Writing anonymously or under pseudonyms, authors traded insults and used name-calling, sarcasm, and satire to ridicule opponents. Paxton critics such as Benjamin Franklin, who authored the first published attack of the debate, condemned the Paxton men and all Scots-Irishmen as "CHRISTIAN WHITE SAVAGES" who had murdered peaceful Conestogas in cold blood. His goal was primarily to condemn his Scots-Irish political opponents in the colony rather than to defend the Conestogas, the victims of their violence. Other authors followed Franklin's lead. They mostly ignored the Conestogas, instead employing anti-Irish stereotypes to ridicule the Scots-Irish as drunkards, or to parody their distinctive dialect as evidence of ignorance; some even fed upon anti-Catholic prejudice by asserting that these Protestant colonists were really Catholics in disguise.

Paxton apologists employed comparably incendiary tactics. Their goal was to defend the Scots-Irish and other immigrant groups in the colony, such as the Germans, while undermining the authority of Philadelphia-centered power brokers. They derided Franklin, an increasingly important politician in the colony, as a self-interested double-dealer and stereotyped all Indians, even the peaceful Conestogas, as inherently violent, traitorous savages. Wealthy and influential Quakers were their favorite targets, however. Distinctively plain forms of Quaker dress and speech, such as broad-brimmed hats and Quakers' use of "thee" and "thou" idiom made them easy to mock.

Political cartoons offer a rich documentary record of such tactics. In *Benjamin Franklin and the Quakers*, the Quaker merchant Israel Pemberton, donning the traditional broad-brimmed hat, distributes hatchets to a group of half-naked, highly-stereotyped Indian men; Pemberton instructs them to "Exercise them [use them] on the Scotch Irish & Dutch [Germans]," suggesting that the Quakers' greed for profits from trade drove Indian violence against backcountry settlers such as the Paxton men. Franklin, depicted in the foreground, holding a bag of money, confirms that "this is the way our Money goes." But the Indians have their own designs, as well. As a Quaker man in the right corner of the cartoon cavorts with a young, bare-breasted Indian woman, she secretly reaches into his pocket to steal his pocket watch, raising questions of who controlled the colony and whether Indians, the Quakers, or Franklin profited most from the trade.

The German bleeds & bears ye Furs followed similar themes but shifted the setting to the backcountry to highlight the consequences of such greed. Here, a Quaker (broad-brimmed hat) and Franklin oversee a scene of death and destruction. The Quaker, who appears to be in control, rides on the back of the Scots-Irishman with a half-naked, hatchet-carrying Indian and a blindfolded German yoked to his arm; Franklin watches from the sidelines. As the verses below the cartoon confirm, the Quaker – not Franklin or even the Indian – bears responsibility for the burning cabins and dead colonists that surround them. Franklin, the verses note, may have offered the "help at hand," but it was the Quaker "broad-brims," the colony's oppressive "Lords," whose desire for profit stoked dependence, violence, and misery in Pennsylvania. Quakers were not the humble Christians and pacifists they claimed; rather, as the wearers of masks that disguised nefarious intentions, Quakers were, as pro-Paxton writers asserted, the root of strife in the colony.

The Paxton crisis, as Thomas Penn predicted, was a war of words and images fought by Paxton critics and defenders who debated Pennsylvania's future by inflaming the passions and misleading the judgement of many in the colony. Yet, in a war sparked by violence against Indians, it is surprising how absent or misrepresented the Conestogas were in these discussions. Few texts acknowledged the Paxton murders. Instead, most works, including political cartoons, either denied the Conestogas' agency by portraying them as helpless dependents of the colony and its Quaker merchants, or by stereotyping them as either cunning, half-naked savages or hatchet-wielding warriors, images popularized during the Seven Years' War. With no native voices to argue on behalf of the Conestogas, the Paxton debates document the colonial narrative of the crisis. They also capture a turning point in the history of the Pennsylvanian colony, away from acknowledgement and negotiation and towards the whole scale displacement and dispossession of indigenous peoples.