

Abstract

Title of thesis: HEADS OF STATE, HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL POWER RELATIONSHIPS IN EARLY AMERICA

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This thesis explores familial and political power relationships in the American colonies after the Glorious Revolution in England in 1688 through the establishment of the independent American republic. It investigates how early American statesmen, such as Presidents and state governors, related with their families and with the public. By examining the private and public correspondence and public addresses of these characters as government leaders and heads of household, it will explain how patriarchal ideals, laws, and practices persisted and changed during the political upheaval of the American Revolution and establishment of the republic with the creation of the Constitution. It will also demonstrate how familial relationships affected people's political understandings.

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POWER RELATIONSHIPS IN EARLY AMERICA

by

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Introduction

This thesis explores familial and political power relationships in the American colonies after the Glorious Revolution in England in 1688 through the establishment of the independent American republic. It investigates how early American statesmen, such as Presidents and state governors, related with their families and with the public. By examining these characters as government leaders and heads of household, it will explain how patriarchal ideals, laws, and practices persisted and changed during the political upheaval of the American Revolution and establishment of the republic with the creation of the Constitution. It will also demonstrate how familial relationships affected people's political understandings.

Before the Glorious Revolution in England, during which the English overthrew King James II and replaced him with the joint-monarchy of King William III and Queen Mary II, patriarchal ideas, laws, and practices hierarchically organized society and defined people's relationships with one another and with their government in England and colonial America. Under the patriarchal system, husbands assumed the position as the head-of-household and governed their families with absolute authority in regards to money, property, and behavior. The state consisted of all the families in the realm, hierarchically arranged based on nobility and wealth. At the top of this system, the monarch ruled all of his subjects and expected loyalty and obedience. In pamphlets and treatises, philosophers and political theorists consistently debated the proper exercise of patriarchal practices in the familial and political spheres. In practice, fathers possessed important power over their dependents but consistently had their authority challenged within the home. Patriarchy, nonetheless, defined ideal familial and political

relationships before the Glorious Revolution.¹ The Glorious Revolution and the American Revolution provided important moments of change concerning people's understandings of social relationships and legitimate government.

The Glorious Revolution of 1688 compelled political theorists and philosophers to contemplate the proper characteristics of legitimate government and explain human nature, and their new ideas affected patriarchy as an organizing principle for the family and government. At the end of the seventeenth century, radical Enlightenment philosophers and authors, notably John Locke and Bishop Fleetwood, attacked the connections between the power of the father and the monarch. They argued that a father did not have absolute and unlimited power but instead characterized family life as reciprocal and contractual. For other political philosophers, the new expectations of patriarchs destroyed the analogy between the father and the monarch. According to these authors, including Locke, political leaders should demonstrate concern for the public good in the same way that fathers should exercise their power over dependents with care and love. Based on this theory, the family continued to serve as a legitimate source of government's authority.² Despite Locke's, among others', radical ideology that separated the government from the family, eighteenth-century Englishmen and American colonists continued to equate the power of the monarch over his or her realm to that of a father over his family.

¹ James Horn, *Adapting to a New World: English Society in the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 205-218; Gordon J. Schochet, *Patriarchalism in Political Thought: The Authoritarian Family and Political Speculation and Attitudes Especially in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwood, 1975); Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 1-15; Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 43-56.

² Schochet, *Patriarchalism in Political Thought*, 268-270.

The American Revolution offered another moment of change in patriarchal ideology and practice because revolutionary leaders envisioned new relationships between people, with one another, and with their government. The American revolutionaries advocated radical ideas of liberty and equality in government and challenged hierarchical, absolutist, unchecked, and unbalanced power in government. Despite these challenges to political authority, early American leaders refused to apply these same principles to their social relationships because restructuring the family could threaten to deconstruct the entire social order. The American Revolution successfully deconstructed political patriarchy, which set a precedent for destroying patriarchal authority within the home.³ Its leaders tried to restrict their work to the political sphere by policing the behavior of women, children, servants, and slaves and keeping patriarchal laws, such as coverture laws, intact.⁴ Within the family, a patriarch retained absolutist authority over his dependents and his household.

This thesis examines the public and private authority exercised by the men at the intersection of these ideological changes. Early American statesmen, such as Presidents and state governors, simultaneously lived their lives as heads of state and heads of households. Familial metaphors that equated the power of the father to the authority of the monarch presented early American statesmen with a paradox. Within the household, they retained patriarchal authority over their families but with a new emphasis on

³ Holly Brewer, *By Birth or Consent: Children, Law, and the Anglo-American Revolution in Authority* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 6; Wood, *Radicalism of the American Revolution*, 162-166.

⁴ Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 9; Clare A. Lyons, *Sex among the Rabble: An Intimate History of Gender and Power in the Age of Revolution, Philadelphia, 1730-1830* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 240.

affection and reciprocity. In regards to politics, these same men had challenged the legitimacy of similar authority in the hands of the monarch.

The paradox of the American Revolution has been a subject of study by many important scholars. Historians Linda K. Kerber and Mary Beth Norton have described the political roles women created for themselves in the new republic which denied them equal political and civil rights with laws that kept them under patriarchal authority within the home.⁵ In more recent work, historians have continued to study how women lived their lives under these circumstances, and they have discovered a more overtly political role for women. In fact, historians have put women at the very center of party politics in the early republic.⁶ Another trend in recent historiography has focused on the ideas that reinforced patriarchal authority in the home yet permitted men to challenge absolute and arbitrary power in the political realm, such as a gendered concept of rights and new definitions of sexuality based on differences in the male and female body.⁷ The existing scholarship has left men's roles as simultaneous heads of state and heads of household unexplored. This thesis explains how early American statesmen perceived themselves as the rulers of the American people and their families. It will describe the relationship between the governors and the governed in the family and politics. By looking at men as the rulers of people and of families, historians can learn more about how patriarchy, Lockean ideology, the government, and the family operated in the early republic.

⁵ Kerber, *Women of the Republic*; Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980).

⁶ Catherine Allgor, *Parlor Politics: In Which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2000); Susan Branson, *These Fiery Frenchified Dames: Women and Political Culture in Early National Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); Rosemarie Zagari, *Revolutionary Backlash: Women and Politics in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

⁷ Zagari, "The Rights of Men and Women in Post-Revolutionary America," *William and Mary Quarterly* 60 (April 1998); Lyons, *Sex Among the Rabble*.

To accomplish these tasks, this thesis examines the public and private correspondence, addresses, speeches, and ideological writing of early American statesmen, specifically Presidents George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson, and Pennsylvania Governor Thomas McKean. Based on these writings and speeches, the thesis will track persistence and change in the relationships between people and their families and with their governments.

To successfully examine how family patriarchs operated within the paradox created by the American Revolution, this thesis must first establish the persistence of a connection between familial and political authority. Chapter One, therefore, studies the familial metaphors, which portrayed monarchical authority as paternal power, used by Englishmen and colonial Americans after the Glorious Revolution.⁸ Although Locke had argued that political authority had no basis in the family, historians agree that these metaphors prevailed in political rhetoric during the eighteenth century. They disagree, however, regarding the significance of these metaphors relating to power relationships in the family and in politics.⁹ This thesis analyzes eighteenth-century familial metaphors

⁸ Edwin G. Burrows and Michael Wallace, "The American Revolution: The Ideology and Psychology of National Liberation," in *Perspective in American History* 6, ed. by Donald Fleming and Bernard Bailyn (Cambridge: Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History, 1972), 167-308. In this article, Burrows and Wallace explain how family metaphors equated the power of the monarch over his realm to a father over his household. They explore the various political ideologies, specifically that of Sir Robert Filmer, to explain how people justified monarchical authority during the Tudor Dynasty and the English Civil War. They also show how Locke challenged Filmer's patriarchal ideology by separating familial and political authority. They track the rise and fall of these two ideologies. This thesis will move beyond ideology. Rather than focusing on how these metaphors justified political authority, this thesis will describe Anglo-Americans' ideal characteristics for the relationship between a ruler and his or her subjects. It will also explain how governing officials and the governed related to one another in correspondence and addresses.

⁹ Wood, *Radicalism of the American Revolution*, 145-166; Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers: Gendered Power and the Forming of American Society* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), 15.

Historian Gordon S. Wood explains that Eighteenth century Anglo-Americans continued to employ familial metaphors to describe the relationship between the monarch and his subjects, as well as between England and its imperial possessions. He argues that these metaphors signified that hierarchy remained essential in the English government's relationship with its people, Englishmen and American

within a context of changing family relationships in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By describing when and how eighteenth-century Anglo-Americans used these metaphors and connecting these metaphors to experiences within the family, this thesis concludes that Anglo-Americans continued to derive their political understandings from the family. Based on familial relationships between dependents and patriarchs, Anglo-Americans employed these metaphors to describe their behavioral expectations for their monarch.¹⁰

Given these conclusions, Chapter Two continues to analyze the persistence of these metaphors into the American Revolution.¹¹ By analyzing political rhetoric in colonial newspapers, treatises, and essays concerning the crisis against royal authority,

colonists continued to perceive the monarch's characteristics as paternal, and ideological shifts toward enlightened paternalism within the family mirrored changes in the political realm.

In contrast, historian Mary Beth Norton relegates these metaphors to strategic rhetoric employed by American revolutionaries in their arguments for independence because of the metaphors' comprehensibility. She argues that Locke succeeded in disassociating public and private authority after the Glorious Revolution. By the time of the American Revolution, the ideology of philosopher Robert Filmer, who emphasized the connection between royal and fatherly authority, had no importance in Anglo-American society. Her forthcoming book in April 2011, *Separated by their Sex: Women in Public and Private in the Colonial Atlantic World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press supposedly continues this theme and emphasizes the split between the public and private spheres in England and the American colonies. She considers this split and how it relates to women's political activities.

¹⁰ I owe the development of these conclusions to numerous works on the importance of rhetoric in politics, including: Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1969); Elizabeth R. Varon, *Disunion!: The Coming of the American Civil War, 1789-1859* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Daniel T. Rodgers, *Contested Truths: Keywords in American Politics Since Independence* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1998). Specifically, I want to highlight Peter A. Dorsey's definition of rhetoric in *Common Bondage: Slavery as a Metaphor in Revolutionary America* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2009), xii. He explains that rhetoric means "to persuade" or "to mislead." People use rhetoric to achieve their goals. According to Dorsey, rhetoric "often faithfully reflected certain aspects of material and social reality, but it also posited a selected version of that reality and, as a result, distorted it."

¹¹ Burrows and Wallace, "The American Revolution," 199-200. In this article, they argue that attacks on the connection between familial and political authority did not gain much ground. Rather, they suggest "the analogy remained unsurpassed as a device for conveying anger and justifying dissent. More important, however, the continued use of the analogy was assured by the discovery that it could provide ideological justification for an ever-expanding sphere of autonomy." Again, this thesis moves beyond ideology and political theories about autonomy and home rule. This thesis attempts to take the findings of Burrows and Wallace and, by adding more context regarding family relationships, add another layer of analysis. By basing a study of these metaphors in the context of familial relationships, this thesis can describe how people and their governments interacted and explain that the two sides had similar views on the proper relationship between a people and their rulers.

which occurred from 1763-1783, this thesis concludes that loyalists and revolutionaries both used familial metaphors and equated the monarch to a father figure and characterized Great Britain as a mother country. Based on the behavioral expectations set forth in metaphors, as described in Chapter One, neither side attacked the ideal relationship between the government and the governed. They simply characterized one another as failing to live up to the ideal expectations set forth in familial metaphors. In this fashion, the American Revolution represented a revolution to restore the ideal characteristics of the patriarchal order.

Patriarchy continued to define social and political relationships through the American Revolution, so Chapter Three examines the role of early American statesmen as husbands, fathers, and governing officials. To accomplish this task, this thesis analyzes the public addresses, correspondence, and speeches within a context of their domestic letters to compare how they operated within the dual-levels of patriarchal organization. First, private letters to family members analyzed within a context of the law and custom reveal that early American statesmen continued to rule over their households with patriarchal authority. In regards to their role as statesmen, their public addresses and correspondence illuminate an incomplete process of change concerning patriarchal organization in government. In the early national period, governing officials and the governed continue to relate to one another in terms of hierarchy coupled with affection and protection. While familial metaphors continue to connect political authority to a foundation in the family, American people do not often define their governing officials as paternal figures in their requests for protection or affection. Instead,

Americans and their governing officials deferred their own obedience and duty to the Constitution and the rule of law.

This thesis concludes that a separation between public and private authority, according to Lockean ideology, began after the American Revolution but had still not been completed because the relationship between governors and the governed remained very much the same. Revolutionary ideology, which established sovereignty in the Constitution and the law rather than people or government offices, separated political authority from a foundation in the family. By creating separate spheres of authority in which law governed the nation, revolutionary statesmen could exercise their power at home while distancing themselves from it in politics.

Chapter One

In 1721, Jeremiah Dummer, an agent in Massachusetts working for the British government, commented on the state of the American colonies and described their relationship to Great Britain. He opened, “’Tis Said, that their increasing Numbers and Wealth join’d to the great Distance from Britain will give them an Opportunity in the Course of some Years to throw off their Dependance on the Nation, and declare themselves a free State, if not curbed in Time by being made entirely subject to the Crown.” In this opening remark, he firmly placed the American colonies in a dependent and inferior position to the British government. He asserted, furthermore, that this hierarchy would never change. He continued, “in Truth there’s no Body tho’ but little acquainted with these or any of the Northern Plantations, who does not know and confess, that their Poverty and the declining State of their Trade is so great at present, that there’s for more Danger of their sinking, without some extraordinary Support from the Crown, than of ever revolting from it.” From his perspective, the American colonies, specifically those in the north, could not survive without the support and protection of their sovereign monarch. In this weak condition, the American colonies relied on the British crown for their well-being and survival. To finally make his point, he developed the familial metaphor to explain the relative condition of the American colonies to Great Britain and the monarch. In his report, he concluded, “So that I may say without being ludicrous, that it would not be more absurd to place two of His Majesty’s Beef-Eaters to watch an infant in the Cradle that it don’t rise and cut its Father’s throat, than to guard

these weak Infant Colonies to prevent their shaking off the British Yoke.”¹² In this metaphor, Dummer equated the American colonies to infants and the monarch to a father. Specifically, he suggested the absurdity of employing the monarch’s personal security force to protect the king from the weak American colonies. Britons and American colonists employed similar familial metaphors to describe peoples’ proper relationships to the British state and the government. These metaphors testified to a persistent link between familial and political authority during the eighteenth century, which stabilized the political and social order.¹³

This chapter analyzes familial metaphors in England and the American colonial politics within a context of family relationships. The first part of this chapter describes familial relationships before the Glorious Revolution. It also demonstrates how political ideology equated the patriarchal rule of fathers to the power of the monarch and how familial metaphors reinforced the patriarchal ordering of society and government.

Before the eighteenth century, Anglo-Americans experienced a hierarchically organized world in which birthright and status determined their relationships with other people, their families, their government, and their religion. Based on hereditary right, men controlled the dependents within their household, including wives, children,

¹² Albert Bushnell Hart, ed., *American History as Told By Contemporaries* vol. 2 *Building of the Republic, 1689-1788* (New York: Macmillan, 1898), 134, qtd. in Faith Jaycox, *An Eyewitness History: The Colonial Era* (New York: Facts on File, 2002), 296.

¹³ This interpretation differs from the conclusions asserted by Brendan McConville, *The King’s Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006). He argues that emotional attachment to benevolent monarch undermined political and social order in the American colonies. In politics, monarchical politics created tension in the diverse, expansive American colonies because people could envision variable forms of patriarchal authority. Within the family, competing visions of the proper exercise of patriarchal authority undermined the system. For more, see McConville, *The King’s Three Faces*, 170-191.

servants, and slaves. The father's power in the household, furthermore, legitimated the monarch's absolute rule over his people.¹⁴

English and American colonial men had authority over their wives. Based on biblical interpretations of the Bible, Anglo-Americans believed that men had inherited their power over their households from divine right.¹⁵ In the biblical story of the fall of man, God punished Eve for her sins and informed her, "Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."¹⁶ In the seventeenth-century marriage ceremony, the minister asked women of their husbands if they will "obey him, and serve him" as well as "love, honour, and keep him in sickness and in health" whereas the minister never asked men to serve and obey their wives. According to the ceremony, a woman should agree "to love, cherish, and to obey" her husband in response to the minister.¹⁷ While many people argued that women's subordination originated in biblical hierarchy, John Locke explained that women's subjection lay in natural causes. According to nature and to divine ordinance, therefore, men had control over their wives in the early modern world.

Regardless of the origins of women's subordination, married men had power over their wives' identity and property. In regards to a woman's civic status, a Maryland law passed in 1664 explained that a free woman who married a slave became a slave to her husband's master during the duration of his master's life.¹⁸ Men controlled their wives' political identities because women did not have the right to vote and could not express a

¹⁴ For more on the connection between monarchical and paternal authority, see Burrows and Wallace, "The American Revolution."

¹⁵ Mary Beth Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers*, 73.

¹⁶ Gn. 3:16.

¹⁷ "The Form Solemnization of Matrimony," in *America's Families: A Documentary History*, ed. by Donald M. Scott and Bernard Wishy (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), 77-78.

¹⁸ Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers*, 72.

political stance contrary to that of her husband's views.¹⁹ Women's possessions became their husbands' property to own, use, and sell. Men had the power to manage their wives' real estate possessions. Married women could not own property, so therefore, they did not have the right to compose a will and set forth legal expectations for her spouse and children.²⁰ Most men, furthermore, did not consult their wives concerning important financial matters, such as income, expenses, cost of goods, revenue from sales, or amount of debt.²¹ Men possessed important power over their wives' identity and property, but their power extended beyond the legal and material realm.

Regarding women's bodies, men had control over that aspect of women's lives, too. They had the right to physically coerce their wives into obedience and reinforce their authority. Women could not legally harm their husbands, and the state punished abusive women for petty treason because killing a husband equaled the killing of a government official or sovereign. A man possessed his wife's body for sexual purposes. He had the right to her body whenever he wanted, and rape laws only punished married women's rape by men other than their husbands. The wife's husband, according to the law, represented the violated party because someone else had violated his home and property.²² Into the eighteenth century, men continued to have strict control over their wives, but social theorists started to emphasize new ideals for marriage.

During the seventeenth century, fathers exercised absolute authority over their children.²³ Although social theory compelled children to obey both parents, theoreticians

¹⁹ Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, 9.

²⁰ Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers*, 72-73

²¹ Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, 119-120; Norton, *Liberty's Daughters*, 3, 5-7; Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers*, 96-112.

²² Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers*, 73-75, 348.

²³ According to Brewer in *By Birth or Consent*, lords and masters had more authority over lower-class children than parents. During the Seventeenth century, poorer parents could lose their children to

developed these ideas within a context of men's power over their wives. In an advice guide, the author argued, "God requires every person should fear his Parents, not only his Father, but also his Mother. Yes, the Mother is here mention'd first possibly because Persons are more apt to disregard their Mothers, tho they stand in some aue of their Fathers." He added, "Children should be faithful and obedient to their Parents."²⁴ In a book of manners, an unnamed author compelled children to "Dispute not, nor delay to Obey thy Parents Commands" and to never "speak to thy Parents without some Title of Repect, viz. Sir, Madam, &c. according to their Quality."²⁵ Children had to obey both their mothers and their fathers, though Anglo-Americans understood that men's privileged position in marriage gave them supreme authority over their children.

With this authority, men made important decisions regarding their children. Men had control concerning child-rearing strategies, potential schools, future careers, and marriage. While serving in the Continental Congress, John Adams considered his eldest son's education. To his wife Abigail, he remarked, "I am very thoughtfull and anxious about our Johnny. What School to send him to—what Measures to take with him. He must go on learning his Latin, to his Grandfather or to you, or somewhere. And he must write."²⁶ Most significantly, fathers possessed enormous influence over their children's courtship habits and marriage partners. In the Quaker faith, for example, they believed

apprenticeship at any time, and this activity continued in the United States until the early nineteenth century. Also, children could leave their parent after the age of fourteen, but they could not leave a master. In the eighteenth century, parental authority over children grew stronger relative to masters and lords. For more, see Brewer, *By Birth or Consent*, 255-263.

²⁴ Benjamin Wadsworth, "The Well-Ordered Family, or, Relative Duties" (Boston, 1712) in *America's Families*, 134.

²⁵ *The School of Good Manners* (Boston, 1768) in *America's Families*, 133.

²⁶ John Adams, Letter to Abigail Adams, 30 Jun. 1774 in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 1 ed. by L. H. Butterfield, Wendell D. Garrett, and Marjorie E. Sprague (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963), 117.

that parents “shalt not give thy sons nor thy daughters in marriage with the heathen.”²⁷
Men had to make decisions regarding their children’s education, career, and marriage.

The law reinforced men’s power and established punishments to compel children to obey. In the Massachusetts colony, for example, the state punished violently insubordinate children with the death penalty. According to some social theorists and English law during the seventeenth century, children’s duty to honor and obey their parents never expired. Through their entire adult lives, children remained subordinate to their parents. John Locke, although he recognized fathers’ authority over his children ended when the children reached maturity, understood that fathers could continue to influence their children by adjusting inheritance to reward adult children. In either case, therefore, men possessed important authority over their children throughout their lives.²⁸
In the eighteenth century, fathers continued to have enormous power over their children’s lives, and this power extended beyond their children’s maturation.

In addition to the nuclear family, English and American patriarchs possessed important power over their servants and slaves. The subordination of servants represented a key aspect of the social order because more than of half the immigrants to the middle and southern colonies came as servants. While indentured servants did have a few legal rights and eventually earned their freedom, the law hindered their ability to leave an abusive master, they faced lengthened terms if they tried to escape, and female servants did not have legal recourse against their master for sexual assault. Masters needed to give their servants permission to engage in bartering, purchasing, or selling. Masters not only controlled the servants’ labor, but they also had the power to deny

²⁷ “Letters to Quakers on Marriage, 1660,” in *America’s Families*, 79.

²⁸ Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers*, 96-103.

marriage rights to male and female servants, and therefore, prevent male servants from becoming their own patriarchs.²⁹ In Virginia law, masters had the authority to physically coerce servants and slaves into obedience without endangering the latter's terms of service. Servants who resisted their masters, however, subjected themselves to a longer period of service. In Massachusetts, unruly and disobedient servants had to remain in servitude until they had finally pleased their masters. In the American colonies that permitted the institution of slavery, masters possessed even greater power over their slaves because they had the right to punish runaway slaves with death, sell them as a punishment for other offenses, or for any other reasons.³⁰ Patriarchs had control over all the people in their household, and servants and slaves remained exempt from a growing attitude emphasizing contractual relationships.

Pre-eighteenth century Anglo-Americans lived in a world in which birthright and status determined their place in a hierarchically arranged society which connected monarchical and paternal authority. They connected the power of fathers and monarchs in two important ways. First, monarchs transferred their authority to their eldest children in the same manner that a father passed the authority over his household to his eldest children under the patriarchal system of primogeniture. Second, both fathers and monarchs had earned their right to rule by divine appointment. In a book describing political ideology, King James I emphasized this metaphor when he explained, "The King towards his people is rightly compared to a father of children, and the people must

²⁹ Kirsten Fischer, *Suspect Relations: Sex, Race, and Resistance in Colonial North Carolina* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 101-102.

³⁰ Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers*, 102-103.

behave dutifully towards their king.”³¹ Sir Robert Filmer described the process by which monarchs had the right to rule the entire nation of people. He explained, “It is true, all kings be not the natural parents of their subjects, yet they all either are, or are to be reputed as the next heirs to those progenitors who were at first the natural parents of the whole people” and, therefore, “such heirs are not only lords of their own children, but also of their brethren, and all others that were subject to their fathers.” He concluded, “By this it comes to pass that many a child, by succeeding a king, hath the right of a father over many a grey-headed multitude, and hath the title of *pater patriae*.”³² In 1716, philosopher Matthias Earberry continued to support the metaphor between the father and the monarch in his argument in support of patriarchalism. He argued, “every Father has still a Right over his Children: . . . the King, who is the Supreme Parent, has by virtue thereof a Superior Power over all other Parents or Heads of Families.” He also explained, “Kings are included in the Command, Honour thy father and thy Mother.”³³ These metaphors represented a vital part of political discourse before and during the early modern period, but the work of John Locke, among others, helped erase them from political ideology over the course of the eighteenth century.

Before the eighteenth century, Anglo-Americans lived their lives in hierarchically organized families controlled by patriarchs, to whom all dependents within the household, such as wives, children, servants, and slaves, owed obedience. He controlled the family’s finances and property. Political theorists connected the rule of fathers to the

³¹ James I, *The True Law of Free Monarchies* . . . (Edinburgh, 1598), qtd. in Holly Brewer, *By Birth or Consent: Children, Law, and the Anglo-American Revolution in Authority* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 21.

³² Robert Filmer, *Patriarcha; or, The Natural Power of Kings* (London, 1680), qtd. in Brewer, *By Birth or Consent*, 22.

³³ Matthias Earberry, *Elements of Policy, Civil and Ecclesiastical in a Mathematical Model* (London, 1716) qtd. in Schochet, *Patriarchalism in Political Thought*, 277.

power of the monarch. At the end of the seventeenth century, however, social theorists advocated a new ideal for the relationships within the family. In this next section, this thesis will describe the various ways in which familial relationships changed over the course of the eighteenth century before the American Revolution. It will describe how these new ideals influenced the relationships between patriarchs and their dependents.

Near the end of the seventeenth century, social theorists, such as John Locke and Bishop Fleetwood, advocated the notion of marriage as a contractual and reciprocal rather than simply a hierarchical agreement, and this idea became prevalent over the course of the eighteenth century.³⁴ An eighteenth-century advice guide reflected the contractual nature of marriage in its discussion of men's and women's bodies. In this guide, author Benjamin Wadsworth claimed, "'The Wife hath not power of her own body, but the Husband; and likewise also the Husband hath not power of his own Body, but the Wife.'" It also suggested, "Husband & Wife should bear one anothers burthens, sympathize with each other in trouble; affording to each other all the comfort they can." A husband, furthermore, had the obligation to "indeavour, that his Wife may have Food and Raiment suitable for her. He should contrive prudently, and work diligently, that his Family, and his Wife particularly, may be well provided for."³⁵ In many ways, men retained power over their wives, but they did have many legal obligations to protect and defend their wives. A husband, for example, assumed his wife's debt and her dowry upon marriage. The state held men responsible, furthermore, for their wives' legal troubles by punishing men for their wives' misdeeds, including making them pay their

³⁴ Schochet, *Patriarchalism*, 270.

³⁵ Wadsworth, "The Well-Ordered Family," 86-87.

wives' fines.³⁶ Although men had important obligations to their wives, they retained control. Wadsworth argued, "Wives ought readily and cheerfully to obey their Husbands. Wives submit your selves to your own Husbands, be in subjection to them."³⁷ In addition to the contractual emphasis on marriage, eighteenth-century Americans also encouraged husbands and wives to demonstrate affection for one another.

During the second half of the eighteenth century, affection became another key component of the Anglo-American marital relationship. By the middle of the eighteenth century, Chesapeake planters, for example, considered love and affection as the proper grounds for a marital relationship.³⁸ In an advice guide, the author claimed husbands and wives should "have a very great and tender love and affection to one another."³⁹ In practice, men often expressed sentimental and affectionate feelings in their letters to loved ones. In a letter, for example, William Byrd described two amorous turtles and explained their love for one another and his envy for their affection. He then added, "I have given you an account of the state of love amongst other people. I need not tell you how thoroughly I feel it my self."⁴⁰

In the American colonies, communities policed familial relationships with a variety of legal and extralegal measures. In previous centuries, communities focused on punishing women for their extramarital vices, but eighteenth-Century Anglo-Americans, especially in the New World, had turned their attention toward abusive and adulterous husbands, as well. This behavior represented part of a larger trend toward a more

³⁶ Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers*, 86-87, 106-107.

³⁷ Wadsworth, "The Well-Ordered Family," 89.

³⁸ Daniel Blake Smith, *Inside the Great House: Planter Family Life in Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), 126.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁴⁰ Maude H. Woodfin and Marion Tinning, eds., *Another Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1739-1741* (Richmond, 1942), in *America's Families*, 46.

affectionate family. Patriarchs still ruled their households, but eighteenth-century Anglo-Americans believed he should rule his dominion with affection and love.⁴¹ Based on these new ideas, American colonists tried to curtail the physical abuse of women. In an advice guide, the author argued, if “therefore the Husband is bitter against his Wife, beating or striking of her (as some vile wretches do) or in any unkind carriage... he then shames his profession of Christianity, he breaks the Divine Law.” By the late eighteenth century, emotion had become the centerpiece of the intimate, private, and nuclear family.⁴²

At the end of the seventeenth century, new ideas influenced laws that freed adult and mature children from their parents’ control and curtailed fathers’ absolute authority. As part of this transition, many theorists denied that, in practice, fathers possessed unlimited power and deemphasized fathers’ arbitrary power and argued that they had certain obligations to their families.⁴³ Among these obligations, fathers had the responsibility to protect and defend their children from harm. Fathers had the responsibility to prepare children for adulthood by teaching them skills, which might include farming techniques, a craft or trade, reading, writing, and arithmetic. At the end of fathers’ lives, they had the responsibility to draft a will and pass their belongings to their children.⁴⁴ Fathers continued to command their children, but they framed their demands as an aspect of children’s obligation for dutiful behavior. At the end of the seventeenth century, laws in England and the American colonies freed mature children from the control of their parents, yet many children continued to view obedience as a life-

⁴¹ Brendan McConville, *The King’s Three Faces: The Rise & Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 183-191.

⁴² Smith, *Inside the Great House*, 21-22.

⁴³ Schochet, *Patriarchalism in Political Thought*, 270.

⁴⁴ Norton, *Founding Mothers and Fathers*, 107-113.

long commitment because of its connection to affection.⁴⁵ In Anglo-American politics, the ability to reason became an important benchmark for inclusion in political and legal rights. As children became mature adults, therefore, they no longer lived under the control of their father.⁴⁶ Fathers, additionally, had important duties to perform regarding their children's well-being.

During the eighteenth century, children had become the focal point of the affectionate and nuclear family. Children recognized the conditional nature of a parent's love for them, so they consistently strove to improve themselves and make themselves worthy of parental affection. To maintain the love of parents, children needed to obey them.⁴⁷ In an advice guide, the author stated, "Children should love their parents. Parents and Children should love mutually, love one another; if they don't, they're without natural affection, which is mention'd among the worst crimes of Heathens." Love played an important part in the relationship because children who did not love their parents cannot "do other duties which they owe to them, as they should."⁴⁸ Affection became a foundation on which both parties based the rest of their relationship. While parents, specifically fathers, retained important power over their children and could expect their obedience, affection represented a vital component in the parent-child relationship.

After the Glorious Revolution, new ideals concerning proper familial relationships infiltrated Anglo-American society. These new ideals emphasized contractual, affectionate, and nurturing relationships between patriarchs and their

⁴⁵ Smith, *Inside the Great House*, 122.

⁴⁶ Brewer, *By Birth or Consent*, 4-6.

⁴⁷ Smith, *Inside the Great House*, 21-22, 88.

⁴⁸ Wadsworth, "The Well-Ordered Family," 133-134.

dependents, specifically wives and children. In this next section, this thesis will describe how the familial relationships continued to have political significance despite a radical ideology that severed their connection. It will argue that familial metaphors that equated the monarch to a father had political significance because these metaphors entailed behavior expectations for monarchs and subjects. People based these expectations on their familial experiences.

By the eighteenth century, philosophers such as John Locke distinguished between social and political relationships and attacked the political importance of the family. Locke perceived familial relationships as a natural part of men's sociable lives. Politics, on the other hand, represented an agreement or contract and, therefore, removed men from their natural state. Government's legitimacy, according to Locke, did not rely on divine right or inheritance but instead on its ability to effectively represent its people and make good decisions.⁴⁹ Locke also argued that a father's profession of loyalty to a monarch did not bind his children to the same monarch or ancestral line. Instead, he suggested that adult and mature men could consent to their governments. After receiving an education emphasizing reason and virtue, Locke argued, men emerged from their father's influence and authority and became independent, which made them political actors.⁵⁰ Locke concluded, therefore, people should not derive their political understandings from familial life. Political ideologies that emphasized the contractual nature of government conflicted with social theories that articulated the family as a natural institution, which broke down the analogy between the family and the state. In Locke's radical ideology, metaphors equating the subjects' duty to obey their sovereign

⁴⁹ Schochet, *Patriarchalism in Political Thought*, 270-276.

⁵⁰ Brewer, *By Birth or Consent*, 91-92.

to children's duty to obey their parents nearly disappeared from political theory over the course of the eighteenth century.⁵¹ In radical political ideology, the state and family became separate entities, which invalidated their connection.

While radical eighteenth-century political theorists no longer derived government's origins and legitimacy from the household, Great Britain's sovereigns, British and colonial American government officials, and British subjects continued to articulate their identities with familial metaphors. In 1727, the mayor of York issued a statement on behalf of the town's inhabitants. In this statement, he thanked King George I "with the utmost Sense of filial Gratitude" for his "paternal Care and goodness."⁵² He strongly connected the idea of the paternal monarch and the filial subject, and British rulers and subjects frequently and consistently repeated this metaphor on numerous occasions. As war threatened the people of Great Britain, they referred to King George I as "the most indulgent father of his People" and applauded him for his wise protection of the nation from foreign enemies.⁵³ While the father metaphor dominated political discourse, some people compared the monarch to a master. The royal governor of Massachusetts, Jonathon Belcher, took it upon himself to repeat the instructions of his "Royal Master" to his fellow subjects. He continued, "I must add in Fidelity to the KING my Master and to my Country" that he had the pleasure of serving the monarch and his

⁵¹ Schochet, *Patriarchalism in Political Thought*, 270-276.

⁵² "To the King's most Excellent Majesty," *The American Weekly Mercury*, June 8 to June 15, 1727, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers : Including Early American Newspapers Series, 1-3, 1690-1922 (Chester, Vt.: Readex, 2011).

⁵³ "The Humble Address of the Mayor and Commonalty of the City of York," *The American Weekly Mercury*, June 8 to June 15, 1727, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

ministers.⁵⁴ Anglo-Americans continued to perceive their relationship with the monarch as hierarchical.

The death of a monarch, the ascension of another to the throne, or the crowing of a prince or princess provided important opportunities to connect the family and the nation. After King George I became Great Britain's monarch, he issued a statement proclaiming his son the Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, and the Earl of Chester. In this statement, he declared that his son "George Augustus, to our People whom is one Day to Govern" deserves "the Titles peculiar to the eldest Son of the King of Great Britain." He expressed his "Paternal Affection to our most dear Son, and the Care we take of our most faithful Subjects" and explained that his son's "eminent Filial Piety has always endear'd him to us."⁵⁵ He also expressed love and affection for his son in a similar way he would express it to his people on many occasions and portrayed himself as a father to a son and to his the people in his realm. British subjects used similar language to describe their connection to the monarchy.

In King George II's speech to Parliament after the death of his father, King George I, he expressed the shared loss of a royal father. He said, "I am persuaded that you all share with Me in My Grief and Affliction for the Death of My late Royal Father."⁵⁶ In the wake of his father's death, he proclaimed "That all Persons, that at the Time of the Decease of Our late Royal Father King GEORGE the First, of Glorious Memory, duly and lawfully possessed of, or invested in any Office..." will keep their

⁵⁴ "The Speech of His Excellency Jonathan Belcher Esq," *The Boston Weekly News-Letter*, September 3 to September 10, 1730, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁵⁵ "The Humble Address of the City of Edinburgh," June 27 to July 4, 1715, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁵⁶ "His Majesty's most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, on Tuesday the 27th Day of June, 1727," *The Boston Weekly News Letter*," September 7 to September 14, 1727, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

position. By permitting his father's appointees to keep their positions in government, he recognized his father's continuing authority. He encouraged all of these people to continue to follow any orders or instructions issued by "Our said late Royal Father."⁵⁷ In this address, the King includes his subjects among his family in expressing the shared loss of a father, and British subjects used their own metaphors to express their sadness at the death of King George I.

Monarchs often employed these metaphors to describe their relative position to the people, but most frequently, British subjects used them to describe their own relationship to the monarch. Upon the death of King George I, British subjects expressed their feelings of sadness regarding the death of their monarch. John Evant, speaking on behalf of dissenting ministers, stated, "Whilst your Majesty's Royal Declaration so tenderly mentions the sudden and unexpected Death of your dearest Father, all loyal Subjects as becomes their different Stations, are mourning the Loss of one common Father to his People." From Evant's perspective, "The Protestant Dissenting Ministers can never forget his paternal Favours and Condescensions." He concluded his statement by expressing that his heart was "full of Loyalty and Affection" for King George II and his new government.⁵⁸ In this address, Evant recognizes the special significance of King George I's death for his heir, and he wants to explain that the entire country had lost their father, as well.

⁵⁷ "By the King, A Proclamation, Declaring His Majesty's Pleasure for Continuing the Offices in His Majesty's Plantations, till His Majesty's Pleasure Shall be Further Signified," *The Boston Gazette*, September 4 to September 11, 1727, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁵⁸ "The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of Three Denominations in and about the Cities of London and Westminster," *The Boston Weekly News-Letter*, September 7 to September 14, 1727, *The Boston Weekly News-Letter*, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

Familial metaphors consistently and frequently appeared in the speeches and addresses of the monarch and British subjects. Among British rulers and governors, these metaphors described a relationship in which British subjects lived in a subservient position to their ruler. For British subjects, they used familial language to describe a relationship in which they willingly served and obeyed their rulers. In eighteenth-century Anglo-America, family relationships entailed numerous expectations for behavior. Dependents owed obedience, loyalty, and affection to their masters, and masters had the responsibility to protect and love their dependents and educate them in virtue. In the next section, this thesis will explain the behavioral expectations set forth by governing officials and the governed for one another's behavior. These expectations had an origins in familial relationships.

Given the connection between monarchical and paternal authority, British subjects expected their monarchs to demonstrate virtue and reason and applauded them for these characteristics. Upon the death of Queen Anne, the death notice highlighted her virtuous character. The notice described her as “a Princess of Exemplary Piety and Vertue.”⁵⁹ After the appointment of William Burnett to govern New York, New Yorkers expressed their gratitude for having someone of “Character, Prudence and other Eminent Vertues” to govern them.⁶⁰ After King George I crowned his eldest son as a prince, he remarked, “We beseech Almighty God, that the Virtues he derives from his Ancestors, may daily shine out in him, with additional Splendor; and that he may go on to merit the

⁵⁹ “Death Notice,” *The Boston News-Letter*, September 20 to September 27, 1714, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁶⁰ “The Humble Address of the Mayor, Alderman and Commonalty of this His Majesty's Most Ancient City and Corporation of New-York in the Province of New-York in America,” *The Boston News-Letter*, October 10 to October 17, 1720, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

Honours, which we have confer'd on him.”⁶¹ Over the course of the eighteenth century, virtue had become a central aspect of legitimate government. Public education had expanded to teach children virtues for the purpose of preparing them for government. In this statement, however, King George I continued to describe virtue and the ability to rule as an inherited trait. Regardless of how one claimed virtue, it represented a fundamental aspect of governance, and British subjects valued these characteristics.

Colonial Americans embraced their dependent status in relation to the monarch, and they often emphasized their loyalty and obedience to the monarch. Upon King George I becoming monarch, Increase Mather, speaking on behalf of the people of Massachusetts and their ministers, proclaimed their intention to serve him with “as great Sense of Duty, Loyalty, Zeal and Joy, as inspire the Breasts of the best of your Subjects.” He requested King George I, furthermore, to “promise ourselves your most Gracious Protection in the enjoyment of our Religious Liberties as well as Civil.”⁶² Important political figures used similar terms to describe their willingness to obey their monarch and to express their desire for protection in return for their obedience.

Numerous British city mayors expressed the importance of loyalty and obedience to the monarch and expressed their peers’ willingness to serve the monarch. In 1737, the Mayor of London issued a statement concerning possible conflict with Spain and expressed his desire to serve King George I. In this statement, he declared, “We therefore... are in a particular Manner obliged to return our most dutiful Thanks for your

⁶¹ “The Preamble to the Patent Creating his Royal Highness the Prince, Prince of Wales, and Earl of Chester is as Follows,” *The Boston News-Letter*, June 27 to July 4, 1715, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁶² “The Humble Address of His Majesty’s Loyal and Dutiful Subjects the Ministers of Christ, in His Majesty’s Provinces of Massachusetts-Bay and New-Hampshire,” *The Boston News-Letter*, October 24 to October 31, 1715, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

Majesty, for that prudent Care which was hitherto render'd abortive the crimerical and unjust Designs of your Enemies” and “to assure your Majesty, that your Loyal City of London will be always ready to sacrifice their Lives and Fortunes in Defence of your Royal Person and Government.”⁶³ In another address, the mayor of Abington explained that “no Protestant Briton can be silent without forgetting his indispensable Duty and Loyalty to the best of Kings” and expressed his people’s “Assurances of our steady and unalterable Loyalty to your Majesty; and that we shall never be wanting to shew our Duty and Affection to your Majesty.”⁶⁴ The city mayors, although they governed other people, perceived themselves as subordinate to the British monarchy. Speaking on behalf of their city’s citizens, they expressed a willingness to serve the monarch and sacrifice for his benefit.

Members of Parliament expressed a similar sentiment in their frequent speeches and addresses to the monarch. The House of Lords informed King George II that he could expect “all imaginable Returns of” the British people’s “Gratitude and Loyalty.” They continued, “we beg Leave to assure your Majesty, in the strongest Manner, of our inviolable Fidelity, and of our fixed and unalterable Resolution upon all Occasions to maintain your Majesty’s undoubted Right and Title to the Imperial Crown.”⁶⁵ British subjects, even those in positions of power such as mayors and legislators, often expressed their loyalty and willingness to serve and obey their monarchs.

⁶³ “London,” *The Boston Weekly News-Letter*, April 6 to April 13, 1727, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁶⁴ “The humble Address of the Mayor, Recorder, Bailiffs, and Burgesses of your Majesty’s loyal Borough of Abington in your County of Berks,” *The American Weekly Mercury*, June 29 to July 6, 1727, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁶⁵ “The Humble Address of the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, Presented to his Majesty on Wednesday the Twenty eighth Day of June, 1727,” *The New England Weekly Journal*, September 18, 1727, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

In the early part of the eighteenth century, Britain continued to perceive the Catholics within its borders as a threat to security and Protestantism, and British Protestants used the opportunity to profess their loyalty and declare their submission to Queen Anne and King George I. In 1714, the people of Edinburgh issued a statement to Queen to declare their intentions to sacrifice themselves “for the Defence of Your Majesty and the Protestant Succession in the illustrious House of Hanover.” They opened their address with the customary introduction, “We Your Majesty’s most Dutiful and Loyal Subjects.” They condemned Catholics in England for their “unwilling precarious Submission to Your Majesty as their Queen.” They praised Queen Anne and declared, “May Your Majesty long continue Your Health, and Gracious Affection for Your People.”⁶⁶ Upon the accession of King George I to the throne, they issued another statement to praise the Hanover’s zeal for Protestantism and their hope that “the Sacred Terms of Loyalty and Religion shall no more be prostituted, for the Concealment of Designs for Popery and Arbitrary Power.” They concluded, “We humbly beg Your Majesty will be graciously pleased to accept this Our Dutiful Tender of Our Loyalty” and a promise to always live “in the Support of those Laws, by which we art now blessed with Your Majesty to Reign over Us.”⁶⁷ In these discussions concerning the Catholic threat to Protestant Britain, subjects compared their willing and loyal submission to Catholics’ treacherous deceit. They also emphasized their subordination to the monarch’s higher power and willingness to sacrifice themselves in his or her service.

⁶⁶ “To the Queen. The Humble Address of the Provost, Ballies, and Town Council of the City of Edinburgh,” *The Boston News-Letter*, January 3 to January 10, 1714, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁶⁷ “The Humble Address of the City of Edinburgh,” June 27 to July 4, 1715, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

British subjects often expressed affection and love for their sovereign. In a poem presented to King George II upon his ascension to the throne but reprinted after his death, the sailors aboard a British war vessel wrote, “We use no Tinsel Arts to prove / The force and Ardour of our Love: / But come as poor plain-dealing Folk, / To tell you that we’ve Hearts of Oak.”⁶⁸ In an address by the House of Lords, they also expressed their love for their monarch. They explained, “Our unshaken Duty and Affection to your Sacred Person, and our love of our Country, are the purest Pledges of our Conduct.”⁶⁹ In addition to similar expressions of affection, British subjects appealed to the monarch’s paternal affection and attention for specific purposes.

Britons and colonial Americans appealed to the monarch’s paternal qualities when they requested protection or expressed gratitude for the monarch’s care. In an address to King George I, Increase Mather, speaking on behalf of New Englanders and their ministers, explained that they will “always bespeak your Paternal Regard to us among the rest of your dutiful people.”⁷⁰ In a reply to King George I’s annual speech to Parliament, the House of Lords issued a statement, “We humbly beg Leave, with Hearts full of Duty and Gratitude, to acknowledge your Majesty’s Paternal Care and Tenderness, in desiring the ease of your people from all unnecessary Burthens.”⁷¹ To this statement, King George I replied, “I give you my Hearty Thanks for this dutifull and loyal Address. Your

⁶⁸ “The Following Address is said to have been presented to his Majesty King George II, on his Accession to the Throne, by the Crew of the *Orford Man of War*,” *New-Hampshire Gazette*, August 21, 1761, Retrieved from America’s Historical Newspapers.

⁶⁹ “The Humble Address of the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament Assembled, Presented to His Majesty, on Friday, the 18th Day of January, 1750,” *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 18, 1751, Retrieved from America’s Historical Newspapers.

⁷⁰ “The Humble Address of His Majesty’s Loyal and Dutiful Subjects the Ministers of Christ, in His Majesty’s Provinces of Massachusetts-Bay and New-Hampshire,” *The Boston News-Letter*, October 24 to October 31, 1715, Retrieved from America’s Historical Newspapers.

⁷¹ “The Humble Address of the Right Honourable Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament Assembled,” *The American Weekly Mercury*, March 26 to April 2, 1724, Retrieved from America’s Historical Newspapers.

affectionate Concern for my Honour and Happiness is very Acceptable to me.”⁷² During another perceived threat to the safety of the British empire, the mayor Abington stated on behalf of the people, “We also in the most humble Manner crave Leave to return your Majesty our most dutiful Thanks for this fresh Instance of your paternal Affection for your People.”⁷³ In response to King George II’s ascension speech, the House of Commons replied, “Your Immediate Succession banished all our Grief; and the uninterrupted Continuance of the Blessings we had long enjoy’d obliges us with Duty and Gratitude, to acknowledge the just Sense we have of our present and future Happiness.”⁷⁴ In 1750, the House of Lords issued a statement to King George II regarding the diplomatic conditions in Europe. In this statement, they explained, “Your Majesty’s paternal Care, always watchful for the Prosperity of your Kingdoms, and mix’d with a generous extensive Concern for the common Welfare of Europe, has appeared in nother more, than in your Endeavours to improve the present State of Tranquility” in Europe.⁷⁵ In the eighteenth century, British fathers had the responsibility to protect and defend their dependents, such as wives and children. In appeals for protection and defense, British subjects emphasized their monarch’s tender and affectionate character. In a similar way, British subjects appealed to their monarch’s paternal care and protection from enemies and from pain and hardship.

⁷² “His Majesty’s Most Gracious Answer,” *The American Weekly Mercury*, March 26 to April 2, 1724, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁷³ “The humble Address of the Mayor, Recorder, bailiffs, and Burgesses of your Majesty’s loyal Borough of Abington, in your County of Berks,” *The American Weekly Mercury*, June 29 to July 6, 1727, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁷⁴ “The Humble Address of the House of Commons to the KING,” *The New England Weekly Journal*, September 18, 1727, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁷⁵ “The Humble Address of the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament Assembled, Presented to His Majesty, on Friday, the 18th Day of January, 1750,” *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 18, 1751, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

Within the scope of paternal protection and affection, Britons and colonial Americans appealed to the monarch's affection in their expressions of happiness and satisfaction with British government. In 1720, King George I appointed William Burnett to serve as the governor of New York. New York's mayor and Alderman addressed Burnett "with hearts full of Sincerity & Affection" and considered his appointment as a "Manifest demonstration of His Majesty's most tender Affection and Care of His Subjects in these."⁷⁶ New York's religious leaders expressed their "Pleasure and Gratitude" for King George I's "Early Instances of His Majesty's Paternal Care to the Establishd Church at His first Accession to the Throne., and which He has been graciously pleased to Continue to our Infant Church here."⁷⁷ The House of Lords issued a statement to King George II and explained, "Your Majesty's tender Concern for your People, and your most Gracious and Solemn Declaration, That you will always esteem their Love & Affection as the best Support of your Crown."⁷⁸ The House of Commons added, "Your Majesty's most Gracious Speech from the Throne requires a more than ordinary Return of Duty and Thankfulness for that Tender and Paternal Care, which you have been pleased to express of our Religion, Laws and Liberties."⁷⁹

Monarchs considered obedience as a sign of affection, so monarchs expected their subjects to demonstrate their affection. Queen Anne, for example considered "the Love

⁷⁶ "The Humble Address of the Mayor, Alderman and Commonalty of this His Majesty's Most Ancient City and Corporation of New-York in the Province of New-York in America," *The Boston News-Letter*, October 10 to October 17, 1720, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁷⁷ "The Humble Address of the Rector, Church-Wardens and Vestry of Trinity Church in the City of New York in America," *The Boston News-Letter*, October 10 to October 17, 1720, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁷⁸ "The Humble Address of the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, Presented to his Majesty on Wednesday the Twenty eighth Day of June, 1727," *The New England Weekly Journal*, September 18, 1727, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁷⁹ "The Humble Address of the House of Commons to the KING," *The New England Weekly Journal*, September 18, 1727, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

and good Affection” of her British subjects “the surest Pledge of their Duty and Obedience, and the truest and surest Support of the Throne.”⁸⁰ She remarked, “I have met with so many Expressions of Joy and Satisfaction in all the Countries, through which I have had Occasion to pass that I cannot but look upon them as true Measures of the Duty and Affection of all my Subjects.”⁸¹ In regards to the British fighting in a war against Spain, she explained, “And I persuade myself I shall always have the cheerfull Assistance of my dutiful and loving Subjects in the Prosecution of the present War.”⁸² Queen Anne, and other monarchs, expected subjects to demonstrate their affection.

King George II expected his subjects to take action and, thereby, demonstrate their affection for him. In his coronation speech, he requested funds from the House of Commons for the benefit of his family. He explained, “I am persuaded that the Experience of past Times, and a due Regard to the Honour and Dignity of the Crown, will prevail upon you to give Me this first Proof of your Zeal and Affection in a manner answerable to the Necessities of My Government.”⁸³ King George II thanked the House of Lords for their kind words of loyalty, and he said, “I Thank you heartily for this very Loyal Address, such a Demonstration of your Duty and Affection cannot but be truly acceptable to Me.”⁸⁴ British subjects recognized this expectation, and the House of Commons assured King George II, “These many and great Instances of your Majesty’s

⁸⁰ Great Britain.Sovereign (Anne:1707-1714), “Queen’s Speech in Parliament, the 21st of October, 1702,” in *A Collection of all Queen Anne’s Speeches, Messages, &c. From Her Accession to the Throne, to her Demise. With a Chronological Table of the Most Remarkable Actions of Her Life* (London: S. Popping at the Black Raven, 1714), 8.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., 14.

⁸³ “His Majesty’s most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, on Tuesday the 27th Day of June, 1727,” *The Boston Weekly News Letter*, September 7 to September 14, 1727, Retrieved from America’s Historical Newspapers.

⁸⁴ “His Majesty’s most Gracious Answer,” *The New England Weekly Journal*, September 18, 1727, Retrieved from America’s Historical Newspapers.

Goodness, and Concern for the Happiness and Welfare of your People, call upon us for the highest Returns of Duty, Zeal and Affection to your Majesty's Person and Government."⁸⁵ King George II replied, "I Return you my hearty Thanks for this dutiful and loyal Address... I cannot but receive with the highest Satisfaction this unanimous Declaration of your Fidelity, Zeal and Affection." He promised to repay their affection with "a steady Care and Concern for the Interest and Welfare" of his subjects.⁸⁶ British monarchs often connected the terms "duty" and "affection. To them, their subjects' expressions of love and affection represented a testament of their obedience and loyalty. Within the ideal family, affection provided a foundation on which the rest of the relationship rested. During the eighteenth century, affection and love had become a key characteristic of the relationship between a sovereign and his or her subjects.

Reflecting yet another change in familial relationships, monarchs often expressed their desire to please and satisfy their subjects. In an address to Parliament, Queen Anne declared, "My interest and yours are inseparable; and my Endeavour shall never be wanting to make you all safe and happy."⁸⁷ In regards to her subjects, she explained, "I have nothing so much at Heart as their Welfare and Happiness" and then encouraged Parliament to set aside factional differences for the benefit of the country. In King George II's ascension speech, he declared, "I am, above all things, desirous to make you a great and happy People" and expressed his "fixed Resolution, by all possible Means, to

⁸⁵ "The Humble Address of the House of Commons to the King," *The New England Weekly Journal*, September 18, 1727, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁸⁶ "His Majesty was pleased to return the following most Gracious Answer to the Address of the Hon. House of Commons, presented last Fryday," *The New England Weekly Journal*, September 18, 1727, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁸⁷ Great Britain.Sovereign (Anne:1707-1714), "Queen's Speech in Parliament, the 21st of October, 1702," in *A Collection of all Queen Anne's Speeches, Messages, &c. From Her Accession to the Throne, to her Demise*, 8.

merit the Love and Affection of My People.”⁸⁸ To the House of Lords, he explained, “You may be assured that I shall, through the whole Course of My Reign, have no other View than the Interest and Happiness of My People.”⁸⁹ Royal governors serving in the American colonies also expressed their desire to please their fellow subjects. After receiving an appointment to serve as governor of Massachusetts, Jonathon Belcher declared to the General Assembly, “I have no Interest separate from your true and real Interest.”⁹⁰ Fathers had an important duty to satisfy their families, and the monarchs and royal governors also wanted to please their subjects by easing their burdens and protecting them.

Before the Glorious Revolution, patriarchs possessed ultimate authority over their dependents. After the Glorious Revolution, patriarchs retained their authority but new familial ideals emerged that emphasized contractual, affectionate, and nurturing family relationships. In eighteenth-century radical political ideology, patriarchal theories of obligation had disappeared and political theorists had argued against the familial origins of legitimate government. In public political discourse, however, British monarchs, royal governors, and British subjects continued to employ familial metaphors to describe power relationships among people and between people and their government. The use of familial terms to describe political relationships represented more than just an easy method to communicate complex relationships; instead, the political rhetoric reflected

⁸⁸ “His Majesty’s most Gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, on Tuesday the 27th Day of June, 1727,” *The Boston Weekly News Letter*, September 7 to September 14, 1727, Retrieved from America’s Historical Newspapers.

⁸⁹ “His Majesty’s most Gracious Answer,” *The New England Weekly Journal*, September 18, 1727, Retrieved from America’s Historical Newspapers.

⁹⁰ “The Speech of His Excellency Jonathon Belcher Esq.,” *The Boston Weekly News-Letter*, September 3 to September 10, 1730, Retrieved from America’s Historical Newspapers.

real truths about social and political relationships.⁹¹ Based on ideals and the practice of family relationships, familial metaphors possessed a set of corresponding behavioral expectations, such as loyalty, obedience, and affection. Despite radical political ideology, a persistent link connected Anglo-American familial and political power relationship during the colonial period.

⁹¹ For a theoretical description of how rhetoric works, see Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives*. For examples of how rhetoric has origins in reality or can effect change in reality, see Varon, *Disunion!*; Rodgers, *Contested Truths*; Dorsey, *Common Bondage*.

Chapter Two

In 1775, an unnamed author issued a statement on behalf of the people of Cortlandt's Manor, New York and credited the monarchy and God with the New York colonists' good fortune in commerce. He explained, "I presume it will not be improper to see what part of this advantage providence has allotted us; the question may be easily solved; we are placed in a fertile land, teeming forth, in abundance, the necessaries of life for ourselves, and a superfluity, which brings the wealth of other nations to our own coffers." Given these material advantages, the author claimed, "Every individual enjoys his share according to his industry and situation in life." With all the material wealth and financial success in New York, however, the author contemplated how New Yorkers could protect their property. He continued, "he is protected in his possessions, by what? 'Tis by the paternal care, the penetrating eye, and the mighty arm of his mother country; who like a hen, when the hawk is near, hovers round her chickens, takes them under her wings, and preserves them from the enemy." Great Britain and King George III, like parents, protected their young American colonists' from injury to their possessions. The author concluded his statement by encouraging his fellow citizens in Cortlandt's Manor to profess and demonstrate their loyalty to Great Britain and King George III. He stated, "I believe you in a general sense, firmly attached to loyalty and our admirable constitution; that you wish to live and die subjects on to the British Empire."⁹²

Before the American Revolution, Anglo-Americans connected familial and political authority. They reinforced these connections with familial metaphors to describe the proper characteristics of political authority. Corresponding to changes in the

⁹² "An Address to the Inhabitants of Cortlandt's Manor," *The Massachusetts Gazette and Boston Weekly News-Letter*, Feb. 23, 1775, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers : Including Early American Newspapers Series, 1-3, 1690-1922 (Chester, Vt.: Readex, 2011).

eighteenth-century family, these metaphors emphasized a hierarchical, yet contractual relationship based on duty, obedience, loyalty, and affection. This chapter examines the rhetoric of the American Revolution. It will describe how loyalists and revolutionaries used familial metaphors and ideals to state their case concerning the rebellion and independence because both groups considered family relationships as the legitimate origins of political power. It will argue that on both sides of the debate during the crisis against royal authority in the American colonies, British subjects and American colonists did not attack the connection between familial and political authority and, instead, continued to perceive their relationship with the government in familial terms.

The first section of this chapter will describe how British government officials and loyalists used the connection between the family and the government to justify Parliamentary and monarchical authority. Based on the behavioral set forth in the previous chapter, loyalists portrayed rebellious colonists as failing to meet their obligations as subjects for obedient, dutiful, and affectionate behavior. They frequently employed familial metaphors to reinforce their arguments. This chapter argues, therefore, that loyalists maintained a connection between familial and political authority with the use of their rhetoric.

In the early conflicts concerning royal authority in North America, King George III and the American colonists continued to relate to one another with affection. After the conclusion of the Seven Years' War, the British government wanted to consolidate and manage its vast amount of conquered territory. In the Proclamation Act of 1763, King George III repeatedly appealed to the loving nature of his subjects in his decision to set up four distinct colonial governments and prohibited the American colonists from settling

the new territory. He wanted all of his “loving subjects” to benefit as quickly as possible from the new trade, manufacturing, and navigational possibilities of the newly acquired territory under the Treaty of Paris. Due to the extensive nature of the territory, he felt compelled to inform his “loving subjects” of his decision to create four distinct governments out of the new territory.⁹³ In what represents the starting point for conflict between the American people and the British government, King George III embraced the colonists’ loving relationship with him. As the conflict grew tenser, the American colonists continued to express their affectionate disposition toward the monarchy and the British government, and these professions of love and affection often invoked familial metaphors.

In 1765, Soame Jenyns, a member of the Board of Trade and Plantations, wrote a pamphlet in support of the British government’s right to tax the American colonists and objected to numerous arguments claiming Parliament had taxed the Americans without representation. He argued that people throughout England and the British Isles have representation in a virtual sense and that, regardless of distance, the American colonists enjoy the same benefits of representation in Parliament. He asserted, furthermore, that the American colonies ought to contribute to their continued protection because of the financial burden of the Seven Years War. To illustrate his argument, he explained, “Lastly; can there be a more proper time for this mother country to leave off feeding out of her own vitals these children whom she has nursed up, than when they arrived at such strength and maturity as to be well able to provide for themselves, and ought rather with filial duty to give some assistance to her distresses?” He suggested that the colonies had

⁹³ “From the Royal Proclamation on North America, 7 October 1763,” in *Sources and Documents Illustrating the American Revolution 1764-1788 and the Formation of the Federal Constitution* second ed., ed. by Samuel Eliot Morrison (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), 1.

reached maturity and like dutiful children, should repay the mother country for its protection and consistent and careful attention. He considered the argument that Parliament should have set a quota for the various colonies to meet on their own conditions because, as the American colonial delegates argued, “that would have been more consistent with justice, at least with maternal tenderness.” He rejected this plan because the British government cannot count on the colonies’ obedience to orders. He explained, “have their Assemblies shewn so much obedience to the orders of the Crown, that we could reasonably expect that they would immediately tax themselves on the arbitrary command of a minister?”⁹⁴ Jenyns equated the relationship between the colonies to Great Britain as that of children to their parents. After maturity, the child had a responsibility to take care of his parents after all of the years of protection and care. Given this relationship, he characterized the colonists as disobedient for failing to meet their filial obligations to a parental figure.

Loyalist lawyer Daniel Dulany also supported Parliament’s authority to tax the American colonists. He stated, the colonies “are dependent upon Great Britain, and the supreme Authority vested in the King, Lords, and Commons, may justly be exercised to secure, or preserve their dependence.” Given the subordinate relationship of the American colonies to Great Britain, he argued that if “the claims of the mother country and the colonies should seem on such an occasion to interfere... it is easy to guess that the determination will be on the side of power, and that the inferior will be constrained to submit.” In cases, however, when Great Britain might oppress the American colonies, he encouraged the oppressed party to take a course to repair the relationship for mutual

⁹⁴ Soame Jenyns, “The Objections to the Taxation of our American Colonies by the Legislature of Great Britain, Briefly Consider’d,” in *Sources and Documents*, 18-24.

benefit. He explained, “a resentment which could not fail to produce effects as beneficial to the mother country as to the colonies, and which a regard to her welfare as well as our own, ought to inspire us with on such an occasion.” He pledged his allegiance to Great Britain, and he explained, “I acknowledge dependence on Great Britain, but I can perceive a degree of it without slavery, and I disown all other.”⁹⁵ Dulany enjoyed his dependent position as a subject of Great Britain, and he argued that in a proper relationship between the mother country and her dependents, the subordinate party has the responsibility to submit and to relinquish its desires if those desires conflict with the mother country. He differentiated, furthermore, between dependency and slavery. As long as Great Britain did not reduce its dependents to slavery, then the relationship continued to work in its ideal manner.

After the repeal of the Stamp Act, Parliament continued to reinforce its authority over the American colonies. In 1766, H. S. Conway, a member of British government, sent Massachusetts colonial governor Francis Bernard two updates from British parliament. The first act of Parliament, entitled the Declaratory Act, had been passed with the purpose of “securing the just Dependency of the Colonies on the Mother Country.” In the second act, Parliament repealed the Stamp Act. According to Conway, the American colonists should perceive Parliament’s actions with gratitude. He explained, the “Moderation, the Forbearance, the unexampled Lenity and Tenderness of Parliament towards the colonies” must be greeted with “that Return of cheerful Obedience to the laws and Legislative Authority of Great Britain” and “respectful

⁹⁵ Daniel Dulany, “Considerations on the Propriety of Imposing Taxes in the British Colonies, for the Purpose of Raising a Revenue, by Act of Parliament,” in *Sources and Documents*, 24-32.

Gratitude to the Mother Country.”⁹⁶ In a description of these acts, Conway had reinforced a contractual, yet hierarchal, relationship between the people and their government with familial terms. In return for tender and benevolent rule, the colonists owed their government obedience and loyalty. Despite this contractual arrangement, the letter left no doubt regarding which body had the superior and authoritative position.

In the Declaratory Act of 1766, Parliament reasserted Great Britain’s superior status over the American colonies. The act had the intended purpose of “better securing the dependency of his Majesty’s Dominions in America Upon the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain.” Parliament considered the American colonies’ assumption of legislative powers concerning taxation and duties as “inconsistent with the dependency of the said colonies and plantations upon the crown of Great Britain.” Parliament asserted, “That the said colonies and plantations in America have been, are, and of right ought to be, subordinate unto, and dependent upon the imperial crown and parliament of Great Britain” and that the monarch, with advice from Parliament, had “full power and authority” over the American colonies. Based on this hierarchal arrangement, therefore, Parliament terminated all the legislative powers of the American colonial assemblies in regards to taxation and duties.⁹⁷ In the Declaratory Act, the British Parliament reasserted hierarchal relationships in government with familial terms. They asserted the monarch’s superiority and mastery and put the American colonies in a subordinate and dependent

⁹⁶ “The 26th Ultimo Arrived at New York, His Majesty’s Ship *Hinde*, Capt. McClathery, with Dispatches from Home, to the Respective Governments on this Continent: The Following is to His Excellency the Governor of this Province, as Communicated to the General Court,” *Boston News-Letter*, June 4, 1766, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

⁹⁷ “The Declaratory Act,” in “The Olive Branch Petition,” in *The American Revolution, 1763-1783: A Bicentennial Collection*, ed. by Richard B. Morris (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1970), 86-87.

position. Based on this arrangement, the British government possessed absolute power over its subordinates.

In 1771, Massachusetts colonial governor Thomas Hutchinson gave his annual speech to open the General Assembly. Based on the Declaratory Act, among others, he observed the British government had reserved to itself all legislative powers regarding taxation. He considered that Parliament's withdrawal of the Townshend Acts in 1770, except for the tax on tea, represented a peculiar moment for the British government in that it withdrew a tax after implementing it. King George III had also condemned colonial laws which put taxation power within their General Assemblies, and he believed the colonists should appreciate the monarch's decision. He addressed the General Assembly and said, "I think that his Majesty's instruction pointing out to you, through me his servant, those parts of your tax acts which he disapproves of, should be considered as an instance of his tenderness and paternal regard to his subjects."⁹⁸ By invoking the familial metaphor of the monarch as a father, Hutchinson expressed his view that the monarch had fulfilled his obligations to his people by acting with regard and tenderness in his decision to repeal an act.

As the fighting drew nearer, some loyalist American colonists continued to perceive the monarch as a tender and affectionate father figure. In 1775, the New York general assembly opened its legislative session with a speech from the Lieutenant Governor. He asserted his willingness to serve the King and to bring happiness to his constituents. He recognized the tense state of affairs between Great Britain and the American colonies, but he encouraged the colonial legislators to guide and advise their

⁹⁸ "His Excellency's Answer," *The Boston News-Letter*, July 11, 1771, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

constituents during this difficult time. To help distressed colonists, the Lieutenant Governor informed the legislators to consider their constituent's problems and address them with patience. In regards to calm and headstrong colonists, he wanted the legislators to use them to help create harmony between the crown and the American people. He explained, "If you find them to be well grounded, pursue the means of redress which the constitution has pointed out: Supplicate the throne, and our most gracious Sovereign will hear and relieve you with paternal tenderness."⁹⁹ The New York General Assembly, in response to a speech by the Lieutenant Governor concerning possible reconciliation with Great Britain, explained, "it affords the highest Satisfaction to hear, from our Honor, that our most gracious Sovereign will be attentive to the complaints of his America Subjects, and ready, with paternal Tenderness, to grant us Relief."¹⁰⁰ In search of relief of burdens, rebellious colonists appealed to the monarch's paternal characteristics.

In addition to their appeals to the tender and loving nature of the monarch, loyalists continued to repeat their loyalty and obedience to King George III. The people of Cortlandt's Manor, in New York, explained, "we... are led to declare our firm and indissoluble attachment to our most gracious Sovereign George the Third, his crown and dignity; and with grateful hearts to acknowledge, that we are indebted to his paternal care, for the preservation of our lives and fortunes."¹⁰¹ They believed, furthermore, "The loyalty we owe to the best of Kings is the grand magnetic point, that will infallibly fix us

⁹⁹ "New-York, Jan. 19," *The New-York Journal*, Jan. 19, 1775, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

¹⁰⁰ "To the Honorable Cadwallader Colden, Esq; His Majesty's Lieutenant-Governor, and Commander in Chief, In and Over the Colony of New-York, and the Territories Depending Thereon in America. The Humble Address of the General Assembly of the Said Colony," *New-York Gazette and Weekly Mercury*, Jan. 23, 1775, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

¹⁰¹ "Form of an Association in Cortlandt's Manor," *Boston Post-Boy*, Feb. 20, 1775, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

on a solid basis. There are none amongst us (if we coolly reflect) but what will find themselves bound by the strongest ties of gratitude, to acknowledge that we have been... the happiest people on earth.”¹⁰² Many American colonists had perceived the monarch as successfully fulfilling his obligations as a father figure to his people because they considered his rule tender, affectionate, and benevolent, but many other Americans had considered King George III as a failed father figure.

Throughout the war, loyalists continued to assert the monarch’s paternal characteristics of goodness and affection. One author condemned the independence movement and explained, “Let them in time renounce this folly, and return to their allegiance.” He then explained, “The King, with paternal goodness, will rejoice to see them rescued from destruction; the mother country is ready with open arms to receive them, on generous terms of reconciliation, to her wonted affectionate protection.” By the end of the war, loyalists continued to appeal to the affectionate and benevolent nature of their fatherly monarch. After the appointment of Guy Carleton as the commander in chief of all of British troops in North America, New York mayor David Mathews issued a statement on behalf of the loyalists in support of the monarch’s decision. For them, the appointment of Carleton represented “a mark of his majesty’s royal care and paternal goodness.” They expressed their hope for peace on honorable terms and hoped that the “pacific disposition of the parent state will abate the prejudices of the deluded inhabitants of America.” Given these familial relationship between the monarch, the country, and the people of New York, they wanted to express their “loyalty and affection to their

¹⁰² “Form of an Association in Cortlandt’s Manor,” *Boston Post-Boy*, Feb. 20, 1775, Retrieved from America’s Historical Newspapers.

gracious and beloved sovereign.”¹⁰³ For loyalists, the monarch continued to represent a father figure that deserved affection and loyalty.

During the revolutionary crisis against royal authority, loyalists used familial metaphors to reinforce the connection between familial and political authority. They understood their relationship with the government from their own experiences within the family. Based on their ideas concerning the proper relationship between a government and its subjects, they characterized rebellious colonists as failing to meet their obligations for duty and obedience. They reasserted the government’s right to rule and its right to expect obedience. On the other hand, revolutionary colonists used the same ideas concerning the proper relationship between a government and its subjects to describe their position. In the next section, this thesis will describe how revolutionaries employed familial metaphors to describe their perceived mistreatment and justify their quest for independence. It will argue that revolutionaries maintained a connection between familial and political authority with their political rhetoric.

In protest of the Stamp Act, the Stamp Act Congress, which consisted of representatives from the various American colonies, issued their resolutions to the British government to express their loyalty to the country but also to reaffirm their rights. They opened their statement with a characterization of themselves as “sincerely devoted with the warmest sentiments of affection and duty to His Majesty’s person and Government.” After expressing their feelings of affection for the monarch, they asserted their subordinate status. They explained, that “His Majesty’s subjects in these colonies owe the same allegiance to the Crown of Great Britain” as a natural-born Englishmen and “all

¹⁰³ “An Address From the Inhabitants of the City of New York, to His Excellency Sir Guy Carleton, K. B. General and Commander in Chief of His Majesty’s Forces in North America, &c. &c.,” *Pennsylvania Packet*, May 30, 1782, Retrieved from America’s Historical Newspapers.

due subordination to that august body the Parliament of Great Britain.” After stating a series of resolutions about their proper relationship with Great Britain and asserting their rights and privileges as Englishmen, they concluded that these rights could contribute to a “mutually affectionate and advantageous” relationship. After listing their demands, they concluded their statement with a profession of loyalty for the purpose of achieving a repeal of the Stamp Act. They explained, “Lastly... it is the indispensable duty of these colonies to the best of sovereigns, to the mother country, and to themselves, to endeavor by a loyal and dutiful address to His Majesty... to procure the repeal of the Act.”¹⁰⁴ The American colonial delegates reasserted their obedience and dependence, and they characterized the ideal relationship between a government and its people as mutually affectionate.

In the early moments of the American Revolution, many American politicians continued to appeal to the monarch’s paternal characteristics of tenderness and affection. In 1766, American colonists appealed to the paternal nature of the monarch in their opposition to the Stamp Act. In an address by the delegates of the various colonies sent King George III a petition, in which they stated, “With Hearts therefore impressed with the most indelible Characters of Gratitude to your Majesty... and convinced by the most affecting Proofs of your Majesty’s Paternal Love to all your people... and your increasing and benevolent Desires to promote their Happiness” that they must “humbly beseech your Majesty” to consider the “Distresses of your faithful Subjects.” After appealing to the monarch’s paternal love and benevolence, they argued against the

¹⁰⁴ “Resolutions of the Stamp Act Congress,” in *Sources and Documents*, 32-34.

righteousness of the Stamp Act and in favor of their ability to tax themselves.¹⁰⁵ In hopes for a redress of grievances, colonial delegates appealed to the paternal nature of their monarch and the benevolence of British Parliament. Based on familial metaphors in which fathers should act to increase the happiness of his dependants and govern with love, the colonist appealed to the paternal characteristics of their monarch.

In 1767 and 1768, statesman John Dickinson wrote a series of letters in which he portrayed himself as a simple yeoman farmer from Pennsylvania. In these letters, he attacked Parliament's various tax laws and their measures at securing the colonies' dependency on Great Britain. In the first letter, he condemned the Quartering Act of 1765, which forced the states to provide shelter and provisions for British soldiers in North America because the cost involved in complying with the law makes it a tax in the same manner as the Stamp Act. He explained how Parliament could force the American colonies into an unjustly obedient and dependent position with laws such as the Quartering Act because British soldiers quartered in the homes of American colonists could more effectively enforce British policies and laws, and he defended the American colonies' right to refuse submission to those laws. He also encouraged the colonies to unite in their opposition to these types of laws. He added, "and when the slightest point touching the freedom of one colony is agitated, I earnestly wish that all the rest may with equal ardour support their sister." Despite his protests to the Quartering Act and similar laws, he explained "I should be sorry that anything should be done which might justly

¹⁰⁵ "The Following are Copies of the Several Petitions Agreed On, and Transmitted from the Late General Congress at New-York, to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, and to Both Houses of Parliament, Agreeable to the Instructions Given the Commissioners From the Several Colonies," *Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 24, 1766, Retrieved from America's Historical Newspapers.

displease our sovereign or our mother country.”¹⁰⁶ Children, from Dickinson’s perspective as well as the advised ideals of the time period, had an obligation to please their parents because love became conditional on obedience. Dickson did not want to displease the mother country.

In Dickinson’s second and third letters, he attacked the Townshend Act which placed a tax on paper and glass, among other items, but he cautioned against rash and disrespectful behavior. He acknowledged that Parliament necessarily possessed the right to regulate the foreign commerce of the American colonies. He explained that this type of authority “is essential to the relation between a mother country and her colonies; and the necessary for the common good of all.” He recognized the need for parent states to govern its dependent colonies for the purpose of advancing common good, yet he condemned the actions of the British government for governing in its own selfish interests. He found his examples in history. He explained, “Perhaps the nature of the necessities of dependent states caused by the policy of a governing one, for her own benefit, may be elucidated by a fact mentioned in history.”¹⁰⁷ He then described the relationship between Carthage and Sardinia and described how a parent state could starve and tyrannize its dependents by governing in its own interests. He asserted, “I hope, my dear countrymen, that you will, in every colony, be upon your guard against those who may at any time endeavour to stir you up under pretences of patriotism, to any measures disrespectful to our Sovereign and our mother country.” From his perspective, the mother country deserved the respect of its subordinates. He expressed his hope that “as spirit that shall so guide you that it will be impossible to determine whether an

¹⁰⁶ John Dickinson, “Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies,” in *The American Revolution*, 34-38.

¹⁰⁷ John Dickinson, “Letter II,” in *The American Revolution*, 38-42.

American's character is most distinguishable for his loyalty to his Sovereign, his duty to his mother country, his love of freedom, or his affection for his native soil."¹⁰⁸ Dickinson believed that subordinate citizens and colonies owed obedience, duty, and affection to their mother country and government. Yet, the mother country had an obligation to protect and support and not starve or tyrannize its young colonies

Dickinson, furthermore, separated the nation from its rulers and argued that one can change his ruler but cannot change his country. He explained, "restistance, in the case of colonies against their mother country, is extremely different from the resistance of a people against their prince." In fact, he suggested that a change in monarch can lead to a better situation for the country, but he advocated retaining the traditional government because it could be impossible to change it. He repeated, "In truth—the prosperity of these provinces is founded in their dependence on Great Britain."¹⁰⁹ From Dickinson's perspective, the American colonies had flourished because of their dependent and subordinate relationship to the mother country. He advocated, therefore, "Let us behave like dutiful children, who have received unmerited blows from a beloved parent." He continued, "Let us complain to our parent; but let our complaints speak at the same time the language of affliction and veneration."¹¹⁰ According to Dickson, parents do not have the right to abuse their children, but they do have the right to expect respect, veneration, and obedience. The American colonies, therefore, should continue in their obedience to Great Britain like a dutiful child, yet they should object to abusive treatment.

In 1774, the colonial delegates issued the Declaration of Colonial Rights and Grievances to assert their numerous rights as the descendants of English-born subjects

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 43.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 43-44.

¹¹⁰ John Dickinson, "Letter III," in *The American Revolution*, 45.

and to state enumerate their plan to protest their mistreatment by refusing to import British goods, among other acts. In this document, colonial delegates often appealed to Great Britain as a parental figure in their quest for reconciliation. To justify their claims to English rights, they explained, that “our ancestors who first settled these colonies, were at the time of their emigration from the mother country, entitled to all the rights, liberties, and immunities” of English subjects. In their list of grievances, the American delegates did concede to Parliament’s will regarding external commerce and foreign relations “for the purpose of securing the commercial advantages of the whole empire to the mother country.”¹¹¹ They recognized their subordinate status, at least in some cases, to the parental figure of British government. Given these metaphors concerning status relationship between the American people and their government, they had a set of expectations to which they needed to adhere, such as protection, care, and a motive to increase their happiness and affection.

In the Declaration of Colonial Rights and Grievances, the American delegates portrayed themselves as having adhered to the principles of their subordinate, yet contractual, relationship to British government but blamed British government for failing to uphold its contractual responsibilities. They portrayed their quest for the redress of grievances as ‘dutiful, humble, loyal and reasonable.’ They expressed, furthermore, their “ardent desire, that harmony and mutual intercourse of affection and interest may be restored.” Despite their having upheld their obligations, the acts of Parliament, from their perspective, demonstrated “a system formed to enslave America.” Whereas the behavioral expectations entailed in familial metaphors obligated a parental figure to treat its subordinates with benevolence, tenderness, and affection, they explained that their

¹¹¹ “Declaration of Colonial Rights and Grievances,” in *The American Revolution*, 130-135.

various attempts at redress had been “repeatedly treated with contempt.”¹¹² A contractual, yet hierarchical, relationship existed between fathers and children, yet servants did not have this type of relationship with their masters. By treating the colonies with contempt, from the perspective of rebellious Americans, the British government had reduced its dependents into slavery.

In the Olive Branch Petition, issued by the Continental Congress in 1775 as a statement of loyalty and appeal for harmony between the American colonists and the monarch, revolutionaries invoked the metaphor of the mother country in their plea for reconciliation. They explained, “the union between our mother country and these colonies, and the energy of mild and just government, produced benefits so remarkably important, and afforded such an assurance of their permanency and increase that the wonder and envy of other nations were excited.”¹¹³ In the petition, the delegates again repeated the metaphor of the mother country in their discussion of the Proclamation Act of 1763. American colonists feared domestic disturbance as a result of the Seven Years’ War and the succeeding administration of North American territory. The delegates explained, “Nor were their anxieties alleviated by any tendency in this system to promote the welfare of the mother country.”¹¹⁴ Later in the document, the delegates charge the British government with failing to meet their obligations to the American colonists. Their behavior, according to the delegates, “have engaged us in a controversy so peculiarly abhorrent to the affections of your still faithful colonists that when we consider whom we must oppose in this contest... our own particular misfortunes are accounted by

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ “The Olive Branch Petition,” in *The American Revolution*, 163.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 164.

us only as parts of our distress.”¹¹⁵ The colonists, from the perspective of the delegates, had remained loyal and affection, and therefore, met the behavior expectations set for them by their contractual, yet still hierarchal relationship to the monarch. The British government, however, had contributed to their distress and frustrations, and therefore, failed to meet its obligations to the people. Despite these circumstances, the delegates repeated their affection Britain. They stated, “notwithstanding the sufferings of your loyal colonists during the course of the present controversy, our breasts retain too tender a regard for the kingdom from which we derive our origin” and reasserted their willingness to “assert and maintain the rights and intersests of your Majesty, and of our mother country.”¹¹⁶ In conclusion, the delegates wanted the monarch to accept the petition as “satisfactory proofs of the disposition of the colonists towards their sovereign and parent state that the wished for opportunity would soon be restored to them” and as a “testimony of devotion becoming the most dutiful subjects, and the most affectionate colonists.”¹¹⁷ In this case, the delegates invoked the mother metaphor to describe how their relationship to Great Britain helped them rise to high power and status, but that in recent years, the British government had violated its obligations to the people.

Revolutionaries used familial metaphors to pledge their loyalty to the British government, but they also used them to profess their allegiance to their fellow colonists. In response to Great Britain’s closure of the Boston Port, John Jay and the other New York correspondents invoked familial metaphors to pledge their assistance to the people of Boston. They felt alarmed by the actions of the British Parliament against the city of Boston. To declare their intention to assist the people of Boston, they stated, “As a sister

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 164-165.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 166.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

colony, suffering in defence of the rights of America, we consider your injuries as a common cause, to the redress of which it is equally our duty, and our interest to contribute.” The Boston committee of correspondence had requested advice from the New Yorkers concerning an appropriate response to the closure of Boston. In response, they once again used the metaphor of the sister by explaining, “While we think you justly entitled to the thanks of your sister colonies for asking their advice on a case of such extensive consequences, we lament our inability to relieve your anxiety by a decisive opinion.” In the end, they restated, “We beg, however, that you will do us the justice to believe that we shall continue to act with a firm and becoming regard to American freedom, and to co-operate with our sister colonies in every measure that shall be thought salutary and conducive to the public good.”¹¹⁸ American colonists used familial metaphors to describe their relationship to one another during this period of conflict. By using the term “sister,” the colonists reinforced their dependent relationship to British government.

For revolutionaries opposed, familial metaphors represented a major aspect of their arguments against British authority. In 1774, colonial delegates used familial metaphors to condemn the government and people of Great Britain. First, they compared the relationship of the American colonies to Great Britain to that of a child to a parent. They opened their address to the people of Great Britain, for example, by claiming that Great Britain had descended into “the ungrateful task of forging chains for her friends and children; and instead of giving support to freedom, turns advocate for slavery and

¹¹⁸ John Jay, Letter to the Committee of Correspondence, Boston, May 23, 1774, in *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay 1763-1826*, ed. by Henry P. Johnston (New York: Da Capo Press, 1971), 13-15.

oppression.”¹¹⁹ They claimed, “we looked up to you as to our parent state, to which we were bound by the strongest ties; and were happy in being instrumental to your prosperity and grandeur.”¹²⁰ Great Britain, from their perspective, had violated its role as a parent and, instead, they viewed the country as having conceived and executed a plan “for enslaving our fellow subjects in America.”¹²¹ They hoped, however, “that the magnanimity and justice of the British nation will furnish a parliament of such wisdom, independence, and public spirit... and thereby restore that harmony, friendship, and fraternal affection, between all the inhabitants of his majesty’s kingdoms and territories.”¹²² Based on these familial metaphors, the colonial delegates possessed a set of expectations for the relationship between Great Britain and the American colonies.

The American revolutionaries perceived the British government, specifically the monarch, as having failed to meet the obligations of a parental figure. They blamed Great Britain’s failure on either ceasing “to be virtuous” or being “extremely negligent in the appointment of her rulers.” They explained, “this unhappy country has not only been oppressed, but abused and misrepresented.”¹²³ To the people of Canada, he explained, “when the plighted faith of government ceases to give security to dutiful subjects... it is high time for them to assert those rights, and with honest indignation oppose the torrent of oppression rushing in upon them.”¹²⁴ The British government, as a father figure, failed

¹¹⁹ Jay, “From the Delegates appointed by the several English Colonies of New-Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Lower Counties on the Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, to consider their grievances in General Congress, at Philadelphia, September 5, 1774,” in *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay*, 17-18.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 30-31.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹²⁴ “Letter From Congress to the ‘Oppressed Inhabitants of Canada,’” in *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay*, 34.

to meet its contractual obligation to protect and defend loyal and obedient subjects. Instead, people's property and wealth "may be taken from you whenever an avaricious governor and a rapacious council may incline to demand them."¹²⁵ He lamented the possibility of a "wicked or careless king" working together with a "wicked ministry" to oppress the country. In an address to the people of New York, the state's representatives explained that people set up governments to protect them from the "rapacious hand of tyranny and lawless power."¹²⁶ By characterizing the father figure as rapacious and tyrannical, the American colonial delegates condemned the monarch for failing to meet his obligations to his filial subjects.

In the past, American colonists had expressed satisfaction at their subordinate relationship to the monarch and the British government, but during the crisis against royal authority, revolutionary colonists portrayed themselves as potential slaves. New York's representatives explained to the people of the state, "But what are the terms on which you are promised peace? Have you heard of any except absolute, unconditional obedience and servile submission?"¹²⁷ He continued, "They tell you to reduce your obedience. Obedience to what? To their will and pleasure! And then what? Why, then you shall be pardoned, because you consent to be slaves."¹²⁸ He added, "No longer hesitate about rejecting all dependence on a king who will rule you only with a rod of iron. Tell those who blame you for declaring yourselves independent that you have done no more than what your late king had done for you; that he declared you to be out of his protection."¹²⁹

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ "Address of the Convention of the Representatives of the State of new York to Their Constituents," in *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay*, 103.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 106.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 109.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 111.

He condemned people who feared that the British would overwhelm the American forces and conquer the entire continent, and he told them, “Blush, then, ye degenerate spirits, who give all over for lost, because your enemies have marched over three or four counties in this and a neighboring State—ye who basely fly to have the yoke of slavery fixed upon your necks and to swear that you and your children after you shall be slaves forever! Such men deserve to be slaves, and are fit only for beasts of burden to the rest of mankind.”¹³⁰ He invoked the case of Switzerland, and he stated, “That country was oppressed by cruel tyrants, but the people refused to continue in bondage.”¹³¹ He also recalled the English Civil War, and he remarked, “His sacred Majesty Charles the First, lost his head and his crown by attempting to enslave his subjects; and his sacred Majesty James the Second, was for the same reason, expelled the kingdom.”¹³²

The American colonial delegates perceived their relationship to the British government as similar to that of a slave or servant to his master, and they compared their new status to the former ideal by using the metaphor of the king as a father. “The infatuated sovereign of Britain,” explained the delegates, “forgetful that kings were the servants, not the proprietors, and ought to be the fathers, not the incendiaries of their people, that, by destroying our former constitutions, enabled us to erect more eligible systems of government on their ruins.”¹³³ He called King George III a “prince... who, by the influence of corruption alone... reduce three million of his most loyal and affectionate subjects to absolute slavery, under a pretence of a right, appertaining to God

¹³⁰ Ibid., 112.

¹³¹ Ibid., 117.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ John Jay, “Jay’s Charge to the Grand Jury of Ulster County,” in *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay*, 158-159.

alone, of binding them in all cases whatever.”¹³⁴ Instead of serving the people as a father figure, according to the delegates, the king had enslaved his loving subjects.

Thomas Paine, in his famous essay “Common Sense,” explored many aspects of the monarch as a father figure and made some bold conclusions concerning inherited right to rule and the failures of King George III. First, he challenges the notion of Great Britain as a parent in many ways. “It hath lately been asserted in parliament,” according to Paine, “that the colonies have no relation to each other but through the Parent Country, i.e. that Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and so on for the rest, are sister Colonies by the way of England.” He does not consider their shared British heritage as an important connection between the colonies, and he rather proves that the colonies’ relationship to Great Britain has made them more enemies than friends. Paine acknowledged, “But Britain is the parent country say some,” but to this idea, he replied, “Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families.” From Paine’s perspective, “the phrase, parent or mother country, hath been jesuitically adopted by the King and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds.” After considering the varieties of people living in the American colonies, Paine argued, “Europe and not England is the parent country of America” and concluded that people fled “not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster” and that people still experience tyranny in England. He concluded, given that people in the American colonies come from everywhere in Europe, that “the phrase of parent or mother country applied to England only, as being false, selfish, narrow and ungenerous.”¹³⁵

¹³⁴ Ibid., 159.

¹³⁵ Thomas Paine, “Common Sense,” in *The American Revolution*, 180-181.

In addition to his challenge to Great Britain as a parental or mother figure, he argued that any reconciliation between the American colonies and Great Britain could only last so long as the colonies remained young. First, Paine compared the American colonies to a youth experience maturity. He wrote, “As I have always considered the independency of this continent, as an event, which sooner or later must arrive, so from the late rapid progress of the continent to maturity, the event could not be far off.” When the colonies reach maturity, according to Paine, they must become independent of their parent state. In regards to potential reconciliation with Great Britain, he believed that even the best circumstances of reconciliation could only delay the inevitable independence of the American colonies. He explained, “That as even the best terms which we can expect to obtain, can amount to no more than a temporary expedient, or a kind of government by guardianship, which can last no longer than till the Colonies come of age.”¹³⁶ In his use of metaphors that compare the American colonies to a maturing child, Paine argued for the independence of the American colonies.¹³⁷

During the crisis against royal authority in the American colonies, both British loyalist and American revolutionaries used familial metaphors to support their arguments for or against the legitimacy of British rule. Both sides perceived the proper relationship between subject and sovereign as hierarchical and contractual. Subjects owed obedience and affection to their rulers. Rulers rewarded the loyalty of their subjects with affection, benevolence, and protection. While each side attacked their opponents for failing to meet these expectations, neither side challenged the legitimacy of this ideal relationship. From the perspective of American revolutionaries, King George III had failed his people

¹³⁶ Ibid., 183.

¹³⁷ Thomas Ibid.; Brewer, *By Birth Or Consent*, 109-110.

because of his abusive character. Based on the monarch's failures, American revolutionaries justified their protests and, eventually, their independence.

People use political rhetoric to persuade or mislead others to support their perspective on issues. To accomplish these tasks, people carefully choose and alter aspects of the truth in their arguments; therefore, rhetoric has a basis in reality.¹³⁸ Loyalists and revolutionaries emphasized different aspects of the proper relationships between a government and the governed, and their ideas had a foundation in the family. By studying loyalist and revolutionary rhetoric in a context of family relationships, this thesis reveals that the two opponents did not have a different conception of the proper relationship between a government and the people. Rather, they each shared a view that governing officials and the public should have a hierarchical, contractual relationship characterized by duty, obedience, and affection. The use of familial metaphors by loyalist and revolutionaries, furthermore, testified to the persistent link between familial and political authority. After the American Revolution ended, radical political ideology that severed this connection had not yet taken hold in England or America.

Paine, however, moved Americans in the direction toward a separation in political and familial authority in his assertion that laws, not people, should govern an independent American republic. To avoid the problem of an abusive monarch in the future, American Revolutionaries developed a rhetoric advocating a nation ruled by laws rather than people. In *Common Sense*, Paine pondered the question, "But where, say some, is the King of America?" To this question, Paine argued, "I'll tell you, Friend, he reigns above, and doth not make havoc of mankind like the Royal Brute of Great Britain." He

¹³⁸ Dorsey, *Common Bondage*, xii; Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives*; Varon, *Disunion*; Rodgers, *Contested Truths*.

continued, “so far as we approve of monarchy, that in America THE LAW IS KING. For as in absolute governments the King is law, so in free countries the law ought to be King.”¹³⁹ The emphasis on the rule of law played an important role in the eventual separation of familial and political authority.

¹³⁹ Paine, “Common Sense,” in *The American Revolution*, 186.

Chapter Three

In 1790, jurist and state Supreme Court justice David Howell, writing as Solon Jr, published an editorial in a Providence, R.I. newspaper in support of the new Constitution. “It was observed,” wrote Howell, “in a former paper, that the happiness of the people in all countries is the result of the spirit of the times, and of the administration of government, rather than the letter of their Constitutions, on paper or parchment.” In response to people that opposed the new Constitution because it failed to protect civil liberties, Howell observed that the federal legislature had recently provided for the protection of a citizen’s right to a trial by jury. Based on this legislation, Howell argued that the legislature could continue to amend the Constitution. He argued that although the Constitution might not represent the most ideal structure for a government, the new nation must adopt it because of it improved the current system under the Articles of Confederation. He explained that a free government cannot alone rule by the majority, but instead, it should protect all of the people and work for its increased happiness. He explained, “The public happiness is the aggregate of that of individuals; and just and faithful rulers will have an equal and impartial eye to the conditions of all classes of people, as the head of a family regards all branches of it with the same paternal affection.”¹⁴⁰ Americans continued to use familial metaphors to describe their relationship to governing officials, but change in early American power relationships had begun.

The first part of this chapter explores how early American statesmen perceived themselves as fathers and how they exercised their authority within the household.

¹⁴⁰ David Howell, “For the Providence Gazette,” *Providence Gazette*, Feb. 27, 1790, Retrieved from Early American Newspapers.

Within the family, they continued to exercise important authority over their household's people and property. They offered guidance to their children, but they framed their guidance as commands and expectations. They often expressed their affection for their wives and children, who reciprocated those sentiments in their own letters. Although affection represented a key component of familial relationships, early American statesmen used affection to enforce their commands and reinforce their patriarchal authority. This thesis demonstrates how early American statesmen embraced their role as patriarchs within the household because they exercised authority and expected obedience. The American Revolution did not destroy familial patriarchy.

After the American Revolution, the United States maintained coverture laws which restricted married women's identity and their rights to property. Based on their dependent legal status, men did not extend political rights to women.¹⁴¹ Some scholars argue that an expansion of rights for married women, and women more generally, did occur after the American Revolution because women earned the right to inherit property from inestate estates, file for an absolute divorce in every state except South Carolina, and manage more of their own property. In reality, as other scholars have demonstrated, these changes in the law had minimal impact on the lives of most married women. If a woman inherited property from her father, she lost the rights to this property after marriage. In southern states, state legislators and states supreme courts had the only power to approve a divorce petition. Massachusetts and New York, furthermore, did not consider cruelty as legitimate grounds for a divorce. Pennsylvania simply denied most

¹⁴¹ Kerber, "The Paradox of Women's Citizenship in the Early Republic: The Case of *Martin vs. Massachusetts*, 1805," *The American Historical Review* vol. 97 (April 1992): 351-353; Michael Grossberg, *Governing the Hearth: Law and Family in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: 1985); Joan R. Gunderson, "Independence, Citizenship, and the American Revolution," *Signs* vol. 13 (Autumn 1987).

divorce petitions. In every state, fathers won custody of children after a divorce, which dissuaded many women from filing for divorce. As a result of these strict laws, very few women could throw off coverture laws and assume status as an independent woman before the death of her husband.¹⁴² In the early republic, the law continued to enforce a patriarch's authority over his wife and their property.

In regards to the relationship between parents and their children, fathers continued to possess important authority over their children. Some scholars argue that the American Revolution resulted in the liberation of children from patriarchal laws because they earned their freedom from their father's control upon reaching adulthood. The abolishment of primogeniture laws, furthermore, deteriorated the effects of patriarchal obligation within the family. After the American Revolution, the new republic emphasized the ability to reason as a means to access government and act as an independent agent. Only mature adults had the ability to reason, and therefore these ideas restricted children's access to the courts to contest their father's authority.¹⁴³ Despite laws that terminated a child's obligation to his parents after reaching maturity, children continued to owe obedience and duty to their parents, and parents expected their children, especially female children, to care for them in old age through financial help and service.¹⁴⁴ After the American Revolution, fathers continued to command their children and expect obedience.

Parents had the responsibility to nurture and raise their children, and they took advantage of opportunities to offer advice and guidance. Within the eighteenth-century

¹⁴² Carole Shammas, *Anglo-American Household Government in Comparative Perspective*, *The William and Mary Quarterly* vol. 52 (January 1995): 128-132.

¹⁴³ Brewer, *By Birth or Consent*, 3-4.

¹⁴⁴ Norton, *Liberty's Daughters*, 96-97.

family, duty characterized the relationship between parents and their children. Fathers gave advice to their children concerning numerous aspects of life, including their appearance, marriage choices, behavior, and their character.¹⁴⁵ Some scholars have argued that the emphasis on nurturing children signified a revolution against patriarchal authority and an assertion of an egalitarian and natural family based on affection rather than coercion. In viewing children as potentially corruptible in the hands of poor parents, early American societies had the grounds to blame parents for failing to adequately instruct and nurture their children. Within this view, fathers should not demand obedience from their children. Given these circumstances, the American Revolution represented a rebellion against patriarchal authority within the household.¹⁴⁶ In an analysis of early American statesmen, this thesis offers a different interpretation. Fathers did nurture and instruct their children, but they used their instructions and guidance as yet another tool to command and control their children. To enforce these commands, they had had a variety of methods at their disposal.¹⁴⁷

Affection represented a key component of the early American family. Over the course of the eighteenth century, new ideals emphasized the affectionate, nuclear family.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 96-100.

¹⁴⁶ Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution against Patriarchal Authority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

¹⁴⁷ Norton, *Liberty's Daughters*, 97; Catherine Kerrison, *Claiming the Pen: Women and Intellectual Life in the Early American South* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 92-94.

In Norton's study, she acknowledges that fathers often adopted a paternalistic stance in their instructive moments with children. This thesis expands this notion to show guidance and instruction as yet another tool used by fathers to reinforce their patriarchal power. She also describes some of the tactics used by patriarchs to enforce their power, such as the expressing or withholding of affection as a form of reward or punishment.

Kerrison expands on this approach and shows how fathers and mothers used their letters to give advice and to perform their respective roles in society, but she mostly focuses on how women used them to fulfill their roles as Kerber's Republican Mothers. Among women, letters could serve as surrogate parents to replace deceased parents. Beyond the grave, other relatives could connect with children and give them advice. In a similar way, early American statesmen used their letters to children. Often removed from their children's presence due to their public work, these men had to use letters as surrogates.

After the American Revolution, affection continued to gain in its importance for the American family. Instead of repaying their parents' protection, guidance, and emotional investments with obedience, children expressed their affection and gratefulness for their parents' efforts. In regard to marriages, love and affection became an important factor in choosing a partner. Due to this change, parents relinquished some of their control over their children's marriage choices. Some scholars argue that affection weakened patriarchal authority within the family.¹⁴⁸ This thesis argues that affection certainly pervaded the relationships of early American statesmen with their families, specifically wives and children. Early American statesmen, however, used affection as a form of social control. They connected obedience and affection and expressed it as a reward for obedience or withheld it to punish disobedience. They turned affection into a tool to reinforce their own authority.

The law and societal ideals concerning the relationship between men and their wives and children did not challenge patriarchal authority within the family. Given this context, the next section will describe how relationships between early American statesmen, their wives, their children, their servants and slaves, and their property played

¹⁴⁸ Jan Lewis, *Pursuits of Happiness: Family and Values in Jefferson's Virginia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 179-189; Kerrison, *Claiming the Pen*, 149-150; Nicole Eustace, *Passion is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 110.

In Kerrison's study, she explains that the presence of affection does not necessarily challenge patriarchal relationships. She argues that affectionate letters do not imply an equal partnership in companionate marriages; rather, affectionate letters reinforced men's dominant position in the marriage.

In Eustace's work, she describes the debate over "affective individualism" against "affective authoritarianism." She recognizes that affection could contribute to more concern for happiness and that this type of individualism could challenge patriarchal authority. She also explains that "affectionate rhetoric developed within a political system yet dominated by hereditary monarchy and within a social system in which men remained the undisputed heads of households." She does not exactly buy notions of "affective authoritarianism," which means that "the language of love arose primarily as a new tool of coercion." Instead, she argues that people used affection to reinforce their patriarchal power, but the interest and emphasis on affection demonstrated a commitment to softening the exercise of power.

out in the early national period. It will demonstrate how early American statesmen embraced their roles as patriarchs over their household.

American government officials continued to command their households. In 1779, Thomas McKean, who served as the Chief Justice of Pennsylvania and eventually as Governor, sold his property and decided to move his family into the country. He explained to his wife, “but I have sold no land yet except your lot at Christiana Bridge, which I have just now parted with for the sum of two thousand pounds to Mr. Humphrey Carson-- It is too cheap, but of no great use to me after discharging the taxes, which I suppose will exceed the rent, and therefore, I thought it best to take the sum.” After listening to his wife’s protests, he reasserted the reasoning behind his decision and stood behind it. As he considered the family’s next move, however, McKean considered his wife’s desires in his decision-making. She claimed to prefer living in the town instead of the country, and he made the appropriate arrangements. McKean had full authority to buy and sell the land as he pleased, but only their affection for one another and his willingness to consider her views on this decision compelled him to consider her interests in his financial decisions.¹⁴⁹ According to pre-revolutionary ideals, McKean had an obligation to work and contribute to her happiness. He possessed ultimate authority over final decisions but could consider his dependents according to contractual ideals for marriage that emphasized the affection toward and protection of dependents.

American political leaders continued to exercise authority over their families, and they expected obedience to their will. Thomas Jefferson raised two daughters, Martha

¹⁴⁹ Thomas McKean, Letter to Sarah McKean, 20 Jul. 1779. Thomas McKean Papers. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.; Norton, *Liberty’s Daughters*, 224. Norton takes a different approach concerning this episode, and she frames Sarah McKean’s actions in a context of women’s growing confidence in themselves to challenge their husbands’ authority

and Mary Jefferson, after the death of his wife and their mother. In a similar fashion as other fathers and mothers across the nation after independence, Jefferson instructed his daughters in industry, frugality, and modesty, among other virtues. Jefferson had a variety of ways to enforce his desires, such as schedules and reports, and he used them to enforce his daughters' obedience to his will. In November 1783, Jefferson sent the following schedule to Martha:

With respect to the distribution of your time the following is what I should approve.
from 8. to 10 o'clock practise music
from 10. to 1. dance one day and draw another
from 1. to 2. draw on the day you dance, and write a letter the next day
from 3. to 4. read French
from 5. till bedtime read English, write &c.¹⁵⁰

Jefferson used schedules like these and relied on his daughters' caregivers to enforce them. From a distance, Jefferson and other planters could use schedules to demand obedience to his will on an hourly basis and reinforce his patriarchal power. By using these schedules, Jefferson could command his daughters' behavior and education.¹⁵¹

McKean possessed authority over his wife and children. While he served in various offices, he commanded his son to perform varieties of tasks. In a letter to his wife, Sarah McKean, he explained, "Tell Thomas, I expect to find him greatly improved in reading and writing when I shall next see him."¹⁵² As the child grew older, McKean demanded his son's attention to political and legal matters. He instructed his son to

¹⁵⁰ Jefferson, "To Martha Jefferson" 28 Nov. 1783, in *The Family Letter of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. by Edwin Morris Betts and James Adam Bear, Jr. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1966), 19.

¹⁵¹ Catherine Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), 133. She frames this activity in a different way. She explains that planters used schedules to reinforce the importance of daughters' education according to republican ideology, which needed educated mothers to raise educated citizens.

¹⁵² McKean, Letter to Sarah McKean, 24 May 1788. Thomas McKean Papers. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

include in his writing an account of “all our private domestic news, and any remarkable public occurrences.”¹⁵³ When McKean sent money home to his family, he commanded his son to divide the funds among the various members of the household. In addition to financial matters, he expected his son to run various errands at his command and to collect rent from McKean’s tenants in Philadelphia.¹⁵⁴ In addition to these commands, McKean employed writing schedules to enforce his son’s obedience. He explained, “You must write to me twice a week; I shall answer once in that period.”¹⁵⁵ In regards to his son’s education, he commanded him to read legal materials. While McKean served as Governor of Pennsylvania, he instructed his son, “Read Blackstone’s commentaries, I say, read them with attention.”¹⁵⁶ In cases such as the one between McKean and his son, the type of guidance and advice expected from fathers to give their sons represented yet another form of patriarchal control because McKean, and other fathers, issued this advice as a series of commands to which he expected obedience.

In addition to issuing schedules and commands, early American officeholders consistently questioned their dependents concerning their activity. Jefferson employed this tactic on numerous occasions in his letters to his daughters. On April 4, 1784, he wrote to Martha, “I wish to know what you read, what tunes you play, how you come on in your writing.”¹⁵⁷ In a letter to Mary, he bombarded her with questions concerning her activity. He wrote:

¹⁵³ McKean, Letter to Thomas McKean Jr., 5 May 1798. Thomas McKean Papers. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

¹⁵⁴ For examples, see: McKean, Letter to Thomas McKean Jr., 4 Jan. 1801, 6 Dec. 1801, 15 Mar. 1804, 4 Jan. 1806, and 29 Feb. 1808.

¹⁵⁵ McKean, Letter to Thomas McKean, Jr., 15 Mar. 1804, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Penn.

¹⁵⁶ McKean, Letter to Thomas McKean, Jr., 15 Jan. 1805. Thomas McKean Papers. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

¹⁵⁷ Jefferson, “To Martha Jefferson” 4 Apr. 1784, in *Family Letters*, 25-26.

Write me a letter by the first post and answer me all these questions. Tell me whether you see the sun rise every day? How many pages a day you read in Don Quixote? How far you are advanced in him? Whether you repeat a Grammar lesson every day? What else you read? How many hours a day you sew? Whether you have an opportunity of continuing your music? Whether you know how to make a pudding yet, to cut out a beef stake, to sow spinach or set a hen?¹⁵⁸

Many times, Jefferson asked them to send their best work to him, warned them that he wanted to check up on their skills, and announced his intentions to speak to their various instructors. On May 5, 1787, Jefferson wrote to Martha and explained that he ordered a harpsichord for her, and he expressed his hope that she would receive it soon. He told her that his return will give him “an opportunity of judging whether you have got the better of that want of industry which I had began to fear would be the rock on which you would split.”¹⁵⁹ In another letter, he instructed Martha to “inclose me every week a copy of all your lessons in drawing that I may judge how you come on.”¹⁶⁰ Jefferson employed a variety of tactics to enforce obedience from his daughters, and he judged their progress and character.

Jefferson’s daughters responded with detailed accounts of their new skills and their activity to demonstrate their obedience to his commands. On March 25, 1787, Martha updated Jefferson on her reading. She told him, “Titus Livius puts me out of my wits. I can not read a word by myself, and I read of it very seldom with my master; however, I hope I shall soon be able to take it up again.”¹⁶¹ She also told him, “I go on

¹⁵⁸ Jefferson, “To Mary Jefferson” 11 Apr. 1790, in *Family Letters*, 52.

¹⁵⁹ Jefferson, “To Martha Jefferson” 5 May 1787, in *Family Letters*, 40.

¹⁶⁰ Jefferson, “To Martha Jefferson” 15 Jan. 1784, in *Family Letters*, 23.

¹⁶¹ Martha Jefferson Randolph, “From Martha Jefferson” 25 Mar. 1787, in *Family Letters*, 33.

pretty well with Thucydides, and hope I shall very soon finish it.”¹⁶² On April 25, 1790, Mary explained to her father, “I have not been able to read in Don Quixote every day, as I have been traveling ever since I saw you last, and the dictionary is too large to go in the pocket of the chariot, nor have I yet had an opportunity of continuing my music. I am now reading Robertson’s America.”¹⁶³ A month later, Mary had better news for her father when she wrote, “I read don quixote every day to my aunt and say my grammer in spanish and english and write and reading in robertson’s America.”¹⁶⁴ She continued, “My cousin Boling and myself made a pudding the other day. My aunt has given us a hen and chickens.”¹⁶⁵ These updates represent one of the most frequent topics Martha and Mary addressed in their letters to their father and reveal their attempt to document their obedience to their father.

In response to a child or spouse’s failure to comply with expectations or commands, early American government officials often criticized their dependents to express disappointment. When Jefferson’s daughters failed to obey his wishes, he criticized them to articulate his displeasure, but he always expressed his optimism that they will perform better. In one letter, Jefferson expressed to Martha, “I am glad to learn that you are employed in things new and good in your music and drawing. You know what have been my fears for some time past; that you do not employ yourself as closely as I wish. You have promised me more assiduous attention, and I have great confidence in what you promise.”¹⁶⁶ In a letter to Mary, he scolded her, “You last told me what you were not doing; that you were not reading Don Quixot, not applying to your music. I

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Mary Jefferson Eppes, “From Mary Jefferson” 25 Apr. 1790, in *Family Letters*, 53.

¹⁶⁴ Mary Jefferson Eppes, “From Mary Jefferson” 23 May 1790, in *Family Letters*, 56-57.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 57.

¹⁶⁶ Jefferson, “To Martha Jefferson” 28 Mar. 1787, in *Family Letters*, 34.

hope your next will tell me what you are doing.”¹⁶⁷ On Dec. 23, Jefferson had grown impatient with lack of letters for him from Monticello. He wrote to Martha, “This is a scolding letter for you all. I have not received a scrip of a pen from home since I left it.”¹⁶⁸ He expressed the same sentiments to Mary a few weeks later, and he added, “I ascribed it [lack of letters] at first to indolence, but the affection must be weak which is so long overruled by that.”¹⁶⁹ From Jefferson’s perspective, he connected their failing to obey his commands and write him letters to their lessening affection for him. Not necessarily a positive emotional feeling, Jefferson equated affection to respect and obedience. Based on this perception, he also expressed his optimism that each of his daughters would improve in their obedience, and therefore, their affection for him.

McKean used a similar strategy in the raising of his children. In 1798, McKean had expected his son and the rest of the family to write to him on a regular basis. While in Philadelphia, he wrote to his son to correct their behavior. He wrote, “I was disappointed in not receiving a letter from you or any one at Philadelphia on Thursday when the Post arrived here; I hope it is not owing to indisposition or any untoward cause, and shall expect to hear from you at Pittsburg next Friday.”¹⁷⁰ While serving as Governor of Pennsylvania, McKean informed his son, Thomas McKean, Jr., to express his disappointment in his daughter’s obedience. He explained, “Tell Sophia, if one had written to me as a dutiful child, I would have sent her a new-year’s gift.”¹⁷¹ McKean’s relationship with his son and daughter has hierarchical characteristics in that he expects

¹⁶⁷ Jefferson, “To Mary Jefferson” 23 May 1790, in *Family Letters*, 57.

¹⁶⁸ Jefferson, “To Martha Jefferson Randolph” 23 Dec. 1790, in *Family Letters*, 67.

¹⁶⁹ Jefferson, “To Mary Jefferson” 5 Jan. 1791, in *Family Letters*, 67.

¹⁷⁰ McKean, Letter to Thomas McKean, Jr., 5 May 1798. Thomas McKean Papers. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

¹⁷¹ McKean, Letter to Thomas McKean, Jr., 4 Jan. 1806. Thomas McKean Papers. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

obedience to his commands. Yet, he frames his commands with concern for their health or promises rewards for their behavior.

McKean expected obedience from his servants, and he expressed his disappointment when one of them rebelled against his authority. In a letter to his wife, he informed her that one of their indentured servants had run away from the home and outlined his plan for punishment. He described, “Our good servant John has, I find, runaway. He is an ungrateful fellow, and I suspect has been guilty of some bad actions before he left Germany.” Based on the servant’s disobedience, McKean had already determined a punishment for the servant. He explained, “If he should be apprehended, let him be confined in the work-house until I come home for he must not again be suffered to stay in the house. I am to sell him without delay.”¹⁷² McKean handled his children in a different manner than he dealt with his servants. While he rewarded his children’s obedience with affection and criticized them with harsh words for their disobedience, he possessed significantly more power over his servants. After the servant rebelled against McKean by running away, McKean aimed to sell his servant to another person. In the households of early American statesmen, obedience and duty represented fundamental elements of familial relationships. In addition to obedience, affection represented another important aspect of the familial relationships within the households of early American statesmen.

In the Adams family, affection pervaded many of the correspondences between John and his wife and his children. In 1782, John Adams had journeyed to the Netherlands to seek assistance in the Revolutionary War effort and to secure a trade

¹⁷² Thomas McKean, Letter to Sarah McKean, 24 May 1788, Thomas McKean Papers. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

agreement. While serving in the Netherlands, his daughter offered to come to Europe to assist him and take care of him. In response to this offer, John Adams explained, “Your proposal of coming to Europe to keep your papa’s house and take care of his health, is in a high strain of filial duty and affection.”¹⁷³ In October, he explained to her that he had read her last letter with “all the tenderness of a father deprived of the dearest, and almost the only enjoyment of his life, his family.”¹⁷⁴ Adams perceived his daughter’s willingness to serve him in house and health as a sign of affection and obedience. In the Adams family, this relationship existed between two siblings. The younger Abigail Adams wrote to her brother, John Quincy Adams, while he worked in Europe with their father. She had not written in a long time, and she felt as if she had failed in her obligations. She explained, “I am conscious my dear Brother that I have appeared deficient in my duty and affection by neglecting to write you often.”¹⁷⁵ In the Adams family, duty and affection characterized the relationship between brother and sister, as well. In a letter to Elizabeth Cranch, Nabby Adams expressed her affection for her absent father. She explained, “A wide Atlantick rolls between us” and that ““It is one of the most unhappy situations in life to be thus separated from those friends that claim the greatest share of our Love by the ties and bonds of natural affection.”¹⁷⁶ After returning to Paris from the Netherlands, John Adams, in a letter to his son John Quincy, lamented his separation from his eldest son. He explained “I want your Company very much, for the

¹⁷³ John Adams, “John Adams to Abigail Adams 2d,” 9 Sept. 1782, in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 5, ed. by Richard Alan Ryerson, Joanna M. Revelas, Celeste Walker, and Gregg L. Lint, et. al. (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1973), 383.

¹⁷⁴ John Adams, “John Adams to Abigail Adams 2d,” 16 Oct. 1782, in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 5, 17.

¹⁷⁵ Abigail Adams 2d, “Abigail Adams 2d to John Quincy Adams,” 3 May 1782, in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 4, ed. by L. H. Butterfield and Marc Friedlaender (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1973), 319.

¹⁷⁶ Abigail Adams 2d, “Abigail Adams 2d to John Quincy Adams,” Apr. 1782, in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 4, 318.

Time hangs heavily upon me very often.” John Adams signed his letters to John Quincy Adams “Your affectionate Father.”¹⁷⁷ Love and affection prevailed in the relationship between John Adams and his children, but affection represented a fundamental aspect of the relationship between him and his wife.

On many occasions, John and Abigail Adams dedicated entire letters to expressing their affection and love for one another. In 1782, Abigail penned one such letter in which she explained that she cannot wait for their reunion. She explained, “My heart sighs for it.” She continued, “I cannot be reconciled to living as I have done for 3 years past. I am serious.” She felt a duty to John and to help him and love him. She explained, “if I can soften your Cares, is it not my duty? If I can by a tender attention and assiduity prolong your most valuable Life, is it not my duty.” She concluded this affection letter with more expressions of her love for her husband. She wrote, “Adieu my dear Friend. How much happier should I be to fold you to my Bosom, than to bid you this Languid adieu, with a whole ocean between us.” She continued, “Yet whilst I recall to your mind tender scenes of happier days, I would add a supplication that the day may not be far distant, that shall again renew them to your Ever Ever affection Portia.”¹⁷⁸

John Adams often expressed his love for his wife. In conclusion to a letter he wrote from Amsterdam, he remarked, “I wonder whether any body but you would believe me Sincere if I were to Say how much I love you, and wish to be with you and never to be Separated more?”¹⁷⁹ A few months later, he wrote a letter from Paris in which he

¹⁷⁷ John Adams, “John Adams to John Quincy Adams,” 3 Jul. 1783, in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 5, 198.

¹⁷⁸ Abigail Adams, “Abigail Adams to John Adams,” 8 Oct. 1782 in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 5, 4-7.

¹⁷⁹ John Adams, “John Adams to Abigail Adams,” 26 Jul. 1783, in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 5, 218.

explained numerous political matters. At the conclusion of this letter, he explained, “But I am wandering from my favourite Point which is the Recollection of my fervent affection for my Dearest Friend and the Dear Pledges of her Love.”¹⁸⁰ After years of separation, he explained to his wife that he could not spend any more time without her and their daughter. He remarked, “Come to Europe with Nabby as soon as possible.” He also explained, “I am in earnest. I cannot be happy, nor tolerable without you.”¹⁸¹ He promised his wife that upon his retirement from public service, “that you may depend upon a good domestic husband, for the remainder of my Life, if it is the Will of Heaven that I should once more meet you.”¹⁸² He continued to explain, “My Promises are not lightly made with any body. I have never broken one made to you, and I will not begin at this time of Life.”¹⁸³ In 1782, Abigail offered to move to Europe to be with her husband. In response to this offer, John replied, “Your Proposal of coming to Europe, has long and tenderly affected me.”¹⁸⁴

John and Abigail Adams almost always ended their letters to one another with an affectionate expression. John Adams, for example, concluded one of his letters from Amsterdam, “I never know how to close, because I can never express the Tenderness I feel.”¹⁸⁵ Abigail concluded her letters with similar expressions. In conclusion to one of her letters to her husband, she commanded, “Ever remember me as I do you; with all the

¹⁸⁰ John Adams, “John Adams to Abigail Adams,” 3 Sept. 1783, in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 5, 234.

¹⁸¹ John Adams, “John Adams to Abigail Adams,” 8 Nov. 1783, in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 5, 265.

¹⁸² John Adams, “John Adams to Abigail Adams,” 28 Dec., 1782, in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 5, 60.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ John Adams, “John Adams to Abigail Adams,” 4 Dec. 1782, John Adams, “John Adams to Abigail Adams,” Dec. 28, 1782, in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 5, 46.

¹⁸⁵ John Adams, “John Adams to Abigail Adams,” 12 Oct. 1782, in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 5, 15.

tenderness which it is possible for one object to feel for an other; which no time can obliterate no distance alter, but which is always the same in the Bosom of Portia.”¹⁸⁶

Affection represented an important aspect in the relationships in the Adams family, and it represented a fundamental aspect of other political families. In many cases, people expressed their affection for one another through their desires to be with their spouses or children. Thomas McKean, however, explained to his wife while he served in the American Revolution that he did not want to put them in harm’s way. He explained, “I confess I have not a wish to see you or any of my female relations in Camp, or in an Army, which may be drawn into action every day, nay every hour.” He concluded his letter, “Give my love by Josey and Robert, kiss Nancy for me.”¹⁸⁷ During October 1778, Thomas McKean expressed his love for his children and sent an affectionate note to his youngest daughter. He wrote, “Give my love to my dear children, and kiss little Sally for me.”¹⁸⁸ In July 1779, Sarah McKean left the care of the elder children to Thomas while she left on a trip. During their separation, Thomas wrote to his wife, “The children give their duty to you, and their love to their sister Sally.”¹⁸⁹ Later in the month, he repeated as similar theme in another letter to his wife. He wrote, “Kiss Sally for me and the children present their duty to you.”¹⁹⁰ A few days later, he repeated, “The children give their duty to you. Kiss my dear little Sally.”¹⁹¹ In addition to the McKean family, affection represented an important characteristic in other prominent public families.

¹⁸⁶ Abigail Adams, “Abigail Adams to John Adams,” 23 Dec. 1782, in *Adams Family Correspondence* vol. 5, 58.

¹⁸⁷ Thomas McKean, Letter to Sarah McKean, 1 Aug. 1776.

¹⁸⁸ Thomas McKean, Letter to Sarah McKean, 25 Oct. 1778.

¹⁸⁹ Thomas McKean, Letter to Sarah McKean, 12 Jul. 1779.

¹⁹⁰ Thomas McKean, Letter to Sarah McKean, 26 Jul. 1779.

¹⁹¹ Thomas McKean, Letter to Sarah McKean, 30 Jul. 1779.

The Jay family related to one another with great affection and sentiments in a variety of ways. While living in Paris, Sarah Jay wrote to her husband, who was visiting Rouen, and explained, “I long my dear to embrace you now as well as a deliverer of our Country as an affectionate and tender husband.”¹⁹² In a letter to husband John Jay, Sarah Jay wrote to him and explained all the various social news. In conclusion to the letter, she asked her about the length and harmful affects of their long separation. She wrote, “Aint you a little fearful of the consequences of leaving me so long sole mistress?” She concluded the letter in a typical fashion with an affectionate expression. She wrote, “Believe me to be sincerely and affectionately yours.”¹⁹³ John Jay often concluded his letters to his wife with similar expressions of affection and love. In 1790, for example, he concluded a letter, “I am, my dear Sally, Yours very affectionately.”¹⁹⁴ He used variances of this type of expression in his numerous correspondences with his wife during their times of separation. While on a trip to Rouen while serving as a peace envoy during the American Revolution, John Jay wrote to his wife still in Paris and concluded his letter, “Kiss our little girl for me, and believe me to be, my dear Sally, Your very affectionate husband.”¹⁹⁵ His children concluded their letters to their father with similar expressions of affection. Peter Augustus Jay concluded one letter, “I am your Affectionate Son.”¹⁹⁶ In John Jay’s will, he issued a final expression of his affection for his children. He explained, “I cannot conclude this interesting act, without expressing the satisfaction I have constantly derived from their virtuous and amiable behavior.” Like

¹⁹² Sarah Jay, “Mrs. Jay to Jay,” 21 Jan. 1783, *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay*, 27.

¹⁹³ Sarah Jay, “Mrs. Jay to Jay,” 15 May 1790, in *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay*, 399.

¹⁹⁴ John Jay, “Jay to Mrs. Jay,” Nov. 1790, in *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay*, 404.

¹⁹⁵ John Jay, “Jay to Mrs. Jay,” Jan. 1783, *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay*, 24.

¹⁹⁶ Peter Augustus Jay, “Peter August Jay to Jay,” 26 Apr. 1798, *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay*, 240.

many fathers, Jay praised his children for meeting his expectations for them. In the opening section of his will, he thanked God for “excellent parents,” a “virtuous wife” and “worthy children.” He continued, “I thank them for having largely contributed to my happiness by their affectionate attachment and attention to me, and to each other.”¹⁹⁷ Affection certainly represented a key characteristic of the relationships between John Jay and his dependents.

In the households of early American statesmen, family members related to one another with great affection. According to some scholars, affectionate bonds weakened patriarchal authority.¹⁹⁸ Given the prevalence of affection in the correspondences between patriarchs and their dependents, it must have been an important element. They often used affection, therefore, to enforce obedience to their commands. They equated obedient behavior, furthermore, as demonstrations of affection. Patriarchs, especially Jefferson, used affection to reinforce their own authority.

Jefferson heartily applauded his daughters for successes in character and behavior. He told Mary a month later, “I am much pleased with the account you give me of your occupations, and the making the pudding is as good an article of them as any. When I come to Virginia I shall insist on eating a pudding of your own making, as well as on trying other specimens of your skill.”¹⁹⁹ Jefferson kept a close eye on his daughters’ education, and he did not hesitate to both scold and reward. Thomas McKean praised his wife for her ability to comply with his desires during his absence during the American Revolution. He often commanded her to send items, relay news, or perform

¹⁹⁷ John Jay, “Extracts from the Will of John Jay,” in *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay* vol. 4, ed. by Henry P. Johnston (New York: Da Capo Press, 1971), 515-516.

¹⁹⁸ Lewis, *Pursuits of Happiness*.

¹⁹⁹ Jefferson, “To Mary Jefferson” 13 Jun. 1790, in *Family Letters*, 58.

certain duties in the household or community. In response to her obedience, he explained, “You have attended so very mindfully to every article that I could want and that could be handily conveyed here, that I cannot think of any Thing Lacking that you can supply.”²⁰⁰ Jefferson framed his commands to his daughters in regards to their happiness and his pleasure. He often connected his expectations to their future happiness or health. At times, he tapped into their willingness to please and satisfy his expectations by connecting their obedience to his happiness. In this way, he used affection as a fundamental characteristic of their relationship with him to enforce his authority. Affection represented an important element in familial relationships after the American Revolution.

Jefferson frequently used affection to enforce his daughter’s obedience. In his letter to Martha on November 28, 1783, he explained, “I have placed my happiness on seeing you good and accomplished, and no distress which this world can now bring on me could equal that of your disappointing my hopes. If you love me then, strive to be good under every situation.”²⁰¹ A few years later, he simply stated to Martha, “The more you learn the more I love you.”²⁰² Jefferson used love to stress the importance of his message. He also threatened to withhold love if they failed to obey him. In a letter to young Mary, Jefferson reminded her “not to go out without your bonnet because it will make you very ugly and then we should not love you so much.”²⁰³ Fathers in the Early Republic frequently threatened to withhold love to enforce obedience, and it represented one of their most effective parenting and common parenting techniques. Fathers mostly

²⁰⁰ McKean, “Letter to Sarah McKean,” 7 Aug. 1776. Thomas McKean Papers. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

²⁰¹ Jefferson, “To Martha Jefferson” 28 Nov. 1783, in *Family Letters*, 20.

²⁰² Jefferson, “To Martha Jefferson” 6 Mar. 1786, in *Family Letters*, 30.

²⁰³ Jefferson, “To Mary Jefferson” 20 Sept. 1785, in *Family Letters*, 30.

did this with their daughters, and Jefferson applied it to his parenting many times.²⁰⁴

Early American statesmen often portrayed obedience and affection as the same.

According to new ideas that emphasized affection as a key component of familial relationships, affection became a practical tool for fathers to assert their patriarchal control over dependents.

After the American Revolution, early American statesmen embraced their roles as heads of households and continued to govern their dependents with patriarchal authority. They continued to control the people and property within their household. They expected obedience to their will, and they had many tools to enforce discipline. Affection and mutual obligation had become key characteristics in an ideal family, and the families of early American statesmen related to one another with abundant terms of endearment and affection. These new ideals, however, did not challenge patriarchal authority. Instead, patriarchs used them to maintain their own authority by issuing commands in the form of guidance and expressing or withholding love to compel obedience. By comparing the language early American statesmen used to describe power relationships within the family, this thesis will describe how they perceived and portrayed themselves relative to the public, the government, and the law.

In the next section, this thesis will describe how governing officials and the public related to one another in correspondences and speeches. It will demonstrate how people continued to use familial relationships to understand their relationship with the government. Early American statesmen and the public continued to connect with one another in terms of obedience, duty, and affection, which had roots in the family. In addition to these relationships, it will describe how early American statesmen separated

²⁰⁴ Norton, *Liberty's Daughters*, 99.

themselves from political authority by using a language of obedience and duty to the Constitution and the law.

In 1790, Colonel Benjamin Wilson, Colonel George L. Jackson, and Major William Robinson, who commanded militia in Virginia, wrote a letter to President Washington detailing their need for protection from Native Americans. They described their relationship with the Native Americans, the attacks, and the perceived barbarity of the attacks on frontier settlers in Harrison County, Virginia. They explained, “the frontiers is left defenceless the people who lays exposed in complaining they are neglected.” The settlers in Harrison County believed “that the government has got thoughtless about the lives” of the citizens. By characterizing government as neglectful and thoughtless, they emphasized the failings of the government to meet its duties to protect its people. Based on the government’s shortcomings, they appealed to Washington’s paternal characteristics. They expressed their hope “that Your Excellency would take our distressed Situation under your Paternal Care and grant us Such Reliefe as you in your Wisdom shall think proper and we in duty Bound shall pray &c.”²⁰⁵ In a quest for protection, Virginia militia commanders appealed to Washington’s paternal characteristics in their pleas.

American citizens portrayed Washington as deserving the affection of the American people and portrayed his actions as representative of his paternal goodness. One author praised Washington for leading the new nation through the American Revolution and, like Cincinnatus, relinquishing his power after the completion of the war. He continued to praise Washington for again answering the voices of the American

²⁰⁵ Benjamin Wilson, George L. Jackson, William Robinson, “From Harrison County, Va., Field Officers,” February 2, 1790, in *The Papers of George Washington* Presidential Series vol. 5, ed. by Dorothy Twohig, Mark A. Mastromarino, and Jack D. Warren (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996), 93-94.

people and assuming the position of President. He portrayed Washington as successfully navigating his first term without jeopardizing his honesty and virtue. He remarked, “he is entitled to the most grateful affection and support of all his countrymen.” In regards to political action, the author praised Washington for staying neutral in the conflict between France and Great Britain. He characterized the decision as “another instance of his watchful and paternal affection for the true interests and happiness of his fellow citizens.”²⁰⁶ John Adams, as Vice President and President of the United States Senate, responded to Washington’s 1794 state of the union address, and he portrayed Washington as a paternal figure. In response to the speech, the Senate replied, “In it we perceive renewed proofs of that vigilant and paternal concern for the prosperity, honour and happiness of our country, which has uniformly distinguished your past administration.”²⁰⁷ When Washington decided to terminate his Presidency at the end of his second term, an elector from the state of Virginia informed Virginians of Washington’s decision. He expressed his hope that Washington might choose his own successor, and explained to the people, “He has requested, in a paternal and affectionate address to his fellow citizens, that me might not be considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.”²⁰⁸ Among the American people, Washington represented a paternal figure at the head of their government.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁶ William Willcocks, “Miscellany, from the (N.Y.) Daily Advertiser,” *Oracle of the Day*, Aug. 20, 1793, Early American Newspapers.

²⁰⁷ John Adams, “To the President of the United States,” *Massachusetts Spy, or the Worcester Gazette*, December 3, 1794, Retrieved from Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, 1639-1900. Chester, Vt.: Readex, 2011.

²⁰⁸ Charles Simms, “To the Freeholders of the Counties of Prince William, Stafford and Fairfax,” *Gazette of the United States*, October 6, 1796, Retrieved from Early American Imprints.

²⁰⁹ In François Furstenberg, *In the Name of the Father: Washington’s Legacy, Slavery, and the Making of a Nation* (New York: Penguin, 2006), Furstenberg argues that amid political partisan crisis at the end of the Eighteenth century, authors secured consent among the various factions and regions by portraying Washington as the ideal father figure in civic texts, such as pamphlets and textbooks. The creation of

In addition to Washington, American citizens used the paternal metaphors to characterize John Adams, who succeeded Washington. By 1798, Americans feared war with France, but Adams successfully kept the United States out of an official war. In response to arguments that condemned Adams for leading the United States closer to war, one citizen praised Adams for successfully navigating the conflict with France. He explained, “The President is the Father of the People: He watches over their interests with paternal solicitude.” Instead of leading the country into war, the author portrayed Adams as “averse to War.” He assured the American people, “he will continue to adopt every measure to save his Country from that disastrous event.”²¹⁰ In the same manner as a father, Adams successfully protected his people from harm and guarded their interests.

American citizens extended familial metaphors to include Jefferson, and they also praised him for his paternal character as a father to two young daughters. After James Callender broke the news of Jefferson’s relationship with his slave Sally Hemings, a newspaper editor came to Jefferson’s defense. He explained, “Mr. Jefferson has been a bachelor for more than twenty years. During this period, he reared with paternal attention, two unblemished, accomplished, and amiable women, his daughters, who are married to two estimable citizens.” In addition to Jefferson’s familial paternal role, the newspaper editor praised Jefferson for adopting the character of a mother. He explained, “In the education of his daughters, this same Thomas Jefferson supplied the place of a mother, his tenderness and delicacy, were proverbial.” After praising Jefferson, the

Washington as a father figure, according to my research, predated his death and represented a vital component of the American people’s relationship with their first President.

²¹⁰ “From the Mercury: To the Manufacturers of the Cambridge Resolutions, and to the Cunning Workman who Persuaded the People to Raise an Edifice, the Very Protection of which They Had Not Seen,” *Newburyport Herald*, April 13, 1798, Retrieved from Early American Newspapers.

editor condemned Callender for his attacks on Jefferson's behavior and character.²¹¹ In this example, the newspapers recognize Jefferson's familial paternal role. In many newspaper columns, authors praised Jefferson's paternal qualities as a father to his own children, and authors praised his paternal qualities in government, as well. In 1804, a poet connected Washington and Jefferson and appealed to Jefferson's paternal nature in a plea for protection. The poet wrote, "See Liberty divine descend, / And on her fav'rite Son attend; / Behold his wide paternal hand / Outstretch'd to guard our happy land."²¹² In early American newspapers, authors praised Jefferson for his paternal characteristics as a father and as a statesman, which demonstrates that people continued to understand their government through a lens of the family relationships.

Before the American Revolution, people lived in a hierarchically arranged society in which even adult men owed obedience to lords, monarchs, and other social and political superiors.²¹³ After the American Revolution, independent adult men continued to appeal to the paternal character of the President in requests for protection and guidance, which testifies to a continuing presence of a hierarchical relationship between governing officials and governed people and a persistent connection between the family and the state. In the next section, this thesis will demonstrate that familial metaphors, although present, did not dominate political discourse and Americans often did not characterize their governing officials as paternal. It will argue that while people and governing officials continued to relate to one another in terms of duty, obedience, and affection, early American statesmen separated themselves from authority by using this

²¹¹ "From the Richmond Examiner," *Centinel of Freedom*, October 5, 1802, Retrieved from Early American Newspapers.

²¹² "Washington and Jefferson," *Political Observatory*, April 14, 1804, Retrieved from Early American Imprints.

²¹³ Brewer, *By Birth or Consent*, 2.

same language to describe their own subordinate position to the Constitution and the law. The American public contributed to this separation by expressing their own subordination and affection for the law.

In public affairs, affection continued to represent a fundamental characteristic of the relationship between the people and their government. After George Washington's election to the Presidency in 1788, he received letters from various state legislatures, organizations, and religious groups to congratulate him on his appointment as the first President of the United States. Family language of brotherhood and affection prevailed in many of these letters to Washington. In February of 1790, Thomas Jones, writing on behalf of government officials in Charleston, South Carolina, sent Washington a letter to describe the various ways in which Washington had made his people happy. They opened the letter, "United with our eastern and northern Brethren in our ardent attachment to the principles of a free government" and continued to explain their satisfaction in his appointment as President. They continued to describe Washington's virtues, such as wisdom, moderation, and firmness and they praised his sacrifices by which he had "so completely endeared" himself "to the people of America." In a similar fashion as colonial Americans, they expressed, "we beg leave to tender you our assurances of a cheerful submission to, and active support of the constitution—and the laws which may be framed in conformity thereto by the wisdom of Congress."²¹⁴ For government officials in Charleston, affection continued to represent a vital characteristic between a ruler and the people. In stating their willingness to submit and obey, however, they did not describe their subordinate position in relation to Washington or another

²¹⁴ Thomas Jones, "The Address of the Intendent and Wardens of the City of Charleston, South Carolina," February 18, 1790, in *The Papers of George Washington*, 189n.

person. Instead, they submitted to the country, its constitution, the laws, and the body of Congress.²¹⁵

In response to this letter, Washington emphasized themes of affection and submission to the laws. He praised the people of Charleston's "active support of the constitution and disposition to maintain dignity" of free government. He praised the people of Charleston for their sacrifices during the American Revolution, and he explained, "you must rejoice in the completion of our toils and the reward which awaits them." He continued, "as members of the great family of the union, connected by the closest ties of interest and endearment, the confidence which you justly cherish of sharing in all the benefits of the national compact, must be strengthened."²¹⁶ From Washington's perspective, the United States represented a great family in which affection bonded people with one another and their government. At the head of this government, however, Washington emphasized the supremacy of the Constitution, as a national compact, and it's deserving of support and loyalty.

Later in 1790, American Catholics developed a statement to Washington to express their pleasure in his new position as President and to describe various elements of new prosperity in the newborn nation. They expressed their regret for not sending their congratulations sooner, but they emphasized their group's scattered and unorganized nature as an excuse. They explained, "Our congratulations have not reached you sooner, because our scattered situation prevented the communication and the collecting of those

²¹⁵ David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 117. Waldstreicher argues that a "cult of the Constitution" was not necessary because people had so much faith in Washington. According to my evidence, people emphasized the sovereignty of the Constitution during Washington's presidency.

²¹⁶ Washington, "To Charleston, S.C. Officials," Feb. 1790, in *The Papers of George Washington*, 188-189.

sentiments, which warmed every breast.”²¹⁷ In response to this letter, Washington explained to them, “your testimony of the increase of the public prosperity, enhances the pleasure which I should otherwise have experienced from your affectionate address.”²¹⁸ Between Washington and the Catholics in the country, affection represented a characteristic of their relationship.

The Virginia Legislature issued another statement regarding Washington’s election as President, and they praised his virtues and his ability to capture the affection of the American people. As his home state, they had a more detailed view of Washington’s life and career. They explained, “In early life you engaged the affections of your fellow citizens, by the exercise of those social virtues which have so eminently marked your conduct, and acquired your confidence, by the display of those abilities.” Washington’s virtues made him the worthy recipient of affection from the people. Later in the statement, the delegates to the Virginia legislature commended Washington for obeying the people’s will. They wrote, “Yes, sir, you have been called to your present high station by the unanimous voice of a free people; you have obeyed them with a peculiar greatness of mind.” Washington assumed his position as President of the United States, from the perspective of the Virginia legislature, represented obedience to the will of the people. Affection characterized the relationship between Washington and other American citizens, but he served as President in a subordinate position to their will.

In response to a statement issued by Jewish Americans, Washington repeated the affectionate bond between people and their government, yet he emphasized his role as President as a duty to country and the American people. He opened his response by

²¹⁷ “Roman Catholic Address,” in *The Papers of George Washington*, 300n.

²¹⁸ Washington, “To Roman Catholics in America,” March 1790, in *The Papers of George Washington*, 299.

praising liberal freedom of religion laws and expressed his affection for people that valued principles of religious liberty. He explained, “The affection of such people is a treasure beyond the reach of calculation; and the repeated proofs which my fellow Citizens have given of their attachment to me, and approbation of my doings form the purest source of temporal felicity.” He continued, “The affectionate expressions of your address again excite my gratitude, and receive my warmest acknowledgements.” In regards to military and political service to the new nation, Washington described his service as resulting from “a sense of duty which I owe my country.”²¹⁹ In addition to Washington, government officials often spoke and wrote about their sense of duty to the country and its people.

In a speech to the Senate and the House of Representatives in 1790, Washington spoke to the delegates concerning the application of Kentucky for admission into the United States. He informed Congress that Kentucky had completed and approved its application to the United States, and he described the character of the application. He explained, “The liberality and harmony with which it has been conducted, will be found to do great honor to both the parties; and the sentiments of warm attachment to the Union and its present government, expressed by our fellow Citizens of Kentucky, cannot fail to add an affectionate concern for their particular welfare.”²²⁰ Washington praised the affectionate relationship between Kentucky and the United States and encouraged the delegates to act with affection toward the people of Kentucky. Among statesmen, affection often demonstrated obedience. By praising the people of Kentucky’s affection

²¹⁹ Washington, “To the Hebrew Congregations of Philadelphia, New York, Charleston, and Richmond,” December 13, 1790, in *The Papers of George Washington*, 61-62.

²²⁰ Washington, “Speech of the President of the United States, to Both Houses of Congress, Wednesday, Dec. 8, 1790,” Retrieved from Early American Imprints.

for the United States, he could emphasize their obedience because dutiful Americans should express their affection for the new nation.²²¹

In the rest of the speech, Washington described the state of affairs with Native Americans, the militia's status, and the success of American commercial endeavors. In conclusion, he encouraged Congress to pursue its goals with wisdom and with affection. He wrote, "In pursuing the various and weighty benefits of the present session, I indulge the fullest persuasion that your consultations will be equally marked with wisdom, and animated by the love of your country." He asserted that his service as President of the United States represented his duty and obligation to the country. He explained, in "whatever belongs to my duty, you shall have all the co-operation which an undiminished zeal for its welfare can inspire." He repeated that the happiness of his people and the common good determined the success of the administration, and he encouraged Congress to work with him in gaining more of the people's "attachment and confidence."²²² By encouraging Congress to work for the affection of the people, Washington makes two important moves. His statement explains that affection should be cultivated rather than expected or demanded. Within the family, patriarchs expected and demanded their dependents to demonstrate their affection as a sign of obedience, but Washington offered a different relationship in politics. His comments suggest a partial split in familial and political authority.

²²¹ Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes*, 126. Waldstreicher explains that national characters emphasized affection for its ability to create national unity. They could portray a lack of affection as un-American. By examining affection within a context of familial relationships, this thesis expands on Waldstreicher's argument. Within the family, early American statesmen equated obedience and affection. In politics, governing officials could measure attachment and obedience to the Constitution by observing people's affection. To legitimate the Constitution, governing officials encouraged people to express their affection for it. They expressed their own affection for it, as well.

²²² Washington, "Speech of the President of the United States, to Both Houses of Congress, Wednesday, Dec. 8, 1790," Retrieved from Early American Imprints.

In October 1791, Washington presented another address to both the Senate and the House of Representatives, and he spoke to issues concerning Native Americans, the Bank of the United States, and the tax on whiskey. He acknowledged that, although most people favored the law, inhabitants in parts of the United States did not agree with the tax. Washington characterized their disagreement with the tax as a failure to understand its provisions. He concluded his remarks on the discontent with the Whiskey tax, “In entertain a full confidence, that it will, in all, give way to motives which arise out of a just sense of duty, and a virtuous regard to the public welfare.” Based on the circumstances in the west regarding taxation, Washington encouraged Congress to carefully consider the desires of all the parts of the United States. Good government necessarily required a “firm adherence to constitutional and necessary Acts of Government.” From Washington’s perspective, the United States needed to “lay the foundations of the public Administration in the affections of the people.”²²³ From Washington’s perspective, a government required the affection of its people to achieve its goals and legitimacy. The people, however, owed obedience and duty to the law.

By the end of 1792, Washington acknowledged that some people continued to rebel against the taxes on domestically distilled alcohol. He characterized these rebellions against tax collectors as local events and emphasized that most people obeyed and appreciated the tax. He guaranteed Congress “that all lawful ways and means would be strictly put in execution for bringing to justice the infractors, thereof, and securing obedience thereto.”²²⁴ By 1794, Washington felt compelled to take military action

²²³ Washington, “Speech of the President of the United States, to Both Houses of Congress; October 25, 1791,” Retrieved from Early American Imprints.

²²⁴ Washington, “Speech of the President of the United States to Both Houses of Congress, Nov. 6, 1792,” Retrieved from Early American Imprints.

against the rebellion in western Pennsylvania. He explained, “It was not perceived that every expectation from the tenderness which had been hitherto pursued, was unavailing, and that further delay could only create an opinion of impotency or irresolution in the government.”²²⁵ Given that the rebellion had become violent and that the judiciary could not compel obedience among the rebels to the law, Washington resolved to subdue the rebellion with military force. He explained, “To represent, however, that without submission, coercion must be the resort; but to invite them, at the same time, to return to the demeanor of faithful citizens.” He continued, “Pardon too, was tendered to them by the government of the United States, and that of Pennsylvania, upon no other condition, that an satisfactory assurance of obedience to the laws.” Over the course of the speech, he continued to explain how he had rather compel people to obey the laws with reason and argument rather than military force, but he continued to describe the urgency of the situation and his decision to use the militia. In conclusion, he encouraged Congress to let American citizens “persevere in their affectionate vigilance over that precious depository of American happiness, the constitution of the United States.” He repeated the Oath of Office and his commitment to “preserve, protect and defend the constitution of the United States.”²²⁶ In subduing the Whiskey Rebellion, Washington’s address and explanation of his decision-making process revealed important insights into the character of the new American government. Washington continued to emphasize the role of affection in the relationship between people and their government, but he maintained that people must act obediently to the laws of the United States. He deferred attention away from himself, and

²²⁵ Washington, “Speech of the President of the United States to Both Houses of Congress,” 1794, Retrieved from Early American Imprints.

²²⁶ Washington, “Speech of the President of the United States to Both Houses of Congress,” November 19, 1794, Retrieved from Early American Imprints.

he held up the Constitution as the worthy recipient of affection and obedience. His decision to use the military resulted from a desire to portray the government as effective and energetic. Washington phrased his addresses, therefore, to strengthen the Constitution and give it credibility as legitimate government.

Future Presidents and other American government officials deferred power and authority, as well as affection, away from themselves and made the law and the Constitution the worthy recipient of duty and affection. John Adams, who succeeded Washington as President in 1797, portrayed the citizens of the United States as affectionate and obedient. He compared the United States' peace with other nations relative to nations at war with one another, and he praised many elements of the American government and nation. First, he characterized the United States as "governed by mild and equal laws" rather than people. Second, he insisted that the American people experienced a daily increase in "their attachment to a system of government in proportion to their experience of its utility." He praised the American people for their "ready and general obedience to the laws flowing from the reason, and resting on the only solid foundation, the affections of the people." He characterized the State of the Union address, appropriately, as his constitutional duty. As war threatened with Great Britain and France over navigation rights and the impressment of sailors, Adams lamented the inability of the government to protect sailors' navigation rights. He explained, "Under this view of our affairs, I should hold myself guilty of a neglect of duty."²²⁷ Adams felt he had an obligation to protect and defend American merchant seamen, and he recognized his failure to accomplish this task.

²²⁷ John Adams, "Speech of the President of the United States to Both Houses of Congress, On Tuesday, May 16, 1797," Retrieved from Early American Imprints.

In regards to Native Americans, Adams perceived affection as an important aspect of the relationship between the United States and Native Americans living in the West. He explained to Congress that foreign powers, specifically Great Britain, had started encouraging Native Americans to fight against the United States. He explained, “it is proper for me to mention the attempts of Foreign Agents, to alienate the affections of the Indian Nations, and to excite them to actual hostilities against the United States.”²²⁸ He continued to describe how foreign insigators had, through great effort, attempted to influence Native Americans to “transfer their affections and force to a foreign nation” and to encourage them to make war on the United States.

During Adams’ presidency, affection continued to represent a vital component of the relationship between people and their governing officials. The people of Providence, Rhode Island issued a statement to President Adams concerning hostilities and diplomatic tensions with France. In response to this letter, Adams issued his own statement to the people of Providence for publication. In the opening remarks, he explained that he, as a native of Massachusetts, had grown up alongside the people of Providence, and he explained, “This respectful Address from the inhabitants of Providence... was by no means necessary to convince me of their affectionate attachment.”²²⁹ During his first inaugural address, Jefferson encouraged political opponents, the Republicans and the Federalists, to cease their oppositional stances and to return to a cordial relationship. He explained, “Let us, then, fellow citizens, unite with one heart and one mind. Let us restore to social intercourse that harmony and affection without which liberty and even

²²⁸ Adams, “The Speech of the President of the United States to Both Houses of Congress Delivered in the Representative Chamber,” November 23, 1797 (Philadelphia: Joseph Gales, 1797), Retrieved from Early American Imprints, 5.

²²⁹ Adams, “To the Inhabitants of the Town of Providence, in the State of Rhode Island,” May 7, 1798, Retrieved from Early American Imprints.

life itself are but dreary things.”²³⁰ After Jefferson had assumed the office, he responded to a congratulatory statement sent to him on behalf of the Danbury Baptist Association. In response, Jefferson explained, “The affectionate sentiments of esteem and approbation which you are so good as to express towards me, on behalf of the Danbury Baptist Association, give me the highest satisfaction.”²³¹ In a similar way that Jefferson spoke to his daughters, Jefferson praised the Baptists for their demonstration of affection and characterized it as satisfactory.

In addition, Adams continued to emphasize the need for obedience in the United States and the obligations of government officials to perform their duties and service to the country and its laws. In 1799, Adams addressed Congress and described his position that the judiciary system needed reworking. He explained, “In this extensive country, it cannot but happen, that numerous questions respecting the interpretation of the laws and the rights and duties of officers and citizens, must arise.”²³² He interpreted from chaos in the judicial system that the government could not effectively enforce its laws nor protect people from oppression. He considered it the duty of government officials to perform both of these tasks. In 1801, Jefferson opened his inaugural address by recognizing that he had been “Called upon to undertake the duties of the first executive office of our country.”²³³ In concluding his address, he remarked, “I repair, then, fellow citizens, to the post your have assigned me” and “Relying, then, on the patronage of your good will, I

²³⁰ Jefferson, “Inauguration Address.—March 4, 1801,” in *The Life and Selected Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. by Adrienne Koch and William Peden (New York: The Modern Library, 2004), 298.

²³¹ Jefferson, “Messrs. Nehemiah Dodge, Ephraim Robbins, and Stephen S. Nelson, A Committee of the Danbury Baptist Association, in the State of Connecticut,” Jan. 1, 1802, *The Life and Selected Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 307.

²³² John Adams, “Speech of the President of the United States, to Both Houses of Congress,” December 3, 1799, *Early American Imprints*, 4.

²³³ Jefferson, “Inauguration Address.—March 4, 1801,” in *The Life and Selected Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 298.

advance with obedience to the work.”²³⁴ In his final annual address to Congress, Jefferson explained that the country will continue to succeed and flourish because of the people’s commitment to the law. He explained, “Looking forward with anxiety to their future destinies, I trust that, in their steady character unshaken by difficulties, in their love of liberty, obedience to law, and support of the public authorities, I see a sure guaranty of the permanence of our republic.”²³⁵

Thomas McKean emphasized the necessity of obedience among the people. While serving as Chief Justice of Pennsylvania and riding judicial circuits, he often reported back to his wife concerning the obedience of the inhabitants of the various towns he visited. In one letter, he commended the local population for their respect toward his office. He remarked, “I have finished my business in this county much to my satisfaction.” He commended the respect and manners of the people in the town, and he concluded his statement that the inhabitants of his particular location “have paid as much attention and respect to the Judges in every practicable way as in any part of their State.”²³⁶ He explained, “The Gentleman in the several counties do not abate in the respectful attention towards me, but increase them, and all business is transacted much to my satisfaction.”²³⁷ McKean expected obedience to the laws and that the people demonstrate their obedience and respect toward him and his office as Chief Justice. Obedience continued to represent a vital component of the people’s relationship with their government and their rulers.

²³⁴ Jefferson, “Inauguration Address.—March 4, 1801,” in *The Life and Selected Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 301.

²³⁵ Jefferson, “Eighth Annual Message—November 8, 1808,” in *The Life and Selected Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 321.

²³⁶ McKean, Letter to Sarah McKean, 27 Oct. 1786. Thomas McKean Papers. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

²³⁷ McKean, Letter to Sarah McKean, 13 May 1789, Thomas McKean Papers. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

The first generation of government officials often deferred authority and the people's obedience to the American Constitution, and they spoke of their own submission to the Constitution, the laws, and their sense of duty to the country and the people. Their language represented part of a rhetoric characterizing the United States as a nation of laws—not men. In his first inaugural address, Jefferson remarked, "Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he, then, be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the forms of kings to govern him? Let history answer this question."²³⁸ In the public eye, political figures wanted to distance themselves from power and condemned political ambitiousness. Government officials employed the rhetoric of deference and submission to the Constitution to increase its credibility within the first years of its creation. Deference to the laws, the people, and the Constitution represented a rhetorical tactic to separate themselves, in view of the public, from patriarchal authority in government.

After the American Revolution, relationships within the family and between the government and the governed both changed and remained unchanged. After independence, early American statesmen continued to govern their families with patriarchal authority. With support from the law, they exercised control over the people and property within their households. While embracing authority as heads of households, they deflected authority away from themselves and toward the Constitution in the political realm. They subordinated themselves to the rule of law and encouraged others to demonstrate their affection and obedience to the Constitution—not to a person. Familial metaphors, while present, did not dominate the discourse. In these ways,

²³⁸ Jefferson, "Inauguration Address.—March 4, 1801," in *The Life and Selected Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 299.

governing officials related to the people in different ways than before the American Revolution, and a separation of familial and political authority had begun.

The American Revolution, however, did not complete a radical change in the relationship between governing officials and the governed nor did it achieve a complete separation of the familial and political authority. In many ways, people continued to relate with their government as they had with their monarch. Adult men employed familial metaphors, from time to time, to reference their own dependent position. Although people did not always explicitly define the characteristics of their governing officials as paternal in nature, governing officials and governed people continued to relate to one another in terms of obedience, duty, loyalty, and affection as they had before independence from Great Britain.

Conclusion

Before the Glorious Revolution, patriarchs commanded their dependents with ultimate authority. After the Glorious Revolution, they retained their authority but within a next context emphasizing contractual, affectionate, and nurturing family relationships. At the end of the seventeenth century, radical political theorists argued against the familial origins of legitimate government. In public political discourse, however, British monarchs, royal governors, and British subjects continued to employ familial metaphors to describe power relationships among people and between people and their governments. Based on ideals and the practice of patriarchy within the family, familial metaphors possessed a set of corresponding behavioral expectations, such as loyalty, obedience, and affection. Despite radical political ideology, a persistent link connected Anglo-American familial and political power relationship during the colonial period.

During the crisis against royal authority in the American colonies, both British loyalist and American revolutionaries employed familial metaphors to support their political arguments. According to loyalists and revolutionaries, subjects owed obedience and affection to their rulers. They each agreed that rulers rewarded the loyalty of their subjects with affection, benevolence, and protection. Despite their agreements, loyalists and revolutionaries emphasized different aspects of this ideal relationship between the government and the people. Each side attacked their opponents for failing to meet these expectations, and neither side challenged the legitimacy of this ideal relationship. From the perspective of American revolutionaries, King George III had failed his people because of his abusive character. Based on the monarch's failures, American revolutionaries justified their protests and, eventually, their independence.

The American Revolution changed the association between governing officials and the people without changing many elements of familial relationships. After independence, early American statesmen continued to govern their families with patriarchal authority. Buttressed by the law, they exercised control over the people and property within their households. They embraced their authority as heads of households but deflected authority away from themselves and toward the Constitution in the political realm. They expressed their duty and obedience to the rule of law and encouraged others to demonstrate their affection and obedience to the Constitution. Familial metaphors, while present, did not dominate political discourse after the American Revolution. In these ways, governing officials related to the people in different ways than before the American Revolution, and a separation of familial and political authority had begun.

The American Revolution, however, did not complete a radical change in the relationship between governing officials and the governed nor did it achieve a complete separation of the familial and political authority. In many ways, people continued to relate with their new governing officials as they had with their monarch. Some early Americans, for example, continued to use familial metaphors to reference their own dependent position. For the most part, early Americans did not characterize their governing officials as paternal figures. Nonetheless, governing officials and governed people continued to relate to one another in terms of obedience, duty, loyalty, and affection.

Historian Linda K. Kerber simply states, “Even the most radical American men had not intended to make a revolution in the status of their wives and sisters.”²³⁹ In addition to Kerber, historian Clare Lyons concurs, the “principles upon which marital

²³⁹ Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, 9.

coverture rested were exactly those that Revolutionary men rejected as illegitimate in the political realm: arbitrary and unaccountable authority, virtual representation, and subordination based on absolute right.”²⁴⁰ This thesis tests the validity of these statements. It concludes that early American statesmen continued to govern their families with patriarchal authority but distanced themselves from authority in politics. Revolutionary ideology that established sovereignty in the Constitution and the law, rather than people or government offices, separated political authority from a foundation in the family. By creating separate spheres of authority, revolutionary statesmen could exercise their power at home while distancing themselves from it in politics. Early American statesmen put the law and the Constitution, instead of themselves, in the position vacated by the monarch after the American Revolution.

In addition to historians’ understanding of early America, this thesis offers a new approach to gender history. In the existing scholarship, historians have focused on how women used their domestic experiences to influence or participate in politics. This scholarship, however, does not address the political significance of men’s domestic experiences. By understanding the language men used in their familial relationships, this thesis can describe how early American statesmen perceived and portrayed themselves in relation to government institutions, the law, the Constitution, and the public.

²⁴⁰ Lyons, *Sex among the Rabble*, 240.

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