

IN THE WAKE OF WAR: VIOLENCE, IDENTITY, AND CULTURAL CHANGE IN
PURITAN MASSACHUSETTS, 1676-1713

A Thesis

by

CHARLES ROBERT HEATON

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

August 2011

Major Subject: History

In the Wake of War: Violence, Identity, and Cultural Change in Puritan Massachusetts,

1676-1713

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	April Lee Hatfield
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ABSTRACT

In the Wake of War: Violence, Identity, and Cultural Change in Puritan Massachusetts,
1676-1713. (August 2011)

Charles Robert Heaton, B.A., Methodist University

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. April Lee Hatfield

This thesis seeks to grasp how King Philip's War influenced cultural evolution in Massachusetts in order to determine whether it produced a culture of violence and conflict amongst the Anglo-Puritan inhabitants of the Massachusetts Bay colony following the conflict. Specifically, this work uses primary sources produced by European inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay to examine the period between 1676 and 1713.

Chapter II examines the impact of King Philip's War on the evolution of colonists' attitudes towards Indians by tracing the development of scalp bounties in Massachusetts. The use of scalp bounties highlights a trend towards commoditizing Indian lives in New England, and King Philip's War proves critical in directing that trend.

Chapter III explores the results of King Philip's War on the relationship between Massachusetts and the metropole in London. This chapter focuses on the riot of April, 1689, in Boston, that removed the London-appointed leader of the Dominion of New England, a political entity created, in part, in response to the weak showing of colonial

government during King Philip's War. This chapter highlights the diverging views of empire and authority between the Massachusetts colonists and the royal officials in London.

Chapter IV analyzes conflict and change within colonial Massachusetts society in the wake of King Philip's War. Here, I find that the war had the smallest impact on the overall course of subsequent cultural development in the colony. This does not mean that the war had no impact at all, but rather that such impact did not stand out against other patterns of cultural influence such as religion and economics.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my wife, Sabrina Ann Heaton, for standing by me when I wanted to return to school and for making this thesis possible. This work is as much yours as it is mine.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all of the individuals who have provided their valuable time and effort helping me research and craft this thesis. History has a reputation as a lonely, solitary pursuit; yet without the help of dozens of people, I could not have finished this project.

I must first thank the members of my committee: Dr. April Lee Hatfield, Dr. Cynthia Bouton, and Dr. James Burk; they have provided warm encouragement, sage advice, and havemaintained the highest standards in my research and writing. Dr. Hatfield deserves special praise as the chair of my committee, for her near endless patience and her tireless assistance.

I also need to thank the faculty and graduate students with whom I have had the honor to work with in countless seminar hours. These people made my years at Texas A&M University an undeniably positive experience. Special thanks go to those professors and students who have read and critiqued the draft versions of the chapters in this thesis.

Beyond the boundaries of Texas A&M, the staff of the Massachusetts Historical Society, the American Antiquarian Society, the Boston Public Library, and the Massachusetts State Archives provided a great deal of assistance in accumulating the primary sources used in the text. Additionally, I presented a version of Chapter II to the New England Historical Association conference at Salem State University and a version of Chapter III to the British Group on Early American History during their annual

conference at the University of Oxford. I owe a debt of gratitude to the commentators and attendees at these conferences for questioning and refining some of the key arguments in those chapters.

Finally, I must close by acknowledging the eternal debt I owe to my family for their love, guidance, and support. My parents, Robert Price and Patricia Louise Heaton, and my brother, Dennis James Heaton, have always been by my side when I have needed them. My family in Rhode Island provided me with shelter, food, and beer during my summer of research and I promise to eventually pay them back. I also must acknowledge the help of Callie, the Super Collie, who broke up the monotony of the day and brought me plenty of laughs. I could not close without acknowledging how much I owe in my life to my wife, Sabrina Ann Heaton. She has been a friend, a confidant, and a continual source of inspiration.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis seeks to grasp how the unprecedented bloodshed of King Philip's War influenced cultural evolution in Massachusetts in order to determine whether it produced a culture of violence and conflict amongst the Anglo-Puritan inhabitants of the Massachusetts Bay colony following King Philip's War. Specifically, this work examines the period between 1676 and 1713, during an era of profound change in the structure of Puritan society. This evaluation operates thematically, rather than chronologically, to highlight the multiple currents of cultural change overtaking the colony simultaneously, and to allow for significant focus on what the author believes are the crucial factors in, and examples of, this change. Incidents of violence and conflict, where individuals or crowds either ignored or actively protested against the traditional sources of power, provide the major focus in an evaluation of how King Philip's War and its political, economic, and social aftermath impacted, or failed to impact, Puritan culture in Massachusetts. Thus, the chapters are organized according to the level of impact that King Philip's War had on the attitudes and actions taken by Puritan society towards a particular target.¹

This thesis follows the style and format of *The William and Mary Quarterly*.

¹ Many prior scholars have addressed the transformation and conflict that gripped the Puritans during this period. This thesis relies on analysis of the primary source material to break these conflicts down according to the primary target of the violence and the root causes for the confrontations. See Perry Miller, *Errand into the Wilderness* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1956); Miller, *The New England Mind*, 2 vol. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1953); Edmund S. Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (New York: New York University Press, 1963); Morgan, *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic*

No society can remain in a position of permanent stasis, particularly colonial societies. Demographic, political, economic, social, and cultural transformations all take their toll on the structure, function, and vitality of colonial societies. Colonies, like any society, remain subject to internal stressors, but unlike other social organizations, colonies must accommodate the whims of the metropole, competing empires, and their indigenous neighbors. Therefore, periods of intense or exceptional violence can drastically alter the structures and appearance of a colony by dramatically remaking the relationships that a colony relies on to uphold the status quo and maintain positive growth.

Writing in 1702, the Puritan divine Cotton Mather seemed to have unconsciously grasped the scale of changes wrought in Puritan society following King Philip's War. Uncertainty, fear, and hesitation pervade the introduction of Mather's magnum opus, the *Magnalia Christi Americana*. Mather recognized a shift, the changing character of the people living in Massachusetts, from the small band of migrants who originally settled the land. The changes wrought by the passage of time left Mather comparing his contemporaries to his ancestors, and finding his generation woefully lacking in the founders' supposed virtues. He wrote,

Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England (New York: Harper Perennial, 1966); Sacvan Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1978); Michael G. Hall, *The Last American Puritan: The Life of Increase Mather, 1639-1723* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan, 1988); Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998); Richard R. Johnson, *Adjustment to Empire: The New England Colonies, 1675-1715* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1981); Brendan McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007); E. Brooks Holifield, "Peace, Conflict, and Ritual in Puritan Congregations," in *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23 (Winter, 1993): 551-570. This represents only a partial bibliography and does not cover the multitude of journal articles addressing aspects of this time period.

The *First Generation* of our Fathers, that began this Plantation of *New-England*... in laying the *Foundation*... and given an *Example* of true *Reformed Religion* in the *Faith* and *Order* of the Gospel... they are now *gathered unto their Fathers*.... Much more may we, the *Children* of such *Fathers*, lament our *Gradual Degeneracy* from that *Life* and *Power* of *Godliness* that was in them, and the many *Provoking Evils* that are amongst us.²

Appeals like Mather's to a more virtuous past, and jeremiads that ranted against a supposedly degenerate present, appeared with greater and greater frequency as the seventeenth century ended and transitioned into the eighteenth. However, Mather and his conservative contemporaries could only identify what they believed constituted evidence of such changes taking place; these jeremiads could not identify the root causes of these changes in attitudes and behaviors.³

This work analyzes the impact of one potential cause for cultural evolution, King Philip's War, in relation to other cultural, social, economic, and political factors that affected the daily lives of the colonists. The organization of this thesis derives from the level of impact that the war had on the relations discussed in each chapter. In other

² Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana: or, the Ecclesiastical History of New-England from Its First Planting in the Year 1620. unto the Year of our Lord, 1698*, in *Magnalia Christi Americana: Books I and II*, ed. Kenneth B. Murdock (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1977), 64-65.

³ The scholarship on jeremiads is voluminous. See Perry Miller, *Errand into the Wilderness* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1956) and Sacvan Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1978) for the most comprehensive treatments of this style of literature. This study does not plan to tackle jeremiads in any way, merely to point out that such concerns existed and that the exceptionally violent period of King Philip's War may have a role in fostering the issues raised by the jeremiads.

words, King Philip's War had a much stronger impact on the cultural changes discussed in chapter two than on those discussed in chapter three. Broadly speaking, chapter two focuses on colonists' cultural conceptions about local Indians following the war, chapter three focuses on the political aftermath of King Philip's War and the cultural reaction to the institutional changes demanded by the metropole, and chapter four looks at internal conflicts between Puritan families and communities.

Chapter II studies the evolving view of the Indian within Puritan society and the changes in acceptable norms of violence that continuous frontier wars provoked between 1675 and 1722. Just how did the experience of King Philip's War affect Puritan views of what was permissible, even laudable, during wartime? Additionally, how did this evolution in norms of violence affect Puritan understandings of both friendly and enemy Native Americans? The answer comes, in part, by analyzing the development of scalp bounties during the closing years of the seventeenth century, and understanding the impact of scalp bounties on Puritan perceptions of Indian bodies and Indian humanity. This chapter also seeks answers by analyzing how Puritans interpreted the place of Indians in the wilderness and how they understood their own place in relationship to the forests and the creatures in the forests. The dates covered in this chapter go further than the thesis as a whole; however, this is due to the timing of scalp bounty legislation. The fundamental cultural shift occurred between 1676 and 1713. The legislation passed in 1722, for example, merely demonstrates that scalp bounties remained accepted and important in Puritan society.

Chapter III explores the changes in political economy wrought by the difficulty the colonists had in putting down Philip's rebellion. King Philip's War offered Charles II and later James II an opportunity to revoke the charter of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and put in place a government of their own devising. The imposition of a new government, called the Dominion of New England, led to a fierce debate over the nature of imperialism, relations between the metropole and the colony, and the nature of English citizenship in colonies. This chapter covers the revocation of the original charter of the Massachusetts Bay colony in 1684 and moves through the process of creating and administering the Dominion of New England from 1685 until the rebellion that overthrew the Dominion's leadership in 1689. The emphasis of this chapter remains, like the previous chapter, on cultural symbolism and change. However, unlike the first chapter, this discussion centers on the cultural gulf between two groups of Englishmen: Stuart England and Massachusetts; even more importantly, this chapter focuses on how Massachusetts Puritans tried to bridge that gulf in an effort to legitimize their actions against the dictates of the metropole. The violent actions of the crowd that deposed the Dominion's government in 1689 forms the backbone of this chapter's analysis. The crowd and its behavior proves crucial for understanding how the residents of Massachusetts viewed themselves in relation to England.

Chapter IV provides an analysis of cultural confrontation and change strictly within the Puritan society of Massachusetts. Specifically, this chapter examines the broad currents of cultural change within long-established communities and how communal changes, along with the tensions such changes created, affected the

relationship between communities and the colony's ruling elites. "Change" in this context is not uniformly negative, nor is it necessarily traumatic. Change includes economic growth, the rise of younger men into positions of high status, and the expansion of consumption. Change also includes events that one could easily identify as traumatic; such events include the growth and subsequent division of old towns into new communities, the turbulent nature of colonial politics following King Philip's War and the revocation of the original charter, and the debate over the liberalization of Puritanism. This chapter aims to demonstrate how these internal conversations, conversions, and debates helped move cultural norms. Overall, King Philip's War appears to have had the smallest role out of the three chapters in altering or defining the nature of the conflicts. This is not to suggest that such a role did not exist, but rather that other factors played a more prominent part in developing Puritan views towards one another.

Hopefully, this study helps illuminate the strength of cultural change during a period in New England's history that historians remember more for its political and economic changes rather than the changes amongst the common people. Changes in political and economic structures feature colonial and metropolitan elites, yet without the tacit or explicit approval of an overwhelming majority of the population, such changes could not occur. Whether the majority of the population supports, or, at the very least, does not oppose, these changes relies heavily on the cultural norms that influence individual and communal decisions. The transition of Massachusetts from a Puritan "city on a hill," to a mercantile power, and the seedbed of the American Revolution, depends,

in large part, on the conflicts and confrontations of the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century, and on the adaptations made by the English settlers of Massachusetts to those conflicts. King Philip's War provides the starkest example of how the English colonists adapted to the turmoil of conflict and change.

The war drastically altered the nature of Puritan expansion and the balance of power in New England. In many ways, the war defined the social, political, economic, and cultural evolution of Massachusetts. Fifty-two of the ninety towns that existed in New England at the start of the war suffered at least one assault. Twenty-five of these towns were pillaged and seventeen were completely destroyed. This means that fifty-eight percent of the towns defended themselves against hostile forces and nineteen percent suffered total devastation. Most of the towns destroyed came from the Connecticut River valley.⁴ The ferocity of the war meant that the frontier colonies of New Hampshire and Maine failed to build a new town for thirty-eight years afterwards. Maine's population in 1717 was less than its population in 1660.⁵

The war pushed the line of English settlement in the Connecticut Valley back some twenty miles to the south and even farther to the east. The war all but obliterated the string of small, but growing, English settlements along the Connecticut River in western Massachusetts. Northfield, Deerfield, Brookfield, Worcester, and numerous other towns ceased to exist. The Puritan victory in the conflict opened up extensive

⁴ Armstrong Starkey, *European and Native American Warfare, 1675-1815* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 80.

⁵ Stella H. Sutherland, *Population Distribution in Colonial America* (New York: AMS Press, 1966), 32. In Maine's case, King Philip's War merely started a trend that resulted in an almost constant conflict between the English settlers and the Abenaki Indians.

swaths of the New England interior to English colonization. However, the Puritans, despite a growing population, did not take advantage of the uninhabited land until decades afterwards. Twenty years after the war, in 1696, Cotton Mather reported that there were still abandoned settlements that had not seen any resettlement.⁶ The Puritans could not match their prewar population distribution almost a generation after the conflict. This long-term displacement of frontier families altered the internal dynamics of the remaining communities in eastern Massachusetts and added unexpected new social and economic stressors.

This struggle seriously damaged the region's profitable fur and timber industries and added significant new expenditures to the government's treasury. The United Colonies of New England, encompassing Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, claimed the war cost them £100,000.⁷ No one has produced an accurate accounting of the income lost by individuals and families. Even those families spared the pain of direct attack lost productivity when their men left for militia service or refugees from other parts of the colony consumed their surplus resources.

Per capita, no war in American history cost more lives than King Philip's War. At the high end, Russell Bourne estimates that around 9,000 people died. He argues for roughly 6,000 Indian deaths and 3,000 European deaths.⁸ A local author writing in 1676

⁶ Douglass Edward Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk: New England in King Philip's War* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1958), 247.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 243-244.

⁸ Russell Bourne, *The Red King's Rebellion: Racial Politics in New England, 1675-1678* (New York: Atheneum, 1990), 36

estimated that around 6,000 Indians died or were sold into slavery while at least 800 Europeans died.⁹ Assuming that there were 64,750 white settlers at the outbreak of the war, and using the low estimate of 800 white dead, this means that one in every eighty-one colonists died.¹⁰ If Russell Bourne's estimate of 3,000 white dead is used then a staggering one in every twenty-two settlers died due to the conflict.

In the aftermath of Philip's assault on New England, an interesting mix of demographic, economic, political, and cultural challenges arose for the Puritans to grapple with. Despite the privations caused by the war, the English population of Massachusetts continued to grow exponentially over the subsequent decades. Between 1670 and 1700, the white population of New England increased by around 39,200 persons.¹¹ These concurrent threads of population growth along with personal and communal destruction, economic development along with the annihilation of entire communities, helped spur much of the conflict and change discussed in the chapters below.

⁹ *A New and Further Narrative of the State of New-England, Being a Continued Account of the Bloody Indian-War from March till August, 1676*, in *King Philip's War Narratives* (1676; repr., Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, 1966), 13-14.

¹⁰ Estimated from the table provided in John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British America: 1607-1789* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 103.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER II
 THE FINAL CUT: SCALP BOUNTIES, CULTURE, AND THE EVOLVING VIEW
 OF THE INDIAN OTHER IN COLONIAL NEW ENGLAND¹²

On March 15, 1697, Goodwife Hannah Dustan, of Haverhill, Massachusetts, became a captive of Abenaki Indians who attacked her town. The Abenakis found her lying in bed, recovering from giving birth to her eighth child just a week earlier. Dustan and her new-born child joined four other captives to make the march back into Abenaki territory and probably into the hands of the French in New France. Dustan's infant never made it out of the town. Fearing the child would slow them down, or perhaps give their position away, one of the Abenaki "dash'd out the Brains of the *Infant*, against a Tree." Several more of the captives similarly perished at the hands of their captors whenever they retarded the progress of the war party too greatly.¹³

Dustan's party moved over a hundred miles over the course of several days. She, along with her wet-nurse and a boy taken captive a year prior from Worcester, became the charges of an Indian family of two men, three women, and seven children, who continued moving her towards a large Indian village. One night, just before daybreak,

[Dustan] heartened the *Nurse* and the *Youth*, to assist her, in this

Enterprise; & they all furnishing themselves with *Hatchets* for the

¹² The title of this paper is an homage to James Axtell and William Sturtevant's seminal article, "The Unkindest Cut." However, whereas they focused on the history of scalping, this paper focuses on the sociocultural effects of scalping. All quotes maintain the original spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization.

¹³ Cotton Mather, *Humiliations Follow'd with Deliverances* (Boston: Green and Allen for Phillips, 1697), 41-43, quotation on page 43.

purpose, they struck such Home Blowe, upon the Heads of their *Sleeping Oppressors*, that e're they could any of them struggle into any effectual Resistance, at the Feat of those poor Prisoners.

Dustan and her assistants killed ten of the twelve Indians. Only a “sorely wounded” woman and one of the children escaped the slaughter.¹⁴

It all makes for an intriguing adventure story. Cotton Mather, who wrote out the narrative as part of a sermon, did not skimp on evocative adjectives or on describing the grisly actions of all parties. However, turning the tables on the captors was not enough for either Dustan or Mather’s telling of the tale. He relates what Dustan and her party did after killing their captors: “but cutting off the Scalps of the *Ten Wretches*, who had Enslav’d ‘em, they are come off.” What’s more, the Indian child who escaped managed to avoid death because Dustan’s group “intend[ed] to bring him away with them.”¹⁵

The adventure story takes an awkward turn for modern readers, to say the least. A narrative of revenge, of harsh justice meted out for a harsh crime, should be enough to satisfy the audience. Why did the protagonists scalp their victims? Why did they try to take a newly-orphaned Indian back with them? Why did Cotton Mather feel the need to relate that Dustan and her group scalped their dead captors?

The first two questions are simple enough to answer, yet even these simple answers raise deeper questions about the evolution of Goodwife Dunstan’s society. It was exceedingly profitable for Dunstan to scalp her dead foes and attempt to kidnap an

¹⁴ Ibid., 46-47.

¹⁵ Ibid., 47.

enemy child. When she returned, the government of Massachusetts paid her fifty pounds for the scalps.¹⁶ Had she returned with the Indian child, she could have claimed all the profits for selling that child into West Indian slavery. During King Philip's War, New England, and Massachusetts in particular, began offering bounties for enemy scalps. This started a trend in Massachusetts with each new Indian war. Once hostilities commenced, the government passed an act granting bounties for enemy scalps. Over time, these laws became more detailed and sophisticated. The slain enemies became financial assets to the colonists.

The third question, why Mather felt the need to relate the story, touches on the evolution of the colonists' views of their Indian neighbors and of themselves. Previous scholars have investigated the process of turning the Indians into an "Other" that the colonists measured themselves against.¹⁷ Yet how did the picture of Indians evolve within colonial Massachusetts over the decades? An additional, and related, question asks how the colonists' picture of themselves evolved. When King Philip's War began, New England colonists barely possessed a vocabulary that adequately described the circumstances surrounding, and the actual act of, scalping.¹⁸ By the end of the century, the colonial leadership enthusiastically encouraged their constituents and allies to scalp

¹⁶ Cotton Mather, *Decennium Luctuosum*, in *Narratives of the Indian Wars, 1675-1699*, ed. Charles H. Lincoln (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913), 266.

¹⁷ James Axtell, *Natives and Newcomers: the Cultural Origins of North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008).

¹⁸ James Axtell and William C. Sturtevant, "The Unkindest Cut, or Who Invented Scalping," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 37, no. 3 (July 1980): 462. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1923812> (accessed 5 December 2009).

their enemies. This chapter evaluates how intercultural interactions, especially violent interactions, impacted cultural norms and self-perception during the period under study.

The adoption of scalp bounties modified a tradition of decapitation in English warfare by further depersonalizing the nature of the mutilation of the enemy and by adding the element of profit. Further, the language in the scalp bounty legislation mirrored legislation written that offered bounties for the heads of predatory animals, wolves in particular. Personifying vague Indian groups as animals or demons was nothing new to ministers such as Mather. Treating colonists as hunters of Indians, rewarding them in the same manner that the colony rewarded hunters of dangerous animals, represented an evolution in the colonists' view of themselves and their power relationship with their Indian enemies.

The colonists adapted during King Philip's War to harness some of the more successful tactics of their enemies. Scalping was foremost among these adaptations. James Axtell writes "the practice of scalping and the use of scalp bounties by the English may have been only a necessary adaptation of Indian means to English ends... But we should also consider the possibility that... scalping and the attitudes it engendered toward alien people left an ugly scar... on the collective mentality of their society."¹⁹ Scalp bounties helped further evolve the colonial picture of the Indians. They still stood out as beasts, but now they were beasts that could be hunted like any nonhuman predator.

¹⁹ James Axtell, "The Moral Dilemmas of Scalping," in *Natives and Newcomers*, 260.

This view differs in focus from the analysis of scalp bounties developed by James Axtell and Peter Silver. Axtell wrote two seminal essays on the subject of scalping by Europeans: “The Unkindest Cut,” and “The Moral Dilemmas of Scalping.” In these essays he focuses on the adoption of scalp bounties by Europeans, the English in particular, and how these bounties affected Indian scalping habits and English ethical norms regarding the treatment of the dead and the treatment of enemies. Axtell views scalp bounties as causing a shift in religious and cultural norms that caused internal angst among the colonists, but satisfied a lust for vengeance and became viewed as “acceptable – or at least not wholly objectionable – because they were necessary to the survival and prosperity of the English way of life in America.”²⁰

Peter Silver examined the impact of scalp bounties as part of his study into “how fear and horror, with suitable repackaging, can remake whole societies and their political landscapes.”²¹ His study focuses on the mid-to-late eighteenth century Middle Atlantic colonies and emphasizes changes in intercultural relations. He argues that scalp bounties “brought about neither epidemics of murder nor great victories, but they did create a different – and, it was hoped, more menacing – context for intercultural relations. They helped rural Europeans to feel they might, after all, be a people to be reckoned with.” Like Axtell, Silver also notes the monetary greed that scalp bounties created.²²

This chapter differs from Axtell and Silver in its interpretation of how the victims of scalping were viewed by the English. Axtell assumes that the English

²⁰ Ibid., 278.

²¹ Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors*, xviii.

²² Ibid., 162.

acknowledged the humanity of the Indians targeted by the scalp bounties. However, scalping by the English, and large scalp bounties encouraging the practice, bore fewer moral implications if they rendered the enemy less than human, or at best, as humans diametrically opposed to the Christian principles the colonists claim to uphold. Linking Indians to the wilderness and to predatory animals, and then linking a specific piece of flesh from the Indians to a specific rate of exchange made Indian lives a tradable commodity in a process very different from the enslavement that made their labor a commodity. The nature of scalp bounties changed over time and reflected some moral uncertainty about the appropriateness of the measures, but overall, the view of the Indian “Other” that developed towards the end of the seventeenth century made the adoption of these bounties a logical stage in the ongoing attempts to dehumanize Indian lives.

Silver emphasizes the loss of authority and decency brought about by scalp bounties, along with the general ineffectiveness of the policy. He notes the opportunities for wanton violence and corruption that the bounties encouraged while resulting in few tangible benefits for colonial governments. Silver’s analysis touches at several of the key points raised in this chapter; notably, the feelings of power that scalping gave European colonists. However, his study takes place fifty-plus years after this chapter concludes, and examines a mature colonial society engaged in one theater of a global conflict. The scalp bounties he examined, enacted in Pennsylvania and Maryland during the Seven Years’ War, drew on a strong tradition of scalp bounty laws that neither colony originated. Thus, these colonies did not go through the same process of changing their cultural norms and their identification of the “Other” that Massachusetts endured. Scalp

bounties, for these colonies, arguably represented a military tactic more than a cultural shift, especially given the limited effectiveness of the bounties.²³

Currently, scholars attribute the origins of scalp bounties to William Kieft, the Dutch director of New Netherland from 1638-1647. Kieft's War, launched due in part to trade and a shifting balance of power between the Dutch and the Raritan, lasted from 1640-1645. Late in 1641, Kieft began offering ten fathoms of wampum for a head and twenty fathoms for a live Indian.²⁴ This first example of scalp bounties focused only on adult Indian males. Kieft himself asked that his bounty hunters bring in only those who had attacked the Dutch.²⁵ With a reward measured in wampum, and the very limited population of New Netherland, Kieft intended that only his Indian allies attempt to collect the bounty. The Dutch tapped into a practice deeply rooted in the culture of most Indian polities in Eastern North America and directed it towards their own ends. Kieft's adoption of scalp bounties represented a temporary expedient that failed to alter the relationship between the Dutch colonists and the natives in any major way.

The English in New England avoided major Indian conflicts for almost four decades after the 1637 Pequot War. When war returned to the colonists in 1675, however, it returned as a wave of brutality and death that the Puritans scarcely thought

²³ Silver notes that only 8 bounties were collected in Pennsylvania. Maryland, too, found themselves appropriating far more money to bounties than bounty hunters were collecting.

²⁴ Wampum were beads created out of clam and mussel shells; typically they came from clams known locally as Quahogs. The beads held symbolic and religious value for the tribes and also acted as a form of currency.

²⁵ Evan Haefeli, "Kieft's War and the Cultures of Violence in Colonial America," in *Lethal Imagination: Violence and Brutality in American History*, ed. Michael A. Bellesiles (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 19-20. New England often paid rewards for Pequot heads brought in during the 1637 Pequot War, but these rewards did not have governmental backing, nor were they consistently given at a standard rate. In short, these were not bounties.

possible. The ferocity of King Philip's War caused the English to reexamine their partnership with their native allies and seek new means to encourage them to vigorously pursue Philip's forces. On July 15, 1675, the governors of Connecticut and Massachusetts signed an agreement with the Narragansett nation in which the colonists agreed to pay for heads,

The said Gentlemen in Behalf of the Governments to which they do belong, do engage to every the said Sachims and their Subjects, that if they or any of them shall seize and bring into either the above said English Governments... *Philip Sachim* alive, he or they so delivering, shall receive for their Pains, forty *Trucking-cloth Coats*; in Case they bring his Head, they shall have *twenty* like good *Coats* paid them: for every living Subject of said *Philips*... two Coats, and for every Head one Coat.²⁶

There is no evidence that the New England authorities knew of Kieft's approach and adapted it for their purposes, but like Kieft, the colonial governments only intended the bounties for Indian allies who assisted the colonists' cause. The treaty was written for the Narragansett only. Englishmen could not legally claim the bounty given for "Heads." The treaty marked the first foray into scalp bounties in New England. The reward for scalps, or heads, was not great, so it is difficult to mark this as the beginning of a

²⁶ William Hubbard, *The History of the Indian Wars in New England from the First Settlement to the Termination of the War with King Philip, in 1677* (1677; repr., Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1990), 23. By "Head," it is commonly assumed that a scalp sufficed. Almost certainly, however, to claim the bounty on Philip, the whole head was required.

commoditization of Indian lives. However, the treaty marked a sharp break with past traditions of limited and irregular gift-giving for enemy body parts.

By the end of King Philip's War the governments of Connecticut, Plymouth, and Massachusetts enacted scalp bounties that even English colonists could collect. The colonial leadership initially thought the war would remain localized and end quickly. The treaty with the Narragansett was reached very early into the war. However, the tide of reversals and devastation for the colonists continued throughout most of 1675 until the governments decided to offer a financial incentive for English soldiers to kill the enemy. Colonists could collect thirty shillings per head, or scalp, that they returned with instead of their wages for time served in the militia. Benjamin Church remarked, "Methinks it is scanty reward, and poor encouragement."²⁷

These bounties marked the beginning of a progressive commoditization of Indian bodies. In many ways, this trend merely reflected the declining value Indian lives held, both friendly and unfriendly, amongst the colonists. Bounties grew in value exponentially over time and the legislation authorizing the bounties grew more complex and more familiar with the process of scalping and claiming the rewards. Massachusetts passed a scalp bounty law in 1694, during King William's War, which offered payment "for every [enemy] Indian, great or small, which they shall kill, or take and bring in prisoner."²⁸

²⁷ Thomas Church, *The History of Philip's War, Commonly Called the Great Indian War, of 1675 and 1676* (1716; repr., Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1989), 126.

²⁸ *The Acts and Resolves, Public and Private, of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay...* (Boston: Wright & Potter, Printers to the State, 1874), 1:530.

During another conflagration on the frontier in 1697, ostensibly during King William's War, the government of Massachusetts passed another scalp bounty. This law, titled, "An Act for Encouragement of the prosecution of the Indian Enemy and Rebels," offered a graduated pay scale based on the age of the slain Indian. The act stated,

Any party or partys that shall voluntarily go forth at their own charge... in the discovery and pursuit of the said Indian enemy and Rebels, for every Man or Woman of the said Enemy that shall be by them slain the sum of Fifty pounds, and for every Child of under the Enemy under the age of ten that shall be by them slain the sum of Ten pounds.

The law also allowed the bounty hunters to keep any plunder they found and the right to sell their prisoners and keep the profit. To encourage offensive actions, colonists who killed Indians in defense of their towns or homes could only collect five pounds per scalp. To guard against fraud, the government required scalp hunters to take an oath that stated the time and circumstances under which they collected each scalp and to present the scalp to the government for safekeeping. Any scalp hunter found to have committed fraud had to pay back double the bounty he collected for the fraudulent scalps.²⁹

The laws continued to evolve with each Indian conflict. The 1722 act, titled the same as the 1697 act, offered one hundred pounds for "the scalp of any male Indian of the age of twelve years or upwards," taken by volunteers who subsisted without government assistance. Men serving under the government could collect a lesser amount

²⁹ An Act for Encouragement of the prosecution of the Indian Enemy and Rebels, October 19, 1697, 229-030-435 & 229-030-435a, Massachusetts State Archives, Boston, MA.

depending on the level of assistance provided by the colony. Prisoners and the scalps of “all others that shall be killed in the fight” were worth half of the maximum amount. Bounty hunters were required to transport any women or children taken prisoner out of the country and into slavery. However, they received all of the money made by selling their prisoners. Any individual attempting to deceive the government by presenting scalps that did not belong to enemy Indians served three months in prison and paid the same fine as the 1697 law stipulated.³⁰

By the time of Dummer’s War in 1722, New England developed a regulated bounty system that they could invoke whenever a conflict broke out. This system evolved to become more regimented and more specific. Additionally, it evolved to become more English. The 1697 act applied only to those who hunted Indians at their own expense. The 1722 act allowed soldiers serving with provisions and salary provided by Massachusetts to collect a bounty for Indian scalps, albeit a lower bounty. Neither the 1697 law nor the 1722 law mentioned friendly Indians collecting scalp bounties. Neither law prevented friendly Indians from doing so, but the language of the laws, and the monetary nature of the award, suggests that English colonists and Praying Indians, Indians who adopted an English lifestyle, made up – or were supposed to make up – a significant portion of the bounty hunters.

The English focus on scalps by the end of the seventeenth century represented a transition from a tradition of dismemberment as a warning display. Beheading was a common way to kill nobility and those convicted of treason in England. Typically the

³⁰ *The Acts and Resolves*, 2:258-259.

head was then displayed on a pike along a road or bridge. However, beheading, and the subsequent display of the severed head, was intended by the authorities to remind their subjects about their lawful place in society and the strength of the state. Beheading served to warn potential enemies.³¹

Very rarely did the English behead combatants or criminals from anything other than the top ranks of society or for the worst crimes. Instances where the English ignored this convention stand out because of their rarity. Sir Humphrey Gilbert slaughtered dozens of noncombatants in Ireland and then lined the way to his tent with severed heads.³² Sir William Skeffington executed twenty-five prisoners at Maynooth Castle in Ireland and displayed the heads on the turrets of the castle.³³ Lord Cromwell's actions in Ireland represented a more typical, and restrained, use of beheading. His army slaughtered hundreds of noncombatants, but he only decapitated English officers and Irish nobility in opposition to him.³⁴

The same held true for most of the seventeenth century in New England. In 1623, Miles Standish led a small party and killed Wituwamet, a Massachusetts Indian chief, along with six of the chief's warriors. Standish displayed Wituwamet's head at

³¹ John Laurence, *A History of Capital Punishment* (New York: The Citadel Press, 1960), 32.

³² Nicholas P. Canny, "The Ideology of English Colonization: From Ireland to America," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (October 1973): 852. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1918596> (accessed 4 December 2009).

³³ David Edwards, "The Escalation of Violence in Sixteenth-Century Ireland," in *Age of Atrocity: Violence and Political Conflict in Early Modern Ireland*, ed. David Edwards, Padraig Lenihan, and Clodagh Tait (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), 56-57.

³⁴ John Morrill, "The Drogheda Massacre in Cromwellian Context," in *Age of Atrocity*, 256.

Plymouth, but left the others where they fell.³⁵ During the Pequot War the colonists began receiving severed heads, hands, and scalps from their Indian allies as gifts. The English preferred the heads since, “Severed heads were most potent while at rest and on display in a prominent location... projecting the permanency of God’s people in a new promised land. A displayed head functioned conclusively.”³⁶ During King Philip’s War, the colonists beheaded and displayed the heads of Philip and his chief lieutenants.³⁷

Arguably, scalping served as an easier means of beheading. The skin taken in scalping derived from the head and transportation of a scalp was much simpler than the transportation of a full head. Additionally, the Indians attached a great deal of metaphysical importance to the scalp-lock, a braid of hair designed specifically for scalping. The colonists could still gain a political statement from the use of scalps. Especially if they displayed them publicly as the Indians often did.

Even if the natures of beheading and scalping bear some similarities, the underlying purpose for the actions differs among the English. Beheading, and the display of those heads, in Ireland and early New England maintained political ramifications. Even the heads of noncombatants, or minor combatants, instilled a sense of awe at the power and authority of the English over subject peoples and even over the leaders of other nations who opposed them. The heads were meant to be seen by anyone who could potentially rebel against English authority. Scalps, on the other hand, lost the spiritual

³⁵ Axtell, “The Unkindest Cut,” 464.

³⁶ Andrew Lipman, “A meanes to knit them together: The Exchange of Body Parts in the Pequot War,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (January 2008): 14.

³⁷ Church, *The History of Philip’s War*, 126, 146.

significance that the natives tied to them, and served only as implements for achieving monetary gain. Towns that displayed their collected scalps, like Salem, Massachusetts, typically displayed them inside their meetinghouses where only residents and the occasional visitor could see them.³⁸ The English did not develop elaborate rituals for scalping or returning with scalps like the Indians often did. Scalping did not even occasion the publicity that usually surrounded staged beheadings in England. The scalps served no broader political purpose. They existed as trophies. The government encouraged bounty hunting to eliminate hostile Indians and the colonists engaged in bounty hunting for the purpose of gain. Scalping amongst the English became another tool for dehumanizing the Indians.

Dehumanizing the Indians was not a new phenomenon at the end of the seventeenth century, and scalping did not serve as the only means, or even the primary means, of accomplishing this dehumanization. Jill Lepore noted that, “What the colonists moved toward... in their writing about King Philip’s War was the idea that the Indians were not, in fact, truly human.”³⁹ Puritan authors who wrote in the aftermath of King Philip’s War insisted that “the war was meant to teach men their dependence on the will of almighty God.”⁴⁰ Thus, sermons and pamphlets captured the humanity of the victims, who suffered due to their sins at the hands of a just God; however, the Indians

³⁸ Axtell, “The Moral Dilemmas of Scalping,” 273.

³⁹ Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip’s War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 167.

⁴⁰ Richard Slotkin and James K. Folsom, eds., *So Dreadfull a Judgment: Puritan Responses to King Philip’s War, 1676-1677* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1978), 234.

became little more than a tool of the Almighty aimed against the colonists like any famine, flood, or storm that preceded them.

The dehumanized nature of the Indian enemy created opportunities for significant violations of existing cultural mores in the realms of violence, justice, and even gender. Though Cotton Mather does not explicitly say so, Hannah Dustan's story proves remarkable and noteworthy because of her status as a "helpless" mother who defies the gendered norms of her society. Nor is Dustan the only such example of a violent inversion of gendered norms during the Indian wars of the late seventeenth century. On July 15, 1677, roughly a year after the conclusion of King Philip's War, Increase Mather noted in his diary that, "2 Indians were brot to Marblehead. the Women there in a boisterous rage set upon & killed them. This done upon ye Sabbath day coming out of the meeting house."⁴¹ Note that Mather mentioned nothing about the men of the community during this event. The women believed that as a group they possessed the needed authority to correct the men who brought the live Indians to Marblehead on the Sabbath day. Religious, legal, and culturally-constructed gender standards apparently held no power, in the eyes of these women, over their actions or the lives of these Indians.

The Puritans did more than associate Indians with God's wrath in order to promote a dehumanized portrait of them. Richard Slotkin reflected on "a state of mind that was prevalent throughout New England, notably a belief that the Indians enjoyed a special and more-than-human relationship with nature, which gave them a kind of

⁴¹ Increase Mather, "Diary Extracts, 1674-1687," folder 1, Ms. N-529, Massachusetts Historical Society.

demonic power.”⁴² This state of mind often surfaced in books, letters, and sermons, and typically took two forms. The first was a biblical or supernatural form in which the Indians served as inhuman foils to the godly works of the Puritans. The second form was a natural or animalistic form where the colonists portrayed the Indians in predatory, animalistic terms that reflected the natural threats of seventeenth-century New England.

The supernatural or allegorically biblical depiction of the Indians appears throughout contemporary publications. Nathaniel Morton referred to the Indians as those “who were wont to be most cruel and treacherous... even like lions.”⁴³ In the sermon relating Hannah Dustan’s tale, Cotton Mather referred to the Indians as “Raging Dragons.”⁴⁴ In another sermon, written about a decade later, he referred to them as “Dragons of the Wilderness” who live in their “horrid and howling Wigwams.”⁴⁵ Cotton Mather’s father, Increase, speculated that the Indians took after “their Father the Devil” and “are delighted in Crueltyes.”⁴⁶ During the Salem witch hysteria, even Satan himself supposedly took the form of an Indian in a tall hat. These authors make apparent a “link between Puritan anxieties about their souls and their fears of the Indians.”⁴⁷

⁴² Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence: the Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), 119.

⁴³ Nathaniel Morton, *New England’s Memorial* (1669; repr., Boston: Congregational Board of Publication, 1855), 37. Morton may have intended for his readers to picture themselves as the righteous Daniel who was tested by being tossed into the lions’ den.

⁴⁴ Cotton Mather, *Humiliations*, 42.

⁴⁵ Cotton Mather, *Good Fetch’d out of Evil* (Boston, 1706), 4.

⁴⁶ Increase Mather, *A Relation of the Troubles which have hapned in New-England, By reason of the Indians there. From the Year 1614 to the Year 1675* (1677; repr., New York: Arno Press, 1972), 57.

⁴⁷ Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence*, 140. For an excellent perspective on the Salem witch trials and the importance that Indian warfare played in creating the hysteria, see Mary Beth Norton’s *In the Devil’s Snare*.

The Indians, due to their perceived closeness with nature, often appeared in colonial writings as predatory animals while the colonists typically portrayed themselves as the prey. Mary Rowlandson wrote in her captivity narrative, “It is a solemn sight to see so many Christians lying in their blood... like a Company of Sheep torn by Wolves.” Later she refers to her captors as “ravenous Bears.”⁴⁸ Roger Williams wrote that the Indians “had Forgot they were Mankind, and ran about the Countrie like Wolves.”⁴⁹ William Hubbard likened the inventive disguise used by a colonist to escape an Indian war party to “the Cuttle-fish, which when it is pursued... casteth out of its Body a think Humor... through which it passes away unseen by the Pursuer.”⁵⁰

Even when the authors avoided personifying the Indians as predatory animals, they often associated predatory animals with signs of an imminent Indian attack. Hubbard, in describing an attack on a Puritan town wrote, “The Week before was heard a very hideous Cry of a Kennel of Wolves round the Town, which... was looked upon... as an ominous Presaging of this following Calamity.”⁵¹ Increase Mather told a story of two men who lost themselves in the woods while hunting and “were terrified with the yelling... of two *Lions*, who roared exceedingly... but they saw none. The next day they perceived that Indians had made fires thereabouts.”⁵² An anonymous author of a pamphlet on King Philip’s War made certain to note that before the war Philip “obliged

⁴⁸ Mary White Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty & Goodness of God, Together, With the Faithfulness of His Promises Displayed* (Cambridge, MA: Printed by Samuel Green, 1682), 5.

⁴⁹ Glenn W. LaFantasie, ed., “Roger Williams to Robert Williams, April 1, 1676,” *The Correspondence of Roger Williams* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1988), 2:720.

⁵⁰ Hubbard, *The History of the Indian Wars in New England*, 176.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 171-172.

⁵² Increase Mather, *A Relation of the Troubles*, 6-7.

himself to be personally present with two Wolves heads at the yearly Court of Election in *Plymouth Collony*.⁵³

Thus, the Indians of New England stood marked apart by their English neighbors through an association with the rampant disorder and broad, dark expanse of the natural world surrounding the Puritan colonies. When not creating a direct metaphor between the perils of nature and the Indians, English authors commonly labeled the Indians savages, heathens, brutes, or beasts. Even when not trying to bring to mind the worst images of the Indians possible, most authors found it necessary to remind their readers of the “otherness” of the native peoples.

The picture painted of Anglo-Indian relations by the Puritan authors is one of predator-prey. Indians pose both a mortal and immortal danger to the English settlers. The Puritans as sheep, probably the most helpless of all prey animals to their mind and an animal rich in biblical symbolism, recurs frequently in the literature. Yet, a predator-prey relationship, while a useful tool for Puritan authors to use to gain sympathy with English audiences, does not adequately describe the evolution of Anglo-Indian relations in the late seventeenth century. Scalp bounties turned the perceived hunted into the actual hunters. Interestingly, the evolution in scalp bounties coincided with an evolution in how the authorities rewarded the hunting of wolves.

The earliest bounties for wolves in Massachusetts offered a limited reward and placed a number of restrictions on wolf hunting. The 1649 book of the general laws

⁵³ *A Brief and True Narration of the Late Wars Risen in New-England: Occasioned by the Quarrelsome disposition, and Perfidious Carriage of the Barbarous, Savage and Heathenish Natives There* (London: Printed for J.S., 1675), 4.

enforced in the colony included one of these early provisions. The act noted, “Whereas great loss & damage doth befall this Comon-wealth by reason of Wolves which destroy great numbers of our cattle... It is Ordered by this Court... that any person either English or Indian that shall kill any *Wolfe* or *Wolves*, within ten miles of any Plantation... shall have... *ten shillings*.”⁵⁴

These limited bounties did not encourage active eradication of wolves by bounty hunters. Rather, they seem designed to assist farmers their efforts to protect their livestock. The focus did not extend to the elimination of all wolves in Massachusetts. In part, this might reflect an acknowledgement of the wilderness expanse in which they lived. In part, this might also reflect the insular perspective that dominated early Puritan thought. No Englishman should venture too far from civilization into the wilderness, and no friendly Indian should make a living by killing wolves many miles from English settlement and then collect a large bounty.

The first wolf bounties stood in marked contrast to the English traditions surrounding wolf hunting. Edward I launched a campaign to eradicate wolves in the early Middle Ages. Scotland and Ireland passed bounty laws throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In 1614 a wolf hunter in Ireland was awarded three pounds per wolf’s head he brought in. Beginning in 1652, Oliver Cromwell’s government in Ireland passed a series of bounty acts designed to eliminate wolves in Ireland in order to make the land more accessible to English farmers and herders who wanted to migrate.

⁵⁴ *The Colonial Laws of Massachusetts. Reprinted from the Edition of 1660, with the Supplements to 1672* (1889; repr., Littleton, CO: Fred B. Rothman & Co., 1995), 202.

The act offered six pounds per female, five pounds per male, two pounds per hunting juvenile, and ten shillings for each suckling cub.⁵⁵

Massachusetts did not modify their bounty on wolves until 1693. This law, “An Act for Encouraging the Killing Wolves,” raised the bounty on adults to twenty shillings and included a specific bounty of ten shillings for pups. Additionally, it required the wolf hunter to present the head of each wolf to the town constable before he could collect his bounty. The constable was required to cut the ears off of each head to prevent fraud. A 1695 addendum to this act, “An Act for Supplying the defects in the Act Entitled, *An Act Encouraging the Killing of Wolves*,” specified that hunters could not redeem pups taken “out of the Belly of any Bitch Wolf.”⁵⁶ Neither the 1693 act, nor the 1695 addendum limited the range that bounty hunters could travel to find wolves. Finally, the 1693 act only specified “whosoever... Kill any... Wolf within this Province.” Indians were not specifically mentioned like in the earlier act. Supposedly, they could still collect the bounty. However, the law seemed aimed at an English audience.⁵⁷

During King William’s War, Massachusetts went on the offensive against the wilderness surrounding them. They passed acts that encouraged men, and even women like Hannah Dustan, to hunt the predators in their world. In 1693 the government passed a new law regulating wolf hunting, raising the bounty and distinguishing between adults

⁵⁵ Kieran R. Hickey, “A geographical perspective on the decline and extermination of the Irish wolf *canis lupus* – an initial assessment,” *Irish Geography* 33, no. 2 (2000): 190, 193-195.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 77.

⁵⁷ John D. Cushing, ed., *Massachusetts Province Laws, 1692-1699* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1978), 44.

and juveniles. In 1694 the government passed an act providing systematic scalp bounties and providing them for any hostile Indian slain. In 1695 the government clarified its position on wolf hunting, while in 1697 it differentiated between scalp bounties for adult Indians, regardless of sex, and juveniles. Additionally, scalps, like the heads of wolves, were turned into colonial authorities and disposed of before the bounty could be redeemed. In many cases, the officials buried the scalps just as they buried the heads of wolves brought in.⁵⁸ Indians in New England became little more than commodities that an enterprising hunter could stalk, kill, mutilate, and profit from in the same manner as a hunter of wolves. Indians, however, became substantially more profitable.

Massachusetts stopped making explicit distinctions between friendly and unfriendly tribes in the 1680s and 1690s. An act passed on July 21, 1689, required all Indians still “in Amity with us,” to break off correspondence with enemy Indians and remove themselves from the vicinity of the enemy’s territory. Indians who failed to relocate were warned, “Neglect so to do, they are hereby to know yet if themselves or relations do suffer with ye Common Enemy their Blood will be upon their own heads.”⁵⁹ Apparently, traditional tribal grounds no longer offered protection and pronouncements of friendship no longer offered a measure of respect for Indian traditions. Massachusetts had altered the way it viewed Indians.

This does not mean that every Englishman in Massachusetts accepted scalp bounties as good or necessary. Nor does it mean that Massachusetts, and New England at

⁵⁸ Axtell, “The Moral Dilemmas of Scalping,” 265.

⁵⁹ An Act, July 21, 1689, 2043-030-312, Massachusetts State Archives, Boston, MA.

large, completely rejected the humanity of the Indians. The continued evolution of scalp bounty legislation demonstrates the moral complexities that affected the authorities and, one assumes, the populace at large. The 1722 scalp bounty act limited the bounties to males over the age of twelve, and despite its rather vague provision that awarded a bounty for all others killed in the fight, attempted to protect the lives of women and children to a modest extent. Enforcing their transportation into slavery hardly qualifies as humanitarian, but it does represent a step away from earlier provisions.

James Axtell writes, “If scalping did not prove to be the colonists’ military salvation, it may have contributed to their moral damnation by encouraging an act that contravened their own cultural norms for the conduct of warfare and generalized Christian standards for the treatment of the dead.”⁶⁰ Modifications of the scalp bounties, like the 1722 act, existed as part of that effort to reconcile the normative deviance encouraged by scalping. Additionally, refocusing the image of the Indians, and the relationship of the colonists to the Indians, offered an easy way to avoid moral dilemmas.

The sermons and captivity narratives published after King Philip’s War focused on the animalistic, or satanic, nature of the Indians and did so with a regularity, and in a volume, not found prior to the war. The focus on the wilderness and the moral hazards of the wilderness may have helped remind Puritans of their mission to establish dominion over the land and the animals. By the close of the century, the position of the Indians, whether they stood as animals or men, remained ambiguous enough to allow for large-scale scalp hunting. This allowed the colonists to overcome any moral dilemmas that

⁶⁰ Axtell, “The Moral Dilemmas of Scalping,” 272.

might have possessed them. Salem, Massachusetts continued to display its collected scalps until 1785, and scalp bounties continued through the French and Indian War.⁶¹

By the end of King Philip's War, the colonists had developed more effective, Indian-style, means for attacking their enemies. Captain Benjamin Church, the great English hero to emerge out of King Philip's War, was successful because he and his men embraced the wilderness and fought Philip's forces in the swamps and woods that traditionally the English refused to enter. Church published his memoirs in 1716, and his attitudes "substituted a realistic acceptance of the conditions of moral and physical life imposed by the wilderness for the Puritan rejection of the wilderness as a chaotic and devilish environment."⁶² In other words, men like Church, who were born in New England and lived most of their lives on the frontier, disregarded much of the fear that the wilderness invoked for men like Cotton Mather writing in Boston. Slotkin describes Church as a man whose "experience is an initiation into the kingship of the American wilderness, undertaken willingly."⁶³

These two trends (the perception of the Indian as an animal or devil and the new New Englander who could fight and hunt in the wilderness) overlapped significantly at the end of the seventeenth century. The wilderness no longer caused the fear and consternation that gripped early colonists, but at the same time, it still held evil forces that could harm the lives and souls of the settlers. The result is that large scalp bounties produced an evolution in the portrait of the Indians as an "Other" in New England.

⁶¹ Ibid., 265.

⁶² Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence*, 180.

⁶³ Ibid., 174.

Indians still had an aura of myth about them, but often that myth reduced them to predatory animals, or half-man, half-animal predators at best. Like wolves, frontier hunters could track Indians, kill them, and receive a bounty. New England continued its push to expand. However, now it did so with a campaign of systematic violence undertaken by English colonists. Colonial authorities no longer relied primarily on Indian allies and defensive wars to achieve their goals. After all, the Indians were now commodities, and to profit from a commodity you had to acquire the commodity.

CHAPTER III

“THESE ARE CHILDREN OF WRATH”⁶⁴: POWER, AUTHORITY, AUDIENCE,
AND THE CROWD IN THE DOMINION OF NEW ENGLAND

No one knew, or, at least, admitted to knowing, where the riot originated. At eight o’clock, on Thursday, April 18, 1689, a rumor spread in Boston that the people were taking arms against the Dominion of New England, the Stuart monarchy-imposed government led by Sir Edmund Andros. Nathanael Byfield observed, “it was reported at the *South* end of the Town, That at the *North* end there were all in Arms; and that like Report was at the *North* end, respecting the *South* end.” Samuel Prince found himself in the midst of the rebellion, “I knew not any thing of what was intended, till it was begun; yet being at the north end of the town, where I saw boys run along the street with clubs in their hands, encouraging one another to fight, I began to mistrust what was intended.” One day later, on Friday, April 19, 1689, Andros and his advisors, holed up at Fort Hill in Boston and surrounded by the militias of Boston and the adjacent communities, surrendered. The Glorious Revolution reached the shores of New England and ended, as it did in England, with the violent removal of Stuart government.⁶⁵

This chapter argues that the collision between the Massachusetts colonists and the government of the Dominion of New England represented a conflict between two

⁶⁴ Increase Mather, “Increase Mather Sermon Notes,” folder 3, Ms. N-529, Massachusetts Historical Society.

⁶⁵ Nathanael Byfield, *An Account of the Late Revolution in New-England*, in *The Andros Tracts* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1868), 1: 3-4. Samuel Prince, “Letter of Samuel Prince, 1689,” in *Narratives of the Insurrections, 1675-1690*, ed. Charles M. Andrews (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1915), 186.

fundamentally different conceptions of political economy within empire. The Puritan majority in Massachusetts viewed political, social, and religious authority as interwoven and indivisible; the idea of the plain, humble meetinghouse as the focus of all forms of authority in the Massachusetts town epitomizes this concept.⁶⁶ The government of Sir Edmund Andros and the authorities in London, on the other hand, separated and subordinated all other concepts of authority to the political authority of the Stuart regime.

The following chapter also considers the rejection of the Dominion of New England a decisive shift towards a new vision of imperial authority in which colonists retained their right to influence the decisions of the metropole and to separate the desires of the metropole from the needs of the colonies as much as possible.⁶⁷ Thematically, the following approaches the overthrow of the Dominion as a discourse over power and the nature of legitimate authority. To accomplish this, the traditional tale of Edmund Andros's reign and removal will be examined from the popular perspective in Massachusetts and from transatlantic perspectives amongst colonial and metropolitan elites. This study proceeds chronologically from the end of King Philip's War in 1676 and the revocation of the original charter by Charles II, to the establishment of the

⁶⁶ The use of the term 'Puritan' in reference to the opponents of the Dominion deserves some explaining. Other religious groups existed and practiced in Boston during this period. However, the structure of Massachusetts society, its laws, local governments, and cultural norms, still remained Puritan in outlook. I have not located any evidence of widespread participation in the reaction to the Dominion government by any of the minority religious groups in the colony. While not intending to leave out non-Puritan members of Massachusetts society, the fact remains that the debate over the Dominion took on a strong Puritan-versus-Stuart character.

⁶⁷ The Dominion of New England formed in 1686 as a consolidation of the governments of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and later New York and the Jerseys. Boston became the capitol of the new government.

Dominion of New England in 1686, up until the issuance of the new charter by William and Mary in 1691. Providing a broad chronological scope should allow for a better analysis of the crowd's motivations and place the rebellion within its Atlantic context. The seeds of the rebellion were planted well before April 18, 1689, yet most historians of the Atlantic World focus only briefly on the rebellion as an effect of Stuart rule. Hopefully, this chapter helps demonstrate the facile nature of such a view by emphasizing the growing cultural disparity amongst the communities of the British Atlantic.

Traditionally historians of Puritan Massachusetts have blamed the religious narrowness of the Puritans, or the religious tone-deafness of Andros and his Anglican administration, for creating much of the hostility that led to the rebellion. Carla Pestana reflects this view in *Protestant Empire*, "While it might seem reasonable for the English monarch to promote a policy in which the national established church had at least neutral if not favored status, the Massachusetts rebels did not see it thus. Instead they framed their actions in terms of battling another popish plot."⁶⁸ Viola Barnes, in *The Dominion of New England: A Study in British Colonial Policy*, the only monograph dealing exclusively with the Dominion government, blames Puritan intolerance of non-Puritans for the failure of the Dominion experiment. Concerns over religious authority played a role in the rebellion, but those concerns centered around the idea of authority broadly, and the place of religion within norms of power rather than obscure theological differences or vague conspiracy theories. As Brendan McConville notes, "Religious

⁶⁸ Carla Gardina Pestana, *Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 144.

devotion and denominational allegiances were loaded with political implications. Politics were intertwined with... religious identity on all levels of society.”⁶⁹ Andros and his co-religionists used their positions of authority to violate the cultural constructs of Puritan Massachusetts in ways that help explain the vituperative denunciations undertaken by the Puritan leaders.

Using historical, sociological, and anthropological research on the concepts of space, the sacred, and the crowd, helps comprehend the cultural subtext that influenced Andros, his elite opponents, and the crowd that rose up to depose him. The result is an analysis that focuses on what the actions of both sides meant to their intended audiences, rather than merely attempting a textual analysis of what the elites wrote. Viewed in this light, the riot in Boston stands apart from the riots in New York and Maryland around the same time. The Puritans of Massachusetts saw and interacted with Andros and his officials on a daily basis. The laws and regulations passed by the Dominion, particularly those addressing social matters, aimed at correcting perceived abuses in Massachusetts more than the other colonies under Andros’s jurisdiction. First and foremost, the advisors in London designed the Dominion of New England to break the power of the Puritans and assert royal control in their place.

Andros and his government did not represent a mere aberration in the story of Puritan Massachusetts; his reign and subsequent overthrow marked a major shift in Massachusetts’s relationship with the British Atlantic and highlighted the internal stresses of an evolving colonial society. Kenneth Lockridge writes in his seminal study

⁶⁹ Brendan McConville, *The King’s Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 7.

of Dedham, Massachusetts, a small town southwest of Boston, that, “The hatred of the “foreign” regime was so great in Dedham that the townsmen followed up Andros’ fall by repudiating every selectman who had served during the years of his rule.” These eight Puritan men came from the town and had more than fifty years of combined experience, yet their association with Andros doomed their public careers.⁷⁰ For the residents of a small town to hold such a grudge against their local elites, elites with no real role in the administration of the Dominion of New England, suggests that Massachusetts colonists were concerned with more than just the question of home rule or concerns over religious orthodoxy when they removed Andros and petitioned the new government.

The removal of Andros resulted in a frenzy of letter, petition, and pamphlet writing aimed at an elite English audience whose opinions could sway the policy of King William and Queen Mary’s new government towards Massachusetts. The Puritans sent one of their ablest ministers, Increase Mather, to plead their case before the royal court, while Andros and his defenders used every means available to preserve their reputations and justify their actions. Thus, a great deal of primary source material remains to cover the perceived causes and results of the rebellion. Yet, any historian hoping to glean explanatory power from these documents must tread carefully.

Most of the letters and pamphlets, both for and against the actions of the Massachusetts crowd, focused on the actions of the elites during the rebellion, the negotiations between the Puritan elites and Andros, the underlying legal causes of the

⁷⁰ Kenneth A. Lockridge, *A New England Town: The First Hundred Years* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1985), 88. Furthermore, only one man of the eight ever served as a selectman again, and only for a single term.

rebellion, and the philosophical justifications, or recriminations, for the rebellion. The remaining primary source materials for the Dominion period exist in the collected volumes of the *Andros Tracts* and the correspondence of Edward Randolph. These volumes speak eloquently of the political problems facing Andros and his allies, and the concerns of the Puritan elites, but say little explicit about the opinions, motivations, and actions of the common residents of the colony. A few testimonials from non-elites, such as the letters from Nathanael Byfield and Samuel Prince quoted above, remain, but these are notable for their scarcity.

Lost in the writings and the posturing on both sides are the common people who took up arms against their governor and stood ready to engage in open combat with the detachments of English soldiers and sailors in Boston. The popular revolt against the Andros government developed over more than legal or religious philosophy, and the crowd behaved with greater determination and purpose than a mere mob cobbled together by the elites for their own purposes. As William Beik noted, “Common people were also capable of thinking politically. They knew the names of the authorities, they had opinions about daily events, and they had a sharp... idea of who was responsible for measures that affected them.”⁷¹

Addressing civil unrest, particularly widespread and violent civil unrest, carries with it certain potential pitfalls and a wide range of theoretical approaches. The elites on both sides had good reasons to portray the actions of lower-ranked people in a particular fashion in order to influence the opinions of the metropole. This analysis attempts to

⁷¹ William Beik, *Urban Protest in Seventeenth-Century France: The Culture of Retribution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 37.

break through the wall of propaganda to uncover the reality of the rebellion and the events leading to the rebellion. Thematically, this chapter approaches the Andros regime and its removal by examining the attitudes of common Massachusetts Puritans towards violence, ritual, and symbol.⁷²

King Philip's War, this "Unjust and bloody War upon the English," as John Dunton framed it, provided King Charles II the opportunity he needed to assert greater control over the affairs of New England.⁷³ In March of 1676, while King Philip's War continued to rage, the Lords of Trade in London dispatched Edward Randolph to Boston to examine the workings of the colony and prepare charges against the existing charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company. Randolph obliged, and on October 23, 1684, after a lengthy legal battle, Boston received word that Charles II had annulled the original charter.⁷⁴

For average Puritans, this represented a new, and unwelcome, challenge from the metropole. The government in London tended to ignore the activities in New England to such an extent that they provided no official help during King Philip's War. In fact, the original charter, by not forcing the Massachusetts Bay Company to meet in London, allowed the Puritan settlers to "remove the colony from control by the Crown." New

⁷² See Beik, *Urban Protest in Seventeenth-Century France*, especially pg. 6-13 for theoretical approaches to crowds. Specifically, my work borrows from the theories put forward by E.P. Thompson in, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," Charles Tilly's *The Politics of Collective Violence*, and Natalie Zemon Davis's *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays*.

⁷³ John Dunton, *A Summer's Ramble, Through Ten Kingdomes*, in *John Dunton's Letters from New-England* (1686; repr., New York: Burt Franklin, 1867), 230.

⁷⁴ Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1953), 135, 146.

England under the first charter, in effect, operated as “a self-governing commonwealth, with the charter a blank check justifying everything it did.”⁷⁵

A spirit of separation, perhaps even arrogant superiority among the colonists, appears throughout Edward Randolph’s reports to London. Certainly Randolph’s objective was to provide Charles with enough actionable information so that they could vacate the charter. Additionally, his personality clashed severely with the Puritan leadership. A protest against Randolph called him “a person extremely obnoxious to his Majt. Governmt. of the Massachusetts and his loyall subjects there inhabiting.”⁷⁶ These issues raise questions about his reliability as a source, yet most of his substantive charges have been found to be generally true.⁷⁷ Randolph wrote that Massachusetts “Coine money with their owne Impress... They have put his Maj. Subjects to death for opinion in matters of Religion... They impose an Oath of fidelity upon all that inhabit within their Territoryes To be true and faithfull to their Government... They violate all the Acts of Trade and navigation.”⁷⁸ Clearly, the revocation of the original charter meant a great disruption in the character of the colony. The fact that the revocation occurred so soon after the trauma of King Philip’s War only heightened the disruption and alienated the majority of the population from any government imposed by London.

⁷⁵ Edmund S. Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop* (New York: Pearson Education, 2007), 42.

⁷⁶ “Agents’ Protest against Randolph’s Appointment as Collector,” in *Edward Randolph, Including his Letters and Official Papers from the New England, Middle, and Southern Colonies in America...*, ed. The Prince Society (New York: Burt Franklin, 1898), 6: 75.

⁷⁷ Philip Ranlet, *Enemies of the Bay Colony* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995), 135.

⁷⁸ Edward Randolph, “Representation of Yr Affaires of N: England by Mr. Randolph,” in *Edward Randolph*, 2: 266.

More than the significant legal affronts to the English monarch, the symbolic affronts recounted by Randolph provide clues into the popular mindset in Massachusetts and the gulf that existed between the colony and the metropole. Symbols and symbolic action carried a special weight in the Early Modern period. People of varying positions and social classes interacted daily, and “they experienced daily reminders that they lived in a society where gradations of status were central facts of life. Forms of address, preferential treatment or the lack of it, styles of conduct, manners, clothing, all bestowed a stream of small satisfactions or aggravations on persons pursuing their daily affairs.”⁷⁹

Randolph noted in a letter to King Charles II, dated September 20, 1676, that when a letter from Charles to the government of Massachusetts was read aloud “the whole council being covered, I put off my hat; whereupon three of the magistrates tooke off their hats... but the governor with the rest continued to keep their hats on.”⁸⁰ Randolph also noted that “ye same General Court had made noe Order for giving the Oath of Allegiance, soe much pressed upon them, in the literal Form prescribed by the Laws of England.”⁸¹ Randolph implied that the government of Massachusetts viewed their religion, and with it their form of government, superior to the laws and dictates of the metropole.

Such symbolic refutations of the King’s authority probably accelerated the revocation of the original charter and helped dictate the attitudes of the Andros regime towards the Puritans. However, while such actions and attitudes did represent a slap

⁷⁹ Beik, *Urban Protest in Seventeenth Century France*, 29.

⁸⁰ “Edward Randolph to the Kings most excellent Majestie,” in *Edward Randolph*, 2: 217.

⁸¹ Edward Randolph, “The Business of New England,” in *Edward Randolph*, 2: 295.

against London, the symbolic reaction of Andros, Randolph, and their supporters demonstrated at best a willing ignorance of their subjects and at worst a pathetic game of symbolic, insulting tit-for-tat.

Puritan leaders and intelligentsia wrote constantly about portents and signs, symbols, of God's favor and what the future held for them. A list of major events compiled from the beginning of the colony until 1691 listed King Philip's War, John Elliot preaching to the local Indians in their own language, the deaths of notable residents, and a number of entries dealing with natural phenomenon. These included, "A blareing starr Appeared in NEngld," and, "A strange noise heard in ye Earth like an Earthquake."⁸² Increase Mather also placed great stock in these symbols. He wrote on May 16, 1676, "at Lieut Howland's Garrison in Plym was seen in the air an Indian Bow pointing from East to West!"⁸³ Close to the arrival of Governor Andros, Samuel Sewall wrote in his diary of the temporary governor, "Ecclips at night... Governour's Hat blew off and fell flat on the Ground just as went to go in at 's Gate."⁸⁴ People who took natural events and incidents of chance so seriously, and saw divine will in each symbolic occurrence, could not easily adjust to Andros's use of power and the symbolic desecration he and his men engaged in.

⁸² James Russell, "A Chronology of the Most remarkable passages happening in New england," James Russell Legal Documents 1692-1701, Ms. N-822, Massachusetts Historical Society.

⁸³ Increase Mather, "Diary Entry for May 16, 1676," Increase Mather Sermons, folder 1, Ms. N-529, Massachusetts Historical Society.

⁸⁴ Samuel Sewall, *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Vol. 5 – Fifth Series* (Boston: Published by the Society, 1878), 104.

Thomas Wertenbaker summed up the concerns of the Massachusetts Puritans following the revocation of their charter,

The loss of the charter made Massachusetts a royal colony, so that henceforth the Governor would not be selected by the voters, but by the King... With such an officer placed over the colony to defend the royal prerogative... the old alliance between Church and State, considered the very essence of the Puritan experiment in the New World, would be seriously weakened, if not entirely destroyed.⁸⁵

How the settlers greeted the new charter depended heavily on both the substance of the charter and the character of the royal governor.

The measures recommended by the Committee of Trade & Plantations, on November 8, 1684, demonstrated the disconnect between the colony and the metropole. They recommended an act to confirm “Marriages as have been made by Magistrats, And that none bee made after that time but by the Clergy.” Left unsaid, and presumably left up to the governor, was a definition of who constituted a clergyman. They also ordered that “there bee a Clause in the Comission giving particular Countenance and encouragement to the Church of England. And that one of the Churches at Boston bee set apart for that service.”⁸⁶ The Puritans in Boston, also known as Congregationalists for their view that each congregation determined its own path independent of a larger church body, did not support the Puritan separatist movements. However, even with an

⁸⁵ Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker, *The Puritan Oligarchy: The Founding of American Civilization* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1947), 329.

⁸⁶ “Measures to be taken after vacation of Charter,” in *Edward Randolph*, 3: 325-326.

acknowledged goal of reforming the Church of England to reflect Puritan theology, the imposition of existing Anglicanism by government fiat into one of the only sacred symbols maintained by the Congregationalists could only result in large-scale, long-lasting conflicts with British authority.⁸⁷

The period between the revocation of the original charter and the arrival of Andros with a new set of instructions for ruling the Dominion of New England provided little clarity for what London held in store for Massachusetts. J.A. Doyle commented, “For more than a year the doomed polity lingered on, preserving its outward form unimpaired, but with a manifest loss of all real life.”⁸⁸ On January 28, 1685, the General Court in Boston sent a petition to the king declaring, “It is matter of great grief and Sorrow to our hearts that... wee are fallen under your Majesties Displeasure ; wee implore your Majesties Favour... you would please to grant a Pardon and Amnesty of all our Errors.”⁸⁹

The colony’s elites tried to adopt a humble, supplicating tone in the hopes of swaying the attitudes of the king and his councilors. Puritan leaders even publicly proclaimed the ascension of King James II before receiving official word to do so “lest the Government should have neglected to do it.”⁹⁰ This does not mean that public anger

⁸⁷ See Perry Miller, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts, 1630-1650* (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1933), especially chapters 3 and 4 for the differences between separatist and non-separatist versions of Congregationalism. See also Edmund S. Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop*, 2nd ed. (New York: Pearson Longman, 2006), for a broad discussion of the basic tenants of Puritanism.

⁸⁸ J.A. Doyle, *The English in America: The Puritan Colonies, Part II* (1887; repr., New York: AMS Press, 1969), 300.

⁸⁹ Sewall, *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Vol. 5 – Fifth Series*, 80.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 70.

abated. Samuel Sewall noted an exceptional meeting of the Court of Assistants where an accused thief verbally accosted the governor, Simon Bradstreet, and his assistants.

Mr. Shrimpton in a great fury, said he was no Thief... and he perceived he was to Answer Mr. Sergeant and not the Court... told the Governour he had wronged him much... substance was what subscribed before in 's Paper given in more silently; but now spoken, in a great Croud with contemptuous Pride and Rage... [the governor cleared the court and] So went away angry, and rest followed him [the governor] ; So is extream Displeasure among the People, against Stoughton and Dudley chiefly.⁹¹

The elites clearly possessed limited control over the opinions and attitudes of the general populace. While they tried to curry favor with the new king, the people of Massachusetts seethed.

Massachusetts received its first taste of what the Dominion of New England entailed with the arrival of “His Matys. Commission, for the Governmt of New England,” approved on September 27, 1685, and naming Joseph Dudley, a native of Massachusetts, the president of an executive council to manage the affairs of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine, and the Narragansett Country (part of modern Rhode Island). The commission vested absolute power in the hands of the council and mandated that, “Wee do hereby will require and Command that liberty of Conscience

⁹¹ Ibid., 129.

shall be allowed unto all persons, and that such especially as shall be Conformable to the Rights of the Church of England shall be particularly... encouraged.”⁹²

This commission became public in Boston with the printing of, “A PROCLAMATION By the PRESIDENT and COUNCIL of His Majesty’s Territory & Dominion of *NEW-ENGLAND* in AMERICA,” on May 16, 1686. The proclamation admonished all inhabitants of New England to cease farming land they have no acquired the title to without a license from the government. It also required the President, the councilors, the judges, and the constables to take the standard English Oath of Allegiance. The reference to freedom of conscience was missing from the public proclamation.⁹³

Dudley had little time to establish his government before Edmund Andros set sail for Boston. Andros carried with him a commission making him the governor and “Captain General” of the Dominion of New England. The document authored by King James II granted Andros almost unlimited powers in the discharge of his office. The king granted Andros the full power to “Suspend any Member of our Council from Sitting Voting & Assisting there in as you shall finde just cause for your Soe doing.” He could also make any laws he thought necessary with the advice and consent of the Privy Council in London. Andros appointed the judges, established the courts, and could, as Captain General, establish forts and towns, or demolish houses, where he saw fit. He

⁹² “His Matys. Commission, for the Governmt of New England,” in *Edward Randolph*, 4: 51-58. Quote on 56-57.

⁹³ “A Proclamation By the President and Council of His Majesty’s Territory & Dominion of *New-England* in America,” http://docs.newsbank.com/openurl?ctx_ver=z39.88-2004&rft_id=info:sid/iw.newsbank.com:EVAN&rft_val_format=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:ctx&rft_dat=0F3018656DBD3E68&svc_dat=Evans:eaidoc&req_dat=0D2167CC8D19A62A (accessed 9 April 2010).

could also unilaterally declare “Martiale Law in time of Innovation Insurrection or Warre.” Andros’s commission required anyone serving in an official capacity to take the Oath of Allegiance to King James. Real concern over ensuring these officials take the Oath pervades almost every page of his commission.⁹⁴ In short, Andros held all of the reins of political power in New England. Only James II and his Privy Council could overrule his decisions.

Sir Edmund Andros came from a noble family on the island of Guernsey, in the English Channel. During the English Civil War, Andros and his family fought for Charles I and fled into exile with Charles II. Andros’s father spent nine years defending Castle Cornet in Guernsey during the war and Andros himself spent most of his childhood in the Netherlands. In 1656, Andros began a long military career as an officer in the cavalry.⁹⁵

Andros travelled extensively and served in a number of different roles. He served the Stuart family at The Hague, he served on the Isle of Wight during the Second Anglo-Dutch War, he moved to Barbados and spent about sixteen months there as a major in the Barbados Regiment, and he went to Sweden on a diplomatic mission to try and procure a wife for the future James II. Andros’s first major colonial assignment came in 1674, at

⁹⁴ “The Commission of Sir Edmund Andros as Governor of the Dominion of New England,” James Russell Legal Documents 1692-1701, Ms. N-822, Massachusetts Historical Society.

⁹⁵ Mary Loy Lustig, *The Imperial Executive in America: Sir Edmund Andros, 1637-1714* (London: Rosemont Publishing, 2002), 25-28.

the conclusion of the Third Anglo-Dutch War, when he was named the new governor of New York.⁹⁶

Andros served at the leisure of James Stuart, Duke of York, and worked to vigorously advance the Duke's claims to disputed regions in Connecticut, Long Island, the Jerseys, and the northern frontiers. His government operated in New York without a genuine representative assembly, the Duke of York preferring, instead, to entrust most of the authority in Andros and a small council. Andros had to face a number of religious, ethnic, and political problems during his governorship. New York City hosted a number of competing religious factions and a number of ethnic divisions between the Dutch and English residents. The colony's frontiers were situated on the borders of the Iroquois Confederacy, so Andros had to maintain decent relations with them during the trying period of King Philip's War. Finally, Andros had to negotiate between various English colonial factions. This included a group of three Puritan towns on Long Island who successfully petitioned Connecticut for annexation.⁹⁷ Andros served in New York until arriving in London, in March, 1681, to answer a number of critics of his administration.⁹⁸

Edmund Andros represented one version of English cosmopolitanism during the Stuart period. He came from a noble background, with the opportunities that nobility entailed, he served in the military in a variety of positions and at a variety of locales, and he gathered extensive knowledge of administration, trade, and other cultures. He could speak French, Swedish, and Dutch in addition to English, and he maintained good

⁹⁶ Ibid., 31-38.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 57.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 120.

relations with the Native Americans.⁹⁹ His knowledge of the English Atlantic world suggested an ideal candidate for the difficult governorship of the Dominion of New England.

Historians have frequently focused their analysis of the Dominion period on Andros's responsibility for the experiment's failure. The Prince Society declared, "As to the government of Andros, we fail to see in it any special hardships or persecution... He may have been hasty of speech, yet his words were followed by no acts of revenge... The only injustice we need to repair, is the mistaken idea that he was the ruling cause of the change...."¹⁰⁰ Viola Barnes thought that the Dominion of New England could have successfully functioned if William of Orange appointed "another governor more acceptable to the Puritans than Andros had been and better fitted by temperament and experience for constructive statesmanship."¹⁰¹ A biographer of Andros summed up his person as, "An excellent administrator, an accomplished statesman, a brave soldier, a polished courtier... he could also be autocratic, arbitrary, and dictatorial... perhaps his greatest flaws were an inability to compromise and a lack of tact."¹⁰²

The failure of the Dominion of New England had far less to do with the person of Edmund Andros and his flaws than with the unyielding competition between worldviews that his arrival initiated. Most contemporary observers seemed to agree that Andros

⁹⁹ Ibid., 29.

¹⁰⁰ *The Andros Tracts* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1868), I: xxxvii-xxxviii.

¹⁰¹ Viola Florence Barnes, *The Dominion of New England: A Study in British Colonial Policy* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1960), 275.

¹⁰² Lustig, *The Imperial Executive in America*, 16.

possessed a brusque personality, and his experiences in the English Civil War certainly did not endear Puritans to him, but greater conflict erupted over the idea of place, the use of space, and the concept of empire than over the capricious whims of one man. The importance of Edmund Andros is as a symbol of Stuart authority and as a tool for creating the kind of Atlantic empire, and English Atlantic world, sought after by James II.¹⁰³

Three major issues divided the government of the Dominion of New England from the English residents of Massachusetts: matters of taxation, matters of religious freedom, and the interpretation of what constituted lawful authority. In truth the first two issues, particularly the issues over revenue and taxation, are little more than subsets of the third issue. However, matters of taxation and religion struck at a greater number of colonists than the rather abstract debates over legal authority and these issues both solidified the opposition to Andros's rule and provided, in their minds, visible proof of Andros's arbitrary nature. In many ways, the protests that emanated from Boston in the wake of the uprising used a language of rights eerily similar to the protests written eighty years later during the Imperial Crisis.

Andros began his reign by declaring on March 8, 1687, that all the laws not revised at that time would remain in force until further orders. The revocation of the charter, coupled with King Philip's War, created a mash of newer laws and older, usually

¹⁰³ Owen Stanwood's "The Protestant Moment: Antipopey, the Revolution of 1688-1689, and the Making of an Anglo-American Empire," *Journal of British Studies* 46 (July 2007): 481-508, provides support for this view.

more local, laws written, in some cases, around the founding of the colony.¹⁰⁴ The confusion meant that very few taxes were collected for the maintenance of the colonial government. Thus, the first major challenge tackled by Andros centered on the collection of taxes and the enforcement of the Navigation Acts.

The Dominion council attempted to lay an equal tax burden on the merchants and the landowners within the Dominion. The government also attempted to mirror its revenue legislation on laws that already existed within Massachusetts but were not currently enforced. On merchants, Andros taxed “a Penny in the Pound for *Goods Imported*, besides a *Vast Excise* on Wine, Rum, and other *Liquors*.” On all residents of the colony the government levied a tax of “a *Penny* in the Pound of all their *Estates*, and *Twenty-pence per Head*, as *Poll-money*.”¹⁰⁵ Edward Randolph also noted that Andros “tried all wayes to bring the people to quitt rents,” to try and raise additional funds from land owners and leasers.¹⁰⁶

The government’s methods quickly ran into trouble. Quit-rents required the land owners to recognize their tenurial relationship with the Crown. However, questions remained about the legality of quit-rents when the land was granted by the original charter government and not the king. The revocation of the charter supposedly made these questions moot, but James’s declaration in 1683 to honor all property rights in Massachusetts created further tensions when Andros tried to reform the land system,

¹⁰⁴ Barnes, *The Dominion of New England*, 79.

¹⁰⁵ Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana*, ed. Kenneth B. Murdock (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1977), 290.

¹⁰⁶ Edward Randolph, “Copy of a Letter from Mr. Randolph to Mr. Povey,” in *The Thomas Hutchinson Papers*, ed. The Prince Society (New York: Burt Franklin, 1865), 2: 297.

grant land based on titles that originated with the king, and settle disputed boundaries between townships. The haphazard way of granting titles prior to the Dominion resulted in a number of people having to confirm their titles again and pay the quit-rent.¹⁰⁷ The concerns of land holders over the validity of their titles, and the possibility that the government could revoke their titles, proved easy to demagogue. Cotton Mather declared “all the Title that the People had unto their Lands was lost... they began to *compel* the People every where to take *Patents* for their Lands... but for these *Patents* there were such exorbitant Prices demanded, that Fifty Pounds could not purchase for its Owner an Estate not worth *Two Hundred*.”¹⁰⁸

The impost and export duties also caused deep consternation amongst the colonists. The failure of these taxes to provide the sufficient funds meant that the government quickly began trying to raise the tax rates. In October, 1687, only a few months after enacting the first revenue acts, Andros proposed doubling taxes on each “Pipe” of wine imported, raising taxes on each gallon of wine, brandy, and rum exported or retailed, and requested a yearly lump sum for each county and town in the Dominion on top of the other taxes to help offset the costs of government.¹⁰⁹ The resulting fervor over taxation caused some members of Andros’s council, most of whom were born or resided long-term in Massachusetts, to state after Andros’s removal that “*a very considerable number... dissented* from and argued much against [the tax bill]... Yet

¹⁰⁷ Barnes, *The Dominion of New England*, 176-178, 188.

¹⁰⁸ Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana*, 290-291.

¹⁰⁹ “The State of His Maties Revenue in New England,” in *Edward Randolph*, 4: 184. The Lords of Trade approved Andros’s request to raise the tax rates in February, 1688 (See Barnes, *The Dominion of New England*, 85).

when we did at last break up we could not imagine that he could take the Bill to be agreed to.”¹¹⁰

Issues over taxation resulted in the first wave of open defiance against Andros’s government. Debates over the legality of the new taxes, and by extension the new government, culminated when the town of Ipswich, in Essex County, rejected a writ requiring them to choose a commissioner for assessing taxes in the town. Andros’s attempts to raise funds for his government led several of the leading citizens, including the town minister, to state that the writ “was not Legall & to Obey and Comply with the same were to lose the liberty of ffreeborne English men.”¹¹¹ Specifically, the Ipswich men argued, “That the Privileges of *Magna Charta*, and other Liberties of *English-men* were denied them.”¹¹² The leaders of Ipswich protested the lack of an assembly in the new government and therefore the authority of the government to levy taxes. These protests will be put into a broader context when discussing the debate over lawful authority.

Issues over religious expression formed the basis for the second great debate between Stuart England and the colonists of Massachusetts. The political economy of late-seventeenth century Massachusetts provided no buffer between the private religious convictions of families and the public sphere. An adult male in Massachusetts had to

¹¹⁰ “A Narrative of the Proceedings of Sir Edmond Androsse and his Complices, Who Acted by an Illegal and Arbitrary Commission from the Late K. JAMES, during his Government in New England,” in *The Andros Tracts*, 1: 140.

¹¹¹ “Proceedings Agt. Wise and others of Ipswich for Misdemeanors,” in *Edward Randolph*, 4: 175.

¹¹² “The State of New-England, Impartially considered, &c., in *The Andros Tracts*, 1: 45.

express religious conformity in order to fully participate in the public sphere.¹¹³ In order to influence the nature of a town's public sphere, in order to vote or hold office, an adult male had to belong to the Congregational Church or own a respectable amount of property and be sanctioned as "orthodox" in their religion by the local Congregational minister.¹¹⁴ Individuals who did not attend the local Congregational church still paid for the upkeep of the minister and could be fined for missing services.¹¹⁵ At the most local level, the exercise of politics in Massachusetts did not allow for the separation of Puritan religious, social, and political identities. To have a stake in the political process in Massachusetts meant to visibly conform to the entire Puritan ethos. This form of political economy meant that any assault against a physical symbol or philosophical tenet of Massachusetts Puritanism equaled an assault against the entire structure of Puritan society.

The proclamation declaring freedom of conscience was published under Dudley's brief rule in 1685, but little changed on the local level. Towns still collected taxes for the upkeep of the Congregational minister. Very early in Andros's reign, however, a decision was made to end the legal collection of taxes for the support of the Congregationalists.¹¹⁶ This was followed closely by the publication of King James's Declaration of Indulgence

¹¹³ See Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1991), especially Habermas's introduction and the chart on page 30.

¹¹⁴ B. Katherine Brown, "The Controversy over the Franchise in Puritan Massachusetts, 1654 to 1674," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 33, No. 2 (April, 1976), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1922163> (accessed 2 March 2010), 213.

¹¹⁵ Edward Randolph, "Edward Randolph to Governor Hinckley of Plymouth relative to Taxes for the support of Ministers," in *Edward Randolph*, 4: 87.

¹¹⁶ "A Narrative of the Proceedings of Sir Edmond Androsse and his Complices," in *The Andros Tracts*, 1: 139.

in August, 1687.¹¹⁷ Initially, the Puritans only lightly resisted the change in their religious landscape. Many ministers viewed the Declaration of Indulgence as a bulwark against the government enacting a tax for support of the Anglican Church in New England.¹¹⁸

The sanctity of space rather than issues over funding or official recognition of one denomination caused the protests over religion that engulfed Boston and much of Massachusetts. Andros, a devout Anglican, along with Randolph, wished to establish a home for the Anglican community in Boston. On December 20, 1686, the same day that he officially assumed the duties of governor of the Dominion, Andros called together the Congregational ministers of Boston and requested the use of one of their meetinghouses for Anglican worship services. The ministers conversed together and determined that they “could not with a good conscience consent that [their] Meeting-Houses should be made use of for the Common-Prayer Worship.”¹¹⁹

Why could the Puritans not allow Andros to hold an Anglican service in their meetinghouse? Ola Winslow described the meetinghouse’s purpose well, “In the town mind, as well as on the Town Book, this was not God’s holy temple; it was an all-purpose place of assembly.” However, she greatly oversimplified the symbolic importance of the meetinghouse when she stated that, “Accordingly, no particular

¹¹⁷ Sewall, *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Vol. 5 – Fifth Series*, 186.

¹¹⁸ “An Appeal to the Men of New England, with a Short Account of Mr. Randolph’s Papers,” in *The Andros Tracts*, 3: 200-201.

¹¹⁹ Sewall, *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Vol. 5 – Fifth Series*, 162.

sacredness attached to the building itself.”¹²⁰ True, the actual structure did not hold the same symbolic sanctity that a Catholic cathedral or Jewish synagogue held in the minds of the worshippers. However, the meetinghouse became a potent symbol of the “simplicity” with which the Puritans practiced their faith, and the physical embodiment of their “skepticism about the nature of man and faith in institutions.” The meetinghouse encapsulated Puritan beliefs in the “instituted ordinances” derived from the Bible.¹²¹ Thus, to allow an Anglican service in the meetinghouse was akin to declaring their interpretation of the Bible, and the ordinances demanded by scripture, invalid. The Puritans maintained the sacredness of their space by declaring the space not sacred.

The issue was ignored for some time after the initial request. The Anglicans met in “a little roome in the towne house,” and occasionally at the exchange. Edward Randolph suggested to the Archbishop of Canterbury that “the three meeting houses in Boston might pay twenty shillings a weeke, a piece... towards the defraieing our church charges,” however, nothing came of the suggestion.¹²² Andros again broached the subject of moving the Anglican services into one of the Boston meetinghouses for Easter. This time, however, he did not ask for permission. On March 23, 1687, Andros sent Randolph for the keys to the South Meetinghouse. A committee comprised of elite church members met Randolph at the door and showed him a copy of the deed giving ownership of the

¹²⁰ Ola Elizabeth Winslow, *Meetinghouse Hill, 1630-1783* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952), 50-51.

¹²¹ Kenneth A. Lockridge, “The History of a Puritan Church, 1637-1736,” *The New England Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (September, 1967) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/363166> (accessed 19 June 2010): 404.

¹²² Edward Randolph, “Mr. Randolph to the Archbishop of Canterbury, 1686,” in *Edward Randolph*, 4: 89-90.

church to the congregation. Their appeal failed, and two days later the governor attended an Anglican service held in the meetinghouse. Merely holding service did not suffice; Andros made the sexton of the church open the door and ring the bell to announce the service.¹²³

The Anglicans continued to meet in the South Meetinghouse. They met before the Congregational service and occasionally ran over their allotted time so that the devout Puritans grew sad “to see how full the Street was with people gazing and moving to and fro because had not entrance into the House.”¹²⁴ Samuel Sewall described Andros’s actions as “the seizure of their place of worship.”¹²⁵

Massachusetts Puritans also worried about the effects that the creation of the Dominion and the government of Andros had on the use of public space. Sewall began chronicling the boisterous public activities of soldiers and residents (most likely Anglican) following the appropriation of the meetinghouse. Presumably, these activities did not frequently occur in Boston before, or, at the very least, Sewall failed to take notice of them prior to Andros’s arrival. Beginning in April of 1687, however, Sewall writes of men dressed in different colors, armed with swords, challenging one another on the streets with the victor engaging in a triumphal march. In Charlestown the confrontations became more heated,

Green told me he knew not of it till today, and that he was undone for this world. It seems the May-pole at Charlestown was cut down last week, and

¹²³ Sewall, *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Vol. 5 – Fifth Series*, 171.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 172.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

now a bigger is set up, and a Garland upon it. A Sou1dier was buried last Wednesday and disturbance grew by reason of Joseph Phips standing with 's hat on as the Parson was reading Service. 'Tis said Mr. Sam Phips bid or encouraged the Watch to cut down the May-pole, being a Select-Man.¹²⁶

Increase Mather wrote a pamphlet on the Biblical inappropriateness of mixed-gender dancing and a second pamphlet, entitled *A Testimony Against several Prophane and Superstitious Customs*.¹²⁷ The *Testimony* linked stage-plays, health drinking, gambling, celebrating Christmas, New Year's, Shrove Tuesday, and the celebration of Saints' days to spiritual degeneration and lamented that "ever things of this nature should be practised in New-England."¹²⁸

The actions of Andros at the meetinghouse and the public spectacles and revelries engaged in by other residents demonstrated a clear disconnect between English customs and the expectations of authority, and the customs developed in Massachusetts. Andros and the Anglicans understood public space, sacred space, and constituted authority as separate matters. The first two were defined and regulated by the constituted authority which received its power through the Crown. The Puritans, however, could not separate the three. Public space, sacred space, and constituted authority all existed within

¹²⁶ Ibid., 173, 175, 178.

¹²⁷ Increase Mather, *An Arrow Against Profane and Promiscuous Dancing: Drawn Out of the Quiver of the Scriptures* (Boston: Printed by Samuel Green, 1686), http://docs.newsbank.com/openurl?ctx_ver=z39.88-2004&rft_id=info:sid/iw.newsbank.com:EVAN&rft_val_format=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:ctx&rft_dat=0F2FD4A167DA9B30&svc_dat=Evans:eaidoc&req_dat=0D2167CC8D19A62A (Accessed 11 March 2010).

¹²⁸ Increase Mather, *A Testimony Against several Prophane and Superstitious Customs, Now Practised by some in New-England* (London: 1687), http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:47038:20 (Accessed 11 March 2010). Quote on page 37.

the confines of the congregation and the meetinghouse. The meetinghouse represented the confluence of space and authority in Massachusetts.¹²⁹

This convergence of space and authority became more important for the New England Puritans after the revocation of their charter. Stephen Foster describes the Congregational Church during this period as “the only institutional repository for the cultural identity of a people somehow led into Babylonian captivity without being forced into physical exile.”¹³⁰ Increase Mather preached that, “Public Judgments come not without mighty sins,” and discussed the destruction of Jerusalem in a way that encouraged analogies with the present situation of the Puritans in Boston.¹³¹

The government of Massachusetts under the original charter was less of a theocracy than historians like Viola Barnes have acknowledged. Ministers did not hold public office and the very nature of Congregationalism meant that the religious class rarely ever spoke with a single voice. Thus, a physical connection between political authority and sacred space did not exist, but the political culture of Massachusetts possessed a very religious character. The revocation of the charter destroyed the old interplay of culture and politics, “What *was* apparent in the devastated political landscape of New England was the residual authority left with the clergy now that all

¹²⁹ See Sumner Chilton Powell, *Puritan Village: The Formation of a New England Town* (New York: Anchor Books, 1965). “Perhaps Brown was startled when he faced the building which he was to share with the selectmen, the men on military watch, and the town clerk. He was now going to function in a meeting-house, practically indistinguishable from any other cottage on Mill Road,” page 137.

¹³⁰ Stephen Foster, *The Long Argument: English Puritanism and the Shaping of New England Culture, 1570-1700* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 239.

¹³¹ Increase Mather, Sermon Notes dated July 26, 1686, Increase Mather Sermons, folder 4, Ms. N-529, Massachusetts Historical Society.

popular civil government was in abeyance.”¹³² The actions of Andros, his disregard for the clergy and the sanctity of the South Meetinghouse only heightened the existing fears of the population.

The very existence of Andros upset the moral economy of Boston and threatened to do the same for the rest of Massachusetts and the Puritan denizens of the Dominion. In this case, moral economy follows the definition offered by Louise Tilly, Cynthia Bouton, James C. Scott, and William Beik, as situations in which residents corrected “an indignity viewed as upsetting the proper order of things,” rather than E.P. Thompson’s more limited definition.¹³³ Under the old charter, the residents of Boston used shunning, excommunication, exile, and the full force of the law to rectify violations of the proper moral order in public and private space. Andros not only prevented such remedies from occurring, but in the eyes of Boston’s Puritans, he encouraged such violations of the existing moral economy.

Thus, the appeals to anti-popery sentiment in England in the wake of the rebellion, by men such as Increase Mather, take on a new light. Mather accused Andros of warning the Puritans to, “Consider what Effects the Stifness of the Protestants in France had, who would not Yield in what they might have done... and now there is not the name of a Protestant in France.”¹³⁴ Mather’s invocation of the French Huguenots would certainly evince fears of a Catholic plot to his London audience, but in truth, Mather probably feared that the imposition of an Anglican government over

¹³² Foster, *The Long Argument*, 248.

¹³³ Beik, *Urban Protest in Seventeenth-Century France*, 50.

¹³⁴ Increase Mather, *A Vindication of New England*, in *The Andros Tracts*, 2: 45.

Massachusetts represented the victory of a “popish” plot. He suggested that the Anglican Church possessed more in common with Roman Catholicism than with Puritanism in a pamphlet entitled, *A brief discourse concerning the unlawfulness of the common prayer worship. And of laying the hand on, and kissing the Booke in swearing*. Written in 1686, Mather argued that the Book of Common Prayer “was Collected out of three Superstitious Books... Hence the English Liturgy has bin well approved of by Papists.”¹³⁵ A pro-Andros pamphleteer wrote following the rebellion that Increase and Cotton Mather worked “insinuating into the Common People, that the Governor and all the Church of *England* were Papists and Idolaters.”¹³⁶ For devout Puritans, Andros represented an ignominious end to the original Puritan mission in New England.

The debate over what constituted lawful authority in Massachusetts drew its heat and strength from incidents arising over matters of taxation and religion. However, the debate also evolved past those concerns and struck at the nature of empire, the place of colonies within empire, and the rights of Englishmen. One historian compared Andros’s vision “of a centralized empire in America: an institution that would project the king’s power throughout the world,” to the New England vision of an empire “centered on

¹³⁵ Increase Mather, *A brief discourse concerning the unlawfulness of the common prayer worship. And of laying the hand on, and kissing the Booke in swearing* (Cambridge, MA: Printed by Samuel Green, 1686), 2. http://docs.newsbank.com/openurl?ctx_ver=z39.88-2004&rft_id=info:sid/iw.newsbank.com:EVAN&rft_val_format=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:ctx&rft_dat=0F30156CCA5E3490&svc_dat=Evans:eaidoc&req_dat=0D2167CC8D19A62A (Accessed 11 March 2010).

¹³⁶ C.D., *New England’s Faction Discovered; Or, A Brief and True Account of their Persecution of the Church of England; the Beginning and Progress of the War with the Indians; and other Late Proceedings there, in a Letter from a Gentleman of that Country, to a Person of Quality* (London: Printed for J. Hindmarsh at the Sign of the Golden Ball, 1690), 4. Copy in the American Antiquarian Society.

religious ideology: a loose combination of territories defined by their common Protestantism and allegiance to an English, Protestant monarch.”¹³⁷

The statement on Andros may be taken as a fairly accurate assessment, but the depiction of the Massachusetts Puritan’s understanding of empire is questionable at the very least. Massachusetts was founded during a period of great unrest within England and during the infancy of the English Atlantic. The transportation of the charter to Boston caused significant problems for Massachusetts from the very beginning; proceedings against the charter began in 1634 and only the outbreak of the English Civil War prevented Charles I from taking concrete action. Charles II initially confirmed the charter in 1662 while reminding the colony that they derived their authority from the crown.¹³⁸ In short, neither the Crown nor Parliament ever defined the relationship between a colony and the metropole. The Privy Council once assured Sir Richard Saltonstall that Massachusetts could keep its autonomy and its religious beliefs. The Council believed that Massachusetts would eventually prove necessary for the production of naval stores.¹³⁹ The relationship, as Massachusetts understood it, was similar to a commonwealth united by heritage and trade, yet independent of, a strong metropole. Yet even this falls short, since the government of Massachusetts understood and accepted that the metropole could initiate legal proceedings against their charter. Massachusetts recognized a colony to be less than sovereign, but more than subservient.

¹³⁷ Owen Stanwood, “The Protestant Moment: Antipopery, the Revolution of 1688-1689, and the Making of an Anglo-American Empire,” *Journal of British Studies* 46 (July 2007): 481.

¹³⁸ Wertenbaker, *The Puritan Oligarchy*, 295-296, 305.

¹³⁹ John Winthrop, *John Winthrop’s Journal, “History of New England,” 1630-1649*, ed. James Kendall Hosmer (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1908), 1: 101.

Andros's commission, the proclamation of the Dominion of New England, and Andros's administration all failed to explicitly define the role of a colony and a colonist in relationship to the metropole. In many ways, the debate which ensued became a matter of two sides talking past one another without ever agreeing on a common vocabulary. The most important specific question was whether the colonists were entitled to all of the rights and protections that native Englishmen enjoyed.

In fact, much of the pamphlet debate over Andros's ouster that occurred in London following the Glorious Revolution centered on the legality of Andros's commission and the lack of English rights afforded to the English residents of the Dominion. Nathanael Byfield wrote that, "It was now plainly affirmed... that the people in *New-England* were all *Slaves*... and it was a maxim delivered in open Court unto us by one of the Council, *that we must not think the Priviledges of English men would follow us to the end of the World.*"¹⁴⁰ John Palmer wrote in defense of the Dominion,

those Kingdoms, Principalities, and Collonies, which are of the Dominion of the Crown of England, and not of Empire of the King of England, are subject to such Laws, Ordinances, and Forms of Government, as the Crown shall think fit to establish. New England, and all the Plantations are subject to the Dominion of the Crown of England... Therefore the Crown of England may Rule and Govern them in such manner as it shall think most fit.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Byfield, "An Account of the Late Revolution," in *The Andros Tracts*, 1: 14.

¹⁴¹ John Palmer, "An Impartial Account of the State of New England: or, the Late Government there, Vindicated," in *The Andros Tracts*, 1: 35

The “Act for Regulating ye Choice of Selectmen, Constabels & other officers in ye Respective townes,” along with the lack of an assembly, proved the most contentious and hated policy of the Andros regime. The law limited town meetings to only one per year for the purposes of choosing selectmen, constables, tax commissioners, making allowances for the poor of the community, repairing bridges, roads, and any other projects that might normally be addressed in a town meeting. Meeting at any time other than the proscribed “third mundy in May annually,” was strictly forbidden.¹⁴² The author of the *Revolution in New England Justified* declared that, “The Inhabitants of the Countrey were startled at this Law, as being apprehensive the design of it was to prevent the people in every Town from meeting to make complaints of their Grievances.”¹⁴³

The protest of the Ipswich men, though ostensibly about tax policy, dealt more thoroughly with issues of authority and rights. Their invocation of the Magna Carta, the assertion that “they Ought to have an Assembly before they payd any Rates contrary to and in Contempt of the Laws of his sd Majestyes Government,” and their declarations of innocence when tried for high misdemeanors struck at the heart of the disconnect between the Dominion government and the people of Massachusetts.¹⁴⁴ The Ipswich men did not organize a crowd or violently resist Andros’s deputies. Their protest took a distinctly professional and legal tone. Andros’s actions only inflamed the tensions over the exercise of proper authority and led to the violent rebellion against his government.

¹⁴² “An Act for Regulating ye Choice of Selectmen, Constabels & other officers in ye Respective townes,” James Russell Legal Documents, 1692-1701, Ms. N-822, Massachusetts Historical Society.

¹⁴³ *The Revolution in New England Justified, And the People there Vindicated*, in *The Andros Tracts*, 1: 80. This author was most likely Increase Mather.

¹⁴⁴ “Proceedings agt. Wise and others of Ipswich for Misdemeanors,” in *Edward Randolph*, 4: 175.

The course of the riot that removed Andros remains relatively obscure. What is known is that around eight o'clock the crowd began to gather. Samuel Prince wrote that as soon as the riot started, several residents of Boston managed to secure the commander of the Royal Navy frigate in Boston Harbor. Additionally, a number of local Andros supporters were simultaneously seized and placed into the town prison for safe-keeping. Four hours after the riot began, several leading residents of Boston gathered in the gallery of the Council-house and publicly proclaimed, *The Declaration of the Gentlemen, Merchants and Inhabitants of Boston, and the Country Adjacent*. By two o'clock in the afternoon, roughly twenty companies of militia occupied Boston with an additional number in Charlestown, unable to cross over due to the size of the crowd. A brief, tense moment occurred when the few British regulars assigned to Andros had the opportunity to engage with the rioters, yet, in the words of one soldier, decided not to because, "What the Devil should I fight against a thousand men?" Andros, with his closest confederates, was trapped at Fort Hill and finally encouraged to surrender.¹⁴⁵

The rebellion itself demonstrated an awareness of audience on the part of the Boston rioters. Their actions fit very well within the norms for an early modern European riot. This proves extremely remarkable when considering the shift in norms of acceptable violence that occurred during the concurrent wars against the Indians.¹⁴⁶ The cost of what became known as King William's War, the military reverses that occurred

¹⁴⁵ Byfield, "Byfield's Account of the Late Revolution, 1689," in *Narratives of the Insurrections*, 171-173 and Samuel Prince, "Letter of Samuel Prince, 1689," in *Narratives of the Insurrections*, 186-188. Quote on page 188.

¹⁴⁶ See Chapter II of this thesis for a full discussion of this cultural transformation. Also see John Grenier, *The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier*.

under Andros, and the level of violence on the frontier could have provided ample excuse for a quick, violent, and bloody coup. Yet, the form of the rebellion against Andros and the actions of the crowd would have been easily recognizable to any European audience.

The uprising of April 18, 1689, represented, “The quest for retribution, defined as ‘deserved punishment for evil done.’” The people of Boston could not merely rebuke the royal governor for upending the city’s moral economy, therefore, they engaged in an act of “community purification (expelling or exterminating the offender, pure and simple).”¹⁴⁷ Like many large uprisings in England and France, the rebels organized their crowd around the militia and maintained a quasi-military attitude throughout the proceedings.¹⁴⁸

Nathanael Byfield wrote that the uprising assumed a military nature when “about nine of the clock the Drums beat thorough the Town; and an Ensign was set up upon the Beacon.” He referred to the rioters as “Soldiers” throughout the course of his narrative.¹⁴⁹ However, this does not mean that the crowd behaved in the manner of an organized military body; it merely means that the crowd used the existing structure of the militia to provide leadership and direction. The composition of the crowd is not recorded. This is chiefly due to the elite nature of the existing sources. Only Samuel Prince, the man quoted earlier, who saw boys running with clubs, suggests that the crowd was made up of more than active militiamen. No evidence exists suggesting the

¹⁴⁷ Beik, *Urban Protest in Seventeenth Century France*, 51.

¹⁴⁸ See Beik, 45, 79-84.

¹⁴⁹ Byfield, “An Account of the Late Revolution,” in *The Andros Tracts*, 1: 4.

participation of women in the crowd. The presence of male elites to lead the crowd may help explain the lack of women. Women often initiated and led food riots in Europe; in fact, E.P. Thompson argued that “the women most frequently precipitated the spontaneous actions.” Women could lead the spontaneous actions, along with children (very often teens or young adults) because they ran less risk of punishment than adult males.¹⁵⁰ However, the extensive involvement of adult males and especially adult male elites in the Boston uprising meant that the legal advantages of gender were unnecessary. Still, the participation of women cannot be ruled out. Even if no women took part in the removal of Andros, women almost certainly took part in the desecration of newly built Anglican church and the quarters of several members of the Dominion’s council after Andros’s imprisonment.

Why did the Massachusetts Puritans choose crowd action to remove Andros? Why did they not simply stage a small coup d’état in the night, or publicly pronounce the end of Andros’s reign? Possibly, the leaders of the rebellion simply became caught up unawares in the tide of public opinion, but almost every contemporary, even those sympathetic to the rebellion, discounted that possibility. Boston received word of the Glorious Revolution in February and March of 1689, and they received a copy of William of Orange’s declarations in April.¹⁵¹ Viola Barnes argued that the elites interpreted the revolution in England as “God’s sign that He was about to deliver them

¹⁵⁰ E.P. Thompson, “The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century,” in *Customs in Common: Studies in Traditional Popular Culture* (New York: The New Press, 1993), 233-234. Quote on page 234.

¹⁵¹ David Cressy, *Coming Over: Migration and Communication between England and New England in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 261.

from bondage... The revolt... was not so much an uprising against oppression, as a predestined event for which they had waited.”¹⁵² Barnes’s jaded view still fails to answer the question of why a crowd action. Crowds could not be easily controlled no matter how unified they were by a common purpose. Human beings with pent-up emotions composed the crowd. The crowd restrained its actions depending on its targets and their audience, but crowds did not behave with uniform military discipline. Samuel Prince wrote that the leaders of the rebellion spoke to Andros before he surrendered and told him that “if he would not give it [the fort on Castle Island] presently under hand and seal, that he must expect to be delivered up to the rage of the people, who doubtless would put him to death.”¹⁵³ An Andros supporter present in Boston during the uprising argued that the leaders of the crowd “were like young conjurers, who had raised a Devil they could not govern.”¹⁵⁴

The answer behind the use of crowd action to remove Andros lies in the transatlantic ties of custom, empire, and audience. The crowd behaved in a culturally acceptable manner for an English audience. Bostonians wished to remove Andros without appearing overly violent, overly vindictive, or overly subversive. During the first hours of the rebellion, Andros himself wrote that “tho’ the street were full of armed men, yet none offered him [Andros] or those that were with him the least rudeness or

¹⁵² Barnes, *The Dominion of New England*, 251.

¹⁵³ Prince, “Letter of Samuel Prince, 1689,” in *Narratives of the Insurrections*, 189.

¹⁵⁴ “A Particular Account of the Late Revolution, 1689,” in *Narratives of the Insurrections*, 204.

incivility, but on the contrary usually respect.”¹⁵⁵ John Walter noted of protests during the English Revolution that, “This was a culture which formally proscribed riot, but acknowledged the responsibilities of power within a public discourse in such a way that it could be appropriated to legitimize independent popular action.”¹⁵⁶

The crowd chose their targets selectively. In addition to capturing Andros and his officials, the crowd broke the windows of the Anglican church and smeared the doors and the walls with excrement. They also broke into the homes of the imprisoned officials and made off with many of their belongings.¹⁵⁷ Though distasteful to modern sensibilities, such actions offered a cathartic way for the crowd to purify the body social.¹⁵⁸ These actions, for the crowd, atoned for the symbolic desecration of the South Meetinghouse and Andros’s appropriation of the “legitimate” government of Massachusetts. Like other English crowds, the Boston crowd attacked “those whose actions were thought to threaten their physical and spiritual security.”¹⁵⁹ They did not act as a mob, nor is there any evidence that they broke the norms of early modern riots.

The pamphleteers writing after the rebellion took great care to craft and moderate their message to their audience. The Massachusetts Puritans understood that they were attempting to win the minds of the new government and the people of the metropole.

¹⁵⁵ Edmund Andros, “Andros’s Report of his Administration, 1690,” in *Narratives of the Insurrections*, 232.

¹⁵⁶ John Walter, *Understanding Popular Violence in the English Revolution: The Colchester Plunderers* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 6.

¹⁵⁷ C.D., *New England’s Faction Discovered*, 4.

¹⁵⁸ Natalie Zemon Davis, “The Rites of Violence,” in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975), 174.

¹⁵⁹ Walter, *Understanding Popular Violence in the English Revolution*, 346.

They also understood that most of these individuals followed the Anglican faith. As such, the implicit links between Anglicanism and Catholicism dropped from their writings. In fact, religion is scarcely mentioned at all except to occasionally try and link the New England uprising to a broader English struggle against Catholicism. Normally vituperative men like Increase Mather wrote that, “No man does really approve of the *Revolution in England*, but must justify that in *New-England* also; for the latter was effected in compliance with the former... Their seizing and securing the Governour was no more than was done in *England*, at *Hull, Dover, Plimouth, &c.*”¹⁶⁰ Massachusetts Puritans sought some recognition that they still maintained the rights and responsibilities of Englishmen. For this, they worked to undermine the authority of Andros’s government at the metropole and cast their own actions as one and commensurate with the struggle of England.

The Dominion of New England and the rebellion which overthrew the Andros government marked significant turning points in the evolution of English authority in North America and the development of customs and negotiations of power within Massachusetts. Placing the Dominion period into the context of debate, debates over the meaning of power, empire, and the source of legitimate authority, helps expose the unique flaws of the English imperial project in the Atlantic world. It also helps expose the development and transmission of an English Atlantic culture that evolved in different ways in the colonies as compared to the metropole, but always maintained an affinity, and a sense of communion, with one another. Owen Stanwood wrote that, “The colonies

¹⁶⁰ *The Revolution in New England Justified, And the People there Vindicated*, in *The Andros Tracts*, 1: 71-72.

mattered, but not as exemplars of liberty. Rather, they represented peculiar variations on European patterns, revealing both the persistence and the adaptability of the early modern Christian worldview.”¹⁶¹ An analysis of Puritan Massachusetts’s reactions to the changes in legitimate authority and their place in the English empire throws light on the conflict within Massachusetts about its evolution and its relationship with the metropole. This analysis shows the struggle between persistence and adaptability within Massachusetts society and the potential for violence within that struggle when not managed properly. King Philip’s War marked a seismic shift in how Massachusetts related to the surrounding environment and people. The Dominion of New England marked a seismic shift in how Massachusetts related to itself and its ancestral home.

¹⁶¹ Stanwood, “The Protestant Moment,” 508.

CHAPTER IV

YOUR OWN WORST ENEMY: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF INTERNAL
CONFLICT AMONG MASSACHUSETTS PURITANS

On December 7, 1705, Joseph Dudley, Governor of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, found his way blocked on a road leading north from Roxbury, Massachusetts. Two carters, their carts piled with cordwood, occupied enough of the road to render the governor's carriage unable to pass them without a minor course diversion off of the beaten path. Dudley sent his son forward to order the carters off the road until the governor and his carriage passed, upon which one of the men, John Winchester, Jr., replied (according to Joseph Dudley), "I am as good flesh and blood as you; I will not give way; you may goe out of the way." What actually happened during the confrontation remains lost in a tangle of self-serving affidavits and the passage of time. However, despite the governor's desire to send the carters to England for trial, the justices of the colonial court decided, instead, to release the prisoners on their own recognizance, "that they might repair to their wives and children and Occasions; and that might have Liberty to assemble with God's People on the Lord's Day."¹⁶²

The event generated little press and, though Samuel Sewall recounted speaking with the governor about the incident and served as a judge for the case, he offered little of the moralizing that frequently marked his earlier entries on deviations of the

¹⁶² Samuel Sewall, *The Diary of Samuel Sewall, 1674-1729: Newly Edited from the Manuscript at the Massachusetts Historical Society*, ed. M. Halsey Thomas (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973), I: 532-537. Quotes on page 533 and page 536.

traditional social order. Historians also often overlook the deeper cultural significance of this incident. One historian merely notes that, “Because the governor was on official business, he had every right to ask them to move.” He does comment that, “The incident got carried away.”¹⁶³ An editor of Sewall’s diary argues that the incident does little more than show “more fully the almost insane rage of [Governor] Dudley, and presents a lively picture of colonial life.”¹⁶⁴

Without question, the authority exercised by Dudley carried more caveats in the early eighteenth century than that of John Winthrop or any of the other colonial magistrates from the early seventeenth century thanks to the Puritan experience under Edmund Andros and the Dominion of New England. T.H. Breen argues that the memory of the Dominion period resulted in “a growing belief in Massachusetts that magistrates had to answer to their constituents for their official acts.”¹⁶⁵ However, culturally, authority still demanded deference. Particularly, one assumes, such deference extended to the hand-picked representative of royal power in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Yet, the two carters go free and Dudley is often portrayed as a petty tyrant. Why?

The answer might be unearthed by evaluating the evolution of culture in Massachusetts towns and communities following King Philip’s War. Understanding how internal factors – demographic, economic, and social factors – impacted an individual’s sense of place in a community and a community’s sense of place within a larger

¹⁶³ Philip Ranlet, *Enemies of the Bay Colony* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995), 197.

¹⁶⁴ Thomas, *The Diary of Samuel Sewall*, I: 532.

¹⁶⁵ T.H. Breen, *The Character of the Good Ruler: A study of Puritan Political Ideas in New England, 1630-1730* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970), 173. See chapter 2 of this thesis for a more complete discussion of the Dominion period and the governorship of Edmund Andros.

geopolitical entity can help researchers interpret cultural reactions to highly visible events like the rebellion against the Dominion of New England in 1689. Any change in the broad socioeconomic status quo of a community, even broadly positive changes, can create significant tensions that result in confrontation and accommodation. This chapter focuses on change at a communal level and the resulting tensions of that change. This chapter helps establish some of the underlying factors that led to the responses seen in chapters two and three. In other words, to understand why the Puritans viewed the Dominion of New England with such suspicion, and why they proved willing to modify their traditional norms of violence and embrace scalp bounties, it helps to begin by understanding the issues facing the New England town in the wake of King Philip's War.

Edmund Morgan described the development of the New England town as a "special institution that the people of Massachusetts had developed to replace the parishes and boroughs and manors from which they had come." He called it "a parish without church officers, a borough without aldermen, a manor without a lord."¹⁶⁶ During the 1960s and 1970s, a number of the "new social" historians turned their attentions to individual New England towns and wrote microhistories of the institutions and people that comprised these separate communities. These historians had good cause to focus on the township as a separate and unique unit of analysis within Puritan New England. Within Dedham, as little as 4 percent of the population moved out of the town for the entire decade of the 1690s; in Hingham, only 7 percent of the population left between

¹⁶⁶ Edmund S. Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop*, 2nd ed. (New York: Pearson Longman, 2006), 230.

1670 and 1680.¹⁶⁷ Towns formed the nucleus of the entire Puritan experiment in Massachusetts.

Studies of individual towns illustrate the personal and micro-level events and issues that caused change within the structure and function of communities over time. However, these studies cannot adequately address the nature or impact of macro-level events and trends. Kenneth Lockridge's famous study of Dedham, Massachusetts mentions King Philip's War only twice, and then in passing, despite the large-scale significance of war. Sumner Chilton Powell's *Puritan Village*, a study of Sudbury, Massachusetts, never mentions the conflict. Meanwhile, historians who focus on macro-level narratives tend to emphasize the religious debates in early Massachusetts, relations between the settlers and the natives, or relations between the settlers and the metropole. Often, and understandably, researchers tend to treat the Massachusetts Puritans as a homogenous, or monolithic, political entity. Disagreements arose over religious matters, particularly the Half-Way Covenant, but the political goals of the early settlers remained remarkably constant.

The increased distance of time between the original settling and the maturing of towns led to increased internal debates and fissures. The birth and growth of subsequent generations in Massachusetts, generations without the connection of living memory to England, created strong debates over the structure and nature of New England communities and their relationship to the government of Massachusetts. Even within the Puritan faith, communities began splintering over theological differences. The massive

¹⁶⁷ David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 184 (see the table in footnote 6).

exodus and resettlement created by King Philip's War further aggravated these tensions. After 1676, the political dynamics within towns, amongst towns, and between towns and the colonial government shifted and began moving in directions that the original settlers would have probably recoiled from.

This chapter tries to chart a middle path between the microhistories of the "new social" historians and traditional macro-histories of Massachusetts. Understanding the conflicts and struggles over the nature of power and authority within communities, and between communities and the colonial elites, can help show the progress of macro-level trends while not overstating the amount of change or stasis at the local level. Such an approach also helps expose some potential reasons for the timing of these conflicts. This approach also, hopefully, breaks away from the alluring simplicity of arguing for a breakdown and restructuring of society and communities during this period into a more recognizably "modern" polity.¹⁶⁸ Understanding the level and nature of the changes affecting communities and their relations with the colonial governing elites helps establish a baseline for understanding changes in culture and dialogues over power between the colonists and the metropole and between the colonists and the Indians described in chapters two and three.

Structurally, this chapter begins by exploring the demographic changes and challenges confronting the Puritans following King Philip's War and then moves to a

¹⁶⁸ See Thomas Bender, *Community and Social Change in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1978), 50-51. In particular, his admonition of community scholarship in which he states, "If these books are placed in serial order, they offer a picture of community breakdown repeating itself in the 1650s, 1690s, 1740s, 1780s, 1820s, 1850s, 1880s, and 1920s. Each captures important dimensions of social change, but their dependence upon the community breakdown thesis limits their value for anyone concerned with the processes and consequences of social change over an extended period."

discussion of the composition, beliefs, functions, and growing tensions within Puritan towns and communities. This discussion primarily highlights cultural and economic transitions. The chapter ends with an analysis of the conflict that emerged between communities and the colonial political order during the organizational and structural tumult of late seventeenth century Massachusetts.

Before moving forward, some space should be dedicated to defining the concept of a community. Already, just within the introduction, the terms “town” and “community” have seen use as near synonyms for one another. This is not a mistake, nor a simplification. The definition of community used in this study comes from Thomas Bender, who argues that, “Community... is best defined as a network of social relations marked by mutuality and emotional bonds.... A community involves a limited number of people in a somewhat restricted social space or network held together by shared understandings and a sense of obligation.” The New England town of the seventeenth century in many ways epitomized this definition. Bender later remarks that, “The Puritans were remarkably successful in making local life communal in the villages they established.”¹⁶⁹ In a city like Boston, though relatively small, several communities, perhaps best delineated by their meetinghouse, or if not Puritan then their house of worship, coexisted, while almost every town or village tolerated only one, central meetinghouse that defined the focus of the community.

After King Philip’s War, a new spate of demographic, economic, political, and cultural challenges arose for the colonists to address. Despite the destruction caused by

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 7, 63.

the war, the English population of Massachusetts continued to grow exponentially. Between 1670 and 1700, the white population of New England increased by around 39,200 persons.¹⁷⁰ The rise in population, combined with the newly-restricted geography available for settlement thanks to the devastation caused by the war, further limited opportunities for sons raised within agricultural communities to migrate westward in search of new lands. This resulted in the further division of already small family tracts and the expansion of towns beyond their original limits. Expansion created new problems for communities built around concepts of cohesion and mutual surveillance, and for faithful townspeople located at increasingly inconvenient distances from the central, all-important meetinghouse.

As with their founding grandparents, the generation that reached adulthood in the late seventeenth century built their lives around the meetinghouse: that secular/religious icon of colonial New England communities. The institutions, symbolism, and structure of the meetinghouse during this period reflected both the stasis and the strong undercurrents of change and tension that characterized Massachusetts.

Theoretically, the meetinghouse stood physically, as well as emotionally, in the center of any town or community. Topography often prevented the meetinghouse from occupying the exact center of a town, but as James Walsh comments, “In these small communities the inhabitants felt and responded to forces of personal and collective influence. These forces created a sacred center, the only appropriate site for the

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

meetinghouse.”¹⁷¹ The importance of the structure to Puritan concepts of community emerges in a 1646 law that remained in force throughout the seventeenth century; this law assigned new settlers to a particular town based on the distance of their homestead to the nearest town meetinghouse rather than to the nearest acknowledged town boundary.¹⁷² One historian noted that, “The congregations even planned their meetinghouses with communal harmony in mind... the early ideal, never realized, was to place the meetinghouse at a location convenient to the entire village.”¹⁷³

The original structures reflected the small size of the initial Puritan communities and the limited tools available for their construction. Longmeadow, Massachusetts originally planned to construct a 38-foot by 38-foot structure, assuming they could find enough quality wood, while Middletown, Connecticut voted to build a tiny, 200-square-foot meetinghouse in 1652.¹⁷⁴ The exteriors of the original meetinghouses often reflected the contemporary style of courthouses and marketplaces in East Anglia, England. They usually contained windows of clear glass, a tub pulpit, a table for communion, and rude benches for pews. Meetinghouses did not offer any visual distractions for the congregants. The walls remained bare, beams and rafters stood unpainted, and even the

¹⁷¹ James P. Walsh, “Holy Time and Sacred Space in Puritan New England,” *American Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (Spring, 1980) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2712497> (accessed 19 June 2010): 90.

¹⁷² *The Laws and Liberties of Massachusetts, 1641-1691* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1976), 1: 85.

¹⁷³ E. Brooks Holifield, “Peace, Conflict, and Ritual in Puritan Congregations,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23, no. 3 (Winter, 1993) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/206102> (accessed 19 June 2010): 557.

¹⁷⁴ Winslow, *Meetinghouse Hill*, 52-53.

exterior of the building retained its natural hues. Instead of a spire, the larger houses might include a central turret for sentries or a smaller turret that housed a bell.¹⁷⁵

These humble beginnings created a mythical ideal of religious simplicity and material paucity amongst the early Puritans. This ideal served Puritan ministers well in later years by providing a “golden age” which they could compare to their supposedly degenerate present. However, the ideal did not reflect the physical, economic, or cultural growth and evolution of these communities. Towns quickly outgrew their original meetinghouses while their increased financial prosperity encouraged congregations to better display their success. The construction of new meetinghouses began in earnest in the late 1670s. Marian Donnelly analyzed the records of New England Puritan congregations and identified 65 Massachusetts meetinghouses for which the dates of construction and replacement were known. The period between 1676 and 1703, roughly the span of one generation, saw 36 of the 65 congregations in Massachusetts, or 55 percent, replace their original, and in some cases their second or even third, meetinghouse. Six congregations constructed their first meetinghouse during this period. In total, 65 percent of the meetinghouses in Massachusetts were either built or replaced at this time. Twenty of these structures were built during the decade between 1677 and 1686.¹⁷⁶

As both the only public structure and the only sacred structure in the majority of towns, the construction of new meetinghouses provided communities with the

¹⁷⁵ Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, 117-118.

¹⁷⁶ Data taken from Marian Card Donnelly, *The New England Meeting Houses of the Seventeenth Century* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1968), 109-119.

opportunity to highlight their place and wealth within the colony and provided elites with the opportunity to highlight their stature within the community. Sumner Chilton Powell's study of Sudbury, Massachusetts highlights the evolution of this process. The original meetinghouse, built in 1643, was "practically indistinguishable from any other cottage... except that it lacked a chimney." The meetinghouse constructed in 1653 created much more tension. A group of conservative elders wished to expand the existing structure while a younger faction worked to build a "really dignified building." The younger faction won out and the town funded a larger building with two gable ends. The third meetinghouse, constructed in 1688, included a turret, was even larger, and had purchased pews in addition to the traditional benches.¹⁷⁷

The process of surveying, drafting, constructing, and utilizing new meetinghouses displayed the tensions that growth created within towns. In May of 1679, problems arising from the growth of towns, and the centrality that the meetinghouse played within towns, caused the General Court of Massachusetts to require that any town or individuals wishing to construct a new meetinghouse first obtain a license from the County Court. The General Court declared that,

For as much as it hath too often happened that through differences arising in several Towns, and on other pretences there hath been Attempts by some persons to erect new meeting houses... yet thereby laying a Foundation for perpetuating divisions, and weakening such places where

¹⁷⁷ Sumner Chilton Powell, *Puritan Village: The Formation of a New England Town* (New York: Anchor Books, 1963), 136-137, 155, 184-185.

they dwell in the comfortable support of the Ministry orderly settled amongst them.¹⁷⁸

The General Court did not previously involve itself in the selection of a site or the construction of local meetinghouses. However, by this period, “The strife over construction became legendary.”¹⁷⁹

The shape taken by most of these new meetinghouses reflected the evolution of New England culture, particularly their views on aesthetics, wealth, and the value of symbols. None of the congregations made a total break with precedent. Decorations and religious symbols remained taboo within the meetinghouse. The structures kept their “simplicity” in the sense that they still resembled large marketplaces or courthouses rather than places of worship. The architectural choices made still showed a level of discomfort with the idea of broadcasting the meetinghouse as a place of worship. The turrets remained in the center of the structures and no meetinghouse, until the Brattle Street Church in 1699, appears to have built a spire at one end of the building.¹⁸⁰

Though the congregations did not wish to broadcast the religious nature of their meetinghouses, they did wish to broadcast the strength and success of their communities. The last third of the seventeenth century, what Marian Donnelly calls the “Late Period” in meetinghouse construction, saw the addition of gables or dormers to eight of the structures and the addition of bell or watch turrets to twenty meetinghouses. Donnelly notes that “the main change in the larger towns was toward greater size and probably

¹⁷⁸ *The Laws and Liberties of Massachusetts, 1641-1691*, 3: 543.

¹⁷⁹ Holifield, “Peace, Conflict, and Ritual in Puritan Congregations,”: 565.

¹⁸⁰ Donnelly, *The New England Meeting Houses of the Seventeenth Century*, 79.

toward more skillful and elegant construction.” Even smaller, less established communities like Deerfield included several small gables on their new meetinghouses.¹⁸¹

More and more, the meetinghouse represented the secular strength of a community built on religious principles. Just as personal success could convince a Puritan that he found God’s favor, so, it seems, that communities viewed their ability to raise the funds needed for such elaborate structures as visible signs of their success and progress as a congregation. Where simplicity and expediency reigned in the first wave of meetinghouse construction, now meetinghouses reflected colonial trends in architecture. Gables did not add to the structural integrity of the building, and bell turrets possessed only limited value. The true value in these late additions is in the visible representation of the congregants’ “sophistication” that such structural luxuries provided.

The growing local elite were not content to display their success through the architecture of their meetinghouses. These elites demanded recognition when the meetinghouse was in use through the instrument of seating. The purchase of seats and the custom of seating according to social rank began at least as early as 1645 in the town of Sudbury. By the second generation of settlement, in the 1660s, this practice became the norm, even among several of the frontier communities. Inhabitants who failed to follow the rules that governed seating typically faced a heavy fine. In the aftermath of King Philip’s War, this tradition took on even stronger importance and became part of the ritual the Puritans created for consecrating a new meetinghouse. Seating took on such importance, and such rancor, that many communities formed a committee to form

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 65-72. Quote on page 65.

the committee that assigned seating in the meetinghouse.¹⁸² Age and wealth formed the basis by which the communities assigned seats; age was usually the first consideration, followed by a congregant's wealth, and finally his or her position in the community. However, this does not mean that an elderly poor man received preferential seating over a wealthy young man. It only meant that an older man would receive preference over a younger man who possessed a slightly larger estate.¹⁸³ Thus, while showing a continued respect for age and experience, late-seventeenth century Puritans displayed an evolving belief in the power of wealth and a strong sense of rank consciousness.¹⁸⁴

This rank consciousness affected gender relations within communities. Technically, women occupied the lowest rung in New England society. During the collection of tithes the progression of congregants to the collection box began with magistrates and gentlemen, then elders and all married men, all single men, and only then could widows and married women whose husbands were away proceed forward to give their offering.¹⁸⁵ The collection ritual provided visual representation of the constituted bodies extant in Puritan Massachusetts. Even wealthy widows or wealthy

¹⁸² Robert J. Dinkin, "Seating the Meetinghouse in Early Massachusetts," *The New England Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (September, 1970) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/363307> (accessed 25 May 2010): 452-453.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 453-454. "When figuring the relative value of age and estate, usually one year of age was taken as the equivalent of one or two pounds in the assessment of real and personal estate."

¹⁸⁴ The definition of *rank* follows that offered in Mary Beth Norton, *Founding Mothers & Fathers: Gendered Power and the Forming of American Society* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), 18. "The only contemporary term used to describe the elements of England's all-encompassing social and political hierarchy was *rank*, employed in English as early as the late sixteenth century to mean 'one's social position or standing.' Other roughly comparable words, like *status* or *class* came into use later, primarily in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries." In order to avoid the strong Marxist and industrial connotations of *class*, this study utilizes the term *rank*.

¹⁸⁵ Holifield, "Peace, Conflict, and Ritual in Puritan Congregations": 554.

married women had to wait on poor, single men before they could take part in the ritual. However, just as in European society of the time where a queen, though ostensibly lower than a male peasant due to her gender, actually reflected the privileges of her position in society, so Puritan women received a certain amount of deference due to their socioeconomic position. Women who joined the church took seats in accordance with their husband's rank. More often than not, after 1660, the wife fully joined the church while husband still lacked the necessary requisites. Despite the fact that the husband did not hold the rank of a member, and the wife technically held no income or property, seating for the wife still depended on the husband's social rank.¹⁸⁶

Some form of Puritan socioeconomic consciousness existed from the beginning of the Massachusetts Bay colony. The colony, while focusing on community, never pursued an ideal of equality. In public, from the start, "Leaders and elders in the Bay Colony dressed differently from ordinary people." Additionally, the legal statutes of the colony meted out different punishments depending on the social class of the offender.¹⁸⁷ Though existing from the beginning of the colony, class took on a greater role in many communities than originally intended. Deerfield, Massachusetts, a frontier community, selected a group of relatively young town elders. What distinguished these men was that they were "noticeably better off economically than the other settlers," this despite the

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 557. The fact that more women than men became full members of the Congregational Church during this period, that is, had a conversion experience, testified to that experience in front of the congregation and were received into the church, may hint at some of the underlying motivations behind the jeremiads decrying the spiritual "degeneration" written by preachers in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The idea that women rather than men more frequently represented the visible saints could have threatened the gendered order of Massachusetts society and forced an unwanted and uncomfortable re-evaluation of a woman's place in the social order. More research is needed however, before drawing such a conclusion.

¹⁸⁷ Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, 141, 201. Quote on page 141.

fact that “great differences in wealth still did not exist in this frontier farming community.”¹⁸⁸ Financial prosperity slowly, but surely, replaced longevity as the measure of success and the measure of God’s favor in the colony.

The growth in personal wealth did not occur uniformly across Massachusetts in the aftermath of King Philip’s War, nor did merchants alone benefit from the developments.¹⁸⁹ In rural Massachusetts, the percentage of estates at the very bottom of the socioeconomic ladder that owned household linens, religious books, mirrors, silverware, and pictures rose dramatically between 1675 and 1699 in comparison to the previous thirty-four years. The poorer residents of Massachusetts did not gain substantially over their ancestors, but they also did not lose their position and even managed to accumulate some material comforts. A quantitative analysis of probate inventories in Massachusetts finds “overwhelming evidence of a rising standard of living and of a radically altered life-style among the modestly propertied.”¹⁹⁰

The post-war period witnessed the first sustained boom of the New England merchant class. The financial success of these men increased their power over local authorities and established the merchant class as one of the premier political bodies in the colony. In 1696, merchants convinced the General Court to pass the first legislation

¹⁸⁸ Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney, *Captors and Captives: The 1704 French and Indian Raid on Deerfield* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 24.

¹⁸⁹ Kenneth Lockridge and Alan Kreider note the rise in Dedham and Watertown, Massachusetts of poor relief and the warning out of strangers beginning around 1690. By no means was this economic evolution an easy or uniformly positive development. Kenneth Lockridge and Alan Kreider, “The Evolution of Massachusetts Town Government, 1640 to 1740,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 23 no. 4 (October 1966) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1919125> (accessed 31 August 2010): 562.

¹⁹⁰ Gloria L. Main, “The Standard of Living in Southern New England, 1640-1773,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 45 no. 1 (January, 1988) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1922218> (accessed 15 December 2009): 127-129. Quote on page 127. See also Table VII.

for regulating the Boston public market. They also managed to coordinate as a political block to elect several of their leaders to the General Court and other political leadership roles.¹⁹¹

As economically successful as these men were, they did not operate solely in the transatlantic market. James McWilliams cautions against a one-dimensional analysis of the merchant class that focuses too heavily on their international character. He argues that, “A more sustained examination of merchant account books from the perspective of the internal economy reveals that merchants relied heavily on a local economy that had become an essential precondition for their expansion into foreign markets.”¹⁹²

Even with the success of the merchants, the vast majority of English residents of Massachusetts continued in the traditional careers of their fathers and grandfathers. A large number of these individuals, however, developed financial lives a great deal more complex than their ancestors. Local traders worked within the provincial economy to increase their wealth as farmers and artisans tried to consolidate their power within their communities and translate that into greater revenue. This economic world was fairly simple, but a “more intense version of the one that Puritan pioneers had known from the earliest days of the colony’s creation.”¹⁹³

Financial and demographic prosperity created new challenges for Massachusetts communities to grapple with. A shift apparently occurred in the number and intensity of

¹⁹¹ G.B. Warden, *Boston: 1689-1776* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970), 53-54.

¹⁹² James E. McWilliams, *Building the Bay Colony: Local Economy and Culture in Early Massachusetts* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 135-136.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 103.

intercommunity conflicts during the period following King Philip's War. Meetinghouse renovation and construction highlights some of the larger currents of change, but cannot explain individual sources of conflict, nor can it explain and how those conflicts expressed themselves within the wider community. A petition submitted by several leading citizens of a Massachusetts town to the General Court hints at some of the sources of tension and the level of the rancor that surfaced in the larger, more settled communities.

This petition, written in November of 1680, did not name either community in the dispute, but noted that the government recently ordered the division of the "Churches & Societies in our towne." The petitioners, belonging to the "most antient Church & Societie," hoped that they could keep their lands, now located within the borders of the new community, while still maintaining their fellowship with the older congregation. However, the new town required that "severall persons allways belonging to our Congregation to yeald their assistance to the other, though against their owne minds." Beyond the individual considerations, by forcing members of one congregation to join another due to location, the new community harmed the older community by the "weakening of our hands in times of difficulty."¹⁹⁴

The powerful demographic and economic changes that altered Massachusetts did not always make themselves readily apparent to average residents. Yet these residents, even those operating at a subsistence level, could feel the stress placed on individuals and the once-sacred idea of consensus and harmony within communities. Kenneth

¹⁹⁴ "Petition of 11 November 1680," John Davis Papers, 1627-1846, Ms. N-1097, Massachusetts Historical Society.

Lockridge commented on the Puritan “faith in the healing virtue of love and honesty [that] was the alpha and the omega of their efforts,” during the early years of community and church creation. In the colony’s beginnings, the preoccupation with “mutual love... transcended the usual platitudes,” and formed a key component behind early Puritan communal harmony.¹⁹⁵ By the 1680s, that consensus fell apart in the face of a rapidly developing society.

The vague petition of 1680 highlights the often overlooked problems created by growth and development. In all probability, the issue was peaceably solved. No party to the petition later emerges in the records for crimes against the neighboring town, and no prolonged court battle occurred. Different communities reenacted similar disputes throughout the last decades of the seventeenth century and the first decades of the eighteenth century. In fact, sixty-three percent of the towns formed in Massachusetts during the eighteenth century came from the division of an older township.¹⁹⁶

Even those towns that managed to endure physically intact could not escape the dissolution of communal consensus. For Watertown, Massachusetts, 1690 marked the decisive end of the “unanimous” decisions traditionally reached in town meetings. Now votes occasionally required a division and, in 1713, created enough dissent that voting members had to leave the meetinghouse and then reenter on the side that they favored.¹⁹⁷ Just as the younger generation demanded recognition during religious

¹⁹⁵ Kenneth A. Lockridge, “The History of a Puritan Church, 1637-1736,” *The New England Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (September, 1967) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/363166> (accessed 31 July 2010): 405: 407.

¹⁹⁶ Holifield, “Peace, Conflict, and Ritual in Puritan Congregations”: 566.

¹⁹⁷ Lockridge and Kreider, “The Evolution of Massachusetts Town Government”: 561-562.

services through seating, now they demanded greater political influence in local politics. Before 1680, the average board of selectmen for Watertown had more than 50 years of experience. After 1680, and until 1720, the average board possessed just over 27 years of combined experience. Simultaneously, the number of ad hoc committees formed per decade jumped from 1 in the 1670s to 18.5 from 1680 through 1720.¹⁹⁸

The most disturbing and memorable instance of inter-communal occurred in Salem during the witch hysteria of 1692-1693. Many of the themes that appear in other communities seemed to help drive the Salem hysteria. Franklin Mixon and Len Trevino demonstrated the extent to which economic and political rivalries between Salem town and Salem village may have motivated the accusations and helped select the accused.¹⁹⁹ Why then did Salem explode into such a violent frenzy while other towns resolved their problems in a more peaceable manner?

Mary Beth Norton offers the intriguing premise that King Philip's War and its aftermath played a key role in further agitating the volatile social environment in the Salem area. The war removed almost all the Indian communities from southern New England, but left a new, French-supported, and arguably more dangerous enemy to the north in the form of the Abenaki. Lingering resentment against Puritan settlers in Maine exploded into a violent new conflict along the northern frontier of British North America

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 574. The authors note that the average age of election to the select board actually rose during this period. However, these individuals, as noted by the number of ad hoc committees, commanded significantly less power than their predecessors and suffered high rates of turnover.

¹⁹⁹ Franklin G. Mixon, Jr. and Len J. Trevino, "The Allocation of Death in the Salem Witch Trials: a Public Choice Perspective," in *The International Journal of Social Economics* 30, no. 9 (2003): 934-941.

in 1688.²⁰⁰ One of the accusers, Mercy Lewis, and several of the key accused witches, most notably the minister George Burroughs, had fled from the Maine frontier to Salem at the renewal of hostilities.²⁰¹ Norton notes that the number of witchcraft accusations skyrocketed after establishing the link between witchcraft and the Indian wars on the frontier. While traditional suspects of witchcraft, such as old widows or practitioners of fortune-telling fell victim to the hysteria, Norton writes, “Others did not fit such standard patterns but instead... were suspected of complicity with the French and the Wabanakis [Abenaki].” These accusations “coupled Essex County residents’ concerns about the conflict with the Wabanakis with their ongoing anxiety about bewitchment.”²⁰²

These incidents help expose trends and arguments that, however small in the grand history of a state or colony, can lead to a shifting of individual and communal priorities and concerns. Eventually, these kinds of stressors can alter the customs and norms of the population. King Philip’s War did not create all of the stressors that affected late-seventeenth century Massachusetts, yet the experience of that conflict may have altered the ways in which individual colonists related to one another and may have fueled some forms of internal conflict at the expense of other forms of conflict.

One aspect of shifting personal and communal priorities shows when analyzing the cases of serious crime brought to the Massachusetts Assizes for prosecution. The rate of violent crime remained steady between the 1690s and the first decade of the

²⁰⁰ See chapter three of Mary Beth Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692* (New York: Vintage Books, 2002), 82-112.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 48-49 and 118-120.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 121-122. Quotes from page 122.

eighteenth century, but the rate of property crime brought before the court jumped from 0.24 prosecutions per 1,000 people in the 1690s, to 0.67 prosecutions per 1,000 people in the 1700s. Additionally, the rate of convictions rose from 27.8 percent in the 1690s to 56.2 percent in the 1700s.²⁰³

Anecdotally, the number of property crimes and what the Puritans classified as violent crimes appears to have risen during the decades following King Philip's War. The diary of John Hull, a long-lived individual who kept a journal for most of life, offers no instances of arson or murder from 1650 through around 1675. Beginning in 1675, he lists two servants executed for murdering their master, a murdered Virginian whose killer vanished, and, between 1677 and 1680, multiple attempts to commit arson against homes and farm buildings.²⁰⁴ It does not matter whether the number of property crimes rose, or the efficiency of the authorities in prosecuting these crimes rose. Either way, the shift suggests a new level of antagonism on a local level, perhaps a stronger personal attachment to property, and a new willingness on the part of the colonial authorities to regulate local affairs.

Communal disputes and minor violations of the laws and societal norms by individuals did not typically involve provincial authorities. Only if the social traditions broke down did the colonial governing apparatus become involved. This creates problems for historians attempting to analyze social unrest since many violent or

²⁰³ David H. Flaherty, "Crime and Social Control in Provincial Massachusetts," *The Historical Journal* 24, no. 2 (June, 1981) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2638790> (accessed 25 June 2010): 358-360. See especially tables 1 and 3.

²⁰⁴ John Hull Diary, Ms. N-791, Massachusetts Historical Society. Copied from the original document housed in the American Antiquarian Society in March of 1849.

confrontational incidents did not involve gross violations of the norms for acceptable behavior.

Even those incidents that did violate the norms typically resulted in a non-judicial punishment via the time-honored Puritan practice of censure.²⁰⁵ For example, the Massachusetts State Archives contains only two petitions sent to governor by women seeking bills of divorce due to abuse during the period between 1676 and 1713. In one instance the actual author of the petition is the victim's mother.²⁰⁶ The rates of spousal abuse were, without question, far higher than this. Even assuming that petitioning the governor only existed as a resource of last resort, it remains telling that far more battered women were willing to live with the judgment of their communities or the lower courts rather than pursue their cases. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich notes, "the extent of wife-beating is difficult to measure because wives might fail to press charges even after fleeing to their neighbors for help."²⁰⁷ She attributes this behavior to guilt. Ulrich argues that, "Since childhood, colonial Americans had learned that submissiveness to authority and careful attention to duty were the best assurance of good treatment. If their parents or their master beat them, they had probably deserved it."²⁰⁸

This concept of guilt, a conditioned belief that negative results came due to disobedience, goes beyond individuals and their personal lives and touches at the

²⁰⁵ Holifield, "Peace, Conflict, and Ritual in Puritan Congregations": 556.

²⁰⁶ "The humble Petition of Mary Litchfield," 2043-009-113, & "The Humble Petition of Abigail Emmery wife of John Emmery of Newberrie," 230-009-162, Massachusetts State Archives.

²⁰⁷ Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650-1750* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 188.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

foundational doctrines and organizing principles of Puritan New England communities. Perry Miller claimed that a Puritan society “presupposed that power arose out of society’s federated will, that it should be not merely well intentioned but actively conscious of what Winthrop called ‘our Commission and Community in the worke.’”²⁰⁹

The importance and propriety of submission to religious and secular elites suffered several crucial blows during the crises of the last quarter of the seventeenth century, and damaged the ability of the elites to execute this concept of power. The costly struggle in King Philip’s War, the revocation of the original charter, the installation and subsequent overthrow of the Dominion of New England, the arrival of a new charter, and the outbreak of King William’s War all created questions for the colonists about their relationship to their government and the exercise of power. Simultaneously, the undercurrents of demographic, economic, and cultural change eroded the once cherished harmony of the New England town. Thus, though Massachusetts did not descend into anarchy, or suffer a Black Death-style cataclysm that altered the cultural landscape, the confluence of events and issues unseated long-held assumptions in almost every conceivable social arena.

The willingness of communities, and even individuals, to challenge provincial authority underlines their recognition, even if only subconsciously, of the changes taking place. Mary Beth Norton divides offenses against authority into two categories: neglect and contempt. She defines the first category as the “neglect of an assigned duty” and the

²⁰⁹ Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1953), 209.

second as “contempt of a government official or body, along with a more serious counterpart, treason.”²¹⁰

The death of Plymouth Colony as an independent political entity in 1691 provides examples of both neglect and contempt from communities against the traditional political order. The myriad problems facing the New England colonies continued to grow in the wake of the Glorious Revolution. Yes, Andros and his regime were gone, but the restoration of traditional power did almost nothing to calm the economic and political troubles plaguing the region. The General Court of Plymouth ordered a return to the government established in the 1685 *Book of Laws* and nullified a number of Andros’s directives.²¹¹ However, the elimination of the Dominion of New England did not end the ongoing war with France and its Indian allies. In addition, the end of the Dominion did not guarantee a metropole-sanctified return to the pre-Dominion forms of government.

Plymouth Colony, never a wealthy or powerful entity, found its civil structures overwhelmed by the external problems inherent in prosecuting King William’s War and the internal problems of raising sufficient revenue to maintain operations.²¹² However, unlike the crises precipitated by King Philip’s War or the Dominion of New England, the breakdown of authority in Plymouth in 1691 came chiefly from internal conflicts. Four towns failed to participate in the June, 1691 meeting of the Election Court; three weeks

²¹⁰ Norton, *Founding Mothers & Fathers*, 329.

²¹¹ George D. Langdon, Jr., *Pilgrim Colony: A History of New Plymouth, 1620-1691* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), 225-226.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 234-235.

later another town, Bridgewater, voted against paying any further taxes to the colony until the other towns paid their taxes due from the previous year. These five towns essentially revoked the authority of the General Court as an instrument of colonial governance.²¹³

The governor of Plymouth, Thomas Hinckley, hoped for annexation to Massachusetts, believing that “the willingness of people to support religion and education had reached such an alarmingly low level that only annexation... could save the two institutions from extinction.”²¹⁴ Cotton Mather worried that “some woful Villages in the Skirts of the Colony, beginning to live without the *Means of Grace* among them, are still more Ominous Intimations of the danger [of apostasy].”²¹⁵ Hinckley’s hopes became reality in October of 1691, but even the stronger presence of the Massachusetts colonial government could not prevent some towns from continuing to defy lawful authority. Most notably, the town of Little Compton, one of the four towns who failed to participate in the Plymouth Election Court, continued to offer strong resistance to colonial authority after the annexation.

The situation grew severe enough that in December of 1692, the governor of Massachusetts “was purposed to have gone himself; But lest the Severity and foulness of

²¹³ Ibid., 233-234. Langdon places the impetus for this reaction against the General Court on the costs of sending soldiers to fight in Canada and the failure of the Canadian campaign. He also places blame on the actions of some individuals who sought to use the uncertainty created by the destruction of Dominion to further their own political goals. Langdon’s analysis of prime causes fails, however, to explain why the communities felt justified in taking action against individuals from their colony who executed a form of power understood to be legitimate since the very founding of the colony.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 243.

²¹⁵ Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana: Books I and II*, ed. Kenneth B. Murdock (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1977), 144.

the weather prevent It has been thought advisable to Emit a proclamation of Indemnity.” The governor’s council in Massachusetts sent the proclamation offering indemnity to residents who proved willing to “[submit] themselves and demeaning themselves peaceably and orderly for the future.” So that the residents of Little Compton did not interpret the proclamation as a sign of weakness, the council sent “fourscore” soldiers along with the document.²¹⁶

Religious orthodoxy also suffered significant reverses during this period. The loss of the original charter and King James’s 1687 Declaration of Indulgence, which granted religious freedom within the English Empire, dismantled the legal obstacles to non-Puritan worship in the colony. However, these legal maneuvers could not, on their own, change accepted orthodoxy or orthopraxy in Massachusetts. If anything, one might assume that the incidents created a conservative backlash. Yet, the political, economic, and social dissent within communities only hastened the demise of Puritan orthodoxy. The demise of traditional Puritanism came from within Puritan society itself.

The mere declaration of religious tolerance did not bring a sudden flood of nonconformists or suddenly release the floodgates of pent-up debauchery. The culture changed gradually and, primarily, from internal pushes rather than external pulls. In Salem, from the founding of the town until 1670, only 11 percent of the selectmen were not church members. Between 1670 and 1690, that percentage completely reversed.

²¹⁶ “Upon the Account given from Mr. Gookin of the Opposition that he met with at little Compton,” 378-003-047A, Massachusetts State Archives.

Only 15 percent of the selectmen elected during that two-decade span counted church membership among their attributes.²¹⁷

The formation of the Brattle Street Church in 1699 represents the best-known example of this internal Puritan conflict. The Brattle Street Church marked a visible transition from the traditional Puritanism of the New England Way into a less theologically rigid, more adaptive form of Congregationalism. The congregation was the first among Massachusetts Puritans to declare their organization a church and the physical structure was the first in Massachusetts with a steeple set at one end of the building.²¹⁸

The church published a manifesto on November 17, 1699, which tried to assure more conservative Puritans that, “First of all, We approve and subscribe the *Confessions of Faith* put forth by the Assembly of Divines at *Westminster*.” Additionally, that, “We conform to the ordinary practice of the Churches of Christ in this Country.” However, this congregation allowed the minister to read verses of the Bible to the congregation “at his discretion,” without then conducting a sermon or exegesis on that verse. Additionally, in a major break with Puritan traditions, the Brattle Street Church offered the sacrament of communion to those “of visible Sanctity,” but not just those who had made “a Publick Relation of their Experiences.”²¹⁹

The Brattle Street Church created a fierce, if short-lived, controversy in Boston over the propriety of their worship style. Cotton Mather called the organizers of the

²¹⁷ Holifield, “Peace, Conflict, and Ritual in Puritan Congregations”: 568.

²¹⁸ Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 117-118..

²¹⁹ *A Manifesto of Declaration, Set forth by the Undertakers of the New Church* (Boston, 1699), 1-2.

congregation, “A Company of Head-strong Men... full of malignity to the Holy Wayes of our Churches.” He worried that manifesto “utterly subvert[ed] our Churches, and invite an ill Party thro’ all the Countrey, to throw all into Confusion on the first Opportunities.”²²⁰ In January of 1700, Increase and Cotton Mather spoke at a service in the church to try and unite the church in some sense with the older congregations. Thomas Sewall wrote of the service that “C. Mather pray’d excellently and pathetically for Mr. Colman and his Flock. Twas a close dark day.”²²¹ Though debate still continued, the existential threat to the Brattle Street congregation ended.²²²

The visible tumult created by the Brattle Street Church ended quickly, but the longer-term cultural tumult persisted. The Brattle Street controversy did not begin the process of liberalizing Puritan worship, nor did it begin the dissention within Puritan congregations. It merely provided visible evidence of an evolving culture. The uncoordinated and confused response to the church offered by the Mathers and other traditionalists emphasizes their loss of popular authority and their lack of a coherent strategy to meet such a rapidly changing environment. Cotton Mather and his allies understood that the government of Massachusetts, as it existed in the 1691 charter, would not provide them the legal authority needed to ensure orthodoxy. Yet liberal institutions like the Brattle Street Church could only thrive in the heart of Boston if the population itself began rejecting the tenets of Puritan faith. Traditional religion, and traditional religious leaders, failed to prepare the people for the upheavals of the late-

²²⁰ Cotton Mather, *Diary of Cotton Mather* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1911), I: 325-326.

²²¹ Sewall, *The Diary of Samuel Sewall*, I: 421-422. Quote on page 422.

²²² Murdock, *Magnalia Christi Americana*, 16.

seventeenth century, and so the people looked for different answers, or at least different spins, to old questions.

Focusing on the internal conflicts within Massachusetts society between 1676 and 1713 gives new perspective on the nature and level of change that encompassed the colony in the wake of King Philip's War. Every assumption about the function and structure of community, church, and colonial government suffered severe tests thanks to a number of internal pressures exacerbated by external events. In the past, men like John Winthrop strove to enforce unity and conformity at the expense of everything else. David Hackett Fischer described Puritan concepts of order as "a oneness of the spirit that did not readily admit internal differences."²²³ By the 1680s, that oneness of spirit unraveled in ways that proved impossible to remedy by traditional means. The Puritan of 1690 resembled the Puritan of 1640 in many crucial ways, but simultaneously, the differences began to outweigh the similarities.

²²³ Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, 189.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

On Tuesday, May 5, 1713, Samuel Sewall attended the dedication of the newly built brick courthouse. The building still stands in Boston today, but better known as the Old State House. Sewall used the occasion, and the event of the fire which destroyed the wooden courthouse, to tell his fellow judges,

Seeing the former decay'd Building is consum'd, and a better bult in the room, Let us pray... that God would take away our filthy Garments, and cloath us with Change of Raiment; That our former Sins may be buried in the Ruins and Rubbish of the former House, and not be suffered to follow us into this.²²⁴

Of course, no matter how much Sewall may have wished to avoid the sins and mistakes of the past, new sins and new mistakes followed him and his companions. Yet, in one sense, Sewall proved right. The burning of the old structure in 1711, a structure that regulated and regimented the lives of Massachusetts Puritans, proved almost providential. A new, visibly more ostentatious structure took the place of the old courthouse and heralded the new importance of trade, wealth, and the reach of empire into the city on a hill. Out of the ruins, a changed culture and a changed society – even if superficially all appeared the same – emerged.

²²⁴ Samuel Sewall, *The Diary of Samuel Sewall*, 2: 713.

1713 provides a useful stopping place for this study. The conflict known in Massachusetts as Queen Anne's War came to a formal end at this time. Less than a year later, Queen Anne herself passed away and turned the throne over to the Hanoverian dynasty. Additionally, Massachusetts emerged from the conflict with a royal government that, in the words of Richard Johnson, "became more formal in character and, in every sense, more businesslike. The task of ruling... was fast developing into a full-time, well-rewarded, and highly competitive profession."²²⁵ The merchants and young gentlemen who upset the social order between 1676 and 1713 now found themselves in increasing positions of political power.

This does not mean that culture in Massachusetts remained static for the remainder of the eighteenth century, far from it. However, the great social and cultural tensions and upheavals of the generation-plus that lived in the wake of King Philip's War receded somewhat into a new normal. Just as Richard Johnson and Philip Haffenden have concluded that Massachusetts adjusted politically after 1689 to their new government and new position in the empire by around 1713, so it appears that culturally the crisis ebbed at roughly the same time.²²⁶

This thesis has attempted to demonstrate the extent to which King Philip's War contributed to the causes and consequences of the cultural conflicts that embroiled

²²⁵ Richard R. Johnson, *Adjustment to Empire: The New England Colonies, 1675-1715* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1981), 414.

²²⁶ See Johnson, *Adjustment to Empire*, and Philip S. Haffenden, *New England in the English Nation, 1689-1713* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974). Haffenden concludes by arguing that, "After her humiliating experiences of the 1680s [Massachusetts] had sought, perhaps pretentiously, a more sophisticated relationship with the parent state the characteristic of which was interdependence," (298-290). A debatable proposition, but the concept of a more integrated empire, of which Massachusetts was a part, by 1713 certainly makes sense.

Puritan society in Massachusetts between 1676 and 1713. This thesis has also evaluated other contributing factors, both local and transatlantic, to the social unrest of this period. This thesis has utilized a thematic approach focusing on the nature of the conflict between the Puritans and other competing groups. The arrangement of the chapters focuses on the strength of the impact made by King Philip's War. Thus, chapter two explores how King Philip's War opened the way for scalp bounty legislation and dehumanizing of the neighboring Indians. Chapter three shows how the political and economic turmoil the war engendered led to a physical confrontation between the colony and the metropole during the Boston riot of 1689. Finally, chapter four evaluates the competing pressures within late seventeenth century Puritan society and the role of the war in instigating or aggravating those pressures. The demographic changes caused by the war, and the resulting political turmoil, means that one should not ignore the impact of the conflict. King Philip's War profoundly affected the way individual colonists related to their world and to their neighbors. While economic or religious factors dictated the nature of certain conflicts within Massachusetts society, the influence of the war cast a shadow that helps explain why certain paths were ignored and others taken by the colonists.

This thesis provides glimpses of a widespread, diverse world undergoing a series of often-painful transformations and the role of exceptional violence in directing these transformations. The experience of King Philip's War did not cause a total break from past norms in Massachusetts Puritan culture. However, it clearly influenced the way these colonists approached their future. The society they inhabited after 1676 redefined

what it meant to be a Massachusetts Puritan, a Massachusetts colonist, an Indian in contact with the colonists, and what it meant to be a part of the English Atlantic World. The redefinition of the colonists' culture and worldview bear the lasting marks of King Philip's War, marks that still linger into the eighteenth century and become ingrained into the character of American society.

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