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## **Fugitive Verses & Faded Histories: Recovering The Poetry & Influence Of The British American Loyalists**

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FUGITIVE VERSES & FADED HISTORIES:  
RECOVERING THE POETRY & INFLUENCE OF THE BRITISH AMERICAN  
LOYALISTS

by

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation traces the literary history of the British American Loyalists as they spread through the Atlantic and across the North American continent during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in order to reassess our understanding of the origins of cultural nationalism and the early literary history of the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean. As a result, it implicitly argues for a reconsideration of American literature as developing in a simultaneously hemispheric and transatlantic response to British Empire. I argue that the Loyalists, through their lived experience of the war, exile, and reincorporation back into the body politic, are necessary to the imaginative conditions of U.S. citizenship and the re-imagining of British Colonial subjecthood. While many reconsiderations of American literature have accounted for the British influence of American culture, none of these studies accounts for those Americans who fought for a desire to keep America British or how such people affected the nascent United States. While American literature defines itself by systematically imitating and appropriating British literature, there exists within it stylistic and historical remnants of the Loyalists and their continued place in American culture throughout the period. The residual effect of the Loyalists on American culture, as well as their role in the historical memory of the origins of the United States yet remains a problem ripe for further literary historical investigation, and it is the goal of this study to fill in such lacuna through the close analyses of select literary touchstones of the period.

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## INTRODUCTION

This study takes up the literary and affective history of the British American Loyalists during and immediately following the events of the American War for Independence in order to reconsider our understanding of the residual affect that the Loyalists had on American cultural identity and the influence they had on the origins of a national American literature. In so doing, the argument implicitly recalls a disciplinary emphasis to what Ralph Bauer has styled the literature of British America, so called due to its focus on the British literary tradition of the territory that would become the United States.<sup>1</sup> As such, I am not calling for a paradigm shift in our understanding of how British colonials expressed themselves, so much as I am tracing an extension and clarification of how the Loyalists, as opposed to their revolutionary counterparts, fit into both a colonial as well as a national American literary tradition.<sup>2</sup>

The revolutionary period in America witnessed the disruption of the first British Empire and with it, the disruption of residual models of literary expression that had only recently began to solidify into a transatlantic, Anglo-American aesthetic. Greene and Pole have argued that most colonials “shared a common identity as British peoples living in

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<sup>1</sup> Ralph Bauer, “The Literature of ‘British America’,” *American Literary History*, 21.4 (2009): 818-835.

<sup>2</sup> Given my dual interest in how the Loyalists both expressed themselves poetically and how they influenced the early national period of the United States, I do not engage with post-nationalist arguments of American literary history at any great length. Rather, I show how the loyalist presence is itself an aspect of the formation of a national literary identity. I do not dismiss post-nationalist or imperialist theories of nineteenth-century American literary history, but rather I tell a different, concurrent story.



America” who “took pride in the extent to which their societies were becoming increasingly Anglicized.”<sup>3</sup> Other proponents of the Anglicization thesis, such as historian T. H. Breen, who has shown how the colonies developed economically and culturally to become more like London as they became increasingly complicit in Britain’s growing commercial empire; and, literary scholars, such as William Spengemann, David S. Shields and Leonard Tennenhouse, who each advocates for the importance of understanding British influences on American literary culture, have made clear that American literature in this period was very much a form of British literature.<sup>4</sup>

While much of the scholarship has substantially reconceived how we understand the literature of both the colonial and early national period, only a handful of works have addressed the literature produced during the American Revolution in any detail, and most of these works antedate many of the recent theoretical and methodological turns in early

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<sup>3</sup> Jack P. Greene and J. R. Pole, “Reconstructing British-American Colonial History,” *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins U P, 1984), 14, 15.

<sup>4</sup> The Anglicization thesis begins with John M. Murrin’s “Anglicizing an American Colony: The Transformation of Provincial Massachusetts,” Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1966. T. H. Breen’s early essays and his culminating study, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004), demonstrates how the British American colonies became increasingly dependent on the British trade for their cultural identity, which in turn laid the foundation for the move toward American independence. William Spengemann rejects a proto-nationalist approach to colonial American literature in his essay, “Stories of Foundations, Scenes of Origin,” *American Literary History* 5 (1993): 391-428; however, he later notes that in the nineteenth century there was an “unprecedented concern...with discovering points of relation between the runaway present and the rapidly vanishing past,” which itself accounts for the nineteenth century’s fascination with historical romance and antiquarian histories, two genres in which the loyalist past feature prominently. William Spengemann, *A New World of Words: Redefining Early American Literature* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1994), 8. David S. Shields’ recovers and delineates a variety of colonial American literary cultures and links them back to their British origins in his *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill, NC: U North Carolina P, 1997); and Leonard Tennenhouse argues that a cultural diaspora of British literary culture constitutes a durable sense of being English with a difference for early national American authors in his *The Importance of Feeling English: the British Diaspora, 1750-1850* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2007). For a recent reassessment of the Anglicization thesis, see Edward Larkin, “Nation and Empire in the Early US,” *American Literary History*, 22.3 (2010): 501-526, in which he refutes the tendency of some scholars, especially Breen, for imbuing the Anglicization thesis with an “investment in a mythology of national origins,” and instead works to show how democracy and empire were integral to the early nation’s understanding of itself, 503.

American studies.<sup>5</sup> Though new emphases of political and cultural expression began to emerge from within the ranks of American rebellion, there yet remained a sustained reliance on the cultural and literary tropes of the colonial period.<sup>6</sup> The American Continentals' continued reliance on British cultural and aesthetic tropes, such as patriotism, constitutionalism, and liberty as well as literary forms of poetic satire, songs, and balladry make it difficult to delineate between the literary productions of the rebels and the Loyalists.<sup>7</sup> While in Britain there was heated debate over the American crisis, there was never a need for the parties on either side to defend their Britishness or clarify their cultural identity. Not so in America. As the colonies declared independence and transitioned into the United States there was an increasing need for an anxiety over who

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<sup>5</sup> The major works being: Moses Coit Tyler, *Literary History of the American Revolution, 1763-1783* (2 vols, 1897); Kenneth Silverman, *A Cultural History of the American Revolution: Painting, Music, Literature, and the Theater in the Colonies and the United States from the Treaty of Paris to the Inauguration of George Washington, 1763-1789* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1976); Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution against Patriarchal Authority 1750-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982); Emory Elliott, *Revolutionary Writers: Literature and Authority in the New Republic, 1725-1810* (New York: Oxford UP, 1986); Philip Gould, *Writing the Rebellion: Loyalists and the Literature of Politics in British America* (New York: Oxford UP, 2013). The majority of these works focus almost solely on the revolutionary writers and reinforce a proto-nationalist reading of the literature; the exceptions being Silverman, whose study is epic in scope, gives considerable attention to Loyalists in addition to the revolutionaries, and strives toward an ambivalent appraisal of the cultural artifacts it describes; and Gould, whose study performs a comparativist analysis of revolutionary and loyalist writings within the context of a shared British American literary culture.

<sup>6</sup> Brendan McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill, NC: U North Carolina P, 2006). McConville illustrates that not only were the colonists increasingly British throughout the nineteenth-century, but increasingly monarchist. His analysis of holidays and rituals compound the economic and literary analyses of Breen, Shields, and Tennenhouse, by showing that the colonists structured their very lives around references and performances of filial devotion to royalty, and that the difficulty of understanding and contextualizing the early national period is due to the fact that the Americans never fully broke their attachment to the monarchy, a point that is developed by Elisa Tamarkin within the context of antebellum American's continued fascination with British culture. Elisa Tamarkin, *Anglophilia: Deference, Devotion, and Antebellum America* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2008).

<sup>7</sup> Throughout the conflict, both the rebels and the Loyalists claimed to be on the side of British constitutionalism, and throughout their literature, the Loyalists continually invoke the idea that liberty could only be assured through the fidelity of their patriot king. There was clearly a war of words between the two groups in which each party laid claim to the terminology of British identity. The Continentals ultimately secured their ownership of the tropes of liberty and patriotism; however, the Loyalists never gave up their feelings of fidelity to the monarch, as will be shown by the readings of loyalist literature in the chapters that follow.

controlled and had access to the language and genres of cultural adhesion. In America, the Continentals<sup>8</sup> strove to gain authority over the processes of cultural centralization that they were in the midst of disrupting as they broke away from the British Empire. This process led to a redefinition of terms, such as ‘patriot,’ and a realignment of genres, such as the mock epic, ballads and songs, and the elegy, and laid the ground work for a new literary nationalism that was beginning to take shape through the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. However, when we take into consideration the Loyalists, we see a similar struggle to maintain control of the literary and ideological currencies of British American identity, coupled with a tenacious hold on residual forms that in time were converted by an affective response to abuse and loss, which in turn separated the Loyalists from both their British past and their American future. While they would go on to have an influence over both, they would do so in a unique and separate fashion than that proposed by most literary histories.

Traditionally, most studies of the Loyalists have viewed them as footnotes and asides to the dominant narrative of American independence. Popular history has often styled the Loyalists as misguided yet sympathetic losers at best or as sycophantic tyranny defending villains at worst. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, interest in the Loyalists was predominantly the purview of an analytic history that sought to come to

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<sup>8</sup> Following the style of the Continental Congress and Army, I have elected to refer to the Americans who strove for independence as “Continentalists.” I do so because the effect was to break much of North America away from the British Empire and because the term “patriot” was one of contention, with both the Continentals and the British American Loyalists laying claim to it. I’ve also striven to avoid using the term “Tory,” except when it was the preferred term of specific authors, such as Crèvecoeur. While often mobilized as a derisive term, it is difficult to accurately map the ideas and ideals of the Tory party onto the American political landscape. While it would be an interesting task to unpack the rhetorical valiances of labeling one’s opponents as “Tory” throughout the American eighteenth-century and into the early republican period, the effects of such a project are outside of the bounds of this study, which is more concerned with how the loyalists expressed themselves.

an accurate knowledge of their numbers, movements, and ideology.<sup>9</sup> While some, such as William Allen Benton attempted to parse and redeem some of the Loyalists within the paradigm of progressive, Whig history, others, such as Moses Coit Tyler and Claude Halstead van Tyne, took a literary and antiquarian approach to the problem of the Loyalists.<sup>10</sup>

Extended studies of the Loyalists have often been the purview of historians, and the second half of the twentieth century witnessed a move toward reassessing the Loyalists and their motives. The works of Wallace Brown, William H. Nelson, Mary Beth Norton, and Robert M. Calhoun all strive to tell the story of the American Revolution from the Loyalists' perspective and to fully contextualize the complexity of the Loyalists' demographics and political ideology.<sup>11</sup> Most recent studies of the period fundamentally agree on the legitimacy of the Anglicization thesis and the importance of colonial Americans' identification with British culture, and most recent studies of the Loyalists, such as those of Gould, Larkin, and Jasanoff, have all situated loyalist literature within the historical context of British culture.<sup>12</sup> Although significant on their own as an object of study, and increasingly of interest to studies of British Empire and

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<sup>9</sup> See especially the work of Wilber Henry Siebert, who produced a number of pamphlets that performed detailed regional studies of the Loyalists, especially with regard to their numbers and migrations.

<sup>10</sup> William Allen Benton, *Whig-loyalism: an Aspect of Political Ideology in the American Revolutionary Era* (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1969); Moses Coit Tyler, *Literary History of the American Revolution, 1763-1783* (2 vols, 1897); Claude Halstead van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1902).

<sup>11</sup> Wallace Brown, *The Good Americans: The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1969); William H. Nelson, *The American Tory* (Boston: Northeastern UP, [1961] 1992); Mary Beth Norton, *The British Americans: The Loyalist Exiles in England 1774-1789* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972); Robert M. Calhoun, et al., *Tory Insurgency: The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays* (Columbia, SC: U South Carolina P, [1989] 2010).

<sup>12</sup> Philip Gould, *Writing the Rebellion: Loyalist and the Literature of Politics in British America* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2013); Edward Larkin, "Loyalism," *The Oxford Handbook of the American Revolution*, ed. Edward G. Gray and Jane Kamensky (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012), 291-310; Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011).

transatlantic, Anglo-American culture, the Loyalists yet remain isolated from American literary and historical narratives. It is my goal to reconsider this position, and call for an insistence on the importance of the Loyalists in an American origin narrative and their influence on the literary culture of the early national period.

While many reconsiderations of American literature have accounted for the British influence of American culture – David Shields’ assessment of belle lettres and polite literature in the colonial period, Leonard Tennenhouse’s thesis about the American “Importance of Feeling English,” and Elisa Tamarkin’s recovery of a culture of “Anglophilia” in the antebellum period as being driven by a sustained interest in, fascination with, and even love of British culture by Americans – none of these studies accounts for those Americans who fought for a desire to keep America British or how such people affected the nascent United States. While American literature defines itself by systematically imitating and appropriating British literature, there exists within it stylistic and historical remnants of the Loyalists and their continued place in American culture throughout the period. The residual effect of the Loyalists on American culture, as well as their role in the historical memory of the origins of the United States yet remains a problem ripe for further literary historical investigation, and it is the goal of this study to fill in such lacuna through the close analyses of select literary touchstones of the period.

***Dr. Franklin, Dr. Faustus: Benjamin Franklin as Object of Ridicule in the Loyalist Satires of Dr. Jonathan Odell and Rev. Jacob Bailey***

A brief example of how loyalist literary communities extend beyond the historically ossified political lines of Whig and Tory can be found in the overlap between

the epistolary networks of those who would become Loyalists and Benjamin Franklin. Franklin is a figure through which we may follow the extension of loyalist literary discourse. I have two basic points: first, is that by following loyalist poetic attacks on Franklin we can see the extent to which loyalist literary discourse could reach; and second, that refiguring Franklin as Faustus is a specific response to a deeply felt sense of betrayal that many Loyalists held toward Franklin.

While commonly regarded as a cosmopolitan man of the Enlightenment and Republic of Letters, Benjamin Franklin was also an object of suspicion, scorn, and ridicule. As tensions between Great Britain and her North American colonies drew nearer to revolution, Franklin increasingly became a favored object of attack with loyalist satirists, many of whom were his sometimes acquaintances. What is interesting about these satires is that much of their metaphorical attack derives not only from a chastising of Franklin the diplomat, but of Franklin the scientist. I argue that loyalist satirists, such as Dr. Jonathan Odell and Rev. Jacob Bailey, tactically re-figure Franklin as a Faustian character - someone who has made a deal with the devil and has defied nature, nature's god, and his rightful sovereign King George III. The Loyalists figure Franklin as Faustus so that they may undermine his character and his place within the revolutionary vanguard as being spurious and heretical. In these satires, Franklin's work in Enlightenment science and its practical applications, such as the stove and the electrical rod, open up the possibility for other discourses, such as humor and ridicule, to enter the revolutionary debate. Furthermore, Franklin's elaborate colonial and imperial information network is refigured as defying time and space, allowing Franklin to propagate his heretical doctrine and mislead his wayward flock toward unnatural alliances with perfidious France.

Finally, in addition to attacking Franklin's character on intellectual and theological issues rather than the immediate issues of the revolution, these texts illustrate the nature of political satire during the Revolution and highlight the vitriolic sense of betrayal that many Loyalists felt toward Franklin.

While loyalism is by no means a strictly Anglican phenomenon, many of the earliest and most vitriolic satirical attacks on Franklin came from American Anglican ministers. The prophetic assaults that many of America's most prominent Anglican ministers made on Franklin were a result of the transatlantic and British imperial networks that Franklin himself worked to develop as a colonial agent in London. Many of Franklin's early satirists first met him while studying for the ministry in England. Franklin befriended, encouraged, and maintained relationships with authors such as Jonathan Odell, Jacob Bailey, and Thomas Coombe,<sup>13</sup> each of whom later goes on to break with their former friend and patron over the question of American independence. At least part of their shock with regard to Franklin's switch from a British imperial perspective to an American centric politics stems from both their cultural affinity to England, which they understand Franklin to be betraying, and to their theological commitments to the Anglican Church. In response to Franklin's political transformation, these poets recast Franklin's science as the religious heterodox of Pelagianism. This is evident in not only their religious politics, but also in their appropriation of Augustinian aesthetics. Franklin's science becomes the foundation upon which he and others may unjustly feel justification in overthrowing the king, nature, and nature's god.

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<sup>13</sup> For more on Thomas Coombe's poetry and flight to England, see Chapter One below.

Pelagianism, the belief that humanity is innately innocent, that virtue may be obtained through the individual's will, and the human existence is developmental and perfectible, was a cornerstone of enlightenment thought. Pelagianism's revival in the early eighteenth century by the third earl of Shaftesbury and the Cambridge Platonists, made its way through a variety of the period's major thinkers, such as Francis Hutcheson, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson.<sup>14</sup> The theological and political implications of Pelagianism drew a stark line between radical and conservative thinkers of the time, and while Franklin was often lauded for his scientific innovations, once he becomes politically suspect many conservative and loyalist writers are quick to accuse him of heresy and equate his technological advancements with too great a concern with human and earthly matters, thereby redefining the origins of his transatlantic fame as the origins of his sins of vanity and pride. Like many of the other Loyalists who attack Franklin out of a sense of betrayal, William Allen,<sup>15</sup> one of Franklin's early political and intellectual allies, became one of Franklin's earliest critics. Having fled the colonies in 1774, Allen publishes a pamphlet that is a pastiche of prose and poetry, of constitutional polemic and personal narrative. In *The American Crisis*, Allen is an early prophet of Franklin's eventual break with empire, and he works to dismiss Franklin's experiments in electricity as failing to consider matters beyond those of human needs and human vanity:

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<sup>14</sup> For an analysis of Pelagianism in the eighteenth century and its influence on the thought and poetry of Timothy Dwight, see Colin Wells, *The Devil and Doctor Dwight: Satire and Theology in the Early American Republic* (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 2002), 8-9, 36-37.

<sup>15</sup> William Allen was Chief Justice of Pennsylvania and worked with Benjamin Franklin to establish the College of Philadelphia.



As to his electrical discoveries, they were but the fiery exertions of a nerveless philosophy, too feeble to raise itself above trifles, vainly busied with the rattles and play-things of science, and whose ambition soared no higher than the mole-hills, while true philosophy of elevated aspect, finds the whole world a field too scanty for its expatiation, when its wings are plumed to soar in the regions of immortality.<sup>16</sup>

Allen's equation of Franklin's experiments with electricity with the sin of being too concerned with the terrestrial world, and his criticism that Franklin and his philosophy were deficient insofar as they failed to consider the divine and the immortality of the soul, casts Franklin as guilty of Pelagianism and sets the standard for much of the loyalist poetic criticism of Franklin by later writers.

In a letter from Warwick, Rhode Island, dated June 13, 1781, Jane Mecom writes to her brother, Benjamin Franklin:

Parson Odell has been Exersising His Poetical Talent on yr Invention of the chamber Fireplace it came to me throw the hands of Crasey Harry Badcock & I have half a mind to send it to you as I think it would make you Laugh but if you should be coming home it will serve to Divert you here.<sup>17</sup>

The Poem Jane mentions is Odell's "Inscription on a curious Chamber-Stove, in the Form of an Urn, contriv'd in such a Manner as to make the Flame descend instead of rising

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<sup>16</sup> William Allen, *The American Crisis*..., cited in the *Critical Review* 37 (1774): 467. Allen's writings as well as his criticism of Franklin were heavily criticized by the British press. See the *Critical Review* and the *Morning Chronicle* for 1774.

<sup>17</sup> Jane Mecom to Benjamin Franklin, 13 June 1781, *The Letters of Benjamin Franklin and Jane Mecom*, ed. Carl van Doren (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1950), 210.

from the Fire. – Invented by the celebrated B. F.---n.” First written in 1776, the poem had been circulating in manuscript and print on both sides of the Atlantic throughout the war and pops up in anthologies well into the nineteenth-century.<sup>18</sup> The Poem’s circulation shows not only its popularity amongst the Loyalists and Franklin’s other political enemies; its republication by generations of anthologists and historians who return to the poem secure the poem’s enduring historical value. Furthermore, knowing that Jane wrote to Benjamin about the poem is evidence of how widely read Loyalist poetry was throughout the war.

Jane’s opinion is surprising in that she assumes the poem would amuse Franklin, which tells us something about her perception of her brother’s sense of humor. Jane does not appear aghast at the satirical attack on her beloved brother; she offers no hint of ire or defensiveness; instead, she expresses a sense of humor, a willingness to appreciate true wit when she sees it. Additionally, Jane’s letter raises a few questions: what did Franklin think of the poem; how did Franklin respond to his detractors; and, what was his relationship with his enemies? What we find with respect to loyalist poetic attacks on Franklin is that many of his detractors in America during the Revolution were not simply Loyalists who disagreed with Franklin’s politics – they were former associates who had benefited greatly from their relationships with Franklin. I here focus on Odell and Bailey because of their prolific literary output and their fixation on Franklin, and I argue that the production and circulation of their work reveals a sense of betrayal that

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<sup>18</sup> Milcah Martha Moore, Jonathan Boucher, William Smith, and Winthrop Sargent all reproduce the poem, and the poem circulated widely in the periodical literature of London. Its presence in an anthology of Smith’s writings is especially interesting as the piece is appended to Smith’s Eulogium of Franklin given to the Philosophical Society of America.

many Loyalists felt toward Franklin as well as the extent to which loyalist literature could and did circulate during and after the war.

As a rule, Franklin refused to engage directly with his detractors and often left his public defense to family, friends, and associates. Ralph Frasca has pointed out that, “Franklin’s solution to the problem of protecting his reputation without getting his hands dirty in the process was to have others defend his character from attacks,” and that “[i]ndeed, Franklin expected this support based on moral imperative.”<sup>19</sup> Jane’s letters to Benjamin during the Revolution offer many examples of friends coming to Franklin’s defense while he was in France. It is this history of interpersonal reciprocity that opens Franklin up to some of his harshest critics during the Revolution. On a more personal level, it is Franklin’s expectations of filial loyalty and reciprocity for past friendship and favors that set him up for the shock of losing many of those with whom he shared long and deep-felt affections, such as his son William and his old political associate, Joseph Galloway.

Philip Gould has recently argued “that the most prominent features of Loyalist poetics—its separation of virtue from politics, its uncertain view of the elasticity of language, its parochial view of an immediate audience.”<sup>20</sup> While I agree with Gould’s argument about the style of loyalist poetry, I think that reading the loyalists as writing in a hermetically sealed community only to each other is insufficient and leaves our understanding of the Loyalists incomplete, and I argue that Franklin offers us an example of how loyalist poetry extended beyond such a narrow sphere. Many of the people who

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<sup>19</sup> Ralph Frasca, *Benjamin Franklin’s Printing Network: Disseminating Virtue in Early America* (Columbia: U Missouri P, 2006), 156, 157.

<sup>20</sup> Gould, *Writing the Rebellion*, 5.

would come to despise Franklin were once his friends, and it is Franklin's betrayal of many British American Loyalists that gives context to their satires. Furthermore, we must also understand that many loyalist networks overlapped with Franklin's. Realizing this allows us to see to the Loyalists were not only writing to themselves, and that the loyalist and patriot communities were not as isolated from each other as is sometimes thought.

To do so, it helps to remember that Franklin's own path toward patriotism and commitment to American independence was by no means obvious to his friends and family in America during the lead up to independence. "Franklin's transition to the status of patriot was long and difficult."<sup>21</sup> Frasca points out that "Franklin was a late and somewhat reluctant participant in the American Revolution," and it is this very perception of belatedness to revolt that figures Franklin as an object for loyalist satirical attack.<sup>22</sup> Gordon Wood's insight that "We should not take [Franklin's] Americanness for granted. Nor should we take his participation in the Revolution for granted" is highlighted by the fact that "Franklin had invested much more of himself in the British Empire than the other patriot leaders."<sup>23</sup> In turning his back on the British Empire, the greatest of British Americans had also turned his back on the Loyalists, many of whom had benefited from Franklin's support and encouragement.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Frasca, 166.

<sup>22</sup> Frasca, 167.

<sup>23</sup> Gordon S. Wood, *The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004), 10, 157.

<sup>24</sup> While it's difficult to point to an overarching narrative of the origins of loyalism toward Britain in the American crisis, we might invert Mary Beth Norton's insight that loyalism was the default identity prior to revolution by pointing to moments of personal crisis in which individuals are irrecoverably forced to take sides for or against various flashpoints such as the Stamp Act or Independence or, for that matter, interpersonal crisis such as a falling out with a loved one or friend. For Benjamin and William Franklin, loyalism comes into being when William chooses his king over his father.

Franklin knew Odell. The young Princeton graduate, soon to be doctor and Anglican minister was a close friend of Benjamin's son William.<sup>25</sup> In fact, it was at William's behest that Franklin aided Odell in London (1763/4), and Odell is referenced often in the letters between father and son throughout the 1760s. William and Jonathan were close, they deeply cared for one another, and they were shocked and aghast by Benjamin's decision to side with the Americans to the point of open revolt. Odell's poem uses Franklin's famous invention as the vehicle for what he understood to be the tenor of the American Revolution, unchecked ambition and a disruption of social hierarchies. Philip Gould argues that the poem "is cleverly structured upon the trope of the famous Franklin stove: it symbolically transforms that invention from the sign of enlightenment enquiry to one of seditious politics, [...] Franklin now represents the tragic fall of British America. Like his once prosperous country, he is as good as damned."<sup>26</sup>

Lighting rod:

With a Spark that he caught from the Skies,  
He display'd an unparallel'd Wonder,  
And we saw with Delight & Surprize  
That his Rod cou'd defend us from Thunder  
...  
But to covet political Fame  
Was in him a degrading Ambition,  
A Spark from Lucifer came,

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<sup>25</sup> Willard Sterne Randall, *A Little Revenge: Benjamin Franklin and His Son* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1984), 193.

<sup>26</sup> Gould, 4.

And kindled the Blaze of Sedition!

The poem imagines Franklin, with his fame, his science, and his extended discourse networks, as the prime mover of the Revolution whose motivations are in league with the devil himself. Here ambition is a degradation of a once great man, and what was once a marvel of modern science, the lightning rod, is now the genesis of the wildfire spreading throughout the colonies. Given the poem's extensive printing history, it is reasonable to believe that Franklin knew Odell's poem, though perhaps he did not at first know the poem to be by Odell's hand, and had probably read it, even previous to his having received Jane's letter. The poem's circulation is an example of loyalist literary networks extending throughout old colonial epistolary, manuscript, print, and newspaper networks, regardless of emergent political and revolutionary networks. In other words, while the revolution promoted new alliances and channels of social and political discourse, both for Continentals and Loyalists, the political fervor of the Revolution did not dissolve the old colonial networks. Following the lines of communications, and connecting the dots as it were, show us that the monikers of patriot and loyalist do not always constitute a separation of societal bonds and that many were the Americans who read the literature of the other side.

Granted, the Loyalists were not alone in attacking Franklin with his supernatural-natural philosophy. John Adams famously complained to Benjamin Rush: "The History of our Revolution will be one continued Lye from one end to the other. The essence of the whole will be that Dr. Franklin's electrical Rod, smote the Earth and out sprung General Washington. That Franklin electrified him with his rod—and thence

forward these two conducted all the Policy, Negotiations, Legislatures and War.”<sup>27</sup>

However, for all of Adam’s crabbiness, his own bitter mythology of the Revolution is driven by Promethean rather than Faustian overtones. So, why do the Loyalists identify Franklin with Faustus? Because it works so damn well. The Faust legend was well known throughout Europe and British America through pamphlets, chapbooks, pantomimes, and plays. Earlier satires were published in the colonies, and Franklin himself published editorials on Faust in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* and sold copies of the History of Doctor Faustus. However, and more specifically, Franklin was an American Faust almost to the letter. Consider the role of an historical Faustus as an early disseminator of printing in Europe and the conflation with Johan Georg Faust (the alchemist) with Johan Fust (the printer) in colloquial traditions. In its earliest stages printing and the dissemination of print was witchcraft. As Sarah Wall-Randell has argued, “the narrative of the doomed necromancer is unmistakably informed by print culture.”<sup>28</sup> Franklin’s lifelong commitment to his identity as a printer combined with his wondrous feats of scientific discovery make Faust and his pact with the devil the perfect vehicle for the tenor of loyalist ire.<sup>29</sup>

While Franklin himself was author of many political satires in his lifetime, his mode was often broad, criticizing institutions, parodying political parties and belittling their policies rather than attacking individuals. In this, we might consider Franklin as falling out of step from his contemporaries. Bruce Granger points out that “the great

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<sup>27</sup> Adams to Rush, 4 April 1790.

<sup>28</sup> Sarah Wall-Randell, “Doctor Faustus and the Printer’s Devil,” *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 48.2 (2008): 262.

<sup>29</sup> J. A. Leo Lemay, *The Life of Benjamin Franklin, Volume 2: Printer and Publisher, 1730-1747* (Philadelphia: U Pennsylvania P, 2006) 392; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, 15 August 1734.

majority of American Hudibrastic poems attack personalities.”<sup>30</sup> Like Franklin earlier uses of the Faust mythos in political satire attack parties, and ideas. However, with the outbreak of hostilities in America and the eventual taking of sides amongst its most prominent members, individuals became fair game for poetic attack, their celebrity allowing them to metonymically represent all that their enemies held abhorrent or anathema. Odell and Bailey’s close identification of Franklin with Faustus gives voice to deeply felt personal animosities and an acute sense of betrayal, of forsakenness. Each of Faustus’ faults become Franklin’s, aligned with both Franklin’s achievements and his characteristics, in these poems.

William Franklin, Joseph Galloway, and Jonathan Odell were by no means the only colonials to have a fallout with Benjamin Franklin over the turn of American affairs. Jacob Bailey, like Odell, benefited from Franklin’s hospitality and encouragement while in London. In fact, it was a packet of letters from Jane Mecom that first brought Bailey to Franklin’s door, an event that Bailey recorded with excitement in his travel journal of his time in London.<sup>31</sup> Not only is this an example of how the Loyalists and Franklin overlap, but it is also an example of inter-colonial overlap as well.

In his manuscript epic, “America,” Bailey uses Faustus as a thinly veiled caricature of Franklin. While Franklin’s scientific endeavors enable Bailey to align Franklin with the Faust mythos, the character of Faustus also performs a specific work of imagined alterity. The generic conventions of satire combine Faustus’ supernatural powers with not only demonic genius but also base animal tendencies. As such, Franklin

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<sup>30</sup> Bruce Granger, *Political Satire in the American Revolution, 1763-1783* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1960), 57.

<sup>31</sup> James S. Leamon, *The Reverend Jacob Bailey, Maine Loyalist: For God, King, Country, and for Self* (Boston: U Massachusetts P, 2012), 2, 7.



is reconfigured as a monstrosity, something both greater and less than human, yet thoroughly inhuman. The message is clear, by forsaking his king, Franklin-Faustus has sold his soul, by selling his soul he has forsaken his humanity.

He by a kite contriv'd to rise  
And range at large about the skies  
To mince old moons up into stars  
To stick among the Ladies hairs  
Did by his cunning once prevail  
To seize a comet by the tail  
...  
He did by art the devil throstle  
And him shut up in conjuring bottle  
...  
He could like Proteus change his shape  
From man to hog, from hog to ape  
And or, in earnest or in jest  
Assume an Angle or the beast  
... (VII, 457-522 passim)

By identifying Franklin with Faustus, Bailey is able to distance Franklin from membership in British imperial subjectivity, by being everything Franklin is essentially nothing. Bailey's poetic conflation of Franklin with Faustus attaches the infamy of Franklin's treason to the attributes that mark him as the most famous of Americans.

After striping Franklin of his humanity, Bailey is then free to dismiss the importance of his scientific endeavors.

But Faustus sprite of all example  
Ventures on sacred things to trample  
Amidst the terrors of a storm  
Went on his juggles to perform  
Presum'd before admiring crouds  
To pomel and to thresh the clouds  
Till with a crack of pop-gun thunder  
He europe fill'd with gaping wonder  
...  
And by a piece of iron could even  
Defend you from the wrath of heaven  
Great kings astonish'd at his fame  
Paid honors to his mighty name  
His friendship with attention courted  
And to his conjuring shop resorted  
Where they by electricity  
Beheld him shoot and kill a flea  
... (VII, 639-58 passim).

Here, poetic Bathos is a wish hopeful of representing Franklin's political and scientific impotence. Ultimately, all of Franklin's clever ingenuity is only powerful enough to kill a flea. By aligning Franklin with Faustus, Bailey discredits the patriot cause as heretical.

By characterizing Faustus as self-serving, he imbues Franklin with ambition, of the same pride that Odell accuses him of, the commonplace accusation that much loyalist writing applies to patriot zeal, the very sin that casts Lucifer and his followers out of paradise, out of the Empire if you will.

The intense ire that Odell and Bailey express in their bitter satires on Franklin are a register of their otherwise ineffable feelings of betrayal. It is easy to focus either on Franklin's correspondence with his sometimes friends in England and his political allies of the American Revolution at the expense of those who early benefited from Franklin's friendship only to lose everything in the wake of the Revolution. While the most obvious and famous example of betrayal by Dr. Franklin is his son William, many were the Loyalists who once called Franklin friend only to feel an immense sense of anger and betrayal by this greatest of colonial Americans. By turning his back on the British Empire, Franklin had also turned his back on the Loyalists, their families, their welfare, their honor. All of the things that Franklin and his revolutionary allocates claimed to be fighting for had been lost to them, and they resented it. They resented him. That Jane Mecom and Benjamin Franklin knew of their poetry, that it circulated in manuscript through patriot as well as loyalist communication networks, is evidence that the Loyalists had the patriots in mind as an audience, that Odell and Bailey had Franklin in mind in particular is a reasonable extrapolation. If they could not have security in their life, liberty, and property under the English crown, they might at the very least have their revenge by committing character assassination through their poetry.

***“very staunch against the Tories”: Franklin’s filial loss & extended friendship***

In spite of Franklin's having been a prolific writer, publisher, and schemer, and in spite of his having left a vast archive of personal papers for scholars to sort through, little of Franklin's personal opinions on the Loyalists or their personal attacks on him exist. Ever the diplomat, in addition to letting others defend him on matters of personality and character, he also appears to have kept to himself most feelings of hurt and betrayal he may have had in response to the Loyalists' reaction to his ultimate support for the American cause. What little we can infer must be snatched from those who knew and observed him. While there is no evidence of what Franklin felt toward Odell or Bailey once sides had been chosen, there were others closer to Franklin's heart whose loyalty certainly shook him to his core and whose support of Britain brought out uncharacteristic ire in Franklin's demeanor.

Not long after his return to America in 1775, Franklin met with his son William at the home of their mutual friend, Joseph Galloway, where the father and mentor was shocked to learn of both men's loyalty to the crown. While Benjamin was at first eager to see both William and Joseph, and while there appears to have been several interviews throughout the summer of 1775, Franklin's relationships with his son and his friend appear to have steadily deteriorated. The only evidence that we have of the early meetings comes from Galloway's recollections, told well after the fact to former royal governor of Massachusetts, Thomas Hutchinson, in London, January 1779. Hutchinson reports that "Galloway and the two Franklyns [sic] met together, and the glass having gone about freely, the Doctor, at a late hour, opened himself, and declared in favour of measures for attaining to Independence," and that after Galloway's refusal to follow Franklin's counsel, Franklin became "united in the closest connection with Adams, [and]

broke off from Galloway.”<sup>32</sup> After the fallout with Galloway, Franklin briefly strove to persuade his son; however, William’s position as the royal governor of New Jersey, combined with his own youthful experiences as a member of a growing transatlantic British empire, secured his loyalties to the crown.

Twice that summer Benjamin visited William in Perth Amboy, but all appears to have been vanity, hurt pride, and betrayal. It is reported that the tempers of both father and son ran hot, that they quarreled violently, their angry voices reaching such a pitch as to have disturbed the governor’s neighbors. Benjamin Franklin, a man remembered by history for his diplomacy, preoccupation with reputation, his wit and genial temperament, was so incensed by his son’s loyalty to Britain that their final conversation that summer ended in a shouting match so loud that it became its own local tradition in the antiquarian histories of the colony.<sup>33</sup>

Franklin remained cold toward his son ever after. While he wrote to Elizabeth Franklin, William’s wife, after his son had been arrested by the committee on Safety and removed to a Connecticut jail, there survives no communication between father and son until the summer of 1784, when William, living as a refugee in London tried and failed to renew his relationship with his father. It is likely that William’s loyalty to Britain, more so than any other act of loyalty by any other American, contributed to Franklin’s anger at the Loyalists during the Paris Peace negotiations. Adams and Jay, the other two members of the American delegation, were surprised by Franklin’s adamant position on not

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<sup>32</sup> Thomas Hutchinson, *The Diary and Letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson, Esq.,...* ed. Peter Orlando Hutchinson (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1886), II:237-238.

<sup>33</sup> William A. Whitehead, “A Biographical Sketch of William Franklin,” *New Jersey Historical Society Proceedings*, 1<sup>st</sup> series, 3 (1848): 137-159; Sheila L. Skemp, *William Franklin: Son of a Patriot, Servant of a King* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990), 181; Gordon S. Wood, *The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 162.

allowing for terms on the Loyalists, a point frequently broached by British negotiators. Near the end of his diary entry for 26 November 1782, John Adams commented, “the rest of the day was spent in endless Discussions about the Tories. Dr. F[ranklin] is very staunch against the Tories, more decided a great deal on this point than Mr. Jay or myself [sic].”<sup>34</sup> The topic was clearly a heated one. Matthew Ridley, an Englishman who had emigrated to Baltimore in 1770 and supported American independence, dined with Adams and Mr. Strachey, a representative from England during the peace negotiations, where the conversation turned to the “Affair of the Refugees.” Ridley recorded his concern that if the problem of the Loyalists was not resolved in some fashion, then “the negotiations will probably break off.”<sup>35</sup> Where others on both sides of the conflict sought compromise on the matter of loyalist compensation, Franklin was adamant, going so far as to argue that if the Loyalists were to be compensated for their losses, then so too should the Americans who suffered at the hands of the British and their Indian allies. While Carla Mulford has recently attempted to defend Benjamin Franklin for the harsh treatment of shutting his son out of his life, most historians and biographers take the breach between the two to signal Benjamin’s deep sense of betrayal, one that was shared by his son and the many other Loyalists who had once called Franklin friend during the colonial period.<sup>36</sup>

Yet, Franklin was not a devil toward all Loyalists. While Franklin’s harsh break of ties with his son, former friends, and colleagues occasioned both Franklin’s animosity

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<sup>34</sup> John Adams, *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, ed. L. H. Butterfield (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 1961), 3:77; Claude-Anne Lopez and Eugenia W. Herbert, *The Private Franklin: The Man and His Family* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1975), 247.

<sup>35</sup> Matthew Ridley, *Diary*, Massachusetts Historical Society; Lopez and Herbert, 247.

<sup>36</sup> Carla J. Mulford, *Benjamin Franklin and the Ends of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2015), 281, 283.

toward the loyalist cause and the Loyalists' ill treatment of Franklin in their satires, still there were some Loyalists with whom Franklin remained on cordial, even friendly, terms. Dr. Mather Byles and his family were all staunch Loyalists. Dr. Byles' son, Mather Byles, Jr., and his family fled to Canada in April 1775, where they became integral in developing British North American culture in the Maritimes. Dr. Byles' grandson, Mather Brown, left America for London in 1780, where he embarked on the beginning of what would become a successful career as a portrait painter. Before Brown's departure, Byles gave his grandson letters of introduction to Copley, who had painted Byles in 1774, and to Franklin. After some time in London, Brown left for Paris, where he met with Franklin. Franklin treated Brown with great kindness and supplied Brown with a letter to Benjamin West, another American painter living in London. Franklin, showed Brown further kindness by introducing the young, aspiring artist at Versailles as "the grandson to one of his most particular friends in America."<sup>37</sup>

The goodwill between Franklin and Byles lasted. Late in both men's lives, Mather Byles dictated to one of his daughters a kind letter to Franklin, in which he thanked Franklin for his continued kindness and protection of the Byles family. The letter culminates in an expression of deep affection and admiration, and Byles say that he "congratulate[s] My Country upon her having produced a Franklin, and can only add, I wish to meet you where compleat [sic] Felicity and we shall be forever united."<sup>38</sup> These are powerful and telling words coming from a man who remained a staunch Loyalist

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<sup>37</sup> Arthur Wentworth Hamilton Eaton, *The famous Mather Byles, the noted Boston Tory preacher, poet, and wit, 1707-1788* (Boston : W.A. Butterfield, 1914), 214; Dorinda Evans, *Mather Brown: Early American Artist in England* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan, 1982), 15.

<sup>38</sup> Byles to Franklin, 14 May 1787,

<http://franklinpapers.org/franklin/framedVolumes.jsp?vol=45&page=013>

throughout his life. Not only does Byles maintain his affection for Franklin while the latter is in the midst of the Constitutional Convention, but Byles' pride in "My Country...having produced a Franklin" illustrates that Byles continued to think of himself as an American in spite of Independence from Britain.<sup>39</sup> In Franklin's response, he meditates on the comforts of having a dutiful daughter in one's old age and bitterly laments the loss of William to the British cause; writing, "I too have a Daughter, who lives with me, and is the Comfort of my declining Years, while my Son, estrang'd from me by the Part he took in the late War, keeps aloof, residing in England, whose Cause he *espous'd*."<sup>40</sup> That Franklin should lament his son's absence to Byles, whose own son had to flee Boston for Halifax in flight from the rebels whom Franklin came to support is further complicated by Byles and his daughters' own obstinate loyalty to the English crown despite their remaining in Boston, yet it also speaks to the fluidness of affection that Americans were capable of showing each other, patriot or loyalist, after the war. The apparent contradiction in Franklin's behavior toward his son, William, versus that toward his friend, Mather Byles, illustrates the core origin of American literary and historical cultures' ambivalence toward the Loyalists. They will continue to be friend, foe, and foil throughout the literature of the nineteenth century.

### ***Justification & Chapter Breakdown***

Recently, there has been a call for a reassessment of the Loyalists and their role in the historical context of the American Revolution. Philip Gould, Ed Larkin, and Maya Jasanoff have argued that the Loyalists offer an alternative account of the print culture,

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<sup>39</sup> For a discussion of the use of the term "County" in loyalist literature see: Edward Larkin, "The Cosmopolitan Revolution: Loyalism and the Fiction of an American Nation," *Novel* (2006/2007): 52-76.

<sup>40</sup> Franklin to Byles, 1 June 1788, <http://franklinpapers.org/franklin/framedVolumes.jsp?vol=45&page=538>



literary history, and imperial implications of the American Revolution. Gould, Larkin, and Jasanoff's scholarship directly intervenes in the critical narrative of the Revolution whereby the patriot movement becomes a synecdoche for American culture. By offering an alternative history of writing and printing that seriously accounts for the British American Loyalists, they open up the discourse of American history in a manner that scrutinizes the very core notions of what defines America as a stable national unity. What happens, in other words, to the dominant critical models in Revolutionary history—those that govern the way we conceptualize the meanings of print, the nature of authorship, the rhetorical forms of expression, and the very notion of public culture—when we reinsert the loyalist presence into Revolutionary American Studies? The recent implementation of transatlantic methods and contexts on scholarship of the late eighteenth century interrogates the "Americanness" of American political writing. By accounting for loyalist writing in a recovery history of the Revolution, Gould and Larkin hope to interrogate current models of the public sphere and of the historical and theoretical models informing public and private life in late eighteenth-century British America.<sup>41</sup>

One of the goals of this dissertation is to perform an intervention in the resurgence of scholarly interest in revolutionary and early national culture. Recent challenges to American exceptionalism and to the concept of manifest destiny demand that we look anew at early American literature and culture. Scholars such as Edward Larkin, Trish Loughran, Philip Gould, and Elisa Tamarkin have returned critical conversations to the nation's formative period. My project explores what it meant to identify with loyalty in

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<sup>41</sup> Philip Gould, *Writing the Rebellion: Loyalists and the Literature of Politics in British America* (New York: Oxford UP, 2013); Edward Larkin, "The Cosmopolitan Revolution: Loyalism and the Fiction of an American Nation," *Novel* (2006/2007): 52-76; Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011).

the Americas during the age of revolutions as well as how British writers reified the category of loyalty into a modular cultural and literary trope. I argue that this reification of loyalty allows for the appropriation of the Loyalists for a variety of rhetorical and political ends. While other scholars of history and literature have focused primarily on the Loyalists within the context of the political debates that lead to American revolutionary fervor or on the diasporic experience of the Loyalists in the wake of war and exile, this study proposes to account for the place of the Loyalists in the wake of independence and in the move toward national literary history. The continued presence of and concern over the Loyalists' role in the American Revolution registers a subtle yet consistent counter history to the development of American letters broadly conceived. The primary objective of my dissertation is to produce a topical study of loyalist cultural and literary practices in the late eighteenth century as setting a precedent for an aesthetics of irrecoverable loss coupled with a healing of remembrance. Doing so will better show how the adaptation of British American literary Practices influence the growth and maturation of Anglophonic culture during the divisive age of revolutions.

This study investigates the social and textual affiliations among the British American Loyalists during the years of conflict in North America. I argue that the mode of association specific to the Loyalists is that of an emergence of a recursive public sphere constituted by a shared imaginary of the literary, performative, affective, and legal conditions of possibility for their own association. Grounding my work in detailed exegeses of Loyalists, English, and American texts, their circulation, their performance, and their reception histories, I argue that Loyalists imagine their social existence and relations as much through textual and performative practices (such as pamphleteering,

circulation of poetry in manuscript and print, and public associations such as clubs, petitions, and public acts of song) as through discursive arguments of constitutional rights of Englishmen, political or territorial identities, and economic relations. I ask, what is the emotional legitimacy of loyalty within the British Empire as the empire is falling apart and how does this legitimacy constitute a unique social imaginary? In other words, what does it mean to feel loyal? What can such meaning tell us about the collapse of the first British Empire and the creation of the United States; and, why might such knowledge be important for literary studies?

I propose that the problem of loyalism is a deeper conflict of affection and association within the context of transatlantic Englishness. As such, on some levels, this dissertation is not specifically about contrasting personal alliances with America or Britain; rather, it proposes that Loyalism is a problem of Empire that surfaces between the earlier age and crises of Absolutism under the House of Stuart and the later rise of the Nation-State in the early nineteenth-century. While Maya Jasanoff's work on Loyalist diaspora and the reformation of empire has offered a much broader geographic context to how we may study the Loyalists, in her argument "loyalism" often equates to an eventual refugee status. By focusing on exile and diaspora, she limits her case study to one particular branch of possible studies of Loyalism in the British Atlantic. By approaching Loyalism as a community of feeling in the British Atlantic, I hope to shed light on the varieties of Loyalism irrespective of whether or not a given individual flees the North American continent.

The recent turn toward globalism as a method of study has greatly changed the nature of how literary history operates. No longer tied to narratives of national origin,

populations such as the Loyalists become all the more important in our understanding of the development of literary history in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Edward Larkin's recent work on empire offers a more complex political history to the role Loyalists played. Larkin has argued that the "displacement of the national framework in favor of a global narrative of empire and circumatlantic cultural and economic flows has rendered the loyalists a relevant, perhaps even indispensable, population to understand."<sup>42</sup> What I am proposing is that at first loyalism is an affective position that uniquely redefines the tenor of how individuals engage with a polity. I argue for a study of loyalist modes of affect and performance that will help us to better understand late colonial and early national modes of literary belonging.

The stakes of this project are historical, definitional, and archival. They are historical insofar as I propose to expand the historical arc that is usually addressed when the topic of the British American Loyalists is engaged by modern scholars. Typically attached to the crises of the lead-up, progress, and fall-out of the American Revolution, British American loyalism is often contextualized in mere relationship and response to the American patriots or rebels. By proposing to expand the historical arc to several years after the conflict between Britain and her colonies, I propose to show how the problem of loyalism is a more complicated aspect of British American cultural and literary identity; one with a variety of origins, attachments, affects, and legacies.

The stakes are definitional insofar as I propose to reconsider how it is that we as literary historians define loyalism. Nelson, Jasanoff, and Larkin are all quick to point out that "loyalism" is not a class, religious, or racial position. Indeed, as William Nelson

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<sup>42</sup> Larkin, "Loyalism," 295.

argues, many of the Loyalists “belonged to cultural, ethnic, religious, geographical, or class minorities and felt threatened by a potential American national consensus.”<sup>43</sup> While demographically correct, Nelson’s argument is limited insofar as it still relies on a nationalist framework of American origins and as such neglects the fact that the patriots were as diverse and heterogeneous as the Loyalists. With this in mind, I propose that a survey and analysis of loyalist textual and performative engagement in the Anglo-American public sphere provides a method for better understanding of how the Loyalists operate and come to define themselves as a distinct literary and political community. By engaging with a variety of overlooked texts and genres, I hope to re-figure how the Loyalists came to define themselves in contrast to both American and British cultural practices. I believe that I may do so by considering the Loyalists as a discreet affective community within the British Atlantic.

As has been alluded to, the stakes are also archival insofar as I plan on engaging with little studied archives such as British poetic responses to the Revolution and a variety of Loyalist writings such as manuscript and newspaper poetry, diaries, letters, and later fictions that reflect back on the Loyalists’ experience of the war. By re-contextualizing the Loyalists through these archives, I argue we gain a better understanding of loyalism as a transatlantic affective community. By reading loyalty as an affective construct, these texts register a public of loyalism that predates our critical construct of who and what the Loyalists are as an object of Early American Studies. What does loyalism as an affect construct allow us to see that is new? For starters, it allows us to reconsider what it means to feel English in the Americas. As a structure of feeling, as a

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<sup>43</sup> Nelson, *The American Tory*, vi.

register of difference, loyalism opens up new networks of literary and cultural association in the British Atlantic that the traditional narratives of American exceptionalism or of latent Englishness have been blind, thus complicating what seems to be the dominant literary historical narrative of Anglo-America.

Finally, I will address the question of those Loyalists who either returned or remained in the newly formed United States. In the current surge of scholarly interest on Loyalism, I believe that it is important and worthwhile to consider the writings of those British Americans who styled themselves as Loyalist during the Revolution but who, for various reasons, chose to either weather out the storm or return to America after the peace of 1783. Such an inquiry opens up new archives, introduces neglected texts, and further expands our understanding of both who the Loyalists were and how they understood their position as well as what influence their remainder had on the newly formed United States.<sup>44</sup>

Through a study of the intersection of such texts, I explore how the Loyalists come to define themselves within a sphere of debate in which they were increasingly losing purchase. I speculate that such remediation of sympathetic response to the crises and the mapping of the circulation of loyalist textual and performative production will allow us to draw clearer inferences of how the Loyalists operated, who their allies were, and how they began to productively and actively imagine their role in empire. For example, I argue loyalist manuscript and newspaper poetry in America allows them a space in which to voice both their love for their king and also their criticisms of British Administration in America, and that they show a development of how the Loyalists

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<sup>44</sup> As Edward Larkin has pointed out, “the vast majority of the loyalists remained in the United States after the war.” Larkin, “Loyalism,” 307 n.20.

understood their position in America and differentiated themselves from the patriots; and that the residual culture of loyalism has an influence in the newly formed United States.

The first part of the dissertation addresses the revolutionary context of loyalism as an emergent political category. Chapter One, takes a transatlantic approach by analyzing poetic representations of Loyalists in the British press. It explores how the figure of the American loyalist refugee became a reified trope that London poets savaged and satirized as a means to voice their own grievances against the royal administration. Poetic satires, in the *Morning* and *London Chronicles* for instance, reveal how appropriations of the Loyalists' transatlantic displacement and disenfranchised voice were often manipulated as material for debate and as evidence of the Loyalists' emergence as an increasingly disputed object of poetic critique. Various represented as objects of sympathy, ridicule, and charity, the Loyalists played an important role in British poetic discourse over the imperial rights of Britons and the appropriate course of British action toward American revolt.

Chapters Two and Three make a case for the importance of loyalist manuscript literature and argue that the spread and overlap of loyalist communication networks throughout the colonies and across the Atlantic lay a foundation for understanding early national literary anxieties of regionalism and federalism. Chapter Two contextualizes loyalist poetic responses to the Battle of Brooklyn as generating a sense of distressed community via the sharing of sympathies amidst the sufferings of war, and Chapter Three analyses the writings of Robert Proud to give a detailed and intimate look at how one Loyalist attempted to rationalize the chaos through a self-consolatory poetics. By focusing on the epic and elegiac traditions of loyalist literary representations of suffering

and loss, these chapters examine how the loyalists relied on their Americanness to define themselves against both the Continentals and the British. Ultimately, this tradition of loyalist loss has a greater influence on later literatures in the United States in terms of providing a cultural history of moral sentiment and shared suffering than did appropriations of English Augustin satire, a tradition that would fade with the closing of the century.

Chapter Four argues for a consideration of loyalist forms of public performance as being a means by which the Loyalists actively identified and defined themselves against both the American Continentals and the British officers. The chapter follows the several modes of loyalist protest, such as songs, toasts, and pasquinades. Focusing primarily on the work of Joseph Stansbury, I follow how Stansbury and his fellow Loyalists underwent a transition from jubilation to disaffection as the war dragged on. Of especial interest are the means by which the Loyalists began to ridicule and resist the British administration of American affairs while simultaneously maintaining their cultural sense of loyalty and their affection for King George III.

Chapter Five reads J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur's manuscript writings in English, especially his closet drama, *Landscapes*, as an example of loyalist use of aesthetics as a register for affect. I argue that what Crèvecoeur establishes in *Landscapes* is an attention to how such cultural practices may be abused in the name of avarice for political gain, and furthermore, how the same cultural practices must be disrupted in order to give voice to those individuals who have experienced the loss of said cultural practices. The Loyalist are denied their American identity and are forced to undermine the cultural practice of both British and American aesthetics and ideology.



Chapter Six take a broader hemispheric and temporal approach as it considers the loyalist diaspora throughout the Atlantic world after the Paris peace of 1783. While displaced, the various groups of Loyalists brought many of their “American” habits and identities with them to their new homes. Joseph Brant and his Mohawk community settle in Upper Canada and become a necessary stop for many itinerate travelers in the region. The thousands of African American slaves and free blacks who are displaced by the war fundamentally change the cultures of Maritime Canada, Sierra Leone, and British Caribbean islands. The Wells family and their printing ventures provide not only a testament to the tenacity of transatlantic ties but allow several examples of unprecedented printing ventures in Florida and the Bahamas, and expand print culture in Jamaica, and generate South Carolina’s first published novelist. The dissertation then concludes with a brief Postscript that considers the continued nineteenth-century interest in the Loyalists and their influences on genres such as antiquarian and topographical history and extrapolates the loyalist experience by considering the Loyalists’ influence on emergent fictions in both Britain and the United States.

Implicit in my chapter breakdown is an emphasis on specific literary genres as executed by specific groups and individuals. In so doing, I am following Edward Gray’s provocation that “perhaps it is that loyalism is best understood from a microhistorical perspective.”<sup>45</sup> With this in mind, this dissertation traces the literary history of the British American Loyalists as they spread through the Atlantic and across the North American continent during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in order to reassess our understanding of the origins of cultural nationalism and the early literary history of the

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<sup>45</sup> Edward G. Gray, “Liberty’s Losers,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 70.1 (2013): 118.

United States, Canada, and the Caribbean by attending to specific case studies. As a result, it implicitly argues for a reconsideration of American literature as developing in a simultaneously hemispheric and transatlantic response to British Empire. I argue that the loyalists, through their lived experience of the war, exile, and reincorporation back into the body politic, are necessary to the imaginative conditions of U.S. citizenship and the re-imagining of British Colonial subject hood.

## CHAPTER ONE

### “AND THOUSAND OTHER ILLS THAT LOYALTY IS HEIR TO”: THE BRITISH AMERICAN LOYALISTS IN THE BRITISH POEMS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

It is a cliché to state that history is written by the winners. Instead, I would like to ask, how are we to read the literary history of a double loss? Specifically, how are we to read British poetry about the American Loyalists? Both the British and the Loyalists lost the war in which the Americans won their independence, so why is it that British poems of the period tend to treat the American Loyalists so poorly? For one thing, loyalism in Britain, with its longer historical arc and its immediate political concerns at home, meant something different from loyalism in America. Emergent concerns surrounding imperial administration, constitutional reform, and British national identity were the lenses through which the British understood the American crisis, leaving the American Loyalists somewhat adrift from the greater political conversations. As a result, when the British wrote about the Loyalists, they did so only insofar as they would succeed in furthering their own ends in the metropolis or on the peripheries of the nation, with little regard for the Loyalists' own experience of the war and exile. While recent criticism has focused on verse written by the Loyalists, here, I turn toward representations of American Loyalists by British poets in order to analyze the fraught relationship that Britons held toward Americans, even loyal ones, and to explore how the American crisis was often used by British authors to debate issues of political and cultural identity within the British Isles.

While some American Loyalists did attempt to engage with the debates in the British press, the novelty of their position lay in the relative scarcity and the general dismissal of their position by most British commentators. The few who do succeed accomplish their goals, not by calling attention to their position as exiled Americans, but rather by using previously established connections in Britain to adopt a place in the pro-administration, anti-American ranks of the British public sphere. Additionally, those British authors who do at times sympathize with the Loyalists do so belatedly and out of pity. Late in the war and after the peace of Paris, some Britons recognize that the Loyalists are the group who have suffered the most; yet, with the majority of the British press still suspicious of the Loyalists, such belated overtures of sympathy offer little comfort and are still structured by a logic that views the Loyalists as culturally other and therefore with little access to public debate or opinion. More often than not, the British American Loyalists were a trope that British poets used to express their fluctuating and contradictory opinions about the war and the administration.

Martin Kallich estimates that there are some 5,600 poems concerning the colonies and British imperial affairs published in Great Britain between 1755 and 1800, yet scholars of early American literature have paid only partial attention to this vast archive.<sup>46</sup> I suggest that by specifically addressing the poetic representations of American Loyalists by British poets we come to see how British poets styled the Americans as irremediably foreign despite their loyalty. Some of this poetry appeared in pamphlets as

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<sup>46</sup> Martin Kallich. *British Poetry and the American Revolution: A Bibliographical Survey of Books and Pamphlets, Journals and Magazines, Newspapers, and Prints 1755-1800* (Troy, NY: Whitson, 1988). For analyses of early eighteenth century literature of British Empire, see David Shield's *Oracles of Empire* (Chicago: U Chicago P, 1990) and Suvir Kaul's *Poems of Nation, Anthems of Empire* (Charlottesville, VA: U Virginia P, 2000).

part of larger criticisms and histories of the American war; however, many of these poems appeared in the London newspapers. While it is difficult to make clear and definitive arguments about British opinions of the war in America,<sup>47</sup> a close examination of how poetry in particular registered issues of transatlantic Britishness and its relationship to ideas about freedom and liberty suggest not only a lively debate about the American crisis in Britain but also an appropriation and at times misreading of the transatlantic nature over the rights of Britons throughout the empire.<sup>48</sup> Indeed, much of the literature reveals an increased distancing and distrust of Americans and a growing refusal to extend such rights to them, even as authors rhetorically leveraged the cause of America to promote reform in Britain. More specifically, it is clear that many poetic depictions of the American Loyalists take on an ambivalent, even at times a confused and hostile, position on how to treat and represent the King's American friends, especially those who sought refuge in the empire's metropolis.

In this chapter, I isolate certain editorial and poetic representations of British American Loyalists in order to demonstrate how the growing confusion over who constituted a British subject and to what extent they had access to certain rights produced a poetic ambivalence, a term I use to encompass the fraught position that many Britons held toward America during this time of imperial crisis. I begin by discussing how

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<sup>47</sup> The scholarly literature on British opinions and responses to the American Revolution are numerous and vary widely in their conclusions. For a good summary of twentieth century scholarship, see James E. Bradley, "The British Public and the American Revolution: Ideology, Interest and Opinion". For a succinct study of fraught British opinions of the war see Linda Colley, *Britons Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (Yale UP, 1992), 132-145.

<sup>48</sup> Bernard Bailyn has pointed to the ambiguous definitions of "natural rights" and "liberty" in the Anglo-American eighteenth century. For the purposes of my argument, I am not concerned with what these rights and liberties were, but rather with the myths surrounding them. For an extended study of natural rights and eighteenth century discourses on liberty as related to the American Revolution, see Bailyn's *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, especially 76-79. For analysis of American loyalist responses to natural rights and liberty discourse in the style of American politics leading up to the Revolution, see Philip Gould's *Writing the Rebellion*, especially 37-38.

conservative poets appropriated loyalty as a term that was increasingly associated with Britons in the realm as well as how some Loyalists leveraged prior associations in order to elide their Americanness and appropriate a conservative British identity. I then analyze how the Loyalists first responded to their exile and how Britons reacted to their presence in the metropolis. As loyalty narrowed in its geographic and political scope, the British press redefined the Americans as a population incapable of loyalty due to their lack of a British identity. In the broader context of print, British authors who debated the American crisis voiced both sympathy and derision toward the Loyalists, and Loyalists themselves entered the print debate; however, with regard to poetry, the poems analyzed below are representative of a general ambivalence used to represent loyal Americans to a British audience. The study of these poems illustrates the perception of Americans and the American crisis from a British perspective, as well as the overlap between conservative and radical poetic representations of Loyalists reveals that the growing sense of division between America and Britain was greater than the political divisions within Britain. Various representations as objects of sympathy, ridicule, and charity, the Loyalists played an important role in British poetic discourse over the imperial rights of Britons and the appropriate course of British action toward American revolt.

Contrary to American representations of loyalism, which styled Loyalists as possessing an active affinity for and commitment to British traditions, British poets style the Americans as passive dependents who benefit from British rule. In November 1779, the *Town and Country Magazine* published a brief poem, “The Fair American,” about a beautiful young American woman who had fled the troubles in America for the security of life in Britain. The amorous tone of the poem divorces the topic of the war from any

moral viewpoint and articulates an ambivalent mood that deliberately neglects the political situation that was the impetus of the young woman's flight from America to Britain. Given the *Town and Country Magazine's* reputation for writing on sexual scandals and tête-à-têtes, the poem is both mild and vague by comparison but also presumptive.<sup>49</sup> While not scandalous, by reducing a young loyal American to a fair prize for some British youth, the poem transforms her experience of diaspora into a connubial opportunity that signifies the synecdochal coding of the American Loyalists as feminine, and therefore, within the context of the poem, as romantic objects for whom agency and independence are denied. The influx of Loyalists into the metropolis, rather than drawing attention to the crisis in America or generating concern for the plight of displaced Loyalists, becomes an opportunity for romance and coquettish flirtation. The focus on the fair American's charms may be sincere, revealing a deviation from the magazine's usual theme of erotic intrigue and disclosure for the amusement of the middle and upper classes; however, the function of the poem, with its disregard for the fair American's status as a refugee, represents an attitude toward the loyalist position that is void of any real sympathy. With her "rare accomplishment of youth...[e]ndu'd with virtue, wisdom, prudence, [and] truth," she becomes a fixture that the speaker hopes "long may...grace our isle." The Loyalist offers an occasion for the British to consider themselves to look to their own welfare and speculate on potential gains for the empire.

Literally, "The Fair American" sexualizes the loyalist position, making the Loyalist an object of British affection. Allegorically, the poem imagines a means of

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<sup>49</sup> E. W. Pitcher, "A Reconsideration of Magazine Serials in *The Town and Country Magazine*," *Library* s6-5.1 (1983): 44-52; Sarah M. S. Pearsall, *American Families: Lives and Letters in the Later Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), 48.

wooing America back into the arms of Britain. It maintains the metaphor of a transatlantic union in which America offers up her charms in exchange for the security that only “Albion” can offer. America will give Britain what is virtuous and fair in her, and in return, Britain will quell rebellion, stave off France, and offer America peace and prosperity, if only she would consent. Written in elegiac quatrains, the poem’s form casts a plaintive shadow over its content, which frets about Britain’s suffering over distant troubles that threaten to separate Britain from America’s beauty and bounty. The modal verbs of “can” and “may” that control the poem’s falling action situate its theme in a conditional mood in which Britain is the land of calm and hope and echo the poem’s opening euphemistic juxtaposition of America’s “unhappy” and “sad shores” with both the violence of “British blood” shed and promise of “Albion’s...calm retreat.”

While the poem’s emphasis on British concerns and its reliance on the gendered metaphor of the fair maiden are each means through which it maintains an imperial power dynamic over its subject, there is a third symbolic register that works to maintain British superiority throughout the poem. The title’s emphasis of the young woman as an “American” categorizes the loyalist refugee as intrinsically other in her Americanness and therefore incapable of agency. While an accomplished and potentially worthy match for a would-be British suitor, the “fair American” is cast as an object of sexual conquest whose loyalty is taken for granted by her geographic displacement, a movement that renders her all the more pliable to reconciliation with Britain. Herein lies the rub, for while I have been referring to the subject of the poem as a Loyalist, at no point does the speaker of the poem refer to her as loyal or British. She remains the “fair American,” perpetually something other than British, yet with the hope of matrimony, she is latent



with the potential of becoming anglicized, and so the martial conflict of the distant American war is here metaphorically assuaged through the inevitable romance to come. In this way, the poem assumes a shared understanding that the Americans who are sympathetic to the British to the point of fleeing America constitute the “fair American” that the poem relies on to bolster the theme of romantic suitability. Such poetic devices conflate constitutional authority and imperial interests in the figure of the would-be suitor, who the fair American is implicitly expected to desire. It is this very ambivalence toward the Loyalist’s experience of the war that presupposes the poem’s position towards Americans as non-political subjects that allows the poem’s allegory to operate.

Largely ephemeral in nature, and as such often subject to change in response to both the events of the war as well as shifts in public opinion, poems, such as “The Fair American,” that took up the American Loyalists as their subject appeared frequently in the pages of British newspapers and found space in political pamphlets throughout the years of the conflict. These poems responded to and leveraged specific events related to the American conflict in order to illustrate and debate a variety of concerns of British politics and social stability as well as highlight what Dror Wahrman has referred to as Britons’ “lack of clarity about who the Americans were.”<sup>50</sup> As more and more American exiles took up residence in London, more poets sought to contextualize their presence within the public perception of the war in America and the daily concerns of Britons at home. Some accomplished this by writing brief satirical quips and epigrams for the news press, others by publishing longer pamphlets that attempted to theorize the problems of

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<sup>50</sup> Dror Wahrman, “The English Problem of Identity in the American Revolution,” *The American Historical Review*, 106.4 (2001): 1238.

empire, while some canny Loyalist exiles attempted to hide their Americanness within the dominant discourses then circulating in Britain.

*Conservative British poets and a nationalist perspective on loyalty*

There has been a recent resurgence in scholarship concerning the Loyalists and the various roles they played in the American Revolution and throughout the British Empire before, during, and after the war. Scholars such as Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan have pointed out a “need to conceptualize loyalism as an affective sensibility as well as a specific political program.”<sup>51</sup> Others, such as Keith Mason have argued that the “loyalist presence, along with the issues it generated, added to the crisis’s transatlantic cross-currents” and “complicated the British response to the struggle,” while Maya Jasanoff has traced how the loyalist diaspora influenced the reshaping of the British empire in the wake of American losses.<sup>52</sup> Historians have written about the divisions in Britain amongst those who supported and those who opposed the American position within the leading intellectuals of the time; however, only recently have scholars such as James Bradley and Tory Bickham analyzed in detail the capriciousness of these opinions in petitions and newspapers and amongst the lower and middle classes. Still, more work needs to be done in order to understand how the British responded to the Loyalists and what they understood the Loyalists’ position to be.

While loyalist writings in America offer one medium through which to re-contextualize how the Loyalists worked to identify themselves as a distinct public,<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan, “Loyalism and the British Atlantic, 1660-1840,” *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era*, eds. Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan (Toronto: U Toronto P, 2012), 9.

<sup>52</sup> Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty’s Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011), 41.

<sup>53</sup> Most recently, Philip Gould’s *Writing the Rebellion* offers a comparative analysis of American belles lettres and political essays from both patriot and loyalist perspectives.

British poetic responses to the American war offer an alternative set of circumstances to understand the political stakes of the war. H. T. Dickinson reminds us “the War of American Independence produced a wave of patriotic fervour as well as a surge of radicalism.”<sup>54</sup> While many conservative prose retorts to the radical call for reform consisted of arguments founded in the positive benefits granted by the constitution as it then stood, there was also broad conservative poetic response to radical ideology and British support of America that drew its inspiration from the ill effects of revolution and civil strife. In this literature we find a distinctive Tory or loyal British poetic response to the American war.<sup>55</sup> Such poetry takes on minor and mock epic forms. Often echoing earlier panegyrics to British Empire as exemplified by commerce, whose spread of prosperity affords liberty to be extended throughout the empire, these conservative poets lamented the war not on behalf of the plight of the Americans, but on behalf of the war’s ill effects of diminished trade and the erosion of empire. Loyalty, in these poems, is a hallmark of the true Briton who has been betrayed by the Americans and their radical supporters. The American Loyalists, however, are little more than objects of sympathy and casualties of an unjust war whose instigators are not the king and parliament, but so many undeserving upstarts on both sides of the Atlantic.

James Bradley reminds us “the American Revolution was a war of political pamphlets” in Britain as well as in America.<sup>56</sup> Likewise, Thomas R. Adams has discovered that during the crisis “no other single issue occupied so large a place in the

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<sup>54</sup> H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth -Century Britain* (NY: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1977), 270.

<sup>55</sup>See Shields, 226.

<sup>56</sup> James Bradley, *Popular Politics and the American Revolution in England* (Macon, GA: Mercer UP, 1986), 93.

output of the British press.”<sup>57</sup> However, unlike the American Loyalists, who relied on the generic conventions of satire and burlesque to create a metric of common taste through which to define themselves, the British conservative poets were secure in their political identity and its relation to empire. Writing from within the kingdom, the British poets did not need to justify their Britishness, which allowed them to pursue a mixed style that was more historical and ambivalent than their American counterparts. Not having to defend their allegiance to King or parliament, conservative poets situated loyalty as a supplement that colored their political agency or as a deficiency that identified the wayward Americans and their radical supporters. Additionally, conservative poets continued the tradition of patriotism from earlier in the century, yet it is a patriotism whose terms have changed within the context of intra-imperial conflict. Linda Colley has argued that the American war was a civil war not only because it divided the empire, but also because it brought out divisions in both Britain and America.<sup>58</sup> In Britain, such divisions were linked to notions of British national identity, debates about whether to reform the constitution, and the greater management of empire from the perspective of the metropolis. All of these were debates from which the American Loyalists themselves were barred, yet they were debates of the utmost importance to the Britons within the realm and part and parcel with how subjects throughout the realm defined themselves against the administration, the metropolis, and each other.

Apprehension about British identities on the peripheries of the nation were just as contentious as they were on the peripheries of empire, and country poets and printers

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<sup>57</sup> Thomas K. Adams, *The British Pamphlet Press and the American Controversy, 1764-1783* (Worcester, MA: The American Antiquarian Society, 1979), 38.

<sup>58</sup> Colley, *Britons*, 135.

weighed in on the debates. John Cole's *The American War, an Ode* is an example of conservative poetry that identified the Americans as being devoid of loyalty. References to Americans' "wonted Loyalty" run throughout the poem, making absence of loyalty a register of rebellion rather than attending to those who remained loyal out of principle. Cole's negative association figures loyalty as a requisite characteristic for peripheral stability, the absence of which must be guarded against by a strong government and a strict adherence to British identity. The Americans, so far removed from Britain and so unfamiliar in their habits and motivations, are not only suspect but also culpable and dangerous. Thomas R. Adams points out that Cole's pamphlet has the appearance of provincial printing, showing that the American crisis was a concern throughout the realm and a topic used to define registers of loyalty throughout the home front. Where Cole's poetic representation of loyalty defines the American war as a British concern and figures the Americans as an alien threat whose devotions lie elsewhere. The treat of the Americans' alien intentions raises the question of how and in what manner Americans might take part in the British debates over American affairs. While many Loyalists attempted to voice their opinions, the extent to which they were successful often relied on their ability to mask their Americanness and those who could not successfully do so were often dismissed and criticized for taking up the pen and going into print.

Figuring the Americans as suspect foreigners who threaten British identity is no easy matter for it raises the problem of who counts as an American versus who is a Briton in America. Anxieties concerning an inability to control imperial peripheries persist throughout the literature and mirror concerns regarding England's own regional tensions, where frontiers are defined as chaotic spaces in which displaced Britons stand in danger

of great suffering, loss, and deprivation. One interesting example of the vexed relationship between identifying as British or American on the empire's periphery comes in the figure of Thomas Coombe. Coombe was an exiled American Anglican clergyman from Philadelphia who had close ties with Benjamin Franklin and was a great admirer of Oliver Goldsmith. Coombe's *The Peasant of Auburn; or, the Emigrant* is a sentimental poem in the genre of anti-emigration poetry that takes its inspiration from Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*. Coombe relied on connections he had previously made while studying in London to help entrench himself into the conservative press, in which he took the opportunity to re-print and recontextualize his earlier poem, *Edwin, or, the Emigrant: An Ecologue*,<sup>59</sup> thereby giving himself the means to shun his Americanness and situate himself within the conservative British print public sphere.

Like much of the British poetry that addresses the American war, *The Peasant of Auburn* describes an expansive historical arc that spans from the Seven Years' War; and, in the act of republication in London, Coombe extends its argument into the contemporary crisis of the Revolution. Set in the Ohio valley, the poem imagines what life must be like for those British subjects who venture to the very edge of empire and re-visions the American interior as the land of "human wolfs."<sup>60</sup> Having survived a first imperial crisis against perfidious Gaul, the speaker of the poem laments to see all worldly goods of the "New World, and Freedom's gentle reign" transform into "fields

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<sup>59</sup> Thomas Coombe, *Edwin, or, the Emigrant: An Ecologue* (Philadelphia: John Dunlap, 1775). Both *Edwin* and *The Peasant of Auburn* circulated throughout the end of the eighteenth century. As late as 1797, Elizabeth Drinker comments in her diary that she "read this Afternoon, Edwin or the Emigrant. an eclogue to which is added Three other Poetical sketches, By the Rev. Mr. Coombe. Thos. Coombe D.D. who was a prisoner in the Masons Lodge with my husband and others, but he was released by engaging to go to Great Britain where I believe he has continued ever since" See: Elizabeth Drinker, *Diary*, Vol. 2, 985-986.

<sup>60</sup> Thomas Coombe, *The Peasant of Auburn; or, the Emigrant* (London, 1783), 7.

deplore[d],” “slaughter’d sons,” and “verdure satin’d with gore.”<sup>61</sup> The poem counters the residual discourse of *translatio libertatis* and *translatio imperii*,<sup>62</sup> as the promises of empire and commerce are wasted by fraternal and civil strife most unnatural.

Time was, blest time, to weeping thousands dear,  
When all that poets picture flourish’d here.  
Then war was not, Religion smil’d and spread,  
Arts, Manners, Learning rear’d their polish’d head;  
Commerce, her sails to every breeze unfurl’d,  
Pour’d on these coasts the treasures of the world.  
Past are those halcyon days. They very land  
Droops a weak mourner, wither’d and unmann’d.  
Brothers ‘gainst brothers rise in vengeful strife,  
The Parent’s weapon drinks the children’s life,  
Sons, leagued with foes, unsheathe their impious sword,  
And gore the nurturing breast they late ador’d.<sup>63</sup>

Given that Coombe originally wrote his poem in an earlier political context, he never uses the word “loyalist” to describe his speaker; yet, his republishing of the poem in 1783 redefines the speaker as such. By appropriating the voice of a distraught loyal subject into a new political context, Coombe employs an appeal to sympathy in order to criticize those radicals on both sides of the Atlantic who instigated the war. The poem’s historical attachment to the Seven Years’ War and its geographic association with the American

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<sup>61</sup> Coombe, *The Peasant of Auburn*, 14.

<sup>62</sup> For a discussion of *translatio libertatis* and *translatio imperii* see Shields, 16-20.

<sup>63</sup> Coombe, *The Peasant of Auburn*, 15-16.

interior frame the American Revolution in a larger context of global imperial struggle, which disassociates the conflict from the concerns and complaints of the thirteen seaboard colonies. By reprinting the poem in London, Coombe presents the stakes of the American Revolution as far outweighing the minor disagreements of policy by reminding his readers that the gains of the late war stand to be lost by those who should share in the delights of Britain's gentle rule. While the tropes of familial strife and civil war were common on both sides of the American crisis, *The Peasant of Auburn* recasts Coombe's *The Emigrant* within a distinctly British perspective on the sufferings of those British American subjects who were swept along by a handful of tyrannical upstarts that have been seduced by their traditional enemy, France. While like much American loyalist literature, the poem is careful to align terms such as peace, freedom, and liberty as sacred to an understanding of British imperial ends, the emigrant – who we might style as occupying a loyalist position – is necessarily barred from being an active agent in his destiny. The readers of the metropolis may pity him, but he does not and cannot have a place in the administration and defense of the empire.<sup>64</sup> In this fashion, Coombe uses the British print public sphere to adopt the position of a conservative British poet and thus cloak his own American history. By engaging larger imperial concerns within a longer historical *durée*, Coombe avoids the pitfalls that the other Loyalists make in focusing so intently on the present American crisis and their own concerns for safety. In so doing,

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<sup>64</sup> While Coombe condemns the violence perpetrated against passive non-combatants, his is not a perspective that accepts the cosmopolitan viewpoint that Edward Larkin has found in American loyalist conceptions of empire. Much like Crèvecoeur's "frontier man" or the Tory characters of *Landscapes*, the Peasant of Auburn is a defenseless subject forsaken at the edge of empire; however, rather than find inspiration in enlightenment precepts of tolerance, the conservative poets rely on the precepts of experience as a metric for the increasing instability of the empire.



Coombe is able to distance himself from the other Loyalists and successfully style himself a Briton.

More still, emigration may also lead to a double exile in that those who first left Britain for America stood to suffer further removes once open hostilities broke out along the American countryside. “The Exile,” from Nisbet’s collection, *Poems: Chiefly Composed from Recent Events*, imagines a long historical tradition of loyalist strife that connects colonial Virginia to Scotland via a Jacobite diaspora. Like *The Peasant of Auburn*, “The Exile” engages a deeper history and global perspective of the American crisis and represents ties to British liberty as severed by the distance between the metropolis and the extremities of empire.

Sad was the hour I left my native shore.  
Here have I liv’d, here seen my boy arrive  
To manly prime, again my heart to grieve;  
To leave me feeble in declining age,  
And in Rebellion’s lawless pow’rs engage.  
Deluded States! Thus madly to contend,  
And hostile fury ‘gainst your country bend!  
What’s all the boasted Freedom you’d attain,  
To change the master, not to ease the chain;  
To spread your land with tumult and uproar,  
And feel the mischiefs of divided pow’r!

Or, if Briton should prevail in war, those Americans who chose rebellion shall need seek flight like the Jacobites of old.

Should once again the Royal Cause prevail,  
And proud Ambition's flatt'ring prospects fail;  
Unwelcome Strangers! You must then repair  
To Gallia's shore, or breathe Austrian air;

Near its end, the poem implores the rebels to submit and beg forgiveness for their treason and in doing so return the empire to its former peace and prosperity.

Return, mad people, to your injur'd King;  
Let soft-ey'd Peace again her pleasures bring<sup>65</sup>

Neither poem uses the term loyalist, indeed, from the perspective of London and Edinburgh, these subjects were not Loyalists so much as unfortunate casualties of civil strife within a global imperial system. Both Coombe and Nisbet combine sympathetic and historical elements in their poems in order to create a sense of shared suffering that all in the empire will feel if this conflict among British subjects continues. In casting the American crisis as a crisis of empire, both Coombe and Nisbet avoid the problem of American identity entirely and make an end-run around the Loyalists' position by figuring them within the larger problem of the role of peripheral British subjectivity.

Along with a shared history of suffering is a shared pride in British military valor, and the patriotic tradition of praising Britons who venture out to the empire's edge in order to spread the protections of liberty is a mainstay of conservative poetry of the period. There is a steady stream of poets who support the officers and the regulars in a variety of forms. *The Genius of Britain to Gen. Howe, the Night before the Battle at Long Island* is one such divisive poem whose vehement patriotism, colored with blatant attacks

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<sup>65</sup> W. Nisbet. "The Exile." *Poems: Chiefly Composed from Recent Events*. (Edinburgh, 1783).

against the opposition, posed quite the conundrum for London reviewers.<sup>66</sup> Later, at the war's end, Miles Parkin's *Columbia, a Poetical Epistle, Heroic and Satirical* lamented Britain's failure in the conflict, yet insisted on honoring the valiant officers who fought on the empire's behalf. Dedicated to Charles, Earl Cornwallis, the poem's speaker justifies his patriotic theme in the face of defeat by claiming "My mind's impartial, loyal as it ought ... My Loyalty misleads, or mists my Eyes."<sup>67</sup> The poem laments the loss of the war, defends Cornwallis, and defines loyalty to Britain as a trope that the poet uses to excuse the faultiness of his art. British loyalty becomes a poetic excuse for the aesthetic faults of the poem and a rhetorical device that situates those who would criticize the poem as disloyal, unpatriotic, and anti-British. Yet again, in these poems, loyalty is a uniquely British characteristic to which the Americans have no access.

While sentimental patriotism and a commitment to the constitution are the mainstays of loyal British poetry, conservatives would also engage in satirical attacks on their radical opponents and those they saw as threats to national stability. A more explicitly satirical example of pro-Administration poetry is Joseph Pert's *The Continuation of Hudibras in Two Cantos, Written in the Time of the Unhappy Contest between Great Britain and America, in 1777 and 1778*. While the Hudibrastic themes of the poem extend the historical continuity of the American crisis back to the protectorate and restoration, Pert also invokes the context of the Seven Years' War "[w]hich in America in part, / Were held by men of loyal heart / But mostly by that hollow tribe."<sup>68</sup> The poem's speaker calls into question the Americans' sincerity to empire in the late war

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<sup>66</sup> See *Gentelman's Magazine* 47 (July 1777): 332 and *London Review* 5 (1777): 150.

<sup>67</sup> Miles Parkin, *Columbia, a Poetical Epistle, Heroic and Satirical* (London, 1783).

<sup>68</sup> Joseph Pert, *The Continuation of Hudibras in Two Cantos, Written in the Time of the Unhappy Contest between Great Britain and America, in 1777 and 1778* (London, 1778), I.404-406.

with France, casting all Americans as being of specious loyalties. Much like Cole, Pert raises the problem of identifying loyalty verses hollow pretense and self-interest. Pert dramatizes the Americans as living in a fallen state in which British liberties no longer apply. Still, the poem argues for a common understanding that many would be loyal Americans turn rebel out of a fear for their personal safety and own self-interest.

Whom your strange conduct would mislead;  
For many an honest worthy man,  
Tho' bred and born American,  
Many a lover of the laws, –  
Is forc'd to aid your frantic cause,  
When all your rebel force is gather'd,  
Lest he be stript, be tarr'd and feather'd.  
For true and faithful's sure to lose,  
Which way soever the game goes<sup>69</sup>

While speculating that many Americans turn rebel out of fear of violence and abuse, Pert does not yet call these Americans Loyalists. It is not until later in the poem that he refers to loyal Americans as such; however, in doing so he oddly couches his depiction of the Loyalists in the rebellious American rhetoric of redefining those loyal to the crown as subhuman.

To American abettors  
Of discontent and civil war,  
(In hopes of being popular)

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<sup>69</sup> Pert, *The Continuation of Hudibras*, I.757-764.

Embolden traitors so befriended,  
To venture further than intended;  
Encourage the Bostonian saints,  
To use plain words instead of faints:  
'till in the sequel they determine,  
To pack off all the loyal vermin,  
And then (for liberty recov'ring)  
Wage actual war 'gainst the sov'reign.<sup>70</sup>

Pert equates the American Loyalists with vermin. The abject position defines them as without honor or agency. Furthermore, he places blame with the British supporters of the American revolt associating them with a desire for popularity without recognizing the dire potential of their profligate ideology. The poem's disdain of American "patriots" pretense to loyalty is the third and final foreclosure of all who would oppose the crown, its administration, and the British constitution: "In every stage of these oppressions / Of loyal truth we've made professions" cast doubt on the petitions to king and parliament.<sup>71</sup> Pert ultimately denies the Americans, no matter their political allegiance, access to loyalty within the empire, and he uses the civil unrest in America as a tool to dismiss radicals in Britain. The conservative poets' reliance on a continuous British history and broad sympathetic style works as a response to the threat of radicalism throughout the empire and as such categorizes the majority of Americans as a threat to peace and prosperity, with those few Americans who struggle with their loyalties as being suspect at best and lamentable casualties of an ideological schism at worst.

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<sup>70</sup> Pert, *The Continuation of Hudibras*, II.396-406.

<sup>71</sup> Pert, *The Continuation of Hudibras*, II.782-783.

### *Radical Whig opposition and the popular press*

Whereas the conservative poets reveal an alternative discourse by which to define loyalty within the empire, the newspapers of London offer us a different lens through which to view the transformation of the Loyalists into a poetic device, the use of which many London poets deployed for political ends that the Loyalists themselves could not have anticipated. At an early stage, the opposition press reified and categorized the Loyalists as something other than American or English by competing publics of those outside of their immediate social experience. Specifically, many of the poems that appear in British newspapers appropriate Loyalists' voices and perspectives to criticize the administration, and to voice general populist grievances, the contexts of which were more uniquely associated with regional concerns in Britain than with America, and to promote radical Whig politics in England.

As Solomon Lutnick has pointed out, "not only was the London press in the hands of the Opposition, it was in the hands of the most radical elements of the Opposition" who argued that the "war in America could not and should not be won."<sup>72</sup> Lutnick has shown that the opposition press was a powerful and influential force of public opinion, especially among the artisan class, and it is in such papers that we find the most hostile attention paid to the American Loyalists. While other scholars of British newspapers such as Werkmeister, Gaston, Barker, and Bickham have offered a more moderate view of British newspapers, it is clear that the American crisis was a divisive issue. However, the Opposition press's history has its antecedents in the Wilkes and Rockingham Whig factions from whose perspective the American war was an additional grievance through

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<sup>72</sup> Solomon Lutnick, *The American Revolution and the British Press 1775-1783* (Columbia, MO: U Missouri P, 1967), 12-13, xi.

which to attack the administration. Drawing from John Sainsbury's study of London during the period, James E. Bradley argues "there was both ideological congruence and historical continuity in leaders and radical techniques between the London pro-Wilkesites in the 1760s and the pro-Americans in the 1770s."<sup>73</sup> While British Americans had a tradition of engaging the British press, from the perspective of most British writers, the American crisis was often an occasion to articulate the concerns of Britons in Britain, and much commentary about the Loyalists bears the mark of being written by Londoners who were trying to come to terms with both the social and economic turmoil of a nation at war as well as an influx of American refugees. Put simply, much of the newspaper content regarding the American crisis has less of a pro-American than an anti-ministry agenda.<sup>74</sup>

Much of the historiographic scholarship that argues for a pro-American opposition press takes its cues from the tradition of Whig historical ideology. However, throughout the early 1770s, there was a growing difference in the use of Country Party politics and sympathizing with America to promote the ends of Britons and British nationalism versus having a sincere investment in American affairs. Despite American appropriations of Country politics, their concerns with ideas of liberty, constitutionalism, and nationalism as led by the civic duty of the landed gentry and its responsibility to the commons, classify the Country Party as necessarily resistant to the most disruptive effects of empire. As Lee Ward has shown, the shift in Country Party politics has its most dramatic antecedents in the transformation of the Tories from the court party of

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<sup>73</sup> James E. Bradley, "The British Public and the American Revolution: Ideology, Interest and Opinion," *Britain and the American Revolution*, ed. H. T. Dickinson (New York: Longman, 1998), 140-141.

<sup>74</sup> For example, Arthur Lee's letters as Junius Americanus, echoed earlier pro-Wilkes press of the Junius letters from the earlier 1770s in the *Public Advertiser*. Also, for a reading of the colonists' view that Wilkes' cause was their cause, see Bailyn, 111.

absolutism of the seventeenth century to the party of culturally conservative British nationalism.<sup>75</sup> The transformation of the Tory party and its relation to the crown is a register of Britain's conservative backlash to a variety of radical and moderate republican and imperial economic effects that the growth of empire had had on the metropolis. As such, public poetry about the American crisis is best understood within the larger milieu of topical poetry ranging from Patriot nationalism, through Wilkesite radicalism and debates surrounding reform of the political system, and culminating in responses to the French Revolution. The ambivalence with which the British handled American Loyalists within poetry concerning the American crisis is not so much about transatlantic political affinities as it is about contexts and politics as situated in Britain.

It is not until after the Seven Years' War that American colonial politics become a problem for British colonial policy, and so it was in many ways misappropriated by the radical British politics of the time. Expanding upon Country Party practices, the Wilkesite faction leveraged their rhetoric in the press by claiming to represent the rights and liberties of the "ordinary" people. While not quite "country" in their deviation from faith in a landed gentry in favor of an ideal of popular sovereignty, the Wilkesites did borrow the rhetoric of liberty from the Country Party and coupled it with a claim to represent the whole of England. In this sense, Hannah Barker has argued that rather than being radical Wilkes and his followers are actually quite conservative, traditional, and loyal in their political tropes and ideology.<sup>76</sup> While Americans of the 1760s looked to Wilkes for inspiration and hope and Wilkesites of the early 1770s could argue, "the cause

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<sup>75</sup> For a succinct analysis of the evolution of party politics in early eighteenth century Britain see Ward's *The Politics of Liberty in England and Revolutionary America*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004) 310.

<sup>76</sup> Hannah Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and English Society, 1695-1855* (London: Longman, 2000). Barker follows Frank O'Gorman's argument on Wilkes' role in London politics.



of America is the cause of the realm,” the cause itself was not extended to the American loyalist refugees.

However, the transatlantic affinity between radicals was tenuous at best. Once the news of the Declaration of Independence became wide spread, many Britons abandoned their support for the American cause just as the Americans had abandoned any hope of precipitating change within the British Empire. The Declaration of Independence effectively distanced the Americans from the commonwealth and redefined them as treasonous insurgents who sought to break rather than reform the Empire. With the cause of America no longer the cause of all Britons, it becomes impossible for loyal Britons to argue in favor of the Americans, though they may still criticize the war and the administration as they see fit. Such actions are their rights as loyal Britons and what we see is an intensity of loyalty in British rhetoric that will reach its apex later in the century in response to the French Revolution. The quick maneuvers to identify one’s self as a loyal Briton are not extended to the American loyalist refugees and it is in the commonality between the conservative and radical opposition that British ambivalence toward the American Loyalists is most fully realized.

### ***The caricature of Loyalists in the British news press***

While the Tory pamphlet poetry often used minor and mock epic forms to capture the deep historical and broad geographic elements of the American war, contextualizing it within an imperial struggle between Britain and France, much of the news poetry focused on discreet, topical issues. Narrower in scope yet more frequent in their production, news poems varied to reflect the more ephemeral changes of the war’s events and in public opinion. Once open hostilities breakout and the king and parliament declare

the colonies in a state of rebellion, we begin to see in the press, the glory of British military might and honor; however, as with the conservative poets, it is only glory for Britons, for only the regulars are capable of spreading liberty throughout the empire. While American Loyalists often wrote and argued for liberty under King and Parliament and many would organize to fight for the British cause in America, yet as represented by the British press, American Loyalists were not associated with martial prowess or as liberators.<sup>77</sup>

Most of the news poetry is concerned with discreet events, both at home and abroad; and, where the conservative poetry at best laments the suffering of the Loyalists and at worst views them with suspicion, the radical news poetry is often hostile, especially to those Loyalists who sought refuge in England. William H. Nelson has stated, “of all the Loyalists, those who spent the war years as refugees in England suffered, perhaps, the most exquisite spiritual anguish.”<sup>78</sup> The great and consistent influx of American Loyalists into England and its effects on daily life was something of which the Loyalists were very self-conscious. The shock of the diaspora caused both the Loyalists and the British populace to come to terms with the Americans as a people out of place. As Thomas Hutchinson pointed out in a letter: “We Americans are plenty here, and very cheap.” Noting that Loyalists were often surprised at their dismissal from the affairs of state, Hutchinson went on to remark: “some of us at first coming, are apt to think ourselves of importance, but other people do not think so, and few if any of us are much

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<sup>77</sup> John André’s *The Cow-Chase* (1780) may be a counter argument that proves the general rule. Written in America, André allows the loyalist militia to be the heroes of his poem, but considering the ludicrousness of their adversaries and the burlesque tone of the poem, it is not at all clear that André intends for the loyalists to be taken any more seriously than their continental American counterparts.

<sup>78</sup> William H. Nelson, *The American Tory* (1961. Reprint. Boston: Northeastern UP, 1992), 153.

consulted or enquired after.”<sup>79</sup> Hutchinson’s dismay at being held at a distance from affairs so close to his heart is only compounded by the abuse Loyalists received in the British press. The problem of the Loyalists’ presence in Britain persisted throughout the conflict. As early as 1775, Samuel Curwen could remark in a letter to a friend still in New England that he found “an Army of New Englanders already” in London; and, after the Treaty of Paris, Loyalist Col. J. H. Cruger reported to Edward Winslow “this huge unwieldy Town swarms with Americans grumbling and discontented.”<sup>80</sup> The discontent was felt mutually by the British public but for different reasons; for, while the Loyalists were dissatisfied by the separation of their former homes from the empire and what they saw as the administration’s lack of support, the British public were dissatisfied with the Loyalists for perpetuating an economic drain on Britain in the form of claims and support. Their increase in numbers and their increase in need made the American Loyalists a target for popular dissent and general agitation with regard to the American conflict. As Mary Beth Norton has pointed out, “the loyalists realized how American they were only after they had abandoned America.”<sup>81</sup> It appears as though many Britons were in no haste to allow the Americans to forget their Americanness.

As soon as the Loyalists arrived in London in substantial numbers they were blamed in the London press for not only failing to bring the colonial dispute to a fair and equitable close, but also for lacking the courage to stand on American soil and help subdue by force of arms their rebellious fellow Americans. Despite wide publicity given

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<sup>79</sup> Thomas Hutchinson, *The Diary and Letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson, Esq.,...* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1883), ii, 40.

<sup>80</sup> Samuel Curwen, *Journal and Letters of the Late Samuel Curwen, Judge of Admiralty, etc., and American Refugee in England 1775-1784...* ed. George Atkinson Ward (New York: C. S. Francis, 1842), 58; *Winslow Papers*, 174.

<sup>81</sup> Mary Beth Norton, *The British-Americans: The Loyalist Exiles in England 1774-1789* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972), 41.

to the terrible suffering inflicted upon the King's supporters in America, the London press insisted that much of their plight was of their own manufacture. For example, the *Gentleman's Magazine* of June 1777 argued "His Majesty's worst enemies could not have conducted his business either here or in America, in a manner more shameful and ruinous than they have done," and on 13 December of the same year the *Public Ledger* called the Loyalists a "hord [sic] of parasites who were instrumental in bringing on the fatal conflict in North America." As the war dragged on, many in London would come to resent the pensions paid by the Treasury to the American refugees who, as the *Courant* 2 November 1781 believed, were "growing fat upon the vitals of this country, after plunging it into the most unnatural war that ever disgraced mankind." Granted, while there are occasionally sympathetic remarks made with regard to the Loyalists' plight, by and large it is clear that the London press and its reading public believed that "the proper place for the King's American friends was [in] America."<sup>82</sup>

Never a popular war, even among those who favored coercion, opinions on the American crisis ebbed and flowed throughout the nine years of conflict, yet what is most striking is how soon and consistent open and hostile criticism of the American Loyalists appears in the papers. On 20 July 1775, *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* published a pseudonymous article that attacked the Loyalists under the sarcastic pretense of giving "advice to the American Tories, who are daily proving their loyalty by emigrating from Boston." Like the conservative poets, the *Gazetteer* piece situates the American conflict in a long historical arc; however, it takes a decidedly more Whig position by finding its antecedents in dissenting religion and a concern for defending

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<sup>82</sup> Lutnick, *The American Revolution and the British Press*, 48-49.

British liberties. Quickly dropping all pretense to advising emigrants and refugees, the article goes on to cite the restoration of Charles II and the religious anxiety of the episcopal clergy as analogous precedents for the loyal, “passive obedience” these Americans hold toward Parliament.

“OPTIMUS” asks: “On which side appears manly courage and zeal, the Tories or Whigs, since one runs away with a blazing discourse of loyalty...will not Lord N[orth] begin to see that his friends in America are courtiers, and the rebels the only proper persons for pensions?” He goes on to characterize the Loyalists as “treacherous” and deserving violence at the hands of the rebels for not “lend[ing] a helping hand to subdue them.” While later in the war, many Loyalists did take up arms against the rebels, the arrival of Loyalists gave Londoners the impression that they were cowards seeking pensions.

These two pervasive themes of American loyalist cowardice and cupidity are the most predominant characterizations used by radical Whig papers. Many of the poems that engage with a generalized and reified figure of the loyalist rely on such dismissals of character in order to justify the dehumanization and brutalization of their subjects. “The Refugees” is an example of an anti-loyalist poem from the *London Courant*, February 26, 1781 that argues England would be better off if all of the Refugees were hung is an example of poetry condoning violence toward Loyalists.

The Congress hang'd two Refugees for spies;  
No man the justice of that act denies.  
And oh! how happy were old England's state,  
If every Refugee had shar'd their fate!

The Martial epigram form of the couplets emphasizes the presumed wit of cruelty and violence, which mirrors the curt dismissal of the refugees on both sides of the Atlantic as being the root of both America and England's ills.

Less physically violent, "A Familiar Epistle to Sir P. J. Clerke, on his saying in the House, that many of the American Refugees deserve a Halter better than a Pension," relies more on the themes of cowardice and cupidity to undermine the Loyalists. A longer satiric piece, again from the *Courant*, 2 March 1781, is erroneously and humorously attributed to "a Refugee." The poem plays on the history of transported felons or worse, those who may have fled to the new world to escape justice in old England, in order to argue that Americans are the descendants of criminals. The poem portrays the Refugees as having come to England for the pensions as opposed to starve in the service of congress – a decision not about principle but about self-interest and which figures into the increasing anger of the London public toward the government support of Loyalists instead of attending to affairs at home. The breaking of oaths undermines the pretensions to loyalty to either side, writing the Loyalists off as greedy opportunists. From the perspective of the London reading public, the American crisis had a very tangible and negative effect on the social stability of everyday life in the metropolis. The focus on how American events changed the cultural landscape of London had its most obvious target in the increasing number of American exiles now taking residence in London. A poem from the *London Packet* 8 December 1775 that contemplated "what brought these Tories 'crossed the sea," titled "On a Gentleman's Asking of Another what Brought so many Americans to Land," is but an early example of an increasing literature that begins to consider the problem of a mass influx of American Loyalists and the effects that such a

migration will have on London. Such poetry begins to style the Loyalists as alien others and as problematically American, themes that perversely echo Hutchinson and Curwen's own private, self-conscious reflections on the Loyalists' predicament.

Of course, the American Loyalists would often take to the press to argue their case, however, their criticisms of the British Army and Administration were often rebuffed by those Londoners who understood the Loyalists to be cowardly Americans, and who as cowards and as Americans, did not have the same rights as the English public to criticize British officers or Administrators. A brief look at poetic attacks against Joseph Galloway offers a specific example of how one American refugee in London was frequently denied credibility and access to basic public rights. If the question of representation was at all an open one prior to the Declaration of Independence, then the London public appears to have decided that those Americans who had remained loyal no longer deserved to have a voice in the British Press. On 11 January and 15 February of 1781, the *London Courant* printed two examples of explicit poetic attacks on Galloway, "Cat-O'-Nine-Tails to Kikero" and "J. Cicero! to Second Cataline!!!". The occasion for the poems was Galloway's criticism of Howe's management of the British military in America, a highly publicized affair. Given his Whiggish past, Galloway's loyalty was suspect, making him a favorite target of London satirists. His public criticisms of British officers such as William Howe gave the London press cause to view the Loyalists as part of the problem with the American War. When a Loyalist, such as Galloway, exercised his right to speech in the press, then the press often dismissed and attacked him as vain and called his loyalty into question.

Radical Whig papers such as the *Courant* tended to amplify their biases against the Loyalists as the war progressed, and conservative pamphlets continued to see the Loyalists only as so many dependent subjects in need of strong imperial rule; however, early in the war the more moderate *Public Advertiser* offered an ambivalent and highly stylized analysis of the American loyalist perspective. “The Pausing American Loyalist” is a well-wrought parody of Hamlet’s famous “to be or not to be” soliloquy. Its point for point transformation of Hamlet’s indecision is a high burlesque of a popular English dramatic piece with which the readers of the *Public Advertiser* would have been well familiar. While staying in keeping with Lutnick and Gaston’s assumptions about newspaper poets who often eschew classical allusions better to reach a wide audience, the generic and stylistic elements of the parody are more complex than the octo-syllabic epigraphs or doggerel verse of some of the more excoriating representations of Loyalists in the London press. Furthermore, the association of the Loyalist position with Shakespearian tragedy dramatizes the tension surrounding the perceived Englishness of the Loyalists.

In the eighteenth century, audiences knew Shakespeare through adaptations and “improvements,” both performative and textual. The many adaptations set a precedent for Shakespeare’s works to be staged in a manner that performed eighteenth century morals, sentiments, and aesthetics and also allowed for appropriations of Shakespeare’s work into other genres, such as the novel and occasional poetry. While Samuel Johnson’s 1765 edition of Shakespeare was a move toward a more “authentic” Shakespeare, the trend toward greater textual fidelity does not appear to have immediately undone the public work of the theater to use dramatizations of Shakespeare to perform a set of cultural values unique to the moment of production. In line with this more liberal approach to



appropriations of Shakespeare, Thomas Keymer and David Fairer have each recently illuminated the lengths to which Shakespearian language and lines permeated eighteenth century novels and poetry. I point this out for two reasons: First, to emphasize the importance of parodying Shakespeare for an eighteenth-century reading public; and second, to emphasize the deliberate skill with which this particular parody adheres to and works from the emergent, textually “authentic” Shakespeare of Johnson – a point which I argue identifies this poem as consciously addressing itself to a culturally literate audience that is invested in considering the emergent issues of authenticity and identity. Such concerns are integral to the conceit of the poem, the chief purpose of which is to define and scrutinize the American Loyalist as a new identity category of which Londoners are becoming increasingly suspicious.<sup>83</sup>

“The Pausing American Loyalist” details in its content the vexed position that every Loyalist faced in the early years of the conflict, that he had no means of redress save for such as must expose him to extremity or hazard; however, in its style the poem expressed the ambivalence that Londoners felt toward these displaced persons who were attempting to exercise their Britishness in a metropolis that was as yet undecided as to whether it would extend such courtesy to so many newly arrived colonials. First, familiarity with Shakespeare engenders an affective bond in the readers who feel a shared Englishness in their recognition of the standardized works of the great national poet and are potentially able to feel sympathy for the Loyalists through their recognition of

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<sup>83</sup>The traditional reading is that Johnson represents the turn away from neoclassical criticism, when he rejects 'the unities,' but that he simultaneously represents neoclassicism's last gasp, in his embrace of poetic justice. In either case, he represents a turning point in which an egocentric model of literary experience is increasingly advocated over and above a genre- and form-based aesthetics.

Hamlet's personal crisis. Themes of national identity here are important insofar as they open a space within the national dialog of emergent Britishness that the Loyalists might inhabit. Second, familiarity with Hamlet – either through performance or through the editions of the eighteenth century such as that of Johnson's – provides a standard by which the readers may translate the loyalist experience into the tradition of English drama. Such translation allows the poem's British readers to sympathize with the Loyalists in a manner that no other topical poem suggests. However, the genre of parody also allows for a mocking dismissal of loyalist suffering, which undermines the potential for sympathy, generating a conflicted affect that is in tandem with the poem's parodic form. While the soliloquy gives an intimacy to the interior of an abstract or generic Loyalist protagonist, the humor of the piece ultimately ridicules the speaker. The poem's free verse iambic pentameter registers the tragedy of the situation, yet the artfully placed alterations from the Shakespearian text that run throughout the poem punctuate any possibility of pathos that the speaker might otherwise have, leaving the reader bemused. While the Loyalist's lot is hard, he is no Hamlet and ultimately the poem leaves the reader to reconcile the incongruity.

The juxtaposition of the poem's content and style demonstrates the unbridgeable gap between the Loyalists and the London reading public. The pleasure of reading the poem is the pleasure of the inappropriateness of reducing Shakespeare's style to the contemporary matter of an unpopular civil war. The wit lies with the poet and his London audience at the expense of his American subject. It is a pleasure that the Loyalist himself is not expected to share, having neither the luxury nor the temperament to appreciate the mockery of his suffering. As such, the poem ultimately falls in line with both the

conservative and oppositional ambivalence toward the Loyalists, making it the apex of British confusion toward the Americans' position.

While the poem is clearly written at the expense of the Loyalist's position, it is an admittedly difficult position that he finds himself in, and as such, the poem does not entirely foreclose the possibility for sympathy or at the very least an honest assessment of why the Loyalist must give pause. There are two basic positions that the poem outlines: that of trimming and that of loyalty. Trimming is associated with calamity, thought, and consideration, of retaining one's powers of sensibility while waiting it out in America.

To fly, – to want –

To want? Perchance, to starve: Ay there's the Rub!

For, in that Chance of Want, what Ills may come

To patriot Rage, when I have left – my All

Must give me Pause: – There's the Respect,

That makes us *trim*, and bow to Men we hate,<sup>84</sup>

In contrast, loyalty is associated with such ills as abuse, starvation, flight, exile, refugee status, death in that blessed country, England, but finally with resolution and virtue, which offer a strong deviation from Hamlet. The parody creates an epistemic shift. Unlike Hamlet, the reader knows what awaits the Loyalist after flight: loss of friends, exile, want, abuse in the newspapers, symbolic and perhaps even literal death in a foreign land. With this epistemic shift comes a fraught moral position:

Thus Dread of Want makes Rebels of us all:

And thus the native Hue of Loyalty

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<sup>84</sup> "The Pausing American Loyalist," *Public Advertiser*, 20 January 1776, ln. 9-14.

Is sicklied o'er with a pale Cast of *Trimming*,  
And Enterprizes of great Pith and Virtue,  
But unsupported, turn their dreams away,  
And never come to Action.<sup>85</sup>

The poem asks its readers, is the virtue of loyalty worth the reality of suffering that all know will accompany it? It would be of the up most virtue to be loyal, to be true to one's King and one's convictions; however, given what all know to be the consequences of loyalty, how can anyone expect an American Loyalist to remain loyal and perform his loyalty publicly on either side of the Atlantic? Moreover, there is a tacit condemnation of the London reading public – because they are unsupported, many Americans who would be loyal cower from being agents and become rebels by default. Therefore, the poem is also an implicit call for sympathy and support of those who remain loyal in the face of such insurmountable adversity from not only the American rebels, but from the passive, uncaring Englishmen to whom these Loyalists have fled to in hope of protection.

The ills that loyalty are heir to are myriad indeed – abuse and censure from both their American neighbors and the Britons who are suspicious of their arrival, the potential for physical violence in the form of tar and feathers in America is barely ameliorated by the dread of want and starvation along with the perpetual friendlessness and outsider status that await them once they arrive in London, it is amazing that any American would admit his loyalties to the crown. The poem allows a reader to be amazed by such loyalty in spite of its humor.

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<sup>85</sup> “The Pausing American Loyalist,” ln. 28-33.

Joseph Pert's concern that many loyal Americans feigned rebellion out of a concern for their own personal safety is an echo of "The Pausing American Loyalist." The conservative poets offered a broader scope through which to understand the terms of the war. Their metropolitan perspective reminds us that while loyalty was at stake on both sides of the Atlantic, they developed an increasingly prescriptive metric for who could qualify as having a right to express loyalty. While perhaps not as dominant as past scholarship has implied, the radical Whig opposition had a powerful effect on how the press depicted the American Loyalists and, as I have shown, such depictions were politically manipulative and often violent. Both conservatives and radicals held an ambivalent view of the American Loyalists and this view characterizes the fraught and inconsistent view that many in Britain held toward the American crisis. Unable to come to any consensus and too involved fighting for their own political power in Britain, both parties made the American Loyalists the literary casualties of British poetic response to the Revolution.

It is clear that the American crisis pervaded the British imagination. As Stephen Conway argues, "the American conflict, far from being a limited affair that impinged very little on life within the British Isles, was a deeply intrusive event."<sup>86</sup> Yet, for all of the attention given to the question of America, there is little consideration in the poetry of what the war meant for Americans as Britons. Eliga Gould has illustrated that there were corresponding tendencies within Britain to "treat even those colonists who retained their allegiance to the king as members of a separate political society."<sup>87</sup> Indeed, it is not until

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<sup>86</sup> Stephen Conway, *The British Isles and the War of American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000), 128.

<sup>87</sup> Eliga Gould, *The Persistence of Empire: British Political Culture in the Age of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, NC: U North Carolina P, 2000), 196.

after the Treaty of Paris (1783) that the poetry shows a growing trend to consider what Britain might do for the King's American friends. It is not until Britain has failed them that Britons recognize the Americans' loyalty and express a non-partisan sympathy. Such belated recognition, I suspect, is a register of a cultural healing process that allows the Loyalists to be incorporated into the empire's recovery in a manner that is parallel to the rehabilitation of the Loyalists in the nascent United States. As such, the Loyalists act as a conduit that allowed both for debates within Britain and for a sustained transatlantic Anglo-American culture to continue into the nineteenth century.

## CHAPTER TWO

### EPICS AND ELEGIES: THE MANUSCRIPT POETRY OF THE BRITISH AMERICAN LOYALISTS & THE BATTLE OF BROOKLYN

While the literary history of the American Revolution has often been an object of analysis, the recent revival of interest in the British American Loyalists has presented a new archive to scholars interested in reframing the critical conversation concerning literary representations of political identity and allegiance. Philip Gould has recently argued “that the most prominent features of loyalist poetics [are] its separation of virtue from politics, its uncertain view of the elasticity of language, [and] its parochial view of an immediate audience.”<sup>88</sup> While Gould provides a cogent argument about the style of loyalist print satires, there is also a vast archive of loyalist manuscript literature that we may study to expand our understanding of the Loyalists and their literary responses to the war. Manuscript poetry, which was still a dominant mode of publication in colonial British America, offers us an example of how loyalist poetry extended beyond the politics of print. Many of the people who would come to resist independence expressed their concerns in verse that circulated in manuscript through epistolary networks and commonplace books. Furthermore, we must also understand that many loyalist networks

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<sup>88</sup> Philip Gould, *Writing the Rebellion: Loyalists and the Literature of Politics in British America* (New York: Oxford UP, 2013), 5.

overlapped with patriot networks and crossed geographical regions. Realizing this allows us to see that the loyalists were not only writing to themselves, but also that the loyalist and patriot communities were not as isolated from each other as is sometimes thought, and that both communities were keenly aware of trans-colonial as well as transatlantic audiences and events.

The result of studying the manuscript archive during the Revolutionary period is to show that the Loyalists begin to form an active community through a variety of performative and textual means, many of which exceed the medium of print. While a considerable amount of loyalist literature relies on the satirical mode, of making fun of the rebels, there is also a strong, yet overlooked, mode of sincerity, of singing praises for the King and his officers, as well as publicly performing a flagrant, loyal style. These two dominant modes of loyalist writing, that of political satire and that of personal sentiment each characterize all mediums and genres of loyalist writing. Philip Gould's excellent work has done much to illuminate not only the political but also the aesthetic register of loyalist writing in the years leading up to open hostilities. I hope to build on this strong foundation and add to it an account of how loyalists affectively engaged with the devastating consequences of the Revolution. Additionally, an analysis of loyalist poetic responses to the battle reveals how the affective, cultural, and literary communities of colonial America influenced loyalist discourse networks. Prior to the war, such networks, while sometimes politically charged, were not divided along lines of loyalty. While the Revolution disrupted and altered some of these communities, it did not fully dissolve them. Indeed, these prerevolutionary communities did much to circulate loyalist literature across regional borders and political lines. I hope to make a case for a need for further



work in exploring the extent of these literary networks across politics and through time. Ultimately, I suspect that the loyalists were not quite as isolated or sycophantic as previous scholars have argued, and I believe that further archival research will yield both print and especially manuscript evidence in support of my current hypothesis. Unlike their print counterparts, manuscript poems highlight the depth of the Loyalists' affective ambiguity, which brings to the fore the problem of the Loyalists' Americanness, as provincials who supported the idea of an American Britishness. In focusing on the manuscript record, we find a model of community that was pervasive throughout the American colonies during the years of the Revolution that is based neither on the notion of nascent United States nationalism nor on an idealization of British empire, but rather on an extensive engagement with and reproduction of a sense of shared culture and mutual communal sensibility.

In this chapter, I analyze loyalist poetic responses to the Battle of Brooklyn, which took place in late August 1776. The Battle of Brooklyn was the largest military engagement of the American Revolution as well as an early decisive victory that established British military dominance.<sup>89</sup> As a result of the battle, the British would hold New York throughout the war, making the city both British military headquarters and an asylum for thousands of loyalist refugees who sought protection from the rebels under the British standard and the aegis of George III and his officers. While the battle and subsequent occupation of the city had a galvanizing effect on loyalist political sentiment,

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<sup>89</sup> Barnet Schecter, *The Battle for New York: the City at the Heart of the American Revolution* (New York: Walker & Company, 2002), 141. While the British victory at the Battle of Bunker's Hill occurred earlier, it was pyrrhic and led to the Americans holding the British sieged in Boston.

the violence of the event elicited a variety of poetic responses from different groups of loyalist writers.

There are regional and stylistic differences in the manner of response to the Howes' victory over the Continentals. Yet, even when focusing within a given region, the majority of scholarly writing about loyalist responses to the battle have been predominantly influenced by the print record, especially the polemical and satirical literature, much of which gained its historical primacy by virtue of nineteenth-century reprintings and historiography. Such work has anatomized the satirical and propagandistic valiances of loyalist literary practices but leaves out much of the intimacy of loyalist responses to the conflict. This presents us with an historical and material media bias of dominant loyalist styles and genres. A more discrete focus on loyalist manuscript writings and the networks they circulated in offer us another lens through which we might assess the Loyalists' experience of the war.

Over the past century and a half, historians of revolutionary era verse, such as Winthrop Sargent, Moses Coit Tyler, Bruce Granger, and Pastora San Juan Cafferty, have pointed out that many loyalist manuscripts were destroyed or lost while others languish, overlooked and unread, across a variety of archives both private and public.<sup>90</sup> Cafferty points to the early suppression of loyalist presses as one cause for the disparity between patriot and loyalist histories.<sup>91</sup> Citing that Loyalists could only publish by means of print when and where the British were in occupation of a major American city, such as New

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<sup>90</sup> Pastora San Juan Cafferty, "Loyalist Rhapsodies: The Poetry of Stansbury and Odell." Ph.D. dissertation, George Washington University, 1971; Bruce Granger, *Political Satire in the American Revolution, 1763-1783* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1960); Winthrop Sargent, *The Loyal Verses of Jonathan Stansbury and Doctor Jonathan Odell; Relating to the American Revolution* (Albany, NY: J. Munsell, 1860); Moses Coit Tyler, *The Literary History of the American Revolution, 1763-1783*, 2 Vols. (New York: Barnes & Noble, inc., 1941).

<sup>91</sup> Cafferty, "Loyalist Rhapsodies," 44.

York from August 1776 on, or in Philadelphia between October 1777 and June 1778, Cafferty reminds us of the importance of manuscript circulation and anthologization for the Loyalists.<sup>92</sup> Nevertheless, many loyalist poems, essays, and other writings did find their way into newspapers and pamphlets in garrison cities and throughout the British Empire.<sup>93</sup> However, a lack of or limited access to print did not stop Loyalists from writing about their wartime experiences in a variety of genres, nor should the absence of a particular piece from the historical print record necessarily lead us to assume that a given piece of loyalist writing was not published according to the social and literary conventions of colonial America. In this period, manuscript circulation was a legitimate and far more than we would often suppose preferred mode of publication.<sup>94</sup> A variety of diaries, letters, commonplace books, and manuscript volumes record a vibrant culture of loyalist literary production throughout the years of conflict. The papers of Jonathan Odell and Jacob Bailey contain satire and invective from some of America's most staunch supporters of the loyalist cause. The letters of William Eddis informed his family and friends in Britain as to the proceeding of events in the rebel colonies. The letters and papers of Robert Proud contain the versified musings and distress of Philadelphia's peculiar Quaker pedagogue, and Milcha Martha Moore's commonplace book is a trove of poems from the period written by some of Philadelphia's most elite women. An obscure

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<sup>92</sup> Cafferty, "Loyalist Rhapsodies," 47.

<sup>93</sup> Indeed, there were loyalist responses to the Battle of Brooklyn that made their way into print. While James Rivington's press was not printing newspapers at the time, due to earlier vandalism by the Son's of Liberty, Hugh Gaine printed his paper in New York up until the Battle. Gaine then fled to New Brunswick, New Jersey, where he brought his paper out for a brief time, and then he returned to New York and continued to print his paper from his office at the Crown and Bible, in Hanover Square. The most important work of loyalist print in response to the events is a closet drama, *The Battle of Brooklyn. A farce of two acts. As it was performed on Long Island, on Tuesday the 27<sup>th</sup> day of August, 1776. By the representatives of the tyrants of America assembled at Philadelphia* (1776). For a detailed analysis of the play and its publication history, see Norman Philbrick (1972). Also of interest is *Conflagration. A Poem* (1780), printed by Hugh Gaine.

<sup>94</sup> For an assessment on the role of manuscript culture in British America, see Shields (1993).

and often overlooked manuscript collection, titled “Rhapsodies,” located in the Peter Force Collection at the Library of Congress, contains copies of some fifty poems by Joseph Stansbury and Jonathan Odell, many of which were not printed in Winthrop Sargent’s nineteenth-century anthologies of loyalist verse.<sup>95</sup> While the vast majority of this literature was never printed during the years of the Revolution, there is ample contextual evidence that these poems were circulated, copied, and read.

In the lead-up to the Battle of Brooklyn, the loyalist poets Joseph Stansbury and Jonathan Odell praised the arrival of Howe from Halifax and satirized the local patriot government and committees. The arrival of the British fleet off the coast of New York in the summer of 1776 was a moment of great concern for all colonials. In Philadelphia, the loyalist, Joseph Stansbury, penned a jubilant “Welcome to Howe,” which expressed his elation at the arrival of British forces and styled Howe as the great hero of colonial America:

He comes, he comes, the Hero comes:

Sound, sound your Trumpets, beat your Drums:

From port to port let Cannon roar

Howe’s welcome to this western shore!

[...]

With laurels crown’d triumphant see

Britannia’s Genius, Victory:

With her fair Freedom sits in State,

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<sup>95</sup> For a detailed analysis of the “Rhapsodies” manuscript and a modern edition of its content, see Cafferty and Kenneth H. Silverman, *A Cultural History of the American Revolution...* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1976), 307.

And mercy smiles, serenely great.<sup>96</sup>

Stansbury's excitement at Howe's arrival and his anticipation at what he expects to be a speedy victory and return to peace is coupled with a plea to his fellow colonists, whom he styles as Britannia's "Deluded Sons," to accept the Justice of the Throne and the blessings in which "Britain's king delights."<sup>97</sup> Rather than press for open conflict and the destructions of war, Stansbury hopes that his fellow colonists will find pride in their participation in "This mighty Empire" and be content with the "tempered streams of Liberty" that the King, via the proxy of Howe, offers them.<sup>98</sup> In this respect, Stansbury is not only writing an expression of his personal loyalty but is also addressing his fellow colonists and arguing with them for a peaceful conciliation with the mother country in the hopes of avoiding further martial conflict. However, if the local patriots were among Stansbury's intended audience, his was an argument they were no longer willing to entertain.

Soon after Stansbury had penned his hopeful poem of British victory, local committees began to harass suspected Loyalists in attempts to deter any colonists from cooperating with British forces. Jonathan Odell's manuscript poem, "The General Warrant," depicts how one such ad hoc continental legal system took it upon themselves to harass and arrest a group of peaceful revelers who were suspected of being sympathetic to the British and who may have been using their merry-making as a cover to smuggle information to a British Man-of-War harbored near Sandy Hook. Odell and Stansbury were among those apprehended under suspicion of their loyalties. Such

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<sup>96</sup> Joseph Stansbury, "A Welcome to Howe," in both Cafferty and Winthrop, ln. 1-4, 9-12.

<sup>97</sup> Stansbury, "A Welcome to Howe," ln. 14, 20.

<sup>98</sup> Stansbury, "A Welcome to Howe," ln. 28, 24.

experiences of harassment began to form bonds, which Odell here expressed in poetry, with which other loyalists who had been harassed could identify. The circulation and recording of the poem is evidence of a community of readers who understood and appreciated the emergence of a literature of political marginalization and prosecution, of mutual suffering due to a shared sense of loyalty.

The political and cultural contexts surrounding loyalist manuscript literature throughout the war is too large of a subject for me to address within the space of this chapter, and so I here focus on loyalist poetic responses to the Battle of Brooklyn as a case study that allows for a detailed analysis of a few select documents and their associated contexts.<sup>99</sup> The two most extensive manuscript poetic responses to the Battle of Brooklyn are an anonymous manuscript poem, *The Toriade* [1777], found in the Col. John Peter's Papers at the New York Historical Society, and Hannah Griffiths' ([1776] 2007) poem, "The sympathetic Scene – wrote August 31st 1776 – occasioned by the unnatural Contest at Long Island Augst. 27th. & 28<sup>th</sup>," found in Milcah Martha Moore's commonplace book. While *The Toriade* is a minor epic representing the poet's sense of pride over witnessing General Howe's victory over Washington, the poem also contains georgic elements that lament the destruction of the countryside and the dissolution of British American imperial culture. Griffiths' poem is an elegy that offers an inverse

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<sup>99</sup> While I've predominantly focused the majority of my exegesis on *The Toriade* and Hannah Griffiths' poems, the work of Odell, Stansbury, Proud, and Eddis gesture toward the larger manuscript culture within which the loyalists wrote. Some of these communities had considerable overlap, such as those of Odell and Stansbury's associations with each other, as well as a variety of prominent British and American officials. Others, such as Proud, were more circumspect, yet still he sent many of his poems to his brothers in England and went on to have a continued influence over the next generation of Philadelphians, most famously Charles Brockden Brown, while Eddis' eloquent letters reveal them to be more than a mere reporting of events. Finally, the survival of personal papers, such as those of Odell and Bailey's in Canada, the "Rhapsodies" manuscript, and Milcah Martha Moore's commonplace book are evidence that many of the loyalists self-consciously copied and reproduced theirs and their friends' verses into personal anthologies. It seems reasonable to believe that there is still considerable archival work to be done in recovering other possible loyalist writings.

reaction to the battle, with its focus on human loss, a condemnation of the patriots, and yet a faith that common sympathy offers a path toward reconciliation and social healing.

While its content offers a multivalent map of loyalist affective responses to the conflict, stylistically *The Toriade* is a gesture toward a minor epic. Unlike the early loyalist literature of political polemic that satirize patriot zeal, *The Toriade* is an example of a sincere minor epic in praise of General Howe and of the British army's role as liberators, as bringers and defenders of British liberties in America. Someone copied out the poem in a neat hand, indicating a finished quality with the expectation that the poem would circulate and many would read it. Also, someone, perhaps the same person who copied the poem, sewed the leaves into folded pages of newspapers, in order to aid in preservation and act as a sort of cover to the leaves of the poem. One of the newspaper pages is from the front page of James Rivington's *Royal Gazette* of September 1777. The other appears likely to be from James Robertson's *The Royal American Gazette*, also from late 1777.<sup>100</sup> This leads me to believe that the poem was at least circulating in New York and sewn into the papers in the fall or winter of 1777. As such, the poem is evidence of a discrete loyalist literary culture in New York during the first instance of martial combat. Based on the internal content of the poem, the community of the writer and his readers appears to center, at least in some way, around Myles Cooper, a prominent New York loyalist intellectual and President of King's College from 1763-1775.

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<sup>100</sup> James Robertson was a member of the Port Roseway Association and founded the first print shop and newspaper in Shelburne, Canada, after the war. See chapter six below as well as Stephen Kimber, *Loyalists & Layabouts: The Rapid Rise and Faster Fall of Shelburne, Nova Scotia 1783-1792* (Toronto: Anchor Canada, 2009).

Cooper was an influential member of a community of Anglican priests and intellectuals in the colonies who employed his own poetic and editorial talents in support of the loyalist cause. His *The Patriots of North-America: a Sketch with Explanatory Notes* (1775) is one of the most excoriating satirical attacks on the congressional delegates. Cooper's ambitions are evident in his clear assumption that his work will have a wide audience. In the "Advertisement" that prefaces *The Patriots of North-America*, Cooper calls attention to the transatlantic circulation of printed materials, arguing "there is not a single Pamphlet, written in North-America, that does not, by some Accident, or other, find its way, to England."<sup>101</sup> Given the escalation of events in America, Cooper takes for granted that the English public will read all material and information coming from the disaffected colonies "with Avidity," and it is his fear that equal measure of attention will be given to the "dullest composition."<sup>102</sup> Cooper's concerns with style, wit, and taste correspond with Philip Gould's recent reading of loyalist literature. Cooper apologizes for certain elements of his style, especially his periodic use of Latin and employment of ribaldry. The Latin, he assures his readers, is not a sign of "Pedantry and Affectation," but is born "from his dreadful Apprehension of the Tarrers and Featherer, of the Country, in which he resides; none of whom, he is well assured, were ever bred, at a Latin school."<sup>103</sup> As to ribaldry, Cooper surely writes with a healthy dose of irony, yet he takes a measured approach in the "Advertisement" by distinguishing between his Manners and his Morals and begs his readers' leave.

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<sup>101</sup> Myles Cooper, *The Patriots of North-America: A Sketch. With Explanatory Notes* (New York: James Rivinton, 1775), iii.

<sup>102</sup> Cooper, *The Patriots of North-America*, iii.

<sup>103</sup> Cooper, *The Patriots of North-America*, iii-iv. John Parke Custis and Alexander Hamilton were two of Cooper's pupils, evidence that there were those among the patriot ranks capable interpreting Cooper's ire.



James Rivington, a New York printer notorious for his loyalty, published *The Patriots of North-America* in February 1775, and the poem's content and style show that Cooper aimed his invective at his patriot neighbors in New York and throughout the colonies. Yet, given the stakes laid out in the "Advertisement," it is clear that Cooper aspired to an English audience as well, given that he has "thought it proper to subjoin here, and there, a Note, for the Information, of his English Readers," so that they may catch the more provincial allusions and clearly follow the argument of the satire.<sup>104</sup> The notes serve as an appended exegesis, enabling an English audience, perhaps unfamiliar with the character of recent American events, to come to a true and clear understanding of the imperial and constitutional stakes of the crisis. While drawing on the aesthetics of Augustin satire, Cooper's desire for a transatlantic audience brings to the fore his position as a provincial American.<sup>105</sup>

Cooper would not remain in New York for much longer. A mob of the Sons of Liberty would literally chase him out of his rooms in King's College and onto a British ship of War stationed in New York harbor.<sup>106</sup> Cooper would return to Edinburgh, and in doing so, he would extend the loyalist literary network of which he was a part. Philip Gould points to the "transatlantic movement of print matter" and further argues that the printed word was "paralleled by that of English-speaking people themselves" and that, even though his own study focuses primarily on New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, it is "misleading to identify many of these important historical figures with a single locale

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<sup>104</sup> Cooper, *The Patriots of North-America*, iii.

<sup>105</sup> For further analysis on Cooper's poetic satire as it relates to the congressional delegates, see Kenneth Silverman (1976, 269-70) and Philip Gould (2013, 15, 20).

<sup>106</sup> See Gould (2013, 15) as well as Lorenzo Sabine (1847, 227-28). Tradition holds that Alexander Hamilton aided Cooper in his escape. For Cooper's own poetic remembrance on his flight from New York on 10<sup>th</sup> of May 1775, see "Stanzas written on the Evening of the 10th of May, 1776. By an Exile from America," *Gentleman's Magazine*, London 46 (July 1776): 326-327.

or region.”<sup>107</sup> Building upon Gould’s evidence, I argue further that when we consider the various removes and displacements of individuals and families throughout the war, we may begin to see the great extent to which these many colonial literary networks expanded.<sup>108</sup> Cooper’s flight became an occasion for his friends who remained in New York to write to him, or stylistically address poems to his absence, and use such absence as a device that both prompts the poem’s composition and generates the conditions for its narrative description of battle in epic style.

It is difficult to identify just who among Cooper’s circle could be the author of *The Toriade*, for his influence was great and wide, reaching throughout New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Among his known literary associates were: Thomas Barclay, Dr. Samuel Bard, Thomas Chandler, Charles Inglis, and Samuel Seabury, and it’s possible that John Peters and Asa D. Spalding, a loyalist satirist from Norwalk Connecticut, could also have been among the group.<sup>109</sup> In any event, Cooper’s exile was a strongly felt loss to the loyalist literary community. Dwight C. Miner has illustrated that “Cooper wrote very little for publication” just before his flight, “his primary function” being that of “Strategist and editor.”<sup>110</sup> Similarly, Clarence H. Vance concludes that Cooper appeared to be “satisfied with being the critic and the reviser of practically all” of the loyalists resistance literature “produced in and near New York, rather than being the actual author

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<sup>107</sup> Gould, 26.

<sup>108</sup> Like Gould, I am following David S. Shields’ argument in *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America*. Shields’ study ends just before the revolution and offers an epilogue toward the role of civility in the early republic. I propose that the revolution, while it distorts the *sensus communis* of polite literary culture in the colonies also extends those communities across a variety of factors, including geography, class, and politics. The further we follow the circulation of print and manuscript responses to the revolution, the more apparent this overlap becomes.

<sup>109</sup> Some of Spalding’s papers appear with *The Toriade* in Peter’s papers at the New York Historical Society, but it’s not clear whether the two knew Cooper before the war or merely came into contact with Cooper’s circle during the British occupation of the city.

<sup>110</sup> Dwight C. Miner, “Doctor Cooper Departs,” *Columbia Library Columns*, 3.1 (1952): 8.

of it,” and that “nothing was considered ready for publication until he had read and criticized it.”<sup>111</sup> Despite the continued uncertainty of authorship, it remains difficult to overestimate the importance of Myles Cooper on the colonies’ regional, loyalist, Anglican intellectual network. He offered a stylistic and polemical coherence for the loyalist resistance in the paper wars that led up to open conflict and his sudden absence appears to have caused some disarray among the loyalist literary cadre, one of whom chose to respond in verse.

When the Sons of Liberty forced Myles Cooper out of New York, General Howe was sieged in Boston and would soon suffer the pyrrhic victory of Bunker’s Hill. After the chaotic events of 1774 and 1775, and with the Continental Congress declaring independence in the summer of 1776, Loyalists throughout the colonies began to suffer increasing abuses and hostilities at the hands of what many of them understood to be a mad mob of upstarts hell bent on the destruction of law, order, and civil liberties. Howe’s engagement with and thorough besting of Washington’s army in late August of 1776, while a crushing blow to patriot morale, was a liberation of those colonists who remained loyal. In response to such glorious events, *The Toriade* eschews satire for sincere praise of British military prowess in an epic mode.

Before offering an analysis of the poem, a brief account of the battle is in order. On 22 August 1776, British troops began landing on Long Island, near New Utrecht, and by noon over 15,000 soldiers, supplemented by artillery, were ashore. By the 25<sup>th</sup>, Howe would have over 20,000 men at his command along with 5,000 Hessians. Starting on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, minor skirmishes would periodically break out between the advanced elements of

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<sup>111</sup> Clarence H. Vance, “Myles Cooper,” *Columbia University Quarterly*, 22 (1930): 276.

both armies in and around Flat Bush, much to Washington's consternation for the fighting made it difficult to determine British intentions and strategy. Local Loyalists provided the British with intelligence on the Continental Army's defensive positions of trenches and forts along Brooklyn Heights.<sup>112</sup>

Washington remained on Manhattan, suspecting a potential naval advance from the Harlem and East Rivers, while Generals Sullivan and Putman commanded 6,500 men in fortifications at Brooklyn and another 3,000 men defending natural passes to the Heights at Gowanus, Flat Bush, and Bedford, the Continental's far left flank was left sorely undermanned and vulnerable at Jamaica Pass. The vulnerability further east on the island was a grave tactical mistake that Howe, on the advice of General Clinton, would take advantage of to great effect. General Howe's strategy was simple and well executed. In fact, it was Clinton's plan, one in which he went to great pains, through an intermediary, to convince Howe to adopt (the two were not on speaking terms). Clinton was familiar with Long Island, having spent time in New York as a child when his father was royal governor of the colony.<sup>113</sup> Howe divided the British forces, with Grant taking position on the far west of the Island and Heister commanding the Hessians at a central position near Flat Bush. Howe and Clinton moved 10,000 men out east and through Jamaica Pass under the cover of night, dividing the Continental Army. Grant and Heister attacked early on the morning of the 27th, giving the impression of a frontal assault on

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<sup>112</sup> For detailed accounts of the battle, see Schecter (141-154) as well as Savas and Dameron (55-61). For a socio-historical assessment see Judith Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2002): esp. 20-32.

<sup>113</sup> William Wilcox speculates that Clinton studied under Rev. Samuel Seabury, a prominent New York loyalist. *Portrait of a General: Sir Henry Clinton in the War of Independence* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf), 9. Furthermore, this brief biographical point further illustrates not only the transatlantic identities of both the British and the Americans, but also that the revolution was a civil war. The sentiments of the Howe brothers highlight these factors as well and often played into the accusations that they were not interested in crushing the rebellion.

Brooklyn Heights. Howe and Clinton came down from the northeast, cutting off hope of retreat. Vastly outnumbered and out maneuvered, the Continental Army did not stand a chance.

*The Toriade* is a near blow-by-blow account of the battle that then continues to highlight British victories leading up to the Pennsylvania campaign. With recent turns of events reinvigorating loyalist hopes in New York, someone in Myles Cooper's former social circle felt compelled to inform their absent friend of the good news. That *The Toriade* styles Cooper in the role of addressee we can infer from internal evidence referencing his former position as President of King's College. The speaker of the poem presumes an intimacy with Cooper that has been disrupted by Cooper's exile and offers the poem as a means by which to relate recent events in America that begin with the Battle of Brooklyn and end just before Howe's Philadelphia campaign. The speaker of the poem contextualizes the lines as an act of writing to one who is absent from events: "Two leisure Days, my dear and worthy Friend, / I've set apart in writing for to spend: / That you tho distant, some few things may know, / Of what befall this wretched land of woe."<sup>114</sup> The poem's opening elevates the task of leisurely correspondence to the level of austere poetic art. In a period in which the act of epistolary discourse was increasingly a most precarious series of circumstances and the content and style of letters reached a zenith of urgency and affective description, *The Toriade's* predominant use of iambic pentameter and heroic couplets casts the act of information transfer alongside the exploits of the British Army:

Then if a date, you will insist I fix,

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<sup>114</sup> *The Toriade*. [1777] MS Col. John Peter's Papers. New York Historical Society, New York, In. 1-4.

'Twas seventeen hundred seventy six  
Dire Work begun: Be more precise you say:  
Content; twas August, twenty second Day:  
The British Troops, under Command of Howe,  
To whose great worth, and Valour all must Bow.<sup>115</sup>

The conversational tone of a call and response between friends across the Atlantic slowly gives way to an extended relation of the exploits of the British regulars and their Commander, General Howe, the hero of the poem.

Intimacy between the speaker and Cooper continues throughout the poem. While superficially an heroic poem in praise of General Howe, there runs a thread of affection strained by distance and a deep sense of longing for those who have departed America for fear of safety. *The Toriade*, like much loyalist poetry, is torn between competing styles, here of panegyric and elegy, bringing to the fore the ambivalence of loyalist literary politics:

Tis mine my Friend, if you will with me Bed,  
Here's half my Couch, there's Pillow for your head.  
Awake my Friend, I hear a dreadful rattle,  
We talk'd so much last Night, of Fort & Battle  
Ourselves we have o'er slept; sure 'tis past Ten,  
The Streets are all alive, with noisy Men:  
But I'm alone, how's this, alack I find!  
To you, last Night I writ, & pleas'd my mind,

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<sup>115</sup> *The Toriade*, 5-10.

By an Imaginary Chatting walk,  
Ask'd you to Bed with me, did just so talk,  
As though you had been present.<sup>116</sup>

In addition to cannily marking the progress of the poet's drafting of the poem, which couched in the narrative of the poem's depiction of victorious battle styles the act of writing as heroic in itself, the above lines allow the poet to imagine an intimacy of lying to bed with a dear friend after having been exhausted by the arduous task of walking through recent events, now made historical by poetic art. The transition from the dream of friendship back into the narrative of war is all the more disorienting for the next lines depict the fire of New York and the desolation of the city by the rebels.<sup>117</sup>

Along with scenes of longing and displacement, scenes of destruction and dislocation run throughout *The Toriade*. While an heroic poem in praise of British law, order, and military force, the poem's focus on the events of battles necessitates that it also document the fallout of war. Much of the poem's first half is devoted to a direful georgic that laments the disruption of agriculture and the marring of the landscape's natural beauties that the rebel fortifications have tarnished and which are further laid to waste by the fruitless battle in which they persist:

The Rebels fly, some might hills to gain,  
And as they flee, they scour, & spoil the Plain  
Horses, and Sheep, and the Cornuted Kine,  
Both fat, & lean, Ducks, Turkey's, Geese, and Swine,

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<sup>116</sup> *The Toriade*, 189-199.

<sup>117</sup> *The Toriade* clearly depicts the fire as having been the handiwork of the fleeing rebels; however, there is competing historical evidence as to just how the fire was started.

Drove after Drove, with utmost hast they drive  
If haply, to the Hills, they may arrive:  
Another Party, follows hard, and burn  
Each Barrack, Stack, and Barn, that's stow'd with Corn  
Full forty fires, I saw at single view,  
The Land hath cause this Rebel work to rue.  
Another Party, still bring up the Rear,  
Kill, and destroy, what others left thro' fear:  
Thus many a Bullock, fat and good,  
Lies wasting through this Neighbourhood.<sup>118</sup>

What would otherwise make for views of a picturesque pastoral have been perverted by rebellious ambition and misguided patriot zeal. Ambrose Serle, secretary to General Howe, commented on the beauty of Long Island in his *Journal of the Revolution*: "The Island seems extremely fertile, and the Country rather flat. There were some fine Cattle still remaining; and proper precautions were taken to prevent our people from plundering."<sup>119</sup> Later, as both armies prepared for battle, Serle brooded over the folly of civil strife, the ruin of what ought to be a peaceful and prosperous country, and contented himself that the willful madness of the rebels was a divine sign of their eminent downfall.

How melancholy is the Reflection, that the Folly & Wickedness of Man,  
under the abused Title of Prudence & Patriotism, shall ruin the finest  
Countires, and proceed, as far as they may, to desolate the Earth! A little

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<sup>118</sup> *The Toriade*, 13-26.

<sup>119</sup> Ambrose Serle. "Journal, July 12-23, 1776," *The American Revolution: Writings from the War for Independence*, ed. John Rhodehamel (New York: The Library of America, 2001), 192.



Pains & a little common Honesty might have induced a meeting with the King's Commissioners, and have settled all Differences with Amity & Ease. But – *Quos Deus vult perdere priùs dementat.*<sup>120</sup>

Serle's sentiments are echoed by the speaker of the *The Toriade*, and he extends the reader's view across Long Island, over Brooklyn Heights, and on to Manhattan, the former splendor of which was also effaced by fortifications and trenches:

See what Entrenchments, cover the whole land,  
What more could been, had Devils lent a Hand:  
All Natures Face, is dug, pitch'd up, & tore, }  
From this, thro' Brookland, by, & from the shore: }  
Such Forts, & Works, was never seen before. }  
New York, in ev'ry street, was Fortify'd:  
Numbers upon each green & Dock beside:  
The Island's width, & length, full fourteen miles  
Was full of Ditches, Forts, Redoubts, & Piles:  
And still beyond; so great was Rebel sence,  
They plac'd, their Idol Fort; Independence  
On each side, up, & down is ditch & Fort,  
It seems that labour, was their daily Sport.<sup>121</sup>

The transformation of a once great and prosperous port city into a war zone represents the antithesis of imperial zeal that characterized British America for much of the eighteenth-

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<sup>120</sup> Serle, "Journal," 198.

<sup>121</sup> *The Toriade*, 176-188.

century. As commerce decays into chaos, the previous harmony of empire gives way to self-destruction and the effacement of nature.

*The Toriade* is not content to leave only a record of the desolation of agriculture and commerce, for, as the speaker shows, learning and the arts also fall victim to rebellion. The image is designed to shock and dismay the addressee, for here the speaker again invokes Cooper as he describes the transformation of King's College into a prison for rebel soldiers.

Now ev'ry Schism Shop throughout this Town  
Are stow'd with Rebels thick as well sous'd Brawn  
E'en yonder stately Royal College too  
Contain's some hundreds of this dirty Crew  
O Cooper Cooper could you but behold  
This seat for learning which you once controul'd  
Its Scholars then were sprightly neat & Trim  
But now how ragged lousy Faith how grim  
Those by your care were learned in the Arts  
These Lucifer doth teach they've Rebel Hearts<sup>122</sup>

The city's seat of learning and Cooper's former employ and habitation is converted to a prison for traitorous rebels whose hearts have been inspired by the devil. The scene is a lament to the imperial topos of *translatio studii* and a collapse of imperial virtue. The destruction of the country and the city, of the noble pursuits of agriculture, commerce, and the polite arts, characterizes the war as being most destructive to the very qualities of

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<sup>122</sup> *The Toriade*, 356-365.

the British Empire that British Americans were most proud. Knowledge, commerce, and now even bare subsistence is forfeited for the ambition of a handful of vain upstarts and the unruly mob they have unleashed on peaceful, loyal bystanders. Though the British have won the battle, and while the poem is clear to lay the blame solely on the rebels, that there was a battle at all has of necessity devastated the lives of those who stood steadfast in their loyalty.

Unlike the hudibrastic satires and bombastic balladery of loyalist invective found in other poems of the period, *The Toriade* adheres to appropriate similes, metaphors, and allusions.<sup>123</sup> There is no disruption of form or style, no irony or satire to indicate anything but the up most sincerity on the part of the poet. The British regulars are depicted as noble liberators freeing the country from the desolation of rebellion, whereas the rebellious Continentals are characterized by their cupidity and cowardice: “The British Army, that had landed there: / The English Officers, both Brave, & Bold / Forbid all Plundering, for Gold Plate or Gold, / Or any quiet Person, to annoy, / Take Rebels, what they can: what not destroy.”<sup>124</sup> Protecting what property they can manage to save from destruction and offering due compensation to the loyalists for what materials they need, the British represent the security offered by royal authority whereas the rebels are cast as selfish thieves.

The advance of the British army across Long Island, through Brooklyn Heights, and on to Manhattan works a civilizing alchemy, as if a tonic has been administered to the body politic. The restoration of law and order engenders loyalty in the hearts of many who had turned rebellious: “Long Island now, is at our King’s Command: / There’s not a

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<sup>123</sup> For a detailed analysis of satire and balladry in loyalist responses to the war, see Gould (84-113).

<sup>124</sup> *The Toriade*, 29-32.

Rebel, in this lengthy Land: / Committee now, and subcommittee Men, / Are Loyal all, and harmless as a Hen.”<sup>125</sup> While recent historical analysis of loyalty oaths reveal that many colonists variously swore allegiance to whichever force happened to be in control of a region at any given moment, within the context of the poem the conversion of rebels is a signifier of the social stability offered by royal authority and obedience to the crown.

Finally, the poem emphasizes Howe’s role as pardoner and as extension of the King’s paternal benevolence: “A gracious Pardon, offer’d unto all, / Nor Congress is exempt, nor Generall. / Mercy beyond our Thought, none sure could ask.”<sup>126</sup> Howe embodies paternal benevolence and filial devotion as a representative of royal authority, a sentiment that echoes Joseph Stansbury’s depiction of Howe as a proxy for the King’s blessings in his poem, “Welcome to Howe.” His clemency after each victory both illustrates the extent of the King’s rule and styles British rule as loving forgiveness in exchange for a deserved filio piety. Like the themes of destruction and liberation, the theme of pardon runs throughout the poem, establishing a pattern of leniency and opportunity presented time and again to the rebels:

After, they’d taken, Rebels strongest Holds  
And drove them to, & fro, like Mice or Moles,  
Then Issu’d forth, a Proclamation free,  
That all who woul’d come in should pardon’d be.  
This Proclamation, Sixty Days doth run,  
Wishing that all, might to their King return.  
What more could King, or King’s Vicegerents, do

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<sup>125</sup> *The Toriade*, 55-58.

<sup>126</sup> *The Toriade*, 77-79.

For a deluded, wretched, Rebel Crew.<sup>127</sup>

Yet, time and again, the rebels' refuse the offer of pardon, an obstinacy that so baffles the poet that he must reconcile it by arguing that rebels' resistance continues due to the venomous words of "Puritanic Priests" who leverage a false logic of sin and perdition into tricking the Rebels that they have already gone too far and the offered pardon cannot possibly be obtained.<sup>128</sup>

The poem ends with Howe, the paragon of military valor, attempting to coax cowardly Washington into a decisive battle, which the rebel chief continually refuses. The last lines end in ambiguity as to Howe's next move and the fate of the colonies, yet, cast in motion, the British General and his Admiral brother are presented as in full control of operations. The poem is structured on a series of parallel themes that make their progress across the colony of New York, into New Jersey, and then speculates as to Philadelphia being the next target. That Howe's Philadelphia campaign is not related leaves us to conclude that the poem was finished before such events took place. The open-ended nature of the poem leaves the reader to believe that British military success will continue to spread throughout the colonies, that Howe will continue to offer proclamations of pardon, and that eventually order will be restored and peace will return to the colonies.

The Battle of Brooklyn was a decisive victory for the British that shattered American morale and caused some to doubt Washington's abilities to lead. Figures on casualties varied widely in the immediate aftermath of the battle. Washington estimated 800 whereas Clinton proposed 6,000 American casualties, the latter being a preposterous

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<sup>127</sup> *The Toriade*, 105-112.

<sup>128</sup> *The Toriade*, 113.

claim. Most modern historians estimate some 300 Americans killed, 650 wounded, and over 1,000 captured, a stunning loss to the nascent army. The problems associated with the desolation of the American countryside and the loss of American lives, rebels though they were, raises the problem of loyalist ambivalence, a particularity that characterizes their position and for so long has made it difficult to generate a coherent, thesis driven history of their literary production during the conflict. While some loyalists, such as the poet of *The Toriade*, were eager to adopt an extreme association with Britishness, others, less zealous in their attachments to either cause, had difficulty shedding their Americanness.

The poet of *The Toriade* takes a strong possessive stance and refers to the British as “our Army” and to Howe as “Our General, with his, brave Troops.”<sup>129</sup> While it may seem reasonable for Loyalists to identify with the British, and loyal British Americans could, on some level, claim an association to any imperial administrative force, it is not at all the case that the Loyalists were consistent in their identification with the British army or saw them as a purely liberating force. Along with deeply felt affections and duties to imperial Britishness, there were strong personal and regional ties that influenced and directed loyalist affect and writing.

The enormity of the Battle of Brooklyn, its destructive toll on the colonists in both lives lost and persons captured, was a shock to all Americans, rebellious and loyal. In Maryland, William Eddis related his response to the events in New York in a letter he sent to his wife, who had fled to England with their son just months before. He relates an “Intelligence of a most alarming nature has been transmitted from New

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<sup>129</sup> *The Toriade*, 144, 139.

York...Particulars of the loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners are not yet ascertained. Maryland has suffered most severely in this conflict, many young men of the most respectable families being included in the number slain.”<sup>130</sup> Eddis was not exaggerating his claims. Maryland suffered some of the greatest casualties of the Battle. During a retreat from Grant’s forces, American infantry under Alexander and Putman realized that Cornwallis and the 71<sup>st</sup> Highlanders had cut them off at Gowanus Creek. Maj. Mordecai Gist led a counter attack of 250 Maryland riflemen, enabling many to escape across Mill Dam Road. In a display of military bravery and discipline otherwise uncharacteristic of the Continental Army at that time, the Marylanders formed ranks and charged Cornwallis, who had installed with artillery at a local farm. Tradition holds that, viewing the counter offence from Brooklyn Heights, Washington exclaimed, “what brave fellows I must lose this day!” The majority of the Marylanders were captured or killed.<sup>131</sup>

Eddis, who had emigrated from England to Maryland under the patronage of Royal Governor Richard Eden, was a Royal official with the Loan Office. His sense of duty to his position and his King was unshakable, yet the sentiments he held toward America and Maryland in particular cannot be doubted. He felt the shock and loss of life, feared deeply for the fate of his adopted country, and continued to hold out hope that a reconciliation between America and Britain would still come to fruition. In Eddis’ letters lay the heart of loyalist ambiguity. Written for an English audience, his letters are a dramatic account of the horrors of civil war. Yet, unlike *The Toriade*, which sought to

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<sup>130</sup> William Eddis, *Letters from America*, ed. Aubrey C. Land (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, [1776] 1969), 169.

<sup>131</sup> Savas and Dameron, 60; Schechter, 153. Walt Whitman makes an oblique reference to the event in his poem “The Sleepers.” While much of the poem underwent substantial revision between 1855 and 1881, the stanza on Washington tearfully looking on the battle from Brooklyn Heights remains largely unchanged across the various edition of *Leaves of Grass*. Whitman also wrote about the battle in “Brooklyniana No. 11” for the *Brooklyn Standard*.

valorize the British and demonize the American rebels, Eddis' letters are stylized by his dual affections for his King and for his adopted country, for his feelings of Englishness and for his affections for his fellow Marylanders, many of whom had recently fallen in battle fighting British Regulars.

With the question of possession comes the question of identity. The anonymous poet of *The Toriade*, whatever his origins, seeks to align himself with the British by laying claim to them as "our Army," thereby identifying New York as British territory and his readers as imperial subjects. Conversely, Eddis, secure in his Englishness through birth and family connections, can maintain an affection for America through the social ties he had made as a colonial official. Throughout the colonies, there were also those whose origins were definitively American and, while loyal, whose sympathies were vexed and confused by the civil strife created by war.

Closer to the events in New York than Eddis was in Maryland, the Quaker community in Philadelphia and its environs offers us a microcosm of the ambiguities that lay at the heart of much American loyalism. Judith Van Buskirk has shown that many Loyalists were "torn individuals" who "could not divorce themselves from their native communities."<sup>132</sup> While recording the events of the Battle of Trenton, Sarah Logan Fisher described the Continentals as "our American army," "our Whigs," and referred to the British and those fighting with them as "the Tories" and "the English."<sup>133</sup> While loyal, Quakers, such as Fisher, Elizabeth Drinker, Anna Rawle, Milcah Martha Moore, and Hannah Griffitts thought of themselves as Americans, loyal British Americans, but

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<sup>132</sup> Judith Van Buskirk, "They Didn't Join the Band: Disaffected Women in Revolutionary Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania History*, 62.3 (1995): 313.

<sup>133</sup> Cited in Van Buskirk, 313



Americans just the same. They understood the rebels to be their rebels, the Continentals to be their army, composed of their neighbors and former friends. The British, on the other hand, were an occupying army. They were the English, come to restore constitutional imperial order perhaps, but distinctly other in their manners and affiliations.

There could be cultural as well as regional reasons as to why the Quaker response to the Battle of Brooklyn differs somewhat from that of the literary productions among the Anglican clergy. There having been no Anglican Bishop in the colonies, American Episcopal ministers had to travel to London for their ordination before they could officiate in the Anglican churches in America. The time spent in London led to a stronger social and intellectual adherence to Britain in some cases, and Philadelphia Anglicans such as Thomas Coombe, Jacob Duché, William Smith, and William White shared a longing for an American Anglican Bishopric along with New York ministers such as Myles Cooper and Samuel Seabury. The fact that for Anglicans, independence meant not only a political but a religious and spiritual break, along with many of their most intellectually and publicly engaged authors having spent requisite time in the metropolis, could account for their strict adhesion to British identity. Whereas the Quakers' emphasis on fellowship and friendship allowed for a more pluralist affection grounded in region and familiarity. Indeed, many of the leading loyalist Quaker poets were women who held attachments to staunchly entrenched Anglicans, such as Elizabeth Graeme Fergusson, and moderate Whigs with rebel associations, such as Annis Boudinot Stockton. Unwilling to sacrifice longstanding ties of affection and intellectual fellowship,

many of the Quaker loyalists sought to maintain ties of regional identity through a literature of shared suffering and loss.

Other notable Quakers responded to the outbreak of hostilities with equal concern. In 1776, Robert Proud, the sometimes head of the Friends' Latin School, was briefly imprisoned, where he met Joseph Stansbury and composed his poem, "Written on a Card with a Pencil, the Author being deprived of Pen Ink & Paper," which speaks to the tenacity of loyalist sentiment, even while incarcerated:

True to our King, our Country & our Laws

[...]

In vaults with bars & Iron doors confin'd,

They hold our Persons, but can't rule the Mind.

Act now we cannot, else we freely wou'd,

But calmly suffer for our Country's Good<sup>134</sup>

Proud wrote extensively throughout the war. In addition to sending many letters to his brothers in England, he also turned to the translation of Latin classics that he felt were appropriate meditations on the American crisis. Around the time immediately following the Battle of Brooklyn, Proud translated works from Seneca and Boethius. His translation of Seneca's Tragedy of Thyestes focused primarily on the Chorus; however, the drama's overall theme of civil war between the brothers, Atreus and Thyestes, speaks to the way many Loyalists understood the Revolution. The drama's Chorus emphasizes the follies of false pride, unnatural violence, the enormity of war, and the dangers of striving toward empires slippery heights parallels many of the common tropes of loyalist

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<sup>134</sup> Robert Proud Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 0529. For more on Odell, Proud, and Stansbury in prison, see Silverman, 308.

criticisms on the patriot cause. Additionally, Boethius, with his meditations on human happiness and the possibility of achieving it in the midst of the suffering and disappointment which play so large a part in human experience, was of extreme importance to Proud during the fall of 1776, and it is clear that both Seneca and Boethius characterize Proud's understanding of the war.

Proud not only sought solace in the classics; he also composed his own verse to cope with and rationalize his wartime experience. Around the time immediately following the Battle of Brooklyn, he wrote a "Pastoral Eulogium, 1776 – 10 mo.," in which he laments the fallen state of the colonies and expresses his feelings of disorientation and isolation at being cut off from his previous associations in Britain:

To distant Regions when I've run  
Beneath the occidental Sun  
[...]  
Where fell Rebellion stares around,  
Where Blood & Slaughter strew the ground;  
Where ev'ry kind & tender Part  
Is banish'd from the human-Heart<sup>135</sup>

Not unlike Ambrose Serle, who in his journal expressed sorrow and confusion over the destruction of the American landscape at the prospect of war, Proud's "Pastoral Eulogium" grieves for the land stained red by rebellion, but he goes further in his mourning to include the ill effects that war has had on his fellow men, who have had kindness shut out of them by their mad pursuit. Such loss of sympathy has had the double

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<sup>135</sup> Robert Proud Collection, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 0529.

effect of dehumanizing the rebels and isolating Proud, both from the society of his fellow Philadelphians, whose brotherly love he no longer knows, and from the protection he once felt through his association with Britain.

Unlike *The Toriade*'s epic trappings that highlight the poem's affections of pride in British victory, the operative mode of Quaker poetic response to the war was the lamentation, the elegy. Quaker elegy took many forms throughout the war. In response to the Battle of Brooklyn, a moral sympathy for their neighbors who suffered the loss of loved ones in battle dominates.<sup>136</sup> Hannah Griffitts' poem, "The sympathetic Scene – wrote August 31st 1776 – occasioned by the unnatural Contest at Long Island Augst. 27th. & 28<sup>th</sup>," offers us the most ardent example of elegiac sympathy on behalf of fallen Americans from the perspective of a loyalist. Born in Philadelphia to an established Quaker family, Griffitts left an extensive body of poetry on a variety of topics, mostly in manuscript. "The sympathetic Scene...", which is found in Milcah Martha Moore's common place book, illustrates how "Hannah Griffitts' poetry espoused moderation and castigated extremism in any form" and expressed loyalist "ambivalence most clearly."<sup>137</sup> Moore's commonplace book consists chiefly of poetry written during the 1760s and 1770s and was compiled by Moore during the middle of the revolutionary crisis. Karin Wulf and Catherine La Courneye Blecki both persuasively argue that Moore's

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<sup>136</sup> Shields argues, "the avoidance of print to communicate sentiment became a hallmark not so much of gentility as of those discursive communities that most avidly embraced moral sentimentalism. In particular, it marked the discursive practice of educated women" (319). Shields goes on to argue that it was just such discursive spheres of civility and moral sympathy that would later provide the basis for holding the nascent nation together during the tumultuous years of the early republic. I would add that the character of loyalty was held over into the early national period and reconceived by those loyalists who remained after the war and that further scholarship needs to consider how the loyalists were integral in sustaining the United States culturally during its earliest years.

<sup>137</sup> Karin A. Wulf, "Milcah Martha Moore's Book: Documenting Culture and Connection in the Revolutionary Era," *Milcah Martha Moore's Book: A Commonplace Book from Revolutionary America*, ed. Catherine La Courneye Blecki and Karin A. Wulf (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State UP), 38, 41, 44.

compilations and arrangement reveal the book to be a thoughtful commentary on the lived circumstances of the revolution, as understood by Moore and her circle, who were predominantly Quaker loyalists living in and around British occupied Philadelphia. While building upon a vibrant women's literary culture that long predated the outbreak of hostilities, Moore's book shows how such a semi-public manuscript culture of polite letters could and was transformed into a meditation on and a response to the war as well as its destructive effects on sociability. Wulf argues that Moore's book "represents a particular geographical experience of the American Revolution."<sup>138</sup> I would add that her commonplace book's broad-ranging concerns over the condition of far off battles and of fellow loyalists in prison and in exile extends Moore and her circle's traditional geographic sensibilities, and like *The Toriade*, signals concerns and affections that far exceed the presumed parochialism of manuscript literary culture.

Griffitts' poetic response documents the communal suffering that the Battle of Brooklyn spread throughout the colonies. Two battalions of Pennsylvania riflemen were stationed on the far left at Jamaica Pass and Bedford. Once they had realized that the British had moved behind them in the night, they belatedly scrambled to take on Howe and Clinton's forces. With so many gone to join the Continental Army and with such loss of life, Griffitts' poem casts a scene of widows and orphans mourning the loss of their beloved husbands and fathers:

The Scenes of speechless Woe, where Widows mourn

The tender Husband lost, -- where Orphans weep

Th' indulgent Friend & Father known no more,

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<sup>138</sup> Wulf, 45.

Where the sad Sister faints beneath the Stroke  
That rent th' associate Brother from her Heart,  
Here clad in sympathetic sorrows Gloom  
My Soul retires, to share my neighbors' Grief<sup>139</sup>

There is bitterness and sorrow, and yet not malice. Griffitts mourns with the families of those men who fell fighting the British Army. As she “shares [her] neighbors’ Grief,” the speaker of the poem transcends political lines. Like William Eddis, her affection for those close to her outweighs a desire for decisive British military victory, for with such victory must come the desolation of the country and the loss of many lives.

Griffitts’ poem emphasizes the affective tension she feels as her desires for peace are confronted by the irrecoverable loss of her former friends and neighbors. The poem articulates a crisis of alliance that can only be resolved by a cessation of hostilities, yet the speaker is willing to forestall political victory in hope that a shared sympathy might prove strong enough to overcome past grievances. While the poetic act gives voice to so many suffering, the gestures of common kindness and fellowship between neighbors can do little to assuage the loss: “But Words are vain, the Powers of Harmony / Are useless here, ev’n Friendships soothing Voice / Has lost its Calm, in Woundings like to yours.”<sup>140</sup>

Unlike *The Toriade*, which characterizes the rebels as misguided sheep too weak to best the British Army and too vain to accept pardon, Griffitts’ speaker implicates the patriot leaders of the Continental Congress in the loss of life and the destruction of the colonies.

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<sup>139</sup> Hannah Griffitts. “The sympathetic Scene – wrote August 31<sup>st</sup> 1776 – occasioned by the unnatural Contest at Long Island Augst. 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>,” *Milcah Martha Moore's Book: A Commonplace Book from Revolutionary America*, ed. Catherine La Courreye Blecki and Karin A. Wulf (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State UP), ln. 2-8.

<sup>140</sup> Griffitts, ln. 17-19.

Her elegy offers a clearer depiction of the conflict as a civil war, and she lays the blame squarely on the Continentals' shoulders:

-- But you, whose mad Ambition lawless Grasp  
Of proud Dominion, & tyrannic Power  
Have spread the Flames of War around the Shores  
Where Peace once smil'd & social Union dwelt;  
How will you stand, the retributive Hour  
Or bear the Close of dread Decision's Voice,  
When, as you mingled deep the Cup of Woe  
For suffering Souls,-- so well yr. Soul partake  
The deeply mingled Cup of Woe again?—  
You – have dissolv'd the tender Bands of Nature  
And torne asunder (by the ruthless Hand  
Of horrid War) the dear, the soft Connections  
Which Heaven had join'd & blest, til you arose  
The Scourge of Desolation on their Peace.—  
To you, the Widow & the Orphan, look  
With heart felt Anguish, as their Source of Woe  
And in the Pang of Grief from you demand  
The Husband, Father, & the Brother lost.<sup>141</sup>

Despite such a hard chastisement, Griffitts offers hope through moral sentiment. If the Americans would heed “the weeping Muse” and “Go, view thy Brother[s]” then perhaps

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<sup>141</sup> Griffitts, 27-44.

these wicked “Sons of Woe,” a clever play on Sons of Liberty, would be moved to the same tears as forlorn widows and orphans. Griffitts implores both sides to meet, “And may he meet you, here, -- in Mercy meet / Upon the Bed of Languishment, & speak / The Voice of Peace & Pardon to yr. Souls,” then perhaps both patriot and Loyalist, both American and Britain, may learn to forgive.<sup>142</sup> Unlike the satire of New York Anglicans, or of the paper wars leading up to the revolt, Griffitts’ poem feels the loss on behalf of all Americans, rebels and Loyalists. And it is only through a reconciliation amongst British Americans, rather than between the colonial and home governments, that peace and love, and thereby social order, may be restored to the land.

Loyalist manuscript poetic responses to the Battle of Brooklyn illustrate both the ambivalence of their authors’ political positions and their deep sense of loss at the desolation of their country along with the loss of their friends and neighbors. These are poems that are concerned with events both near and far, written both for members of their own intimate circle as well as to those who had fled and those who had fallen. In reconsidering and recovering these poems, we not only recover forgotten perspectives on the American Revolution, we also recover modes of writing that highlight the intimacy and passion of literary works, the force of poetry that draws from the chaos of human experience and codifies that experience into transmittable expressions that may be understood across regions and over time. In addition to the many poetic satirical attacks that fall in line with much of the prose polemics that proliferated in the lead-up to open hostilities, poetry also offered the Loyalists a sense of communal belonging and a shared sympathy that extended to their fellow Americans whose way of life had also been

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<sup>142</sup> Griffitts, 58-60.



disrupted by war. It is in their manuscript literature, more so than in the print record, which the Loyalists' deep ambivalence toward the conflict comes into greatest relief. That many Loyalists turned to poetry as a means to express their pride and their suffering reveals to us a rich archive for further research, reconsideration, and rediscovery. More importantly, the manuscript record further manifests the great depth and breadth of suffering on both sides and the potential for sympathy with one's supposed enemies.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### “THAT AFFLICTED AND TRYING SEASON”: ROBERT PROUD AND THE PROBLEM OF LOYALIST SUBJECTIVITY

In order to accomplish a reassessment of the Loyalists and their role in the historical context of the American Revolution, we must also account for the Loyalists' own conceptions of history and time. Philip Gould, Ed Larkin, and Maya Jasanoff have argued that the loyalists offer an alternative account of the print culture, literary history, and imperial implications of the American Revolution. Gould, Larkin, and Jasanoff's scholarship directly intervenes in the critical narrative of the Revolution whereby the patriot movement becomes a synecdoche for American culture. By offering an alternative history of writing and printing that accounts seriously for the British American Loyalists, they open up the discourse of American history in a manner that scrutinizes the very core notions of what defines America as a stable national unity.

Whereas previous studies of the Loyalists focus largely on the Loyalists' place in the historical narratives of the American Revolution and the British Empire, or as a marker of their own stylistic expression within a greater Anglo-American literary tradition, we might also recover Loyalism as a characteristic of experience, as being felt and perceived through what J. G. A. Pocock refers to as a “politics of time.” Gould focuses on the Loyalists' place within the larger framework of transatlantic book history to counter traditional nationalist literary histories. Similarly, Larkin's analysis of Peter

Oliver's *The Origin and Progress of the American Rebellion* offers a counter history of the American Revolution from a loyalist perspective. Both Gould and Larkin highlight the Loyalists' generic and stylistic idiosyncrasies, especially what Gould refers to as loyalist anxieties concerning the "elasticity of language" and Larkin's assessment of Oliver's "profound distrust of language," in order to recover loyalist thought and literary practices through a comparative model that reads the Loyalists against the Patriots and a received nationalist literary historical tradition. Working within this dialog, I contribute a reconsideration of the Loyalists' own conceptions of time as a lived experience of suffering and consider this alternative tradition as an influence on the nascent United States in the wake of independence.<sup>143</sup>

This chapter examines the life and writings of Robert Proud (1728-1813), a Loyalist and sometime instructor of the Friends Latin School who remained in Philadelphia after the American Revolution and lived well into the early national period. In recovering Robert Proud and his writings, we broaden the scope of what we may call loyalist writings by seriously considering the private letters, diaries, and manuscripts of persons traditionally classified as Loyalists as a means to supplement our knowledge of the greater socio-cultural climate in which the explicitly printed political writings that Gould and Larkin analyze. In conversation with Jasanoff's study of the effects of loyalist diaspora throughout the British Empire, I focus on the experience and influence of rehabilitated Loyalists in the early national period. Here, I take the case of Robert Proud to be an example of how one man's sentiments may circulate in a fashion that allows

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<sup>143</sup> J. G. A. Pocock, *Politics, Language, and Time: Essays on Political Thought and History* (Chicago: U Chicago P, 1989), 39; Gould, 6; Edward Larkin, "Seeing Through Language: Narrative, Portraiture, and Character in Peter Oliver's *The Origin and Progress of the American Rebellion*," *Early American Literature*, 36.3 (2001): 431, 451 n. 8.

history to craft a narrative of loyalty that will itself problematize the very act of historicism. Robert Proud's own hermeneutical response to the revolution encourages us to reconsider how Loyalists made meaning out of their chaotic times and disrupted sense of place. Proud engages with his historical moment through a variety of genres, most predominantly the letter, verse elegy, and the translation of works from classical and late antiquity, as a means of mediating his internal suffering, contextualizing his experience of loyalty, and of stabilizing his sense of English identity in a rebellious colony. Recent scholarship has done much to illuminate not only the political but also the aesthetic register of loyalist writing in the years leading up to open hostilities. I hope to build on this strong foundation and add to it an account of how Loyalists affectively engaged with the devastating consequences of the Revolution. Additionally, the broader scope of my argument aims to show how the affective, cultural, and literary communities of colonial America influenced loyalist representations of time and space, specifically with regard to feelings of displacement and cultural distance along with feelings of loss, chaos, and decay.<sup>144</sup>

Time, as a structure of experience, underwent radical changes throughout the early modern period; changes which drastically altered the function and nature of narrative, history, nationhood, and individual subjectivity. These changes in time's role in structuring human experience can be traced through much recent scholarship on cultural understandings of time, temporality, history, and historiography from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries. Specific to how Anglo-Americans

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<sup>144</sup> As Mary Beth Norton argued in her seminal study, *The British Americans* (Little, Brown, 1972), loyalty was the unquestioned, default cultural identity of all British Americans, and it is not until independence becomes a viable issue that an explicit loyalist party emerges.

understood their place in time, works by Stuart Sherman and Molly McCarthy explore the role of timepieces and almanacs in restructuring both daily practices and the interior worlds of the English and Americans respectively, constituting what Sherman identifies as a “new prose structure” and what McCarthy refers to as a new “performance of self.”<sup>145</sup> With these emergent understandings of the individual’s relationship to time comes a broader cultural engagement with time constituted in part by the public sphere. Scholars such as Michael Lienesch, Thomas M. Allen, and Lloyd Pratt have all taken up the increasingly heterogeneous experiences of homogenous, empty time as they relate to competing national narratives in the early republic and antebellum periods. However, none of these scholars deals explicitly with the American Revolution or the Loyalists’ experience of time.<sup>146</sup>

Yet, even within the narrow scope of transatlantic cultural studies, synthesizing the scholarship on the history of time proves alternately daunting and repetitive, depending on what generic and affective historical experiences one wishes to recover. As Lynn Hunt has pointed out, “there is little agreement about the precise origins of modern temporality, although most scholars trace them to the ‘early modern period.’ Some find

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<sup>145</sup> Stuart Sherman, *Telling Time: Clocks, Diaries, and English Diurnal Form 1660-1785* (Chicago: U Chicago P, 1996); Molly McCarthy, *The Accidental Diarist: A History of the Daily Planner in America* (Chicago: U Chicago P, 2013).

<sup>146</sup> Michael Lienesch, *New Order of the Ages: Time, the Constitution, and the Making of Modern American Political Thought* (Princeton UP, 1988); Thomas M. Allen, *A Republic in Time: Temporality and Social Imagination in Nineteenth-Century America* (UNC Press, 2008); Lloyd Pratt, *Archives of American Time: Literature and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (U Pennsylvania P, 2010). I realize that heterogeneous experiences of homogenous, empty time sounds like a bit of a contradiction in terms; however, the common thread among Lienesch, Allen, and Pratt is the paradoxical, competing, and complex cultural histories of temporal experience in America. Indeed, many of their introductory remarks are structured by how binary oppositions compete for dominance over historical and temporal narratives that will come to define American identity and subjective experience. While each of these authors is concerned with national narratives in a post-revolutionary world, I hope to isolate Robert Proud as an example of how similar terms of historical inquiry might be used to illustrate and define the Loyalists’ own experience of time during the Revolution and how such terms reveal a lasting impression on later national narratives.

the sources of what Walter Benjamin called ‘homogeneous, empty time’ in the age of discoveries made by the new science and European overseas voyages.” Hunt’s general assessment is capacious enough to allow for an analysis of a “certain suspension of belief about temporal continuity” that troubles the very nature of historiography by interrogating the nature of what constitutes historical writing.<sup>147</sup>

It is through this question of what constitutes historical writing that we may recover alternative ways in which the Loyalists expressed their position in history and time. Pocock argues “every paradigmatic language contains a structure of implications concerning time, which can further be shown to embody a mode or modes of conceptualizing political society itself as existing in time.” He goes on to show how such structures of time originate from both “institutional forms” as well as “languages available for stating how an emergent event maybe cognized and acted upon as it occurs in an extra-political continuum of time.”<sup>148</sup> While Pocock, like Benedict Anderson, argues for an increasingly progressive, secular notion of time out of which ideas of modern nationalism might emerge, his assessment of language and time may be utilized to articulate residual as well as emergent discourses on time and subjectivity. If we may use an historical subject’s language to recover how an “emergent event may be cognized,” then we may use the same methods to assess how resistance to the same emergent event was cognized and articulated. Larkin’s study of Peter Oliver is instructive for his recognition that Loyalist literature was “fundamentally anti-public-sphere” in nature.<sup>149</sup> Similarly, in what follows, I take up Pocock’s method of identifying the

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<sup>147</sup> Lynn Hunt, “‘No Longer an Evenly Flowing River’: Time History, and the Novel,” *The American Historical Review*. 103.5 (1998): 1520.

<sup>148</sup> Pocock, *Politics, Language, and Time*, 39.

<sup>149</sup> Larkin, “Seeing Through Language,” 447.

“problem...of discerning the languages, explicit or implicit, concerning time” and apply it to the writings of Robert Proud in order to illustrate that, for the Loyalists, time was an affective register of suffering that constituted a unique political identity during the revolutionary period.<sup>150</sup>

*Loyalist suffering & Proud’s theology of time*

On 1 December 1777, Robert Proud, a Quaker resident of Philadelphia, opens a letter to his brother, William, still living in England, as follows:

After more than two years Interruption of our Correspondence, during which time, if I mistake not, I have neither wrote nor received any Letter from thee, the way is now again opened between us, the Kings Troops having taken Possession of this City by Land, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of 9<sup>th</sup> mo. last.

This instance of transatlantic communication reveals the stress of a family separated by the discontents of war – a common enough tale. What I find interesting about it is the means by which the common practices of historiography have appropriated this intimate communication and others like it, for its own meta-historical ends. For finding comfort in the occupation of Philadelphia by British forces, Proud is often written off as a Tory and a Loyalist. Proud had loyalist sympathies; indeed, he was an ardent Loyalist who self-identified as an “Englishman,” but what concerns us here is how it is that we feel justified in labeling Proud as such. How is it that historians and Proud’s own contemporaries are able to identify him, a pacifist Quaker who finds comfort in the ideology of the Crown and the hierarchical order that it promises to its willing subjects, as loyalist? I will here reassess the character of Robert Proud and his writings, not so much as to overthrow common notions of political identity during the Revolutionary period in American

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<sup>150</sup> Pocock, *Politics, Language, and Time*, 153.

history, but more to reevaluate the means by which Proud's writing exemplifies a peculiarly loyalist mode of expression. One register for how we do so is through Proud's representations of time in his autobiography, letters, and poetry. Proud represents time both as a condition of man's fallen nature and as a force that acts upon man. Proud's representations of time reveal a parallel representation of the Revolution that allow us to identify his loyalist sentiments.<sup>151</sup>

Briefly, the historical context to which Proud's letter alludes is that on 19 September 1777, Alexander Hamilton sent word to John Hancock that it might be necessary to evacuate Philadelphia, then the seat of the Continental Congress. General concern and confusion spread throughout the city, with Congress ultimately adjourning and removing to Lancaster. Most of the prominent patriots and people of means left the city, and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Hamilton made a sweep through Philadelphia to remove anything that might be of use to the British Forces – especially arms, blankets, clothing, and horses. The bells were also removed for fear the British might use them for shot, with the Liberty Bell hidden in Allentown. Rumors of British invasion, potential battle, and fears that the city would be burned to the ground circulated for the next several days, creating a state of anxiety. General William Howe moved the British forces across the Schuylkill and stationed the bulk of his army in Germantown with little event on the 25<sup>th</sup>. At 8:30 am on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September, Howe sent Lord Charles Cornwallis, with approximately 3,000 British troops, to occupy Philadelphia. They arrived in procession,

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<sup>151</sup> Robert Proud, "The Letters of Robert Proud," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 34 (1910): 62; Robert Proud, "He is an Englishman," Robert Proud Collection, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 0529.

Though the variations are minor, I will follow Proud's orthography throughout. Also, the dating system that Proud uses follows the Quaker practice of referring to the months in their numerical order: e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> mo. (month) = January, 12<sup>th</sup> mo. = December, &c.



at 10 am, looking considerably cleaner, better organized, and better rested than their Continental counterparts, to the relief of the many Loyalists who remained in the city.<sup>152</sup>

However, the Philadelphia Loyalists had various and sundry reasons for feeling liberated by the British army. The Congress, the Committees of Safety, and other non-official Patriot groups had harassed many Quakers and other pacifists for their refusal to explicitly aid in the Revolutionary effort. Also, the anxiety and rumors surrounding the possible violence of battle within the city proper was much allayed upon the peaceful arrival of British Forces, adding an element of security to an otherwise insecure world. Finally, there is no reason to assume that those who remained in Philadelphia during the occupation were in any way of a single mind or sensibility. As Elizabeth Drinker, the great Quaker diarist of late eighteenth-century Philadelphia, remarks in her entry for 25 September 1777, “a great number of the lower sort of the People are gone out” to greet the British forces. Drinker’s disparaging remark implies that, from her perspective, there were plenty of unsavory residents eager to gain favor with the newly established authority. In all likelihood Proud shared Drinker’s sentiments, yet it bears remembering that Proud, though certainly irked by the Revolutionaries and sympathetic to the British had, by the British occupation of the city, once again been afforded the opportunity to communicate with his family.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> See: Stephen R. Taaffe, *The Philadelphia Campaign, 1777-1778* (UP Kansas, 2003), 89-91; John W. Jackson, *With the British Army in Philadelphia, 1777-1778* (New York: Presidio Press, 1979), 11-20; Elizabeth Drinker, *The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker Volume One*, ed. Elaine Forman Crane (Boston: Northeastern UP, 1991), 232-236.

<sup>153</sup> Drinker, 235. The politics and sentiments of Philadelphia Quakers are among the extreme examples of loyalist ambivalence toward the Revolutionary crisis. The diaries and poetry of Elizabeth Drinker, Sarah Fisher, Hannah Griffitts, and Milcah Martha Moore offer a variety of loyalist Quaker perspectives of British Occupied Philadelphia. Additionally, the manuscript and printed poetry of Jonathan Odell and Joseph Stansbury offer the literary perspectives of loyalists who also worked as bureaucratic officials during the occupation.

The two brothers, separated by an ocean and by the contingent nature of war, are, now that the King's Troops have opened up communication between the colonial outpost and the metropolitan center at London, able to commit the precarious act of writing to one another. Eve Tavor Bannet has argued for the importance of letter writing in the formation of not only the British Empire, but of a transatlantic sense of British culture and identity. Her emphasis on the importance of "letteracy" on the historical development of an increasingly global British sociability through epistolary discourse shows how letter writing was crucial in establishing colonists' ability to feel "British" regardless of where they were within the empire. Bannet's assessment of letter writing as a means to maintain and disseminate British cultural identity across the Atlantic certainly applies to Proud; however, the Revolution clearly caused frequent disruption of communication that were themselves endemic of the precarity of the American branch of British Empire and which are intimately linked to Proud's own threatened sense of Englishness. So long as Proud can write home to his family in England, who he is and where he is can remain English. In addition to documenting the events of the conflict and their consequences for those living in Philadelphia, Robert Proud's letters also articulate the Revolution as a lived experience of loyalty. Unlike the polemics of more public figures, Proud's loyalty is defined by his persistent and continued attachment to his feelings of Englishness and his devotion to routine. As such, Proud's writings are a rare expression of the many Loyalists who did not take an active part in the revolution, of the many statistical Loyalists of historical analysis who left no explicit record of their loyalty, but whose loyalty can be inferred from the greater historical record. However, this being a literary study of loyalism, my purpose here is to recover and better contextualize Proud's writings as well

as illustrate that Robert Proud's writings are an example of a common mode of loyalty to Britain. As such, his writings are valuable for their sentiment as well as their aesthetic. What we find in Proud's writing, in addition to a manipulation of space that extends Britain to wherever his act of writing occurs, is also a reiteration of Proud's conscious resistance to historical change. His continued refusal to accept the United States as a fact of history is articulated by his enduring loyalty to Britain even though he continued to live in Philadelphia.<sup>154</sup>

Proud's letters to his brothers, William and John, both living in England, reveal much about the material conditions of Philadelphia during the crisis in America. Perhaps most interesting are Proud's concerns revolving around the contingency of life during wartime. Themes of time, loss, insufficiency, and decay color Proud's otherwise material reporting of the state of things in the rebel colony. Furthermore, those few who do read Proud's documents often claim to notice a glaring omission in his writings – a decisive lack of mention of the Revolutionary forces during the years of conflict. It has become common practice to read Proud as only circumspectly referring to the American forces in his private communications and his total elision of the Revolutionary War from his *History of Pennsylvania*, as a representation of his embittered loyalist sympathies. It is not quite as simple as that. Proud does refer to the general body of people and events that make up the Revolutionary War in his own indirect manner. It is just these historical and character assumptions that I wish to interrogate. What exactly is a Loyalist? What are the traits that allow us to identify any given historical personage as “patriot,” “loyalist,” or otherwise? I suggest that, in the case of Robert Proud, the experience of time becomes a

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<sup>154</sup> Eve Tavor Bannet, *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1680-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005).

defining register through which Proud filters the crisis in America and by which we as literary historians may come to an understanding of loyalist rhetorical and literary practices.

There is a painful and precarious nature to time in Proud's writings. Many, including himself, have commented that he lived in the wrong place at the wrong time. Disappointment seems to have followed the unfortunate Quaker in all of his pursuits, causing him to lament his time spent in America and on Earth and to long for a more stable existence under Royalist control and divine salvation. In the opening of his brief Autobiographical manuscript, Robert Proud refers to his time "resided in Philadelphia now many years, which have seemed to me very short and fleeting, tho' attended with much vicissitude, tribulation and disappointment." There is a dilation in his recollection here that occurs through his writing. Time is not necessarily stable or linear in Proud's worldview, but rather a chaotic result of man's sins and ambitions. Having seen most of his ambitions dashed on the rocks of circumstance, Proud turns toward more structured modes of social belonging in the hope of finding, if not happiness, at least security. He finds neither in his lifetime.<sup>155</sup>

Proud's Quaker faith, his pacifism and his desire for security, color his reactions to the war. He comes to associate temporal affairs, such as the shifting economic and political climate that leads to revolution with a post-lapsarian state of constant change and turmoil, the only remedies to which he is able to identify being God and the King. He comes to view royal sovereignty as a relative constant in an otherwise inconsistent world, a system that allows for structure. Without either God or the King, man is lost in time,

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<sup>155</sup> Robert Proud, "Autobiography of Robert Proud, The Historian," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 13 (1890), 430.

lost to chaos, and therefore a subject of confusion and suffering rather than a subject of a benevolent Lord of order. Given the time he finds himself in, Proud is become a desperate man on the edge of the wilderness. He laments to his brother that “when every Dispensation has a Tendency to bring nearer to that true Happiness and Tranquility which is out of the Reach of all the Vicissitudes of Temporal Affairs, and can never be affected by human Contingencies; this the nature of the present Times here may doubtless affect on some Minds.” The influence of the Revolution, what he refers to here as “the present Times,” affects “some,” and we should here read Proud referring obliquely to his own mind, to be displeased with the temporal affairs of war and long for the security afforded by the occupation of the city, a situation which Proud takes to be a shadow of a reality beyond human contingency, beyond the folly of man. Proud’s oblique references to the Revolution are not so much bitter dismissals as they are a representation of his own experience of occupied Philadelphia. His desire for structure and security, rather than the glory of war and the striving for liberty, position Proud to be cast in a narrative of loyalist sympathies.<sup>156</sup>

It is worth pointing out that, whether it be the King’s troops or the Continental Congress, for Proud, the contingent world of Philadelphia was always one under occupation of some sort. He not only avoids discussing the Continentals, but also the British evacuation and the martial role of some Loyalists are absent from his documentation of events. He was a man controlled largely by a sense of helplessness in the world, a man who expressed himself through a discreet lack of agency. Again referring to time, Proud, rather than taking action or expressing a desire to extend himself

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<sup>156</sup> Proud, “The Letters of Robert Proud,” 66.

through time, styles himself as a victim of circumstance, a man who is incapable of overcoming and controlling time: “I desire my Mother and Relations may be informed how I am, as opportunity offers; whom I still hope to see, tho I can fix no Time.” This same sheepish desire for security often undermines readings of Proud as a Loyalist insofar as it one, takes away just as much agency as would be necessary to advocate for the Crown; and two, locks him into a passivity that leads to his remainder in America. It is worthwhile to note that Proud’s brother John lived with him in Philadelphia during the 1770s and the two failed at business together. John made an early decision to return to England. Robert remained. By remaining in Philadelphia, Robert Proud underwent a metamorphosis from British colonial to British American Loyalist, and his writing is refracted by the lens of his experiences of suffering. Proud’s stylistic coping mechanisms, his passive relationship to time complicates both his lived experience in revolutionary Philadelphia and his stylistic documentation and poetic responses to the crisis in America. His loyalist rhetorical style parallels his own personal crises of security and identity. He refuses to set a date to see his family.<sup>157</sup>

Such a task, though difficult, was possible, given the many evacuations of loyalists from America during and immediately following the war. His most thorough biographer, John Merrill Beeson, has commented, “if he despised the new government he could have emigrated,” and points out that as early as 1766 “he contemplated a trip home.” What is more, Proud’s younger brother, William, offered several times

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<sup>157</sup> Proud, “The Letters of Robert Proud,” 67; For recent scholarship that clarifies the definition of loyalist see: Edward Larkin, “What is a Loyalist?” *Common-Place* 8.1 (2007): <http://www.common-place.org/vol-08/no-01/larkin/>; and Kacy Tillman, “What is a Female Loyalist?” *Common-Place* 13.4 (2013): <http://www.common-place.org/vol-13/no-04/tillman/>. Larkin and Tillman each interrogate and expand the historical category of who constitutes a loyalist.

throughout and after the war, to fund Robert's return to England. As late as 1793, William continued to suggest that Robert could make his home with him upon his return to England. What I would here argue is that Proud's inaction forecloses him out of the active demeanor that is the tenor of revolutionary modes of behavior. There is a binary problem here: one is either a revolutionary or a loyalist. Proud is not a revolutionary; therefore, he is a loyalist. There is a syllogistic logic that has for too long been in command of narratives of the Revolution, and I believe that by a more nuanced reading of bizarre marginal characters, such as Proud, we may come to a better understanding of why the Revolution played out in the manner that it did.<sup>158</sup>

In what he referred to as "that afflicted and trying season," Proud fashioned for himself an elaborate conceit of natural philosophy and mythic ages of transition in which to couch his frustrations. In a letter to his brother, John, dated "Anno 10<sup>th</sup>, 1778," we have a taste of not only Proud's insular sufferings, but also a glimpse at the narrative and possessive structures he began to construct in order to place agency outside of individual human action and onto a greater, multivalent system of power: "almost as a Prisoner now for several years, including the Time of the Rebels possessing it, when it was not safe for such as I am to go out, and since the King's Troops came in, that we are confined within the Lines; together with the Change of the Manner of Living in these distressing Times." Here, time becomes a season. It takes on genitive properties of possession and being possessed – the time of... - it becomes a force of nature, sublime and insurmountable, ever

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<sup>158</sup> John Merrill Beeson, "Robert Proud (1728-1813): a Biography" (Dissertation, The Pennsylvania State University, 1974), 151, 65, 116; William Proud to Robert Proud, 22 January 1778, Proud Mss., Folder 59, Library Company of Philadelphia; William Proud to Robert Proud, 18 June 1785, Proud Mss., Folder 93, Library Company of Philadelphia; William Proud to Robert Proud, 23 July 1793, Proud Mss., Folder 139, Library Company of Philadelphia.

present and ever morphing. Whether it is the time of the Rebels or the time of the King's Troops, time envelops Proud, trapping him and arresting him within itself.<sup>159</sup>

The war not only wrought havoc on Proud's own mythical sense of time as a season possessed by ambitious men; it also altered the material cycles of nature's own seasons, disrupting patterns of production related to agriculture and the various artisanal works that allow for husbandry, stewardship, and commerce. With this perpetual season of war disrupting the seasons of harvest and commerce, Philadelphia enters an inflation spike: "even if the Army should remove, or the Country be laid open to the City, much of it is in such a ruinous and neglected Condition, by Reason of the War, that the Prices of these and similar Articles will in the opinion of most People here still Continue not to be low." The two modes of time entwine to create a mutual reinforcement of suffering for those who attempt to maintain a civil and peaceable lifestyle. "One thing is perhaps necessary to be considered, it appears very unlikely that there will be much Produce of this Country, to export for a considerable Time to come to make Remittances as usual formerly." Proud recognizes time as a force that is linked to the economy and wellbeing of the colonies as well as that of trade and discourse between the colonies and the metropolitan center.<sup>160</sup>

Proud attempts various speculation schemes surrounding the importation of dry goods from England and other colonies, yet again, his sense of timing is one of loss and passivity. Hopeful as he is that the "present Dullness may probably be the Cause of less Importations and better Trade in the future," and believing that "it is expected it will be

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<sup>159</sup> Proud, "Autobiography," 435; Proud, "The Letters of Robert Proud," 70.

<sup>160</sup> Proud, "The Letters of Robert Proud," 68. The anonymous manuscript poem, *The Toriade*, and George Ogilvie's *Carolina; or, the Planter* are further examples of loyalist elegy and georgic genres of poetic response to the agricultural and commercial desolation of America during the war years.



good again;” there is still the insecurity that the “uncertainty thereof, and especially the Time when, as it does not appear to be near, gives great anxiety to many.” None knew what the outcome of the War would be, and whether life would ever return to a secure and affable state, regardless of which side won. The various gambits of opportunism that surrounded the political identity of middling persons during the Revolution are underestimated in much of the historical narrative. While Proud was placing his ideological bet with the Royalists, he was just as uncertain as any of what the payoff might amount to. History tells us that Proud made the wrong bet. And yet, not only did Proud remain, he also continued to write, to teach, and to make what influence he could on the emergent social culture of the new nation.<sup>161</sup>

### ***The failure of history & the consolation of poetry***

Proud worked on the bulk of his *History of Pennsylvania* while living a life of quiet, desperate isolation during the years of the Revolution. John A. Neuenschwander has called Proud an “unrepresentative historian” with a “proclivity to skirt important historical events,” and whose “finished product faintly reflected [his] Loyalist sympathies.” Indeed, Proud himself characterized the history as “imperfect and deficient” and the “necessary and authentic materials being very defective” though still he insisted that his history was “the best extant of the kind, or on that subject, as a *true and faithful record*” and despaired at his work being “strangely and manifestly opposed, or discouraged” upon its publication in 1797. Angered at the work’s neglect and distressed over the financial burden that its publication imposed upon him, Proud continually attempted to persuade his friends and acquaintances that it was “a performance, besides

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<sup>161</sup> Proud, “The Letters of Robert Proud,” 68, 69.

the said more particular and special design, intended likewise for a more public information, and the general utility of both the present and future times; - and to prevent the future publishing and spreading of false accounts, or misrepresentation, on the subject; which had too long prevailed.” Much to Proud’s chagrin, such “false accounts” would continue to prevail.<sup>162</sup>

The social disruptions that lead to the Revolution were well underway before Proud arrived in Penn’s great experiment, and Proud believed society to be dissolving. From a political and economic standpoint, Beeson points out that the circumstances surrounding the Seven Years’ War were known in London and Proud must have been aware of them prior to his emigration. More toward an ideological and symbolic point, Gordon S. Wood cites John Adams as writing to one of his sons in 1799, just one year after the publication of Proud’s *History of Pennsylvania*, that “the source of the revolution” lay in “a systematical dissolution of the true family authority. There can never be any regular government of a nation...without a marked subordination of mother and children to the father.” In his own study of the “revolution against patriarchal authority,” Jay Fliegelman “examines a constellation of intimately related ideas about the nature of parental authority and filial rights, moral obligation and personal autonomy, the character of God and the morality of Scripture, and the growth of the mind and the nature of historical progress.” For someone like Proud, who was suspicious of the merit of personal autonomy, who saw history as cyclical rather than progressive, the revolution and all that it stood for appeared to be vanity at best and blasphemy at worst. In an historical moment where the disregard of the father led to revolution and rapid cultural

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<sup>162</sup> John, A. Neuenschwander, “Robert Proud: A Chronicle of Scholarly Failure” *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 92 (1968): 494, 500, 499; Proud, “Autobiography,” 437-438.

change, Proud's own social prognosis exemplifies an equal and parallel revolt against the authorial intent of God and King. Michael Clark summarizes Proud's *History* as having two main points: "The first is Proud's emphasis on history as a constant repetition of Adam and Eve's eating of the forbidden fruit; the second is Proud's condemnation of 'ambition'." There is merit to such an assessment. Proud did have a post-lapsarian worldview and this is evident in the "Introduction" to his *History*. For Proud, Pennsylvania has its own fall narrative, one of a transition "from Harmony to discord." However, the serpent that snuck into the garden was itself lured into it by the very promotional narrative of liberty and freedom which Penn himself offered to all who sought asylum. This posed a problem for Proud, and as Joseph E. Illick, III notes, for Proud, "the fault was not the Quaker's but that of the society which grew up around them." Whereas John Adams understood the Revolution to have been born in a fundamental shift in the American perspective of the family as a social unit, Proud understood the crisis in far more theological terms.<sup>163</sup>

In fact, Proud first introduces the trope of the fall narrative, not in his *History*, but at the very outset of conflict in the colonies. In a poem written in 1775, entitled "Some Extemporaneous Lines, on the Source of Human Misery, Here Called, Forbidden Fruit, Written About the Beginning of the Aforesaid Time or Change," Proud characterized his view of the crisis as an oppositional choice between life and death in the terms of Genesis' death on earth:

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<sup>163</sup> Beeson, "Robert Proud," 39-40; Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1993), 147; Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution against Patriarchal Authority 1750-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982), 5; Michael Clark, "Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* and Robert Proud's *History of Pennsylvania*," *Studies in the Novel* 20 (1988): 239; Robert Proud, *History of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, PA: Zachariah Poulson, 1797-1798), 14; Joseph E. Illick, III, "Robert Proud and *The History of Pennsylvania*," *The Colonial Legacy Volume I: Loyalist Histories*, ed. Lawrence H. Leder (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 174.

Forbidden fruit our parents chose,  
Instead of life and peace;  
Forbidden fruit to be the choice  
Of man will never cease.

Cosmologically, then, Proud understood the turmoil of the Revolution to be a gross desire for advancement beyond one's station, a striving for that which would tear the whole order of the world itself.<sup>164</sup>

While the theological implications and allusions to Proud's critique of the Revolution run deep, there is certainly more to Proud's historical analysis of the war than a rehashing of the fall narrative. One of the most common critiques of Proud's *History* is that it lacks any reference to the American Revolution. Most scholars have read this elision as Proud's passive-aggressive resistance to the chaos of the 1780s and the change that surrounded him in the 1790s. Peter Hoffer goes so far as to argue, "Proud's refusal to extend the narrative up to the revolution was thus a product of sincere religious revulsion: Proud's unwillingness, and perhaps his psychological inability, to recall the violence and disorder of the rebellion." There is certainly some truth in such assessments; however, we might also pay attention to what Proud does in fact write. Recently, Ed White has reassessed Proud's *History* in the context of the 1760s agrarian riots on Pennsylvania's western frontier. White recognizes past historians' concern over Proud's lack of attention to the Revolution. For White, it is not so much out of spite that Proud makes such a decisive decision. He argues that, "Diminishing the significance of the War for Independence, Proud located the end of 'the golden days of Pennsylvania' not in the Philadelphia of 1776 but in the backcountry of the early 1760s." While one aspect of

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<sup>164</sup> Proud, "Autobiography," 435.

Proud's is indeed theological, there is another line of reasoning that is hyper-aware of the material and political implications of the western frontiers influence over colonial rule. White goes on to argue, "With the Paxton Riots, then, Proud's history identified a fundamental scission in the population produced by rural immigration and a government conducive to both prosperity and profligacy, fanaticism, and ungovernability." If White is correct, then one major reason for Proud's elision of the Revolution is because he does not consider the Revolution to be the major turning point of Pennsylvanian history, but rather the incorporation and influence of non-English, non-Quaker partisans, up-starts, and adventurers. Additionally, Hoffer's psychological assessment of Proud provides a rationale to look toward Proud's veiled discourse surrounding the revolution as a means for articulating his own loyal aesthetic. In such a case, the Revolution is a symptom of a great social cause, which helps to explain why Proud is able to reconcile himself to remaining in the United States.<sup>165</sup>

As has been repetitively stated, much has been made of Proud's elisions of the American Revolution. This is and ought only to be part of the case. Rather than assess Proud's writing by the standards of modern academic history, we need to recover Proud's own language for the crisis. A language alien to our master narrative of the Revolution, yet valuable in our understanding of a parallel identification of the same historical events. We must bear in mind that Proud manages to write and translate quite a lot of material about what we refer to as the Revolution. In his letters, he often refers to the Revolutionary War as "the distraction of the Country here." In his Autobiography, Proud

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<sup>165</sup> Peter Hoffer, "Fettered Loyalism: A Re-evaluation of Robert Proud's and George Chalmers' Unfinished Histories," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 68.2 (1973) 161; Ed White, "Carwin the Peasant Rebel," *Revising Charles Brockden Brown: Culture, Politics, and Sexuality in the Early Republic* (Knoxville: U Tennessee P, 2004), 41, 42.

explains to his reader that “between the years 1775 and 1780, there being a great change from the former happy condition of this country, since called, The United States, with a general cessation, at that time, from the former usual and useful employments among the people, who were then strangely disposed for revolution, rebellion, and destruction, under the name and pretense of Liberty.” These are the carefully chosen words of a man who is still, even after the Revolution is over, very skeptical of its motivations and its outcome. By taking Proud’s peculiar language seriously, we gain a greater insight into the complexities of desire that shaped residence on both sides of the conflict.<sup>166</sup>

Also, more study needs to be done which explores what we might refer to as the patriot logic of loyalist production. That is to say, the loyalist is produced just as much by the violence of the patriot as the patriot is produced by his resistance to the crown. The examples of Quakers and loyalists being removed to the backwoods of Virginia, confiscations of property, harassments, and threats all attest to a fervent desire on the part of the patriots to place blame on those who were even the least bit uncertain of their Revolutionary designs. Proud’s own experience of harassment and imprisonment were provocations for his poetic responses to the conflict. Proud’s prison poem, “Written on a Card with a Pencil, the Author being deprived of Pen Ink & Paper,” speaks to the tenacity of loyalist sentiment, even while incarcerated. As he reported to his brother William: “on the Commencement of open Rebellion here, I had so great Reason to fear, having not only been obnoxious to the Incendiaries and Usurpers, put also particularly painted out and threatened by them, more than many others, who are now suffering more than I do,

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<sup>166</sup> Proud, “Autobiography,” 434.

thro the Anarchy and Tyranny that has reigned here or for their not acknowledging the Rebellion and acknowledging the Usurpation.”<sup>167</sup>

Yet, despite the violence, the loss, and the failures, there is a peculiar stasis to Proud’s character, one that is linked to his ardent loyalism. He remains in Philadelphia, and his letters and poetry of the period explain how he is able to reconcile himself to the social and political changes around him. In his letter to William, Proud wonders at his future prospects in America. Given the circumstances of war, he tells his brother that he is “uncertain how soon [he] shall leave this Place.” Robert Proud would remain in Philadelphia until his death in 1813. When so many other loyalists leave the continent, either for England, Canada, or the Caribbean, either during or immediately after the war, the fact that Robert Proud not only stays in Philadelphia, but is reinstated as the Master of the Friends Latin school after the war, a position which he holds for another decade, and proceeds to revise and see through the press his own *History of Pennsylvania*, is curious on many levels and complicates our understanding of what it means to be a loyalist. Can one remain a loyalist and remain in America after its transformation from colonial network to Confederate network to Federal Republic? Apparently so. There is a stubbornness to Proud that underlies his behavior – a stubbornness that is in excess to his remainder in the now newly formed United States, and in his insistence that his *History* is the only valid and true report of the commonwealth. He remains in his antiquated garb; he continues, though fails, to make good on debts both owed by him and owed to him; and, he takes up his old post as pedagogue. This is a loyalty to routine and a bygone social order in which he continues to hope to find peace, so much if not more so than it is a loyalty to the

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<sup>167</sup> Robert Proud Collection, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 0529; Proud, “Letters of Robert Proud,” 63.





The loss of friends, either through a change in their political sentiment or due to death and exile, effaces any social worth the Proud once had. Yet for all of the promise of “peace & plenty” that Proud “mayst have upon this Isle, / if [he] flee” there remains a sense of trepidation and uncertainty. The elegy remains true to form as a lament for the living death that Proud suffers while abiding in Philadelphia:

What hast thou to do with those  
Who embrace Rebellion’s Cause?  
Come away;  
There to live in Death so thee,  
Worse than theirs thy lot shall be,  
If thou stay.<sup>169</sup>

Proud’s “Responsum,” which follows the elegy in each of their iterations among his papers, plays on the theme of a written reply by a rabbi or Talmudic scholar to an inquiry on some matter of Jewish law and further reinforces his tendency to blur sacred and secular lines in his attempts to account for the Revolution. As a response to “Vox Natura,” Proud’s “Responsum” questions whether he could return to England. In spite of the hostility and radical change he has experienced in Philadelphia, Proud recognizes that England, too, has changed:

How can I revisit thee,  
And my native country  
see,  
Now forgotten &  
unknown,  
Now remember’d there by none!  
How can I,

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<sup>169</sup> Robert Proud Collection, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 0529. Both poems are taken from a leather bound notebook of miscellanies dated from 1761-1806, Box 5, Folder 2. The poems appear again, with slight alterations, among other poems in Box 5, Folder 7.

After Absence many years,  
Now repeat my former  
cares, And myself again  
expose  
To new Trials & fresh Woes,  
Eve I die!

Proud fears his long absence has made him a stranger to his native country. Ill-suited for life in America or in England, Proud finds himself in a situation in which to remain or to re-emigrate would result in exile. With hardship and loneliness facing him in either decision, Proud reconciles himself to the impossibility of living “among the Righteous” and resigns himself to dwell “Here with Rebel Pow’rs ... And not shun the State of Hell!” Proud reconciles himself to the reality that happiness can no longer be achieved by a dutiful deference and reciprocity within a well-defined social hierarchy of monarchical rule. Proud recognizes that he must seek new means of contentment, and the poem ends with a submission to reason:

Hence eternal Reason’s Voice  
I will follow, in my Choice;  
For, as Happiness alone  
By obedience first was known;  
But was lost  
By Rebellion, so no more  
Can be known upon this Shore,  
That thine glory, peace & Joy,  
Which did former Days  
employ,  
on this Coast.

As a “Responsum,” the poem forsakes divine law for the law of man. No longer able to find “true Solace,” the scholar reinterprets the law to fit the land in which he finds

himself, and it is at this point that Proud finds consolation in his translations of Boethius and Seneca that make up the bulk of his work after the Revolution.<sup>170</sup>

As we have seen, Proud wrote extensively throughout the war. In addition to the many letters he sent to his brothers in England, and the verses he wrote to cope with and rationalize his wartime experience, Proud also turned to the translation of Latin classics that he felt were appropriate meditations on the American crisis. The habit of turning to the classics for both comfort and as validation for his own philosophical ideas is one the Proud developed early in his childhood, and it became a habit that he maintained throughout his long life. Early in the war, Proud translated works from Seneca and Boethius. His translation of Seneca's Tragedy of Thyestes focused primarily on the Chorus; however, the drama's overall theme of civil war between the brothers, Atreus and Thyestes, speaks to the way many loyalist understood the Revolution. The drama's Chorus emphasizes the follies of false pride, unnatural violence, the enormity of war, and the dangers of striving toward empires slippery heights parallels many of the common tropes of loyalist criticisms on the patriot cause. Additionally, Boethius, with his meditations on human happiness and the possibility of achieving it in the midst of the suffering and disappointment which play so large a part in human experience, was of extreme importance to Proud during the fall of 1776, and it is clear that both Seneca and Boethius characterize Proud's understanding of the Revolution throughout the period.<sup>171</sup>

The form of elegiac verse provides Proud with an aesthetic that transcends the material reality of the war. Furthermore, in articulating his experience in verse, Proud sanctifies and elevates his experience, rendering his obscure suffering historically and

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<sup>170</sup> Robert Proud Collection, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 0529.

<sup>171</sup> Beeson, "Robert Proud," 38.

aesthetically valid. While temporally fixed, his poetry documents his interior state and gives voice to his emotional experience of the revolution. The elegy is a form that reflects Proud's sense of confusion, loss, and exile; it articulates that even though he did not experience diaspora the way other loyalists did, the very event of the revolution rendered him an exile and cut him off from his sense of cultural identity. As such, he had to turn to other poetic forms in order to artificially reconstruct his sense of Englishness in a now foreign land. Proud's poetry theorizes his desire for stability and his fantasy of maintaining an attachment to British culture well into the early national period. Robert Proud and other loyalists' attachment to a sense of Englishness is far more visceral, and in Proud's case even spiteful, yet also exceedingly more reserved than that theorized by Leonard Tennenhouse or Elisa Tamarkin, insofar as Proud's is a sense of Englishness forever tied to the English loss of America, a breach that is felt so devoutly that Proud's only recourse is to construct a world elsewhere, a charming fantasy existence in which he may remain English in the still rebellious United States.

Supplementing his recourse to verse, Proud's habit of translating passages from the classics that aptly articulate his loyal devotions to England and his suspicions toward the Continental government give a transhistorical legitimacy to both his experience and his opinions. Temporarily fluid, insofar as Proud is able to use the translation of the classics as a validation of his political opinions and an efficacy to his emotional isolation, Proud's attachment to the classics allows him to situate himself in an historical narrative that is greater than the Revolution. Translation is therapeutic for Proud because it situates his loyalty and fear of rebellion within a greater historical system and links his beliefs and sentiments back to classical antiquity. Works such as Seneca, Boethius, and

Cicero allow Proud to transcend his own historical moment and find consolation and comradery with the great men of history who also suffered due to the vainglorious folly of past tyrants. Proud's manipulation of his classical learning gives a structure and context to his experience of revolt that far exceeds the pettiness of his own historical moment, which allows him to disregard the revolutionaries' claims to progressive history or their ideological justification for revolt. As such, Proud's acts of translation allow him to mediate his feelings of isolation, generating a relationship between the great literature of antiquity with his own particular place in the world, thereby giving a grandeur to his own obscure suffering.

As time went on, Proud would slowly and incompletely be reincorporated back into Philadelphia society, yet he would still be remembered as an antiquated, out of place loyalist. His own method of remaining loyal within the context of the early republic was quite ingenious. He made Britain a state of being, a place that anyone could inhabit so long as there was sociability between likeminded persons. In a poem dated from March 1806 he insists, "Where my Friend is, there is my Country" and that "But Where my nearest Friends I find, / There is Britannia to my Mind." Well into Jefferson's presidency, Robert Proud proclaims Britain to be a state of mind that he may inhabit so long as friendship abides. As the war drew to a close much loyalists poetry transformed from being about Englishness into being about loss and displacement, and as the stability of the Republic became too secure to deny those loyalists who remained found new and inventive ways to maintain their sense of Britishness in the newly constituted United States.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> "To those who would enquire abt. My Country." Robert Proud to John Proud 5mo 16<sup>th</sup> 1807, Robert Proud Collection, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 0529. The elaborate monarchical rituals carried on

### *Pedagogy & the cultural influence of the rehabilitated loyalists*

A meditation on the rehabilitated loyalists and their influence on the early republic, especially with regard to education, sociability, and finance is in order if we are to fully recover a lost history of the nascent nation's cultural identity. With regard to education, in comparison to Benjamin Rush, who "consider[ed] it is possible to convert men into republican machines" educators such as Milcah Martha Moore, Susanna Rowson, and Robert Proud had a far more intimate effect on the minds of young girls and boys of the early republic. Moore's editing of school books and Rowson's books and schools ensured that polite learning and manners would continue to dominate in spite of Dr. Rush's idealized utopian tracts. Robert Proud's rehabilitation and reinstatement as the master Philadelphia's Friends' Latin School along with the Committee of Safety's treatment of prominent Quaker families calls for a reassessment of the loyalist influence on the works of Charles Brockden Brown.<sup>173</sup>

While the loyalist modes of writing and circulation are necessary for a full understanding of early national writing, it is also the case that loyalism becomes a reified trope in the production of a nascent United States nationalism. In addition to the sheer volume of loyalist writing in the late eighteenth-century, the high frequency of stories, tales, legends, historical romances, novels, and dramatic productions that appropriated the loyalists throughout the nineteenth century registers a certain sympathy and nostalgia for the loyalists and problematizes traditional notions of a progressive, nationalist literature. Nineteenth-Century histories, both progressive and antiquarian in nature, repeatedly

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by Mary and Catherine Byles in Boston offer the most extreme example of crypto-loyalism in the nineteenth century. See: Eliza Leslie, "The Daughter's of Dr. Byles. A Sketch of Reality," *Graham's Lady's and Gentleman's Magazine* (Jan. 20.1, 61-65; Feb. 20.2, 114-118).

<sup>173</sup> Benjamin Rush, *The Mode of Education Proper in a Republic*, Philadelphia, 1786.

address the function of the loyalist position. The presence of poems and anecdotes, both derived from and attributed to loyalists, reveal the national present's embarrassment and continued curiosity toward the loyalists. The continued reliance on the loyalists within the historical narrative of the United States structures a problem that the idea of the nation neither wishes to do away with nor knows how to fully reincorporate. These writings work to constitute, if not a national, certainly an emergent American imaginary.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FROM JUBILATION TO DISAFFECTION: LOYALIST PERFORMANCE AS A REGISTER OF COMMUNAL AFFECT IN REVOLUTIONARY AMERICA

Among the Washington Papers held at the Library of Congress is a small scrap of ephemera. The imprint is a standard form for receipt of goods purchased of and paid for by, and in manuscript are the names of George Washington, W. Andrew Hodge, and Joseph Stansbury. The receipt documents the sale of two vinegar cruets and one salt cellar on March 28, 1776, and paid for by the hand of W. Andrew Hodge on 13 May 1776.<sup>174</sup> Washington was still in Boston, overseeing the American reclamation of the city in the wake of the British evacuation on 28 March.<sup>175</sup> On 13 May, Washington was in New York, where the “Guard of the Commander-in-Chief was organized.”<sup>176</sup> He would not reach Philadelphia until 16 May. Evidently, Hodge was purchasing on behalf of Washington, and whether or not the commander of the Continental Army every met or interacted with Stansbury, the loyalist china and glass dealer, remains a matter of speculation. Be that as it may, one of the primary recurring themes of this study has been

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<sup>174</sup> George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress, 1741-1799: Series 5 Financial Papers Joseph Stansbury to George Washington, March 28, 1776, Revolutionary War Accounts, Vouchers, and Receipted Accounts 2  
<http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=mgw5&fileName=gwpage024.db&recNum=92>

<sup>175</sup> Elizabeth Bryant Johnson, *George Washington Day by Day* (New York: The Baker & Taylor Co., 1895), 47.

<sup>176</sup> Johnson, 71.



to expand the social and literary reach of loyalist action and writing and to show that even the most ardent, stylized, and anglicized among the loyalists were conscious of and engaged with their Continental counter parts. That Stansbury was doing business with Washington in early 1776, or rather, that Washington was purchasing china and glassware from a known and prominent loyalist, illustrates the degree of cultural ambivalence that was prevalent throughout the crisis in America.

The following chapter focuses primarily on Joseph Stansbury. It follows Stansbury from his early and ardent loyalism and illustrates his affable and effective versifications for the loyalist cause. The first half centers around the problem of sound. Specifically, what does it mean to sound like a Loyalist in Revolutionary America? I argue that, just as much as appearing in print or circulating in manuscript, being heard was a primary register of one's loyal affections and that sounding loyalist was, at least in some respects, a prominent and deliberate mode of loyalist publicity, constituting a performative act of public affiliation. I then consider the uses of songs as ritualistic form of both royalist jubilee and as flagrant and vocal dissent from Continental authority; and, I explore the cultural importance of remediating oral performance into print, especially in New York in 1779.

The second half of the chapter considers loyalist dissent, not against the Continental Army, Congress, or Committees, but rather as it manifests itself against the British officers later in the war. By exploring loyalist dissatisfaction with the British officers and their administration of American affairs, the emergent social and affective communities of American loyalism fall into greater relief, and we are able to draw

tangible conclusions of what specifically constituted a loyalist aesthetic under garrison occupation.

Finally, the chapter ends with a meditation on Stansbury's failed plea for compensation before the Loyalist Claims Commission in London, his abandonment of Canada as a cultural response to the United States, his being driven out of Philadelphia under threat of violence, and his settlement in New York, now the new capital of the nation he so ardently fought against.

***“God Save the King”: Song and loyalist publicity in revolutionary America***

It is an historical commonplace that the revolutionary Americans were a vocal, at times rowdy and boisterous public force, often resorting to aggressive public displays of verbal and physical intimidation to anyone who opposed, or was perceived to oppose, their cause. If the loyalists are supposed to have a role in the disputations, debates, and deliberations over the American crisis, they are usually cast as victims of patriot pageantry such as the breaking of windows, the raiding of shops, or of taring and feathering. How, if at all, did the Loyalists relate to the role of silence in debate; how is it that they were finally excluded from the *vox populi*? I argue that the work of historical elision, of silencing the Loyalists' voices, has made modern historians deaf to the cacophony that was the loyalist soundscape, and that a recovery of the Loyalists' auditory world allows for a far richer revolutionary acoustic territory.

Over the past two decades, sound studies and sonic history have become important emergent subfields in both media studies and sensory history. While scholars such as David D. Hall, Richard Ferguson, Brendan McConville, and David Waldstreicher have reassessed the importance of the public performance of texts and the force of

pageantry and ritual in colonial and early national America, others, such as Peter Charles Hoffer, Richard Cullen Rath, and Sophia Rosenfeld, have recovered the importance of the auditory history of early American soundscapes. In this chapter, I rely on the methodology of sound studies to recover the performative aspects of certain genres of loyalist poetry and argue that hearing and being heard was just as important to Loyalist political identity as it was threatening to the rebels.<sup>177</sup>

When considering the historical valiance of sound Rath reminds us that “all sounds had agents and that sounds had a tangible power that we no longer grant them.”<sup>178</sup> While the agents considered in this chapter are nearly all human, it is helpful to remember that even when people generate sounds for a specific purpose the resulting sound can have unintended effects and exceed the boundaries of the intended audience. As Brandon LaBelle points out, sound gains its political force “by creating shared spaces that belong to no single public and yet which impart a feeling for intimacy: sound is always already mine and not mine.”<sup>179</sup> Put another way, sound is always already shared, whether the agents who transmit and receive sound intend it so or not, “sound opens up a

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<sup>177</sup> David D. Hall describes the traditional method of publishing texts by reading them aloud in “The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century,” *A History of the Book in America*, Vol.1 (Cambridge UP, 1999): 57, 71; Richard Ferguson argues for a re-historization of the Declaration of Independence as a read and posted public text in “The American Enlightenment,” *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, ed. Sacvan Bercovitch (Cambridge UP, 1994), see especially, 470-495; in *The King’s Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill, NC: U North Carolina P, 2006), Brendan McConville analyzes holidays and public rituals in the lead up to and during the Revolution, and David Waldstreicher’s *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1997) explores the political force of public festivals in the early republic. Peter Charles Hoffer’s *Sensory Worlds in Early America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2005); and, Richard Cullen Rath’s *How Early America Sounded* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2005) are each a seminal study in early American soundscapes. Additionally, Rath’s “Hearing American History,” *Journal of American History*, 95.2 (2008): 417-431 offers and excellent overview of the history and methodologies of sound studies and argues a reconsideration of orality and aurality when engaging with historical texts; and, Sophia Rosenfeld assesses the difficulties in assessing historical soundscapes in “On Being Heard: A Case for Paying Attention to the Historical Ear,” *American Historical Review* 116.2 (2011): 316-334.

<sup>178</sup> Rath, *How Early America Sounded*, 46.

<sup>179</sup> Brandon LaBelle, *Acoustic Territories: Sound Culture and Everyday Life* (London: Continuum, 2010), xvii.

field of interaction.”<sup>180</sup> It is these very fields of interaction that many revolutionary actors found themselves entangled in, and it was often an open question as to what their consequences might be.

While attending a meeting on 25 November 1776, at the Indian Queen tavern in Philadelphia, William Smith informed the Council on Safety that Joseph Stansbury sung “God Save the King” in his house, and that “a number of persons present bore him the chorus,” on the 15 October 1776. There is an alternate tradition that adds not only did Stansbury sing “God Save the King,” but also that he encouraged a group of Sons of Liberty to join in the chorus. For their offence, the singers were “forced to enter into obligations to confine themselves to their dwellings,” so as not to offend the ears of the local patriots, and on 10 December 1776 the Committee of Safety ordered that “an enquiry should be made into the causes of the commitment of Joseph Stansbury.”<sup>181</sup>

Whatever the details, the incident brings to the fore several points of contention surrounding loyalist aesthetics, affect, and social behaviors during the American Revolution. First, that there is not a clear public / private divide when it comes to loyalist activities. If Stansbury and his loyal compatriots were singing in his home, then it appears as if they were not safe to freely express their loyal sentiments in private without the possibility of harassment from the ad hoc patriot committees. Furthermore, if Stansbury invited a group of patriots to join him in loyalist song, no matter how jocose his intentions, then it is clear that his intentions were to directly engage the disaffected rebels and possibly to convert their sentiments through an act of sociability. In this

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<sup>180</sup> LaBelle, xvii.

<sup>181</sup> Winthrop Sargent, *The Loyal Verses of Joseph Stansbury and Jonathan Odell; Relating to the American Revolution* (Albany: J. Munsell, 1860), 103-04; Thomas B. Allen, *Tories: Fighting for the King in America's First Civil War* (New York: Harper Collins, 2010), 292.

manner, the Committee of Safety's apprehension concerning Stansbury's singing reveals that song holds a power that Stansbury, his loyal associates, and the patriot opposition all found to be most powerful in its affective and political potential. And yet, while ephemeral actions of association such as the taking of loyalty oaths, to either the royal or the patriot governments, have been cited as means of willful and coercive measures of political force, may we not also consider Stansbury's melodious voice as a medium of political protest and disaffection toward the Continental Congress, especially considering the grave consequences that stood to attend it?

Joseph Stansbury (1742?-1809) was born in London and immigrated to Philadelphia, arriving there on 11 October 1767. He became an importing merchant and opened a china shop in Second Street. Having been briefly educated at St. Paul's in his youth, he carried those skills and refinement with him to America, gradually became a prominent member of the polite social set of Philadelphia, and was generally respected for his integrity. His friends in Philadelphia included Benjamin Franklin, "who was often to be seen in his parlor." He had the reputation of being intelligent, with an ability to write satirical and humorous political poems and songs, and he evidently had a jocose personality and pleasant singing voice, characterized by its melodiousness and "great expression." Moses Coit Tyler claims, "as a writer of satirical verse, free from hatred and bitterness, he was 'without a rival among his brethren'."<sup>182</sup> As the colonies became embroiled in revolution, he opposed independence, and became what his son once

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<sup>182</sup> Moses Coit Tyler, *The Literary History of the American Revolution* (New York: The Facsimile Library, Inc., 1941), II.80.

referred to as: “an open, ardent, uncompromising opponent of the scheme [of Independence], & in a short time, by an easy transition, a violent tory.”<sup>183</sup>

Stansbury’s signing of “God Save the King” was no isolated affair, nor was it taken lightly by the Committee of Safety. Stansbury was arrested and detained for three weeks in a Philadelphia jail, where he met Robert Proud, a loyal Quaker and sometimes instructor of the Friends Latin School, whose prison poem, “Witten on a Card with a Pencil, the Author being deprived of Pen Ink & Paper,” speaks to the tenacity of loyalist sentiment, even while incarcerated.<sup>184</sup> Stansbury was liberated by the “intercession of friends”; however, he continued with his egregious singing and rhyming and was again seized and put in jail by the Committee of Safety, though, ever the optimist, he “continued to laugh, to sing, to make verses, & to turn his enemies into a jest.” Stansbury deliberately forced to the surface an “encounter between a language and a voice,” what Roland Barthes refers to as “the grain of the voice...the body in the voice as it sings.”<sup>185</sup> Stansbury’s incessant singing and jesting emphasized the aesthetic of musical pleasure as a conduit for political persuasion, mockery, and resistance. His arrests mark the ebb and flow of the committee’s patience for seditious sounds. What Stansbury’s singing makes evident is that whether a product of coerced loyalty oaths, of sociable parties, or of resistance from within prison, on both sides, enemies were encoded by the very sounds that they made.

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<sup>183</sup> “Sketch of Joseph Stansbury; from the MS. of his son, Arthur Joseph Stansbury; here copied ‘with but slight alteration’ by Fred H. Wines, a grandson of the Poet,” found in “Manuscripts Collected by Moses Coit Tyler” (14-17-2641, Bd. Ms. 61++ pp. 68-75). The Moses Coit Tyler Papers, Cornell University Library.

<sup>184</sup> For an extended analysis of Robert Proud and his writings, see Chapter Three above.

<sup>185</sup> Roland Barthes, “The Grain of the Voice,” *Image, Music, Text*, Trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 181, 188.

In Revolutionary America, the act of singing was both a socially binding and politically deviant event. Equally, listening to songs became a task fraught with radical epistemological dissonance, what LaBelle refers to as “listening in while also letting out the nested audibility and emotional force within history.”<sup>186</sup> Loyalists would sing odes to King George III, to St. George, and to St. Andrews as a means to identify their kindred sense of British identity. While perhaps now best known for their biting satires of the Continental Congress, the vast majority of Joseph Stansbury and Jonathan Odell’s writings were celebratory songs, often written for specific occasions, such as the meetings of loyalist associations, major holidays such as Christmas and New Year’s, and the King’s birthday. What is more, the iron bars of prison cells could neither stop the loyalists from singing nor could it protect the surrounding communities from hearing their loyal jubilees. As Kenneth Silverman relates, “Tories in a local jail sang one of [Odell’s] songs on the king’s birthday, so antagonizing the New Jersey Provincial Congress that they ordered Odell confined within an eight-mile circle of the Burlington courthouse.”<sup>187</sup> A young British lieutenant by the name of John André was among the prisoners.

The effects of such songs show that the Loyalists begin to form an active community through a variety of performative and textual means, many of which exceed the medium of print. While a considerable amount of loyalist literature relies on the satirical, of making fun of the patriots, there is also a strong, yet overlooked, mode of sincerity, of singing praises for the King, his officers, and publically performing a

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<sup>186</sup> LaBelle, 109.

<sup>187</sup> Kenneth Silverman, *A Cultural History of the American Revolution: Painting, Music, Literature, and the Theater in the Colonies and the United States from the Treaty of Paris to the Inauguration of George Washington, 1763-1789* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1976), 308.

flagrant, loyal style. These two dominant modes of loyalist writing, that of political satire and that of personal sentiment each characterize all media and genres of loyalist writing.

After the Continental Congress banned cultural pastimes and amusements as vain, wasteful, and seditious, local committees took it upon themselves to abnegate, censor, and monitor societal practices of singing, toasting, and play going, for fear that their familiar, ritualistic quality may be charged with politically persuasive meaning without explicitly stating that the performers or their audience were for or against either side of the conflict. Furthermore, the recalcitrant nature of sound allowed it to be heard by anyone within ear shot, making it difficult to police those who uttered it and difficult to protect unwitting audiences who indirectly heard it, which allowed for potentially loyal sentiments to travel beyond the immediate vicinity of the act. The examples of Stansbury's singing of "God Save the King" in his home and of the British and Loyalist prisoners singing Odell's encomiums to the King's birthday in a New Jersey prison are evidence of patriots' fears that bystanders may hear and be affected. The Loyalists sang to sustain their own personal loyalty, to join together as a community to praise their king and British institutions that they felt were under threat of destruction by the Congress, and also to signal to other Americans that loyalty and fidelity to Britain was still a viable, even enjoyable, option. Like the Continental Congress' embargo on British goods, the local committees' embargo on British traditions of sociability attempted to break America from Britain. In response, some of the more ardent and vocal Loyalists attempted to resist through the aural effects of social cohesion. Their reliance on a repetition of an established repertoire, combined with the production of new songs



generated to propel a traditional calendar of events facilitated an enduring sense of Britishness in the midst of the American conflict.

Loyalist songs not only circulated in the aural realm of soundscapes. Many of them eventually found their way into print after they had been vetted by the standards of loyalist public culture. Specifically, the importance of printing loyalist works in garrisoned New York afforded the Loyalists with a record of their shared experience of war time troubles and how they whiled away the time under British occupation. One such anthology, *Loyal and Humorous Songs*, published by Hugh Gaine in 1779, offers a window into the sociable circles that many displaced Loyalists sought to form with each other along with the men and officers of the British Army.<sup>188</sup>

The tavern and salon culture that developed in New York during the war was an extension of colonial patterns of sociability that offered companionship to those who had lost previous attachments in their former places of residence and created a venue for likeminded members to share information, ideas, and sentiments. David Shields has shown how civil discourse could allow people to bridge distinctions of rank, profession, ethnicity, and calling, as well as how the reception of literary productions were manifested in a variety of forms of sociability such as salons and tavern going throughout colonial British America.<sup>189</sup> Given the massive influx of Loyalists of a variety of social backgrounds from all of the colonies who sought refuge in New York, such civil discourse was necessary to maintaining order and fostering a sense of purpose. While William Franklin and other prominent persons established the Board of Associated

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<sup>188</sup> *Loyal and Humorous Songs* (New York: Gaine, 1779) [Evans #16326].

<sup>189</sup> David S. Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill, NC: U North Carolina P, 1997), xx.

Loyalists, giving an official bureaucratic structure of the loyalist community, many of the Loyalists most ardent and colorful displays of affiliation were performed in taverns, coffee houses, and private diners in the form of toasts and songs.

That so many Loyalists had fled to New York from across the North American seaboard was both a stress on British resources and affairs and a shock to colonial manners and social hierarchies. One effect of the Loyalist emigration to New York was that it brought together a variety of individuals who perhaps had little else in common than their fidelity to their king and a shared sense of persecution. As a result, it was imperative that social structures among the Loyalists be reinforced by common traditions and behaviors, especially when in public. As Peter Thompson has pointed out, “taverngoers employed two practices in particular – singing and toasting – in an attempt to draw into fellowship men and women from different cultural backgrounds and social stations.”<sup>190</sup> These dual practices of sociability were reinforced by the need on the part of Loyalists to bolster their shattered sense of belonging. In his study of Loyalist identity, Keith Mason has shown how toasts and songs as performed at festive dinners “had a complex impact on those present, generating a renewed sense of unity and resolve, a collective bonhomie, and an awareness of a shared past and a common set of goals in the present.”<sup>191</sup> The shared experience of singing and toasting raised spirits and registered commonly felt sympathies. Even before the war, especially popular songs and toasts would circulate by their repetition on other occasions and by letter, and there existed

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<sup>190</sup> Peter Thompson, *Rum, Punch, and Revolution: Taverngoing and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: U Pennsylvania P, 1999), 97.

<sup>191</sup> Keith Mason, “The American Loyalist Problem of Identity in the Revolutionary Atlantic World,” *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era* (U Toronto P, 2012), 50.

several published anthologies of sentiment.<sup>192</sup> The sole surviving copy of the *Loyal and Humorous Songs* anthology now only exists as a fragment of a book at the American Antiquarian Society. Its title and publication history are surmised by an advertisement in Hugh Gainé's *New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, 11 October 1779. The text is a hodgepodge of songs, toasts, extemporaneous speeches, and letters, all of which offer a glimpse of the social life of Loyalists as they drank and made merry in the midst of war. Loyalist songs and toasts were a public manifestation of sympathy, deference, and affiliation that followed specific social rituals. They adapted traditional and familiar English tunes in order to identify themselves as having a shared culture and to give stability to new and disturbing social contexts. The descriptions of songs and toasts note what tunes were adapted, what the circumstance or event was, both highlighting the social and performative nature while also preserving the song and its event in print. This archiving of the Loyalists' songs in the print record makes manifest the desire to memorialize and historicize the social life of garrison New York while also selecting and ossifying the perceived nature of the loyalist experience of British Military rule. Loyalists avidly engaged in the singing of songs both because it exerted positive influence on the audience and because it reinforced profound feelings of empathy and comradeship in the singers. As such, singing constituted a powerfully affective social practice and identified the participants as maintaining a deliberate and affiliative public culture. Whether lambasting and satirizing the rebellious mob or glorifying king and

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<sup>192</sup> For an example of patriot toasts circulating by letter after the Americans had retaken Philadelphia in 1779 see: "Letters of John Blakely to Jesse Sharpless," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 44 (1920): 192. For examples of printed anthologies of songs and toasts see: George Alexander Stevens, *Songs, Comic, Satirical, and Sentimental* (Philadelphia, 1777) [Evans #15603]; *The Charmer. Being a Select Collection of English, Scottish, and American Songs, Including the Modern: with a Selection of Favorite Toasts and Sentiments* (Philadelphia, 1790) [Evans #22400].

empire, singing served the social purpose of unifying the Loyalists under circumstances that were otherwise deeply divisive.

*Loyalist disaffection with British officers and administration*

Upon being told in Paris that General Howe had captured Philadelphia, Benjamin Franklin is reported to have retorted “No, Philadelphia has captured Howe.”<sup>193</sup> Franklin’s comment, apocryphal or not, appears to have had some truth to it. The British occupation of Philadelphia, and the apparent dissipation and revelry that accompanied it, would signal the end of Howe’s tenure as Commander of Operations in America. While the Battle of Brooklyn and the capture of New York was Howe’s crowning militaristic achievement of the war, a pageant, known as the *Mischianza*, held in honor of Howe just outside of Philadelphia is both the grandest cultural achievement of the war on the part of the British Army as well as its greatest cultural failure. As one English critic voiced his concerns, “the character of Sir W[ilia]m H[ow]e has undergone some extraordinary revolutions since his arrival in America.”<sup>194</sup>

The *Mischianza*, from the Italian word for melody gesturing toward the event’s mixture of entertainments, was a blend of medieval pageantry and eighteenth-century politeness, complete with British officers dressed as knights performing a tournament and young ladies from both the local Whig and Tory families dressed up in a Turkish style designed by John Andrè. David S. Shields and Fredrika J. Teute describe the *Mischianza* as an “eighteen-hour extravaganza [that] was held on the Wharton estate outside of British-occupied Philadelphia on May 18, 1778. It included a regatta, a costumed mock-medieval tournament, a fête champêtre, a feast, a ball, a fireworks display, and scripted

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<sup>193</sup> Cited in Silverman, 337

<sup>194</sup> Mauduit, 9-10

testimonies to the departing commander,” of which Howe’s officers subscribed £3,312 to underwrite. The principle architects of the affair were John Andrè and Oliver De Lancey, a prominent New York Loyalist. Shields and Teute have characterized the Mischianza as a “crisis in manners that troubled Anglo-American culture at the end of the eighteenth century,” for while it was an ostentatious performance of loyalty toward General Howe on the part of his subordinates, there was little in the festivities that called attention to modern British martial prowess or of the imperial system of constitution and commerce that loyal British Americans had risked their all to defend.

Once news of the event spread back in London, Howe was once again under suspicion of intentionally neglecting his duties. As Kenneth Silverman points out, “many in England criticized Howe for accepting ‘honors due the king alone’” and feared that such display would turn the well-affected Americans against the British administration.<sup>195</sup> A pamphlet by Israel Mauduit, *Strictures on the Philadelphia Mischianza or Triumph upon Leaving America Unconquered*, adequately summarizes the attacks on Howe’s behavior and leadership. Mauduit marvels at reports of the spectacle and the audacity of its proponents to masquerade in splendor at a “time of public calamity...when the British empire in America is sunk, and when thousands and thousands of good subjects in both countries are ruined by its fall.”<sup>196</sup>

What is most disturbing to Mauduit is that Howe’s lackadaisical mismanagement of the war combine with his flagrant arrogance will cause the American rebels and the American royalists to at length concur in the same opinion of the man, and that “this change of sentiment in the minds of the American loyalists” will engender yet another

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<sup>195</sup> Silverman, 377.

<sup>196</sup> Mauduit, 1-2.

schism in both the colonies and in the metropolis.<sup>197</sup> If Howe and his men thought they were fighting a cultural as well as a military war, then Mauduit proposes that they had misread their intended audience: “’Tis a Washington, therefore, and not a H[ow]e, that is triumphant” in America.<sup>198</sup>

Mauduit was not alone in his sentiments, even among those closest to Howe. Ambrose Searle, Howe’s secretary, feared that the Americans would “dwell upon the Folly & Extravagance of it [the Mischianza] with Pleasure. Every man of sense, among ourselves, tho’ not unwilling to pay a due Respect, was ashamed of this mode of doing it.”<sup>199</sup> Elisa Tamarkin has argued, “The Mischianza points to a turn away from the history of the historical drama to concentrate on the spectacle of mutual interaction that war makes possible.”<sup>200</sup> Yet, for many American Loyalists, a return to peace and prosperity was more important than a vainglorious, ahistorical display of pomp. What they wanted was an end of hostilities and a restoration of order and imperial administration based on an immediate history of Britishness in America. Furthermore, while the cosmopolitan elite of Philadelphia from both political factions joined in on the gay festivities, Howe and his officers grossly neglected the sensibilities of Philadelphia’s more conservative loyalists.

In her diary, Elizabeth Drinker records the events of 18 May 1778, remarking:

This day may be remembered by many, from the Scenes of Folly and  
Vanity, promoted by the Officers of the Army under pretense of shewing  
respect to Gen. Howe, now about leaving them...How insensible do these

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<sup>197</sup> Mauduit, 10.

<sup>198</sup> Mauduit, 3.

<sup>199</sup> Cited in Silverman, 337.

<sup>200</sup> Tamarkin, *Anglophilia*, 132.

people appear, while our Land is so greatly desolated, and Death and sore destruction has overtaken and impends over so many.<sup>201</sup>

Drinker's private documentation of opinion of the British festivities, surrounded by a war-wrecked country and tainted with the mark of failure to suppress the rebellion, echo the lamentations of loyalist responses to the suffering and dead as well as characterize the growing impatience that many Loyalists began to feel toward the management of the war.

For the poet Hannah Griffitts, the Mischianza is provocation to forgo lamentation and adopt satire in her rhyming of revolutionary events. Her poem, "Answer to the question: what is it? By a Lady of Philadelphia," is

A shameful scene of dissipation

The Death of sense and Reputation

A Deep degeneracy of Nature

A frolic for the Lash of Satire

A feast of Grandeur fit for Kings

Formed of the following empty things<sup>202</sup>

For Griffitts, the young ladies, dressed in silk and turbans, and the young officers, masquerading as knights, had all of the hollowness of "trim Don Quixotes made of wonders."<sup>203</sup> The Mischianza's utter lack of sobriety signaled for her the most egregious make-believe of war whilst an actual war with dire consequences was raging all around the gay participants. Had Howe and his officers put as much capital and effort into

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<sup>201</sup> *The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker*, 306.

<sup>202</sup> Griffitts, ln. 1-6.

<sup>203</sup> Griffitts, ln. 12.

fighting Washington as they did in praising a failed general, then surely the war would have come to a speedy conclusion and true peace and prosperity could cover the whole of the land. What is more, Griffiths is appalled by the young American ladies, who so eagerly play the part for these British officers who play at war.

It was not only the Quaker community that disapproved of Howe's leadership. Sociable, jocose, well-connected Joseph Stansbury was also among those Loyalists who criticized in verse Howe and the British Army's in ability to make a decisive victory. Shortly after the British took Philadelphia, many of the city's leading Loyalists, such as Galloway, Odell, and Stansbury, were granted civic administrative positions. Stansbury became director of the Library Company and administered lotteries. However, it was not long before discontent began to breed within the circles of even the most ardent of Loyalists. Stansbury's manuscript poem, "The Carpet Knight," criticized Howe for squandering the martial gifts of the Olympian gods by abandoning Burgoyne and preferring the company of mortal pleasures.

I know that fell *Discord*, your zeal to oppose,  
Will nourish Sedition and Hate:  
Mistakes may occur, and Friends suffer with Foes:  
Yet your Wish is confirmed by Fate.  
Sweet Peace shall revive from the horrors of War;  
Her Empire again be rector'd;  
Affection and Duty shall cover each Scar,  
And *Howe* by the World be ador'd!



Now with shame must the Muse the sad sequel display;  
With Sorrow, and Shame, and Surprise:  
The Gifts of *Astraea* he loft by the way,  
And her fillet he plac'd o'er his Eyes.  
The Arms of *Alcides* he sent to Burgoyne,  
And with them the Chariot of *Mars*:  
For what but Assistance and Weapons divine  
Could finish such Quixotic Wars ?

*Hermes'* Wand was now useless; no Snakes would unite:  
The Olive in vain was display'd;  
For blessings no longer attended the fight,  
And Loyalty fled from its shade.  
The Gifts sent *to* Burgoyne return'd to the skies--  
Despairing he yielded his Arms :  
And fair *Venus*, disgusted, beheld with Surprize  
A Mortal preferr'd to her Charms.<sup>204</sup>

The poem's manuscript title is an intentionally disparaging remark upon General Howe's recent knighthood, an honor he received for his accomplishments in the Battle of Brooklyn and the conquering of New York. The newly christened "Sir William" is here being mocked for his dissipation and indolence as the British army languishes in the throes of Philadelphia society. The term "carpet knight" was characteristically applied to

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<sup>204</sup> Stansbury, ln. 25-48.

those who obtained honors “with unhacked rapier and on carpet consideration” amidst the holiday gifts of their sovereign, rather than bravely acquired on the field of battle, or boasting a prescriptive claim by proving victorious at a tournament. Stansbury further ridicules Howe’s mockery of the honor of knighthood with the comparison of the American crisis to a series of unending “Quixotic Wars” that could only be conquered by the aid of Mars’ own chariot. Insincere in both peace negotiations and on the battlefield, Howe shocks the goddess Venus herself by idling his time in Philadelphia away in the arms of the local beauties.

In his notes on “The Carpet Knight,” Winthrop Sargent speculates that the manuscript version of the poem “offers renewed evidence of the disesteem Sir William Howe felt during his occupation of Philadelphia” as the “Tories were surprised” at the sight of the British Army’s “slothfulness, dissipation and extravagance.”<sup>205</sup> Cynthia Durbin Edelberg generally concurs with Sargent, stating, “it is indeed reasonable to assume that...Stansbury’s original echoes the feelings of the loyalist majority.”<sup>206</sup>

Whether Howe ever saw Stansbury’s manuscript version is unknown, though given the widespread criticism of his leadership, he must have had an inkling as to the sentiments among the disaffected of the loyalists. In his unpublished dissertation on the “Loyalist Rhapsodies” manuscript collection in the Library of Congress, Pastora San Juan Cafferty cites a note immediately following the final stanza: “This was alter’d by Yoric’s advice, and a complimentary turn given to the whole of it,” and here we have evidence of a rift

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<sup>205</sup> Sargent, *Loyal Verses*, 23.

<sup>206</sup> Edelberg, 71.

between loyalist manuscript and print culture as it was effected by the social conditions of living in a garrison town.<sup>207</sup>

“Yoric” was the *nom de guerre* of Jonathan Odell, Stansbury’s friend, collaborator, and coconspirator in the Benedict Arnold treason. However, unlike Stansbury whose humor was such that he could ardently maintain his loyalty while also penning humorous attacks on folly whether said folly’s antecedents were American or British, Odell was obstinate, spiteful, ambitious, and unwilling to criticize those who buttered his bread. Odell persuaded Stansbury to drastically revise “The Carpet Knight” into “New Year’s Verse 1778” for publication in broadside and as a supplement to the *Pennsylvania Evening Post*. Under Odell’s editorial guidance, the final stanza was transformed into:

This Balance and Sword to thy Hands we consign,  
Let Justice preside in thy Breast.  
But temper’d with Mercy let Justice appear,  
Majestic, yet mild and serene;  
And still in the Heat of your martial Career,  
Let the Prospect of Peace close the Scene.

That the altered version of the poem circulated in print raises a variety of questions as to how each version circulated. I do not necessarily agree with Edelberg’s assessment of the primacy of print as registering a wider circulation over Stansbury’s manuscript versions, especially given the variety of drafts and examples that Sargent and Cafferty have recovered. In any event, the dual publication of satire and encomium, of disaffection and

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<sup>207</sup> Cafferty, 199.

false esteem, highlights the importance of manuscript culture to the expression of loyalist sentiment and also reveals the rift in political allegiance and motivation within the loyalist literary ranks – believing it was in his best interest, Odell sought to be an agent for British bureaucratic control were as Stansbury, more willing to wear his heart on his sleeve, sought to express the sentiment of his fellow loyalists.

Stansbury's criticism of British administration in America did not end with the departure of Howe. Living as a refugee in New York after the patriot reclamation of Philadelphia made his remaining in his adopted city intolerable, Stansbury again took up his pen to savage General Clinton's administration of New York. Abandoning his gift of song and merriment, he publically posted a series of three satires around the city. Stansbury's pasquinades represent a fallout between American loyalists and British officers and administration. Much like Griffiths' satire on the Mischianza, Stansbury's pasquinades take the style Loyalists at first used to criticize and attack the American rebels and turn it against the British officers. Stansbury's pasquinades represent a growing divide between ideologies and expectations as well as a growing dissatisfaction on the part of the Loyalists. Stansbury is at his most British American at this point. Furthermore, the reprinting of the pasquinades in the British press transforms the poems, turning them into tools for the radical critique of the administration in London and fodder to satires of failed British officers, which were ends beyond which Stansbury could have intended them. As such, their reprinting is an example of how the loyalists were manipulated in Britain to criticize the war effort.

On 12 August 1780, someone, probably Joseph Stansbury, posted two pasquinades in New York. Each lampooned recent British Naval and Military failures

and criticized the British officers' mismanagement of American affairs. On 25 August, another pasquinade appeared, this time ridiculing General Clinton's inability to stop Americans from cattle rustling and burring resources in the nearby neutral zone. These public displays of poetry critical of the British officers proved popular, appearing in several London newspapers, the poems were certainly copied and disseminated through a vibrant British American manuscript and epistolary network. The poems' republications reveal the scope of loyalist poetic response to the British administration of American affairs and their initial public display are a register of a growing dissatisfaction with British officers and the ever present gap between the official print organs of Royal authority and the voice and opinion of the loyalist refugees who sought protection in British occupied New York. While each poem engages with a specific grievance, all three have in common an expression of disappointment and disenfranchisement that characterizes the loyalist position during the war's later years. While still relying on a tradition of transatlantic Englishness to make his point, the poet's satire represents a growing tension between the Loyalists and the British officers. That being said, the poetic attacks on Royal authority are subversive so much as they are a continuation of English modes of social and political conciliation struggling for recognition in a garrison town pushed to the limits by the contingencies of war. What is most interesting about Stansbury's pasquinades is that they contextualize and perform Englishness, Americanness, and fidelity in a manner that neither the American patriots nor the British officers are capable. Specifically, Joseph Stansbury's pasquinades show the Loyalists inhabiting a discourse of engaged fidelity that is not merely sycophantic or a competitive engagement with Englishness; rather, Stansbury's verses reveal the Loyalists to be a discreet public

sphere and affective community that desires their practical and humorous voice of critique to be heard as a legitimating form of engagement with the British management of North American affairs.

The public display of these poems grants us an insight into the opinions of loyalist refugees that may be counter to those sanctioned by the medium of print, especially that expressed by the official organs of the Royal administration such as James Rivington's *Royal Gazette* and Hugh Gaine's *New York Weekly Mercury*. The poems explicitly contradict the sentiment of contemporaneous issues of the *Royal Gazette*, especially the third pasquinade, which give a competing example of concerns surrounding cattle rustling and scavenging for resources in the surrounding countryside. Major John André's mock epic poem, *The Cow-Chase*, was being serialized by Rivington as the pasquinades were posted and circulated, revealing a parallel loyalist critique of the situation of provisions and British military administration. Such parallel representation of satirical force is especially interesting if Stansbury did write the pasquinades because of Stansbury's involvement in André's activities with the Benedict Arnold treason and the near contemporaneous capture and execution of André with Stansbury's manuscript poems' circulation.

The first pasquinade is a burlesque of the story of Jonah and the whale. It ridicules British naval efforts, deflates British pretensions by both comparing British officers to the criminal and cowardly Jonah and adds a bodily grotesqueness as men become objects spewed up by the whale.

YOU know there goes a tale,  
How Jonas went on board a whale,

Once for a frolic;  
And how the whale  
Set sail  
And got the cholic:  
And, after a great splutter,  
Spewed him up upon the coast,  
Just like a woodcock on a toast,  
With trail and butter.

The poem begins with an invocation of the second person, addressing the readers who are standing out in public, reading as a community. The verb “know” opens the audience’s participation, allowing them to draw upon a common bank of knowledge of which they may be assured and through which they are offered an expansive sense of community. Knowledge here, because of its public nature, becomes a means by which to generate association, both epistemic and communal, as well as public discourse of recent events. The trope of the tale, a traditional or familiar story, sets up the poem as having a potential moral or edifying purpose that will soon be disrupted by the generic shifts of the burlesque. Ingesting the dissipated criminal element of society causes the great leviathan to suffer the “cholic,” the humor of discomfort and rage. As the whale’s bodily distemper works to propel the ridicule by comparing Jonah, a proxy for Clinton, to the abject bodily expulsion of a whale, the British officers become only so much flotsam and jetsam. Grammatically, Jonah goes from subject to object to objectification as Clinton becomes the object of loyalist dissatisfaction.

The second stanza turns on a generic wit as narrative is reduced from a tale, a tradition that implies a lesson, to a joke or outright ridicule at another's expense.

There also goes a joke,  
How C—n—on went on board the Duke,  
Count Rochambeau to fight;  
As he did n't fail  
To set sail,  
The first fair gale,  
*For once* we thought him right.  
But after a great clutter,  
He turned back along the coast,  
And left the French to make their boast,  
And Englishmen to mutter.

Here, "We" identifies the loyalist community of New York and their collective opinion. No longer appealing to abstract ideals of aesthetics, constitutionalism, or history, nor associating with the British military, here the Loyalists are finally on their own. They have become their own distinct social group, in friendly opposition to both the Americans and the British. The French navy wins without a fight and the ambiguous category of "Englishmen" can only "mutter" or speak softly, though dismissively, under their breath. The comparison continues as the poem moves from sea to land in the final two stanzas as the British army is routed by a rebellious group of locals in New Jersey, a parallel criticism of the navy's failures against the French. This playful verse allegory of failed maritime adventures and instability of the countryside works to give vent to loyalist



exasperation as they witness time and again the rebels and their French allies thwart every British attempt, while the eager Loyalists are told to keep quiet and stand by.

The second of Stansbury's pasquinades takes to task Admiral Arbuthnot. While, like the first pasquinade, the second criticizes the failure of British naval ventures against the French fleet, it also attacks the British officer along the lines of proper diction, politeness, and social decorum that the Loyalists expect of British officers.

From Arb—th—t, my friend, pray tell me the news,  
What's done by his ships, and their brave gallant crews.  
Has the old Englishman shewn old English spunk,  
And the ships of the French, burnt, taken, or sunk?

In truth, my good Sir, there has been nothing like it,  
'Tis easier to threaten a blow than to strike it.  
No ship has been taken, nor frigate nor lugger,  
Nor e'en a poor Frenchman for jack tarts to b----r.  
Though this was a promise so solemnly made,  
When he called on the sailors to give him their aid;  
Yet himself he has hid under Gardiner's Island,  
And swears the French ships must be now taken by land.

In short, Arbuthnot is a vulgar buffoon unfit to lead a fishing party let alone speak in public. In addition to the rift between the public performance of British officials and loyalist sensibility, the example of Admiral Mariot Arbuthnot brings to the fore the issues of taste, decorum, class, and culture. Reprints of the poem included a note that quoted the

Admiral's vulgar and uncouth harangue in his attempt to enlist men to aid him in his naval strike against the French:

The following is part of the Admiral's eloquent and elegant recruiting harangue at New York, a short time before his departure for Rhode Island, taken down literally from his own mouth, viz.

"I tell you what, my boys, damme, if you'll go along with me, we will take, burn, sink, or destroy every French ship we meet, and bugger all the Frenchmen into the bargain, damme."

N.B. the above was pronounced in the hearing of at least fifty gentlemen.

The Admiral's public speech clearly offended the Loyalists' sensibilities and the emphasis on his being heard by 50 or more gentlemen emphasizes the public nature of the criticism. Not only is Arbuthnot a failure and coward at sea, but his language is garish too boot. Arbuthnot's vulgar diction and utter lack of decorum allows the loyalist poet and the English press to question his representation of Englishness in addition to his effectiveness as an officer. Additionally, were earlier in this chapter we discussed the anxiety surrounding the censorship of loyalist soundscapes by local patriot committees, here we have an example of loyalist censure and criticism of British speech that not only represents a loyal American sense of propriety but also becomes fodder for English criticism of the war effort as the poem is unmoored from its original context and reprinted in the London press.

The third pasquinade again takes up Clinton as its object of derision, and in what appears to be a certain, tacit response to André's *The Cow-Chase* takes up the theme of supply and cattle rustling. "Has the Marquis la Fayette, / Taken off all our hay yet? / Says

C-----n to the wise heads around him: / Yes, faith, great Sir H---y, / Each stack did he carry, / And likewise the cattle – confound him!” Clinton’s disregard for the safety of the surrounding area and the ready access to supplies is associated with his vanity and security in his station as a British officer. Spurning what he sees as a task far beneath his office, the general dismisses the need for security of the many refugees who have fled to New York for safety. “For forage and house, / I care not a louse; / For revenge let the Loyalists bellow; / To keep them in humour, / I swear I’ll not do more, / Than play on my violoncello.” The neglect of official duties in favor of idle pastimes echoes earlier criticisms of Howe, and to ensure that his audience does not miss that comparison, Stansbury makes it clear in the final stanza: “If growlers complain / I inactive remain, / *Will do nothing, nor let any others; / ‘Tis sure no new thing, / To serve thus our King; / Witness B-----ne and two famous brothers.*” The “two famous brothers are Admiral and General Howe, and service to the King is reduced to inertia and pessimism while thousands of Loyalists who would prefer action are left to stand by and watch their country burn around them.

***Loyalist Revenants: on the Uncanny Return of Loyalists to America***

David Shields has described how pasquinades become “immediately notorious,” quickly find their way into commonplace books and circulate by word of mouth and letter, and eventually find their way into newspapers and the public conscious.<sup>208</sup> Such poems have a political force by exploiting the subversive nature of presumed public anonymity – the poems are posted, unsigned, in public – and of vandalism, the poems are often placed in a visible, high trafficked space and often commit some type of slander or

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<sup>208</sup> David S. Shields, *Oracles of Empire* (Chicago: U Chicago P, 1990), 105-106, 99.

criticism of a public figure. Yet, for all of Stansbury's pasquinades' wit and evident popularity, they ultimately did little to help him or his fellow Loyalists. Like his poems, Stansbury spent several years after the war adrift, without home, country, or support. Just before the British evacuation of New York, Stansbury and his family were subsequently chased out of Philadelphia and Moorestown, and Stansbury was arrested and imprisoned in a Burlington, New Jersey, jail. He was released on the promise that he would leave the state within nine days. Like many other Loyalists, he fled to Nova Scotia, but finding the conditions there below his standard of taste, he had returned to New York by October. He left for England in the hope of securing a pension from the Loyalist Claims Commission, but to his astonishment, he was denied. He returned to the newly formed United States and, in the words of his son, "he accepted the revolution as an accomplished fact & submitted to it, with the line: *Victrix placuit causa Divis, sed victa Catoni*. He wrote no more political songs."<sup>209</sup> He is alleged to have destroyed all of his manuscripts from the time of the war and what untold and uncopied verses and drafts may have been lost in the act we can only speculate. Perhaps more will turn up in letters and commonplace books from the period.

While Stansbury was scuttling about the North Atlantic in search of a suitable home for himself and his family, the United States was busy with the arduous task of defining and stabilizing itself. During this time, many Britons and Loyalists patiently watched and waited, hoping that the Americans would fail, devolve into anarchy, and

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<sup>209</sup> "Sketch of Joseph Stansbury; from the MS. of his son, Arthur Joseph Stansbury; here copied 'with but slight alteration' by Fred H. Wines, a grandson of the Poet," found in "Manuscripts Collected by Moses Coit Tyler" (14-17-2641, Bd. Ms. 61++ pp. 68-75). The Moses Coit Tyler Papers, Cornell University Library. The Latin translates to "The victorious cause pleased the gods, but the vanquished pleased Cato" and is from Lucan's *Pharsalia* or *De Bello Civili* "The Civil War". The summary of Stansbury's trials and tribulations after the war are adapted from this source.

eventually be reabsorbed back into the British Empire. Such events never transpired, the Constitution was eventually ratified, and George Washington was elected the nation's first Federal President. On his way to his inauguration, Washington was ferried across the Hudson River on a barge decked out in red ribbon and pulled by thirteen oarsmen on each side, a British Man-of-War anchored in the harbor fired thirteen cannon in salute, and two schooners pulled up beside the barge and a choir of young women began to sing "God Save Great Washington" to the tune of "God Save the King." The famously taciturn Washington was visibly emotional at the display. Such uses of English melody and monarchical pageantry were clearly a desire to grant American achievements and to elevate Washington's position to that of the power of a monarch in world affairs. There was no register of cognitive dissonance or reference to the Revolution's iconoclastic tendencies. Yet, such one-to-one substitutions highlight the problem of a lack of an American tradition and a need, compulsion, or perhaps a sincere and sentimental desire to maintain a connection to British celebratory traditions and rituals. Almost immediately, Americans began to appropriate British songs in honor of American heroes and historical events.

How strange it all must have sounded to the many Loyalists who remained in New York after the war. As old English melodies became the organizing principles behind new American songs an uncanny, postcolonial element seeped into the American soundscape and pervaded what would become cultural memory. Homi K. Bhabha's description of the "almost the same, but not quite" is an instructive heuristic for how to recover the Loyalists' perception of an emergent celebratory music that was both deeply

familiar and yet strange.<sup>210</sup> While using an old or familiar tune to give new lyrics a sense of legitimacy was by no means new, as is evident by the Loyalists' own use of song during the Revolution, the advent of a wholly new political entity on which to hang old ditties now forcefully placed the Loyalists on either a newly expanded continuum, somewhere between American and Briton, or it forced them to make an attempt at an explicit political choice – either American or Briton. In either event, to hear the tune of “God Save the King” refashioned to fit lyrics in praise of the man who stood as the synecdoche for America's breach with Britain had to have been disorienting to those many crypto-Loyalists lingering in the crowds. Could the new lyrics, and the man they praised, live up to the sentiment engendered by the old tune? Was this new music a symptom of a continued cultural heritage, or part of a discourse that sought to elide the old order by appropriating and thereby effectively erasing the colonial past?

On the back of a scrap of paper with the lyrics of “God Save the King” Joseph Stansbury wrote his final lines of reconciliation: “Now this War at length is o'er / Let us think of it no more.” Like Robert Proud, Stansbury eventually became a “reconstructed Loyalist” and entered the civil life of the new republic, settling with his family in New York as their newly adopted home. While he was done with writing biting political satire, he continued to write occasional verse. A “Song on a Turtle Feast, written in October 1790” survives in the Moses Coit Tyler papers and is a testament to both Stansbury's incorrigible affability and the endurance of British forms of civil discourse in the early national period. The poem concludes:

What's Life, without pleasure? The fountain designed

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<sup>210</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, “Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse,” *The Location of Culture* (New York, 1994), 86.

To refres & enliven the delicate Mind?  
May the lovers of slander to Limbos be hurled.  
Who poison the streams that give life to the world.  
Then to sweet Sociability raise all your powers!  
Let a vine-leaf set off your gay chaplet of flowers!  
Surround her chaste altar & keep up the fore,  
Till Life, with a slow-ebbing pulse, shall expire!<sup>211</sup>

The date on the poem is telling. 1790 is six years before the traditionally established date of the Hoboken Turtle Club's founding, which the present proprietors claim to be 1796.<sup>212</sup> While modern tradition has elided the conservative and loyalist origins of the turtle club, there survive in the periodical record news of the club's monarchical activities, such as a note in the *New York Courier* from 1816 that reports the club's 4<sup>th</sup> of June celebrations in honor of "his majesty's birth-day." It appears that shortly after the war of 1812, a tradition that Stansbury seems to have helped found was retained the social forms and rituals of an older, loyalist era.<sup>213</sup> In addition to showcasing how eighteenth-century mores and aesthetic ideals of sociability survive into the early

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<sup>211</sup> "Sketch of Joseph Stansbury; from the MS. of his son, Arthur Joseph Stansbury; here copied 'with but slight alteration' by Fred H. Wines, a grandson of the Poet," found in "Manuscripts Collected by Moses Coit Tyler" (14-17-2641, Bd. Ms. 61++ pp. 68-75). The Moses Coit Tyler Papers, Cornell University Library.

<sup>212</sup> The Hoboken Turtle Club exists to this day and claims to be America's oldest social club. According to their website, the club was founded by Col. John Stevens, a member of the Continental Army, and "early membership included Alexander Hamilton, Aaron Burr, and John Jay." See: <https://www.hobokenturtleclub.com/>

While this list of American founders by no means precludes membership of reconstructed Loyalists, it does work to occult the earlier origins of the group, who appear to have had loyalist sympathies and whose monarchical traditions endured into the nineteenth century.

<sup>213</sup> "Celebration of the 4<sup>th</sup> of June," *New York Courier* 7 June 1816. The article in the *Courier* is no isolated affair. *The Port-Folio* 29 May 1802, *The Literary Companion* 18 August 1821, and the *New York Times* 29 July 1864 all report on the Hoboken Turtle Club's songs and toasts. It appears that the *New York Times*' article is the source of later traditions that hold onto the idea that the Club was founded in 1796, thereby surprising the earlier group, which included Stansbury, from the historical record.

republic, Joseph Stansbury was the father of two literary and military figures of the early national period, and his own historical legacy is maintained by the periodic revivals of antiquarian historians throughout the nineteenth century.

In addressing the emergence of a uniquely loyalist soundscape, first in Philadelphia and later in garrison New York allows us to consider the mediation of loyalist identity as expressed in the street culture of revolutionary America. Focusing specifically on song, both sung and printed, as well as on three pasquinades commonly attributed to Joseph Stansbury affords us the opportunity to take seriously the fact that the Loyalists were not merely passive victims of the revolutionary performance culture of protest. Considering a pasquinade, a lampoon or squib, as a satire originally displayed or delivered in a public space, illustrates how the loyalists used public documents as a means of articulating their own unique experience of the war. In “The American Enlightenment,” Robert A. Ferguson re-historicizes our ideas about the public nature of texts in revolutionary America. Using the *Declaration of Independence* as his primary object of study, Ferguson argues for a combined notion of public display, performance, and textuality for understanding “the aesthetics of consensual literature” and its dissemination throughout the public such that the body politic and its ideology mutually constitute one another.<sup>214</sup> Pointing out that the *Declaration*, and other Revolutionary texts, were designed to be placed in public spaces for group consumption, Ferguson argues that the *Declaration*’s material structure and distribution creates the necessary sense of community that its linguistic and legalistic structure seeks to defend.

Considering the *Declaration of Independence* as an object posted in a public space, raises

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<sup>214</sup> Ferguson, 354.



a series of questions about revolutionary era discourse networks: What genres of public and consensual literature does the document fall in and what are other contemporaneous texts of similar genre? How do we combine this notion of public display with the historically perceived “lag” of loyalist public productions and political theater? What are the different levels and valiances of deliberation, public protest, and public associations and affects that circulate in revolutionary America? What constitutes the aesthetics of consensual literature and are certain aesthetic values of opposing consensual bodies (i.e. patriot, loyalist) mutually exclusive; do the loyalists ever produce a consensual literature? What is the loyalist role in disputations, debates, and deliberations prior to and after 1776? How do the loyalists relate to the role of silence in debate; how is it that they are finally excluded from the *vox populi*?

## CHAPTER FIVE

### “’TIS ALL WELL, AND THE SUFFERING WORLD MUST REMAIN PASSIVE AND SILENT”: SUBLIME MELANCHOLY IN CRÈVECOEUR’S *LANDSCAPES*

“’Tis really melancholy to see what puppets we are that can’t distinguish  
even the wires that move us on.”<sup>215</sup>

So says the character Ecclestone, in the pivotal “Fourth Landscape: At the Tavern,” from J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur’s closet drama, *Landscapes*. Such sentiment of disillusioned melancholy is emblematic of a dilemma experienced by many distressed inhabitants of British North America during the 1770s. Swept up by a torrent of violence and insurrectionary conflict, many Americans were uncertain of what to make of the events of the Revolution or of which side to support. Contrary to having clear sides of patriot and tory, of righteous defenders of liberty and servile servants to tyranny, many who experienced and wrote about the American Revolution understood the events they were living in terms of civil war. The setting of Crèvecoeur’s scene is apt. Hiding out in a tavern, a place of hospitality, sociability, and by then a conventional place of conspiracy, representing the cultivation of civility and imperial culture in the improved American wilderness, Crèvecoeur’s characters lament the rapid change in conditions of their daily

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<sup>215</sup> J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Landscapes*, in *Letters from an American Farmer and Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America*, ed. Albert E. Stone (New York: Penguin Classics, 1986), 450.

lives and express a feeling of melancholy attributed to the realization of their astonishment at the utter helplessness of their situation. As Eccleston, “an American gentleman,” and Iwan, “a foreigner,” wax philosophic about the plight of peace loving American colonists, the Landlord of the tavern urges them into silence for fear that they may be overheard by Aaron Blue-Skin, “a new-made squire,” and the “very inquisitor of these parts.”<sup>216</sup> Tensions rise and the scene becomes increasingly complex as more and more characters representing every conceivable political and personal position enter the crowded tavern. A pair of strangers who go to great pains to remain ambivalent and unknown by the others, Continental officers who argue and force the idealization of their cause on Eccleston, Iwan, the Landlord, and the strangers, a band of militiamen who have taken three Quakers captive, all find themselves defending their position in the American controversy. By the end of the scene, it is clear that Crèvecoeur gives the most sympathetic voices to the concerns of those Americans who were suspicious and fearful of a world in which they were no longer protected by the rule of law established by British Imperial policy, a world in which they are left to the avarice and ambition of their zealous, self-interested neighbors.

Crèvecoeur’s *Landscapes* is a formally innovative text that offers us a unique appropriation of traditional aesthetic categories, such as the picturesque, the novel, and the sublime. I argue that Crèvecoeur grafts these aesthetic tropes onto the form of the drama in order to disrupt readerly expectations in a mode that reflects loyalist experiences of trauma and elicits an affective, sympathetic response with the loyalist position, a position of irrecoverable loss. Peculiar to Crèvecoeur’s loyalist aesthetics is a

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<sup>216</sup> Crèvecoeur, *Landscapes*, 446, 453. For the sake of clarity, I will quote from 1986 Penguin edition of *Sketches*.

sublime melancholy, which functions as a style of engagement that, unlike other loyalist authors who attempt to deride the patriot perspective, attempts to realize a perspective of identification with the Loyalists on an affective level. In this chapter, I will show how Crèvecoeur's *Landscapes* offers us an example of how certain Americans combined the aesthetic discourses of the eighteenth century with representations of violence and loss in order to present a uniquely loyalist perspective on the crisis in America. Crèvecoeur's problem of loyalty brings into focus the question of what constitutes an American. If in my earlier chapter on British poetry regarding the American crisis I interrogated the Loyalists' Americanness through the lenses of how the British reacted to the Loyalists' presence and defined them as American to deny them a loyal British identity, then in this chapter I use Crèvecoeur to highlight how the American rebels and Continentals used the Loyalists' loyalty to Britain, the crown, and the rule of law, to deny them an American identity. In *Landscapes*, Crèvecoeur provides both an affective and aesthetic register through which we might crystalize the loyalist position within American literary history. I argue that Crèvecoeur's formal conceits of the aesthetic discourse of landscape painting are grafted onto his dramatic textual production in order to create an affective response in his audience that will register the sensory and epistemological disorder suffered by those inhabitants of North America who were either openly supportive of a continued attachment to British Empire or who were merely political moderates who wish nothing more than a peaceful existence.<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> I must admit that my own peculiar use of the term aesthetic does deviate somewhat from the academic norm. Drawing from Terry Eagleton's notion that aesthetics is both an elite discourse of pleasure and a form of knowledge rooted in the body, I tend to favor the somatic and visceral half of the complex. Additionally, my argument is indebted to affect and trauma studies insofar as I argue that the crisis in America generates a specific mode of aesthetics to allow for a mode of expression that will be legible to an imperial audience whose cultural, intellectual, and imaginative sensibilities are rooted in British cultural identity. I am likewise indebted to the work of scholars who have revealed the importance of Englishness in

Although much recent scholarship has revisited Crèvecoeur's writings under the category of loyalism and rekindled an interest in Crèvecoeur and other eighteenth-century writers' use of aesthetic vocabulary, these two readings have not been sufficiently aligned so as to demonstrate the force with which Crèvecoeur is attempting to affect his audience. An examination of how Crèvecoeur utilizes the discourse of aesthetics to articulate a loyalist position towards events in America suggests that American writers' use of English aesthetic categories was not deployed solely to lay claim to an English cultural heritage, but at times, especially times of crisis, such aesthetics were altered to give voice to uniquely British-American experiences. Crèvecoeur's blending of aesthetic forms generates a feeling of melancholy, complicating our understanding of the categories of loyalty, as a felt identity, and of aesthetics, as a practice of form. Textually speaking, to be a Loyalist is to call attention to form in a manner that expresses a particular affective position, often of derision or of loss. It is the latter of these that I will focus on with respect to Crèvecoeur's loyalist tendencies. To be a Loyalist is to occupy a position of loss. Crèvecoeur's manuscript writings known as *Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America*, are more formally experimental, fragmented, and incomplete than his more well-known *Letters from an American Farmer*. The abandonment of the perspective of Farmer James allows for a more vitriolic ethos as the shift from the formal conceit of letters to that of the drama allows for a more dynamic and ambivalent perspective on American events.

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British American identity, such as Shields, Tennenhouse, Fliegelman, and Tamarkin, as well as Denis Moore and Edward Larkin's readings of J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur's loyalist position, all of which are the foundation for my own reading of *Landscapes* as an exemplary text of loyalist aesthetics. I am also at pains to explain the uniquely American aspects of such cultural transformations of aesthetics as a discursive practice for loyalist expression and its residual effect on the early national United States.

The majority of Crèvecoeur scholarship revolves around revisiting readings of the first English edition of *Letters from an American Farmer*, an overdetermined work with a complicated publication history. The oversimplified, stereotypical reading of Crèvecoeur, and his archetypal “Farmer James” as embodying the origins of American exceptionalism, as well as the periodic rallying cries to read beyond and beneath the proto-nationalist, agrarian ideal that Crèvecoeur, James, and their panegyrists have produced has become something of a commonplace in American studies. Nearly as many scholars have called attention to the limited and selective readings of *Letters* as have relied on such readings. Suffice to say that there is now a broadly agreed upon consensus that Crèvecoeur had many “textual masks” that he utilized in both his published works and unpublished manuscripts, all of which met a variety of needs depending on a variety of contexts such as time, place, politics, and economy.<sup>218</sup> What is as yet unclear is how to interpret the variety of texts and persona in order to come to some sort of resolution as to who Crèvecoeur was and what he may have sought to accomplish with his writings.

Since the discovery of Crèvecoeur’s manuscript material in 1922, there has been an ebb and flow of reconsiderations of the 1782 edition of *Letters*’ role in the American literary canon as well as debates about how to read and understand Crèvecoeur the man in addition to his works. Yet curiously, while these new texts have been the impetus and at times the foil for re-readings of Crèvecoeur, the bulk of the scholarly reconsideration continues to focus on *Letters*. The *Letters* have been taken to be ethnography, promotional tract, a bildungsroman, a parody of utopian literature, an epistolary novel, a

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<sup>218</sup> For an analysis of Crèvecoeur’s various “textual masks” and the problems posed by the first English edition of *Letters*, see Wil Verhoeven, *Americomania and the French Revolution Debate in Britain, 1789-1802* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2013).

hoax, a meta-historical irony, a proto-nationalist work, and an example of the transatlantic world of “letterecy” - the list goes on.<sup>219</sup> In considering Crèvecoeur’s manuscript writings, we get a clearer idea of Crèvecoeur’s loyalist experience than is evident in only reading the *Letters*.

Admittedly, arguing for Crèvecoeur’s loyalist identity is not new; indeed, it too dates back to the recovery of Crèvecoeur’s manuscript writings in the 1920s. As early as 1925, Bourdin and Williams published a truncated version of “The Grotto” under the title “Crèvecoeur the Loyalist,” in *The Nation*.<sup>220</sup> Since then, scholars such as Everett Emerson, Dennis Moore, Jeffrey Richards, and Edward Larkin have all pointed to elements of *Letters* and the bulk of Crèvecoeur’s unpublished English manuscripts on the American Revolution as evidence of his loyalist tendencies during the late 1770s.<sup>221</sup> However, in addition to the manuscript material, Crèvecoeur’s French editions of *Lettres*, while providing equal and compelling evidence for a reconsideration of Crèvecoeur’s

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<sup>219</sup> Myra Jehlen, “J. Hector St. John Crèvecoeur: A Monarcho-Anarchist in Revolutionary America” *American Quarterly*, 3 (1979): 204-222; Grantland Rice, “Crèvecoeur and the Politics of Authorship in Republican America” *Early American Literature*, 28.2 (1993): 91-119; Edward Larkin, “The Cosmopolitan Revolution: Loyalism and the Fiction of an American Nation,” *Novel*, (2006/2007): 52-76; Christine Holbo, “Imagination, Commerce, and the Politics of Associationism in Crèvecoeur’s *Letters from an American Farmer*,” *Early American Literature*, 32 (1997): 20-65; James C. Mohr, “Calculated Disillusionment: Crèvecoeur’s Letters Reconsidered,” *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 69 (1970): 354-63; Ralph Bauer, *The Cultural Geography of Colonial American Literatures: Empire, Travel, Modernity* (New York: Cambridge, 2003); Albert E. Stone, “Crèvecoeur’s *Letters* and the Beginings of an American Literature,” *Emory University Quarterly*, 18 (1962): 197-213; Russel B. Nye, *American Literary History: 1607-1830* (New York: Knopf, 1970); Eve Tavor Bannet, *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1680-1820* (New York: Cambridge, 2005).

<sup>220</sup> *The Nation* 121 (1925): 328-330.

<sup>221</sup> Everett Emerson, “Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur and the Promise of America,” *Forms and Functions of History in American Literature*, eds. Winfried Fluck, et al. (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 1981): 204-222; *More Letters from an American Farmer: an Edition of the Essays in English Left Unpublished by Crèvecoeur*, ed Dennis Moore (Atlanta: The University of Georgia Press, 1995); Jeffrey Richards, *Drama, Theatre, and Identity in the American New Republic* (New York: Cambridge, 2005); Edward Larkin, “The Cosmopolitan Revolution: Loyalism and the Fiction of an American Nation,” *Novel*, (2006/2007): 52-76.

oeuvre, prove virulently anti-British and pro-American, which further complicates just how it is we should or may reread Crèvecoeur's place in American literary history.<sup>222</sup>

The problem of what to make of these writings is somewhat ameliorated when their idiosyncratic contexts are taken into consideration. That the 1782 London edition of *Letters*, published by Davies and Davis, is a product of at least some editorial intervention by the publishers and their hacks who reworked Crèvecoeur's now lost manuscripts into a whiggish tract with an audience of pro-American Britons in mind is now fairly well established. Crèvecoeur seems to have sold the rights to his work for the pragmatic reason that he needed capital to return to France, where he brought out two subsequent editions of *Lettres* in French, both of which are distinctly more anti-British and pro-American than either the English *Letters* or the unpublished English manuscripts. The reasons for this change in tone appears to be an attention to audience and a slow but deliberate change of heart on Crèvecoeur's part. In the French editions, the Loyalists are referred to as Monarchists and Royalists while the Patriots become Republicans, which reveals Crèvecoeur's attempts to appeal to the French philosophes and revolutionaries of the time. Additionally, upon returning to France, Crèvecoeur became somewhat of a literary celebrity and was commissioned as French consul to New York shortly after the war. Evidently, given time, new found success, and a new attachment to the United States, Crèvecoeur was able to forgive and forget the many wrongs done to him by the patriot committees and other revolutionary actors.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Everett Emerson still offers the most concise comparison of Crèvecoeur's writings.

<sup>223</sup> Ed White, "Crèvecoeur in Wyoming," *Early American Literature*, 43.2 (2008): 379-407, offers an assessment of some of Crèvecoeur's unpublished French writings, criticizes the continued attention and scholarly emphasis on *Letters*, and instead argues for a focus on the complexities of Crèvecoeur's work without necessarily working toward a resolution.



However, even given the publication context of the English *Letters* and the French *Lettres*, we need not dismiss out of hand Crèvecoeur's English manuscript writings of the 1770s and what they might teach us about the loyalist experience of the Revolution. To do so would be to take a too strict legitimization of one version of Crèvecoeur and his experiences over another. Dennis Moore and Ed White have both argued for the need for more scholarship on Crèvecoeur's manuscript writings. Moore, with his edition of *More Letters from an American Farmer*, has offered Americanists the opportunity to read Crèvecoeur's other English writings, many of which address the American Revolution and reveal what were at the time Crèvecoeur's loyalist sympathies. Ed White has returned to Crèvecoeur's unpublished writings, in both English and French, to come to a better understanding of how Crèvecoeur viewed the frontier territories during the conflict. In following Moore and White's lead by focusing on Crèvecoeur's manuscript sketches, I am not dismissing Crèvecoeur's published works but rather am reading a period in which Crèvecoeur suffered for his neutrality in order to recover the aesthetics of loyalty during the moment of political crisis.

Along with advocating for a circumscribed reading of Crèvecoeur's manuscript writing, I also want to stress the importance of reading Crèvecoeur's aesthetics as representative of a loyalist aesthetic experience of the revolutionary conflict as well as an expression of loyalist suffering during the years of conflict. Recently, Carolyn Weinstein and Christopher Looby's collection *American Literature's Aesthetic Dimensions* has reprised the debate concerning the validity of addressing a text's aesthetic qualities as a viable methodology for literary analysis. Calling for a methodological approach that aims to "reintroduce aesthetics categories...in order to demonstrate the ways in which

aesthetics and politics are dialectically engaged,” Weinstein and Looby contextualize their position as working against a reified aesthetics and toward an historicized understanding of how aesthetics operated in early American literary practice.<sup>224</sup> Weinstein and Looby’s assessment of the role of aesthetics offers us an opportunity to re-evaluate the role of aesthetics in a variety of unique contexts, to strive toward an articulation of how aesthetics operates rather than of what aesthetics is.

In a similar vein, Edward Cahill’s work on the transatlantic contexts of eighteenth-century aesthetics of politics and its importance for national formation in early Federalist America provides an insightful reading of Crèvecoeur’s use of aesthetic discourse to conceptualize the American wilderness such that desires for expansion and improvement may be understood as a stylistic extension of liberty across the landscape.<sup>225</sup> Cahill makes a case for the incorporation of aesthetic discourse in our studies of early national literature and political discourse and demonstrates a sincerer engagement of aesthetics on early American terms.

While Weinstein and Looby’s anthology broaches a new concern with aesthetics and Cahill offers us a method of analysis of aesthetics’ role in early American literary culture, both studies are predominantly concerned with early national and nineteenth-century texts. The aesthetic sensibilities of colonial America remain understudied by recent scholarship that, as Weinstein and Looby put it, have been productively informed

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<sup>224</sup> Cindy Weinstein and Christopher Looby, “Introduction,” *American Literature’s Aesthetic Dimensions* (New York: Columbia UP, 2012), 9.

<sup>225</sup> Edward Cahill, *Liberty of the Imagination: Aesthetic Theory, Literary Form, and Politics in the Early United States* (Philadelphia: U Pennsylvania P, 2012); see especially chapter three, “The Beautiful and Sublime Objects of Landscape Writing,” in which Cahill delineates the Whig notions of landscape aesthetics and the pleasure of infinite perspective in order to articulate the origins of American national ideology, which is a point that I will below argue the Loyalists offer a counter aesthetics and alternate literary history.

by the cultural and ideological critique of the late twentieth-century. The scholarship of Jay Fliegelman, David Shields, Leonard Tennenhouse, and David Waldstriker, have done immense work to illuminate our understanding of late colonial and early national affects and sensibilities. I hope to add to this conversation a brief analysis of concerns that falls snugly in between these studies. If, as Catherine Kelly has asserted, the “valorization of taste” in the early republic’s “culture of class” was “Janus faced,” then Crèvecoeur’s earlier warnings against taking the American founding’s aesthetic assertions at face value are all the more concerning and complicated.<sup>226</sup> I show how the events of the American Revolution forces those who wished to remain loyal to the British Empire distort the aesthetic traditions transplanted from England to American not to generate license for a justification of independence, as their Continental counterparts would, but to create an expression of melancholy that would adequately express their suffering of events they felt were beyond their control.

What is at stake with my reading of Crèvecoeur’s loyalist aesthetics is a reconceptualization of the loyalists as operating under an aesthetics of affect in addition to an aesthetics of political rhetoric. Crèvecoeur’s writings call attention to loyalty as an affective construct that exists outside of our traditional critical constructs of early American studies. Considering loyalism as affect allows us to see new structures of feeling as a register of different archives by which to categorize the writing of the British American Loyalists.

### ***The Aesthetics of Landscape and the Picturesque***

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<sup>226</sup> Catherine E. Kelly, *Republic of Taste: Art, Politics, and Everyday Life in Early America* (U Pennsylvania P, 2016), 6.

The aesthetics of landscape is intricately tied to the aesthetics of early America during the revolutionary and early national period. Scholars have shown that the cultures of British America were dependent upon a transatlantic transference of English culture, what Leonard Tennenhouse refers to as “feeling English with a difference.” I propose an analogous argument for a uniquely loyalist aesthetic that develops within the context of a crisis of empire. The American Revolution radically altered the American countryside, desolating its picturesque beauty and disrupting its previous claims to fertility and promise of further development. Literary history responded to this desolation of the land and man’s relationship to the land, by the violence of war, which led later American writers to represent the landscape as haunted by past violence. In various literatures of the revolutionary and early national period, the American landscape is depicted in violent and deceitful terms, lending an aesthetics of mystery, suspicion, and danger. The novels of Charles Brockden Brown and James Fenimore Cooper, especially *Edgar Huntly* and *The Spy*, are filled with rustic, desolate wildernesses that threaten not only the welfare but the very identities of the stories’ protagonists. The landscapes of Washington Irving’s most famous stories are warped by a supernatural history. The early national chorographic tradition, as exemplified by the works of Timothy Dwight, Philip Stansbury, and Hannah Mather Crocker, are haunted by the battles of the Revolution. While I believe the influence of loyalist aesthetics and literary tropes had a greater impact on early national writing than is commonly recognized, to establish such an argument is beyond the scope of this chapter. Suffice to say that I believe what holds true for Crèvecoeur and his characters is emblematic of a thread within the American literary

tradition and that a closer scrutiny of a loyalist counter tradition enriches our understanding of the intellectual and artistic culture of early America.

While it is difficult to fully parse Crèvecoeur along the traditional political lines of Whig and Tory, scholars such as Denis Moore and Edward Larkin have made persuasive cases for reading Crèvecoeur as a Loyalist. Even so, it is useful to trace the elements of Crèvecoeur's writings and how they have been read along the Whig-Tory divide in order to come to a better understanding of how he alters British aesthetic sensibilities to synthesize a uniquely loyalist aesthetic. As Leo Marx rightly, though perhaps misguidedly points out, "Crèvecoeur was no primitivist."<sup>227</sup> With regard to Crèvecoeur's approach to landscapes and the natural world Marx argues, "[h]e does not believe, as Lawrence says he does, that Nature is sweet and pure. He admires improved nature, a landscape that is a made thing, a fusion of work and spontaneous process."<sup>228</sup> Marx's assessment of Crèvecoeur's aesthetic approach to the natural world is much in keeping with Whig landscape aesthetics of the picturesque and would seem to situate Crèvecoeur in a progressive ideological frame work. Conversely, Robert Lawrence-Peebles has characterized Crèvecoeur "an aristocrat and Tory sympathizer."<sup>229</sup> He goes on to argue that *Letters from an American Farmer* ought to be read within the context of British Empire rather than an American national founding, stating that "Letter III reaffirms the theory of *translatio imperii*."<sup>230</sup> Lawrence-Peebles further understands Crèvecoeur to be promoting a rationale that is colonial, "ratified and confirmed by the

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<sup>227</sup> Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford UP, [1964] 2000), 114.

<sup>228</sup> Marx, 112.

<sup>229</sup> Robert Lawrence-Peebles, *Landscape and Written Expression in Revolutionary America: The World Turned Upside Down* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2008), 100.

<sup>230</sup> Lawrence-Peebles, 101.

crown,” and as such understands Crèvecoeur to be promoting a monarchist ideology throughout his work.<sup>231</sup> Drawing upon Leo Marx’s reading that Crèvecoeur is promoting an idea of the American landscape as a middle landscape balanced between the decadent city and the rude underdeveloped frontier as well as Lawrence-Peebles’ assessment of Crèvecoeur as an agent of British Imperialism with monarchist sympathies, we can revisit Crèvecoeur’s loyalist tendencies as being influence by both traditional Whig and Tory political and aesthetic ideology as they manifest themselves in his representation of the American landscape.<sup>232</sup>

Many scholars of the English aesthetics of landscape and the picturesque argue that the enclosures inspired in the middle-class a rediscovery of the countryside as a source of inspiration and a re-conception of Britishness. Conversely, in America, the Revolution causes an irreparable breach. The connection between humanity and the land, as well as the connection between America and England is permanently altered. This alteration forged an aesthetics of loss, longing, and melancholy. In *The Tory View of Landscape*, Nigel Everett offers an astute analysis of competing landscape ideologies of eighteenth-century England. Whig aesthetic ideology both commodified landscape and aestheticized it of all productive labor. The aesthetic justification for Whig “improvement” was often complicit in the effects of enclosure and the removal of commoners from manors and estates. In America, Whig aesthetics and ideology is what allows the Americans (Crèvecoeur included) to imagine the landscape as a blank slate (to misappropriate Locke) and envision the growth of imperial progress upon it. The Tory view of landscape, so Everett argues, is suspicious of the Whig tendency to convert the

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<sup>231</sup> Robert Lawrence-Peebles, 102.

<sup>232</sup> Marx, 103.

landscape into a market force. The Tories feared that such commodification of land would abandon civil society to fragmentation. For the Tories, aesthetics is more closely linked to ethics and the traditions of Britain, whereas the Whigs' aesthetics of liberty and improvement causes nature to be in a constant state of revision so that it may keep up with the endless trends in fashion and the market. While Crèvecoeur has much in common with Whig aesthetics, as many including Cahill have pointed out, he is also very closely tied to the Tories' aesthetic concerns of a loss of tradition and fragmentation, a point that Edward Larkin's scholarship gestures toward and that *Landscapes* makes explicit.<sup>233</sup> Philip Gould has pointed out that it is difficult to translate the terms "Whig" and "Tory" into an American context.<sup>234</sup> While he is correct in this, it is hard to deny that Crèvecoeur was trying to strike a balance between the two, and that as the Revolution progressed, he shared more in common with the Tories, or rather Loyalists, than previous American Exceptionalist readings of his writing allow.

To be clear, I do not wish to map a history of English art onto a history of early American literature; however, I do wish to point toward the coincidental traumas of English enclosure, with its underlying political aesthetics of Whiggish improvement, and American Revolution in order to help trace the emergence of a uniquely American aesthetic that I believe is tied closely to the effects of the American Revolution on the American landscape. More specifically, I argue that the trauma experienced by the American Loyalists as a result of the war, and the literary expression that this trauma induced, is the inception of a new type of American aesthetics of loss without recovery,

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<sup>233</sup> Edward Larkin, "The Cosmopolitan Revolution: Loyalism and the Fiction of an American Nation," *Novel*, (2006/2007): 52-76.

<sup>234</sup> Philip Gould, *Writing the Rebellion: Loyalists and the Literature of Politics in British America* (New York: Oxford UP, 2013).

an aesthetic that we might term loyalist melancholia. In what follows, I establish the transatlantic cultural ties between Britain and America, with a focus on the aesthetics of landscape picturesque and the sublime, consider the problems of such cultural translation faced by the Americans, and describe how such problems of translation effect the emergence of a new aesthetic. Crèvecoeur's *Landscapes* best exemplifies what I take to be a development of a loyalist aesthetics that emphasizes the affective position of their suffering. I show that the loyalist response to loss helps codify aesthetic expressions of loss, violence, and confusion that disrupt Old World presumptions about the role of aesthetics as a category of human understanding.

Crèvecoeur's text excels at deploying the desired effects of picturesque landscape, to "arouse emotions, stir the imagination, and to delight the eye with its naturalness," his success results in what might otherwise be considered a breach of decorum.<sup>235</sup> The emotions that Crèvecoeur arouses in the reader are those of horror and dismay that agitate, more than stir the imagination, and while expressive of "naturalness" are anything but delightful. The problem becomes a question of style, a question that has long plagued students of early American aesthetics. Issues, events, and phenomena of the loyalist experience distort traditional ideas of aesthetics, which force the Loyalists to deploy new modes of expression, representation, and meaning making. Crèvecoeur's use of the language and tropes of aesthetics and artistic techniques of painting create a mode of readerly affect that opens up a critique of "American" foundation. Eric Slauter has recently argued that the state is a work of art, that it is a man-made aesthetic object.<sup>236</sup> It

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<sup>235</sup> Bermingham, 72

<sup>236</sup> Eric Slauter, *The State as a Work of Art: The Cultural Origins of the Constitution* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2009). In his "Prologue," Slauter traces and explicates a variety of ephemeral pamphlet and epistolary responses and critiques of a couplet from Pope's *Essay on Man* in order to illustrate the poetic nature of



is this very work, what Crèvecoeur terms “artifice,” that *Landscapes* works against. Crèvecoeur’s engagement with landscape and the picturesque taps into English sentiments of aesthetic and national identity but is also at odds with Whiggish notions of utility, which shows a blending of these ideologies within an American context. This blending is also a subversion of Englishness insofar as Crèvecoeur is proposing to peel back the veneer of art and reveal the foundational work, the sketches that lie beneath, upon which the artifice relies. These sketches, this work, are the violence committed upon the “Tories” or Loyalists by the local committee-men.

Performing the work of cultural translation, the aesthetics of landscape often provides a license to reimagine the American wilderness in terms of the growth of empire and its transmission westward. Yet, while the rhetoric of the picturesque allows Crèvecoeur to elsewhere aestheticize undeveloped landscape into an imaginative national future, the scenes of *Landscapes* do not take place along the western frontier, but rather in the developed interior, complete with roads, well-established farms, parish churches, and inns. Whereas in England, the presence of rustic laborers was a contentious aesthetic subject - did they represent the charm of British industry and labor, a charm that was more nostalgic than empirically evident along the English countryside; or, did they represent the vulgar and abject masses of England who were being unwittingly swept along by the forces of modernization in both agriculture and in the changing aesthetics standards of what the material landscape of England ought to be - both of which were each forces that worked independently of and against the better interests of the English

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politics and the political nature of poetry in the early national period as they applied to debates concerning whether the United States would have a government of men or a government of laws, thereby highlighting the aesthetic foundations of the Constitution. I would argue that Crèvecoeur is concerned with the same dilemma and fears all too viscerally the dangers and abuses of a government of men.

commoners. There are most certainly controversial, vulgar rustics to be found in Crèvecoeur's *Landscapes*; however, their distortion of the picturesque beauty of the American landscape is anything but passive. Furthermore, it is not some abstract ideal of manorial countryside that these characters ornament, but bustling little farm communities that not long ago were imagined as populated by an egalitarian and meritocratic community comfortable and vibrant in its place of British imperial rule.

In Crèvecoeur's *Landscapes*, we are presented with a situation different from the aesthetic problem of the presence of the English commoner. Due in part to the formal incursion of plot into the landscape, a plot that represents the social as well as the political upheaval that the Revolution engendered along the American countryside. Crèvecoeur's *Landscapes* illustrates the rustics' presence as a symbol of decay and as a disruption of social hierarchies. Characters such as Aaron Blue-Skin, who has "a wild, irascible countenance," refers to himself as "the very soul and quintessence of a committeeman."<sup>237</sup> Blue-Skin is a vulgar, violent, and avaricious character who has risen in social standing through his zealous support of the Continental cause, and he uses his newly acquired power to harass his fellow countrymen. When the Two Strangers in the tavern refuse to answer his questions, he accuses them of being Tories and implicitly threatens them with violence. The scene in the tavern is an increasingly ludicrous spectacle of social upheaval that becomes all the more affecting for its depictions of increasingly explicit abuses heaped upon the peaceful inhabitants of the surrounding neighborhoods.

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<sup>237</sup> Crèvecoeur, *Landscapes*, 453, 456.

The oscillating rhetorical forces of pathos and irony are compounded when Colonel Templeman enters the scene. The Colonel, who leads a band of ruffian militiamen to harass the tavern Landlord, round up three Quakers, and steal from widows and orphans, becomes the mouthpiece through which Crèvecoeur voices the distant and confusing will of the Continental Congress as interpreted by the local committees. While blind to their own hypocrisy, Crèvecoeur ensures that his audience witnesses a nearly hyperbolic presentation of dramatic irony that runs at times toward farce – as when Aaron Blue-Skin seems confused that “these plaguy Tories have made us intrude on the Sabbath. I do not know how it happened;” or, later when he continually misunderstands the Two Strangers’ wry criticisms of his newly acquired power, as when they comment that “Authority is a commodity which is become so common that it is become less valuable than heretofore.”<sup>238</sup> Such impolitic and uncivil behavior is only slightly defended by Colonel Templeman, who while he is able to dismiss the Quakers’ accusation that he is an oppressive tyrant by explaining that he performs a social good by punishing Quakers for their doctrine of nonviolence, reveals his own ignorance of the hearts and minds of his neighbors when he complains, “we have unfortunately so many disaffected persons; and [so are] some of our principal families.”<sup>239</sup> The irony of Colonel Templeman’s inability to understand why so many of his neighborhood’s principal families should feel disaffected toward the committees and Congress is made all the more horrifying when later in the drama the Colonel is exasperated by his need to explain the committee’s justification for killing the patriarch of one such principal family and then summarily confiscates the property from his widow and children. Such depictions of

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<sup>238</sup> Crèvecoeur, 455, 456.

<sup>239</sup> Crèvecoeur, 463, 468.

rationalized violence masquerading as law is a stark departure from the presence of the English laboring class marring an otherwise bucolic landscape and exemplifies the sublime nature of the loyalist experience.

Crèvecoeur achieves his ironic critique of the committee men in part because he has offered a variety of perspectives and voices that he may juxtapose for dramatic effect. Unlike the singularly controlled optics of Farmer James in *Letters from an American Farmer*, *Landscapes* allows for a broad spectrum of views to be voiced and at times brought into both passive and aggressive conflict. Of all of *Landscapes*' characters, the tavern Landlord is perhaps the most like Farmer James in his position and perspective. While the other characters are philosophically detached, such as Eccelstone and Iwan, active and myopic, such as Aaron Blue-Skin and Colonel Templeman, or passive and indignant, such as the Quakers, the Landlord sees all and is able to leverage his perspective into a calculated passive-aggression. He witnesses all the comings and goings from the tavern, passively resists the committee men as best as he may, yet even he is batted into debate by the colonel, and in the course of their conversation he reveals his suspicions as to the veracity of the laws of Congress. When pressed and threatened to be brought down by the Colonel, the Landlord breaks from his characteristic ambiguity, stating that the law "never pinched nor galled before. Is it wonder we should shrink a little and wink and blink?"<sup>240</sup>

The Landlord's characterization of life before the Revolution harkens back to Crèvecoeur's *Letters*, in which Farmer James lauds that he and his fellow Americans owe "small tribute to my king, with loyalty and due respect," and for which James and his

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<sup>240</sup> Crèvecoeur, *Landscapes*, 461.

fellow Americans are protected by “indulgent laws” that were “derived from the original genius and strong desire of the people ratified and confirmed by the crown.”<sup>241</sup> This passage, from the famous “Letter III – What is an American?”, brings to the fore those who desired nothing more than to thrive in “unity” under “the silken bands of mild government’s all respecting laws without dreading their powers,” what Edward Larkin has referred to as the “weak imperial structure” that fostered a cosmopolitan environment that helped to define Crèvecoeur’s pluralist, archetypal American and encouraged his loyalty to the benign, beneficent, British crown.<sup>242</sup> It is just such laws, here praised by Farmer James, that the Landlord is referencing when he explains to Colonel Templeman why their fellow countrymen resist the rule of the committees. The “Advertisement” to the first edition of *Letters* calls attention to Farmer James / Crèvecoeur’s having “long been an eye witness of the transactions which have deformed the face of America,” and “Letter XII – Distresses of a Frontier Man” bookends *Letters* with the fear and anxiety of the loyalist predicament, yet too often and too easily are the *Letters* read with an eye toward the entrenched proto-nationalist readings of the American master narrative, and it is through texts such as *Landscapes* that Crèvecoeur’s loyalist aesthetic may be more fully recovered.

Unlike the *Letters*, the inclusion of landscape aesthetics informs *Landscapes* on both the thematic and the formal levels. Consequently, the representation of action on the part of the committee-men radically alters the transplantation of British aesthetics, which is why, in *Landscapes*, aesthetic elements that the likes of Addison, Burke, Kames and others would claim works toward the elevation of the intellect and the liberty of the

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<sup>241</sup> Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, 52, 69.

<sup>242</sup> Crèvecoeur, *Letters*, 67.

imagination become recast as elements of horror, violence, and loss. The leveling and anarchic tendencies of the revolution rub against enlightenment aesthetics elevating rhetoric, revealing its limits. I will have more to say about representations of vulgarity hereafter; for the moment, I will only point out that the introduction of character and action, formal qualities of the drama, alter the means by which Crèvecoeur utilizes the aesthetics of landscape.

The language of art and the hopeful language of civil society are then juxtaposed by their insidious cognates of artfulness and artifice as an aesthetics of deception, a covering over the of destruction and suffering of the loyalists over which revolutionary aspirations and cupidity gloss and upon which Crèvecoeur fears historians will lay the foundations of their selective retelling of events, even as the events unfold. The speaker offers the sketch beneath the great work of art, the vulgar pre-work that lies beneath, as the aesthetic point of departure for understanding the Revolution as it effected the individual, especially those individuals whose loyalties were suspect or outright monarchist in nature. While any shade of loyalty to king, church, or empire was made occasion for abuse, Crèvecoeur just as often makes evident that loyalists, or “Tories” as he styles them in the drama, are produced by the abuse of committee-men and the unprecedented laws of Congress. Crèvecoeur utilizes the dramatic irony of the revolutionaries’ inability to sympathize with the Loyalists as a means to heighten the sublime effect that plot has on landscape.

***Form as feeling and argument***

Crèvecoeur situates his text in two discursive modes – landscape painting and drama. Crèvecoeur disrupts English aesthetic paradigms for viewing landscape by adding

the formal characteristics of drama to his sketches of eighteenth-century America. This blending of genre as well as aesthetic expectations productively corrupts both modes of writing: the drama is denied a hero and robbed of a proper plot resolution; likewise, the landscape is interfered with by the introduction of action and consequence. Such mixing of forms generates an abuse upon the reader's sensibilities that replicates the actual abuse of the American landscape and its inhabitants inflicted upon the scene by the committees of safety. While disruptive of traditional aesthetics, such generic comingling allows Crèvecoeur to mediate the horror of loyalist experience and the lamentable effects of both Continental and Imperial politics. Abused and abandoned, the Loyalists of Crèvecoeur's *Landscapes* experience a horror that defies the traditional aesthetics of either drama or landscape and as such require a supplemental aesthetics of excess and sensationalism. If, as Kelly argues, loyalist figures such as William Hamilton and the picturesque landscapes of his estate at Woodlands invite us to "consider the relation between the colonial past and the early national present" as engendering a "dialectic of remembering and forgetting upon which the nation depended," then Crèvecoeur's aesthetic anxieties, as manifest in *Landscapes*, urges us to remember the violent transition from a bucolic colonial past to an appropriative early national historiography.<sup>243</sup> Unlike the later nationalist deployment of an aesthetics of landscape as depicting national prosperity in a seemingly endless "Empire of Liberty," providing both a discourse of wealth in land and a discourse of unity and control over what could prove to be a chaotic bounty, Crèvecoeur mobilizes the aesthetics of the sublime and monstrous in order to register a sense of loss and denigration both social and natural.

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<sup>243</sup> Kelly, 119, 158.

Formally, *Landscapes* is a bit odd, even for an eighteenth-century closet drama. Jeffrey Richards argues that “*Landscapes* lacks a single tragic figure whose story holds the whole together ... nor does it have the usual plot trajectory of rise-reversal-fall, except on the scenic level.”<sup>244</sup> Yet it is just this scenic level that Crèvecoeur is constantly invoking to express the disillusionment over the course of American affairs. Richards underestimates the importance of the tradition of landscape aesthetics and painting that Crèvecoeur fuses with the form of drama. Shuttling between the media of painting and drama, the text of *Landscapes*, with its various scenes, sketch out a narrative of progressively atrocious abuses enacted by the rural committee-men. Unlike *Letters*, which utilizes a fictional epistolary framework, the dramatic elements of *Landscapes* is not as intimate, allowing for a more dynamic structure and ambivalent tone. There is also a different ethos to *Landscapes*. No longer reliant on Farmer James, Crèvecoeur is able to make his argument by juxtaposition, perspective, and conflict of various characters and settings.

Crèvecoeur begins by placing his dramatic text within the discourse of European landscape painting. Addressing some unknown interlocutor, the narrator assures that “the following ‘American Landscapes’ are not beneath your attention, though they are the works of neither Salvator Rosa nor Claude Lorrain.”<sup>245</sup> By invoking such names, Crèvecoeur is deliberately engaging with the tradition of landscape painting and the aesthetic discourse that accompanied thoughts and presumptions about such works. This marriage of form allows Crèvecoeur to broaden the scope of his aesthetic. By drawing

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<sup>244</sup> Jeffrey Richards, *Drama, Theatre, and Identity in the New American Republic* (New York: Cambridge, 2005), 40.

<sup>245</sup> Crèvecoeur, *Landscapes*, 424.



from both the closet drama and the landscape, Crèvecoeur engages his audience on multiple levels of visceral response. While he explicitly engages with the tradition of European landscape painting, Crèvecoeur immediately disassociates his own work, claiming that they are “sketches.” The purposes of this quick shift are several. First, it is a gesture toward humility. Calming that he “leave[s] to artists the harmony of shades and brilliance of perspective arrangements,” Crèvecoeur makes a necessary admission that what he proposes to share with his audience are not great works of art, but rather are the foundational sketches over which a myth of American national historiography is painted.<sup>246</sup> They are a true art for a true history that is in the process of being secreted away by the deceitful artifice of the American Continentals.

It is important to note that the visual nature of landscape aesthetics show that Crèvecoeur was attempting to paint a picture for his audience. Rather than fight the Continental Americans on ideological or literary formalist terms, such as Jonathan Odell or Samuel Seabury, Crèvecoeur attempts to create a visceral world that his readers will be able to fear. Such a sensual, somatic sense of depiction attempts an aesthetics of bodily experience. The emphasis on the potential for sensory deception in the formation and artistic production of *Landscapes* show Crèvecoeur’s readers that the newly formed United States are indeed a “work of art.”<sup>247</sup> For Crèvecoeur, the aesthetic experience is a sublime representation of melancholy.

The key words of Crèvecoeur’s “Preface” to *Landscapes* runs something along the lines of: art, artists, artful, perspective, harmony, shades. The emphasis on the language of landscape painting adds a self-conscious aesthetic level to the dramatic

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<sup>246</sup> Crèvecoeur, *Landscapes*, 424.

<sup>247</sup> See Eric Slauter.

dialog that follows. By naming his play's scenes as "Landscapes" and by framing his drama within the language of eighteenth-century aesthetic theory, Crèvecoeur accomplishes a blending of forms -- visual, dramatic, and textual -- that adds an emotional complexity correspondent to the text's self-conscious formal qualities.

Crèvecoeur quickly transitions from an abstract metaphor of the role of art in culture to an analysis of the levels and stages in the progress and development in the work of art: "My simple wish is to show you the vulgar thread of that canvas, once so rude and neglected, the work of low and ignorant artists, but now transmuted into a wide, extended surface on which new and deceiving perspectives are represented."<sup>248</sup>

Crèvecoeur's ironic apology for bringing his reader/viewer's attention to the vulgar thread, the canvas once so rude, the hidden course ligaments and texture beneath the work of art is a subtle condemnation of the artfulness of American Continental statecraft. Crèvecoeur's language works to both characterize the "artifice" of new Nation making as the work of low and ignorant artists, thereby demarcating a hierarchy of aesthetic order, and to call attention to the hidden work that allowed the Revolution to take place and progress.

### ***The sublime horror of American tyranny***

Embedded in Crèvecoeur's use of the discourse of landscape painting is a simultaneous mobilization and criticism of the Anglo-American Gothic aesthetic. While situating Crèvecoeur within a genealogy of American Gothic writing is not altogether new, it does serve to call into question Crèvecoeur's place in the cannon of American Exceptionalism and allow us to reconsider his motivations for writing during the years of

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<sup>248</sup> Crèvecoeur, *Landscapes*, 424.

the Revolution. Teresa A. Goddu has claimed “Crèvecoeur’s *Letters*...focuses on how the gothic disrupts the Enlightenment fable of the early republic with the cultural contradictions – slavery and revolution – that establish the republic yet also threaten its dissolution.”<sup>249</sup> I would add that Crèvecoeur’s loyalist writings call into question the legitimacy of the revolutionary government, which finds its inception in civil war, deceit, and artifice. While by no means directly influence by the gothic tradition, the revolutionary context, graphic physical and psychological violence, and callous, megalomaniacal motivations of the Committee men and women allows us to anachronistically situate Crèvecoeur’s work within a broader gothic tradition, specifically that of the sublimity of horror.<sup>250</sup> The sublime effects of Crèvecoeur’s horror writing in *Landscapes* are scripted into the descriptions of the desolate countryside, the novelty of the new republican regime, and the personification of monstrosity that is indicative of revolutionary rhetoric.

Crèvecoeur uses the language of the sublime extensively and variously, often in ways that, rather than elevating the pleasure of the imagination, represent enormity, suffering, and loss. According to eighteenth-century aesthetic philosophers, such as Addison and Burke, a primary and pleasurable element of the sublime is that of novelty. For Addison, “everything that is *new* and *uncommon* raises a Pleasure in the Imagination, because it fills the Soul with an agreeable Surprise, gratifies the Curiosity, and gives it an

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<sup>249</sup> Teresa A. Goddu, *Gothic America: Narrative, History, and Nation* (Columbia UP, 1997), 11.

<sup>250</sup> I am anachronistically situating Crèvecoeur within the discourse of the Gothic for argumentative and analogous purposes. While Crèvecoeur does not himself claim to be a Gothic writer, none-the-less his work often shares many traits with later eighteenth century Gothic writing, especially the novels of terror and horror popular at the time. Though, as Nick Groom has pointed out, the term “Gothic novel” does not appear until the 1920s, the Gothic tradition was used as a political metaphor for both Whigs and Tories throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries; Groom, *The Gothic: a Very Short Introduction* (Oxford UP, 2012), 76. See also, Alfred Longueil, “The Word ‘Gothic’ in Eighteenth Century Criticism,” *Modern Language Notes*, 38 (1923): 459-461.

Idea of which it was not before possessed.”<sup>251</sup> Burke extends Addison’s assessment of novelty but also diminishes its importance by equating it to a superficial curiosity that is indicative of restlessness and anxiety.<sup>252</sup> While they differ in their emphasis, both Addison and Burke ascribe positive qualities to novelty, as when Addison claims that “it is [novelty] that bestows charms on a Monster.”<sup>253</sup> Such an assessment of novelty is borne of a position of political and economic security and is indicative of a progressive, whiggish ideology. For the Loyalists, the novelty of revolt is anything but pleasurable, rather it is the monstrosity of novelty and its sublime horror that Crèvecoeur and his loyalist characters fear.

Crèvecoeur undermines Addison and Burke’s notions of novelty and explicitly defines novelty as sublime in its enormity. Crèvecoeur is so explicit in this point that a passage from *Landscapes’* “Preface” is worth quoting at length:

Behold, then, a new source of revolution, a new class of calamity never before experienced. That excess of misrule should rouse a generous people is very natural to conceive; that the avarice of individuals, the cupidity of the republics, the ambition of princes, should kindle and promote wars – we are well acquainted with these veteran causes. Ambition, hypocrisy, enthusiasm, are continually travelling from one end of the earth to the other. But this American manœuvre is altogether without a precedent; history affords us no parallel...A new and unheard-of impunity, grafted on

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<sup>251</sup> Joseph Addison, *The Spectator, No. 412, Selections from The Tatler and The Spectator*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., ed. Robert J. Allen (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970), 402.

<sup>252</sup> Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), 29.

<sup>253</sup> Addison, 402.

parental indulgence, grows and expands and settles into pertinacity and arrogance. Is this, then, the state of human nature? Is this the source of things? Premature event! Fatal disposition! My astonishment is boundless when I recollect in a short retrospect the beginnings and progressive increase of this unnatural revolt.<sup>254</sup>

Crèvecoeur here depicts American revolt as exceptionally novel, as having no precedent in the whole of human history, and implements the problem of novelty extensively elsewhere in *Landscapes*. For Crèvecoeur and his Tory characters, such novelty is disturbing and dangerous. Specifically, the novelty of American Revolution sets forth a new aesthetic beyond description. Crèvecoeur goes on to use the language of the sublime when he describes the Revolution as an object “so large that I cannot enclose it within the reach of my horizontal vision,” as something that exceeds the landscape and understanding itself.<sup>255</sup> Crèvecoeur’s depiction of the Revolution and its novelty is one in which an “unnatural revolt” distorts the “landscape,” making the view of the land before one a juxtaposition of perspectives disjointed, in contradistinction to the desired harmony of eighteenth-century notions of picturesque beauty, which allows for a suspicion of, if not an ambivalence toward, the later landscape of national unity that will be painted over these vulgar sketches.

Explicitly at odds here are the types of characters who populate the landscape and set the plot into motion. The partisan nature of the committee members strikes the other characters as new and frightening, while the committee members’ assaults on the passive “Tories” brings certain characters’ loyalist sympathies into relief. That each group was a

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<sup>254</sup> Crèvecoeur, *Landscapes*, 425-426.

<sup>255</sup> Crèvecoeur, *Landscapes*, 426.

source of fear and propaganda for the other throughout the conflict is made clear by the many partisan pamphlets that proliferated during the 1770s. The most extreme examples of demonizing the British and their American supporters are Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* and *The Crisis*. In *The Crisis, No. 1*, Paine rhetorically asks "what is a Tory? Good God! what is he?"<sup>256</sup> Paine's caricature of self-interest, cowardice, and avarice would fit just as well in a loyalist screed against the rebels, and it is just such pretense to confusion and horror that allows people who until recently were quite similar suddenly to become radically other. As Edward Larkin has argued, the Loyalists are an essential characteristic to Paine's ideal of revolution, they are the local antagonists to his narrative of progress.<sup>257</sup> But as we see in Crèvecoeur's *Landscapes* it is just such a slavish commitment to the beating of the war drum of progress that characterizes the patriots as ignorant, low, mean, and incapable of addressing individual nuance or affording a genuine sympathy to their neighbors. Just as Paine distorts tradition and fidelity into cowardice and cupidity, within the world of Crèvecoeur's *Landscapes*, progress and novelty distort character into monstrosity.

This is not to argue that Crèvecoeur has the moral high ground or a monopoly on eighteenth-century Anglo-American aesthetics. In some respects, the American patriots fulfill the ideology of Whig landscape aesthetics. They seek to rid the land of any unseemly elements that do not fall within their definition of taste (e.g. the loyalists); however, Crèvecoeur very explicitly constructs the rebels as coarse, vulgar, and rude clowns who unduly lay claim to rights of proprietary ownership. Such *fiat accompli* on

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<sup>256</sup> Thomas Paine, *The Crisis, No. 1*, December 1776.

<sup>257</sup> Edward Larkin, "What is a Loyalist?" *Common-Place*. 8.1 (2007): <http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-08/no-01/larkin/>

the part of the Deacon and his wife flies in the face of English Whig aesthetics, making a mockery of its mistranslation in an American context. The committee-men's gross misappropriation of claims to Whig ideals of improvement and liberty distort the English aesthetic tradition into a living monstrosity gobbling up the landscape and slaughtering the inhabitants of the countryside. The American Revolution disrupted traditional social, economic, and ideological hierarchies, which lead to the advent of extreme violence, suspicion, prosecution, and confiscation under a system of novel and seemingly arbitrary "laws," enforced by a combination of self-proclaimed "patriots" from heretofore lower and vulgar classes caused astonishment and fear within the loyalist community.<sup>258</sup>

Crèvecoeur articulates the committee-men's radical break from the past by having his characters meditate on another perversion of landscape aesthetics, that of perspective. Crèvecoeur represents a world in which perspectives are distorted into terrific proportions, creating monstrous visions, in which taste is vulgarized, and through which traditional Whig policy is denigrated into cupidity, avarice, and most heinous murder. As a result, Loyalists resorted to modes of expression and aesthetic forms that emphasized the sublime horror they saw and inescapable chaos they confronted. Crèvecoeur calls

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<sup>258</sup> William H. Nelson has demonstrated that many of the Loyalists were among British America's minorities and populated much of America's geographic periphery and as such constituted America's most vulnerable populations, making them especially susceptible to harassment. See *The American Tory* (Boston: Northeastern UP, [1961] 1992). We may read the harassment of peripheral Loyalists as an extension of the Whig aesthetics of improvement. Nigel Everett has argued, "In the Whig idea of arrangement of landscape it is often difficult to distinguish ideas of taste from the assertive expression of private property and control of territory," which can be used to justify a confiscation of property from those who would depreciate its aesthetic value by their mere presence (38). Under such an aesthetics, "[i]mprovement would conform to the pastoral ideal expressed in the fashionable aesthetics...in which rural life could be seen as a state of tranquil ease, natural sentiments, and amiable simplicity, without any of the displeasing characteristics of the real life of the country – the dull, laborious, mean, servile circumstances and 'low ideas' of actual peasants" (40). See Everett's *The Tory View of Landscape* (Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1994). Crèvecoeur's *Landscapes* reveals the dangers of Whig ideology's logical conclusions. Armed with their own sense of justice, the committee men roam the American countryside with the right to confiscate property and upset longstanding communities by defining their uncooperative neighbors as "Tories."

attention to such aesthetic machinations, and even seeks to criticize the nature of their affects through his characters' dialogs. Early on in the fourth landscape, Iwan explains to Ecclestone the importance of perspective in relation to perceptions:

Small causes have generally the most extensive effects: 'tis so all the world over. When you read the resolves of some mighty councils, the edicts of potent kings, you see but the ostensible side of the medal. Could you pervade the little, insignificant cabals of their cabinets, the combination of female influence, the jars of parties, you'd observe the same train; you'd see that it is by the distance, the dense medium through which we little folks contemplate the actions of the great, that we are deceived. We have naturally such respect for grandeur that we are fools enough to think that they are made of other clay.<sup>259</sup>

Iwan's explanation of how politics relies on the aesthetics of the sublime in order to assert and justify power relations is both a description of how the Congress and the Committees have been able to establish dominance in America and also a subtle deflation of the Continentals' pretense to such sublime power. In explaining how the rebels have used perspective to give themselves a false sense of grandeur, Iwan peels away the veneer of sublimity to reveal the rude, insignificant sketches on which the Revolution is founded. In addition to echoing Crèvecoeur's own emphasis on aesthetic metaphors from the "Preface," Iwan's conversation about the rebels utilizes plot to break through the ossifying tendencies of landscape painting and thereby supply a means by which the masterpiece of national founding may be questioned, debated, and made small.

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<sup>259</sup> Crèvecoeur, *Landscapes*, 448.



Unfortunately, Iwan and Ecclestone's conversation is interrupted by the Landlord who fears they may be overheard by the committeemen. As Arron Blue-Skin enters the scene, terror and apprehension once again become the dominant mood of the drama, and what follows are a further series of vignettes of violence and abuse.

The question of perspective and the policing of public speech among the loyalist characters articulates the epistemic rift the Loyalists' experience when engaging or evading their rebel counterparts. The Loyalists suffer the sublime insofar as they are incapable of knowing the limits of the new continental order. If, for the Continentals, the liberty of the imagination offers them an opportunity to make the world anew, such novelty to the Loyalists has a sublime effect. The unprecedented nature of the colonial revolt is beyond their scope of knowledge and in contradistinction to their epistemological framework. Crèvecoeur represents the committees as acting out of cupidity and unsympathetic capris, leaving the Tories at a designed disadvantage, the design of which is yet one more artifice in favor of the anomaly of mob rule. The artifice of such characters as Deacon Beatus and his wife, Eltha, signify a terrifying rupture and departure from the old colonial order. As life becomes unpredictable and incoherent, the Loyalists are uncertain of their welfare or their future, and their temerity is exemplified in their utter dismay at the committee members' behavior.

While there is no shortage of egregious behavior among the rebels, it is Deacon Beatus and Eltha, his wife, who enact the most grotesque and monstrous behavior. In breaking the Sabbath to abuse Tories and steal from helpless widows and orphans, the two become the most hypocritical of the drama's villains. Indeed, Eltha becomes the most illegible within traditional historical paradigms of femininity and sympathy. As

Jeffrey Richards has put it, “given the usual run of female characters in eighteenth-century British drama, the presence ‘on stage’ of a woman who remains, essentially, unpunished for her disruptions of domestic order is a startling one,” and Crèvecoeur’s drama is startling insofar as, “in his play, the republican woman is a monster.”<sup>260</sup> The monstrosity of the Deacon’s wife is a recognition of the inherent cruelty of her hubris and the innate viciousness of her newly elevated position. In many ways, Crèvecoeur’s *Landscapes* could almost be read as bathos if not for its tragic qualities. Crèvecoeur deflates the sublime by relating the committee members’ practice as demanding the respect of grandeur from fools who know no better; however, the sublime will return in the reality of the brutality of cognitive dissonance of the mob as monstrosity.

Eltha’s perverse cruelty toward the loyalist characters reminds us of the violence of the Revolution and its capacity to divide communities. At the fore of much loyalist writing is dismay, but also horror at war’s bloody path. Jeff Osborne has argued that the violence of the American founding is too often overlooked in studies of the period’s literature, and his study of Crèvecoeur’s *Letters* argues for the importance of antagonism, violence, and cruelty in favor of sympathetic feelings in scholars’ efforts to explain how the colonists came to understand themselves as a nation. Osborn’s study shows that empathy and community were ultimately impotent in the revolutionary moment and that focusing too much on narratives of sympathy and fellow feelings obscures the more hostile aspects of the war that were strongest in forging allegiances and associations between revolutionary actors.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> Richards, *Drama, Theatre, and Identity in the American New Republic*, 51, 47.

<sup>261</sup> Jeff Osborne, “American Antipathy and the Cruelties of Citizenship in Crèvecoeur’s *Letters*,” *Early American Literature*, 42 (2004): 529-553.

### *Crèvecoeur's Sublime Melancholy*

For Crèvecoeur and other loyalist and moderate writers, the point is that the politics of revolution effectively erode any romantic or transcendental notion of “humanity as such.” For the loyalists, and for Crèvecoeur in particular, there is no “presocial” and all sensuous forms of art are only more or less didactic, more or less visceral forms of their dreadful trepidations and expressions of political abuse. This is not to say that loyalist literature, as such, is a literature that holds men’s politics -- their ambitions and their avarice -- to be the lowest most vulgar forms of “humanity as such.” With this in mind, I argue that we can best understand a loyalist aesthetics by reading their literature in the political, material, and emotional abuse that the loyalists suffered, both individually and collectively, at the hands of the self-fashioned American committees and through the negligence of British administration.<sup>262</sup> Additionally, for those Loyalists who preferred to remain and reintegrate back into American culture, the very modes of aesthetic sociability used to cover up the Revolution’s violent overtones and the national founding’s violent undertones became the very same political covers for loyalist amelioration. As Catherine Kelly has pointed out through the example of William Hamilton, the “bitter Tory became a benevolent uncle” who was able to use “sociability to situate himself outside the political conflicts and commitments that branded him as a Tory, a loyalist, a traitor.”<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>262</sup> Recently, Cindy Weinstein and Christopher Looby summarize Herbert Marcuse’s account of the necessary autonomy of art in which aesthetics “references something more fundamental than politics, which [Marcuse] calls ‘humanity as such’” (30 n.6). For Marcuse, the “political potential of art” must come from a space that is “presocial...embodied in or addressed by the sensuous form of art rather than by its expressed political content” (30-31 n.6).

<sup>263</sup> Kelly, 129, 139.

Crèvecoeur's deployment of the language of the sublime within the dual form of landscape and dramatic dialog give setting and action to the feeling of loyalist melancholia, which is itself an aesthetics of private interiorities disrupted by a hostile and avaricious public collectivity. Such an aesthetics reveals that the "sublime remainder" of the American Revolution is the sublime melancholy expressed by the Loyalists. In *Landscapes*, Crèvecoeur deflates the sublime by relating Whig practice as demanding the respect of grandeur from fools who know no better; however, the sublime will return in the reality of the brutality of cognitive dissonance of the mob as monstrosity. This lured, invisible vision correlates with the inability of the neutral and "Tory" characters of the drama's inability to make sense of the Congress's rule of "law." The Whig law and history as refracted through Whig perspective, distorts the landscape into a phantasmagoria of impress, confiscation, arrest, severance, and murder perpetrated by unruly Committee members who have become unmoored from social responsibility and cultural tradition. Unable to know right from wrong, truth from lie, rights from abuses, the Tory characters are at a loss to defend themselves from the cupidity and arbitrary power of their Whig neighbors. These competing distances of perspective create a gap between belief and feeling for the incredulous Tories.

While some loyalist writers, such as Jonathan Odell, resorted to a biting satire and aesthetics of ridicule and deflation to combat the patriot worldview; others, such as Crèvecoeur, perverted more traditional aesthetics, such as that of landscape painting, to register an increasingly growing sensation of loss and despair that combines the sublime with the melancholic. Melancholy is Crèvecoeur's term for the experiences of those who, like Ecclestone, the Marston family, and Martha Corwin, are condemned to witness with

ambivalence and horror to a blending of transatlantic aesthetics and revolutionary ideology. While the central importance of melancholy in Crèvecoeur's work is to identify the suffering of the Loyalists and transmit those feelings of hopelessness and loss to his audience, I also want to distinguish the meaning of melancholy in *Landscapes* from its more well-known traditions of Galenic and Freudian discourse. In addition, the more general use of melancholy as a state of sullenness and perpetual gloom, there emerged in the early eighteenth-century a sense of melancholy as a response to a deplorable fact or state of affairs. It is just such a use of the term melancholy that Jonathan Odell invokes in a July 1775 letter when he refers to "this important and melancholy crisis."<sup>264</sup> Odell, an ardent Loyalist, understood the events to be grave, and as an Anglican minister he saw his role as that of a keeper of the peace, advocate of social order, and a minister for the crown. The chaos engendered by the Revolution, and the violence the Loyalists suffered at the hands of the committees, is represented by Crèvecoeur through a distortion of traditional aesthetics of the pleasurable sublime in an attempt to express to his audience the crippling melancholy of the Loyalists' affective and political position.

Crèvecoeur's discourse of melancholy is a direct result of this mixing of forms. Within the greater formal aesthetic conceit of the "landscape" is an expression of the sublime that leads to an articulation of loyalist melancholia. Loyalist melancholia is an aesthetic that uses the tropes of the sublime to produce a distorted view, or perspective, of landscape, which Crèvecoeur reveals to be the underlying structural study over which the artifice of the newly imagined United States is painted. By juxtaposing sublime horror and extreme violence with the aesthetic of landscape painting, Crèvecoeur not only

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<sup>264</sup> Cited in Cafferty, 7

represents despair but also engenders despair in the work of art itself. His apparent ambivalence of representation reveals the near absurd incongruity of notions of liberty and justice within the revolutionary framework. Furthermore, the desolation of the countryside, the landscape of once fruitful America, emphasizes the effects of such unbridled liberty. As an aesthetic, melancholy becomes for Crèvecoeur and the Loyalists an expression of their feelings of loss and utter hopelessness in the wake of Revolutionary fervor. Reconsidering the “Preface,” which sets up the scenes and the foundation for the landscape writ large, the sketches over that which the great American work of art is painted, Crèvecoeur proposes an understanding of American founding as having its roots in despair. Crèvecoeur’s deployment of melancholy as a means of expressing the irrecoverable loss that identifies the Loyalists serves the aesthetic politics that are central to the portrayal of the American Revolution, and Crèvecoeur’s dread and dismay of the effects of revolutionary fervor constitutes a structure of feeling that identifies the Loyalists as a political group unique from both the British and the Americans.

If loyalist aesthetics is to be taken seriously and examined more closely than it has been, then the complexity of its determinants and their various social engagements must be accounted for. The problem of universalizing tendencies in many discussions of aesthetics is similar to the problem of universalizing tendencies in many discussions of revolutionary ideology. Crèvecoeur’s *Landscapes* emphasizes the threat to civilization posed by unbridled liberty and a break from tradition. Edward Cahill has argued that Crèvecoeur’s beautiful American futurity serves as an extension of and response to

Europe's sublime past.<sup>265</sup> While Cahill's reading is appropriate for a reading of Crèvecoeur's early optimism, it does not account for the desolation that the Revolution wrought upon Crèvecoeur's early vision of America, and the advent of revolutionary hostilities shatters Crèvecoeur's early hopes for American liberty and prosperity within an imperial context. As the war desolates the landscape, as liberty of the imagination inspires the persecution of loyal and moderate Americans, Crèvecoeur's vision of America is distorted beyond recognition, the spectator's perspective is altered, America becomes a phantasmagoria of carnage and waste. Deployment of the sublime then mobilizes an aesthetic register meant to influence Crèvecoeur's readers' aesthetic sensibilities and draw out a sympathy for the Loyalists by presenting the reader with scenes of violence that disrupt the picturesque ideologies of landscape aesthetics. The inconceivable scope and enormity of the Revolution is difficult to express within the traditional norms of history, art, and society, and the beautiful gives way to the terrifying. The heteroglossia of the character's competing points of view, along with the unwieldy, unnatural nature of events call for alternative modes of expression. Following Burke's notion that the sublime in art delights whereas the sublime in nature paralyzes, what Crèvecoeur accomplishes is an aesthetics that will lay claim to nature and representation, a depiction of events in America that will paralyze the reader and represent horror in their claims to truth values.

Crèvecoeur's *Landscapes* are a world in which the spectator's imagination is arrested and deprivation, suffering, and death are the only imaginable outcomes, hence the melancholy tenor of Crèvecoeur's Loyalists' diction. As opposed to *Letters*, in which

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<sup>265</sup> Edward Cahill, *Liberty of the Imagination: Aesthetic Theory, Literary Form, and Politics in the Early United States* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 123-124.

Crèvecoeur utilizes the aesthetics of the beautiful to describe a “diverse constellation of concepts similarly concerned with discovering truth in pleasure, emotion, and non-rational modes of knowledge,” *Landscapes* presents a crisis of pleasure by focusing on a non-rational expression of emotion.<sup>266</sup> The form of *Landscapes*, the disruption and abuse of a once beautiful and verdant landscape by the intercession of political action, gives voice to the emotional distress of a suppressed community that lacked organization and a central voice. Crèvecoeur’s avoidance of an explicit, argumentative response to Whig political ideology and revolutionary fervor offers a visceral, non-rational, affective retort to the horrors of American tyranny. What Crèvecoeur establishes in *Landscapes* is an attention to how such cultural practices may be abused in the name of avarice for political gain, and furthermore, how the same cultural practices must be disrupted in order to give voice to those individuals who have experienced the loss of said cultural practices. The Loyalist are denied their American identity and are forced to undermine the cultural practice of both British and American aesthetics and ideology. In *Landscapes*, Crèvecoeur categorizes feeling as the sole province of the Loyalists. This, combined with his deliberate mixing of forms forges a structural sympathy with the loyalist position.

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<sup>266</sup> Cahill, 3.



## CHAPTER SIX

### LOYALISTS IN TRANSITION: COMPETING CULTURES OF EXILE

On Thursday 18 April 1776, James Boswell met Joseph Brant, Thayendangea, the loyalist Mohawk chief, at the Subscription City Ball in Haberdashers Hall, London. The only substantive comment that Boswell makes about Brant in his journal is that Brant “spoke English quite well.”<sup>267</sup> It’s a small but telling comment. One that will be repeated by all anglophones who meet Brant, and one that has unexpected parallels with a variety of other loyalists’ diasporic experiences. Command of and control over the English language becomes a fraught site of allegiance and identity as the United States becomes a separate political and cultural entity from Britain and its empire.

While uncharacteristically reticent in his journal entry, Boswell wrote the lead article for the July 1776 issue of the *London Magazine* on his meeting with Brant, and it is here we find Boswell perplexed and uncertain about how to adequately describe Brant. Boswell is at first confused and underwhelmed at meeting Brant. Perhaps half expecting either a blood thirsty or a noble savage, Boswell laments that “this chief had not the ferocious dignity of a savage leader.” Upon arriving in London, Brant had himself fitted out in the latest English fashion, which evidently had the effect of rendering Brant unrecognizable as a representative of his people to his interlocutor. As Boswell comments, “when he wore the ordinary European habit, there did not seem to be any

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<sup>267</sup> *Boswell: The Ominous years, 1774-1776*. ed. Charles Ryskamp (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), 342.

thing about him that marked preeminence.” Brant in European clothes does not strike Boswell as being forceful or savage. Indeed, Boswell seems to have difficulty with imagining the man before him as a native American. Worried that his readers will be disappointed, Boswell arranges to have Brant’s likeness sketched in the “dress of his nation,” for the “satisfaction of our readers.” While Boswell lauds the Mohawk nation’s adoption of villages, agriculture, and Christianity, he is alarmed at the sight of an American Indian in British dress. More surprising still, Boswell reports that Brant’s “manners are gentle and quiet,” that he “speaks English very well; and is so much master of the language, that he is engaged in a translation of the New Testament into the Mohock [sic] tongue.” Brant’s illegibility stems from Boswell’s inability to accept a Native American that dresses and speaks like an Englishman.<sup>268</sup>

Yet, when given an audience with George Germain, Brant cannily sheds his anglicized style and performs an elaborate theater of Native American eloquence and loyalist supplication. Early in his account of Brant, Boswell makes clear that it is the “present unhappy Civil War in America [that] occasioned his coming over to England,” and Brant met with Germain to pledge the Mohawk’s loyalty to Britain as well as to request support for his people and make grievance against previous land agreements. Brant uses the metaphor of the family to make his case, referring to George III as “our Father, the Great King” and Germain as “Brother Gorah.” The rhetorical trope of addressing Germain as “Brother” is a refrain that Brant employs at the beginning of each

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<sup>268</sup> James Boswell, “An Account of the Chief of the Mohock Indians, who lately visited England (With an exact Likeness),” *The London Magazine*, (July 1776). For a detailed account of portraits of Brant, see: Milton W. Hamilton, “Joseph Brant – “The Most Painted Indian,” *New York History*, XXXIX.2 (1958): 119-132.

of his major syllogisms.<sup>269</sup> While the transatlantic family metaphor is a common trope in both Native American and Anglo American conceptions of British empire, it's Brant's willingness to "play Indian" for Germain that makes his meeting with Boswell all the more striking. Politically, Brant is well aware of the pageantry of the crown and its offices and knows well how to situate himself into the imperial regime; yet, culturally, Brant's desire for all things British and his bilingual ambitions as manifest in his translations and speech make evident that, at least on some levels, Brant's loyalty is not merely a political convenience or a calculated alliance, but also a sincere desire that he and his people partake in all things English.

This chapter follows the Loyalists into exile throughout the British Atlantic, charts their initial attempts at recreating their American experiences elsewhere, and analyzes the successes and failures of these early attempts at resettlement. Beyond the scope of the national, the Loyalists also engendered lasting effects on the re-configuration of the British Empire, especially in relation to Canada and the Caribbean. However, in some respects, these situations have been over dramatized or misunderstood. Shelburne, for example, was meant to be a new city, built *ab nihilo* in the Canadian frontier and intended to rival the New York and Philadelphia, the cities from which so many of the Loyalists were recently exiled. Conceived of at Charles Roubalet's tavern, on Cortland Street near the Paulus Hook ferry, in British occupied New York, Shelburne was a city of the mind of Joseph Dufree and twenty-six of his friends who made up the Port Roseway Associates. As word of a small cadre of Loyalists who were planning their northern utopia spread throughout the city, the association grew to over two-hundred subscribers

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<sup>269</sup> "Speech of Captain Brant to Lord George Germain (14 March 1776)," *New-York Colonial Manuscripts, London Documents: XLVL*, 670-671.

and their families.<sup>270</sup> Shelburne appeared to thrive at first, and for a brief period it became the fourth largest city in North America, but it soon entered a rapid decline. Within ten years, Shelburne had become a ghost town, a hollow shell of stately urban vacuity, yet another open sore in the flesh of empire.<sup>271</sup>

Among the failed Shelburne experiment's most prominent members was Joseph Stansbury, who along with Jonathan Odell was one of the great loyalist poets. After souring on Canada, Stansbury, like many who abandoned Shelburne, repatriated to the United States, settling in New York and into a quiet life as an insurance secretary, writing inoffensive occasional verse. Here, loyalty and locality are not necessarily mutually constitutive elements. Unlike Maya Jasanoff, whose conception of loyalism equates an eventual refugee status, I problematize how the loyalists' attachment to America blurs their relationship to borders and belonging. Whether attempting to carve out a space for displaced Mohawks in Canada as Joseph Brant does, or recreating a slave economy in Canada and the Caribbean as many southerners attempted to with varying degrees of success, or the struggle that many former slaves faced in their attempts to shed the racial animosity that many white Loyalists held toward them, the specter of America held just as strong of an influence as did the hope of Britain.

***The limits of identity: slavery and freedom in the loyalist world***

One attachment that many Americans carried with them was the institution of slavery. Barry Cahill contends that loyalist Nova Scotia may be understood as a colonial slave society and that “demythologizing the Black Loyalists is a matter of some

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<sup>270</sup> Kimber, *Loyalists & Layabouts*, 7-13.

<sup>271</sup> For an extensive study of the rise and fall of Shelburne, see Stephen Kimber *Loyalists & Layabouts* (2008).

urgency.”<sup>272</sup> There is a false dichotomy between the stories of American Bondage and Canadian freedom for Americans of African descent. As Harvey Amani Whitefield points out, this specious historical narrative is further complicated by another overdetermined history, that of an Afro-British migration from the hostility of Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone. As Whitefield argues, while for slaves “the escape from slavery to freedom reified the differences between” an American past and a British future, “for American exiles [i.e. white loyalists], the institution of slavery became an important link to their former home as they expanded the institution in Nova Scotia. Thus slavery, as much as freedom, influenced loyalist culture and society.”<sup>273</sup> As competing promises of rewards for loyalty to British institutions and fidelity to the British crown bifurcated along racial lines, struggles for preference, support, resources, and employment culminated in the Shelburne/Birchtown race riots of the summer of 1784.

In addition to addressing how the Loyalists came to constitute their own unique social and political category during and after the Revolution, the problem of how to address the issue of the thousands of former slaves and free blacks who sided with the British. Were they loyal? To whom or what, and why? While the many slaves who escaped to the British lines are often categorized as loyal, at times in service of our own comfort and conscious as historians of a violent past, some earlier scholarship of black Atlantic culture problematizes how and why American slaves and free blacks came to

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<sup>272</sup> Barry Cahill, “The Black Loyalist Myth in Atlantic Canada,” *Acadiensis: Journal of the History of the Atlantic Region*, 29.1 (1999): <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/Acadiensis/article/view/10801/11587> Cahill contends that black Canadians “seem to have been the only group who did not invest in the creation of a Loyalist tradition... Because their ancestors were not Loyalists.” While he concedes that some free African Americans may have considered themselves Loyalists, the “myth of the Black Loyalists is of recent historical vintage.”

<sup>273</sup> Harvey Amani Whitefield, *Blacks on the Border: The Black Refugees in British North America, 1815-1860* (Burlington: U Vermont P, 2006), 36, 22.

align themselves with the British. Ultimately, access to British protection offered the hope of liberty and freedom through an identification of loyalty. As Benjamin Quarles points out: “[m]any slaves who came into British hands were merely victims of military force. By seizing slaves, the British army increased its resources and depleted those of the enemy”; however, “[m]any more slaves...voluntarily deserted to the British. They had no particular love for England, but they believed that the English officers would give them their freedom.”<sup>274</sup> While the nature of British intentions with regard to the thousands of escaped slave who sought protection under the British Standard may be specious at best, and while the nature of loyalty to England felt in the hearts of those newly free persons may be more appropriately attributed to their desire for freedom and liberty howsoever they may find it, so long as the British army was present in Savannah, Charleston, and New York, the potential for Black alliance with the British remained, the long term effects of which would prove to help shape and define conceptions of race and its relation to liberty in the Atlantic for generations to come.

While we must remain attuned to deep ambivalence of African-American loyalty to Britain, reading American slaves’ hope for freedom as a willful engagement in an economy of faith in British institutions and a register of loyalty is historically reasonable. A case in point is the disagreement between George Washington and Guy Carleton over the interpretation of the terms of peace and British evacuation of New York. In respect to an “important conference ... held at Orangetown on May 6 [1783]” Quarles points out that Sir. Guy Carleton made the reclamation of American property in slaves nearly impossible. When citing the terms of the treaty in which American property is to be

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<sup>274</sup> Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1961), 114-115.

returned, Washington was rebuffed by Carleton, who claimed it “could not have been the intention of [the British] government...to ignore its obligations to Negroes who had come into the British lines under proclamations of freedom issued by his predecessors. To deliver up such persons, some of whom would thereby be executed and others seriously punished, would be a ‘dishonorable Violation of the public Faith’.”<sup>275</sup> Here Carleton acknowledged black loyalists’ rights as British subjects as explicitly as he possibly could. By claiming that the Crown and Parliament were obliged to uphold the public faith of the black refugees then residing in New York, Carleton’s actions set an example of a British official making good on his word in freeing those American slaves who would cross the line and support the British cause. As to the treaty’s provision that Americans would have an opportunity for reclaiming their lost “property,” Carleton replied that when he came to New York he found the Negroes free, and that he had no right to keep them from going anywhere in the world they pleased.<sup>276</sup> Washington gave up the men, women, and children that he understood to be his lost property.

The recognition of escaped slaves as loyal British subjects extends through the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century. With regard to the anglophilic sentiments of black abolitionists in the antebellum United States, Elisa Tamarkin has argued that “[s]eeing black loyalty to England as the mere function of abolitionist sentiment is only part of what is going on.”<sup>277</sup> While it would be anachronistic to read the cultural and political structures of transatlantic abolitionism back onto the experience of the first wave of black loyalists’ diaspora throughout the British Empire, black loyalists’ continued

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<sup>275</sup> Quarles, 168.

<sup>276</sup> Quarles, 169.

<sup>277</sup> Elisa Tamarkin, *Anglophilia: Deference, Devotion, and Antebellum America* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 2008), 191.

engagement with and transformations of the Empire are part of a cultural formation that exceeds any one example of suffering or success. While deeply problematic, the lamentations over the black loyalists' suffering in the Canadian Maritimes and the genesis of the Sierra Leone colony were an expression of the metropolis' expressed desire, at the least, to aid black refugees who sought shelter in the Empire. Clinton's letter of introduction to Grenville on behalf of Thomas Peters reveals a sentiment of patronage and a shared sense of memory and their American experiences. Clinton's recommendation grants Peters credibility and, interestingly, enfranchises Peters to speak on his own behalf:

I wish to present to you a memorial of certain poor blacks who are deserving the Protection of Govt. & who seem to be the only Loyalists that have been neglected; Indisposition prevented my calling again at your office. I am now obliged to go out of Town for a few days, perhaps you will suffer the poor Black who is the bearer of this to tell his own melancholy Tale. He is deputed by others in similar situation; I remember this man a very active Serjt. in a very useful Corps.<sup>278</sup>

Peters', with the aid of Granville Sharp, petitioned for "some Establishment where they may attain a competent Settlement for themselves and be enabled by their industrious Exertions to become useful Subjects to his Majesty," and secondly, the provision of the due allotments for those blacks who preferred to remain in Canada.<sup>279</sup> The above quotes shed light on how certain Englishmen, some of whom had experience with black loyalists during their careers in America, and wished for the recognition of transported black

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<sup>278</sup> Cited in Ellen Gibson Wilson, *The Loyal Blacks*, 179

<sup>279</sup> Cited in Wilson, 180



loyalists as worthy subjects deserving of rights and aid. While paternalistic, the call for reciprocity on behalf of Peters and those he represented is a register of an emergent understanding in England that not only is slavery an injustice, but that former slaves are fully deserving of protection under the English constitution. Furthermore, Peters' act of petition for redress is a performance of the rights of British subjects, a method at first employed by many American revolutionaries in the years up until the revolt whilst those very men were still claiming to be loyal subjects of his Britannic Majesty. The point here is to recognize that there is no clear line between those who are loyal out of a devotion to Britain and those who perform loyalty out of a sincere hope and faith that, if those in England only knew of the suffering of his majesty's subjects across the Atlantic, surely justice would prevail. Peters' appeal, his petition, whatever its motives, is a performance of fidelity to the British Imperial system and as such situates him and other black loyalists within the purview of royal authority and therefore allows us to identify them as loyal, be they in Nova Scotia or Sierra Leone.

While the above argument is one viable method by which to situate former American slaves as loyalists, it is problematic insofar as it only affords Peters and others entry into the category of loyalist through the writings of Englishmen of great standing and privilege. Any nuanced study of black loyalism must look elsewhere for corroborating evidence. As Laird Niven and Stephen A. Davis point out, "the salient fact to remember is that the most complete and unbiased archive of African American history lies in the ground."<sup>280</sup> While I do not intend to lead an archeological survey of Black

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<sup>280</sup> Laird Niven and Stephen A. Davis, "Birchtown: The History and Material Culture of an Expatriate African American Community," *Moving On: Black Loyalists in the Afro-Atlantic World*, ed. John W. Pulis (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), 67.

loyalist communities, an engagement with material culture, contemporaneous artistic representations, and personal narratives of both black and white loyalists of the Shelburne and Birchtown settlements immediately following resettlement and leading up to collapse are our best methods of reconstructing the black loyalist experience in the Canadian Maritimes in the period between the end of the Revolution and the mass exodus of African Americans to the colonial experiment in Sierra Leone. The image of black loyalists in British visual culture afford Britain the cultural and moral upper hand in the emergent terms of transatlantic abolitionism: whereas the slave holding Republic infantilized free African Americans and slaves, the Empire of Liberty more often (though certainly not always and not without its own problems) created a space in which displays of devotion, loyalty, and manliness could flourish and men could be free and equal.

Like the Maritimes, Upper Canada was an amalgam of slavery and freedom. While there was considerable tension between free blacks and loyalist slave holders, the region eventually became home to several Black United Empire Loyalists who rose to some prominence in the area and whose petitions to Governor Simcoe lead to Upper Canada being the first British territory to legislate against slavery. Many of Upper Canada's free Blacks were members of Butler's Rangers, an aggressive loyalist regiment noted for terrorizing rural New York and western Pennsylvania along with Joseph Brant's contingent of Mohawk warriors. The exact number of Black Loyalists among Butler's Rangers is unknown, with speculation being around a dozen or so, about half a dozen of whom may be traced through muster roles and postwar settlements and petitions. Perhaps most prominent among Upper Canada's Black Loyalists was Richard Pierpoint, also known as Black Dick and Captain Dick. Pierpoint was allotted 200 acres of land in the St.

Catherine's district of Upper Canada, near Niagara, which was a considerable sum of land for a former slave. The area eventually became known as Dick's Creek, due to a tributary of the Niagara that empties into Lake Ontario which runs Peirpoint's land grant. Peter and David Meyler speculate that Peirpoint was given such a sizable tract either because Butler considered him a non-commissioned officer or because he arrived in Canada with family members who have gone unrecorded. In either event, Peirpoint's land grant and his reputation in the region are evidence to the more complicated lacuna in Black Loyalist history.<sup>281</sup>

Cognizant of their minority status and the precarity of their situation in being geographically so close to the United States's slave territory,<sup>282</sup> Peirpoint and other free Blacks petitioned Governor Simcoe to allot adjacent land grants to the Black Loyalists so that they might form a coherent and discrete community of mutual support and protection. Imbued with the rhetoric of loyalty and deference, the petition reads:

That there are a number of Negroes in this part of the Country many of whom have been soldiers during the late war between Great Britain & America, and others who were born free with a few who have come into Canada since the peace, - Your Petitioners are desirous of settling adjacent to each other that they may be enabled to give assistance (in works) to those amongst them who may most want it,

Your Petitioners therefore [sic] humbly Pray that their situation may be taken into consideration, and if your Excellency should see fit to allow

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<sup>281</sup> Peter Meyler and David Myeler. *A Stolen Life: Searching for Richard Pierpoint* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1999), 69-80.

<sup>282</sup> Some Black Loyalists and free Blacks in Canada were kidnapped and sold back into slavery in the U.S.

them a Tract of Country to settle on, separate from the white settlers, your Petitioners hope their behaviour will be such as to shew, that Negroes are capable of being industrious, and in loyalty to the Crown they are not deficient.<sup>283</sup>

While Simcoe had acted to abolish the slave trade a year earlier in 1793, those who were slaves remained so and their children would be slaves for 25 years. Upper Canada remained a hybrid community of slaves and free subjects. Many white Loyalists in the area were slaveholders and there was considerable opposition to a total abolition among the majority of white royal subjects. Perhaps fearing a similar violence and social unrest that plagued the Maritimes, Simcoe denied the Petitioners' request. Even so, the Petition itself illustrated a desire for royal protection on the part of Black Loyalists and their recognition of and engagement with British Imperial policies and protocols. Their invocation of loyalty to the Crown as well as industry within the community are hallmarks of a deliberate utilization of the constitutional rights of British subjects in pursuit of recompense that seek a dutiful reciprocity in return for their deference to the Crown and its adjuncts, and the Petition itself is an archival remain of Black Loyalist contribution to Canadian culture and its ties to the Loyalist diaspora.

Another area in which black loyalists offered a complex and enduring effect on the British Empire was in the Caribbean. George F. Tyson, Jr. and Roger Norman Buckley have illustrated the importance of the military service of former American slaves for the British in both the American Revolution and later throughout the British West Indies. Among the some eight to ten thousand former slaves who fled bondage under the

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<sup>283</sup> Cited in Meyler and Meyler, 73-74. See also, Joan Magee, *Loyalist Mosaic: A Multi-Ethnic Heritage* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1984), 90.

auspices of the British standard, The Carolina Black Corps, first founded in 1779, became the West Indian Regiment after the war and grew into the largest all black force in the Americas.<sup>284</sup>

While the creation of a unit of ex-slaves among the Royal Marines gave singularly concrete evidence of British willingness to grant arms and rank to those who opted to fight against their rebellious masters, many British colonials and white Loyalists were deeply suspicious of the efficacy of a black soldiers and fearful of the arming of ex-slaves. Nonetheless, there was some precedent and support for the idea in the Caribbean. In 1774, Edward Long, a Jamaican planter and historian of the island, argued for the utility of black troops among the islands militia. Long's reasoning was that the slave population was already on the island and used to hard labor and torrid climates. Additionally, in a prescient insight, he postulated the any invading force would entice the slave population to revolt with false promises of freedom, and that instilling pride and discipline through militia service would help secure regional loyalty among the island's black population. Furthermore, Long suggested that black soldiers and pioneers should be culled from the tradesmen and other trustworthy members of the slave population, who would be purchased from their masters by the colonial government and granted their freedom, citing the use of slaves in military service in ancient Rome and the practice of arming slaves on the British island of Antigua as precedents for his plan.<sup>285</sup> While met with resistance from other planters at the time, Long's ideas would slowly be adopted in

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<sup>284</sup> George F. Tyson, Jr., "The Carolina Black Corps: Legacy of Revolution," *Revista / Review Interamericana*, 5 (1975-76): 648-663; Roger Norman Buckley, *Slaves in Red Coats: The British West Indian Regiments, 1795-1815* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1979).

<sup>285</sup> Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica* (London: Printed for T. Lowndes, in Fleet-Street, 1774) Vol. I, 130-135.

the British West Indies through the end of the eighteenth century. As Roger Norman Buckley has pointed out, in spite of British colonial resistance to the idea of a standing black regiment, the Black Carolina Corps was a well-known and respected model for a “locally recruited and permanent military force” in the West Indies and that colonial governors, such as that of Antigua, requested that soldiers from the corps be attached to garrisons on the islands.<sup>286</sup>

Yet, not all of the escaped slaves who fled to the British during the Revolution were men of fighting age. Indeed, most were women and children. Unlike later escapes from bondage in the American antebellum period, the American Revolution was period in which many whole families sought freedom, and such a mass exodus would not be repeated until the War of 1812. Additionally, as John W. Pulis has argued, “blacks took full advantage of the British occupation and formed families and reconstituted themselves into a free black community” and as the British evacuated New York, Charleston, and St. Augustine, these people followed the loyalist diaspora into other parts of the empire.<sup>287</sup> In addition to restructuring the social hierarchies of the Caribbean, the effect of this mass population shift resulted in the spread of Afro-Christianity throughout the British West Indies. As Andrew O’Shaughnessy points out, the mass conversion of slaves and free

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<sup>286</sup> Roger Norman Buckley, *Slaves in Red Coats: The British West India Regiments, 1795-1815* (New Haven, Yale UP, 1979), 6. Also, Todd W. Braisted’s “The Black Pioneers and Others: The Military Role of Black Loyalists in the American War for Independence,” *Moving On: Black Loyalists in the Afro-Atlantic World*, ed. John W. Pulis (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999) offers a good general summary of Black Loyalists in British regiments, and George F. Tyson, Jr.’s “The Carolina Black Corps: Legacy of Revolution (1782-1798),” *Revista Interamericana Review*, 5.4 (1975/76): 648-664, gives a very detailed and balanced history of what happened to the Black Carolina Corps after the war. Tyson details struggles of British proponents of a black unit to keep the Corps together and well supported, the Corps slow decay and dispersal, and many of its members eventual positions in the West Indian Regiment and other garrisons in the British Caribbean.

<sup>287</sup> John W. Pulis, “Bridging Troubled Waters: Mosses Baker, George Liele, and the African American Diaspora in Jamaica,” *Moving On: Black Loyalists in the Afro-Atlantic World*. ed. John W. Pulis (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999).

color people to Christianity “was related to events of the American Revolutionary War” insofar as the “arrival of black loyalist preachers leaving the United States” resulted in a complete restructuring of black religious life in the Caribbean. Citing the example of George Liele, who “established the first Baptist church in Kingston, where he had baptized more than 450 people by 1790,” O’Shaughnessy extrapolates that the work of other black loyalists fostered a more cohesive British West Indian identity.<sup>288</sup>

In a move that emphasizes the ambivalent nature of many narratives of loyalist motivation, many free blacks and former slaves sided with the British because it offered them a greater share of freedom and security than the rebels were able to offer; however, often African American motives were equally at odds with white Loyalist visions of how to restructure the empire in the wake of revolution. One unique characteristic of many Black Loyalists is their attachment to and engagement with evangelical Christianity. Indeed, as Frey and Wood have pointed out, it was the “democratic tendencies” of the Baptist and Methodist faiths that “attracted so many Africans,” and as they brought evangelical rituals and practices with them into the Caribbean they also brought ideas of equality and freedom of assembly that often functioned counter to the Loyalist and British Colonial ideals of government and threatened to undermine the planter class on islands that were predominantly inhabited by people of African descent.<sup>289</sup>

The establishment of an inter-American Afro-Christianity is one of the enduring legacies of the American Revolution, and it was supported, unintentionally, by the British

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<sup>288</sup> Andrew Jackson O’Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia: U Pennsylvania P, 2000).

<sup>289</sup> Sylvia R. Frey and Betty Wood, *Come Shouting to Zion: African American Protestantism in the American South and British Caribbean to 1830* (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1998), 116. For an assessment as to why Anglicanism did not appeal to slaves and free blacks, especially in the South, see pages 74-79.

encouragement of slave dissent from rebellious masters. Additionally, it was black evangelicalism that came to define the dominant mode of expression throughout the Afro-Caribbean world, especially in Jamaica. Some of the most prominent Black Loyalists were itinerant preachers who were literate in both the Anglo-American world of print and belle letter as well as the Afro-American world of orality. Steeped in the tropes and tenants of transatlantic evangelicalism, they often became leaders around whom the free black and slave populations looked to for leadership. Making appeals to both the colonial assembly and various evangelical communities in Great Britain, figures such as Mosses Baker and George Liele raised questions concerning cultural identity, regional politics, and economic structures that the sugar islands had not previously had to address. While often harassed and jailed by colonial authorities, Liele was nearly single handedly responsible for establishing a Black Baptist community that grew so powerful that decades later, when British missionaries finally came to Jamaica, the missionaries felt more resistance from the entrenched Baptist congregations than from the planter class.<sup>290</sup>

Contemporaneous with the anxieties of US influence over Canada, the War of 1812 prompts a resurgence of Black Loyalism in the British Atlantic. The revived possibility for freedom and British liberties draws a wide variety of American slaves to the British lines, especially the British Navy. We may consider the American Revolution and The War of 1812 as high-water marks in a series of continuous waves of African-American diaspora throughout the British world. These surges of migration extend a cultural narrative of liberation, relocation, and affiliation that revises our understanding of antebellum American slavery in the context of the Black Atlantic and the British

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<sup>290</sup> I am relying heavily on Pulis, "Bridging Troubled Waters," in this paragraph.



Empire. As I have argued above, the exodus of Black Loyalists from Nova Scotia complicates our understanding of loyalism in the wake of the Revolution; the War of 1812 is evidence of how the performance of loyalism meets the ulterior ends of freedom for thousands of escaped slaves. Whitefield points out that “the identity of Black Refugees ... revolved around assertions of Loyalty to Britain and British institutions,” and that “Refugees intertwined their abolitionist beliefs with Britain because of their original liberation from slavery” (84, 85). Whitefield’s analysis of black loyalism’s symbiotic relationship with abolitionism informs Elisa Tamarkin’s analysis of the anglophilic experience of escaped slaves in England, registering the transatlantic force of Black loyalism during the nineteenth-century. For Black Canadians’ the border between the United States and Canada did not merely divide slavery and freedom. As racial tensions eased in Canada and former slaves were able to develop stable communities, refugees organized by continuous engagement with the political events of the United States encouraged American slaves to run away. Like many other Loyalists, those slaves who sided with the British in both Anglo-American wars had to work to define themselves as a distinct group through their unique practice of loyalty to Britain. They also had to engage in an ongoing and precarious relationship with the United States. Their history, personal and cultural, of enslavement in the United States created an attachment to and continued interest in U.S. affairs that continually and actively influenced their attachment to Britain.

*Something old, something new: redefining loyalist identity in Canada and the Caribbean.*

While Shelburne and Birchtown may be cautionary tales to those who would overaggrandize the loyalist influence on the reformation of the British Empire, Halifax and Saint John offer a quite different story. The United Empire Loyalists role in the reconceiving of Canada against “American” terms of belonging is integral to an understanding of North Atlantic relations in the early nineteenth century. The mass influx of displaced Loyalists to the already established Canadian frontier caused both consternation among those who cleared the rugged way for the Loyalists and insured that later disputes with the newly formed United States would not go unnoticed. Jacob Bailey brought with him to Canada a suspicion of anything that deviated from high Anglicanism. His bitterness over his maltreatment at the hands of so many greedy, up-start rebels carried over into Canada in the form of a rage against all forms of dissention, inspiring invective and mock-epic poetry that savaged not only the American patriots but also the Methodists and Baptists in the Canadian frontier whose presence preceded his own arrival.

Similar to the problem of how the patriots’ own cognitive dissonance in fighting for constitutionality and the rights of Englishmen while simultaneously declaring independence from England, the Loyalists themselves faced the problem of loyalty after the object of loyalist practice was no longer available. The Loyalists were not simply siding with or fighting for England, for King, or for Empire; they were also fighting for a particular idea of America and a way of life in the Americas that they understood to be under threat. Hence the disconnect felt by many Loyalists not only among their former friends and neighbors, the revolutionaries, but also in relation to England, the British

Army, and Parliament. With the loss of America from empire came a confusion for many Loyalists as to just what it was they had been fighting for and defending.

In Canada, matters were intensified by a fundamental anxiety of cultural identity. Just how, if at all, were the loyal Canadians different than their rebellious cousins to the south? While grand experiments such as Shelburne failed, the close geographic and cultural proximity to the United States, coupled with periodic conflict and the continued ire of certain prominent Loyalists who succeeded in rising to power in Canada created certain conditions of possibility that allowed for a continued and persistent notion of difference. Open hostilities between the United States and Britain along the Canadian border reinvigorated Jonathan Odell and others to lash out at the United States in literary and social terms. At first, such attacks maintained the neoclassical style of mock epic and travesty seen in much of the loyalist verse of the American Revolution; however, later hostilities took on stronger cultural and linguistic associations of difference.

The poetry of Thomas Cary, Jacob Bailey, Jonathan Odell, Cornwall Bayley, and Alexander Croke (among others) recounts a culture of persons cautious and fearful of their past yet hopeful that this newly acquired northern territory will afford them the liberty they were so rudely denied in the former Thirteen Colonies. Loyalist expressions of freedom and prosperity within the British Empire between the years 1773-1837 took on a variety of forms, all of which strove to differentiate Canada from the United States. Oddly, language became the locus for an association with England and a rejection of the United States. At the same time that Noah Webster was being attacked by both Federalists and Republicans in opposition to his dictionary, there was a mounting debate in Canada concerning the use and nature of the English Language in North America.

While Webster's ultimate success was due to the collapse of the Federalist Party, the spread of the second great awakening, and the rise of Jacksonian democracy, a similarly structured counter narrative of linguistic affiliation developed in Canada, and it is in this debate that the term "American" becomes increasingly associated with the territory and culture of the United States. In the wake of the rebellion of 1837, many of Upper Canada's civic leaders worried that the colony had become "too American" and that "republican ideas were...invading the religious and educational institutions of the new province -- the two forums which should have been the bulwarks of society's authority."<sup>291</sup> Evidently the concerns over American influence lingered, for in 1838, the Toronto *Patriot* remarked "If an American educates the child, the child will grow up with a strong American bias, -- an American, that is filthy in his habits, -- an American, that is with a nasal twang in his pronunciation, -- an American, that is a free-thinker, or fanatic, in religion -- and an American, that is an inveterate hater of the British government in his political opinions."<sup>292</sup>

The derisive remark on American's "nasal twang in his pronunciation" is interesting. For a conflict in which the identification and detection of the enemy as other is often difficult, that speech and pronunciation can offer the Canadians a means by which to identify an American is telling. While his literary manuscript and periodical production was immense, Jonathan Odell, prominent loyalist poet and civic leader among the refugees in the Canadian Maritimes, only published one book, *An Essay on the Elements, Accents, & Prosody, of the English Language*, which gives us a clue into how

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<sup>291</sup> Errington, *The Lion, the Eagle, and Upper Canada*, 51. See also, Mazoff, *Anxious Allegiances: Legitimizing Identity in the Early Canadian Long Poem*, 78.

<sup>292</sup> Cited in Mazoff, 78.

the Canadians, by way of the Loyalists, understood their precarious relationships with the mother country across the Atlantic and their insolent cousins to the south. Odell's essay is a register of loyalist performative and aesthetic attachments to England. A work of prescriptive and antiquated linguistic philosophy, Odell peppers his work with tangential attacks on republicanism and overly wrought examples of poetry exemplifying the true nature of piety and loyalty.

One such tangent, which occurs in the middle of a discussion of Greek grammar, is an attack on the United States and France for having abandoned monarchy. Self-satisfied that no civilization can long exist under self-government, Odell enlightens his readers on the finer points of Greek irony, pointing out that “[t]his word *δη* is sometimes of an ironical or sarcastic import; an instance of which, quoted by Scapula from Thucydides, I beg leave to offer as a suitable motto for the Great Republic, and all others who are blessed with French liberty and equality *ημεεις δε αυτιγονη δη οντες ; we forsooth are self-governed!*”<sup>293</sup> Odell is being intentionally insincere and ahistorical to affect his pun; he is making a dry jest at the idea that the United States and the French are capable of self-government. Like many high Anglican Loyalists, his satire relies on the conceit that the rebels in America and France are uneducated and will not appreciate the pun. The “*forsooth*” or “*δη*” of the quote is more accurately translated as “indeed” or “in fact,” e.g. “we are *in fact* self-governed,” which Odell ironically implies to be false. The Americans and the French are neither self-governed nor fully free and liberated.<sup>294</sup> Arguing that “*δη*” is ironic is a bit of a stretch on Odell's part, yet he cannot allow the

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<sup>293</sup> Jonathan Odell, *An Essay on the Elements, Accents, & Prosody, of the English Language...* (London, 1805), 136. The reference is to a quote from Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* found in Johannes Scapula *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum*.

<sup>294</sup> Thanks to Trevor Myer for assisting me with regard to interpreting the original Greek phrase.

opportunity to make a dig at republicanism pass by, even in such an erudite context as Greek translation. In fact, much of Odell's humor relies on the assumption that ignorant republicans would miss the joke, be left out of the culturally superior position of British royalists. Later in his discourse, Odell makes it a point to quote from the English Augustin and Tory Poets from earlier in the eighteenth century. In the middle of an analysis on the Gray's poetry Odell muses on the nature of genius.

Genius is too apt to disdain care; and care, without genius, must look for happiness in other pursuits. And we have reason to be thankful, that happiness, in this sublime sense, is placed within the reach of everyone. The *careful christian moralist*, who "loves the brotherhood, who fears God and honors the King"<sup>295</sup>

In relying on Greek and Tory politics and poetics to make his point about the proper prosody of English, Odell is insisting on a prescriptive, learned, and ossified performance of the language. While out of step with the contemporary British metropolitan trends, Odell's *Essay* is a calculated attack on American provincial speech and perceived anti-intellectualism. This is a theme that is picked up on and extended into the Canadian periodical literature of the nineteenth century.

While at times playful, the tension between Canada and the United States carries a history of betrayal and violence. As the *Kingston Chronicle*, ten years earlier, stated: "this is not a nursery for enemies to Britain or radicals of any kind, not a plantation people for the purpose of increasing hereafter the wealth and strength of the United States; but it is an asylum for Britons and a nursery for loyal men."<sup>296</sup> It is not until later in the

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<sup>295</sup> Odell, *Essay on the Elements*, 182.

<sup>296</sup> Cited in Mazoff, 79.

nineteenth-century that the figures of Britain, Canada, and Bother Jonathan become the material for caricature, and even then, the quasi-incestuous anxiety of the marriage plot prevails. While willing to recognize and satirize the narcissism of small differences, the Canadians perennially look back to the Loyalists for historical precedent for why Canada should not fall into the orbit of the United States and look into the English language for a means to create a sense of forced cultural difference between the two territories.

### *Caribbean print culture and the ties of empire*

Similarly, in the Caribbean, the Loyalists tried, and at first succeeded in restructuring the Bahaman way of life to best represent and extend the life they had had on the continent. The force, fervor, and extent to which the Loyalists went to recreate what they had lost is exemplified in the pages of the *Bahama Gazette*, printed by John Wells, formerly of Charleston, South Carolina. Filled with the rhetoric of loyalty in contention with the imperial administration, the *Bahama Gazette* was a mouthpiece for the massive number of exiles who demanded control of their own fate in their new home. However, as Thelma Peters has shown, the Loyalists who succeeded in the long-run were those displaced persons who adopted what they termed as the “Conch”<sup>297</sup> way of life, a life style that was first termed by the Loyalists as a life of indolence that was closely associated with the sea.<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>297</sup> “Conch” was a derisive term that the Loyalists used to refer to the pre-established creole population of the Bahamas.

<sup>298</sup> For extensive studies on Loyalists life in the Bahama’s see: Thelma Peters, “The Loyalist Migration from East Florida to the Bahama Islands,” *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 40 (1961): 123-141; Thelma Peters, “The American Loyalists in the Bahama Islands: Who they were,” *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 40 (1961): 226-240; and Lydia Austin Parrish, “Records of Some Southern Loyalists, Being a collection of manuscripts about some eighty families, most of whom immigrated to the Bahamas during and after the American Revolution,” MSS Harvard University Library, microfilm University of Florida.

The *Bahama Gazette*, like other printing and literary ventures that sprang up along the empire's periphery, was part of a larger loyalist diasporic phenomena in which American exiles strove to reproduce a world similar to what they knew in their home colonies. The Wells family printing press is itself a story of political contention and loyalist movement throughout the empire. As printers in Charleston, SC, the Wells family out performed Benjamin Franklin's connections and contributed a parallel, British centric business throughout the southern colonies. The movement of the family press allowed for a variety of firsts in British colonial printing and book culture. The press was the apparatus that produced the first newspapers in both Florida and the Bahamas, some of the earliest Caribbean books, and was the training ground for future Royal Printers of Jamaica. While I do not mean to grant political identity to the press itself, the Wells family's commitment to the press and printing is a testament to loyalist communication in the south and Caribbean. The press's survival may be attributed both to eldest son John's political ambivalence and the lucky circumstances of the War's southern theatre.

Patriarch, Robert Wells, was a Scottish emigrant whose wife's family may have had Jacobite sympathies. Robert, who had been trained as a binder in his youth, entered the colonial book trade first by importing books and stationer material from Britain and soon thereafter set up a press of his own, much to the consternation of Peter Timothy, Benjamin Franklin's associate and former apprentice. As hostilities between Britain and her colonies grew hot, Wells solidified into an ardent Loyalist who did not shy away from publishing attacks on the rebels in his paper. His vocal politics forced Robert to flee to England, where he was meet shortly thereafter by his wife, daughters, and youngest son,



William, in 1775. The family left elder son, John, behind to maintain the family business.<sup>299</sup>

A trimmer<sup>300</sup> at heart, John Wells appears to have been liberal and opportunistic in his politics, swearing oaths to whichever force held control of Charleston at any given time. He volunteered for Continental and Royal militias, and printed material favorable to Rebels and Loyalists alike. While John's loose political behavior was no doubt designed to protect himself and the family business and property, he does seem to have preferred Whig politics or, at the very least, had a strong desire to remain in South Carolina. News of John's rebel sympathies, real or feigned, must have made it to the family in London, for Robert sent his younger son, William, back to Charleston to assess the state of John's politics and see to the family's affairs.

Writing to a friend from Charleston, William reported that he "found [his] brother in good health, and an officer in a company of militia clothed in uniforms and well disciplined, consequently a good loyalist."<sup>301</sup> Britain was in control of Charleston again, allowing for correspondence and trade with the metropolis. William encouraged John to travel to London and reconcile with their father. Meantime, William remained in Charleston, joined the Royal Militia, and took over the press. Under William's supervision, the family paper became an explicit organ for the British administration,

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<sup>299</sup> For assessments of the Wells family and their role in British colonial print culture see: Wilbur Henry Siebert, *Loyalists in East Florida, 1774 to 1785...* (The Florida State Historical Society, 1929), esp. 126-136, 189; Christopher Gould, "Scottish Printers and Booksellers in colonial Charleston, S.C.," *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 15.1; Frances M. Ponick, "Helena Wells and her Family: Loyalist Writers and Printers of Colonial Charleston" (MA Thesis, University of South Carolina, 1975); David Moltke-Hansen, "The Empire of Scotsman Robert Wells, Loyalist South Carolina Printer-Publisher" (MA Thesis, University of South Carolina, 1984).

<sup>300</sup> "Trimmer" was a derisive term applied to those who changed political sides or attempted to remain neutral. See chapter one above.

<sup>301</sup> "Letter from Wm. Charles Wells to Dr. James Currie," *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, 26.1 (1925), 43.

which he restyled *The Royal Gazette* by R. Wells and Son. While the paper thrived under William, the new association with royal prerogative sealed the press' fate and ensured that the paper and the population it served would have to flee as the tide of war swung back to the Continentals' favor.

Consequently, William relocated to St. Augustine during the British evacuation of Charleston in December 1782. He brought with him the family printing press and at least one pressman,<sup>302</sup> and by January 1783 he was publishing the *East Florida Gazette*, Florida's first newspaper. William quickly established himself among the cultural elite among East Florida's loyalist population, taking a captainship in the royal militia and managing an officers' theatre group that performed for the benefit of destitute refugees. Though his acting abilities were decried, the paper was a success, a special issue of which published news of the Paris Peace on 21 April 1783.<sup>303</sup> News of the Peace was a devastating blow to loyalist morale, with one East Florida Loyalist complaining that the terms were "most shameful to Britain" and that "the war never occasioned half the distress which this peace has done, to the unfortunate Loyalists."<sup>304</sup> In many ways, the peace added insult to injury for the Loyalists and worked only to heighten their sense of uncertainty and insecurity.

Still, life went on and John joined William in East Florida. John's arrival proved a welcome reprieve for William, who embarked for Great Britain in May 1784, leaving John to carry on the print shop. John continued to produce a newspaper and published

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<sup>302</sup> The pressman was presumably one of the Wells family's slaves. Isaiah Thomas notes that Robert Wells was notoriously cruel to his slaves. See: Isaiah Thomas, *The History of Printing in America* (New York: Weathervane Books, 1970), 570.

<sup>303</sup> Siebert, 134.

<sup>304</sup> Elizabeth Lichtenstein Johnson, *Recollections of a Georgia Loyalist* (New York: M. F. Mansfield and Company, 1901), 211. See also, Siebert, 134.

some monographs, the first of their kind in Florida. *The Case of the Inhabitants of East Florida, with an Appendix, Containing Papers by which all the Facts stated in the Case, are Supported* is a testament to the Loyalists' continued attempts at political engagement, and its publication is an example of loyalist attempts at producing their own print public sphere, one independent of either the Americans or the British. Additionally, John Wells printed a work by Samuel Gale, a fellow refugee from Charleston. Gale's *On the Nature and Principles of Publick Credit...* is the first of several important contributions to political economy of the time that Gale produced. While he would later relocate to London, Gale eventually found his way to Nassau, where he would contribute to the growing loyalist population and political restructuring of those islands.<sup>305</sup>

John Wells' publications in East Florida are evidence of a desire to restructure the colony along the lines of the southern colonies that many of the Loyalists had recently inhabited. Undoubtedly, the *East Florida Gazette* would have flourished, and the Wells family would have once again become an important southern publishing outfit and established themselves as important colonials in English speaking Florida; however, with the Peace also came the news that Florida was to be returned to Spanish control, and many British Loyalists chose a second exile over life under a Catholic monarch. While some East Florida Loyalists chose to go north, to Canada, many, including John Wells, relocated to the Bahamas.

Like his father had done in Charleston, John Wells quickly established himself as a bookseller, opened a stationary store, and began printing a newspaper and contracted for government printing jobs in Nassau. As Thelma Peters has argued, Wells' *Bahama*

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<sup>305</sup> Siebert, 135.

*Gazette* was the single most important contribution of the Loyalists to the cultural life of the Bahamas.<sup>306</sup> The paper not only served as a source of imperial information, allowing many displaced Loyalists to maintain a connection with the greater British Atlantic, it also served as a political organ for the Loyalists and gave them an outlet through which they could criticize the colonial government and influence the rest of the islands' population.

Wells' joined Nassau's Board of American Loyalists, and the group used his paper to publicize what they felt were government abuses, to argue for the political rights of Loyalists in the islands, and to influence legislation and policy. Organized to "protect the Rights and Liberties for which they had left their homes and possessions," in many ways, the Board of American Loyalists' behavior shares a striking resemblance to the behavior of their former rebellious adversaries on the continent.<sup>307</sup> A brief example will suffice in illustrating their concerns and Wells' role in helping them to promote their agenda. In May 1785, the Board met in the Nassau home of William Panton and called on Governor Maxwell to "dissolve the Assembly and call a new election so that the newcomers might have a chance to be represented."<sup>308</sup> A petition was drawn up and printed in Wells' *Bahama Gazette*, reading: "Resolved: That we do not consider ourselves represented in the present Assembly, and, of course not bound by any laws they may think proper to pass."<sup>309</sup> The petition was signed by twenty-two Loyalists, including

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<sup>306</sup> Thelma Peters, "The American Loyalists in the Bahama Islands: Who They Were," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 40.3 (1962): 239.

<sup>307</sup> Bahamas, Reg. Of., M, 146.

<sup>308</sup> Peters, 230.

<sup>309</sup> *Bahama Gazette*, May 14, 1785.

John Wells, and each of these men went on to have important political and economic influence over the islands.

Wells published the *Gazette* from 1784 until his death in 1799, and it was an important cultural mainstay of the island that offers a record of how the Loyalists influenced British Caribbean politics throughout the period. Additionally, as Peters has argued, the paper was an important “link with the outside world and with one another.”<sup>310</sup> With a circulation that reached as far as Charleston, Savannah, and Bermuda, the *Bahama Gazette* not only served as a mouthpiece for Loyalist political identity and power, but helped to maintain ties to the American mainland as well as the greater British Empire.

### *Transatlantic literacy and English as a performance of identity*

In addition to the movement of the Wells’ family printing press, the individual family members traveled back and forth across the Atlantic, and each of them left literary remains in their respective wakes. William Wells eventually became a noted scientist, a member of the Royal Society, and wrote of memoir of his life that gives an extended account of his war time experiences. Louisa Susannah Wells kept a journal of her voyage from Charleston to London that offers a unique perspective on how a young Loyalist reacted to coming to Britain for the first time. Like Joseph Brant, it is Louisa’s command of English and her exquisite penmanship that causes her to stand out as a marvel to the first Englishmen she meets. Upon arriving in England and signing a registry, she reports that:

all the Gentlemen went up to the Table to look at my name. It surely was no matter of wonder to see a native of Charleston write well, for there bad

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<sup>310</sup> Peters, 240.

writing was seldom seen and good writing seldomer praised! Nothing has excited my wonder more since I came to England than the labour, toil, and expense which is bestowed on the plainest Education. I am thankful I was born and bred on the western shore of the Atlantic. I should have died under the horrors of a Boarding School.<sup>311</sup>

Louisa Susannah's astonishment that her ability to sign her name well should prove such a wonder to the English further reinforces her Americanness for both herself and her new companions. That she should write well flies in the face of British pretense both with regard to her gender and her origins. Furthermore, Louisa's dismay at the piteous state of English education awakens within Louisa a dormant pride in her American, or perhaps more specifically South Carolinian, heritage, and reminds her that, though loyal to Britain, she owes a debt to American social norms and expectations that far exceed those of the British.

Louisa eventually relocated to Kingston Jamaica, where she would marry Alexander Aikman, her father's former apprentice, who had since become the royal printer for Jamaica. Meanwhile, her younger sister, Helena, would become what Louisa had found so fearful upon arriving in England: Helena would become mistress of a girls boarding school and also the first novelist of South Carolinian origin. While both of her novels had moderate success, each going through two editions, it was her role as an educator in which Helena has left her most interesting mark on Loyalist linguistic history. While in general Helena's novels and educational works were well reviewed by the

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<sup>311</sup> Louisa Susannah Wells, *The Journal of a Voyage from Charleston S.C. to London...* [New York: NYHS, 1906] (New York Times and Arno Press, 1968), 34.

British press, her brief “Lessons on the Improprieties of Language” was thoroughly criticized by the arbiters of British taste and English elocution.

Similar to Jonathan Odell’s *Essay on English Prosody*, Helena Wells’ “Lessons” ties proper English usage to cultural identity and proper morality. However, it is her very American, and also perhaps Scottish, turns of phrase, which seeped into her grammar, that caused concern with her reviewers. Both the *Monthly Review* and the more conservative *Critical Review* took issue with Helena’s rules for proper English befitting of young women. The *Critical Review* laments that “we are sorry to observe, that the governess sometimes recommends glaring improprieties. Indeed, every page of her work abounds with inaccuracies of expression.”<sup>312</sup> While the *Monthly Review* is also skeptical, they are willing to admit Addison and Dr. Johnson as proofs in defense of some of Helena’s odder constructions.<sup>313</sup> David Moltke-Hansen has attempted to put a positive spin on Helena’s grammar in arguing that “her language was a reflection of not only her heritage, but her horizons”; and, as Frances M. Ponick has argued, Helena’s “Scotch and South Carolina background in combination with the rapidly occurring changes in the English language during the eighteenth century probably contributed to the controversy about the section on grammar in the book.”<sup>314</sup> Though thoroughly committed to loyalism and British identity, it is their very Americanness that make the Wells family stand out among their fellow Loyalists.

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<sup>312</sup> *The Critical Review*, 27 (Dec. 1799): 465.

<sup>313</sup> *The Monthly Review*, 30 (Oct. 1799): 210.

<sup>314</sup> David Moltke-Hansen, “The Empire of Scotsman Robert Wells, Loyalist South Carolina Printer-Publisher” (University of South Carolina, MA Thesis, 1984), 57; Frances M. Ponick, “Helena Wells and Her Family: Loyalist Writers and Printers of Colonial Charleston” (University of South Carolina, MA Thesis, 1975), 29.

Much like Jonathan Odell in Canada, the Wells family looked to language and education as means of defining their unique political conditions. William, Louisa Susannah, and Helena Wells each wrote about the English language as a means to establish a connection with British political identity, though it just as often became a marker of their Americanness and transatlantic heritage. For the Loyalists, language became a locus for political ideology due to its relationship to culture, class, and morality. Yet, there is an essentializing of the Wells' "Americanness" in Louisa's relations and in the British reviewers' criticisms of Helena's pedagogical works. For all of Helena's emphasis on proper English speech and morality, many otherwise favorable reviews of her work take her to task on the grounds that her appendix on language is riddled with fundamental errors and errant "Americanisms." While brought to England as a child by her loyalist parents, Helena would never fully distance herself from her colonial American origins.

The linguistic, moral, and intellectual differences between natives of Great Britain and British subjects who were born in the Americas is a theme that comes up in Helena's fiction, the transatlantic undertones of which cryptically bend toward the autobiographical. In *Constantia Neville; or, the West Indian*, Helena's second novel, the eponymous heroine is shocked at the cultural reticence and general illiteracy of common Britons when she first arrives in Bristol as a young adult.<sup>315</sup> Upon seeing the English landscape for the first time, Constantia is vocal and effusive in her wonder and joy at its picturesque beauty. Unable to control her initial happiness, she begins to quote from Thomson's *The Seasons*, only to be dismayed that "the people who lived in the midst of

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<sup>315</sup> Helena Wells, *Constantia Neville; or, the West Indian. A Novel in Three Volumes* (London, 1800) I.81-82.



such, to her, romantic scenery, felt none of her enthusiasm; some had heard of Thomson's Seasons, others had read them without emotion" while most remained befuddled by the young woman's volubility.<sup>316</sup> The scene recalls Louisa Wells' astonishment that the English should be impressed by her penmanship, and calls to the fore the self-consciousness that British colonial children face when confronted by the gap between their cultural expectations and the realities of life in Great Britain. Having been born in Barbados, Constantia was predominantly in the company of adults, tended to by an English nurse, tutored by an English gentleman, and systematically kept away from the islands slaves.<sup>317</sup> As a result, she developed a "fluency of speech, and a correctness of language, which many of her seniors would have been proud to possess."<sup>318</sup> Her West Indian heritage, like that of Louisa and Helena's South Carolina upbringing, renders her loyal enthusiasm for all things British as fundamentally American.

Perhaps it is telling that Helena capitalized on her American Loyalist heritage in styling herself "An American" on the title pages of her novels. Additionally, the subscription lists for both *The Step-Mother* and *Constantia Neville* contain the names of German patrons who were undoubtable business associates of Robert Wells, Carolina Loyalists and former royal officials living lives of exile in England and Scotland, as well as former friends and associates still living in South Carolina.<sup>319</sup> Indeed, without her

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<sup>316</sup> Wells, *Constantia Neville*, I.82.

<sup>317</sup> The fear and dislike of Constantia's mother with regard to the island's slave population and the emphasis given to insisting that Constantia was not raised among them belies the strong aversion that the Wells' felt toward African slaves and attempts to mask the inescapable realities of the slave system in the Americas. As stated above, Robert Wells was notably cruel to his slaves, and his family certainly engaged with slavery in their everyday life in South Carolina. Most of Helena's biographers have attempted to gloss over this fact by pointing out that the Wells children tended to disapprove of slavery. While Helena does condemn the practice, her writings show her deep animosity to African-American and African-Caribbean slaves, and her siblings, John, William, and Louisa, owned slaves.

<sup>318</sup> Wells, *Constantia Neville*, I.74.

<sup>319</sup> For an analysis of the Wells family's global connections in the wake of diaspora see Moltke-Hansen, 56-57.

family's American and loyalist connections, it's unlikely that Helena would have secured the funding to become South Carolina's first published novelist. While in the wake of the Revolution, Robert Wells' family members dispersed to various corners of the empire, they maintained many of their social and business connections, even those in South Carolina; and, as Moltke-Hasen argues, it is in the "intersection of family, cultural, and business history, that the empire had much of its meaning" for the Wells family.<sup>320</sup>

*Loyalist hospitality on the edges of empire*

In May of 1798, two Moravian missionaries, John Heckewelder and Benjamin Mortimer, journeyed from Bethlehem Pennsylvania to Fairfield in Upper Canada. On 18 May 1798, they arrived at the "Mohawk village...commonly called Brant's town."<sup>321</sup> Heckewelder comments on the size of the Mohawk territory in Upper Canada, which extends six miles inland along the Grand River, gives a brief history of the tribe's attachment to the British during the late war, and relays an account of Brant's visit to King George III shortly after the peace. The two men did not stay in Brant's town long and, being missionaries, much of Heckewelder's description is of the Anglican religious services, performed in both Mohawk and English, and Brant's translation of the Gospel. Of Brant himself, Heckewelder remarks that he "has a handsome two story house, built after the manner of the white people," and that he is "very polite, has a dignified & pleasing aspect, dresses well after the Indian manner, and speaks the English language with great fluency."<sup>322</sup> Unlike James Boswell, who twenty-two years earlier had difficulty accepting Brant's hybrid Mohawk-Anglican identity and characteristics,

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<sup>320</sup> David Moltke-Hansen, 57.

<sup>321</sup> *The Travels of John Heckewelder in Frontier America*. ed. Paul A. Wallace. (Pittsburgh: U Pittsburgh P, 1985), 361.

<sup>322</sup> *The Travels of John Heckewelder*, 362, 363.

Heckewelder and Mortimer merely comment on what they see without much personal anxiety to national identity, and yet they feel compelled to call attention to Brant's fluency in English and the style in which he blends Mohawk and English traditions.

Heckewelder and Mortimer were not the only visitors to record their impressions of Brant's community of exiles. Four years earlier, Patrick Campbell was traveling in North America, and spent two lively days of feasting, dancing, and exchanging civilities with Brant in February of 1792. During dinner the first night, Port and Madeira were produced, and Brant led several toasts to "King, Queen, Prince of Wales, and all the royal family of England; and next, to the brave fellows who drubbed the Yankies [sic] on the 4<sup>th</sup> of last November."<sup>323</sup> This display of English civility, with toasts to the monarchy and derisive comments about the rebellious Yankees calls to mind the performances of sociability that were the mainstays of loyalist New York during the Revolution, and which Brant may have picked during his visits to London. Ever the consummate performer and hyper aware of his hybrid identity, Brant next enjoined his guest to witness and take part in a set of Mohawk dances. Campbell relates that "after dinner Captain Brant, that he might not be wanting in doing me the honours of his nation, directed all the young warriors to assemble in a certain large house, to show me the war dance."<sup>324</sup> Like in his previous visits to London, Brant shows an adept ability to charm his British guest with his cultivated anglicization while also being able to sustain an attachment to his native culture. Brant's hybrid hospitality is simultaneous attachment to both his Mohawk culture and his British ambitions, and each serves both him and his

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<sup>323</sup> Patrick Campbell, *Travels in the interior inhabited parts of North America : in the years 1791 and 1792...* (Edinburgh: 1793), 195.

<sup>324</sup> Campbell, 195.

people in maintaining their way of live and ensuring their security within the British empire.

Brant's Native American is a marker that tends to encourage scholarship that focuses on his otherness, his hybrid identity in a transatlantic world. While such readings are certainly accurate, they ought not to diminish his loyal provincial characteristics. Indeed, Brant's provincialism is brought into strong relief when he is considered in comparison to other British provincials such as Campbell, whose Scottish heritage also becomes a performance of otherness that he gladly shares with Brant. In order to return the respect that his kind hosts had shown him, Campbell agreed to give a speech. He reports that he rose and informed Brant and the others gathered that he "would address them in the Indian language of my country" and proceeded to speak to them in Gaelic, saying, as he reports in his English text: "I had fought in many parts of Europe, killed many men, and being now in America, I do not doubt but I would fight with them yet, particularly if the Yankies [sic] attacked us."<sup>325</sup> Campbell reports that his Gaelic speech, and its translation into both English and Mohawk greatly pleases his hosts, and the company spends the rest of the night in dancing and merriment. His equation with Gaelic as an Indian language situates Campbell among the loyal subjects of Britain's periphery and puts he and Brant on equal imperial footing. Both are men who are equally proud of their cultural heritages and their political alignments. Whatever Brant's reasons for loyalty, he shares them and the fruits of empire with Campbell, the Wells family, George Liele, and countless other Loyalists who were exiled from their homes and scattered around the Atlantic.

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<sup>325</sup> Campbell, 196.

## POSTSCRIPT

In an 1853 issue of *Household Words*, Charles Dickens wrote an extensive review of long dead Loyalist, Samuel Curwen's, journals of exile in England for the years 1775-1785. The attention Dickens pays to Curwen is curious, even given Dickens' occasional interest in Americans and their print culture. What Curwen offers Dickens is an outsider's view of England prior to the mass technological advancement and social reforms of the early nineteenth-century. Perhaps less surprising, though still curious, is an essay from *The North American Review* that takes up the fourth edition of Curwen's Journals. Both Dickens and the anonymous American reviewer find Curwen to be an insightful and enjoyable chronicler. For Dickens, Curwen is a useful and amusing window into rural England's past and an opportunity to cast dispersions on his own contemporary political moment. Similarly, the American reviewer uses the reprint of Curwen's journals to contemplate the problem of loyalty in an American context. Claiming that certain motivations for loyalty may be forgiven, the American reviewer uses Curwen as a foil to comment on the Southern rebels whose disloyalty to the Union has engendered yet another civil war in the Americas. Curwen's example further becomes an occasion for meditations on the inevitable healing and re-incorporation of those he terms as being "guilty only of weakness, and who may be wisely pardoned" so that a peaceful close may

be brought to America's latest civil war.<sup>326</sup> These two reviews of Curwen offer us some insight into the role the British American Loyalists' play in history. The reviews raise the questions: why do Curwen's journals reach a fourth edition by 1864; why are they still a fascination on both sides of the Atlantic; and, how do different audiences understand and appropriate Curwen's role as an American Loyalist in exile? I propose that a loyalist past, as a register of difference, becomes necessary for a variety of national identities. While savaged in their own time, by the mid nineteenth-century the Loyalists symbolize a much more variegated population often taken up to address the ambiguous nature of questions of belonging and origin within a national imaginary.<sup>327</sup> In 1857 and 1860, Winthrop Sargent releases his *Loyalist Poetry of the Revolution* and *The Loyalist Verse of Joseph Stansbury and Dr. Jonathan Odell*, the latter of which opened with a prefatory remark signed and dated from Mississippi. The appropriation of loyalist texts and identities as a means for promoting, fostering, and questioning loyalties on the eve of civil war calls attention to the vexed and malleable role that loyalism played in nineteenth-century America.

An extension of this project must consider the continued nineteenth-century interest in the Loyalists and their influences on genres such as antiquarian and topographical history and extrapolates the loyalist experience by considering the

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<sup>326</sup> *The North American Review*, 100 (1864): 288-289.

<sup>327</sup> While many scholars of the past sixty years have done great work in explaining that the Loyalists were not a cohesive social or ideological group, I argue that the Loyalists are integral to understanding later cultural identities in the Anglophonic Atlantic and into the western territories of North America, especially as Canadians and the United States citizens vie to develop unique national understandings of themselves and each other. The Loyalists, through their lived experience of the war, exile, and reincorporation back into the body politic, are necessary to the imaginative conditions of U.S. citizenship and the re-imagination of British Colonial subjecthood. Furthermore, the memory of the loyalists and their remediation through a variety of nineteenth century print genres are of the utmost importance to "the creative and symbolic dimension of the social worlds" of Canada, the United States, and the alter Black Atlantic identities (Thompson, 1984, p.6). For extensive studies that address the loyalists as having diverse material and ideological backgrounds see Wallace Brown, William Nelson, and Maya Jasanoff.

Loyalists' influence on emergent fictions in both Britain and the United States. While some British fictions, such as *Jonathan Corncob*, *The Aerostatic Spy*, and *Emma Corbett*, capitalized on the recent events of the American Revolution and prominently featured loyalist characters, like the British poems that are the focus of Chapter One, these fictions are ultimately concerned only with British affairs and British audiences. Conversely, the fiction of Helena Wells, an exile from Charleston, SC, offers an example of how one Loyalist was able successfully to enter the British print market while also maintaining her Americanness as both a selling point and as a means for maintaining an American audience. Finally, a consideration of how the work of Charles Brockden Brown is inflected by loyalist influences, such as his relationship with Robert Proud, and his own experiences of wartime trauma is a project in need of undertaking and one that could be expanded to include other pedagogical imperatives of the early national period.

In a poem dated from March 1806 Robert Proud insists that “Where my Friend is, there is my Country” and that “But Where my nearest Friends I find, / There is Britannia to my Mind.” Well into Jefferson’s presidency Robert Proud proclaims Britain to be a state of mind that he may inhabit so long as friendship abides. As the war drew to a close loyalist poetry transformed from being one about Englishness into being about loss and displacement, and as the stability of the Republic became too secure to deny those loyalists who remained found new and inventive ways to maintain their sense of Britishness in the newly constituted United States.

A meditation on the reconstructed Loyalists and their influence on the early republic, especially with regard to education, sociability, and finance is in order to recover a lost history of the nascent nation’s cultural identity. With regard to education,

in comparison to Benjamin Rush, who “consider[ed] it is possible to convert men into republican machines” educators such as Milcah Martha Moore, Susanna Rowson, and Robert Proud had a far more material effect on the minds of young girls and boys of the early republic. Moore’s editing of school books and Rowson’s books and schools ensured that polite learning and manners would continue to dominate in spite of Dr. Rush’s idealized utopian tracts. Robert Proud’s reconstruction and reinstitution as the master Philadelphia’s Friends Latin School along with the Committee of Safety’s treatment of prominent Quaker families calls for a reassessment of the loyalist influence on the works of Charles Brockden Brown. In addition to showcasing how eighteenth-century aesthetic ideals of sociability survive into the early republic, Joseph Stansbury was the father of literary and military figures of the early national period. His son, Philip, whose *A Pedestrian Tour of Two Thousand Three Hundred Miles in North America: To the Lakes, --the Canadas, --and the New-England States. Performed in the Autumn of 1821* is an example of native tourism that ranks among the travel literature of Timothy Dwight, and is an early example of chorographic antiquarianism that would later find its most extensive expression in the work of Benson John Lossing. These writings work to constitute, if not a national, certainly an emergent American imaginary.

***Reminiscing about the old times: the Loyalists as a cultural trope in early U.S. nationalism***

While the material exile of Loyalists to Canada has a very real and immediate effect on the future culture of what is left of British North America after the Revolution, the memory of the Loyalists figures prominently in the historical imagination of the United States. In addition to the sheer volume of loyalist writing in the late eighteenth-



century, the high frequency of stories, tales, legends, historical romances, novels, and dramatic productions that appropriated the loyalists throughout the nineteenth-century registers a certain sympathy and nostalgia for the loyalists and problematizes traditional notions of a progressive, nationalist literature. Nineteenth-century histories, both progressive and antiquarian in nature, repeatedly address the function of the loyalist position. The presence of poems and anecdotes, both derived from and attributed to loyalists, reveal the national present's embarrassment and continued curiosity toward the loyalists. The continued reliance on the loyalists within the historical narrative of the United States structures a problem that the idea of the nation neither wishes to do away with nor knows how to fully reincorporate. These writings work to constitute, if not a national, certainly an emergent American imaginary.

In the summer of 1833, Miss Leslie of Philadelphia was tricked into betraying her liberty by sitting at ease beneath the Crown. What is more, this treason to her country occurred in Boston. More specifically, it came about in the home of the daughters of Dr. Byles, two old maids who were "classed among the curiosities of the place." The cultural coup was all part of an elaborate ritual of Royal affection that the Byleses had been practicing to the level of art. For decades, the Miss Byleses had been holding court to the king of England in the very city that brought the American Crisis to a head.

While the British monarch was not present in person, his sovereignty was present in fetish. The crown was carved into the stately armchair of ancient date and the lady from the crucible of independence was presented with monarchical commissions signed in the hand of four English rulers. The signatures in hand, of course, are only so many synecdoches for the monarchs themselves, an undying loyalty to whom the sisters had

never abandoned, despite the rapid political and technological changes occurring in the new Republic in which they resided. Through their possessions of Colonial relics and the ritualistic royalist devotion to which all visitors must submit, the daughters of Dr. Byles generated an affective network of antiquarian care that not only sustained but also allowed their fervent royalism to flourish in a space that they continued to insist is little more than a rebellious colony, a specious republic. By defining a republic as a space void of communal trust, the Byles sisters' pageant to the English king marked their home a place of anachronistic security.

Furthermore, Miss Leslie's appellation of "ancient" creates an exaggerated historical distance that safely contextualizes the Byles sisters in the antiquated colonial past. This both neutralizes their potentially polarizing and offensive opinions and places a value of rarity upon their persons, their personalities, and their possessions that categorizes them as objects of analysis both worthy of description, curation, and historicity. Such ritual created an affection that secured an identity of loyalty to the Byleses via the play of loyalty to the king.

The aesthetics of landscape is intricately tied to the aesthetics of early America during the Revolutionary and early national period. Scholars have shown that the cultures of British America were dependent upon a transatlantic transference of English culture, what Leonard Tennenhouse refers to as "feeling English with a difference." I wish to propose an analogous argument for a uniquely loyalist aesthetic that develops within the context of a crisis of empire. The American Revolution radically altered the American countryside, desolating its picturesque beauty and disrupting its previous claims to fertility and promise of further development. Literary history responded to this

desolation of the land and man's relationship to the land, by the violence of war, which led later American writers to represent the landscape as haunted by past violence. In various literatures of the Revolutionary and early national period, the American landscape is depicted in violent and deceitful terms, lending an aesthetics of mystery, suspicion, and danger. The novels of Charles Brockden Brown and James Fenimore Cooper<sup>328</sup>, especially *Edgar Huntly* and *The Spy*, are filled with rustic, desolate wildernesses that threaten not only the welfare but the very identities of the stories' protagonists. The landscapes of Washington Irving's most famous stories are warped by a supernatural history. The early national chorographic tradition, as exemplified by the works of Timothy Dwight, Philip Stansbury, and Hannah Mather Crocker, are haunted by the battles of the Revolution. I believe the influence of loyalist aesthetics and literary tropes had a greater impact on early national writing than is commonly recognized, and is emblematic of a thread within the American literary tradition and that a closer scrutiny of a loyalist counter tradition enriches our understanding of the intellectual culture of the early national United States.

Literatures of picturesque travel and historical curiosity were prevalent throughout the early national and antebellum period. Such literature performs the cultural work of controlling and transmitting the past by aestheticizing and historicizing the rapidly changing landscape of the present. Authors as diverse as Timothy Dwight, Philip Stansbury, Hannah Mather Crocker, and Benson John Loring combine anachronism with the genre of topographical writing as a means of attaching a variety of historical events with a particular place. Such texts work to inculcate an appreciation for the past through

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<sup>328</sup> William Gilmore Simms as well. His many novels of the American Revolution, such as *The Partisan*, are certainly worth consideration.

the common appreciation of public spaces, well-known landmarks and buildings, and little known and forgotten spaces that the authors wish to elevate to the level of public pride and affection.

Catharine Maria Sedgwick engages in an analogous work in her historical romance, *The Lindwoods; or, Sixty Years Since in America*. Specifically, Sedgwick seeks to use anachronisms to attach a loyalist past with the spaces of a national present. In her novel, space becomes a link to times forgotten and works as a key to unlock the possibilities of a loyalist past as operating as a form of patriotic feeling. George Washington, who will come to occupy the very same house once commandeered by General Henry Clinton, a structure that stood in New York in Sedgwick's own time, figures the most sacrosanct example. Sedgwick riddles *The Linwoods* with just such time bending descriptions of place, both great and small. Sedgwick imbues the different future-presents of her narrative with the present-meaning of the past through anachronism's relationship to place. Such narrative elaboration functions as a translation of historical feeling and ideological structures of meaning that effectively collapse time into space. Sedgwick reincorporates and sanctifies New York's egregious loyalist past into a common national affection for the past, by providing elaborate descriptions across time and through space. Among other things, Sedgwick's anachronistic topographies reveal that a loyalist past is necessary to a national identity.

### ***Brining the century to a close***

While the Loyalists are a great fascination for the United States reading public throughout the nineteenth century, there is an especial interest in the concept of loyalism in the lead-up to and as a result of the US Civil War and Reconstruction (a point that is

quantitatively stressed by ngrams from both google and APS). Considering loyalism in post-bellum America, focusing especially on *Lester the Loyalist* and the formation of Canada and Sarah Orne Jewett's *The Tory Lover*. Jewett's last novel was first published serially in *The Atlantic Monthly* from November 1900 through June 1901 and is found along-side a variety of articles on the cause and nature of the American Civil War, of the Confederacy as a social and political unit, of the nature and progress of the process of Reconstruction, and several articles by a young Woodrow Wilson. My point here is to consider this final surge of interest and appropriation of the loyalists before the progressive and nationalist historians of the early twentieth-century begin to write them off as Tory sycophants to the English. A role they would hold for two generations until the likes of William Nelson and Mary Beth Norton would revisit them later in the century.

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