

LOYALISTS, PATRIOTS, AND FENCE-SITTERS

The AMC series **TURN: Washington's Spies** is based on Alexander Rose's book *Washington's Spies* and tells the little-known story of the first spy ring in American history. This historical thriller is set during the Revolutionary War and focuses on Long Island farmer Abe Woodhull and a group of his childhood friends who form the Culper Ring, which gathered intelligence for General George Washington and gave rise to modern spycraft. Season 2 introduces viewers to Benedict Arnold, one of the most controversial figures in American history, and traces Washington's efforts to secure an alliance with France. The star of the show, however, is the Culper Ring and its secret fight to win liberty for America.



DISCOVERY

Go beyond the battlefield to learn about the divisions between the loyalists to the British Crown and the patriots struggling for independence. As **TURN: Washington's Spies** emphasizes, such bitter rifts divided not just towns or cities but families. It was difficult to know whom to trust. And so, as the armies clashed, America's first spy ring went to work.

- Read a variety of primary sources written by various Loyalists at the outset of the war at <http://americainclass.org/sources/makingrevolution/rebellion/text1/loyalists17751776.pdf>.
- Read Loyalist Rev. Myles Cooper's poem "The Patriots of North America," 1775, at <http://americainclass.org/sources/makingrevolution/rebellion/text1/cooperpatriotsnorthamerica.pdf>.
- Read about anti-Loyalist sentiment at <http://americainclass.org/sources/makingrevolution/rebellion/text2/loyalistsbroadides.pdf>.
- Read Thomas Paine's pamphlet, *Common Sense* (available at <http://www.ushistory.org/Paine/commonsense/singlehtml.htm>).
- Learn about the division among one famous family at <http://education-portal.com/academy/lesson/british-loyalists-vs-american-patriots-during-the-american-revolution.html>.

DISCUSSION

- Consider King George's tyrannical rule from a contemporary point of view and debate whether, in the United States today, George Washington's spies would be seen as heroes or traitors.
- Discuss whether the anti-Loyalist riots and mobs were justified or not.
- The majority of Americans were "fence-sitters" who supported neither side during the war. Discuss what factors would influence an individual to side with the Loyalists or the Patriots as opposed to remaining neutral. Consider the risks that these individuals would have to take.
- Debate the impact of Paine's *Common Sense* on the Loyalists, the Patriots, and the fence-sitters. Which group was most influenced by the document and why?



TURN

WASHINGTON'S SPIES

2-HOUR PREMIERE EVENT
MONDAY APRIL 13 9/8C **AMC**