MERCY OTIS WARREN: PROPAGANDIST AND HISTORIAN

AN ANALYSIS OF HER TREATMENT OF
CROWN SYMPATHIZERS OF REVOLUTIONARY MASSACHUSETTS
IN HER WORKS,

THE GROUP AND THE HISTORY OF THE RISE, PROGRESS
AND TERMINATION OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

INTERSPERSED WITH BIOGRAPHICAL,

POLITICAL AND MORAL CONSIDERATIONS

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

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MILDRED RHEA TWEDDELL

ADVISER - DR. ALTHEA STOECKEL

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

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Mercy Otis Warren was a playwright and a historian contemporary with the American revolutionary period, and most of her writings relate to the American Revolution itself. For instance, her plays were written as propaganda for the patriot cause in Massachusetts and her historical work was a narration of the struggle in the thirteen colonies for American independence from Britain.¹

This honors thesis is an analysis of certain works of Mercy Otis Warren to show how strong patriotic and personal biases influenced her treatment of British sympathizers in Massachusetts. It focuses primarily upon the manner in which she depicted these men as characters in her play, The Group, written in 1775. The honors thesis demonstrates that Mrs. Warren's emotional involvement as a patriot and her personal familiarity with many of these Crown adherents heightened her effectiveness as a propagandist in denouncing them. Some of these British sympathizers or "Friends of Government" appear in both The Group and in her three volume work, History of the Rise, Progress and Termination of the American Revolution.

Interspersed with Biographical, Political and Moral Considerations, written in 1805. The History is studied to determine if Mrs. Warren's patriotic and personal biases against the pro-British "Friends of Government" remained unchanged.

This honors thesis is limited to a consideration of The Group and the History. Neither of these works are available for mass circulation. Only five copies of the complete version of The Group exist today and the History is classified as a rare book.

The Group, in its incomplete version, was first published by the Boston Gazette on January 23, 1775, and in The Massachusetts Spy on January 26, 1775. This incomplete version of The Group consists of two acts with one scene in each.

The complete version of The Group, in two acts, the second expanded into three scenes, was published as a pamphlet by the printers Edes and Gills of Boston on April 3, 1775. One can infer that few copies of the complete version of The Group have survived with time because of the inherent limitation of its pamphlet media when Maud Macdonald Hutcheson states that

... much of her (Mrs. Warren's) works belong to pamphlet literature, the medium in which the eighteenth century expressed editorial or columnistic opinion. Journalistic in essence, the appeal of the pamphlet is limited by time and topic.1

1Hutcheson, The William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series, X, No. 3, p. 379. (brackets mine)
Of the five existing copies of the complete version of The Group, three are in the Boston Athenaeum, one is in the Massachusetts Historical Society collection of unpublished "Mercy Otis Warren Papers," and the fifth is owned by the Cornell College Library.

These rare copies of The Group, in its incomplete version, are unavailable on loan to the public. The incomplete version, however, is available through Ball State University's microfilm collection of the Boston Gazette and The Massachusetts Spy. The incomplete version is also included in Arthur Quinn's anthology, A History of the American Drama From the Beginning to the Civil War. This honors thesis, therefore, is confined to the incomplete version of The Group, consisting of two acts, each act with one scene.

The History of the Rise, Progress and Termination of the American Revolution, Interspersed with Biographical, Political and Moral Considerations too is unavailable for mass circulation. The History was published by Manning and Loring in 1805, and encountered competition from John Marshall's Life of Washington which was published that same year. In an era where books were costly, Marshall's book overlapped on the same subject of the American Revolution, and in contrast to the decided anti-Federalist overtones of Mrs. Warren's History, Marshall's book expressed the Federalist viewpoint. By 1805, Federalism had emerged victorious in the formation of the Constitution, and the Federalist viewpoint was more
widely accepted and shared by the book-buying public. Partly because of this adverse competition from Marshall's book, the History had only a limited first printing and was never reprinted.

An unbroken set of the three volumes of the History is also classified as rare. If a set of the History could be located, the Chicago book firm of Krock's and Bretano's estimates its cost even in poor condition at $147. Only through the courtesy of the Henry F. Moellering Memorial Library at Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana, was I able to find and do research in the History.

I would like to thank Mr. Carl Sachtleben, Administrative Head of the Moellering Memorial Library, for extending research privileges to me. I would also like to gratefully acknowledge the patient assistance and invaluable aid of my honors thesis advisor, Dr. Althea Stoeckel.
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INTRODUCTION

Born in 1728, Mercy Otis Warren was one of the fifth generation of the Otis family living in Massachusetts. While the Otises were never affluent enough to claim membership as one of the leading families in the colony, their social credentials as early settlers were impeccable. Mrs. Warren's mother, Mary Allyne Otis, was a descendant of one of the signers of the "Mayflower Compact" and on her paternal side, John Otis the First, came to America shortly after the voyage of the "Mayflower."

This Puritan founder of the American line of Otises, settled in the provincial town of Barnstable, only twenty-five miles from Plymouth, and it was here that four generations of Otises became known and respected throughout the locale. Mrs. Warren herself was born in Barnstable and lived there much of her life, moving only to nearby Plymouth upon her marriage to James Warren in 1754.

While her "personal life was lived out in one unchanging set of scenes," Mrs. Warren witnessed within her lifetime the stirring events of the American Revolution and knew many of the distinguished figures of the period personally. As the sister of

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James Otis the Patriot and the wife of James Warren, she met John Hancock, Sam Adams, and other patriots in her own home. 1 John Adams maintained a regular correspondence with her as three volumes of collected letters will attest, 2 and Dr. John Winthrop, Elbridge Gerry, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington all knew her and commented on her accomplishments. 3 When Mrs. Warren's first poems were published in 1790, names on the subscription list included President Willard of Harvard, Henry Know, James Bowdoin, Paul Revere, and the President and Vice-President of the United States. 4

Perhaps not unexpectedly, Mrs. Warren's political views were influenced by her brother, her husband, and their patriot friends of the period. Mrs. Warren was "one of the earliest herself to proclaim independence as the need and logic of events . . ." 5 and she shared an "intensely patriotic view of the struggle." 6

1 Anthony, p. 56.
Yet Mrs. Warren did not just passively reflect the viewpoints of her patriot contemporaries. Called the "penwoman of the Revolution," she actively lent her pen to her cause, and her plays, written earlier in the period, were essentially vehicles of propaganda as Maud Hutcheson points out.

Although arranged in acts and scenes, her "plays" are lacking in plot, love interest, and woman characters. They were rabid conversation pieces, propaganda, intended primarily for reading. . . .

For example, The Adulterer, written in 1773, traces events from the Boston Massacre and depicts the patriots' firm determination to strike against British oppression. The Blockheads or the Affrighted Officers was written in 1776 when the British were blockaded in Boston by General Washington and the Continental Army, and it satirically ridicules the helpless British and the fearful American Loyalists who depended upon them for protection against the patriots. A third play, The Motley Assembly, aimed its propaganda against those Americans, especially the fashionable ladies of Boston, whose patriotic ardor had diminished with the military setbacks of the American cause in 1779.

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1 Beard, IV, p. 21.

2 Hutcheson, The William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series, X, No. 3, p. 383. emphasis mine


5 Quinn, I, pp. 53-54.
Of all her plays, *The Group*, however, has been judged as Mrs. Warren's most effective patriotic propaganda.¹ This play centers on the small group of colonial leaders in Massachusetts who chose to cast their allegiance to the British instead of supporting their fellow Americans. These Crown sympathizers or "Friends of Government" publicly committed themselves to the British cause as early as 1775, and later became overt Loyalists when the Declaration of Independence was announced.²

The pro-British "Friends of Government" were thus the direct antithesis of the patriot cause that Mrs. Warren championed, and from her patriotic frame of reference, she could regard them only as betrayers of their fellow Americans. From the very opening of *The Group*, Mrs. Warren concentrated all her efforts as a propagandist in a withering denunciation of the "Friends of Government,"

¹Hutcheson, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, X, No. 3, p. 387, states that "As an excellent example of partisan writing, it merits its place in the literature of the American Revolution." Tyler, p. 196, cites *The Group* as Mrs. Warren's most effective attempt at propaganda. Quinn includes it in his anthology of representative plays, and one can thus infer that Quinn considers *The Group* not only Mrs. Warren's best play, but also one of the best in the period.

²The term "Friends of Government" is used by Francis G. Walett, "The Massachusetts Council, 1766 - 1774: The Transformation of a Conservative Institution," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, VI, No. 4 (October, 1949), p. 605-627, to denote Crown sympathizers in Massachusetts before the Declaration of Independence was announced on July 4, 1776. In the interests of internal consistency, this honors thesis will use the same designation, and the term Loyalists will denote those who remained loyal to England when independence was formally announced.
attacking them through the use of thinly-veiled pseudonyms. In discrediting them and the British position they upheld, she hoped to advance the patriot cause by showing how just and noble it was in comparison.

To accomplish this purpose, Mrs. Warren capitalized on her personal familiarity with many of the royal sympathizers to castigate them individually as well as collectively. They were among the most prominent men in Massachusetts and included such well known public figures as Colonel John Murray and Brigadier General Timothy Ruggles of the colonial militia; Peter Oliver, Chief Justice of the Superior Court; and Thomas Hutchinson, one of the few royal governors in the colonies who was a native American. Then too, the family histories, personalities, and petty vices of the "Friends of Government" were common knowledge in the colony. Incorporating all these identifiable facts and embellishing them, Mrs. Warren satirically lampoons each man.

Mercy Otis Warren's genuine dislike of many of the "Friends of Government" coupled with her knowledge of them, reinforced her determination and her effectiveness in castigating them as scoundrels. Chief among those she vehemently disliked were James Boutinou and Thomas Hutchinson, and it is no coincidence that these two men emerge from The Group as particularly reprehensible traitors.

The History, Mrs. Warren's other notable work, was published in 1805, thirty years after The Group was written and twenty-two years after the American Revolution ended. Mrs. Warren explains
her purpose in writing the *History* by stating that the period of the Revolution was a time when "every manly arm was occupied and every trait of talent or activity ingaged..." and that "many circumstances might escape the more busy and active members of society."¹

She felt that these events should not go unrecorded and alluded to her own unique qualifications for writing a historical account by stating:

> Connected by nature, friendship, and every social tie, with many of the first patriots, and most influential characters on the continent; in the habits of confidential and epistolary intercourse with several gentlemen employed abroad in the most distinguished stations, and with others since elevated to the highest grades of rank and distinction, I had the best means of information, through a long period that the colonies were in suspense...²

Since the *History* was to be a scholarly account, Mrs. Warren contends that it is free from the patriotic and personal biases that prompted her propaganda efforts in *The Group*. She states that:

> Confident that the truth has been the guide of my pen, and candor, as well as justice, the accompaniment of my wishes throughout every page... The historian has never laid aside the tenderness of the sex or the friend; at the same time, she has endeavored, on all occasions that the strictest veracity should govern her heart, and the most exact impartiality be the guide of her pen.³

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²Mrs. Mercy Warren, I, p. ii.

³Mrs. Mercy Warren, I, p. v, vi.
Yet the passage of time does not give Mrs. Warren objectivity despite her avowals to the contrary. Moses Coit Tyler judges the History as a

... frank, strong, well-spiced story of a renowned race quarrel by one who had a passionate share in every stage of it, and who had an honest abhorance for those --- particularly among her own countrymen --- who took the opposite side from her own. ¹

Yet this singular lack of historical objectivity in Mercy Otis Warren's works should, in part, assure her an academic audience. She was a contemporary witness to the events of the revolutionary period and a personal acquaintance of many men, on both sides of the political spectrum, who shaped them. Her works, reflecting this historical vantage point, have scholarly value as a colorful narration of the events themselves and as an indication of the type of propaganda the patriots employed to further their cause. These works also show the degree and depth of a patriot's actual sentiments against those of her countrymen who chose to adhere to the Crown's cause.

The following pages analyze how Mrs. Warren depicted characters in The Group; they show how she identified them as caricatures of actual royal sympathizers in Massachusetts and demonstrates the manner and degree in which she denounces them. Secondly, her History is analyzed to compare how she treats some of these same people thirty years after The Group was written.

¹Tyler, p. 421.
When The Group was written in 1775, the events of Lexington and Concord were only a few short weeks away. A decade had passed since the Stamp Act crisis, five years since the Boston Massacre, and three since the Boston Tea Party. In 1775, Boston was occupied by royal troops and Massachusetts was ruled by a military governor, General Gage. The whole colony labored under the punitive Coercive Acts.

Lawrence Henry Gipson flatly states that "The Coercive Acts made open rebellion in America inevitable."\(^1\) Certainly the climate in recalcitrant Massachusetts was charged. The time was quickening when political differences could not be solved calmly or even peacefully, and those with dual allegiances to the Crown and to the colony could no longer reconcile the two. Sentiment began polarizing between the pro-Crown "Friends of Government" and the patriots. It was in this context of the times that Mercy Otis Warren, a member of an ardently patriotic family, wrote The Group for purely propaganda purposes. The play was calculated to spur anti-British sentiment and to incite colonial hostility against the "Friends of Government" who still supported British authority in the colony.

Specifically, the backdrop of The Group was the Massachusetts Governing Act, the second of the four Coercive Acts. In rescinding the charter of Massachusetts, the Act allowed the King to appoint and remove members of the Council at his pleasure. The Council consequently was appointed by royal mandamus instead of being elected by the assembly. The people of Massachusetts deeply resented this abrogation of their ancient charter and "Everyone who accepted the appointment to the Council was by that fact an enemy of the people."¹

Collectively speaking, all of these "Friends of Government" were socially prominent and well known in Massachusetts life, and many of the men were of established colonial families. William Browne could trace his ancestry back to Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts, while Foster and Thomas Hutchinson were descendants of the famous Anne Hutchinson. William Pepperell's family was known, honored, and distinguished on both sides of the Atlantic. Other men had distinguished themselves by their own efforts, and chief among these was James Boutineau, the son of a French Hugenot immigrant and a leading lawyer in the colony.

All were men of considerable wealth. Harrison Gray, Daniel Leonard, and the Hutchinsons were all successful Boston merchants, while Joshua Loring, a country gentleman, divided his time between his town-house in Boston and his country estate. John Murray and William Pepperell were among the most wealthy men in Massachusetts

¹Quinn, I, p. 40.
and perhaps in all New England. Murray owned twenty-two different properties and his estate was valued in excess of 23,000 pounds at the time of the Revolution,\(^1\) while Pepperell's vast fortune was founded on multiple interests in Maine - fishing, shipping, lumbering and milling, and renting to tenant farmers.\(^2\)

All had been active in colonial affairs before 1775. At least nine had served in the colonial assembly, most for several terms; others were earlier appointees to the Council or to the judiciary branch. Some of the men had even supported the patriot position. Richard Lechmere, James Boutineau, and John Erving, Jr. had all signed the Boston Memorial censoring the British for the Boston Massacre in 1770. Browne was especially well liked by the patriot leaders before he accepted the royal mandamus appointment, and John Adams, a man not given to light pronouncements, characterized Browne as a man he had highly respected and once could call a friend.\(^3\)

Perhaps most strikingly, Timothy Ruggles was the president of the Stamp Act Congress, but then he refused to sign its resolves.

In short, these were men who by position, influence, and experience were the natural leaders in Massachusetts. The colonists had long looked to them for direction, according them both personal


\(^2\) Sabine, II, p. 168.

\(^3\) Sabine, I, p. 265.
prestige and political power. The patriots bitterly felt almost betrayed by these leaders who chose to cast their prestige and power to the British as "Friends of Government."

As a patriot, Mercy Otis Warren viewed these self-acknowledged allies with the British as men who had, in Arthur Quinn's descriptive phrase, "sold their birthright for an office,"¹ and as a propagandist for her cause, she gave an articulate voice to the colonists' sense of betrayal in The Group. Unlike her other plays, The Group is not an academic recital of the patriots' noble sentiments, a ridicule of the British, or a tirade against the frivolous ladies of Boston. It was a more compelling theme: an indictment of native Americans who Mrs. Warren felt had betrayed their countrymen.

The Group received its title from this small group of "Friends of Government" and the characters in the play are not abstract models of the mandamus councillors, but rather were satirical portraits of the actual men themselves. Mercy Otis Warren's effectiveness in lampooning the "Friends of Government" lies in her adroit pseudonyms and apt parodies, for she alluded to known facts about their family histories, personalities, and even their petty vices. In utilizing this knowledge common to the leaders and even to the general population of Massachusetts, Mrs. Warren insured that the colonial reader could readily determine the true identities of the people in

¹Quinn, I, p. 40.
the play. As a propagandist, she expanded the facts and freely assigned these characters undesirable traits, fostering the impression that the Crown sympathizers were corrupt and thoroughly despicable men.

An example of how Mrs. Warren revealed the actual identities of the men and ascribed negative traits to them is the pseudonym "Beau Trumps" that she gave to Daniel Leonard, known for his foppishness and alleged gambling habits. Timothy Ruggles or "Brigadeer Hateall" had been a brigadeer general in the French and Indian War and was noted for his surly disposition. The pseudonym that Mrs. Warren assigned to William Pepperell is perhaps most indicative of her satirical skill. Pepperell inherited both a vast fortune and the only title of nobility ever granted to an American in colonial history. His name then became Sir William Sparhawk, and Mrs. Warren entitled him "Sir Sparrow Spendall," derisively alluding to his fortune, his title and the more lackluster qualities of a sparrow instead of a hawk.

The following is a complete list of the characters and the men they represented in The Group:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Name</th>
<th>Alias</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lord Chief Justice Hazlerod</td>
<td>Peter Oliver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judge Meagre</td>
<td>Foster Hutchinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brigadier Hateall</td>
<td>Timothy Ruggles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hum Humbug, Esquire</td>
<td>John Irving, Jr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Sparrow Spendall</td>
<td>William Pepperell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hector Mushroom, Colonel</td>
<td>Colonel John Murray</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Sabine, II, p. 11.
2. Quinn, I, p. 42.
Like Mrs. Warren's other plays, The Group was meant to be read as propaganda, not acted as a play. All authorities agree that, in all probability, it was never enacted on the stage, and most question if it could be acted by theatrical standards. As a play, The Group lacks adequate stage directions, internal structure, and a meaningful exchange of dialogue among the characters.

1Quinn, I, p. 40. Quinn compiled this list of characters by a comparison of four of the existing five copies of The Group, and he is substantiited, in part, by cross-references to Tyler, pp. 196 - 198. However, the above list is based on the complete version of The Group and not all of the characters appear in the incomplete version. Therefore, some of the characters are excluded from consideration in this honors thesis.

2For clarification, I have added Thomas Hutchinson as "Rapatio" to the list, although Mrs. Warren does not include him directly in the play. Hutchinson is excluded from a direct role for two reasons. First, Hutchinson, as the former governor and a native of Massachusetts, had been recalled to England by 1775. Second, his absence is an effective dramatic device for it allows the other characters to freely reveal their innermost sentiments against him, not possible if Hutchinson were in the same setting at the same time. Yet Hutchinson is a central, if off-stage, character and he is central to an understanding of the play. Until 1775, Hutchinson had been the acknowledge leader of the "Friends of Government" and even if absent, he was a motivating force behind the other characters.

3Anthony, p. 13; Hutcherson, William and Mary Quarterly, X, No. 3, p. 383; Quinn, I, p. 40; and Tyler, p. 196.
The Group also lacks a dramatic plot; it does not contain a story-line or narrate a sequence of events, but rather it is wholly adopted as a diatribe against the "Friends of Government." In the play, Mrs. Warren portrays each man re-examining his decision to stay friendly with the British administration and his reason for doing so. As a patriot propagandist, Mrs. Warren deliberately exaggerates the evil qualities of the "Friends of Government" and thus does not imbue them with any possible worthy motive or even a justifiable reason for supporting the Crown. Yet within this framework, she depicts the characters with varying sentiments about their decision to ally with the British - qualms of conscience, guilt, fear of reprisal from the patriots, avarice, ambition, and even hatred for their countrymen. Some of the men regret their decision to become a mandamus councillor; others entertain second thoughts about the advisability of their actions and now show fear of the consequences of abandoning the patriot cause. Only a few openly exult in their betrayal of their countrymen.

Thus, Mrs. Warren depicts the characters in The Group as men with different motives, ambitions, and emotions, and perhaps she did this for dramatic effect. If The Group were unrelieved by any variation in the characters - if their evil qualities were all uniformly alike and equally emphasized - a sense of repetitious monotony would prevail throughout the play. Then too, by varying the characters, Mrs. Warren could assign them a broader range of reprehensible motives and base emotions.
If Mrs. Warren's purpose in writing *The Group* was patriot propaganda, her personal prejudices against some, if not all, the men were also operative. An analysis of the play reveals that both factors figure in the manner and degree of emphasis that she gave to the pro-British "Friends of Government" as characters in *The Group*. Some of the men were less active in adhering to the British and thus Mrs. Warren relegated them to the lesser, supporting roles in the play. Individually then, they were depicted according to her evaluation of their efforts in supporting the Crown and also according to her own degree of personal dislike. Those men who are the minor characters include Harrison Gray, James Boutineau, and Josiah Edson, while the major characters were men like Timothy Ruggles, Daniel Leonard, and Peter Oliver who had chosen a more overt course and were stridently active as "Friends of Government." Another major character, Thomas Hutchinson, in addition to being an activist leader of the royal sympathizers, also had incurred Mrs. Warren's deep personal animosity and thus suffers doubly under her caustic pen.

An example of Mrs. Warren's method of relegating less reprehensible persons to minor roles is her treatment of Harrison Gray. Leonard Sabine states that Gray was a timid man and "was accused of being on both sides of politics according as he met Tory or Whig."¹ By 1775, of course, he had quit his public vacillation

¹Sabine, I, p. 489.
and became a mandamus councillor and the receiver-general of Massachusetts. However, in The Group, Mrs. Warren depicts Gray still in inner turmoil which he masks by a desperate heartiness when talking to James Boutineau. At the same time, the solemn Boutineau too is having second thoughts about the advisability of his own actions. Gray fatalistically concludes that since the two of them cannot make peace with the Boston Sons of Liberty now, they must make peace in heaven later.¹

Gray was not an active British sympathizer and after this brief exchange with Boutineau, he fades from the play. Mrs. Warren's mild treatment of Gray may also have been influenced by considerations of her own family. Her younger brother, Samuel Allyne Otis, had married Gray's only daughter Elizabeth in 1762, and by 1775, there was no middle ground for Elizabeth Gray Otis between her father and her husband's conflicting camps. A year later, Harrison Gray left the colony forever and subsequently died in England, while his daughter remained in America with her husband.² Thus possibly out of deference to Samuel and her sister-in-law Elizabeth, Mrs. Warren mentions Gray only briefly.

Family considerations also influenced Mercy Otis Warren's treatment of James Boutineau. In this instance however, Mrs. Warren was strongly biased against Boutineau, and as a result, he does not


²Sabine, I, p. 489.
escape as lightly as Gray. Mrs. Warren's vehement dislike stems from a conflict between her elder brother, James Otis, and Boutineau's son-in-law, John Robinson, who was a collector of customs.

Otis precipitated the conflict by writing a withering personal attack on the collectors of customs in 1770. He specifically singled out Robinson as one of the more odious officials, and then boldly signed the article with his own name. The consequences were not long in coming. Only a few days after his article appeared in the Boston Gazette, Otis was assaulted in a pub by a group of men armed with bludgeons and swords, and he was severely beaten. In spite of the confusion, Otis recognized Robinson as the leader of the group.

Otis survived Robinson's beating but never fully recovered. Somewhat eccentric even in earlier life, he subsequently went into periodic spells of melancholy and incoherence. Increasingly, the intervals between clarity and madness grew shorter, and Otis ultimately died insane. In a lucid moment however, Otis brought suit against Robinson in a court of law, and Boutineau, Robinson's father-in-law, served as his defense attorney.

In writing about this episode in her History thirty-five years after it occurred, Mercy Otis Warren castigates Robinson as a "dark assassin" and the "principal ruffian" in the fateful attack on her brother. Mrs. Warren, with her own strong familial loyalty, could grant no similar concession to Boutineau that he might feel an obligation to defend a member of his own family.

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1Anthony, pp. 39, 68.
Boutineau emerges as a fully developed character in *The Group*, although he was no more prominent in his political exertions as a "Friend of Government" than either John Erving, Jr. or Colonel John Murray, two other minor characters in the play. In contrast to Boutineau, these two men are confined to only a single speech in the play consisting of a few lines, and, in each case, these two ask a question designed only to forward the action.¹

In *The Group*, Boutineau guiltily recalls how his French Hugenot father fled oppression "Till fair Bostonia stretch'd her friendly arm / And gave the refugee both bread and peace."² He states that his father's dying words were an admonishment to repel any similar attempt at oppression in their new-found, free land. Boutineau now fears heavenly retribution for betraying both his father and his homeland.

His remorse, however, does not soften his ambition. With a hardening of attitude, Boutineau then concludes

So great the itch I feel for titl'd place,
Some honorary post, some small distinction,
To save my name from dark oblivion's jaws,
I'll hazard all, but ne'er give up my place,
For that I'll see Rome's ancient rites restor'd,
And flame and faggot burn in ev'ry street.³

Mrs. Warren has thus depicted Boutineau as being ruled by remorse, fear, and above all, ambition. Her characterization of him is particularly damning, and in all probability, it was spurred by

her own active dislike. Effectively incorporating known facts about his family background, she implied that Boutineau was fully aware that he was acting as an agent of oppression; yet this self-knowledge does not deter him. His ambition is stronger than his slight remorse or distant fear of heavenly judgment.

Remorse and fear, with overtones of ambition, are also the dominant sentiments of other characters who have only minor roles. Yet even if she ascribes a remorseful attitude to some of the characters, Mrs. Warren still gives them unsympathetic treatment. She implies that repentance, in itself, is not an atonement for the wrongs that the "Friends of Government" have perpetrated upon their countrymen. Indeed, it is not even dictated by a genuine regret of their decision to abandon their colonial stalwarts, but rather that their decision had proved inexpedient.

Her portrayal of Josiah Edson in The Group reinforces this point, for Edson is so guilt-stricken that he cannot even sleep at nights. Cast aside by the colonists, the acutely sensitive Edson feels scorned by his accomplices, the other mandamus councillors. Feelingly, Edson cries out, "To sell my friends, my country, and my conscience..." But just as feelingly, Edson laments that "hard fate" had called him from his rural tranquility. In doing the latter, Mrs. Warren artfully suggests that what grieves Edson most is not that he has sold his allegiance, but that he had done so at

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a miserable price. In late 1774, Edson was driven from his country estate by incensed patriots.¹

Mrs. Warren depicts other men, like Edson, reappraising the advisability of their actions. As a propaganda device, she shrewdly shows these characters confessing that the patriot cause is a just and honorable one in contrast to the coercive British policy they support. The immediate result of this self-incriminating admission is fear of those they have betrayed. For instance, Colonel John Murray wonders aloud, "Will our abettors in the distant towns / Support us long against the common cause?"²

Perhaps most representative of the way Mrs. Warren ascribed duplicity and fear to the "Friends of Government" is her portrayal of Nathaniel Ray Thomas as "Simple Sapling," a rural dullard bent by his ambition to become a British adherent. Ambition is an unwise man proves to be a miscalculation as Thomas himself ruefully admits. He concedes in The Group that thoughts of "greatness and her charms . . . entranc'd my slender brain."³

Yet even if Mrs. Warren credits Thomas with little intellect, she ascribes him with enough astuteness to realize that the patriots were growing restive under the oppression he helped enforce. Through Thomas, Mrs. Warren correctly foresees a war when he states

I fear the brave, the injur'd multitude,
Repeated wrongs, arouse them to resent . . .
They're resolv'd to die, or see their country free.⁴

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¹Sabine, I, p. 403.
A further analysis of The Group reveals that Daniel Leonard, Timothy Ruggles, and Peter Oliver are major characters, and, in assigning them this prominence in the play, Mrs. Warren was once again prompted by her partisan and personal biases. These three men were major targets of her propaganda because they were staunch advocates of the Crown's position and were the activist leaders of the "Friends of Government." Because they had chosen such an overt course against the patriot cause, Mrs. Warren deliberately overdraws them as corrupt, evil, and thoroughly despicable men. Thus while remorse, fear, and ambition are the dominant sentiments of the minor characters, more culpable motives are purported to move these major characters. In Mrs. Warren's assessment against them, these three men acknowledge the fairness of the colonial cause, but only with a sullen contempt for their countrymen. They are arrogant rather than apprehensive, boastful rather than repentent. Crass, strident ambition, avarice, and even hatred of their countrymen motivate them.

Daniel Leonard, for instance, was "uncompromising and vigorous" in his activities as a "Friend of Government." Leonard, like Mrs. Warren, also lent his pen to the side of his cause, and it has now been established that Leonard actually wrote the "Massachusettsius," a series of Loyalist articles long attributed to Johnathan Sewall. These articles appeared during the winter of 1774 - 1775 as an answer to the patriot "Novangulus" of John Adams.

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2Nelson, pp. 69-71; Sabine, II, p. 11.
Leonard presented a Loyalist viewpoint with "singular calm and care." He traced the philosophical and constitutional issues with England and skillfully defended the concept of parliamentary supremacy over the colonies; and more pointedly, he traced the rise of mob violence and the establishment of what he viewed as arbitrary, extra-legal government in Massachusetts. The real danger, he concluded, came not from England but from those in America who usurped British concepts of justice and government based on laws, not men.²

As an able exponent of Loyalist viewpoints, Leonard was, in all probability, motivated by genuine philosophical differences with the patriot position, and one may even argue that it took a certain amount of courage for Leonard to back his convictions in print and to accept an appointment as a mandamus councillor.

Yet strikingly enough, Mrs. Warren ignored this courage completely. Indeed, as a propagandist writing against him, she concedes nothing in Leonard's favor; she credits him with no high convictions or motives. Instead, Mrs. Warren selectively attributes to him more defamatory reasons for becoming a "Friend of Government."

Thus in The Group, Mrs. Warren presents Leonard disclosing his calculated ambition and overwhelming avarice when he states

I walk'd a while and tasted solid peace . . .
But 'twas a poor unprofitable path,
Nought to be gain'd, save solid peace of mind,
No pensions, place or title there I found . . . ³

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¹Nelson, p. 70.
²Nelson, pp. 70 - 71.
Leonard emerges from the play as an obviously learned man who suffers no self-delusions or misconceptions about the course he has chosen. He knows that he and his confederates "Are mark'd with infamy, till time blot out / And in oblivion sink our hated names." Accurately, he even predicts that England with all her superior might cannot subdue the colonists, armed as they are with an honorable, just cause.

Thus in contrast to factual proof in his own writings, Mrs. Warren depicted Leonard as clearly aware that he is advocating an unjust cause against the patriots. She then underscores Leonard's duplicity even further by showing that he is singularly unrepentent in spite of his insight. Cooly Leonard concludes that "if by carnage we should win the game / Perhaps by my abilities and fame ..." he will be suitably rewarded by the British.

Like the urbane and calculating Leonard, Timothy Ruggles too is portrayed as a striking contrast to the fearful, often weak minor characters. Depicted by Mrs. Warren as a man of violent passions and intense hatreds, Ruggles scorns the timid and hesitant among them when he roars

Curse on their coward fears, and dastard souls,  
Their soft compunctions and relented qualms,  
Compassion ne'er shall seize my steadfast breast  
Though blood and carnage spread thro' all the land ...  

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Yet this invective of Ruggles against his colleagues is only a foreshadowing of the furious hatred of the patriots which Mrs. Warren accords him. In The Group, Ruggles goes on to boldly state that "had I power, As I have the will / I'd send them murmur'ng to the shades of hell."¹

Ruggles' militantcy against the patriot cause is grounded in historical fact - the reason that influenced Mrs. Warren to emphasize him as a major character. Before the end of the American Revolution, Ruggles actually did command a "Loyal Militia" of 3,000 men against the patriots. Even as early as 1774, the year before The Group was written, Ruggles defiantly proposed an armed "Association" or defensive alliance for British sympathizers throughout the colonies. They could then band together and protect their families and their properties against the patriot mobs. Ruggles, who was legally trained, carefully stressed that self-defense was the guiding principle behind this Loyalist "Association."²

To inflame popular sentiment against Ruggles however, Mrs. Warren deliberately misconstrues the defensive purpose of his "Association" and attributes him with a more sinister motive for forming it. Thus in The Group, Ruggles declares

I've boldly sent my new-born brat abroad,  
Th' association of my morbid brain,  
To which each minion must affix his name,  
As all our hopes depend on brutal force,  
On quick destruction, misery, and death ...³

²Sabine, II, pp. 244-245.  
He even ruthlessly vows, "I'll not recede to save from swift perdition / My wife, my country, family or friends."¹ Ruggles chooses his course, unconfined by considerations of love, loyalty, and honor. Thus Mercy Otis Warren portrays Ruggles as a man whose hatred of the American cause is unsatiated by the betrayal of his country: it drives him to an open advocacy of force and violence in suppressing the colonists.

Mrs. Warren also represented Peter Oliver as avaricious and singularly lacking in remorse just as she did Leonard. Imbued with the above qualities, Oliver views his earlier moral training only as a handicap to his successful career that culminated in the position of Chief Justice of the Superior Court in Massachusetts. In The Group, Oliver relates that he was "bound by these shackles" of honesty and justice, and he "obscurely trod the lower walks of life" until he gave his "tears and conscience to the winds."² Mrs. Warren then has Oliver openly boast, "I sold my country for a splendid bribe" when he became the Chief Justice.³

Thus Mrs. Warren suggests collusion between Oliver and the British - in exchange for his efforts against the patriots, the Crown appointed him as Chief Justice. Mrs. Warren probably emphasized Oliver as a major character in The Group because of the well-known fact that he had no legal training whatsoever and yet became head of the highest court in Massachusetts. This was quite an

unusual feat even in 1775, because there was no dearth of trained attorneys to occupy the bench. Mrs. Warren harshly comments on Oliver’s particular qualifications when she has him state

Resolv’d more highly to gain my point,
I mounted high in justic’s sacred seat,
With flowing robes and head equip’d without.
A heart unfeeling and a stubborn soul,
As qualif’d as e’er a Jeffries was,
Save in the knotty rudiments of law,
The smallest requisite for modern times,
When wisdom, law and justice are supply’d
By swords, dragoons, and ministerial nods. ¹

Oliver’s lack of legal qualifications and his superficial abilities were still a subject of denunciation thirty years later when Mercy Otis Warren wrote her History. She states that in turn for his “splendid bribe,” Chief Justice Oliver then gave “sanction by the forms of law to the most atrocious acts of arbitrary power.”²

Mrs. Warren’s treatment of Thomas Hutchinson, the final major character in the play, is perhaps the most significant for the purposes of this honors thesis because it offers an excellent opportunity to analyze her as a propagandist and a historian. Hutchinson appears at length in both The Group and the History, and one can compare how she depicted him in her propaganda against him as one of the “Friends of Government” and how she later judges him as a figure in the History.

Hutchinson is first noteworthy for his physical absence in The Group, and he remains an off-stage character throughout the play. When The Group was written in 1775, Hutchinson had left for England, and in reality then, he could not have been both places at once – in

England and in the setting of Boston. Mrs. Warren astutely uses Hutchinson's absence in the play as a dramatic device to allow the other men to freely reveal their innermost sentiments against him. This would not be possible if Hutchinson were with them in the same setting at the same time.

Hutchinson is also noteworthy for his dramatic presence because Mrs. Warren assigns him as the pivotal character in The Group and as the motivating force behind the other characters when they relate their reasons for allying with the British. Thus, Hutchinson is the man most referred to in the play, and Mrs. Warren maligns him the most severely of all the men. She assigns three characters — Josiah Edson, Daniel Leonard, and William Browne — to speak at length about Hutchinson's duplicity and dishonesty. Mrs. Warren portrays Hutchinson as the arch-traitor who led the other "Friends of Government" astray, as she speaks through the following characters:

Josiah Edson, the remorse-ridden character mentioned earlier, laments

So wise, so just, so good I thought Rapatio
That if my salvation rested on his word
I'd pin my hopes and risk my hopes thereon. 1

Mrs. Warren then shows a thoroughly disenchanted Edson who, with hindsight, now sees that Hutchinson has used him and the others to further his own plans for enslaving their homeland. Edson states

It is too plain that he has betray'd his country;
And we're the wretched tools by him mark'd out
To seal its ruins — tear up the ancient forms ... 2

In *The Group*, Timothy Ruggles and Peter Oliver firmly dismiss Edson's disenchantment as idle qualms of conscience. But later in the play, Mrs. Warren reinforces the aggrieved Edson by having Daniel Leonard reveal that he too was actively recruited by Hutchinson.

... the Arch Traitor prowling round for aid
Saw my suspense and bade me doubt no more; --
He gently bow'd, and smiling took my hand,
And whispering softly in my list'ning ear,
Show'd me my name among his chosen band... .

This time Mrs. Warren does not allow the discussion to be promptly surpressed. William Browne also alludes to Hutchinson. Before he became a "Friend of Government," Browne was subjected to much pressure from John Adams and his other patriot friends to join them against the British. Perhaps the loss of their esteem and friendship was a poignant one, but Mrs. Warren depicts Browne as a largely self-contained character: he does not voice fears or feeble excuses.

Instead she reveals an inner glimpse of the patriot Browne might easily have become. With great bitterness and a certain amount of courage, Browne argues that at least among themselves, they can dare to speak the truth. Referring to Hutchinson, he then asks almost rhetorically, "Can you suppose there is yet such a dupe / As still believes that wretch an honest man?"

Browne then answers his own question. He soberly concludes that Hutchinson outrivals Machiavelli in his political machinations,

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trickery, and cunning. These remarks that Mrs. Warren ascribes to Browne introduces her more specific charges against Hutchinson as Leonard then re-entered the conversation by agreeing with Browne.

Almost academically, Leonard begins cataloging Hutchinson's evil traits - "unparalleled effrontery," "chicanery," and "specious art." For an untypical moment, genuine emotion seems to break through Leonard's urbanity. He cites how Hutchinson still attempts to deceive his fellow Americans even while in England. Once more referring to Hutchinson as a traitor, Mrs. Warren has Leonard cry,

But mark the traitor - his high crimes gloss'd over . . .
He strikes a bargain with his country's foes,
And joins to wrap America in flames,
Yet with feign'd pity, and Satanic grin,
As if more deep to fix the keen insult,
Or make his life a farce more complete,
He sends a groan across the broad Atlantic . . .

Thus using the characters of The Group to criticize him among themselves, Mrs. Warren thoroughly condemns Hutchinson as a master of deception, duplicity, and intrigue, outrivaling even Machiavelli. She states that he craftily preys on the weaknesses of other men, appealing to the trusting Edson and the ambitious Leonard. When recruited, the other "Friends of Government" lend him the weight of their names for credulity and become tools for broadening his base of power. And of all the "Friends of Government," Hutchinson has the most far-reaching objective: he deliberately seeks to enslave his homeland. Thomas Hutchinson is the only man that Mrs. Warren specifically calls a traitor in The Group.

In assigning Hutchinson this pivotal role in The Group, Mrs. Warren was once again prompted by personal as well as patriotic biases. Theirs was a family feud, with James Otis and Thomas Hutchinson the main adversaries.

A traditional version of the feud revolves around a vacancy in the Superior Court of Massachusetts in 1760. Chief Justice Sewall had died; his position fell open, and James Otis sought the appointment for his father, Colonel James Otis. The junior Otis met with Governor Bernard and reminded him that both earlier governors, Shirley and Pownall, had promised the first opening on the bench to his father. Otis also pointed out his father's distinguished efforts in the French and Indian War.

Apparently Bernard did not seriously consider either the hopes of the Otises or the political repercussions of a refusal because he instead appointed Hutchinson as the Chief Justice. While Hutchinson did not actively solicit the appointment himself, he did not prevent influential friends from doing so on his behalf. Otis and Mrs. Warren, angered by the dismissal of their father's hopes and expectations, blamed Hutchinson.

John J. Waters and John A. Schutz see this clash as part of a larger rivalry in "social and political fortunes" between the two families. They contend that even in the years prior to 1760, the

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1 Waters and Schutz, The William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series, XXIV, No. 4, p. 544.
Otises, a provincial, agrarian family, vied with the Hutchinsons, an urban, mercantile family. Hutchinson then accepted the appointment, they state, in order to enhance family prestige and to stop the Otises.

Although the exact inception of the Otis-Hutchinson feud may be argued, its presence cannot be contested. By 1760, there was an open and abiding hostility between the two families.¹ Yet it would be both inaccurate and unfair to attribute Mercy Otis Warren's active dislike of Hutchinson as based completely on inter-family rivalries.

Mrs. Warren's biases were perhaps more justifiably based on political issues also, for politically, Thomas Hutchinson represented the direct antithesis of the partisan position Mrs. Warren championed. In fact, Hutchinson was an activist leader in opposition to the patriots throughout almost all his career.

Hutchinson began his political career conventionally enough in the assembly, later becoming the Speaker of the House. Subsequently he enjoyed British favor and steadily advanced in appointive positions, becoming the associate and chief justice of the Suffolk Common Pleas Court and a member of the Council. Perhaps most strikingly, Hutchinson, by 1760, held three appointive positions simultaneously as a member of the Council, the lieutenant-governor, and the Chief Justice of the Superior Court. Then too, Hutchinson was acting

¹Gipson, p. 34.
governor between administrations of governors Shirley and Bernard. Finally in 1769, Hutchinson became the royal governor of Massachusetts, a distinction granted to few native Americans.¹

Thus much of Thomas Hutchinson's political career paralleled the turbulent decade of 1765 - 1775 - the period including the Stamp Act controversy through the Massachusetts Governing Act. More specifically, he was Chief Justice when Otis argued the writs of assistance before the Superior Court and was lieutenant governor when the Stamp Act Congress occurred and British troops first occupied Boston in 1769. He was the governor during the Boston Massacre and the Boston Tea Party, recalled only after the Coercive Acts were passed.

As a Crown appointee, Hutchinson increasingly allied himself with the Crown's policy in Massachusetts during this decade of pre-revolutionary activities. Politically, he tried to enforce the onerous British policy and personally, he adopted its principles as his own. As the governor Thomas Hutchinson particularly embodied the colonists' view of repressive British administration. Also by virtue of being the governor, he became the focal leader of fellow Americans who also had cast their support to the British established order. Thomas Hutchinson was, in fact, the symbol and the substance of the "Friends of Government."

In this light, it is unsurprising that Hutchinson should bear the bulk of Mrs. Warren's partisan attack against the "Friends of Government."

In her play. The time, 1775, was one of pre-revolutionary passions, and The Group itself was a vehicle for patriot propaganda, Mrs. Warren's personal dislike of Hutchinson only reinforced her determination to portray him as utterly corrupt and despicable as possible.

Mercy Otis Warren's History, however, was written in a later time and for a different purpose than The Group. Written thirty years after The Group and twenty-two years after the conclusion of the American Revolution, the History was to be a scholarly survey of the Revolution in all the colonies. Yet despite its elevated intent, the History reveals that none of Mrs. Warren's personal and patriotic biases had diminished with time.

Indeed, the History afforded Mrs. Warren an opportunity to expand upon her earlier charges against Hutchinson in The Group. Again she condemns Hutchinson for his dubious abilities, again gives him a Machiavellian character and again castigates him as a traitor who actively enlisted other Americans into betraying their countrymen. Her initial reference to Hutchinson is an indication from the outset of how she intends to appraise him historically.

He was dark, intriguing, insinuating, haughty, and ambitious, while the extreme of avarice marked each feature of his character. His abilities were little elevated above the line of mediocrity; yet by dint of industry, exact temperance, and indefatigable labor . . . he had acquired some knowledge of the common law of England, diligently studied the intricacies of Machiavellian policy, and never failed to recommend the Italian master as a model to his adherents.¹

¹Warren, History, I, p. 72.
Thus Mercy Otis Warren, after thirty years, assigns Hutchinson the same reprehensible character traits. She does not even concede that he has any inherent ability to act as governor of Massachusetts. He had only a familiarity with English common law, and by inference, no broader understanding of the constitutional principles it embodies. Hutchinson's guiding principles, she again asserts, are only a diligent application of those of Machiavelli.

Yet this is only a foreshadowing of her historical assessment of Hutchinson. Mrs. Warren's History is much more specific than The Group about Hutchinson's alleged recruitment of other "Friends of Government" who allied themselves with the British. Hutchinson, she states, engendered a "compact" in and between the executive and judicial branches. First, he made extensive use of the governor's power of patronage and appointment, and by virtue of this political preferment, Hutchinson seduced potential "Friends of Government." Second, he also achieved this "compact" by a high degree of nepotism; and therefore the "Friends of Government" were either Hutchinson's political or familial dependents. In filling the key positions, she maintains the only qualification necessary was adherence to Hutchinson and the measures he supported.

One can almost hear Mercy Otis Warren's moralistic indignation as she even charges that

Intermarriages among their children in the near degree of consanguinity before the parties were of age for maturity of choice, had strengthened the union of interests among the candidates for preferment.\(^1\)

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In part, Mercy Otis Warren's contentions about Hutchinson's "compact" with other "Friends of Government" is substantially correct. A remarkable degree of interrelatedness, fostered by marriage and appointment, did exist. One authority calls it "little short of amazing" and furthermore states that "... the members of these families often filled two or more posts at the same time." More specifically, another historian states that "Hutchinson was connected by marriage with another leading family, the Olivers, and most of the key positions in government were held by him and his relatives."²

This degree of interrelationship is ably demonstrated by 1771, one year alone. Thomas Hutchinson, the governor, was related to both the Oliver brothers. Andrew Oliver, his lieutenant-governor, was also his brother-in-law. Hutchinson's son had married the daughter of Peter Oliver, then an associate justice of the Superior Court. Foster Hutchinson, the governor's brother, was also an associate justice. Another brother-in-law John Cotton, was the deputy secretary of the colony.³

In her History, Mercy Otis Warren continues to view Hutchinson as a traitor, and, indeed even states that he planned to betray his country as early as 1769 when he was first appointed governor of

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¹ Cary, pp. 43, 44.
² Huteson, The William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series, X, No. 4, p. 382.
³ Cary, p. 88.
Massachusetts. Taking advantage of his office, she asserts, Hutchinson then began "to undermine the happiness of the people, while he had their fullest confidence and to barter the liberties of his country by the most shameful duplicity."¹

Later when Hutchinson tried to enforce the Crown's policy, Mrs. Warren states that he justified it on the basis of his "instructions from the King" which was "his constant apology for every arbitrary step."² To Mrs. Warren, this seemed to be an inadequate justification indeed, and, as a patriot, she could not admire Hutchinson's fidelity to his monarch's specific directions.

Because he tried to uphold the British administration, he became the equivalent of a traitor in her mind and in the viewpoints of much of the colony. Hutchinson was further discredited when the patriots intercepted and published some of his private letters to a friend in England; in the letters, Hutchinson had, among other things, made the damaging confession that he welcomed the British troops that occupied Boston.

By then, sentiment had grown so strong against Hutchinson that the Assembly tried to impeach him, and with all her patriotic single-mindedness, Mrs. Warren recorded the Assembly's failure to do so in this way:

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¹Warren, History, I, p. 81.
²Warren, History, I, p. 82.
They had proceeded to an impeachment, and unanimously requested, that his majesty would be pleased to remove both Mr. Thomas Hutchinson and Mr. Andrew Oliver from their public functions in the province, forever. But before they had time to complete their spirited measures, the governor had as usual dissolved the assembly.¹

The Coercive Acts were passed in 1774, and Hutchinson was subsequently recalled to England. After a long discussion of the punitive intent of the Acts to render Massachusetts prostrate, Mrs. Warren succinctly states that "... the only melioration of the present evils was, that the recall of Mr. Hutchinson accompanied the bills."²

Hutchinson left for England, never to return to his homeland. Sabine states that "His political ruin gave him inconceivable anguish and prematurely closed his life."³ In 1780, only six years after he left the colony, Hutchinson died in England. Writing twenty-five years after his death, Mercy Otis Warren concludes her historical assessment of Hutchinson in these words:

_It must however be acknowledged that governor Hutchinson was uniform in his political conduct ... In the eyes of candor, he may therefore be much more excusable, than any who deviate from their principles and possessions of republicanism, who have not been biased by the patronage of kings, nor influenced in favor of monarchy by their early prejudices of education or employment._⁴

¹Warren, History, I, p. 112.
³Sabine, I, p. 559.
Thus, consistency in conduct is all that Mrs. Warren will concede to Thomas Hutchinson when writing thirty years after The Group appeared. Yet if the ardent patriot Mrs. Warren could judge the staunch Loyalist, Hutchinson, on no objective ground, she does share the same quality of consistency in conduct that she ascribes to him. An analysis of Mrs. Warren's History reveals that she too never wavered in her own convictions about her patriot cause. Her partisan biases and personal vindictiveness against her countrymen who chose to ally with the British as "Friends of Government" remained unchanged over an interval of thirty years.
CONCLUSION

Mercy Otis Warren aided the patriot cause in the American Revolution by writing plays as vehicles of propaganda against native Americans who chose to adhere to the British as "Friends of Government" at the close of the pre-revolutionary period. More specifically, her purpose was to castigate them as traitors to their fellow Americans, and Mrs. Warren's patriotic biases and personal prejudices against the "Friends of Government" helped her in accomplishing her purpose.

In writing The Group, Mrs. Warren skillfully employed many of the techniques or devices of the effective propagandist in her savage caricatures of these British sympathizers and in her selective citation and deliberate misinterpretation of actual events. She adroitly utilized known facts about the "Friends of Government" to lampoon them and incorporated her own active dislike of many of the men to render them distinctly culpable. Mrs. Warren totally ignored or slanted other factors that would act in favor of the "Friends of Government," and indeed acknowledged no justifiable motives for them to support the British. Shrewdly using the techniques of making the men damn themselves, Mrs. Warren depicts them in The Group revealing their base emotions and evil traits. Thus these British sympathizers emerge as villains, oppressors of their countrymen, and traitors to their homeland, unrelieved by any redeeming features.
However, Mrs. Warren's success as a propagandist did not solely rest upon her mastery of propaganda techniques and devices, for the play was not merely a tool of expediency in championing the patriot cause. An analysis of her History reveals instead that her play was firmly based on long enduring attitudes about the "Friends of Government" and her deeply held convictions about the worth and justice of the American position during the revolutionary period. Written thirty years after The Group, her History vigorously asserts that her viewpoints remained unaltered and undiminished with time.

In The Group, Mrs. Warren effectively equated the "Friends of Government" with traitors to their homeland, and Claude Van Tyne states that later treatment of Loyalists was, in fact, based on the premise that "Loyalty to the King is now treason to our country" for "The Tory was no longer regarded as a political opponent to be coerced, but as a traitor deserving retributive justice."¹ Read in this light, Mrs. Warren's History is more than a testimony of her own sentiments - it is a broader indication of the degree of undying vindictiveness that the patriots felt toward the Loyalists and the harsh treatment they, as victors, exacted upon the British sympathizers.

For instance, all the men that Mrs. Warren depicted as characters in The Group came under the strictures of three punitive laws that Massachusetts passed against Loyalists. Some were forced

¹Claude Halstead Van Tyne, The Loyalists in the American Revolution (Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith, 1959), p. 100. (Van Tyne's emphasis)
to take the Test Act or a required oath of allegiance to the state, and refusal to do so meant exile, return forbidden under the penalty of death. The second law, the Proscription Act, listed 260 Loyalists, including most of these "Friends of Government," who were denied the opportunity to even take the oath and whose property reverted to the state; and the third, the Conspiracy Act, authorized the state to confiscate the estates of these Loyalists who had, under its provisions, forfeited their right of ownership by absenteeism from Massachusetts or by being "notorious conspirators" against the patriots.¹

Political exiles judged as enemies of the state, these Loyalists saw their names disgraced, their property seized, and their wealth greatly diminished. Most, like Thomas Hutchinson, died in distant England, and only Colonel John Murray seemingly prospered after the American Revolution.² In view of Murray's vast holdings in America, it is not surprising that his heirs made a diligent effort to recover some of his confiscated estates, and in 1807, his son Daniel sued Jonathan Ware in the Circuit Court of the United States and won the court's judgment. However in that same year, Ware was relieved of paying the claim by a special resolve of the Massachusetts legislature.³ William Pepperell's property was confiscated in entirety, and his

¹Van Tyne, p. 336.
descendants also lost a huge fortune in his many mills, farms, and lumber tracts. Daniel Leonard's estate, however, passed intact to his only son Charles, but only because his son remained a patriot in America when his father was exiled.\(^1\) To further indicate how these Loyalists forfeited even their lesser possessions, Harrison Gray's carriage and horses were appropriated by Mrs. Warren's brother-in-law, General Joseph Warren, until he was killed at Bunker Hill, and they subsequently reverted to the Committee of Supplies for the war effort.\(^2\)

As a final ironical footnote to how Loyalists in Massachusetts were treated, James and Mercy Warren bought Thomas Hutchinson's country home, "Hilton," from the state, and it was there in Hutchinson's former home that she wrote much of her History that "singled out the exiled governor for her bitter scorn."\(^3\)

Widely known and honored by leading patriots in her own time, today Mercy Otis Warren is an almost forgotten figure in history and her works are referred to rarely except by a few literary and historical authorities. Yet The Group, with all its rabid propaganda against the "Friends of Government," and the History, notoriously lacking objectivity in judging the Loyalists, should grant Mrs. Warren an academic audience. As a contemporary witness to the events of the revolutionary period and as a personal acquaintance of many of the men

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\(^1\)Sabine, II, p. 11.

\(^2\)Sabine, I, p. 439.

\(^3\)Kraus, p. 78.
who shaped them, Mrs. Warren was in a unique vantage point to capture the sentiments of the patriots against their fellow American "Friends of Government" and later Loyalists. Thus, these two works bring a graphic authenticity and a vivid insight into the passions and heated animosities of fellow Americans divided between conflicting allegiances to the British Crown or to their country.
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