Tangible Imaginations

Community, Print Culture, and American Identity in Philadelphia, 1764 – 1776

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Table of Contents

Abstract

My doctoral project examines the role that serials and printed ephemera played in animating ordinary Philadelphians into revolutionary action. I am interested in the intellectual life of historically inarticulate peoples, and I argue that the moments of intersection between crowds and texts recorded how American colonists contributed their own thoughts toward erudite theories surrounding representative government, liberty, and commercial networks. The central research question asks: *what role did texts play in the transformation of British subjects into dissident Americans?* Where earlier studies of the Revolution have emphasized either radical argumentation or revolutionary activity, I show how the material text functioned as a vital intermediary by creating a persuasive ideal of the American identity through the physical ubiquity of colonial prints, the distillation of printed ideas into imitable action, the reiteration of instructive texts through public performances, and a consistent message across all media of the virtue and necessity of an American community. In so doing, the thesis no less crucially explores print materials and modes of reader reception deemed relatively inaccessible in previous studies of reading in America. The project concludes by looking forward toward the sectionalism of the nineteenth century arguing that print created a perception of unity without a meaningful unification of the divergent regional practices.

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Abbreviations

American Weekly Mercury — *AWS*

Philadelphia, PA, American Philosophical Society — APS

Archive of Americana, Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, 1639 – 1800 — Evans

The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, ed. by Benjamin Labaree, 39 vols, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1967) — *PBF*

Pennsylvania Chronicle — *PC*

Pennsylvania Evening Post — *PEP*

Pennsylvania Gazette — *PG*

Pennsylvania Journal — *PJ*

Pennsylvania Ledger — *PL*

Pennsylvania Mercury — *PM*

Pennsylvania Packet — *PP*

Philadelphia, PA, Historical Society of Pennsylvania — HSP

Philadelphia, PA, Library Company of Philadelphia — LCP

Washington Crossing, PA, David Library of the American Revolution — DLAR

Introduction:
Using American Identity to Understand the Intellectual Life of the Inarticulate

Cheap print provided non-elite Philadelphia readers with an entree to many of the diverse intellectual currents circulating in the British Atlantic. Even pithy single-page recaps of the year's events contained references to renowned writers such as Homer, Virgil, Cato, and Dante Alighieri.[1] In almanacs meditations from the ancient Roman philosopher Seneca existed cheek by jowl with a recipe for making liquor from the sap of the south Indian Arrack tree.[2] Popular songs similarly drew on a variety of sources, including John Bunyan's eminent Christian allegory *Pilgrim's Progress*. [3] More celebrated texts quoted at length from modern economic classics like Charles Davenant, Malachy Postlethwayt and Josiah Child.[4] Radical multivolume works on the state of British governance like James Burgh's *Political Disquisitions*, though far too expensive for ordinary consumers to buy themselves, were raided for concise anecdotes and reprinted in significantly cheaper works.[5] Public dialogues, which were often reprinted in newspapers, drew from contemporary poetical works such as William Mason's *Caractacus*.[6] Almanacs taught audiences to appreciate astronomical phenomenon like the transit of Venus.[7] Being sufficiently familiar with the work of Benjamin Franklin on electricity, crowds set an effigy on fire in his defence using an electric spark.[8] Popular aphorisms distilled the classical learning of authors into pithy epithets, and authors frequently exclaimed *O Tempora! O Mores!*[9] Perhaps more obliquely, while ordinary colonists may not have been familiar with the political intricacies of James Harrington's seventeenth-century treatise *The*

[1] *New Year Verses, of the Printers Lads, who carry about the Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans, 12183.
[2] Andrew Aguecheek, *The Universal American Almanack* (Philadelphia, 1765), Evans 9893, pp. 20 – 8.
[3] Mr Sagasity, *The Whiteoak Anthum* [sic] *taken from Pilgrim's Progress* (Philadelphia, 1765), Evans 10211.
[4] John Dickinson quoted all three men repeatedly in his opposition pieces against Parliament. John Dickinson, *Late Regulations Respecting the British Colonies on the Continent of America Considered* (Philadelphia, 1765), Evans 9950, pp. 4 – 5. *PG* 31 December 1767).
[5] Richard Saunders, *Poor Richard Improved* (Philadelphia, 1775), Evans 14452, pp. 21 – 5.
[6] *PG* 5 June 1766.
[7] Abraham Weatherwise, *Father Abraham's Almanack* (Philadelphia, 1768), Evans 11110, p 2.
[8] Richard Alan Ryerson, *The Revolution is Now Begun: The Radical Committees of Philadelphia, 1765 – 1776* (Philadelphia, PA; University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978), p. 40.
[9] *PC* 30 March 1772. Philo-Veritatis, *Remarks upon the Delineated Presbyterian* (Phildelphia, 1764), Evans 9814.

Commonwealth of Oceana, his call for the regular re-election of officials was ultimately reflected in the determination of the Pennsylvanian Constitution to prevent 'an inconvenient aristocracy' dominating revolutionary politics.[10] By directly engaging with their responses to the rich array of material available to them, this thesis aims to highlight the role that ordinary people played in the development of revolutionary ideas. As the above summary amply illustrates, no material, irrespective of its erudition, was inherently beyond the reach of popular audiences.

This dissertation therefore explores the extent to which ordinary people both engaged with and actively shaped the literature of Revolution. In particular, the project aims to demonstrate how defining the concept of 'American' helped to transform British colonists into independent Republicans. The process was relatively quick, meaningfully beginning in the Paxton Boys debate of 1764. The debate reveals that ordinary Philadelphians assumed that Native Americans were doomed to inevitable decline. The important implication of this assumption was a belief in white ascendency that underpinned the conflict with Britain, empowering white colonists to believe they had an advantage over the metropole. Despite this assumed white ascendency, the white colonists did not yet share a name, but following the Stamp Act of 1765 colonists increasingly referred to themselves as Americans in the press. This new Americanness then became associated with patriotism and Parliamentary protest. As an important distinction, debates surrounding Americanness concentrated on the membership of the community. Meanwhile, patriotism was a political agenda that sought to protect American interests from British infringement. The confluence between the two had revolutionary implications. At first, elite Patriots led the protest, but the crucial moment came in 1770 when ordinary people, disappointed in the lack of commitment from the merchants, organised themselves into large public gatherings in order discuss their own commitment to patriotism. The impetus for these meetings came from their engagement with revolutionary literature, most notably *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*. Throughout the entire period from the Stamp Act protests in 1765 to the Continental Association in 1774, there had been a pervasive Patriot message that associated domestic manufacturing with American ascendency. This emboldened ordinary people in their Americanness to such a degree that in the final two years before independence

[10] *The Constitution of the Common-Wealth of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1776), Evans 14979, p. 18.

Americans asserted that if they removed all the impediments to their unification they would be able to defeat Britain. The entire scheme culminated in a belief, best expressed by Tom Paine's *Common Sense*, that continental cooperation rather than integration was the greatest strength of the Americans. This would eventually cause problems in the Early Republic, but it was a belief that ordinary people held. Overall, then, this thesis examines the imaginative process of the American Revolution by looking at the tangible consequences of ordinary people's involvement, the revolutionary actions they undertook, and the radical literature that animated them.

This thesis primarily responds to the concepts, narratives, and imperatives of historians working in the field of new social history. The field has always treated the contributions of ordinary people seriously, repeatedly emphasising their centrality in the Revolution, but most historians have overlooked their world of ideas. This thesis aims to reintegrate ordinary people into the intellectual history of the Revolution. The key aspect in conceptualising this task involves recovering the voice of the inarticulate, the people who could not or did not leave records of their interior lives to posterity. Compounding this inarticulateness, I am mainly interested in the intellectual lives of ordinary people, i.e. those who were content to be ruled rather than those who aspired to rule. Understanding their participation in this movement can help to explain the transformative force of revolutionary ideals, and the extent to which this was an attempt to seize power. Given these restrictions, the thesis examines inarticulate and ordinary people as a group, exploring how a shared American identity effected political change. A central concern is how the voice of an individual can be used to discern the ideas of an audience. To address this concern, my methodology is developed from the history of reading, looking at the material circumstances surrounding intellectual exchanges and the ways in which communities reined in the eccentric interpretations of individuals. This methodology shifts the focus from articulate authors to inarticulate audiences, hence reintegrating ordinary people into the intellectual trajectory of the Revolution. The whole project developed from revisiting the exhaustive collections of digitised sources to look for new ways to discern the influence of ordinary people. Importantly, though accessed digitally, I analysed these sources as material texts, the physical remnants of a larger and more vivacious process. In these various ways, the purpose of the project is to engage a well-established field and familiar source set with new eyes, both conceptually and methodologically.

New Social History:
The Contribution of Ordinary People's Ideas to the American Revolution

The main insight of new social history is that the people occupy a central place in revolutionary studies. However, it is important to note that its practitioners never adhered strictly to a single methodology or ideology in pursuing that notion. Instead, two main positions emerged. One congregated around Peter Stearns' 'social history of everything' approach.[11] The other, and the one from which this thesis builds, concentrated explicitly on the place of ordinary people in politics. The foremost exponent of this position has been Alfred Young. Three concepts are central to his work—agency, consciousness, and transformation. For Young incorporating ordinary people into the narrative of Revolution entailed looking at their ability to act (agency), their sense of belonging (consciousness), and the reasoning behind changes in these behaviours (transformation).[12] Throughout I will concentrate on the ability of ordinary people to affect the Revolution. I will measure their American consciousness and its implications for understanding the intellectual life of inarticulate people. Ultimately, the Revolution was an important transforming force and so I will frequently assess changes in the agency of ordinary people to understand how the Revolution empowered them, as well as how ideas of Americanness responded to the British Empire. In each chapter, Young's concepts provide a framework for analysing how material texts reveal the agency of ordinary people and their American consciousness.

Another important element of new social history is the imperative in many of the works to reintegrate marginalised perspectives. Young envisioned that his concepts would help to re-evaluate the Revolution as a whole by examining 'outsiders'.[13] Gary Nash's work has repeatedly demonstrated the value of reintegration. His work on race and class reveal lost moments of racial harmony or black

[11] In fairness, Stearns' main argument was that as an independent discipline social history would have the freedom to train scholars who could begin to synthesise a total history. Peter N. Stearns, 'Coming of Age', *Journal of Social History*, 10:2 (1976), 246 – 55, (p. 252).
[12] Alfred F. Young, 'American Historians Confront "The Transforming Hand of Revolution"', in *Transforming Hand of Revolution: Reconsidering the American Revolution as a Social Movement*, ed. by Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert (Charlottesville, VA; University of Virginia Press, 1995), pp. 346 – 492, (pp. 465 – 9).
[13] Young, 'American Historians Confront', p. 465.

nationalism, as well as the numerous and distinct agendas through which a host of diverse peoples interpreted the revolutionary conflict.[14] Nash's works make clear that marginalised people acted in pursuit of their own notions of what a better society could be. This approach is not simply a well-meaning attempt at a more inclusive history; instead, these alternative futures force historians to revisit established narratives and settled concepts by suggesting that people had a range of intentions behind their engagement with revolutionary events. Incorporating ordinary people into the world of revolutionary ideas entails scrutinising some of the basic assumptions that underlay interpretations of that world. This historiographical imperative underpins the chapters of this thesis in their interrogation of some fundamental tenets of colonial and revolutionary society. The chapters pose questions about the confidence Philadelphians had in their whiteness and their Americanness; the relationship ordinary people had with revolutionary classics like *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* and *Common Sense*; and even the emergence of the name 'American' itself. In accordance with Nash's studies, reintegrating ordinary people in the world of revolutionary ideas involves returning to some of the first principles of colonial society in order to understand how ordinary people interpreted them.

One of the issues associated with reintegrating marginalised perspectives is then explaining how these diverse groups coordinated their activity. For Nash this unity of purpose arises essentially from a set of shared problems. In Philadelphia, the revolutionary movement gathered momentum following the 1770 collapse of the Townshend Duties non-importation agreements. This disappointment caused artisans to become conscious of their strength and they worked together to oppose Britain and address the inequalities of Philadelphian society.[15] This was a pivotal moment in the political engagement of ordinary Philadelphians, but it appears too seamless in Nash's analysis. Similarly, Charles Olton's seminal work on the artisanal community in Philadelphia argued that overlapping economic and social networks created a self-conscious group of manufacturers in the city. Again 1770 was a crucial moment when a local conflict over the unequal provision of street cleaning and the collapse of non-importation politicised the artisans, unleashing their latent potential as a force for change and pushing them toward coordinated

[14] Gary B. Nash, *The Forgotten Fifth: African Americans in the Age of Revolution* (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 67. Gary B. Nash, *Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia's Black Community, 1720 – 1840* (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 5. Gary B. Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America* (New York, NY; Viking, 2005), pp. 33 – 9.
[15] Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, pp. 100 – 3.

revolutionary activity. For Olton's artisans the Revolution was about securing their right to political action and defending their interests.[16] In each narrative, ordinary people recognised their strength in 1770 to change the future of America, but both Nash and Olton too readily accepts a consensus without examining how participants arrived at that point. The intellectual life of the inarticulate is not just about examining the ideas that ordinary people had, but also the ways in which ordinary people formulated those ideas. Part of this formulation was the feedback loop between reader and text, in which the reader influenced the text and the text influenced the reader. This mutually reinforcing relationship with print helped Philadelphians coordinate activity, sometimes cooperatively and sometimes coercively.

Previously, other new social history studies have tackled this tension between cooperation and coercion in the organised responses of ordinary people. I want to build on these studies because they exemplify the ability of ordinary people to take revolutionary action, and the methods by which their collective consciousness flourished; however, they are less forthcoming in explaining why these transformations happen. Richard Ryerson and Steven Rosswurm's work on the organisation of revolutionary bodies, like the revolutionary committees or the Military Associations, show how these institutions educated people in the values of the Revolution. For Ryerson, committees were the machinery of Revolution. They reflected the religious and ethnic diversity of Pennsylvanians. They facilitated greater communication between the governing and the governed. Revolutionary consciousness did not arise simply through personal associations, as was the case with politicised artisans. Instead, an administrative body committed to resisting Britain purposely developed a revolutionary consciousness among the people. [17] By his own admission, Ryerson was more interested in 'explaining how principles, beliefs, and fears translated into Revolutionary action.'[18] *The Revolution is Now Begun* looks closely at the process of Revolution, the factions, the manoeuvres, and the alliances. This political landscape shows how Revolution was possible, but it overlooks the way audiences received revolutionary ideas. Ryerson references popular dissent and support, but he concentrates more on the messages of the Patriots than on

[16] Charles Olton, *Artisans for Independence: Philadelphia Mechanics and the American Revolution* (Syracuse, NY; Syracuse University Press, 1975), pp. 12 – 8, 49 – 54.
[17] Ryerson, *The Revolution is Now Begun*, pp. 204 – 5.
[18] Ryerson, *The Revolution is Now Begun*, p. 2.

why audiences were willing to listen to them.[19] The feedback loop between audience and text helps to describe the transformations in more detail because it entails a study of this reception, charting the development of an idea as it moved from text to audience and then back again. This process demonstrates that ordinary people had a role as the audience in cultivating and adapting the ideas that underpinned revolutionary committees.

Like Ryerson, Steven Rosswurm began his study in earnest late in the unfolding revolutionary crisis to look at the role of Military Associations in promoting radical egalitarian ideas. These voluntary militias were the schools of radical thought and they acted contrary to the desires of many of Pennsylvania's elites. Crucially, Rosswurm accounts for the sudden flourishing of political engagement from ordinary people. He argues that ordinary people had always had intellectual thoughts, but these remained somewhat hidden because they were unable to express them freely. The need for credit and recommendations meant ordinary people were deferential to their social superiors, but though this subordination stifled the intellectual expression of ordinary people, it did not quash their independent thought. For Rosswurm, 1769 shifted the balance of power in Philadelphia and destroyed traditional deference. As Nash and Olton identified, dissatisfaction with the merchants during the Townshend Duties boycott of British goods radicalised ordinary people. They began to share grievances about their condition and, when they organised into Military Associations in 1775, they formulated radical ideas about equality.[20] Rosswurm emphasises the obstacles people had to overcome to join the debate. He concentrates on the culmination of this process in 1775, but I am more interested in the debates preceding the high water mark of the Military Associations. The contribution of ordinary people becomes discernible earlier in the debates over Americanness. These contributions range from the silent assent to anti-Indian violence in the aftermath of the Seven Years War to the noisy boasts of American ascendency in 1775 and 1776. As the Revolution progressed, the voice of ordinary people becomes clearer, but even when faced with impediments to their expression, examining material texts uncovers the intellectual life that Rosswurm asserts existed under the veil of deference to the elites. Moreover, looking at the

[19] Ryerson, *The Revolution is Now Begun*, pp. 174 – 5.
[20] Steven Rosswurm, *Arms, Country, and Class: The Philadelphia Militia and "Lower Sort" During the American Revolution, 1775 – 1783* (New Brunswick, NJ; Rutgers University Press, 1987), pp. 39 – 42, 71 – 2, 108.

transformations in agency and consciousness before 1770 demonstrates that even without a clear voice ordinary people were able to influence revolutionary ideas in some way.

Historians often attribute ordinary people's influence on revolutionary ideas to long-held beliefs about their customary rights to affect politics. These customs empowered revolutionary transformations in the agency and consciousness of ordinary people. Here, as Alfred Young has pointed out, Americans drew heavily on English cultural norms and plebeian traditions. The critical inheritance was that the people were empowered to take direct action to fix injustices, but Young defers explaining how this process worked in the Revolution.[21] Other scholars, however, have taken up this line of inquiry. Paul Gilje's work on the rationale of rioting establishes how crowd activity advanced the Revolution. The crowd was not fickle or impulsive, but reasonable and rational. They responded to specific problems and sought limited concrete resolutions. Most importantly, they sought to regulate their community through customary and ritual behaviours inherited from Britain. Following 1765, people often blamed the ills in society on Parliament, but their crowd activities addressed broader economic problems that predated 1765.[22] Significantly, rioting was a useful and legitimate tool in influencing the decisions of government. Barbara Clark Smith explicitly links the development of patriotism with these customary exhortations to influence governance, tumultuously when necessary.[23] In a later chapter, I will return to engage in detail with Smith's work, but suffice here to say, ordinary people certainly felt empowered by these customary rights to influence government, but I argue revolutionary literature also shaped specific ideas. Texts, as well as crowds, drove forward transformations in agency and consciousness. Ordinary people acted because their cultural inheritance empowered them, but their actions reflected exhortations in revolutionary literature. The aim of the thesis is to understand this relationship with texts.

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[21] Alfred F. Young, 'English Plebeian Culture and Eighteenth-Century American Radicalism', in *The Origins of Anglo-American Radicalism*, ed. by Margaret Jacob and James Jacob (London; George Allen & Unwin, 1984), pp. 185 – 212, (p. 206).

[22] Paul A. Gilje, *Rioting in America* (Bloomington, IL; Indiana University Press, 1996), p.1 – 59.

[23] Barbara Clark Smith, 'Food Rioters and the American Revolution', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 51:1 (1994), 3 – 38, (p. 29). Barbara Clark Smith, *The Freedoms We Lost: Consent and Resistance in Revolutionary America* (New York, NY; The New Press, 2010), pp. 119 – 22.

The closest analogues to this topic are the studies of crowd culture by Simon Newman and David Waldstreicher.[24] Both Newman and Waldstreicher emphasise the centrality of festive culture for popular politics, especially the role texts play in disseminating these festivities. Ultimately, American political culture was not only about rioting to fix problems, but involved positive affirmations of loyalty and belonging. For Newman, the audience to crowd actions were as important as the participants were. This included both the physical audience who witnessed the crowd, and the virtual audience who read accounts of the crowd. Newspapers, especially, helped to create a shared language of symbols and rituals that bound Americans together.[25] This meant that the actions of Philadelphians had a broader reach than just within their own city, and similarly, the actions of other Americans had an effect on Philadelphians. This was a process enabled not just by customary rights, but texts as well. Waldstreicher looks further at the relationship between print culture and the rise of the American nation. He argues that printed accounts of crowd activity enabled Americans to express national feeling. During the course of the Revolution, this created a consensus that overcame divisions between the colonies. Eventually, these rites of rebellion against Britain transformed in the 1790s into rites of assent to the American Republic. In both instances, however, printed accounts encouraged communities throughout America to think about how they were striving for a national future.[26] More than just linking together crowd actions into a unified movement, texts encouraged alternative visions of the future. Crucially, both studies demonstrate that audiences had an effect on the politicisation of the people. In this way, historians can see how ordinary Americans defined Americanness without personally putting pen to paper. The thesis builds on this premise to move beyond newspapers and accounts of crowd action into how other genres of print helped ordinary people contribute to revolutionary ideas.

This thesis arose in response to the central concerns of new social history. The chapters concentrate on analysing the agency of ordinary people, their American consciousness, and the

[24] Benjamin Irvin's recent work on the relationship between the Philadelphian crowd and Congress also has pertinent observations on this topic of crowd and festivity that I will address in the final chapter; however, he is more interested in material objects, behaviours, and rituals than material texts. Benjamin Irvin, *Clothed in the Robes of Sovereignty: The Continental Congress and the People Out of Doors* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 5.
[25] Simon P. Newman, *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia, PA; University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), pp. 2 – 4, 186 – 8.
[26] David Waldstreicher, 'Rites of Rebellion, Rites of Assent: Celebrations, Print Culture, and the Origins of American Nationalism', *Journal of American History*, 82:1 (1995), 37 – 61, (p. 38).

revolutionary transformation in Americanness that empowered them. Reintegrating ordinary people prompts an assessment of how they understood some of the underlying premises of colonial society, further highlighting their role in the Revolution. At the heart of the transformation, I argue, was the feedback loop that existed between audience and text. Understanding the relationship between the two allows the thesis to chart the evolution of an American consciousness that ultimately took on revolutionary implications, thereby identifying the intellectual contributions of the inarticulate. Furthermore, while ordinary people had long influenced governance according to customary rights, revolutionary literature played a part in adapting those rights to new political climates. Finally, the thesis moves on from the power of newspapers to explore other genres of print and their effect on creating a sense of Americanness. Ultimately, by studying the intellectual life of the inarticulate the thesis emphasises the agency of ordinary people in creating a consciousness that transformed British colonists into American Republicans.

Key Terms:
Conceptualising Inarticulateness

The major obstacle to reintegrating ordinary people into the development of revolutionary ideas is that these men and women have left little to document their intellectual lives, either because they were unable to record this world of ideas or because they were unable to leave these records to posterity. Another pioneer of new social history, Jesse Lemisch, has done a great deal of work on inarticulate people looking at the lives of sailors in the Revolution. Lemisch offers two important observations on this topic. The first is to recognise that the issue of inarticulateness is the problem of the historian rather than the historical personages themselves. Ordinary people were more than capable of expressing themselves and it is the job of the historian to recover that voice.[27] The second is a caution against trusting articulation as a

[27] Jesse Lemisch, 'Listening to the "Inarticulate": William Widger's Dream and the Loyalties of American Revolutionary Seamen in British Prisons', *Journal of Social History*, 3:1 (1969), 1 – 29. Jesse Lemisch and John K. Alexander, 'The White Oaks, Jack Tar, and the Concept of the "Inarticulate"', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 29:1 (1972), 109 – 34.

sufficient measure of prevailing ideas. On the revolutionary potential of naval impressment, Lemisch wanted to move beyond asking whether anti-press-gang activity was relevant. Instead he rephrased the question as: 'why were the articulate not *more* articulate about the seamen's anger?'[28] Few revolutionary pamphlets deal with this obvious infringement of American liberty by British authority because impressment did not affect their lives directly. This is why it is crucial to appreciate the material circumstances of people's lives to appraise blind spots like this. Ultimately, inarticulateness is a problem for the historian to overcome. It is a problem of interpretation and methodology.

Before addressing inarticulateness directly, there remains the issue of whether historical reality is recoverable from documents. In their *Class Matters*, for example, Simon Middleton and Billy Smith argue scholars from literary studies raised troubling issues about the extent to which texts reflected reality or, as the literary critics suggested, more properly reflected discourses that had distinct histories in their own right. This linguistic turn, in which texts could tell us more about the history of symbolic language than about historical consciousness, undermined the concept of class, one of the core analytical categories in new social history. Middleton and Smith use their volume to imagine new possibilities on the utility of class after the linguistic turn.[29] This thesis also accepts the reality of class. During the eighteenth century, there was an unequal distribution of resources that led to the differentiation of social groups. Competition over access to these resources developed into organised activity and the development of class-consciousness. Typical categories included the genteel elites, the aspirational middling orders, and the struggling lower sorts. However, the notion of class rests on the ability of the historian to discern specifics about the material conditions of readers in a situation where studying the audiences of texts is riddled with unknowables. Under these circumstances, it is very difficult to divide readers into even these broad groups. While acknowledging there is great value in revisiting class, and especially in returning the lower sorts to the centre of the story of the Revolution, the social divisions in this thesis have to be a little less precise. For the purposes of analysis, the main distinction is between ordinary and extraordinary people. The extraordinary people have left the bulk of documentary evidence. They were able to preserve their

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[28] Jesse Lemisch, 'Jack Tar in the Streets: Merchant Seamen in the Politics of Revolutionary America', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 25:3 (1968), 371 – 407, (p. 396).
[29] Simon Middleton and Billy G. Smith, eds., 'Introduction', in *Class Matters: Early North America and the Atlantic World* (Philadelphia, PA; University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 1 – 15, (pp. 4 – 11).

thoughts and words for posterity. They were generally richer, more powerful, and, by definition, they were unusual. Ordinary people were, by contrast, inarticulate in the main. They had little interest in becoming political leaders themselves, but, as Barbara Clark Smith shows, they expected to influence the process of governing.[30] This is what makes them important historical subjects. The intellectual life of the inarticulate is about understanding why these ordinary people embraced the revolutionary movement, especially the transformations in their consciousness that empowered them as revolutionary agents. The thesis is interested in the thoughts and ideas of the people who had once been content to be governed, but who over the course of the 1760s and 1770s involved themselves in changing the process of governance.

Young's own attempt to 'get a handle on ordinary people' involved studying the lives of individual participants, most famously the Boston shoemaker George Robert Twelve Hewes and his memories of the American Revolution.[31] He continued this task in another edited collection with Ray Raphael and Gary Nash. Their *Revolutionary Founders* reiterated the value of new social history in a project that sought to explore the lives of radical men and women who are representative of broader historical trends.[32] The goal of both projects was to highlight the contributions of an exceptional few in order to understand the condition of the majority. Meanwhile, Terry Bouton adopts a similar approach in *Taming Democracy*. He introduces overlooked political actors such as "Black Boy" Jimmy Smith or William Findley to re-contextualise founding fathers like the revolutionary financier Robert Morris and George Washington. Bouton's aim is to understand better the social interactions between the elites and ordinary people.[33] Together these studies have reintegrated many marginalised individuals and highlighted the diversity of revolutionary participants. However, this thesis follows a different tack. It is not a study of many individual readers, but a study of readers as a collective. Rather than concentrating on picking out

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[30] Smith, *The Freedoms We Lost*, pp. xi – xii. Simon Newman uses 'ordinary' in a related fashion to highlight that popular participation with government was not unusual for people. Newman, *Parades and Politics of the Street*, p. 4. Meanwhile, Timothy Breen uses the term 'ordinary' to denote that his subjects were the most numerous, but that no statistical data exists to verify these assertions. Timothy H. Breen, *American Insurgents, American Patriots: The Revolution of the People* (New York, NY; Hill and Wang, 2010), p. 25.

[31] Alfred F. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Boston, MA; Beacon Press, 1999), p. x – xvii; quote on p. xi.

[32] Alfred F. Young, Ray Raphael, and Gary B. Nash, eds., 'Introduction: "To Begin the World Over Again"', in *Revolutionary Founders: Rebels, Radicals, and Reformers in the Making of the Nation* (New York, NY; Vintage Books, 2012), pp. 3 – 12.

[33] Terry Bouton, *Taming Democracy: "The People", the Founders, and the Troubled Ending of the American Revolution* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 8 – 9.

representative case studies of individuals or small cohorts, my project uses the readers of Philadelphia as a whole in order to understand the prevailing ideas in the city. This approach may disproportionately reflect the actions of powerful artisanal interests, but there was still space for others involved in crowd actions to express themselves as well. I place ordinary people at the centre of intellectual developments, not as authors or theorists, but as audiences and contributors.

This is where my approach diverges from Alfred Young and Gary Nash's reintegration of marginalised people. For them, the experiences of Revolution were overlapping and idiosyncratic. However, I am interested in how debates surrounding Americanness effected political change. This is a form of identity politics. In the Revolution, an American identity became a way of understanding the politics of the day. I argue that a sense Americanness eventually had sufficient meaning for ordinary people for it to justify their protests against Britain. Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper argue that a 'weak' understanding of identity has become the *de rigueur* of academic writing. In emphasising identities as multiple and in flux, analysts overlook the coercive force of identity politics. Instead, Brubaker and Cooper make a range of suggestions for alternatives that help confront the specific phenomena historians are describing. For example, 'identification and categorisation' to understand how groups and individuals orientate themselves amongst their social relations, or 'self-understanding and social location' to understand the expectations individuals have within their groups. These two terms focus on the internal dynamics of groups, but their utility is limited because ordinary readers were unable to leave their thoughts to posterity. For the purposes of this thesis, and given the collective nature of revolutionary activity, I will be using Brubaker and Cooper's third proposed set of analytical alternatives, commonality, connectedness, and groupness. In brief, commonality refers to the sharing of common attributes. Printed discussions about the virtues of Americanness helped Philadelphians to identify the common attributes they should pursue. This informed the direct action that people undertook. Connectedness refers to the ties that link people together.[34] Importantly, colonists could not simply declare themselves to be American. Instead, they had to demonstrate their Americanness publically. These public acts connected Americans together. Finally, groupness indicates the shared experience of belonging to a discrete

[34] Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, 'Beyond "Identity"', *Theory and Society*, 29:1 (2000), 1 – 47.

community. Here I am interested in how ordinary people envisioned America working as a collective, for example in the continental cooperation that arose before independence. These categories further refine the concept of American consciousness. In analysing the American identity, the chapters will focus on the attributes Americans shared, the acts that bound Americans together, and the criteria used to determine membership in the American group. The debates over these topics encouraged ordinary people to transform the politics of the colonies.

Benedict Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities' best describes the power behind this identity politics. The American imagined community was finite and held together by a sense of simultaneity inculcated by printed objects, or print-capitalism in the parlance of *Imagined Communities*. Reading the same sort of material helped Americans imagine themselves belonging to one community. For Anderson, North America was an early pioneer of this form of imagined community because its centres of commerce were tightly bunched allowing for greater connectivity through networks of print.[35] I am simply looking at this American imagined community from within Philadelphia. Simultaneity was a powerful factor in sustaining Americanness. It empowered Patriots in Philadelphia to take action on behalf of many others from elsewhere on the continent. Individual engagement with the imagined community may have varied, but there was a prevailing sentiment that it was vitally important and this, in turn, helped to regulate community action. Timothy Breen's books, *Marketplace of Revolution* and *American Insurgents, American Patriots*, draw heavily on the issue of simultaneity and I will return to it when I assess how the debates surrounding Americanness penetrated the daily lives of ordinary people. For now, I argue that over the course of the Revolution Patriots convinced many that belonging to this imagined American community was worth fighting for. The American community existed in the imagination of authors and on the pages of texts, but it had concrete effects for the people in Philadelphia.

Belonging to an imagined community with a group identity had transformative potential, but the works of Brubaker, Cooper, and Anderson analyse declarations of belonging and author's words; however, crucially, the inarticulate could furnish neither of these. Therefore, the next problem is to assess

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[35] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London; Verso, 2006), pp. 7, 24 – 6, 34 – 6, 63 – 5.

who could speak, and what that speech can reveal about the intellectual life of the inarticulate. According to Jürgen Habermas, Philadelphian Patriots were able to discuss this American community because a new public sphere enabled people to critique government. The public sphere developed throughout the eighteenth century and opened political discussion to more than the narrow cohort around the court. Broadening the scope of public affairs allowed private individuals, previously excluded from the court, to comment on and attempt to influence state affairs. This new arrangement meant public debates were open to everyone equally, but, for Habermas, participation was limited mainly to the rising class of the bourgeoisie, those engaged in the transformed capital market.[36] Like Anderson's imagined communities, these new forms of collective awareness were therefore intimately linked with the rise of capitalism. Capitalism empowered people to engage with government. William Pencak criticised this valorisation of the market in Habermas. His introduction to *Riot and Revelry in Early America* argues Habermas was responsible for 'opening doors to middle-class and upper-class white males, [but] the new public sphere closed them to women, the poor, and the non-white.'[37] I agree with Pencak that the public sphere did not directly preserve the thoughts and ideas of inarticulate people, but the broadening participation that Habermas describes does leave more evidence to analyse. Significantly, Harold Mah's summary of Habermas' work argues that the critics of government in the public sphere predicated their critiques on the political fiction of speaking on behalf of the public. This fiction was more important than any actual uniformity of opinion among the public.[38] This means people produced texts to speak on behalf of a public they believed to exist. These texts do not represent the harmonious voice of the collective, but the contentious voice of an individual. The thesis will probe the broader intellectual factors informing these public declarations, as well as why individuals felt they could speak. Ultimately, the author believed they spoke on behalf of an audience, and so analysing the material text can provides clues about the relationship the author had with their audience. The influence of ordinary people could potentially be discerned from the empowerment an author felt in putting pen to paper.

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[36] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. by Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge; Polity Press, 1992), pp. 25 – 6, 74, 171.
[37] William Pencak, 'Introduction: A Historical Perspective' in *Riot and Revelry in Early America*, ed. by William Pencak, Mathew Denis and Simon P. Newman (University Park, PA; The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), pp. 3 – 20, (p. 15).
[38] Harold Mah, 'Phantasies of the Public Sphere: Rethinking the Habermas of Historians', *Journal of Modern History*, 72:1 (2000), 153 – 82, (p. 168).

Furthermore, Pencak's comments raise the issue about speech in the community. Following on his criticism of Habermas, Pencak argues that his edited collection of essays on rough music aims to understand how ordinary people:

> who do not write "traditional texts" are actually the "authors" of riot and revelry. […] As such, this volume contributes to the study of popular culture and to the semiotic readings of "texts" and "discourses" that express mentalities that appear on the streets or in the woods and that articulate what remains unspoken in the pages of political tracts or religious sermons.[39]

Pencak is suggesting that, though ordinary people did not author texts in the public sphere, they were still able to express themselves. He argues that, by drawing on non-verbal phenomena like rough music and street culture, historians can better understand the precise meaning behind the words preserved in tracts and sermons. I simply want to broaden the purview of these non-verbal phenomena to include the participation of an audience, whether compliant or resistive. Reception was not a passive phenomenon. Instead, it involved active engagement with the literature. Articulate authors may have had their voices preserved, but they were encouraged by a belief they had an audience.

Inarticulateness is the problem of the historian, and this project aims to tackle it, specifically the inarticulateness of ordinary people who had few pretensions of governing. One of the interesting questions that emerge when looking at the engagement of ordinary people with revolutionary ideas is why these people involved themselves in government in such a dramatic way. I want to discern this transformation as a product of the creation of an American identity. I argue that changes in the definitions of commonality, connectedness, and groupness altered the nature of the American consciousness. These transformations were significant because the community imagined itself existing simultaneously. In part, these transformations were driven by people who spoke on behalf of the community, but the thesis aims to understand the relationship of ordinary people with those articulate few. Crucially, being an audience member was not passive. Instead, it was influential and examining that influence will reveal some of the intellectual horizons of inarticulate people.

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[39] William Pencak, 'Introduction: A Historical Perspective', (p. 15).

Methodology:
Analysing the Relationship between Ordinary People and Revolutionary Literature

Fortunately, Robert Darnton's work on the history of reading is particularly relevant for addressing these types of issues. He focuses on the relationship between print culture and popular politics in a pre-revolutionary state. His principal maxim is that historians can recover the mental landscapes of historical people from the documentary record by understanding the society that created the texts.[40] Recently, Darnton has used this approach to explore how certain elements of print culture undermined *Ancien Regime* authority in France.[41] Darnton's main sources for his studies come from the archive created by the French state as it expended immense energy censoring books. Unfortunately, no such archive exists for the period before the American Revolution. Philadelphian presses were able to operate according to their own agendas. While wider societal and economic pressures limited the type of material they put out, these forces certainly did not have the resources of the French state.[42] In the course of the thesis, I will assess the impositions made on printers as the revolutionary crises deepened. Suffice it to say here there were no concerted efforts that either required large police archives or the prodigious efforts of

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[40] Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (London; Lane, 1984), p. 6.

[41] Robert Darnton, *The Devil in the Holy Water or the Art of Slander from Louis XIV to Napoleon* (Philadelphia, PA; University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010). Robert Darnton, *Poetry and the Police: Communication Networks in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Cambridge, MA; Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010).

[42] As a brief survey of this much larger field, there has been a recurrent theme in revolutionary historiography that has looked at the limitations imposed upon dissenting opinion within colonial printing. Philip Davidson wrote a seminal piece describing the concerted effort of propagandists during the Revolution. Philip Davidson, *Propaganda and the American Revolution 1763 – 1783* (Chapel Hill, NC; University of North Carolina Press, 1941), pp. 3 – 30, 173 – 245, 269, 298. Arthur Schlesinger continued this theme in his investigation of revolutionary newspapers. Arthur M. Schlesinger, *Prelude to Independence: The Newspaper War on Britain, 1764 – 1776* (New York, NY; Alfred A. Knopf, 1958), p. 5, 33, 90. Leonard Levy looked at the ability of the anti-British Patriot governments to use the courts and the threat of seditious libel as a way of controlling and advancing the Patriot message. Leonard Levy, *Freedom of Speech and Press in Early American History: Legacy of Suppression* (New York, NY; Harper & Row, 1963), pp. 64 – 87. Leonard Levy, *Origins of the Bill of Rights* (New Haven, CT; Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 120, 124. For Jeffery Smith, access to the press was governed by the personal prudence of the individual printer, but he argued that the influence of Franklin and his idea of impartiality were critical to the developing attitude toward printing revolutionary material. Jeffery A. Smith, *Printers and Press Freedom: The Ideology of Early American Freedom* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 36 – 7,136 – 7, 164 – 5. Jeffrey Pasley moves further from the control of printers, and aligns himself more with Davidson's position that it was a cohort of elite gentlemen who insisted upon printing mainly Patriot material. In turn, printers recognised the commercial benefit of supporting the Patriot cause. Jeffrey L. Pasley, *The Tyranny of Printers: Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville, VA; University of Virginia Press, 2001), pp. 32 – 40. For Charles Clark, following the Stamp Act there was an intensification of public debate in which a Patriot majority confronted a Loyalist minority. Neutrality was disregarded, and many printers, through either personal commitment or business acumen, chose to embrace the revolutionary cause. Charles E. Clark, 'Early American Journalism: News and Opinion in the Popular Press', *A History of the Book in America: The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*, ed. by Hugh Amory and David D. Hall (Chapel Hill, NC; University of North Carolina, 2007), pp. 347 – 66, (pp. 355 – 62).

presses like the Swiss *Société typographique de Neuchâtel*, which helped to subvert the French censor, that have formed the basis of Darnton's study of print culture and popular politics. However, one advantage of studying Philadelphian print culture is that, unlike in Boston and New York, widespread riots were significantly less common. In their place was a political culture that encouraged harmony and a discourse based on plainness of speech.[43] As a result, Philadelphians often disputed in print rather than in face-to-face confrontations in the streets. This has left a number of interesting material texts to examine. Moreover, Philadelphia contained many readers, with an estimated 80% literacy rate among the city's white residents.[44] Many ordinary Philadelphians could read revolutionary literature themselves or knew someone who could. Therefore, when Patriot agitation prompted many of the debates over Americanness, in Philadelphia, many of these involved a printed component that has survived in the archive. The thesis analyses this documentary record to recover the mental landscape of ordinary Philadelphians.

To fulfil Darnton's exhortation to recover the culture of ordinary people through texts this thesis will draw on his earlier article 'What is the History of the Book?'. Here he argues that the conceptual centre of this kind of history is the 'communications circuit' i.e. the way that each step in book production was inextricably and meaningfully linked together. This includes the author writing the text, suppliers providing the ink and materials, printers pressing the book, agents transporting the book, booksellers selling it, binders binding, and readers reading. At each stage of production, prevailing intellectual, economic, political, and legal pressures affected the process providing a unifying social context irrespective of the particular focus of book history studies. The approach blends both the intellectual work of authors and readers, with the material circumstances of actually disseminating those ideas. Despite differing foci, the interplay between the acts of composition, production, dissemination,

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[43] Jane Calvert has also emphasised the important role that internal harmony has played in creating the specific constitutionalism of Pennsylvania, a process that reached its greatest enunciation in John Dickinson's seemingly tepid response to independence. Jane E. Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism and the Political Thought of John Dickinson* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 13 – 22. John Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers: The Making of Creole Culture in Colonial Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, PA; University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), pp. 232 – 43.

[44] Rates among women were estimated to be half that of men. Also, unlike in the South, there was no legal impediment in educating black readers. Alan Tully, 'Literacy Levels and Education Development in Rural Pennsylvania', *Pennsylvania History*, 39:3 (1972), 301 – 31, (p. 304). Farley Grubb, 'Growth of Literacy in Colonial America: Longitudinal Patterns, Economic Models, and the Direction of Future Research', *Social Science History*, 14:4 (1990), 451 – 482, (p. 454). Ross W. Beales and E. Jennifer Monaghan, 'Literacy and Schoolbooks', in *A History of the Book in America*, pp. 380 – 7, (p. 381 – 2).

and reception unites historians of the book.[45] In this thesis, I am interested in understanding how developments in the 1760s and 1770s affected the reception of revolutionary ideas by readers, but significantly, this involves more than looking narrowly at the process of readers interpreting the book in their hands. It also involves looking at the ways in which revolutionary literature was produced, disseminated, and encountered by ordinary Philadelphians. This is the core concept of the material text approach. These interrelated phenomena help fill in gaps about the society ordinary readers inhabited. The project attempted to survey as many extant texts as possible, and so a full account of the contribution of suppliers and booksellers to the city's print and intellectual culture has not been possible, instead the thesis predominantly concentrates on the relationship between author, printer, and reader, especially how authors responded to readers, the role of printers in shaping prints genres, and how readers encountered texts. These issues were most visible when analysing readily accessible texts, such as those available in public spaces, like newspapers and handbills, or those that responded directly to popular debates. These were, therefore, the most helpful issues in understanding the medium of intellectual exchange between articulate authors and inarticulate audiences.

One more aspect of the material text approach is to consider the physicality of the texts themselves, not just their production, but their presentation to the reader. D. F. McKenzie's *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* has shown that the decisions made in creating the form of a printed object, its composition or typography for example, give clues about the social motives behind it.[46] In this thesis, I will similarly look closely at the material form of a given text. At the most basic level I am interested in the genre of print. I argue there is a difference between encountering revolutionary ideas in the guise of a pamphlet or newspaper as opposed to printed objects freely given, such as a flyer or broadside. Crucially, these decisions were not necessarily the driving force behind ideological change. As Stephen Botein argued, audiences did not expect printers themselves to be revolutionary agents. They were 'meer mechanics' and their physically demanding job did not confer intellectual respect.[47] However, as

[45] Robert Darnton, 'What is the History of the Book?', *Daedalus*, 111:3 (1982), 65 – 83.
[46] D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 11 – 17, 28 – 9.
[47] Stephen Botein, '"Meer Mechanics" and an Open Press: The Business and Political Strategies of Colonial American Printers', in *Perspectives in American History*, ed. by Donald Fleming and Bernard Bailyn (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 1975), IX, pp. 127 – 228, (pp. 156 – 8).

accidental or unintended as these material clues may be, I argue they affected the interpretation of readers and are therefore considered in the analysis of documents. The 'meer mechanics', like many other ordinary Philadelphians, involved themselves in discussions about Americanness and this thesis will consider at each stage the influence that printed forms and printers had over readers.

Until now, the thesis has avoided the most thorny of the methodological questions, actually analysing the act of interpretation. Darnton admits that the history of reading remains the most elusive in the communications circuit.[48] Moreover, previous studies of reading have concentrated on using the personal papers of readers to analyse their reading habits. Mark Towsey has a succinct survey of the usual mechanisms of preserving reader reception. These included letters, commonplace books, diaries, and marginalia.[49] Jonathan Rose argues that eventually ordinary readers become visible in the nineteenth century because of a growing trend for working class autobiographies.[50] These sources do not exist for the historical subjects that need to be re-integrated into the narrative of the American Revolution. While the material text approach gives clues to the society that created the texts, my solution is to adapt Stanley Fish's concept of the interpretative community. He argued readers are, of course, free to interpret any particular text howsoever they please, but in practice their interpretations are constrained by the community around them. The individual interpretation of the reader is shaped by collective assumptions.[51] Fish was particularly interested in small coteries of elite readers, but during the American Revolution these interpretative communities existed in a very literal and physical sense. Philadelphians interpreted many of the most revolutionary texts collectively and often in public spaces. To discern these guiding assumptions I return to the texts themselves analysing how debates evolved to understand the underpinning premises. Ultimately, crowds participated in a reciprocal cycle with texts, their actions informing texts and then texts informing crowd actions. The analysis in the following chapters will concentrate on establishing first the communications circuits of texts in order to tease out their relationship with their audience. I will then concentrate on what the reception of those texts can tell us

[48] Darnton, 'What is the History of the Book?', pp. 79.
[49] Mark R. M. Towsey, *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment: Books and their Readers in Provincial Scotland, 1750 – 1820* (Leiden; Brill, 2010), pp. 163 – 86.
[50] Jonathan Rose, *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Class* (New Haven, CT; Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 1 – 9.
[51] Stanley Fish, *Is there a Text in this Class?: The Authority of Interpretative Communities* (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 11, 297 – 99.

about broader assumptions in society. These assumptions, determined as they were as part of a collective effort, formed the basis of the prevailing ideas among ordinary people.

Source Set:
Using Digital Archives to Determine Genres of Material Texts

Using this interpretative community framework required analysing as much of the literature produced in the feedback loop between crowd and text as possible in order to appraise the assumptions that underpin the texts. Fortunately, this thesis is able to build on several bibliographic and preservation projects that are over a hundred years old. The advantage of this source set is that previous scholars have already done much of the legwork in collecting the necessary texts. The bulk of material derives from the Archive of Americana. The Archive of Americana began in 1939 when Albert Boni began the Readex Microprint company. Boni filmed pages of texts, miniaturised them, and mounted them on card. His first project as part of the Archive of Americana was to collate the massive bibliographies of Charles Evans, Joseph Sabin, G. W. Cole, and Henry Harisse. These bibliographers catalogued the title pages of over a hundred thousand printed objects, excluding serials, available in America. Boni then began the process of locating titles in Evans and Roger Bristol's supplement to Evans and filmed their contents. This huge collection of around thirty-seven thousand imprint titles formed the basis of the Readex database. In 1984, Boni sold Readex to the Newsbank Corporation. Newsbank continued Boni's work on collecting titles by collaborating with the American Antiquarian Society. Over the last thirty years, Newsbank have expanded their collections with further filming and digitisation projects of thousands of texts from the American Antiquarian Society and the Library Company of Philadelphia. The result is a database of just under forty thousand fully digitised titles from 1670 to 1800, catalogued by experts and benefitting from the best attributions of the most eminent bibliographers. Using these powerful bibliographic tools, I surveyed every text bearing a Philadelphia imprint between the year 1764 and 1776. Where possible I supplemented this material with letters and private papers from Philadelphians and their correspondents, but from this admittedly more cursory examination of manuscript material I did not find many major

texts missing. There are a few exceptions, and the librarian of the Library Company of Philadelphia, Jim Green, has pointed me in their direction, but in the main the digitised sources of the Evans collection in the Archive of Americana remains the most exhaustive collection of early American literature.[52]

Alongside these printed items, the Archive of Americana also has a collection of colonial newspapers. The database builds on Clarence S. Brigham's *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690 – 1820* and the result is almost complete runs of several Pennsylvanian newspapers, the most important of which is the *Pennsylvania Chronicle*. Unfortunately, the Archive of Americana for newspapers was not as exhaustive as the Evans collection of imprints. The two other major newspapers of the revolutionary era, the *Pennsylvania Journal* and the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, are missing from its database. For the *Pennsylvania Journal* I visited Philadelphia and looked at the collected volumes of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, housed in the Library Company of Philadelphia. For the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, the HSP commissioned the Microfilming Corporation of America to produce a microfilm version, and since 1990 John Nagy at Accessible Archives has been digitising this newspaper. Nagy first made CDs of this material, and now there is a subscription service to access the material both in form of original images and typed transcripts. For the thesis, I worked my way mainly though the scanned images of the HSP filmed copies in order to appreciate more fully the choices that were made in composing the newspaper, and the clues that this can have for underlying social motivations. The print run of the *Gazette* is almost wholly complete, though images are missing for editions in early 1770. All together, these newspapers enabled me to follow the course of the Revolution over the twelve years preceding independence.

As exhaustive as the list is, a problem with the Archive of Americana collection particularly and digitised images in general is that they have the potential to distort the materiality of the text under analysis. I have therefore reviewed the physical broadside collections at the Library Company of Philadelphia and the American Philosophical Society, and I noticed that there was a strong preference in the Readex database for clean copies. The images that appear in the Archive of Americana emphasise the printed text and not the manuscript notations that accompanied many of these items. For example, on a

[52] These include a broadside in a private collection and a pamphlet sent to the Stamp Collector of Philadelphia from London. *To the Gentlemen Associators, of the City and Liberties of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1775), private collection of Gary Milan, Beverly Hills, CA. *Instructions for the Distributors of Stamped Parchment and Paper in America* (London, 1765), HSP.

broadside entitled *The Lamentation of Pennsylvania* the high contrast nature of the image destroyed some red ink that included information about how the text was disseminated. [53] Similarly, for a short pamphlet entitled *The Procession with the Standard of Faction*, the Evans image is the Library Company of Philadelphia's edition, but another in the American Philosophical Society has explanatory notes about the piece.[54] Finally, there were also examples where the image taken of a text neglected to film the marginalia on the obverse of a piece. For example, the Library Company has two copies of James Biddle's broadside *To the Freeholders and Electors of the Province of Pennsylvania*. One copy was annotated to suggest that the broadside was later used to hold together legal documents for August Biddle; however, the second copy noted that the piece was read aloud at the Masons Lodge and applauded.[55] The imprint on the database did not have either of these notations despite the fact that the imprint was one of these LCP copies. This demonstrates the value of examining the material copy as these small clues give us indications about the process of disseminating the material. Moreover, these rare examples of marginalia are a reminder to historians that the text was not the only element with which readers of revolutionary literature engaged. These small clues about how texts were distributed reinforce the central material text approach of this thesis. Understanding the intellectual life of inarticulate people involves looking at what was said and how it was said.

Ultimately, though these imprint collections are relatively exhaustive they do not reflect the total picture of print available in Philadelphia in the 1760s and 1770s. After all, only one in three books are estimated to survive and the proportion is even less for ephemeral pieces.[56] Therefore, the thesis can only feasibly survey a fragment of the literature produced in response to the Revolution. Secondly, more books and prints were available in Philadelphia than those that issued from its presses. The eighteenth-century catalogues of the Library Company of Philadelphia and other subscription libraries attest to this fact. My study into Philadelphian print culture is less about charting what was read in the Revolution and more

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[53] *The Lamentation of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1765), LCP.
[54] *The Procession with the Standard of Faction: A Cantata* (New York, 1770), Evans 11827. *The Procession with the Standard of Faction: A Cantata* (New York, 1770), APS.
[55] *To the Freeholders and Electors* (Philadelphia, 1765), LCP
[56] Hugh Amory, 'A Note on Statistics', in *A History of the Book in America*, pp. 504 – 18. James N. Green, 'English Books and Printing in the Age of Franklin', in *A History of the Book in America*, pp. 248 – 98, (p. 272).

about what was produced as part of the Philadelphia interpretative community.[57] Other, unknown texts circulated alongside the pieces analysed here, but the texts printed in Philadelphia best reveal the intellectual life of inarticulate people because they preserve a fuller picture of the communications circuit that prevailed in the city. This is the meaning behind the title of the thesis. Tangible imaginations refers to the fact that I am investigating the imagined American community in Philadelphia by looking at its tangible elements, namely the actions that ordinary people took in response to radical literature and the material texts that are the physical remnants of this intellectual exchange.

To organise and make sense of this vast archive I became interested in the ways specific genres had discernible roles in revolutionary flashpoints. These genres are broadly defined because the thesis surveyed many idiosyncratic examples from the archive, but to determine the generic categories I looked at the material form of the print, focusing especially on the interactions between readers and the texts. In the majority of cases I am interested in familiar categories such as pamphlets, newspapers, ephemera, and almanacs, but I also examine more niche categories such as commercial notices in newspapers, the plans for lotteries, and meeting cards. Thinking about genre in such a way helped me reflect on the moments of intellectual exchange that shaped the role of ordinary people in the development of revolutionary ideas. In the first chapters of the thesis, I focus on three methods for uncovering the assumptions underpinning the interpretative community in Philadelphia. Chapter one looks at how points of consensus reveal shared assumptions. By identifying public debates and examining the points of consensus, we can begin to sketch out the intellectual horizons of ordinary people. In 1764 there was such a public debate surrounding the Paxton Boys march against Philadelphia. A collection of backcountry farmers massacred a village of Native Americans then threatened to kill the group of Native American refugees sheltering in Philadelphia. Ultimately, the marchers disbanded before they came to the city, but the fright was sufficient to precipitate a ten-month public debate through the medium of pamphlets. Authors and printers presented the debate as a cohesive whole; therefore, analysing the points of consensus reveals that most authors anticipated imminent Indian decline and white ascendency. Looking at this consensus helps to identify a shared assumption among Philadelphians that contextualises some of the declarations

[57] David D. Hall, 'Introduction', in *A History of the Book in America*, pp. 1 – 25, (pp. 7 – 8).

and actions made about Native Americans in the later 1760s and 1770s. Consensus is a useful way of perceiving unspoken assumptions that shaped the intellectual boundaries of ordinary people.

The second chapter explores the concept of news culture. This is the idea that the printers of texts respond directly to the attention and interests of their readers. The chapter concentrates on the ways in which printers compile newspapers in order to reflect the political climate in Philadelphia. By examining trends in texts and comparing them to significant events then we can discern how assumptions react to new developments. For this chapter I explore how the Stamp Act affected the news culture of Philadelphia. Interestingly, exploring trends in press attention reveals that newspapers became more Americanised. Concentrating specifically on the American demonym, literally the people's name, reveals a dramatic surge in its use which, after 1765, then became associated with Parliamentary protest. This was a significant shift in encouraging ordinary people to envision themselves belonging to a continental community distinct from their metropolitan brethren. News culture is helpful in understanding the intellectual life of the inarticulate because ordinary people were a large part of the audience that shaped the news. The reflections of changes among the ideas of ordinary people can be discerned from changes in the compilation of texts. Examining news culture is a useful tool for seeing how assumptions change over time, which is important in this period for understanding the development of American identity, and the role of ordinary people in that process.

The third chapter looks at the most intimate relationship between inarticulate people and material texts, focusing on the moments crowds physically encountered texts. Analysing this moment of interaction with a text is a vital part of understanding how audiences interpreted them. The way readers encountered handbills, broadsides, and other ephemera changed the act of interpretation. Whether a radical text was encountered alone and at home or in a politically charged assembly had a dramatic effect on how a reader understood the ideas within the prints. The chapter concentrates on 1770 during the dissolution of the Townshend Duties non-importation agreements. Large gatherings of ordinary people met to stop merchants from importing British goods. Small cards called together these meetings and in turn shaped the expectations of the audience. These cards both preserve the debates surrounding momentous revolutionary events as well as shaping the ideas of people going into them. Understanding

the encounter between texts and audiences is another way to analyse the assumptions of ordinary people. Taken together consensus, news culture, and textual encounters are the main methods I will employ to uncover the assumptions that underpinned inarticulate people's interpretations of Americanness. They rely heavily on examining the communications circuits of texts, understanding the role of author, printer, and reader in order to understand how audiences received the ideas within.

The final two chapters then develop these ideas further, looking at the way certain genres affected revolutionary ideas. Each will explore genres most connected to ordinary people and the Revolution. In the fourth chapter, I will look at often overlooked genres in order to discern how Patriot ideas pervaded into everyday life, and more than that how they persisted long after the typical highpoints of the Revolution, sustaining the Patriot message in between the massive crowd actions. The final chapter will look at the most revolutionary genres, assessing the way that the Military Association, *Common Sense*, and the State Constitution helped to complete the final transformation of British colonists into American Republicans. Throughout the American identity is the lens through which broader assumptions about society are explored. This methodology puts ordinary people into the centre of intellectual developments.

American identity is the consciousness that I am examining by looking at ideas of commonality, connectedness, and groupness. By analysing revolutionary literature as material texts, we can discern the agency of ordinary people and their centrality in the transformation of British colonists into American Republicans. Ultimately, patriotism was an evolving political agenda that protested Parliament. Americanness was a broader understanding of the community to which Philadelphians belonged. The confluence of the two pushed forward the American Revolution. This was a relatively short transformation, meaningfully beginning in 1764 with the assumption of imminent Indian decline and an all-white future. The following year the community appropriated the name American from Native Americans and then authors quickly associated it with protest against Parliament. The popularisation of the Revolution in 1770, or at least the collapse of the alliance between elites and ordinary people, further entangled ideas of patriotism with an American identity. Throughout there was an increasing confidence in the idea of American ascendency, even in the period between the dissolution of the Townshend Duties and the Tea Act. This confidence culminated in 1775 when Americans believed that they could and

should defeat Britain militarily. This radical confidence in the strength of the Americans mean that by 1776, as the calls for independence became stronger and stronger, ordinary people were able to express what they believed clearly and have it preserved in the Pennsylvania State Constitution. It is in this document that we can identify the ideas of ordinary people that have survived to posterity.

1) 'The Heathen for Thine Inheritance': Consensus in the 1764 Paxton Boys Pamphlet War about the Assumed Decline of Indians

Central to the processes of revolutionary action was the emergence of America itself as a meaningful concept for Philadelphians. This chapter along with the next will chart this development, concentrating particularly on how this powerful notion shaped the intellectual world of ordinary people. The second chapter will explore the relationship Philadelphians had with Britain, but this first examines how Philadelphians understood their Americanness in relation to Native Americans. Significantly, the construction of an American identity by the white colonists came at the expense of Native Americans. Understanding why white colonists imagined they replaced Indians is an important starting point for this study. To achieve this end, the chapter focuses on the Paxton Boys pamphlet war of 1764. This was a watershed moment in transforming the relationship between the two communities. As an immediate outcome, it escalated the violence between Native Americans and white colonists; however, more insidiously it revealed that there was no belief in the continued vibrancy of Indian culture. Understanding the intellectual life of inarticulate people means understanding they assumed that one day they would be the sole occupants of America. This confidence underpinned many of the assumptions about their conflict with Britain in the 1760s and 1770s. Pamphlets are best placed to understand this situation because they have the space to explore ideas. As a genre, they are perfectly suited for intellectual exchange. Vanishing Indians allowed colonists to envision the ascendency of white culture in North America and these confident expectations contributed to the myth of invincibility that, in turn, empowered Patriots to challenge the British Empire. Ultimately, then, the emergence of a sense of American community in Philadelphia developed directly out of the displacement of Indians and their subsequent marginalisation in public life.

In order to assess the development of the belief in Indian decline and white ascendency, this chapter will concentrate on understanding how consensus in public debate can reveal the assumptions of

ordinary people. I will examine the communications circuit of the Paxton Boys pamphlets to demonstrate that authors and printers expected readers to read from both sides of the debate. Given the popularity of the debate, the fact that authors on all sides spoke in this way suggests that their understanding of the Paxton Boys drew from a shared assumption that existed in the interpretive community of Philadelphia. Viewing the literature from this perspective reveals that both pro- and anti-Paxton authors foresaw the eventual decline and extinction of Indian culture, and that both factions anticipated white ascendency in America. This was not a racist belief in the supremacy of whiteness per se, but an assumption that Protestant white culture created a more industrious and successful society that would eventually displace Native Americans. In general, those authors who defended the Paxton Boys did so on the grounds that the solution to Pennsylvania's troubles was a campaign of violence; however, their anti-Paxton counterparts did not oppose this violence on the grounds of defending Indian culture, but rather because a murderous backcountry upset good governance. The marginalisation of Indians in this debate implies that many in white society felt confident in the course they were following. Moreover, throughout the following decade texts continued to diminish Indian culture and reiterated the belief in white ascendency as part of the political campaign against Parliament. This process culminated in assertions by 1775 that America had begun to tame the wilderness and, more importantly, that the American landscape guaranteed that if war came between the colonies and the metropole the colonists could live comfortably beyond the reach of Britain's military power. Identifying the consensus in public debate is one way of discerning inarticulate people's ideas because it means that all disputants drew from a shared assumption. In this instance, the assumption of Indian decline had important ramifications for understanding that throughout America's conflict with Britain the colonists assumed that they would flourish on the continent unimpeded by their Native American neighbours.

This chapter builds on Peter Silver's *Our Savage Neighbors*. The experience of war and conflict in the 1750s and 1760s redefined both ethnic relationships within white society and associations between white and Indian communities. The Paxton Boys was one in a series of wartime atrocities, but it was pivotal in the creation of the anti-Indian sublime. The sublime was essentially a political argument constructed to address the fears generated by conflict. In particular, Pennsylvanian society had been terrorised by repeated displays of mutilated corpses either physically displayed in the streets or invoked by

literary representations. By responding to these bodies, the anti-Indian sublime provided the framework for understanding these bewildering events. Crucially, the sublime was influential because it was adaptable. It was not a series of logical conclusions that governed the response to Indian violence, but rather a set of rhetorical strategies that proceeded from the grotesque displays that resulted. This rhetoric transformed Pennsylvanian society. It justified further violence against Native Americans, promoted white unity, and elevated ordinary people to the centre of American politics.[1] In this way, *Our Savage Neighbor* successfully contextualises one of the major flashpoints in American history both in relation to its origins in the Seven Years' War and its future implications for the Early Republic. However, what is striking is that Silver's analysis fundamentally rests on the rhetoric of authors rather than the reception of audiences. In contrast, this thesis demonstrates that authors and printers assumed their readers' familiarity with both sides of the debate, which in turn points to an underlying consensus. The consensus was the assumed inevitability of Indian extinction. This extinction also led to a belief in white ascendency, the idea that the culture of the colonists would eventually lead them to dominate America. Although the full implications of this belief were not apparent before the imperial crises from 1765 onward, this assumption of white ascendency underpinned many of the interpretations of America's place in the world as colonists considered their relationship with Britain.

The process of displacing and replacing Native Americans was a complex process. By no means did the white appropriation of Americanness actually deny Native Americans a place on the continent. I highlight this phenomenon because the American identity that empowered the colonists eventually to challenge the British Empire was a recent invention. Daniel Richter's concept of historical strata in *Before the Revolution* helps describe the relationship between the periods of American history. He argues there were six that preceded the Revolution. New layers sat atop the others, but the legacies of the previous still shaped the current and consequent strata. Successive eras imagined themselves starting afresh, and disregarded the patterns of older eras that still shaped their societies. Significantly, Richter argues that in the second quarter of the eighteenth century the violence that had characterised the periods since first contact subsided. In this period, the labels of American, European, or African become less meaningful,

[1] Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York, NY; W. W. Norton & Company, 2008), pp. xx – xxvi.

and Richter instead refers to an Atlantean people, a name for the complex intermingling of people from throughout the Atlantic littoral. However, by 1776 the American Patriots worked hard to disentangle themselves from this Atlantean origin. They imagined their independent America built afresh atop the history of their Indian past and their imperial legacy. This creative act of disengagement and construction suggests that the Americanness that informed the Revolution was a relatively recent invention confined to the decade or so before independence.[2] Richter's layering is important for the thesis as it describes the process of disentanglement that the construction of identity in America entailed. After 1764 the white people of Pennsylvania imagined themselves building an American community on the ruins of Native American habitation and this helped them to challenge British authority, but in practice no amount of wishful thinking could make the Indians vanish and Native Americans continued to shape the cultures and institutions of the American continent.

'Relative to the Disputes in this Province':
The Role of Printers and Authors in Creating a Popular and Cohesive Debate

In the aftermath of the Seven Years War, white colonists and Native Americans fundamentally altered their relationship. On both sides, new hardened ideologies emphasised segregation and limited intercourse, typified among Native Americans by men like Neolin and Pontiac and among the colonists by British military personnel like Jeffery Amherst and Henry Bouquet. Crucial to this process among Philadelphians, according to Silver, was the pamphlet war surrounding the Paxton Boys incident in 1764. Both the massacre of Native Americans in Conestoga village and Lancaster committed by the group and their subsequent march on Philadelphia instigated a public debate. The pamphlets these events generated reflected a factional division within the dominant white community. One side condemned the Paxton Boys for their violence, while the other sought to justify their outrages. In the course of the ensuing debate, in which the Paxton Boys apologists successfully defended the massacre and the march, the anti-

[2] Daniel K. Richter, *Before the Revolution: America's Ancient Pasts* (Cambridge, MA; The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 3 – 7, 403 – 14.

Indian sublime gained significant traction; however, the sublime was a rhetorical tool, and so Benjamin Franklin could use the anti-Indian sublime against the Paxton Boys themselves, blaming further mutilated corpses on the actions of the backcountry men. Later at the moment of independence, pro-revolutionary writers employed the anti-Indian sublime, used with devastating effect on the Quakers in 1764, to discredit the defenders of Proprietary government, many of whom had been apologists for the Paxton Boys. As elastic as the rhetoric was, the cumulative effect was that the sublime justified and invigorated anti-Indian activity as a solution to provincial troubles in turn binding together the white inhabitants against their savage neighbours.[3] Silver is undoubtedly right in identifying 1764 as marking an important shift in the way people discussed relationships within white society and between white and Indian communities. Moreover, the anti-Indian sublime was undoubtedly a powerful weapon in factional debate pitting one segment of the province against the other. However, this polarised language has often obscured the essential similarities between the two sides.[4] Silver has overlooked the significant underlying agreement between rival factions, a dimension that only becomes apparent through adopting a material text analysis of the pamphlet war.

In analysing the Paxton Boys debate, the communications circuit that made up the controversy is integral for understanding its effect on ordinary people's ideas, but as Silver emphasises it would be misleading to pass over the intense emotional context—the desperation, terror, and dread— in which the debate took place.[5] These fears made the debate relevant for the audience in Philadelphia. In December 1763, a group of backcountry settlers, nameless in posterity but certainly known to their contemporaries, gathered together to massacre first the Native American Christians on Conestoga manor and then their

[3] Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors*, pp. xxi – xxiii, 57 – 8, 86, 215, 238 – 49, 263 – 4, 291 – 2.

[4] Alison Olson analyses the triumphant use of British satirical modes employed by the pro-Paxton authors against their opponents. It was easier to satirise the celebrities of the anti-Paxton coterie than the more anonymous and sympathetic victims of Indian warfare. Alison Olson, 'The Pamphlet War Over the Paxton Boys', *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 123:1 (1999), 31–56, (pp. 32, 41 – 56). Similarly, Nathan Kozukanich argues that the success of pro-Paxton apologists meant that a public commitment to common protection and security irrespective of white ethnic origins papered over the historic tensions between European settlers. This political pledge remained a live issue throughout the imperial crisis and would ultimately become enshrined in the 1776 Pennsylvanian Constitution. Nathan Kozuskanich, '"For the Security and Protection of the Community": The Frontier and the Makings of Pennsylvanian Constitutionalism' (unpublished PhD dissertation, Ohio State University, 2005), p. 187. Kevin Kenny argues in one of the first monographs on the subject, the attacks by anti-Paxton authors on Prebysterianism, Irishness, as well as historic slurs against the Germans rendered the anti-Paxton authors powerless to refute the violent anti-Indian voices that came to dominate public debate. Kevin Kenny, *Peaceable Kingdom Lost: The Paxton Boys and the Destruction of William Penn's Holy Experiment* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 192 – 202.

[5] Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors*, pp. 40 – 1.

remaining brethren who had taken shelter in Lancaster gaol. They did so because they feared that the villagers were harbouring Will Soc, whom the settlers accused of abetting war parties with supplies and intelligence. Following these attacks, a hundred and fifty terrified Native Americans fled to the quarantine compound in the middle of the Delaware River. The Paxton Boys marched toward Philadelphia threatening to kill the refugees and anyone who stood to protect them. The city, thrown into a panic, quickly erected barricades and the citizens, including many Quakers, armed themselves in preparation to repulse the rioters. The Paxton Boys stopped at Germantown where they met a delegation of prominent figures. They agreed to disband as long as the governors heard their remonstrance, even asserting that this had been their original aim. The event was one of a series of atrocities committed by both whites and Native Americans.[6] The significant elements of the Paxton Boys march for the emergence of the American community in Philadelphia is the fact that the Paxton Boys first massacred Native Americans and then threatened the city. The remarkable consequence of this action is that their apologists were successful in defending and even encouraging similar behaviour in continuing vigilante action against Native Americans.[7]

Understanding the successful defence of this unruly white behaviour means assessing pamphlets as the principal medium for the debate. The dispute was certainly prolific. The volume of pamphlets produced in 1764 represented a 40% increase in publications over the previous year. The Paxton tracts themselves constituted 20% of all printed items produced in Pennsylvania in that particular year, a figure that included not only official proclamations and government papers, but also two weekly newspapers.[8] In all, following a survey of all the printed items produced in Philadelphia in 1764, there were sixty-six imprints of Paxton Boys material available for examination. Some of these were re-prints or composite editions, but this was still an extraordinary output relating to a single issue. Moreover, the debate was politically engaging. The Paxton march gripped the city for nearly two weeks and the threat was so great

[6] Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 199 – 208.
[7] Kenny *Peaceable Kingdom Lost,* pp. 205 – 16.
[8] Olson, 'The Pamphlet War Over the Paxton Boys', p. 31.

that the Assembly could not reach a quorum for proceedings.[9] This all-engrossing panic precipitated the pamphlet war. As authors debated, the discussion turned away from the prosecution of the rioters and toward the nature of Pennsylvanian governance. Following this shift David Hall printed and distributed three hundred petitions asking for the revocation of the Proprietary charter. Hall's opponents alleged he distributed the petition to the poor and licentious, though apparently three thousand five hundred people subscribed to its terms.[10] This was a popular political debate, and, animated by and reflective of tracts broadly sympathetic to the Paxton Boys, that year's election had an extraordinarily high voter turnout. Both doyens of the anti-Paxton Assembly party, Benjamin Franklin and Joseph Galloway, lost their seats in the House.[11]

With newspapers standing apart from the controversy, pamphlets largely directed the course of the debate. As a genre, pamphlets were flexible enough to allow an author to respond to issues without worrying about newspaper inches or sticking to one or two sides of a page.[12] The pamphlets in the Paxton Boys came in a variety of sizes from more expensive quarto imprints to cheaper sextodecimo. They varied in length from single leaf pieces up to huge 80 page republications of speeches from the Assembly. The average length was around sixteen pages long, but most pamphlets were eight pages.[13] The variety meant that authors could choose to respond to the dispute quickly and say as little or as much as they thought their readers would tolerate. This fostered a highly charged pattern of call and response. Analysing the pamphlets from this perspective helps to uncover the consensus around assumed white ascendency that was the starting point from which the discussion of Native American and European settlement progressed.

This call and response between the authors required readers to be familiar with the tracts they set out to refute. The authors responded to each other explicitly, many seeking to dismantle the claims of

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[9] *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania*, ed. by Samuel Hazard, 10 vols (Harrisburg; Theo. Fenn & Co., 1852), IX, p. 134. Col. Shippen to Col. Burd, 9 February 1764, in *Letters and Papers Relating Chiefly to the Provincial History of Pennsylvania*, ed. by Thomas Balch (Philadelphia: Crissy & Markley, 1855), p. 204 – 6. (p. 204).

[10] Charles Richè Hildebrand, *A Century of Printing: The Issues of the Press in Pennsylvania, 1688 – 1784*, 2 vols (Philadelphia, 1886), II, p. 21. William Smith, 'Preface' in John Dickinson, *A Speech Delivered in the House of the Assembly* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9641, pp. iii – xii, (p. iv).

[11] Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors*, p. 222.

[12] Bernard Bailyn, *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA; Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 1 – 8.

[13] Hildebrand, *A Century of Printing*, II, pp. 3 – 31.

their opponents. For example, one of the most vitriolic pamphlets, *Quaker Unmask'd*, accused the Quaker-controlled Assembly of neglecting backcountry settlements and profiting from supporting Indian warfare. Rejoinders were then published called *The Quaker Vindicated, Remarks on Quaker Unmask'd,* and *The Author of Quaker Unmask'd Strip'd Start Naked, or The Delineated Presbyterian Play'd Hob with*. The final piece also prompted a direct refutation called *Remarks upon the Delineated Presbyterian Play'd Hob with; Or Clothes for Stark Naked Author*. Authors did more than link pamphlets with direct references to each other. There were also strong thematic strands knitting them together. For example, as seen in the title of the last pamphlet, the theme of clothes provided a consistent theme throughout the whole debate. In response to the pro-Paxton *The Conduct of the Paxton-Men Impartially Represented with some remarks on the Narrative*, itself a rejoinder to Benjamin Franklin's *Narrative of the Late Massacres*, an author called Philanthropy published the piece *An Answer to the Pamphlet Entituled The Conduct of the Paxton Men, Impartially Represented, Wherein the Ungenerous Spirit of the Author is Manifested, &C. And the Spotted Garment Pluckt Off*.[14] This created a dense web of pamphlets connected by their direct engagement and thematic cohesiveness.

Ultimately, authors may not have had control over the title pages of their work but as this summary makes apparent, pro-Paxton pamphlets, like *Quaker Unmask'd* and *The Conduct of the Paxton-Men*, were much more successful at inciting their opponents to respond. The result of this interconnected call and response debate was that it followed a set of premises laid out by the Paxton apologists because they were better at inciting their opponents into writing refutations. This meant the debate focused on topics broached by men hostile to established Quaker authority and allied with the Proprietary government.[15] As anti-Paxton authors conceded point after point to their pro-Paxton opponents, authors collectively moved toward support for the Proprietary Government and backcountry warfare. This polemical shift obscured the fundamental assumption about Indian decline evident from Benjamin Franklin's opening attack on the rioters.

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[14] David James Dove, *The Quaker Unmask'd; Or Plain Truth* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9646. Timothy Wigwagg, *The Author of Quaker Unmask'd Strip'd Start Naked* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9586. Philo-Veritatis, *Remarks upon the Delineated Presbyterian* (Phildelphia, 1764), Evans 9814. Philalethes, *The Quaker Vindicated, or Observations on a Late Pamphlet Entitled the Quaker Unmask'd* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9805. *Remarks on the Quaker Unmask'd: Or PLAIN TRUTH found to be PLAIN FALSHOOD* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9813. *An Answer to the Pamphlet Entitled the Conduct of the Paxton Men* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9580. Benjamin Franklin, *Narrative of the Late Massacres in Lancaster County* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9667. Thomas Barton, *Conduct of the Paxton-Men Impartially Represented* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9594.

[15] Olson, 'The Pamphlet War Over the Paxton Boys', p. 54.

As authors took for granted that their readers were familiar with the works to which they alluded, printers attempted to furnish customers with the material first hand. Two—Anthony Armbruster and Andrew Stueart—played a particularly prominent role. In Charles Hildebrand's survey of Pennsylvanian publishing Armbruster printed twenty-eight of the sixty-six extant editions and Stueart twenty. Their closest competitor was the press of William and Thomas Bradford, which printed seven editions, the majority interested mainly in the Royal versus Proprietary government question.[16] Neither Armbruster nor Stueart had a particular loyalty to one side over the other, but printed and reprinted pieces as popular demand dictated.[17] In pursuit of this goal, the men actually squabbled with each other using title pages. Armbruster accused Steuart of pirating *An Historical Account of the Late Disturbance*, a narrative sympathetic to the Paxton Boys march.[18] This was something Steuart was probably guilty of as he was renowned in printing circles for not being 'over nice as it respected the publications of others.'[19] Steuart responded by printing a revised second edition of Armbruster's *A Serious Address* to which he snidely appended a note to the title page that it was 'Re-printed from the FIRST EDITION (printed by Mr. *Armbluster*)'.[20] To annoy Armbruster further, Steuart appended to the fourth edition of *A Serious Address*, *A Dialogue between Andrew Trueman and Thomas Zealot*, a tract for which Armbruster had also produced two stand-alone imprints.[21] These compilation editions of pamphlets and their frequent reprinting encouraged audiences to read broadly, but Steuart went further than his rival printers in advertising that the complete dispute with both prompt and rejoinder pamphlets were available from him. On his edition of *Copy of a Letter from Charles Read* he announced that for any interested party '*all the pamphlets that have been published on the same subject*' could be had at his shop.[22] In case the promise of 'all the pamphlets' was unclear, Steuart affixed at the back of the most controversial pamphlet, *Quaker Unmask'd,* a checklist of specific rejoinders and tracts

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[16] Hildeburn, *A Century of Printing,* II, pp. 3 – 31.
[17] Olson, 'The Pamphlet War Over the Paxton Boys', pp. 31 – 2.
[18] Countryman, *An Historical Account of the Late Disturbance* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9697.
[19] Isaiah Thomas, *The History of Printing in America*, 2 vols (Worcester, MA, 1810), II, p. 57
[20] A Pennsylvanian, *A Serious Address to such Inhabitants of Pennsylvania, as have connived at, or do approve of, the Late Massacre of the Indians at LANCASTER* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9834. A Pennsylvanian, *A Serious Address*, 2nd edition (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9836.
[21] A Pennsylvanian, *A Serious Address* 4th edition (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9837. I have not seen the presumably intervening third edition. The typesetting remained identical, but it appears in Evans under different covers. *A Dialogue between Andrew Trueman and Thomas Zealot* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9634. This was purportedly printed at Ephesus. *A Dialogue between Andrew Trueman and Thomas Zealot* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9635. No imprint location. Evans ascribes both imprints to Armbruster's press in Philadelphia.
[22] Charles Read, *Copy of a Letter from Charles Read* 3rd edition (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9811.

'*relative to the Disputes in this Province*'.[23] Clearly, authors and printers encouraged readers to think of the debate holistically.

Authors and printers could personally profit from convincing audiences to purchase each of the texts in the dispute, but anonymity conventions also portrayed the pamphlet war as more than simply a debate between interested parties. Pseudonyms masked prolific authors and allowed them to present their specific opinions as representative of a sentiment more broadly held. Concealing one's identity allowed authors to pose as a disinterested citizen, putting aside their own political aims to speak on behalf of an audience who, according to eighteenth-century ideals, could supervise leaders and ensure they always acted to benefit the greater public good.[24] For example, Anthony Armbruster, printed two anti-Franklin election squibs, *The Plot* and *An Answer to the Plot*, on the same sheet of paper. The extant copies are now unattached and originally may have been sold separately.[25] Ostensibly, the second answered the accusations in the first, but both pieces lampooned Franklin for his anti-German remarks and personal lasciviousness. The similarity in their line of attack and the fact that they were both available at the same time suggests that they shared a common origin. This may have been another way to make a little money, but the anonymity of the pieces likely allowed one individual or partnership to take two swings at Franklin on the same issue, reinforcing the general perception that Franklin was unfit for office. Two other pamphlets used a similar ploy when they appropriated William McClenachan's name to attack the Paxton Boys and their apologists. McClenachan was the founder of St Paul's Church in Philadelphia. St Paul's started as a schismatic Anglican parish, in which McClenachan rejected the authority of the Church of England hierarchy. The authors used the minister's unorthodox and fiery reputation to assert that those who supported the Paxton Boys were treacherous. The latter refuted the authenticity of the first, and there is nothing to suggest that the authors of the pieces were colluding or even that one author penned both; however, misusing McClenachan's name in this way strengthened the argument of both

[23] David James Dove, *Quaker Unmask'd*, 2nd edition (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9647.
[24] Michael Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 67 – 72.
[25] The Readex database notes that both half-sheet broadsides in the Library Company of Philadelphia had been printed on the same sheet. Looking at the physical copies in the Library Company of Philadelphia, the chain lines run in the same direction and their size mean that the two could sit together in the printing form. *The Plot. By Way of Burlesk* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9799. *An Answer to the Plot* (Philadelphia, 1764) Evans 9581.

pieces by reaffirming the association between the Paxton Boys and inflammatory religion.[26] The shifting and duplicitous pseudonyms disguised authors, but authors also used pseudonyms to align their pamphlet with a particular issue and create a sympathetic readership.[27] To curry favour with their Pennsylvanian readers many writers signed themselves on behalf of the province as a whole.[28] Audiences knew some authors, bibliographers later attributed pieces to others, and a few authors were wrongly accused, but disguising real identities helped a group of authors portray their arguments as a reflection of general sentiments.[29] Pamphlets shaped prevailing beliefs by reiterating arguments numerous times under a variety of covers.

In their words and their form, these pamphlets indicate readers encountered these texts as part of an engaged and emotionally charged debate, but the omissions in these pamphlets also give clues about the audience. In particular, they reveal that the controversy was from its inception confined to whites. This may seem self-evident, but it also reflects the trajectory of public disputation in Philadelphia in 1764. The Paxton Boys pamphlet war moved to discuss the nature of backcountry settlement, and then quickly encompassed a debate about the very basis of Pennsylvanian government. Even in late 1764, the publications of speeches made in the Assembly by Joseph Galloway, an advocate for changing to Royal government, and John Dickinson, in defence of the proprietors, both had prefaces that appropriated the Paxton Boys debate as evidence in support of their cause. This was a debate between white people and they excised Indians almost immediately in a way that reflected the Habermasian nature of the dispute.

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[26] Benjamin Bankhurst, 'A Looking-Glass for Presbyterians: Recasting a Prejudice in Late Colonial Pennsylvania', *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 133:4, (2009), 317 – 48, (pp. 330 – 2). *True Copy of a Letter from a Member of St P[au]l's* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9857. *A Letter from a Clergyman in Town* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9716. *The Cheat Unmask'd Being a Refutation of that Illegitimate Letter Said to be Wrote by A Clergyman in Town* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9614.

[27] David S. Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill, NC; University of North Carolina Press, 1997), pp. 264 – 7.

[28] Examples include: The true Born PENNSYLVANIAN' and Isaac Hunt who changed his pseudonym from 'Philo-Libertatis' to 'a Pennsylvanian' in the compendium edition of his *Looking Glass for Presbyterians* pamphlets. True-Born Pennsylvanian, *The Quakers Assisting to Preserve the Lives of the Indians* […] *Number II* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9807. Philo-Libertatis [Isaac Hunt], *A Looking-Glass for Presbyterians* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9702. Isaac Hunt, *A Looking Glass for Presbyterians* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9703.

[29] For example, David James Dove was named in a satirical cartoon. *A Conference between the D–l and D–e. Together with the Doctor's Epitaph on himself* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9617. Another author, Timothy Wigwagg, accused Benjamin Franklin of being the author of *Quaker Unmask'd.* Timothy Wigwagg, *The Author of Quaker Unmask'd Strip'd Start Naked* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9586. Meanwhile, Thomas Barton was unknown to his audience, and the librarian of the Library Company of Philadelphia, George Maurice Abbot, only attributed the pamphlet to Barton in 1873. James Myers, 'The Rev. Thomas Barton's Authorship of *The Conduct of the Paxton Men, Impartially Represented* (1764)', *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies*, 61:2 (1994), 155 – 184, (pp. 159).

Essentially their absence passed without comment because Philadelphia audiences clearly did not expect Native Americans to participate in the critique of state affairs. Private individuals, like Benjamin Franklin and even James Gibson and Mathew Smith, spoke on behalf of a public they believed to exist. Rather than representing the harmonious voice of the collective, these pamphlets contain the contentious voice of an individual who felt empowered to speak on behalf of the people.[30] A select few authors led the course of the debate. Their confidence in the right to a public voice imbued their discussion with the power to change society. The extent to which these pamphlets actually changed the minds of individuals is impossible to determine, but these material texts nevertheless reflect a few fundamental tenets of political discourse in the city that helps more fully explain the course of white/Indian history leading up to the Revolution. The white conception of America that developed marginalised the influence of the Native American community. This was not a simple oversight. In fact, this erasure of the Indian would eventually help to strengthen the Patriot claims against Britain.

Consensus is one way to discern the intellectual life of inarticulate people. The method rests on examining the language of a few articulate authors, but if focused on the right sort of debate then the similarities between the two sides can provide an insight into some of the assumptions guiding interpretations within a community. The debate needs to be both popular and cohesive, meaning that a large number of ordinary people have to engage with the topic and the debate itself has to encourage its audience to consider both perspectives. It has to be popular so that the arguments of the author reach a broad section of society, with the understanding that if authors put forward something deeply objectionable then the audience can respond. It needs to be cohesive so that audiences considered the perspective of both authors, with the understanding that the overlaps represent a moment in which the debaters build their arguments from the same premise. In this case, the Paxton Boys was certainly popular. The authors themselves attest to the incendiary nature of the debate, though each author had a vested interest in demonstrating their opponent was disruptive, and so these claims may not be the most

[30] Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, pp. 25 – 6, 74, 171. Mah, 'Phantasies of the Public Sphere', p. 168.

reliable testimony.[31] However, the debate was precipitated by a citywide panic that in turn evolved into a discussion over the provincial charter, which included a petitioning campaign, and then finally led into one of the highest voter turnouts in Pennsylvania's recent history. The Paxton Boys remained a relevant discussion point in the city long after the marchers had disbanded, and therefore, the debate surrounding them retained popular resonance throughout the entire ten-month period. Finally, most points along the communications circuit stressed the importance of cohesiveness in the debate and encouraged readers to consider the debate holistically. As a result, the authors of these pieces all built from a similar premise about their anticipated future that suggests the same assumption prevailed throughout the Philadelphian interpretative community as a whole.

'Do Not Increase, But Diminish Continually':
Analysing Points of Consensus to Determine Shared Assumptions about Indian Decline

Having established how the debate's form presented a cohesive public discourse that excised Native Americans from the outset, it is now important to turn to the substance of the pamphlets themselves, especially the anti-Paxton pieces that built their arguments on the imminent demise of Indian populations. One of the iconic declarations from the Paxton Boys pamphlet war is the 'CHRISTIAN WHITE SAVAGES' in Benjamin Franklin's anti-Paxton *Narrative of a Late Massacre*. Historians have returned repeatedly to the inchoate sense of race suggested by the phrase. They highlight the unsettled nature of the colour line, and the confused logic white commentators used as they attempted to understand the backcountry.[32] However, Peter Silver argues that Franklin's racialized language was

[31] Philanthropy, *An Answer to the Pamphlet Entituled The Conduct of the Paxton Men, Impartially Represented* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9580, p. 21. Thomas Barton, *The Conduct of the Paxton Men, Impartially Represented* (Philadelphia, 1764) Evans 9594, p. 3. Hugh Williamson, *The Plain Dealer, Numb. II* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9877, pp. 3 – 4. Dove, *The Quaker Unmask'd* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9647, p. 3.

[32] Patrick Griffin argues that the racialized language belied the more pressing concern about the progress of civilisation that the Paxton Boys threatened by concentrating on race. For Griffin, Franklin's attack on the marchers was motivated by their racist insistence on treating all Indians the same and was intended to convey that the Paxton Boys had regressed in the wilderness to a more brutal and unthinking stage of development. Griffin's Franklin is more colour blind than the Paxton Boys. Patrick Griffin, *American Leviathan: Empire, Nation, and Revolutionary Frontier* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 2007), pp. 48 – 50, 256. Alternatively, Krista Camenzind contends that, though

anomalous and mattered little to contemporary audiences who were more interested in the prejudice and tension that existed within European communities, especially the fear of bigoted Presbyterians or overly powerful Quakers.[33] I agree with Silver that the racialized language of the debate has less significance than the cultural conflict beneath it. However, Silver's focus on the conflict within the white community is coloured by the vitriolic language that eclipsed the essential agreement between the Paxton apologists and their anti-Paxton opponents. Franklin made his overarching case about Native Americans clear on the first page when he argued that 'it has always been observed that Indians, settled in the neighbourhood of White people, do not increase, but diminish continually.' [34] Franklin tacitly offered his readers an alternative to killing Native Americans by suggesting that white settlers should envelop Indians so that over time the subsumed communities would eventually dwindle to nothing. Franklin's *Narrative* did not exist in isolation. Those who read it likely considered it alongside pro-Paxton tracts that advocated the violent removal of Indians. In all cases, authors effectively excised Native Americans from the future of America. Ultimately, CHRISTIAN WHITE SAVAGES appeared on page twenty-seven, the diminishing Indian was at the bottom of the first page. Franklin's promise of an all-white future therefore appeared before his condemnation of the Paxton Boys. There were a range of ways in which this all-white future might appear, but of overriding importance was the consensus that Indians would decline.

Throughout *Narrative of the Late Massacres* Franklin marginalised Indians. Although Franklin strongly denounced the Paxton Boys, he concentrated on the fact that the massacres contravened the rules of hospitality. This marginalised the Indians and separated them from white society by categorising them essentially as guests and sojourners. Franklin supported his case with numerous historical precedents for the protection of guests. They were lodgers and, as such, they stood apart from Pennsylvanians. Franklin drew the distinction between the communities by using racialized language. The Paxton Boys acted to the 'eternal Disgrace of their Country and Colour', a country and colour to which

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Franklin deplored the violence of the backcountry, he developed a language of white racial superiority that exceeded the Paxton Boys. They perpetrated racial violence, but they did not have the language to articulate it. The vitriol in Franklin's pamphlet was less about defending the right of Indians to live as they pleased and more against the distasteful expedient that the Paxton Boys had employed. For Camenzind, Franklin had a clearer sense of whiteness than his opponents. Krista Camenzind, 'From Holy Experiment to the Paxton Boys: Violence, Manhood, and Race in Pennsylvania during the Seven Years' War' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, 2002), pp. 21, 314 – 20.

[33] Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors*, pp. 202 – 4.

[34] Franklin, *Narrative*, p. 3.

Franklin implicitly belonged.[35] Similarly, Franklin drew a comparison between the various nations of the Native Americans and the 'White People' of Europe. He ridiculed the Paxton Boys for failing to distinguish between warring enemies and friendly tribes by pointing out that the Dutch would not satisfy themselves against the French by exacting vengeance on the English. The logic of the analogy only worked by pointing out the ridiculousness of flattening out Indian relations by comparing them to the more familiar dynamics of his and his audience's white society.[36] Franklin's concluding remarks reiterated that the atrocities committed by the Paxton Boys meant they acted like a '*Pagan Negroe*' and worse than the '*cruel Turks'* or the '*Popish Spaniards*'.[37] For Franklin unruly behaviour was neither a 'white' nor a Protestant attribute. He insulted the Paxton Boys by calling them 'CHRISTIAN WHITE SAVAGES'.[38] Franklin was disgusted with the behaviour of the Paxton Boys but his argument still rested on the assumption that he and they belonged to one group and the warring Indians and friendly Conestoga belonged to another.

Benjamin Franklin's *Narrative of the Late Massacres* was published in January, but the Paxton Boys debate began in earnest with the appearance of *The Declaration and Remonstrance of the Distressed and Bleeding Frontier* in February. This pamphlet illustrates many of the most important elements of the Paxton apologist literature. Written by two of the few named members of the Paxton Boys, Mathew Smith and James Gibson, *Declaration and Remonstrance* prompted a reassessment of the march's intentions. From its title to its conclusion, it embodied the anti-Indian sublime that would prove persuasive during the course of 1764. The marchers were the representatives of a suffering western people and only war with the Native Americans could stem the further bloodshed of white settlers.[39] The pamphlet was composed of two sections, the declaration and the remonstrance. In the *Declaration* the marchers issued a plaintive justification for the massacres at Conestoga and Lancaster and presented the atrocities as a loyal duty to George III. They complained that Conestoga supplied backcountry warriors with food, clothing, and information and declared themselves to be 'opposite to the Enemies of [the King's] Throne and Dignity, whether openly avowed or more dangerously concealed under a Mask of falsly pretended Friendship.' The authors alleged that Quakers provided Delaware and Shawnee warriors with war supplies so that they

[35] Franklin, *Narrative*, p. 9.
[36] Franklin, *Narrative*, p. 13.
[37] Franklin, *Narrative*, pp. 26 – 7.
[38] Franklin, *Narrative*, p. 27.
[39] Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors*, pp. 204 – 7.

could be a 'Rod to scourge the white People that were settled on the purchased lands.'[40] Smith and Gibson explained that their actions represented the only viable solution for people on the backcountry against the oppressive and neglectful eastern Quakers. The *Declaration* was an appeal to an audience that previously had been sympathetic to the plight of frontier settlers, but which after the events of early 1764 had somewhat hardened against them. Its greatest success lay in prompting Pennsylvanian authors to interrogate the causes behind the march.

The marchers then used the *Remonstrance* to lay out their vision of the future, which they believed provided an answer to Pennsylvania's troubles. The *Remonstrance* asked the government for a series of concrete remedies to alleviate the stresses of the backcountry, but in essence, they amounted to entirely eradicating Indians from areas of white interest. Significantly, the demands included requests for more funding for forts along the backcountry and a new scalp bounty. In the *Remonstrance,* the Paxton Boys asked eastern authorities to remove restrictions on frontier warfare, and actively promote a campaign of violence in order to disentangle the European and Native American communities. They argued that accommodating Indian settlements was 'contrary to the Maxims of good Policy and extreamly dangerous to our Frontiers, to suffer any *Indians* of what Tribe soever, to live within the inhabited Parts of this Province.'[41] The *Declaration* looked back to the abuses of Quaker government, whilst the *Remonstrance* offered audiences a solution to the province's travails. The Paxton Boys asked for governmental support in the violent removal of Indians.

This was not without precedent. A number of government initiatives had earlier supported individual efforts against Indians during the Seven Years' War, and the British generals stationed in the backcountry had been throughout the conflict forthright in their reticence to perpetuate the status quo of interspersed white and Indian communities. Smith and Gibson's vision had the power it did because the British military had alienated Native American society. The British military's operations in the backcountry resembled the solutions proposed in the *Declaration and Remonstrance*. The actions of British generals provide necessary social context for understanding pro-Paxton pamphlets. Following the capture

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[40] Mathew Smith, and James Gibson, *A Declaration and Remonstrance of the Distressed and Bleeding Frontier Inhabitants* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9630, pp. 4, 8.
[41] Smith and Gibson, pp. 15 – 6.

of Quebec in 1759, British General Jeffrey Amherst was actively envisioning the future of America and he aimed to bring the Indians over to the settled life of farming and trading. To do so, Amherst was prepared to use military power in pursuit of his goals. He repudiated many long-established customs of Native American diplomacy. He refused to participate in rituals of gift giving, curtailed the sale of arms and ammunition, prohibited the provision of alcohol, and finally refused to 'cover the graves' of murdered Indians with offerings in lieu of bloody vengeance. Unsurprisingly Amherst's new policy engendered violent conflict. It created widespread deprivation among the Delaware and Shawnee communities and diminished the ability of Native Americans leaders to restrain young and agitated warriors.[42] Within this volatile mix were indications for the Native Americans that the white settlers did not expect to share the continent. Another British General Edward Braddock told Delaware leaders in 1755 that he foresaw no permanent place for Native Americans in a settled America.[43] Similarly, by late 1764 a third British General, John Bradstreet, believed that the continued warfare, sometimes called Pontiac's War, was in part due to the rumour that the Iroquois were spreading among their clients, the Delaware and Shawnee, that the British 'have nothing so much at Heart as the Extirpation of all Savages.'[44] Before Franklin's piece ever went to press, peaceful cohabitation with Native Americans was rapidly becoming an untenable position, a fact that became even more apparent in the course of the 1764 Paxton Boys pamphlet war. Ultimately, in the 1770s Pennsylvania fulfilled the Paxton vision of a state-sponsored and frontier-led campaign.[45] Overall, disgust with Native American communities typified pro-Paxton arguments.[46] These authors often juxtaposed the civility of religion with the barbarity of nature.[47] The *Remonstrance* was the blueprint for the anti-Indian sublime that led to the excision of Native Americans from white neighbourhoods. The emotive language and well-defined solution of *Declaration and*

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[42] Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America* (London; Faber and Faber, 2000), pp. 457 – 71, 518, 535 – 8. Alan Taylor, *The Divided Ground: Indians, Settlers, and the Northern Borderland of the American Revolution* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2006), pp. 28 – 33

[43] Daniel K. Richter, *Trade, Land, Power: The Struggle for Eastern North America* (Philadelphia, PA; University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), pp. 156 – 7.

[44] John Bradstreet, 'General Bradstreet's Statement. December 17 1764' in *Diary of the Siege of Detroit in the War with Pontiac* ed. by Franklin Hough (Albany, NY: J. Munsell, 1860), pp. 137 – 58, (pp. 152 – 3).

[45] Rob Harper, 'State Intervention and Extreme Violence in the Revolutionary Ohio Valley', *Journal of Genocide Research*, 10:2 (2008), 233 – 48, (pp. 234 – 244).

[46] A great deal of the Paxton apologists linked Philadelphia's Quakers with a plot to unleash Native American aggression. Francis Alison, *An Address of Thanks to the Wardens of Christ Church and St. Pauls* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9560. David James Dove, *The Quaker Unmask'd, passim.*

[47] William Smith, *A Brief State of the Province of Pennsylvania* (London, 1755), p. 39. Hugh Williamson, *The Plain Dealer: or A Few Remarks upon Quaker Politics, Numb. I* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9875, p. 4.

Remonstrance persuaded many in the backcountry of the justice of their cause. In places like Carlisle, founded on backcountry trade, Native Americans attracted suspicion after 1764 and they became a less common sight on the town's streets in the decade before the Revolution.[48]

Franklin's *Narrative* was not, therefore, the genesis for the belief in inevitable white triumph. A number of different strains of opinion concerning Indian extinction provide the backcloth to the communications circuit for the anti-Paxton position in the debate. The capture of Quebec in 1759 and the end of the Seven Years' War invariably prompted speculation about the future of America that included hypotheses about the place of Indians. Governor William Denny declared a day of thanksgiving to announce that 'the Power of our French Enemy in America is totally demolished […] and the Protestant Religion and Interest triumphant through this New World.'[49] Though never explicitly stated, the 1760 Convention of Episcopal Clergy seemed to gather to ensure that Anglican interests remained foremost in this Protestant New World. The Convention's first task was to congratulate the recently appointed Lieutenant Governor, James Hamilton, and to request that he continue to encourage the Church of England in the province. During the Convention, William McClenachan earned his reputation as an unorthodox and fiery minister. He objected first to the conflation of civil and religious duty in the letter to the Governor, noting that it would unnecessarily irritate the Presbyterians. Then he objected to William Smith, provost of Philadelphia College, as the Convention's choice for delivering the sermon. McClenachan never recorded his objection, but it is unlikely it was because of scruples against Smith's vision of an all-white future. Smith preached on a verse in Psalms in which God said to his people 'Ask of me and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance and the utmost parts of the Earth for thy possession.'[50] Smith's sermon discussed the biblical prophecy of the final conversion of the nations. He argued that Britain would '[obtain] a more natural and lasting dominion over the Heathen natives of this continent by our arts and manufactures, than the Romans did over the old world by the terror of their arms. Every river, creek, inlet, lake and settlement, will be open to our Commerce' and through this

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[48] Judith Ridner, *Town In-Between: Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and the Early Mid-Atlantic Interior* (Philadelphia, PA; University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), pp. 92 – 4, 110 – 1.
[49] *PG* 18 October 1759.
[50] *Papers Relating to the History of the Church in Pennsylvania, A.D. 1680 – 1778*, ed. by William Stevens Perry, 2 Vols (Hartford, CT, 1871), I, pp. 295 – 305.

endeavour the Indians would become Christian and allied with the interests of Britain.[51] Like the confused CHRISTIAN WHITE SAVAGES, Smith's visions of white ascendency have little of the strict racial categorisation that would dominate nineteenth- and twentieth-century discussions, but they certainly anticipate that white Protestant culture would supersede all other ways of life.

European missionaries' conversion texts foretelling another strain of Indian extinction also preceded Franklin's *Narrative.* These authors focused increasingly on the death of Native Americans, especially the difference between worthy and wasteful deaths. A recurrent theme was that British colonisation saved Indians from eternal damnation. However, the concentration on death and damnation reinforced the notion that Native Americans were a vanishing people.[52] This attention to Indian death was also evident in the anti-Paxton pamphlets. Authors aimed to discredit and embarrass their opponents by depicting the Native Americans as weak and marginal. In *A Dialogue Containing Some Reflections on the Late Declaration and Remonstrance,* a 'plain honest man' called Lovell commented how serenely the Conestoga died, a trope among the missionary texts that indicated a worthy death.[53] In effect, Lovell contended that British civilisation had redeemed the men and women who died in Conestoga, allowing them to pass untroubled into the next life. Similarly, *A Touch on the Times* called the victims in Conestoga and Lancaster lambs, and those who hid in the barracks in Philadelphia were 'Decrepid, feeble, young and old'.[54] The targets of the Paxton Boys were enervated victims who lacked the vigour to resist. This concentration on the death of the weak furthered the sense of white ascendency. Returning to Franklin, his *Narrative* actually opened with a description of the inhabitants of Conestoga as well as a great deal of detail about the piteous nature of their deaths. He even emphasised the closeness of the Conestoga residents to his white readers saying that it 'is common with the *Indians* that have an Affection for the *English*' to give English names.[55] This reinforced his central concern that the lifestyle of the Conestoga was giving way to the white culture that surrounded it. The anti-Paxton pamphlets fitted into an older

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[51] William Smith, *The Works of William Smith, D.D. Late Provost of the College and Academy of Philadelphia,* 2 vols (Philadelphia, 1803), II, pp. 308 – 36, (pp. 326 – 7).
[52] Laura M. Stevens, *The Poor Indians: British Missionaries, Native Americans, and Colonial Sensibility* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), pp. 30, 160, 173 – 93.
[53] *A Dialogue Containing Some Reflections on the Late Declaration and Remonstrance* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9638. Stevens, *The Poor Indians*, p. 183.
[54] *A Touch on the Times* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 41494.
[55] Franklin, *Narratives*, pp. 4 – 10.

narrative focused on the death of the Indian. The pity of the Conestoga was that the Paxton Boys massacred a community on the very cusp of adopting white cultural practices. Those who had not made the transition already were slowly dying out and were no longer a threat to the progress of white society.

The official view of the Conestoga reflected a similar perspective. Reports to the Provincial Council said the Native Americans lived 'peaceably and inoffensively', implicitly emphasising that the settled villages posed no threat to the orderly governance of Pennsylvania.[56] John Armstrong, in a statement to the Governor, bemoaned that 'I should be very sorry that ever the people of this County should attempt avenging their injuries on the heads of a few inoffensive superannuated savages, whome nature had already devoted to the dust.'[57] This dust was all that remained of their previous culture after it crumbled in the wake of contact with white Christian society. For Armstrong and the governors of Pennsylvania, the Conestoga were no barrier to the progression of civilisation. Although authorities periodically worried about the effect of the wilderness on the civilisation project, it remained a prescribed programme set out by Europeans and judged by them.[58] Consequently, there emerged an appealing comparison between the life cycle of humans and the life cycle of civilisation. Both people and societies progressed along a defined path toward greater enlightenment where old or inert societies would wither and die.[59] In this context, as illustrated by these broader intellectual trends, anti-Paxton pamphlets were not a defence of Native Americans against white aggressors, but rather an attack on the Paxton Boys for pursuing a distasteful expedient.

As William Smith had searched the bible for prophetic visions of conversion, anti-Paxton authors too found biblical comparisons to reinforce white ascendency in a bid to dissuade further violence. One useful comparison was between white people and the Israelites and Indians with the Gibeonites. Like the Israelites, white Americans industriously moved along a providential path whilst the Conestoga Indians

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[56] *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania*, ed. by Samuel Hazard, 10 vols (Harrisburg; Theo. Fenn & Co., 1852), IX, pp. 94, 107.
[57] John Armstrong to Thomas Penn, 28th December 1763, *Pennsylvania Archives; First Series*, ed. by Samuel Hazard, 12 vols (Philadelphia, PA; Joseph Severns & Co., 1853), IV, p. 152. Kenny suggests that Armstrong was also guilty of wrongdoing during the massacres. Kenny, *Peaceable Kingdom Lost*, p. 143.
[58] James H. Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York, NY; W. W. Norton & Company, 1999), p. 153 – 4. Griffin, *American Leviathan*, pp. 38 – 40. Krishan Kumar, 'The Return of Civilization – and of Arnold Toynbee?', *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* 56:4 (2014), 815 – 43, (pp. 820 – 2).
[59] Robert E. Berkhoffer, jr, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York, NY; Vintage Books, 1979), pp. 44 – 9.

toiled uselessly and inoffensively beside them. The eighteenth-century interpretation was that God punished the Gibeonites with the hewing of wood and the drawing of water, or menial tasks that did not contribute to the advancement of wider society.[60] Franklin used the same analogy in *Narrative*.[61] Similarly, in the second issue of *The Quakers Assisting to Preserve the Lives of Indians*, the author, True-Born Pennsylvanian, warned that, if like King Saul, the Israelites failed to protect the Gibeonites then God would punish them with a famine.[62] For a True-Born Pennsylvanian, the Conestoga were a lesser culture that burdened Pennsylvania with a providential duty to protect them. The fear of providential punishment also functioned in *A Serious Address*. The author, A Pennsylvanian, again compared the friendly Indians to the Gibeonites and the white settlers to the Israelites, but the bigger concern was that if Pennsylvania did not get its house in order Britain would return and strip Pennsylvania of its charter privileges. The author argued that the Conestoga had continued on their land 'in no better Condition than that of poor Basket-makers and Broom-makers.'[63] Rather than the more abstract divine punishment, A Pennsylvanian saw clear analogues between politics in the backcountry and imperial policy, but the Conestoga did not themselves feature in this calculation. Unlike the disruptive white settlers, Indians were hewers of wood or drawers of water, and therefore posed no danger to the expanding white population. Moreover, A Pennsylvanian directly denied that the violent endeavour proposed by the Paxton Boys was even feasible. He argued that 'To exterpate the Indians is impracticable: It has been said (and I believe with a great deal of Reason) that all the Forces in *Europe* could not totally destroy them.'[64] Neither practically nor morally was the expedited removal of Indians a good idea. Instead the anti-Paxton authors counselled patiently waiting for Indian cultural extinction.

The pity of the anti-Paxton authors diminished the choices the Conestoga community had made in continuing to live in the village, but John Tobler's essay in his 1764 almanac seemed to display a humanitarian concern for the lives of the native peoples in America. The essay focused on the Hispaniolans who suffered at the hands of Spanish forces. He argued that Europeans, animated purely by

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[60] Marcus Rediker and Peter Linebaugh, *Many-Headed Hydra: The Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston, MA; Beacon Press, 2000), pp. 40 – 2.
[61] Franklin, *Narrative*, p. 13.
[62] True-Born Pennsylvanian, *The Quakers Assisting to Preserve the Lives of the Indians* […] *Number II* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9807, pp. 6 – 7.
[63] A Pennsylvanian, *A Serious Address* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9837, p. 2.
[64] A Pennsylvanian, *A Serious Address*, p. 4.

avarice, imposed brutal conditions on enslaved Africans and Native Americans. He scoffed at the idea that a conquest could be consistent with Christian values and that 'All that you ever read of heathen Barbarity, is here outdone by Christian Conquerors'.[65] He admitted that the native communities of North America were perhaps more warlike than the Hispaniolans but, acknowledged at the same time, that their complaints of abuses inflicted on them by European settlers were equally just. Tobler believed conflict with Indians would only continue the depravities of the backcountry and corrupt the souls of Christian combatants. Tobler's essay argued that the Christian needed to treat the neighbouring heathen well in order to receive his eternal inheritance in heaven.[66] There is little reason to dismiss the compassion displayed in Tobler as cynical or disingenuous, but ultimately he focused on the ill effects of massacre on the Christian soul rather than on the consequences for Native Americans and enslaved Africans. As Pennsylvanians envisioned their future, some hoped for a quick and violent resolution to complexity. Others sought to establish peaceful terms with their neighbours while each led parallel lives in which the assumed superiority of a Christian life and a white culture would eventually lead to a homogenous future. In neither of these visions was there room for a competing Native American way of life. Consigning Indian culture to the dust, as both pro-Paxton and anti-Paxton authors did, allowed colonists to appropriate America, its land and its history, as they struggled against British authority.

'The White People of this Big Island':
Studying the Implications of the Paxton Boys Debate, 1764 – 1776

The Paxton Boys generated a long legacy. In Philadelphia, the memory of late 1763/early 1764 persisted in Quaker meetings as Friends debated what should happen to the Society members who had taken up arms against the marchers, only laying the issue to rest in 1767.[67] The Paxton Boys also became a reference point for understanding later crises in the 1760s and 1770s. A song distributed in 1771 used

[65] John Tobler, *The Pennsylvania Town and Country-Man's Almanack* (Germantown, 1764), Evans 41416, p. 29.
[66]Tobler, *Pennsylvania Town and Country-Man's Almanack*, pp. 9, 34 – 5.
[67] Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, *Records of Annual Sessions: Men's Meeting and Joint Minutes, 1747 – 1779*, Haverford, PA, Haverford College Special Collections.

the refrain 'true PAXTON Boys' to assert that the backcountry marchers had been virtuous in defending the rights of the poor west against the neglectful east.[68] Meanwhile, in less valorous terms, the radical backcountry grain factor Sam Patterson in 1774 used the term Paxtonian against Quakers he thought acted without scruples.[69] These conflicting legacies of the Paxton Boys were evident as early as 1764. Kevin Kenny even argues that some of the Paxton Boys literally continued their anti-Indian activity by participating in a number of episodes of backcountry disorder in the 1760s and 1770s.[70] For Silver, the Paxton Boys debate brought the white community together as a suffering people. The white colonists found unity in the depredations inflicted on them by Indians. In turn, this idea of shared suffering made the plight of ordinary people the central concern of government.[71] The anti-Indian sublime was undoubtedly useful in attacking authority in Pennsylvania. It was an emotive call that made the demands of ordinary people difficult to ignore. However, rather than the just fear of external enemies, this chapter has concentrated on the anticipated decline of Indians and the confident belief in white ascendency. This assumption actually contributed to the elevation of Americans to the centre of politics. Conflict with Native Americans had encouraged declarations about the vitality of white culture in America that in the course of conflict with Britain would underpin celebration of the strength of the colonies.

Paxton apologists were quick to integrate the rioters into a laudatory re-telling of white history. In *An Historical Account of the Late Disturbance between the Inhabitants of the back Settlements of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphians*, the pro-Paxton author, Well-Wisher, reframed the Paxton Boys march as a moment of provincial unity in keeping with a long tradition of British liberty. He called the Paxton Boys who met Franklin at Germantown 'a selected band of Gentlemen, Decendants of the Noble Eniskillers, who were the great Means of setting that great and never to be forgotten Prince King William on the Throne'.[72] Meanwhile the 'wolf-like' Native Americans destroyed the profitability of Pennsylvania, so that ultimately 'the White People most in General, hates anything that Savours of the Name of an Indian'. Well-Wisher's solution was that Native Americans should live in their own country with which Pennsylvania should get

[68] *A New Song in High Vogue in Northampton County* (Philadelphia, 1771), Evans 12153.
[69] Sam Patterson to Levi Hollingsworth 28 June 1774, Hollingsworth Family Papers (Collection 289), HSP.
[70] Kenny, *Peaceable Kingdom Lost*, pp. 205 – 25.
[71] Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors*, pp. 298 – 9.
[72] Well-Wisher, *An Historical Account of the Late Disturbance* (Philadelphia, 1764), Evans 9697, p. 5.

the most peaceable terms possible. To emphasise his point he called himself a 'True Countryman.'[73] In practice, the independent United States in 1776 followed a comparable policy. When addressing the clients of the Wyandots, Pennsylvania asked for 'Peace between the white inhabitants of this big island and the red people.'[74] The language used in the addresses emphasised that they wished to make America safe for their wives and children, and implied that the British forces were foreign invaders not invested in the land. To make the point clearer a speech delivered by Captain Pepe assured the Indian chief that: 'We are very sensible of your good intentions towards the white People of this big Island who grew out of the same ground with you'.[75] Like the Native Americans, the European immigrants had become native to the continent. They had become Americans.

Although Patriots confidently asserted they were American, the issue of race, or specifically questions over whiteness, recurred to undermine the security of these claims. The important thing to note is that Americans believed wholeheartedly in the strength of their culture, even if they struggled with defining whiteness. This dissonance would persist into the Early Republic, but it never fatally undermined the self-assurance Patriots had in their claim to Americanness. This discrepancy suggests a point of tension between the lived experience of residing on a multi-racial, multi-ethnic continent and the imagined white community that audiences anticipated would dominate America. An example of this phenomenon is a telling joke between two friends, one in Philadelphia and one in Lancaster, the largest town in the backcountry. Jasper Yeates, who would become a leading Patriot as well as Commissioner for Indian Affairs for the revolutionary United States, wrote from Lancaster in 1765 to his friend Nicholas Van Dike. Yeates had finished his legal studies in Philadelphia and had moved to Lancaster to practice. Yeates told Van Dike he was mistaken to assert that all the girls in Lancaster were 'tawny Dutch squaws'. In fact, the suggestion was a slight 'thrown on our fair ones' because actually the Lancastrian girls were 'not so far removed from those of Philadelphia in the Article of Beauty'.[76] Yeates is here revealing anxiety about difference and inferiority. To be tawny, or German, or a squaw was a slight that besmirched the

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[73] Well-Wisher, *An Historical Account of the Late Disturbance*, pp. 6 – 8.
[74] The same terminology was used in both the Delaware and Ottawa councils. Delaware Meeting, 5 September 1776, Jasper Yeates Papers (Collection 0740), HSP. Ottawa Meeting 5 September 1776, Jasper Yeates Papers, HSP.
[75] Speech to Captain Pepe, 5 September 1776, Jasper Yeates Papers, HSP.
[76] Jasper Yeates to Nicholas Van Dike, May 19 1765, Burd-Shippen Family Collections (MG-30), Microfilm, (Harrisburg, PA; Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1966), 2 Rolls, DLAR.

'fair ones' of Lancaster. Yeates was at pains to insist that he was surrounded by white women, and that there was little difference between the people of Philadelphia and Lancaster.

Joyce Chaplin's work studying the reasoning behind the displacement of Indians by white settlers engages with this fear of change, difference, and inferiority. British colonists in America stressed continuity over change, which explains why they consistently rejected the term 'creole'. For the colonists, the term implied that they had changed and adapted to their new environment, potentially undermining the connection with their metropolitan brethren. To prove her case Chaplin notes that in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* there were only eighteen instances of the term 'creole' between 1728 and 1800, none of which use the term to describe the white settlers.[77] Moreover, the editor of the newspaper may have done more than just reject 'creole'. He may have actively sought to distinguish Americans from any association with it. In 1769, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* included a humorous anecdote about a mail order bride. The article discussed a naïve Jamaican merchant who asked his London contact to send him a wife along with the usual trading goods. Throughout the piece, the Jamaican was referred to as a 'Creole' and a 'naturalized Creole'; however, the piece had previously appeared in 1751 in the *New York Gazette*. In that instance, the Jamaican was referred to as an American.[78] The editor of the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* was clearly at pains to distinguish the creole West Indian from the American. In the following chapter, I will revisit the significance of the term 'American' to suggest that using creole to refer to a merchant originally from London and settled in Jamaica was done in order to dignify the term American and not allow it to be used as shorthand for a naïve colonial. The adaptation itself suggests a point of tension between the historical antecedents of the colony and empire on the one hand and the emerging American community on the other. However, Chaplin argues that the commitment to the ascendency of white culture actually helped to sidestep some of these troubling issues over race. The insistence on the technological and cultural superiority of white people is a product of colonisation rather than the original justification. White settlers in America had once been comfortable discussing issues of body differences, and the English colonisers

[77] Joyce E. Chaplin, 'Creoles in British America: From Denial to Acceptance', in *Creolization: History, Ethnography, Theory*, ed. by Charles Stewart (Walnut Creek, CA; Left Coast Press, 2007), pp. 46 – 65, (pp. 53 – 4).
[78] *New-York Gazette* 10 June 1751. *PC* 22 May 1769.

first predicated their right to claim Indian land on the fact they were better suited to living in America.[79] The inchoate and inconsistent approach eighteenth-century commentators took on race demonstrates that, though the authors imagined themselves defining a fresh and new identity, in practice long historical processes surrounding whiteness still troubled them.

This belief in white culture was not just confined to interactions with Native Americans. The issue of slavery also highlights this emerging confidence in the white American community. In 1773, the Quaker abolitionist Anthony Benezet developed a plan for freed southern slaves. Benezet advised governments to give free black people land between the Allegheny Mountains and the Mississippi. This was intended to prevent manumitted slaves from remaining in the South because 'the thought of settling there in a body by themselves will be found as infeasible, as it would be dangerous both to blacks and whites', neither able to forget the traumas of slaveholding. Instead, freed slaves should be given property and interspersed with white communities. Benezet hoped this would stop the black community 'becoming a prey to their ignorance and passions, and a sad annoyance to their neighbours'.[80] The black population would learn virtue from their neighbour without risk of retaliation against their former enslavers. Benezet worried about the violence engendered by racialized tensions, but the assumed inherent superiority of white culture was the means of bringing about civilisation peacefully. Similarly, at the conclusion of the War for Independence Ezra Stiles, the president of Yale College, trusted God had a providential plan in which the continued prosperity of the continent would resolve the mixed racial composition as the other races dwindled to extinction.[81] By the Early Republic, Benjamin Rush's theories on moral science synthesised the two plans. Rush believed that eventually the Native American would be 'extirpated' from the land, whilst freed slaves would be improved by their settlement in the neighbourhood of white communities.[82] Each plan built from the common premise that dangerous tensions could be peacefully resolved through cultural assimilation. Adopting white practices would benefit everyone. This reflected the confidence that Americans had in their culture.

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[79] Joyce E. Chaplin, *Subject Matter: Technology, the Body, and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier, 1500 – 1676* (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 321 – 4.
[80] Anthony Benezet to Dr Fothergill 28 April 1773, Anthony Benezet Letters (Manuscript Collection 852), Haverford, PA, Haverford College Special Collections..
[81] Nicholas Guyatt, *Providence and the Invention of the United States, 1607 – 1876* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 132.
[82] Sarah Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, NC; University of North Carolina, 2009), p. 213.

Benezet, Stiles, and Rush matured in a political climate in which a steady supply of stories celebrated an all-white future. Immediately following the end of hostilities with the Native Americans, Colonel Henry Bouquet's mission to return prisoners captured during the war became an important victory for white culture. William Smith, fresh from his electoral defeat of Franklin and Galloway, prepared Bouquet's journal for publication, and asked famous artist Benjamin West to produce a series of prints narrating Bouquet's encounters with the Native Americans. Smith intended the lavish publication to cement the Proprietary victory of 1764.[83] However, conflict with Britain, following the announcement of the Stamp Act, re-contextualised the project's impact from reinforcing the suffering people trope to celebrating white culture in America. A commentator inserted journal excerpts from this episode in both the *Pennsylvania Gazette* and the *Pennsylvania Journal.* [84] The account detailed the tenderness between the Native Americans and their white captives, but justified Bouquet's policy of forced separation because 'For, easy and unconstrained as the savage life is, certainly it could never be put in competition with the blessings of improved life, and the light of religion, by any persons who have had the happiness of enjoying, and the capacity of discerning, them.'[85] In some cases, there were orphans who had been in the care of Native Americans so long that they did not remember their place of origin or their family name. If unclaimed, the boys would be 'bound out to trades, and the girls so disposed of, that they may be no further expence to the public.'[86] The white way of life was so superior that it was better to be a servant in Philadelphia than reside among the loving embrace of an Indian family. The key was European rationality and education, two prescribed tenets of civilisation. This idea is illustrated by the hopeful opening address at a public grammar school in Wilmington in 1773. In the poetic dialogue, education vanquished the savage Indian in America, leading to the plentiful land that now sustained the colonists in their struggle with Britain.[87] In making this claim, of course, the address incorrectly recounted the way in which white settlers came to inhabit the American landscape. Remembering only the diffusion of educational material., it completely overlooked the violence of the seizure. Such grossly inaccurate attempts to recapture the

[83] Nicole Eustace, *Passion is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill; University of North Carolina Press, 2009), pp. 367 – 83.
[84] *PJ* 25 July 1765. *PG* 25 July 1765.
[85] *PG* 25 July 1765.
[86] *PJ* 21 March 1765.
[87] *A Dialogue spoken at Opening the Public Grammar School* (Wilmington, 1773), Evans 12750.

past highlight an ardent desire in authors to fulfil the promise of a New World. They reflect the importance of creative forgetting in constructing American identity.

Irrespective of white attempts to suppress African and Native American culture or emulate current European movements, Americans were unable to escape their Atlantic origins. As patently untrue and presumptuous as white ascendency was, authors frequently portrayed themselves as Native Americans in order to renew social and constitutional bonds between Britain and the colonies that had never really existed.[88] Colonists appropriated Indian heritage as part of their revolutionary agenda. A story inserted in the *Pennsylvania Journal* claimed that the New-Englanders got the name Yankee by defeating the Yankoo Indians.[89] Meanwhile in Philadelphia, an elite collection of gentlemen appropriated St Tammany as the 'titular saint' in their opposition to Parliament.[90] Tammany was the Delaware chief who signed the land deal with William Penn that first made the Peaceable Kingdom a possibility. The society had been gathering as a group since the Stamp Act, and St Tammany's Day on 1 May had often been marked with the ringing of church bells in the city, but the adoption of the name represented the appropriation of a Native American past in pursuit of a white future.[91] Just as in the Wilmington case, creating a new American Republic also involved forgetting the violent displacement of Native Americans. In an article calling for an awakening of religious piety and defence of liberty a commentator, Demostenes, argued that for America's earliest seventeenth-century settlers '*Religion* was their peculiar delight; they sought neither *honor* or *wealth* from *hostility* and *ravage*.'[92] Americans were not violent conquerors, but instead quietly tamed the wilderness. Even at the moment of continental unity in the fast day to consecrate the Second Continental Congress, David Batwell stressed that property protection had always marked American government, so that 'From the poor untutored Indian it has uniformly disdained to borrow, and abhorred to steal: Fair and open purchases have preceded every settlement'.[93] These examples demonstrate that reconfiguring their Native American heritage allowed patriots to make statements about the future they

[88] Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York, NY; Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 2 – 31, 283 – 6.
[89] *PJ* 24 May 1775.
[90] Sons of St. Tammany, *Sir, As all Nations have for Seven Centuries past …* (Philadelphia, 1773), Evans 42516.
[91] *A List of Gentlemen Invited to St Tammany's* (Philadelphia, 1773), Evans 42458. Francis Von A. Cabeen, 'The Society of the Sons of Saint Tammany of Phildaelphia', *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 25:4 (1901), 433 – 51.
[92] *PJ* 11 November 1772.
[93] Daniel Batwell, *A Sermon Preached at York-Town* (Philadelphia, 1775), Evans 13828, p. 15.

wished to see. The assumed extinction of Indians did more than just make the anti-Paxton argument untenable. It was a shared rallying point for colonists to gather and protest British authority.

In the months before the final break with Britain, the inaugural issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine* published a frontispiece engraved by the printer Robert Aitken that encapsulated how Americans had assumed both the Indian past and the white future. Aitken personified Pennsylvania as a woman in classical robes with a plumed helmet, a pole with a Phrygian cap of liberty atop it, and a large shield emblazoned with the three-ball signet of the Penn family. The figure sat in a rural landscape surrounded by martial stores of powder, arms, cannon, pike, and plans for fortification. There were also more peaceful tools of resistance such as a book entitled *P. Mag* and a letter satchel labelled as liberty. A bombard was mounted on a small plinth stamped prominently as 'THE CONGRESS', and a British navy ship loomed in the background. The epithet read 'JUVAT IN SYLVIS HABITARE', translated: 'it is pleasant to live in the woods'.[94] The symbolism celebrated the liberty and independence that Pennsylvania enjoyed in the American wilderness. The liberty satchel alluded to the letters and texts shared between the provinces that had organised resistance and the Congress bombard indicated that the Americans would keep the British navy at bay. The piece reflected a growing sentiment among Americans that in their conflict with Britain the landscape would make them invulnerable to Britain's greatest weapon, its navy. Congress wrote to the people of Britain that 'We can retire beyond the Reach of your Navy, and without any sensible Diminution of the *Necessities* of Life, enjoy a *Luxury*, which from that Period you will want: THE LUXURY OF BEING FREE.'[95] Depicting Pennsylvania as a white woman comfortably waiting in the woods and ready to go to war with maritime Britain was a powerful statement that alluded to the sanctuary of the American landscape and the naturalness of Pennsylvania's white inhabitants therein.

Inside the periodical, Aitken laid out the plan for his magazine. He saw himself as contributing to independence and liberty by promoting domestic arts and sciences. Significantly, though Europe could look to models from antiquity, Americans 'can look no further back than to the rude manners and customs of the savage *Aborigines* of *North America*'. Aitken admitted that such study may yet yield 'many

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[94] *Pennsylvania Magazine*, January 1775.
[95] Continental Congress, *The Twelve United Colonies by their Delegates in Congress to the Inhabitants of Great-Britain* (Philadelphia, 1775), Evans 14533, p. 8.

curious particulars', but he says little on the utility of this knowledge. In contrast to these curiosities of Indian culture, 'proud antiquity, like a skeleton in rags, parades the streets of other nations [in Europe], their genius, as if sickened and disgusted with the phantom, comes hither for recovery.' For Aitken, many European countries could point to their physical inheritance from the ancient world in buildings and artefacts, but the virtuous spirit of the classics now resided in an America invigorated by its salutary conditions. The 'rude manners' of Native Americans were supplanted by the 'genius' of antiquity. In this way white authors chose to neglect the influence of Native Americans, preferring instead to concentrate on the continuity of classical civilisation. They declared themselves invincible against the corrupted reach of Britons, sustained in body by the bountiful woods that had once belonged to the Indians and protected in spirit by the genius of their European ancestry. The germ of this belief had existed before the Paxton Boys debate, but the pamphlet war clearly exemplified that Indian extinction had long been an assumption for white settlers and it subsequently underpinned patriotic confidence in their defiance of British authority.

The Paxton Boys debate was a vital moment in both popular politics and in the history of the white/Native American relationship. Like many debates, understanding the marginalised is less about what was said and more about what needed no further explanation. The underlying consensus of the Paxton Boys debate was that Indians were doomed to extinction. Readers may initially have had their own interpretation, but authors and printers waged a pamphlet war that subjected audiences to an increasingly cohesive narrative that presumed white ascendency. Moreover, this involved the whole pamphlet, its words, its paratexts, its form and conventions in order to foreground this overarching conclusion. At the end of 1764, the doomed Indian consensus was implicit, but the subsequent imperial crisis created a need for white replacements of Native Americans, who claimed the liberties of America against the incursions of Parliament. This controversy encouraged authors to appropriate the legacy of the dying Indian in order to protest against Britain. From this perspective, the Native American erasure in the Paxton Boys debate becomes one of the most important elements in constructing the sense of American identity needed for Revolution. This chapter has argued 1764 was a transformative moment in the pre-history of the American Republic. It created favourable conditions for the future Patriots by establishing white commonality among all settlers. It emphasised a connectedness based on the fear of

Indian attacks and, critically, the hope for an all-white future. Finally, it helped define the groupness of the American community by envisioning the displacement of Indians. In the process, studying the moments of consensus allows a historian to discern some of the assumptions that underpinned the intellectual life of the inarticulate. The belief in white ascendency is fraught with inconsistencies, but the 1764 Paxton Boys debate demonstrates it was a vital first step in the emergence of the American community.

2) 'Temerity of Political Animosity': Philadelphia's News Culture and the Relationship between the American Demonym and Ordinary People

This chapter continues to examine the emergence of America as a meaningful concept for ordinary people. The inheritance of European empire in America was, of course, a series of divergent colonies. They had originated from a variety of colonising projects and each had long distinct histories of European immigration and negotiation with Native Americans.[1] Becoming American entailed addressing these entrenched differences. Moreover, the belief of white settlers in the ultimate extinction of Native Americans did not necessarily mean that the process of unification was either inevitable or natural. This chapter is about understanding the overarching framework of Americanness and its relationship with European colonisation. The focus is on the American demonym as a way in which colonists identified their community. A crucial part of American consciousness was the definition of American groupness, the idea of belonging to a discrete group as a named member. The chapter will explore ideas surrounding this American name, from early iterations through to the Stamp Act crisis, charting its development and associated ideas, in order to understand the relationship ordinary people had with the demonym at the outset of the imperial crisis. Newspapers, as a print genre, provide a useful insight into both trends in the political discourse as well as specific moments when ordinary people expressed themselves. Examining the content of newspapers reveals that the political discourse in the press became increasingly Americanised and reports included the demonym with increasing frequency. The aim is to understand whether this shift in the political discourse mirrored the language crowds used to protest against the Stamp Act. One of the fundamental transformations in the consciousness that empowered ordinary people to challenge Britain was the moment colonists adopted the American name. Understanding the

[1] Richter, *Before the Revolution*, pp. 406 – 14.

role of the inarticulate in this process reintegrates them into the intellectual development of the Revolution.

At the heart of this transformation was the American press. Printers experienced immense pressures on their businesses to remain fiscally solvent and this made them responsive to their audiences. This responsiveness was especially important because audiences were entrenched in much broader information networks in which the newspaper often only supplemented their information rather than providing it directly. Papers had to reflect the changes in these information networks. Similarly, though printers had a large role in compiling and editing papers, in Pennsylvania they rarely offered explicit editorial commentary on events. This meant readers had to interpret the reports according to the prevailing assumptions in the community. Significantly, printers were also part of this community and aware of these prevailing assumptions. In this way, the ordinary people who were involved in the dramatic events surrounding the Stamp Act also participated in the feedback loop that guided how printers provided information about those same events. As a result, changes in the language of the press indicate a crucial transformation throughout the eighteenth century in the way colonists identified themselves in the world. Between 1763 and 1766, there was a surge in the use of the American demonym, which continued in the years leading up to independence. Moreover, whereas before 1765 the press used the demonym infrequently and inconsistently, afterwards they used it more regularly in a positive sense to denote the white settlers of the colonies. Two pamphlets by John Dickinson use this new American identification as a rallying call in protesting against Parliament, so that while the ideas among the crowds that challenged the Stamp Act have been lost to posterity, Dickinson's pamphlets suggest that the opposition gathered around the American demonym. Examining the news culture of Philadelphia helps to demonstrate the link between crowds and newspapers, highlighting how ordinary people contributed toward transformative moments. In the Stamp Act crisis, the inarticulate prompted a public debate in which a newly emerged American demonym was then associated with protest against Parliament. The American identity meaningfully emerged in response to this crisis.

The full extent of ordinary people's identification with the demonym is difficult to discern in 1765 and 1766; however, examining newspapers can highlight trends in political discourse, particularly in

suggesting meaningful starting points for the emergence of the American community. Richard Merritt's work in the 1960s addressed this question of timing directly and is therefore useful for examining the process of Americans disengaging from their Atlantean origins in the years before 1776. He focused on patterns of attention in the press by measuring the frequency of political symbols to assess the global issues newspapers articles reported. His methodology involved classifying usages of place-names, demonyms, and other forms of political belonging. He divided these symbols into American, British, or rest-of-the-world categories. Merritt counted elements from these categories to determine the political content of newspapers and the attention devoted to various parts of the world. The study examined periods of political integration and disintegration on the American continent between 1735 and 1775. Increased attention on American affairs, i.e. a high number of symbols that indicated American belonging, signalled moments of political integration among the colonies as they focused on shared issues. This shared focus made formative events, like imperial wars or political conflicts with Britain, meaningful for members throughout the continent. The interesting development Merritt observed was that the period from 1763 to the end of the Stamp Act crisis in 1766 corresponded to a marked tilt in the attention patterns of newspapers toward the American community. Thereafter, the balance of news favoured stories from America. [2] Merritt conceded that his symbol analysis methodology only addressed questions of timing and it is here the material text approach can offer some insights into how ordinary Philadelphians interpreted symbols. Significantly, in the process of examining the American name as a symbol, my study of newspapers reveals that for every one mention of the American demonym in the seventy-three years before 1763 there were thirty-six mentions in the twelve years leading up to 1776. I will return to these numbers in the second section, but this dramatic shift in the language of the press requires further investigation.

The huge surge in the demonym meant Americans discussed their Americanness much more frequently at the same time that the British Empire collapsed. Historians have examined the phenomenon of how Americanness changed the imperial relationship multiple times, but not what the demonym meant to ordinary people. Recent works have looked at self-fashioning ideologies, such as sensibility or

[2] Richard L. Merritt, *The Symbols of American Community, 1735 – 1775* (New Haven, CT; Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 10 – 4, 40 – 53,

emotional expression.[3] However, these approaches resemble Brubaker and Cooper's analytical category of 'self-understanding and social location' rather than the debates around commonality, connectedness, and the groupness of Americans that directly engaged ordinary people with revolutionary ideas.[4] Other historians have concentrated on how ideas about America itself contributed to the deterioration of the imperial relationship and the development of an independent America.[5] Landscape played a large part in shaping many of the ideas Americans held, but I want to focus specifically on the relationship between American consciousness and ordinary people. Meanwhile, Edward Countryman argues that Americans emerged out of an 'entanglement' between the histories of three groups on the continent—the Europeans, Native Americans, and Africans. Countryman's aim is to ensure that the white inhabitants did not have exclusive claim to the name American.[6] However, the purpose of this chapter is almost entirely the opposite, namely to explore how ordinary Philadelphians staked their exclusive claim on the American identity. Americanness empowered ordinary colonists to challenge Britain. Looking at the American demonym specifically has not received large amounts of attention, but there have been recent comments alluding to its potentially crucial role for colonial America. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, in her study of American nationalism, calls the appropriation of the American name 'as revolutionary an act as engaging the British at Lexington and Concord', whilst James Sidbury and Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra in their study of ethnic groupings in the New World argue that white settlers 'colonized the claims to being American just as they had colonized the land'.[7] Both studies indicate that there was nothing inevitable or natural

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[3] Sarah Knott argues the Americanisation of sensibility transformed how Americans related to each other. Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution*, pp. 50, 68, 105. Meanwhile, Nicole Eustace looks at how changes in emotional expression helped colonists celebrate their Americanness and understand the changes with Britain. Eustace, *Passion is the Gale*, pp. 387 – 93.

[4] Brubaker and Cooper, 'Beyond "Identity"', pp. 17 – 9.

[5] John Butler explicitly rejected that his study addressed issues of the American character. He focused determinedly on the way that the landscape shaped the institutions that developed within it. John Butler, *Becoming America: The Revolution Before 1776* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), pp. 1 – 7. Jack Greene premised his study of the intellectual construction of America on the interaction colonists had with the landscape they occupied, emphasising how this divergent experience led America to separate from Europe. Jack P. Greene, *The Intellectual Construction of America: Exceptionalism and Identity from 1492 to 1820* (Chapel Hill, NC; University of North Carolina Press, 1993), p. 7. James Drake looks at how geographical concepts shaped the political and intellectual development of Americans. In fact, the assumption that Americans belonged to a continental unit helped coordinate revolutionary action in the conflict with Britain. James D. Drake, *The Nation's Nature: How Continental Presumptions Gave Rise to the United States* (Charlottesville, VA; University of Virginia Press, 2011), pp. 2 – 3, 176 – 8.

[6] Edward Countryman, *Americans: A Collision of Histories* (London; I. B. Tauris Publishers, 1996), pp. 4 – 5, 67 – 70.

[7] Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *This Violent Empire: The Birth of an American National Identity* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), pp. 4 – 5. James Sidbury and Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, 'Mapping Ethnogenesis in the Early Modern Atlantic', in *William and Mary Quarterly*, 68:2 (2011), pp. 181 – 208, (pp. 202 – 3).

about the colonies appropriating the American name, and so this chapter scrutinises the sudden spike in the demonym in the Philadelphia press and its relationship with ordinary people.

'I Shall Reap No Benefit from Them':
The Role of Printers in Compiling Newspapers as Part of a News Culture

The serial nature of newspapers documents important changes in the political community as reports kept readers abreast of breaking developments. In the process, they also record the complex relationship between themselves, their producers, and their audiences. As Merritt argues, symbols of political community can be analysed for indications about broader attitudes in society. Counting them then helps locate significant shifts in the way people discuss political communities.[8] Merritt was searching for public opinions about the level of political integration. He used his quantitative approach in order to compensate for the relatively few examples left to posterity of overt political discussion. Merritt rightly argues that newspapers are key to understanding this phenomenon, because they reflect the 'opinions most frequently held by the politically relevant strata of the colonial population.'[9] Merritt focuses primarily on the role of the printer in reflecting prevailing sentiments. Examining the communication circuits surrounding newspapers demonstrates that printers were entrepreneurs. Their responsibility was in keeping the presses running. Newspapers left readers a great deal of autonomy in interpreting the material therein. I want to understand the influence readers exerted as part of the news culture that shaped newspapers. Inarticulate audiences may not have left their thoughts to posterity, but their actions changed the political climate in Philadelphia and printers then responded to these new developments. In this way, they were a critical part of the politically-active population reflected in newspapers.

Significantly, newspaper printers themselves were in most cases neither the literati nor the Patriot elite. They were artisans. Running a printing press required a great deal of expensive machinery and

[8] Richard L. Merritt, 'The Emergence of American Nationalism: A Quantitative Approach', *American Quarterly*, 17:2 (1965), 319 – 35, (p. 321, 323).
[9] Richard L. Merritt, 'Public Opinion in Colonial America: Content-Analyzing the Colonial Press', *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 27:3 (1963), 356 – 71, (p. 358).

material. For example, John Foxcraft in 1765 advertised a complete set of printing materials that had never been unpacked. The set is suggestive of the sort of materials a prospective printer would need to own. These included seven types of fonts, numerous large types and character types for headlines and emphasis, as well as fifteen cases to store the type. In total, these cases suggest there were 365kg of type in Foxcraft's collection. The materials also included two printing presses, with the marble imposing plates and frames to hold the type; a complete set of composing equipment, which included six composing sticks, rules to hold the type, bodkins to insert the type into the rules, and eighteen galleys to hold composed pages together. There were ball stocks to apply the ink, as well as unspecified furniture, presumably assorted baskets or other small tables sent along with the press from Britain. Foxcraft advertised the entire ensemble for £209. Given it was advertised as new and never unpacked, it is safe to assume that the original person who ordered it changed their mind about getting involved in printing, and the advertised price is close to the actual amount someone would pay if they had ordered a set of printing materials themselves.[10] Added to this expensive capital investment an urban printing shop could expect to spend another £100 a year on paper alone.[11] As a result, most printers needed powerful local allies to establish themselves in the city. This meant they were usually entrenched in the local political scene in a way that cordwainers or weavers were not.[12] Printers were therefore ideally suited to survey the prevailing political climate.

Even though printers were connected to powerful interests, running a press itself was dirty, labour intensive work. Even the typical four-page American newspaper took sixteen hours to compose, involving numerous workers. One member of the shop would read aloud the copy while another composed the type. Printing itself involved wetting the paper, beating the composed pages with ink, then pulling the heavy stones to impress the paper with the inked image. A smoothly operating partnership

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[10] *PG* 12 September 1765. Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1972), pp. 35 – 8.

[11] John Bidwell, 'Printers' Supplies and Capitalization', in *A History of the Book in America*, pp. 163 – 83, (pp. 172 – 3).

[12] For example, Benjamin Franklin helped William Dunlap, David Hall, Anthony Armbruster, and Henry Miller establish their presses in the city. Franklin's political ally established William Goddard and Benjamin Towne. William and Thomas Bradford inherited their business. Ralph Frasca, 'From Apprentice to Journeyman to Partner: Benjamin Franklin's Workers and the Growth of the Early American Printing Trade', *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 114:2 (1990), 229 – 48, (p. 232). Dwight L. Teeter, 'Benjamin Towne: The Precarious Career of a Persistent Printer', *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 89:3 (1965), 316 – 30, (p. 317). Green, 'English Books and Printing in the Age of Franklin', p. 271.

could produce two hundred and forty sheets an hour, but, like many artisanal activities, underemployment was a constant concern. Printing was not a genteel industry. Printers were renowned for heavy drinking and the work itself took its toll. They could often be readily distinguished because they walked with an uneven gait due the strenuous activity of repeatedly pulling the press onto the paper.[13] Stephen Botein's often-cited 1975 article on printers concentrates on their artisanal nature. He argued that the public regarded printers as 'meer mechanics.' Many Americans did not consider printers intellectually capable to be leaders of the Revolution. They instead printed whatever they could in order to keep their press solvent.[14] The physical work was clearly demanding, but Botein's concentration on the public perception overlooks the intellectual work printers had to complete in putting together newspapers. All artisans had business concerns, but the products of printers, newspapers especially, had to cater to an audience and tell them something about the prevailing political climate. The production of a newspaper was not merely mechanical. It preserves a moment from news culture that can be analysed for clues about the intellectual life of the inarticulate, even if the audience did not respect the work of the producer.

To understand the relationship between newspapers and the ideas of ordinary people then we have to look at the influence the audience had on the content printers put into papers. Jeffrey Pasley revisits many of the points raised by Botein. He argues eighteenth-century printers preferred to maintain their press neutrality in order to remain as attractive as possible to as many people as possible, but a powerful cohort of patriotic elites ultimately pressured reluctant printers into ignoring their commercial concerns in favour of riskier partisan politics. In this way, he suggests that much of the shift toward the Patriot agenda in newspapers followed the direction of a committed articulate few. Pasley emphasises these printers rarely wrote for the papers themselves, but instead edited material to hand in order to advance the Patriot agenda. However, Pasley notes that despite the weight of the Patriot elite attempting to exert pressure on printers actually 'market forces were more effective in creating Revolutionary printers than Revolutionary politics.'[15] In Pasley's analysis, newspapers were the product of both the pressure exerted by Patriots to include explicitly anti-British material and a broader demand among consumers for

[13] Thomas C. Leonard, *Power of the Press: The Birth of American Political Reporting* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 14. Jeffrey Pasley, *Tyranny of the Printers*, pp. 25 – 6.
[14] Botein, '"Meer Mechanics"', pp. 156 – 8.
[15] Pasley, *Tyranny of Printers*, pp. 28 – 40; quote on p. 36.

news with a Patriot agenda. This is likely a fair description of the shift toward the Patriot agenda among the issues from Philadelphia presses. However, in order to examine the effect of the inarticulate audience on the texts produced we have to look closer at their role as consumers, both in terms of their spending power and as readers of the news. This is especially important because both Merritt and I measure the Americanisation of the news less on the basis of its explicitly anti-British material than on the subtle realignment toward more American news stories. In my own analysis, I argue that the presence of the American demonym was not merely a conscious decision by the printer to use the word more frequently. Instead, the word appeared because of a changing political discourse in which Americans talked about themselves as Americans in response to an imperial crisis.

Looking first at the role of the audience as customers of newspapers, profit margins in print shops were slim. Printers sold a wide variety of goods in order to make ends meet. Many acted as stationers and general retailers. They printed a broad range of print genres including books, government papers, almanacs and job printing for private individuals. The aim was to reduce the amount of time in which the press was idle. As such, a successful weekly newspaper had the best potential in keeping printers solvent. Not only was a newspaper a useful advert for the printer, prominently displaying their skills, they also sold adverts to other retailers. Another advantage of newspapers was that the printer sold subscriptions so that, unlike many of the other printing projects, the number of subscribers determined the number of newspapers printed and did not risk unsold remainders.[16] Expanding and sustaining these subscribers was important for printers. One printer in Philadelphia learned about the damage to their business that arose from not satisfying their consumers. David Hall was Benjamin Franklin's partner in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. Hall was reluctant to relinquish his commitment to an open press and throughout the Stamp Act continued to print arguments in defence of Parliamentary taxation. However, he eventually abandoned this position because it lost him five hundred subscriptions by the middle of October 1765.[17] This reflected more than just a narrow Patriot elite, but a mass exodus of subscribers expressing their discontent that the newspaper did not accurately reflect prevailing sentiments. The rejection of press

[16] Rosalind Remer, *Printers and Men of Capital: Philadelphia Book Publishers in the New Republic* (Phildaelphia, PA; University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996) pp. 11 – 23.
[17] Green, 'English Books and Printing in the Age of Franklin', pp. 292 – 3.

neutrality indicates the dynamic relationship between printer and audience. Printers had to change their business model in response to changes in the political climate of their audience.

The continuing conflict with Britain meant many printers tried to capitalise on moments of increased interest in the news. Each political crisis expanded the number of newspapers in circulation around the colonies. During the controversy over the Stamp Act, 1763 – 1765, newspaper titles rose from twenty-two to twenty-seven. In the following crisis, the 1767 – 1770 Townshend Duties dispute, they went from twenty-eight to thirty-two, and finally between the Tea Act in 1773 and Independence in 1776, the number of titles jumped from thirty-five to forty-two.[18] In Philadelphia, this process culminated in January 1775 with the announcement of three new newspapers, the *Pennsylvania Ledger, Pennsylvania Mercury,* and *Pennsylvania Evening Post.*[19] Each of them alluded to their importance in providing the public with information about the crisis with Britain. James Humphreys' *Pennsylvania Ledger* printed on Saturdays and maintained a traditional rhetoric of an impartial press.[20] Meanwhile, the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* had an ambitious thrice-weekly publication schedule. In the paper's manifesto, Benjamin Towne announced that he was moving towards more frequent issues so 'Persons anxious for early Intelligence at this important Crisis' could receive news from the eastern post from New York.[21] Finally, the *Pennsylvania Mercury* was published on a Friday because the packet from Boston came in on Thursday.[22] These new newspapers declared themselves as important purveyors of American information. Overall, by April 1775 there was almost a daily newspaper service for Philadelphians. Possibly this increase in newspapers was motivated purely by profit speculation or even encouraged by patriotic patronage, but the increased volume of news indicates that the customer base in Philadelphia was capable of prompting a change in the provision of their news. Audiences could exert economic influence over newspapers in a fashion similar to how the Patriot elite exerted social or political influence. The full extent of the audience's economic influence is difficult to discern, but it had concrete effects on the business of news in Philadelphia.

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[18] Pasley, *Tyranny of the Printers*, pp. 33, 402 – 3.
[19] James Humphreys, *Proposals for Printing by Subscription a Free and Impartial Weekly News Paper* (Philadelphia, 1775), Evans 14122. Enoch Story and Daniel Humphreys, *Proposals for Printing by Subscription in Four Pages Folio* (Philadelphia, 1775), Evans 14476. Benjamin Towne, *The First Attempt in America* (Philadelphia, 1775), Evans 49273.
[20] *PL* 28 January 1775.
[21] *PEP* 24 January 1775.
[22] *PM* 7 April 1775.

Alongside the business pressures, ordinary people were consumers of the news as readers. The genre connected most intimately with global networks. Their outlook was largely imperial and so the press is particularly useful for addressing readers' perception of Americanness. Hannah Barker and Simon Burrow's edited collection on newspapers in the Atlantic world demonstrates the press shared many common features, but what makes them particularly useful for historians is that they followed divergent regional practices that shaped specific political cultures. This means that, while newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic evolved from common origins, copied endlessly from each other, and were read in analogous public spaces, newspapers had specific roles in their respective societies that shaped how their readers understood the news and their world.[23] As David Copeland argues, American newspapers were at the forefront of debate about the formation of America. Throughout the Revolution and the Early Republic, they became the primary vehicle for sharing and canvassing political sentiments from across the continent.[24] Readers engaged with newspapers in order to share their political sentiments. Reading a newspaper was not an act of passive consumption; it contributed to changing political practices. The task of for this chapter is to understand how ordinary people left their mark on this process.

Over the course of the eighteenth century, the genre of newspapers changed to allow for greater politicisation and Americanisation of news culture. Charles Clark has argued that from the 1720s the number of genres newspapers included in their pages expanded beyond reprinting London newsletters to incorporating literary and polemical pieces as well. This expansion meant newspapers had greater scope to offer a platform for more public engagement with politics. Authors could comment on developments in a way that simply reprinting London papers had not allowed for. Inevitably, this diversity gave greater scope for political material that increasingly brought readers into public debate directly. This politicisation was accompanied by a growth in Americanisation. Newspapers concentrated more and more on American stories, copying items from other parts of the provincial press rather than just British papers. Together this move toward a more politicised and Americanised press accelerated dramatically following the popular outcry against the Stamp Act, and reluctant printers felt compelled to follow audience

[23] Hannah Barker and Simon Burrows, 'Introduction' in *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and America: 1760 – 1840* (Port Chester, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 1 – 23, (pp. 1 – 17).
[24] David Copeland, 'America, 1750 – 1820' in *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and America: 1760 – 1840*, pp. 140 – 58, (p. 154).

demands that they use their paper to criticise British policies.[25] Politicisation and Americanisation invariably generated an environment hostile to pro-British views. Readers adapted the way that they interacted with texts, responding to genres differently. By including a wide variety of material, newspapers encouraged readers to become more politically engaged with the stories they were reading. Significantly, during the Stamp Act crisis, the news culture in Philadelphia was politically active, American in its outlook, and anti-British in its perspective.

Ordinary people were a part of this news culture, and because of their newsgathering techniques, printers had a great deal of autonomy in selecting material appropriate for their readership. Some of the main intellectual work of a printer involved condensing all the material they had to hand into a single four-page weekly paper. Printers copied the majority of international news items directly from the imported British papers; however, the British press had a number of dailies to select from, while the two English-speaking papers in Philadelphia in 1765, the *Pennsylvania Journal* and the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, only appeared weekly. This meant printers made important choices in tailoring the material to suit the more infrequent American publication schedule. Under these circumstances, the compilers had scope to select the material they perceived was most relevant for their audiences. A similar selection process was involved in gathering information from other American papers. Printers copied material from their competitors, and while there were no dailies, Philadelphian printers still had a wide range of newspapers to extract from and then reprint for local audiences. Moreover, readers added to these newspaper materials by sending letters directly to the printers, or, in some cases, printers themselves solicited letters and information from the numerous people arriving at the port.[26] In total, this meant that printers had a massive amount of material from which to choose, and therefore, each decision made by the printer was meaningful. This is significant not just for the explicit protests against Britain, but also the huge surge in the American demonym that appeared after the Stamp Act crisis. When printers filled their papers, they with increasing frequency chose stories that included the demonym because more of these sources used

[25] Clark, 'Early American Journalism', pp. 354 – 62.
[26] Uriel Heyd, *Reading Newspapers: Press and Public in Eighteenth-Century Britain and America* (Oxford; Voltaire Foundation, 2012), p.10 – 2.

and discussed the term American. Ordinary people were embedded in a news culture that talked about Americans more often.

Newspapers did not operate in a vacuum. David Hall cultivated a working relationship with William Strahan, a bookseller in London, for the freshest information. Hall even asked Strahan 'that you will write no Political Letters or Letters of News, to any One but myself, for the Reason I gave you before that they will be [hastened] into another Channel, and I shall reap no Benefit from them.'[27] Hall sought to bring his readers exclusive news, but by jealously guarding his source, Hall illustrates that news circulated rapidly through Philadelphia. If Strahan wrote to anyone else in Philadelphia then Hall would lose an important advantage, ultimately hurting his business interests. In fact, many of the most engaged members of Philadelphia society had access to their own forms of information. For example, British clockmaker Thomas Wagstaff was content to tell his fellow Quaker associate in Philadelphia, Thomas Fisher, that there was an imminent change in Parliamentary policy on trade regulations. Wagstaff allowed Fisher to distribute the information to his friends, but requested that it should not be passed along to a newspaper because the 'informant fills a station of great consequence'.[28] While in this case Wagstaff's informant passed along incorrect information, these kinds of speculation were a feature of Philadelphia's news culture. Newspapers were certainly an important platform for information; however, they were not necessarily at the cutting edge of providing news. This was especially true for people with access to correspondents like Wagstaff. Richard Brown's seminal study, *Knowledge is Power*, examined the personalised information networks Americans formed. He argued that newspapers were essentially a reference source—a way for readers to collect public notices and accounts together for later reflection. People received the most important and freshest advices, especially in cities, through their personal networks—the people they knew and the public spaces they visited.[29] Rather than leading the way, newspapers were entrenched in the broader news culture of the city. In effect, newspapers preserve only a small snapshot of the more vibrant exchanges of information in Philadelphia.

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[27] David Hall to William Strahan, 31 March 1767, David Hall Papers, 1745 – 1822, APS.
[28] Thomas Wagstaff to Thomas Fisher, 8 November 1765, Logan-Fisher-Fox Papers (Collection 1960), HSP.
[29] Richard D. Brown, *Knowledge is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700 – 1865* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 115 – 6.

There are rare clues about the ways individual readers reconciled this news culture with their broader information networks. Two men, Harbottle Dorr, a Boston shopkeeper, and Pierre Eugène du Simitière, a Swiss gentleman in New York and Philadelphia, compiled indices which allow a glimpse at the reading habits of newspaper audiences. Importantly, both men followed stories through to their completion and supplemented their knowledge with notes from external sources. This reinforces the idea that press attention is a potential indicator of what people wanted to know. If readers followed stories through to the end then reiterations and revisits meant the printer still expected his readers to care about the subject. Moreover, the way that both Dorr and du Simitière appended extra information to stories suggests the newspaper was insufficient in sating their interests. Du Simitière cut out and collected articles from each of the three main papers in New York, adding to them the substance of various speeches he heard at the meetings of the Sons of Liberty.[30] The interpretative community of these patriotic gatherings further informing du Simitière's reception of the newspaper. Meanwhile, Dorr created an elaborate indexing system to help him track developments in the Stamp Act opposition. He cross-referenced articles with each other, and further marginalia would explain the significance of events and then comment on the troubling implications of British policy. Furthermore, Dorr would refer to other printed texts and conversations.[31] His experiences beyond the pages of newspapers actively framed the content within his index. He was not getting his news solely from the press, but it did form an important function in his understanding of the developing crisis with Britain. Clearly, these men were not typical readers. Few members of the newspaper audiences clipped out articles or bound their newspapers together, and even if this practice was more widespread then these examples, few have survived or surfaced in the archive. What these examples do suggest, however, is that even though the press was an important reference point for building up a picture of world affairs, it was not the sole platform for receiving the news. Whatever the Patriots inserted into the press still had to resonate with the information networks that connected Philadelphians to the wider world.

Recent studies of newspapers have looked at the place of the press in society more generally. These works emphasise the importance of discussing the news as a community. David Paul Nord argues

[30] Newspaper Clipping 1770 May 28, Box 9 F(III).142 Pierre Eugène du Simitière collection, 1492 – 1784, LCP.
[31] Heyd, *Reading Newspapers*, p. 133.

that communication creates communities, and newspapers sustain that communication by being both the provider of information and the forum to discuss it.[32] Newspapers relied on their audience for the material within. Readers, in effect, sustained and substantiated debates about the community. In Philadelphia, this involved both patriotic polemics and the popular protests against Parliament. As elite Patriots furnished more material justifying the protest, ordinary people continued to take to the streets to express their displeasure. This link may have been easier to maintain because, as Uriel Heyd argues in his study of British and American news culture, it was not uncommon for people to read newspapers aloud in public spaces such as taverns or coffeehouses. These public performances assisted audience members with reading difficulties, and were an opportunity to participate in the interpretative community surrounding newspapers. The assembly gathered around the paper engaged in debate, lost to history, but their conclusions had an effect on the course of events. For Heyd, the critical exchange was the link between the newspapers and the world of oral communication.[33] He turns to fictional sources in order to recapture this oral communication, but as both Nord and Heyd illustrate, consumers of the news did not have to read the papers personally to be involved. Participating in and influencing news culture could be as simple as discussing the news.

Newspapers themselves left the interpretation of events to the readers in a number of crucial ways. On a practical level, transport across the Atlantic was slow, six to eight weeks, and the vagaries of transatlantic travel meant that interruptions and delays in communications were common. This made papers vulnerable to gossip and rumour within the interpretative community. These same delays then further impeded the ability of governments to correct misapprehensions.[34] Therefore, the Philadelphian news culture sometimes operated in a relatively closed system in which the assumptions of the community shaped the interpretation of events when new information was not forthcoming. Secondly, the editorial layout of papers left the burden of narration with the readers themselves. Printers organised the news items that came to hand without what Charles Clark calls a 'news judgement', the precedence of

[32] David Paul Nord, *Communities of Journalism: A History of American Newspapers and their Readers* (Urbana, IL; University of Illinois Press, 2001), pp. 1 – 8.
[33] Heyd, *Reading Newspapers*, pp. 48 – 9.
[34] Heyd, *Reading Newspapers*, p. 13.

one story over another.[35] Whatever the editorial intention, the reader encountered the news in a predictable fashion, with very few explicit clues about the message the printer conveyed with their compilation of items. Instead, as Uriel Heyd argues, there was a policy of 'historical narration'. Older items had precedence over newer ones, and as a result, colonial readers shared the same order of revelation as metropolitan readers, though six to eight weeks behind.[36] This emphasis on the organising principle of freshness exacerbated the breakdown of communication because there was no editorial voice to reconcile dissonant accounts of events. Excerpts from newspapers or letters appeared one after the other and the audiences interpreted events according to the assumptions and practices of their interpretative community. Ultimately, the key to understanding colonial newspapers is in their relation to the community surrounding them. They are a reflection of how a printer interpreted the news culture generated by his audience.

The readers were the politically relevant strata of society represented by newspapers. The barrier to participation in news culture was significantly lower than either buying a newspaper or even literacy itself. It could be as simple as discussing the news. Printers felt pressure from both a patriotic elite encouraging them to print anti-British polemics and from a broader set of consumers willing to express their discontent economically. This discontent in part stemmed from the fact readers expected their papers to reflect the information networks to which they were also connected, especially as in many cases the newspaper supplemented debate rather than solely providing information. Moreover, this debate about news was necessary because newspapers themselves rarely offered direct editorial comment on the news items they provided. It is the responses to these debates, now lost to posterity, that examining newspapers in close detail will hopefully reveal. Studying news culture is helpful in discerning the intellectual life of the inarticulate because it played an important role in shaping the composition of newspapers. Like many of these methods of appraising ordinary people's world of ideas, news culture can rarely produce declarative statements on their behalf; however, it is occasionally possible to discern some major currents like the increasing use of the term American.

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[35] Charles E. Clark, *Public Prints: The Newspapers in Anglo-American Culture, 1665 – 1740* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 215 – 20.
[36] Heyd, *Reading Newspapers*, pp. 149 – 51.

'The Once Senseless and Insignificant, but Now Great, North Americans'
Charting the Frequency and Definition of the Demonym in the American Press, 1690 – 1766

My aim in the following section is twofold. Firstly, to build from Merritt's work in order chart the development of the demonym, and secondly, to analyse what this symbol of political belonging meant for the interpretative community in Philadelphia. Entirely updating Merritt's approach of discerning press attention for the digital age would be a new project in itself. His methodology involved exhaustively scouring issues of newspapers for every symbol of political belonging. These included explicit identifications wit**h** either Britain or America, and stories about specific places on either side of the Atlantic. There were also more implicit symbols of community. These included pronouns, and the usage of either colony or province, which indicated British community to Merritt, or continent or country, which suggested American community. This level of scrutiny was feasible because Merritt sampled only four issues from five newspapers each year from 1735 to 1775. Replicating this same level of scrutiny would require a search function at the forefront of artificial intelligence and optical character recognition. Moreover, parsing the intended subject behind pronouns, as Merritt did, is well beyond the capacity of even the most advanced technologies currently in development.[37] However, while digital archives may not be able to provide the depth of analysis of Merritt's approach, they provide a more thorough overall picture of the material contained within newspapers. Rather than restricting analysis to four editions each year, digital repositories enable researchers to search thousands of editions and instantly provide an almost exhaustive survey of the American demonym in context. This context helps to assess the connotations of the demonym and analyse changes in its meaning.

I looked first at the Archive of Americana in the Readex database. Unlike Merritt's corpus of five newspapers, the database allowed me to search the extant runs of fifty-two newspapers. These included

[37] My familiarity with this topic is shallow; however, I have been guided by Yeu-wei Lin's case study of text mining. Yeu-wei Lei, 'Transdiciplinarity and the Digital Humanities: Lessons Learned from Developing Text-mining Tools for Textual Analysis' in *Understanding Digital Humanities*, ed. by David M. Berry (Basingstoke; Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 295 – 314. The University of Sheffield Armadillo project in understanding semantics in historical documents. [http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/armadillo/]. As well as the Perseus project at Tufts University, especially their article on named entity analysis. Gregory Crane and Alison Jones, 'The Challenge of Virginia Banks: An Evaluation of Named Entity Analysis in a 19th-Century Newspaper Collection', in *Proceedings of the 6th ACM/IEEE-CS Joint Conference on Digital Libraries* (Chapel Hill, NC; University of North Carolina Press, 2006), pp. 31 – 40.

titles from the major seaports, the provincial towns, and even two German-language papers. In order to count only the demonym usage I decided to use the phrase Americans, because searching for 'American' included the adjectival sense of the word and returned 54,392 results. Focusing on 'Americans' resulted in 5942 hits, but scanning the results to check the precision and sensitivity of the search function, I noticed there were a number of results for the Royal Americans, a battalion deployed during the Seven Years War. I repeated the search with the Boolean parameters [Americans NOT "Royal Americans"]. This returned 5678 hits in separate articles from 1690 until 1776. There were 152 instances of 'Americans' before 1763 and 5517 hits after. This data reflects Merritt's pattern of increasing attention to the American community, even including a slow build up from 1763. There were 23 hits for Americans in 1763, 34 in 1764, 115 in 1765, and 294 in 1766. These results indicate that the American demonym followed the general pattern of other symbols of American belonging. Moreover, the larger sample size helps corroborate Merritt's conclusion that there was an important shift in the press between 1763 and 1766.

Unfortunately, the major newspaper that Merritt consulted for Pennsylvania, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, is not available on the Readex database. Instead, I had to repeat these same search parameters on Accessible Archives. While this presented some difficulties relating principally to coverage and terminology, the results again reflect Merritt's sharp increase in American stories in the colonial press after 1763.[38] In total, there were ten instances of the demonym between when records began in 1728 and 1762, though there were no references in 1763. There was 1 in 1764, 5 in 1765, and 31 in 1766. Between 1767 and 1776 there were a further 251 instances of the demonym. These results are not as comprehensive as Merritt's original analysis. Many symbols of American community, significantly the singular version of Americans (i.e. an American), were not counted. However, by using this dataset we can begin to sketch out some of the meanings attached to the demonym before and during the Stamp Act crisis.

[38] I used the Accessible Archives word index rather than their search function to identify articles that contained the word Americans because I could not search for the exact phrase 'Americans'. Results often returned 'American' as well, thus making the survey too large and imprecise.

As the numbers illustrate, the demonym never had the widespread traction in the press before 1763 as it did afterwards. Interestingly, the term was only rarely used to refer to Native Americans. In most cases when newspapers discussed Native Americans they preferred either 'Indians' or the specific name of the nation. The Accessible Archive word index for 'Indians' in the *Pennsylvania Gazette,* reveals there were a total of 1920 hits between 1728 and 1776, 1375 before 1763. To assess the consistency of this demonym usage I looked at the average number of articles each year referring to Indians from 1728 to 1762, which was approximately 40 instances per year, and compared it to the average number of articles between 1763 and 1776, which was 39 per year. Throughout the eighteenth century, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* consistently referred to Native Americans as Indians, seemingly unaffected by changes in relationships with these communities. During moments of heightened political tension, the white press referred to the Native American nations by name. For example, the deteriorating relationship between white settlers, the Iroquois and their clients, the Delaware and Shawnee serves as a local test case for Philadelphia. Using the word index in Accessible Archives reveals the distribution of 'Delawares' and 'Shawanese', the most common demonyms for these two nations, was concentrated mainly in the period between 1755 and 1765, corresponding to the Seven Years War and Pontiac's War. [39] Between 1728 and 1776, there were 92 and 117 instances respectively of each demonym. During the decade of conflict, there were 69 hits out of the total 92 for Delawares and 78 out of the total 117 for the Shawanese. The majority of the time that the white press discussed Native Americans they did not call them Americans. The rise of the demonym was not a simple process of white colonists appropriating the name American from Native Americans.

Even when newspapers did use the demonym, they did so inconsistently before 1763. The trends that do emerge are spotty and at times contradictory. For example, a transcript from a conference with General Johnson during the Seven Years War suggests that Native Americans referred to themselves as American. A report in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* said that after a series of British defeats in 1755 a Native American sachem replied the British 'were Men who had cross'd the Great Water, and unacquainted with

[39] The alternative spelling for Delawares in the word index were: Delawarean, Delawareans, Delawaree, Delawareindian, Delawarer, Delawarians, Delawars, Delawere, Delawers, Delawres. Alternative spelling for Shawanese were: Shawnaese, Shawnanese, Shawnees, Shawneese, Shawni, Shawonese, Shawonees, Shawonwse. These did not produce a substantial number of hits for the period up to 1776.

the Arts of War among the *Americans*'.[40] However, newspapers rarely included such usages of the term. One of the more consistent definitions of the demonym used it to highlight the incivility of the Native Americans. This may have originated in the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to Foreign Lands. Their earliest publications spoke of the need to bring Christianity to the Americans, meaning to convert Native Americans.[41] This sense was reiterated numerous times in the press. A report from London in the Pennsylvanian paper *American Weekly Mercury* approved a college in Bermuda for 'converting the savage *Americans*'.[42] Similarly, an excerpt from the *London Magazine*, reprinted in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, exhorted the iterant preacher George Whitefield to 'Teach the American, how good his claim' was to eternal salvation through Christ.[43] Returning to the William Smith sermon from the previous chapter, the bookseller William Woodhouse advertised it as *A Discourse Concerning the Conversion of the Heathen Americans and the Final Propogation of Christianity and the Sciences to the Ends of the Earth*.[44] These proselytising messages often conveyed a sense that Indians occupied a remote wilderness in need of European intervention, and this idea persisted outside of conversion attempts. In a vignette about the fall of a young woman named Melinda, she was described 'as ignorant of [the lure of the Libertine lifestyle], as the savage American in their native Groves.'[45] Here 'American' referred to a Native American, and the grove referenced the uncultivated colonial wilderness. Practically speaking, white commentators referred to Native Americans by their nation, but when conceptualising the place of Indians in the white imagination commentators used American as a marker of difference and exclusion from Europe.

The connotation of seclusion persisted when the demonym referred to white settlers as well. It conveyed a sense that Britons resident in America occupied a faraway land. The earliest application of the demonym to a white settler appeared in a 1718 edition of the *Boston News-Letter*. A letter, purportedly written in Leipzig and reprinted in Boston, used the demonym to indicate the mismatch between European society and American rusticity. The commentator wrote that 'an American is lately arrived

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[40] *PG* 21 August 1755.
[41] Samuel Sewall, *Phaenomena Quaedam Apocalyptica ad Aspectum Novi Orbis Configurata. Or, Some few Lines towards a Description of the New Heaven as it makes to those who Stand upon the New Earth* (Boston, 1697), Evans 813, p. v. Cotton Mather, *India Christiana; A Discourse, Delivered unto the Commissioners for the Propagation of the Gospel among the American Indians* (Boston, 1721), Evans 2246, p. 23.
[42] *AWM* 30 September 1725.
[43] *PG* 27 December 1739.
[44] *PG* 7 August 1760.
[45] *PG* 20 June 1754.

there from Rome, where he embraced Popery, who says that he is a Physician, and has a Sovereign Remedy for several sorts of Diseases; that he understands 30 Languages, is 109 Years of Age, and that he pretends to know he has 8 Years more to Live.'[46] The outrageous claims and adoption of Catholicism indicated that the American did not belong in such a seat of learning as Leipzig. The demonym was a marker of distance from European refinement. Similarly, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the original *New York Gazette* anecdote about the mail-order bride for the Jamaican merchant called the man an American. The author employed the term for comedic effect to critique the pervasive influence of business into everyday life, but it specifically signalled that Americans had not found the balance between business and polite society. Even without the overtly disparaging connotation, American became a byword for remote. During the *annus horribilis* of the Seven Years War, an address from the City of Dublin to George II praised the King for his 'tender and diffusive regard to [his] people, which will not suffer the rights of the remotest American in the colonies to be invaded with impunity.'[47] This sense of the remote American persisted in 1765. For example, two friends sent a gentle joking message between each other that one's departure from London meant they had left 'paradise for the Wilderness of America'.[48] America served as the diametric opposite to Britain, commenting on the relative civility of both. 'American' was essentially a descriptor of the distance of colonists from British culture.

A third usage of the denonym revolved around the distinction between Europeans and white settlers. This usage is distinct from the connotation of remoteness because it had politically divisive implications. Albert Harkness explored this phenomenon during the War of Austrian Succession. He argued the war was a moment in which colonists reimagined the imperial relationship because the conflict witnessed antipathy between the professional European forces and the ill-equipped forces from America. Harkness discovered in naval papers a trend for differentiating between Europeans and Americans. This distinction fostered the development of what Harkness referred to as Americanism, or a belief in the separation of Americans from Europeans. Harkness' aim was to highlight how powerful military leaders, like Admiral Vernon, understood that any separation of the British Empire into European and American

[46] *Boston News-Letter* 23 June 1718.
[47] *Boston Evening Post* 1 March 1756.
[48] James Beesley to Thomas Fisher, 4 July 1765, Logan-Fisher-Fox Papers, HSP.

interests was a potentially damaging issue.[49] Newspaper reports followed a similar trend often distinguishing between British forces and Americans.[50] Harkness' findings suggest that any awareness of difference between Europeans and Americans potentially challenged the stability of the empire. However, the lack of consistency in demonym usage before 1765 meant that this was not always the case. One notable exception is a 1740 report about the Duke of Marlborough, which instead points toward a greater integration of the Empire. The article described Marlborough as a 'Gentleman who has spent upwards of five and twenty Years in America; and who, by his large Estate and Possessions in Virginia, may be considered as an American'.[51] Marlborough's economic interests, as well as the time he spent in America, made him an American, and yet as a peer in the realm he was also firmly part of the British world.

The Marlborough case indicates that Americanism was also an economic phenomenon in the way that it explicitly distinguished between European and American commercial interests. In fact, the first time that the *Pennsylvania Gazette* used the American demonym in 1737, it related to this economic Americanism and distinguished between those who had interests in America and those whose interests were European. The article itself is copied from the *London Daily Post*, and suggests that European commentators worried that the interests of their American counterparts could potentially harm the metropole. The article fretted over allowing Americans to export their bar-iron to Europe. The commentator complained that allowing this form of manufacturing to develop would lead inexorably toward the colonies producing their own wool and other finished products. This would in turn greatly impoverish Britain. Tellingly the *Pennsylvania Gazette* included a refutation directly after this article. This second letter was from the following day's *London Daily Post*, highlighting the influence printers exercised over the composition of their paper. There was no editorial voice linking the two pieces explicitly and the printer left the burden of reconciling the pieces to the reader, but this juxtaposition was a subtle comment. While insisting that it was impossible to disbar American forges from legally producing bar iron, this second article argued that allowing the exportation of iron from America to Britain would

[49] Albert Harkness, 'Americanism and Jenkin's Ear' *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 37:1 (1950), pp. 61 – 90, (pp. 75 - 6, 82 – 9).
[50] *AWM* 26 June 1740. *AWM* 4 January 1743.
[51] *Boston Weekly Post-Boy* 28 April 1740.

actually help the empire as a whole by reducing the price as well as British dependence on Swedish iron.[52] The dispute is interesting because the first letter used the demonym to prioritise Britain's manufacturing sector over colonial industry, whereas the second eschewed the demonym in order to discuss the empire as a whole. In the first, the demonym distinguished between Europe and America, and in the second, its absence reinforced the indivisibility of the British Empire.

While use of the demonym is rare prior to 1765, the above examples demonstrate that it often acted to divide the British Empire into Americans and Europeans. This mostly passed without comment, but at the height of the Stamp Acts protests Daniel Dulany did recognise the troubling implications of Americanism. In one of the most popular tracts against the Stamp Act, Dulany warned that the demonym indicated a 'Temerity of political Animosity'. The name itself was capable of sustaining political conflict. He worried, just as Vernon had done earlier, that distinguishing between Americans and Britons would dissolve the imperial union.[53] For Dulany, everyone invested in the future of America on either side of the Atlantic could be American. If colonists exclusively thought themselves American this would promote division and discord between all parts of the empire. Dulany was explicit that the demonym indicated a weakening of the imperial system, and in this regard, the declarations on behalf of Americans in the 1770s seem to vindicate his concern. Yet, this association between being American and the act of independence was certainly not a common assumption until much later. In the mid-1760s, Dulany almost stood alone in his explicit comments on the emergence of the demonym. The demonym emerged almost imperceptibly as part of broader changes in news culture. The crucial transformation of American consciousness, in which colonists called themselves Americans, happened without much printed fanfare, but the sudden emergence of the term is significant, and so too is the increased consistency with which it appeared.

Newspapers reprinted letters from throughout the Empire commending the colonists as Americans who resisted tyrannical impositions. The prevalence of these reports signalled a change in the

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[52] *PG* 30 June 1737.

[53] Dulany's pamphlet *Considerations on the Proprietary of Imposing Taxes in the British Colonies* was hugely popular with audiences on both sides of the Atlantic, running through multiple editions in most of the printing centres of the Anglophonic Atlantic world. He was toasted repeatedly in taverns, and was importantly read aloud to crowds of people alongside news of the repeal of Stamp Act. 'Debate in the Commons on the Address of Thanks' in *The Parliamentary History of England*, ed. by William Cobbett, 36 vols (London, 1813), XVI, pp. 95 – 111, (p. 105). *PG* 27 March 1766. *PG* 22 May 1766. The quote can be found in: Daniel Dulany, *Considerations on the Proprietary of Imposing Taxes in the British Colonies* (Annapolis, 1765), Evans 9956, p. 46.

political language of the empire. A letter, initially published in the *London Daily Advertiser*, asserted that 'an American has an equal right with every other British subject not to be taxed without his consent in parliament.'[54] At the peak of Stamp Act resistance the *Pennsylvania Gazette* printed stories with lines such as – 'The spirited Conduct of the North Americans, on this Occasion, has ranked them amongst the foremost Sons of Liberty'; 'The Disturbances of the Americans, it is said, has reached the Mother Country, and were highly approved by the Populace'; and following the resignation of Augustus Johnston, the Rhode Island stamp collector, 'This Gentlemen has discovered a Zeal equal with any other American, against the Impositions from Britain'. Support came from across the British Atlantic world, as 'the People of Ireland highly commend the Opposition the North Americans have given to the Stamp Act.' In tracing the opposition to the Stamp Act newspapers celebrated being American. A letter from the inhabitants of St Kitts noted they 'have followed the true loyal Spirit of the North Americans, by burning and totally destroying the Stamps'.[55] Meanwhile, the people of Jamaica said that they 'greatly approve the Conduct of the North Americans, in opposing the Stamp Law, and were in Hopes of Relief from it by their Means.'[56] A report from Albany praised the local Sons of Liberty who were motivated by 'the general Disquiet that now fills the Minds of the Americans' and who aimed to 'repel from this Land of Liberty the dangerous Invaders'.[57] Finally, another commentator noted the improvements Americans had made during the past century, 'I found not the least Difficulty arising from my Papers not being stamped, as the People here, in general, instead of calling us a d----d Sett of rebellious Rascals, now applaud the noble Spirit, and grand Opposition made by the once senseless and insignificant, but now great, North Americans.'[58] These are a brief selection of the numerous examples praising Americans for their defence of liberty, but their dramatic rise in the period after 1765 indicates the emergence of a more positive and consistent definition of the demonym.

These celebrations reserved the demonym to the colonists challenging Britain, and so implicitly excluded Native Americans, but the multi-racial composition of port towns means that many of the crowds who expressed their displeasure likely involved non-white people; however, one British

[54] *PG* 28 November 1765.
[55] *PG* 26 December 1765.
[56] *PG* 6 March 1766.
[57] *PG* 30 January 1766.
[58] *PG* 12 December 1765. *PG* 12 December 1765. *PG* 5 September 1765. *PG* 6 February 1766. *PG* 6 March 1766.

commentator prompted colonial authors to assert explicitly the whiteness of the American. In the *Public Ledger* a commentator called William Pym wrote that the colonies were a place presided over by 'a jury of molattoes in a court where the descendant of some African Negro may sit as sole or chief justice'. The full article in the London paper *Public Ledger* claimed that Americans were the children of Britain, but if they pursued independence then they 'ought to be treated as aliens in our blood.' Pym submitted numerous pieces to many London papers. He consistently advocated taking a hard line against America for attempting to escape paying its due for the expenses incurred during the Seven Years War. Although the racial and blood line language of Pym's 'jury of mulattoes' piece was not replicated in his other contributions, this insinuation that Americans were fundamentally different by birth from their British counterparts was explicitly and vigorously rejected in colonial newspapers. In the *Newport Mercury* John Hampden, actually Boston lawyer James Otis junior, retorted that 'Ninety nine in a hundred in the more northern colonies are white, and there is good blood flowing in their veins.'[59] Meanwhile, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* revisited Pym's 'jury of molattoes' jibe in an article opposing virtual representation. The author rebuked Pym and said 'Americans must have less Understanding than Negroes and Mulattoes, if they are cajoled by [the prospect of representation in Parliament].'[60] Both the American rejoinders concentrate more on refuting the slights against their colour than Pym's more aggressive assertion that Britons and Americans were fundamentally different. The exchange suggests that almost from its outset the press used the demonym to refer to white colonists. Rarely did commentators address the issue explicitly, but their silence is perhaps telling about how fundamental an assumption the link was between whiteness and Americanness.

The demonym therefore began to be applied consistently to the white colonists after 1766, and may even have distinguished between colonies and metropole, but this did not yet indicate any willingness to dissolve the British Empire. Indeed, tension surrounded the term's association with Patriot activity against Britain. This contest began early in 1765. A commentator, later exposed as Joseph Galloway, called himself Americanus and wrote a piece to defend the ability of Parliament to impose legislation on

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[59] *Newport Mercury* 16 December 1765. *Papers of John Adams*, ed. by Robert J Taylor, Mary-Jo Kline, Gregg Lint, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA; Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1977), I, p. 155. *Lloyd's Evening Post* 28 December 1764. *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* 2 January 1765. *Public Ledger* 13 August 1765. *Public Ledger* 23 August 1765. *Public Ledger* 30 August 1765. *Public Ledger* 7 September 1765. *Public Ledger* 4 October 1765. *PG* 23 January 1766.
[60] *PG* January 30 1766

the colonies because the 'Americans have now acquired a considerable share of property'.[61] Americanus scoffed at the idea that 'our sovereign and his parliament will be intimidated by the irreverent censures, and disloyal [meanness] of the Americans, in their present disunited and defenceless condition.'[62] Instead, Americanus argued the colonies should petition Parliament rather than threaten it with action. Galloway used the term Americanus to reinforce the idea that the colonies, the Americans, were junior partners in the British Empire, whose duty it was to serve the empire according to their means and remonstrate against problems through legal measures. Galloway sustained one of the older connotations of American in which the term signalled the distance from and inferiority to British culture. In response, a 'True American' argued that Americanus was contributing to the oppression imposed by Parliament, the name suggesting that Americanus did not truly represent American interests. He continued that their problem was with the perfidious Parliament and was not a question of loyalty to the King. Moreover, the Americans were not attempting to intimidate Parliament, but to complain loudly against the Stamp Act and to preserve their liberties for posterity.[63] Both pieces sought to act on behalf of all the colonists, but, during the course of 1765 and 1766, the loud complaints of the True American resonated most with the people. Philadelphia, and many other communities, chose to oppose Parliament through extra-legal means. By the following April, Galloway dropped his opposition to popular involvement in Stamp Act protest and sought to appeal to ordinary Philadelphians by, according to his enemies, 'artfully contradicting his former judgement out of an affectation of popularity.'[64] Galloway's political *volte-face* provides a useful bellwether for the trend toward greater popular support for American interests and suggests that True American's position better reflected the sentiments in Philadelphia. Importantly, both men used the American name in order to argue for the best way to protest against Parliament while still demonstrating loyalty to the King.

Charting the development of the demonym reveals that the name was a relatively novel term by the time of the Stamp Act and that it became much more prevalent after the crisis. The press had not generally used the term in reports about political developments with the Native Americans. However,

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[61] *PJ* 29 August 1765.
[62] *PJ* 29 August 1765.
[63] *PJ* 19 September 1765.
[64] Jasper Yeates to Richard Peters, 28 April 1766, Burd-Shippen Family Collection, DLAR.

when they did use the demonym, it built on the incivility and remoteness that characterised the Native Americans. This sense of remoteness also carried over to how newspapers discussed the white colonists, sometimes appearing to mock the Americans for their lack of refinement. Albert Harkness' work on the War of Austrian Succession posited another connotation in which the demonym helped to distinguish between the interests of Americans and Europeans. This was the sense that caused Daniel Dulany to fret about the political divisiveness of the term, but his concerns were largely unaddressed by commentators on either side of the Atlantic. In general, newspapers included the demonym in printed exhortations of the resistance that the colonists put up against Parliament. Irrespective of the actual participants in these protests, the usages of the demonym seemed to imply a close association between whiteness and Americanness. However, one consistent thread emerged by 1766 that often invoked the demonym when discussing the protests. The contest between Americanus and True American both build from the consensual premise that protesting against Parliament was an American activity. By 1766, the demonym had moved from an infrequently used and confused term in political discourse to a relatively uniform descriptor for white colonists engaged in protests against Britain.

'I am a North American':
Establishing the Place of the American Demonym in Popular Crowd Actions during the Stamp Act Crisis

The chapter's aim was to interrogate the origins of the American identity that contributed toward Revolution. The purpose of this final section is to look at the role of ordinary people in changing the definition of the demonym, their understanding of it, and the revolutionary implications of such an idea. Merritt argued that the Americanisation of the news was not the consequence of the Stamp Act itself, but rather arose from improved communication links between the colonies. It was, in effect, the culmination of colonial wars and imperial policies. The significance of the Stamp Act was from then on '[m]ilder provocations began to arouse stronger responses' that reinforced and further defined the strength and

necessity of the American community.[65] Certainly, Merritt's observations indicate that the Stamp Act represented a significant watershed moment in the development of American consciousness, but this is the limit of his methodology. Looking at ordinary people's reception of the demonym can indicate their role in contributing toward the greater American awareness measured by his symbol analysis. In turn, this would help bridge two major interpretations of the Revolution. One perspective, largely from the work of new social history, emphasises that the significant moment in the Revolution was the fractious collapse of the consensus between mechanics and merchants that sustained the Townshend Duties non-importation agreements. From 1770 onward, the power balance shifted away from the Patriot elite and toward the ordinary people because they now doubted the patriotic resolve of their erstwhile allies.[66] In contrast, other interpretations emphasise the Stamp Act and its constitutional implications for the future relationship with Britain.[67] These studies emphasise an intractable conflict between the American and British conception of the Empire. Both interpretations describe significant transformations, the first in the agency of the people and the second in the American consciousness of Empire. The purpose of this section is to ascertain whether ordinary people created the conditions for intractable conflict with the British Empire by encouraging the growth of the demonym through their actions.

The remarkable thing about the Stamp Act is, of course, the popular and violent colonial reaction against it. In the wake of the Seven Years War, Parliament had introduced a number of new regulations designed to improve imperial efficiency in collecting taxes and exercising administrative control over the colonies. These included the Sugar Act, the Revenue Act, and renewed attempts to billet soldiers in New York. There had been expressions of discontent in response to this legislation, but the confirmation of the Stamp Act in 1765 incited public demonstrations in urban centres throughout the continent. There

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[65] Merritt, *Symbols of American Community*, pp. 174 – 182; quote on p. 179.

[66] Olton, *Artisans for Independence*, p. 40. Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution*, pp. 98 – 103. Rosswurm, *Arms, Country, and Class*, pp. 39 – 42.

[67] For Edmund and Helen Morgan, the 1766 Declaratory Act, in which, after the repeal of the Stamp Act, Parliament reserved the right to tax the colonies, was the first step in the terminal lack of trust between the colonies and the metropole. Edmund S. and Helen M. Morgan, *The Stamp Act Crisis: Prologue to Revolution*, pp. 207 – 13, 303 – 4. Similarly, Bernard Bailyn argued that opposition to the Stamp Act crystallised decades of Republican ideology inherited from Britain and set the agenda for the Revolution. Bailyn, *Ideological Origins*, p. 162. Finally, Jack Greene argued the Stamp Act was the first of three constitutional crises that were fatal for the imperial relationship; however, unlike the new social historians, the Townshend Duties did not represent a radicalisation of imperial politics, but actually de-escalated tensions by focusing the question of Parliament's authority strictly on taxation. Jack P. Greene, *Understanding the American Revolution: Issues and Actors* (Charlottesville, VA; University Press of Virginia, 1995), p. 72, 81 – 2, 114 – 6.

were riots in Rhode Island, New Hampshire, both Carolinas, and Maryland.[68] The most extreme cases were in Boston and New York. Boston erupted into violence almost immediately on receiving the news. From 19 to 27 August, there were popular demonstrations denouncing the tax. The Stamp Office was pulled down; Thomas Hutchinson, Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts, had his house and belongings gutted; and effigies of Andrew Oliver, the Stamp Collector, were publically burned.[69] Meanwhile, in New York there was almost civil war as crowds threatened officials acting in defence of the stamped paper. The disruption was so intense that Cadwallader Colden, Lieutenant Governor of New York, had to hide in the Fort, whilst a crowd burned his carriages and an effigy of him. After intimidating Colden, the crowd marched off to smash the house and burn the belongings of Major Thomas James, commander of the fort. The agitation continued until 5 November, Pope's Day, when finally Colden surrendered the stamped paper to the mayor.[70] Throughout the port cities in America, ordinary people expressed their displeasure and reports of their actions caused an increase in press attention on American affairs.

Philadelphian crowds were never as riotous as these other cities, though there was still a tense political climate in the city. Disruptions in the city began on 30 May 1765 when the press named John Hughes as Pennsylvania's Stamp Collector.[71] It is unknown how many people knew about Hughes's appointment before then, but it almost immediately became public knowledge. Widespread opposition to the Stamp Act came as no surprise. Benjamin Franklin, who had secured the commission for Hughes, warned him his post would make him unpopular with the people. Franklin advised Hughes to continue to act with 'Coolness and Steadiness […] whatever may be the Madness of the Populace or their blind Leaders'.[72] In early September, the mounting discontent started to scare Hughes. He wrote to Franklin that 'the Spirit or Flame of Rebellion is got to a high Pitch amongst the North Americans; and it seems to me that a Sort of Frenzy or Madness has got such hold of the People of all Ranks, that I fancy some

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[68] Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, pp. 50 – 9.
[69] *Boston Gazette* 19 August 1765. Thomas Hutchinson, *The History of the Province of Massachusetts Bay* (London, 1828), pp. 120–2. Dirk Hoerder, *Crowd Action in Revolutionary Massachusetts, 1765 – 1780* (New York, NY: Academic Press, 1977), pp. 107–13.
[70] *New-York Mercury* 7 November 1765. Paul A. Gilje, *The Road to Mobocracy: Popular Disorder in New York City, 1763–1834* (Chapel Hill, NC; University of North Carolina Press, 1987), pp. 45–8. Cadwallader Colden, *The Conduct of Cadwallader Colden* (New York, 1767), pp. 41–56.
[71] *PG* 30 May 1765. *PG* 22 August 1765.
[72] Benjamin Franklin to John Hughes, 9 August 1765, *PBF*, XII, pp. 234 – 5.

Lives will be lost before this Fire is put out.'[73] Importantly, Hughes expressed these fears less than a week after the *Pennsylvania Gazette* and the *Pennsylvania Journal*, on the same day, 29 August 1765, reported the violence in Boston. In both cases, the article is a verbatim extract of a letter from the city commenting on the 'surprize and joy of the public' at the destruction of the Stamp Office and an attack on the house of Andrew Oliver, the Massachusetts Stamp Collector.[74] A few days later, Hughes received warnings that a mass demonstration intended to pull down his house too, though the crowd never did so.[75] Newspapers in this instance served to reinforce the menace of the crowd. The Boston reports in both *Pennsylvania Gazette* and the *Pennsylvania Journal* mirrored real threats issued against Hughes. The similarity between the targets and the threat meant Philadelphians acted in the same way as Americans in the other colonies.

The next crisis came on 16 September following ebullient celebrations of the collapse of Prime Minister George Grenville's ministry. The American press often blamed Grenville for masterminding the Stamp Act. In fact, in the news report about the destruction of Andrew Oliver's house, the Massachusetts crowd burned an effigy of Grenville alongside Oliver and the devil.[76] Hughes feared the celebratory bonfires and carousing would lead to his destruction. The fear was sufficiently palpable that this prompted the first gathering of the White Oaks. By midday, several hundred ship's carpenters and their allies patrolled between the houses of Hughes and Franklin and the place crowds had congregated to celebrate the fall of the ministry, Bradford's Old London Coffee House. The White Oak demonstration of strength prevented violence and the crowd eventually dispersed without incident.[77] Although in mid-September, Philadelphia looked poised to follow the same destructive path as other American cities, the threatened violence never manifested itself. This lack of violence is one of the reasons that Philadelphia makes such a strong case for the study of the inarticulate. By preventing destructive activity, the White Oaks did not quell the outrage against the Stamp Act, but they did force the discontented to express their displeasure in other ways, many of which have left a textual footprint that can be analysed. The White Oaks, therefore, provide an insight into the nature of the crowd.

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[73] John Hughes to Benjamin Franklin, 8 September 1765, *PBF*, XII, pp. 263 – 7.
[74] *PG* 29 August 1765. *PJ* 29 August 1765.
[75] John Hughes to Benjamin Franklin, 12 September 1765, *PBF*, XII, pp. 263 – 7.
[76] *PG* 29 August 1765. *PJ* 29 August 1765.
[77] John Hughes to Benjamin Franklin, 16 – 17 September 1765, *PBF*, XII, pp. 263 – 7.

There have been a number of different interpretations of the White Oaks, but most have concentrated on an affinity between the ship carpenters and the artisan community more generally. The classic account is James Hutson who argues the White Oaks reflect an aspirational desire for material wealth among the ordinary people of Philadelphia. The White Oaks allied with Franklin and Hughes because both men were former artisans who had elevated themselves through the mechanical arts, Franklin as a printer and Hughes as a baker. Critically for Hutson, this affinity with the socially mobile overrode the radical association that workers on the docks often felt for each other. Hutson suggests that, rather than identifying with the radical sailors, the White Oaks wanted to support the quiet elevation of their brother mechanics. Hutson's aim was to assert that American society was not a seething cauldron of discontent, but that there were people getting on with business and the White Oaks are the only extant example.[78] Jesse Lemisch, one of the seminal historians of sailors and radicalism, rejected many of Hutson's claims, especially the proposition that the White Oaks provided evidence of prevailing conservative opinion. Lemisch concluded that the White Oaks only served to reinforce the idea that historical inarticulateness is an acute problem for historians of the lower orders that requires further investigation.[79] In effect, Lemisch aimed to avoid an explanation of their activity. Simon Newman approaches the White Oaks in a slightly different way. He argued, like Hutson, that the White Oaks personally allied themselves with Benjamin Franklin, but they did so because the elder statesmen celebrated and elevated artisans.[80] Newman therefore points towards a class identity between leather-apron men.

While not entirely rejecting that notion, the contention here is that the White Oaks are the product of Philadelphia's interpretative community, the result of a distinctive street culture that eschewed violence. This perspective certainly reflects how the city's political leaders wanted to portray the men's actions. Joseph Galloway, doyen of the Pennsylvania Assembly, gloated 'we can muster ten [White Oaks]

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[78] James Hutson, 'An Investigation into the Inarticulate: Philadelphia's White Oaks', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 28:1 (1971), 3 – 25, (pp. 8, 24). James Hutson, 'The White Oaks, Jack Tar, and the Concept of the "Inarticulate"', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 29:1 (1972), 136 – 42, (p. 138).
[79] Lemisch, 'The White Oaks, Jack Tar, and the Concept of the "Inarticulate"', pp. 127 – 34.
[80] Simon P. Newman, 'Benjamin Franklin and the Leather-apron men: The Politics of Class in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia', *Journal of American Studies*, 43:2 (2009), 161 – 175, (pp. 170 – 2).

to their one [rioter].'[81] Galloway was essentially claiming that Philadelphia would not degenerate into destructive behaviour. Meanwhile, Benjamin Chew, leader of the Provincial Council and inveterate political enemy to Galloway, smugly reported to the Penn family that Pennsylvania had experienced no disturbances and implied that, although the Franklin-allied White Oaks had stopped the violence, it was at his urging that they had appeared on the streets in the first place.[82] Colonies had distinctive street cultures that responded to events in particular ways. Luckily, the White Oaks had the traditional Philadelphian distaste for violence. Their presence likely facilitated the sorts of crowd actions and texts that provide an insight into the relationship between the American demonym and protest against Parliament.

The threats against Hughes reignited in early October with news that the stamped paper would soon arrive in the city.[83] What happened next in Philadelphia is an important departure from the other Stamp Act protests. Whereas in Boston and New York, the resignation of the Stamp Collector followed rioting and threats, in Philadelphia, Hughes, supported by the White Oaks, negotiated his position through both massive crowd gatherings and newspapers. Once the stamps reached Philadelphia on 5 October, a crowd of several thousand assembled outside the State House to discuss their next step. The organisers called the meeting by sending drummers through the streets.[84] There is little record of the discussion itself, but though Hughes was ill and bedridden, he still understood the bellicose tone of the meeting. [85] The crowd at the State House decided that Hughes should resign. The assembly appointed a committee, who attended him and demanded an answer from him in the name of the crowd still waiting at the State House.[86] Significantly, Hughes' response was not to resign. Instead, he promised that he would not carry the Stamp Act into execution unless every other province did the same. Back at the State House, when the crowd heard about Hughes's refusal to comply fully with their demands they were outraged. They again threatened his property and person. To forgo violent reprisal a committee returned to Hughes and said he had until Monday 7 October to respond to their request in writing, which he duly did. He still refused full acquiesce to the crowd's demands because he reasserted he would not put his

[81] Joseph Galloway to William Franklin, 14 November 1765, *PBF*, XII, pp. 372 – 4.
[82] Benjamin Chew to Thomas Penn, 17 December 1765, Chew Family Papers (Collection 2050), HSP.
[83] *PJ* 3 October 1765.
[84] John Hughes to John Penn, 8 October 1765, Pennsylvania Stamp Act and Non-Importations, APS.
[85] John Hughes to John Penn, 8 October 1765, Pennsylvania Stamp Act and Non-Importations, APS.
[86] Jasper Yeates to Samuel Yeates, 5 October 1765, Burd-Shippen Family Collection, DLAR.

commission into action until every other colony did so. This published promise, reprinted verbatim in both the *Pennsylvania Gazette* and the *Pennsylvania Journal*, satisfied the crowd for the next month or so, but there were growing concerns that they had not secured a resignation from him.[87] In early November, Charles Thomson called another meeting outside the State House possibly to push for more direct action against Hughes, but White Oak members booed every suggestion made to the crowd so that the meeting had no mandate to act.[88]. The White Oaks had succeeded on a second occasion to stall violent action. In response, Hughes issued another declaration that was still not a resignation, but emphatically assured the public that he would not act as the Stamp Collector, even if it became general in the other provinces 'until it shall appear to be the Desire of the People generally, by their calling upon [him] publickly to execute the said Act.'[89] This sort of negotiation is important context for understanding Philadelphia's transition to non-importation. The crowd was familiar with meeting to discuss events, expressing their discontent non-violently, and resolving to find solutions.

The problem remains in understanding the relationship of these crowd actions with Americannesss. John Dickinson's writings contain valuable clues about the demonym's potential meaning beyond those contained in newspapers. Dickinson was prominently involved in the Stamp Act opposition serving as Pennsylvania's delegate to the New York Stamp Act Congress. He twice used the demonym to inspire his audience to protest against Parliament: Firstly, in a broadside distributed anonymously at one of the large gatherings, and secondly, in a more erudite refutation of a perceived insult to America from Barbados. The first, more so than the second, exists because Philadelphians engaged more in public debate than riotous street action, but in both cases the pieces are suggestive of a link between the increasing press attention to the American demonym and the popular discontent against the Stamp Act.

The first was a two-sided handbill named after its opening line *Friends and Countrymen the Time is Now Come*. Two hundred copies of the handbill were printed and distributed throughout the streets of Philadelphia, at Dickinson's own expense. Paul Leicester Ford, the nineteenth-century editor of his works, attributes the piece to him because in Dickinson's papers there was a bill from Franklin and Hall

[87] *PJ* 10 October 1765.
[88] Hutson, 'An Investigation into the Inarticulate', pp. 19 – 20.
[89] *PG* 21 November 1765.

on 10 December of £3/5/- for two hundred copies of a handbill. Ford argues this is the piece in question. Furthermore, Ford contends that the appearance of the text of the broadside in the *New York Gazette* in the 5 December issue meant it was initially published in Philadelphia sometime in November.[90] The piece makes reference to the 'unexampled Unanimity' that colonies undertook in forcing the resignation of Stamp Collectors, which suggests the piece was written and distributed after Charles Thomson's attempt to take further action against Hughes in early November. In any case, the piece urged its audience to continue their business as usual regardless of the Stamp Act. Dickinson warned if they used the stamped paper it would be a 'Demonstration that the Spirit of *Americans*, after a great Clamour and Bluster, is a *most submissive servile spirit.*'[91] The piece referred to the unity of the continent and the unassailable strength arising from concerted action. Its existence is suggestive of the type of message that ordinary people heard about the Stamp Act. Ultimately, the intellectual substance of the riotous gathering in New York that threatened Cadawallader Colden has been lost to posterity. Their actions make clear that they were deeply opposed and willing to risk their lives to stop the stamped paper, but it is less clear that they did so in the name of being American. However, Dickinson's piece, which he freely distributed to people in the city, is suggestive of a link between Stamp Act protests, colonial unity, and the American demonym. In this instance, Dickinson deliberately used the demonym to rally colonists to further protest against Parliament.

What makes Dickinson's use of the demonym in this pamphlet even more compelling is his second deployment of it following a dispute with Barbados. He clearly uses his identification with America as a way of distancing himself from that island's actions. Barbados had come under repeated censure from Patriots for accepting the use of stamps and there was still a pervading rumour that the island's ports were seizing vessels that arrived without stamped paper, despite numerous reports rejecting the claim.[92] In a *Pennsylvania Journal* article, Barbados had allegedly given into demands and used stamped paper in legal and business proceedings. Tellingly, the commentator noted that the island had never 'failed

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[90] Paul Leicester Ford, *The Writings of John Dickinson* (Philadelphia, PA; Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1895), pp. 197 – 205. Marginalia on the LCP copy of the piece notes that it was given away freely. John Dickinson, *Friends and Countrymen the Critical Time is Now Come* (Philadelphia, 1765), LCP.

[91] Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism* pp. 208 – 10. John Dickinson, *Friends and Countrymen the Critical Time is Now Come* (Philadelphia, 1765), Evans 41539.

[92] *PG* 2 January 1766. *PG* 16 January 1766. *PG* 13 February 1766. *PG* 20 February 1766. *PG* 24 April 1766. *PG* 1 May 1766. *PC* 8 August 1766. *PG* 15 August 1766.

to *plunder* the poor *North-Americans* of that *property* they had justly and hardly earned by the sweat of their brows, whilst these very *sons of rapine* had been *wallowing* in *ease and plenty*.'[93] The suspicion was Barbadians had enriched themselves at the expense of their continental neighbours. Critically, the commentator makes the distinction between the 'poor *North-Americans*' and the 'very *sons of rapine*', in effect excluding the Barbadians from the American community. In December 1765, a crowd gathered outside of Bradford's Old London Coffee House to burn a stamped newspaper brought from Barbados. A large crowd accompanied the public destruction of the paper and cheered its destruction.[94] Barbados was already a target of popular disdain before Dickinson's pamphlet.

These suspicions peaked in April 1766. A letter to London from Bridgetown in Barbados, printed in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, called the American Stamp Act protest 'rebellious opposition' to Parliament. The letter in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* was an early draft, and the actual letter sent to London referred to 'present opposition'.[95] Importantly, no American newspaper retracted this mistake and so the perception likely persisted until the repeal of the Stamp Act, perpetuating the negative assumptions Philadelphians had about the island. In the pamphlet, Dickinson was explicit that the aim of his reply to this letter was not to debate the merits of the right to resist the Stamp Act, which had been proved by better authors, but to defend the manner of American resistance. Dickinson reproduced the body of the Barbadian letter to remind audiences of the topic under discussion, namely that the Committee of Correspondence for the island wrote to their London agent to distance themselves from the continental opposition to the Stamp Act. The betrayal was that the island's merchants asked Parliament to consider them separately from their neighbours, thereby fatally undermining the principle of continental unity. Dickinson opened his rebuttal with the phrase 'I am a *North-American*' using italics, which by his own admission in the preface was to draw attention to the importance of the word.[96] This was an explicit identification with being American. Unlike other declarations of Americanness that referred to Americans as third parties, Dickinson called himself an American and defended himself and his fellow Americans against damaging insinuations.

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[93] *PJ* 12 December 1765.
[94] *PG* 12 December 1765.
[95] A Native of Barbados, *Candid Observations on Two Pamphlets* (Bridgetown, 1766), LCP, p. 7.
[96] John Dickinson, *Address to the Committee of Correspondence in Barbados* (Philadelphia, 1766), LCP, p. 1.

An interesting point of consensus emerges too when looking at the response to Dickinson's pamphlets from Barbados. Each pamphlet used the demonym in such a way as to suggest they stood apart from it, while they also associated the Americans with the popular discontent that accompanied the protests, in effect confirming the link between popular protest and Americanness. In fact, looking back at the declarations of support for the continent, many of the Caribbean islands had made the same association, just usually in a more positive way. Understanding the ultimate separation of American colonies into the mainland and the Caribbean islands falls beyond the scope of this thesis, but a suggestive letter from John Batho may help explain why Caribbean communities felt unable to join their neighbours in protesting Parliament. Batho wrote to his father in Philadelphia that Antigua would have burned the stamped paper, but the people of the island felt intimidated by the regiment of soldiers stationed there.[97] Perhaps for small Caribbean communities the threat of British forces or slave uprisings was an insurmountable barrier to these expressions of Americanness. By contrast, even as Philadelphia commemorated both the King's Birthday and the repeal of the Stamp Act, there were hints Philadelphians still sought to celebrate their Americanness. At the height of the festivities, a company of celebrants offered a series of toasts that were then recorded in the newspaper. The first were to the King and the men in the Commons who had fought for the repeal and then the second round went to the Governor of Pennsylvania and the Assembly. Critically, in the report a footnote explained 'The Reason of placing the Healths in this Order was, that we might first toast the Friends to America in England, then cross the Atlantick, to those in America.'[98] The note indicated that the toasts were ordered geographically and not by preference. In effect, it claimed that the British opponents of the Stamp Act, though the first to be toasted, did not have priority over the Americans. Individually the distinctions between Americans and Britons may have been subtle or oblique, but cumulatively they represent the beginning of a fundamental shift in the way that Americans imagined themselves in the British Empire.

In conclusion, newspapers recorded a dramatic increase in press attention to American affairs and this corresponded to a more consistent use of the demonym to refer to white colonists. The increased and consistent use of the term American is significant because the demonym in itself had

[97] John Batho to his Father, 10 November 1765, John Batho Letterbook, 1765 – 1768, HSP.
[98] *PG* 12 June 1766.

troubling implications, dividing the Empire into two potentially competing sets of interests, namely the American and the British. However, during the Stamp Act crisis it began to assume overwhelmingly positive connotations as Americans came to see themselves as staunch defenders of liberty. Ordinary Philadelphians actively engaged with this process, but the majority of these people were not able to leave their reasons for participating to posterity. The actions of the White Oaks may have provided an opportunity for an insight into how ordinary people participated in the news culture of Philadelphia. In one of a number of menacing, but ultimately non-violent, gatherings John Dickinson used the demonym as a rallying call against the Stamp Act. This partially preserves the language used at popular protests and corroborates the usage that appeared in the press. The advantage of Dickinson is that he then used the demonym a second time in a more erudite way in order to defend the actions of Americans in their protest against Parliament. Dickinson indicates a close association between Americanness and protest against Parliament. During the Stamp Act period, ordinary people contributed to the transformation of American consciousness through their protests against Parliament. News culture is the extant remnant of this contribution because being a member of the inarticulate audience still entailed active involvement that affected the composition of a serial like the newspaper. In 1765 and 1766, the demonym had little of the revolutionary significance it would eventually appropriate, but the protests of ordinary people began the association between an American consciousness and the Patriot political agenda.

3) 'Every Man is a Part of the Public': The Relationship between Ordinary People and Revolutionary Literature during the Townshend Duties Crisis, 1767 – 1770

The previous two chapters looked at the emergence of America as a meaningful concept for ordinary people. This chapter looks at the radicalisation of the Revolution, the shift of power away from the Patriot elite towards the population at large. This shift would eventually lead to the State Constitution of 1776 that enshrined in its tenets a fundamental alteration in the relationship between governing and governed. The aim is to understand the role of revolutionary literature in transforming the agency of ordinary people, specifically the effect engaging with the ideas within texts had on their evolving American consciousness. To study this phenomenon, the chapter concentrates on the assemblies that gathered in order to campaign for the continuation of the non-importation agreements in 1770. These meetings were organised through the distribution of small cards that along with a few surviving handbills and newspaper commentaries can provide an insight into the prevailing ideas among the inarticulate audiences as they debated the future of non-importation. Ephemera are so important because they were a physical medium of intellectual exchange in which inarticulate people participated directly. Encountering these texts potentially affected the interpretation of ordinary people, forming a bridge between the polemics of the press and the crowd actions in the streets. Significantly, the calls that artisans and mechanics made in favour of continuing non-importation reflect ideas in John Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*. Therefore, charting the reception of *Letters* by ordinary Philadelphians potentially reveals how inarticulate audiences adopted ideas from revolutionary literature into their intellectual life. Interrogating the place of ephemera in intellectual exchange uncovers the way readers received texts and helps explain the transformations in the agency of ordinary people.

Revolutionary ephemera are a difficult genre to explore. They rarely provide information about the printer or the author and therefore, uncovering information about their audience is difficult; however,

the collection at the Library Company of Philadelphia has many examples that include marginalia detailing the mode through which texts got into the hands of audiences. Physically encountering a text could have political significance for readers, either through the act of distribution that could be confrontational or surreptitious or as another vehicle to bring incendiary language into crowd actions. The small meeting cards that called together the 1770 meetings also fit into these generic expectations. They preserve some of the urgency and language of these meetings that have been lost to posterity. Significantly, the meeting cards, and a few other pieces of ephemera, demonstrate that texts circulated through large crowds during important moments in revolutionary history. Individual reception could differ wildly, but the presence of an audience vivified the ideas on the cards, making them seem tangible and general. The task is linking together these pieces with revolutionary literature more broadly. Many of the pieces referenced key tenets from Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*; therefore, examining the ideas within the pamphlet reveals it urged broad participation from Americans by being vigilant and industrious, two characteristics that the crowd actions seemed to exemplify. Moreover, its reception in America shows commentators often used *Letters* to justify protests against Parliament, in effect distilling Dickinson's ideas into simple imitable elements. In Philadelphia, these elements had popular appeal because they resonated with the city's inherited Quaker political culture of peaceable dissent and civil disobedience. Dickinson's popularity upset Joseph Galloway and so he set out to disparage Dickinson, at one point successfully using the White Oaks to keep Dickinson out of the Assembly with a popular political campaign against him that challenged for leadership of the protest movement. Ultimately, the discussion over *Letters* prompted a debate about the relationship with Parliament. More than traditional plebeian customs inherited from Britain or customary rights developed in America, the dissolution of the Townshend Duties demonstrates revolutionary literature stimulated the actions of Philadelphians.

This relationship between literature and customary rights is important because it reveals the transformation in the agency of ordinary people and their willingness to direct revolutionary events. Barbara Clark Smith's *The Freedoms We Lost* examines the liberties colonists used to push forward the Revolution. At the heart of the analysis is the idea of the common ground, the institutions and methods through which ordinary people exercised their influence over governance. The common ground drew its power from the knowledge shared by the community, local practices and customary rights that emerged

out of living together. Ordinary people used this common knowledge to consent to or dissent from the execution of the law. Crucially, ordinary people exercised this power collectively, rather than individually, and in this way created a popular presence that forced governors to acquiesce to the demands of ordinary people. These liberties empowered ordinary people to participate in the Revolution. In contrast, Smith argues that revolutionary literature reflected the ideas of 'leading Patriots'. For Smith, examining these texts leaves an incomplete picture, and misses the shared common knowledge that ordinary people brought to their alliance with the elite.[1] Smith's argument rests on the idea that people knew their rights intimately. Adaptation happened as people used the common ground, and especially the idea that the law needed to work on common knowledge, to push back against troublesome innovations. However, I argue Smith's analysis means ordinary people arrive at their ideas too organically. They coordinate their actions to redress injustices according to established patterns, but Smith does not explain how old ways adapted to new problems. Revolutionary ephemera demonstrate that when ordinary people gathered to discuss their actions, texts were present. Encountering texts affected the interpretation of the ideas within the page and the world around it. Studying this transformation reveals the agency of ordinary people, the way they engaged with revolutionary literature and adapted their customary rights in response to debates over American identity. This American consciousness, formed by both their traditional liberties and new revolutionary ideas, then empowered them to challenge Britain.

Looking at the contributions of ordinary people entails understanding their role in the social and intellectual history of the American Revolution. Many recent works on this topic have focussed on the importance of negotiation between ordinary people and revolutionary leaders. Terry Bouton's *Taming Democracy* emphasises the political power ordinary people gained by 1776 because of their broad support of the Pennsylvania elite.[2] However, Bouton's primary focus is not ordinary people *per se*. Instead he seeks to re-evaluate the founding fathers in the light of their relationship with the non-elite. Similarly, Benjamin Irvin argues that during the war for independence there was a dialogue between the people of Philadelphia and the delegates within Congress that profoundly shaped the early Republic. The two

[1] Barbara Clark Smith, *The Freedoms We Lost*, pp. 2, 13 – 8, 43 – 4, 109 – 10.
[2] Bouton, *Taming Democracy,* pp. 57 – 8.

groups defined authority in the new state as they debated the interpretation of ceremonial culture.[3] However, for Irvin the focus is not the crowds outside Congress, but rather their specific role in legitimating revolutionary authority. Finally, Smith's *The Freedoms We Lost* argues that elites and ordinary people debated the Revolution from a common ground. Elites and ordinary people alike found a common cause in the non-importation association, and it is from this perspective that each side negotiated their participation in the Revolution.[4] In slightly different ways, then, all three historians argue that ordinary people developed their ideas of Revolution by entering into a dialogue with the elite. However, as Patrick Spero suggests this form of negotiation often reduces the complexity of elite groups and ordinary people. Instead Spero insists, by exploring internal tensions and the precise moments of cooperation between each group, there is space to complicate further the place of the people.[5] Looking at extant pieces of ephemera suggests there was a more vibrant debate surrounding the radicalisation of the Revolution than a simple negotiation between elites and ordinary people.

'You are Come here this Day':
Understanding the Effect of Encounters between Readers and Revolutionary Ephemera

Ephemera is a varied genre of print, but its unifying characteristic is that it was, relative to other genres, inexpensive to produce and cheap, if not free, to consume. By its very nature, ephemera reacted to immediate events in order to achieve limited goals. As such, ephemera can provide a valuable window into underlying political tensions. Smith emphasises the importance of a 'popular presence', ordinary people gathering together to demonstrate that they had stake in governing. [6] However, she misses the common texts that filled those spaces and assemblies. Smith, especially, overlooks the practicalities of calling together those assemblies. In the dissolution of the Townshend Duties agreements, the assemblies to protect the non-importation associations were called together by small meeting cards. These small

[3] Irvin, *Clothed in the Robes of Sovereignty,* pp. 13 – 8.
[4] Barbara Clark Smith, *The Freedoms We Lost*, pp. 45 – 6, 109 – 113.
[5] Patrick Spero, 'A Negotiated Revolution', *Reviews in American History,* 41:1 (2013), 31 – 8, (pp. 37 – 8).
[6] Barbara Clark Smith, *The Freedoms We Lost*, pp. 91, 84 – 5,

innocuous pieces of paper, usually one third of a half sheet, have very little information about their authors, their printers, or even their audience, but they provide a snapshot of the moment before a large public gathering. They allude to the expectations that crowds had as they gathered to discuss the Townshend Duties. Moreover, the cards had a distinct political function, encouraging broad participation or filtering unwanted elements. These texts also often declared the intention behind a gathering. These pieces provide an insight into the intellectual engagement of crowds. Examining ephemera as a genre helps to explain how far the encounters between a reader and text mattered, and how different ways of encountering a text affected the interpretation of major events.

This study is based primarily on surviving copies of ephemera in the Library Company of Philadelphia, one of the biggest collections of colonial Pennsylvania material. As is the case with all ephemera, the few pieces that survive probably represent only a tiny part of the total number produced. Moreover, the reasons for their survival are often obscure. The material itself is thoroughly catalogued and much of it is grouped together according to size and date across a number of collections, but very little is known about the accession of these texts. The collection is composed mostly of material from Pennsylvania and New York and much of it probably comes from the collections of Pierre Eugène du Simitière, one of the most prolific collectors of revolutionary ephemera and one of the few revolutionaries to recognise its value to posterity. Du Simitière lived in New York from 1769 to 1774 and then moved to Philadelphia where he remained until his death in 1784. Determining whether a piece belonged to du Simitière's ephemera collection could indicate that he recognised its significance. Unfortunately, when the LCP acquired his papers, they preserved his manuscript materials but dispersed his books and printed material through the rest of their collections.[7] In effect, this means that there is little way of knowing whether du Simitière kept a surviving piece because he thought it was important or whether it owes its existence to luck. Ultimately, although the ephemera collection in the LCP is one of the largest, there is no assumption that the collection is exhaustive or even that the pieces within it are

[7] Paul Ginsburge Sifton, 'Pierre Eugene du Simitière (1737 – 1784): Collector in Revolutionary America' (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1960), p. 8. Library Company of Philadelphia, *Pierre Eugène du Simitière Collection Finding Aid* <http://hdl.library.upenn.edu/1017/d/pacscl/LCP_LCPDuSimitiere> [accessed 14 May 2015].

inherently significant. The ephemera are simply the best clues available about the vibrant public debate in which texts were often freely distributed.

Another problem with ephemera is that there is little information about its authors or its printers. This means that delineating a picture about its communications circuit becomes very difficult. However, the benefit of the LCP collection is that the ephemera itself often provides clues for why it survives for posterity. Many of the pieces have marginalia that may indicate its method of dissemination, or provide an indication about the way that the reader physically encountered the text. Analysing these encounters can offer some clues about the nature of the relationship between audience and text. Building up a picture of the different ways that audiences encountered ephemera illustrates some of the ways in which encountering a text affected interpretation. That said, given the paucity of material, rather than focussing narrowly on the Philadelphia press in this instance, I will also examine evidence from New York in order to create a fuller picture of ephemera. This is especially important because the same sort of material present in Philadelphia also accompanied the dissolution of the Townshend Duties agreements in New York.[8] In brief, the aim is to understand reader's expectations of the genre in order to assess the significance the 1770 cards had in shaping the assemblies of ordinary people.

One of the more common manuscript notes were dates. These largely appear without comment, but likely indicate the date of their distribution. This could suggest that the collector, anticipating these might have significance in the future, may have wished to recover the chronological order of events, marking the ephemera so the collector could chart the development of a specific set of texts, noting which responded to which.[9] Similarly, these dates could indicate that the collector was making notes for his own reflection, as in the case of Dorr and Du Simitière's newspaper indices. The few instances in which the owner annotated the ephemera could indicate that they wanted to contextualise these pieces as part of a broader public debate. As an example of this, in 1769 a pseudonymous J. W. Squinter published

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[8] These include: *Advertisement, whereas a small number of persons* (New York, 1770), Evans 11785. *New York, May 17 1770* (New York, 1770), Evans 11780. *New York, June 12 1770* (New York, 1770), Evans 11783. *New York, June 12 1770* (New York, 1770), Evans 11784. *New York May 31st 1770* (New York, 1770), Evans 11782.

[9] Examples include; *To the Freeholders and Other Electors of Assembly-Men* (Philadelphia, 1765), Evans 10184. *The White Oaks Anthum* (Philadelphia, 1765), Evans 10211. *Quakers Grace Prayer and Thanksgiving* (Philadelphia, 1765), LCP. *The Life and Adventures of a Certain Quaker Presbyterian Indian Colonel* (Philadelphia, 1765), LCP. John Dickinson, *A Copy of a Letter from a Gentleman in Virginia* (Philadelphia, 1768), LCP.

an election squib in New York. At the bottom of the page, the collector noted that the *New York Gazette* printed an answer to the broadside. Interestingly, in the Readex database this small note becomes unreadable in the filmed version and is another reason that returning to these material texts can reveal important clues about the audience.[10] The collector contextualised the election squib with reference to other printed works. Potentially, these notes suggest that the pieces were entrenched in broader debates across a variety of print genres. Likewise, in a 1773 piece, marginalia noted that a broadside addressing the citizens of Philadelphia referenced the unequal paving controversy in the city. As Charles Olton argued, the question of paving was a longstanding issue between the artisans and the elite—one that contributed to the ongoing distrust between the two groups.[11] As these few examples suggest, in at least some cases, popular ephemera commented on critical public disputes and collectors made the effort to preserve and annotate these pieces of paper. Taken together these suggestive marginalia indicate the political potential of ephemera.

Before being carried away with the significance of these pieces, it is important to note that the reason so few survived may have been that they actually meant little to their readers. Some people may have revered the ephemera, while others treated them more like pieces of scrap paper, their survival being more about luck than intention. For example, the 1775 *Directions for Manouvres*, a set of instructions for the parade of the city's militias, had on its verso a series of sums where the owner had tried to calculate something now lost to posterity.[12] As the title suggests, the purpose of the piece was to organise armed resistance against Britain, but at some point, it merely became a piece of notepaper. Similarly, there are two pieces of the same 1765 broadside entitled *To the Electorate and Freeholders* in the collection. On the first, a commentator annotated the piece. The marginalia noted James Biddle had read the text at the Mason's Lodge accompanied by cheers. Friends of Biddle then published the broadside for a more general audience, and presumably, given its anti-Stamp Act message, gave it away for free.[13] Another copy of the same broadside was not as carefully preserved and recorded. A notation on its reverse indicates its collector used the broadside at some point to hold together various land deeds belonging to Augustine

[10] J. W. Squinter, *The Mode of Elections Considered* (New York, 1769), LCP.
[11] *To the Freemen, Citizens of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1773), LCP.
[12] *Directions for the Manouevres* (Philadelphia, 1775), LCP.
[13] *To the Electorate and Freeholders* (Philadelphia, 1765), LCP.

Biddle, James' daughter.[14] In the first instance, the anonymous collector carefully recorded the provenance and reception of the text, implying the text had significance for the protest against the Stamp Act. Meanwhile, the second broadside likely owes its existence to its utility in keeping important legal documents together. This discrepancy between reverence and carelessness has often complicated the place of ephemera in studying the past.

Whatever the reason for its survival, ephemera can still provide important clues about the intellectual environment of Philadelphia, especially the genre's intimate connection to the public spaces of the city. Among the annotated pieces in the LCP, collectors noted they found ephemera stuck up on walls or handed about in the streets.[15] The famous New York placard of Vox Populi, which threatened the body and property of anyone who used stamped paper, was pasted up throughout the streets of the city, contributing to the atmosphere of popular discontent that culminated in the destruction of the Governor's home.[16] For Smith, the negotiation between elites and ordinary people happened on common ground, both constitutionally and spatially, but she overlooks the fact that texts, like the Vox Populi placard, physically existed on that same terrain.[17] Recovering these printed objects potentially alters the intellectual climate that prevailed in these encounters between elites and ordinary people. Even in that hub of the traditional Habermasian public sphere, the coffee house, the distributors of notices pasted ephemera for public perusal, but it often carried a much more menacing message than any rational critique of the state.[18] For example, in New York a notice from an anonymous group called the Mohocks 'was stuck upon the wall of the Coffee House' threatening merchants in breach of the non-importation agreements.[19] Its public nature reinforced the threat's sincerity and menace. Similarly, in Philadelphia, when the public ordered the merchants James and Drinker not to accept the consignment of tea sent to them from the East India Company, they were told to confirm their compliance with a few lines at the coffee house (presumably Bradford's Old London Coffee House).[20] These public notices called people, even merchants, to account for their decisions. They served as reminders to their audience of the

[14] *To the Freeholders and Electorate* (Philadelphia, 1765), LCP.
[15] *Liberty, Property, and No Stamps* (Philadelphia, 1765), Evans 10041.
[16] Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, p. 54.
[17] Barbara Clark Smith, *The Freedoms We Lost*, pp. 45 – 6.
[18] Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, pp. 58 – 9.
[19] Du Simitière Box 9 396 F(IV) 57, Pierre Eugène du Simitière collection, LCP.
[20] *A Card, The Public present their Compliments to Messieurs JAMES and DRINKER* (Philadelphia, 1772), Evans 12707.

willingness of the crowd to take direct action. Ordinary people were most likely not the authors of these pieces, but ephemera spoke on their behalf in threatening to take action against unpopular figures, and this menace pervaded the public spaces in the city. The popular presence that Smith argues was so important was sustained in print even when the people were not gathered physically together.

While some ephemera spoke on behalf of the Patriot public, other forms hinted at dissenting opinion, but even these cases suggest that the prevailing sentiment of ordinary people affected how readers encountered these texts. Another common method of distributing ephemera was simply handing the pieces out on the street. This was a confrontational mode of distribution that could provoke violence. Nevertheless, John MacPherson, for one, chose this method. MacPherson was a wealthy privateer, but in 1769, unknown assailants imprisoned him as a mad man. MacPherson maintained that this was because he knew that John Dickinson was not the sole author of *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*. In order to clear his name, MacPherson embarked on a major campaign to disparage Dickinson with a pamphlet entitled *A Pennsylvania Sailor's Letters Alias the Farmer's Fall.* MacPherson commissioned a thousand copies of an advertisement for this pamphlet, which would have been a large personal expense for something that was to be given away free. However, the bookseller William Woodhouse, whom MacPherson expected to distribute the handbill, presumably received such a negative response that he refused to do so and MacPherson had to have his slave distribute the pamphlet instead.[21] While Woodhouse was content to print the piece, he refused to distribute the texts in the streets. Precisely what dissuaded Woodhouse is lost to history, but Dickinson's popularity was most likely an important factor in the decision. Evidence from New York also suggests that distributing texts in the street could prompt conflict. An announcement card in 1769 calling on people to sign the Townshend Duties agreements alludes to another that was torn down from public spaces.[22] People clearly took direct action against posted texts with which they disagreed. At times of heightened tensions, this could involve attacking the individuals distributing them. British soldiers handing out a broadside precipitated the 1770 Battle of Golden Hill in New York. When Patriots seized the soldiers for distributing the pamphlet it sparked a riot that involved

[21] Extrapolating from the price Dickinson paid for 200, then it could have cost MacPherson £16/5/-. *To be Published and Sold by William Woodhouse* (Philadelphia, 1771), Evans 12106.
[22] *To the Public* (New York, 1769), Evans 11501.

dozens of people.[23] Ephemera exist as a testament to contested public debate. The very act of distributing texts took on a political significance that, in extreme cases, provoked violence. The encounters between readers and texts mattered.

This is particularly important because some pieces of ephemera made complex political statements through their very existence. As seen in the last chapter, Dickinson printed a handbill at his own expense urging Philadelphians to continue their business without using stamped paper. The copy of the handbill in the LCP notes that it was given away free in Philadelphia.[24] There is little to suggest what Dickinson intended to accomplish by distributing this piece, but it was not printed on stamped paper, even though it was likely given away after the 1 November 1765 deadline. In effect, the message of the piece and the form of its dissemination were intimately connected as Dickinson ignored the Stamp Act in his protest against it. Again, there is little direct evidence whether the audience appreciated this political act, but the piece potentially reached as many as 200 people, possibly more. Among this group, some may have understood the fact that distributing this unstamped handbill was a political act even though there was no explicit statement to that effect. Although Dickinson's politics may have been implicit, the poem *The Lamentation of Pennsylvania* was much more openly subversive of the Stamp Act regulations. The poem itself was an explicit anti-Stamp Act piece threatening Hughes with mob violence if he accepted the stamped paper. Critically, according to another piece of marginalia, the printer Anthony Armbruster gave the poem away free if the customer bought a piece of grey paper.[25] Grey paper, an inferior quality of paper for wrapping or non-reading purposes, was exempt from the Stamp Act whilst the poem was subject to the tax. Armbruster intended the mode of distribution to be a political act in itself to protest the stamps. Unlike newspapers and pamphlets, understanding the reception of these acts is impossible, but their existence is suggestive of the fact that the act of distributing a broadside or other piece of paper ephemera was a political act. By their very existence, these meeting cards had genuine political significance that can reveal something about Philadelphia's intellectual environment.

[23] Gilje, *The Road to Mobocracy*, pp. 56 – 7.
[24] Dickinson, *Friends and Countrymen*, (Philadelphia, 1765), LCP.
[25] *The Lamentation of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1765), LCP.

The notion of texts as political acts is intrinsic to many types of revolutionary literature, but with ephemera the question of timing is particularly important. Some of the annotated ephemera in LCP suggest that exactly when an audience encountered a text could profoundly affect their interpretation of it. In New York, the long-running battle of the American Wilkes, Alexander McDougall, exemplifies this process. A poem called *Out-Lines* noted that the piece 'was found in the street the morning after Mr McDougall was arrested'.[26] It was then printed and distributed to make the biggest impact following McDougall's arrest. Similarly, a month later, and days before the anniversary of the repeal of the Stamp Act, an unknown person surreptitiously slid an anti-McDougall piece under New Yorkers' doors during the middle of the night.[27] McDougall was a popular pro-American figure arrested for sedition and heavily involved in the defence of the liberty pole during the Battle of Golden Hill.[28] It is unclear why this poem was slid under residents' doors, but by distributing this pamphlet at night directly to people's homes the distributor would force many readers to consider the pamphlet in private, away from the public debates of the day. Readers could have varying interpretations of texts when read in different places and at different times. These disparities are why the interpretative community is important in guiding the reception of texts by audiences. Likewise, the many dates that people noted on the ephemera may suggest that the day a piece of ephemera was distributed had an effect on its meaning, though its precise significance is now lost. However, this question of timing may go even further than just the day of distribution. Some of the pieces suggest that even the time of day may have been significant. During the 1773 Tea Act crisis, a broadside addressed to the Delaware pilots asked them not to escort the *Polly* to Philadelphia. The ship was carrying the hated tea and the broadside threatened tarring and feathering to anyone who abetted its landing. A note on the LCP copy says that the ship 'May be hourly expected'.[29] This note indicates that the collector appended the marginalia in anticipation of the impending confrontation. The author of the handbill tried to threaten the Delaware pilots to conform to prevailing opinion in Philadelphia, and chose to do so on the very day the decision was to be made. This was

[26] *Out-Lines* (New York, 1770), Evans 11795.
[27] *Procession, with the Standard of Faction* (New York, 1770), Evans 11827.
[28] Benjamin Carp, *Rebels Rising: Cities and the American Revolution* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 91.
[29] *To the Delaware Pilots* (Philadelphia, 1773), LCP.

possible because printers advertised they could print handbills and small jobs in as little as two hours.[30] Ephemera, by their very nature, were not timeless pieces of print. They were a vibrant and engaging medium that responded directly to their immediate contexts, both physical and temporal. The highly charged political implications of ephemera instil the meeting cards with revolutionary potential as both the products of popular politics and prompts to further action.

First, in order to understand the context of the cards, it is worth sketching out the progress of the Townshend Duties crisis. The introduction of new custom duties in 1767 by Chancellor of the Exchequer, Charles Townshend, precipitated the crisis in the colonies. Parliament levied taxes on British manufactured goods imported into America such as paint, glass, paper and ceramics, as well as foreign luxuries such as wine, dried fruits, olive oil, and most importantly tea. The revenue generated from these taxes supported an American civil list. This list would eliminate the provision of salaries for governors and judges by colonial Assemblies. In an attempt to secure colonial obedience, Parliament aimed to restructure imperial administration by subjecting it to tighter central authority. To emphasise this new obedience and running alongside the Townshend Duties, Parliament shut New York's Assembly in order to force the city to assent to the billeting of soldiers there.[31] In response, the Massachusetts House of Representatives sent a circular letter to the other colonial assemblies. The Massachusetts circular declared the Townshend Duties unconstitutional because Americans had no representation in Parliament. Connecticut, Maryland, Virginia and New Jersey quickly affirmed Massachusetts' sentiments. In response, the Colonial Secretary Lord Hillsborough sent a letter to the governors of the colonies instructing them that if the assemblies publically supported the circular the governors should dissolve them.[32] Governor Thomas Penn refused to dissolve the Pennsylvania Assembly and the colony began a campaign to petition Parliament.

This campaign continued into 1769 as the city was unwilling to enter into non-importation agreements until they had exhausted this remedy. Finally, the non-importation movement began in March

[30] William Evitt advertised that after taking over from Andrew Stueart he would be able to fill orders for adverts 'of a moderate size, shall be done at two hours notice'. *PG* 2 August 1770.
[31] Peter D. G. Thomas*, The Townshend Duties: The Second Phase of the American Revolution, 1767 – 1773* (Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 22 – 31.
[32] Pennsylvania House of Representatives, *Votes and Proceedings of the House of the Representatives of the House of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1768), Evans 11027, pp. 128 – 34.

1769, but by mid-May 1770, Philadelphia received notification that Parliament intended to repeal the Townshend Duties on all goods except tea; significantly, however, this revenue would still maintain a civil list in America. This partial repeal caused a split in the Philadelphia community. The following six months witnessed a number of tense confrontations between the people on the streets and the merchants, but significantly both sides concentrated on creating broad consensus through printed exchanges and assemblies. The merchants of Philadelphia led all the American colonies in modifying non-importation. They first proposed that the colonies should adopt a policy of boycotting only those goods on which the obnoxious tax was levied—a step that conformed to John Dickinson's stance that America should withhold only commerce that was subject to external taxation. The Pennsylvanian merchants concluded, however, that they would not implement their agreement until Boston and New York assented to the changes. New York deferred its decision, but Boston reacted vigorously against Philadelphia's suggestion and reaffirmed that it would not import any British goods until Parliament repealed all the Townshend Duties. Philadelphia eventually followed suit and resolved to maintain non-importation until Parliament repealed the entire revenue act, including the preamble that provided for a civil list. This decision was widely touted in the press by commentators with pseudonyms aligning themselves with tradesmen and artisans (as opposed to merchants or traders). These pieces, written on behalf of artisans, contended that their campaign to continue non-importation until Parliament repealed the entire act had the support of the American continent.[33] Importantly, these commentators placed more emphasis on one part of *Letters*, remaining vigilant against external taxation, rather than another on the importance of not consuming taxed items; thereby, revealing that the interpretation of Dickinson was open to debate.

Shortly thereafter, New York merchants again unsuccessfully asked their neighbours for an end to the non-importation agreement; however, disregarding threats from Philadelphia and Boston that they would shun the city and its merchants, on 9 July 1770, New York announced that it would only boycott tea and taxed items. For three months, Philadelphia upheld the terms of the original agreement, but on 20 September, the merchants gathered and agreed to break it. They cited New York's desertion as a justification and further pleaded that Boston's association had been more lenient, and therefore its

[33] *PC* 21 May 1770. *PG* 24 May 1770.

merchants had not suffered to the same degree as they had. There was a brief reaction from the city's tradesmen, but ultimately non-importation expired on 15 January 1771.[34] Even though non-importation eventually crumbled, Benjamin Carp credits its survival to the efforts of political radicals gathering popular support for the tradesmen through the use of both small meetings in taverns and larger public gatherings outside the State House.[35] Marrying the vitriolic language of the polemic press with the immediacy and perceived generality of large public gatherings helped prolong the non-importation movement after New York's defection. At the heart of this development were the cards and handbills that audiences carried to and from these meetings.

The merchants' success in eventually breaking the agreements belies the fundamental change that occurred in Philadelphia in 1770. Although the traders were able to resume their commercial networks with Britain, the public debate had radicalised city politics. The week after the agreements collapsed a commentator called Brother Chip issued a rousing call for the election of mechanics to the Assembly, which he argued would better represent the majority of people as well as reduce the possibility of public tumults.[36] Significantly, Brother Chip embodied two of the central assumptions of ordinary Philadelphians, namely the alignment of popular interests with those of the mechanics and a preference for limiting street violence. Both of these assumptions, as will be evident later, derived from engagement with the ideas of Dickinson in *Letters*. In the October elections of that year, Joseph Parker, a tailor, was voted in as the first mechanic to serve in the Assembly.[37] Two years later the Patriotic Society was founded to put artisans and mechanics into more governmental positions with the avowed aim to 'preserve inviolate, our just rights and privileges, to us and our posterity, against every attempt to violate or infringe the same, either here [in Philadelphia], or on the other side of the *Atlantic*.'[38] This political engagement involved more than persuasion by eloquent texts or participation in mass activity. Instead, it was a reciprocal process in which ordinary Philadelphians were invited to enter into politics through the

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[34] Thomas, *Townshend Duties*, pp. 161 – 213.
[35] Carp, *Rebels Rising*, pp. 191 – 3.
[36] *PG* 27 September 1770.
[37] Olton, *Artisans for Independence*, p. 53.
[38] *PG* 19 August 1772. The articles in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* were preceded by the request from PUBLIUS in Bucks County for the articles of the Patriotic Society. He asserted that there was a general agreement amongst his neighbours that the Patriotic Society represented their best interests against self-interested and corrupted individuals. *PC* 5 September 1772.

medium of printed ephemera. Clearly, therefore, examining these material texts provides insights into how and where ordinary people formulated their ideas and attitudes.

This intellectual engagement significantly took place in large public meetings and the act of calling together these assemblies always had political implications. For example, in October 1765, when organisers wished to call together a large assembly outside the State House to demand Hughes' resignation as Stamp Collector, they sent drummers through streets calling people out. [39] This resulted in a popular meeting; however, when the merchants in the city gathered to discuss a non-importation agreement on 6 November 1765 they used meeting cards to target merchants specifically. One of these cards, addressed to Michael Hillegas, invited him to 'confer with the Merchants of this city upon Matters of the highest Importance, relative to the TRADE of this province.'[40] The card implied a sense of urgency that is perhaps not surprising considering that the meeting took place six days after the Stamp Act deadline. At the meeting, the merchants signed the non-importation agreements. However, there is little evidence from the card itself suggesting which specific topic would be discussed. It was simply an invitation to discuss important matters defined not by the card, but by the context in which the card was distributed. The effect was to downplay the incendiary nature of protesting against Parliament. The same vague language was present in the first cards of the Townshend Duties debates. The meeting that signed the association was called together by a card that requested merchants gather at the Coffee House on 6 February 1769 'to consider of a Matter of great Importance'.[41] There was little in its language to suggest that Philadelphian merchants were about to countermand all orders for British goods. In both cases, this bland language appealed to the disinterested ideal of eighteenth-century politics and stood in direct contrast to the method of literally drumming up support. These meetings in taverns called for the free and impartial deliberation of important matters. It was a fiction easy to maintain because in practice it was almost a *fait accompli* by the time these cards were distributed that Philadelphia would enter into non-importation agreements. The decisions made by the authors of these cards, whoever they may have been,

[39] John Hughes to John Penn, 8 October 1765, Pennsylvania Stamp Act and Non-Importations, APS.
[40] *Philadelphia, Wednesday, November 6, 1765* (Philadelphia, 1765), Evans 10135.
[41] *The Merchants of this city are earnestly requested to meet at the Coffee-House* (Philadelphia, 1769), Evans 11337.

affected the composition of the meeting, both in terms of who was invited and what they gathered to discuss.

In mid-May 1770, merchants organised the first meetings to discuss changing the terms of the association. In response a card, signed as '*An* AMERICAN', was distributed on 12 May. The 'AMERICAN' pseudonym, of course, associated its message with Americanness and the claims drew their authority from this American consciousness. The author guessed the merchants intended to make amendments to the agreements. The purpose of the card was to remind the committee of the advantages of American manufacturing for colonial commerce. It insisted that 'True Patriotism is not to be found in Clamour, but in Actions that will bear the Test of Examination'.[42] An American argued that irrespective of the debate surrounding the partial repeal, the public would judge the merchants by the actions they took. Unfortunately, the card does not provide any clues about whether the merchants encountered it as it was passed about in the streets or whether the card was pinned to notices throughout the city and in taverns. In either case, it reminded the merchants of the popular presence of ordinary people and their belief in the value of domestic manufacturing to all sections of Philadelphia society. An American spoke on behalf of a public against another section of the public, but his central premise about the importance of domestic manufacturing was an important tenet of Dickinson's *Letters*. Dickinson argued America should use its industry to disengage actively from Britain.[43] Non-importation alone was insufficient. Instead, protesting against Britain also required non-consumption and the support of domestic manufacturing. While the author may not have been an ordinary person, the card's underlying thrust bore a strong resemblance to that of *Letters*. I will return to explore these similarities in further detail later, but the card shows that popular ephemera reiterated key tenets from revolutionary literature.

This first card only commented on the existence of meetings. In contrast, and importantly for the development of popular politics, a meeting scheduled for 23 May 1770 addressed its audience as the 'Tradesmen, Artificers, and other Inhabitants'.[44] This was the first to use the meeting cards medium to call together a popular audience. The impetus for these mechanics' meetings came from Charles

[42] An American, *To the Merchants Committee, the Dry Goods Merchants, &c.* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11887.
[43] John Dickinson, *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1768), Evans 10875, pp. 67 – 8.
[44] *Philadelphia, May 22, 1770* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11897.

Thomson, a close political ally of Dickinson who had led the 1768 and 1769 push for non-importation. Ordinary people responded eagerly to Thomson's appeals for their support.[45] Thomson convened the gathering in response to the arrival of a ship from Rhode Island carrying items forbidden by the non-importation agreements. The card hinted at the 'Matters of great Importance to *America*'.[46] The addition of this term 'America' was significant because one of the charges that the artisans would level at their opponents was that they were parochial and self-interested, whereas artisans saw themselves as the guardians of colonial rights. This reflected Dickinson's emphasis on the importance of unity as strength.[47] Moreover, following the meeting, five resolutions were published in newspapers that all reaffirmed that the artisans and mechanics had no intention of deviating from the original non-importation agreements. The assembly, according to the report, unanimously resolved to support the original tenets of the agreements. They sent the offending ship away without unloading its cargo, and significantly resolved to take action to uphold the spirit of the Townshend non-importation agreement by continuing to promote American manufacturing, treating with contempt all those who broke its articles, and attending meetings to give their support for the continuation of the original terms.[48] This was a declaration of active involvement in public affairs by historically inarticulate Philadelphians who specifically sought to insert themselves into the associations made between merchants. In a further echo of Dickinson's political philosophy, it was an expression of active protest rather than passive disobedience.[49] The close affinity between the card's tone and the meeting's resolves suggests that the organisers were successful in convening a favourable audience. Beyond that, the ordinary people who attended affirmed their adherence to principles first laid out in *Letters*. The reported unanimity may have been a political fiction, but even with the presence of silent detractors, the report suggests that ordinary people assumed they had the power to regulate the market to protest Parliament.

Philadelphian merchants did not take kindly to the intrusion of the mechanics on matters of trade. Their exact reaction has not been preserved in the archive, but a broadside by 'A Lover of Liberty

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[45] Ryerson, *The Revolution is Now Begun*, pp. 28 – 31.
[46] *Philadelphia, May 22, 1770* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11897.
[47] Dickinson, *Letters*, p. 66.
[48] *PC* 29 May 1770.
[49] Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, pp. 12 – 3, 209.

and a Mechanic's Friend' seemingly responded to developments from beyond the world of the page. A Lover of Liberty said he wanted to address the public because he had heard that the members of the 23 May meeting 'most audaciously and virulently censured' for resolving to continue the non-importation movement. More worryingly, he also asserted that some merchants were intending not only to import British goods, but actually boycott American manufactured goods. However, A Lover of Liberty's response to the perceived threat of mercantile attacks was to reassert the virtue of tradesmen, and to hint at the growing inclusion of all Americans within the political sphere. He declared that 'every man is a part of the public' and continued 'Stand forth ye Farmers, manufacturers, mechanics and tradesmen who are the pillars of government'.[50] The piece attacked merchants as 'Creatures of muslin intellect' and instead depicted mechanics as 'one of the most valuable members of society'. A Lover of Liberty then quoted Dickinson, the 'eminently distinguished *American Patriot*', to the effect that any tax that could potentially contribute toward the civil list was 'A DIREFUL FORETELLER OF FUTURE CALAMITIES', a phrase specifically used by Dickinson to encourage continued vigilance. [51] A Lover of Liberty used Dickinson to defend the right of ordinary people to become involved. This is significant because one principal aim of *Letters* was to encourage popular participation in the resistance to Britain. The definition of taxes, the exhortations to remain united, and the need to promote frugality and industriousness all worked to involve ordinary people in the protests against the tyrannical impositions of Parliament. In the divisive debate between mechanics and merchants, articles like this reflect the developing Patriot agenda to which ordinary people subscribed. The belief that every man was a part of the public was a critical element in radicalising the Revolution.

From June onward, there was an escalation of political tensions. The public consensus that had existed since February 1769 was breaking down. This meant that there was a greater need to ensure that any assembly convened would assent to the resolutions that the organisers proposed. A card for a meeting on 14 July, issued an even more general call than the May card, addressing 'the Inhabitants of [Philadelphia] City and County'. It included a detailed description of the issue at hand as well as what was

[50] Lover of Liberty and a Mechanic's Friend, *To the Free and Patriotic Inhabitants of the City of Philadelphia and Province of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11882.
[51] Lover of Liberty, *To the Free and Patriotic Inhabitants*.

at stake, namely 'The Inhabitants of the City of *New-York*, having broke their Non-Importation Agreement, and thereby endangered the Liberties of all *America*'. [52] The card attempted to create explicit expectations in its reader. It focused on a specific issue; invited a broad audience; and clearly delineated the stakes of the matter in question. These cards became increasingly prescriptive in their language. The July card was not content simply to note that the assembly was convening to discuss the collapse of the New York agreement. This collapse now threatened the liberties of every American. Again the individual reader reception of these cards is impossible to gauge, and there were doubtless many among the audience who were apolitical or even opposed to the gathering; however, as Simon Newman argues, even the existence of an audience coveys a political message.[53] The fact that an assembly gathered in response to this message gave credence to the idea that the collapse of New York's association threatened the liberties of Americans. The card suggests the ways in which ordinary people imagined their connectedness to Americans in other cities, and the commonality they shared in protesting Parliament. These debates, almost irrespective of individual perspectives, encouraged an American consciousness that was intimately entwined with the Patriot agenda.

The July card digitised in the Readex collection even had a note that recorded the meeting made 'firm resolves' for the suspension of trade with New York. [54] There is little evidence of what happened to the cards themselves, though the note at the end of this one suggests that at least one person kept it for posterity. The cards may even have been carried to the meetings themselves and, in this fashion, actually become a part of the assembly. There is strong internal evidence that there was a broadside distributed at this same July meeting, probably by Thomson's associates, like a flyer through the participants. While the card had summoned people to the gathering, the broadside was not content with prescribing the agenda and its stakes. It also contained a provocative exhortation to continue non-importation. Addressing its reader directly it stated 'You are come here this Day to determine whether you will be FREEMAN OR SLAVES'. The piece then attacked the '*New-Yorkers*' saying 'may the Names of a *Bute,* a *Grenville*, a *Bernard*,

[52] *Philadelphia, July 12, 1770* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11817.
[53] Newman, *Parades and the Politics of the Street*, pp. 2 – 4.
[54] *Philadelphia, July 12, 1770* (Philadelphia, 1770). Evans 11817. The manuscript note reads 'Consequences. Firm resolves – Trade with New York suspended.' Evidence that it was written at the time is based upon two suppositions. First that the citation on the Readex database does not note that it was added by a later hand, and second that the verb 'suspended' is in the pluperfect progressive tense, an act completed at the meeting that is still ongoing at the time of writing.

and a *Yorker* hereafter be synonimous [sic] Words.' The piece finally reminded its audience that 'we are *Pennsylvanians* ---- and Oh! let us not sully that illustrious Name by an Act that will bring Infamy and Slavery upon our Country.'[55] This was a moment when print was a physical element within the crowd, and one which carried the vitriol of the polemic press against New Yorkers into a meeting intended to decide the future policies of the colonies. As noted in the July card, the meeting ultimately decided to reject New York's lead and opted to maintain its original non-importation agreements. This represented more than simple negotiation between the assembly's elite organisers and the inarticulate audiences. The cards shaped the expectations of ordinary people and the flyer further reinforced this message. The consent ordinary people gave to continued non-importation at this meeting was informed by an intellectual environment of both text and crowd. It is just that texts are the only tangible element of this creative exchange.

Moreover, the artisans' immense efforts in trying to convince the merchants to maintain non-importation may look like a form of negotiation between the two, but they actually reflect a fundamentally divergent understanding of what the public sphere was and how best to understand it. Two newspaper pieces published in August 1770 carried the implicit debate of the meeting cards forward. Whereas those in support of non-importation encouraged large public gatherings, those opposed to it invited a select group of merchants to taverns. These were two different visions of the public, one that aimed for majority support among the population and the other that sought majority support from a representative body, in this case the merchants in the non-importation agreements who acted on behalf of Philadelphia as a whole. In the newspapers, this became a debate about the relative merits of the two. On the merchant's side, a contributor called A Philadelphian wrote an apology for the city's importers saying that they had been cowed into continuing non-importation. After the partial repeal of the Townshend Duties 'prevailing opinion' forced the merchants to persist in the boycott, but there had been a general realisation in the last few weeks that the reasonable course of action was to reopen trade with Britain and prohibit only goods that carried the pernicious tax.[56] The following week A True Philadelphian responded

[55] A Pennsylvanian, *To the Inhabitants of the City and County of Philadelphia, July 14th, 1770* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11885.
[56] *PG* 16 August 1770.

that the sentiments of A Philadelphian were 'set at Variance [with an] agreeing and united People.' He continued that:

> The surest Proof of the Necessities of the Province, are the complaints of the Poor, who are silent, and therefore, it is to be concluded, satisfied. It is much to be lamented, that the most active Men against the Non-importation Agreement, and for importing every Thing, generally, except Tea, as I am informed, are People of Property, and can best bear the Burthen. [57]

A True Philadelphian's assertion that the complaints of the poor were the surest measure of popular assent clashed with A Philadelphian's belief that the merchants had been silenced. The basis of every 'man as part of the public' was that if there was cause for concern then every man was empowered to register his remonstration in the clearest way possible. This is the tension at the heart of interpreting popular consent: did silence represent implicit approval or stifled protests? This question was never resolved, but the sentiments of A True Philadelphian point toward a radical moment in the Revolution when the cause of ordinary people was linked explicitly with the poorest members of society, elevating their concerns to the centre of political debate and attempting to give further weight to the popular presence demonstrated by large public gatherings.

In September, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported that all business and trades would close in Boston so that everyone could participate in deliberating upon the non-importation issue.[58] These reports prompted a new round of public meetings in Philadelphia, beginning with a gathering of merchants at the Davenport tavern on 20 September 1770. Josiah Davenport built his tavern in the heart of Philadelphia's fashionable and genteel streets and catered for an audience displeased with an ordinary tavern sociability that allowed ordinary and elite patrons to mingle freely.[59] The first card was disseminated three days before the meeting and addressed itself specifically to the 'Subscribers to the Nonimportation Agreement'—a measure intended to forestall the involvement of the mechanics. [60] In response, on the morning of the Davenport meeting another card was distributed which said that 'At this Juncture, when

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[57] *PG* 23 August 1770.
[58] *PG* 20 September 1770.
[59] Peter Thompson, *Rum Punch and Revolution: Taverngoing and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, PA; University of Pennsylvania, 1999), p. 108.
[60] *A Number of the Subscribers to the Nonimportation agreement, September 17, 1770* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11793.

Measures are pursuing to dissolve the Union of the Colonies, every Subscriber to our Non-Importation Agreement, who wishes well to the Liberties of his Country and the Reputation of this City' was to go to the Davenport and be part of the consultation process.[61] The timing of this second card encouraged participation from those merchants who had signed up for non-importation and were reluctant to abandon it. A third card was distributed the same day after the meeting. This card revealed that there had been no acceptable consensus at the gathering and, as a result, another was arranged for the following week. Written below the printed section was a manuscript note that the meeting had been adjourned because six of the seventeen merchants selected had declined to serve on the committee.[62] This flurry of activity is suggestive of heightened political tensions and reflects the ability of the artisans to influence the decisions of the merchants even without being present.

Following the collapse of the 20 September meeting there was a final push from the tradesmen to ensure that non-importation would continue. Published in papers and distributed as handbills, the convenors said that they were:

> respectable Freeholders and Inhabitants of this City and County; justly alarmed at the Resolutions formed by a Number of the Dry Goods Importers […] which reflect Dishonour on this City and Province earnestly request the Freemen of this City and County to meet in the State-House, This afternoon, at three o'Clock, to consider and determine what is proper to be done to vindicate the Honour of this City and to avert the Danger that threatens their Country. [63]

The card was distributed on the morning of the meeting, perhaps suggesting that it was handed out to people as they passed through the street. It clearly positioned itself in direct opposition to the merchants' dishonourable conduct. The card indicated its stance and attempted to predispose its audience against any sort of compromise that involved the abandonment of the non-importation agreements. The meeting itself was conducted outside the State House and attended by 'a large body of respectable Inhabitants'. The crowd agreed on nine points which effectively promoted the continuance of non-importation until all the Townshend Duties were repealed, including an agreement that the resolves themselves 'be published,

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[61] *Thursday, September 20, 1770* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11878.
[62] *The Subscribers to the Non-importation Agreement, September 20, 1770* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11876.
[63] *Thursday, September 27, 1770* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11879.

and the Inhabitants of this Province invited to concur therein.'[64] The card's immediacy preserves some of the urgency that surrounded the debate. The card alludes not to a negotiation between merchants and mechanics, but a fundamental disagreement. The two positions agreed that on the principle they should not pay the tax; however, they interpreted the implications of importing British goods entirely differently.

Following the dissolution of the mercantile non-importation agreement, a pamphlet written by an author called a Citizen asserted that recalcitrant merchants could not injure Americans if consumers did not purchase the items. Citizen argued for importing only those British manufactures that America could not produce itself. His vision for the future pointed to a time when American needs would be fulfilled by American producers. Ultimately, Citizen credited the 'Patriot Farmer' as the originator of this movement.[65] Citizen was offering a resolution to the debates over non-importation that placed the responsibility of avoiding British manufactures at the feet of the consumer. Here too Dickinson's *Letters* remained a crucial reference point for opposing Parliamentary impositions and it is indicative of the shift toward the idea that ordinary colonists rather than merchants were the animating force behind the opposition to Parliament. The specific reception of Citizen is impossible to gauge, but the fact that artisans and mechanics continued through the following years to work together to promote and debate American manufacturing suggests that his comments arose out of a broader consensus that celebrated domestic products. Their timing is particularly interesting. Citizen argued for the continuance of Dickinson's protest campaign after the unravelling of merchant-led non-importation and, since many seemed to follow what he recommended, this suggests that *Letters* remained a crucial instigator and symbol of the wider popular movement.

Ephemera were a medium of intellectual exchange. Contextualising the interpretative community of Philadelphia entails understanding the role of print in shaping and responding to the assumptions circulating in the city. Crucially, ordinary people had direct contact with ephemera and that was particularly true of the meeting cards. Although the merchants overcame the objections to continuing the full terms of the non-importation agreements, their victory disguised the rise of divergent assumptions

[64] *PG* 4 October 1770.
[65] *PG* 11 October 1770.

between the two groups. The meeting cards attest to this contest over the necessity for public consent. They exemplified popular vigilance against tyranny. They advocated civil disobedience rather than direct confrontation. However, being more than mere artefacts, these cards also took an active role in shaping these public debates, reinforcing the crowd's message. They therefore constitute a tangible link between the world of crowd action and the world of printed debate in which the encounters between the two were of critical importance.

'*Dominato Plebis*':
Analysing the Popular Reception of Ideas within *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*

The cards represent a popular consciousness about Americanness that empowered ordinary people as revolutionary agents in continuing their protest against Parliament. The cards and associated ephemera reflect many of the ideas Dickinson put down in *Letters*, but in order to understand the extent ordinary people engaged with revolutionary literature, we must determine whether Dickinson's *Letters* stimulated the actions of the crowd. From Smith's perspective, revolutionary ideas progressed from customary rights. She argues that the driving force was the Patriot economy, the regulation that ordinary people exercised over the market that assumed increasingly revolutionary implications as the crisis with Britain deepened. Underpinning this movement was the idea of neighbourly interdependence. The Patriots asserted their right to regulate the market choices of individuals in the name of making a better future for the collective whole. This was not the same as the moral economy of bread riots, from which many of these customary rights had descended. However, Smith argues that the moral dimension transfers readily from the regulation of the market in times of famine to regulating the market in times of political oppression.[66] While such customary rights provided an impetus to act, this did not happen without some prompting from texts. The most important of these texts was Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*, which encouraged its readers to think about their place in the commercial empire

[66] Barbara Clark Smith, *The Freedoms We Lost*, pp. 119 – 22.

and the ways they could affect British policies. The task is to understand how from 1767 to 1770 Dickinson's ideas meaningfully moved from his pamphlet to its readers to the cards and then to the people.

At its core, *Letters* was about broadening participation, diminishing the exclusivity of public debate, and developing solutions to which ordinary people could contribute. The Farmer presented himself as a self-taught lawyer living modestly on the banks of the Delaware, which was slightly disingenuous given that Dickinson was well educated and wealthy; however, the dissonance between the Farmer as a pseudonym and Dickinson as the author was part of the broadening participation rhetoric of *Letters* as it aligned him with ordinary people. Despite his pseudonym, from the outset many readers knew Dickinson was the author of *Letters*. In the same month that the last letter was published, Edward Shippen wrote from Lancaster to his brother in Philadelphia that he had heard that Dickinson was the 'reputed author [of the] Sensible Farmer's letters'.[67] Information that had spread out to Lancaster was probably well known in Philadelphia. In fact, the printers of some collected editions of the letters attached a portrait with Dickinson's name poorly disguised.[68] Moreover, Dickinson was a leading figure in making manifest the ideas advocated by the Farmer and, working in concert with radical Charles Thomson, he staged a series of public assemblies that forced the conservative mercantile community of Philadelphia to sign non-importation agreements.[69] These large assemblies convinced many to do so and *Letters* formed one part of an integrated campaign against the Townshend duties. The pamphlet's aim was to rouse people to action, but it also anticipated and sought to forestall tumultuous behaviour. The Farmer's methods continued many of the elements of civil disobedience developed in Dickinson's protests against the Stamp Act.[70] His distinctive solution was a concerted campaign of boycotting British goods and petitioning consistently, as well as the encouragement of thrifty spending, consuming homespun, and developing American manufacturing. These simple imitable elements did not just entail passive abstention, but active disengagement from Britain. Crucial to all these activities were the exhortations of Dickinson to his readers to be vigilant and industrious.

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[67] Edward Shippen to Joseph Shippen, 22 February 1768, Burd-Shippen Family Collection, DLAR.
[68] Charles E. Clark, 'Early American Journalism', p. 365.
[69] Ryerson, *The Revolution is Now Begun*, pp. 28 – 9.
[70] Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, p. 220.

Dickinson wrote *Letters* as an address to the reader, referring to 'you' and 'I'. There are three distinct, but informal, sections to the text. The first section, comprised of letters I to III, appeared in early December. These letters concentrated on the troubling nature of Parliament's imperial reforms, including the billet order in New York, the attempt at a civil list, and finally the Townshend Duties themselves. Dickinson's main contention was that Parliament predicated these reforms on the same illiberal premises as the Stamp Act; therefore, Americans should oppose them with the same vehemence. The second section consisted of letters IV to VI and ran from late December until early January. These focused more on the definition of internal versus external taxation. Dickinson's distinction between these two modes of taxation formed the basis of complaints against taxes through to the Declaration of Independence. The final section encompassed the remaining six letters and ran until mid-February. This section was much more concerned with establishing a sense of urgency in opposing to the Townshend Duties. This final section emphasised forcefully the need for vigilance and popular involvement. Taken together these twelve letters were instrumental in developing a manifesto for the American resistance movement. The first section identified a sense of continuity with the Stamp Act; the second exposed the specifics of this tyranny; and the third was an emotive call designed to energise the audience.

The first section laid out the mode of opposition to Parliament. Letter II addressed the Townshend Duties Act and its attempt to raise a revenue. Dickinson argued that, like the New York billet, the intention of the duties on manufactured goods was to create a civil list, and not simply regulate trade. The civil list was a novel and perfidious extension of Parliamentary authority that was based upon the same unprecedented statutes as the Stamp Act. The revenue was not limited to defraying the expense of frontier defence, but also included the cost of administering justice by providing wages for judges. By discussing the similarities of the duties to the Stamp Act, Dickinson encouraged his readers to be vigilant against the many ways Parliament would seek to extend its authority. The third letter promoted a moderate and legal challenge to this innovation. Dickinson advocated that colonists pursued the same technique as they had during Stamp Act opposition. He issued a call to his colonial brethren to:

> let us then take another step by withholding from Great-Britain all the advantages she has been used to receive from us. Then let us try, if our ingenuity, industry, and frugality, will not give weight to our remonstrances. Let us be united in one spirit, in

> one cause. Let us invent ---- let us work ---- let us save----let us, continually, keep our claim, and incessantly repeat our complaints.[71]

Dickinson's argument was that, by changing the way that America functioned in the empire, Britain would have to listen to their complaints. Although the non-importation movement began during the Stamp Act crisis, Dickinson's *Letters* reiterated the justification for the Townshend Duties crisis. Importantly, the movement was not just non-importation, but an active promotion of American industry in competition with Britain. By being industrious, Americans could resist Parliament's tyranny.

The second section developed the stakes at the heart of the campaign against Parliament. It delved into the particulars of the crisis and was significant for developing the language and justifications of resistance. Here Dickinson developed the terminology of internal versus external taxation that was widely disseminated in numerous other publications. Internal and external taxation referred not to the item on which the charge was levied, but rather to the institution which laid the imposition. Therefore, internal impositions were those duties imposed by colonial Assemblies, while external impositions were those charges levied by Parliament. External impositions could not grant to the crown the property of a colonist and were restricted solely to regulating trade and manufacturing. Dickinson concluded that because the Townshend Act had the stated aim of raising revenue it was an illegitimate imposition. Only through representative government could people gift property to the crown. The fifth letter pursued and expanded this legalistic definition of the imperial covenant by arguing that the Stamp Act was an aberration in the established tradition of British colonisation. The British Empire was a commercial entity, not a product of conquest.[72] In this system, Parliament had never imposed a tax on the colonies to raise revenue, and the design of the Navigation Acts was to encourage mutual benefit through the exchange of goods. To demonstrate the authority of these claims Dickinson included many long, footnoted excerpts from Malachy Postlethwayt and Josiah Child. The sixth letter concluded the section with a justification for distinguishing between internal and external taxation. Parliament's attempt at raising revenue fundamentally altered the imperial covenant between Britain and America. In the words

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[71] Dickinson, *Letters*, pp. 1 – 18.
[72] Dickinson, *Letters*, p. 24.

of Dickinson, 'A FREE people therefore can never be too quick in observing, nor too firm in opposing the beginnings of *alteration* either in *form* or *reality*.'[73] Ultimately, Dickinson argued that any sort of Parliamentary taxation was an external imposition that would deprive British subjects of their property, and Americans had to be vigilant against these changes. This section laid out the distinctions people had to guard against. It focused attention on the purposes of taxes and the commerce of empire, both of which underpinned the dispute in 1770. The mechanics wanted to maintain non-importation until the repeal of the preamble that gave Parliament the right to raise a revenue from America. Their solution was to rely on their own industriousness.

The third and final section appealed directly for the intervention of ordinary colonists by expanding upon the idea that the Townshend Duties were a precedent to erode American liberty. The seventh letter, in particular, illustrated this well because it was explicitly addressed to those 'whose employments in life may have prevented your attending to the consideration of some points that are of great and public importance'.[74] Dickinson explained that because indirect taxation was unavoidable it was a tool of arbitrary governments and had been favoured by the archetypal tyrant Nero. America could not manufacture goods such as glass and paper so that, although the tax burden was low in 1768, Parliament was using the duties as a precedent to undermine colonial government and secure future taxes that were even more onerous. Dickinson had made a similar point in his handbill during the Stamp Act in which he argued that the tax was a test of the disposition of the colonies.[75] Dickinson concluded with the formulation that '*Those* who are *taxed* without their own consent, expressed by themselves or their representatives, are *slaves*. *We are taxed* without our own consent, expressed by ourselves or our representatives. *We are* therefore ------- § SLAVES.'[76] Letter VII marked a turning point in Dickinson's argumentation, and reached out beyond those concerned with established statutes and sound economic principles. It intended to demonstrate the impact that the Townshend Duties would have on ordinary life, revealing the dangers of the act as a pernicious new model of Parliamentary governance.

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[73] Dickinson, *Letters*, pp. 18 – 32.
[74] Dickinson, *Letters*, p. 33.
[75] Dickinson, *Friends and Countrymen*.
[76] Dickinson, *Letters*, p. 38.

The remaining letters built upon this theme by making references to standing armies, like the one that had been billeted in New York, and the corruption of Parliamentary power in Ireland where the revenue generated served no public good and only provided emolument to the friends of the ministry. In this fashion, Dickinson provided concrete examples of constitutional ills. The final letter warned that the greatest threat to American liberty was the '*decay of virtue*' and the lack of community involvement. In the closing lines, Dickinson returned to his familiar refrain emphasising that the recipe for success was to support the petitioning of the colonial assemblies by protesting commercially.[77] The last six letters from the Farmer were emotive calls that sought to lay out in concrete terms the steps to opposing the attack on American liberty. It was an exhortation to the people and specifically sought to expand the public arena. Ordinary people could participate by being vigilant against innovation and support the remonstrations of America by being industrious. The intervening years between the publication of these ideas and the 1770 movement provide an insight into how *Letters* helped encourage protest against Parliament.

For its audience across the world *Letters* served to further a range of causes. The French lawyer Jean-Baptiste-Jacques Elie de Beaumont, for instance, used *Letters* as a demonstration of the enviable loyalty of the colonists in never denying the legal requests of the British crown.[78] His intention was to celebrate British property rights in order to critique the relationship between the French Parliament and the King. Meanwhile a letter from Paris in 1770 drew on *Letters* to bemoan European political decline, while hoping that America 'will be the Means of exciting the Emulation of this old Continent, where every Thing is going to Ruin.'[79] In this instance, the many exhortations of *Letters* signalled that a vibrant public nourished the American political system. Similarly, radical British printer John Almon reviewed *Letters* in his *Political Register* and said that an 'unquenchable love of liberty breathes' through the work which would have been stifled in Britain.[80] Almon appropriated the dissent in *Letters* in order to highlight the use of libel trials to shackle the British press. John Wilkes, himself a victim, toasted the Farmer from his cell in the tower of London in order to denounce the British aristocracy.[81] Wilkes built his case from

[77] Dickinson, *Letters*, pp. 33 – 71.
[78] *PC* 4 June 1770.
[79] *PG* 16 August 1770.
[80] *PJ* 9 February 1769.
[81] *PC* 3 April 1769.

the use of the Farmer pseudonym. *Letters* was held up as an example of liberty and used by Europeans to critique their own governments. In contrast, when Americans spoke to foreign correspondents, they emphasised a much more moderate interpretation of the ideas. Philadelphian merchant William Logan repeatedly sent copies of *Letters* with his business correspondence to Britain. In writing to Archibald Drummond, Logan praised the pamphlet because 'it is wrote with more moderation than most of the others'.[82] He again praised the pamphlet for its moderation in a letter to the Liverpool merchant John Blackburne.[83] Logan, from his position within Philadelphia's interpretative community, responded to Dickinson's calls for petitioning reinforced by withholding from commerce. Ultimately, *Letters* was sufficiently sophisticated in its composition that it was meaningful to audiences throughout the world, but Logan demonstrates that it had a special resonance for Philadelphians.

One of the critical messages, often repeated in America, was Dickinson's role in animating orderly opposition to Parliamentary authority. This, in effect, gave *Letters* a privileged position in defining the imperial-colonial crisis. The effusive expressions of thanks to Dickinson that were printed widely in newspapers reasserted the critical elements of *Letters*. The elite fishing company of Fort St David personally waited upon Dickinson with the present of a '*Box of* HEART OF OAK' containing an address to him that thanked him for defending and explaining the imperial constitution. The society told him that *Letters* would '*fully instruct Ages yet unborn*'.[84] The Providence, Rhode Island, address of gratitude to the Farmer claimed not to know Dickinson, but thanked him for his effort on behalf of America and the entire human race. They especially thanked Dickinson for rousing 'an injured country from their lethargy, and animates them into active and successful Endeavours for casting off the Burdens imposed on them'.[85] The Grand Jury of Cecil County, Maryland, confirmed that *Letters* was a clarion call for the colonists because 'The Americans were so pleased and lulled asleep with the Justice their Mother Country had done them in repealing the detestable Stamp Act' that they were unaware of the ill effects of

[82] William Logan to Archibald Drummond 23 April 1768, Logan-Fisher-Fox Papers, HSP.
[83] John Blackburne to William Logan, 6 June 1768, Logan-Fisher-Fox Papers, HSP.
[84] *PC* 16 May 1768. *PG* 12 May 1768.
[85] 'Address from the Moderator and Freemen of the Town of Providence', in *The Proud Papers*, ed. by Robert Proud (Philadelphia; The Morris Press, 1903), p. 32. *PG* 7 July 1768.

Parliament's new acts.[86] The Grand Jury of the Assize in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, thanked Dickinson for informing people 'that their chartered Privileges are not of Courtesy; but the essential Rights of Britons'.[87] In Newport, Rhode Island, a gentleman attested to the important and specific intellectual framework of *Letters* when he credited Dickinson with settling 'the meaning of the word TAX to the public satisfaction'.[88] The celebrations of *Letters* emphasised that the pamphlet instructed Americans about their rights and motivated them to action. Importantly, they associated activity with resisting Parliamentary taxation.

Finally, in Connecticut, the Lebanon town meeting expressed their thanks to Dickinson in defiant tones of gratitude. The town meeting declared that Dickinson's *Letters* 'erected a monument which will last when those of marble and brass are mouldered to dust'. *Letters* properly vindicated the rights of America, and the people of Lebanon wished only to add their thanks 'amidst applauding millions'. As a demonstration of their understanding the town then gathered together to write instructions to their representatives in Hartford for the promotion of American manufacturing. The town, in effect, urged its governors to act according to the philosophy of the Farmer.[89] Stories about the Farmer's reception filled the pages of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* and *Pennsylvania Chronicle*. They reflected a news culture emanating in Philadelphia and spreading throughout the colonies that was deeply interested in both Dickinson and his ideas. Moreover, they uniformly reinforced a prevailing message that *Letters* defined the controversy and animated the people. This was not just a reassertion of customary obligations to each other, but explicit instructions that in order to defend American liberties people had to take extraordinary actions and produce goods to replace British imports.

Even before 1770, the organisers of public assemblies used *Letters* to justify Parliamentary opposition. Philadelphians invoked the Farmer as they gathered outside the State House in July 1768 to hear an address on the Massachusetts Circular Letter. The speakers, Dickinson and Thomson, demanded that the crowd unite with the other colonies in actively defending liberty by petitioning the King, and

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[86] *PG* 1 September 1768.
[87] *PG* 9 June 1768.
[88] *PG* 7 April 1768.
[89] *PC* 9 May 1768.

concluded by quoting 'the words of our patriotic FARMER, to whom we and every American are so much indebted'.[90] Audiences more likely encountered these invocations of the Farmer, and probably even Dickinson himself, than the content of *Letters*. This was how *Letters'* message got to them. In response to the meeting, the Pennsylvania Assembly wrote petitions to the King, Lords, and Commons. Crucially, the Assembly agreed with *Letters* that the best way to reinforce the petitions was to point out that, if the tax was not repealed, the commerce of the British Empire would be threatened. The Assembly also urged their agents in London to use their influence to remind members of Parliament that the Townshend Duties 'will induce the *Americans*, either from the Principles of Necessity, Interest or Conveniency, to set up Manufacturies of those Articles [subject to the tax], and desist from any further Importation from *Britain*.'[91] Although raised in a less confrontational manner in *Letters*, this argument essentially followed Dickinson's line of reasoning that industriousness underpinned the protest against Parliament. Ultimately, as a response to calls issued publically by a crowd of Philadelphians, the official petition of Pennsylvania enshrined many of the issues laid out in *Letters*. The intention here is not to privilege the Farmer with a uniquely instrumental role in American opposition, but rather to demonstrate that *Letters* was a vital element sustaining a cohesive movement. Rallying together under the banner of the Farmer, ordinary Philadelphians provided the popular impetus for petitioning. Their activity then prompted the Pennsylvania Assembly to act vigorously along the same lines advocated in *Letters*. These claims did not come from the common ground of customary rights, but rather in the name of Farmer.

The public events enabled ordinary people to call for a protest that resembled *Letters*, but there were also opportunities available for traditionally inarticulate people to leave a record of their engagement with the pamphlet. The workers in William and Thomas Bradford's printing office were well-placed to record their thoughts given their access to paper and prints. Importantly, they wrote Dickinson a letter in June 1770 at the height of the argument over the Townshend Duties. While congratulating him on his marriage to the daughter of the speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly, they also asserted their involvement in the Farmer's movement. They identified themselves as 'The Printers of the Farmer's Letters, employed in the Honourable Cause of American Liberty and Freedom of the Press'. The

[90] *PC* 1 August 1768. *PC* 8 August 1768. *PG* 11 August 1768. Ryerson, *The Revolution is Now Begun*, p. 28.
[91] Pennsylvania House of Representatives, *Votes and Proceedings*, pp. 128 – 34.

workmen hoped '*Freedom, Liberty, Harmony,* and *Unity* may support the *Cause of Liberty* in America, and that We may be forever employed in *Printing American Liberty*, the effects of which *Honourable Sir*, we hope, will *soon* be acknowledged by all True and Loyal Americans, for *Liberty's Cause*'. The note concluded 'This Letter is wrote on *American Manufactur'd Paper*, as our *Master* encouraged it, we are agreed, that (*the workmen*) will use *no other*.'[92] The workers explicitly aligned themselves with the American cause, and even claimed a role in advancing it. The workers also highlighted their contribution to the success of *Letters* and domestic industry. They agreed with their employer that they would not use British paper, but the fact that they chose to say that has a threatening undertone. The letter, though perhaps anecdotal, was an affirmation of ordinary people's involvement in the protests against Parliament. Importantly, the mechanics allied themselves to Dickinson, America, and domestic manufacturing, linking together the three elements of the Revolution that radicalised the dispute between the colony and the metropole.

Understanding the role of revolutionary literature is so important because it drew directly from customary obligations. It adapted local traditions in revolutionary ways. Dickinson's ideas resonated with the idea of neighbourly interdependence that underpinned the Patriot economy, both involved vigilance and industriousness. As Smith argued, the Patriot economy established by the non-importation agreements empowered ordinary people to regulate local market activity and forced elites to defer to their material interests.[93] Admittedly, the ability to regulate people's market choices was a customary right, but *Letters* can help describe how these old ideas found new targets because Dickinson and the reports of his work focused popular attention on the importance of commercial activity as a way of solving an imperial impasse. Merchant correspondence reveals that many of them keenly felt the menace from the crowd around them. They frequently expressed fears about importing goods contrary to popular sentiment. Abel James, who was working on putting together a consignment of woollen goods from Yorkshire in readiness to be competitive with many of the merchants he suspected of doing the same, asked for secrecy from his contacts because he was conscious that if exposed there would be some very negative

[92] Workmen to John Dickinson, 20 June 1770, R. R. Logan Collection of John Dickinson papers (Collection 383), LCP.
[93] Barbara Clark Smith, *The Freedoms We Lost*, pp. 102 – 3.

consequences.[94] James was cagey about these consequences, but John Reynell was much more explicit with his London contacts. He told them that if any British merchants were to send over goods contrary to the non-importation crisis then he was 'afraid [it] might be productive of bad Consequences, and perhaps occasion Riots and Tumults'.[95] Contravening the non-importation agreements could potentially lead to violent crowd reactions. Even ship captains were reticent to take goods on board that might inspire the ire of ordinary people. Samuel Clarke was unable to complete William Logan's request for articles because both the captain and the owner would not carry goods prohibited by the association.[96] Although Clarke himself was not a Philadelphia resident, he certainly feared the popular reaction. Robert Barclay was informed by an American merchant in London not to send his sister a petticoat because it would be first difficult to get ashore, or 'if worn would probably subject [her] to the insults of the populace.'[97] The perception in London was that even underwear was subject to public regulation. Moreover, while the exact nature of these insults has been lost, the target—the petticoat—suggests that the focus was on imported luxury goods. The merchants clearly felt that ordinary Philadelphians scrutinised the market choices individuals made and were willing to coordinate their activity in response to transgressions. The scrutiny and impetus to act arose from customary obligations between neighbours, but this overlooks the fact that revolutionary literature explicitly suggested that ordinary people should pay attention to the importation of British goods in order to protect American liberties.

This oversight is particularly significant in the case of *Letters* because Dickinson's ideas responded directly to the prevailing political culture in the city. Jane Calvert's reading of *Letters* identifies the prominent role of the Quaker values of peaceable dissent and civil disobedience. Peaceable dissent meant Dickinson repeatedly extolled efforts to protest against Parliament, but insisted that it should not be riotous.[98] Dickinson was not alone in this desire. During the Stamp Act, the White Oaks had reflected a commitment to peaceable dissent when they faced down potentially riotous crowds. The idea supported the involvement and vigilance of ordinary people in protesting, but encouraged them not to riot.

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[94] Abel James to Sam Elam, 24 April 1770, Coates and Reynell Family Papers, (Collection 140), HSP. Abel James to Charles Rawson, 25 April 1770, Coates and Reynell Family Papers, HSP.
[95] John Reynell to Mildred and Roberts, 6 June 1769, Coates and Reynell Family Papers, HSP.
[96] Samuel Clarke to William Logan, 21 August 1769, Logan-Fisher-Fox Papers, HSP.
[97] Robert Barclay to Rebecca Barclay, 23 March 1770, Cox-Parrish-Wharton papers (Collection 154), HSP.
[98] Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, pp. 211 – 23.

Irrespective of the menace felt by the merchants, there were only five popular disturbances in the city all initiated by conflicts between sailors and customs officials, and certainly none on a level with the Battle of Golden Hill or the Boston Massacre.[99] In fact, more characteristic was the success of the city's brewers in turning away a shipment of foreign malt without incident.[100] *Letters* and market regulation spoke to a popular political debate that eschewed violence. Meanwhile, civil disobedience was important because it involved commercial non-intercourse protest that went beyond simply disengaging with British imports and involved developing American substitutes and better practices of thrift.[101] Ordinary people could contribute in small ways to this civil disobedience without being violent. Smith argues the Patriot economy was not about being discerning consumers, but about being virtuous producers and re-establishing connections as neighbours participating in a shared economy.[102] However, in Philadelphia, this idea also emerged out of established political customs as mediated by revolutionary essays. This was more complicated than a simple push and pull dynamic between the articulate Dickinson and his inarticulate audience. Instead, it involved tapping longstanding political practices to encourage novel crowd actions through popular literature.

Dickinson's connection to the city can be seen in the attacks levelled against him by his main political rival, Joseph Galloway. Galloway mounted this assault in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle*. At the time, Galloway controlled the newspaper after he transferred lucrative government printing commissions from David Hall to Maryland printer William Goddard, allowing Goddard's *Chronicle* to challenge Hall's *Gazette* and the Bradfords' *Pennsylvania Journal*. Galloway worried that the popular reception of *Letters* would lead to electoral victory for Dickinson and worked to undermine the Farmer with a series of disparaging articles.[103] Significantly, Galloway's attacks attempted to contradict Dickinson, but by positioning themselves in diametric opposition to the Farmer they unwittingly underscored the central tenets of Dickinson's popular appeal. The attacks began in earnest following the meeting outside the State House in July 1768. Galloway's main aim was to undermine the idea that Dickinson believed in peaceable

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[99] Steven Rosswurm, 'Arms, Culture, and Class: The Philadelphia Militia and "Lower Orders" in the American Revolution, 1765 to 1783' (unpublished PhD dissertation, Northern Illinois University, 1979), pp. 79 – 89.
[100] *PC* 24 July 1769. *PG* 20 July 1769.
[101] Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, pp. 13 – 4.
[102] Barbara Clark Smith, *The Freedoms We Lost*, pp. 105 – 6.
[103] Green, 'English Books and Printing in the Age of Franklin', p. 293.

dissent. The first attack reprinted Dickinson's *Address to the Committee of Correspondence in Barbados*. Galloway printed an extract introduced by remarks that framed the piece as an inflammatory call to arms. Galloway changed the typography of the piece, adding more capitals and italics to make the tone seem shrill and divisive. He also omitted both the opening apology of *Address* and the significant declaration 'I am a *North-American*' as well as the 'A NORTH AMERICAN' pseudonym.[104] Galloway twisted the support Dickinson enjoyed from ordinary people to reveal its potential disruptiveness. Galloway also denied Dickinson's Americanness. However, in attempting to dislodge the Farmer and occupy his political position, Galloway actually provided a testament to the popular appeal of his opponent's ideas.

The other attacks followed in a similar vein. The *Chronicle* printer Goddard later said that Galloway orchestrated the assault with his hired pens associating Dickinson with the villains of Pennsylvanian politics.[105] A Miller from the banks of the Schuylkill, as opposed to the Farmer on the Delaware, accused Dickinson of vanity and ambition. Significantly, the Miller said New Englanders, who had a reputation for republicanism, deified Dickinson.[106] The Miller deliberately associated Dickinson with New England, dredging up old provincial rivalries in order to undermine the Farmer by appealing to Pennsylvanians' long-held distrust of radical New Englanders. Meanwhile, the commentator Machiavel alluded to the fall of the Roman Republic. He argued that Dickinson was the '*young Octavius*' who ultimately manipulated the adoring Roman crowds to enforce a '*Dominato Plebis* (a Tyranny of the People).'[107] Galloway tapped Quaker fears of instability, as well as the broader concern that Dickinson's popular appeal would raise a mob. However, these attacks only serve to demonstrate Galloway's acceptance of the popular appeal of *Letters*. Finally, Jack Whiteoak accused the Farmer of being an 'ambitious *changeling*' with '*Oliverian* designs'. Oliverian was a reference to the republican tyrant Oliver Cromwell.[108] The pseudonym Whiteoak invoked the traditional associations between Galloway and the White Oaks. His attack again targeted Dickinson for his popular appeal, this time asserting that it was a disingenuous act of demagoguery. Instead, Galloway wanted to utilise the cache the White Oaks had built

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[104] *PC* 1 August 1768. *PC* 8 August 1768.
[105] William Goddard, *The Partnership: Or the History of the Rise and Progress of the Pennsylvania Chronicle* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11669, pp. 18 – 21.
[106] *PC* 15 August 1768.
[107] *PC* 15 August 1768.
[108] *PC* 8 August 1768.

up in 1765 in order to assert his own credentials as the advocate of peaceable dissent. These attacks, in a broadly similar fashion to the Paxton Boys pamphlet war, highlight the continued importance of Philadelphia's distinctive modes of debate in popular politics. Ultimately, this debate highlights that literature did not stand apart from customary rights, but attempted to adapt it for its own purpose. Galloway neither denied that peaceable dissent was the ideal mode of protest, nor that Americans should protest against Parliament, he simply tried to appropriate these goals for his own ends.

This attack culminated in the call from the White Oaks for '*No* Farmer *in the Assembly*'.[109] The crude electioneering was successful and Galloway kept Dickinson out of office in 1768.[110] However, Galloway's success eventually fractured Pennsylvanian politics. As Dickinson and Charles Thomson successfully led outdoor meetings, Galloway's Assembly failed to represent itself on any of the non-importation committees. As a result, in the 1770 October elections the White Oaks reneged on their established connection with Galloway's party ticket and elected Dickinson to the post of City Burgess along with a number of other artisan candidates.[111] The shifting pattern of opposition and support between the White Oaks and Dickinson raises question about the leadership role of ordinary people in protesting against Parliament. In the first instance, the White Oaks successfully upheld their position in politics and frustrated Dickinson, but, when discontented, they also had the power to influence governance by supporting Dickinson and other artisan politicians in their push for leadership. The group's actions reinforce the prevalence of the culture of peaceable dissent in the city, but they also allude to the importance of revolutionary ideas in capturing the imagination of interested groups. The White Oaks moved toward an active and engaged protest movement that supported Dickinson, which is suggestive of the general mood in the city. However, ultimately, they indicate that the challenge to the British Empire did not come from a negotiation between the texts of articulate authors and the rights of inarticulate people, but from a more dynamic picture in which one informed the other.

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[109] Benjamin Newcomb, *Franklin and Galloway: A Political Partnership* (New Haven, CT; Yale University Press, 1972), pp. 194 – 7.
[110] *PG* 6 October 1768.
[111] Benjamin Newcomb, *Political Partisanship in the American Middle Colonies, 1700 – 1776* (Baton Rouge, LA; Louisiana State University Press, 1995), p. 159.

The radicalisation of the American Revolution took place in the spaces where crowds and prints worked in tandem, with texts shaping the expectations of crowds and crowds vivifying the words in texts. John Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* informed this relationship to shape profoundly how the Philadelphian community interpreted the events of 1767 – 1770. Critically, audiences did not receive these ideas in a straightforward fashion from text to reader, but in a circuitous route that involved a number of print genres from newspapers to ephemera as well as crowd actions and electioneering. Ultimately, it owed its success in Philadelphia to its origins in the Quaker political tradition and the campaigning of its author. Furthermore, as Spero suggests, moving away from the concept of negotiation reveals the disrupted nature of the ordinary/elite divide, most notably in the actions of the White Oaks. In 1768, John Dickinson's political rival, Joseph Galloway, conscripted the White Oaks to defeat Dickinson's election hopes, but in 1770 they became his greatest allies. By understanding this change of heart, historians can glimpse the ideas that ordinary people formulated, even when they derived from debates with the elites. Therefore, though the cards that circulated in 1770 may not have been particularly eloquent, looking at ephemera to understand the physical encounters between readers and texts illustrates the intermediate steps through which revolutionary ideas passed and helps to explain why erudite ideas in the literature rarely appeared in its pristine form when crowds undertook revolutionary actions. Ephemera are the extant remnant of a much more vivacious debate, but they provide clues about the power of the popular presence to change colonial politics.

4) 'Raising and Increasing the Jealousy of Great Britain': Analysing the Debates over Domestic Manufacturing and their Contribution to Rising Confidence in American Ascendency, 1765 – 1774

This chapter continues to explore the engagement of ordinary people with the Revolution. The previous chapter demonstrated how they initially developed revolutionary ideas as they read and responded to the extant literature, particularly Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*. This one examines how ordinary people became actively involved in advancing the protest against Britain. Bluntly, the American Revolution happened because Americans believed they could and should protect their interests against British tyranny. At the core of this belief was confidence in American ascendency. Ordinary people assumed America would continually become stronger and stronger, and this empowered them to challenge the British Empire. This confidence was cultivated throughout the non-importation crises, but independence was not inevitable in 1774. The next chapter will examine the years 1775 and 1776 in order to understand how this confidence transformed into the independence movement, but the decisive first step was the emergence of an American consciousness among ordinary people. This consciousness arose out of two assumptions about the way that society should work. The first assumption was the link between colonial manufacturing and American ascendency. From 1765 to 1774, ordinary Philadelphians frequently read that supporting manufacturing in the colonies would lead to American power. The second assumption was that material refinement was no longer the hallmark of a civilised society. This led to a celebration of colonial rusticity in which Americans demonstrated their virtue by contributing, in however small a way, to the promotion of colonial manufacturing. This consciousness developed rapidly in the years surrounding the radicalisation of the Revolution between 1767 and 1770, but it also persisted in the years between consumer protests. Significantly, a number of print genres entrenched in Philadelphian print culture reinforced the development of these assumptions.

Advertising, almanacs, and lotteries were accessible to many ordinary people and were part of their regular reading routine. Analysing the communications circuits surrounding these texts reveals how the Patriot message pervaded daily life, and how persistent Patriots were in reiterating the value of the American community between major crowd events. Although they rarely contained explicit political commentaries, these texts reminded ordinary people of their political potential. Individually the content in these genres could appear random or eccentric, but taken together in the context of broader political campaigns they engendered greater confidence in the idea of the American community.

These material texts did not cause the transformation in American consciousness by themselves. They are artefacts of Patriot ideas as well as reminders of the revolutionary potential of consumer choices. These ubiquitous genres carried the polemics of revolutionary literature into the lives of ordinary people. Newspaper advertisements, focussing on the attractions of consumer goods, are the extant remnants of a much larger discussion. The majority of adverts followed a strict formula and offered no political comment, but a few exceptional examples used the medium to engage the patriotic debates surrounding consumer goods. Some of these exceptions capture the voice of usually inarticulate artisans, while overall the genre provides an insight into the association between domestic manufacturing and American ascendency. Meanwhile, almanacs linked to broader debates surrounding the substitution of imported goods by offering useful knowledge about American alternatives at crucial moments of the debate. Almanacs appear apolitical only when considered in isolation. Viewed in the context of the protest campaigns surrounding them, the advice within almanacs becomes pointed and politicised. They encouraged their readers to take small, incremental actions to promote colonial production. Finally, the lottery schemes that supported a series of manufacturing endeavours demonstrate the persistence of these debates between 1770 and 1773. These years are usually considered a fallow period in revolutionary activity, but the schemes for vineyards, steel, glass, and porcelain demonstrate there was a continued discussion about the important link between domestic manufacturing and American ascendency. Lotteries bridged the gap between non-importation crises and the Continental Association, sustaining the Patriot message. Ultimately, the inclusion of many tenets relating to American manufacturing in the Continental Association demonstrates its revolutionary significance. The Association was not just a boycott of British imports. It included a formal commitment to domestic manufacturing schemes that facilitated the

participation of ordinary people. This chapter looks first at the discussion of domestic manufacturing within these genres of print and then connects them to some of the broader political debates in order to demonstrate how integrated these genres were to the revolutionary narrative. The association between manufacturing in the colonies and American ascendency fostered ordinary people's assumption of imminent American greatness.

At the heart of this chapter is the metamorphosis of consumer culture into political protest. Timothy Breen's *Marketplace of Revolution* and *American Insurgents, American Patriots* are integral to this revolutionary historiography. Throughout both works, Breen persuasively argues that the revolutionary moment was the transformation of material culture into political objects through public acts of sacrifice. Regulating or ritually destroying consumer goods politicised material culture, transforming daily life and bringing ordinary people into the Revolution. The non-importation movements were crucial for developing trust between the colonies, as the replication of rituals throughout America created a sense of simultaneity that helped colonists imagine a broader American community. The pinnacle of this movement was the 1774 Continental Association. The Association formalised the non-importation movements into colonial committees, which in turn helped Patriots organise the insurgency that directly challenged British authority. As Breen argues, understanding the nature of material culture is crucial for understanding the Revolution, but he too readily assumes that actions involving material culture were self-evident to audiences.[1] Also, by concentrating almost exclusively on the consumption side of the consumer protest, Breen overlooks the crucial debates about American production. Non-importation and non-consumption agreements existed alongside many other debates about the importance of domestic manufacturing. The persistent and pervasive discussions that took place in advertising, almanacs, and lotteries sustained the idea that America would overtake Britain eventually. The aim here is not to dislodge Breen's narrative, but rather to look deeper into the totality of the debates surrounding consumer society in America. Conspicuous acts of non-consumption created trust between the disparate colonies, but the celebration of domestic manufacturing helped ordinary people become confident in the American community.

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[1] Timothy H. Breen, *Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 21 – 4, 55 – 9, 238. Breen, *American Insurgents, American Patriots*, pp. 110 – 1, 167 – 70.

This assumption of American ascendency had radical implications. It realigned the expectations of a society. By choosing to celebrate rusticity, ordinary people repudiated the idea that refinement was the source of power. In *The Refinement of America,* Richard Bushman argued there was a link between the use of material items and the political authority of elite Americans. Refinement encompassed both the actual quality of the consumer goods and the built environment, as well as the way in which people used these objects and presented themselves. Significantly, refinement described a set of signs shared between people that allowed elites to parse their position in society by judging the goods and habits of their colleagues. These judgements then concentrated wealth and power into the hands of those who could appreciate refinement.[2] In this way, refinement helped to maintain the position of the elite, but many of the commentaries in advertising, almanacs, and lotteries appeal to an alternative vision of America, one that looked forward to American ascendency. These genres linked the rise of America with the promotion of colonial industries, and in many cases, this domestic production came at the expense of refinement. Each of the overlooked genres in this chapter alludes to the revolutionary potential of everyday activities and, as they pushed for greater domestic manufacturing, they started to celebrate rusticity rather than refinement. Advertising reinforced the critical association between domestic manufacturing and American ascendency. From this assumption developed the idea that virtue was preferable to refinement, and almanacs helped to suggest ways in which ordinary people could contribute to colonial industries. Finally, four lottery schemes reveal that this idea did not disappear between the Townshend Duties and the Boston Tea Party. Attempts to set up manufactories in America demonstrate that, even after debates about consumption ended, discussion about American production continued. Although they rarely contained explicit political commentaries, they contextualise the confident assertions about American ascendency. Ultimately, Americans believed at the moment of independence their rusticity was a sign of strength compared to metropolitan decline and this empowered them to challenge the British Empire.

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[2] Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York, NY; Alfred A Knopf, 1992), pp. 181 – 5.

'Attended with Obvious Good Consequences':
Newspaper Advertising and the Discussion of Patriotic Manufacturing

Newspaper advertising helped to develop the first assumption underpinning American confidence, namely that there was a link between colonial manufacturing and potential American ascendency. The most significant adverts are the retail notices that informed potential shoppers about the consumer goods available for sale. Retailers communicated with customers through these adverts. In most cases, these adverts had little political significance, but in a few instances, retailers attempted to sell their wares by emphasising their patriotic value. These appeals equated the consumption of domestic manufacturing with advancing American interests. While Breen also looks at advertising, he concentrates on its effect for consumption. He argues the most important commercial notices were the inventories of desire. These were long lists of goods available for sale that sparked the imagination of the consumer by listing all the different varieties available. Cloth was sold in an array of finishes, originating from a multitude of countries, and in a selection of colours. They helped create discerning consumers who revelled in the world of goods. These inventories put consumer culture at the centre of colonial life.[3] Breen makes no claims about the patriotic effect of these inventories of desire. Instead, the most significant element of the adverts for him was the variety they offered to consumers. He summarises the tactics retailers deployed to compete with each other, but mainly concentrates on the consumer goods themselves. In so doing, he overlooks the fact retailers provided short commentaries about their goods designed to appeal to consumers. Carl Robert Keyes, in one of the few studies on early American advertising, argues retailers did more with their advertisements to entice consumers than merely offer choice. They cultivated a consuming habit among shoppers by developing new textual and visual strategies.[4] These advertising appeals fundamentally shaped the relationship between colonists and consumer goods. During the Revolution, some retailers also tried to use their adverts to shape the relationship between consumers and manufacturing. Historians often disregard these advertisements as

[3] Breen, *Marketplace of Revolution*, pp. 53 – 9.
[4] Carl Robert Keyes, 'Early American Advertising: Marketing and consumer culture in eighteenth-century Philadelphia' (unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, The John Hopkins University, 2008), pp. 9, 17 – 9,

peculiar exceptions.[5] However, looking at their communications circuit reveals their entrenched place in Philadelphia's interpretative community. These exceptional instances illustrate the patriotic interpretation of domestic manufacturing.

Understanding the relationship between the message of the retailer and its reception by the consumer requires looking at the mediations the adverts passed through. The first mediating factor was the newspaper printer. Printers responded to the news culture surrounding their newspapers, but there is little evidence to suggest they took an active role in changing the messages of advertisers. In fact, a number of elements of their business would seem to preclude it. At the abstract level, printers operated according to the principle of an impartial press in which they published anything brought to them without discrimination.[6] The application of this impartiality is clearly much more complicated, but in the case of advertising exercising editorial influence would be remarkable and worthy of comment. In the numerous merchants' letterbooks consulted for this thesis, none feature complaints from retailers about printers changing an advert; however, the silence of retailers is, of course, not conclusive evidence, and may instead signal problems in preserving these complaints. Instead, the second disincentive to printers amending adverts was the financial importance of advertising to the newspaper business. Advertising was their second largest revenue stream after subscriptions. However, as printers had notorious difficulty in collecting from subscribers, advertising being an over-the-counter transaction was an important source of money that printers would be hesitant to endanger with needless interference.[7] For many printers, these financial incentives may have helped reinforce the impartiality principle. Finally, Keyes demonstrates that printers more than any other advertiser used patriotic appeals themselves to sell their wares.[8] In general, printers were more aligned with the Patriot position and not squeamish about associating their business with the patriotic cause; therefore, the printer's main role in advertising was to solicit as many adverts as possible to support their newspapers, and they likely had little influence over their content.

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[5] Keyes' articles argue that patriotic advertising was more prominent in the Early Republic. Carl Robert Keyes, 'History Prints, Newspaper Advertisements, and Cultivating Citizen Consumers: Patriotism and Partisanship in Marketing Campaigns in the Era of the Revolution', *American Periodicals,* 24:2 (2014), 145 – 85. Carl Robert Keyes, 'A Revolution in Advertising: "Buy American" Campaigns in the Late Eighteenth Century', in *We are What we Sell: How Advertising Shapes American Life … and Always Has*, ed. by Danielle Sarver Coombs and Bob Batchelor (Santa Barbara, CA; Praeger, 2013), pp. 1 – 25.

[6] Green, 'English Books and Printing in the Age of Franklin', p. 291.

[7] Charles Clark, *The Public Prints*, pp. 205 – 7.

[8] Keyes, 'Early American Advertising', pp. 244 – 5.

Printers received adverts from a broad cross-section of society. Overall, advertising was open to many more people than other forms of print. In fact, most people who chose to advertise did not sell consumer goods. Alongside the retail notices, newspaper advertising included vendue sales, real estate, runaway slaves and servants, job opportunities, employment solicitation, adverts for services, lost livestock or personal affects, and appeals for people to pay their debts. Many different people could use newspaper advertising to communicate with the world. That said, commercial notices were the largest component of the advertising share. Keyes estimates that adverts for consumer goods reached a high point of 47% of all adverts by the mid-eighteenth century.[9] These commercial notices were one way in which retailers discussed their consumer goods. Newspaper adverts cost three shillings for the first printing and a shilling a piece for each subsequent printing. This was significantly less than the price of handbills or broadsides, and therefore they were a plausible outlet for moderately successful artisans.[10] The relative cheapness of advertising allowed many outside the elite to publish their commentaries. Looking at the language of patriotic appeals may help to reveal some of the prevailing ideas among ordinary people given that artisans like glue makers, weavers, and millers rarely left their ideas to posterity in any other form. Advertising provides a tantalising glimpse into the political engagement of a few usually inarticulate individuals.

Looking at the variety and sophistication of adverts demonstrates that their authors exercised a great deal of control over their notices. Retailers often amended their adverts to reflect stock levels and emphasise the newly imported nature of their goods. Benjamin Fuller twice advertised imported goods in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1765, once in June and once in September. By comparing the two, it is evident that Fuller's September advert adapted an already established formula. Both adverts began by announcing the arrival of new goods, but in each case, Fuller specified the name of the ship, the captain's name, and the port of origin. Then Fuller, verbatim in June and September, gave a description for where his shop could be found. The list of goods followed, but Fuller added in the new stock, deleted some of the older stock, while keeping other items in between. Critically, the deletions and amendments appear in large blocks and the older stock appeared in the same order in both notices. The notice concluded with a

[9] Keyes, 'Early American Advertising', p. 27, 241 – 3.
[10] Keyes, 'Early American Advertising', p. 31.

common assertion that there were many other articles for sale too tedious to mention. The similarity between the two lists suggests that Fuller worked from a model. Differences in spacing and capitalisation suggest that this was a paper model rather than a block of type held by the printer.[11] Moreover, Fuller inserted the same advert, with the items listed in identical order, in the *Pennsylvania Journal*. The only difference was that in the *Gazette* the fractions Fuller used were given as '7 eights' or '3 qr.' whereas in the *Journal* they were listed as '7 8' and '3 4'.[12] This suggests Fuller had a model for his advertisements that he amended and then submitted to printers. Retailers therefore exercised control over the content of their adverts. They were attentive to changes in their stock levels and used their advertisements to inform consumers. These were not static texts reprinted mechanically, but instead stood as vibrant statements about consumer goods in Philadelphia.

Many like Fuller followed a set formula, updating items in order to appeal to customers, but others chose to make more substantive claims. More than just utilitarian inventories of desire, advertisers made important choices about how to present their wares. According to Keyes, 71% of advertisers used substantive appeals in the period from 1760 to 1791. These were concerted efforts to lure consumers on issues such as price, quality, or refined characteristics like gentility or elegance.[13] As a case study, boulting cloths, used by millers and grain merchants in the sifting of flour, illustrate how certain trades developed unique selling points specific to their commodity. Many of the purveyors of the cloth in Philadelphia newspapers competed with each other directly on this point. Three firms advertised a promise between 1766 and 1774 that their retailer was an experienced miller and would help anyone unacquainted with the process select the appropriate cloth.[14] Repeatedly and consistently, these firms vied with each other over the same market share; however, experience as a miller was not the only way that retailers in Philadelphia attempted to sell boulting cloth. Both Elizabeth Thomas and Peter Turner advertised that their cloth was

[11] *PG* 13 June 1765. *PG* 26 September 1765.
[12] *PJ* 13 June 1765.
[13] Keyes, 'Early American Advertising', pp. 138 – 43.
[14] *PG* 26 June 1766. *PG* 20 November 1766. *PG* 8 January 1767. *PG* 29 January 1767. *PG* 23 January 1766. *PG* 20 February 1766. *PG* 1 June 1767. *PG* 3 December 1767. *PG* 10 December 1767. *PG* 3 November 1768. *PG* 16 February 1769. *PG* 23 February 1769. *PG* 16 March 1769. *PG* 16 November 1769. *PG* 30 August 1770. *PG* 25 October 1770. *PG* 29 August 1771. *PG* 26 December 1771. *PG* 18 June 1772. *PG* 5 August 1772. *PG* 2 September 1772. *PG* 8 November 1774.

of the best quality available in America.[15] Meanwhile, Ludwig Lauman and the firm of Hamilton and Moore stressed that they were located in Lancaster, hoping to tap the wider Pennsylvanian market.[16] Similarly, Daniel Byrnes announced he was located in Wilmington, but assured readers he offered prices equal to Philadelphia.[17] Still other retailers adapted new marketing techniques and sold boulting cloth with satisfaction guarantees. Isaac Melcher promised to exchange any cloth that did not meet a customer's expectations provided they were undamaged.[18] Francis Hassenclever went further and said that if his cloth did not reach a customer's expectation he would offer an exchange or their money back.[19] From this brief overview, the variety of boulting cloth advertisement demonstrates retailers could appeal to customers in a variety of ways specific to their business model. Clearly historians should treat these advertising statements seriously, as they were important to the retailers themselves.

Advertising was a discussion between retailer and consumer, and according to one of the few reader responses that survives, readers read adverts carefully. Harbottle Dorr's index of newspapers reveals the Boston shopkeeper often commented on advertisements. Crucially, he usually ignored the more mundane notices in favour of more unusual items. Uriel Heyd concludes that this meant newspaper audiences paid attention to all parts of the text.[20] Dorr may have been an exceptional reader, but his case suggests that there was an audience for these items. The effect of the patriotic appeals beyond these immediate readers is harder to discern; however, looking at trends in advertising during moments of heightened political tension reveals that newspaper advertisements responded to prevailing discontent toward imported goods. For Breen, much of the significance of the inventories of desire was its assertions of freshness. A shipment of goods created considerable excitement among consumers wishing to purchase the latest fashions.[21] Unsurprisingly, however, the number of retailers that advertised their newly imported goods declined dramatically during the months of non-importation. Using the search function in Accessible Archives to locate the word 'import', I counted the adverts selling imported goods. In each

[15] *PG* 6 June 1766. *PG* 12 May 1768. *PG* 16 February 1769. *PG* 23 August 1770. *PG* 29 November 1770. *PG* 14 March 1771. *PG* 2 May 1771. *PG* 4 July 1771. *PG* 7 November 1771. *PG* 30 April 1772. *PG* 12 August 1772. *PG* 7 April 1773. *PG* 10 November 1773. *PG* 6 April 1774.
[16] *PG* 14 April 1772. *PG* 9 December 1772. *PG* 18 August 1773.
[17] *PG* 3 November 1773.
[18] *PG* 31 January 1771. *PG* 9 June 1773.
[19] *PG* 9 September 1772. *PG* 11 November 1772. *PG* 21 April 1773.
[20] Heyd, *Reading Newspapers*, pp. 226 – 8.
[21] Breen, *Marketplace of Revolution*, p. 133.

of the crises surrounding the Stamp Act, Townshend Duties, and the Continental Association, the average adverts per issue were 1.53, 1.45, and 1.48 respectively. By comparison, in the year preceding each non-importation movement the average number of imported adverts were 4.22 between 1 November 1764 and 31 October 1765, 7.5 between 17 March 1768 and 9 March 1769, and 3.98 between 1 December 1773 and 30 November 1774. The larger number for the 1768/9 period may reflect the greater survival of supplements for these issues, but clearly newspapers contained fewer imported adverts during times of non-importation. The fact that adverts for imported goods appeared at all is indicative that a few retailers were willing to risk popular discontent and that printers were willing to print the notices. Overall, adverts have something to tell us about the nature of the debates surrounding consumer culture in Philadelphia.

This discussion between retailers and consumers changed over time. The most explicit declarations accompanied the radicalisation of the Revolution during the Townshend Duties crisis, but the adverts surrounding the Continental Association are also suggestive of the pervasive politicisation of market life. During the Stamp Act crisis, the majority of patriotic advertising worked to convince readers that there was no difference in quality between British imports and American manufacture, thereby reassuring elite consumers that they would not unduly suffer by switching to domestic products. Thomas Bradford, publisher of the *Pennsylvania Journal*, inserted a piece in his paper advertising 'superfine home spun American CLOTH, superior to any from Britain, is now left at the Coffee House for sale, where those that are willing to encourage their country may be supplied.'[22] Americans were well versed in distinguishing between varying qualities of textiles from coarse to superfine. Bradford's superfine cloth appealed to those who usually shopped at the higher end of the market. These adverts sought to convince consumers that their goods were the equivalents of British imports while providing a boost to the Patriot cause. Similarly, William Smith's market for domestically produced cloth attempted to convince consumers that domestic cloth could replace British imports. He opened the market in December 1765, advertising 'FINE HOMEMADE BROADCLOTHS'. An article in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported Smith's market to be an immediate success, with one Gentleman buying £30 worth of goods. The

[22] *PJ* 28 November 1765.

intention behind the story was to demonstrate to the elite that gentlemen were consuming vast amounts of American goods. By January, Smith asserted that his cloth was not 'inferior to the Super Cloths imported from England.'[23] Both Smith and Bradford associated their goods with the patriotic cause, but also asserted their products were viable substitutes for refined British imports. Moreover, in both instances the products targeted elite consumers.

Patriotic advertising in 1765 and 1766 still implicitly celebrated refinement. For example, Thomas Smith linked his soap factory with the advocacy of domestic manufacturing, but he also promised his superfine crown soap would help in the washing and fulling of cloth to make them 'have a nearer Resemblence of the English manufactures.'[24] Smith's contention was that his soap could turn American cloth into refined English-style goods. The advert alluded to domestic production but concentrated on achieving the quality of imported cloth. Smith worked hard to reassure readers that switching to American products would not have a negative effect on their enjoyment of the goods. During the Stamp Act crisis, retailers responded to the broader discontent with importation and even appealed to the potential power of patriotic endeavours, but the main purpose behind these appeals were to encourage the refined elite to signal their power with American goods rather than British imports. The Stamp Act did little to change American preferences for imported British goods. Breen doubts the sincerity of any claim to replace British manufactured goods. He argues Stamp Act protests convinced Americans their consumption made Britain dependent on the colonies. For Breen, the protest movement revolved around political acts of consumption, the revolutionary power coming from the sacrifice of giving up desirable goods. The Stamp Act established this behaviour and though colonists often regressed to older patterns between non-importation movements, over the course of the 1760s and 1770s they learned to express their political sentiments through material culture.[25] The adverts by Bradford, Smith, and Smith reinforce this interpretation by emphasising their refined and genteel nature, but Breen and the adverts only address replacing fashionable British cloth, when in practice most of the patriotic appeals focus on less fashionable manufactured items.

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[23] *PG* 12 December 1765. *PG* 2 January 1766.
[24] *PG* 26 December 1765. *PG* 13 February 1766.
[25] Breen, *Marketplace of Revolution*, pp. 212 – 3, 224 – 34.

One of earliest promoters of patriotic advertising, Conrad Bartling, sold glue that was 'in every Respect as good as any that is imported from England'. In the note beneath the advert, Bartling aligned his glue making with the general encouragement of domestic manufacturing.[26] Glue was not a luxury product like cloth. For this reason, Bartling may have been unable to encourage elites to buy American glue in as persuasive a manner as Bradford, Smith, and Smith. Bartling's advert makes two claims, first that his glue was as good as that imported from Britain and second that American glue would be beneficial to America. Unlike William Smith, it did not matter whether gentlemen bought the glue, and unlike Thomas Smith, the glue did not help to bring American products up to British standards. Patriotic advertising that promoted mundane items like glue reinforced the association between domestic manufacturing and American ascendency while not implicitly privileging Britain as the touchstone of refinement. This was the basis of many advertisements during the more radical 1767 to 1770 period. Retailers staked similar claims during both crises, but the focus shifted further away from matching British refinement and more toward helping America.

Perhaps the best illustration of this distinction is evident in the advertisements of Benjamin Jackson and his competitors. Jackson was a powder maker and initially involved in the mustard, coffee, and chocolate business. Jackson formed a partnership with Jonathan Crathorne in 1759, but dissolved it in 1765. Jackson had since the beginning of the partnership claimed his mustard flour was 'preferable to the English, Durham, or any other yet made.'[27] The Stamp Act crisis inflected this older claim with new significance. When the partnership between Jackson and Crathorne dissolved, both men maintained, in exactly the same wording, that their mustard flour 'exceed any from England or elsewhere.'[28] Jackson also asserted his coffee was roasted and ground 'in as great Perfection as at the Roasting Office in London'; whereas, Crathorne said that his coffee was done 'to as great Perfection as in England.'[29] For two weeks in late November, both adverts appeared side-by-side in the same issue.[30] There were differences between the adverts, but both men vied with each other in order to assert that they had the best mustard and coffee in Philadelphia, which crucially was based on their ability to exceed British imports. In the context

[26] *PG* 18 April 1765.
[27] *PG* 27 December 1759.
[28] *PG* 24 October 1765. *PG* 31 October 1765.
[29] *PG* 24 October 1765. *PG* 31 October 1765.
[30] *PG* 21 November 1765. *PG* 28 November 1765.

of the Stamp Act crisis, this was a patriotic claim because it sought to replace a British import, but it still maintained the idea that British manufacturing was more refined.

These claims changed substantially during the Townshend Duties. Mary Crathorne took over her husband's business in 1768 after John's death. Mary Crathorne chose not to advertise that the coffee she sold was superior to London's.[31] Jackson, meanwhile, persisted in his claim to be the best mustard flour producer in the world, and furthermore hoped to induce 'true patriotic Merchants, Masters of vessels, &c.' to ship his mustard to the various colonial trading hubs. For Jackson, buying his mustard would prevent the sending of money for this 'seemingly trifling article' back to England and increase the flow of money in America. To highlight his patriotic credentials further, Jackson asserted that in order to avoid contributing any tax by buying glass bottles, he would store the mustard in ceramic jars. Jackson even added he wished to replace British glass entirely.[32] Over the course of the Stamp Act and the Townshend Duties, Jackson decided to emphasise how important his goods were to American interests. He appealed to Patriots and demonstrated how supporting his business ultimately helped America. By elaborating on the political implications of buying mustard, Jackson focused less on the ability of his mustard to match British refinement and more on the important consequences of buying American.

A few months later Jackson sold his business to William Norton. Norton appealed to consumers on the basis that he employed the same head workman as Jackson.[33] Critically, Norton chose not to continue the patriotic assertion that chocolate and mustard could contribute to the overall prosperity of the colonies. Jackson, however, remerged a year later after inventing a new ink powder. Like mustard, he claimed that 'all our American manufactures (tho'ever so small) are attended with obvious good consequences to the British colonies in general'. He assured his readers of the superior quality of his ink and hoped for the general encouragement of domestic manufacturing.[34] Jackson was a persistent voice in celebrating the power of domestic products to contribute to the Patriot agenda. He maintained this position even as his direct competitors chose to abandon it. Jackson's adverts represented a principled stand in support of American manufacturing that translated into market activity. He alluded to the rise of

[31] *PG* 11 February 1768.
[32] *PG* 6 October 1768.
[33] *PG* 5 January 1769.
[34] *PG* 5 April 1770.

America through the small, but accumulative contributions of ordinary people. This was an important narrative and many chose to take up this line of reasoning during the Townshend Duties. This constant refrain reiterated to anyone who heeded Jackson the association between domestic manufacturing and ascendency.

Two changes happened during the Townshend Duties movement. Advertisements began to focus more on convincing ordinary consumers about the salutary effect of buying patriotically and there were more retailers advertising in this way. Looking at a cross-section of this diverse array of advertisements demonstrates that from the largest pieces of cloth to the smallest everyday items, retailers stressed continually that each was contributing to the success of America. Retailers competed directly over their patriotic appeals. Both Nathaniel Tweedy and Joshua Fisher, for example, noted that their snuff encouraged American manufacturing.[35] Patriotic claims differed in their focus, but all specified they promoted American interests. Two broadcloth weavers from Stroudwater in England set up a manufactory in Philadelphia to produce 'all sorts of woollen cloths'. Importantly, 'they hope that all lovers of their country will encourage this MANUFACTORY, as it may lessen the demand for foreign cloths.'[36] The advert addressed all who wished to promote American interests as well as appealing to consumers who wanted more than just superfine cloth. By reaching out to a wider audience in this way the weavers explicitly aligned themselves with the political non-importation movement. Richard Humphreys explained how his cloth business promoted the public good in America. He aimed to buy up domestic cloth according to a scheme that would benefit both himself as a retailer, the manufacturer, consumers, and the country as a whole. He wanted to 'encourage the purchasers to promote the industry and wealth of the colonies, by wearing and recommending such manufactures.'[37] Humphreys stressed the importance of virtuous consumption, but he did so in reference to the production side of cloth. Finally, Benjamin Randolph advertised his woodworking business. He highlighted his stock of wooden buttons, and said 'he doubts not but every lover of his country, will encourage the same, as well as all other American manufactures, especially at this time, when the importation of British superfluities is deemed inconsistent

[35] *PG* 5 October 1769.
[36] *PG* 20 July 1769.
[37] *PG* 11 October 1770.

with the true interest of America.'[38] Randolph worked against the importation of British goods by emphasising that every small consumer decision mattered. Admittedly, some of these adverts could potentially have been cynical attempts to sell traditionally mundane wares during a time of non-importation, but they still explicitly made the argument that domestic products helped promote American interests. This broadening participation resonated with the call in *Letters* and the more popular crowd actions that surrounded the Townshend Duties debates. These adverts were part of a popular patriotic drive and they reminded audiences about the way their consumer choices could help, or hurt, American interests.

These claims were most explicit in the industries targeted by the Townshend Duties, especially paper and glass. Dickinson argued paper and glass exemplified the pernicious nature of the tax.[39] This heightened political awareness may explain why many of these retailers sold their goods in direct opposition to paying the duties. Richard Wistar advertised the various products of his glass works noting that since the 'glass is of American manufactory, it is consequently clear of the duties the Americans so justly complain of, and at present it seems peculiarly the interest of America to encourage her own manufactories, more especially those upon which duties have been raised, for the sole purpose of raising a revenue.'[40] Wistar reflected the broader complaint against the Townshend Duties that their illegitimacy arose from their intention to raise a revenue. The language of Dickinson and other polemicists existed in this advert for glass. Plunket Fleeson advertised in huge capital letters 'AMERICAN PAPER HANGINGS'. Fleeson 'MANUFACTURED in Philadelphia, of all kinds and colours, not inferior to those generally imported, and as low in price. […] And as there is a considerable duty imposed on paper hangings imported here, it cannot be doubted, but that every one among us, who wishes prosperity to America, will give a preference to our own manufacture'.[41] Fleeson argued that those who hoped for American prosperity should support domestic manufacturing. This was a common concern that had political implications as it also helped to avoid the Townshend Duties. Finally, an advertisement called for Philadelphians to bring their broken flint glass to a number of merchants in the city so the pieces could

[38] *PG* 18 January 1770.
[39] Dickinson, *Letters*, pp. 7 – 13.
[40] *PG* 10 August 1769.
[41] *PG* 19 October 1769.

be reworked into new glass. The advert appealed to 'all Lovers of American Manufactory will encourage what lies in their Power, and particularly in this Instance, save, collect and send such broken Glass'. The advert concluded with a prominent note 'N.B. NO DUTIES HERE.'[42] Audiences could directly help with setting up a domestic glass industry. The advert offered a clear and concrete way that ordinary people could contribute to the prosperity of America. Retailers during the Townshend Duties used their adverts to exhort the link between manufacturing and American prosperity. Retailers did not always cite the political implications of their adverts, but these texts drew from the broader non-importation campaign and reminded audiences of the importance of American production.

This was a pervasive message and even advertisers connected to the importation business responded with sensitivity to the new political climate. In 1769, during the months of non-importation, Francis Hopkinson advertised new broadcloths, but he stressed they had been imported last spring and only now were they unpacked.[43] Hopkinson sold imported goods, but in deference to the terms of the non-importation agreements he explained to the audience how they conformed to the broader political movement. Similarly, Thomas Clifford noted 'a variety of European goods, of former importation.'[44] Even after the collapse of the non-importation agreements, John Kaighn advertised he had imported goods for sale, but they had arrived in Philadelphia the previous year. He explained these items had been in the committee's stores, but, following the collapse of the agreement, he was now opening the freight and selling the imported cloth.[45] Kaighn's advert attempted to balance the excitement of fashionable consumer goods against upsetting the popular commitment to non-importation. These more tepid concessions to patriotic advertising illustrate how pervasive the broader non-importation movement had become, but also presage the more reserved claims made during the Continental Association. Townshend Duties' advertising corresponded to the massive increase in the participation of ordinary people. Looking at the messages within it demonstrates how the Patriot agenda reached far beyond polemical works and into the everyday discussions surrounding consumer goods. A few retailers explicitly embraced Patriot politics and argued their goods helped advance the cause, others preferred to speak in general terms about

[42] *PG* 13 July 1769.
[43] *PG* 21 September 1769.
[44] *PG* 12 October 1769.
[45] *PG* 11 October 1770.

the benefits that domestic manufacturing provided for Americans, and some simply used their adverts to indicate they conformed to prevailing opinions. In these different ways, they provided a link for readers between the broader political campaign, domestic manufacturing, and the promotion of American ascendency.

Keyes notes that in the intervening years between 1770 and 1774 these patriotic claims resurfaced sporadically for goods like parchment or glass.[46] However, the Townshend Duties represented a high water mark, and direct opposition to Parliament never resurfaced among advertisers during the Continental Association. Those who made patriotic appeals reserved themselves to highlighting the public good that domestic manufacturing provided. Matthias Eyre and John Wood sold watch springs 'much cheaper than they can be afforded when imported from England'. They hoped only to encourage watchmakers in 'this and the neighbouring Provinces' by supplying them with Philadelphia-made springs.[47] This was a significantly less grandiose claim to the good of America in general. Meanwhile, Hamilton and Leiper were pleased that the encouragement they received for their Philadelphia-made snuff would empower them to continue to make it so as to 'render it as desirable as any ever imported from London.'[48] In effect, they returned to the more staid assertions about import substitution that characterised Stamp Act advertising. However, in both cases these adverts appeared at times of intense political conflict. Their smaller claims were weighted against the momentous changes that had happened during the Townshend Duties and the incendiary political context of 1774 and 1775. One of the few exceptions was John Elliott. He emblazoned an advertisement with '*AMERICAN* GLASS' which was 'such as are usually imported from Great-Britain' and offered it to sale to 'the friends of their country and their own interest'.[49] This exception was likely to do with the fact that glass, unlike watches and snuff, had a longer association with Parliamentary protest, but even Elliot did not make as explicit a political statement as Richard Wistar. These adverts represent a generally more muted commitment to American manufacturing. They emphasised that colonial products had a public good, but were hesitant to link it with American ascendency.

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[46] Keyes, 'Early American Advertising', pp. 249 – 66.
[47] *PG* 1 February 1775.
[48] *PG* 22 February 1775.
[49] *PG* 7 December 1774.

In general, adverts during 1774 and 1775 preferred to stress their compliance with the tenets of the Continental Association. William Lippincott advertised that his imported goods would be sold for a moderate profit.[50] This notion of moderate profit was enshrined in the Continental Association, which will be explored in greater detail later, but suffice it to say that one of the powers of ordinary people was to ensure that retailers did not take advantage of the dispute with Britain to raise prices. This was a much older idea, and even before the Association was agreed, Peter Stretch, cloth retailer, used the term 'moderate Profit'.[51] This suggests that advertising and the Continental Association emerged out of the same political climate, one committed to a more cautious style of business. Repeatedly, retailers stressed they would abide by a commitment to reasonable earnings. Isaac and Benjamin Cathrall sold their linen drapery for moderate profit.[52] Philip Marchinton explicitly appealed to his audience to trust him because he was selling his cloth 'at the very same prices he did six months ago, except those that came higher from home'.[53] Suspicions about John Head forced him to deny publically that he would sell at excessive profit.[54] Individually, these later examples appear less politically engaged, but by indicating their adherence to the Continental Association they were in effect publically declaring their commitment to it. Moreover, by 1774 the silence of retailers was insignificant next to the much louder public debates. Overall, retailers throughout the 1760s and 1770s made some telling remarks about the nature of American production. At most, they made declarations about the link between domestic production and American ascendency, and at least they signalled conformity with broader political campaigns. A few captured the voice of artisans, but collectively they preserve patriotic discussions of domestic manufacturing. Importantly they were not apolitical, but powerful reminders of the revolutionary potential of consumer choices.

This patriotic discussion takes on even more resonance when viewed in the context of confident assertions about American ascendency. As an illustration, a short anecdote about American travellers in Britain underscores the arguments these adverts made. Between 1769 and 1771, a piece from the *Gazetteer and Daily Advertiser* appeared in newspapers in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, as well as a Philadelphian magazine and almanac. The anecdote itself is about two North American travellers who

[50] *PG* 28 September 1774.
[51] *PG* 4 May 1774.
[52] *PG* 26 October 1774.
[53] *PG* 18 January 1775.
[54] *PG* 19 October 1774.

landed in London in the year 1944. The two travellers met a poor Briton who took them on a tour around the depopulated and degraded city pointing out famous landmarks and bemoaning the sad state of modern Britain. The guide concluded with a pointed lament about the dissolution of London, a city 'whose merchants were princes; whose traffickers were the honourable of the earth; but whose prosperity, alas! Are now scattered over the whole world, and more especially to the American empire, whither they were followed by most [British] artisans and mechanics, and which is the real cause of [America's] power and grandeur' now.[55] The significant line is 'whose merchants were princes, whose traffickers were the honourable of the earth'. This is a direct quote from Isaiah 23:8 in which God punishes the great mercantile city of Tyre for its arrogance and greed. To the original British audience, the comparison with Tyre was an attack on the ministry for atrocities committed against India, Wilkes, and the colonies. To the American audience, the anecdote seemed to point toward the colonies surpassing Britain in terms of commercial prosperity. British decline and American ascendency was predicated on the power and grandeur emanating from manufacturing.

At each stage of the Revolution, commentators reached back to Tyre as a model to understand the relationship with Britain. In 1766, a prize-winning essayist explicitly compared Britain to Tyre to assert that Carthage, colony to Tyre, was the source of its wealth.[56] This helped to reinforce the idea that America was central to Britain's commercial prosperity. In a commencement oration in 1771 a poem entitled 'The Rising Glory of America' argued the British Empire, and most especially New York and Philadelphia, had overtaken Tyre, Rome, and Carthage through their commitment to commerce. This commitment had led to the growth of all the arts and sciences and the gifts of liberty and 'mild religion'. Interestingly, the author suggested that America's first settlers had been from Tyre itself.[57] Forgetting the providential punishment meted out to the city, the poem associated Tyre's commercial success with American liberty and prosperity. Finally, in 1774, Barbados attempted to distance itself from the non-importation agreements. In response, a contributor called Cato argued that united adherence to the

[55] *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* 28 February 1769. *Boston Post Boy* 15 May 1769. *New York Gazette* 5 June 1769. *PC* 12 June 1769. *American Magazine* July 1769. Andrew Aguecheek, *The Universal American Almanack* (Philadelphia, 1771), Evans 11956.
[56] John Morgan, 'Dissertation on the Reciprocal Advantages of a Perpetual Union between Great Britain and Her American Colonies', in *Four Dissertations on the Reciprocal Advantages of a Perpetual Union between Great Britain and Her American Colonies* (Philadelphia, 1766), Evans 10400, pp. 7 – 8. *PG* 29 May 1766.
[57] Philip Freneau, *A Poem on the Rising Glory of America* (Philadelphia, 1771), Evans 12398, pp. 7 – 8, 16 – 7.

Association would 'transmit to our posterity the invaluable blessing of liberty in such maturity and on such a firm basis, that the characters of Rome and Athens, when at the summit of liberty, and the acquisitions of Tyre, Carthage, Venice, Syracuse, and all the greatest commercial states of those times, will be faint in comparison with the superior greatness and unequalled virtue of Americans.'[58] Cato argued that Americans had more liberty even than the traditional touchstones of liberty, the Romans and Athenians, and America was more prosperous than the great symbols of commercial success, Tyre among them. Ultimately, commentators used the symbol of Tyre inconsistently, but in all its different iterations an underlying consensus emerged that linked commercial success and American ascendency. The patriotic appeals of retailers resonated with this broader assumption of imminent American greatness through commercial success. Between the orations and the polemics, advertising reinforced the idea that domestic manufacturing contributed to American ascendency.

Newspaper advertising was the most accessible form of advertising and allowed many beyond the traditionally articulate elite to discuss material culture. Moreover, given their serial nature, newspaper advertising also helps to chart changes over time, revealing the subtle ways in which patriotic appeals adapted to each political crisis. During each non-importation movement, retailers acquiesced to popular British boycotts and the number of adverts for imported goods reduced. However, more than this the declarations that retailers made on behalf of American goods reflected a growing commitment to domestic manufacturing. At first patriotic appeals suggested that American-made goods matched the refinement of British imports, but this in effect perpetuated the idea of European sophistication and did not reflect any dramatic change in consuming habits. The high water mark for explicit declarations in support of domestic manufacturing came during the Townshend Duties crisis. At this point many retailers associated their products with the interests of America in general. This significantly complemented the popular non-importation movements, the advertisements reinforcing the rhetoric of non-importation and vice versa. Looking at the message of these exceptional advertisements therefore helps to reveal the patriotic discussion around producing American-made goods. Finally, during the Continental Association, patriotic advertising concentrated on signalling its compliance with the terms of

[58] *PP* 10 October 1774.

the Association itself. While this may seem to represent a retreat from patriotism, in effect it is a symptom of advertising's conservative nature. Nevertheless, the pains that some retailers went to assure their audience they did not seek to make immoderate profit on their goods indicates they were keen to affirm they supported the Association's terms. These messages reminded consumers of the momentous implications of their consumer choices, but revisiting these adverts also contextualises the more confident assertions about America's eventual succession to British supremacy. Throughout the 1760s and 1770s, commentators often asserted that Britain's bad behaviour toward the colonies would lead to its downfall and America's industriousness would lead it to rise in Britain's place. A few exceptional advertisements reinforced this interpretation of revolutionary events.

'To Study What Would Be Most Useful to the Public':
Printer's Compilation of Almanacs According to the Prevailing News Culture Surrounding Domestic Manufacturing

The association between domestic manufacturing and American ascendency had radical implications that almanacs helped to develop. These annual calendars encouraged ordinary people to contribute toward the substitution of British goods with American products. Explicit political commentary was even rarer in almanacs than in advertising, but they still reflected wider discussions in the city. Historians rarely analyse these texts for their political content. Breen mentions almanacs in the context of their advice about thrift and credit, but his interest is principally in newspapers.[59] Even in specific studies about almanacs, the Philadelphian version is portrayed as an apolitical text that retreated from revolutionary events. In two extensive studies both Joseph Goldberg and Patrick Spero concluded that the Philadelphian almanac had little effect on the course of the Revolution in the city. Goldberg argued the almanacs were literary and rational. They offered advice about living a happy life, but were not a repository for medical or practical knowledge.[60] Meanwhile, Patrick Spero argues Philadelphian

[59] Breen, *Marketplace of Revolution*, pp. 139, 143
[60] Joseph Philip Goldberg, 'The Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia Almanac and its English Counterpart' (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Maryland, 1962), pp. 133 – 150, 157 – 164.

almanacs only obliquely commented on current affairs through cryptic statements or short asides. The bulk of the material remained apolitical.[61] However, examining almanacs from the broader perspective of their communications circuit contradicts both of these characterisations. The printers who printed them were deeply embedded in a politicised news culture, and the readers who read them often did so alongside revolutionary texts. Viewed in isolation, almanacs may seem quaint repositories of staid information or timid assertions, but in the context of the Revolution they often provided pointed advice that had clear political significance.

In essence, almanacs were practical texts for their readers. The extant examples of reader reception demonstrate that many people used almanacs to record their daily lives. Some readers interleaved blank pages into the text to expand the space they had to write. Even readers who struggled with literacy could use the calendar's symbols to discern useful information. Although far from a perfect method, historians judge almanacs to have had a broad audience given the material printers annually included. Both articulate and inarticulate people shared the publication.[62] Moreover, there is no reason to suggest elites preferred literary almanacs whilst ordinary people preferred a more utilitarian version. Ultimately, the audience for almanacs is largely unknowable, but we presume the readership was diverse and socially broad and that readers consulted the text frequently. Instead, readers are most visible in the way they influenced the printer as the consuming audience.

Almanacs were annual publications that generated a significant income for Philadelphia's printers. There were two types, the pocket and the long form. The pocket almanac was a short utility piece usually duodecimo or sextodecimo in size and between 24 and 48 pages. It contained a calendar of days that noted important religious or civil dates, phases of the moon, movement of the stars, a prediction of the weather, and an appendix of dates for fairs, Quaker meetings, and courts. The long form almanac was a larger text of either octavo or duodecimo and generally between 36 and 48 pages in length. This format allowed the printer to insert additional material beyond that included in the pocket almanac. These included anecdotes, parables, cooking and food preparation recipes, instructions for making dyes

[61] Patrick Spero, 'The Revolution in Popular Publications: The Almanac and New England Primer, 1750 – 1800', *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 8:1 (2010), 41 – 74, (p. 59).
[62] Patrick Spero, 'The Americanization of the Philadelphia Almanac', in *Pennsylvania's Revolution*, ed. by William Pencak (University Park; Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), pp. 36 – 55, (pp. 38 – 9).

and medicine, amongst other miscellaneous content. Together the pocket and long form varieties were useful to all manner of audiences, and this made them steady sellers. There was a mature market in the city reaching back to 1686, and Philadelphia was the most prolific producer of almanacs, accounting for 30% of the total produced in the American colonies as a whole.[63] Most printers in the city published their own version. For example, in 1767 William and Thomas Bradford published the *American Calendar*, David Hall and his new partner David Sellers printed *The Poor Richard Improved* and the *Pocket Almanack*, Andrew Stueart put out both the *Universal American Almanack* and the *Gentlemen's and Citizen's Pocket-Almanack*. William Dunlap printed *Father Abraham's Almanack*, and the two German printers, John Henry Miller and Anthony Armbruster, printed respectively the *Americanische Calender* and the *Americanischer Stadt und Land Calender*.[64] Most of these almanac series existed down to the Revolution, demonstrating the genre's longevity. Moreover, *Poor Richard* sold 12,000 copies each year, and the pocket edition another 2,000.[65] These were exceptional figures, but they allude to the potential profit that successful publications could generate. Given the potential income at stake, printers took an active role in shaping the content of the texts. Their major concern was to appeal to as broad an audience as possible, but, like most serial publications, this entailed responding to the prevailing news culture in the city.

Even though printers were the creative force behind almanacs, they created pseudonymous authors like Abraham Weatherwise or Richard Saunders. These personas wrote the prefaces to each edition and sometimes introduced short sections themselves. However, much of the other material was recycled from other sources.[66] Therefore, the printer's compilation of articles was just as meaningful as the bespoke pieces. The printer could comment on political events by including apposite material. For example, comparing useful advice in Philadelphian almanacs to the 1 January 1768 opening address of the American Society for Promoting Useful Knowledge demonstrates that printers frequently took direction from beyond the world of the page. The society's stated aims were to 'tend to the Improvement of their

[63] Spero, 'The Revolution in Popular Publications', p. 51.
[64] Philo Copernicus, *American Calendar* (Philadelphia, 1767), Evans 10741. Richard Saunders, *The Poor Richard Improved* (Philadelphia, 1767), Evans 10765. *Pocket Almanack* (Philadelphia, 1767), Evans 10764. Andrew Aguecheek, *The Universal American Almanack* (Philadelphia, 1767), Evans 10537. *Gentlemen's and Citizen's Pocket Almanack* (Philadelphia, 1767), Evans 10775. Abraham Weatherwise, *Father Abraham's Almanack* (Philadelphia, 1767), Evans 10799. *Americanische Calender* (Philadelphia, 1767), Evans 10698. *Americanischer Stadt und Land Calender* (Philadelphia, 1767), Evans 10697.
[65] Spero, 'The Revolution in Popular Publications', p. 54
[66] Spero, 'The Revolution in Popular Publications', pp. 54 – 5.

Country, and Advancement of its Interest and Prosperity.' The address then outlined its intended subjects of study, including silk, fruit trees, the Arrack tree, development of American dyes, the growth of hemp, the use of domestic plants to make beers and liquors, and the cultivation of vines for wine.[67] The compilers of Philadelphian almanacs then inserted short articles about each of these topics into their publications. The inaugural issue of *Poor Will's Almanack* included information on preventing rot in fruit trees.[68] The almanac implicitly aligned itself with the desire for American substitutes for imported goods. Similarly, the *Universal American* contained a recipe for making liquor out of the American sugar maple by imitating the Goa method for making liquor from the Arrack tree.[69] Many almanacs explicitly stated that their advice could have political or economic effects. The *American Calendar* in 1771 had an article by an author using the pseudonym 'an American' that argued the growth of hemp would give the colonies the ability to pay back British debts.[70] Poor Richard's preface in the 1769 edition was devoted to the cultivation of vines, which he stated was 'the greatest promise for the promotion of the commercial interests of *North-America*'.[71] Later Poor Richard inserted the American Philosophical Society's plan for the encouragement of silk, noting that many Philadelphians had donated to the scheme.[72] Printers chose to include material about the topics covered by the society. In this way the act of compilation had a political message within it that resonated with the much broader debate surrounding domestic manufacturing.

However, the Society for Promoting Useful Knowledge did not cause the printers of almanacs to address these topics. Rather prevailing interest in them most likely led to their inclusion. In fact, some almanacs even presaged the society's address. The previous year *Poor Richard Improved* had contained information on the promotion of fruit trees with the preface that 'I have always made it a Rule, in the filling up of my Almanack, to study what would be most useful to the Public'.[73] Likewise, in 1765 *Poor Richard* inserted a plan to grow hemp specifically in Pennsylvania.[74] The useful knowledge in almanacs

[67] *PG* 17 March 1768.
[68] William Andrews, *Poor Will's Almanack* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11552.
[69] Andrew Aguecheek, *The Universal American Almanack* (Philadelphia, 1765), Evans 9893.
[70] Philo Copernicus, *The American Calendar* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11824.
[71] Richard Saunders, *Poor Richard Improved* (Philadelphia,1768), Evans 11064.
[72] Richard Saunders, *Poor Richard Improved* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11848.
[73] Richard Saunders, *Poor Richard Improved* (Philadelphia, 1767), Evans 10765.
[74] Richard Saunders, *Poor Richard Improved* (Philadelphia, 1765), Evans 10161.

existed in a feedback loop with the rest of Philadelphian print culture. The publications responded to events in the city and events in the city reflected topics contained in almanacs. In this way, printers compiled almanacs like they compiled newspapers. In fact, newspapers often reflected many of the same interests in the promotion of colonial products. For example, many frequently inserted articles that expounded on the importance and profitability of hemp in America.[75] In the same year as the 1768 address, a commentator reported that in Passyunk, Pennsylvania, one farmer had had great success growing hemp, using the fibre to make good linen for canvas and shirts.[76] Almanacs were not isolated texts thrown haphazardly together and only sold to keep presses solvent. Instead they were entrenched in a news culture and printers explicitly crafted them to appeal directly to audiences.

One of the biggest influences on this news culture was the campaign to promote wool. The wool campaign demonstrates that with very little overt comment the useful knowledge within almanacs took on political significance. The promotion of wool by prohibiting the eating of lamb was something that happened early in the Stamp Act crisis. Numerous Fire Insurance Companies in Philadelphia issued statements that their members intended to stop eating lamb in order to promote the provincial wool industry.[77] The political intentions behind this ban may not have been immediately apparent to ordinary people, but very quickly, the campaign became co-opted into the protest movement against Parliament. News from Boston confirming the Stamp Act was accompanied by news that many in the city had also sworn not to eat lamb.[78] However this juxtaposition arose, over the course of the dispute the prohibition against lamb became associated with significant moments of protest. The Heart and Hand Fire Company, one of the companies participating in the prohibition, took direct action to force John Hughes to retire as Stamp Collector. They informed Hughes that unless he resigned his office, they would eject him from their coverage.[79] The message had menacing overtones of continued popular violence, but it also politicised the activities of insurance companies. Moreover, in his famous letter to Vindex Patriae, Benjamin Franklin under the guise of Homespun commended Philadelphians for abstaining from lamb.

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[75] *PG* 21 March 1765. *PG* 14 August 1766. *PG* 26 November 1767.
[76] *PG* 18 February 1768.
[77] *PG* 28 February 1765. *PG* 7 March 1765. *PG* 14 March 1765. *PG* 11 April 1765. *PG* 16 May 1765. *PJ* 13 June 1765.
[78] *PG* 18 April 1765.
[79] *PG* 19 December 1765.

He used the prohibition as evidence of Americans' commitment to consumer protest, noting that Americans had gathered to foreswear lamb and had been steadfast in that pledge.[80] Franklin's letter did not appear in the Pennsylvanian press until the following year, but he alluded to the quick association between non-importation and domestic manufacturing. Most explicitly, the almanac, *American Calendar*, included at the end of its 1766 edition a recap of events since the passage of the Stamp Act, citing the prohibition of lamb among the first acts of protest in the colonies.[81] During the prohibition itself, almanacs did not include much information about sheep or wool production directly, but the wool campaign was popular and quickly celebrated as an important part of the protest.

Shortly after the announcement of the Townshend Duties, there were calls for a new prohibition of lamb. A commentator in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* raised the issue after the city failed to join Boston and New York in the early 1768 non-importation agreements. He posed a series of questions to the 'many small societies, companies and clubs' of the city. He censured the lack of support and patriotism, and asked that the clubs unite to advance the American cause despite recalcitrant merchants. He encouraged the Fire Companies to pass a new resolution prohibiting the eating of lamb to encourage the domestic wool industry. Importantly, the article asked for these prohibitions to be publically printed to 'stand as lasting memorials and testimonies of their public spirit, and noble zeal, in the cause of LIBERTY and their COUNTRY'.[82] For the commentator, the prohibition of lamb promoted both American interests and liberty. The commentator also believed domestic manufacturing could counteract the deleterious effects of importing British goods. The following week a farmer in Chester County testified that the Stamp Act prohibition on lamb had had many beneficial effects. The number of sheep had increased, and there was more investment in both improving the breed and the pasture grounds on which they grazed. The surplus of cloth had been sold for a profit, but all the good work had been undermined by the gentlemen of Philadelphia who resolved to buy new suits of imported cloth in order to celebrate the repeal of the Stamp Act.[83] The Chester County farmer reproached elite consumption politics and called for the promotion of domestic manufacturing. These pieces allude to the political urgency surrounding

[80] *PC* 23 February 1767.
[81] Philo Copernicus, *The American Calendar* (Philadelphia, 1766), Evans 10457.
[82] *PG* 2 June 1768.
[83] *PG* 16 June 1768.

the discussion of lamb prohibition. However, in a typically cautious manner, Philadelphians took over a year to respond as they sought to exhaust the petitioning process with Parliament. A large public gathering signed an agreement to abstain from lamb in early 1769, around the same time as merchants signed non-importation agreements. Then for the following three months, various Fire Insurance Companies similarly affirmed their commitment to lamb prohibition.[84] The reluctance to sign up for more lamb prohibition reflected Philadelphian concerns about disruptive popular politics, but this concern also indicates that by 1769 the prohibition of lamb had as many political overtones as the boycotting of British goods.

In light of these broader pushes toward wool production, the advice in almanacs becomes about contributing toward this broader movement. Some almanacs may have benefitted from fortuitous timing. *Father Abraham's Almanack* in 1768 included a hint about preventing rot in sheep, noting the cure had saved 400 animals.[85] Dunlap, the printer, inserted the piece amidst other receipts, and the timing with the push toward new lamb prohibition may have been coincidence. However, other associations with the lamb protest seem less accidental. Philo-Copernicus inserted an unusually long treatise on sheep in his preface during the first year of the lamb prohibition. He deferred making a political statement, and said that a 'long discourse of praise or profit of Sheep' would be a 'frivolous' endeavour.[86] Philo-Copernicus referred to the prevailing discussion about sheep so that even without an overt political statement, he indicated that the timing of the advice was apposite. The receipts were simple remedies that any person could use to help promote wool. The following year, during the final stages of the Townshend Duties, Philo-Copernicus included a substantial list of common diseases among sheep and their cures.[87] Readers could follow these recipes to protect their own flocks. He again declined to make a political statement, but given Phio-Copernicus' knowing wink in the previous edition, this advice too responded to prevailing interests in sheep and wool. The following year, *Poor Robin's Almanack* included hints about the raising of sheep in England.[88] This interest in the promotion of wool persisted after the collapse of the non-

[84] *PG* 9 February 1769. *PG* 16 February 1769. *PG* 16 March 1769. *PG* 13 April 1769. *PC* 13 February 1769. *PC* 20 February 1769. *PC* 20 March 1769.
[85] Abraham Weatherwise, *Father Abraham's Almanack* (Philadelphia, 1768), Evans 11110.
[86] Philo Copernicus, *The American Calendar* (Philadelphia, 1769), Evans 11418.
[87] Philo Copernicus, *The American Calendar* (Philadelphia, 1770), Evans 11824.
[88] Robert More, *Poor Robin's Almanack* (Philadelphia, 1771), Evans 12201.

importation associations indicating that the debate surrounding domestic production outlasted controversies about consumption. Ultimately, even when trust between Americans broke down following the collapse of non-importation and non-consumption agreements, the persistent interest in domestic manufacturing suggests that texts still cultivated assumptions about American ascendency. This emphasis on wool was clearly linked with the prevailing political climate, but it also suggests that the compilation of almanacs could have contained many more redolent pieces of advice for audiences that are now lost to posterity.

The extent to which readers acted upon this advice is unknowable. Potentially every time a reader picked up their almanac they remembered the political implications of useful knowledge. In this way, patriotic debates pervaded everyday life. More than that, these hints about wool persisted after 1770. Both the *American Almanack* and *Poor Robin's Almanack* printed their advice after the dissolution of the Townshend Duties associations. Importantly, the interest in American domestic production continued after the end of actions taken against colonial consumption. During the final stages of the Townshend Duties campaign, a group of merchants in Lancaster offered a gold medal for the best piece of woollen cloth suitable for making clothes. On one side, the medal had the Pennsylvania Farmer, and on the reverse, a woman spinning with the motto 'Frugality and industry make mankind rich, free, and happy.'[89] Even as the importers disappointed their artisan allies, the campaign for wool promised both personal riches and American prosperity and potentially the advice in almanacs could help ordinary people win the patriotic medal. The following year demonstrated the persistent political implications of domestic manufacturing. The Lancastrian merchants offered the prize again. The announcement said that 'it must give every lover of this country sincere pleasure, to see how attentive persons of every denomination are, not only to the woollen, but to other manufacturies that we stand most in need of from foreign countries; and by the yearly increase of the quantities in this county, and the advantage every family finds in manufacturing, there is sufficient reason to conclude, that we shall persist in them, till we arrive at much greater perfection'.[90] The announcement hoped for a bright future for wool production in the colony, but it also anticipated an improvement in all manufactories. The advice in almanacs could help in both

[89] *PG* 13 September 1770. *PG* 30 May 1771.
[90] *PG* 30 May 1771.

instances. By focusing on consumption, Breen does not adequately appreciate the depth and persistence of the Patriot message, nor sufficiently explain why in each successive crisis people were so quick to take up non-importation. Almanacs provide an answer. They were an important medium for disseminating this Patriot message and helped politicise daily life in revolutionary ways.

The penetration of this material into people's lives is important, because the campaign to promote domestic manufacturing changed the relationship between consumers and goods. At the height of the popularisation of the Revolution, many expressed joy at the improving state of American manufacturing and the future of Pennsylvania. Richard Penn, a member of the province's proprietary family, told his uncle in London that the people of Lancaster county had produced thirty thousand yards of cotton stuffs. He insisted that, if the demand for American manufacturing continued over the upcoming years, the town would 'bring their manufactures to such a state of perfection as to leave them little need of applying to Europe for the materials of clothing.'[91] For Penn, American manufacturing was gradually improving and the need for imports was diminishing. Franklin was more explicit than Penn about the political implications of American domestic products. Writing to Samuel Cooper, the preacher at the fiery Brattle Street Church in Boston, Franklin believed that if the colonists were steady in their associations, then not only would manufacture improve, but Parliament would be forced to repeal the Townshend Duties and treat America with greater respect.[92] In another letter to the Nantucket ship captain, Timothy Folger, Franklin even said that British imports were 'flimsy' and hoped that Americans would continue to 'appear in *good substantial honourable homespun!*'[93] The growth of American manufacturing was becoming a source of pride amongst Americans, but this did not reflect individual products' refinement but rather manufacturing's gradual advance.

Not everyone was as convinced of the salutary effects of domestic manufacturing. Some commentators questioned the veracity of the claims made in the press. The *Pennsylvania Journal* announced that there would be an account made of manufacturing in America to which a commentator added 'and

[91] Richard Penn to Thomas Penn, 15 July 1770, Penn Family Papers (Collection 485), HSP.
[92] Benjamin Franklin to Samuel Cooper, 27 April 1769, *PBF*, XVI, pp. 117 – 20.
[93] Franklin to Timothy Folger, 29 September 1769, *PBF*, XVI, pp. 207 – 10.

small they will be found to be if it be a true account.'[94] As Breen argues, actually replacing British imports was unlikely in the short term, but this was not the purpose behind the encouragement of American products. The process of supporting domestic manufacturing, especially its open discussion, was more important than the narrow goal of replacing British goods. Essentially Americans found confidence in imagining domestic manufacturing. For example, two years later, one report seemed to respond to accusations of misleading people about the extent of the increase in American-made products. The article retorted that 'it may be concluded by some, that New England manufactures exist only in our newspapers; but such a conclusion would be *very erroneous*; We have not, it is true, any quantities of home-made cotton, linen and woolen goods which can yet be spared for *exports*, but it may be depended upon that those manufactures have *greatly increased* since the stamp-act'.[95] Whatever prompted this, the article made a virtue out of the fact that manufacturing was increasing. New England could not share its prodigious growth, but in the short time since the Stamp Act they had improved. Most significantly, an article in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* alluded to the potential harm of domestic manufacturing. In 1768, the paper was still under the influence of the conservative Joseph Galloway. An article signed only as AB, which reflected Galloway's cautious approach to the patriotic agenda, questioned 'Whether the accounts of the Progress of Manufactures in the Colonies, published from Time to Time in the Newspapers and Pamphlets, could answer any purpose but that of raising and increasing the jealousy of *Great-Britain*; scarce one Third part of those Accounts having any foundation in Truth?'[96] The complaints indicate that the reporting of American manufacturing was part of a political movement, rather than an economic drive to improve domestic production. Domestic products were a political weapon against Britain and a symbol of the strength of the American community.

Printers compiled almanacs that reminded readers of the support they could give to the promotion of domestic manufacturing. Colonial production and the substitution of British goods were not neutral. Instead they actively contributed to the Patriot agenda of celebrating Americanness. The radical implications of supporting domestic manufacturing are best illustrated by the confident assertions

[94] *PJ* 5 February 1767.
[95] *PC* 2 January 1769.
[96] *PC* 25 July 1768.

that surrounded the Continental Association. The Association enshrined domestic manufacturing as part of its patriotic agenda. Importantly, looking at the celebrations of America reveal that it was not the immediate replacement of Britain the colonies wanted, but the belief they were on track to do so. In 1774, Hugh Henry Brackenridge used the motif of the dawning of the sun to suggest the imminent fruition of American refinement.[97] The idea was that the light of civilisation was setting in Europe and rising in America. For Brackenridge, civilisation did not shine fully in America, but it was on the horizon. In the 1775 introduction to his monthly magazine, Robert Aitkin compared the American genius to the first tender shoots of a snowdrop emerging in the aftermath of a harsh winter.[98] The genius of America was not in full bloom, but it was present. In the most explicit case, an author called Philopatrius (lover of his country) appealed to his fellow citizens and argued that in order to be competitive with Britain they needed to imitate the quantity and quality of its manufactures. Philopatrius cautioned his brethren that these improvements would not happen until all colonists committed to encouraging domestic manufacture. He maintained that St Petersburg, a much younger city, had overtaken Philadelphia by relying upon its own manufacture. He reserved special criticism for those Americans who pointed out the deficiencies in domestic manufacture.[99] Philopatrius wanted Americans to use their manufacturing to compete with Britain, ignoring the quality of the goods in order to concentrate on their virtuous effects. Connecting each of these iterations, and many others beside, was not a celebration of refinement, but rather hope for America's future potential.

Printers compiled almanacs in response to the news culture in Philadelphia. They included useful knowledge that corresponded to political developments surrounding domestic manufacturing. One of the most important of these campaigns was the prohibition against eating lamb. The measure aimed to promote an American wool industry, and Philadelphians sustained this campaign over the three non-importation movements. In isolation, these almanacs simply fulfilled a traditional role in providing advice for readers, but collectively the almanacs lent their support to the encouragement of wool in protest

[97] This was a motif Brackenridge had developed in 1771 with Philip Freneau in the poem entitled *The Rising Glory of America.* In fact when *A Poem on Divine Revelation* was published, the advertisements linked it with the earlier poem. Hugh Henry Brackenridge, *A Poem on Divine Revelation* (Philadelphia, 1774), Evans 13172. Hugh Henry Brackenridge, *A Hugh Henry Brackenridge Reader, 1770 – 1815*, ed. by Daniel Marder (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1970), pp. 56 – 60.
[98] *Pennsylvania Magazine*, January 1775.
[99] *PJ* 28 December 1774.

against Parliament. The synergy between almanac material and popular campaigns demonstrates that the protest was not just about being a good consumer, but an active promoter of domestic production. The aim was not to immediately replace British imports, but rather for Americans to unite and promote colonial production. Surrounding debates clarify that the promotion of American industry was less an economic imperative and more a political statement. As such, it was not about the refinement of the manufactures themselves, but rather the virtue in supporting manufacturing. Almanacs broadened participation, allowing some Americans to contribute in concrete ways to the promotion of domestic manufacturing, and reminding other Americans of the patriotic potential of their consumer choices.

'Appear Pregnant with Many Advantages to America':
Sustaining the Patriotic Discussion of American Manufacturing through Lottery Schemes, 1770 – 1774

Lotteries allowed a few enterprising individuals to take concrete steps toward establishing domestic manufacturing. This sort of initiative was not unique in Philadelphia. Schemes like the distribution of silkworm eggs and mulberry trees continued throughout the 1770s, but lotteries provide clearer insight into the political implications of undertaking some of these plans.[100] As Breen argues, 1770 taught ordinary colonists that they were committed to a common American cause and, more importantly, that they rather than the merchants were responsible for the public good. In 1773, according to Breen's narrative, these revelations formed the cornerstone of the Revolution. Parliament shutting the port of Boston, to use his words, 'revived enthusiasm' for consumer protest. For Breen, the period between the collapse of Townshend Duties non-importation and the Boston Tea Party was relatively uneventful.[101] While this may be true from the perspective of importation and consumption, this period was significant for the rise of direct political involvement of artisans and ordinary people. Lotteries played an important role in this process. The four main schemes were the American China Manufactory, plans for steel

[100] *PG* 21 March 1771. *PG* 17 March 1773.
[101] Breen, *Marketplace of Revolution*, pp. 292 – 9. The quote can be found in: Breen, *American Insurgents, American Patriots*, p. 166.

refineries in Pennsylvania, William Stiegel's attempts at establishing a glassworks, and John Leacock's plan to expand his vineyard. Three of the four produced consumer products, but their focus was not primarily on the enjoyment of the goods themselves. Instead it was about the virtue of promoting American manufacturing. Lottery schemes, then, provided a link between Patriot politics, domestic manufacturing, and American ascendency. The events of late 1773 and 1774 therefore did not revive interest in consumer protest. Instead discussions surrounding domestic manufacturing had persisted long after the collapse of the non-importation agreements.

Lotteries were a common occurrence in Philadelphia. There were seventy-four lotteries held throughout the colonies between 1770 and 1774. By comparison, there had been seventy-two between 1765 and 1769, and ninety-eight between 1760 and 1764. In Pennsylvania in 1770 and 1774, there were twelve different schemes advertised. Two thirds of the lotteries contributed toward the upkeep of churches, but the remaining third were projects to promote domestic manufacturing.[102] Even though they were common, they were not easily accessible to ordinary people. Tickets for the lotteries cost between six pence and thirty shillings.[103] However, the important factor was less about the ability to participate and more about their place in the discussion about manufacturing. In that respect, the lottery manager, the person who organised the scheme, had a great deal of autonomy in deciding the content of the message. Each of the four lotteries concentrated on different qualities of their schemes, but they all advertised their schemes through handbills and newspapers. They advertised extensively, inserting their notices into each of the major Pennsylvanian newspapers, the *Pennsylvania Journal*, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, the *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, and the newly established *Pennsylvania Packet*. This broad dissemination created numerous opportunities for readers to encounter the schemes in a variety of situations. As usual, determining the actual readership of these lottery schemes is impossible, but, like advertising and almanacs, the schemes arose out of Philadelphian life and reflected prevailing concerns therein.

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[102] Neal Elizabeth Millikan, '"Willing to be in Fortune's Way": Lotteries in the Eighteenth-Century British North American Empire' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of South Carolina, 2008), p. 7, 60, 71 – 2, 322 – 327. *PP* 25 November 1771. *PP* 26 September 1774.

[103] Thirty shillings was for the promotion of the China Manufactory. Newcastle Lottery, *Christiana Bridge July 13 1771, Newcastle Lottery* (Wilmington, 1771), Evans 12140. The cheapest was Leacock's scheme that was actually priced in dollars. The conversion rate is deduced from the fact that each class cost 1,2 or 3 dollars, and Leacock said to purchase a ticket in all would cost 30 shillings. *Philadelphia, September 23, 1773 Pettie's-Island Cash Lottery* (Philadelphia, 1773), Evans 12937.

The lottery to promote porcelain production in Philadelphia associated itself with Americanness, but general comment about porcelain production politicised its aims. The proprietors of Philadelphia's first and only colonial porcelain works established the company in January 1770 during the height of Townshend non-importation. The advert lamented the 'various difficulties and disadvantages, which usually attend the introduction of any important manufacture into a new country'. They then affirmed that American clay produced porcelain as good as pieces from the famous London Bow factory.[104] This was typical of patriotic advertising, focusing on the value of the manufacturing and then the parity of its quality. The following year the works announced a lottery scheme to support its production of porcelain but the managers changed the name from 'New China Ware' to the '*American* China Manufactory'.[105] The manufactory and its lottery scheme already carried a great deal of contingent political significance due to the association that porcelain had with the Townshend Duties. However, later that year, a commentator called the Pennsylvania Planter directly aligned the works with the Patriot agenda. The Planter indicted imperial policy whereby 'our Mother Country apprehends she has a Right to manufacture every Article we consume, except Bread and Meat; our very Drink is to come through her hands, or pay to her Support.' The Planter praised the virtuous men who were willing to risk their fortunes to encourage manufacturing. He argued that, were it possible, he would prefer that colonists used neither tea nor china, but if they continued with these luxuries then it would be better if Americans produced them domestically. He specifically praised the attempt at producing porcelain, but also mentioned the importance of vineyards and glass works. The Planter sarcastically concluded that his neighbour was 'such a Patriot as to declare, that he should prefer Home Manufactures to Foreign, provided they were equal in Quality and Price; until that Time, he counts it his Duty to buy at the cheapest Shop.'[106] The Planter contrasted the virtuous behaviour of manufactories against an indictment against irresponsible consumers. Irrespective of whether the Planter collaborated with the works himself, his address imparted patriotic urgency to the support of china manufacturing. The managers of the lottery scheme changed

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[104] *PG* 11 January 1770. Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, *American Porcelain, 1720 – 1920* (New York, NY; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989), p. 8.
[105] Newcastle Lottery, *Christiana Bridge July 13 1771, Newcastle Lottery* (Wilmington, 1771), Evans 12140. *PP* 25 November 1771.
[106] *PG* 1 August 1771.

their name to become more American, but in the broader Philadelphian culture, porcelain production still retained the political implications of protesting against Parliament.

Likewise, the managers for the American Steel Manufactory lottery associated their scheme with Americanness, but the project reflected wider political trends in the city. Managers announced the lottery in August 1772, the same month as the formation of the Patriotic Society to elect mechanics to governmental positions.[107] The production and refinement of iron was the second largest employer in the province after shipbuilding and therefore was an endeavour that would have generated interest among Philadelphian artisans.[108] At first, the managers seemed to court patriotic sentiment. One of the earliest notices calling for subscriptions appealed to the 'Generous and patriotic Spirit that hath already been manifested by the Public for promoting this Undertaking.'[109] The use of the word patriotic likely referred to the more neutral use of promoting Americans interests, but as seen in the Pennsylvania Planter piece, some people used the term as part of a more politicised complaint. The lottery associated itself with America and with the promotion of American interests. Most importantly, the scheme began in 1772, two years after the dissolution of the Townshend Duties agreement and over a year before the Boston Tea Party. The discussion of patriotic and American production was no longer restricted to periods of open hostility to Parliament.

Later notices retreated from this use of 'patriotic', but, during the same year, an ongoing dispute in Philadelphia suggests that discussions about manufacturing took on political overtones. John Rhea wanted to establish the manufacturing of pearl ash and potash, two potassium products that provided essential minerals for industries including glass, fertilizer, wool, and soap. In the first attempt in early 1772, Rhea and his associates went door-to-door to people throughout Philadelphia asking to take away their household ashes. This created an enmity with the soap boilers of Philadelphia, who complained that Rhea had gone door-to-door paying people a sum in return for a promise that he would take away their ashes for the next five years, thereby unfairly impinging on their ability to procure the ash necessary for

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[107] *PP* 19 October 1772. *PP* 30 November 1772. *PC* 19 September 1772. *PC* 10 October 1772.
[108] Bailyn's numbers for the iron industry include miners, charcoal producers, mill works, and carters. Bernard Bailyn, *Voyages West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of Revolution* (New York, NY; Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), pp. 243 – 254.
[109] *PC* 8 August 1772.

their business. The soap-boilers called it a 'specious pretence of creating a new article of remittance to Great Britain'. They effectively accused Rhea of cynically using the language of domestic manufacturing to fill his pockets. To make their position clear they argued that if the soap-boilers had to purchase their ashes from Rhea, the price would escalate 'which will be no other than TAXING the inhabitants.'[110] Perhaps discouraged by the censure of the soap boilers, in August 1772 Rhea changed his plan from trying to create a monopoly on ashes and advertised in both the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* and the *Pennsylvania Gazette* that he would buy alkaline salts from people. He first celebrated the advantages that potash could bring to the province as a whole and then included directions for making the salts from lye and ashes at home. Rhea also promised to provide kettles to particularly industrious producers.[111] Rhea appealed for people to contribute to his venture based on the value it would bring to the public. After the soap boilers accused him of Parliament-like tactics, Rhea even changed his business model to encourage the participation of ordinary people in the first step of manufacturing. Debates over colonial production continued into the period after 1770 and still carried political resonances. Regardless of whether the managers wished to engage with political debates, by associating their product with Americanness they entered into these discussions between domestic manufacturing and American ascendency.

One of the most outspoken schemes was the lottery for the Manheim flint glass works. The proprietor William Stiegel was particularly aggressive in pressing the advantages that manufacturing brought to America and Pennsylvania, focusing on the idea that his glass should replace British imports. The works had been blowing glass since 1764, and during the last months of the Townshend non-importation movement the works advertised itself under the banner '*American* GLASS WARE'. The glass was described as achieving 'great perfection', but more importantly the notice insisted that 'at this crisis it is the indispensible duty, as well as interest of every well wisher of America, to promote and encourage manufactures amongst ourselves'.[112] By 1771 the advertisements had scaled back the overtly oppositional tone, but still asserted that its glass was 'EQUAL in quality with any imported from *Europe'*. Stiegel then entreated his readers that he 'well knows the patriotic spirit of the Americans' and hoped they would use

[110] *To the Inhabitants of the City of Philadelphia, and Parts adjacent* (Philadelphia, 1772), Evans 12577.
[111] *PG* 19 August 1772.
[112] *PJ* 12 July 1770.

their spirit to encourage his works further.[113] Moreover, Stiegel sought to support the boasts about his glass' superiority by having the claims confirmed by the members of the American Philosophical Society. At a meeting, the society attested that the glass was better than European imports, and recommended 'the ingenious and public-spirited Manufacturer to the particular Encouragement of his Countrymen.'[114] Stiegel's advertising repeatedly and consistently linked his glass works with American ascendency. He appealed to his audience on the basis of the contribution his products could make to the country.

Despite the quality of his glass Stiegel still needed support. In March 1773 he advertised his plan for the '*American* GLASS MANUFACTORY', stressing 'LITTLE need be said to *Americans* to convince them of the necessity to encourage our own Manufacture, especially in this growing and commercial Province, we apprehend this truth to be so self-evident, that we shall not enlarge upon it.'[115] The lottery scheme seemed to have been relatively successful in generating interest as a notice advertising the drawing expressed gratitude and surprise at the rapidity of ticket sales.[116] Despite this popularity, however, it appears that Stiegel's first scheme fell short of expectations and he needed to supplement his income with a second subscription drive. This time he primarily offered land and glass prizes rather than cash, which hints that Stiegel's problem had been caused by his offering generous cash prizes for the first lottery.[117] Importantly, Stiegel's lottery built from an aggressively patriotic campaign. His assertion that little needed to be said about the value of American-made products suggests that Stiegel expected his lottery to resonate with the broader push for domestic manufacturing. He was also a persistent voice in promoting colonial industries, thereby sustaining the link between Americanness, manufacturing, and prosperity.

Most of the lotteries could perhaps be cynically dismissed as managers seeking to associate their schemes with a prevailing interest in America and manufacturing, but John Leacock's scheme for expanding his vineyard had inherent patriotic aims. His scheme asked for the support of a public vineyard

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[113] *PC* 24 June 1771.
[114] *PC* 1 July 1771.
[115] Pettie's-Island Lottery, *Pettie's Island Cash Lottery* […] *towards the support of the American glass manufactory* (Philadelphia, 1773), Evans 12938.
[116] *PG* 17 March 1773.
[117] Pettie's-Island Lottery, *January 17, 1774 Supplement to the American flint glass manufactory* (Philadelphia, 1774), Evans 13533.

that would allow people to take cuttings from his plants to establish vineyards throughout the province.[118] He hoped that his vineyard would 'appear pregnant with many advantages to America, and this province in particular.' Leacock's plan was to use lottery funds so that he could support vineyards throughout Pennsylvania. More than just promoting his own interest, there was a clear public mission in the endeavour. This eccentric plan met with moderate success and Leacock expressed gratitude that his vineyard had received so much support despite the surfeit of lottery schemes in Philadelphia.[119] He was a committed Patriot, who not only wrote scathing indictments on British tyranny and in celebration of American ascendency, but also staked his personal fortune on encouraging American manufacturing. Leacock translated his abstract ideas about the American community into tangible projects to promote and strengthen it. In each case, these schemes were part of a patriotic push for domestic substitution that would further elevate America.

By the time that the colonies protested Parliament's actions explicitly again, concrete steps had been taken to ensure that American manufacturing was established on a firmer footing than that provided by the lotteries. In 1774, the printer Robert Bell advertised loans from between £200 to £1,000 to anyone willing to carry on American manufacturing and who could turn a profit during non-importation agreements and times of open commerce with Britain.[120] Bell still imagined that America would remain part of the British Empire, but by 1775 the mood had darkened significantly and there seemed to be a more radical edge to the push for domestic manufacturing. Based on older models of poor relief the United Company of Philadelphia for Promoting American Manufactures sought to advance American production by ensuring that there were sufficient numbers of experienced workers. The society's aims were to tackle the lack of manufacturing experience within the colonies and the first project was to establish a linen bleaching business.[121] The company became a gateway into radical politics for many of Pennsylvania's revolutionary leaders, including its president Daniel Roberdeau and its secretary James Cannon who would both help write the Pennsylvanian Constitution.[122] Furthermore, the radical nature of

[118] *PG* 17 February 1773. *PP* 22 February 1773.
[119] *PP* 2 August 1773.
[120] *PG* 23 November 1774.
[121] *PJ* 27 September 1775.
[122] Ryerson, *The Revolution is Now Begun*, pp. 112 – 5.

lotteries was confirmed by the establishment of one to support the new United States in its 'most just and necessary war in defence of the lives, liberties and property, of the inhabitants of the United States.'[123]

Lotteries were a common occurrence in Philadelphia, but in the period between 1770 and 1774 there were four schemes designed to promote domestic production. These projects associated themselves with Americanness, and more than that, their goals aligned with the Patriot agenda. Long after importation boycotts had disintegrated, these schemes provided concrete ways in which people could support domestic manufacturing. Again, the important factor is not the actual effect these schemes had on manufacturing, but rather their ability to reflect and influence discussion in the city. Critically, these lotteries bridge the often fallow period between the dissolution of the Townshend Duties and the popular mobilisation against the Tea Act. They explain why the Continental Association had so many provisions that dealt with domestic production. They also help to explain how Americans nurtured the confidence they expressed surrounding the Association.

Imperial tensions reached open conflict again in 1773 when Parliament passed a bill reducing the duty on tea. Parliament intended the act to save the sinking East India Company, but the bill also allowed them to export tea directly to the colonies. Unfortunately, for Parliament, the measure was interpreted in America as an attempt to force the colonies to pay the remaining taxes from the Townshend Act on tea and thereby support the dreaded civil list. Throughout the colonies the ships were either turned away or the tea warehoused. The exception was Boston, where mounting tensions between the colonists, the Governor, and the army stationed in the city meant that there was no option of sending the tea away. In December 1773, a group of Bostonians crept aboard, dressed as Mohawks, and threw the tea into the harbour. This prompted Parliament to pass a series of acts shutting Boston harbour until the cost of the tea was recovered. Unfortunately, at the same time Parliament passed the Quebec act which allowed French Canadians to practice Catholicism. Taken together these acts were called the Intolerable Acts or the Coercive Acts. In response the First Continental Congress was convened with delegates arriving in Philadelphia for its opening on 5 September 1774.[124] The following month, on 20 October, the Bradfords

[123] *United States Lottery* (Philadelphia, 1776), Evans 43204.
[124] Benjamin Carp, *Defiance of the Patriots: The Boston Tea Party and the Making of America* (New Haven, CT; Yale University Press, 2010), pp. 7 – 24.

published the Continental Association. This document formalised the protest movement, and as Breen argued, established an effective revolutionary framework in the colonies.[125]

The Association had fourteen articles. Six stipulated the regulation of trade with Britain through non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation tenets. The remaining seven laid out methods for encouraging and policing the terms of the Association. Crucially, four articles explicitly tried to protect the promotion of manufacturing in America. The ninth and thirteenth attempted to prevent excessive profiteering. These two articles recognised the inability of domestic manufacturing to compensate for the lack of imported British goods while also preparing for an extended conflict. They were ultimately ignored during war time and the rocketing inflation that followed, but they represented a genuine and confident assertion that the values of the community would be able to overcome private greed as long as communities were sufficiently empowered to observe and communicate. The eighth was an anti-luxury exhortation to 'encourage frugality, oeconomy, and industry; and promote agriculture, arts, and the manufacture of this country, especially that of wool'. Meanwhile, the promotion of wool was sufficiently significant to warrant its own article. It exhorted Americans to improve the breed of sheep and increase their number by killing them sparingly and not exporting them. It also expressed the idea that anyone who was overstocked should provide spare sheep, at a reasonable price, to their poorer neighbours.[126] The Association was a manifesto for the revolutionary movement, and domestic manufacturing featured prominently amongst its tenets.

Many confident assertions filled the period from 1774 to 1776. Significantly, in 1774, *A Pretty Story* and *American Chronicles* narrated the rise of American glory with a radical verve. They are representative of the increasingly anti-British media culture that surrounded the Continental Association. *A Pretty Story* said Americans had always been 'more stout and enterprising' than other British subjects, which was why they left Britain to settle America.[127] Over time 'by Dint of indefatigable Perseverance' they transformed 'dreary Wilderness' into profitable tracts.[128] The author, Francis Hopkinson, reserved

[125] Breen, *American Insurgents, American Patriots*, pp. 169 – 74.
[126] Continental Congress, *The Association Entered into by the American Continental Congress in behalf of all the Colonies* (Philadelphia, 1774), Evans 42725. pp. 5 – 6, 8.
[127] Francis Hopkinson, *A Pretty Story Written in the Year of Our Lord 2774* (Philadelphia, 1774), Evans 13338, p. 9.
[128] Hopkinson, *A Pretty Story*, p. 12.

for Americans a more industrious nature than their British counterparts. Hopkinson's story built from an assumption that America was still developing, and would continue to prosper because, as the colonies' wealth already demonstrated, Americans were willing to work harder. In *American Chronicles* the author, John Leacock went further than Hopkinson and in an exhortation for the New Englanders to take up arms against Gage's forces, he reminded them they were the sons of those who reduced the fort at Louisbourg in Canada in 1760. They were also the true inheritors of the spirit of tyrant killers from the republic of Oliver Cromwell. Leacock claimed, somewhat sarcastically, the least of these men could resist a hundred valiant men of war and the greatest a thousand.[129] When Gage's men saw the New Englanders they were 'not men but unconquerable devils'.[130] Reporting back to George III, Gage insisted that the New Englanders could not be subdued because 'they be giants, men of great stature, and we seemed but as catapillars in their sight'.[131] The British as 'catapillars' in the sight of Americans was a fantasy of power, but the lesson behind the story was that Americans could and should resist British tyranny. Both Hopkinson and Leacock published empowering narratives about the strength of America.

By 1776, colonial media narratives portrayed the virile colonies in sharp contrast to the degraded societies of old Europe. For instance, the Connecticut light dragoons were praised for their valour and it was said that 'Some of these worthy soldiers assisted, in their present uniforms, at the first reduction of Louisbourg, and their lean cheeks, and war-worn coats 'are viewed with more veneration by their honest countrymen, than if they were glittering Nabobs from India, or Bashaws with nine tails.'[132] The refinement Indian riches contrasted against the shabby strength of Americans. However, the image of a plain American was most publically performed by Benjamin Franklin in France. His portraits from the time depict Franklin with uncovered and unpowdered hair atop a balding head. He even appeared in the ostentatious court of Louis XVI wearing simple 'Quaker-style' garments. Franklin did not try to compete with the flamboyance of his French hosts, but presented himself as the embodiment of frugality and industry and an antidote to European sleaze. While privately Franklin indulged his luxurious tastes in lavish accommodations, that he represented America as plain and industrious speaks volumes about the

[129] John Leacock, *The First Book of the American Chronicles of the Times, Chapter I* (Philadelphia, 1774), Evans 13104, p. 10.
[130] Leacock, *Chapter I,* p. 12.
[131] Leacock, *The First Book of the American Chronicles of the Times, Chapter II* (Philadelphia, 1774), Evans 13109, p. 13.
[132] *PG* 17 July 1776.

colonial realignment that had happened during the course of the 1760s and 1770s.[133] These confident assertions make more sense in the context of the preceding debate over domestic manufacturing.

In many small and sundry ways, these print genres reinforced prevailing Patriot messages. The intellectual life of inarticulate people was rarely preserved, but in analysing the print material that suffused their lives, we can recover the debates that shaped their interpretation of events. The rhetorical flourishes of American ascendency stood atop more substantive popular campaigns for domestic manufacturing. Individually these examples could appear to be random or undirected, but taken together they provide a picture of a comprehensive discourse that has been lost to posterity. Exploring these material texts in relation to each other demonstrates the different ways that the Patriot agenda influenced the lives of ordinary Philadelphians—affecting the way they conceived of consumer goods, the advice in their almanacs, and sustaining revolutionary discourse between large-scale popular crowd actions. They indicate a popular political campaign through which ordinary Philadelphians expressed their Americanness in response to economic concerns and through economic means. The aim is not to imply that economic and political developments were foremost in the minds of ordinary people. Day-to-day problems or dramas undoubtedly overrode revolutionary developments. Also these sources largely reveal politicised observations about economic matters, but this does not preclude broader observations about the nature of American identity that can help to recover the intellectual life of the inarticulate, most crucially the basic notion that being American was a positive ideal. The final chapter explores how this confidence transformed into the independence movement.

[133] Gordon Wood, *The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin* (New York; Penguin Press, 2004), pp. 171 – 81.

5) 'The Authority of the Decision of the Majority': The Role of Ordinary People in Shaping an Independent America's Imagined Future

The previous chapters have concentrated on ideas that were widespread in the Philadelphian interpretative community, but as the Patriot campaign moved toward independence the situation in the city became more polarised and divided. The terminal crisis of the British Empire prompted responses from Philadelphians that ranged from neutrality to loyalism, but the focus of this final chapter is to understand the transformation of British colonists into American Republicans. Underpinning this change of consciousness were two assumptions. The first was the transition from economic to military confidence with the belief that Americans could defeat Britain. This confidence rested on the idea that if Americans removed all impediments to their joining together as a fighting force they would win. In effect, Americans believed that they already had the capacity to win; they needed only to unleash their full potential against the British. The second assumption was that the greatest strength of the Americans lay in their continental cooperation. This cooperation entailed solving local issues with continental strategies. Significantly, this was not an integrated American community *per se*, but a commitment to American regions shared across the continent. These two assumptions empowered ordinary Philadelphians to challenge the British Empire and declare independence. This independence movement culminated in the State Constitution. The Constitution arose out of the popular energies of the city and captured a snapshot of some the ideas prevailing among ordinary people. These included a commitment to traditional Pennsylvanian liberties, the protection of revolutionary developments, and a number of radical innovations. Looking at three of the most revolutionary genres—the handbills produced in the debates surrounding the Military Association, Tom Paine's *Common Sense*, and the Pennsylvania State Constitution—demonstrates that ordinary people put themselves at the centre of the struggle for defeating Britain and establishing the American Republic.

The three genres represent critical moments in the independence movement. 1775 was the high point of American confidence, and a popular enthusiasm for armed resistance to Britain enthralled many Philadelphians. Driving forward this *rage militaire* were the various associations that organised people into militia companies. Two public debates from within these Military Associations reveal how they conceived of their place within the revolutionary movement. The first centred around the uniform of the Associators, as the militiamen called themselves, the second on the terms of military discipline needed to regulate the militia. The surviving handbills demonstrate that Associators struggled with how best to discern the will of the majority, but a crucial consensus across the entire debate was there should be as few impediments as possible for Associators taking up arms against Britain. There was an implicit assurance that if the Associators acted in a united manner then Britain would be defeated. This popular debate reinforced a news culture that celebrated the military strength of Americans and encouraged the confidence they felt in challenging Britain. Thereafter, Tom Paine's *Common Sense* precipitated the transformation of confidence into independence. His pamphlet became a continental best seller, but it emerged out of a close association with many trends in Philadelphia. This makes Paine's ideas especially pertinent in understanding the interpretative community in the city, particularly the celebration of continental cooperation. According to *Common Sense*, Americans could solve their own problems by working together, but they did not have to give up their provincially defined sense of Americanness. The culmination of this independence movement was the State Constitution. Ordinary people gave the mandate for its creation, they expected to review it after its completion, and many of the men assigned the task came from the ranks of the traditionally inarticulate artisans. The document was, of course, still mediated through an articulate few, but it responded to the intellectual lives of ordinary people and best preserves their vision of a future America. Overall, these revolutionary material texts are relics of the United States, but they also acted as the vibrant animating force for independence. These documents were popular, radical, and invigorating declarations of Americanness. The debates over American consciousness invoked in these revolutionary texts empowered ordinary people to reject their colonial status and fight for independence.

One of the underlying concerns in each of these documents was the legitimacy of American governance. Benjamin Irvin explores this issue in *Clothed in the Robes of Sovereignty*. He analyses ceremonial

culture in order to understand how Congress conceptualised the American nation. This included the physical objects and rituals that helped to unify America. Significantly, the Philadelphians who surrounded Congress did not accept ceremonial culture wholesale. Irvin's study is on the ways in which ordinary people negotiated the symbols of American identity that Congress created.[1] However, his concentration on the rituals and objects of ceremonial culture overlooks the material texts that had a central role in many of the major revolutionary developments. Returning to look at these material texts reveals the thoughts and ideas of the ordinary people who participated in the debates with Congress. More than negotiation over the interpretation of specific symbols, these material texts complicate the picture of the intellectual environment in the city. Ordinary people exercised a great deal of autonomy in formulating their own ideas. Overall, these texts indicate that the tangible remnants left to posterity can only allude to the more vibrant debates in which the inarticulate participated.

'Possessed of the Means of Defending Ourselves':
Consensus in the Military Association Handbills that Overcoming the Impediments to American Unity Will Lead to British Defeat

The Military Association was instrumental in encouraging confidence in armed resistance. The militia companies became strident advocates for pursuing the Patriot agenda and examining their debates reveal the ideas behind their role in resisting Britain. Irvin argues the Associators exercised their power most clearly in policing the terms of the Continental Association. For Irvin, the Continental Association created the conditions for the first disagreement between Congress and ordinary people. The dispute arose in November 1775 when a crowd threatened to disrupt a congressional ball held at the genteel City Tavern. This conflict demonstrated that Congress' authority was not absolute. Irvin specifically highlights article eight of the Continental Association as the pivotal clause. The article forbade expensive leisure activities and extravagant luxury goods. In Irvin's interpretation, Congress had designed article eight to reinforce the social power of refinement, stopping ordinary people from aspiring to emulate the elite,

[1] Irvin, *Clothed in the Robes of Sovereignty*, pp. 3 – 15, 281 – 3.

thereby further buttressing their power over ordinary people. However, to make his case, Irvin concentrates on the consumption dimension of the Continental Association. This perspective frames the disagreement as a negotiation between Congress, committed to the ideal of refinement as necessary to exercise their power, and a crowd of ordinary people unwilling to bear the burden of revolutionary expenses and determined to hold Congress to their own standard of anti-luxury. Ultimately, for Irvin, the importance of the Continental Association was that it allowed the people out-of-doors to demonstrate their power over Congress by ensuring that ceremonial culture was simple and austere.[2] The unwillingness to bear unequal burdens was essential in empowering the demands of ordinary people, but Irvin overlooks their involvement in the production side of the Association. The crowd decried luxury, but they also promoted rusticity for its association with American ascendency. In order to understand the Military Association in the intellectual life of the inarticulate, it is important to examine it from the perspective of ordinary people and their belief in the inherent advantages of America rather than, as Irvin does, concentrating on the power of refinement.

This belief in the inherent advantages of America arose out of engagement with the Continental Association. The Continental Association was the key to the success of the Military Association movement. Unlike many other colonies, Pennsylvania did not have a strong militia tradition; therefore, the formation of these companies caused significant political problems, especially for the Quakers opposed to violence and conservatives fearful about further provoking Britain. Both of these groups resisted numerous attempts at providing money for the companies. To overcome these blockages, Richard Ryerson argues the first step was the insistence on upholding the terms of the Continental Association in early 1775. Policing these terms fell to a body called the Committee of Observation and Inspection. The second incarnation of this body was called the Sixty-Six for the number of its members. The Sixty-Six was a more radical committee than the first, known as the Forty-Three, and was comprised of many more people from outside of formal politics. Their greatest success was preserving the Patriot movement from the political machinations of the conservative Joseph Galloway. In March 1775, Pennsylvania received news that the King had assented to lay Congress' American petition before

[2] Irvin, *Clothed in the Robes of Sovereignty*, pp. 29 – 33.

Parliament. The news was a victory for Congress. Moreover, it politically isolated Galloway, who had repeatedly insisted Pennsylvania needed to petition Parliament separately. He consequently withdrew from the legislature, leaving his conservative colleagues without firm leadership. Eventually, this collapse of opposition allowed the Sixty-Six to campaign for provincial funding for the Military Association.[3] This committee, initially organised to oversee the terms of the Continental Association, took a leading role in facilitating the growth of the Military Association and overcoming the conservatism of Pennsylvania politics. The close political connection between the two movements provided opportunities for the transfer of ideas between the bodies' respective members as well.

Understanding the Military Association from the perspective of ordinary people entails looking at the debates that happened among its members. Two in particular are illustrative of the confidence Associators had in their ability to defeat Britain militarily. The debates themselves focused on seemingly mundane topics, uniforms and the rules of military discipline, but they encompassed issues such as political responsibility, economic burdens, and the prospect of armed conflict with Britain. The points of consensus in these debates can help discern some of the assumptions that Associators had about their role in society. The Military Associations were a popular phenomenon. Following news of the battles of Lexington and Concord in April 1775, eight thousand Philadelphians met and agreed to form into a militia. Over the next two months, they organised into companies and began drilling in public spaces.[4] These prominent displays kept the Military Association at the fore of public debate. The two debates were also cohesive. In relation to the first debate, I have been given access to a previously unknown handbill from a private collection. Since the 1980s, Steven Rosswurm's interpretation of the debate over uniforms has been the standard. He concentrated on the egalitarian language in the more well-known handbill entitled *To the Associators of the City of Philadelphia* in order to highlight the radical ideas that flourished among the Associators.[5] The new handbill, *To the Gentlemen Associators*, argued directly against this first handbill and provides an insight into the underlying premises from which both pieces build their arguments. In the second debate, the popularity of the issues is evident from the large crowd gatherings

[3] Ryerson, *The Revolution is Now Begun*, pp. 106 – 10, 119 – 22.
[4] Rosswurm, *Arms, Country, and Class*, pp. 49 – 50.
[5] Rosswurm, *Arms, Country, and Class*, p. 52. Bouton, *Taming Democracy*, p. 68. Irvin, *Clothed in the Robes of Sovereignty*, p. 45.

that met to discuss the articles of military discipline. Twice the Committee of Privates, an elected body of representatives for the militia, gathered the Associators together to convince them to sign the articles, each time distributing a broadside to help make their case. However, on both occasions, they met with resistance from the rank-and-file Associators. Although there are no rejoinder texts from the rank-and-file Associators, we can infer their position from the differences between these two texts. Thereafter, the points of consensus indicate the underlying assumptions Associators had about their place in society.

In the first debate, there is very little external evidence about the two extant handbills. There is no known printer or author attribution, and therefore, most of what can be known about these pieces is derived from looking at their material form. Both are the same size. The original copy of *To the Associators of the City of Philadelphia* in the LCP is a half folio page, and judging from the vertical chain lines in *To the Gentlemen Associators*, this piece too is a half sheet. They are also both single-sided. This means that the two pieces would have cost roughly the same for whoever commissioned them. In terms of the authors, both are anonymous and do not use a pseudonym. There is a manuscript notation on *To the Associators of the City of Philadelphia* that says 'May 18th 1775', likely indicating the day it was distributed. There are no extant cards from around 18 May that advertise for a general meeting, nor any reports in the Pennsylvania press of people gathering. The only clue to its distribution method comes from the second handbill, which says it is responding to an address that 'has lately appeared in Hand Bills'. This suggests that the first was likely pinned up in public spaces throughout Philadelphia and may have been handed out in person as well. The second handbill probably followed a similar method of distribution. Ultimately, readers encountered both of these texts in a similar fashion, essentially giving equal weight to both perspectives.

Looking at the arguments, the first pamphlet *To the Associators of the City of Philadelphia* addressed the Associators without distinction. The author claimed to speak for a 'Considerable number of the Associators of this city', in effect speaking on behalf of the majority. He argued that the plan for the uniform set out by the militia commanders would be too expensive for the 'generality'. The author accepted that a uniform was necessary, but he suggested that a much cheaper option was the hunting shirt, a long shirt that cost less than ten shillings. This would mean Associators would not have to buy expensive coats and jackets. Crucially, as Rosswurm highlights, the author repeatedly framed his

contention in the language of equality. The hunting shirt would 'level all distinctions' and was 'within the compass of almost *every* person's ability'. The author acknowledged that the officers had not intended to impose the uniform on the Associators, but he believed the officers should have 'given the privates an opportunity of making known *their* sentiments.' Had the officers done so then the hunting shirt 'would have met the approbation of ninety-nine out of an hundred.' The author apologised for writing the address and claimed not to want to spread any dissension, but he asked for a meeting of Associators so that 'each man may have a voice in what so nearly concerns himself.' Significantly, the handbill concluded with an assertion that though '*hundreds*' of Associators could not afford the uniform, none would ask for charity and none would turn up without a coat.[6] In effect, the author argued there would be fewer Associators unless a cheaper option enabled them to participate. The overall message was that the Association was more powerful when people were able to join.

The second handbill, *To The Gentlemen Associators*, responded directly. The opening and closing statements indicted the author of *To the Associators of the City of Philadelphia* for upsetting the harmony among the militiamen. The opening lines complained that the handbill had a troubling implication that threatened '*the Authority of the Decision of the Majority*.' These majority decisions, he argued, were the foundation of colonial unity. The author asked whether 'a single Man, or a few Individuals' should be allowed to disrupt the whole. *To the Gentlemen Associators* accused the first pamphlet of creating dissension and denied that its author spoke on behalf of the majority of Associators. In the body of the pamphlet, the author refuted that the hunting shirt was even the cheaper option. He argued the officers based the uniform on the principle of frugality. Firstly, though the recommended uniform would cost thirty shillings in total, the author reasoned that no one would have to purchase every item new. Many would have coats and jackets to hand and Associators could trim old hats into the uniform rounded shape. Even those who needed to buy breeches and waistcoats should only need to spend a little.[7] The second author censured the first author for his dissent. This dissent threatened to derail plans already in motion; however,

[6] *To the Associators of the City of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1775), Evans 14487.
[7] *To the Gentlemen Associators, of the City and Liberties of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1775), private collection of Gary Milan, Beverly Hills, CA.

crucially he concurred that Associators needed uniforms, and that those uniforms should not be expensive.

Both handbills agreed that the outlay of expenses for participating in the Military Associations should not be onerous. The first handbill makes clear that there should be as few impediments to doing one's patriotic duty as possible. They also both fully subscribe to the idea that the authority of the majority is key. The first repeatedly stressed that hunting shirts were the will of the majority, whilst the second insisted that the decision for a uniform reflected the same impetus. Importantly, they disagreed on how to interpret a majority decision. The first implicitly argued that the will of the majority came from speaking to the Associators as a group. The second contended that it came from the decision of a representative body, in this case the officers. The debate resonates with the 'every man is a part of the public' dispute between 'A Philadelphian' and 'A True Philadelphian' during the Townshend Duties crisis. The first handbill adopted a much more radical position in pushing for an interpretation of the majority based on numerical superiority, while the second concentrated more on the majority decision of representatives. The second is a more conservative position, but there is little information about the authors themselves to be able to discern a difference in their status. Both were able to afford to print a handbill in order to voice their opinion, and therefore, there is insufficient evidence to assert that one more closely represents the ideas of ordinary people than the other. Moreover, many Associators acquiesced and accepted the uniform, which is indicative of at least limited cooperation between ordinary people and the officers. The divergence between these handbills indicates that the debate entailed more complex ideas than a clash between an elite and rank-and-file perspective. Crucially, however, both agreed there should be as few impediments as possible to people joining the Association. The full implications of this consensus would appear more explicitly in the second debate.

The second debate was much more wide ranging and centred on convincing Associators to sign the articles of association, the rules of military discipline. The Articles of Association appeared first in September 1775.[8] They were largely based on the rules for governing the Continental regular forces, but there were concerns from Associators about the nature of the discipline proposed. The Pennsylvania

[8] *PM* 8 September 1775.

Assembly expanded and elaborated on the original terms in November and distributed them for signing, but again the Associators were reluctant to give their approval. In the winter of 1775 and 1776, the elites became increasingly concerned that Philadelphia would be a military target for a British campaign, and without Articles of Association they effectively had no fighting force with which to repel them. The Committee of Privates, the body elected to represent the interests of the Associators, twice had to gather their colleagues in Philadelphia in order to convince them to sign the articles. At these meetings, they distributed broadsides through crowd like flyers whilst presumably also delivering speeches. The flyers are the extant remnants of how the Committee of Privates attempted to persuade their colleagues. As in the first debate, there is very little information about the ephemera itself. The authors of both pieces are unknown, but the message was on behalf of the Committee of Privates and associated with them. Information about the printer is limited. Evans based his attribution of *To the Non-Commissioned Officers* to the press of Henry Miller on the existence of a German translation, as Miller was a prolific translator of English-language texts, but this is uncertain and little else is known.[9] More significantly, however, readers encountered the text as part of a larger public gathering. The fact it took two attempts to convince ordinary Associators to sign the articles demonstrates they were not always compliant with the messages the organisers of meetings intended.

The first attempt at persuading rank-and-file Associators to sign the articles was at a gathering held on 27 December 1775.[10] The handbill was a double-sided piece entitled *To the Non-Commissioned Officers and Privates*. It addressed the ordinary Associators directly and set out to accomplish two tasks, the first to highlight the danger facing the province and the second to extol the strength of the Association. The piece invoked the immediate danger Pennsylvania was in. It argued that the colony was the next target for British attack because the US navy was in the Delaware and the province produced large amounts of grain. Crucially, according to the pamphlet, Pennsylvania was the lynch pin that held together the northern and southern colonies. If the British captured the province then it would break the unity of the colonies that protected them all. The pamphlet then described the horrors that would await British occupation. It especially warned those who would desert their brethren in this time of need because the

[9] *To the Non-Commissioned Officers* (Philadelphia, 1775), Evans 14507.
[10] Rosswurm, *Arms, Country, and Class*, p. 61.

'*coward meets no favour from a conquering enemy*'. The idea was that there was no retreat, no surrender, no avoiding the fight with the British. Importantly, it argued that the Associators were so important because they had volunteered. Raising a standing army would burden future generations with insufferable debt, but 'in the end it might crush our liberties, as it is like to do to those of Great Britain. —And above all, it would be putting the defence of our liberties into the hands of men, who have been the destroyers of it in all ages and countries.' As volunteers, the Associators helped America avoid this financial burden without conscripting and arming unruly men. The main argument of the handbill was that once the Associators signed the articles they would become a sixty thousand strong fighting force that would to stop all the evils that threatened the province. The pamphlet praised its readers for becoming Associators, but warned 'this noble ardour, this generous spirit' had been lost in the dispute over signing the Articles. The pamphlet dismissed the objections of the ordinary Associators, implying their reluctance to sign was petulant because they did not 'obtain redress of grievances they complained of on their first application.' It reminded its audience that the Committee of Privates, from whom the message came, had the best interests of all at heart, and therefore, the redress that the Associators were clamouring for would come eventually. The only specific factor the pamphlet referenced was that the Associators should 'not be afraid of Court Martial and Military Articles: penalties can only be inflicted on delinquents; the man who conducts himself properly, has nothing to fear.'[11] The pamphlet does not linger on refuting these troubling details. Instead it highlighted the imminent danger and the potential military strength that could stop the horrors.

Looking at the second pamphlet, *Gentlemen and Fellow Soldiers*, reveals some of the deficiencies in the first. Organisers called a second meeting in January 1775, and again distributed a flyer there. The second handbill opened with praise for the strength of the Association. It admiringly noted that the people had gathered together into militias quickly and learnt their art. The darkening political climate had leant new power to the Associators' determination. The pamphlet then stipulated the many dangers that faced Pennsylvania, laying the entire problem at the feet of 'a bloody and vindictive ministry, supported by a bold and inhuman soldiery'. The only guards that Americans had left were providence and virtue.

[11] *To the Non-Commissioned Officers* (Philadelphia, 1775), Evans 14507.

The pamphlet's main argument was that American safety needed military success and that success came from the exertion of the Associators. For the author of this pamphlet the only obstacle to that exertion was the organisation of the militia. The author admitted that life for Pennsylvanians was so good because of the equality that existed between them, and though military discipline was an anathema to that equality it was necessary in order to protect against British incursions. A critical distinction between the first and second pamphlets was that the second argued that military discipline derived its power from the people directly. The officers' authority was a 'gift, and cannot be easily abused.'. Discipline was necessary to 'distinguish our regular and united exertions for the publick service, from the tumultuous and disorderly movements of an armed mob.' Unlike the first, the second took seriously the concerns about military discipline and sought to allay them. The pamphlet continued that the officers have signed the articles knowing that, while they were not perfect, they were necessary before any defence of the province can begin. The author stressed repeatedly that all defects could be addressed after the articles had been signed. Without a general signing of the Articles the continental currency had no value and non-Associators could not be compelled to share their part of the public burden. [12] The difference between the first and the second is that the second devoted more space to detailing specific concerns like abusive commanders and the ability to amend the articles. These changes in argumentation suggest Associators raised these issues when they first rejected the articles in December.

Even with this shift of focus as well as the large public gathering, apparently the rank-and-file Associators resisted signing again. A circular letter from the Committee of Privates in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* indicates that the sticking point remained the dissatisfaction with the terms of the articles and a persistent fear they would not be addressed after the Associators had signed. The circular letter ignored all other concerns to assure its readers that they needed to sign immediately and that the Committee of Privates would enter into immediate correspondence to hear the grievances of every Associator.[13] This concrete promise was likely sufficient because by 14 February 1776 the officers of the association announced that the signing of the articles had become general.[14] Unfortunately, the alternative

[12] *Gentlemen and Fellow Soldiers* (Philadelphia, 1776), Evans 14772.
[13] *PEP* 1 February 1776.
[14] Rosswurm, *Arms, Country, and Class*, p. 63.

suggestions and visions for the Association that the rank-and-file Associators may have had has not been preserved for posterity, but it seems the debate went beyond simply rejecting the articles outright. Although this debate has been partially lost, a point of consensus was that America could stop Britain if they managed to form into an effective fighting force. The pieces concentrated on the sixty thousand men ready to resist the imperial power. Admittedly, handbills designed to convince militiamen to sign articles of association were not an appropriate forum to discuss anxieties about the conflict, but the consensus across both debates and all four pamphlets was that if all the impediments to joining the Association were removed then America could defeat Britain. These were confident assertions that if enough Americans fought together they would win.

Associators' confidence in American military strength worked in tandem with assertions about the advantages America enjoyed as a continent. Congress espoused these ideas as part of its official communications. In a letter to the people of Great Britain, Congress threatened that Parliament's attack against Boston was actually hurting British opulence rather than American interests. So even though the ministry had abandoned the colonies in foreign affairs, unleashed a depraved soldiery and shut up the ports, because America had large supplies they were not defenceless.[15] They repeated the same threat in the letter to Ireland. Americans had important internal resources that would help them resist violent incursions, if necessary.[16] In both cases, Congress' boast was that the land would preserve Americans. In 1775, its value to the American cause would have been difficult to refute. That year's harvest was a bumper crop and the colonies had long been capable of providing for their own needs. In fact, Pennsylvania had stockpiled good quality flour over a number of years, so there was a surplus already in the province. The failure to make good on this advantage was that mobilisation meant many areas had too little labour to clear the fields. Meanwhile, the wild inflation that followed the emission of Continental currency made those that had wheat unwilling to sell because grain became the best repository of value on the continent.[17] However, it was more than just the land that would preserve American virtue, it was also Americans themselves. In the *Declaration* […] *Seting* [sic] *forth the Causes and Necessity of their Taking up Arms*,

[15] Continental Congress, *The Twelve United Colonies*, p. 6.
[16] Continental Congress, *An Address of the Twelve United Colonies of North-America by their Representatives in Congress to the People of Ireland* (Philadelphia, 1775), Evans 14536.
[17] Richard Buel, *In Irons: Britain's Naval Supremacy and the American Revolutionary Economy* (New Haven, CT; Yale University Press, 1998), p. 44 – 5, 50.

Congress asserted to Parliament the colonies had armed and organised themselves because 'Our Cause is Just. Our union is perfect. Our internal resources are great,' but more than that 'Providence would not permit us to be called into the severe controversy, until we were grown up to our present strength, had been previously exercised in warlike operations, and possessed of the means of defending ourselves.'[18] Americans had learnt the art of war over the previous century and they were now able to resist Britain. It was not just that the resources possessed by the Americans would help them resist Britain, but that the people would too. The debate over the Military Association contributed to this vision of American strength.

Beyond Congress, newspapers reiterated the strength of America's military. Just after the first meetings of the Associators in Philadelphia a commentator said 'MARS has established his empire in this populous city; and it is not doubted but we shall have in a few weeks from this date, 4000 men, well equipped, for our own defence or for the assistance of our neighbours.'[19] The Associators were numerous, supplied, and ready to resist Britain. This was important because Americans contrasted their condition against the British forces. During the siege of Prospect Hill in Boston, Americans distributed a pamphlet, subsequently published in newspapers, comparing the conditions of both forces:

> PROSPECT HILL.
> I. Seven Dollars a month.
> II. Fresh provisions, and in plenty.
> III. Health.
> IV. Freedom, ease, affluence, and a good farm.
>
> BUNKER'S HILL.
> I. Three pence a day.
> II. Rotten salt pork.
> III. The Scurvy.
> IV. Slavery, beggary, and want.[20]

Prospect Hill was the fortified location British forces attacked in order to gain control over Boston harbour. Although the British successfully forced the Americans to retreat to Cambridge after the battle

[18] Continental Congress, *Declaration* […] *Seting* [sic] *forth the Causes and Necessity of their Taking up Arms* (Philadelphia, 1775), Evans 14544, pp. 11 – 2.
[19] *PG* 3 May 1775.
[20] *PG* 16 August 1775.

of Bunker Hill, the huge losses the British incurred were a cause for celebration among the Americans. According to the Americans they were better paid, had better provisions, enjoyed good health rather than suffering from disease, and fought in order to protect their farms and affluence rather than because they were slaves or destitute. Fighting for America was a duty, but not a destructive or degrading one. The American landscape improved the condition of the American military.

Added to these celebrations of the conditions of America's military, news of victories flooded into the press, and each time they followed a similar narrative as Bunker Hill. A small plucky American force could easily see off the larger British contingent. One of the most celebrated parts of this confidence was the rifle. The grooves within the barrels of rifles gave the bullets a gyroscopic spin that stabilised the projectile and gave it greater accuracy over long distances. Charles Royster's study of the effect of war on American identity argued that Americans put a great deal of trust in the efficacy of riflemen, even though in practice the rifle was not a useful weapon in fighting the British.[21] Reports abounded in the press that in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the riflemen were killing British troops from long distances. One article reported that a sentry was killed at two hundred and fifty yards distance.[22] The story is emblematic of the mythic power the rifle accrued. It had the ability to keep the British forces at a harmless distance. There was a story from Williamsburg, Virginia, about twenty riflemen fending off repeated attempts by British troops trying to land and burn ferries.[23] Newspapers also included anecdotal accounts of the prodigious skill of American riflemen. From Virginia there was a report that Lord Dunmore, who had declared war in the province, was familiar with the skill of American riflemen. The commentator said that the dead Shawnee Dunmore had conscripted to his cause were testimony to the skilled aim of the Virginians. The report concluded that nearly every man in the country was armed and unwilling to submit to British tyranny.[24] The threat was clear from the outset. Americans throughout the continent were able and willing to resist British forces militarily. Meanwhile, in a militia summons on the Pennsylvania frontier, many more applicants turned up than expected and so the battalion commander drew a nose on a board and said he would engage anyone who could hit the picture. Sixty of the

[21] Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775 – 1783* (Chapel Hill, NC; University of North Carolina Press, 1979), p. 33.
[22] *PG* 16 August 1775.
[23] *PG* 29 November 1775.
[24] *PEP* 9 November 1775.

applicants did so and the report concluded with a warning for 'General Gage, take care of *your* nose!'[25] This was a direct threat to the commander of British forces, but it also alluded to the enthusiasm with which Americans turned out to join the fight. These reports from throughout the colonies resonated with the Military Association debates reinforcing the idea that ordinary Philadelphians were participating in a viable endeavour to resist Britain.

One of the most famous accounts of the prodigious skill of American riflemen was the company of Captain Michael Cressap. An eyewitness reported a number of men emerging out of the woods dressed in hunting shirts and looking like Native Americans. These were Captain Cressap's militiamen. They demonstrated their skill with the rifle and printers reprinted their anecdotes in the Pennsylvania press as the evidence of American martial skill. They hit the target from a variety of poses, on their back, side, front, as well as while running. Two brothers impressed a crowd by taking turns holding a board while the other shot at it. The culmination of this performance was when one man put the board between his legs and one of his colleagues shot at it. The report concluded with a belief that a thousand of those men could do a huge amount of damage to British forces in the American forests. The commentator asserted they 'want nothing to preserve their health and courage, but water from the spring, with a little parched corn, and what they can easily procure in hunting; who wrapped in their blankets in the damp of night, would choose the shade of a tree for their covering, and the earth for their bed?'[26] Pennsylvania papers reprinted this same account indicating the interest editors believed it would have for their readers.[27] The *Pennsylvania Packet* included a different version of the same event. This report said Cressap's men could hit the head of a ten-penny nail and to 'envince the confidence they possessed in their dexterity at these kind of arms, some of them proposed to stand with apples on their heads' while others stood again at sixty yards, though the crowd declined this offer. Importantly, the report stressed that fifty out of the hundred and thirty men in Cressap's command could do the same.[28] The report emphasised that Cressap did more than just play games; they put their deadly skills to work killing hostile Native

[25] *PEP* 11 July 1775.
[26] *PM* 18 August 1775.
[27] *PG* 16 August 1775.
[28] *PP* 28 August 1775.

Americans.[29] The riflemen were symbolic of American military strength and they were important for bolstering the confidence that Americans had in facing the British.

The debates over uniforms and the articles of association reveal that as the Associators struggled with issues of representation and military discipline they believed that if they could remove the impediments to their participation they could challenge Britain militarily. These impediments could be as simple as making sure that ordinary people could afford to join the militia, or as problematic as giving up their liberties to submit to military authority. In both cases, the persistent belief was that once Americans overcome these impediments they could create a unified force to stop British incursions into America. Broader reports combined this assumption with assertions about the strength of the American landscape that improved the conditions under which Americans fought. Moreover, the riflemen, with their association with a rustic lifestyle and the backcountry, became symbolic of the strength of the Americans. Extolling the virtues bestowed by the American landscape and praising the strength of the people conflated an assurance in American ascendency with the Patriot goal of taking up arms against the British. The Military Association promoted an American consciousness that could and should defeat Britain.

'Strength and Happiness is Continental not Provincial':
The Relationship between Tom Paine's *Common Sense* and the Interpretation of American Unity

Tom Paine's *Common Sense* stands out as an enduring legacy of the Revolution. Its publication in January 1776 changed the public debate and broached the subject of independence. Since ordinary people responded to revolutionary literature, it is important to analyse its relationship with the intellectual life of the inarticulate, particularly the effect it had on the readers and the way that readers affected its composition. Irvin's concentration on ritual and material culture mean he has little to say about Paine directly; however, Trish Loughran's *The Republic in Print* analyses the powerful myth of the pamphlet and incorporates it into the broader nationalising movement. *The Republic in Print* adopts a material text

[29] *PEP* 30 November 1775.

perspective and focuses specifically on the networks of distribution surrounding *Common Sense*. For Loughran, the fact that printing centres throughout the continent printed their own version of the pamphlet actually undermined the unity of Paine's message. She concludes that the myth of a bestseller was more important for creating unity among the colonists than the text's actual content. Paine's proclamations about everyone reading *Common Sense* brought more people together than did his ideas of independence or republicanism.[30] One of Loughran's most problematic arguments is that she contends that '*Common Sense*, in its radical and original articulation of the North American continent as a distinct and newly imaginable geographical subject, could only have been written by an outsider uninitiated and unassimilated to the fierce local attachments of late-eighteenth-century provincial politics.'[31] Many historians have analysed *Common Sense*, and their interpretation contradicts Loughran's. Most situate Paine firmly within a Philadelphian setting and looking at the wider communications circuit reinforces this interpretation.

As an author, Paine spoke directly to his Philadelphian audience using a language they recognised. Nicole Eustace argues that *Common Sense* was the culmination of a particularly Pennsylvanian brand of universal emotion. The rhetoric Paine used to appeal to his audience was the product of extensive pamphlet debate in Pennsylvania. Concepts like the mutual obligations required in bonds of love, the rational efficacy of anger, and the necessity of sympathy to create unity reached a climactic enunciation in *Common Sense*. Paine had imbibed the sense of communal human emotions within Philadelphia and Benjamin Franklin heightened its local resonance with his editing. This mode of emotional expression propelled Paine's ideas to the centre of American politics.[32] *Common Sense* used a language that had developed in response to debates in the province and emerged out of its intellectual environment. Furthermore, as Eric Foner argued in *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America*, though Paine had only been in Philadelphia for a year before he published *Common Sense*, he embedded himself into the radical milieu of the city. Leading revolutionaries like Franklin, Benjamin Rush, David Rittenhouse, and Sam Adams read his manuscript and suggested minor changes. Paine's monumental contribution was the

[30] Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770 – 1870* (New York, NY; Columbia University Press, 2007), pp. 33 – 103.
[31] Loughran, *The Republic in Print*, p. 67.
[32] Eustace, *Passion is the Gale*, p. 441.

introduction of the term republican. This politically charged term allowed his radical colleagues to rise to prominence as they supported his case.[33] As an author, Paine courageously used his pamphlet to broach the subject of independence. He relied on his supporters in the city to carry on the debate and push forcefully for separation from Britain. Finally, Sophia Rosenfeld's study of the concept of common sense argues that Paine's success was his synthesis between Atlantic anti-elitist connotations of common sense and the peculiar conditions of Philadelphia that allowed for radical experiments in popular sovereignty. Paine spoke as an American commenting on the conditions he saw and the solution that appeared to him.[34] This meant that, though *Common Sense* had a local perspective, it was not parochial in its ambitions or in its reach. One of the major reasons for the success of *Common Sense* was that Paine used a set of rhetorical tools developed in Philadelphia. His ideas were recognisable to his readers in the city.

In fact, more than just his skill as an author, Paine had thoroughly prepared his audience for the reception of *Common Sense*. Timothy Breen persuasively argues that the *Crisis* series of essays in the early part of 1775, probably written by Paine, prepared the way for *Common Sense*. The nearly unprecedented circulation of the *Crisis* was a strident call to arms that helped to create a sense of simultaneity amongst the burgeoning committee movements throughout the colonies. The text appealed directly to ordinary people and affirmed their belief in the need for violence. It also created a sense of international solidarity amongst the oppressed. *Common Sense* then expanded on this sentiment.[35] Paine's text was not isolated, but part of a larger revolutionary canon. Although no one had argued as explicitly for independence, texts like the *Crisis* had rehearsed for audiences many of Paine's central tenets. More obviously, Edward Larkin argues Paine had honed his craft as editor for Robert Aitkin's *Pennsylvania Magazine*. He used his position as both editor and as prolific contributor to shape the attitudes of his reading audience with a number of influential metaphors. For example, comparing British troops to ants naturalised the political situation preparing them for impending conflict. Significantly, Larkin argues that Paine created a public for his work. He used his editorship in order to create a set of readers whom he could represent. This new public

[33] Eric Foner, *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America* (New York, NY; Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 74 – 5,
[34] Sophia Rosenfeld, *Common Sense: A Political History* (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 145 – 52.
[35] Breen, *American Insurgents, American Patriots*, pp. 261 – 74.

was comprised of ordinary people, and it gave *Common Sense* its political force.[36] This use of metaphors rather than overt polemics would have worked well in a Philadelphian media environment that was cautious about inflammatory language even up to the pamphlet's publication. Crucially, *Common Sense* was not isolated. Instead, it was part of Philadelphia's intellectual environment. Paine embedded himself in this milieu through a number of avenues, but his ideas were a part of Philadelphia's print culture long before they appeared in January 1776.

Even at the level of production, the print culture of Philadelphia affected the popularity of *Common Sense*. Richard Gimbel's bibliographical checklist of the pamphlet argued Paine's fractious relationship with printers helped it become a best seller. Paine initially sent the pamphlet to the printer Robert Bell because of his republican sentiments, but after a dispute over the profits, Paine published his second and enlarged edition with the Bradfords. In order to hit back at Paine, Bell printed the new appendix and gave it away free to any reader who bought his edition. Bell claimed he had no desire to profit from his publication of *Common Sense*. The contest spilled over into a series of articles in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, thereby bringing it to the attention of an audience already avidly consuming news.[37] Moreover, as Jim Green argues this dispute may have stopped Paine exercising too much control over *Common Sense* and stifling its broader dissemination.[38] Throughout the rest of 1776, Paine appended additions to new editions of his work that further entrenched the discussion in Philadelphian politics. In February, he responded to the publication of a letter from Quakers condemning *Common Sense*.[39] Then in May, he included an imaginary dialogue between an American delegate and the ghost of General Richard Montgomery, who had died a heroic death fighting the British.[40] These two pieces replenished *Common Sense* making it relevant for political developments and encouraging readers to return to the piece. The numerous responses to *Common Sense*, many of them negative, also helped raise its notoriety.[41] The competition between booksellers added to the availability and reputation of the text helping it become an

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[36] Edward Larkin, *Thomas Paine and the Literature of Revolution* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 24, 34, 38.
[37] Richard Gimbel, *Thomas Paine: A Bibliographical Check List of Common Sense with an Account of its Publication* (Port Washington, NY; Kennikat Press, 1973), p. 49.
[38] Green, 'English Books and Printing in the Age of Franklin', pp. 295 – 6.
[39] Ryerson, *The Revolution is Now Begun*, pp. 153 – 5.
[40] Irvin, *Clothed in the Robes of Sovereignty*, pp. 124 – 5.
[41] *PG* 28 February 1776. *PG* March 20 1776. *PL* 30 March 1776. *PL* 6 April 1776. *PL* 13 April 1776. *PP* 15 April 1776.

American best seller. One of Loughran's important observations about the material dissemination of *Common Sense* relates to its circulation. The sixteen editions that the pamphlet went through attest to its visibility in the city, but Loughran has a problem with the usually cited number of a hundred and fifty thousand copies because this figure originated with Paine himself. She contends that historians use the number to reinforce a narrative of unprecedented market success. In practice, Loughran argues *Common Sense* followed predictable and established print networks along the coast with only limited penetration into the backcountry. Loughran wishes to move past using these numbers as an indicator of popularity to examine instead the way that Paine used the myth surrounding *Common Sense* to bring Americans together.[42] The significance of *Common Sense* therefore lay in its popularity and its ability to engage public debate, but in order to understand its reception and effect in Philadelphia we also need to emphasise its intimate connections to the local interpretative community.

Although Loughran focuses primarily on the text's material dissemination at the expense of its broader communications circuit, she concludes that *Common Sense*, in its words and its material form, emphasised a 'universalizing localism'. Paine's vision of America neither prioritised the overarching structure nor the local. Instead, Paine cultivated an idea that all Americans share a connection to their localities. The myth of Paine's book helped to replace the imperial superstructure with a new unifying localism; however, Loughran argues that the Revolution was not a time of union, but localism.[43] Loughran identifies this disunion as a problem, but looking at *Common Sense*, Paine considered universalising localism as a source of strength. It underpinned an independent America. The idea itself emerged in response to the political climate in Philadelphia and Paine exemplified the idea by selecting specifically Pennsylvanian examples to build his argument. The significance of the pamphlet for the transformation of American consciousness was its celebration of universalising localism. It encouraged ordinary people to concentrate on their local affairs believing that this also furthered the American cause.

Turning to the text itself, Paine's perspective was simultaneously continental and distinctly concentrated on issues that arose in Pennsylvania. Continental unity was vitally important to Paine. He

[42] Loughran, *The Republic in Print*, p. 40 – 51.
[43] Loughran, *The Republic in Print*, p. 74 – 9.

repeatedly referred to America as a continent throughout. The solution to British tyranny was independence and 'a continental form of government, [which] can keep the peace of the Continent and preserve it inviolate from civil wars.'[44] The government of America should operate from the continental level. In fact, he asserted that 'strength and happiness is Continental not Provincial.'[45] Throughout he asserted that no colony sought to advance itself ahead of the others.[46] Paine affirmed that the American provinces could work together as a collective whole. The greatest strength of the Continent was not numbers, which seemed to be the suggestion during the economic conflict, but the unity shared between Americans.[47] In fact, he later said that if America were more populously inhabited its unity might not be so strong.[48] For Paine, Americans had reached the level of maturity necessary for independence. He argued that the Americans were 'not the little people' they had been sixty years previously.[49] He admitted that the colonies were in an infant state, but asserted this was an advantage because good habits started in youth.[50] In fact, this theme of continental freshness was integral to Paine's argument. He used metaphors like throwing away old almanacs, or weening America from the milk of Britain in order to eat the meat needed for maturity. Finally, Paine argued that just as the first twenty years of a person's life does not predict the second twenty years, America should not hold itself to its youthful attachment to Britain.[51] In essence, everything was about starting afresh. Paine declared that it is 'not in the power of England or of Europe to conquer America' unless Americans refused to work together in unity.[52] Paine reflected the belief in American ascendency and the Associators' confidence that if Americans were willing to fight they would win. Paine asserted the unity of the American continent was the key to success against Britain.

Despite this broad perspective and celebration of continental strength, Paine clearly situated himself within Pennsylvania. In order to witness the troubles facing America, Paine invited his readers on an imaginative journey to Boston. This transportation clearly indicated that Paine was not a Bostonian,

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[44] Thomas Paine, *Common Sense: With the Whole Appendix, the Address to the Quakers, also the Large Additions* (Philadelphia, 1776), Evans 14966, p. 51.
[45] Paine, *Common Sense*, p. 56.
[46] Paine, *Common Sense*, p. 52.
[47] Paine, *Common Sense*, p. 61.
[48] Paine, *Common Sense*, p. 70.
[49] Paine, *Common Sense*, pp. 65 – 6.
[50] Paine, *Common Sense*, pp. 70 – 1.
[51] Paine, *Common Sense*, pp. 31 – 2.
[52] Paine, *Common Sense*, p. 42 – 7.

but an American in another locale. Through the course of the pamphlet, it would be increasingly identifiable as Pennsylvania. At numerous points, Paine used Pennsylvania's relationship with its neighbours to highlight problems with the British Empire. For example, in arguing against the idea that the attachment to Britain was the only thing uniting the colonies, he countered that the connections between Pennsylvania and New Jersey were as sister colonies. The British Empire had little influence in keeping the two colonies together. Later he returned to this point to discuss the continuing conflict between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, arguing that the British government was next to useless in resolving the backcountry issues between the colonies, especially as they had erupted into violence.[53] Paine spoke on behalf of all Americans, but his examples were Pennsylvanian. He did not discuss any of the problems plaguing other colonies and their neighbours in the same explicit manner.

These were not superficial references to Pennsylvania; Paine understood continental problems through the lens of his adopted province. For example, Paine stressed that Europe rather than Britain was the home of Americans. In fact, the relationship with Britain meant 'France and Spain never were, nor perhaps ever will be our enemies as *Americans* but as our being the *subjects of Great Britain*.' The imperial relationship was problematic, but being European was no obstacle. He cited how people from England, Netherlands, Germany, and Sweden all found common cause by belonging to America. Their ancestral homes were no impediment to their ability to cooperate on the new continent.[54] This observation likely had more impact in Pennsylvania, which had seen large numbers of immigrants specifically from these countries.[55] Paine understood the ability of Europeans to work together because he had witnessed it in Philadelphia. Moreover, Paine's plan for the newly independent states built from a Pennsylvanian model, calling for a unicameral house with annual elections.[56] The radical experiment in popular sovereignty that had empowered his declarations built from the influence ordinary people had in Pennsylvania's elections. Paine highlighted the importance of hemp and iron in defeating Britain. Both were essential for shipbuilding, but they were also two products that Pennsylvania produced.[57] The resources that Paine

[53] Paine, *Common Sense*, pp. 33, 40, 70
[54] Paine, *Common Sense*, p. 33 – 6.
[55] Jack T. Lemon, *Best Poor Man's Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore, MD; The John Hopkins Press, 1972), pp. 13 – 5.
[56] Paine, *Common Sense*, p. 54.
[57] Paine, *Common Sense*, p. 69.

privileged as saving America were also the commodities products that his local province produced in abundance.[58] Finally, in his reflections about actual governance, Paine used the defeat of an Associators' petition due to the overrepresentation of Bucks and Chester counties in the Pennsylvania assembly as evidence of how a minority could have undue influence over the will of the majority, actually threatening the ability of Pennsylvania to defend itself.[59] Paine referred to the recalcitrance of the eight Bucks county committee members who had repeatedly slowed the financing of the Military Association.[60] Each of these observations arose out of an intimate familiarity with the situation in Pennsylvania. Paine predicated his confidence in an independent America on encouraging the strengths and fixing the weaknesses he witnessed in Pennsylvania. This universalising localism would help improve America as a whole.

Discovering ordinary people's reception of the pamphlet is impossible, but it was clearly a visible part of Philadelphian print culture. The text itself emerged out of the city's radical milieu, but audiences had been prepared before its publication through previous public debates, magazines, and pamphlets. Afterwards, the leading radicals defended Paine's work, using it to push forward the independence movement. Paine kept it fresh by appending new material and other authors obligingly kept the text relevant by debating its merits. Paine may have exaggerated the circulation numbers, but it reflects its importance to the revolutionary canon. The effect of this popularity was to disseminate Paine's idea of universalising localism. He exemplified the idea by drawing from his knowledge of Pennsylvania's politics and history to construct an argument in favour of a united continental government independent from Britain. Unfortunately, there are no extant intermediate pieces of ephemera to help draw a line connecting ordinary people's actions to universalising localism, but Paine's intimate connection with Philadelphia means the idea had roots in the city which inarticulate people also tapped. Significantly, the concept helps explain the relationship ordinary people imagined between themselves and the continent as a whole.

[58] Lemon, *Best Poor Man's Country*, pp. 199 – 204, 215 – 6.
[59] Paine, *Common Sense*, pp. 74 – 5.
[60] Ryerson, *The Revolution is Now Begun*, p. 142.

‘Governing Their Future Society’:
Ordinary People’s Role in Shaping the 1776 Pennsylvania State Constitution

The Pennsylvania State Constitution of 1776 was one of the most radical documents produced during the American Revolution. It owed its existence to the energy of the inarticulate crowds that surrounded it, and therefore, it preserves some of their goals and aspirations for America’s future. The Constitution demonstrates the importance of texts to the American Revolution as it became a focus for popular energies. By contrast, Irvin is more interested in the nature of the continental events themselves. He focuses on the fast days and the big national holidays because these were opportunities for Congress to assert their vision of America. For example, Congress used the Declaration of Independence to promote national unity. It allowed Patriots to celebrate the birth of the United States. Americans used the opportunity to express their anti-British sentiments through ritual acts of violence. In celebrating the Declaration, crowds re-appropriated their customary British festivities for American ends.[61] However, beyond their anti-British nature the celebrations surrounding independence make it difficult to discern ordinary people’s vision of America. Independence was more than just separation from Britain; it was an opportunity to elaborate on their ideas of Americanness. The Constitution was a chance to propose a vision of a future America and the imagined popular presence of Philadelphians was a crucial part of the composition process. The Constitutional Convention wrote the Constitution as part of the feedback loop between reader and text in the city. Much like the printers of newspapers, the Constitutional authors wrote to reflect the ideas of the ordinary people who had given the Convention their mandate and who would act again as the audience to piece. The future America in the Constitution had to resonate with the ideas of ordinary people. Analysing the Constitution’s articles, therefore, helps to recover some of the goals ordinary people imagined as they fought for independence.

Common Sense had opened the public debate on independence, but the push toward making it a reality began in earnest following a broadside from Congress on 15 May 1776. The broadside informed its readers that the King had removed them from his protection and Congress asked the provinces to select

[61] Irvin, *Clothed in the Robes of Sovereignty*, pp. 133 – 41.

'Representatives of the People best conduce to the happiness of their Constituents in particular, and America in general.'[62] The ordering of this hierarchy was not accidental. Congress reflected Paine's idea that solving local issues would promote general American interests, and vice versa. Three days later, on 18 May, a card announced a public assembly. Importantly, this assembly was not at the behest of a few individuals. The card explained that 'a Number of the Inhabitants of the City and Liberties' had approached the Committee of Inspection and Observation, the body responsible for overseeing the terms of the Continental Association, asking them to consider 'the Resolve of Congress' in an assembly outside the State House.[63] The deliberately vague language of 'a Number of the Inhabitants' implied that the impetus behind the meeting came from the people of Philadelphia directly. They had specified the purpose of the meeting and they had chosen the venue. The meeting was probably not as spontaneous as the card implied. The 'Inhabitants' who approached the Committee were likely radicals already engaged in protesting against the continuation of Pennsylvania's conservative assembly; however, the fiction of popular support was important and so too was the fiction that the meeting was to consider the resolves of Congress as if the organisers had no plan to dissolve the colonial government. The idea was that ordinary people were directing the course of the Revolution. Patriots needed the mandate of the people. They carefully managed it for their own benefit, but importantly they worked in cooperation with the inarticulate rather than necessarily dictating terms.

Four thousand Philadelphians gathered at the meeting. The head of the Military Association Daniel Roberdeau was appointed chair, and the first order of business was to read aloud the declaration from Congress. The crowd cheered in response, which in effect prompted the meeting to continue. Colonel Thomas McKean, another Associator, then read aloud the instructions of the Pennsylvania Assembly to the province's Congressional delegates. The instructions forbade the delegates from overtly supporting independence. According to the report, the crowd then concurred with McKean that these instructions threatened the unity of the American colonies. The remainder of the meeting focused on gathering a mandate for the removal of the Pennsylvania Assembly. Three men spoke on the topic, two

[62] Continental Congress, *In Congress, May 15, 1776* (Philadelphia, 1776), Evans 15141.
[63] Philadelphia Committee of Inspection and Observation, *Committee Chamber, Philadelphia, May 18, 1776* (Philadelphia, 1776), Evans 15014.

colonels in the Military Association, Thomas MacKean, John Cadawalader, and brewer Timothy Matlock. Importantly, the crowd cheered the radical pushes of MacKean and Matlock and booed Cadwalader for his attempts at moderating the tone of the resolves. The crowd energised the radical position.[64]

The final business of the day attests to this radical sentiment. At the meeting, the organisers distributed a broadside they had been preparing since 14 May.[65] A manuscript notation on the LCP copy has the date of the meeting, suggesting the collector received the text on that day. This is important because James Clitherall complained about the prescriptive nature of the debate. He said that the paper calling the meeting already had a number of resolves printed upon it so that when the organisers questioned the audience 'the people behaved in such a tyrannical manner that the least opposition was dangerous.'[66] Clitherall's account illustrates the diversity among participants of a crowd. He felt intimated by the people surrounding him and felt they had silenced dissent, but this may also suggest that the mood was generally supportive of the organisers and concurred with their resolves. Part of this general support may actually have been due to the flyer distributed through the crowd. The extant broadside from the event references that the names were to be subscribed below the text, though the LCP copy is not endorsed with any signatures. Instead, reports of the meeting say that the crowd presented a petition to the House on the same day, and so the LCP broadside was likely a copy distributed for perusal before a person signed their name on a central document. The 18 May meeting was not a free and impartial debate. The Patriot organisers gathered the crowd together in order to receive popular approbation for their resolves. Importantly, the petition maintained the idea of popular sovereignty and stated it acted on behalf of the 'Inhabitants of *Pennsylvania*, until the sense of the majority of the same can be more fully known'.[67] At each stage of the constitutional process, the Patriots solicited the consent of the people, emphasising that the independence movement followed their assent.

Interestingly, there is a discrepancy between what organisers distributed on the day and accounts that appeared afterwards. The differences between these two texts suggest the influence that ordinary

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[64] Ryerson, *The Revolution is Now Begun*, pp. 213 – 5.
[65] Ryerson, *The Revolution is Now Begun*, p. 215.
[66] James Clitherall, 'Extracts from the Diary of James Clitherall, 1776', *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography,* 22:4 (1898), 468 – 74, (pp. 469 – 71).
[67] *The Protest of the Divers of the Inhabitants of this Province, in behalf of themselves and others* (Philadelphia, 1776), Evans 15016.

people exercised when they gathered on 18 May. In the original broadside, the subscribers protested against the 'present and future authority' of the Assembly; however, they assured the members this was intended specifically to rescind the instructions the Assembly had issued to Pennsylvania's delegates in Congress, and not to repudiate any of the transactions, debts, or bills passed in that session. The 18 May petition asked that the Assembly stop its business until Pennsylvania in general had considered the resolves of Congress.[68] This first petition did not propose much in the way of positive action. It merely asked for a stoppage of government business. However, in the account that appeared the following day in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, as well as in a second broadside, there was a stipulation that Pennsylvania form a Constitutional Convention. This had been absent in the first petition and therefore indicates that during the course of the 18 May meeting the idea of the Convention was mooted and approved. Moreover, the amended petition asked the Assembly to continue its business whilst the Convention compiled the new Constitution. This was because the 18 May meeting was 'fully convinced, that our safety and happiness, next to the immediate providence of God, depend on our complying with, and supporting firmly the said resolve of Congress'.[69] This was a confident declaration that the rest of Pennsylvania did not need to meet to agree to Congress. That step could be considered a *fait accompli*, and so they should begin planning the Constitution. The most expedient way to do that was to have the Assembly continue in its operations and keep the business of government moving. It showed a great deal of trust that the Committee could oversee the Assembly and crucial to this authority was the mandate the people had expressed during the course of the meeting. This was a moment when an inarticulate crowd seemingly went further than the printed resolves disseminated amongst them. Ordinary people put themselves at the centre of revolutionary developments.

Building on this victory, those in support of independence conveyed a circular letter composed by the Committee in Philadelphia and addressed to each of the counties.[70] Meanwhile, the Committee of Privates printed a handbill to encourage its members to vote for ordinary people when electing delegates for the State Constitutional Convention. Significantly, the pamphlet contended that rich men were 'very

[68] *The Protest of the Divers of the Inhabitants of this Province, in behalf of themselves and others* (Philadelphia, 1776), Evans 15016.
[69] *PEP* 21 May 1776. *Philadelphia May 20* (Philadelphia, 1776), Evans 15015.
[70] Gary B. Nash, 'Philadelphia's Radical Caucus that Propelled Pennsylvania to Independence and Democracy' in *Revolutionary Founders*, pp. 67 – 85, (p. 76).

apt to indulge their Disposition to Refinement to a culpable Degree'.[71] The Committee argued that seeking refinement would actually distract from the ability of the government to respond to the people and, therefore, ordinary people could provide for a better American future. The Committee of Privates took active steps to ensure that the people in the Convention were familiar with the ideas of the inarticulate. Importantly, this goal was feasible because the number of eligible voters was increased by up to 90% in some areas. As Gary Nash argues, the leaders of the Constitutional Convention, themselves not from the traditional colonial elite, 'channelled ideas bubbling up from the streets, taverns, and docks and devised strategies for accomplishing what ordinary men had been striving for since the early 1760s.'[72] The Constitutional Convention tapped into the intellectual life of Philadelphia's inarticulate people.

In a case of fortunate timing, both the Declaration of Independence and the election of the Philadelphian delegates to the Pennsylvania Convention happened on the same day, 8 July 1776. The evening passed with bonfires to the unanimity of the independence declaration, whilst the Constitutional Convention began without objection.[73] This meant that the radical body, including many ordinary men, overcame the final obstacle to setting down its ideas about independent American governance. Looking ahead, the popular support that had accompanied the beginning of the Constitution continued after its composition. Significantly, the Convention offered the Constitution to the people for their approval. The four hundred copies distributed in this way did not represent a formal process of ratification, but the Convention had invited people to comment and approve of their work.[74] As they wrote the Pennsylvanian Constitution, the men in the room were aware the populace would judge it and at least one man, Cadwallader, had felt the displeasure of the crowd at first hand. The document existed in a feedback loop with ordinary people. The ideas within it emerged from the mandate of popular politics and were returned to this same crucible so that its authors could not suddenly betray the trust invested in them by the crowd. The Constitution is not an unmediated view into the intellectual life of the inarticulate, but it is one the most comprehensive clues available, and analysing its articles can provide an insight into the ideas ordinary people had about their American consciousness.

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[71] *To the Several Battalions of Military Associations* (Philadelphia, 1776), Evans 15115.
[72] Nash, 'Radical Caucus', p. 68.
[73] Christopher Marshall, *Passages from the Remembrancer of Christopher Marshall*, ed. by William Duane (Philadelphia, 1839), p. 94.
[74] Nash, 'Radical Caucus', pp. 80 – 81.

The Convention divided the Constitution into three parts, the preamble, the declaration of rights, and the frame of government. Throughout each part, the Constitution provides an insight into the relationship ordinary people had with politics and their recent history. The Constitution affirmed many of the traditional liberties of Pennsylvania, which suggests that ordinary people did not wish to start the world anew. It enshrined the revolutionary developments, in effect approving of the conduct of the protest movement. Finally, the more radical tenets suggest some of the alternative visions of America imagined by ordinary people. The preamble and the opening declaration of rights clarified all the liberties that Pennsylvania reserved for its constituents, and asserted that the Constitution had been written to allow the 'people of this State, by common consent, and without violence, deliberately to form for themselves such just rules as they shalt think best, for governing their future society'.[75] This was a plan for the future of America, but even here there was the traditional fear of violent disorder that characterised Philadelphia's Revolution. The bill of rights cemented all the controversies that had embroiled Pennsylvanians over the preceding twelve years. There was a right to assembly, freedom of the press, the right to consent to taxation, the right to jury trial, and an affirmation that the authority of the people was the basis for government. These were not unique assertions, but they had clear connections to the organisation of the revolutionary movement. They protected the popular assemblies and radical texts that had helped animate ordinary participation. They also condemned unfair taxes, admiralty courts, and virtual representation. Article eight specifically addressed the Pennsylvanian problem of militias. The article declared that 'every member of society hath a right to be protected in the enjoyment of life, liberty and property', but this required them to be active participants contributing their service or an equivalent thereof.[76] The articles in practice enumerated the 'certain unalienable Rights' that had been declared as the endowment of every man in the Declaration of Independence.[77] Significantly, the bill of rights in the Pennsylvanian Constitution reserved the privileges that Pennsylvanians had understood to be the liberty for which they had challenged Britain to protect.

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[75] *Constitution of the Common-Wealth*, p. 4.
[76] *Constitution of the Common-Wealth*, p. 7.
[77] [*Declaration of Independence*] (Philadelphia, 1776), Evans 15155.

The bill of rights helps to enumerate some of the specific motivations for joining the Patriot cause, but the frame of government provides an insight into the imagined future of America. The conditions protected specific Pennsylvanian institutions. The religious liberty created by the new government continued the same rights as those granted in the 1701 charter. The unicameral house would continue the legacy of the Assembly that had served as a protector of rights for almost the entirety of Pennsylvania's existence. It made allowances for the use of affirmations rather than oaths, thereby allowing Quakers and others with religious scruples against oaths to participate. It expanded the franchise to ensure that the popular involvement that had become the norm could continue. It provided weekly information on governmental activity and it also opened the doors of the house so that they could not shut out ordinary people from the proceedings of government as they had following a similar attempt in 1770.[78] This had originally been part of Penn's original plan to allow people to witness the legislature, but the printing of proceedings had replaced this practice.[79] These articles protected many of the traditional modes of popular engagement with the Pennsylvania government that had persisted throughout the 1760s and 1770s, and in fact had made the province amenable to the radical constitution in the first place. These tenets suggest the principles of government that satisfied ordinary people.

The Constitution also responded to some of the developments since the Revolution. More than just the principle of the militia, the Constitution specifically enshrined the Military Association as part of the Pennsylvania government structure, including the ability to vote for colonels and non-commissioned officers. It protected the Convention model of returning legislation to the voters for their approbation before the final reading. The Constitution also mandated that preambles contained a justification for the purpose of the laws. These preambles could prevent disputes like those between the mechanics and merchants following the partial repeal of the Townshend Duties in which the city had disagreed about whether the survival of the preamble would allow for the future levy of another set of Townshend-like imposts. Furthermore, the constitution stipulated that the burden of proof be on the legislature to demonstrate that the tax raised was more beneficial for the community than the money would be to the individual. There was a Council of Censors, to whom was reserved the right to review the collection and

[78] *Constitution of the Common-Wealth,* pp. 10 – 1, 13 – 5. Carp, *Rebels Rising*, pp. 194 – 5.
[79] Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, pp. 253 – 4.

expending of tax monies; the issuance of public censures against the deficient sections of government; the subpoena of people, their papers, and other records; and, the power to call conventions for the amendment of the Pennsylvanian Constitution.[80] This Council of Censors was the formalisation of the committee movement and if properly exercised would ensure that government would always remain communicative and responsive to the needs of the people. In response to revolutionary debates, the articles indicate the sections of the revolutionary movement that ordinary people had embraced.

There were also a number of innovations that extended the rights of ordinary colonists and established a new relationship between governing and governed. This included the amelioration of the penal system to deconstruct the sanguinary nature of colonial discipline and instead promote public labour.[81] This began with the end of imprisonment for debtors. Moreover, instead of violence committed on individuals by the state to discipline them, the individuals would work to repair the damage they caused and the public 'at proper times shall be admitted to see the prisoners at their labour.'[82] In the same manner there was to be a school established so that the young could be educated at a low price, thereby perpetuating the ability of people to engage with texts and their government. There was also an insistence that 'useful learning' be encouraged in the universities, again alluding to the importance of manufacturing in the future of America. Government officials were liable to be recalled or impeached if they did not properly see to their jobs. The Constitution continued the practice of annual elections that had been a major part of Pennsylvanian political life, but it sought to work against the sort of entrenched interest that had resisted independence by imposing term limits on representatives. This was reinforced with a condition that meant that there was a staggered election for Executive Council places that would ensure that there was sufficient knowledge and expertise to effectively govern.[83] However, at the same time it explicitly warned against the danger of 'an inconvenient aristocracy'.[84] These new innovative powers went beyond the customary practices of Pennsylvanian governance and worked to secure the obligation of the state to the authority of the people. Crucially, these innovations meant that ordinary people were still

[80] *Constitution of the Common-Wealth*, pp. 10 – 1, 29, 31 – 2.
[81] These ideas of penal reform were put into motion during the 1780s. Michael Meranze, *Laboratories of Virtue: Punishment, Authority, and Revolution in Philadelphia, 1760 – 1835* (Chapel Hill, NC; University of North Carolina, 1996), pp. 61 – 2.
[82] *Constitution of the Common-Wealth*, p. 28.
[83] *Constitution of the Common-Wealth*, pp. 24 – 6, 28, 30.
[84] *Constitution of the Common-Wealth*, p. 18.

content to be ruled rather than to rule; they just expected the new government to respond to their concerns more attentively.

As Pauline Maier argues these constitutions were more significant to the people than the Declaration of Independence. Throughout America, each state declared their independence from Britain with their own framework of government, and in turn laid out their vision for the future of America.[85] This was the ideal of universalising localism in practice. Each state defined its terms of membership but worked cooperatively with its neighbours to defeat Britain and protect those terms. A petition to Congress from a group in the backcountry asking to become the fourteenth state is helpful in exploring some of the justifications for belonging to the American union. In mid-1776 Jasper Yeates, now commissioner of Indian affairs for the Continental Congress, composed a petition on behalf of the 'Inhabitants of the Country, West of the Allegheny Mountains' to join the Union as the fourteenth state, entitled Westsylvania.[86] The Westsylvanians appealed to Congress as the 'Guardians, Trustees & Curators, Conservators & Defences of all that is dear to us or valuable to Americans'.[87] The Westsylvanians complained they were petitioning Congress because claims to their land by both Virginia and Pennsylvania had meant that the twenty five thousand families who lived in the area were subject to severe deprivations.[88] Yeates stressed that the distance between the seat of government and the governed was too far and too impassable to be representative of their needs. He complained that decisions made in Williamsburg or Philadelphia were at best arbitrary and at worst mercenary. The people of the backcountry suffered all the inconveniences of government without any of the advantages of its protections and mediations.[89] Significantly, Westsylvania argued that if Congress allowed them to form their own government they could be 'not the least useful Part of the American Confederacy' by forming an effective frontier against the 'Western savages'.[90] Solving their own local issues would have positive effects for the American collective. The Westsylvanians made their appeal as Americans and emphasised that their right was to local government. In effect, the Westsylvanians presented eastern authority as

[85] Pauline Maier, *American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence* (New York, NY; Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), pp. 163 – 70.
[86] Gibson Cranmer, *History of the Upper Ohio Valley*, 2 vols (Madison, Wisconsin; Brant & Fuller, 1890), I, pp. 59.
[87] Cranmer, *History of the Upper Ohio Valley,* I, p. 62.
[88] Cranmer, *History of the Upper Ohio Valley*, I, pp. 59.
[89] Cranmer, *History of the Upper Ohio Valley,* I, pp. 62.
[90] Cranmer, *History of the Upper Ohio Valley,* I, p. 61.

perpetrating the same injustices as metropolitan Britain. Congress, ultimately, ignored the memorial, and instead divided the region into districts to vote for their delegates to the Virginia Assembly. Yeates remarked to his friend James Wilson that this was an absurd idea because 'Are the people here divided!'[91] However, the case is illustrative of the principle of universalising localism in practice, solving local issues to promote American ascendency.

The Pennsylvania Constitutional Convention never explicitly offered these same justifications, but they further highlight the universalising localism that underpinned the first plan of union between the independent states of America. Christian Fritz argues that backcountry movements like Westsylvania, gained their strength from the constitutional arguments of the Revolution in terms of consent and self-government. They were born from the same impulse of local determination that led to successful bids of statehood in Vermont, Maine, and Kentucky. The principle was that the Revolution had created an opportunity for people to determine their own place within the American system.[92] They were the culmination of the political culture that empowered Americans to engage in armed conflict with Britain. This confidence built from the belief in American ascendency that the Continental Association had encouraged, and developed in popular debates about the potential strength of a united American force. Tom Paine's *Common Sense* brought the idea of universalising localism to a popular audience, associating it with the independence movement. This independence movement reached its climactic enunciation in the State Constitutions. In Pennsylvania, ordinary people played an important part in the writing of their Constitution. Their mandate carried it into execution and the Convention returned it to them for their approbation. Importantly, the Constitution partially preserves the intellectual life of the inarticulate. These material texts accrued their revolutionary significance from the ordinary people who encountered and handled these prints. Understanding the American Revolution, and the reason for the involvement of ordinary people, entails understanding the relationship between texts and the inarticulate. Their voices may not survive to posterity, but their support, rejection, and celebration of these documents, help

[91] Jasper Yeates to James Wilson, 30 July 1776, Burd-Shippen Family Collection, DLAR.
[92] Christian G. Fritz, *American Sovereigns: The People and America's Constitutional Tradition before the Civil War* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 53.

preserve their intellectual life. Their participation in debates over Americanness empowered British colonists to challenge the metropole and become republicans.

Conclusion
'The Sources of our National Life':
The Place of Print in American Historiography

In the preface to *American Bibliography* Charles Evans said his purpose behind compiling the title pages of every American imprint was an 'earnest endeavour to present in a fitting and enduring manner a faithful record of the literary activities of the true Founders of the American Republic'.[1] For Evans, the role of a bibliographer was as a 'student of book physiognomy', and the faces that Evans uncovered were 'earnest, thoughtful, dignified, intense of purpose, hopeful, often sad, sometimes with a gleam of humour wrinkling around the steadfast look in the eyes.'[2] Evans' aim was to create an indelible record of early American literature, and he approached this task with a bibliographer's appreciation of print's material form. He intended his work to display 'reverential care due to the monuments of American literature, the sources of our National life.'[3] Evans' *American Bibliography* has shaped this thesis, providing a guide to Philadelphia's print culture. Significantly, Evans' project did not just concentrate on the abstract ideas of authors, but on the tangible form in which they were communicated. In that vein, this project has worked to understand the literature of Revolution not as the source of national life they would become, but rather as monuments to the enormous energies expended in founding the American Republic. An American identity brought ordinary people together by prompting debates about the attributes they shared in common, the connections that bound them together, and the importance of Americans as a discrete group. Texts were tangible expressions of abstract Patriot ideals, but the readers of the texts vivified the identity and transformed British subjects into American republicans. Through print, colonists worked together to oppose Parliament by redefining the meaning of America and this process of collaborative definition survived into the Early Republic to become the national project that Evans sought to record.

[1] Charles Evans, *American Bibliography: A Chronological Dictionary of all Books, Pamphlets, and Periodical Publications Printed in the United States of America from the Genesis of Printing in1639 down to and including the year 1820*, 14 vols (New York, NY; Peter Smith, 1941), I, p. vii.
[2] Evans, *American Bibliography*, pp. vii – viii.
[3] Evans, *American Bibliography*, p. viii.

Yet the whole concept of the American nation is problematic. In this thesis, I have largely avoided using the term nation in reference to the British colonies, preferring to talk of 'imagined communities' or continental agreement. This is to reflect the fact that Americans rarely spoke of nation themselves, instead employing the language of friendship, brethren, or countrymen. My thesis stops before the nation-building project became an explicit concern, but in analysing colonial and Early Republican print culture the work of *American Bibliography*, and in consequence my own thesis, nevertheless resonates with Benedict Anderson's interest in print-capitalism and the contribution of creole pioneers in the United States toward modern nationalism.[4]

Importantly, there was no simple colonial prelude to American nationalism in which the seeds of the nation were sown in the colonial period and reached fruition at some point in the Early Republic. In re-evaluating Anderson's work, Ed White argues that scholars have often overlooked the colonial legacy of 'nation-ness', or the prevailing belief that the nation to which a person belonged mattered less than imperial or religious considerations. Throughout most of the colonial period nation had racialized connotations, and commentators used the term principally to refer to Native American communities. Meanwhile, the white settlers gathered strength from their place in a civilised empire of nations. More work needs to be done on the transition from the manifold nations that characterised colonial thought on nationality to the idea of a singular nation that gained pre-eminence following independence.[5] White uses nineteenth-century literary markers to gauge this development, but nationalism's unifying project has meaningful precedents in the colonial opposition to Parliament. This thesis began with an interest in understanding how texts animated Revolution. Print took a central role in guiding the popular politics that escalated imperial discontent into republican insurrection and it would continue to shape American political relationships in the early stages of federalisation. Texts had ordered the revolutionary American community, and so too would texts order the American national community. The culture of disputing regional and continental issues as part of a local interpretative community that underpinned the separation from Britain initially helped tie together Americans in the Early Republic.

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[4] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 61 – 5.
[5] Ed White, 'Early American Nations as Imagined Communities', *American Quarterly*, 56:1 (2004), 49 – 81, (pp. 71, 76).

As a source of nation building the role of print has benefitted from a number of important revisions. A great deal has changed since Isaiah Thomas' study of print as the 'art which is the preserver of all arts', which Thomas argued allowed the history of the English colonies in America to 'be traced with the clearness and certainty of authentic history.'[6] As this thesis has demonstrated, texts can often only allude to some of the more influential events; the debates themselves have been lost to posterity. Moreover, Thomas' reverence has taken on some problematic implications. Early American texts have at times been conscripted into myth-making endeavours, useful for substantiating political ideologies but less so for understanding past lived experiences. Many historians have warned about the dangers of trusting too much in print. Jill Lepore argued that historical fundamentalism fuelled its agenda with revolutionary literature, obscuring the vital differences between the eighteenth-century revolutionaries and the travails of modern politics.[7] Similarly, for Pauline Maier, contemporary tourists have forgotten the 'workaday' origin of printed objects and instead treat texts, most especially the Declaration of Independence, as a sacred relic like 'Lenin's body was for the Soviet Union, a tangible remnant of the revolution to which its children can still cling.'[8] The centrality of print to the American Revolution, with its founding documents and revolutionary best sellers, must not be overstated. Certainly, as Maier argues, these texts served a function.

At its worst, historiographical concentration on print serves to obscure the nation-building project itself and the role of print has been seen by Trish Loughran as 'ahistorical, a postindustrial fantasy of preindustrial print's efficacy as a cross-regional agent'.[9] Loughran is one of the most critical scholars of the place of print. Her study emerges from questions about the centrality of print to the foundational narratives of early American nationalism. According to Loughran, print was insufficiently effective at centralising ideas and, to become a nation, Americans needed a material nation of infrastructure and federal authority in their daily lives. In fact a truly national print culture, as emerged in the 1830s and 1840s, created a sense of simultaneity that actually destabilised and upset the imagined unity between

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[6] Isaiah Thomas, *The History of Printing in America*, I, p. 11.
[7] Jill Lepore, *The Whites of their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History* (Princeton, NJ; Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 16, 124 – 5.
[8] Maier, *American Scripture*, p. xiii
[9] Loughran, *The Republic in Print*, p. xix.

Americans.[10] This burgeoning national print culture challenged the connections Americans thought they shared. Loughran acknowledges that print has had an important place in the history of America, but she argues that it functioned to reinforce sectionalism not promote national unity. In the course of my thesis, I have adopted a different perspective. My aim has certainly not been to restore texts to the vaunted position Evans and Thomas held them in, but rather to suggest that it was a critical medium that changed American society both in the late colonial and Early Republican periods. I concede that it reinforced divergent practices in America, but I disagree that this prevented national unity. Furthermore, in these earliest stages of the nation-building project print's close relationship with the interpretative community around it actively encouraged an American consciousness.

Loughran's concentration on the material nation of spaces, objects, and people does not give sufficient weight to the perception of unity. Print's place in the founding of America was that it papered over the very real fissions in American society, but as demonstrated in the course of this thesis, it served to reinforce parochial practice at the very same time that it encouraged a broader perspective. During the Paxton Boys debate, the consensus among pamphlets excised Indians from the imagined future of America, in turn emphasising the commonalty of all the white people in the province. Bridging the divisions between ordinary white people was an important first step in imagining the identity that empowered Americans to challenge Britain. During the Stamp Act debate, newspapers and Dickinson's writings reflect an intensification of demonym usage in the political language of Philadelphia, in turn encouraging ordinary colonists to think and act continentally. The profusion of print protesting against the imposition of Townshend Duties started with Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* and concluded with an assertion that mechanics and artisans were the guardians of American liberty. Similarly, the everyday cheap print that sustained the campaign for domestic manufacturing empowered ordinary people to imagine that their opposition to Britain would be successful because of their stewardship over the richness of the American continent. Finally, printed debates encouraged Americans to believe they could defeat Britain. Tom Paine capitalised on this burgeoning confidence to put forward his idea of universalising localism. This in turn was then enshrined in the State Constitution, a document that set out

[10] Loughran, *The Republic in Print*, pp. xviii – xix, 303 – 4.

the future of America in Pennsylvania. Both before and after independence there was a prevailing belief that localism was not a barrier to broader unity but in fact the preserver of community virtues.

Acting on behalf of these American virtues eventually became nationalism rather than Revolution, but it functioned in a similar way as the phenomenon described in this thesis. Many historians attest to the power of print in to encouraging Americans to think broadly. Liam Riordan argues that the plurality of the press that had enabled revolutionary authority would also facilitate the federal government. Texts carried a number of national projects to local groups and created cosmopolitan associations between many unconnected communities. These texts allowed every town and individual to be called American, but also allowed them to mediate their own integration into the national community by rejecting or accepting the texts.[11] At a political level, Jeffrey Pasley, argues that the vigorous energies of the partisan press acted as conduits through which national politics entered the local arena.[12] Similarly, John Richard's work on the postal service demonstrates it was an effective institution in unifying America, grounded as it was in the federal government. The postal service helped people to communicate, and elevated popular opinion as a necessity for governance. However, the postal service also brought states into conflict, especially over issues of slavery and states rights.[13] Beneath the conflicting voices that arose in the controversies over state building emerged a commitment to an American nation. The people who had propelled the Revolution had invested themselves in its creation and in the Early Republic they sought to direct its aim. Once involved, however, the process of addressing the myriad of concerns among Americans throughout the Republic began to overwhelm the political elite and empower a broad range of pluralistic institutions better suited to listening to complaints. David Nord Paul put it neatly: to 'argue about the state was to be a member of the nation, to be an American.'[14] People were participating in the creation of a material nation, but it was the arguments that arose between them that gave it form. This was the intellectual work that helped interpretative communities order their place in the world. The nation was not imposed by the presence of concrete

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[11] Liam Riordan, *Many Identities, One Nation: The Revolution and Its Legacy in the Mid-Atlantic* (Philadelphia, PA; University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), pp. 165, 206, 219, 246 – 51.
[12] Pasley, *Tyranny of the Printers*, pp. 2 – 3, 329 – 31, 337 – 40.
[13] John R. Richard, *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse* (Cambridge, MA; Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 20, 37, 53 – 4, 154 – 6, 260, 282 – 3.
[14] Nord, *Communities of Journalism*, pp. 83 – 9; quote on p. 16.

objects, but arose out of the people debating and imagining the nation, assembling in person and sending each other texts.

As Woody Holton argued, following independence the American Republic struggled with its revolutionary successes in creating responsive political structures like the Pennsylvania Constitution.[15] The entanglement between the American consciousness and the Patriot agenda became more complex and ambiguous. During the conflict with Britain, Americans identified themselves by their protests against Parliament, but following independence, this unifying paradigm disappeared. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg argued that, though the national project was not about the creation of orthodoxy, the Early Republic was a fractious period of disenfranchisement that excluded many people whilst it elevated the importance of a national whole. This was the transformative impulse that lay behind the movement from the many nations of the empire to one national project. Unfortunately, the reality of exclusionary national practices contradicted the universal language of American inclusion. The result was violence, both literary and actual. In the nineteenth century, magazines embodied the tense contradictions of early American nationalism, as authors and audiences attempted to reconcile the inharmonious parts of the national American community. They aimed for the coherent unity that characterised republican and liberal conceptions of society, but fell short of the ideal. As had been the case during the Paxton Boys debate, stability was best achieved when the American self was compared with the Other.[16] These magazines are tangible remnants of constructing this new identity.

For Richard Brown, access to information changed over the course of the nineteenth century. The notion of an informed and politically active citizenry, which had been critical in formulating the first Pennsylvanian Constitution, was rolled back from its aim of in creating guardians of the Republic toward an idea that education was individually and socially positive, but did not entail a citizen's involvement with government. By depoliticising information women, African Americans, and Native Americans were still enjoined to become informed, with all its attendant economic advantages, but were denied citizenship and

[15] This was a process that began with the Federal Constitution of 1787 that worked to insulate the structures of politics against the pressures of ordinary Americans. Woody Holton, *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Consitution* (New York, NY; Hill and Wang, 2007), pp. 272 – 8.
[16] Smith-Rosenberg, *This Violent Empire*, pp. 27 – 31, 84 – 7, 465 – 8.

political access thereby simplifying, momentarily, many of the republic's problems.[17] Meanwhile, as Riordan argues, the partisan newspapers that brought federal issues to local communities helped to generate a sense of a white republican unity that preserved the American polity but at the expense of African Americans.[18] Likewise, David Waldstreicher notes there were even black nationalist movements, but significantly they were never given space in the press to argue their case or their conceptions of the American nation.[19] In the Early Republic, there was an exclusionary understanding of the American that meant its members were more sure about who was excluded from politics than included in the community. American identity still continued to be defined at the intersection between communities and texts, but the issues had changed from collectively resisting British impositions to more searching questions about the meaning of belonging to the American nation.

As this brief survey of Early Republic historiography demonstrates, print remained a vibrant force in animating debates about Americanness. The thesis followed the new social history imperative to reintegrate marginalised perspectives, and focused on the American consciousness of the inarticulate. It explored the intellectual life of ordinary people by analysing the material remnants of their intellectual exchange. Over the course of the twelve years before independence, ordinary people attempted to disentangle themselves from their Atlantic origins, separating from previous associations with Native Americans, appropriating the name American, and then eventually repudiating their connection to Britain. Ordinary people had long been a part of the city's intellectual environment, but during the course of the Revolution their contributions became increasingly prominent. The turning point was the 1770 collapse of the Townshend Duties agreements, which led to a concerted attempt to secure greater representation in government. The high water mark was the 1776 State Constitution. The movement toward the Constitution built on the rising confidence in American ascendency, based first on the economic advantages of the continent and then in 1775 on the military strength of the American people. The Constitution is a valuable insight into the ideas of the inarticulate Philadelphians who gave their mandate for its creation and their support for its terms. Ultimately, this thesis can only sketch out some of the

[17] Richard D. Brown, *The Strength of the People: The Idea of an Informed Citizenry in America, 1650 – 1870* (Chapel Hill, NC; University of North Carolina Press, 1996), pp. 38 – 9, 43 – 4, 58, 155, 195.
[18] Riordan, *Many Identities, One Nation,* pp. 229.
[19] David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776 – 1820* (Chapel Hill, NC; University of North Carolina Press, 1997), p. 297, 313, 334 – 5.

intellectual horizons of the inarticulate. The concentration has been on the political and monumental, rather than the personal and mundane, but this still complicates the historian's picture of the world of ideas ordinary people inhabited. Texts, their underpinning premises, their popular presence, their physical form, were tangible manifestations of the revolutionary movement. Alone they were dead letters, but when imbued with an animating energy from the changing political context they became a vital medium through which Philadelphians constructed and understood the broader American community. Texts therefore preserve, in physical form, a record of the origins of the modern American nation, but recapturing this history requires resisting anachronistic national fantasies.

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