

REVIEW ESSAYS/NOTES CRITIQUES

Loyalists and Loyalism in the American Revolution and Beyond

A LITTLE MORE THAN A GENERATION AGO, as I was beginning my academic career, the Loyalists were a relatively popular topic for those of us studying colonial North America. The bicentennial of the Declaration of Independence and then, ten years later, of the arrival of refugees from the new republic, had prompted scholars to try to understand why tens of thousands of British Americans had rejected the patriots' call for independence and what impact this had had on the worlds they recreated after 1783. A number of American historians, including Robert Calhoon, and Bernard Bailyn, refused the standard trope that these "losers" of the American Revolution were an aberration whose views and resistance had little impact on the outcome of the war or the nature of the republic.¹ A number of Canadian scholars, including David Bell and Neil MacKinnon, challenged the view that the Loyalists willingly acquiesced to British authority after they arrived in their new homes to the north.² And, as James W. St. G. Walker reminded us, not all Loyalists were white.³ What was clear from this growing body of work was that the story of the Loyalists was not just about conservative office holders and Anglican clerics who had rejected the Revolution out of hand or had almost reflexively supported the Crown. Not only was there a Loyalist ideology that mirrored that of the patriots,⁴ but Loyalists came from various social and ethnic backgrounds and had differing motivations for remaining loyal to the Crown and often conflicting expectations of the future when they were forced to flee from the new republic.

What is fascinating is how Loyalist scholarship has developed over the years. Certainly, as will be evident below, interpretations offered 25 years ago continue to illuminate our understanding of what it meant to be a loyal subject of the Crown in 18th-century North America. We continue to be fascinated by the day-to-day struggles of the Loyalists during and after the American Revolution and to be intrigued by the scope of their beliefs. But some scholars are beginning to ask different questions, and to bring new insights from Atlantic history and the "new"

1 Robert M. Calhoon, *The Loyalists in Revolutionary America, 1760-1781* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanich, 1973); Bernard Bailyn, *The Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974). The literature from the 1970s and 1980s is vast. For a first-class bibliographic survey, see Robert M. Calhoon, et al., *Tory Insurgents: The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays* (reviewed below).

2 David G. Bell, *Early Loyalist Saint John: The Origin of New Brunswick Politics, 1783-1786* (Fredericton: New Ireland Press, 1983); Neil MacKinnon, *This Unfriendly Soil: The Loyalist Experience in Nova Scotia, 1783-1791* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986).

3 James W. St. G. Walker, *The Black Loyalists: The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone, 1783-1870* (New York: Africana Publishing, 1976).

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

imperial history to bear on their studies. Maya Jasanoff's fine *Liberty's Exiles*, discussed by Nicolas Landry in an earlier review essay in this journal, is but one of a number of works that explore "The Spirit of '83" and the indelible impact that Loyalists and loyalism had throughout the British world.⁵

The revised and expanded edition of *Tory Insurgents: The Loyalist Perception and Other Essays* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010) is a good example of how some of the best of the earlier scholarship continues to inform our understandings of the American Loyalists. Robert Calhoun is one of the most recognized Loyalist scholars in North America and this collection, originally published in 1989, highlights some of his best work in addition to offering articles, new and old, by other accomplished historians. In his brief introduction, Calhoun reminds us that "the Revolution spilled into areas of American life only tangentially connected to the question of empire versus independence" (xiv). The collection is divided into three parts, reflecting Calhoun's conviction that "*ideas* leading toward *action* and finally maturing into settled patterns of *practice* remain the configuration of loyalist scholarship" (ix, emphasis in original). The seven chapters in Part 1 (entitled "Ideas") explore the changing perceptions of some of the leading Loyalists, including William Smith Jr. (Chapter 2), Thomas Hutchinson (Chapter 3), Sir Egerton Leigh (Chapter 4), Robert Galloway (Chapter 5), and Robert Beverley (Chapter 6). These men, as Calhoun explains in the opening chapter of Part 1, "The Loyalist Perception" (taken from the original edition), represented the varying degrees of loyalism – principled, accommodating, and doctrinaire – categories that, as he quite rightly notes in his 2008 "Author's Note," continue to be useful in appreciating the range of Loyalist ideology (11). What the chapters in Part 1 also highlight is the personal anguish and moral dilemma that these men confronted in the years leading up to the Rebellion, as they tried to reconcile their belief in the need to reform the colonial-imperial relationship with their commitment to the Crown and to their own place in the social and political order. Calhoun and Robert Weir's account of "The Scandalous Career of Sir Egerton Leigh," for example, explores Leigh's difficulties as a member of the Vice-Admiralty Court. The authors illustrate how, under increasingly fierce criticism from many South Carolinians (including a former friend) for his decisions, "when the rents began to appear in the fabric that bound royal officials [Leigh] and local leaders together into a coherent whole, it became clear that in many cases they spoke different languages" (63). For Joseph Galloway, on the other hand, his "Plan on Union" to restructure the empire was intimately tied to his fears that "dangerous men" (71), exemplified in the person of his political enemy John Dickinson, would destroy the political landscape of Pennsylvania and Galloway's place within it. Robert Beverley confronted a different situation. Despite all his attempts to stay out of the fray of Virginian politics in the early 1770s, his neutrality fostered suspicions and hostility from his fellow planters (98).

After 1774, it was time for action. Part 2 includes three chapters from the original edition (two by Robert Calhoun – "Civil, Revolutionary or Partisan" and

5 Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011); Nicolas Landry, "Migrations et histoire de l'Atlantique" *Acadiensis* XL, no. 2 (été/automne 2011): 128-35.

“The Floridas, The Western Frontier and Vermont” – and one authored with Janice Potter-MacKinnon – “The Character and Coherence of the Loyalist Press”), as well as three new works. Timothy Barnes’s collaboration with Calhoun, “Loyalist Discourse and the Moderation of the American Revolution,” explores the evolving responses of Loyalists living in the security of seaport garrison communities during the war years. Initially confident in the superiority of the British forces over the apparently small numbers of rebels, Loyalists “knew” their suffering would soon come to an end. But with the British defeat at Saratoga, the “garrison dwellers gained a new appreciation of their miserable conditions” (168) and began to vilify their opponents – both the patriots and British military authorities who continued to suggest reconciliation. The two companion pieces by Robert S. Davis – “Loyalism and Patriotism at Askance: Community, Conspiracy, and Conflict on the Southern Frontier” and “The Man Who Would Have Been: John Dooly, Ambitions, and Politics on the Southern Frontier” – are particularly fascinating for those of us less familiar with Loyalists in the southern colonies. In Georgia and South Carolina, the Revolution was clearly a civil war complicated by the presence of an army of occupation. There, personal ambitions coupled with particular local dynamics and concerns often trumped ideology (230). As Davis concludes in his exploration of folk hero John Dooly, “the frontier population had its own agenda above and beyond whoever won the formal war known as the American Revolution” (297).

The three chapters in Part 3 (entitled “Practices”) explore how during and after the Revolution the new republicans tried to discover and then assert “the legitimate sources of authority in American society” (371). Scottish Presbyterian cleric John Witherspoon (considered by Calhoun and Barnes in Chapter 14), viewed this in moral terms while Aedanus Burke and Thomas Burke of the Carolinas (Chapter 15) believed that authority came from the people. And with republicanism the norm, the issue now was, as considered by Calhoun with the assistance of Timothy Barnes, how best to further “The Reintegration of the Loyalist and the Disaffected” (Chapter 16) into the new nation.

The chapters in this new edition highlight the diversity of viewpoints of American Tories. As Calhoun concludes, the Revolution was “a special kind of civil war” (371). Those of us who read the original edition of *Tory Insurgents* will find considerable value in this expanded edition. In addition to the new chapters, Calhoun offers a thoughtful commentary at the end of some of the original chapters that highlights how more recent scholarship speaks to the issue at hand. And the lengthy “Bibliographic Essay” at the end of the volume includes a comprehensive reading list for those “still curious” about the Loyalists (376).

Thomas B. Allen’s *Tories: Fighting for the King in America’s First Civil War* (New York: Harper, 2010) presents us with quite a different view of the war. Although he, too, characterizes the Revolution as a civil war, for Allen what was most important was not the diverse ideas about the colonies’ relationship to the empire but rather the skirmishes, battles, and frequent atrocities that characterized the conflict. *Tories* is a war story written for a general audience. What Allen wants readers to appreciate is that the Revolution was more than a war for independence. As he explains, there was “a defiant, passionate minority” of colonists who fought for the King; although they were on the losing side, they too were Americans (xxii).

Tories opens in 1769 in Massachusetts, and follows the members of the Old Colony Club as they grappled with the implications of the growing tensions between Great Britain and the American colonists. Some painfully decide to remain loyal to the king, and by 1776 they are embroiled in a bloody and bitter conflict with former friends and sometimes even family members. *Tories* follows the chronology of a war that involved wholesale looting and theft, raiding parties, and savage retaliation exacted by both Loyalists and patriots. Allen also retells the stories of major battles, and of how on the northern and western frontiers Native and Loyalist raiding parties swept down on patriot forces. The Tories also included runaway slaves, who were caught up in the turmoil. In the end, of course, the Tories and the British lost the war. But Allen assures the reader that the Loyalists, who were evacuated from Savannah, Charleston, and eventually New York (as the title of the last chapter states “And They Began the World Again”), took with them “the virtues and the visions that they and their ancestors had had as American colonists.” In Canada, the “traditional devotion to law and civility, the very essence of being Canadian, traces back to being loyal, as in Loyalist” (333). In the new republic, other Americans soon forgave and forgot the Tories and assumed that the war was between Americans and the British.

There is no question that Allen tells a good story, and it is one in which the familiar figures of the Revolution are joined by those more familiar to Canadians – Edward Winslow, General Howe, Sir John Johnson, and Joseph Brant (among others). And Allen has done prodigious research, including consulting that invaluable resource – The Loyalist Research Network (www.loyalistresearchnet.org) – administered by Bonnie Huskins. But there is no nuance in *Tories*, or, apart from stating that this was a civil war, little in the way of an overarching analytical framework that informs Allen’s study. *Tories* is perhaps a good introduction for those who seek another view of the war for independence. It offers little, however, to advance our understanding of the complexity of the war or of the diversity of viewpoints of those who chose to fight for the king.

Ruma Chopra has also done her research, and her Tories, and indeed the Revolution itself, are much more complex and satisfying. *Unnatural Rebellion: Loyalists in New York City During the Revolution* (Charlottesville & London: University of Virginia Press, 2011), is a most welcome addition to Loyalist studies. Chopra skilfully illustrates how colonists who shared much of the whig ideology of their patriot opponents reconciled their belief in the essential unity of the empire with their opposition to the constitutional arrangements imposed by London in the 1760s. New Yorkers believed from the beginning that the Revolution was an “Unnatural Rebellion,” and it was this conviction that sustained them throughout the war.

As Chopra clearly argues in her first two chapters, between 1763 and 1773 New Yorkers were relatively united in their opposition to the new, restrictive, British policies. “Only in retrospect,” she reminds us, “do the liberty boys appear to be proto-revolutionaries” (26). Both factions in New York politics – the Delanceys and the Livingstons – “favored a moderate path” of opposition and reform “that fell between the radicalism of the Liberty Boys and the unquestioning obedience of royalists” (27). This was not particularly surprising. New Yorkers were enmeshed in the Atlantic World. The city was the second largest in the British North American colonies and the leading seaport of British America. “Living in a city blessed by the profits of Empire,” local leaders “avoided taking positions that would jeopardize

their well-established connection to the empire.” Moreover, the identity of New Yorkers of all classes and conditions was intimately connected to the imperial world with which they shared a “culture, language, belief in constitutional liberty, trading interests and Protestantism” (28). The growing turmoil, however, eventually forced New Yorkers to choose between “two competing states” (49). Some “turned to aggressive resistance”; others, more fearful of “the violent clamour from below than the illegal tyranny of the British Government” (50), continued to lobby for a new constitutional arrangement that would resolve the crisis and at the same time recognize the growing maturity of the colonies.

Over the next seven chapters, Chopra chronicles the difficulties that loyal Americans in New York City faced as they confronted not only rebellious fellow Americans but also, and to their dismay, seemingly intransigent and unresponsive British military leaders who did not really appreciate the unique opportunity that the city offered to maintain the imperial connection. Loyal Americans had welcomed the arrival of the British army in 1776, secure in the knowledge that the rebellion would soon be quelled and New York City would resume its place in the imperial world. In the meantime, they believed, the city would provide recalcitrant rebels with an example of the benefits of continued membership in the empire – constitutional liberty, the rule of law, and prosperity. The anticipated “partnership with the British to crush” the rebels and “to restore New York City to civil government” (221) was, however, never realized. Instead, by the end of 1776, New Yorkers lived in “a garrison city under siege” (79) – subject not only to attacks and harassment from rebels but also to looting and pillaging by the British forces in occupation as well as suspicion and rejection from British officials. This was certainly not the city “that beckoned others with its promise of constitutional liberties” (224).

By 1777, New Yorkers’ growing uneasiness about the progress of the war itself was exacerbated when France, the great Catholic enemy, entered the conflict. Over the next four years, “loyalists sought reunion not only in the name of British law and commerce, but also in the name of British Protestantism” (93). But loyal New Yorkers were increasingly divided about the role they should take in putting down the rebellion. British defeats, particularly at Saratoga, widened the gulf between those who urged “a war of destruction” (111) against rebels and their property, and moderates who continued to seek a constitutional solution to their dilemma. Frustration grew as British officers on the ground refused to support independent Loyalist military operations (although hardline Loyalists had received support from London for such action). The pressure within the city also mounted as more and more refugees flocked into New York. Overcrowding, shortages of food and fuel, and a dearth of opportunities for employment created fault lines between the elite and the general population and between residents and refugees, and further exacerbated tensions between Loyalists and the British (186). Because authorities presumed that “the need of the military [always] superseded loyalist shortages,” and the military did not have the resources, or sometimes the inclination, to address residents’ concerns, “Britain alienated many supporters and divided leading loyalists” even further (159).

As the war dragged on, New York Loyalists became increasingly bitter and, as the southern campaign foundered, they began to fear they might be abandoned. It

was, however, only when news arrived about the peace negotiations of 1781-82 that they began to “suspect that their allegiance would lead to permanent exile from their homes” (222). Not surprisingly, as they left the city in 1783, Loyalists “cursed the rebels publicly and the British privately.” They also carried “with them an almost equal knowledge – and suspicion – of the United States and the British Empire, [and so] they vowed to avert an unnatural rebellion in Canada” (226).

In *Unnatural Rebellion*, Chopra brings alive the anguish, anger, and frustrations of Americans caught in an unresolvable situation – how to remain loyal to a state that they believed was pursuing illegal policies and that denied the most fundamental principles of British liberty. This engaging and persuasive study integrates an appreciation of the diverse and at times conflicting ideas and perceptions of American Loyalists with a finely crafted social history of a city that itself becomes one of the characters of the book. One is only left to wonder if the tensions of New York City were re-enacted in other garrison communities throughout the Revolution, and how the diversity of opinion and circumstance that New Yorkers displayed was carried with them – not just to the remaining British colonies to the north, but also in that diaspora of Maya Jasanoff’s “Spirit of ’83.”

For Alan Taylor, the exodus of the Loyalists from New York was certainly not the end of the story for loyal Americans, or really even the end of the Revolution. As he persuasively argues in *The Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects & Indian Allies* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), the Revolution had only “incompletely divided” a people who shared a history, a language, and many cultural sensibilities. Almost 20 years after the signing of the Treaty of Paris, “the republic and the empire were” once again forced to compete “for the allegiance of the peoples of North America – natives, settlers and immigrants” (8). But as Taylor explains, this was more than a war between loyal Britons and republican Americans. The war also pitted federalists against republicans, it divided Native peoples, and Irish migrants recently arrived in the United States often found themselves facing “British regiments primarily recruited in Ireland” (9).

Taylor explicitly centres his study on the borderlands of Upper Canada and New York. It was here, after all, that most of the fighting actually occurred. It was also the region in which the international boundary was, for all intents and purposes, an inconsequential part of most residents’ lives. But one of the many strengths of this study is how Taylor situates the war in the borderlands in its international context – of British imperial policies in North America in the post-revolutionary period, of the French Revolution, of agitation in Ireland for reform, as well as those ongoing tensions between the United States and Britain over the Native peoples in the west, and the two governments’ fundamental disagreement over the question of who was a subject and who was a citizen. As Taylor explains in his first four chapters, the roots of the conflict of 1812-1814 lay in the Revolution. While colonial leaders in Upper Canada – newly transplanted Loyalists and British officials – attempted to create a society “free from the social and political pathologies [they] attributed to the United States,” American leaders were trying to defend their territory from a Native threat they believed was being instigated and supported by Britain and to assert the rights of their citizens to be free of impressment by the British navy. None of these factors alone, however, brought the two nations to outright conflict. Rather it was only when “a synergy of grievances” (135) came together that Congress declared war.

Such a declaration of war did not mean that the peoples of the borderland were willing participants in the conflict. As Taylor wonderfully chronicles, Upper Canadians and Americans were not swayed by differing political ideologies and saw little need to defend national honour. Rather, “the country people” were “pragmatic and acquisitive” and “thought in concrete and personal terms that avoided political distractions” (305). Time and again, British and American officers and political leaders were dismayed by men who refused to come out when called to fight or militiamen who deserted their posts; they were also disconcerted by civilians who only reluctantly supported their soldiers. Taylor’s skilful and engaging narrative tells of a war marked by military incompetence and political indecision. It was a conflict that included wholesale looting by both soldiers and civilians, the destruction of villages as well as forts, and, in a fascinating chapter, the story of prisoners of war who waited, often impatiently, to be exchanged and sent home.

As Taylor concludes, the war “seems to have been an inconsequential draw” (437).⁶ Yet although no one “won,” there were definite losers. Native peoples were, once again, abandoned by the British and soon came under increasing pressure from a republic determined to settle western lands and secure its borders. Moreover, this civil war was not without other consequences. The very nature of the conflict, with its wholesale destruction along the borderlands, left bitter memories and encouraged residents and leaders to draw sharp distinctions between the United States and Upper Canada, and between the republic and the empire. In the post-war years, colonial leaders used the war as evidence of the depravity of the United States and “celebrated the British Empire as the grandest, freest and richest in history” (446). At the same time, Upper Canadians continued to distrust the imperial government – believing it had squandered the opportunity for a clear victory.

My one criticism of this fine piece of scholarship is Taylor’s assumption that in 1812 the original Loyalist settlers of Upper Canada, who “nursed bitter memories of the Revolution,” were willing and perhaps eager to defend a colony that had given “them land and the benefit of government patronage” (143). Certainly colonial leaders hoped that this was the case, but as I have argued elsewhere, Loyalists, like those growing number of American settlers who arrived in the colony after 1792, were more interested in maintaining the borderland community than in taking up arms against friends and family members who had stayed in the republic after the Revolution.⁷ The views of Joel Stone and John Strachan were not shared by the majority of the Loyalist population, who at best were loyal British Americans – and who at worst saw little difference between being a subject or a citizen. That aside, *The First American Civil War* is a most welcome addition to the study of colonial America.

The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), edited by Jerry Bannister and Liam

6 This is in sharp contrast to the messages that the federal government and Parks Canada is promoting about the War of 1812. The “official” version of the war, as presented on television and on government websites (www.1812.gc.ca) tells of colonists united in their fight against the American invader, and of a great Canadian victory – certainly not the story told by Taylor.

7 Jane Errington, *The Lion, the Eagle, and Upper Canada: A Developing Colonial Ideology*, 2nd ed. (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2012).

Riordan, broadens the scope of Loyalist studies even more and highlights some of the exciting new directions for the field. The volume includes a well-crafted and thought-provoking introduction that most ably sets up the eight chapters, and is brought to a conclusion by Robert Calhoun's afterword. Clearly, the Loyalists were much more than "just the refugees who arrived in Nova Scotia and Quebec in the 1770s and 1780s and settled in Upper Canada in the 1790s" (xi). The chapters variously explore Loyalists and loyalism in the West Indies, British America, Ireland, and other parts of the British world from the mid-17th century to the mid-19th. Appreciating that "the conceptualization of Loyalist has been unduly restricted by nationalistic perspectives and political priorities" (3), the collection is explicitly framed within the context of the Atlantic World. Yet each of the chapters also illustrates that what it meant to be loyal subjects of the Crown was always informed by local circumstances as well as by "ideas and movements" that flowed "not just from the imperial centre" but also north and south throughout North America and to and from the British West Indies, and east to the British Isles (xi).

To Bannister and Riordan, loyalism was "an amalgam of values, practices, laws, and politics that distinguished between who was loyal (and deserved the full rights and privileges of Britons) and who was disloyal (and subject to varied prohibitions and punishments)" (x). It was, at times, contradictory and often shifted in unexpected ways. In their introduction, the editors trace this multifaceted international phenomenon from the Restoration in 1660 to after the American Revolution at the end of the 18th century. Loyalism "drew on principles deeply embedded in English politics, philosophy, and literature" (10). It was rooted in anti-Catholicism and allegiance to the Protestant Crown; it also found expression in mercantilism and a veneration of the constitutional rights of Englishmen. Certainly, the years of the American Revolution were particularly important from a Loyalist perspective. But Bannister and Riordan emphasize that this is only part of the story and does not alone explain either why some remained loyal to the Crown or the impact that the Loyalist diaspora had on the British Empire.

The two chapters in Part 1 explore the issues of allegiance and identity. Keith Mason uses the experiences of Virginia Loyalist James Parker, and his "changing reactions to the challenges of revolution, war and exile" (45), to consider that thorny issue of Loyalist identity. The first half of the chapter describes how viewing the Revolution as a civil war "forced contemporaries . . . to reflect – often with considerable unease – on their understandings of identity." Drawing on the work of Dror Wahrman and Brubaker and Cooper (among others), Mason chronicles how Scottish-born James Parker was not a "preordained" Loyalist (55). But as colonial resistance began to damage his interests, his once almost unthinking commitment to the Crown and the British Empire became a conscious position (57); like many in New York, he became a hardliner who advocated a strong military response to the rebels. But as Mason cautions, this was not the path that all Loyalists took. And although Loyalists "developed a rather sharper, more immediate sense of collective identity coming out of the America civil war" (64), this was difficult to maintain "under the challenging conditions of migration and exile" (66).

John Reid considers a quite different situation. "Imperial-Aboriginal Friendship in Eighteenth-Century Mi'kma'ki/Wulstukwik" illustrates that "the complexity of empire both predated the Revolution and survived it" (76). In this fascinating study

of Aboriginal-imperial friendship, Reid shows how the relationship maintained “an element of continuity to which the Revolution, in itself, was incidental” (77). Although the Mi’kmaq and Wulstukwiuk were not generally understood as Loyalists, “friendship, in this sense . . . was just as crucial to the maintenance of empire as more active aboriginal loyalism was elsewhere” (95).

In Part II, Philip Gould and Gwendolyn Davies explore “Transnational Print Culture and the Loyalist Expression.” Gould brings the legal history of copyright to bear in his carefully crafted consideration of “Loyalists Respond to *Common Sense*.” As Gould illustrates, “disputes over literary originality” that were swirling in London “helped shape the debates on the other side of the Atlantic about *Common Sense* (110), a publication that appalled Loyalists and that many believed was not particularly original. Gwendolyn Davies considers “New Brunswick Loyalist Printers in the Post-war Atlantic World” and particularly the careers of John Ryan of Rhode Island and Christopher Sower III of Pennsylvania once they left the republic. As she notes: “The Loyalist printers faced especially daunting challenges in 1783 in coming to an undeveloped Maritime region where more communities had yet to be surveyed” (133). These two men not only prevailed, but they “helped to create” a network of “independent-minded printer publishers” in Victorian New Brunswick (152).

The two chapters in Part III, “Loyalist Slavery and the Caribbean,” consider the situation of Loyalist slaves who, with their masters, were forced into exile in St. Augustine and the Bahamas. As Jennifer Snyder reminds us in “Loyalist Slaves in St. Augustine and Beyond,” not all, or indeed a majority of, slaves from the south managed to find freedom during the American Revolution. And some chose to stay with their families, despite having the opportunity to flee to northern British lines. In this insightful study, Snyder imaginatively gives “voice to these actors” (180) who are at best difficult to hear. In “Uses of the Bahamas by Southern Loyalist Exiles,” Carole Troxler explores the migration pattern of southern Loyalists who, with the active support of British authorities, were looking for new homes in which to establish plantations and new lives. Both backcountry farmers and large slaveholders made their way to the islands, together with some Loyalists from New York. Soon, a “new planter-merchant group” began to clash with royal governors over the political and economic future of the colony (192). “Slave control was a vital issue for the planter-merchant network” (194), Troxler contends, and this led to growing tension with British governors, who wanted to ameliorate the condition of the slaves.

The fourth part of *The Loyal Atlantic* takes us into the first half of the 19th century. Allison O’Mahen Malcom offers a fascinating study of Loyal Orangemen and how the memory of the Glorious Revolution shaped politics in Upper Canada and the United States. Here, loyalism was not directly linked to the Revolution but to William of Orange’s victory in Ireland. Concentrating on the period from the Rebellion to Confederation, Malcom traces how ultra-Protestantism became an essential part not only of colonial Orangemen’s “brand of Loyalism” (214) but also American nativists’ understanding of the world – even though they “despised each other’s politics” (235). Allan Blackstock’s intensive reading of the Irish press in the 1830s illustrates that ideas did not just flow from the metropole to the colonies. “Papineau-O’Connell Instruments’: Irish Loyalism and the Transnational

Dimensions of the 1837 Rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada” considers how “the transmission, manipulation, and receptions of news from Canada” (252) was used by the Irish press in Ulster and Connacht to promote particular political agendas.

The Loyal Atlantic is a fine collection whose strength lies not only in the high quality of the chapters but also in their very diversity. By setting the framework so carefully with their perceptive and persuasive introduction, Bannister and Riordan give the volume an essential unity that is sustained throughout. As they conclude in their introduction, “Loyalists offer a quintessentially Atlantic story” (23) – one that resonated in numerous ways throughout the 18th and 19th century British world – and their “legacy is still felt, contested, and debated” today (24). Indeed, *The Loyal Atlantic* is, in part, an invitation to join this debate.

It is impossible in a review essay really to do justice to the five works that have been discussed here. What is apparent is that scholarship about the Loyalists and loyalism is thriving. In imaginative and eclectic ways, many of these studies push the boundaries just a little more. In 1986 Jack Bumsted commented, in his last lecture in *Understanding the Loyalists* (Sackville, NB: Centre for Canadian Studies, 1986), that “allegiance during the period of the American Revolution was a very complex business” (48). This is certainly reflected in Roma Chopra’s study of the Loyalists in New York City and in many of the stories told in *Tory Insurgents*. But Bumsted also concluded that Canadian historical writing, in particular, had “not yet [1986] managed to create its own agenda” when it came to Loyalist studies as it continued to be “influenced unduly by the structure and categories growing out of that most American of events” – the Revolution. He reminded us that “not everything that happened” during this period of history “can or should be placed into the context of the imperial civil war which struck North America in the 1770s” (48). Bumsted was calling on Canadian historians to “reconceptualise Loyalism to include Canada’s resident population.” This is what John Reid does in his contribution to *The Loyal Atlantic*. But Bannister and Riordan’s collection goes farther than that. It expands our purview of both the Loyalists and loyalism in space and time, and situates the “Canadian” story within a complex international context. This work, in particular, prompts all of us to ask new questions and consider broad themes when we try to tease out what it meant to be a loyal subject of the Crown, not just during the American Revolution but before and after.

JANE ERRINGTON