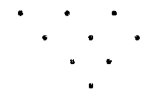
INTRODUCTION

PRINCES AND POPES IN THE AMERICAN PROVINCES



On November 5, 1764, diarist John Rowe recorded that "a sorrowful accident" had happened in Boston's North End. A giant "carriage" constructed by the neighborhood's residents, carrying effigies of the pope and other figures, had "run over a Boy's head" during a raucous procession, "and he died instantly." In response to the tragedy, the authorities dismantled the effigies and sought to destroy a similar cart in the South End—the "North and South end Popes," as they were known. However, when the magistrates "went to the So. End [they] could not Conquer upon which the South End people brought out their pope and went in Triumph to the Northward" to seek victory in the traditional battle between the neighborhoods that occurred on Boston Common every November 5. "At the Mill Bridge," Rowe continued, "a Battle begun," the North End people "having repaired their pope." Neighborhood pride was on the line—the North End had always prevailed in these battles—but on this day, a repaired pope would not do, and "the South End people got the Battle. . . . Brought away the North End pope and burnt Both of them at the Gallows," with "several thousand people following them" to see the spectacle on Boston Neck. So ended the annual celebration of the foiling of Guy Fawkes's 1605 plot against James I and the English nation.[1]

Certain images predominate in popular imagination when we think of colonial America. Somber Puritans, heads bowed in prayer when not hunting witches at Salem; broad-hatted Quakers, preaching peace in the City of Brotherly Love; yeoman farmers chopping wood and tending crops; dignified Indian chiefs negotiating with the ever-increasing number of white settlers; Virginia tobacco planters living in Georgian mansions on the Northern Neck, served by African slaves; and deerskin-clad frontiersmen opening new lands and fighting against the various Indian nations—all these come to mind. Scholars have refined these images and added new ones to their more specific conversations: visions of midwives and

1. John Rowe diary, Nov. 5, 1764, MS, MHS.

PLATE 1. *"Boston Affairs" (detail). By Pierre Eugène Du Simitière. This drawing of a Pope's Day cart in a New England town, done in the 1760s, shows the traditional effigies of the devil and those who would do his bidding being dragged by young people. The Library Company of Philadelphia*

wenches, merchant entrepreneurs, aggressive artisans, confidence men, enlightened intellectuals, and evangelical preachers seeking to save souls from eternal hellfire. But mobile papist archetypes crushing innocent children, followed by nighttime battles on Boston Common? This all seems to be foreign, un-American, at best the manifestation of lower-class rowdiness in a busy colonial port, at worst a display of religious bigotry.

Yet it was none of these things. Boston's North and South End gangs were remembering Pope's Day, one of a number of annual royal rites at the core of political life in an imperial America that existed before 1776. In that lost world, public holidays did not celebrate exceptionalism and democracy but rather expressed intense pride in Britain's kings and rejoiced in the empire's victories in the continuous struggle against Catholicism. The political culture's central focus was a physically distant but emotionally available Protestant British monarch who had the provincial population's impassioned loyalty.

This all-encompassing royal America has been gradually wiped from our national memory. Royalism, it has seemed to the general public and most American scholars, had never really taken deep root in colonial society. The provinces' social diversity and truncated (by European standards) social structures sup-

posedly inhibited faith in king and country and paved the way for a republican America. But was this really the case?

To answer this question takes a seemingly impossible leap of faith, for it requires us to forget the American Revolution. We are still, despite the best efforts of historical writers, so conditioned by the overwhelming power of the democratic reality created in the last two hundred-plus years that we can only imagine American history as some variant on that omnipresent worldview. The Revolution thus has remained, like the Civil War, the Great Depression, and World War II, a scholarly vortex that sucks all that came before it into its deterministic bowels. Despite decades of proclaimed hostility to "whiggish" and teleological history, most historians still treat the years between 1688 and 1776 as a long prologue to the revolutionary crisis or American society's broader modernization. There are at least three identifiable strains in this historiography: one with the imperative to explain the emergence of American national character and democratic government; another that examines the roots of American capitalism; and, more recently, a host of studies seeking the origins of America's racial attitudes.[2]

2. Jon Butler pushes the origins of an American self back to the 1710s and postulates all developments from that point as contributing to the creation of an American identity. Butler directly and forcefully juxtaposes his views against those of Gordon S. Wood, Richard L. Bushman, John M. Murrin, and T. H. Breen, those advocates of what he calls the Europeanization model of the colonial period. See Jon Butler, *Becoming America: The Revolution before 1776* (Cambridge, Mass., 2000), 3–4. Those "Europeanizers," particularly Wood (*The Radicalism of the American Revolution* [New York, 1991] 1–92) and Bushman (*King and People in Provincial Massachusetts* [Chapel Hill, N.C., 1985]), are, in fact, writing in the same broad tradition as Butler. Bushman and Wood are sophisticated restatements of the whig tradition in that they see a gradual republicanization of provincial politics, political discourse, and social relationships in the eighteenth century. The overlapping templates of monarchy and republicanism, as Wood has called them, coexisted until the imperatives imparted by republicanism and modernizing social tendencies eroded through colonial societies' monarchical veneer. Bushman, while cognizant of the importance of the relationship of king and people to Bay Colonists, emphasizes the ways in which the king was a diminished figure and the society nascently republicanized. Even as ardent a student of the empire as Jack P. Greene clings to an emergent neoliberal perception of the colonists engaged continually in a "pursuit of happiness." See also Winthrop D. Jordan, "Familial Politics: Thomas Paine and the Killing of the King, 1776," *Journal of American History* (hereafter cited as *JAH*), LX (1973), 294–308; Darrett B. Rutman, "George III: The Myth of a Tyrannical King," in Nicholas Cords and Patrick Gerster, eds., *Myth and the American Experience* (New York, 1973); Michael Kammen, "The American Revolution as a Crise de Conscience: The Case of New York," in Richard M. Jellison, ed., *Society, Free-*

The historians who subscribe to these approaches believe that major changes develop over time and that looking for their early manifestations will tell us much about them. This approach has persistent emotional appeal: it is forward looking, modernizing, and in the American context, democratizing. One thing leads to another; things that look alike tend to be related. Thus the provincial world has been filled with protorepublicans, readers of Country pamphlets, rising assemblies, plain-folk Protestants, budding contract theorists, protocapitalists, protoproletariat, protoliberals, modernizers—in short, future Americans.[3]

Although several influential scholars writing within these whig traditions have invoked the term *monarchy*, it was the adherents of two smaller schools of historical thought who tried consciously to avoid early American history's teleological pitfalls: the imperial historians and the students of provincial anglicization.[4] The original imperial historians viewed the empire from London and thus

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dom, and Conscience (New York, 1976); William D. Liddle, "'A Patriot King, or None': Lord Bolingbroke and the American Renunciation of George III," *JAH*, LV (1979), 951–970; Peter Shaw, *American Patriots and the Rituals of Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981); Jerrilyn Greene Marston, *King and Congress: The Transfer of Political Legitimacy, 1774–1776* (Princeton, N.J., 1987), 13–63; Benjamin Lewis Price, *Nursing Fathers: American Colonists' Conception of English Protestant Kingship, 1688–1776* (Lanham, Md., 1999). None really engages the question of why the colonists would behave the way they did.

3. The most sophisticated statement in this strain is Wood's *Radicalism of the American Revolution*. Wood maintains that

> despite the colonists' sense that they were only thinking as any good Englishmen would, they did draw from that British culture its most republican and whiggish strains. . . . Many colonists had little reason to feel part of His Majesty's realm or to respect royalty. Many white foreign immigrants had no natural allegiance to a British king, and they often settled far from established authority in the colonies. . . . But even those English colonists who were proud of being Englishmen were not very good monarchists (110).

Such statements, designed to establish the republicanized or republicanizing character of provincial life, are unsupported or, in the case of these particular quotes, supported by a statement from an English general in the midst of the imperial crisis. The initial statement in this vein was put forth by Bernard Bailyn, who declared that "if American politics through the eighteenth century was latently revolutionary in this sense—if in these ways the patterns of ideas that would give transcendent meaning to the events of the 1760s and 1770s was already present decades earlier—the ultimate dangers had nevertheless been averted" until the imperial crisis made them all too real (Bailyn, *The Origins of American Politics* [New York, 1968], 160).

4. Some scholars have tried to engage the monarchical reality that leaps from the

understood the American colonies as one component of a larger polity. They focused on the empire's governing structures, its institutions, and its personnel. This school largely died out in the 1930s, but interest in empire has revived in recent years. These new studies have focused on aspects of imperial politics and ideology in the home islands.[5] Anglicization's early advocates were the first to

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period's surviving intellectual artifacts in order to better understand the emerging American reality they understand as the central fact of eighteenth-century history. An example of the immense power of that approach over our thinking is Alan Tully's very fine study, *Forming American Politics: Ideals, Interests, and Institutions in Colonial New York and Pennsylvania* (Baltimore, 1994), 1–8. Tully is fully aware of the imperial position of the colonies in his study and of the distorting influence of the republican synthesis on studies of the pre-1776 period, yet spends much of his study determining how the political culture of these colonies became American.

5. The best known of these imperial studies are David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2000); Eliga H. Gould, *The Persistence of Empire: British Political Culture in the Age of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2000); Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture, and Imperialism in England, 1715–1785* (New York, 1995); Stephen Conway, *The British Isles and the War of American Independence* (Oxford, 2000); Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven, Conn., 1992); David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735–1785* (Cambridge, 1995); Jack P. Greene, *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Polities of the British Empire and the United States, 1607–1788* (New York, 1990); Alison Gilbert Olson and Richard Maxwell Brown, eds., *Anglo-American Political Relations, 1675–1775* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1970); Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754–1766* (New York, 2000); Eric Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673–1800* (New York, 1997); Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (New York, 1991); David S. Shields, *Oracles of Empire: Poetry, Politics, and Commerce in British America, 1690–1750* (Chicago, 1990); and Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia, 2000). Also useful is Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York, 1983).

These new studies were built on the foundation laid by the old imperial school. The most famous of those scholars is Charles Andrews, but in this study I have found Charles Howard McIlwain's *American Revolution: A Constitutional Interpretation* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1923) to be the most useful. It is a remarkably insightful study; Greene has built on some of these insights in his work, expanding them in new and useful ways. Lawrence Henry Gipson, *The British Empire before the American Revolution*, 15 vols. (New York, 1939–1970),

question colonial America's democratization and looked at how provincial institutions, particularly the bench and bar, were remodeled along English lines in the eighteenth century. A second wave of studies in this vein has examined provincial Americans' accelerating consumption of British goods. Overall, these studies suggest that nascent Americanization has been read back into a very different period.[6]

Like most scholars of my generation, I accepted the whiggish schools' central premises while being aware of these imperial-centered approaches. A democratization or republicanization of politics marked by rising assemblies, economic expansion and liberalization, and new egalitarian evangelical Protestant religious movements were the dominant trends in provincial life that explained change. Monarchical allegiance was superficial, social stratification became a problem, and patriarchy as a social and political principle was eroding. Belief that some form of modernization drove change in colonial America still dominated the historiography of the period, and I endorsed its logic.

I thus began *The King's Three Faces* with no agenda other than that of simply examining how provincials' thinking about monarchy changed in the short century between the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the American Revolution. In time, I came to see provincial political culture and the first British empire in a very different way than it had been presented to me. To accept the received wisdom about the period, I came to think, silenced most of its voices and misrepresented those we do hear. Progress toward a republic and a liberal capitalist society, toward the America we know, had been read back through the Revolution's distorting lenses into a different time with its own political-cultural-social dynamic.

In the royal America that existed between the Glorious Revolution and 1776, that which we call political culture, the milieu in which politics takes place, was decidedly monarchical and imperial, Protestant and virulently anti-Catholic, almost to the moment of American independence. The anglicization of colonial governments and legal procedures was linked to the establishment of a calendar of officially orchestrated annual celebrations of Britain's Protestant rulers, their families, and the historic triumph of Protestantism over Catholicism. These rites expressed an ecumenical Protestant political culture whose values and symbols bound a transatlantic empire.

Writers who lived in this society internalized and reinforced its values. Almost everything printed between 1689 and 1775 expressed an intense admiration for the monarchy and situated their rulers both within a dynastic British history that ran back to the Anglo-Saxons and in terms of the ongoing struggle between pan-European Protestantism and Catholicism, absolutism, and popery. Shaped by what they saw, heard, and read, an ever-growing number of provincials identified themselves as Britons and referenced versions of British and English history as their own. A flood of goods from the home islands encouraged these provincial Britons to affect English manners and consumption patterns. The Hanoverian dynasty that ruled Britain after 1714 became the purveyors of good taste even as merchants and hawkers commodified their names and likenesses. For seven decades, without hesitation or hypocrisy, provincials proclaimed their love of Britain's Protestant monarchs and loathing for the kings' enemies, particularly papists of all stripes.

It makes little sense to examine such a society through modern notions that separate secular from sacred life. Religious devotion and denominational allegiances were loaded with political implications. Politics were intertwined with religion and religious identity on all levels of society, as all British Americans knew. By addressing religious developments apart from the political culture they occurred in, we have unintentionally distorted early American politics.

Obviously, other scholars have noticed aspects of this monarchical America that emerge from reading eighteenth-century sources, but the sum total seemed to me quite distinctive. Devotion to the monarchy, the imperialization of political life, patriarchy as political and social expectation, a British historical understanding and perception of time, intense fear of Catholics, and a growing, mobile yeoman population that perceived its relationship to the king as a personal one: these factors explain much of what occurred in public life in America between 1688 and 1774.

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was the last of that school, although his active career overlapped with Greene's. A number of articles have also examined imperial issues. The best is T. H. Breen, "Ideology and Nationalism on the Eve of the American Revolution: Revisions Once More in Need of Revising," *JAH*, LXXXIV (1997), 13–39.

6. John M. Murrin, "Anglicizing an American Colony: The Transformation of Provincial Massachusetts" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1966). Particularly suggestive is Murrin's essay, "The Myths of Colonial Democracy and Royal Decline in Eighteenth-Century America: A Review Essay," *Cithara*, V, no. 1 (November 1965), 52–69; T. H. Breen, "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690–1776," *Journal of British Studies*, XXV (1986), 467–499; and Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford, 2004). Both Murrin and Breen have offered partial views on how the anglicization of the society can be reconciled to the Revolution and the libertarian society that eventually emerged. Murrin highlights the power struggles between gentry factions (the Otis family and the Hutchinsons) whereas Breen suggests how the consumption of goods created shared experience and identity. I have built on aspects of their insights within the text.

Accepting the reality of this royal America, with its jumble of monarchical rites and royally focused affectations, brings into sharp relief a historically unrecognizable British Empire and a pattern of change distinctive from the whiggish teleologies that dominate our understanding of the period. In some respects, the empire's political culture looked the exact opposite of what has been commonly assumed. In the home islands, the Glorious Revolution's constitutional settlement located sovereignty in the King-in-Parliament and more or less settled the balance of power in the government. Effectively, this situated authority in the House of Commons and the imperial bureaucracy. People tried to forget the seventeenth century's violent problems, when English society was rendered by civil war and revolution that saw one Stuart king executed and another forced into exile with his heirs. The occasional Stuart conspiracy unsettled the national peace after 1689, but these were sporadic, ill planned, and tainted by the deposed house's French and Catholic connections. Political patronage, the Church of England's control of religious and social life in countless communities, fear of Europe's Catholic powers, and a fixed and controlled land tenure system maintained allegiance to the post-1688 order. It had to be so, as many eighteenth-century Englishmen felt tepid at best toward their German-born Hanoverian kings, royal rites declined markedly in England, Jacobitism remained current in some circles, and republicanism took hold among coffeehouse radicals.

Provincials, their worldview shaped by political spectacles and a print media that celebrated Britain's Protestant princes, came to understand the Glorious Revolution's legacy and the Hanoverian dynasty very differently. They saw the national settlement as establishing the Protestant succession and a Protestant political culture built around a cult of benevolent monarchy. Parliament had no symbolic role in imperial political rituals, its history was poorly understood, and it was diminished in political discussions. For colonists, the monarch apart from Parliament became the primary and common imperial link, the empire's living embodiment.

This dramatic reorientation of the colonies' political culture after the Glorious Revolution was not tempered by the establishment of the social conventions or political structures that helped stabilize the social orders in the home islands. State patronage remained extremely limited in the colonies, and the creation of new institutions was slow in relationship to population growth. The courts, the primary point of contact between the empire's authority and the mass of yeomen, were understood as a royal prerogative, and court procedures referenced all authority to the monarch. Provincial religious diversity stood in stark contrast to the church establishment of England itself. Freehold land tenure was far more common in the colonies, and farmers violently resisted efforts to establish tenancy as normal in parts of the countryside. However, these attributes did not make the colonists protorepublicans. Married as they were to royal political spectacles and a slavishly loyal print culture, the result was a polity sewn together by passions rather than patronage in the American provinces. British North Americans championed their British king with emotional intensity in print, during public political rites, and in private conversation.

These divergent understandings of the king and the British constitution ultimately undid both the colonies' internal peace and the empire itself. As the political and social context changed after 1740, this (for lack of a better term) institutionally unconditioned royalism became latently subversive to the provincial order and ultimately to the entire empire. Explosive population growth, an expanding print culture, new ethnic and racial tensions, and warfare with the French and Native Americans encouraged some provincials to manipulate the language and rites of empire. Political factions fighting over property rights, paper money, and institutional power appropriated imperial holidays for partisan ends. England's ambiguous, brutal seventeenth-century history was used to justify all types of behaviors. Rioting yeomen struggling for ownership of untold millions of acres in North America invoked a benevolent king to legitimate their violent actions, and rebelling slaves repeatedly claimed that the distant monarch intended to free them. Native Americans invoked Britain's kings against their American subjects as more settlers moved into the interior. In incident after incident, colonists revealed that they loved the king, but they did not share a universal understanding of his nature, political patriarchy, the British constitution, or even whether they lived under an imperial, British, English, or customary constitution. This book's title describes these subjective understandings of king and constitution that proved so crucial to unhinging the empire.

This fragmentation helped tear the Anglo-American world apart because it expressed conceptual divergences from metropolitan norms. The failure to successfully extend the British state's financial structures to America after the Seven Years' War grew as much from provincial society's royalization as it did from any other ideological factor. Affection for and faith in imagined kings and constitutions, coupled to unique understandings of British history, informed the colonists' actions in the imperial crisis as much as Country thought or natural-rights ideology did. Royal rites shaped the pattern of resistance in the streets as mobs confronted royal officials. The belief that the Glorious Revolution's settlement might manifest itself in their charters or in natural law informed colonial defiance of metropolitan norms. Only in 1774–1775 did that royal America finally collapse amid a potent but decentralized terror against those loyal to the empire. An iconoclasm against royal emblems followed, punctuated by a series of sym-

bolic regicides in the summer of 1776. In the terror's aftermath, the long struggle to make a workable republican society began.

Seen this way, colonial history becomes more than a preparation for the Revolution or the seed ground for the hyperdemocratic America we now live in. Rather, profoundly different assumptions shaped that world. By rejecting teleology, we let the colonists' lives speak to our own, not as agents of an emergent modernity but rather as human beings who inherited and adopted certain beliefs that they then used to confront change. By conceptualizing the period in this fashion, I am not claiming that provincials did not read republican- or Country-influenced tracts, that commerce did not expand dramatically, that election days and assemblies were not important, that religious revivals did not take place, or that no social oppression existed. But these changes occurred within the period's predominate political culture. Royalism was a primary force of change before 1776.

The King's Three Faces is divided into three sections. These are loosely chronological, but it is not a standard narrative of the provincial period, moving through "events" or fixating on personalities like Jonathan Edwards, John Peter Zenger, or George Whitefield. Rather, its focus is on the effects of royalization on the provinces. The first section, "The British Peace," examines colonial political culture between the Glorious Revolution and the 1740s. In this period, the cult of Protestant monarchy and British national identity became firmly rooted by means of annual royal rites and a growing, regulated print culture that focused on a uniquely Protestant historical time line as the root of the British nation. The new identity of provincial Briton was accepted by Protestant populations increasingly proud to be part of a transatlantic empire that could defend them from their Catholic enemies in New France and Spanish Florida. Under the influence of representations of a benevolent monarchy, provincials established emotional links to king and country.

The second section, "Three Faces," explores the relationship between the British peace's gradual breakdown in the 1730s and 1740s and the fragmentation in understanding of the monarchy and the imperial order. The emotional ties to the monarchy and empire that had developed in the first half of the eighteenth century were not linked to the state's institutional development. The empire's patronage structures remained immature, and the provincial land tenure system remained chaotic. This disjuncture encouraged some of the best-known conflicts in the colonial period as men struggled for honor and place. As population growth continued apace, the problem became acute, encouraging violent challenges to the provincial order and studied plans to reform the structure of the empire.

The third section, "A Funeral Fit for a King," examines the collapse of empire.

The need for reform was understood by a host of Anglo-American intellectuals throughout the eighteenth century, but their speculations on the character of the needed changes did not bring forth a new empire. The failure to reform left the empire vulnerable to challenges from within, like the Stamp Act protests. The imperial crisis can in part be understood as a conflict over monarchs and imagined constitutions conducted through the royal political culture's language and rituals.

The King's Three Faces is the story of the rise and collapse of royal America between the Glorious Revolution and the American Revolution as told through that period's own political culture rather than through the future's political demands. Even those historians that accept the reality of a monarchical society have imagined provincial Americans as little republicans waiting to burst from their monarchist shells. What it was to be an American subject, in love with king and country, has been lost to us. But, for the people of that time, it was a consuming attachment, one that separated their lost world from our own.

3

REMEMBRANCE OF KINGS PAST

HISTORY AND POWER IN EARLY AMERICA

In the mid-eighteenth century, Robert Strettell Jones was a student at what would become the University of Pennsylvania. As his education advanced, he came to reflect on the origins of knowledge and its relationship to human wisdom. He realized that personal experience would always be limited, but reading history made it possible to "use . . . the Experience of those, who . . . have traveled the Path of Life before us." This allowed the individual to "bring all Antiquity under contribution to us for wisdom. Confining ourselves no longer to a superficial knowledge of Facts, we now strive to trace them up to their Causes and form them into one connected system for the conduct of life." The past, as Jones confided to his diary, provided literate provincials with the tools to reason. "History," agreed Rhode Islander Theodore Foster, "makes men wise." Delaware's Thomas Rodney reached the same profound conclusions. "Man seeth with the Intellectual Eye, Looking on times far off, as with the material eye upon remote objects." This perspective often gave "false judgments," but such reasoning, however flawed, was not "without due honor among wise men." Histories provided "the conclusion of Reason down from probable grounds, they suffice, if not to convince the understanding, yet to give convenient satisfaction."[1]

Jones, Foster, and Rodney reveal a central tenet of provincial America's intel-

1. "An Abridgement of Metaphysicks Written March 20, 1761 and a SYSTEM of Rhetoric Wrote Nov. and Dec, 1762," Robert Strettell Jones Papers, APS; Theodore Foster diaries, Nov. 7, 1768, Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence; Thomas Rodney, "The Genoalogy, Being a Historical Account, of the De Rodney, Alias Rodney Family, from the Arrival of the Empress Maud in Great Britain to the Present Time," Manuscript Books, Historical Society of Delaware, Wilmington.

lectual life. History provided valuable instruction to those open to its lessons. The young Marylander Charles Carroll went further still, declaring that all of mankind's knowledge "is acquired from the study of History and personal experience." Most writers would have agreed with these men. Historical precedent informed political decisions, guided the enforcement of English common law, influenced family life, and underlay eighteenth-century philosophy. People reasoned historically, seeking guidance for all that they did and thought.[2]

For British Americans, the past became a way of thinking about empire that, like the British constitution and the monarchy itself, helped establish their commonality with Britons everywhere. A British historical identity, with its roots in an imagined antiquity, became over time a key part of provincials' political culture, related to the imperial political rites that celebrated the Protestant monarchy. The semiautonomous historical identities that existed in the seventeenth-century colonies—the time lines that ran back to the Reformation's early Puritans, to the Netherlands through the Dutch West India Company, to James Nayler, George Fox, and the early Quakers, to real and imagined Cavaliers—were assimilated into and largely supplanted by a comprehensive imperial history. The imperial rites, it came to be understood, celebrated a royal dynasty whose rise to the throne culminated a series of events that ran back into the Middle Ages, to the time of the Anglo-Saxons. It was, by necessity, a version of English history retold to fit a British empire.

Had that imperial history been peaceful and uniformly understood, the first British empire might have been established on a more stable and enduring foundation. British history's chaotic quality, though, prevented a uniform understanding of its meaning from taking hold. In particular, the violent upheavals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries provided lessons and highlighted personalities brutally ambiguous in their implications for eighteenth-century observers, who appropriated examples from the turmoil to conflicting ends. Heirs to disaster, the eighteenth-century denizens found it no sin to use the previous century for their own designs. In so doing, these writers and political polemicists unintentionally threatened the empire's stability.

2. "Charles Carroll, May the 16th, 1760, Extracts from the Carroll Papers," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, X (1915), 328.

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To "Use . . . the Experience of Those, Who . . . Have Traveled the Path of Life before Us": Theories of History, Modes of Reasoning

Few periods in the American past are as neglected as the eighteenth century's early decades. The empire was locked in warfare with its Catholic enemies, and no major "event" marred the internal British peace that stretched from 1689 to the mid-1730s. This superficial quiet masks one of the most profound, if little understood, transformations in provincial political culture: the shift toward the acceptance of an imperial historical identity.

Again, Protestantism acted as the fulcrum for this development. New Englanders' belief in a special millennial mission and the biblically based perceptions of change imported to much of seventeenth-century America by various Puritans, Dutch Calvinists, and Quakers gave way to a dynastically structured history and time line made evident in the period's print culture. A host of officially sponsored and sympathetic writers, encouraged by the Crown's American servants, took up the task of explaining the relationship of particular dynasties to God's holy Protestant design. Provincials accepted this history as a component of their British identity, and it served as the basis of provincial political reasoning until at least 1776. Explanations for events shifted away from a providential and toward a more temporal understanding of change that acknowledged monarchs' role in shaping their societies.

The empire's basic historical-political literature was the calendar almanac. These provided the broadest spectrum of provincial society with a historic education. The most famous in our time is Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's*, but others were as well known in the eighteenth century. Some were closely modeled on English almanacs, whereas others reflected mostly colonial influences. Their content reflected the change in historical understanding between 1650 and 1750.

The original colonial almanacs expressed as malleable a view of historical time as that held by the French revolutionaries who boldly proclaimed 1793 as the Year I. Puritan New England's early almanac writers and editors eliminated the names of months and days because they honored false gods (the origins of Samuel Sewall's complaint with them as well). The seventeenth-century New England almanac writers frequently focused on divine Providence's role in shaping human society. Chronologies included in the almanacs began with Creation and highlighted major biblical events.

Some of these almanac writers linked the major religious events that had occurred since New England's settlement to more distant events in the struggle for

a Protestant England. *The New England Almanac for the Year of Our Lord 1686*, for example, noted the passing of New England's founders at the foot of each page, as its author simultaneously retold English history in a manner designed to highlight the Reformation. The reign of good Queen Elizabeth, who established the Protestant religion after the Marian persecutions and defeated the Armada, and the oppression of Puritans that had led to the Great Migration were related to the more recent happenings in New England itself.[3]

The Old Testament and the history of English Protestantism remained a powerful theme in eighteenth-century almanac histories, and this was not confined to New England. The 1741 *Virginia Almanac* had a long time line that began with "The Creation of the World, 5690," and included "The Promise made to Abraham" and "The Birth of Jesus Christ." Such an emphasis celebrated English Protestants' fulfillment of God's holy plan and helped bind the empire together.[4]

The internalization of this Protestant time line is evident in provincial contemporary diaries. Lawrence Hammond's diary noted the English Reformation's major events, such as the Pilgrimage of Grace: when "40000 [Papists] were assembled giving . . . out for a holy pil[g]rimage, on the side of their Ensins, they had hanging only the Cross, on the other side, the cup and bread of the sacrament, as taking arms only for the faith," cloaking their actual design, to enslave the nation for the pope. The habit of keeping diaries in almanacs common in the middle colonies and New England suggests the influence such mass literature had in both regions.[5]

The Glorious Revolution encouraged almanac and popular historical writers

3. David D. Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* (New York, 1989), 58–61; Samuel Danforth, *The New England Almanack for the Year of Our Lord 1686* (Cambridge, 1685), esp. 6 of 16. Hall astutely notes the New Englanders' original editing of London's almanacs, the biblical character of the Puritans' own limited almanac production before the eighteenth century, and their changes after 1660. But Hall focuses on astrology and Copernican science in the almanacs. For the restructuring of British almanacs, see Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven, Conn., 1992), esp. 20–22. John Miller, *Popery and Politics in England, 1660–1688* (Cambridge, 1973), discusses the impact of Mary I, Elizabeth I, the Armada, and general antipopery on English political culture.

4. *The Virginia Almanac for the Year of Our Lord God . . . 1741* (Williamsburg, Va., 1741). See Nathaniel Whittemore, *An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord. . . .* (Boston, 1717–1728), for examples. Whittemore's Boston almanac frequently noted the time passed from such events as "the Creation of the World" and "Noah's Flood."

5. Lawrence Hammond diary, L. Hammond Collection, 1677–1694, microfilm, P-363, reel 5.3, MHS.

to shift their emphasis to those events that would help establish the legitimacy of Britain's foreign-born Protestant monarchs. Providence was still seen as a force in the world, but it became a force to bolster what was called the Protestant interest in Europe. The focus on the role of Britain in the broader struggle against Catholicism reinforced the rule of first William III and then the Hanoverians, whose claim to the throne was based on their Protestantism. For certain, writers continued to highlight English events. The "Spanish Armada Built," "Gun Powder Plot," and "Bible new Translated" (by King James) were related to a string of events with religious-political meaning that had culminated in the Glorious Revolution. In 1716, Boston minister Benjamin Colman would proudly preach that "neither the bloody Martydoms in the reign of Queen Mary, nor the Spanish Armada . . . nor the Powder Treason," nor the crypto-Catholic Stuarts had been able to enslave Englishmen with popery.[6]

But after 1688, provincial writers linked these events to others across Europe. Key among these events were the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre in France and Louis XIV's Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Both had great significance in Britons' worldview, as they illustrated the fate of Protestants in Catholic-dominated absolutist societies. "The Intendant of each Province," colonists were informed, in a detailed description of the Revocation, "with the Bishop, went from Town to Town, and having summoned the Protestants . . . let them know, That it was his most Christian Majesty's Pleasure, that the Roman Catholick Religion only should be professed in his Dominions." They must convert, and those who refused found themselves attacked by soldiers who cried out, "*Die, or turn Roman Catholick!*" Liberty in political and religious matters disappeared; Protestants of all ages were hung "on Hooks in their Chimneys, by their Hair and Feet, and smoaked with Whisps of wet Hay . . . Others were thrown into Fires . . . and after they were desperately scorched, let down by Ropes into Wells." Men and women were stripped and tied together. "But the common Torture," he continued, "and that which seems to be purely of *French* Invention, was the keeping People awake for a Week together." Heavens! The all-too-obvious parallels to the persecutions of Mary I's reign, to Guy Fawkes, and to the Stuart family's absolutist designs were drawn again and again.[7]

These persecutions, at home and abroad, made it essential that Britain have a Protestant prince. As Massachusetts minister Thomas Foxcroft so aptly put it in

6. *Virginia Almanac, 1741*; Whittemore, *An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord*; Benjamin Colman, *A Sermon Preach'd at Boston in New-England on Thursday the 23d of August 1716 . . .* (Boston, 1716), 14–15.

7. *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, Sept. 19, 1754.

regard to George I, he seemed "form'd for the happiness of Mankind; rais'd up by a kind of Providence, to be the common Protector of Europe, the Guardian of the Reformation, and the Defense of Britain." The post-1688 rulers acted self-consciously as patrons and protectors of "foreign protestants, who have taken shelter under the shadow of his wings," as one provincial wrote of George II. The British monarchy's role as the protector of "the Protestant interest" throughout Europe shaped provincials' historical understanding and united them with others in the empire.[8]

The Hanoverian succession encouraged a rapid shift to dynastic history as the predominate rendering of the imperial past. Unlike William and Mary and then Queen Anne, George I had heirs who could inherit the throne. In the hands of Anglo-American writers, the pan-European Protestant time line established between 1689 and 1720 became linked to the establishment of this new Protestant dynasty. Writers represented the Hanoverians' assumption of the British throne as the culmination of a series of changes that stretched back to the medieval period and were intertwined with the Reformation. The new, imperial, British past created in this period was actually a reworked English dynastic history that delineated historical eras by reference to the reigning ruling families.

This focus on English dynastic history is significant. Although the empire might tolerate the yearly celebration of a mystical founding saint by its ethnic subgroups, their national histories were too dangerous. Such histories would have been filled with stories of resistance to English power by Welsh, Scottish, and Irish rulers and their subjects. The empire's history became that of English dynasties fused to the struggle of pan-European Protestantism.[9]

This dynastic history spread rapidly after 1715 as merchants carried books, almanacs, and pamphlets to the empire's far corners. The stories of the rise and

8. Samuel Haven, *The Supreme Influence of the Son of God in Appointing, Directing, and Terminating the Reign of Princes* . . . (Portsmouth, N.H., 1761), 20–21; Thomas Foxcroft, *A Sermon upon Occasion of the Death of Our Late Sovereign Lord King George and the Accession of His Present Majesty, King George II, to the British Throne* (Boston, 1727), 26; Benjamin Wadsworth, *Rulers Feeding and Guiding Their People, with Integrity and Skilfulness*. . . . (Boston, 1716), 65.

9. H. Trevor Colbourn, *The Lamp of Experience: Whig History and the Intellectual Origins of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1965), 6–8, is the best discussion of the origins of historical debate in the Anglo-American world. Colbourn rightly argues that the dispute over the character of medieval England emerged in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and was tied to the unsettled question of the power relationship between the monarchy and Parliament. See also Louis B. Wright, *The Cultural Life of the American Colonies, 1607–1763* (New York, 1957), 132–135.

fall of kings, kingdoms, and empires seem to have been the colonial elite's history of choice. Massachusetts and then New Jersey governor Jonathan Belcher had the four-volume *Annals of Queen Anne* in his library, as well as the *Life of Oliver Cromwell* and Gilbert Burnet's *History of His Own Time* (first volume) when he donated his books to the College of New Jersey. In 1755, the library of onetime Virginia burgess Colonel John Waller contained *Memories in the Reign of Queen Anne, History of Charles 2d., Plots vs. King William the 3d, Life of Alexander the Great*, and "three volumes of Artemenes on Cyrus the Great." A variant on this was the history of a realm or part of it. *The History of the Grand Rebellion, Restitution of English Nation, by K. W., England's Remembrance Abt. Powder Plot, Ancient and Present State of England*—these were read and admired throughout the colonies. So deep did they penetrate colonial consciousness that a young John Quincy Adams asked his father for "the History of king and queen" as a gift in the 1770s.[10]

Sketches of realms and dynasties written in almanacs and mass-produced biographies eventually reached the literate populations in the provinces' smallest villages. These histories assigned characteristics to each dynastic lineage and identified the nation with the then-ruling Hanoverian dynasty. Nathaniel Whittemore's *Almanack for the Year of Our Lord, 1717* noted the time passed since "our Deliverance by King William from Popery and Arbitrary Government" and celebrated the "third year of the Happy Reign of our Sovereign Lord, King George." *Whittemore Revived: An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord* for 1738 carried "A Table of the Kings in England from Egbert the last of the Saxon Kings and first of England, to this present Year." They were divided as "the Saxon Line," "The Danish Line," "The Norman Line," etc. The 1741 *Virginia Almanac* carried a list of monarchs going back beyond Alfred the Great to Egbert the Saxon as well as such entries as "London Built by Brutus" and "Caesar first attempted Britain." The 1753 *Virginia Almanac* also contained a list of British rulers that ran back to Egbert the Saxon, and Isaac Bickerstaff's *Boston Almanack* (1769) featured a list of monarchs going back to 821. This time line noted Charles I's beheading and even represented "the common wealth" during the Interregnum as dynastic, with "Oliver and Richard Cromwell, Protector" as the dynasty in place during that upheaval. As late as 1772, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* advertised for sale "The General American Register," which included "A table of the kings and queens of

10. Jonathan Belcher's "Catalogue of Books . . . 1755," Jonathan Belcher's Library, Special Collections and Manuscripts, Firestone Library, Princeton University; "Libraries in Colonial Virginia: Library of Colonel John Waller," *WMQ*, 1st Ser., VIII (1899) (from an inventory, Feb. 5, 1755), 77–80; Jerrilyn Greene Marston, *King and Congress: The Transfer of Political Legitimacy, 1774–1776* (Princeton, N.J., 1987), 14.

England; Genealogical list of the royal family of Great Britain . . . Births, marriages and issue of the sovereign princes of Europe."[11]

Their popularity reflected a general support of the Hanoverians and a powerful identification with the empire and its purported history. But it probably had a social basis as well, reflecting the consolidation of power by local elites early in the eighteenth century. The so-called First Families of Virginia were the most famous of these groups, but there were others in every colony and indeed in most communities. Just as each official was supposed to be the father of his polity in this patriarchal world, each leading family saw itself as a small dynasty.

Dynastic histories influenced thinking at all levels of colonial society. New York gentleman Cadwallader Colden began a formal discussion of the English constitution with William the Conqueror and his relations with the various English barons, tying the ancient constitution to a particular reign. In so doing, he sought to establish the relationship of the legal order to the English nation and the monarchy. New Englander Samuel Chandler, a reader of Nathaniel Ames's almanacs, at one point penned his own time line from William the Conqueror to George I into his diary. He called the Catholic Mary I "a scourge to the nation" and the pope "God Father" to the Spanish Armada that attacked good Queen Elizabeth. James I was a fine king because "he caused the Bible to be translated [and] in his reign was the gunpowder Plot November 5th." And Charles I met his fate because of a popish queen and her intrigues. Just how far interest in these dynasties penetrated down the social order is hinted at by the will of Baltimore iron shaper Joseph Smith. Among his modest effects, he had the first volume of Rapin's *History of England*, a considerable item in an estate that was valued at just four pounds.[12]

Ministers reinforced these historical perceptions in sermons and pamphlets. Even the grand itinerant George Whitefield would talk about God's providential care of the British nation "from the Infant State of WILLIAM the Conqueror, to her present Manhood, and more than Augustan Maturity, under the auspicious Reign of our dread and rightful Sovereign King GEORGE the Second." Whitefield

11. Whittemore, *An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord, 1717*; Whittemore, *Whittemore Revived: An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord, 1738* . . . (Boston, 1738); *Virginia Almanac, 1741*; *The Virginia Almanac for the Year of Our Lord God . . . 1753* (Williamsburg, Va., 1753); *Bickerstaff's Boston Almanack* . . . (Boston, 1769). In 1774, *Bickerstaff's Boston Almanack* provided a genealogy of George II and George III side by side.

12. *The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden*, IX, *Additional Letters and Papers, 1749–1775, and Some of Colden's Writings*, NYHS, *Collections*, LXVIII (New York, 1937), 251; Samuel Chandler diaries, 1746–1772, microfilm, MHS; Colbourn, *Lamp of Experience*, 12.

and other preachers transmitted this historical worldview into the oral culture and amplified it in the written.[13]

After 1688, the British constitution was formally dependent on the monarch's Protestant genealogy, and this came to be represented in the provinces' popular historical literature as a corollary to dynastic history. *The Loyal American's Almanac for the Year 1715* declared George I's title legitimate "by Fate and due descent." All his family, the author continued, "are PROTESTANTS." Whittemore repeatedly printed George I's genealogy in order to establish the House of Hanover's legitimacy via blood as well as religion. "His Britanick Majesty," he informed his readers, "is descended from Elizabeth, Daughter of James the First, King of England, that Learned and Excellent Prince." James's daughter "was Married to Frederick Count Palatine . . . King of Bohemia . . . whose youngest Daughter Sophia, Princess Palatine, was Married to Ernest Augustus, late Elector of Hannover, and Bishop of Ofmaburg, A Protestant." Ernest was, according to Whittemore, a prince, "who for his Excellent Vertue, was . . . honored with the . . . title of the Standard Bearer of the Empire." George I, "a Prince formed for the Greatest Actions," was the child of Ernest and Princess Sophia and inherited the British throne in "the Line of the Protestant Succession. In this Illustrious house we hope for a Succession of Vertuous Princes, till Time shall be no more." Few provincial Americans, wrapped up as they were in their own Protestant identities, would have disagreed. "Illustrious house": this became the key catchphrase in Anglo-American popular historical literature to describe the Hanoverian dynasty.[14]

This obsession with genealogy became a factor in provincial society's organization. Genealogical research and coats of arms that established real and imagined lineages in the home islands became a rage among provincial gentry by 1740, and in some places, like Virginia, it was an obsession much earlier. Bloodlines maintained over decades and centuries meant legitimacy, and carriages emblazoned with coats of arms patrolled colonial streets, loudly proclaiming the owner's status. We might see this behavior as a response to the consumer revolution; whereas the material symbols of status were becoming more readily available, bloodlines remained exclusive and thus could be used to assert social place. William Alexander, the self-proclaimed "Lord Stirling," provides the most ob-

13. George Whitefield, *Britain's Mercies, and Britain's Duty; Represented in a Sermon Preach'd at the New-Building in Philadelphia on Sunday August 24, 1746* . . . (Boston, 1746), 7.

14. *The Loyal American's Almanac for the Year 1715* (Boston, 1715), inside cover; Whittemore, *An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord, 1717*.

sessive example of this phenomenon. The New Jersey gentleman futilely spent thousands of pounds in the early 1760s trying to establish a genealogical connection to the deceased Scottish Earl of Stirling in order to claim the title and estate. Beyond their assertion of status, genealogies normalized the rule of the local, kin-based oligarchies that dominated provincial society in the eighteenth century.[15]

A shared historical perception came to link the provinces to the home islands in the period that we once simply labeled the era of "salutary neglect." To understand the intensity of this identification and the way it shaped political perception by the eighteenth century's middle decades, one must only read an August 1755 letter to the *Boston Weekly News-Letter*. "In this Time," declared the writer in regard to the looming confrontation with the French that would lead to the Seven Years' War, "when it seems nothing less than the conquest of North America" would assuage the Gallic foe's ambition, "we should cheerfully offer our Swords and Purses for assisting the best of Kings, to verify that heroic and gallant resolution, of not losing a Foot of his American Dominions." This patriot went on to ask, should "the Sons of Britain, A Nation whom neither the Roman Sword . . . nor the unnatural designs of . . . her own Usurping monarchs, could ever reduce to Bondage, tamely behold the Slaves of Lewis, invading the Territories of our gracious Sovereign?"[16]

This writer had come to see himself as a son of Britain, an heir to those ancient Britons who had resisted Roman occupation. His justification for the war and his mode of reasoning were a historically specific defense of a national identity. This identification spread through oral culture as well as written. One of the songs sung in the colonial period was entitled "Great William [III] Our Renowned King," part of a repertoire that, along with the royal rites and print publications, educated the mass of semiliterate provincials about their political salvation by monarchs of Protestant descent.[17]

At times it seemed colonial writers were determined to place every event, major and minor, within these historical frameworks. When royal governor William Burnet, the son of Bishop Gilbert Burnet, arrived in Boston in 1728, he was greeted with more than a royal entrance. The *Boston Weekly News-Letter* published a "Gratulatory POEM" placing his arrival in a string of historical developments that had occurred since "Immortal WILLIAM [III] sav'd the British Isle / Groaning in Romish Chains, and Bid it smile." Queen Anne's reign, the crises of 1714 and 1715, the Hanoverian succession, wars with the "Sylvian Salvages, by Rome Enrag'd," George I's death, and George II's coronation were all seen as part of a Protestant imperial progression that had, as one of its threads, the arrival of Governor Burnet in the Bay Colony. That Burnet's own father had helped secure the Protestant succession by making the House of Hanover aware of genealogical data that assured their legitimate right only intensified the sense that dynasty and providential destiny had fused. The writer assumed the colonists shared a British identity, perceived the empire's territory as synonymous with the British king's person, and, most important, believed that owning this identity would mobilize his readers.[18]

In addressing a jury detailed to mete out punishment to the conspirators involved in a supposed slave rebellion in New York City in 1741, William Smith showed how provincials used dynastic history to frame understanding of contemporary events. The "secret springs," as Smith called them, of this "horrible plot" were, not racial oppression, but Rome. It was another manifestation of "popish cruelty" that stretched back across the history of Europe from "the ashes of the ancient Waldenses and Albigenses" to "the massacre at Paris [Saint Bartholomew's Day]," to the Spanish slaughter of Protestants in the Low Countries during the Dutch rebellion; all these "many millions of lives . . . have been sacrificed to the Roman idol." But, as he reminded the jury, they need not look outside the empire for examples of popish conspiracy. The reign of "bloody" Queen Mary; "that execrable design to blow up king, lords, and commons in the gun-

15. Mary Newton Stanard, *Colonial Virginia: Its People and Customs* (Philadelphia, 1917), 132–135. Apparently, there were quite a few people running around seventeenth-century Virginia with family arms on their silver, rings, and other personal items. Someone even had a quilt with Queen Elizabeth's arms on it. See the quote at the top of 134, concerning a special funeral coach with a Virginia family's arms. See also the description of coat of arms letter seals and rings bearing family coats of arms (134–135). Stanard also claims to have seen 160 headstones bearing coats of arms in an old Virgina graveyard, a claim I find entirely believable. Additionally, she quotes letters from Washington and Jefferson to London asking for family arms and/or genealogical research (135). See also Paul David Nelson, *William Alexander, Lord Stirling* (Tuscaloosa, Ala., 1987), 35–42; Brendan McConville, *These Daring Disturbers of the Public Peace: The Struggle for Property and Power in Early New Jersey* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1999), 41–45. I have benefited greatly from discussions with Karin Wulf on the use of genealogy in early America.

16. *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, Aug. 29, 1755, from the *New-York Mercury*.

17. *The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden*, VII, *1765–1775*, NYHS, *Collections*, LVI (New York, 1928), 217.

18. "A Gratulatory POEM Received from a Friend the Day after the Arrival of His Excellency Governour BURNET," in *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, July 28, 1728; J. G. A. Pocock, "The Limits and Divisions of British History: In Search of the Unknown Subject," *AHR*, LXXXVII (1982), 318. Pocock comments, "In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Atlantic seaboard of North America became incorporated in 'English History' and acquired inhabitants with modes of consciousness corresponding to this experience."

powder treason [Guy Fawkes's plot]"; the English Civil Wars and the massacres of Protestants in Ireland; James II's efforts to set up Catholic absolutism—all were "evidences of the destructive tendency of that bloody religion." Smith declared in summation that the fires in the city grew from a "Spanish and popish plot" to massacre Protestants. Smith's charge suggests the hold that an imperial, dynastic Protestant sensibility had on provincial minds. Like the ritual cycle to which it was linked, the imperial time line tied provincials to the empire emotionally, for reading about the struggle between the Protestant good and popish evil could only generate love and fear. Imperial history had any number of subjective understandings. But the danger posed would only become apparent over time.[19]

Such a powerful intertwining of political calendar, dynastic time line, family organization, and constitutional perception should have served as a stable imperial foundation. It was meant to be so. The writing of history—natural, political, social—was, to some degree, designed to "be usefull to my Country," as Cadwallader Colden wrote. But the lessons taught by England's past, particularly its seventeenth-century history, were hardly of a single sort. The violent turmoil of that time reached forward and grabbed at the eighteenth-century empire's very soul.[20]

. . .

"To All the Years of My Own Life I Have Added on the Four Years of the Protectorate": The English Civil Wars in Provincial Political Memory

In 1745, with the empire facing France from without and Jacobite intrigue from within, a writer to the *American Magazine* drew on the lessons of the nation's past to try to rally the provincial elite against the looming threats. "In King Charles the First's time," he informed them, "the measures of the court were so bad" that most of the "Noblemen and Gentlemen . . . would have taken Arms against him long before the Year 1642, if it had not been for the danger of ruining their Families." Their hesitation "encouraged the Court to increase their Oppressions upon the people. At last the popular Discontents became so general . . . that every one saw, it would be easy to raise an Army against the Government." Still, the gentry hesitated: "Our noblemen and Gentlemen were still afraid of ruining their

19. "Trial of John Ury Alias Jury," in Daniel Horsmanden, *The New York Conspiracy*, ed. Thomas J. Davis (Boston, 1971), 369–370.

20. Cadwallader Colden to Peter Collinson, May 1742, in *The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden*, II, *1730–1742*, NYHS, *Collections*, LI (New York, 1919), 258.

Families; and therefore, when an Army was raised, few of them joined it." The parliamentary army became "composed . . . for the most part, of the lowest Scum of the Nation. What was the Consequence?" he asked. The army "raised in Favor of Liberty, at last destroyed it . . . and invested their General with . . . absolute Power." The danger that those who should take the lead would hold back was again at the door of the imperial house. It was another lesson from an earlier period that eighteenth-century writers constantly turned to for guidance.[21]

It is perhaps difficult for us to imagine that the English Civil Wars once had as strong a hold on colonials as Vietnam and World War II do on contemporary Americans. Yet that seventeenth-century disaster was a powerful historical reference point for all political considerations in the provinces up to 1776. The events between 1640 and 1660 ruptured the dynastic lines central to Britain's imperial-historical worldview and severed God and king. Every form of human behavior and social organization had been called into question, and thus the period offered compelling lessons to its near heirs. The specter of its events, its personalities (Oliver Cromwell, William Laud, Charles I, his sons, Hugh Peter, Prince Rupert, George Monck), and the groups that emerged (the New Model Army, the Rump Parliament, the Fifth Monarchists, the Levelers, the Quakers) were planks in the symbolic-intellectual platform from which eighteenth-century provincials viewed change in their world.

For a people who reasoned historically, though, the English Civil Wars' lessons were often contradictory and potentially threatened the social order. "Everyone," wrote John Wise in 1715, "knows what direful Convultions this [the seventeenth-century struggles over power] has bred in the Bowels of the Kingdom." The meaning of these disorders, though, was open to interpretation. For provincials, the seventeenth century became an obsession, and thus it could not be easily controlled. Parliament had warred with monarch; the parliamentary army had intervened repeatedly and purged Parliament; first the Archbishop of Canterbury and then the king had been executed; new Dissenting Protestant religious groups had appeared (the best known being the Quakers); Cromwell, the protector of liberty, established a military protectorate; and finally the House of Stuart was restored, though that lasted fewer than thirty years before the Glorious Revolution. The larger political danger of this became apparent by the 1740s, when contemporary writers repeatedly invoked competing versions of Civil War figures to frame understanding of the Great Awakening, the rise of the Church of England, and the imperial wars against Catholic France. The historicized lan-

21. *American Magazine* (February 1745), 55–56.

guage that expressed a common British identity came to enable conflicts within colonial society in the eighteenth century.[22]

The events of the English Civil Wars were well known to most seventeenth-century colonists. Many lived through the years of crisis, and after 1660, stories of the Civil Wars and the Restoration saturated both oral and written culture. New England developed a potent oral tradition about Cromwell, the wars, and particularly the three regicide judges and other "men of blood" (those involved in the execution of Charles I) who fled to the Puritan colonies after the Restoration. The Chesapeake colonies, too, had their legends, many of them involving Cavaliers or the Restoration itself.[23]

Late-seventeenth-century writers used examples, comparisons, and metaphors associated with the Civil Wars to carry points in political and religious debate. As early as 1689, Gershom Bulkeley, a critic of New England's Puritan elite, called Boston's revolt against Governor Andros evidence of the "levelling, independent, democratical principle and spirit, with a tang of fifth-monarchy" in the region. All the labels referenced Civil War events or political-religious groups. Charges of a leveling spirit became commonplace in the provincial mainstream whenever an entrenched group felt its power threatened by the "people." Indeed, it is fair to say that such charges were as common as those that warned of the Stuarts' despotism, if not more so.[24]

For eighteenth-century Anglo-Americans, their near history indicated that balance was the key to good order. Their world had none of the celebrations of egalitarianism that ours does. Political theory taught that society was divided between the one, the few, and the many, each of which needed to be kept in balance in the political order. The abstract struggle between liberty and power was supposed to lead to equilibrium between the two, not the triumph of liberty. The Civil Wars had showed that the people could as easily ruin balance from below as a tyrant could from above, and that lesson was not forgotten in the eighteenth century. During political turmoil in South Carolina in the late 1720s and early

22. John Wise, *The Churches Quarrel Espoused; or, A Reply in Satyre, to Certain Proposals Made . . .* (Boston, 1715), 41.

23. Philip F. Gura, *A Glimpse of Sion's Glory: Puritan Radicalism in New England, 1620–1660* (Middletown, Conn., 1984), 222; Jacob Cushing diary, 1749–1772, Microfilm Almanacs, P-79, reel 1, diary in Nathaniel Ames, Almanac, MHS. Ezra Stiles, *A History of Three of the Judges of King Charles I* (Hartford, Conn., 1794), is still the best source for this aspect of seventeenth-century New England's political culture. It is also explored in T. H. Breen's *Character of the Good Ruler: A Study of Puritan Political Ideas in New England, 1630–1730* (New Haven, Conn., 1974).

24. Breen, *Character of the Good Ruler*, 177.

1730s, the assembly's upper and lower houses repeatedly invoked the Civil Wars to legitimate their competing views on the separation of power and the nature of stability within the British constitution. According to an upper house spokesman, the assembly's members possessed "the same turbulent and restless Spirit" that animated "the pretended Parliament of England, in the Year 1649, when they voted the House of Lords useless and dangerous, and afterwards, that Monarchy ought to be abolished."[25]

The Civil Wars' maddening contradictions became apparent as partisans fighting over the Great Awakening, paper money, and the rise of the Church of England in the colonies manipulated the upheavals' lessons to factional ends. Perhaps no figure was more frequently manipulated than the lord protector, Oliver Cromwell. Cromwell's last campaign was a tortured march through the eighteenth century's political culture, directed by the needs of provincials faced with dramatic changes.

Before 1750, disdain for Cromwell ran deep and wide in America. The label of "Cromwellian" was primarily attached to those accused of extreme political behavior. In 1728, a paper libeled a Pennsylvania politician by claiming mockingly that he was familiar with the ways of the "Secretary of State to Oliver Cromwell." The subject of this satire declared it "a vile Abuse." Any show of political militancy might bring forth the charge of "Oliverian" or "Cromwellian" behavior, the undesirable political equivalent of an "enthusiastic" spiritual state. The Virginian William Byrd went as far as to declare it "an abomination to mention the name of Oliver Cromwell" in the Anglo-American world. Byrd reminded contemporaries of Virginia's historic loyalty to monarchy precisely because it still served a political end: to define adherence to the mainstream values of eighteenth-century Anglo-American politics. Provincials used Cromwell to illustrate one type of political deviance, just as they used the deposed House of Stuart to define the dangers of monarchical excess, thus re-creating the German Hanoverian family as the prudent, Protestant, British mean.[26]

Writers also used Cromwell's name as an insult hurled at Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and other Dissenting Calvinists in order to link them to the Civil

25. *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), June 9–16, 1733.

26. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), Dec. 4, 1728. For a basic discussion, see Alfred F. Young, "English Plebeian Culture and Eighteenth-Century American Radicalism," in Margaret Jacob and James Jacob, eds., *The Origins of Anglo-American Radicalism* (London, 1984), 187–212. See also Peter Karsten, *Patriot-Heroes in England and America: Political Symbolism and Changing Values over Three Centuries* (Madison, Wis., 1978), 21; Marion Tinling, ed., *The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, Virginia, 1684–1776* (Charlottesville, Va., 1977), 535; *Virginia Almanac*, 1741.

War period's radical sectarians. New Yorker Archibald Kennedy declared early in the 1750s that "in party Politicks, the Affair is soon over, and commonly ends only in a few sour Looks; whereas those in Religion, last from Generation to Generation, and commonly end in Fire and Faggot. . . . And did not Cromwel, upon the very same Principles, overturn one of the best Constitutions under the Sun." An Anglican cleric in New London, Connecticut, called the area's Dissenting majority "the bigotted Relics of the Oliverian spawn in the Novanglican Part of the world." These writers sought to portray their religious antagonists as extremists of the sort that executed a king.[27]

This vilification intensified at midcentury in some circles. In 1762, Massachusetts governor Francis Bernard accused Jonathan Mayhew of Cromwellian tendencies during a nasty confrontation sparked by the recurring issue of whether the colonies should have an Anglican bishop. One satirist, in a 1764 tract denouncing the violent activities of the Scots-Irish Paxton Boys on the Pennsylvania frontier, sarcastically declared of their behavior that it was "agreeable to my Forefathers Oliverian spirit." The same writer went on to claim that if "you know Olivers Schemes took effect; more through Policy and Cunning than Force, we must keep on our Guard, or we shall be in the sudds." Anglican minister Charles Woodmason described the Carolina backcountry Presbyterians who were tormenting him as "a Pack of vile, levelling common wealth Presbyterians In whom the Republican Spirit of 41 yet dwells."[28]

Even as this denigration of Cromwell increased, a rhetorical rehabilitation of the lord protector began. This colonial march to acceptance was born, not in a desire to republicanize the provincial world, but rather to buttress a monarchy in conflict with Europe's Catholic powers, particularly France. In the 1740s and 1750s, as the intermittent one-hundred-year war against that hated national enemy reerupted, Cromwell's metaphoric restoration began, in large part to justify a more assertive use of royal prerogative to fight France.

Cromwell's military bearing, his willingness to use force against all who opposed him, and his success in dealing with France's Bourbon rulers a century

27. [Archibald Kennedy], *A Speech Said to Have Been Delivered Some Time before the Close of the Last Sessions, by a Member Dissenting from the Church* ([New York], 1755), 4–5; "Ecclesanglicus to Jos. Harrison, Esq., Collector, 1764," Sparks Collection, I, fol. 10, no. 89, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

28. Colin Nicolson, *The "Infamas Govener" Francis Bernard and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Boston, 2001), 77; *The Paxton Boys: A Farce, Translated from the Original French* ([Philadelphia], 1764), 7–8; Marjoleine Kars, *Breaking Loose Together: The Regulator Rebellion in Pre-Revolutionary North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2002), 127.

earlier recommended him to frightenened colonists faced with the threat of French invasion from Canada. In July 1742, the *Boston Weekly News-Letter* reported that a privateer captain named Frank, "grandson of Oliver Cromwell," had inherited "the Virtues of that Hero without his Vices" and captured nine Spanish ships during the War of Jenkins's Ear.[29] In 1743, writers for the *American Magazine* recalled how the lord protector dealt with a French threat a century earlier: "Cromwell sent one Morning for the French Ambassador . . . and upbraided him publickly for his Master's designed Breach of Promise, in giving secret Orders to the French General to keep Possession of Dunkirk, in case it was taken [by the English and French, cooperating against the Spanish]." According to the magazine, "the Ambassador protested he knew nothing of the matter. . . . Upon which Cromwell . . . (says he). . . . that if he [the French ambassador] deliver not up the Keys of the town of Dunkirk . . . within an Hour after it shall be taken, I'll come in Person and demand them at the Gates of Paris. The Message had its effect." The struggle with France so elevated Cromwell that a privateer operating from New York during the Seven Years' War carried his name.[30]

The identification with Cromwell as a warrior against Catholic hegemony was strong in New England. There, writers measured soldiers and even public officials against Cromwell or described them as Cromwellians in a new age. This reference came to carry positive meanings in most contexts, as it did in a poem composed by Boston almanac writer Nathaniel Ames at the Seven Years' War opening. "I have just heard," wrote Ames, "how the proud Gallic Pow'rs / Prostrate themselves before the leaden Show'rs / Which our Cromelians with just Rage possest / Aim'd sure and fatal at each bleeding breast." Cromwell seems to have been particularly popular in Connecticut; this might have grown from the widely known story that Cromwell intended to remove to the colony on the eve of the Civil Wars. John Adams remembered hearing a rural New England preacher speak positively of Cromwell in the early 1760s.[31]

Had Cromwell's rehabilitation merely been tied to the cycle of imperial wars, it no doubt would have slackened when the wars ended. However, changes in

29. *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, July 8–15, 1742.

30. Tinling, ed., *Correspondence of the Three William Byrds*, 535; *American Magazine* (October 1743), 61; I. N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498–1909*, IV (New York, 1922), 691.

31. Nathaniel Ames, *An Astronomical Diary; or, An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord Christ, 1756* (Boston, [1755]); Young, "English Plebeian Culture and Eighteenth-Century American Radicalism," in Jacob and Jacob, eds., *Origins of Anglo-American Radicalism*, 194–200, esp. 197.

colonial religious life also helped remake Cromwell's reputation in the provinces. Surprisingly, his unwitting ally in this moment of triumph was his old antagonist, Charles I, England's long-since-beheaded monarch.

It is impossible to understand Cromwell's historical rehabilitation at midcentury apart from the hostility provoked by the Church of England's rise in the colonies. Historical antagonisms between the state church and the various colonial Dissenters dating back to the seventeenth century were dredged up first when William and Mary and then Queen Anne encouraged Church of England missionaries to evangelize in the American provinces. Many Dissenters feared that the state church would be established universally in the empire, which explains in large part their explosive hostility to the appointment of an American bishop when that issue arose periodically throughout the eighteenth century. The planting of the Church of England in the colonies threatened to "make us Dissenters in our own Countrys. . . . a Designe Barbarous as well as unjust, Since it was to be Free of her . . . [that] we went so farr," as a worried William Penn aptly put it as early as 1704.[32]

By midcentury, the Protestant churches had been fighting for the soul of provincial America for decades. The Anglicans had organized four hundred congregations in the mainland provinces and repeatedly agitated for their own bishop. When Anglicans began to remember the "blessed martyr" Charles I on January 30, the anniversary of his execution, it was more than some colonials could stomach, and it was then that they turned to the lord protector, Oliver Cromwell, for aid against those who would celebrate a royal tyrant.[33]

32. Richard S. Dunn, Mary Maples Dunn, et al., eds., *The Papers of William Penn*, IV, *1701–1718* (Philadelphia, 1987), 259.

33. For additional insight into religious conflict in the earlier period, see Lord Cornbury to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (hereafter cited as SPG), Mar. 24, 1703/4, New York, SPG microfilm, reel 13; John Chamberlain to SPG, Oct. 9, 1703, Nassau Island, Hemstead, New York, SPG microfilm, reel 13. The New Englanders on the eastern end of Long Island were said to "hate the name of the Church of England," an "independent minister, who have poisoned the minds of the People soe far" (Cornbury to SPG, Oct. 22, 1705, New York, SPG microfilm, reel 13). McConville, *These Daring Disturbers of the Public Peace*, 68–73, addresses the actions of Anglican itinerants in New Jersey. Patricia U. Bonomi, *Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America* (New York, 1986), esp. 42–50, 52–54, 56–57, 64–65, 119–121, 202–203, gives a more extensive and thorough overview. For examples of the itinerants' activities, see John Brooke to SPG secretary, 1706, American Papers, XII, NYHS. John Frederick Woolverton, *Colonial Anglicanism in North America* (Detroit, 1984), provides a general overview of the development of the Church of England in America; Carl Bridenbaugh, *Mitre and Sceptre: Transatlantic

As these remembrances became more pronounced, two of provincial America's leading thinkers, the New Englander Jonathan Mayhew and the New Yorker William Livingston, established another framework for Cromwell's historical rehabilitation, as someone who sought, at least initially, to keep the national constitution in balance. Mayhew was the more strident of the two. Early in 1750, in *A Discourse concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance to the Higher Powers*, Mayhew asked a loaded historical question: "If it be said," he declared, "that although the parliament which first opposed king Charles's measures, and at length took up arms against him, were not guilty of rebellion; yet certainly those persons were, who condemned and put him to death; even this perhaps is not true." Charles, Mayhew insisted, had dethroned himself by repeatedly breaching his realm's fundamental constitution. Cromwell and his associates "might possibly have been very wicked" men. There was, Mayhew acknowledged, "male-administration during the Interegnum." Nonetheless, "Cromwell and his adherents were not, properly speaking, guilty of rebellions because he, whom they beheaded was not, properly speaking, their king; but a lawless tyrant."[34]

What did Cromwell and his contemporaries signify to those who thought like Mayhew and Livingston? Anglo-American political imperatives in the period between the Spanish Armada and the American Revolution might be summarized thus: normalize and preserve the Protestant succession in England, maintain the society's delicate religious equilibrium, defeat the realm's Papist enemies, and safeguard the vaguely defined liberties and properties of Englishmen —and Britons. Such disparate goals called for a ruler with seemingly contradictory political characteristics: firm, decisive, and militaristic in foreign affairs; gentle, legalistic, and restrained in domestic matters; militantly Protestant but also somehow malleable in his faith.

The tensions caused by these demands help explain why England went through three ruling dynasties in a little more than one hundred years, and they

Faiths, Ideas, Personalities, and Politics, 1689–1775* (New York, 1962), provides a detailed examination of the conflict over American bishops in the 1760s. Bruce E. Steiner, "New England Anglicanism, A Genteel Faith?" *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XXVII (1970), 122–135; Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge, Mass., 1990).

34. Jonathan Mayhew, *A Discourse concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance to the Higher Powers: With Some Reflections on the Resistance Made to King Charles I. . . .* (Boston, 1750), esp. 47–48. "An Independent," *A Discourse on Government and Religion, Calculated for the Meridian of the Thirtieth of January* (Boston, 1750), 11–12, also attacked the remembrance of this anniversary and legitimated the behavior of the regicides.

also help to explain why Cromwell survived as a political symbol of merit. For some provincial writers, Cromwell and his compatriots represented a strain of political-historical thought having commonwealth, Puritan, constitutional monarchical, and absolutist monarchical characteristics. This perceptual pattern was (obviously) rife with inconsistencies and existed below the level of a coherent political philosophy, having strong emotional as well as rational components.

Cromwell's figure remained equivocal even through the revolutionary crisis. The ambiguity of the Civil Wars and their figures—Oliver, Charles, and the other long-dead combatants—threatened the empire's stability. History should provide clear lessons, but it could not if civil war was the reference point. Trifling provincial political battles became linked to that larger struggle for the nation, fought and refought on the pages of colonial print culture. What was now could always be called into question because of the turmoil in the past. And the questions raised should not be understood as occurring just on the macro or abstract level of political debate. The events of the past shaped how individuals understood themselves.

. . .

Memories of a Violent Past

The shift to an imperial perception of history centered on the English Civil Wars seems another academic abstraction created by a willful reading of eighteenth-century print culture. That shared imperial past, though, was real and operated in intensely personal ways to shape specific lives. In particular, the Civil Wars marked participants with an indelible imprint of blood and trauma still visible in all areas of British America decades, even a century, later.

In 1706, a man named John Pearce wrote to the Woodbridge, New Jersey, Quaker meeting to confess his sins. "Whereas, I do hear that some dear friends do hear that I am like to be lead away after a separate party called Ranters." It was "true, for I have been mislead too much by their fair words and fine appearances like Angels of light." However, he now realized that they intended to destroy all order in the world and in particular the Quaker meetings. He thanked God for delivering him from the Ranters' clutches and pleaded with the Quakers to accept him again as a member.[35]

As a distinct document, John Pearce's confession is simply a statement of theological confusion by a man living in a small midatlantic province. Read in context, however, the confession suggests the hold that the Civil Wars and the resulting social dislocations had on provincials in the eighteenth century's first decades. Ranter and Quaker, royalist and regicide, parliamentarian and Fifth Monarchist—the war's political and spiritual protagonists remained a real presence to them fifty-plus years after the upheaval ended.

What we know of John Pearce's story is as potent an example of this as any. Born poor, probably not native to New Jersey, he had been in the colony's eastern division since the 1680s. He somehow became attached to the Quaker meeting in that decade, and in 1687, he petitioned it for a cow.[36] By 1701, the year Queen Anne royalized New Jersey's government, Pearce was caught in the middle of a theological divide that had originated in England in the 1650s. The upheavals of the 1640s had encouraged the appearance of new Christian sects in England. The Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers, is the best known of these, in large part because it has endured until today. But there were others, none more notorious than the Ranters.

The Ranters, if indeed they ever existed as a coherent movement or tendency in England, were rivals to and yet closely associated with the Quakers. Both began as antinomian movements driven by a belief in an inner-dwelling Holy Spirit and some form of direct divine revelations.[37] "Ranter" quickly became a term synonymous with "heretic" and "religious deviant" in the Anglo-American world. And it came to shape the lives of dispossessed or marginalized figures like John Pearce. He could not escape this historical-religious label that pushed him to the edge of Anglo-American society, and ultimately it formed his self-perception. Nor could he completely draw himself away from the New Jersey Ranters, whose

35. Minutes, Monthly Meetings of Friends, Oct. 19, 1706, Woodbridge, New Jersey, Friends Historical Library (microfilm), 33–34, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pa.

36. Ibid., Feb. 13, 1687, meeting held at Amboy.

37. Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution* (London, 1972); A. L. Morton, *The World of the Ranters: Religious Radicalism in the English Revolution* (London, 1970). This line of interpretation was challenged by J. C. Davis, *Fear, Myth, and History: The Ranters and the Historians* (Cambridge, 1986), bringing on a remarkably heated debate. See Mark Goldie, "Review of Fear, Myth, and History: The Ranters and the Historians," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, XXXIX (1988), 150–151; David Underdown, "Review of Fear, Myth, and History: The Ranters and the Historians," *Journal of Modern History*, XLI (1989), 592–594; Edward Thompson, "On the Rant," in Geoff Eley and William Hunt, eds., *Reviving the English Revolution: Reflections and Elaborations on the Work of Christopher Hill* (London, 1988), 160; Barry Reay, "The World Turned Upside Down: A Retrospect," ibid., 66–69; and J. C. Davis, "Fear, Myth, and Furore: Reappraising the Ranters, Reply," *Past and Present*, no. 140 (August 1993), 194–210. For overviews of early antinomian movements in colonial America, see Gura, *A Glimpse of Sion's Glory*, 63, 237–275; and Stephen Foster, *The Long Argument: English Puritanism and the Shaping of New England Culture, 1570–1700* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1991), 138–175.

"fair words" he repeatedly found so seductive. He was, in other words, a man marked by the past for his entire life. His letter to the Woodbridge Quaker meeting was followed by an additional letter declaring that he had indeed become one with "his dear friends. . . . and justifying the s:d separate Party." He accepted this persona and the condemnation that came with being identified with the kinds of sectarians that appeared in the years of civil war.[38]

The past's hold was not always so indirect. Memories of the Civil Wars defined lives into the eighteenth century. When Boston's William Parsons died in 1702 after eighty-eight years of life, Samuel Sewall marked him as a man of the tumultuous past whose most noteworthy moment came with his participation in "the fifth-monarchy fray in London" in 1661, a religiously inspired putsch against Charles II designed to bring on the rule of God on earth. These Fifth Monarchists believed that the reign of Jesus Christ was upon them, and in the wake of their failed coup, they were suppressed. Since then, Parsons had lived in exile on the empire's fringe, noteworthy only for that moment of millennial defiance four decades before.[39]

There were others still tied to that past, like "Edward Wale," who lived on Maryland's Eastern Shore until 1718. "Wale" was believed erroneously to be somehow connected to the regicide Edward Whalley (some even thought him the same man), and he apparently lived out his life the subject of local gossip about his imagined connections to the past. East-Hampton, New York's William Fithian was believed to have served in the New Model Army, seen Charles I executed, and come to America at the Restoration in order to avoid retribution. Often, these rumored historical connections are all we know of these lives.[40]

What is most amazing is the way that past held on in individual lives, refusing to lose contact with the present as it stretched forward. What weight did New Jersey governor Lewis Morris place on his father's service in the New Model Army during the Civil Wars and his namesake uncle's conversion to the Society of Friends long before it was fashionable? We are unsure, but he was well aware

38. Minutes, Monthly Meetings of Friends, Oct. 19, 1706, 33–34; "At a Monthly Meeting at Nathaniel ffitz-Randolph's in Woodbridge the 16th Day of the 7th. Month 1708," ibid.

39. *The Diary of Samuel Sewall*, II, *1699–1714*, MHS, *Collections*, 5th Ser., VI (Boston, 1929), 52.

40. J. Weeden, S. Johnpeter, and R. Nelson, "Records Are Remorseless as Regards Theory," paper published online, August 1998 (www.smokykin.com/regicide.htm); Robert Patterson Robins, "Edward Whalley, the Regicide," and "The Will of Edward Whalley," both in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, I (1877), 55–66; *Records of the Town of East-Hampton, Long Island*, III (Sag Harbor, N.Y., 1889), 2–3.

of both facts. Benjamin Rush claimed that knowledge of his ancestor who served in the New Model Army led him to explore republican ideas in Scotland in 1766. The son and grandchildren of the regicide judge John Dixwell, who had fled into hiding in New Haven, continued to struggle with the legacy of his actions into the time of the revolutionary crisis, when Massachusetts's last civilian royal governor, Thomas Hutchinson, made note of them. Hutchinson himself knew his ancestor, the famous antinomian Anne, had suffered public humiliation in Boston in the 1630s and drew comfort from her persecution when he faced his own political trials during the 1760s and 1770s. For them, the seventeenth century's tortured past was real, instructive, reprimanding, shaping, alive. It gave social meaning to these lives and countless others, reasserting itself again and again in unexpected ways.[41]

. . .

Oliver and Charles, William and Mary . . . and Empire

Eighteenth-century New York's prolific chronicler Cadwallader Colden understood both the promise of the identity of Briton and the danger that the British nation's history posed to a stable order. The former united the diverse and dispersed peoples of the empire in a common understanding of themselves. The latter, though, posed a threat to the empire, particularly the near past. "Our History," he wrote, "is not so well established as to serve as a Basis for such an enquiry." A "little away beyond our present times and so many will be found Interested in the Relation of Facts, that it will not be easy to agree on the Truth." The Civil Wars' ambiguous moral lessons and the inability to agree on a common understanding of events weakened the empire's conceptual foundations.[42]

By the 1740s, the colonies had come to be situated within a national historical framework that stretched back to Roman times. This history portrayed the Protestant Reformation and the arrival of the Hanoverian dynasty as the logical conclusion of Britain's development. The embrace of this history did not, however, bring stability to colonial political life. The near past's violent upheavals and

41. Eugene R. Sheridan, *Lewis Morris, 1671–1746: A Study in Early American Politics* (Syracuse, N.Y., 1981); Alan Craig Houston, *Algernon Sidney and the Republican Heritage in England and America* (Princeton, N.J., 1991), 225–226. The Dixwell Papers, contained within the Wigglesworth Papers, MHS, contain correspondence from the regicides' descendants. See also Hutchinson to [?], Thomas Hutchinson Letterbook, II, 12, microfilm, MHS.

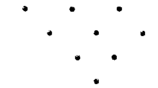
42. *Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden*, IX, *Additional Letters and Papers, 1749–1775, and Some of Colden's Writings*, NYHS, *Collections*, LXVIII (New York, 1937), 253.

disorders could provoke a wide range of emotional responses in the eighteenth century, which is why writers and politicians invoked them. Such manipulations were especially dangerous in the first British empire because it was the passions, expressed in the written and spoken word as well as in political rites, that held the extended nation together.

4

THE PASSIONS OF EMPIRE

AFFECTION, DESIRE, AND THE BONDS OF NATION IN THE BRITISH ATLANTIC



In the Stamp Act's aftermath, Parliament investigated the provincials' violent response to the legislation. By English standards, the stamp tax was mild, and the London government assumed that the unrest must have had some other origins. Like historians two hundred years later, members of Parliament sought answers to this troubling question in the past, in the years before 1765. In their case, they picked as trenchant and treacherous an informant as one could possibly imagine: Benjamin Franklin—scientist, diplomat, printer, writer, inventor, "Franklin, of Philadelphia" as he referred to himself with studied restraint at the opening of his interview. For several hours, MPs questioned Franklin about those now-unsettled provinces on the British Atlantic world's far rim. At a critical moment, they asked about provincial political attitudes in the decades before the outbreak of resistance to parliamentary authority. The Sage of Philadelphia assured the members that the Americans' temper toward Britain was the "best in the world. They submitted willingly to the government of the Crown." In fact, he insisted, "they were led by a thread. They had not only a respect, but an affection, for Great-Britain, for its laws, its customs and manners."[1]

Franklin had voiced one of the empire's central truths: the passions, focused and tempered by political rites and print culture, gave the first British empire coherence. Protestant political culture rested on love for the king, fear of Catho-

1. *The Examination of Doctor Benjamin Franklin, before an August Assembly, relating to the Repeal of the Stamp-Act, Etc.* ([Philadelphia, 1766]), 3–4. Passion in the eighteenth century has been explored by a number of scholars. See Roland Greene, *Unrequited Conquests: Love and Empire in the Colonial Americas* (Chicago, 1999), as well as the work of Julie Ellison. See also Paul Downes, *Democracy, Revolution, and Monarchism in Early American Literature* (Cambridge, 2002).

lics, and the desire to consume in emulation of the British gentry. The imperial contract, the elaborate monarchical rites, and the unique historical time lines constructed in the print culture channeled these imperial passions. This is what those aspects of the British state were designed to do—link provincial emotions to the empire's motifs and symbols. The passions of empire were visualized in political spectacle; historical and political writers gave meaning in time to those emotions. The appeal to these feelings became part of formal governmental and political discourse through official decrees and proclamations.

Although the troika of love, fear, and desire proved a powerful imperial foundation, it was markedly different from the emotional structures created in the home islands by a political order dominated by extensive patronage ties, the state church, long established custom, and a tightly controlled land tenure system. In the most abstract sense, it may be said that, in the provinces, attachment to the monarchy was passionate, created by rites and print culture, whereas in England it was "normal," meaning the social structure, land tenure system, and customs supported it. This divergence left the monarch's person and political character open to a spectrum of subjective understandings in the colonies and the empire in aggregate.

. . .

"This Celestial Venus": The Empire of Love, the Love of Empire

John Wise looked deeply within his own soul during his emotional efforts to reconcile the New England Way to metropolitan expectations. Surveying the jumbled riot of institutions that together amounted to the first British empire early in the eighteenth century, Wise expressed the hope that something more would unite the dispersed dominions than the institutional similarity that some imperial officials hoped to impose on the colonies. He publicly prayed that "the Great ANNE, our Wise and Protestant Princess," would live to see "all the *Protestant Churches* thro' her vast Empire, more vertuous and more united." That unity, he thought, could only be achieved if their common focus became "their Love and Loyal Actions in Her Person and Government. Let Her Most Excellent Majesty, next to Christ, continue absolute in Her Empire over their hearts." Only in that manner would she win "all the Fame of Rule and Soveraignty from her Royal Progenitors, who could never so charm such Mighty Nations."[2]

We have been conditioned by our modern society to understand love as a personal emotional tie and empire as the end product of institutional violence

2. John Wise, *The Churches Quarrel Espoused; or, A Reply in Satyre, to Certain Proposals Made . . .* (Boston, 1715), 24–25.

and cultural hegemony. Love of country is often derided as a manifestation of false consciousness. But emotions in the first British empire worked differently. As they embraced a Protestant, British identity and the Protestant succession, provincial Americans shifted their perception of the monarch from a dreaded ruler to an object of affection who would arbitrate all imperial relationships. Love came to be seen as a governing principle expressed in public behaviors throughout the society. The tie between master and subordinate was explained as an affectionate one; love of country was seen as the highest social virtue, and rulers were believed to be devoted to their charges. Theoretically, a loving bond came to exist between every subject and the monarch, a tie that held the empire together.

If the seventeenth-century upheavals taught just one lesson, it was that kings could not be trusted. The settlement of the Glorious Revolution reflected this. By situating sovereignty in Parliament and invoking the ancient constitution that stretched back to Magna Charta, the expanding British nation sought to control royal prerogative and stifle royal personalities bent on the sins of constitutional innovation or absolute power. In the decades immediately after 1688, provincials retained this fear of their monarch, even their deliverer from popery, William III. In fact, the legitimating of William by his military prowess, stern Calvinism, and his supposed providential connection encouraged distance rather than affection. He was still the "dread soveraigne" imagined in colonial petitions to monarchs before and after 1688. And yet, by the end of George I's reign, the primary bond of empire was no longer fear, but a love shared between ruler and subject.[3]

The imperatives conveyed by Protestant theology and political theory lay at the root of the empire's political-emotional transformation. One early-seventeenth-century English writer summed up succinctly the relationship between Protestant Christianity and this socially binding love when he wrote, "There is in us by nature no spark of love at all, if Christ by his loving of us did not first instill love into us." Seventeenth-century colonists prided themselves on the Protestant Christian love that held them together. As religious imperatives in whole or part structured their societies, this ideal became the subject of frequent public discussion. Robert Barclay, writing from Boston in 1677, entitled his meditation on Christian order *Universal Love Considered, and Established upon Its Right Foundation*. "Christian Love," he wrote, "and Charity is fully . . . described in the Holy Scriptures, where it is preferred before all other Virtues and prop-

3. J. G. A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law: A Study of English Historical Thought in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1987); Richard L. Bushman, *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1985), 47. Bushman discusses the character of petitions to the monarchy at some length (46–54).

erties." Virtue "proceedeth from Love; hence God himself is called *Love* . . . By this *Love* we are Redeemed from the Corruption of our Nature." The true Christian spent his time loving God. This love was above "the Love of Self, the Love of the World, the Love of any Creature." In the colonies, at least, the transference of this emotional language into the Protestant political culture would alter understanding of the monarchy. By 1740, colonials saw the king as a caring figure who expressed his affections to them in royal proclamations, in political rites, and in his behavior as reported by the colonial newspapers.[4]

This Protestant affection became a powerful strut that supported the Glorious Revolution's settlement. As Anglo-American political culture defined itself in opposition to fearsome, absolutist Catholic monarchs, it created an imperative for Protestant British monarchs to invoke love to explain their rule. Law and custom supposedly bound these Protestant monarchs, who were seen to be paternalistic and somehow emotionally open. When George II took the throne, the *American Weekly Mercury* reported that he "express[ed] the Sentiments of My Heart . . . by all possible means, to Merit the Love of my People, which I shall always look upon as the best Support and Security of My Crown." When George's son Frederick died at midcentury, the *Boston Weekly News-Letter* described him as "heartily convinced the Felicity of a Prince depends on the Love and Affection of his People." Frederick strove to "cultivate that Love and Affection" with his every action, according to this Boston writer. The monarch, this beloved figure, would protect the empire, preserve the Protestant political culture, and arbitrate the imperial constitution for the good of his loving subjects.[5]

Official actions were explained in this affectionate rhetoric as love supposedly guided officials. Each provincial official acted as patriarch of his own trust, right down to the town fathers in the rawest frontier community, and each was supposed to cultivate the love of those in his charge. As early as 1689, John Blackwell commented to Pennsylvania proprietor William Penn that "you desire me to Rule by love and persuasion (the Rationall Sceptre and Empire) rather than by Rigour" over the new Quaker colony in America.[6]

The inclusion of the trope of love in imperial decrees amplified its impact and

4. Conrad Russell, *The Causes of the English Civil War: The Ford Lectures Delivered in the University of Oxford, 1987–1988* (Oxford, 1990), 64; Robert Barclay, *Universal Love Considered, and Established upon Its Right Foundation* . . . ([Boston], 1677), 4–6.

5. *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), Sept. 7–14, 1727; *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, June 13, 1751.

6. John Blackwell to William Penn, Jan. 13, 1689, Philadelphia, John Blackwell Letters, 1688–1690, HSP.

gave it formal meaning. In 1733, Viscount Howe assured the Council of Barbados that George II's "gracious Love extends to all his Subjects." Howe intended to act as the agent of that affection in the sugar islands. Imperial addresses and decrees like this, in their actual deliveries and subsequent reproduction in print, were the primary means by which people received the king's affections. Typical in this regard was the rationale purported to be George II's for the War of Jenkins's Ear in 1739. "I have," he said to Parliament, "upon all Occasions, declared, how sensibly I have been affected with the many Hardships and Injuries sustained by my Trading Subjects in *America*." The true interests of his people were "to[o] much at Heart" to allow them to continue to suffer Spanish abuses. At the opening of hostilities, the London government linked this love to action when it instructed Maryland's Governor Ogle to "grant commissions of Marque and Reprisal to any of Our loving subjects" so that they might raid Spanish shipping.[7] Nathaniel Ames's *An Astronomical Diary; or, An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord Christ, 1752* summed up the role of these affectionate links in the imperial order: "Look round our World; behold the Chain of Love / Combining all below, and all above." Such was the expectation and the hope of authority in the eighteenth-century empire. So successfully had this trope been planted that, at the Seven Years' War's end, Thomas Pownall would write that "nothing can eradicate from their [provincials'] hearts their natural, almost mechanical, affection to Great Britain, which they . . . call . . . home."[8]

The ability of this emotional language to shape perception was evidenced in 1765, when the delegates at the Stamp Act Congress wrote to their king of their devotion and "affection." Their hearts were "impressed with the most indelible Characters of Gratitude to your Majesty, and to the Memory of the Kings of your Illustrious House." The Hanoverians' actions across the eighteenth century gave repeated proof "of your Majesty's Paternal Love to all your People." In the same moment, the governor and council of Pennsylvania sent their "unfeigned Assurances that our Hearts" remained bound to king and country. Even the rioters who broke into South Carolinian Henry Laurens's home searching for stamped paper in 1765 expressed their "love" for him after finding nothing. Love bound the empire, and love governed it.[9]

7. *American Weekly Mercury*, June 7–14, 1733; *New-York Weekly Journal*, Apr. 30, 1739; "Colonial Militia, 1740, 1748," in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, VI (1911), 44.

8. Nathaniel Ames, *An Astronomical Diary; or, An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord Christ, 1752* (Boston, [1751]); [Thomas Pownall], *The Administration of the Colonies* (London, 1764), 25.

9. Bushman, *King and People*, 48–49; George Edward Reed, ed., *Pennsylvania Archives*,

The love that bound the empire was supposed to be tempered, ensuring monarchical control in the polity. As one Jerseyman declared in 1747, left to themselves, "the hearts of Men Naturally are filled with perverse and Rebellious principles." Thus the heart needed to be harnessed to the cause of good order in a just empire. "The Passions," one observer noted, "are all good in themselves, if directed to proper Objects, and do not exceed in Measure, the Excellency of their Objects." The passions "and Affections are not to be Eradicated . . . but Regulated." Only such a tempering could produce a natural, ordered society. Presbyterian minister Samuel Davies concurred, believing, as he preached in Delaware in 1748, that all man's "*Affections* must be *regular* and *governable*, otherwise he *cou'd not keep* the Law." The monarch was, as John Wise noted, the highest object of appropriate affection on earth, and each level of society should receive its proper measure of love. Indeed, political society was designed to allow the passions to flow in channels that reinforced rather than eroded the established order. Language and ritual assured that emotions did not swamp good order.[10]

From 1688 to 1775, colonists used affectionate tropes to describe key imperial relationships. But to shape meaning, this rhetoric needed to have physical expression in human behavior. Certainly, political rites played a key role in asserting the royal family's goodness. That these rites celebrated the Hanoverians' life cycle and the development of Protestantism in England only heightened their emotional impact. Beneath the macro level of public rites, though, a host of social conventions encouraged provincials to understand the imperial power structure as one of affection. These customs normalized access to resources, to positions of respect and honor, and to one's fellow subjects. The imperial emotional structure, like the social structure, looked like a wedding cake, with clear hierarchies. The social customs that expressed these affections made clear the ordering of society.

Perhaps the most important act of affection in colonial political society was treating. The king's government provided treats on royal holidays, on days of legal or political ceremony, or after military victories. For a social superior to give entertainment to inferiors in order to express gratitude for political, military, or economic support became a universal custom. In September 1733, the government of Antigua treated the island's white population to "Bonfires and Illuminations . . . Two Oxen Roasted Whole, and . . . a great Quantity of Liquor"

4th Ser., III, *Papers of the Governors, 1759–1785* (Harrisburg, 1900), 320; Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York, 1991), 91.

10. *NJA*, VII, 71–72; *American Weekly Mercury*, Sept. 11–18, 1729; Samuel Davies, *A Sermon on Man's Primitive State; and the First COVENANT. Delivered before the Reverend Presbytery of New-Castle, April 13th, 1748* (Philadelphia, 1748), 18–19.

in the form of "several Hogsheads of Beer and Wine" after Parliament repealed a sugar regulation that was damaging the island's economy. "J. Brenton, Esq.," of Newport, Rhode Island, treated the town's artillery company (of which he was a captain) to a "handsome Dinner" after they "made their first publick Appearance in their Dress . . . [and] . . . performed the Manual Exercise . . . to the Satisfaction of a great Number of Spectators." Captain Brenton used public training as an opportunity to show his devotion to those beneath him. In return, he expected acceptance of his status as community leader. All the colonial gentry followed this practice; when the New England militia won its miraculous 1745 victory at Louisbourg, Bostonians celebrated all day. In the evening, the royal government provided a bonfire, fireworks, and casks of wine to the assembled mass.[11]

If treating expressed the social contract on a local level, hand kissing made visible the role of affection in establishing one's place in the imperial order. Colonial newspapers actually carried accounts of those who earned the ultimate honor, kissing the monarch's hand. In 1706, the *Boston News-Letter* reported that London's mayor and councilmen received an audience with Queen Anne, who "very graciously . . . admit[ted] them to the Honour of kissing Her Hand." In 1708, Bay Colonist Jonathan Belcher wrote breathlessly to his brother that he had journeyed to Hanover and met with Princess Sophia, heiress to the British throne by virtue of Protestant genealogy. The princess "called me by my name" and then "pulled off her Glove" so that he might kneel and "kis's her Hand." He remembered this thrill clearly forty years later. The princess had recognized him, and he had been allowed to express his subordination. In 1721, the much traveled royal retainer Sir Francis Nicholson, appointed governor of South Carolina, "had the Honour to kiss His Majesty's Hand" when he formally received his posting. Such acts upheld the perception that affection as much as power maintained hierarchy in the British polity.[12]

The centrality of such affectionate acts to the political order is nowhere more apparent than in the actions of the father of our country at the dawn of his public life. George Washington's role in the Seven Years' War established his reputation as a military leader. Close examination of his activities in that sprawling conflict provides us with a view of a Washington very different from the one we know, of a provincial man with aspirations to rise in the imperial power structure. And,

11. *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, Sept. 13–20, 1733, Sept. 27, 1744, July 4, 1745.

12. *Boston News-Letter*, Nov. 11–18, 1706; Jonathan Belcher, Sr., to his brother and Captain Foster, Nov. 16, 1708, London, Belcher Papers, General MSS Collection, Special Collections, MHS; *Boston News-Letter*, July 17–24, 1721. For another example, see William Logan to John Smith at Burlington, [1760s?], John Smith Letterbook, HSP.

if we understand that love helped hold the empire together, it should come as little surprise that we find him writing to Virginia's lieutenant governor, Francis Fauquier, in late 1758, anxious to earn the "honor of kissing your hand, about the 25th instant." As Washington well knew, to rise in the empire, one sometimes needed to kneel and kiss authority's hand.[13]

Love, the celestial Venus, bound one subject to another and helped to structure social relationships in a Protestant political culture. Bound in affection, Britons on both sides of the Atlantic were supposed to be free to enjoy their liberties and properties. But the eighteenth century was not the Age of Aquarius. Love governed, but fear ruled. The two, love and fear, held the empire together.

• • •

Romaphobia: The Fear of Catholics and the Character of British Liberty

In 1754, the king's loyal subjects in Maryland moved to deal with a dangerous element among them: Catholics. "Some Measures," it was reported, "were thought necessary to be taken in order to put a Check to the Papists within that Province." The situation seemed urgent, "as the French are encroaching on all his Majesty's Territories on this Continent, and spiriting up the Indians to make Incursions and commit Hostilities on his Majesty's Subjects." Two men particularly concerned the assemblymen, who determined that "an exact Enquiry may be made into the Matter contained in certain Depositions therewith delivered, against one Gerard Jordan, jun., and Joseph Broadway, of St. Mary's County." Their apparent crimes were "obstructing the raising his Majesty's Levies" and toasting the Stuart Pretender. Prodded by his assembly, the province's governor offered a twenty-pound reward for the two Papists' capture.[14]

The idea that a provincial governor and assembly would devote such attention to two men accused essentially of toasting seems strange to us today. But the toast, like hand kissing, played an important public role in displays of political loyalty, and to British Americans, drinking to the Stuart Pretender was deadly serious business. The intense fear that permeated provincial society—of Catholics, popery, the Pretender, the European Catholic powers and their Indian allies—also helped hold the empire together. Initially, this fear legitimated Britain's Dutch- and German-born rulers and rallied the empire against its foreign enemies. Over time, though, provincial elites also used antipopery and anti-Catholicism as instruments of social control. In the first, royal America, the expansive liberty that provincials believed their birthright was realized in religious intolerance, ethnic suspicion, and political fear. It was an empire of demons as much as one of love.

Fear of Catholics grew from the dynastic and religious problems of sixteenth-century England. The bitter seventeenth- and eighteenth-century conflicts amplified these feelings and made denouncement of popish governments and Catholics a stock-in-trade of English print culture. Anti-Catholic feelings expanded dramatically in the period from the massacres of Protestansts in France through the time of the Spanish Armada, and antipopery played an important and apparently underappreciated role in provoking the English Civil Wars.[15]

The particular themes of eighteenth-century antipopish literature that became common in the provinces can be traced to England in the period between 1679 and 1689. In that decade, the realm went through the fears of a Popish Plot, the Exclusion Crisis, the expulsion of Protestants from France, and the Glorious Revolution. A massive upwelling in antipopish literature began as the ascent of James, Duke of York, Charles II's Catholic brother, took on the air of inevitability. Speakers denounced the sins of Rome as mobs burned papal effigies. Pamphlets, broadsides, and sermons came pouring out of London's publishing quarters, each trying to outdo the other in highlighting Catholicism's seditious and subversive nature. James's subsequent overthrow did nothing to dampen this trend. Lurid antipopery, for lack of a better term, flooded the empire's print culture after 1688–1689.[16]

13. George Washington to Francis Fauquier, Dec. 9, 1758, in George Reese, ed., *The Official Papers of Francis Fauquier, Lieutenant Governor of Virginia, 1758–1768*, I (Charlottesville, Va., 1981), 130–131.

14. *New-York Gazette; or, the Weekly Post-Boy*, June 24, 1754. For a modern study of English anti-Catholicism, see Colin Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism in Eighteenth-Century England, c. 1714–80: A Political and Social Study* (Manchester, 1993).

15. Russell, *Causes of the English Civil War*, 73–74.

16. Tim Harris, *Politics under the Later Stuarts: Party Conflict in a Divided Society* (London, 1993), 80–116; J. R. Western, *Monarchy and Revolution: The English State in the 1680s* (London, 1972). *Historical Journal* carried a number of articles on these themes in the 1980s and 1990s. The burning of papal effigies actually had its origins in the celebration of Saint Hugh's Day, November 17, which was also the day of Elizabeth I's coronation. It was then adopted as a practice on November 5. See Peter Shaw, *American Patriots and the Rituals of Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), 204–207. The discussion of antipopery in the American provinces, particularly in the seventeenth century, is limited. For the impact in New York, the best statement is John M. Murrin, "English Rights as Ethnic Aggression: The English Conquest, the Charter of Liberties of 1683, and Leisler's Rebellion in New York," in William Pencak and Conrad Edick Wright, eds., *Authority and Resistance in Early New York* (New York, 1988), 56–94. For a very useful discussion, see also J. C. D. Clark, *The*

A broadside that circulated in provinces in 1689 captured perfectly the intensifying anti-Catholicism and the perception that the new monarchs, William and Mary, had saved the nation from popery. *Popery Pickled; or, The Jesuits Shooes Made of Running Leather* assured its readers and listeners that "Would you have a new Play acted / Would you see it just begun / Popery is run Distracted / And the Priests are all undone / Now you'll see their Beads and Crosses / All lie Prostrate on the Ground." In 1698, a Yorker declared that, had not William and Mary seized the throne, Papists would have "fetter'd all Europe," and pan-European Protestantism would have been undone. Bay colonist John Marshall, who labeled William III's death a "grave blow to all Europe" in his diary because the Anglo-Dutch monarch was the Protestant interest's chief defender, suggests colonials' internalization of these views. Nathaniel Whittemore's Boston almanac asked heaven to protect George I from "Popish Plots and all his Foes may Heaven him secure / That he and his for Protestants while Sun and Moon indure." Skulking Catholics, foreign Catholics, Jesuits, Jacobites—these were the agents of fear in the empire. They encouraged Protestant subjects to cling to one another and to their Protestant ruler.[17]

Anglo-American writers used comparison to the Catholic kingdoms to help define the new identity of Britishness. Catholic rulers and Catholicism were so bad, maintained Robert Stevens of South Carolina in 1711, that the Yamassee Indians returned to their "Ancient Atheism" after "they had been instructed by the Spainards in the principales of the Popish Religion from whence they fled . . . to live under the mild Government of the English." Anglo-American writers constantly drew such contrasts without any sense that their own persecutions of Catholics mirrored those suffered by Protestants in Catholic lands.[18]

Although France and Spain were the primary points of comparison, provincial writers obsessed about the persecution of Protestants anywhere. The *American Weekly Mercury* reported in March 1720 on the "extreme Violences" launched by Catholic bishops against Polish Protestants in several provinces. The persecutions were supposed to have been reported to "his *Britannick* Majesty," who,

Language of Liberty, 1660–1832 (Cambridge, 1994). Also helpful is David S. Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America* (New York, 1972). But the entire topic is underexplored.

17. *Popery Pickled; or, The Jesuits Shooes Made of Running Leather* (London, 1689); Isaac Addington, *An Answer to a Letter from a Gentleman of New Yorke* (Boston, 1698), 2; John Marshall diary, May 1702, Braintree, Mass., MHS; [Nathaniel Whittemore], *An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord, 1716* ([Boston], 1716).

18. Robert Stevens to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (hereafter cited as SPG), [1711?], South Carolina, SPG microfilm, reel 17.

as a leader of the Protestant cause, expressed his appropriate outrage. Colonials read into every such incident their own fate if the Hanoverians should fall.[19]

The permeation of such thinking about Catholics and Catholic princes into everyday life is nowhere more evident than in the tutor Philip Fithian's account of an evening of casual diversion in prerevolutionary Virginia. After drinking and dancing, the group decided to engage in one of its favorite activities, playing "Break the popes neck." Colonel Philip Lee was "chosen *Pope*, and Mr Carter, Mr Christian, Mrs *Carter*, Mrs *Lee*, and the rest of the company were appointed Friars. . . . Here we had great Diversion." It is hardly surprising that they should enjoy such games. From early childhood, provincials were taught to mock the pope, deride his image, and denounce his behavior. It wasn't just the little boys who dragged hideous pope effigies through the streets. Peter Oliver remembered that every child who learned to read from the *New England Primer* each morning faced a drawing of the pope with darts on his face on the cover. In this worldview, all destructive or antisocial behavior could be construed as either coming from Catholics, having Catholic characteristics, or threatening to bring Catholicism somehow back to Britain.[20]

The creation of an ethnically compound empire intersected with this intense "Romaphobia" and, over time, antipopish language came to express anxiety about British America's ethnic strangers. It was a double-sided blade. Provincials imagined the empire as a haven for Protestants across Europe fleeing, as one German from Strasbourg put it, "the civil and religious oppressions which my country is subject to under an arbitrary and Romish government." Yet Protestants seeking asylum arrived as cultural aliens. Such strangers appeared subversive to the British identity feverishly being inculcated in the empire. William Smith reported in his *Brief State of the Province of Pennsylvania* that the Germans who had entered the colony between 1700 and 1750 were in danger of being corrupted by French priests determined to introduce "the Horrors of *Popish* Slavery" into the backcountry. Smith demanded immediate language and civic instructions to bring them into a British identity. Virginia's Governor Dinwiddie warned Robert Hunter Morris in 1755 of the serious "Dangers we are in from the German Roman Catholicks" living on the Pennsylvania frontier.[21]

19. *American Weekly Mercury*, Mar. 1, 1719/20.

20. Hunter Dickinson Farish, ed., *Journal and Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian, 1773–1774: A Plantation Tutor of the Old Dominion* (Williamsburg, Va., 1957), 34; Douglass Adair and John A. Schutz, eds., *Peter Oliver's Origin and Progress of the American Rebellion: A Tory View* (Stanford, Calif., 1961), 94.

21. John Richard Alden, *John Stuart and the Southern Colonial Frontier* (Ann Arbor,

The oaths given to culturally alien immigrants expressed these fears and became a means of controlling outsiders. Each immigrant was supposed to own the new imperial mean given voice by Jacob Smith, a German settler in Pennsylvania. During his naturalization oath, he swore he was "a Protestant" and would be "true to our Sovereign Lord King GEORGE." In an extreme form of such vows, German settlers in rural New York affirmed, "I do from my Heart abhor, detest, and abjure as . . . Heretical that damnable doctrine. . . . that Princes excommunicated . . . [by] . . . the See of Rome, may be deposed and murthered by their Subjects." The same oath called on its takers to denounce "any of the Descendents of the person who pretended to be Prince of Wales during the life Time of the late King James the Second" and deny that they had any right to the throne. Finally, and most startlingly, the oath takers were forced to swear that they did not believe in transubstantiation and that they did not adore the Virgin Mary or engage in any other "Idolatrous" practices.[22]

Over time, the anti-Catholic rhetoric came to be used to control native-born British Americans as circumstances demanded it. Real Jacobite conspiracies in the home islands reinforced this fear of popish subversion from within. Authorities used such fears to encourage the population to examine and if necessary alert them to anyone or anything that seemed Catholic and thus dangerous.[23]

An example of the use of antipopery for social policing occurred in New York City in 1741. The authorities attributed a series of fires in the city to a Catholic-tainted slave conspiracy. At the plot's center, officials declared, stood a priest who had entered New York covertly, "a principal promoter" of the "most horrible and Detestable" conspiracy "brooded in a Conclave of Devils, and hatcht in the Cabinet of Hell." The lower orders both black and white were purportedly drawn in by an "infamous Oath." Ominously, a woman allegedly kissed a book, a sure sign of impending Catholic tyranny. As one provincial reported, without any sense of irony, during the aftermath, "the Old proverb has herein also been verifyed That there is Scarce a plot but a priest is at the Bottom of it."[24]

1944), 353; [William Smith], *A Brief State of the Province of Pennsylvania* (1755; rpt. New York, 1865), 32–34, 34n; "Governor Dinwiddie to Governor Morris, September 20th, 1755," in R. A. Brock, ed., *The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie* . . . , II, Virginia Historical Society, *Collections*, N.S., IV (Richmond, Va., 1884), 207.

22. Shippen Family Papers, box 1, APS; Milton W. Hamilton, ed., *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, VIII (Albany, 1933), 653–656.

23. See *New-England Courant*, Oct. 1–8, 1722; *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, Feb. 20, 1752.

24. Daniel Horsmanden to Cadwallader Colden, Aug. 7, 1741, *The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden*, II, 1730–1742, NYHS, *Collections*, LI (New York, 1919), 225; Horsmanden, *The New York Conspiracy*, ed. Thomas J. Davis (Boston, 1971), 60.

Some of the slaves were actually sailors captured by New York privateers in the Spanish Caribbean. Thus nationality and religion as well as race made them suspect. The New York authorities believed these bondsmen retained their affections for Spain and Catholicism. In actuality, they had been free men as Spanish subjects and bitterly resented being sold into slavery. Fear of them ran so deep in the general population that, at one point, frightened New Yorkers had chanted *"the Spanish negroes; the Spanish negroes"* in the city's streets to force the authorities to suppress them. Authorities interrogated dozens of slaves, servants, and poorer whites and placed strict controls on them. Officials searched homes for stolen goods and passed legislation against those who might sell slaves liquor. Executions followed; authorities burned thirteen slaves and hanged seventeen more, along with four whites. Others were transported, and across the Hudson, in Hackensack, New Jersey, freeholders burned several slaves who reputedly set fires.[25]

The incident (real or imagined) also led the city's aldermen and Governor George Clarke to order a closer watch on all immigrants and strangers, who might be secret Catholic agents. The aldermen approved a house-to-house search designed in part to uncover strangers who might be trying to incite rebellion. Governor Clarke ordered the militia to assist this search and encouraged the king's subjects to "inquire concerning all . . . Strangers . . . obscure People that have no visible way of Subsistence." He feared that "popish emissaries" had been sent to the city "under disguises, such as DANCING MASTERS, SCHOOL MASTERS, PHISICIANS, and such like" so that "they may easily gain admittance into Families" and seduce the young and the weak. Cadwallader Colden wrote a detailed account of just such a "teacher" who "called himself Luke Barington," a "Stranger in this Neighbourhood at the time of the Negro Conspiracy." An Irishman, he had "traveld into Italy . . . there turn'd roman Catholick." He had set himself up in New York City as a schoolteacher shortly before the conspiracy, cavorted with Irish Catholic servants, refused to drink George II's health, and reportedly pledged his allegiance to Philip of Spain. It was feared that such actions would encourage others, and Catholicism and absolutism would replace an empire of Protestant love. In the end, Barrington turned out to be the failed son of a minor gentleman in the home islands, a threat solely to his family reputation, nothing more.[26]

25. Horsmanden, *The New York Conspiracy*, ed. Davis, 28, 39, 50, 386.

26. Ibid., 33; *New-York Weekly Journal*, Aug. 9, 1742; Colden to Daniel Horsmanden, July 29, 1742, in *The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden*, VIII, *Additional Letters and Papers, 1715–1748*, NYHS, *Collections*, LXVII (New York, 1937), 288–289.

Similar reasoning created doubts about Maryland's Catholics during the wars with the French at midcentury. In 1745, at the outbreak of King George's War, Maryland's Governor Thomas Bladen expressed fears about his colony's Catholic population. Specifically, he believed that Jesuit emissaries were working among the Native Americans deep in the province's interior to turn them to the French interest. He demanded action to control those populations and assure their loyalty to the British cause. In 1754, Virginia's Governor Dinwiddie reported to the London authorities that Catholics constituted more than one-third of neighboring Maryland's population. "I fear," he continued, "they w'd be glad of any Conquest [of the Chesapeake by the French and Indians] y't w'd establish their religion."[27]

It was not the actual number of Catholics that in the end frightened imperial officials. The fear of internal subversion, of Britons turning to Catholicism and Catholic ways, expressed a starkly Calvinist view of the human soul. In that worldview, Protestantism and British Protestant liberty demanded much. It should not be confused with the ultralibertarianism of postmodern society. There was always a danger that that which was asked was too much, that the individual soul might be seduced by Catholic spectacle and the range of emotions it could create. Awe seems to have been the most dangerous of these emotions, coupled to a craving for idolatry. One of those condemned as a secret Catholic during the New York unrest in 1741 asked of his accusers, "Now how come these persons to know so much, to be acquainted with priests and their secrets?" Although shouted in desperation, it was a question they asked themselves (in an abstract sense) more than we might now acknowledge. Fear of the empire's Papist enemies expressed an anxiety about themselves and their own innate depraved tendencies.[28]

As strange as it may now seem in our world of unchecked democracy, religious bigotry helped define British liberties. Exclusion of Catholics from the empire's political and social council framed the parameters of British liberties and properties. Difference was suspect and the absorption of cultural aliens into the em-

27. "Proceedings of the Council of Maryland, 1745/6. At a Council Held at the House of His Excellency the Governor in the City of Annapolis . . . ," Feb. 24, 1745/6, *Proceedings of the Council of Maryland, 1732–1753*, XXVIII, Archives of Maryland Online, 353; Dinwiddie to Secretary Robinson, Sept. 23, 1754, in R. A. Brock, ed., *The Official Records of Robert Dinwiddie . . .*, I, Virginia Historical Society, *Collections*, III (Richmond, Va., 1883), 323.

28. Horsmanden, *New York Conspiracy*, ed. Davis, 367. Russell, *Causes of the English Civil War*, cogently comments that England's sixteenth-century iconoclasts feared the seductive powers of the images they destroyed (77).

pire's shared identities—Protestant, Briton, free—was the highest goal of those who generated political print culture. Internal deviance, particularly of a political nature, was referenced to Catholicism, France, and the Stuart Pretender as a means of controlling it.[29]

This fear insinuated itself into the epistemological base of provincial thinking where reason meets passion, and it never let go of those who lived within its grasp. One New Yorker writing in 1810 vividly remembered that the power "the English government" got from fear of Catholics led them "to cherish this animosity." Those who had lived before the war, he continued, were "religiously" taught to "abhor the Pope, Devil and Pretender." Visualized in the effigies of November 5, blamed for every historical disaster that had overtaken Protestants, denounced in oaths, in print, and in toast, the Protestant apocalypse's three riders were among the empire's strongest supports. It is critical to understand the passions of empire as real things that shaped behavior. People loved the king and feared his enemies in large part because they participated in a ritual cycle that encouraged these emotions. They read a print culture saturated with words of affection for the monarch and a dread of Catholics. And they spoke in a political-religious idiom that incorporated these emotions.[30]

Material desires made these emotional ties to empire part of everyday life. Over time, the consumption of British goods took on overt political meaning as products linked to the monarchy became common in the American colonies. These goods allowed provincials to visualize the passions of empire in their own lives.

. . .

Envy, Desire, and the Commodification of Monarchy

In 1772, the *Massachusetts Gazette and Boston News-Letter* carried an ad aimed at combating one of the eighteenth century's worst tyrants: tooth decay. The era was, among other things, a time of great dental misery. Doctors and merchants answered the demand created by disfigurement and pain. One such pseudo-dentist, Jacob Hemet, recommended to the Boston public "his newly discovered Essence of Pearl, and Pearl Dentifrice, which he has found to be greatly superior . . . in elegance . . . also in efficacy, to any thing hitherto made use of for complaints of the Teeth and Gums." But Hemet realized that his product's strongest draw was the teeth of his most famous clients, "her Majesty, and the Princess Amelia."[31]

29. *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, Jan. 9, 1755.

30. Horsmanden, *New York Conspiracy*, ed. Davis, 2.

31. *Massachusetts Gazette and Boston News-Letter*, Apr. 16, 1772.

It is hard to imagine that essence of pearl might play as meaningful a role in instructing us about the provincial order and empire as court records, a preacher's sermon, or an Enlightenment writer. Scholars, however, have correctly established that provincials consumed British goods with abandon, that gender differences shaped consumption and were shaped by it, and that commercial demands set off ripple effects throughout the imperial economy. Imperial trade lay at the foundation of eighteenth-century political economy.

The efforts to link these changes to political transformation in the empire have, however, been fraught with difficulty. The intersection of consumption and change in the period seems obvious. Printed materials moved along trade networks as both product and vehicles of advertisement. The bitter paper money disputes that wracked the colonial polities in the eighteenth century were tied directly to increased consumption. The initial conversion experiences in the Great Awakening have been convincingly linked to a guilty reaction to the spread of consumer culture, and consumer boycotts were at the core of imperial protest until 1774. But consumption of British goods also integrated the empire economically and culturally, even as commercial ambitions created real social disruptions.[32]

32. The most important study to date is that of T. H. Breen; see Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (New York, 2004); Breen, "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690–1776," *Journal of British Studies*, XXV (1986), 467–499; and Breen, "'Baubles of Britain': The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century," in *Past and Present*, no. 119 (May 1988), 73–104. See also J. E. Crowley, *This Sheba, Self: The Conceptualization of Economic Life in Eighteenth-Century America*, Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, Ser. 92, no. 2 (Baltimore, 1974). The literature on consumption in the Anglo-American world in the eighteenth century is extensive and growing. Some of the most important studies since the 1960s are Ralph Davis, *A Commercial Revolution: English Overseas Trade in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century* (London, 1967); W. E. Minchinton, ed., *The Growth of English Overseas Trade in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (London, 1969); Winifred B. Rothenberg, "The Market and Massachusetts Farmers, 1750–1855," *Journal of Economic History*, XLI (1981), 283–314; Joan Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects: The Development of a Consumer Society in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1978); Carole Shammas, "How Self-Sufficient Was Early America?" *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, XIII, no. 2 (Autumn 1982), 247–272; Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J. H. Plumb, eds., *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (Bloomington, Ind., 1982); Lorena S. Walsh, "Urban Amenities and Rural Sufficiency: Living Standards and Consumer Behavior in the Colonial Chespeake, 1643–1777," *Journal of Economic History*, XLIII (1983), 109–117; J. G. A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History* (Cambridge, 1985); Robert Blair St. George, ed., *Material Life in America, 1600–1860* (Boston, 1988), particularly the essays in section three, and Rodris Roth, "Tea-Drinking in Eighteenth-Century America: Its Etiquette and Equipage," 439–462; Graham Hood, *The Governor's Palace in Williamsburg: A Cultural Study* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1991); John J. McCusker and Russell Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607–1789* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1991); John Brewer and Roy Porter, eds., *Consumption and the World of Goods* (New York, 1993); Stephen Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth: The Economic Culture of Puritan New England* (New York, 1995); Jon Butler, *Becoming America: The Revolution before 1776* (Cambridge, Mass., 2000), 50–88, 131–184.

To address this paradox, we need to rethink consumption. It expressed and continues to express emotions—hope, fear, love, anxiety—that are tied to power and personal relationships. "That which men Desire," Hobbes wrote, "they are also sayd to LOVE . . . so that Desire, and Love, are the same thing; save that by Desire, we alwayes signifie the Absence of the Object." The spread of one category of goods, those that appropriated the royal families' names and images for commercial or artistic ends, suggests both the ways commerce normalized the Hanoverian regime and the danger inherent in a commercial empire based on the passions. Products that bore the royal seal, advertisements for goods that invoked the monarchy, and mass-produced royal images helped express and shape the personal emotional ties that acted as imperial filament in the British Atlantic. These products became commonplace in the eighteenth century, and as they did, more and more provincial homes came to contain images of the monarch or royal family. This royalization of private life expressed a swelling loyalty, but it also allowed provincials to imagine the empire as a personal, emotional relationship between individuals and their king.[33]

The rising affluence that made these purchases possible threatened the assumption of social immobility and material limits upon which the early modern order rested. Affluence was supposed to be for the few and thus connected to power. In a letter to the home islands in the mid-eighteenth century, Georgia Council president James Habersham provides us with an illustration of how material display was supposed to reinforce the existing power structure. He complained to his London correspondent William Knox that, while the ship from the empire's capital had arrived in Savannah, "I received my Cloths, tho' too late for the King's birth day, and so was the Governor's." To wear fine cloths from London during royal rites honored the monarch and at the same time asserted one's own status in the local power structure. Habersham knew that clothing marked mutuality between gentlemen, and he was quick to add, "I much approve of your

33. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge, 1991), 38.

Taste . . . but how you send so gay a Waistcoat, however to shew my respect to you, I wore it."[34]

The spreading consumer revolution gradually unhinged the fusion of material goods with status. But to understand how that occurred, it is critical to put aside the debates over a liberal or republican colonial past or a premodern versus modern worldview. The problem was not the antimaterialistic streak within Puritanism, evangelical culture, or republicanism. Nor was it materialism per se. It was, rather, the envy-driven wishes for increasingly available material goods that had been, within living memory, limited to a certain social stratum. Abundance threatened all that the colonial gentry aspired to; it scrambled the link between possessions and social status. When that abundance was wrapped in a royal package, consumption became a vehicle, figuratively and in some cases literally, for the internalization of authority that ultimately created a new political logic in North America. Such objects personalized the relationship between monarch and imperial subject. The nature of consumption obscures that critical change to a large degree, and yet the sources provide just enough evidence for speculation on its character.[35]

Eighteenth-century observers fixed on envy and desire as the cause of a kind of rolling crisis of status they perceived around them. They understood these feelings to create faction, feared by eighteenth-century political and social theorists of all stripes. In the 1720s and 1730s, with royal rites' being passed along seamlessly to new generations and social immobility firmly at the core of provincials' American dream, a host of widely dispersed commentators began to complain about the power of envy to rupture the social body's harmony. A writer to the *American Weekly Mercury* stated that, of all the passions, "Envy . . . proceeds from an inward Grief and Disatisfaction at the good of another. . . . Envy sooner exerts its Fury upon its own Bowels, than on the Honour of its Neighbour. . . . Men are naturally apt to look with an ill Eye on anothers Happiness, and desire to reduce the Fortunes of none more than those whom they have once seen upon the Level with themselves." A 1733 correspondent to the *South-Carolina Gazette* declared that "the Passions which most disturb the human Mind, are *Lust* and *Anger* . . . but vehemence of Passion is not so dreadful a Distemper of the Mind, as *Envy*

34. James Habersham to William Knox, July 12, 1768, Georgia, in *The Letters of Hon. James Habersham, 1756–1775*, Georgia Historical Society, *Collections*, VI (Savannah, 1904), 75.

35. Very useful in this regard is Joyce Appleby, "Consumption in Early Modern Social Thought," in John Brewer and Roy Porter, eds., *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London, 1993), 162–173.

and hidden *Malice*." Envy, he continued, "inflames us against others, who, in *our Opinion*, are *happier* than we." Envy threatened the dream of social immobility that was also a hope of a conflict-free society.[36]

It became a trope of provincial literature to denounce those who had made their fortunes and put on the airs of a superior rank. The Philadelphia writer "Busybody" used his essays to urge the ambitious to act in a manner as "to cause all his Acquaintaince to wish his Prosperity and Advancement in the world." He particularly instructed them to be patient but feared "that the Persons I am endeavoring to instruct, will think that nothing short of Grandeur can be worth their pressing after." Few men, he continued, "know how to demean themselves, whose Industry has been crowned with success; and we more frequently see the Man, vain and full of himself that from a mean Birth and little stock has shot up."[37]

The traveling Maryland doctor Alexander Hamilton, who provided a detailed account of the American provinces in the 1740s, described just such a pretend gentleman. Hamilton mocked this William Morison, "a very rough spun, forward, clownish blade" he encountered in Pennsylvania, for attempting to "pass for a gentleman." Morison couldn't pull it off, despite his repeatedly telling his road companion that he "had good linnen in his bags, a pair of silver buckles, silver clasps, and gold sleeve buttons . . . that his little woman att home drank tea twice a day."[38]

This interesting account reveals the threat consumption posed to the system as a whole. More and more Morisons began to appear in provincial America, convinced they could somehow purchase gentility and all that came with it. Although Hamilton might note the disjuncture between Morison's material refinement and his personal gentility, between his goods and his manners, for many others, boundaries began to blur. Of course, the denunciation of such people itself became a vehicle to social mobility, an opportunity to display one's own learning and discretion. Those like Hamilton who instructed others asserted their own superiority.

In the 1730s and 1740s, provincial observers increasingly denounced the social disruptions caused by wanton material desire. In South Carolina, the heightening fear of a black majority was apparently paralleled by considerable anxiety over

36. *American Weekly Mercury*, June 22–29, 1732; *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), Aug. 11–18, 1733.

37. *American Weekly Mercury*, May 1–8, 1720.

38. Carl Bridenbaugh, ed., *Gentleman's Progress: The Itinerarium of Dr. Alexander Hamilton, 1744* (Pittsburgh, 1948), 13–14.

those growing numbers within white society who would grasp at a higher social status. "Blackamore," writing in 1733, conflated the problems of racial identity with the problem of status in an inflationary economy where social mobility was more prevalent than many were comfortable with.

Blackamore feared status amalgamation, a social sin he saw equal to racial amalgamation. Physical lust produced the latter; the former grew from the twin ills of envy and emulation. After a long description of "mulattoes," Blackamore launched into an assault on those who "from mean Beginnings find themselves in Circumstances a little more easy." Such people, he complained, had ambitions beyond their station. But it was impossible for such a person to affect "the natural and easy Manner of those who have been genteely educated." After saluting those real gentlemen who could "converse freely . . . with honest Men of any Degree below him, without degrading or fearing to degrade himself in the least," Blackamore declared himself (improbably) as an "ordinary Mechanick." He hoped to always know his "Station." Those who did not know their station, "a Man well dress'd . . . mighty cautious how he mixes in Company" and a "young Woman Mistress of a newly fine furnished House, treating me with . . . a high Manner of Condescension that might become a Governor's Lady," made fools of themselves and confused the society's lines of authority.[39]

These parvenus he thought of as "Mungrel," the man a kind of half-gentleman, the woman "not long since . . . somebody's Servant Maid." Blackamore concluded his remarks by declaring that nothing was as "monstrously ridiculous as the *Molatto Gentleman*." The "ridiculous" figures grew from the disjuncture of their material possessions—the fine clothes and furniture that marked gentile status—with their education, birth, and manners. The socially amalgamated figure made a mockery of the status that he or she aspired to.[40]

The material appropriation of royalty should be viewed against this backdrop of desire and anxiety. When this use of royalty for commercial ends in the colonies began is difficult to determine. It had not begun in earnest in the provinces before William III's death; the throne was too precarious, as it would be again in the reign of George I, to allow for uncontrolled consumer appropriation. Newspapers did not appear in the colonies with regularity until early in the eighteenth century, and the commercial ad as a literary genre did not become normalized until the 1730s. We can date the monarchy's commercialization firmly to that decade, when the *Boston Weekly News-Letter* advertised Dr. Boylston's *History of the Small Pox Inoculation in New-England*, dedicated to "Her Royal Highness

39. *South-Carolina Gazette*, Mar. 5–22, 1734/5.

40. Ibid.

the PRINCESS of WALES." Similar ads appeared in other colonial publications as consumer goods became more widely available.[41]

This brief ad for Boylston's *History* suggests the origins of this particular form of monarchical appropriation. It seems to be related to dynastic stability. By 1730, George II was securely on the throne, and thus appropriation of royal authority for commercial ends would have seemed less threatening. The sellers' intent, one suspects, was in no way to denigrate royal authority. Rather, they sought to take advantage of the tremendous affections being generated for the monarchy in the broader political culture. For consumers, such goods offered social status but also affirmed their ties to the empire and linked them emotionally to the royal family.

The association with medical science obvious in many of the royally oriented ads grew from the Hanoverians' patronage of science and the medical arts. George II and Queen Caroline kept busts of Newton handy in their residences, desperately seeking to be seen as a progressive monarchy attuned to the eighteenth century's new sciences. Their approval of scientific progress laid them open to the appropriation of imperial crests for commercial ends, and although they attempted to control it, the Hanoverians never stamped it out. To control the language to that degree would have been too difficult in the sprawling commercial empire.[42]

One after another colonial ad writer managed to suggest royal approval of medical and even what we would consider personal hygiene products. Initially, this was done indirectly, as when the *New-York Gazette; or, the Weekly Post-Boy* advertised "The Princely Beautifying Lotion . . . [which] beautifies the Face, Neck, and Hands, to the utmost perfection" or when an ad in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* proclaimed the value of "the great and learned Doctor SANXAY's Imperial Golden DROPS," which had been developed in the course "of private practice with the . . . most delicate constitutions, the first nobility . . . in Great Britain, Ireland, and many persons eminent for fortune and character in America."[43]

Eventually, the ads turned to direct linkage in one form or another. In 1753, the *New-York Gazette; or, the Weekly Post-Boy* advertised "by the King's Patent . . . West's ASTMATICUM MIRABLE, or wonderful Pectoral ELIXIR . . . [which] cures all colds, Hoarsness . . . Wheezing, Ratling in the Throat, or Difficulty of

41. *Weekly News-Letter* (Boston), Feb. 5–12, 1730.

42. Ibid., Oct. 12–19, 1732. "*London, August* 10. Her Majesty having built a fine Grotto or Hermitage at Richmond and adorned it with the Bustoes of Mr. Locke, Sir Isaac Newton, Mr. Woolaston (Author of *The Religion of Nature Delineated*) and the late Dr. Clarke."

43. *New-York Gazette; or, the Weekly Post-Boy*, Feb. 26, 1753; *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), Feb. 28, 1771.

Breathing." With the king's approval, all things were possible, even a cure for the common cold.[44]

In this same period, royal likenesses, crowns, or royal arms came to adorn mass-produced glass and earthenware. Fragments of plates bearing the likeness of William and Mary have been unearthed at Jamestown in Virginia, though dating their exact arrival is impossible. Virginia archaeological sites have also yielded delftware emblazoned with the royal arms and the Hanoverian mottos "Dieu Et Mon Droit" and "Honi Soit Qui Mal Y Pense." Platters showing a cavalier presenting a woman a flower and a plate with a crowned "GR" (representing Georgius REX) and a royal figure in robes that celebrated the Hanoverian succession in 1714 have been found in the same sites.[45]

New England's glass, slipware, and delftware also carried imperial themes, though there, tastes more obviously reflected the accommodation of local political cultures with the empire. Products that mixed imperial and Protestant themes were available throughout the empire, but New Englanders seem to have been especially fond of them, reflecting their creolization. Early in the eighteenth century, Maine settlers owned gray stoneware with the crowned initials "GR" over a cherub's head, and gray stoneware jugs carrying an equestrian seal with "William III by the grace of God King of Great Britain, France and Ireland" were present in New England.[46]

Other glass, earthenware, slipware, delftware, and tiles carried imperial themes or expressed aspects of the Protestant political culture. As early as the 1680s, London tile makers produced Popish Plot tiles that charted the course of the purported Catholic conspiracy at the end of the 1670s and offered the opportunity of symbolically sharing the home with the informer Titus Oates. Although we cannot determine with certainty how many colonials, if any, had these tiles, by the time of George III's ascension to the throne, Wedgwood was mass-producing ceramics with the royal likenesses and imperial themes for the Atlantic markets. Even Benjamin West's famous painting of General Wolfe's death at the Battle of Quebec in 1759 was transferred to ceramics and sold in the provinces.[47]

44. *New-York Gazette; or, the Weekly Post-Boy*, Jan. 29, 1753.

45. Ron Fuchs, Assistant Curator of Ceramics, Winterthur Museum, relayed by Leslie Grigsby; Grigsby, *English Pottery: Stoneware and Earthenware, 1650–1800* (London, 1990), 104–105, 156, 423; Grigsby, *English Slip-Decorated Earthenware at Williamsburg* (Williamsburg, Va., 1993), 48. I am extremely grateful to Leslie Grigsby for her advice and assistance in understanding imperial delftware.

46. *Unearthing New England's Past: The Ceramic Evidence* (Lexington, Mass., 1984), 18, 47, 67.

47. Michael Archer, *Delftware, The Tin-Glazed Earthenware of the British Isles: A Catalogue of the Collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, 1997), 429. In the 1680s, there was a "Popish Plot Nine Tiles relating to the Titus Oates Conspiracy" line of painted ceramic tiles made in London. Leslie B. Grigsby, *The Longridge Collection of English Slipware and Delftware*, 2 vols. (London, 2000), esp. 62, contains numerous examples of politically themed slip and delftware. The demand for Saint George slipware was apparently high in the eighteenth century. Saint George was the patron saint of England. See David Drakard, *Printed English Pottery: History and Humour in the Reign of George III, 1760–1820* (London, 1992), 146, 148–151.

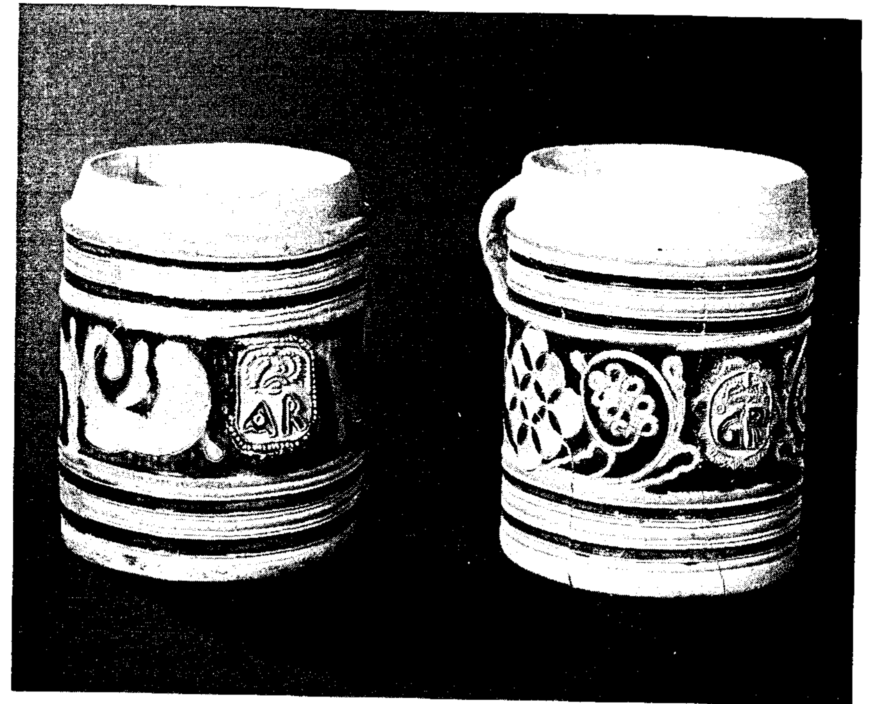


PLATE 5. *Stoneware tankards with "AR" and "GR" ciphers. Monarchical images and symbols could be found in both homes and more public settings like taverns, where mugs with royal arms or symbols were hoisted to toast the monarchy and Protestant political culture on any number of red-letter days. "AR" stood for "Anne* REX,*" and "GR" was "George* REX.*" The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation*

Purchasing such goods allowed for the royalization of the household. Those who selected imperially themed goods affirmed their place as British subjects in the privacy of their own homes. They proclaimed British patriotism and established a visual connection to the empire. Perhaps the best evidence of this admittedly semi-hidden process of domestic royalization in the provinces comes from the consumption of royal images.

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The Consumption of Images and the Problem of Representation

In February 1750, the *New-York Weekly Journal* carried a description of a newly planned capital for His Majesty's province of Nova Scotia. "That City," the paper reported, "is at the first to consist of 2000 Houses, disposed in fifty Streets of different Magnitudes." At the town's center was to be a "spacious Square, with an Equestrian Statue of his present Majesty in the Center of it." The streets were "all built in straight lines, crossing one another at right angles." In this town, all roads would lead to the king.[48]

But a year earlier, the same New York papers called attention to a king on the road, literally. Wax "'Effigies of the Royal Family of England' and others, to the number of fourteen wax figures, are advertized to be seen from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m." On October 9, 1749, the wax figures and a "Puppet Shew" were exhibited for poor debtors' relief, with the royal figures to be displayed before the "shew."[49]

The empire's physical and demographic expansion created a subtle problem of aesthetic authority. How would the king be represented to these growing populations who would never see the royal person? How would they come to know and love the Hanoverian monarchy? Royal celebrations and a royal political calendar, a restructuring of language conventions and public behavioral norms, and religious invocations designed to assert monarchical supremacy to an unprecedented degree all provided an education. But there was more, as the plan for Halifax and the touring wax show suggest. Between 1690 and 1776, provincial officials used visual representations of royalty to normalize their authority. But the gradual spread of the monarch's commodified likeness in the form of prints, mass-produced portraits, glassware, and even wax museums and puppet shows undermined the efforts to control how American subjects saw their kings' likenesses. Private representations ultimately helped create contradictory understandings of the monarchy and by extension the entire empire.[50]

Imperial officials sent formal monarchical portraits to the American provinces as gifts to colonial governments designed to solidify royal authority. Public likenesses of the monarch had become commonplace in parts of Britain during Queen Anne's reign. The importance of such portraits to imperial relationships was demonstrated early in the eighteenth century in Massachusetts Bay. In 1705, Jonathan Belcher returned from a visit to Hanover in Germany with a portrait of Princess Sophia, Protestant heir to the throne and mother of George I. The painting was a gift to Massachusetts Bay, and Joseph Dudley ordered it displayed with the portrait of "her Majesties [Queen Anne]." He asked Belcher to attend the province's "Council and the Officers" in order that he might see the portrait hung in the council chamber and "drink her Majesties and Royal Highness health, it being her Majesties birthday."[51]

Strangely, provincial officials did not immediately thank Sophia, an oversight that caused a panic when it was recognized. Dudley desperately sought to make "an acknowledgement of this Honour and Favour done to the Province," but, "having no Correspondent, nor acquaintance in Her Highness's Court," he could not rectify so grievous an error alone. Dudley turned to Belcher to recoup the situation, which the young man did by again journeying to Hanover "to Apologize" for his and the province's mistake. He threw himself "at Your Royal Highnesses feet and Humbly ask[ed] forgiveness." He begged the princess to accept atonement from "Her Majesty's Governour in N. England" in the form of "candles . . . and An Indian Slave [a young boy], A native of my countrey." That the colony would assuage its fears at the expense of an Indian boy may be surprisingly brutal to us, but, as Belcher's note to Sophia suggests, they saw him as symbol, property, and human being, a representation of their province, just as the portrait depicted both the princess's person and the Protestant succession.[52]

In the same period, portraits and royal representations became part of diplomatic initiatives to the Five Nations in northern New York. In August 1710, Governor Robert Hunter presented medals with Queen Anne's "Royal Effigie on one side" to be kept at the Five Nations' main villages. Hunter further presented each of the nations with twenty pictures of the queen in silver, "to be given to the Chief Warriors" to wear around their necks so they would "allways be in a readiness to fight under her Banner." The queen's image realized her authority on the empire's far rim by establishing personal-political ties to the Five Nations' head-

48. *New-York Weekly Journal*, Feb. 27, 1749/50.

49. I. N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498–1909*, IV (New York, 1922), 616.

50. The best short discussions of the rise of colonial consumption of portraits are Margaretta M. Lovell, "Painters and Their Customers: Aspects of Art and Money in Eighteenth-Century America," in Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert, eds., *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century* (Charlottesville, Va., 1994), 284–306; and Lovell, "Reading Eighteenth-Century American Family Portraits: Social Images and Self-Images," *Wintherthur Portfolio*, XXII (1987), 46–71.

51. Paul Kléber Monod, *The Power of Kings: Monarchy and Religion in Europe, 1589–1715* (New Haven, Conn., 1999), 294–295; Joseph Dudley to Jonathan Belcher, Feb. 6, 1705/6, Miscellaneous, Frederick Lewis Gay Transcripts, I, 172, MHS.

52. Dudley to John Chamberlayne, Mar. 1, 1707/8, and Belcher to Princess Sophia, Sept. 12, 1708, Gay Transcripts, I, 173, 174.

men. What must the recipients have thought as they wore this image in the deep woods of northern New York?[53]

Southern governments placed equally high importance on royal portraits and emblems. In 1721, South Carolina leaders ordered their agents to request portraits of George I and his consort, the royal arms, and silver plate for the Charleston Anglican church. In 1739, Caroline County, Virginia, paid a visiting English artist 1,600 pounds of tobacco to paint the king's arms on the side of their new courthouse, to remind them of the king's power and justice. When the capital building at Williamsburg, Virginia, burned to the ground in January 1747, the colonial papers reported that officials fortuitously saved both the all-important records and "the Pictures of the Royal Family." The efforts to save the portraits and the widespread reports of their salvation reflected their worth.[54]

In most colonies, officials installed royal portraits in government buildings in ceremonies that coincided with royal birthday celebrations or other imperial holidays. The practice was evident as early as the arrival of Sophia's portraits in Boston in 1706, but as the celebrations themselves became more elaborate, so did the images' role in them. On June 6, 1765, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported on the King's Birthday celebration at Burlington, West New Jersey. The paper's description shows the relationship of royal portraits to royal rites and the articulation of power. The reporter declared that "the Gentlemen of the Council, and General Assembly, together with the Mayor and Corporation . . . and many of the Magistrates and principal Inhabitants, went at Noon in Procession to the House of his Excellency our Governor." William Franklin greeted them, and they drank the royal healths as small cannons fired a salute.[55]

53. "Colden's History of the Five Indian Nations, Continuation, 1707–1720," in *The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden*, IX, *Additional Letters and Papers, 1749–1775, and Some of Colden's Writings*, NYHS, *Collections*, LXVIII (New York, 1937), 391.

54. Edward McCrady, *The History of South Carolina under the Royal Government, 1719–1776* (New York, 1899), 40. George I had locked his consort away years before. Apparently, the colonial government was unaware of this. I would like to thank John Murrin for this observation. On the courthouse and the king's arms, see T. E. Campbell, *Colonial Caroline: A History of Caroline County, Virginia* (Richmond, Va., 1954), 125. On the burning of the capital building, see *New-York Evening-Post*, Apr. 6, 1747. Twenty years later, William Tryon would report to the Earl of Hillsborough that he had incorporated "Medals of the King and Queen on the Frieze over the Columns" in the governor's mansion house he was building in North Carolina. See William Tryon to the Earl of Hillsborough, Jan. 12, 1769, in William S. Powell, ed., *The Correspondence of William Tryon and Other Selected Papers*, II, *1768–1818* (Raleigh, N.C., 1981), 292.

55. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), June 6, 1765.

PLATE 6. *George II, 1752. From the* New England Primer *Beginning in the 1730s, portraits of the British monarchs began circulating widely in the colonies. They were included in children's books, sold for the decorating of private homes, and placed in taverns and other public places. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society*

But the day's climax was still to come. "The Company," the *Gazette* continued, "had likewise the Pleasure of seeing the fine Portraits of their Majesties (drawn at full Length, in their Coronation Robes . . .) which were lately sent over as a Present from the Crown to his Excellency." By placing and displaying the portraits within government buildings, royal officials linked visually their power with the larger imperial order.[56]

If formal viewings in controlled situations had been the only way that provincials saw portraits of their monarchs, perhaps such representations would have enhanced the colonial gentry's status and helped permanently stabilize the imperial order, as they were designed to do. Whatever way colonials understood them, such spectacles reinforced the imperial order. However, at the dawn of the era of mass production, royal images began to be produced for commercial ends. The consumption of these images allowed the purchasers to bring the monarch and the empire quite literally into the home.

Mass-produced prints of the monarchs first appeared in the provinces early in the eighteenth century. Print portraits of Queen Anne apparently circulated in the colonies after 1702, and prints of George I and George II seem to have been sold in the port towns by the 1720s or the early 1730s. In April 1746, the *Pennsyl-*

56. Ibid.

PLATE 7. *George III copper medal. 1762. Miniatures and medals bearing the monarch's likeness arrived in the colonies as early as Queen Anne's reign. Worn on the person or displayed in the home on a mantle or in another prominent place, these signaled personal allegiance to the monarch and loyalty to the Protestant succession. Courtesy, Massachusetts Historical Society*

vania Gazette advertised imported pictures of the royal family for sale. The same bundle contained other prints with imperial themes, including some of "Consultations between the Pope, the king of France, the Old Pretender, Young Pretender, a Highlander and the Devil," produced in response to the '45 Jacobite rebellion in Britain. Certainly by the 1760s, such portraits were being sold beyond the ports. Joseph McAdams of Northumberland County, Virginia, offered "200 prints, or pictures, representing all the persons and characters of note in Europe, viz., Crowned Heads" for sale to his neighbors. Merchants also sold medallions, like the "Sundry Medals of his present most Sacred Majesty GEORGE III struck on a fine white Metal." One side contained a "Portrait of His Majesty," the other "a Heart encircled with Oak and Laurel Branches; the Motto, ENTIRELY BRITISH." By the time the imperial crisis erupted, such prints and portraits were widely distributed.[57]

The flood of prints allowed for a royalization of domestic life. Contemporary commentators noted that the English-speaking people had a tendency to decorate their homes with portraits of family and friends. People of high and even middling status gave face portraits and miniatures of family members as gifts.

57. *American Weekly Mercury*, Apr. 24, 1746; Lovell, "Painters and Their Customers," in Carson, Hoffman, and Albert, eds., *Of Consuming Interests*, 301; *Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg), Oct. 17, 1766; *Boston News-Letter*, June 25, 1761.

They decorated the interior chambers of provincial homes or were carried on the person. Although this was obviously much more common among the British aristocracy, the colonial gentry adopted portrait decoration at least as early as the 1720s.

It is against this backdrop that we should view the inclusion of royal portraits and imperially themed paintings in provincial homes. In 1728, Virginian Colonel Maximilian Boush had portraits of Queen Anne and Prince George in his home. A more vivid example of this familiarization occurred in Benjamin Franklin's Philadelphia home. At one point in his extended travels, his wife, Deborah, wrote to him that she had decorated the family sitting room with "brother John's picture, and one of the King and Queen." The portraits united family and monarch in Franklin's home and, no doubt, in others.[58]

The maudlin emotions such portraits could bring forth are evident in the will of Franklin's loyalist son, William, who lived in a bitter exile in London. Writing in 1813, he gave everything he had to family and friends without stipulation, except "the family pictures and those of the King and Queen" and "likewise the glass out of which the Queen drank at the Coronation Dinner"; the fate of these, he was very careful to control. Their value was heightened by his exile, his alienation from his father, and his other sufferings as a loyalist. He wrote long after the Revolution, but it is powerfully telling that he would single these things out and link family portraits with those of the monarchy.[59]

Some British Americans actually carried the monarch's image with them on their person. This practice, too, underwent a shift shaped by the spread of the cult of Protestant monarchy and industrial production. Initially, only a select few with direct access to the monarchy carried such images. Virginian Daniel Parke, who eventually became the governor of Antigua, wore a miniature of Queen Anne presented to him by the last Stuart queen herself when he brought her news of the Duke of Marlborough's great victory over the forces of Louis XIV at Blenheim. When Jonathan Belcher visited the court of Hanover in 1706, he reported with pride to his brother that the Princess Sophia "gave me a pretty pocket piece with her face on one side, which desir'd I would accept as a mark of her respect

58. John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination* (Chicago, 1997), 209–213; Mary Newton Stanard, *Colonial Virginia: Its People and Customs* (Philadelphia, 1917), 317; John F. Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia, and Pennsylvania in the Olden Time . . .* (Philadelphia, 1909), I, 206.

59. Last will and testament of William Franklin, Apr. 15, 1813, William Franklin Papers, box 1, APS.

and thanks" for Belcher's having twice visited her. So deeply did he value this piece that he passed it to his son in 1749 as a special mark of his love.[60]

By that latter date, wider populations could experience the same sort of tie as mechanical reproduction allowed miniatures and miniature engravings of the king to be sold in the provinces. These were small enough to fit inside a watch cover or a carrying case. The inscription below one such miniature told "BRITONS" to "BEHOLD the Best of KINGS. Beloved by the Bravest of People. Justly admired by all, By his Enemies Dreaded." To carry the king's likeness was to own one's allegiances in a most intimate fashion.[61]

The power such prints and portraits had to inculcate loyalty is evident in an account of one given by Philip Fithian in Virginia in 1774. Even at that late date, he described in great detail a print of the West painting portraying General Wolfe's death at Quebec at the height of the Seven Years' War. He found the "two Lions couchant, the Emblems of the british Nation, supporting the Sarcophagus or marble Urn, and intended to express the gratitude of his native country for his eminent Services" to be especially noteworthy and appropriate.[62]

People in every colony had royal portraits and imperial prints by 1765. From the numbers mentioned in newspaper ads, it seems probable that at least thousands of households had prints or portraits of the royal family by that date, although that number is simply a guess. It was possibly much higher, into the tens of thousands, but not likely much lower. These representations, along with the tiles, delftware, slipware, and glassware, allowed for an imperialized household.

To fully understand the power of this widespread personalization of royal images, we have to do one of the most dangerous things a historian can do: read backward and, worse yet, do so through the revolutionary crisis. Although formal representations of the king were destroyed as part of a spectacular iconoclasm in 1776 that expressed deep anger at a rogue political father, some of the mass-produced portraits suffered a different fate. In February 1777, John Adams was in Baltimore with other members of the Continental Congress. As he visited homes in the city, he noticed that "they have a Fashion in this Town of reversing the Picture of King G. 3, in such Families as have it." One evening he came across one

60. David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York, 1989), 319; Belcher to his brother and Captain Foster, Nov. 16, 1708, London, Belcher Papers.

61. E. McSherry Fowble, *To Please Every Taste: Eighteenth-Century Prints from the Winterthur Museum* (Alexandria, Va., 1991), 86–87.

62. Farish, ed., *Journal and Letters of Philip Vickers Fithian*, 71.

of these "Topsy Turvy Kings," as he called them, with a poem mounted beneath it. The poem mocked the ruler who, as they noted, had once had the power to create both fear and love in his subjects:

> Behold the Man who had it in his Power
> To make a Kingdom tremble and adore
> Intoxicate with Folly, see his Head
> Plac'd where the meanest of his Subjects tread
> Like Lucifer the giddy Tyrant fell
> He lifts his Heel to Heaven but points his Head to Hell.[63]

A similar, though less public, statement was made by Georgia whig William Ewen. Rewriting his will at the Revolution's outbreak, he carefully enumerated his possessions, including twenty-nine portraits, and listed their value. On a separate sheet, he then listed just his portrait of George III and gave its value as worthless. In New Hampshire, crowds defaced official portraits of the royal family, and "pictures and escutcheons of the same kind in private houses were inverted" much as they had been in Baltimore.[64]

Adams, the Baltimore poet, and Ewen realized that the pictures still had, at that late date, a powerful but unfixed meaning that could be manipulated because the attachment to them had such an intense, personal quality. Although the Revolution made this apparent to many, it had hardly begun the process. Rather, the images themselves expressed a personalization of the relationship between subject and monarch that had been encouraged by a political culture rich in ritual and imperial rhetoric but truncated institutionally. Only such personalization can explain why Baltimore residents satirized rather than destroyed the portraits of a king who had once been able to make his subjects "tremble and adore." Such actions reflected a sense of long-standing emotional ties violated.[65]

63. L. H. Butterfield, ed., *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, II, *1771–1781*, Feb. 16, 1777, The Adams Papers, Series 1, Diaries (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), 259.

64. Harold E. Davis, *The Fledgling Province: Social and Cultural Life in Colonial Georgia, 1733–1776* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1976), 189; Jeremy Belknap, *The History of New-Hampshire* (New York, 1970), 368.

65. Letters of Colonel John Murray of Rutland, Massachusetts, in Brinley Family Papers, box 1, HSP. According to family tradition, a mob near Worcester, Mass., ran his portrait through the wig in 1774 after he was named a Mandamus Councillor and fled to Boston (ibid.). The Rev. Jeremiah Leaming, Anglican, graduated from Yale and was an Anglican minister in Newport, R.I., and Norwalk, Conn. At the outbreak of the Revolution, whigs took his portrait, defaced it, and nailed it upside-down on a signpost. See

Although they were commodities, the portraits, prints, and medallions displayed in the colonies before the Revolution conveyed the same sense of respect and affection for the monarchy that the formal visualizations did. They were placed in positions of honor within homes. Over time, however, monarchical representations designed overtly for profit appeared in the American provinces. They, too, tapped into the emotions generated in the broader political culture, but in a manner that, in retrospect, made the monarch too familiar, too close, too much a commodity.

There are a number of such examples, but perhaps none is as surprising as the royal wax figures. Charleston, South Carolina, planters saw wax figures representing "their present most Sacred Majesties" exhibited in August 1737. Touring groups displayed similar figures at midcentury, and in 1749, New York City's papers announced that "the Effigies of the Royal Family of England" would be displayed, along with fourteen others. Eventually, a Mrs. Wright established a wax museum of sorts. She displayed the figures for profit until boys playing with candles burned the museum down, excepting of course saintly George Whitefield's wax figure, which miraculously survived the fire.[66]

People found further emotional and political meaning in such wax figures. Although we have no detailed account of a reaction to the touring figures or the New York museum, Francis Goelet, visiting London in 1750, saw images of "the maiden Queen Elizabeth, with the Lady Margaret Russell," as well as "the happy union of the red rose and the white in the healing marriage of King Henry the Seventh of the House of Lancaster" and "Their excellent Majesties, King William and Queen Mary, sitting in their royal robes . . . Queen Anne Lying in state, surrounded with pious mourners, lords spiritual and temporal with guards and attendants." Although such displays supported the Protestant succession, they were commercial spectacles foremost designed to gain an immediate emotional response.[67]

Before the Revolution, no political figure was more hated by the colonists than France's Sun King, Louis XIV. He stood in life and death as the feared embodiment of the type of Catholic, arbitrary power the colonists never ceased to denounce. But Louis XIV knew a lot about the projection of royal dignity, and he

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Lorenzo Sabine, *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists of the American Revolution, with an Historical Essay*, II ([1864]; rpt. Port Washington, N.Y., 1966), 7.

66. *South-Carolina Gazette*, Aug. 13, 1737; Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, IV, 616; Esther Singleton, *Social New York under the Georges, 1714–1776* (New York, 1902), 318–319.

67. Francis Goelet diary, Dec. 21–25, 1750, NYHS.

could have told the Hanoverians that if your likeness was the warm-up act for a "puppet shew" touring provinces distant from the throne, trouble lay ahead. For eighteenth-century kings, popularity and authority were by their natures different things.[68]

It has been said by more than one historian that the colonists who expressed affection for the three Hanoverian Georges did so because they did not know them. But perhaps the opposite was true; perhaps the colonists knew the king intimately, emotionally, and visually. The rites, and writings, and imperial goods imparted just such an emotional education. That knowledge allowed for a freedom of understanding that would ultimately problematize imperial institutional control. In an empire of emotions, imaginations created many monarchs and constitutions.

. . .

Of Ralph and Will, of Empire and Province, of King and People

The changes in provincial political culture that occurred in the era that was once known as the period of "salutary neglect" firmly planted imperial perceptions and loyalty to the monarchy in British America. By 1774, a visitor to South Carolina could comment that "most people that are born in Carolina" called England "their home tho' they have never been there." Key among the perceptions created to sustain this identification was that a powerful, benevolent Protestant prince concerned primarily with the welfare of his far-flung subjects ruled the empire.[69]

Colonial print culture strongly reinforced these positive perceptions. The same newspapers that amplified the royal political rites' power by persistently reporting on them also educated colonists about the royal family's character and the historical developments that led that family to the throne. Those presses described the three Georges as "the best of KINGS" day in and day out for five decades. Distance from the corrupt bureaucracy that controlled the empire reinforced provincials' belief that they had been blessed with the greatest kings that a monarchical world had to offer. Little wonder, then, that they should purchase the royal likeness or products seemingly carrying the royal family's endorsement. It would have been surprising if the colonists did not love the British monarchy, and perhaps we should take at his word the Pennsylvania writer who declared during the Seven Years' War, "All His Majesty's loyal Subjects among us (and in-

68. Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, IV, 616.

69. Robert Olwell, *Masters, Slaves, and Subjects: The Culture of Power in the South Carolina Low Country, 1740–1790* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1998), 40–41.

deed where is there a disaffected One) felt for his Majesty" in that moment of crisis.[70]

A strange paradox emerges from this understanding. It seems that eighteenth-century America became more overtly monarchical than England itself. Glimpses, fragmentary images, really, of the imperial polity's true character have emerged from time to time, but their full meaning has been obscured by the historiography's general orientation toward the Revolution. Overall, the image that has remained current in popular and many scholarly imaginations is of an English core that was monarchical, Protestant, and hierarchical. Clannish Scottish Highlanders, Papist Irishmen, scarcely more civilized Scots-Irish Presbyterians in Ulster, and nascent Americans in one form or another scattered along the eastern seaboard inhabited the imperial fringe.[71]

In fact, though, by 1740, the empire's political culture seems to have been the mirror image of what we had imagined. Many in the fringe areas of Greater Britain — Scotland, Ireland, and the American colonies — were ardently, publicly monarchical. Even the Jacobite sympathizers in the Highlands and in Ireland can be conceived this way, though they were obviously loyal to the Stuart dynasty. The core population — the English — seems to have been apathetic about the Hanoverians, and it was British thinkers who were enthralled with aspects of the radical Enlightenment. As one provincial put it, "Old England, and not New, must be the land of deists and freethinkers." The political and religious implications of this remark are clear. The fringe was far more royalist in terms of public life than we have imagined, and the prevalence or lack of political celebrations of the Hanoverian dynasty is one way to trace the contours of the empire's overarching political culture.[72]

Acceptance of this understanding of the empire's political culture at mid-century makes much of the later eighteenth century's turbulent history more understandable. Republican revolutions occurred in two of the most monarchical societies in the Atlantic world, British America and Bourbon France. Their political cultures were more alike, particularly in their visualization, than we have been comfortable admitting, even as we must continue to acknowledge the profound differences between these societies in other arenas. The most apathetic and republicanized society, England proper, not only retained its monarchy but also enhanced his prestige as revolution, war with France, and George III's own illness led the nation to rally around its symbolic head. That combination, of earlier republicanization followed by a renewed royalism, encouraged change and accommodation without revolution. We will better understand eighteenth-century America if we accept that monarchy, hierarchy, and patriarchy were primary forces of change and subversion in certain contexts.[73]

A satirical dialogue between two brothers published in 1742 suggests how the society's royalization potentially endangered the empire. Almanac writer Nathaniel Ames printed this purported exchange between two Massachusetts brothers, Ralph and Will. The former was a "Freshman at College [Harvard]," whereas his brother Will was "an Ignorant Rustick" in need of instruction about the province's political affairs. As Ralph tried to explain the intricacies of the financial problems that rocked the Bay Colony in the 1740s to his uneducated brother, he mentioned that the issue had finally been sent to Parliament for settlement. "The Barlemend," the country brother responded, "Whad's that?" His Harvard-educated brother called it "The Place where Noble-men resort / And make the Nation's highest Court." When he explained the Parliament's powers, his country brother, in shock, declared, "Hold, Brother *Ralph*, pray give me leave / I by your Dalk thus much berceive / This Barlemend's a dreadful Thing / As great and powerful as a King."[74]

70. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Oct. 4, 1759.

71. The anglicization thesis was originally formed by John M. Murrin in the mid-1960s. He postulated the norming of colonial institutions along the models provided by England, particularly the bench and the bar. He later suggested that the land tenure system was in the process of anglicization during the imperial crisis.

In the 1980s and 1990s, Jack Greene and T. H. Breen reexamined aspects of the empire and provincial America in light of the anglicization thesis. Greene postulated that the colonies were becoming more like one another and more like the cosmopolitan core across the eighteenth century. This integrated empire, he believed, rested on an increasingly liberal political economy of self-interest and acquisition. Breen has focused on the consumption of British goods in the colonies through to the boycotts of the imperial crisis. Like Greene, Breen sees America as essentially liberal from its origins.

J. G. A. Pocock, Bernard Bailyn, Gordon Wood, and a host of others have examined the transmission of ideas and patterns of reasoning from England to America. Essential to their project was the belief that these concepts, marginalized or peripheral in England, flowered once transferred to American soil, encouraging the gradual republicanization or democratization of American society and politics.

72. Andrew Croswell, *Observations on Several Passages in a Sermon Preached by William Warburton, Lord Bishop of Gloucester . . .* (Boston, 1768), 29.

73. Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven, Conn., 1992), 206–210, discusses the resurrection of the monarchy in Britain in the early decades of George III's reign.

74. Nathaniel Ames, *An Astronomical Diary; or, An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord Christ, 1742* (Boston, 1742).

It was, of course, only a satire in an almanac, yet it revealed an emerging truth about provincial Americans and their imperial perceptions. Whereas some among the educated, Atlantic-facing elite understood the empire and the constitutional settlement as those in London did, with "The King the Parliament ... join'd to / And they do all things they've a mind to," as Ralph said, others, who had learned of the empire via rites, almanacs, and decrees, understood the king alone as the ultimate location of power in the Anglo-American political universe.[75]

It was not, strictly speaking, a perception limited to the yeomanry. As well-read a gentleman as Lewis Morris, who purportedly had the largest library in America in the 1730s, conceded that "the King has Powers and Prerogatives in *America* that he has not in *England*," in large part because the colonial charters originated with the crown, even as he insisted that the monarchy was still bound by the British constitution. The confusion over the provincial charters' fundamental character and the nature of British liberties in the colonies that prompted Morris's statement only reinforced the message of political rites and historical writers that the king was somehow supreme and apart from Parliament in the empire.[76]

By the 1740s, the predominant political ideology in the provinces was a kind of benevolent royalism that grew from the broader Protestant political culture. Given everything we have been told about eighteenth-century America, it is difficult to even imagine such an ideology. But if we look at some East Asian societies today, we see political-religious cults of political personality in polities with dynamic commercial growth. It is logical that such a situation should develop in the colonies. Parliament and other imperial institutions were diminished in public rites and political discussion or unknown altogether to the yeomen in the countryside. The political rites, the language of power and imperial representation, the emotional structure of imperial rhetoric, and even consumer goods and visual representations all encouraged provincials to think like Will even as their betters put on the airs of Ralph and adopted a more sophisticated worldview.

A multiplicity of monarchs came to exist because building a political state out of Britain's disjointed, transatlantic empire was simultaneously successful and a distinct failure. In the period between 1688 and the 1740s, the iconography, rites,

75. Ibid.

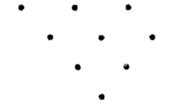
76. Eugene R. Sheridan, *Lewis Morris, 1671–1746: A Study in Early American Politics* (Syracuse, N.Y., 1981), 150; Lewis Morris, *The Opinion and Argument of the Chief Justice of the Province of New-York concerning the Jurisdiction of the Supream Court of the Said Province, to Determine Causes in a Course of Equity* (New York, 1733), 2.

and history that explained the nature of power in the empire won wide acceptance. But state patronage, the land tenure system, and financial structures that conditioned behaviors in the home islands were largely missing. Half a state had been very firmly established. This disjuncture created a wildly royalist society whose institutions and property system remained immature and unsettled when compared to those of western European monarchies.

When, like the two brothers in Ames's almanac, provincials increasingly fell into quarreling over place, money, land, and institutional power beginning in the 1730s, the British peace began to give way to more troubled times. The parties to these conflicts turned to their imagined rulers for support against their opponents. In so doing, they exposed growing contradictions in the understanding of king and constitution in the American provinces. Passionate ties encouraged subjective understandings of the empire, the constitution, and the monarch's nature. And it was thus that an empire of many peoples came to be ruled by a king with many faces.

PART TWO

THREE FACES



The growth of a political culture focused on the monarchy brought stability to the settler colonies in the four decades after the Glorious Revolution. Whereas institutional structures continued to vary between proprietary, charter, and royal colonies, political language, ceremony, and rites became remarkably standardized. Provincials accepted British historical identities and venerated the Hanoverian dynasty as their protectors against French conquest from without and Catholic subversion from within. Political and commercial ties between the home islands and British North America grew. It seemed that the foundations of an enduring and peaceful empire had been established. But it was not to be.

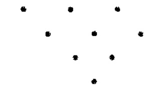
The successful royalization of provincial political culture created a problem of authority that was ultimately unresolvable. As the population continued to expand and diversify ethnically and racially, the disjuncture between the emotional ties generated within the political culture and its institutional truncation became more pronounced. Across the entire social order, from its haughty gentlemen to enslaved African-Americans, individuals and groups repeatedly reconceived their relationship to the king and the British constitution.

By the 1740s, at least three conceptions of the king and the empire were manifesting themselves in the American provinces. The spectrum ran from forms of divine-right monarchy to belief in an extralegal, extrainstitutional monarch at one with his meanest subjects.

5

THE PROBLEM WITH PATRIARCHY

INSTITUTIONS, EVENTS, AND EMPIRE RETHOUGHT



By the 1730s, the cult of monarchy had muscled its way to the center of public life. The empire's main iconography was very firmly established; the state's symbolic structure had been successfully planted in British America. States, though, are founded upon more than rites and icons and the emotions they create. The system of offices and patronage appointments that composed the early modern realm's institutional architecture remained immature in the American colonies. In the demographic, social, and political context that began to emerge, the imperial state's disjointed character became a threat to public order.

Encouraged by a patriarchal political culture to assume the role of community fathers, propertied men at all social levels sought institutional acknowledgment of their status, only to find themselves often frustrated. A remarkable rate of population increase assured that more and more people competed for a limited number of places in provincial power structures. The creation of new institutions never kept pace with this population growth; new counties and colonies appeared far too slowly to satisfy the need for honor and place. The result was a series of public conflicts that revealed the subversive danger of patriarchal desire and the subjective understanding of king and constitution.

Our libertarian traditions have led historians to believe that these conflicts undid imperial bonds or created more individualistic or republicanized polities. In fact, though, the many events that form the earliest part of the American story are best understood as struggles to get into the empire in the role of local patriarch. Maximum individual liberty had yet to be proclaimed a cultural godhead. Kafka's *Castle* had yet to be written; "organization man" had yet to be born. Institutional participation was linked to social status and brought emotional fulfillment in a manner that our more cynical age finds mystifying. Conflicts like the Zenger Crisis in New York that have been traditionally understood as part of

the liberalization or republicanization of America in fact occurred in an imperial context that fundamentally changes their historical meaning, once we acknowledge it.

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Anglicization in the Imperial Marches

Sometime in the 1760s, a minor imperial official considered the problems created by explosive poulation growth in the American provinces. "The British colonies in . . . America notwithstanding their present growth and importance were at first undertaken by Private Adventurers. . . . They have from very trifling Beginnings, most unexpectedly increased in little more than a century to [a] Million and a half of people." This increase grew from "Foreign Accession and Propogation . . . Where the Means of life are so attainable that none are restrain'd from Marriage . . . no devastations have ever been made by Pestilence or Famine, the natural increase Must Exceed prodigiously." As this man knew, the growth strained the empire's institutional structures. It wasn't that the colonists weren't loyal—they were, intensely and passionately. They had no dreams but of being British and of the empire. But no one had anticipated their numbers as Protestants from across Europe flooded to America, the continent being "layed open as it were a great Common."[1]

Around the same time, Robert Livingston, Jr., wrote to his son-in-law, the New York attorney James Duane, about his family's struggle against the colony's Delancey faction. Although the parties to the struggle had been given religious labels and indeed argued over religious issues, for Livingston, the fight was not about religion. They, Livingston wrote, meaning the Delancey family, "do not value the Presbyterian, nor even their own church, where it happens to be in opposition to their favoured Scheem of Ruling over all the familyes in the Country [meaning the colony of New York]."[2]

The two passages reveal contemporary awareness of two of the most powerful forces of change in the late empire, population growth and family rivalries for power and place. As the British official noted, the opening of a continental supercommons for displaced Protestants coupled with reproduction that "must Exceed prodigiously" had accelerated the mainland colonies' demographic growth to unprecedented levels for European-dominated populations. Like rising water,

1. "Observations on the British Colonies in America, Received from Malaga in 1769, Thought to Be Wrote by the Late Comptroller Wair Who Died Consul in Malaga," NYHS.

2. Edward P. Alexander, *A Revolutionary Conservative: James Duane of New York* (New York, 1938), 47.

provincials pushed on the society's boundaries, unintentionally, often unconsciously, but still forcefully. The ruptures caused by their actions are familiar to historians, and the myths surrounding this mass of colonial yeomen form the core of our national story. The rivalries between elite family groups in various colonies are also well known, but the relationship between these two developments has remained partially hidden.

It has been assumed that population pressures helped undo the empire and create a liberal society by loosening traditional and social conventions. There is a logic to this supposition, and in retrospect, if we look back through the Revolution, it makes good sense. If we read forward from the seventeenth century, though, the petty squabbles, conflicts, and events of this period suggest another pattern. Provincials seeking place in the government—town, county, or imperial—drove many political changes. Before the Revolution, Americans wanted more patriarchy and more empire, not less, and, strangely, such desires, held by more and more people, helped unravel the imperial state. The growth of institutional structures that conveyed honor, power, or simply public voice to those who served them never kept pace with population growth. The scarcity of patronage positions repeatedly caused conflict as those who received them earned the disdain of those who, like Robert Livingston, Jr., felt themselves excluded or threatened. The desperate desire for place intensified as the imperial cult of monarchy spread the idea of the polity as a series of ruling fathers headed by a benevolent king, and the budding consumer revolution diluted the power of material goods to reaffirm status. This was one of the first empire's central truths, its strange equation—the ever-growing number of colonists wanted into the empire and wanted more patriarchy until the empire collapsed, a failure that grew in part from their desires.

In the decades after the Glorious Revolution, the London bureaucracy gradually addressed the lack of uniformity in civil institutions that had so troubled the later Stuart kings. Early in the eighteenth century, as imperial rites were introduced and imperial history written, officials haltingly remade provincial governments and legal systems along English lines. The models provided by London and England's southern counties became the template for the colonies' restructuring, a transformation designed to ease imperial control. Anglicization, as this process has come to be known, gradually made the empire more coherent institutionally.

Simply looking at imperial institutional structures in the 1730s, one sees a cumbersome but by no means unworkable institutional architecture designed to answer any challenges in British America. Agents appointed by colonies as a whole, by assemblies, and even by private interests within each province linked the colonial governments to the London bureaucracy. These brokers solicited

the Board of Trade, the central imperial institutional control over the provinces. They also approached members of both houses of Parliament, aristocrats, and even the monarch if circumstances demanded it. This unwieldy system was rife with delays and corruption. Yet for seventy-five years, in various incarnations, it kept the empire together.[3]

Governors headed the colonies. London authorities, either royal bureaucrats or proprietary owners, in the case of Pennsylvania and Maryland, appointed them. By the 1730s, the only remaining exceptions to this were the charter governments of Connecticut and Rhode Island, whose populations elected their governors. The governors themselves seem to fall into three categories: placemen related to prominent aristocrats in the home islands; prominent provincials with connections in London; and military officers rewarded for service. They all hoped for wealth gained from a royal salary, gifts from their respective assemblies, and fees.[4]

Acting with the advice of a colony's leading men or governor, London also appointed most of the major administrative officials. Such appointments were based upon the man's "Birth, his property, his Friends and his own Merit," as Virginia's lieutenant governor Francis Fauquier explained in relation to a member of the Fairfax family selected to be the province's attorney. These factors, according

3. The Ferdinand St. John Paris Papers, NJHS, provide an unusually complete look at the work of a colonial agent in the mid-eighteenth century. Michael G. Kammen's study, *A Rope of Sand: The Colonial Agents, British Politics, and the American Revolution* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1968), remains the standard study of the colonial agencies. See also David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735–1785* (Cambridge, 1995). For the uses of imperial authority in the colonies, see Timothy Shannon's insightful study, *Indians and Colonists at the Crossroads of Empire: The Albany Congress of 1754* (Ithaca, N.Y., 2000); see also Winfred T. Root, "The Lords of Trade and Plantations, 1675–1696," *AHR*, XXIII (1917), 20–41.

4. Beverly McAnear, *The Income of the Colonial Governors of British North America* (New York, 1967), 10; John W. Raimo, *Biographical Directory of American Colonial and Revolutionary Governors, 1607–1789* (Westport, Conn., 1980); Leonard Woods Labaree, "The Early Careers of the Royal Governors," in *Essays in Colonial History Presented to Charles McLean Andrews by His Students* (New York, 1931); Labaree, "The Royal Governors of New England," Colonial Society of Massachusetts, *Publications*, XXXII (1937), 120–131; Michael C. Batinski, *Jonathan Belcher, Colonial Governor* (Lexington, Ky., 1996); Edward J. Cashin, *Governor Henry Ellis and the Transformation of British North America* (Athens, Ga., 1994); Marshall Delancey Haywood, *Governor William Tryon, and His Administration in the Province of North Carolina, 1765–1771* (Raleigh, N.C., 1903); Mary Lou Lustig, *Robert Hunter, 1666–1734: New York's Augustan Statesman* (Syracuse, N.Y., 1983).

to Fauquier, provided one with "a just claim to the honor." Honor: this was the return on many of the empire's lesser offices, because the fees paid to them were negligible. Such appointments confirmed one's place in an endlessly hierarchical order. As the political structure reflected the social structure and the distribution of material wealth, holding office influenced all social relationships.[5]

The various provinces' legislative structures also became more similar to one another in the eighteenth century and tried to emulate Parliament in their procedures. Upper houses whose members were appointed from London were joined to elected lower houses whose members held substantial property in their home locales. Pennsylvania's structure differed significantly, since its upper house played largely an advisory role. In Massachusetts, the outgoing upper house and the incoming lower house elected the upper house, subject to the royal governor's negative. These upper houses also acted as the highest court in some colonies and as the royal governor's advisers. Usually numbering ten to twelve men, the councillors were among the wealthiest men in their respective colonies.[6]

As the eighteenth century progressed, colonials also remade their courts along the lines of those in England. Lawyers and judges increasingly received formal training of some type modeled on that given at the Inns of Court in London. Some actually went to London for training or studied there before removing to the colonies. Under the influence of such judiciaries, court structure became more uniformly anglicized, and the courts sat in the monarch's name. The county courts of sessions that met four times a year, the justice of the peace (JP) courts that assembled monthly, and local sheriffs dominated legal matters in the empire's far marches. Portraits of the kings and queens, royal arms, and other monarchical insignia decorated courtrooms in many colonies, reinforcing the power of courts by linking them to the human embodiment of empire.[7]

5. "To the Earl of Shelburne, York, July 30th 1767," in George Reese, ed., *The Official Papers of Francis Fauquier, Lieutenant Governor of Virginia*, III, *1764–1768* (Charlottesville, Va., 1983), 1491.

6. Alan Tully, *Forming American Politics: Ideals, Interests, and Institutions in Colonial New York and Pennsylvania* (Baltimore, 1994), 365–370, 387–389, discusses the oligarchic nature of the New York and Pennsylvania legislatures; see also Thomas L. Purvis, "High-Born, Long-Recorded Families: Social Origins of New Jersey Assemblymen, 1703 to 1776," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XXXVII (1980), 599; Bruce Daniels, "Family Dynasties in Connecticut's Largest Towns, 1700–1760," *Canadian Journal of History*, VIII (1973), 99; Leonard Woods Labaree, *Conservativism in Early American History* (New York, 1948), 4–5. The meeting of the Virginia Burgesses was often a family reunion for the First Families of Virginia.

7. John M. Murrin, "Anglicizing an American Colony: The Transformation of Provincial Massachusetts" (Ph.D. diss., Yale, 1966); James A. Henretta, *"Salutary Neglect": Colo-*

The courts brought the king's justice and prerogative (rhetorically free of both assemblies and Parliament) to every community in North America. Virginia's magistrates opened court with "Oyez, oyez, oyez, silence is commanded in the court while his Majesties Justices are sitting. . . . God Save the King." The tendency to invoke the king as the origin of authority in the empire was especially pronounced in the legal system.[8]

The empire touched people in their other governing institutions as well. The county, town, and township were key among these. From New Jersey north, the town dominated; to the south, the county was central, though not exclusively so in South Carolina and Georgia, where parishes also played significant institutional roles. Local institutions tied the yeomanry to their king; appointed or elected officers organized them in their militias for imperial defense; and the yeomen voted for their assembly legislators in town- or countywide elections (depending on the region).

Anglicization was chronologically staggered, even within regions. In New York, particularly New York City, imperial institutions became entrenched after Leisler's Rebellion. All the colony's political factions accepted the monarchy and imperial norms without real question. New York's polyglot Dissenting populations welcomed a monarch legitimated in part by the claim to defend pan-European Protestantism. Intermarriage after 1710 eventually united the province's warring families, who became champions of royal authority and controlled its institutions and rituals even as they continued to squabble bitterly.[9]

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nial Administration under the Duke of Newcastle (Princeton, N.J., 1972); Bruce H. Mann, *Neighbors and Strangers: Law and Community in Early Connecticut* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1987); Ian K. Steele, "The Anointed, the Appointed, and the Elected: Governance of the British Empire, 1689–1784," in P. J. Marshall, ed., *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, II, *The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1998), 113. See also the work of A. G. Roeber, Cornelia Hughes Dayton, Jack P. Greene, Alan Tully, and the older imperial school literature.

8. A. G. Roeber, *Faithful Magistrates and Republican Lawyers: Creators of Virginia Legal Culture, 1680–1810* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1981), 78–79. The drama of court day is described by Roeber, esp. 73–83, and by Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740–1790* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1982).

9. Beverly McAnear, "Politics in Provincial New York, 1689–1761" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1935), II, 1000–1002; Patricia U. Bonomi, *A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York* (New York, 1971), 56–86; Lustig, *Robert Hunter*, 64–140; Philip S. Haffenden, *New England in the English Nation, 1689–1713* (London, 1974); Donna Merwick, *Possessing Albany, 1630–1710: The Dutch and English Experiences* (Cambridge, 1990), 220–285.

In Pennsylvania, Quaker resistance inhibited acceptance of many imperial norms for decades. Pennsylvanian James Kenny threw into high relief the colony's problematic relationship with imperial norms when he recalled a trip to the interior with a British-born Lieutenant Lim during the Seven Years' War. After reading "Barchleys Apollogy," the lieutenant confronted Kenny about "how much we [the Pennsylvanians] were against excess, and calling the Days and months by the heathen names." Lim "strove to vindicate both arguing that the use of many things that we counted excess helped to promote Trade and augmented the Revenues of the Crown." Kenny refused to concede and told him, "Excesses . . . was a means to deprive the Subjects of an Heavenly Crown would by no means of gaining a blessing to the Earthly Crown." It was a defense that would have made Samuel Sewall proud, had a New England Congregationalist uttered it.[10]

As these men knew, Pennsylvania's institutional structure differed somewhat from that of the metropolis. The assembly's power compared to the upper house was greater than that of the House of Commons in relation to the House of Lords. Even Pennsylvania, however, acknowledged royal authority. Driven by the demands of the imperial wars against France, a hybrid creolized political culture came into existence. As elsewhere, the language of authority in Pennsylvania was royalized. For example, Governor James Hamilton, attempting to raise troops in 1761, told the assembly he "had the Honour to receive from one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, the King's Command" to act in this manner. Hamilton personalized the request, telling the legislators that "the King is pleased to furnish all the men so raised. . . . with Arms, Ammunition, and Tents." Within a few years of this speech, there would be a concerted (though ultimately unsuccessful) drive headed by Ben Franklin, among others, to place the province's government in the king's hands.[11]

In all the colonies, local leaders, almost invariably the towns' and counties' largest property holders—the councillors and assemblymen, session judges, and other officials—were the political fathers. A man like this, as one Bostonian noted about an imperial governor, was supposed to "imitate his Master in his Royal Vertues, his Courage, Justice, Clemency and other Ennobling Qualifications." It was a social and political structure congruent with the broader royal political culture that celebrated the empire's political father and his family, which helps

10. James Kenny, Dec. 22, 1758, Journal to the Westward, 1758–1761, HSP.

11. "Opening Speech to the Assembly concerning the Raising of Troops for His Majesty's Service," in George E. Reed, ed., *Pennsylvania Archives*, III, 4th Ser., *Papers of the Governors, 1759–1785* (Harrisburg, 1900), 65.

explain its durability. In England, similar structures had maintained community stability since the sixteenth century and steadied the realm after 1688.[12]

At midcentury, the provinces seemed to be developing the same way. Groups of prominent families controlled the governing apparatus in each colony, soliciting a severely limited number of official positions for their relations and friends. They were like vines on a tree, seemingly indistinguishable from the power structure they came to inhabit. In this manner, colonial power structures came to resemble the county communities that dominated life in the English countryside. It should have been the beginning of a stable, anglicized British America. But it was not. This process of remodelling along English lines occurred in a society experiencing explosive population growth, and the combination proved dangerous to the social order.

. . .

Population and the Problem of Patriarchal Desires

The anglicization of colonial institutions came to bear on a strange equation shaped by population growth, widespread freehold land tenure, and political royalization that, taken together, inhibited the stabilization of the first British empire. The problem was the divergent functioning of patriarchy in the British Atlantic. In Britain, freeholders were fewer and far between. Those who owned substantial acreage could expect to play an active role in local politics, especially eldest sons. Primogeniture remained current throughout the British Isles.

In the colonies, the situation was different. Royal ceremonies and print culture spread the cult of monarchical patriarchy everywhere. But in America, freeholders abounded, while new colonies, counties, towns, and even churches came into being only fitfully and totally out of sync with the yeomen freeholder population's growth. It was in just such a situation that patriarchal expectations could become a powerful force for change.

By 1740, this strange problem in the British peace was already becoming apparent. The royalization of the yearly political calendar and print culture in a demographically expanding society helped create desires for place and authority that threatened the established order. The situation was particularly severe in relationship to political structures. On the mainland south of Canada, only one new colony, Georgia, was founded between 1700 and 1763, and its government was not royalized until 1752. That colony's institutional layout highlights the problem of institutional creation. The county structure was never successfully

12. Amicus Patrie, *A Word of Comfort to a Melancholy Country; or, The Bank of Credit Erected in the Massachusetts-Bay* (Boston, 1721), 3.

extended, and in 1776, Georgia would still consist of one county (parishes were subordinate entities within the county) with a royal governor and legislature on top of it. As with many colonies, London authorities appointed the governors (the most notable being the Scot Henry Ellis and James Wright) and the Legislative Council. This left precious few places of honor and authority for the local white male population to aspire to.[13]

This same problem, in various guises, intensified across British America as the population grew and expanded and institutional development failed to keep pace. Population figures for the period are sometimes sketchy, but the trends are clear. New York's population grew by 3.1 percent annually in the eighteenth century. By 1771, 168,000 Yorkers of European and African origins shared the colony's lands, up from about 18,000 in 1698. New Jersey's population grew 3 to 4 percent per year in the eighteenth century, and by the 1770s, approximately 110,000 colonists lived there. Rhode Island began the century with 7,181 souls and had nearly 60,000 in 1774, a growth rate of 3.2 percent for European and African populations. Maryland grew from 32,258 black and white residents early in the century to 164,000 by 1763. There were variations, of course, and dips in growth in some locales. Certainly, in the southern colonies, the rapid importation of slaves complicates the broader meaning of the growth. But the overall trend was a stunning expansion that quickly began to outstrip the institutional structure's ability to serve the population.[14]

Proprietary Pennsylvania offers a telling example of how a rapid population increase without corresponding institutional growth could strain a society. Between around 1725 and 1755, 77,000 immigrants arrived in Philadelphia, and natural reproduction increased apace. By 1775, around 300,000 people of Euro-

13. Harold E. Davis, *The Fledgling Province: Social and Cultural Life in Colonial Georgia, 1733–1776* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1976); Paul S. Taylor, *Georgia Plan: 1732–1752* (Berkeley, Calif., 1972); W. W. Abbot, *The Royal Governors of Georgia, 1754–1775* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1959). See also P. M. G. Harris, "The Social Origins of American Leaders: The Demographic Foundations," in Donald Fleming and Bernard Bailyn, eds., *Perspectives in American History*, III (Cambridge, 1969), 159–344; James Kirby Martin, *Men in Rebellion: Higher Governmental Leaders and the Coming of the American Revolution* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1973); Stanley Elkins and Eric McKitrick, "The Founding Fathers: Young Men of the Revolution," *Political Science Quarterly*, LXXVI (1961), 181–216; Philip J. Greven, Jr., *Four Generations: Population, Land, and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1970).

14. The figures are drawn from Robert V. Wells, *The Population of the British Colonies in America before 1776* (Princeton, N.J., 1975). For New York, see ibid., 111–113; for New Jersey, 134–135; for Rhode Island, 97–98; for Maryland, 146–147.

pean descent lived in the colony, and many of the immigrants and young settled on the colony's frontier. Begrudgingly, over time, five new interior counties were created, but they were only assigned ten assembly seats despite having, by the 1750s, half the colony's population. The three eastern counties, dominated by a long-settled elite, retained twenty-six seats.

Worse yet, the ratio of assemblymen to population climbed alarmingly throughout the period. In the eighteenth century's third decade, that ratio was one assemblyman for approximately every 340 white males. By 1770, it was approximately one assemblyman for every 1,300 white men. The lack of representation for the interior became a major point of contention during the march of the Paxton Boys in 1764 and in the political crisis in the colony in the spring of 1776 that led to the pro-independence party's ascent to power.[15]

The same sort of denial of place and respect to portions of rapidly growing populations occurred everywhere. For decades, the coastal elite in the Carolinas prevented the ever-mounting number of interior settlers from having effective political representation and institutional access. Legislative attempts to create new counties and towns at midcentury were disallowed by the Crown in 1754 because they were seen as an assault on prerogative. Tensions boiled over in both North and South Carolina and continued for decades until new royal institutional structures were created shortly before the Revolution.

In New Hampshire, the lack of a county structure caused repeated disputes throughout the provincial period. Governor Bennington Wentworth refused to erect courts outside the capital of Portsmouth, and in 1767 the colony still had only one county. Conflicts exacerbated by population growth continued to disrupt the polity until 1771, when Governor John Wentworth finally established five counties in the interior. By then, events had already begun to erode royal authority in the colony. There was not enough government to go around in the little colony or, indeed, anywhere in British America.[16]

The overwhelming tendency to continue older leading men in office aggravated this situation again and again. Such men traditionally kept their positions for decades, and, unrestrained by law or custom, added offices to their portfolios whenever possible. Lancaster, Virginia, patriarch Edwin Conway, for example, served forty years on the Court of the Quorum before the grim reaper removed him from office in 1752. Men elected to their respective assemblies would serve term after term until they retired or death overcame them. Twenty-four New York Council members died while serving, and another ten went to their maker shortly after leaving office. Daniel Horsmanden gave thirty-five years to that body, and the legendary Cadwallader Colden held on for fifty-five, serving in a number of other offices simultaneously![17]

The tendency to see possession of such offices as a kind of right led leading men to try to pass offices on to their younger relatives. They thus sought to secure the place of their dynasty at the expense of other families. William Smith, Sr., did exactly this when he resigned from the New York Council in favor of his namesake son in 1767. Founding father Benjamin Franklin did the same thing; after serving ten years as Pennsylvania Assembly clerk, he was elected to that body and resigned the clerk position in favor of his son William. Later, the elder Franklin would use his influence with Lord Bute to get William appointed royal governor of New Jersey.[18]

15. Ibid., 143; James T. Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore, 1972); David Hawke, *In the Midst of a Revolution* (Philadelphia, 1961), 17–22; Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York, 1991), 128; Jack P. Greene, "Legislative Turnover in British America, 1696 to 1775: A Quantitative Analysis," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XXXVIII (1981), 442–463. New York went from a ratio of 1 legislator for every 320 white males in 1730 to a 1 to 1,065 ratio shortly before the Revolution. This change may in part help explain the breakdown of order in the New York countryside after 1750, although other factors were clearly in play in that disorder.

16. Charles Lee Raper, *North Carolina: A Study in English Colonial Government* (New York, 1904), 226; Marjoleine Kars, *Breaking Loose Together: The Regulator Rebellion in Pre-Revolutionary North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2002); Richard Maxwell Brown, *The South Carolina Regulators* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963); Paul W. Wilderson, *Governor John Wentworth and the American Revolution: The English Connection* (Hanover, N.H., 1994), 115–117; Jeremy Belknap, *The History of New-Hampshire* (New York, 1970), 343–344; Bernard Bailyn, *The Origins of American Politics* (New York, 1968), 99. A general discussion of the demographic structure is Philip J. Greven, Jr., "Historical Demography and Colonial America," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XXIV (1967), 438–454. The best effort to situate the demographic structure of the society to leadership selection and patterns is P. M. G. Harris's "Social Origins of American Leaders," in Fleming and Bailyn, eds., *Perspectives in American History*, III, 159–346.

17. Roeber, *Faithful Magistrates and Republican Lawyers*, 76; Jessica Kross, "'Patronage Most Ardently Sought': The New York Council, 1665–1775," in Bruce C. Daniels, ed., *Power and Status: Officeholding in Colonial America* (Middletown, Conn., 1986), 218–219.

18. Leslie Francis Stokes Upton, "William Smith, Chief Justice of New York and Quebec, 1728–1793" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1957); Sheila L. Skemp, *William Franklin: Son of a Patriot, Servant of a King* (New York, 1990), 15; Edmund S. Morgan, *Benjamin Franklin* (New Haven, Conn., 2002), 126.

These practices helped create interrelated local oligarchies with a tight grip on status. By the 1720s, about forty intermarried families ran the middle colonies. They passed power from one generation to the next seamlessly and largely without external challenge even as they squabbled bitterly among themselves. In 1763, Cadwallader Colden wrote to the Earl of Egremont that the colony had "a set of Lawyers . . . as Insolent, Petulant, and at the same time as well skilled in all the chicanerie of the Law as perhaps is to be found anywhere else." Colden knew that the appointment of disinterested judges would have done much to squelch the bar's influence, but he also knew the impossibility of finding such judges. It was, he explained, a fact of life that "the distinguished Families in so small a Country are so united by intermarriage and otherwise" that to move against their interest was impossible, even in legal matters. Few cases could be brought before a judge who "is free from connections with those interested either in the Case or in other Cases similar to it."[19]

Colden might have added (though he probably didn't have to) that he had used his own political influence to assist his numerous offspring in getting positions. Governor George Clinton had enlisted Colden's aid against the powerful Delancey kin-patronage network in the late 1740s, and Colden's kin received patronage from the governor. By 1750, two of Colden's sons had been appointed to important posts in New York's imperial structure. His other sons received military or imperial-logistical appointments. Colden's description of New York's

19. I. N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498–1909*, IV (New York, 1922), 737. For the best discussion of this structure, see John M. Murrin and Gary J. Kornblith, "The Making and Unmaking of an American Ruling Class," in Alfred F. Young, ed., *Beyond the American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism* (Dekalb, Ill., 1993), 27–79. See also Brendan McConville, *These Daring Disturbers of the Public Peace: The Struggle for Property and Power in Early New Jersey* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1999), 111–115; Roger Champagne, "Family Politics versus Constitutional Principles: The New York Assembly Elections of 1768 and 1769," *WMQ*, XX (1963), 57–73; and especially the essays in Daniels, ed., *Power and Status*, particularly the essays by Ronald K. Snell, "'Ambitious of Honor and Places': The Magistracy of Hampshire County, Massachusetts, 1692–1760" (17–35), Bruce C. Daniels, "Diversity and Democracy: Officeholding Patterns among Selectmen in Eighteenth-Century Connecticut" (36–52), Lorena S. Walsh, "The Development of Local Power Structures: Maryland's Lower Western Shore in the Early Colonial Period" (53–71), Richard Alan Ryerson, "Portrait of a Colonial Oligarchy: The Quaker Elite in the Pennsylvania Assembly, 1729–1776" (75–105), and Grace L. Chickering, "Founders of an Oligarchy: The Virgin Council" (255–274). Chickering provides a simple but informative chart of the intermarriage among the member families of the Virginia Council on 261.

bench and bar, even allowing for his relentless cynicism, provides an illuminating description of provincial politics.[20]

It was the same north and south. In Virginia, nine families provided one-third of the members of the colony's council in the period between the Glorious Revolution and the American Revolution. These nine families were tightly intermarried and also related by blood to the other two-thirds. In fact, one-sixth of the members of the Council of the Virginia House of Burgesses in the period after 1688 had the same grandmother, a woman named Lucy Higginson who married often and well in the mid-seventeenth century. In New Hampshire, the Wentworth family controlled the major offices from the 1740s until they were overthrown in the revolutionary crisis. John Wentworth was made lieutenant governor in 1717, when New Hampshire and Massachusetts still shared the same royal governor. His son Benning followed him in 1741, becoming New Hampshire's first independent royal governor, and his nephew John, in turn, followed his uncle into the governorship. They were never lonely, as family members served in the colony's assembly and council throughout the period. The custom of relatives in office reached its logical extreme during John the younger's regime: his initial Council consisted of three uncles (two by marriage), his own father, three cousins, and the husband of another cousin.[21]

Colonials everywhere knew of these developments. Massachusetts governor Francis Bernard recognized the problems such a monopoly of position created. He appointed an enormous number (462) of county justices in the Bay Colony and further avoided appointing friends to office, only to see his efforts to extend state patronage unravel during the imperial crisis. His eventual successor, Thomas Hutchinson, repeatedly commented on kinship as a reality of New England's political life. The same families controlled churches, militia units, towns, and counties for generations. These little oligarchies were usually based on seventeenth-century families, along with some members of the merchant elite (the Hancock family in Boston, for example). Hutchinson's own family became one such extended kin group through intermarriage and dominated politics in the Bay Colony in the 1760s and 1770s before they were overthrown.[22]

20. Stanley Nider Katz, *Newcastle's New York: Anglo-American Politics, 1732–1753* (Cambridge, 1968), 178.

21. Labaree, *Conservativism in Early American History*, 7–8, 19; Belknap, *The History of New-Hampshire*, 344–345; Colin Nicolson, *The "Infamas Govener" Francis Bernard and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Boston, 2001), 72. Wilderson, *Governor John Wentworth and the American Revolution*, is an excellent discussion of that member of the family and the English context of his appointment.

22. Nicolson, *The "Infamas Govener,"* 72. The best discussion of Hutchinson is still

If provincial America had been a demographically stable, geographically contained society with a settled European-style land tenure system, the strange equation would never have arisen. America might well have found imperial equilibrium politically, a comfortable place in the empire akin to Canada in the nineteenth century. But the ability to realize authority commensurate with economic and social status was severely restricted in eighteenth-century America. The ever-increasing number of eldest sons would have been especially troubled, since a truncated form of primogeniture retained a powerful hold over their social imaginations. As these men got older, they assumed they would have a place of respect and authority in the community. All too often, these expectations failed to be met.[23]

Over time, the inability to realize position shaped the political behavior of men at every level of the social order. When a New York loyalist sought to explain how a conservative lawyer like James Duane could become a revolutionary, he declared that, in Duane's case, the deciding factors were "being married in the Livingston family, disappointed in an application to Lord Dunmore, and in another to Genl. Tryon, to be made one of his Majesty's Council, and his determination to be a great man, all combined to hurry him down the stream to rebellion." This problem, the slow-burning crisis of the three "P's"—patronage, population, and patriarchy—ran back far deeper into the provincial past and indeed manifested itself in some of the period's famous episodes.[24]

The Zenger Crisis specifically, historically enshrined in the whig political traditions as a moment of birth for various forms of modern freedoms, allows us to see clearly these factors at work on colonial society. For, as much as we would

Bernard Bailyn, *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson* (Cambridge, Mass., 1974). Hutchinson's own history of the Bay Colony is a potent source of information on the origins of this oligarchic control. Richard S. Dunn, *Puritans and Yankees: The Winthrop Dynasty of New England* (Princeton, N.J., 1962), is a valuable discussion of the most famous of the seventeenth-century family dynasties. Daniel Scott Smith, "'All in Some Degree Related to Each Other': A Demographic and Comparative Resolution of the Anomaly of New England Kinship," *AHR*, XCIV (1989), 44–79; see also Edward M. Cook, Jr., *The Fathers of the Towns: Leadership and Community Structure in Eighteenth-Century New England* (Baltimore, 1976).

23. For primogeniture in New England, see Toby L. Ditz, *Property and Kinship: Inheritance in Early Connecticut, 1750–1820* (Princeton, N.J., 1986); for Virginia, see C. Ray Keim, "Primogeniture and Entail in Colonial Virginia," *WMQ*, XXV (1968), 545–586; Carole Shammas, Marylynn Salmon, and Michael Dahlin, *Inheritance in America from Colonial Times to the Present* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1987).

24. Alexander, *A Revolutionary Conservative*, 105.

like to see ourselves somehow intellectually connected to the actors in that minidrama, they knew they lived in an empire where the most important tie was to the king.

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Zenger Reconsidered

The Zenger Crisis. Freedom of the press, jury nullification, Country ideology's introduction to America, the beginnings of a bourgeois "public sphere," and the beginnings of American democracy itself have all been attributed to this squabble in New York politics that began over salary money and patronage positions. Placed within its appropriate, imperial context, though, the crisis looks quite different than we have imagined. The royalization of political rites and public rhetoric enabled a factional fight over place within the giant, oligarchic superfamily that ruled that colony. Because the royalization of British America allowed for incredible latitude in understanding of the central motifs of order, colonials on both sides of the dispute were able to invoke the king against their political opponents. Writers discussed the tension between liberty and power as part of this debate, but they linked that discussion to dynastic history and imperial themes that grew from the efforts to legitimate the Hanoverian dynasty.[25]

The Zenger Crisis grew from a long-running dispute that pitted a group of New York politicians led by Lewis Morris, James Alexander, and Rip Van Dam against a faction that was eventually supported by a newly appointed royal governor, William Cosby. Morris's supporters included New York's agrarian interest and also many of the Scottish gentlemen who had been settling in the midatlantic since the 1680s. Morris himself had married the daughter of a leading Scotsman, James Graham. Their opponent, William Cosby, was a placeman and former sol-

25. Michael Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1990), Bailyn, *Origins of American Politics*, and the body of scholarship produced by Leonard Levy use this approach. Tully's solid study of midatlantic politics (*Forming American Politics*)—as solid as a study of the midatlantic can be that takes no account of New Jersey—is a case in point. He entitles his section on Zenger "Freedom of Speech and the Zenger Trial." More egregious in this regard are Bailyn's *Origins of American Politics* and *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992), both of which are sophisticated restatements of the whig tradition and teleological in the extreme. As early as 1960, Leonard Levy established that the Zenger trial did not secure freedom of the press as was once believed. See Levy, "Did the Zenger Case Really Matter? Freedom of the Press in Colonial New York," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., XVII (1960), 35–50.

dier who had married the Earl of Halifax's sister, a cousin of the powerful Duke of Newcastle. Some merchants, several members of the important Delancey family, and some imperial officials supported Cosby. Passions ran high for years as the factions struggled for power and imperial patronage.[26]

The dispute actually ran back a number of years before Cosby arrived in the colony in August 1732. The thread of continuity uniting events in New York that stretched from the late 1720s to 1736 is that, in each episode, conflict flared, not over major policy issues, but rather over control of the limited places of authority and political patronage. Both the Morrisites and their opponents were highborn men of property who felt they had the right to rule. Lewis Morris, the struggle's protagonist, held vast properties in New Jersey and New York. But the truncated imperial state that existed in New York could only accommodate a few such great men seeking institutional acknowledgment of their authority, locking out others of similar status. It is telling that the crisis would not be resolved until more such places were created by the London government by granting New Jersey a separate executive (it had shared governors with New York since 1702) and appointing Lewis Morris governor.

The problem began with Morris's loss of place. He had gained real influence in New York through his close alliances with Governor Robert Hunter (1709–1719) and then Governor William Burnet (1720–1728), who shared his views that those who held landed property were most fit to rule. Morris had acted as legislative ally of these governors from his Westchester assembly seat, in the process securing patronage positions for his supporters.[27]

After Burnet's departure, though, Morris gradually lost power. Burnet's replacement, John Montgomerie (1728–1731), became embroiled in a salary dispute with Morris, who remained a New York supreme court justice. The dispute, which foreshadowed the Zenger Crisis in many ways, saw Morris's son suspended from the Governor's Council for defending his father's honor. By the early 1730s,

26. Bonomi, *A Factious People*, 106; Murrin and Kornblith, "The Making and Unmaking of an American Ruling Class," in Young, ed., *Beyond the American Revolution*; Tully, *Forming American Politics*. Lustig, *Robert Hunter*, 78, 109, 118–119, gives ample evidence of Morris's involvement with the Scottish gentlemen of New York. Morris was related to the Scots through his marriage to Isabella, the daughter of James Graham, a leading Scottish-born politician active in New York in the 1690s (Eugene R. Sheridan, *Lewis Morris, 1671–1746: A Study in Early American Politics* [Syracuse, N.Y., 1981], 24).

27. Tully gives a good, brief account (*Forming American Politics*, 95–96). For an equally solid extended treatment, see Sheridan, *Lewis Morris*, 91–180. Morris's relationship with Hunter is explored by Lustig, *Robert Hunter*, 78–79. For Hunter's use of patronage, see ibid., 110–111.

the elder Morris was barely holding on to his place, and then only because of a vacuum in the governor's chair caused by Montgomerie's death. When the London government filled that vacuum by appointing William Cosby, Morris and his ally James Alexander quickly lost their places in the power structure. On his arrival, Cosby demanded fees collected by New York's acting governor Rip Van Dam, a political ally of Morris's. Cosby moreover tried to influence the legal proceedings in the matter in a way that threatened Morris's position as head of the supreme court. Cosby eventually removed him from office and replaced him with James Delancey. When a Delancey supporter challenged Morris for the seat in the New York legislature from Westchester County in the election of 1733, the Zenger Crisis began.[28]

From the beginning, imperial themes and motifs linked to the monarchy dominated the struggle. On election day in 1733, Morris's supporters rode in procession onto the green at the village of Eastchester: "first rode two Trumpeters and 3 Violins; next 4 of the principal Freeholders, one of which carried a Banner, on one side of which was affixed in gold Capitals, KING GEORGE, and on the other, in like golden Capitals LIBERTY and LAW; next followed the Candidate Lewis Morris, Esq. then two colours." After intense political infighting revolving around the eligibility of Morris's Quaker supporters to vote (because they would not swear a loyalty oath to George II due to religious scruples), he took the election. Morris's supporters greeted him like an arriving imperial governor when he returned to New York on October 31, "saluted by a general Fire of the Guns from the Merchants Vessels; and . . . receiv'd by great numbers of the most considerable Merchants and Inhabitants . . . and by them with loud Acclamations of the People . . . conduct'd to the Black Horse Tavern." There "was fix'd a Tabulet with golden Capitals, KING GEORGE, LIBERTY AND LAW."[29]

That tablet suggests the Zenger Crisis's most underappreciated aspect. The debate over monarchy's character current in the empire in the eighteenth century's first decades provided the broader context for the Morrisites' eventual use of so-called radical Country thought. Initially, they situated their struggle for place in terms of the conflict between the deposed House of Stuart and the Hanoverians. During the confrontation at the Eastchester election, Morris and his supporters cried out, "No Excise . . . no Pretender," and accused "William Foster, Esq., the Candidate on the other Side, with being a Jacobite," an advocate of the House of

28. Sheridan, *Lewis Morris*, 140–180, esp. 141, 144.

29. *New-York Weekly Journal*, Nov. 5, 1733. Morris's Quaker support originated with his by-then-deceased uncle, Lewis Morris, who was a leading Quaker in New York in the 1670s.

Stuart and absolutist government. The Morrisites declared themselves champions of balanced monarchy.[30]

In a newspaper piece published after the election, a pro-Morrisite writer said, "There are two Sorts of Monarchies, an absolute and a limited one." Clearly thinking ahead, the writer declared that "in the first, the liberty of the Press can never be maintained; it is inconsistent with it; for what absolute Monarch would suffer any subject to animadvert on his Actions, when it is in his Power to declare the Crime." Identifying his own cause with "limited Monarchy, as England," the writer argued for the rule of law as "the sure Guide to direct the King, the Ministers, and others his Subjects."[31]

Writers in support of Morris placed the disputes within the context of the Stuart family's seventeenth-century political battles, particularly the controversies before the English Civil Wars. Those disputes played a crucial, living part in the royal political culture, as they helped legitimate deposing the Catholic line of the House of Stuart in 1688. One such writer, "Independent Whig," stated in a 1733 letter to the *New-York Weekly Journal* that, "by an independent Whigg," he did not mean some kind of republican but rather "one whose Principles lead him to be firmly attached to the present happy Establishment, both in Church and State, and whose Fidelity to the Royal Family [the Hanoverians] is . . . not to be called into question." He encouraged use of satire against New York's placemen; such writings "were of great Service to the Patriot Whiggs" against the Stuarts, particularly "in the Reign of King Charles and King James the Second, as well as in that of Queen Anne. They asserted the Freedom of Writing against wicked Ministers."[32]

Several months later, another writer to the same paper referenced the supposed persecution of Morris to the tyrannical period of Charles I's personal rule in the 1630s. The writer declared that "Mr Hampden [a parliamentary leader]" was "one of the most bright . . . Characters that acted upon the Stage of those times; but the Opposition he gave in the Case of Ship Money [the tax collected by Charles I without the approval of Parliament in the 1630s], is by [no] meanes to be forgiven, by Men of Laudean [meaning absolutist] Principles." As was the case with Morris, "one of the best" of men was being portrayed "as one of the Worst of Men." These writers sought to identify Morris with the Protestant succession and his opponents with the previous century's Stuart excesses.[33]

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid., Nov. 12, 1733.

32. Ibid., Nov. 19, 1733.

33. Ibid., Apr. 29, 1734.

Governor William Cosby's arrival gradually encouraged a transformation in political rhetoric. Because George II had appointed Cosby, he could not be directly vilified as a Stuart supporter. But he could be and was vilified for abuse of power when he joined with James and Stephen Delancey, Adolph Philipse, and others against the Morrisites. Only then did Morris, James Alexander, and others turn to libertarian rhetoric to justify their actions. The Morrisites denounced institutional placemen and celebrated agrarian life, a viewpoint Morris, a major landholder, developed in some of his writings. That much of what Morris drew on was actually written by high tories (supporters of a strong royal prerogative) has largely been ignored by subsequent generations.[34]

Even as the rhetoric shifted, both factions began to manipulate royal celebrations in order to identify themselves with the Hanoverian dynasty and gain popular support. The imperial rites remained superficially normal in the port city through 1734. But by October 1735, the hostile factions staged discreet imperial celebrations to garner support. On October 9, 1735, two days before the anniversary of George II's coronation, Governor Cosby dined with and was toasted by "the Principle Merchants, and other Gentlemen of this City" upon his return from Albany. The overt reason for the celebration was the governor's renewal of a treaty with the Iroquois, but it might also have been an effort to preempt the Morrisite-dominated coronation celebrations planned for the eleventh. The latter celebration was held; "the elected Magistrates with a considerable Number of Merchants and Gentlemen, not Dependent on [Governor Cosby] made a very handsome Entertainment in Honour of the Day." Morris's ally Rip Van Dam, "President of His Majesty's Council, Matthew Norris, Esq. [Morris's son-in-law], Commander of His Majesty's Ship Tartar, and Capt. Compton Commander of His Majesty's ship Seahorse, [were] at the House of Mr. John De Honeur in this City . . . while the great Guns of his Majesty's ship Tartar were Firing."[35]

Toasts during the celebration allowed the Morrisites to express their loyalty to the idea of Protestant monarchy and thus to implicate Cosby's actions as unconstitutional. The *New-York Journal* reported, "They drank the following Healths, the King, the Queen, the Prince, Duke and royal Family, the Prince and Princess of Orange, the Glorious and immortal Memory of King William the third; suc-

34. Bonomi, *A Factious People*, 107. The best study of Bolingbroke himself is still Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and His Circle: The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968). There are, of course, numerous studies of Country thought in the period.

35. *New-York Gazette*, Oct. 6–13, 1735; *New-York Journal*, Oct. 20, 1735; Sheridan, *Lewis Morris*, 144.

cess to Coll. Morris, in His Undertakings [referring to Morris's impending journey to London to get Cosby removed], to a speedy Election of a new Assembly." The special attention paid to William III during the toasts suggested the Morrisite attachment to the Glorious Revolution's settlement as Morris understood it and expressed their opposition to arbitrary rule, without ever accusing Cosby directly of Jacobite sympathies. Rather, Cosby was now being portrayed as corrupted by power, as a political personality type rather than as a partisan in the dynastic struggle.[36]

The royal holidays continued to be manipulated to partisan ends into 1736. The Prince of Wales's birthday celebration became a battleground in January 1736, as the Morrisite and Cosby factions set up rival events. The Morrisites celebrated the day "at the Black Horse [Tavern—their social stronghold] in a most . . . genteel Manner." There was "a most magnificent Appearance of Gentlemen and Ladies . . . the Company proceeded to Country Dances . . . the first of which was called The Prince of Wales, and the second, the Princess of Saxe-Gotha, in Honour of the Day." There was "a most sumptuous Entertainment afterward," at which "the Honourable Rip Van Dam Esq., President of His Majesty's Council began with the Royal Healths." The next day, the Cosby faction, aware that the celebrations shaped perception, held a rival event at Fort George. Cosby, already terminally ill, could not attend the ball, but his gentlemen supporters toasted the king and illuminated their homes.[37]

By the time Morris returned from his futile embassy to London in early October 1736, the colony seemed primed for some kind of civil war. Only the arrival of imperial documents proclaiming George Clarke, a member of the now-deceased Cosby's faction, council president, lieutenant governor, and provincial commander-in-chief brought a tenuous social peace.

Clarke immediately seized the initiative by asserting his control over the imperial ritual calendar. On November 1, 1736, a New York newspaper reported "His Majesty's Birth-Day, the same was observed here, with the usual Solemnity." The city's leading men "waited upon the Honourable GEORGE CLARKE, Esq., Lieutenant-Governor of this Province . . . to pay him the usual Compliments of the Day." The "royal Healths" were drunk "under the discharge of Cannon from the Fort." It was, finally, reported that "this happy Turn of Affairs diffused a general Joy throughout the City, to see a Period so effectually put to the Disorders

36. *New-York Journal*, Oct. 20, 1735.

37. Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, IV, 544; *New-York Gazette*, Jan. 20–Feb. 3, 1736; Esther Singleton, *Social New York under the Georges, 1714–1776* (New York, 1902), 305–306.

that threatened us." The crisis began to subside with the King's Birthday celebration. The Morrisite faction realized that they could not challenge a magistrate who had just received George II's approval, and Clarke realized that that approval, publicly owned in a ritual of imperial power, was his strongest political weapon.[38]

Tensions persisted in the colony until the one thing that could truly resolve them, the creation of new institutional structures, was accomplished. In 1737, imperial authorities separated New Jersey from New York at the executive level and made it an independent colony. Its first governor, father to the polity, was Lewis Morris, and one of his appointments to the colony's council was James Alexander, who went on to become a multiple office holder. Lewis Morris's son, Robert Hunter Morris, became a judge of the colony's supreme court and eventually Pennsylvania's lieutenant governor. Other Morris supporters completed the new government. Their honor was thus served.[39]

Considered as a social and political conflict as well as an ideological one, it is evident that monarchical political culture shaped the Zenger affair. Language derived from imperial debates was used to define the factions. The contending parties usurped royalist political holidays for partisan goals. That they manipulated political language and holidays is hardly surprising, given the importance of celebrations and print culture in linking imperial subjects. And at the root of it all was a struggle for place in an empire that did not have enough of it to go around.

To accept the power patriarchy, monarchy, empire, honor, and place had to shape behavior in colonial America is to subtly rethink much of what we know and to retell American stories with a uniquely British accent. So it was with the Zenger Crisis and with many of the other stories that comprise the earliest parts of our national history.

. . .

American Stories Retold

A persistent theme emerges from events in the provincial period that have been generally considered in light of the liberal society that developed at the eighteenth century's end. Incidents interpreted in light of classical liberalism, Country ideology, or as manifestations of a budding American localism often began

38. *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1826*, IV (New York, 1826), 30–31.

39. Sheridan, *Lewis Morris*, 173, 179–180. Morris had been sporadically interested in securing the governorship of New Jersey since at least 1701, when Queen Anne royalized its government (48, 80, 85).

as struggles for place on the town, county, or colony level. It was true in the witchcraft conflict in Salem village, in the Great Awakening, and in the land rioting in New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, and elsewhere. For certain, these events are complex, and explanations for them must be subtle and multilayered. But institutional creation in the provincial period, which we have equated with American voluntarism and democratization, was driven by the desire for institutional place and control.

Salem village experienced severe internal tensions over institutional control between 1650 and 1692. Friction between the Putnam and the Porter families erupted repeatedly in that period. By 1692, the interior's substantial landholders, led by the Putnam family, had long been shut out of town politics by the port's elite and their Porter allies in Salem village. After a struggle, the villagers in the interior were allowed to establish their own church, and they eventually invited in a strong figure to minister to them. But in 1690, the town leaders curtly rebuffed yeomen's efforts to create a new polity by splitting village lands from the town. Such a polity would have, in these dissident villagers' minds, reunited the social and political structures in their community. Their request was denied, which must have been especially galling for some of these villagers, particularly members of the once-powerful Putnam family, who knew their fathers and grandfathers had played prominent roles in Salem's governance. This rejection was in all likelihood linked to the deadly events that followed.[40]

The religious upsurge we call the Great Awakening has generally been understood in libertarian, antiauthoritarian terms. There is much to recommend this view, as untold numbers proclaimed the primacy of a personal relationship with God, often in defiance of well-established ministers. The power of that message and its chronological relationship to the Revolution have shaped our understanding of the entire period. The creation of new institutional structures in the Awakening's aftermath has been noted, but usually as evidence of a growing American voluntarism. The new churches, new synods, new colleges, and ultimately new Christian cults that appeared might have been voluntary in membership. However, they also were institutions that offered honor and authority to those who served in them.

As paradoxical as it may seem, on a certain level the Awakening might have been driven by the desire of men in an expanding society to realize institutional

40. Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (Cambridge, Mass., 1974), 40–45, 51–52. Although many studies have since been done of the episode, this classic study of village life remains a valuable tool for understanding the community and family dynamics in late-seventeenth-century New England.

control and public patriarchy. This would explain the rapid institutionalization of a supposedly individualist rebellion against institutionalized authority and the rapid return to patriarchal structuring. And it helps explain the appearance of patriarchal religious cults in the 1760s and 1770s, some of whose leaders proclaimed themselves Old World prophets or even demigods, a trend that would continue into the 1830s.[41]

The revival's preachers tapped into the political culture's prevalent anti-Catholic themes. Christ and Antichrist were at war for the soul of Protestant people everywhere. The earthly enemy was Catholics and the Catholic powers, the king was a key figure in protecting the empire from them, and those who failed to acknowledge this threatened the realm. As early as 1739, George Whitefield, writing in his widely read *Journal of a Voyage from Gibraltar to Georgia*, declared that "there needs no other argument against popery, than to see the Pageantry, Superstition, and Idolatry of their Worship." The revivalist ministers were aware of the danger of popery and sought regeneration in part because those in a weakened spiritual state might succumb to its temptations inadvertently. In time, some of these evangelically inclined ministers, like Boston's Thomas Prince, would assign the struggle against Catholics, generally, and Catholic France, in particular, millennial meaning.[42]

This same trend toward patriarchal reorganization emerged in another unlikely place: among the agrarian dissidents who first emerged in New Jersey in the mid-1740s and then appeared in backcountry or frontier locales in New York, Pennsylvania, and the Carolinas. These yeomen dissidents quickly developed committees to govern their actions. In New Jersey, farmers opposed to the colony's proprietors initially created a committee structure, manned by the best established among them, that mimicked town councils and a central committee

41. The literature on awakenings is vast. Stephen A. Marini, *Radical Sects of Revolutionary New England* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989), addresses the initial appearance of these sects. See also Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, Conn., 1989). The appearance of several female-dominated sects, particularly the Universal Friends and the Shakers, have obscured this much larger turn toward rigid patriarchal forms.

42. George Whitefield, *A Journal of a Voyage from Gibraltar to Georgia . . .* (Philadelphia, 1739), 17; Thomas Prince, *A Sermon Delivered at the South Church in Boston* (Boston, 1746). Thomas Kidd has begun to explore the role of anti-Catholicism in the Great Awakening. Nathan Hatch has developed aspects of the latter theme in Hatch, "The Origins of Civil Millennialism in America: New England Clergymen, War with France, and the Revolution," in Stanley Katz and John Murrin, eds., *Colonial America*, 3d ed. (New York, 1983), 617–638.

that resembled their assembly. This structure soon gave way to a more hierarchical one headed by an agrarian strongman named Amos Roberts, who proclaimed his followers "all his children and one family."[43]

Similar institutions and leaders appeared in the New York borderlands, in Pennsylvania's Wyoming Valley, in North and South Carolina, and in other areas of the interior where an expanding population was moving beyond the social-political structures of the coast and the tidewater. When the North Carolina Assembly sought to alleviate the tensions that led to a decade of agrarian violence in the 1760s, they created four new counties in the newly populated interior. Indeed, the entire violent upheaval known as the South Carolina Regulation was driven by the desire of those living in the interior to create new royal institutions in the face of opposition from the coastal elite, who controlled all institutional structures. Simply calling such episodes "localist" fails to capture the complexity of the participants' expectations and outlooks.[44]

The Salem incident, the religious revival, and the agrarian conflicts were, of course, tremendously complex. Such emotional changes cannot simply be reduced to any one cause or even set of causes. As revealing as their public actions were, to speculate on the inner motives of those who participated, and particularly to try to discern the relationship of these motives to changes in the broader political culture, is to do just that, speculate.

If any type of history can comfortably be said to be out of vogue, it is institutional history. Its study seems to create a dead language, leaving its practitioners unable to speak to those around them. However, if we imagine institutions as an expression of conditioned human behavior, as a site where honor and place were asserted rather than simply as buildings or records, then new possibilities emerge for using institutional change to understand the provincial period. The artificial boundaries between institution and political ritual blur; the intricate relationships between governing structure, historical perception, and aesthetic taste become visible. Print culture and institution become, if not one, then arms of the same creature.

The empire and the British peace would have endured if conflict in the society had remained restricted to elites struggling for patronage positions in the empire. But the tensions caused by the confluence of population growth, the establishment of the imperial cult of monarchy, and stagnation in the creation of new institutions led to more widespread disorder. As the society divided in new ways and the British peace broke down, the parties to the resulting discord began to invoke the king to their own ends. British America became a society of many monarchs, each proclaiming a different vision of local and imperial order.

43. *NJA*, VII, 180. I have discussed this issue at length in *These Daring Disturbers of the Public Peace*, 51, 137–156, 186–196.

44. Kars, *Breaking Loose Together*, 190. Fear of criminal gangs and frontier violence drove the South Carolina Regulators to push for institutions. That said, elite resistance and the general course of events very strongly suggest a much more complex mindset on the part of all parties. See Brown, *The South Carolina Regulators*, for a discussion.