

An Interest in Union:
Constitutional Settlements and the
Economies of Secondary Seaports

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In their 1990 study of the economic and ideological concerns framing the drafting of the Constitution, Cathy Matson and Peter Onuf broke important new ground. Re-examining the forging and ratification of the Constitution through the lens of political economy, Matson and Onuf gave equal attention to political *and* economic questions that weighed upon the minds of delegates and policymakers from throughout the confederated republic. *A Union of Interests* illuminated the intensity of interstate jealousies and how the need to satiate the developmental goals of tenacious local interests characterized constitutional formation. According to these two scholars, one important aspect of this process was how “the critical contribution of development rhetoric, even when aimed at promoting the interests of one city or region at the expense of others, [became] an expansive and dynamic conception of the American economy.” The sustained, successful employment of this rhetoric yielded a new nation characterized by the pursuit of self-interest in disinterested republican ways. This new union of interests demonstrated to increasing numbers of citizens that it could foster the development of political economies, “even as it transcended the specific local contexts in which ‘interest’ was often defined.”¹ A developmentalist language steeped in shared republican assumptions about the ways in which elected leaders and economically powerful men (often one and the same) should direct policy for the greatest public good made it rhetorically possible, at times, to make national and local interests indistinct.

In illustrating these points, *A Union of Interests* recognized the incongruent relationships between early national port cities and began sketching the power dynamics which characterized their interactions. Because of ports’ seminal roles in promoting broader regional development, the rationale behind state legislators’ actions in the Constitutional debates was intimately tied to these affairs. The commercial jealousies and recriminations that arose between large and small states brought the smaller, or “secondary ports” in to view and *A Union of Interests* pointed to how their business relations with “primary ports” like New York City, Philadelphia, and Baltimore deteriorated as a result. Matson and Onuf identified these relationships as important variables in the larger equation that resulted in the federal Constitution. The attention which *A Union of Interests* paid to these issues led me to ask questions about the secondary seaports’ role in early national economic development and provided the springboard for my own work examining this phenomenon in the years spanning from the Critical Period to the early antebellum era.

Historians of the Critical Period have long examined the rocky relationships between the large states and the smaller states with regard to frontier issues, political thought, constitutional questions, and economic affairs.² Others have examined the role of class in securing a centralized national government.³ In *A Union of Interests*, Matson and Onuf argued that while “class tensions . . . preoccup[ied] nationalists, they were most concerned about interstate conflicts over trade issues. To a large extent, state policies were determined by the presence or absence of dominant regional ports.”⁴ Most states did not have such primary ports however, and conducted their trade through what scholars have termed “secondary” or “lesser ports.” Legislators and economic leaders in such states aggressively sought to advance and protect their states’ interests in ways that reflected the ambitious, egalitarian, entrepreneurial ethos that the Revolution had unleashed.⁵ In order to secure the blessings of their liberty, leaders in the secondary ports and their states’ legislatures acted through charters of incorporation, free port bills, militia exemptions and other creative, and at times, ad hoc means.⁶

If interstate conflict over trade indeed represented the largest area of concern to early nationalists, then our historical record of events has been told in exceedingly one-sided fashion. Larger regional or primary ports, like Philadelphia and New York, and their roles in both the Revolutionary movement and the new nation have understandably received prolific attention from scholars for generations.⁷ In seeking to redress the historiographical focus on the activities of elite males in the early urban republic, social and labor historians also began recovering the lives of women, African-Americans, and the working classes to reconstruct their experiences in, again, the primary seaports.⁸

Merchants and creditors in primary ports controlled local distribution networks, credit arrangements, and other apparatus of commerce that essentially dictated the terms by which economic men in smaller towns within their regional orbits were forced to do business.⁹ Such disparities in trade did not cost local governments too dearly during the colonial era, but once the national period ensued and each state and port became concerned with its prosperity and power within an independent confederated government, these figures took on an enhanced significance to concerned policymakers in the smaller ports who were thrown suddenly into competition with the larger, more powerful ports. Little or no attempt has been made to understand the effects of this domination on the political economies of the smaller maritime communities or its impact upon politics and identity formation in these smaller locales.

During the Critical Period, citizens of the secondary seaports quickly learned that their revolution was resulting in specific, localized outcomes, and that new forms of domination and discrimination exercised by both foreign powers and larger neighboring ports and states were the results of their revolutionary settlements.¹⁰ A closer study of small ports like Wilmington, Delaware, and New Haven, Connecticut (as well as the citizens in their rural hinterlands) reveals an ongoing effort by smaller states and their citizens to end discrimination in political and commercial affairs and to preserve the liberties and equality that they understood to be the realizable outcomes of the Revolution. It is time to begin considering the internal operations and goals of policymakers in the smaller ports and their hinterlands; their external relations with the larger “entrepôts”¹¹; how they conceived of their place in the new nation; where, when, and how they delineated “the national” and “the local”; and how they envisioned *their* newly won “liberty” playing out in much more meaningful ways.

To better understand the challenges and experiences of citizens of the early urban republic residing in the “secondary” ports we will look at a few cases involving how citizen entrepreneurs of the smaller ports and their local and state representatives reacted to policies and initiatives instigated by the British Empire and by fellow economic men in larger ports and states both before and after the ratification of the Constitution; initiatives which they believed threatened their local political economies. We will begin by looking at how policymakers in the secondary seaports responded to different forms of post-Revolutionary commercial discrimination as well as the attendant issue of capital scarcity in the 1780s. New forms of commercial discrimination and financial ills were instigated by the British Parliament and New York City in the case of New Haven, and Parliament and Philadelphia in the case of Wilmington. Faced with their new national government’s static inability to deal with issues and forced by turns to devise their own solutions to their problems, small state leaders strongly supported the shift to a stronger centralized government in 1787-88.

Upon adoption of the Constitution, however, their problems unexpectedly continued. The new centralized government allowed powerful nationalists in the primary seaports- as they competed with one another for hegemony- to pursue the creation of an integrated national marketplace. These new conditions permitted them to further capitalize on their superior harborage, capital, populations, and resources at the further expense of the secondary seaports.

In relation to these developments we will examine two cases of interstate conflicts under the new federal government involving trade upon the Delaware River between Wilmington and Philadelphia, and issues surrounding state enticement of, and aid to, manufactures involving New Haven and New York.

These events will demonstrate how citizens of the secondary seaports responded to the promises of independence and devised policies to forge political economies that would safeguard their newly won liberty by both promoting local prosperity and combatting the unforeseen new hierarchies that early national independence had wrought. They also show that citizens of the secondary seaports quickly learned that neither national independence nor the institution of a centralized government would protect them from the new geo-political and economic hierarchies that had taken shape. Both their revolutionary and constitutional settlements revealed that the struggle to destroy hierarchy and realize the Revolutionary promise of liberty and equality would remain at the center of their efforts to develop their local political economies.

As the Revolutionary War moved toward its final diplomatic resolution in 1783, the British government issued Orders-in-Council that excluded American ships from carrying American goods to the British West Indies. This unexpected consequence of independence destroyed a traditionally lucrative source of colonial shipping and had a harsh impact on the nation's maritime communities. Despite its indignant insistence on commercial reciprocity the new American government remained powerless to affect change or bring relief to its citizens. At a meeting held on December 19, "the merchants, traders, and others of the town" voted to close the port of New Haven to "vessels from British or other ports that were shut against the vessels of the United States." The assembly also voted to refuse admittance to the "property of subjects" hailing from any such ports. New Haven's commercial community further agreed not to accept any "consignments from merchants or others residing in any port or place in the West-Indies" and to "use their influence to prevent" any town merchants not in attendance from doing the same. A committee of five, but never less than three merchants "would wait upon any Captain, Owner, Supercargo or others . . . suspected of introducing any property" from the forbidden ports and "acquaint them that it is disagreeable to the trading interest of this town." The town would send a separate committee to wait upon Senator Roger Sherman to convince him to introduce legislation in the national Congress to enact a nationwide program of discrimination against

British ships and goods.¹² The challenges of independence were becoming quickly evident. If the Confederation Congress would not act to battle British commercial warfare, the people of New Haven proposed to do so themselves.

The merchants of New Haven also had other plans to protect their interests and give direction to their local political economy. Two weeks later the Connecticut General Assembly granted a new municipal charter incorporating “The City of New Haven” on January 8, 1784. The charter reduced the existing Town of New Haven from an area of ten by thirteen miles with a population of 8,000, to a space comprising perhaps ten percent of that size. This new city commanded the vital harborage and waterfront that lie between “Quinnipiac River, on the east, over to the West River and from the Mill River meadows, on the north.” The nine original squares that made up the “town-plot” were connected to the waterfront by two streets running southeast.¹³ The Venezuelan patriot Francisco de Miranda visited New Haven in July 1784 and reported the “number of houses in this city, including all sizes, is 440 and of inhabitants 3,322.”¹⁴ This small city’s principal contacts with the wider world transpired within the confines of its harbor and the merchant community had managed to have it severed from the surrounding Town and legislated into their own busy hands.

This generous grant by the Connecticut General Assembly gave the merchants control of the harbor and its customs revenues as well as oversight of the marketing of all local produce, thus assuring the political fealty of the local farming population to city exporters.¹⁵ In taking these bold steps to shape the local political economy the emerging policymakers of New Haven positioned themselves as both the inheritors and progenitors of their new city’s long commercial tradition. Yet that tradition, for all its local significance, was a British one. New Haven’s commercial leaders now needed to formulate policies that reflected and expanded upon their newly won independence, both local and national, and British navigation laws no longer favored their commercial tradition.

If North Americans collectively closed their ports to British ships and products, argued some writers in the secondary seaports, Parliament would be forced to reconsider its position. The revenue boost from even a partially restored American carrying trade could begin the economic turnaround so direly needed during the postwar recession of the 1780s. Since the new Confederation government had been granted no power to regulate trade, Congress sought an amendment to the Articles of Confederation granting such power, yet the states failed to support

the measure unanimously as required.¹⁶ As a result, the embargo plan failed. The Congress had in essence been enfeebled by its own compact of separate sovereign states. But local municipalities (like New Haven) could draw upon prior revolutionary examples and did respond to British policy.¹⁷

The challenges of the secondary seaports during the Confederation era also extended to their relations with primary regional ports that encouraged other layers of discrimination. Josiah Burr explained to his father Andrew, how the sugar and dry goods he sent from St. Thomas were subject to an impost for being re-shipped into New Haven from New York. This duty could have been avoided had the items been carried directly to New Haven. Such taxation bewildered merchants in the early urban republic. Burr seems to have anticipated his father's surprise, allowing that "it may seem extraordinary that Taxes should be laid on Goods carried from one State to another, but it is a Measure adopted by our Assembly in order to encourage direct importations into Connecticut."¹⁸ Such arrangements as these hampered the republic's commerce by prohibiting its citizens from achieving complete independence from the British and the freedom to openly compete with them. It also embittered relations between the states.

Because the waterways crossing its region flowed eastward into the Delaware River, Philadelphia held an important pull on Wilmington and its environs from an early time. As the largest city and market center in the North American colonies its political economy had exercised tremendous influence over the diminutive Delaware borough; this condition only became more acute with the onset of national independence. Wilmington merchants had traditionally conducted most of their business through the larger neighboring port of Philadelphia from colonial times, but the high tariffs adopted by Pennsylvania during the Confederation period cost Delawareans dearly for goods they imported from there.

To hurdle Philadelphia's tariff walls, and enter the necessary West Indies trade, the Delaware legislature declared Wilmington a free port in 1786. Many Wilmington merchants thus ceased paying excessive taxes into Philadelphia coffers for both transporting their goods to Philadelphia and for re-shipment abroad. The absence of tariffs also enticed greater numbers of ships to visit the port of Wilmington. By 1794, Wilmington's yearly exports would nearly double over pre-Revolutionary levels (\$207,985 in goods) and the port "could boast over thirty 'square-rigged vessels, besides sloops, and schooners'" of its own in the oceanic trade.

Commerce was at the center of the economic landscape of Wilmington, and created a strong demand for the services of area millers, artisans, and farmers.¹⁹

Problems of commercial discrimination had first begun with colonial opposition to British policies that emerged in the wake of the Seven Years' War. Two decades later the former colonists again debated adapting policy measures that would secure their rights and interests. "As to treaties of commerce with England," a commentator in one Wilmington newspaper predicted, "none will ever be made other than a perfect freedom on both sides, or equal prohibitions."²⁰ Yet, the Critical Period found citizens of the smaller ports and states battling unanticipated forms of domestic discrimination as well and they came to believe that a stronger national government could restore the equality that their republican revolution had promised and would best protect their interests from both sources of unhappiness. Citizens of ports situated in the smaller states, like Wilmington and New Haven, developed an interest in Union.

Along with the troubles presented by the British Orders-in-Council, the value of national, state, and private credit arrangements fluctuated wildly during the war causing widespread economic disarray and deepening the commercial crisis. Credit grew sparser and a profound specie shortage precluded the growth of banks and banking in the 1780s. According to Gordon Wood, the adoption of the federal Constitution in 1789 began the process of securing an environment under which concerted economic growth could begin.²¹ Prior to that time many men of property believed that stepped up tax collection and disciplined fiscal policies appeared the only way to right state economies, repay foreign debts, and attract developmental capital. [N Ch 3 p4] This vision was surely not a majority point of view during the 1780s when access to credit for ordinary citizens seemed even less likely. Yet this is not to say that no discussions of opening banks took place.

In June 1785, Eleazer McComb, a Dover merchant, agriculturalist, and budding entrepreneur wrote to Governor Nicholas van Dyke proposing the formation of Delaware's first bank. McComb proposed to locate the bank in Wilmington, coupled with an initiative (cited above) to make the Borough a free port. McComb confided that he "would not despair, if there was any money in the country, to see a subscription for such a scheme filled among ourselves in a short time." However, postcolonial conditions prevented such developments and a loan was required to finance the scheme. McComb acknowledged that "the scarcity of money obliges us to look abroad for this loan. If there should be no Dutch War," he suggested, "I think it highly

probable that Private Merchants in Holland would furnish the money on Public security.” Should the foreign investors find such a guarantee inadequate, McComb was confident a number of Public Spirited Landholders in this state . . . would cheerfully lend their names, and bind their property,” to such a deal. He asked that “if the scheme is practicable, you will foster it and bring it to light. If not, you will suffer it to die in peace.”

The scheme died in peace, but the existence of the letter shows that like New Haven’s non-importation exponents, entrepreneurial men in spite of conditions on the ground, were thinking creatively about ways to grow the local economies of the secondary seaports in the 1780s in ways that could help to balance their positions relative to foreign and regional powers. Failures to initiate plans for economic growth such as McComb’s gave momentum to the movement for the Constitution, and many of its advocates included the merchants of the secondary seaports who would ultimately pioneer the first banks in the early republic. Such men of commercial property, whose fortunes were expanded by land speculation, later began to build fledgling institutions commonly known as “commercial banks” almost exclusively serving the interests of commerce.

In 1787, the Federal Convention sought to re-fashion the nation’s blueprint for government and one of its most vexatious debates centered on the manner for choosing members of the proposed second legislative house; what would be called the Senate. Delegates from the large states advocated proportional representation based upon states’ populations while small state delegates fought to retain the equal state status (one state-one vote) that they enjoyed under the Articles of Confederation. Despite the very active efforts of large state delegates to deprive them of an equal voice in the Senate, and therefore, the entire Congress, the so-called “great compromise” secured the interests of the smaller states.

Based upon their experiences during the Critical Period, smaller states such as Delaware and Connecticut had worried intensely that prospective combinations of the larger states could threaten their liberties. According to historian Jack Rakove, large state representatives admitted that under their plan “the less populous states would lose influence. But this did not mean that their citizens would be either less free or less capable of reaping the benefits of union.”²² During the debate, Delaware’s Gunning Bedford bluntly asked if the small states could “be expected [to] . . . act from pure disinterestedness when the large states [are] evidently seeking to aggrandize themselves at the[ir] expense?” When the conventioners finally reported the new Constitution

to the public that September, New York's Gouverneur Morris wrote that it was well that the compromise had been struck, for if every state had sought only its own interests then "the consequences might have been particularly disagreeable or injurious to others."²³ So just how well-founded were the concerns of smaller states such as Delaware and how would this dynamic between the large and small states actually play out in the new republic?

While foreign discrimination such as the British Orders-in-Council could to some degree be expected by early republicans, discrimination at the hands of sister states could not be brooked.²⁴ The hard-fought battle that resulted in the "great compromise" at the federal convention suggests as much. Focusing on the intercourse between these secondary ports and the primary regional ports *after* the ratification of the Constitution offers an important new perspective on how the relations between the large and small states actually played out in the early republic and helps to explain why some convention delegates held the concerns that they did in 1787.

In the mid to late 1790s, ongoing war between France and Britain created record demands for Delaware Valley flour and breadstuffs both in Europe and the West Indies. The region's merchants, millers, and those engaged in the maritime trades found business brisk. At this point in the state's history, the merchant-millers represented the likeliest source of local investment capital. Their investment choices would be discretionary for sure, but favored individuals whose business aims dovetailed with their own. As Cathy Matson has noted, "Flour milling in Wilmington . . . grew up both naturally and by the aggressive design of entrepreneurs who saw potential to connect one of America's wheat belts to Philadelphia and foreign markets."²⁵ Delaware still had no bank of its own at this time but the borough's commercial growth from flour production and allied industries induced action on this point. Local business had "arrived to that degree which require[d] the aid of a Bank, and without which it must of necessity rather decline; as negotiations [sic] of that kind are now made at Philadelphia under some material disadvantages," a 1793 petition of merchants and millers argued. When the state legislature incorporated the Bank of Delaware in 1796 its directors included Jacob Broom, Samuel Canby, Joseph Tatnall, and Samuel Hollingsworth among other commercial figures. As John Munroe observed, "every one of these directors was a merchant, and many were millers." The French traveler La Rochefoucault sneered that, "This bank appears to be of no real utility, at least there is no apparent necessity for it---except to the Brandywine millers."²⁶ Efforts to

capitalize local hopes, like those of the millers, fueled the engine of Wilmington's growth in the Federal period. By this time, centralized regulation of commerce and the fortunes of war created a perfect storm that benefited Wilmington's merchant community, allowing for the creation of the first bank that allowed Delawareans to wrest a degree of financial independence from both Philadelphia, and foreign creditors.

The merchant-millers of Wilmington's Brandywine Creek shipped their "Superfine" flour throughout the world, most of it in Philadelphia bottoms. The shallopmen of the Delaware and Christiana passed regularly on these waterways on their way back and forth to Philadelphia brimming with cargoes of flour, lumber, and breadstuffs for export. This heightened commercial activity benefited the region widely, yet the increased intercourse with the West Indies also raised alarms for the public health.

Severe outbreaks of yellow fever had occurred in Atlantic seaboard cities throughout the 1790s. During this tumultuous decade of revolution, war, and partisan struggle, pestilence added a more sinister and local danger for citizens of the early urban republic. It was "not the fact of death that people dreaded; death was familiar to them all," wrote a historian of Philadelphia's outbreak, "what shocked people was a sudden mass of death, the uneasy fear that would forever after go with living in a city."²⁷ A yellow fever epidemic struck New Haven in 1794, claiming the wife of Congressman James Hillhouse among its victims.²⁸ The yellow fever epidemic of 1793 had killed nearly one-tenth of Philadelphia's population while doctors debated whether the fever originated from putrid local air or imported sources, by which they meant Santo Domingans.²⁹ More yellow fever outbreaks struck Philadelphia in 1794, 1797, and 1798.³⁰ The latter outbreak apparently shook medical professionals. Benjamin Rush confided to his correspondent Dr. B. Lynde Oliver of Salem, that the "fever . . . is more malignant than in the years of 1793-97."³¹ In order to obviate the civic terror occasioned by the tolling funerary bells of prior years,³² Philadelphia municipal authorities acted by instituting public policy designed to prevent another deadly epidemic.

Philadelphia's Quarantine Law of April 1799 and the January 1800 law incorporating the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Company both sought to address health risks associated with international commerce by heavily regulating how both imports and individuals entered the city.³³ The Quarantine law required any vessel bound from a foreign port to Philadelphia between the months of April and October to stop and weigh anchor at the city's Lazaretto. There

city officials inspected the cargo, passengers, and crew and held them in quarantine for fifteen days. After this time, the captain could receive a certificate from the Board of Health permitting him to continue to port.³⁴ Philadelphia demanded this procedure of all ships bound for the city before they landed any cargo or passengers at any other point, or on either shore of the river, between the Capes of Delaware and the City. Any ship's master, who permitted any item or individual to leave ship before following this course, would be sentenced to one to five years' hard labor in the Philadelphia County jail. Moreover, the law required any Delaware shallopmen carrying goods to Philadelphia to stop at the Lazaretto, where their cargoes would be unloaded and then carried to the city on *Philadelphia* vessels.

The quarantine created a great controversy within Philadelphia itself as members of the medical community, still debating whether the disease's cause was foreign or domestic six years later, bitterly debated the measures for dealing with it in the city's newspapers. "Philadelphus" defended the quarantine while other members of the community attacked him. "A Philadelphian" notified him that the city's leading merchants had deemed the costs of the quarantine to the city "enormous," and that it was an experiment "our commerce will not support." The author went on to assure Philadelphus that the satellite ports of neighboring states would benefit from Philadelphia's self-imposed losses. "If you mixed with the world and took pains to inform yourself of the events which have ensued," A Philadelphian charged, "you would find that many of our first merchants have directed their vessels to stop at New Castle or Wilmington, from whence they will be again ladened [sic]."³⁵ This information suggests that Philadelphia leaders may have believed they had economic as well as epidemiological reasons for interdicting trade between Philadelphia and the ports of northern Delaware.

Philadelphia had, by way of public health legislation, effectively assumed legal hegemony over all maritime traffic on the river between its own wharves and the Atlantic Ocean. Not surprisingly, the operation of these laws caused the merchants of nearby Wilmington to infer a scheme on the part of Philadelphia commercial interests to monopolize the trade of the entire Delaware River while they hid behind Aesculapian intentions. On June 17 1801, "the Merchants and other inhabitants" of Wilmington held a public meeting to look into the operations of the laws of their Pennsylvania neighbors. "The disguise of a Quarantine Law," the Delaware merchants intoned, "has not concealed the views of Commercial Interest." The community insisted that Philadelphia had over-stepped its jurisdiction by passing laws which could punish

citizens of Delaware- and individuals stopping there- for actions taken *in* Delaware. Any such law assaulted Delaware's sovereignty as an equal state "under the Federal compact"; an arrangement under which "one state cannot rightfully pass a law injurious to the Sovereignty of another." It belonged "to each to govern within its own territory," the Wilmingtonians reminded the reading public.³⁶ The Philadelphians either failed to grasp this or refused to, although the Wilmington authors tactfully gave them the benefit of the doubt.

In light of the actions of Philadelphia, Delaware could be justified in passing overweening commercial legislation of its own. The Wilmington Committee cautioned that "Our Colonial grant covers the Bay and River of Delaware . . . and as the trade of Pennsylvania must pass under our jurisdiction there might be some pretence for making it subject to our Laws." Delaware could just as easily "erect a Lazaretto at New Castle, and direct that no vessel shall pass it" without conforming to laws such as those ordained by Philadelphia. The Wilmington merchants' use of the term "pretence" is telling in this case. They themselves would attempt to pass no such legislation because according to the United States Constitution, "the power to regulate Commerce is given to the general government." Pennsylvania "had no right" to pass such a law, which they claimed, "contain[ed] more Commercial than Quarantine regulations."³⁷ In fact, Delaware believed they could receive some redress for these injustices because of a particular favor that Pennsylvania sought from them at that time.

At the dawn of the nineteenth century, Pennsylvania merchants longed to build a canal between the Delaware River and the Chesapeake Bay. Such a work of course required the cooperation of the sovereign state of Delaware through whose territory such an artificial waterway would be cut.³⁸ Delaware leaders believed that this gave them a very powerful card to play. Delaware did not share Pennsylvania's interest in a canal quite so keenly. Nonetheless, the state "was applied to on the principles of a liberal accommodation," to allow such a waterway to be cut through its territory. Delaware had previously granted Pennsylvania a canal concession but had not yet seen the Quarantine Law at the time.³⁹ The law's operation however, had had sufficient impact on New Castle and Wilmington to convince Delaware's General Assembly to attach specific conditions to the Canal Law which would nullify it *if* Philadelphia leaders failed to remove the provisions of their Quarantine Law which discriminated against Delaware's commerce and carrying trade.⁴⁰

What exasperated the merchants of Wilmington most about the law was the requirement that goods imported from “sickly places,” although landed in Delaware as long as 120 days, remained subject to fifteen days’ quarantine at the Lazaretto; if carried there in Delaware shallops, the cargo required re-shipment “into City lighters” when the vessel arrived. Such a bold-faced attempt to hijack all of the Delaware River carrying trade for Philadelphia’s pilots and boatmen angered Wilmington’s leaders not a little. The legislature of Delaware “did not expect that the condition of their law would have been thus complied with, by an aggravation of the injuries complained of. Nor [did they] suppose that such was the design of Pennsylvania, if their act will admit of any other rational construction.”⁴¹ The Delaware commercial community asserted that Philadelphia was acting well in excess of the spirit of laws designed to protect public health in order to gain unfair trading advantages and to wreck the carrying trade of their state. Even as Philadelphia purported to repeal injurious sections of their laws, they seemed to cling to control.

One section of Philadelphia’s 1801 Canal law governing insusceptible articles, provided that goods accepted and excused as incapable “of imbibing or retaining infectious matter,” might proceed to the City if loaded in “clean Vessels.” Because of the repeal of 1799 regulations on re-shipment put into the 1801 law, “clean goods in clean vessels” bound from Delaware to Philadelphia faced no stop at the Lazaretto to re-ship. Yet, The President of Philadelphia’s Board of Health appears to have covered that base too in a letter to the Delaware commercial community. This letter explained that most of the resolutions complained of would not be executed and that Delaware’s carrying vessels *would* be permitted to proceed without further quarantine or re-shipping, *when* bearing a certificate “satisfactory to the Board.” But, the Board retained a right, in spite of the certificate, to enforce the laws at their discretion.⁴²

“This branch of business,” the Wilmington merchants declared, depended upon “the precarious pleasure of the Board, and must give an influence over the traders of this State, neither honorable nor safe in its nature.” Smaller port communities such as Wilmington and small states like Delaware well understood the hazards they potentially faced at the hands of larger neighboring states and the primary American ports. Yet the notion that a small “foreign” municipal committee could wield so much power over the commerce of an entire state must have astonished the Delawareans. “The discretionary power vested by the Law, or assumed by the Board of Health,” they warned, “may be regarded as an engine capable of dangerous abuse.”

Decisions were being made “by men whose interests and prejudices can never leave them impartial as to the Commerce of the two States.”⁴³ Moreover, in its operations the Wilmingtonians argued (with some foresight) that the effect of Philadelphia’s laws would ultimately harm the broader regional commercial interest.

The tendency of Philadelphia’s law was “to divert [the region’s] trade to the Ports of New York and Baltimore.” In those seasons when disease would close the port of Philadelphia, the Lazaretto would be the only location on the entire river where goods could be landed. The fact that the law applied to an area extending 170 miles from Philadelphia meant that the law would drive trade “to the shelter of more propitious laws,” such as those of rival ports in other states. The Delaware merchants then, somewhat obsequiously, acknowledged the benefits that they derived from their relationship with Philadelphia. They claimed to have always “identif[ied] their interest with that of Pennsylvania,” and to have made no distinction “between the prosperity of her ports and their own.” What was beneficial to the commerce of Philadelphia ultimately benefited Delaware as well, and her people had always cooperated in following Pennsylvania’s lead in related matters of policy.⁴⁴ This was laying it on thick.

This compatibility of purpose would always hold true so long as Pennsylvania’s laws were founded upon “an enlarged and sound policy.” If Philadelphia leaders chose to “prefer the wretched profits of a few individuals to the justice which she owes to Delaware,” the citizens of Wilmington and their state government had means of retaliating. The Merchants’ Committee directed three of Delaware’s first citizens, James A. Bayard, Caesar A. Rodney, and James M. Broom, to prepare a petition to the General Assembly in Dover. This remonstrance would request a repeal of Delaware’s Canal Law to punish Philadelphia’s failure to faithfully modify the operation of their Quarantine Laws against the people of Delaware.⁴⁵

The matter was finally concluded during the fall session of the Delaware General Assembly in 1801 as part of the negotiations surrounding passage of the act of incorporation for the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Company. This original company charter proposed a tri-state partnership involving Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware. While the Delaware House had approved the matter in 1800, the Senate had not. A committee comprised of Dr. George Logan, Captain John Hunn, and Presley Carr Lane traveled to Dover to represent Pennsylvania’s interests and engaged in negotiations with Delaware legislators to get a deal done. In the end, Delaware’s legislators succeeded in forcing the Philadelphians to remove those portions of the

quarantine law that afflicted Wilmington's commerce in exchange for the Assembly's approval of the canal company charter.⁴⁶

In this rare case, Delaware held the trump card and Pennsylvania leaders were forced to bow to pressure from what they essentially viewed as a tributary state. This was an exception to the rule in big state-small state relations, and certainly in the relations between early national Pennsylvania and Delaware. The Chesapeake and Delaware Canal could only be built through Delaware, and this could not occur without Delaware's consent. Philadelphia's exertion of regional commercial and financial hegemony over Wilmington and its state would not cease any time soon.

The Revolutionary War had also impressed the importance of domestic manufactures upon many people and after the war many new ventures continued to appear when commercial opportunities became uncertain under the British Orders in Council and persistent fears of war. During the 1780s-90s, the arbitrary commercial powers wielded by large neighboring states boasting primary ports like those of Pennsylvania and New York gave pause to citizens of the secondary ports, as detailed above. During the Critical Period, the confederated states had proved incapable of concerted commercial retaliation against Britain and the double threat of both British and primary port discrimination sparked fervent activity in both Wilmington's Brandywine district and in New Haven and its hinterlands during this period. With the nation's fiscal affairs deranged, merchants and aspiring entrepreneurs sought secure investment possibilities for their capital in the manufacturing sectors of their local political economies and looked harder at the promotion of domestic economic development.⁴⁷ This new focus upon domestic manufactures led to the creation of associations for the encouragement, promotion, and protection of domestic manufactures, and signaled the beginning of intense nationwide discussions about the role of manufacturing in national, regional, and local political economies.⁴⁸

Many seaport merchants joined the pro-manufacturing movement, increasingly persuaded by Mathew Carey's *The American Museum* and other sources that the nation had become overpopulated with merchants and that development of domestic manufactures and harmonization of economic interests was the surest path to prosperity and true independence. As one writer put it, "We cannot all be cultivators of land---neither can we all be merchants."⁴⁹ In Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania Society for the Encouragement of Manufactures and the Useful Arts led this movement beginning in 1787. The new breed of merchant-manufacturers who

stood behind the Pennsylvania Society, the New York Manufacturing Society (1788), as well as Hamilton's SEUM (1791)⁵⁰ believed that developing manufacturing offered the best investment in uncertain financial times. ⁵¹ By establishing manufacturing as a viable *national* interest, early developmentalists shaped the bounds and viable rhetorical criteria of developmentalist discourse. For manufacturers seeking to carve out a sphere of interest in a developing republican political economy the language of "national" and "public" good was critical to success and their own self-interest: republican political culture demanded no less.

But significant obstacles faced the virtuous republican wishing to set up in domestic production. Skilled labor, machinery, and knowledge of the necessary machinery proved major logistical roadblocks to the actual establishment of manufacturing. Competition from cheap British imports (usually of higher quality) threatened to stifle sales of domestic goods that would be priced higher as manufacturers dealt with exorbitant start-up costs. Consumer desire for fine quality foreign articles after years of wartime deprivation made domestic products of rougher quality a harder sell yet. As Carey later remembered, "All our citizens at once were converted into disciples of Adam Smith. They purchased every species of goods cheaper than they could be manufactured at home."⁵² A lack of credit-lending institutions forced would-be manufacturers to solicit investment from merchants or entrepreneurs, who might easily be frightened off by the other negative variables. Hostility to American goods in foreign markets and the lack of transportation infrastructure to reach backcountry settlements also hemmed domestic goods into local markets where they would be forced to compete with cheaper high quality British articles.⁵³

One early historian of American manufacturing concluded that, "the termination of the colonial period is not as definitive a point in industrial as in political history."⁵⁴ Still, for contemporaries, conditions begged a definitive political solution. Only a strong national government could offer American manufacturers a level of protection from imported British goods that would allow their nascent business ventures to survive. Centralized power to establish tariff duties and issue credit promised hope to domestic manufacturers. Therefore, perhaps more than any other citizens advocating for their economic interests in local, state, and national political economies, manufacturers might be thought to be more sincere in their employment of nationalist language when seeking government aid. Only the creation of a national market system that would absorb domestic productions could insure the success of

American manufacturing. Stuart Bruchey pinpointed this relationship between political centralization and economic development a half-century ago when noting that “the Constitution did not create a national market, but it made it possible for one to emerge.”⁵⁵

Many supporters of the pro-ratification movement were successful merchants who had already established themselves financially, socially, and politically but found their standing threatened by economic conditions under the Confederation government. When such merchants set themselves up as manufacturers by diverting capital into new ventures, they often stood at odds with fellow merchants engaged in importing British goods and not open to the domestic competition. Moreover, as these domestic ventures began operation and investors and proprietors solicited government support via higher ad valorem duties on imports, they began to advocate a new political economy that further conflicted with what would evolve as the Hamiltonian plan. These associations of powerful merchants in the early republic’s primary seaports worked with and eventually displaced more populous but less influential mechanics and tradesmen in their efforts to stimulate capital and strengthen their respective political economies. Pro-manufacturing men, perhaps more than any others, assumed a disinterested, nationalistic posture in their quest to establish themselves and their interests in a republican political economy. Yet recognizing that they favored a strong national government that aided the developmental impulse is not to say that they did not seek to enrich their states, locales, and selves. The very *interested* efforts of men eager to act upon the liberal, entrepreneurial energies unleashed by the Revolution and seemingly buttressed by the ratification of the Constitution, demonstrate that even within the nascent national market system rivalries between the larger and smaller states persisted and leading entrepreneurs in their respective ports remained at the center of events.

Events in New York and Connecticut support the view that an ongoing battle with new forms of inequality remained a primary challenge for the entrepreneurs of the secondary ports.

In the early Federal era, as pro-manufacturing networks coalesced in some states, superior sources of capital and organization in the larger ports sparked efforts to lure prospective manufacturers away from outlying states, secondary ports, and hinterlands. A 1790 advertisement addressed “To those who propose to begin new manufactures” evidences New Yorkers’ efforts along these lines. The ad, which appeared in the *Connecticut Journal*, reasoned

that start-up costs for new establishments were relatively equal, but “when the work is once established, long experience has proved, that it is extremely difficult to remove it.” The extensive lands and topography of New York suited it for any branch of manufactures one could wish to conduct. However, the real case for locating one’s manufacturing establishment in New York “(especially those whose business requires expensive works) . . . is the just and liberal policy of the Legislature of the State.” Loans to business, and a \$1,000.00 stock subscription “by the State to the Manufacturing Society,” demonstrated New York’s wise and generous efforts “to establish useful trades.” “It is far from being a desirable[sic] object to encrease[sic] the inhabitants of one State at the expence of others” the author soothed, “but it would be still less desirable for individuals to fail in useful projects.”⁵⁶ The appeal of the ad to those engaged in large capital-intensive concerns suggests that the ad was planted by the New York Manufacturing Society, which included Hamilton among its members.

The message also suggests that business took precedence over state allegiances, and that men of liberal views should seek climates of opportunity as politics afforded them. This effort by New York boosters to enlarge their economic power emphasizes the undesirability of “individuals . . . fail[ing] . . . in useful projects.” By presenting this as the great issue at hand (at least rhetorically), it casts the promotion in disinterested and in shrewdly nationalist terms. Assisting “individuals” engaged in “useful trades” demonstrated enlightened liberal and patriotic action. Since the success of the manufacturer represented the success of the national project, the specific locale of the establishment was less important than the object at stake. To think otherwise would be parochial, illiberal, and ultimately un-republican. Patriotic men with an eye toward personal and by turns, national success, should choose the environment which best ensured that success. If Connecticut manufacturers brought their ventures to New York, both they and the nation would profit.

Tempting ingenuity and enterprise away from other states represented no new strain of thinking for Alexander Hamilton and his New York Federalist followers. As Secretary of the Treasury, Hamilton encouraged British mechanics and designers who understood the workings of that nation’s closely guarded industrial technology to abscond to the United States with their plans and knowledge. The most notable case of defection and industrial piracy was that of Samuel Slater, who smuggled the plans of the Arkwright water frame into New York City in his

head.⁵⁷ Luring capitalists down the sound from New Haven was a mean feat by comparison; at least in theory, as events below will show.

New Yorkers' designs on regional manufacturing production did not stop with enticing away new businesses. In 1791 The Connecticut Manufacturing Society appeared to promise a successful silk manufactory in conjunction with a new bank in Hartford. Connecticut's Jeremiah Wadsworth, a former Congressman and sitting Director of the Bank of the United States believed that the prospects were sound. But subscriptions of stock were sought with the aid of the notorious New York investor William Duer. A business associate of Wadsworth's cautioned that the "scheme for Connecticut will assuredly succeed if our frnd Duer does not fill the subscription with Speculators." However, this was precisely what happened. Over forty New York investors "speculating for a rise" including known Duer associates Melancton Smith and John Pintard had purchased 50 shares apiece. When the financial backers behind the scheme came to light, the Society apparently failed due to public disinterest and was never able to apply for a charter or manufacture a single item.⁵⁸ In effect, by luring business and capital away from local political economies, capitalists in the primary ports, like those behind the New York Society, could stymie development in the secondary seaports and shape the broad contours of regional political economies to suit their own interests.

New Haven entrepreneurs could also try to attract investors away from New York markets and even aimed to enter Connecticut into competition with New York for the attentions of European manufacturing talent. New Haven's capital shortage and reliance on New York investment however, could make all the difference in the success or failure of local ventures. In 1789 a mechanic named Abel Buell traveled to Europe on pretense of purchasing copper for coining at the New Haven Mint.⁵⁹ His true purpose was to learn all that he could about the machinery used to produce cotton-cloth. Buell returned to New Haven with Scotsman William McIntosh, an artisan familiar with the construction of the machinery necessary to cloth production. Ultimately the odyssey resulted in the opening of two manufactories. New York capitalists John R. Livingston and David Dixon joined with Buell and McIntosh to erect a cotton manufactory at Westville which began operation in 1794.⁶⁰ Meanwhile, McIntosh, "trusting that the distinction and appellation of foreigner w[ould] not operate on the[ir] minds," also branched off and petitioned the General Assembly for a loan of three thousand pounds, or permission to hold a lottery to raise such a sum, in order to build a manufactory for producing "worsted &

woollens.” The legislature, although unable to offer such a subsidy, exceeded the request and granted McIntosh permission to raise £3,200 by a lottery under the direction of a small group of men that included David Austin, Elias Shipman, Elijah Austin, and William Hillhouse.⁶¹ In the May 1792 Session, the Assembly granted McIntosh further permission to join a cotton manufactory to the works, and replaced Hillhouse with Elias Beers on the lottery commission.⁶²

The widespread financial distress and capital shortages that followed the Revolution made lotteries, a device imported from England during colonial times, an important mechanism for raising funds for worthy public and private projects. As the newly centralized government under the Constitution unleashed further entrepreneurial energies a cash poor public continued to rely upon the “financial crutch” of lotteries as a source of start-up capital for business, as well as a revenue stream for schools, internal improvements schemes, and more.⁶³ Secondary seaports such as New Haven felt the shortage of capital even more acutely than larger centers of commerce such as New York and the appearance of lottery requests in petitions was common. In this particular case, the disparity in capital on the New York-New Haven axis appears to have played a significant role in the fate of the two concerns.

Historical accounts of the two operations conflict but it appears that the Buell factory that was infused with New York capital, shifted from production of cotton to that of wool after several years. It later became a paper mill and was eventually consumed by fire in 1837. McIntosh built a much larger concern that embraced production of multiple fabrics and the size and complexity of his operations made his financial needs greater. In May 1794, Isaac Beers informed David Daggett that “Mr. Hillhouse . . . said I must be at Hartford on Monday as he was going to make his application in favor of McIntosh & should want me.”⁶⁴ Here Beers referred to the effort of a group of New Haven entrepreneurs that included several of his family members, to take over the unsuccessful sale of lottery tickets for McIntosh’s factory. Once approved, this new effort assumed the name of the Connecticut Manufacturing Lottery.⁶⁵ Yet important players behind this scheme privately held deep reservations about the project’s likelihood of success. As insider Beers informed Daggett, “I find the Managers of the Lottery are very desirous it should be given up, on the principle that it is in fact a State Lottery & wholly at their risque & the very little prospect that it will by any means be any profit to the State.”⁶⁶ Indeed while the state granted them permission, they were cautioned to “take good and sufficient security to Indemnify themselves and this State from any risque or expence on Account of” the Lottery.⁶⁷

Yale President Rev. Ezra Stiles also expressed misgivings about McIntosh's over-sized and under-capitalized venture. Visiting both Buell's and McIntosh's factories just before his death in 1795, he remarked that McIntosh's "is very grand---but will fail, and Buell's will succeed, tho' much smaller."⁶⁸ So why would "principal citizens" of the under-capitalized New Haven community take such risks to make McIntosh's business succeed? For Beers, one of the most important reasons for the appeal to authorities in Hartford was:

to impress on the House the Great Utility of Supporting an establishment of this kind on so large a Scale in this State, particularly at this time when so many manufacturers are coming from Europe wanting employ---who if they cannot find a place to resort to & get employment may return & by that means discourage others from ever attempting the business in this country---this time also appears to be as favourable as any we may ever have to make a trial of this kind, & every exertion should be made to retain those Valuable Artisans amongst us.⁶⁹

This local-spirited form of patriotism expressed a desire to seize an opportunity to put Connecticut on the map as a destination for emigrating manufacturers and artisans, presumably at the expense of New York. McIntosh's grand works could provide the magnet to do just this, if only it could be properly funded and operated. The lottery managers and their lobbyists had succeeded in soliciting enough funds to get the factory up and running, and they reminded "the good citizens of this State and others that there is no Grant, or even prospect of a Lottery of any kind, except the one now submitted which may be an Inducement to the Patriotic, to adventure for their *own* and, the *public good*."⁷⁰ Ultimately, however, the partnership of McIntosh, Livingston, and Dixon dissolved in 1796 and the lottery proved insufficient to sustain the business. After the New Yorkers pulled up stakes, McIntosh continued for a few more years until his solo operation failed as Stiles had predicted.⁷¹

New Haven brewer Edward Larkin offers us a brief glimpse at another discriminatory outcome of his city's constitutional settlement in his 1795 remonstrance to the Connecticut General Assembly. Larkin had "met with some misfortunes by reason of sickness and various losses" which had "prevented him from being as useful to himself and his fellow Citizens as he would wish." Larkin hoped to expand his production of Porter but "want of a sufficient Capital" prevented him from operating at "any great Advantage either to himself or the public." Larkin thought himself "fully authorized to talk to your Honours" and was "sensible that the Legislature

of th[e] state have always Manifested a wish to encourage industry and useful Manufactories,” (and certainly *The Public Records of the State of Connecticut* bear him out on this point). This knowledge encouraged the brewer to request permission to conduct a lottery for the purpose of raising \$1,000.00 to expand his operation. Larkin, confident that his private endeavor would benefit his wider community, insisted to Assemblymen that “he could afford to sell Porter to the citizens of this State, one half cheaper than any that has been imported, and he humbly conceives that this Porter will be nearly as good as any imported.”⁷²

Larkin could not rely upon the endorsement of principal citizens who had sampled his wares, as clients of Wilmington’s flour industry could then do.⁷³ Yet Larkin felt fully “authorized” to appeal to the General Assembly based upon his familiarity with the custom of his state’s aid to manufacturers. That Larkin told the Assembly he had “been able to support himself and family comfortably” tells us something of his middling social station. The experience of Connecticut manufacturers with the state, however, was not one which favored mechanics who had not been “useful” to the public like Larkin; not in the “Land of Steady Habits.” It favored well-placed or aspiring merchant capitalists, men of the same ilk as the Assembly themselves. Grants to such properly-placed men had historically resulted in monopoly privileges and tax exemption.⁷⁴ It required some level of gumption for this moderately “useful” brewer to cite prior legislative decisions to the Assembly in his appeal. Larkin’s petition reveals what the Revolutionary promise meant to him: the liberty and equality of opportunity to pursue his energies to their fullest and the optimism that a “just and liberal state policy” should apply to him, as well.

Connecticut mechanics had recently protested the legislature’s grant of tax exemptions and bounties to large manufacturers while members of the laboring classes were made to pay a poll tax.⁷⁵ Perhaps these efforts emboldened him. Or perhaps he had simply sipped too much of his own brew. This we cannot know. We can deduce that the manufacturing vision held by the economic and political hierarchy of New Haven during the 1790s endorsed large-scale operations that encouraged opportunities for principal citizens to benefit, not middling inhabitants. Such exclusion from access to state aid, or banking credit, or subjection to new toll roads forged a heightened consciousness about social discrimination for workaday citizens of the early urban republic and its hinterlands that would become a mobilizing political force for citizens seeking “a happy mediocrity of condition.”⁷⁶ As policymakers in the port communities

of the Federal era struggled to craft policies that could bring economic growth and relief from those forms of discrimination upon which they focused, they begat a new set of social and political problems that increasingly emerged in the form of Jeffersonianism and continued into the nineteenth century until Connecticut replace its ancient Royal Charter with a new state constitution in 1818.

An examination of citizens in the secondary seaports' experience with the early experiments with republican political economy reveals that inhabitants of American port cities all embarked on a common quest to pursue their economic liberties and maximize liberation from the imperial mercantile system after the Revolutionary War. However, the egalitarian expectations shared by all faded beneath the long shadows cast by the endowments, resources, and the connections of the larger ports and a new hierarchical system that distinguished premiere ports from lesser ports and interior places emerged.

The dynamic tension created by similar geographic and commercial frameworks in the early republic played an important role in forging the shape of the political economies of America's smaller states. By viewing the contested relationships between the primary and secondary ports of the early republic and their hinterlands more closely, scholars may gain important new perspectives on how interstate power relations shaped ongoing efforts to achieve revolutionary settlements that fulfilled the promises of liberty and equality, not just among the citizenry, but amongst the sovereign states as well.

¹ Cathy D. Matson and Peter S. Onuf, *A Union of Interests: Political and Economic Thought in Revolutionary America*, (Lawrence, KS: Kansas University Press 1990), 81, 162.

² Merrill Jensen, *The New Nation: A History of the Confederation*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950); Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969); Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert, eds., *Sovereign states in an Age of Uncertainty*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981); Richard Beeman, Stephen Botein, and Edward C. Carter, II, eds., *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1987); Cathy D. Matson and Peter S. Onuf, *A Union of Interests: Political and Economic Thought in Revolutionary America*, (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 1990); Matson "The Revolution, the Constitution, and the New Nation," in Stanley L. Engerman and Robert E. Gallman, eds., *The Cambridge Economic History of the United States, Volume I: The Colonial Era*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

³ Charles A. Beard, *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States*, (New York: The Free Press, 1986 [1913]); Joyce Appleby, "The American Heritage: The Heirs and the Disinherited," *Journal of American History* 74 (Dec., 1987): 798-813; Saul Cornell, "Aristocracy Assailed: The Ideology of Backcountry Anti-Federalism," *Journal of American History* 76 (Mar., 1990): 1148-1172; Woody Holton, *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the*

Constitution, (New York: Hill & Wang, 2007); Terry Bouton, *Taming Democracy: "The People," the Founders, and the Troubled Ending of the American Revolution*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁴ Matson and Onuf, *A Union of Interests*, 72.

⁵ Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 229-286; Matson, "Capitalizing Hope: Economic Thought and the Early National Economy," *Journal of the Early Republic* 16 (Summer 1996): 273-39; Appleby, *Inheriting the Revolution: The Second Generation of Americans*, (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2000); Andrew Shankman, *Crucible of American Democracy: The Struggle to Fuse Egalitarianism and Capitalism in Jeffersonian Pennsylvania*, (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 2004); J.M. Opal, *Beyond the Farm: National Ambitions in Rural New England*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

⁶ Richard R. Demirjian, Jr., "'To All the Great Interests': Political Economy in the Early Urban Republic," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Delaware, 2013).

⁷ Robert G. Albion, *The Rise of New York Port, 1815-1860*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939); James Weston Livingood, *The Philadelphia-Baltimore Trade Rivalry: 1760-1860*, (Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1947); Carl Bridenbaugh, *Cities in Revolt: Urban Life in America, 1743-1776*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955); David T. Gilchrist, *The Growth of the Seaport Cities, 1790-1825*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1967); Alan R. Pred, *Urban Growth and the United States System of Cities, 1790-1840*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973); Gary Lawson Browne, *Baltimore in the New Nation, 1789-1861*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); William Pencak and Conrad Edick Wright, *New York and the Rise of American Capitalism: Economic Development and the Social and Political History of an American State*, (New York: The New York Historical Society, 1989).

⁸ Gary B. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979); Howard B. Rock, *Artisans of the New Republic: The Tradesmen of New York City in the Age of Jefferson*, (New York: New York University Press, 1979); Bruce Laurie, *Working People of Philadelphia, 1800-1850*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980); Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982); Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Charles G. Steffen, *The Mechanics of Baltimore: Workers and the Age of Revolution, 1763-1812*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984); Paul A. Gilje, *The Road to Mobocracy: Popular Disorder in New York City, 1763-1834*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987); Nash, *Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia's Black Community, 1720-1840*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988); Benjamin L. Carp, *Rebels Rising: Cities and the American Revolution*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Seth Rockman, *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

⁹ Comparison of the export values of the states that played home to the various secondary and primary seaports which I study (Connecticut's trade versus that of New York and Massachusetts, and Delaware's versus that of Pennsylvania and Maryland) reinforces this imbalance. Adam Seybert, *Statistical Annals: Embracing Views of the Population, Commerce, Navigation, Fisheries, Public Lands, Post-Office Establishment, Revenues, Mint, Military and Naval Establishments, Expenditures, Public Debt, and Sinking Fund of the United States of America: Founded on Official Public Documents*, (Philadelphia: Thomas Dobson & Son, 1818), 88, Library Company of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA. *Hereafter cited as LCP.

Seybert's reportage analyzes the performance of the states, not of their individual ports, but as the ports discussed in this study were the largest in their respective states, we may safely draw some conclusions from these figures as to the performance of Wilmington, Philadelphia, etc.

¹⁰ Eric Foner, *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976); John L. Brooke, "'To the Quiet of the People': Revolutionary Settlements and Civil Unrest in Western Massachusetts, 1774-1789," *William & Mary Quarterly* XLVI (1989): 425-462; Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*; Douglas Bradburn, "'The Great Field of Human Concerns': The States, The Union, and the Problem of Citizenship in the Era of the American Revolution," in Peter Thompson and Peter S. Onuf, eds., *State and Citizen: British America and the Early United States*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2013); David C. Hendrickson, "Bringing the State System Back In: The Significance of the Union in Early American History, 1763-1865," in Thompson and Onuf, eds., *State and Citizen*.

¹¹ Jacob M. Price, "Economic Function and the Growth of American Port Towns in the Eighteenth Century," *Perspectives in American History* 8 (1974): 172-173. Geography, a viable export trade, and development as "entrepreneurial decision-making center[s]" distinguished a mature entrepôt (ports hosting a multilateral commerce that supported an array of goods and services and a resident consumer base), from a mere "shipping point." These criteria provided in Price's classic essay help us to differentiate the way that American port-types developed within the eighteenth century British Empire and later entered an Atlantic system of states as part of a newly sovereign American nation. They also help to illustrate colonial economic factors that went into the making of the early urban republic's primary and secondary ports.

¹² *Connecticut Journal*, December 24, 1783.

¹³ Rollin G. Osterweis, *Three Centuries of New Haven, 1638-1938*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), 157, 162, 160.

¹⁴ Francisco de Miranda, *The New Democracy in America: Travels of Francisco de Miranda in the United States, 1783-84*, Transl. Judson P. Wood, Ed. John S. Ezell, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 107.

¹⁵ Franklin Bowditch Dexter, "New Haven in 1784," *Papers of the New Haven Colony Historical Society* Vol. IV (New Haven: New Haven Colony Historical Society, 1888), 117-138.

¹⁶ Holton, *Unruly Americans*, 134-136.

¹⁷ Matson and Onuf, *A Union of Interests*; Pauline Maier, *From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American Opposition to Britain, 1765-1776*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992); Nash, *The Urban Crucible*; T.H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

¹⁸ Josiah Burr to Andrew Burr, December 10, 1784, Burr Family Papers MSS 303 Box 2 Folder 51, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven, CT. *Hereafter cited as Yale MSSA.

¹⁹ John A. Munroe, *Federalist Delaware, 1775-1815*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1954), 131-134; Sally Guertler Farris, "The Wilmington Merchant, 1775-1815," M.A. Thesis, (University of Delaware, 1961), 3, 18, 24; John J. McCusker and Russell Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607-1789*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 321-324; Brooke Hunter, "Rage For Grain: Flour Milling in the Mid-Atlantic, 1750-1815," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Delaware, 2001), 254-275; Richard Buel, Jr., *In Irons: Britain's Naval Supremacy and the American Revolutionary Economy*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

²⁰ *The Delaware Gazette or the Faithful Centinel*, January 18, 1786.

²¹ Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, 250.

²² Jack N. Rakove, *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), 67.

²³ Gunning Bedford quoted in Rakove, *Original Meanings*, 68; Gouverneur Morris quoted in Rakove, 57.

²⁴ Onuf, *The Origins of the Federal Republic: Jurisdictional Controversies in the United States, 1775-1787*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983); Matson and Onuf, *A Union of Interests*; Demirjian, "To All the Great Interests."

²⁵ Matson, "Capitalizing Hope," 289.

²⁶ Munroe, *Federalist Delaware*, 145-146, quote 146, n. 154. La Rochefoucault quote, 146, n. 156. For more on the development of banking in Wilmington and Philadelphia's influence over the borough's fiscal life, see Demirjian, "To All the Great Interests," Chapter 3.

²⁸ Osterweis, *Three Centuries of New Haven*, 185.

²⁹ J. H. Powell, *Bring Out Your Dead: The Great Plague of Yellow Fever in Philadelphia in 1793*, Second Edition (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 29-44.

³⁰ Kenneth R. Foster, Mary F. Jenkins, and Anna Coxe Toogood, Introduction to Powell, *Bring Out Your Dead*, xiii. Richard Chew gives the following figures for yellow fever deaths in Baltimore: One-sixth of the population of the city's Fell's Point maritime community perished in the 1794 epidemic. The 1800 epidemic claimed 1,197 lives; 50% of which came from Fell's Point, where swampy conditions and direct contact with the incoming ships increased susceptibility to the disease. See Richard S. Chew, "Certain Victims of an International Contagion: The Panic of 1797 and the Hard Times of the Late 1790s in Baltimore," *Journal of the Early Republic* 25 (Winter, 2005): 598-599.

³¹ "Dr. B. Lynde Oliver (Salem, MA) to Dr. Benjamin Rush, 14 October 1798," Benjamin Rush, Correspondence, Vol. 38 Yellow Fever, Pt. 4, Library Company of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA. *Hereafter cited as LCP.

³² Powell, *Bring Out Your Dead*, 45-47.

³³ The role of municipal governments in regulating civic affairs and economics is treated in Jon C. Teaford, *The Municipal Revolution in America: The Origins of Modern Urban Government, 1650-1825*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975) and William J. Novak, *The People's Welfare: Law and Regulation in Nineteenth Century America*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

³⁴ In a diary entry dated December 12, 1799, visitor Hipólito José da Carta described passing Fort Mifflin, where "on the shore nearby there is a hospital with a doctor who inspects the health of those aboard the ships entering the port. Here we were obliged to spend the night, in the 1st place because the doctor never came and if a ship passes without his permission the Captain must pay a fine of 300 dollars." The doctor came the following day. Robert C. Smith, "A Portuguese Naturalist in Philadelphia, 1799," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 78 (January, 1954): 77. *Hereafter cited as *PMHB*. Apparently the position of Lazaretto physician could be a plum patronage appointment as well. Pennsylvania Governor Thomas McKean appointed his son-in-law, Dr. George Buchanan to the post in 1806 in the face of outrage from the radical wing of the city's Republican Party led by James Duane and Michael Leib. The Pennsylvania constitution required one year's residency in the county of practice to be considered for the post of Lazaretto physician. Opponents charged that McKean had violated the state constitution by appointing his non-resident son-in-law. McKean, a former judge described by one opponent as a "vain conceited rusty old weathercock," argued that the post was a general appointment so residency requirements did not apply in the case. For this and other charges faced by the old judge, see: James Hedley Peeling, "Governor McKean and the Pennsylvania Jacobins (1799-1808)," *PMHB* 54 (1930): esp. 344, 348, and 351.

³⁵ "To Philadelphus," *Gazette of the United States*, June 6, 1799, Philadelphia, PA, NewsBank/Readex, Database: America's Historical Newspapers, SQN: 10947345A1F98668, Accessed 7/28/11. *Hereafter cited as *AHN*.

³⁶ “The Committee appointed by the meeting of the Merchants and other inhabitants of the Borough of Wilmington, held on the 17th June, 1801, to whom the objects of that meeting were generally referred,” July 20, 1801, (Wilmington: Printed by J. Wilson, 1801), 2, Microforms-Microfiche S269.5 1667, Morris Library, University of Delaware, Newark, DE. *Hereafter cited as “Report of the Wilmington Merchants’ Committee, July 1801” and “UD Library.”

³⁷ “Report of the Wilmington Merchants’ Committee, July 1801,” 3, 4, 3.

³⁸ For a detailed discussion of the relations between Delaware and Pennsylvania relative to the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, see Demirjian, “‘To All the Great Interests’,” Chapter 4 and Ralph D. Gray, *The National Waterway: A History of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Company, 1769-1965*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1969).

³⁹ Livingood, *The Philadelphia-Baltimore Trade Rivalry*.

⁴⁰ “Report of the Wilmington Merchants’ Committee, July, 1801,” 6.

⁴¹ “Report of the Wilmington Merchants’ Committee, July, 1801,” 6-7.

⁴² “Report of the Wilmington Merchants’ Committee, July, 1801,” 10.

⁴³ “Report of the Wilmington Merchants’ Committee, July 1801,” 9-11.

⁴⁴ “Report of the Wilmington Merchants’ Committee,” 11-12.

⁴⁵ “Report of the Wilmington Merchants’ Committee,” 12-13.

⁴⁶ Gray, “Philadelphia and the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, 1769-1823,” *PMHB* 84 (Jan., 1960): 406.

⁴⁷ Victor S. Clark, *A History of Manufactures in the United States: Volume I, 1607-1860*, (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1916), 228-230.

⁴⁸ Matson and Onuf, *A Union of Interests*, 44-47; Gary J. Kornblith, “‘Cementing the Mechanic Interest’: Origins of the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 8 (Winter 1988): 355-387; Lawrence A. Peskin, “From Protection to Encouragement: Manufacturing and Mercantilism in New York City’s Public Sphere, 1783-1795,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 18 (Winter 1998): 589-615.

⁴⁹ *The American Museum*, January 1787, 17, LCP.

⁵⁰ Hereafter referred to as “the New York Society” and “the Pennsylvania Society.”

⁵¹ Peskin, *Manufacturing Revolution: The Intellectual Origins of Early American Industry*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 106.

⁵² Mathew Carey, *The New Olive Branch: or, An Attempt to Establish an Identity Between Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce*, (Philadelphia: M. Carey & Sons, 1821), 15, LCP.

⁵³ Clark, *A History of Manufactures in the United States: Volume I*, 228-237; Doron Ben-Atar, “Alexander Hamilton’s Alternative: Technology Piracy and the Report on Manufactures,” in Ben-Atar and Barbara Oberg, eds., *Federalists Reconsidered*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 41-60; *The American Museum*, January 1788, 21-24, and May 1788, 483, LCP; Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution*; John Lauritz Larson, *The Market Revolution in America: Liberty, Ambition, and the Eclipse of the Common Good*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), Ch.1; Matson, “Public Vices, Private Benefit: William Duer and His Circle, 1776-1792,” in Pencak and Wright, ed., *New York and the Rise of American Capitalism*.

⁵⁴ Clark, *A History of Manufactures in the United States: Volume I*, 234.

⁵⁵ Stuart Bruchey, *The Roots of American Economic Growth, 1607-1861: An Essay in Social Causation*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 97.

⁵⁶ *Connecticut Journal*, May 5, 1790. The Manufacturing Society had sought assistance of \$1,500 to \$2,500 but received only \$1,000. However the ad man does not mention the state's *prudent* liberality. See Peskin, *Manufacturing Revolution*, 254, n. 79.

⁵⁷ Ben-Atar, "Alexander Hamilton's Alternative," 41-60, and *Trade Secrets: Intellectual Piracy and the Origins of American Industrial Power*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004); Barbara M. Tucker, *Samuel Slater and the Origins of the American Textile Industry, 1790-1860*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), esp. Ch. 1.

⁵⁸ Joseph Stancliffe Davis, *Essays in the Earlier History of American Corporations, Volume 2*, (New York: Russell & Russell, 1965), 273-275, quote 274; Peskin, *Manufacturing Revolution*, 102.

⁵⁹ The "Company for Coining Coppers" which included James Hillhouse, Samuel Bishop, and John Goodrich, received permission from the general Assembly and began operations in 1785. According to their petition, the company sought to redress the paucity of small coins in Connecticut and thus remove the "great inconveniences . . . felt, particularly by the laboring class, who are the stay and staff of the community." By 1787, the New Haven Mint had contracted with Congress to produce coins for the national government. Samuel E. Atwater, ed., *History of New Haven, Connecticut to the Present Time*, (New York: W.W. Munsell & Co., 1887), 532. Spellings of his name alternate between "Buel" and "Buell" depending upon the source.

⁶⁰ Leonard Woods Labaree and Catherine Fennelly, *The Public Records of the State of Connecticut, Volume VIII: From May 1793 through October 1796*, (Hartford: Connecticut State Library, 1951), 18, n. 21.

⁶¹ "Petition of Wm. McIntosh and others, October 1791," Connecticut Archives: Industry 2nd Series Vol. 2, Reel 72, 85A-C, Connecticut State Library, Hartford, CT. *Hereafter cited as CSL. See also "Bill in Form on Wm. McIntosh Mem," Connecticut Archives: Industry 2nd Series, Vol. 2, Reel 72, 86A-C.

⁶² "Bill Concerning McIntosh's Grant, May 1792," Connecticut Archives: Industry 2nd Series Vol. 2, Reel 72, 87A-B.

⁶³ John Samuel Ezell, *Fortune's Merry Wheel: The Lottery in America*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), 3-78, quote 78.

⁶⁴ Isaac Beers to David Daggett, May 10, 1794, David Daggett Papers, MS 162 Box 1 Folder 30, Yale MSSA.

⁶⁵ The managers of the Connecticut Manufacturing Lottery were listed in 1795 as Timothy Jones, Henry Daggett, Elias Beers, William Lyon, and Nathan Beers. See *Connecticut Journal* June 24, 1795.

⁶⁶ Beers to Daggett, May 10, 1794, David Daggett Papers, MS 162, Yale MSSA.

⁶⁷ Labaree and Fennelly, *The Public Records of the State of Connecticut, Vol. VIII*, 254.

⁶⁸ Labaree and Fennelly, *The Public Records of the State of Connecticut, Vol. VIII*, 18, n. 21. A newspaper ad demonstrates that the operation adopted a Hamiltonian model, including the Treasury secretary's suggestions for making women and children "useful": "The Proprietors of the Woolen and Cotton Factory now going on in New Haven, (anxious to put into effect the intent of the Legislature in bringing them into existence)—wish to inform the public, that they are now ready to employ a number of weavers at their factory in New Haven city, or in private families, who will have a constant supply of yarns, &c. and meet with every encouragement; those who wish to embrace an opportunity of obtaining a decent support, will please to apply at the Factory, or to the subscriber in New Haven city . . . Note---A number of poor

children are wanted as bound apprentices to the works, boys from the age of 12 to 14 years, girls from 10 to 12 years---apply as above." *Connecticut Journal*, June 24, 1795

⁶⁹ Beers to Daggett, May 10, 1794, MS 162, Yale MSSA.

⁷⁰ *Connecticut Journal*, June 24, 1795.

⁷¹ Labaree and Fennelly, *The Public Records of the State of Connecticut*, Vol. VIII, 18, n. 21.

⁷² "Memorial of Edward Larkin, October 1795," Connecticut Archives: Industry, 2nd Series Vol. 2, Reel 72, 57A-B, CSL.

⁷³ *Delaware and Eastern Shore Advertiser*, July 15, 1795. Robert Dawson, a Wilmington bolting cloth manufacturer, produced an item that was vital to the interests of the merchant-millers and was empowered to publicize their endorsements for his own benefit

⁷⁴ For instance, in January 1783 the Connecticut General Assembly granted William Pitkin, Samuel Bishop, and Elisha Pitkin of New Haven permission to "erect and Set up a Glass Manufactory" and were granted monopoly privileges within the state for twenty-five years and exemption from taxation of their profits for ten years. See Leonard Woods Labaree, *The Public Records of the State of Connecticut for the Years 1783 and 1784*, (Hartford: Published by the state, 1943), 57.

⁷⁵ James P. Walsh, "'Mechanics and Citizens': The Connecticut Artisan Protest of 1792," *William and Mary Quarterly* 42 (Jan., 1995): 66-89.

⁷⁶ *Philadelphia Aurora*, May 27, 1805, quoted in Shankman, *Crucible of American Democracy*, 80.