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Order and Peace: Samuel Seabury's Concept of Liberty

Cho-Chien Feng

1. Introduction

The idea of liberty has been the subject of incessant debate. People around the world define the concept of liberty in different ways. For example, supporters of gay rights claim that liberty gives homosexuals the right to marry, yet at the same time, conservatively-inclined people in the United States argue that their liberty is threatened when President Obama executes his plans for the health care system. People have argued about the meaning of liberty throughout the centuries. Although the focus of the debates seemed to be diverse, the spirit underlying the debates was always the same: expanding the realm of human liberty for outside groups. The history of early modern American freedom, Michal Jan Rozbicki concluded in his book, was “a lengthy chronicle of diverse groups pounding at the gates and demanding membership.”¹ As historians continue to explore how different groups of people have claimed liberty for themselves, it becomes clear that liberty is not a self-evident right, but is instead a locus of conflict and contestation.

In the eighteenth century, people in the Atlantic world also contested the meanings and boundaries of the concept of liberty. This thesis utilizes New York Anglican priest Samuel Seabury's writings to elucidate the how Loyalists conceived the notion of liberty. The Loyalist conception of liberty is important for understanding how moderates and conservatives viewed

¹ Michal Jan Rozbicki, *Culture and Liberty in the Age of the American Revolution*. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 238.

liberty during the revolutionary era. Despite the significance of Loyalists' conception of liberty to the understanding of the political thought of the revolutionary era, this avenue of study has been overshadowed by the Patriots' victory and the subsequent growth of the United States. Several anecdotes and case studies will illuminate the importance of alternative concepts of liberty.

I would like to begin with a story of a moderate Loyalist, William Smith (1728–1793), to explain the crucial role that Loyalists played in the American Revolution's intellectual history. On July 6, 1776, William Smith, a lawyer in New York, received a summons from the Committee of the Congress of New York. The committee condemned New Yorkers who refused to “associate with their fellow citizens for the defence of their common rights” and “never manifested by their conduct, a zeal for, and an attachment to the American cause,” or had “maintained an equivocal neutrality.” They “have been considered by their countrymen in a suspicious light.” Therefore, “for the satisfaction of the people, who, in times so dangerous and critical, are naturally led to consider those as their enemies,” the committee asked him to declare himself to be a friend to the American cause.² Although the revolutionaries outnumbered Loyalists and neutrals, did they therefore have the right to deprive the Loyalists' right to pursue the liberty that they sought? When the revolutionaries forced others to agree with the “common rights” or common interests they defined, were they consistent with their claims of inherent rights? I suggest that the answer is no. I therefore believe that we should also consider the American Revolution from the Loyalist perspective.

² Original printed summons from the Committee of the Congress of New York, July 6th, 1776, box 1, lot 192, folio 1, William Smith Papers, New York Public Library.

Most Americans regarded themselves as subjects of the British King before the Revolution. Brendan McConville asserted that the cultural milieu of royal America before 1776 was monarchical and imperial.³ A transformational period before the American Revolution, however, turned many people from loyalty to Britain and instead pointed people towards a stance of complete separation from the Mother Country. Patriots utilized the idea of liberty to promote the separation. People of different positions argued about the origins of the right of liberty, and their different assertions later created a discrepancy between Patriots and Loyalists. Hence, reexamining the Loyalists' idea of liberty by discerning what they regarded as their liberty is crucial for us to reconstruct the true image of the intellectual world during the revolutionary crisis.

Basically, many Loyalists supported colonial opposition against the Stamp Act and Townshend Duties. Many scholars have already attempted to explain how economic and political interests drove many latent Loyalists to support the Stamp Act Congress initially, but eventually turned towards full-fledged Loyalism.⁴ However, in addition to personal economic interests and a desire for political patronage, Loyalists also had intellectual reasons for not following the revolutionaries. They also cherished their liberty, but their idea of liberty was different from the liberty that the revolutionaries pursued. Unfortunately, this incongruity eventually compelled thousands of people to lose their properties, families, friends, and reputations. When the Patriots

³ Brendan McConville, "A World of Kings," in *Recent Themes in Early American History: Historians in Conversation*, ed. Donald A. Yerxa (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), 123.

⁴ Many scholars have asserted that a group of people categorized as "Whig-Loyalists," a subgroup amongst Loyalists who initially supported the Congress in the formative stages of the Revolution, but eventually became full-fledged Loyalists. See Leopold S. Launitz-Schürer, Jr., *Loyal Whigs and Revolutionaries: The Making of the Revolution in New York, 1765-1776* (New York: New York University Press, 1980); William A. Benton, "Peter Van Schaack: The Conscience of a Loyalist"; and Jacob Judd, "Frederick Philipse III of Westchester County: A Reluctant Loyalist," both in *The Loyalist Americans: A Focus on Greater New York*, ed. Robert A. East and Jacob Judd (Tarrytown: Sleepy Hollow Restorations, 1975).

deported or imprisoned the Loyalists, we can see that, like slaves, the Loyalists were another group of people who were not applicable to the phrase “all men are created equal.”⁵

The composition of the New York Loyalists was complex. Each person had different reasons to stay loyal to the British king. This thesis focuses on the idea of an Anglican cleric, Samuel Seabury, and argues that Seabury’s arguments about liberty centered on several topics: the justification of the representatives; the supreme national authority; and the conditions of liberty. Whereas Patriots attempted to enlarge the realm of people who possessed liberty and had the right to participate in politics, Seabury adopted a more conservative stance on the distribution of the right of liberty. Seabury was satisfied with the liberty under the British Constitution, and tended to maintain the *status quo*. The Patriots protected their liberty by rebelling, and the Loyalists claimed their ideal liberty by uniting with the British side.

2. Previous studies on the New York Loyalists in the American Revolution: intellectual and factional perspectives

2.1 American Revolution

Since the American Revolution marked the commencement of the United States, historians of every generation have attempted to interpret its founding period. Progressive historians tended to elucidate the founding period from the perspective of party politics and economic interests.⁶

⁵ Continental Congress, *Declaration of Independence* (Philadelphia, 1776)

⁶ For more on the party-politics interpretation, see Carl Becker, *The History of Political Parties in the Province of New York, 1760-1776* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1960). For the preeminent economic interpretation of the American Revolution, see Charles Beard, *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States* (New York: Free Press, 1913).

They viewed ideas merely as “projected rationalizations of underlying interests.”⁷ Dissatisfied with the economic interpretation of Progressive historians, the next generation of historians “located the Revolution within a homogeneous past.”⁸ Richard Hofstadter stated that a new interpretation of America's political tradition was required in light of the existence of “a common climate of opinion,” one “obscured by the tendency to place political conflict in the foreground of history.”⁹ Because of their emphasis on the existence of “a common climate of opinion,” they were called consensus historians. This interpretation also claimed that the Founders' political thought was rooted in the Lockean variation of the principles of classical liberalism. According to Alan Gibson, after World War II, this Lockean interpretation of the American Founding “became a centerpiece of the consensus historians’ efforts to displace the Progressives’ conflict model of American history.” While the Progressive historians explained American history as a series of conflicts between agrarian debtors and commercial capitalists, consensus historians emphasized “the continuity throughout American history of the middle-class structure of American society and the hegemony of liberal values such as the sanctity of property, economic individualism, and democracy.”¹⁰

To revise the liberal interpretation, a group of scholars—who were later called the republican school—turned to emphasize the importance of non-Lockean ideas. They rejected the existence of a Lockean consensus in the age of the American Revolution, and argued that republican

⁷ Alan Gibson, *Interpreting the Founding: Guide to the Enduring Debates over the Origins and Foundations of the American Republic* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2009), 7.

⁸ Gwenda Morgan, *The Debate on the American Revolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 58.

⁹ Morgan, *The Debate on the American Revolution*, 57.

¹⁰ Gibson, *Interpreting the Founding*, 13–5.

values spread everywhere in the culture of the western world; therefore, republican ideas played a crucial role in the Revolution.¹¹ The first historian to lead this trend was Bernard Bailyn.

In 1960s, Bernard Bailyn planned to publish a complete series of American Revolutionary pamphlets. Eventually, he only finished the first volume; however, he later expanded the introduction of this volume into a classic work, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*. Bailyn argued that there were many different sources of revolutionary ideology. He traced some of the origins of revolutionary ideology back to the classics. He regarded the main contribution of the classical world was not in logic or theory, but merely in terminology. For example, the Patriots used terms such as virtue and corruption, but not in their original meanings in classic age. The works of rationalism in the Enlightenment directly shaped the idea of the revolutionary generation. They “expressed not simply the rationalism of liberal reform but that of enlightened conservatism as well.”¹² The tradition of English common law and Protestant political and social theory were also important sources for the pamphlets. In addition, the British dissenting tradition was gradually incorporated into colonial society from the seventeenth century onwards. The Revolutionary pamphlets were also filled with the dissenting tradition’s suspicion of monarchic despotism. The changes in the American colonies’ political and economic system made the description of the English dissenters, especially the accusations of the commonwealth men against Robert Walpole, looked like depictions of their own real lives in America.¹³ This radical tradition, Bailyn believed, provided a force to harmonize the “discordant elements in the political and social thought.” This force brought together Enlightenment

¹¹ Gibson, *Interpreting the Founding*, 36 and Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), vii.

¹² Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1992), 26.

¹³ Bailyn, *Ideological Origins*, 51.

abstractions, common law precedents, covenant theology, and classical analogy into a comprehensive political theory.¹⁴

Gordon Wood argued that republican values spread everywhere in the culture of the Western world. Quoting Franco Venturi, Wood claimed that by the eighteenth century, republicanism had become “a form of life, a set of ideals and beliefs that rooted in the culture.”¹⁵ He further asserted that the Revolution brought the republican tendencies to the surface, which abolished the monarchical remains, and also “create[d] once and for all new, enlightened republican relationship among people.” This change indicated a real radical revolution, not only in politics, but also in society.¹⁶ As for the people’s attitude toward independence, Wood believed that by embracing the language of radical Whigs and attacking the “monarchical abuse of family influence and patronage, people were destroying the bonds of traditional monarchical society.” Therefore, their opposition was not only political, but also social.¹⁷ By constructing not only a new form of government, but also a new concept of politics, Wood believed that the Revolution led the Americans out of the classical and medieval world, and into a modern political discussion.¹⁸

J. G. A. Pocock disagreed with Wood on the modernity of the American Revolution by stating that he viewed the Revolution not as “the first political act of revolutionary enlightenment,” but instead as “the last great act of the Renaissance.”¹⁹ He thought that Wood slightly overstated his belief that the classical political theory was supplanted. Pocock suggested

¹⁴ Bailyn, *Ideological Origins*, 53–4.

¹⁵ Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), vii–viii.

¹⁶ Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 169.

¹⁷ Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, 175.

¹⁸ Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787*, xvi.

¹⁹ J. G. A. Pocock, “Virtue and Commerce in the Eighteenth Century,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 3, no. 1 (Summer 1972): 120.

that “virtue” worked both in the “civic independence” of freeholders as well as the membership in a hierarchical order. That meant that republican theory could also be described as hierarchical, and therefore the Revolution did not bring Americans into modernity.²⁰ In addition, he asserted that the American Revolution, in the context of British history, provided evidence for the existence of a republican alternative within the parliamentary tradition. The Patriots used this republicanism to deny Parliament its authority as well as to produce a different mode of government. He stated that “the republican, commonwealth, or country tradition . . . provided Americans with a radical but rather shallow explanation of why they could no longer be parliamentary Englishmen, and a rather profound understanding of what else they might become.”²¹ Bailyn, Wood, and Pocock, though not totally in agreement with one another, established a firm foundation on the republican interpretation of the intellectual history of the American Revolution by using pamphlets and other political writings to elucidate how the ideology of republicanism affected the American Revolution.

More recent scholars have modified the findings of the republican school. Using the idea of liberty as a central theme, Michal Rozbicki’s *Culture and Liberty in the Age of the American Revolution* attempted to “recover the contemporary meaning of liberty,” and in the process suggested “revising some of the ways we currently understand the founding of the nation.”²² His intention to “recover the contemporary meaning of liberty” sounds pretty close to that of Wood and Pocock. However, the essence of Rozbicki’s effort is different. He said that “Political theory and philosophical ideas—as elaborated in the classical works of authors like Bernard Bailyn and

²⁰ Pocock, “Virtue and Commerce,” 133.

²¹ J. G. A. Pocock, “1776: The Revolution Against Parliament,” in *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 74–5.

²² Michal Jan Rozbicki, *Culture and Liberty in the Age of the American Revolution*, 1.

Pocock—are only some of the many bodies of knowledge that constitute such reality, and only partially illuminate what historical events meant to historical actors.”²³ Rozbicki attempted to bridge “the current gap between the political and cultural history of the Revolution,” and encourages “these two fields to speak to each other more often and more creatively.”²⁴ What does he mean by bridge the gap? Rozbicki reminded his readers that “Early modern liberty was a social relation between unequals, and as such could not have existed in and of itself as an abstract right, nor should it be examined as such.” Therefore, “any account of Revolutionary liberty should be deeply rooted in the relationship between those who enjoyed the full privileges of freedom and those who held only a few, or none.”²⁵ In other words, although the idea of liberty has been taken for granted in our age, we should be aware that it did not possess such a simple connotation during the age of the American Revolution. He concluded that “liberties first had to be invented (symbolic level), and legitimized by some, before they could be claimed by others.” He successfully argued that the invention of ideas precede the exercise of the idea in that culture. As for the American Revolution, Rozbicki claimed that “the emergence of freedom was not just a response to unfreedom; it was an outcome of the practices of the ruling class, because they were already the most free, they held cultural authority, and they were able not only to circumscribe particular liberties but also bestow worth and reputation on them.”²⁶ Rozbicki calls on scholars to rethink the cultural influence on the development of the concept of liberty.

Noting that the revolutionary debates had an imperial context, Craig Yirush stated that historians “failed to explore the ways that the political ideas of the English settlers who eventually created a republican revolution were shaped by the experience of living in an Atlantic

²³ Rozbicki, *Culture and Liberty*, 14.

²⁴ Rozbicki, *Culture and Liberty*, 1.

²⁵ Rozbicki, *Culture and Liberty*, 2–3.

²⁶ Rozbicki, *Culture and Liberty*, 235–6.

world of jurisdictional plurality and contested sovereignty.”²⁷ He asserted that the colonists applied these English and European ideas in specific contexts. Therefore, “out of the crucible of an Atlantic empire,” powerful ideas of rights and equality emerged.²⁸ The political ideas of the Loyalists showed us the other side of imperial debates. Their claims of liberty reminded us that under the context of the turbulent imperial crisis, the debate of rights was still an ongoing process.

2.2 Factions in New York

This paper also views New York Loyalists as a faction in colonial and revolutionary New York. The decisive factors that affected the forming of factions included economic interests, political positions, and different visions about the future of the colony. By the late colonial period, factions had not developed into an organized party system, and therefore, although we may call them “party” in a broader sense, the term “faction” will serve our purpose here to elucidate the origins and functions of the factions in colonial and revolutionary New York. The Loyalist camp which Samuel Seabury was a part of also evolved under this specific political context.

Factions and divisions were the essential elements of colonial political argument, and New York province was no exception. The fundamental work of party politics in colonial New York is Carl Becker’s *The history of Political Parties in the Province of New York, 1760-1776*. First published in 1909, Becker’s monograph set up an important foundation on the studies of party

²⁷ Craig Yirush, *Settlers, Liberty, and Empire: The Roots of Early American Political Theory, 1675-1775* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 6.

²⁸ Craig Yirush, *Settlers, Liberty, and Empire*, 267, 270. For more on the context of the imperial problem, which “seeks to locate the origins of the ideological definition of empire in Britain, Ireland and the wider Atlantic world, see David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 5.

politics in the colonial New York. Becker stated that before 1765 the political history of New York was a contest between the governors and the assembly, each representing “different interests and opposing principles.” The only thing that was permanent about factions was that those who were attached to the governor’s interest were on one side and those who were opposed to him used the assembly to thwart him. As the conflict with Britain gathered momentum, extra-legal committees came to supersede the authority of the assembly. “The establishment of this extra-legal machinery was the open door through which the common freeholder and the unfranchised mechanic and artisan pushed their way into the political arena” to the dismay of the land-owning and merchant aristocracy.²⁹ In the end of chapter one, he asserted that,

From 1765 to 1776, therefore, two questions, about equally prominent, determined party history. The first was whether essential colonial rights should be maintained; the second was by whom and by what methods they should be maintained. The first was the question of home rule; the second was the question, if we may so put it, of who should rule at home.³⁰

The two questions he raised became targets for later scholarly discussions. Patricia Bonomi, Alfred Young, Marc Egnal, and Michael Kammen all responded to Becker’s statement.³¹

Patricia Bonomi pointed out two problems with Becker’s assertion. First of all, she questioned Becker’s usage of the term “Aristocracy.” She doubted that the aristocracy described by Becker did exist in New York. One of her reasons was that the abundance of land made it difficult for the planters to find tenants. Some people might question that if it was so difficult to find tenants, how did the landlords keep prospering? Her answer was that “most of them did not; the majority were gradually parceled out among various family members, or broken down into smaller farms

²⁹ Carl Becker, *The History of Political Parties in the Province of New York, 1760-1776* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1960), 5, 7, 21–2.

³⁰ Carl Becker, *History of Political Parties*, 22.

³¹ Alfred F. Young, *The Democratic Republicans of New York: The Origins, 1763–1797* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967).

and sold outright.”³² Through deeper research on the composition of the members of the New York Assembly from 1750–1775, she found that “the assemblymen were approximately one-third patrician, one-third substantial middle-class, and one-third moderate middle-class.”³³ She also questioned Becker’s assertion that the aristocracy, which connoted stability, tranquility, and order, controlled politics. Yet, she argued that New York’s early history was filled with political strife.³⁴ Therefore, there was no way for “aristocracy” or any other sect to control the politics in New York.

Alfred Young argued that New York provincial politics was not characterized by a two-way conflict, as Becker had previously noted, “but a three-way conflict,” including the conflict between the Whigs and the Loyalists, within the Whigs’ camp, and between the tenants and landlords.³⁵ Therefore, Loyalists, as the counterpart of the revolutionaries, developed into a complex and diverse group of people at the eve of the American Revolution and played a crucial role in colonial political history. According to Young, the many conservative Whigs, who later became loyalists deserve further study.

Marc Egnal questioned Becker’s assumption that colonial factions were short-lived, lacked coherence, and were held together by a simple desire for office rather than by any more profound interest or world view. He argued that factions in Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts were actually “long-lived and coherent,” and the factions emerging in each colony by 1740

³² Patricia U. Bonomi, *A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 6.

³³ Bonomi, *Factious People*, 9n10.

³⁴ Bonomi, *Factious People*, 10.

³⁵ Young, *Democratic Republicans*, 11.

“underlay the choice of loyalties in the Revolutionary crisis.”³⁶ Egnal argued that as the Revolutionary movement began, long-held views of empire were at the center of partisan conflicts in New York. By 1769 the economic downturn had eased, and the Livingstons and DeLanceys had become Patriots and Tories respectively. The choice of allegiances reflected a pattern that had been evident even before the 1740s.³⁷ In his opinion, the different camps with diverse opinions about the British Empire lasted and developed into Patriots and Tories.

Edward Countryman also challenged Becker’s idea of aristocratic domination in the American Revolution. He claimed that most of his study, *A People in Revolution: The American Revolution and Political Society in New York, 1760–1790*, was concerned with relations between ordinary people and their rulers at the level of first, the provincial and later the state government. He reminded his readers, “Local government was a significant factor in eighteenth-century New York, sometimes socializing people into the ways of a participatory society and sometimes repressing just such participation.” He thought that the charters of Albany and New York City provided for popular involvement. “For though the governor appointed their mayors, their freeholders and freemen elected their boards of aldermen and common councils.” Therefore, he asserted that political power was close to people’s daily lives. Ordinary men stood an excellent chance of wielding their political power in a day-to-day manner.³⁸

Countryman indicated that Carl Becker’s conclusion about the Revolution becoming a struggle in these years over “who should rule at home” only began to suggest the complexity of what was happening. No one knew in 1765 or even 1770 what would happen, but people did get

³⁶ Marc Egnal, “The Pattern of Factional Development in Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts, 1682–1776” in *Party and Political Opposition in Revolutionary America*, ed. Patricia U. Bonomi (New York: The Sleepy Hollow Press, 1980), 43.

³⁷ Egnal, “The Pattern of Factional Development,” 56.

³⁸ Edward Countryman, *A People in Revolution: The American Revolution and Political Society in New York, 1760–1790* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1981), 31.

used to “deliberately resisting authority, to challenging official policy, and to trying to change social practice.”³⁹

Countryman also pointed out that people integrated their concern about many other things with their response to the imperial issue. Many people were so concerned about their own difficulties that they neglected the imperial issue until the crisis of independence. That does not mean they were irrelevant to the Revolution. Countryman insisted that, “their concern with domestic issues had a major part in causing the crisis to strike at the whole system of colonial life and not simply at the tie to Britain.”⁴⁰ Domestic issues and imperial issues were inseparable, and when it comes to discuss the politics in colonial New York, Countryman argued we have to examine those two factors together. He commented on the situation in colonial New York:

People's anger expressed itself in many types of crowd action. There were crowds of mixed social composition whose concern was primarily with the imperial issue. There were lower-class urban crowds that had domestic problems in mind. There were other crowds of lower-class city people who were learning to think independently about what the tie to Britain meant in their lives. In the countryside men rioted in protest against a set of economic, social, and political relations with which they could make no quarter.⁴¹

Even the riots, or crowd actions, contained plenty of different factors: different places, with different people, with different motives. Countryman believed that “the net effect of all three factors – social development, popular militance, and political decay—was to put New Yorkers in a situation of readiness for a thoroughgoing revolution by 1773 or 1774.”⁴²

³⁹ Countryman, *People in Revolution*, 71.

⁴⁰ Countryman, *People in Revolution*, 3.

⁴¹ Countryman, *People in Revolution*, 3.

⁴² Countryman, *People in Revolution*, 4.

Countryman asserted that, for people in New York, “social and economic questions might easily meld with political ones.” For example, “an artisan faced with depression could blame it on the Stamp Act. He could demand that New York's port be opened in defiance of the act in the hope of stimulating exports and that New Yorkers themselves consume the products of local industry.” Moreover, “a laborer could grow irate when off-duty troops and naval sailors took scarce work from him.” In the anger of such men, Countryman stated, was “the making of the city's revolutionary coalition.” The imperial problems that the British imposed on the city after 1763 struck a place whose people had reason for quarreling among themselves. However, their quarrels became intimately bound up with the way that they responded to what the British did.⁴³ Consequently, Countryman believed that independence eventually changed New York and cut their ties with Britain.

Michael Kammen noted that many of the Whig leaders in colonial New York had been trained in the law, an education that heightened their appreciation of constitutional grievances but also made them hesitant to take part in extralegal activities. In consequence the leaders were pulled along by public opinion and by the irresistible force of the people. Most of the major trends and themes in New York's colonial history played important roles in determining the province's revolutionary experience. An excess of pluralism and materialism combined with a lack of coherent community to make rebellion in New York a fairly distinctive phenomenon. But what made New York's rebellion so problematic, Kammen declared, was that “it paralleled the troubles arising from *Forsey v. Cunningham* (1763–65), the Sugar Act crisis (1764), and the Stamp Act (1765).” “Similarly, the Stamp Act crisis (1765–1766) overlapped the passionate protest aroused in New York by enforcement of the Quartering Act (1765–1767), a dispute that

⁴³ Countryman, *People in Revolution*, 12–3.

led in turn to Parliament's passage in 1767 of the Restraining Act. That, in turn, coincided with the furor over the Townshend duties, and so it went."⁴⁴

These studies show that New York Loyalists lived in a factious society. Ordinary people and elites competed in leading the revolutionary movement. Samuel Seabury, representing Anglican power and ideology, played a supportive role in the Loyalist camp. Kammen mentioned that people's attitude towards local issues helped formed their decisions on imperial issues. Seabury's attitude towards the issue of appointing an American bishop also informed his decision on occupying the Loyalist side.

2.3 Loyalists

The study of Loyalists showed another perspective toward the American Revolution. The Loyalists were of diverse origins: Anglican preachers and the non-clerical Loyalists, or as Benton called, the Whig-Loyalists. Since the Loyalists came from diverse interests, backgrounds and social status, they were likely to have diverse opinions. However, they at least held one thing in common: their claims for liberty.

Robert M. Calhoun's *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America* made a substantial contribution to the studies of Loyalists. Calhoun used a chapter to state William Smith Jr.'s effort on mediating between the Loyalists and Patriots. He also used several chapters to illustrate the political ideas of Samuel Seabury and Myles Cooper, and another couple chapters to describe the Loyalists in New York, both state and city. It is a very comprehensive monograph.⁴⁵ William H. Nelson spent a chapter in his book illustrating the composition of the loyalist rank and file. He

⁴⁴ Michael Kammen, *Colonial New York: A History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), 348–9.

⁴⁵ Robert McCluer Calhoun, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America, 1760–1781* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973). See also, Wallace Brown, *The King's Friends: The Composition and Motives of the American Loyalist Claimants* (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 1965).

thought that it was dangerous to make class generalizations about the Revolution. For example, he pointed out that “when an Act of Banishment was passed against some three hundred Loyalists in Massachusetts in 1778, they were listed by trade or profession.” The ranks of the banished were comprised as follows: “a third were merchants, professional men, and gentlemen; another third were farmers, and the rest were artisans or labourers with a sprinkling of small shopkeepers.”⁴⁶ William Benton in his *Whig-Loyalism* asserted that not all the Loyalists were Tories. Actually, some people were originally Whigs, and later become Loyalists. They became Loyalists because they disagreed with the methods that the radicals used, and many of them went back to the United States after the revolution.⁴⁷

Recently, Brendan McConville emphasized royalism in pre-revolutionary period. He reminded us that

In the royal America that existed between the Glorious Revolution and 1776, that which we call political culture, the milieu in which politics takes place, was decidedly monarchical and imperial, Protestant and virulently anti-Catholic, almost to the moment of American independence.

He also argued, “Writers who lived in this society internalized and reinforced its values. Almost everything printed between 1689 and 1775 expressed an intense admiration for the monarchy.”⁴⁸

In his research he depicted the process of Anglicization in colonial society, and concluded that the fall of royal America defined the period around the Independence. Though the revolutionary culture was greatly influenced by the political ideas of Enlightenment, McConville asserted that the culture in colonial America was very royalist in reality. The idea of Neoabsolutism

⁴⁶ William H. Nelson, *The American Tory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 85–6.

⁴⁷ William Allen Benton, *Whig-Loyalism: An Aspect of Political Ideology in the American Revolutionary Era* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1969).

⁴⁸ Brendan McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688-1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 7.

reemerged in colonial culture, and the claims of kings' divine right were popular. Americans adapted the language of divine rights to describe the Hanoverian kings, and equated loyalty to the kings with loyalty to God.⁴⁹ He concluded that when scholars came to understand the royal nature of the provincial past, scholars will be able to change their understanding of what followed. Many colonial behaviors revealed a "desperate need for ties to the past,"⁵⁰ which demonstrated how royalist the Americans were.

In addition, Loyalism in New York was an important issue, and therefore, some books focused on this theme. Philip Ranlet's *The New York Loyalists* provided a comprehensive political and social history of the Loyalists in New York. Although it did not mention much about intellectual history, Ranlet discerned that:

Since New York seemed divided, puzzled observers in other colonies probably assumed that the division amounted to a fight between Tories and Whigs, instead of what it really was—a debate about the method of opposition to the British.⁵¹

Ranlet noted that one of the special characteristics of the conflicts between Patriots and Loyalists in New York was that it did not lead to a physical violence, but led to published debates. Many scholars asserted that a group of people categorized as "Whig-Loyalists" among the Loyalists supported the Congress in the beginning, but eventually adopted the loyalist position.⁵² In *Loyal Whigs and Revolutionaries*, Leopold S. Launitz-Schürer, Jr. depicted the development of the Patriot and Loyalist factions in New York. This book reexamined the rivalry of the Livingston

⁴⁹ Brendan McConville, *Three Faces*, 209.

⁵⁰ Brendan McConville, *Three Faces*, 313, 315.

⁵¹ Philip Ranlet, *The New York Loyalists* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1986), 4.

⁵² See Leopold S. Launitz-Schürer, Jr., *Loyal Whigs and Revolutionaries: The Making of the Revolution in New York, 1765–1776* (New York: New York University Press, 1980). William A. Benton, "Peter Van Schaack: The Conscience of a Loyalist" and Jacob Judd, "Frederick Philipse III of Westchester County: A Reluctant Loyalist," in *Loyalist Americans*, ed. East and Judd.

and De Lancey families to evaluate the way the rivalry shaped politics and the growth of a revolutionary ideology and also the struggle for power between the elites.⁵³ Although being viewed as a staunch Loyalist family, Launitz-Schürer pointed out that the DeLanceys did not accept the classic conservatism that William Nelson suggested marked the American Tory. Their belief and actions, however, were identical to those of the revolutionaries, so Launitz-Schürer also categorized them as the “whig-loyalists,” or as he named the title of his book, “Loyal Whigs.”⁵⁴

Maya Jasanoff and Ruma Chopra have both published recent books on Loyalism. Jasanoff’s book, *Liberty’s Exiles*, focused on the exile of the Loyalists and their influence after the Revolution.⁵⁵ *Liberty’s Exiles* is an extension of her article in 2008. In her article, Maya Jasanoff claimed that the Loyalists have long been relegated to the margins of mainstream history, and have figured little in the major treatments of British politics and identity during the war.⁵⁶ However, Jasanoff asserted that the exile of the Loyalists from the thirteen colonies to the other parts of the British Empire actually played a crucial role in Atlantic history and even in the history of the worldwide British Empire.⁵⁷ She concluded that all aspects of these Loyalist migrations offered insight into how Britain and their empire rebounded from the lost war, and also showed the value of a global and comparative study of this topic. She believed that by taking a global approach one can describe the transnational experiences of many Loyalist refugees.⁵⁸ In other words, the Loyalist migrants are an unusually valuable group through which

⁵³ Launitz-Schürer, Jr., *Whigs and Revolutionaries*, ix.

⁵⁴ Launitz-Schürer, Jr., *Whigs and Revolutionaries*, 129.

⁵⁵ Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty’s Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011).

⁵⁶ Maya Jasanoff, “The Other Side of Revolution: Loyalists in the British Empire,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 65, no. 2 (April 2008): 206.

⁵⁷ Jasanoff, “The Other Side of Revolution,” 208.

⁵⁸ Jasanoff, “The Other Side of Revolution,” 231.

to investigate imperial history in this decade of change. Out of her research, she suggested that the historiography of the American Revolution and the British Empire needed revisiting in the two following ways. “One concerns the global nature of the Revolution,” and the other involves “the nature of the British imperial state.”⁵⁹

On the other hand, Ruma Chopra said, in her introduction, that “the Americans who opposed independence felt a deeper threat from rebel leaders who justified the legality of revolution than from the restrictive legislation imposed by the British ministry.” She further stated that the Loyalists:

[s]hared similar fears about the unleashing of violence that threatened to annihilate any sense of reason, about the blindness and provincialism of rebel leaders who awoke the passion of the mob on a utopian vision that had no successful historical precedent, and about the appalling prospect of an unbalanced society.⁶⁰

Chopra indicated that leading New Yorkers favored a moderate path between radicalism and unquestioning obedience. They believed that arbitrary taxes violated their political liberties as British subjects. Because they lived in a commercial city blessed by the benefits of British Empire, leading New Yorkers avoided taking any action that would jeopardize their ties to the empire.⁶¹ In conclusion, Chopra thought that the Loyalists confronted a realization that “they valued the symbols of the British Empire” “more deeply than the Crown’s representatives in New York or in London.” They expected to be the partners of the British army but the British government did not treat them as they expected.⁶²

⁵⁹ Maya Jasanoff, “The Other Side of Revolution,” 231–2.

⁶⁰ Ruma Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion: Loyalists in New York City during the Revolution* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 2.

⁶¹ Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 27–8.

⁶² Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 223.

Janice Potter's *The Liberty We Seek* examined the Loyalist ideology, and is most close to the theme of this research.⁶³ It broadly discussed the Loyalist ideology, analyzed Loyalists' fear for democratic tyranny, and traced the colonial and British origins of Loyalist thought. Potter claimed that the Loyalists' plan was to restore the order, keep the imperial union intact, and reform the colonial institution. Their alternative to the revolution was a reformed British Empire and revitalized colonial institutions.⁶⁴ By researching the political and religious debates centered on the King's College Controversy, Donald F. M. Gerardi deeply delved into the embryo of the Whig-Tory argument. He asserted that the debates about the King's College controversy later developed into the Patriot-Loyalist debates on the eve of the Revolution. Therefore, through his study on the King's College controversy, he actually explained the ideology behind the Anglican Loyalists.⁶⁵ While Potter examined the Loyalist ideology in a broader sense, Gerardi focused on the Anglican Loyalists and correctly pointed out their connection with the controversy two decades ago.

These former studies provided necessary background knowledge for this research. Although most of the scholars noted that the Anglican Church had some connection with Loyalism, the study of this connection is still absent. Moreover, although there were many Anglicans who joined the Loyalist camp, there were still many others who chose the other side—for example, John Jay and Alexander Hamilton. By further studying the political and religious thoughts of Samuel Seabury, we could not only delve into the intellectual world of a significant Anglican

⁶³ Janice Potter, *The Liberty We Seek: Loyalist Ideology in Colonial New York and Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983).

⁶⁴ Janice Potter, *The Liberty We Seek*, 154.

⁶⁵ Donald F. M. Gerardi, "The King's College Controversy 1753–1756 and the Ideological Roots of Toryism in New York," *Perspectives in American History* 11 (1977): 148–9.

figure, but also open a door to an advanced understanding of the connection between Loyalism and Anglicanism.

3. Samuel Seabury in the American Revolution

3.1 The Loyalists in New York

The steps that the First Continental Congress took stimulated the opposing people to form a loyalist faction. Thomas Jones explained that many Loyalists supported the Congress because they expected the Congress to come up with a method to reconcile with the mother country; however, what the Congress produced at last was “a declaration of war.”⁶⁶ According to Joseph S. Tiedemann’s research, the Loyalists in New York “came from all walks of life but were most prominent among crown officials, patricians, De Lanceyites, Anglicans, merchants, ideologues, and recent English immigrants.” They disagreed among themselves and with Britain over the right of taxation, the issue of Tea Act, and the Coercive Acts; however, they all agreed that British America was moving toward independence. John Alsop resigned as a member in the Provincial Congress after the declaration of independence. He stated, “As long as a door was left open for a reconciliation ... I was willing and ready to render my country all the service in my power, and for which purpose I was appointed and sent to this Congress; but as you have ... by that Declaration, closed the door of reconciliation. I must beg leave to resign my seat.”⁶⁷ Alsop’s statement demonstrated one of the typical characteristics of the political positions of the New York Loyalists: They believed that the Parliament made mistakes, but they insisted that this

⁶⁶ Thomas Jones was a Loyalist lawyer and politician who published *History of New York During the Revolutionary War and of the Leading Events in the Other Colonies at That Period*, when he was exiled in England.

⁶⁷ Joseph S. Tiedemann, *Reluctant Revolutionaries: New York City and the Road to Independence, 1763-1776* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 206–7.

mistake should be made up by negotiation and reconciliation, not by an abrupt break with the mother country.

Since the Loyalists came from “all walks of life” as Tiedemann stated, they were a complex composition. Socially, the DeLanceyite merchants were concerned about their economic links with the empire, and some residents sided with the king because of their adherence to elitist rule; others loyally emulated the example of the political leaders they had followed for years. Some Livingstonites, though, while opposed to the Delanceyites for many years, chose to become Loyalists because they preferred royal tyranny to mobocracy. Intellectually, many Loyalists were the heirs of Bolingbroke, Montesquieu, Edmund Burke, and William Blackstone. They were conservatives who abhorred “the whig preference for equality, individualism, and limited government.” Some New York Loyalists were persuaded by constitutional arguments supporting the Parliamentary supremacy.⁶⁸

The Loyalists were also religiously diverse. For Anglicans like Samuel Seabury, Myles Cooper, Thomas Bradbury Chandler, and Charles Inglis, their loyalism revealed their church’s theology and history. Tiedemann pointed out that they believed in a hierarchical society, mistrusted ordinary people, and were convinced that faith required “obedience to God, king, lords and bishops.” Of course, Anglicans were not the only Loyalists; some members of the Dutch Reformed church were also Loyalists. Most American Methodists became Loyalists or remained neutral. Quakers were pacifists who rejected the notion of bearing arms and strove to

⁶⁸ Tiedemann, *Reluctant Revolutionaries*, 207. It is interesting to list Burke with Bolingbroke here, for Burke had been an intellectual opponent of Bolingbroke. However, they did agree on their attitude toward equality, individualism and limited government.

stay neutral.⁶⁹ Though their reasons and ideas were diverse, everyone had his own reason to be loyal to the king.

In his research on Frederick Philipse III, Jacob Judd suggested that “political ideology, party factionalism, and church affiliation” were some of the important factors which helped the Loyalists determine their choices. On the other hand, allegiances related to social and political position also helped form their ultimate decision.⁷⁰ Tiedemann called the New Yorkers “reluctant revolutionaries” for a reason. Judd pointed out that most New Yorkers “agreed the concept that Crown had erred, but they also adhered to the idea that they must recognize the Crown’s authority.” People wavered on their stances. It would be very difficult to predict if one would become a Patriot or Loyalist according to one’s stance in 1765, since leading New Yorkers actually favored a moderate path between the radical Liberty Boys and the absolute royalists. Eventually, events outside the province, such as the Declaration of Independence, compelled the New Yorkers to reach final decisions. In fact, Judd noted, New York did not ratify the Declaration until July 9, at a point when “it realized that it had to join her sister states in the ensuing struggle or stand against them alone.”⁷¹

In the process of wavering between two camps, many prominent American Whigs ended up refusing independence. William Benton called them “Whig-Loyalists,” and Leopold S. Launitz-Schürer, Jr. named them “Loyal Whigs.” Peter Van Schaack was one of the most scrupulous among them. His hopes rested on a belief that Congress would reject the use of armed force. He did not champion the “violent measures” of his neighbors, but would support the Continental Association since “[i]t is a peaceable mode of obtaining redress.” He tended to go along with the

⁶⁹ Tiedemann, *Reluctant Revolutionaries*, 208–9.

⁷⁰ Judd, “Frederick Philipse III,” 25.

⁷¹ Judd, “Frederick Philipse III of Westchester,” 26 and Ruma Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 27.

Congress to a certain extent, hoping to fortify what they conceived to be the rights of their country. However, as soon as he found that the designs of the American leaders were to dissolve the union between Great Britain and the colonies, he refused to participate in the process.⁷² As a lawyer, he remained loyal due to his legal understanding of the binding contract between the empire and the colonies.⁷³ This attitude was a common one among many Loyalists in New York.

Another important example of the New York Loyalists is the DeLancey family. Through the DeLanceys-Lincolns rivalry, the DeLanceys grasped the main prominent political positions in colonial New York. Launitz-Schürer pointed out that the DeLanceys did not accept the classic conservatism that William Nelson has suggested marked the American Tory. Their belief and actions, however, were nearly identical to those of the revolutionaries, so Launitz-Schürer also categorized them as “whig-loyalists.”⁷⁴

Those Whig-Loyalists were the political leaders of the Loyalists in New York; however, the writers who participated in the pamphlet war were Anglican clergyman. Led by Samuel Seabury, Charles Inglis, and Thomas Bradbury Chandler, the Anglican clergy in New York and New Jersey attacked the Continental Association during the fall of 1774.⁷⁵ Unlike the Anglican clergy and Whig-Loyalists, many New Yorkers did not leave behind specific ideological reasons for their decision during the rebellion.⁷⁶ Therefore, the writings of the Whig-Loyalists and Anglicans became the most important materials for historians to understand the political ideas of the Loyalists.

3.2 Samuel Seabury and the Church of England

⁷² Benton, “Peter Van Schaack,” 47–8.

⁷³ Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 47.

⁷⁴ Launitz-Schürer, Jr., *Loyal Whigs and Revolutionaries*, 129.

⁷⁵ Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 33–4.

⁷⁶ Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 48.

Samuel Seabury was born in Groton, Connecticut on November 30, 1729. His parents had just converted from Congregationalism to the Church of England when he was born. He studied at Yale for several years, and after he got a degree at Yale, went to Edinburgh, Scotland to study anatomy and physics in 1752. He was ordained a deacon and priest and then appointed to New Brunswick. He returned to America in 1754 and then was promoted to Jamaica, Long Island in 1757.⁷⁷ Being an Anglican preacher, Seabury's sermons and pamphlets were based on a set of governmental ideas that could be linked to his Anglican belief.

The established church in New England in the colonial era was the Congregational order. However, in June 1722, Timothy Cutler, a rector of Yale College, as well as four other tutors declared that they would give up their Congregational posts and seek ordination in the Church of England. This development partly resulted from a donation of about one thousand volumes to the library of Yale by Jeremiah Dummer, Connecticut's colonial agent in London. This collection included many books by Anglican divines, which influenced the readers in the college at that time. By 1765, among the 400 ministers graduated from Yale, 10 percent of them became Anglican clergy.⁷⁸ Seabury and his father were both influenced by this trend. Seabury's father, Samuel Seabury Sr., married around 1726 and was brought in association with members of the Church of England. Seabury Sr.'s father-in-law, Thomas Mumford, was the uncle by marriage of Dr. McSparran, the celebrated missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (S.P.G.) in that region. The religious tendency of Old Seabury's wife's family, and the public agitation of the subject, led Old Seabury to research Episcopal claims. Eventually, he ceased to officiate for the Congregationalists in North Groton, and declared his intention of crossing the

⁷⁷ Eden Edward Beardsley, *Life and Correspondence of the Right Reverend Samuel Seabury* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1881), 1–8.

⁷⁸ Peter M. Doll, *Revolution, Religion, and National Identity: Imperial Anglicanism in British North America, 1745-1795* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2000), 160–1.

ocean to obtain Holy Orders in the spring of 1730.⁷⁹ Though Samuel Seabury was baptized by a Congregational minister in 1729, he grew up in the Anglican Church.

Historically, the emergence of the Church of England paralleled the development of nation-states. One major difference that the Church of England held was that the leader of the Anglican Church was not the Pope, but the King of England. The purpose of this change was to avoid Rome's foreign influence on the politics of England. Simultaneously, this change also marked their desire to make themselves a distinct group of people, and thus formulated the idea of the nation. Therefore, the idea of a united nation and of the supreme authority of the King and Parliament rooted deeply into Anglican concept of liberty began to congeal.

One of the problems restricting the development of the Anglican Church in America was that the church could not provide sufficient clergymen to the colonies. Without a resident bishop in America, prospective Anglican clergy had to voyage across the Atlantic Ocean to England to accept the ordination, which was costly, time consuming, and dangerous. Therefore, American Anglicans had been petitioning the Anglican Church for a resident bishop in America for many years and aroused a great deal of opposition, not only from Congregationalists and Presbyterians, but also from other Anglicans who were "convinced that their own hard-won traditions of government in church and state were threatened by the growth and spread of episcopacy."⁸⁰ The opposition of some Anglicans to this effort to install bishops could also explain the reason that some Anglicans, such as John Jay and Alexander Hamilton eventually chose to stand with the revolutionaries.

⁷⁹ Beardsley, *Life and Correspondence of the Right Reverend Samuel Seabury*, 2–3.

⁸⁰ Doll, *Revolution, Religion, and National Identity: Imperial Anglicanism in British North America, 1745-1795*, 157.

For the opponents of American bishops, everything the English and American clerical Episcopal advocates and their allies among the laity did “seemed to militate towards a greater degree of imperial control over the colonies,” and also, their “incarnational understanding of the church’s mission and the establishment tradition of the Church of England alike made them acutely conscious of the political dimension of religious issues.”⁸¹ The Dissenters wondered if Anglican advocates were “sincere in their desire for a purely ‘spiritual’ episcopate, or did they regard that goal as a stalking horse for a more fully developed establishment and ecclesiastical supremacy over the Dissenters?” The Dissenters distrusted the Anglicans’ intention, believing that the Anglicans were involved in “some underhanded plot against American liberties,” and adhered to “an older religio-political system whose values would continue to be upheld in the British Empire.”⁸² Therefore, the controversy of the American bishop issue was not only a problem of religion, but also of politics, especially imperial politics.

The Anglican clergy argued that God’s incarnation in Jesus Christ instilled his Spirit into the material world and enabled humans to receive God’s grace through material things in the church’s sacraments. They also stated that it was the church’s responsibility to sanctify the community. Therefore, “the natural tendency for those schooled in such a theology would be to understand church and state as a natural whole and to seek the reconciliation and unity of the two.”⁸³ For the Anglican clergy, the Church and the British nation were inseparable.⁸⁴ Samuel Seabury’s sermon demonstrated the implication of this unified concept of politics and religion.

⁸¹ Doll, *Revolution, Religion, and National Identity*, 156–7.

⁸² Doll, *Revolution, Religion, and National Identity*, 157.

⁸³ Doll, *Revolution, Religion, and National Identity*, 157–8.

⁸⁴ Gerardi, “The King’s College Controversy,” 157.

In a sermon Seabury published in 1777, he emphasized the idea that people should fear God, and honor the King, showing his belief in the divine origin of Kingship. He believed that the writings of the Apostles contained rules and directions on all the different relations of men in this world, and therefore:

As the grand relative Duty, so far as civil society is concerned, is that which all Men owe to the Government under which God's Providence hath place them, the Apostle first attends to, and inculcates upon Christians, due and peaceable Submission to that Authority under which they live; whether it be exercised by Kings as Supreme, or by Governors sent by them, and acting by their authority.⁸⁵

He asserted that God's Providence had placed men under the supremacy of Kings, and accused the revolutionaries of "pretending that their Christian Liberty set them free from their Subjection to civil Government."⁸⁶ For Seabury, civil government "was the Order and Institution of God himself," and thus people actually disobeyed God when they disobeyed legal government.⁸⁷ Seabury further elucidated that without Society, man "could not subsist with Safety and Comfort to himself," and also "without Government there can be no Society, at least no Security in Society: And without Governors and Rulers, there can be no Government." Therefore, he asserted, "reason and common sense will teach us to honor and esteem those from whom we receive[d] protection."⁸⁸

The revolutionaries contended that the measures of British Parliament encroached upon their rights as Britons, and believed in the British government's inherent corruption. However, Seabury doubted men's judgmental abilities. He reflected: "Are we always competent Judges of

⁸⁵ Samuel Seabury, *St. Peter's Exhortation to Fear God and Honor the King, Explained and Inculcated* (New York, 1777), 5–6.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 10.

the good or evil Conduct of those whom God's Providence hath placed over us?" He reminded his audience that "our Passions and Prejudices often mislead us in the Judgment." The current revolt, he opined, would "dissolve all the Ties of Government, and introduce Anarchy, and Oppression, and Confusion, because some of the Officers of Government had behaved amiss."⁸⁹ He pointed out that when Peter commanded the Church to fear God and honor the King, they were ruled by kings like Nero and Caligula.⁹⁰ He implied that the Apostles asked the Church to obey kings even as such, so they absolutely needed to obey their current king. He adopted Peter's exhortation for people to fear God, and said, "The Fear of God, therefore, binds all the Duties which we owe to civil Government,"⁹¹ and therefore, he further instructed:

In the Empire to which we belong, the supreme Authority is vested in the King, the *Lords* and the *Commons* of the Realm, conjunctly called the Parliament; and to the Laws of this supreme Authority absolute Submission and Obedience are due, both upon the Principles of Religion, and of good Policy.⁹²

He affirmed that the supreme authority of civil government, which fell on the King, the *Lords*, and the *Commons*, required absolute obedience and submission. He rebuked the revolutionaries for "breaking through all the Bonds of civil Society, effacing the Principles of Morality from among Men, treading under Foot the Dictates of Humanity and the Rights of their Fellow Subjects, subverting the most mild and equitable System of Laws, introducing the most horrid Oppression and Tyranny, and filling the Country with Confusion, Rapine, Destruction, Slaughter

⁸⁹ Ibid., 11.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 12.

⁹¹ Ibid., 15.

⁹² Ibid., 16.

and Blood!”⁹³ Accordingly, he urged the Loyalists to restore “[p]eace, Order and good Government again in this Country.”⁹⁴

In another sermon Seabury preached in British-occupied New York in 1777, he emphasized that the kingdom should not be divided. He presumed that human beings were “born for society,” and that the aim of every society was “the peace, order and welfare of the human species.”⁹⁵ However, malevolence and “impetuosity of passion” usually put the society in danger. To avoid this danger, he asserted that “the laws of civil society, the laws of God, the tender, sociable and humane feelings of the heart, all concur to restrain the inordinacy of passion, to bridle the lust of revenge; and all these united, and assisted by education, are scarcely sufficient to answer the purpose.”⁹⁶ In other words, he believed that men had to be restrained by civil laws and divine laws to do good. Seabury further said that, “To bring about this happy state by restraining the malevolent tempers of our nature, and by cherishing those of a kind and benevolent tendency, is the proper business of reason, the grand aim of religion, especially of that religion which the son of God hath communicated to the world.”⁹⁷ As a clergyman, he attempted to balance between reason and religion, and claimed that both of them aimed at the “happy state” of human beings through the regulation of human nature. In this sermon, he quoted chapter 133 in Psalms and explained King David’s feelings about brotherhood. He noted that David had “long viewed, and lamented over his country torn to pieces with party and faction, and languishing under all the horrors and distresses of civil war.” He compared the fights between Loyalists and Patriots to the contest between Saul and David. Seabury was not willing to see the country torn apart by the

⁹³ Ibid., 18–9.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 20.

⁹⁵ Samuel Seabury, *A Discourse on Brotherly Love* (New York: H. Gaine, 1777), 5-6.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 12.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 14.

conflicts between the colonies and her parent country. He hoped that “His foreign enemies were subdued or humbled, his own people were united and happy.” Just as what happened in Ancient Israel, he wanted the rebellion to be crushed, and to see that “the hedious [hideous] monster” were punished so that “peace, order and happiness were restored.”⁹⁸

Seabury preached both sermons in British-occupied New York. The audience of those sermons originally was mainly the Anglican Loyalists who stayed in, or flowed into, New York as the Revolutionary War started. Therefore, they demonstrated the purest form of Anglican view on the imperial politics by emphasizing the value of divine Kingship, peace and order, and connected these values with faith and happiness, which constituted the core of Seabury’s arguments, not only on religion, but even extending to politics. On the other hand, they were not only preached, but also published as propaganda of the Anglican Church and the Loyalist cause. As Doll has pointed out, the concern for both the sacred and secular was a “particularly Anglican trait.”⁹⁹ The dual role that these sermons and Anglican clergies played showed the premise of the political discourse of the Anglican preachers, including Samuel Seabury.

3.4 Samuel Seabury on the Eve of the Revolution: His Ideas about Representation

Samuel Seabury was not only an Anglican Loyalist, but also a Loyalist in a broader sense. He published a series of political pamphlets from 1774 to 1775 to rebuke the measures of the Continental Congress, and his contemporaries regarded him as a supporter of the DeLanceys because of the ideas revealed in his pamphlets.¹⁰⁰ The ideas in these pamphlets had their beginnings in the very earliest days of his ministry, while he was still at New Brunswick. These writings were at last published in the form of a series of pamphlets which he wrote under the

⁹⁸ Ibid., 15–6.

⁹⁹ Doll, *Revolution, Religion, and National Identity*, 157.

¹⁰⁰ Launitz-Schürer, Jr., *Loyal Whigs and Revolutionaries*, 130.

signature of A. W. Farmer. These pamphlets were highly popular among those Loyalists and excited a very bitter antipathy among the Patriots.¹⁰¹ The Sons of Liberty seized him in 1775, and accused him of writing pamphlets “against the liberties of America.”¹⁰² Their animosity against him showed the influence and importance of his pamphlets.

Seabury seldom used religious theology or terms in these political pamphlets directly. Rather, he sounded completely like a political writer. He argued that the British Parliament, as the supreme authority of the whole empire, could represent the American colonists, and therefore had the right to regulate the whole empire, which certainly included the American colonies. He said that “in every government there must be a supreme, absolute authority lodged somewhere.” For the whole British Empire, “the supreme authority is vested in the King, Nobles and People, i.e. the King, House of Lords, and House of Commons elected by the people. This supreme authority extends as far as the British dominions extend.”¹⁰³ Therefore, when the Patriots doubted whether the authority of British Parliament could reach the American colonies, they actually declared they were not part of the British Empire. Samuel Seabury attacked this assertion by explaining the principle of representation:

It is the happiness of the British Government, and of all the British Colonies, that the people have a right to share in the legislature. This right they exercise by choosing representatives; and thereby constituting one branch of the legislative authority. But when they have chosen their representatives, that right, which was before diffused through the whole people, centers in their Representatives alone; and can legally be exercised by none but them.

He viewed the assemblies in the colonies as “one branch of the legislative authority,” and therefore represented the proper authority in the colonies. Since they had already elected their

¹⁰¹ William Jones Seabury, *Memoir of Bishop Seabury* (New York: Edwin S. Gorham, 1908), 132.

¹⁰² Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 42.

¹⁰³ Samuel Seabury, *A View of the Controversy between Great-Britain and Her Colonies* (New York, 1774), 9.

representatives for the assemblies, they should not and could not elect another group of representatives to execute the legislature's authority. Seabury asserted that these representatives thus became "the guardians of the lives, the liberties, the rights and properties, of the people." So the people should "treat them with honor and respect," and ask them to help the people that went through the difficulties that people were facing.¹⁰⁴

Even though he emphasized that the proper representatives were the delegates in colonial assemblies, he actually condemned the Continental Congress as illegal. Seabury attacked the Congress in many aspects. First, he claimed that "the assemblies have but a delegated authority themselves," so they could not "delegate that authority to three or four persons." The colonial assemblies have "betrayed the rights and privileges of the people whom they represented" in this manner. They were exercising a power which they never "received from the people."¹⁰⁵ When the colonies elected their delegates to the Continental Congress, they ignored the colonial assemblies in this process. Seabury noted that the representatives in the assemblies did not ignore people's interests; however, the people neglected these assemblies. He viewed the revolutionaries' action of forming a new Continental Congress as unlawful. He emphasized that "the assembly are a body known and acknowledged by the law of the empire."¹⁰⁶

Since the colonists felt that their rights were neglected, they should petition through an acknowledged and lawful procedure. He further stated:

You know in your conscience that they [the delegates in the Continental Congress] were not chosen by a hundredth part of the people. You know also, that their appointment was in a way unsupported by any law, usage, or custom of the province. You know also, that the people of this province had already delegated their power to the members of their Assembly, and

¹⁰⁴ Samuel Seabury, *An Alarm to the Legislature of the Province of New York* (New York: Rivington, 1775), 4.

¹⁰⁵ Samuel Seabury, *The Congress Canvassed* (New York, 1774), 10.

¹⁰⁶ Seabury, *A View of the Controversy between Great-Britain and her Colonies*, 17.

therefore had no right to choose Delegates, to contravene the authority of the Assembly, by introducing a foreign power of legislation.¹⁰⁷

Except for the legitimate status of the Congress, Seabury pointed out another problem of the Congress here: whom did the Congress represent? He mentioned that the delegates “were not chosen by a hundredth part of the people.” In other words, the people who would vote to send delegates to an unlawful institution were those who were affiliated with a specific faction. The number of the people who were willing to break the law was very limited. Those people who were unwilling or at least hesitating to support an illegal organization would not vote. Therefore, when the Congress made agreements and forced all colonists to conform to those agreements, they actually made decisions without most people’s consents. Throughout the pamphlets that he published during the revolutionary era, he unceasingly rebuked the people who disregarded what he considered to be their true representatives, and attacked the Congress and the committees around the colonies for usurping legislative authority and power from the colonial assemblies. Accordingly, Seabury condemned:

A committee, chosen in a tumultuous, illegal manner, usurped the most depotic authority over the province. They entered into contracts, compacts, combinations, treaties of alliance, with the other colonies, without any power from the legislature of the province. They agreed with the other Colonies to send Delegates to meet in convention at Philadelphia, to determine upon the rights and liberties of the good people of this province, unsupported by any Law.¹⁰⁸

Seabury emphasized that all the committees were “without any power from the legislature of the province,” and “unsupported by any law.” The Congress and the committees operated under its direction were not only illegal, but also not protecting people’s liberty. Seabury’s stance on the

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 17.

¹⁰⁸ Samuel Seabury, *An Alarm to the Legislature of the Province of New York*, 4–5.

Continental Congress was distinct from the Whig-Loyalists'. The Whig-Loyalists were supporters of the Continental Congress until the eve of the Revolution.

Seabury's argument about representation touched two crucial questions: Did British Parliament have the right to regulate the American colonies without Americans' consent? And was the Continental Congress a lawful representative institution? Since it was impossible for each person to participate in the public affair, the function of parliament as the representative was crucial. If the parliament failed to function as a representative of the people, then people would lose all their claims of rights. Therefore, what was an appropriate representation became the core of the argument. We should notice that the franchise in the eighteenth century was not as extensive as it is nowadays. Rozbicki reminded his readers that "early modern liberty was a social relation between unequals."¹⁰⁹ The franchise was a very limited privilege and was only enjoyed by a small group of people with property. However, the problem here was that the Americans, even if they were freemen with property, had no representative in British Parliament.

While the Patriots claimed that they were not properly represented by the British Parliament,¹¹⁰ Seabury asserted that the British Parliament, as the supreme power in the whole empire, did rightfully represent the colonies. This was an awkward argument. If the Patriots were right, then as Seabury said, the empire would have to be completely torn apart. However, if Seabury was right, then the British people could do whatever they wanted and ignore the opinions of the colonies. Edmund Burke, as a leading speaker and writer of the Rockingham

¹⁰⁹ Rozbicki, *Culture and Liberty*, 2.

¹¹⁰ For more on the Patriots' opposition to Parliamentary authority, "a plain Yeoman" argued that on *Providence Gazette and Country Journal* on May 11 1765, and Virginia House of Burgesses expressed the same idea in their Resolves, see *Maryland Gazette* on July 4, 1765. David A. Copeland, ed., *Debating the Issue in Colonial Newspapers: Primary Documents on Events of the Period* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), 208, 210. John Dickinson also complained about the Parliamentary measures in *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1768), 13.

Whigs, supported the American claims in Parliament, and even proposed to allow American colonies their independence to end the costly war. When Edmund Burke spoke to sustain the American colonies in Parliament, he faced the same dilemma Seabury did. By comparing Seabury and Burke's viewpoints on the authority of the British Parliament, Seabury's argument seemed to be more conservative than his British Whig contemporaries, and represented a more stern British perspective. In order to support American claims, Burke insisted some constitutional principles and at the same time provided some conditions for Americans to argue for a compromise. He said:

Parliament is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but Parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole-- where not local purposes, not local prejudices, ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member, indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not member of Bristol, but he is a member of Parliament.¹¹¹

He emphasized that the members of Parliament had to not only consider the interest of the area they were elected from, but the common interest of the whole empire. This was the spirit of virtual representation.

However, in reality, members of Parliament would consider others' interests with difficulty. When it came to the American colonies, Burke believed that the power of virtual representation could not cross the Atlantic Ocean.¹¹² He warned his colleagues "that great caution ought to be used in the exercise of all our legislative rights over an object so remote from our eye, and so little connected with our immediate feelings." He also argued that the distance made it

¹¹¹ Edmund Burke, "Speech at the Conclusion of the Poll," in *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, Vol. III, ed. Warren M Elofson and John A. Woods (London: Clarendon, 1996), 69.

¹¹² Edmund Burke, "Speech on Conciliation with America," in *Writings*, 145.

impractical for the American colonies to elect their members of Parliament from American colonies and send them to London.¹¹³ He did not really make any novel argument about representation to solve the dilemma. However, he suggested that the Parliament should be very cautious in exercising its supreme authority to rule such a distant place. In other words, the Parliament had the right to tax the colonies, but they should be prudent in doing so. This idea of Parliamentary authority was not fundamentally different from Seabury's. Burke also insisted that Parliamentary authority was supreme. Only that authority had to be exercised cautiously. Although Burke did not refuse the idea of the American Revolution, his concept of Parliamentary authority later developed into the commencement of the ideology of conservatism. His concept of Parliamentary authority was a less absolute version of the Loyalist one, and the reason to be less absolute was that his purpose to deliver those speeches was to support the American claims, not to deny them, which is what Seabury always attempted to do.

For Seabury, the other question was about the lawfulness of the Continental Congress. While many other Whig-Loyalists, such as the DeLanceys, John Alsop, and Peter Van Schaack, admitted the lawful status of the Congress, Seabury not only rebuked the Congress' decisions, but also definitely rejected the legality of the Continental Congress, for it is not the institution under the existent constitution. As his Anglican background demonstrated, he insisted that order was a crucial element in civil society and liberty had to rest on the basis of stable civil society; therefore, these sorts of unlawful measures would disturb the order as well as the true liberty of people.

3.5 Samuel Seabury on the Eve of the Revolution: His Idea on Freedom

¹¹³ Edmund Burke, "Observation on a Late Publication, Intitl'd, ' the Present State of the Nation,'" in *The Works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, Vol. II (London, 1826), 137–143.

When Seabury said that he expected the Congress to make plans for amending the colonies' relationship with the Britain, it seemed that he would accept their agreement if Congress' measures were acceptable. However, he severely attacked the Congress on its misbehavior. He condemned the action of the Congress or the Congress itself as tyrannical several times in his pamphlets. He claimed that he wanted to expose "the false, arbitrary, and tyrannical principles upon which the Congress acted," and he also warned people that they were giving up their liberty to "an illegal, tyrannical Congress."¹¹⁴ If we want to know the exact meaning of the word "tyranny" in eighteenth-century Atlantic world, we have to try to understand this word in its context. Samuel Johnson defined tyranny as "absolute monarchy imperiously administered," "unresisted and cruel power," and "cruel government; rigorous command."¹¹⁵ Seabury condemned the Congress as tyrannical in this context. He argued that true liberty would not invade the rights of people with different opinions. For example, the Congress established many committees around the colonies to enforce their policies. Seabury rebuked the Congress for establishing committees and courts that were built upon "the same principle with the papish Inquisition," because "no proofs, no evidences are called for. The committee may judge from appearances if they please—for when it shall be made to appear to be a majority of any committee that the Association is violated, they may proceed to punishment." Those measures were absolutely imperious. Therefore, he said: "You establish a court of Inquisition, to decide, in the most arbitrary, tyrannical and unheard-of manner, upon the liberties and properties of your fellow-subjects, over whom you have no just or legal power."¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Samuel Seabury, *The Congress Canvassed*, 13, 17.

¹¹⁵ Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (London, 1755), 2120–1.

¹¹⁶ Seabury, *The Congress Canvassed*, 14, 23.

Furthermore, he also accused the Congress of directing, encouraging, and abetting a mob. Seabury also charged the committee of sixty of being tax-gatherers to collect money for the Boston poor and of being spies and informers whom monitored people to ensure that their plan was being executed. Thus the people in New York were in danger of “being deprived of many of the comforts, and of some of the necessaries of life,” and also their “very mode of living is made subject to their inspection.”¹¹⁷

Seabury not only attacked the Congress for the way that they perceived their concept of liberty, but also provided his own version of liberty. To do this, he emphasized the advantages of the British Constitution.

I must think that liberty under a King, Lords and Commons is as good as liberty under a republican Congress: And that slavery under a republican Congress is as bad, at least, as slavery under a King, Lords and Commons: And upon the whole, that liberty under the supreme authority and protection of Great-Britain, is infinitely preferable to slavery under an American Congress.¹¹⁸

Since Seabury believed there must be a supreme authority in the government, he trusted this authority to the King-in-Parliament, rather than to the Congress. He then made an explicit statement about liberty:

I will own and acknowledge that not only Americans, but Africans, Europeans, Asiaticks, all men, of all countries and degrees, of all sizes and complexions, have a right to as much freedom as is consistent with the security of civil society.¹¹⁹

The key point for his concept of liberty was that liberty should be “consistent with the security of civil society.” Therefore, he asserted that “violent and illegal measures, even in the most

¹¹⁷ Seabury, *Alarm to the Legislature of the Province of New York*, 5.

¹¹⁸ Seabury, *A View of the Controversy*, 8.

¹¹⁹ Seabury, *A View of the Controversy between Great-Britain and her Colonies*, 8.

necessary struggles for liberty, can never be justified, till all legal and moderate ones have failed.”¹²⁰ He believed that liberty could only endure in a society with stability and order, and hence he asserted that the traditional balanced constitution of the British Empire was the best political system for people to enjoy liberty.

Many Patriots presumed that the British government and the Anglican Church had a plan to enslave America, and the acts of Parliament that the colonists complained of were the methods by which they executed this evil plan. In a letter to the secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, Seabury ridiculed this idea and said that “the charge against the clergy is a very extraordinary one—that they have, in conjunction with the Society and the British ministry, laid a plan for enslaving America. I do not believe that those people who raised this calumny believe one syllable of it.”¹²¹ In his pamphlet, Seabury reminded his readers that this presumption had never been proved, and people should not rebel because of an imagined conspiracy. In addition, he also argued:

If greater security to our rights and liberties be necessary than the present form and administration of the government can give us, let us endeavour to obtain it; but let our endeavours be regulated by prudence and probability of success. In this attempt all good men will join, both in England and America: All, who love their country, and with the prosperity of the British Empire, will be glad to see it accomplished.¹²²

He admitted and understood that they needed greater security of their liberty; however, he insisted that the efforts should be made in prudence.

¹²⁰ Seabury, *The Congress Canvassed*, 23.

¹²¹ Beardsley, *Life and Correspondence of the Right Reverend Samuel Seabury*, 34.

¹²² Samuel Seabury, *A View of the Controversy between Great-Britain and her Colonies*, 20.

While Seabury insisted that liberty had to be protected in a stable civil society, many Patriots had different foci and emphasized the inviolability of liberty. For example, James Otis averred that the administrators of civil government were originally “the whole people.” People could bestow the right of administration on “whom they pleased,” and this devolution was fiduciary “for the good of the whole.”¹²³ He said:

That by the British constitution, this devolution is on the King, lords and commons, the supreme, sacred and uncontrollable legislative power not only in the realm but through the dominions; that by the abdication, the original compact was broken to pieces; that by the revolution it was renewed and more firmly established, and the rights and liberties of the subject in all parts of the dominions more fully explained and confirmed.¹²⁴

He suggested that the British Constitution, if executed properly, could align perfectly with the concept of the social contract. However, he also pointed out that through revolution the compact could be “renewed and more firmly established.” He further praised this Constitution as “the most free one, and by far, the best, now existing on earth.” Therefore, by this Constitution, all people in this kingdom were free. And thus, “no part of His Majesty’s dominions can be taxed without their consent,” and also “every part has a right to be represented in the supreme or subordinate legislature.” Otis warned that “the refusal of this principle would seem to be a contradiction in practice to the theory of the constitution.”¹²⁵ Otis claimed that his argument was based on the theory of the British Constitution, and that the right of the colonists as British subjects was ignored and invaded.

Another example for the Patriot discourse of the inviolability of liberty is from Stephen Hopkins, the governor of Rhode Island. He published a pamphlet *The Rights of the Colonies*

¹²³ James Otis, *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved* (Boston, 1764), 64–5.

¹²⁴ Otis, *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved*, 65.

¹²⁵ Otis, *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved*, 65.

Examined in 1765, which demonstrated typical resistance and confusion aroused by Britain's new colonial policy. He stated that "those who are governed at the will of another, or of others, and whose property may be taken from them by taxes or otherwise without their own consent and against their will, are in the miserable condition of slaves."¹²⁶ Since the colonies came from a kingdom renowned for liberty, the people should be free, and should be partakers and sharers in all the privileges and advantages of the British Constitution.¹²⁷

Although Seabury, Otis, and Hopkins all agreed on the same liberty out of the tradition of the British constitution, their arguments showed different foci. While Otis and Hopkins stressed that the British government should not intrude into people's liberty by forcing them paying tax without their consent, Seabury, on the eve of the Revolution, maintained that true liberty had to subsist in a civil society with order and peace.

4. Conclusion: Understanding Seabury's Concept of Liberty in the Eighteenth-Century Context

Michal Jan Rozbicki claimed that liberty was a privilege in the eighteenth century for it was confined to a specific group of people, and therefore, the history of early modern American freedom was "a lengthy chronicle of diverse groups pounding at the gates and demanding membership."¹²⁸ In *Dr. Johnson's Dictionary*, liberty had five definitions: first, "Freedom, as opposed to slavery"; second, "Freedom, as opposed to necessity"; third, "Privilege; exemption; immunity"; fourth, "Relaxation of restraint"; and fifth, "Leave; permission."¹²⁹ These definitions demonstrated the diverse characterizations of liberty. Through the analysis above, we could conclude that Seabury's arguments about liberty covered several topics: the justification of the

¹²⁶ Stephen Hopkins, *The Rights of the Colonies Examined* (Providence, 1765), 4.

¹²⁷ Stephen Hopkins, *The Rights of the Colonies Examined*, 8.

¹²⁸ Rozbicki, *Culture and Liberty*, 1–2, 238.

¹²⁹ Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 1196.

representatives, the supreme national authority, and the conditions of liberty. Throughout his pamphlets, he accused the Patriots of planning to establish a commonwealth. So, what was the problem with establishing a commonwealth? Why did Seabury view it as a dangerous scheme? This discussion involved the theory of classical republicanism. Around the English Civil War, the discussion of natural rights among the British writers came to a peak. According to Quentin Skinner, those seventeenth century writers usually claimed that “all citizens have an equal right to the lawful enjoyment of their lives, liberties, and estates.”¹³⁰ Skinner also stated that they also believed that a free nation was “a community in which the actions of the body politic are determined by the will of the members as a whole.”¹³¹ The problem was how to determine those actions by the will of the members as a whole? Thus there came the concept of parliament as the representative body of the citizens as a whole. The Patriots attempted to enlarge the realm of the people owning liberty and having the right to participate in politics. On the other hand, Seabury was more conservative on topic of the distribution of the right of liberty.

Seabury’s concept of supreme authority was rooted deeply in the tradition of the Church of England. The Anglican Church viewed the King of England as their leader, holding the supreme authority of both the nation and the Church. The reverence toward the authority of the king was the most obvious factor that decided one to be Loyalist or Patriot.

Despite all the presumption of representation and supreme authority mentioned above, throughout his argument on liberty, Seabury attacked the Patriots according to his definition of liberty. He defined liberty as something that could not be achieved by violence. Therefore, he devoted a lot of space in his pamphlets to assaulting the mobs and riots. On the other hand, he

¹³⁰ Quentin Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 20.

¹³¹ Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism*, 26.

also argued that the Congress interfered with people's rights of property and liberty by forcing them to obey their measures. Ruma Chopra summed up that Seabury believed that society should be hierarchical and that ordinary people needed to be supervised by kings and bishops. By contrast, Presbyterianism would lead to revolution.¹³² However, when Seabury emphasized order, peace, and unity in the pursuit of liberty, his belief actually fit into the context of eighteenth-century British ideology.

Seabury was satisfied with the liberty afforded to colonial subjects under the British Constitution, and tended to maintain the *status quo*. The American Revolution did not occur under the aegis of a clear social consensus. Rather, the Revolution occurred in an age with diverse ideas of liberty. All sides advocated liberty as a common value; however, they had diverse opinions on who should enjoy it. While the Patriots protected and enlarged their liberty by rebelling, the Loyalists protected their ideal liberty by uniting with the British side.

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¹³² Chopra, *Unnatural Rebellion*, 34 and Gerardi, "The King's College Controversy," 158, 167.

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