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Dissertation Prospectus
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**"As I Glory in the name of TORY":
Loyalism, Community, and Memory in Revolutionary Virginia, 1765-1798**

The term WHIG is generally understood, now a days to mean, A friend to the American cause; and the word TORY denotes, an enemy to American freedom, and the British constitution in general, both in church and state.

--Alexander Purdie, *Virginia Gazette*, January 12, 1776, 2.

Introduction:

In the fall of 1776—months after Virginians and other colonists declared their independence from Great Britain—Adam Allan of Williamsburg, Virginia was stopped by a group of armed men blocking his way home. A few days before, a British officer had ordered Allan to ride from Williamsburg to Fredericksburg and steal the royal seals and crest of Virginia. Even though the old colonial seals held little to no value after Virginia voted for independence, it was a symbolic heist to taunt Virginia patriots who supported the War for Independence. Allan was successful in stealing the seals and crest in Fredericksburg. On his way back to Williamsburg, the armed men who stopped Allan ordered him off of his horse and searched his belongings. According to the claim that Allan filed with the British government after the war,

once the men discovered the seals and crest in his pack, the situation became life threatening.¹ The group of patriots dragged Allan to a nearby town, stripped him naked in front of an angry mob, and he was declared a traitor and an enemy of American liberty. A few moments later one of the patriots poured molten tar over his head, while a few others covered him in feathers. For upwards of two hours the mob paraded Allan on wooden planks down the streets.

While tarring and feathering is one of the most recognizable punishments for loyalists during the American Revolution, Allan's situation is an example of one of the best kept secrets in Virginia's Revolutionary history. Before 1776 the *Virginia Gazette* newspapers published dozens of dehumanizing stories citing tarring and featherings across the Old Dominion, along with debates among Virginia's Tories and Whigs—opponents and supporters of resistance to British authority in North America. While Tories received their fair share of negative press, their existence in Virginia society was ever-present and newspapers consistently reported loyalist trials, imprisonments, and abuses. However, on May 15, 1776 the Virginia Convention gave Richard Henry Lee permission to motion for American Independence at the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia. In an act of solidarity, the colony's two remaining newspapers—both named the *Virginia Gazette*—removed the old London Company coat of arms from their mastheads.² The removal of these symbols of British loyalty portrayed in the mastheads heralded a new era in Virginia as the putative leader of the American Revolution. Where stories citing Tory activities in the colony were once important topics of conversation among the

¹ Adam Allan, The British American Loyalist Claims Commission, British Audit Office 13 as part of the Virginia Colonial Records Project, Reel 153, pp 452-465.

² During the Revolutionary era there are three separate *Virginia Gazette* newspapers published at the capital in Williamsburg. The first *Virginia Gazette* began publication in 1732, the second was introduced in 1765 by Thomas Jefferson to compete with the original *Gazette's* royalist publications, and the third was opened in 1775 by Alexander Purdie after he stepped down as editor of the original *Gazette*. By 1776 there were only two *Virginia Gazettes* in operation, Hunter and Dixon's *Gazette* (the first *Virginia Gazette*) and Purdie's *Gazette* (the third *Virginia Gazette*). The dissertation will include a chart listing the editors of each newspaper and the years they served.

Virginia Convention and the *Gazette* newspapers, all acknowledgements of loyalist activities were now silenced. After June 1776 the *Gazettes* stopped publishing stories citing loyalism in Virginia and records from the Virginia Convention barely mention the hundreds of Tories who faced trials in the capital at Williamsburg, raids in the Virginia backcountry, and the continuation of tarring and feathering across the state. A major objective of this dissertation is to explain why.

Allan's story was one of the first to be ignored by Virginia patriots who sought to perpetuate the image of a perfectly unified and patriotic Virginia. Without Allan's humiliation published in the pages of the *Gazettes*, described in pamphlets, or discussed by government officials, the only known accounts of Allan's abuse are in his pension to the Loyalist Claims Commission and memoirs of several British officers.³ What makes Allan's story so significant is that he was not alone. Even after constant attempts by the state to censor and conceal the existence of Tories there were thousands of Virginians who remained loyal to Great Britain throughout the war and consistently thwarted patriot attempts to conceal their existence.

Project Description

This dissertation seeks to trace the extent, nature, and significance of Virginia Tories and how vestiges of loyalism ultimately affected the colony/state's wartime experience. It will argue that Virginia's loyalist populations were much larger and politically active than historians of Virginia, loyalism, or the American Revolution have previously acknowledged.

Across historiographical works on the American Revolution, definitions of loyalty or royalism vary. For the purposes of this dissertation, a Virginia loyalist or Tory is defined as a

³ Starting in early 1776 loyalists from every state began pensioning the British government in an attempt to receive aid for displacement due to their loyalty. However, in 1783 after the Treaty of Paris, Parliament voted to start a claims commission through the British Audit Office that would receive claims from any American loyalist who lost property or livelihood due to their loyalty during the war. While the Loyalist Claims Commission was only funded through 1800, loyalists who were exiles throughout the British Empire still submitted claims as late as the 1830s.

person who was either born in Virginia or immigrated to the colony before 1765 and who showed support for Great Britain over the United States during the Revolutionary War. Evidence of such support includes, but is not limited to, military or militia service with the British army or a loyalist military unit, trial and imprisonment as an “enemy of American liberty,” loss of property as a result of Virginia’s 1779 confiscation law, involuntary exile from Virginia, and documented suspicion of loyalism during and after the war. My loyalist populations include both black and white individuals as well as entire Tory households who were also displaced as a result of the war. Families are considered significant for this study in instances where wives and children were listed in loyalist claims as dependents of a Tory and subsequently suffered physically or financially due to the political convictions of the head of their household. Because many white Virginia loyalists submitted pension claims to the British government after the war, the records of the Loyalist Claims Commission are essential sources for my project. Additionally, black loyalists (both free and enslaved) will be examined alongside their white counterparts. However, only nine Loyalist Claims were submitted by black loyalists from Virginia. Therefore this dissertation will also draw on *The Book of Negroes*—a list compiled by Sir Guy Carleton at the end of the war of free and enslaved blacks who escaped to New York and were then relocated to Canada. This source will provide imperative social data on black loyalist families and where they lived before the war.

Determining who should be considered a Virginia loyalist is difficult. Many Virginians from the beginning of the Revolutionary War to 1783 were known to switch between Whig and Tory alliances. One such instance was Williamsburg resident John Jarrett Carter, who served in the Continental Army and fought at the Battle of Trenton. After Trenton, Carter did not reenlist but instead took up arms with a loyalist militia in 1779. Much like Carter, there were many

Virginia loyalists who switched between political allegiances as personal experiences or news of the war led to a change of heart. This dissertation acknowledges that this grey area exists and will sort out loyalty based on who submitted loyalist claims or were displaced because of their allegiance to Great Britain (at any point in the war) as noted above.

This dissertation posits that Virginia's loyalist population was much larger and more politically active than historians of Virginia or loyalism have previously argued. By acknowledging Virginia's contributions to the Revolution and with a lack of loyalist representation in Virginia records, historians have mistakenly assumed that Virginia loyalists were virtually non-existent after June 1776. When looking beyond the *Virginia Gazettes* and state documents it is easy to see that Virginia loyalists were not only plentiful across in the Old Dominion after June 1776, but that Virginia's Whigs went to extreme measures to stamp out any vestiges of loyalism in the state. In an attempt to maintain their reputation as the political and ideological leader of the Revolution, it was not in the best interest of Virginia Whigs to acknowledge the existence of Virginia's Tories. Instead, the Whig-supported *Virginia Gazettes* forwent stories of illegal lynchings, tarring, and featherings, imprisonments, and humiliations suffered by both black and white Virginia loyalists and instead focused on valiant stories of Virginia patriotism and the grisly civil war-like stories between patriots and loyalists in other states such as New York, New Jersey, and the Carolinas. By comparing Virginia records with claims filed by loyalists after the war, personal document collections, and British military records, this dissertation will reveal that Virginia was no more ideologically superior than the rest of the United States and suffered the same civil war-like tensions in the backcountry, as well as episodes of violence and turmoil in the Tidewater, Piedmont, and Chesapeake.

This dissertation also argues that in order to create a more complete picture loyalism in Virginia during the Revolutionary Era both white and black loyalists must be examined together. While enslaved and free blacks had strikingly different motivations for their loyalty than white Tories, both black and white loyalism is imperative to understanding loyalism as whole in Virginia. This study will examine black and white loyalists as separate communities and as a larger network of loyalists. In the 18th century it is impossible to examine politics, economics, culture, and society without understanding the lives of both black and white Virginians. Therefore, the treatment of loyalism should be no different.

This dissertation is a community study and network analysis of Virginia's loyalist populations. Community studies such as Darrett and Anita Rutman's *A Place in Time* and Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum's *Salem Possessed* posit how geography, culture, environment, religion, and politics can alter the behavior of community members.⁴ Thus, when multiple people in the same group share similar values they are more likely to draw strength from and support each other when under immense pressure. These authors have also argued the communities not only influence from within their own populations, but spread cultural and political values across their geographical boundaries. This idea of spreading values across regional barriers is emphasized in Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Community* in which Anderson argues that socially constructed communities can be formed between people who share a common ideology even though they have never met.⁵ Anderson also demonstrates that constructed communities find their roots in a common press or newspaper which brings people together through common politics and ideologies—which can be seen in Virginia's Whig and

⁴ Darrett and Anita Rutman, *A Place in Time: Middlesex County Virginia, 1660-1750* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc, 1986); Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974).

⁵ Benedict Anderson: *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Press, 1986).

Tory communities. This dissertation will also ask questions regarding whether or not loyalists across the commonwealth examine Virginia's loyalist population by regional communities as well as a larger state-wide based on Virginia identity and loyalism before, during, and after the Revolutionary War.

When examining Virginia by region, the Tidewater, Piedmont, Chesapeake, backcountry, and the Richmond area came to and maintained loyalism differently. For instance, loyalists who lived in the Tidewater were far more active as loyalists before June 1776, but became quiet spectators after in order to salvage their authority in the region after Dunmore's evacuation of Norfolk.⁶ While many who could have qualified as loyalists before June 1776 remained neutral for the duration of the war, after Cornwallis came through Virginia in his Southern Campaign many of the old loyalist elite became reinvigorated in their previous Tory ideologies. Tidewater loyalists from elite families such as the Carters and Byrds joined Cornwallis in the weeks preceding Yorktown. In contrast, loyalists who lived in the backcountry were far from the political atmosphere of Williamsburg (and later Richmond) and remained active loyalists throughout the duration of the war. Unlike in the Tidewater, the backcountry did not face similar hierarchical pressures and were less interested in their political standing in Virginia. Therefore, farmers in the backcountry were able to assert their loyalism with less economic or political risk.

While Virginia's Tories became loyalists in different ways, regardless of whether they lived in the Chesapeake or the Piedmont, many of Virginia's loyalists knew each other and

⁶ In his book *A "Topping People"* Emory Evans examines the rise and fall of the Tidewater's planter elite and how this group who had managed to maintain control of Virginia's government since 1680 lost control after the Revolutionary War. Evans reveals in his book that political conformity was more important to the elite so they could maintain control of Virginia's complex hierarchical system. My dissertation draws inspiration from Evan's work to show that keeping their status and friends was more important than their own personal political ideologies. This could serve as an explanation as to why Tidewater loyalists remained quiet for most of the Revolutionary war until the Southern Campaign. Emory G. Evans" *A "Topping People": The Rise and Decline of Virginia's Old Political Elite, 1689-1790* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009).

corresponded with each other before, during, and after the war. Using R software, I will analyze data sheets I've created which contain every person who submitted a claim from Virginia and their witness testimonies. In order to prove both their monetary losses and their acts of loyalty, Tories asked loyal friends and neighbors to author witness testimonies on their behalf. These testimonies included information on property including slaves, land, homes, business and farms, and verified loyalty by arguing a loyalist served in the army, supplied the army, was tarred and feathered, imprisonment, and abuse. By using the geographic locations specified in the claims records between the claimant and witnesses, I will use R to connect each loyalist to their witness testimonies across the map of Virginia and create traditional network analysis visualizations. These maps and visualizations will examine the communities that existed in the Old Dominion during the Revolution and how they were maintained after the war. These digital methods will also show that loyalist communities did not just exist locally but reached across the state's geography in political, familial, and business networks. Portsmouth loyalist Reverend John Agnew, who had fifty-six witness testimonies in his claim, reveals that he was connected to local loyalists in the Tidewater, but was also a part of a larger loyalist network that stretched as far north as Fairfax and as far west as Bedford county. Additionally, *The Book of Negroes* will create a similar analysis of Virginia's black loyalist populations to determine how many black loyalists knew each other before Lord Dunmore's Proclamation and how far those communities reached. While this dissertation seeks to understand how well loyalists knew each other across the state with digital methods, it is also my hope to understand how loyalists functioned by region and state.

This dissertation begins in 1765 and ends in 1798. By 1765 all future loyalists who immigrated to Virginia from Great Britain were settled and living in the colony. While terms

such as loyalist or patriot were not yet defined, tensions surrounding territorial controversies after the French and Indian War and the Stamp Act led to multiple debates and frustrations around Virginia. Even more significantly, in 1765 Thomas Jefferson bought a printing press from Philadelphia and hired an editor out of Williamsburg to compete with the first *Virginia Gazette* newspaper.⁷ The first *Virginia Gazette* was often criticized during the period for being a pro-royal newspaper. Tension surrounding the French and Indian War and the Stamp Act led to the creation of the second *Virginia Gazette* not only as a competitor for the first newspaper, but as a forum to openly criticize Parliament. This new competition clearly indicates the beginning of an early ideological split between Virginia Tories and Whigs as those who supported Parliament and those who actively defied it. This dissertation ends in 1798 when the last known displaced Virginia loyalist—Benjamin Bucktrout of Williamsburg—was allowed back into his hometown after being forcibly exiled for almost twenty years. While 1798 does not herald a start of reconciliation between Virginia’s Revolutionary era Whigs and Tories, it reveals how the last known man out of only a small handful was quietly allowed back into the state.

The Historiography:

While this dissertation fits into the broader context of the Revolutionary era, it specifically engages two distinct historiographies: Virginia during the American Revolution, and America’s shifting relationship with the British Empire—even more specifically, Loyalism in the Revolution. These historiographies have failed to properly assess the role of loyalism in Virginia during the Revolution or analyze the significance of the Tories’ tireless effort to politically and militarily support Great Britain in the war.

⁷ Roger P. Mellen, “Thomas Jefferson and the Origins of Newspaper Competition in Pre-Revolutionary Virginia”, *Journalism History* 35:3 (Fall 2009), 151.

The narrative of the Revolution in Virginia has almost exclusively focused on the development and near-universal acceptance of the patriot cause across class and region. As the largest, richest, and most populous colony, the Old Dominion had a reputation as the natural political and economic leader of the American colonies during the 1770s. John Adams, who motioned for George Washington to become general of the Continental Army and pressured Jefferson to author the Declaration of Independence, acknowledged in his diary and memoirs that he had practical motive in selecting Virginians for prestigious positions. He argued that Virginia was the accepted leader of the colonies and where Virginia went the others would surely follow.⁸ Adams was correct in his assessment that Virginia's influence was needed in order to bring the colonies together to declare independence. However, Whig historians took Adams's assertions too literally by positing that since Virginia was needed for the Revolution to be successful that nearly everyone in the colony/state were completely supportive of the war. Later historians, known as Neo-Whigs, reiterated this interpretation. In *The Revolution in Virginia, 1775-1783*—which has remained the standard account— John E. Selby argued that Virginia was more ideologically supportive of the Revolution than any other state by citing publications of country ideology and pro-Revolution articles in the *Virginia Gazettes*.⁹ Selby goes as far as to assert that without Virginia's blessing to declare independence from Great Britain and without their financial support for the war the American Revolution would have been a complete failure. Throughout these assertions, Selby never mentions the role loyalism played leading up to independence and he fails to engage the topic outside of a single footnote. To Neo-Whigs, the story of the Revolution is the story of Virginia and names such as Washington, Jefferson, Henry, and Madison are emphasized to reveal the state's imperative role in supporting the Revolution.

⁸ John Adams *The Works of John Adams the Second President of the United States, Vol II with a Life of the Author by His Grandson Charles Francis Adams* (Boston: Charles C Little and James Brown Company, 1850), 514.

⁹ John E. Selby, *The Revolution in Virginia, 1775-1783*(Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1988).

Some historians sought to complicate this simplistic Whig and Neo-Whig narrative by arguing that Virginians were not innately patriotic, but initially came to the American Revolution as unwilling participants who grew to support the cause for independence. In his book, *Tobacco Culture*, T.H. Breen examines the mentality and identity of Virginia's planting elite and posits that many first families of Virginia came to the Whig-led Revolution as the result of a class-wide depression over failing tobacco prices and spiraling financial instability.¹⁰ With tobacco prices dropping consistently and coming under constant debt each planting season, elites in the Tidewater used the American Revolution as a means to regain popularity and control of middling and yeoman Virginians who eagerly accepted revolutionary rhetoric. Similarly, Rhys Isaac's *The Transformation of Virginia*, as well as his second book *Landon Carter's Uneasy Kingdom*, follows the ideological struggles faced by Virginia's planter elite. As a case study of these larger works, *Landon Carter's Uneasy Kingdom* examines the life of King Robert Carter I's son who struggled throughout the era on whether support local loyalists or fight for independence from Great Britain. Similar to Breen and Holton, Isaac posits that Landon Carter did not become a patriot easily and only came to support independence once he realized he was losing control of his plantation, his slaves, and authority over his children.

Both Breen and Isaac's assertions sparked a debate amongst other Revolutionary era historians who questioned Neo-Whig interpretations of Virginia's patriotic narrative. In support of Breen's assertions Neo-Progressive historians such as Woody Holton and Michael McDonnell sought to complicate Virginia's revolutionary history further. Holton's *Forced Founders* acknowledges that instability in the gentry allowed for Revolution to take root in the colony.¹¹

¹⁰ T.H. Breen, *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Plantation on the Eve of Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

¹¹ Woody Holton, *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves, and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

As a Neo-Progressive historian, Holton argues that pressure to choose a revolution came from more than just tobacco sales and debtors. Holton goes past planter anxieties surrounding tobacco and political competition—citing concerns over the loss of land to Native Americans after the French and Indian War as well as slave revolts brought forth by Lord Dunmore's Proclamation in 1775. These pressures were a direct challenge to patriarchy and the elite's perceived right to rule. According to Holton, to stay on top of Virginia's complex hierarchal system, elites chose to join the Revolution not because they truly supported independence, but to appease the lower classes and lead the rebellion to remain relevant to Virginia society.

Breen, Holton, and Isaac all agree that the majority of Virginia's planting elite were initially unwilling participants in the American Revolution, and that by 1776 the elite embraced patriot ideology and supported the war. However, McDonnell's Neo-Progressive work *The Politics of War* addresses Virginia society from the bottom up and examines the struggle across society during the Revolution. McDonnell argues that middling and upper middling Virginians were also anxious about the war and attempted to remain neutral or un-involved in Revolutionary rhetoric and politics. The book follows the rise of Virginia's secondary elite families who came to displace Virginia's old political regime by joining the revolution. Much like other Neo-Progressives, McDonnell agrees that the vast majority of Virginians supported the Revolution—however McDonnell believes it is important to reexamine middling and yeoman whites in Virginia because there was much more of a neutral/Tory struggle among non-elites that historians such as Breen and Holton have argued. Therefore, McDonnell sees the Revolution as not just an ideological struggle for elite Virginians, but for all white Virginians.

This dissertation seeks to build on Neo-Progressive interpretations of the Revolution by looking into the lives of loyalists during the war. While Neo-Progressives have done much to

complicate Neo-Whigs' flawed assessment of the Revolution in Virginia, many still fail to examine patriotism and loyalism after the state declared independence. While most Neo-Progressives agree that Revolution did not necessarily come easy for Virginians across the social hierarchy, historians such as Holton and McConnell tend to follow Neo-Whig notions that after 1776, once the Tories were silenced or exiled, the entire state banded together to fight against British tyranny. My work will pick up where these Neo-Progressive historians left off and follow the large populations of Virginians who chose to disregard Revolutionary rhetoric and remain loyal to Great Britain.

This dissertation also engages the historiography of loyalism across the United States during the war. Much like Neo-Whigs and Neo-Progressive historians ignore the existence of loyalists in the state; scholars of loyalism have also overlooked Virginia Tories. Since the earliest publications on loyalism, Virginia's Tories have failed to arouse much interest. In 1847 Lorenzo Sabine published *The American Loyalists* which contained thousands of biographical sketches from every loyalist who filed a claim with the Loyalist Claims Commission after the Revolutionary War.¹² However, while Sabine did not offer an explanation for how he selected loyalists for his publication, very few loyal Virginians were examined in his book. In 1973, Robert M. Calhoun published *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America, 1760-1781* and argued that the subject of loyalism was actively avoided by historians of United States history as it did not easily fit the mold of America's national story.¹³ Examining Tories by state, Calhoun's thesis

¹² Lorenzo Sabine, *The American Loyalists: Or, Biographical Sketches of Adherents to the British Crown in the War of the Revolution* (New York: C.C. Little and J. Brown Publishing, 1847)

¹³ Robert McCluer Calhoun, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America, 1760-1781* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1965); Three years after the publication of *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America*, Leslie F.S. Upton's edited collection *Revolutionary Versus Loyalist* examined loyalism in nine separate states, excluding Virginia. Mary Beth Norton's work the *British-Americans: The Loyalist Exiles in England, 1774-1789* examined loyalist who relocated to Britain after the war—the majority of whom were exiles from New York. After decades of historiographical neglect the history of loyalism has regained popularity, yet follows a similar trend brought forth by Calhoun, Upton, and Norton. Leslie F.S. Upton, *Revolutionary Versus Loyalist: The First American Civil War*,

was a call to American historians to consider the relevance of loyalism throughout the era. However, out of over three hundred pages dedicated to the plight of loyalists, Virginia Tories only appeared in nine pages of Calhoun's book. In his chapter on Virginia, Calhoun claimed that the Old Dominion had only a handful of Tories—including the Anglican clergy and a few hundred Scottish immigrants led by Lord Dunmore. In his work, Calhoun attributes conclusions were almost solely based on Sabine's scant selections of Virginia loyalists.

Calhoun's argument was so influential that it led many historians of the American Revolution—and of loyalism in particular—to dismiss the significance of Virginia's Tory population. This latest historiography follows two distinct trends that focus on New York and Carolina loyalists (due to the large population of Tories in these states and the British Army's constant occupation of their regions) and black loyalists who fled enslavement to fight in British militia units across the south. Judith Van Buskirk's *Generous Enemies*, Joseph Tiedemann and Eugene Fingerhut's *The Other New York*, and Tiedemann's *Reluctant Revolutionaries* all focus on the experience of loyalists and patriots in New York—particularly emphasizing the role of the British Army making New York City the epicenter of loyalism and loyalist refugees from other states.¹⁴ Wayne Lee's *Crowds and Soldiers in Revolutionary North Carolina* examines riot culture during the Revolutionary War, especially in the Carolina backcountry where the majority of the state's bloodiest conflicts transpired between patriots and loyalists.¹⁵ Robert Lambert's *South Carolina Loyalists in the American Revolution* and Jim Piccuch's *Three Peoples, One King* also address the intense hostilities during the Southern Campaign in which loyalists and

1774-1784 (London: Blaisdell Publishing Company, 1968); Mary Beth Norton, *British-Americans: Loyalist Exiles in England, 1774-89* (New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 1974).

¹⁴ Judith L. Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002); Joseph s. Tiedemann, Eugene R. Fingerhut eds, *The Other New York: The American Revolution beyond New York City, 1775-1787*(New York: State University of New York Press, 2006).

¹⁵ Wayne E. Lee, *Crowds and Soldiers in Revolutionary North Carolina: The Culture of Violence in Riot and War* (Jacksonville: University Press of Florida, 2001).

patriots sought to annihilate each other.¹⁶ Without a doubt loyalists from New York and the Carolinas during the war deserve a large portion of the historiography, however we have allowed the violence in the Carolinas and the numbers in New York overshadow the significance of loyalism in states like Virginia.

The only area of the historiography that engages Virginia loyalism is the study of black loyalists who fled enslavement after Dunmore's 1775 Proclamation which emancipated Virginia slaves who ran away from their masters and joined British militia regiments. This phenomenon has sparked interest across the historiography—making the black loyalists of Virginia a popular topic of research. Gary Nash's book *The Forgotten Fifth* examines the story of African Americans in the Revolution, which he argues, has largely been ignored. In the book, Nash pays particular attention to the slaves who fled plantations in Virginia to either serve in Lord Dunmore's Royal Ethiopian Regiment or march with the regiment as camp followers.¹⁷ Additionally, Alan Gilbert's *Black Patriots and Loyalists* is a response to many different historians who have studied the importance of black loyalists to the Revolution. Gilbert specifically targets Gary Nash's *The Forgotten Fifth*, accusing Nash of not looking at the larger international struggle slaves faced in their attempt at freedom during the revolution and for only looking at a few important participants and not the broader nation. Gilbert specifically emphasizes that Virginia had one of the largest black patriot and loyalist populations throughout the war—but pays closer attention to the loyalist population, specifically those who were abandoned by Lord Dunmore after the burning of Norfolk.¹⁸ Gilbert also examines the

¹⁶ Robert Stansbury Lambert, *South Carolina Loyalists in the American Revolution* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1987); Jim Piecuch, *Three Peoples, One King: Loyalists, Indians, and Slaves in the American Revolutionary South, 1775-1782* (University of South Carolina Press, 2013).

¹⁷ Gary Nash, *The Forgotten Fifth: African Americans in the Age of Revolution* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2006).

¹⁸ Alan Gilbert, *Black Patriots and Loyalists: Fighting for Emancipation in the War for Independence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

international role black patriots played in the Revolution, especially after the war when many black loyalists were evacuated to Bermuda and Canada—the majority of whom were from Virginians.

Additionally, Cassandra Pybus's *Epic Journeys of Freedom* examines slave and freed black communities, paying particular attention to black populations in Virginia and revealing the intense loyalty free and enslaved people felt towards the British after Lord Dunmore's Proclamation by using Shadrack Furman—Virginia's most famous free black soldier during the war--as an example of black loyalism.¹⁹ Furman, who was a free man, attempted to join the British Army in 1777 and was captured by local patriots in Nansemond County Virginia. He was beaten to the point where he became blind in one eye and was partially paralyzed. Even after the patriots left Furman for dead, Furman still managed to make his way to a British regiment and attempted to join the British Army. Stories similar to Furman's appear across Virginia during the war and have attracted numerous historians to study the region's black loyalist populations. In his recent book the *Internal Enemy*, Alan Taylor examines loyalism in free and enslaved communities in the Chesapeake during the American Revolution.²⁰ Taylor acknowledges that motivation to join the British varied between enslaved and free black communities. Taylor argues that enslaved Virginians fled to the British army to acquire freedom. However, freed blacks supported the British to oppose their former patriot, slave holding masters. If the British were to win, freed blacks such as Furman hoped that their former masters would be punished for rebelling. Freed blacks believed that the British were the lesser evil and sought to support the Army since they shared a common enemy.

¹⁹ Cassandra Pybus, *Epic Journeys of Freedom: Runaway Slaves of the American Revolution and Their Global Quest for Liberty* (New York: Beacon Press, 2007), 77-79.

²⁰ Alan Taylor, *The Internal Enemy: Slavery and War in Virginia 1772-1832* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2014).

Outside of Virginia's black loyalists, only a few scholars have either written specifically on the topic of loyalism in Virginia during the American Revolution or used a few examples of Virginia loyalists within their work. Adele Hast published *Loyalism in Revolutionary Virginia: The Norfolk Area and the Eastern Shore* in 1982.²¹ Similar to Calhoun, Hast examined Virginia loyalists only in the Tidewater and the Chesapeake, limiting her study to the usual observation that the majority of Virginia's loyalist populations were newly immigrated Scots merchants who lived on the Atlantic coast. While Hast is accurate in that there was a much larger population of loyalists in the region compared to central Virginia and the backcountry, her research fails to look outside of just the merchant class in Norfolk or past the burning of the city. Thus, as the only book written specifically on Virginia loyalists, her work has left many historians to assume that there is no more work left to be done on the topic by over simplifying the complicated history of loyalists in the Old Dominion. However, other works such as Jasanoff's *Liberty's Exiles* list specific loyalists from Virginia as examples of varying degrees of loyalty throughout the era. Jasanoff's work is even more significant in that it traces how loyalism ultimately affected ideology in the British Empire decades after the war. Even though this dissertation ends at the dawn of the nineteenth century, Jasanoff's work is imperative for understanding the immediate transition of loyalists from American colonials to exiles.²² While Michael Cecere's 2006 book *In this Time of Extreme Danger* did not focus largely on loyalism in Virginia, he does argue that Tory populations were much more frequent in Fairfax County and Dumfries than Hast previously asserted.²³

²¹ Adele Hast, *Loyalism in Revolutionary Virginia: The Norfolk Area and the Eastern Shore* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Research Press, 1982).

²² Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Vintage Press, 2012).

²³ Michael Cecere, *In This Time of Extreme Danger: Northern Virginia in the American Revolution* (New York: Heritage Books, 2009).

Sources:

This dissertation will examine the experiences of over 2,000 Virginia loyalists. These loyalists were located in sources such as Loyalist Claims Commission, refugee records from Canada, England, Scotland, Ireland, and Bermuda, British Army muster roles, and imprisonment records. All of Virginia's loyalist claims are a part of the Virginia Colonial Records—a collaborative effort by the Library of Virginia, the Virginia Historical Society, William & Mary, and the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Foundation in the 1950s to scan and microfilm any European sources from the colonial era that pertains to Virginia. All 82 reels of microfilm that contain loyalist claims from Virginia will be examined. Along with these claims, I will examine pre-Revolutionary era deed, land, will, and probate records from all of the regions in order to locate the geographic location of those who submitted claims and did not offer an exact location of their residence.

The newspapers of the Revolutionary era are also essential sources for my project. In 2014 I received a two month Coffelt fellowship at the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library in Colonial Williamsburg to examine all Revolutionary era *Virginia Gazettes* and scrape them for any information surrounding loyalism in the Old Dominion. Thanks to the generosity of the Coffelt Family, this dissertation benefits from the completion of over 300 issues of the *Gazettes* surveyed as well as all known issues of the *Norfolk Intelligencer* (the only other Revolutionary Era newspaper published in Virginia outside of the three *Gazettes*), and all newspapers printed in the new state capital, Richmond, from 1781 to 1800.

Starting in the summer of 2016 I will begin research at the Canadian National Archives in Ottawa, at the University of New Brunswick Archives and Special Collections. These archives

have important document collections that surround social data of Virginia's loyalists, including family records and collections, court records, and military accounts. I also plan additional visits to visit libraries and archives in Virginia, including the Rockefeller Library, the Library of Virginia and the Virginia Historical Society. Trips will also be made to the David Library of the American Revolution and the Library of the Society of the Cincinnati. All of these North American based libraries house hundreds of miscellaneous collections that contain information on individual loyalists and their families. In spring 2017 I will make an important trip to the British National Archive to examine notes from the Loyalist Claims Commission which have not been transferred to microfilm and to go through over seventy family files and collections located at the library. All of these research trips are imperative to the data scraping I need for my network analysis using R programming and to complete my dissertation.

Chapter Outline:

Introduction: Victims of Liberty

This introduction will present the major thesis/argument of the dissertation as discussed above. An outline of the historiography will tie this significance of this research what has been done or overlooked in studies surrounding loyalism and Revolutionary Era Virginia. It will also define white and black Virginia loyalism and offer a comparative to loyalism in surrounding states to describe the similarities and differences faced by Tories across North America.

Chapter One: Friendly Enemies

Chapter One will cover the time period 1765 to 1772 and argue that as early as the Stamp Act there were divisions across Virginia over whether or not Parliament had the right to tax the American colonies to fill the deficit left behind by the French and Indian War. While there were

no patriot or loyalist affiliations as early as 1765, there were enough political tensions tied to Parliament in the Old Dominion that Jefferson felt it necessary to introduce a competing *Virginia Gazette* newspaper in Williamsburg.

These initial tensions will be further examined with reactions to the Boston Massacre, the Rhode Island “Gaspee Affair” --both of which had major impact in Virginia. With hostilities between Virginia’s sister colonies to the north and the British Army, Virginians began to realize that they would have to make a decision on which side of the disagreement they supported. By 1772 both Virginia Gazette newspapers began labeling each side of the debate as Whigs and Tories. By the end of 1772 the term Tory became interchangeable with loyalist.

Chapter Two: God save the Kingdom

Chapter two will continue with the tensions examined in chapter one into 1773 through 1775. It will cover the rise in loyalist and patriot divisions across the colony and argue that around this time period religious and familial communities in the Tidewater and the Piedmont were torn apart over ideological and political struggles—especially with the emergence of the Oath of Allegiance in 1774. Between 1773 and 1775 there was an increase in royalist sermons by Anglican ministers in Virginia. Many of these sermons emphasized the importance of remaining loyal to kings and following government order, citing the popular “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s” sermon which circulated across dozens of Anglican churches. This includes the infamous incident in Norfolk in 1774 when John Agnew was forcibly thrown out of his church for supporting parliament.²⁴

²⁴ Samuel Henley, *The Distinct Claims of Government and Religion, Considered in a Sermon Preached Before the Honourable House of Burgesses, at Williamsburg, in Virginia, March 1, 1772* (Cambridge: Printed for J. Woodyer, and Messieurs Davies and Elmsley in London, 1772), 17.

Additionally, this chapter will examine the split of many of the Tidewater's elite families such as the Randolphs, Carters, and Byrds, the colony's response to Lord Dunmore's 1775 Proclamation which freed all Virginia slaves who agreed to join him in revolt at Norfolk, as well as the Williamsburg Magazine scandal. This chapter will also include the creation of the colony's third *Virginia Gazette* newspaper which was established as an exclusively pro-patriot publication as well as the emergence of black loyalty and Lord Dunmore's Royal Ethiopian Regiment.

Chapter Three: "But I am Not a Tory"

Chapter three argues that 1776 was the year that defined loyalist and patriot relationships for the rest of the Revolutionary war by examining the rise in hostilities at the beginning of the year and a major turning point for Virginia Whigs that June. This chapter will take a month-by-month approach beginning with the burning of Norfolk in January 1776 and the *Gazette's* reaction to Lord Dunmore's choice to abandon the followers of the Royal Ethiopian Regiment. This chapter will include personal accounts of Virginia loyalists through their personal document collections and loyalist claims of the rise of public abuse against the wives and children of prominent loyalist men. These records detail the rise in tensions across Virginia and the rise in violence against Tories.

I will examine dozens of stories citing imprisonment and abuse of loyalists across the state after June 1776, that do not make it into the *Gazette* newspapers and emphasize the rise in Tory stories from other states that run in the two remaining papers. This chapter will seek to answer the questions of why editors would systematically filter out stories surrounding their own loyalists and actively choose to publish accounts of loyalist activities in other states—especially

with mounting hostilities in the backcountry and Piedmont. It will also examine the importance of Virginia identity, what role the state wanted to play in the larger nation, and how suppressing the existence of Tories in newspapers and convention records promoted notions of a perceived exceptionalism.

Chapter Four: Politics and Property

Chapter four will examine Virginia loyalists between 1777 and 1779. It will argue that after 1776 all of Virginia's major regions continued loyalist legacies vastly different ways. With the remaining loyalists who have not yet fled the state I will determine what defined loyalism after 1776. This chapter seeks to answer questions about why so many loyalists who were active before 1776 who lived in the Chesapeake and Tidewater were less politically active during this time period. It will also examine economic and political networks Virginia loyalists shared across state borders. This includes the Piedmont with North Carolina and the Chesapeake with Maryland—both states with had frequent loyalist and patriot altercations during this time period. This will include a large group of free blacks who lived in the Maryland/Virginia Chesapeake who took up arms with British militia units.

By 1779 Governor Thomas Jefferson issued a Tory property confiscation act which sought to claim the property loyalists who evacuated the state and property of those who remained and were imprisoned for being "enemies to American Liberty."²⁵ Dozens of yeoman farmers and merchants were subject to the confiscation act and hundreds cite their loss of property in the loyalist claims commission. This chapter will ask whether affluence allowed

²⁵ Dixon and Nicolson, *Virginia Gazette*, July 3, 1779, 3.

many Tories to keep their property vs the middling and yeoman classes who lost everything that year.

Chapter Five: Loyal Virginians at War

This chapter will examine the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War between 1780-1783 and argue that Cornwallis's March invigorated the loyalist cause across the state. This chapter will describe the relationship between Virginia civilians and the British Army, various loyalist militia regiments out of the state, and the Queen's Rangers (a large portion of which belonged to the Queen's Own Loyal Virginia Regiment in 1779).

The chapter will also examine the claims from loyalists who supplied Cornwallis's army with provisions and shelter at the end of the Revolutionary War. Many British officers brought their regiments through Richmond, Williamsburg, and Petersburg before the Siege of Yorktown and formed fond relationships with loyalist locals. In the loyalist claims both British officers and Virginia loyalist describe their actions with one another—and many British officers felt responsible for the loyalists who lost everything after supplying and fighting for the army late in the war. This includes Cornwallis attempt to protect the Tories he joined them from his campaign as a part of his surrender at Yorktown in 1781.

Chapter Six: “Only we can truly understand Our Suffering”

This chapter will examine the years 1784-1798 and argue – through the pensions submitted to the Loyalist Claims Commission and *The Book of Negroes*—that communities before, during, and after the war were important to the survival and livelihood of Virginia's Tories. This chapter will focus on Virginia as a colony/state-wide network throughout the Revolutionary era and use programs in R to reveal how Tories knew each other across the Old

Dominion and how they came together as exiles in the British Empire to survive. Analyzing the loyalist claims will show not only how loyal Virginians came to each other's aid between 1776 and 1784 and how these networks lasted beyond the late Georgian period. While this chapter will be written as a traditional dissertation chapter it will be accompanied by a digital appendix and/or website that contain all of the visualizations collected from the loyalist claims.

Conclusion: "those who returned to this State"

The conclusion will begin with the story of Benjamin Bucktrout, a loyalist from Williamsburg who joined Cornwallis at Yorktown and was thrown out of the city when he attempted to return home in 1781. In 1798 Bucktrout was allowed back into Williamsburg after being exiled for almost twenty years. The conclusion will look at the loyalists who managed to stay in Virginia or eventually made their way back to their former homes. It will continue with the censorship theme by examining the newspapers printed in the late 1780s to 1798 show how Virginia was one of the only states that refused to publish notices about the Loyalist Claims Commission and the articles that clearly depict loyalists without using the term "Tory" or "Loyalist", such as Governor Benjamin Harrison's proclamation in 1784 that abuse should not be show to "those who returned to this State."

The conclusion will look back to the historiography and argue that Virginia loyalists deserve to be added to Virginia's Revolutionary narrative.

Research and Completion Schedule:

Summer '16: Complete comprehensive exams and receive prospectus approval from all committee members. Complete research in Ottawa at the Canadian National Archives and the Archives and Special Collections at the University of New Brunswick in August 2016.

Fall '16: Complete archival research at the Rockefeller Library in Colonial Williamsburg, the Library of Virginia, the Virginia Historical Society, the David Library, and the Library of the Cincinnati.

Spring '17: Complete archival research at the British National Archives. Complete statistical loyalist data into 'R' programs.

Summer '17: Run statistical data in 'R' and examine results. Complete drafts of Introduction and Chapters 1-2.

Fall '17: Complete drafts of Chapters 3-5.

Spring '18: Complete drafts 6-Conclusion.

Summer '18: Revise and defend

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