The Reciprocal Relationship Between Self and Social: The Impact of Individual Identity Development on National Identity

Anneliese Johnson

Abstract: This paper unites political science and psychological research in a cohesive discussion of how individual identity development impacts the emergence of a group's national identity. The social construction of national identity is particularly important in colonial experiences, where individuals experience a conversion from one definition of self to another. Evidence presented suggests that a national identity cannot exist in a meaningful way without the presence of an internalized sense of national identity at the individual level. Antecedents to a fully expressed national identity, or cornerstones of commonality, provide individuals with critical reference points of sameness when a new national identity is presented, allowing individuals to shed their current social identity in favor of one that more clearly defines the existing realities of their social experience.

Rather than operate in abstractions, the significance of individual identity formation for national identity is illustrated through an exploration of demographic and economic changes in colonial America between 1720 and 1763. This article demonstrates that individual conceptions of identity began to shift prior to the acknowledgement of a group national identity, but were critical for its success in fostering and sustaining an independence movement.

Introduction

Individual identity formation and the emergence of national identity have received near constant attention within the academic community over the past several decades. Despite this robust history of scholarly engagement, a dearth of research exists that fuses conceptions of individual identity formation with the onset of collective national identity in an effort to coherently express the influence of individuals on the emergence of national identity. Uniting political science and psychological research increases the understanding of the importance of individuals' development of self for the successful development of national identity.

Though national identity is situated as a group identity, psychological theories about individual identity formation can yield fresh insight into the way in which individuals construct a foundation for the acceptance of a national identity prior to its recognition at the collective level. This article argues that a reciprocal relationship between individual and social realms exists, such that nationalism cannot exist in a meaningful way without the presence of an internalized sense of national identity at an autonomous level. As such, antecedents to a fully expressed national identity must be present within individuals' conceptions of self to facilitate the acceptance of a new social identity so that it resonates within the population, allowing individuals to shed their existing adherence to a social group in favor of one that more clearly defines the realities of their social experience.

First, a literature review of nationalism and identity formation will be used to provide a basis of common understanding. The importance of a socially constructed collective national identity will be explored, with primary emphasis on how language and common experiences influence its formation. Social construction plays a vital role in the development of both individual and collective social identities. Individual identity formation will also be explained, referencing in particular the reciprocal relationship between the self and the social world. Special attention will also be given to the hierarchal yet fluid nature of identity. In addition, an explanation of the reciprocal nature of individual identity development and national identity will be presented, highlighting both political science and psychological insights to achieve a deeper understanding of how a collective national identity emerges and is sustained by a foundation of individual commitment. Finally, analysis of existing theories will shed new importance on the role that individual identity development plays in creating cornerstones of commonality prior to the acknowledgement of a national identity at the societal level. These cornerstones provide members of the given group critical reference points of sameness when a new national identity is presented socially, strengthening the collective identity and reinforcing notions of belonging among group members.

Rather than operate in abstractions, the significance of individual identity formation for national identity will be illustrated using a concrete example – the emergence of national identity in the United States of America. American national identity has been traditionally associated with the Revolutionary War period, however, in order to observe its earliest vestiges, an examination of the mid-eighteenth century prior to the Revolutionary period is warranted. As such, this article will evaluate evidence from the American colonies between 1720 and 1763. Prior to the Revolutionary War, individual conceptions of identity began to shift as demographic and economic changes moved the colonists away from defining themselves as 'British' and closer to a new definition more compatible with the cultural and historical experiences in their lives, that of 'American.' Primary sources and contemporary research will both be used to demonstrate the presence of a shifting identity and the establishment of foundational elements critical to the emergence of American national identity.

Literature Review

Ernst Renan was the first to interpret nationalism as something more than an ethnic or racial distinction, and instead conceived the nation as constituting the soul of the community, sustained by a "rich legacy of memories" and "the desire to live together."[1] Since his speech in 1882, several other thinkers have also supported the idea of the nation as a social construction, including Benedict Anderson, who described the nation as an "imagined community" because of the powerful yet intangible bonds that unite people within a community, most of whom are unlikely to ever meet. Chief among these bonds are shared language, culture, and history.[2]

Language in particular has a unique ability to unite people previously isolated due to distance or circumstance by expanding access to the ideas and values associated with a national

---

[1]Ernst Renan, "What is a nation," Lecture at Sorbonne, March 11, 1882, also in Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny, eds. *Becoming a National: A Reader* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 41-5.
[2] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 6.

identity, allowing individuals a common understanding of what a given identity represents. Not only does language act as an agent of expansion, but the messages themselves also carry weight. Language is an invaluable mechanism for spreading ideas and stories that contribute to a group's culture and shared history, reinforcing a common national identity. It can also strengthen the idea of exclusivity by grounding a group's existence in history.[3]

Though national identity is dynamic in nature, it must be grounded by some level of commonality in order to maintain enough consistency over time to preserve a sense of continuity. Visceral connections between members of a group (such as shared histories) are essential to this continuity because they foster feelings of inclusion by providing rallying points for members to unite around.[4] A common history provides a link from the past to the present, intensifying associations between generations of group members while also establishing the legitimacy of the group as one that has 'always' existed. The legacy of the past is referenced by current members of a group as part of their story of belonging, reinforcing their commitment to a national identity.[5] Furthermore, the ability of historical narratives to increase group affinity extends beyond the present and links the current cohort to both previous and future generations legitimizing the 'nation' group as one that has always existed. Common historical experiences and linguistic norms are an important part of how national identity develops[6] providing a foundation for nationalism to adhere to as it becomes a powerful force within the community.

The case of colonialism presents a unique set of challenges in determining national identity, in that it is not merely formation that occurs, but the transfer from one identity to another. Conversion theory offers some insight into how an individual processes a change of identity, and what social conditions are necessary for such a conversion to occur.[7] Rodney Stark and John Lofland outline a conversion process in their work "Becoming a World Saver: A Theory of Conversion to a Deviant Perspective" which includes a series of seven steps, four of which are time dependent upon particular social actions occurring, such as a catalyst for change at the moment when a population has already been primed for such a move.

The first three steps of their process however are not time dependent, and as such can occur at any time prior to the recognition of a new social identity. These steps create a predisposition to change that primes the individual to be more accepting of an alternate world view, shifting his or her understanding of their acceptance of and participation in a social identity. In order to accept the need for a potential shift, there must be the presence of actual or perceived tension, a problem solving perspective, whereby an individual searches for resolution of the conflict, and seekership, when an individual cannot relieve the tension through traditional means and is thus ready for new approaches to an identity after exhausting conventional means of reconciliation.

The idea that people socially construct their reality is important because it places them as active participants in the shaping of national identity rather than passive spectators subject to

---

[3] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 44-45

[4] Renan, *What is a Nation*, 52-54. See also, David McCrone, *Sociology of Nationalism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 52, Helen Ting, "Social Construction of Nation – A Theoretical Exploration," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 14 (2008): 457 and Heinrich Best, "History Matters: Dimensions and Determinants of National Identities among European populations and Elites," *Europe-Asia Studies* 61, no. 6 (August 2009): 922.

[5] Heinrich Best, "History Matters," 922.

[6] Heather Malin, "America as a Philosophy: Implications for the Development of American Identity Among Today's Youth," *Applied Developmental Science* 15, no. 2 (2011): 55, doi: 10.1080/10888691.2011.560805.

[7] John Lofland and Rodney Stark, "Becoming a World-Saver: A Theory of Conversion to a Deviant Perspective," *American Sociological Review* 30, no. 6 (December 1965): 862-875, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2090965

biological classification. Although fiery rhetoric and overt displays of patriotism bolster the development of a nation, particularly at critical moments in history, national identity generally develops slowly over time, beginning long before public expressions of impassioned oratory.[8] Michael Billig's theory of "banal nationalism" highlights the formation of cultural bonds simply by the reinforcement of seemingly mundane actions, or 'flags,' establishing a foundation for national identity that continues to strengthen itself as the nation becomes more and more clearly defined.[9]

National identity is not only defined as members engage in mundane actions that reinforce belonging, it can also be defined in a discriminatory way. The notion of 'otherness' is well documented and centers on the idea that intergroup dynamics greatly influence our social choices, including those regarding national identity.[10] A sense of otherness is critical for the formation of social identities because it calcifies boundaries between groups, and highlights attributes that are considered essential to an identity. Perceived and actual discrimination between individuals of a group can provide a powerful incentive for those members viewed as 'other' to break away from current associations and form a new group, effectively re-defining themselves from 'other' to 'us.'

Identity development is predicated upon the acceptance or rejection of a given definition of an identity. The process of defining occurs via personal experiences, through micro-contexts, such as conversations and intimate interactions with others. By engaging in social behaviors, individuals create a context for the group and form bonds that reinforce feelings of belongingness which aid an individual's process of defining themselves in a social space.[11] Not only do social experiences provide a place of engagement for identity formation, but the encounters themselves are shaped by historical interpretations of past events and characters, allowing perpetual social discourses to continue to influence the present.[12] These kinds of experiences function as platforms of engagement for individuals to internalize attributes that will later collectively define themselves and the group.[13]

Not only is group identity defined by intimate interactions between individuals, there is also a reciprocal element between self and social when determining an individual's identity. James Marcia's Identity Status Theory highlights the importance of an individual's willingness to explore an identity, and commit to it, accepting that it accurately defines his or her interpretation of self. If so, the new definition of self is adopted, and a strong bond to it is

---

[8] Michael Skey, "The National in Everyday Life: A Critical Engagement with Michael Billig's Thesis of Banal Nationalism," *Sociological Review* 57, Issue 2 (May 2009), 334.

[9] Michale Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage Publications, 1995), 6.

[10] 10   Kitty Dumont and Johann Louw, "A Citation Analysis of Henri Tajfel's Work on Intergroup Relations," *International Journal of Psychology* 44, No. 1 (October 2007), 47-48. See also John Turner, "Social Comparison and Social Identity: Some Prospects for Intergroup Behaviour," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 5, no. 1, 7-8, and Maggie Elizabeth Penn, "From Many, One: State Representation and the Construction of an American Identity," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 21, No. 3 (2009): 352, doi: 10.1177/0951629809103967

[11] Malin, "America as a Philosophy," 54-55. See also, Best, "History Matters," 921, and Parissa Jahromi, "American Identity in the USA: Youth Perspectives," *Applied Developmental Science* 15, No. 2 (2011): 79.

[12] Ting, "Social Construction," 463.

[13] William R. Penuel and James V. Wertsch, "Vygotsky and Identity Formation: A Sociocultural Approach," *Educational Psychologist* 30, no. 3 (1995): 91. See also John Santrock, "Chapter 1 – Introduction," in *Life Span Development*, Thirteenth Edition – International Student Edition (New York: McGraw-Hill International Edition, 2011), 28-29, and Philip Osteen, "Motivations, Values, and Conflict Resolution: Students' Integration of Personal and Professional Identities," *Journal of Social Work Education* 47, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 429.

created.[14] However, it is important to understand that 'identity' is not one, singular entity, rather it is composed of several pieces that work together to produce a collaborative definition of self for the individual. These distinct pieces, or holons, develop in a non-linear fashion independentof other parts and emerge via Marcia's theory. These holons represent both a whole and a part, in that each is an autonomous interpretation of identity, but also fits together with others to collectively form something greater than its parts. This collaborative identity is presented to the outside world simply as the individual's identity.[15]

Individual interpretations of group identities are part of this process, and as such can inform our understanding of how and why individuals attach meaning to a social identity like national identity. 'Identity' is not a static expression of self; an individual is constantly challenged to assimilate new data and experiences and adjust to accommodate the new information.[16] The collaborative identity may be dynamic, but it is also hierarchical in nature, where order is based upon interactions between holons and the level of acceptance they have achieved. Holons that have been fully adopted by an individual are closer to the core of an individual's identity while those still in the exploration stage are relegated to the periphery.[17]

Identity development is dynamic and complex, and its relationship with social contexts cannot be ignored. An individual's collaborative identity is influenced by the social cues within a given environment, and also influences the environment. Lev Vygotsky, a Russian developmental psychologist, believed that "social interaction actively informs and forms individual identity" going so far as to say "the two are symbiotic in nature."[18] Social identity is the part of the identity that specifically deals with an individual's membership in different groups.[19] An individual may consider him or herself as a member of several groups, yet some of these groups are more meaningful than others when determining how one defines him or herself collectively.[20] An individual's conception of their national identity is but one example of a social identity.

The reciprocal nature of social identities allows an individual to continually assess and accommodate new social cues. However, as individuals engage within their environment, the environment itself is also altered, so that social cues projected to an individual at one time may

---

[14] James E. Marcia, "Development and Validation of Ego-Identity Status," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 3, no. 5 (1966): 551-558. See also Adriana Umana-Taylor, Ani Yazedjian and Mayra Bamaca-Gomez, "Developing the Ethnic Identity Scale Using Eriksonian and Social Identity Perspectives," *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research* 4, no. 1: 9-38, and John Santrock, "Chapter 12 – Socioemotional Development in Adolescence," in *Life Span Development*, Thirteenth Edition – International Student Edition (New York: McGraw-Hill International Edition, 2011).

[15] Jessica N. Fish and Jacob B. Priest, "Identity Structures: Holons, Boundaries, Hierarchies, and the Formation of the Collaborative Identity," *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families* 19, no. 2 (2011): 182-190.

[16] Malin, "America as a Philosophy," PG #. See also Alexander J. Motyl, "The Social Construction of Social Construction: Implications for Theories of Nationalism and Identity Formation," *Nationalities Papers* 38, No. 1 (January 2010): 59-71, doi: 10.1080/00905990903394508 and ; William M Sullivan, "Interdependence in American Society and Commitment to the Common Good," *Applied Developmental Science* 15, no. 2 (2011): 73-78, doi: 10.1080/10888691.2011.560809.

[17] Fish & Priest, "Identity Structures," 185-186.

[18] Penuel & Wertsch, "Vygotsky and Identity Formation," 84, 87

[19] Kay Deaux, "Social Identity," *Encyclopedia of Women and Gender, Volumes One and Two* (Academic Press, 2001), 1, 2. See also Janita Andrijevskaja, "The Relationship Between Organizational Culture and Individual Values in German Organizations," Dissertation Paper for University of Tartu, 2004, 4-10, and Malin, "America as a Philosophy," 55.

[20] Motyl, "The Social Construction of Social Construction," 70.

be different than at a later date in time. These shifts can be dramatic or subtle, but even subtle shifts can alter the environment given time. Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory illustrates the impact of social/external forces on identity formation by highlighting the importance of external factors in determining a person's cognitive and emotional development.[21] Further, his assessment of the power of external influences on an individual's general development can also be understood as a model for a single facet of identity development, such as national identity.

Bronfenbrenner identified five environmental systems responsible for influencing a person's development in varying ways, and envisioned them as concentric rings around the individual, increasing in influence based on the proximity to the individual. Thus, the microsystem is closest to the person and consists of family, neighbors and peers of the person. It is also the most powerful ring of social influence. Other rings are comprised of a wider array of influences, expanding to include the general attitudes and ideologies that influence not just an individual but a large group of people based on sociohistorical conditions.[22] Bronfenbrenner envisioned the influence of each system on the individual as bidirectional in nature, that is, emphasis must also be placed on the individual as a contributor to both his own development and to the systems within which he operates.[23]

Analysis

Each theory presented above illustrates an important aspect of identity development. Collectively, these theories provide support for the premise that foundational cornerstones of national identity are laid in an individual's identity prior to the acknowledgement of national identity at the social level. Previous research suggests that national identity emerges and develops in response to a catalyst for change, continually strengthening its power through commonality and mundane reinforcement. While this research offers valuable insights into how national identity develops once it has been acknowledged by society, it fails to explore how individuals come to initially accept the national identity as more closely aligned with their social experiences than any current conceptions of self. This article argues that antecedents of a national identity, expressed as commonalities and existing as peripheral influences on an individual's collaborative identity, are present prior to the acknowledgement of a new national identity at the social level. These cornerstone elements create a latent foundation for acceptance of a new identity, in response to social cues that continually inform the development of both an individual and society.

---

[21] Larry K. Brendtro, "The Vision of Urie Bronfenbrenner: Adults Who Are Crazy About Kids," *Reclaiming Children & Youth* 15, no. 3 (Fall 2006): 163-165, http://ehis.ebscohost.com.proxy-tu.researchport.umd.edu/eds/pdf viewer/pdfviewer?sid=de6c89a0-594b-4338-9445-b0cffcb98770%40sessionmgr114&vid=6&hid=6.

[22] Martin Guhn and Hillel Goelman, "Bioecological Theory, Early Child Development and the Validation of the Population-Level Early Development Instrument," *Social Indicators Research* 103, no. 2 (September 2011): 205-207, doi: 10.1007/s11205-011-9842-5.; See also Stephen J. Ceci, "Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005)," *American Psychologist* 61, no. 2 (February-March 2006): 173-174, doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.61.2.173, Santrock, "Chapter 12."

[23] "Longitudinal Study of Australian Children: Key Research Questions." Growing Up in Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children. http://www.aifs.gov.au/growingup/pubs/reports/krq2009/keyresearch questions.html, accessed May 8, 2012.

Social identities are, by definition, dependent upon the acceptance of a large group of individuals for their meaning. Commonality then is essential for the development of any social identity, and national identity is no different. Although the potential identities themselves may be innumerable, there are reliable bonds that unite groups together, providing opportunities for commonality. Language, social experiences, and a collective history all act to bind groups together, creating cornerstones for social identities such as national identity.

The power of these cornerstones of commonality as binding agents to identity is not diminished simply because a collective identity has yet to be fully defined. The pieces exist, however peripherally, until such a time as they are called to the forefront of an individual's collaborative identity as evidence of his or her membership in a newly defined social group. These individual interpretations of the value of a given language, history, or experience are antecedents to a fully developed sense of national identity, but are critical for its success in terms of its motivational ability and sustainability over time. A social identity supported by enthusiastic individual acceptance of its foundational elements is far more likely to survive the pressures ofthe external world than one that individuals of the group do not readily and strongly identify with. In order for a national identity to have meaning within a group, the characteristics of the given identity must resonate within the individuals eligible for membership.

If an individual does not identify with the core definition of what it means to be a member of a given nation, he or she will reject that identity as one that does not fit with his or her social experience. Thus, the success of a social identity is predicated on individuals accepting that the choice made most closely defines their experiences. In this case, individuals who have already accepted foundational elements of the national identity, even subconsciously, as accurate definitions of their life experiences are far more likely to accept a realized national identity than those who have very little or no meaning attached to those fundamental building blocks that comprise the given identity. An existing link to a newly defined identity creates an inherent bond to it. These links only occur after a social identity has presented itself, but the existence of the distinct elements as part of an individual's definition of self predates the emergence of the national identity. Thus, individuals create a foundation for acceptance of a new national identity prior to its emergence at a societal level.

Each player in the environment and each social interaction influences the way in which an individual understands and conceives him or herself and the environment. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model suggests a reciprocal relationship between the individual and the social world, indicating that nationalism cannot exist in a meaningful way without the presence of an internalized sense of national identity at an autonomous level. The individual, changed by social interactions, alters the environment by projecting something new to others, as he or she is inherently changed, forcing others to engage in the continual assessment and accommodation of a dynamic social space over time. However, in times of dramatic social upheaval, such as a population boom or a declining social construct, the environment can be so radically altered that it becomes difficult for individuals to assimilate the new information with existing definitions of their individual and group identities, forcing an exploration of new possibilities.

The kind of tension that provokes an identity conversion can be found in any situation where dramatic social changes fundamentally alter the experience of an individual. However, conversion tension is particularly relevant in colonial settings, as colonists must continually assess the meaningfulness of their identity in relation to the imperialist country, and even in relation to previous generations of colonists, who might have been more or less aligned with the national identity of the imperialist country. Regardless of an individual's acceptance or rejection

of a new identity, the onus of change is placed on the individual, that is, individuals are responsible for socially constructing their reality.

The social construction of identity indicates that not only do individuals build identities, but that they are continually involved with the work of identity construction. There is no break from defining one's self on a subconscious level. Every interaction is assessed and answered based on social cues that are unceasingly sent and received. These kinds of continual adjustments are themselves banal transactions, unyielding in the ability to examine an experience and categorize it into one or more of the various holons that comprise the individual's collaborative identity. Transformation occurs when the experiences no longer align with accepted notions of identity. In cases where a disconnect exists between current identity and social cues, an opportunity for redefinition occurs. Dramatic social changes offer a heightened opportunity for new social identities to emerge due to the increased yield of incompatible social cues with existing identity conceptions. The social landscape of colonial American in the mid-eighteenth century yielded an abundance of social change, and is an ideal period of exploration regarding the emergence of antecedents to national identity.

Case Study

The Revolutionary War period in America is valued as a time of rich national identity development. It was during this period that a defined American national identity emerged, one that more closely aligned with the colonists' perception of their group identity than that of an 'English' identity. However, the foundation necessary for this shift to occur took place not during the Revolutionary period, but prior to it, as cornerstones of commonality emerged in response to a variety of new social cues being presented to the colonists. These cornerstones laid the foundation for acceptance of a fully realized national identity that would emerge, in part, due to a recognition of otherness between the English and the colonists. Resistance to British influence in the American colonies does not make sense from a psychological perspective unless there is an underlying commitment to a new social identity, 'American,' which places the

English as the other in terms of in-group/out-group associations. An increase in opportunities for political participation, such as reading pamphlets, listening to sermons, and engaging in demonstrations, influenced the development of American national identity by increasing the possibility of contact with specific notions and ideas related to it. Colonists' conceptions of their own identities as 'American' began to emerge prior to the "shot heard around the world" in Lexington, something even the founding fathers understood. Benjamin Franklin recognized the Revolutionary War as a crystallizing moment for the colonists who saw themselves as uniquely American prior to the commencement of war. Reflecting in 1787 he wrote that the Revolutionary War was necessary in order to "properly comprehend the character they had assumed."[24] John Adams also understood that the emergence of identity predated the war and wrote:

> The American Revolution was not a common event….But what do we mean by the American Revolution? Do we mean the American War? The Revolution was effected before the war commenced. The Revolution

---

[24] Jack P. Greene, "Search for Identity: An Interpretation of the Meaning of Selected Patterns of Social Response in Eighteenth-Century America," *Journal of Social History* 3, no. 3 (Spring 1969-Spring 1970): 219-220, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3786589.

was in the minds and hearts of the people; a change in their religious sentiments of their duties and obligations…This radical change in the principles, opinions, sentiments, and affections of the people, was the real American Revolution.[25]

Antecedents to national identity began to emerge prior to the Revolutionary War, and created a critical context for the acceptance of a national identity once acknowledged by the group.

In this section, the idea that cornerstones of commonality are present prior to the emergence of a clearly defined national identity will be illustrated. Three cornerstones of American identity will be presented and examined, the Puritan work ethic, a reliance on self-preservation, and the importance of liberty and inherent rights. The development of these cornerstones will be analyzed within the context of the social changes that occurred between 1720 and 1763 to establish these ideas as foundational elements of an American national identity. A dramatic increase among colonists, as well as an increasing number of diverse immigrants and emerging economic markets all acted to fundamentally change colonists' social experiences, prompting an examination of identity to occur. At the start of the eighteenth century, colonial society was "isolated, independent, and homogenous."[26] In addition, colonies (particularly those in New England) elevated the group over the individual, restricting personal activities to traditional roles usually defined by the local church[27] in order to give themselves the best chance at survival. Survival was key in the minds of early colonists, as was the Puritan thinking that became one of the prominent building blocks of American identity. Edmund Morgan offers a lengthy analysis of the link between Puritan thought and the American Revolution. He explains "The values, ideas, and attitudes of the Puritan Ethic…clustered around the familiar idea of "calling." God, the Puritans believed, called every man to serve Him by serving society and himself in some useful, productive occupation."[28] Martin Luther and John Calvin, Protestant reformers that influenced Puritan beliefs, promoted work as a calling from God, and success as a sign of salvation.

These ideas led many Puritans to accept that "hard work and good deeds would bring rewards, in life and after."[29] This adherence to hard work permeated the colonial culture, and is still evident today.[30] Even when Puritan values were not explicitly present, their influence can be seen in the colonist's thought processes and the way in which arguments were crafted. Not only did the Puritan ethic lead to individual salvation, but, equally important, it also let to societal salvation. Life's purpose was centered on diligence, thrift, frugality, and productivity for the benefit of society; community was first, and self was second.[31]

Puritan thought, though a powerful cultural norm, was not the only influence on colonists' identity development in America, particularly after 1720 as more and more individuals

---

[25]Alan P. Grimes, "Conservative Revolution and Liberal Rhetoric: The Declaration of Independence," *The Journal of Politics* 38, no. 3 (August 1976): 7, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2129571.

[26]Kenneth, Lockridge, "Social Change and the Meaning of the American Revolution," *Journal of Social History* 6, no. 4 (Summer 1973): 420, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3786509.

[27] Joyce Appleby, "Liberalism and the American Revolution." *The New England Quarterly* 49, No. 1 (March 1976): 14.

[28] Edmund Morgan, "The Puritan Ethic and the American Revolution," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 24, no. 1 (January 1967): 4.

[29] Matthew Hutson, "Still Puritan After All These Years," *New York Times*, August 3, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/05/opinion/sunday/are-americans-still-pUritan.html?_r=0

[30] James A. Christenson, "Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft: Testing the Spatial and Communal Hypothesis," *Social Forces* 63, no. 1 (September 1984): 160-168. http://ehis.ebscohost.com.proxy-tu.researchport.umd.edu/eds/pdf viewer/pdfviewer?sid=a9dbf245-d8d4-4acb-b9b3-0c81c3ffb240%40sessionmgr12&vid=8&hid=105.

[31] Morgan, "The Puritan Ethic," 4.

immigrated from a variety of backgrounds. In many respects however, colonists (particularly the colonial 'elite') sought to emulate the best of British society and re-create it in the American colonies.[32] Much as a parent influences the identity of a child, by providing instruction and experiences consistent with their own lifestyle choices, it is natural that aspects of colonial identity would be English in origin. However, an attachment to existing influences does not preclude the formation of a new identity based on the assimilation and adaptation of current cultural models merging with new experiences.

Population growth, immigration, and the resulting emerging market all altered the way in which colonists operated within their environment. In doing so, identity formation at both the social and individual level was impacted. As a result of demographic and economic changes, a broadening of identity occurred, whereby colonists envisioned themselves as not just part of a particular town or community but as a group of colonies with common values and purpose despite their different daily experiences.

American national identity began to emerge in part due to the impact of demographic changes on the way in which people imagined their social identities within a dynamic society. Between 1720 and 1780, growth of the white population continued to double every twenty to thirty years[33] and the black population grew at an even more astonishing rate, as nearly 300,000 slaves were forcibly immigrated to the colonies.[34] On the whole, between 1700 and 1770, the population of the American colonies increased by an incredible 756 percent, from 250,000 to approximately 2.1 million.[35] This increase in population meant in part that while colonists in the1720s reasonably expected to acquire land within their community and live out their lives as their families had before them, colonists in 1770 had no such guarantee.

As fertility and life expectancy continued to rise, more and more men were faced with the realization that they would be responsible for creating their own future, rather than having it passed down to them from their parents.[36] As a result, some colonists capitalized on the expanding markets and rising demand for raw materials produced in the colonies, shifting their perspectives from community-survival to self-reliance.[37] Two swings of economic growth and expansion occurred from 1720 to 1745 and 1745 to 1775[38] driven in large part by the booming colonial population. Many colonists viewed individual economic opportunity as a means of survival, resulting in increased importance on the idea of personal property and reliance on an emerging market economy. As success was found in the new system, many began to view themselves as capable of economic survival without British oversight and intervention.[39] Even before the Revolutionary War, towns and colonies were no longer isolated, independent, and

---

[32] Greene, "Search for Identity," 206 and Sullivan, "Interdependence in American Society," 74.

[33]Lockridge, "Social Change," 405, 406.

[34]Aaron S. Fogleman, "From Slaves, Convicts, and Servants to Free Passengers: The Transformation of Immigration in the Era of the American Revolution," *The Journal of American History* (June 1998): 50.

[35] Jacob M. Price, "Who Cared about the Colonies? The Impact of the Thirteen Colonies on British Society and Politics, circa 1714-1775," in *Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire*, eds. Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 402.

[36] Appleby, "Liberalism," 18. See also A.G. Roeber, "The Origin of Whatever is Not English Among Us: The Dutch-speaking and the German-speaking Peoples of Colonial North America," in *Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire*, eds. Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 229-230, and Lockridge, "Social Change," 406.

[37] Appleby, "Liberalism," 10, 15, 16, 19.

[38] Marc Engal and Joseph A. Ernst, "An Economic Interpretation of the American Revolution," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (January 1972): 10-11 http://www.jstor.org/stable/1921325.

[39] Greene, "Search for Identity," 190.

homogenous; rather they were diverse, and interconnected due to a variety of factors including population growth, emerging economic markets, and an increasing number of immigrants arriving in colonies.

Much like population growth, immigration added to the total number of colonists, increasing the interconnectedness between settlements due to the sheer quantity of people. Immigration also diversified colonial life calling into question the appropriateness of an adherence to English identity. In the seventeenth century, an estimated 378,000 British citizens (mostly English) arrived in the colonies.[40] As their numbers declined in the eighteenth century, the number of German and Irish immigrants rose.[41] Aaron Fogleman estimates that between 1700 and 1775 approximately 307,400 Europeans immigrated to the colonies, including 73,100 English/Welsh, 35,300 Scots, 108,600 Irish, 84,500 German[42], and 5,900 other European immigrants.[43] By the middle of the eighteenth century "people born elsewhere may have constituted a larger percentage of the American population than they did later, when the absolute number of immigrants peaked."[44]

The diversity of heritage, language, and ethnicity influenced society by providing colonists exposure to a variety of new cultures. Exposure to other cultures and ethnicities was important for the development of American identity because as commonalities emerged among immigrants, they served as bridges between ethnic groups, reframing 'otherness' as a colonists/imperialist distinction rather than an ethnic distinction. Ned Landsman suggests that although colonists with English heritage embraced their English identity, intermingling by way of settlement and marriage weakened their primary identification as 'English.'[45]

Immigration also influenced the ideas and language of pro-independence colonists. Although slaves were largely excluded from this organic mixing of cultures, only about one quarter of all immigrants to the colonies arrived free.[46] Because the experience of most colonial immigrants in the mid-eighteenth century was one that often included some level of servitude (via the redemption system or indentured servitude) ideas about liberty and inherent rights became paramount in many colonists' minds, influencing the way they thought of themselves and their 'rights' as members of the British Empire. Later arguments for American independence would draw on the social context that highlighted liberty and oppression in vivid and easily understood terms, often portraying the British as 'cruel masters' and the colonists as 'slaves' to British vice and corruption.[47]

Because of the increasing interconnectedness of colonists, ideas were easier to spread, often via pamphlets and papers, confirming the vital role of a common language in establishing national identity. Not only does it highlight who belongs, but it also acts a vehicle for idea transmission across a large space. In the case of colonial America, the spread of similar messages

---

[40] Price, "Who Cared about the Colonies?," 426.

[41] Fogleman, "From Slaves, Convicts, and Servants," 51.

[42] Some estimates for German immigration place the figure even higher, at closer to 125,000 (Roeber, "The Origins of Whatever," 245).

[43] Fogleman, "From Slaves, Convicts, and Servants," 71.

[44] Fogleman "From Slaves, Convicts, and Servants,", 49.

[45] Ned Landsman, "Ethnicity and National Origin among British Settlers in the Philadelphia Region: Pennsylvania Immigration in the Wake of "Voyagers to the West,"" *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 133, no. 2 (June 1998): 173-174.

[46] Fogleman, "From Slaves, Convicts, and Servants," 57.

[47] Appleby, "Liberalism," 7, 20-21, 23-25.

allowed colonists from Massachusetts to Georgia to recognize that they were part of something larger than themselves and their local communities.

In colonial America, reading pamphlets and listening to sermons helped define national identity for many colonists who incorporated presented ideas into their understanding of who they were and how they fit into the world.[48] Beginning in the 1720s, the use and distribution of newspapers and political literature in colonial America increased dramatically. From 1715-1724 there were forty two published pamphlets between Boston and Philadelphia,[49] however, between 1755-1764 one hundred and fifty four pamphlets were published in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York.[50] The rise in published commentary is noteworthy, not only because of the sheer volume of publications, but also because the literature was "intended to make politics everyone's concern."[51] Although these works did not directly address issues of national identity, the emergence of the press as a political tool established the format as an accepted way to learn about and participate in current political developments. In the case of American independence, the production of printed media such as the *Pennsylvania Magazine* was integral to the expression and consolidation of resistance to Britain and support for a new national identity both before and during the war.[52]

The diffusion of national identity across a community must necessarily occur not only among the 'elite' but also spread among the common citizenry. Though many groups were excluded from the development of an American national identity, there was an increase in the level of participation of middle and lower-class white men, and the cooperation between these groups and the societal 'elite.' Mob behavior was an essential part of the resistance to Great Britain, both prior to and during the Revolutionary War.[53] Mob activity was employed as early as the 1730s by political leaders in order to gain favor and win elections. Lower class freemen were organized to bolster support for a particular candidate.[54]

These previously "politically inert" members of society (free white males, such as unskilled laborers and boatmen, who owned only enough property to qualify as voters) suddenly gained a new level of importance during the mid-eighteenth century shifting their identity by expanding the roles they played in society.[55] Increased access to political participation arose out of necessity for political leaders to secure victory rather than a magnanimous recognition of the rights of an individual to participate in political exchanges, but the result was the same; those who had been previously excluded from political participation were now included in it. Gary Nash writes "That an increasing percentage of qualified voters was participating in electoral politics not only by casting their votes, but also by taking part in street demonstrations, rallies, and caucuses was emblematic of the changing political culture of the cities….which by 1765 already contained many of the changes in political style and behavior usually associated with the

---

[48] Michael Schudson, "The Revolution in American Journalism in the Age of Egalitarianism: The Penny Press," in *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (United States of America: Basic Books, Inc., 1978), 39.

[49] Although New York City had published pamphlets in previous years, in the decade 1715-1724 none were recorded. From Gary B. Nash. "The Transformation of Urban Politics 1700-1765." *The Journal of American History* 60, No. 3 (December 1973): 617.

[50] Nash, "The Transformation of Urban Politics," 617.

[51] Nash, "The Transformation of Urban Politics," 617.

[52] John Mac Kilgore, "Rites of Dissent: Literatures of Enthusiasm and the American Revolution," *Early American Literature* 48, no. 2 (2013): 383.

[53] Gordon Wood, "A Note on Mobs in the American Revolution," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 23, no. 4

[54] Nash, "The Transformation of Urban Politics," 607.

[55] Nash, "The Transformation of Urban Politics," 607, 613-614

Revolutionary period."[56] This broadening of political activism prior to the Revolutionary War created a cultural norm of political involvement for both the elite and common colonists to draw upon during the struggle for independence.

Increasing political participation was evident throughout society, not only through the abundance of political literature published during the period and the activation of the mob to address political grievances, but also by the increase in the willingness of the clergy to speak on uniquely American issues and problems. An escalation of political involvement from the clergy and other religious figures occurred around 1740 as clergymen began to assert their right to "preach politics."[57] Their sermons were often diatribes and jeremiads against values that were seen as different and changed from those of their ancestors who arrived in America to create a new 'city upon a hill.'

The accuracy of such assessments is not relevant for this discussion; what matters is the acknowledgement that colonists had fundamentally changed from their ancestors. For Jonathan Mayhew, a prominent preacher in Boston, and other clergymen, American colonists had already begun to explore a new identity. In many ways, American colonists in the mid-eighteenth century were experiencing a crisis of identity (though this was not the term used at the time) as they sought to determine their relationship with the world. Were they English citizens, separated by an ocean from other members of their community, or were they something different, removed from English influences by time and space and thus uniquely American?

The revolutionary period crystallized the 'American' identity for many, but the impetus for the new identity occurred prior to engaging in organized resistance to the English. Colonists in mid-eighteenth century America faced an increase in the diversity of social cues from which to determine their definition of self. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model poses a plausible understanding of how colonists' identities were changed due to the dramatic social revisions they were forced to assess and accommodate. Increases in the quantity and diversity of population as well as expanded political engagement and emerging economic markets dramatically altered the social space of colonists beginning in 1720.

The changing social landscape of colonial life linked young, white male colonists more closely to each other due to commonalities of language, history, and social experiences. As the bonds of commonality increased between colonists, a weakening of association between colonists and previous generations of colonists or previous national affiliations occurred. In the case of mid-eighteenth century colonial America, there were clear differences between the English and the colonists. However, these differences did not gain importance in a reactionary sense until the colonists realized that the English no longer viewed the colonists as part of the same group, but as less than, or 'other' instead. The realization that the English saw the colonists as others inevitably lead the colonists to sever association with one group identity (the British) in favor of another (Americans) more closely aligned with similar cultural and historical experiences.[58]

---

[56] Nash, "The Transformation of Urban Politics," 632.

[57] Nash, "The Transformation of Urban Politics," 624.

[58] Susan Condor and Jackie Abell, "Romantic Scotland, tragic England, ambiguous Britain: constructions of 'the Empire' in post-devolution national accounting," *Nations and Nationalism* 12, no. 3 (2006): 453-472. See also Kathy O. McGill, "How Easily the World May Be Begun: British History, American Newness and National Identity," *Dialectal Anthropology* 27 (2003): 105-120, and Kilgore, "Rites of Dissent," 367-398.

Conclusion

National identity exists, in part, because of the commonalities created by language, history and cultural experiences, yet this paper argues that commitment to a social identity such as national identity can only occur when there is support for analogous values and beliefs at the personal level. First, the importance of commonality for defining groups and developing feelings of belongingness was explained. Additional attention was given to the concept of otherness and its ability to further define boundaries between groups. Next, the dynamic, segmented, and hierarchical aspects of identity were discussed. Finally, the influence of the social world on identity development was illustrated, revealing a reciprocal relationship between self and social. Analysis suggested that antecedents to a realized national identity develop at the individual level, and act as foundational elements by providing a context for the acceptance of a national identity. The colonial experience in America was highlighted to demonstrate the emergence of antecedents to national identity prior to the Revolutionary period.

As Anderson and others illustrate, language can unite a population by creating a medium for the expression of individual recognition of identity shifts. These individual interpretations are then shared with others in the community, even those who may have been previously isolated by time or space. Similarly, the use of a shared history among group members solidifies the concept of who belongs and who does not based on individual responses to culturally significant stories. Often, the truthfulness of the stories carries less weight than the ability to elicit an emotional response from the listener. As the individual relates the story to him or herself, he or she also relates to the group, by establishing a commonality to others who also connect with the story. In as much as a historical past allows generations of group members to identify with particular "rallying" moments for their culture, mundane interactions and individual daily experiences also inform a person's identity as well as the identity of the community in which they participate.

National identity is but one way in which an individual can define him or herself, and will hold more or less influence over that person based on the feedback received from external sources. Social processes, such as the construction of an identity, link members of a community by providing a forum for exchange of similar ideas and practices. National identity also serves as a way to define an individual by indicating who is, and equally important, who is not a member of a given group, positioning the individual within a larger social context by ordering the world based on notions of sameness and difference. The strength of national identity at the societal level is a function of its importance at the individual level. When national identity is constructed at an individual level through micro-contexts and engagement with social structures, a foundation is created, priming society for national consciousness expressed as nationalism.

The reciprocal relationship between self and social is best illustrated by Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model that demonstrates the way in which an individual's definition of self is influences by external social cues, such as language, common history, and everyday interactions. These social cues inform the individual of their identity, but are also influenced by the individual, and by all the individuals within the given community. Together, identity formation at the individual level impacts the social identity of the community, simply because the individual is engaging with the community.

Antecedents to national identity act as cornerstones of commonality among individuals, creating a context of sameness important for the acceptance of a group identity such as a new national identity. As individuals receive and interpret cues from social sources, these cues are

assimilated or accommodated based on existing notions of an individual's definition of self. Dramatic social changes, such as those experiences by American colonists in the mid-eighteenth century, provide individuals with an overwhelming amount of information that may not easily fit with existing conceptions of self. In this case, social cues are accepted by the individual, but relegated to the periphery of their identity; they are accepted because they are an experienced phenomenon, but only of limited importance because they do not fit with current conceptions of a social group's definition. Thus, when a social identity is acknowledged that draws on existing holons and reinforces those on the periphery, a new identity can be adopted.

In this article, the theory that cornerstones of national identity develop prior to emergence at the societal level was explained using colonial America in the period before the revolution, 1720-1763. Individual conceptions of a shift in identity occurred and spread via cultural tools such as language, history, and common experience until an American national identity at the collective level emerged. In the case of colonial America, emergence of national identity occurred during the revolutionary period, but this emergence was preceded by the acceptance of foundational cornerstones at an individual level prior to the Revolutionary War.

The connection between individual and group identity has been underrepresented in both general scholarship, and work specifically dedicated to American national identity. While articles may address the psychological or political aspects of identity development, few attempt to marry the disciplinary approaches into a cohesive theory of identity formation at both the individual and collective level. The presences of antecedents to national identity at an individual level provide a foundation for the acceptance of a national identity at a group level, by providing cornerstones of commonality for individuals to reference when determining the suitability of a social identity. These antecedents become particularly important when comparing new choices with existing conceptions of both individual and group identity. Increased understanding of how national identity is formed is potentially powerful information considering the impact it continues to exert at both the domestic and international level for many countries. Therefore, an understanding of the reciprocal and reinforcing nature of national identity at both the individual and group level is critical for interpreting national identity movements.

Bibliography

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1991.

Andrijevskaja, Janita. "The Relationship Between Organizational culture and Individual Values in German Organizations." Dissertation Paper for University of Tartu, 2004.

Appleby, Joyce. 1976. "Liberalism and the American Revolution." *The New England Quarterly* 49, No. 1 (March 1976): 3-26.

Billig, Michael. *Banal Nationalism*. London: Sage Publications, 1995.

Best, Heinrich. "History Matters: Dimensions and Determinants of National Identities among European populations and Elites." *Europe-Asia Studies* 61, no. 6 (August 2009): 921-941. Brendtro, Larry K. "The Vision of Urie Bronfenbrenner: Adults Who Are Crazy About Kids." *Reclaiming Children & Youth* 15, no. 3 (Fall 2006): 162-166. Database: SocINDEX with Full Text, Accession Number: 23275096.

Ceci, Stephen J. "Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005)." *American Psychologist* 61, no. 2 (February-March 2006): 173-174. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.61.2.173.

Christenson, James A. "Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft: Testing the Spatial and Communal Hypothesis." *Social Forces* 63, no. 1 (September 1984): 160-168. Database: Business Source Complete, Accession Number: 5283487.

Condor, Susan and Jackie Abell. "Romantic Scotland, Tragic England, Ambiguous Britain: Constructions of 'the Empire' in Post-devolution National Accounting." *Nations and Nationalism* 12, no. 3 (2006): 453-472.

Deaux, Kay. "Social Identity." *Encyclopedia of Women and Gender, Volumes One and Two*. Academic Press, 2001, 1-9

Dumont, Kitty and Johann Louw. "A Citation Analysis of Henri Tajfel's Work on Intergroup Relations." *International Journal of Psychology* 44, no. 1 (October 2007): 46-59.

Engal, Marc and Joseph A. Ernst. "An Economic Interpretation of the American Revolution." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (January 1972): 3-32. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1921325.

Fish, Jessica N. and Jacob B. Priest. "Identity Structures: Holons, Boundaries, Hierarchies, and the Formation of the Collaborative Identity." *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families* 19, no. 2 (2011): 182-190.

Fogleman, Aaron S. "From Slaves, Convicts, and Servants to Free Passengers: The Transformation of Immigration in the Era of the American Revolution." *The Journal of American History* (June 1998): 43-76.

Greene, Jack P. "Search for Identity: An Interpretation of the Meaning of Selected Patterns of Social Response in Eighteenth-Century America." *Journal of Social History* 3, no. 3 (Spring1969-Spring 1970): 189-220. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3786589.

Grimes, Alan P. "Conservative Revolution and Liberal Rhetoric: The Declaration of Independence." *The Journal of Politics* 38, no. 3 (August 1976): 1-19. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2129571.

Guhn, Martin and Hillel Goelman. "Bioecological Theory, Early Child Development and the Validation of the Population-Level Early Development Instrument." *Social Indicators Research* 103, no. 2 (September 2011): 193-217. doi: 10.1007/s11205-011-9842-5.

Hutson, Matthew. "Still Puritan After All These Years," *New York Times*, August 3, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/05/opinion/sunday/are-americans-still pUritan.html?_r=0.

Jahromi, Parissa. "American Identity in the USA: Youth Perspectives." *Applied Developmental Science* 15, no. 2 (2011): 79-93.

Kilgore, John Mac. "Rites of Dissent: Literatures of Enthusiasm and the American Revolution." *Early American Literature* 48, no. 2 (2013): 367-398.

Landsman, Ned. "Ethnicity and National Origin among British Settlers in the Philadelphia Region: Pennsylvania Immigration in the Wake of "Voyagers to the West." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 133, no. 2 (June 1998): 170-174.

Lockridge, Kenneth. "Social Change and the Meaning of the American Revolution." *Journal of Social History* 6, no. 4 (Summer 1973): 403-439. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3786509. Lofland, John and Rodney Stark. "Becoming a World-Saver: A Theory of Conversion to a Deviant Perspective." *American Sociological Review* 30, no. 6 (December 1965): 862-875.http://www.jstor.org/stable/2090965.

"Longitudinal Study of Australian Children: Key Research Questions." Growing Up in Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children. Accessed May 8, 2012. http://www.aifs.gov.au/growingup/pubs/reports/krq2009/keyresearchquestions.html.

Malin, Heather. "America as a Philosophy: Implications for the Development of American Identity Among Today's Youth." *Applied Developmental Science* 15, no. 2 (2011): 54-60. doi: 10.1080/10888691.2011.560805.

Marcia, James E. "Development and Validation of Ego-Identity Status." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 3, no. 5 (1966): 551-558.

McCrone, David. *Sociology of Nationalism*. London and New York: Routledge, 1998.

McGill, Kathy O. "How Easily the World May Be Begun: British History, American Newness and National Identity." *Dialectal Anthropology* 27 (2003): 105-120.

Morgan, Edmund. "The Puritan Ethic and the American Revolution." *The William and MaryQuarterly* 24, no. 1 (January 1967): 3-43.

Motyl, Alexander J. "The Social Construction of Social Construction: Implications for Theories of Nationalism and Identity Formation." *Nationalities Papers* 38, no. 1 (January 2010): 59-71. doi: 10.1080/00905990903394508.

Nash, Gary B. "The Transformation of Urban Politics 1700-1765." *The Journal of American History* 60, no. 3 (December 1973): 605-632.

Osteen, Philip. "Motivations, Values, and Conflict Resolution: Students' Integration of Personal and Professional Identities." *Journal of Social Work Education* 47, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 423-444.

Penn, Elizabeth Maggie. "From Many, One: State Representation and the Construction of an American Identity." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 21, no. 3 (2009): 343-364. doi: 10.1177/0951629809103967.

Penuel, William R. and James V. Wertsch. "Vygotsky and Identity Formation: A Sociocultural Approach." *Educational Psychologist* 30, no. 3 (1995): 83-92.

Price, Jacob M. "Who Cared about the Colonies? The Impact of the Thirteen Colonies on British Society and Politics, circa 1714-1775," in *Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire* edited by Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan, 395-436. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991.

Renan, Ernst. "What is a Nation," Lecture at Sorbonne, March 11, 1882.

Roeber, A.G. "The Origin of Whatever is Not English Among Us: The Dutch-speaking and the German-speaking Peoples of Colonial North America," in *Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire,* edited by Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan, 220-283. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991.

Santrock, John W. "Chapter 1 – Introduction," in *Life Span Development*, Thirteenth Edition – International Student Edition, New York: McGraw-Hill International Edition, 2011.

———. "Chapter 12 – Socioemotional Development in Adolescence," in *Life Span Development*, Thirteenth Edition – International Student Edition, New York: McGraw-Hill International Edition, 2011.

Schudson, Michael. "The Revolution in American Journalism in the Age of Egalitarianism: The Penny Press," in *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers*, 12-60. United States of America: Basic Books, Inc., 1978.

Skey, Michael. "The National in Everyday Life: A Critical Engagement with Michael Billig's Thesis of Banal Nationalism." *Sociological Review* 57, Issue 2 (May 2009): 331-346.

Sullivan, William M. "Interdependence in American Society and Commitment to the Common

Good.” *Applied Developmental Science* 15, no. 2 (2011): 73-78. doi: 10.1080/10888691.2011.560809.

Ting, Helen. “Social Construction of Nation – A Theoretical Exploration.” *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 14 (2008): 453-482.

Turner, John C. “Social Comparison and Social Identity: Some Prospects for Intergroup Behaviour.” *European Journal of Social Psychology* 5, no. 1: 5-34.

Umana-Taylor, Adriana, Ani Yazedjian and Mayra Bamaca-Gomez. “Developing the Ethnic Identity Scale Using Eriksonian and Social Identity Perspectives.” *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research* 4, no. 1: 9-38.

Wood, Gordon. “A Note on Mobs in the American Revolution.” *The William and Mary Quarterly 23, no. 4 (October 1966): 635-642. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1919130.*

of national and cultural identity. Readers were asked to send in their opinions. You decide to write a letter responding to the points raised and. Â In more detail, the term identity describes the relationship within one's self or between one's self and others (Woodward, 2002, p. 1). Besides, Rummens (1993, p. 21) wrote on his book that identity can be defined as distinctive characteristics of one individual or a particular social group in society. In other words, identity is the way in which we see ourselves and Read More. 1752 Words 5 Pages. Identity Essay. Â The social group is defined in terms of psychological processes as a collection of individuals sharing a common social identity (Turner, 1982) and defined by others as a group (Brown, 1988). Identity development is a stage in the adolescent life cycle. For most, the search for identity begins in the adolescent years. During these years, adolescents are more open to 'trying on' different behaviors and appearances to discover who they are. Â In contrast to friendships (which are reciprocal dyadic relationships) and cliques (which refer to groups of individuals who interact frequently), crowds are characterized more by shared reputations or images than actual interactions (Brown & Larson, 2009)[14] These crowds reflect different prototypic identities (such as jocks or brains) and are often linked with adolescents' social status and peers' perceptions of their values.