

during this period owned slaves, suggesting that on this point the middle colonies elite were linked more closely to the South than to New England (outside Rhode Island), where slaves were few.

Like the other colonial assemblies from New York to Maryland, Pennsylvania's never endorsed the Revolution: in fact, it coexisted uneasily with the new state government that emerged in the summer of 1776 until it went out of existence in September 1776, condemning the tyranny of the new order as its final action. Assemblymen from the newer counties such as Berks, Northampton, York, and Northumberland, unlike those from the older counties, tended to be ardent revolutionaries. But they remained a small minority in the prerevolutionary body, which grossly overrepresented conservative Philadelphia, Bucks, and Chester counties. Among all the colonial legislatures, Pennsylvania's best illustrates that the Revolution overturned those who ruled at home.

The editors include a huge bibliography—useful for all scholars of colonial and revolutionary Pennsylvania—and additions and corrections to the first two volumes of this series. Every library in the state should ask their representative for a copy of this volume in two parts, and every scholar of eighteenth-century Pennsylvania will be indebted to the splendid work of Horle, Foster, Wolfe, and their colleagues.

Since reviewers must criticize something, why were there no pictures of the legislators and some of the places and incidents (Paxton Boys cartoons, for instance) described?

Pennsylvania State University

WILLIAM PENCAK

The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688–1776. By BRENDAN MCCONVILLE. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006. ix, 322 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$39.95.)

The King's Three Faces is an ambitious attempt to rethink important aspects of early American history. Challenging teleological narratives that view colonial politics as mere prologue to a democratic revolution, Brendan McConville argues that British Americans in fact embraced a deeply monarchical political culture. As he puts it, "Americans were not always engaged in somehow becoming what we are" (p. 192).

Central to McConville's story is the period from the Glorious Revolution to the mid-eighteenth-century. These crucial decades saw a number of discrete provincial subcultures (Puritan, Quaker, Dutch Calvinist, and Cavalier) embrace a common allegiance to a Protestant monarch, in the process creating a pan-colonial royalist political culture. In elucidating the origins of "the empire's cult of monarchy" (p. 69), McConville is at his boldest and most innovative. Using a

wide array of evidence, he reconstructs a provincial world full of Pope's Day processions, public celebrations of royal birthdays, the dissemination of royalist print culture, and the circulation of consumer goods emblazoned with the king's image. The proliferation of rites, print, and consumption inculcated a deeply personal, emotive love for the Hanoverians, understood as benevolent, liberty-loving Protestant kings. Taking seriously the antipopery of the eighteenth-century British world, McConville also argues that a pervasive fear of Catholics intensified allegiance to the sovereign as the protector of Protestantism.

Although McConville is careful to claim that this provincial understanding of monarchy was not absolutist, he does argue that it was patriarchal and that it drew on a deep desire among provincials to restore the divinely ordained connection between God and king that the upheavals in the British world in the seventeenth century had sundered. In so doing, he is asking scholars to rethink their usual categories and sympathetically understand a world that was at once patriarchal and individualistic, traditional and progressive. In a rare contemporary reference, he compares royal America with some twentieth-century East Asian societies (p. 140).

This detailed reconstruction of a lost provincial world also allows McConville to rethink the nature of the empire. Indeed, he contends that the royalization of provincial America created "a strange paradox" in which "eighteenth-century America became more overtly monarchical than England itself" (p. 138). As a result, on the western edge of the Atlantic, the empire was held together by emotive ties, and not by strong institutions or the traditional social hierarchies that underlay monarchy in Europe. Interestingly, McConville argues that this monarchical understanding of the empire was stronger among the lower orders, who, in contrast to educated colonial elites, were unlikely to have heard of Parliament, let alone acknowledge its authority.

Having described the origins of this monarchical world, the final third of the book narrates its dissolution. Beginning in midcentury, population growth in these patriarchal societies led to intractable conflicts as more and more provincials sought the honor that office would bring (McConville explains the Zenger crisis as a result of such a dynamic). In addition, a desire for western land led to violence between yeomen farmers and large landholders. These conflicts were, ironically, exacerbated by the very royalization that had been intended to knit the empire more closely together, as provincials (and even slaves) used their personal (and thus subjective) understanding of monarchy to invoke the king's protection against their enemies. The "subversive danger" (p. 145) of British America's strong attachment to monarchy surfaced again in the wake of the Seven Years' War when Parliament tried to tax the colonists. Initially, the colonists looked to the king to protect their liberties; but, when George III sided with Parliament, the colonists turned on him "in an orgy of iconoclastic violence" (p. 306). In the ensuing "American terror" all of the symbols of monarchy were destroyed (p. 291).

In McConville's view, then, the Revolution was in part an unintended consequence of the strength of the colonists' attachment to the monarch.

McConville's compelling account of the "rise and fall of royal America" raises some questions. Although he offers convincing evidence for the salience of this royalist political culture, his account of its subversive side, as well as his acknowledgement that it lacked a supporting social structure and sufficiently strong institutions, can be interpreted as evidence that these colonial societies were, in the long run, inhospitable to monarchy. In addition, it is not clear how the loyalists fit into McConville's explanation of the origins of the revolution. If they were shaped by the same royalist political culture as the revolutionaries, why did they remain loyal to *both* the king and Parliament, instead of embracing the solely personal tie to the monarch that, McConville argues, eventually led the majority of colonists to turn against the king? Such criticisms aside, this innovative and thought-provoking book should be required reading for all those with an interest in the British Atlantic world. It will surely be central to any future discussions of early American politics, religion, popular culture, and the coming of the Revolution.

University of California, Los Angeles

CRAIG BRYAN YIRUSH

Thomas Paine and the Literature of Revolution. By EDWARD LARKIN. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. x, 205 pp. Notes, works cited, index. \$65.00.)

One need only walk the streets of Philadelphia to gain a sense of Thomas Paine's status as one of the key founders of the American republic. There are three "monuments" to the revolutionary author in Center City: the first, a standard-issue placard at the site of the print shop of Robert Bell, the first printer of *Common Sense*; a second, the adjacent green street sign for Thomas Paine Place, signaling a block-long alley tucked politely off the beaten tourist path; and a third, the Thomas Paine Plaza near City Hall, which boasts a statue of Benjamin Franklin (not Paine) and a tribute to board games. In a city rich with veneration for a pantheon of founders, Paine is but a vague recollection.

Thomas Paine is most often forgotten because he is most often misunderstood. Paine's legacy has been clouded for two centuries by the polarities of smear campaigns and hagiographies. Only in the last few decades have scholars begun to take a balanced view of Paine, and a recent spate of books and articles on his tempestuous career and powerful pen bode well for a fuller understanding of this intriguing individual.

Among the best of these recent works, Edward Larkin's literary study of Paine's prose is a much-needed complement to the political, historical, and philo-