

Abstract

The Declaration of Independence: A New Genre in Political Discourse,  
or Mixed Genres and an Unlikely Medium?

by

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The dissertation shows how mismatched content/medium relationships can supersede the responses of traditional pairings when the medium dominates the discursive power of the discourse. The dissertation, in part, looks at a historical case study to help us understand some modern uses where mismatched pairings have been used to enhance audience attention. I begin with an overview of related theories that pertain to genre inception, development, and demise. Next, I describe an historic occasion where a mismatched content/medium pairing was, to some extent, responsible for reshaping geo-political relations: Modern concepts of democracy rest within the genre of a political communication that originated from the writing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Looking at the Declaration of Independence alongside the British government's response to it in John Lind's lengthy pamphlet *An Answer to the Declaration of the American Congress*, I discuss normative uses of genres during the eighteenth century to show how the success of the Dunlap Broadside version of the Declaration of Independence, the official version ordered by the Second Continental Congress, is a product of a larger message that is implied by the broadside in conjunction with its content of revolutionary thinking. The dissertation concludes with modern-day examples where

mismatched content/medium pairings are being used in strategies to increase public awareness of messages that were originally introduced through traditional pairings.

*Keywords:* information packaging, document design, genre-audience relationships, colonial discourse, and media studies



THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE:  
A NEW GENRE IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE  
OR MIXED GENRES IN AN UNLIKELY MEDIUM?

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by

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## Chapter One:

### Introduction

For all that has been written about one of the United States's founding iconic documents, The Declaration of Independence, missing in that discussion is what seems to be an obvious comparative study: looking at the Declaration alongside the British government's response to it in John Lind's lengthy pamphlet *An Answer to the Declaration of the American Congress*.<sup>1</sup> The framers' decision to publish the Declaration first as a broadside might have aided in shaping late eighteenth-century readers' reception to it because, in modern history until July 5, 1776, a self-declaration of nationhood had never been written, so no pre-established content/medium pairing was in place.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the reception it received from many of its audiences could not have been anticipated.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The original name of the document at its adoption on July 4, 1776, was *A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress Assembled*. It changed names once again on August 2, 1776, when it received unanimous endorsement by the colonies to become *The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America*. While it was never officially titled *The Declaration of Independence*, because this title has become the most familiar one, by this name and the *Declaration* is how I shall refer to it throughout. Additionally, Lind wrote the Answer on behalf of King George III. George didn't directly respond to the Framers' Declaration but employed Lind to do so in his place because, according to Lind, it would have diminished George's role as king to respond to a situation that was being alluded to as insignificant: "Ill it would become the policy of an enlightened Sovereign to appeal to other states on matters relating to his own internal government" (x). Lind, a pamphleteer by profession, was possibly chosen because the status of the author of the response sent a message to the Framers of the lack of significance in which England received their "audacious paper," (x) i.e., the Declaration. Lind's pamphlet will be primarily referred to as the *Answer*.

<sup>2</sup> For simplicity, the term *framers* represents the Second Continental Congress even though not all members were present at the time the *Declaration* was drafted. Broadside were used to move information quicker than any other print medium. Foolscap in size and printed on a single side of heavy chained paper, broadsides were often posted in public places to reach a large audience in a short amount of time. The Dunlap broadside printing of the *Declaration* was almost 19 inches in length by about 14 inches in width.

<sup>3</sup> There are three differing views as to whom the *Declaration* was directed: King George III, fellow colonists, or countries outside the British Empire targeted as prospective American allies. Because the initial printings were sent directly to England, disseminated throughout the thirteen colonies, and sent to France, I view the *Declaration* as including all three audiences. Depending on the context, in many cases when discussing broadsides, and to some extent newspapers, the term audience implies both consumers who are readers of an artifact and also those who retrieve its information aurally. See Chapter 4 for a more thorough discussion on audience.

This project claims that the Declaration's irregular combination of content and packaging--or form--elevated audience attentiveness to the document's text more so than the traditional pairing of content, such as England's response in the *Answer*, and its packaging, the pamphlet. This project contributes to studies in information packaging, document design, genre-audience relationships, colonial discourse, media studies, and interdisciplinary studies.

This project also contributes to the small but growing field of studies on the rhetorical attributes of the Declaration of Independence where there currently exist "surprisingly few sustainable studies on the stylistic artistry" of a document [the Declaration] that "is constantly invoked but rarely studied" (Lucas; Wills xxiv). Aside from the often quoted handful of Declaration scholars who, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, contributed the majority of original work on the Declaration's historical development (Becker; Boyd; Hazelton), as is often the case with historical events, interpretations have been susceptible to influence by generational needs. For example, fewer than a hundred years after the Declaration was written, Abraham Lincoln, in 1863, used it in his Gettysburg Address as a prop to reduce division between the North and South by supporting nationhood. One hundred years later, in the 1960s, Civil Rights activists rallied around its claim that "all men are created equal" in their fight against racism and segregation.

To study a historical artifact is not easy. One problem is that we interpret its meaning from a contemporary understanding that is based on what we've read or been told by historians because the actual context of its origin cannot be had. Thus, the need for more study, unimpeded as much as possible by our social situation, is important to understanding this document in its purity. In the words of historian Gerald F. Moran:

We urgently need studies devoted to resurrecting the meaning of the Declaration in light of its precise historical context, or otherwise we will continue to misapprehend the myths of our political culture, misunderstand the disjunction between national symbol and national history, and misread the history that produced such important documents as the American Constitution.

(806)

Some scholars (Armitage; Lucas; Lutz; Smith), however, have improved our understanding of one aspect of the Declaration, and that is its persuasive style. This dissertation project, too, contributes to the understanding of the document's stylistic impact in that it considers the packaging of the text as another possible source of persuasion which, in the past, was considered as "serving no useful purpose" (Walsh 35). Contrary to that opinion, the packaging--that is, the form that a text takes through use of medium--of both the Declaration and Lind's *Answer*--serves an important rhetorical purpose and deserves attention as such because of its role in how audiences came to understand the content of the broadside and pamphlet.

To begin an examination of the Declaration's and the *Answer's* packaging, a brief synopsis of a theoretical framework used for analyzing the two artifacts is in order. This project covers three main themes useful for the study of these documents: "Content, Delivery, and the Information Highway," which highlights message urgency through the sender's choice of information packaging and distribution; "Audience, Context, and Culture," which emphasizes message interpretation through the lens of socio-cultural influences; and "The Emergence of the Declaration as Establishing a Genre," which helps show that a mismatched content/medium pairing can supersede responses to traditional content/medium pairings when the medium

dominates the discursive power of the text. Combined, these themes illustrate how the causal relationship for the birth of the Declaration as a genre might be the result of an ambiguous understanding of the document's intent.

### Theoretical Framework: An Overview

Document design characteristics help shape the possible meanings of texts by signaling to readers what kinds of rhetorical act they are reading, and genre scholars tell us that content, medium, context, and rhetorical effect are co-determinate. If these are true, understanding how eighteenth-century readers made sense of the broadside, the original form used to present the Declaration, and of the pamphlet, the form used for the *Answer*, can help us to understand how they might have interpreted the Declaration and the *Answer*.

During the eighteenth century in colonial North America and England, the relationship between genre and audience was understood within literary circles. I contend that from seeing how political writers of the era made use of media, they, too, were aware of content/medium relationships. Several examples of the traditional uses of broadsides, newspapers, and pamphlets during the decade prior to the writing of the Declaration illustrate this point.<sup>4</sup>

So far I have been referring to what Brent Henze describes as the traditional, form-based concept of "genre" as

simply the collection of more or less shared conventions of form, style, and language that have been used in similar situations, and by similar writers, in the past. Just as individual members of a language group depend upon every other member's familiarity with the language to facilitate group communication,

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<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 3.

writers and readers of documents depend upon shared textual conventions, applied in recognizably similar situations to accomplish conventional goals. (1)

This formal understanding of genre is contrasted with a more rhetorical understanding of genre that has come to dominate scholarship in the field, especially following Carolyn Miller. Later on I will discuss genre as it relates to rhetorical genre studies (RGS). Natasha Artemeva's explanation of RGS will be implied when discussing the context of social and cultural influences on a genre's interpretation and formation. According to Artemeva,

RGS moves the study of genre beyond the exploration of its textual features on to the analysis of the social contexts that give rise to and shape genres and, thus, lends itself as a useful theoretical framework to research into changes in genre creation, development, learning, and use (10).

The formal approach shows the development of genres based on their formal characteristics. Artemeva's explanation of RGS doesn't reject the notion of formal characteristics, but it understands those characteristics in terms of the social conditions in which the textual conventions are actually produced.

An examination of traditional uses of genres in eighteenth-century England and colonial America shows how medium selection might have created a heightened level of awareness for the language used in the Declaration, most notably because a broadside, by its very nature, was a medium typically used for mass distribution and display.<sup>5</sup> Until July 5, 1776, letters and pamphlets, not broadsides, were the two media commonly exchanged between the two governing bodies. All the more reason James Raven emphasizes that "an understanding of the

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<sup>5</sup> See Chapter 5 for discussion about the "the Scottish Declaration of Independence" (1320) and "the Dutch Declaration of Independence" (1581).

effects of the standardization and mass replication of printed texts . . . demands fresh analysis of the response of individual readers and the contingency of print reception" (268). In general, prior research has evolved around "printers' working practices," "transmission processes," "historicist textual criticism," "the phenomenology of acts of reading," and "the culturally constructed means of receiving and understanding the read" (269). The idea that information packaging helps audiences to unravel a message's meaning is commonly agreed upon within the field of genre theory; however, little has been done to broaden the field's scope. By comparing two historical artifacts—one of a nontraditional use of a medium and the other of a traditional—my aim with this project is to offer one possibility to contribute to broadening the scope by showing a case where a mismatched content/medium pairing is more effective than traditionally accepted forms. Such an approach not only adds to genre theory, but also contributes to case-study research in communication practices incorporated into eighteenth-century textual artifacts, of which, according to Raven, there are "surprisingly few" (275).

The comparative case study of the Declaration and *Answer* helps illustrate the point *that within content/medium relationships there are exceptions where an artifact's vagueness might contribute to a greater favorable interpretation of its content than in cases when an artifact's intention is transparent, as it is in traditional pairings of content with media. When content and media are uncommonly matched, the role of ambiguity, in some cases, may be as effective as design transparency in other cases. Lack of a genre's agreed-upon use gives audiences the flexibility to interpret a document's meaning and significance according to the audience's understanding of the content and its relationship with the medium because a precedent of conventional interpretation has not yet been determined.*

*The notion of genres as being as Carolyn R. Miller states as "typified rhetorical responses to recurring social situations" (qtd. in Spinuzzi, Network 17) provides little insight into artifacts like the Declaration when the medium is anomalous in its pairing with the text, and thereby cannot be neatly placed within an established genre. Such an uncommon combination of content and form can confound an audience's reaction to, and reception of, a document. Because this "new genre" has no established parameters by which to test its legitimacy, we typically "first, . . . think carefully about the approach to understanding the experience of receiving a particular type of text, and second, . . . investigate the sort of evidence upon which this new reception and reading history might draw" (Raven 269). In the end, we wind up testing it within the parameters of our understanding of our socio-contextual uses of existing genres (McLuhan, Report 69).*

*When new genres are introduced, audiences are given the flexibility to interpret an artifact's meaning and decipher its significance according to their individual understandings and experiences with its medium, content, context, and the social situation in which it is read. As is claimed by constructivist theorists, usability cannot be located in a single artifact because it is located within the entire activity in which the artifact is used (Spinuzzi, "Grappling" 41). Though the sender is somewhat able to manipulate reaction through the decision in matching content with a particular medium (i.e., a medium indicates to the reader the way its sender intends the message to be read), ultimately the authority for interpreting a new genre lies in the hands of its audience. By using the paradigm set forth in RGS, I address the social, political, and rhetorical actions that surrounded the Declaration and Answer so that my examination of these texts*

*explores the contemporary contexts of these documents' production, distribution, and reception (Artemeva 1-2).*

### Content, Delivery, and the Information Highway

*As important as any other element of the context and social situation surrounding the Declaration and Answer is the understanding of the forms used to first publish these two texts.*

This study suggests that three key criteria exist within an artifact that can determine how an audience will perceive its utility: textual regularity, timeliness (relative to medium), and dissemination speed. Using these criteria as a conceptual framework one can see that content from colonial American and English broadsides, newspapers, and pamphlets demonstrate a recognizable composition through their continuing display of certain genres. This framework also shows that technology and production factored in to medium selection from the standpoint of the information's life cycle (i.e., whether the information is new and timely, or ongoing and the audience already had a tacit understanding of it), and that dissemination speeds were calculated in proportion to a text's importance or timeliness.

For example, broadsides were typically posted to doors and walls in public places. By their placement and design characteristics they were treated as an early version of a public awareness announcement. Broadside appear to have been chosen over other communication media when the content had to be delivered quickly and to a large audience. Within a few hours they could be both printed and deposited directly into the surroundings of their targeted audiences. They were often read aloud within a group setting to ensure that everyone was exposed to the information regardless of their literacy levels, which, Marshall McLuhan would say, divided the sensual elements of the audience since the nature of the medium catered to

both oral and visual senses. Printed by local newspaper publishers, broadsides with their poster-like image made them easily recognizable to passersby.

By comparison, newspapers also reached a large audience within only minutes of printing, but the dynamics of the information were often less timely and the venue was more eclectic. For instance, newspapers ran articles on political essays, book reviews, news from abroad, rebuttals to earlier articles, and advertisements. Newspaper readers, however, were often silent readers who re-circulated the artifact to other silent readers and occasionally to readers who would read it aloud to small groups (Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion* 27). In other words, the genre didn't imply oral readership, though it normally evolved into that, depending on the information being reported that day. Newspapers were initially acquired for a small fee and were distributed several places throughout a city or town for availability. While a few newspaper publishers printed their papers more frequently, many went to press only once a week, and some even fewer times than that.

Unlike broadsides and newspapers, pamphlets were written for a particular audience. The audience for a pamphlet was well-read and had a specific interest in the subject. Pamphlets were purchased directly from bookstores, and they were printed in volumes of 500 copies per edition with additional editions pending demand (T. Adams, *American Controversy*, xv). Often, orders were taken early so that the publisher would know how many he could expect to sell. When a pamphlet was widely received on the local level, on many occasions it was also sent abroad for circulation, thereby creating an international readership. Another contrast between newspapers and pamphlets is that the pamphlet was comparatively straightforward in manner. As Thomas Adams notes from his research in compiling bibliographies on British and American

pamphlets published during the Revolutionary War, "An author composed an essay in which he stated an argument, and the essay was financed, printed, and published solely to communicate those thoughts" (*American Controversy* xiv).

So, the reading of a message is a product of several variables, all of which begin at that point when content and design are paired. From then on, the artifact's message is subjected to the circumstances under which it is read, an audience's familiarity with the subject matter, and the efficiency with which it is delivered being that its rhetorical power is altered by time and spatial separateness evolving from the occurrence of the actual event to the distribution of the news outlet reporting it.

#### *Audience, Context, and Culture*

Continuing with the genre-audience thematic, I have developed a theoretical construct that suggests differing social circumstances about the ways individuals might have "flesh[ed] out" relationships between "*agency* and *structure*" in order to understand how to interpret a genre's content (Artemeva 10). My approach is in no way an attempt to reconstruct history. Rather, I provide a framework through which to consider how history might have been shaped by readers' use and understanding of their media. First, readership demographics (literacy rates, gender, income) have been used to determine a medium's targeted audience. Then the context (social environment) has been considered as a perceivable influence when reading occurred in a public place conducive to discussions of politics. Last, I have considered socio-cultural influences that also might have aided in forming opinions (occupation, national allegiance [i.e., England or America]). Primary data sets (broadsides, newspapers, and pamphlets) have been supplemented by additional material (magazines, journals, personal

correspondence, governmental ledgers, state constitutions, historical documents) that have aided in understanding the circumstances in which the Declaration and the *Answer* were written.

To build a descriptive analytical lens to view media and audience reception, I have applied McLuhan's theory on the physiological effects of media, Miles Kimball's theory on the dynamics of design practices, and other theories of genre, information packaging, and audience (C. Miller; Ong; Porter; Schryer) to describe audience relationships with early broadsides, newspapers, and pamphlets.<sup>6</sup>

For example, as McLuhan suggests, the message emitting from a medium is more sensual than epistemological; it has physiological effects on its audience that determine how, and to what extent, the senses are engaged when deciphering content. To use a modern-day example where our sensual ratios are redistributed, if content from a newspaper is later presented on television, "we no longer feel the same, nor do our eyes and ears and other senses remain the same" (McLuhan, *Gutenberg* 24). Furthermore, if an audience is willing to engage with a medium, then and only then can its content be deliverable (McLuhan, *Gutenberg* 94-95).

While Kimball doesn't discuss the physiological dynamics between a medium and its audience, he does illustrate the concept of McLuhan's claim through his example of Charles Booth's nineteenth-century maps identifying the reach of London's poverty. Kimball contends that Booth's maps derived their rhetorical power of creating audience awareness through the design's transparency rather than the content itself since the content had pre-existed in other

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<sup>6</sup> See Chapter 4.

media prior to Booth's use of it (354). To paint a broader picture of his claim, Kimball suggests that design practices were responsible for influencing reform in social policy because the content was packaged in such a way that the magnitude of London's poverty, which before had seemed insurmountable to the point that its "scope and nature . . . [was] difficult to perceive," suddenly seemed manageable (355).

Similar in scope, the majority of the Declaration's text was not original in thought or language. Jefferson himself said he wasn't aiming for originality. But what made the Declaration unique was that it was a mosaic of collaborative contemporary texts and ideologies, so much so that it would have been difficult for most colonists not to find some portion with which they agreed. To be sure, while reflecting on writing the document in a letter to Richard Henry Lee (May 8, 1825), Jefferson acknowledged that he was "neither aiming at originality of principle or sentiment, or yet copied from any particular and previous writing, it was intended to be an expression of the American mind, and to give to that expression the proper tone and spirit called for by the occasion." Compared with the Declaration, the *Answer* received little fanfare even though its content was familiar *and* its form more traditional for political polemics.<sup>7</sup>

Unlike traditional models of usability in which emphasis is placed upon studying the user/artifact dyad, Spinuzzi's model works well with this project because it takes into account society, culture, history, and interpretation as also playing integral parts in the relationship (*Grappling* 43). Except for one criterion Spinuzzi fails to consider, and that is author credibility, his variables provide the criteria for my own analysis. How authorship influences a text's

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<sup>7</sup> My basis for this claim is that the broadside printed by Dunlap was a one-time event, and it is estimated that 200 to 300 copies were printed. Of that number, today there are 27 extant copies known to exist. In contrast, only one copy of the first edition of the *Answer* exists out of 500 printings. While my argument for this claim is not conclusive, it does indicate that the less-expensive broadside was better preserved than the more-expensive pamphlet.

credibility is discussed through the lens of Catherine Schryer's approach to understanding authorship credibility (Lingard 516).

It is impossible to determine the extent that author-credibility played in eighteenth-century broadsides and pamphlets. In several instances, authors maintained their anonymity. For those texts where the author's name did appear, the "politics of identity" of the document's authorship might have shaped its authority on the subject, as it did with Richard Price's *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty*, or did not as with Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*. Either way, the voice of the text, according to Schryer, is partially responsible for giving it its credence (Lingard et al 515 -516). While Schryer writes about collaborative writing in academic research papers, her fundamental point that a document's credibility is shaped "through selections of audience, voice, story, and genre" can be extended even further. It can include a document's sponsor, reputation of the printer, and the author's social status, in addition to design decisions, all of which may have contributed to how readers made sense of broadsides and pamphlets (Lingard et al 516).<sup>8</sup>

#### The Emergence of the Declaration of Independence as Establishing a New Genre

As previously mentioned, only a small percentage of the Declaration's text is original work. Yet its reception—both immediate and in the years following 1776—elevated the text to that of a model for other countries seeking to create new identities for themselves within the world arena through the act of secession. The underlying question here isn't *why* the Declaration is so often emulated, but *what in particular* about its original first printing initiated

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<sup>8</sup> While Schryer has developed her ideas in several different places (e.g., *Genre and Power: "A Chronotopic Analysis,"* and "Genre Time/Space: Chronotopic Strategies in the Experimental Article"), this article for which she served as second author does a good job of bringing those ideas together.

further interest.<sup>9</sup> The fact that the Declaration's text *and* its packaging were reproduced on several occasions during its initial reading throughout the British Isles and Europe suggests that the role of the broadside was linked to the message. For example, when the Declaration was reprinted throughout England, it was printed initially on broadsides before being printed in newspapers and magazines.

Since the majority of the Declaration's text is not new to its audiences and if the Declaration actually did catch England by surprise, as Lind said, the surprise might have resulted from its form.<sup>10</sup> Since previous interactions between the two countries were geared toward expository discourse using conventional media, the nature of the communication Congress unveiled in the broadside—a *declaration* of independence—probably did confuse those coming into contact with it. Consequently, *A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress Assembled* was the first of its kind to write *at* its motherland, not *to* it, meaning that its rhetorical structure, both in content and form, implied an end to the possibility of negotiation and discussion on reconciliation.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> W. Stuart Emmons points out in "The Leary Copy of the First Printing of the Declaration of Independence": "The John Dunlap first printing was later used as the basis for later printings in newspapers, books, and broadsides." Michael J. Walsh adds in his "Contemporary Broadside Editions of the Declaration of Independence" that the Dunlap Broadside "supplied the text for the longhand copy of the Declaration in the . . . Journal of the Congress, and that for the famous engrossed vellum copy signed by the delegates. It was the form of the Declaration disseminated to the new-born 'states' by order of the Congress, thereby becoming the basis for later printings in newspapers, broadsides, and books" (31). Throughout July 1776, the *Declaration* was printed in 29 colonial newspapers (Walsh 33).

<sup>10</sup> "[I]f we give ourselves time to reflect, we shall find, that there is nothing in all this that ought to surprise us; nothing but what have been foreseen, nothing indeed but what had, by many, been expected," as stated in England's response to the *Declaration* (Lind ii-iii).

<sup>11</sup> The *Declaration's* first paragraph states: "When in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the cause which impel them to the Separation."

In 1976, two hundred years after the signing of the Declaration, Jacques Derrida posed the question: "how does a state make or found itself?" (31). This study provides one possibility as an answer to that question by demonstrating the significance the role medium played in carrying out the act of establishing nationhood by colonial America. Beginning with the Dunlap Declaration, the Declaration's continued involvement in establishing nationhood has served as a charter for other countries seeking to become nation-states, and today has contributed to the writings of declarations of independence for more than half of the countries in the world.<sup>12</sup>

### Preview of Chapters

Following this introductory chapter, in Chapter Two I discuss the prevailing views that set the stage for the conditions in which the Declaration emerged. Particularly, the focus is on how and why the bond between colonial America and England began to dissolve in the 1760s and continued to do so even more in the 1770s. To provide a possible explanation for the change, I describe the growing difference in demographics, economic conditions, political climates, and social environments.

Chapter Three is a discussion of the technology, production, distribution, and design practices characteristic of eighteenth-century colonial American broadsides, newspapers, and pamphlets published between 1765 and 1776. Here, I show how shortly after England announced the Stamp Act in 1765, the constraints on printing that followed in the years to come determined how publishers compensated for shortages by printing fewer voluminous compositions, such as books, while increasing the production of ephemera. Illustrations

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<sup>12</sup> See *The Declaration of Independence: A Global History*, by David Armitage.

comparing the quality of materials used in colonial America and England are also provided (with additional detail provided in Chapters Five and Six). English newspapers are not included in the discussion because their composition played a lesser role in understanding Parliament's reading of, and responding to, the Declaration than did broadsides and pamphlets.

Then, in Chapter Four, usability is discussed. Through an interpretative exercise in the user/artifact dyad, I show how colonial readers of ephemera might have interpreted content and assigned meaning to its significance by "judging a book by its cover." That is, content was interpreted, in part, by the medium that presented it. Interpretation was based on common uses for the medium and such factors as the socio-economic conditions that surrounded it as much as it was literacy levels.

The previous chapters are constructed so that they establish a foundation for comparing the two texts discussed in Chapters Five and Six, the Declaration and *Answer*, respectively. The earlier chapters provide a backdrop to explain relational changes that took place between colonial America and England leading up to the writing of the Declaration; the characteristics of traditional uses of late eighteenth-century mass media outlets; and a snapshot of audience demographics of such outlets. How the Declaration's anomalous packaging at the time of its inception might have led to its success is explored in Chapter Five. And in Chapter Six I show how one of the Declaration's audiences, Parliament, responded to it by discussing how the *Answer* came to be written. Finally, in Chapter Seven I provide several modern-day examples from different professions where nontraditional content/medium pairings are being chosen over traditional pairings, an attempt made by workforce cultures to draw more attention from their audiences.

## Chapter Two:

### Contextual Paradigms Inspiring the Creation of a Declaration of Independence

Beginning with the end of the French and Indian War in 1763 (also known as the Seven Years' War) and concluding with the writing of the Declaration, this section summarizes the major events and issues occurring between colonial America and England. The timeframe is significant because it explains how and when the relationship between the two countries began to dissolve into a state of disrepair. At the beginning of this timeframe George III had been the king for three years. George III was unlike his grandfather, the preceding king, in many ways. George III spoke more fluent English than his German grandfather; he had a more physical presence in England than did George II, who often managed England's affairs from Germany; and he wanted to enforce several laws governing the American colonists that had long been relaxed during the thirty-three-year reign of George II. All in all, George III's grandfather, like his great-grandfather before him, "had regarded the wishes of England as of considerably less importance than the wellbeing of their beloved Hanover" (Mumby 7). Understanding the situation, George III was aware that the "power of appointing his own Ministry, and shaping its policy to his own ends, had been taken from his hands" (Mumby 7).

For the most part, the colonists embraced George III as their king, but when George began enforcing measures that would apply to them and not his subjects in England, the colonists viewed the enforcement as inequitable. Considering the concept of "rights" beyond those liberties that subjects were allotted by the monarchy was unfathomable to contemplate openly. Doing so could be considered an act of sedition and result in one's death. Yet in their decision-making process, colonists explored the value of rights anyway, not just in their

treatment from England, but also in terms of what the "laws of nature" and "nature's God" entitled them because the threat of persecution was worse than the threat of dying to keep from it. Chapter Four will provide more detail of the colonists' approach toward reassessing the value of self worth, but this chapter sets the stage for the arrival of how the colonists came to evaluate their worthiness. Chapter Three bridges the break between dissolution and self-reliance by providing an example of the conditions that England imposed upon colonists' communication outlets and the stance the colonists took against such conditions.

This chapter is divided into five sections: "American and English Relations Leading up to the Declaration of Independence: An Overview"; "England: An Eighteenth Century Snapshot"; "Colonial America: An Eighteenth Century Snapshot"; and "The Global Community: An Eighteenth Century Snapshot." Last, in "Enlightenment Thought and the Industrial Revolution: Influences Shaping Mindset and Disposition in the Colonies and Beyond," I summarize the abstract contexts that were at play during the conflict between colonial America and England.

#### American and English Relations Leading up to the Declaration of Independence: An Overview

In 1764, one year after the end of the French and Indian War, an opposition group of colonists organized to fight against Great Britain's plan to impose a tax on sugar (known as The Sugar Act; American Revenue Act; and American Duties Act). The tax was England's way of recovering some of the money spent to protect the colonies during the war, costs that ended up doubling England's budget, as England had financed the war through bank loans. The national debt rose from £75 million in 1754 to £133 million in 1763. Trying to generate the added revenue through the North American colonists and not other British subjects as well "violated what many American colonists understood as the clear precedent of more than a

century of colonial-imperial relations" since the British Constitution prohibited taxing British subjects without their consent (Congress).<sup>13</sup>

Though there was some discrepancy over the interpretation of the British Constitution, both England and its colonists agreed that the way it was structured left little room for improvement (Moran, 808; Bentham, 72-73, 82-84). In fact, as late as January 12, 1776, members of a convention in Maryland said that "of all known systems" the British Constitution was "best calculated to secure the liberty of the subject" (qtd. in Maier 30).

In 1765, still trying to recover the financial shortfall from the war and now trying to recover some of the costs of stationing troops in the colonies, England imposed taxes on most paper goods purchased by the American colonists (newspapers, stationery, legal documents, playing cards) with legislation known as the "Stamp Act." This time England figured out a way to circumvent its constitution by pointing out that British subjects were represented by delegates, a process known as virtual representation. So the British government argued that colonists were represented, even though no American colonist was a member of Parliament, because the colonists were British subjects by default. Again, an opposition group formed.

In protest, mobs of colonists ransacked the homes of and threatened bodily harm to stamp agents whose job it was to distribute the stamps. In Virginia, the House of Burgesses

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<sup>13</sup> Regulating the colonies' economy with this and similar parliamentary statutes formed the core of England's colonial policy, a policy based on the ideas of mercantilism. For King George III's implementation of it, see Crane Brinton, John B. Christopher, and Robert L. Wolff's *History of Civilization*, 2:74-75. Mercantilism, i.e., the accumulation of natural resources through territorial control, was a common practice by nations during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The English government first imposed a mercantile system on the American colonies in the 1650s with the navigation acts, which regulated commerce and manufacturing. Other such acts followed. The Colonists had found a way to circumvent the navigation acts. They, in turn, began trading with other countries. The monarchy and Parliament believed that the American colonies existed to fortify England's coffers. The more lucrative a nation was in its natural resources, the more control the nation had in driving imports and exports against foreign trade. To ensure financial gain from the Colonists' trading practices, England imposed several additional acts that taxed imported goods and prohibited exported goods.

declared the Stamp Act unlawful since colonial representation was not considered in the voting process. By the end of 1765, eight other colonies had taken similar measures. The Stamp Act had served as a unifying force in fusing the voices of the thirteen colonies into one (Congress). The unified stand in opposition to the Stamp Act foreshadowed the solidarity that the colonies would have when representatives from all thirteen colonies signed the Declaration. Throughout the violence, however, colonists had continued to send letters of proclamation to King George, reminding him that they were his subjects and "entitled to all the inherent rights and privileges of his natural born subjects within the kingdom of Great Britain" (Declaration of Rights). In other words, while England saw the colonists as being represented by Parliament, colonists saw the situation otherwise.

In 1767, Richard Henry Lee, Patrick Henry, and Thomas Jefferson joined together in organizing yet another act of opposition, this time against the Parliament's Townshend Acts, a series of acts again designed to strengthen England's financial stronghold over the colonists by imposing a broader spectrum of taxable items to its venue, including imported paper, glass, paint, and tea. Yet, in still trying to establish a common bond, in February 1768 the Massachusetts assembly circulated a letter claiming George III to be "our common head and father" (Massachusetts).

To further enforce colonists' obedience, especially after 1773 when the event known as the "Boston Tea Party" took place, King George III ordered the ports of Boston closed, and in 1774 he further responded with the Coercive Acts. Though the First Continental Congress had established an army to defend the colonies against further attacks by its mother country, Congress continued to attempt reconciliation as well. For instance, in 1775, Benjamin

Franklin entered a statement in his journal of what he believed to be the mindset of most colonists: George was the "common father of his people" (363). In the same year, Congress wrote the "Olive Branch Petition," an attempt to prevent an actual war and return to George's good grace. The petition played a pivotal role in the colonists' allegiance to England in the sense that its creation raised the question of whether the next Congress, which was the Second Continental Congress (established in May 1775), should continue trying to negotiate with George as their last recourse; they had already dissolved attempts to get Parliament and the British subjects in England to take their side:

George III's hostile speeches, as John Dickinson continually affirmed, could be attributed to the ministers who prepared them. Perhaps further pleas could get to the King himself and persuade him to act like the father of his people. Radicals such as the Adamses thought it demeaning to submit yet another "humble and dutiful petition" to a monarch who had answered earlier pleas for redress with worse grievances. On the other hand, to agree to a petition would mollify Dickinson and the other Congressional moderates, who were desperate for a settlement. If the new petition was again rejected, its supporters might be persuaded that more extreme measures had become necessary. (Maier 24)

Negotiating peace while preparing for war could be seen as a hypocritical maneuver on the part of the colonists, but as Maier identifies, the desire for negotiation was still prevalent, even if negotiation itself was not probable.<sup>14</sup> While England still offered reconciliation, the only way of

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<sup>14</sup> The British also shared in this practice. Admiral Lord Richard Howe and his brother General Sir William Howe acted as peace commissioners at the same time they commanded the British navy and army in America in 1776.

achieving it was through compliance. A handful of men such as John Adams and his cousin Samuel Adams had come to terms with the reality of the situation while allegiance kept most colonists from considering George as the mastermind behind the colonists' "grievances."

George rejected the Olive Branch Petition and, on Oct. 27, 1775, announced before Parliament a "Proclamation Suppressing Rebellion and Sedition" that accused the colonists of treachery. Thus, more bloodshed was in store. The British government hired foreign mercenaries to assist in fighting the makeshift colonial forces. About this same time the *Pennsylvania Gazette* ran a recently obtained news brief—already three months old—from London presses about a fleet of British warships that had departed for America carrying 35,000 more British soldiers. The lag time in receiving this news was a result of the changes in communication practices that occurred at the onset of the war. The royal postal system—known for having a "high level of service by the standards of the day" and for turning port towns "into funnels for the transmission of information between the British North American hinterland and the wider world"—was replaced by colonial postal workers. These replacement workers struggled to maintain the same pace as the British system but often fell short of doing so. Now, not only were the British less inclined to send periodicals to American printers so that news from abroad could be reprinted for dissemination throughout the colonies, but local delivery was also reduced from three times a week to once a week. And compounding the setback even further was that postal riders, who often delivered newspapers along with the mail, did so "at their pleasure" and on "their own private account" because there was no law in place requiring them to do otherwise (John 26-31). To demonstrate the speed at which information travelled during colonial times, in 1839, Jesse Dow, a retired postal clerk, claimed

that it took "forty days to receive a reply to a letter from Portland, Maine, to Savannah, Georgia, and thirty two days to receive a reply to a letter sent from Philadelphia to Lexington, Kentucky" (John 17).

Still, even at war's onset, many colonists were not ready to give up their British-ness (Maier 8; Conway, par. 1) because it was not the *system* that had upset the status quo, but "particular men within it" (Maier 30). In March 1776, George Wythe and Richard Henry Lee, representatives from Virginia, were the first to openly change the course of sentiment by asserting that the king was the "Author of our miseries" and then call for secession from England (qtd. in J. Miller 343). While the majority of other delegates did not immediately support their claim at the time, by June the idea to separate had garnered enough support to formally draft a declaration of independence.

#### England: An Eighteenth Century Snapshot

What lay behind England's inability to recognize the tensions behind many of its American colonists' reluctant desire to separate from England was England's own situation at home. England's demography had placed it in the position of what modern-day political scientists call a "superpower." A superpower nation occupies the highest profile position in international affairs such as trade, commerce, military might, wealth, and power. Though in the eighteenth century the term had yet to be coined, its definition is still synonymous with England's influence at this time. And as superpowers usually do, England had its share of enemies as a result of its authority and political stronghold in the world arena, but most nations were unwilling to engage in actual conflict with a nation wielding so much dominance for fear of the ramifications.

## *Demographics*

The combined population of the British Isles at the beginning of the eighteenth century was about 8.4 million and, in 1770, had increased to about 13.3 million (Bailyn, "1776" 447).<sup>15</sup> Within the British Isles, the English and Welsh population grew about 23 percent, the Irish about 73 percent, and the Scottish about 67 percent. The greatest growth, however, was taking place in North America. Excluding slaves (which accounted for about 250,000 people by the 1770s) and Indians (who weren't counted at the time), the population grew from 275,000 in 1700 to 2.2 million in 1770; in the 1760s alone the population increased by 37 percent. As for metropolitan areas, the largest urban population in the British Isles in the 1760s was London at about 750,000 (including the metro area and Westminster).

## *Economy*

With British North America's significant growth in population came a greater emphasis on the North American Colonies' place within the overall British economy. The Treaty of Paris (1763) secured British control over the shipping trade in most of North America and confirmed British sovereignty over North American land east of the Mississippi River. This exchange resulted in the British Empire's becoming the most economically vital kingdom in the world at the time, and one that also had the greatest military might. American trade contributed a significant portion to England's strength. American imports from England rose 120 percent between 1768 and 1772, and within the five-year frame of 1768 to 1772 that portion was 43 percent (Bailyn, "1776" 446-447). In 1774, English exports to the thirteen colonies accounted

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<sup>15</sup> All information about the demographics of Great Britain and its North American Colonies comes from Bernard Bailyn's article "1776 A Year of Challenge—A World Transformed," unless otherwise noted. See especially p. 447.

for £2,644,000 whereas American goods to England were half as much, £1,398,000. Walter Conser, Ronald M. McCarthy, and David J. Toscano point out how "obvious [it is] that England normally had a very considerable advantage over the American colonies, supplying manufactured goods far in excess of the value of imported raw materials" (302). In 1775, however, with America's creation of the Continental Association (see the section "Economy" under "Colonial America" below), the "picture was transformed" with imports to the colonies falling by nine-tenths (Conser, McCarthy, and Toscano 302).

### *Politics*

Tensions between the British government and the North American Colonies were not solely based on economics. As Margaret Avery states, "The Age of the American Revolution was, in England, one of great political confusion and instability, and has long posed serious problems for historians seeking to understand the nature of 'party' and to unravel the complex strands of political thought in this period" (27). George III took the throne in 1760 at a time when Parliament had more authority than the monarchy. He blamed the loss of monarchical control on the Whigs, which was the majority party at the time, and aligned his politics with those of the Tories, who vowed to return authority into the hands of the monarchy (Mumby 4-13).<sup>16</sup>

While at first respected by his subjects for the victory of the French and Indian War, peculiar behaviors led to questions about his ability to successfully govern England.<sup>17</sup> Distanced

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<sup>16</sup> For a more comprehensive explanation of the power King George and Parliament had, both collectively and individually, see of *A Fragment of Government*, by Jeremy Bentham (pp. 75-77).

<sup>17</sup> The court attempted to limit information about the king. In 1966, British scientists Ida MacAlpine and Richard Hunter found that George suffered from porphyria, a blood disease that affects the nervous system and causes severe abdominal pain and skin sensitivity. They based their claim on his symptoms and descriptions of ailments affecting his ancestors Mary, Queen of Scots, and James I. In 2004 scientists tested hair from George and

from firsthand accounts of his shortcomings, however, George III remained popular among the American colonists. For years Americans believed that the strained relations between England and its North American colonists were more a result of Parliament's decisions than George's. For instance, in 1773, an American pamphleteer wrote, "Where can an affectionate, but afflicted people go, but to the bosom of their affectionate Sovereign?" (Brinton, Christopher, and Wolff 2:74-76).

Even though George had no intention of ruling without Parliament, when he did not intervene on the colonists' behalf, they eventually came to believe that it was he, not Parliament, who was the most likely architect of the legislation.<sup>18</sup> As the Declaration of Independence states, the colonists, by this time, viewed their king as a tyrant who prevented them from practicing their God-given rights.<sup>19</sup> George received a copy of the printed broadside version of the Declaration in August 1776 and commissioned John Lind, a young lawyer and pamphleteer, to respond to it on behalf of England. Lind responded in September with a 137-page pamphlet titled *An Answer to the Declaration of the American Congress*.

### *Ideology*

By the 1770s, many Britons no longer considered American colonists to be fellow Britons, which is what Stephen Conway claims as the reason for England's initial indifference when it received the Declaration (par.6). Because there was no defining moment that

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found there to be high levels of arsenic, which was used in the powder for most wigs at the time to keep insects from infesting them. The DNB article on George III is a good place for an overview article, including information about his porphyria.

<sup>18</sup> In May 1776, King George replied to a petition from America asking him to define the terms for peace. George replied that the colonists had "brought upon themselves by an unjustifiable resistance to the continental authority of this Kingdom . . . and [he would] be ready and happy to alleviate those miseries, by acts of mercy and clemency, when ever that authority is established, and the now existing rebellion is at an end." He followed by saying that "I will invariably pursue the most proper and effectual means" (qtd. in Maier 40-41).

<sup>19</sup> See list of grievances in section three of the *Declaration* that begins "Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies."

chronicles when the disassociation took place, the process of the separation itself was not cut and dried. Conway calls the transformation "a jagged, broken and faltering movement" and describes it as resembling "a drunkard lurching forward and then tottering back" (par. 3).

Excerpts from the July 1776 parliamentary proceedings as reported in *The Gentleman's Magazine* support Conway's claim:

That leave be given to bring in a bill to establish a permanent reconciliation between Great Britain and its dependencies in North America, and to restore his Majesty's subjects in North America to that happy and free condition, and to that peace and prosperity which they enjoyed in their constitutional dependence on Great Britain before the present unhappy troubles, viz, as in 1763. ("Debate on the American Restraining Bill" 291)

The motion failed to pass. Another speaker who was quoted in the same issue of the *Gentleman's Magazine* considered reconciliation to be "dangerous and absurd" and "absolutely impracticable that these Colonies to be ever again subject to, or dependant [*sic*] upon Great Britain" ("Account of the Proceedings of the American Colonists" 330). Another said "the Americans . . . brought the troubles on themselves, by resisting the laws and authority of this country" ("Debate on the American Restraining Bill" 292). And yet another speaker read extracts from letters he had received from America which indicated that "coercive measures would never either frighten or otherwise induce the Americans to enter into any treaty of compromise with this country; on the contrary, that they would risk every thing [*sic*], and suffer every thing [*sic*] before they would be compelled by force to submit" ("Debate on the American

Restraining Bill" 293).

Though it's impossible to tell how many British sympathizers there were for the "American Cause," given the abundance of artifacts addressing the colonists' plight that exists today, it can be reasonably assumed that while the British government might have been, for the most part, consistent in its ideas how best to handle the conflict between itself and its American subjects, the answer wasn't so simple among England's citizenry.

### Colonial America: An Eighteenth Century Snapshot

Colonial America, by this time, had already established various governmental structures. Eight colonies were governed by governors appointed by the king; these were called royal colonies. Three colonies allowed proprietors to choose their governors, these were called proprietary colonies. Two colonies elected their governors themselves; these were called charter colonies. Of the legislative bodies, the Upper House was appointed by the crown or proprietor and the Lower House by voters. Legislatures voted on all matters of tax implementation. There is some truth to the idea that at least a significant number of Americans (if not a majority) did not see themselves as British. Many coming from non-British backgrounds, these immigrants might have been identified as having added to the population count of British subjects, but many were British only through the process of association. Customs learned in native homelands or through the practices of immigrant parents often continued to play a significant role in how people perceived themselves and wanted others to perceive them. For instance, many of colonial America's German population who moved to America to escape persecution immediately began to immerse themselves into American communities and adapt the American mindset by contributing to the local economies through

establishing businesses and growing crops, yet they also maintained their sense of identity as a German people. The *Pennsylvanischer Staatsbote*, to illustrate, was a German-language newspaper that, on July 5, 1776, became the first colonial newspaper to announce the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. (Though the Declaration began to appear on broadsides, its printing for readers of English-language newspapers followed the *Pennsylvania Gazette's* printing of it on July 6.) As for the Irish, though America experienced a greater increase in Irish immigrants in the nineteenth century, colonial America's Irish population in the late eighteenth century placed Irish presence just below the Germans as being among the most numerous in minority groups. The French Huguenots, inspired by John Calvin's Protestant teachings over that of the Catholic church's, also found refuge in the American colonies after being driven from France.

Though the Naturalization Acts (1740 to 1761) were successful in assimilating these non-British colonists, such as the Germans, Irish, and Huguenots, into the fold of British control, in the years following the end of the French and Indian War and up to the arrival of the Declaration, England attempted to play a more prominent role within the diverse composition of its American population in order to "emphasize the British-ness of the colonists," especially those who had "developed in ways that distinguished them from Britons in Britain" (Conway, par. 28). For instance, for 150 years (beginning with the first permanent settlement in America in 1607), colonists had the flexibility to reside on land west of the Appalachian mountain range. The Proclamation of 1763 was an attempt to put an end to westward expansion. Trying to reduce expenditures after spending so much on the French and Indian War, England had wanted to reduce British troops on its American borders so it declared them closed to colonial

exploration and settlement, thinking that the decision would reduce Indian attacks on the colonists if the two groups no longer claimed the same land as home. Colonists living in the now restricted area received orders to relocate (Mumby 91; Brinton, Christopher, and Wolff 2:74-75). In short, America was a "transatlantic British nation," according to England, and those who were living there were British, regardless of where they were from originally.

### *Demographics*

According to the U.S. Historical Census Data Base (2002), of the 2.5 million people residing in North America in 1775 (still excluding the Indian population), about 50 percent were non-English, which included 20 percent who were African, 8 percent Scots-Irish, and 7 percent German (Armitage, *The Declaration of Independence: A Global* 12-13). Of the fifty-five men who initially signed the Declaration of Independence, nine were born outside colonial America. The largest urban area was Philadelphia with a population of about 30,000. From 1700 to 1776 the American population was doubling every twenty-five years. As with all population increases, supply and demand on labor, goods, and services played a central role in determining quality of life, and ultimately political representation, not just with England's Parliament, but also within local assemblies. As Gordon Wood points out, "Although such disproportionate representation was common enough to Britain . . . the colonists were historically accustomed to more direct and equal representation; and their small club-like assemblies became more and more of a grievance" (129). For example, as described by Wood, at the outbreak of the revolution Pennsylvania's population was 250,000 and its assembly consisted of only 36 members (128).

### *Economy*

The majority of the workforce were engaged in agriculture, fishing, shipbuilding, and retail. Leading trades were fishing and whaling, lumbering, and shipbuilding. In retaliation for England's attempts to impose added taxes solely on its American colonists, the First Continental Congress created the Continental Association (1774). The Continental Association placed a boycott on trade with England and added measures to reduce American independence from imports, such as increasing the number of sheep raised in order to decrease the importation of woolens. It also encouraged colonists to practice "frugality, economy, and industry, and promote agriculture, arts and the manufacture of this Country," and to avoid drinking tea (United, *Journals* par. 8). To be sure of the success in its initiation, the provincial conventions of Pennsylvania and Virginia adopted resolutions to manufacture "hosiery, coarse cloths, all sorts of dyes, flax, hemp, salt, saltpeter, gunpowder, nails, wire, steel, paper, glass, copper products and malt liquors," all which had formerly been acquired from England (Conser, McCarthy, and Toscano 251).

### *Politics*

Pauline Maier describes the political philosophy of the American colonists as "Americans took particular pride in being governed under Britain's unwritten constitution, which they considered the most perfect form of government ever invented" (29). Britain's constitution divided power among the monarchy, lords, and commons; creating an equal distribution of power was supposed to curtail the possibility of despotism. The British system became the model that the founding fathers used to design America's system to separate the powers of its three branches of government. Though colonial America didn't always see eye-to-eye with England, the colonists still viewed the British constitution, as Maier states, "the most perfect

form of government ever invented."<sup>20</sup> As stated above, a primary catalyst for the dissolution was not the form of government, but money.

Following the Proclamation of 1763 was the American Revenue Act in 1764 (better known as the "Sugar Act"). The Sugar Act—a revision of the Molasses Act of 1733—tried to raise revenue by lowering the duty on imported molasses. Instead of trying to prohibit imported molasses, Parliament wanted to tax it. At the time this act was passed, there was a coin shortage in America, yet the act still required that the duties be paid with coins. (See the section "Colonial America, an Eighteenth Century Snapshot" above for more examples.)

In September 1773, delegates from twelve colonies convened to form a congress so that it could respond to what are now called the Intolerable Acts (also known as the Coercive Acts).<sup>21</sup> In response to the acts, the First Continental Congress initiated a boycott on British goods and at the same time requested a redress for the acts. By October 1774, a statement called the "Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress" officially denounced all of the revenue-generating acts as well as laws that restricted political and geographical freedoms (i.e., the Intolerable Acts) imposed solely on the colonists, and through a "bill of rights" it also claimed that their rights stemmed both from the British Constitution and the God-given rights of "natural law," which included "life, liberty, and the pursuit of property." The

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<sup>20</sup> Despite general agreement on the nature of government as "the most perfect form of government ever invented," sporadic conflicts with the British government erupted in North America during the seventeenth century between colonists and imperial officials in Virginia, Massachusetts, New York, and Maryland. Known as Bacon's Rebellion, in 1676, Virginia colonists rebelled against William Berkeley, the royal governor of Virginia, when he refused to retaliate against the Indians for attacking colonists. Nathaniel Bacon, a Virginia planter, initiated the uprising which resulted in a form of mutiny: the colonists both attacked the Indians and forced Berkeley out of Virginia. Similarly, as a result of England's Glorious Revolution in 1688, Massachusetts, New York, and Maryland rebelled against the Stuart governments and re-established legislative governments that secured Protestants with the ability to freely practice their religion. The Glorious Revolution secured against Catholic rule.

<sup>21</sup> The Intolerable Acts constitute the following five acts: The Quartering Act in 1765, and the Boston Port Bill; Administration of Justice Act; Massachusetts Government Act; and Quebec Act, all in 1774.

"Declaration and Resolves" concluded with a statement of continued loyalty to the king, yet it also contained an approval to convene as a Second Continental Congress should the redress fail to receive approval (United, *Journals* 1:64-74).

In May 1775, a second Continental Congress convened. This congress, which served until March 1781, directed the "American Cause" for its part in the Revolutionary War that had begun a month earlier with battles at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts. A year later the Second Continental Congress also approved and adopted a declaration of independence.<sup>22</sup>

### *Ideology*

Americans were often distinguished from Britons by assumptions about social graces, culture, and class. American colonists generally made a living as merchants, craftsmen, or from the soil or sea, and they practiced some variation of a Protestant religion. A high social standing was not inherited through aristocratic upbringing, but was earned through an accumulation of wealth both self-made and through inheritance. Exposures to African slaves and Indians also were a part of American life not shared by its mother country. Sylas Neville, a British sympathizer for the colonists, wrote that "the body of the people in America are much more virtuous and understand the nature of Liberty better than the body of the people here" (31). Yet, because America was also used as a place to redeposit British and Irish criminals, Samuel Johnson described Americans as "a race of convicts" (qtd. in Conway, par. 7).

Obviously, as Neville and Johnson depict, understanding who the American colonist was perplexed the British to no end. Changes that had evolved in the colonists' demographics,

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<sup>22</sup> I deliberately do not use capitalization here because at the time it was written, the *Declaration* did not have the name *Declaration of Independence*, nor did the text of the document include the word "independence." On July 8, 1776, Jefferson sent a copy of the document to Lee and in the letter included, he called it a "declaration of independence" (Jefferson to Richard Henry Lee, July 8, 1776, 1:455). {Take out the parts that are struck out and add this letter to your Works Cited list.}

economy, and ideology were realized by England during the nine years it spent in America fighting the French and Indian War. Thereafter, England wanted to restore English patriotism to a group of people who had strayed so far from their origin that the relationship between the two groups of British subjects was in name alone for many of not most American colonists.

### The Global Community: An Eighteenth Century Snapshot

What distinguished the American Revolutionary War from other conflicts was "the way in which it . . . violated the body of international law—the 'law of nature and nations'—upon which the stability of Europe had come to depend since the late seventeenth century," according to Eliga Gould (115). Before the mid-eighteenth century, the laws of nations were assimilated into the laws of nature, meaning that "states were not simply analogous to persons (as in later conceptions of international law), but morally equivalent to them, in their autonomy, rationality, and duty to obey the dictates of natural law" (Armitage, *The Declaration of Independence: A Global* 8). For England, "the law of nations consisted of a body of mutual compacts, treaties and agreements" (Gould 115). While national laws were generally binding, as Gould states, their legitimacy diminished significantly during times of war (115); in the case of England's battle with colonial America, reinterpreting legally binding language was especially true.

The nomenclature "American Revolutionary War" to describe the conflict between England and colonial America is somewhat misleading. Joseph Ellis argues that because the fight occurred between a motherland and its subjects, the fight was a civil war and not a revolution, "a war for colonial independence, the first of its kind in the modern world . . . but not a fundamental shift in the social orders that left the world changed forever" (21).

When the hope of a negotiation had proven to be fruitless and American colonists had dissipated their resources by petitioning King George, Parliament, and most recently, the British people, colonists then began to contemplate the concept of declaring independence (Lucas 6-7). In doing so they considered whether they could win in a war against the world's most powerful military force *and* receive recognition as a nation from other countries, since they would need to depend on the help of others for defense and commerce to compensate the losses they would suffer by losing England (Maier 28-29; Armitage, *The Declaration of Independence: A Global* 16-17). To modern readers, Ellis's statement about differentiating between a civil war and a revolution may sound as though he is quibbling over semantics; however, during the decade before the Declaration's inception, other countries would have recognized Ellis's distinction and therefore refrained from openly supporting either side. In an attempt to build relationships abroad (i.e., allies), for two years before the writing of the Declaration, colonists had already put into place most of the plans for its implementation; knowingly or not, they were setting the stage for their independence. As David Armitage explains, "[The founding fathers] had been negotiating with British representatives, appointing agents to pursue its interests in Europe, corresponding with foreign powers, and seeking various kinds of aid for the revolutionary cause" (*The Declaration of Independence: A Global* 33, 45-46).

#### Enlightenment Thought and the Industrial Revolution:

##### Influences Shaping Mindset and Disposition in the Colonies and Beyond

To put the situation between England and colonial America into a broader context, at the time that the two countries were experiencing a stalemate in dealing with each other, two

underlying intellectual movements were taking place throughout England and most of Europe—and were just beginning to surface in colonial America. Those movements were the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution. Though the Age of Enlightenment, or Age of Reason as it is also known, was not a specific, single school of thought, and the Industrial Revolution only directly benefitted the few and not the many at its outset, combined the two movements created a wave of aspiration for better qualities of life and provided people with the abilities to achieve such ambitions. Many historians today attribute the founding fathers' mindset during the decade leading to the writing of the Declaration as being significantly influenced by these two movements (Armitage, *The Declaration of Independence: A Global* ; Hazelton; Lucas; Lutz; Maier).

The philosophical ideology of the Age of Enlightenment challenged individuals to think critically about authority, whether it be political or religious in nature: "Have courage to use your own intelligence! is therefore the motto of enlightenment," wrote the so-called father of the Enlightenment, Emanuel Kant, in 1784 (*Classical*). Such concepts of the self and self-interest took on new meanings through the readings of John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) and the *Second Treatise on Civil Government* (1690), as well as Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (1776). The Enlightenment began in Europe and eventually spread to colonial America. In both places the Enlightenment inspired interests in the sciences and humanities. By the 1770s, all eyes were on the American colonies because they were in the rare position of having less of a history than the other countries, so implementing complete Enlightenment principles would come at less of a cost. The American people were "the hope of the human race, they may well become its model," Anne Robert Jacques Turgot, a French

economist and statesman, predicted in a conversation with Richard Price, a British minister and political pamphleteer (Echeverria 69).

While the Age of Enlightenment challenged people to become rationally-minded thinkers who considered the concept of self to play a greater part in one's happiness and well-being than it had played in previous years, the onset of the Industrial Revolution provided the wherewithal to support a more self-reliant lifestyle. At the Industrial Revolution's apex a transition in the workforce took place that reduced using the brawn of man and animals in exchange for machines powered by water and coal. But in its early stages, which were taking place at this time, people were tinkering with innovation by coming up with ways to improve conditions within their work environments.<sup>23</sup> While colonial America wouldn't actually see a full-fledged industrial transformation take place until the nineteenth century, the Continental Association's boycott on trade with England which ensued in the colonists' making their own clothes and similar changes in practice is an early indicator of economic and social change.

For Enlightenment thinkers such as the founding fathers, revelations made in understanding the laws that governed universal order inspired them to think that perhaps there were natural laws that governed humankind as well. For instance, beginning with Isaac Newton's discovery of the law of gravity in the 1680s, man learned that the universe was not as chaotic as originally thought. Newton's discovery suggested that if there was a law for gravity, there might also be a law for the patterns of behavior they saw in seasons and agriculture. And if there were laws for the natural world, there might also be laws in other forms that controlled human environment, such as the laws of economics suggested by Adam Smith in his *Wealth of*

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<sup>23</sup> There are many schools of thought about when the Industrial Revolution actually occurred. My claim is in line with T. S. Ashton's, who says it began around 1760.

*Nations*. Inspired by Newton, Francis Bacon's contributions in empiricism, which challenged man to test scientific theories, and others like Newton and Bacon, Enlightenment man began to understand the physical sciences, and then he set out to determine how to make the knowledge gleaned from such observations apply to all areas of life and to improve his own conditions.

Benjamin Franklin, as an Enlightenment man of science, after developing a better understanding of the workings of electricity, installed lightning rods on his roof and connected them to bells and electric arcs within his home. When lightning struck, the bells tolled and the rooms were lighted. In a similar fashion, at the time that Jefferson sat down to write the Declaration, he and other founding fathers—Franklin included—were so deeply entrenched in the influences of the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution that it was assumed that if a child was born with a blank slate for a mind (Locke's "tabula rasa") and the mind was developed through experience and education, couldn't the same thing apply on a macro-level? Couldn't they "institute a new government"?<sup>24</sup>

As shown in this chapter, several factors contributed to dissolving the relationship between England and colonial America. Looking at each factor on its own, and then comparing how it relates to other factors suggests that, in many ways, the dissolution occurred because differing mindsets were at play: England wanted to recover some of the money it spent on the French and Indian War; rules that had long been relaxed were suddenly enforced; revenue generating acts that were passed applied only to the colonists and not other British subjects;

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<sup>24</sup> As stated in the second paragraph of the *Declaration*, "That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

and the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution movements that were coursing their way through Europe and England had most recently arrived in the American colonies. Arguably, the colonists were thinking differently about their wellbeing as it related to British influence. This chapter contextualizes how—that is, for what reason—the Declaration came to be written.

## Chapter Three:

### **Antecedents and Conventions: Pamphlets, Broad­sides, and Newspapers in Colonial America,**

#### **Beginning with the Stamp Act and Leading up to the Declaration of Independence**

Two hundred and fifty years before the advent of twenty-four hour television channels, satellite radio stations, and the Internet, consumers of news and mainstream global interests still had media outlets available for information retrieval. This chapter will look at the availability and use of media outlets available to England and colonial America during the late eighteenth century. Specifically, this chapter looks at colonial American broadsides, newspapers, and pamphlets from visual-rhetorical, technological, and production standpoints. Among the issues that need to be addressed when using such standpoints is that there is "some resistance" to the opinion that "usability can be localized within a given artifact apart from the cultural-historical milieu in which it is used" (Spinuzzi, "Grappling" 43). I contend that both the environment as well as the artifact itself work together to create textual interpretation. Additionally, because the next chapter, "Audience Involvement with Genre Materiality Leading up to the Declaration of Independence," explores the social and socio-cognitive aspects of the "user-artifact dyad" in relation to medium, the artifacts only in their tangible states will be discussed here.

This chapter describes the technological conventions, supply availability, and monetary constraints colonial publishers were exposed to leading up to the time the Declaration was written. That description is followed by a discussion of each of the three media (broadsides, newspapers, and pamphlets) in terms of traditional design practices used in their effort to give these texts visual rhetorical power. And last, because the Declaration was a secession from

England, intentionally sent to England to deliver America's pronouncement, and responded to in the form of a pamphlet, this chapter discusses how broadsides and pamphlets were used in England at the time. Regarding the last section, while it emphasizes the social uses of these media in general, Chapter Six, "Reception, Recognition, and Response: England's Reaction to the Declaration of Independence," will use this information to examine the decisions made by pamphleteer John Lind when writing *An Answer to the Declaration of the American Congress*.

### Technology, Constraints, and Availability

On either the evening of July 4 or morning of July 5, 1776, when John Dunlap was commissioned by Congress to produce multiple copies of the Declaration, he was limited to the tools and technology of his time. While Congress selected the genre of the Declaration's first appearance in print, Dunlap probably chose the type sizes, formatting, and paper quality—components all of which were also as important in message delivery as the content and medium. Congress's orders to Dunlap were the following:

*Ordered*, That the declaration be authenticated and printed.

That the committee appointed to prepare the declaration, superintend and correct the press.

That copies of the declaration be sent to the several assemblies, conventions and committees, or councils of safety, and to the several commanding officers of the continental troops; that it be proclaimed in each of the United States, and at the head of the army. (United States, *Journals* 5: 516)

No known records indicate that Dunlap received specifics about how to print the Declaration, though the *Journals of the Continental Congress* do state that a committee would oversee his work and would "superintend and correct the press." Peter Parker appropriately described printers of the period as both "artisans and merchants," a result of the creativity required in

order to use the limited resources they had to work with when fashioning documents presentable enough to sell (24). Reinforcing the plight of the printer, Benjamin Franklin (former owner of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*) recollected that "our printing-house often wanted sorts, and there was no letter-founder in America" (80).

Before the American Revolution, presses, type, and paper came from Europe. Because the initial investment in tools and equipment created a hefty debt for printers, most European manufacturers allowed them to purchase on credit before the war began (Parker 29). But beginning in 1765 with the announcement of the Stamp Act, it became more difficult to secure such items abroad, so printers tended to use their tools for many years longer than they had when they were to replace them more easily. For instance, some typefaces became so worn that individual letters were difficult to identify individually and only within the context of a word could they be clearly understood. Realizing the shabby quality of print being produced, printer John Dunlap took out an advertisement in the July 14, 1768, press run of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* that offered "printing performed in a neat and correct manner." As evidence of typefaces' decline, today's reader can choose a character used repeatedly by a colonial printer and watch a degenerative process taking place over a three- to five-year timeframe.

In order to make use of the materials available on the home front, printers often ran advertisements for rags to compensate for paper shortage. While a few paper mills did exist within the colonies, supply couldn't keep pace with demand, as is evident by the varying watermarks by Dutch manufacturers in the paper used by Dunlap for the first printing of the Declaration (Armitage, *Global* 12; Goff 9; Parker 36).

Printers in colonial America had several choices of type sizes, but they were limited in styles. Franklin started a foundry in 1775 and assembled Greek, Hebrew, and Roman types. Baskerville type was also available at this time, but appears to have been reserved for documents that required an ornamental look (such as bibles and prayer books). Caslon type, common throughout America, England, and Europe, was the equivalent of Times New Roman of today—an industry favorite for general use.

Ink, at the time, continued to be shipped from Europe. The printers Gamaliel Rogers and Daniel Fowle were reportedly the only manufacturers who could produce quality ink in America, explaining the fact that, as Isaiah and Benjamin Franklin Thomas point out, "most of the bad printing in the United States . . . during the Revolutionary War was occasioned by the wretched ink, and more wretched paper, which printers were then under the necessity of using" (123-24). Speaking as a former printer, Franklin gave his view that those who could read and had the money to do so "were obliged to send for their books to England" (117-18).

Not only by the reading public were books from England preferred, but printers often relied on books from abroad as a result of their inability to print many of them, a result due to paper shortages. To compensate for losses in book publishing, less substantial works and ephemera often assumed the place of book production. Ephemera, published works not intended to be kept for any length of time, were more efficient to print in terms of both time and demands on supplies (paper and ink) and were easier to sell because they catered to a greater audience than a book typically would. Ephemera also had an increase in consumer demand and, as a result, production. Almanacs, broadsides, chap books, court proceedings, imprints, newspapers, and pamphlets are some examples of eighteenth-century press runs, and

the diversity of merchandise available from many booksellers to help carry them through the lean times in the book business illustrated the point that "booksellers with one string to their bows did not fare well in unsettled years" (Parker 25).

To further subsidize sales, publishers competed for printing orders. Contracts from Congress and provincial governments received the most demand. For example, in 1771, when the vice-admiralty court at Halifax, Nova Scotia, was established, the Bradford printers opened shop there at the encouragement of Cornelius Bradford, nephew to William Bradford who was already an established printer. William wrote to Cornelius, "how can I be sure of the Governments Business" (qtd. in Parker 26). A quick perusal of the *Journals of the Continental Congress* between January 1 and July 4, 1776 (vol. 4), reveals that government-ordered publications addressed a variety of topics, including:

Address to Canada (Jan. 24)

Proclamation for a fast (March 16)

Sermon on the death of Samuel Ward (RI delegate to Congress) (March 27)

Instructions to commanders of American vessels (May 6)

Resolution concerning state governments (May 15)

Declaration of Independence (July 4)

The impact beginning in 1765 with the Stamp Act, which threatened financial ruin to many printers, was twofold: not only did it drive up costs for printing supplies, thereby threatening the livelihood of printers who weren't as fortunate as the Bradfords in securing printing orders from the government, but it also changed what was being printed. Disposable reading material—in many cases the equivalent of today's tabloids—was gaining ground in popularity

and, as a result, upsetting the longstanding status of the book market. The speed, dependability, and security of news delivery were also factors. While weekly newspapers were now common, as explained in the American Antiquarian Society's online exhibit A Place of Reading, "news needed to travel faster than that . . . . News was vital, full of consequence, political. . . . Reading was essential to the revolutionary process."

Before 1792, no laws required postal workers to consider newspapers as objects that could be received through the mail service. The gentleman's agreement shared between printers and postal workers for newspaper delivery was semi-reliable, but even so it was still subject to environmental conditions. To demonstrate the speed and conditions that information travelled, one must consider the vehicles by which it travelled: foot messenger, horse, or boat. On land, the roads were narrowly defined dirt trails that were typically bumpy and dusty in summer, and virtually undetectable in winter, especially when travelling at night. A person walks on average three miles per hour and an average-sized horse travels twenty to thirty miles in a day, so a 250-mile trip from Boston to New York City could take a week or longer. With good winds and little interference from inclement weather, a sailing vessel at the time could have made the trip in two days. News from abroad, however, had to cross the Atlantic Ocean, so a letter arriving to Boston from London by a packet ship could take two months to travel the nearly 5,000-mile distance.

### *Broadsides*

All things being equal in relation to arrival times when printers used the same modes of transportation to distribute media, broadsides were most capable of moving the *information*—that is, content—faster than any other print media because they, more than other media, had

the advantage of inviting less literate and illiterate audiences into partaking of their information. Whether it be an attack on an individual, announcement of an item for sale, or a community meeting, the foolscap size of most broadsides and their affordability made them an easy choice by clients who had a single bit of information they wanted to disseminate.<sup>25</sup>

Colonial printers also used broadsides to convey late-breaking news and sold them as extras between press runs for newspapers (United States, *Journals* VOL.: PAGE#). These ephemera, in their eclectic uses of timely, short-lived information *du jour*, were often discarded when the information was no longer pertinent. To hasten their spread of information, broadsides were typically printed on a single side of paper so that they could be posted in a public place where one reader could read to others in a group setting, and they could be easily folded into the pockets of messengers who were disseminating the news to areas outside the community (notice the creases from folds in figs. 3.2 and 5.1).

From a technical standpoint, the eighteenth-century broadside drew much of its rhetorical power from its nonverbal, visual aspects in similar ways as maps do. For example, when Charles Booth redesigned existing textual information on poverty rates in Victorian London by replacing text with a color-coded map, a *Daily News* reporter wrote that the transformation was more easily able to "show us where to find the haunts of the lowest class . . . a fair predominance of the more cheerful colours [of] . . . a pink, and a red, and a light blue landscape, . . . and . . . the dismal shades which seem but so many varieties of black" (qtd. in Kimball 360). The transformation made it easier for literate audiences to decipher the demographics and also afforded opportunities for illiterate audiences to comprehend. With

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<sup>25</sup> Foolscap is paper about 13 1/2 x 17 inches. It was typically used for printing and called foolscap because the watermark on it typically displayed a fool's (jester's) cap.

Booth's map, one did not have to know how to read, only to know what each color signified in order to understand London's conditions. Thus, if the color-coded schema were explained to an illiterate audience, the document itself could be understood. As for broadsides, they relied less on graphics for audience attention and more on form, which made them identifiable by illiterate audiences who would have recognized them by their visual qualities. Audiences knew that the information was timely and might have found someone to read it to them.

As an example of the embodiment of a medium's power, Marshall McLuhan has written extensively about the transition from oral to print cultures and has provided examples of how messages are amplified or reduced in authority, depending upon which medium is used to deliver them. For instance, McLuhan contends that Adolf Hitler's achievements during World War II were attributed to (1) his having a deep voice, and (2) radio becoming a common fixture in many homes. Had television been as common a fixture as radio, allowing people to see Hitler's slight stature and not just hear his deep, powerful-sounding voice, Hitler would have been less effective, and the war might have gone differently, says McLuhan. That is, the sensual ratios are reprioritized when a new medium is introduced, such as when the printed book reprioritized the sense of sight and, in the previous example, the radio reprioritized the sense of hearing (*Gutenberg* 24).

Walter Ong goes a step beyond McLuhan by looking at how a reader's relationship with a text changed when printed books replaced manuscript books since manuscript books were treated as "recorded utterances," but neither of their assertions take into account that some texts, as with the broadside, are also recorded utterances (126).

Though the broadside was a textual artifact, its readership was primarily engaged in an

oral activity and its audience was a listening one, much as early sixteenth-century books (i.e., those that were a product of the invention of Johannes Gutenberg's moveable type) were more often read aloud than silently and regardless of whether a listening audience was involved.<sup>26</sup> When discussing the impact on sensory awareness shifts that took place in Greek culture during the Socratic era—a result of the introduction of the modern alphabet—McLuhan calls the conversion from oral to written culture "a division between the tongue and heart" (*Gutenberg* 24). Ong, more concerned with a word's abstract definitiveness by way of its permanency on the page, discusses how words replaced iconographic signs and printed drawings as a way of "reconstitut[ing] the originally oral, spoken word in visual space" (123).

While broadsides can be examined solely on their merits as textual artifacts, doing so diminishes our understanding of their usability by emphasizing the broadside's discourse and ignoring the *medium's* role as a mediator with its audience (Spinuzzi, *Network* 22). Though they were a printed medium, broadsides predominantly had an oral audience. For example, fig. 3.1 is of a broadside that, though thought to be printed in the 1780s, recreates the possible image of the moment when George Washington, military commander-in-chief at this time, read aloud the Declaration of Independence. Notice also the broadside being uplifted by a fellow listener. While it, too, is likely supposed to be a copy of the Declaration if the date "1776" written on it can act as an indicator, the visual elements of its text are not being followed by an audience.

As another example of how audiences might have interacted with broadsides, consider

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<sup>26</sup> When title pages came into existence, the influence of orality was evident in the construction of author's names and book titles. Often the words of names or titles were separated with a hyphen or continued on a second line. In other cases the font size would be more prominent in one word, or portion of a word, and less so in another. These design forms of early printed books, or *incunabula*, printed before early forms of standardization in design took place, were designed orally and not visually. Hyphens, font sizes, and other typographical tools were used to signify where a reader should place emphasis, breath, and so on.



Fig. 3.1. A broadside thought to be printed in the 1780s that depicts George Washington reading aloud the Declaration of Independence. (Source: Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division.)

the broadside's multifunctional flexibility while comparing it to the example Spinuzzi uses with the user programmable "F1" key's early uses in a customer service division of a multi-divisional company before the company began to regulate the key's function (*Network* 19-21). One customer-service employee said she generally used the key to provide nominal information that was straight and to the point; another employee used the key's function to provide a detailed explanation of his actions, similar to a journal entry; yet another said she used it to document the "emotional climate" while assisting customers so that fellow colleagues would be informed what to expect should an existing customer need further assistance. In other words, the guidelines for using the F1 key were loosely defined. An employee interpreted the key's intended use of enhancing communication about a customer order as one best saw fit.

An employee's interpretive approach to genre creation for the F1 key's usage likely meant that the information desired to be retrieved from the key was similar in nature to the information the employee feeds into it. When individual uses (i.e., multiple genres) of the F1 key were later replaced with an electronic template to fill out instead, the revised single-genre use of the F1 key function controlled the information entered into the system by unifying its language and intent. In the earlier cases of employee uses of the F1 key, employees interpreted the information based on what *they* deemed as being important information for understanding a customer's file, whereas the template worked to secure information that was deemed important to the company at large. So the F1 key both *mediated* workers' ability to transform an object (i.e., a document) and also, in and of itself, was an *object* that was *transformed* through the mediation of other artifacts such as scraps of paper and sticky notes that were used to record notes before entering information into the system (22).

In a similar way, broadsides mediated printers' abilities to print news and they also acted as objects that *transformed* awareness. For instance, newspapers ran articles that, a month or two after their press run, would often be recycled as material for a broadside, treating the news at these times as new information even when early printings in another medium (i.e., newspaper) indicated otherwise. Whether it be to draw attention to new or recycled material, regardless of the genre or familiarity of a text, broadsides, by their very nature, were "plastic" enough—to use Spinuzzi's term when describing a genre's flexibility—to bend to the task assigned to them, just as the F1 key was able to do in order to meet the needs of the customer service division and later the entire company. Using a broadside to convey a message likely created a situation where audiences might have interpreted the news individually at first—as was the situation with the F1 key's function—and then collectively, with either a restored awareness or a heightened level of intensity (16).<sup>27</sup>

Understanding design practices is important to this project because it helps us to see how these eighteenth-century audiences actually saw their texts, which is necessary to better understanding the discussion on audience and reading practices in the next chapter. Thus, the following illustrations (figs. 3.2; 3.3; 3.4)—all related to political tensions between colonial America and England—provide insight into design styles printers used when formatting pages for political polemics. The two-column design, used in all three figures, both created symmetry and provided for additional white space, improving legibility since ink had a tendency to bleed.

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<sup>27</sup> "Tuchman's Law," developed by historian Barbara Tuchman, addresses the interplay between an audience's relationship with news of disasters. She concludes that the increase in sensation is in relation to the amount of coverage it receives. By use of repetition, media craft a message that is snowballed at the reader, creating the illusion that the importance of the message is synonymous both with its multiplicity and the force behind the discursive lobs of attack. {SOURCE? Especially since Tuchman isn't on your works cited list.}

Headlines were written using a type larger than the body text and encompassed varying uses of italics and capitalization, which were the only two font styles widely available, to draw attention to a document. As a result of paper and supply shortages, as a secondary feature within the same illustrations, notice the decline in legibility due to aging tools and equipment. For example, the quality of the design in fig. 3.2 (printed in 1765, the year the Stamp Act took place) is far superior to the two later texts (printed in 1772, and 1776, respectively) in which inferior ink and paper quality caused characters to have a heavier weight in some cases and lighter in others, creating a gritty appearance at best, and at worst a Rorschach-ian test in reading ability.

As shown, broadsides had a unique relationship with their audiences in that they were the one mass-produced textual medium that catered to both literate and illiterate audiences. While other media were obviously read to illiterate audiences on occasion, broadsides were the one textual medium that an illiterate audience looked to and *expected* to have read to it. Though Rolf Reichardt explains the broadside's influence on late eighteenth-century French audiences, it is possible that audiences in colonial America and England during this time might have been similarly influenced:

[Their accessibility to a cross section of audiences] renders them fundamentally significant for the Revolution because they helped mobilize a broad social base that made the Revolution's political process, and its radicalization, possible in the

# TO THE FREEHOLDERS AND ELECTORS

Of the Province of PENNSYLVANIA.

**FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN!**  
 S another annual election is now approaching (thanks to that Providence which has for one year longer tolerated the wicked designs of the enemies of our country) I shall beg leave to address you for the last time, which perhaps it may ever be in my power, without submitting to what my spirits would ill brook, the receiving my *stamps, my paper, and my leave to print* from the adous hand of a *Stamp-Man*.

The affairs of this province have of late been fully discussed, and the destructive views of the faction, who have so long lorded it over you, are become at length so glaring to every person who can think for himself, that but little need be said on the present occasion.  
 In a supplement to the Pennsylvania Journal, published at the last Election, you had a short review of the conduct of these men for many years past. You saw how, from being chosen your *representatives*, they aspired at length to become your *perpetual masters*; how our country has been loaded with debt and our treasury become *poor*, while they have become *rich*; how more than *half a million* of our money has been squandered away, with little benefit or credit to the Province, while they have been dividing pots and places among themselves; and sharing out the spoils of public honors and commissions among a few tools and creatures within their own narrow party.

You have seen too how the same faction have gratified an ambitious man in frequent enflames to England, under pretence of extinguishing a flame, designedly kindled by himself; and you have further seen how this man, altho' he originally enjoyed confidence under the character of a *common sensible man*, with the cry of our constitution and *charter rights* in his mouth, returned from England an arrogant courtier and flatterer, in order to secure to himself and for lucrative offices from the king, a determination to maintain himself and his associates here in power by a total change of our government and surrender of our admirable charter, in open defiance of the general voice of an injured people.

You were called upon, at last election, to route yourselves and crush this base faction, before he had time to crush you. And for the honour of the city and county of Philadelphia, there were spirit and virtue enough found in them to reject the projector of this injurious scheme and several of his principal adherents, from among the number of your representatives.

But unhappily, there was still a taint of the old error left: This man, tho' thus routed and disgraced, yet still persevering and without the virtue to retire to private life, got himself removed from the looks of his fellow citizens, in the greater part of which he could read nothing but indignation, and by a manly and fortly in the house he was faddled answer on the province, in the needed and previously expensive character of an assistant agent, at the court of Great-Britain.

In vain was every remonstrance against this measure! In vain was it contended that the guardianship of the privileges of Pennsylvanians was committed to the house only, and that they could neither give them up, nor commit any power over them to any person whatsoever. In vain was it urged that if such a trust could be confided to any one, Mr. Franklin was of all others the most improper to entrust with any discretionary power over a constitution which he was so unwisely endeavouring to subvert. In vain was it likewise to urge, with respect to the duties of stamps or other internal taxation on America, that he was of all others (as the event has shewn) the most improbable to have any influence or to contend against them with the ministry, whose dependent he was, as holding a lucrative office at their pleasure, and his son another.

Their arguments were scarce heard by his adherents. They called for a vote saying they had already determined on their measures—out of doors we may suppose. This vote being obtained he hurried off, boiling with rancor and resentment. His last farewell spoke a spirit that boded no good to his countrymen, a great part of whom he characterized in the following ignominious manner:—  
 Men who had obtained a superiority over him at the expense of honour and confidence; religious bigots, of all favours the most brutish; a wretched rabble, we are well informed, he has since continued, wherever he could be heard, to traduce his countrymen, especially the Germans, as an ungovernable mob. I His adherents here have likewise followed his example, instead of answers to the charges against him, throwing out whole reams of scurrility, too gross to receive any other notice than the contemptuous silence wheresoever it has been treated. To some of the principal of these performances the name of JOHN HUGHES was affixed. The reward for which he fulfilled this prostitution of his name is now visible to all. On the recommendation of Mr. FRANKLIN he is exalted over his countrymen, and transformed at once from a following republican (as he affected to be) into a STAMP-MAN.

And here a fair opportunity would offer to repay this STAMP-MAN in his own way. But the odium into which he is fallen, and his present distress both of body and mind plead with my humanity for forbearance.—I dismiss him therefore with a charitable wish that he may live to repent and be forgiven for all his abuses of others.

I would only add, that from the reward which you see this noisy adherent of Mr. Franklin has got, you may easily guess from what motives the rest of his adherents have acted in the house for the last year. They no doubt all expect offices and places either by changing our government, or keeping him in England at our expense. If therefore you ever expect to see the quiet of this province restored, and that admirable constitution, for which you planned a wilderness,

Among others who declared their sentiments in this manner, Mr. Norris, that ancient member and speaker of the House quitted his chair, with these memorable words:—That he was of opinion the house had no right to delegate their powers to any man or set of men whatever to alter or change the government, and that he was for putting an entire prohibition on the agents presenting the said petition without farther and express orders from the house.

See his answer to the protest of the members against him.  
 Mr. Franklin has taken much pains to represent this province as riotous, because the spirits of the people could not easily submit to his ambitious measures. But we can appeal to the whole world whether any part of his majesty's subjects, on the present or any former occasion, has ever behaved with greater decorum and sobriety. The people of Ireland when there was an attempt on foot to change their constitution and remove their parliament to England, made their members swear on their bended knees in the streets that they never would consent to it. It is for our honour, that that attempt has so long submitted to change our constitution, we have pursued more moderate measures. We have been content to petition and remonstrate, trusting that the virtue and spirit of the people, by a right improvement of our annual elections, would at length discard all those who were advocates for this measure.

The utmost quiet prevailed at the last election and undoubtedly prevail at this, unless Mr. Franklin's adherents should be mad enough to endeavour putting in execution any of the threats contained in a vile incendiary letter, lately thrown into a Gentleman's house in this city. In that case, the writer of that letter may assuredly know, from the firm determination of the other side, that as they will not be fit to commit any breach of the peace, so they are not to be intimidated, but will assert their free right of voting according to their own Judgment, and have both resolution and strength sufficient to maintain that right against any opposition.

transmitted to your children, you ought to chuse only honest and independent men, who you are sure will recall the unhappy petition for a change of government, and ease the province of the vast burden of maintaining Mr. Franklin, in England, who can never do us any service there, however much he may serve himself and his own particular creatures. Nor is this a time, in the present scarcity of money, for us to gratify a man, in his ambition, and support double agents, when other provinces have but one.

These men finding the public resentment so strong, against the advocates for a change of government, endeavour to persuade the ignorant that no such change is intended. But what can they mean by such a conduct? have they not boasted on the receipt of every letter from Mr. Franklin this Summer, that the petition for a change was to be presented in a week or two, and that he had assurance of success, having great connections with the King's ministry? and lately when by bonfires and ringing of bells we demonstrated our joy that the whole ministry was changed who had brought in the Stamp-Act, and encouraged Mr. Franklin (as he says) in his scheme for changing our government, did not his partisans give out that he had as much interest with the new ministry as the old, and would certainly soon effectuate the intended change of our government? Has not one of the *Whigs*, a *Black-Whiter* of Franklin's party, laid a wager of one hundred pounds with a gentleman of this city, that the government is changed by the fall of next January, and entered into articles for the payment of the money? I ask then again, what can these men mean by endeavouring to persuade the ignorant that there is no design on foot for a change of government? For to break the proprietors charter and yet save our constitution has long ago been shewn to be an utter impossibility.

In like manner the adherents of this man would endeavour to persuade us, that he opposed the Stamp-Act. Alas! we demonstrated our joy that the whole ministry was changed who had brought in the Stamp-Act, and encouraged Mr. Franklin (as he says) in his scheme for changing our government, did not his partisans give out that he had as much interest with the new ministry as the old, and would certainly soon effectuate the intended change of our government? Has not one of the *Whigs*, a *Black-Whiter* of Franklin's party, laid a wager of one hundred pounds with a gentleman of this city, that the government is changed by the fall of next January, and entered into articles for the payment of the money? I ask then again, what can these men mean by endeavouring to persuade the ignorant that there is no design on foot for a change of government? For to break the proprietors charter and yet save our constitution has long ago been shewn to be an utter impossibility.

But what, if instead of opposing, it can be shewn that this Stamp Act was the original project of Mr. Franklin himself? At General Braddock's table in the hearing of several gentlemen of credit in Maryland ten years ago, when the General was complaining of the backwardness of the provinces to raise supplies and unite for the common good, we are well assured that Mr. Franklin said, a Stamp duty enacted at home for all the colonies, would create an independent revenue to the crown. These words, or words to that effect, are well remember'd in Maryland; for which and for being supposed to have a hand in the recommendation of this Stamp-Man, Mr. Franklin's name has been of late treated in that province with but little ceremony. Nay, that the Stamp-Act has been long a favorite scheme of his, is clear from a manuscript written by him about eight years ago, before he went first to England, which has been seen by some persons of credit here. In that performance (which he undoubtedly complimented the ministry with a copy of, to ingratiate himself) the STAMP-DUTY, the POLL-TAX and the circulating EXCHEQUER BILLS upon mortgages bearing interest into the Exchequer in England, were part of the burdens he proposed to bring on us; and it is much suspected that among his other *ways and means*, he has since projected a general EXCISE SCHEME. The laying a pollage on our ship-jetters by a late act of parliament is clearly another of his plans.

With regard to the Stamp Law, if you look round, you will find Mr. Franklin's friends the chief advocates for it. His son has made strong efforts to subvert the spirit of liberty in his government, and arbitrarily refuses to give his assent any opportunity to join the other assemblies in decent remonstrances against it; altho' nine tenths of the people of the Jerseys now vehemently desire it. Nor does he confine himself to his own government alone, but by the assistance of Mr. G-----y is said to have practised the eight members of a certain county of this province, not very remote from him, in order to get them to carry a vote against sending commissioners to New-York, that the Pennsylvania assembly might thus keep the Jersey one in countenance. But this scheme miscarried, and these members, with some others who have seen their names published to the world, and their conduct so generally condemned, have had sufficient reason to repent of the evil counsels they received. Nevertheless, little else could be expected from the members of a county, who promised it is said at last election to use all their endeavours to recall the petition for a change of government, and yet voted for continuing it. Upon the whole, countrymen, now is the time for you to assert your native rights and to secure your invaluable privileges against all future attempts from these betrayers of them. If you trust Mr. Franklin and the petition for a change of our government another year in England, you must be insatiable to the last degree. Your posterity will never blame you for recalling this petition, because they themselves may present another, whenever they think proper. But should the present one be once presented, they may have reason to curse your memory, because in that case it never can be recalled.

Now this evil is no way to be prevented but by throwing Mr. Franklin's known adherents, and all who voted for a change of government, wholly out of your new ticket. Independent men, in whom you can trust, are proposed to you; and though enemies are used to raise you jealousy and divide your interests, by insinuating that out of the candidates for this city and county, three of the ten are Germans or Dutchmen as they phrase it; yet we can see no evil consequence from this. Our ticket is composed of honest men of various denominations; and with respect to the Germans, they have shewn themselves lovers of liberty, and this province is much indebted to their industry. The persons they have proposed as their candidates are men of fortune and character; and why should two or three Dutch members in this province be objected to, when the neighbouring province of New-York has flourished to long, with one half of their members often Dutch? This objection then, my countrymen, is only the artifice of a party who are jealous of seeing you treat those *Germans* as fellow citizens on a level with yourselves, after they have treated them so many years as persons fit indeed to vote for them at elections, but not to be entrusted with any share of their power.

As to the *Franklin ticket*, I need say nothing about it, for it will speak against itself whenever it is offer'd to you. It will be found fill'd principally with people of one particular denomination; and even those old discarded creatures of Franklin's, namely G-----y and K-----s are attempted once more to be crammed down your throats. Nay so much bent are they for that scaly wrangling creature G-----y that they propose to give him a chance in two counties at once, and I trust he will have the like fate in both, which he had last year in this; for there never can be peace in any public body where he is a member, and is to receive his directions either from *Franklin* the elder or younger.

Fig. 3.2. An attack on Franklin's credibility for his contribution in the Stamp Act. 1765. (Source: Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division.)

1772, Mar 2

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## A Tradesman's Address to his Countrymen.

*Countrymen, Friends and Fellow-Citizens,*  
It was a maxim among the *Romans*, that before any new Law was established, it was first hung up in the most public place of the city, for a certain number of days, that the people might judge of its nature, and not be surpris'd suddenly into an assent to any Law, the evil tendency of which they might not have had time fully to consider.— A precaution of the same kind seems particularly necessary in this province, where the inhabitants do not give their suffrages for any Laws personally, and where they are seldom made acquainted with the tenor of any Bill, before it is confirm'd into a Law; owing to the absurd and tyrannical custom of shutting the Assembly doors against you, whose interest and right it is to enter whenever you think it necessary to your security; instead of which, you are oblig'd to put up with dark hints, sometimes given by a few of the Members to some of their friends. Such kinds of information can be of little use towards discovering any bad consequences in most Acts, whose Titles or Preamble generally shew the fairest side; and, indeed, it is not uncommon to find the spirit of many Laws very repugnant to the common interpretation of the Title and Preamble.

I am led into this reasoning by a report that our Assembly have fram'd an Excise Bill, which it is more than probable will pass into a Law—I shall beg leave to give you an Extract from a Letter on this subject, which I received some years ago from a Gentleman of approved talents, and a Member of Assembly in an American province.

"You desire my opinion, respecting Excise Laws, and ask me, whether to impose duties on wine, spirits, &c. which you term the luxuries of life and bane of mankind, be not the most eligible mode of Taxation, as it in some measure prevents the excessive use of those pernicious articles, relieves the necessity of the state, and supports government without taxing either the virtue or industry of individuals; and you further add, that this Law may be carried into execution in your province by one or two Officers only—I shall answer you in a few words.—If an Excise Law could prevent drunkenness, debauchery, and the consequent destruction of the labouring poor, it would indeed prove a desirable regulation; but the contrary is too fatally apparent, both in *England, Ireland*, and this province; in which last, since the year in which we pass'd our first Impost and Excise Laws on wines and spirits, the above vices and their consequences have increased exceedingly; for the executive part of the Legislature will never attempt to put a stop to enormities which produce a certain and great revenue for their support, and which add so considerably to their influence, by the appointment of a number of Officers. I must further add, that you judge ill, to suppose, that an act of this nature can be carried into execution by one or two Officers only; possibly your Bill may at first limit the collection to that number, but every session of Assembly, for ten years to come, will be under a necessity not only to increase the number of Officers, but to grant them power incompatible with Liberty; and finally, will be oblig'd to make the very Officers, who collect that revenue, the judges of the breaches of the Law. It would take volumes to explain all the evils attendant on a Law of this kind; your very Delegates will in time give up all your Liberties, in exchange for the most lucrative of those Offices for themselves or connexions; for I cannot suppose that your Representatives will resist temptations more firmly than the Members of the most powerful Assembly in the King's dominions. To conclude; Excise Laws are productive of Immorality, Perjury, Corruption, Oppression and Slavery; nor can the necessities of government warrant the Friends of Liberty to take so dangerous a step—You will see the reasons more fully,

"if you read the debates of the *British* Parliament on this subject, together with Sir *Matthew Decker's* Dissertation on the cause of the decay of foreign trade."

My Friend's Letter contained nothing further on this subject; but his reasoning has convinc'd me so effectually of the evil tendency of all Excise Laws, that I thought it my duty to communicate it to the Public, and to make some reflections on the consequences of this Act—I have heard it remark'd by many well-meaning persons, that we have had an Excise Law for some years, from which no bad consequences have arisen, and that this propos'd addition only serves to make the Tax more equitable. It may be answer'd, that the Excise Act which has subsist'd for some years, was a most partial and unjust one, and a Tax only on the conscientious, few others having paid more than one sixth of the real duty they were entitl'd to pay; consequently the mass of principle was by no means on a footing with him devoid of it—Is not this Tax then granting a premium to fraud; and in future, when the Legislature shall enact, that the parties dealing in those articles shall qualify to the quantity sold, (which they certainly will do) will not this Act also encourage perjury? In order to prevent frequent violations, no doubt it will be found necessary to create more Officers; and if that should be the case, and a dealer chooses to carry on an illicit trade of this kind, is it so hard a matter to corrupt an Excise Officer? Experience tells us otherwise. I appeal to the knowledge of every man who has been in *Great Britain* or *Ireland*, whether it is not daily practis'd in those places, consequently no man can engage in excis'd articles, unless he makes use of the same arts with his neighbours. It needs not the gift of prophecy to judge of the effects this corruption of manners will have on the people—There is even now one province on the continent, where the majority of the people's Representatives are collectors of Excise, and have such power over their constituents in office, and they over the whole commercial interest of that unhappy country, that while they hold their Offices, they can always be sure of their re-election.

My dear Countrymen, it is immaterial whether the powers of granting those offices be in one person or in a body of men. The next step they will take, will be to oblige you to elect your Representatives  *viva voce*, and to prolong the periods of election; after which there never will be another struggle for Liberty, and all branches of the Legislature will peaceably divide the pillage of this country, or wrangle for the greater share. Yes, my Countrymen, like the unfortunate inhabitants of *Ireland*, will only be the tools and mobs made use of by the tyrants out of place, to dispossess the parasites who immediately fleece you; the prospect is melancholy. You may say you will stop short, when you see such consequences likely to ensue; fatal delusion! Believe me, my Fellow-Citizens, human nature is nearly the same in all countries, and the very man who, with *Haxwell*, would now cry out, *Is thy servant as dog, that he should do these things*, may, by regular gradation, be brought to be the assasin of his country's Liberty.—'Tis possible, before this reaches you, the fatal Act may be irrecoverably pass'd; in which case, you must apply the remedy in time, and, at your next election, choose such Members only as will engage to bring in a Bill to prohibit any Member of Assembly from holding any Office in the Excise, or being security for such Officers, or shall have any salary, commission, or particular emolument arising from this, or any other tax. If you read history, you will find, that few countries have lost their Liberties at once, but have been enslaved by degrees; and had the foolish councils of *Charles I.* adopted and promoted an Excise Law, instead of contending for absurd punctilios of power, his descendants might still have reign'd the absolute tyrants of *Great Britain* and its dominions. Farewell. Remember to apply the remedy in time.

*Philadelphia, March 2, 1772. A TRADESMAN.*

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Fig. 3.3. A citizen's concern about the public's lack of notification when new laws were being considered by government. 1772. (Source: Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division.)

1776, May 13

# INTERESTING Intelligence from EUROPE.

BOSTON, May 13, 1776.

**G**EORGE MERCHANT, a Private in Capt. Morgan's Company of Rifle Men, from Virginia, who went to Canada with Col. Arnold last Fall, was taken Prisoner with two Indians and a New-England Soldier, passing over the River St. Lawrence. Merchant was sent to England to be hanged, but never was even examin'd, and the other three were kept Prisoners in Quebec, confined in Irons.—He left Bri'rol the 24th of March, and arriv'd at Halifax in 23 Days, arriv'd there 20, when he with several Masters of Vessels that had been taken by the ministerial Cruizers, hired a small Fishing Schooner to bring them to Newbury; but by Reason of contrary Winds put into Old York last Thursday, and came to Town by Land Yesterday to General Ward, who soon dispatch'd him Express to General Washington.—By him we have the following important and very interesting Advice, viz.—

HALIFAX, April 23, 1776.

Tuesday Afternoon last arrived his Majesty's Sloop Viper, with some Transports from the West-Indies, being Part of the Fleet which was drove off this Coast by the severe Weather last Winter.

Wednesday Evening last arrived a Schooner from Bristol (in England) in 23 Days Passage.

Thursday Morning arrived his Majesty's Ships Rose and Glasgow, Capts. Wallis and How from New-Port, Rhode-Island.

Friday arrived the Tamer from South Carolina.

Same Day arrived a Schooner from Salem (N. E.) in 4 Days; by her we are informed that Mr. Washington, Commander of the Rebel Army, with some Troops, had marched for New-York—in the above Vessel came several Passengers who obtained Leave to depart.

Saturday sailed the Viper Sloop of War for Quebec, with a Number of Transports and Troops on Board.

The same Day arrived a Packet from Falmouth (G. B.) in 5 Weeks and three Days.

Sunday arrived here the Scarborough from Savannah in Georgia, in whom came Governor Wright of that Province.

We are informed that Governor Campbell of South-Carolina is on his Passage for this Place.

BRISTOL, February 17.

Lord Cornwallis sailed from Cork the 12th Instant—Two Transports are fitting out now for Boston with Necessaries for the Troops.—One is a large Ship with 16 Guns, and will have Provisions.—The other will have Shoes, Hofs and Cloathing, and 8 or 10 Guns.—They will be ready to sail in 14 Days.

The West India Traders outward will take Guns.—The Capture of the homeward bound would alarm the Merchants and distress—those are yet unprovided.

Extracts of Letters from several eminent Gentlemen in London to their Friends in America, dated February 7, and 14, 1776.

**L**ORD George Germain or Sackville is made Minister absolute for the American War—Lord How is appointed Commander in Chief of the Fleet, the Commander at Land is not yet determined.

Lord Cornwallis is now ready to sail from Cork with 3000 Men for Virginia, to meet General Clinton.—The Plan is to march through that colony and attack Philadelphia by Land, if impracticable by Sea; they reckon upon Paper to have an Army of 30,000, mostly Germans, in America by June.—Burgoyne is to retake Canada with 10,000 Men; if the Passage over the Blue Ridge are fortify'd that Way will be impracticable.—If Offers of Settlement, &c. are prepared to fling into the Camp in German, when the Germans arrive, it may have a great Effect. They trust to the Slaves, but more to the Scotch among you.

The Generals talk'd of are Amherst, Count La Lippe Harvey, the last is most probable.

A General of the first Abilities, has offer'd to go over, if I could assure him of being received by the Congress.—If the Ministerial Efforts do not succeed this Campaign, it is over with them.

Ess. 24. This is certainly the Minister's (Lord G. Germaine's) plan upon paper for the war against America in 1776; but the attentive reader will readily conceive it will prove very deficient in point of numbers; tho' possibly there may be in the whole, 20, or 25,000 effective men in America in 1776. The 15th, 31st, 33d, 37th, 54th, 55th, and 57th regiments are now embarked at Cork, to sail with Lord Cornwallis, under Sir Peter Parker, commander by Sea, for Virginia. The Germans are actually engaged, and will be embark'd most probably at Hambro' or Stade, by the last of next March.

We further learn by Extracts from the St. James's Chronicle of the 29th of March infer'd in the Halifax Gazette, that Sir Peter Parker, Lord Cornwallis and General Clinton with 3000 Troops were to sail for Virginia and the Carolinas about the first of March.—That General Burgoyne was to sail for Quebec with 10,000 Troops and retake it in the Hands of the Rebels, and then proceed to Montreal, St. John's &c.—That General Gage and Lord Howe with 2000 troops were to join General Howe at Boston, at which place it is suppos'd there is 8000—Gage to remain as Governor of Massachusetts, while the Generals Howe, are to attack and beat the Rebels from their posts; they are then to secure their embarkation and proceed to New-York, land there and occupy Hudson's River, and proceed up and join General Burgoyne from Quebec, and establish a chain of Forts round New-England.—Also that about 200 sail of Frigates and Sloops of war are to line our Coast, it is said three deep, to cut off all communication between the Colonies.—The above troops are to be Heffians who enter into pay before they march, and Hanoverians and British; the foreign Troops are subsidiz'd for two Years after the 1st of July, to be returned to their own land again, if ever that should be.

From the PUBLIC LEDGER.

LONDON, February 14, 1776.

[A U T H E N T I C.]

CORPS IN AMERICA, and under Orders for the CONTINENT, JANUARY 1776.

N O W I N A M E R I C A.

- 27th drag. Preston's } at Boston.
  - 4th foot, Hodgson's } at Boston.
  - 5th — Percy's } Taken at Chamb'd the greatest part, the rest with Carleton.
  - 7th — Bertie's } At the upper posts, Niagara, Detroit, &c.
  - 8th — Armstrong's } at Boston.
  - 10th — Sandford's } at Boston.
  - 22d — Gage's } at Boston.
  - 23d — Howe's } at Boston.
  - 24th — Ld Wm Gordon's } Taken the greatest part at St. John's, the rest with Carleton.
  - 25th — late Scott's } at Boston.
  - 26th — Pi. Campbell's } at Boston.
  - 28th — Rigot's } at Boston.
  - 40th — Hamilton's } at Boston.
  - 41st — Cary's } at Boston.
  - 42d — Abercrombie's } at Boston.
  - 43d — Haviland's } at Boston.
  - 44th — Carleton's } at Boston.
  - 45th — Maitland's } at Boston.
  - 46th — Clavering's } at Boston.
  - 47th — T. Grant's } at Boston.
  - 48th — Fomeroy's } at Boston.
  - 49th — Urmston's } at Boston and Halifax.
- Royal Artillery, at Boston, five Companies, each one Captain, one Captain-Lieutenant, one First Lieutenant, the Second Lieutenants, three Sergeants, three Corporals, six Bombardiers, twelve Gunners, one File, two Drums, and forty eight Men officers.
- 1 Company ditto at Quebec.
  - 1 Company ditto at Montreal, &c. part suppos'd to be taken.
  - 1 Company ditto at St. Augustin's.
  - 1 Invalid Company ditto at Newfoundland.
- Marines, intended to be made up to 2000, and it is expected that more Artillery will be sent.

INTENDED FOR THE SERVICE IN NORTH-AMERICA, 1776.

29th foot, Evelyn's.—Now at Chatham, ordered to be in readiness to embark on board of men of war suppos'd to be destined for Quebec, and to sail so as to arrive there as early as the navigation of the River St. Lawrence will admit.

3d foot, Sir J. Amherst's } at Quebec.
- 4th — Lieut's } at Quebec.
- 11th — A Court's } at Quebec.
- 12th — Fenner's } at Quebec.
- 24th — G. Cornwallis's } at Quebec.
- 25th — now Taylor's } at Quebec.
- 26th — Ld F Cavendish's } at Quebec.
- 27th — H. Elphinstone's } at Quebec.
- 62d — Stred's, now } at Quebec.
- 63d — Jones's } at Quebec.
- 64th — Boothby's } at Quebec.

Now ordered to be in readiness for embarkation in the Spring.

14th — Cunningham's } now at St. Vincent's, partly at St. Augustin's, partly with Lord Dunmore, the 1st at Halifax, ready to sail from Cork.

15th — Cavan's } at St. Vincent's.
- 16th — Gibb's } at St. Vincent's.
- 17th — Monkton's } On their passage from Ireland.
- 18th — Maffey's } Four Comp. of the 29th arrived at B-Ron.
- 19th — Erie's } but back to Cork.
- 20th — Cornwallis's } Ready to sail from Cork.
- 21st — Coore's } Requesting to be sent to B-Ron.
- 22d — Lord Murray's } 3d Company put back to Cork the other three on their passage to B-Ron.

23d — Vaughan's } ready to sail from Cork.
- 24th — Frederick's } on their passage from Ireland.
- 25th — Ju. Grant's } ready to sail from Cork.
- 26th — Irvine's } waiting in Scotland, to consist of 2000 men.

27d batt. Fraser's corps } waiting in America, to consist of 4 of 500 each.

28d batt. Fraser's corps } waiting in America, to consist of 4 of 500 each.

N. B. The marching regiments for the American service, are to consist of twelve companies, of fifty six effective rank and file each company; the three Highland battalions excepted, viz. Lord John Murray's and Fraser's, which are to consist of 1200 men each.

16th drag. Burgoyne's.—Under orders for Boston.

N. B. The present establishments of the 16th and 27th drag, exclusive of the Commissioned Officers, are two Sergeants, two Corporals, and thirty five effective Privates to each troop, six troops; but an augmentation is ordered of one Sergeant, one Sergeant, two Corporals, and thirty Privates to each troop, so the duty on foot; no horse to be provided for this augmentation.

2000 of the guards to be drafted from the three regiments, and commanded by Col. Matthews.

Besides the above British forces, it is reckoned there will be 25,000 foreign auxiliaries; and that the shipping necessary for the embarkation will be 200,000 ton.

Fig. 3.4. Various reports of regiment locations and plans of British invasion. 1776. (Source: Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division.)

first place. If we take into account that one-half to two-thirds of the population of the time could not or could barely read, and that they lived in a traditional world of oral communication, it becomes clear that illustrated broadsides fulfilled a more than supplementary function. Together with nonwritten media of public speeches and songs, they approached the man and woman in the street in the terms of their own oral or semioral culture. They not only rendered the revolutionary message accessible but also drew ordinary people into the communication and opinion-making process of a widening public sphere, with its tendency toward democratization. (224).

A broadside's special relationship with both reading and non-reading audiences is the very factor that allows it to become a multifaceted genre repository when information was meant to serve a larger audience than just a literate one.

### *Newspapers*

"The papers issued by Congress might well answer the needs of the most intelligent classes of the people . . . . But there were large numbers of persons who needed the help of some short and easy argument homely in style and quotable between plain neighbors" (Winsor 795). Justin Winsor was writing about the value of Thomas Paine's simplistically written January 1776 pamphlet *Common Sense*; however, Winsor's perspective underscores the demand for easily understood language and sentence structures. When authors forsook straightforwardness for complex language or literary showmanship, their readership was reduced to the people who had the education *and* interest in tackling such material. As an example, to Paine's pamphlet, Loyalist James Chalmers replied with the *Plain Truth*, about

which the American Antiquarian Society says, "with its obscure literary language . . . it was probably not read by the common man" ("A Place of Reading").

Aware of the variety of literacy capabilities and general interests of colonial readers, newspapers could cater to a wide range of populations (in comparison to other textual media) by providing an eclectic display of material in genres that included book reviews, international news, trans-Atlantic commerce, advertisements, and early versions of classified sections, all of which were arranged in a "mosaic" presentation (McLuhan, *Understanding Me* 24). By *mosaic* I mean that the combined collection of information was a collage of genres that presented themselves collectively as news, but individually as basic information that satisfied the reader's needs of who, what, where, when, why, and how. When a deeper understanding was sought, the reader typically had the option of delving into a recently published pamphlet or book. In other words, in comparison to broadsides and pamphlets, newspapers had an exclusive niche in "communicat[ing] ideas, mood and style not only through written contents but also through visual design" (Machin and Niblock 244). As David Machin and Sarah Niblock note, "Readers of newspapers . . . [found] in news a reality that is designed to address them in the first place as consumers as what they read, both in content and form of address" (257). As a result of the rapport readers had with this medium they responded by increasing demand for information provided by it.<sup>28</sup>

A newspaper, as a serial publication, contained news on current events or interests at the local, national, or international level, on issues such as ethnic or racial groups, farming,

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<sup>28</sup> In the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, the number of articles per year increased fivefold from less than 500 in 1728 to about 2,500 in 1764. Article length doubled from about 200 words at the beginning of the eighteenth century to 400 words toward the end of it (Newman and Block 758).

religion, and politics. In addition to packing a variety of thoughts and information into one medium (unlike most broadside and pamphlet publications), newspapers were also unique in that their writers were less able to enjoy the cloak of anonymity as pamphlet and broadside writers had often done. Not only were their identities more commonly available to the public, newspaper printers also had a financial dependence on their product not shared by the other two mediums, making it even more difficult for them to "hide from authorities" (Stephens). Thus, their relationship with "the common man" manifested itself in the articles they printed.

Before 1765--that is, before the threat of a Stamp Act when printers were at risk of being driven out of business by increases in operational costs and taxes--newspapers generally would have been considered as a non-confrontational medium of information that left hot-button opinion pieces to pamphleteers such as Paine.<sup>29</sup> But as the act had the ability to financially ruin many printers, newspapers became instant and direct contenders in the information arena. Colonial newspapers suddenly found themselves directly interested in foreign relations—more so now than in the recent past—because their turf and financial security were at risk. David J. Newman and Sharon Block demonstrate the magnitude of this change in their analysis of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, the longest running and largest newspaper of the eighteenth century. They identify the shift transpiring in coverage and relate it to colonial interests in foreign relations (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2 in the next chapter). David Copeland provides additional understanding by claiming that simultaneous with the Seven Years' War and the American Revolution, a revolution in print media was also occurring, as was a rise in literacy

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<sup>29</sup> In the early part of the eighteenth century, many newspapers didn't print articles of political persuasion from the home front, and instead reprinted articles that had run in newspapers abroad. As Scott E. Casper points out, "If colonial newspapers often seemed like dull recapitulations of foreign events, that content probably owed much to their proprietors' financially motivated decisions not to offend" (102).

rates. By the end of 1764 there were twenty four newspapers in colonial America (three more than at the first of the year). As Arthur Schlesinger notes, "If Delaware be considered a part of Pennsylvania, every colony but New Jersey possessed at least one journal" (64). To date, this was the largest number of newspapers recorded, indicating a continual steady demand for the product. "News was vital" and "the presses were hot and would be hotter still" (American Antiquarian Society). By the end of 1775, there were thirty-eight colonial newspapers in operation (Bailyn, *Ideological* 1).

Because a stamp tax had raised the price of newspapers substantially—on some papers it amounted to a 50 percent increase—printers began to look within their own institutional framework for resources to generate support in opposing the tax and fought back with pictures (Mott 71). On October 19 and October 31, 1765, respectively, the *Maryland Gazette* and *Pennsylvania Journal* printed a skull and crossbones image with an announcement below their mastheads that read: "EXPIRING: In Hopes of a Resurrection to Life again" (figs. 3.5 and 3.6). The *New-Hampshire Gazette* printed an essay on October 31—the day before the Stamp Act took effect—titled "The Lamentation of the New-Hampshire Gazette." The essay opened with the following line: "What a hard Case it is, that after this Day's Appearance upon the Stage of Action, I must Die, or submit to that which is worse than Death, be Stamp'd and lose my Freedom." The essay was framed in borders that resembled black mourning bands. Most newspapers used visual design to demonstrate opposition.

One of the areas lacking in analyses of newspapers, according to Machin and Niblock, is how production factors worked in textual choices (244): "Simply, we cannot understand a text in isolation from its production" (247). Machin and Niblock's claim that production influences



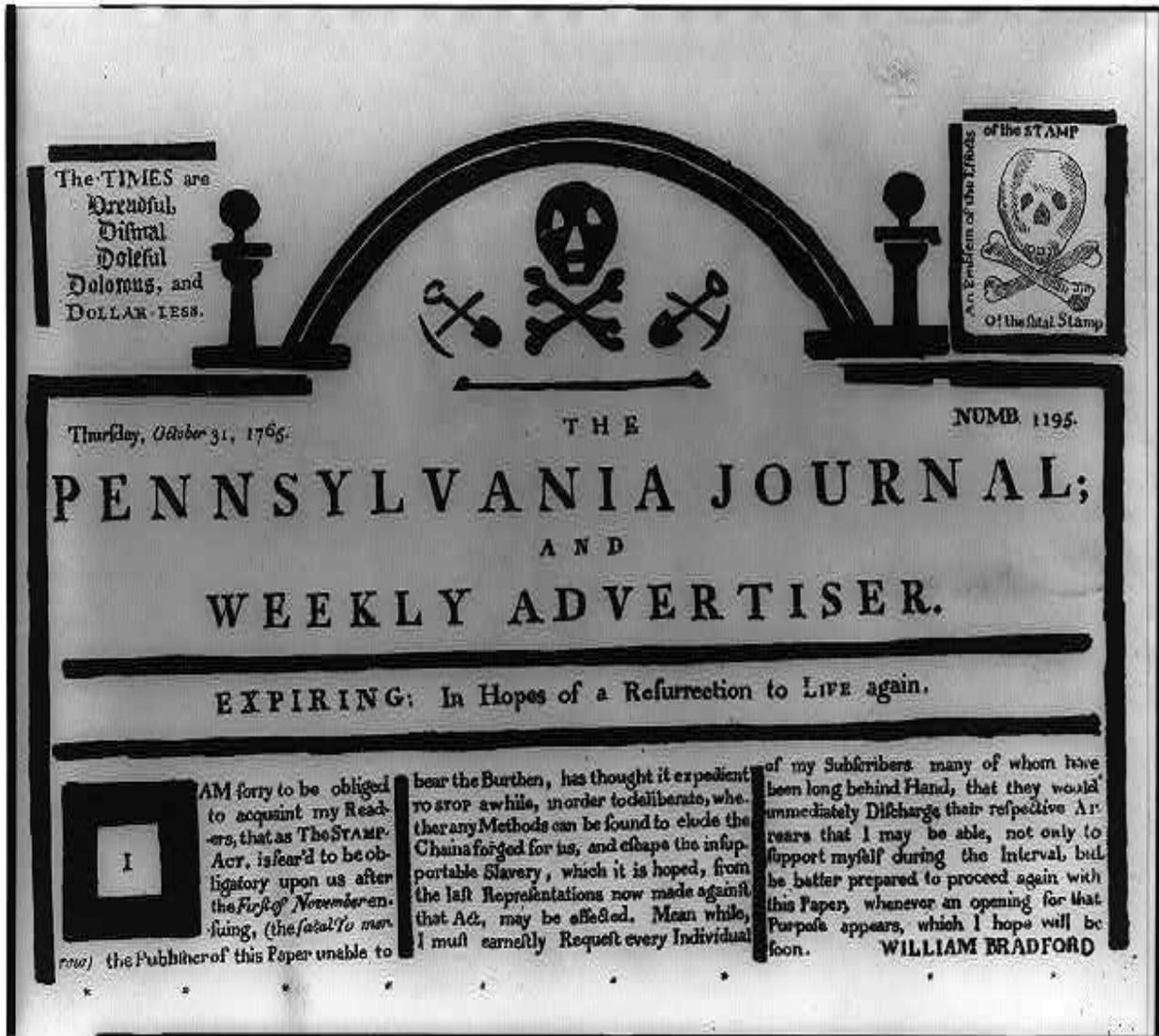


Fig. 3.6. The Pennsylvania Journal's reaction to the Stamp Act. (Source: Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division.)

textual features is evident in the changes made to newspaper design in the years following the victory over the Stamp Act. Tensions between England and its North American colonies worsened as England succeeded in both passing laws that increased taxes on other American goods and weakened America's supply lines.<sup>30</sup> The ink that was used to create mourning bands, skulls and crossbones, and coffins was suddenly a valuable commodity, and therefore used sparingly. Paper, too, became a valuable commodity in limited supply. The *Boston Gazette*, for example, when printing the Declaration in its July 22 press run, ran an advertisement next to it stating: "Cash given for clean Cotton and Linen RAGS, at the Printing-Office in Watertown." The rags would be used to make paper.

Because newspapers found themselves in a position in which they could rely less on visual artistry as a persuasive tactic since the ink used for graphics was suddenly needed for text, another technique began to emerge that didn't require additional ink and would have a lasting result in the world of the newspaper business: textual hierarchy (Reichardt 224). Westernized reading patterns (from left to right, top to bottom, respectively) dictate that a text in the top left corner of a newspaper is typically the first to attract a reader's attention; newspapers place breaking news stories on the front page and position them in line with westernized reading practices. The colonial Congress mandated that the Declaration be printed in all newspapers but didn't specify its placement on the page. This mandate is probably why James Humphreys Jr., publisher of the *Pennsylvania Ledger* (figs. 3.7 and 3.8) and an ardent supporter of England's side in the war, ran the Declaration on the *second* page, and on the *first* page advertised for the *second* edition of *Common Sense*. While it's true that *Common Sense*

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<sup>30</sup> The Declaratory Act (1766) authorized Parliament to impose any laws on colonists that it so desired. In addition, Parliament enacted the Townsend Acts, which taxed imported paper, tea, glass, lead, etc.

supported the revolutionary cause, its second edition would likely have had less exigency about it than news of the American Colonies breaking with England. Support for this claim lies in the percentage of newspapers that printed the Declaration. Whether the Declaration's placement had anything to do with his political ideology or that the placement of *Common Sense* was to advertise that the book could be purchased at his shop is unknown. But what is known is that readers would have seen the news of a second edition of the pamphlet before they saw the Declaration. Also on the first page was a House of Lords debate that took place on March 5. The argument between the lords indicates a split in opinion over support for the war. According to Robin Shields, in a Library of Congress webcast *Publishing the Declaration of Independence*, "A reader gets the impression that ambivalence and division is rampant so that by the time one reads the Declaration, it seems that independence is not impossible."

Conversely, most other printers gave the Declaration a prominent, page-one placement. John Holt, the printer of the *Pennsylvania Journal*, placed the Declaration on the right side of its three-columned front page and in the masthead included "United Now Alive and Free, Firm on the basis Liberty shall stand"; Benjamin Towne filled both of the two-columned front page of the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* with the Declaration, which also flowed onto the second page; John Mycall, who also placed the Declaration on the front page of the Massachusetts *Essex Journal*, included a proclamation for August 1 to be a day of fasting and prayer to signify an end to British control. And to further illustrate how the first page was typically used for the most pressing news, Edward Powars and Nathaniel Willis placed an advertisement for smallpox inoculation on the front page next to the Declaration, and David Hall Jr. and William Sellers, owners of the largest and most influential newspaper of the day, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*

# PENNSYLVANIA LEDGER:

Or the Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New-Jersey  
W E E K L Y A D V E R T I S E R.

S A T U R D A Y, JULY 13, 1776.

Philadelphia: Printed by JAMES HUMPHREYS, junr. in *Front-street*, at the Corner of *Black-horse Alley*:—Where Essays, Articles of News, Advertisements, &c. are gratefully received and impartially inserted. And Where Subscriptions are taken in for this Paper, at *Ten Shillings* per Year.

Just printed, published, and now selling by  
R O B E R T B E L L, in Third-street,  
(Price One Shilling and Two-pence)

**T**HE genuine PRINCIPLES of the ancient  
SAXON, or ENGLISH CONSTITU-  
TION. Carefully collected from the best Autho-  
rities; with some Observations on their peculiar  
Fitsness for the United Colonies in general, and  
Pennsylvania in particular. By DE MOPHILUS.  
All human Constitutions, are subject to Corruption,  
and must perish, unless they are timely renewed  
by reducing them to their first Principles. SINCE  
Where Annual Election ends, Tyranny begins.

HISTORICAL ESSAYS.  
N. B. All the New Pamphlets may be had at said  
Bell's.

Just printed, published and to be Sold, By  
JAMES HUMPHREYS, junr.  
G R A M M A T I C Æ,  
INSTITUTIO COMPENDIARIA.  
IN USUM SCHOLARUM.  
A U T O R E  
EDV. WETTENHALL, D. D.  
Nuper Episcopo Kilmar, & Ardg.

A few Copies of the  
**Military Guide,**  
FOR  
**YOUNG OFFICERS,**  
By THOMAS SIMES, Esquire,  
In Two Volumes, large Octavo, embellished  
with a Number of Copperplates,  
(Price Three Dollars)  
May be had of the PRINTER hereof.

The Second Edition  
Just published and To be Sold by  
James Humphreys, junior,  
in Front-street. (Price Two Shillings)  
**The True Interest of America**  
Impartially Stated,  
In certain STRICTURES on a Pamphlet  
entitled

**COMMON SENSE.**  
By an AMERICAN.  
" You have been told that we are factious, im-  
patient of government, and desirous of Independ-  
ency. Be assured that these are not *Facts*, but  
" *Calumnies*—Permit us to be as free as yourselves,  
" and we shall ever esteem a union with you to be  
" our *greatest glory* and our *greatest happiness*. —  
" Place us in the same situation we were at the close  
" of the last war, and our former harmony will be  
" restored." **CONSTITUTIONAL CONGRESS'S**  
*Address to the People of Great-Britain.*  
" *Outructatio et livor pronis acribus accipiuntur.*  
" *Factus.*

" Nihil est, Anripho.  
" Quin mali narrando possit depravari. *Terentius.*  
**Genuine Keyser's Pills,**  
To be had of the Printer.  
MELASSES, COFFEE, and SUGARS  
T O B E S O L D, By  
GEORGE MEADE, and Co.  
JONAS PHILLIPS has for sale superfine French  
INDIGO, one hundred and eighty reams of  
the best Propatria writing paper, ofsnaburgs and  
nickinburgs, checks and Holland stripes, needles  
and pins, bedstern wires, bickrams, umbrellas, and  
sundry other dry goods. Likewise Madeira, Tent,  
Mammy, and Frontoniac WINES, &c.

## H O U S E of L O R D S

T U E S D A Y, March 5.  
(Continued from our last.)

**THE Duke of MANCHESTER.**  
W HATEVER objections I may have to the  
original cause of the dispute between both  
countries, however I may condemn the mode in  
which it has been hitherto conducted, or how much-  
soever I may disapprove of the measure of employ-  
ing foreigners to make a conquest of our own sub-  
jects, and commission them to carry all the horrors  
of a war into a part of the dominions of the British  
Crown; I own I have still, if possible, stronger and  
more material objections against some matters which  
make their appearance in the treaties now before  
your Lordships. I think I perceive something which  
bears the strongest, nay most unequivocal marks of  
that secret influence, that black complexion, which  
openly or covertly, as opportunities served or cir-  
cumstances concurred, have pervaded our Councils  
for some years back. America is to be coerced, no  
matter by what means. The blood and treasure of  
this country is to be lavishly thrown away in effect-  
ing this purpose. A set of beggarly, insignificant  
German Princes are to be doubly subsidised to give  
this extraordinary measure success. But that is not  
all; the commander of this body of mercenaries is to  
be invested with the supreme command, independ-  
ent of the control of either King or Parliament.  
If any dispute should arise, where are the parties to  
appeal? not to the King, for he has no power over  
them; not the Parliament, for they can pretend to  
none. Where then, as no provision is made in the  
treaty, but to the Prince to whom they belong?  
Thus you will have a body of 12,000 men, with a  
veteran General at their head, free from any con-  
trol whatever. Suppose any dispute should arise  
between our Commanders and theirs, who is to de-  
cide it? The foreign General knows no superior  
but his matter, and the consequence will be, that  
in any such event, all operations must cease till he  
receives instructions from home; and thus the very  
end for which those foreigners are brought into the  
kingdom will be defeated, and the nation put to a  
monstrous expence for nothing.

**Lord Effingham.** I should not have troubled your  
Lordships upon a subject which has been so fully and  
repeatedly discussed in all its parts, did not three  
points which naturally present themselves on the  
present occasion, strike me very strongly. These  
are the force which America is able to oppose to  
ours, with the resources for maintaining that force,  
the prospect of success on our part, and the means  
of defence against the attacks of our natural en-  
emies. The first may be considered in two lights,  
the number of troops America will be able to bring  
into the field, and the mode adopted for paying  
them. This, my Lords, is a point that calls for  
your Lordships most serious consideration. With  
such as deny the justice of the war, it will operate  
as proving its impracticability, as well as injustice;  
with such as contend for its justice, it will create  
a very strong objection as to the expediency. By  
the measures proposed by the Continental Congress  
for obliging every province to contribute a certain  
number of men, and a certain specific sum of mo-  
ney for their support, it was directed that the in-  
habitants of each province should be numbered, and  
the men and money proportioned to such returns.  
On this occasion, as might be expected, the returns  
were short, considerably, of the real number of  
souls; notwithstanding this, they amounted to three  
millions and a half, which is more by almost one  
half, than any gross computation had amounted to.  
To pay those men, the Congress gave orders to  
strike off four millions of dollars in paper currency,  
which sum, accordingly as the paper is emitted, is  
to pass current in the respective provinces where  
the revenue arises. Thus, though paper be emitted  
it is still paid away without incurring a debt; for  
the supplies are by this means raised within the  
year, every man contributing his own share, and  
the whole state, as one body, still left free of any  
debt or incumbrance whatever. On the second  
point, it is plain, including the foreigners, and  
supposing the British corps complete, which I am  
sure they are not, the whole force acting on the

part of Great-Britain, will not much exceed 40,000  
effective men. Suppose that our Lordships assist,  
or be persuaded to assist, in raising an army of 40,000  
men will be able to sustain a campaign, or in any given  
time, to make a conquest of three millions  
and a half of people, zealous for their liberties, and  
resolutely determined to defend them to the last  
extremity—I am sure there is not.

If so, then every pretence to expedition and put-  
ting a speedy end to the present civil war, is at once  
over. The force will be found inadequate; and I  
will go more, any force you will or can send will  
be so. As to the last point of domestic defence, how  
does that stand? Let us presume for a minute, that  
the military force remaining in this kingdom, aided  
by the militia, was sufficient for the purpose of de-  
fending this island; will it be pretended that Ire-  
land, with a force in it of only 6000 men, will be  
equally secure? I am confident such a monstrous  
assertion will not be made; 12,000 men, even in  
times of peace, has been at all times thought ne-  
cessary for the preservation of its internal tranqui-  
lity. I would appeal to a noble Lord near me  
(Lord Townshend) supposing no attack had been  
made from without, whether the military establish-  
ment, after the embarkation, would be equal even  
to the suppression of domestic riot or disturbance,  
much less if a body of French or Spaniards should  
make a descent there. For my part, I think and  
believe, the noble Viscount who presided there for  
so many years as Chief Governor, is of the same opi-  
nion, that 12,000 men might march from one end  
of the kingdom to the other without molestation,  
there being no barrier, natural or artificial to pre-  
vent them but the Shannon; so that on the whole,  
putting the justice of the war out of the question, I  
am persuaded that the present measures are big with  
ruin in every light, and can, in the nature of things,  
be never attended with success, but are vain, il-  
ludory, and chimerical, and originate from obliquity  
or something worse.

**Lord Talbot.** The noble Earl who spoke last, has  
certainly hit off one leading feature of the Ameri-  
cans. His Lordship tells you, that even in the midst  
of their zeal for freedom and independency, they  
were not able to conquer their natural propensity  
to fraud and concealment. He tells you, that to evade  
the order of the Congress for supplying their quotas  
of men and money, they purposely concealed their  
real numbers. However I may differ from the noble  
Lord in the deduction he has drawn from this fact,  
I am not permitted to doubt the truth of it, as  
coming from a person in whose estimation and good  
opinion, they bear to high a rank. This with me,  
would be the strongest reason imaginable for not  
trusting to their professions, when it is seriously  
stated, that they are to be held by no ties whatever,  
not even by their most sacred engagements to sup-  
port a cause which they deem essential to their very  
existence as a free people. They have all along a  
reluctance to order and good government, and I am  
every day more and more convinced, that this peo-  
ple will never be brought back to their duty and the  
subordinate relation they stand in to this country,  
till reduced to an unconditional effectual submission.  
Let them promise or hold out what present conve-  
nience or future views of independence may sug-  
gest, believe me, my Lords, they will never give  
up their favourite object, till they are fully convin-  
ced, that that object is unattainable. No concession  
on our part, no lenity, nor no endurance will have  
any other effect, but that of increasing their inso-  
lence, and encouraging them daily to rise in their  
demands. They have been obstinate and ungovern-  
able from the very beginning, from their first early  
and infant settlements in that country. They be-  
gan to manifest this spirit so early as the reign of  
Charles the first. They disputed our right of fish-  
ing on their coasts, in the times of the common-  
wealth and protectorate. But was this claim to  
exemption accorded to on our part, or this privileg-  
e inseparably connected with sovereignty, relinquit-  
ted? Not then as now, they were both treated as  
pretentious and piddulous. Indeed the principle  
of absolute unconditional supremacy, was so fully  
established in the reign of Charles the second, that  
what by some people establishes a right on our part

Fig. 3.7. The Pennsylvania Ledger's page-one news when publishing the Declaration of Independence.

(Source: Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division.)

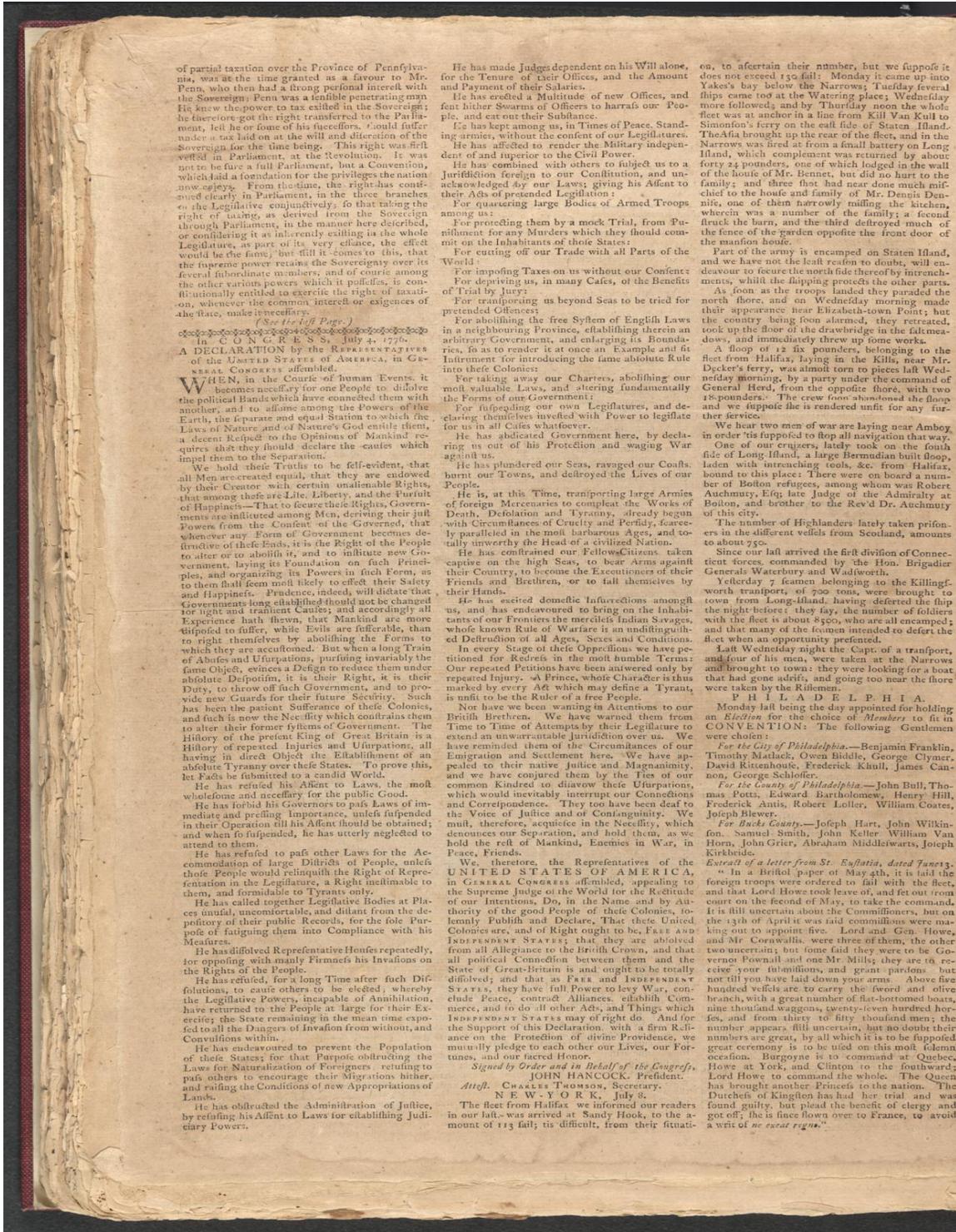


Fig. 3.8. Pennsylvania Ledger's placement of the Declaration of Independence. (Source: Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division.)

of partial taxation over the Province of Pennsylvania, was at the time granted as a favour to Mr. Penn, who then had a strong personal interest with the Sovereign: Penn was a sensible penetrating man. He knew the power to tax existed in the Sovereign; he therefore got the right transferred to the Parliament, let he or some of his successors, should suffer under a tax laid on at the will and discretion of the Sovereign for the time being. This right was first vested in Parliament, at the Revolution. It was not to be sure a full Parliament, but a Convention, which laid a foundation for the privileges the nation now enjoys. From thence, the right has continued vested in Parliament, in the three branches of the Legislative conjunctively, so that taking the right of taxing as derived from the Sovereign through Parliament, in the manner here described, or considering it as inherently existing in the whole Legislature, as part of its very essence, the effect would be the same; but still it comes to this, that the supreme power retains the Sovereignty over its several subordinate members, and of course among the other various powers which it possesses, is constitutionally entitled to exercise the right of taxation, whenever the common interest or exigencies of the State, make it necessary.

(See the next Page.)  
In CONGRESS ASSEMBLED,  
A DECLARATION BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

WHEN, in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the Separation.

We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly all Experience hath shewn, that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while Evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security. Such has been the patient Sufferance of these Colonies, and such is now the Necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The History of repeated Injuries and Usurpations, all having in direct Object the Establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid World.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public Good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing Importance, unless suspended in their Operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the Accommodation of large Districts of People, unless those People would relinquish the Right of Representation in the Legislature, a Right inalienable to them, and formidable to Tyrants only.

He has called together Legislative Bodies at Places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole Purpose of fatiguing them into Compliance with his Measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly Firmness his Invasions on the Rights of the People.

He has refused, for a long Time after such Dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their Exercise, the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the Dangers of Invasion from without, and Convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the Population of these States; for that Purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; returning to pass others to encourage their Migrations hither, and raising the Conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the Tenure of their Offices, and the Amount and Payment of their Salaries.

He has erected a Multitude of new Offices, and sent hither Swarms of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their Substance.

He has kept among us, in Times of Peace, Standing Armies, without the Consent of our Legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a Jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our Laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For quartering large Bodies of Armed Troops among us;

For depriving us, in many Cases, of the Benefit of Trial by Jury;

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended Offences;

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an arbitrary Government, and enlarging its Boundaries, so as to render it at once an Example and fit Instrument for introducing the same absolute Rule into these Colonies;

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Government;

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with Power to legislate for us in all Cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our Seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our Towns, and destroyed the Lives of our People.

He is, at this Time, transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to commit the Works of Death, Desolation and Tyranny, already begun with Circumstances of Cruelty and Perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous Ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized Nation.

He has constrained our Fellow-Citizens, taken captive on the high Seas, to bear Arms against their Country, to become the Executioners of their Friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic Insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the Inhabitants of our Frontiers the merciless Indian Savages, whose known Rule of Warfare is an undistinguished Destruction of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions.

In every Stage of these Oppressions we have petitioned for Redress in the most humble Terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated Injury. A Prince, whose Character is thus marked by every Act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the Ruler of a free People.

Now have we been warning in Attention to our British Brethren. We have warned them from Time to Time of Attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable Jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the Circumstances of our Emigration and Settlement here. We have appealed to their native Justice and Magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the Ties of our common Kindred to disavow these Usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our Connections and Correspondence. They too have been deaf to the Voice of Justice and of Consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the Necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of Mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace, Friends.

We and therefore, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the Rectitude of our Intentions, Do, in the Name and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly Publish and Declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political Connection between them and the State of Great-Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts, and Things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do. And for the Support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

Signed by Order and in Behalf of the Congress, JOHN HANCOCK, President.

Attest: CHARLES THOMSON, Secretary.  
NEW-YORK, July 8.

The fleet from Halifax we informed our readers in our last, was arrived at Sandy Hook, to the amount of 113 sail; it is difficult, from their situation,

to ascertain their number, but we suppose it does not exceed 150 sail: Monday it came up into Yakes's bay below the Narrows; Tuesday several ships came too at the Watering place; Wednesday more followed; and by Thursday noon the whole fleet was at anchor in a line from Kill Van Kull to Simonson's ferry on the east side of Staten Island.

The *Asia* brought up the rear of the fleet, and in the Narrows was fired at from a small battery on Long Island, which complement was returned by about forty 24 pounders, one of which lodged in the wall of the house of Mr. Bennet, but did no hurt to the family; and three shot had near done much mischief to the house and family of Mr. Dennis Demnitz, one of them narrowly missing the kitchen, which was a number of the family; a second struck the barn, and the third destroyed much of the fence of the garden opposite the front door of the mansion house.

Part of the army is encamped on Staten Island, and we have not the least reason to doubt, will endeavour to secure the north side thereof by intrenchments, whilst the shipping protects the other parts.

As soon as the troops landed they paraded the north shore, and on Wednesday morning made their appearance near Elizabeth-town Point; but the country being soon alarmed, they retreated, took up the floor of the drawbridge in the salt meadows, and immediately threw up some works.

A floop of 12 six pounders, belonging to the fleet from Halifax, lying in the Kills, near Mr. Decker's ferry, was almost torn to pieces last Wednesday morning, by a party under the command of General Herd, from the opposite shore, with two 18 pounders. The crew were shot about the floop, and we suppose the is rendered unfit for any further service.

We hear two men of war are laying near Amboy, in order to be disposed to hop all navigation that way.

One of our cruizers, lately took on the fourth side of Long-Island, a large Bermudian built floop, laden with intruding tools, sent from Halifax, bound to this place: There were on board a number of Boston refugees, among whom was Robert Auchmuty, Esq. late Judge of the Admiralty at Boston, and brother to the Rev'd Dr. Auchmuty of this city.

The number of Highlanders lately taken prisoners in the different vessels from Scotland, amounts to about 750.

Since our last arrived the first division of Connecticut forces, commanded by the Hon. Brigadier General Waterbury and Wadsworth.

Yesterday 7 fathoms belonging to the Killingsworth transport, of 700 tons, were brought to town from Long-Island, having deserted the ship the night before: they say, the number of soldiers with the fleet is about 8500, who are all encamped; and that many of the women intended to desert the fleet when an opportunity presented.

Last Wednesday night the Capt. of a transport, and four of his men, were taken at the Narrows and brought to town: they were looking for a boat that had gone ashore, and going too near the shore were taken by the Rilemen.

P H I L A D E L P H I A.  
Monday last being the day appointed for holding an Election for the choice of Members to sit in CONVENTION: The following Gentlemen were chosen:

For the City of Philadelphia.—Benjamin Franklin, Timothy Matlack, Owen Biddle, George Clymer, David Rittenhouse, Frederick Kuhl, James Cannon, George Schloffer.

For the County of Philadelphia.—John Bull, Thomas Potts, Edward Bartholomew, Henry Hill, Frederick Antis, Robert Loller, William Coates, Joseph Blewer.

For Bucks County.—Joseph Hart, John Wilkinson, Samuel Smith, John Ketter, William Van Horn, John Grier, Abraham Middleworts, Joseph Kirkbride.

Extract of a letter from St. Eustatius, dated January 3. "In a Bristol paper of May 4th, it is said the foreign troops were ordered to sail with the fleet, and that Lord Howe took leave of, and set out from court on the second of May, to take the command. It is still uncertain about the Commissioners, but on the 13th of April it was said commissions were making out to appoint five. Lord and Gen. Howe, and Mr. Cornwallis, were three of them, the other two uncertain; but some said they were to be Governor Pownall and one Mr. Mills; they are to receive your commissions, and grant pardons: but not till you have laid down your arms. Above five hundred vessels are to carry the sword and olive branch, with a great number of flat-bottomed boats, nine thousand waggons, twenty-seven hundred horses, and from thirty to fifty thousand men; the number appears still uncertain, but no doubt the numbers are great, by all which it is to be supposed great ceremony is to be used on this most solemn occasion. Burgoyne is to command at Quebec, Howe at York, and Clinton to the southward; Lord Howe to command the whole. The Queen has brought another Princess to the nation. The Dutchess of Kingston has had her trial and was found guilty, but plead the benefit of clergy and got off; she is since flown over to France, to avoid a writ of *ex officio* process."

(fig. 3.8), probably considered the rewards for runaway slaves and servants in the right-hand column nearly equal in significance to the Declaration, which they ran in the left column of the front page.

### *Pamphlets*

Our cause will never appear to advantage in a pamphlet. If you begin a series of letters in a news-paper you are at full liberty to say as much or as little as you please, to suspend your operations for a time and strike in again when occasion serves. . . . When you write a pamphlet you are expected to say the best, if not all that can be said on the subject, and if it contains a few weighty arguments the author is despised and the subject suffers. There you are obliged to come to a period, but you may write a twelve month in a news-paper and yet make the public believe that your main argument has not yet appeared. (Qtd. in T. Adams, *American Independence* xiv-xv)

Thomas Adams, bibliographer of British and American Revolutionary War pamphlets, extracted the above quotation from a piece entitled "Conversation Between Cato and *Plain Truth*" that ran in the March 25, 1776, press run of the *Pennsylvania Packet*.<sup>31</sup> Its author had contrasted two replies that negotiated how best to respond to *Common Sense*: via newspaper or pamphlet ( *American Independence* xv). As stated above, *Plain Truth*, which was a response to Paine's widely received pamphlet *Common Sense*, was a flop. If demand is an indicator, we know now that the choice of pamphlet might not have been the most advantageous.

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<sup>31</sup> "Cato" was a pseudonym used by William Smith, provost of the College of Philadelphia, and regular contributor to the *Packet*.



The authors of colonial American pamphlets were working professionals (lawyers, merchants, etc.) who wrote on occasion while still attending to their occupations (Bailyn, *Ideological* 14). Historian Bernard Bailyn describes Colonists' pamphleteering practices as "amateurism" and their writing skills as "crude" and lacking in technique (14-15). This inference might explain their practice of authoring many of their publications pseudonymously or anonymously. Bailyn also suggests these factors explain the heavy use of pseudonymity when satirical writing was attempted, as when Judge Martin Howard Jr. called Rhode Island Governor Stephen Hopkins a "ragged country fellow" (11). While Colonists were "obviously acquainted with, and capable of, imitating the forms of sophisticated polemics" produced by English pamphleteers, Bailyn states, "they had not truly mastered them; they were rarely capable of keeping their literary contrivances in control" (14-15). In other words, American Revolutionary War pamphlets "are not great documents" (12). For that reason, T.H. Breen and Timothy Hall point out, "The figures, tropes, and rhetorical flourishes such writers employed gave shape to linguistic constructions at once so powerful and so protean that postmodern critics have challenged the possibility of reconstructing any historical reality beyond discourse itself" (1413).

Yet, though a pamphleteer's writing skills might have languished in comparison, through the pamphlet's superior social standing as a genre, its content was lifted to that of "the distinctive literature of the Revolution" (Bailyn, *Ideological* 8). By way of the political pamphlet, authors and readers alike began to explore the concept of self and social change through such themes as "politics and power," "war and empire," "slavery and freedom," "religion and irreligion," "gender roles and polite behavior" (Breen and Hall 1414). Breen and Hall continue, "The texts of these interpretive exercises provide the historian with a body of evidence

detailing how colonists situated themselves effectively and persuasively within this larger community" (1415).

Unlike the twenty-first century's concept of a pamphlet, the eighteenth-century pamphlet resembled a small booklet more than it did the tri-folded, 8 1/2 x 11-inch single sheet of paper that we identify today. Bailyn defines the eighteenth-century pamphlet as printers' sheets, two to five in number, folded and then stitched into booklet form, ranging in size from folios twenty pages in length to octavos of eighty pages; some were shorter and others longer (*Ideological* 2-3). It was this flexibility that made the pamphlet one of the Revolution's greatest assets because, unlike other genres, its design allowed writers enough space to attempt to fully develop arguments by linking claims with experience and observation (Bailyn, *Ideological* 3). While writing styles might have been rudimentary and American book publications had ebbed simultaneously with ink and paper supplies after 1765, the pamphlet—though considered ephemera by twenty-first-century communication scholars—played the precocious role of acting in the form of a book for the colonial American reader of the 1760s. For instance, the American Antiquarian Society describes pamphlets as being shelved alongside books: "Lucky patrons of James Pitson's Boston King Street Tavern might help themselves to one of the eighty-eight books and thirty-one pamphlets resting on his barroom bookshelf" ("A Place of Reading"). The major distinction between a book and pamphlet was in its assembly, not its reception. Like today, books were bound together by a form of glue and the cover was usually made of covered wooden panels, ornate in design and detail.<sup>32</sup> Pamphlets didn't fare so well. Their pages were loosely stitched into a binding that had no more appeal than its title, as costs

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<sup>32</sup> Books were sold unbound, but with the intention that they would be bound. Printers/booksellers and book binders were separate businesses in the eighteenth century.

were kept to a minimum since, in many cases, the pamphleteer was paying to have his own work printed.

To illustrate the increase in demand for the pamphlet compared to other printing jobs, Table 3.1 shows the reprioritization of Philadelphia printers before 1765 and after the war's end in 1783. Notice how the exponential increases in pamphlet publications during tensions with England plummeted after the war, and demand for fiction (*belles lettres*) soared. Consumers who were in the market for pamphlets would have purchased them directly from bookstores, where printers published them in runs of 500 copies per edition with additional reprints or editions pending demand (Adams xv). Often, orders were taken early so publishers would know how many they could expect to sell. When a pamphlet was well received at the local level, on many occasions it was also sent abroad for circulation, thereby creating an international audience. If a portion of a pamphlet first ran in a newspaper and its cast was still set, the printer saved time in casting it as a pamphlet, *and* also had the added benefit of filling a news hole with a plug advertising its availability. For example, when the Bradfords printed William Tennant's *Invasion of Liberties* in the *Pennsylvania Journal* in 1774, the polemic only required another 300 impressions of one-and-one quarter octavo sheets—and "little more than a day's work"—in order to make the transition from newspaper to pamphlet (Parker 32). Adams's *American Independence* lists the number of editions printed of the most popular political pamphlets, all of which likely had typefaces set in casts (xi-xii).<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Adams loosely defines "American" pamphlets as being: "written by Americans which were printed in America; the pamphlets written by Englishmen and first printed in England which were reprinted in America; and the pamphlets written by Englishmen which, although not reprinted in America, elicited a reply written by an American and printed in America" (*American Independence* x).

Table 3.1  
Philadelphia Imprints  
Averages, Selected Years, 1758-1790

Year Group % Total	Gov't	Private	Periodicals	Almanacs	Religion	Political Pamphlets	School/ Children	Practical Guides	<i>Belles Lettres</i>	Scientific	Medical	Historical & Legal	Music	Maps & Misc.	Total	No. of Printers
<b>1758-1760</b>	9.7	5.7	3.7	9	14.7	3.3	1.7	0.7	2.3	0	0.7	1	0	1.3	53.8	12
%	18.1	10.3	6.9	16.8	27.4	6.1	3.2	1.3	4.3	0	1.3	1.9	0	2.4	100%	
<b>1768-1770</b>	8.3	15.3	5.3	11.7	17	19.7	3.3	0.7	5.3	0.7	0.7	2	0	1.3	91.3	16
%	8.9	16.9	5.9	12.9	18.6	21.6	3.6	0.8	5.8	0.8	0.8	2.2	0	1.4	100%	
<b>1774-1776</b>	55.3	15	6.7	11.3	20	46	2	6.7	11.7	0	0.3	4.3	0	3.7	183	20
%	30.1	8.2	3.6	6.2	10.7	25.1	1.7	3.6	6.3	0	0.2	2.3	0	2	100%	
<b>1781-1783</b>	53	17	8	12.3	20	15.3	5	0.7	11.3	1.3	1.7	3.3	0.7	3.3	152.9	18
%	34.5	11.5	5.4	8.1	13.1	10	3.3	0.2	7.3	0.9	1.1	2.2	0.2	2.2	100%	
<b>1788-1790</b>	21	24.7	12.3	11.3	30.7	6	16	7.3	24.7	0	9	3.3	9.7	7	183	36
%	11.5	13.5	6.7	6.1	16.8	3.3	8.8	4	13.5	0	4.9	1.8	5.3	3.8	100%	

Source: Charles Evans, *American Bibliography: A Chronological Dictionary of All Books, Pamphlets, and Periodical Publications Printed in the United States of America from the Genesis of Printing in 1639 Down to and Including the Year 1830, with Bibliographical and Biographical Notes.*

As is evident by Table 3.2, demand for *Common Sense* outranked other pamphlets by a long shot. Estimates indicate that demand for this publication coursed its way through the colonies within weeks after its January 9, 1776, release, and in a year's time sold 500,000 copies, undergoing 25 editions (Wood 55). Rhode Island Congressman Josiah Bartlett reported that it was "greedily bought up and read by all ranks of people" (qtd. in Maier 33). Though the pamphlet's authorship has since been attributed to Thomas Paine—an Englishman who would likely have been exposed to the writings of polemicists Daniel Defoe,<sup>34</sup> Jonathan Swift,<sup>35</sup> and other popular pamphleteers before migrating to America in 1774—like so many other pamphlets of the day, it was originally published with its authorship unknown (fig. 3.9).

Pamphleteers assumed anonymity because the castigations and accusations that were frequently practiced in pamphlet writing often angered the accused and provoked retaliation.

Table 3.2. Consumer Demand.

	Number of American Editions	Number of American Cities and Towns in Which Editions Appeared
Paine, <i>Common Sense</i> , 1776	25	13
*Shipley, <i>Speech</i> , 1774	12	8
**Dickinson, <i>Letters</i> , 1768	7	5
Lee, <i>Strictures</i> , 1774	7	6
*Rokeby, <i>Considerations</i> , 1774	7	5
Allen, <i>Oration</i> , 1773	7	4
Dulany, <i>Considerations</i> , 1765	5	4
Franklin, <i>Examination</i> , 1766	5	5
*Shipley, <i>Sermon</i> , 1773	5	5
Hancock, <i>Oration</i> , 1774	5	4
*Price, <i>Observations</i> , 1776	5	4
Hutchinson, <i>Letters</i> , 1773	5	2

\* Pamphlets that appeared first appeared in England.

\*\*A pamphlet that was first printed in American newspapers.

<sup>34</sup> Among others, in particular, see Defoe's *Shortest Way with the Dissenters* (1702).

<sup>35</sup> For Swift, see his *A Modest Proposal* (1729).

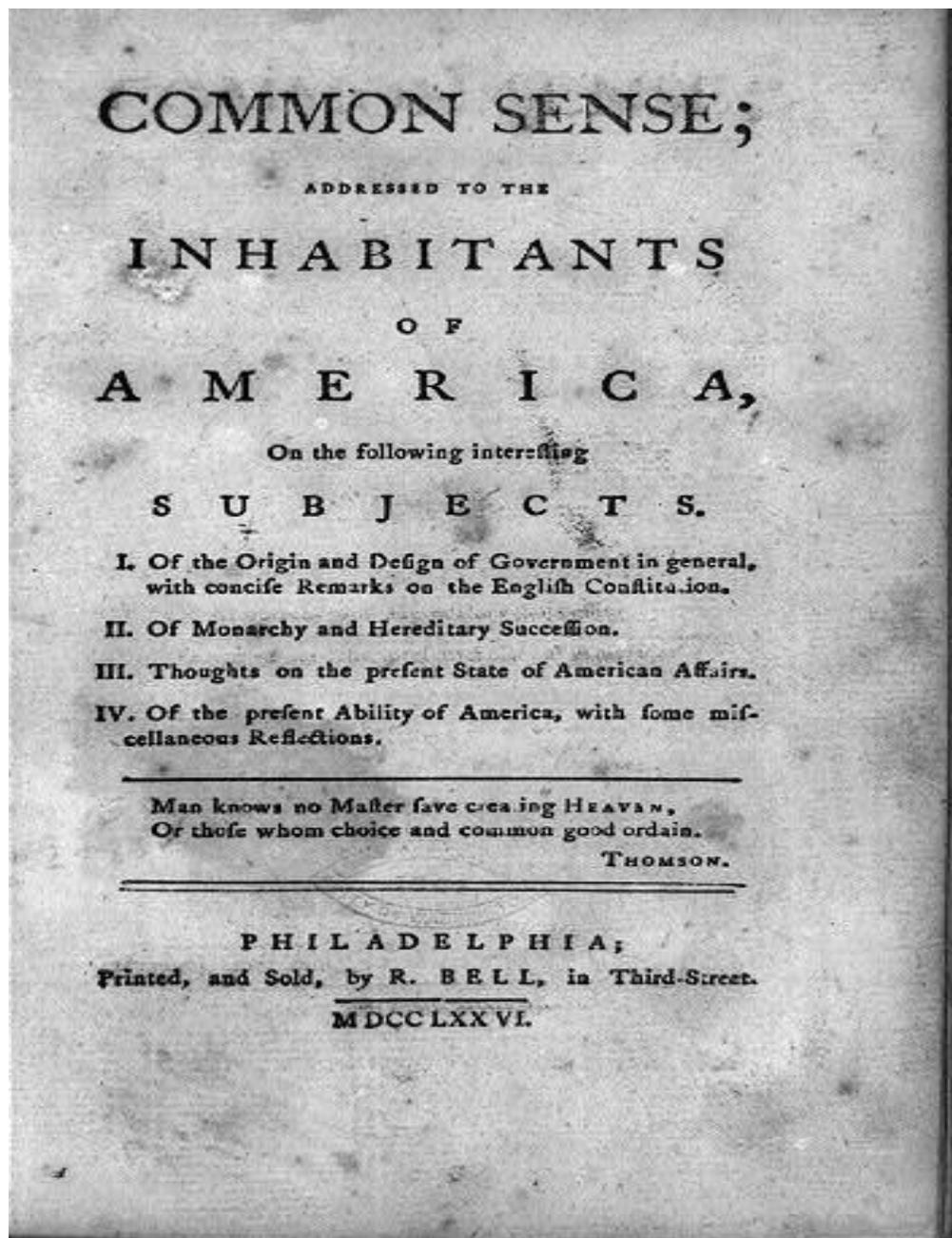


Fig. 3.9. Common Sense experiences highest demand compared to other pamphlets. (Source: Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division.)

Paine's language and writing style, in particular, drew a "daring impudence" and "uncommon frenzy," which "had to have been nourished in another culture" because it was "an alien quality in American writing" (Bailyn, *Ideological* 18). Typically retaliation came in the form of the accused issuing a statement in the same medium. In the case of *Common Sense*, the one under attack was King George III. Thus, the ramifications could have been dire for the author behind such words as

O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is over-run with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted around the Globe. Asia and Africa have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

(Paine 37)

In fact, *Rights of Man*, Part II, written by Paine in 1791 also courted punishment for sedition, and British authorities issued a warrant for his arrest as a result.

Simple, easy to read sentences distinguished *Common Sense* from other pamphlets of the day, which often referenced Tacitus, Montesquieu, and political and legal writers of previous centuries. Acknowledging that since 1770—the six years leading up to *Common Sense*'s first printing—a steady stream of similar arguments had been made, Pauline Maier contends *Common Sense*'s impact lay less in the language itself but in how it was used. "*Common Sense* . . . gathered those arguments together and used them not to persuade Congress, which was already moving apace toward Independence, but the people whose support Congress needed" (33).

## *British Pamphlets and Broad­sides*

A month after *Common Sense* appeared in America, Englishman Richard Price wrote the 128-page tract *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, the Principles of Government, and the Justice and Policy of the War with America*, which also garnered an unusual amount of attention for its support of the Colonists' cause. *Observations* underwent thirteen editions in England alone. Outside of England it was published in Boston, Charleston, Dublin, Edinburgh, New York, Paris, and Philadelphia, all in order to meet its consumers' demand.<sup>36</sup> Conversely, opposition literature was also flooding off the presses. By the year's end, thirty-four books and pamphlets were published, and fifteen letters appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* (Bailyn, "1776" 439). Such notable figures as Edmund Burke (publisher of the *Annual Review*), Samuel Johnson (lexicographer and author of *Dictionary of the English Language*), James Macpherson (archbishop of York), and John Wesley (founder of the Methodism religious denomination) were among the opposition.

As is obvious by the support and rebuke that Price's pamphlet generated, opinions about England's relationship with America were immeasurable. In a twenty-year timeframe beginning with 1763, one estimate for the number of British pamphlets published on the American cause was more than a thousand (Harris 39). Using the same timeframe, Thomas Adams stated that polemics on America that were written by British pamphleteers had

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<sup>36</sup> In March of that same year, 1776, *Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith was published as a pamphlet. Its immediate fanfare surpassed both *Common Sense* and *Observations*. *Wealth of Nations* was "recognized from the day of its publication as the voice of a new age and, as opposed to tracts like *Common Sense* or...*Observations*, a monument of critical intelligence likely to redirect the course of economic development at home and throughout the British world" (Bailyn, "1776" 441). It was intentionally omitted in this text because it lends itself to studies in fields beyond the realm of the paradigm of political pamphleteering established here. It is worth mentioning, however, to demonstrate its global impact, and like *Common Sense*, continues to be published today.

accounted for 30 percent of the pamphlets published. And within that period, between 1773 and 1778 publications on the American cause rose as high as 60 percent of the total pamphlets published by the British (*American Controversy* xiv). Like the American published pamphlets, British pamphlets were usually published in runs of 500 at a time. Unlike in America, several newspapers were available in England as tri-weeklies and others even as dailies, so advertisements for pamphlets likely stimulated greater demand for the medium as a result of the rhetoric used in sales pitches.<sup>37</sup>

Readers of English pamphlets were typically "prominent and influential men" who had "standing orders . . . with their booksellers" for the newest publications (T. Adams, *American Controversy* xv). Unlike American pamphlets, given the heavy uses of aphorisms, hyperbole, and personification, English pamphlets reflected superior reading skills by their audience (Bailyn, *Ideological* 12). As Bailyn notes, "These pamphlets form part of the vast body of English polemical and journalistic literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to which the greatest men of letters contributed" (8). Separating them even further from the American polemicists, most British pamphleteers were "capable . . . of earning their living by their pens . . . [by] producing copy on order as well as on inspiration" (13).

Many English pamphleteers drew their inspiration from broadsides. Broadsides encompassed a vast assortment of information; genres of balladry and criminality were two of

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<sup>37</sup> Daily newspapers included *Public Advertiser*, *Public Ledger*, *London Chronicle*, *London Packet*, and *Morning Chronicle* (Harris 38). Advertising taxes listed on surviving Audit Office records combined with John Trusler's *London Adviser and Guide* (1786) show that there were at least nine dailies, eight tri-weeklies, and nine weeklies in London by the 1780s. As a combined total that accounts for all London newspapers including weeklies, by 1782 there were about 25,000 newspapers produced each day according to Jeremy Black's estimate, which newspaper historian Hannah Barker deems as a more reasonable figure than other speculations. By 1780, London had a population of 750,000. It is difficult to tell how many of London's population were newspaper readers since newspapers were often re-circulated among readers and the numbers indicating how many times a newspaper was re-circulated are highly speculative at best, ranging from 10 to 20 times (Barker 23).

their more common uses of display. Broadside balladry was so popular that consumers both "young and old, rich and poor, ignorant and cultivated . . . loved them so well that they put them up on their walls" (Millar 130). Ballad sellers frequented elections, hangings, and other political venues to target passersby (Millar 129). The broadsides were pinned to a wall or canvas, and the seller would "cry out his wares like a hawker" (Millar 129). Criminality genres were also sold at these congregations. In addition to general spectators, audiences of criminality genres included clergymen who, as Andrea McKenzie explains, "vied for the exclusive possessions of 'lives,' 'confessions,' and 'last dying words' of the most famous criminals of the day" to use as fodder for Sunday's sermon (590).

Of course most of the language alleged to have been said by the dying was fabricated to some extent if not entirely, but its significance here is that its effects met the audience's expectations, and demand because at least portions of it might have been true. In other words, "based on a true story" appealed to eighteenth-century audiences in a similar way that it does modern-day audiences when they approach a book or movie claiming to have a non-fictionalized authenticity. But unlike modern-day writers of true crime, who are seldom given access to the condemned, eighteenth-century English printers and publishers could have access if the accused allowed for it. As McKenzie states, it was customary for the condemned to "endorse at the place of execution his or her true 'papers' by naming the title and printer and warning the spectators against being imposed upon by forgeries" (592). Criminals such as "Foot-pad" Edward Burnworth used his time leading up to execution to sketch self portraits to run as a frontpiece on a book about his life, while street-robber Stephen Barnham wrote a song that glorified the actions of himself and his companions. Printer John Applebee refused to print

Barnham's song for fear it would encourage others to either take up Barnham's line of work or continue in it (A. McKenzie 592).

As an example of the insatiable appetites Londoners had for reading about the lives and deaths of their villains, consider the reaction to Barnham's death along with two others who were executed at the same time: "Wednesday night the bodies of Barnham, Featherby, and Levee, three of the notorious street-robbers, executed last Monday at Tyburn, were buried at the church near Little-Britain, after having laid in state at an alehouse all the day, where vast numbers of people resorted to see them" (*Weekly Journal* Nov. 16, 1728). Moreover, not only did Londoners desire to see their criminals after the execution, but they were willing to pay to see them: "Mary Price executed for the murder of a child; being brought from the gallows to her father's near Long-Acre, he at first refused to take her in, but at length consenting; and letting people come to see her at a penny a piece, got near 81" (*Original Weekly Journal* August 2-8, 1718).

McKenzie offers one word of caution in characterizing these audiences as being "grotesque" and "morbid." The primary audience for this genre of writing was actually London's middle class and not the stereotypical working class or poor.<sup>38</sup> Thus, the advertisements for these pamphlets and broadsides ran in reputable newspapers, books, and other publications of the day. For instance, while Applebee printed numerous pamphlets and broadsides about criminals' lives and activities, he was better known for his periodical *Applebee's Original Weekly Journal*, where Daniel Defoe was a leading contributor. McKenzie states, "Criminal literature,

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<sup>38</sup> McKenzie notes that the claim of the middling class forming the primary audience is based on *Drunks, Whores, and Idle Apprentices: Criminal Biographies of the Eighteenth Century*, by Philip Rawlings (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992). {Is Cambridge UP right? Give full MLA bibliographic information here, or just title and author and give the full information on the Works Cited list. This is about the one case where it would be OK to just give the information in the note.}

then was 'popular' only insofar as its readership was socially inclusive" (591). In other words, criminal literature was to English printers' financial stability as governmental contracts were to colonial printers.

This chapter has looked at colonial American broadsides, newspapers, and pamphlets, as well as English broadsides and pamphlets from visual rhetorical, technological, and production standpoints. The most important concept addressed within the conceptual framework presented here is that usability within each medium is a result of a cultural-historical milieu. The user-audience dyad model applies the concept that audiences' relationships with the broadside, newspaper, and pamphlet are based upon their perception of the artifact itself *as well as* the social environment in which they perceive it. Given that the media discussed here served audiences of varying degrees of literacy and understanding of the subject matter, the success of each of the artifacts depended largely upon its ability both to attract a large population and to be intelligible to that population in much the same way that tax forms, ballots, and jury instructions have to be functional within a complexity of situations in today's society. As Amy J. Devitt, Anis Bawarshi, and Mary Jo Reiff point out:

All genres exist through and depend on human action, so these community-spanning genres, too, depend on the cooperation of participants from multiple communities, on people accepting the roles the genres assign to them and on being able to carry out the tasks expected of them. (Devitt 548)

However, Devitt Bawarshi, and Reiff add, genres' effects aren't always predictable. Using jury instructions as an example, consider that while lawyers and judges want a fair trial and just verdict, their "community's values also emphasize winning, not being overturned on appeal, and building reputations as well as bank accounts" (549).

Interpretation of a message is not a simple process because a message does not stand on its own merit; readers use an intricate web of knowledge to decipher and bolster the message's meaning. Within the web exists familiarity with the subject, audience opinions of the inter-textual relationships the message is built upon, cultural and societal interpretations of the message's medium, and the setting in which it is read. While a message is often presented as original language or thought, on rare occasions is this truly the case. I explore this thought more in Chapter Five, "America's First Utterance: The Declaration of Independence's Emergence as a Genre."

**Chapter Four:**  
**Colonists' Involvement with Genre Materiality Before Writing**  
**the Declaration of Independence**

Having looked at the common uses of texts from the standpoint of design practices by printers and publishers, this chapter focuses on the other important part of how texts are used and come to have meaning: how audiences shape a text's meaning and significance through the act of reading. Beginning with two modern-day illustrations, I show in the first illustration how audience demography influences a discourse's effectiveness and, in the second illustration, how an audience's interpretation of a medium's intended use further influences textual understanding. The intention is that exploring one's own demography and cultural expectation will provide deeper insight for understanding some of the ways eighteenth-century audiences might have shaped discourse. After the two illustrations, the chapter will return to exploring eighteenth-century reading practices. Following that, I will discuss textual rhetorical influences through writer/reader relationships. Last, I will consider reading practices in England.

To begin to understand how colonial audiences affected the way that the Declaration's meaning was shaped, we need to think about how audiences affect the meaning of texts in general. One of the tools often used to understand audience and genre is Kenneth Burke's famous metaphor of the parlor, which I take as my starting point here. But, similar to James E. Porter's reconfiguration, I complicate the Burkean parlor to explore how, in discourse, content can take on many forms while still remaining true to the genre in which it originated.

Burke's hypothetical situation demonstrates how you, as an audience member, would choose to participate in an ongoing argument only after you feel that you understand the

different perspectives being discussed, the division of sides each of the players has formed, and enough about the argument that your opinions would assimilate nicely into the discussion. In other words, while your contribution might slightly alter the argument's motif, it doesn't completely reroute it. Here's Burke:

Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the discussion had already begun long before any of them got there, so that no one present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar. Someone answers you; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you, to either the embarrassment or gratification of your opponent, depending upon the quality of your ally's assistance. However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress.

(qtd. in Porter 110-11)

In like manner, imagine you had arrived late and the above argument was already going on about, say, the outcome of a reality television show, as was another about Chinese trade policies, and another about the *Titanic's* structural design flaws. And yet a fourth one emerges about the drop in Monarch butterfly counts due to the flooding at Sierra Chincua and El Rosario, Mexico. Most likely you would have coursed your way through the different groups until you found either a conversation that you had enough familiarity with in which to

participate or you found a familiarity with one or more of the other people in the group so you felt comfortable standing in and listening as a spectator rather than a participant. In other words, you consider your knowledge of the subject matter or familiarity with the audience to decide whether you enter a particular conversation *and* whether you will contribute in shaping the information or consuming it.

In the end, you join the group discussing the structural flaws in the *Titanic's* design because you had seen the movie *Titanic*. You don't know anything about structural engineering or early twentieth-century maritime architecture, but you do know, through your having seen the movie, that the *Titanic* hit an iceberg and sank. Thus, the conversation might be "dumbed down" on account of your contribution, but that aside, the validity of the argument has been met in that the conclusion formed meets the logical requirements of the audience's premises about why the ship could no longer stay afloat. (Conversely, had it been the case that you did not know anything about the *Titanic* yet insisted on participating in the conversation anyway, your contribution would likely have thrown it so far off kilter that a new conversation and new premises would have developed instead.)

By the end of the night, the argument might take on many shapes with such contributing factors as intelligence, experience, education, and interest, all emitting from the minds of the contributors and relative to the foundation of the argument's development. Several things took place here: The audience was familiar with the argument; therefore the argument was able to be moved toward reaching a logical conclusion based on the premises contributed by the participants. The argument was plastic enough (as defined by Clay Spinuzzi

in Chapter One) for its audience to participate, and the contributors to this argument formed a discursive community (as defined by Artemeva's explanation of RGS in Chapter One).

The illustration above pertains to the relational qualities of (1) audience as bystander, (2) audience as contributor, and (3) the establishment of a discursive community. In the essence of simplicity, it shows how audience shapes an argument either through the language required in order for it to understand the argument or by participating in the argument, thereby shaping its structure. The scenario is one that many of us can identify with through experience. When engaging in discourse, we use our language capabilities—that is, our "tools"—to navigate our positions, either within an existing argument or through the course of selecting another one. We reach our *goals* through the *means* that we have available.

Similarly, audience interaction shapes textual communities. By textual communities, I am referring to the interaction readers have with a text through interpreting it *and* the medium that frames it. A reader is an audience to a text simultaneous with being an audience to a medium. Yet in both cases the reader, as audience, is also a critic of the text's structure, the text's medium, and the author who helps to construct its meaning through the act of writing (Porter 63). The second illustration, which is about the Japanese haiku, illustrates this point.

Traditional Japanese haiku poetry is designed as a single line of seventeen moras on a topic related to seasons.<sup>39</sup> Yet English-speaking writers typically form haikus in seventeen syllables weighted in three lines of five, seven, and five *syllables*, respectively. There is no set boundary for a topic that a haiku can address among English-speaking writers. Though both of these examples scratch only the surface of haiku poetry, each helps us understand how

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<sup>39</sup> A mora is a unit of sound used in linguistics that determines how much stress a syllable receives according to the weight it carries. In many Japanese dialects, moras are used in place of syllables.

audiences shape the language and structure of the texts through an expectation built on their common uses.

Consider for example the social networking site Twitter. The maximum length a message using Twitter can accommodate is 140 characters. Unless a sender goes through the extra effort to control for who can view a text, texts sent through Twitter are available for anyone to see. Given the limits set on text length and the public's access to it, the typical assumption is that a text sent using Twitter is not serious, confidential, or personal. So, when Sun Microsystems's chief executive officer Jonathan Schwartz resigned from his position by writing a resignation letter to his board members in haiku form and then posted it on Twitter, it drew attention from the general public so much so that major news networks reported on the *method* he used to resign in addition to his resignation.<sup>40</sup> As noted above, English-speaking audiences are flexible in their expectation of topics used in haiku writing, but resignation letters haven't typically been part of that realm. Schwartz's method violated the implied use and audience protocol of Twitter in delivering a resignation since typically it is received by a superior(s) on paper and written in the style of a letter. In Schwartz's case, the board members would likely have been the first to be notified, followed by the chairperson sending an internal message throughout the company and constructing an external message for the press. The possibility of ulterior motives by Schwartz aside, this illustration provides a "real life" scenario of an audience's reaction when a medium is mismatched with a text; textual language is infused with a level of intensity sometimes not as evident in traditional pairings. For instance, had

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<sup>40</sup> Schwartz's haiku resignation read:  
Financial crisis  
Stalled too many customers  
CEO no more.

Schwartz's resignation been written in the traditional method and delivered throughout in the traditional protocol, surprise might have occurred about the spontaneity of his announcement, but not its delivery. And it certainly would not have received the attention that it did.

These two illustrations demonstrate how these rhetorical genres are defined by similarities in audience, situation, delivery (packaging), and expectation. Often when discussing a genre, terms used to describe it are synonymous with "taxonomic structures" (as Carolyn Miller explains in "Genre as Social Action"), indicating that genres can be placed into neatly defined categories of use, as was the case with our expectations from the illustrations above. But, as Miller points out, genres change, evolve, and even decay (163). Depending on how a society determines its use for a genre, a genre's "organic" qualities reflect its situational use at the time. When society no longer needs to use a genre, the genre dies; similarly, the argument about the *Titanic* might die when someone who knows nothing about the *Titanic* enters the conversation. But when a haiku was used to resign from employment and it was delivered through Twitter, the genre of resignation letters had not met its demise, nor had the practice of haiku writing or Twitter's use as a medium. What did occur, though, was a change in each of their uses; they were altered to meet the expectation of the user (Schwartz). Seldom do audiences share an agreed upon understanding of a message's motives, especially when nontraditional content/medium pairings are in place. It is unlikely that in Schwartz's use of Twitter to resign, and doing so with a haiku, that all audiences interpreted the message in the same way. Some could have thought it to be a joke or that Schwartz was having a mental breakdown. Different understandings of the message were likely at play, and not all were consistent with the message that he was resigning.

Similar situations existed in the relationship between eighteenth-century readers and the genres with which they were presented. In the eighteenth century, as now, a genre is a social construct that rises out of rhetorical practice and develops through society's acceptance of its use as a tool for communicating. The reading practices of colonial readers suggest how audiences of broadsides, newspapers, and pamphlets might have shaped the rhetorical genres of those media through their reading habits. Using Chapter Three's focus on the design practices of publishers and printers, this chapter builds on that discussion by including audience interaction with those media outlets. Literacy levels, demographics, and socio-cultural expectations, combined with the technological and production aspects, helped to determine media's usability for the colonial reader as much as they do for the modern reader.

#### The Colonial American Reader

First, it should be noted that there are many theories about the role a "reader" plays in determining a text's usability. For this study, Porter's approach is my basis for understanding usability. Porter points out how there is little shared agreement among reader-response critics in how to determine *which* of several types of readers is the *key* reader in textual interpretation. For this reason he suggests that usability should be studied using a number of criteria, many of which are social constructs (64). To further complicate our understanding of the relationship between a reader and text, we also need to recognize that readers differ in the degree of involvement with a text depending on their levels of understanding it. To address this issue, this study uses claims made by Miller and Spinuzzi that discern reader involvement based on the amount of information a reader needs from a text. Miller and Spinuzzi agree that studying only the relationship between user and artifact reduces the understanding of the

significance of the bond a reader shares with the artifact, since bonding levels vary (C. Miller, "Genre" 155; Spinuzzi, "Grappling" 43).

Kenneth Lockridge's study comparing literacy rates among colonists living in New England also helps us to better understand readership practices in colonial America by suggesting an aggregate of the population who most likely could read based on social standing and geographical location.<sup>41</sup> Thus, the Lockridge study both combines and quantifies the claims about reader involvement made by Porter, Miller, and Spinuzzi. Those whom Lockridge identifies as possible readers might have shared a greater relationship with textual artifacts than other colonists, even if non-literate colonists were read the text of a broadside. Moreover, as I discuss below, New England colonists' exposure to textual artifacts was also much more widespread than in other colonies.

Finally, another contributing factor in colonial readership is how to account for colonists who couldn't read yet were privy to the material as "aural audiences," meaning that texts were read to them. A number of historical documents indicate that reading aloud to a group of people was common practice, especially when it involved information on current issues. "I returned to my lodging at eight o'clock, and the post being arrived, I found a numerous company at Slater's [tavern] reading the news. [Their] chit-chat and noise kept me awake three hours after I went to bed," wrote Alexander Hamilton after a night's stay in Portsmouth, New Hampshire (qtd. in Conroy 234). While evidence of aural audiences is abundant (see fig. 3.1 for

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<sup>41</sup> Lockridge's study defines literacy as signature literacy, i.e., literate colonists were those who signed their own names, as opposed to an "X," to wills. Signature literacy is the earliest evidence of a person's attempt at writing. Signature literacy does not imply that a person was otherwise illiterate. In addition, Carl F. Kaestle shows cases where eighteenth-century colonial women who were only "crudely" literate when it came to writing could nonetheless, read (Kintgen, Kroll, and Rose 111). {See the note on the Kintgen, Kroll, and Rose collection; the changes suggested there should leave this citation being under Kaestle's name, not those of the collection's editors.}

an illustration that recreates the possible image of the moment when General George Washington read aloud the Declaration of Independence), no studies have been able to pinpoint actual readership numbers, let alone aural audience statistics. Journals such as Hamilton's, a few tavern records, and very few remaining ledgers kept by publishers and printers are all the data available at this time, and the numbers from them fluctuate greatly. As a result, aural audiences have been intentionally left out of the discussion about audience in this chapter, but I will discuss in Chapter Five their capacity as the primary audience for the broadside (see section "The Dunlap Broadside: Packaging a New Genre").

Lockridge's study presupposes there to have been significantly lower literacy rates in the middle and southern colonies given that fewer colonists in these areas were Puritans, who placed a great emphasis on literacy for reading the Bible. There were also fewer urbanized areas and schools. Lockridge bases his assumption on analyses of Pennsylvania (a middle colony) and Virginia (a southern colony), saying that in both cases "literacy . . . was stagnant . . . and highly correlated with social status," but he also acknowledges that, like New England, both colonies "remained traditional in their attitudinal patterns" toward literacy (5). So the numbers discussed in this section would likely be lower if adjusted for the colonies as a whole, based on Lockridge's claims.

Furthermore, *Literacy in America: Historic Journey and Contemporary Solutions*, a comprehensive study of literacy rates in colonial America by Edward Gordon and Elaine Gordon, supports Lockridge's claim, yet also identifies other reasons why some colonies experienced less of a growth in literacy than occurred in New England. For example, in the middle colonies (Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania) there was a greater

diversity in ethnic groups which contributed to different languages and belief systems. Mobility barriers created by the terrain, and taxing systems to build schools weren't often put into place by communities, both of which contributed to lower literacy rates (51). Most education took place at home, in dame schools, or in denominational schools (Catholics and Quakers had a strong influence).<sup>42</sup> Charity schools established by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) also infiltrated the middle colonies at this time.

In colonies from Virginia southward, terrain issues and lack of population densities had even more of an impact on literacy. Instruction here was more likely received through apprenticeships or tutelage at denominational schools (for instance, of Anglican, Presbyterian, Moravian influence and German and Scots-Irish revival movements). SPG schools were working their way into the South as well (Gordon and Gordon 55-56). To dispel any suggested inference that the predominantly agrarian inhabitants of the middle and southern colonies were uneducated, consider two of the books published in Pennsylvania and Virginia in the mid-eighteenth century. In Pennsylvania, Cicero's *Cato Maior de Senectute* (1744) was translated into English and published at Benjamin Franklin's publishing house. In Virginia, *Typographia. An Ode on Printing* (1730), a book on the art of printing, was published, making it not only the first of its kind to address this subject, but because it was written in the form of a poem, it stands as the first poem published in Virginia.

With all that said, since most of the Framers of the Declaration were primarily from northern colonies, since most of the publishing houses were located in New England, and since, as it stands today, of the twenty-seven Dunlap broadside versions of the Declaration that have

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<sup>42</sup> Dame schools were an early version of a private school. Lessons were provided in a neighboring house by a female teacher.

been discovered, none has been found in southern states, Lockridge's study is most suitable for exploring whom publishers and printers might have viewed as their primary audiences between 1765 and 1776.

According to Lockridge, male illiteracy rates were nearly obliterated by the end of the eighteenth century and women's literacy had made strides toward improving. The reason for the discrepancy was that schooling was more commonly available to males, whereas females' education was still confined to the home and limited in scope. Largely Protestants whose Puritan background encouraged literacy values, for both genders the primary foundation of study was religion (4). As for self-reliance, literacy had a liberating quality because it opened doors to societies beyond the restricted world of aural cultures. The escape from ignorance and naivety is analogous to Plato's allegory of the cave; cave dwellers who had never been exposed to a reality outside the cave had a distorted and unrealistic view of reality since their information wasn't based on knowledge but on perception. Through literacy, colonists could communicate at a deeper level because words were more readily available to explain and express what they thought and felt. They could participate in discussions about abstract concepts such as equality, rights, patriotism, and secession. By lessening the "disunities," literate colonists could then focus on concepts that both applied and appealed to maintaining a self-sustaining society. For example, Lockridge argues, "literate colonists were more likely to identify with a new nation than were illiterates, whose identities still lay with their villages or regions" (30).

To reduce the literacy gap and increase social cohesion in communication as tensions between colonists and Parliament increased, committees of correspondence were organized in

several colonies beginning in Boston in 1772. These groups were also used to send information into the less populous countryside where information about colonial tensions had been infrequently received, and when it did travel the distance, both the sources and information often varied. Committees of correspondence infiltrated the areas with information that was consistent and credible, thereby reducing skepticism and stymieing the growth of rumors.

While both were exposed to thinking about a world outside their own, literate colonists were able to more easily define solutions for large-scale issues that reached beyond their communities than were illiterate colonists, and in so doing created an even greater division between the two groups than status and wealth had previously done. In other words, their voice through writing had become a tool, or a "defense of the indefensible" as George Orwell contended in "Politics and the English Language." While an internal concept of *liberation* might have occurred (alluding to an expanded reality), Lockridge concludes that the concept of *modernization* did not take hold, at least within his sample, which is ironic in that spikes in literacy rates typically are considered to be coincident with the creation of a more modern environment (e.g., Marshall McLuhan argues this case in *The Gutenberg Galaxy*; Elizabeth Eisenstein does so in *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*). To define modernization, Lockbridge frames the concept around charitable contributions and poses the question: Did colonists leave all of their estate to their families or did they think of the larger needs of society? If the latter was the case, then were their concerns directed to persons near to their families, to other persons within their communities, or to causes more global in scope? (33). In fact, not only was modernization non-evident, but from the middle of the seventeenth century to the end of the eighteenth century, charitable contributions actually declined (Table 4.1) *and*

there was little difference between literates and illiterates in their giving when income was removed as a factor (Table 4.2). To further define the similarities between the two groups, both gave more money to charities to help the poor and religious groups than to charities furthering education or enhancement of their communities (Table 4.3).

As it turns out, what appears to be going on within the mindset of the colonists is that they viewed the liberating qualities of literacy primarily as a functioning agent. For example, as stated above, it allowed for conversation on deep-seated issues regarding religion, politics and economics, and it was also required to progress in occupations since many colonists depended upon some aspect of trade for a living. Recordkeeping and accounting practices written on paper proved to be more accurate than relying on memory. While there were sure to be other reasons for learning to read and write, the tables indicate that colonial communities—especially those with a Puritan outlook—tended to have within their framework a unified, cohesive bond where individuals identified themselves as part of a group rather than by the concept of "self." Today we speak of nationhood and statehood; what I am suggesting here is that colonial communities operated under a similar value system but on a micro level. So, taking place within the inner workings of the colonial mindset is what Kurt Ritter calls the building of a "community of minds" because it was responsible for "shaping a national self-consciousness," and in the end a "national ethos" (25-26).

Table 4.1. Charitable Contributions Overall

	Gift to a Person within Village Connected with the Family (Servants)	Gifts to a Person within the Village not Connected with the Family (Ministers)	Gifts to a cause within the Village (The Poor, Religion, Education)	Gifts to a Cause Outside the Village (The Poor, Religion, Education)
Gifts*	42	211	139	23
1650-1715	10%	49%	35%	6%
n=414 gifts				
Gifts*	28	39	86	5
1758-1795	17%	39%	86%	5%
n=158 gifts				

\* Literates and Non-literates Combined

Source: Kenneth A. Lockridge, *Literacy in Colonial America* (34).

Table 4.2. Charitable Contribution Comparison by Class

	Gift to a Person within Village Connected with the Family (Servants)	Gifts to a Person within the Village not Connected with the Family (Ministers)	Gifts to a cause within the Village (The Poor, Religion, Education)	Gifts to a Cause Outside the Village (The Poor, Religion, Education)
Gifts by literates	23	32	75	5
1758-95	17%	24%	55%	4%
n=135				
Gifts by Illiterates	5	7	11	0
1758-95	20%	30%	50%	0
n=23 gifts				

Source: Kenneth A. Lockridge, *Literacy in Colonial America* by (35).

Table 4.3. Distribution of Charitable Contributions

	Gifts to the Poor	Gifts to Religion, Ministries	Gifts to Education	Gifts to Municipalities
Gifts	104	283	48	4
1650-1715	23.7%	64.5%	10.9%	0.9%
n=439*				
Gifts	54	91	17	2
1758-95	32.9%	55.5%	10.4%	1.2%
n=164*				

\*Note: gifts that didn't fall under the classifications in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 are measurable in this system which is why there is a variation in numbers.

Source: Kenneth A. Lockridge, *Literacy in Colonial America* by (36).

As testimony to this re-evaluation of identity, a decadal study on word trends in the *Philadelphia Gazette* by David Newman and Sharon Block shows in the 1760s and 1770s a steep increase in articles that include the words "people," "power," "public," and "united," simultaneous with a decrease in advertisements for imported fabrics, indicating a preference for homespun fabric over more luxury imports, i.e., self-reliance (figs. 4.1 and 4.2).<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, summarizing a 1779 article in *United States Magazine*, a Philadelphia-based periodical, Ritter writes, "The British themselves acknowledged 'that the rebels . . . had some damn'd good writers on their side of the question'" (26).

So, who were these "damn'd good writers?" And how were they—with their worn out typefaces and presses, shortage of paper and ink, and lack of ability to support themselves as writers by profession so were tradesmen and farmers by day/writers by night, so to speak—able to carry more influence than a country that had the strongest military and literary might of all western nations at the time? The following section explores those writers and their methods of influence.

### Rhetorical Influences of Texts

"Who shall write the history of the American Revolution? Who can write it? Who will ever be able to write it?" John Adams considered these questions in a letter dated 1815 to his friend and fellow signer of the Declaration Thomas McKean (171). Though written nearly two hundred years ago, his concerns continue to resonate among scholars today. While there is no shortage of books and articles hitting the market each year that contribute to providing a better

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<sup>43</sup> Also see Richard L. Merritt, "The Emergence of American Nationalism: A Quantitative Approach."

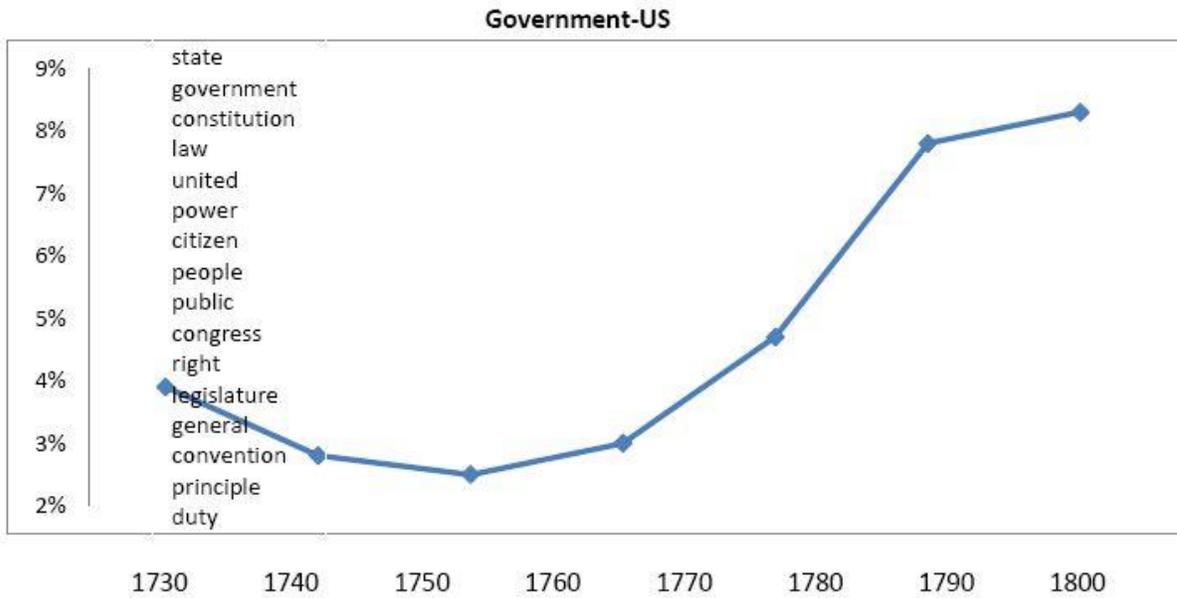


Fig. 4.1. Colonial concept of nationalism increases throughout the American Revolution. (Source: “Probabilistic Topic Decomposition of an Eighteenth-Century American Newspaper” by David Newman and Sharon Block.)

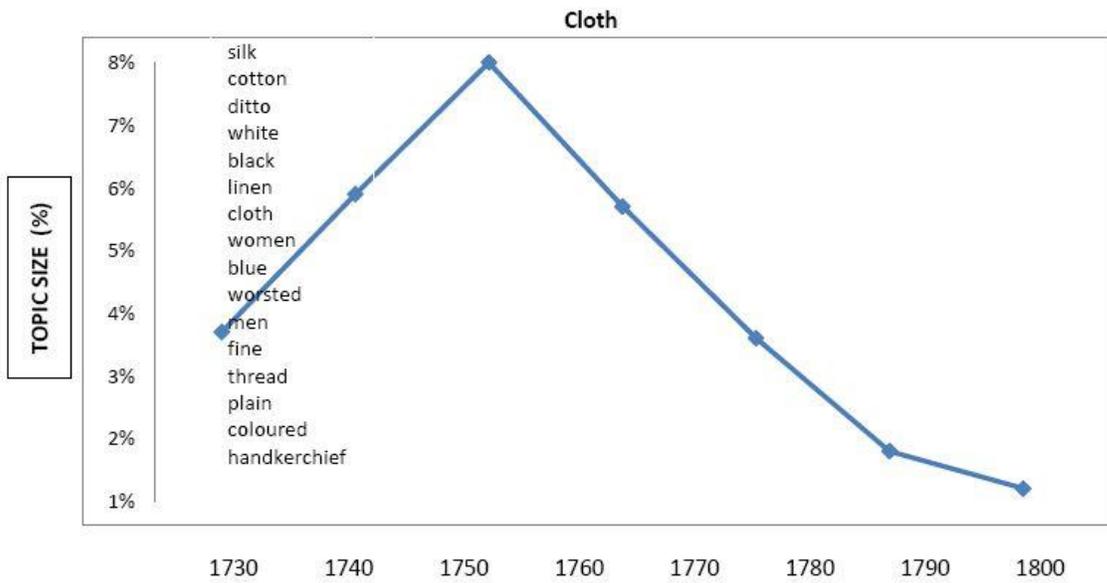


Fig. 4.2. Fashions are less influenced by Britain and Europe and more on homespun styles. (Source: “Probabilistic Topic Decomposition of an Eighteenth-Century American Newspaper” by David Newman and Sharon Block.)

insight, equally there is little consistency in approaches toward explaining the American Revolution, which is why many scholars continue to pore over the annals of antiquated documents looking for new nuggets of information that might contribute toward making even greater sense of it all.

Yet, while in the act of researching the American Revolution, the language early writers employed while writing their journals, governmental acts, newspaper articles, and so on—now considered to be key links in understanding America's development—is "at once so powerful and protean" in its uses of "figures, tropes, and rhetorical flourishes" that historians and scholars should also study the language *in and of itself* while attempting to answer Adams's questions. For it was the writers of this period, Adams included, who held within their might the "challenge of reconstructing any historical reality beyond the discourse itself" (Breen and Hall 1413).

As T.H. Breen and Timothy Hall point out, "The historical setting of the eighteenth-century British Empire confronted its theorists with a crisis of interpretation, one in which competing ways of understanding the individual self loomed large" (1414). Consider, for example, that writers of ephemeral material often addressed the reader specifically. Such was the finding of David Machin and Sarah Niblock when they studied the writing practices of newspaper journalists. "Rather than simply as readers," through the skills of the writer, readers were considered to be actual consumers of the printed word in that they purchased texts that supported their own way of thinking, just as today readers often purchase texts that support their opinions (257-58). Furthermore, these "consumers" were from several merging classes and from many diverse groups. For their ideas to build momentum, American political writers

faced the challenge of finding a language that had similar underlying concepts in such weighty questions as to whom one's political allegiance belonged and whether one could happily remain a British subject after years of the two countries being at odds with each other.<sup>44</sup>

As late as 1775, many colonists—including those who later fought for independence—considered themselves British subjects and wanted to remain as such.<sup>45</sup> Yet the diversity of material being published forced readers to consider such weighty topics as "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," most likely non-issues of consideration for some, if not many, loyal subjects. To openly discuss such ideas could be considered seditious, with punishment resulting in death. In Chapters Two and Three I discussed recurring themes used by political writers used during this period, but the demand for information was undoubtedly stronger at the onset of the 1760s and throughout the signing of the Declaration than at any other time beforehand. Political writers drove thirsts for information by wielding their rhetorical powers, in the words of Breen and Hall, to "fire the imagination with competing visions of the social worlds that might be created from a welter of economic and social change" (1413). It was, for the most part, the textual production of these writers of broadsides, newspapers, and pamphlets that colonists turned to in order to understand the political unfolding of events. These words constructed the colonists' responses accordingly. Thus, a writer's success in promoting his opinions lay in his ability to communicate effectively with his audience. For it was the audience alone who dictated his success.

A writer's popularity was contingent upon his ability to give audiences the information

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<sup>44</sup> This approach to writing for a diverse audience foreshadows Chapter 5, where I discuss Jefferson's use of language when writing the *Declaration*.

<sup>45</sup> See Chapter 2.

they required and in a rhetorical style they accepted. Pamphlets, for example, circulated among readers who were impressed by the language and writing style of the author, much like book sharing today. With colonial pamphlet writers, however, their objective for writing was less to make a profit and more to communicate ideas.<sup>46</sup> The pamphlet was the best approach available for achieving this goal (Bonwick 364).

Consider *Common Sense*, for example. Many other writers had written about the issues Thomas Paine discussed in this pamphlet, but the exigency of Paine's writing style made the words appear as though an individual was "running out of time" to rally behind the cause for independence. And, those who didn't support it would surely die, according to newspapers that reprinted the infamous "Join or Die" snake cartoon.<sup>47</sup>

In addition, Breen and Hall reference an anonymous writer whose language also implied that the state of communities would succumb to "Confusion, and every Evil Work" such as "unlawful Meetings, Routs, Riots, perpetual Quarrels among Friends, and Neighbours, continual Insults, and Bullying" (1411). So in Paine's approach, readers who had been skeptical of declaring independence suddenly found themselves embracing it (Maier 32); and in Breen and Hall's example, chaos would have occurred if independence were not pursued, implying the picturesque Puritanical lifestyle would no longer exist. In both accounts many colonists realized independence was inevitable but needed stronger language to convince them of their decision than the language expressed by congressional delegates. Paine basically left his readers with no

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<sup>46</sup> See Chapter 3 for a discussion on colonial pamphlet writers.

<sup>47</sup> The "Join or Die" snake cartoon originated in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1754 and was specifically devised for the Albany Plan of Union. In 1765, the cartoon reemerged. One of its uses was to unite colonies against the British. Newspapers in Massachusetts, New York, South Carolina, and Virginia were some of those that reprinted the cartoon. Isaiah Thomas reprinted it in his newspaper, the *Massachusetts Spy*, with an engraving in the masthead by Paul Revere.

alternatives than to support a war for independence.

The driving desire to acquire more information was likely the reason for colonists' shifts from reading traditional literary works found in books to the ephemera that presented the hot-button items of the day. Philadelphia printer David Hall, who typically let his suppliers choose books to send to his bookshop for resale, wrote to one supplier that "I now point out to you what Books you are not to send me for the future, without my particular order for so doing," including a list of thirty-five titles. "As to the other Books . . . you may send me an Assortment of them as you please . . . but send nothing that is bulky" (qtd. in Parker 31). If the shifts in book advertisements found in the study of the *Philadelphia Gazette* by Newman and Block are an indicator, then we know the reason that Hall's difficulty in clearing his bookracks was that, rather than whiling away time in cumbersome novels, colonists were now "see[ing] the importance of such inexpensive, locally-produced publications" (764). And though these "locally-produced publications" overlapped in ideas, thoughts, and opinions, they operated their discourse within different boundaries so that readers could choose the degree to which they wanted to participate, ranging from an aural audience at the reading of a broadside about a recent act of Congress or restriction put into place by Parliament, to one who peruses newspapers to acquire information about a variety of issues. In the end, however, as Peter Parker points out, "the colonial printer . . . printed what his customers needed or knew" (37).

The underlying point is that textual artifacts derive their rhetorical power from social culture. Texts not only provide meaning to social circumstances, but also are interpreted by the social circumstances in which they were read. Eighteenth-century textual artifacts, for example, provide historians with clues as to how colonists situated themselves within the larger

community. Through colonists' demand to replace the traditional customs of reader/author relationships with ones that Porter describe as being more "dialogical," meaning the discourse is more interactive between the reader and author, the roles the two have when reading books are blurred to the point of dissolution when reading ephemera (81).

A text's interpretation is not only the consequence of the design practices of printers and publishers, but also of the demographics of the audience (education, experience, intelligence, and literacy), and the prescribed "taxonomic structures" that societies place on the medium at any given time. The reading practices of colonial readers suggest how interpretations of broadsides, newspapers, and pamphlets might have shaped the rhetorical uses of those media through their reading habits and customary pairings of texts with select media. That is, content was interpreted, in part, by the package (i.e., medium) delivering it. Interpretation was based on common uses for the medium and such factors as the socio-economic conditions that surrounded it as much as literacy levels.

## Chapter Five:

### America's First Utterance: The Declaration of Independence's Emergence as a Genre

*A nation was born in a day—*

*“How many ages hence*

*“Shall this, their lofty scene, be acted o’er*

*“In states unborn, and accents yet unknown?”*

*It will be acted o’er, fellow-citizens, but it can never be repeated. It stands, and must for ever stand, alone, a beacon on the summit of the mountain, to which all the inhabitants of the earth may turn their eyes for a genial and saving light till time shall be lost in eternity, and this globe itself dissolve, nor leave a wreck behind. It stands for ever, a light of admonition to the rulers of men, a light of salvation and redemption to the oppressed. So long as this planet shall be inhabited by human beings, so long as man shall be of social nature, so long as government shall be necessary to the great moral purposes of society, and so long as it shall be abused to the purposes of oppression, so long shall this Declaration hold out to the sovereign and to the subject the extent and the boundaries of their respective rights and duties, founded in the laws of nature, and of nature’s God.*

*--John Quincy Adams, 1821.*

Chapter One focuses on establishing the originality of this study. Chapter Two contextualizes the period leading up to the writing of the Declaration by defining the relationship between colonial America and Great Britain. Chapter Three illustrates the uses of colonial American and English textual genres, and provides an understanding of how England's Stamp Act impacted the livelihoods of colonial printers and publishers. And in Chapter Four, audience is the focal point. Here, textual media are looked at to determine how consumers perceived and utilized genres within particular discursive communities. Combined, these chapters help us to see how the causal relationship for the birth of the Declaration as establishing a genre might be the result of an ambiguous understanding of its intent. This

chapter explores that possibility.<sup>48</sup>

Building on the narrative overview (below) that shows how a declaration of independence came to be written, the next section, "Drafting a Genre for Independence," explores Jefferson's use of language and intertextuality to achieve Congress's intentions. Following the motivation for its existence and exploring early drafts leading up to its inception, the section "The Dunlap Broadside: Packaging a New Genre" continues with the editorial process and also suggests an urgency taking place to expedite the document's completion for quick distribution. Last, in "Audience's Perception of a New Genre," the unlikely pairing of secession language and the broadside are explored for their combined ability to create a greater public awareness than if a traditional pairing had been used.

#### Overview

After a week's journey from his home in the outskirts of Charlottesville, Virginia, Thomas Jefferson arrived by horseback in Philadelphia on May 13, 1776. At thirty-three years old, he was the youngest delegate to the Second Continental Congress. Until this trip, Jefferson had missed months of congressional meetings because of the deaths of one of his children and his mother. During the interim, a movement for independence had gained noticeable momentum.

Following King George III's rejection of the colonists' attempt to avoid a revolution and make amends with England through the Olive Branch Petition in the summer of 1775, George countered by declaring that thirteen of his colonies were in a state of rebellion. In a letter to Lord Sandwich on July 1, 1775, he wrote: "I am of the opinion that when once these rebels have

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<sup>48</sup> The themes of each chapter are loosely modeled after Jennifer J. Connor's five-step method for researching historical medical documents, as noted in "Medical Text and Historical Context: Research Issues and Methods in History and Technical Communication."

felt a smart blow, they will submit; and no situation can ever change my fixed resolution, either to bring the colonies to due obedience to the legislature of the mother country or to cast them off" (United States, Library of Congress). By the end of the year, he ordered all ports in the colonies closed to trade.

Cutting off trade was only the beginning of how George had planned to "put a Speedy end to these disorders" (United States, Library of Congress, "To Lord Sandwich"). "By the most decisive exertions" the towns of Bristol, Rhode Island, and Falmouth, Massachusetts (now Portland, Maine), were also destroyed after the colonists refused to supply goods to British warships (United States, Library of Congress, "To Lord Sandwich"). As a result of having trade lines cut and farms, businesses, and homes burned, the high unemployment rates that ensued forced many families to seek public assistance for food and firewood. Or if one lived in Pennsylvania, Quaker-run Bettering Houses were available at the cost of being separated by gender and agreeing to practice Quaker rules.

And now the latest news to arrive from England reached Philadelphia on May 6, the day Jefferson set out for his trip: the king was gearing up to send several thousand Hessian troops to strengthen British military action against the colonists. Until *Common Sense* was published in January 1776, four months before Jefferson left for Philadelphia, colonists often considered their fellow brethren of neighboring colonies to be foreigners if they had different accents and practiced different customs. Paine's pamphlet led to an increase of support for cohesiveness in that area. *Common Sense* redirected a lot of the micro-level "othering" that had taken place within the colonies by aiming perceived differences more legitimately at the threats of invasion

from attackers of foreign soils abroad.<sup>49</sup> Thus, England's use of its European allies, states William Hogeland, "could make Americans feel ill with horror, and the thought of the intrusion could make people from Massachusetts and . . . Pennsylvania suddenly see one another as comrades" (37). Paine's pamphlet created a vocabulary for the colonial mindset at the time by giving colonists a way of talking about it. Through phrases such as "We have the power to begin the world over again," colonists bonded and *Common Sense* reached unparalleled highs in press runs and sales.

On May 17, four days after Jefferson's arrival in Philadelphia, Congress declared the day to be a "day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer" for all the colonies, and had printed the notice in newspapers. To participate was voluntary, but "Christians of all denominations [were encouraged] to assemble for public worship and abstain from servile labour on the said day" (United, *Journals*). In Philadelphia, as colonists who participated in the congressional pronouncement left the church, they were approached by a group of signature gatherers for a petition to encourage Congress to move forward on declaring independence.

Earlier in May, coffeehouses, taverns, and boarding houses were targeted by other independence lobbyists, such as John Adams, Samuel Adams, Richard Henry Lee, and Thomas McKean, who also looked to garner support to force Congress to move forward. By June 7, during a congressional meeting in the Philadelphia State House, Lee, a Virginia delegate, proposed a motion for resolution for independence after the Virginia convention had given him permission to take such action. John Adams, a Massachusetts delegate, seconded the motion,

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<sup>49</sup> As explained by Sara Mills in *Discourse: The New Critical Idiom*. Mills defines *othering* as "The process whereby the inhabitants of colonised countries are represented in negative and degrading ways and often generalized about as if they were all the same" (146),

having been given permission to do so from his colony. Finally, endorsements for independence began to trickle in, but there were still not enough to ensure a successful vote to declare the colonies free of British rule. Delegates who were uncertain of how their colonies would have them vote on a resolution that claimed the colonies to be "absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved," as the Declaration did, asked for the vote to be postponed. These provinces needed to seek instruction from their conventions back home on how to respond. On June 10, Congress authorized an extension on casting a vote until July 2. Simultaneously, it appointed five delegates to begin drafting a proposed document to be sent to England announcing Congress's decision. Jefferson was one of the appointees.

As is often the case within the organizational culture of a committee today that has been assigned a project and date to complete it, each member of the Committee of Five, as they are known today, was assigned a special task. Jefferson's task was to write the first draft, while the full committee would share in editing the document. They were given a June 28 deadline to have a copy ready for review by Congress. On July 2, delegates approved Lee's resolution for independence and then set about reviewing the committee's draft that stated Congress's purpose for dissolution. On July 4 the draft was edited for the last time and then was sent to printer John Dunlap to make copies for distribution. During the interim day Adams, reflecting on the historic significance of the vote that had taken place the day before, wrote to his wife, Abigail:

The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epocha, in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding

generations, as the great Anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the day of deliverance by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, shews, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations, from one end of the continent to the other, from this time forward forever. (J. Adams, "To Abigail")

Before writing the Declaration, Jefferson and others had conceptualized an existence where government's role was reduced and the role of the people increased, but those considerations were pondered only by him and a handful of other intellectuals who shared a vision of building a society that emphasized moral capital and social mobility. Today they are known as Enlightenment thinkers. A contemporary modification of Immanuel Kant's classic definition that an Enlightenment occurs when man is released "from his self-incurred tutelage" is by Michel Foucault (Foucault). Foucault states that Kant described the Enlightenment as the moment when "humanity is going to put its own reason to use, without subjecting itself to any authority," which, Foucault claims, isn't completely accurate. Had it been so, humanity would be more mature in its decision making than it is; humans would demonstrate more responsibility for their own actions within their present situation and less on chasing quests for universal truths that might or may not exist (Rabinow 38).<sup>50</sup> As for Jefferson and many of the Founding Fathers, they, like Kant, adhered to a philosophy that human beings, for the most part, are good. And since humans are good, they will be good and do good things if given the opportunity to act on their own behalf. Some others at the time, including Alexander Hamilton, were less persuaded by this particular concept of Enlightenment thought. Taking the opposite

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<sup>50</sup> See Foucault's lecture "What is Enlightenment?" (Berkeley, 1983).

approach, they leaned more toward how Foucault describes humanity as being. They believed humans are essentially fallible and must be controlled through laws that limit their actions. At the time that writing a declaration was contemplated, the gentry was the primary participant in both of these intellectual movements. The opinions of the rest of the population weren't as clear.

Edward Bernays, a pioneer in the public relations industry and former member of the Committee on Public Information (CPI) during World War I, describes the practice used to gain support from a public who otherwise stands opposed or indifferent as being the "engineering of consent."<sup>51</sup> The practice of engineering consent, he claims, is the essence of what makes the concept of democracy work. (qtd. in Chomsky 24). In and of itself, the term *democracy*, like *Enlightenment*, is complicated and has no universal meaning but has several different meanings that depend on the situation and also who is defining it. Thus, when politicians and governmental officials whose success, to some extent, is measured by their ability to persuade, can tap into the ideologies of a public by connecting with it in like-mindedness, these persuaders of reason are then better able to influence public opinion, or more precisely, turn the public's ideological assumptions into what Norman Fairclough describes as the feeling of common sense (64). As the Continental Congress aimed to do when it worked to convince colonists of the need for independence, to govern people's ideologies is key to being able to control by consent since the power of persuasion is embedded in nothing other than discourse itself (Fairclough 28, 61). In the 1920s Walter Lippmann coined the name "the bewildered herd" for all people who were not in the small, elite circle of decision makers. While the phrase is a

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<sup>51</sup> An approach used by Woodrow Wilson to generate public enthusiasm for war with Germany, CPI flooded media with government-issued propaganda.

play on words that likens the John Q. Public majority to a herd of scared cattle who will run in many directions unless otherwise controlled, Lippmann saw the power that the people outside the circle were capable of having should they, like cattle, band together and move in the same direction.<sup>52</sup> For the Second Continental Congress, even more than today, there wasn't a system in place to poll 2.5 million people to determine their opinions, so the Bernays concept carries weight with how the Congress proceeded. Strategically, it worked from the feedback of each colony's delegates to align itself with a position that would have the majority of support from the people it would represent. It would engineer consent so as not to bewilder the herd and have them form a stampede. Tailoring those ideologies to fit, neatly packaged, into a unified discursive community was Jefferson.

#### Drafting a Genre for Independence

Just as we shape our discourse to meet the needs of audiences today, Jefferson, too, did the same when drafting the Declaration of Independence. The Declaration isn't the only sign of his ability to write with an audience in mind. That ability is visible in the plethora of letters he exchanged before the Declaration and continued to exchange right up until his death in 1826. For example, when writing to his friend John Adams in the final years of their lives, Jefferson's letters take on a negative mood, which matched the mood of the very Puritan and Calvinist Adams most of the time. Yet when writing to James Madison, another lifelong friend, his letters were upbeat and positive, resembling Madison's own optimistic personality. But to write on

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<sup>52</sup> To illustrate, James A. Secord describes a situation where, in 1835, W & R Chambers printed an inexpensive series of books called the People's Editions. One of its early publications, *The Constitution of Man Considered in Relation to External Objects* (1835), drew a following so vast in number that phrenologist William Scott grew concerned the book would "penetrate into working-class homes" where "clerks and factory operatives faced with an insufficient provision of churches, would slide down the slippery slope that led to atheism" (69-74). To keep the "bewildered herd" from forming a stampede away from the church, religious tracts and other publications were printed to counter the claims made in *Constitution*.

behalf of and for 2.5 million people whose cultures, customs, beliefs, and ideologies varied significantly, this magnitude of assignment was far more challenging.<sup>53</sup>

For this reason, very little of the language in the Declaration is Jefferson's own words. Those that are his are buried by the more popularly espoused passages that were lifted from material commonly cited by other authors or read by colonists in original contexts. And with such a diverse population, the plethora of opinions being published in newspapers and pamphlets at the time was astounding. Consequently, as Donald Lutz points out, to the colonial reader the Declaration represented a "rhetorical balancing of contending views. . . . Few [colonists] saw any conflict between what they read in Locke and what they read in the Bible when it came to the erection and operation of civil societies" (41, 52). Most every segment of the American population at the time could find language in the Declaration with which they agreed or at least had previously been exposed to in other content and contexts. For example, through comparable uses of terms, language, and thought, historians have found a wide range of sources Jefferson likely used, some of which are:

- The Constitution of Virginia – written by Jefferson in May-June 1776. Many historians believe this document was influenced by *Thoughts on Government*, written and published by John Adams in the spring of 1776, which emphasizes separation of powers;

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<sup>53</sup> As described by Adams in a letter to Hezekiah Niles, Feb. 13, 1818: "The colonies had grown up under constitutions of government so different, there was so great a variety of religions, they were composed of so many different nations, their customs, manners, and habits had so little resemblance, and their intercourse had been so rare, and their knowledge of each other so imperfect, that to unite them in the same principles in theory and the same system of action, was certainly a very difficult enterprise" ("Adams Quotations").

- Other state constitutions and resolves—24 of the 28 charges against the king are taken from these documents;
- “Declaration of Rights,” written by George Mason in and adopted by the Virginia Convention in June of 1776; Mason uses terms such as “all men are born equally free and independent,” and “all men have inherent rights”;
- English Declaration of Rights (1689) announcing the charges against James II;
- *Common Sense*, by Thomas Paine;
- Scottish Enlightenment thought, presenting a moral-sense philosophy;
- *Second Treatise on Government* (from *Two Treatises on Government*), by John Locke (1690); here Locke uses the phrase “life, liberty, and pursuit of property” (Jefferson changes the last word to “happiness”).

As a consequence of the likelihood of Jefferson's borrowing from other texts, it stands to reason that views of the Declaration being developed entirely on Lockean principles or the Scottish Enlightenment are unfounded.<sup>54</sup> While some of the language Jefferson used sounded a lot like Locke's, and some of the ideas resemble the ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment, they

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<sup>54</sup> Lockean principles support social contract theory. A social contract, as defined by Locke, is a set of laws by which a body of people agree to be governed. So long as social order is maintained, the contract stands valid. But should the social order be upset, it is the right of the people to dissolve its allegiance to its own sovereign government and cloak themselves under the ruling power of another. For example, in *Two Treatises on Government* Locke attacked Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha* (1680) for claiming that the authority monarchies had was divinely inspired (first treatise). In the second treatise Locke defended the practice of an individual being governed by the “law of nature” and not a monarchy. Instead of people forcibly adhering to a ruler, they should be able to adhere, by choice, to a civil government.

Regarding the Scottish Enlightenment, James Herrick in *The History and Theory of Rhetoric: An Introduction* (3rd ed.) points out that Scottish Enlightenment thought (e.g., works by Adam Smith, Hugh Blair, and George Campbell) was brand new to America at this time and was introduced to replace Ciceronian practices of rhetoric that were common up until this time. But what should also be mentioned here is that Blair and others often cited classical Greek and Roman texts as justifiable examples of styles from which to argue, with the caveat being that the appropriateness of using classical models depends on the circumstance.

did so for a reason: Locke's concepts and language were already both familiar and accepted among the American colonists at the time, and Scottish Enlightenment theorists were used in order to, as Lutz states, "make the document acceptable to more forward-looking Americans while not essentially changing anything that was of value to the many more traditionally inclined Americans" (45). If it is true that "you persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his" (Burke, *Rhetoric* 55), then it could only have been natural for Jefferson to combine the language and thought of the individual groups existing in America at the time and present them as a *unified* ("We hold these truths . . ."), *singular* ("necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another . . .") *voice* ("Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our Brittish [*sic*] brethren. . . . They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity").<sup>55</sup> More bluntly put: through the persuasive power of language, humanity, not unlike the colonists, buys into "vapid, empty concepts like Americanism. Who can be against that? Or harmony. Who can be against that?" Or more recently, "the Persian Gulf War, Support our troops. Or yellow ribbons," or declaring war on terror (Chomsky 20).

It is easily understood why Jefferson wanted to use his rhetorical abilities to create a document that claimed it had the support of the people it represented—much like how in some academic papers, as Peter Vanderberg explains, "[a]uthors pay homage to distant points in the intertext while assiduously papering over the most immediate of influences" (537). However,

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<sup>55</sup> The synthesized concept of sharing a "unified singular voice" builds on the discussion in Chapter 4 about the colonists replacing self identities with a collective identity themselves. As Bhikhu Parekh describes, "Images crystallise and offer highly condensed and idealised accounts for what the community takes to be its ideals, values and organising principles, and represent its identity and distinctive contribution to the world" ("Defining National Identity in a Multicultural Society"). For a recent example of how a people "brands" itself, Peru is considering replacing the language in the first stanza of its national anthem that alludes to oppression and alienation, written in 1821, with a later stanza that better represents the Peru of today.

the irony behind his language, both borrowed and original, is that the document's initial demonstrable support Declaration (i.e., approval by Congress) in place at the time he was writing the was weak. First, very few people outside of Congress knew that the Declaration was being written. And as for the delegates, whose job it was to represent public opinion, in a meeting held by the committee of the whole on July 1, only nine out of thirteen delegations in a test-vote favored independence. Though it wasn't unanimous, as everyone could see, independence was still the favored opinion. While a vote in favor of independence was imminent, it was more important that the vote be unanimous. Realizing the gravity of the situation, South Carolina delegate Edward Rutledge proposed that Congress's vote be postponed until the following day so that delegates would have a chance to sleep on it.

Of the colonial white population as a whole, about 50 percent were non-English and included, among others, Scots-Irish, Germans, and Moravians. In addition, there were such competing personalities as Whigs, rationalists, religious groups, and Enlightenment thinkers. Since the beginning of the eighteenth century, the American population was doubling every twenty-five years. One source of the increase was from immigrants coming to America to escape religious or other types of persecution. Retailers, tradesmen, and journeymen also joined the exodus, seeing America as a way to profit by less competition and fewer laws restricting their practices or crafts. Printers and publishers, for example, enjoyed the ability to freely print material based on desire or demand without having to get governmental approval for their material before printing it.<sup>56</sup> Additionally, England's shipments of convicted felons to

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<sup>56</sup> From the time of the Licensing Act of 1662, English presses had varying degrees of constraint placed on their freedom. During George III's reign, authors' works were highly scrutinized for their content and opinion. In

America and the African slave trade also drove the influx.<sup>57</sup>

While this chapter's aim, in part, is to demonstrate how the language used to write the Declaration represented the colonial American landscape, it is important to understand that for some groups the textual decisions made when writing it had consequences beyond rights and freedom, as discourse itself is capable of colonization through the social orders it creates (Fairclough 163). Edward Said describes colonial discursive structures (the Declaration, for example) as continuing to colonize some groups of people by making dehumanizing generalities about them within colonial texts, even when an author's intention is otherwise (Mills 94-115). In the Declaration's case, it wasn't what the document stated, but what it didn't state. Post-colonial discourse theorists, such as Said, try to understand discourse through the lens of psychoanalytical theory more than through the use of discourse theory. So the discursive decisions that the Founding Fathers had in place before formatting a text underlies a more comprehensive view of the social, economic, and political understanding of which a text (the Declaration) can be seen as being more a product than a process (Mills 94-96; Fairclough 20). The African population, to highlight one commonly referred to group who didn't benefit from

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1765, with *Entick v. Carrington*, grounds for libel charges improved in the favor of the press, but English presses were still subject to other constraints, such as a stamp tax, which wasn't lifted until 1855.

<sup>57</sup> In order to reduce its rapidly growing crime rate and to cut the cost of building more jails, Britain sent many criminals into exile to live in the New World. From the passage of the Transportation Act in 1718 until 1775, many convicts were transported from Britain to America. Criminals were often given two choices: execution or exile. If the latter was chosen, the criminal had to raise the money to fund the transportation fees, which was another savings to Britain. At first, Colonists welcomed the criminals because they were seen as cheap labor, but when their population began to be seen as being out of control, the Colonists saw that America was being used as Britain's "dumping ground." In retaliation, Franklin crafted a cartoon of a rattlesnake that he printed in a 1751 edition of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, along with a caption saying how Colonists should rid itself of its snakes by sending them to Britain. Like Miles A. Kimball's example of the effectiveness of the color-coded map representing London's poverty rates in "London Through Rose-Colored Graphics. . .," the rhetorical power of this snake cartoon was so effective in rallying Colonists' opposition that it would be seen twice again later (1754 and 1765) but in segmented form, which implied the Colonies must band together or die under English tyranny (hence, the caption: "Join or Die"). Today the un-segmented snake of 1751 is seen on the 1775 Gadsden flag, which signifies the unification of America and bears the motto "Don't Tread on Me."

the writing of the Declaration, was the only racial group in the colonies whose subjugation didn't stem from any doing of its own—like convicted felons—but because the group's black skin signified that Africans were considered chattel and relegated to servitude. It wasn't until the US Constitution was written in 1787 that, in a North-South compromise, America began to consider slaves, many of whom were Africans, as Americans. Even then the total number counted towards representation of slaves in each state was limited in count to three fifths of the states' total number of slaves, and the reasoning behind including them to begin with was for the purposes of representation for the state as a whole, not of the enslaved, and for taxes.

With the increase of cash crops and a shortage of manpower, African slaves became a vital part of the economy, especially for the southern states. Like convicted felons, Africans were cheap labor. Estimates show that by the mid-eighteenth century, African slaves numbered about 650,000 (Rawley).<sup>58</sup> By the 1770s, many of the Founding Fathers, including Jefferson, owned slaves but also understood the inhumanity in its practice.<sup>59</sup> The Fathers argued that they inherited the problem from their ancestors and were at odds in how best to eliminate it. Though Jefferson made an attempt to abolish slavery when drafting the Declaration, Congress removed the language to do so for several reasons, including Georgia's and South Carolina's refusing to vote for independence if the Declaration included any language condemning

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<sup>58</sup> The 1790 U.S. Census, which is the first official census to take place, records there being 697,681 black slaves out of a total of 757,208 total black population and a grand total of 3,929,214 U.S. population, signifying that approximately 19 percent of the population was black, and of that number, 7.9 percent were free blacks. Yet like today, Jefferson, who was the first official census taker, believed there to be a gross undercount in those figures.

<sup>59</sup> For Jefferson's argument against slavery, read *Notes on the State of Virginia* (written in 1781 and published in 1784).

slavery.<sup>60</sup> Had the language remained as part of the official document, it is highly likely that the Declaration would have lost a lot of its authority. In support for this belief, historians Carl Becker and Pauline Maier (as did Franklin before them) say that freeing slaves should not be written into a declaration for independence because it weakened the rhetorical power of the argument for secession by convoluting its purpose. According to Becker, the passage on slavery in Jefferson's draft of the Declaration needed to be omitted because "one does not expect a declaration of independence to represent historical events with the objectivity and exactitude of a scientific treatise" (213). Taking a different approach, Maier contends that including the passage would have undermined Congress's attack on George to be "alone responsible for that outrage on humanity" by its claims for rights and liberties for itself and fellow colonists that were not bestowed upon Africans (146).<sup>61</sup>

One day and several hours of reflection and consideration later, when Congress met in its official capacity, the situation had changed somewhat. Georgia and South Carolina reluctantly approved the Declaration, doing so only after language proposing an end to slavery was removed, and Delaware's vote finally flipped to favoring the resolution at the last minute. Pennsylvania also finally voted for it, even though the colony continued to want Congress to adopt a resolution to return colonial America and England to a state that existed prior to England's interventions from the mid-1760s when it imposed new taxes and regulations.

Though the vote for independence passed, Congress was overwhelmingly supportive of

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<sup>60</sup> In Jefferson's own words: "the clause too, reprobating the enslaving the inhabitants of Africa, was struck out in complaisance to South Carolina & Georgia, who had never attempted to restrain the importation of slaves, and who on the contrary still wished to continue it. Our Northern brethren also I believe felt a little tender under those censures; for tho' their people have very few slaves themselves yet they had been pretty considerable carriers of them to others" (Jefferson, *Notes on Debates*).

<sup>61</sup> England abolished slavery in 1772.

neither the idea nor the document that defended the reasoning behind it.<sup>62</sup> Editorial marks modifying the document before it went to press indicated, most notably to Jefferson, that it was approved with little fanfare: "I will say for Mr. Adams, that he supported the declaration with zeal and ability, fighting fearlessly for every word of it," yet he didn't comment on having received such support from any of the other members (Foley). Hogeland best describes the situation as "Most of the men in the Congress considered themselves masters of grammar and rhetoric," which was not Jefferson's view. Jefferson considered his fellow delegates to be "mutilating" his work, so much so that at night he began to rewrite his original version, which he considered much better than the one adopted by Congress. For the rest of his life, when the occasion presented itself, he would present both versions "to show what had happened to his document" (174-175). Perhaps that is why Jefferson described himself as "writhing a little under the acrimonious criticisms on some of it's [*sic*] parts," and simultaneously why Franklin comforted the angered author of the document by telling him the story of how one John Thompson had improved the sign advertising his hats for sale through the editorial suggestions made by others (Letters).<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Delaware's delegates passed it 2 to 1; Pennsylvania, 3 to 2; and South Carolina unanimously.

<sup>63</sup> "I was sitting by Dr. Franklin, who perceived that I was not insensible to these mutilations. 'I have made it a rule,' said he, 'whenever in my power, to avoid becoming the draughtsman of papers to be reviewed by a public body. I took my lesson from an incident which I will relate to you. When I was a journeyman printer, one of my companions, an apprentice hatter, having served out his time, was about to open shop for himself. His first concern was to have a handsome signboard, with a proper inscription. He composed it in these words, *John Thompson, Hatter, makes and sells hats for ready money*, with a figure of a hat subjoined; but he thought he would submit it to his friends for their amendments. The first he showed it to thought the word *Hatter* tautologous [*sic*], because followed by the words "makes hats," which show he was a hatter. It was struck out. The next observed that the word *makes* might as well be omitted, because his customers would not care who made the hats. If good and to their mind, they would buy, by whomsoever made. He struck it out. A third said he thought the words *for ready money* were useless, as it was not the custom of the place to sell on credit. Every one who purchased expected to pay. They were parted with, and the inscription now stood, *John Thompson sells hats. Sells hats!* says his next friend. Why nobody will expect you to give them away, what then is the use of that word? It was stricken

Since there were no large-scale copying machines at the time, how nearly fifty men edited Jefferson's highly confidential, four-page, handwritten draft of the Declaration remains a mystery to historians (see fig. 5.1 for what is known as the "rough draft," or as titled by Jefferson, the "original Rough draught [*sic*]").<sup>64</sup> As Maier asks, "Did one or two delegates take charge, or did many voices feed into the process? . . . If there was only one copy . . . how could the delegates examine the text, propose changes, or even understand the revisions others proposed?" (144). To fill in this blank that history has left for us, Maier and other historians commonly agree that Wilfred J. Ritz's hypothesis offers the most plausible explanation:

The common sense approach would have been to send a copy of the handwritten report (retaining the original to guard against loss) to a printer and have sufficient copies run off so that each member could have a copy . . . . The need for secrecy would require careful accounting for each of these printed copies of the handwritten draft. (500)

If Ritz's guess is true, then the handwritten draft would have been sent to a printer to have fifty-plus copies made so that each delegate could edit the draft. Since Congress had relied

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out, and *hats* followed it, the rather as there was one painted on the board. So the inscription was reduced ultimately to *John Thompson* with the figure of a hat subjoined." (Jefferson, Letter to Robert).

<sup>64</sup> Even though there is no indication that roll was taken, Wilfred Ritz suggests there were about fifty delegates present. Further evidence showing some of the men's whereabouts during this time supports this claim.

As for the difficulty in such a large group engaging in revisions can be seen in the fact that to reproduce a text, copying clerks were commonly obtained. Though the polygraph machine (making two copies at once) was available at this time, it was considered to be more a novelty than a practicality. That opinion began to change by the close of the eighteenth century.

Though referred to as the rough draft, other versions had to have preceded Jefferson's rough draft. Frederick Goff speculates that one or two versions were submitted to John Adams and Benjamin Franklin since their comments are included by Jefferson's hand in the margins, but there is no existing evidence of edits made by Robert Livingston and Roger Sherman, the remaining two members of what is often called the "Committee of Five" (3). In 1950 Julian P. Boyd disputed Jefferson's claim by saying the version Jefferson labeled as being the rough draft is actually the "fair copy." Boyd, in 1947, had found a fragment of an earlier version of the *Declaration*, which is called the "composition draft." Thus, the copy received by Congress was the "fair copy," meaning that committee edits were incorporated into the document.

A Declaration by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled.

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for <sup>one</sup> people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the <sup>separate and equal</sup> station to which the laws of nature & of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to ~~that~~ <sup>the</sup> separation.

We hold these truths to be <sup>self-evident</sup> that all men are created equal & independent that <sup>the are endowed by their creator with</sup> certain unalienable rights, that among <sup>these</sup> are ~~life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness~~ <sup>life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness</sup>; that to secure these <sup>rights</sup>, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government ~~shall~~ becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, & to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles & organizing its powers in such form, as to them it shall seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness. prudence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light & transient causes: and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. but when a long train of abuses & usurpations [began at a distinguished period &] pressing invariably the same object, evinces a design to ~~reduce~~ <sup>reduce</sup> them ~~to absolute despotism~~ <sup>to absolute despotism</sup>, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, & to provide new guards for their future security: such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; & such is now the necessity which constrains them to ~~exchange~~ <sup>change</sup> their former systems of government. the history of <sup>the</sup> present <sup>King of Great Britain</sup> is a history of unremitted injuries and usurpations, [among which, <sup>appears no solitary fact</sup> ~~appears no solitary fact~~ <sup>to contradict</sup> to contradict the uniform tenor of the rest, <sup>in that</sup> ~~all of which~~ <sup>in that</sup> have for direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. to prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world, [for the truth of which we pledge a faith not equalled by falsehood]

Fig. 5.1. Jefferson's rough draft. Written in June 1776. Page 1 of 4. This is the only known full text of the manuscript version of the Declaration. (Source: Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division.)





Not have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren, we have  
warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend a juris-  
-diction over these our states, we have reminded them of the circumstances of  
our emigration & settlement here, no one of which could warrant so strange a  
pretension: that these were effected at the expence of our own blood & treasure,  
assisted by the wealth or the strength of Great Britain: that in constituting  
-ed our several forms of government, we had adopted our own way, thereby  
laying a foundation for perpetual league & amity with them: but that subservient to this  
-ceded: and we appealed to their native justice & magnanimity, as well as to the ties  
of our common kindred to discover these usurpations, which were likely to interrupt  
our correspondence & connection. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice &  
of consanguinity, (When occasions have been given them by the regular course of  
their laws, of removing from their councils the disturbers of our harmony, they)  
have by their free election re-established them in power. At this very time too they  
are permitting their chief magistrates to send over not only soldiers of our common  
blood, but Scotch & foreign mercenaries to invade ~~us~~ <sup>us</sup>. These facts  
-ince the first step to acquiring affection and mutual ~~friendship~~ <sup>friendship</sup> to  
-nourish: as in true confederating brethren, we must endeavor to forget our former  
-love for them, and to hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war,  
-in peace friends, we might have been a free & a great people together, but a commu-  
-nication of grandeur & of freedom it seems is below their dignity, be it so, since they  
will have it: the road to ~~glory~~ <sup>to glory</sup> happiness, is open to us too, we will stand it on  
-apart from them, ~~and acquiesce in the necessity which pronounces our~~ <sup>we</sup>  
-cutting ~~off~~ <sup>separation</sup> ~~separation~~!

We therefore the representatives of the United States of America in General Con-  
-gress assembled, do in the name & by authority of the good people of these states,  
-reject & renounce all allegiance & subjection to the kings of Great Britain  
- & all others who may hereafter claim by, through, or under them, a authority  
- dissolved & broken off all political connection which may ~~have~~ <sup>have</sup> herebefore sub-  
-sisted between us & the people or parliament of Great Britain; and finally  
- we do assert and declare these colonies to be free and independant states,  
- and that as free & independant states they shall hereafter have <sup>full</sup> power to levy  
- war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, & to do all other  
- acts and things which independant states may of right do. And for the  
- support of this declaration we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our  
- fortunes, & our sacred honour.

Fig. 5.1. Page 4 of 4.

upon work of printers in the past, as is evident by multiple entries for printing orders in the congressional journal, there is little reason to think this case would be treated differently.<sup>65</sup> Accordingly, once all the delegates were finished editing, a clean copy would have been drafted that combined all the edits. Allowing for last-minute changes after the clean copy was printed and reviewed once more, the *final* clean copy would become the version of the Declaration that would be printed for distribution.<sup>66</sup>

So for three days, from July 2-4, Jefferson quietly stewed in his seat watching and listening as Congress critiqued each passage. It replaced "expunge" with "alter" because, as Maier points out in *American Scripture: Making the Declaration of Independence*, "there were, after all, some parts of their former governments worth keeping." And it replaced "unremitting" with "repeating" because it was "easier to prove." Stylistically, "[F]or the truth of which we pledge a faith yet unsullied by falsehood" was deleted entirely, likely to make the sentence sharper and more direct. And so it went. Could it have been that many of Congress's edits were because the claims were tainted by hyperbole that massaged the truth?<sup>67</sup> It is plausible. For example, also deleted was the word *our* in the phrase that the king had made "our judges

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<sup>65</sup> Another, though less likely, possibility is that each paragraph could have been read aloud and then edited verbally to an appointee (John Hancock or Charles Thomson, perhaps) to make the appropriate notes. The report for George's Washington's commission as commander-in-chief was handled this way (United, *Journals*).

<sup>66</sup> Though its placement in the drafting process is debated, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania has a fragmented version of a Dunlap Broadside that Boyd and Goff claim is the "proof copy," which would be the only known copy used for making congressional edits. Unlike other drafts of the *Declaration*, the fragment includes sixteen quotation marks in the first two paragraphs and the inclusion of the article "a" prior to "new" in the line "to institute new Government." Boyd and Goff dismiss the marks as printers' marks, but Ritz, in "From the Here of Jefferson's Handwritten Draft," argues that the fragmented copy is not a proof copy, but is a separate copy that was printed sometime between Jefferson's rough draft and the official Dunlap Broadside. He also says this is the version that was used to make the engrossed copy. Among support for his claim is the unusually wide space between "institute" and "new" in the engrossed copy at the National Archives.

<sup>67</sup> In actuality, many of the charges were isolated incidences, referred to a single piece of legislation, or magnified the seriousness of the grievance, e.g., the "swarms of Officers" in the tenth grievance actually equated to about fifty (Lucas).

dependent on his will alone." As Maier conjectures: "Judges, after all, had been Crown appointees, and so servants of the King." Throughout, Congress continued to tone down Jefferson's claims with the exception being in one passage, which it actually strengthened: accusations that the king was "transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries" to America was changed by adding that the act was "scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages" and the word "totally" was added to Jefferson's statement that it was "unworthy the head of a civilized nation" (144-46).

Congress would end up cutting about 25 percent of Jefferson's original draft. Yet in the end and by the skin of its teeth, the Declaration was adopted. As described in hindsight by John Adams in a letter written in 1818 to Hezekiah Niles, publisher of the esteemed national magazine the *Weekly Register*, "The complete accomplishment of it, in so short a time and by such simple means, was perhaps a singular example in the history of mankind. Thirteen clocks were made to strike together—a perfection of mechanism which no artist had ever before effected" ("Adams Quotations"). Simply put, those familiar with the Declaration at the time better understood the ramifications if it had failed to pass than they did the rhetorical power of the language they were approving.

It is worth pointing out that in addition to building a rhetorical argument using language from the literature of the day, Jefferson also formed the argument for independence with a familiar rhetorical style of the day.<sup>68</sup> Since Chapter Six discusses how the *Answer's* structure is more formal than the Declaration's style, it helps to know the techne that form each of the

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<sup>68</sup> Jefferson, who was under the tutelage of George Wythe while studying law at William and Mary, likely learned the practice of logic and rhetoric from Wythe since he is reportedly among the first to introduce it to the American education system. While at William and Mary it is also possible that he was also exposed to William Duncan's text.

documents so that, as Aristotle explained, we can see the available means of persuasion used in their creation. By eighteenth-century standards, using a syllogistic style wasn't uncommon when one desired to construct a tightly fit polemic (though less common, in some genres it was also used in the seventeenth century, e.g., the English *Declaration of Rights*, written after the Glorious Revolution of 1689). To paraphrase James Herrick, rhetorical practices concerned with the invention of argument were no longer in vogue, but moving argument out of the domain of rhetoric and into the domains of logic, dialectic, and mathematics were. Argument's function had shifted from serving as both discovery and proof to that of only proof (175). Thus, with the exception of the first paragraph in the Declaration, the remaining portion of the document is built within the frame of the following implicit syllogism, meaning that it isn't as prescriptive as the rules of a syllogism, but its minor premise is loosely stated and not simply implied, as in an enthymeme:

*Major premise:* When government reduces people to despotism, people have a right to alter or abolish that government.

*Minor premise:* England, under the reign of George III, was guilty of the aforementioned crimes of humanity.

*Conclusion:* It is the American colonists' right to separate themselves from the reign of George III and establish a new government.

The five parts of the overall frame for the Declaration also have individual significance: the first paragraph contains the purpose of the document; the second provides principles of how a government should conduct itself and ramifications when it doesn't act accordingly; the third includes a list of grievances against King George III that cite examples of his failure to practice a

governmental rule that doesn't consist of despotism; the fourth acknowledges that the grievances have gone unattended; and the fifth cites the right to become "free and independent states." While the Declaration's structure and particularly its five-part (which Stephen E. Lucas defines as the style of a loosely defined sorites<sup>69</sup>) help us to see how colonial America viewed its relationship with England and so doing provide reasons for the colonists' wanting to break free of England's rule, it is the introductory paragraph that is arguably the single most significant portion of the document. The introduction, or preamble, not only justifies the document's existence, but also establishes its credibility. Using the end of the French and Indian War as a turning point, England had denied representation for the inhabitants of its colonies and relegated colonists' status to the equivalent of the modern-day understanding of barbarian. In so doing, England both robbed colonists of the representation they had enjoyed before the war and also denied them permission to exist, to some extent, on their own terms as a colony, which was also enjoyed before the same war.<sup>70</sup>

Through language that, in a "revolutionary" overtone, "dignifies" secession on the basis of "moral legitimacy," the preamble first defines the reason for the need for secession, then it removes any doubt that the war between England and colonial America is *not* a civil war by distinguishing the colonists as "one people" and Britons as "another."<sup>71</sup> As Lucas puts it "the gulf between them was much more than political; it was intellectual, social, moral, [and]

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<sup>69</sup> A sorites is a style of argument in which all predicates are linked so that the preposition of one becomes the subject of the next one with the last preposition being tied to the first predicate.

<sup>70</sup> This point is illustrated in detail in Chapter 2 where the relationship between England and Colonial America is contextualized, and in Chapter 6 where England's response to the *Declaration* is discussed.

<sup>71</sup> From the standpoint of many historians, that which today we call the American Revolution actually was a civil war. It started as a revolt against tax hikes and evolved into a civil war between loyalists and patriots. At the time, British rule oversaw most of America's trade relations and the British military protected American soils from foreign invasion, thereby, Colonial America did not exist on its own accord. Had Colonial America been an independent country, it would not have had to write a declaration of independence.

cultural.<sup>72</sup> These introductory words not only foreshadowed the actions detailed throughout the rest of the document, but the paragraph itself is one of only two paragraphs that even comes close to resembling the Ciceronian style of writing that was common during this time<sup>73</sup>:

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

Enlightenment thinkers, such as Jefferson, tended to appreciate the classical rhetoric defined by early Greek and Roman practices. This is why in future correspondence after the writing of the Declaration, among those Jefferson attributed as influencing him most were Aristotle and Cicero. Here it is important to make the distinction that while these two early Greek and Roman writers did influence Jefferson, their influence did not bear much weight on the delivery of his writing.<sup>74</sup> While Jefferson might have attributed those men as being influential to him, which

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<sup>72</sup> See Footnote 2 in this chapter on the idea of *othering*. Ironically, while Congress made use of this rhetorical practice in the *Declaration* by how it continued to treat racial and ethnic groups not represented in the *Declaration*, in the *Declaration* Congress also implies that Britain's practice of othering in its treatment of American colonists was one of the catalysts behind writing the document. See below for more detail.

<sup>73</sup> The second example is 127 words long: "We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do."

<sup>74</sup> For example, Jefferson owned more than forty volumes of Cicero. To Jefferson and several other Enlightenment thinkers, the Greeks and Romans provided a systematic way of thinking that explored the concept

they were, it was in his way of thinking, not his style of writing, that they persuaded him. In his commonplace book it is Tacitus from whom Jefferson copied more passages than any other, and it was Tacitus's writing style of short, declarative sentences that Jefferson's writing style most resembled.<sup>75</sup> Thus, Jefferson, like Tacitus before him, relied on his readers to have an implied understanding upon which tacit knowledge or inferential information could be easily referenced without substantive contributions weighting down the point.

Unlike Cicero, whose serpentine sentences could span up to two hundred words before reaching a period, the Declaration's first paragraph accounts for a sentence that is, for Jefferson's style, a "whopping" seventy-one words in length.<sup>76</sup> Consider this while also taking into account that the text's shortest sentence is only eleven: "To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world." In other words, Jefferson wrote in a precise style where meaning was made quickly and rationale was to the point. To be sure of the difference in Jefferson's style in comparison to other committee members, John Adams wrote to Timothy Pickering in 1822 that Jefferson was chosen because when it was being considered who would write a draft for a declaration, Adams said to Jefferson, "You can write ten times better than I can."

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of God in ways that weren't approachable with the Christian way of thinking at the time. In Enlightenment thought, man could find God in nature. In most Christian thought of the day, God was found only through Jesus Christ.

<sup>75</sup> To David Howell, Jefferson wrote, "I read one or two newspapers a week, but with reluctance give up even that from Tacitus and Horace" (1810). And to John Adams, "I have given up newspapers in exchange for Tacitus and Thucydides, for Newton and Euclid; and I find myself much the happier" (1812) (Foley PAGE #'s?).

And for an understanding of Tacitus's approach to writing see *Tacitus: The Annals*, with an introduction by Anthony A. Barrett. Barrett says that Tacitus's Latin was "always recognizable" and that he "rejected Ciceronian verbosity in favour of pointed concision." Bacon and Montaigne—two other men who influenced Jefferson—claimed Tacitus influenced their works as well according to Barrett (xvi, xxviii). {BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FOR BOTH PARAGRAPHS MOVED TO THE WORKS CITED LIST.}

<sup>76</sup> For an example of Cicero's writing style see *Letters to Atticus*.

## The Dunlap Broadside: Packaging a New Genre

Today our mental image of the Declaration usually includes the signatures of all the representatives at the bottom of the page. But when the John Dunlap Declaration—the first version of the Declaration—went to press, the only congressional signatures endorsing it were by the president, John Hancock, and secretary, Charles Thomson. It wasn't unusual for congressional documents to be printed for circulation with only two endorsers, just as today, often, only the two sponsors of a Congressional mandate are widely known to the general public. For example, the 107th Congress approved the 2002 Public Company Accounting Reform and Investor Protection Act, more commonly known as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act after its sponsors, Senator Paul Sarbanes and Representative Michael G. Oxley. In all likelihood, many Americans can name only its sponsors and one or two other congressmen as endorsers to the bill although 99 out of 100 senators and 423 of 435 representatives approved it.

Though Sarbanes-Oxley was overwhelmingly approved, had the signatures of its endorsers been prominently displayed along with the text, they might have lent even further credence to the document's already-established credibility. But for other congressional acts that are passed with less support, adding signatures could weaken the overall endorsement from Congress, which might carry a greater rhetorical weight in its "collectivity" than if each of the few supporting members is individually identified. As Andrew J. Perrin states, "lacking an understanding of the social settings within which deliberation takes place leads to an overly optimistic, asocial vision of the democratic potential" (1050).

To illustrate Perrin's point, the 2010 tax cut bill passed in December by the 111th Congress received a 277-148 vote approval. Though it was approved, news media outlets

reported that both Republicans and Democrats were unhappy with the language in many parts of the measure. Newscaster Andrea Seabrook, who witnessed the discussions, described the situation as "[n]obody was overjoyed and everybody got something" ("Congress Sends Tax Legislation"). To be sure, the vote for approval was nearly equally divided between both parties: Democrats, 139; Republican, 138. Thus, to the public at large the measure represents a situation where both parties were able to work together, but its support "behind the scenes" was similar to the heated debates going on in the summer of 1776.

Endorsers of independence needed to generate approval from each of the *colonies* to claim full support, not each of the *delegates* (which never was received). Keeping in mind that the Declaration had marginal support at best, this undisclosed bit of information likely strengthened the document's rhetorical power. After all, its underlying authority was cloaked in the guise of unanimous endorsement.<sup>77</sup> Had one or more of the colonies failed to approve it, a discrepancy could have halted plans to move forward on declaring independence. Advancing would have created a situation in which one's opposition wouldn't be just on the foreign soils of Great Britain and all whom she recruited, but also the neighbors next door. For instance, while North Carolina was the first to authorize its delegates to approve the Declaration, South Carolina was one of the last and did so reluctantly. Had South Carolina and others who were less supportive of secession refused to endorse a declaration for independence, those seeking it could have received resistance from bordering colonies as well as from across the ocean.

Aside from what might have been chagrin from the marginal support the Declaration

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<sup>77</sup> The *Declaration* wasn't actually unanimously endorsed until July 19, when New York received permission to sign. At this time, congressional clerk Timothy Matlack rewrote the document onto parchment and changed the title to its official title, "The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States," and as a subhead wrote "In Congress, July 4, 1776."

received in Congress, there were two other reasons to exclude delegates' signatures from the Dunlap printing. The first is that including them could be considered an act of sedition, punishable by death (see Chapter Two for further discussion on sedition). The second is that the space required for the signatures would have reduced the space left for the text, space that was a precious commodity. Broadside, conventionally, limited text length to one page and the dimensions of the sheet.<sup>78</sup> Newspapers, by contrast, could add sheets to accommodate text length. In the Dunlap Broadside (fig. 5.2), the 18 3/8 inch by 13 3/8 inch sheet of paper could only accommodate congressional signatures if the title's font sizes were reduced significantly. Yet doing so would have altered the text's rhetorical power. As it stands, not only does the *medium* imply exigency, but the large font sizes and capitalization used in the title yell it.

The language in the Declaration wasn't new to any of its audiences; much had been recycled from other texts both written by the colonists in earlier exchanges and from published material widely available within the colonies, England, and Europe.<sup>79</sup> As Lutz states, the list of abuses that the colonists claimed they suffered "surprised no one. Americans had been producing similar lists of abuses in their newspapers since the infamous Stamp Act more than a decade earlier" (47). This is not to say that the colonists had grown passive. For several reasons, ranging from emotional attachment to financial security, the colonists saw little reason to pursue war with their mother land. Chapters Two and Four show that many of the colonists, including Franklin and some other Congressional members, until as late as 1775 continued to have a familial love for England and didn't want to break that tie, so they attempted to resolve

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<sup>78</sup> This is according to the Library of Congress's Continental Congress Broadside Collection.

<sup>79</sup> I define the *Declaration's* audience as being fellow Colonists (internal audience); the monarchy and Great Britain (direct external audience) and Europe (secondary external audience). See Footnote 6 in chapter 1 for more discussion.

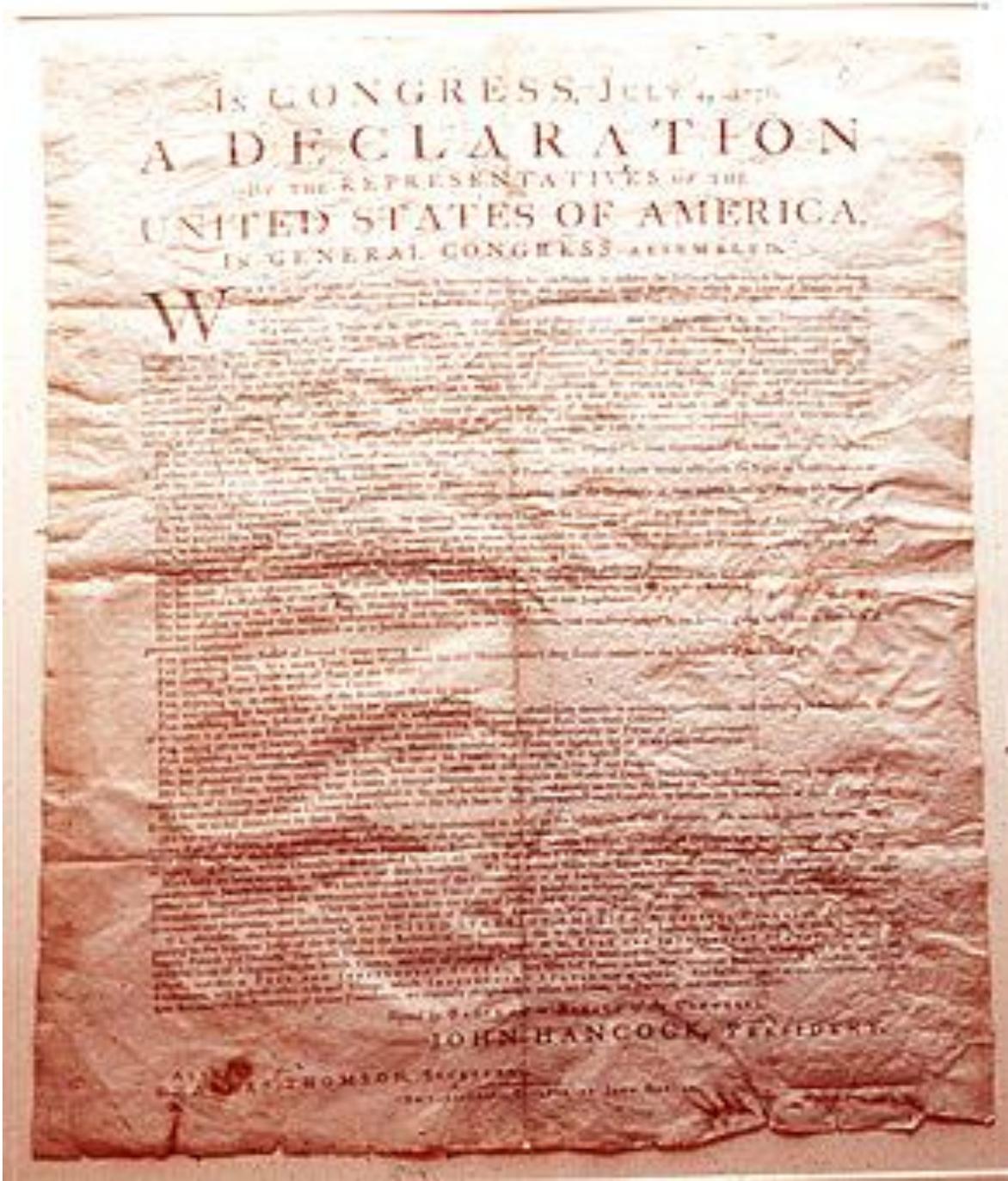


Fig. 5.2. A Dunlap Broadside from the first print run. The folds in the paper reduce the page to an eighth of its size. They could have been made to fit into a messenger's pocket so that the document could be easily transported. (Source: Chicago Historical Society.)

differences through communication. By summer 1776, however, the majority of Congress—though whose numbers made up only a handful of the total colonial population—thought differently. They wanted secession. Communication wasn't working. Proof of that was the eleven years of ongoing discussion and debate that showed no progress toward resolving differences. Journal entries and letters written by many of the Founding Fathers following King George III's rejection of the Olive Branch Petition (Fall 1775) indicate that they believed secession to be the only recourse. Doing so, they realized, was sure to result in war. To ensure public support for an enterprise that could be considered seditious and punishable by death was critical.

"Engineering consent" from "the herd" had to occur in order to reduce the likelihood of such ramifications as imprisonment or death. As Franklin told fellow delegates, "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately." Using World War I again as a conceptual framework to understand the Founding Fathers' circumstance, today we know that Wilson created the Committee on Public Information to "whip up the population" so that it would support American involvement in World War I, as Chomsky describes it (25). The Second Continental Congress, similarly, used a declaration of independence to whip up support for secession. A statement Lippmann uses to describe the and other propaganda commissions also helps us to understand how the Continental Congress saw the Declaration as a discursive shield of armor, worn by a united front of 2.5 million people: A "revolution in the art of democracy" could "manufacture consent" (qtd. in Chomsky 10). To manufacture consent is a propaganda tactic to "bring about agreement on the part of the public for things that they didn't want," which the Continental Congress accomplished by creating a market out of the information

frenzy taking place on the possibility of a colonial war with England (remember, "Live Free or Die") and jobs to manufacture the information (Chomsky 10; Curran 77).

During the 1770s, shortages in supplies limited most newspapers to printing an average of 500 copies per press run (Lee 1: 258). To put this number into perspective *and* to assume Dunlap's numbers tripled Lee's estimate, which could have occurred according to Hannah Barker (see Footnote 12 in Chapter Three), the supply ratio of a Philadelphia citizens access to the newspaper Dunlap published, the *Packet*, would have been about one copy per eighteen citizens. (This number does not take into account age and literacy rates that would reduce the ratio, but is an example only of the *Packet's* availability to the population at large.<sup>80</sup>) Moreover, since type making was expensive, printers used fonts long after the characters' sharpness had faded. Ink was available locally but its quality was inferior to the imported ink that was difficult to come by given the strained relations between colonial America and England. The most difficult item to obtain, though, was paper. The need for paper was at an all-time high during a period when it was at its scarcest. As Alfred McClung Lee puts it, "Military records, legislative reports, pamphlets, broadsides, and newspapers, all necessities of war, required paper" (22). The few men who were skilled in making paper mill molds were discharged from the army by a congressional resolution passed a month after the Declaration was printed. Earlier that year, the Massachusetts legislature ordered the Committees on Public Safety to designate rag collectors in each town, and the Convention of Maryland provided seed money as an incentive for someone to start a mill. To top it off, "paper fabrication for all purposes received an impetus

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<sup>80</sup> I gave the *Packet* the benefit of the doubt when estimating its size because of its longevity and popularity. By 1783, it went from being a weekly, to semi-weekly, to tri-weekly, to daily, and also became part of a small chain. Additionally, Dunlap had partnered with David C. Claypoole by this time and they changed the name to the *Pennsylvania Packet and Daily Advertiser*.

from state subsidies and state and national legislation” (Lee 22-23). The results from Lee’s study further illustrate the demand for newspapers:

Sheets increased from one to eighteen, located in nine colonies, between 1710 and 1760, a period in which the population increased about four and one-half times. During the next increase, with the Stamp Act and other pre-Revolutionary events to agitate the citizenry, papers rose to thirty with population but thirty-seven percent higher, and then to forty-eight in 1775, aligned for and against the patriots, with only seventeen percent more people. (18)

Yet, though newspaper popularity continued to rise, given the costs involved to secure material, many printers were scarcely able to print more than one newspaper per week. (See Table 5.1 for newspaper circulation rate increases from 1710 to 1780.) In short, the onset of war drove demand for printed information as expeditiously as it could be available. Increases in production of extras and broadsides and in the frequency of printing days were “evidence [of] publishers’ reactions to the situation” (59).

Despite paper shortages, the more strained relations became with the mother land, the more colonists wanted to *read* about their possible fates. Subsequently, as a secondary use, colonists who had not yet learned to read were using newspapers as a study aid so that they, too, could rely more on the printed word for their information and less on hearsay. For example, one tavern keeper painted a sign above his mantel that read, “Gentlemen learning to spell are requested to use last week’s newsletter” (qtd. in Lee 16).

The significance that the public assigned to extras or other mid-week publications is something Congress would have known through previous experiences in using broadsides to

post orders and also from Franklin's personal knowledge as a former newspaper editor. Thus, for the reason of "urgency" alone, it made sense for Congress to choose the broadside to disseminate news of independence throughout the colonies. But, there are also two other factors that don't appear to have been taken into consideration in most scholarship about the Declaration. The first is that since paper was in short supply, broadside usage might have increased because it was printed on a heavier paper that wasn't in as much demand as the paper used for newspapers. The other factor is that some of the editorial cuts made to Jefferson's draft might have been a result of the limited space on a broadside. These concepts will not be explored here, but they are mentioned as possibilities since they play a prominent role in medium selection and are worth further examination at another time. So while the process of selecting a medium for the Declaration remains unknown, suffice it to say that when it was carried to Dunlap for printing, its package had already been decided. In the late hours of July 4 or early morning of July 5, Dunlap read through the document, making last minute edits along the way, and then set the type for print.

As Congress's choice to print the Declaration, Dunlap was a likely candidate for a number of reasons. He was the son and successor of a well-known printer and bookseller. His newspaper, *The Pennsylvania Packet*, was published at 48 High Street and Market Street, near the State House where the Declaration was adopted. His access to materials for producing cleaner copies of newsprint was advantageous; he lived in the largest colonial city, which was also a busy port. And he had already established credibility among congressional leaders as both a printer and an anti-loyalist; for example, in 1774 he printed Jefferson's pamphlet *A Summary View of the Rights of British America* and also a small book called *A Pretty Story*,

Table 5.1: Number of Newspaper in colonial America

	All Papers	Weekly	Semi-Weekly	Tri-Weekly	Daily
1710	1	1			
1720	3	3			
1730	7	7	1		
1740	12	11			
1750	14	13			
1760	18	17			
1770	30	25	3	1	
1780	39	34	3	2	
1783	...	...	...	...	1
1790	92	70	10	3	8
1800	235	178	29	3	24

Source: *The Daily Newspaper in America*, by Alfred McClung Lee (New York: Octagon, 1973)

an allegory of the making of the First Continental Congress written by Francis Hopkinson, a delegate from New Jersey and signer of the Declaration.<sup>81</sup> As much as we know about Dunlap, one area that remains left to speculation (since no known journal entries exist to set the record straight), a gray area that often is debated among historians, is the amount of time Dunlap had to prepare the manuscript version of the Declaration for print. This is important to consider because it helps us to understand the Declaration as a discourse, not just as a text. If a text is, as Fairclough says, a product of the process of text production, not a process in itself, and discourse describes the whole process of how we interact with a text, not just the text itself, then to understand the Declaration as a discourse we must consider the artifact's content and medium (product) as much as the contextual dynamics (process) at work during the time it was being written and then received (Fairclough 20). The exigency that might have been placed on distributing the document, or conversely, time allotted for writing and editing it, will help us with some of the qualities of the document's discursive properties. Julian P. Boyd and Frederick R. Goff, two leading Declaration historians, accept conventional thought that the text's type was set under pressure, while Ritz and some others share the view that Dunlap began setting type after he was given an early draft to make several copies so that Congress could edit it.<sup>82</sup>

There are strong arguments for each school of thought:

It has always been assumed . . . that the broadside was hastily produced. Under such pressing circumstances, especially with one or more members of the Committee of Five standing about to "superintend the press," it is very plausible

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<sup>81</sup> Dunlap took out an advertisement in the July 14, 1768, press run of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* that offered "printing performed in a neat and correct manner."

<sup>82</sup> See Footnotes 3 and 21 in this chapter for more discussion on Boyd's study.

to suppose that what printers often did in the face of urgency was done on this remarkable occasion—that is, that the copy was distributed among several compositors, allowing each enough to fill one or two composing sticks. (Ritz 506)

Goff's study concludes that two distinct printings took place, the first one was with the "P" under the comma, which is also the pressrun where fewer of the letters are damaged, and that all of them were printed in a hurry (7). So, sometime between the evening hours of July 4 and early morning of July 5, Congress "Ordered, That the declaration be authenticated and printed" and that "the committee appointed to prepare the declaration, superintend and correct the press" (United States, Lib. of Cong., *Journals* 5: 516). Jefferson and any number of other members from the Committee of Five rushed to edit and then have Dunlap print what historians believe to be about two hundred broadsides so that post riders could collect and distribute them accordingly.

In 1975, Goff evaluated seventeen of the twenty-one copies of the Dunlap Broadside known to exist at the time for signs that might indicate a rushed print job. Goff found that the horizontal chains running through the paper varied from sixteen to nineteen when comparing all twenty-one broadsides, and none of the chains was parallel with the text, which indicates that it was hurried into the coffin. Also, in eleven broadsides the type was offset because the page was folded in half before the ink dried. Last, by using photography, beta-radiography, and a Hinman collator, two other characteristics detected where the "P" in Philadelphia is located directly beneath the comma after Thomson's name on some broadsides, whereas on others it's beneath the "n" in his name, and eleven letters were damaged.

Thus, Boyd's and Goff's version holds more observable proof, while Ritz's is more circumstantial. But when we take into account that congressional members cut 25 percent of the manuscript version (discussed above in relation to the language suggesting the abolition of slavery), Ritz's study does suggest that the Founding Fathers scrutinized the Declaration's content just as carefully as they managed its delivery. Dunlap broadsides were sent to state assemblies, conventions, and committees of safety, and ordered by Congress to be read aloud to the continental army. Nineteen other broadsides were printed by other printers in the days to come, and before Congress had ordered the engrossed copy to be written on July 19, twenty-three newspapers had printed the document.

#### Audience's Perception of a New Genre

Similarly, with a better understanding of how the Declaration as a textual artifact was processed, we must also come to know the Declaration as a product in order to fully understand it as a discourse. From Chomsky's perspective on America's involvement in World War I, US entry was the result of the persuasive maneuvers of a small group of elite intellectuals who succeeded in driving "a reluctant population into a war by . . . eliciting jingoist fanaticism" (8). As this chapter shows, to a large extent this was also the approach Congress took by way of the Declaration. But, rather than using jingoistic propaganda, Congress instead used texts that were already popular among the colonists to create a perceived reality of the colonial American situation. Audiences were made to interpret extracts of familiar texts (either in language or creed) within a different social situation (i.e., context), one that was set up by Congress. A new, or perhaps more enhanced, discursive understanding of the text was likely the result, as I will show below (using *Wuthering Heights* as an example).

Jefferson, a fervent note-taker during congressional proceedings, understood the logistics that he needed to address when writing the Declaration in order to meet the demands espoused by each of the delegates as they discussed the opinions and conditions of their home states. With a self-described "canine appetite for reading," he also knew the popular texts of the day. His insatiable desire for books and other reading material, combined with acquaintances in the newspaper business—who were good gauges of the public sentiment circulating around taverns and coffeehouses (where newspapers were regularly available)—Jefferson's grasp of colonial sentiment was unchallenged. So when drafting the Declaration he intended for the language to be an "expression of the American mind" and its idiom to be "the proper tone and spirit called for by the occasion," as he recounted in a letter to Lee in 1825. For this reason, while the Declaration would be sent to England and Europe, their relationships with the document were as *external primary* and *external secondary audiences*, respectively; the point was that England and Europe were not being written *to*, but written *at*. The colonists were the Declaration's actual audience and also the audience for whom the document was tacitly written. Thus, the Declaration's "power as a symbol was potentially global in extent," but for the Colonists, its value rested in their being independent "more than they [valued] the specific document" (Armitage, *Declaration* 3).

Though it first *appeared* publically in the form of a broadside, there is evidence that the news of independence might have hit the streets earlier through an unauthorized or informal oral reading of the document. In such an event, Tuchman's Law explains that rumors of independence established a fanfare supporting secession before it actually took place; the rumors heightened anticipation of the news, thereby possibly increasing approval ratings. This

is not to say that all colonists favored secession, but that enough did to create a public display of celebration by tearing down and removing things symbolizing the king's presence in the colonies. Pennsylvania statesman Charles Biddle recalled while writing his autobiography that "On the memorable Fourth of July, 1776, I was in the Old State-House yard when the Declaration of Independence was read" (86). And Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, a German Lutheran missionary to Pennsylvania, reported in his journal that on July 4 "the Continental Congress openly declared the united provinces of North America to be free and *independent* states" (qtd. in Ritz 507-08). Yet, like the disagreement over how much time Dunlap had to set the type, differing opinions also exist over when the public was first informed of its independence. Aside from the accounts similar to those by Biddle and Muhlenberg, widespread opinion is that the *official* ceremonial reading took place on July 8—shortly *after* the document began to appear in newspapers. But what is important is that this broadside document going into or just out from the printer's was read aloud, an important feature of the broadside as a genre.<sup>83</sup>

Also important, yet for a different reason, is understanding how the Declaration was read: which words received emphasis and why. Identifying which words Congress capitalized in the Declaration, and then drawing from the conventions for capitalization written in early style guides, we see that in addition to the power of persuasion, the Founding Fathers used conventional design techniques to call attention to specific parts of the reading of the Declaration that otherwise might have received less attention. Overfamiliarity with language as it is understood in its original context often causes audiences to recall portions of a text

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<sup>83</sup> Ritz suggests that there were two readings, the fragmented version of the *Declaration* was read on July 4 (see Footnote 25) and John Nixon's ceremonial public reading was read from a broadside on July 8 (509).

selectively; they focus only on what they want to retrieve from the text (Curran 71). This is also true when audiences understand only select parts of a discourse but not the discourse in its entirety. As demonstrated with the Burkean Parlor example in Chapter Four, audiences tend to focus only on what they know, or what relates closely to what they know. So, mixing up a context by placing excerpts of it within a frame that combines excerpts from several other texts—the equivalent of assembling a jigsaw puzzle using pieces from multiple puzzles of varying motifs—the result is a lateral understanding of all of the texts, but a linear understanding of none. Though eighteenth-century orthography differs in several respects from modern spelling and character formation, one practice that existed at the time the Declaration was written and continues today is in how words were enhanced by the use of certain design techniques and style rules.<sup>84</sup> The Continental Congress's use of large fonts and capitalization resembles that of Westernized contemporary approaches to design interpretation.

For eighteenth-century broadside audiences, capitalization served two purposes. Large-sized lettering notified readers to aural audiences which words to emphasize when reading the document aloud. And for silent readers, the distinguished characters, too, acted as stress markers though through an intellectual understanding of their meaning. In America today, for example, the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) sets the standards for the way safety-related language is written for US companies. Below are three examples of safety notices, two of which ANSI places in all caps to highlight the language as being more imperative than in the third:

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<sup>84</sup> See N. E. Osselton, "Spelling-Book Rules and the Capitalization of Nouns in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," as well as his "Formal and Informal Spelling in the 18th Century: Error, Honor, and Related Words."

- DANGER: EXTREMELY HIGH VOLTAGE. STAND BACK
- WARNING: TO PREVENT SERIOUS INJURY TO ARMS AND HANDS, YOU MUST SECURE ARM RESTRAINTS BEFORE OPERATING MACHINE
- Caution: Use of non-rechargeable batteries will damage this equipment

Capitalized words in the Declaration were used no differently; they were employed to draw attention to the enormity of Congress's decision by setting apart certain words or aspects of a sentence that the document's editors most wanted to register with audiences. Like ANSI, and for that matter modern language stylebooks, Thomas Dilworth's 1740 stylebook, *A New Guide to the English Tongue*, stated that capital letters are to be used for "all words . . . that have any great emphasis in a sentence" and "whole words . . . [where] something is expressed [to be] extraordinary [sic] great" (1820 ed., 84). Consider further that Jefferson, a man who seldom capitalized words—even at the beginning of sentences—while drafting the Declaration wrote: *UNITED STATES OF AMERICA*, and also capitalized the first letter of *Declaration*, *Representatives*, and *General Congress*.<sup>85</sup> Whether it was Congress's idea or Dunlap using his artistic license, the Dunlap Broadside went a step beyond Jefferson's draft by capitalizing all the words in the title as well as three terms in the text's closing statement: *UNITED STATES OF AMERICA*, *GENERAL CONGRESS*, and *FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES*. Notwithstanding English presses reprinting the Dunlap Declaration to announce America's claim of independence, some of them, if not all, used a style for capitalization that connotes less emphasis on the words "United States of America." They capitalized only the first letter of "all words put for proper

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<sup>85</sup> Similar differences in capitalization practices between Jefferson's draft and Congress's edits are: Constitutions/Constitution; honour/Honor; inalienable/unalienable; injuries/Injury; tryant;/Tyrant; independent/Independent; and unacknowledged/unacknowledged.

nouns" (Dilworth 84).<sup>86</sup>

As for the British government's reading of the Dunlap Declaration, it, too, was likely familiar with the texts Jefferson used to write the document; Lind even accused Jefferson of plagiarism (addressed in Chapter Six). Furthermore, as stated above, many of the grievances in the document Congress had written about in correspondence prior to the Declaration. While many circumstances come into play that might have caused England to respond to the Dunlap Declaration with writing a 137-page pamphlet, we know that in this particular case a nontraditional medium was used and that this choice has to be considered to better know how audiences might have interpreted, and ultimately responded to, the content. Thus, it is possible that the overly familiar language wasn't as much of a catalyst for England's response than the channel of communication used by the sender that was the influencing factor. Confounding England as much as a termination letter written on a sticky-note would perplex a modern receiver, or a reminder to pick up grandmother from the airport by way of a knock on the door by the sheriff's department, the anomalous packaging of the Declaration likely stirred within England an unsettling understanding of Congress's intent. Congress was so bold as to declare independence, yet did so on a broadside. Congress's use of the broadside—differing from England's typical uses for it—gave rise to a new level of power for the medium; it challenged "the prevailing structure of authority" by appearing in a context where it didn't belong (Curran 55).

More so than the average American colonists, Britons would have been familiar with the concept of a declaration of independence through history's unfolding of events that

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<sup>86</sup> The broadside collection at the American Antiquarian Society.

involved England. First might be the Peace Treaties of Westphalia, 1648: a new form of congress was established in central Europe that was based on the ideas of establishing a sovereign statehood governed by a sovereign and political diplomacy (this concept resembles the framework used by Congress to establish the U.S. governing and political systems). Additionally might be its own Declaration of Rights, 1689: Parliament replaced James II with William and Mary, justifying the upset with thirteen reasons of explanation (similar to the Declaration's denunciation of George III). Also, North Carolina's legislature, on April 12, 1776, was the first colony to instruct delegates to advance toward independence. Last, the Virginia Declaration of Rights, adopted June 12, 1776, declared "That all men were born equally free and independent, and have certain inherent natural rights"; "That all power is . . . derived by the people"; and "That government is . . . instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the people" (all three of these thoughts are prevalent in the Declaration). Moreover, while the language in these documents specified desire for independence from a controlling governmental authority, their legitimacy also drew from media typically used to display genres such as legislative acts, treaties, and proclamations. So when Congress unveiled that all the colonies were suddenly free from England's jurisprudence—and announced it through a medium that had yet to be used to announce a declaration of independence—both locally and abroad the widespread news of the proclamation stimulated public reaction, but for different reasons.

Before the mass-produced Dunlap Broadside circulated throughout the colonies, many colonies had already put into place state and local declarations denouncing their relationship with England. Maier supports evidence that the American colonists wrote more than ninety

declarations before the official, unifying Declaration. But, the ramifications of these were less consequential compared to a declaration of 2.5 million people because the small groups of militia and sizes of the colonies were of little threat to a military that many historians consider to have been the strongest in the world at the time. Yet through a shared language, people were actually creating a shared reality by "manipulating conditions into meaningful patterns" (Pickett 11). Before July 1776, declarations had "not been treated as a global phenomenon," making Congress's venture unique because it was "born out of secession and endowed by its visionaries with a mission in the world" (Armitage, *Declaration* 4). Emerging from a reassessment of self-importance rooted in Enlightenment thought, or what Terry H. Pickett calls "anthropocentric morality," an American identity was being built with such building blocks as artifacts and discourse (11).<sup>87</sup>

England, whose use for broadsides was typically as a genre for tabloid journalism, responded by using a medium that had already been recognized as a tried and true method for framing political discourse: the pamphlet. As one can see about reading the pamphlet (Chapter Six), the language Lind used reifies some of the claims Congress made in the Declaration about being treated inhumanely:

When a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies;

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<sup>87</sup> See Footnote 17 in this chapter.

and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former  
Systems Government.

As the practice of colonialism is understood through Mills, a colonized country is often described in the present tense while the colonizer describes itself in the simple past tense (e.g., "I witnessed"). Additionally the colonists are further "homogenized" by being referred to with the use of a third-person pronoun. To explain the consequences of using such language, Mills quotes Johannes Fabian as saying "pronouns and verb forms in the third person mark an Other outside the dialogue. He (she or it) is not spoken to but posited (predicated) as that which contrasts with the personness of the participants in the dialogue" (100-01). As the Declaration's internal audience, the colonists were accustomed to Congress using broadsides to communicate with them. So their response to the Declaration of Independence written on a broadside was less a reaction to the medium than it was to the language. It wasn't out of character when New York colonists, for example, razed a statue of King George III in celebration after General George Washington read a Dunlap Broadside to his troops on December 9, 1776. Then again, it also wasn't out of character when they used the fallen statue against the British by melting it and turning the molten metal into ammunition.

One other factor that needs to be recognized is the question of when the Declaration was initially unveiled to the public; this question, in part, addresses the document's aural audience that was alluded to in Chapter Four, and it also plays a role in our further understanding of how the document drew some of its discursive power. Fairclough claims that mass media have a hidden power built within their discursive structures in that they have the upper hand in controlling discourse through a one-sided dialogue. Moreover, by definition the

power of media is "cumulative" whereas in a single text, such as the *Answer*, which shares a different relationship with its audience because it is read silently and by one person at a time, the power is "insignificant," comparatively speaking (41, 45). As explained above and to a greater extent in Chapter Four, England and Europe had what Fairclough calls an unequal distribution of cultural capital in their literacy rates compared with the American colonies. The result: a pamphlet as lengthy and formulaic as the *Answer* could have posed constraints on audience access because a good number of colonists were neither able to afford it nor were literate enough to fully comprehend its intent. This is assuming the artifact was available to begin with; as Chapter Six discusses, though the *Answer* went through several printings, early press runs were typically about 500 copies per edition. And even if colonists could afford to purchase it and were at a level of reading sufficient enough to understand it, the isolated experience in which a pamphlet as verbose as the *Answer* is read also constrains consent; it limits audience understanding to the discursive properties of the text rather than allowing understanding to be shaped communally, which, theoretically, is a more complete level of understanding. English students reading the novel *Wuthering Heights*, for example, have a different level of understanding when they discuss the story in class after they have read the book than do those who read the book but miss the discussion. Unlike a pamphlet, an eighteenth-century colonial American broadside was conventionally read aloud within a communal environment, whereby it served to create "the most effective form of ideological common sense" of the text because the understanding could be interpreted, and therefore shared, by a larger audience (Fairclough 73). By the time the *Answer* was being discussed by audiences who elected to read and discuss it (Congress mandated that the Declaration be read

to troops and that colonial newspapers print it), the dominant discourse of the Declaration, as understood through the media attention it continued to receive *after* mandates were met, had already established what Fairclough calls naturalization: Its intention became an acceptable approach to America's relationship with England by the document's primary audience: the colonists (89).

In 1976, as part of a commemoration of the United States's bicentennial celebration, a team of scholars researched a broad spectrum of textual artifacts of independence to be considered for compilation in *Independence Documents of the World*. Their findings further support existing evidence that the colonists' self-proclamation of inhabiting a *new* nation was the "first proclaimed birth certificate in world history" (Blaustein, Sigler, and Beede xiii). To differentiate between a self-proclamation of nationhood and the formation of existing nation-states until July 1776,<sup>88</sup> states could develop organically into nations, but for a state to proclaim itself as a nation had never before occurred. For example, England has the Magna Carta, written in 1215, but it is not a declaration of independence even though it defends human rights. England was established long before then. England, France, and several other long-established nations do not have actual documents signifying entry into nationhood.<sup>89</sup> But, scholars of the publication *Independence Documents* found that "every nation founded or created since July 4, 1776, has some sort of definable birth certificate," and they attribute this

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<sup>88</sup> For clarification between a nation and nation state, the state's authority is more aligned with a specific geographical area and population whereas a nation places its emphasis on establishing relationships and building a collective identity through time and distance. In addition to nation-states, there are also multi-national states and stateless nations (Spencer 2). "The nation-state is the individual writ large, an entity seeking sovereignty (autonomy) and emancipation from constraint that will enable it to achieve an adequate expression of its will and desire" (Pickett 10).

<sup>89</sup> France's *Rights of Man and of the Citizen* (written in 1789) was modeled after the *Virginia Declaration of Rights*. France, though supportive of the *U.S. Declaration*, was more interested achieving a form of state's rights at the time since it was already a recognized nation.

change to America's emergence as a nation into the global arena through its Declaration (Blaustein, Sigler, and Beede xiii). John Adams wrote to Abigail on July 2 that this day would be "celebrated by succeeding generations." What he had not considered (and what neither he nor anyone else could have known) was that America's celebration for its independence wouldn't be the historical vote on July 2 that would receive the ceremonial pomp and circumstance by future generations of Americans. Instead, it would be that "secondary document," as David Armitage calls it (49), finalized on July 4, that would live on through the annals of time: America's birth certificate and also the birth of a new genre in political discourse. In less than three weeks, and beginning with the words "When in the course of human events," Jefferson completed the task assigned to him by the Second Continental Congress: he wrote what would be the world's first self-proclaimed declaration of independence for nationhood.

Today, more than half the world's countries have adopted declarations of independence, many of which were patterned after the U.S. Declaration in language or creed. Beginning with Flanders in 1790 and continuing until as recently as Southern Sudan in spring 2011, since its inception the U.S. Declaration has reshaped global politics by setting an example of where self-government has been successful. The Declaration symbolizes that people are capable of governing their own affairs, and that thereby hierarchical powers such as monarchies are neither needed nor desired.

The Declaration wasn't written in a vacuum and it wasn't inspired overnight. Letters exchanged between England and Congress, as well as existing practices of religious toleration and obliteration of an aristocratic system, show the colonists' long desire for an existence that involved more self regulation through a democratic decision-making process and less

governmental control. So when England received the Declaration of Independence, the document should have been dismissed as yet another attempt by England's unruly subjects in "getting their way," since that's how previous communications had been considered. And when the rest of Europe read the Declaration, their response should have been nothing more than to mark it off as a ploy by those crazy American colonists who were trying to convince other countries to recognize their plight and take colonists' side in the civil war that was taking place between colonial America and its mother country. With the receipt of the Declaration though, the dynamics of these relationships began to change. England more adequately prepared for a full-fledged war on its American turf, and Europe—France especially—was anxiously waiting by the sidelines to welcome the victor into the fold of nationhood.

One of the claims technical communicators make is that an established genre/medium pairing is more effective than one that deviates from conventionality: among the most common practices in evaluating a textual artifact is to recognize its contribution as a "model of effective communication" through its employment of "time-honored strategies" (Malone 335). But this has not always been the case (and is not entirely the case today). Using the Declaration of Independence, I show one example of a popular historical communication in which a nontraditional content/medium pairing might have contributed to its becoming a new genre in political discourse. More importantly, I show how nontraditional uses of media can "bypass existing structures of control, and make available new ideas and information" (Curran 69). Furthermore, this chapter can help technical communicators and media researchers, in particular, to realize the incompleteness of research that fails to account for the full circuit of a

communication.

When, in 1949, Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver introduced a communication transmission model that explains how a message from a sender is decoded by a receiver, though groundbreaking at its time, the Shannon-Weaver model didn't take into account context. As communication scholars came to realize there was a missing link in the circuit, which led to Roman Jakobson, in 1960, developing a more complete model to include context. Similarly, in book history studies, when attempts are made to understand audiences of historical textual artifacts, there's a missing link in the Robert Darnton schematic; information about the reader is limited to discussions of the publisher and the text's print history (Secord 126). James A. Secord explains that knowing a reader's relationship with a text helps us to understand *how* a text is processed through the act of reading:

Placing reading at the center of a history opens up general possibilities for understanding what happens when we read. Reading always takes place in specific contexts of experiences and expectations. It unites an interpretation of words on the page with an understanding of the physical appearance and genre of a work and the ways in which it is marketed and discussed. (5)

As shown in this chapter's look at the Declaration as a divergent use of an existing medium, conventional communication theories and "time-honored strategies" provide a starting point for understanding message interpretation but, as we have seen with the improvements made to the Shannon-Weaver model, they are not the end of the story. Today, especially with the growth in nontraditional uses of existing media and emerging new media markets, there's an underlying complexity within these channels of communication—a result of either their

plasticity or lack of established use—that poses a threat to fully understanding how a message is interpreted when conventional methods are used as a lens.

## Chapter Six:

### Reception, Recognition, and Response:

#### England's Reaction to the Declaration of Independence

The significance of the need to understand *An Answer to the Declaration of the American Congress*—England's response to the Declaration of Independence—is that it helps us to see how the Declaration was the first instance of an emergent genre in political discourse. In content and medium, the *Answer* is an example of an eighteenth-century traditional form for printing literature on the American Cause in both England and Colonial America. By contrast, the Declaration's delivery wasn't common, especially abroad. Chapter Five looked at how audiences might have perceived the uncommon pairing of content and medium brought about by the Dunlap Broadside, the first printed *version* of the Declaration. By using the *Answer* as an example, I show how audiences can become less attentive to content when content is paired with traditional forms of delivery because an assumed use for a medium might lessen a message's audibility. It can create a reduction in attention. This chapter focuses on how an "over-reliance on situated learning," as coined by Lorelei Lingard, et al., might have been why the *Answer's* reception was less favorable than the Declaration's (515).

I start with a timeline for the arrival of the *Answer* and Declaration to their respective destinations. Following it, the *Answer* is then discussed along with scholarly opinions of how its audiences might have received it. From there, John Lind's credibility is discussed as author of the *Answer*. "Mediums, Meaning, and Message Interpretation" focuses on how audiences of the *Answer* and Declaration considered the rhetorical message of each document's packaging in addition to its content. "Balladry, Criminality, and Promotion: Common Uses of the English

Broadside" addresses how common practices in England's uses of the broadside might have stimulated interest in the Dunlap Broadside. Last, "Expectation vs. Ambiguity" dispels the belief that accepted communication practices are intrinsically more effective than nontraditional ones.

To begin to explore the *Answer*, consider that the American colonists lived in a world where news travelled, for the most part, at three miles per hour. Thus, information was only as important as it was relevant to the timing of its arrival. In cases of urgency, where water wasn't a significant factor, a horse was used in place of the foot or boat. In these instances, information travelled about 30 miles per hour; horse transportation was how the Declaration was delivered to the colonies. By the time the American colonists had access to a copy of the *Answer*, many no longer considered themselves as colonists but as Americans. The *Answer's* argument, though much more factual than was the Declaration, was not, in turn, held to a higher esteem upon its arrival. It took until October for a ship to make the approximately 4,000-mile trip to deliver the *Answer*. During the interim, celebrations of independence throughout the colonies—fueled by the arrival of the Dunlap Broadside—were already taking place. In London, newspapers received and printed the Declaration in mid-August. In Europe, the Declaration was delivered to many of the major cities, primarily by post, and it was printed in their newspapers by early September. The arrival of the *Answer* received different treatment. Its length restricted it from being printed in any newspapers. It wasn't printed in a foreign language until January 1777 (French), and that printing was by an English press, implying that

French printers saw less value in printing it than they did the Declaration. While English presses never printed the Declaration as a pamphlet, it was reprinted in several newspapers and as a broadside.

Frederick Lord North, Great Britain's prime minister at this time, had more issues to deal with than just a fallout with the colonies. Despite the gravity of the colonial situation as it was seen from the American perspective, North had an even bigger situation to deal with and that was maintaining a majority in Parliament: "If he wavered on American taxation, he would not take ten members with him into the lobby" (Liebert 9). Herman W. Liebert likens Colonial America's pecking order to be not unlike how courses of action are weighted in our own capital of Washington. Liebert illustrates his analogy using the a 1970s setting during the administration of Richard Nixon: "How easy it is to rank the noisy claims about the Viet Nam war among the other, often inimical, claims of black power, national defense, ecology, the domestic economy, the exploration of space and the campaign of 1972" (9). North's decision on how to handle the conflict in America was, as Liebert further describes, the same decision that Abraham Lincoln had to make in 1861, which was whether to use arms in order to enforce sovereignty: "If it was right for the Southern states to be denied the power of secession in 1860, it was equally right for the American colonies to be denied the power of secession in 1776" (12). Because the British monarchy could not respond directly to the Declaration of Independence—doing so would be to acknowledge Congress as being an equal in both political strength and position to its own government—North privately employed for the task John Lind,

a pamphleteer by profession and educated in British law.<sup>90</sup> Lind's name would have been familiar to readers of pamphlets about the American cause; before the *Answer* he wrote, with some degree of success, *Remarks on the Principal Acts of the Thirteenth Parliament of Great Britain* (1775) and *Letters to Dr. Price* (1776).<sup>91</sup> While it is uncertain how many total publications Lind wrote, several bibliographers list eight pamphlets in existence today.<sup>92</sup>

Lind's writing style in the *Answer* remained mostly unchanged from earlier his pamphlets. His language continued to be straightforward. His claims were clearly defined. He drew on the classical tradition of argument set forth by Aristotle of deliberative and forensic styles, which he adjusted accordingly per situation and appropriateness.<sup>93</sup> Though D.B. Horn describes Lind's style in *Letters Concerning the Present State of Poland* (1773), another of Lind's earlier pamphlets, his description illustrates the argumentative styles used in all Lind's pamphlets: "He has no difficulty in demolishing the historical and legal claims put forward . . .

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<sup>90</sup> Had the monarchy responded directly, doing so stood the potential as being interpreted by Europe that the contention between the two was more than a civil war, thereby encouraging the likelihood of outside involvement in the name of economic and security interests (Armitage, "Declaration" 52). Thus, early on in the *Answer* Lind was sure to remove any possibility of the idea of equality existing between Parliament and Congress: "the leaders of rebellion should wish to shelter their selves, and encourage their deluded followers, by a Declaration of independence? should attempt, at least, to raise the proscribed rebel to the rank of a fair and open enemy?" (iii).

<sup>91</sup> Parliament commissioned Lind to write *Letters to Dr. Price* (Bailyn, "1776" 442). *Letters* addressed Price's claims on civil liberty and government's role. *Remarks* defended England's role in engaging in war with the American colonies.

<sup>92</sup> The major bibliographers of early Americana who list eight extant pamphlets by Lind are Thomas R. Adams, Charles Evans, and John Sabin. For clarification purposes, the word "letters" was used to personalize an otherwise epistemic dialogue whose readership was the public at large, which was a common tactic at the time. For example, *A Letter to the Right Honourable Lord Camden, on the Bill for Restraining the Trade and Fishery of the Four Provinces of New England* and *A Letter to Those Ladies Whose Husbands Possess a Seat in either House of Parliament* are titles of pamphlets written by Lind's contemporaries.

<sup>93</sup> Chosen to rebut, Lind had three writing/communication/discourse problems: authority, purpose, and audience. Lind was able to solve those problems by applying classical (Aristotelian) argumentation and oratory principle. While commonplace in the context in which Lind wrote, those principles are more than loosely applied in *An Answer*. In fact, *An Answer* can be read almost as an exercise in adapting Aristotle to the occasion.

and appeals constantly to the law of nations" (23).<sup>94</sup>

One notable and rather unusual exception, however, was the substantial attention Lind paid to the Declaration's twenty-eight, mostly line item, grievances against King George III. In 110 pages he countered each grievance individually, leaving the other twenty-seven pages to write the remaining three sections, including the little-known extra that is included only in the first edition: "Outline of a Counter-Declaration."<sup>95</sup> In addition to questioning Congress's claims about the king's conduct, the four sections combined name numerous counts in which the colonists had committed acts of barbarism and displayed disloyalty toward the Crown.<sup>96</sup>

In September 1776, five hundred first editions of the *Answer* were printed and sent to America to be disseminated among British troops to use for rebuttal against the charges stated in the Declaration (fig. 6.1).<sup>97</sup> Although other changes were made in the editions that followed besides an omission of the "Counter Declaration," more than eight thousand copies of the *Answer* were printed in the five editions published before January 1777, all by a print shop in

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<sup>94</sup> *Letters Concerning the Present State of Poland* was actually published anonymously. Horn and other historians identify Lind as its author.

<sup>95</sup> In addition to responding to the Declaration, in the introduction of the *Answer* Lind stated that he had also written an "Outline of a Counter Declaration," which he included as the last section of the pamphlet. In it, Lind lists thirty-five grievances that could have been brought against the colonists by the king, but were not on account of the king's compassion for his subjects: "the parent's heart is still affectionate to the penitent child" (George to North, June 27, 1779). {NOT ON YOUR WORKS CITED PAGE.} Among the grievances listed were the establishment of illegal assemblies and carrying out an illegal and traitorous correspondence (e.g., Congress and Committees of Correspondence). No records are known to exist that indicate why the "Counter Declaration" section wasn't included in later editions. Two possibilities that might account for its omission are that with the *Declaration's* reception throughout Europe, the "Counter Declaration" would have lost enough of its intrinsic value to justify further inclusion, and the language in it might have made the king appear soft on his handling of the colonists. George and North, for example, made Samuel Johnson remove language from *Taxation no Tyranny* that castigated the colonists for their reaction to the taxation issue (Liebert 14-15).

<sup>96</sup> In several instances Lind's claims about the grievances were true. See chapter 5 for discussion.

<sup>97</sup> Five hundred was a typical number for pamphlet publications, which indicates that "readership was limited to an already identified segment of the public" (Adams, *American xv*). {*American Independence or American Controversy?*}

Rich<sup>ms</sup> 53

AN

A N S W E R

TO THE

DECLARATION

OF THE

AMERICAN CONGRESS.

*Il popolo molte volte grida  
Viva la sua morte, muoia la sua vita.*

*Num hanc referret gratiam? Num vitam ereptura sit illi, quae  
vitam ipsi dederit?*

*By J.<sup>n</sup> Lind of Lincoln's Inn Esq.*

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*This is the work in its original state.  
A considerable part of this was left out  
at the desire of the Ministry*

LONDON:  
Printed for T. CADELL in the Strand; J. WALTER, Charing-  
cross, and T. SEWELL near the Royal Exchange.  
*in the pub- MDCCLXXVI. - best copy*

*By done autoris J.<sup>s</sup> Bootham.*

Fig. 6.1. England's response to the Declaration of Independence. (Source: John Carter Brown Library, Brown University, Providence, RI.)

London.<sup>98</sup> According to David Armitage and Bernard Bailyn, the *Answer* was "almost the only foreign publication to comment" on the Declaration ("Declaration" 53; "1776" 442).<sup>99</sup>

Any thorough understanding of the *Answer's* fanfare, like the Declaration's, is based upon the number of artifacts that have survived time. In the case of the *Answer*, few artifacts exist today that describe the response it received, so when writing about its reception, scholars can only interpret its popularity within a very limited selection of material, comparatively speaking. Thus, its reception in Colonial America and Europe remains somewhat unclear to modern-day scholars and historians, but most agree that the *Answer* was, as Bailyn states, "scarcely heard against the ringing affirmations of the Declaration" and is today considered by many to be "a piece of arcana, buried in the dustheap of history," as Stephan Lucas describes ("1776" 442; "Declaration").<sup>100</sup>

While some researchers disagree on the extent of the *Answer's* reception, others disagree on its intent. Sheldon Cohen interprets the *Answer* to be a "particularly antagonistic work" that "stridently denounced any right of the Americans to claim independence from Britain" (18). Armitage, too, claims that Lind's modus operandus was to deny "that the Americans were . . . anything other than treacherous . . . rebels" ("Declaration" 52). Yet some saw the *Answer* as a work that clarified the otherwise vaguely-written Declaration. For example, Moses Coit Tyler defends the *Answer* to the point that he boldly claims that "It is doubtful that . . . any competent judge of reasoning will . . . deny to this pamphlet the praise of

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<sup>98</sup> Most notable among the changes to the second and later editions, Lind's name as author and the section proposing a counter declaration were cut. Some additional revisions and cuts to the language in the "Introduction" also took place.

<sup>99</sup> The pamphlet *Strictures upon the Declaration of the Congress at Philadelphia: In a Letter to a Noble Lord*, by Thomas Hutchinson, British royal governor of Massachusetts 1771 to 1774, was the only other major response by the British. Hutchinson, like Lind, devoted the bulk of his work to responding to the grievances.

<sup>100</sup> Conversely, Eliga H. Gould found the *Answer* to be "widely read" ("American" 115).

making out a strong case against the historical accuracy and the logical soundness of many parts of the Declaration of Independence" (500). Lending support to Tyler's claim, Carl Becker states of the twenty-eight grievances listed in the Declaration that they were not "facts," but were "calumnies." Lind, claims Becker, demonstrated that the grievances were defamatory statements by providing examples of how George III's practices were "no different from measures under his predecessors which the Americans had repeatedly recognized" (220).

#### Responding to a New Genre in Political Discourse: John Lind as the *Answer's* Author

Establishing Lind's credibility is important to this study for the following two reasons. For historical purposes it helps us, as contemporary readers, to understand how the British government viewed the colonists. From a professional standpoint, it provides communication analysts with a starting point for understanding the ethos of authorship assigned to the *Answer*. By ethos, I am using the term as it is defined within the realm of classical theory: persuasion based on the character of the speaker (Crowley and Hawhee 165-168).

At the time Lind was selected to write the *Answer*, the monarchy and parliament were already on familiar terms with Lind. Lind had twice served as an ambassador abroad (Turkey and Poland), was author of numerous pamphlets and newspaper articles, and was a fellow at the Society of Antiquaries and the Royal Society. On a personal level, records indicate that he was a "familiar figure at the card parties of Henrietta Maria North," wife of Bishop Brownlow North, Lord North's half-brother. Political reformer and philosopher Jeremy Bentham, Lind's friend, noted that while attending a dinner at Lind's house he met Francis Maseres, attorney general of Quebec from 1766 to 1769, and cursitor baron of the exchequer from 1773 to 1824 (292). Combined, these factors define the rhetorical context of Lind as writer, liaison, lawyer,

and political activist devoted to a number of causes, many of which fall under the category of patriotism both in terms of nationalism and to certain individuals.

The theme of loyalty is central in Lind's works and signifies his allegiance to those who commissioned him as a writer. Each allegiance was dependent upon the motivating force behind the development of the document at the time. For example, in his 1775 pamphlet *Remarks on the Principal Acts of the Thirteenth Parliament of Great Britain*, Lind expressed his hope that "I shall have the merit of having served my country. . . . The motive I can assure of, it is of the purest kind . . . I speak as I feel" (vii). Similarly, in *Letters Concerning the Present State of Poland*, he saw in his own actions a reflection that demonstrated that "I could not render a more acceptable service to your Lordship, nor a more useful one to the public, than to send forth this short, but, I trust, full, defense of the passage in question" (2-3). Lind saw his writing serving as realistic accounts of the shared opinions of those who commissioned it, such as when in the *Answer* Lind stated that "what follows, I conceive, might form the outlines of a Declaration, which his Majesty might make" (119). Even when writing on his own behalf, Lind believed his principles represented those of the general public. For example, in *An Englishman's Answer*, he asserted in matter-of-fact manner that "I believe . . . all my fellow subjects in Great Britain, consider, that you are . . . entitled to all the benefits of English subjects" (4).<sup>101</sup>

Yet his writings received both accolades and criticism. Lords North and George Grenville, Bishop Robert Lowth and Samuel Parr were among those who praised Lind's writing, while Bentham, acknowledging Lind's popularity as a writer, at times criticized his writing on counts

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<sup>101</sup>The full title of *An Englishman's Answer*, a 1775 pamphlet, is *An Englishman's Answer, to the Address, from the Delegates, to the People of Great-Britain, in a Letter to the Several Colonies, which were Represented in the Late Continental Congress* In this pamphlet, Lind agreed with the colonists in that they should be subject to the same treatment subjects living in England received, but he disagreed with them that their treatment differed from their English counterparts.

of plagiarism and poor scholarship.<sup>102</sup> For instance, in a letter dated July 5, 1776—the same day many historians believe the Declaration was being printed at John Dunlap's print shop in preparation to be sent to England—Bentham described Lind's popularity to his younger brother Samuel as favorable: "His book against Price is out [*Three Letters to Dr. Price*]. Ld. North and Mansfield approve of it highly—Ld. M. has reproached Ld. North for not having yet done anything for him" (*Collected* 1:333-34).<sup>103</sup> Yet, in a letter believed to be written between March 27 and April 1 in the same year, Bentham chastised Lind directly for overreliance on the use of Bentham's own material:

You [Lind] should find some means of exculpating me from a charge of plagiarism I may otherwise stand exposed to. The Definition of Liberty is one of the corner stones of my system: and one that I know not how to do without. I must make use of it . . . . When I do, my enemies . . . will be objecting to me that what I have said is stolen. (*Collected* 1:311)

The evidence of Bentham's contribution to Lind's work is convincing.<sup>104</sup> In a September 2, 1776, letter to Lind, Bentham included extensive notes and edits that reappeared in the "Short Review of the Declaration" section of the *Answer*.

Accusations of plagiarism aside, Bentham considered Lind's general writing style to be

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<sup>102</sup> Lord George Grenville served as prime minister from 1763 to 1765. His government oversaw the Stamp Act. Robert Lowth was an Oxford University professor and bishop for the Church of England. He is more commonly known for writing *A Short English Grammar* (1762), an early rendition of books that provide commentary and instruction on proper grammatical uses. Parr was a school master and author. Included in his publications is the *Introduction to English Grammar* (1765), which was a move away from Latin to English instruction in schools.

<sup>103</sup> *Three Letters* attacked Richard Price's *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, the Principles of Government, and the Justice and Policy of the War with America* (1776). Mansfield helped with his matriculation into Lincoln's Inn where Lind studied law. Mansfield was also England's lord chief justice and noted jurist.

<sup>104</sup> Bentham had also written several pages of what came to be known as the *Answer's* introduction. For more about Bentham's contribution, see *The Correspondence of Jeremy Bentham*, Vol. 1:1752-1776. {NOT ON YOUR WORKS CITED PAGE.}

"too agitated." It concentrated too much on "interrogations and exclamation." Two years before writing the *Answer*, Lind was working on a critique of William Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* and asked Bentham to review his draft. In an October 5, 1774, letter, Bentham said that the Blackstone criticism "suffered [t]oo much pathos in . . . some places for an attack upon a work which in its nature is not pathetic." In addition to style, Bentham reminded Lind to take note of the ethos he may, or may not, carry with the audience for whom he is writing:

You are teaching while you are learning: you have instruction to seek yourself, while you have correction to give him: you have your own ideas to form, while you have his to censure: In pushing him down the hill, you have to climb up it yourself. Were you already up, you could take a commanding view of the field, choose your ground beforehand and combat him with more advantage. This makes you in some places take larger compass than perhaps is necessary. I have always found it so myself. Leading ideas, principles, take up many more words in their first disclosure than are sufficient to contain them afterwards. (*Collected Works* 1: 204-05)

When crafting a response to the Declaration it is questionable whether, or to what extent, Lind followed Bentham's advice. In general, leading up to writing the *Answer*, his writing style remained about the same as it did prior to critiquing Blackstone's commentaries. For instance, in 1775 when Lind wrote *Remarks*, Bentham assisted in its composition with sizeable redactions. Yet, when writing the *Answer*, at least one stylistic use that could have been a result of Bentham's advice (i.e., that "leading ideas, principles, take up more words in their first

disclosure,") is evident in the *Answer's* set up.

While his approach to building a foundation for his argument could have been a result of the grievances' vague assertions by their failure to list dates and places of occurrence, it is unlikely. The pamphlet wars had been going on for a solid two years before the Declaration was written, so most of the charges brought against the monarchy had been written about before July 1776.<sup>105</sup> Thus, it is difficult to understand why Lind wrote the following passage detailing the style of his argument, but it does lend itself to the possibility that Lind, like many others, was perplexed not so much by the actual language of the Declaration but by the implicit message of its delivery:

The facts we are now about to examine: To state them more clearly, the several charges are numbered; and divided into so many separate Articles. They are given in the order in which they stand in the Declaration; and each considered apart. But . . . it was thought right to subjoin a short, but general, Review of the whole; in which the maxims and the theory are examined; and the grievances alleged are classed under their respective heads. (*Answer* xiv)

Of all Lind's known works, explanation for the method he used to design a text, as in the example above, is most intricately detailed in the *Answer*. His reasoning behind including those words, and going about doing so in such detail, was probably because, to paraphrase his own reasoning, Lind said that in crafting the *Answer* his intention was to use a format and style that did not confuse the reader as Jefferson's style had done (ix-xi). Yet, Lind didn't just respond to

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<sup>105</sup> Lind had even responded to Congress's 1774 petition (i.e., *The Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress*, also known as the *Declaration of Rights and Grievances*) which stated several of the same grievances.

the content of the Declaration. He went so far as to wage war on its physical characteristics as well. The Declaration's content and presentation combined to create an element of surprise (audience response) that he assumed was shared by others: "[I]f we give ourselves time to reflect, we shall find, that there is nothing in all this that ought to surprise us . . . [about] this audacious paper . . . [that is being used to] hold out the glittering object of independence," which he considered to be "a studied confusion in the order which they [arguments for independence] were arranged" (i, x, xiv).

So sure was Lind that the *Answer* would set straight the Declaration's charges as being "unsupported," that "with confidence" his rebuttal was outfitted with a counter-declaration. Lind thought a counter-declaration—the *Answer*'s concluding section in the first edition—would be an addition that "his Majesty might have made, had it been consistent with dignity or policy to have made any Declaration" (xv). Lind drew thirty-five charges that, he implied, could have been brought against the colonists at any time since the French and Indian War. But until the writing of the Declaration, the king had been reluctant to do so in an attempt to avoid escalating the existing conflict to that of a full-blown civil war.<sup>106</sup>

### Mediums, Meanings, and Message Interpretation

To illustrate how an individual typically handles writing within an unfamiliar genre, Brent Henze explains that one would likely begin the process by collecting several documents intended for similar purposes as one's own interest to use as models (1). The approach Henze suggests is similar to the one Jefferson took when writing the Declaration and the one Lind took when responding with the *Answer*. In Jefferson's case, a self-proclaimed secession from a

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<sup>106</sup> The monarchy denied that the British Constitution provided the colonists a right to armed resistance when the Constitution did, in fact, provide the grounds for protection by use of force.

mother land had never before occurred, so Jefferson had little to go on while drafting such a statement. To compensate, he crafted the document by borrowing from popular literature that represented a shift in the colonial mindset. The attitudinal changes he described had emerged as a result of the occurrences listed as grievances, which began with the Stamp Act and on several occasions thereafter had been expressed before July 1776. Thus, both the language and the references used were familiar to Parliament. Like Jefferson, Lind also pulled from previous communications between Parliament and Congress that referenced events ensuing with the announcement of the Stamp Act. Lind, however, went one step beyond discussing the existing tensions. He included a thorough account of the relational history shared by England and the colonists before England's imposition of a tax to help recover the money it had spent to protect Colonial America during the French and Indian War. In ways so similar in some respects, yet so different in others, when writing the Declaration and *Answer* both Jefferson and Lind had preconceived ideas of the best method for drafting their documents, which included modeling their texts after existing texts within the genre. Both authors borrowed extensively from existing texts familiar to the monarchy and Parliament, Congress, and each document's respective additional audiences—the *Answer's* audience being British troops, Congress, and Europe; the Declaration's audience being American colonists, Parliament, and Europe. Identifying the similarities used to construct the two documents leads us to consider the more obvious factor concerning the two: their systemic difference in form.

A traditional form of packaging for political publications was selected to prepare the *Answer*, and that was the pamphlet. The use of pamphlets for writing lengthy, complex political views was longstanding in England and Europe. As a newcomer on the scene, Colonial America,

too, had picked up the art, most aggressively with the onset of tensions with England. So widely used was the pamphlet that Bailyn claims it to be the most common of all written communication media at this time (*Ideological 2*). As a medium, the pamphlet differentiated itself from other media in that writers could express themselves within a genre where constraints in form, style, and page limits were loosely defined, and speech was less restrictive than it is in broadsides. From the reader's perspective, another possibility that might have added to pamphlets' popularity was that, except in cases where authorship was anonymous, a pamphlet's authorship was often more clearly discernible, for example, than that of media where authorship and textual intent could be more difficult to determine, such as in a newspaper or magazine article.<sup>107</sup>

Identification, however, came with its share of consequences. For example, *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty*, written by the English minister Richard Price and published February 1776, received responses in the forms of thirty-four book and pamphlet publications, fifteen letters in the *Morning Chronicle*, and several anonymously written death threats. Public criticism so damned his reputation that in a letter to Franklin, Price wrote that he was "so marked and obnoxious that prudence requires me to be very cautious" (qtd. in Bailyn "1776").

As a witness to the castigations plaguing Price at the time the Declaration arrived in England, the British government likely carefully considered its options on how best to respond.

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<sup>107</sup> For instance, Benjamin Franklin used a female pseudonym to write the story of Polly Baker. Baker, a fictitious character, was facing her fifth prosecution for having a bastard child. She argued her case so well that the judge both acquitted her and married her. The story was first published in London in April 1747 in *The Gentleman's Magazine* and later throughout England and Colonial America. Very few people, if any, realized it was a satire attacking discrimination against women. In March 1790, Franklin again fabricated a speech in Philadelphia's *Federal Gazette* newspaper, this time by the fictitious Sidi Mehemet Ibrahim, a member of the divan of Algiers. This speech and its associated authorship was used to support Franklin's fight for the abolition of slavery.

By 1776, George III's sporadic outbursts and questionable decisions had crippled his once stalwart reputation, so much so that in many respects he was considered a "laughing stock" among his English subjects, to whom he was most visible. George III reigned during a time that was also considered by historians to be the golden age of caricature art. Satirical images of noteworthy people and events in cartoon-like frames were available for sale in local print shops. Caricaturists James Gillray, Richard Newton, Thomas Rowlandson, and others especially profited from the king's handling of his American subjects. For instance, caricaturist Mary Darly published a character in May of 1776—three months before England received the Declaration—portraying British troops fighting the colonists while holding two flags, one sporting an ass and the other a fool's cap. The only reason we know to have been expressed about why the king or his ministers didn't respond directly to the Declaration was Lind's saying that doing so would have pitted the two governments as equals, which, to the British government, they were not. Nevertheless, given the emotional climate brewing in England at the time that surrounded the debate over the dispute with the colonists, Lind might also have been chosen as a way for Parliament to still issue a response, but circumvent its consequences. If this was the case, Lind was the sacrificial lamb.

That the monarchy indirectly profited by identifying Lind as the author of the *Answer* has some merit: it explains why two versions of the *Answer* appeared in 1776. Armitage suggests the motive for publishing a second version, which omitted a reference to authorship and the section with the counter-declaration, was that in the first version the ministry (through Lind) "went too far." Its text, he states, conjectured too much in its reasoning why the Declaration was written, and it overly speculated how the refutation of the "Counter

Declaration" would be received: "The ministry suppressed the initial text of the *Answer*—only one copy of which now survives—and had the whole work revised" (*Declaration 75*).<sup>108</sup> While Armitage explains the editorial decisions made concerning revisions for the second version, he doesn't say why the language was used to begin with. One likely reason for its inclusion could have been that when Lind wrote the first version, whether consciously or not, he was also responding to its packaging.

#### Balladry, Criminality, and Promotion: Common Uses of the English Broadside

In mid-eighteenth-century England, the broadside (often referred to there as the broadsheet) was commonly used for purposes similar to the tabloid's use today. Sensationalist language described the heinous acts of wrongdoers and merciful pleas by the accused, wove mythical tales of legend and lore, and pitched sales for new products. In many instances, the highly-inflated language served as propagandist tactics to sway audiences into actually purchasing the broadsheets themselves, as opposed to merely hearing them read in the streets, taverns, coffee houses, and other places conducive to ready-made audiences. Illustrated sheets made with simple woodcuts, typically selling for a halfpenny or penny, often served as wall art in homes of the poor while the more rhetorically powerful sheets were fodder for Sunday sermons and the next pamphlet. In an inexpensive and easy way, ministers and pamphleteers could gauge public interest and response to the latest "news" item through the attention it received by a broadside's reporting of it. Assuming the content caused a stir, "information gatherers" then drew from it to construct a more in-depth version for their own communication outlets, a situation which lends credence to Marshall McLuhan's adage that "the content of any

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<sup>108</sup> The John Carter Brown Library (Providence, RI) holds the only extant copy of the Lind first edition and that it is not available in current online databases, such as *Sabin Americana*.

medium is another medium" ("Report" 9).

Just as the broadside's use of emotive hyperbole implies, not *all* that was reported was factually represented. But, the information being reported was realistic enough to be credible. A nugget of credible authority appealed to its audiences then as much as today's audiences are drawn to historical fiction, if not more so. Eighteenth-century English printers and publishers typically had direct access to sources that the general public did not, thereby rousing audience curiosities and piquing intrigues into a world beyond their own. And sometimes, an iota of truth wasn't necessary to entice audiences. The broadside's sensationalistic "too-amazing-to-be-true" qualities were enough: information on strange animals, monstrous human or animal births, witchcraft, and amazing cures could be frequently found on any given street side (Shapiro 88). As Douglas A. Brooks states, the broadside "confirms its own power to represent through its particular printed format" what other mediums cannot do, including those that actually provide visual representation such as paintings and sculptures (230).

English broadsides did not always have a tabloid-like reputation. Their early uses were for printing royal proclamations, acts, and official notices.<sup>109</sup> The National Library of Scotland describes them as evolving into a "vehicle for political agitation," and also a repository for "what is now known as 'popular culture'" ("Word on the Street"). The broadside's origin actually places it among the earliest forms of the modern newspaper. As the demand for news grew, so did the number of pages required to report it, which accounts for the broadside's evolutionary transformation into the multiple-page design practices of newspapers today. For example, between 1640 and 1660, about 30,000 "news papers" were printed in England in the forms of

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news letters, sheets, papers, and broadsides ("History of British Newspapers"). During the seventeenth century, the broadside as a news outlet flourished so much so that the monarchy initiated an embargo on its content for fear that the "reckless publishing of news" could jeopardize the integrity of the Crown ("History"). Material for printing was limited to events abroad, natural disasters, royal declarations, and crime. To illustrate the depth of the issue, author John Milton, suffering from England's strict publishing laws when trying to circulate arguments that defended divorce, waged an attack on the Licensing Act of 1643 with his pamphlet *Areopagitica*. The Licensing Act required printers to acquire a license for each text prior to its publication. Any material offensive to the English government that was printed without a license was seized and destroyed and its author and publisher were imprisoned. *Areopagitica* argued for "liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all other liberties." But, realizing that wouldn't occur, as a compromise Milton proposed a system that controls for the use of inappropriate material by requiring the name of the printer and author to be included in a text's publication (this had been an earlier practice by England).

While the Licensing Act itself expired in 1694, variations of censorship continued throughout England well into the eighteenth century. Libel laws restrained the press from discussing such concepts as national security issues and writing obscene or blasphemous gestures. Thus, when Edward Mallet printed England's first daily newspaper, the *Daily Courant*, in 1702, he advertised that his paper would print only foreign news and not add any editorial

commentary.<sup>110</sup> By the mid-eighteenth century, the number of newspapers circulating in London alone was about 25,000 each day, including at least nine dailies, eight tri-weeklies, and nine weeklies among a population nearing one million by 1780 (Barker, *Newspapers, Politics, and English* 23; McCullough 4). And following newspaper proliferation were the libel laws.

Given what appears to be a discrepancy in leniency when comparing the language used in broadsides and newspapers, it seems that more restrictions were placed on newspapers than broadsides. This conjecture especially rings true during the 1760s-1780s, the years enveloping the American conflict during the reign of King George III. It could be that the abundance of broadsides papering London streets and public places was too extensive, and their overall influence—when compared to newspapers—too miniscule to busy the Stationers' Company, the censorship enforcement arm of government.<sup>111</sup> Like senders of unsolicited electronic mail (email) today, broadside writers tried to take in as large an audience as possible, and as quickly as possible. Also like unsolicited emails, the broadside's lifespan—by definition of socio-cultural value placed on the medium—was short, frequently losing audience's interest as quickly as the next one surfaced with the most recent information hot off the press. The quick turnover and sporadic printing of the medium might have been the reasons for audiences not holding it to a greater level of believability, so strict regulation of its text might have been deemed unnecessary. For instance, a jab at the king's mental instability was just as likely to appear on a broadside as it was in a caricature print; but newspapers were unlikely to attack the king's

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<sup>110</sup> The *Courant* is most commonly referenced as being England's first daily though the *Norwich Post* claimed it was originally printed daily in 1701.

<sup>111</sup> The Stationers' Company was a London trade guild for printers, bookbinders, and booksellers that was granted a royal charter and allowed the exclusive rights to benefit from receiving all printing jobs in exchange for regulating the material being printed.

persona (see Fig. 6.2 for a broadside where the king is called "raving mad").<sup>112</sup> All things being equal, the discrepancy implies that in some cases the influence of a medium outweighed that of its content, perhaps because, as McLuhan famously wrote, "the medium is the message."

This classic statement, coined in the 1960s to explain the effects media have both on content and the hierarchical status they wield over each other, sheds light on why newspapers, pamphlets, and books might have been more tightly regulated than broadsides and caricatures. Moreover, it helps us to understand what might have led England to select the pamphlet for issuing a response to the Declaration, i.e., that the pamphlet was seen as having a higher social standing than the broadside.

McLuhan's statement that the "content of any medium is another medium" is referenced above to demonstrate how ministers and pamphleteers often looked to broadsides to gauge public interest in a topic.<sup>113</sup> Juxtaposing that demonstration with two of McLuhan's descriptions about media's influence further shows how media shape content interpretation: (1) The content of radio is speech. But the effect of radio is not that of speech nor is it of writing; and (2) If a new or different medium is introduced, it puts new stress on one of our senses and alters the ratio among all of our senses (*Gutenberg 24*).<sup>114</sup> The first description shows how a medium shapes content, the second, how the attention assigned to a medium is determined by the social construct in which it is used. So, the content borrowed from a broadside to write a Sunday sermon would become material for a speech medium. And the

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<sup>112</sup> Today it is thought that George III suffered from porphyria, a blood disease that affects the nervous system. See footnote in Ch. 2 for more description.

<sup>113</sup> See chapter 3 for more discussion on media uses in England.

<sup>114</sup> For additional information on how McLuhan views mediums as having the ability to alter an audience's sensory ratios, consult his theories on "hot" and "cool" media in *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964).

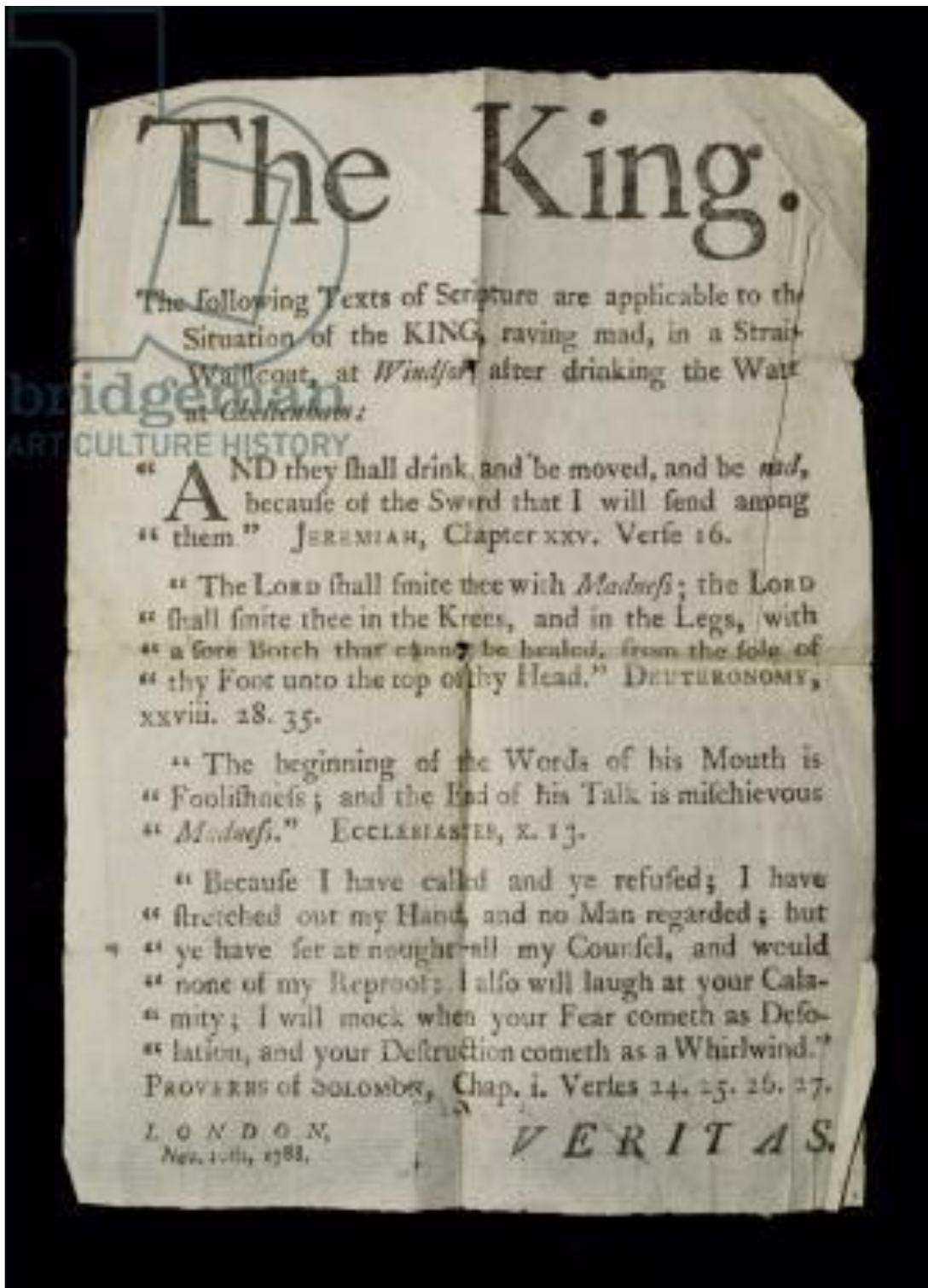


Fig. 6.2. Broadside discussing the madness of King George III, 1788. (Source: English School, (18th century) / Private Collection / The Bridgeman Art Library International.)

context would shift from strangers gathering at a local coffee house or tavern to congregants in a religious setting, drawing spiritual conclusions from the hearsay of yesterday's "tabloid." Similarly, the pamphleteer, often a member of England's well-educated class, regularly relied on the broadside's content to construct polemics for a writing medium that would be purchased by "prominent and influential men" or found in coffee houses and taverns to be read free of charge by those literate enough to read it (Bailyn, *Ideological 8*; Adams, *American Controversy xv*). Thus, according to McLuhan's explanation, it is understandable why the content of the Declaration—most of which was previously stated by congress or published in books and pamphlets—when recycled onto a broadside, suddenly received more attention (by way of response through the *Answer*) than the prior communications had accomplished. This is not to say that content plays a lesser role in audience attentiveness than does its packaging. Certainly there are many examples where content played a greater significance in reaching an audience than did its packaging; *Common Sense* is an example. The purpose here is to show that in some cases where content and packaging are mismatched, the content can play a greater role in audience's interpretation of the content than we recognize it as being able to do.

So much was the broadside's message audible among so many of its English audience that the monarchy found itself in a predicament: How might a king who is ruler over a combined population of more than thirteen million subjects respond to a communication from a quasi-legal congress, but signed by a mere two people and published on a broadside?<sup>115</sup> From a modern-day view of political communication practices, governments typically wouldn't write

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<sup>115</sup> President of the Second Continental Congress, John Hancock, and its presiding secretary, Charles Thomson. Congressional signatures weren't included until after the engrossed copy, ordered on July 19, was reading for signing on August 2.

a response to a few citizens fueled by claims of inequality and injustice and therefore threatening to remove themselves from conventional leadership. Thus the even larger question looming is why was a response *necessary* to the Declaration when it wasn't even written in a customary genre calling for one? The answer to that question is as straightforward as this: The Dunlap broadside had within its structure a built-in, Janus-like component that spelled ambiguity for audiences.

Readers of the Dunlap *Declaration* were absorbing the content while factoring in the echoing message of the medium. The double meaning of the full message (one from the content, the other from the medium) heightened reader awareness with its English audience. The broadside sent from Colonial America wasn't paired with a genre that was typically used for broadsides in London at the time, and further complicating the matter was that readers of this period read with a more "extraordinary intensity" than is common today (Secord 342). For the most part, eighteenth-century readers of Westernized cultures cut their literary teeth on the Bible, developing a reading practice which transferred over to how other genres were read: "slowly, line-by-line, and with utmost attention" (Secord 343). While James A. Secord discusses English readers of the 1840s, his claims I use here arguably best describe the English reader of seventy years prior to England's Industrial Revolution.

The 1840s gave birth to quicker message delivery systems through the invention of the electronic telegraph, steam-operated printing press, and the Uniform Penny Post, and also to improvements made in transportation with canals and steamboats, and on land, railroads. Before these inventions and improvements, news sent to England in 1776 came in the forms of newspapers, pamphlets, and letters, and as mentioned above, a sailing vessel, horse (or horses

if a coach was used), and foot messenger would have been the only options of transporting it. Though information flowed at a faster pace than ever before in the eighteenth century (because it was sent more frequently), comparatively, the actual production and processing of information was still at a much slower rate than it was in the 1840s, the time Secord describes, when information sent from a telegraph travelled at a speed of 192,000 miles per second (26).<sup>116</sup> The differences in how accessible news was, therefore, might have led the eighteenth-century reader to pore over a text as though it were a Bible more so than even the nineteenth-century reader would have done. From socio-cultural and economic standpoints, Bibles, too, more than in the nineteenth century, were used to educate and teach literacy. And, other than a broadside, the costs involved for owning reading material limited their ownership to mainly the middle and upper classes. Conversely, with the nineteenth century came publishers who offered inexpensive books in all genres including education and art. These factors lessened the need, compared with the eighteenth century, to use the Bible as the sole tool for developing reading habits. By the same token, there was also less of a need to purchase broadsides for wall art depicting a picture of a sensationalized occurrence or the last words of a dying criminal, as some audiences of the eighteenth-century broadside had done.

All to say that from our understanding of who these audiences might have been (which we learned of in Chapter Three), we now see *how* they, as readers, might have approached texts. Combined with their uses for media, both through interface and agency, we can then see how the Declaration of Independence on a broadside could have heightened audience awareness of the language comprising the document since usability within each medium is a

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<sup>116</sup> See Chapter 3 for more information on media availability and Chapter 4 for audience.

result of a cultural-historical milieu. As for the broadside in particular, "controversies about the future shape of the polity were embodied in the physical size and shape of printed material," which often didn't include this medium (52). In the case of the Dunlap Declaration, the message emitting from the medium might have heightened audience attentiveness to the content, so much so that the audience responded to the content as though for the first time (McLuhan, *Understanding* 24; Porter 68)). This study does not provide a discussion of reader-response theories. My aim is simply to show that the unusual pairing of the Declaration and broadside might have generated more awareness of the content than traditional pairings because of the uses assigned to the broadside.<sup>117</sup> And to answer the question about how George III responded to the approximately 19- by 14-inch heavy-chained single sheet declaring America free from England's reign, he didn't. Instead, someone else was paid to do the job. And in so doing, Lind, using the more customary and traditional exchange for political polemics, wrote a 137-page pamphlet.

#### Expectation vs. Ambiguity

As Karen Schriver notes, the first decision people make about a text is whether they're going to read it (164). Using examples of the pitfalls of desktop publishing, Schriver claims that the ramifications of using templates are that they aren't always the best models for content presentation because the information appears to audiences as being prepackaged (6). As we have seen with the comparison between the Dunlap Broadside version of the Declaration of Independence and *An Answer to the Declaration of the American Congress*, the failure of a sender to consider a medium's influence on an audience can alter the effectiveness of the

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<sup>117</sup> For discussion on reader-response theory see almost any work by David Bleich, Steven Mailloux, Walter Ong, or James Porter.

message, because "every time we pick up a book or read a newspaper . . . [i]t unites an interpretation of words on the page with an understanding of the physical appearance and genre of a work and the ways in which it is marketed and discussed" (Secord 4-5). Through the back and forth relationship between audience and message (from both the content and medium) discourse is shaped. In the case of the *Answer's* content/medium pairing, it was a common match. Audiences *expected* the political polemic to be printed in a pamphlet. Conversely, in the Dunlap Declaration's case, where the content and medium were uncommonly matched, the ambiguity made for the audience to have to interpret an understanding of the document's meaning and significance because a precedent for conventional interpretation had not yet been determined. Lind's response in the *Answer*, as Garry Wills describes it, supplied an argument that was as rhetorically heated as the Declaration's "and better grounded" (73). The *Answer* is also an example of an eighteenth-century traditional writing form for printing literature on the American Cause in both England and Colonial America. By contrast, the Dunlap Declaration's combined message wasn't as common; as a result, its content received more attention.

## **Chapter Seven:**

### **Afterword**

Early last year I boarded a Southwest Airlines flight, chose my seat, buckled the seatbelt, and then resumed reading my book. Other passengers continued to board, some accidentally bumping my shoulder, others knocking my elbow from the armrest as they passed by my seat, but the distraction was expected and its interruption minor at worst. I was sufficiently engulfed enough in reading that I hardly noticed any of the commotion. Having flown many times before this flight, the events forming around me were something I had grown accustomed to over time. Also over time, I learned to ignore them. When all of the passengers had finally settled into their seats I was already deeply involved with the storyline, and the sounds surrounding me were nothing more than white noise. That is, until the flight attendants began briefing passengers on the plane's safety aspects in preparation for takeoff.

I didn't shut my book because I suddenly wanted to listen to preflight safety instructions. Having heard the instructions during previous flights, not to mention having looked at the safety card in the seat pocket in front of me, I knew how to prepare myself in the case of sudden air loss in the cabin or an emergency landing. But my mind refused to continue its interest in reading and instead listened to the flight attendants as though the information they presented was new or suddenly important. Flotation aids were presented as inflatable toilet seat covers, overhead masks distributing oxygen were suggested to distribute vodka instead. "Turn off your cell phones, BlackBerries, and blueberries" was followed by "give your seatbelts a tug, your neighbors a hug, this Boeing's a rollin', it's time to get goin'." Southwest Airlines had tricked my mind. By repackaging passenger safety instructions into standup

comedy, the flight attendants' humor and passengers' laughter overtook my concentration, and thereby forced me to pay attention.

Like Southwest, many workforce cultures are indicating by their use of nontraditional information packaging that they are aware of the potential influences brought about by such applications. As I've shown with the Dunlap Broadside version of the Declaration of Independence, nontraditional content/medium pairings *can* produce the same intended effect as traditional pairings, and *sometimes* the effect can be greater than that which occurs from traditional pairings. Whether the combinations are out of necessity (e.g., Dunlap might have chosen the broadside for its ability to be quickly distributed) or intentionally (e.g., the safety briefing by Southwest attendants), there is evidence that irregular pairings impact audiences differently from traditional pairings.

The significance of the relationship between a medium and its content was recognized long before Marshall McLuhan brought attention to it in the 1960s. The following two examples show the historical awareness of media's differing influences on content existing in the earliest ages of textual communication. Evidence of understanding content packaging dates as far back as 3000 BCE with the Mesopotamians' use of clay. Mesopotamians saw clay as a mixture of blood and water that was used by God to make the first mortal. Therefore, not only was it interpreted as a material having special meaning, anything the moist earthy matter was used for was also considered special. Early Egyptians, on the other hand, placed their emphasis on papyrus, a towering reed plant commonly found on the banks of the Nile River. Its pulp-like pith was easily processed into sheets used for writing (see Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia* for a detailed description of this process). D.F. McKenzie describes papyrus as serving two purposes:

While the scribes used it for their work, its religious affiliation had presence in Egyptian temples and mythologies. The ease with which it could be rolled into a scroll might explain why even after vellum was introduced—vellum having a much smoother writing surface than papyrus—papyrus wasn't as quickly replaced in the houses of God as it was in its secular uses. Papyrus, unlike vellum, likely held a greater influence over audiences than did the crudely-folded shapes of cowhide, this hierarchy being brought about by its visually rhetorical relationship with the Bible's claim of the sky being rolled back like a "scroll" (Isaiah 34:4, Revelations 6:14). Though shapes would change and materials evolve, information packaging continues to be viewed by users as influential to audiences independent of the content they present, a fact which makes placing content in new or different packaging difficult if the pairing has been untested on audiences.

Proof that workforce cultures today are looking for ways to boost communication with their audiences is apparent. Yet, in the field of technical and professional communication, little effort has been made to try to understand these newer, and many times nontraditional, pairings. Moreover, this lack of interest in such pairings may be why alternative approaches are being explored outside the field. For instance, in 2000, the National Transportation Safety Board published *Emergency Evacuation of Commercial Airplanes*, a study looking at the effectiveness of the airline industry's evacuation communication practices presented to passengers. The Safety Board investigated forty-six evacuations that involved 2,651 passengers and eighteen different aircraft types (not to be mistaken for airlines). Of the participants onboard these aircraft at the time the emergency communication instructions were activated, fifty-four percent of the passengers (247 out of 457) stated they "did not watch the entire

briefing because they had seen it on previous flights." Of the 431 passengers who reported information about the safety card, sixty-eight percent (293) did not read it. Of those, eighty-nine percent said they didn't read it on that particular flight because they had done so on previous flights, implying they were already familiar with the instructions. Of particular concern for the Safety Board was the forty-four percent (175) of the 399 passengers who said they neither reviewed the safety card nor listened to the flight attendants' safety briefing (59-66). Another alarming factor is that safety information differs depending on the aircraft. Because passengers read a safety card or listen to a flight attendant's safety briefing on one flight doesn't mean that they can properly function during an emergency situation on another flight.

According to the NTSB study, with the "exception of videotaping, there has been *little change* over the years in how safety information has been presented to passengers" (63). The Safety Board's suggestions to the Federal Aviation Administration weren't much better. The NTSB recommended

that the FAA develop tests and standards which describe the minimum level of acceptable comprehension and performance to measure whether persons who represent typical passengers understand the safety information presented during oral briefings and demonstrations, on safety cards, and in videotaped briefings, and whether these persons actually are able to perform the actions described, such as using supplemental oxygen systems, using life preservers, and opening of exits.

The tweaking approach to policy change, as the NTSB suggests, compared to a complete policy overhaul, may explain why passengers on Southwest flights appear to be paying more attention

to safety briefings on its airline than on others, assuming laughter is an indicator. Rather than modifying the norm through additional testing "to measure whether persons who represent typical passengers understand the safety information," Southwest divested its safety briefing of its typical nuances and then repackaged it with genres not typically associated with risk communication: comedy, singing, and poetry.<sup>118</sup>

Similarly, in 2010 flight attendants for the Philippines-based Cebu Pacific Airlines danced to music by Lady Gaga and Katy Perry while giving safety demonstrations. Cebu passengers actually received safety information twice: the first version, before takeoff, in the customary fashion. Once the aircraft was in the air, the entertaining approach began. The "safety dance," as Cebu Vice President for Marketing and Distribution, Candice Iyog, calls it, was conducted as a test demonstration that the airline plans to expand ("Cebu"). Thereby, the list of genres used for flight safety briefings will also include dance.

In another workforce culture, that of medicine, the "Speak Up" campaign launched by the Joint Commission, a nonprofit group that accredits hospitals, introduced lapel buttons to encourage patients to talk to medical examiners about their concerns. The buttons challenged patients to hold examiners accountable for hygienic and safety practices with such language as "Ask me whether I washed my hands." The initiative began after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported in 2002 that "hospitals are a significant cause of morbidity and mortality," resulting in approximately 1.7 million cases annually (Klebens).

Also in the medical field, family practitioner Dr. Rani Whitfield relies on a sound studio and hip hop music to reach young African American audiences. True to the genre's stylistic beat

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<sup>118</sup> Southwest Airlines was not part of this study because it had no emergency evacuations take place during the investigation.

but not its typical content, Whitfield raps instructions on how to reduce obesity, heart disease, strokes and other medically-related issues that are leading causes of death in the African American population. Known as "The Hip Hop Doc," the Louisiana doctor's communication strategy has broadened his audience base from Baton Rouge to a nationwide span through television appearances on CNN and BET channels. Likewise, in a manner related to Whitfield's, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has also rapped. The 65-year-old Museveni used the youthful art form as a package for campaign speeches in his recent bid for re-election in a country where nine out of ten people are under 40 years old. YouTube and local radio stations aired his recordings.

Another media outlet that is currently showing up in workforce cultures is animation. Simple-looking characters (often animals, politicians, celebrities, or superhero personas) with computer-generated, monotone voices are used as an internal communication alternative by Lockheed Martin and in commercials that target new clients for Geico Insurance. The crudely produced animated movie shorts, starting at about \$10 to make, were originally marketed to movie production companies as virtual frames for storyboarding ideas. But the medium's greatest success came from interest by professions outside the movie industry and included the fields of law, medicine, and journalism. For instance, the Taiwanese-based New Media Animation is designing animated news clips for Asian television stations to serve as mnemonics for retaining information and explaining complex news stories (*Xtranormal*; Gamerman).<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> A similar attempt to facilitate people's ability to retain newsworthy information occurred in Paris during the eighteenth century where news was written in lyrical form to be sung in familiar tunes, as noted in *Poetry and the Police: Communication Networks in Eighteenth Century Paris* by Robert Darnton (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2010).

As this study shows, particularly in this chapter, several businesses and industries are turning to nontraditional communication practices in place of established ones to reach audiences. In like manner, both the staying power and growth in the use of irregular pairings indicate a favorable outcome in their ability to deliver information. In these examples, as it is when introducing new genres, audiences had the flexibility to interpret the artifact's meaning and decipher its significance according to their individual understandings of the medium, content, context, and social situation. For instance, many of the newer media have no established parameters that define their "common" uses, *and* common uses for some older media are no longer salient. Some media have multiple uses, others have new uses, and still other media continue to be paired with the same use(s) they were assigned at their inception. Today's audiences typically "investigate the sort of evidence" that might be drawn from this "new reception and reading history" of content/medium relationships, and then establish parameters for a medium's use based on their understanding of socio-contextual uses of existing genres (Raven 269; McLuhan, "Report" 69).

*The following two court cases illustrate the complex relationship that exists within a content/medium dyad that audiences contemplate when establishing normative uses for a medium. The cases show how expectations for use can differ when media are subject to multiple uses.*

In 2010, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear *Snyder v. Phelps*, a case where the father of a fallen Marine sued a church in Topeka, Kansas, for waging an anti-gay campaign outside the doors of his son's funeral service. Westboro Baptist Church, having about seventy congregants according to media outlets, used picket signs at the funeral and then online

postings thereafter. In both forms of expression, the church claimed the United States is at war because of God's displeasure over US tolerance for homosexuals. The soldier's death meant one less practitioner for Satan, according to the church, justifying its "celebration" with the use of language such as "Thank God for Dead Soldiers." When the Supreme Court agreed to take the case, the justices disagreed over the impact of the *media* used to convey anti-gay messages as much as they did the possibility of First Amendment violations. "[T]he outcome was hard to predict . . . because the case mingled . . . different forms of expression that some justices suggested had distinct legal implications," stated Jess Bravin, a Supreme Court correspondent (Bravin).

In another Supreme Court case, *Schwarzenegger v. Entertainment Merchants Association*, justices will contemplate whether California's law that prohibits selling or renting videogames to minors violates First Amendment rights. The issue at hand concerns a disproportionate interest in the influence videogames have on the minds of adolescents compared with other graphic media, such as books, movies, and music. Supporters of the law and its author, Senator Leland Yee, a child psychologist by profession, distinguish videogames from other media entertainment outlets by claiming videogames are interactive whereas the other forms of entertainment are less so. Opponents argue that the animated figures and violence, though graphic, are computer generated and thereby do not compare with the realistic scenes in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy or in reading Greek mythology or stories of historical battles and war, to all of which adolescents are frequently exposed ("California"). At the moment, California has a voluntary regulation system in place where salesclerks check for a purchaser's age, but the state deems it necessary to place additional constraints on the ability

to purchase this medium.

Yee's claim of videogames having different effects on users compared with other media isn't too far removed from the results of a 2008 study that compared the brain's neural activity when people examine both handwritten and computer-generated alphabetic characters. The study found "stronger and longer lasting (several weeks) facilitation in recognizing the orientation of characters that had been written by hand compared to those typed" (Longcamp 802). The reason given was that the regions of the brain linked to language, imagery, and observation (i.e., Broca's area and the inferior parietal lobule areas) generated greater neural activity during the more interactive form of character identification found in reading handwriting. These findings not only lend credence to Yee's claim, but also to McLuhan's about media having the ability to generate different physiological effects on audiences independent of their agreed-upon uses within a social culture.

Moreover, further evidence of media having the "built in" ability to influence audience in addition to the authority they carry through a culture's use of them is shown in a situation where, in 2007, a New Zealand accountant lost her job over the style she used when writing emails. In a written reprimand prior to the termination, ProCare Health Institute, the accountant's employer, stated: "For some time now, there have been issues with the manner in which you communicate with others [through email] . . . [This] has led to a formal complaint from another staff member." That is, the aesthetics of the emails—not to be mistaken for the content—spawned unpleasant emotions within recipients by way of the voice and tone the aesthetics created. The reprimand then supported the claim by stating the catalyst of the problem: "In particular . . . an unnecessary use of emphasis (e.g. block capitals, bold typeface

and red colour) are considered confrontational to most staff." That is, though the electronic messaging program used by the company offered a variety of ways to design fonts, some of the design options were not considered to be acceptable within the organizational culture of the company. However, because ProCare did not have a policy or guide in place concerning writing style etiquette for emails, the Employment Relations Authority approved compensation for the accountant (*Walker v. Procare Health 4*).

Ernest Gellner describes workforce cultures in modern-day industrialized countries as being advanced societies that have replaced brawn with eight hours per day of semantic exchanges. Physical labor is contracted out to undocumented workers or undereducated populations while the rest of the workforce makes a living exchanging knowledge and ideas through messaging systems (26-29). To this end, new media continue to be invented, and new uses continue to transform old media. Pope Benedict XVI, for instance, has introduced to the papacy Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to deliver messages and sermons. In his explanation for including these new media into the Catholic church's communication repertoire, at the 44th World Communications Day in May 2010, the Pope stated that "in this way the Word [of God] can traverse the many crossroads created by the intersection of all the different 'highways' that form 'cyberspace'" ("Message"). And as for old media, Nielsen Media Research reported in 2008 that cell phones, a medium first marketed as an on-the-road safety device in the early 1980s, are employed by U.S. users in most age groups to exchange text messages more than they are used to make phone calls (Nielsen). Additionally, "smart" phone users can read books, navigate destinations through global positioning systems, obtain restaurant ratings, watch television programs, and play games on their phones. Whether it's the Pope's use of new media

or a telephone owner's use of an old medium, there appears to be a growing shift toward more exploratory pairings of content and medium.

Whether the intention is to increase message presence among audiences or another reason, just as when the Declaration of Independence was printed on a broadside, in many of the non-traditional content/medium pairings there is no pre-existing expectation in place to set the standard for what typical audience reactions are expected to be. It is my hope that this study contributes to the field of technical communication scholarship an awareness of the need for future study in how nontraditional content/medium pairings influence audiences.

Such future study can and should consider several questions. First, how do we take into account that some genres have consistent uses throughout their existence while others go through rapid changes in their presumed uses? For instance, the television's usage (i.e., to view moving images) remains about the same as when it was introduced in the 1920s. However, not all genres have been as consistent in their usage as the television. Today's usage of the telephone, for instance, hardly compares to the intended reason for its inception. Second, can it be that a culture's expected uses of a genre are not consistent with the reason the genre was originally intended. Last, how might research be conducted on the actual effects of nontraditional content/medium pairings upon audiences, going beyond the claims made here based primarily on the observation of public response and not quantifiable data.

Future research in the area of content/medium pairings should first distinguish the differences between traditional pairings and non-traditional pairings. This process appears to be easier said than done given that, as mentioned above with the example of the telephone, determining which pairings and uses are considered "traditional" can vary over the lifespan of a

genre and also within different cultures. Thus, a set of criteria must be defined to take into account metamorphoses. Second, studying the effects of non-traditional content/medium pairings should replicate at least some existing studies used to gauge effectiveness in traditional pairings. Doing so will enable researchers to have an established set of results to compare findings and weigh successes. Last, studies exploring why new pairings are created might provide insight into how traditional pairings have come to be viewed, and also whether there is an actual or just a perceived gap in how traditional pairings are received by audiences.

As stated in Chapter Six, Karen Schriver claims that the first decision a person makes about a text is whether to read it, which she uses to emphasize the importance for studying design practices. If we can agree that Schriver's claim is valid, then isn't it equally as plausible that before a person chooses whether to read a text, a decision about whether to address the medium must be made first? For example, before an employer notices the design of a job applicant's resume, and thereafter its content, isn't the paper quality and color of first consideration? And even whether the resume has been delivered on paper or electronically? Or to use another example, in a supermarket checkout line there's an assortment of reading material for sale near the register. When a tabloid and magazine highlight coverage of the same event, which do you thumb through, and why? Is your choice based on the medium's design features, or the medium itself? Regardless, you likely base the decision on either design features or medium packaging. That is to say, the influence of content/medium pairings on audiences is as common as design practices to a text's audience.

Schriver and others make us aware of the importance of understanding design practices, and some scholars have explored early texts to offer a history of the field of design. For

instance, Elizabeth Tebeaux points out that page design strategies were practiced in twelfth-century English data and bookkeeping entries. Mary Webb and Michael J. Albers applied to medieval Books of Hours the four design criteria set forth by Charles Kostelnick and David D. Roberts and found that "the commonsense principles of modern document design are direct descendants of the principles used" when crafting the books (353).

With the growing number of options from which senders of information have to communicate, there are as many options audiences have to receive information. Therefore, the scope of nontraditional content/medium pairings needs to be further explored for their contribution toward audience attentiveness. Traditional practices of content/medium pairings can no longer be solely counted upon as being genre bellwethers for gauging audience attentiveness to texts when so many texts today appear on media that traditionally served as packaging for other fields' written communication. Like design practices and other tools that technical communicators use to reach audiences, nontraditional content/medium pairings, too, have a history of usage that needs to be recognized.

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