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Anxious Patriarchs: Forging American Identity through Violence  
during the American Revolution

Presented to the faculty of Lycoming College in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for Departmental Honors in  
History

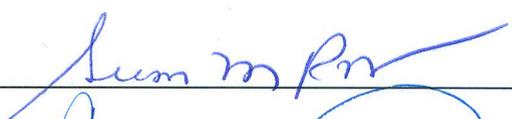
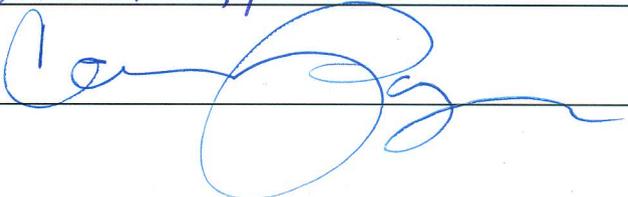
by

Caroline McMaster

Lycoming College

April 19, 2016

Approved by:

  
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## Introduction

On August 22, 1777, an American soldier shot Edward Vaughan Dongan during a surprise attack in Staten Island. Dongan was an ardent loyalist who fled to the British after patriots constantly harassed him and his family. Dongan's men carried him to a British post, though he was badly wounded.<sup>1</sup> His wife, Frances, lived at the British headquarters with their three-year-old son, Walter. While trying to escape the sudden battle, patriot soldiers captured and raped Frances Dongan in front of her child to get back at her husband. They then abandoned her and young Walter in the woods. According to Frances, she then "fled for safety with a child on her arm through marshes and ditches with mud up to her knees."<sup>2</sup> Not only was she ravished in the swamp while trying to reach British lines, but Frances also lost both her son and her husband three days after the ordeal. Walter Townley Dongan died of an illness brought on by the harsh weather in the marshes just hours before a coroner pronounced his father dead in the British camp. Days later, their family laid them to rest in the same grave. Frances, heartbroken, fled to England where she remained until her death.<sup>3</sup>

This tragic instance was the violent climax of several years of patriot attempts to coerce and punish Edward Vaughan Dongan, a disloyal patriarch. In June 1775, citizens of New Brunswick, New Jersey, captured Dongan's father-in-law Barnard LaGrange and carted him through the streets after plundering his home. The night before, an anonymous "Mechanic" posted a note calling LaGrange "a Disturber of the Community; as such [he] deserve[d]

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<sup>1</sup> *The New York Gazette, and The Weekly Mercury*, September 1, 1777, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Wilson Coldham, *American Migrations 1765-1799: The Lives, Times, and Families Of Colonial Americans Who Remained Loyal to The British Crown Before, During and After the Revolutionary War, as Related in Their Own Words and Through Their Correspondence* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2000), 432.

<sup>3</sup> *The New York Gazette*, September 1, 1777.

punishment.”<sup>4</sup> LaGrange held strong views against “damned, hot-headed Presbyterians who were aiming at Independence” and fought against their “struggles for liberty.”<sup>5</sup> When patriot rebels attacked the LaGrange estate, he herded his wife and terrified children into a secure room while a mob ravaged their home.<sup>6</sup> In July a year later, LaGrange’s wife received a note in which an anonymous mechanic admonished the old woman for allowing her daughter Frances to marry an unpatriotic and selfish man, among other rebukes. Threatening the family, the mechanic wrote, “EVD has ruined himself by his folly; let the Father take further warning.”<sup>7</sup> In the same letter, he scolded Mr. LaGrange for refusing to join his “countrymen [...] who cheerfully leave their wives and children at home.”<sup>8</sup> The final straw for the family came months later when armed patriots ousted Edward, Frances, and Walter from their home and converted it to a rebel barracks.<sup>9</sup> With nowhere else to go, the Dongan and LaGranges fled to the British army, where Edward became Lieutenant Colonel.<sup>10</sup> The humiliation, threatening, plundering, and banishment of the Dongans show the patriot attempt to establish loyal and politically homogenous communities as well as their effort to reinforce the masculine virility of male patriots.

The Middle-Atlantic states, composed of New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, were rife with such legally-unregulated violence as opposing American identities fought for social and political control of the newly formed states. In 1781, Pennsylvania’s Chief Justice Thomas McKean considered Pennsylvania “a country in a state of *civil war*.”<sup>11</sup> The subversive

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<sup>4</sup> Coldham, *American Migrations*, 410.

<sup>5</sup> Coldham, *American Migrations*, 410.

<sup>6</sup> Bernardus Lagrange to Parliament, Letter from the Bernardus Lagrange folder, Rutgers University Special Collections and University Archives.

<sup>7</sup> Letter to Mrs. Lagrange from Neighbor, July 1776, Letter from the Bernardus Lagrange folder, Rutgers University Special Collections and University Archives.

<sup>8</sup> Letter to Mrs. Lagrange from Neighbor.

<sup>9</sup> William Nelson, *New Jersey Biographical and Genealogical Notes* (Newark, NJ, 1916), 32.

<sup>10</sup> Coldham, *American Migrations*, 393.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas McKean, *Respublica V. Samuel Chapman*, US Supreme Court, 1 US 53, 1781.

atmosphere of revolution forced American colonists to choose between remaining loyal to King George III and renouncing their identity as British subjects. The American revolutionaries that chose to break from the king's tyranny persevered passionately, audaciously, and inimically as what they called defenders of liberty and fathers of their communities. They built a patriot American identity, attributing these qualities to themselves, and violently protected their new idea of America. Patriots resorted to violent measures because they determined that the British government had become unjust and defunct. Therefore, they needed to overthrow the colonial government with their own authority. That new authority granted citizenship to Americans that met their requirements; one must be a white, property-owning man that met religious standards. Anyone who refused that authority lost the rights of citizens.<sup>12</sup> To firmly establish their control, the developing government expelled loyalist dissenters and even neutrals, such as Quakers, from the social community and deemed them foreign enemies, un-American, and marked for displacement.

The Americans, then, used rhetoric, threats, and violence to assert their patriot identity. With a monopoly on printing presses and control of government, they forced their identity onto other parties. They did so primarily by targeting not only merchants and tyrannous loyalists, but also their families. The experiences of the LaGrange-Dongan clan exemplify the many forms of violence used to assert dominance. First patriots targeted Edward Vaughan Dongan and his father-in-law—politically active men—with collective violence, hoping to humiliate them enough to renounce their loyalist identity or leave. Then mobs threatened and used violence on these patriarchs' dependent families, asserting patriot dominance and masculinity. Finally, the patriots excommunicated the LaGrange-Dongans because the family did not accept the new

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<sup>12</sup> Douglas Bradburn, *The Citizenship Revolution: Politics and the Creation of the American Union, 1774–1804* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009), 165-166.

government, and therefore did not have protection nor permission to live within the boundaries of the solidifying United States of America. Patriots were not the only ones to use such tactics as destruction of property and rape; the British government and their supporters also targeted patriarchs and their families to coerce the politically active men to acquiesce to their demands, and consequently many noncombatant family members became objects of political violence.

Between 1775 and 1783, anger and frustration at the reigning monarchy and aristocracy culminated in American independence producing violent revolution and civil war, where strife erupted between patriots and loyalists both on and off the battlefield. Historians have not ignored this violence. Their approaches, however, fail to relay the importance of violence in creating revolutionary identities. Moreover, many historians neglect the violence experienced by dependent families. Scholarly work on the American Revolution has primarily focused on military aspects of the war by describing battles, military figures, and political figures. The historical imagination confined violence to battlefields, it seems, not the streets, and certainly did not consider the violent coercion of ordinary people. Still, generations of historians have also evolved their thinking, and different analyses have surfaced that look at the revolutionary involvement of common Americans. Scholars of the early twentieth century, such as Robert L. Brunhouse, attributed political violence primarily to class conflict, recognizing that individuals from all classes used legal and extralegal violence as political ploys.<sup>13</sup> By the 1960s, Edmund Morgan, Daniel Boorstin, and others refuted those ideas.<sup>14</sup> They instead claimed that colonists tried to preserve their liberty, but not by significantly creating and asserting a new sociopolitical

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<sup>13</sup> Brunhouse, Robert L. *The Counter-Revolution in Pennsylvania 1776-1790*, Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1942.

<sup>14</sup> Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Americans: The Colonial Experience* (New York: Random House, 1958); Edmund S. Morgan, *The American Revolution: A Review of Changing Interpretations* (Washington: Service Center for Teachers of History, 1958.)

identity through violence. They argued that consensus rather than conflict defined the revolution, which implies that violence between patriots and loyalists was insignificant.

Later historians probed deeper into cultural and social perspectives of the war by examining the stories of average individuals, though these evolving views had their limits. By the 1980s and '90s, historians merged political, cultural, and social approaches, and recognized the importance of civil violence to the revolution. Edward Countryman did so by examining the extralegal power of rebel committees and demonstrating that collective acts of violence shaped economic, ideological, and cultural relationships of politically active men.<sup>15</sup> In *American Insurgents, American Patriots*, T.H. Breen furthered Countryman's work by analyzing how committees politicized communities through violence; however, he focused more on the identity being created for politically-active citizens and barely touches on the experiences of women or children in these same communities.<sup>16</sup> As this era of historical thinking has progressed, more scholars come closer to understanding the relationship between violence and the creation of identity. Nevertheless, these historians, while focusing on the formation of an American identity, failed to study the important masculine and patriarchal aspects of the revolutionary identity.

Some historians totally discount the role that a patriarch's family had in the American Revolution. Historians like Harry Ward did not believe that patriots used women as objects of political violence. In *The War for Independence*, published in 1999, Ward asserts, "rape on civilians by soldiers was an extreme rarity" and that victimized army wives and children were even more infrequent.<sup>17</sup> Numerous accounts prove this statement false. Christopher Hibbert, the

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<sup>15</sup> Edward Countryman, *A People in Revolution: The American Revolution and Political Society in New York, 1760-1790*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981).

<sup>16</sup> T.H. Breen, *American Insurgents, American Patriots: The Revolution of the People* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2010).

<sup>17</sup> Harry M. Ward, *The War for Independence and the Transformation of Society* (London: UCL Press, 1999), 84.

author of *Redcoats and Rebels*, states, "women could be little more than onlookers in the impending struggle."<sup>18</sup> The accounts of violence that will follow show that violence did indeed affect women; they were more than mere onlookers in the Revolutionary struggle. In reality, women were participants in the war. By abusing women and children, patriots established their own identity and discredited the masculine honor and political inclusion of their male enemies.

Fortunately, other contemporary historians are unearthing the importance of women in the revolution's political atmosphere and contesting the assertions of those like Ward and Hibbert. Mary Beth Norton, for example, stresses, "The experiences of white women during the Revolutionary War were affected by the extent of their husbands' political activism as well as by the region in which their families lived."<sup>19</sup> By analyzing women's roles as camp followers, political activists, and victims of war-related violence, Norton shows the consequences of the American Revolution on women. Yet, although her research notably advances the topic of women in the revolution, she does not analyze the reasons why men used women for their own benefit. While there is much left to uncover, historians have recently begun to expand on women in the American Revolution and the violence they experienced, which will increasingly benefit research regarding sociopolitical identity and violence, since this violence was all-encompassing.

Additionally, contemporary historians have begun aiming their attention at identity in the revolution, but have not connected communal identity and violence. Ruma Chopra analyzed the experiences of loyalists in New York City during the revolution, arguing that Americans were much divided on British subjecthood; but she focuses primarily on loyalist rejection of rebel

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<sup>18</sup> Christopher Hibbert, *Redcoats and Rebels: The American Revolution Through British Eyes*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1990).

<sup>19</sup> Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980).

violence and the contention between differing loyalist ideologies.<sup>20</sup> Chopra's work is essential, but its focus on loyalist identity leaves the reader curious about the ambiguous patriot identity. In *The Liberty We Seek*, Janice Potter concentrates on how loyalist ideology was decidedly different from patriots, which then created an entirely different loyalist identity. Yet Potter determined that identity depended solely on political ideas and disregards violent coercion. Next Potter turns her attention to officeholding loyalists, but does not factor in the significance of women in creating the different identities. While her research is vital to the study of identity in the American Revolution, it neglects women as well as the patriot perspective, and does not solidly relay the connection between identity, violence and masculinity.<sup>21</sup> Overall, researchers like Chopra and Potter expand the historical understanding of identity in the American Revolution, but they overlook the importance of masculinity and patriarchy in developing these identities.

Historians have repeatedly studied the standard narrative of violence regarding militarily-active men, but their research does not illuminate the violent opposing identities created and defended by ordinary Americans. This paper aims to expand on that scholarship and additionally examine the creation and assertion of patriot and loyalist identities through violence. Research and analysis using diaries, newspapers, government documents, and an array of other sources illuminate the revolutionary experiences of men and women in the revolution and support the idea that all American people took part in the forging of new political and cultural identities. This research broadens the understood scope of impact that violence had in the American Revolution. All people experienced, whether willingly or unwillingly, the violence of the destructive internecine conflict.

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<sup>20</sup> Ruma Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion: Loyalists in New York City During the Revolution* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011).

<sup>21</sup> Janice Potter, *The Liberty We Seek: Loyalist Ideology in Colonial New York and Massachusetts* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983).

Identities came into question and the ability to self-identify disappeared with the divisive onset of the American Revolution. American colonists had to choose their loyalties. Were they American citizens, at liberty to live in the United States on their own accord? Or were they British subjects, eternally but willingly dependent on Britain's patriarchal monarch? Women and children assumed the patriarch's political and cultural identities. Therefore, whichever loyalty a colonist chose had incredible consequences not only on himself, but also on his family. Even those who wished to refrain from choosing loyalties, like pacifist Quakers, lost their autonomy. Revolutionary state-governing bodies called Committees of Safety automatically branded neutrals "Tories", which forced them to undergo the same adversities as true loyalists to the British crown, whether or not they truly desired subjecthood. The contending loyalists and patriots vying for control tried to establish their authority in communities with violent coercion. Chapter 1 interprets contemporary rhetoric and determines that patriots considered themselves, among other characteristics, defenders of liberty and fathers of their communities. Though at a disadvantage with few printing resources, loyalists too spread rhetoric and created an opposing identity. Chapter 2 then illustrates how patriots violently attacked loyalist individuals through both legal and extralegal means, and rationalized their behavior by considering it defense of their liberties and their positions as fathers. This chapter also considers how loyalists retaliated, in turn augmenting their own identity. The final chapter shows the ways in which patriots and loyalists asserted their masculine and patriarchal identities by using violence on women and children. Together, these chapters support the idea that by compelling men with the use of varying forms of violence, Americans created a distinct identity while simultaneously upholding patriarchal values.

## Chapter 1: Creation of Identity

As tensions deepened, patriot rhetoric became fierce and persuasive, attacking the British and loyal American subjects who were often their own friends and neighbors. Americans who refused to turn their backs on the mother country were called “loyalists” or negatively, “tories.” Their adversaries, patriots, were also referred to as “Whigs,” a term that originated in 1648, when western Scottish inhabitants opposed English rule, and were called whiggamores.<sup>22</sup> The term evolved to represent any opponents of expanding royal power. Patriots wanted to establish a clear difference between the two approaches to American government. Patriots zealously expressed their identity, especially through newspapers. They also imposed their identity onto loyalists and parties that wanted to remain neutral. Patriots did not want any non-patriots—what they perceived as godless fools without sense—in their American community. Loyalists retaliated, creating a counter-identity, and fought back with their own invectives. While they did not want to go as far as excommunicating the patriots, they still looked down on them as delusional and dishonest. However, the patriots had multiple advantages, including the extralegal governments that they developed in the early years of the war, and, eventually, the state governments they created in order to keep the people within their jurisdictions in check.

Following the meeting of the First Continental Congress in 1774, American patriots throughout the colonies promoted extralegal political order by developing committees of correspondence, safety, and observation and inspection. Discontent colonists formed informal committees of correspondence before the outbreak of war to formally share grievances with each other and with British officials. Beginning in 1774, patriots formed committees of observation and inspection to enforce the boycott of British trade goods, ordered by the First Continental

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<sup>22</sup> Michael F. Holt, *The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Congress. Finally, these morphed into committees of safety that more fully established sovereignty in order to serve the community as provincial legislative bodies. Among their duties, these committees handled border patrol, distributed resolutions of Congress, and elected County Lieutenants, as well as a secretary and treasurer.<sup>23</sup> Americans formed various committees because they felt the colonial government had not met the needs of their communities. The patriots established networks of communication between committees, which were ultimately vital to their success because they thoroughly policed the colonies. These patriots developed a shared goal that solidified with the continuation of the revolution: to rid America of anyone with the intentions of taking their liberties. The Philadelphia committee told the editor of the local newspaper, *The Pennsylvania Journal*,

In the present unnatural struggle, where the child is obliged to defend itself against the violence of the parent, an attempt on our liberty is made, under the form of law [...It was most important] to suspend the former laws and customs of our Country, so far as was necessary for the preservations of our privileges, and to establish others of a temporary nature, to answer the present exigencies.<sup>24</sup>

The committees eventually replaced royal administration and took over local governments.

The extralegal governments called local men—already required to participate in militias—to action. Many patriots rallied for the cause with fervor and regarded themselves as masculine, honorable, God-fearing defenders of liberty. Yet, not all colonial men wanted to sever ties with Britain and fight their neighbors. Some could not decide whether to remain loyal to King George III or to accept the emerging radical authority. Others had no desire to involve themselves in the war. Many families lived in rural areas removed from the political atmosphere or refrained from harming others because of their religion. These included Quakers, Mennonites,

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<sup>23</sup> "Committees of Safety." *Dictionary of American History*. 2003, *Encyclopedia.com*. (April 3, 2016).

<sup>24</sup> "To the Printers of the Pennsylvania Journal," Documents of the American Revolutionary Period, v3:172, American Archives.

and other pacifists. Still, others loyalists knew absolutely that they wanted to remain subjects under the crown.

Royal officials, large landowners and their tenants, professionals, recent British immigrants, conservatives, and colonial politicians composed the majority of the loyalist faction. Many of these men were wealthy, but nonetheless every class produced loyalists. Some remained loyal because of self-interest, knowing well that they would lose power or wealth if Britain lost authority. They also knew that they would reap the benefits if Britain crushed the rebellion. Others chose to ally themselves with the loyalists by virtue of duty. Some royal officials took oaths upon accepting their positions and refused to break them.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, loyal British immigrants had strong connections with friends and relatives in England and had confidence in the mother country. Many loyalists simply lived content under the king's rule. Finally, sons, brothers, sisters, and wives followed the paths of their loyalist family patriarchs; Early American patriarchs considered themselves governors of their estates and dependents, therefore they had their dependents' allegiance. The patriots did not treat these people kindly. Loyalists, like neutrals, undermined the idea of the revolution as a product of "the people" and it did not take long for patriots to exclude such non-conformists with the creation of a new American identity, thus removing loyalists and neutrals from any definition of "the people" or the American community patriots wished to establish.

Early Americans looked to newspapers for noteworthy information. Historian Kenneth Lockridge analyzed legal records and found that 90% of white men were literate by 1787, and figures were even higher in cities.<sup>26</sup> The patriot elites used the widespread literate background of

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<sup>25</sup>Alexander Clarence Flick, *Loyalism In New York During the American Revolution* (New York: Arno Press, 1969).

<sup>26</sup> Kenneth A. Lockridge, *Literacy in Colonial New England: An Enquiry into the Social Context of Literacy in the Early Modern West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1974).

the people to their political advantage. Patriot newspapers far-outnumbered loyalist papers because patriots had a much more physical and imposing presence in the colonies than the British. Patriot newspapers, such as the *Independent Gazette*, *Freeman's Journal* or *Pennsylvania Gazette* published propaganda that influenced readers to join their side and be sympathetic with their cause. Early on, patriots realized their advantage in the media and published pieces that celebrated patriotism and denounced loyalists, neutrals, and the British. The newspapers distributed patriot rhetoric and propaganda, making them central to the fashioning of a new American identity.

Individual printers were key to the circulation of patriot discourse and identity. The earliest Pennsylvania printers were John Dunlap and Benjamin Towne. In 1771, Philadelphia's Dunlap founded the *Pennsylvania Packet*. During the revolution, Dunlap published semi-weekly, but also issued important news when he received it from other colonies or abroad. Because he supported the state, he relocated to Lancaster while the British occupied Philadelphia in 1777-78.<sup>27</sup> Benjamin Towne printed the semi-weekly *Pennsylvania Evening Post* from 1775 to 1784, advocating the patriot cause for most of the war. However, Towne's loyalty wavered when the British entered Philadelphia. Although he printed the first broadside Declaration of Independence in 1776, patriots dubbed him a traitor, stopped buying his newspaper, and terminated his business by the end of the war. In 1782, Eleazer Oswald published the daily *Independent Gazetteer*, also patriotically known as the *Chronicle of Freedom* to the Philadelphia community. He was an apprentice to the *New York Journal's* John Holt and married his daughter.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> John Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884*, Vol 3, 1966.

<sup>28</sup> "The Pennsylvania Evening Post," Stanford University, <https://web.stanford.edu/group/ic/cgi-bin/drupal/book/export/html/169>, (accessed December 3, 2015).

*The New York Journal* was one of the most influential patriot newspapers in New York, accompanied by the *New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*. The *Journal* faced constant pressure from the British who occupied the city for the majority of the war. An ardent patriot, Holt continually moved the printing presses to avoid physical conflict with the enemy. Beginning in 1768, patriot-sympathizer Hugh Gaine's weekly *New York Gazette* covered news impartially in New York until the city became too dangerous. He quickly learned that political neutrality was futile by the fall of 1776. Still, he was nervous and fled, publishing the paper from Newark, New Jersey, instead. The British took over Gaine's New York printing press and issued a loyalist version of the paper until Gaine returned just seven weeks later; he took General Howe's offer of amnesty and became a loyalist.<sup>29</sup>

New Jersey patriots belatedly printed influential newspapers, such as the *New Jersey Gazette* and *New Jersey Journal*. In 1776, Governor Livingston appealed to Quaker Isaac Collins of Burlington to print a paper for New Jersey, since beforehand, inhabitants obtained news from Philadelphia and New York. Fortunately for Livingston, Collins had patriot sympathies, and although he they refused to take part in combat, he willingly printed the *Gazette*. The governor avidly published patriot rhetoric and attacked British ideals under the pseudonym "Hortentius". In March 1778, the Collins transferred the press to New Jersey's capital, Trenton, to reach a wider audience and teach young printers.<sup>30</sup> In 1779, Shepard Kollock established the state's third paper, the *New Jersey Journal*, in Chatham. He distributed reliable military information from sources at Washington's Morristown headquarters until November 1783. He also held

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<sup>29</sup> Ruma Chopra, "Printer Hugh Gaine Crosses and Re-Crosses the Hudson, *New York History* 90 no. 4 (2009), 271-285.

<sup>30</sup> John J. Cleary, "Journalism and Literature in Trenton," *A History of Trenton 1679- 1929*, ed. The Trenton Historical Society, 1929.

educational debates, which garnered members for the cause as he persuasively defended the struggle for liberty.

Differentiating themselves from loyalists, patriot printers created an identity with specific qualities unique to patriots. The *Pennsylvania Packet* repeatedly printed “Maxims Concerning Patriotism” throughout the 1770s, which describe the twelve qualities of a patriot. According to the author, a bishop named Dr. Berkley, the power-hungry and money-oriented could not be patriots; nor could atheists, foreigners, or liars. A patriot was required to be honest, Christian, dutiful, moral, ready to rage against injustice, and born in America.<sup>31</sup> Dunlap printed another article which also dictates the qualities of a patriot. Similar to Dr. Berkley, this anonymous author claims a patriot was religious, honorable, and brave. Patriots were also prudent, dedicated to their country, ingenious, and ready to serve the public.<sup>32</sup> Still, other articles and even poems claimed honor, piety, virtue, and civility as characteristics of a true patriot.<sup>33</sup> It seems such a definition of a patriot permeated the minds of revolutionaries. Benjamin Rush, a founding father from Philadelphia, wrote, “Perseverance & firmness belong to [the patriot] character” and noted the piety, faith in justice, virtue, and wisdom of the patriots he encountered.<sup>34</sup> According to these writings, contemporary patriots most valued and appropriated the following qualities: honor, piety/religiousness, bravery, manliness, and dedication to both America and liberty. To identify oneself as a patriot, a man had to be a brave guardian of his community with a fear of God and his duties to liberty at heart.

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<sup>31</sup> Dr. Berkley, “Maxims Concerning Patriotism,” *Pennsylvania Packet*, December 25, 1775, 2.

<sup>32</sup> “On True Patriotism,” *Pennsylvania Packet*, November 4, 1771, 1.

<sup>33</sup> *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, February 1, 1777, 51.

<sup>34</sup> “Historical Notes of Dr. Benjamin Rush,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* vol. 27 (1903), 143-145.

In the fertile middle colonies, the revolution's success and this emerging American identity fell on the shoulders of small farmers. "To the Pennsylvania Farmer" published in the *Pennsylvania Packet* in 1773 by an elite New Yorker requests:

In the name of your countrymen, step forth in behalf of the liberties of America [...] Come forth at her call, and exchange your plough share and pruning hook for the weapons of reason and eloquence. [...] Never was a time in which the united efforts of the sons of freedom, or the single arm of its CHAMPION, were more necessary to save our country from ruin. [...] Your reputation is at stake. [...] Remember you must *live* a patriot—and if you wish to be received into this society hereafter remember, you must *die* a patriot.<sup>35</sup>

Clearly, the middle colonies recognized the importance of Pennsylvania farmers early on. The author pulled at the pride and identities of American farmers. One could not call himself a patriot unless he fought for America. Imagine life in 1773 as an average farmer watched the beginning of the end of colonial government and possibly supported the patriots' movement, but had a family to care for, livestock to manage, and crops to tend. He, like many of his literate friends, read the weekly newspaper for information about the revolution and came upon "To the Pennsylvania Farmer." Upon finishing the persuasive letter, he no longer had a choice; his reputation was at stake, and he was aware that patriots would excommunicate him, banishing his family from their friends and neighbors. Even if he died during the emerging war, at least he would have died a patriot, fighting in the name of his countrymen for their liberties. He had achieved his own personal laurel wreath.

When a well-known patriot died, printers took advantage of men dying for the cause to further instill the patriot identity. After a well-known patriot's death, eulogiums called him

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<sup>35</sup> "For the *Pennsylvania Packet*, To the Pennsylvania Farmer," *The Pennsylvania Packet*, November 8, 1773, 1.

“zealous” and named other “exalted qualities of a patriot.”<sup>36</sup> Printer Benjamin Towne conspicuously coerced patriot identity in the case of Isaac Dacosta, an older patriot who died in December 1783. His death notice describes him as

An honest man, an upright merchant, and a citizen beloved by the community; he was a firm patriot in the cause of his country, and during a painful exile while the enemy was in possession of his property, supported himself with a manly fortitude. His conduct during his residence in the city endeared him to his numerous acquaintance, and his Masonic virtues were well-known to his brethren.<sup>37</sup>

Isaac’s death notice stressed his honesty, manliness, and acceptance in his community. The “Masonic virtues” include temperance, prudence, fortitude, and justice; they mirrored the desired qualities of a patriot. Death notices regularly stressed that the deceased identified as a “patriot,” especially when the man died in battle.<sup>38</sup> In the poem, “From the Lyon’s Mouth,” the lines celebrate the patriot: “But, when the Hero and the Patriot fall,/ (Even Heroes and Patriots must submit to fate)/ Then may the mournful verse their virtues tell and clergy their fame may celebrate.”<sup>39</sup> The revolutionary media focused on celebrating “the patriot” when a man died, even if he also identified as a father, brother, farmer, or merchant. Death notices stressed the qualities that made a man most patriotic, focusing most on masculinity, community, justice, and zeal for patriotic duty.

Patriots additionally created identity by influencing neutral parties to choose their loyalties. Patriots insulted the character of neutrals. The *New York Journal* called neutrals “ungrateful [...] assassins of America who, though you have received your whole existence from

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<sup>36</sup> “An Eulogium Sacred to the memory of the late Major General Warren,” *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, September 26, 1775, 435.

<sup>37</sup> “Death Notice,” *Independent Gazetteer*, December 6, 1783, 3.

<sup>38</sup> “Death Notice,” *New York Journal*, December 3, 1772, 794.

<sup>39</sup> “From the Lyon’s Mouth,” *Pennsylvania Ledger*, February 17, 1776, 4.

her indulgence, trample on her rights! What name shall I give you? You are not men; for is it manly to hug yourselves in wanton ease, unconcerned at the sufferings of your brethren, bleeding in common cause?”<sup>40</sup> The patriots called out neutrals for not choosing a side, and said that their cowardice made them un-American, just like loyalists. Additionally, by not claiming a patriot identity, neutrals could not claim characteristics of patriots, including manliness, bravery, and commitment to community. By calling out neutrals and making positive characteristics unavailable to them, patriots suppressed the growth of the neutral party. As the war developed, patriots scorned neutrals because they impeded recruitment efforts.

Patriot authorities tried to force neutrals to adopt a patriot identity. In “Patriotism,” an author under the pseudonym Philo Patriae, meaning “one with a strong love for his country”, asserted that a true patriot had faith in his community and zealous concern for his patriot neighbors that he always endeavored to promote. He claimed that those “determined from acting the Patriot by a spirit of cowardice; fearing that the colonies should be subdued, shall fall under the punitive resentment of an arbitrary government.”<sup>41</sup> Many neutral colonists did not claim a patriot identity for fear that the British would win. The patriots did not accept skepticism, and threatened neutrals with violence for cowardice. A patriot community could not accept neutrals because they only hurt the community and, to them, degraded the name of an American. The *Pennsylvania Packet* published an opinion piece declaring,

The government of New York has imposed an oath of allegiance upon every idle, neutral, and suspected person in their state. [...] Nothing can be more just and reasonable than this. Suppose a number of people should be confined in a leaky vessel together at a great distance from harbor, and suppose part of them refus'd to pump, [...] would not they be looked upon as highly criminal, and accessory to the ruin of those who were active in saving the ship? It is exactly the same with idle, neutral, and suspected people in the

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<sup>40</sup> “To the Inhabitants,” *New York Journal*, 1.

<sup>41</sup> Philo Patriae, “Patriotism,” *New York Journal*, November 2, 1775, 1.

present controversy. They should be compelled to do something for the States, or to join the enemy. 'He that is not for us (says the author of all truth [God]), is against us.'<sup>42</sup>

Here, the anonymous author makes sense of neutrals' roles in America's political turmoil within the confines of an emerging American identity through metaphor. America was a leaky vessel that needed all able men on board to purge the ship of unwanted water. Those who did not help save America contributed to her destruction by standing idly aside. According to patriot principles, a man that did not take an active stance against the enemy had equal character to a loyalist.

Patriots depicted loyalists as "other" by attributing negative qualities to their character, often the contrary to the qualities of a true patriot. The most common qualities included cowardice, foolishness, and ungodliness. Many patriots also deemed them liars and against their communities' best interests. Patriots called them "foolish, absurd, blasphemous."<sup>43</sup> Thomas Paine, a political activist credited with writing the renowned *Common Sense*, said, "Every Tory is a coward; for servile, slavish, self-interested fear is the foundation of Toryism; and a man under such influence, though he may be cruel, never can be brave."<sup>44</sup> The *Pennsylvania Packet* published an opinion piece labeling a guilty tory a "poltroon," the Early American equivalent of "chicken" and synonymous with weakling and coward.<sup>45</sup> The poem, "A Mirror for a Printer," printed in 1774, begins, "Without one grain of *honest* sense, / One virtuous view, or *just* pretense / To patriotic flame; / Without a patriot heart or mind, / Behold your Type with shame!"<sup>46</sup> After labeling them dishonest, unjust, and unpatriotic, the poet continues his castigation of loyalists; he

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<sup>42</sup> "For The Pennsylvania Packet, Seasonable Thoughts," *Pennsylvania Packet*, May 6, 1777, 2.

<sup>43</sup> "A Description of a Tory," *Independent Gazetteer*, October 11, 1783, 3.

<sup>44</sup> Thomas Paine, "The American Crisis," in *The Complete Writings of Thomas Paine*, edited by Philip S. Foner, (New York: Citadel Press, Inc., 1945), 53.

<sup>45</sup> "Anecdote," *Pennsylvania Packet*, July 15, 1780, 2.

<sup>46</sup> "A Mirror for a Printer," *New York Journal*, September 15, 1774, 4.

brands them “ignorant,” “treacherous,” and “friend [s] to *public ills*.”<sup>47</sup> When turncoat Dr. Benjamin Church traded secret information with British General Gage, *The Pennsylvania Packet* republished a poem that questioned how he betrayed his countrymen after all they had done for the colonies. The poet asks,

Whate’er thy gen’rous country had to give,  
 Blest in her favour, didst thou not receive?  
 Power and honor did she not bestow;  
 And all the benefits which thence may flow?  
 What could tempt thee th’apostate to part?  
 What prompt the treach’rous purpose of thy heart?  
 Why didst thou stop to join the venal tribe  
 Who barter conscience for a paltry bribe  
 For sordid lucre who themselves profane,  
 and part with virtue, honor, all for gain?<sup>48</sup>

Here, he classified the defector as a money-grubbing, immoral, and shameful traitor. The column-long poem also called Church dishonorable, God-less; a man condemned and hated by his neighbors for committing patricide. The poet lamented on the patriotic life he could have lived, with a wife that adored him and generations that praised his name. Finally, he ended the poem hoping the miscreant feels “public vengeance.”<sup>49</sup> The patriot poet vehemently criticized and vilified the loyalist; he rescinded Church’s honor and other noble qualities, thereby stripping him of his patriot identity.

Patriots continuously depicted loyalists as “other” and refused to accept them into their communities, therefore suppressing the loyalist identity and pressuring them to become patriots. Since patriots were American, opposing identities could not claim that quality and therefore had to leave. Since up to one fifth of early Americans retained their loyalties to the king,<sup>50</sup> rebel

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<sup>47</sup> “A Mirror for a Printer, *New York Journal*, 4.

<sup>48</sup> “From the New York Gazetteer to the Printer,” *Pennsylvania Packet*, October 23, 1775, 3.

<sup>49</sup> “From the Gazetteer,” *Pennsylvania Packet*.

<sup>50</sup> Robert M. Calhoon, “Loyalism and Neutrality,” in *A Companion to the American Revolution*, edited by Jack P. Greene and J.R. Pole (Blackwell Publishers, 2003), 235-247.

governments had to “devise ways and means for suppressing the dangerous spirit of toryism” before it infected the able-bodied men that patriots needed and caused them to commit “open Acts of Treason.”<sup>51</sup> Two thirds of the men in Sussex County, Delaware, identified as loyalists, and this worried the Continental Congress, an illegal body without constitutional authority. Congress ordered the committee of safety in Sussex “to apprehend and remove all persons of influence [...] who have betrayed or manifested a disaffection to the American cause, to some remote or secure place.”<sup>52</sup> The authorities took all firearms and prohibited anyone from having access to the loyalists. These precautions prevented the loyalist from having any means of expressing or asserting their identities. Even still, some patriot authorities thought simple disarmament was too generous, and wanted loyalists excommunicated as even further precaution.

Often, patriot communities saw loyalists as pariahs and wanted them found and ousted. In 1781, the *Freeman's Journal* published a notice asking “seraphic patriots” to help find a former-patriot on the loose.<sup>53</sup> It relates the story of a nameless untrustworthy loyalist who had power—and in turn influence—in the community and tricked his fellow compatriots into believing he was a true American. But, when British troops approached his town and other men left to fight, he loyalist stole from their houses to repair his own and called them rebels. The loyalist even tricked patriot authorities into believing he was a patriot by claiming the British burned his identification papers and his home for his patriotism. The author of the notice, “A Patriot,” asks,

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<sup>51</sup> Journals of the Continental Congress, April 19, 1777, *A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: US Congressional Documents and Debates, 1774-1875*, 285-86.

<sup>52</sup> Journals of the Continental Congress, April 19, 1777, 286.

<sup>53</sup> “To a Seraphic Patriot,” *Freeman's Journal*, November 14, 1781, 3.

“Should you be so favoured by heaven as to find out the miscreant, I rest assured that the noble flame which is kindled in your breast will irresistibly impel you to drag him to justice.”<sup>54</sup>

Patriot authorities expected members of the community, conceivably noble, brave, and Christian, to partake in the imposition of identity by expelling loyalists that did not belong. In a letter to the editor of the *Pennsylvania Packet*, the patriot author accuses loyalists of “undermining your liberties” by starting the war, allying with Native Americans, and advising and assisted “in burning your towns, ravaging your country, and violating the chastity of your women” as well as causing one to “mourn the loss of your dearest connections.”<sup>55</sup> He also accuses loyalists of dissuading other men from enlisting, persuading the enlisted to desert, and harboring the deserters. At the end of the letter, he diverges from addressing the editor and calls to Americans, “Awake, Americans, [...] Instantly banish every Tory from among you. Let America be sacred alone to freemen.”<sup>56</sup> The author of this letter fervently believed that loyalists had no place in America. Other patriots generally agreed with him. Only patriots were Americans, making loyalists foreigners. People who wanted British rule did not identify as patriots, self-proclaimed harbingers of liberty, and therefore did not deserve to live within and take part in the American community.

In addition to being suppressed by patriots, loyalists had less access to media resources and therefore could not influence the public nearly as effectively as their enemies/oppressors. They had less of an ability to convey their own identities, demoralize patriots, and encourage each other. Physically impressive in the colonies, the patriots did not accept loyalists to print their “false” opinions. They threatened them with violence by attacking printing presses, such as

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<sup>54</sup> “To a Seraphic Patriot,” 3.

<sup>55</sup> A Whig, *Pennsylvania Packet*, August 1777.

<sup>56</sup> A Whig, *Pennsylvania Packet*, August 1777.

that of James Rivington, with mobs or threatened them legally by charging them with libel. By the start of the war, most printers with loyalist sympathies changed sides to continue printing because that was their only source of income. Others left town or even the country. Some were brave, such as Rivington in the beginning of the war. Despite crowds attacking his shop and home, he continued printing, even after a mob of his neighbors hung him in effigy.<sup>57</sup> Because of the threats, most loyalist newspapers only survived where and when the British maintained military control, such as in New York City and Philadelphia during the British occupation of that city between 1777 and 1778. The *Royal Gazette* and *New-York Gazette; and the Weekly Mercury* printed substantially in New York City. Philadelphia loyalists had access to the *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, *Pennsylvania Ledger*, and *Royal Pennsylvania Gazette*. One devout loyalist wrote to Mr. Towne of the *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, “I have been long anxious to see a printing-press in this city subservient to the purpose of *Lord and General Howe*,” the British commander in North America.<sup>58</sup> In the same letter, he warned Mr. Towne of a patriot acquaintance who boasted of their stronger influence and denounced the *Pennsylvania Ledger* by calling it a “newspaper fraught with mischief.” Nevertheless, loyalists had less of an ability to undermine the patriots and both parties were aware of their disadvantage.

At such a disadvantage, loyalists had to construct their own identity in the face of domineering patriots; they labeled themselves “loyalists” only after patriots proclaimed their identity and made them “other.” They saw themselves as peaceful, loyal, obedient, truthful, and honorable.<sup>59</sup> They believed themselves to be courageous because they spoke against their

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<sup>57</sup> Carol Sue Humphrey, “This Popular Engine,” in *New England Papers During the American Revolution, 1775-1789* (Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 1992), 88.

<sup>58</sup> *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, November 16, 1776, 573.

<sup>59</sup> Samuel Seabury, *Letters of a Westchester Farmer*, ed. C.H. Vance (Westchester County Historical Society, 1930), 65-66.

oppressors, the rebelling patriots. They also often claimed to be grateful for the generous government they already had. Unlike the patriots, they wanted to avoid violence, and therefore claimed diplomatic qualities.<sup>60</sup> Similar to how the patriots blamed the loyalists for disrupting the community, loyalists blamed patriots. One peaceful loyalist believed a patriot aimed “only at raising a spirit of venom and bitterness towards his neighbours that are of the church.”<sup>61</sup> This loyalist claimed patriots threatened his community, even though they were Christian, because they were of the Anglican Church, the official religion in England. After being attacked so thoroughly and viciously in the press, loyalists refuted patriot attacks by developing their own identity. This development allowed them to create a loyalist community in the face of the excluding patriots.

Loyalists, unlike patriots, did not plan to excommunicate members who did not fit their identity; rather they wanted to incorporate them back into the British-American community once the crown quelled the rebellion. The *Royal Pennsylvania Gazette*, a loyalist newspaper that only survived three months in 1778 published the poem, “The Loyalist” in their last issue, and gave it a full page and a half out of four pages.<sup>62</sup> This poem praises King George III and describes the future, when the British army quells the rebellion and restores peace to America. The poem describes the fear and grief loyalists felt during the tumult of a civil war. It also describes their optimism that Britain would reign supreme and restore peace: “When dire rebellion sneaks into the dust/ [...] And peace and harmony return to all;/ All be united in the common good,/ [...] To taste the sweets of freedom all again/ once more united, all our rights maintain’d.”<sup>63</sup> New York

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<sup>60</sup> “A Modern Tory,” *Rivington’s New York Gazetteer*, March 9, 1775, 3.

<sup>61</sup> “An Appeal from an American Whig, to All that Are Impartial,” *New York Gazette*, April 25, 1768, 2.

<sup>62</sup> John Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884* vol. 3, (Philadelphia: L.H. Everts & Co., 1884), 1974.

<sup>63</sup> “The Loyalist. A Poem.” *Royal Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 26, 1778, 1.

loyalists agreed. Rivington of the *Royal Gazette* republished a speech by the mayor of London, who hoped sincerely for “a happy restoration of peace and harmony with our American colonies.” By republishing the speech, Rivington expressed agreement with the mayor that he too wanted to unite everyone in the colonies again. Loyalists in the colonies did not want to oust members from the community after the war; they wanted unity between patriot and loyalist neighbors.

However, loyalists and royalists—supporters of monarchy—still expressed their views of patriots in newspapers. By attributing negative qualities to those who proclaimed a patriot identity, loyalists built up their own identity. Additionally, they had their chances to demean the patriot character. Loyalists called them “deluded,” “dishonorable,” and “licentious.”<sup>64</sup> In the sardonic “Creed of a Patriot,” *John Bull*, a London newspaper, vilifies patriots for “dividing our counties, insulting our Parliament, and violating our constitution.”<sup>65</sup> One primary concern for loyalists was defamation of the mother country. *John Bull* sarcastically attacked patriots and even neutrals for being complicit in the war: “The persons who by their declaration, or by their negligence, fomented the American rebellion; who have ridiculed exposed, or falsified the strength of England [...] are the properest persons to support our reputation, conquer our enemies, relieve our grievances, and govern our country.”<sup>66</sup> *John Bull*'s creed additionally shows that loyalists had no faith that the rebels could properly handle the responsibility of running a country. The aforementioned poem, “The Loyalist,” describes not only the character of loyalists, but also the characteristics of patriots. The poet considers them disloyal, cowardly, vain,

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<sup>64</sup> Winthrop Sargent, ed., *The Loyal Verses of Joseph Stansbury and Dr. Jonathan Odell*, (Albany: Winthrop Sargent Printers, 1860), 11; “Teucro Duce Nil Desperandum,” *Pennsylvania Ledger*, November 12, 1777; Henry P. Johnston ed., *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay* vol 2 (New York, 1890), 343-345.; Wallace Brown, “Viewpoints of a Pennsylvania Loyalist,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* vol. 91 (1967), 419.

<sup>65</sup> “The Creed of a Patriot, March 18 1780,” *Royal Gazette*, August 9, 1780, 2.

<sup>66</sup> “The Creed of a Patriot,” *Royal Gazette*, 2.

arrogant, and destroyers-of-peace. If the unruly patriots had not rebelled against the king, widows would not cry for their dead husbands, brothers would no longer bear arms against each other, and no child would see “his father, mother slain.”<sup>67</sup> The poet repeats that patriots did not know love because they could willingly murder their kin and side with their enemies, the French. *Rivington’s New York Gazetteer* called patriots licentious and anarchical as opposed to peaceful loyalists in “A Modern Whig.”<sup>68</sup> Overall, loyalists thought patriots were dishonest, deluded, and rebellious. Even though their range of influence was small in comparison to the patriots’, loyalists still used the media to express their own identity.

In conclusion, revolutionaries used printing presses to their advantage to produce and spread positive patriot rhetoric and negative loyalist rhetoric. By identifying themselves with positive characteristics and disparaging the character of loyalists, patriots imposed their identity. Furthermore, using newspapers, they developed a “Join or Die” stance and shunned not only loyalists, but neutrals too. Loyalists responded by creating a counter-identity that appreciated unity and called out the patriots for disturbing America’s peace. Since the loyalists did not have as much influence as patriots, the patriot identity prevailed. They circulated rhetoric calling for the defense of the liberties and average citizens answered their call with violence.

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<sup>67</sup> “The Loyalist,” *Royal Pennsylvania Gazette*, 1.

<sup>68</sup> “A Modern Whig,” *Rivington’s New York Gazetteer*, March 9, 1775, 3.

## Chapter 2: Defenders of Liberty

Since revolutionaries in the Mid-Atlantic states aimed to legitimize a patriot identity and conceived of loyalists as detrimental to that identity's existence, they needed to eliminate loyalists. To do so, patriots used many forms of violence and the line between legal and extralegal violence was thin. After 1776, committees of safety, rooted in the sovereign authority of the people rather than the legally constituted government of the crown, authorized violence. Yet the Committee of Safety used violence to persuade unfortunate loyalists and to bring together as well as spread the patriot community. Either way, patriots justified their violence by claiming they were defenders of liberty, protecting their communities. After all, patriots were religious, honorable, and just community saviors. Often their violence was collective and meant to humiliate the victim. The loyalists also used violence in retaliation, but they were less effective. As their chances deteriorated, many deserted their homes and escaped to other British territories. Their evacuation assisted the patriots because they were more easily able to establish the patriot identity in local communities devoid of loyalist opposition.

New York's Sons of Liberty is a prime example of the blending of extralegal and legal powers. Originally an extralegal secret society to protest British taxation, the Sons continued to influence the public in the early ambiguous years, and produced many members in the state's eventual legal counsel. In 1765, due to the Stamp Act, the New York City chapter organized and used violence to achieve their goals. A British captain thought that the Sons "were openly defying powers, office, and all authority [...and] were the sole rulers of New York."<sup>69</sup> Isaac Sears, a particularly rowdy merchant and Son of Liberty, had a long career as both a legal and extralegal leader in the city. In 1774, Sears became a leader of the extralegal Committee of Sixty,

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<sup>69</sup> G.D. Scull, editor, *The Montresor Journals* (New York: New York Historical Society, 1881).

enforcing Congress's Continental Association, which boycotted British goods. When the British left New York City in 1783, he revived the Sons and preyed on the city's remaining loyalists. Even though they disbanded with the repeal of the Stamp Act, leading members like Sears and John Lamb, a general and politician, became members of committees and at the end of the war, promoted the expulsion of all loyalists in the territory. Sons of Liberty won seats in New York's assembly and succeeded in passing laws that persecuted loyalists. Loyalists, for example, could not return to their homes if they initially fled. Governor Clinton, who showed support of the Sons of Liberty in 1770, passed laws in 1782 that cancelled "all debts owed to loyalists as long as they paid a fortieth part of the amount to the state."<sup>70</sup> Additionally, he authorized citizens to file suits against loyalists who occupied their properties during British occupation, even though the Continental Congress recommended forgiveness and compensation for property.<sup>71</sup> Seeing their government legally disciplining loyalists, patriots, which from hereon will refer to active citizens, shunned and rejected them. Members of the Sons of Liberty with extralegal backgrounds used their legal power to impress the state against loyalists.

Committees of Safety, like mobs, used violence to persuade loyalists and justified their violence by claiming to do anything necessary to defend American liberties. As separate Committees of Safety developed in each state as per the Continental Congress's recommendation, they became the recognized legal body by most of the inhabitants. Part of their acknowledgement stemmed from the respect these revolutionary bodies instilled through violence. The New York Committee of Safety, for example, violently intimidated Walter Bates, a sixteen-year-old loyalist victim, by capturing and torturing him. The Committee threatened to

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<sup>70</sup> "Clinton", American Presidents, [http://www.ouramericanpresidents.org/g\\_clinton.html](http://www.ouramericanpresidents.org/g_clinton.html) (accessed April 7, 2016); Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 210.

<sup>71</sup> Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 206.

kill him in a variety of ways, including by drowning him in high tide or sawing him in two, because he refused to confess the location of his brother and other loyalist allies. When such threats failed, a mob of angry citizens carried him from his cell, stripped him, tied him to a tree, and drew blood from his body. Two committee members stood by and told Walter that if he exposed the loyalists, they would stop the attackers, whom they feigned to be unaffiliated with, but since he stayed silent, the torture continued for two hours, ending with twenty lashes. Days later a judge set him free and Walter fled for Nova Scotia; but in that terrifying moment, Walter experienced both legal and extralegal forms of violence. While informal, the Committee had been recognized—voluntarily or involuntarily—as the stabilizing legal body by a majority of inhabitants. They participated in and witnessed the violence done unto the youngest Bates son. Although they did not take part nor physically associate with the mob, they did not stop them, and allowed the men to continue for the sake of determining a loyalist outpost.<sup>72</sup>

When the state came into power, it initiated violence and ignored much patriotic mob violence because legal members were involved in many of these events, and they ultimately encouraged obedience to the new government, and helped promote the solidification of a patriot community. State authorities used legal bloodshed to compel remaining loyalists to leave or concede. The state also did not want to spurn the increasingly politicized and forceful citizens, lest they retaliated. The state needed these citizens on their side, or the movement against Britain would have disintegrated. Therefore, they ventured to control what violence occurred and assure it did not get out of hand. For example, in April 1774, rebel leaders usurped a ship carrying 698 chests of tea and after assuring no crew deserted, convinced the captain to return to England. Less than a week later, a mob of New Yorkers led by the Sons of Liberty raided another tea ship

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<sup>72</sup> Walter Bates, *Kingston and the Loyalists of the "Spring Fleet" of 1783. With Reminiscence of Early Days in Connecticut*, edited by W.O. Raymond (Fredrickton, New Brunswick: Non Entity Press, 1980).

that was due to arrive in port. After securing Captain Chambers, the leaders stood at the entrances to the ship and only allowed the mob to plunder tea, dumping it into the frigid bay.<sup>73</sup> Radical leaders like Isaac Sears allied with, organized, and led mobs through the streets. Some discounted the violence and other leaders acknowledged the wrongness of extralegal action, but considered the enactors simply overzealous.<sup>74</sup> When the state officially came into power, these behaviors continued. The acts of legal and extralegal violence increasingly entwined as patriots clamored with Britain for power.

To create a patriot American identity, states used an assortment of violent methods to ostracize and exhort unwanted loyalists. As a standard approach, they appropriated or destroyed loyalist property to physically drive them out of the community. Politically active residents of Monmouth County, New Jersey, for example, were equally divided on the issue, which caused exorbitant property disputes between the community's competing identities. The *New Jersey Gazette* frequently advertised the legal confiscation and auction of loyalist estates, including the 127 taken in Monmouth County.<sup>75</sup> Extralegal confiscation, such as mobs evicting householders and illegal occupations, occurred even more frequently.

Extralegal confiscation took its tolls on individuals that offended active patriot neighbors. For years, Samuel Jarvis, a loyalist living near the border of New York, had undergone frequent patriot abuse, "in person and in property," yet refused to leave his farm.<sup>76</sup> Having influence in the community before the war, unruly citizens repeatedly plundered his home, threatened him, and even shot at him. Patriots gave the same treatment to his two eldest

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<sup>73</sup> Mary Ellen Snodgrass, *Civil Disobedience: An Encyclopedic History of Dissidence in the United States* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 290.

<sup>74</sup> Peter Z. Lloyd, Secretary to Philadelphia Committee, September 19, 1775, Documents of the American Revolutionary Period, v3:731, American Archives.

<sup>75</sup> Michael Riccard, "Patriots and Plunderers: Confiscation of Loyalist Lands in New Jersey," *New Jersey History* 86 (1968): 14-28.

<sup>76</sup> "New York: September 6," *New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, New York, September 11, 1780.

sons and son-in-law, who committed suicide because of the treatment.<sup>77</sup> They convinced his sons to flee to British lines; but they had a hard time convincing the elder Jarvis. Thus, in the autumn of 1779, a large mob prepared to permanently banish the patriarch and his family. They surrounded his house while he, his wife, three daughters, and infant son slept soundly inside. The patriots broke in, “turned [the Jarvis’s] out of their beds, stripped them of every necessary, and put them on board a rebel whale boat” which eventually landed on Long Island at two o’clock in the morning.<sup>78</sup> The parents and children waded through the water to shore, where they remained soaking and “nearly perished” until help from the kind Cole family came at mid-morning.<sup>79</sup> The state eventually confiscated most of the Jarvis property in October 1783, giving the land to Samuel Gruman as administer.<sup>80</sup> After the war, Jarvis’s daughter Polly wrote, “O gracious God, that I should live to see such times under the protection we have suffered everything but that of dying- may you never experience such heart piercing troubles as I have and still labor under, [...] the sufferings of the poor Loyalists are beyond all possible description.”<sup>81</sup> For not heeding their earlier warnings of plunder, scuffles, and verbal abuse like his sons, Jarvis’s family faced the consequences. The citizens defended their liberties and established their patriot identity by ostracizing an uncooperative loyalist family from their community; however, politically active citizens did not limit their violence to outspoken individuals like Jarvis.

Citizens also collectively lashed out on oppressive individuals who took advantage of them during the war. Namely, patriots incited food riots to defend their patriotic liberties against

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<sup>77</sup> George A Jarvis, George Murray Jarvis, and William Jarvis Wetmore, *The Jarvis Family: The Descendants of the First Settlers of the Name in Massachusetts and Long Island, and those who have more Recently Settled in other parts of the United States and British America* (Hartford: Press of the Case, Lockwood, and Brainard Co., 1879.

<sup>78</sup> “New York,” *New York Gazette*, September 11, 1780.

<sup>79</sup> “New York,” *New York Gazette*, September 11, 1780; Coldham, *American Migrations*, 17.

<sup>80</sup> George A. Jarvis, *The Jarvis Family*, 282.

<sup>81</sup> Letter from Polly Jarvis Dibblee to William Jarvis, May 1787, Primary Documents of Loyalist Women in New Brunswick, UNB Libraries, Atlantic Canada Virtual Archives.

tyrannous merchants imposing intolerable prices. During the revolution, supplies were low, paper currency depreciated, and inflation ran rampant. Historian Barbara Clark Smith claimed that these factors made America the perfect atmosphere for food riots.<sup>82</sup> Food riots began when people collectively reacted to inflation of prices of necessities, especially foodstuffs.<sup>83</sup> By confronting the merchants, patriots expressed their dominance and values. They claimed the merchants' unfair prices were "very detrimental to the Liberties of America."<sup>84</sup> With Congress's nonimportation campaign in 1774, America withdrew from the British Atlantic. They then relied on local networks of production and trade, expecting each other to sacrifice profit for the sake of the common good. As patriot rhetoric published in newspapers illustrated, a true patriot had concern for his neighbors' well-being and actively committed to their protection. Patriots used food riots to reinforce these American ideals in the face of oppressive merchants. The patriots that participated in the food riots were also further able to develop their patriot identity by politicizing individuals through participation, reaffirming patriot ideals, and coming together as an established patriot community.

To further resist British rule and build their identity, patriots in the middle colonies constructed, paraded, and hanged effigies of British and loyalist officials in the 1760s and '70s. In 1765, a two thousand-person mob built an effigy of Lieutenant Governor Cadwallader Colden in "a movable gallows" and situated him next to a figure of the devil. They placed stamped paper in the effigy's hand and paraded him through the streets of New York City. To strike an even more ominous note, the bells tolled and the crowds cheered through the streets, growing in

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<sup>82</sup> Barbara Clark Smith, "Food Rioters and the American Revolution," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 51 no. 1 (January 1994), 6.

<sup>83</sup> Lynne Taylor, "Food Riots Revisited," *Journal of Social History* 30 no. 2 (Winter 1996), 482.

<sup>84</sup> Smith, "Food Rioters," 7.

number as neighbors joined the morbid fete.<sup>85</sup> The growing mob hijacked his coach and paraded it with the effigy. At the end of the macabre parade, the crowd used furniture from Cadwallader's coach house to kindle a bonfire and "reduced the Coach, Gallows, Man, Devil, and all to Ashes."<sup>86</sup> Often, as in the case of Cadwallader, mobs hanged and burned effigies for deeply social and political meaning. Though extreme, it reaffirmed shared oppositional values, thus promoting a shared, if imagined, community. In another instance, a patriot mob hanged an effigy of a British official, symbolically ending his life as a metaphor to the end of British reign. In 1774, mimicking the mob against Cadwallader, patriots constructed a gallows and suspended effigies of three royal authorities and loyalists as well as a figure of the devil in New York City. They marked the effigies with inscriptions and emblems. One of the effigies was of Lord North, who the patriots labeled "an insidious and implacable Enemy to the Liberties of America" and "a Slave of Power and Betrayer of his Country."<sup>87</sup> After a parade, thousands of people in attendance watched the effigies burn "before the Coffee-House Door."<sup>88</sup> Effigies effectively brought the community together against a common enemy in defense of their liberties and, one must add, their identity.

If burning an effigy did not produce the desired outcome, zealous colonists literally "smoked" live opponents. When patriots smoked a tory, they confined him in small room and shut all windows and doors. They placed the victim in front of a fireplace and filled it with green wood, which would build more smoke. Then, they placed a cover on the chimney and filled the room with heavy smoke until the individual apologized or withdrew his treasonous statements.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> F.L. Engelman, "Cadwallader Colden and the New York Stamp Act Riots," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 10 no. 4 (October 1953), 571.

<sup>86</sup> *New York Gazette*, November 7, 1765.

<sup>87</sup> A Citizen, *To The People of New York*, New York, 1774.

<sup>88</sup> *New York Journal*, 1774.

<sup>89</sup> United Empire Loyalists' Association of Ontario, *Annual Transactions* (Toronto: The Hunter Rose Co., 1897), 56.

Evidence in the middle colonies of this tactic is slim, but evidence survived from other colonies. For example, New York loyalists' *Rivington's Gazette* informed the city of an event in Massachusetts where patriots locked an elderly loyalist in his house and smoked him for hours because he was on the British appointed Mandamus Council, making him a legal upholder of the Administration of Justice Act.<sup>90</sup> There is a line in a contemporary poem related to smoking another Mandamus Councilor: "Have you ever made old Murray look less big, Or smoked old Williams to Whig?"<sup>91</sup> In this quote, the author reveals that patriots used the tactic of smoking to demean the victim, in this case Councilor Israel Williams, and to convert loyalists to the Whig, aka patriot, identity. Smoking tormented transgressors into submitting to forceful patriots.

Patriots also infamously tarred and feathered offenders to establish their collective identity as defenders of liberty. This process involved the dumping of pine tar and goose feathers on a victim. Aggressors had used tar and feathering since long before the American Revolution. The earliest historical evidence of this method occurred in 1189 when King Richard of England ordered his soldiers to shave the heads of thieving crusaders, then dumped pitch and feathers atop them, and finally set them out on shore to "the first place they came to."<sup>92</sup> The ingredients were plenty in early America, and once patriots learned about the impact that tar and feathering could have, the activity took hold in the colonies. Originally, patriots targeted royal officials or informants; yet as the war continued, any offending citizen could be a target. This was not unexpected though, for throughout the war the execution of tarring and feathering evolved in many other ways.

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<sup>90</sup> *Rivington's Gazette*, March 8, 1775; C. James Taylor, *Founding Families: Digital Editions of the Papers of the Winthrops and the Adamses* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 2016).

<sup>91</sup> Thomas, Jones, *History of New York During the Revolutionary War, and of the Leading Events in the Other Colonies at that Period*, edited by Edward Floyd DeLancey (New York: Arno Press, 1968), 101.

<sup>92</sup> Benjamin H. Irvin, "Tar, Feathers, and the Enemies of American Liberties, 1768–1776," *New England Quarterly*, 76 (June 2003), 199.

The specifics of tarring and feathering were flexible and depended on the resources available and individuals involved. First, the angry crowd poured tar then feathers on the victim in unity. They acquired feathers from the local community. Neighbors, friends, and kin raided their own homes and destroyed their own dearly bought property for feathers in stuffed pillows, couch cushions, and even their own beds. If these household items were unavailable, they resorted to plucking live geese.<sup>93</sup> Sometimes the aggressors heated the tar, which burned and marred the victim's skin. Other times, they applied it cool. Either way, it was painful and time-consuming to remove. Additionally, what the crowd did with the victim after the tarring differed from case to case. Always, ceremonial exhibition had as much symbolic importance as the tar and feathers. Usually the patriots paraded the victim through the main streets to show him to the community. A large crowd put him in a cart or on a horse and accompanied him while making music and cheering. Sometimes they made their victims wear labels. At times, the assailants set him to sea like King Richard did centuries before. No matter how the patriots executed the process, they ostracized the accused offender and humiliated him in front of his neighbors, thus confirming that person's difference from the community. Tarring and feathering, then, was the violent manifestation of the othering process. While some patriots employed the pen and the press, others wielded the tar and feather buckets.

Targeted victims of tarring and feathering expanded as patriot identity solidified. Sometimes, patriots tarred and feathered loyalists for refusing to accept the Articles of Association or take the oath. Edward Short of Dutchess County, New York, faced a crowd who tarred and feathered him for rejecting Congress's resolutions.<sup>94</sup> Patriots could not accept loyalist

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<sup>93</sup> "Tar and Feathers, 1768-1776," 203-205.

<sup>94</sup> Great Britain Colonial Office, *Documents of the American Revolution, 1770-1783* 10, ed. K.G. Davies (Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1972-1981), 177.

resistance. Patriots also tarred and feathered loyalists for speaking against their new government or publicly allying with the British. When Dutchess County's judge of the Court and Common Pleas spoke out about the Committee's order to disarm all loyalists, patriots carted him into the country and tarred and feathered him.<sup>95</sup> The patriots of the county could not risk someone spouting opinions contrary to the patriot identity that may influence others in the vicinity. Similarly, when Abraham Revere, a former patriot who fled to the British, returned for his belongings, his neighbors tarred and feathered him. The tarring and feathering disturbed Revere, who thought himself to be a gentleman, so much that he repeatedly attempted to commit suicide after the affray. In July 1784, Revere accomplished his goal and successfully hanged himself in his home near the city.<sup>96</sup> Patriots wanted to establish that allying with the British in any way—whether verbally or physically—resulted in utter humiliation that could cause the slow destruction of the victim. By devastating a diverse array of loyalists with tar and feathers, patriots dissuaded other loyalists from asserting themselves and convinced neutrals to give in to the patriot cause. Tarring and feathering reinforced the patriot identity, especially as the practice grew.

Even patriot women, adopting their husband's political stance, used such violent tactics against outspoken loyalists, proving the practice of tarring and feathering evolved and grew as the war continued. In September 1775, a young loyalist interrupted a quilting bee in Kinderhook, New York, to rant about the Continental Congress. The women in attendance listened patiently at first, but eventually tired of his rude tirade. The "exasperated" women took hold of the situation by stripping him to the waist. Then, for lack of tar and feathers, they covered him with molasses

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<sup>95</sup> United Empire, *Annual Transactions*, 56.

<sup>96</sup> "New York, July 12," *Pennsylvania Packet*, July 20, 1784, 2.

and wildflowers.<sup>97</sup> When the *New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury* reported on the event, they praised the women and called the man “an enemy to the liberties of America.”<sup>98</sup> Strangely, the predators were women. They imposed their authority in their quilting space and felt justified to do so after their patience wore thin. The fact that women conducted the political action was strange enough, but their resources were strange as well. By covering a man in molasses and wildflowers, the women simulated the tar and feather ritual. Though they did not use tar and feathers, the affect was the same. Additionally, when the women of Kinderhook apprehended him, they held more power and dominance than he did. The naked man was humiliated, especially because these strong women stripped his status as a patriarch. For spouting his loyalist opinions, the man faced embarrassing consequences and loyalists in the community learned they were not even safe from patriot women. He intruded on their domestic sphere, and, what is more, they used domestic products to humiliate him. Women took care of day-to-day chores in their homes. They bought the molasses at market, many attended their own gardens, from which they garnished the house with flowers. When the venting loyalist invaded their space, the women reclaimed their power using common household items to belittle him. Unfortunately, many other loyalists did not even have to vocalize their opinions before patriot men targeted them.

Patriots targeted loyalists Joshua Booth and William Steele simply for their allegiance, rather than for a specific offense because they had to legitimize their identity while defending their community. As Booth traveled from New York City to Wallkill, New York, in hopes of visiting his mother, forty patriots stopped him, forced him down, and shaved all the hair from his head, including his eyebrows. They then tarred and feathered him. Before mounting him on horseback, they draped a bell around his neck and put a paper on his head that said, “Look yo

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<sup>97</sup> *New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, October 2, 1775.

<sup>98</sup> *New York Gazette*, October 2, 1775.

Tory Crew, and see what George your King can do.” The patriots mocked him, banged on drums, and played fifes while parading him to the shores of the city. At midnight, they put him aboard a sloop and sent him away.<sup>99</sup> William Steele of Brunswick, New Jersey faced a similar fate when a vicious mob captured the loyalist Irish immigrant in February 1776. After tarring and feathering him, they carted him “round the main streets of town” to the jail, then surrounded and looted his home.<sup>100</sup> He escaped, but they recaptured him, threatened to hang him and make a rebel fifer out of his 12-year-old son. Finally, during a storm, the dissident mob forced the Steele family to flee to the British in New York with only muddy shoes and the clothes on their backs.<sup>101</sup> Rather than being at fault of a specific crime, being a conspicuous loyalist in patriot territory was his downfall. Since Steele was a prominent loyalist in the county, even though he was not outspoken, he faced the wrath of patriots. The assaulters could not let the rest of the community think that they were foolish, lenient, or pardoning, so they legitimized their identity and their manhood through violence.

Patriots also forced dissenters to ride skimmington, also known as railing, for reasons similar to tarring and feathering. In the colonies, this practice began in the 1730s, and was very much like the English practice of rough music, in which men were rode on rails for breaches in conduct to humiliate them. Skimmington was popular especially at times when the populace felt law enforcement was lax.<sup>102</sup> As angry patriots formed collective groups, it became popular against loyalists. In a letter to his brother-in-law early in the war, patriot Peter Elting described a railing that took place in New York City. That week, a mob beat pots and pans, blew whistles,

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<sup>99</sup> Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 213.

<sup>100</sup> Coldham, *American Migrations*, 432.

<sup>101</sup> Coldham, *American Migrations*, 432.

<sup>102</sup> William Pencak, Matthew Dennis, Simon P. Newman, ed., *Riot and Revelry in Early America* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 42.

and rang bells outside the homes of several loyalists, including the local pharmacist, silversmith, and barber. Then the mob stripped and carried the naked and dusty loyalists through the streets on rails. Apparently, the railing was effective because there was “hardly a tory face to be seen this morning.”<sup>103</sup> Another letter by an anonymous author described the same event, saying the loyalists “have been cruelly rode on rails, a practice most painful, dangerous, and, till now, peculiar to the *humane* republicans of New England.”<sup>104</sup> Before the war, New Yorkers had never seen such viciousness in their own community, and clearly, it left an impression. The patriots needed to leave their mark so that any other dissenters in the community would realize their mistakes, or at least adopt the patriot identity simply for fear of public humiliation.

Whether they used the mode of tarring and feathering, railing, smoking, or something in between, the patriot’s primary goal of their violence was public humiliation and ostracization. Sometimes tactics of humiliation were unique to the instance. For example, Moravian pastor Ewald Shewkirk remarked in his journal about a night in which a patriot mob hauled loyalists through the streets while forcing candles in their faces and burning their heads.<sup>105</sup> Even though that particular mob used candles, they still paraded the victims, thereby humiliating them in front of their friends, family, and neighbors. In another instance, soldiers stole Christopher Saur, a Dunker and printer in Germantown, from his bed in the middle of the night. In his nightgown, he trudged through fields until resting at a barn to relieve his bleeding feet. The soldiers took advantage of his injuries and humiliated him by cutting half his beard off, then smearing paint on his face before continuing to march him to Valley Forge.<sup>106</sup> Humiliation was a lucrative strategy.

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<sup>103</sup> Peter Elting to Colonel Richard Varick, “The Riding of Tories on Rails Through the Streets of New York,” in *History of New York During the Revolutionary War* 1, 596

<sup>104</sup> *History of New York During the Revolutionary War*, 597.

<sup>105</sup> United Empire, *Annual Transactions*, 58.

<sup>106</sup> Joseph S. Walton and Martin G. Brumbaugh, *Stories of Pennsylvania or School Readings from Pennsylvania History* (New York: American Book Company, 1897), 216-19.

It isolated victims, like poor Abraham Revere, from their own people. Without community, the victim became more motivated to give in, and if they refused to relinquish their British loyalty, the public spectacle still reinforced their outsider status. Additionally, public humiliation warned any others of the consequences, which made them more inclined to give in as well, or at least keep quiet.

The threat of violence produced tangible results when loyalists and neutrals wanted to avoid violence. Patriots often produced the desired outcome: intimidated dissenters usually fled or joined the patriots. Many men gave in and swore the oath, paid taxes, or even joined rebel armies to avoid imprisonment. Pennsylvania Quakers admonished 542 of their fellow Friends for “acting in the quality of a soldier,” despite their pacifism, because they did not want to waste away in jail.<sup>107</sup> Terrified of what Royal Governor Tryon called “unabated vigour and desperate excess,” loyalists fled their homes in hysteria, joined associations, or renounced their public positions.<sup>108</sup> Loyalists also built safehavens to hide from their rebel neighbors, called “Tory dens” by patriots, in which they developed a sense of loyalist community and further formed the loyalist identity.<sup>109</sup> When even these small shelters were not safe, loyalists abandoned their lives in the United States for safety within the boundaries of the British Empire.

When life in America became too dangerous, loyalists escaped to Canada, Florida, or Britain. Ten percent of white loyalists fled the country, most going to the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.<sup>110</sup> For instance, in 1783, the Snider family absconded to New Brunswick, Canada, abandoning their possessions and community, because the sons fought with

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<sup>107</sup> Rollin C. Steinmetz, “Loyalists, Pacifists, and Prisoners,” *Lancaster County During the American Revolution* (Sutter House Publishing, 1973).

<sup>108</sup> “William Tryon to George Germain, April 6, 1776,” in *William Tryon and the Course of Empire: A Life in British Imperial Service*, ed. Paul David Nelson (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 207.

<sup>109</sup> E. LeRoy Pond, *The Tories of Chippeny Hill* (New York: The Grafton Press Publishers, 1909).

<sup>110</sup> Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty’s Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (Randomhouse Publishing, 2012), 357.

the British in New Jersey. It was also common for families to group together rather than adventuring alone. In 1786, three prominent Mennonite families led a migration out of Plumstead, New York, to Lincoln County near Lake Ontario in Canada, and in the following years, twenty-two additional families followed them.<sup>111</sup> In New York, 35,000 loyalists lost their homes and dispersed their families throughout the British Empire. Some returned when settling elsewhere did not go as well as hoped, but such cases were few, and most loyalists that fled never returned. Instead, they joined communities that accepted their loyalist values, such as Nova Scotia, which still boasts its loyalist origins. Before setting off on their journeys, individuals and families compiled groups in order to flee together. According to historian Ruma Chopra, the war forced both sides to develop “shared language, political traditions, mores, and culture, a degree of common descent, and religion.”<sup>112</sup> Loyalism was a political and a cultural identity. When patriots targeted loyalists, they allowed loyalists to form communal bonds in the face of shared enemies. To oppose the patriot identity, they developed their own and valued qualities like truth, honor, and harmony. Not all loyalists and neutrals created a communal bond to leave America or surrender to their enemy, though. A less desired outcome to the patriots, brave loyalists retaliated.

Loyalists responded to patriot violence with retaliatory violence. Both individuals and bands of loyalist avengers aimed at protecting their identities and prevailing over patriots. In the Pine Barrens of New Jersey, a group called the Highlands gang attacked patriot homes in the name of the king, and in Pennsylvania, the Doan gang of Bucks County did the same. The Doan gang primarily consisted of the five infamous Doan brothers, Moses, Joseph, Levi, Mahlon, and

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<sup>111</sup> William Watts Hart Davis, *History of Bucks County, Pennsylvania from the Discovery of the Delaware to the Present Time* (New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1905), 411.

<sup>112</sup> Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 50.

Aaron; their cousin Abraham; and numerous other loyalist men.<sup>113</sup> The brothers were tall, athletic, and well-off Quakers who sympathized with the loyalist cause.<sup>114</sup> Before the war, they had friendly relationships with other families, such as the Shaws and Harts.<sup>115</sup> However, when the war broke out, these friendships fragmented because of the Doan's British loyalty. These outlaws, now derided by their neighbors, broke into patriot homes, stole goods and horses, robbed the Newtown Treasury, and committed murder. They even broke into the home of their father's closest friend, John Shaw, and severely beat him then stole his horses and valuables.<sup>116</sup> They sold much of what they stole, especially horses, to the British army as provisions. In the later years of the war, the brothers became more daring, impulsive, and indiscriminate with their targets. As far as Philadelphia, citizens considered them "a knot of the most incorrigible villains, who have for some time infected the county of Buck."<sup>117</sup> The Pennsylvania general assembly went so far as to make it "justifiable and lawful for any person to kill all or any of the [...] robbers, burglars, and felons, on their attempting to fly or escape from the hands of justice."<sup>118</sup> According to the patriots, the Doans were lawless, wanton, and threatening criminals. From the gang's perspective, though, they struggled against traitors and anarchists who wanted to take the liberties granted to them by the benevolent British king. The Doans and other loyalists retaliated for the same reason as patriots: to defend their liberties and, just as important, their identity.

In opposition to the patriots and in defense of their British liberties, the Doan gang attacked homes of patriot officials and other prominent patriots in the community. On the night

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<sup>113</sup> "Proclamation," *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, September 15, 1783, 196.

<sup>114</sup> Samuel Hart to John McAllister, "Letter Regarding Story he Heard from the Lips of his Father-in-Law," May 9, 1846; "Broke Gaol," *Independent Gazetteer*, October 5, 1782, 3.

<sup>115</sup> Davis, *History of Bucks County*, 635.

<sup>116</sup> Frederic A. Godchild, "Two Brothers of Doan Family of Outlaw Sons Hanged September 24, 1788," in *Daily Stories of Pennsylvania: Prepared for Publication in the Leading Daily Newspapers of the State* (Milton, PA: W.B. Conkey Company, 1924) 663.

<sup>117</sup> "Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania Evening Post and Public Advertiser*, September 15, 1783, 196.

<sup>118</sup> "Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, September 15, 1783, 196.

of July 21, 1783, the notorious Doan gang rampaged through Bucks County, plundering the homes of government officials and other wealthy patriot supporters and soldiers. Just a month earlier, they had similarly robbed several tax collectors. The Doans broke into the officials' houses and imperiled their families one by one, robbing them of money, horses, and valuable effects before fleeing to continue onto the next home. The Doans rode horseback through the county, with total disregard for the state and its new laws, threatening people and robbing homes "to the great disquiet, terror, and impoverishing of many of the good citizens of this Commonwealth."<sup>119</sup> Three weeks later, The Doans posted a notice "To who you please" by "The Royal Refugees, your Sworn Enemies" in Plumstead Township. The notice states:

This May inform Any that It may Concern that If Joseph Doan, prisoner now in Philadelphia, Is not released and acquitted immediately, that we will put one of your head men to death, and without fail, take another, and another till we have taken ten; and will Burn Houses and Barns. [...] For Every Refugee you put to Death We will put ten to Death and for Every person you put in jail on our account, If you Distress them we will Distress you, and Burn ten Houses and Barns and we will show you other Sorts of Diversions than you have Ever Been acquainted With yet. *For we are not your Subjects and Neither Will we Ever Be.*<sup>120</sup>

The *Pennsylvania Evening Post* reprinted the public threat that scorned the state on August 22. The defiant Doans, identifying themselves as royal refugees, refused to subject themselves to Pennsylvania state law. They had an "us against them" mentality and saw America divided between rebellious traitors and loyalists. To protect their threatened government and identity, they expressed their opposition through extralegal violent acts on patriots. The Doans threatened to kill patriots if they murdered one of their own, which expressed their unity as loyalists trying to protect what they believed was rightfully theirs.

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<sup>119</sup> Don Corbly, *Pennsylvania's Traitors and Criminals during the Revolutionary War* (Raleigh: Lulu Press, 2013), 419.

<sup>120</sup> "Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, August 22, 1783.

By the end of the revolution, the patriots had considerable success in “defending their liberties” by ostracizing the “other” and legitimizing their own identity through violence. The “other” included anyone that was not a patriot, therefore neutrals, loyalists, and Native Americans. Whether legal or extralegal, patriots used violence to achieve their goals in overcoming what they viewed as a tyrannous British subjecthood to establish American citizenship. Tactics included plundering, rioting, railing, smoking, and tarring and feathering, in addition to others. These tactics changed and expanded, but patriots always used them with the intention of public humiliation. Loyalists were a minority trying to succeed with as much passion as the patriots and retaliated with their own violent actions; nevertheless, they failed to overcome the patriots and were forced to leave. The patriots defended their liberties and legitimized their identity by excommunicating anyone who spoke against them.

### Chapter 3: Making Patriarchs

Patriots did not only use violence to defend themselves against tyranny; they also used violence to show their dominance and masculinity as patriarchs. They further used violence to show that they were masculine men that protected the town and women against the “other.” In the first chapter, contemporary newspapers showed that manhood and being a community savior were two important characteristics of the average patriot. Men outwardly asserted these qualities in order to create community. In aiming to settle land disputes and legitimate a patriarchal government, these revolutionaries subjugated women and turned them into pawns during the war. British and loyalists troops also violently used women as tools; however, this was more likely to happen in territories occupied by the British, such as Philadelphia. Additionally, isolated loyalists used violence to resist the patriot identity being impressed on them and to maintain their own identities. Americans, loyalists, and the British used violent tactics on each other’s families and communities, such as removal, harassment, and rape, to challenge a patriarch’s authority, establish their own as dominant, and express their masculinity. Dominance entitled both political and social leadership to the most masculine patriarchs that could protect their families.

War propaganda supported these paternal ideas and encouraged men to join the patriot cause by playing on their patriarchal sympathies. Chairman Thomas McKean of the Philadelphia Committee appealed to citizens:

Your houses, your fields, the legacies of your ancestors or the dear-bought fruits of your own industry and your liberty- now urge you to the field. These cannot plead with You in vain, or, we might point out to you further, your wives, your children, your aged fathers and mothers, who now look up to you for aid and hope for

salvation in this day of calamity only from the instrumentality of your swords.<sup>121</sup>

McKean recognized the need to motivate his citizens by appealing to their patriarchal values. In December of that year, the Philadelphia Council of Safety warned citizens to defend their land and “protect the innocence of your wives and children” by joining the Continental Army.<sup>122</sup> The *Pennsylvania Gazette* reprinted a plea from the *Boston Journal* to join the army in which they asked men to think about “their property plundered [... and] their virgins *ravished*.”<sup>123</sup> Propaganda played on the sympathies of citizens and convinced many to join the patriot cause in order to protect their property, their families, and through that, their manhood.

When state and patriot forces tried to establish themselves as the sole bodies of authority in communities, they had to ensure the safety of the citizens. This was often difficult, as they contended with other impassioned and resentful patriots that wantonly committed destruction. Joseph Reed, president of Pennsylvania’s Supreme Executive Council, warned his citizens “that some licentious and unworthy characters, taking advantage of the unhappy tumult, artfully kindled by themselves, have led many innocent and otherwise well-disposed persons, into outrages and insults.”<sup>124</sup> He had recently received reports of both citizens and officers causing problems with loyalists. Reed cautioned “the faithful inhabitants,” but especially “all officers, both Civil and Military, [...] whose rank and character in other respects gave weight to their conduct.”<sup>125</sup> Across the middle states, some patriots were out of hand with their conduct, and it was up to the emerging states to keep them in line.

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<sup>121</sup> Thomas McKean to the Associators of Pennsylvania, June 25, 1776, Documents of the American Revolutionary Period, v6:966, American Archives.

<sup>122</sup> *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, December 28, 1776.

<sup>123</sup> “From Boston, July 13,” *Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 2, 1780.

<sup>124</sup> Samuel Hazard, ed., *Colonial Records*, 121.

<sup>125</sup> Samuel Hazard, ed., *Colonial Records*, 121.

Once patriots established their states, they used state authority to establish politically homogenous patriot communities by banishing loyalist families. By asserting their dominance in this way, patriots also legitimized their status as patriarchs while diminishing the patriarchal claims of loyalist fathers, husbands, and brothers. In 1778, for example, Americans forced Grace Galloway out of her home, undeterred her numerous protests, because her husband was a loyalist. Despite coming into the marriage with property, she received a letter from Pennsylvania's governor, George Bryan, that began, "When a lady marries, the use and profits of the real estate belonging to her rests in her husband for and during their joint lives [...] It may be seized by creditors [...] or] lost by attain, and then it devolves to the publick as forfeiture."<sup>126</sup> He then apologized for taking her home, but went on optimistically by quoting Pennsylvania's vow to support the family with an allowance from the Supreme Court: "that such allowance be made out of the paternal estate, lost by you, [Grace,] for the uncertain term of Mr. Galloway's natural life."<sup>127</sup> Although Grace had no personal political affiliation, she lost her own property because of patriarchal property ownership laws. To show their authority over her, the patriots made Grace dependent on them to care for her children.

Unfortunately for loyalist families, the Americans did not provide for them for long; soon state authorities forced families to leave without giving them support. Banishing dependent mothers, children, and elderly parents still allowed the state to impose their dominance and undermine the politically active man's patriarchal status. In February 1780, Pennsylvania's Executive Council President, Joseph Reed, ordered Elizabeth Fegan to leave the state after arresting her loyalist husband. Though she committed no crime, they exiled her; and, had she

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<sup>126</sup> "George Bryan to Mrs. Grace Galloway, August 3, 1778," in *Diary of Grace Growden Galloway*, 45.

<sup>127</sup> *Diary of Grace Growden Galloway*, 45.

disregarded their orders, authorities would have confined her in jail because of her husband's loyalty.<sup>128</sup> Later that same year, state representatives passed an official resolution stating:

The residence of the wives & children of those persons who have Joined the enemy has at all times proved inconvenient to the public interests [...] and has now become too dangerous to be longer permitted. Resolved, That such persons depart this State within Ten days and any remaining after that time will not be entitled to any protection, but liable to be proceeded against as enemies of the State.<sup>129</sup>

Now, a loyalist put his family at risk of legal violence when he refused to accept the new government. This order was able to weaken the control of loyalist patriarchs while at same time enhancing that of American patriots.

In sanctioning popular violence, such declarations only legitimized the extralegal actions of individuals and mobs practiced since at least 1774. Throughout the war, mobs forced loyalist family members to leave their communities. In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, loyalist shipmaster John Wade openly praised the crown and his family faced the consequences. In 1775, a mob drove him out of the city for refusing to take up arms in their cause. He fled to England, taking a job under the king, and leaving behind his wife, daughter, and property. While her husband was gone, Mrs. Wade stated she "had suffered the treatment from the Rebels; was taken up three times; and dragged down to the Dock to be ducked. Her House had been broken open & furniture destroyed."<sup>130</sup> Usually a formal and legal punishment, ducking involved plunging an individual, customarily a woman, underwater for at least a half minute until they yielded and apologized for their behavior. Courts punished women with ducking for slander, gossip, spreading lies, and abusive language because they believed it shamed them and sent a lesson to spectators to

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<sup>128</sup> Samuel Hazard, ed., *Colonial Records*, February 4, 1780, 243.

<sup>129</sup> Samuel Hazard, ed., *Colonial Records*, 377.

<sup>130</sup> John Wade, Memorandum, *Papers of the American Loyalist Claims Commission, 1780-1835*, AO13 Film 264, Great Britain Audit Office.

conform to their standards.<sup>131</sup> The patriot offenders in this case used ducking and other tactics to assert their dominance over the Wade family while their absent patriarch could not protect them.

Then one night in August 1781, six years after the mob ran Wade out of town, rumors circulated about his service to the King. As retribution, another mob drove his family out of Philadelphia the next morning before his wife could even get dressed. The scantily clad mother and daughter fled to New York, where Mrs. Wade "experienced the greatest distress for the common necessary of life."<sup>132</sup> Eventually, after living in the streets and relying on the generosity of strangers, the destitute family found salvation with a wealthy British admiral who gave them passage on a ship out of America.<sup>133</sup> The experiences of the Wades exemplify how patriots extralegally banished families because of their patriarch's identity and political association. This action established their power in that Philadelphia community, showing dominance not only over Mr. Wade but also over his family. Since John did not accept the new government, he and his family no longer had their community's protection, nor did they have permission to live within the boundaries of the solidifying United States.

Patriots commonly asserted their authority by intimidating the patriarch's family, especially his wife, after assuring his absence. In the beginning of the revolution, a mob attacked the Hatton home in Gloucester County, New Jersey. John Hatton, his son, and his slave tried to fight off their attackers for close to an hour, but were no match for the gang and sustained many injuries. The patriots plundered his home, and tarred and feathered Hatton's two servants "for working for [him], before finally throwing Hatton in jail."<sup>134</sup> With an absent patriarch, the patriots continued to harass the helpless family. For the next seven months, they kept Mrs.

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<sup>131</sup> Lawrence Friedman, *Crime and Punishment in American History* (New York: BasicBooks, 1993), 38.

<sup>132</sup> John Wade, Memorandum, *Papers of the American Loyalist Claims Commission*.

<sup>133</sup> John Wade, Memorandum, *Papers of the American Loyalist Claims Commission*.

<sup>134</sup> *American Migrations*, 402.

Hatton prisoner in her home, “terrifying her almost to death” and forcing her to sleep on the floor, before they finally “Order’d Her out of the Province, [and stripped] her of the remainder of her clothes.”<sup>135</sup> Jane Van Norden had similar experiences as Mrs. Hatton after patriots captured her husband, Gabriel Van Norden. According to Van Norden, during his incarceration, Jane and their nine children were “often insulted and threatened with death [by individuals in the community], and many of their things destroyed.”<sup>136</sup> The patriots devalued the patriarchs’ wives and children while he could not protect them to express their dominance.

In addition to mobs and individuals disturbing families in the absence of their patriarchs, patriot soldiers also took advantage of the vulnerability, and justified exploitation with their military authority. On November 25, 1777, Elizabeth Drinker, her four children, and her sister had been watching the "fire and Smoke" of the burned houses in Woodberry across the river. At roughly 9:00, one of the children went out into the yard after she witnessed Ann, a mother-like figure to Elizabeth, with a young officer. The officer, already behaving belligerently, followed the girls into the kitchen when they retreated inside. After hearing a commotion from outside, Drinker's friend Chalkley James came into the room. The officer threatened James with a sword, who "twisted it out of his Hands and Collor'd him."<sup>137</sup> Mary grabbed the sword and the officer stubbornly refused to leave without his weapon. Hoping to get the officer out of their hair, they brought him to the door and returned his sword. Instead of leaving, he swore profusely at the family, shaking the sword angrily. The women and children locked themselves in the parlor, and the "poor dear Children was never so frightened, to have an enraged, drunken Man, as I believe

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<sup>135</sup> Coldham, *American Migrations*, 402.

<sup>136</sup> Coldham, *American Migrations*, 442.

<sup>137</sup> Elizabeth Drinker, *The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker*, Vol. 1 edited by Elaine Forman Crane (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 199), xi and 258.

he was, with a Sword in his Hand swearing about the House."<sup>138</sup> Elizabeth had still "not yet recovered the fright" by one in the morning.<sup>139</sup> The soldier, although intoxicated, tried to show his masculinity and therefore dominance over these women. When Chalkley entered and intimidated him, the soldier became ornery because another man threatened his control of the situation and the women, and therefore his masculinity. Since many loyalist men left their dependent wives and children behind, soldiers used their authority to abuse them.

Some soldiers had enough confidence to assert their dominance over a loyalist patriarch's family in his presence. In late 1777, James Allen's wife and daughters attempted to visit a neighbor, Mrs. Bond, in Allen's chariot. James watched them leave, but when the chariot "entered the street, a company of the Militia met them in front." The driver tried to avert the militia, but they stopped him and beat him with muskets. Then, they attacked the chariot with the woman and children still inside, and tried to push it over. In Allen's diary, he recalled his "wife begging to be let out & the children screaming."<sup>140</sup> The militia left briefly, but then the head officers arrived and Major Boehm initiated a skirmish with Allen by drawing his sword on him. These militiamen attacked the Allen family in front of their patriarch, challenging his power and masculinity. By not being able to protect his dependents, Allen's status as a patriarch diminished.

American soldiers were not the only culprits of this kind of harassment; British soldiers, of course, also tried to assert their dominance by entering homes and intimidating families. When British soldiers occupied Princeton, a few forced their way into the home of patriot farmer William Clark and continually distressed his pregnant wife. One "Monstrous Destroyer of human race before they are born Went on so Horribly with his Threats, oaths, and curses That he so

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<sup>138</sup> Drinker, *Diary*, 258.

<sup>139</sup> Drinker, *Diary*, 259.

<sup>140</sup> James Allen, "Diary of James Allen, Esq., of Philadelphia, Counsellor at Law, 1770-1778" *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 9:2 (July 1885), 196.

Afrightened the poor Woman that she fell into a violent disorder and soon miscarried.”<sup>141</sup> They proceeded to steal her robe and when she protested, “one of them swore that if the Damned Rebel Bitch said a word more, he Would run his bayonet through her heart.”<sup>142</sup> They plundered her home, ruined her bed with bayonets, and repeatedly tormented her during their stay.<sup>143</sup> These solders violently took advantage of their power and forced the poor farmer’s wife to comply with their demands, thereby making her dependent on them, rather than on her husband. This was not an isolated account, but happened in Princeton and other regions in which battles raged and British soldiers were left to their own devices. By terrifying Mrs. Clark and taking over her home, the British soldiers discredited William Clark’s status as a patriarch and dismissed his masculinity because he could not protect his vulnerable wife.

In another instance in Chatham, New Jersey, British and loyalist troops murdered the wife of a very well-known patriot in the community, completely subverting his patriarchal prestige. While Reverend James Caldwell led a small force of patriots against British invaders on June 7, 1780, his wife, Hannah, tucked the family away into safety. Her toddler sons and her housemaids, Abigail Lenington and Katy Benwood, accompanied her in a small bedroom toward the back of the home. Abigail spotted a redcoat sneaking toward the home and notified Hannah. As he approached the room’s single window, Hannah stood up to protect her family. The soldier aimed and “fired two balls into that amiable lady, so well directed that they ended her life in a moment.”<sup>144</sup> Afterward, family and neighbors suspected that the soldier murdered her deliberately because of a hatred of her husband. British troops swarmed the home, took the

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<sup>141</sup> Varnum Lansing Collins, ed. *A Brief Narrative of the Ravages of the British and Hessians at Princeton in 1776-1777* (Princeton, NJ: The University Library, 1906), 16.

<sup>142</sup> Collins, *A Brief Narrative*, 17.

<sup>143</sup> Collins, *A Brief Narrative*, 17.

<sup>144</sup> *New-Jersey Journal*, June 14, 1780.

valuables and the reverend's sermons, and set the rest on fire. Abigail and Katy fled with the children in tow and were even able to drag out the body of their mistress. Hannah's body lay in the street for hours after her death.<sup>145</sup> The British troops went beyond plunder and threats, murdering a patriarch's defenseless wife. Taking it even farther, they ousted his dependent children and young housemaids. Clearly, the British troops also asserted their masculinity and dominance by harming the families of American patriarchs. However, with popular sovereignty, patriots had the advantage in their control over certain resources like jails and stockades.

Patriots could further assert their dominance by capturing their enemies' family members and marching them to jails or prison camps. When loyalist John Johnson refused to turn himself in for his acts against the state, American General Schuyler detained his wife and threatened her with messages "too indelicate and cruel."<sup>146</sup> In a letter to General Washington, Lady Johnson said, "I am convinced [Schuyler] acts more out of ill nature to Sir John than from any reason that I have given him."<sup>147</sup> Lady Johnson understood that the Americans preyed on her husband's patriarchal ideals, using her to tease John into rescuing her. Often, patriots captured multiple people; such as in 1776, after William Taylor, a prominent lawyer of Freehold, New Jersey, "prevailed upon a majority of the citizens to oppose" a petition in favor of independence.<sup>148</sup> The patriots did not accept this behavior. Citizens captured almost one hundred people close to Taylor and marched them three hundred miles south to Fredricktown, Maryland. The patriots then imprisoned them all for the remainder of the war. The prisoners included Taylor's brother, wife, Elizabeth, and their five children. A great number of friends and neighbors made up the

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<sup>145</sup> Ambrose E. Vanderpoel, *History of Chatham, New Jersey*, (New York: Charles Francis Press, 1921), 101-124.

<sup>146</sup> Letter from M. Johnson to Washington, June 16, 1776, in *History of New York*, 589.

<sup>147</sup> *History of New York*, 589.

<sup>148</sup> Coldham, *American Migrations*, 436.

rest of the captives.<sup>149</sup> In another instance, because Israel Ferguson enlisted in the British army, Americans immediately imprisoned his five sisters, his youngest brother, and his mother, Charlotte, in an Albany jail.<sup>150</sup> Finally, Pennsylvania loyalist William Pearce “became a guide to the [British] Army for which the rebels plundered his home, even taking the shoes from his children before sending them to Philadelphia” to be incarcerated.<sup>151</sup> In this situation, angry patriots clearly considered the children in their plundering.. By maltreating his children, the patriot insurgents objectified Pearce’s children as another tactic to show Pearce his mistake and prove their dominance. The families of Pearce, Ferguson, and Taylor were not the only sufferers marched to jail; in many instances, Americans transported loyalist families to prisons across the Mid-Atlantic States to deliberately challenge and defy their patriarchs.

The most violent way patriot men asserted their dominance and forced compliance over enemy patriarchs was by raping loyalists’ wives and daughters. Rape destroyed the ideal colonial female virtues of chastity and honor, stripping them of dignity and respect, while at the same time demonstrating and reinforcing the assailant’s masculinity. Soldiers, then, used rape to assert their dominance as patriarchs, thereby challenging the male family members of the victims. Their fathers, brothers, and husbands felt helpless because they could do nothing to stop the assailants and protect their women. Historian Paul B. Moyer argues, “Rape was just as much an attack on a man’s independence as robbing him of his property.”<sup>152</sup> Soldiers used rape as a violent symbol of social and political power over patriarchs who could not defend their dependent women.

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<sup>149</sup> New Jersey Historical Society, *Collections of the New Jersey Historical Society*, (Newark, NJ), 216.

<sup>150</sup> Stephen Davidson, “Brothers who Bore Arms Together,” Loyalist Trails Newsletter, <http://www.uelac.org/Loyalist-Trails/2008/Loyalist-Trails-2008.php?issue=200827#Brothers> (accessed October 21, 2015).

<sup>151</sup> Coldham, *American Migrations*, 423.

<sup>152</sup> Paul B. Moyer, *Wild Yankees: The Struggle for Independence Along Pennsylvania's Revolutionary Frontier* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2007), 63.

Not only soldiers committed rape; sometimes enraged individuals or gangs took advantage of defenseless women to reinforce their masculine images. For example, while John Stuart rotted in jail for his loyalty, his family cowered at home, abandoned and unprotected by their patriarch. Local patriots were aware of John's incarceration; dissidents entered his home and raped his wife on multiple occasions. The final time they came for her, she "dropped dead at her door," so the party of patriots "seized [John's] effects" in a raid.<sup>153</sup> They then sold the fearful Stuart children into servitude. Two of the youngest died of infections while held captive, and John was only able to reunite with one child after he heard of their internment.<sup>154</sup> These men raped John's wife and sold his children to establish their dominance and devalue the "property" of John, now an ex-patriarch. However, while raping enemy wives and daughters asserted masculinity, it did not bolster the sought-after patriot image of being fathers and protectors; therefore, they used it less frequently than loyalists.

More often, British and loyalists used the political tactic of rape to affirm their power and masculinity. Many women in Philadelphia, New York, and New Jersey said that British and loyalist soldiers raped them during occupation. Nevertheless, this does not mean that patriots rarely used rape as a domination tactic. It is more likely that few women admitted that they were victims, for fear of social backlash. Because they were more inclined to see results from the state governments, women raped by British soldiers were more likely to speak up. The British army and their loyalist allies committed rape in order to reestablish their dominance in their territory. In August 1777, British forces captured and occupied Philadelphia, severely escalating violence until the summer of 1778. Historian Mary Beth Norton asserts the extended stationing of British troops in the city permitted unrestricted violence, including the systematic rape of American

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<sup>153</sup> Coldham, *American Migrations*, 432.

<sup>154</sup> Coldham, *American Migrations*, 433.

women.<sup>155</sup> British officials forced Philadelphian families to quarter these soldiers, which resulted in the sexual exploitation of many wives and daughters. Additionally, these troops had recently lost consecutive battles against Washington, and upon arrival in Philadelphia, raped the wives of enemy soldiers to enact revenge, vent frustrations, and reestablish authority. Soldiers raped Philadelphian women to flaunt the military defeat of their enemies by sexually impressing their victory over their subordinates. The political tactic of rape made women ashamed, humiliated, and helpless in the face of Britain's army. Soon after the British exiled her prominent husband, Sarah Logan Fisher recorded hearing the accounts of young girls raped by English officers in her diary.<sup>156</sup> Friends informed Elizabeth Drinker of other Quaker women that the British had "ill-used."<sup>157</sup> These accounts of rape and numerous others in Philadelphia attest to the limitless violence that pervaded Philadelphia as a way for the British to reestablish sovereignty. However, the British did not only spend extended time in Philadelphia.

In New Jersey, too, British and loyalist troops raped women to take back control and force control. British soldiers in Hunterdon County committed similar crimes to those in Philadelphia. Admonishing British General Howe for his handling of troops, loyalist Joseph Galloway wrote,

It appears that no less than twenty-three [rapes] were committed in one neighborhood in New Jersey; some of them on married women, in presence of their helpless husbands, and others on daughters, while the unhappy parents, with unavailing tears and cries, could only deplore the savage brutality.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Norton, *Liberty's Daughters*.

<sup>156</sup> Sarah Logan Fisher, "A Diary of Trifling Occurrences": Philadelphia, 1776-1778," in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 82 no. 4 (October 1958): 411-465.

<sup>157</sup> Elizabeth Drinker, *The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker*, Vol. 1, edited by Elaine Forman Crane (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1991), 268.

<sup>158</sup> Joseph Galloway, *A Reply to the Observations of Lieut. Gen. Sir William Howe, on a Pamphlet, Entitled Letters to a Nobleman* (London: G. Wilkie, 1780), 72.

Howe did not order his soldiers to rape the wives and daughters of their patriot enemies, but neither did he prevent or put an end to the deplorable acts. The testimonies of those girls still survive. An eighteen year old swore that in December 1776, two British sergeants held her at bayonet-point, damned her parents as rebels, “and dragged her into a back room, against all her cries and intreaties, where they threw her upon the floor and finally both of them ravished her.”<sup>159</sup> Two British soldiers raped a fifteen-year-old and her sister in front of their patriot father, then took them to their camp less than a mile away, where other soldiers treated them “in the same cruel manner.”<sup>160</sup> Another testimony states that three soldiers raped a thirteen-year-old living with her grandparents; “for three days, divers and soldiers would come to the house to use her.” Then, after threatening to burn the home, they kidnapped her and passed her around the camp.<sup>161</sup> By sexually exploiting the wives and daughters of American men, the British soldiers illustrated their conquest. They acted ruthlessly to the rebellious men’s families in order to restore their dominion over the colonies.

Witnesses documented rapes committed by British soldiers in Princeton that were clearly meant to show a message of domination, rather than sexual gratification. While in Princeton, a clergyman witnessed that “three women were most horribly ravished by them, one of them an old woman near seventy years of age, [...] another was a woman considerably advanced in her pregnancy, and the third was a young girl.”<sup>162</sup> The soldiers raped elderly, pregnant, and very young women because it relayed a deeper message that even a patriarch’s young and elderly are helpless when facing the enemy. An American soldier told his officer that troops ravished his

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<sup>159</sup> “Rapes in NJ by Soldiers” March 22, 1777.

<sup>160</sup> “Rapes in NJ by Soldiers,” March 22 1777.

<sup>161</sup> “Rapes in NJ by Soldiers,” March 22, 1777.

<sup>162</sup> “Extract of a letter from Newark, March 12, 1777,” in *Documents Relating to the Revolutionary History of the State of New Jersey* edited by William S. Stryker (Trenton: The John Murphy Publishing Co., 1901.

wife and ten-year-old daughter in Princeton, and the same officer relayed a story of a 13-year-old victim as well. Long Island residents accused two soldiers, William Green and Thomas Salem, of raping Hannah Dray's seventy-year-old mother-in-law.<sup>163</sup> Finally, British soldiers Dunn and Lusty called Elizabeth Johnstone "a Yankee whore or a Yankee bitch," to justify their fellow British soldiers raping her in front of her four-year-old.<sup>164</sup>

Americans used instances like those mentioned above to reinforce the military service as a patriarchal duty. In a letter to the governor of Rhode Island, General Nathanael Greene stated that Howe's "ravages in the Jerseys exceed all description [...] little Girls not ten years old ravished, Mothers and Daughters ravished in presence of the Husbands and Sons who were obliged to be spectators to their brutal conduct."<sup>165</sup> The general then voiced his hope that these atrocities would prompt more men to join the Continental Army to protect their wives and daughters.<sup>166</sup> British soldiers committed these rapes to show that they dominated the patriarchs, and Greene believed that patriots were too masculine and protective to allow the British to threaten or debase their power. Fortunately for patriot women, British and loyalist troops could not commit such atrocious crimes unless they occupied a territory and had more influence there than patriot men.

Outnumbered loyalists could not commit such an outrage as rape without facing consequences, but they still tried to debase the patriots' power and cement their own authority, often by setting homes and neighborhoods on fire. When the patriot shipbuilding community of the Southwark District in Philadelphia experienced a rash of attempted and successful acts of

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<sup>163</sup> Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 121.

<sup>164</sup> Sharon Block, *Rape and Sexual Power in Early America*, (University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 296.

<sup>165</sup> "General Greene to Governour Cooke, December 21, 1776" in *Life of Nathanael Greene: Major General in the Army of the Revolution* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1867), 249.

<sup>166</sup> "General Greene to Governour Cooke," in *Life of Nathanael Greene* 249-250.

arson, citizens assumed the perpetrators were loyalist. In a petition to Philadelphia officials, four Southwark neighbors complained of the incendiarism. On a January afternoon in 1777, James Potter witnessed a man and a woman pulling boards from his stable. While repairing a nearby home earlier that afternoon, Abram Jones witnessed men attempt the same crime on a neighbor's stable. Mrs. Black testified to a similar incident that night. She discovered her husband's stable on fire, but the perpetrator had set it so recently that she extinguished it quickly enough to avoid disaster. Mrs. Black's friend and neighbor, Ann Morgan, encountered quite a fright when two of the loyalist Gally brothers loudly banged on her front door late the next night. Upon hearing the commotion, she woke her husband and the two left their bedroom to inspect the clamor. Ann reached the door before her husband and immediately opened it to demand that the men explain themselves. The Gally brothers threatened Ann for her husband's political affiliation, revealing their desire to set her house on fire for her husband's treason. They believed that subsequently the whole town deserved to collapse in flames. They threatened her with two bags of gunpowder, then told the couple that they generously gave a warning, sparing their lives temporarily, but planned to return the next day between twelve and one in the afternoon and implement their plans. Fortunately, Ann and her neighbors pled with local officials and avoided the destruction of Southwark.<sup>167</sup> The Gally brothers and any other loyalist culprits committed acts of incendiarism to destroy the homes of American patriarchs, simultaneously challenging their power and ability to protect their families.

Throughout the Middle states, patriots, loyalists, and British troops used legal and extralegal violence on each other's families to establish dominance and challenge the enemy patriarch's authority. Soldiers, mobs, and individuals also used these tactics to express their

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<sup>167</sup> "Petition of Ann Morgan, et al.," *Records of Pennsylvania's Revolutionary Governments 1775-1790*, Reel 1041, January 20, 1777.

masculinity and diminish the masculinity of their adversaries. Women and children became pawns in the civil war because each side was aware that they were wholly dependent on their husbands and fathers. They took advantage of their dependency to demonstrate political and social sovereignty over inferiors who lacked the masculinity and power protect their own families. The revolution, though hailed as the birth of republicanism and democracy, was also a movement to establish sovereign authority. By establishing this sovereign authority, Americans reinforced the patriarchal authority of both state and household governments.

### Conclusion

By those fields that were ravaged, those towns that were fired,  
 By those wrongs which your females endured;  
 By those blood-sprinkled plains where your warriors expired,  
 O, preserve what your prowess procured;  
 -“Song for America”

The violent civil war between patriots and loyalists officially ended on September 3, 1783, when the Treaty of Paris officially gave America independence from the British Empire. Although the loyalists and British tried to assert their authority, the unlikely patriots had more success in coercing others to accept their regime with the use of rhetoric and varying methods of violence. Those who remained faithful to Britain during the war had to decide whether to leave or to become citizens of the United States. Most stayed, making a bid for life in the new nation, but approximately 80,000 loyalist refugees left the states after their loss, preferring to remain subjects under the king.<sup>168</sup>

In England, Nova Scotia, Canada, and other British colonies, the refugees started their lives anew. Sometimes they met former neighbors, friends, and family that had fled during the war. These pre-established communities made settlement easier for newer refugees because they provided support. Other times, loyalists were on their own. Luckily, the British usually provided refugees with food, temporary shelter, seeds, and land in undeveloped parts of the empire. Not all refugees needed help from British officials, though. Farmers drove their livestock ahead and a majority of others took provisions with them. Whether in England or the wild Canadian outskirts, loyal British subjects rebuilt their homes and made new connections with their neighbors. Still, loyalists that initially fled to other parts of the empire often found themselves dissatisfied with their new communities or with the British government for failing to adequately support them

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<sup>168</sup> Flick, *Loyalism in New York*, 170-175.

after the war.<sup>169</sup> Indifferent British commissioners rejected the claims of many soldiers, widows, orphans, and displaced families who begged them for relief. Despite supplying documentation including affidavits, property deeds, wills, and correspondences, commissioners dismissed several refugees. They refused them for taking the patriot oath, losing papers, and illiteracy, among other excuses. A number of them, failing to receive proper compensation from the empire, tried their fair in the states instead.<sup>170</sup>

Undeterred by the risks, restless loyalists and neutrals returned to American soil. Many were the aforementioned loyalists disenchanted with the empire's false promises, but a portion of loyalists returned for other reasons. Sometimes, their relatives and kind neighbors who remained in the states had preserved or recovered their property, inducing them to retrace their steps. Other loyalists simply disliked the climate, or missed their homeland and endeavored to return. Additionally, their new neighbors in England and Nova Scotia could be unwelcoming and cold, not interested in the disturbances caused by an influx of refugees.<sup>171</sup> When these loyalists realized they would face persecution wherever they lived, they preferred the familiar lands of America.

In the United States, intolerant patriots continued to harass loyalists, at first refusing to accept them into their communities. With time, the patriots welcomed most neutral and loyalist civilians who ceded to their authority. Those who fought for Britain, however, were snubbed and attacked. Chiefly in New York, officials threw former soldiers in county jails, whipping and prosecuting them for their crimes. Mobs got ahold of some and tormented them until they left and promised never to return. In the case of a Mr. Becraft of Schoharie, New York, ten patriots

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<sup>169</sup> Flick, *Loyalism in New York*, 166-167; 190-210.

<sup>170</sup> Coldham, *American Migrations*, x-xi.

<sup>171</sup> Flick, *Loyalism in New York*, 182-183.

whipped him profusely for fighting for the British.<sup>172</sup> Unfortunately, even those whom the patriots did not assault lost property, friends, and wealth. The patriots wanted to make it clear that they required obedience from all who remained within the boundaries of the United States of America.

Unlike obedient loyalists, patriot colonists were unhappy with British rule and thought of King George III with reproach. They judged him a tyrannous liar with no care for his subjects, and called his supporters senseless, traitorous, and selfish. The resentful colonists, calling themselves patriots, initially propagated their dissatisfaction through newspapers. They distributed consistent rhetoric establishing themselves as manly defenders of liberty with the safety of their community always in mind. Both legal and extralegal bodies actualized patriot rhetoric. Committees of Safety, initially extralegal governing bodies, tried to establish a new patriot authority. However, loyalists and neutrals who did not acknowledge the emerging authority remained in their communities. Therefore, committees in each state had to assert their power with violence in order for the majority of inhabitants to recognize them as the sole governing power. They then justified this violence by claiming loyalists were “other” and did not fit the desired patriot identity. Gradually these committees established sovereignty, but they still faced retaliatory loyalists. Additionally, they faced British troops that occupied territories like New York City and Philadelphia and abused the patriot men, women, and children residing in those regions. Committees were not the only perpetrators of patriot violence; ordinary politically-active men also collectively humiliated and assaulted loyalists. By violently shaming neighbors that did not fit in, average individuals developed a sense of community and

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<sup>172</sup> Lorenzo Sabine, *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution: With an Historical Essay* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1864), 223.

legitimized their patriot identity. These individuals additionally validated their status as masculine patriarchs by defending their families and communities.

The American revolutionaries succeeded in suppressing loyalists and constructing a patriot identity that had influence nationally and in the Atlantic. By choosing to identify as a patriot, one did not only adopt patriot characteristics, but also patriot values, including the belief in a democratic government. As illustrated, patriots coerced many loyalists, neutrals, and undecided Americans to join their side and adopt their identity. They accomplished intimidation primarily through violence, but also through rhetoric. Patriots also had an influence on the loyalists who maintained their allegiance to Britain. Loyalist refugees arrived in the mother country and Britain's colonies expecting representation in the imperial government, but their hopes were dashed. After the war, the king determined his mistake was giving his subjects in the Americas too much freedom. To the refugees' dismay, he resolved the issue by reinforcing hierarchy and consolidating government. The loyalists felt as if their supposedly benevolent king treated them like children. King George III's paternalistic solution was the final straw for refugees who were already dissatisfied with the king; they expected more compensation for their loyalty.<sup>173</sup> In demanding a more autonomous government that had their considerations in mind, loyalists endorsed patriot ideals.

In addition to loyalists, patriots influenced French, Haitian, Batavian, and eventually Latin American revolutionaries. For example, the French revolutionaries desired liberty, equality, and fraternity, and modeled much of their revolution, from 1789-1799, after the patriots. Even Thomas Jefferson acknowledged their influence: "the American war seems first to have awakened the thinking part of [France] in general from the sleep of despotism on which

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<sup>173</sup> Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*.

they were sunk.”<sup>174</sup> Like the patriots, French revolutionaries used violence to achieve their goals, and have become infamous for their Reign of Terror. Although historians in the past have disassociated the American Revolution from other revolutions, the patriots’ violent methods of persuasion did in fact successfully influence other revolutionary insurgents.

Historians cannot overlook the significance of the violent ways in which patriots spread their identity because they add to the greater understanding of the American Revolution and the American identity. Rather than being a revolution based on consensus like historians such as Edmund Morgan proclaim, the revolution was a brutal civil war. Additionally, some historians have only studied the political and militaristic components of the war and have neglected the important social and cultural aspects. In reality, extralegal violence had a huge impact on Americans. This research shares the perspectives of Americans that researchers have previously considered inconsequential or unimportant. Surely ordinary citizens, women, and children were the majority, and considering their experiences, motivations, and opinions can improve the historical imagination of the American Revolution. Finally, the patriot identity has influenced American culture throughout history, bolstering patriarchal values and leading Americans to embrace similar qualities, such as bravery, manliness, and religiousness. Overall, this analysis of identity, violence, and community in the revolutionary Mid-Atlantic States adds to scholars’ understood scope of impact that the war had on all Americans, both then and now.

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<sup>174</sup> Julian P. Boyd, ed., “Letter from Jefferson to Dr. Richard Price, January 8, 1789,” in *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), 420.

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