*, lasted only a few brief months. The number of newspapers printed in the

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<sup>46</sup> *Boston Post-Boy*, Dec. 5, 1774.

<sup>47</sup> Catherine Snell Crary, “The Tory and the Spy: The Double Life of James Rivington,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Jan., 1959): 66-67.

<sup>48</sup> Richard Buell Jr., “Freedom of the Press in Revolutionary America: Evolution of Libertarianism, 1760-1820” in Bernard Bailyn, John Hench, ed. *The Press and the American Revolution* (Worcester, MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1980), 62. Richard D. Brown, “The Shifting Freedoms of the Press in the Eighteenth Century,” in Hugh Amory and David Hall, ed., *A History of the Book in America: The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World* (Worcester, MA: American Antiquarian Society, 2007), 372.

rebellious colonies at any given time during the war ranged from 25 to 42 titles. Of that, the loyalists could claim only five to eight newspapers depending on the vagaries of the conflict, and the effective circulation of these papers was restricted to British held territory. In terms of pamphlet production the loyalists faced a similar disadvantage. In 1775, of the 46 political pamphlets published in the Thirteen Colonies, twelve were penned by supporters of the royal cause. The following year that number had dropped to only two of twenty six pamphlets, and both of those – James Chalmers’ *Plain Truth* and Charles Inglis’ *True Interests of America*, were reactions to Paine.<sup>49</sup>

The dominance of the patriot press throughout the colonies allowed patriot writers to create a consistent and disparaging image of the loyalists. Patriot newspapers, pamphlets, and broadsides were filled with depictions of loyalists as skulking spies, as dependent and effete courtiers, and as traitors to their race, country, and even civilized society. The patriot press portrayed the loyalists as everything from spineless cowards and lap dogs to sub-human amphibians. Although prominent loyalists were singled out, more often than not the printed attacks on the loyalists were generalized. Whig polemicists created the spectre of unified, organized cabals and gangs of archetypal Tories. This characterization of the loyalists accomplished several important things for the patriot cause. By linking all Tories in a great conspiracy against the liberties of America, the patriots justified any actions they took against individual loyalists. Just as importantly, by arguing that all loyalists were also depraved and immoral men, they transformed the political issues into a Manichaean struggle, in which the loyalists of whatever rank became the antithesis of the patriot ideals. A Tory gentleman was a corrupt leader who abused his power; a Tory merchant was a selfish cheat; a Tory farmer was a dependant weakling, and so on. Patriots could therefore make a claim to morality and worthy manhood simply on the basis of their allegiance to the revolutionary cause.

A fairly routine article from *The Connecticut Courant* in 1775 is filled with the typical patriot charges of loyalist betrayal and degeneracy. It reported that the “Judases,” who formed the Loyal Fencible Americans in Worcester, Massachusetts may have

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<sup>49</sup> Alison Olson, “Political Humor, Deference, and the American Revolution” *Early American Studies*, (Fall, 2005): 375. Philip Davidson, *Propaganda and the American Revolution, 1763-1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941), 307, 333.

contained some “*head Tories*” but the majority were “a few negroes, and some Scotch rebels and convicts,” a none-to-subtle implication of racial upheaval, criminality, and Catholic Jacobite connections.<sup>50</sup> Another report of a loyalist force described them as consisting of “200 (Boys, Negros etc.)” who were poorly armed and awaited the King’s fleet to protect them and “make them Masters of our estates.” The Tory leaders of this group were described as feeble, dependent cowards whose “reigning Principle is Lying.”<sup>51</sup> The reams of attacks printed during the opening stages of the armed conflict were intended not only to show the intellectual, political, and moral bankruptcy of the loyalists and their cause, but to also show their degeneracy and failure as men. In this early stage of the conflict, as will be explored in more detail in chapter 5, armed loyalism was hardly considered a threat. The loyalists were unmanned by their dependence on royal power, by their willingness to abandon manly resistance for the languid acceptance of arbitrary power, and their attempts to enrich themselves at the expense of their countrymen.

The patriot press endeavoured to uncover the direct conspiracy that linked these Tories to the authorities in Whitehall. The years leading up to the American Revolution were, in the words of Thomas C. Leonard, “an era of exposés” when the patriot press attempted to ferret out all the pernicious schemes of the British Parliament.<sup>52</sup> The belief in secret British plots to undo the liberties of the colonists, plots which relied on the self-serving nature of the American Tories, was a common and recurring subject in the press. There was hardly any question as to the identity of the “snakes” which, one newspaper asserted, the North administration was “cherishing in their bosom.”<sup>53</sup> Royal Governors like Thomas Hutchinson of Massachusetts or William Franklin of New Jersey were American-born, yet they were believed to have conspired with the British government to undermine colonial rights and resistance. The publication of letters from Governor

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<sup>50</sup> *Connecticut Courant*, Oct. 2, 1775.

<sup>51</sup> *Connecticut Journal*, Feb. 8, 1775.

<sup>52</sup> Thomas C. Leonard, “News for a Revolution: The Exposé in America, 1768-1773” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (Jun., 1980): 26.

<sup>53</sup> *The New-York Journal*, 27 April 1775.



Hutchinson and other high ranking officials to Thomas Whately, a British Member of Parliament and member of the Board of Trade, provided fuel for patriot propaganda. To some patriots this was proof that there was indeed a conspiracy at the highest level of political power in the colonies and Parliament. The letters were written in 1768, when Hutchinson was Chief Justice of Massachusetts, and were published in 1773 as a pamphlet along with letters from Governor Francis Bernard, Andrew Oliver (a former stamp-distributor and Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts), Charles Paxton (a high ranking customs official), and Hutchinson's nephew Nathaniel Rogers. How they came into hands of the Massachusetts Assembly is a long and still uncertain tale of intrigue, but at the centre was Benjamin Franklin, who confessed his part in late 1773.<sup>54</sup> Intrigue to expose intrigue was a tricky matter for gentlemen, ever concerned about their honour, reputations, and political careers. Though Americans applauded Franklin for his efforts to expose the machinations of the Tory Governor and his conspirators, he was publicly rebuked and called a thief in England – a slight that helped push Franklin ever deeper into the patriot camp.<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, the letters provided proof for those already convinced that an alliance of Tories and British ministerial agents were plotting the enslavement of freeborn colonists.

There were very few sentiments within the letters that Hutchinson had not publicly stated before their publication, and when compared with other loyalist writers, Bernard Bailyn argues that they were “restrained and discreet.”<sup>56</sup> Nonetheless, it was the apparent clandestine nature of the correspondence that incensed the Whigs. In the letters, Hutchinson heaps the blame for the riots and other public disruptions on John Hancock, accuses the Sons of Liberty, “our incendiaries,” of misleading the people, and laments the general gullibility of the populace. Yet Hutchinson's letter of January 20, 1769 was perhaps the most damning. In it he suggests that to restore order “[t]here must be an abridgement of what are called English liberties.” Hutchinson then questions whether it was even possible that “a colony 3000 miles distant shall enjoy all the liberty of the

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<sup>54</sup> Bernard Bailyn, *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson*, 224-225.

<sup>55</sup> Gordon Wood, *The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin* (New York: Penguin Press, 2003), 140-144.

<sup>56</sup> Bailyn, *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson*, 227.

parent state.”<sup>57</sup> The Sons of Liberty pounced on the letters and, as is often the case with conspiracy theorists, twisted the evidence to fit their pre-existing world-view. Patriots, loyalists, and their British contemporaries all shared a penchant for political conspiracy theories, a trait no doubt gleaned from almost two centuries of regicides, dissenters, Popish plots, and Jacobite insurgencies.

An author, who borrowed the name of Oliver Cromwell’s “press agent,” “Marchmont Nedham,” commented in early 1774 that the content of the letters proved that the officials “*wrote in concert*” and that “*the conspiracy was joint.*” Furthermore, the letters displayed an unparalleled level of “*unfairness, disingenuity, malice, and cowardice.*” In his next installment, Nedham asks if the real “Betrayal of Government” was the patriot who “openly assembles with his brethren to consider of public affairs, who speaks his sentiments freely, and determines his conduct in the face of all men?” Or, he asks, is the colonial traitor one “who writes *secret and confidential* letters to the enemies of his country, blasts its reputation with calumny, and points the way to its overthrow and ruin?” Nedham notes that an “open invader” is a more honest foe since the country can be “in some measure prepared, by the knowledge of our enemy and danger” adding even that “there is something of generosity in the attack. But against the secret destroyer...who hides his dagger under the veil of friendship...innocence is no protection---valour is no adequate defence.” “The thrust of a duelist may be parried;” he writes, “but who can repel the stab of an assassin?”<sup>58</sup> The cowardly, dishonourable, and sneaky Tory mould was set.

Along with government officials, merchants also bore the brunt of suspicion from revolutionary committees, mainly due to their connections to the imperial trading networks. Distrust of the “Art & Mystery of a Merchant” was common enough in the eighteenth century, but was exacerbated in the American political crisis. As T.H. Breen has shown, British consumer products became charged with political meaning in the years leading to the Revolution. Colonists engaged in “rituals of non-consumption,” and

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<sup>57</sup> *Copy of letters sent to Great-Britain, by His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson, the Hon. Andrew Oliver, and several other persons...* (Boston, MA: Edes and Gill, 1773), 3-5, 6, 16.

<sup>58</sup> Joseph Frank, *Cromwell's Press Agent: A Critical Biography of Marchmont Nedham, 1620–78* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1980); *Boston Gazette*, Jan. 10, 1774. *Essex Gazette*, Jan. 18, 1774.

newspapers published the names of transgressors to the non-consumption and non-importation associations, all in an effort to end their dependence on British manufactured goods. A merchant's personal morality was carefully judged by revolutionary committees, who might suspect that a merchant's patriotism lasted only as long as his inventory held out. Many shopkeepers and importers refused access to their account books as a point of honour, which only increased suspicions.<sup>59</sup>

Loyalists saw things quite differently. Thomas Bradbury Chandler likened non-importations to "a remedy...ten thousand times worse than the disease. It is, for the wisdom of it, like cutting off an arm, in order to get rid of a small sore in one of the fingers."<sup>60</sup> Samuel Seabury's sardonic comparison of non-importation to a gun is a good summation of his scepticism of the committee-enforced boycotts. "If a man puts a pistol to his breast and draws the trigger," he writes, "the pistol will fire as vigorously as if he turned the muzzle the other way, but the consequence will be very different." In an earlier pamphlet, Seabury warned his readers that "[w]hen a trading people carelessly neglect, or wilfully give up any branch of their trade, it is seldom in their power to recover it."<sup>61</sup> Seabury argued that the non-importation agreements would leave the colonies economically ruined, which would in turn lead to anarchy. Marauding bands of the starving poor would ravage the countryside while the unscrupulous merchant would not quibble to "prostitute his honour" and fleece the colonists by engineering artificial scarcity. Seabury, in the persona of the supposedly straight-talking "Westchester Farmer," reminded his readers that they were "Englishmen...and will eat, and drink, and wear, whatever the public laws of your country permit, without asking leave of any illegal, tyrannical Congress or Committee on Earth."<sup>62</sup> To loyalists like Seabury, non-importation was an infringement on liberty, not a defense.

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<sup>59</sup> T.H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 23-24, 129.

<sup>60</sup> Thomas Bradbury Chandler, *The Friendly Address to All Reasonable Americans, on the Subject of our Political Confusions: Carefully abridged from the Original* (New York, 1774), 13.

<sup>61</sup> Samuel Seabury, *A View of the Controversy Between Great-Britain and her Colonies...* (New York: James Rivington, 1774), 24. Samuel Seabury, *Free Thoughts, on the Proceedings of the Continental Congress...* (New York: James Rivington, 1774), 7.

<sup>62</sup> Seabury, *Free Thoughts*, 7, 11, 19.

In response to loyalist arguments, Thomas Paine attacked those who “would sell their Birthright for a little salt” asking “[w]hat are salt, sugar, and finery to the inestimable blessings of ‘Liberty and Safety?’”<sup>63</sup> The connection between conspiracy and luxury was easy to make, especially in the northern colonies where the Puritan ethic was still very much alive. Imported goods smacked of the sin of luxury and were touted as “the handmaid to Bribery and Corruption.” The individual quest for luxury gave birth to “Corruption, that secret and certain destroyer of virtue, that engine of despotism...”<sup>64</sup> An excellent example of this thinking in action can be seen in a resolution published in July 1776. The Committee of Inspection for Simsbury, Connecticut banned the sale of “indigo, feathers, wooden dishes, teas, and many other goods, and wares of various kinds,” by “strolling petit chapman” for whom there were “great grounds of suspicion” that such men were forming “inimical combinations and correspondence...and carrying on with the enemies of the United American States.”<sup>65</sup> Though merchants were found in the ranks of both sides in the Revolution, the degenerate Tory merchant remained a stereotype throughout the conflict and long after.

The image of the miserly or decadent Tory merchant was just one of many gendered anti-loyalist tropes found in the patriot press, but it was Thomas Paine who delivered the most concerted and bitter attacks on loyalist manhood. In *Common Sense*, Paine’s most famous and incendiary pamphlet, he writes that the wealthy Tories who allied themselves with the Crown “are in general slaves to fear, and submit to courtly power with the trembling duplicity of a spaniel.” The denigration of loyalists does not end with the lapdog analogy, as Paine continues by claiming that any adherent to Tory ideology has “forfeited his claim to rationality” and is an “apostate from the order of manhood...one who hath not only given up the proper dignity of a man, but sunk himself

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<sup>63</sup> Thomas Paine, *The Crisis, Number II* (Philadelphia: Styner and Cist, 1777), 21.

<sup>64</sup> Letter from “Britannicus,” *New-York Journal*, Mar. 2, 1775. Southerners also worried about imported goods, but more out of fears of the increasing debts they were incurring which threatened their independence, rather than the inherent sinfulness of luxury. See, T.H. Breen, *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 198), 161-162.

<sup>65</sup> *Connecticut Courant*, Aug. 7, 1776.

beneath the rank of animals, and contemptibly crawl through the world like a worm.”<sup>66</sup> As seen in the physical attacks on Dr. Abner Beebe and other loyalists, these were literary attempts to transform gentlemen into things. Popular attitudes towards animals were beginning to change in the eighteenth century, as the rising notion of sensibility extended to the idea that animals could suffer and feel just like people. In a world in which humans were enslaved, however, there was a very clear hierarchy of organisms in which animals fared poorly. Some animals were considered nobler than others, and the loyalists were always compared with the lowest orders. The lapdog analogy employed by Paine is a particularly good case in point. In the words of Markman Ellis, the lapdog of the eighteenth century was “a misogynist trope of female venereal concupiscence” as well as a symbol of useless luxury. A spaniel was merely a “trifle,” fussed over by pampered women, which provided no practical contributions to a household or farm.<sup>67</sup> The worm was universally considered the lowest of all organisms, crawling through dirt and feasting on corpses.<sup>68</sup> Paine could not have chosen two more powerful images than the spaniel and the worm.

Paine’s attacks on loyalists’ manly virtues are strewn throughout his writings. Perhaps the most stinging indictment of loyalist manhood during the entire conflict is delivered in *Common Sense*. After listing the agonies and outrages caused by the British government, Paine addresses the Tories directly. “[I]f you...can still shake hands with the murderers [the British]” he writes, “then are ye unworthy [of] the name of husband, father, friend, or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a sycophant.” Such condemnations of loyalist masculinity continue into *The Crisis* where he answers his own question “what is a Tory” by describing a loyalist as “a coward, for a servile, slavish, self-interested fear is the

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<sup>66</sup> Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, (Philadelphia: Robert Bell, 1776), 40, 66.

<sup>67</sup> Markman Ellis, “Suffering Things: Lapdogs, Slaves, and Counter Sensibility,” in Mark Blackwell, ed. *The Secret Life of Things: Animals, Objects and It-Narratives in Eighteenth Century England* (Cranbury, NJ.: Rosemont Publishing & Printing Corp, 2007), 94, 97.

<sup>68</sup> Lisbeth Chapin, “Shelley’s Great Chain of Being: From ‘blind worms’ to ‘new-fledged eagles,’” in Frank Palmeri, ed. *Humans and Other Animals in Eighteenth-Century British Culture: Representation, Hybridity, Ethics* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2006), 153-168. Also see Robert Darnton’s discussion of the relationship of animals to insults in *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 89-90, 193.

foundation of Toryism; and a man under such influence, though he may be cruel, never can be brave.”<sup>69</sup>

The loyalist writers never found an effective response to such virulent attacks. In *Plain Truth*, the Maryland loyalist James Chalmers attempts to answer Paine by repeating the biting passage quoted above from *Common Sense*. Chalmers then feebly asks “Are these words dictated by peace, or base foul revenge, the constant attendant on COWARDS and sycophants [?]”<sup>70</sup> The effect of his response falls flat, since the reader surely knows that the sentiments are not meant to be peaceful, and by quoting the entire passage, Chalmers has granted his revolutionary opponent far too much space to restate his attack. It was an error common to many loyalist writers during the American Revolution and one which the Anglican minister Jonathan Boucher lamented in hindsight as “foolish good-nature and improvidence... which [lead] them [loyalist writers] often to hurt their own interests by promoting those of their adversaries.”<sup>71</sup>

While Chalmers provided a more precise reading of history and the great Enlightenment thinkers in *Plain Truth*, his eighty-five page tract does little to counter the blow that *Common Sense* gave to the royal cause and loyalist manhood. Paine’s work, when read aloud, was accessible to an artisan or labourer, whereas *Plain Truth* is full of sarcastic allusions that could only be grasped and appreciated by the learned. In the end, that might be exactly what Chalmers intended. As Douglas Adair observed, it was not enough for an eighteenth century gentleman to be famous, but to be famous with the right people and for the right reasons. A thousand cheering plebeians were not equal to the approval of a single man of culture and learning. Jonathan Boucher dismissed the idea of appealing to the people. “I am persuaded,” he wrote in 1787, “whenever it happens that a

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<sup>69</sup> Thomas Paine, *The Crisis*, I, (Norwich: Trumbull, 1776), 5.

<sup>70</sup> James Chalmers, *Plain Truth*, (Philadelphia: Bell, 1776), 49. The quoted section of *Common Sense* can be found on page 24 of Bell’s first edition.

<sup>71</sup> Jonathan Boucher, *Reminiscences of an American Loyalist, 1738-1789*, (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1967): 118. For a detailed exploration of the loyalists’ literary battle with Thomas Paine, see Philip Gould, *Writing the Rebellion: Loyalists and the Literature of Politics in British America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 114-143.

really sensible man becomes the idol of the people, it must be owing to his possessing a talent of letting himself down to their level.”<sup>72</sup>

The tone and style of loyalist writers did not help their cause. Prior to 1774, loyalists responded to printed attacks with “serene, patient rationalism,” though their tone stiffened with the intensification of colonial resistance.<sup>73</sup> There were many loyalist contributors to the print war in the lead-up to the conflict, but the most notable spokesmen came from two distinct groups of men. Royal and government office holders such as Joseph Galloway of Pennsylvania and Daniel Leonard and Jonathan Sewall of Massachusetts, made carefully considered arguments built on their understanding of the British constitution, but they could neither convince their fellow colonists of the folly of rebellion nor convert them (or the British, for that matter) to the wisdom of finding some sort of amicable compromise, such as Galloway’s proposed Plan of Union.<sup>74</sup> Sewall and Leonard contributed their anonymous arguments to Massachusetts newspapers while Galloway published two pamphlets in Philadelphia in 1775, though none of these publications found the wide circulation enjoyed by their patriot rivals. These loyalist writers often used vivid language and were technically proficient, but were usually cerebral, scholarly, and they actively rejected any appeal to the passions. Indeed, as Robert Calhoun writes, their publications “reflected a concern with law and the details of imperial administration...or the subtleties of colonial politics.”<sup>75</sup> This resulted in less emotional, less persuasive language than the polemical exhortations found in patriot newspapers and pamphlets.

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<sup>72</sup> Douglas Adair, *Fame and the Founding Fathers* (New York: Norton, 1973), 8-9. Boucher, *Reminiscences*, 119.

<sup>73</sup> Colin Nicolson, “‘McIntosh, Otis & Adams Are Our Demagogues’: Nathaniel Coffin and the Loyalist Interpretation of the Origins of the American Revolution,” *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Third Series, Vol. 108, (1996):75.

<sup>74</sup> Joseph Galloway, *A Candid Examination of the Mutual Claims of Great-Britain, and the Colonies: with A Plan of Accommodation on Constitutional Principles* (New York: James Rivington, 1775). John E. Ferling, *The Loyalist Mind: Joseph Galloway and the American Revolution* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977). Daniel Leonard, *The origin of the American contest with Great-Britain, or The present political state of the Massachusetts-Bay...* (New York, James Rivington, 1775). Carol Berkin, *Jonathan Sewall: Odyssey of an American Loyalist* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974).

<sup>75</sup> Robert Calhoun, *The Loyalist Perception*, 7.

The other group of writers were Anglican clergymen such as Thomas Bradbury Chandler, Samuel Seabury, and Charles Inglis who struck out passionately against what they saw as the childish, immoral, and the sinfully rebellious attitude of colonial resistance.<sup>76</sup> By invoking the image of the rebellious, petulant child, they were playing on the passions of the reader as much as the patriot writer who invoked the image of the coward. Yet these authors seem to be writing for others who already thought as they did, and they did more to insult than persuade the undecided. In the small corpus of writings produced by Chandler, Inglis, and Seabury, two competing versions of men are presented. The revolutionaries are misguided by their passions and the designs of wicked men, and though they are brave, they have lost one of the key requirements for an adult male: emotional restraint. This argument drew both on the idea that a true gentleman carefully governed his emotions, and the teachings of High-Church Anglicanism, to which these three writers belonged, that rejected the emotional outpouring of evangelical Protestantism and instead sought an emotionally restrained and contemplative form of worship. In addition to the threat posed by the uninhibited passions of the rebels, these loyalist writers saw the levelling, republican influence of New England Dissenters at work, who sought to establish a “Presbyterian yoke of bondage” over their fellow colonists.<sup>77</sup> In other words, the passions were whipped-up as part of larger New England

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<sup>76</sup> Bruce E. Steiner, *Samuel Seabury, 1729-1796: A Study in the High Church Tradition*, (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1972). Anne W. Rowthorn, *Samuel Seabury: A Bicentennial Biography*, (New York: Seabury Press, 1983). For Charles Inglis see: Brian Cuthbertson, *The First Bishop: A Biography of Charles Inglis*, (Halifax, NS: Waegwoltic Press, 1987); Reginald V. Harris, *Charles Inglis: Missionary, Loyalist, Bishop, 1734-1816*, (Toronto, General board of religious education, 1937). There is no dedicated biography for Thomas Bradbury Chandler, but he authored three pamphlets in 1774 and 1775: *The American Querist* (Boson, Mills and Hicks, 1774), *The Friendly Address to all Reasonable Americans*, (New York, 1774), and *What Ye Think of the Congress Now?* (New York: James Rivington, 1775). Samuel Seabury penned four essays which were published in 1774 and 1775: *Free Thoughts, on the Proceedings of the Continental Congress*, (New York: 1774). *The Congress Canvassed*, (New York: 1774). *A View to the Controversy Between Great-Britain and her Colonies*, (New York: Rivington, 1774). *An Alarm to the Legislature of the Province of New York*, (New York: Rivington, 1775). Charles Inglis wrote a reply to Paine’s *Common Sense* entitled *The True Interests of America Impartially Stated* (Philadelphia: Humphreys, 1776) though another printed version of the same pamphlet *The Deceiver Unmasked*, (New York: Loudon, 1776) was never circulated. (See: Gould, *Writing the Rebellion...* 116-117). James Chalmers published *Plain Truth* (Philadelphia: R. Bell, 1776). Though written by a layman, the pamphlet resembles the style and temperament of the doctrinaire loyalists. Isaac Hunt and Isaac Wilkins, both Anglican Clergy also published less well-known pamphlets expounding on the same themes in 1775. It was not until 1777 that loyalists were able to begin to print again.

<sup>77</sup> Thomas Bradbury Chandler, “The Friendly Address to All *Reasonable* Americans, on the Subject of our Political Confusions: Carefully abridged from the Original,” (New York, 1774), 23.



conspiracy to end religious freedom, not defend liberty. The loyal subject, on the other hand, bore all the hallmarks of prudence, caution, aged wisdom, and respect for established authority and religious conscience – attributes which might make an excellent vicar, but not a particularly good counterrevolutionary fighter.

Perhaps the most hard-line conservative of the loyalist writers was Thomas Bradbury Chandler, the Connecticut-born rector of Elizabethtown, New Jersey. Chandler had stoked controversy in 1766 with his publication of “An Appeal on Behalf of the Church of England in America” which espoused the establishment of an American bishopric in the face of increasing religious pluralism in the colonies, a cause which John Adams later credited with being one of the earliest and most important factors leading to the Revolution. “We firmly believe,” Chandler candidly explained in a letter, “that [Government’s] best security in the colonies does and must always arise from the principles of submission and loyalty taught by the Church. The Clergy...are constantly instilling these great principles into the people.” A strong church would help build a strong empire. William Smith Jr., another prominent loyalist and Chief Justice of the Province of New York, noted how misguided those beliefs were, and more accurately wrote that “the body of the people are for an equal, universal toleration of all Protestants and are utterly averse to any kind of ecclesiastical establishment.”<sup>78</sup> Smith seemed to know that a strong imperial union could be based on religious toleration.

Chandler’s conservatism and elitism can be best seen in *The American Querist* (1774). This collection of one hundred self-answering and often sneering questions directed at the American colonists ranges from body metaphors to constitutional history. In question 10, Chandler asks whether the political turmoil in the colonies was not unlike a disease, “of the *feverish* kind, as is attended with an irregular pulse, and discovers, in some parts, a dangerous swelling and inflammation” and asks whether the root cause was the colonists “own *imprudence* and *intemperance*?”<sup>79</sup> The cures put forward by the patriots are likened by Chandler to those prescribed by “notorious quacks” rather than

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<sup>78</sup> Calhoun, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America*, 208-209. For a more detailed examination of the Bishop’s Controversy, see Nancy L. Rhoden, *Revolutionary Anglicanism: The Colonial Church of England Clergy During the American Revolution* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 1999), 37-63.

<sup>79</sup> Chandler, *Querist*, 5

professional doctors, a sentiment that echoes Chandler's thoughts on the impropriety of the common people getting involved in political discussions at all. Chandler suggests a cure to these political ailments by asking "[w]hether some degree of respect be not always due from inferiors to superiors, and especially from children to parents; and whether the refusal of this on any occasion, be not violation of the general laws of society, to say nothing here of the obligations of religion and morality?"<sup>80</sup> This was a sentiment shared by other loyalist writers at the time. Samuel Seabury, also distressed at the disrespect shown by his fellow colonists, chided them that "the *people* are under the strongest obligations to treat them [their representatives and governors] with *honour* and *respect*; and to look to *them* for redress of all those grievances that they can justly complain of."<sup>81</sup> Fundamentally, Chandler's deeply unpopular message of passive obedience and non-resistance is summarized in question 96: "Whether [God] has given any dispensation to the body of the people, under any government, to refuse *honor*, or *custom*, or *tribute*, to whom they are due; to contract habits of thinking and *speaking evil of dignities*, and to weaken the natural principle of respect for those in authority." And he answers his question with yet another leading question: "Whether, on the contrary, he does not command us to *submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake*; and require us, on pain of *damnation*, to be duly *subject to the higher powers*, and *not to resist* their lawful authority?"<sup>82</sup> Jonathan Boucher agreed, advising his parishioners to "sit still" and "stand fast" rather than take any actions against lawful authority.<sup>83</sup> For Anglican clergymen like Chandler and Boucher, unlawful armed resistance was one of the darkest sins, a fact attested by I Samuel 15:23, which declared that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft."<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>81</sup> Seabury, *An Alarm*, 4.

<sup>82</sup> Chandler, *American Querist*, 32.

<sup>83</sup> Jonathan Boucher, *Reminiscences*, 120. Jonathan Boucher, "On Liberty; Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance" in *A View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution in Thirteen Discourses*, (New York: Russell & Russell, 1967 [1797]), 495.

<sup>84</sup> I Samuel, 15:23. King James Bible. See Charles Inglis, *The True Interests of America*, 31-32 for more biblical support for monarchy and condemnation of rebellion. Boucher's opinions were very much in the minority, and he was aware of this fact. See: Nancy Rhoden, *Revolutionary Anglicanism*, 75.

Most loyalist clergy spokesmen rejected the rule of “passive obedience and non-resistance,” because the doctrine could call into question the Glorious Revolution of 1688 which dethroned the Catholic James II in favour of a Protestant King and a more religiously tolerant constitution. To advocate acceptance of established authority too strenuously would, ironically, seem to question the legitimacy of the ruling House of Hanover. Samuel Seabury declared that he could not “swallow [the doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance], and if I could, I am sure my stomach would never digest it.” Charles Inglis avowed that “I am none of your passive obedience and non-resistance men.” Anglican writers needed to tread a careful line. If the King and Parliament were indeed acting in an unjust or ungodly manner, then good Christians were not obliged to obey, but open rebellion was still unchristian. Anglican clergymen believed that Englishmen should work within the system laid down by the Glorious Revolution through a “golden mean” that rejected servile Catholic obedience as well the rebellious tendencies of Puritanism.<sup>85</sup> The Anglican loyalist writers were in agreement that the political disagreements leading to the American Revolution were far too petty to justify the colonists’ outrage. Colonial resistance in this case represented a sinful, unjustifiable, and unnatural rebellion.

Two main tropes characterized the loyalist argument to prevent a permanent schism within the empire. The first was likening the imperial relationship of colonies to Britain as a tree or body, whose limbs could not be severed without causing the death of the whole. The other more powerful metaphor was of the empire as a family.<sup>86</sup> In the words of Clifford Geertz, the family symbol functioned as a matrix “for the creation of collective conscience.”<sup>87</sup> By wrapping the political constitution of the British Empire in the rhetoric of family, the loyalist writers were invoking the duties of children to parents

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<sup>85</sup> Rhoden, *Revolutionary Anglicanism*, 64, 72-73, 74.

<sup>86</sup> Lester Olson, “An Ideological Rupture: Metaphorical Divergence in Loyalist Rhetoric During the American Revolution,” *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Autumn, 1992): 405-422. Isaac Hunt, *The Political Family: Or a Discourse, Pointing out the reciprocal advantages, which flow from an uninterrupted union between Great-Britain and her American Colonies*, (Philadelphia: James Humphreys, 1775).

<sup>87</sup> Edwin G. Burrows and Michael Wallace, “The American Revolution: The Ideology and Psychology of National Liberation,” *Perspectives in American History*, 6 (1972): 271.

as established in the Fifth Commandment. Samuel Seabury describes the upstart rebels as “peevish and petulant” and filled with “sulky obstinacy” and “preposterous pride” and “fiery intemperate zeal” which prevents them from honestly considering their position and accepting their errors.<sup>88</sup> The characterization of patriots as petulant children is found throughout the loyalist writings. Seabury refers to the Suffolk Resolves adopted by the first Continental Congress in 1774 as “this adopted brat of the congress,” while James Chalmers, the Maryland author of *Plain Truth*, describes the colonies as a wayward apprentice seeking patronage from another master before his term has properly expired. Perhaps the most striking example is Inglis’ comparison of the patriot sentiments of Thomas Paine to “a rash, froward stripling, who should call his mother a d-mn-d b—ch, swear he had no relation to her, and attempt to knock her down.”<sup>89</sup> Seabury opines in his last letter from A Westchester Farmer that perhaps a vanquished rebellion is the only way the revolutionaries can see the error of their ways since, “like children, they seem incapable of learning from *any* experience but *their own*.”<sup>90</sup>

Thomas Paine turned the parent-child metaphor back on the loyalist writers, declaring that a man could not be beholden to his parents forever, and noted in *Common Sense* that it was absurd to think that “because a child has thrived on milk...it is never to have meat.” Inglis repeats the charge of child-like insolence again in his *True Interests of America*, dismissing Paine’s hijacked simile as “absurd, and a violation of the propriety of language” and reminds his readers that the parent-child relationship between Great Britain and the colonies was only figurative. Even so, he goes on to assert that the continued relationship between parent and matured child is “still necessary to the happiness of both.”<sup>91</sup> Both arguments would have made sense to colonial readers, but in

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<sup>88</sup> Seabury, *Free Thoughts, on the Proceedings*, 6 and Seabury, *The Congress Canvassed*, 4,6.

<sup>89</sup> Inglis, *True Interest*, 39.

<sup>90</sup> Seabury, *Congress Canvassed*, 13, James Chalmers, *Plain Truth*, 54, Seabury, *An Alarm*, 11.

<sup>91</sup> Inglis, *True Interests*, 38. The loyalist charge that patriot writers violated the “propriety of language” was a recurring trope in their writings. As Philip Gould has shown, castigations of vulgar patriot taste and linguistic propriety were ways for loyalists to attack their enemies “while striving to reassert their identities as civilized English subjects who wished to remain within the realm.” Philip Gould, *Writing the Rebellion...* 87. Also see Gould, “Wit and Politics in Revolutionary British America: The Case of Samuel Seabury and Alexander Hamilton,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (Spring, 2008): 383-403.

the end the patriot argument won by rejecting the analogy altogether and replacing a government built on bonds of affection with voluntary ideas of association and consent.<sup>92</sup>

Perhaps the loyalists' most effective insult, and one which patriot writers actually took notice of and worked to refute, was the epithet "rebel." Chief in the minds of the loyalist writers was the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, 1639-1649, which resulted in the execution of King Charles I, the desolation of the English countryside, and the establishment of Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate. The Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 ended the Dissenter-led experiment and with the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the Church of England became firmly entrenched above other Protestant denominations in the British constitution. For the loyalist writers in North America these violent convulsions had produced an effective constitutional arrangement which invalidated any need for further insurrection. Seabury's brief discussion of the events of 1688 is representative of the body of loyalist pamphlets on the subject. He writes that however "necessary that revolution may have been to secure the rights and liberties of the English nation, no man, I am persuaded... would wish to see it again torn by such violent convulsions." To Seabury, anyone who would cite the Glorious Revolution as a legitimate precedent for colonial rebellion was "too fond of revolutions to be good subjects of any government on earth."<sup>93</sup> Since 1688, the most vividly remembered rebellion in the British world was the Jacobite uprising that was defeated at the Battle of Culloden in 1746. The image of the wild and savage Scottish highlanders had become associated with the idea of rebellion in English thought, and Seabury invokes the notion of savagery when he lambasts the Continental Congress for their intemperate passions. Using a rather far-flung analogy, Seabury likens Congress to the "inhabitants of New-Zealand, [who] before they attack their enemies... found it necessary to animate themselves by singing their war song... that they might work themselves up into... a state

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<sup>92</sup> Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution against Patriarchal Authority, 1750-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 3-4. Melvin Yazawa, *From Colonies to Commonwealth: Familial Ideology and the Beginnings of the American Republic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 195.

<sup>93</sup> Samuel Seabury, *Congress Canvassed*, 22.

of frenzy.”<sup>94</sup> Charles Inglis noted these qualities in Thomas Paine, observing that the patriot writer’s intemperance “knows no limits, and hurries him along, like an impetuous torrent.”<sup>95</sup> Once again, the passions have made the patriots less than men, though this time they are not youths, but wild and uncivilized savages. The loyalist writers no doubt saw insurrection as a predictable consequence of the combination of enthusiastic religion, youth, and the uncivilized nature of colonials.

Rebellion and criminality were nearly synonymous in the eighteenth-century mind. Patriot writers had to establish the justice of their rebellion and many worked to redefine the word itself. Thomas Paine recognized that the colonies could never expect any assistance from foreign powers as long as they were considered rebels by the international community. Such a precedent could be disastrous for their potential allies’ imperial possessions. Garnering international support was therefore another powerful reason cited by Paine to support a complete break from Great Britain. As Paine writes, establishing an independent country would “solve the paradox.”<sup>96</sup> He also elaborated on the criminality of rebellion in the second volume of *The Crisis*, but like the parent-child metaphor, he turned the concept back on the British. In a clear nod to the principles of the Enlightenment, Paine argues that “The Republic of Letters is more ancient than monarchy...” he writes, and “he that rebels against reason is a real rebel, but he that in defence of reason, rebels against tyranny, has a better title to ‘DEFENDER OF THE FAITH’ than George the Third.”<sup>97</sup> The Congregational minister Nathaniel Whitaker went further, declaring that the American Revolution was not a rebellion at all. Following the traditional Dissenter idea that there was a contract between God, ruler, and ruled, Whitaker argued that he “who transgresses this compact... is a rebel. In this, it matters not whether the person be a king or a subject.”<sup>98</sup> The Whig writers were also able to call upon

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<sup>94</sup> Geoffrey Plank, *Rebellion and Savagery: The Jacobite Rising of 1745 and the British Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Seabury, *Congress Canvassed*, 11-12.

<sup>95</sup> Inglis, *True Interests*, 34.

<sup>96</sup> Paine, *Common Sense*, 44.

<sup>97</sup> Paine, *The Crisis, Number II*, 10

<sup>98</sup> Nathaniel Whitaker, *An Antidote Against Toryism. Or the Curse of Meroz, in a Discourse on Judges 5<sup>th</sup> 23* (Newbury-Port, John MyCall 1777), 17.

the historical precedent of the Cavaliers who supported the Stuarts in the War of Three Kingdoms, and the few adherents to James II when he was deposed in 1688. A column written by “Cato” in 1775 argued that a Tory is a Jacobite in the sense that he is a “maintainer of the infernal doctrine of arbitrary power...and of passive obedience and non-resistance on the part of the subject.” Another New England newspaper asks whether the King’s ministers have “all turned Tories, and become Jacobites?” In 1774, “A Friend to Liberty” wrote to the *Newport Mercury* of a fictional loyalist named Francis Puffgut, who was a “flaming *Jacobite* with more guts than brains” who came into Connecticut to escape winds which were “*unconstitutional* to *weak men*.” The Quebec Act of 1774, which formally permitted the Catholic Church in Quebec, only added to suspicions of the creeping influence of the “popery” that characterized the popular memory of the Stuarts.<sup>99</sup> Combined with biblical justification and precedents from English history, the American Revolutionaries reconciled rebellion and just resistance for themselves, and turned the charges of criminality and treason against the loyalists.

In addition to the debate over whether armed colonial resistance was justified, the loyalist pamphleteers stressed what they saw as the practical reality that any uprising was doomed to fail. Yet in their attempts to dissuade the colonists from armed resistance, the loyalists made another fatal blunder by insulting the manhood and prowess of the colonists thereby leaving themselves open to charges of cowardice. The weakness of the colonies, Chandler argued, had been revealed in the Seven Years’ War, when they were “unable to withstand the militia of *Canada*, supported by a few regiments of regular troops from *France*.” Furthermore, Chandler intentionally insults the martial spirit of the colonists, declaring “I am too well acquainted with their character to expect that they would prove thus *definite* in the day of trial.”<sup>100</sup> It is hard to see how such statements could be taken as anything other than a challenge to supporters of the patriot cause. To explain how the Whigs deluded themselves into thinking that they could win, loyalist authors pointed to the immoral pride of the revolutionaries. It seemed obvious to Chandler that “there is too much reason to believe, that our minds are unprincipled, and

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<sup>99</sup> *Connecticut Journal*, Mar. 22, 1775. *Connecticut Courant*, Jan. 16, 1775. *The Newport Mercury*, Aug. 29, 1774. *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, Oct. 5, 1775.

<sup>100</sup> Chandler, *Friendly Address*, 6-7.

our hearts disposed for rebellion. Ever since the reduction of Canada, we have been bloated with a vain opinion of our own power and importance. Our ease has produced pride and wantonness.”<sup>101</sup> Colonial hubris would lead to destruction, but the loyalists were still hopeful that cooler heads would prevail.

The loyalist writers differed slightly among themselves on how to prevent the final plunge into open rebellion. Samuel Seabury, as the Westchester Farmer, addressed the New York assembly bluntly: “We, Gentlemen, have no alternative left, but either to join the other colonies in a war against Great-Britain, or to make the best terms we can, for ourselves. The *former* may have the most *old Oliverian* glory in it, but the *latter* is certainly the most *prudent* course. It will save this *province*, and probably the *whole continent*, from *desolation* and *destruction*.”<sup>102</sup> He could acknowledge the martial allure of the call to arms, but, like the wise and knowledgeable man he regarded himself to be, he advocated caution. Thomas Bradbury Chandler agreed, but neither writer openly encouraged the colonists to resist Congress. One of Chandler’s only calls to arms falls quite flat. “I will only observe farther on this subject,” he writes, “that all who have the courage now to declare themselves friends to Government, will undoubtedly think themselves bound in honour, interest and conscience, to resort to the King’s *Standard*, when it comes to be erected in our different Colonies...”<sup>103</sup> Chandler is not recommending that colonists take it upon themselves to fight the rebels; rather he is merely advising that they wait for the redcoats and follow their lead. The call to do nothing appears quite feeble when compared with the bellicose rhetoric of the patriots.

Even if the rebellion was successful, the loyalist writers believed it would lead to a dystopian world akin to Hobbes’ state of nature. “This will be productive of eternal quarrels, and riots, and disturbances, and acts of violence among ourselves;” wrote Chandler, “and then our misery will be compleat [sic].”<sup>104</sup> Seabury agreed, and once again raised the spectre of the Protectorate. “There would be no peace in the colonies, till

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>102</sup> Seabury, *An Alarm*, 11.

<sup>103</sup> Chandler, *Friendly Address*, 12-13.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, 16.



we all submitted to the republican zealots and bigots of New-England” he warned, “whose tender mercies, when they had power in their hands, have been ever cruel, towards all that presumed to differ from them in matters either of religion or government.” Seabury believed, too, that the unnatural rebellion would lead to the end of trade and prosperity, the end of honour, and the collapse of civilization in the colonies. His dystopian predictions include bands of men wandering the countryside, invading farms to steal food, a bitter war between New England and the middle colonies, and the end of courts and justice.<sup>105</sup> To ardent patriots, this must have seemed like the fretful hand-wringing of grey old men, who were so afraid of change that they would surrender their rights as free-born Englishmen. The final question in the *American Querist* lends credence to such an idea, as Chandler asks “[w]hether it be not a matter both of worldly wisdom, and of indispensable Christian duty, in every *American*, to *fear the Lord and the King, and to meddle not with them that are GIVEN TO CHANGE?*”<sup>106</sup>

Taken as a whole, the body of loyalist pamphlets written by these doctrinaire Tories, or their more cerebral, secular counterparts between 1774 and 1776 failed to answer the vigorous insults of the patriot propaganda campaign for a variety of reasons. The loyalist pamphlets present a negative, almost sneering reactionary tone, and lack the populism that made Thomas Paine and other Whig pamphleteers so successful. The vociferous outrage and call to arms that fuelled the patriot argument is absent from loyalist writings, and is instead replaced by a call to reason and prudence, and an appeal to respect the established authority. Such a message obviously did not resonate with a youthful and frontier audience. As Philip Gould has shown, this style of pamphleteering evolved into more satirical and lampooning attacks on the patriots later in the war, but they simply did not resonate with the wider American public.<sup>107</sup> In the end, the loyalist attempts at countering the patriot argument failed because they were, in a word, unmanly. Patriot insults were always more visceral than anything the loyalists conjured. The

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<sup>105</sup> Seabury, *Congress Canvassed*, 27, and Seabury, *Free Thoughts*, 9. For a longer discussion of the implications of the loyalist invocation of Cromwell and the Puritan rebels in New England, see Gould, *Writing the Rebellion*, 144-167.

<sup>106</sup> Chandler, *American Querist*, 32.

<sup>107</sup> Gould, *Writing the Rebellion*, 85.

loyalist pamphleteers explored in this chapter appealed to reason, not passion, and their arguments got lost in pedantry and patronizing instruction. Indeed, many of the arguments employed by the loyalist writers, such as fretful predictions of defeat in the face of British might, or their insistence on showing respect to established authority, actually reinforced the stereotypes of loyalists as dependent, obsequious cowards. It is therefore quite possible that these doctrinaire loyalists did more damage to their cause than if they had written nothing at all.

Insults were a central part of the loyalist experience. From verbal taunts on the street, to shaming rituals, to the printed word, loyalists were dogged by a concerted campaign to discredit and intimidate them. This fact has long been recognized by historians, and the ubiquitous references to insults in the writings of both loyalists and patriots have been recognized in most studies of the Tories in American Revolution. Yet the fact that these insults were infused with the symbolic language of honour and manhood has not been examined in any detail. This chapter has therefore drawn on the social science of insult and methods of cultural and social history to provide a cultural examination of these insults to more fully grasp how they would have been perceived and understood within the shared culture of loyalists and patriots. Although the content of the invectives shouted at loyalists on the street is mostly lost to history, the epithets found in the revolutionary press show the consistent use of deeply gendered language to excoriate the loyalists and their political allegiance. In the words of the patriot propagandists the loyalists became “apostates to manhood” and had “prostituted” themselves to the British at the expense of their fellow colonists. They were described as effeminate, luxury-loving cowards, as subhuman animals, Judases, and Papists. The loyalists’ written responses to such devastating attacks on their masculinity and honour were ineffectual. They castigated the patriots as unruly, unrestrained, and ungrateful children, who were being led by their passions into ruin, but this in turn made the loyalist pamphleteers seem feeble and cowardly in face of youthful revolutionary zeal. The relatively few, but widely publicized, physical acts of shaming such as stealing wigs or tarring and feathering, indicate how this same revolutionary ideology and fervour shattered the established customs of respect for genteel bodies so that patriots could mark Tories as fallen men, as

colonists might have done to deviants or thieves. The psychological impact of these insults within a profoundly honour-conscious society cannot be overestimated.

Whether by design or as an unintended consequence, insults could effectively eliminate gentlemen loyalists from communities without bloodshed. The insults explored in this chapter such as verbal epithets, physical gestures and shaming rituals, and the campaign or printed insult in the press, were all made openly and with impunity. The potency of patriot insults was increased by the loyalists' inability to effectively respond and restore their maligned reputations and appearance of honour. Loyalists could not seek legal redress where patriots were in the majority, and since loyalists were often outnumbered in their communities, they could usually not seek any satisfaction through physical retaliation or challenges. Even the efforts of loyalist writers fell flat and failed to present a vigorous or persuasive response to patriot arguments and insults. Instead, loyalist authors, already hampered by the lack of friendly printers, adopted a genteel and instructive, even paternalistic, tone which was drowned out by the more vigorous patriot written assaults. This sense of impotence in the face of indignity was enough to compel many loyalists to flee before ever being subjected to physical shaming or violence directed at their bodies. This is a testament to the power of insult in eighteenth century honour culture, where the loss of public esteem effectively meant the loss of status and power. The inability to meaningfully respond and retaliate against insults, especially coming from the lower ranks of society, was simply intolerable. In a culture built on entrenched hierarchies, the degradation of the loyalists served to elevate the honour of the patriots. Insults were therefore a vital tool of patriot ascendancy and a crucial step in the political death of American loyalists.

#### 4. Captivity

On the night of October 14, 1777, British General John Burgoyne prepared to concede defeat. His composite army of British and Hessian regulars, Native allies, Canadians irregulars, and loyalist volunteers had struggled through the forests of northern New York and suffered heavy casualties in a series of engagements before being completely outmanoeuvred at the Battle of Bemis Heights. Surrounded by a much larger American army, with no hope of reinforcements and with dwindling supplies, Burgoyne and his officers decided that there was no dishonour in negotiating terms with the American commander, Major General Horatio Gates. The stipulations of the “Convention of Saratoga” (Burgoyne would not refer to it as a surrender or a capitulation), were consistent with the customs of the time. Burgoyne’s army was to march for Boston with the “honours of war” – their colours flying and bands playing – where they would be evacuated back to England on their promise not to return to North America. Article eight of the convention stated that “All corps whatever...of whatever country...shall be included in the fullest sense, and utmost extent of the [the privileges of the convention]; and comprehended in every respect as British subjects.”<sup>1</sup> This clause of the convention seemed to include the loyalist corps, yet by 1777 loyalists were aware that if they fell into rebel hands they faced a very uncertain fate.

Among Burgoyne’s forces was the loyalist Colonel John Peters of the Queen’s Loyal Rangers. He had accompanied the rebel army to Quebec in 1775 only to flee to the British with valuable intelligence. In retaliation, patriots confiscated his lands in New York State and expelled his wife and children from their home. Because of his previous actions, Peters’ rank would provide very little protection if he was captured. In August, Peters learned firsthand what could happen to captured loyalists. After his unit was badly mauled at the Battle of Bennington, reports came in that his surrendering soldiers “were refused quarter, after having asked it,” while other loyalist soldiers were taken prisoner and abused. In protest, Burgoyne sent a letter to Horatio Gates to remind the general of

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<sup>1</sup> “Extract from a Letter from Henry Gates...” Continental Congress, Nov. 1, 1777. Lancaster, PA. For descriptions and differing perspectives on the Saratoga Campaign see: Richard M. Ketchum, *Saratoga: Turning Point of America’s Revolutionary War* (New York: Henry Holt, 1997); Theodore Corbett, *No Turning Point: The Saratoga Campaign in Perspective* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012).

the “horrors of retaliation” if the Continental forces did not adhere to “those maxims upon which all men of honor think alike.”<sup>2</sup> To Burgoyne this was a fairly straightforward matter: Gates needed to restrain his backwoods fighters and enforce the standards expected of European officers. Yet for Americans fighting a civil war, where both sides viewed the other as traitors and criminals, the question of who was worthy of honour and deserving of proper respect was far from clear. Indeed, Peters recorded in his narrative that “I was in great anxiety and distress of mind knowing how impossible it was that any Capitulation could provide for my Security.” Even with this threat looming, Peters noted that he would not flee on his own volition. Loyalist units had already been accused of abandoning their posts during the campaign, and Peters wrote that he “would not go without orders in writing, for that no one should be able to say, that I had deserted them in the hour of distress...”<sup>3</sup> So, on the night of October 14, before Burgoyne had signed the Convention, Major General William Philips provided Peters with written permission “to Escape through the Woods to Canada.” Nearly six thousand British and Hessian prisoners marched off to Boston a few days later. Peters and his small band of loyalists, however, made it back to Quebec with their skin and, it seemed, their honour intact.<sup>4</sup>

John Peters’ fear of being mistreated if captured by the patriots was not unfounded. Most states had enacted strict treason laws, and regardless of the uniforms loyalists wore or British commissions they carried, captured Tories could be sent back to their provincial homelands to face local justice or revenge.<sup>5</sup> Ambrose Serle, the secretary

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<sup>2</sup> Letter from Gen. Burgoyne to Gen. Gates, August 30, 1777, published in *The New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, October 6, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> John Peters’ Narrative, 7. John Peters Papers, New York Historical Society.

<sup>4</sup> Major General William Phillips for John Peters “Burgoyne’s official order or permission...”, John Peters Papers, NYHS. Richard Sampson, *Escape in America: The British Convention Prisoners, 1777-1783*, (Chippenham, UK: Picton Publishing, 1995), 39. As will be shown in chapter 6, Burgoyne later cited the loyalists as a cause of his defeat, and accused them of desertion.

<sup>5</sup> A good example of this sort of treason act was Connecticut’s *An Act for the Punishment of High Treason and other atrocious Crimes against the State*, though every state had some version of this. Charles J. Hoadly ed., *The Public Records of the State of Connecticut from October 1776 to February, 1778, Inclusive* (Hartford: Case, Lockwood & Brainard, 1894), 4-5. The Continental Congress also supported the extradition of captured loyalist soldiers to their home towns, counties, or states, but this was applied inconsistently. One such example was in regards to the hundreds of prisoners taken at King’s Mountain. *Journals of the Continental Congress, from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1780 to January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1781* (Philadelphia: David Claypoole, 1781), 374.

to General Howe, recorded the rumours that “[t]hose [loyalists] who fall into [rebel] Hands are either killed upon the Spot, or dragged to their Copper Mines...surrounded with Terrors equal to Death itself.”<sup>6</sup> Rank and file loyalists could be treated harshly, and some were indeed sent to the copper mines at Simsbury, Connecticut. Private soldiers of any eighteenth century army could expect to face daily privations, whether they were in their own camps or held as prisoners. The loyalists’ uncertain legal status while in patriot custody complicated their plight, but their treatment was rarely worse than the thousands of patriot prisoners who languished in British prison ships and warehouses in New York.

Gentlemen prisoners, be they military officers, public office holders, or just private gentlemen, expected to be treated very differently from common men. In eighteenth century European warfare, gentlemen prisoners brought their status and reputation with them into captivity, and as with other areas of their life, demanded their right to be treated with respect and dignity. Unless there was some exceptional circumstance, gentlemen would be granted very generous paroles based solely on their word of honour not to escape or continue to participate in the war in any way until released. Low-ranking private soldiers were rarely, if ever, offered paroles, but were held under close supervision. They could not be trusted to abide by their word. In contrast, gentlemen were normally treated with civility and made as comfortable as possible while they waited to be exchanged for an enemy prisoner. These rules were not so much codified laws, like the Geneva Conventions of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but were instead customs known and accepted by European nations and their empires.<sup>7</sup> Civil wars and insurrections complicated these conventions. Initially the British refused to accept the legitimacy of patriot soldiers and militia because they were rebels and subject to criminal law. As the war progressed and British officers fell into rebel hands, Crown forces were obliged to extend gentlemanly privileges to patriot officers to prevent retaliation against their own men. Yet prisoner exchanges remained ad hoc and were predicated on necessity and the authority of individual British commanders rather than a

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<sup>6</sup> Ambrose Serle, *The American Journal of Ambrose Serle* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 90, entry of September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1776.

<sup>7</sup> Caroline Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honor: Service and Sacrifice in George Washington's Army* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 201-202, 204-205, 206-207.

formal agreement between warring nations. This nuance was taken as a deep insult by Congress, but it was not until 1782 that a formal cartel was arranged between the British and Continental armies. This confusing situation was made even more so by the civil war between Whigs and Tories. To the patriots, the loyalists were guilty of high treasons; to the loyalists, the patriots were rebels and usurpers. Therefore, both sides viewed the other as criminally dishonoured which threw the whole idea of captivity as an agreement between gentlemen into disarray.

This chapter explores the experiences of white gentlemen loyalists who were captured or arrested by the revolutionaries. Women and entire loyalist families were also held prisoner on occasion (explored in chapter 2) but they were often treated as extensions of their loyalist patriarchs and held as hostages to compel fugitive Tories to surrender. Once in patriot custody, the treatment loyalists experienced was surprisingly inconsistent considering that they had been collectively dishonoured and criminalized through campaigns of insults, harassment, and in punitive laws passed by state assemblies. Loyalists were not accorded the automatic honours of war expected by officers in a conventional European conflict, yet they were not universally mistreated. Some were granted generous paroles, while others were placed under house arrest. Loyalists could be dealt with harshly, transported hundreds of miles from their homes, held in common jails, or, on occasion, shackled to floors, or even executed. Few historians have looked for general reasons for this varied treatment, and attempts to classify or categorize loyalists and their corresponding treatments have fallen short.<sup>8</sup> There were no consistent instructions for the treatment of loyalist prisoners from the Continental Congress or Army. Rather, this chapter argues that revolutionary authorities evaluated and judged the personal honour or dishonour of loyalists on a case-by-case basis to determine appropriate treatment regardless of the wider patriot consensus that all Tories were dishonourable traitors. This personalized captivity helps explain some strange inconsistencies. One would expect that a loyalist implicated in a plot to kidnap George Washington would face a harsher captivity than one who merely refused to take an oath to Congress, but this was not always the case. In practice, the severity of their

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<sup>8</sup> Claude Halstead Van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1902), 213, 216. Charles Metzger, *The Prisoner in the American Revolution* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1971), 4-5. This will be explained in more detail later in this chapter.

captivity experience could be mitigated because of the loyalists' pre-war reputations, or through their genteel and obliging manners which paid respect to their captors. This again reveals the real power men derived from these cultural virtues. Captive loyalists who displayed culturally legitimate expressions of rank and virtue continued to be respected and were afforded privileges that other gentlemen were reluctant to deny. Honour was subjective and malleable, but it was also persistent and powerful enough to alter a captives' material situation, for better or worse.

In examining the loyalist prisoner experience there does not appear to have been a concerted attack on gentlemanly privilege in favour of republican or egalitarian ideology. While there are examples of low-ranking rebels lording-over or intentionally insulting high-ranking loyalists, patriot gentlemen sitting on committees or in councils seemed reticent to inflict too much discomfort on fellow gentlemen, even Tories, if it could be prevented. Patriots and loyalists shared the same aspirations to gentility and honour, and both denying and extending gentlemanly privileges to individual loyalist prisoners empowered patriot captors. Signs of respect helped legitimize patriots and their cause, and could be rewarded. Committees and guards also eagerly capitalized on perceived signs of disrespect or duplicity as evidence of the loyalists' moral corruption, and these were used to justify stripping loyalist prisoners of their right to respect.

Official records, personal diaries and narratives of loyalist prisoners, as well as public announcements of captured or fugitive Tories, are filled with discussions and appraisals of the honour and dishonour of individuals. Patriot committees and their prisoners regularly engaged in charged debates and tests of will over who was the truly honourable party, and who was deluded by a false sense of righteousness. The interactions between loyalist prisoners and their captors also reveal the complexities and malleability of eighteenth century honour. Loyalists sometimes employed honour to disguise escape attempts or parole violations; patriots used the apparent dishonour of loyalists to justify humiliating punishments; and both sides watched for any breach or punctilio that could be construed as deceit or bad faith. In essence, loyalist and patriot gentlemen always found ways to justify their actions and ensure that honour was on their side. Even with all of this confusion and competing claims on the moral high ground, as well as the concerted campaign to unman and collectively dishonour the loyalists, patriots



treated Tory prisoners based on individual evaluations of their personal honour. This could work for or against the loyalists. A few of the prisoners examined in this chapter stoically endured their captivity and were even restored to political life after their release, while the dishonours experienced by many others marked the penultimate stage of their political death before their final exile.

This chapter begins with an exploration of the historiography of prisoners of war in the American Revolution, before shifting to the thorny issues of legality and honour which hampered official negotiations and prisoner exchange between the British military and the Continental Congress. Patriot authorities suspected scheming duplicity on the part of their enemies, and routinely noted the disrespect they received from elite British and loyalist prisoners, yet the revolutionaries never abandoned the European model. Rather they diligently attempted to abide by its customs and prove that they were the truly honourable party. The chapter then turns to the variety of loyalist prisoner experiences, from parole negotiations to summary executions. While a captured British officer could normally depend on being paroled and treated with customary civility, a loyalist officer or gentleman civilian could not. Because of the generalized idea of Tory dishonour and criminality, patriots denied loyalist prisoners automatic privileges. Instead, individual evaluations of honour and dishonour were essential in determining the severity of loyalist captivity experiences. Appraisals of personal honour could dictate whether a prisoner spent the summer on a private yacht moored on the Hudson River, or was degraded in close confinement among criminals. More broadly, these findings underscore the consistent power of honour over the behaviour of eighteenth century gentlemen, and reveal the very personalized nature of the American Revolution. As subjective and malleable as honour was, it nevertheless functioned as a right to power and respect between men, and was therefore crucial in such matters as combat, captivity, and prisoner negotiations. This concern for honour might seem petty or even absurd to modern eyes, but it was powerful enough in the minds of some men to supersede even the demands of political ideology or practical military necessity. In this sense, personal honour had the potential to hamper the war effort of either side as men languished in prisons, died of disease, and drained coffers, often on account of points of honour between the gentlemen negotiators and their governments. The individual prisoner experiences explored in this

chapter are microcosms of the wider cultural conflict that erupted in the American Revolution between loyalists and patriots.

The history of prisoners of war in the American Revolution has been dominated by examinations of the patriot experience. First written down and spread by the Whig press during the conflict, scores of publications and newspaper accounts detailed the misery of American prisoners floating in prison ships or confined in warehouses in New York City and in England. Ethan Allen's captivity narrative and Philip Freneau's 1781 poem "The British Prison-Ship" are two of the most famous publications which detailed the horrors patriots experienced at the hands of the British. Allen described his guards in New York as "slavish Hessians" and "merciless Britons", yet even their cruelty was "less malignant than the Tories." Indeed, of all the characters Allen met, none were quite as gloating and sadistic as the loyalists, who "exult[ed] over the dead [patriot prisoners], saying there goes another load of damned rebels."<sup>9</sup> Allen's narrative recounts sacred churches transformed into hideous prisons, where captives writhed "in the agonies of death" afflicted with hunger, disease, and cold. He graphically sketches floors "covered with excrement" "in consequence of the fluxe [sic]" while the suffering patriots bravely resist British temptations to renounce the cause and be released from their torments.<sup>10</sup> The most feared places of captivity for rebel prisoners were the rotting hulks in Wallabout Bay off Brooklyn. Freneau's poem tells of the "damps, disease and varied shapes of woe" suffered on these decommissioned and dilapidated ships. Every day men died and their bodies were dragged from below deck for a shallow burial on shore or simply tossed overboard. According to Freneau, the helpless men lay dying "Some struck with madness, some with scurvy pain'd, But still of *putrid fevers* most complain'd."<sup>11</sup> Congressional and state authorities collected equally graphic reports of patriot suffering

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<sup>9</sup> Ethan Allen, *A Narrative of Colonel Ethan Allen's Captivity* (Philadelphia: Bell, 1779), 29-30.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 29, 31.

<sup>11</sup> Philip Freneau, "The British Prison-Ship: A Poem" (Philadelphia: Bailey, 1781), 16. Freneau claimed to have been a prisoner on the *Scorpion* in his pension claim in 1832, but Edwin Burrows doubts he was actually a prisoner, and argues that his poem was more a reflection of other published works than any first-hand experience. See Edwin Burrows, *Forgotten Patriots: The Untold Story of American Prisoners During the Revolutionary War* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 174.

which were spread through the revolutionary press. One official account described wretched food, illness, merciless guards, and the indignity of white patriots being “huddled together between decks...with Indians, Mallatoes [sic], Negroes etc.”<sup>12</sup> Between 8 500 and 11 000 rebel prisoners died in British custody. Patriot leadership and propagandists decried these deaths as intentional war-crimes and seized on the alarming mortality rates in British prisons as evidence of the Crown’s savagery and dishonour. The horrific tales of death and suffering also provided another opportunity for patriots to contrast their own incorruptible decency with the perfidy of their enemies, and led New Jersey Governor William Livingston to declare that the patriots would “triumph over [the] Enemy not only by force of arms but by the virtues of humanity.”<sup>13</sup> Former loyalist prisoners thought differently and scoffed at the reams of patriot propaganda. “Were the loyalists to take the pains...to collect and publish relations of this nature,” wrote William Franklin after his own captivity experience in Connecticut, “I am very certain that they would be able to furnish well-attested accounts of far more barbarities actually practised by the rebels against their prisoners than is even contained in all their exaggerated charges against the Britons.”<sup>14</sup> Loyalist captivity narratives will be explored later in this chapter, and while they do provide vital insights into loyalist experiences, they were only circulated in occupied areas of North America during the conflict and never in great numbers. Like the pamphlets explored in the previous chapter, loyalist narratives were drowned out by the torrent of patriot publication.

Professional twentieth century historians were not entirely convinced by patriot claims of British cruelty and were less willing to condemn the Crown forces’ treatment of their prisoners. Philip Davidson viewed patriot claims of prisoner abuse as sensationalist

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<sup>12</sup> Charles Hoadly, ed. *The Public Records of the State of Connecticut*, 125. “Appendix to the Report of the Committee of Congress...”*Independent Chronicle* (Boston), June 5, 1777.

<sup>13</sup> Burrows, *Forgotten Patriots*, 191. For an examination of the propaganda surrounding prisoners see chapter 7, “War of Words”, 161-193.

<sup>14</sup> William Franklin to Lord Germaine, Nov. 10, 1778. Reprinted in K.G. Davies, ed., *Documents of the American Revolution, 1170-1783* (Colonial Office Series), Vol. XV. (Dublin: Irish University Press, 1976), 241-247.

exaggerations intended to whip up support for the Revolutionary cause.<sup>15</sup> Charles Metzger was also suspicious of the propagandistic nature of the reports, though he did not dispute the wretched conditions. Rather he points out that the British were more or less following the standard practices of eighteenth century counterinsurgency in the early phases of the conflict, and conditions markedly improved after thousands of British prisoners were taken at Saratoga. Despite their reservations, British authorities had to treat men they regarded as criminals with more lenience to prevent acts of retaliation against their own imprisoned comrades.<sup>16</sup> Larry G. Bowman agrees that conditions were often dreadful, but argues that American prisoners of war suffered more as a result of scarce resources and British ineptitude than “a lack of human compassion”.<sup>17</sup> Philip Ranlet contends that British commanders, and to a lesser extent the Congress, bear the blame for allowing political intransigence and confusion to lead to deadly overcrowding and the inevitable spread of disease on the prison ships.<sup>18</sup> More recently Edwin Burrows maintains that while British policy was never directed toward deliberately killing American prisoners, “a lethal convergence, as it were, of obstinacy, condescension, corruption, mendacity, and indifference” essentially achieved the same result, though he does concede the point that conditions in army camps, where Continental soldiers died in similar numbers, were not much better.<sup>19</sup> Regardless of intent, the thousands of dead patriot prisoners gave the Revolution a massive public relations victory and provided a valuable pretext or justification for the abuse of loyalist prisoners.

The few published studies of British prisoners tend to focus on the Convention Army captured at Saratoga, which was mainly comprised of redcoats, Hessians and

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<sup>15</sup> Philip Davidson, *Propaganda and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1941), 369-371

<sup>16</sup> Metzger, *The Prisoner in the American Revolution*, 151-152.

<sup>17</sup> Bowman, *Captive Americans*, 5.

<sup>18</sup> Philip Ranlet, “Tory David Sproat of Pennsylvania and the Death of American Prisoners of War,” *Pennsylvania History*, Vol. 61, No. 2, (April 1994): 185-205.

<sup>19</sup> Burrows, *Forgotten Patriots*, xi.

Canadians.<sup>20</sup> Since Burgoyne and Gates had agreed to a “convention” and not, strictly speaking, a surrender or capitulation, the Continental Congress denied the Convention Army the status of prisoners of war. Both sides used this semantic confusion to their advantage. Unlike the captives in New York, British Convention prisoners escaped in large numbers from prison camps as the army was marched from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Albemarle, Virginia, and finally to Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Escape was considered a form of desertion in the eighteenth century, but because of the dubious status of the Convention Army, enlisted men fled with the tacit consent of their officers. Burgoyne even invented a new category of “honourable deserters” to describe the escapees who returned to British service.<sup>21</sup> Likewise, Congress refused to exchange the Convention prisoners until the British government officially consented to the Convention terms rather than leaving it as an agreement between commanders. This would have effectively forced Britain’s acknowledgment of an independent America and was thus rejected by Parliament.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, all studies of prisoners in the American Revolution point to the confusion created by competing notions of legality and pragmatism, and the obligations arising from the military honour culture of the eighteenth century. Yet they rarely, if ever, explore how the loyalists further complicated this situation.

There has never been a dedicated study of loyalist prisoners in the American Revolution. This may be due to the confusing status of the loyalists, or perhaps nationalist historians were reluctant to engage with evidence that John Ferling calls a “black stain on America’s record” in the Revolution.<sup>23</sup> Claude Van Tyne explains loyalist

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<sup>20</sup> Charles Metzger, *The Prisoner*, Chapter 10, “The Convention Prisoners”, 241-280. Sampson, *Escape in America*, Daniel Krebs, *A Generous and Merciful Enemy: Life for German Prisoners of War during the American War of Independence* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013), Chapter Nine “The Convention Army”.

<sup>21</sup> Sampson, *Escape in America*, xiii, 64.

<sup>22</sup> Metzger, *The Prisoner*, 244. Other studies of British prisoners of war explore the local context of their captivity. Having so many potentially dangerous outsiders concentrated in small inland communities was a dreadful prospect, but these experiences also helped form a shared revolutionary identity in the face of a common enemy close at hand. See: Laura L. Becker, “Prisoners of War in the American Revolution: A Community Perspective” *Military Affairs*, Vol.46, No.4, (Dec.1982): 169-173; Ken Miller, “ ‘A Dangerous Set of People’: British Captives and the Making of Revolutionary Identity in the Mid-Atlantic Interior,” *Journal of the Early Republic*, Vol. 32, No. 4, (Winter 2012): 656-601.

<sup>23</sup> John Ferling, *Almost a Miracle: The American Victory in the War of Independence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 432.

captivity with the patriot's metaphor of a "political quarantine" to prevent the spread of a Tory disease.<sup>24</sup> As for charges of loyalist mistreatment, he concludes "that the truth lies somewhere between the best that the Patriots can claim and the worst that the Loyalists could charge." Van Tyne's loyalist prisoners reflect the prevailing early twentieth-century archetype of the aristocratic Tory, and he divided them into three categories. The most dangerous class of Tory was made up of men who committed "some overt act in support of the British, and... were treated as criminals", and were therefore not accorded gentlemanly honours. The other two categories are described as political prisoners, which included "influential and active" loyalists who were kept under paroles of varying severity, and loyalists "who had little influence, but who talked too freely about the mistakes of Congress, or the virtues of the British government..." The second group could be transported away from their homes, but were normally allowed a generous parole.<sup>25</sup> Though Van Tyne does not elaborate on his use of the term "influence," it does suggest that he is referring to the loyalists' status. Those of higher rank, therefore, were often transported out of their communities. Charles Metzger, writing seven decades after Van Tyne, also groups loyalist prisoners into three categories, consisting of loyalists who actively served in provincial units of the British military, royal officeholders, and civilians. Metzger suggests that each of these groups were treated somewhat differently, but even loyalist civilians were kept under tight security for the threat they posed as informants and spies.<sup>26</sup>

Though Van Tyne and Metzger attempted to classify loyalist prisoners into neat categories, a careful look at loyalist captivity experiences reveals that the competing demands of gentlemanly honour and military security caused deep inconsistencies and confusion in the patriots' treatment and attitudes towards Crown supporters. Captured loyalists faced a particularized and capricious situation that often depended on the personal inclinations of patriot officers. When George Washington sent Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull prisoners from Long Island, he made it clear that "they are

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<sup>24</sup> Van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution*, 213, 216.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 227, 231-232.

<sup>26</sup> Metzger, *The Prisoner*, 4-5.

apprehended merely on suspicion” and he had given them assurances they would be treated kindly and humanely. He asked the Governor that the prisoners “might have every accommodation and Indulgence, having a respect for their rank and Education which may be deemed Consistent with Safety...”<sup>27</sup> Washington was anxious to extend all courtesies to fellow gentlemen, but his attitude towards confirmed loyalists could be severe. While besieging Boston in the summer of 1775 he reminded the British General that “Not only your [captured] Officers and Soldiers have been treated with a Tenderness, due to Fellow-Citizens, and Brethren, but even those execrable Parricides, whose Counsels and Aid have deluged their Country with Blood, have been protected from the Fury of a justly-enraged People.”<sup>28</sup> While Washington considered British soldiers his countrymen at this early stage in the conflict, Tories, though protected, were set apart. Washington referred to them as “abominable pests of Society” and later advised summary executions for “some of the most notorious offenders whenever they can be found *in flagrante delicto*...” in order to terrify other loyalists.<sup>29</sup> It is clear, however, that the treatment of gentlemen loyalists during captivity was largely determined on a case by case basis which caused a great deal of uncertainty. The status of the loyalist Captain Albert Cole of Long Island, captured in 1779, testifies to the sort of confusion these men faced even at this advanced period in the war. Washington was seemingly stuck in indecision, writing to Major General William Heath that he did “not yet know in what light Captain Cole will be considered, whether as a Prisoner of War, or a Citizen.”<sup>30</sup> While Washington may have suggested shooting Tory banditti on site, he was much more reticent to even mistreat captured loyalist gentlemen.

The numerous biographies of gentlemen loyalists lend support to the personalized nature of their captivity. Sheila Skemp’s exploration of Governor William Franklin’s imprisonment shows that while patriots respected the rank and status of their prisoner,

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<sup>27</sup> George Washington to Jonathan Trumbull, August 11, 1776, George Washington Papers, LOC.

<sup>28</sup> George Washington to Thomas Gage, August 20 1775, George Washington Papers, LOC.

<sup>29</sup> George Washington to Suffolk, New York Safety Committee, May 16, 1776. George Washington to Joseph Kirkbride, April 20, 1778, George Washington Papers, LOC.

<sup>30</sup> George Washington to William Heath, July 3, 1779. George Washington Papers, LOC.

this quickly eroded when Franklin violated the terms of his parole. Patriots felt fully justified in treating Franklin as a common criminal, since from their perspective he had acted like one. The indulgent captivity of Cadwallader Colden II is explored by Eugene Fingerhut who shows the surprisingly generous terms a gentleman could receive based on his pre-war reputation, his cordial friendships with patriot officials, and his persistent adherence to notions of personal honour and civility. Susan Shenstone's biography of James Moody, on the other hand, reveals the complexities and confusion active loyalists experienced if taken prisoner. When first captured Moody was treated as an officer and granted a parole. As a well-known partisan fighter, Moody's capture came to the attention of the more zealous revolutionary leaders who annulled his parole and had him shackled and placed in a cell.<sup>31</sup> These cases demonstrate how different loyalist captivity experiences could be, and yet when taken as a whole, the one determining factor in their treatment was the patriots' appraisal of loyalists' personal honour.

In many respects, the individual experiences of loyalist captivity match the findings of Judith Van Buskirk and Caroline Cox. Van Buskirk shows how civility could override political enmity to ensure honourable treatment of gentlemen and officers. Indeed, though the British were initially skeptical of patriot officers' claim to status, they soon granted captured American officers very liberal paroles. American commanders worked hard to maintain these favourable conditions, and even sent their own escaped officers back to the British if they had violated their paroles. A captive's right to gentlemanly respect could be lost if he was perceived to have dishonoured himself. The most infamous example was British Major John André, who was caught out of uniform after carrying out an act of espionage, a crime held in particularly low regard in the eighteenth century. Even though André was celebrated as the epitome of gentility and grace he was hanged as a common spy.<sup>32</sup> Cox's examination of Continental prisoners of war explores some of the same ideas as Van Buskirk, and she also points out instances where harsh conditions or failing health forced prisoners to weigh the punctilios of

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<sup>31</sup> Sheila Skemp, *William Franklin: Son of a Patriot, Servant of a King* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 203-225; Eugene Fingerhut, *Survivor: Cadwallader Colden II in Revolutionary America* (Washington, D.C: University Press of America, 1983), 52-97; Susan Burgess Shenstone, *So Obstinate Loyal: James Moody, 1755-1809* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 82-83.

<sup>32</sup> Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 92-104.



honour to determine whether abiding by a parole was worth more than life itself. What exactly constituted the honourable course of action was not always clear. Nevertheless, Cox argues that when “imprisoned, a man’s honor and his sense of his place in his community guided his conduct.” Officers’ willingness to cooperate with their captors was contingent on being “treated in a way that honoured and recognized their rank...”<sup>33</sup> The same sort of deliberations described by Cox can be seen in the experiences of the loyalist gentlemen examined in this chapter. High ranking loyalists, who had enjoyed the privilege and respect of community leaders, felt the sting of insult at the very idea of being in rebel custody. Loyalist gentlemen sometimes attempted to use their status and notions of honour to shame their patriot captors into lightening restrictions and improving conditions with varying degrees of success. For their part, patriots used the same ideas to enforce compliance or to punish loyalists who had seemingly violated their paroles by rolling back privileges and by placing loyalists in “close confinement.” Being shackled, shut away in a cell, and denied communication with the outside world, separated a man from all the things that provided him with gentlemanly distinction. Like other attacks on the genteel body, physical restraints were not only painful, but symbolic of a significant fall from grace. As the captive loyalist John Ferdinand Smyth wrote bluntly, “Confinement is death and torture to me”.<sup>34</sup> While this treatment might not have been considered out of place for a common soldier, it was intolerable for a gentleman.

The treatment of prisoners is a reflection of society’s wider values, and the “civilizing” process which introduced politeness and civility to society carried over into warfare. The casual mistreatment and ransom of prisoners seen in the Wars of Religion was replaced with the common practice of prisoner exchange and the extension of courtesies to captive gentlemen by the mid-seventeenth century.<sup>35</sup> The gentility, courage,

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<sup>33</sup> Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honor*, 203.

<sup>34</sup> John Ferdinand Smyth to unnamed recipient, November 24, 1775. Peter Force, ed. *American Archives: Fourth series, containing a documentary history of the English colonies in North America from the King's message to Parliament of March 7, 1774 to the Declaration of Independence of the United States* (Washington: M. St. Claire and Peter Force, 1846), 615-616.

<sup>35</sup> Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honor*, 204-205.

and magnanimity displayed by a gentleman officer served as a badge of professionalism, and provided him with the assurance that his opponent, too, would be honourable and generous. Gentlemen were believed to be morally superior to the common soldier and were thus accorded great respect, and consequently their terms of captivity could be very generous. After giving his parole, either written or verbal, an officer was permitted to find his own lodgings and was granted freedom to travel miles from his residence as long as he returned by an agreed time. He was allowed to entertain guests, attend dinners, talk with whomever he pleased, and send letters. As a gentleman, he had given his word of honour to refrain from any military involvement, including taking note of defences or sending information to his own forces. Officers of European armies were permitted to return home to attend to ill or distressed family members if they promised to surrender themselves when their tasks were complete or they were recalled. Captured officers could also return to their army to negotiate their own and fellow officers' exchange on behalf of the enemy.<sup>36</sup>

The question of who was honour-worthy was at the heart of the confusion surrounding the status of prisoners of war in the American Revolution. Gentlemanly courtesies were often denied to American officers in the early stages of the conflict because they were officially considered rebels. As more and more British officers fell into rebel hands, basic necessity demanded the system of mutual respect be extended, even if this did not include official British recognition of the Continental Army as a legitimate entity. Permitting rebel officers the rights of gentlemen, one British observer noted, gave "great disgust to all the Loyalists."<sup>37</sup> As well as creating tensions between British officers and loyalists, debate and confusion over points of honour slowed down the prisoner exchange negotiations between British and Continental authorities. George Germaine instructed General Howe that while exchanges were needed "to procure the release of such of His Majesty's officers and loyal subjects as are in the disgraceful situation of being prisoners to Rebels" there should be no "regular cartel". Because the American forces were rebels, King and Congress could not share in general agreements

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 205-206. Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 75-81.

<sup>37</sup> Burrows, *Forgotten Patriots*, 77, 49.

as warring European states would. The necessary prisoner exchanges were left to the general's discretion, though Germaine made it clear that negotiations were to be conducted "without the King's dignity and honour being committed, or His Majesty's name used in any regulations for the purpose".<sup>38</sup> Any agreement would be an expedient arrangement between British generals and their counterparts, and not a covenant between sovereign nations. This meant, in effect, that all negotiations were carried out without the moral support of the Crown. Congress took this as a slight, and a series of conferences intended to iron out a regular system for prisoner exchange never got past this basic point. The fact that the highest authorities of both sides would jeopardize the lives of their men and even weaken their own forces by leaving their soldiers and officers prisoner is a testament to the obstinacy of both sides and to how seriously they took matters of honour.

The Crown finally recognized American captives as *bona fide* prisoners of war after the British defeat at Yorktown in 1781. After a Parliamentary act in the spring of 1782 made the acknowledgement official, British and Congressional representatives negotiated a general exchange of prisoners on the European model.<sup>39</sup> The agreement laid out a table of exchange for the general cartel. A Lieutenant General, for example, was worth 1044 private soldiers or an equivalent number of other ranks whose combined value equalled 1044.<sup>40</sup> Although a practical solution, this fair exchange was exactly what the British had earlier wanted to avoid because it placed American officers on an equal footing with British gentlemen. Upon first meeting American officers in 1776, a surprised Hessian observer wrote that they were "nothing but mechanics, tailors, shoemakers, wigmakers, barbers etc. Some of them were soundly beaten by our people, who would by no means let such persons pass for officers."<sup>41</sup> American officers smarted at such dismissive insults, and in the words of Judith Van Buskirk, often attempted to "out-

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<sup>38</sup> Lord Germain to William Howe, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1776, in Peter Force, ed. *American Archives: Fourth series*, 903. Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honor*, 214.

<sup>39</sup> Bowman, *Captive Americans*, 110-115. Cox, *Proper Sense of Honor*, 216.

<sup>40</sup> Bowman, *Captive Americans*, 113.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, 30.

gentleman” the British by forcefully asserting their honour.<sup>42</sup> As rebels and provincials, the Americans needed to prove themselves, and Washington took it upon himself to educate his men and enforce strict adherence to the European standards of parole and exchange. When several of his officers broke their paroles and escaped from Long Island in 1777, Washington sent them back. The officers claimed that they were short of money and supplies, and though Washington did not doubt that they were suffering, the honour of the army was more important.<sup>43</sup> This same concern can be seen in Washington’s rejection of a plan to mount a rescue operation to liberate Continental officers held on Long Island. Washington pointed out that those officers left behind would face reprisals, and “No future prisoners, in the hands of the Enemy, would receive the same favourable indulgence”. Washington stressed that a rescue attempt would be considered “a breach of Honor [and] would certainly be objected against by the Officers released; for it would be said, right or wrong, they, at least, had consented to the measure, if not planned it.”<sup>44</sup> Even clerical mix-ups did not excuse officers from their parole. A Continental officer, Isaac Grant, who had been paroled home, then exchanged and restored to active duty, discovered that his exchange had actually been a bureaucratic error. Rather than risk any sort of dishonour, he quickly returned home to resume his parole.<sup>45</sup> This sort of careful observance was just one of many ways the Continental officers attempted to show their honourable character so that they and their fellow officers would continue to receive generous paroles.

Continental authorities were deeply annoyed early in the conflict when it became clear that many British and loyalist prisoners were unwilling to abide by the same code of honour that the patriots were so diligently cultivating in their own ranks. In December 1775, General Philip Schuyler wrote to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull that he was sending a particularly obstinate group of officers to Connecticut. One loyalist in

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<sup>42</sup> Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 76.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 81. Burrows, *Forgotten Patriots*, 99.

<sup>44</sup> George Washington to Matthias Ogden, April 13, 1778, George Washington Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>45</sup> Burrows. *Forgotten Patriots*. 110.

particular, Captain Samuel McKay, was stripped of his parole for a pattern of insulting behaviour towards the Albany Committee and was essentially ejected from the community under guard. Schuyler also lamented that Lt. Gov. Philip Skene and his son Andrew had broken their paroles and fled custody, as had a number of other officers in the area. This was an insulting pattern of disregard for oaths given to Continental authorities. "I fear," wrote Schuyler, "they do not consider their parole of honour as binding."<sup>46</sup> Many loyalist and British officers perhaps felt, especially in the early phases of the war, that abiding by their paroles would be an insult to the King since he did not recognize the rebel captors as legitimate foes.

Even those British and loyalist officers who adhered to their paroles often interpreted their limits rather loosely. In late 1777, Elias Boudinot, commissary general for prisoners of war, wrote to his counterpart in Connecticut, Ezekiel Williams to inform him that while transferring a group of prisoners from New Jersey to Connecticut, a British Captain "to his great dishonour broke his parole" and slipped away into the countryside. A few days later he voluntarily rejoined his captors and proceeded with them to Connecticut. Boudinot instructed Williams to "Confine the Captain in Gaol...unless by his late Behaviour he has wiped away the stain" of his dishonour. For both sides, the captivity experience was a way to evaluate and gauge the personal honour of gentlemen to determine the depth of their personal corruption and the dishonour of their cause. The fact that the Captain returned at all is a testament to the value gentlemen and officers placed on their honour in the Revolutionary period, and would have been regarded favourably. Why the officer left is not discussed in the document, but Boudinot mentions that the officer "went Sixty Miles into the Country among his friends..."<sup>47</sup> Whether the officer simply wanted to see his friends one more time and cavalierly took his own leave, or he had intentionally broken parole and was then talked into returning by his colleagues, is not known. It is unclear exactly how many British and loyalist officers broke their parole and escaped, and the evidence is mostly anecdotal. As will be

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<sup>46</sup> Gen. Philip Schuyler to Jonathan Trumbull, December 12, 1775. Force, *American Archives, Fourth Series*, 248. Philip Skene had actually not escaped, but Andrew Skene, "the younger Skene" had.

<sup>47</sup> Elias Boudinot to Ezekiel Williams, December 4, 1777 in John C. Parsons ed. *Letters and Documents of Ezekiel Williams of Wethersfield, Connecticut* (Connecticut: Acorn Club, 1976), 11.

discussed later in this chapter, loyalist and British rank and file prisoners escaped from patriot custody in their hundreds, but that would have been of less consequence than the escape of gentlemen prisoners. Nonetheless, there is evidence that parole violations and escapes committed by elite loyalist prisoners compelled patriot authorities to treat their remaining gentleman captives more severely. When the respected gentleman Cadwallader Colden II was held on suspicion of loyalism in the summer of 1777, his captors initially denied him a generous parole suited to his rank and reputation. Though Colden had not violated the conditions of his parole, the committeemen informed him that “there was to[o] Many Instances of gent<sup>n</sup> of [Colden’s] Disposition who had Broke their Promise and Paroles and...that there was no Confidence to be had in any one any more...” The patriot authorities were convinced that loyalists and British officers believed “No faith or Promise was to be kept with Rebels...”<sup>48</sup> Continental authorities took every breach of parole as an insult and as proof that their prisoners did not deserve the respect that underwrote paroles.

Attention to the legalities of paroles, the subtle nuances and loopholes, had a tendency to exacerbate distrust and suspicions of dishonour between captives and captors. Witness the contest between General John Burgoyne and the Continental Congress. Congress had never sanctioned the “Convention” terms between Horatio Gates and John Burgoyne, and it did not feel obliged to live up to the extraordinarily generous limits promised to the defeated British. The Convention Army, as Burgoyne’s forces came to be known, were to be evacuated to England through the port of Boston, but when they were finally camped at Cambridge, the British General, Congressional representatives, and the Continental Army entered into a drawn-out dispute over points of honour and interpretation of the Convention. Burgoyne accused Congress of violating the terms by failing to provide adequate shelter for his men and officers and for not allowing a significant alteration to the Convention which would have allowed his army to march to Rhode Island instead of Boston. Burgoyne argued that this alteration would better facilitate the evacuation, but Congress suspected this was a ploy to get the men into the Long Island Sound in British transports and then simply land the troops in New York.

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<sup>48</sup> Cadwallader Colden II, “Journal,” 101.UNBLC, FC LFR .C6C3J6.

Burgoyne declared that the refusal to allow the amendment to the Convention represented “a breach of public faith” – a charge which incensed the Continental Congress. The captive general, at the head of nearly 6000 prisoners, posed a serious danger if he decided that his men were no longer bound by the Convention. Congress fumed that General Burgoyne was the offending party who, in addition to his scheme, lied about the whereabouts of his regimental colours, refused to provide lists of officers and men to the revolutionary authorities, and did not order his men to surrender small items like ammunition pouches which, Congress argued, adhered to “the technical definition of the word ‘arms’”. Congress resolved that Burgoyne was attempting to “avail himself of... pretended breaches...to disengage himself, and the army under him, of the obligation they are under to these United States...” Burgoyne’s invocation of honour, Congress insisted, was nothing more than a ploy. Congress therefore announced that “the security, which these states have had in [John Burgoyne’s] personal honor, is hereby destroyed.”<sup>49</sup> As a final rebuke, when Burgoyne asked to be paroled back to England, Congress replied that it would only consent if the general first settled all accounts, in specie, for the cost of maintaining his imprisoned army. Burgoyne had no honour – and therefore no credit – with the Continental Congress.<sup>50</sup>

In many ways paroles were legal expressions of the trust gentlemen placed in one another. Congress issued a standard printed parole for captured officers to sign that articulated some basic requirements and privileges,<sup>51</sup> but individual gentlemen and their captors often worked out their own terms. When Lt. Gov. Philip Skene, the manorial landlord of Skenesborough, was sent to Hartford as a prisoner, the authorities pointedly instructed his guards to “take care that he is treated with that politeness & civility which is due a Gentleman of his Rank.”<sup>52</sup> If at all possible, the Continental leadership wanted

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<sup>49</sup> *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789*, Volume 10 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1908), 29-35. Metzger, *The Prisoner*, 257.

<sup>50</sup> Sampson, *Escape in America*, 96-97. A deal was finally worked out whereby the British would repay partly in coin and partly in supplies.

<sup>51</sup> “In Congress, May 21, 1776” Hand bill detailing prisoner treatment and parole conditions. (Philadelphia, 1776), Evans Collection.

<sup>52</sup> Major General David Wooster to Captain David Dimon, July 10, 1775. Ezekiel Williams Papers, Connecticut Historical Society, MS 82827. (Transcribed copy provided by archives).

high-ranking British and loyalist prisoners to return with stories of respectful treatment that might help ensure patriot prisoners receive the same generous terms. John Hancock wrote directly to the Commissioner of Prisoners in Connecticut, Ezekiel Williams, that Skene was to be held on a “Parole within such Limits as your Honor shall point out to them.”<sup>53</sup> In other words, his parole was left to the discretion of the local authorities, but it could also be a matter of negotiation.

Parole conditions depended greatly on the local mood and the popular appraisal of the guilt and dishonour of individual loyalists. The Connecticut interior was considered a safe place to hold valuable loyalist prisoners, and the state was particularly burdened with prisoners sent in from other regions. Such imported loyalists, even notorious privateers, were usually permitted to “go at large” on parole, while homegrown Tories were denied parole, jailed, and at least one loyalist was executed for aiding the British.<sup>54</sup> Prominent loyalists like Philip Skene, Governor William Franklin of New Jersey, and New York Mayor David Mathews, who fell under the jurisdiction of the Continental Congress and held in Connecticut, were granted generous paroles, even though local Tories were not. Popular outrage at local betrayers determined the fate of many Connecticut loyalists, while the directions and orders from the Continental Congress ensured that high ranking Tories and British military officers would be treated according to their rank.

Local Tory prisoners were usually held under the auspices of Committees of Safety or individual town assemblies, and these authorities imposed tight restrictions on prominent gentlemen loyalists to limit their potential influence within communities.<sup>55</sup> Van Tyne’s notion of a “political quarantine” is an apt metaphor for this form of treatment. Gentlemen loyalists might not always be held in a jail, but they would be

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<sup>53</sup> John Hancock to Ezekiel Williams, July 6, 1775. Williams Family Papers, WILLW/1811-I.

<sup>54</sup> Moses Dunbar, a recruiter from Waterbury, CT, was executed on March 19, 1777. Another recruiter, Joel Stone, was threatened with the same fate in 1778. January 23, 1777, *Superior Court Records*, Connecticut State Archives, quoted in Catherine S. Crary, *The Price of Loyalty: Tory Writings from the American Revolution* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1973), 231. Joel Stone’s “Narrative”, in Talman, *Loyalist Narratives*, 327-328. Hoadly, *Connecticut*, July 2<sup>nd</sup> 1777, 339.

<sup>55</sup> Metzger, *The Prisoner*, 4. Committee of Stamford to Ezekiel Williams, July 21, 1778. Williams Family Papers, Connecticut Historical Society.



forced to remain in their homes, much like people afflicted with smallpox.<sup>56</sup> Loyalists posed a threat of contagion to the republican body politic. In late 1776, rebel privateers captured Gideon White, a young loyalist merchant, and brought him to his home community of Plymouth, Massachusetts. The Committee of Correspondence refused to give White a parole and instead placed the prodigal loyalist under house arrest “within the limits of his father’s house & garden... (except on Sabbath to Attend Publick Worship)”. White’s compliance was ensured by a bond secured by friendly neighbours, who would stand to lose £200 if the young loyalist fled. White stubbornly refused to recant or reform, and was banished from the community a few months later.<sup>57</sup>

Israel Williams of Hatfield, Massachusetts, one of the prominent “river gods” of the Connecticut Valley, was similarly treated. Known as the “Monarch of Hampshire County” the wealthy grandee was suspected of loyalist sympathies, and was a known associate of the reviled former governor Thomas Hutchinson.<sup>58</sup> The local revolutionary authorities believed that Williams had been communicating with Hutchinson and the British, and was undermining American resistance, though how Williams accomplished this was never made clear. Hatfield Committee of Safety assured the Massachusetts House of Representatives that “it would be fruitless for us...to Attempt to inform you of all the ways... [Williams] has taken to discourage & intimidate the People... [but] we are fully convinced he has spared no pains to frustrate and defeate [sic] the measures” of Congress.<sup>59</sup> They could not explain what, exactly, but they knew he was up to something.

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<sup>56</sup> Elizabeth Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-1782* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2002), 29-31.

<sup>57</sup> Bond agreement between Plymouth Committee of Correspondence, Gideon White, George Watson, and Is[rael] LeBarron. No date. Gideon White Papers, UNBLC. Kimber, *Loyalists and Layabouts*, 50.

<sup>58</sup> Michael D. Coe, *The Line of Forts: Historical Archaeology on the Colonial Frontier of Massachusetts* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2006), 141-142; Gregory H. Nobles, “Shay’s Neighbors: The Context of Rebellion in Pelham, Massachusetts,” in Robert A. Gross, *In Debt to Shays: The Bicentennial of an Agrarian Rebellion* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1993), 195-196. For background on Williams’ relationship to the people of the region in the French and Indian War, see Mark Williams, *The Brittle Thread of Life: Backcountry People Make a Place for themselves in Early America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 148-153. In 1775 a mob attacked Williams’ home, trapped him inside, and plugged his chimney to torment the gentlemen. Such an attack, as described in chapter two, was a direct violation of the sacred ideas of property and patriarchy, but was evidence that the surrounding populace considered Williams to be dishonoured.

<sup>59</sup> Hatfield Committee of Safety, John Hastings, Chairman, to Massachusetts House of Representatives, March 29, 1777. Israel Williams Papers, UNBLC. Earlier attempts to prove the guilt of Israel Williams

This was enough for the House of Representatives to determine that Williams and his son, Israel Jr., had committed a “Violation of Natural Law” and ordered that father and son be arrested and placed in the town jail.<sup>60</sup> The elder Williams complained bitterly of being “injuriously treated and entertained [while a prisoner] the whole night with the most obscene conversation...and Blasphemies that I have ever heard.” At no point did either Williams resist. They simply questioned the meagre evidence against them, and endured. Both men were held under house arrest for several years and were required to put up an extraordinary £3000 security bond for the privilege.<sup>61</sup> In June 1779, a few friends of the Williams family interceded on their behalf lamenting that father and son were “still restrained of their Liberty...owing to the People of Hatfield.” In other words, it was the people’s judgment of the Williams’ suspected loyalism that kept them under arrest, and not any proven crime or act of treason.<sup>62</sup> The house arrest continued into the following year, when the elder Williams wrote another plea for release, arguing that he had been made a “Prisoner for Life” based on of the popular resentment of “the People of Hatfield.” Williams invoked the principles of honour in his appeal, likening his unnamed accusers, with their mysterious evidence, to assassins. He demanded that all allegations be brought to trial, “For there is no fencing against Daggers or Darts thrown in the Dark.”<sup>63</sup> The controversy and Williams’ captivity ended with the war. He was never banished or attained, and his family continued to be community leaders for generations afterwards. The patriots of Hatfield rejected Israel Williams’ honour and ignored genteel conventions because of his personal relationship with Thomas Hutchinson and the swirling rumours about his Toryism. Williams was likely opposed to the rebellion, but he

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were equally vague. A letter from Samuel Dexter to the House of Representatives claims to have a foggy recollection of seeing incriminating letters between Williams and Hutchinson, but he could not be sure. See: Samuel Dexter to Clerk of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, November 18, 1776, in Peter Force, ed. *American Archives: Fifth series, containing a documentary history of the United States of America from the Declaration of Independence to the Definitive Treaty of Peace with Great Britain, September 3, 1783. Vol. 3* (Washington: M. St. Claire and Peter Force, 1853), 758.

<sup>60</sup> Copy of Resolutions of the House of Representatives, April 15, 1777. Israel Williams Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>61</sup> Israel Williams deposition. No date, but likely late spring 1777; Hatfield Committee of Safety, Israel Chapin, Chairman, to Massachusetts General Court, September 1779. Israel Williams Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>62</sup> Short note, “Whereas Israel Williams and Son Israel...” June 1779. There are five signatures, though the names are faded. Two of the last names are King and Hastings. Israel Williams Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>63</sup> Israel Williams Sr. to People of Hatfield, January 10, 1780. Israel Williams Papers, UNBLC.

was not an active loyalist, nor was guilt by association enough to condemn him to political death. Yet suspicion was enough for the local people to dishonour him and at least temporarily deny him the rights of a gentleman.

As seen in the case of Israel Williams, patriot friends sometimes attempted to intercede on behalf of captured loyalists or suspected loyalist gentlemen. Jacob Schieffelin, a loyalist who had already once escaped from close confinement in Virginia, travelled with his wife Hannah Lawrence to Detroit in 1780. He carried a letter written by his patriot friend William Roberts in case the couple was captured and taken to Philadelphia. Roberts addressed his letter to his friend, the influential politician Thomas Mifflin, and genteelly suggested to the prominent revolutionary that “the Affection you have always professed for me [Roberts], cannot in any manner be better applied than by assisting [the Schieffelins] as much as is in Your Power.”<sup>64</sup> Luckily for the Schieffelins they never had to use their protection letter, but other loyalists did rely on the intercession of their patriot connections. A suspected loyalist named Ralph Phillips, held by the New York Committee for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies in December 1776, had two respectable character witnesses come to his assistance. Joshua Draper, a Massachusetts Committeeman, wrote to the committee on his behalf, and a “Rev. Mr. Rysdorp” testified in person that that the prisoner should be treated humanely for he “was a Person of good Moral Character and very useful to the Community.” Rysdorp, like many Americans who had friends and family on both sides of the conflict, compartmentalized the situation, admitting that “with Respect to his Political Character he does not pretend to Determine.”<sup>65</sup>

A man might face political death, but that was not the same as a social death. Friends and family could and did continue to assist loyalists despite political differences and the prevailing idea of loyalist dishonour in the press. Indeed, this phenomenon was noted by frustrated revolutionaries at the time, and as Judith Van Buskirk has

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<sup>64</sup> William Roberts to Charles Mifflin, New York, 9<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1781. Box 1, Schieffelin Family Papers. New York Public Library.

<sup>65</sup> “The Minutes of the Commissioners for Detecting and Defeating Conspiracies in the State of New York, Dec 11, 1776 to Sept. 23 1778”, 9. (Bound documents). NYHS. Also reprinted in Peter Force, ed. *American Archives: Consisting of Authentick Records, State Papers, Debates, and Letters and Other Notices of Public Affairs, Third Volume* (Washington: M. St. Claire and Peter Force, 1846), 1541.

convincingly argued, ties of family and friendship often overrode political or military considerations.<sup>66</sup> The continued social connections among friends and family may also help explain why loyalist persecution was often more symbolic than deadly. The internecine nature of the conflict meant that revolutionary authorities had to tread carefully lest their actions create new enemies or harm their cause. Patriots and loyalists were often locally defined and seen through the lens of past friendships and animosities. Consequently, the revolutionary persecution of a well-liked man for loyalism could threaten to fracture sometimes tentative support for the revolutionary cause. G. Selleck Silliman, a general in the Continental Army, worried about the deep connections that linked Whig and Tory. The people, he said, “have every kind of relationship that you can mention among the enemy...when they see vigorous measures pursued...of taking or slaying a father, a son etc. the tender sensations that they feel...run them into modes of behaviour that are altogether inconsistent with the Character of a Patriot.” A nineteenth century Connecticut historian admitted that the execution of a local loyalist “did not advance the cause of independence” in his town.<sup>67</sup> Loyalist prisoners could often rely on the assistance of friends and family for food, money, and even help in their escapes.

The captivity of Cadwallader Colden II of Ulster County, New York highlights the complexities of holding esteemed gentlemen prisoners for suspected loyalism. Honour and virtue were bound up in genteel customs and civility, and these cultural conventions came into conflict with revolutionary fervour and the practical necessities of the war effort. Colden’s father was a wealthy and accomplished gentleman who had twice served as New York governor. The younger Colden inherited his father’s estate, his famous name, and the privileges of offices and appointments. He was regarded as one of the most refined gentlemen in New York. Colden recorded his extended, though usually genteel captivity in a lengthy journal which displays how adherence to gentlemanly customs and conduct could aid elite loyalist prisoners by disarming patriot gentlemen.

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<sup>66</sup> Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, see especially chapter 2, “The Web of Family,” 44-72.

<sup>67</sup> Joy Day Buel and Richard Buel, *The Way of Duty*, (New York; W.W. Norton & Co., 1984), 134 Payne Kilbourn, *Sketches and Chronicles of the Town of Litchfield*, (Hartford, Press of Case, Lockwood and Company, 1859), 116.

Yet he often remained subject to the machinations of lower ranking patriots who resented the haughtiness and gentility of the dishonoured Tory.<sup>68</sup> Like other loyalists, Colden's treatment was dependant on his captors' evaluation of his personal honour, and though his experiences show the extensive freedoms a respected loyalist might receive on the basis of their personal honour or wealth, they also reveal the limits of the security civility could provide. Colden's loyalism could not be ignored, regardless of how friendly the patriot leadership may have been with him. Despite his protests and appeals to his gentlemanly privileges and freedom of conscience, he was eventually exiled into British-occupied New York.

Colden was taken from his home under guard in June 1776 and brought before the Committee for Detecting Conspiracies in Fishkill, New York. Though he was not charged with any specific crime, he had refused to take an oath of allegiance to the state of New York and was ordered to be sent to Massachusetts as a prisoner. In a respectful and humble petition, Colden requested the "Committee to Soften their Sentence" and grant him a parole at his home which was refused, and he was "Shutt up five weeks in the Common jail" replete with its "Common Nastyness."<sup>69</sup> Colden, who was never officially charged with any crimes throughout his whole ordeal, wrote repeatedly to the committeemen and councillors that the allegations against him were false. He was accused of aiding and communicating with the British but no firm evidence was produced and the only testimony against him, according to Colden, came from a witness whom he described as a "man of a vile infamous character".<sup>70</sup> Indeed, Colden prevailed on the patriot authorities using the language of gentlemanly deliberation, personal independence, and sensibility. First he appealed to the "Rights of Private judgement" and argued that his political principles were based in the "freedom of Disquisition and Debate on Topics which affected the Public Weal... [which were] the Birth Right of English

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<sup>68</sup> Cadwallader Colden, "Journal," UNBLC. For parole negotiations see: 6, 120, 188. (The journal contains no pagination, and neither are there individual dated entries. The journal appears to be more of a lengthy, detailed memoir written shortly after the events. The page numbers provided are according to my personal count). Colden's captivity and his journal are also examined in Fingerhut, *Survivor*, 52-97.

<sup>69</sup> Colden's Journal, 5, 15-17.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

Men...” The council at Fishkill was unconvinced, though Colden was permitted the opportunity to address them in person, and read a long prepared statement in which the key issue, he argued, was the fact that he refused to abjure his previous oaths to the King as a royal official and lawyer. “How gent<sup>n</sup> am I to get over this matter of Conscience?” he asked. Though he was terrified that his unprotected family might be subject to “the Insults& Raviges [sic] of a Soldiery” this could not “Induce me to take an Oath against my Conscience... I should undoubtedly conclude that the Sin was in [the] takeing [sic] of the Oath & not in Breaking of it...” This was a fairly common position employed by loyalist gentlemen in the hopes that they could appeal to patriot leaders’ ideals of personal freedom and honesty. In essence, this was a claim to neutrality: the gentleman simply wanted to retire in peace to his farm and stay out of these worldly affairs. Colden was either naïve or desperate enough to imagine that the patriots would accept the neutrality of a public man of his wealth and influence. Though Colden might characterize his political position as principled and impartial, the patriot leadership would see it as a clear rejection of the Revolution.

The Committee for Detecting Conspiracies encompassed several counties within its jurisdiction, and was led by some of the most prominent gentlemen in New York, including John Jay, William Duer, and Gouverneur Morris.<sup>71</sup> These and other members would have known Colden and his family, so the suspected Tory was being judged by his peers, and he seemingly endeavoured to make things as awkward as possible. Colden concluded his gentlemanly address by thanking the committee and apologizing for having “discover’d so Much weakness in Delivering my Deffence (for I had let fall a few Tears) But if there was any more punishments in Store for me they would find I had Resolution to bare them.”<sup>72</sup> Colden was displaying the ideal qualities of a gentleman – showing deep feeling, but also stoicism. This bit of theatre, though perhaps genuine, was calculated to engender the requisite feelings of empathy from his fellow gentlemen. If individual committeemen were moved by this show of genteel oration and feelings, they conveniently relegated the issue of Colden’s captivity into a bureaucratic morass. Indeed,

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<sup>71</sup> Fingerhut, *Survivor*, 58.

<sup>72</sup> Colden’s Journal, 28-29.37.

the committee members were often at odds with each other over the treatment of Colden, with the elite members being quite sympathetic to the captive gentleman, while committeemen from more humble backgrounds chafed at the indulgence shown to Colden because of his wealth and gentility.<sup>73</sup> As the months passed, individual members of the council, such as Robert R. Livingston, who was once Colden's lawyer, would openly sympathize with Colden, but throw up their hands at the complexity and delay of it all.<sup>74</sup>

Colden seems to have maintained control over his emotions, save for the instances when a genteel tear could help his cause, and he never intentionally antagonized the gentlemen of the committee. By January 1777, Colden had tired of waiting for the authorities to make a decision on his fate, so he wrote to the prominent New York patriot James Livingston that since he had been held in Fishkill for seven weeks without parole, and because his home was only a short distance away, he would depart and stay there until called for.<sup>75</sup> Colden's simple yet audacious plan worked, and he lived quietly at his estate until March 2, 1777 when he was again taken by an armed company. Luckily for Colden, and again showing how personal honour and sociability worked to the benefit of a suspected gentleman, the state representative William Denning was a guest at his house when the company came for him "or I might have Expected to have been Insulted and very Ruffly handled..." wrote Colden.<sup>76</sup> Once more under the power of the Committee, Colden was paroled to a private residence, and experienced a tedious period of petitions and hearings, but also evenings spent "in a Sociable manner with the Commissioners without Entering on Politics."<sup>77</sup> That a suspected Tory would have such cordial relations with high-ranking patriots seemed unremarkable to Colden and consistent with genteel customs, but it must have been a source of consternation for the humbler sort.

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<sup>73</sup> Fingerhut, *Survivor*, 52-53.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 81. Colden's Journal, 130-131.

<sup>75</sup> Copy of a letter from Cadwallader Colden II to James Livingston, January 23, 1777. Colden's Journal, 39.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

These friendly relations did not prevent Colden from being thrown into the common jail in Kingston, New York in May, 1777, for allegedly aiding or harbouring members of a Tory raiding party some time earlier. Colden vociferously denied the allegation, and the patriot authorities had little evidence to back up their claims. The very raiders Colden was alleged to have aided were held in the cell next to his and were “so Lousey as not to be fit to Lodge with the Meanest of their fellow Creatures.” After the local authorities executed the leader of the raiding party, Jacobus Rose, Colden and some of his fellow gentlemen were informed that they would be transferred to the state’s own prison ships. In a display of Colden’s wealth and influence, he and a few other imprisoned gentlemen petitioned to purchase their own ship rather than be held with common prisoners. What was intended by patriot authorities as an act of retaliation for British mistreatment of Continental prisoners on the prison ships in New York, ended with Colden and his friends living through the early summer of 1777 “very Comfortably & very merry” on their own private sloop without a guard. He was even permitted to bring a “servant,” most likely his own slave on board with him, and at one point was granted a five day holiday to visit his family.<sup>78</sup> Though Colden paid for all this himself, he was permitted these extravagances because the committee had faith in him that he would abide by his word not to escape nor communicate with the enemy. Patriot gentlemen continued to recognize Colden’s right to respect, and he was dedicated to staying in their good graces, while still refusing to renounce the king.

Yet this indulgence provided some of Colden’s fellow genteel prisoners the opportunity to take advantage of the lack of a guard and escape. In their deliberations, Colden attempted to persuade the men not to run off. “Tho’ we were under no kind of Parole,” wrote Colden, “yet by there being no guard put on bord [sic] our vessel it imply’d a confidence put in us by the Captn of the gard [sic] ship which for my part I had a kind of Reluctance in forfeiting...” His fellow gentlemen respectfully disagreed and planned their escape, though Colden asked that they conceal any further plans from him so he would not be complicit. When Colden finally discovered that his friends had

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 65, 71, 89. Fingerhut, *Survivor*, 75.



escaped, he waited until daybreak before informing the captain of the guard, thus giving his friends a chance to gain some distance, while also appearing to be a model prisoner.<sup>79</sup>

There were no real consequences for Colden because of this escape. In fact, he was actually paroled on land, though he was only granted a two mile limit around his private lodgings. His gentle captivity was disrupted when an armed troop arrived to take him back to the Kingston jail because of reports of advancing British forces. Even with the state of emergency, the troops were obliged to let Colden finish his dinner and gather his belongings. Once at Kingston, prisoners of all ranks were lined up in front of the jail and chained together. To Colden's horror, the guards "put me into the Ranks with the other Prisoners" and he insisted on seeing whoever was in charge. At some perceived slight from Colden, the guards decided to intentionally insult the gentleman and "just before me was Placed an Indian & behind me a Negro..." As a slave owner himself, Colden was infuriated by the insult. The lowly rebels had placed him, as a Tory, literally in the ranks of slaves and Indians. To be physically attached to men considered racially inferior, and to be seemingly valued on the same level as chattel slaves or uncivilized savages must have stung the proud white gentlemen to the core.

Colden's physical trial was short-lived. He records in his journal that "I saw Mr. Robert R. Livingston Standing in the Barbers Shop, I beconed [sic] to him as he came up to me, & upon Desireing him to observe the indignity with which I was used, he said he was Intirely Ignorant of it [and] that he was Sorry to see it..." A few minutes later he was released and allowed to find his own way back to his place of lodging.<sup>80</sup> Livingston could not let such an indignity stand, even if it was inflicted on a suspected enemy.

Colden's constant petitions and complaints about his limits finally ended in June 1778 when the New York Assembly passed "An Act More Effectively to Prevent the Mischiefs ariseing from the influence and Example of Persons of Equivocal and Suspected Character." This new law criminalized neutrality, and no amount of evasion or delay could keep Colden from either taking or refusing his oath, once and for all. The wording of the act was particularly harsh and directed at men like Colden who attempted

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<sup>79</sup> Colden's Journal, 111, 113-115.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 120, 130-131.

to stay out of the conflict. The act declared that such men acted from “an undue attachment to Property” and concealed information and beliefs “Contrary to their faith Pledged by their Paroles...and perfidiously from time to time, by active misrepresentations...”<sup>81</sup> Neutrals were at best greedy sneaks who might play both sides, or at worst crypto-loyalists who were actively undermining the war effort. After he was presented with the ultimatum, Colden deliberated overnight, but could still not bring himself to take an oath abjuring the King. The committee therefore had no choice but to send him across the lines into British New York as a *bona fide* Tory.

In a revealing post-script, the newly exiled and penniless loyalist wrote to General Henry Clinton, “That in April 1777 an Officer or Messenger Charged with dispatches from the Commander in Chief at Canada to Sir William How [sic],” was “being pursued, [and] fled to the house of Your Memorialist for protection, which he not only Rec’d but your Memorialist hired guides who conducted him” back to New York.<sup>82</sup> Colden had pledged his word of honour to the New York Committee that he was neutral and had not assisted the British in any way. He had either been lying the entire time to the patriot authorities, or was lying to General Clinton. Either way, Colden does not seem to have been overly troubled by his apparent dishonesty. Colden used honour as a tool to ensure the continuation of his wealth and privileges, regardless of which side prevailed in the conflict. As Eugene Fingerhut argued in his biography of Colden, the country gentleman did his utmost to preserve the appearance of passivity and neutrality to the patriots, and steadfast loyalty to the British.<sup>83</sup>

Colden was concerned about maintaining a credible appearance to both sides in the conflict, but other loyalists were less bothered if they appeared dishonourable to rebels. David Mathews, the loyalist mayor of New York City, was arrested for his involvement in the nefarious ‘Hickey plot’ to possibly assassinate or kidnap George Washington and cause general havoc in New York when British forces attempted their

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<sup>81</sup> Fingerhut, *Survivor*, 94. Colden’s Journal, 179.

<sup>82</sup> Colden’s Journal, 195.

<sup>83</sup> Fingerhut, *Survivor*, 95.

landing in the summer of 1776.<sup>84</sup> Initially, Mathews' role in the treacherous plot was thought sufficient for patriot authorities to deny him the privileges of a gentleman. Sent to Hartford, Connecticut, he was refused a parole and held under close guard. Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull took a personal interest in the case and instructed the commissary, Ezekiel Williams, that the mayor's guards "should be frequently changed and that no person should be long about him."<sup>85</sup> The reason for this peculiar order became clear over the course of the next few months. Through his genteel and obliging behaviour, Mathews apparently convinced Williams and others that he was not a threat. Connecticut authorities granted him a generous parole, and he was transferred to Litchfield, Connecticut where he was a guest of Captain Moses Seymour. It seems he had convinced at least some of the locals of his honourable character, and perhaps that his involvement in the whole Hickey affair was nothing more than a misunderstanding.<sup>86</sup> Mathews ingratiated himself with the elite members of the community and even imported a fine carriage for Mrs. Seymour to thank her for her hospitality. With his captors put at ease, Mathews began corresponding with the British and planning his escape. With the help of the local shopkeeper Joel Stone, Mathews slipped away in late November 1776. Captain Seymour realized that he had been duped by a master of genteel disguise and posted an advertisement in the *Connecticut Journal* offering a fifty dollar reward for the capture of the fugitive mayor. The strongly worded notice declared that Mathews had "most basely and perfidiously deserted" his parole, and readers were further warned that he had "a very plausible way of deceiving people" a phrase designed to both explain Seymour's own failure and further impugn the mayor's character.<sup>87</sup> It is likely that Mathews either saw no dishonour in breaking his word to

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<sup>84</sup> *Minutes of a Conspiracy Against the Liberties of America* (New York, Arno Press, 1969 [1865, 1786]). Carl Van Doren, *Secret History of the American Revolution: An Account of the Conspiracies of Benedict Arnold and numerous others, drawn from the Secret service papers of the British headquarters in North America...*(New York: Viking Press, 1941), 14-15.

<sup>85</sup> Jonathan Trumbull to Ezekiel Williams, August 1, 1776, Connecticut Historical Society, Williams Family Papers (Transcribed copies provided by CHS).

<sup>86</sup> Jonathan Trumbull to Moses Seymour, August 22, 1776. Litchfield Historical Society, Woodruff Collection.

<sup>87</sup> Payne Kilbourn, *Sketches and Chronicles of the Town of Litchfield*, (Hartford: Press of Case, Lockwood and Company, 1859), 116-117. Richard. Buel, *Dear Liberty: Connecticut's Mobilization for the*

rebels, or believed that his initial close confinement was so insulting that it absolved him from any obligations. However Mathews rationalized his escape, this was a serious mark of dishonour to the patriots, but did little to harm the mayor in the eyes of the British, and he resumed his office upon his return to New York.<sup>88</sup>

Parole breaking was also central to the controversies surrounding the captivity of New Jersey Governor William Franklin, the loyalist son of Benjamin Franklin. The stubborn governor was the last sitting royal official in New Jersey when patriot representatives arrived at his mansion to offer him a parole in June 1776. Franklin refused to recognize their authority and was placed under house arrest before being transferred to Middleton, Connecticut. By refusing to sign a parole, however, Franklin was not honour-bound to remain a prisoner, and an intercepted letter to his wife seemed to indicate that Franklin intended to take advantage of that situation. Writing to the Committee of Safety in Essex, New Jersey, George Washington reported that Franklin told his wife that he feared “something may turn up to make his removal improper”, (i.e. a parole), which Washington interpreted as “full evidence, that he means to escape if possible.”<sup>89</sup> Despite this suspicion, the patriot authorities endeavoured to secure their gentleman prisoner through a parole, and allowed him to negotiate directly with the governor of Connecticut. When those negotiations proved fruitless, Franklin was given a stark ultimatum: sign a parole or be thrown in jail with common criminals. This threat tapped into a recurring fear shared by gentlemen loyalists, and as seen in the cases of Israel Williams and Cadwallader Colden, was taken as a profound insult. Common criminals had no honour, their word was worthless, their bodies were subject to painful marking and punishments, they were diseased, and were often from racially subjugated

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*Revolutionary War*, (Middleton, CT,: Wesleyan University Press, 1980), 93-94. Testimonial of David Mathews, Feb. 12th, 1784, Public Record Office, Great Britain, transcribed at [www.royalprovincial.com/military/mems/ct/clmston8.htm](http://www.royalprovincial.com/military/mems/ct/clmston8.htm) accessed July 1, 2014. *Connecticut Journal*, Nov.27, 1776.

<sup>88</sup> Ruma Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion: Loyalists in New York City During the Revolution* (Charlottesville VA: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 148. *The New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, Dec. 9, 1776, reported that Mathews had been taken in the middle of the night, was held under close confinement “among Felons, during a Month in the Hottest time of the Year” but does not mention that he was granted a parole. It is possible that Mathews chose not to share that information with the press.

<sup>89</sup> George Washington to Essex County, New Jersey, Committee, June 30, 1776. Letter Book 8, 201-203, George Washington Papers, Library of Congress. Skemp, *William Franklin*, 214.

groups like Natives, African Americans, or Irish immigrants. For a gentleman to be thrown among such loathsome people, to be humiliated and exposed to violence and disease was a terrifying prospect. Franklin signed the parole, but it is clear that the former governor felt unfairly coerced into signing.<sup>90</sup>

Perhaps because of Franklin's reticence to sign a parole, along with the recent example of David Mathews' escape, Connecticut authorities closely monitored their valuable prisoner. The new revolutionary governor of New Jersey, William Livingston, believed Franklin was hiding sensitive documents and ordered Franklin's room searched. Franklin took this an insult since he had given his word that there were no letters, and none were found. In April 1777, the Continental Congress learned that Franklin had indeed committed serious parole violations by corresponding with the British and handing out "protections" to the locals in the name of General Howe. In early May he was sent to Litchfield, Connecticut, the same place where David Mathews had broken parole a few months earlier, and Franklin was confined in a cell above a tavern.<sup>91</sup> Though the former Governor denied the charges and demanded a hearing or trial, his requests were soundly rebuffed. "I was closely confined for about eight months," Franklin wrote to Lord Germaine after his release in 1778. "Overrun and molested with many kinds of vermin, debarred pen, ink, and paper and all conversation with every person", Franklin described his experience as being "buried alive."<sup>92</sup> The former governor claimed that he was poorly fed, that his clothes were filthy, and he was covered with lice. The great man had taken on the appearance of a condemned criminal. For months Franklin waited to be exchanged, but Continental authorities continued to view Franklin as far too dangerous an enemy to release. While other loyalists were sometimes allowed to return to New York to tend to ill and distressed relatives, Franklin was not. Though the former governor's wife was on the verge of death, and even with George Washington's humane intercession on his behalf, the Continental Congress reasoned that Franklin could not be

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<sup>90</sup> Skemp, *William Franklin*, 215.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 220-221.

<sup>92</sup> William Franklin to Lord Germaine, Nov. 10, 1778. Reprinted in K.G. Davies, ed., *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783* (Colonial Office Series), Vol. XV (Dublin: Irish University Press, 1976), 243.

allowed any freedoms after a “violation of so sacred a tie as that of honor.”<sup>93</sup> Yet some Connecticut residents thought that Franklin’s abuse had gone too far. One letter to the *Connecticut Gazette* demanded to know “the true reason of Mr. William Franklin...being confined to a loathsome gaol” and wondered why the “Son of the Great Doctor Franklin is treated...like a thief or murderer.” The anonymous writer went on to declare that “If he has broke his parole of Honor, publish it in all the News Papers on the Continent, and (if he’s not lost to all the finest feelings of the mind) to be exposed will be worse than death.” Just as William Franklin had requested, the writer concludes by demanding a trial for Franklin lest “the vile Tories...boast that the patriotic Doctor Franklin’s son is used with a Rigour, seldom known but in a Portuguese Inquisition.”<sup>94</sup> Despite the writer’s hyperbole, the patriot authorities had followed the accepted customs of the time in treating a parole violator. Initially they recognized the potential danger posed by an influential loyalist like Franklin, but the patriots still accorded him the respect and dignity of his rank, and hoped that a parole would guarantee his compliance. Franklin would not acknowledge his adversaries’ authority or their right to respect, and this led him to violate his parole. As Sheila Skemp has shown, despite Franklin’s protestations of innocence, he was very much guilty of the illicit communications charged against him, and the patriots were within their rights to confine such a cunning and duplicitous man. His actions were both a breach of security and an insult that the patriots were honour-bound to answer, yet Franklin certainly felt no dishonour in breaching a rebel parole he was forced to sign.<sup>95</sup> Franklin’s experience shows that the patriots did attempt to treat the former governor with respect for his rank and dignity, but the honour system quickly unravelled because the former governor did not truly recognize the patriot’s right to respect. In the end, both captive and captor viewed one another as criminally dishonoured. After nearly two years as a prisoner, Franklin was exchanged in October, 1778.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Entry for July 28, 1777. *Journals of the Continental Congress, Vol. 8* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1907), 584.

<sup>94</sup> “Mr. Green, please insert the following...” *Connecticut Gazette*, July 18 1777.

<sup>95</sup> Skemp, *William Franklin*, 222.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 225.

Franklin's difficulties arose from his unwillingness to accept the validity of a rebel parole, but in the case of Major Christopher French, one of the first British officers captured in the war, the intensification of the gentlemanly honour system resulted from dozens of smaller slights and insults. French recorded his experiences in a detailed and lively journal which provides some clear insights into how ideas of honour were used in the moral contest between captive and captor. An officer of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of Foot, French was captured on board a British supply ship in August, 1775. French, like William Franklin and others, initially refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of his capture, but eventually relented and gave his parole which, interestingly, was not an indefinite parole, but one which was only to last up to twelve months.<sup>97</sup> It is not clear why the patriot authorities would agree to a time-limit, as most paroles were worded so that they would apply for as long as the conflict lasted or until the parolee was exchanged. This was likely the result of patriot inexperience at this early stage in the conflict.

Though not a loyalist, French muses extensively about honour and the loyalists who became his fellow prisoners, including such notables as Lt. Gov. Philip Skene and Gov. Montfort Browne of the Bahamas. French was from an Irish Protestant landowning family, and seems to have understood the American Revolution in terms of an ongoing Atlantic struggle between rebellious forces and the Crown, whether in Ireland or America. In this sense he felt common cause with the American Tories. At times in his journal he refers to himself as a loyalist and, noting the Calvinist roots of his New England hosts, borrows terminology from the English Civil War, labelling his captors "Roundheads," and his fellow loyalists "Cavaliers".<sup>98</sup> Like so many other prisoners, French was paroled in Connecticut, where he was free to roam around Hartford and interact with the locals. In 1775-76, patriots feared the possibility of a Tory insurgency in western Connecticut, and French and his fellow parolees and prisoners felt the tension in numerous disputes with community members. Since many loyalist gentlemen brought

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<sup>97</sup> A convenient transcribed copy of all three of Major French's journals can be found in: Sheldon S. Cohen, ed. "The Connecticut Captivity of Major Christopher French," *The Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin*, Vol. 55, 3-4, (Summer/Fall 1990): 125, 151. Microfilm of journal # 2 was compared against the transcription. American Revolution Collection, Micro. 79956. Connecticut Historical Society.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 187, 191, 194, 203.

their slaves with them into captivity, matters were not improved when the local African-American population elected Philip Skene's servant as their governor "according to annual custom," which added the terrifying prospect of servile insurrection to the fears of a Tory fifth column.<sup>99</sup> The turning point for the loyalist and British prisoners at Hartford was the escape of Captain Samuel McKay, the same loyalist who had caused the Albany Committee to doubt whether British and loyalist officers could be trusted to abide by their paroles. Once recaptured, French recorded that McKay was tied and "beat & abus'd...in the grossest manner" before being "sent to the common [jail] indiscriminately." McKay's mistreatment seemed a far worse crime to his fellow gentleman prisoners than his breach of parole. Perhaps in solidarity, Philip Skene refused to sign a parole and was confined in the common jail.<sup>100</sup> Following this affair the local committee tightened the restrictions on the prisoners, and French's intransigence towards the local authorities increased.

Any semblance of mutual respect between the committee and the Major evaporated when French issued an order forbidding British prisoners in Hartford from attending Congregationalist services, since the clergy "abuse and revile [His Majesty] by the epithets of Bloody Tyrant etc....and call his Navies and Armies murderers Pirates & Butchers." When French refused to rescind the order, he and his officers were removed to the common jail with "no distinction made between us & Felons", "contrary," he later wrote, to "all laws, Civil or Military, of all nations..."<sup>101</sup> For French, the committee had used his order as a pretext to violate the conditions of parole and wound the pride of the British officers. The rebels had shown their true colours, and now it was his business to torment his jailers, to mock them, and plot his own escape.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 141-145, March 9 to May 9, 1776. Election of the governor, 144. For information of the worries about the Tories of Western Connecticut, see Oscar Zeichner, *Connecticut's Years of Controversy, 1750-1776* (Archon Books, 1970 [Reprint of 1949 edition]), 206; Robert A. East, *Connecticut's Loyalists* (Chester, CT: Pequot Press, 1974); David H. Villiers, "King Mob and the Rule of Law: Revolutionary Justice and the Suppression of Loyalism in Connecticut, 1774-1783," in Robert M. Calhoun et al. *Loyalists and Community in North America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 17-30.

<sup>100</sup> Cohen, "Connecticut Captivity," 146-147.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 156, 197, 213

<sup>102</sup> French also argued that since he signed a 12 month parole, at the end he was free to go, an assertion denied by his captors.



French carefully recorded the apparent indignities he and the other loyalists suffered, including charges of high treason, threats of execution, imprisonment, attacks from locals, and an episode where Governor Montfort Browne performed the degrading task of rolling a sugar barrel.<sup>103</sup> Though this act may seem trivial, French was outraged that a man of Browne's status and rank should perform manual labour. The British Major often scolded his captors for such ignoble treatment of their genteel prisoners, and bombarded his jailors with letters and petitions.<sup>104</sup> French described the locals and the committeemen as little more than country bumpkins bereft of any sense of proper deference to a man of his learning and rank. This was to be expected, he wrote, because the people were "accustom'd to a Life of equality, where Birth, Riches, nay merit are mostly undistinguish'd" and therefore the New Englanders could "scarcely be found fault with for this method of acting, which arises from Simplicity and Ignorance."<sup>105</sup> In the opinion of French and other gentlemen, a country without any semblance of proper hierarchy produced defective people. At times French seems to regard his jailors and the local populace as bratty children in need of correction and instruction, an attitude that enraged the independent-minded New Englanders.

In response to French's constant complaints and challenges, the Hartford committee, led by the Princeton-educated gentleman Jesse Root, entered into a battle of wits and insults with their prisoner. French bristled when local farmers were admitted to the jail to gawk at him through the bars and demand he play his flute for them. Rather than rail at the common people and call them "rascals," as he so often did to his jailors, he politely excused himself from performing on account of sore fingers. The jailors also kept him in the company of arsonists and counterfeiters, and lodged a "raving lunatic" in the cell beside him, whose shrieks and cries kept him up at night. When French demanded that his right to exercise in the yard be acknowledged, Root offered him the use of the yard as a personal favour, which French flatly refused, as he "never accept[ed]

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 191.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. 184-186, 187.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, 182

favors from any but those I think upon as friends.”<sup>106</sup> The Major seemed to delight in talking down to his jailers and admonishing Continental officials, especially Jesse Root, for their failings as gentlemen and their ignorance of the finer points of honour.<sup>107</sup>

The feud between French and his jailers veered at times towards the absurd,<sup>108</sup> but the crux of the insults and arguments was a dispute over who was the truly honourable party. This led Jesse Root to submit an editorial on the dangers of “False Honor” to the *Connecticut Courant*. Though French is not mentioned by name, he recorded in his journal that he had little doubt the piece referred to him. Root described the bearers of false honour as “impertinent, saucy, [and] vain” whose ideals are “a war [upon]...conscience, upon heaven... [False honour] substitutes brutal ferocity [for] fortitude, and breaks through all restraints...” Those men who embraced such principles, the article continues, were like a vector that could “give the country the plague” and “ought to be cooped in the caverns of the earth” – a thinly veiled reference to Newgate prison built into the Simsbury copper mines north of Hartford.<sup>109</sup> In response to what French saw as “an Attack upon me,” he penned his own discussion of honour entitled “True Honor” under the name, “Cosmopolitus,” though the printer evidently refused to publish it. French describes true honour as “mild and gentle in Prosperity, yet bold & manly in Adversity...” Using Root’s own words against him, French writes that his honour is “Not Vain, not saucy, nor impertinent, but steady and unshaken - & fears not tho’ many threaten.” “In short,” he writes, “true honor is as a precious Gem which (tho’ buried in the...Caverns of the Earth...) will retain...its indelible Stamp of Sterling Merit, & will shine forth, to the terror of False Honor...”<sup>110</sup> French and his captors were not only engaged in a political conflict, but were also waging a cultural war as well.

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid, 184, 186, 220.

<sup>107</sup> Though French’s admonishments can be found throughout the journal, his entry of January 14<sup>th</sup>, 1776 stands out. French recorded dining General Charles Lee and when the conversation turned hot, French scolded Lee for being “too free” on political subjects, to which the patriot “genteely apologis’d.” Ibid, 137.

<sup>108</sup> Cohen, “Connecticut Captivity,” 179. His mockery of his jailers is at times imperious and at others juvenile and petty. At one point, French composed a song to the new bride of one of his guards, advising her not to marry him, because, among other things, “His Parts are small...”

<sup>109</sup> *Connecticut Courant*, November 4, 1776.

<sup>110</sup> Cohen, “Connecticut Captivity,” 201.

The Hartford committee's irritation at their bothersome prisoner exploded into rage when a local girl eloped with a soldier under French's command, and the Major was blamed. French feared that a local mob was coming for him, or that he would indeed be sent to toil in the Simsbury copper mines. On the night of November 15, 1776, he and four other prisoners made their escape through a hole they had chipped through the wall. For five days the group of fugitives attempted to make their way to British lines. French even disguised himself as "a Woman with Cloak & Bonnett" but seemingly saw no dishonour in it, as he was both desperate to escape and presumably thought little of what his captors might think of him. He and his fellow fugitives were captured and returned to their patched-up jail, but they escaped again on December 27<sup>th</sup> and successfully made their way to New York.<sup>111</sup>

The inexperienced Whigs seemed helpless to stop the constant escape of both rank and file loyalist and British prisoners who were not granted paroles by virtue of their lower status, or gentlemen who refused to abide by their oaths. Burgoyne's Convention Army prisoners fled in droves and by the time it arrived in Virginia in January 1779, around 1 900 had escaped. Even the fearsome, converted copper mine of Newgate prison was subject to mass escapes.<sup>112</sup> Yet it was the desertions of gentlemen prisoners that most infuriated the revolutionary leadership. Evidence for this can be seen in the numerous printed insults directed towards specific fugitives, distributed in newspapers and handbills. About two months after he escaped, the *Connecticut Gazette* carried two scathing rebukes of Major French and his behaviour. A letter to the editor explained that French had initially been "used with the greatest Lenity...till he violated (like a Scoundrel) his Parole..." The article describes him as "peevish, ill-natured, churlish, bigotted [sic]," and of a "bloodthirsty Disposition." He is accused of responding to kindness with "fresh insults and Instances of uncommon Insolence and Scurrility..." The paper also included an acrostic poem describing French's character, in which the author

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid, 203-204, 206. 223. Interestingly enough there is no mention of this episode or French's disguise in the patriot press, even though it could have been used to show the ludicrous emasculation of an archenemy. The failure to capitalize on this may owe to the fact that David Mathews had escaped within the same week, and patriot authorities were reluctant to expose their inability to retain high-value prisoners.

<sup>112</sup> Ferling, *Almost a Miracle*, 432. Richard Phelps, *A History of Newgate of Connecticut* (New York: Arno Press, 1969 [1860]), 35, 40-45.

again takes aim at the Major's egotism. "F" is for "Fixed in Opinion always in the wrong" while "H is [for] Honor to maintain in spite of Man and God." The article concludes by attacking French's manhood, calling him a "Hermaphrodite" and explaining that he was dependent on his brother for "Two Hundred a Year towards the Support of his needy Family, and yet the Major is such an Ingrate and Churl that he has not spoke to his Brother and Benefactor for several Years."<sup>113</sup> The patriot press also targeted other fugitives or escapees. A hand bill described Isaac Wilkins, a New York loyalist, as a "wolf in sheep's clothing" for his deception and escape.<sup>114</sup> Connecticut authorities insulted Philip Skene in the newspapers by officially offering to exchange him for a corporal.<sup>115</sup>

Escaped loyalists rarely responded to printed insults. This may have owed to the lack of loyalist printers, but gentlemen loyalists likely felt it would be vulgar to exchange insults in the press. One of the few printed answers to patriot accusations of dishonour and oath-breaking came from Andrew Skene, a loyalist officer and the son of Philip Skene. He admitted that he had indeed escaped, but he claimed to be innocent of any dishonour and called upon his former jailers to admit their violations of gentlemanly conduct which voided the parole and forced him to flee. He politely restrained himself from providing any particulars.<sup>116</sup> Major Christopher French never responded publicly to any of the printed attacks against him, but he likely would have seen such crude attacks as further evidence of the rustic and plebeian character of New Englanders, and may have even taken a touch of pleasure knowing how badly he had riled his captors. Judging from the sentiments expressed his journal, French saw his prisoner experience, and indeed the American Revolution in general, as a cultural conflict between a proper, ordered hierarchy, built on respect, merit, and honour, and the ignorant, levelling rebel upstarts of Connecticut. French assumed moral superiority over his captors throughout his

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<sup>113</sup> *Connecticut Gazette*, February 28, 1777.

<sup>114</sup> "To the People of America, Stop Him! Stop Him!" Broadside, New London CT. May 4, 1775.

<sup>115</sup> Major French's Journal, 212. Herbert H. White, "British Prisoners of War in Hartford During the Revolution," *Papers of the New Haven Historical Society*, Vol. VIII, 1914: 263.

<sup>116</sup> Major Andrew Skene to Hugh Gainé, December 5, 1775. Force, ed. *American Archives*, IV...187.

imprisonment, and though he begrudgingly accepted the parole offered to him when he was first taken prisoner, he refused to respect the honour of his captors. French's rejection of the patriot claim-right of honour sparked a bitter feud in which both sides attempted to reveal the illusion or shallowness of their opponents' concept of honour. It was a conflict that spilled out of the jails and into the newspapers and gossip of the community. Even in jail, a gentleman was on a stage.

The patriots had initially treated French according to the customs of civilized warfare, and assumed his honour as a gentleman and a British officer. Showing this sort of respect was vital for the American revolutionaries to prove that they were honourable, legitimate soldiers, and not rebellious criminals. Abiding by civilized customs was also a way to ensure that their own captured officers would be treated with dignity. With only a few exceptions, the Continental Congress and Army tried their best to treat captured British and Hessian officers and soldiers with the requisite honours. In contrast, the treatment of loyalists such as Gideon White, Israel Williams, Cadwallader Colden II, William Franklin, and David Mathews varied considerably depending on the patriots' estimation of their captives' personal honour. Gideon White and Israel Williams were denied parole by the local committees and quarantined in their homes to prevent the spread of their political infection. David Mathews and Cadwalder Colden II were both confined to jail cells despite their status as gentlemen, before their captors lightened their restrictions because of the prisoners' genteel behaviour and polite arguments. The patriots initially sought to treat Governor William Franklin with respect owing to both his rank and his illustrious father, but were compelled to place Franklin in close confinement because of his allegedly duplicitous conduct. Though loyalism was considered a dishonourable political principle, the treatment of loyalist gentlemen was contingent on the patriots' appraisal of their personal honour. Loyalist prisoners were under a sort of evaluation to discover whether their treasonous political allegiance was born out of foolishness and misplaced affection for the King, or whether it represented a deeper moral defect.

Of particular interest to patriot assemblies were the quiet sorts who did not openly declare their support for either side. Patriot committees would often give such men the benefit of the doubt, and could even attempt to separate a man and his honour from his

political delusions. According to Robert Calhoun, when local patriots interrogated their neighbours they sometimes tried to expose “the evil of Toryism without destroying the self-respect of the suspect, peeling away the thin layers of misguided belief in an effort to isolate and excise specific tendencies.” A revolutionary committee of New Englanders residing just across the frontier in Sunbury County, Nova Scotia, questioned a group of men whose seeming neutrality had caused “uneasiness to many”. The committee demanded the men make their political sentiments clear, and warned them that claiming neutrality “will not be a satisfactory answer.” Only one suspected neutral in this case refused to declare for the Revolution, and was officially ostracized by the committee.<sup>117</sup>

The idea of neutrality was considered politically indefensible since it effectively amounted to a rejection of the revolutionary cause, but it was also regarded as a deeply unmanly position. Whatever allegiance truly lay in his heart, the committee declared that a neutral “must be a slothful man who...desires a thing may come to pass and yet shall use no measures, direct or indirect, to accomplish his desires.” By this logic it would seem that being an open loyalist was manlier than being a neutral. Indeed, the contempt for neutrals was a recurring idea in patriot thought. The Congregationalist preacher Nathaniel Whitaker railed against “neuters” because, he argued, there “are but two sides to any case, a right and wrong; and they who neglect to take the right side...must stand chargeable with all the ill consequences that follow...” A neutral was just as culpable as a Tory villain, but lacked the courage to choose a side. Even with this stark binary of honourable patriots and dishonourable loyalists created by revolutionary committees and the patriot press, authorities were adamant that support for the cause needed to be voluntary and not go against individual conscience.<sup>118</sup> Religious justifications for neutrality or pacifism posed a serious challenge to the sort of coercion practiced by committees. The imprisonment and relocations of prominent members of Philadelphia’s Quaker community raised perplexing questions as to the justice of persecuting gentlemen merely on grounds of neutrality or suspicions of loyalism.

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<sup>117</sup> Calhoun, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America*, 303-304. For an in depth look at the politics of communities along the Maine/Nova Scotia border, see: Elizabeth Manke, *The Fault Lines of Empire: Political Differentiation in Massachusetts and Nova Scotia, ca. 1760-1830* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

<sup>118</sup> Calhoun, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America*, 304. Nathaniel Whitaker, *The Reward of Toryism* (Newbury-Port, MA: John McCall, 1783), 16-17.

In early 1777, a group of nearly two dozen Philadelphia Quaker merchants protested their innocence in the press, and made principled complaints against the local committee for roughly searching their homes and imprisoning them in the Freemason hall.<sup>119</sup> Quaker prisoners wrote and published several “remonstrances” directed at the Pennsylvania council and the general public. “[W]e have been kept in close confinement, under strong Military Guard,” reads one remonstrance, “but have remained here unaccused and unheard.” The Quaker gentlemen attempted to point out the essential hypocrisy of being held without charge by men who claimed to be protecting liberty, and appealed to the “Declaration of Rights, which form a fundamental...Part of the Constitution from which you derive your power.”<sup>120</sup> Continental commanders and patriot civil authorities were deeply suspicious of the Quakers, and there were numerous rumours and tales of their collusion with the British, though there was little firm evidence to prove the allegations. John Hancock, for one, believed the Society of Friends was acting against American interests under the “Hypocritical Cloak of Religion.”<sup>121</sup> Most of the suspected Quaker loyalists were pacifists who wanted to stay out of the conflict, which was enough to bring them to the attention of the revolutionary authorities. The instructions of the Philadelphia Meeting of Friends were decidedly anti-revolutionary and seemed to confirm the patriot suspicions.<sup>122</sup> The Society of Friends, like other churches in Revolutionary America, was divided on the political crisis, and some Quakers abandoned their pacifist roots, while others clung to them.<sup>123</sup> According to a pamphlet published by the imprisoned Quakers, a key point of contention was the patriot demand that they take an oath affirming they would do nothing “injurious to the United Free States of North America, by speaking, writing, or otherwise, and from giving intelligence to the

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<sup>119</sup> For a description of the Quaker experience see Arthur Mekeel, *The Quakers and the American Revolution*, (York: The Ebor Press, 1996); William C. Kashatus, *Conflict of Conviction: A Reappraisal of Quaker Involvement in the American Revolution* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1990).

<sup>120</sup> “To the President and Council of Philadelphia...”September 5, 1777 (Philadelphia: Bell, 1777). Evans Collection. “The following Remonstrance...” (Philadelphia: Bell, 1777). Evans Collection.

<sup>121</sup> Mekeel, *Quakers and the American Revolution*, 199.

<sup>122</sup> Nelson, *The American Tory*, 90, 106-107.

<sup>123</sup> Calhoun, *Loyalist Perception*, 199, 208. Kashatus, *Conflict of Conviction*, 79, 84.

Commander of the British forces.”<sup>124</sup> Quaker theology, then as today, teaches that oaths create two standards of honesty, whereas the Society of Friends teach that one should always unfailingly tell the truth. More importantly, Quakers believe a secular oath interferes with their spiritual obligations to God. Therefore the Quakers had never taken an oath to the British Crown, and neither would they take one to the new United States.<sup>125</sup> The local committee offered the imprisoned Quakers the choice of taking the oath or submitting to voluntary house arrest. The Friends refused the ultimatum as a point of honour, “disdaining to be considered in so odious a light, as men who by crimes had forfeited our common and inherent rights...”<sup>126</sup> The Quaker merchants argued that they had done nothing wrong, and had not given offence or preference to either side in the conflict. They were not denying the authority of Congress, but neither were they willing to lay aside their principles and submit to restrictions on their freedom. With the British army closing in on Philadelphia in the late summer of 1777, the exasperated patriot authorities sent the intransigent Quaker gentlemen to Winchester, Virginia as prisoners.

The wealthy merchant Thomas Gilpin Sr. kept a diary of his prisoner experience that details a fairly peaceful captivity spent at church meetings and simply putting in time with colleagues. Yet their status as suspected loyalists meant that Gilpin and his fellow Quakers were subjected to the indignities and dishonours experienced by other Tory prisoners. The Friends chafed at the insults and abuse hurled by the common people as they travelled and it “Rather appeared”, wrote Gilpin “that [the country people] had been encouraged by some Violent People to do so.”<sup>127</sup> One point that continually irked the Quakers was the armed guard posted at their door. This seemed a particularly insulting and overbearing gesture to Gilpin, who noted that even mercenary Hessians captured at Saratoga were granted the freedom to work for local farmers without supervision. The

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<sup>124</sup> “An Address to the Inhabitants of Pennsylvania” (Philadelphia: Bell, 1777), 2.

<sup>125</sup> Jane E. Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism and the Political Thought of John Dickinson* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 57, 266.

<sup>126</sup> “An Address to the Inhabitants...”, 3.

<sup>127</sup> “Diary of Thomas Gilpin,” Sept. 20, 1777. New York Historical Society. The captivity of Gilpin and the other Quakers in Winchester was explored by Gilpin’s son, Thomas Gilpin Jr., *Exiles in Virginia* (Philadelphia: C. Sherman, 1848).



rustic captain of the guard attempted to intimidate the peaceful Quakers with threats of hanging, and bragged with “familiar sentiments [sic] & expressions ab[ou]t thumming people’s eyes, biting, pinching their Privates.”<sup>128</sup> Most of the Quaker prisoners at Winchester stoically endured the constant nuisances and indignities.

The Virginia legislature eventually offered the Quakers a parole, but it required them to leave Winchester and go to British occupied New York. This may have been a clever ploy by the Virginia authorities to rid themselves of the costly prisoners, and by accepting the parole the Quakers would essentially admit that they were indeed Tories. Although some did take the offer, the scrupulous Gilpin thought this was an unwise move which would “be construed to a Consciousness of guilt.”<sup>129</sup> Having refused to leave Winchester on principle, Gilpin died in the early spring of 1778, along with another Quaker named John Hunt. The deaths of these gentlemen angered their patriot friends who pointed out the inhumanity of causing death on the basis of mere suspicion. The Pennsylvania Council was obliged to agree, and permitted the return of the remaining Quaker prisoners at Wilmington.<sup>130</sup>

Thomas Gilpin may not have been an active loyalist, and his personal opinions on the justice of the Revolution remain unclear. Yet to patriots he belonged to a class of deceptive or weak-willed gentlemen like Cadwallader Colden II, who conscientiously refused to support the revolution, but did not openly support the British either. Gilpin took his captivity much more gracefully than other gentlemen loyalists examined in this chapter, perhaps owing to his strong religious faith. Though he offered no resistance, he believed that the indignities he experienced in captivity were designed to force him into declaring for the loyalists, or to taking the oath against his convictions. The Quaker intransigence on this matter continued throughout the war.

Patriot authorities deliberated over the proper ways to treat loyalist prisoners depending on their status, honour, or religious convictions, but they were far less willing to extend privileges to captured loyalist fighters. Like their civilian counterparts, the

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<sup>128</sup> Gilpin’s Diary, Oct. 7, 1777.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>130</sup> Mekeel, *Quakers in the American Revolution*, 211.

treatment of armed loyalists depended on patriot evaluations of their honour, though loyalist gentlemen captured in battle, or who participated in partisan warfare, were generally not accorded gentlemanly honours, and many faced the possibility of execution. Patriots argued that these men were traitors and bandits, and therefore deserved the harshest treatment possible regardless of their rank or status. It was commonly accepted that armed Tories had not only committed the unpardonable dishonour of treason, but they had also violently turned on their own families, communities, and even their race. revolutionary authorities therefore felt fully justified in mistreating loyalists captured in arms.

The narrative of the New Jersey loyalist James Moody displays how a self-styled gentleman-at-arms, with an officer's commission and clear and direct orders, could end up being held as an ignominious spy. A middling landowner, Moody tended five hundred acres in Sussex County, New Jersey before being driven from his home for his open loyalism.<sup>131</sup> Moody received a lieutenant's commission in the New Jersey Volunteers and achieved a degree of fame (or infamy) during the war for his daring exploits freeing prisoners and capturing rebel dispatches. He was even immortalized in 1785 by the British engraver Robert Pollard, who depicted Moody rescuing a shackled British officer from a gothic dungeon.<sup>132</sup> A patriot force captured Moody in July 1780, and he was transferred to Westpoint where the genteel commandant Robert Howe granted him a gentleman's parole with a three mile limit around the fortress. The patriot press jubilantly announced Moody's capture, and printed the orders he carried directing him to capture New Jersey governor William Livingston. Even though these documents were intended "to prevent his being treated as a spy", the newspaper informed readers that because he travelled with a very small party of men behind enemy lines "with weapons concealed," his actions were "characteristic of a spy" according to the rules "of all the nations of Europe".<sup>133</sup> It was an important distinction. According to eighteenth century custom, gentlemen fought bravely and openly; they did not skulk in shadows. Spies were

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<sup>131</sup> Shenstone, *So Obstinate Loyal*, 9.

<sup>132</sup> Robert Pollard, "Lieutenant Moody" 1785. See: Shenstone, *So Obstinate Loyal*, 162-163 for a detailed description.

<sup>133</sup> Shenstone, *So Obstinate Loyal*, 81-82.

therefore not considered gentlemen and were not normally protected by the genteel conventions of war, as seen in the execution of Nathaniel Hale, John André and others.<sup>134</sup> Indeed, Livingston and George Washington interceded by voiding Moody's parole and ordering that the loyalist partisan be held under close guard.<sup>135</sup>

The new commandant of Westpoint, Benedict Arnold, took no chances with his wily prisoner. He ordered Moody shackled, which, the loyalist later recalled, "caused his wrists to be much cut and scarified". To add to the security, and the torment, Moody recorded that he was held in a roofless pit dug out of natural rock which often filled with ankle-deep water.<sup>136</sup> Even with this treatment, Moody believed his life would be spared since he was more valuable for prisoner exchange than for patriot vengeance. The Continental authorities dashed his expectations when they informed him that he was to be tried for the "assassination" of a pair of officers who were killed fighting Moody and his men. The loyalist officer wrote that this charge could be easily countered since the officers died fairly in battle, but he was then told that he was "so obnoxious" and was "likely to be...so mischievous" if exchanged, that the revolutionary authorities planned to use whatever excuse they could to justify executing Moody. Even if the assassination charge failed, an officer explained to Moody that "you have enlisted men...for the King's service, and this, by our laws, is *death*."<sup>137</sup> Moody, like so many other loyalist prisoners, escaped before he could be put on trial.

Moody presented his treatment as exceedingly harsh and unjust, but his experiences were consistent with other captured partisans and raiders. The shackles, however, were an injury and an indignity spared most captives in the American Revolution. Such instruments were normally reserved for slaves or the worst sort of criminals. News of starvation and disease aboard the prison ships incensed the

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<sup>134</sup> For details on the customary treatment of spies in eighteenth century warfare, see Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 92, 96-97.

<sup>135</sup> Shenstone, *So Obstinate Loyal*, 81-82.

<sup>136</sup> James Moody, *Lieutenant James Moody's Narrative of his Exertions and Sufferings*, (London: Richardson and Urquhart, 1783), 24-30. George Washington was involved in the Moody trial, and had set Sept. 1, 1780 for the date of his trial. George Washington to William Livingston, August 17, 1780. Letterbook 3, 362. George Washington Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>137</sup> Moody, *Narrative*, 31.

revolutionary leadership, but it was rumours that Continental officers been shackled and chained to the floor that provoked an immediate response. After hearing these reports in 1779, Governor Livingston retaliated directly on British Colonel Christopher Billop. Elisha Boudinot apologized to Billop in writing, but lamented that such harsh treatment was the only way “to teach Britons to act like men of humanity.”<sup>138</sup> To constrain a genteel body was the height of insult and indignity, but according to Boudinot it was the enemy who had provoked such treatment. Boudinot was arguing that in times of war the truly dishonourable act was the one which started the cycle of violence, not the one provoked out of retaliation. In eighteenth century custom, when one side violated the rules of warfare it absolved their enemies from the same obligations. George Washington, a fastidious observer of honour’s punctilios, wrote General Thomas Gage on the matter of prisoner abuse in 1775 warning that the “Obligation arising from the Rights of Humanity, and claims of Rank are universally binding, and extensive, (except in case of Retaliation).”<sup>139</sup> For Boudinot and Washington, when their enemies refused to act like gentlemen, retaliation was the only effective way to prevent further cruelties.

Patriots employed this principle of retaliation against British and loyalist officers who fought alongside Native warriors on the frontier. The Lieutenant Governor of Detroit, Henry Hamilton, was one of the most loathed royal officials in the conflict because of his central role in establishing the alliance between Britain and the western tribes. Whig frontiersmen derisively labelled Hamilton the “Hair Buyer” for allegedly paying Native warriors for patriot scalps. Thus he and his officers were among the most valuable prizes for the frontier Whigs. To patriots Hamilton was the epitome of false honor: an accomplished gentleman born to privilege and influence, yet in league Native Americans who were assumed by white patriots to be the very antithesis of civilization.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> John Graves Simcoe, *A Journal of the Operations of the Queen’s Rangers* (Exeter, 1789), appendix, 191-192.

<sup>139</sup> George Washington to Thomas Gage, August 11, 1775. George Washington Papers, Library of Congress. Series 4, 873.

<sup>140</sup> Bernard W. Sheehan, “‘The Famous Hair Buyer General’: Henry Hamilton, George Rogers Clark, and the American Indian,” *Indiana Magazine of History*, Vol. 79, No. 1, (Mar. 1983): 2. Also see Colin G. Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 40-41, 56.

In February 1779, Colonel George Rogers Clark surprised Hamilton's garrison at Fort Vincennes, and demanded its surrender. Both loyalist and patriot sources agree that before the negotiations were complete, Clark's men captured a small party of Native and French Canadian fighters and brought them into town. After separating the white men from the party, the remaining four Natives were publicly murdered and their bodies tossed into the river. The patriot Major Joseph Bowman recorded that Hamilton and Clark were meeting while this occurred, but his mater-of-fact description perhaps highlights the routine nature of such killings.<sup>141</sup> The loyalist Lieutenant Jacob Schieffelin, who claimed to be an eye-witness, provided a more graphic description for the *Royal Gazette*, claiming that "Colonel Clark...took a tomahawk, and in cool blood knocked their brains out, dipping his hands in their blood, rubbing it several times on his cheeks, yelping as a savage..."<sup>142</sup> The American Revolution enflamed generations of racial hatred on the frontier, where tales of murder and torture were all too common. These particular murders were not given any coverage in the patriot press, though news of the capture of Henry Hamilton and his officers was widely reported.<sup>143</sup>

The actions taken against Henry Hamilton, his men, and his Native allies was part of the ongoing battle for moral superiority, and patriot officials circulated accounts of enemy cruelty to justify their acts of reprisal. The Virginia legislature published a broadside detailing the Indian raids supposedly ordered by Hamilton, and the governor's own inhumane treatment of prisoners. In particular, several paragraphs were devoted to the sufferings of the unfortunate John Dodge, who was shackled in a stone cell without blankets, fire, or proper food in the dead of winter. On the verge of death, Hamilton ordered him brought out until "somewhat mended, and then again, before he had recovered the abilities to walk, was returned to the dungeon." Other prisoners were said to be placed "into the hands of savages." The last few paragraphs of the broadside

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<sup>141</sup> Major Joseph Bowman, "Bowman's Journal" in *Col. George Roger Clark's Sketch of his Campaign in the Illinois* (Cincinnati, OH: Robert Clarke, 1907), 90.

<sup>142</sup> *Royal Gazette*, July 15, 1780. Also transcribed and edited by Gerald O. Haffner, "A British Prisoner of War in the American Revolution: The Experiences of Jacob Schieffelin from Vincennes to Williamsburg, 1779-1780," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 86, No. 1, (Jan., 1978): 17-25, 20.

<sup>143</sup> *Pennsylvania Packet*, June 29, 1779; *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, July 3, 1779; *Independent Chronicle*, July 8, 1779; *Connecticut Courant*, July 13, 1779.

contrast the loathsome conditions suffered by patriot prisoners with the indulgent treatment accorded to British captives. Although, the pamphlet reads, “we had long and vainly endeavoured to introduce an emulation in kindness [in the enemy]”, Hamilton and his fellow prisoners “are free subjects to begin on the work of retaliation.” The publication concludes that Henry Hamilton, along with the Detroit Justice of the Peace Philip Dejean and Captain William Lamothe, were ordered to be “put in irons, confined in the dungeon of the public jail, debarred the use of pen, ink, and paper, and excluded all converse except with the keeper.”<sup>144</sup> To patriots, the alliance with Native warriors and their alleged inhumanity against patriot prisoners stripped the royal officers of any honour, and transformed these gentlemen into the most loathsome criminals.

The loyalist Jacob Schieffelin, who was also taken prisoner and transported to Virginia, recorded that when he and his fellow officers watched helplessly as Hamilton, Dejean and Lamothe were clasped in irons, they “shed tears of indignation that their worthy Chief should be so treated”. The patriots marched their prisoners through the streets of Williamsburg “with great pomp” in the rain, before being “committed to the dungeon with felons, murderers, and condemned criminals, not so much as a blanket allowed them...and heavy chains put on their legs before great numbers of people.” Schieffelin was not simply offended at the insult of seeing his commander in chains, but the public nature of the dishonour. The young officer believed the charges against his commander were “infamous falsehoods”, and could not bear that so many rough people could feel morally superior to the Governor based on rebel lies.<sup>145</sup>

Washington initially supported the harsh measures against Hamilton and his fellow prisoners, agreeing with Virginia Governor Thomas Jefferson that “Their cruelties to our unhappy people who have fallen into their hands and the measures they have pursued to excite the savages...discriminate them from common prisoners...”<sup>146</sup> Yet

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<sup>144</sup> “In Council, June 16, 1779...” Broadside (Williamsburg, VA: Dixon & Nicolson, 1779). *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, July 3, 1779. John Dodge’s captivity narrative was also printed in *The Continental Journal*, Dec. 30, 1779.

<sup>145</sup> *Royal Gazette*, July 15, 1780

<sup>146</sup> George Washington to Thomas Jefferson, July 10, 1779. Letter Book 3, 99. George Washington Papers, Library of Congress.

British General William Phillips reminded Washington that since Fort Vincennes had surrendered on the basis of a negotiated settlement, retaliation was a violation of the patriot's word of honour. Ever conscious of such intricacies, Washington was forced to concede the point and wrote to Jefferson that "on more mature consideration, [the issue of retaliation] appears to be involved in greater difficulty than I apprehended."

Washington admitted that Hamilton deserved to be punished, and that his crimes should be widely published "that the World... may feel and approve the justice of his fate".

Nonetheless, the offender could not "be subjected to any uncommon severity" since his "capitulation placed him upon a different footing from a mere prisoner at discretion."

Washington suggested that "altho' the practice of War" did "not justify the measures that have been taken against him," Hamilton could still be kept under close confinement.<sup>147</sup>

This potential breach of faith troubled Washington's sense of honour, but it would also have had larger military ramifications. If British garrisons felt they could not trust patriot surrender terms, they might choose to prolong sieges through obstinate resistance, and force bloody assaults that would work to no one's advantage. In the end, Hamilton's fellow prisoners were either paroled, or in the case of Schieffelin, escaped, but Hamilton was not exchanged until November 1780.<sup>148</sup> Despite the intense public rancour against Hamilton and his loyalist officers, practical military necessity prevented them from experiencing the full brunt of patriot vengeance.

Less well-known loyalists without friends among the British were not as fortunate as the officers from Detroit, and as the civil war intensified, atrocities and reprisals became more common. In an attempt to prevent extrajudicial killings of captured Tories in South Carolina, the legislature instituted £80 bounties for loyalists taken alive.<sup>149</sup> Even if captured, the patriot authorities were rarely willing to acknowledge that loyalists in arms were lawful combatants.<sup>150</sup> After the Battle of Kettle Creek in Georgia on February

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<sup>147</sup> George Washington to Thomas Jefferson, August 6, 1779. Letter Book 3, 112-113. George Washington Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>148</sup> *The Continental Journal*, January 18, 1781. Also see Clark, *Col. George Roger Clark's Sketches...* 65.

<sup>149</sup> Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honor*, 217.

<sup>150</sup> Jim Piecuch, *Three Peoples, One King: Loyalists, Indians, and Slaves in the Revolutionary South, 1775-1782* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), 198.

14, 1779, dozens of loyalists were denied prisoner of war status and instead tried under the state's Sedition Act.<sup>151</sup> Fifty loyalists were convicted of treason, though most were released on grounds that they had been "seduced and terrified" into joining the British cause.<sup>152</sup> Eventually five of the loyalists were hanged. The British condemned these executions and threatened retaliation, but the Continental General Andrew Williamson defended the killings, arguing that the deceased were in fact brigands who carried no commissions. It was only when several committeemen fell into British hands that the patriots agreed to exchange loyalist prisoners in Georgia. British authorities were furious that loyalists were abused and sometimes executed, but they were reluctant to retaliate on Continental prisoners out of fears for the safety of their regulars and officers. Sir Henry Clinton himself ordered that no action be taken against the Whig prisoners despite the fact that the loyalist executions had been sanctioned by the Georgian government.<sup>153</sup> Similar situations faced the loyalists elsewhere, and little was done by the British to protect loyalist prisoners. In fact, the British sometimes rejected patriot offers to exchange loyalist prisoners, and demanded their regulars first.<sup>154</sup> Such actions must have been deeply insulting to loyalists.

In some cases, being an influential loyalist officer could be a death sentence. Not only had they raised arms against their country, but they had also encouraged and lead others to do the same, thus compounding their treason. This was fate of Lt. Colonel Ambrose Mills and two of his captains on October 7, 1780, when one thousand provincial soldiers and loyalist militia under British Major Patrick Ferguson were surrounded and defeated at the Battle of King's Mountain in South Carolina. Ferguson and nearly three hundred loyalists and provincials were killed, and the rest were taken prisoner. Anthony Allaire, a loyalist lieutenant in the provincial light infantry, recorded that the militia officers were singled-out for mistreatment since they had "the most Influence in the

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<sup>151</sup> Robert Scott Davis, "The Loyalist Trials at Ninety Six in 1779," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 80, No. 2 (Apr., 1979): 174.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>154</sup> Thomas Shaw to Ezekiel Williams, June 13, 1778. Connecticut Historical Society, Williams Family Papers.



country.”<sup>155</sup> First the officers’ baggage was ransacked, and their clothes, money and arms were all stolen. The patriots convened an impromptu court martial, and condemned thirty loyalist militiamen to hang. Lt. Colonel Mills, two unnamed captains, and six privates were executed while the rest of the prisoners were sent on a forced march where more died.<sup>156</sup>

The brutality witnessed at the Battle of King’s Mountain was typical of the ferocious civil war in the southern theatre, which will be explored in more detail in the following chapter. The loyalists’ mistreatment may have also stemmed from the culture of the “over-mountain men” who filled the ranks of the patriots at this engagement. These were Scotch-Irish frontiersmen who had little time for the niceties of genteel behaviour and were determined to punish the loyalists for the threats and insults made by Major Ferguson in a circular letter spread in the lead-up to the battle. The British officer had called the patriot militiamen “Barbarians”, “the dregs of mankind” “Backwater men” and “a set of Mongrels” and even mentioned their leaders by name.<sup>157</sup> The brutal treatment eventually compelled nearly six hundred loyalists to escape and spread the demoralizing news of their defeat and suffering. Since loyalist soldiers could depend on neither the conventions of honourable warfare nor the protection of the British, loyalist support began to wither in the South.<sup>158</sup>

The ill-treatment of loyalist prisoners taken at King’s Mountain came to the attention of patriot militia Colonel William Campbell. Concerned about how such brutal actions would reflect on his character, he issued a general order on October 11<sup>th</sup> instructing “the officers of all ranks in the army to endeavour to restrain the disorderly manner of slaughtering and disturbing the prisoners. If it cannot be prevented by

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<sup>155</sup> Anthony Allaire, *The Diary of Anthony Allaire*, (New York: Arno Press, 1968), Entry for Saturday Oct. 14, 1780, 32. Quoted in Piecuch, *Three Peoples, One King*, 199

<sup>156</sup> For an account of the Battle of King’s Mountain see: David Dameron, *King’s Mountain: The Defeat of the Loyalists, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1780*, (Cambridge, MA: De Capo Press, 2003); Jim Piecuch, *Three Peoples, One King*, 198-202.

<sup>157</sup> Ferguson circular letter was reprinted in *The Norwich Packet*, Dec. 12, 1780. For a discussion of the Scotch-Irish culture of the Appalachian Mountains, see Hackett-Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, Part 4, especially 765-771, which describes the “*Lex Talionis*” of the Scotch-Irish.

<sup>158</sup> Piecuch, *Three Peoples, One King*, 200.

moderate measures, such effectual punishments shall be executed upon delinquents as will put a stop to it.”<sup>159</sup> Yet few patriot officers shared Campbell’s concerns. The British protests at the executions and abuses were equally ineffective. “The hanging of Poor old Col. Mills,” wrote Lord Charles Cornwallis to Continental General William Smallwood, “who was always a fair and open enemy to your Cause, was an act of the most Savage Barbarity.” Mills was neither a spy nor a bandit, but a military commander with a British commission. “From the Character which I have heard of you, Sir,” continued Cornwallis, “I cannot suppose that you can approve of these most cruel Murders: but I hope you will see the necessity of interposing your Authority to stop this bloody Scene; which must oblige me in justice to the suffering Loyalists, to retaliate on the unfortunate persons now in my power.”<sup>160</sup> Continental authorities thought little of Cornwallis’ protests or his threat. There was no investigation of the complaints nor was there any attempt to discipline the troops. The patriot generals were confident that the British had no right to complain of harsh treatment when they had committed so many outrages themselves.<sup>161</sup> Any act committed against the loyalists seemed perfectly justified.

Perhaps the most infamous example of patriot severity towards captured loyalists occurred at the Newgate jail in northern Connecticut. Called the “Black Hole of Connecticut”, a nineteenth century historian recorded that this converted copper mine was employed specifically for “the purpose of retaliation.”<sup>162</sup> Newgate was a dreaded and well-known spectre to the loyalists: Ambrose Serle mused about its horrors in his journal; it appeared regularly in loyal newspapers; and the Hartford committee used it as a threat to compel Major French to behave. Yet, despite its infamy, Newgate never housed a large number of prisoners, nor were any elite loyalists held in its depths. Rather it harboured dishonoured members of the rank and file whom Washington described as “atrocious villains.” Nonetheless, the patriot leadership were fully aware of how effective

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<sup>159</sup> General Orders, Colonel William Campbell, Oct. 11, 1780. King’s Mountain Papers, Draper Manuscripts.

<sup>160</sup> Cornwallis to Smallwood, 10 November 1780 King’s Mountain Papers, Draper Manuscripts. Series DD. Reel 83. DB Weldon Library, University of Western Ontario.

<sup>161</sup> Piecuch, *Three Peoples, One King*, 201.

<sup>162</sup> Phelps, *A History of Newgate*, 76.

the threat of imprisonment in a mineshaft could be against patrician or plebeian loyalists alike. The Newgate prisoners were comprised of marauders, counterfeiters, deserters, and those caught in arms with Native warriors. After the failed invasion of Canada in the winter of 1775-76, General Philip Schuyler's command in northern New York was "daily tormented by parties of *Indians* from all quarters" and he believed "some Tories" were inciting them. He swore that if he captured any of these offenders he would "provide them with a lodging in *Simsbury* mines."<sup>163</sup> The mines were also used as a form of punishment in lieu of the death penalty for Continental soldiers in the early phases of the conflict. Several army deserters from Massachusetts, who allegedly fled with the intention of joining the British, were flogged and sentenced to six months to two years in the prison.<sup>164</sup> Loyalists were well aware of the jail and its terrible reputation both from rumour and from published reports. *The Royal Gazette* printed the narrative of two loyalist privateers who escaped from Newgate in 1781. They described their descent through a trap door "which they called hell" seventy feet below ground, where the prisoners were kept in a communal room ventilated by an "auger hole." The men remained captive for twenty days until they and the rest of the prisoners overpowered their guards and escaped.<sup>165</sup> The loyalist press celebrated such escapes, but news of mistreatment served to both demoralize loyalists and enflame their vengeful passions.<sup>166</sup>

Though the Simsbury mines were often used to threaten gentlemen captives, few if any high-status loyalist prisoners were held captive there. Revolutionary authorities were pleased to send deserters, counterfeiters, and pirates down the mine shaft, but were obviously reticent to do the same to loyalist officers and gentlemen. This was perhaps due to the fear of reprisal, but such concerns did not prevent executions and close

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<sup>163</sup> Philip Schuyler to John Hancock, February 10, 1776. Force, *American Archive, Fourth Series*, 990. Original emphasis.

<sup>164</sup> A General Court Martial Held at Roxbury (Massachusetts) December, 4, 1775. Force, *American Archive, Fourth Series*, 177-178.

<sup>165</sup> *The Royal Gazette*, June 9, 1781. The men report that a total of 18 prisoners escaped on May 18, 1781. *The Connecticut Journal*, May 31, 1781, reported that 16 prisoners had been recaptured. Robert Calhoun, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1973), 311.

<sup>166</sup> *The Royal Gazette*, January 20, 1781, published the names of seven loyalists who escaped from the jail in Philadelphia and made it through to New York despite "a reward of Two Thousand Dollars...[which] proved ineffectual."

confinement in other situations. Newgate is often invoked as a prime example of rebel cruelty, yet it might also reveal the patriots' abiding respect for individual rank and gentility. The sources are silent on this question, but either no loyalist gentlemen were thought deserving of imprisonment in the mines, (which is unlikely), or there may have been some unspoken, immutable quality to a gentlemen which the loyalists' former peers could not bring themselves to entirely disregard. To seal a gentleman in "the bowels of the earth" was a fate far worse than death, even for a parricidal Tory, and the patriots may have feared that such an act would bring as much dishonour to the captor as the captive.

Honour, manhood, and gentility were cultural virtues shared by British, patriot, and loyalist gentlemen alike, yet the tangled legal and moral issues of rebellion and treason confused matters, and complicated any easy importation of European standards of prisoner treatment to North America. Initially the British refused to consider patriots lawful combatants or treat their officers as gentlemen. Yet as the conflict intensified and both sides took prisoners, practical necessity required the British and Continental armies to come to terms with one another. Even while the British refused to invoke the King's honour in prisoner exchanges, the limited cartels established between the armies essentially functioned in the same manner as the more formal arrangements that existed between warring states in Europe. As Charles Metzger, Caroline Cox, and Judith Van Buskirk have shown, despite the difficulties of the early phases of the conflict and the recurring outrages that threatened to sink the war into unrestrained chaos, by 1777 captured patriot and British officers in uniform could expect to be treated with basic standards of gentlemanly honour and dignity.

The historiography has not paid the same attention to the experience of loyalist prisoners, yet this aspect of the Revolutionary War provides some valuable insights into both eighteenth century culture and the personalized nature of the American Revolution. Unlike British or Continental officers or officials, elite loyalist captives were not automatically extended the honours of war, but faced a number of possible fates. Some twentieth century historians attempted to classify loyalist prisoners into different legal or perceived moral categories to explain the variety of treatment, but these theories have too many exceptions and inconsistencies to be useful. Rather, this chapter has shown that the

key determinant for the treatment of loyalist gentlemen prisoners, whether they were civilian or military, was the patriot evaluation of their captives' personal honour. The loyalists as a group were dishonoured, and carried the weight and stain of the insults and infamy of a generalized dishonour, yet that shared opprobrium could be mitigated, or exacerbated, in the face-to-face realities of captivity. The cultural forces of personal honour or dishonour were so strong that they could override political animosities and indulge captured loyalists in spite of potential security risks, or punish loyalists without concerns for potential retaliation.

Patriot jailors and committees stood in judgement of captured loyalists' honour and their evaluations determined what sort of treatment the prisoner would receive. From genteel parole, to house arrest, to confinement in a loathsome cell, or even execution, the nature of loyalist captivity depended on a combination of the individual loyalist's alleged crimes, his pre-war reputation, the intercession of his friends, his displays of manners and respect, and the cultural sensibilities of his captors. As in the case of Governor William Franklin, this could turn into a contest for moral superiority. Because Franklin was unwilling to recognize the honour and legitimacy of his captors, he violated his parole and was imprisoned like a common criminal. To the patriots, he had revealed his true corruption and dishonour by breaking his word, and was therefore undeserving of the privileges accorded to true gentlemen. The power of gentlemanly privilege and right to respect among patriots was reinforced by its denial to dishonoured loyalists. From Franklin's perspective, his captors were rebel criminals and were therefore unworthy of a gentleman's word. There was no dishonour in breaking promises made under duress to villains.

Other loyalists, like Cadwallader Colden II, who refused to take an oath of allegiance to the Congress, received very generous treatment. Yet, Thomas Gilpin Jr. died while under armed guard hundreds of miles from his home for the same crime. David Mathews, a man alleged to have plotted the kidnap of George Washington, was eventually lodged as a guest in a genteel home, while a uniformed loyalist officer was hanged on the field as traitor. Patriot treatment of elite, male loyalist prisoners may on first glance seem to be so particularized and *ad hoc* to defy any systematic explanation. Because the loyalist political position had been so thoroughly dishonoured in the patriot

press and made illegal by the individual states, loyalists could not expect to be treated with the honours of war like their British and patriot counterparts. Instead, their treatment depended on individual reputations and personal notions of honour. For loyalist gentlemen, captivity was an experience which could determine their political life or death. Some suspected loyalists, like Israel Williams or the Philadelphia Quakers, bore their captivity and eventually rejoined their communities with the support of their friends and family. Others, like David Mathews, only ensured the permanence of their political death by rejecting the patriots' right to respect. Patriots justified their mistreatment of loyalists on the grounds of retaliation against the Tories' betrayal of their country or, as in the case of Henry Hamilton, of their race. So while the loyalist cause was dishonoured in a general way, evaluations of individual honour or dishonour ultimately determined the treatment of elite loyalist prisoners. As will be explored in the next chapter, it was precisely the personalized nature of their mistreatment that encouraged Crown supporters, led by William Franklin and other aggrieved gentlemen, to seek satisfaction and the restoration of their honour through vengeance.

## 5. Vengeance

In July 1779, a group of loyalist refugees in British-occupied Newport, Rhode Island, inserted a notice in New York's *Royal Gazette*. It described "The imprisonment and captivity of our persons – the forcibly separating us from our families and tenderest [sic] connections – The destruction of our possessions, and the confiscating of our estates." After outlining the crimes suffered by loyal subjects, the refugees came to their main point: that this "long train of evils" had "laid a foundation for the most justifiable revenge". To achieve their goal, the association was taking up arms "as the ultimate and only possible means of procuring happiness for ourselves or for America." "The sword is drawn", declared the loyalists, "we will never resign our claims but with our latest breath." Pure revenge was considered savage and unchristian, so the association assured readers that their vengeance would be "devoid of passion and resentment, and free from every unworthy or vindictive motive..."<sup>1</sup> Led by the Harvard educated loyalist Edward Winslow, this band of loyalists gathered a small fleet of sloops and schooners, and began preying on coastal communities, plundering and burning rebel farms and warehouses, and all with the consent of British commanders. George Leonard, captain of the Tory flagship *Restoration*, enticed loyalist recruits with promises of "profit and honour".<sup>2</sup> These predatory raids would restore pride and manhood by aiding the British, chastising the rebels, and providing the impoverished loyalists with the wealth needed to restore their status and independence as gentlemen. For the loyalists of *Restoration* and scores of other similar ships, they would reclaim their honour through vengeance.

Yet, in the end, the loyalists failed to achieve their longed-for revenge. Rather than restore their place in American society, the actions of armed loyalists provided the Whig press with endless propaganda material. By the conclusion of the war, the loyalists had gained the reputation as the worst of America's enemies. In 1783, "Civis," an anonymous contributor to the *Boston Evening-Post*, wrote that the greatest share of blame

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<sup>1</sup> *The Royal Gazette*, July 14, 1779.

<sup>2</sup> "The Frigate Restoration" Handbill (New York: Rivington, 1779). Early American Imprints, 49318.

for the destructive war belonged to the “the malignant tories, who were among ourselves.” It was the Tories, argued “Civis” who provided the bad council to the King and encouraged the British to punish the colonies. “How obstinate, how spiteful, how murderous, have these domestic incendiaries been!” The Tories burned “single homes, churches, publick buildings, and even whole villages...” and committed “innumerable murders.”<sup>3</sup> While the loyalists prepared for their final evacuation from New York, a handbill circulated through the streets railing against their “delusive prospects of conquest, plunder, and revenge.”<sup>4</sup> Other publications mocked the defanged Tories as they departed. An article in the *Boston Gazette* lampooned the loyalists’ impotent thirst for vengeance by presenting the minutes of a fictitious meeting between nineteen of New York’s well-known Tories. There were banal suggestions to “crop”, “club” or “enslave” the patriots, along with more personalized and creative forms of retributions that reflected loyalists’ particular sins. New York Mayor David Mathews, who had been implicated in the notorious Hickey Plot, planned “to poison and murder them.” “Joseph Allecock” wanted “to Negrofy them”; a loyalist named Reylander sought “to make Indians of them”; the merchants Watson and McAdams were eager “to vendue [sell] them.”<sup>5</sup> These inventive acts of fictional vengeance contain all the notions the patriot press held about the loyalists by the end of the war. They were cowardly assassins; they were savage murderers; and they were greedy, unscrupulous merchants willing to sell their souls for money. Perhaps worst of all to the patriots, the loyalists were willing to transgress racial barriers and employ Native Americans and African American slaves against their white countrymen. A postscript explained that Reylander’s chosen revenge was a reference to his “being of Indian breed”. Patriots explained that the political choices of some loyalists, and their desire for vengeance, were products of racial corruption.<sup>6</sup>

Whereas the indignation that fuelled patriot retaliation against the loyalists was characterized by Washington as the “Fury of a justly-enraged People”, the rage which

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<sup>3</sup> *Boston Evening-Post*, April 26, 1783.

<sup>4</sup> “To all Adherents to the British Government...” (New York: Morton & Horner, August 15, 1783).

<sup>5</sup> *The Boston Gazette*, May 5, 1783.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*



animated the loyalists was described as something feral and twisted.<sup>7</sup> Patriots regarded their loyalist adversaries differently from their other enemies. While the British and Hessians were considered ruthless and cruel, and the Native warriors on the frontier were as terrifying as they had always been to settlers, the loyalists were a new breed of enemy. They were hidden in plain sight among friends and neighbours, often indistinguishable from patriots. To the revolutionaries, the loyalists were betrayers, apostates, collaborators, and traitors. As David Ramsay explained in 1789, loyalists “were considered by the whig Americans as being cowards, who not only wanted [i.e. lacked] spirit to defend their constitutional rights, but who unnaturally co-operated with strangers in fixing the chains of foreign domination on themselves and on their countrymen.”<sup>8</sup> The politically dead loyalists were the unnatural corruptions of Americans. If the patriots were honourable, manly heroes in battle, the loyalists were dishonourable, unmanly assassins. The patriots fought for a glorious cause, while the loyalists fought for plunder and for revenge.

This chapter explores the differing perspectives on the honour and morality of revenge in the conflict between loyalists and patriots, and provides a cultural explanation for how the patriots so successfully discredited the loyalists’ attempts at armed resistance. Loyalist and patriot combatants brought their cultural ideas with them onto the battlefield, therefore understanding their mentalities can bring us closer to an appreciation of why these historical actors behaved as they did. The gentlemen loyalists examined in this dissertation were caught between two competing notions of honour: genteel and primal. Eighteenth century genteel culture held a dim view of vengeance and regarded it as a savage, unchristian, and unmanly passion, yet responding to insults and abuse was also considered essential to maintaining honour and manhood. This tension between what Bertram Wyatt-Brown called “primal honour” and “genteel honour” can be seen throughout the loyalist experience. Primal honour was the ancient set of principles predicated on strength, martial glory, and what Frank Henderson Stewart terms “reflexive

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<sup>7</sup> George Washington to Thomas Gage, August 20, 1775. George Washington Papers, Library of Congress. “To all Adherents to the British Government...” (New York: Morton & Horner, August 15, 1783).

<sup>8</sup> David Ramsay, *The History of the American Revolution* Vol. 2 (Philadelphia: R. Aitken & Son, 1789), 240.

honor” which demanded that a man respond to insults or trespasses to himself or his family.<sup>9</sup> As shown in chapter two, these ancient precepts were in tension with both Christian teachings and the culture of politeness and gentility. While some loyalist thinkers like the Anglican Reverends Samuel Seabury and Charles Inglis preached against the dangers of unrestrained vengeance, others saw armed retaliation as the only way to restore the loyalists’ manhood and their rightful place in the colonies. Approximately 19 000 colonists served in organized loyalist units, while an estimated 10 000 loyalists engaged in raiding parties, privateering and other armed activities only loosely under British command.<sup>10</sup> This chapter argues that while thousands of loyalists took up arms to restore both the British Empire and their personal honour in America, the Whig press was able to use loyalist actions in their continued campaign to dishonour and unman the Tories. The resoundingly successful propaganda image of vengeful Tory monsters persisted throughout the Revolution and for generations after. Tories were presented as villains who burned old women in their homes, led Native warriors to attack settlers, and provoked slaves to turn on their masters. Once proud and haughty, the Tory had become a bandit and a pirate, lured by plunder and revenge to ravage the coasts and pillage peaceful farms. Even uniformed loyalists were depicted as little better than marauders, and as men who, in spite of their fine polished uniforms, rejected the civilized ways of war in favour of brutal vengeance. The British redcoats, Hessian regulars, and the Native American warriors were all accused of cruelty and atrocities, but it was the American Tories who were considered the most morally reprehensible. They were politically dead and dishonoured Americans, transformed by their savage and unjust passions for revenge into the antithesis of the patriot and the honourable man. Regardless of whether or not they were truly guilty of the crimes charged against them in the patriot newspapers, the loyalists’ attempts to regain their honour through arms left them even more deeply dishonoured in the eyes of their fellow Americans.

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<sup>9</sup> Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 34. Frank Henderson Stewart, *Honor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 64-71.

<sup>10</sup> Paul Smith, *Loyalist and Redcoats: A Study in British Revolutionary Policy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), 60-61. Smith initially claimed there were 15 000, but revised his figure to 19 000 in Paul H. Smith, “The American Loyalists: Notes on their Organization and Strength,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 25, No. 2 (Apr., 1968): 267.

This chapter begins by exploring the vengeful loyalist trope in American history and literature, before turning to an examination of eighteenth century discussions of vengeance and the loyalists' own debate over how best to respond to the insults and abuses they had suffered. As will be shown, attitudes had hardened by 1778 and refugees like the associated loyalists described in the opening vignette called openly for revenge. The chapter will then examine how notions of vengeance influenced the actual fighting between loyalists and patriots, and the cycle of violence, reprisals, and massacres which ensued in the Neutral Ground in New York, in the heated civil war of the Southern theatre, in the coastal waters, and on the frontier. Both sides believed their vengeance was justified and both blamed the other for initiating a deadly cycle of attacks on people and property. Yet, because of the preponderance of the patriot media, the specific events explored in this chapter led to a devastating and lasting public relations defeat for the loyalists. Already politically dead, formerly respected gentlemen now became pirates, savages, murderers, and bandits. Despite their attempts to counter patriot claims of loyalist brutality, gentlemen like James DeLancey, John Butler, William Franklin, and indeed the loyalists in general, became intensely despised enemies of the American Revolution.

Nineteenth century American novelists did not waste a great deal of ink dealing with American loyalists. A few writers like James Fenimore Cooper and Catherine Sedgwick crafted nuanced, human portraits of loyalists, but others chose to present Tories as the one-dimensional archenemies of American liberty.<sup>11</sup> John Pendleton Kennedy's *Horse-Shoe Robinson: A Tale of the Tory Ascendency* (1835) provides perhaps the broadest fictional treatment of the loyalists in South, showing how the conflict split families and set fathers and children against one another. Though there are stern, conservative, yet good-natured old Tories and their beautiful daughters, most loyalists are depicted as mercenary cutthroats "always dodging about in gangs" involved in "house-

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<sup>11</sup> James Fenimore Cooper, *The Spy: A Tale of Neutral Ground* (New York: Charles Wiley, 1824); Lionel Lincoln, *Or the Leaguer of Boston* (London: Richard Bentley, 1832); Catherine Sedgwick, *The Linwoods; Or Sixty Years Since in America* (London: Edward Churton, 1835).

burning and thieving”.<sup>12</sup> Lawrence Labree’s *Rebels and Tories, Or, The Blood of the Mohawk* (1851) recounts that “our worst foes were not the English, nor their savage allies...” but rather it was the “tories [who] were equally cruel and bloodthirsty, and often added to their other atrocities, the most unpardonable treachery.” The main antagonist, a fictional loyalist named Nahum Leffers, betrayed his people and had a mind “incapable of the conception of liberal feeling.” Through a combination of revenge and lucre, Leffers engaged in a “class of duties [i.e. pillage and murder] that the honest and high-minded soldier would shrink from.”<sup>13</sup> Harold Frederic’s *In the Valley* (1891) shares similar ideas, and describes “the wanton baseness and beast-like bloodthirstiness [of]...native-born Tories...” “Beside them”, the narrator continues, “the lowest painted heathen in their train was a Christian, the most ignorant Hessian peasant was a nobleman.” Frederic’s portrait of Walter Butler of Butler’s Rangers depicts a former gentleman whose passions were “inflamed...by dissipation and by the evil spell which seemed to hang over everything in the [Mohawk] Valley, into a sinister and sombre rage at the Whigs, difficult to distinguish from madness.”<sup>14</sup> These home-grown enemies are a sort of patriot in negative, displaying cruelty and rage instead of heroism and righteous indignation. This image of the transformed and maddened loyalist continued into the literature of the twentieth century. Walter Butler appears again in Walter D. Edmunds’ *Drums Along the Mohawk*, (1936), and is described as having a “whittled attorney’s face” marked “with a passion of contempt.”<sup>15</sup> Butler, the vengeful country gentleman, is altered by his experiences which had “given him a bitter power” and made him drive against both reason and nature to attempt the impossible task of besieging the fort at Cherry Valley. Rather than take the military objective, Butler’s monomania causes the deaths of

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<sup>12</sup> John Pendleton Kennedy, *Horse-Shoe Robinson: A Tale of the Tory Ascendancy* (London: Richard Bentley, 1835), Vol. 1, 228.

<sup>13</sup> Lawrence Labree, *Rebels and Tories; Or, The Blood of the Mohawks! A Tale of the American Revolution* (New York: Dewitt & Davenport, 1851), 32.

<sup>14</sup> Harold Frederic, *In the Valley* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1890) 328, 207.

<sup>15</sup> Walter D. Edmunds, *Drums Along the Mohawk* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 247.

innocents as his Native warriors massacre women and children outside the fort's walls.<sup>16</sup> These works of historical fiction published over the span of more than a century reveal a persistent image of the vengeful Tory, and are perhaps an indication of the persistent fear of a disguised enemy lurking in American society.

Fictional Tories in American literature bear striking resemblance to the loyalists in early American histories. Historical descriptions of two of the most infamous loyalist partisans, Thomas Brown and David Fanning, are particularly revealing examples of the belief in the transforming power of Tory vengeance. The "black legend" of Lt. Colonel Thomas Brown of the East Florida Rangers began almost immediately after the conclusion of the War of Independence. Because of his intractable loyalism, Brown was transformed from an English gentleman, newly arrived in the colonies, into a physically and morally disfigured enemy to liberty. Later historians record that a patriot force confronted Brown at his home and after a violent altercation, beat the young planter unconscious, tied him to a tree, scalped and tarred him, and set his legs on fire.<sup>17</sup> Early historians of the American Revolution omitted this violent origin story, blaming Brown's zeal for the Tory cause and his thirst for vengeance on his defective character. David Ramsay's 1785 history of South Carolina in the Revolution depicts Brown as a principle villain of the Southern theatre and describes how he tormented civilians, hanged "beardless youth," and handed his prisoners off to be tortured by his Indian allies. Hugh McCall, writing in 1811, presented a similar picture of cruelty. To McCall, Brown's "feelings had long been banished from his remorseless bosom, and their place inhabited by a fiend of darkness." Like the evil spell which possessed a fictional Walter Butler in Frederic's novel, Brown's vengeance was imbued with a supernatural quality. Nineteenth century American novelists and historians were unable to find a rational cause for Tories

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 424-428. In one of the first film depictions of murderous loyalists, the antagonist in the cinematic version of Edmunds' novel is a one-dimensional, fiendish Tory, who launches his hordes of Native allies against the stalwart frontiersmen. *Drums Along the Mohawk* (1939) Dir. John Ford. Twentieth Century Fox. For a more in depth look at the depiction of loyalists and the British as villains in American cinema, see Nancy L. Rhoden, "Patriots, Villains, and the Quest for Liberty: How American Film has Depicted the American Revolution," *Canadian Review of American Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (2007):205-238, specifically, 214-220.

<sup>17</sup> Edward Cashin, *The King's Ranger: Thomas Brown and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier* (Athens GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1989), 28.

like Brown who “gloated in revenge.”<sup>18</sup> Just like witches, the internal enemy of the seventeenth century, the loyalists of the American Revolution were seemingly imbued with an evil that could only have come from the devil.

Colonel David Fanning received equally harsh treatment from historians. Though by no means a gentleman, Fanning is a repugnant Tory insurgent in the annals of American history. From “obscure parentage”, Fanning was described by a nineteenth century historian as an orphan, runaway, and wanderer who lived at times with the Catawbas or was fostered by compassionate settlers. He suffered from “the scald head” and “was so offensive that he never ate at the table with the family or slept in a bed.” Both his experience with Native Americans and his exclusion from civil society helped the nineteenth century writer Thomas Wynn explain that Fanning’s support for the loyalist cause derived not from his allegiance to the King, but from his desire for personal revenge, unchecked by a civilized soul. At the beginning of the Revolution Fanning was a Whig supporter, but after being robbed by supposed patriots he “availed himself of every opportunity to wreak his vengeance on his former friends.” From the British perspective Fanning was an effective partisan fighter, who even captured the Governor of North Carolina and hundreds of other important prisoners, but to his patriot contemporaries he was guilty of “rapine, and cruelty.”<sup>19</sup> Indeed, there is no other loyalist with such a loathsome reputation as Fanning. As late as 1988, Don Higginbotham described him as both physically and morally “grotesque”, who in addition to his skin disease “reeked of an unusually strong body odor, [and] had a penchant for teenage girls”. Perhaps some of these allegations were true, for even in exile Fanning was reviled

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 219. Gary D. Olson, “Dr. David Ramsay and Lt. Colonel Thomas Brown: Patriot Historian and Loyalist Critic” *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 77, No. 4 (Oct., 1976):257-267. David Ramsay, *The History of the Revolution of South Carolina, Vol. II*, 237, 240-241. Hugh McCall, *The History of Georgia: Containing Brief Sketches of the Most Remarkable Events* (Atlanta: A.B. Caldwell, 1909 [Originally published 1811]), 523.

<sup>19</sup> Thomas H. Wynn, ed., *The Narrative of Colonel David Fanning* (New York: Sabin’s Reprints, 1865), x, xv. For a British and loyalist perspective see Lindley S. Butler, “David Fanning’s Militia: A Roving Partisan Community,” in Robert Calhoon et al, *Loyalists and Community in North America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 147-157.

by his fellow loyalists, and was banished from New Brunswick for a rape conviction in 1801.<sup>20</sup>

Few loyalists had such odious reputations as Fanning and Brown, but men like William Franklin, Colonel John Butler (Walter Butler's father), and Joseph Brant garnered reputations for ruthlessness and treachery, and these attributes were applied to the loyalists as a group in American histories. Even the normally sympathetic Lorenzo Sabine described the "horrid warfare" of men like "that incarnate devil John Butler" and other "predatory bands" which "speak of Tory guilt, and of the horrors of civil war, in tones, which will ring in the ears of men for centuries to come."<sup>21</sup> Ernest Cruickshank, a Canadian historian, admitted that Butler and his men "were hard, fierce, and revengeful men, but it should be remembered that they lived in stormy times, in a hard, fierce, and revengeful world."<sup>22</sup> Interestingly, Cruickshank does not absolve Butler of his dark reputation, but merely suggests that he was a product of his time, and was no worse than his patriot enemies.

Despite some Canadian works defending the loyalists, Sabine's predictions of lasting infamy proved correct. The early twentieth century historian Claude Halstead Van Tyne, while trying to be even-handed, admitted he could "understand why a Tory was 'a devil in human shape' in the eyes of the patriots." Van Tyne argued that the loyalists engaged in "acts of war which especially aroused the hatred of the patriots." While the British and those involved in "great campaigns...were regarded as honorable enemies...the men who harassed and worried the country by petty attacks came to be hated in the most virulent way." "Tory aggression" and the "horror of massacre" left an indelible mark on the land, he wrote, and was "fearfully suggestive of the work they

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<sup>20</sup> Don Higginbotham, "Reflections on the War of Independence, Modern Guerilla Warfare, and the War in Vietnam," in *War and Society in Revolutionary America: The Wider Dimensions of Conflict* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 168. David Fanning to Jonathan Odell, February 9, 1801. Reel 2, New Brunswick Museum Archives Collection, MIC-Loyalist FC LSC . N4M8A7L6I, UNBLC. In this letter Fanning complains that he was convicted not based on any evidence but on the antipathy of the judge and jury towards him. Also see: Carole Troxler, "'To git out of a Troublesome neighborhood': David Fanning in New Brunswick," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. 56, No. 4 (Oct. 1979): 343-365.

<sup>21</sup> Lorenzo Sabine, *The American Loyalists* (Boston: Thurston, Torry, and Co., 1847), 21-22.

<sup>22</sup> Ernest Cruickshank, *The Story of Butler's Rangers and the Settlement of Niagara* (Welland, ON: Tribune Printing House, 1893), 4.

might have done” had more loyalists not left “their fate to the success of British arms.”<sup>23</sup> That some loyalists were ruthless antagonists while most others were sidelined cowards is a recurring theme in the historiography, but it was obvious to Van Tyne that revenge motivated the more violent loyalists. This idea was shared by Sydney George Fisher in *The Struggle for American Independence* (1908). Fisher condemns the Tory elite, who, motivated by revenge, “called for the most relentless severity, slaughter, hanging, exile, and confiscation,” and had they been victorious, America would have faced “the severity that had been inflicted upon Ireland – no mercy to men, women, or children.” Fisher justified his counterfactual by citing similar calls from “literary men of England” for “the extermination of the Boer republics.”<sup>24</sup> Such muddled comparisons did little to shed light on the Revolutionary War, but show the continued image in the American histories of perfidious Albion and her ruthless Tory allies.

With more immediate examples of insurgencies and asymmetrical wars in the latter-half of the twentieth century, historians began to see the armed loyalists in more nuanced shades. William H. Nelson dismissed the idea of the savage Tory outlaw, as he did the genteel loyalist, as a product of “folk tales of nineteenth century America” and argued instead for the importance of pre-existing ethnic and religious tensions to explain the ferocity of the internecine conflict.<sup>25</sup> Robert Calhoun also distances himself from the antiquated tropes of Tory villains and regarded the loyalists as “the most immediate victims of the war” who took up arms from a variety of overlapping motivations. The ranks of armed loyalists represented everyone from localized “agrarian radicals” who fought against patriot landlords, to those who took up arms to preserve their vision of law and order, and, indeed, to those loyalists who sought to “unleash terrible vengeance on the rebels”. The guerilla wars of the twentieth century showed Calhoun that partisan conflict “involves terror inflicted by informal bands of insurgents” and neither loyalists

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<sup>23</sup> Claude Halstead Van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1902), 166-167, 173-174.

<sup>24</sup> Sydney George Fisher, *The Struggle for American Independence* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1908), 143.

<sup>25</sup> William H. Nelson, *The American Tory* (Ann Arbor, MI: Northeastern University Press [Imprint], 1992), 85.



nor patriots could be singled-out as more or less ruthless when both were caught up in the violence.<sup>26</sup> Charles Royster followed the same line of thinking when he characterized the Southern theatre of the conflict as a “vendetta war” between loyalists and Whigs, with cycles of outrages and reprisals, fueled by pre-existing “family and local hostilities”.<sup>27</sup> Likewise, John Shy could admit that “there was little difference between Loyalists and rebels in terms of organization, tactics, or the use of terror.” Even so, in the same work Shy writes that loyalist militia units “regarded retribution as their principle function” and later referred to loyalists as “bitter, angry people bent on vengeance”.<sup>28</sup> It seems that even while attempting to explain the deeper complexities of a civil war, some historians still presented the loyalists’ goals and motivations as localized, near-criminal expressions of revenge as opposed to the strategic objectives of their patriot adversaries. This argument persisted in the twenty first century, as Harry M. Ward’s examination of the “banditti” in the American Revolution describes them as being composed of loyalists who were, again, motivated primarily by “revenge and greed”.<sup>29</sup>

There is another recurring portrait of loyalists in the historiography which is more indolent and indecisive than violent. As shown in chapter three, charges of cowardice and unmanly weakness were commonly hurled at loyalists, and this stereotype lingers in the historiography as well. In his study of British military policy in the American Revolution, Paul H. Smith notes that when Crown forces finally began to see the logic of arming loyalists in late 1777, they were underwhelmed by the number of volunteers they received. Smith suggests that part of the reason for such a disappointing turnout was that many loyalists had already become disillusioned by the failure of British forces to protect

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<sup>26</sup> Robert Calhoun, *The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays* (Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina Press, 1989), 147-148, 154; Calhoun, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1965), 504.

<sup>27</sup> Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1976), 277.

<sup>28</sup> John Shy, *A People Numerous and Armed: Reflections on the Military Struggle for American Independence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 213, 206; John Shy, “American Society and Its War for Independence” in Don Higginbotham, ed., *Reconsiderations on the Revolutionary War: Selected Essays* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978), 81.

<sup>29</sup> Harry M. Ward, *Between the Lines: Banditti of the American Revolution* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), x.

loyal subjects. Perhaps more importantly, Smith argues that the “typical American Loyalist” was “conservative, cautious, abhorring violence” and was therefore “disinclined to commit himself boldly”. Rather, he was content to leave the fighting to the British army.<sup>30</sup> Wallace Brown also sees “timidity and equivocation” as particular loyalist traits. He points out that in the early years of the conflict, Crown spokesmen advised loyal subjects to remain passive and take no part in the struggle, but later British officials bemoaned the lack of loyalist spirit.<sup>31</sup> As will be shown later in this chapter, the loyalists saw things quite differently and blamed the British commanders’ idleness and poor decisions for letting victory slip away. Nonetheless, the seemingly paradoxical extremes of Tory ruthlessness and languor are found throughout the historiography of the loyalists and they represent two different kinds of loyalist trope: what Nelson calls the “Tory gentlefolk” and the “fearful outlaws”.<sup>32</sup> This suggests a class-based dichotomy where the low-born were considered the naturally violent loyalists, whereas the elite were more cowardly until transformed by their quest for vengeance. More recently, Jim Picuch noticed that this simultaneous description of loyalists as both unreliable and dangerously violent mirrors the traits ascribed to Native warriors in contemporary sources, though he argues that neither group deserves this infamy.<sup>33</sup> Native American men were thought to possess a set of qualities which stood in stark juxtaposition to colonial American men. They did not work the land or meet their enemies openly; they were thought unable to control their passions, disdained Christian civilization, and could be swept up in animalistic and indiscriminate waves of deadly fury.<sup>34</sup> As will be shown in

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<sup>30</sup> Paul H. Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats: A Study in Revolutionary Policy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), 58-59.

<sup>31</sup> Wallace Brown, *The Good Americans: The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1969), 64-65.

<sup>32</sup> Nelson, *The American Tory*, 85.

<sup>33</sup> Jim Picuch, *Three Peoples, One King: Loyalists, Indians, and Slaves in the Revolutionary South, 1775-1782* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), 7.

<sup>34</sup> Ann M. Little, *Abraham in Arms: War and Gender in Colonial New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), *passim*. Little’s work is the most comprehensive examination of manhood ideals in New England throughout the colonial period. For the Pennsylvanian frontier, see Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbours: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008). Silver’s idea of the “anti-Indian sublime” to characterize the deadly rhetoric used to engender hatred toward the Native Americans is also a clear window into colonial and Revolutionary American attitudes.

this chapter, the revolutionaries presented an image of frontier loyalists who resembled their Native allies in appearance and behaviour. To patriots, these loyalists represented a corruption of the white heroic patriot ideal. The similarity in the depiction of loyalists and Native warriors is another reminder of the way in which masculine ideals and opposites were used to discredit the loyalists and all the patriots' enemies.

The historiography of the American loyalists shows a shift away from the Tory villains of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to an appreciation of the complexities of an ugly civil war exacerbated by competing ethnic groups and long-standing grievances. It seems clear that neither side can be charged with being more or less violent, yet the idea that loyalists were the more vengeful party remains a consistent element in their historical treatment. Yet loyalists, especially gentlemen, were conflicted about the honour and morality of revenge. While thousands chose to take up arms, many prominent loyalists felt it was more prudent to allow the Crown to restore order. Other loyalist gentlemen embraced the cause of armed loyalism which they regarded as honourable, mainly resistance against oppression. The preponderant Whig press managed to recast the loyalists' efforts into savage and criminal Tory vengeance. As Thomas Paine scathingly wrote in 1776, though a Tory "may be cruel, never can [he] be brave."<sup>35</sup> As this chapter will show, patriots constructed an image of loyalists so degenerated by their own greed and thirst for revenge that they were transformed into the very antithesis of an honourable man.

Revenge is a constant in human affairs and appears in literature from Homer, to the Bible, to modern cinema. Psychologists have puzzled over the thought processes and impulses that direct humans to avenge perceived wrongs while anthropologists, sociologists, and ethnographers work to understand the implications and manifestations of this seemingly innate drive within cultures and societies. Wolfgang Schivelbusch argues that the "instinct for revenge is as elementary as thirst or sexual desire" and yet is "also part of a larger behavior complex of exchange" which can be seen in the same vein

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Also see, Colin Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 293.

<sup>35</sup> Thomas Paine, *The Crisis*, I (Norwich: Trumbull, 1776): 5.

as gift giving or compliments, but is expressed in a darker “spiral of exchange.”<sup>36</sup> Regulated by ideas of honour, religious cosmology, laws, and customs, vengeance can take many forms and can be carried out by individuals, tribes, families, nations, and empires. Depending on the circumstances, revenge may be considered a right or a crime.<sup>37</sup> Vengeance, when placed in its cultural context, can provide an explanatory framework for individual murders and genocide alike.<sup>38</sup> Societies often design ways to deal with aggression and revenge in order to prevent the endless cycles of vendetta and blood vengeance that plagued pre-modern communities and continue to beset the substrata of modern societies.<sup>39</sup> In Arab cultures, the idea of “blood money” was a way that the perpetrator of a crime could satisfy and atone for his transgression to the victims or their families.<sup>40</sup> In seventeenth and eighteenth century Western Europe, the upper classes engaged in duels. Duels were not acts of vengeance, but were rather thought, ideally, to restore a sense of balance and settle accounts. In industrial or post-industrial societies, citizens have turned over most rights to violent revenge or retaliation to the state.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Wolfgang Schivelbusch, Trans. Jefferson Chase. *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2001), 23.

<sup>37</sup> An exhaustive list of the multi-disciplinary exploration of revenge would be prohibitively long. A short list of recent work can provide a basis for understanding how the subject has developed. Arlene M. Stillwell, Roy F. Baumeister et al. “We’re All Victims Here: Toward a Psychology of Revenge” *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, Vol. 30, No.3 (Sept. 2008):253-263; Robert J. Stainton, “Revenge” *Crítica: Revista Hispanoamericana de Filosofía*, Vol. 38, No. 112 (Apr., 2006):3-20; Oded Lowenheim and Gadi Heimann, “Revenge in International Politics” *Security Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 4 (2008):685-724; Roger V. Gould, “Revenge as Sanction and Solidarity Display: An Analysis of Vendettas in Nineteenth-Century Corsica” *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 65, No. 5 (Oct., 2000): 682-704.

<sup>38</sup> Alexander Laban Hinton, “A Head for an Eye: Revenge in the Cambodian Genocide” *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Aug., 1998): 352-377

<sup>39</sup> Napoleon A. Chagnon, “Life Histories, Blood Revenge, and Warfare in a Tribal Population” *Science*, New Series, Vol. 239, No. 4843 (Feb. 26, 1988): 985-992. Ruth Horowitz and Gary Schwartz, “Honor, Normative Ambiguity and Gang Violence” *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (Apr., 1974):238-251.

<sup>40</sup> Henderson Stewart, *Honor*, 85, 92.

<sup>41</sup> Leo Zaibert, “Punishment and Revenge” *Law and Philosophy*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Jan., 2006):81-118. Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat*, 25.

In the eighteenth century English Atlantic there was no accepted structure for taking revenge as there was in other cultures. Inter-family vendettas or long-standing feuds certainly existed, but a combination of litigation and moral condemnation prevented the sort of open, trans-generational conflicts seen in some Mediterranean cultures.<sup>42</sup> Even though revenge and “primal honor” are inseparably linked and seem inconsistent with Christian principles and the culture of civility, men and women found ways to reconcile these two divergent ethical systems.<sup>43</sup> Indeed some eighteenth century thinkers saw vengeance as arising not from the savage impulse of wrath, but from masculine traits like pride. This did not mean that prideful vengeance was excusable, but was less blameable, perhaps, than its bloodthirsty cousin. Describing the cut and thrust world of insult and response he witnessed, Dr. Samuel Johnson noted that many men “who could have conquered their anger are unable to combat pride”. Social pressures caused aggrieved men to “pursue offences to the extremity of vengeance, lest they should be insulted by the triumph of an enemy.” Bernard Mandeville would likely have agreed, claiming in 1714 that while “Religion commands you to leave all Revenge to God, Honour bids you trust your Revenge to no body but your self...” Christianity, he asserted, was “built on Humility, and Honour Pride.”<sup>44</sup> These men are describing what Frank Henderson Stewart terms “reflexive honor.” Reflexive honour is, in many ways, an aspect of rivalry between equals, a phenomenon of horizontal honour where men were compelled to defend their claim-right of honour. In the context of eighteenth century elite society, insults and injuries had to be addressed, (as they do in all honour groups, but

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<sup>42</sup> Trevor Dean, “Marriage and Mutilation: Vendetta in Late Medieval Italy”, *Past & Present*, No. 157 (Nov., 1997):3-36. Edward Muir, *Mad Blood Rising: Vendetta and Factions in Friuli During the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993). The exception was in the Scots-Irish borderlands and the backcountry of the Southern states and colonies See David Hackett Fischer, *Albion’s Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 663, 668, 756, 767.

<sup>43</sup> Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 34. The “eye for an eye” passage from Exodus 21: 24-25 is often used as a sort of justification for revenge, yet the New Testament is unequivocal in its condemnation of pursuing violent retribution. See Romans, 12: 17-21; Matthew 5: 38-39 (which directly refutes Exodus, and commands the righteous to “resist not evil: but whoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.”), and Matthew 26: 52-54 (“all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.”); 1 Peter 2:23, 3:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:15, among others.

<sup>44</sup> Samuel Johnson, *The Rambler*, Vol. 4, (London: T. Longman et al., 1793), 135. Originally Printed as No. 185, December 24, 1751. Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees* (London: J. Tonson, 1732), 245. Also discussed, in Alexander Welch, *What is Honor?*, 91.

with different conventions), in order to assert one's right to respect and maintain one's place in the hierarchy.<sup>45</sup> Yet, as discussed in chapters 2 and 3 ("Honour and Dishonour" and "Insult") loyalist gentlemen were so completely dishonoured in their societies through the rejection of their right to respect and the denial of their role as householders and landowners, that there was no way to satisfy their honour in any conventional sense. Such a condition would cause despair and rage which, in eighteenth century thought, might unhinge a man from his reason and rationality.

Rage, vengeance, and lust were thought to be connected and savage passions. In the genteel culture of the eighteenth century, anger was an emotion that needed to be stifled and suppressed. True gentlemen did not to lose their temper, regardless of the situation. Men of standing felt "resentment" at a slight or insult which was, in the words of Nicole Eustace, "a quintessentially masculine form of anger both because of its association with reason...and because of its link to honor." Blind rage was thought to express the "animalistic, the criminal, the insane."<sup>46</sup> "The Instructor" who wrote to *The Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1754, argued that "Anger and Revenge, when once enter'd, are very powerful: And the rational Man must exert his whole Force of Reason in Combat with them or be overthrown."<sup>47</sup> "The Speech of Logan" which appeared in newspapers throughout the colonies in 1775 after Dunmore's War against the Shawnee, is indicative of these eighteenth century beliefs. Logan, "a Shawanese Chief" cries out at the harm done to his people and how this "called on me for revenge." "I have fought it" declared Logan, "I have killed many – I have fully glutted my vengeance."<sup>48</sup> Revenge is clearly viewed as a savage hunger, yet some thinkers believed it was not without its uses. While declaring that revenge "must be condemned in a Christian Country," Dr. John Perkins of

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<sup>45</sup> Henderson Stewart, *Honor*, 64-71.

<sup>46</sup> Nicole Eustace, *Passion is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 159-160.

<sup>47</sup> *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 26 1754.

<sup>48</sup> *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, February 2, 1775. This same article appeared in at least nine other newspapers. For details on Logan and his speech see: James H. O'Donnell, III, "Logan's Oration: A Case Study in Ethnographic Authentication" *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, Vol. 65 (1979):150-6. Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011 [1991]), 358-359.

New England reminded his readers that “[r]evenge seems to be the Rod of Justice in the Hands of savage Nature to keep the People in Awe and afford the Subject some little Degree of Security.”<sup>49</sup> In a state of nature, without laws or government, people were only prevented from harming one another out of fear of revenge. Most thinkers would agree, however, that this primal threat of reprisal was unnecessary and unwelcome in civilized society.

The drive for revenge and the rage that fuelled it were emotions that had the potential to transform a decent gentleman into a ferocious beast. This idea can be seen in the eighteenth century’s literary inheritance. Shakespeare’s plays are filled with tragic scenes of brutal revenge that turn ostensibly moral people into their own antithesis. Hamlet’s quest for vengeance spirals into madness; Coriolanus, the great Roman general, joins his former enemies to wage war on his own city. The list of Elizabethan and Jacobean revenge plays is long, and each one contains a warning of the transformative effect of such a destructive craving.<sup>50</sup> Although it was a topic considered by essayists and moralists of the day, the genteel literary world of the eighteenth century did not focus on exploring vengeance. One notable exception is Edward Young’s drama *The Revenge* (1721) wherein an enslaved Moor exacts a terrible vengeance on his Spanish master. Again this presents revenge as a savage impulse, where the vengeance-seeker is neither European nor Christian.<sup>51</sup> In the generation after the Revolution, revenge became a popular subject among the Romantic authors as they explored the human passions. Lord Byron’s Venetian aristocrat, Alp, in *The Siege of Corinth* (1816) is a “fiery convert” to revenge, “a renegade” who forsakes his countrymen and joins the Ottoman Turks to destroy his own people who slighted him. Magua, in Fenimore’s *The Last of Mohicans* (1826), is a perfect example of savage vengeance taking aim at the innocent and young. A later work, *Wacousta* (1832) by the Canadian author John Richardson follows the same

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<sup>49</sup> John Perkins, “Thoughts on Agency; wherein, the article of motive...” (New Haven, CT: B. Mecom, 1765), 32

<sup>50</sup> Harold Skulsky, “Revenge, Honor, and Conscience in ‘Hamlet’” *PMLA*, Vol. 85, No. 1 (Jan., 1970):78-87. Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy* (1582-89?); John Marston, *Antonio’s Revenge* (1599-1600); and Thomas Middleton, *The Revenger’s Tragedy* (1606) are just three examples which share many of the themes of protagonists undone and killed by their quest for vengeance.

<sup>51</sup> Edward Young, *The Revenge: A Tragedy* (London: R. Butters, cir.1780). Originally published in 1721.

theme and tells the tale of an English aristocrat so consumed with his lust for revenge that he is actually transformed into a terrifying Native warrior.<sup>52</sup> In eighteenth and early nineteenth century literature, revenge was something ancient and primal, something animalistic and savage. It was practiced by the low-born thug or the foreign-born alien, and was deeply unchristian. This body of literature written in England, the United States, and Upper Canada, agreed that revenge brought no honour to a Christian gentleman, but rather transformed him into his bestial opposite.

These literary ideas and contradictions were reflected in the advice given to refugees in the loyalist press and from the pulpit. In a sermon entitled *A Discourse on Brotherly Love* (1777), the Anglican clergyman and loyalist chaplain Samuel Seabury condemned the idea of revenge, and compared it to “the impetuosity of mighty waters [which] will drive us headlong down its furious current; bearing away all the little remains of principle, overwhelming the feeble restraints of reason.” Though the loyalists had been badly used by their enemies, pursuing revenge would leave the loyalists “unsatisfied with any thing but the destruction of its object.” He advised his listeners and readers to reject the “inordinancy,” the “lust,” “the bitterness of malice and revenge” and follow “gentle, benign and humane propensities...[to promote] peace, unity, and concord among the brotherhood of men...”<sup>53</sup> Charles Inglis, a fellow clergyman of the Church of England, echoed these statements, admitting that although his flock had suffered dreadful persecution and loss at the hands of their enemies, he did not want to “kindle Resentment,” or “widen a Breach,” “but to recommend Earnestness, Fortitude and Perseverance.” “For they were not Enemies” he explained, “who occasioned those direful Scenes. They were Brethren and Fellow Subjects.” The restoration of a just peace, not revenge was the object of war, and healing, not vengeance, was every Christian’s duty.<sup>54</sup> These men of the cloth were adhering to the Pauline instructions of Romans 12:19 to

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<sup>52</sup> Carl Lefevre, “Lord Byron’s Fiery Convert of Revenge” *Studies in Philology*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (July, 1952):468-487; Gordon George Byron, *The Siege of Corinth: A Poem* (London: T. Davidson, 1816); James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans: A Narrative of 1757* (London: John Miller, 1826); John Richardson, *Wacousta; or the Prophecy: A Tale of the Canadas* (London: T. Cadell, Strand and W. Blackwood, 1832).

<sup>53</sup> Samuel Seabury, *A Discourse on Brotherly Love* (New York: Hugh Gaine, 1777), 13, 9, 12.

<sup>54</sup> Charles Inglis, *The Christian Soldier’s Duty* (New York: Hugh Gaine, 1777), 2, 21.



“avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, Saith the Lord,” but not every loyalist preacher agreed with this idea.

While a prisoner in the dreaded copper mines of Newgate, Simeon Baxter, a “Licentiate in Divinity” of the Church of England, wrote a sermon justifying murderous revenge against the Continental Congress. Quoting from the Book of Judges, Baxter used the story of Samson’s revenge on the Philistines to instruct his readers and listeners on the necessity of the “law of retaliation” which was a “law of nature”. When asked why he slew the Philistines, Samson replied: “What they have done unto me, so have I done unto them.” According to Baxter, Samson, Moses, Samuel, and the other champions of Israel “never alleged the command of God for what they did, but defended themselves upon the plea of retaliation.” Therefore, Baxter contended, the loyalists were justified in taking revenge on Congress because “the doctrine of killing tyrants and their adherents is not murderous, but truly Christian...” The times called for drastic measures, yet the loyalists lacked heroes to carry out God’s will. There was “no Moses, no Ehud, no Samuel...with a patriotic dagger to do justice upon our tyrants.” This may have been a veiled slight against many of the loyalist elite who fled the scene of battle for the safety of England or New York, but the main reason, according to Baxter, was that men did not “truly understand the laws of God, nature, and civil society,” nor did they realize the extent of the societal collapse around them. When “social liberty ceases, and natural liberty revives...every man is a soldier, a Moses, a Samson, and may, without incurring the guilt of murder, kill those uncircumcised Philistines...” Not only did Baxter argue that revenge aligned with Christian principles, he also absolved his listeners and readers from the dishonour of acts that would be considered cowardly or criminal under normal circumstances “since we live in evil times.” Citing Plato, Baxter argued that “When tyrants cannot be expelled by the law, the citizens may use secret practices”, and the vengeful preacher took issue with men who were unwilling “to kill their oppressor with a dagger in the dark.” The cause of justice superseded all other concerns, including the idea that an honourable man should meet his enemies openly. “We have rights of civil society to restore; we have honour, virtue, and religion, to maintain,” he wrote, “let us therefore take the first prudent opportunity to revenge our wrongs.”<sup>55</sup> This was the transformation

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<sup>55</sup> Simeon Baxter, *Tyrannicide Proved Lawful...* (London: S.Bladon, 1782), 8, 25, 23, 12, 13, 23, 27.

from polite gentleman to avenger, and though it might be considered savage, Baxter felt the loyalists were not only fully justified, but had divine sanction as well.

The loyalist newspapers occasionally called for vengeance, but considering both the small number of loyal presses and the moral ambivalence of openly calling for revenge, there are only a few extant examples. As the conflict progressed, however, the calls for manly action and revenge appear to have increased. The works of Jonathan Odell, the loyalists' most prolific poet, exhibit this change in the loyalists' attitudes. His "Song for St. George's Day" published as a broadside in the spring of 1777, cheered on loyal Britons and extolled them to let "Vengeance arm your Hands!" "Seize and Destroy!" the poet cries. At this early stage in the conflict, with New York firmly in British hands and with Crown forces mustering for an invasion of rebel territory from Canada and from New York, his calls for vengeance appear to be mere rhetorical flourish. In the following lines, Odell is much more conciliatory and reminds his readers in the next stanza "Let Pity melt in British Eyes/Let Mercy still be shown." Repeated throughout the song are the lines "But let not Havoc reign!/ The Brave alone, in Triumph, know/ Soft Pity's tender Pain."<sup>56</sup> Odell distances himself from the idea of savage vengeance, but seemingly admits to the necessity of some measure of revenge to engender a martial spirit. Once again this shows the ambivalence of not only the loyalist elite's attitude towards vengeance, but the common understanding of the passion in the eighteenth century. As Simon Luttrell declared in the House of Commons in 1775, revenge was "unchristian...yet how rarely do we find the human soul possessed of a sublime heroism, without this alloy!"<sup>57</sup>

By 1779, however, Odell was less mollifying. By this point Burgoyne's army was defeated and captured, Philadelphia had been abandoned, and the French had entered the war, all while Parliament squabbled. The British war plan had also shifted from the North to the South, a move which left many loyalists in New York questioning the wisdom of

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<sup>56</sup> Jonathan Odell, "Song for St. George's Day" (New York, 1777).

<sup>57</sup> "The Speech of the Honourable Henry Temple Luttrell" *Norwich Packet*, June 1, 1775. There seems to be some confusion in the newspaper as to the proper name of the speaker. The Member of Parliament sitting for Stockbridge at the time was Simon Luttrell, whose son was Simon Temple Luttrell.

British commanders.<sup>58</sup> In “The Congratulation,” a new bitterness and anger is clear as Odell exults in rebel and French losses. Hoping that the loyalists might finally have their moment, Odell writes: “Myriads of swords are ready for the field/ Myriads of lurking daggers are conceal’d/ In injured bosoms, dark revenge is nurst [sic]/ Yet but a moment, and the storm shall burst.”<sup>59</sup> The call for restraint and pity from his previous writings is replaced by visions of a storm of warriors and assassins seeking swift justice. The loyalist frustration with the war can also be seen in a fanciful script for a “Prologue to the Tragedy of the Revenge” printed in *The Royal Pennsylvania Gazette* in March 1778, just prior to the British evacuation in June. After comparing the American rebellion to the regenerative giant Antous, whom Hercules repeatedly defeated but could not kill, the author describes the treacherous behaviour of the Continentals and their mistreatment of British prisoners. “Away with Grief,” cries the narrator, “Our God shall be REVENGE.”<sup>60</sup> What happens next in the play is not printed, but it is clear that the call for revenge was becoming more common.

Beginning in 1779, loyalist associations, irregular units, and privateers were openly publishing their intentions to seek vengeance against the rebels. In February a group “from the province of Massachusetts Bay, and other loyalists” responded to the “many injuries and indignities” and the punitive laws passed by the “the usurped government of that province” by formally declaring themselves the patriots’ “avowed enemies” who would “from this time, commence and carry on hostility against the rebels and their adherents...” The loyalists declared that they were “actuated by the eldest law of nature, [and] we apprehend ourselves fully justified by the laws of God and man, in making retaliations and reprisals.”<sup>61</sup> The Association of Loyal Refugees of Rhode Island circulated a broadside in March of the same year, listing very similar complaints against the rebels, and declaring they were “warranted by the Laws of God and Man, to wage war

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<sup>58</sup> Calhoun, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America*, 480-483.

<sup>59</sup> Jonathan Odell, “The Congratulation” in Winthrop Sargent, *The Loyal Verses of Joseph Stansbury and Doctor Jonathan Odell* (Albany: J. Munsell, 1860), 45-50. Also, *Royal Gazette*, November 6, 1779.

<sup>60</sup> *The Royal Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 20, 1778.

<sup>61</sup> *The Royal Gazette*, Feb. 13, 1778.

against their inhuman Persecutors; and to use every Means in their Power to obtain redress and Compensation for the indignities and Losses they have suffered.”<sup>62</sup> By 1779 the loyalists were freely publishing their desire for revenge, and they, like Simeon Baxter, believed this was natural, legal, and divinely ordained. Yet they also had to be conscious of preserving their own integrity in the eyes of the British and their fellow loyalists.

When loyalist gentlemen openly spoke of their desire for revenge they framed their sentiments in the language of justice and many refused to consider the prospect of peace without first punishing the rebels for their crimes. James Simpson, a prominent loyalist and former Attorney General of South Carolina, wrote to Sir Henry Clinton in May 1780 that the loyalists in his region were “resentful of their past Injuries, they are clamorous [sic] for retributive Justice, and affirm that the Province will never be settled in Pease [sic] until those People whose persecuting spirit hath caused such calamities to their fellow subjects shall receive the punishments their Iniquities deserve.”<sup>63</sup> It is quite likely that Simpson was expressing his own feelings in the report, and would have known that he was not alone in seeing just retribution as a necessary requirement for peace.

The desire for righteous vengeance is also present in the correspondence of gentlemen loyalists. A colleague of the beleaguered Joseph Galloway wrote that he would “suffer much in my property but will bear it cheerfully, provided the day of retribution is not passed.” Galloway agreed, writing that he wished “every rebell [would] receive his deserts.” John Blackburn, reflecting on the treatment Sir John Johnson’s family had met at the hands of the rebels, (see chapter 2), wrote knowingly that “It is my opinion...that he will have his Revenge upon...his enemies.” The young Henry Nase, who had almost been impressed into the Continental Army before escaping to join the King’s American Legion, described how his desire to settle scores had divine approbation. He wrote that he was “Looking forward to that hastening period when the Law of Retaliation shall take place & God in his way Shall see fit to Restore a sistim [sic]

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<sup>62</sup> Association of Loyal Refugees, “To Further in Some Degree...” March, 30, 1779 (Newport, R.I.).

<sup>63</sup> Alan S. Brown, “James Simpson’s Reports of the Carolina Loyalists, 1779-1780” *The Journal of Southern History*, Vo. 21, No. 4 (Nov. 1955): 519.

of happiness In this Distracted land.”<sup>64</sup> Nase’s personal yearning for revenge is seemingly couched in the Biblical idea of Judgement Day. In 1780, the Reverend Jacob Bailey wrote Rev. Samuel Peters, about his written attacks on the “fathers of rebellion.” “It is true private revenge without any view to redress and reform discovers [i.e. reveals] a faulty disposition,” he wrote, “but a proper resentment upon certain occasions may be attended with public utility.”<sup>65</sup> In the end, Bailey likely agreed with Nase that while vengeance should be left to God, a restrained expression of the primal urge might help restore justice to the land.

Even with these private and public expressions of “retributive justice,” it was unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman to advocate bloody retaliation. Especially in light of patriot accusations of Tory barbarity, which will be described later in this chapter, loyalist gentlemen sought to present themselves as sensible, humane individuals, who had been attacked by heartless rebels and mistreated for no reason but their steadfast loyalty. The New Jersey loyalist Lt. James Moody took pains to disclaim the bogey-man reputation he had garnered as a successful partisan leader.<sup>66</sup> In his narrative, Moody describes an oath that he supposedly required his men take before they embarked on their missions. Renouncing malicious vengeance, they swore to respect property, to protect fellow loyalists, and “in case of our taking any prisoners, I will endeavour to treat them as well as our situation will admit of.”<sup>67</sup> The Maryland loyalist Captain John Ferdinand Dalziel Smyth of the Queen’s Rangers recounted the cruelties he suffered at the hands of the rebels in his published narrative, but he avowed it “would be unworthy of the British

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<sup>64</sup> “The Diary of Henry Nase,” UNBLC. A convenient copy transcribed by Todd Braisted is available from the New Brunswick Museum, Archives Division. Quotation can be found on page 3.

<sup>65</sup> Charles Stewart to Joseph Galloway, Dec. 1, 1778 quoted in: Edward H. Tebbenhoff, “The Associated Loyalists: An Aspect of Militant Loyalism” *The New York Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 63 (April 1979): 118. Brown, *The Good Americans*, 254. John Blackburn to Christian Daniel Claus, July 30, 1776. Claus Family Papers, UNBLC. Thomas Brewer Vincent, “Keeping the Faith: The Poetic Development of Jacob Bailey, Loyalist” *Early American Literature*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Spring, 1979): 8.

<sup>66</sup> Susan Burgess Shentstone, *So Obstinate Loyalty: James Moody, 1755-1809* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2000), 308.

<sup>67</sup> James Moody, *Lieutenant James Moody’s Narrative of his Exertions and Sufferings* (London: Richardson and Urquhart, 1783), 44.

arms to retaliate cruelty, and it is far from my disposition to wish it.”<sup>68</sup> Yet retaliation had a powerful effect on eighteenth century men at arms. Even George Washington admitted that while the “Obligation arising from the Rights of Humanity, and claims of Rank are universally binding”, that obligation dissolved if enemy cruelty demanded retaliation.<sup>69</sup> In any war, this idea of justifiable revenge can quickly degenerate into a cycle of atrocities. As the Rev. Charles Inglis wrote in 1780, “Civil Wars are always more cruel and more barbarous than foreign Wars, and more destructive to Morals...” In a war between neighbours and kin, he wrote, “personal Revenge and Animosity mingle and kindle up the soul to tenfold rage.”<sup>70</sup>

This “personal revenge” was precisely what British commanders wanted to avoid and so they were wary of employing armed loyalists in the early stages of the war. As General Burgoyne explained to the House of Commons before he departed for America in 1775, his duty was to deliver the “correction of the state” not indulge in the “impetuous impulse of passion and revenge.” He did not anticipate a problem with achieving that goal since “there is a certain charm in the very wanderings and dreams of liberty that disarms an Englishman’s anger.”<sup>71</sup> Burgoyne’s tone of a “generous enemy” may have appealed to a British audience eager to restore peace and commerce, but this gentle spirit, while certainly *en vogue* among London’s elite, was not what many loyalists in America hoped for in their British commanders. By 1778, loyalists in and around New York City had split into two loose factions: one made up of moderates, who wanted to see a reconciliation, and the hardliners who wanted the British to engage in harsher measures to crush the revolution and punish the rebels.<sup>72</sup> These two attitudes again corresponded with the two general poles of thought on vengeance: one genteel and restrained; the other violent and active. The prominent loyalist Andrew Elliot of New

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<sup>68</sup> John Ferdinand Dalziel Smyth, *Narrative of Journal of Capt. John Ferdinand Dalziel Smith* (New York: Hugh Gaine, 1778), 1.

<sup>69</sup> George Washington to Thomas Gage, August 11, 1775. George Washington Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>70</sup> Charles Inglis, *The Duty of Honouring the King* (New York: Hugh Gaine, 1780), 23.

<sup>71</sup> *The Providence Gazette and Country Journal*, June 10, 1775.

<sup>72</sup> Ruma Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion: Loyalists in New York City during the Revolution* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 110-112.

York was well aware of the refugees' anger, and had deep misgivings about the potential bloodshed revenge could produce. He advised British commanders that "It will be dangerous to use Refugees but as the Commander in Chief directs and to him alone they should look up". In other words, it was essential that British officers always have control of the loyalists. If they were allowed to operate under their own commanders it "will produce disagreeable consequences in times when revenge and necessity go hand in hand and England aims at conciliating more than conquering."<sup>73</sup> Most British officers agreed with Elliot, but hardline loyalists chafed at the perceived timidity, indolence, and inaction of British commanders.

To many loyalists "revenge and necessity" truly were inseparable, and their resentment towards British commanders was a constant refrain throughout the conflict. In 1778 the loyalist James Parker described William and Richard Howe as the "fatal brothers" who, through their inaction, "brought many of the best [loyalists]...to destruction & death."<sup>74</sup> Joseph Stansbury, a prolific loyalist penman, turned his attention to attacking the lethargic response of General Henry Clinton to patriot forage expeditions in loyalist territory in 1779. "For revenge let the loyalists bellow" declares Stansbury's fictionalized General, "I swear I'll not do more/ To keep them in humour/ Than to play on my violoncello."<sup>75</sup> William Franklin held a similar view and wrote that "many of the Loyalists in America think they have Reason to complain not only of Sights and Inattentions, but of Ill-usage, from those who ought to have favoured and encouraged" the friends of lawful government. William Franklin became the leader of the hardline loyalist faction in New York, and along with Governor William Tryon and others, advocated violent and sustained attacks on rebel-held territory to force Congress to a negotiated settlement. Sir Henry Clinton, the British forces' overall commander from

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<sup>73</sup> Andrew Elliot to the Earl of Carlisle, February 1, 1779 quoted in Tebbenhoff, "The Associated Loyalists..."121-122. John Shy, "The Loyalist Problem in the Lower Hudson Valley: The British Perspective" in Robert A. East and Jacob Judd ed. *The Loyalist Americans: A Focus on Greater New York* (Tarrytown, NY: Sleepy Hollow Restorations, 1975), 9.

<sup>74</sup> James Parker quoted in Keith Mason, "The American Loyalist Problem of Identity in the Revolutionary Atlantic World" in Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan, *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 59.

<sup>75</sup> Joseph Stansbury, "A Pasquinade" Winthrop Sargent, *The Loyal Verses*, 67-68.

1778 to 1782, flatly refused to consider loyalist plans for intensifying the war, fearing that the loyalists' plans would lead to "a system of war horrid beyond conception."<sup>76</sup>

Despite Clinton's misgivings, the inconsistent British policy towards the loyalists provided plenty of opportunities for the refugees to seek revenge against their enemies.

British employment of armed loyalists was, according to Paul H. Smith, made up of "*ad hoc* responses to constantly changing conditions", but after Saratoga and especially after the French entered the conflict, the British realized they needed every man they could get.<sup>77</sup> By this point the hopeful, conciliatory attitude of British commanders had worn off and was replaced with a greater willingness to use the loyalists and engage in what British Major Patrick Ferguson described as a "degree of severity, which would not have been justifiable[sic] at the beginning..."<sup>78</sup> This shift in British policy corresponds with the already described change in loyalist rhetoric towards vengeance. Whether one caused the other, or they merely coincided is an open question, but the emergence of a force of armed loyalist hardliners had a significant impact on both the war effort and the loyalist portrayal in the patriot press.

From the patriot perspective, loyalist fighters were politically dead members of their respective states who could not honourably bear arms for another country. Therefore the Whig press interpreted every act of belligerent loyalism as criminal expressions of Tory vengeance whether the loyalists were in uniform or not. Loyalist fighters were considered spies, murderers, or bandits, not legitimate fighters. The patriot press never used the terms "Tory soldier" or "loyalist soldier" to describe them as they did the British regulars.<sup>79</sup> Put simply, loyalists did not fight with honour. They were regarded as either ineffective fighters who waited for British success to strike their helpless victims, or were half-savages who incited slaves and Native warriors and directed their fury against the innocent. These images of cowardly, dependent, greedy, and vengeful bandits in many

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<sup>76</sup> Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 109-110.

<sup>77</sup> Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats*, ix, 72-73.

<sup>78</sup> Shy, "The Loyalist Problem," 7.

<sup>79</sup> This is based on a search of all printed material contained in the Archive of Americana database, 1775-1783, as of April, 2014.



ways reflect the more widely held tropes in the English Atlantic of highwaymen, pirates, and other dishonourable sorts who, according to Erin Mackie, helped craft the parameters of what it meant to be a polite, honourable gentleman. The Tory, like the pirate, became the antithesis of the brave patriot and the honourable man.<sup>80</sup>

The civil war between loyalists and patriots produced some of the most infamous events of the Revolution. These helped forge the image of the vengeful Tory monster in the patriot imagination, while also providing the loyalists with tales of victory and successful revenge. In the southern theatre, in the Neutral Ground surrounding New York City, and on the western frontier, a vicious war of atrocity and revenge destroyed farms and homes, and killed thousands. Though very few loyalist gentlemen were actually involved in these conflicts, sensationalized reports from the front served to sculpt the patriot opinion of the loyalists in general. Refugee gentlemen were far more likely to join or financially invest in privateering expeditions which had the potential for violent revenge, but perhaps more importantly, could refill much depleted coffers and help restore independence and the approximation of an honourable and genteel lifestyle. The patriot reports of loyalists in arms which appeared in newspapers were clearly intended to show that the dishonoured Tories were not like the patriot soldiers. Loyalist fighters were seen as weak and dependent on the British for support or were exceptionally brutal and operated outside of the norms of civilized behaviour. The loyalist ranks were supposedly filled with the dregs of the earth, Scottish convicts and Jacobites, slaves and paupers, or ruthless Native warriors. These were the only creatures desperate or depraved enough to follow white loyalist officers, who were themselves depicted as loathsome corruptions of manhood.

In the first two years of the conflict the revolutionary press depicted loyalists as laughably weak, ineffective, and poorly led. Far from being a military threat, the loyalists who fled to the British in 1775 and 1776 were remarkable in the press for their insignificance. *The Connecticut Gazette* revelled in the fact that “the Refugee Tories are taken but little Notice of by either Party” while another publication described the loyalists

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<sup>80</sup> Erin Mackie, *Rakes, Highwaymen, and Pirates: The Making of the Modern Gentleman in the Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

“as sheep in the fold” who forced the British to “listen to their lamb-like bleatings...”<sup>81</sup> Similarly, the loyalists who flocked to New York City after its capture were equally derided and described as “poor Devils...wandering about the city like lost sheep...”<sup>82</sup> While this phrase contains a rare tinge of sympathy for the loyalists, it is more or less negated by equating the loyalists with sheep – blindly following, willingly corralled, and too impotent to change their circumstances.

The loyalists who managed to take up arms in the early stages of the conflict were similarly mocked by the rebel press. Patriot newspapers reported that the few armed loyalists in Boston were treated as night watchmen and did little honourable service. The *Pennsylvania Packet* jeeringly reported the formation of a Boston regiment of “ragamuffin Tories” led by “*four-eyed* Morgan, the fiddler”.<sup>83</sup> Other loyalist units were similarly ridiculed. A Worcester, Massachusetts force styling itself the “Loyal Fencible Americans” was dismissed as being comprised of “some *head tories*, a few negroes, and some Scotch Rebels and Convicts”. Reports of Virginia’s loyalist forces were described as “the poorest, miserable wretches” of the region and consisted of “black companies” led by “Scotch Tories”.<sup>84</sup> The recurring refrain that loyalists were all either of Scottish or African descent was a way for the Anglo-Protestant majority to malign the Tories as a mongrel or subhuman threat. The Scottish “rebels and convicts” reported in the newspapers invoked visions of furious, yet primitive Highlanders who fought to restore a hated Catholic king. In Virginia, the Scottish minority of Norfolk included a powerful merchant elite which held the Tidewater planters in their debt.<sup>85</sup> The repeated references to African American recruits in the loyalist ranks pointed to the lowly status of Crown

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<sup>81</sup> *Pennsylvania Ledger*, Nov. 11, 1775.

<sup>82</sup> *Essex Journal*, Jan. 23, 1777. For more on the ways loyalists were derided as unmanly cowards see chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>83</sup> *The Connecticut Gazette*, July 28, 1775; *Pennsylvania Mercury*, July 28, 1775; *Pennsylvania Packet*, Sept. 18, 1775.

<sup>84</sup> *The Connecticut Courant*, Oct. 2, 1775; *The Connecticut Journal*, Dec. 20, 1775.

<sup>85</sup> For the idea of Scottish savagery and the Jacobite Rebellion, see Geoffrey Gilbert Plank, *Rebellion and Savagery: The Jacobite Rising of 1745 and the British Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006). For the Scottish in Virginia see: Adele Hast, *Loyalism in Revolutionary Virginia: The Norfolk Area and Eastern Shore* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982), 11.

supporters, but more importantly, highlighted the terrifying prospect of servile insurrection. Virginia Governor Lord Dunmore's Proclamation of November 1775 promised freedom to the slaves of patriot masters if they fought for the British.<sup>86</sup> This new British policy earned the Scottish Lord the moniker "Negro Thief of Virginia." *The Pennsylvania Evening-Post* expressed horror at Dunmore's "cruel declaration" and within a week reported that roving bands of escaped slaves were taking revenge, with British blessing, on the families and property of white gentlemen. The home of Benjamin Wells, for example, was attacked by a group of escaped slaves who "pillaged every thing valuable, such as bedding, wearing apparel, liquors...and carried off two Negro girls."<sup>87</sup> Such scenes horrified white Americans, and as Woody Holton argues, Dunmore's willingness to employ escaped and supposedly vengeful slaves in Britain's cause pushed many moderate Virginians squarely into the rebel camp. That Dunmore organized the slaves into his "Ethiopian regiment" with uniforms emblazoned with the phrase "Liberty to Slaves" helped transform colonial resistance in Virginia into an open rebellion with the underpinnings of a race war.<sup>88</sup>

As threatening as the prospect of a British-directed slave uprising was, early patriot victories against the motley bands of Tories and their African American allies provided further evidence in patriot newspapers of the essential ineptitude of their domestic enemy and the prowess of their own fighting men. Printed reports from across the colonies described patriot units rounding up scattered Tories, disarming them, or forcing them to flee. Organized loyalist resistance suffered two widely publicized defeats at Great Bridge in Virginia on December 9, 1775, and at Moore's Creek Bridge in North Carolina on February 27, 1776. Both of these encounters involved ill-advised charges

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<sup>86</sup> For Dunmore's Proclamation and African American support for the British and loyalist cause see Simon Schama, *Rough Crossings: Britain, The Slaves, and the American Revolution* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2005), 75-76. Woody Holton, *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves and the Making of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 133-163. Holton, "Rebel Against Rebel: Enslaved Virginians and the Coming of the American Revolution," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 105, No. 2 (Spring, 1997): 157-192. Cassandra Pybus, *Epic Journeys of Freedom: Runaway Slaves of the American Revolution and their Global Quest for Liberty* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006), chapters 1-3.

<sup>87</sup> "Negro Thief" found in *The Constitutional Gazette*, January 20, 1776. *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, December 5 and 12, 1775.

<sup>88</sup> Holton, "Rebel against Rebel," Thesis summarized 189-192.

across bridges against entrenched patriots. Colonel William Woodford informed the Virginia Convention of the patriots' lopsided victory at Great Bridge, and provided details of the aftermath which included the fate of a captured Scottish-born loyalist. In disgust, Woodford "ordered him coupled to one of his brother black soldiers, with a pair of handcuffs", he wrote, "which is the resolution I have taken shall be the fate of all these cattle..."<sup>89</sup> This was a symbolic and degrading punishment for crossing racial barriers and inciting slaves, but the use of the term "cattle" was an insinuation that the loyalists gave themselves up like mindless beasts of burden and cannon fodder for the British. The *Pennsylvania Ledger* published similar details, and while "the worst of the tories" at Great Bridge were reportedly shackled to slaves, many of the loyalists were considered too weak to be threatening, and a patriot noted that the "most stupid kind we discharge."<sup>90</sup>

Patriot newspapers described the Scottish loyalists defeated at Moore's Creek Bridge in much the same way. The Highlanders revealed their dim-witted savagery by charging across the bridge in "the most furious manner" and were easily shot down by the patriots who "behaved with the spirit and intrepidity becoming freemen, contending for their dearest privileges."<sup>91</sup> A letter in *The Pennsylvania Evening Post* reported the Tory defeat in detail, counting the number of times the loyalist commander had been shot, and the cowardly escape attempts of hundreds of others. The writer singled out a man named Tom Rutherford, for instance, who "ran like a lusty fellow" but was captured nonetheless.<sup>92</sup> The loyalists at both Great Bridge and Moore's Creek Bridge were not

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<sup>89</sup> William Woodford to the Virginia Convention, Dec. 12, 1775 in Peter Force, ed. *American Archives: Fourth series, containing a documentary history of the English colonies in North America from the King's message to Parliament of March 7, 1774 to the Declaration of Independence of the United States*. (Washington: M. St. Claire and Peter Force, 1846), 245.

<sup>90</sup> *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, April 6, 1776; *Pennsylvania Packet*, March 24, 1776; *Pennsylvania Ledger*, Dec. 30, 1775. For an excellent description of the Battle of Great Bridge and the role of African Americans, see Simon Schama, *Rough Crossings*, 79-82.

<sup>91</sup> *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, March 23, 1776. For a description of the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge and the wider history of the Scottish settlers of North Carolina who took up arms for the King, see: Duane Meyer, *The Highland Scots of North Carolina, 1732-1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 159-161.

<sup>92</sup> *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, March 26, 1776.

complimented for their brave charges, but were depicted as doltish, disorganized, and cowardly. Next to the resourceful and skilled patriots, the loyalists looked dishonourable indeed. In the early years of the war, the patriots were wary of the potential menace posed by slaves, but were seemingly dismissive of loyalists' military threat. The Tories, patriots claimed, did not have the courage or competence to fight their own battles.

Throughout the war loyalists were often depicted as cruel toadies or scavengers, tagging along behind the British to plunder the wounded and weak. When protected by British arms, the loyalists were depicted as exceptionally cruel. The Marquis de Chastellux described the British Army as a "hurricane which destroyed every thing in its passage" but it "was followed by a scourge yet more terrible, a numerous rabble, under the title of *Refugees* and *Loyalists* [who] followed the army, not to assist in the field, but to partake of the plunder."<sup>93</sup> Ethan Allen recorded that during his captivity in New York City, the loyalists were the most sadistic of the guards. Secure in their position of power over the helpless revolutionaries, Allen recorded witnessing "the tories exulting over the dead bodies of their murdered countrymen."<sup>94</sup> Loyalists were also thought to be the evil behind New York Governor William Tryon's policy of "desolation warfare" and his devastating raids on the Connecticut coast in July 1779.<sup>95</sup> The raids on New Haven, Fairfield, and Norwalk, were mostly carried out by British regulars, but the loyalists were implicated nonetheless. The *Connecticut Courant* called Tryon "the Tories kind protector", and erroneously reported later in summer that the Governor was at the head of "three thousand Refugees and Tories". The prospect of an army of vengeful plunderers led by "a detestable salamander" sent by "the vice regent Satan" was a terrifying prospect for coastal communities.<sup>96</sup> A letter from Priscilla Lothrop Burr to her sister describes the carnage and terrorism inflicted on the town of Fairfield, and notes how even amid the

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<sup>93</sup> Marquis de Chastellux, *Travels in North America in the Years 1780, 1781, and 1782, Volume 2* (London: G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1787), 5-6.

<sup>94</sup> Ethan Allen, *A Narrative of Colonel Ethan Allen's Captivity* (Philadelphia: Bell, 1779), 29-30.

<sup>95</sup> *Pennsylvania Packet*, August 5, 1779. Paul David Nelson, *William Tryon and the Course of Empire: A Life in British Imperial Service* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 157.

<sup>96</sup> *The Connecticut Courant*, July 27, 1779; *Pennsylvania Packet*, August 7, 1779; *New Jersey Gazette*, August 18, 1779.

directed chaos of the British raids, the loyalists were the cruelest raiders of them all. In one instance, British soldiers burst into her sister's bedroom and "damned her" while they plundered the house of all the valuables they could find. In response, Governor Tryon personally wrote a protection for Mrs. Burr and her home. Nonetheless, when a group of loyalist militants arrived at her home, "they Damned her and tore [Tryon's protection] to pieces in her hand, and instantly set fire to the house & swore that if she offered to put it out they would Stab her to the heart..." Interestingly, Burr notes that "our Tories were treated with no more respect" by the loyalist raiders, who "abused old Mrs. Rowland very much, Draged her about by the hair of her head, tore her cloaths of[f], and swore they would kill her..." To Priscilla Burr, Tory vengeance was indiscriminate rage. Burr concludes her letter by describing the "heaps of naked Chimneys seemingly left for monuments to bewail the Loss of those Pleasent habbitations."<sup>97</sup> Though it was the British who descended upon Fairfield, according to Burr it was the Tories who carried out the most barbarous acts. Tryon's raiders burned over 180 structures with only a fraction of those being public buildings. Official reaction to the raids was sharp in America and Britain. The British commander-in-chief Sir Henry Clinton worried about gaining a reputation as a "buccaneer" and relieved Tryon of his command the following year.<sup>98</sup>

While the patriot press depicted Tories as little more than cruel outlaws, thousands of loyalist refugees enlisted in uniformed provincial regiments. For the rank and file, membership in loyalist units provided a steady income, and most received generous enlistment bounties and promises of land at the conclusion of the war. Yet loyalist units also faced considerable problems from what historian Paul H. Smith termed a "catalogue of inconsistencies." Loyalists in different regiments could have wildly different signing bonuses, causing resentment and confusion, and loyalist officers chafed at their junior status and lack of privileges compared with their British counterparts.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Priscilla Lothrop Burr, August 10 1779. American Revolution Papers, Box 1, Connecticut Historical Society.

<sup>98</sup> Nelson, *William Tryon*, 169-174. *The Independent Ledger*, Aug. 9, 1779, also picked up on the controversy among the British commanders, and printed a mocking poem in which even Henry Clinton refused to "own poor Tryon as a brother".

<sup>99</sup> Smith, *Loyalist and Redcoats*, 63-65.

British officers always doubted the quality of loyalist troops and their officers, and yet bemoaned the failure of more loyalists to enlist.<sup>100</sup> In 1778, after the serious reversal at Saratoga and the entrance of the French into the conflict, British commanders began to take the loyalist regiments more seriously and offer more generous terms for enlistments which included the same pensions and gratuity for wounded officers that the British received. By the end of the conflict this change in policy produced a number of respectable loyalist regiments with both loyalist and British officers, such as the Queen's Loyal Rangers under John Graves Simcoe and the British Legion under Banastre Tarleton, but there never seemed to be enough recruits.<sup>101</sup> These loyalist regiments brought pride to the refugees and there was never a lack of loyalist officers since former men of property routinely sought to regain their honour and status with military service. In fact there were so many loyalists who, in the words of George Leonard, came from "a rank in life superior to the class from which the common seaman and soldier is taken" that many were unable to find suitable appointments and instead turned to privateering.<sup>102</sup>

The loyalist press hailed provincial regiments as the agents of justice and retribution. In April 1778, the *Royal Pennsylvania Gazette* recorded with satisfaction that "the loyal refugees, who had formerly felt the effects of [the patriots'] lawless power...now rejoice to bring the culprits to justice." The article describes the Queen's Rangers heroically destroying a party of rebel marauders for which the grateful "inhabitants from all quarters flocked to them" to sell their goods to the loyalists at fair prices.<sup>103</sup> Likewise the *New York Gazette* reported that a combined loyalist force under John Graves Simcoe, Banastre Tarleton, and Oliver DeLancey surprised a force of rebels and "so briskly charged, that many of [the Continentals] forgot their Arms...and fled..." Adding a comical nod to rebel cowardliness and bumbling, the newspaper recorded that the patriot "Colonel...scamper[ed] off without his Breeches or Boots".<sup>104</sup> Such

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<sup>100</sup> Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 119. Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats*, 70-71.

<sup>101</sup> Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats*, 48-49.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 71-75.

<sup>103</sup> *The Royal Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 3, 1778.

<sup>104</sup> *New York Gazette*, Sept. 21, 1778.

propaganda pieces were intended to show that the loyalists could take revenge with honour, in an organized and directed fashion. As would be expected of any propaganda, victories reported in loyalist newspapers were depicted as massacres in the patriot press, and vice versa. Just as importantly, these brief descriptions of skirmishes actually represent a cycle of violence and retaliation that characterized loyalist and patriot conflict throughout the war.

This phenomenon of violence and retaliation can best be seen in one of the most infamous battles between patriots and loyalists. The Battle of Waxhaws, which took place in South Carolina on May 29, 1780, involved around 150 cavalry of the British Legion under Lt. Col. Tarleton and an infantry force of over four hundred Continental regulars under Colonel Abraham Buford. Caught in the open, Buford refused a command to surrender and Tarleton's force charged. At ten yards the Continentals fired a volley which killed several officers and dozens of horses, but the loyalists broke the patriot line. Banastre Tarleton recorded years later that his men then attacked the rebels with "a vindictive asperity not easily restrained" killing 112 and badly wounding another 150.<sup>105</sup> The loyalists lost only 5 men. Tarleton's brief account of the clash was printed in the loyalist *New York Gazette* which trumpeted his victory, declaring that he "had attacked and cut them to Pieces." According to Tarleton, this engagement, combined with the British victory at Camden, convinced the backcountry militias to join the royal forces.<sup>106</sup> In fact the effect was quite the opposite. When news of this incident spread it became a story of Tories butchering surrendered patriots. Because of the consistent propaganda image of vicious vengeful Tories, the story easily took root. Writing in 1785, David Ramsay noted how this "barbarous massacre gave a more sanguinary turn to the war." More impassioned than ever, patriots were fired by a "spirit of revenge [which] gave a keener edge to military resentments."<sup>107</sup> Even a loyalist historian writing after the war

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<sup>105</sup> Michael C. Scoggins, *The Day it Rained Militia: Huck's Defeat and the Revolution in the South Carolina Backcountry, May-July 1780* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2005), 44-46.

<sup>106</sup> *New-York Gazette*, June 19 1780.

<sup>107</sup> David Ramsay, *The History of the Revolution in South-Carolina, from a British Province to an independent state*. (Trenton, NJ: Isaac Collins, 1785);110. James Piecuch, "Massacre or Myth? Banastre Tarleton at the Waxhaws, May 29, 1780" *Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution*, Vol.1 No.2 (October, 2004): 4-19.



conceded that at the Battle of Waxhaws “the virtue of humanity was totally forgot.”<sup>108</sup> To the patriots, their righteous vengeance was fully justified because of the loyalists’ war crimes. The clearest example of the patriots’ revenge was at the Battle of King’s Mountain (described in chapter 4), where patriots fired on several white flags from the surrounded loyalists, and executed numerous prisoners. This was but one example of the revenge and reprisals of the civil war in the Southern theatre.<sup>109</sup> The Battle of Waxhaws was a shockingly lopsided loyalist victory but is a prime example of how the patriots managed to turn a resounding defeat into a public relations coup. In this case loyalist success was characterized as a dishonourable act of savage revenge and barbarity which served to justify further acts of retaliation. Overall, this loyalist victory severely damaged the British war effort and was fatal to many loyalists in the South. The “disagreeable consequences” of employing loyalist troops predicted by the New York loyalist Andrew Elliot had come to pass.

Some gentlemen loyalists deeply resented accusations that they revelled in personal vengeance while carrying out their duties, and attempted to clear their names. James DeLancey, a prominent member of the powerful DeLancey family of New York and leader of the Corps of Loyalist Westchester Refugees, or “DeLancey’s Cowboys” as they were more popularly known, chafed at the idea that he ordered or permitted his men to loot and pillage the “Neutral Ground” between British and revolutionary occupied New York. This area swarmed with foraging parties, guerilla fighters, and simple outlaws who ravaged the farms and houses of the region. Both the British and Continental armies employed private bands that specialized in raiding farms and stealing cattle from the enemy. Though this was hardly honourable, it was considered a tactical necessity which both wounded the enemy’s ability to wage war and supplied friendly troops.<sup>110</sup> DeLancey, however, complained to Guy Carleton in 1783 that his troops were unfairly blamed for these actions and that even some of his fellow loyalists “secretly endeavour to

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<sup>108</sup> J. Tracy Power, “‘The Virtue of Humanity was Totally Forgot’: Buford’s Massacre, May 29, 1780” *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Vol. 93, No.1 (Jan. 1992):9.

<sup>109</sup> Piecuch, *Three Peoples*, chapters 5 and 6 contain a thorough account of the cycle of violence in the South.

<sup>110</sup> Ward, *Between the Lines*, 17-32.

prejudice him” by blaming “every Irregularity committed...[on] the Refugees under his Command tho’ most of [the crimes] have originated from other People who have no Connection with that Corp.”<sup>111</sup> Accounts of DeLancey’s actions were spun in markedly different directions in loyalist and patriot newspapers. The loyalist *New York Gazette* reported that a “successful incursion” by “Col. De Lancey” and “his loyal Band of Refugees” had killed ten rebels and taken thirty seven prisoners along with “Trophies, consisting...of over one hundred Head of Cattle.” The loyal band unfortunately lost “a brave Office, Captain Fowler” who was shot from a nearby house which “occasioned a severe Retribution – The House was immediately consumed to Ashes.”<sup>112</sup> While this event was recorded as a clean victory in the loyalist press, the same event was described in the patriot *Connecticut Gazette* as a “descent” by the “enemy’s plunderers, commanded by Col. Delancey” who “did their King, not their country service, by burning two houses, in one of which was an old deaf woman who [sic] they let expire in the flames, and murdering five of the militia.”<sup>113</sup> Indeed, though later American historians labelled DeLancey and his men “worthless and criminal” and claimed that they were guilty of carrying out “terrible devastation and suffering”, interviews recorded with surviving witnesses in the early nineteenth century paint a different picture. DeLancey and his officers purportedly did their best to restrain their men, punish transgressions, and conduct their missions within acceptable limits of wartime behaviour.<sup>114</sup> Historian Catherine Crary judges that DeLancey’s Cowboys, acting under British orders to carry out forage missions and other raids of military necessity, did not deserve the reputation that history heaped upon them.<sup>115</sup>

Other loyalists in the Neutral Ground were not as concerned with their reputations and engaged openly in the cycle of revenge and localized conflicts of the Revolutionary

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<sup>111</sup> Catherine Crary, “Guerrilla Activities of James DeLancey’s Cowboys in Westchester County: Conventional Warfare of Self-Interested Freebooting?” in Robert A. East and Jacob Judd ed, *The Loyalist Americans*, 19-20

<sup>112</sup> *New-York Gazette*, May 29, 1780.

<sup>113</sup> *Connecticut Gazette*, June 9, 1780.

<sup>114</sup> Crary, “Guerrilla Activities of James DeLancey’s Cowboys,”20.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 16, 24.

War. Newspaper coverage of the capture and execution of the “Tory villain” Claudius Smith is a prime example of how these raiding expeditions led to intensely personal vendettas. Local legends and lore described the Smiths of Orange County, New York as a rough backwoods family who had always displayed a predilection for thievery. When fighting broke out in New York, Smith, along with several of his sons and neighbours, declared allegiance to the British and began their own private campaign against patriots in the region, stealing cattle and other goods and selling their plunder in British occupied New York.<sup>116</sup>

The Smith gang targeted the homes of prominent Whigs and according to a nineteenth century historian, Claudius Smith was “foremost in daring wickedness” and boldly promised to take the lives of several Continental officers in the region.<sup>117</sup> In October 1778, *The Pennsylvania Evening Post* reported that Smith and his men attacked the home of “Captain [Jesse] Woodhull...whom...they intended to murder” and robbed his family of “a silver tankard and spoons, a scarlet cloak, two horses, a saddle, a pair of pistols, and all the clothes belonging to a young man who lodged in the house.” Unable to find the captain, Smith allegedly locked “Mrs. Woodhull, her children and Negroes...in a room and leaving them there.” He then rode to the nearby home of the Major Nathaniel Strong, Woodhull’s cousin, and after a brief fire fight, Smith “called to [Strong] and told him to deliver up his arms, and he should have quarter...” After Strong agreed to the terms, Smith reportedly shot the surrendered patriot in the face and neck killing him instantly.<sup>118</sup> What prompted Smith to target and murder Strong is not discussed in the newspaper article. This act of cold-blooded murder, made all the worse because of the promise to spare Strong’s life, served as further proof of the dishonourable, half-crazed Tory archetype bent on blind vengeance so often repeated in the Whig press.

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<sup>116</sup> Ward, *Between the Lines*, 69-75

<sup>117</sup> Samuel W. Eager, *An Outline History of Orange County: Together with Local Tradition and Short Biographical Sketches of Early Settlers* (Newburgh, NY: S.T. Callahan, 1846-47), 550, 552.

<sup>118</sup> *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, October 26, 1778. Interestingly, the same section in the newspaper recounts how a Continental detachment captured twelve Hessians who refused to march and “were bayoneted on the spot.” This war crime was justified because “the enemy, with a stronger body, [was] in pursuit of our people.” The one murder committed by Smith is given far more coverage and consideration than 12 executed prisoners.

Reports of Smith's crimes and treachery made their way to the state's legislature. The New York Senate described Smith as the "great Terror of the Inhabitants" and offered a thousand dollar bounty for his capture and five hundred dollars each for his sons Richard and James, and other members of their group. A day after news of Strong's murder appeared in *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, the bounties were raised to twelve hundred and six hundred dollars respectively.<sup>119</sup> Bounty hunters tracked down Smith and captured him on Long Island in November and he was hanged at Goshen, New York.<sup>120</sup>

Claudius Smith's son Richard carried on the conflict, and evidently swore revenge for his father's execution. In 1779, patriot newspapers reported his attacks on revolutionary fighters "who had shewn some activity and resolution in apprehending these robbers and murderers, who infested the neighbourhood". In March he shot and killed John Clarke, a patriot militiaman who lived just long enough to identify his murderer.<sup>121</sup> *The Royal Gazette* printed the same report as the patriot papers, but included the contents of a note Smith pinned to John Clark's body, entitled "A Warning to the Rebels." "You are hereby warned at your peril to desist from hanging any more friends of government as you did Claudius Smith..." the note began, "we are determined to hang six for one, for the blood of the innocent cries aloud for vengeance." The threats are made all the more chilling when the author informs the rebels that many of the gang actually belong to "Col. Butler's army, Indians as well as white men...that are resolved to be revenged on you for your cruelty and murder." Smith placed the blame for all this violence and mayhem on the patriots who were the "beginners and aggressors" whose "cruel oppressions and bloody actions...drive us [loyalists] to it." "This is the first,"

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<sup>119</sup> "Votes and Proceedings of the Senate of the State of New-York, at their first session, held at Kingston, in Ulster County, commencing September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1777" (Kingston, NY: John Holt, 1779), 135, 142. Entries for October 23, 1778 and October 27, 1778. The Senate resolutions were taken up by the New York Assembly. See: *The votes and proceedings of the Assembly of the state of New-York, at their second session, begun and holden in the Assembly chamber, at Poughkeepsie, in Dutchess County, on Thursday, the first day of October, 1778.* (Poughkeepsie, NY: John Holt, 1778), 21, 23, 26, 30.

<sup>120</sup> *New-Jersey Gazette*, December 2, 1778. The actual date of Smith's execution is unclear, but it certainly took place before spring, 1779. Interestingly, in the same article that describes Smith's capture, the first news of the Cherry Valley Massacre is revealed. The combination of stories in the same article gives the impression of a beleaguered people being attacked by savage and criminal elements on all sides.

<sup>121</sup> *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, March 10, 1779; *Massachusetts Spy*, March 11, 1779; *Connecticut Gazette*, March 12, 1779.

concludes the note, “and we are determined to pursue it on your heads and leaders to the last, till the whole of you are murdered.”<sup>122</sup> For patriot readers this would have been added evidence of the terrifying lengths that Tories would go in their quest for vengeance, allying themselves with Native warriors and murdering innocent people. The loyalist newspaper obviously thought this was worth including and did not provide any editorial comment. Loyalists, as already shown, would have been divided on the justice of Smith’s actions, but for Smith and hardline Tories, the grizzly act of pinning a note to the victim was an attempt to restore a sense of primal, reflexive honour. Even primal revenge could not be random. The victim needed to understand who was carrying out the vengeance and why. With the breakdown of society in the Neutral Ground, this was an example of men who believed they were employing revenge as a “Rod of Justice” which, as Dr. John Perkins explained, was a way for “savage Nature to keep the People in Awe and afford the Subject some little Degree of Security.” The threats were intended to protect other loyalists, and affixing the note to a corpse provided terrifying proof of the refugees’ sincerity. What some loyalists might regard as a cruel necessity the patriots saw as savage criminality, and the cycle of violence continued. Indeed, this was not even a unique case.

A similar act of vengeance, which became one of the most notorious of the entire war, was carried out by members of the Associated Board of Loyalists. The Associated Loyalists were a force of several hundred refugees who pooled their resources and operated as privateers answerable to a board of directors led by William Franklin.<sup>123</sup> The main focus of the “Associators” was self-support through raids, but, just as the British commanders feared, the activities of the Associated Loyalists were often directed towards revenge. In early 1782, an Associated Loyalist named Philip White, a close friend of William Franklin, was killed by patriot forces. The loyalists claimed this was an extralegal execution, while the patriots reported he had been killed attempting to escape. Frustrated at the British forces’ refusal to act, and reeling from the surrender at Yorktown months earlier, Richard Lippincott, a loyalist Captain, sailed to patriot-held New Jersey

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<sup>122</sup> *Royal Gazette*, April 17, 1779. Crary, C. ed., *The Price of Loyalty: Tory Writings From the Revolutionary Era*, (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1973): 194-195.

<sup>123</sup> Tebbenhoff, “The Associated Loyalists,” 122-124.

with a rebel prisoner named Joshua Huddy, made a landing, and hanged him. Like Richard Smith, Lippincott affixed a note to the hanging corpse which declared that the loyalists would not “suffer without taking vengeance for the numerous cruelties” and “further determine to hang man for man as long as a refugee is left existing.” The note concluded with the terse yet chilling declaration: “Up goes HUDDY for PHILIP WHITE.”<sup>124</sup> When news of this reached General Clinton and the rest of the British command, they were furious, and ordered an investigation. Washington personally demanded Clinton turn over the loyalists responsible, or “a British Officer of equal Rank must atone for the Death of the unfortunate Huddy.”<sup>125</sup> The loyalists defended their actions as just retaliation and even self-defence against the atrocities committed against them. Lippincott was eventually cleared of the murder charge by a British court martial, but William Franklin, as head of the Associated Loyalists, was unofficially recognized as the architect of the whole affair and his character was tarnished. The debate over the honour and justice of this act of revenge caused an irreparable rift between the loyalists struggling to keep Britain in the fight, and Sir Guy Carleton who was anxious to defuse the situation with the Americans as he prepared to extricate Britain from her former colonies. To end the cycle of revenge, Carleton refused to consent to any further raids by the now notorious privateers. The Associated Loyalists, to the British commanders’ relief, disbanded out of frustration in August 1782.<sup>126</sup> The Marquis de Chastellux recorded his thoughts on the “shame and indignation” of the Huddy case, writing that the “English General” was “unable to enforce discipline in his own army” out of fear of “irritating Governor Franklin and his envenomed board of loyalists.”<sup>127</sup> Like the popular depiction of Britain’s Native allies, the vengeful loyalists had become savage and uncontrollable.

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<sup>124</sup> *The New Jersey Gazette*, April 24, 1782.

<sup>125</sup> George Washington to Continental Congress, April 20, 1782. Series 3a, Varick Transcripts. Letterbook 6, 221. George Washington Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>126</sup> Skemp, 256-266. Henry Clinton to William Franklin, April 20, 1782, Series 4, General Correspondence, Image 390. George Washington Papers, Library of Congress. Tebbenhoff, “The Associated Loyalists,” 143.

<sup>127</sup> Marquis de Chastellux, *Travels in North America*, Vol. 1, 337.

The Board of Associated Loyalists was the largest and most widely-known group of loyalist privateers, but thousands of other refugees engaged in the same practice. Formed in 1781, the Associated Loyalists cited two main goals of their group. The first was to provide some sort of “comfort to those now suffering under the iron [rod] of rebel oppression,” and the second, and perhaps more important reason, was to find “the means of procuring a comfortable support, instead of becoming a useless burthen to government.”<sup>128</sup> Thousands of other loyalists shared these sentiments and with so few government positions available, patrician and plebeian alike saw privateering as the only way to earn a living and restore their personal honour.

Privateering was fully within the accepted rules of warfare, and was not considered dishonourable. The patriots engaged enthusiastically in privateering, and private ships constituted the bulk of Continental naval power.<sup>129</sup> Yet as with any actions undertaken by armed loyalists, the patriot newspapers branded Tory privateers cutthroats and thieves. Baltimore’s *American Journal* described loyalist privateers as “piratical villains, called refugees” while another Whig publication despaired over the weakness of Continental sea power, wondering how a “small piratical fleet... a force which ought to be *despised*, [could] harass and perplex our Eastern seas.”<sup>130</sup> As a whole, loyalist privateers were numerous and effective. Taking revenge against the patriots was no doubt satisfying, but that was not the chief concern for the privateers’ financial backers who were watching their fortunes wither away. Money was needed to maintain an honourable, genteel lifestyle, and many loyalists found the only way to acquire funds was through predatory expeditions. Successful privateering benefitted the Crown, the war effort, individual loyalists, and hurt the rebels. As the loyalist captain George Leonard

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<sup>128</sup> *The Royal Gazette*, February 7, 1781.

<sup>129</sup> Richard D. Pougher, “‘Averse...to Remaining Idle Spectators’: the Emergence of Loyalist Privateering During the American Revolution, 1775-1778 Volume I. Introduction to Chapter 8” (PhD. Dissertation, University of Maine, 2002), 43-47. Pougher provides an overview of the wildly varied estimates of patriot privateers ranging from a few hundred to several thousand. It would be fair to say that there were “hundreds” and that they were an important factor in the Continental war effort. Also see: Robert H. Patton, *Patriot Pirates* (New York, Pantheon Books, 2008); William J. Morgan, “American Privateering in America’s War for Independence, 1775-1783,” *American Neptune*, 36, (1976): 79-87.

<sup>130</sup> *The American Journal and General Advertiser*, August 25, 1781. *The Independent Chronicle*, December 24, 1778.

advertised, privateering was “an undertaking where profit and honour are inseparably blended.”<sup>131</sup>

Refugees did not expect to become rich from privateering, merely to support themselves and their families with dignity. Loyalist enclaves like New York City were crowded with thousands of refugees and British soldiers. Everything from housing to firewood was in short supply and could be ruinously expensive. Adding to the hardships was Parliament’s Prohibitory Act which, until October 1778, barred all trade with the rebellious colonies, and this included New York and its loyalist merchants. The experience of one loyalist gentleman, Evert Bancker Jr., exhibits the strain that even the wealthy and well-connected endured. The head of one of the most prominent merchant families in the city and a former government contractor, Bancker lost much of his estate to the rebels, while British soldiers pilfered what he had left.<sup>132</sup> Because of “the disappointments and Treatment I have received” Bancker felt compelled to raise the rent for one of his genteel tenants to the astronomical sum of £250 a year. Bancker was sure, he wrote, that “I could obtain [the rent from someone else] by only mentioning the house was to be rented.”<sup>133</sup> His correspondence serves as testimony to stacks of unpaid bills, outstanding loans, and the inability of the Banckers to collect their debts. When Bancker pressed one debtor, Matthias Nicoll, for payment, Nicoll meekly replied that “from the dullness of business here, God knows where I shall get [the money.]”<sup>134</sup> When a member of his own family implored Bancker to help him out of his dire financial situation, the loyalist merchant was notably slow in complying.<sup>135</sup>

Once British authorities lifted the prohibitions against shipping from the city in October 1778, elite loyalists like Bancker began to fit out and bankroll privateering

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<sup>131</sup> Richard Pougher argues that the primary motivation of loyalist privateers was “public virtue.” Pougher, “Averse...to Remaining Idle,” 52. “The Frigate Restoration” Handbill (New York: Rivington, 1779). *Early American Imprints*, 49318.

<sup>132</sup> Petition of Evert Bancker Jr. Undated. Bancker Family Papers, NYPL. Bancker records in his petition that a house destroyed in the fire 1776 was worth £300.

<sup>133</sup> Evert Bancker to unnamed recipient, January 25, 1780. Bancker Family Papers, NYPL.

<sup>134</sup> Matthias Nicoll to Evert Bancker Jr. no date. Bancker Family Papers, NYPL.

<sup>135</sup> A. Bancker to Evert Bancker, May 9, 1783. Bancker Family Papers, NYPL.



vessels, while the rank and file risked their lives in the crew.<sup>136</sup> Investing in privateering ventures was open to anyone with money, including loyalist gentlewomen. Ann Bancker secured a “1 ½ share in the *Hammond*, Warren Leslie Nicol Commander”, while the fittingly named *The Fair American*, was advertised in the *Royal Gazette* as being bankrolled “by a number of the principle Loyal Ladies” of New York. It was, reported the newspaper, an example of how the “insolence and obstinacy” of the rebels served to “excite the indignation of the Fair Sex”.<sup>137</sup> Privateering could be lucrative but it also provided a way for genteel ladies to get a taste of revenge.

Loyalist men without money to invest could sign up for actual duty on board the ships. Some were lured by the potential prizes, but many volunteers were also dissatisfied and disappointed at the British failure to find a more active role for the loyalists in the armed forces. George Leonard, a prominent loyalist ship owner and captain, maintained that his fellow loyalists became privateers because they “were unwilling to enter as common seamen on board his Majesty’s ships or as soldiers in the army, as most of us were by birth and education, gentlemen.”<sup>138</sup> As previously noted, Leonard had already publicly announced his independent party of loyalists’ quest for vengeance. For such a man, privateering was an opportunity to make a living, retaliate against the patriots, and yet remain free from the humiliation of taking lowly positions in the British service.

There was an allure to privateering which could not be matched by other occupations, yet it was also a gamble. When a privateer arrived laden with prize goods, the wharfs overflowed with eager consumers, and the newly enriched crewmen must have thought themselves celebrities.<sup>139</sup> Advertisements for the auction of captured goods became a common appearance in the loyal newspapers of New York. One advertisement listed a succession of auctions for the cargos of the French and rebel ships *Rosiere*

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<sup>136</sup> Pougher, “Averse...to Remaining Idle,” 2.

<sup>137</sup> “Copy of Wm. Glenham’s sale of 1 ½ share in the *Hammond*, Warren Leslie Nicol Commander” June 16, 1779. Bancker Family Papers, Box 1, NYPL. *Royal Gazette*, January 6, 1779. *The Fair American* is also mentioned in Van Tyne, *The Loyalsits*, 178.

<sup>138</sup> George Leonard to Admiral Marriot Arbuthnot, September 20, 1779 quoted in North Callahan, *Royal Raiders: The Tories of the American Revolution* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co, 1963), 198.

<sup>139</sup> Van Bukirk, *Generous Enemies*, 117.

*D'Artois, John Wilkes, Le Noir, Lydia*, and the *Le Viscomte De Veaux* which included everything from tobacco and tea, to luxury goods like brandy and silk, to dear necessities like glass and soap.<sup>140</sup> Other advertisements announced the auction of entire ships taken as prizes such as the French ship *Le Amity* or the outfitted privateer, *Norfolk Revenge* “with all her warlike stores”.<sup>141</sup> A captured prize could restore a gentleman’s finances and status, but the risky venture could and did sink others deeper into destitution. Loyalist ships might be captured or destroyed or could come home empty-handed with no return on investment. “[R]eturning without a prize”, wrote one privateering agent, “was almost equivalent to a total loss of the Vessel.”<sup>142</sup> But if the risk was great, so was the potential reward. As James Simpson wrote “the profits upon a single voyage sometimes enabled the Adventurers, not only to emerge from Indigence and obscurity, but to rise to a great degree of opulence...”<sup>143</sup> Perhaps a few fortunate loyalists could embrace George Herbert’s famous maxim that “living well is the best revenge”, especially if they did so at the expense of their enemies.<sup>144</sup>

The Connecticut refugee Joel Stone provides a good example of what could come from a successful expedition. He recorded that having “expended all his money [and]...run considerable in the debt of my friends...determined me to venture on the hazardous practice of privateering...” Stone served aboard at least two ships as a “captain of marines” beginning in January 1779. Although shipwrecked once, by the end of his brief seven-month career as a privateer he had acquired “a sum not only sufficient to discharge the chief of my accumulated debt but also to enable me by the aid of my friends to resume my former employ in the merchantile [sic] business and hire a convenient store for the purpose in the city of New York...” Not only did his privateering activities provide him with the means to earn a less hazardous living, but also to gain

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<sup>140</sup> *The New-York Gazette*, March, 13, 1778.

<sup>141</sup> *The Royal Gazette*, March 27, 1779 and October 23, 1779.

<sup>142</sup> John Richardson to John Porteous, August 22, 1780. Porteous Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>143</sup> James Simpson to Claims Commission quoted in Wallace Brown, *The King’s Friends*, 278-279.

<sup>144</sup> George Herbert, *The English Poems of George Herbert, together with his collection of proverbs entitled Jacula Prudentum* (London: Rivington, 1871), 238. The line is found in *Jacula Prudentum*, and was therefore a recorded aphorism, and not necessarily an original creation by Herbert. The collection was originally published in 1640.

respect and marry “a young woman of a good family”.<sup>145</sup> Stone had regained his former occupation and a semblance of his former status, or perhaps even elevated his rank in society. The money he gained from his enterprise also represented an act of successful revenge against the patriots. The shop he now tended and the success he displayed were marks of honour and even a measured victory. No longer destitute, he became a captain in the New York militia and the head of a household and a business. Privateering was his path to credit and honour. As a result of such success stories, privateering became one of the chief pursuits of New York’s loyalists.

Other loyalist privateers were less fortunate. John Porteous, a loyalist merchant, converted his firm’s trading ship *Elegante* into the fittingly rechristened privateer *Vengeance*. Porteous did not go to sea with his craft, but sent a representative named John Richardson to monitor the voyage and perhaps keep watch on George Dean, the ship’s captain. The correspondence between owner, factor, and captain reveals the crowded nature of the business, the incessant quarrels over prize money, and suspicions of the underhanded duplicity of prize commissioners who were responsible for fairly dividing the loot.<sup>146</sup> When the *Vengeance* succeeded in capturing enemy shipping, Captain Dean and Richardson reported that the crew’s spirits were high.<sup>147</sup> When adversity struck, the crew of the *Vengeance* became uncontrollable. A disastrous case of mistaken identity caused a British 50-gun warship to fire several broadsides at the *Vengeance*, severely damaging the ship and wounding many in the crew.<sup>148</sup> After the ship limped back to New York for repairs, four of the crewmen stole a pinnace equipped with several small cannon and deserted. Porteous placed an advertisement in the *Royal Gazette*

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<sup>145</sup> Joel Stone, “The Narrative of Joel Stone” in J.J. Talman, *Loyalist Narratives from Upper Canada* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), 331-332.

<sup>146</sup> John Richardson to John Porteous, March 15, 1779. Richardson mentions of the names of some New York loyalists who were “guilty of wronging us in a very ungenerous manner...” as the *Vengeance* was present when prizes were taken and therefore “fully entitled to a share” yet were not included upon their return.

<sup>147</sup> Advertisements appeared in the *Royal Gazette* announcing the capture of such choice prizes as the *George Washington*. *Royal Gazette*, September 1, 1779. Also John Richardson to John Porteous, February 15 1779, discusses high spirits after taking the *George Washington*. Porteous Papers UNBLC.

<sup>148</sup> John Richardson to John Porteous, May 22, 1779. Porteous Papers, UNBLC.

offering seventeen guineas for their apprehension.<sup>149</sup> The subsequent voyage was also marked by open desertions as the loyalist sailors sought brighter prospects elsewhere. In December 1779, while cruising off the Southern coast, Captain Dean reported that twelve of the crew had stolen one of the *Vengeance*'s longboats on Christmas day and fled. Believing they were headed for British occupied Savannah, Dean gave pursuit and captured all of them. Yet even with the deserters in irons, three more members of his crew, "on whose Fidelity I thought I cou'd depend, have deserted and left me in the Lurch."<sup>150</sup> For the common sailor it seemed that loyalty lasted as long as the profit. After its many uneven voyages, the ship disappeared towards the end of the conflict and was never heard from again. There is no record of what happened to the ship.<sup>151</sup> In this case *Vengeance* brought neither profit nor honour to its crew and owners.

The loyalist privateering expeditions often involved more than raids on rebel shipping. Patriot newspapers reported large and coordinated attacks on island communities in the Long Island Sound and on the Massachusetts coast. In 1779, George Leonard's "invincible tory armada" attacked Nonamasset Island, Nantucket, and Martha's Vineyard off Massachusetts. Terrorizing the communities, breaking into warehouses and barns, the "Royal Sheep-stealers...pretended to act under commission from the Commander in Chief of the British forces" but the article alleges that the marauders acted without authority and sought only revenge and plunder. According to the report, the force consisted of dozens of small ships which landed two hundred loyalist raiders at a farm on Nonamasset and "threatened to kill the family that lived there, because the d ---d rebels had been killing them". The loyalists stole everything they could find, even "some chalk and old grindstones" and killed the cattle they could not take away. To highlight the depth of the betrayal committed by these men, the lengthy article included the names of different loyalists spotted in the band and their local origins: "a Foster, belonging to Plymouth; one Uphan...of Brookfield...a Slocum, and two Sissons

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<sup>149</sup> *Royal Gazette*, September 29, 1779.

<sup>150</sup> George Dean to John Porteous, December 26, 1779 and January 10, 1780. Porteous Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>151</sup> Henry R. Howland, "A British Privateer in the American Revolution," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Jan., 1902): 303.

of Newport” and so on.<sup>152</sup> Such attacks continued, with *The Providence Gazette* reporting a similar scene of “between 50 and 60 Refugees” who plundered the isolated community on Fisher’s Island in the Long Island Sound.<sup>153</sup> Such attacks continued until the very end of the conflict, with the last refugee privateers reported in March 1783, long after the provisional peace of November 1782.<sup>154</sup> To the readers of the Whig newspapers, the vengeful loyalists would simply not give up.

The alleged crimes and persistence of Tory bandits and privateers was widely covered in the patriot press, but the loyalist alliance with Native warriors on the frontier provided the most potent fuel for the patriot charge that loyalists had been transformed into vengeful monsters. “Tories and Indians” was a common pairing in patriot letters and in the press. Obadiah Gore, a settler from Connecticut on the Susquehanna River, wrote to his family back east of “some difficulty with Tories and Indians” who attacked a settlement thirty miles from his home and took about twenty settlers “to Fort Niagara.” To him and other settlers it seemed as though the enemy was everywhere. In the same letter he explained that some of his acquaintances were paddling on the Susquehanna River when they were surprised by “Indians and Tories” who “shot at them a great number of guns...” The men were badly wounded but managed to escape.<sup>155</sup> A few weeks later, the local militia marched out to meet a contingent of loyalist rangers under Colonel John Butler and several hundred Seneca warriors under Chief Cornplanter. In the ensuing firefight the untrained patriot militia panicked and became easy targets for their enemies. The patriot force of over three hundred men was annihilated. A letter from Gore’s son, Obadiah Jr., who was away serving in the Continental army during the devastating loss, described the effect of the raid on his family. “I lost three [of my] own brothers...and two brothers in law...our families were all driven out from this

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<sup>152</sup> *The American Journal*, April 15, 1779.

<sup>153</sup> *The Providence Gazette*, April 21, 1781.

<sup>154</sup> The last reference I found was in *The Independent Gazetteer*, May 31, 1783, which was reporting on an incident from March of the same year.

<sup>155</sup> Obadiah Gore Sr. to Nathaniel Gallup, June 22, 1778 (Copy), Mss 84460, Connecticut Historical Society.

settlement... Our buildings all burnt and our household furniture and clothing all carried away or destroyed...<sup>156</sup>

Colonel Butler claimed that only combatants were killed, but the lopsided Battle of Wyoming Valley became known as “The Wyoming Valley Massacre” to patriots, who contended that Tories and Indians slaughtered surrendered militiamen and civilians. A generation later, the romantic poet Thomas Campbell penned a fictional account of the event in *Gertrude of Wyoming* (1809), in which he implicated “Monster Brandt” in the war crime.<sup>157</sup> Joseph Brant was nowhere near the Wyoming Valley when this occurred, but he nonetheless received much of the blame in the poem. In published accounts immediately after the battle, Colonel Butler was clearly named as the commander, and it was even reported that the group which carried out the outrages “is supposed to consist of Tories chiefly.” If the savagery of “these inhuman allies of Britain” was terrifying, the Tories’ own cruelty was indistinguishable.<sup>158</sup> A longer article in the *Connecticut Courant* described how Tories had “concealed themselves among our different settlements...” and “fired up the Indians” and enkindled “a spirit of hostility against us.” Tories were found roaming the backcountry in small groups with the Indians, or were working as a fifth column ready to open settler forts to besieging enemies. As for the defeat at Wyoming Valley, *The Connecticut Courant* reported that the patriot militia under Colonel Zebulon Butler (John Butler’s cousin) was walking with a flag of truce when they were ambushed. Like the British Legion at Waxhaws and Claudius Smith in the Neutral Ground, the frontier loyalists treacherously violated the conventions of civilized warfare. The same article reported that the vast majority of the raiders were actually “Tories, painted like [Indians]” and only the officers were dressed like regulars. To add to the horrible savagery of the Tories and Indians, the article claimed they took what captives they could

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<sup>156</sup> Obadiah Gore Jr. to Nathaniel Gallup, March 17, 1779 (Copy), Mss 84460, Connecticut Historical Society.

<sup>157</sup> Thomas Campbell, *Gertrude of Wyoming and Other Poems* (London: Longman, Hurts et. al., 1810), 59. “The Mammoth comes, - the foe, - the Monster Brandt...” Campbell also relates an apocryphal tale of “Brandt” killing a captured American officer in revenge for a painful wound suffered. Sir John Johnson was apparently outraged, but Brandt simply replied “that he could not help revenging himself on the only chief of the party that he saw taken.” This is another example of the popular belief in the blinding thirst for revenge among the Native warriors, (126-127).

<sup>158</sup> *Connecticut Courant*, July 21, 1778; *New Jersey Gazette*, July 22, 1778.

“and shutting up the rest in the houses, set fire to them and they were all consumed together.” This was a complete fabrication, but helped encourage readers to search for some “speedy and effectual measures...to punish and extirpate these monsters in human shape...” who betrayed their own families and their race out of vengeance.<sup>159</sup>

The allegations that the loyalists and Native warriors murdered civilians in cold blood had profoundly violent consequences. In October, patriot forces attacked and burned the settlement of Oquaga, a mixed community of Iroquois in northern New York. Some supported the Revolution and others the British, but little distinction was made in the patriot attack. Rumours circulated that in their own quest for vengeance the patriot soldiers had discovered Iroquois children in the corn field and murdered them.<sup>160</sup> This, of course, was never reported in the newspapers. In retaliation, John Butler’s son Walter and Joseph Brant descended on Cherry Valley, New York in November of the same year. In the attack around thirty-two civilians were killed by Seneca and Mohawk warriors in what both British and American authorities considered an atrocity.<sup>161</sup> Reports in *The Connecticut Journal* gave macabre details of the “inhuman barbarities” – scalping, decapitation, and dismemberment – committed against defenseless civilians.<sup>162</sup> *The Independent Chronicle* published a letter sent to General Philip Schuyler by Walter Butler concerning the events at Cherry Valley. Butler claimed that “I have done every thing in my power to restrain the Indians in their fury, from hurting women and children, or killing the prisoners who fell into our hands, and would have more effectually prevented them, but they were much enraged by the late destruction of their village Onohoghguago [Oquaga] by your people...” For Butler, the atrocities were explained by a longer history of outrages committed by the patriots. Nevertheless, Butler assured the

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<sup>159</sup> *Connecticut Courant*, July 28 1778. For a description of the Battle of Wyoming Valley see: Barbara Graymont, *The Iroquois in the American Revolution* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1972), 168-174.

<sup>160</sup> Colin G. Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 124-125. Alan Taylor, *The Divided Ground: Indians, Settlers, and the Northern Borderland of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 2007), 93-94.

<sup>161</sup> Alan Taylor, *The Divided Ground*, 93-94.

<sup>162</sup> *Connecticut Journal*, December 3, 1778.

patriot general that he would continue to try and restrain his allies as it was “beneath the character of a soldier, to wage war on women and children.” Yet, immediately following that statement, Butler invoked the threat of savage retaliation himself. “[B]e assured,” concluded Butler, “that if you persevere in detaining my father’s family with you, that we shall no longer take the same pains, in restraining the Indians from making prisoners of women and children.”<sup>163</sup> The loyalist officer’s assertion that he had attempted to restrain their Native allies must have seemed hollow when combined with the concluding threat. The Butler family, once wealthy New York merchants, appeared complicit in the outrages and were apparently willing to use the same methods to achieve their own vengeance. To the Whig readers it must have seemed as though the Butlers had been transformed into something savage themselves.

The perception of loyalist involvement in frontier atrocities deeply worried gentlemen loyalists and their British commanders. News of the outrages had reached Britain, and both Edmund Burke and William Pitt delivered scathing speeches in Parliament deploring the use of Native allies against the rebels.<sup>164</sup> The Swiss-born Governor of Quebec, Sir Frederick Haldimand, knew the importance of the Native alliances and the effectiveness of their raids, but reproached Colonel Butler after the incident at Cherry Valley for “such indiscriminate vengeance” which was “useless and disreputable...as it is contrary to the dispositions and maxims of the King...”<sup>165</sup> On previous missions Haldimand had stressed the need to restrain the Native warriors. Writing to Captain John Peters in 1778, Haldimand advised keeping the number of warriors to a minimum and “to take special care that proper persons of your appointing...shall accompany them upon all occasions in order to prevent entirely all acts of cruelty of Inhumanity...”<sup>166</sup> Captain Walter Butler, who Guy Carleton described as a “pretty genteel man,” remorsefully described the events of Cherry Valley to the elegant

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<sup>163</sup> *The Independent Chronicle and the Universal Advertiser*, December 24 1778.

<sup>164</sup> Graymont, *The Iroquois in the American Revolution*, 161-162. Graymont accurately points out the hypocrisy of Pitt’s stance since he had supported the use of Native warriors during the Seven Years’ War.

<sup>165</sup> Quoted in George M. Wrong, *The Chronicles of Canada, Vol. IV*, (Toronto: Fireship Press, 2009), 119.

<sup>166</sup> Frederick Haldimand to John Peters, July 25, 1778. John Peters Papers. NYHS.



Hannah Lawrence Schieffelin during her travels through Canada in 1780. As in his letter to General Schuyler, Butler blamed patriot atrocities for firing the zeal of the Native warriors. In particular, he noted that a patriot “Captain H----” had “threatened to exterminate” the whole race of Indians if they did not return to their villages. He also suggested that it was Joseph Brant who “was infected with the contagious spirit of cruelty and guilty of actions that redound to his dishonour.” Schieffelin seemed to accept Walter Butler’s version of events but was aghast at the tragic cycle of revenge and reprisal on the frontier. Brought up in the comfort of a wealthy New York household, Schieffelin was appalled at how the frontier war sapped the decency and humanity from the people caught up in its violence. On one occasion she encountered a raiding party returning from an expedition with around one hundred prisoners “whom the Indians had stripped of almost all of their cloathing[sic]” and to her shocked amazement “about thirty of their number were inspired by their necessity to enlist in the British service.” The frontier people, it seemed to Schieffelin, were devoid of “manners and morals” and were “fit instruments of the devastation that attends these... sanguinary incursions.” She imagined that the men who joined the British sought to “stifle the reproofs of conscience in dissipation, and lose every sentiment of duty, honour, and humanity, in vice and intemperance.” The war on the frontier, according to the gentlewoman, was a dehumanizing and transformative affair for all parties. Watching as another raiding party prepared to set out for the German Flats in New York, Schieffelin noted that “this expedition seems destined to dishonour the British cause by the most barbarous violations of faith and humanity.”<sup>167</sup> Schieffelin’s romantic notions of honour and virtue seemingly had little place on the frontier.

Despite the repeated charges of atrocities in the patriot newspapers, loyalists continued to support the employment of Native warriors against the rebels and, like Walter Butler, defended their reputations and actions. For many loyalists, patriot propaganda was not only filled with lies but also smacked of hypocrisy since the patriots

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<sup>167</sup> Sir John Johnson to Daniel Claus, July 16 1778. Reel 8, Claus Family Papers, UNBLC. The British official appears to be Sir Guy Carleton. Sir John Johnson did not share the glowing appraisal and seems to suggest in this letter that the Butlers are more self-interested than dedicated to the cause. Hannah Lawrence Shieffelin, “Narrative of Events...during a Journey through Canada.” 16-18. Schieffelin Family Papers, New York Public Library.

were just as guilty of war crimes. Newspaper accounts of atrocities like the *Connecticut Courant*'s coverage of the Battle of Wyoming Valley were often exaggerated and included blatantly false information. Reports of genuine war crimes like the murders at Cherry Valley leave out the context of cyclical violence committed by both sides. Indeed, the Virginia loyalist James Parker, incensed at the inactivity of British generals in New York, applauded "the example of Butler and Brant" and suggested that the regular British Army would do well to "try a little irregularity."<sup>168</sup> Simply put, the raids were effective; they damaged patriot morale and deprived the enemy of valuable materiel.<sup>169</sup> The correspondence between officers in the field and Daniel Claus, the deputy Indian agent for the Six Nations, testify to this fact. Just one raid in 1778 on German Flats destroyed the rebel granary and the winter's supply of beef for the entire garrison. Such raids, wrote the loyalist agents, "must be severely felt by the Rebel Army."<sup>170</sup>

Hit and run tactics were sometimes deplored as dishonourable and unmanly forms of combat. Peter Oliver, the affluent Massachusetts loyalist, defended the Native style of warfare in his *Origins and Progress of the American Rebellion*, (1781). "It is true," he wrote, "he [a Native warrior] doth not discover what is called english [sic] Courage, of standing undaunted in the open field to be shot at..." Rather, "An Indian prefers the Mode of fighting behind a Tree, or skulking in Bushes." Yet, according to Oliver, the Indian "can undergo the most excruciating Torture, without a Groan..." As for scalping, Oliver wryly observed that "taking the scalp off a dead Man... will not give any great Pain..." and reminded his readers that the New England militia scalped fallen redcoats at Lexington, another insinuation that the patriots, not the loyalists or their allies, began the cycle of violence. Oliver dismissed the criticisms poured out against the Native warriors by asserting that "Every Nation has something peculiar in its Mode of War" and furthermore, "The Definition of Courage is Arbitrary."<sup>171</sup> Oliver's ideas of courage

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<sup>168</sup> James Parker to Charles Steuart, June 1, 1778, quoted in Keith Mason, "The American Loyalist Problem of Identity," 60.

<sup>169</sup> Taylor, *Divided Ground*, 100.

<sup>170</sup> Daniel Claus to F. Haldimand, Oct. 26, 1778. Reel 8, Claus Family Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>171</sup> Oliver, *Origins and Progress*, 132-134.

actually correspond quite well to the modern anthropological studies of honour, but it is unlikely his patriot contemporaries would have been impressed with Oliver's open mind.

The revolutionaries, it must be noted, also did their best to court alliances with the Native peoples on the frontier, and they were occasionally successful. The Oneida, one of the nations of the Iroquois Confederacy, put their support behind Congress which in turn initiated a civil war within the Six Nations.<sup>172</sup> In what must have seemed to some like fitting vengeance, Walter Butler was killed in a skirmish with patriot forces and Oneida allies in November 1781. *The New Jersey Gazette* reported with satisfaction that "Captain Walter Butler and eight others were killed and scalped" by the Revolution's own Native allies.<sup>173</sup> Though the patriot press portrayed loyalists and their Native allies as savages bent on vengeance, both sides employed similar tactics. In many respects the Revolutionary War was grafted on to the genocidal conflict between settlers and Natives that began at first contact. Nevertheless, the Whig propaganda machine was able to frame the conflict as a product of loyalist and British treachery, which was, in the words of George Washington "Sharpened by [loyalist] revenge."<sup>174</sup> Like the Tory bandits, privateers, and ruthless uniformed troops in other theatres, the patriot press formed a consistent image of a loyalist stained with war paint directing the murder of innocents or committing the deeds himself. There could be no greater dishonour.

The loyalists of the American Revolution faced a unique moral quandary. To restore their honour they needed to retaliate against the patriots, but in the process they risked deepening their dishonour by openly declaring their desire for vengeance. Eighteenth century genteel culture considered revenge a savage passion which could transform an otherwise good man into a ruthless beast, yet at the same time reflexive, masculine honour demanded that insults be repaid. Though all loyalists shared in the pain of loss and deprivation, they were divided on the issue of retaliation. Some loyalists like Simeon Baxter and William Franklin obviously felt justified in violent retribution, while

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<sup>172</sup> Taylor, *Divided Ground*, 84-85.

<sup>173</sup> *The New Jersey Gazette*, Nov. 14, 1781.

<sup>174</sup> George Washington to Joseph Reed, July 5, 1779. Letterbook 3, 94. George Washington Papers, Library of Congress.

others like Samuel Seabury and Charles Inglis wanted to prevent further bloodshed in hopes of reconciliation. Those refugees who took up arms were viewed with suspicion by British commanders, fearful that vengeful loyalists would deepen and prolong the conflict. In the end the loyalists not only lost the military conflict, they also lost the propaganda war. The patriot press created a consistent image of the Tory as a greedy bandit, a ruthless butcher, and a heartless traitor to his country and his race. While patriots could retaliate against their former countrymen out of a spirit of righteous indignation, the loyalists, it was argued, fought out of base, criminal vengeance. Tories were animated by dark passions which transformed them into corruptions of manhood.

These findings add to the knowledge of the American Revolution in several ways. Historians of the nineteenth and early twentieth century accepted the idea that because loyalist had been abused and driven from their homes, they were more vengeful and cruel than their patriot counterparts. By the 1960s and 1970s, scholars such as Robert Calhoon and William H. Nelson took a more sceptical approach to tales of Tory brutality. Military historians like Charles Royster and John Shy pointed out the cyclical nature of the vendettas between loyalists and patriots in which both sides engaged in violent acts of retaliation. Yet the trope of the vengeful Tory persisted even in these academic works. The reason, as this chapter has shown, was the systematic way that a dominant Whig press delegitimized or dishonoured armed loyalists by claiming that bloody revenge motivated Tory combatants. These men were transformed by their dark passions into the antithesis of the honourable and righteous patriot. This dichotomy reflects the wider cultural attitudes towards revenge and honour prevalent in the eighteenth century English Atlantic, which coloured contemporary reports of loyalist military action and influenced generations of histories. Armed with these insights, historians can better cut through the propagandistic nature of contemporary patriot or Tory sources.

These same cultural ideas also help explain why the British failed to make better use of the loyalists in the military conflict and why many loyalist gentlemen were content to remain on the sidelines of the conflict. Paul H. Smith argues that the British did not employ large numbers of loyalists in the early years of the war because of their overconfidence in the ability of the British army to crush the rebellion, but came to rely on armed loyalists as the conflict persisted and intensified. British authorities were never

satisfied with the quantity or quality of American loyalists who enlisted in Crown forces.<sup>175</sup> Though Smith provides an excellent political and military history, he leaves out these important cultural aspects which illuminate the dysfunctional relationship between loyalists and redcoats. Throughout the conflict, and especially after 1779, British commanders were concerned about the loyalists' vengeful outrages deepening the conflict further and staining the honour of individual commanders. Even while the British sought to employ more loyalists to fill their dwindling ranks, they tried to rein in their activities. This led to deep frustrations among loyalists who believed that they were fully justified in defending themselves against patriot insults. Loyalist gentlemen were also deeply divided. William Franklin argued the loyalists' quest for "retaliatory justice" was honourable, while others like Andrew Elliot were deeply troubled by the bloodshed. Loyalist gentlemen and British commanders were never united in their goals, nor did they have a consistent outlook on the honour or morality of their tactics. These divisions, caused in part by the cultural ambivalence towards revenge, and their concerns for personal dishonour, contributed to the ineffectiveness of armed loyalism.

By placing the Whig propaganda, the British fears, and the loyalists' own debate on the justice of revenge within the wider cultural context of the eighteenth century English Atlantic, it becomes clear why the loyalists suffered such a resounding and long-lasting public relations disaster in the United States. Events like the massacres in the Wyoming and Cherry Valleys, the continuous guerilla campaigns and looting in the Neutral Ground and elsewhere, and the macabre notes infamously pinned to the victims of loyalist vengeance, all fuelled the patriot image of uncontrollable Tory monsters. Any war or violent conflict will enkindle the darker aspects of the human psyche, and historians can now admit to abuses and outrages committed by all sides in the conflict. Nevertheless, the success of the Whig propaganda campaign can be seen in the generations of fictional and historical accounts of Tory barbarity. Once-esteemed gentlemen such as William Franklin, James DeLancey and Thomas Browne had garnered reputations as murderers and plunderers. Walter Butler, once "pretty genteel," was implicated in some of the most brutal outrages of the war. Deserved or not, the reputation of the loyalists in the American Revolution was forever stained and all

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<sup>175</sup> Smith, *Loyalists and Redcoats*, 168-174 provides a concise summary of his argument.

loyalists shared the dishonour. With the Treaty of Paris and the British capitulation in 1783, loyalist gentlemen had to face the reality that there would be no satisfaction on the battlefield. The loyalists had no choice but to begin the search for honour in defeat.

## 6. Political Rebirth

In 1819, George Ramsay, the ninth Earl of Dalhousie, and new Governor General of British North America, toured Upper and Lower Canada. At four o'clock in the afternoon of July 10<sup>th</sup> he stopped at a little village along the St. Lawrence River called Gananoque, governed by a Connecticut exile named Joel Stone. Dalhousie described Stone as "an Old Gentleman...seemingly a sensible, well-bred, and intelligent man, a refugee Loyalist..."<sup>1</sup> Though Stone was born a middling farmer's son, and listed as a "shopkeeper" by the Royal Claims Commission,<sup>2</sup> Dalhousie noted in his journal that in 1819 Stone was "wealthy, tho' not rich, occupied sufficiently to be busy, comfortable and content." The Earl wrote that he was "very much pleased with Mr. Stone's manner and sentiments..." and accordingly "...I have put down the conversation in his own words as nearly as I recollect them." Stone would certainly have been satisfied by Dalhousie's appraisal and compliments. During the Revolution Stone was but one of thousands of struggling loyalist refugees in New York City, a man of little consequence who teetered on the edge of destitution, and who bitterly resented Britain's final capitulation and his own paltry compensation for losses. Decades later he was an established landowner, merchant, and the representative of British authority at this little river port, a man worthy of being called upon by the Viceroy himself.

Dalhousie's journal entry centred on Stone's loyalist narrative, a tale no doubt perfected through repeated recitations since 1783. Stone told his story with the manners and speech of a gentleman, yet he also presented himself as a rugged trailblazer who "cut the first tree at Gananoque." His persistent loyalism was evident after thirty-five years of exile from his homeland, and he explained to the Earl that he could not "reconcile to his ideas the separation of the colonies from England." Stone served as a militia colonel in the second conflict with the United States in 1812-14, yet Dalhousie noted that even in 1819 Stone "fancies that he sees yet in the conduct of the British Govt. to the United

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<sup>1</sup> Marjory Whitelaw, ed. George Ramsay, *The Dalhousie Journals* (Toronto: Oberon Press, 1978), 127

<sup>2</sup> Hugh Edward Egerton, ed. Daniel Parker Coke, *The Royal Commission on the Losses and Services of the American Loyalists, 1783-1785* (Oxford, 1915), 183.

States, in Peace and War, a feeling that the Colonies are still the children of the Mother Country.” To round out his tale, Stone added the pathos of his own familial separation, and described five sisters left to fend for themselves in rebel territory when he embarked in the King’s service, and the fact he had “not seen one of them since 1783.” Stone deeply lamented the family breakup. “That is wrong,” he said, “very wrong. I know it is, but yet I cannot bring myself to go there, and I read & dwell upon the history & discussion in Parliament from 1765 to the present day with a mixture of sincere sorrow & astonishment at the Events.”<sup>3</sup> The painful cleavages in his own family reflected the political disintegration of the British Empire in America. For Stone and thousands of loyalists like him, the domestic repercussions of the American Revolution were impossible to separate from the imperial schism.

This chance encounter, decades after the American Revolution, is a window on to one particular loyalist’s life after political death. In many ways Stone represents the archetype of the Canadian loyalist tradition. He is prosperous and hardworking; genteel and sensible.<sup>4</sup> The encounter recorded in Dalhousie’s journal in 1819 reveals that Stone was still crafting his narrative, his image, and his identity decades after the Revolution. To make an impression on the visiting notable, Stone exaggerated the permanence of his familial separation. He had in fact been to the United States on several occasions since the Treaty of Paris to visit his family, and there is considerable extant correspondence to prove that he remained in close contact with relatives in his homeland until his death in 1833. Details aside, this vignette shows that a man declared politically deceased in Connecticut had risen to a social and economic status he was unlikely to have attained as a non-college educated farmer’s son in colonial New England. In Upper Canada, a land with few established institutions during the early years of settlement, Stone and men like him were the faces of British authority in their small communities. He was the Justice of the Peace, roads commissioner, customs official, as well as being the highest ranking

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<sup>3</sup> Whitelaw, *The Dalhousie Journals*, 127-128.

<sup>4</sup> See Normal Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists: The Ontario Loyalist Tradition and the Creation of Usable Pasts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Greg Marquis, "Commemorating the Loyalists in the loyalist city: Saint John, New Brunswick, 1883-1934." *Urban History Review* vol. 33, no. 1 (Fall 2004): 24-33; Jo-Anne Fellows, *The Loyalist Myth in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1971).



military officer, largest landholder, and the wealthiest merchant in the area.<sup>5</sup> Though Stone's political rebirth was exceptional, his experiences in the years after the American Revolution were far from unique.

Political rebirth was a complex and multi-generational process that restored status and privilege to dishonoured American gentlemen and secured them new positions of domestic and political authority. The steps that Stone and other men like him took to achieve the restoration of their honour and manhood between 1783 and the late 1790s is the subject of this final chapter. The loyalists had to come to terms with Britain's crushing defeat in the conflict, and explain their role in the catastrophe. In general, the refugee loyalists argued that they had sacrificed all they could for the British Empire, and blamed incompetent generals and Parliamentarians for the loss of the colonies. The loyalists then had to rebuild their lives and restore their positions as household masters. This could only be accomplished with help from the British government, a fact which led to deep confusion about the nature of citizenship and the stigma of dependence among the loyalists.

The central argument of this chapter is that the loyalists, individually and collectively, were not just making claims for lost property and income from the British Parliament, they were reclaiming manhood. This concern permeated every facet of their defeat, exile, claims process, and resettlement. The refugees' submissions to the Loyalist Claims Commission, their individual narratives and collective histories of the conflict, as well as the strains in resettlement, reveal this consistent anxiety. The loyalist exiles faced the immediate post-war years as men adrift, dependent on others for their support. This condition was the antithesis of honourable manhood. In many ways loyalist gentlemen were reduced to a stage of adolescence, and had to begin the long climb back to full manhood. The loyalists never articulated the struggle in quite these terms, perhaps because to do so would be too emotionally painful. Instead, loyalism itself became a badge of honour and masculinity among the refugees, which allowed them to regard the

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<sup>5</sup> For the career of Joel Stone see: Elizabeth Margaret Morgan, "Joel Stone: Connecticut Loyalist, 1749-1833," MA Thesis, (Queen's University, 1980). H. William Hawke, "Joel Stone of Gananoque: His Life and Letters" (Unpublished Manuscript, Gananoque Public Library, 1966). Kenneth Donovan, "'Taking Leave of an Ungrateful Country': The Loyalist Exile of Joel Stone" *Dalhousie Review*, No.4, Vol. 60, (1984):123-145.

compensation and assistance they received not as charity from a benevolent Parliament, but as theirs by right. Though loyalists smarted at further insults, the British government recognized its obligations and helped ensure that many loyalist gentlemen could build new households and establish the patriarchal foundations of a new British Empire in North America.

Throughout the claims and resettlement process the loyalists invoked honour's function as a claim-right, "a right that something be done by another".<sup>6</sup> In other words, the loyalists' identity as white, accomplished, and refined heads of households, combined with the suffering and sacrifices they had endured, granted them the right to be treated with honour by the state and other members of society. The loyalists discussed in this dissertation felt they had a moral right to have their former privileges, respect, and property restored by the British Empire. The assertion of honour as a masculine claim-right is the common link between the stages of political rebirth from the initial experience of defeat, to the search for monetary compensation, to the final ordeal of resettlement. The loyalists claimed this right from everyone within the British Empire, from the King to members of their own households, not simply as a reward for their sacrifices, but as the right of gentlemen subjects. Their allegiance to Britain caused the loyalists' political death in their colonial homelands and stripped them of their property and status as householders. Political rebirth would restore those privileges and transform loyalism, and all the suffered indignities that came with it, into marks of honour and manhood. Loyalist manhood was not a meek and subservient expression of duty, but was in fact as demanding and assertive as the competitive ideals formed in the new republic.

Appreciating the central place of masculinity and honour in the post-war experiences of the loyalists provides a new way of understanding their behaviour and writings in exile, and it also provides new insights into how the American Revolution affected concepts of manhood in the wider English Atlantic, and the relationship of male honour and privilege to the state. British Parliamentarians were not bound by any legal requirement to compensate the loyalists for their losses, but did so out of a sense of moral

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<sup>6</sup> This idea encompasses both the eighteenth century meaning of honour in the English Atlantic, and the more widely applicable anthropological definition of honour presented in Frank Henderson Stewart, *Honor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 21-22.

obligation engendered partly by the loyalists' assertions of their rights as men. The loyalist claims and narratives describe the loss of key benchmarks of manhood – households, occupations, accumulated property, and influence over others – and reveal, in negative, the essential value placed on well-ordered, loyal households in a properly functioning state. Restoring the manhood and patriarchal authority of individual loyalists was therefore made into an imperial concern.

The fate of loyalist manhood in the post-Revolutionary Atlantic has not yet been explored by historians. Scholars have shown how the American Revolution disrupted notions of family governance and patriarchal authority within the new republic, but the same attention has not been paid to the loyalists, who, because of the physical dislocation from their households and homelands faced far deeper and more immediate challenges. Jay Fliegelman's *Prodigals and Pilgrims* (1982) and Melvin Yazawa's *From Colonies to Commonwealth* (1985) both argue that the idea of patriarchal political governance, constructed through "bonds of affection," suffered a devastating blow in the Revolutionary era. These ideas were replaced by republican notions of voluntary association and contractual relationships between all free members of society. Fliegelman argues this revolution in thought occurred throughout the English Atlantic, and transformed culture and politics with concepts of individual freedom and autonomy, and the desire to escape "protracted adolescence" both in the structure of families and government.<sup>7</sup> At first glance, then, the loyalists, with their professed affection for the King and Parliament, and their dependence on British support would place them out of step with the transforming culture of the English Atlantic. Indeed, they do appear to be what Bernard Bailyn described as "ancient, honorable, and moribund", clinging to political ideas which had run out of time.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution against Patriarchal Authority, 1750-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 3-4; Melvin Yazawa, *From Colonies to Commonwealth: Familial Ideology and the Beginnings of the American Republic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 195.

<sup>8</sup> Bernard Bailyn *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA.: Belknap Press, 1992, [1967]), 312.

Yet other historians have convincingly argued that patriarchal authority in domestic and public relationships remained a potent force. Even as state legislatures worked to enshrine republican notions into law by abolishing ancient rights like primogeniture and entail, Carole Shammas argues that this actually enhanced the power of the householder since he was no longer obliged by law, but could decide inheritance issues on his own. This provided powerful economic clout to back up the moral authority of a father as he directed his adult children.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, Nancy Rhoden's work on the families of Richard Henry Lee and Landon Carter during the Revolution reveals that these wealthy planters were deeply anxious patriarchs who felt their authority slipping within their households. Yet, their sons, in spite of the Revolution's influence, were quite dedicated to traditional ideals of patriarchal rule and built their own families on the same foundations.<sup>10</sup> While republican ideology may have altered the powers of the heads of households and planted the seeds that later extended the rights of citizenship to women and non-whites, the American Revolution did not attack the patriarchal power of husbands and fathers at the time. Indeed, Linda Kerber's theory of "republican motherhood", which argues that women became the inculcators of civic virtue within the household in the early republic, does not negate the fact that men still needed to project the appearance of domestic mastery in order to have a place in public life, just as they had done in the colonial period.<sup>11</sup> Anne Lombard, in her study of manhood in colonial New England agrees and notes that patriarchal notions of family life "displayed remarkable persistence" from the seventeenth century to the Revolutionary period.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Carole Shammas, *A History of Household Government in America*. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002): 58-60. It should also be noted that the abolition of slavery in the north also altered patriarchal power. Its continuation in the South was one of the key differences between the regions, and contributed to the South retaining far more patriarchal aspects of household authority.

<sup>10</sup> Nancy Rhoden, "Patriarchal Authority in Revolutionary Virginia: Connecting Familial Relations with Revolutionary Crises" in Nancy Rhoden, ed. *English Atlantics Revisited: Essays Honouring Professor Ian K. Steele* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 410-449.

<sup>11</sup> Linda Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 123-134. Shammas, *A History of Household Government*, 79.

<sup>12</sup> Anne S. Lombard, *Making Manhood: Growing Up Male in Colonial New England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 146-147.

While family life remained mostly unaltered, notions of manhood and honour in public life underwent more significant changes. As Anthony Rotundo has observed of masculinity in New England, the American Revolution marked a clear break between the colonial attitudes which castigated “assertive individualism” as a corrosive influence on the community, and the celebration of manly independence following the conflict. The American citizen, a “self-made man”, was regarded as the source of the republic’s power and virtue by the early decades of the nineteenth century. These men were expected to resist arbitrary rank and power, and support the limited authority of men who displayed the merit and worthiness to govern by consent. The ideal American citizen rejected luxury, but pursued wealth and advancement for the good of his family and the good of the nation.<sup>13</sup>

Mark Kann has argued that a “grammar of manhood” infused these ideas into the very language of the early republic. Yet once again, the household is of central importance to the construction of male identity and honour. Bachelors were regarded as transient, reckless, and selfish, while the “better sort” of republican men derived their “personal dignity, social respect, and public influence” first and foremost from an orderly family life. Though Kann agrees that the Revolutionary period did diminish the power of patriarchal authority in some respects, larger than life characters like Washington and Jefferson stood as archetypes of virtuous republican men for others to emulate. Therefore the deference due to the most worthy and heroic men meant politics remained dominated by hierarchy and patriarchy.<sup>14</sup> This was a republican version of manhood that allowed deference only to those who could prove they deserved their standing.

For many middling and upper class men in the early republic, the options for participation in public life increased and, as Lisa Wilson suggests, those public roles and

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<sup>13</sup> E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 15-17. For the emergence of “self-made manhood” see pages 18-22.

<sup>14</sup> Mark E. Kann, *A Republic of Men: The American Founders, Gendered Language and Patriarchal Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 155, 143. Kann’s ideas about bachelors have recently been challenged in John Gilbert McCurdy, *Citizen Bachelors: Manhood and the Creation of the United States* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009). McCurdy argues that single men began to resist the stigma against bachelorhood in the Revolutionary period and their uniquely important contributions began to be appreciated within the republic.

competition with other men increasingly became as central to male identity as the household.<sup>15</sup> Lori Glover's study of southern youth in the early republic reveals how elite families raised their sons to participate in the political life of the new nation. Young southerners were encouraged to "extend the sphere" of their influence and public renown, and Southern patriarchs advised their sons to make themselves "useful within a larger circle than your immediate neighbourhood" and gain "some celebrity". Whatever genteel profession a young man might choose, it was often but a gateway to politics.<sup>16</sup> State and national politics became the ultimate proving ground for gentlemen in the early republic, and political disputes were inextricable from questions of honour. As Joanne B. Freeman argues in her examination of the political cockpit of the first decades of the republic, "Honor was the core of a man's identity... a man of honor was defined by the respect that he received in public." The men who engaged in early republican politics entered into an unstable world of shifting hierarchies, where men of established, powerful families contended against a rising and ambitious new set of republican men who eschewed the old culture of deference and demanded respect. Performance and bravado were often the keys to success, and duels, relatively rare in colonial America (see chapter 2) became increasingly common. Even men who held high political rank felt compelled to put their lives on the line over public insults.<sup>17</sup> In summary, gentlemanly manhood in the new republic was characterized by independence and sometimes violent assertiveness, and, for many gentlemen at least, a successful political career which brought honour and renown. Old forms of genteel honour did not entirely fade away with the American Revolution,

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<sup>15</sup> Lisa Wilson, *Ye Heart of a Man: The Domestic Life of Men in Colonial New England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 187-188.

<sup>16</sup> Lorri Glover, *Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), chapter 10, 147-164. Quotations from John C. Calhoun, 148, and Thomas Grimké, 151.

<sup>17</sup> Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), xvi. For duelling, see Chapter 4, "Duelling as Politics," 159-198. The increase in duels and displays of hyper-masculinity seems to follow political upheavals in the early modern and modern periods. In Revolutionary France and in Napoleon's Grand Army duelling was rampant. Honour was hotly contested among upstarts daring to prove their worth in a society where the traditional hierarchy had been destroyed. Unification Italy also experienced the same sort of "duellomania." See: John A. Lynn, "Toward an Army of Honor: The Moral Evolution of the French Army, 1789-1815," *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Spring, 1989): 152-173. Steven C. Hughes, *Politics of the Sword: Duelling, Honor, and Masculinity in Modern Italy*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007).

but spread throughout the middle ranks of men who saw personal honour as sacred and felt compelled to defend it. Undergirding all of this remained the ordered household and patriarchal authority. Whether in colonial or republican American, household governance was an essential requirement for any man of consequence.

How then did the already wounded masculinity and honour of loyalist exiles fare in the post-Revolutionary English Atlantic? It is an intriguing question which historians have yet to address, and this chapter can only offer some tentative answers. Bereft of their households and livings, by the standards of the period the loyalists were seemingly dependent and emasculated. Loyalist gentlemen knew that their situation in 1783 fell far short of what was expected of them as patriarchs and providers, yet far from considering their claims and petitions for British assistance as emblems of that dishonour, the loyalists instead attempted to present themselves as worthy men who had given up their estates as advanced payment for a privileged place in the imperial hierarchy. In their claims, the loyalists described themselves as ideal, masculine British subjects who adhered to their duty and followed the King into bitter defeat. Though individual claims were written with customary, even formulaic, expressions of deference and respect, the loyalist gentlemen were actually quite assertive, and some even aggressively pursued their perceived rights in the face of powerful opposition from British officials.

Both Mary Beth Norton and Maya Jasanoff have explored the claims process in detail, but neither examines the work of the commission from the perspective of manhood. They do note the important role of the rhetoric of national honour in the Parliamentary debates and deliberations on the loyalist question, but this is only part of the equation. Jasanoff argues that the Claims Commission represented an early example of government taking on the role of a welfare provider, and that is certainly worth noting. But she also argues that the loyalists, in making their claims on the British government, were actually making a demand that was similar to the one their rebel neighbours had made at the beginning of the conflict – to be treated as full citizens of the British Empire and enjoy the same rights as Englishmen. In the end, Parliament never declared that the loyalists were indeed entitled to compensation by their rights as British subjects and citizens. Rather the claims were addressed more as expressions of state paternalism and because “the honor of the nation” was at stake. As Edmund Burke explained, the loyalists

“had no claim upon [the British government] founded in strict right” but rather Parliament would consider the claims for the sake of “honor and justice” and to exhibit “a new and noble instance of national bounty and generosity.”<sup>18</sup> The loyalists insisted, however, that their claims were centred on their rights, if not as British citizens, then as loyal male subjects who had sacrificed their property for the British Empire. Their affective attachment to the King, and their willingness to fight and suffer for him, created a contractual obligation. As Joseph Galloway succinctly stated in his 1783 pamphlet, Britain was bound by the “essential obligations established by the social compact”.<sup>19</sup> Though loyalist began requesting restitution or financial assistance from the British government from the outset of the conflict, it was not until the final peace that the majority of loyalists realized that they could never hope to reclaim their property in America. The loyalist claims collectively and individually present an image of loyal and worthy manhood that had earned the right to both compensation and a privileged place in the British Empire.

The loyalist concept of their own manhood and their place in the empire can be perceived in the narratives they produced for the claims commission in the 1780s. Gregory T. Knouff compared these narratives to similar petitions written by patriots after the war and sees a sharp distinction between the patriot’s “identity as politically empowered white men” and the loyalist “image of suffering, emasculated subjects.” While both sets of narratives were penned with an eye to government compensation or pensions for services during the war, Knouff argues that the loyalist depictions of their losses and abuse created a picture of emasculation and dependence which intentionally placed them in a subordinate position within an “increasingly hierarchical empire.”<sup>20</sup> On the surface this seems like a clear distinction between two divergent concepts of

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<sup>18</sup> Mary Beth Norton, *The British Americans: The Loyalist Exiles in England, 1774-1789* (Toronto: Little, Brown & Company (Canada) Ltd., 1972), 185-222, chapter 7, “A Debt of the Highest and Most Inviolable Nature.” Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty’s Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011), 120-123, 142.

<sup>19</sup> Joseph Galloway, *Observations on the Fifth Article of the Treaty with America and on the Necessity of appointing a Judicial Enquiry into the Merits and Losses of the American Loyalists* (London, 1783), 10.

<sup>20</sup> Gregory T. Knouff, “Masculinity, Race, and Citizenship: Soldiers Memoirs of the American Revolution,” in Karen Hagemann, Gisela Mettele, and Jane Rendall *Gender, War and Politics: Transatlantic Perspectives, 1775-1830*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 325.



masculinity in the post-Revolutionary Atlantic – the republican’s manly assertion of his honour and the loyalist’s willing submission to authority. Proper respect for the established hierarchy was certainly a loyalist trait, but the emasculating images found in the claims and the narratives represent more than feeble victimhood. Rather, as the loyalist John Peters argued, it took great courage to suffer such unmanly catastrophes as leaving one’s family unprotected in the middle of winter.<sup>21</sup> The seemingly unbearable indignities and insults could have ended with a public recantation and apology, but by highlighting the fact that the loyalists endured this suffering for their King, the narratives transformed what men might construe as failures into expressions of honour and undying fidelity. The claims were not the plaintive requests of emasculated, defeated men, but were claims based on rights which derived from honour culture. The loyalists had earned the moral right to be compensated.

Along with explorations of the claims process, evidence for the state of loyalist masculinity can also be found in studies of loyalist resettlement in what remained of British North America. The restoration of loyalist patriarchal authority in the colony of Upper Canada has been examined by Janice Potter-MacKinnon, who argues that loyalist women were denied the same sort of moral role as the “republican mothers” in patriot households. Loyalist settlements in Upper Canada replicated the strict British laws which supported patriarchy, and Potter-MacKinnon points to the lack of women in the court records to argue that all state power was mediated through the householder to his dependants, just as it had been in the colonial period. Indeed, Potter-MacKinnon argues that the overwhelmingly patriarchal nature of Upper Canadian society led subsequent generations to forget the particular role of loyalist women in the Revolution in favour of a more heroic, masculine narrative wherein “the women only wept.”<sup>22</sup> It is entirely plausible that this strict adherence to traditional patriarchy was a conscious effort on the part of wounded men who were anxious to restore their power, but it was also a part of British policy to replicate the laws of England in Upper Canada to prevent any further

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<sup>21</sup> John Peters, “Defence of the Provincials and Indians against Burgoyne’s Charges. Dated 9 Dec. 1779” John Peters Papers, NYHS

<sup>22</sup> Janice Potter-MacKinnon, *While the Women Only Wept: Loyalist Refugee Women*. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 142, 144-146, 160.

rebellions. Laws which supported patriarchal power in the households would ensure that both domestic and public authorities contributed to the stability and loyalty of the province. Yet as Jane Errington argues, the society that developed in Upper Canada in the years after the American Revolution was a cultural and political hybrid of the American republic and the British Empire. Loyalist exile did not represent a clean and final break from the United States; rather lines of cultural and economic exchange and communication remained open, even during the War of 1812.<sup>23</sup> As will be shown in part three of this chapter, struggling loyalist householders in exile often received help from their former homelands which served to bolster their waning patriarchy. Loyalist gentlemen could therefore employ both the legal authority entrusted in them by the Crown as well as their residual connections to the United States to support their efforts to rebuild their household patriarchy.

Ann Gorman Condon's exploration of New Brunswick also shows how the loyalists attempted to create a society built on elite patriarchal norms. With a much larger number of refugees settling along the St. John River, and with a substantially larger population of gentlemen than were present in Upper Canada, Condon shows how elite exiles dominated the early evolution of the politics and society of the new province. These loyalist gentlemen were also deeply concerned with re-establishing links with their homelands and ensuring decent prospects for their sons and daughters. Condon explains that loyalist men were engrossed with their families because that was "the one area of life they could control and also the one area capable of positive response."<sup>24</sup> This was also an indication that families were in fact political institutions, and as will be shown, the outward appearance of domestic order could be a sign of patriarchal power or a significant source of anxiety for the troubled loyalist gentlemen.

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<sup>23</sup> Jane Errington, *The Lion, the Eagle and Upper Canada: A Developing Colonial Ideology* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987). The continued communication and even economic alliances between Upper Canada and Federalists in the United States is also shown by Alan Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels, and Indian Allies* (New York: Vintage Books, 2011), see especially chapter 10, "Northern Lights," 269-293.

<sup>24</sup> Ann Gorman Condon, *The Envy of the American States: The Loyalist Dream for New Brunswick* (Fredericton: New Ireland Press, 1984), 137-138. Condon, "The Family in Exile: Loyalist Social Values After the Revolution" in Margaret Conrad, ed. *Intimate Relations: Family and Community in Planter Nova Scotia, 1759-1800* (Fredericton, NB: Acadiensis Press, 1995), 47.

Though Janice Potter-MacKinnon argues that loyalist women saw few of the benefits that their patriot cousins experienced, the work of Katherine McKenna suggests that loyalist women did in fact play an essential role in inculcating the virtues of loyalism and citizenship. McKenna's *A Life of Propriety: Anne Murray Powell and Her Family* (1994), explores the experiences of the loyalist gentlewoman and her family who settled in York, Upper Canada. Though ostensibly a middling sort of family, the Powells, much like Joel Stone, were elevated to a much higher social status because of the paucity of ladies and gentlemen in the remote and scattered settlements. Powell's husband, William Dummer Powell, who was not a promising candidate for advancement in his early years, eventually embarked on a long career as a lawyer and a member of the Executive Council of Upper Canada from 1808 to 1825. McKenna shows that loyalists like the Powells grasped onto the ideas of gentility and refinement, as impractical as they may have been on the frontier, as markers of class and distinction. Anne Murray Powell and other women of the family passed on their refined culture and notions of respectability from one generation to the next. The family's anxiety over their sons' education and moral upbringing may be a timeless concern for families everywhere, but the particular challenges faced by the Powells, of trying to foster genteel and honourable manhood on the frontier, resemble the experiences of other loyalists and will be explored later.<sup>25</sup>

Anne Murray Powell was performing an important political function in her domestic role. David Mills argues that ideas of loyalism in Upper Canada evolved to embrace Victorian ideals of propriety, and households like the Powell's were the primary engines for inculcating notions of refinement and respect for hierarchy. Even with the widespread cultural exchange with the United States, Mills observes that expressions of loyalty became essential in the political culture of Upper Canada, especially after the War of 1812. In essence, loyalty meant the open commitment to the imperial connection and accepting the idea that without British ties the province and the superior manners and morals of its people would be swallowed by vulgar American democracy. Reformers therefore had to tread a careful, moderate path lest they be labelled "disloyal" and politically illegitimate. The loyalist experience in the American Revolution, especially

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<sup>25</sup> Katherine McKenna, *A Life of Propriety: Anne Murray Powell and Her Family*, (Montreal: McGill Queens University Press, 1994), 9, 10, 12, 44, 130-133.

when transformed into more general Anglophilia, was employed for generations as a foundational myth that allowed people with no real connection to the historical loyalists to maintain political and economic power.<sup>26</sup>

The politics of Upper Canada, and the disputes between competing political ideologies, became bound up in the concepts of masculinity. Cecilia Morgan's *Public Men and Virtuous Women: The Gendered Languages of Religion and Politics in Upper Canada, 1791-1850* (1996), shows how ideas of loyalism and masculinity became almost synonymous in the generations after the Revolution. While true manliness was at times claimed by both Upper Canadian republicans and conservatives alike, loyalism was consistently portrayed in the colony's print media as a manly virtue. American style democracy was a beguiling, seductive vice compared to the tried and true British mode of governance. After the War of 1812, tales of women's contributions to the war effort centred on the continuation of domestic activities, while manly loyalism was displayed in public and on the battlefield. As Morgan writes, there was no Upper Canadian equivalent of the "Marianne of the French Revolution or the republican mother of the American."<sup>27</sup> Much as Janice Potter-MacKinnon observed about the legacy of the Revolution, there seemed little room for a civic celebration of womanly virtues in such a patriarchal society.

This masculine, patriarchal culture found in the Canadian provinces was not solely the result of loyalist attempts to overcompensate for emasculating failures. As will be shown in the third section of this chapter, loyalist patriarchy was comparably weak, as householders often lacked the ability to maintain order in their own homes and protect and provide for their dependants amid the privations of frontier life. Rather, loyalist gentlemen found their waning positions as patriarchs propped up by British preferment. As Kathleen Wilson and Nancy Christie have recently argued, state power in distant, multi-ethnic colonies with few functional institutions relied on households and their

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<sup>26</sup> David Mills, *The Idea of Loyalty in Upper Canada, 1784-1850*, (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 5-7.

<sup>27</sup> Cecilia Morgan, *Public Men and Virtuous Women: The Gendered Languages of Religion and Politics in Upper Canada, 1791-1850* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 80, 24, 48.

patriarchs to order society and replicate the values and manners of the metropolis.<sup>28</sup> British law buttressed the power of householders and upheld hierarchical rule in the attempt to create a counterrevolutionary society.<sup>29</sup> Some loyalist gentlemen became the representatives of British authority without themselves having achieved an orderly and obedient household. In the early years of exile and resettlement, the masculinity and honour of gentlemen refugees centred on loyalism. In this sense, expressions of fidelity and sacrifice, for a time, substituted for traditional sources of honour, and helped loyalists reconcile defeat, make honourable claims on the British government, and endure further strains on their household authority during resettlement. Loyalism brought British preferment and assistance, but rather than be seen as dependence, loyalist gentlemen regarded this as a reciprocal relationship with the British imperial state. Their manhood and patriarchal authority were inextricably linked with the future of the British Empire in North America.

The process of political rebirth presented in this chapter consisted of three stages: accepting defeat, the claims process, and the reestablishment of household patriarchy. These were not the only concerns of exiles, nor do the stages reflect a perfectly linear process, but they were the three most pressing and overlapping goals for loyalists. Accepting defeat and the reestablishment of households proceeded unevenly, simultaneously, and often took more than a generation. At what point a loyalist could be said to have accepted defeat or restored his household patriarchy is subjective, but these were nonetheless goals shared by all exiled loyalist gentlemen. In contrast, the loyalist claims followed a bureaucratic procedure which demanded specific documents from the loyalists and deadlines to be met. Issues of honour and manhood are clearly at work in all three aspects of political rebirth, even in the cumbersome government commission. This chapter is designed around these three interlocking stages of political rebirth, and

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<sup>28</sup> Kathleen Wilson, "Rethinking the Colonial State: Family, Gender, and Governmentality in Eighteenth-Century British Frontiers," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 116, No. 5 (Dec. 2011): 1294-1322. Nancy Christie, "'He is the master of his house': Families and Political Authority in Counterrevolutionary Montreal" *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 70, No. 2, Centering Families in Atlantic Histories (April, 2013): 341-370.

<sup>29</sup> Christie, "He is the Master of his House," 342.

examines how the refugee gentlemen navigated through the chaos of the post-Revolutionary Atlantic, from their initial exile to their resettlement.

The first section explores how the loyalists coped with defeat, and how they struggled to come to terms with their role in the catastrophe. For many loyalists, the revolution disrupted not just the political composition of the Empire, but also its divinely ordained social hierarchy and their privileged place within it.<sup>30</sup> The refugees accepted a variety of explanations for Britain's failure in America. They blamed imperial decadence, incompetent British generals, and treasonous elements within Parliament and English society. A few loyalist gentlemen published their interpretations of the complex factors that led to American independence, while individuals such as Joseph Galloway and John Peters became locked in drawn-out and very public quarrels with British generals over who was to blame for the American disaster. Explaining and accounting for defeat were not merely the arguments and finger-pointing of old soldiers reliving past battles; these were matters of official inquiry and public debate. At stake was the honour of loyalist arms and manhood, and in many cases the accepted version of events could have a significant impact on the ability of individual loyalists to make claims upon the British government for their losses and services. Loyalists did not, therefore, defer to their superiors, but often bitterly defended their contributions and directly challenged the honour of the British generals who failed to quell the rebellion. The loyalists' own honour and rights superseded their obligations to respect all imperial officers.

The second section explores the role of honour and manhood in the claims process itself. Even though the loyalists chafed at the interrogations and burden of proof laid upon them by the Royal Commission on the Losses and Services of the American Loyalists, the structure of the commission was designed to benefit gentlemen. Literate men with the connections, resources, and manners had a tremendous advantage over other claimants, and were able to make their cases in ways which appealed to the gentlemen commissioners. In this way the British government ensured that most of the compensation was paid to white gentlemen to restore their place as British colonial

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<sup>30</sup> Keith Mason, "The American Loyalist Problem of Identity in the Revolutionary Atlantic World" in Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan, *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 40.

patriarchs.<sup>31</sup> The claims process also provided the loyalists a venue, through their depositions and published narratives, to craft an idealized image of a suffering, yet valiant loyalist man who remained morally undefeated. The image of the loyalist man is strikingly consistent throughout the narratives. These were hardworking yet genteel men, with fortunes and bright futures ahead of them. Nonetheless, when faced with the decision to rebel or remain loyal, they sacrificed all they had out of devotion to the King and the British constitution. Yet after all they endured, the loyalists argued that they had been betrayed in the peace treaty by the very authorities they had fought to defend. In essence the refugee gentlemen were creating a sense of moral obligation between men, which once again shows honour's function as a claim-right. The loyalists portrayed themselves as worthy, faithful, and suffering men who needed to be treated with respect and gratitude to preserve British honour. They were making personal and collective claims on the government, and on other individuals, not just for a monetary reward, but for the restoration of their power and privilege. To experience anything less was an insult and violation of their rights. Though the imperial government was unable to restore the loyalists' fortunes pound for pound, and in spite of the competing claims of some British generals, Parliament did recognize the debt it owed to their loyal American subjects.

The final section of this chapter explores the loyalists' fixation on their power as household and community patriarchs during their resettlement in British North America. Though a father's power was enshrined in custom, religion, and law, in a practical sense his authority over dependents was usually fixed to the amount of property and money he was able to provide.<sup>32</sup> The loyalists, like their counterparts in the new republic, were deeply anxious about their place in the reordered world, and as they sometimes teetered on the brink of insolvency and ruin, or contended with the privations of frontier life, they fretted about losing patriarchal control over their wives, children, and other dependents. The experiences of three loyalist gentlemen of very different circumstances living in three different colonies reveal consistent concerns over strained and even collapsing marriages, financial stress, and their anxiety over the honour and future of their sons.

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<sup>31</sup> This idea is also argued in Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, 134-136.

<sup>32</sup> Nancy L. Rhoden, "Patriarchal Authority in Revolutionary Virginia," 411, 415.

Using a comparative biographical approach, the correspondence of Joel Stone in Upper Canada, Amos Botsford in Saint John, New Brunswick, and Mather Byles Jr. of Halifax, Nova Scotia reveal that even though challenges to patriarchy were common in the new settlements, these men were not isolated patriarchs in the wilderness. The combined support of the British government and the extended, cross-border social networks maintained the privileged place of loyalist gentlemen in their new communities. Sons were sent for their education to the new republic, and people, goods, and ideas continually passed between loyalist settlements and the American states, regardless of the political divisions. British preferment and the loyalists' continued attachment to families and friends in their homelands ensured the survival of their patriarchal authority and ability to pass their privileges and their values on to a new generation of loyalists.

Before continuing, it must be noted that while the majority of scholarly and popular attention has been paid to the loyalist exiles, and the term "loyalist" is often used interchangeably with exile or refugee in the study of the American Revolution, they were actually a minority of the total number of Americans who sided with the British Crown. If Paul H. Smith's estimate of loyalist numbers is accurate, perhaps as many as 500 000 colonists were connected in some manner with the loyalists. According to Maya Jasanoff's recent study, the number of loyalist exiles is considerably less than originally thought, perhaps numbering around 60 000 people who left the former colonies for a variety of destinations within the British Empire. Most loyalists, therefore, found a place within the new republic of the United States. Yet following the loyalists who remained or returned to the United States is difficult and there have only been a handful of studies which examine the question. Most work has focussed either on prominent individuals such as Samuel Seabury or William Samuel Johnson, or on specific regions or states.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> See: Paul H. Smith, "The American Loyalists: Notes on their Organization and Numerical Strength" *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 25, No. 2 (Apr., 1968): 259-277. On pages 268-269 Smith estimates that 19.8% of the white population of the colonies were in the loyalists camp, of which 128 000 were men, although less than a fifth of that number officially carried arms for the British Empire. Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, 353-358, "Measuring the Exodus." Elizabeth McCaughey, *From Loyalist to Founding Father: The Political Odyssey of William Samuel Johnson* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980). Bruce Steiner, *Samuel Seabury, 1729-1796: A Study in the High Church Tradition* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1971). Oscar Zeichner, "The Rehabilitation of Loyalists in Connecticut," *The New England Quarterly*, Vol. 11, No.2, (June 1938): 308-330. David E. Maas, *The Return of the Massachusetts Loyalists* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1989). Robert M. Calhoun, "The Reintegration of the Loyalists and Disaffected" in Robert Calhoun, *The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays*, (Columbia, S.C.:



The wartime allegiance of the returning loyalists was a continued source of dishonour and needed to be hidden or downplayed, not celebrated or commemorated. Reintegrated loyalists did not speak out against negative depictions of them in the press or popular literature or social memory. They did achieve a political rebirth, but not one based on their wartime experiences. These loyalists worked to cover their past, and their political rebirth followed a different trajectory and must therefore be treated elsewhere.

The loyalist exiles described in this dissertation believed their authority and privileges were theirs by right. Their political death in Revolutionary America unjustly stripped them of that right in the former colonies, but this was a sacrifice, they argued, endured on behalf of the British Empire. Historians have long studied the claims process and the history of resettlement, but when this same history is examined from the perspective of honour and manhood, it is evident that the loyalist claim on the British government for restitution was inextricable from the claims they made on their families and others, to be treated as patriarchs and gentlemen. Far from being suffering, deferential imperial subjects, the loyalists were assertive, demanding compensation and preferment by right of their superior manhood and honour. Not all loyalists were successful in their attempts. Some dishonoured themselves by falling into debt and bankruptcy, while others, in their attempts to defend their reputations, offended the honour of powerful men and lost potential patrons. Collectively, the loyalists in the remaining colonies of British North America successfully achieved political rebirth. Subsequent generations of Canadians remembered the loyalists not as dishonoured Americans, but as heroic founders of a new nation.

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University of South Carolina Press, 1989), 195-215. Two dissertations have examined the reintegration of the loyalists. The more recent is Aaron N. Coleman, "Loyalists in War, Americans in Peace: The Reintegration of the Loyalists, 1775-1800" (2008) University of Kentucky Doctoral Dissertations. Paper 620. An earlier dissertation also looks at reintegration on the early national stage, Roberta Tansman Jacobs, "The Treaty and the Tories: The Ideological Reaction to the Return of the Tories, 1783-1787" (1974) Cornell University.

## Defeat

The first stage of political rebirth was coming to terms with defeat. The shock and bewilderment of the catastrophe pervaded all aspects of the loyalist experience. From their own personal losses to the shared disasters of Boston, Saratoga, the abandonment of Philadelphia, the surrender at Yorktown, and the final evacuation in 1783, the loyalists had to find some way to rationalize these events and explain their role in them. If they were to blame for Britain's defeat, their incompetence would make them unfit for political rebirth, but if they had done all they could and were failed by British arms, then they were in a far better position to justify making claims on the government. Their individual and collective honour and manhood, as well as their fortunes and families' well-being, were at stake.

Wolfgang Schivelbusch argues that all defeated nations display “a recognizable set of patterns or archetypes that recur across time and national boundaries.”<sup>34</sup> The loyalists exhibited some of these archetypes, but exiles suffered the imperial collapse very differently from Britons. National defeat is experienced through stages of collective mourning and renewal. In the first stage, which Schivelbusch borrows from the German thinker Ernst Troeltsch, a defeated people fall into a “dreamland...in which all blame is transferred” to the failed leadership. The incompetent leaders are then deposed “and the losing nation feels cathartically cleansed, freed of any responsibility or guilt.” Germany in 1918 and France in 1871 serve as examples of nations who dethroned their monarchs in popular post-war revolutions. As seen in the preceding chapter, loyalists were clearly frustrated with British commanders in America and saw them as vain, corrupt, and lazy, just as the Germans and French chose to remember their former monarchs who led them into disaster. Yet the loyalists never considered any sort of post-war rebellion of their own, nor did they blame their King, even if they did feel that defeat in America was entirely the fault of certain British generals and politicians. Joseph Galloway argued that the loyalists' virtues “taught them to look up to Government to take the lead in suppressing [the rebellion]” but found that the British authorities in the colonies “were

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<sup>34</sup> Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery*, trans. Jefferson Chase (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 2003), 10.

daily giving way to new usurpations, without any exertion to prevent it.” Furthermore, individual loyalists could do little since they “were disarmed, [and] the most obnoxious of them imprisoned.” To make matters worse, they could not fully participate in the ideological struggle since the “loyal presses were restrained, some of them seized and destroyed... [and] Publications in favour of Government were publicly burned...” To add to Britain’s culpability, “republican presses teemed with speeches of their friends and allies in parliament, and letters wrote from their colleagues in faction in England... all tend[ed] to lead the people into a rebellious opposition to Government.”<sup>35</sup> Any hope of subduing the rebellion was dashed by sending ill-timed peace commissions to North America with “terms of accommodation” after the siege of Boston and the invasion of Canada. Galloway charged that this measure only emboldened the American rebels and set them directly on the path to declaring independence.<sup>36</sup>

British bungling did not end with their diplomatic failures, but was joined by equally disastrous military policies. If, as Schivelbusch argues, “the deployment of armies on the battlefield is the classic manifestation of collective self-confidence”, then the loyalists were deprived of this from the earliest stages of the war. According to Galloway, the rebels “were arrayed in arms by voluntary associations, and there was moreover a regular armed force under the Congress to support them...” In stark contrast, “the loyalists... were without a head, and without weapons.” Throughout the conflict, loyalists were not effectively utilized as soldiers, and those that were often felt insulted at the arrogant high-handedness of British commanders. British political ineptitude and military incompetence was to blame for the defeat, but did not lessen the loyalists’ virtues of duty and fidelity, according to men like Galloway.<sup>37</sup> The loyalists had done all they

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<sup>35</sup> Galloway, *Historical and Political Reflections on the Rise and Progress of the American Rebellion...* (London: 1780), 94-95.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

<sup>37</sup> Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Culture of Defeat*, 6. Galloway, *Historical and Political Reflections*, 108. Galloway’s description of the rebel military zeal is somewhat overstated. As Charles Royster has shown the *rage militaire* of rebel supporters was quite pronounced in the earliest stages of the war, but “vanished by the end of 1776 and never returned.” Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1979), 25.

could to uphold their personal honour and remain faithful to the King. The loss was not due to any deficiency in loyalist manhood, but the impotence of British leadership.

If the ignominy of defeat was hard enough for the loyalists to bear, the trauma was exacerbated by the loyalists' own stab-in-the-back moment: the articles of the Treaty of Paris signed in 1783. Many loyalists had hoped to fight on after the Yorktown disaster in 1781, but the British government and treasury were exhausted. Facing a global conflict against France, Spain, and the Dutch Republic, the British Parliament, and eventually the King, accepted the American victory.<sup>38</sup> The Treaty of Paris recognized American independence, secured fishing rights of American sailors on the Grand Banks, and established generous borders for the new American nation. The independent United States was difficult for loyalists to accept, but article five of the treaty seemed like a blatant betrayal. Rather than demand the return of loyalists' confiscated estates as a condition of peace, the treaty simply stated that "Congress shall earnestly recommend it to the Legislatures of the respective States to provide for the Restitution of all Estates, Rights, and Properties, which have been confiscated..." Furthermore the loyalists "shall have free Liberty to go to any Part or Parts of any of the thirteen United States and therein remain twelve Months unmolested in their Endeavours to obtain the Restitution of their Estates..."<sup>39</sup> The loyalists considered this article to be a grave injustice. It seemed to ignore their suffering and their losses while permitting the states to keep the loyalists' illegally seized property. The proviso suggesting that the exiles could return to the scene of their persecution and dishonour would have struck most refugees as ridiculous and insulting.

Popular sentiment and local authorities actively worked against any sort of loyalist reintegration or reconciliation in the months surrounding the peace treaty. Many of Connecticut's coastal towns, for example, suffered heavily from British raids during the conflict and forbade the return of any loyalists on pain of imprisonment and

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<sup>38</sup> Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, 58. A comprehensive history of the peace negotiations can be found in Andrew Stockley, *Britain and France at the Birth of America: The European Powers and the Peace Negotiations of 1782-1783* (Exeter, UK.: University of Exeter Press, 2001).

<sup>39</sup> Treaty of Paris (1783). National Archives and Records Administration. Made available at [www.ourdocuments.gov](http://www.ourdocuments.gov) August 30, 2013).

deportation.<sup>40</sup> The townspeople of Stratford formed a committee to determine how to deal with “whole shoals of Tories...flocking over from Long Island, and other parts within the enemy’s lines...” The committee’s resolves, published in *The Connecticut Journal* were unequivocal, stating that until there was some direction from the State authorities to do otherwise, “we do pledge our honor, to each other, that we will exert ourselves, in the most proper and strenuous manner, to drive off and expel all such persons who shall make the attempt to regain that settlement; in this town, which they have utterly and forever forfeited.” The announcement then went on to list the names of individuals who had boldly returned “to walk the streets of Freedom.”<sup>41</sup> No matter what the negotiators accomplished in Paris, there was little they could do to lessen the fierce, local animosity toward the defeated loyalists.

Nevertheless, some men were willing to take the risk of returning to their former communities in order to restore lost elements of their masculinity and satisfy personal honour. In May 1783, Stephen Jarvis, a young cavalry lieutenant in the Queen’s Rangers, returned to his home of Danbury, Connecticut eager to marry his fiancée, Amelia Glover, after a seven-year delay. Jarvis’ memoir, written decades after the events, illustrates the confusion of the immediate post-war period, as local rancour vied with treaty stipulations. Jarvis received the proper passes from both his commanding officer and the Connecticut authorities, but even with those official assurances of safe passage, his father’s home was repeatedly besieged by a vengeful local militia. He was able to talk his way out of one encounter through a combination of bravado and genteel manners, both appealing to former acquaintances and daring the militia to act against official orders from their government. A few old friends in the group shook his hand, while others cursed him “for a dam’d Tory...charging me with Cutting out Prisoners[’] tongues.” Eventually, a small body of American troops arrived to protect the premises and Jarvis consented to an impromptu wedding ceremony to hurry his departure, and this temporarily placated the mob. The following morning, after the guard departed, the local sheriff arrived to arrest Jarvis despite his official passes and the deal brokered earlier with the militia. Barricaded

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<sup>40</sup> Zeichner, “The Rehabilitation,” 321-322.

<sup>41</sup> *Connecticut Journal*, April 17, 1783.

in his bedroom with his new wife, Jarvis managed to assuage the crowd to let the newlyweds leave by tossing a dollar for the men to drink the health of the bride, and sharing a “bottle of bitters” lowered from his window in a bucket. With the mood lightened, the mob reportedly declared the local Tory “a dam’d honest fellow” and Jarvis and his wife eventually went on their way.<sup>42</sup> In Jarvis’ narrative his masculinity is doubly vindicated. He marries a woman of good character and becomes the head of a new, though transient, family, all while he fends off his enemies. The details of the vignette, however, bear some striking similarities to the custom of the charivari, where locals might express their displeasure at a marital mismatch or some other form of nuptial dishonour.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, the marriage of a Tory to a local young woman may have been exactly what the mob was protesting. In this case Jarvis’ obliging, yet manly, behaviour, and perhaps more importantly Amelia Glover’s obvious desire to marry a man she had waited seven years for, and quite likely her own family’s consent, ensured that no harm came to the loyalist newlyweds.

Joel Stone’s return to his former home in Litchfield County, Connecticut was also met with protest. As early as 1782, Stone’s brother had urged him to return. “You write to me that the people...wish me to return” Stone replied. “Am much obliged to them for there [sic] good opinion of me, and wish as sincerely there was an end to malice, & I could happily spend my days with them.”<sup>44</sup> But it was not to be. In August of 1783, Stone returned not to visit or rekindle past affections, but to collect “a considerable property due upon notes and book debts...” Even though he had been declared politically deceased, and had his estate confiscated according to Connecticut law in 1777, he wrote that he “had secreted my writings and could produce my books” and therefore “determined to try what I could do among my original debtors.” Debt repayment was considered a matter of personal honour and Stone obviously hoped that his neighbours

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<sup>42</sup> Stephen Jarvis, “The Narrative of Colonel Stephen Jarvis” in J.J. Talman, *Loyalist Narratives from Upper Canada*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969 [1946]), 217-222. Jarvis later settled in New Brunswick before moving to York, Upper Canada just prior to the War of 1812.

<sup>43</sup> Steven J. Stewart, “Skimmington in the Middle and Northern Colonies” in William Pencak, Matthew Dennis, and Simon P. Newman eds. *Riot and Revelry in Early America*, (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 43.

<sup>44</sup> Joel Stone to Leman Stone, Nov. 29, 1782. Stone Papers, MS519, Reel 1. AO.

would live up to their pre-war obligations. He recorded that his “former friends” treated him “with respect [,] but from those of the populace who deemed me criminal to their principles I met a quite different treatment.” Stone does not specify whether or not the resentful patriots were the same people who owed him the money, but the local Justice of the Peace warned Stone not to collect “such book debts as the populace being still enraged against me the consequences might be dreadful.” When the locals learned of Stone’s presence and intentions he “received solemn warning from the mob to leave the province within forty-eight hours.” He then went into hiding to finish making copies of his account books, before hastily returning to British lines.<sup>45</sup> To Stone, the collection of debts was both practical and a matter of honour that personally bound debtor and creditor. The cancellation of loyalist debts was a particularly bitter issue for refugees. Not only was the erasure of debts owed to loyalists another mark of their political death, it was also a set-back in their quest to restore their finances. As Mather Byles Jr. wryly noted in 1786, the people of the new republic had “a rooted Antipathy to paying their just Debts” since “it is certainly inconsistent with the Liberties of a free People to be obliged to pay them at all.”<sup>46</sup> The loyalist impotence in collecting their pre-war American debts was a stinging wound to their honour, but this was exacerbated by the fact that the British disallowed any claims for lost debts in the final compensation process.<sup>47</sup> To make matters even worse for the loyalists, American creditors followed the refugees to England seeking debt repayment. British courts and Parliament failed to protect loyalists in these cases.<sup>48</sup> The loyalists felt personally insulted and betrayed both by men who had made honourable agreements before the war, separate from any political matter, and by their supposed British protectors.

In the confusing months surrounding the announcement of the peace treaty, the patriot press gleefully reported on grief-stricken Tories and their apparent abandonment by the British. An article in the *Connecticut Journal* recounted that “Many of the Loyalists affect not to believe our accounts of [the Treaty of Paris]: However, their faith

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<sup>45</sup> Joel Stone, “The Narrative of Joel Stone,” in Talman, *Loyalist Narratives*, 333-334.

<sup>46</sup> Mather Byles Jr. to Mather Byles Sr. Oct. 7, 1786. Byles Family Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>47</sup> Norton, *The British-Americans*, 209, 220, 246-247.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 207-208.

of the important truth, is to be read distinctly in the countenance of the tories.”

Furthermore, “The offers of land in Nova Scotia, the promise of six months provisions, and other tokens of royal favours, have no influence in dispersing the melancholy gloom which has taken deep impression on their faces.”<sup>49</sup> *The South Carolina Gazette and General Advertiser* carried a notification from the loyalist official Oliver De Lancey that all occupied homes in New York City had to be returned to their former patriot owners. The announcement was followed by an editorial which described the loyalists fleeing “in precipitation and disgust.” Patriots must have been gratified to read that the “Loyalists, it is said, boldly d--n their King for ‘a Turn-coat.’”<sup>50</sup> *The Connecticut Courant* reported that “the vile miscreants of tories were so exasperated that they trampled *their most gracious* King’s proclamation under their feet, with the utmost scorn and contempt...” “Finding themselves duped by a government on whom they reposed the highest confidence in,” continued the article, “they are become desperate even to madness.... The just reward of their demerits.”<sup>51</sup> *The South Carolina Weekly Gazette* carried a supposed anecdote from the English Civil War which underscored the historical recurrence of the English monarch’s betrayal and abandonment of ruined loyalists. Upon the restoration of King Charles II of England in 1660, he caught sight of “a very genteel figure, but meanly habited” and was “told he was an old Cavalier, who had ruined his fortune by espousing his father’s [King Charles I] cause against the rebels.” When the King learned his name was Sir Thomas Pool, Charles II joked “shocking and cruel as it was; ‘should he not... spell his name with an F?’ Thus was the invaluable spirit of loyalty ridiculed in the last century; and how it fares in the present, is lamentably notorious from some late transactions.”<sup>52</sup> A more sympathetic reading of the loyalist plight appeared in the same paper, which described the exiles in East Florida who suddenly found their refuge ceded to Spain. “A Planter” writing from the St. Johns River in Florida, implored his former countrymen to feel pity rather than malice towards the “unfortunate Loyalists in

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<sup>49</sup> *Connecticut Journal*, April 10, 1783.

<sup>50</sup> *South Carolina Gazette and General Advertiser*, April 5, 1783.

<sup>51</sup> *Connecticut Courant*, April 22, 1783.

<sup>52</sup> *The South Carolina Weekly Gazette*, September 13, 1783.



America". "The man that is steeled against such forceable [sic] impressions, is a monster, that should be drove from the circle of cultivated society." The loyalists had been "sacrificed to the ambition of their enemies, expelled [from] their native country, and thrown upon the wide world, friendless and unsupported." British promises, the planter writes, "have been violated in every instance; and that national faith, which we had been accustomed to look upon as sacred, basely bartered for an inglorious peace." After being so "betrayed and deserted" it was time, argued "A Planter," "that the Loyalists should think for themselves, and not trust to a people who have so repeatedly deceived them, and whose national honour is sunk beneath contempt." Rather than go to the British for assistance, the Planter suggests that since the "brave and the virtuous will ever find patrons and protectors", it would be better to bring their case to the new states "and to set forth in decent and manly terms the nature of their sufferings."<sup>53</sup> Valiant manhood, he hoped, would always be respected regardless of politics.

To patriot readers, these accounts of friendless loyalists served to highlight once again the perfidiousness of the British government, and the gullibility of the loyalists. In many ways the patriot observations of the British betrayal mirrored the sentiments of some loyalist gentlemen. In his official narrative to the commissioners, Joel Stone called the treaty "unjust" while a loyalist from Georgia delivered his sentiment more strongly, declaring that he "shall ever...remember with satisfaction that it was not I [who] deserted my King, but my King who deserted me."<sup>54</sup> Mather Byles Jr., the exiled Boston clergyman, struck a more sardonic and resigned tone. In a letter to his sister he describes watching the ceremonial disbanding of some provincial regiments in Halifax, "immediately upon which I bought a cheese & a Frying-Pan; the latter, because I concluded all Broils would be at an End; & the former, because after cheese comes Nothing." After his attempt at humour, Byles concludes with an expression of Christian stoicism. He endured his suffering, he wrote, knowing that "in Heaven [he would] have a

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<sup>53</sup> *The South Carolina Weekly Gazette*, June 28, 1783. For more on the British cession of loyalist Florida to the Spanish, see Carole Troxler, "Loyalist Refugees and the British Evacuation of East Florida, 1783-1785," *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (Jul., 1981): 1-28; "Refuge, Resistance, and Reward: The Southern Loyalists' Claim on East Florida," *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (Nov., 1989): 563-596.

<sup>54</sup> Joel Stone, "The Narrative of Joel Stone," 336. Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, 99.

better & enduring Substance, where the Sons of Violence can afflict no more...& where those faithful Ministers who have steadily adhered...to their solemn ordination-vows of Loyalty to the King, will meet their Reward.”<sup>55</sup> Byles put his faith in God, not the British government.

While Byles could take consolation in a clear conscience and the promise of heavenly rewards, other loyalists expressed their bitterness by looking to lay blame for the disaster. The Connecticut exile Joshua Chandler, an aging Yale graduate and former assemblyman, knew exactly who was at fault. During his temporary residence in London, Chandler wrote to a friend in Massachusetts of his astonishment at the decadent manners and customs he encountered. He referred to England as “this Great Sink of Pollution, Corruption and Venality...” “This Kingdom,” he despaired, “without a miracle in its favor must soon be Lost; you can have no idea of their Corruption, of their Debauchery and Luxury; their Pride; their Riches; their Luxury has Ruined them; it is not in the Power of Human Nature to Save them.” To that excoriating assessment of the English, he added that even men whom he assumed were the loyalists’ allies, such as former Prime Minister Lord North, were “in Favor of the Democratical Part of the Constitution to the Ruin of the Monarchical...” To Chandler, like many others, it was clear that the British were the architects of their own defeat and the ruin of the loyalists. The letter must have seemed like the admission of a terrible error to its patriot recipient.<sup>56</sup>

Even with the loyalists’ recognition of the British government’s mishandling of the war and perceived mistreatment of the loyalists, many refugees still argued that their choice to remain faithful to the King was the honourable and moral decision. Colonel John Peters wrote in his narrative that “I cannot say that I look back with regret at the part I took from the motives of Loyalty and from a foresight of the horrors and miseries of Independency”. Indeed, “I thought the part I took right & I certainly think so still from love to my Country as well as Duty to my Sovereign & notwithstanding my sufferings, and Services and Scandalous treatment [at the hands of British officers]...I wou’d do it

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<sup>55</sup> Mather Byles Jr. to Kitty Byles, Halifax, Oct. 28, 1783. Byles Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>56</sup> Joshua Chandler to Charles Chauncey, London, April 13, 1784. Reprinted in: George Chandler, ed., *The Descendants of William and Annis Chandler, who settled in Roxbury, Mass. 1637*. (Worcester, MA: Press of Charles Hamilton, 1883), 255-256. In this work the letter is viewed as an expression of regret for taking up the loyalist cause.

again if there was occasion.” If Peters refused to question the righteousness of his cause, he still had to contend with the success of his enemies. “With the consciousness of having done right,” he wrote, “I can look with disdain at the triumph of successful Villainy.”<sup>57</sup> Nevertheless, Peters still blamed the British for the defeat and felt badly used. This raised one of the fundamental problems loyalists faced: they could blame the British for the defeat all they pleased, but they still relied on the same government to rebuild their estates and influence. This must have been a bitter truth for the loyalists as they floundered in the post-Revolutionary years without a home or even a solid sense of identity, caught between America and Britain without being part of either.<sup>58</sup>

Loyalists were therefore caught in a paradox. They were certain of the honour, justice, and righteousness of their decision, but torn by resentment towards British authorities who either did not appreciate the extent of their suffering or were perhaps unworthy of the loyalists’ sacrifices. To work out these issues some of the most literary-minded loyalists like Joseph Galloway, Alexander Hewatt, Peter Oliver, Samuel Peters, and Jonathan Boucher wrote extended histories which attempted to explain Britain’s defeat and defend the part the loyalists played.<sup>59</sup> Without exception, each of the writers agreed that the rebellion had been incited by a small group of demagogues who whipped a gullible people into an emotional frenzy, even though the colonists should have been perfectly happy in their rich country.<sup>60</sup> Samuel Peters, (along with most of the loyalist pamphleteers explored in chapter 3), saw the Revolution as a war of religion, contending that the spirit of rebellion from the English Civil Wars had persisted in the “darkness of

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<sup>57</sup> John Peter’s Narrative. August 1785, 11. John Peters Papers, NYHS.

<sup>58</sup> For an excellent discussion on the problems of loyalist identity, see: Keith Mason, “The Loyalist Problem of Identity,” On allegiance and ideology see Jasanoff, *Liberty’s Exiles*, 8-9. Jasanoff, “The Other Side of the Revolution,” 222-7

<sup>59</sup> Galloway, *Historical and Political Reflections*; Alexander Hewatt, *An Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of the Colonies of South Carolina and Georgia*, Vol. 2. (London: 1779). Peter Oliver, *Origin and Progress of the American Rebellion* was written around 1781, but was never published until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Samuel Peters, *A General History of Connecticut from its First Settlement... Second Edition* (London: 1782), published anonymously. Jonathan Boucher, *A View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution in Thirteen Discourses*. (1797). ([Reprint] New York: Russel & Russel, 1967).

<sup>60</sup> An excellent summation of the loyalist histories can be found in Norton, *The British Americans*, chapter 5 “The Seeds of Sedition” 130-154. In particular, for a discussion on the loyalist consensus that there was little cause for upheaval see page 134.

superstition” among the bigoted Congregationalists of New England. The Connecticut-born Peters recorded outrageous tales of his homeland’s religious fanaticism, such as fining an Anglican clergyman who ran to escape the rain on the Sabbath.<sup>61</sup> Along with, (or perhaps because of), his former countrymen’s peculiar religious devotion, Peters noted that these seemingly godly people made it their business to “conscientiously study to cheat the King of those duties, which they say, God and nature never intended should be paid. From the governor down to the tithing-man,” Peters charged, “they will aid smugglers, resist collectors, and mob informers.”<sup>62</sup> Regardless of their advantages and comforts, Peters asserted that the New Englanders were religiously and culturally disposed to rebellion and republicanism.

The former Speaker of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, Joseph Galloway, also saw the connection between the Roundheads and 1776. “If the pulpits of the sectaries in England in the year 1641, resounded with sedition,” he wrote, “the pulpits of the Congregational Independents and Presbyterians, from Nova Scotia to Georgia, rung with the same flagitious doctrines.”<sup>63</sup> Jonathan Boucher, writing almost two decades later, agreed with Peters and Galloway that the dissenters of New England played a major role in the rebellion, but what united all of the colonies into conflict with Britain was much more complicated. Indeed Boucher writes that it was a “marvellous, romantic, and incredible” fact that the people of Virginia and Maryland would follow the New Englanders, “for whom they entertained an hereditary national disesteem,” into civil war. The true cause, argued Boucher, was that the colonies were “planted in imperfection.” “A possibility of their future defection” he wrote, “was not foreseen; nor of course, guarded against.” Whatever the individual acts of Parliament, the imperial authorities “either saw not, or heeded not, the latent mischief, till at length it broke out with a force that was

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<sup>61</sup> Peters, *A General History*, 317. On Sabbath breaking see: 304. On pages 307-312 Peters also describes the New Englanders’ long-standing, hypocritical, and laughably petty mistrust of “Britons” as profligates and seducers.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 321.

<sup>63</sup> Galloway, *Historical and Political Reflections*, 110.

irresistible.” The loyalist chroniclers generally agreed that although the revolution had deep cultural roots, it was, in the end, completely unjustifiable.<sup>64</sup>

Since the loyalists contended that the Revolution was not ignited by actual oppression, the writers looked to the revolutionary leaders as the true sparks of the war. Each of these works presents the leading patriots as the dark inversions of decent gentlemen. Hardly the champions of individual liberty and rights, the loyalists depicted the patriot leadership as either fanatical dissenters, or, just as often, cabals of self-interested and ambitious men. Through their demagoguery and charisma, this small group managed to delude the people of America. Peter Oliver devoted lengthy portions of his manuscript dissecting and lambasting the character of some of the most prominent revolutionaries. Samuel Adams “was so thorough a Machiavellian, that he divested himself of every worthy Principle, & would stick at no Crime to accomplish his ends.” These crimes included deluding John Hancock, whose “Mind was a meer [sic] tabula rasa,” and hijacking his fortune to support the rebellion. Benjamin Franklin “was a Man of Genius, but of so unprincipled an [sic] Heart, that the Merit of all his political & philosophical Disquisitions can never atone for the Mischiefs which he plunged Society into...” John Adams was characterized as a petty tyrant, possessing “an Acrimony of Temper” which “settled into Rancor & Malignancy – by having an absolute Authority over Children” when a schoolmaster. James Otis had ruined his law practice “by drinking & by Passion”.<sup>65</sup> These invectives painted the patriot leadership as a sort of rogue’s gallery of men guided by the worst defects gentlemen could possess.<sup>66</sup> Indeed, both Joseph Galloway and John Peters wrote that the deceitful rebel faction had intentionally thwarted any attempt at reconciliation, and in spite of Congress’ protestations of loyalty, “the Bankrupts, dissenting Teachers and Smugglers [in Congress] meant to have a Serious Rebellion, and a Civil and Religious separation from the Mother Country.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Boucher, *A View of the Causes*, xxxiv-xxxv, xxxvii. Norton, *The British-Americans*, 134.

<sup>65</sup> Oliver, *Origin and Progress*, 39-41, 79, 83; Edward Larkin, “Seeing through Language: Narrative, Portraiture, and Character in Peter Oliver’s ‘The Origin & Progress of the American Rebellion’” *Early American Literature*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (2001): 427-454.

<sup>66</sup> Mason, “The Problem of Loyalist Identity,” 46.

<sup>67</sup> “The Narrative of John Peters” manuscript copy. No date. John Peters Papers, New York Historical Society.

To the loyalists the causes of the American Revolution – the deep-seated religious and political distemper, the structural weakness of authority in the colonies, and the demagoguery of the rebel leaders - went a considerable distance in explaining the British defeat. In the face of such systemic dysfunction and conspiracy there was little the good gentlemen in the loyalist ranks could do. Yet the loyalists also blamed Britain’s military leaders in America. Two bitter feuds between high-ranking loyalists and British commanders display the stakes and rancour involved in determining the blame for defeat. Joseph Galloway and John Peters took on William Howe and John Burgoyne respectively in Parliamentary inquiries, in the back channels of political influence, and in the court of public opinion, in their attempts both to vindicate the conduct and manhood of the loyalists and to show how the defects in the generals’ characters and their failed policies led to the disaster at Saratoga in 1777 and the failure of the Pennsylvania Campaign in 1777-78. In both cases, the loyalist writers boldly present the generals as intemperate, vain, foolish, and even cowardly. These concerted attacks on British authority figures by loyalist gentlemen underscore just how assertive the leading refugees became in defeat. To Galloway and Peters, and doubtlessly many other loyalists, America was lost because of the deficient martial prowess and deep character flaws of Burgoyne and Howe.

As a refugee in London in 1779, Joseph Galloway anonymously published a pamphlet entitled *Letters to a Nobleman on the Conduct of the War in the Middle Colonies*, which, he wrote, was intended to reveal “the shameful misconduct of the American war” and refute General William Howe’s claims that his reversals were the fault of the administration’s lack of support and the strength of the “almost universally disaffected” colonists. Though Galloway rarely mentions General Howe by name, his attacks are clear and sharp.<sup>68</sup> Publishing the pamphlets anonymously was a standard custom, but as will be seen in this case, Galloway’s identity as the author was well known and the anonymity was dropped in later printings.

Galloway begins by describing the easy terrain of New Jersey and Pennsylvania which “cannot, with the least propriety, in the military sense of the words, be called uncommonly strong, and much less impracticable.” The British army moved freely

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<sup>68</sup> Joseph Galloway, *Letters to a Nobleman on the Conduct of the War in the Middle Colonies*. (London: 1779), v-vi.

through the territory “with ease and little loss” putting the rebels to flight at every encounter. The loyalist author then goes one step further and compares the fighting in the Middle Colonies, with “the scene of action in the last American war” which “was in a country of thick woods, - full of vast mountains, high precipices, and strong defiles” defended by “French veterans.” And yet it was conquered by “an *Amherst* and a *Wolfe*” who, Galloway sniped, “unconnected with party, prized their own honour, and devoted their lives to the interest of their country and the glory of their Sovereign.” Howe’s assertion that the Middle Colonies were in fact “strong and impracticable” was a feeble excuse “for the military indolence and misconduct of men, who have sacrificed to party and faction their own honour, the glory of their Sovereign, and the dignity of the nation.”<sup>69</sup> This was a stinging rebuke for a general whose reputation had already been skewered by tawdry gossip of his affair with the married Elizabeth Loring (see chapter 2).

After assuring the reader that the majority of colonists were loyal subjects, Galloway dissects Howe’s leadership during the military campaign. The overwhelming might of British arms should have ensured victory. According to Galloway, over forty thousand British soldiers, “commanded by able and experienced officers” were pitted against a force of eighteen thousand rebels “seduced into arms” and led “by men destitute of military skill or experience; and, for the most part, taken from mechanic arts or the plough.”<sup>70</sup> British soldiers were trained and led by gentlemen, yet succumbed to lesser men. The eventual failure of the British in the northern colonies, save for the occupation of New York City and Long Island, was entirely the fault of the “British General [Howe]” who “was left to his own judgement in forming and executing his plans in every instance [except in assisting Burgoyne] and by that neglect sacrificed a British army, and involved his country in a degree of disgrace it never before had experienced.” In the end, Galloway asserted, the seeds of defeat were found in Howe’s “want of wisdom in plans, and of vigour and exertion in the execution.”<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 2-6.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 33-34.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 35-36. For the most recent analysis of William Howe’s conduct in the Philadelphia Campaign see Andrew Jackson O’Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America: British Leadership, the American*

Galloway provided a litany of examples of bungling: instances when Howe pointlessly delayed his army, overestimated rebel strength, and underestimated the number of loyalists while failing to arm American volunteers. Furthermore Howe took the army on needlessly circuitous routes in the summer heat and exhausted his men.<sup>72</sup> To make matters worse, after “thousands” of loyalists “took the oath”, “the Royal faith, pledged for their safety, was shamefully violated. The unhappy people, instead of receiving the protection promised, were plundered by the soldiery. Their wives and daughters polluted by the lustful brutality of the lowest of mankind...” Throughout all of the outrages Howe “was indolent and neglectful in putting a stop to these cruelties”, which disheartened the loyalists and gave the patriot press an unmatched propaganda tool.<sup>73</sup> Galloway presents example after example of poor planning, abysmal leadership, and moments of “unparalleled absurdity” where Howe turned overwhelming advantage into failure.<sup>74</sup> In a final rebuke, Galloway declares that neither Howe’s superiority in arms, men, and equipment, nor “the distress of the loyal inhabitants, the millions he was wasting, the prospect of glory, nor the duty he owed to his Sovereign and the nation,

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*Revolution, and the Fate of Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 83-122, 114. O’Shaughnessy does not think that Howe or Burgoyne were bad commanders, but that they over-estimated the level of loyalist support and underestimated the patriot zeal. In this sense, O’Shaughnessy seems to be siding with William Howe against Galloway’s interpretation. For a longer overview of the both General and Admiral Howe’s careers in the American Revolution, see: Ira D. Gruber, *The Howe Brothers and the American Revolution* (New York: Atheneum, 1972). For the Parliamentary inquiry and dispute between Howe and Galloway see pages 345-350. Chapter 12 (351-365) of Gruber’s book neatly sums up many of the possible reasons for Howe’s failure, but places the blame on the fact that the Howe brothers and the ministry tended to work at cross-purposes. While the Howe brothers sought conciliation, the ministry demanded firm action to restore Parliamentary authority. In the end, Gruber writes, “The Howes failed primarily because they and a majority of the ministry were working in separate and mutually destructive ways towards the restoration of British government in America.” Gruber, *The Howe Brothers*, 362.

<sup>72</sup> Galloway, *Letters to a Nobleman*, 36-41.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, 42, 43. For a recent discussion on rape accusations against the British in the American Revolution, and again in the War of 1812, see Sharon Block, *Rape and Sexual Power in Early America*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 230-238. Block argues that stories of rape in American propaganda tended to take the form of accounts from male witnesses that lessened the importance of women in the narrative, and highlighted competing forms of masculinity. See also, Sharon Block, “Rape Without Women: Print Culture and the Politicization of Rape, 1765-1815,” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 89, No. 3 (Dec., 2002): 849-868. To date there has not been a study of loyalist perception of rape, and this brief but powerful accusation by Galloway suggests this might be a fruitful area of study, especially as he refers to British soldiers as the “lowest of mankind,” a reference to both the social rank and the depraved morals of the redcoats.

<sup>74</sup> Galloway, *Letters to a Nobleman*, 57, 44-93.



could prevail on the general to desert the delusive pleasures of the long room and the Faro table.”<sup>75</sup>

Galloway’s sharp tone was a product of his own frustrations. Howe, for his part, gave Galloway a number of important offices including superintendent of the police and customs in occupied Philadelphia. The loyalist reported on the Continental Army’s movements, strength, and morale to Howe, but was astonished at the General’s failure to crush Washington while the patriot army languished at Valley Forge in early 1778.<sup>76</sup> By the late 1780s, Galloway and another loyalist pamphleteer, Israel Mauduit, had together written and published twenty-five separate pamphlets attacking the general’s conduct.<sup>77</sup>

Howe defended himself vigorously against Galloway and others who blamed him for Britain’s failure, and published his own pamphlet addressing Galloway’s claims and “invidious assertions” page by page.<sup>78</sup> In his defence, Howe attacked Galloway and the honour of the loyalists in general. The British commander rejected the alleged similarities between the French and Indian War and the American War of Independence, and provided the testimony of other British officers to refute Galloway’s claim that the terrain was easy to traverse and conquer.<sup>79</sup> In reference to loyalist support, Howe denied that “thousands” of loyalists flocked to British-occupied Philadelphia. Those Americans who did come through the British lines, he argued, came not out of loyalty but “to get possession of their houses and effects...[others] to do us all the mischief they could, by sending out intelligence to the enemy, and inveighing the troops to desert, and smuggling... supplies for Washington’s army...” Local farmers only supplied the British to get “hard money” instead of the Continental Army’s “paper money”, charged Howe. The Pennsylvanians fed the redcoats out of greed and not from their zealous attachment

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>76</sup> Ferling, *The Loyalist Mind*, 42-44, 49.

<sup>77</sup> O’Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 120-121.

<sup>78</sup> Sir William Howe, *The Narrative of Lieut. Gen. Sir William Howe, in A Committee of the House of Commons...* (London: H. Baldwin, 1781): 36-110.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 37-38.

to the King.<sup>80</sup> Far from describing his enemies as undisciplined rabble, Howe complimented Washington's troops as being surprisingly well disciplined, provisioned, and having "as good use of fire-arms, in general, as the King's troops..."<sup>81</sup> The British general also denied the plundering and rapine alleged by Galloway, and insisted that the few cases which did occur were dealt with justly.<sup>82</sup>

Howe never claims to know the author of *Letters to a Nobleman*, but his frequent mention of Joseph Galloway, always emphasized in italics, indicates he was fully aware of the author's identity. In an extended discussion of Galloway, Howe portrays him as a puffed-up provincial, whose declarations of status and ability fell far short of his promises. Howe claims that he put great confidence in certain loyalists, but writes, "I confess that I sometimes found myself the dupe of such distinctions." He then spends a page and a half castigating the former Pennsylvania representative in particular. For example, Howe charges that Galloway only came into British lines after the resounding victory in New York and the subsequent "Proclamation of indemnity," which implies that Galloway had in fact been numbered among the rebels, and deserted his countrymen out of fear of a British victory. Howe writes that he "expected much assistance from a gentleman of [Galloway's] abilities and reputed influence" and entrusted him with a variety of posts and an annual salary of £770. "[B]ut I afterwards found that my confidence was misplaced". "His ideas," Howe continues, "were visionary, [i.e. delusional] and his intelligence was too frequently either ill-founded, or so much exaggerated, that it would have been unsafe to act upon."<sup>83</sup> William Howe goes on to

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 46. For a discussion on the improvement of the Continental Army, from amateurs to professionals, see Don Higginbotham, *War and Society in Revolutionary America: The Wider Dimensions of Conflict*, (Columbia, SC.: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 19-41.

<sup>82</sup> Howe, *The Narrative of Lieut. Gen. Sir William Howe*, 59-60. While Howe may have truly believed this was the case, rape accusations were fairly common in the British Army during the American Revolution, but commanders tended to treat the crime rather leniently. Victims of rape were often dismissed as "soldiers' trulls" and pardons were routinely granted after convictions, though there was some gibbeting and the occasional execution. British Major John Peebles was sure that there were many sexual assaults which never came to the attention of the authorities. Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies*, 24-25. See also Sylvia Frey, *The British Soldier in America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 79-80.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 40-41.

allege that Galloway “applied...for permission to raise a provincial corps of dragoons...chiefly from the county of Bucks in Pennsylvania, where he pretended to have (for he certainly had not) great influence” and failed in his task. On another occasion, the loyalist gentleman promised to find 500 loyal workers to erect fortifications around Philadelphia, but could only produce “seventy or eighty.” Galloway was constantly assuring the General of his “intimate knowledge” of the land and its people, and insisted on their loyalty. When it did not materialize, Galloway simply stated that the loyalists “were farther on.”<sup>84</sup> In Howe’s narrative he was impeded, not helped, by the loyal gentleman and the loyalists in general. It was the loyalists who did not come to the assistance of the British, and who undermined the war effort with their unmanly greed and bad advice. Galloway, in particular, was little more than a fawning huckster.

To Galloway, Howe’s printed aspersions must have seemed like astonishingly open attacks on the loyalists’ honour, but Howe was not alone in his opinions. Edmund Burke, the famous orator and Parliamentarian, criticized Galloway’s demands for sending more troops and dealing harshly with the rebels, arguing that his advice would lead to perpetual war in America.<sup>85</sup> Nonetheless, Galloway set his pen again to refuting Howe’s refutation of the original pamphlet. In a tedious 160 page document, Galloway, again anonymously, set out to answer Howe’s page-by-page challenges, page by page.<sup>86</sup>

Enough people evidently took interest in the dispute for there to have been several editions of the pamphlets and the body of Galloway’s work was eventually repackaged and printed under his name in Philadelphia in 1788 as *A Short History of the War in America*.<sup>87</sup> In the first appendix, Galloway includes an open letter to General Howe, castigating him for his personal insults. Citing the conventions of civility, Galloway scolds Howe for not following “the example I had set you in my Letters; in which...I

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 43-44, 55, 56.

<sup>85</sup> Ferling, *The Loyalist Mind*, 56-69.

<sup>86</sup> Joseph Galloway, *A Reply to the Observations of Lieut. Gen. Sir William Howe, on a Pamphlet, Entitled Letters to a Nobleman* (London: 1780). On page 13, Galloway, without any indication of irony quotes Howe “*I shall now proceed, says the General, with my remarks, page by page.*” As I have no particular objection to this method, I will do myself the honour of strictly attending him.”

<sup>87</sup> Joseph Galloway, *A Short History of the War in America, During the Command of Sir William Howe...* (Philadelphia: Enoch Story, 1788).

had confined my strictures to your ‘professional conduct,’ without suffering one syllable of personal abuse, or one hint at the defects in your private moral character...to escape my pen.” This was entirely false. Galloway had clearly blamed Howe’s defeat on his character as a bungler and as an indolent gambler. Nonetheless, Galloway accuses Howe of deserting “the field of decent and manly argument, and [taking] a mean refuge under the abuse of [Galloway’s] private reputation. A conduct of this kind” added Galloway, “is the usual practice of the guilty, and the common weapon made use of to wound the innocent.”<sup>88</sup> If Galloway felt better for defending himself in print, his nemesis Howe, even with the cloud of controversy hanging over him, remained a powerful figure in the British establishment for the rest of his life.<sup>89</sup> Galloway continued as an influential advocate and spokesman for his fellow refugees, printing several pamphlets in defence of the loyalists’ claims on the government. He was never able to return Pennsylvania, and by the 1790s he had retreated from public life. He died in England in 1803.<sup>90</sup> The dispute between Howe and Galloway faded, but was never resolved.

An equally acrimonious argument took place between the Connecticut-born loyalist Colonel John Peters of the Queen’s Loyal Rangers (nephew of the Rev. Samuel Peters) and his one-time commanding officer Lieutenant General John Burgoyne over their competing versions of the British disaster at Saratoga in 1777. Like the Galloway-Howe quarrel, this controversy called loyalist manhood and honour into question, but it also had a profound impact upon John Peters’ claims on the British government. Powerful and well-connected British officers were eager to protect their own reputations and dismissed Peters and his fellow loyalists as grasping, cowardly, opportunistic provincials who even lacked the moral fiber of their rebel adversaries. In the end, Peters’ attempts to vindicate his actions and those of his fellow loyalists at Saratoga failed, and his hopes of political rebirth were entirely dashed.

Though he has long been characterized as a foppish and incompetent dandy in the historical and popular imagination, John Burgoyne was a respected commander and was

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<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 89-90.

<sup>89</sup> O’Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 121-122.

<sup>90</sup> Ferling, *The Loyalist Mind*, 64.

considered by many to be the epitome of the genteel officer. In spite of his military defeat and his political allegiance with the short-lived Whig government that collapsed in 1783, Burgoyne continued to enjoy fame as an accomplished playwright and was respected as an influential gentleman until his death.<sup>91</sup> John Peters, by comparison, was an unknown provincial exile who provoked the ire of both Burgoyne and Frederick Haldimand, the military governor of Quebec from 1778 to 1786. Peters did not have the resources to publish a response to Burgoyne's printed version of the Saratoga campaign, but his handwritten narrative provides an intriguing testimony of the deep insult a formerly prominent loyalist felt at the dismissive and disparaging treatment he experienced at the hands of commanders whom he blamed for Britain's defeat.

In 1779, John Peters learned of Burgoyne's attempts to defend himself and blame his crushing defeat, in part, on "the ill Conduct of the Indians & Provincials on whom he found too late was no Dependence." In a letter to an unnamed recipient, Peters attempted to defend "the Provincials" and "Indians" and show how Burgoyne blundered his way to defeat by alienating his provincial irregulars and Native allies, neglecting to properly compensate them, and ignoring their advice. Burgoyne's first mistake was telling his Native allies that they "should be hanged if they carried on the War in their own Way." Peters neglects to mention that Burgoyne was responding to the murder of Jane McRae, the wife of one of the loyalist officers, but nonetheless, the warriors were incensed and left the camp. While Burgoyne's high-handedness lost the army invaluable Native allies, he also thoughtlessly sacrificed loyal American lives. According to Peters, when the loyalists first refused an order to march out on the "Connecticut Road through Bennington" to secure supplies, knowing "the certain Danger & the Mountains between which they must pass", Burgoyne refused to listen. Ignoring his subordinate officers' suggestion that Peters may have had a point, the General instead declared that the "Americans were Cowards and disobedient. [A]t this Colonel Peters told the General that...he was ready to obey his Orders but we shall not return." The resulting Battle of Bennington on August 16, 1777 found the British, Hessian, and loyalist forces exposed to

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<sup>91</sup> Burgoyne and the debacle at Saratoga has been the subject of historical study for over two centuries. For the most recent works see: Max M. Mintz, *The Generals of Saratoga: John Burgoyne and Horatio Gates* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); O'Shaunessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 123-164.

fire from “Rebels, secreted behind Rocks & Trees” who “killed in half an Hour above one thousand Men.”<sup>92</sup> As the letter continues, Peters’ sense of insult becomes more and more palpable. “The Provincials further say, that if Genl Burgoine [sic] had condescended to the Advice of those who knew the Country...” he writes, “all America could not have tarnished his Glory, nor hurt or starv’d his Army.” Furthermore, “the Provincials think themselves ill treated, as their Characters are wounded by the General for whom they went to die...” In the same way that Galloway bristled at Howe’s compliments of rebel prowess, Peters wished “that Gen’ Burgoine [sic] would consider these Questions as he calls the rebel Americans bold & brave...” and the “loyal Americans...cowards...” This was too much for Peters, and was evidence that the whole moral universe had been upended. After all, the loyalists “had Courage to leave their Wives & Children, their Friends & Property and turn Soldiers and go in the forefront of all his Army to receive the first Blows of the Enimy [sic] and be Guardians to Each Wing & Rear...when...the loyal Provincials...were killed ten to one of the royal Army.” The final line of the letter is an ominous, if impotent, threat at Burgoyne’s failure to acknowledge and reward the loyalists: “Neglect is a Percecutiō [sic] that may be attended with equal bad Consequences to Insult or reproach.”<sup>93</sup>

John Burgoyne published his version of events in 1780 as *The State of the Expedition from Canada*. It is a well-written and thorough defence of his conduct, supported by transcribed examinations of his fellow officers and witnesses. Burgoyne’s version of events does not blame the loyalists for the defeat; rather the Provincials are shown as having little impact on events. There are several discussions of the loyalists in the work, none of which are flattering. And the fact that the testimonies come from several different sources make the aspersions all the more cutting and seemingly credible.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> The actual number killed was a little over 200, with 700 captured. Mintz, *The Generals of Saratoga*, 168-174.

<sup>93</sup> John Peters to unnamed recipient. Title added in a different hand: “Defence of the Provincials and Indians against Burgoyne’s Charges. Dated 9 Dec. 1779” John Peters Papers, NYHS.

<sup>94</sup> John Burgoyne, *A state of the expedition from Canada, as laid before the House of Commons, by Lieutenant-General Burgoyne, And Verified By Evidence...* (London: J. Almon, 1780).

John Peters records in his hand-written defence that “the General gave Leave to Peters & others to return to Canada...” the night before Burgoyne’s surrender, and “700 went off to Canada with out Loss...” because it was believed the loyalists would be arrested as traitors and not treated as prisoners of war (see Chapter 4). Yet in the examination of Lt. Col. Kingston, Burgoyne asked a particularly leading question: “If any party did make its way to Canada, do you not suppose it must be that party of provincials that ran away while they were employed to repair roads, and that were never heard of afterwards?” Kingston answered that any who escaped were “likely to have been that party.” Since Peters had explicitly stated that he returned to Canada, this would likely have been considered a direct stab at his character, placing him in the ranks of deserters, not of wily servants to the Crown. Since no action was ever taken against Peters as a deserter these statements are puzzling, and may have been included simply to cast doubt on the loyalist character. Kingston further denigrates the loyalists as being “not disciplined” and comments that “A very great part of them were such as I should have placed very little dependence upon.”<sup>95</sup>

In Burgoyne’s lengthy “Review of the Evidence” he shares his own opinions of the “professed loyalists” in his army. In his estimation they were entirely unfit for military duty because the “various interests which influenced their actions rendered all arrangement of them impracticable.” His evaluation of the provincials under his command would undoubtedly enrage any American loyalist:

One man’s views went to the profit which he was to enjoy when his corps should be complete; another’s, to the protection of the district in which he resided; a third was wholly intent upon revenge against his personal enemies; and all of them were repugnant even to an idea of subordination. Hence the settlement [of] who should act as a private man, and who as an officer, or in whose corps either should be, was seldom satisfactorily made among themselves; and as surely as it failed, succeeded a reference to the Commander in Chief, which could not be put by, or delegated to another hand, without dissatisfaction, encrease or confusion, and generally a loss of such services as they were really fit for, viz. searching for cattle, ascertaining the

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 74, 88.

practicability of routes, clearing roads, and guiding detachments of columns upon the march.<sup>96</sup>

To Burgoyne the loyalists were tedious provincials who spent more time squabbling over the dubious honours of their junior ranks than they did fighting their common enemy. Even some of the best loyalists under his command were incapable of behaving like gentlemen soldiers, and suffered from the same ungovernable spirit as their rebel counterparts. He concludes his thoughts on the loyalists by undermining their avowed core principles and the entire basis for their claims on the British government. “I only maintain that the interests and the passions of the revolted Americans concenter in the cause of the Congress”, he writes, “and those of the Loyalists break and subdivide into various pursuits, with which the cause of the King has little or nothing to do.”<sup>97</sup> In other words, though the patriots might be rebels, they at least fought for a cause, while the loyalists fought for themselves. John Peters obviously had a particularly obstinate opponent in John Burgoyne.

Peters’ personal quarrel with Burgoyne continued for years, and while they both attacked one another for their roles in the defeat, Peters actually depended on Burgoyne’s attestation of his services to submit a formal claim to the British government. Peters was continually incensed at what he regarded as Burgoyne’s brusque treatment of him. The general had dishonoured Peters, but because of the gaping chasm of rank and culture that separated the two men, Peters could not take Burgoyne on alone. Nine years after Saratoga, Peters composed a letter asking for help from his “only Patron” Sir Guy Carleton.<sup>98</sup>

Guy Carleton, Lord Dorchester, had been the military governor of Quebec until Burgoyne’s promotion to command of the Saratoga campaign. Incensed at being passed over in favour of a subordinate officer, Carleton demanded to be recalled to Britain and

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<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.* In an important footnote to this passage, Burgoyne adds that some provincials “were sincere in their loyalty” and commends “Mr. Fistar, [Francis Pfister] who fell at Bennington, and Capt. Sherwood, who was forward in every service of danger to the end of the campaign.” Captain Justus Sherwood served under John Peters. Again, this must have struck Peters as a personal slight.

<sup>98</sup> John Peters to Sir Guy Carleton, July 10, 1786. John Peters Papers, NYHS.



was replaced by Sir Frederick Haldimand in 1778. Carleton was a great favourite among the loyalists, and though in and out of favour with the administration, he was one of the few British commanders who actively stood up for the refugees. Jonathan Odell lauded his “mild command” and many loyalists wrote to him upon his return to America in 1782 and afterwards, in the hopes of special consideration and assistance in redressing wrongs committed by other officers.<sup>99</sup>

The rough copy of Peters’ letter, stored in the archives of the New York Historical Society, is an emotionally charged document, full of redactions and rephrasing as Peters struggled to find the balance between assertiveness and impudence, deference and self-defeating timidity. Peters’ central claim was that he had “inlisted 643 Men” and yet “General Burgoyne did not deliver to me my Commission and I believe it was owing to the various disasters under which the royal Army laboured.”<sup>100</sup> Years after these events, however, Burgoyne still had not issued a certificate testifying to Peters’ rank and services. A signed commission from Burgoyne was essential proof of Peters’ activities in the war, without which he could not apply for an officer’s pension. Perhaps just as importantly, without the commission Peters could not receive public acknowledgement of his loyalty to the Crown. The lack of a commission was very likely an intentional insult, calculated to prevent any preferment of the former loyalist colonel. Burgoyne’s sin of omission in this case prevented Peters from even beginning his quest for political rebirth.

“I know myself under greater obligation to you than to all Mankind besides; this truth I have owned Since 1776 and will continue to own as long as I live” writes Peters, before arriving at his more bitter point. “I had full faith in the Promises of British Ministers and British Generals. Upon that faith I acted without expecting to meet with deception, neglect & contempt from those I served with my Mind, my Person & Property.” Here his tone changes sharply: “but, Sir, I have at last discovered that I was once blinded by the Dazle [sic] of British Honor vested in the hands of certain British Officers, whose maxim has been to make no Difference between evil Servants & good.”

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<sup>99</sup> Jonathan Odell, “Lord Dorchester and General Carleton” excerpt dated 6 Septemeber, 1804, but it is likely the passage was composed earlier. Page marked “22” Reel 1. MIC-Loyalist FC LFR .O3F3P3. UNBLC. For a biography of Sir Guy Carleton, see: Paul David Nelson, *General Sir Guy Carleton, Lord Dorchester: Soldier-Statesman of Early British Canada* (London: Associated University Presses, 2000) and Paul Revere Reynolds, *Guy Carleton: A Biography* (Toronto: Gage Publishers, 1980).

<sup>100</sup> John Peters to Sir Guy Carleton, July 10, 1786. John Peters Papers, 1770-1786. NYHS.

With a classical flourish meant to remind Carleton that Peters, though a provincial, was still a well-educated man, he alludes to the Catilinarian Conspiracy of ancient Rome, when “Cataline made use of Lentulus and of Cethagus, but it was to ruin his Country and not to save it...Why any Person should adopt the policy of Cataline to Support...British Honor cannot be Accounted for...” In this new conspiracy, Peters saw the loyalists in the role of Cataline’s unfortunate dupes, left behind in Rome to be executed by a vengeful Senate. It was a muddled analogy.<sup>101</sup> The lengthy letter continues with praise for Carleton and scorn for Burgoyne who despite several entreaties never signed the commission. Peters could only conclude these slights were “designed while in America...” “[Burgoyne] was fond of my services while he was to receive the Glory of it”, and now without Carleton’s help, Peters reported that he “shall despair and die in wretchedness with my numerous family.” Rather than simply end on such a pathetic or sympathetic note, Peters also drew on Carleton’s own potential piques and rivalries by including the Swiss-born General Frederick Haldimand, who replaced Carleton as Governor of Quebec in 1778, as another conspirator in the scheme to undo the loyalist. Peters charged that “while in Canada [Haldimand] said that he would take care & prevent me having half pay or any other favour from the King for no other Reason known, than that because he Supposed me to be the Author of the inclosed [sic] Petition to himself to be Signed by the Loyalists in Canada” writes Peters, “but I have reason to Suspect my greatest crime consisted in my being born in New England & not in a Hut in the Mountains of Switzerland...”<sup>102</sup> In 1786 Haldimand’s threat appeared to be coming to fruition, and serves again to show how personal honour and politics were inextricably linked in the loyalist refugee crisis.

Peters explained his feud with Haldimand in more detail in his narrative. After his escape from Saratoga, Peters returned to Quebec penniless, yet he and his men were owed a considerable sum of unpaid wages. When Haldimand refused to settle accounts

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<sup>101</sup> Both Sallust’s *The Conspiracy of Catiline* and Ben Johnson’s *Catiline, His Conspiracy* (1611) would have been available to Peters, and both agree that Catiline, Letulus, and Cethegus were immoral bankrupts and desperate criminals. The reference may also be an allusion to Joseph Galloway’s *Letters from Cicero to Catiline the Second. With corrections and explanatory notes*, (London, 1781), which was directed at the radical Charles Fox and used the same trope.

<sup>102</sup> John Peters to Sir Guy Carleton, July 10, 1786. John Peters Papers, 1770-1786. NYHS.

with Peters, the loyalist wrote to his uncle Rev. Samuel Peters in England for advice. The elder Peters managed to gain the ear of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord George Germain, who ordered Haldimand to address the issue. To Haldimand it must have seemed like a politicking breach of the chain of command, and Peters noted that “General Haldimand seemed to be offended, and accused me of complaining home against him.” Things got worse for Peters in 1781, when Haldimand reorganized the loyalists under his command at Quebec into “the Loyal Rangers.” John Peters writes in his narrative that while he was away exchanging prisoners, Haldimand placed Major Edward Jessup in command, and demoted Lt. Col. Peters to the rank of “Captain of Invalids.” He complained of “this cruel degrading change” but was never given a satisfactory answer. Later, when Peters was accused of writing the petition for the loyalists to settle at Cape Breton, rather than Haldimand’s choice of Bay Chaleurs in Quebec, the Swiss-born General “treated me with great indignity: I told him no man but the Commander in Chief should treat me so.” In the end, “General Haldimand refused a certificate of my Loyalty & Services, tho’ they had been so conspicuous for Ten Years past.” Peters also regarded the fact that his sons were overlooked for promotion as part of the same campaign against him.<sup>103</sup>

All of these disputes weighed heavily on Peters. As a gentleman he could not silently abide such treatment, especially considering what he had sacrificed for the British government. Yet his opponents were too powerful and his resources too limited to carry on a campaign like Joseph Galloway attempted. With both of his former commanding officers refusing to provide certificates on his behalf, Peters could not begin his political rebirth. His disfavour was also felt by his loyalist sons and his entire family. For as much as Peters cried out in defence of his own honour and that of the loyalists in general, he failed entirely. Peters died in 1788, never achieving the satisfaction he so desperately sought.<sup>104</sup>

The exiled loyalists experienced the trauma of defeat as a people adrift, as refugees caught between the nation that exiled them and a government that had, for some,

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<sup>103</sup> John Peter’s Narrative. August 1785, 9-11. John Peters Papers, NYHS.

seemingly betrayed them. The patriot press regarded the loyalists as gullible dupes who had been completely unmanned by their fear and greed. Some loyalists began to feel that the British were unworthy of their sacrifices, but many others did their best to defend their honour, uphold the justice of their cause, and assert their rights as worthy men within the empire. Most loyalist refugees agreed that a combination of wicked and ambitious colonists, raised in a republican, dissenting culture, had been victorious because of a weak and dysfunctional colonial administration and the defective manhood of the generals sent to quell the rebellion. The loyalists had done all they could in support of British arms, despite the charges of Burgoyne and Howe. To the refugees, the British government was responsible for losing America and the loyalists' estates. The King and Parliament had sacrificed the property and livelihoods of their loyal American subjects for peace, and the loyalists were determined to make the government understand its obligation and provide compensation. At the heart of this claim was the loyalists' appeal to their honour and manhood.

## Claims

In order to receive any kind of compensation from the British government, the loyalists first needed to make Parliament and the British people aware of the injustice of their situation. The refugees again found their champion spokesman in the former Pennsylvania Assemblyman Joseph Galloway, who while fighting his own battles with General William Howe, also published pamphlets which articulated the loyalist cause and presented solutions for restoring faith and honour between Britain and her American loyalists. His 1783 pamphlet, *Observations on the Fifth Article of the Treaty with America*, called on the British government to compensate the loyalists for their material losses. His argument hinged on the impossibilities of the fifth article of the Treaty of Paris which "recommended" that the American states return confiscated estates. Galloway argued that since the property had already been sold under the seals of the individual states, which were now recognized as legal by Britain through the treaty itself, it would be impossible to restore the actual estates. In any event, the "Loyalists, who are subject to those attainders and confiscations, can therefore of right, and in justice, look up only to Great Britain for a compensation." Any idea of returning to the United States to

purchase back their property was also delusional, because the loyalists would face the “implacable resentment” of their former adversaries, and would be subjected to “*every insult, and even death itself*. Besides,” Galloway asked, “where are men, who have forfeited all they possessed on earth, to find money to repurchase their property [?]” Galloway succinctly stated what most loyalists surely thought: that Britain had “purchased peace with the property of the attained Loyalists...”<sup>105</sup> Mary Beth Norton and Maya Jasanoff agree that the work of Galloway and others had a significant impact on British Parliamentarians who passed the “Compensation Act” in July 1783, which established the Loyalist Claims Commission.<sup>106</sup>

The Royal Commission on the Losses and Services of the American Loyalists is often seen as a remarkable moment in British imperial history. The sheer scale of compensating the loyalists for their losses, as well as providing free transportation, land grants, and provisions in the early years of settlement was unprecedented.<sup>107</sup> While the loyalists pointed to the British government’s compensation of those who suffered losses in the Jacobite rebellions as precedent, the situation of the American loyalists was unique in British history. The loyalists were not British citizens, but subjects. Even the wealthiest loyalist in the colonies could not vote for a Member of Parliament, and his rights within the empire were not entirely clear.<sup>108</sup> Nonetheless, most Parliamentarians understood that some restitution was necessary to maintain, as Galloway put it, “the social compact.”

The structure of the claims process, and the requirements demanded of individual claimants, favoured the formerly wealthy and connected loyalists. Literacy was a basic requirement, since claims had to be submitted in writing. Witness testimony was a vital component in the claims process and those loyalists with more extensive personal connections could produce prominent witnesses, like governors and generals, who were obviously taken seriously by the commissioners. In the first round of claims

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<sup>105</sup> Galloway, *Observations on the Fifth Article of the Treaty*, 10-12.

<sup>106</sup> Mary Beth Norton, *The British-Americans: The Loyalist Exiles in England, 1774-1789*. (Toronto: Little, Brown, and Company, 1972), 191-192. Jasanoff, *Liberty’s Exile*, 121.

<sup>107</sup> Jasanoff, *Liberty’s Exiles*, 121.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 120-123, 142.

investigations, loyalists had to personally attend a hearing in London. This disqualified thousands of people who lacked the means to travel and support themselves in England. In the end, both the commission in London and the later commission sent to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, were dominated by middling and wealthy white loyalist men.<sup>109</sup> Of the 3 225 claims fully examined by the commission, the vast majority were submitted by formerly landholding men, and of the 468 white women who submitted claims, most did so on behalf of deceased or absent husbands or fathers. Because of the nature of eighteenth century domestic roles, these women were often unable to provide accurate valuations for the lost property and received little restitution.<sup>110</sup> The compensation of the loyalists was not a recognition of their citizenship, but an acknowledgement by the commission of the important place of gentlemen patriarchs within the empire.

In the patriarchal world of the eighteenth century it is not surprising that the claims commission would favour landholding men, but even with their advantage, loyalist gentlemen chafed at the burden of proof placed on claimants by the commissioners' interrogations. For their part, the five men placed in charge of the commission were tasked with the unenviable chore of determining appropriate compensation for the loyalists while representing a deeply indebted imperial state reeling from the loss of vast territorial holdings. The initial Compensation Act included a deadline of March 24, 1784 for the loyalists to submit their claims. Because of the vast distances involved and the inability of many loyalists to travel to England to submit their testimony in person, the government enacted another claims commission to be held in British North America, with a deadline of May, 1786.<sup>111</sup> The sheer number of claims and the extensive supporting material created massive backlogs, but it also required a degree of bureaucratic due diligence on the part of the commissioners which some loyalists

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 134-136. There were of course illiterate claimants, who hired others to write claims on their behalf.

<sup>110</sup> Mary Beth Norton, "Eighteenth-Century American Women in War and Peace: The Case of the Loyalists," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 33, No. 3 (Jul., 1976): 389-390. Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, 131, 134-135. Jasanoff reports that of the 3225 claims, 468 were submitted by women, and only 47 were submitted by African Americans. Most black loyalists who claimed to have owned property prior to the war were dismissed as liars.

<sup>111</sup> Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, 131. Jasanoff reports that of the 3225 answered claims, 468 were submitted by women, and 47 by African Americans.

found insulting. A loyalist agent advised the commissioners that “Every mans [sic] claim be his Rank or Character what it will, ought to be enquired into as strictly as the lowest.”<sup>112</sup> This sort of egalitarian investigation was certainly prudent, but its disregard for the respect of rank and station disturbed some loyalist gentlemen. In keeping with their policy of due diligence, the commission sent a barrister named John Anstey as an envoy to the United States to investigate the situation loyalists faced during the conflict, and just as importantly, determine what things actually cost in the colonies at the outset of the war. Initially suspicious of the loyalist claims and narratives, Anstey’s findings confirmed their version of events.<sup>113</sup> Although the loyalists as a group tended to exaggerate the monetary value of their losses, there was actually very little outright fraud.<sup>114</sup>

Even with careful documentation and Anstey’s findings, the eventual compensation fell far below what the loyalist gentlemen had expected and hoped for, and some felt betrayed once again. To the horror of many loyalists, only losses suffered directly on account of their loyalty, and not due to the depredations of British soldiers, or from fire or other disasters, would be considered.<sup>115</sup> Merchants and professionals received a smaller percentage of their claims than landowners, likely because it was simply easier to determine the exact value of real estate as opposed to professional losses documented in inventories and account books. Regardless of occupation, the Pitt government determined that the British treasury could simply not afford to compensate the loyalists pound for pound. Instead, loyalists who bore arms would receive 40% of their accepted claims and everyone else was to receive 30%. In spite of Joseph Galloway’s passionate invocation of Britain’s “sacred obligations” and the sad reality he described of destitute loyalists dying “of broken hearts” while others were “driven by their extreme distress, into insanity, and from insanity, SUICIDE...” the average loyalist

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<sup>112</sup> Mary Beth Norton, *The British-Americans*, 194.

<sup>113</sup> L.F.S. Upton, “The Claims: The Mission of John Anstey” in Esmond Wright, ed. *Red, White, and True Blue: The Loyalists in the Revolution* (New York: AMS Press, 1976), 135-147.

<sup>114</sup> Norton, *The British-Americans*, 198-199. Jasonoff, *Liberty’s Exiles*, 134.

<sup>115</sup> Jasonoff, *Liberty’s Exiles*, 132-133. Norton, *The British-Americans*, 201.

gentleman received 37% of what he claimed.<sup>116</sup> This led even arch-loyalists like Peter Oliver to lament bitterly on the fact that they were “obliged to put up with every insult from this ungrateful people the English...” “Blessed are ye, who expecteth...nothing” he fumed, “for ye then will not be disappointed.”<sup>117</sup>

Because loyalists might only receive a third or less of the value of their lost estates, refugees had to look elsewhere for financial resuscitation. Most middling and elite exiles found the best chances for financial recovery in the new colonies of British North America where they received generous land grants, military pensions, and where they could vie for government offices, and practice their former professions as lawyers, physicians, or merchants.<sup>118</sup> While most loyalists could not rely on the claims for their economic salvation, there was a moral weight embedded in the claims process that went beyond simple financial restitution and reward. In many ways the claims provided a public forum for individual loyalists to have a direct conversation with their government through the submission of narratives, wherein they could also account for the more intangible losses suffered in consequence of their loyalty.

The composition of narratives was a chance for loyalists to rebuild their own sense of honourable manhood by presenting their suffering and other experiences as marks of distinction. Collectively, the claims formed a macro-narrative that all white loyalists could share. As Keith Mason argues, even with the repetitive “banality” of the language found in the claims, they indicate a common loyalist identity which was particularly strong among the elites.<sup>119</sup> And while most narratives and depositions dwell on the trauma of insults, displacement, and suffering families, these stories were offered up not as expressions of helpless emasculation, but as proof of a manly willingness to

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<sup>116</sup> Norton, *The British-Americans*, 209, 212, 216, 219. Joseph Galloway, *The Claim of the American Loyalists Reviewed and Maintained Upon Incontrovertible Principles of Law and Justice* (London, 1788), v, vii.

<sup>117</sup> Peter Oliver, July 1784, quoted in Egerton, *The Royal Commission*, 31.

<sup>118</sup> Loyalists found other places of refuge, from the Caribbean, to the Africa, to Great Britain, and even in the ranks of the East India Company. For the most complete summation of the global nature of the loyalist diaspora, see Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*.

<sup>119</sup> Mason, “The American Loyalist Problem,” 45.



undergo any trial for the sake of loyalty.<sup>120</sup> These personal narratives and the macro-narrative also helped loyalists accept and account for their role in the defeat.

Most narratives submitted to the claims commission were very short, amounting to little over a page, summarizing the claimants' experiences, services, and losses. These were accompanied by witness statements and supporting documentation such as certificates from British officers, deeds, records of confiscation from the American states, and other types of documentation.<sup>121</sup> Some loyalists, such as Joel Stone, John Peters, James Moody, and John Connolly, penned much longer memoirs to add to their case.<sup>122</sup> Moody and Connolly even went so far as to publish their narratives for the London print market in the hopes of garnering popular support for their own claim and the loyalist cause in general.<sup>123</sup>

Memorials submitted to the claims commissioners tended to follow a standard template found in a helpful pamphlet published in 1783. The anonymously authored pamphlet was meant to guide the refugee claimants through the process, and provided instructions for the memorial format, items to include in inventories and accounts of

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<sup>120</sup> cf. Knouff, "Masculinity, Race, and Citizenship."

<sup>121</sup> Microfilm copies of the Loyalist Claims at the Archives of Ontario were used for this study, "Loyalist Claims Diffusion Material, D12." In addition to locating the claims of specific loyalists already discussed in previous chapters, a random sampling was taken to test the consistency of the standard format of the memorials. A conveniently transcribed, published, and now digitized collection of loyalist claims handled by Daniel Parker Coke, M.P. (1745-1825), was utilized which allowed for basic text mining and further confirmed my conclusions. Hugh Edward Egerton, *The Royal Commission on the Losses and Services of the American Loyalists, 1783-1785* (Oxford, 1915).

<sup>122</sup> Joel Stone's Narrative was originally housed in the Archives of Ontario, but is conveniently transcribed in James J. Talman, *Loyalist Narratives of Upper Canada*, 323-332. James Moody's narrative appeared in two editions. The body of the document is unchanged, although the second edition includes testimonials of prominent officers and government officials supporting Moody's version of events. For this study, the second edition was used. James Moody, *Lieut. James Moody's Narrative of his Exertions and Sufferings in the Cause of Government...* (London: Richardson and Urquhart, 1783); John Connolly, *A Narrative of the Transactions, Imprisonment, and Sufferings of John Connolly, An American Loyalist...* (London, 1783). John Peters' narrative, as already cited, can be found in the John Peters Papers, NYHS.

<sup>123</sup> The usefulness of these longer narratives can be seen in the case of James Moody who submitted his printed narrative as part of his official claim and swore "that it contains a just & true Acc<sup>t</sup> of his Loyalty & exertions in behalf of the British Gov<sup>t</sup>." His two witnesses General James Robertson and Governor William Franklin both mentioned the published narrative in their witness depositions and testified to its accuracy. On account of Moody's exceptional services as a loyalist, his witnesses, and his dramatic narrative, he was rewarded a far greater compensation than others received, and was marked for preferment in his resettlement in Nova Scotia. Egerton, *The Royal Commission*, 133-134; Shenstone, *So ObstinateLY Loyal*, 149-152.

losses, along with stipulations for acquiring written witness testimonials. Included in the suggested language for the memorials are basic expressions of humility which followed eighteenth century conventions. Most gentlemen would have been aware of the expected displays of deference, so it is interesting that these instructions were included. Perhaps the loyalist agents feared that many refugees might let their provincial manners or their sense of outrage and assertiveness seep through and embarrass the loyalists' cause. In any event, nearly all of the claimants followed the pamphlet's rubric and began their memorials by stating that they "*Humbly Sheweth...*"<sup>124</sup> The longer narratives penned by loyalists expanded on this customary expression of humility. John Connolly, in perhaps the lengthiest loyalist narrative published in the 1780s, apologized for any appearance of "unavoidable egotism" and hoped it "may be overlooked in mercy to the misfortunes of one who is at least conscious of having acted with good intentions, and from principles which he believed were descriptive of a loyal subject, an honest man, and a man of honour." James Moody likewise averred that though he was once "a plain, contented farmer" it was only through "the importunity of his friends" that compelled him to compose his narrative. He at least would keep his tale brief, rather "than to make a pompous display of any supposed merit of his own." John Peters characterized his narrative as a response to another gentleman's queries, thus he did not intend "to boast of my Exploits by complying with your request: but, to relate my Story in Simplicity." Juxtaposed to the professions of humility, these gentlemen loyalists portrayed themselves as remarkable men who were sharper, wittier, and more honourable than their ragged adversaries.<sup>125</sup>

One of the most striking aspects of loyalist narratives is the consistent elements that appear regardless of the various forms they took, whether terse official claims or the longer narratives penned by some gentlemen, or even personal memoirs written years or decades after events. In addition to the humility described above, the narratives outlined an idyllic pre-war existence and glowing future prospects; they told of the loyalists' grim

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<sup>124</sup> "A Loyalist," *Directions to the American Loyalists in order to Enable them to State their Cases...to the Honourable Commissioners* (London: 1783), 23.

<sup>125</sup> Connolly, *Narrative of the Transactions*, 1-2; Moody, *Lieut. James Moody's Narrative*, 1-2, 4; Peters' narrative, 1, John Peters Papers, NYHS.

determination in the face of overwhelming odds; and they described episodes of endurance, suffering, and loss. Some loyalists wrote about their heroic acts of bravery in their battles with the rebels while others recounted their wit and wiles as they outsmarted the ham-fisted agents of Congress.<sup>126</sup> The narratives are doubtlessly biased towards the loyalists' version of events, and therefore the details need to be treated circumspectly. In general, however, the narratives and memorials of loyalist men depict two tropes of the suffering male. Some loyalists painted themselves as refined martyrs who had been set upon by the unruly, unwashed mob. Other loyalists portrayed themselves as wily foxes that outwitted their adversaries, and though they evacuated with the British, remained morally undefeated. The most gripping loyalist narratives went beyond the templates, and showcased adventurous men with the requisite blend of strength and sensibility thought to be possessed by the first class of gentlemen. This display of valued masculine traits exhibited the worthiness of individual loyalists and was intended to compel British readers to consider their obligations to the authors and their cause. These narratives were attempts by the loyalists to achieve the basic function of honour as a claim-right: the right to be respected and appreciated by others.

Loyalist authors rarely missed an opportunity to display their own masculine worthiness in their narratives. Their descriptions of an idealized pre-Revolutionary colonial world include portraits of idealized men, diligently growing their fortunes and providing for their families as honest and genteel patriachs until everything is destroyed by "the dreadful horrors of unnatural War."<sup>127</sup> James Moody was "a happy farmer, without a wish or an idea of any other enjoyment, than that of making happy, and being happy, with a beloved wife, and three promising children." Furthermore, he was a moral and independent family man "Clear of debt, and at ease in his professions." Joel Stone, from a more modest background, was on the make, rising from a farmer's son to a successful merchant, who, even at a young age entered a partnership with "a Merchant of great trade". His dignity and work ethic was visible in the "confidence and esteem of all

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<sup>126</sup> Mary Beth Norton, *The British-Americans*, 198. Norton describes the consistent format of submitted claims, as well as a few common elements, as does Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, 132-133. Also see Norton, *The British-Americans*, 130-154 (chapter 5), for a longer discussion of recurring tropes in loyalists writings, which recur in the personal narratives as well.

<sup>127</sup> Talman, "Joel Stone's Narrative," 324.

my Neighbours and the public in general...” No retired gentleman, Stone was building his fortune, and “by dint of an unwearied diligence and a close application to trade I found the number of my Friends and customers daily increasing and a fair prospect of long happiness arose to my sanguine mind...”<sup>128</sup> Both John Connolly and John Peters spoke of their advanced education – Peters attended Yale and Connolly “received as perfect an education as that country could afford.” Wherever these two settled on the frontier, civilization seemed to spring up around them. Connolly helped establish new settlements in western Virginia and valiantly assisted Lord Dunmore in Virginia’s war with the Shawnee in 1774. Peters left Connecticut for New Hampshire where he established mills and farms, then moved west of the Connecticut River into New York and was “appointed by Governor Tryon to be Colonel of the Militia, Justice of the Peace, Judge of Probates, Register of the County, Clerk of the Courts; and Judge of the Court of Common Pleas: Here I was in easy circumstances, and as Independent as my mind ever wish’d.”<sup>129</sup> The independence, respectability, and honour these men displayed marked them as ideal colonial gentlemen and patriarchs.

Other gentlemen loyalists relied on witness testimonies to provide information on their estates as well as to support their claims of worth, dignity, and advancing careers. Nehemiah Marks testified on behalf of Amos Botsford of Connecticut that “he lived as genteely as any Man in New Haven.” Moreover, “He seemed to be in full as much Business as any young Man of the Profession and seemed arising very fast.” Another witness, Daniel Lymans agreed, testifying that Botsford “was in considerable Practice [and] Was amongst the first Lawyers...had the fairest Prospects, he lived very well and seemed to be laying up Money.”<sup>130</sup> These were subjective observations that described appearances of wealth and gentility, but even then such witness testimonies were important in determining not only what property the loyalists owned before the war, but also their place within their former communities, and the power they broadcasted by their

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<sup>128</sup> Moody, *Lieut. James Moody’s Narrative*, 2. Talman, “Joel Stone’s Narrative,” 323-324.

<sup>129</sup> Connolly, *Narrative of the Transactions*, 2-8. Peters’ narrative, 2, John Peters Papers, NYHS.

<sup>130</sup>“The Memorial of Amos Botsford,” Loyalist Claims Diffusion Material, Archives of Ontario, (hereafter abbreviated as Loyalist Claims, AofO), AO12.1 b1155, 54.

homes and finery. Simply having witnesses testify on a man's behalf was evidence of his connections, influence, and standing. Ideally witnesses were to attend and give their statements in person, but written and notarized statements were also acceptable. Perhaps one of the most interesting witness statements was submitted on behalf of Rev. Samuel Peters of Hebron, Connecticut. Written by Charles Wattles, a former neighbour of Peters, the letter contains details which attested to the character and property of the Anglican clergyman. Wattles described "Priest Peters" as "a Gentleman greatly beloved by all his Acquaintances" who "built a grand house on his Estate" and "lived in a genteel and splendid Manner." Though a former friend, Wattles, like the majority of Connecticut, supported the Revolution, and therefore his assertions that Peters and his family were "industrious and indefatigable to Subject America under the power of the King of Great Britain" must have held significant weight. Indeed, a letter of support from a man who signed off with "I shall live and die your political Enemy" underscores the fact that the loyalists relied on former contacts in their homelands, be they friend or foe, for evidence to secure their claims.<sup>131</sup>

Once the loyalist gentlemen had established that they were either men of property or had been on the sure path to prosperity, they moved on to describe their stalwart character as loyalists. Joel Stone declared that he "was fixed in my resolves rather to forego all I could call my property in the world than flinch from my duty as a subject to the best of Sovereigns [and] sooner to perish in the general Calamity than abet in the least degree the enemies of the British Constitution." Connolly "decided instantly, and resolved to exert every faculty in defence of the royal cause;" while Moody "resolved to do any thing, and to be any thing, not inconsistent with integrity – to fight, to bleed, to die – rather than live to see the venerable Constitution of his country totally lost..." Amos Botsford was less florid in his declaration of sentiments, merely stating that through his loyalty he "rendered himself obnoxious to his Country" while most other claimants simply listed the sufferings they experienced "on account of" or "in consequence" of

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., AO13.42.B2337 ("Copy of a Letter referred to in the Memorial") Charles Wattles to Edward Thorp. July 24, 1783.

their loyalty.<sup>132</sup> Like their descriptions of property and the idyllic past, the refugees' expressions of their undying loyalty fit a common pattern with few significant variations. A picture of an archetypal loyalist gentleman was coming into focus.

At this point, most loyalist narratives turn to a discussion of the insults, losses, and attacks they suffered. In another context, these would have been confessions of masculine failure, but the wounded patriarchs were sharing their misfortunes to both highlight the extent of the suffering they were willing to endure, and to make the claim that this suffering was on behalf of the King. Munson Jarvis described his experience of being unable "to supply his Family with meat, Drink or Clothes" and then being forced to leave "his Family behind to the mercy of the Rebels who they stript of every necessary of Life." Timothy Hierlihy's "Wife, and nine Children were left in a great Measure destitute of the necessaries of Life" on account of his political choice, while Lt. Hugh Fraser's family was "stripp'd of every thing by Gen'l Gates's Army"<sup>133</sup> Edward Jessup's career as a loyalist officer left his "Large family...exceedingly distressed by means of the Loss of his property..."<sup>134</sup> Such examples fill page after page in the claims and narratives. Though these men had followed their conscience and their King, they had ruined their households and their status as providers and patriarchs. Applying the paternal analogy of the King as the father of his people, the loyalists' dishonour was the King's as well, since he and his government were unable to protect them.

In addition to losses and suffering, the loyalists also went to great lengths to describe their services to the crown, though not all loyalists had to bear arms to be considered a worthy servant of the King. Men like Amos Botsford, Evert Bancker, and Joshua Loring served as government agents in a variety of tasks from supplying soldiers to surveying and allocating lands for refugees. In what must have been one of the more eyebrow-raising narratives, Dr. Isaac Moseley described how he and his confederates

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<sup>132</sup> Talman, "Joel Stone's Narrative," 324. Connolly, *Narrative of the Transactions*, 10. Moody, *Lieut. James Moody's Narrative*, 3. Loyalist Claims. AO 12.1 b1155, 54. AofO.

<sup>133</sup> Loyalist Claims. Munson Jarvis, AO 12.1.B1155, 41. Timothy Hierlihy. AO121 B1155, 28. AofO.

"Memorial of Lieut. Hugh Fraser," in Egerton, *The Royal Commission*, 32.

<sup>134</sup> "Memorial of Edward Jessup," London, 29 March, 1785. Edward Jessup Papers, FC LFR. J4E3P3 Reel 1. UNBLC.

spent the war disguised as patriots in Connecticut, all the while delivering shipments of provisions into the hands of lurking British cruisers.<sup>135</sup> For many of the wealthiest gentlemen loyalists it was enough that they had forfeited their estates and became refugees. Clergymen like Jonathan Boucher and grandees such as former Governor Thomas Hutchinson of Massachusetts lived out the war in England, yet worked to influence government policy as best they could.<sup>136</sup> Other loyalist officers, who served under arms but did not see much action, distinguished themselves by obeying orders and keeping their men in line. Such officers found a written testimony from a General added significant weight to their loyalist claims.<sup>137</sup>

Loyalist narratives occasionally include tales of gallantry and heroic resistance to rebel mobs. These episodes added memorable drama to the narratives that could help a loyalists' claim, as well as display the refugee's martial prowess and brave audacity. John Peters describes his actions as a feeling gentleman warrior who, when he was run-through with a bayonet, realized his opponent was an "Old School fellow & Playmate and a Couzin of my Wife's: Tho his Bayonet was in my Body, I felt regret at being obliged to destroy him." When a rebel interloper threatened John Connolly with a pistol to his head in his own home, the veteran declared that "I had been so long learning to despise danger, and acquire fortitude, that [I] was not easily to be intimidated." In a scene worthy of a modern action film, Connolly grapples with his armed opponent while briefly fending off another twenty rebels who rush in.<sup>138</sup> Such super-human feats are rare in the narratives, and these British-American lions also presented themselves as wily foxes. Peters describes how he tricked his enemies by leading them into "an Ambuscade whereby [the

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<sup>135</sup> Loyalist Claims. Isaac Moseley. AO12.2.B1155. 65-73. AO.

<sup>136</sup> See Anne Y. Zimmer, *Jonathan Boucher: Loyalist in Exile* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978), 196; Bernard Bailyn, *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1974), 274-330.

<sup>137</sup> A good example is that of Frederick Haldimand's attestation of Major Edward Jessup, wherein he "certifies" that the loyalist "acquitted Himself until His Corps was disbanded, in every respect, to my entire Satisfaction. I beg leave therefore to recommend Him as worthy the Protection of Government, not only as a Loyalist who has forfeited considerable Property by His early & steady Attachment to the Royal Cause, but as a Zealous, Active, and deserving Officer." No particulars were needed in this case and many others like it. Attestation of Frederick Haldimand, March 20, 1785. Jessup Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>138</sup> Peters' narrative, 6, John Peters Papers, NYHS. Connolly, *Narrative of the Transactions*, 15-16.

British] took and killed near 150 Rebels.” John Connolly explains how the local revolutionaries prevailed on him to convince the Native tribes on the frontier to join the rebellion. While he did indeed go speak to the various Native leaders at Fort Pitt, he “secretly frustrated the machinations of the Republicans, while I received their thanks, and procured assurances from the Indian chiefs to support his Majesty, at all events, as his Majesty’s most faithful friends and auxiliaries...”<sup>139</sup>

Perhaps the most gripping tales of sly and stealthy loyalist heroics are found in James Moody’s narrative. Indeed, Moody portrays himself as a loyalist avenger, slinking behind the enemy lines to intercept Washington’s dispatches, capture cruel committeemen, and rescue imprisoned loyalists – all while maintaining the moral rectitude of a gentleman. Moody’s tales were so fantastic that the second edition of his printed narrative included affidavits from a variety of respectable commanders and gentlemen to assure the reader of the narrative’s truth. In a particularly dashing sequence of events, Moody attempts to gain access to a jail in some unnamed “country town” to free a captive loyalist. He first poses as a patriot soldier, delivering one of his own men as a prisoner to the jail. When that fails because of a standing order to refuse entry to anyone after dark, Moody tries to cow the jail-keeper by announcing who he really was, and warning the guards that “I have a strong party with me, and if you do not this moment deliver up your keys, I will instantly pull down your house about your ears.” His men then make the “Indian war-whoop” and the jailor “obsequiously conducted Moody to the dungeon.”<sup>140</sup>

It is unclear what impact these tales of heroics and suffering had on the wider British public. The loyalists were a topic of parliamentary debate, and there were charitable societies established for the relief of the poorest refugees, including black loyalists.<sup>141</sup> Perhaps the best evidence for the resonance of the loyalist macro-narrative of stoic, honourable men, who endured the loss of their families and fortunes, can be glimpsed in a poem composed by the English gentlewoman Mariana Starke, the author of

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<sup>139</sup> Peters’ narrative, 3, John Peters Papers, NYHS. Connolly, *Narrative of the Transactions*, 15-17.

<sup>140</sup> Moody, *Lieut. James Moody’s Narrative*, 16-17.

<sup>141</sup> Jasanoff, *Liberty’s Exiles*, 128-129.



some of the first travel guides to France and Italy.<sup>142</sup> In *The Poor Soldier; An American Tale: Founded on a Recent Fact* (1789), Starke tells the story of Charles Short, a “Carolina loyalist.” Starke’s sentimental poem follows the standard loyalist narrative pattern exactly, with the only real innovation being the introduction of a feeling young gentlewoman named Felicia who sets out to save the loyalist from his misery. Felicia first comes across Short begging in the street, who “A Soldier’s garb the mournful Object wore/ A wooden-leg, stern Honour’s badge, he bore/ Dire Famine in his hollow cheek was seen/ But placid Resignation mark’d his mien.”<sup>143</sup> Short has lost everything, but accepts his lot with a clear conscience, knowing that he has done right. Once Felicia learns how this former gentleman came to such a pitiable condition, she cannot help but echo the loyalists’ cry:

Ungrateful England! Shall the Man whose blood  
Flow’d, at thy bidding, in a copious flood;  
Who left his happy Cot, his fair domains,  
To war for thee on Carolina’s Plains,  
Shall he in vain solicit thy relief,  
And die from meagre want and pining grief?<sup>144</sup>

Short’s career began in a golden land of plenty, where he minded his “fruitful Farm”, and lived the patriarchal dream with his faithful “Tenants” and “pure Wedlock’s hallow’d joys”. Then came the “deathful banner” of war at which “domestic Comfort fled/ And dark suspicion came in Concord’s stead/ The Brother now against Brother rose/ And dearest Friends were turn’d to deadliest Foes.” Short chooses loyalty “to my Prince and Albion’s interest true” and joins the British army, eventually evacuating his whole family to New York. There he is met by unspeakable tragedy when his family is burned alive in their home by marauding Hessians. Left “Unman’d, distracted, void of all relief, Silent [Short] stood, a monument of grief.” After this trauma Short fights recklessly for the British, until he mournfully comes across his rebel brother dying on the battlefield.

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<sup>142</sup> For some background on Mariana Starke, see Jeanne Moskal, “Politics and the Occupation of a nurse in Mariana Starke’s *Letters from Italy*” in Amanda Gilroy, *Romantic Geographies: Discourses on Travel, 1775-1844* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 150-164.

<sup>143</sup> Mariana Starke, *The Poor Soldier; An American Tale: Founded on a Recent Fact* (London: J. Walter, 1789), 2.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

With all of his family dead and his world destroyed, Short is finally wounded and crippled on the battlefield. The shattered former gentleman travels to England but is ignored by his former commanders, until Felicia uses her resources and influence to give the poor soldier a comfortable place to die.<sup>145</sup>

*The Poor Soldier* is more than likely a well-designed piece of fiction, intended to jerk tears from a feeling, genteel audience. Written after the conclusion of the Claims Commission's work, it would have been of little political use.<sup>146</sup> Yet the narrative described in the poem would have been recognizable to any loyalist. The fact that it was penned by a young English gentlewoman indicates that the macro-narrative of the loyalists was known and even had an impact on the wider public. The character is a good, honourable man, who did everything that was expected of him as a gentleman, husband, and as a loyal and brave soldier. For his virtues he is rewarded with nothing but tragedy and abandonment. It was a perfect encapsulation of the loyalists' self-perception. As late as 1797 the exiled Reverend Jonathan Boucher brooded in his history of the Revolution that "Loyalty and loyal men gained nothing but honour, either by their superior prowess, or superior skill."<sup>147</sup>

Enduring losses and suffering became marks of honour for loyalists, but the strain of the privations meant that not all loyalist gentlemen could live up to the idealized standard of Mariana Starke or the loyalists' own narratives. The longing to rebuild lost fortunes and provide for a family led some loyalists into deeply questionable behaviour. As previously stated, there were very few cases of outright fraud, but they did happen. In the most glaring example, Frederick Dalziel Smyth claimed to own an estate in Maryland, until it was brought to the attention of the commissioners that he was a mere renter. Caught in his lie before the commission he "confess'd that he had been very disingenuous", admitted his shame, and was denied any compensation.<sup>148</sup> While loyalists

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<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 9, 11, 18-19, 24, 33-34.

<sup>146</sup> I have not been able to find any record of a loyalist named Charles Short from North or South Carolina.

<sup>147</sup> Jonathan Boucher, *A View to the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1967 reprint of 1797 publication), xx.

<sup>148</sup> Egerton, ed. *The Royal Commission*, 128. Also discussed in Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, 134, n80. In total there were only nine cases of fraud which disqualified loyalists out of 3225 claims.

worked to prevent individual frauds from tainting the claims process in general, some refugees actively cast doubt on the testimonies and claims of others for their own personal benefit. Just prior to the evacuation of Charleston in 1783, Robert Bayard and some of his fellow New York merchants who had interests in the southern colonies, petitioned the British commanders to return rebel property, including slaves who had fled to the British for the promise of freedom, in the hopes of mollifying the victors and restoring their own lost estates. They assured Lieutenant General Alexander Leslie that the loyalists who were carrying property out of South Carolina did so on “the specious pretense of retaliation for losses and injuries, which perhaps, on investigation, would be found utterly destitute of existence.” Furthermore, returning the escaped slaves to their former masters could hardly be considered unjust since it would in fact be an act of “tender Sympathy to commiserate the condition of the Negroes, who, although reduced to Slavery in this Country, are entitled to humanity, which forbids the separation of them from their kindred.” The wealthy loyalists’ petition was rejected outright by Leslie who wrote to Guy Carleton that he could never hand over “Negroes, who having claimed our protection have borne arms in our service or otherwise rendered themselves obnoxious to the resentment of their former masters, and the severity of Rebel Laws...”<sup>149</sup> Though Bayard and his fellow gentlemen saw no problem in abandoning the most vulnerable refugees, it evidently struck the British commanders as a dishonourable proposition. Throughout the peace negotiations Carleton stood by the British promises of freedom to the Black Loyalists in spite of Congressional and white loyalist pressure.<sup>150</sup>

Of all the sources of dishonour that haunted loyalist refugees during the claims process, the spectre of bankruptcy was the most omnipresent. The expense of exile and the debts they incurred along the way led some gentlemen to take drastic measures to avoid both the public shame of destitution and debtors’ prison. Some loyalists were

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<sup>149</sup> Robert Bayard et al to Lt. Gen Alexander Leslie, “The Memorial and humble representation of divers Loyal Inhabitants of South Carolina.” Undated. Lt. Gen. Alexander Leslie to Sir Guy Carleton, October 10, 1782. Public Records of Great Britain, North America, SC, 397-403/CO 5/O16. Microfilm Copies, D.B. Weldon Library, University of Western Ontario.

<sup>150</sup> For an lively narrative account of Carleton’s position during the negotiations of the evacuation of New York with Washington, see: Simon Schama, *Rough Crossings: Britain, The Slaves, and the American Revolution* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2005), 145-150.

confined for insolvency, while the claims show evidence of at least two loyalist women who were abandoned by bankrupt husbands who fled rather than go to prison.<sup>151</sup> The loyalist gentlemen were in England seeking compensation so they could restore their place as honourable patriarchs, and yet the drawn out nature of the claims process brought more than one loyalist family to ruin.

The experiences of the formerly wealthy New England lawyer Joshua Chandler provide an example of how compounded family misfortunes and tragedies could lead an otherwise respectable loyalist gentleman into personal dishonour. Chandler was described by the early twentieth-century historian Franklin Dexter as one of the most prominent men of New Haven, from an ancient and established New England dynasty. Among his many other duties, Chandler even sat as the chairman for the local Committee of Correspondence in the early years of the imperial crisis, but because of “conscientious motives” declared his loyalty to the King and willingly “accepted the consequent suspicion and obloquy”.<sup>152</sup> Chandler and his family left with General William Tryon’s forces during their destructive raid in 1779, an infamous act of desertion reported as far afield as Philadelphia.<sup>153</sup> Indeed, Dexter writes that Chandler’s political death in the community clung to his son, John Chandler, whose legal “career was blighted by the opprobrium of the family record.”<sup>154</sup>

Joshua Chandler spent the rest of the American Revolution, like so many other refugees, in New York, and with a “Final and Everlasting Farewell of my Native Country”, he and his family evacuated in October 1783, bound for Nova Scotia. They experienced a “Terrible Passage” where rough seas “swept off all our Stock” destroying all the property they were able to salvage from New York. Meanwhile his wife “was overcome with the Passage.” Upon arriving in Nova Scotia she “languished, mourned and Died in about 3 weeks” as much from despair as her illness, Chandler suggested. Despite

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<sup>151</sup> Jasanoff, *Liberty’s Exiles*, 126-127.

<sup>152</sup> Franklin B. Dexter, *New Haven Loyalists*, (New Haven: New Haven Colony Historical Society, 1918), 38-39.

<sup>153</sup> *The Pennsylvania Packet*, July 22, 1779.

<sup>154</sup> Dexter, *New Haven Loyalists*, 39.

his loss, the wounded patriarch was determined to regain some of his former wealth, and like many other loyalist gentlemen made the expensive and risky journey to England only to be bitterly disappointed at the small compensation he received in the form of a quarterly pension.<sup>155</sup>

When Chandler returned to his new home in Digby, Nova Scotia in 1787 he was still in the process of arguing his claim, and therefore took passage with his family to St. John, New Brunswick to meet with the visiting commissioners. The events of this ill-fated voyage were widely recorded in the American press: a late winter storm blew in and “the vessel was cast upon a rocky shore...and soon beat to pieces”. Chandler’s son “drowned in attempting to reach the shore...his father [Joshua] and sister perished with fatigue and cold, after wandering several hours in the deep snow...” Perhaps out of respect for the dead, or perhaps due to the common infamy of prominent men like Chandler, the reports mentioned that he had been the Justice of the Peace for New Haven, and had recently returned from England, but made no mention of his wartime allegiance.<sup>156</sup> The storm took the lives of Chandler and two of his children, but it also destroyed the documents Chandler intended to present to the commissioners. A later family biographer recorded that the shipwreck dashed the hopes of the remaining Chandler heirs, who without proof of losses, could not make a proper claim.<sup>157</sup> Chandler had failed as patriarch and provider for his family.

If that was not enough woe to strike a refugee family, a year after the disaster Chandler’s son-in-law, Amos Botsford, another prominent New Haven loyalist, received a letter from the Reverend Samuel Peters which revealed a serious stain on the deceased gentleman’s honour which, had he survived, could have jeopardized his attempts at political rebirth. The loyalist clergyman opened with the customary ministerial duties and

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<sup>155</sup> Joshua Chandler to Charles Chauncey, London, April 13, 1784 transcribed in George Chandler, ed., *The Descendants of William and Annis Chandler*, 254.

<sup>156</sup> The story of Joshua Chandler’s shipwreck and death was recorded in at least nine American newspapers. *Connecticut Courant*, April 9, 1787; *Middlesex Gazetteer*, April 9, 1787; *Massachusetts Gazette*, April 13, 1787; *New-Hampshire Spy*, April 13, 1787; *New-York Packet*, April 13, 1787; *Salem Mercury*, April 14, 1787; *Pennsylvania Packet*, April 16, 1787; *Pennsylvania Evening Herald*, April 18, 1787; *Spooner’s Vermont Journal*, April 30, 1787.

<sup>157</sup> Chandler, ed., *The Descendants*, 254.

attempted to assuage Botsford's sadness and make sense of the inexplicable misfortune inflicted on a good and loyal family. Peters, alluding to a passage in the Gospel of Luke, reminded Botsford that "those Men on Whom the tower of Siloam fell were not sinners above all Men nor does the Catastrophe of Chandler & his Children prove them less righteous for their Loyalty, than [Connecticut Governor] Trumbull for his Rebellion, tho' he died in Bed, without feeling the Calamities rising from the Hail, Snow & Winds – The Wiseman & fool die alike & turn to the Worms..." But this was not simply a letter of condolence. Though the "Sad Story on the Shore of New Brunswick...compel the Tears of Sorrow from those that feel human woes", Peters alleged that Chandler had dishonoured himself by neglecting to repay his lawful debts.<sup>158</sup>

The problem began in England when Chandler failed to repay his debt to a "Mr. Bean." Following the standard practice, "an attachment was obtained" but "Mr. Chandler confined himself to his House to avoid a Prison." The threat of being tossed in jail as a bankrupt caused Chandler to become "almost delirious" and his son went to Peters for help. A simple but telling example of how bankruptcy was understood in this period is revealed in a letter from the loyalist agent Charles Cooke, who informed his client Joel Stone that their close friend "Sandall was a Bankrupt."<sup>159</sup> Bankruptcy was not simply a business matter, but a stain on a man's character and even became a part of his public identity.

Peters went on to explain that "I went three miles in a night of snow & rain & paid the Debt to Mr. Bean". The good reverend then "pacified the mind of Mr. Chandler & recommended him to Mr. Isaac Scott, a Marchant [sic] for Goods on Credit." Peters, Scott, and Chandler worked out a deal for the repayment to come from Chandler's loyalist pension. Peters would remain Chandler's agent in the dealings, but for some reason, Chandler then appointed another man, a Mr. Cook, as his agent under a similar deal, without informing Peters. To add another layer of duplicity to these transactions, Peters alleged that Chandler received an advance on his pension to the amount of £240

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<sup>158</sup> Samuel Peters to Amos Botsford, Feb. 10, 1788. Botsford Family Papers, UNBLC. The story of the Tower of Siloam can be found in Luke 13: 1-5 King James Bible.

<sup>159</sup> Charles Cooke to Joel Stone, April 4<sup>th</sup> 1789. Joel Stone Papers, Toronto Public Library Collection, UNBLC.

which he kept, leaving Cook, Peters, and Scott saddled with a substantial loss. Chandler “suddenly went off” to Halifax and it was only then that “Cook, Scott & I found out the Secret of all these Manoeuvres.”<sup>160</sup> It was a revelation of shameful proportions. Eighteenth century law and popular opinion tended to weigh whether bankruptcy was due to an unfortunate and unforeseeable sequence of events beyond the power of an individual, or whether it was due to a man’s incompetence, or worse still, his malfeasance. Both varieties of bankruptcy brought shame, but the behaviour of Chandler, though distressed by his losses, was in keeping with the dishonourable bankrupt who would hide or flee rather than face the consequences of his actions. The writings of the seventeenth-century dramatist and pamphleteer Thomas Dekker neatly summed up the distinction in British law. The fraudulent or “politick bankrupt,” “after he hath gotten into his hands so much of other mens goods or money, as will fill him to the upper deck, away he sayles with it, and politickly runnes himself on ground, to make the world believe he had suffered a shipwreck.” In the eighteenth century, sympathy for unfortunate debtors was common, but Chandler’s behaviour revealed him to be a schemer and a cheat.<sup>161</sup>

Peters concludes by calling on Botsford, as Chandler’s “Heir and Son in Law”, to settle the debt. “I might have complained of this to the commissioners & perhaps caused them to neglect the surviving children of Joshua Chandler” continues Peters, “but Mr. Cook & I thought best to let matters rest as they were & he engaged to inform you...” This must have been a blow to Botsford. He could ill afford to part with the money, but that was not the main problem. It was the charge of impropriety, of a dishonourable fraud known among his fellow loyalists, and the subtle threat that this case could be taken to the commissioners, that would have distressed Botsford. Such duplicity would cast a long shadow of doubt across his own claim since Chandler acted as Botsford’s agent to the Claims Commission in London.<sup>162</sup> There is no record of whether or not Botsford paid the debt, but it would have been in the loyalists’ interests to do so. This tragic episode is just

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<sup>160</sup> Samuel Peters to Amos Botsford, Feb. 10, 1788. Botsford Family Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>161</sup> Julian Hoppit, *Risk and Failure in English Business, 1700-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 20.

<sup>162</sup> Amos Botsford’s claim is signed by Joshua Chandler as agent. “Loyalist Claims diffusion material” Archives of Ontario, AO 12 Reel 1.B115 p.55.

one of many found in the confusion and chaos of the 1780s and 90s. A once proud and prominent gentleman, borne under by the circumstances he found himself in, commits a dishonourable act in the hopes of restoring a modicum of his past status. The shipwreck was a common metaphor for failure in the eighteenth century, but in the case of Chandler, a literal shipwreck saved him from the ignominy and public dishonour of the bankrupt.<sup>163</sup>

Chandler's case reveals the essential role of financial destruction as a contributing cause and consequence of political death. A man's honour was inextricably linked to his economic power, and the loss of that power was felt throughout his entire network of friends, dependants, patrons, and clients. Refugee or not, a man's failure to meet his financial obligations to creditors and dependants signified dishonour, and this needed to be overcome for a gentleman loyalist to be restored to prominence. An example of the reverberating consequences of a gentleman loyalist's financial collapse can be seen in a brief, but emotionally charged letter received by the former New York scion William Bayard in 1785. Bayard had served as an executor for the estate of Barnaby Byrne who passed away in 1771. After liquidating the Byrne estate at auction, Bayard was entrusted with providing the widow, Jane Byrne, a yearly stipend of £70. The war and Bayard's exile had ended these payments. Dispensing with the customs of civility, the widow Byrne began her letter directly, stating that the "want of money and many demands for the Same, oblige me to charge you with being the sole cause of my Distress and suffering..." She castigates the loyalist exile for withholding her stipend "for many years" and for what she regarded as the misuse of her husband's property, which "to a Considerable amount you Converted to your own use..." Unable to get any compensation from New York State's confiscation of Bayard's property, Byrne concludes by demanding Bayard send her £775, "Otherwise I will be under the Disagreeable Necessity of sending my papers to England, to procure redress..."<sup>164</sup> Byrne was using the same tactic as Samuel Peters. The threat of public embarrassment in front of the claims

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<sup>163</sup> Toby Ditz, "Shipwrecked; or, Masculinity Imperilled: Mercantile Representations of Failure and the Gendered Self in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 81, No. 1 (June, 1994): 51-80.

<sup>164</sup> Jane Byrne to William Bayard, New York, September 27, 1785. Bayard, Campbell, Pearsall Collection. Box 1, Folder 2. NYPL. Henry Onderdonk, *Queen's County in Olden Times, Being a Supplement to the Several Histories...* (Jamaica, NY: Charles Welling, 1865), 44.



commissioners seems to have been a recurring practice to encourage loyalists to pay their debts. Bayard's papers do not record whether or not he paid Mrs. Byrne, but the accusation of dishonourable conduct and the menace of embarrassment was surely meant to prey on Bayard's mind. Bayard's political death upset a wide network of dependents that extended beyond his household, and each dependant like Jane Byrne represented Bayard's failure to live up to his patriarchal or paternalistic duties. He would likely have argued that since his estate, which including Byrne's pension, was confiscated, her case should be brought to the New York legislature. Yet the fact that prominent gentlemen loyalists like Bayard would never be able to fulfill all of their previous responsibilities or repay all their debts was something they had to acknowledge and accept. Even in the best of circumstances, political rebirth was not the restoration of all that was lost, but the beginning of something new.

The Claims Commission dominated the hopes and fears of loyalist gentlemen eager to reclaim their status as honourable patriarchs. Though the refugees tended to be disappointed by the compensation they received, the Parliamentarians held up the commission as a shining example of British faithfulness and compassion. The British government did not compensate the loyalists based on their rights as citizens, but out of concerns for the honour of the British state. The loyalists regarded themselves as important members of the empire, who were owed compensation for their losses by right, if not as citizens, then as gentlemen and patriarchs. The structure of the claims commission favoured gentlemen claimants who had the education and connections to prove their claims, thus preserving their privileges and advantages among the wider population of refugees. Loyalist honour was never fully satisfied with the compensation, but it was nonetheless a step on the road to political rebirth. In addition to the monetary compensation, the claims commission provided loyalists with the opportunity to compose narratives which together created a consistent image and ideal of the loyal man as a person of honour, integrity, and a martyr for the British Constitution and its notions of liberty. The loyalists had restored, as best as they could, the function of honour as a claim-right within the imperial hierarchy. Though their role in the war was never fully acknowledged, and they were even attacked and denigrated by prominent British officers

like John Burgoyne and William Howe, and despite the continued risks of bankruptcy and dishonour that haunted loyalist petitioners, the claims process was a key stage in their political rebirth. The last and longest stage of political rebirth was the recreation of loyalist households and financial security. The final section of this chapter highlights a few key observations of this process in British North America from 1784 to the 1790s.

## Patriarchs

A colonial gentleman's identity was born in the household. Only when a man had married, maintained an orderly home, and had secured a stable living could he be considered of any consequence. Transient males like sailors and soldiers were considered to be locked in a state of adolescence. The men explored in this dissertation had, by and large, achieved all the necessary benchmarks of honourable manhood prior to the outbreak of war in 1775. Those benchmarks were systematically stripped from the loyalists. They were insulted with impunity, their homes were vandalized, their businesses ruined, and their very right to own property was taken from them. The privileges and honour their manhood had provided were nullified in the revolutionary upheavals. Their exile and attainder marked the final realization of their political death. Though exiles often maintained ties of affection and connections among friends and relatives in their former homelands, they no longer held the status of men or citizens in the United States. As shown in the preceding sections, the loyalists worked to restore their own sense of honour by defending their role in Britain's defeat and asserting their moral right to be compensated for their losses, sacrifices, and services. Few loyalists felt that these endeavours had fully restored their honour. There was public recognition of their plight and of the Crown's obligation to them, but the loyalists felt interrogated and questioned by the commissioners, and believed their compensation fell far below what was just. Only when they had resumed the role of a household patriarch, on land they owned, could loyalists be truly reborn as men. While the wealthiest loyalist gentlemen remained in Britain, the vast majority of exiles began their new lives in the British colonies of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Upper Canada.

This final section is not intended as a retelling of the history of the loyalist settlement in Canada, but is rather a brief examination of how concerns over manhood,

patriarchy, and the function of honour as a claim-right continued into loyalist resettlement.<sup>165</sup> Applying a comparative biographical approach to Amos Botsford, Mather Byles, Jr., and Joel Stone, all New England exiles who became prominent in the loyalist colonies, reveals the consistent challenges they faced in their attempts to assert their honour and compel superiors and inferiors alike to treat them as gentlemen.<sup>166</sup> The history of loyalist settlement is vast, and therefore this examination can only highlight some recurring themes and areas of study that would benefit from further research. Whether in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, or Upper Canada, gentlemen loyalists found their finances strained again to the breaking point, they competed with other loyalists for government positions and lands, and their assumed authority was challenged. Even some of their marriages buckled under the stress of frontier privations. They also worked to instil their political values in their children but, ironically, they also relied on contacts in the United States to provide a suitable education for their sons to secure their place as the next generation of loyalist leaders.

Though historians have long noted the patriarchal nature of early Canadian societies,<sup>167</sup> the genteel “loyalist founders”, whose children and grandchildren later formed the ruling cliques of these new societies, began with comparatively weak patriarchal power in their households and in public. They had little money, and remained

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<sup>165</sup> For detailed histories on loyalist settlement and culture, see: Neil MacKinnon, *This Unfriendly Soil: The Loyalist Experience in Nova Scotia, 1783-1791*. (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988); Condon, *The Envy of the American States*.; Errington, *The Lion, the Eagle and Upper Canada*. Other books add greatly to our knowledge about the period of loyalist settlement in this region including: J.K Johnson, *Becoming Prominent: Regional Leadership in Upper Canada, 1791-1841* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989); Douglas McCalla, *Planting the Province: The Economic History of Upper Canada, 1784-1870* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993); Jeffrey L. McNairn, *The capacity to judge: public opinion and deliberative democracy in Upper Canada, 1791-1854* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000); Mills, *The Idea of Loyalty in Upper Canada*; Françoise Noel, *Family Life and Sociability in Upper and Lower Canada, 1780-1870: A View from Diaries and Family Correspondence* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003); S.J.R Noel, *Patrons, Clients, Brokers: Ontario Society and Politics, 1791-1896* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); Bruce W. Antliff, *Loyalist Settlements, 1783-1789: New Evidence of Canadian Loyalist Claims* (Toronto: Archives of Ontario, 1985).

<sup>166</sup> This method is based in part on the example of Nancy Rhoden's exploration of patriarchy during the American Revolution among Virginia's planter elite using the cases of Richard Henry Lee and Landon Carter. See Rhoden, “Patriarchal Authority in Revolutionary Virginia,” 417-418.

<sup>167</sup> Potter-MacKinnon, *While the Women Only Wept*; Morgan, *Public Men and Virtuous Women*; Constance Backhouse, *Petticoats and Prejudice: Women and Law in Nineteenth Century Canada* (Toronto: Osgoode Society by Women's Press, 1991).

dependent on government preferment and the assistance of friends well into the 1790s. Nevertheless, British interests and the loyalists' personal goals aligned in the imperial project. The empire needed households and loyal patriarchs as functional units of state power in the sparsely settled colonies bordering an unfriendly rival state. As with so many frontier experiences, even ruined and disgraced men could find a new start on the fringes of civilization, but the loyalist gentlemen explored in this section had the advantage of British preferment and the continuation of pre-war connections with their homelands to prop-up their waning patriarchy, ensure proper educations for their sons, and preserve their positions until the new settler communities matured. Once again, this assistance was not seen as dependence, but as the rightful compensation for their loyalty. With the benchmarks of successful masculinity in disarray, with divided families, strained affections, and precarious levels of debt, loyalism – professed attachment to Britain and a history of sacrifice and continued service to the Crown – became *the* mark of honour and the source of restored public and domestic power in British North America. This process sometimes took generations to complete, but it was the final stage of political rebirth.

Amos Botsford was a Yale-educated lawyer with a flourishing practice in New Haven before the war. He fled Connecticut in 1779 and as a well-connected gentleman he quickly found government preferment in New York as a refugee agent during the conflict and as a settlement director in New Brunswick after the peace. He eventually held a number of important posts, including Speaker of the House in the provincial assembly.<sup>168</sup> Like so many gentlemen loyalists, even a grandee such as Botsford ran deeply into debt as he attempted to resurrect his genteel standards of living and risked following his father-in-law, Joshua Chandler, into bankruptcy and disrepute. Almost a decade after resettlement, Amos Botsford bemoaned his debts and ever-increasing expenses he had incurred in New Brunswick and in supporting his scattered family. In a lengthy and candid letter to his son William, Bostford admitted to being “embarrassed [sic]” and “very apprehensive respecting my Affairs and have felt so this long time...” He chided his son

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<sup>168</sup> See Amos Botsford's entry in the Dictionary of Canadian Biography, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/botsford\\_amos\\_5E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/botsford_amos_5E.html) accessed July 10, 2013.

that “My children run me too hard, they think Pa is worth a great deal, whereas they are mistaken.” The elder Botsford wrote that he had gone to great expense and effort for his children, “but the greater my exertions the louder their demands against me...” He did not begrudge his obligations as a patriarch and genteel provider, but wanted his son to be aware of the strains on the family fortune. When Botsford arrived in New Brunswick to “get some little spot to begin the world anew and which might be in a way of accumulating”, his entire estate amounted to about £1000. By the standards of other loyalist refugees, this was an incredible sum, but to Botsford it was hardly sufficient. “My purchases here amount to about that Sum or near it and Building has been very expensive” he recalled, and added that he was also responsible for the “support of the Family abroad” as his dependants spread throughout the Atlantic. Knowing perhaps that his taste for luxury and genteel living was also to blame for his precarious financial condition, Botsford concedes that “you may say I went upon to[o] large a scale, perhaps I did, for my own Comfort I know I did...”, yet “I have not made a foolish Bargain in any of my Purchases, nor an injudicious one that I know of...” He simply needed to “exercise every Oeconomy to extricate my Affairs.”<sup>169</sup> All of these thoughts depict the conflicting emotions of a man caught between many competing obligations. His sons and daughters were a reflection of his status, and they needed to be properly attired and refined; his home needed to reflect his status and prestige to project his power; and he was obviously loathe to sacrifice his own creature comforts. To ignore any of these pursuits would lessen his public image, and yet these same obligations imperilled his whole project. Botsford’s admissions were meant to educate William in the family affairs and groom him as a future heir and responsible patriarch. The letter was also meant to highlight the significance of Botsford’s support of his son’s lifestyle and advancement by pointing out the burden and strain it placed on the greater household. No petulance or ingratitude would be countenanced in light of such generosity. The Botsford patriarch was attempting to ensure continued respect and obedience from his son by taking him into his

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<sup>169</sup> Amos Botsford to William Botsford, Nov. 22, 1794. Amos Botsford Papers, UNBLC. Being an indebted gentleman was by no means a situation unique to loyalists. The drive to maintain an outward showing of dignity and success had led men into debt across the English Atlantic, whether they were loyalist, patriot, or Briton. For a particularly telling study on the anxiety debt caused and its relationship to honour, see T.H. Breen, *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 100, 118, 125, 133-141.

confidence and by intimating that his financial support was more precarious than the father's public image may have suggested.

Similar worries over financial matters and their connection to domestic authority were shared by Joel Stone in Upper Canada. Though of middling status, Stone had married Leah Moore, a member of a prosperous New York merchant family during his time in the British-occupied city. Separated from her husband for almost three years while he pursued his claims in England, Leah Moore Stone and their infant son were shuffled around from family home to family home, deeply straining their new marriage and the good graces of relatives. The couple was finally reunited in 1787 and settled initially in the rough loyalist camp of New Johnstown along the St. Lawrence River.<sup>170</sup> Disappointed in his attempts to procure a government position, which were doled out to more prominent gentlemen, Stone instead went into the distillery business, working from a building constructed “from the forests standing.”<sup>171</sup> By 1790, however, Stone was in great difficulty. His distillery languished “owing to the singular Scarcity of grain” and he fell into debt. He despaired that “my expenses call loud for more cash than I can command, (owing to Domestick troubles, which has embarrassed my mind & finances, both to a Digree [sic] of ruin).” Without a doubt his “domestick troubles” were Stone's biggest concern. Though details of the specific causes are lost, the Stone marriage disintegrated in 1789. It was a very public humiliation, a “calamity” as he put it, for a man striving to build a household and a career in a new land.<sup>172</sup> No letters survive between Joel and Leah during their break-up, but others commented on the issue. Stone's brother referred to Leah Moore Stone as “that Rib of the Devil, who had so long devoured your interest and happiness,” and his sister, Dothe, referred to her sister-in-law in her diary as the “evil ----”.<sup>173</sup> The public embarrassment continued to mount for Stone,

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<sup>170</sup> For a synopsis of Joel Stone's loyalist career, see: Kenneth Donovan, “‘Taking Leave of an Ungrateful Country’: The Loyalist Exile of Joel Stone” *Dalhousie Review*, No.4, Vol. 60, (1984):123-145.

<sup>171</sup> Joel Stone to Stephen Stone, Jan. 25, 1788. Copies in Gananoque Museum Collection. (Copied from McDonald, Stone, Baker Family Fonds, LAC).

<sup>172</sup> Joel Stone to unnamed recipient, January 19 1790, Joel Stone Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>173</sup> Leman Stone to Joel Stone, June 14<sup>th</sup> 1789, Gananoque Museum Collection (Copied from McDonald, Stone, Baker Family Fonds, LAC). Diary of Dothe Stone. Entry Oct. 15, 1789. Joel Stone Family Fonds, AO.

when he learned from a friend in Montreal that “your quondam wife...is endeavoring to place you in debt wherever she can find that you have any credit.”<sup>174</sup> Stone’s honour and finances were being deeply tarnished by the affair. Sometime in 1790 Stone effectively banished his wife to New York City to live with her family while he took full custody of their two children. Turning over his military pension to her, he also placed advertisements in New York newspapers which give some hint to his understanding of the failed marriage. In a draft he declares that the separation was caused by his wife’s “ungrateful conduct, and repeated demands” which “obliged me to enter into Articles of Final Separation.”<sup>175</sup> In other words, his patriarchal authority was questioned or denied by his wife, who refused to live with what could be provided. His notice in the *Daily Advertiser* further blames his wife for the separation, stating that she “has impetuously requested and demanded a final separation from me” which was signed on May 25, 1789. “I therefore forbid every person trusting her...on my account” he continues “as I will not pay any debts contracted by her.”<sup>176</sup> It is plausible that Leah Moore Stone was simply exasperated with her husband’s constant schemes and failures. The couple’s dispute had been growing since he travelled to London in 1783, and there is ample evidence in their letters that she bitterly resented his absence. For his part, he likely viewed his journey as a necessary sacrifice for the future prospects of their family. The duties of patriarch, like honour itself, were open to interpretation. The break-up of their marriage was certainly a public disgrace for the Stones, yet even with these very public humiliations, Joel Stone eventually became a prosperous and respected householder and prominent local gentleman. In a more settled region, such a failure could have been Stone’s undoing, as his inability to maintain an orderly household would announce a deeper level of incompetence that would make creditors or patrons leery about attaching their fortunes to the man. But in the unsettled frontier of Upper Canada the domestic catastrophe was but a limited setback on his road to political rebirth. Leah died in 1793, so no divorce petition

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<sup>174</sup> Josiah Pomeroy to Joel Stone, June 8, 1789. Gananoque Museum Collection (Copied from McDonald, Stone, Baker Family Fonds, LAC).

<sup>175</sup> Notice, dated June 15, 1789. Gananoque Museum Collection (Copied from McDonald, Stone, Baker Family Fonds, LAC).

<sup>176</sup> *The Daily Advertiser*, July 4, 1789. The ad then appears daily from July 7 to the 17th.

was ever sent to the Upper Canada legislature. Stone continued to pursue government posts and was soon rewarded with several important positions including Justice of the Peace and militia colonel. He finally restored his position as the head of a complete household when he remarried in 1798.<sup>177</sup>

It would be reasonable to assume that marital strain would accompany the trauma of war, dislocation, and exile. Yet there is no evidence of any endemic trend towards marital break-up among the loyalists in exile. As Janice Potter-MacKinnon and Anne Gorman Condon have shown, it was quite the contrary. The correspondence of other genteel loyalist couples like Edward and Mary Winslow, Jonathan and Mary Bliss, and Beverly and Nancy Robinson, all show abiding concern, respect, and mutual love in the face of the material privation and the emotional depression of exile.<sup>178</sup> The appearance of stable marriages among genteel loyalist families may perhaps point to the persistent fact that marriage, according to Kathleen M. Brown's study of the Virginia elite, "was vital to class formation and gentry identity."<sup>179</sup> There was much more to gain in eighteenth century culture, both socially and morally, within wedlock than without. But there were also few options open for individuals to divorce their spouses anywhere in British North America. Upper Canada's divorce laws followed the British Common Law tradition, and anyone seeking to dissolve their marriage needed a special act of the Legislature. The first successful petition did not occur until 1839, and in the whole legal history of Upper Canada, only seven divorce proceedings ever made it to the Legislature. The other provinces had equally or even more restrictive laws, and in nearly all cases divorce laws in British North America upheld patriarchal power and favoured the husband.<sup>180</sup> In contrast, many American states liberalized their divorce laws after the Revolution, permitting the legal dissolution of marriage in the case of abuse or abandonment. Nancy Cott noted a significant rise in the number of divorce cases in Massachusetts during the

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<sup>177</sup> Hawke, "Joel Stone," 28-36, 52-54.

<sup>178</sup> Potter-MacKinnon, *While the Women*, 134; Condon, "The Family in Exile," 43-45, 49.

<sup>179</sup> Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nast Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 249.

<sup>180</sup> Backhouse, *Petticoats and Prejudice*, 167-168, 332.



Revolutionary period, and both she and Jay Fliegelman have argued for a causal link between revolutionary ideology and the increase in divorce. Men and women had the right to pursue independence if their spouse was a tyrant or did not fulfill their end of the marriage contract. Yet marriage remained one of the primary benchmarks for manhood in the early republic, showing the continued importance of traditional expressions of patriarchal authority in what Cott sees as a modernizing state, led by men who were eager to show that it was different from the restrictive and authoritarian Old World.<sup>181</sup> The laws in the remaining British possessions of North America made divorce nearly impossible. More often than not, this situation favoured the man in dysfunctional relationships, again showing how British government and law buttressed even seemingly corrupt or impotent patriarchal power.

Despite not having a legal recourse to divorce, other loyalist marriages also dissolved in practice, though not law. Joseph Galloway, the loyalist spokesman from Pennsylvania, famously went into exile without his wife, Grace, who remained in Philadelphia. Already suffering through a mismatched and unhappy marriage, Galloway's loyalism destroyed the family fortune and caused the confiscation of their estate, most of which was inherited from Grace Galloway's father. In 1779, she recorded in her diary that she was "truly set against him [her husband]" for causing so much pain and loss to their family, and for taking their daughter Elizabeth with him into exile. Grace Galloway never made any attempt to join her exiled husband and daughter in England, and she died in 1789, never having seen her family again. Though they never formally divorced, the permanent separation was a very clear and obvious sign of the failure of Galloway's patriarchal authority, and yet his continued custody of this daughter was a sign of the state's power to prop-up a man's waning domestic command.<sup>182</sup>

The Botsford family also experienced the break-up of the nuclear family. Sarah Botsford, the wife of Amos Botsford and the daughter of Joshua Chandler, followed her

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<sup>181</sup> Nancy F. Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 47-50; and "Divorce and the Changing Status of Women in Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 4, (Oct., 1976): 592-595. Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims*, 123-127.

<sup>182</sup> Ferling, *The Loyalist Mind*, 44. Raymond C. Werner, introduction to *The Diary of Grace Growden Galloway*, by Grace Growden Galloway (New York: Arno Press, 1971 [reprint]), 33-34.

husband into exile in New Brunswick, but the two had a dreadful falling out. The cause of the troubles is not revealed in the Botsford correspondence, but Mrs. Botsford either felt she was to blame, or accepted the blame in an attempt to restore the family. Either out of contrition or calculation, her letters express the “learned helplessness” and deference towards patriarchal authority that was expected of married women.<sup>183</sup> She wrote to her husband in 1788 “that I hartily repent of my past Folly and Often wish I could recall my past Life again but alas too Late.” In her letter she apologizes for “the abuse & troble that I have given” and writes about the “unhappy day when we parted.” There is no reply from Amos Botsford in the papers, but the following year he wrote his son that “Your Ma...boards out at Sackville about a Dozen miles from this [place]” and though inconvenient in many ways, “it is however less troublesome to board her out than to keep her in the Family.”<sup>184</sup> His continuing rebuke of his wife, in spite of her pleas, was obviously an expression of his power over her, and he seemed to feel fully justified in his actions. Perhaps because of Botsford’s rank and influence, he kept the domestic strife as quiet as possible, yet it certainly must have been a topic of gossip in the refugee communities. Nevertheless, he continued to receive government posts and remained a powerful figure in the community regardless of the unofficial separation and frayed appearance of domestic authority and tranquility.

Mather Byles also did his best to project the appearance of domestic order, but was deeply anxious about how his marriage was seen in the community. In 1783, the exiled Anglican reverend was living with his family in Halifax. He wrote to his sister that his wife, Sarah Lyde, “made a great Racket about Nothing, roused the Family at three oclock in the Morning, & alarmed the whole Neighborhood.” Though he attempted to be tender to his suffering wife, “I was convinced of the Necessity of her being confined to her chamber & she was so, strictly, for three weeks; since which Time she has, for the most Part, behaved very quietly & decently.” While concerned for his wife, the very public scene caused Byles to reflect that “this memorable crisis...had such direct Tendency to lessen the Family in the Eye of the World, & indeed to make the poor

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<sup>183</sup> Condon, “The Family in Exile,” 49.

<sup>184</sup> Sarah Botsford to Amos Botsford, July 11, 1788. Amos Botsford to William Botsford, Jan. 2, 1789. Amos Botsford Papers, UNBLC.

Woman herself look little.” What caused the outburst is unclear, but it is likely that the stress of exile and loss, of moving from the genteel environment of Boston and its social scene to the rustic surroundings of Halifax, had taken an emotional toll and contributed to her apparent mental breakdown. Byles admitted as much in the same letter, noting that “I have slips enough of my own to answer for.”<sup>185</sup> Sarah died in 1787 from a “mysterious & extraordinary” ailment, which Byles and his doctor reasoned “was totally owing to a pernicious Practice of lacing & girding herself too tight.” Byles was at least somewhat cheered that “Her funeral was long & very respectable; a large Number of the American Refugees being dressed in Black & walking as Relations” which he interpreted as a testament to the esteem the community held for his family. As no household was complete without a wife and mother, Byles, now in his fifties, remarried a year later.<sup>186</sup>

What the cases of Stone, Botsford, and Byles suggest, is that while marriage was considered a vital institution for gentlemen leaders, and though these loyalists might have suffered emotional anguish and embarrassment over the appearance of domestic strife, their political positions in their communities and their relationship with government were not unduly affected. Indeed, they retained their role as the face of government authority, or in the case of Byles, spiritual authority. They could count on continued advancement, in spite of their perceived personal failures, because of their status as loyalist gentlemen. Even without money and an orderly domestic life, the British authorities continued to treat them as leaders and as potential recipients of government posts.

Holding a government office was one of the very few ways a gentleman could earn a living in the rough and unsettled colonies. Opportunities existed for merchants and surveyors, but the majority of loyalist gentlemen who settled in New Brunswick, for instance, were trained as lawyers. There would never be enough work for these men to all practice their genteel vocation. Government positions were therefore the only reliable source of employment for gentlemen in the early years of settlement. Men vied with one another for positions and often held far more offices than they could effectively administer in an effort to maximize earnings and prestige. Whether they acquired offices

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<sup>185</sup> Mather Byles to Kitty Byles, June 10, 1783. Byles Family Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>186</sup> Mather Byles Jr. to Mather Byles Sr. March 15, 1787 and Mather Byles Jr. to his sisters, September 4, 1788. Byles Family Papers, UNBLC.

through nepotism or merit, loyalist leaders routinely found their authority questioned or challenged.<sup>187</sup>

As an Anglican clergyman, the Reverend Mather Byles Jr. found a secure living tending to a refugee congregation, but the popular veneration for him and the Church of England fell far below his hopes. During the American Revolution Byles served as chaplain to troops stationed in Halifax, and continued there after the peace, even though he loathed the ramshackle city and its uncouth people. While he mentions the occasional genteel soirée and periodic bouts of excitement, such as a visit from Prince William Henry in the autumn of 1787, Byles was either bored or annoyed for his entire time in Halifax. He found the society tedious and the politics of the province caustic and factious. As a public man, he lamented bitterly that he had been drawn into vulgar elections and politics which were dominated by “the dispute between the old Inhabitants of this Province & the American Loyalists.” He felt his honour and dignity impugned as he spent his days marked with “the Rage of Electioneering, & the Violence of Party” coupled with “many drunken Mobs... & much other Mischief done.” The environment didn’t appeal to him either, as he jokingly explained to his sister that far from being a “howling wilderness”, Nova Scotia was rather a “hissing Wilderness” due to the “Abundance of Rattle-Snakes.” In another letter to his sister, Byles despaired of the people among whom he was forced to live. The people ignored Byles and his teachings, did not attend his services, and in essence, disregarded his claim to privilege and authority in favour of other denominations or, seemingly, embraced no religion at all. After leaving Halifax he wrote that he had “been imprisoned” in the city, and “upon cool Reflexion,” he continued, Halifax was “in every Respect, the most contemptible my Eyes ever beheld & I desire never to forget that the most irreligious People I ever knew were at the same Time the [most] ignorant, the most stupid, & the most unhappy.”<sup>188</sup> This is a

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<sup>187</sup> Condon, *Envy of the American States*, 180-183.

<sup>188</sup> Mather Byles Jr. to Kitty Byles, Oct. 7, 1786, Byles Family Papers, UNBLC; MacKinnon, *This Unfriendly Soil*...75; Unaddressed letter from Mather Byles, Jr. March 1789 Byles Family Papers, UNBLC. For a longer explanation of party politics in Nova Scotia see: MacKinnon, *This Unfriendly Soil*, chapter 8, 118-136. It should also be noted that being in a religious minority for Byles, who came from the overwhelmingly Congregationalist colony of Massachusetts, but he obviously found the transition to a frontier settlement extremely jarring.

considerable rebuke for his refugee neighbours considering Byles was forced to flee the mobs of Revolutionary Massachusetts. Byles was therefore overjoyed when he received an appointment to the rectory in Saint John, New Brunswick, a colony settled and governed by loyalists like him.

The Church of England, even in loyalist New Brunswick, was but one of many denominations competing for parishioners, and its rigid and conservative customs and hierarchy did not appeal to the vast majority of settlers. While the locals raised Baptist and Presbyterian churches and supported their ministers, and itinerant Methodist preachers travelled healthy circuits, Byles and his fellow Anglican clergymen were supported by government subsidies and by The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Led by Charles Inglis, who was consecrated as the first Bishop of Nova Scotia in 1787, the Anglican Churches of New Brunswick were directed to maintain strict hierarchy and order by replicating traditional customs such as assigning and renting pews to individual families based on rank and respectability. While the Church of England failed to fill their services or find enough local support to build new churches, Inglis fussed over the fact that some clergy allowed church-goers to sit where they pleased, a practice destined, he wrote, to “produce disorder and confusion...” The Church of England, though the established church of both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, was not able to sustain itself on local support for another generation. Mather Byles could not have based his domestic and public authority on his role as a minister of the Church of England, which the majority of the population seemingly rejected, without direct support from government. His transfer to the comparatively more genteel surroundings of St. John was doubtlessly made possible through the intercession of other gentlemen loyalists on his behalf.<sup>189</sup> Byles achieved his political rebirth because the British government believed orderly religious instruction from the established church would help create a peaceful, loyal, and deferential population. The success or failure of the clergyman’s personal quest to restore his household patriarchy and his public honour as a spiritual authority figure depended entirely on Britain’s imperial policies.

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<sup>189</sup> Judith Fingard, *The Anglican Design in Loyalist Nova Scotia, 1783-1816* (London: Published for the Church Historical Society [by] S.P.C.K, 1972).

Amos Botsford was also a beneficiary of British preferment, but his own sense of entitlement to respect and positions, described as his “dictatorial style”, brought him into conflict with both the common loyalist settlers and his superiors. He was accused of lording over inferiors and being impertinently demanding with British officials, including Nova Scotia’s military governor John Parr. His lack of deference earned him a sharp rebuke, with one official reminding the exile that he was no longer in Connecticut where people “may reject and chuse another [Governor] when they please.”<sup>190</sup> Yet British authorities still entrusted Botsford with directing refugee settlement along the St. John River in New Brunswick. Perhaps again because of his brusque manners, several disgruntled refugees, provincial captains and other middling loyalists, drew up a petition charging Botsford with gross neglect of duty, conflict of interest, and peremptorily reassigning lands, presumably to his friends. The British passed over Botsford in the initial allocation of government offices in 1784, though he attributed this to the influence of more powerful loyalist gentlemen petitioning in England, and not to his own imperious behaviour. Nonetheless, this was only a temporary setback, and Botsford went on to hold a number of prominent government posts.<sup>191</sup> Botsford was not the only New Brunswick loyalist to be accused of haughtiness and pomposity. An American visitor described the mayor of Saint John, Gabriel Ludlow, as “aping the hauteur of the British” while Jonathan Bliss shuddered at the manners of fellow gentleman loyalist Jonathan Odell whose “hauteur” was “so disgusting that he has become completely obnoxious...”<sup>192</sup> The new powers entrusted to these men combined with the memory of the insults and losses they had suffered during the war, and their desire to repair their wounded masculinity, might have produced such overweening behaviour. These instances could also be expressions of mental strain or of gentlemen overcompensating for their own psychological wounds. Yet the pompous displays of imperious manners could also be consistent with the loyalist gentlemen’s beliefs that they possessed a level of honour

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<sup>190</sup> MacKinnon, *This Unfriendly Soil*, 119.

<sup>191</sup> Condon, *The Envy of the American States*, 92. Petition of Joseph Barton, Joseph Hatfield, Richard Hill, Richard Williams, and Thomas Marjoribanks. Undated. Amos Botsford Papers, UNBLC. Though undated, the petition appears to have been drawn up in the early months or perhaps the first couple years of settlement.

<sup>192</sup> Condon, *The Envy of the American States*, 180.

which required significant displays of deference from other men. That other loyalists seemingly rolled their eyes at such pretenses indicates people understood both the offensive idiosyncrasies of some gentlemen, and the precarious and spurious foundations of authority that could be transferred at the whim of British officials.

While men like Botsford seemed to succeed in spite of themselves, less well-connected loyalists had to struggle against more powerful gentlemen for land grants and government posts. While Joel Stone's marriage collapsed and he was passed over for a government office, he was also involved in a drawn-out dispute with Sir John Johnson, formerly one of the greatest landholders in colonial America, and a Brigadier General of provincial forces. Stone had been instructed by the Surveyor General Samuel Holland, that if he paid to have lands on the Gananoque River surveyed he could then take legal possession.<sup>193</sup> Unfortunately, Johnson was the supervisor of loyalist land settlement in what became Upper Canada and also claimed the land. The Gananoque River, with rapids flowing into the St. Lawrence, was an ideal place to construct both grist and saw mills to serve the growing region. Neither man was willing to back down. The correspondence between the men reveals that far from being cowed by the unequal contest, Stone, perhaps still smarting from his continued personal failures, was determined not to lose what he saw as his last chance at political rebirth. With the requisite combination of assertiveness and deference, Stone argued that while he "never presumed to doubt your [Johnson's] Rights" he was eager to "explain and defend my own rights...particularly in point of right to [my] just proportion of the King's Bounty in Lands." Stone refused Johnson's offer of 1000 acres further up the river and continued to argue his point. The lands, Stone said, were his by right – by law, since he had paid for the survey and Johnson had not, and from the justice of his previous sacrifices. The baronet seemingly acknowledged the legality of Stone's claim, and agreed to a compromise wherein they would each take a bank of the river. This moment marked the beginnings not only of Stone's successful political rebirth, but a period of social, economic, and political advancement. He had asserted himself against a much more powerful adversary and secured his right to respect and his rightful reward. His honour was at least partially restored. Johnson served as an absentee landlord of the east bank of the river, while Stone

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<sup>193</sup> "Deposition of Joel Stone, 1787," cited in Hawke, "Joel Stone of Gananoque.," 42.

began operating a saw mill and a general store, which eventually grew into a set of mills, shops, and homes with Stone as the undisputed leader of the settlement. Yet Stone's case also highlights the fluid and subjective nature of the term "gentleman" on the frontier. When John Graves and Elizabeth Simcoe stopped at Stone's settlement in 1791, Mrs. Simcoe had to be told by another loyalist that "Stone was too much a gentleman to offer" payment for his hospitality.<sup>194</sup> While Stone's status was understood by the other refugees on the St. Lawrence, Elizabeth Simcoe did not recognize him as a gentleman in the English sense. Less than a decade after the Simcoe's visit, Stone's enterprise was prospering, and because of his economic centrality in the region, he was rewarded with government offices and married Abigail Dayton, the widow of another prospering Connecticut loyalist. By 1804 he held the positions of Justice of the Peace, roads commissioner, and militia colonel.<sup>195</sup> Stone lacked the connections, education, and previous wealth of Amos Botsford and Mather Byles, and his loyalist losses and service as a militia captain were unremarkable among the thousands of other claimants. Yet because of his staunch loyalism, expressed in his claims narrative and no doubt repeated to every British officer who would listen, he established a flourishing settlement at a strategic location on the St. Lawrence River, a main highway of British communications. In spite of domestic failures, he became the face of the British government in the settlement. His new found prosperity and the honours brought by rank helped him to restore his patriarchal power and granted him a level of political authority he had never before achieved. An early twentieth century historian described him as "a little autocrat...in his little kingdom."<sup>196</sup> If his status as a gentleman was in doubt in 1791, by the early nineteenth century he was a secure member of the provincial elite.

Government preferment was essential for Stone's political rebirth, but he also relied heavily on his continued connections with his homeland to build his new

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<sup>194</sup> J. Ross Robertson, ed. Elizabeth Postuma Simcoe, *The Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1911), 252.

<sup>195</sup> Sir John Johnson to Joel Stone, Oct. 30, 1790. Joel Stone to Sir John Johnson, November 13, 1790. Gananoque Museum Collection (Copied from McDonald, Stone, Baker Family Fonds, LAC). Donovan, "Taking Leave," 140.

<sup>196</sup> W.L. Smith, *The Pioneers of Old Ontario* (Toronto: George N. Morang, 1923), 71.



settlement. The task of clearing thickly wooded land and erecting a mill in a remote area was not something a single man could undertake. Because the rank and file loyalists were busy with their own lands, Stone enlisted men from his hometown of Litchfield, Connecticut, who though not loyalists, came to settle on the Gananoque River in Upper Canada. A blacksmith and a number of labourers all eventually relocated. Welcomed as “late loyalists” these workers built the settlement and Stone became their patron. Joel Stone’s political rebirth in Upper Canada signalled at least a partial rebirth in his former homeland as well. He ceased to be regarded as a traitorous exile and became a contact for men looking for a brighter future in the depressed economy of the early republic.<sup>197</sup>

None of the loyalists examined in this chapter lost contact with family and friends in their former homelands. The Stone, Botsford, and Byles correspondences all show an abiding emotional and practical attachment to their family and friends that was maintained for the rest of their lives through letters and the occasional visit. The correspondence served as a conduit for local and family news, as a route for the exchange of political ideas, and serves as evidence for the continued economic ties. As Jane Errington has shown, these connections facilitated cultural exchange and became part of a loose political alliance between the elite settlers of Upper Canada and the Federalists of the northern states.<sup>198</sup> The situation was similar in the Maritime Provinces where family ties continued in spite of political death. Perhaps the most significant element of the continued attachment of loyalists to their former homelands was in raising and educating loyalist sons. Ann Gorman Condon refers to the next generation of loyalists as “redeemer children,” who “were expected to carry the torch” of genteel loyalism and “bring honour” to their families.<sup>199</sup> On the children’s shoulders rested their father’s hopes for the lineal fulfillment of their political rebirth. From childhood this generation was raised on stories of the Revolution, and there is even evidence of a uniquely loyalist vernacular. When at age six Belcher Byles made “his first Appearance in Jacket & Trowsers” his father

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<sup>197</sup> Luther Bishop and Dan Throop to Joel Stone, Feb. 9, 1789. Gananoque Museum Collection (Copied from McDonald, Stone, Baker Family Fonds, LAC). Luther Bishop to Joel Stone, undated, Sheldon Family Papers. Helga J. Ingraham Memorial Library, Litchfield Historical Society.

<sup>198</sup> Errington, *The Lion, The Eagle and Upper Canada*, 35-54, 39, 46.

<sup>199</sup> Condon, “The Family in Exile,” 49-50.

Mather Byles described how “he struts, & swells, & puffs, & looks as important as a Boston Committee-Man.”<sup>200</sup> When his daughter Betsey turned twenty-one and left the family home, Byles mused on his shrinking household, writing that “my Subjects are reduced to four. I expect the Example will spread, & that they will all, one after another, declare their Independence.”<sup>201</sup> Before the next generation of loyalists “declared their independence”, refugee parents worked to instill genteel manners and replicate their loyalist political ideology in their children. This proved to be a complex task.

For many genteel loyalists, the need to provide their children, especially sons, with a proper education, reveals one of the most significant advantages of maintaining ties to their homelands. To persist as a respectable family, sons needed to be crafted into gentlemen, but this could not be completed in the rough wilderness settlements. A proper education was not simply a matter of academics, although that was certainly an important element. Rather, a gentleman’s education consisted of the inculcation of tastes, customs, and mores which served to set men apart and distinguish them as leaders. Loyalist elites and British governors like John Graves Simcoe acknowledged that the opportunities for a genteel education in any of the provinces were sorely lacking. While loyalist parents did their best to impress their culture and political ideology upon their sons, only through a proper education, which included seeing more of the world, could loyalist sons be fit to take the reins of government.<sup>202</sup>

The options open to loyalists depended heavily on their connections in the United States. Joel Stone’s son William had first been sent to a boarding school in Montreal in the 1780s, but after the Stones’ marriage fell apart, William and his younger sister Mary were sent to live with their aunt in Woodbury, Connecticut until, Stone wrote, “I can rid

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<sup>200</sup> Mather Byles to Kitty Byles, Oct. 7, 1786. Byles Family Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>201</sup> Mather Byles to Kitty Byles, May 14 1787 Byles Family Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>202</sup> Craig, *Upper Canada*, 25; Condon, *The Envy of the American States*, 174. Anthony Di Mascio, “Educational Discourse and the Making of Educational Legislation in Early Upper Canada,” *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 1, (Feb., 2010): 34-54. Katherine McKenna also explores the predicament of finding a genteel education for both boys and girls in Upper Canada in *A Life of Propriety*, 155-171.

myself of bad examples in my own family.”<sup>203</sup> The Stone family was not wealthy or connected enough to provide the next generation of sons with a college education, but local schools in Connecticut, and the households of the extended family were more promising environments than the frontier of the St. Lawrence River. The children stayed in Connecticut for several years, attending school and living with several different family members. In many ways this was a continuation of the old New England custom of “sending out,” where children were sent to live in a related household to attend school or apprentice, refine their manners, and build character in a less familiar environment.<sup>204</sup> Indeed, the Stone children were split up with Mary staying with her Aunt Dothe Cutler in Watertown, Connecticut and William with his Aunt Rene Hopkins in Hartford where he could attend a “French school.”<sup>205</sup> Yet Stone’s sister Rene eventually came to the conclusion that, while a promising boy, William needed the direction and example of his father. This was perhaps an encoded admission that she could not control her nephew. Rene Stone Hopkins wrote that she could not bear to become a “tyrant” in the typical joust of care-giver and teenager, and felt it would be better for William to begin working in Upper Canada rather than consorting with “bad company or...trifling away his time...in a town like this...that would unman him forever.”<sup>206</sup> Mrs. Hopkins may also have been suggesting that it was time for Stone to act a patriarch and guide his own son into adulthood. William returned to live with his father in Gananoque and became his business partner. The younger Stone routinely travelled to Connecticut to conduct business and kept his father informed of family news and early republican politics. Though moulded in New England, he was obviously the son of a Tory, noting on one occasion that the “people now begin to open their eyes, and see that Thomas Jefferson

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<sup>203</sup> Joel Stone to Rev. Jeremiah Leaming, April 27, 1791. Gananoque Museum Collection (Copied from McDonald, Stone, Baker Family Fonds, LAC).

<sup>204</sup> Edmund S. Morgan, *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relationships in Seventeenth-Century New England* (New York: Harper Collins, 1966), 77. David Hackett Fischer, *Albion’s Seed: Four British Folkways in America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 101.

<sup>205</sup> Dothe Cutler to Joel Stone, Dec. 17, 1791. Gananoque Museum Collection (Copied from McDonald, Stone, Baker Family Fonds, LAC). William Stone to Joel Stone, July 15, 1792. Stone Family Fonds, Archives of Ontario.

<sup>206</sup> Rene Stone Hopkins to Joel Stone, Dec. 13, 1794. Joel Stone Papers, Queen’s University Archives.

and Tom Paine...will not always lead the people as they wish..." He observed for his father, with satisfaction, that many of their relatives in Connecticut "are wishing that their property was under the King's Dominion."<sup>207</sup> Stone was doubtlessly proud of his son and was grooming him to lead the next generation of loyalists along the St. Lawrence. He secured William a position as customs collector at Gananoque and was giving the young man more responsibilities when tragedy struck, and William Stone died in 1809. His hopes shifted to his daughter and a sound marriage with a capable and enterprising Scottish merchant-adventurer who eventually took over affairs in the little community.<sup>208</sup>

With far more financial resources and connections, Amos Botsford sent his son, also named William, for an elite education in Connecticut, first at a grammar school, then at Yale College. William Botsford was being groomed to be a fine gentleman, and his father monitored his progress in as minute detail as he could from a distance. The correspondence contains a great deal of advice and instruction, and is typical of genteel patriarchs of the time who used rewards of fine clothes and money as both incentives to encourage study and proper behaviour, and as a way to maintain control over their sons.<sup>209</sup> William began his instruction at a private boarding school under a Mr. Goodrich. From the detailed information Amos Botsford seemed to have about his son, it is likely he and Mr. Goodrich were in regular contact. For example, Botsford warned his son that he had "heard you are rather too much inclined to go abroad Evenings" and he urged his son to stay home to study and "get well fitted for College..." Other letters focus on William's poor spelling and grammar. Botsford instructs his son that "a young Gentlemen should always wr[ite] and spell properly otherwise the handsomest writing does not look well..." The patriarch then adds that his son has also "not learnt to fold a letter handsomely" and provides some instruction and continued incentives to improve, promising "I shall grudge you nothing if you are studious and behave well."<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> William Stone to Joel Stone, Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>, 1803. Joel Stone Papers, Queen's University Archives.

<sup>208</sup> Hawke, "Joel Stone," 59-60.

<sup>209</sup> Potter-MacKinnon, *While the Women Only Wept*, 154.

<sup>210</sup> Amos Botsford to William Botsford, February 1, 1788 and March 12, 1788. Amos Botsford Papers, UNBLC.

When William entered Yale in 1789, Amos became even more interested in his son's progress, a situation that may have been resented by the young scholar who responded to his father less frequently. Nonetheless, the elder Botsford continued to be a helpful but stern advisor to his son, half-mocking William when he was passed-over for some extracurricular distinction. "[I]t seems your Sophimorical Honour and Dignity has been wounded, a great affair indeed!" he chided. Concerned that his son had taken this perceived slight too seriously, he upbraided William, "I clearly discover too much Obstinacy in your temper, from your own Account of the business\_ if you cannot bear little disappointments it shews a great want of Philosophical Coolness." Worried about the family name at Yale, Amos Botsford shared a tale of his own disappointment adding that "I bred no Rumpus or Riot, nor flounced, nor made a pother." The letter continues with an ongoing argument between William and Amos over ideas of politeness and deference, which William believed "were injurious" to his advancement at the college. William was likely caught up in a new spirit of assertiveness and resistance to authority which was becoming common in the elite colleges of the new republic.<sup>211</sup> Such a cultural shift seemed alien, uncouth, and alarmingly republican to the loyalist patriarch. Amos Botsford was determined to put an end to what he certainly saw as corrosive democratic influences, and concludes his letter by explaining that a "youth should not be...proud, obstinate, haughty, foppish, nor ill-tempered; nor give to Noise, Riot, drinking or debauchery..." Instead, a young gentleman should be "complaisant, submissive to rule and good order, quiet...studious, respectful to superiors and obedient to the Laws of the Society which he is a member." Fathers had given such advice for generations, but the Revolutionary age, which witnessed the collapse of divinely ordained hierarchy throughout the Atlantic world, seemed to heighten the importance of such basic wisdom for Botsford. Again, detecting the spirit of aggression and competition that so characterized ambitious young men in the early national period, Botsford adds that "Ambition tho not properly to be classed among the Rules of Politeness is however useful

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<sup>211</sup> Jeffrey A. Mullins, "Honorable Violence: Youth Culture, Masculinity, and Contested Authority in Liberal Education in the Early Republic," *American Transcendental Quarterly*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (Sept., 2003): 161-179. Also see chapter 5, "The (Mis)Behaviors of Southern Collegians" in Lorri Glover, *Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 64-82.

when properly managed.” Employing a nautical metaphor, Botsford advised that ambition “should not be top-heavy, more sail than Ballast, but well trimmed and balanced, and if you have a good store of useful knowledge you will have a good cargo on board and arrive at a good market.”<sup>212</sup> While the faculty of Yale trained his son in the liberal arts and the law, Botsford tried to mould his son’s character and by extension, his political ideology. When William sent his father a letter full of histrionics about a debt he had incurred, Amos chides him once again that “You are really too desponding at times... it does no good, you have a want of Philosophy”. By embracing the sort of stoicism displayed by the loyalist patriarchs “you will find convenience to carry you easily along in Life.”<sup>213</sup> These were words that Amos Botsford, and many loyalists, lived by, and he expected his dutiful son to follow his advice. William Botsford completed his studies in 1796 and settled in St. John where he practiced law and rose to follow in his father’s footsteps, becoming Speaker of the New Brunswick House of Assembly and holding a number of other offices until his death in 1864. It was William Botsford and other loyalist children who completed their parent’s political rebirth.

The loyalists examined in this chapter relied on the assistance of the British government, their connections, and even their children to achieve political rebirth. The loyalist gentlemen did not see this assistance as dependence, but theirs by right. They demanded the respect due to them by virtue of their personal honour and sacrifices. Amos Botsford, Mather Byles, and Joel Stone each faced their own domestic troubles, financial difficulties, public controversies, and the task of raising the next generation of gentlemen loyalists on the frontier, and throughout all of this their patriarchal authority was supported and preserved by British preferment. At times the loyalists inflated their sense of importance and took their rights far too seriously, engaging in pompous and imperious displays like Amos Botsford, or in the case of Mather Byles, cursing the people for not paying due deference to a gentleman and his office. In other cases, such as Joel Stone’s dispute with Sir John Johnson, a loyalist’s demand for respect and the assertion of his loyalist rights resulted in recognition and wealth. In each of these cases, the loyalist

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<sup>212</sup> Amos Botsford to William Botsford, May 5, 1790 Amos Botsford Papers, UNBLC.

<sup>213</sup> Amos Botsford to William Botsford , May 12,1792 Amos Botsford Papers, UNBLC.

gentlemen endeavoured to surround themselves, both in their home and in public, with people who paid them the sort of deference they thought they deserved. When Mrs. Botsford or Mrs. Stone proved unwilling to abide by their husbands' wishes, they were sent away. When the people failed to show the proper respect to Rev. Byles, he endeavoured to find a more appreciative flock to manage. Only by establishing an obedient household in a respectful community could a loyalist be politically reborn.

The political rebirth of the loyalists could never fully erase the sting of political death. The ignominy of insult, defeat, and exile remained a central part of the loyalists' narrative and identity, but through the process of political rebirth these injuries came to be regarded as badges of honour and hallmarks of a superior form of masculinity. The loyalists were reliant on British assistance throughout the 1780s and 1790s, but they refused to see this as emasculating dependence. Rather, the assistance was the just remuneration for their manly services and sacrifices. They had a right to compensation, just as they had a right to be treated with respect, and loyalists asserted these perceived rights throughout the process of political rebirth. When John Peters and Joseph Galloway condemned the foppish incompetence of Burgoyne and Howe they were defending the honour of all loyalists and asserted their right to respect. When Peter Oliver, Samuel Peters, or Jonathan Boucher wrote their histories of the Revolution, they were defending the honour of the loyalists by explaining how the machinations of wicked Americans and the folly of negligent Britons combined to destroy the empire. When individuals wrote their narratives and claims describing the loyalists' manly virtues, they created a moral obligation wherein the British government was bound by honour to assist its faithful, wounded subjects. And when the loyalists demanded obedience and respect from their wives and children and their fellow loyalists, they were drawing on the same claim to be treated with the honour and deference due to patriarchs. In their minds, their special status among men entitled them to privileges that had to be restored in order for the national honour of Britain to be upheld. In large measure, the British government agreed. Though the loyalists were never recognized as citizens, they were compensated and assisted in their resettlement because they were white, male British subjects who would form the basis of imperial rule through the establishment of orderly, loyal households.

Amid the privations and challenges of frontier life, loyalist patriarchy struggled to assert itself, but was buttressed by British support. Gentlemen loyalists experienced their political rebirth because others accepted and supported their special status and privileges, from the British Parliament to individual household members. For many women, for the poor, for the First Peoples and for the descendants of African slaves, life in the new provinces in Canada was still marked by legal subjugation and few social privileges. But for loyalist gentlemen, this was honour restored.



## Conclusion

“I am afraid we are apt to forget that the Loyalists, to a considerable extent, were the very cream of the population of the Thirteen Colonies. They represented in very large measure the learning, the piety, the gentle birth, the wealth and good citizenship of the British race in America...”<sup>1</sup> So wrote J.H. Coyne, a Canadian lawyer and historian in 1898. His ideas are a neat encapsulation of what has since become known as the Loyalist Myth. As Norman Knowles explains in his study of the social memory of loyalists in Ontario, supporters of the continued connection between Canada and the British Empire, from the mid-nineteenth century to the First World War, embraced the loyalist myth as a “usable past.” The loyalists were the harbingers of Victorian decency, honour, and the prosperity that came from the unity of the British Empire and a rejection of all things American.<sup>2</sup> According to Coyne, because of the moral and institutional foundations laid down by the loyalists, Canada enjoyed a profoundly different culture than its American neighbour. The loyalists’ “native instinct of British respect for law and order” could still be felt in 1898, Coyne argued, and he praised the peace and order of Canada against the “annual harvest of 10 000 murders and 200 lynchings” that plagued the United States. Canada may not have been as prosperous as the republic, but “Our churches are well filled. Our legislation keeps pace with the requirements of advancing civilization. Our Legislatures and Municipal Councils are fairly representative, and largely free from corruption.”<sup>3</sup> Coyne’s Canada was a shining monument to the loyalists’ lasting morality and honour, which stood in stark contrast to the excesses and violence of Gilded-Age America and its westward expansion.

The myth of the honourable and genteel loyalist fathers that Coyne and other Canadian nationalists attempted to fashion was a response to the vibrant American mythos of 1776,<sup>4</sup> which contained its own Tory myth of aristocratic and dishonourable

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<sup>1</sup> James Henry Coyne, “Memorial to the U.E. Loyalists,” in L.F.S. Upton, *The United Empire Loyalists: Men and Myths* (Toronto: The Copp Clark Publishing Company, 1967), 138.

<sup>2</sup> Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists*, 67-90, *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> Coyne, “Memorial to the U.E. Loyalists,” 138.

<sup>4</sup> Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists*, 69.

placemen, selling liberty for preferment and plunder. More than a century after the American Revolution, nationalists from both sides of the border still held up their respective ancestors as the truly honourable party. Twentieth century historians demolished both of these loyalist myths, and revealed the diversity of Crown supporters and the contributions of women, the poor, freed slaves, and Native allies in the struggle. The elite or middling sorts comprised only a small, but powerful minority of the loyalists and exiles.

Yet studying this elite minority is useful for several important reasons. Historians often rely on extant sources that were overwhelmingly produced by, or pertain to, the loyalist elite. By drawing on the insights and methodology of cultural history and the anthropological study of honour, as well as gender history and its exploration of masculinity, this dissertation has worked to contextualize these records within their original culture. Understanding the class and gender-based concerns embedded in the written records should caution against extrapolating general notions of loyalist ideology and applying them to the wider loyalist population. Of broader significance is the way these records display deeply held cultural beliefs about honour and manhood that might not have been articulated had it not been for the political and social upheavals of the American Revolution. In their cultural and political arguments, loyalists and patriots employed insults and arguments permeated with gendered archetypes that cast light on their shared mentalities. Furthermore, the methods of cultural history provide ways of reading recorded social interactions, physical descriptions of bodies, clothing, rituals, and other symbols for their deeper power and meaning. As Robert Darnton argues, people “think with things”, and interpreting the interactions of patriots and loyalists for these often unwritten, yet essential beliefs reveal aspects of culture shared by men throughout the eighteenth century English Atlantic.<sup>5</sup> It has not been the intent of this dissertation to applaud the contributions of white, wealthy, landowning men at the expense of others, nor to deny the agency of other participants in the American Revolution, but to dissect the cultural sources of power and better understand the loyalists’ behaviour as gendered and class-based subjects.

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<sup>5</sup> Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*, 4.

This dissertation adds to the historiography of the loyalists in the American Revolution, and to the wider study of eighteenth century masculinity and honour, in several ways. First, it reveals that loyalists and patriots shared a common culture despite differences of political ideology. Second, the persecution of loyalist gentlemen was enacted through deeply gendered insults and symbols of dishonour. Punitive legal actions and confiscations also fit into this schema as the loyalists' patriarchal authority was stripped along with their property. Though the conflict was often deadly, at a local level patriots usually destroyed a loyalist gentleman's public existence and honour, rather than kill him outright. This is referred to in this dissertation as political death. Finally, the loyalists clung to ideas of honour to justify and rationalize their political choices and their claims on Britain. The indignities they suffered were transformed into expressions of honour and martyrdom for the British constitution. As loyal men, they lived up to their obligations to the King and Parliament who had sacrificed their subjects' property in the peace treaty with the United States. Thus the loyalists argued that Britain owed them monetary restitution for their losses, as well as moral recognition for their services and fidelity. Parliament agreed both from the need to uphold the honour of the British government, and because the loyalists' quest for political rebirth coincided with Britain's continued imperial project in North America. The Empire needed patriarchs as representatives of the state as much as the loyalist gentlemen needed to be restored to honour.

The gentlemanly fixation on honour is central to this thesis. Bertram Wyatt-Brown argued that "the missing element in the historians' grasp of [Revolutionary] events was an appreciation for the ethic of honor."<sup>6</sup> This dissertation has shown that integrating honour into the loyalist history is pivotal for uncovering the mentalities of both gentlemen loyalists and their opponents alike. Despite regional, professional, and class-based variations, men throughout the eighteenth century Atlantic were deeply conscious of honour as a public measure of their morality and standing in their communities. It encompassed some of the most important aspects of manhood – domestic patriarchy, public reputation, and financial credit. To be bankrupt, a cuckold, or a kinless wanderer was to be a man with very little honour by the standards of the day. All men

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<sup>6</sup> Wyatt-Brown, *Shaping of Southern Culture*, 31.

needed to belong to hierarchies regulated by expressions of respect and deference. Men of all ranks and status had some notion of honour or masculine capital, but men who claimed the status of gentlemen needed to meet exacting standards of behaviour and cultivation. Gentlemanly honour was reserved for men with the economic clout or leisure time to form the culturally legitimate nexus of tastes, manners, and knowledge, collectively described as gentility. These elements served as emblems that announced a man's honour and manly virtues. A true gentleman was a household patriarch: the master of a tight group of obedient dependants who lived in a well-kept structure that projected a man's status and position within a community. To some extent these ideals of deference and respect resided more in the minds of gentlemen than in practice, but they provided powerful cultural aspirations nonetheless.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, honour was a source of male privilege that legitimized and even sacralised patriarchal dominance over women, non-whites, and less powerful men. Gentlemanly honour classed certain men morally above others with assumptions of inherent honesty and openness. As seen time and again, this cultural assumption was often used as a convenient disguise to cover any number of underhanded or abusive behaviours. Despite claims of higher morality and ancient traditions, honour was functionally a far more pliable concept than men cared to admit, and it was used by loyalists, patriots, the British, indeed by men from all European nations, to rationalize and justify their actions and claim power over each other.

This reading of eighteenth century honour as a cultural virtue and code of conduct which encompassed aspects of manhood, patriarchy, and gentility, fits precisely into ethnographic studies of honour culture. Cultural values of masculine honour predicated on familial obedience, manly achievements, and mutual respect within a group of peers regulated by ritualized forms of insult and retribution, recur across human cultures and throughout recorded history. Though the details and customs may vary, there are many commonalities. Chief among them is what honour does. Frank Henderson Stewart's theory of honour as claim-right, a "right that something be done by another," is a crucial element for understanding why honour was such a powerful concept: it was a man's right

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Zuckerman, "Tocqueville, Turner, and Turds."

to respect.<sup>8</sup> When that right is violated, a man in an honour-conscious society must respond or be diminished in the eyes of his peers. This anthropological function of honour can be seen at work throughout the Revolutionary period, as patriots, loyalists, and the British all made and denied competing claims for respect.

Culture and political ideology can seem to be hopelessly confused and intermeshed in the apparent mentalities of historical actors. Bertram Wyatt-Brown thought that loyalist honour was guided foremost by ideas of “submission to established authority,” while Bernard Bailyn argued that the loyalist mentality was decidedly pre-modern, being “ancient, honorable, and moribund.”<sup>9</sup> What this study has shown is that though their political ideology differed, loyalists and patriots shared a common culture of masculinity and honour. Loyalists and patriots defended their respective positions with notions of individual liberty, freedom of conscience, rights of private property, and resistance against tyranny – be that Congress or the King. What is fascinating about the conflict between the loyalists and patriots is how these shared cultural virtues which formed ideals of honourable masculinity can often be best discerned in negative – through insults, shaming, and dishonour. As the patriots stripped away the constituent elements of loyalists’ genteel manhood, they also revealed hegemonic masculine ideals. This shared culture made gendered and honour-based attacks all the more devastating for loyalists. By exploring the systematic denial of loyalists’ gentlemanly privileges and honour, the destruction of the benchmarks of manhood, as well as attempts by loyalists to restore themselves to honour and prominence after the war, the anatomy of eighteenth century honour culture and masculinity comes more clearly into focus.

The patriot attempts to dishonour the loyalists do not represent attacks on patriarchy or male privilege in general, but rather testify to the continued power of these concepts. Republicanism and democracy drastically expanded the number of men who could claim honour and citizenship in the decades following the American Revolution, but during the conflict, on a cultural level, patriots and loyalists were speaking with the same symbolic language of honour and manhood. Though popular American memory

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<sup>8</sup> Stewart, *Honor*, 21, and *passim*.

<sup>9</sup> Wyatt-Brown, *Shaping of Southern Culture*, 33; Bailyn, *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, 312.

depicts Tories as aristocrats, very few loyalists, if any, could come close to that level of distinction. The loyalist gentlemen examined in this dissertation, with the notable exceptions of royal governors or the highest-ranking colonial officials, were indistinguishable from their patriot counterparts, save for their political choices. Patriots argued that loyalism was an unmanly political position which revealed corruption and dishonour; therefore loyalists were no longer worthy of the rights and privileges of gentlemen.

This dissertation presented the theory of “political death” to explain the experience of elite and aspiring elite loyalists in the American Revolution and their legal and cultural excision from American society. Unlike a slave’s social death, as described by Orlando Patterson, loyalist gentlemen were never permanently stripped of their freedom or identity.<sup>10</sup> Their race and gender often protected white loyalists from severe corporal punishments, close confinement, and execution, and permitted them far more privileges in disgrace than slaves ever had even while fulfilling their expected roles. Rather, political death was a systematic rejection of a man’s right to respect, as well as the legal, social, financial, and cultural extinction of a man’s public place in society. He was disgraced, dishonoured, and emasculated. The term political death was occasionally used by contemporaries to describe loyalists who fled to the British for protection, and it was also a phrase utilized in the wider eighteenth century world of letters. As a contributor to a Revolutionary-era newspaper explained, “A Man’s *honour* is his political life; and the moment he sacrifices it, he dies a political death – he is no longer a useful member of the community, but is truly a burden to society.”<sup>11</sup> Loyalism was an active choice, and whether men chose their allegiance out of love for the King or because they were opposed to the unruly methods of the revolution did not matter to the Whigs. From the patriot perspective, their insults and punishments did not cause political death; rather those actions merely recognized the dishonourable choices made by the loyalists themselves.

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<sup>10</sup> Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 46.

<sup>11</sup> *Spooner’s Vermont Journal*, June 7, 1785.

Political death is a term which encompasses the patriot treatment of loyalists, from the shaming rituals and other forms of dishonour, to civil and financial death, but it also recognizes the limits of loyalist dishonour. The American Revolution did not witness bloody massacres of loyalist gentlemen, and this is likely because the consequences of political death were considered harsh and effective enough to end Tory influence in American society. And yet, former friends and acquaintances sometimes stressed that their enmity towards individual loyalists was political, and there are numerous examples of patriots interceding on loyalists' behalf, even assisting loyalist prisoners or exiles. Though individual loyalists could eventually find friendly receptions in the United States in the decades following the Treaty of Paris, the memory of dishonoured Tories lived on for generations in American folklore, literature, and history.

These limits did not seem to dull the pain of political death for gentlemen, nor did they assuage the suffering of loyalist dependants. Loyalist gentlemen were usually household heads and patriarchs, and their political death was felt throughout their families and wider connections. With a patriarch's citizenship stripped, his wife, children, servants, and slaves no longer had a clear relationship to the state and shared in the privations caused by his apparent dishonour. The political death of a loyalist gentleman also left a gaping hole in his patron-client networks. A man's financial situation in the eighteenth century was inextricable from his moral character, and erased debts, lost fortunes, and bankruptcies surrounded the politically dead. Unlike a natural death, where family members would inherit property and the estate might continue, the wealth of a loyalist was seized and liquidated by the state through acts of confiscation and attainder. In many respects this resembled the medieval punishment of "corruption of blood" wherein a man's criminal dishonour and treason prevented any inheritance. He ceased to have any legal existence, alive or dead, and his property was forfeit. Without having much say in the matter, loyalist dependants were forced into poverty and exile with their dishonoured patriarchs.

Confiscation and banishment represented the culmination of political death, but the process of dishonouring loyalists began in campaigns of insults and harassment that were infused with cultural meaning and symbolic power. This included a myriad of small insults that to modern eyes may seem like almost juvenile pranks, such as snatching a wig

from a gentleman's head or donning a rich man's hat, but these were deeply emasculating acts. More seriously still, patriot mobs exposed loyalist impotence by invading and vandalizing homes and property, and attacking their genteel bodies and clothing with humiliating rituals like tarring and feathering, all with the tacit or open support of local authorities. Rank and file revolutionaries could be creative in their insults. Chaining loyalist gentlemen to African-American slaves or rolling them in pig manure and forcing them to beg forgiveness from assembled patriot women, articulated the new categories of deficient manhood patriots created for hated Tories. The insults and humiliations demarcated the true men and citizens from "apostate[s] from the order of manhood".<sup>12</sup> The creation of such binary categories served as a warning to the undecided or to hidden loyalists. Even informal attacks on loyalist honour in the form of insults delivered in person, in the press, and on the streets, were powerful because loyalists were unable to respond effectively. Most loyalist gentlemen, when faced with public insults, felt compelled to flee to the British for protection, even before receiving any official demand or ultimatum from revolutionary authorities.

Loyalists and patriots saw the Revolution as a morally asymmetrical conflict. Loyalists viewed themselves as the righteous few who stood against the storm of rebellion, while the patriots saw the Tories as selfish, greedy, and cowardly men who stood in defiance of the will of a free people. Both sides clung to masculine tropes and hurled gendered insults in the press war between supporters and opponents of colonial resistance. The loyalists saw their position as the rational, reasonable, and prudent course of action. Any illegal tax or imposition by Britain should be petitioned and questioned with restraint and respect for authority, and they castigated supporters of more radical resistance as impetuous youths, who were leading the colonies into destruction because they were unable to control their passions. The press war was a decidedly lopsided patriot victory because they had access to far more friendly printers, and they embraced a populist and active approach in their attacks on the loyalists. At best Tories were depicted as fretful old men who had outlived their usefulness; at worst they were impotent cowards, slaves, lapdogs, amphibians, and worms. The loyalists' wealth was not earned by any special prowess or virtue, patriots argued, but flowed from their obsequious

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<sup>12</sup> Paine, *Common Sense*, 66.



dependence on the Crown. The loyalists were not free and independent men, but parasites who lived off their fellow colonists. After two and half centuries the gendered nature of the patriot attacks remains powerful and cutting. The printed war of words between loyalists and patriots reveals their shared mentalities, as both sides operated within the same cultural context, but employed different gendered binaries of boys and men, men and women, brave and cowardly, competent and incompetent, freeborn and slave, human and animal.

One would expect the loyalists' generalized dishonour and their bitterness towards the rebels to exacerbate the violence of the armed conflict, and at times it did. Civil wars, as Charles Inglis wrote, "are always more cruel... than foreign Wars," wherein "personal Revenge and Animosity mingle and kindle up the soul to tenfold rage."<sup>13</sup> Indeed, loyalists struggled with the cultural conventions of honour in their war with the patriots: their primal honour called for manly revenge, while genteel and Christian values saw honour in manly restraint. There are numerous examples of patriots and loyalists denying one another the martial honours expected of gentlemen in combat. The summary executions of loyalists in the aftermath of the Battle of King's Mountain and the carnage at the Battle of Waxhaws in 1780 stand out as particularly bloody examples. Yet notions of personal honour often prevented bloodshed and encouraged the belligerent parties to extend at least grudging respect to one another. Captured loyalist gentlemen were not extended the automatic rights enjoyed by British officers. Rather, the treatment of individual loyalists depended on patriot evaluations of loyalist prisoners' personal honour and willingness to pay courtesies and show respect to their captors. The seriousness of a loyalist's alleged crimes often seemed less important than the respect he showed his captors or a loyalist's pre-war renown. While some loyalists were held under armed guard or punished merely for claiming neutrality, others, such as the loyalist mayor of New York who was suspected of plotting to kill George Washington, was lodged as a genteel guest. The greatest dishonour, for which loyalists were shown little compassion by patriots, was to collude or fight alongside escaped slaves or Native warriors on the frontier. Even gentlemen like Lt. Gov. Henry Hamilton could be shackled

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<sup>13</sup> Charles Inglis, *The Duty of Honouring the King* (New York: Hugh Gaine, 1780), 23.

and held in a tiny cell like a condemned prisoner. In a culture built on notions of divinely sanctioned racial hierarchy, patriots argued that the loyalists had compounded their treason and dishonour by betraying their race. Ideas of savage revenge and dishonour became deeply associated with the loyalists in the Whig press, and this propaganda campaign engendered an image of brutal, vengeful Tories that survived for generations in popular writing and professional histories.

The loyalists suffered a crushing blow to their public honour and patriarchal power in the American Revolution which coincided with Britain's own humiliating defeat and the loss of her prized colonies. Loyalist exiles used the language of honour to defend their role in the catastrophe, and explain how, why, and who was responsible for losing Britain's New World empire. Incompetent British generals and short-sighted peace commissioners had betrayed the loyalists. The refugees collectively and individually called on the British government to acknowledge their services and provide restitution for their losses. Parliament compensated the loyalists not based on their rights as citizens, for as colonials they had none, but to preserve the honour of the British state. The loyalists believed they had a sacred claim on the British government by virtue of their rights as male, property-owning subjects, who had sacrificed their personal happiness and wealth out of duty to the imperial hierarchy. The King and Parliament were bound by the same obligations to compensate the loyalists, or be dishonoured.

Though the loyalists did not receive the level of monetary compensation they believed they were owed, the British government helped restore their patriarchal power and honoured positions in new societies. The empire needed gentlemen patriarchs to act as extensions of the state, to instill morals, manners, and loyalty to the Crown. The political rebirth of exiled loyalist gentlemen to prominence in the new Canadian provinces was an imperial concern. Exiles like Mather Byles Jr., Amos Botsford, and Joel Stone built their households and re-established their patriarchal power and influence with British assistance. They did not look upon this aid as dependence, but as theirs by right. They employed honour as a claim-right, demanding that others, from their own dependants to British officials, treat them with the respect owed to gentlemen. The written claims of loyalist exiles may look humble and banally obsequious, but these gentlemen, animated by the belief in their own honour, were fastidious, and even

obnoxiously assertive in their demands for respect and reward. Political rebirth, like political life, relied on the willingness of others to accept and support a gentleman's claim to power, and though it did not set all things to right, it created a functioning hierarchy that allowed them to "begin the world anew".

This dissertation has endeavoured to show that for all their political differences, loyalists and patriots operated within the same cultural framework of symbols, rituals, and virtues that led them to justify and rationalize their allegiances. Whatever truly motivated patriots and loyalists, they defended their political choices and attacked their enemies in the gendered language of honour and manhood. The power of these cultural ideas can be seen both in their ubiquity and their pliancy. The loyalists were routinely humiliated, emasculated, and dishonoured by their more numerous enemies, and yet they continued to cling to ideas of honour, transforming failure and indignity into sacrifice and martyrdom. Generations of mythmaking and nationalistic interpretations clouded the history of the loyalists in the American Revolution, and this study accounts for the emergence of those Tory archetypes in the print culture of the War of Independence. Some of the gentlemen loyalists described in this dissertation went on to become the leaders of new societies and for a time even gained the status of legendary founding fathers of Canada. The same men were reviled as traitors and bloodthirsty villains in the popular memory and history of the United States. This dissertation has helped explain why, well into the twentieth century, the loyalists were regarded as both the moral bedrock of Canada, and as the epitome of dishonoured Americans.

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- Zuckerman, Michael. "Tocqueville, Turner, and Turds: Four Stories of Manners in Early America," *Journal of American History*, 85 (1998): 13-42.

## Curriculum Vitae

### Education

Ph.D. History  
 University of Western Ontario  
 Sept. 2007 – Present  
 Supervisor: Nancy L. Rhoden

Thesis: “Dishonoured Americans: Loyalist Manhood and Political Death in Revolutionary America”

Comprehensive Exams:  
 Colonial, Revolutionary, and Early Republic America in the Atlantic World  
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Master of Arts, Public History  
 University of Western Ontario  
 Graduated – 2006

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) - Major History, Minor Classical Studies  
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### Teaching Experience

2014-Present      Instructor – History 2701E: Patterns and Perspectives in World History. Huron University College, London, ON.

2013-2014      Instructor – History 3301E: Colonial British America  
 University of Western Ontario, London, ON.

Sabbatical Leave Appointment – Huron University College, Dept. of History, London, Ontario.

HIST 1801E: Major Issues in World History.

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2012-2013	Instructor – History 3301E: Colonial British America University of Western Ontario, London, ON.
	Instructor – History 2301E: The United States: Colonial Period to the Present. Huron University College, London, ON.
2011	Instructor – History 3411E: Britain from 1688 to the Present. Huron University College, London, ON.

### Publications

Refereed	With Robert MacDougall, “Tecumseh Lies Here: Goals and Challenges for Pervasive History Games.” In Kevin Kee, et al. <i>Past Play</i> , University of Michigan Press, 2014.
Other	“Playing with the War of 1812: Teaching History with Games and ‘Playful Historical Thinking’” <i>Canadian Issues</i> , Fall 2012: 49-53.
Textbook	Sections in Robert Wardhaugh, et. al. <i>Origins: Canadian History to Confederation</i> . Seventh Edition (Toronto: Nelson, 2011) “Where Historians Disagree: Montcalm”; “Joined in Death: Wolfe and Montcalm”; “The War of 1812.”
Reviews	McCulloch, Ian M.; Chapman, Earl John, eds., <i>A Bard of Wolfe's Army: James Thompson, Gentleman Volunteer, 1733-1830</i> . H- Canada, H-Net Reviews. July, 2011. <b>URL:</b> <a href="http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=33681">http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=33681</a>  James Elliot, <i>Strange Fatality: The Battle of Stoney Creek</i> , and Jon Latimer, <i>Niagara 1814</i> , in <i>Canada's History</i> (formerly <i>The Beaver</i> ) Oct-Nov, 2009.

### Awards

- 2012 – The Eleta Britton Scholarship, Department of History, UWO (Inaugural)
- 2011-2012 – Ontario Graduate Scholarship
- 2010 – Social Science and Humanities Research Council Doctoral Fellowship
- 2010 – Ontario Graduate Scholarship (declined for SSHRC).
- Nominated by students in 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11 for Teaching Assistant  
Award, UWO.
- 2009 – United Empire Scholarship, UWO
- 2009 – Ivie Cornish Memorial Fellowship in History
- 2007 - 2011 UWO Graduate Research Scholarship

- 2007 - 2010 United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada Scholarship

### Conference Presentations

- July 9/14 With Kevin Kee and Eric Poitras, "History All Around Us: Towards Best Practices for Augmented Reality for Public History and Cultural Empowerment," Digital Humanities Conference 2014. Ecole Polytechnique Federale, Lausanne, Switzerland.
- June 28/13 With Kevin Kee, "Training the Next Generation of AR Developers" IEEE International Symposium on Technology and Society, University of Toronto.
- June 15/12 "Digital History and the Promised Land" 2012 Promised Land Project Symposium. Buxton National Historic Site.
- May 30/12 With Robert MacDougall et. al. "Tecumseh Lies Here: Exploring the War of 1812 in an Augmented Reality Game." Canadian Historical Association, (Active History Mini-Conference). University of Waterloo.
- May 5/12 "Playing with the War of 1812: Teaching History with Augmented Reality." 23<sup>rd</sup> Military History Colloquium, The Laurier Centre for Military, Strategic, and Disarmament Studies. (Invited)
- June 12/10 "Crowd-Sourcing Your Collections: Using Web 2.0 in Small Museums." Ontario Heritage Conference, University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus. (Invited)
- April 29/10 With Robert MacDougall, "Tecumseh's Curse? Goals and Challenges for Pervasive History Games." Playing with Technology in History, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario.
- Jan. 14/10 "A Trim Reckoning: Loyalists and Honour in the American Revolution," Bruce McCaffrey Memorial Lecture, UWO Department of History.
- Oct. 17/09 "'Pouring Sand Down a Rat Hole': The Public Contest of Museums and Memory in Small-Town Ontario," Presented at "History on the Grand," University of Waterloo School of Architecture, Cambridge, Ontario.
- June 3/09 "A Captivity So Much to be Dreaded:" Loyalism, Honour, and Imprisonment in Revolutionary Connecticut," Presented at

“Loyalism in the Revolutionary Atlantic World,” University of Maine, Orono.

- January 18/08 “Saving Local History in Gananoque, Ontario,” Bruce McCaffrey Memorial Lecture, UWO Department of History.
- Nov. 17/06 “Forgotten Villains and Invented Saints: The Social Memory of Loyalists in Ontario and Connecticut.” Presented at: “Inventing Our Past: What, Why and How we Remember” Litchfield Historical Society, Litchfield, Connecticut. (Invited)

### **Funded Research**

- 2012-Present Researcher – Ontario Augmented Reality Network/Brock University
- 2009-2013 Project Manager: “Tecumseh Lies Here Augmented Reality Game” – University of Western Ontario.
- 2009-2012 Research/Teaching Assistant – The Promised Land Project, Huron University College, London, Ontario.

### **Additional Relevant Employment**

- 2012 - 2014 Presenter and Writer – Canada’s History Magazine  
“Canada’s History Video Field Guide to the War of 1812”
- 2006-2007 Curator: Arthur Child Heritage Museum of the 1000 Islands.  
[www.collectionresurrection.blogspot.com](http://www.collectionresurrection.blogspot.com).