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Florida International University
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Doctoral Dissertation Defense

Abstract

Pennsylvania's Loyalists and Disaffected in the Age of Revolution: Defining the Terrain of Reintegration,
1765-1800

by

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This study examines the reintegration of loyalists and disaffected residents in Pennsylvania who opposed the American Revolution from the Stamp Act crisis in 1765 through the Age of Federalism in 1790s. The inquiry argues that postwar loyalist reintegration in Pennsylvania succeeded because of the attitudes, behavior, actions and contributions of both disaffected residents and patriot citizens. The focus is chiefly on the legal battle over citizenship, especially patriot legislative measures such as treason, oaths of allegiance, attainders, confiscation, and militia service laws that revolutionaries employed to sanction disaffection.

Loyalists and the disaffected contributed to their own successful reintegration in three ways. First, the departure of loyalist militants at the British evacuation of occupied Philadelphia in June 1778 and later substantially lessened internal political tensions. Second, the overwhelming majority of the disaffected who stayed in Pennsylvania adopted non-threatening attitudes and behaviors towards republican rule. And third, the disaffected who remained ultimately chose to embrace the new republican form of government they had earlier resisted. Patriots contributed to the successful reintegration of the disaffected chiefly through the outcome of the factional struggle for internal political supremacy between revolutionary radicals and moderates. Pennsylvania radicals used the rule of law to deny citizenship to opponents of the Revolution and pushed for their permanent exclusion from the body politic. Moderates favored a reincorporation of those who had not supported the rebellion, utilizing the law to foster inclusion. Moderate electoral victories in the decade of the 1780s led to solid majorities in the state assembly that rescinded all repressive measures against former opponents, in particular the 1789 repeal of the Test Act of 1777.

In addition to patriot factionalism, the analysis stresses the activities of loyalists and the disaffected, exploring elite loyalist militants such as Joseph Galloway and the disaffected sons of Chief Justice William Allen; ordinary loyalist militants like John Connolly and the Rankin brothers of York County; Quaker pacifists such as the Pemberton siblings; the Doan guerrilla gang and British collaborators Abraham Carlisle and John Roberts; and the role of the Penn family proprietors.

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Department: History

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Major Professor: Dr. Kirsten Wood

Place: University Park, DM 370