Gracious Affections: Affect and the Rise of Evangelicalism in Early America

By

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Abstract

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In this dissertation I build on current theorists of affect in order to critically foreground the centrality of embodied religious experience in the spread of evangelicalism through the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century United States and the larger Atlantic world. I argue that the social and embodied religious practices within evangelical public spaces altered the writing and reading practices of evangelicals in the early republic by attempting to recreate, but also limit, the powerful and embodied religious feelings created within those spaces. This dissertation is structured around the writing and embodied practices of lay publics who were animated by the ecstatic religious experiences found at revivals and other religious gatherings and the work of ministers who sought to both propagate and control that energy through the authority of the clergy. By bringing the fields of literary studies, religious history, queer theory, and theories of affect into conversation around evangelicalism, this dissertation revises the conventional wisdom of American religious history, and offers new ways to understand evangelicalism's complex influence on early American writing practices and the greater culture at large.

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Introduction: The Secrets of the Heart

I do not know whether all Americans have a sincere faith in their religion—for who can read the secrets of the heart?—but I am certain that they hold it to be indispensible to the maintenance of republican institutions. This opinion is not peculiar to a class of citizens or a party, but it belongs to the whole nation and to every rank of society.

Alexis De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*

In a sermon "The Wise and Foolish Virgins" famed eighteenth-century itinerant George Whitefield called upon his auditors to imagine the suffering Christ: "Look then, look then, by an eye of faith, to that God-man whom you have pierced. Behold him bleeding, panting, dying upon the cross, with arms stretched out, ready to embrace you all. Hark! How he groans! See how all nature is in agony!"[1] Whitefield calls up a spectacle of Christ's body in anguish to move his auditors from their spiritual complacency by foregrounding not Christ's love and forgiveness but the intensity of his bodily suffering. Christ's is not the only body on display in this moment, for Whitefield himself was a spectacular performer, known for his performative skills and a passionate preaching style that brought out thousands of spectators across the Anglophone world.

Roughly a century later, Henry Ward Beecher would preach a sermon on gambling, collected in his *Lectures to Young Men* (1859). He paints a scene of vice and degradation, as a young man's life falls apart due to his gambling addiction:

> At the gallows' ladder his courage fails. His coward feet refuse to ascend; dragged up, he is supported by bustling officials; his brain reels, his eyes swim, while the meek minister utters a final prayer by his leaden ear. The prayer is said, the noose is fixed, the signal is given; a shudder runs through the crowd as he swings free. After a moment, his

[1] George Whitefield, *Sermons of George Whitefield* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2009), 110.

> convulsed limbs stretch down and hang heavily and still; and he who began to gamble to make up a game, and ended with stabbing an enraged victim whom he had fleeced, had here played his last game, himself the stake.[2]

Like Whitefield, Beecher uses the image of a tortured, suffering body to make his point and move his auditors. And like Whitefield, Beecher was a minister known for deploying his own charismatic performance to effect change among his auditors.

This dissertation charts the period of time marked off by these two figures and argues that the experiential body inaugurated evangelicalism in the eighteenth-century and is key to explaining evangelicalism's power in colonial and U.S. culture. But this means more than the sentimentalized portraits of bodies in distress captured in these two examples; more importantly, it is the ecstatic bodies of evangelical lay people spurred on by the revivals that structured evangelical religious experience that is my focus. From the emergence of evangelical practice in the 1740s through our current day, evangelical revivals featured huge crowds of spectators weeping, swooning, and falling—moved so deeply by the word and by the crowds around them they were overcome spiritually and physically. These contagious affective experiences helped draw crowds, convert masses, and made celebrities of figures like Whitefield. But they also disrupted social and ecclesiastical hierarchies, encouraged radical religious thought, and fractured parishes and denominations. It is the unpredictable consequences of these embodied religious experiences that this dissertation centers upon.

This dissertation argues that the affectively changed body is the defining feature of evangelical experience. Evangelicalism has always shared a relationship to the body as a medium of spiritual experience and though this is certainly true of other religious traditions, in the

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[2]Lyman Abbot and S.B. Halliday, *Henry Ward Beecher: A Sketch of His Career: With Analyses of His Power as a Preacher, Lecturer, Orator, Journalist, and Incidents and Reminiscences of His Life* (Hartford: American Publishing Company, 1887), 139.

colonies that would become the United States and the larger Anglophone world, evangelicalism came into being because of this embodied religiosity. As Nathan O. Hatch claims (speaking specifically of Baptists and Methodists), evangelicals "measured the depth of worship experience by the amount of tears shed at their meetings."[3] But what does it mean to cry in public at religious meetings? And beyond those tears, what does it mean to fall down, to shake, to speak in tongues, to experience visionary trances? And, importantly for my work, what does it mean to communicate those experiences through the printed word?

These questions are precipitated by the very public nature of evangelical experience. Though studies of evangelicalism frequently foreground its individualistic character (due to its investment in the searching out of the convert's interior self), these activities are often times not private but shaped by the public rituals of revivalism such as prayer meetings, church services, and the camp meeting—multi-day, outdoor religious events that often included multiple ministers and up to thousands of people.[4] The large numbers of converts and reclaimed backsliders convinced evangelicals that the Christianization of the United States (defined on their own terms) was distinctly possible and could be transmitted from revival locations to other parts of the country and across the world. Print was seen as a handmaiden of this process. Thomas Prince's *The Christian History* (1743-1745) inaugurated this print culture in the colonies. That template was expanded upon in the nineteenth-century with such publications as *The Panoplist* (1805-1820) the *Christian Advocate* (1826-1832), the *American Missionary Register* (1820-1825), among many others.

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[3] Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1989), 105.
[4] Patricia Bonomi's *Under the Cope of Heaven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986) and John Boles's *The Great Revival, 1787-1805* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1972) are two such examples. Or as Richard Brown asserts, "it must be recognized that in the Awakening the notion of individual choice was forcefully asserted, together with the exercise of personal preference by ordinary people who announced that they would henceforth decide what religious information they could choose to hear." In Richard D. Brown, *Knowledge is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700-1865* (New York: Oxofrd University Press, 1989), 273.

The relationship between print and practice animates many of the issues addressed in each chapter. I begin with the awakenings of the 1740s because these mark the emergence of the distinctive public rituals of revivalism. It is George Whitefield who promulgates these practices by preaching to enormous outdoor crowds, though Jonathan Edwards was the arch-theorist of revival experience. Whitefield, more than any other religious figure of the day, knew how to make use of the emerging print culture to generate excitement, controversy, and crowds. But by the time of Henry Ward Beecher's rise to fame in the 1850s, print no longer served the same purposes. Despite large numbers of citizens within their respective denominations, mainstream evangelicals turned away from ecstatic religious practice towards a more regimented religious practice that was the result of the mainstreaming of evangelicalism in the antebellum period. Beecher epitomized this shift; as a charismatic preacher who turned to the press and to fiction to disseminate his message, Beecher is a capstone figure in the institutionalization of evangelicalism. This institutionalization moved denominations away from the intense, unpredictable, and highly public rituals of revivalism toward more static and regimented religious experiences. And this move limited the affective possibilities inherent in the social religious rituals of an earlier revivalism.

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When wading into the topic of evangelicalism in the early American context one must contend with a dense and sometimes conflicting historiography. Part of this is the long and significant shadow cast by Perry Miller, whose work on the New England colonial intellectual

milieu has been a touchstone for most scholars.[5] But a recent reemergence of evangelicalism's centrality to American thought have come from Mark Noll's *America's God*: *From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (2002) and E. Brooks Holifield's *Theology in America: Christian Thought from the Age of the Puritans to the Civil War* (2003).[6] Noll in particular stresses the unique qualities of post-Revolutionary theology, arguing for a distinct "American Synthesis," which he argues "was a compound of evangelical Protestant religion, republican political ideology, and commonsense moral reasoning."[7]

As extremely useful as these studies have been to my own work, the turn to intellectual history as a means of analyzing evangelicalism in this period also leaves substantial absences in the discussion—most notably, the role of everyday religious individuals and their own experiences of evangelical piety and doctrine.[8] The public rituals of revival and awakening, camp meetings, prayer meetings—these public worship activities offered an unprecedented space in which participants experienced powerful affective forces heightened by the numbers of people

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[5] In particular, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953) and his final work *The Life of the Mind in America: From the Revolution to the Civil War* (New York: Hartcourt, Brace, and World, 1965) have ably charted the period under consideration in this dissertation.

[6] In some ways, the work of Noll and Holifield can be seen as a revision of Ann Douglas's famous *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977). Revisions of Douglas's "feminist" reading of the period came in the 1980s, particularly the work of Nina Baym and Jane Tomkins but the work of both Noll and Holifield substantially revise Douglas's claims about the intellectual content of the period's religious thought.

[7] Mark Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 9.

[8] Both Holifield and Noll seem aware of this problem and to elide it Noll claims "that many nonpublishing citizens read, pondered, and considered themselves part of the circles of debate created by the published theology examined in this volume; and that during the years from 1730 to 1865, most residents in the United States, as well as outside, if they thought about 'America' at all, did so in terms of the public realm of discourse that is the focus here." In Noll, *America's God*, 18. In a similar vein, Holifield writes "the language of theology informed the piety of Americans who never immersed themselves in learned or artistic productions. Through the sermon and tracts of local Protestant and Catholic clergy, the ideas of theologians reached an audience that knew little of science of philosophy." In E. Brookks Holifield, *Theology in America: Christian Thought from the Age of the Puritans to the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 2. Though claims can be made about popular readership and evangelical print culture, both authors rest their work on the assumption that there was a kind of trickle down model of theology at this time, and that religious thought of lay readers, by virtue of consumption, can be understood within the terms of the theological elite. Both Holifield and Noll leave this assumption untested, offering little insight into how we might prove that theologians were understood and incorporated into the lives of lay readers.

present (sometimes in the thousands) and the intensity of the affects on display. It is this collection of active bodies that is so important to the power of evangelicalism in the early American period and this power has not been substantially analyzed in earlier scholarship. Texts on revivals, such as missionary magazines, memoirs, and public letter collections have an odd place in the scholarship of evangelicalism. Such texts were not theology properly speaking and they were not always interested in the reformist politics that animate evangelicalism.[9] Rather, these texts attempted to transmit the energy of revival communities through the printed word, meaning they were meant to be both transcriptions of events as well as catalysts for further revival. Writers endeavored to recreate a sense of what revival felt like and its effects on the body and heart in the hopes of knitting together a disparate evangelical community by creating an imagined trans-American revival (and even beyond) linked by public revival activities and their attendant print renditions.

Several scholars have attempted to enfold the experiential nature of evangelical practice into their studies.[10] Eschewing both the declension narratives of earlier studies as well as intellectual history, these authors, taken together, point scholarship of religion across all disciplines into a productive realm of inquiry by working through religious experience as a social and lived practice.[11] Though these works inform the following discussion, many still rely on the

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[9] Only a handful of scholarly works have addressed the density and variety of evangelical texts from this period, most notably Candy Gunther Brown's *The Word in the World: Evangelical Writing, Publishing, and Reading in America, 1789-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) and David Paul Nord's *Faith in Reading: Religious Publishing and the Birth of Mass Media in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[10] Eric Leigh Schmidt's *Holy Fairs: Scotland and the Making of American Revivalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), Anne Taves's *Fits, Trances, & Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1999), and David Hall's edited collection *Lived Religion in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).
[11] Two other studies are worth mentioning here, Robert Blair St. George's *Conversing by Signs: Poetics of Implication in Colonial New England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998) and David Waldstreicher's *In the Midst of Perpetucal Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997). Both of these works are interested in understanding early American life through public activities and spatiality, which has been of immense help and influence on this project.

rationalist assumptions of traditional historicist scholarship by maintaining a certain critical distance from the subjects experiencing religion in these charged spaces. Still left unexplained are those trembling bodies and charged atmosphere that seem to have affected and enfolded entire communities. This is not a transcription of the emotional discourse used to describe affective religious experience and is more than a recuperation of the heart-centered ethos of evangelicalism; it is rather an exploration of the workings of those collective bodies within the specific discourse of evangelical revivalism. And the recent "affective turn" in literary studies and beyond offers provocative ways to understand these charged spaces.

An example from the pamphlet *A Narrative of the Revival of Religion in the County of Oneida, Particularly in the Bounds of the Presbytery of Oneida, in the Year 1826* can give us some insight into the affective intensity of these revival experiences. Reverend James Frost of Whitesborough, New York describes revival in his town this way:

> The following week was the most interesting and solemn this village ever witnessed. Some of the most intelligent and respectable people in the place were convicted of sin. Silence reigned. No opposition was heard. Christians trembled. They felt that God was here, and that the village was awed to silence and prostrated before the majesty of his character, and his truth set home by his own power. Never did I feel my own nothingness so sensibly. I felt as though all I could do was to urge Christians to pray, that breath might enter these slain. I felt at the same time, as though we were all unworthy to be *permitted* to pray for such a blessing. It seemed as though a still small voice said to the church—"Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God; be it known unto you; be

> ashamed and confounded for your own ways." Many interesting cases of conversion now occurred, at which the church wept and the angels rejoiced.[12]

Frost's narrative is just one of many in this collection. Each section is divided into a town, where the local minister (usually Presbyterian in this instance) narrates the spread of revival power across the community and its effects on participants—in terms of immediate, sensational responses, conversions, spiritual recommitments, and behavioral improvements. The document also has its own kind of spiritual geography. The organization of the town-based narratives relates in many instances to the perceived contagion of revival energy from community to community—each town recognizing from where they caught this energy and where it might be transmitted further. The collection of narratives follows the spread of revivalism across the upstate New York region known as the "Burned-Over District." What Frost also attempts is a way to articulate those shaking bodies and to find an evangelical language to describe those precognitive urgings moving through the bodies of his congregation.

When describing Frost's Whitesborough church, I used the phrase "precognitive urgings" as a way to articulate the intensity found within that space. I wish to return to that phrase to help outline how affect will operate within this dissertation. This precognitive response is not the unconscious that will become conscious (via language) but what Brian Massumi calls "intensity." Intensity is "nonconscious," "embodied in the purely autonomic reactions most directly manifested in the skin—at the surface of the body, at its interface with things."[13] Affect is this intensity, an animating energy that happens through the surface of the body and which connects bodies together in shared experiences of affective intensity. This dissertation is invested

[12] *A Narrative of the Revival of Religion, in the County of Oneida Particularly in the Bounds of the Presbytery of Oneida, in the Year 1826*. (Hastings and Tracy: Utica, 1826), 19.
[13] Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 25.

in understanding that intensity as it moved throughout these social spaces and more importantly, through those bodies.

We must also recognize Massumi's key distinction between affect and emotion. Whereas affect is unqualified and contagious intensity, emotion is "intensity owned and recognized."[14] He writes, "reserve the term 'emotion' for the personalized content, and affect for the continuation. Emotion is contextual. Affect is situational…."[15] For Massumi, emotions are "subjective content" and "the sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience" and as such are only one portion of the affective spectrum.[16] I agree with Massumi that affect exceeds (and precedes) emotion and with this in mind we can understand Frost's narrative not just for the language of unworthiness and awe through which he describes the scene, but the sensitive bodies, the radiant energy produced by their collective experience, and an intensity within that space that must exceed the language of emotions in order to spread so far beyond that one church and one town. In so doing we can understand the generative power of affect within evangelical spaces without being beholden to the cultural linguistics of evangelical discourse.

But the theoretical necessity of separating affect from emotion does not mean rejecting the importance of studying the discourse of emotion. What I wish to foreground here is an understanding of the emotions and affects as distinct but interrelated, sharing a common ground of the body which transmits and shapes emotion through the experience of affect. And in so doing the body as it is understood in the western intellectual tradition needs to be revised as well. Through affect, the body is not an expressive template on which a singular interiority can be legibly discerned. The mind/body duality that structures our reigning understanding of

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[14] Massumi, *Virtual*, 28.
[15] Massumi, *Virtual*, 217.
[16] Massumi, *Virtual*, 28.

consciousness is displaced by studies of affect in that the body becomes its own site of consciousness and meaning making.[17]

This allows us to return the active and vital presence of lived religious practice to the center of studies on evangelicalism and in so doing, to revise the narratives of evangelicalism that dominate the field. For a moment let us consider the ecstatic religious behaviors of revivalists that show up frequently in narratives like those of Whitefield's travels through the colonies or Frost's description of his congregation. Scholars have had difficulty in dealing with such ecstatic behaviors, ignoring them or minimizing them as fringe experiences of a small number of enthusiasts.[18] But through the integrated model proposed in studies of affect, those features of interiority we value are no longer buried within a complex historical individual but written on and through the body. Central to this discussion is a conviction that the body proved to be a powerful location of speech and action for these groups of people. That evangelicalism created particular spaces where groups of people could work through affects together and using studies of affect to read these public behaviors returns speech, agency, and insight to these evangelical publics. I would argue that intellectual histories and print culture oriented models like those of Noll and others, despite all they bring to the table, fall back upon the dualism that

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[17] This understanding of the body comes from Benedict de Spinoza and influences the work on affect of scholars such as Gilles Deleuze, Brian Massumi, and Elizabeth Grosz. In his *Ethics* (1677), Spinoza argues that the mind and body cannot be understood as separate faculties with the mind hold supremacy over the body. This alternative to the Cartesian model of the body is best articulated by Elizabeth Grosz in her work *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994). She argues that "psychical interiority" is actually dependent upon "a corporeal exteriority" and that the two are forever intertwined with one another (xii). She argues that the body can best be visualized by the Möbius strip (similar to an inverted number eight when rendered two-dimensionally). The Möbius strip "has the advantage of showing the inflection of mind into body and body into mind" (xii). This model recognizes that qualities of interiority privileged in western thinking are not only profoundly interrelated with the sensational body, but that the body (and bodies together) performs its own consciousness as well, rather than being subservient to an interior will.

[18] Speaking of such behaviors from the southern revivals of the early nineteenth-century Paul Conkin writes, "this failure to understand the exercises has almost forced historians to see them as frontier aberrations, or as irrational 'diseases' that infected psychologically sick members of the lower orders of society—poor, ignorant, and superstitious." In Paul A. Conkin, *Cane Ridge: America's Pentecost*. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 103.

makes intellectual history a disembodied practice and therefore evangelical bodies a superfluous residue of evangelical thought.

And this elision of lay crowds and publics in contemporary studies of evangelicalism allows us to ignore the troubling politics of the body at work in evangelicalism's emergence. In recuperating the energy of evangelical publics we must also contend with the various means of evangelicalism to harness the power of such communities. When large groups of people came together in worship ministers felt both the rumblings of millennial fervor and the possibility of crowd feeling overwhelming social and ecclesiastical hierarchies. Part of this project (and the utility of an affective lens) is to recognize how even pro-revival figures such as Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, Charles Grandison Finney, Beecher, and other prominent voices developed strategies of containment and regulation within evangelical discourse in order to return promiscuous religious crowds into orderly participants in the structure of church. The ecstatic practices of evangelicalism brought up concerns about lay preaching (chapters one and two), Catholicism (chapter 4), and perhaps most important, issues around race (chapters two, three, and my conclusion) that ministers felt had to be cautiously regulated.

These regulatory mechanisms also shed light on evangelicalism's complex relationship to the discourse of sentimentalism. This dissertation argues in part that the sentimental tradition is a key element of evangelical thought, both in its more obvious antebellum American manifestations (such as Harriet Beecher Stowe and other Christian sentimental writers), but also earlier, at the emergence of the evangelical tradition, specifically in the work of itinerant George Whitefield and to a lesser extent, Jonathan Edwards. With this in mind, we can connect evangelical discourse to the larger literary sensibilities of the early American world that have been charted in the works of Julia Stern, Elizabeth Barnes, Sarah Knott, G.J. Barker-Benfield,

and others.[19] However, one must tread lightly when addressing sentimentalism within the context of affect. Affect and sentiment are not the same thing. If we return to Massumi's distinction between affect and emotion, sentimentalism is the discourse in which affect is "captured" and made situationally legible within its historical context. Though a pervasive discourse across a broad range of texts, recognizing sentiment as discourse and not as a pure transcription of affective experiences helps us understand the work of sentimentalism in the context of public religious experience and its related world.

And the work of sentimentalism within this context relates to the regulation of affect that figures prominently throughout this project. An example from Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* can illuminate this issue. At the end of the novel Stowe's narrator offers this piece of advice to those seeking to bring an end to slavery; "there is one thing every individual can do,—they can see to it that *they feel right*."[20] Arguing for a kind of intensity that I described earlier she continues, "an atmosphere of sympathetic influence encircles every human being; and the man or woman who *feels* strongly, healthily, and justly, on the great interests of humanity, is a constant benefactor to the human race."[21] But in Stowe's formulation, this atmosphere of affective intensity leads to a particular injunction—feeling "right."[22] Though addressing the evils of slavery, there is ultimately something coercive about this logic of feeling. When faced with a particularly charged scenario (to take the meeting of Eliza and the Bird family as only one of

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[19] Julia Stern, *The Plight of Feeling: Sympathy and Dissent in the Early American Novel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), Elizabeth Barnes, *States of Sympathy: Seduction and Democracy in the American Novel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), Sarah Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), and G.J. Barker-Benfield, *Abigail and John Adams: The Americanization of Sensibility* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010). This list is obviously not exhaustive of the both classic and recent work on sentimental discourse in the Anglo-American context.
[20] Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1994), 385.
[21] Stowe, *Cabin*, 285.
[22] Though his work undertheorizes his use of affect, Glenn Hendler makes such an argument about the "element of coercion in the affective medium" of sentimental communication. In Glenn Hendler, *Public Sentiments: Structures of Feeling in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 219.

such examples), Stowe leads her readers to only one possible emotional conclusion—a deep sympathy for enslaved people and a commitment to their ultimate freedom. Though I am obviously not arguing with the conclusion Stowe demands of her readers, the sentimental logic evinced in this passage is part of a history of sentiment as a discourse that limits the breadth of possibilities available within affective experience. Chapter one offers just such an example in the sermons of George Whitefield, a contemporary of Ur-sentimentalist Samuel Richardson, who uses the nascent structures of sentimental discourse to harness the affective power of his public preaching. Chapter three follows a similar and more troubling logic in the sentimentalizing of Native American converts.

This isn't to say that the discourse of sentiment is a boogeyman in this project—what I wish to highlight is that any discourse of emotion necessarily sets limits upon experience and that this bears significantly on the regulation of evangelical publics. But even within sentimental discourse these regulations are not all encompassing, in part because the excesses of affect spill out beyond the discourse in unpredictable ways. This unpredictability was argued in David Marshall's influential work *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy: Marivaux, Diderot, Rousseau, and Mary Shelly* (1988). Marshall argues that the "surprising effects" within sentimentalism are the unpredictable responses found within its own logic, those moments where texts produce alternatives and unexpected consequences outside of the intentions of the discourse. Marshall's central thesis has been key to this work, but I wish to fine tune it by recognizing that those surprises perhaps shouldn't be so surprising at all—looking past the horizon of sentimentalism via affect allows us to recognize unpredictability as an expected consequence of affectively charged communication. We cannot know in advance the results of affective transmission, which

allows varied moments of the surprising, the unexpected, and the uncharted even within the ritualized spaces of evangelicalism.

Following this logic, this project very purposefully engages in reparative reading strategies. The hierarchical social vision of eighteenth century ministers (chapter one), the assimilationist goals of white missionaries among American Indians (chapter three), or the anti-Catholicism of Protestant activists (chapter four) invite and even necessitate a suspicious reading practice. But as Eve Sedgwick has argued, the "hermeneutics of suspicion" have limited our scholarly vision because "they may have made it less rather than more possible to unpack the local, contingent relations between any given piece of knowledge and its narrative/ epistemological entailments for the seeker, knower, or teller."[23] As academic discourse has privileged suspicious reading practices, a certain inevitability has come to dictate our conclusions and while guiding us to new areas of inquiry, paranoid reading limits the ways in which scholars can interact with our objects of study.[24] I am not interested in supplanting one model for another and Sedgwick is certainly not calling for that. Instead, this dissertation attempts to balance these two scholarly modes, to recognize that a hermeneutics of suspicion reveals the functioning of power while a reparative model offers us ways beyond charting those functions by moving toward a more generative, constructive approach to the study of evangelicalism. Each chapter attempts a productive intervention (particularly chapters two and

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[23] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching, Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 124.

[24] Massumi makes a strikingly similar claim in his introduction to *Parables of the Virtual:"* If you want to adopt a productivist approach, the techniques of critical thinking prized by the humanities are of limited value. To think productivism, you have to allow that even your own logical efforts feedback and add to reality, in some small, probably microscopic way. But still. Once you have allowed that, you have accepted that activities dedicated to thought and writing are inventive. Critical thinking disavows its own inventiveness as much as possible. Because it sees itself as uncovering something it claims was hidden or as debunking something it desires to subtract from the world, it clings to a basically descriptive and justifactory modus operandi." In Massumi, *Virtual,* 12. Though he and Sedgwick come to affect from different origins, it is worth pondering how studies of affect have also facilitated a revision of Paul Ricouer's "hermeneutics of suspicion" and seem to encourage scholars towards a productivist approach to scholarship.

four) within evangelical discourse, and attempts to openly and inventively intervene within it. This model moves us beyond history and into surprising and unexpected locations within the period.

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Chapter one begins with the emerging print of the eighteenth-century Anglo-American revivals that set off a debate about the powerful bodily manifestations of religious feeling happening at new revivals and argues that this discourse begins evangelicalism's long and complex relationship to the body as evidence. Along with these emergent bodily practices came responses from ministers across the evangelical spectrum, some praising and some criticizing these "outward and visible signs." But almost all can be understood as attempting to find ways to assert ministerial control as a regulating mechanism for the unpredictable and interpersonal nature of these religious ecstasies. Surveying the Anglo-American revival network, this chapter ends with a discussion of Jonathan Edwards's particular response to religious "enthusiasm," which I read alongside of his wife Sarah's unpublished and unedited narrative of her experiences during the First Great Awakening. My reading of Sarah Edwards's unvarnished description of her religious ecstasies illuminates the ways in which her and other first person accounts were altered and shaped by the ministers in control of eighteen-century publishing.

Chapter two focuses on the birth of the "camp meeting," multi-day religious revivals that originated in rural Kentucky at the turn of the nineteenth-century. Through new religious magazines, evangelicals across the country touted this novel outburst of piety and retold the story in print and pulpit. First person accounts of these camp meetings show how shame structured the

religious experiences of white participants. I argue that shame's ability to destabilize white bodily norms in turn explains the segregated nature of particular revivals, such as the famous camp meeting at Cane Ridge, Kentucky.

Building on the relationship between race and evangelicalism, chapter three looks at the early nineteenth-century missions to American Indians and the writings of George Copway and William Apess, two Indian converts turn missionaries. I show how white missionaries deployed templates of passive Indian converts that rendered Indian subjects docile as a result of the conversions. I then discuss how Copway and Apess to power of evangelical conversion and sociality to facilitate communities among American Indians as a means of resistance to U.S. removal and reservation policy in the wake of the genocidal policies of the Jackson administration and those following.

My fourth chapter addresses the rise of anti-Catholic discourse in the antebellum period, turning to Harriet Beecher Stowe's *The Minister's Wooing* to reflect on the meeting of the sentimental novel in conversation with the larger evangelical print culture. My particular focus is the panic surrounding the convent and its threat to young women that is repeated through much anti-Catholic writing. Revising the anti-Catholicism inherited from her family, Stowe uses the conventions of the sentimental novel along with evangelical structures of feeling and communication to create an ecumenical haven for women within the New England home.

The conclusion builds off of this chapter by comparing Stowe's textual formulations of evangelical affectivity alongside her brother Henry Ward Beecher's public preaching on behalf of abolitionism. Beecher uses both his own embodied style alongside of public spectacles such as a mock slave auction within his church in order to move his congregation toward abolitionism. In

the service of abolitionism, Beecher celebrates the Christian body's ability to act as evidence and to facilitate feeling for his parishioners by performing a slave auction, in which the silent body of a fair-skinned slave woman speaks to the benevolent impulses of his Brooklyn congregation. This final example of the evangelical history of the body as evidence marks an apotheosis of the work begun by George Whitefield a century prior. And I read these bodily activities alongside of the new primacy of the written word (particularly religious novels) to consider the consequences of an evangelical public practice of feeling being subsumed into the more private world of the text.

This project casts a broad net over evangelicalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and predominantly within the American landscape (with forays into Canada, Scotland, and England). As a result, the specificity of each denomination might appear lost within such broadly conceived parameters and certain denominations (the Baptists in particular) might seem underserved within a dissertation that claims to address evangelicalism as a whole. But this move is purposeful and though I am aware of what is lost in such a decision, I believe it also serves a significant use. As noted earlier, this project is not overly invested in reading evangelicalism through its theological legacy and that is the space where sectarian division most aggressively manifest themselves and have been charted by scholars discussed earlier. When it came to the social practices of revivalism, missionary labors, and reform work, American evangelicals often shared resources and ambitions. This can be seen in Anglican Whitefield's itinerancy across the Anglophone world, or the Southern revivals discussed in chapter two. As missionary George Copway wrote in his memoirs, "we ought not to know each other as Presbyterians, Methodists, or Baptists, but only as missionaries of the cross."[25] This is not to elide the differences among

[25] George Copway, *Life Letters, Speeches* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 114.

denominations of the contentions that arose among them throughout this period—it is only to say that I am not interested in narrating early American evangelicalism through a sectarian lens. Though the arc of my project is structured around the tensions of institutionalization and affect, I resist overly-privileging any all-encompassing narrative.[26] Rather I see these various chapters as what David Kazajian calls "flashpoints," distinctive moments within the discourse of evangelicalism that allow us insight into the ways in which embodied religious practice reveals the compelling influences of evangelical practice on the lives of evangelicals from across a range of locations.[27]

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This introduction began with Alexis De Tocqueville's famous assessment of American piety and its relationship to the political and social well being of the nation. But the most striking feature to me is that caveat about assessing belief, "for who can read the secrets of the heart?" Tocqueville's certainty that the heart bears no admittance seems to implicitly structure so much study of American religious thought. And though this project makes no claim to validate the "truth" of the spiritual convictions of people written about here, I am attempting a model that

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[26] Reinhold Niebhur has argued that there is a generational saga to all emergent religious groups. They begin as outsiders, and then lose their distinctive and radical qualities as they move to mainstream legitimacy. I agree with Niebhur's thesis, but it makes any cohesive narrative of evangelicalism particularly messy. The nineteenth-century is replete with new denominations (Millerites and later Seventh-Day Adventists, Alexander Campbell's Christian denomination) along with an upswell in previously marginalized ones (Methodists, African Methodist Episcopal Church, and Baptists) happening at various moments across this time period. As such, any broad historiography of evangelical denominations cannot fit into a neat chronology. As we move through the chapters we will glimpse this recurring cycle of outsider energy converted into mainstream legitimacy; if one casts a wide net across the evangelical spectrum, the process is multiplied too often to speak of evangelicalism, or a narrative of it, too sensibly. In Richard H. Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*. (New York: New American Library, 1929), 32-33.

[27] David Kazanjian. *The Colonizing Trick: National Culture and Imperial Citizenship in Early America*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 5.

seeks to treat those deep well springs of feeling as seriously as possible. Perhaps that goal signals the greatest utility of affect in this project—through affect, interiority is not located in the secret, buried heart of a single individual, but written on the surface, through the body, on the face, generated not in privacy but among others through a collective, affective power.

Chapter One

"A Remarkable Uniformity in the Work of God:" Revival Bodies and the Regulation of Affect in the Transatlantic Awakenings.

The evangelical weekly magazine *The Christian History* was established in 1743 in order to propagate revival news across both the colonies and the Atlantic. Editor and minister Thomas Prince's weekly magazine printed reports from across the Anglo-American world, "extracts of WRITTEN LETTERS…as they shall be sent hither from creditable Persons and communicated to us."[28] I would like to begin my discussion of the eighteenth-century revivals traditionally known as "The Great Awakening" by looking at the *History*'s first published narrative, the Scottish minister James Robe's entitled *A Faithful Narrative of the Extraordinary Work of the Spirit of God at Kilsyth and other Congregations in the Neighbourhood*. Robe's work had been printed in Glasgow the year prior but its publication in *The Christian History* marks its first American edition. Robe's narrative was serialized over the first seven weekly issues of the *History*, unfolding each week for its readers not unlike the serial fiction that would come to dominate nineteenth-century story papers.

Like other evangelical ministers during the awakening years, Robe had to wrestle with a certain crisis of authority that the revivals precipitated. Robe was pleased to see what at first appeared to be a local recommitment to holiness morph into a seemingly global affair but was also troubled by the affective excesses of his congregation. This excess was the manifestation of revival emotion through bodily exercises. Robe characterizes these responses as "faintings,

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[28]Thomas Prince, *The Christian History*, 1 (March 5, 1743), 1.

Histerick-Fits, Convulsions, bodily Agonies and Strugglings."[29] Robe initially finds these responses troubling and writes, "when I heard these Outcries, and saw the bodily Distresses some of theAwakened [sic] were under, it proved *at first very uneasy to me*, it appeared *unpleasant yea even shocking*."[30] His initial revulsion leads him to isolate these enthusiastic participants: "I therefore resolved, that as soon as any fell under remarkable Distress, they should be *carried out of the Congregation* into a separate Place I had provided for them, and *appointed some of the Elders* to carry them off accordingly."[31] Assuming that this isolation will allow the rest of the congregation to focus, Robe finds that the opposite is true and that "instead of being disturbed with their *Outcries*, [congregants] were more disturbed by *carrying them off*; and the People's Attention much lessened in hearing the Word."[32] Finding that the trauma of removal undid the positive effects these distressed bodies caused the congregation, they were allowed to return and participate. Robe is convinced that the most affectively reactive members of the congregation do positive work for all: "I observed that some were awakened while they had the Distressed *in their Sight*, and heard Exhortations given in the Place where they were convened. From this I was perswaded, that the Examples of others under spiritual Terrors and Distress, was *one of the Means* the Lord was pleased to *make Use of* to bring Beholders to consider their own State and way…."[33]

The eighteenth-century awakenings generated a complex of theological and social questions, but at the center was exactly what Robe addresses here: what to do with the ecstatic bodies of the revivalists? Robe's final answer (after his failed attempts at isolation) points to an

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[29] James Robe, "A Faithful Narrative of the Extraordinary Work of the Spirit of God at Kilsyth and other Congregations in the Neighbourhood," *The Christian History*, 1 (March 5, 1743), 7.
[30] James Robe, "A Faithful Narrative of the Extraordinary Work of the Spirit of God at Kilsyth and other Congregations in the Neighbourhood," *The Christian History*, 5 (April 2, 1743), 33.
[31] Robe, "Faithful Narrative," 33.
[32] Robe, "Faithful Narrative," 34.
[33] Robe, "Faithful Narrative," 34.

understanding of what drew people to these events. Whether one fell into convulsions or other physical responses or was present to observe them, the affective heat generated by these enthusiasts made the energy of revivalism possible. Robe understood this when he saw his congregation's spirits wane after the distressed were removed from services. Robe felt his community was strengthened by the presence of ecstatic religious feelings, and the disruption of that through removal disrupted that affective contagion. The ecstatic revivalist was merely the most legible (and potentially threatening) manifestation of the affective energy that allowed revival experiences to transmit across the Anglo-American evangelical world.

Though somewhat tentative, Robe is one of the prominent figures within the evangelical ministry to celebrate the affective body of revival participants and to hold up their ecstasies as a sign of God's work. But as this chapter argues, no one within the print conversation around the transatlantic revivals was able to elide these public, embodied, religious ecstasies—the ecstatic body is the center of an emerging evangelical discourse, though as we will come to see, a kind of absent center. More time is spent discussing how to read, propagate, or control these bodies than actually allowing lay people to describe for themselves the meaning and experiential significance of these embodied expressions. Ministers expend tremendous energy both celebrating and chastising the ecstasy of revivalism but I argue that almost all were concerned with the regulatory power necessary within the clergy to make these bodies conform to both Calvinist theology and the social norms of the eighteenth-century Anglo-American world. This will be seen in both the regulation of public behaviors as well as the regulations placed on the print circulation of revival narrations.

Those most troubled by these public performances used the loaded and usually disparaging term "enthusiasm." To move away from this language, I define this body of affective

and embodied religious feelings as "ecstasy," which maintains the specifically religious character of the expressions seen through the awakenings, without the pathology of enthusiasm. "Ecstasy" better captures the range of affective expressions and emotions generated by revivalism—from melancholy to holy joy. Though perhaps equally pathologizing, I will frequently describe the transmission of affect that happens in these spaces as "contagious." Despite its deep affiliation with discourses of illness and public health, as Priscilla Wald writes, "the interactions that make us sick also constitute us as a community."[34] This relationality is fundamental to the work of conversion and awakening. The spiritual community offers a template for understanding the ecstatic self and a space in which it can be communicated under specific forms of intelligibility. Keeping this sense of contagion as a way of knitting together community allows us to understand not only the affective power of revival experiences but to refute the long-held tradition that American religion became more individualistic beginning with the First Great Awakening. I'm not seeking to argue community over individual (as if only to invert the current scholarly picture of revivalism) but to see the two as mutually constitutive. Though a proliferation of first-person spiritual narratives and increasing range of denominational choices gives individuals an increased range of choices, the fundamental nature of this early evangelicalism is a relational sense of community, one structured around the communication of feeling revivalism made so powerful and possible.

Robe's narrative stresses this relationality, that participants shared energy among one another. Though Robe reads this as a positive good (with a certain caution), other ministers will see this form of community emotionalism as a danger to the authority of the clergy, as a threat to social norms, and as a public pathology that needs to be regulated. But I will show that this

[34] Priscilla Wald, *Contagious: Cultures, Carriers, and the Outbreak Narrative* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 2.

concern over embodied performativity extends beyond lay participants to the ministry itself. Ministers like James Davenport and the famous George Whitefield use their bodies as vehicles to transmit religious feeling along their respective itinerant preaching, and their bodily performances were used against them in order to define them as outside of evangelical orthodoxy. Finally, this chapter turns to Jonathan Edwards and his extensive work on the "religious affections." I will argue that Edwards' initial celebration of revival energy morphs over time into a more regulated and disembodied interiority, a means of turning affective energy back inside of revivalists as a way to establish order. This is most clear in Edwards's revisions of his wife Sarah's revival narrative. Sarah's narrative gives us a glimpse into how revivalists experienced religious affectivity outside of the ministerial print culture of the period.

"Enthusiasm" and the Evangelical Spectrum of the Transatlantic Revival Network

Beginning my discussion with Robe's piece should first serve as an important reminder that the revivals of the eighteenth-century are inherently transatlantic affairs, as recent scholarly work has made clear.[35] But since Jon Butler's *Awash in a Sea of Faith* (1990), the concept of "The Great Awakening" itself has been permanently called into question. Butler argues that the revival of religion that took place in the mid-eighteenth century must be understood as both more modest in its effects, and more plural in its origins. Frank Lambert's *Inventing the 'Great Awakening'* also calls the concept into question (hence the scare quotes in his title) by studying the revivals as built upon the self-conscious production of revivalism initiated by ministers

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[35] See Lee Erich Schmidt's *Holy Fairs: Scottish Communions and the American Revivals in the Early Modern Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), Frank Lambert's *Inventing the Great Awakening* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) and Thomas Kidd's *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007) as recent examples of this turn towards the transatlantic nature of these revivals.

through an emergent, transatlantic print culture. Skimming through the vast body of recent and classic scholarship on the subject one might reasonably conclude, the "awakening" seems quite possibly great, but perhaps too big a tent to be a useful label. As such, I will use the label "great," as well as "first" and "second" only sparingly throughout this dissertation, instead referring to these events more broadly as the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century revivals. Though this is perhaps a difference in degree rather than kind, it is meant to keep Butler's argument in mind, as well as to look at the revivals as broadly as possible, across denominations, regions, nations, and decades.

Butler reminds us that the concept of the Great Awakening did not exist, and was not even labeled as such, until Joseph Tracy's *The Great Awakening*, published in 1841, a book meant "to provide historical support for America's nineteenth-century revivals."[36] Tracy used the eighteenth-century revivals to offer an evangelical hermeneutic for the revivals going on at the time of his writing. But Tracy's self-conscious attempt to link his present to the revival past is precisely why I hesitate to cast off the labels entirely. As we will see, the writers and historical figures of the eighteenth-century revivals provided not only a historical antecedent to the antebellum period, but distinctive evangelical discourses of feeling and embodiment used to make evangelical energy intelligible for later writers. Works like *The Life of David Brainerd* (1749) and *A Faithful Narrative* (1735) (to name only two of Jonathan Edwards's most famous texts) provided later evangelicals with templates for writing about the affective intensity of revival, conversion experiences, and personal piety and struggle. These templates of course were not always followed closely or perhaps even understood correctly, but they set the foundations upon which evangelicalism would attempt to understand itself in the antebellum period. As such,

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[36] Jon Butler, *Awash in the Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 164.

this first chapter will look closely at the textual productions from eighteenth-century evangelicals as a way to understand the continuities and alterations of revivalism as it passes through the generations.

But in keeping with current scholarship, this chapter reads the eighteenth-century awakenings broadly, recognizing that the descriptions and methods generated through its voluminous print discourse is part of a transatlantic and ecumenical body of texts and ideas. The revivalism that helped codify the eighteenth-century understanding of evangelicalism happened among the colonies, Scotland, England, and the pietistic traditions of Europe and was embodied in diverse figures such as Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, the Tennent family, John Wesley, and others.

The utility in addressing this broad swath of evangelicalism is to recognize the central feature of this emergent evangelical discourse—that of a heart-centered religion and the bodily practices that arise out of that new formulation. As seen in Robe's narrative, the shock of both ministers and parishioners to this new, ecstatic, embodied practice brought both a sense of a new dispensation, echoes of Pentecost, and a fear of religious mania sweeping entire communities. This quickly divided evangelicals into camps. For a long time the historiography of the awakenings understood this as a division between "Old Lights" and "New Lights," where those in the "old" camp stood staunchly opposed to revivals and those in the "new" in full support. Thomas Kidd's recent work gives a more subtle and accurate "continuum" of these positions: "On one end were the *anti-revivalists*, who dismissed the revivals as religious frenzy or 'enthusiasm.' In the middle were the *moderate evangelicals*, who supported the revivals at their outset but became concerned about the chaotic, leveling extremes that the awakening produced. Finally, on the other end were the radical evangelicals, who eagerly embraced the Spirit's

movements, even if social conventions had to be sacrificed."[37] Although some remained committed to one of these positions throughout their careers, many changed their perceptions as the revivals moved through the 1740s.

These various responses to the revivals always returned to the issue of religious ecstasy. This chapter argues that the ecstatic bodies of evangelical participants are the defining feature of evangelicalism at its emergence, both in practice and in print. The continuum described above by Kidd is marked on both ends by how ministers and supporters understood the meaning and efficacy of this ecstasy. But by refocusing our understanding of the awakenings on the bodies of revivalists, Kidd's spectrum becomes somewhat smaller—to put it perhaps too simply, the center moves right. I don't wish to return to the Old Light/New Light division, but I would argue that moderate evangelicals, in their attempts to excise the "chaotic, leveling extremes" found at certain revivals, apply a logic not far removed from the hierarchical and authoritarian model of anti-revivalists. In order to maintain the efficacy of public religious feeling within an eighteenth-century hierarchical church and social model, modes and discourses on the control of religious affects begin to emerge. Though not excising affect like anti-revivalists, moderates, as we will see, turn to what I call "affective scripts," discourses that shape and interpret religious feelings within a mainstream hermeneutic of religious feeling.

A small example: in an advertisement for Alexander Webster's Divine *Influence the True Spring of the Extraordinary Work at Cambuslang and Other Places in the West of Scotland*, Thomas Prince (editor of *The Christian History*) writes, "and as there is a remarkable Uniformity in the Work of God, as it has appeared there and in this Country; so this Performance is

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[37] Thomas S. Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), xiv.

excellently suited to vindicate it from many of the Objections made against it among Us; and is wrote in so scriptural and rational, so masterly and polite a Manner, that it is not doubted but it will be read with Approbation by the judicious and unprejudiced."[38] Prince sees the merit of Webster's work in terms of a "scriptural," "rational," and "polite" style of writing, which facilitates its ability to "vindicate" the current revivals from anti-revival critics. As most critics of revivals set their sights on the bodily enthusiasm of revival meetings, Webster's polite defense will counteract both that enthusiastic energy as well as its critics. But just as compelling as his defense of Webster's ability to speak on the subject is Prince's insistence on the "remarkable Uniformity" of the work. In order to interpret the religious ecstasies of revivalism outside of the discourse of enthusiasm, Prince and others call upon their "uniformity" as a sign of a universality of religious feeling that is also validated by its manifestations on both sides of the Atlantic. This focus on uniformity requires print culture on revivalism to reflect that uniformity. The few individuals who controlled print representations of revivalism (of whom Prince was certainly one of the most prominent) and the cadre of ministers with the most authority to speak on the subject generated a print discourse that sought a uniformity of feeling in order to maintain and control the power of revivalism. Though I don't want to present these figures as some kind of media cabal all operating with the same explicit ambitions, I do think it is important, if we wish to understand these sources as well as move beyond them, to recognize the desire for a consensual affective script that animated the evangelical center. The stylistics of evangelical print culture were generated as a response to embodied religious ecstasy. Though we can't call the writings generated by the eighteenth-century awakenings a revolution in aesthetics, we can see that evangelical writing was changed by the emergent and active presence of the body. Perhaps one of the longest-lasting influences of the eighteenth-century awakenings is a specific print

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[38] Thomas Prince, "Advertisement," *The Christian History*, 2 (March 12, 1743), 16.

discourse that was generated by the bodily experiences of revivalism and the responses generated to propagate, limit, and shape those experiences. This specter of the enthusiastic body was both the center of many works and lingers on the fringes of others, informing and delimiting the stylistics of the text. More importantly, this bodily presence means what we cannot understand the rules of evangelical print culture or the spectrum of evangelical responses without considering the lived experiences that brought these texts into existence. The interplay between revival as lived practice and the print surrounding it means we must recognize these two forces as mutually constitutive.

Pathologizing the Body: Anti-Revivalists, Authority and Bodily Performance

Though Prince, Robe, and many others saw bodily evidence as a valid means of measuring the efficacy of revivalism, it is worthwhile to understand this issue through those in the staunch anti-revivalist camp and their critiques of two specific and interrelated figures, famed English revivalist George Whitefield and colonial minister James Davenport. Boston minister Charles Chauncy led the charge against Whitefield, Davenport, and famously battled Jonathan Edwards in print. In his published sermon, *Enthusiasm Described and Caution'd Against* (1742), he writes that the "cause of this enthusiasm is a bad temperament of the blood and spirits; 'tis properly a disease, a sort of madness."[39] For Chauncy, this is a discernible, visible madness written upon the countenance of "enthusiasts": "a certain wildness is discernable in their general look and air; especially when their imaginations are mov'd and fired."[40] And beyond that look in their eye, there is the work on the body: "sometimes, it affects their bodies, throws them into

[39] Charles Chauncy, *Enthusiasm Described and Caution'd Against. A Sermon Preach'd at the Old Brick Meeting-House in Boston, the Lord's Day After the Commencement, ...,* (Boston, 1742), 3.
[40] Chauncy, *Enthusiasm Described*, 3-4.

convulsions and distortions, into quakings and trembling."[41] Chauncy finds this embodied enthusiasm as a sign of the worst disorder of mind and body and bears no resemblance to the real, and inward, work of conviction. Those who experienced such movements oftentimes understood themselves to be moved by the Holy Spirit, but Chauncy sees only delusion.

Chauncy's fear of and contempt for these exercises also points to their seemingly outstanding power. Though revival exercises were a recent development in New England religious practice he writes, "no greater mischiefs have arisen from any corner. It is indeed the genuine source of infinite evil. Popery it self hasn't been the mother of more and greater blasphemies and abominations. It has made strong attempts to destroy all property, to make all things common, *wives* as well as *goods.*"[42] Chauncy's hyperbole leads us to consider not only how unexpected these ecstatic responses were, but how powerful they seemed to everyone across the evangelical spectrum. He goes on to give advice as to how to protect oneself against the tide of enthusiasm. First and foremost, Chauncy calls for a use of "reason" and "understanding," in opposition to the mania of enthusiasm.[43] He warns readers "not lay too great stress upon the *workings* of your *passions* and *affections*" and explains "you can't therefore be too careful to keep your passions under the regimen of a *sober judgment.*"[44] Chauncy's distaste for enthusiasm is not simply a dismissal. As we see here, he is acutely aware of the power of the passions to overcome the body and that Christians need to use every resource within their power to combat this force. Enthusiasm might be "madness," but a profoundly seductive madness.

The reason for this might be the kind of contagion of feelings that Robe came to utilize in Scotland. William Rand, in a preface to one of Chauncy's other works, writes that "I am prone to

[41] Chauncy, *Enthusiasm Described*, 4.
[42] Chauncy, *Enthusiasm Described*, 15.
[43] Chauncy, *Enthusiasm Described*, 18.
[44] Chauncy, *Enthusiasm Described*, 20.

think that the People sometimes *affected one another*.--- Tears are apt to produce Tears in the Spectators.--- I know a person who made one at a religious Assembly in the Days of the Gentlemen we have been speaking of, who by *seeing* others weep fell to Weeping too;--- and it may be that was the Case with *more* in the Audience: It is not *at all* unlikely."[45] Like Robe, Rand sees contagion as a fundamental part of enthusiasm, but he believes it to be a sign that enthusiasm is passion run amuck in promiscuous crowds. But this sense of contagion explains why anti-revivalists like Chauncy encouraged listeners to use all of their rational power in order to prevent such contagion. Like the healthy preventing the spread of illness, the rational body requires strict Christian and physical regulation in order to maintain its integrity. The reasonable Christian body proves to be shockingly weak, requiring endless defenses against the seductive power of enthusiasm.

In the above examples, the focus of Rand and Chauncy is on the responsibilities (or perhaps blame) of auditors and their responses but much anti-revival critique was pointed at ministers who sparked such revival energy, none more so than George Whitefield, the English itinerant who traveled across the Anglo-American world preaching both in various churches as well as outdoors (in order to facilitate his enormous crowds). Biographer Harry S. Stout calls him "Anglo-America's first modern celebrity" and like any such prominent figure, his popularity led to a vociferous host of critics.[46] Although many (like Edwards) saw Whitefield as a promoter of revival and a sound minister, others rejected his methods and refused him entry into their pulpits. Though itinerant preaching was not foreign to the colonies, most colonial Protestants

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[45] William Rand and Charles Chauncy, *The Late Religious Commotions in New-England Considered an Answer to the Reverend Mr. Jonathan Edward's Sermon, Entitled, the Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God, Applied to That Uncommon Operation That Has Lately Appeared on the Minds of Many of the People of This Land: Together with a Preface, Containing an Examination of the Rev. Mr. William Cooper's Preface to Nr. Edward's Sermon*. (Boston: Green, Bushell, and Allen, for T. Fleet in Cornhill, 1743), 7.

[46] Harry S. Stout, *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism,* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdsmans Publishing Company, 1991), xiii.

were used to a more settled ministry and only heard other ministers either while visiting other towns or on special occasions such as ordinations or deaths. Whitefield's highly successful itinerancy touched communities across the Anglo-American world and emboldened others to do the same. As a result, many thought that Whitefield's presence in their communities would create fissures between ministers and their congregations and disrespect the very office of the ministry.

These concerns are the result of Whitefield's intelligent marketing of himself through the press. Along with his secretary William Seward, Whitefield used the press (both evangelical and secular) to alert communities of his work as well as future visits, guaranteeing crowds and controversies as he arrived at his various locations across the Anglo-American world. Whitefield's expert deployment of the press is well chronicled by Stout in his biography of Whitefield, in which he also keenly addresses Whitefield's relationship to the theater and the public performance of emotions. As Stout writes, "Whitefield's unique contribution lay in his impassioned manner of presentation and in his single-minded emphasis on experience."[47] Compared to other ministers of his period, Whitefield (despite his methodist condemnations of the theater) employed the skills of an actor in delivering his sermons. Following the eighteenth-century education of an actor, Whitefield "was working on the passions," meaning he studied the actor's art in using the body and face to elicit emotional responses from his audience.[48] As a preacher, Whitefield turned biblical figures like Abraham and Zaccheus into roles he fully inhabited in the pulpit. Minister William Rand saw all of this as artifice: "Is not Mr. Whitefield a good deal of an orator? We refer now to *Style* and *Elocution*.----For as to the *external* Qualifications, he hath them, beyond all Dispute, in a *remarkable* Degree. Was there nothing *artificial* and *studied* in his Compositions?---- Did he not *seek* for the most moving pathetic

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[47] Stout, *Divine Dramatist*, 38.
[48] Stout, *Divine Dramatist*, 8.

Language? Were not his Discourses *calculated* to work upon the Passions?"[49] Echoing Puritan critiques of the theater, Rand calls out Whitefield's style for its artificiality and emotional manipulation. But as Stout argues, Whitefield "was not 'acting' as he preached so much as he was exhibiting a one-to-one correspondence between his inner passions and the biblical saints he embodied."[50] Rather than settle the issue of Whitefield's intentions, what we can see from both Rand's critique and Stout's recuperation is that Whitefield's methods echo not only debates around the theater but around issues of sentimentalism as an aesthetic and philosophical practice. Whitefield is to preaching what Samuel Richardson is to the novel—a figure who incorporates the emerging sentimental ethos into the conventional piety and dogma of the evangelical tradition.

In critiquing Whitefield and the logic of revivalists, Rand writes, "when a man is born again, his *Heart is changed*, but the Heart is out of our View.--- How then can we *positively* say that the heart of any Man is changed.--- He may *tell* us so, but he may either design to deceive us, or be deceived himself."[51] But Whitefield's homiletics are designed to produce an exterior manifestation of the interior "heart" and that emotional exteriority is all the proof Whitefield and others felt necessary for the validation of that heart change. And of all of Whitefield's sermons, *Abraham's Offering Up His Son Isaac*, published in the American colonies for the first time in 1740, offers a window into this performative and emotional register that is central to Whitefield's popularity. The story of the sacrifice of Isaac is particularly telling because there is a lack of interiority to the original biblical text as it would be understood by the modern reader. Nowhere in the chapter is the reader given insight into Abraham or Isaac's thoughts. So

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[49] Rand, *Religious Commotions*, 5.
[50] Stout, *Divine Dramatist*, 106.
[51] Rand, *Religious Commotions*, 9.

Whitefield imaginatively projects onto both an interior monologue, conforming Abraham's story to the experiences of his modern auditor. Whitefield describes what he considers the likely reservations and feelings of Abraham: "'What! might the good man have said, butcher my own Child! It is contrary to the very Law of Nature--Much more to butcher my dear son *Isaac*."[52] The "might" is a textual clue to Whitefield's recognition that the monologue he is delivering is only speculation, but Whitefield carries it on, performing the role of Abraham for his audience as he wrestles with the potential death of his son and the anger he anticipates from Sarah, Abraham's wife. Again, not present in the original Genesis story, Whitefield as Abraham exclaims, "oh! that God would pardon me in this Thing, or take my Life in the Place of my Son's!"[53] Whitefield invents himself as Abraham, working through a series of concerns as father, husband, and community leader that is never attributed to Abraham in the Bible itself.

But Whitefield's intention becomes clear later in the sermon. As he describes the altar he goes on: "come all you tenderhearted Parents, who know what it is to look over a dying Child--fancy that you saw the Altar here erected before you, and the Wood laid in Order, and the beloved Isaac bound upon it--Fancy that you saw the aged Parent standing by and weeping-- (For why may not we suppose that *Abraham* wept, since Jesus himself wept at the grace of *Lazarus*?)—Oh! what pious, endearing Expressions passed now alternately between the Father and the Son!"[54] Whitefield asks his auditors to imagine themselves in the place of Abraham, collapsing the differences between the ancient patriarch and the contemporary auditor in the

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[52] George Whitefield, Samuel Kneeland, and Timothy Green, *Nine Sermons Upon the Following Subjects viz. I. The Lord our Righteousness. II. The Seed of the Woman and the Seed of the Serpent. III. Persecution every Christian's Lot. IV. Abraham's Offering up His Son Isaac. V. Saul's Conversion. VI. The Pharisee and Publican. VII. Christ, The Believer's Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. VIII. The Holy Spirit Convincing the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment. IX. The Conversion of Zacchaeus. By George Whitefield, A.B. late of Pembroke College, Oxford*, (Boston: Printed and sold by S. Kneeland and T. Green, in Queen Street, 1741), 86.
[53] Whitefield, *Nine Sermons*, 87.
[54] Whitefield, *Nine Sermons*, 93-94.

common role of affectionate parent. Whitefield invents tears for Abraham, in parentheses, assuming that Abraham must have wept, thereby licensing his auditors to do the same. To drive the point home he says, "but methinks I see the Tears trickle down the Patriarch Abraham's Cheeks…."[55] Whitefield invents an emotional register for the story of Abraham meant to both elicit and naturalize the tears of his auditors, the tears, sighs, and faintings that Whitefield elicited from many crowds throughout his career. But these tears are validated by the tears of Abraham, and of Whitefield embodying Abraham through his imaginative projection into the interior life of Abraham. By performing Abraham's conflict for his auditors and readers, by registering Abraham's conflicts in terms of a parental struggle he believes available to the majority of his audience, and by demanding that a full, tearful response is the only appropriate, even necessary response, Whitefield's body and his emotional performance create a scene of divine feeling meant to spread a holy sorrow among his listeners.

In a similar example, Whitefield enacts the story of blind Bartimeus from the gospel of Mark. Bartimeus was a blind beggar who regained his sight through his faith in Jesus. Whitefield does not perform the role of Bartimeus as he does with Abraham, but nonetheless projects onto the blind man an interiority absent in the New Testament story. Whitefield says, "I think I see you transported with wonder and admiration" and that "I believe, he received also a fresh addition of spiritual sight," once again imbuing biblical stories with an affective script that privileges an emotional interiority absent in the original text, but meant to encourage that emotion in his audience. He goes on to say, "I see you concerned--I see you weeping--And, was I to ask some of you, what you want to be done unto you? I know your answer wou'd be, *that we may receive our Sight*--And God forbid, that I should charge you to hold your Peace, as tho'

[55] Whitefield, *Nine Sermons*, 94.

Jesus wou'd not regard you!--No, your being sensible of your natural Blindness, and crying thus earnestly after Jesus, is a Sign at least, that you are awakened by his Holy Spirit…."[56] The auditor becomes Bartimeus, seeking not just literal, but spiritual sight from Christ. Bartimeus's desires become the audiences' desires. And in his direct address to the audience (his very frequent use of the second person), Whitefield attempts to shape his audience into a particular type of feeling figure. Whitefield and his audience create a kind of feedback loop, in which affective energy is distributed through the preacher and the audience; Abraham's tears producing Whitefield's tears producing tears in the audience as an emotional pitch is generated in the collective affective energy. But it's important to recognize that though there is a collective element to the energy created in this scene, Whitefield still attempts to script the feelings of his audience. Though less formalized than Edwards in *Religious Affections*, Whitefield enacts and demands enacting specific emotional registers. To feel with Abraham the sorrow of losing a child, Whitefield wants his audience to feel the larger sacrifice of Christ's sacrifice; to become blind Bartimeus is for auditors to recognize their "natural blindness" as the first step toward awakening. Whitefield's sermons are the most pronounced use of an affective script meant to guide readers in the direction of being born again, and the performance of emotions is central to this work. Whitefield's homiletics display a purposeful structure pointing towards an affective ideal from his auditors. In some ways, Rand's criticism that there is something "artificial and studied" in the Whitefield's preaching has a ring of truth to it. I don't wish to extend that criticism, but I wish to highlight the point that Whitefield has explicit aims and methods in his preaching and desired outcomes that he helps generate by implicitly imposing certain responses onto his audience. Whitefield applauds his auditors for their tears (as he does in the above quote

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[56] George Whitefield, *Five Sermons on the Following Subjects, viz. I. Christ the Believer's Husband. II. The Gospel Supper. III. Blind Bartimeus. IV. Walking with God. V. The Resurrection of Lazarus* (Philadelphia: Printed and sold by B. Franklin, 1746), 94.

from "Bartimeus") because they signal an "awakening," but his sermon is structured to create and validate that response as the ideal, and perhaps only, conclusion.

It's logical to link the emotionalism of Whitefield's homiletics to the threatening emotionalism of revivalists. Whitefield's performances allowed his audiences a sight of the body working out the usually private matters of conviction and regeneration and asked them to identify with that emotional body in order to take part fully in his sermons. As in the sentimental tradition, Whitefield sympathetically inhabited his role, and asked his auditors to do the same. As David Marshall writes, "if the success of a novel, play, or painting depends on acts of sympathy, our experience of sympathy depends on an aesthetic experience. Sympathy in this sense is always already an aesthetic experience."[57] Whitefield's work can be both studied and sincere, as it always operates in the realm of the aesthetic and the performative. But the desire of the sympathetic tradition to create a mimesis of feeling rarely holds; hence Marshall's interest in the "surprising effects of sympathy," those moments where the work of sympathy creates unintended consequences in the dissemination and reception of emotions. Whitefield's sermons, despite the criticism of some of his contemporaries, ultimately structure religious feeling along mainstream evangelical doctrines (guilt and shame around natural depravity, for example). The common denominator among Whitefield and his critics is ultimately an affective ideal that centers on a limited spectrum of responses afforded to evangelical publics. But I argue that these limitations are built upon an awareness of exactly what Marshall articulates—that affective responses ("sympathy" in eighteenth-century parlance) are unpredictable, that the flow of energy among crowds resists the passivity of the evangelical, affective ideal, allowing both individuals and collective groups to reformulate that energy in their own ways.

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[57] David Marshall, *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy: Marivaux, Diderot, Rousseau, and Mary Shelly*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 21.

In the sources from the eighteenth-century awakenings there are few texts that allow us a window into the lay person's affective responses (Sarah Edwards will be a notable exception discussed later). More energy was spent on describing how to handle these active crowds than what they felt; more print discussions on the appropriateness of the responses than a transcription of them. As a result, though I've been using affect as a way to understand the nature of evangelical feeling, there is an empty center in this discussion where those participants and their experiences exist. But we can get some insight into absence by looking at a battle among clergymen over minister James Davenport. Despite Whitefield's studied part (both in the pulpit and in his larger role as a public figure), Whitefield produced his own surprising replicant in Davenport. Although not the only figure to take Whitefield's message to heart, Davenport became the most controversial, a figure anti-revivalists could point to as a justification for their orderly and hierarchical vision of the church. A minister from Long Island, Davenport began to itinerate throughout the region, sometimes by invitation, sometimes not. Davenport worked with the separatist energy already bubbling throughout New England and used the precedent of George Whitefield to travel through the colonies and call on congregations to reject any minister who could not articulate (by Davenport's own standards) a convincing conversion experience. Such calls were not uncommon—Whitefield warned of this problem and Gilbert Tennent had preached explicitly on the subject in his 1739 sermon *The Dangers of an Unconverted Ministry*. But Davenport combined his itinerancy and uninvited forays into certain communities with direct assaults on specific ministers, calling them into question and encouraging their congregations to part with them.

The ministerial response to Davenport was severe from both anti-revivalists and moderates wishing to differentiate themselves after Davenport had been chastised in print by

moderate revivalists in *The Declaration of a Number of the Associated Pastors* (1742). The printed version of Chauncy's sermon, *Enthusiasm Described and Caution'd Against* (1742) opens with a public letter to Davenport in which he claims Davenport to be the inspiration of the following sermon. The letter goes on: "what good you may have been the means of elsewhere, I know not: But I am well assured, instead of *good*, you will be the *occasion* of much *hurt*, to the interest of religion in these churches. Your *manner* in speaking, as well as *what you say*, seems rather calculated, at least at some times, to disturb the *imagination*, than inform the *judgment*: And I am fully perswaded [sic], you too often mistake the *mechanical* operations of *violent voice* and *action*, for impressions of another kind."[58] Davenport's danger is that his rhetoric and public deportment as a minister is both an example of, and catalyst for, the enthusiasm Chauncy and other anti-revivalists have spoken so forcefully against. Davenport's own imagination and the mechanics of affect confuse him into believing he has the authority and judgment to criticize ministers and unsettle congregations. The passions of Whitefield become the mania of Davenport, at least in the language of his opponents.

Perhaps the more compelling part of Davenport's story is not the narrative of his enthusiasm (which as Kidd cautions us, is probably biased by the virulence of his detractors), but his return to the evangelical mainstream through his printed apology, *The Reverend Mr. James Davenport's Confession and Retractions* (1744). Davenport's "confessions" are surprisingly brief and mild in tone.[59] In it, Davenport apologizes for condemning fellow ministers he perceived as unconverted, and encouraging "*separations* from *those Ministers.*"[60] Along with

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[58] Chauncy, *Enthusiasm Described*, 5.
[59] An anonymous 1744 pamphlet claimed "that *this Confession* is neither *full* nor so *early* as might have been expected." In *An Impartial Examination of Mr. Davenport's Retractations* (Boston: B. Green and Company, 1744), 4.
[60] James Davenport, *The Reverend Mr. James Davenport's Confession and Retractions*, (Boston: S. Kneeland and T. Green, 1744), 5.

this, his final apology is for encouraging public exhortation: “I believe I have done much Hurt to Religion by *encouraging private Persons to a ministerial and authoritative Kind or Method of exhorting*.”[61] In order to return to the fold of evangelical consensus, Davenport had to reject not only his public outcries against certain ministers but also any threat to their authority he unleashed by sanctioning and encouraging itinerants, unlicensed ministers, and lay persons to speak in public. In order to speak again with authority, Davenport invokes the authority of the ministry against an increasingly active and seemingly dangerous public voice. Here we can see the gate-keeping at work within evangelical print. Davenport’s career as a minister cannot be traced through print until his official retractions. Whereas prominent ministers somewhat regularly printed and disseminated sermons, Davenport’s preaching is absent in the print record until the publication of his *Confession and Retractions*.

In a supplemental document (perhaps to address those who still mistrusted Davenport), Solomon Williams and Eleazar Wheelock published *Two Letters from the Reverend Mr. Williams & Wheelock of Lebanon, to the Rev. Mr. Davenport: Which Were the Principal Means of His Late Conviction and Retractation* (1744). These letters were ostensibly the means of returning Davenport to his senses and Davenport opens the collection with a letter to the publisher encouraging its publication, hoping that the sage advice found inside “*may be blest to convince and reclaim those, who have unhappily run into these, or the like Errors*.”[62]

Williams and Wheelock each take a particular concern to focus on; Williams on the issue of an unconverted ministry and Wheelock on unlicensed preaching. The fact that sympathetic,

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[61] Davenport, *Confessions*, 5.
[62] Eleazar Wheelock, James Davenport, Thomas Prince, and Solomon Williams, *Two Letters from the Reverend Mr. Williams & Wheelock of Lebanon, to the Rev. Mr. Davenport: Which Were the Principal Means of His Late Conviction and Retractation ; with a Letter from Mr. Davenport, Desiring Their Publication, for the Good of Others ; and His Explanation of Some Passages in His Late Confession*, (Boston: Printed and sold by Kneeland and Green, in Queenstreet, 1744), 2.

moderate evangelicals saw these as the two most important issues to address with Davenport (this to a man who tried to set his clothing on fire in public) reveals a great deal about what was at stake for moderate revivalists and what limits they were willing to set within the new revival scheme. Williams agrees with Davenport that unconverted ministers can be a great harm to the work of Christ and to their congregations, but he parts ways when it comes to Davenport's methods. An unconverted minister may be a bad one, but not an "unlawful" one, and as such he cannot be removed from his position of authority by the judgments of others.[63] The reason for this is that one cannot search out the heart of the minister to truly know the state of his soul. Although conversion is necessary, it is ultimately inscrutable for Williams and that outside of the public ordinances of the church one cannot judge the interiority of the minister. Such a judgment would lead forever back into the personal: "ff it be again said, that Christians may know this by feeling the Efficacy and spiritual Benefit of Ordinances; it may be replied, then this feeling the spiritual Benefit must be a Rule to determine the Conversion of Ministers, and so the spiritual Feeling of one Man is the Rule to determine the Conversion of another, which never yet had a Warrant in the Word of God, and this is also plainly to set up a new Revelation."[64] Part of Williams's concern here is that Davenport's logic sets up a standard without scriptural precedent. But along with this is a concern that the interiority of the individual can hold precedent over the offices of a minister. The heart unleashed as an effective tool of revival work returns back onto the minister in ways that can complicate his authority.

Wheelock, though specifically addressing unlicensed preaching, is also ultimately concerned with the authority of the ministry. Where Williams addresses the threat of the interior to ministers, Wheelock condemns lay preaching and other unauthorized means of addressing the

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[63] Wheelock et. al., *Letters*, 6.
[64] Wheelock et. al., *Letters*, 11.

public. He writes "it is evident that Christ has set a sacred Hedge aboot [sic] this Work, that no Man may undertake it without a Commission from him: And all those who are trying to pull down this Hedge, are acting against the Kingdom of Christ, and opening an awful Door to a Flood of Evils."[65] Wheelock's image of the hedge that separates ecclesiastical authority from lay participation is telling—a physical barrier between the minister and any who would threaten or undermine his authority. Although this hierarchical model is not new to eighteenth-century New England (either within the church or other social structures), the recommitment by Wheelock, Williams, and others reveals its new function in the era of widespread revival. With the affective energy circulating throughout revivals, and with many ministers encouraging such circulations, lay participants had the opportunity to explore not only new affective sensations, but also ways that those affects articulated publicly could also alter social and power dynamics. What both moderates and anti-revivalists had in common was a sense that the ecstatic body had to be controlled more effectively. Anti-revivalists advocated turning away from revival practices completely, while moderates sought to keep these sensations both public and controlled. Chauncy dismissed revivalists as delusional, but Robe deployed their ecstatic bodies to carry on the work among others. And most ministers came to see their roles as regulators of affect, not affectively charged bodies in and of themselves.

This regulatory impulse ultimately became its own "hedge" about the work of awakening print as a genre. It's telling that there is little print record of Davenport's own words prior to his retractions. The bulk of print in the Davenport controversy was by those across the evangelical spectrum chastising him for his enthusiasm. Davenport only accessed print once he was willing to make a formal apology and return to a moderate stance on lay participation, itinerancy, and an

[65] Wheelock et. al., *Letters*, 25.

unconverted ministry. In this way, the evangelical spectrum outlined by Kidd is not a spectrum reflected accurately in the contemporary print accounts of the awakenings. Instead, print is mediated and shaped by the common ground of moderates and anti-revivalists—a continued investment in ecclesiastical authority that is replicated in restricted access to a print voice. Davenport could be written to and about in public, exemplary lay participants could be discussed and valorized for their piety; but in the eighteenth-century awakenings, these voices were not granted access by the gatekeepers of the press. Figures like Thomas Prince and other select publishers regulated the voices that can be transmitted through the Anglo-American evangelical network. An emboldening, ecstatic energy traveled among various congregations through word of mouth and personal experience, but the print legacy of this ecstasy is always altered by an overall commitment among writers and publishers to tell a "correct" (or rather, corrected) version of events in order to limit the almost excessive power unleashed by these religious affections.[66]

As emotional exercises become a consistent feature of evangelical religious practice, the minister is accorded greater power over the public performance and meaning of the congregant's religious affects. In bringing the heart into worship, participants also brought their affective lives into greater scrutiny. We have seen how this scrutiny was turned towards controversial ministers, but there is also the analytics by ministers of the affective experiences and their validity for lay participants. Nowhere is this scrutiny more carefully delineated than in the works of Jonathan Edwards.

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[66] This conclusion mirrors what Richard D. Brown claims about eighteenth-century written communication networks: "[the] few voices that were raised to challenge the common culture could scarcely be heard. The channels of information flow had been so much controlled by men who expressed the ruling conventions, and so unified within particular colonies that, lacking institutional bases of support, there was meager sustinence [sic] for alternative notions." Richard D. Brown *Knowledge is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 272.

Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, and the Inward Turn

Jonathan Edwards was certainly no stranger to revivalism. As the grandson of the famous Solomon Stoddard, Edwards lived with the legacy of his grandfather's three revivals over a 55 year career at Northampton.[67] But Edwards would leave a permanent mark on revivals for decades to come with *A Faithful Narrative*. The *Narrative*, about the Northampton revival in the years 1733-1735, would travel across the Anglo-American world, first published in England in 1737 by Isaac Watts and John Guyse, then returning to the American colonies in 1738. In his introduction to the Yale Edition of the *Narrative*, C.C. Goen writes, "when he gave his narrative to the world, the simple fact is that no revival could ever be a surprise again. His account showed plainly what kind of preaching would awaken sleepy sinners and what sort of responses could be expected."[68] Though not a charismatic or well-traveled figure like Whitefield or Gilbert Tennent, through print, Edwards would come to set the template for future revival accounts and revival aesthetics.

Edwards plots out a general outline of what happens when persons are "wrought upon" in the awakening. It begins first with a sense of a "miserable condition by nature," regardless of their previous sense of security. Although elsewhere Edwards remarks upon the overall "swiftness" of the particular work at Northampton, he makes clear that though some "are more suddenly seized by conviction," others "have awakenings that come upon them more

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[67] As Stout reminds us, three revivals in a lifetime would be considered quite uncommon. Before the eighteenth century awakenings, "revivals were local, mysterious events that occurred once or twice in any generation and that remained within local communities." In Stout, *Divine Dramatist*, 97.
[68] Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards, Volume 4: The Great Awakening*, edited by C.C. Goen (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 27.

gradually."[69] This new conviction leads to two courses; one is the reform of sinful behavior and the other is a full conviction of "a sense of heart sins, the dreadful corruption of their nature."[70] This stage, in which the sinner becomes profoundly aware of an inherently sinful nature is the most emotionally and textually rich of Edwards's morphology. When sinners become aware of their state, "they seem themselves to grow worse and worse, harder and blinder, and more desperately wicked."[71] This sense also leads to a kind of spiritual alienation in which "they often think that they differ from all others, their hearts are ready to sink with the thoughts that they are the worst of all."[72]

This final passage might confirm to some the age-old image of Edwards the dour, severe Puritan; an image perpetuated by the frequent citation and anthologizing of his famed sermon *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*. But it's important to recognize a larger process in Edwards's sense of awakening. The dark night of the soul engendered by a true conviction of innate depravity also leads to a relinquishing of control to God, a recognition of his total power and majesty that leads the truly reconciled into a sense of spiritual ecstasy. After passing through this time of trial "their joyful surprise has caused their hearts as it were to leap, so that they have been ready to break forth into laughter, tears often at the same time issuing like a flood and intermingling a loud weeping."[73] Edwards always cautions his readers that these rich emotional responses did and should align with a proper scriptural understanding. But Edwards has oriented his readers towards a very specific affective script, one filled with anxiety, abjection, and holy joy.

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[69] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 160.
[70] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 164.
[71] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 164.
[72] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 164.
[73] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 175.

I have attempted in this dissertation to foreground the communal and social power of evangelical public rituals, their tremendous possibilities as well as their perceived dangers. Edwards himself was certainly aware of this dynamic. He celebrated the fact that the tavern was replaced by the "minister's house" as a site of social interaction, noting that it was "thronged far more than ever the tavern had wont to be."[74] But this dense accumulation of people and feeling also had a dangerous side, as seen with the suicide of his uncle, Joseph Hawley. Edwards had completed the narrative before his uncle's suicide but felt compelled to add it to his remarks. He writes that Hawley "was a gentleman of more than common understanding, of strict morals, religious in his behavior" but was later overcome with "melancholy."[75] Edwards blames the Devil for Hawley's sense of "terror" and death. Hawley's suicide not only shocked the community but became its own form of dangerous transmission:

> The news of this extraordinarily affected the minds of people here, and struck them as it were with astonishment. After this, multitudes in this and other towns seemed to have it strongly suggested to 'em, and pressed upon 'em, to do as this person had done. And many that seemed to be under no melancholy, some serious pious persons that had no special darkness, or doubts about the goodness of their state, nor were under any special trouble or concern of mind about anything spiritual or temporal, yet had it urged upon 'em, as if somebody had spoke to 'em, 'Cut your own throat, now is a good opportunity: *now, NOW*![76]

The most troubling result of Hawley's suicide was that those who felt this impulse had no previous sense of melancholy (that dangerous emotion Edwards uses to explain Hawley's

[74] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 161.
[75] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 206.
[76] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 206-207.

condition). To Edwards, such a dark contagion had to be the work of the Devil, jealous of the special work at Northampton and its power. But the impulse to suicide is merely the logic of affective transmission that structures the awakening experience taken to a particular extreme. The wave of suicidal impulses that passes over Northampton is the ultimate expression of the unpredictability that can manifest itself even in the increasingly regulated awakening experience. This dangerous unpredictability helps us better understand Edwards's revisions of his understanding of religious affectivity in his work *Religious Affections* (1746).

Hawley's death and its effects are only one reason that the Northampton revival came to a close. Though a wave of suicidal energy passing through the area might seem to be the most troubling byproduct of the awakenings, Edwards also cites "two remarkable instances of persons led away with strange enthusiastic delusions" as a reason for the waning of awakening energy.[77] A man from South Hadley "thought himself divinely instructed" to counsel a "melancholy" man by encouraging him to "say certain words in prayer to God."[78] Edwards's particular trouble with this enthusiasm is vague—perhaps it was the false sense of divine inspiration, over-reaching lay authority, or perhaps the use of Scripture as quasi-mystical incantation. Edwards finds that the man later recanted of his error and that it was the result of an enthusiasm caused by a sincere belief that Northampton "was the beginning of the glorious times spoken of in Scripture."[79] These two instances of religious feelings pushed to suicide and heresy, combined with the worldly concerns Edwards also articulates, ended the wave of conversions and awakenings. But as Mark Noll cogently reminds us, anticipation of awakening is as integral to the revival

[77] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 207.
[78] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 207.
[79] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 207.

imagination as awakenings themselves.[80] The fact that Edwards's narrative end with declension, though also reminding us that many participants maintained their spiritual commitments even after the intensity died down, is a key feature to the revival narrative. The highs and lows of the awakening narrative guarantee an end, but also the endless possibilities of new beginnings; hence the efficacy of Edwards's *Narrative* in inspiring ministers and congregations across the Anglophone world.

Edwards's sense that the revivals of the early 1740s "ended" structures much of the work in his *Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*, first published in Boston in 1746, when the earlier wave of revivals had died out. Edwards notes that "the prevailing taste seems of late strangely altered," this strange alteration signaled by a turning away from revival practice and aesthetics in the taste of New Englanders.[81] This dismissal of the affectionate troubled Edwards firstly because of the way it changes the value placed on a preaching aesthetic that is meant to heighten and encourage the affections: "that pathetical manner of praying and preaching, which would formerly have been admired and extolled, and that for this reason, because it had such a tendency to move the affections, now, in great multitudes, immediately excites disgust, and moves no other affections, than those of displeasure and contempt."[82] Importantly, this "pathetical manner of preaching" (perhaps the kind he admired so much in Whitefield) doesn't leave the audience with an absence of feeling (something like indifference) but rather with negative feelings of contempt and disgust. Even when the method of preaching remains consistent, the production of affect is in the hands of the audience. Those who might initially have been moved towards appropriate affectionate responses are now moved to contempt for

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[80] Mark A. Noll, *America's God: from Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 435.
[81] Jonathan Edwards, The *Works of Jonathan Edwards, Volume 2: Religious Affections,* ed. John E. Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 122.
[82] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 122.

those same methods. Unintentionally, the foregrounding of the embodied, affective responses of auditors has given them a sidelong access to power. Their responses to the sermon are a form of power, not through speech, but through affective response.

Edwards then models for us just what style of preaching should be producing sensible affectionate responses in his auditors (and here it is important to remember that this work was originally a series of sermons at his Northampton meeting house):

> How they can sit and hear of the infinite height and depth and length and breadth of the love of God in Christ Jesus, of his giving his infinitely dear Son, to be offered up a sacrifice for the sins of men, and of the unparalleled love of the innocent, holy and tender Lamb of God, manifested in his dying agonies, his bloody sweat, his loud and bitter cries, and bleeding heart, and all this for enemies, to redeem them from deserved, eternal burnings, and to bring to unspeakable and everlasting joy and glory; and yet be cold, and heavy, insensible, and regardless! Where are the exercises of our affections proper, if not here? [83]

Edwards here writes an extended sentence, filled with multiple clauses, to build a kind of rhetorical tension that will (he hopes) create the affectionate response he desires his auditors and readers to have. But beyond this structure, he also uses the heated imagery and descriptive language that made *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God* so famous. He concretizes an image of the suffering Christ and his agonies and then asks his auditors (and readers) to imagine someone so "insensible" as to be unmoved by the suffering of Christ and the redemption it purchased. Like Whitefield, Edwards unleashes a densely emotional moment and then points his

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[83] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 121.

readers to a specific affective ideal by chastising any response that is not "sensibly" moved. In *The Distinguishing Marks* (1741), a text that served as a kind of prelude to *Religious Affections*, Edwards writes, "if a person should see another under some extreme bodily torment, he might receive much clearer ideas, and more convincing evidence what he suffered by his actions in his misery, than he could do only by the words of an unaffected indifferent relator."[84] Here Edwards is referring to those who are moved proximately by seeing the agitated responses of others in revival settings. It's perhaps not surprising then that in the previous passage he attempts to use the body of Christ to a similar end. As Whitefield deployed his own body in sermonic spectacles of Abraham and others, in both of these instances, the affected body of a church member and the suffering body of Christ, the spectacle of religious feeling should naturally produce a correct response in the observer, but always filtered through some spectacle of embodiment.

These passages also invoke the famous (and oft-quoted) passage from Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), in which Smith argues that upon seeing the torments of an individual, we imaginatively put ourselves into that subject's position, "we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him."[85] Although the point needn't be overlabored, it's key to recognize that evangelical discourse emerges alongside of the sentimental philosophical tradition, both temporally and geographically (radiating outward from Scotland on both accounts). Edwards shares a similar belief that the spectacle of others (both real and evoked through sermon) in moments of heightened affectionate states can produce an ideal

[84] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 239.
[85] Certainly too oft-quoted to be featured prominently, the full passage goes as such: "By the imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence form some idea of his sensations, and even feel something which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them," In Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Mineola: Dover Publications, 2006), 4.

sympathetic response. But in committing himself to this as a key function of religious practice, he must attempt to organize those religious affections, which is the bulk of his task in the book.

His earlier works on revivalism and awakening were documents fundamentally meant to propagate the energy generated among evangelicals and to justify the value of the revivals, even when offering critiques and refutations of those elements Edwards disagreed with. *Religious Affections* is a work of hindsight, and to some extent, a more elaborate critique of revival ecstasy than some might have expected from him. In his preface he writes, "many will probably be hurt in their spirits, to find so much that appertains to religious affection, here condemned."[86] But Edwards commits himself to holding the various elements of revivalism up to a searching critique in order to know its best fruits, as well as any "delusions" that will lead to failure in such religious work. His main goal is to develop a correct understanding of what religious affections are, how they are linked to mind and body, and how to distinguish between correct and incorrect affections: "there are false affections, and there are true. A man's having much affection, don't prove that he has any true religion: but if he has no affection, it proves that he has no true religion. The right way, is not to reject all affections, nor to approve all; but to distinguish between affections, approving some, and rejecting others; separating between the wheat and the chaff, the gold and the dross, the precious and the vile."[87] Edwards sees affections as necessary, but also troubled. To be devoid of affections is to be without "true religion," but in granting the affections such a primary role in religious life, Edwards must take on the task of working through the myriad affectionate responses of religious participants, marginalizing those responses he sees as dangerous while maintaining the centrality of affectionate religion. Some have turned away from the affections, because many during the recent revivals who "appeared to

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[86] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 84.
[87] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 121.

have great religious affections, did not manifest a right temper of mind, and run into many errors."[88] Edwards wants to steer his congregation and the larger Christian public away from these errors without forgoing affectionate religion altogether.

According to Edwards, the Scriptures are the only true guide to recognizing religious affections. Quite simply, if it was felt in the Bible, then it can be a potentially true affection in the lives of Christians. For example, he cites Paul's many instances of tears as a mete scriptural precedent, and the apostle John for his "inexpressibly tender and pathetical" mode of discourse.[89] These precedents justify not only the centrality of religious affections in the Christian life, but act as examples of what signs can be valued when judging the affections.

But interestingly, the book is not particularly focused on outward expressions and their relationship to the affections. First and foremost, Edwards returns the affections to the interior: "the first objective ground of gracious affections, is the transcendently excellent and amiable nature of divine things, as they are in themselves; and not any conceived relation they bear to self, or self-interest."[90] This is an inward sense that manifests itself in the truly regenerate, an alteration of perception in which the individual sees God's world in a new way. Perhaps the best example of what Edwards means here can be taken from a passage of his *Personal Narrative*. After a struggle with the doctrine of God' sovereignty, Edwards comes to have "a *delightful* conviction" and writes, "the doctrine of God's sovereignty has very often appeared, an exceeding pleasant, bright, and sweet doctrine to me."[91] The delight and sweetness that Edwards feels here are the requisite affections for one truly convinced of the doctrine of election. This conviction for

[88] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 119.
[89] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 110-111.
[90] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 240.
[91] Jonathan Edwards, *A Jonathan Edwards Reader*, edited by John Edwin Smith and Harry S. Stout (New Haven: Yale Bena Note, 2003), 283.

Edwards is not manifested outward, but deeply inward, a reformulation of the feelings one experiences in contemplating God's nature that can be understood wholly within the self.

One might characterize this position as a kind of affective docility, in which an inward sense of true grace produces a new emotional lens for seeing the world and God's operations within, but that has little to do with the outward signs of affection he has cautiously validated elsewhere. Later in *Affections* Edwards writes, "hypocritical affections are like a violent motion; like that of the air that is moved with winds (Jude 12). But gracious affections are more a natural motion, like the stream of a river, which though it has many turns hither and thither…yet in general, with a steady and constant course, tends the same way, till it gets to the ocean."[92] With this passage in mind, it's important to see *Religious Affections* as a move away from Edwards's earlier positions on the relationship between what I'm calling religious ecstasy and the place of feeling in religious life.

Perhaps the best way to understand the shift in Edwards's thought is through a comparison with his most vocal critic, Charles Chauncy. Chauncy's most sustained critique of Edwards's revival theology comes from his *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New-England* (1743), a text that, beginning with its title, seeks to be a direct refutation of Edwards's *Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England*, published the year earlier. In that book, Edwards's commitment to ecstatic practice is less restrained (dare I say, more ecstatic?). Addressing critics of public ecstasy among worshipers (behaviors such as "outcries, faintings, and other bodily effects") Edwards writes that ministers should celebrate such bodily motions, provided they are united with correct doctrine: "when I see them excited by preaching the important truths of God's word…I don't scruple to speak of them,

[92] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 374.

and to rejoice in them, and bless God for them as such."[93] This is a distinctly more active characterization of religious affections than the comparison of religious feelings to a calm, steady river and Chauncy found such evidentiary commitment to bodily practices abhorrent. Refuting Edwards, he condemns "enthusiasts" for "their *Aptness* to take the *Motion of their own Minds* for something *divinely extraordinary*."[94] Blaming modern ecstatic practice for enthusiasm and separation, Chauncy likens the current revival mood to the antinomian crisis of the previous century. In his reading of the antinomian crisis that makes up the bulk of his preface, Chauncy says there is "*a* Likeness *between the Disturbances* then *and* now*: They are indeed surprisingly* similar."[95]Enlisting New England's past places Chauncy on the side of inherited tradition and authority and explains the dense accumulation of quotations that make up much of Chauncy's work. In order to describe the errors of revivalists, Chauncy enlists both prominent figures of New England's past and esteemed writers such as John Flavel and Richard Baxter. Their words are interwoven with his, collapsing history into a contemporary rejection of religious ecstasy. As Amy Schrager Lang writes, Chauncy's "credibility depends on his words being indistinguishable from those of the estimable divines he quotes."[96]

In her article, Lang contends that the opposition between Chauncy and Edwards is that Edwards focuses on "experience" and "feeling" and Chauncy "asserts the centrality of language as sign" in judging the fruits of revivalism.[97]But Chauncy doesn't reject wholesale the role of

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[93] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 399.
[94] Charles Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New-England: A Treatise in Five Parts ; with a Preface Giving an Account of the Antinomians, Familists and Libertines, Who Infected These Churches, Above an Hundred Years Ago : Very Needful for These Days ; the Like Spirit Prevailing Now As Did Then. the Whole Being Intended, and Calculated, to Serve the Interest of Christ's Kingdom*, (Boston: Printed by Rogers and Fowle, for Samuel Eliot in Cornhill, 1743), 178.
[95] Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts*, xxvi.
[96] Amy Schrager Lang, "'A Flood of Errors': Chauncy and Edwards in the Great Awakening," in *Jonathan Edwards and the American Experience*, edited by Nathan O. Hatch and Harry S. Stout (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 164.
[97] Lang, "Flood," 161; 171.

feeling or experience in religious life; rather, he insists that those feelings produce an inward turn. He writes in *Seasonable Thoughts*, "this *Work of GOD* is a secret Thing; a Work *within* Men; a Work effected in the *inward* Frame of their Mind. It *principally* lies in a *new Heart*, *another Soul*."[98] Chauncy makes the case for an inward process of conversion and regeneration—the workings of the exterior are manifestations of instability and pathology. Though not as critical, Edwards's *Religious Affections* moves into similar territory.

It's not necessary in this project to outline all of the scripturally sanctioned affections Edwards articulates in *Religious Affections*. Edwards's vision is precise, without being programmatic—no tear speaks for itself, no trembling limb evidence of true conviction. What is most important overall is that despite his claim that "there never is any case whatsoever, any lively and vigorous exercise of the will or inclination of the soul, without some effects upon the body" he clarifies his position: "but yet, it is not the body, but the mind only, that is the proper seat of the affections."[99] It's important to recognize that Edwards sees the body in service of the mind and spirit, but only in service. The body is useful as a way to externalize the workings of the mind and will, but it does no work in and of itself. Edwards argues that the "saints in heaven" also have pure affections, even without bodies and as such, "we are not speaking of the affections of the body, but of the affections of the soul."[100] With this image of the bodiless saints experiencing the full ideal of religious affections, Edwards's position can be mapped significantly onto that of his early critic, Chauncy. Though only a few years separate the publication of *Some Thoughts Concerning the Revival of Religion* and *Religious Affections*, Edwards has made a move toward the logic of anti-revivalism by locating the ideal of religious

[98] Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts*, 6.
[99] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 98.
[100] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 113.

feeling within a private and isolated discourse of religious feelings as a product of and change within individuals alone.

Religious Affections signals a shift in Edwards's thought about religious ecstasy that relates to the regulatory model of evangelical print culture. As James Davenport's print presence exists only in the realm of his critics and his retractions, Edwards calls for a similar model of regulated affect and private interiority. This is best seen in his description of his wife Sarah Pierpont Edwards in *Some Thoughts Concerning the Revival of Religion in New England*, published in 1743. In this document, Edwards holds Sarah up as a model of ideal affective piety, but does so through some compelling erasures of her experience and identity along the way. Under the heading "An Example of Evangelical Piety," Edwards describes a nameless and genderless subject of religious ecstasy, who conforms absolutely to his ideal vision of religious affections. Edwards doesn't necessarily erase the bodily ecstasies of the unnamed Sarah (though they are indeed downplayed); rather, he takes away her context and motivation. In her idealized reconstruction in the hands of Jonathan, Sarah's religious transports have no impetus or even relation to the external world—her piety is located purely within her interiority.

Although I have been arguing Edwards's theological and social move away from embodiment and toward a private affective interiority, I don't wish to oversimplify the case too much. When describing Sarah's religious transports in *Some Thoughts* Edwards makes clear that Sarah's body responds to her various emotional states: she unconsciously "leaps for joy" when so moved by God and her religious ecstasy "has been so affecting as to overcome the body."[101] Though Edwards reports of Sarah "being frequently attended with very great effects on the

[101] Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 334; 341.

body," his description is more concerned with what is *absent* from her experiences.[102] He writes, "these effects on the body did not begin now in this wonderful season, that they should be owing to the influence of the example of the times, but about seven years ago; and began in a much higher degree, and greater frequency, near three years ago, when there was no such enthusiastical season, as many account this, but it was a very dead time through the land. They arose from no distemper catched from Mr. Whitefield or Mr. Tennent, because they began before either of them came into the country…."[103] The legitimacy of Sarah's religious ecstasy resides not in the intensity or frequency of feeling, but that these manifestations of religious feeling have no trigger from the outside world. She is not one of the masses taking part for the first time in the awakenings, nor is she moved by the controversial preaching of Whitefield or Tennent. She has a long history of religious feeling that separates her from the mere "enthusiast." Along with this, her transports are not the result of "bodily distemper or weakness," and do not lead to an "enthusiastic disposition to follow impulses, or any supposed prophetical revelations."[104] The disembodied ideal that Edwards presents of Sarah's experiences shape her into a theologically and socially correct model of religious ecstasy—a figure whose bodily experiences (described with little attention to her actual body) are removed from the social space of revivalism.

But Sarah tells a different story, one unpublished in her lifetime. "The Narrative of Sarah Pierpont Edwards" has no remaining manuscript, but was included in Sereno Dwight's *Life of President Edwards*, published in 1829. Unedited and perhaps unintended for publication, the narrative of her religious experiences from the year 1742 allow us to understand into what Edwards excised from Sarah's experiences and what those omissions tell us about his own

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[102] Edwards, *Great Awakening,* 332.
[103] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 333.
[104] Edwards, *Great Awakening*, 333; 335.

investments in awakening experience, and what Edwards felt could be both expressed and excised from an official print record. Most obvious in her narrative is an attention to personal detail. Where Edwards takes away any particularity from Sarah's experiences, she understands herself and her religious affections as located very specifically in her own world. She situates herself as minister's wife, mother, friend, family member—these relationships all bear on her religious concerns and her ecstatic feelings. It would be a gross oversimplification to see husband and wife as opposites, or even the extremes of a spectrum. After Sarah Edwards contemplates her sinful nature she writes, "in consequence of this, I felt a strong desire to be alone with God, to go to him, without having any one to interrupt the silent and soft communion, which I earnestly desired between God and my own soul ; and accordingly withdrew to my chamber."[105] Here she experiences a similar response to Jonathan in his personal piety and print understanding of affectionate religion—the desire to be alone with God as a kind of special piety.

But this occasional desire to be alone only tells part of the story. Throughout much of her brief narrative Sarah is fully engaged with the activities engendered by the awakenings and by life in Northampton. Though Edwards takes pains to make sure that in *Some Thoughts* she is not lumped among the recent and untested converts, Sarah's ecstasy is as equally embedded in the revitalized public spaces of the awakenings. While attending a service she writes, "on seeing some, that I found were in a natural condition, I felt a most tender compassion for them; but especially was I, while I remained in the meeting-house, from time to time over-come, and my strength taken away, by the sight of one and another, whom I regarded as the children of God, and who, I had heard were lively and animated in religion. We remained in the meeting-house about three hours, after the public exercises were over. During most of the time, my bodily

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[105] Jonathan Edwards and Sereno Edwards Dwight. *The Works of President Edwards: With a Memoir of His Life*, (New York: S. Converse, 1829), 172.

strength was overcome…."[106] It is the proximity to others in the public space of the meeting house that causes her to be "overcome." She is moved by both those still in need of true conversion and those who she feels are saved. Importantly, her spiritual experience doesn't lack context or happen in isolation (as Edwards portrayed it) but is predicated on the social space of the meeting house. In a similar experience at her own home, the speaking of a Mr. Buell precipitates "such a sense of the deep ingratitude manifested by the children of God" that she writes, "my strength was immediately taken away, and I sunk down on the spot."[107]

In her home, at the meeting house, among ministers and friends, Sarah's responses take part in the kind of contagion that Chauncy's ally William Rand believed proved the artifice of such ecstatic responses. The fact that Edwards in *Some Thoughts* both minimizes Sarah's bodily transports and removes the powerful social locations in which they happen tell us something about his own mistrust of both of those forces. Whereas anti-revivalists articulate a wholesale rejection of revival practices, Edwards's moderate position leaves him carefully parsing these experiences for his ideal construction of an awakening experience. Sarah's embodied ecstasies can serve as an example but only if they are divorced from the unpredictable public spaces in which they were created. But Sarah herself never separates the feelings from its social location, perhaps because the union of the two is the location of such power.

I end this chapter with Sarah Edwards for two reasons. The first is to keep in mind historian Michel-Rolph Trouillot's claims that "presences and absences embodied in sources or archives are neither neutral nor natural."[108] As I have been charting through this chapter, the vital link between the affectively-charged body and the emergence of evangelicalism in the

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[106] Edwards, *Works*, 176.
[107] Edwards, *Works*, 177.
[108] Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 42.

eighteenth-century produced a large body of print on and around this bodily ecstasy, but also operated with a profoundly cautious, and sometimes hostile, relationship to those bodies. Despite the access we have to so much of this print culture through the digitization of archives and the holdings of libraries, limits were set in this historical moment by those with control of pulpits and publishing. Much can be understood through those limits, which at the very least were stated honestly and frequently. But as Sarah Edwards's narrative reminds us, the lived practice of revivalism for everyday participants exceeded the ideal boundaries articulated by authoritative figures such as Edwards, Chauncy, and others. The regulation of print in its colonial context limits our ability to see clearly how and why thousands of people took such an active part in the eighteenth-century revivals, and how specifically it allowed participants to sometimes threaten the power of ministers and the doctrines of eighteenth-century evangelicalism. I am reminded of Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie's *Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error* (1979). Ladurie's study of a minor inquisition in the small French town of Montaillou found that the lived practice of lay Catholics in the "Age of Faith" involved a heterodoxy far outside of the doctrines of the Church, giving us a rare insight into how faith at the lay level (so rarely understood by historians due to the illiteracy of the population) did not, and sometimes refused to, conform to the orthodoxy of the Catholic Church. Though my project is not invested in teasing out the doctrinal differences between lay people and religious readers, by focusing on the bodily ecstasies central to revivalism, we can see a similar friction between the voices in power and the embodied voices of revivalists, and can attempt to see past the limits set by the gatekeepers of evangelical publishing.

Secondly, Sarah's narrative prefigures first-person accounts of evangelical revivalist writing that emerged in the nineteenth-century. Through the twin phenomena of disestablishment

and an expanding print market, more and more accounts of religious experience flooded the market in the era of the "Second Great Awakening." These print sources give us an expanded (and in many cases, under-analyzed) range of voices from across a broad swath of evangelicalism—a plurality of denominational stances as well as expressions by women, Indians, and African Americans. Increased access to print meant an increased range of voices; in Nathan O. Hatch's words, "American Christianity became a mass enterprise."[109] I don't wish to oversimplify the matter as some ministers continued to celebrate, decry, and regulate the work of revivalism into the nineteenth-century. Although Hatch's democratization thesis holds true in many ways, it's important to keep in mind that this expansion of religious possibilities and its attendant expansion into print pluralized, rather than settled, these battles.

The next chapter jumps forward to the beginning of the nineteenth-century and to the rural South of Kentucky and the surrounding region. As I will discuss, these southern revivals, culminating at Cane Ridge Kentucky, produced a similar spectrum of revival/anti-revival discourse. But with a modestly increased access to first person accounts of revival experience, we will see multiple lay participants use the language of shame to describe their participation in religious community. Cane Ridge serves as an ideal introduction to the increased print culture of nineteenth-century evangelicalism and how that increase gives unique insights into the lived practice of revivalism for American evangelicals.

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[109] Nathan O. Hatch, The *Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 4.

Chapter Two:

Falling for the Lord: Revivalism, Print, and the Performance of Shame at Cane Ridge

Revivalism has a cyclical structure. The spiritual declension of a community spurs a recommitment to piety which spreads among the people until they reach a new state of holiness and spiritual commitment. These ecstasies never last forever (as Jonathan Edwards so solemnly noted) and the holiness of the community slips into decline again, to await the reemergence of a new revival spark. But the rhetoric of revivalism at the turn of the nineteenth-century shows ministers and lay people caught off guard (yet again) and that as part of this cycle, the same debates, theological arguments, and marvels returned anew. Though evangelicals sought and prayed for revivals, their rhetoric always contained the element of surprise and an attempt to recognize what was happening among them.

George Baxter of Connecticut was one such individual surprised by the revivals he came across in a visit to the southern states. In a letter to Archibald Alexander (president of Hampden-Sydney College) about the Kentucky revivals of 1801 he writes, "the power with which this revival has spread, and its influence in moralizing the people, are difficult for you to conceive, and more so for me to describe."[110] But what Baxter saw at these revivals conforms to so many documents on revivals—large crowd gatherings, moral reforms, reclaimed backsliders. But one distinct feature did stand out; the falling exercises. Baxter was startled by the number of fallen, which he claimed to be in upwards of a thousand individuals and worried that these scenes of

[110] George Baxter, "Religious Intelligence," *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*, March 1802: 354-360, 355.

mass bodily ecstasy seemed "to be the principle cause, why this work should be more suspected of enthusiasm, than some other revivals."[111]

These exercises varied in intensity and style, the most common being falling down and laying unconscious for any amount of time, from minutes to hours. Methodist Episcopal minister William McKendree quotes a woman from one of the Kentucky revivals: "Lord I have heard about these people and walked along [sic] way to hear them. Yesterday while the Man was speaking I felt very bad, and thought I should fall down, but Lord I was ashamed that the People should see me cry and fall down, so I was about to get into the Woods and hide myself, for I did not know that it was the Lord. But I could not walk, I fell down among all the People, and all my shame went away!"[112] This woman's testimonial, part of the print dissemination of revival news that went on long after the fires had died out in Kentucky, can stand as a useful model of what these exercises entailed and the focus of this chapter. In this passage, the speaker comes out of interest to the revival, but not necessarily committed to the experience. In the midst of her interest she experiences shame as a result of hearing the word of God and the experience of shame manifests itself through her body, in falling. Most importantly, the shame experience becomes collective, spreading contagiously to participants who either fell in turn, or experienced heightened spiritual responses by virtue of their proximity to the exercises. Although not foreign to previous revivals, these exercises became more common in these Southern revivals at the turn of the nineteenth-century. Some reports claimed that dozens and even hundreds fell or experienced physical manifestations as a result of this religious ecstasy. And reports of the exercises were a key element in the distribution of revival news—an integral part of the

[111] Baxter, "Religious Intelligence," 357.
[112] *Extracts of Letters, Containing Some Account of the Work of God Since the Year 1800, Written by the Preachers and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to their Bishops* (Barnard,: Joseph Dix, J.H. Carpenter, Printer, 1812), 41.

reemergent religious print culture that was part of the evangelicalization of the early United States that increased exponentially in the middle of the nineteenth-century. For revivalists, the ecstatic participant was a legible sign of the work of God; for anti-revivalists, a sign of emotionalism, human weakness, and doctrinal decay and, like Chauncy and Edwards, they fought these battles through religious publishing.

This chapter argues that the falling exercises are a response to the affect of shame engendered in this revival space. Bringing the work of Silvan Tomkins on shame to bear on these writings about the falling exercises allows us to understand that in publicly performing and embracing shame, revivalists in Kentucky and at surrounding revivals took on a temporary but potent reorganization of their bodies. This bodily acknowledgement of shame came to influence the racial dynamics specifically of the Cane Ridge revival—I argue that the white performance of shame helps explain the segregated nature of the revivals. And finally, I will consider how the affectively charged discourse of shame reveals tensions in evangelical print culture's interest and ability in recording and transmitting the bodily activities of revival participants.

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Many scholars have a difficult time addressing what to do with the ecstatic religious practices on display at these revivals. Several valuable studies of the revivals borne out of Kentucky have been written and much scholarship on the Second Great Awakening refers to its Southern origins, but most scholars downplay the role of the exercises or fail to critically engage with the work such exercises might have done within the camp meeting and beyond. Paul Conkin nicely summarizes this attitude: "this failure to understand the exercises has almost forced

historians to see them as frontier aberrations, or as irrational 'diseases' that infected psychologically sick members of the lower orders of society—poor, ignorant, and superstitious."[113] But as we saw in chapter one, ecstatic religious practice was foundational to revival experience in New England. Despite scholarly confusion around these "aberrations," what was new at Cane Ridge and the surrounding revivals was not embodied religious ecstasy, but a more heightened physical response combined with a previously unused discourse to describe the affective states of participants—the discourse of shame. More first person accounts of the southern revivals exist than from the eighteenth-century awakenings of chapter one, and these documents give us insight into how shame animated the ecstatic religious exercises happening at Cane Ridge.

News of the Southern camp meetings spread through word of mouth, pulpit, and print sources such as the *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* and letter collections like *Increase of Piety, or the Revival of Religion in the United States of America*. Many of these documents considered the revivals part of the christianizing of the American people and a foretaste of the millennial promise of the United States as it was understood among many evangelicals. It was through these sources that ministers spread the word of the revivals and anti-revivalists, those who found the methods and theology of the camp meetings a threat to orthodoxy and traditional church structure, fought their battles. The struggle for the soul of America happened not only in the pulpit and the camp meeting, but in the print culture that brought these arguments into the home and the private lives of American readers.

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[113] Paul A. Conkin, *Cane Ridge: America's Pentecost* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 103. As an example of this, one of the earliest scholars dealing with the Southern revivals, Catherine Cleveland, dismisses these exercises as being the product of mass hysteria and/or hypnotic suggestion, writing, "a large number of cases fall under the head of chorea, hysteria, or ecstasy. Just what proportion of the cases were epileptic cannot be ascertained." From Catherine C. Cleveland, *The Great Revival in the West, 1797-1805* (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1959), 123.

Like George Baxter, ministers and lay people seem to have had difficulty in describing these exercises and finding a language in print that both celebrated such massive revivals while at the same time keeping a disinterested and even disembodied relationship to those ecstasies. Michael Warner's *The Letters of the Republic* still stands as one of the best studies available for understanding early American print culture and helps to shed insight on these tensions. Warner argues that the public sphere created by this political print discourse generates a limitless audience through a disinterested, abstracted voice based on a silence around the writer's own embodiment and investments. We will see however that the evangelical investments in narratives of personal conversion and spiritual development that are meant to disseminate the highly charged emotional energy of the camp meeting into the reader's home come into conflict with this disinterestedness print voice. This chapter uses Warner's study as a useful compliment, and contrast, to Silvan Tomkins' work and the role of affective communication. Evangelical publications are a distinctive portion of the early American public sphere and need to be reckoned with, as these texts are our primary entry into the minds and hearts of revivalists. But a full understanding of this element of religious life requires going beyond the text and attempting to engage with the emotional work taking place at the camp meeting. We must listen in closely—to read between the lines of texts governed by the rules of print culture—with the goal of understanding the potent work done on revival subjects when entering into the both sacred and sometimes radical space of camp meetings.

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Cane Ridge, Kentucky holds a special place in narratives of the nineteenth-century awakenings. Most scholars locate the Kentucky revivals, starting in 1801, as the birthplace of a Southern revival that continued for several more years and fed into the evangelical energy that have been labeled the "Second Great Awakening." This was the origin of the camp meeting—where revivals became multi-day affairs, requiring families to spend days on impromptu campgrounds or the homes of locals. Here thousands gathered for what began as a Presbyterian sacramental occasion and became an ecumenical, multi-day series of sermons, singing, and exhortation. Beyond this new way of imagining the worship space, the Kentucky revivals gave way to untraditional religious practices, often times disrupting orthodox church authority in scenes of spontaneous lay-preaching and physical manifestations of religious ecstasy.

The antecedents of the Kentucky revivals can be found at Hampden-Sydney, a Presbyterian college in Virginia. Hampden-Sydney was part of a flurry of smaller revivals happening at the end of the eighteenth century in the south. The entire college experienced an intense increase of religious fervor and commitment, which began as small assemblies at the president's house and grew to encompass the whole college community. Although the revivals were spurred on initially by a Methodist minister, the school's president, John Blair Smith, sought to temper the enthusiastic elements of Methodist revivalism.[114] According to Ellen Eslinger, "whenever the people listening to his sermons verged on any sort of outburst, Smith would admonish them and wait for composure."[115] Despite Smith's orthodox understanding of religious emotionalism, the revival spirit flourished among the students. As the school trained many Presbyterian ministers (some of whom would end up encouraging revivals throughout the

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[114] Ellen Eslinger, *Citizens of Zion: The Social Origins of Camp Meeting Revivalism* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 188-89.
[115] Eslinger, *Citizens*, 199.

region), these experiences instilled in many of them a firm commitment in the efficacy of revivalism. Beyond a specific clergy trained in revival techniques and committed to their usefulness, the southern revivals are also an outgrowth of the Presbyterian sacramental occasion, large gatherings for delivering the sacrament of communion to dispersed church populations.[116] But the sacramental occasion, like the Hampden-Sydney revivals, was a moderated and organized religious experience, orthodox in nature. It was not until Cane Ridge that the ecstatic falling exercises came to be a part of the revival experience in the region.

Though this dissertation's use of affect comes predominantly from the work of Brian Massumi (as discussed in the introduction), psychologist Silvan Tomkins can provide us with some productive tools for understanding the ecstatic work at these revivals. This is beyond the centrality of shame in his understanding of the affects (more on this in just a bit); it is also Tomkins's understanding of the relationship of affect to object choice and the role of "reason" in his formulation of affects. Tompkins writes, "reason without affect would be impotent, affect without reason would be blind. The combination of affect and reason guarantees man's high degree of freedom."[117] Fundamental to Tomkins's understanding of affect is that the affects form "the primary motives for human beings" but individuals experience agency within that system.[118] Whereas drives reduce subjects to monolithic forces, affect offers a sensitive reading of subjects that includes rationality and agency in decision making and feeling. This agency is due in part to the freedom of object choice that is central to Tomkins's work. Whereas drives are always linked to a specific object, affects can be attached to any range of objects. Such a model allows us to understand the revivals and their exercises in ways that are more productive—bringing a sense of

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[116] Conkin, *Cane Ridge*, 32.
[117] Silvan Tomkins, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank, *Shame and Its Sisters: A Silvan Tomkins Reader* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 37.
[118] Tomkins, *Shame*, 36.

agency to acts that were seen by many to be the result of an unconscious, overwhelming power. Revivalists in some way chose to make the falling exercises a significant object where a certain emotional work plays out.

George Baxter, whose letter opened this chapter, writes "persons who have been in this situation have uniformly avowed, that they suffered no bodily pain, and that they had the entire command of their reason and reflection….From this it appears that their falling is neither the common fainting nor the nervous affection."[119] Baxter and others sought to remove any taint of enthusiasm or delusion from these ecstatic participants while some scholars have re-imposed such stigma onto the fallen. Tomkins allows us to keep the psychology without the pathology much like Baxter himself insisted on. With this in mind Tomkins's work allows us to perform a recuperative and reparative reading of the goings-on in these revivals.

Of the eight-nine affects Tomkins recognizes (depending on the point in his career), shame-humiliation figures the most prominently, not only in his work, but in the work of scholars influenced by him (most notably, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick). First and foremost, shame is intimately related to pride and self-presentation. When a subject gives way to shame, "he is vulnerable in a quite unique way:" "in contrast to all other affects, shame is an experience of the self by the self. At that moment when the self feels ashamed, it is felt as a sickness within the self. Shame is the most reflexive of affects in that the phenomenological distinction between the subject and object of shame is lost."[120] The paradox of shame is the intense internalization one experiences as a result of the emotion (the "sickness within the self") that is necessarily also about the self on display. For Tomkins, this is because "the self lives in the face….Shame turns

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[119] Baxter, "Religious Intelligence," 358.
[120] Tomkins, *Shame*, 136.

the attention of the self and others away from other objects to this most visible residence of the self, increases its visibility, and thereby generates the torment of self-consciousness."[121] So shame becomes legible in the face of the shamed subject, creating a heightened visibility that in turn creates a more profound sense of shame; one becomes ashamed of being recognized as ashamed. But what is inextricably linked here is that one cannot experience shame without the presence of others (even if that presence is only imagined); or rather, despite the intense internalization the shamed subject might feel, that formation of the subject itself must happen within an awareness of a public self. Sedgwick elsewhere describes this "double-movement" as "towards painful individuation, towards uncontrollable relationality."[122] In this way, shame is the most contagious of affects, requiring not only the presence of others, but infecting others as the feeling becomes recognized and externalized in and through the body. Here are some words Tomkins uses to describe shame in his own distinct style: "indignity," "defeat," "transgression," "alienation," "inner torment," "a sickness of the soul" (and all this in just one paragraph). His rich vocabulary of shame parallels the language of sin fundamental to the Southern revivals and the attendant exercises, and perhaps, much Christian discourse overall.[123]

Although this paper argues for a kind of radicalism in the revivals' foregrounding of shame, there were other facets that contemporaries found unsettling and unorthodox. The revivals brought together people of different religious traditions and economic classes; many well-documented cases of children preaching to parents can be found, as well as women to men. One writer notes a twelve-year old boy who, while held up by two men as he neared exhaustion,

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[121] Tomkins, *Shame*, 136.
[122] Eve Kosofsky Segwick, *Touching, Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 37.
[123] Arlene Stein's *Shameless: Sexual Dissidence in American Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2006) offer an analysis of shame and American Christianity in our own historical moment. Stein's chapter "Revenge of the Shamed" argues that the Christian right's current battles against gay marriage are in part due to those individual's own shame surrounding sexual desire.

exhorted to the crowd: "with tears streaming from his eyes, he cried aloud to the wicked, warning them of their danger, denouncing their certain doom, if they persisted in their sins; expressing his love of their souls, and desire that they would turn to the Lord and be saved."[124] In this moment two adult men support the boy who becomes the mouthpiece for God's word, an uncommon reversal of traditional children's roles in the church and just one of many examples of the egalitarian nature of the revivals. Eslinger elegantly describes this moment as such: "for a few days, people from every possible sort of background joined together to form a temporary community ruled by principles of harmony, virtue, and unity."[125]

But beyond these momentary inversions, the very nature of revivalism required a breakdown of traditional gender roles. Catherine Brekus notes "that female preaching was also linked to the emotionalism and turbulence of revival meetings."[126] It was not simply that female preaching was emotional, but that, as Susan Juster writes, "the qualities that defined the evangelical faith—its emotionalism, sensuality, and above all its porous sense of self—were qualities that to the eighteenth-century mind were distinctly female."[127] And with their explicit emotional outpourings and ministerial appeals to the heart, the Kentucky revivals had to confront this gendered understanding of evangelical camp meetings all the more directly. It is this gender anxiety surrounding evangelicalism that helps explain why, according to Eslinger, women's participation in the revivals "received much less attention."[128] The emotional woman on display

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[124] Richard McNemar, *The Kentucky Revival, or a Short History of the Late Extraordinary Out-Pouring of the Spirit of God, in the Western States of America, agreeably to Scripture Promises, and Prophecies concerning the Latter Day: With a Brief Account of the Entrance and Progress of What the World Call Shakerism, Among the Subjects of the Late Revival in Ohio and Kentucky* (Cincinnati: John W. Browne, 1807), 25.
[125] Eslinger, *Citizens*, 214.
[126] Catherine A Brekus, *Strangers and Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 139.
[127] Susan, Juster, *Disorderly Women: Sexual Politics and Evangelicalism in Revolutionary New England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 5.
[128] Eslinger, *Citizens*, 230.

at the revival often times proved to be a stumbling block, an example of emotionalism run amok or the traditional susceptibility of the female mind.

Male participants were seen as the hard case that proved the overwhelming power of the revivals. A contemporary observer writes of one revival, "that the Governor of the State, a Lawyer, and a Physician were among the number; and that the two latter came to the ground under the influence of inveterate prejudice; the Doctor being an avowed Deist, and the lawyer, in the plentitude of contempt, ascending the scorner's chair."[129] These figures are notable not only because they are men, but because they hold traditional roles of authority, in government, law, and medicine, figures that are defined by their power over others and therefore least likely to embrace a loss of self through shame. These men then stand as an example of a power that overwhelms traditional male restraint as well as official roles of male, patriarchal authority.

One unnamed letter writer offers a particularly rich example of a male participant succumbing to the power of the revival. He visited a Kentucky revival as a skeptic but began to find himself softening to its power. However, his conversion wasn't immediate and he returned to the camp meeting a second day. It is worth quoting the account he initially sent to his brother-in-law at length:

> I saw myself on the awful precipice, and the mouldering [sic] brink crumbling under my feet; my soul took the alarm, and for the first time, shrunk back at the very thoughts of a hell! Construe this as you please, my dear brother, but whether you call it insanity or imbecility, I am again involved in a similar situation; the view of my past guilt had

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[129] *Increase of Piety, or the Revival of Religion in the United States of America; Containing Several Interesting Letters Not Before Published. Together with Three Remarkable Dreams* (Philadelphia: Printed By Angier March, 1802), 92-93.

> watered my face afresh. I am become a proselyte in some degree, but a stranger to regeneration. I returned and resolved to go to meeting that day also; accordingly, accompanied by your sister, the partner of my cares, we hastened to the place of festivity. A more tremendous sight never struck the eyes of mortal man. The very clouds, seemed to separate, and give way for the praises of the people of God to ascend the heavens, while thousands of tongues, with sounds of hallelujahs, seemed to roll through infinite space. Hundreds of the people lay prostrate on the ground crying for mercy. O! my brother, had you been there to have seen the convulsed limbs, the apparently lifeless bodies, to all of which the distorted features exactly comporting, you would have been constrained to have cried out as I was obliged to do, that God is among the people. Nor was this confined to the commonalty alone, but people of every description lay prostrate on the ground. There you would have seen the learned pastor, the steady patriot; and the obedient son, crying holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.[130]

Although the writer never claims to pass out among the other fallen, he shares in the same sense of guilt and shame that motivates the exercises. He experiences shame when considering his unregenerate state and that shame is doubled in its expression to his brother ("call it insanity or imbecility"). The recognition of his sin leaves him vulnerable not only to conversion, but to a perceived shaming by others via that recognition. But this letter is also meant to convince his brother of the revival's power and the writer communicates this by describing the "learned pastor, the steady patriot; and the obedient son." Like the governor, lawyer, and physician, this writer makes the case for the revival (and his own experiences thereat), by enlisting and implicating authoritative men of the early republic.

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[130] *Increase*, 80-81. This letters was also published as "Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman in Kentucky to his Brother in Lower Virginia," *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*, April 1802: 392-393.

Invoking men of sterling character and implicit authority is meant to minimize the kind of vulnerability at the heart of these revivals. In part this is due to the shame that generates much of the revival's power and the cyclical nature of shame—shame helps invigorate the revival and the intensity of the revival experience generates more shame. This is shame as contagion, as necessarily relational. But other descriptions of those caught up in the revival's contagion give us insight into the destabilizing of gender norms that the revivals allowed. One participant at a South Carolina revival in 1802 writes of "a professed atheist, who fell to the earth, and sent for brother Gaffaway, to pray for him: after labouring in the pangs of the new birth for some time, the Lord gave him deliverance: he then confessed before hundreds, that, for some years, he had not believed there was a God, but now found him gracious to his soul."[131] Reverend Moses Hoge writes from Shepard's Town in 1801: "those who fall, lie some a longer, some a shorter time. Some get comfort, some do not when first down, when one gets thro' (it is their own phrase,) that is, obtains relief, the shout is raised, glory to God for a new born soul.—And the holy embrace follows."[132] Both of these examples turn to the metaphor of birth to describe passing through the exercises. In the first, the male convert is the mother giving birth to his new soul; the second, less literal example, the participant is the new born child. If the vulnerability of conversion leads to a moment of being recast as a birthing mother, the earlier examples of powerful men experiencing the conversion moment can be understood as a means of maintaining the stability of the male body in the face of a potent liminality.[133] Invoking the powerful men of the republic becomes a way of restabilizing the male body as it slips into a liminal gendered

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[131] *Extracts of Letters*, 28.
[132] *Increase*, 53.
[133] My use of liminality in relation to these moments of gender subversion in the revivals is indebted to Susan Juster's *Disorderly Women*: "The new psychology of conversion marked this experience as a profoundly liminal event, a rite of passage in anthropological terms. A deep alienation from one's prior self or condition is followed by an existential state of limbo in which old values and structures are discarded, ultimately leading to a new level of being in which structure and values are reaffirmed, albeit in a transformed state." In Susan Juster, *Disorderly Women,* 49.

subjectivity, however briefly, in the public and physical acknowledgement of shame. Imagining the fallen sinner as maternal also explains why the experiences of falling women means less to revival proponents, as succumbing to the power of shame is understood already in feminine terms.

Communities of Shame and the Problem of Integrated Worship

Along with the inversion of traditional social roles, one of the key tensions between revivalists and anti-revivalists surrounded the issue of individualism. Despite the nature of the revivals, with hundreds or thousands joining in worship together, many critics saw the revivals as too individualistic and too reliant on the individual's sense of conviction. Presbyterian minister Adam Rankin produced one of the most vitriolic documents against the revivals, *A Review of the Noted Revival in Kentucky, Commenced in the Year of our Lord, 1801* (1803). Rankin finds many elements not only distasteful, but contrary to the work of God and the history of the church. Not only the ecstasy and disorder, but the very reliance on man's word as a confirmation of one's conversion experience. Rankin sees the revivals as propagating a series of delusions, one of which is "*a greater confidence in our own experience and feelings, than in divine revelation* [his italics]."[134] For Rankin, the revivals operate too far outside of traditional church structure and authority, leaving the individual sinner in a place of potential delusion. Rankin's model implies church as family with a stern, parental authority over its members.[135] What seems

[134] Adam Rankin, *Review of the Noted Revival in Kentucky Commenced in the Year of Our Lord, 1801* (Lexington, 1803), 23.
[135] This mirrors the arguments against revivals later in the century, particularly Horace Bushnell's *Christian Nurture, and of Subjects Adjacent Thereto* (1847). In this work Bushnell writes, "The Scriptures have a perpetual habit, if I may so speak, of associating children with the character and destiny of their parents. In this respect, they maintain a marked contrast with the extreme individualism of our modern philosophy." In Horace Bushnell,

most delusional to Rankin is that the experience of sin and conversion could dismantle both church and social hierarchies. The revival participant becomes unmoored from those structures that are meant to bring others together and maintain social control.

But revivalists understood their work as part of a community experience. If trust was placed on the individual's own sense of conversion, that experience could happen only among a body of believers. Beyond this, these conversions created a more powerful Christian community and sense of connectedness among converts and believers. In "Extract of a Letter on Christian Friendship," published in the letter collection *Gospel News, or A Brief Account of the Revival of Religion in Kentucky and Several Other Parts of the United States* (1801) the writer celebrates the unification that one experiences as coming to the faith through the power of the revivals:

> The effects of Divine Friendship are—a complete reconciliation to God, produced in the hearts of the most obdurate and rebellious sinners, by the powerful operation of divine love shed abroad in their hearts by his holy Spirit, by which that enmity of heart is removed, by which they were opposed to God and his law, and full of malice and hatred one against another, their being united in the delightful bonds of love and fellowship and mutually engaged to seek and promote each other's good and that holy communion with God and his people which every Christian enjoys, in a greater or smaller degree, by the sweet influences of the holy Comforter, the Spirit of Truth.[136]

Christian Nurture, and of Subjects Adjacent Thereto (New Haven Yale University Press), 47. Although not as orthodox as Rankin, Bushnell also famously conceives of Christian faith in terms of the family and the communal support and cultivation of faith. This is in contrast to the immediacy and, as he claims, individualistic nature of the revival conversion. We will return to Bushnell and this issue again in chapter four.

[136] *Gospel News, or A Brief Account of the Revival of Religion in Kentucky and Several Other Parts of the United States. Likewise, Some Pleasing Accounts of the Success and Progress of the Everlasting Gospel in the East Indies* (Baltimore, 1801), 23. Although not named in this publication, the letter is written by Baptist minister Lemuel Covell, and can also be found in *Memoir of the Late Rev. Lemuel Covell, Missionary to the Tuscarora Indians and*

For this writer, conversion is a work on the heart of the Christian. Once the heart of the sinner has been subdued, the sinner joins the shared community of Christian love that is mutually supportive and sustaining. This sense of equitable friendship through Christian love spreads equally to all who seek it, a justification of the communal and egalitarian nature of the revivals where many social hierarchies and traditional social roles were temporarily erased. This brings us back to the "double movement" of shame, that of isolating the subject while consequently creating that very subjectivity by experiencing shame relationally. If the sinner feels alienated by the recognition of sin, that sinner in turn becomes part of a larger Christian fellowship through conversions facilitated at camp meetings. Shame then becomes integral to Christian fellowship and Christian fellowship leads to an erasure of the boundaries that keep individuals apart.

The potential for this fellowship in evangelical America is a community where other forms of identity temporarily become less prominent. The community spirit of the camp meetings lead to increased participation of women and children, but another group needs to be brought into a serious discussion: African Americans. Minister Richard McNemar, in his contemporary chronicle of the Kentucky revivals, considered the camp meeting a radical space devoid of any traditional social and religious divisions. All denominations were welcome (something McNemar celebrates as anti-Calvinist) but also, "neither was there any distinction as to age, sex, color, or anything of a temporary nature: old and young, male and female, black and white, had equal privilege to minister the light which they received, in whatever way the spirit

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the Province of Upper Canada: Comprising a History of the Origin and Progress of Missionary Operations in the Shaftsbury Baptist Association, Up to the Time of Mr. Covell's Decease in 1806, written by his daughter, Deidamia Covell Brown.

directed."[137] McNemar's statement reflects what many contemporary figures felt to be true—that in the camp meeting moment, Christian bonds transcended all other categories.

But such an idealistic picture requires careful investigation and here I would like to focus specifically on Cane Ridge, a revival for which we have not only much scholarly work, but which became the template for other revivals throughout the south.[138] Eslinger's study of Cane Ridge paints a more realistic picture of the racial dimension of the camp meeting. Few writers make mention of the black presence at Cane Ridge. Eslinger quotes John Lyle, whose diaries give much insight into Cane Ridge, and who writes that "the negroes had a preaching to themselves."[139] Although scant, it appears that "no evidence suggests a status reversal, with blacks preaching to whites—a useful reminder that the social ideals celebrated at camp meetings were those of the hegemonic white population"[140] We might usefully assume that such role reversals would have been mentioned among any writer on the subject (as scenes of child and female preaching were). Eslinger reads the racially divided camp meeting as a sign of autonomy for black Christians and "may have represented positive community development among western blacks."[141]

I don't dispute Eslinger's claims that such community building did productive work for blacks in attendance, but I believe that leaves the segregated nature of the revivals still troublingly unexplained. If traditional church authority was dismantled to the point of female and

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[137] McNemar, *Kentucky Revival*, 30.
[138] As Paul Conkin writes, "Reports from North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia in 1801, and from western Virginia and Pennsylvania in 1802, are so similar to those from Kentucky in 1801 as to suggest plagiarism." In Conkin, *Cane Ridge*, 66.
[139] Quoted in Eslinger, *Citizens*, 232. Another example of segregated worship: In *Gospel News, or A Brief Account of the Revival of Religion in Kentucky and Several Other Parts of the United States* (Baltimore, 1801), a writer from Lexington Kentucky writes, "about 150 yards in a south course from the house was an assembly of black people, hearing the exhortations of the blacks, some of whom appeared deeply convicted, and others converted," 5.
[140] Eslinger, *Citizens*, 233.
[141] Eslinger, *Citizens*, 233.

youth preaching, why did the potential for interracial preaching prove to be the threshold of the egalitarianism at Cane Ridge and ultimately perhaps, the limit of "divine friendship"?

The answer points to what I have been charting: the central role of the vulnerable, shamed body on display. As described earlier, the body going through the exercises performs the acknowledgement of sin publicly, destabilizing the body's (particularly male) authority and traditional legibility. Those falling and physically responding to the revival's power underwent a public reinscription, sometimes coded female, but more generally understood in terms of vulnerability and shame. Such a ritual seems possible only within a specifically white community space. The male revivalist giving in to shame and abjecting himself in public ritual could experience such destabilization of bodily authority within the familiar space of white community. The issue resides less in listening to a black minister or worshipping next to a black Christian, but abjecting the white body in the presence of black bodies, creating a perhaps unthinkable unsettling of the white body's privilege.

An example of this destabilization: in one collection of letters disseminating news of the Southern revivals, a writer from South Carolina describes being both a Methodist preacher and a school teacher for blacks: "The epithet of Negro-school-master, added to that of Methodist preacher, makes a *black compound* [emphasis added] sure enough; yet, wonderful to think, the congregations are as large and as serious as they were at any time since I came to Charleston."[142] It might seem obvious that the writer would face difficulties as a master of a black school, but less obvious is the implicit public disapproval of his role as Methodist minister that the writer imagines. Together, these roles create a "black-compound," the writer "blacking-up" by taking on not one, but two, marginalized social roles. This writer seems conscious of a kind of racial

[142] *Extracts of Letters*, 18.

liminality that comes from his public evangelicalism. Perhaps then, before taking part in the camp meetings or experiencing the exercises, there is something destabilizing that some evangelicals felt in publicly embracing their faith.

This writer's candid moment of self-consciousness about his "black" social role points to how potentially threatening the idea of integrated revivalism must have been to white participants, due to the potential for a perceived contamination of the white body in its vulnerable performance. Experientially, the white revivalist goes through a process that particularizes the subject in ways that define the participant's body as vulnerable, shamed, and exceptionally public. This gesture of particularity, where whiteness exposes its frailties and willingly takes on abjection, has larger implications in the early republic. Those involved in this revival moment, and particularly those who fell or experienced other exercises, refused the privilege of invisibility fundamental to the white body. In a moment where sometimes thousands of individuals were present, revivalists embraced shame, placed themselves on display, and returned particularity to the white body through an acceptance and performance of vulnerability. When we consider the contagious nature of shame, the way it spreads like a blush, the way it affects those near it and implicates them in the actor's sense of shame, then these exercises might be productively understood as a significant way of fashioning the white body in ways that refuse abstraction, invisibility, and individualized, bodily integrity.

This brings us back to the issue of black participation and the difficulty of integration at Cane Ridge. I do not wish to negate the obvious problem of the segregation of black participation, but I would like to understand that segregation more productively, as a sign of just how much was at stake in these public performances. In rejecting white bodily integrity, participants reimagine themselves in terms of vulnerability, of shame, and of marginalization. In

this bodily refashioning, white male participants in particular make themselves available to the scopophilia usually reserved for the black body in the early republic. As Maurice Wallace notes, the runaway slave advertisement is the most common image of black manhood in the eighteenth century and the slave body, defined exclusively by its ability to do work, stands in opposition to the abstracted white male body of the early republic.[143] The hierarchies that define white and black bodies and maintain those distinctions collapse in the physical exercises. The authority of the white male body becomes so unhinged that to perform this ritual in an integrated environment would bring the realities of this abjection too dangerously close to home.

Along these lines, it is important to understand that in the early republic, African Americans were understood not just as "noncitizens" but as a threat to the very concept of being an American citizen. As David Roediger writes, blacks "were seen as anticitizens, as 'enemies rather than the members of the social compact.' As such they were driven from their homes by Sons of Liberty and Minute Men."[144] Roediger's study emphasizes how American racism formed in part as the white workers of the United States understood themselves in terms of their status as "workers" and "laborers," rather than as the more dangerous title of "servant," which bleeds into the category of "slave." But this distinction goes beyond simple racism. Rodiger writes that due to "the position of unfree, formerly unfree and precariously free whites" that "a large body of whites could imagine themselves as slaves—and on socioeconomic, as well as political, grounds."[145] Although the participants in the revivals were mostly farmers, the status of everyday white Americans in the new republic still included a high degree of tension as to just who was represented and who had access to power. If we include the kind of white men who

[143] Maurice O. Wallace, *Constructing the Black Masculine: Identity and Ideality in African American Men's Literature and Culture, 1775-1995* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 60.
[144] David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1991), 57.
[145]Roediger, *Wages*, 31.

participated at Cane Ridge and throughout the southern revivals, then the consequences of blurring the boundary between black and white bodies becomes very high. And if these white participants placed a limit on how far they would blur their identities into the realms of vulnerability that might lead to a kind of blackness, they nonetheless created a rich potential in the very gesture of negating the cohesion of traditional white bodily definition. Integration proved the threshold of this possibility, at least within the camp meeting at Cane Ridge, but the gesture's implications cannot go unrecognized, particularly when we consider this gesture in light of the politics of print and representation in the early republic.

Print Circulation and the Southern Revivals

In contradistinction to this form of abjected particularity performed by white revivalists, the print culture surrounding revivals often conforms to the ideologies of print outlined by Michael Warner. In *The Republic of Letters*, Warner describes the "principle of negativity" required of eighteenth century print culture: "it is a ground rule of argument in a public discourse that defines its norms as abstract and universal, but it is also a political resource available only in this discourse, and available only to those participants whose social role allows such self-negation (that is, to persons defined by whiteness, maleness, and capital)."[146] In order to take on a public voice in print, one must remove the personal and particular and take on the rhetorical pose of disinterestedness. This disinterestedness only happens when one ignores one's identity and social location, thereby codifying the white male body by its absence within print discourse. This kind of abstraction is fundamental to much political discourse of the era. In his discussion

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[146] Michael Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 42.

of *The Federalist* Jay Grossman writes that "'the people' in whose name and by whose authority the new Constitution is nominally adopted is a chimera and a mirage, a construction always of rhetorical negation which, as such, can never be said to be either true or not."[147] As such, "the people" shifts in meaning among the different papers, working as a concept by its inherent invisibility. Both examples points to how individuals and publics become abstract subjects within public writing, potentially allowing for more capacious models of the public, but also silencing differences that need to be addressed (such as race and gender). The print culture of the early republic is based on silencing the body's location in politics and society, and one's ability to intervene in this discourse is predicated on that silence. If this rhetorical move allows an elision of white male privilege, then the revival exercises offer a potent alternative to understanding American representational politics.

Despite the social differences of writers like Alexander Hamilton and Southern country ministers like those found at Cane Ridge, this disinterested voice often times shapes the print news surrounding the revivals. In the letter collection, *Increase of Piety,* one Daniel Jones prefaces a letter written by Reverend John Evans Findley. A private letter (as many of those published publicly originally were), Jones states that he finds the document too important to leave out of the larger public conversation. But in bringing Findley's impressions to the general reading public Jones carefully prefaces Findley's letter, portraying the minister as a figure capable of speaking to the public due to his disinterested nature. Jones credits Findley with a "coolness and deliberation of character" and that he "confined himself principally to facts" rather than the kind of "extravagant embellishments, which are the customary offspring of an

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[147] Jay Grossman, *Reconstituting the American Renaissance: Emerson, Whitman, and the Politics of Representation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 53

imagination untutored by the guidance of mature and deliberate judgment."[148] Given Findley's disinterested record of the camp meetings, "it is presumed, that your readers will give full credit to the existence of facts, as stated by him in the above narrative."[149] Jones sanctions Findley's letter by couching it in the rhetoric of eighteenth-century print culture, guaranteeing that any conclusions Findley reports about the revivals (all positive) will not be misconstrued with the enthusiasm of those revivalists who so willingly and immoderately engage in the physical manifestations of revivalism.

This gesture is similar to those writers who celebrate the revivals and the attendant exercises, while making clear that they have never personally experienced physical manifestations of religious ecstasy. In fact, few writers, even the most ardent supporters of the revivals, ever claim to have fallen or experienced any physical exercise. Many writers take on a detached style of reportage, creating taxonomies of various exercises and levels of physical response, without ever admitting to their own physical engagement.[150] Minister George Roberts writes "God has spared me through a perilous affliction: hundreds fell on my right hand and on my left; and nothing but a sense of duty to my station, prompted me to stand on my spot; I think none the less of those who remove."[151] As a minister, Roberts sees himself as obligated to maintain his bodily integrity, or else his office would be compromised. He might not think less of those who succumb but holds it as a point of integrity that he maintained himself. As early republican manhood is defined by self-restraint, the falling exercises involves a loss of authority

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[148] *Increase*, 91.
[149] *Increase*, 91-92.
[150] Revivalist David Rice writes "as to those bodily exercises, I acknowledge I never experienced them; and therefore it becomes me to speak about them with modesty." Rice supports the revivals, but has a cautious relationship to the exercises, which he does not want to dismiss, but, at least in the published sermon, hesitates to lay direct claim to. In David Rice, *Sermon on the Present Revival of Religion, &c. in This Country: Preached at the Opening of the Kentucky Synod*, (Washington: Monitor Press, 1804), 18.
[151] *Extracts of Letters*, 7.

in the revival and admitting falling in print means a potential loss of authority among imagined readers. The voice in print mimics that public self-restraint, obscuring and denying just what kind of investments both personal and specifically bodily, the writing subject might maintain.

Issues of authority and interpretation of the revivals and exercises were central to the print battles between revivalists and anti-revivalists. Despite the enthusiasm among evangelicals about the revivals and the concomitant spread of revivalism throughout the country, as their popularity increased and reports of revival scenes spread via print and pulpit, detractors stepped up to alert Christians to the harmful possibilities. Anti-revivalists found many things to fault—the chaos of the proceedings, interdenominationalism, refusal to adhere to traditional doctrines (particularly Calvinist doctrines), the role of women, and other signs of religious “enthusiasm” running amuck. But whatever the critique, these detractors most often returned to the issue of the exercises and other signs of emotionalism. The body on display at the revivals became the site and center of anti-revivalism, a battle that took place in print.

These displays particularly bothered Adam Rankin, an early participant in the Kentucky revivals who grew disenfranchised as they moved further away from Presbyterian orthodoxy. Like many anti-revivalists, Rankin believes that the work of God happens in men’s souls and that the soul needs to be the concern of Christians, not the body. In making this confusion, Rankin believes revivalists are perverting the very heart of evangelicalism—Jesus Christ. Rankin charges revivalists with the delusion of concentrating on Christ as man. He makes clear that Christ’s time as a man was relatively brief, only out of necessity, and that man does not need Christ in human form in order to understand him as the son of God and the key to salvation: “the kingdom of God cometh not with observation neither is it lawful to worship, even to form an idea of him [Christ] in our minds; for as man he is not the object of our devotion, he never was a

person as a man; his personality is divine, and as such alone, he is the object of our faith and devotion, and Heaven's grand depository of all possible blessings; but as such we have no idea of him, as possessing any possible form."[152] Rankin's criticism here is intriguing. Shortly after this passage, he claims that the excessive focus on Christ as man reeks of popery, yet in all the literature surrounding the revival, one does not come across what could be characterized as a significantly more human Christ.[153] It seems rather, that for Rankin, the very centrality of the body at the camp meetings necessarily turns us back towards Christ and his body. And if the early republic's ideal man is the disinterested and disembodied man, then camp meeting exercises undermine the very authority ministers are trying to assert.

An anti-revival pamphlet produced by John Cree along with other ministers finds the greatest fault with the exercises. For Cree, those experiencing such physical outpourings at the revivals are not touched by God, nor does he read them cynically as falsely performing. Rather, they are under the power of the devil, or some other dark power: "but it would be a gross delusion to consider any sort of bodily agitation or affliction as being, in itself, the work of the Spirit, or as so connected with it, that the latter might be inferred from the former. Besides, there is much soul-trouble in the saints themselves, arising from Satan's temptations, from their own unbelief, and other corruptions, which may, no doubt, have a distressing effect upon their bodies…."[154] The issue here is legibility. Physical signs of conversion are not self-evident. The saints experienced physical torments due to wrestling with evil and torment was relieved once the saints were won over to God. Reading the fallen and regenerate revivalist as having

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[152] Rankin, *Review*, 22.
[153] Rankin, *Review*, 23.
[154] John Cree et. al., *Evils of the Work Now Prevailing in the United States of America, Under the Name of A Revival of Religion; Shewn By a Comparison of that Work, as it is Represented by its Friends and Promoters with the Word of God* (Washington: 1804), 8.

experienced redemption is to misread the body; they are rather still deeply bonded to sin by their enthusiasm and acceptance of physical torment. But it is important to recognize that Cree is not dismissing these exercises as, for example, some kind of failure of the mind. It is the vulnerable body of the sinner still in torment, still in the throes of Satan's power. To revivalists, the exercises were outward manifestations of the work of god; to anti-revivalists, they signal a failure to achieve the work of god. Both interpretations are predicated on the kind of vulnerability that revival participants simultaneously embraced and felt deep shame over. If the fallen embraced their shame as a source of pride, Cree marginalizes the fallen, stigmatizes them in their shame, and negates their ability to speak on behalf of the revival and its work. When one publicly, either at the camp meeting or in print, introduces the shamed, fallen body of the revivalist into the discussion, this embodied presence disrupts the subject's ability to speak with authority. The logic of the bourgeois public sphere that Warner articulates stands in opposition to the emotional, performative self of the revival.

Cree's pamphlet also claims that, "some indeed who speak in favour of the work pretend, that the spasmodic affections and convulsive symptoms, now mentioned, are little or no part of it. But it is evident from the testimonies now adduced of the friends of the work, that these bodily phenomena or appearances are considered as the primary part, if not the whole of the work; even that part of it in which Providence addresses the sense with undeniable testimony."[155] To those revivalists who might attempt to minimize the exercises as a means of gaining a more widespread acceptance, Cree, et. al. argue that the exercises are the flawed foundation of the revival experience. Where some might wish to hide the ecstatic body, critics like Cree sought to place it once again on display not to celebrate the millennial work of god but to act as evidence

[155] Cree, *Evils*, 7.

of the "delusions" taking place at the revivals. Revivalists who might downplay the exercises are perhaps playing to the disembodied imperative of public print, and Cree's attack is to therefore implicate them through that body.

These examples point out how invested the public face of evangelicalism was in the print discourse of the early republic as a means of legitimizing (or critiquing) revivalism to a larger American readership. The disembodiment of print discourse appealed to those anti-revivalists offended by the shamed, bodily presence at camp meetings; this discourse also benefited pro-revivalists who desired a larger legitimacy and to win over their audiences to the ultimate purpose of revivals—saving souls. Proponents were in a most difficult position—the exercises became the selling point of revivalism's power, and yet the power of the abjected white body threatened not only the subjectivity of those who fell, but those who invoked those bodies within print circulation. But these insights also point to the limitations of understanding the revival experience exclusively within the terms of print culture. The experiential nature of religion requires a theoretical model that understands not only how revivalism was disseminated throughout the United States, but also how such experiences registered on a particular and immediate level. In carefully considering such possibilities, a new way of constructing whiteness in public spaces emerges, one that sacrifices the white body's privilege in a moment of public abjection. Print culture performs an erasure of this particularity that scholars need to reclaim in order to understand how, in Mark Noll's words, evangelicalism became the "established religion in a nation that had forsworn religious establishments," and just what larger possibilities might have been made available by the evangelicalization of the United States.[156]

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[156] Mark A. Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 208.

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The narratives of Cane Ridge circulated for several years in the evangelical press and were read alongside sermons, lessons on piety, theological discussions, reports of mission work, and news of other revivals across the country and the English speaking world.[157] It is important to take a moment to consider Cane Ridge and its related narratives within this context for it reveals both some of the more exceptional qualities of Cane Ridge as well the tension between evangelicalism at the regional and national level.

In a letter to the *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* in 1801 minister Jonathan Miller described a revival in his parish in Bristol Connecticut. Miller depicts the lack of attention to spiritual matters in the community, low church attendance, and the like. But as a revival percolates, the community becomes animated with grace. Miller notes, "in the whole season, nothing noisy or tumultuous has been discovered, no outcries or swooning, and none who have been disposed to relate their own experiences in conferences and public meetings…."[158] In his insistence on an orderly revival Miller even goes so far as to claim that no one had any interest in speaking about their experiences out loud. Though the extreme silence of his description is a bit uncommon, his narrative of an orderly, regimented revival season is conventional among revival narratives from the northeastern United States. It would be an oversimplification to ascribe emotionalism to frontier revivalism and orderly revival activities to the northeast but there is some merit to this oversimplification because it forces us to recognize the heterogeneous nature

[157] An anonymous article entitled "Revival of Religion in the North of Scotland" *Massachusetts Missionary Magazine*, July 1803,103-106, is a reminder that Scotland held a special place in the minds of U.S. evangelicals well beyond the revivals of the 1740s.
[158] Jonathan Miller, "Revival of Religion in West-Britain," *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*, July 1800, 21-27: 23.

of revivalism as well as the pitfalls of locating American religious experience too deeply in New England religious culture and the surrounding area.

The famous revival preacher Charles Grandison Finney helps us understand the consequences of this. In his *Lectures on the Revival of Religion* (1835) Finney tells his audience that although emotions are necessary in revivals, they can't be trusted and must be harnessed and directed towards the proper ends: "the emotions are purely involuntary states of mind. They naturally and necessarily exist in the mind under certain circumstances calculated to excite them. But they can be controlled *indirectly*."[159] Although no stranger to ecstatic revival practice, Finney's lectures are in many ways a codification of how ministers and laypersons are meant to act in the creation, performance, and prolongation of a religious revival and fundamental to this is restraining how individuals behaved within the revival space. Finney covers how to encourage a revival, how to pray correctly, what to preach; the *Lectures* formalize what began as a more spontaneous outburst of religious energy and community into a cohesive formula that can be exported to any region of the country; a standardization of revival practice. But Finney's own revival experiences come from predominantly preaching across the northeast. Though some (like Lyman Beecher) accused Finney of encouraging excessive emotionalism and disorder with his preaching, compared to the Kentucky revivals, Finney's work shares more in common with other mainstream northeastern religious figures.

In this vein, Finney's "anxious bench" was a means of placing evangelical bodies on display, while maintaining an orderly revival service.[160] Here, those who wished to experience

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[159] Charles Grandison Finney, *Lectures on the Revival of Religion* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1960), 39.

[160] Paul Conkin notes that the anxious bench was not actually innovated by Finney, but by Baptist revivalists in North Carolina, following in the wake of the Kentucky revivals. In Conkin, *Cane Ridge*, 76.

conversion were positioned in revival services separate from other participants. As Whitney Cross describes, "set apart on the one hand from the regenerate, and on the other from the unconverted, indifferent, and curious, the anxious ones became subjects for unlimited and merciless exhortation."[161] Although not a space for the expressions fundamental to the southern revivals, the anxious bench was a part of the performative ritual of later revivals, and the space where participants willingly took on another manifestation of shame, physically situating themselves as those desirous of conversion but unable to make the same passage as converts, trapped in their sin and unable to rise above it. The display was subdued and organized, lacking the more empowered and volatile displays found at the southern revivals.

To read revivalism through dominant figures like Finney is to lose the more complex texture of evangelicalism and its myriad manifestations. In this chapter, I have attempted a kind of case study of a very particular place and time. In some ways, it might be read as an opposite move to the turn towards transatlantic American Studies—rather than turn to broad circulations across multiple countries and regions, I have attempted to look closely and particularly at one node of nineteenth-century revivalism. But these methods share common ground by de-centering the very concept of the "American." What happens in Cane Ridge transmits across the nation through print and oral communication, but also speaks to a very specific moment in time and place that cannot be overly generalized to the American evangelical experience.

But we can claim that the Cane Ridge and the surrounding revivals are a window into the radical and participatory possibilities that evangelicalism's affective ethos engendered. The Presbyterian sacramental occasion became the revival, then the camp meeting, and in the end, a

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[161] Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1950), 181.

new way to understand the white body in the early republic, an act full of political and social significance at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The exercises short circuited the abstraction and invisibility of the white body by privileging vulnerability, shame, and performance. When war veterans, ministers, lawyers, and other citizens of stature willingly sacrifice such privilege, then a new understanding of the white body becomes possible. At Cane Ridge and the Southern revivals, one cannot join the evangelical community until one has known such shame, such vulnerability. True, many at camp meetings never converted and many never experienced the exercises. But all present were implicated and few write about them without expressing their own affective relationships. Going both in and beyond the print sources surrounding these early revivals, the revivalist’s body emerges as a site of new possibility within early American social structures. Camp meetings did an experiential work that, although temporary, collapsed distinctions of gender and race that many thought necessary to maintain order. The evangelical focus on emotionalism can be seen as a means of moving beyond the categories created and sustained by the rational discourses of the early republic.

Chapter Three

Geographies of the Heart: Conversion, Itinerancy, and the American Indian Experience in Antebellum Evangelicalism

In the early 1830s, the Mashpee Indians of Cape Cod began a political battle with Harvard College and the state of Massachusetts in order to gain greater political autonomy over their community as well as the ability to choose their own town minister. Pequot William Apess, an itinerant Methodist preacher, came to Mashpee while this crisis was simmering and aligned himself with the Mashpee Indians and their political activities. An article from the nearby *Barnstable Patriot* called Apess a "*pious* interloper" and a "hypocritical *missionary*."[162] In the Massachusetts legislature, one representative placed the problems of Mashpee all at the feet of Apess: "the difficulty in the Marshpee tribe had been caused by an itinerant preacher, who went there and urged them to declare their independence."[163] Though the Mashpee had put together a collective petition to the legislature outlining their political demands, the same representative claimed "the petition originated no doubt, from the itinerant preacher, who has been pouring into their ears discontent."[164] In each of these instances, Apess is tarnished by his role as missionary and itinerant and surrounding hostile whites believed that his circulations had been to blame for the political problems that arose among the Mashpee. The threatening nature of the itinerant preacher has been discussed in chapter one through such figures as George Whitefield and James Davenport. But that threat is amplified when that preacher is also an Indian whose itinerancy is

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[162] Quoted in William Apess, *Indian Nullification of the Unconstitutional Laws of Massachusetts Relative to the Marshpee Tribe; or, The Pretended Riot Explained* in William Apess, *On Our Own Ground: The Complete Writings of William Apess, a Pequot,* ed. Barry O'Connell (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 227.
[163] Apess, *Own Ground*, 207.
[164] Apess, *Own Ground*, 207.

doubled with political activity on behalf of Indians. Though white Americans across the religious spectrum wanted to see Indians converted to Christianity, there is something about Apess's status as Indian and as a mobile, circulating religious figure that unsettled the white, racist desire for a docile Indian and Indian community.

This chapter seeks to analyze the evangelicalism that made complex inroads into American Indian communities in the early nineteenth-century and how Indian converts, specifically Apess and George Copway, moved from conversion, to itinerancy, to political and social activism, like Apess's work at Mashpee. Indian converts and missionaries had existed in earlier centuries, but the nineteenth-century offered a new and significant dimension to the possibilities inhered in the adoption of evangelical Christianity by Indians—the mobility of itinerant preaching and missionary work. Despite such eighteenth-century American Indian preachers like Samson Occom, Indian missionaries only emerged as a distinctive and active part of the evangelical experience alongside the explosion of missionary work following the War of 1812.[165] It is the mobility and circulation of mission work that offers us insight into the utility of evangelicalism for American Indians and enriches our understanding of the affective dimensions of evangelicalism. Though the first two chapters gave examples of specific evangelical affects at work (ecstasy, shame), these missionary figures offer us something beyond a description of affect—they offer a map of its various possibilities. This is less about specific and distinct affective transmissions (like ecstasy, shame, or sorrow) and more about the construction of their possible routes of transmission across the United States.

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[165] For an excellent discussion of Occom's work, see chapter two of Joanna Brooks's *American Lazarus: Religion and the Rise of African-American and Native American Literatures* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) as well as chapter three of Bernd C. Peyer's *The Tutor'd Mind: Indian Missionary-Writers in Antebellum America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997).

The significance of these routes of transmission relate to the geopolitics of American Indian communities in the era of removal. Though missionaries saw themselves as working on behalf of Indian nations, they often understood religious conversion as means of facilitating assimilation or the integration of Christianity into new reservations being touted as the salvation of Indians in the face of white encroachment and the negative influence of white communities in proximity to Indian lands. As a result missionaries sought to tout their successful conversions among Indians as conversions both to Christianity and to white American notions of civilization. In missionary magazines, memoirs, and the general press they presented images of Indians moved by the power of revivalism and conversion and subdued by its power into passive and pious Christians unconcerned with earthly considerations.[166] This chapter begins by understanding the work of these representations within missionary print discourse. I then turn my focus to the writings of Apess and Copway, both converts to Methodism who became missionaries among the Indians. I argue that Copway and Apess turn to the affective power of revivalism not to reinscribe the passivity of Indian converts (like the work of their white counterparts), but to create affective bonds that allow Indian communities to recommit to the sacred meaning of land through a discourse of affective affiliation and sacred geography. Despite the limits put in place on Indian converts by missionaries, the affective excess of communal religious experience combined with the long history of Indian resistance provided a means of deploying the affective bonds of evangelicalism in order to resist removal and generate alternatives to it.

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[166] This missionary project shares significant affinities with southern American missions to plantations, where missionaries preached a "gospel of submission" to slaves in order to appease plantation owners. This image has been satirized in such antebellum novels as William Wells Brown's *Clotel; or, The President's Daughter* (Boston: Bedford St. Martin's, 2000) and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006). Scholarly work on this subject include Milton C. Sernett's *Black Religion and American Evangelicalism: White Protestants, Plantation Missions, and the Flowering of Negro Christianity, 1787-1865* (Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1975) and Susan M. Ryan's *The Grammar of Good Intentions: Race and the Antebellum Culture of Benevolence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

Praying Indians and Docile Bodies

The previous chapters have dealt with some reasonably safe spaces in which to consider the affective dimensions of evangelicalism; the relatively homogenous populations of New England and Scotland in chapter one and the rural Southern communities of chapter two. Though chapter two addressed the troubling racial dynamics that were a part of the Cane Ridge camp meeting in Kentucky, all of the speaking subjects shared the commonality of whiteness. But the "universality" of Christianity and the conversion experience had a different resonance in the context of missions to the Indians because American Indians themselves were not broadly understood as universal subjects. A brief glimpse at the polygenetic theories of the antebellum period will shed light on this. Josiah Clark Nott and George Robins Gliddon's *Types of Mankind* (1854) was a capstone text of the theory of polygenesis, the belief that the differences among races are inherent due to the independent geneses and developments of the races across the globe. Nott and Gliddon are aware that polygenesis conflicts with the biblical account of man's creation but insist that it is ultimately the only obvious way to understand the differences among the races. Hedging their bets slightly they write, "whether an original diversity of races be admitted or not, the *permanence* of existing physical types will not be questioned by any Archaeologist or Naturalist of the present day. Nor, by such competent arbitrators, can the consequent permanence of moral and intellectual peculiarities of types be denied. The intellectual man is inseparable from the physical man; and the nature of the one cannot be altered without a corresponding change in the other."[167] In order to convince reader's of their theory, Nott and Gliddon elide a mono- versus polygenesis position but insist that the permanent

[167] Josiah Nott Clark and Robert Gliddon, *Types of Mankind* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co., 1854), 50.

differences of the races must be understood as an absolute fact. And along with this, those physical differences of the races are "inseparable" from the mental differences among them.

In relation to the American Indian, Nott and Gliddon give careful attention to proving a distinct racial heritage, one that can be read the Indian's long history on the continent, differing mathematical, linguistic, and astronomical models, and (following Samuel George Morton's 1839 *Crania Americana*), distinct cranial features.[168] Following this summary, they provide a quote from eighteenth-century Scottish philosopher and naturalist Lord Kames who writes, "the frigidity of the North Americans, men and women, differing in that particular from all other savages, is to me evidence of a separate race."[169] Though we cannot overstate the theory of polygenesis as there were many detractors, its convenient ability to so neatly separate the races of the world and to impose a moral and intellectual value on those differences made it a useful weapon in the battles over Indian lands and rights.

These issues came to bear on missionaries to the Indians. Not only did polygenesis offer a model of human development seemingly at odds with the creation stories of Genesis, it set up boundaries between the races and their abilities to take part fully in the universal ideals of evangelical Christianity. As Baptist missionary Isaac McCoy writes, "as soon as the reader divests himself of the impression that there is something *queer* in the Indian character, and settles in his own mind that all human beings *must necessarily be the same kind of beings*, he will discover…that the Indian has been misrepresented."[170] As such, myths about the silent, taciturn, and emotionless Indian must be understood as misrepresentations and that "the Indian, instead of

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[168] Clark and Gliddon, *Types*, 296-297.
[169] Clark and Gliddon, *Types*, 297.
[170] Isaac McCoy, *History of Baptist Indian Missions Embracing Remarks on the Former and Present Condition of the Aboriginal Tribes, Their Settlement Within the Indian Territory, and Their Future Prospects* (Washington: W.M. Morrison, 1840), 24.

being a taciturn, dull being, inclined only to hunting and war, as he has been represented, is, when not oppressed with suffering, cheerful and conversable."[171] McCoy's generous reading of Indian subjectivity works to defend Indians against white encroachment and exploitation and speaks implicitly to the dividing lines laid down by polygenesis by returning Indians to the human family in the name of their ultimate conversion.

This concern over the universal humanity of Indians bears particularly on this dissertation's own articulation of affect for it brings to the center the challenges in understanding the power of affect within discourses of emotion that are themselves steeped in the logic of race. To help work through this problem, we need to consider the differences between affects and emotions, which I touched on in the introduction. Brian Massumi writes that "emotion is a subjective content, the sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as personal."[172]

For Massumi, emotion is how affect is articulated within specific individuals and within the language and modes of expression available to them, what he calls "narrativizable action-reaction circuits."[173] The expressive part of emotions is limited by whatever discourses are available to the individual experiencing affect. But affect is the "intensity," the energy that makes that emotional, subjective, expression possible. And affect's real power is in its mobility: "affect is *trans-situational*. As processional as it is precessional, affect inhabits the passage. It is pre- and postcontextual, pre- and postpersonal, and excess of continuity invested only in the ongoing: its own."[174] Affect doesn't sit still—it transmits among people and beyond, within

[171] McCoy, *Baptist Indian Missions*, 24.
[172] Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 28.
[173] Massumi, *Parables*, 28.
[174] Massumi, *Parables*, 217.

spaces and beyond; it begins before the emotion and continues on afterward; this is what he calls "the autonomy of affect." But emotions are the possessive expression of affective intensity made situationally and culturally legible. Teresa Brennan puts it perhaps more succinctly: "I define feelings as sensations that have found the right match in words."[175] As such, emotions are a cultural linguistics generated by an affective intensity that moves of its own accord—quite simply, emotions are just *expression*. And as such, those affects defined by Silvan Tomkins (such as shame) would be understood by Brennan and Massumi as emotions or feelings because of their sociolinguistic nature. The work of missionaries created a coercive linguistic context in which affective experiences among Indian converts was funneled into the language of mainstream evangelical conversion rhetoric (what I will call later in this chapter the "colonization of feeling").

But I hesitate to mark too severe a boundary between affect and emotion—keeping the terms a bit slippery has its own utility. In part, because turning emotion into a mere language function ignores the body's own ability to speak beyond words. If Brennan above links emotion with expression and expression essentially with language (and I think Massumi would agree), then what about the body's own expressiveness, its own sociolinguistic functions? The body functions within discourse and produces discourse through its movements, gestures and range of motion. And it is here that Tomkins is still very useful. As he writes in "The Quest for Primary Motives: Biography and Autobiography of an Idea," "because the free expression of innate affect is extremely contagious, all societies exercise substantial control over the free expression of affect."[176] Here Tomkins links both affect and expression together in that the transcultural and

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[175] Terera Brennan, *The Transmission of Affect* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 5.
[176] Silvan S. Tomkins, *Exploring Affect: The Selected Writings of Silvan S. Tomkins*, edited by. E.V. Demos (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 57.

transituational power of affect can be limited culturally through expression. Though affect does not reside exclusively within the body, and though the body might be the site of emotional expression more properly, the exceptional ability of the body to transmit affect as well as the ability to control bodies and thus control the transmission of emotion needs to be foreground as a key part of understanding the transmission of affect. This is not to say that Brennan or Massumi ignore the role of the body in their understandings of affect (they clearly do not). But if bodies can be as culturally situated as language, then the transmission of affect and its ostensible autonomy is complicated by the discourse of emotion. And rather than mark the line between them too severely, I wish to foreground that interrelationship. Understanding the regulation of bodies alongside the social language of emotions (particularly through the evangelical language of conversion) helps us make sense of how affect informs the study of white missionaries among the Indians. As we will see in the following section, missionaries used the affective intensity of revival experience to render Indian bodies more passive by linking the change of heart that marks conversion with an image of an idealized, passive Christianity mapped onto Indian subjects. Later, we will discuss how William Apess and George Copway found ways as writers, ministers, and activists to maintain the centrality of affectively-bound communities while operating outside of the assimilationist aims of white missionaries.

Changes of Heart: Missionaries and the Rhetoric of Conversion

As Robert Berkhofer notes, with the Second Great Awakening and the passing of the War of 1812, evangelical missionary attempts in the west, and specifically among Indians, grew

dramatically.[177] The halting, tenuous projects of the eighteenth-century may have died out, but the foundational logic of Indian conversion continued and regained significant traction among evangelicals in this time period. Many young men (and some few women) moved westward in order to preach and serve various Indian nations across new states and territories. Though Berkhofer rightly notes that "after thousands of dollars and hundreds of missionaries, the managers and patrons of the missionary societies had to account their eight decades of effort among the American Indians as unsuccessful," the nineteenth-century might be considered the modestly more successful period, if only because the realities of Indian/U.S. contact.[178] Henry Warner Bowden points out that missions consistently failed where "native cultures were still relatively intact" and only "after the fiber of precontact culture had been weakened by disease, loss of land and manpower, and increased dependence on European trade" did missionaries find some success.[179] This means the nineteenth-century, with its particularly devastating transformations of the geography of Indian nations (reaching its apogee with the Indian Removal Act of 1830) created the conditions necessary for conversion.

Nonetheless, missionaries had exceptional difficulties overcoming challenges when working among Indian nations and peoples. Many spoke of the Indian "prejudice" against missionaries, either because of commitment to their current religious life, or because (according to the missionaries, of course), missionaries had been misrepresented by traders and Roman Catholics. They also ran into conflict due to a seeming misapprehension of their true goals. Though conversion to Protestant Christianity was the stated aim, most felt compelled to reform

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[177] Robert F. Berkhofer Jr., *Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant Missions and American Indian Response, 1787-1862.* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965), 1.
[178] Berkhofer, *Salvation*, 152.
[179] Henry Warner Bowden, *American Indians and Christian Missions: Studies in Cultural Conflict* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 122-23.

manners and cultural traditions they felt were inseparable from the Indian's supposed godlessness. Missionary John Pietzel states it most bluntly: "in the school and in the field, as well as in the kitchen, our aim was to teach the Indians to live like white people."[180] Though some missionaries fought alongside Indian nations to keep their lands and even attempted to nurture some long-standing Indian traditions, the ultimate endgame, broadly speaking, was cultural assimilation attending Christian conversion.

So the evangelical "change of heart" also entailed a change of culture, meaning that the affective complexes of evangelicalism register differently when transmitted into the lives of nineteenth-century American Indians. Though we have a historical understanding of the attempts to "civilize" Indians through missionary labors, a key part of that project has been ignored, what I call the "colonization of feeling." By this I mean that the evangelical insistence on a legible conversion moment necessary to signify a true, internal change and the presence of the Holy Ghost's intervention required that the conversion standards formulated beginning in the eighteenth-century along the Anglo-American revival network became the units of measurement on the U.S. "frontier" among Indian communities. Ministers and missionaries watched Indians during sermons and meetings for those signs they were familiar with from white conversion experiences and when Indians converted, expected not only behavioral and religious transformation, but also emotional transformations. These strategies of reading both the religious experiences and embodied practices of Indians were shaped by cultural conventions and racist tropes of white American culture.

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[180] John H. Pietzel, *Lights and Shades of Missionary Life: Containing Travels, Sketches, Incidents, and Missionary Efforts, During Nine Years Spent in the Region of Lake Superior* (Cincinnati: Walden and Stowe, 1883), 57.

This returns us to the rituals of revival and conversion, the religious social practices discussed in chapter two now exported to Indian communities, predominantly in the West. In order to claim success among the Indians, writers pointed to successful conversion experiences among the various Indian communities. Though we have seen examples of frustrations and failures with this project, most missionaries were still committed to validating their work and the possibility of massive conversions among the Indians. Joseph Badger describes a meeting among the Indians in which "there were many who cried out, and fell into a perfectly helpless situation," an image popular in evangelical print as a sign of success but in Badger's mind, something unexpected and unexplained.[181] He goes on to write, "I could not learn from any with whom I conversed that their views of sin and of their danger and criminality, were anywise different from what was common in revivals in New England, with which I had been conversant. But the effects on the system, so different and alarming, were totally inexplicable by any."[182] The intensity of the response surprises him and Badger cannot cite any New England precedent (though they certainly exist, as we have discussed). But he claims that the language of sin and repentance the fallen Indians used was "common" to other revivals he is familiar with. The distinction is important—though Badger assumes this enthusiasm might catch a New England reader off guard, the change of heart, expressed through a sense of innate depravity, makes the Indian revivals intelligible to an evangelical reader.[183] The bodily and expressive qualities of conversion might be regionally as well as racially specific, but the change of heart at the center of antebellum evangelical discourse ostensibly transcends all regional and now racial categories.

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[181] Joseph Badger, *A Memoir of Rev. Joseph Badger; Containing an Autobiography and Selections from the Private Journal and Correspondence* (Hudson, Ohio: Sawyer, Ingersoll, and Company, 1851), 50.
[182] Badger, *Memoir*, 50.
[183] Badger goes on to alert the reader that the methods used in the meeting were traditional: "There was nothing in the preaching calculated to move the passions otherwise than what is contained in the doctrine of total depravity, repentance, and faith, as preached by all Calvinistic men. It was worth going a hundred miles to be a spectator of such incomprehensible operations of Divine power on the mind and corporeal system. Every thing was conducted with propriety and good order." In Badger, *Memoir*, 52.

The evangelical belief in the legibility of conversion (falling, tears, anxiety) expressed a commitment to a universal affective structure of conversion, in which anyone truly converted and regenerated would fall within a spectrum of public religious actions and expressions. This explains McCoy's earlier commitment to describing the universal attributes of the Indian character and also sheds light on the descriptions of conversion found in these texts. Much has been written about the troubling work of missionaries among the Indians to both conversion as well as assimilation.[184] In particular, missionaries often sought to convert Indians into the domestic arts, farming, and normative white gender roles. Along with this, I would also like to consider the possibility of a conversion of feeling that is described in these texts. The various nineteenth-century awakenings posited a conversion moment both immediate and legible, along with an impulse to unite all Americans under the banner of evangelical Christianity. When this goal is exported into American Indian communities the affective lives of Indian converts must conform to the expectations of the missionaries. This is a colonization of feeling that is also part and parcel of mission work, a way of converting both the cultural life but also the affective life of American Indians. After facilitating the conversion of a powerful Indian male, John Pietzel, missionary among the Lake Superior tribes, writes, "the Indians are taught to believe that it is the greatest weakness for a *man* to weep. Nothing but the love of Jesus can open the fountain of tears. In their heathen state they can look on, apparently with stoical indifference, when their dearest friends are torn from them by death…..But the strong man armed is brought to bow, and the adamantine heart to melt, under the power of the cross."[185] The stoic Indian mythologized in white culture through works like John August Stone's *Metamora* (1829) and other fantasies of

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[184] See Robert Berkhofer *Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant Missions and American Indian Response, 1787-1862* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press,1965), Henry Warner Bowden, *American Indians and Christian Missions: Studies in Cultural Conflict* (Chicago: Chicago University Press,1981), Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1982).

[185] Pietzel, *Lights and Shades*, 109.

the noble savage is converted both to Christ, and to a sentimental man. The success of conversion is overcoming an indigenous emotional culture (defined by this missionary as a gender-specific stoicism) and replacing it with Christian sentimentalism.

The biography of Methodist minister John Clark, *Life of Rev. John Clark* (1856), offers a similar testimony from an Indian known as Big Jacob. Big Jacob hears tales of Indian men weeping at Methodist meetings and though he chooses to attend, was "determined not to behave…like a *woman* by crying"; he cannot maintain such a posture and at the meeting also devolves into crying.[186] Big Jacob's insistence that tears would make him a woman conforms to the position taken up by certain scholars of nineteenth-century Indians and masculinity such as Peter L. Bayers who writes that "society feminized native peoples in order to rationalize their subjugation."[187] Though this might be true, various masculinities existed in this period. As Glenn Hendler has argued in *Public Sentiments* in his reading of temperance narratives, sentimentality was not gendered in the nineteenth-century as other earlier scholars have assumed, but that male sentimental conversion experiences signal "a more complexly gendered sentimentality" at work in the period.[188] Though Big Jacob understood his tears as a sign of femininity, the evangelical union of male piety and sentimental expression was not always understood as feminized, but converted, heart and soul. The potential dangers of these tear-filled conversion moments is not the feminization of the Indian male in general, but a particular kind of sentimental posture—one that values a docile piety that transforms converted Indians into compliant believers. The legibility imposed on these Indian conversion experiences is mean to signal the behavioral

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[186] B.M. Hall, *The Life of Rev. John Clark* (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1856), 160.
[187] Peter L. Bayers, "William Apess's Manhood and Native Resistance in Jacksonian America," *MELUS* 31, no. 1 (2006) 123.
[188] Glenn Hendler, *Public Sentiments: Structures of Feeling in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 32.

changes urged on by white Americans. Tears will lead not only a change of heart, but a reformation of behavior.

Rather than understand these expressive behaviors through the logic of gender, Big Jacob's tears "rationalize [Indian] subjugation" not because of the gender norms at work, but because those tears led to an Indian conversion ideal that, as we will see, privileged a deathly, disembodied ideal of a convert focused exclusively, even obsessively, on the life to come. Joseph Badger's *Memoir* offers a clearer picture of what this conversion ideal entailed. A sick Delaware Indian woman is moved by Badger's instructions and becomes convicted. Badger writes: "on Saturday, August 24th, she expressed such a calmness of mind and submission to the will of God as appeared to result from a change of heart. She had no concern about living, was willing that God should do with her as he should please; she only wanted to have her heart right."[189] Her "change of heart" is signaled to Badger by a traditional evangelical understanding of willing submission to God. But along with this submissive posture is both docility and apathy towards life itself. Her lack of "concern about living" signals to Badger that she has truly been converted, but whether conscious or not, Badger's conversion standards map onto the desired goals of Indian removal and assimilation. She is not a restive Indian creating trouble for white settlers, but a woman who has already been "removed" by her conversion.

This posture is structured by perhaps the most influential text in the evangelicalization of Indian religious experience, *The Life of David Brainerd* (1749).[190] Brainerd, an eighteenth-

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[189] Badger, *Memoir*, 117.
[190] As John A. Grigg's recent work *The Lives of David Brainerd* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) reflects in its title, there is hardly one Brainerd in circulation in the period we are studying; multiple editions, revisions, and emendations happened over the years, including the significantly edited eighteenth-century editions by Jonathan Edwards (1749) and John Wesley (1768). Two significant editions also emerged in the nineteenth century; John Styles' *The Life of David Brainerd, Missionary to the Indians with an Abridgement of the Diary and Journal* published in 1812 and Sereno Dwight's 1822 edition, *Memoirs of the Rev. David Brainerd: Missionary to the*

century missionary to the Housatonic and Delaware Indians, became a celebrated figure in evangelical culture as a model of evangelical piety following his early death and the publication of the *Life* edited by Jonathan Edwards.[191] For Edwards, Brainerd's diaries offered a window into an ideal Protestant pietism with only a secondary concern for the success and significance of his mission work.[192] So many missionaries of the nineteenth century claimed to have been inspired and consoled by Brainerd's story that their own missionary endeavors were always trailed by Brainerd's life. Joseph Conforti rightly states that the *Life* "served as the archetype for an important sub-genre of religious biography in America—the missionary memoir."[193] This role as a template for understanding missionary experience is particularly meaningful not for how white missionaries adopted that structure, but how the Brainerd ideal came to influence and shape representations of Indians within evangelical print culture. In particular, Brainerd's melancholy (a point of contention for Edwards in his editorial role) came to be privileged as an ideal for Indian converts. This melancholy ideal, and its attendant focus on death, provided a rhetorical means for creating an ideal Indian conversion motif, where the pious obsession with death is a marker of sanctity as well as passivity.

Perhaps most prominent among the melancholy currents running through Brainerd's *Life* are his frequent reflections on death and it is this "death piety" that comes to have a troubling influence on Christian perceptions of Indian converts. Physically unhealthy much of his life

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Indians on the Borders of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania: Chiefly Taken from his Own Diary. By Rev. Jonathan Edwards of Northampton. These titles alone signal a refocusing of Brainerd's life around his missionary work, in line with the reanimated missionary projects of the nineteenth-century. Though heavily editorialized by Edwards and transmitted in multiple editions in the nineteenth century, for the ease of readers I cite only from Edwards's edition as published in the Yale *Works of Jonathan Edwards*.[190]

[191] Not unlike Sarah Edwards's narrative (discussed at the end of chapter one), Brainerd's *Life* is structured around Jonathan Edwards's own evangelical ideals. This happens on two levels in the text: first, at the level of omission and secondly at the level of intervention, with Edwards explicating on his own terms features of Brainerd's experiences.

[192] For a thorough discussion of how both Edwards and Wesley edit Brainerd's diaries to conform to their particular theologies, see Grigg's *The Lives of David Brainerd*, chapters four and five.

[193] Joseph Conforti, "Jonathan Edward's Most Popular Work: The Life of David Brainerd and Nineteenth-Century Evangelical Culture," *Church History* 54, no. 2 (1985), 197.

(which was exacerbated by the challenges of mission work), Brainerd recurrently wished for death, as when he writes, “I exceedingly long to die, and yet through divine goodness have felt very willing to live, for two or three days past.”[194] Beyond just longing to die, he is comforted by the thought of death: “indeed, I always feel comfortable when God realizes death and the things of another world to my mind: Whenever my mind is taken off from the things of this world, and set on God, my soul is then at rest.”[195] The Brainerd that emerges from the *Life* then is pious, reclusive, self-denying, and sacralized by both his sickly body and his refusal to concern himself with his bodily health. There is a kind of self-denial unto death to Brainerd’s missionary work that Edwards foregrounds in his editing and that future missionaries will take on as a template in the nineteenth-century. It is worth noting that within the dense *Life* the message Edwards most wants his readers to take away is the exceptional searching out of the self that Brainerd so masterfully displays. Edwards does not ask the reader to marvel at Brainerd’s success among the Indians or to strategize for greater and more effective mission work—Brainerd’s success as a missionary isn’t about souls saved but about a model of Christian piety par excellence—a piety defined by an extreme indifference to health and community. The insularity reflected in the *Life* comes to bear on later missionary writers and writings within and about American Indians. Brainerd’s legacy to the missionary memoir as a genre is about a representational stance on the missionary’s own commitment to the ideals of a spiritual life ultimately removed from the success or failure of the missionary project (which is perhaps a good thing, given how consistently such projects failed). But as we will see, this template has distinctly different consequences when one considers it with the racial dynamics of nineteenth-century missionary work.

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[194] Edwards, *Brainerd*, 198.
[195] Edwards, *Brainerd*, 217.

This death piety can be found in the popular tract *Poor Sarah, or, Religion Exemplified in the Life and Death of an Indian Woman* (1821). Often times attributed to Cherokee writer Elias Budinot (who translated the tract into Cherokee along with an English language introduction) but most likely written by Phoebe Hinsdale Brown, the tract tells the story of Sarah, an aged, Indian widow eking out a meager existence among her white neighbors but forever pious in the face of poverty and near starvation. The white, first-person narrator befriends Sarah and offers her modest assistance as well as discussions about Sarah's spiritual state. But Sarah, though lamenting her earthly misfortune, is ultimately concerned not with a better life for herself in this world, but in the world beyond. When the narrator finds that Sarah cannot attend religious meetings because of her tattered clothing she enlists the other women in the community to bring her new outfits. But Sarah does not want to use these clothes to attend meetings after all; she wishes to save them for her death bed. She tells the narrator, "o, these just what I pray for so long, so to lay out my poor old body, clean and decent, like God's dear white people when I die."[196] Rather than take the opportunity to rejoin her religious community, Sarah instead focuses fetishistically on her afterlife. The narrator responds, "thus was the humble band of female friends honoured, by anointing as it were the body, beforehand, to the burial."[197] This image of the honorable anointing of the still alive Sarah speaks to the troubling logic behind Indian conversions in light of the Brainerd model—the piety exemplified in Sarah is not only her deathly Christian resignation, but in the white community's satisfaction of taking part in her preparations for death. All the participants here are sacralized by ushering Sarah away from the world and towards the afterlife. Like Brainerd, her lack of interest in her ultimate survival and well-being is a mark of her true sanctification.

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[196] P.H. Brown, *Poor Sarah;, or, Religion Exemplified in the Life and Death of an Indian Woman* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Sunday and Adult School Union, 1821), 8.
[197] Brown, *Poor Sarah*, 8.

The most thorough revision of an Indian subject within the Brainerd model comes from Rufus Anderson's *Memoir of Catherine Brown, a Christian Indian of the Cherokee Nation*, published in 1825. The text was originally imagined as an article for the *Missionary Herald* but some considered that a full length work would do Brown's story more justice. As a result, "such a publication being advised, by the Prudential Committee of the Board of Missions, it is now respectfully offered to those who feel interested in the success of missionary efforts."[198] Along with this, Anderson makes clear that Brown's life is meant to be representative of future success, telling us towards the end of the narrative that "in her history, we see how much can be made of the Indian character."[199] Taken together, these two quotes make clear that Brown's narrative is meant to serve as a validation of missions among the Indians. It is also worth noting along with this that Brown's "memoir" is written not by Catherine Brown, but by Anderson. Though the text makes use of her letters to friends and family, the overall narrative of her life is written by a missionary and her experiences are tailored to make her life support mission work. We can also read Anderson's *Memoir* for its obvious relationship to Edwards and the *Life of David Brainerd* as we discussed above. Not only has Anderson taken a similar editorial model and structure, but he validates Brown by structuring her piety around the Brainerd form—the suffering, passive, deathward looking Christian ideal.[200]

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[198] Rufus Anderson, *Memoir of Catherine Brown, a Christian Indian of the Cherokee Nation* (Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, and Chocker and Brewster, 1825), iii.
[199] Anderson, *Catherine Brown*, 172.
[200] Brown's ability to narrate her own life within the white, evangelical world of print relates to the larger issues of voice and agency among colonized people. Scholars of Native American writing and culture have addressed this, such as Gerald Vizenor and Arnold Krupat. But Brown's narrative also takes us back to Gayatri Spivak's foundational essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" The title's question relates specifically to the ability of European reading practices to understand *sati*, the ritual suicide of widows in India. Spivak attempts a reparative reading of her own by analyzing the suicide of Bhuvaneswari Bhaduri outside of the imperialist and patriarchal rhetoric of British colonial reading practices. Spivak's attempt to read the signification of Bhaduri's suicide along with an awareness of the double marginalization of female colonial subjects bears of Brown's narrative and requires us to recognize how Western reading practices silence such speakers not only through the word, but through those subjects' actual bodies.

Anderson's text does not shy away from the challenges of missionary work among the Indians. He tells the reader "it has not been common for missionary stations among Pagans, to be favoured so early, as was Brainerd, with the converting influences of the Spirit of God. Generally, in these latter days, the faith and patience of a missionary, under such circumstances, have been considerably tried, before he has seen the fruits of his labours; though in due season, there has seldom failed to be a harvest amply compensating him for all his toils."[201] Despite his generous reading of David Brainerd's own mission work, Anderson alerts his reader, who must certainly have been aware, that inroads within American Indian communities are a profound challenge. This makes Brown's life both exemplary and necessary. He tells us that Catherine was "regarded as the first, who was hopefully converted from among the Indians; by means of the missionaries sent out by the American Board of Missions."[202] Brown's conversion is then a foretaste of future mission success, an exemplary woman who came to Christianity early and eagerly, setting a model of Indian piety for her fellow Indians and interested white readers abroad.

We must also address the issue of authorship and remember that like the Edwards/Brainerd relationship, Anderson is ultimately in control of the editing and dissemination of Brown's life; it is more his memoir than hers.[203] We are given several of her own letters in the text, which are intended as models of her piety and learning. But in the tradition of Brainerd's memoirs most of the letters given here are about her sense of her impending death. With a long history of health concerns in her young life, Brown frequently writes to her friends about her imminent death. In a letter to her friends Mr. and Mrs. Hall,

[201] Anderson, *Catherine Brown*, 30.
[202] Anderson, *Catherine Brown*, 26.
[203] For a discussion on the author/editor relationship in American Indian writing, see chapter three of H. David Brumble's *American Indian Autobiography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

Brown writes, "sweet and reviving is the thought, that we are not to continue long in this world, but hope soon to rest in the city of our God," a common refrain in all of the correspondences selected for the *Memoir*, and an image of an Indian reconciled to death that maps perhaps too comfortably onto the contemporary white-myth of the "Vanishing Indian."[204] When cloaked in Indianness, Brainerd's death piety transforms into an evangelical manifestation of the logic of Indian removal and ultimate extinction.

This "death piety" as I have been calling it has particular resonances within nineteenth-century politics. Russ Castronovo's work explores the "necro ideology" of the antebellum nineteenth-century, an ideology that he argues "not only annihilates historical consciousness, thereby immobilizing possibilities for political change; it also generates entities clumped about the nation-state who leave in their wake social corpses who refuse to transcend the inescapable effects of embodiment."[205] For Castronovo, this necro ideology explains the nineteenth-century cult of death as it manifests in "rituals of mourning, occult séances to summon the dead, eroticized memories of the deceased, the fetishization of suicide, and spiritualist beliefs in the afterlife."[206] I would add to this not only the recurring revival image of "falling down as if dead" but the Brainerd-inspired pietistic subject whose sick, deathly body is meant to signal an exceptional holiness. If, as Castronovo argues, this necro ideology is meant to silence "bodies that threaten the blandness of generic personhood" and those who cannot or will not transcend into political disembodiment, then the reification of Indian converts through Brainerd's deathly pietism performs a similar silencing of American Indians through Christian conversion.[207] To put it bluntly, Catherine Brown's commitment to conversion and almost singular focus on the

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[204] Anderson, *Catherine Brown*, 116.
[205] Russ Castronovo, *Necro Citizenship: Death, Eroticism, and the Public Sphere in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 14.
[206] Castronovo, *Necro Citizenship*, 1.
[207] Castronovo, *Necro Citizenship*, 13.

afterlife silences any possible critiques that an American Indian subject can make back to U.S. national politics. The Indian convert does not have to concern him or herself with reservations, removals, or genocide because their bodies hover so close and so dearly to specters of heavenly reward.

But these letters are not the unmediated form they sometimes appear and we cannot assume Brown accepts this silencing as passively or enthusiastically as Anderson makes it appear. Rather than a window into Brown's subjectivity outside of Anderson's writing, these letters come to us already altered, not only through Anderson's editorial choices, but also through Brown's own self-consciousness about her role in the missionary press. Towards the end of the narrative, in a chapter assessing Brown's "character," a friend of Brown is quoted as saying, "she was much distressed, that so many of her letters had been published, and, for a season, it was with difficulty, that we could persuade her to write to her correspondents."[208] In this brief comment the difficulty of Brown's life as an "exemplary Indian" comes into sharp relief. We can imagine the difficulty of her public life that was mediated and distributed by a missionary community anxious to convert her first to Christianity and then into a saint. Her own private writing was incalculably altered by the knowledge that her letters were being used in an evangelical press. Though we have no insight as to what specifically troubled her about this, it's important to see that Brown seems to have had little control over the distribution of her private life in the public record.

Though only a hint at the internal conflict of converted Indians writing in the presence of white evangelicalism, Brown's hesitance to speak freely even in private reveals the highly mediated and potentially vexed relationship between author, editor, and public that Christian

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[208] Anderson, *Catherine Brown*, 160.

Indian writers came to. Her seeming awareness that she is being used as a model Indian and public spokeswoman, both outside of her own control, reveals the highly self-conscious nature of the writing of Indian converts in the white evangelical press. This is a recurring scholarly problem in the study of life writing and more specifically within the discourses of race and American religion. In Mary Rowlandson's revisions by Increase Mather or in antebellum slave narratives, such as Lydia Maria Child's work with Harriet Jacobs, the tensions around accuracy and authenticity animate much scholarly conversation.[209] The Brown/Anderson relationship shares many of the tensions of such examples. But Anderson's particular articulation of Brown's life helps us understand the historically specific utility of a "docile" convert like Brown. Brown's life circulated in the years leading up to *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (1831) and *Wooster v. Georgia* (1832) where the Cherokee battle for autonomy went to the Supreme Court and the public hotly debated the ethics of removal. Brown's interests are merely those of one close to death and to whom conversion makes the battles on earth irrelevant. It is worthwhile to keep Brown and her *Memoir* in mind as we turn to authors George Copway and William Apess, two writers who had to navigate a similarly troubled relationship with white readers but who both used their writing and their lives to advocate for Indian autonomy and the centrality of sacred land as part of Indian politics.

Indian Conversion Narratives

[209] For a discussion of Mather's editorial shaping of Rowlandson's life see Christopher Castiglia's *Bound and Determined: Captivity, Culture-Crossing, and White Womanhood from Mary Rowlandson to Patty Hearst* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1996), particularly pages 80-82. For Jacobs, see Yellin's introduction to *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987) as well as Stephanie Smith's essay "Harriet Jacobs: A Case History of Authentication" in *The Cambridge Companion to the African American Slave Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Whereas Catherine Brown felt an uncomfortable lack of agency when it came to her print circulation, George Copway and William Apess are both American Indian writers who took up publication as a means of controlling their own representations and intervening in both evangelical print discussions and issues of Native American policy. Brown's *Memoirs* are mostly Anderson speaking on her behalf; Copway claims that in his autobiography certain stylistic and grammar errors remain "so that [his] own style may be exhibited as truly as possible."[210] As we will see throughout our discussion, Copway and Apess both went to great lengths to claim ownership of their texts, up to and including imagined shortcomings.

Keeping the colonization of feeling in mind, along with Brown's troubled relationship to her own print dissemination, it is important to understand how Indian writers described the affective dimensions of their religious lives and more importantly to understand how the affective utility of evangelicalism was key to the reintegration of their communities. In his 1846 memoir, *The Life, Letters and Speeches of Kah-ge-ga-gah-bowh, or, G. Copway, Chief Ojibway Nation*, Copway describes his first Christian experience. When hearing a white preacher at a revival meeting speak of heaven and hell Copway writes, "*I felt very sick in my heart*" and "I resolved to go and prostrate myself at the mourner's bench, as soon as an opportunity offered."[211] He too trembles and falls and then writes, "the small brilliant light came near to me, and fell upon my head, and then ran all over and through me, just as if water had been copiously poured upon me."[212] Invoking both Pentecost and baptism, Copway's conversion signals a recommitment to his studies, regular attendance at class meetings, and ultimately inspires him to become a missionary. In it his resistance is overcome, he experiences true conversion, and the

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[210] George Copway, *Life, Letters, and Speeches*. edited by A LaVonne Brown Ruoff and Donald B. Smith (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 67.
[211] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 102.
[212] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 102.

conversion moment leads to a commitment to both literacy and religious activity: before his conversion he "had only begun to spell and read" but afterwards "resumed [his] studies with a new and different relish."[213] Although taking on the study of English has its own perils for an American Indian, the fact that conversion animates Copway's life and projects it into a future, a future in which he believes literacy in English will be needed, that separates him from the radical turn inward that characterized Catherine Brown.

This turn towards a Christianized literacy requires us to consider the theoretical issues involved in Indian writing. As Cheryl Walker writes, "since Indians before contact did not have anything but pictographic writing, written literature emerged, to some degree, as a form of collaboration with the enemy."[214] The highly charged nature of this "collaboration" makes an analysis and recuperation of the evangelical inheritance found in these texts a challenging proposition. But Arnold Krupat's work offers us perhaps the best formulations to think through the multiple sites of contact that make up Native American conversion literature. Although he initially labels his methodology "ethnocriticism," in his more recent work *Red Matters*, he reformulates ethnocriticism as "cosmopolitan comparitivism."[215] This cosmopolitan comparitivist approach, as Krupat argues, allows us to study Native American literature as being produced primarily through its indigenous culture, but always in conversation with the other cultures such authors and texts come into contact with.[216] As he writes earlier (still using the terms "ethnocriticism"), "ethnocriticism at home rejects all forms of manichean discourse whether of a traditional and neocolonial or of a revisionist, 'victimist' kind. Thus, ethnocriticism, as I have said, is concerned with differences rather than oppositions, and so seeks to replace

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[213] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 102.
[214] Cheryl Walker, *Indian Nation: Native American Literature and Nineteenth-Century Nationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 13.
[215] Arnold Krupat, *Red Matters: Native American Studies* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2002), ix.
[216] Krupat, *Red Matters*, 20.

oppositional with dialogical models."[217] Krupat's formulation allows us to read these Native American converts outside of a hierarchical model, one that would privilege indigenous religion over the imposed Christianity of American missionaries, by seeing the relationship dialogically rather than as oppositional.

Some might see this position as eliding the inherent power imbalance of the missionary interventions of the nineteenth century and I do not want to seem unaware of that. I take it as a given that, even in its most benevolent forms, missionaries were still fundamentally interested in the ultimate erasure of indigenous cultures (though not indigenous peoples) and most operated with the end-game of assimilation in mind. But other missionaries fought against white encroachments on Indian lands and white exploitation via trade and alcohol. I would argue that despite the inherent power imbalance found in the "contact zone" (to use Mary Louise Pratt's famous phrase) between Christian missionaries and American Indians, the Indian writers discussed here move knowingly, if not easily, through this minefield. To view the utility and significance of their conversion experiences is not to valorize their new-found Christianity per se, but to understand its possible significance without resorting to other, more cynical, reading modes. This chapter attempts to avoid seeing conversion as a kind of crass, self-conscious assimilation or the other extreme of "Stockholm Syndrome" with decimated Indian populations choosing conversion out of a sense of futility. As Elvira Pulitano describes in a discussion of Krupat's method, "whether we like it or not…Native American writing, in whatever language, is the product of the conjunction of cultural practices, Euramerican and Native American; any claim to a radical cultural independence or autonomy is, therefore, untenable."[218] I agree with

[217] Arnold Krupat, *Ethnocriticism: Ethnography, History, Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 26.
[218] Elvira Pulitano, *Toward a Native American Critical Theory* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 62.

Pulitano's claim, in large part because the writers we will discuss are themselves foreground those conjunctions and are uninterested in a "radical cultural independence." Rather, both Copway and Apess evince a communitarian impulse, one that is facilitated, in part, through their evangelical experiences and that make possible social and communal relationships structured around the realities of post-genocidal Indian experience.

For example, George Copway goes to great lengths to describe his youth as one knit within his Ojibwa family and social structure. Though the opening chapter begins, "the Christian will no doubt feel for my poor people, when he hears the story of one brought from that unfortunate race called the Indian," his description of his childhood and family life is idyllic and even conventionally romantic.[219] He describes his love of "the woods, and the chase" and his Indian religious heritage is bestowed on him from lessons from his father.[220] His conversion, though it causes him to cast off his previously held religious beliefs (even calling them "the imaginary gods of my poor blind father"), happens among his Ojibwa community.[221] The Credit River revival experience begins when converted Indians speak to Copway and his family. They tell them about Christ's death for their sins and the entire family is affected, so much so that Copway's father destroys the whiskey he originally intended to take back to his tribe.[222] His father then commits to attending the camp meeting, which Copway attends the next day.

The central image of Copway's' visit to the camp meeting is of his father's dramatic response to the preaching. Hearing his father's anguished prayers Copway writes, "I thought my father was dying."[223] But his father explains to him that he is experiencing holy joy and wishes

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[219] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 69.
[220] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 69.
[221] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 69.
[222] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 96-97.
[223] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 97.

to pray for his son. Copway is deeply affected by "[his] *father's first prayer!"*[224] And tied up with this moment of his father's prayer is the image of interracial religious feeling: "the feeling was so general and powerful, that the influence was felt throughout the camp, both by the Indians and the whites."[225] This initial camp meeting is a kind of template of Copway's religious ideal—one that includes fellow Indians, whites, and his own family. Copway will leave his family when he feels called to preach, but conversion is not a rupture with his community or a retreat into a kind of monastic solitude, but a new extension of that community.

William Apess tells a somewhat different story in his memoir *A Son of the Forest* (1829). Raised by his abusive grandparents, Apess grew up without his parents or a larger Pequot Indian community. He is then indentured to Baptist Mr. Furman and his family where he learns about Christianity but shows no interest in the Baptist tradition. Apess writes of his young life not in the idealized conventions of Copway, but as a man alienated from his Indian community from an early age. Living predominantly among whites, Apess imbibes a white racist picture of Indians, writing that "the great fear I entertained of my brethren was occasioned by the many stories I had heard of their cruelty toward the whites."[226] Without any stable social structure, Apess ultimately turns to a Methodist society, a group he sees as similarly persecuted as the Indians: "all denominations were up in arms against them, because the Lord was blessing their labors and making them (a poor, despised people) his instruments in the conversion of sinners."[227] It is through this Methodist community that Apess becomes convinced that "Christ died for all mankind—that age, sect, color, country, or situation made no difference" and that "I felt an

[224] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 98.
[225] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 98.
[226] Apess, *Own Ground*, 11.
[227] Apess, *Own Ground*, 19.

assurance that I was included in the plan of redemption with all my brethren."[228] As writers in control of their own narratives, Apess and Copway do not privilege the cultural transformations idealized by white missionaries nor do they retreat into the melancholy interiority of Catherine Brown. Instead both men experience a kind of religious ecstasy that knits them closer to their communities, attaches them to larger communities, and sets in motion more politically and socially active lives. And to belabor the point, this is why an understanding of the affects within evangelical discourse is so necessary. Though missionaries attempted to exert control over the religious feelings of Indian converts and privileged particular signs of legibility, the sociality which makes those conversions possible also exceeds the controls put in place.

This is best exemplified in one of Apess's less studied works, *The Experience of Five Christian Indians* (1833). In studies on Apess, *Experience* is overshadowed by its now-famous concluding essay, "An Indian's Looking Glass for the White Man." But for this discussion, it is the five narratives that make up the bulk of that text that reveal best how certain Indian converts understood their conversion experiences and the ways those experiences can be narrated outside of the white missionary discourse. *Experience* begins with Apess's own life, a briefer version than that of *A Son of the Forest*, but that according to editor Barry O'Connell, probably written up to a year before that longer narrative.[229] This is followed by his wife, Mary Wood, written by herself. Like Apess, Wood is an orphan and her narrative is structured around a need to reconfigure some kind of community in the absence of family and while a servant (like Apess) in an indifferent white family.

[228] Apess, *Own Ground*, 19.
[229] Apess, *Own Ground*, 1.

Wood's narrative is structured around her sense of isolation and her continual search for community. She is deeply influenced by a passing missionary, with whom she begins her early interest in Christianity. Once he leaves the area, she returns to deep feelings of isolation: "he soon left the place, and when he was gone, there was not one in the place that ever afterward presented the subject to me, only in the way of derision; even the children would laugh at me and say that Mr. B. converted me."[230] Wood's brief narrative is structured around such feelings of alienation and precipitates a search for community, which she finds among the Methodists. Despite initial misgivings, she begins to attend a Methodist class. About this class she writes, "I attended the meetings, and class, and from that dear people I was encouraged to press forward and obtain my object, the salvation of my soul. But when I was alone, my mind was filled with temptations and doubts and fears."[231] Beyond the traditional cycle of conviction and backsliding in this passage, what's important to note her is the way community precedes conviction. This is not to elide the spiritual content of Wood's experience or place it in some secondary role. But beyond the purpose of finding Christian faith, Wood seeks out the Methodists for the purposes of community feeling. The Methodists class experience helps Wood create some kind of community within the larger community that has exiled her by virtue of class and race.

The need for community runs through each of the narratives. We've already heard of Apess and his attachment to the Methodist community as well as Wood; Hannah Caleb is brought back from the brink of suicide by the desire to hear her Christian Indian community pray for her "perishing soul."[232] Sally George, who is related to Apess, was a member of Caleb's church and Anne Wampy, whose narrative closes the volume, was converted by Apess while he

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[230] Apess, *Own Ground*, 134.
[231] Apess, *Own Ground*, 139.
[232] Apess, *Own Ground*, 146.

worked within her small Pequot community. Though it might be obvious that all of the experiences collected in this short volume are connected to Apess, the textual interweaving of those relationships seems a purposeful move—these five individuals speak to one another both in their lives and within their texts. What's perhaps most striking about Apess's *Experience* is the reading experience it asks for. Beyond a desire for an authentic record of Indian Christianity outside of a white-authored discourse, these narratives replicate together the Methodist community's that sustained the subjects themselves. These narratives then act as a small community, not by privileging of one individual narrative, but by creating an interdependent set of stories that reflect upon one another and model religious community in textual form.

Though this text shares important affinities with the western biographical tradition and the evangelical conversion narrative, the collective and accumulative nature of the narratives placed side by side, as well as each narrative's own foregrounding of the importance of community, points us away from the individual subject of the memoir form and toward the collaborative nature of religious experience. *The Experience of Five Christian Indians* can then be read as its own Methodist class meeting, a communal sharing of religious trials and successes that brings the reader into the meeting experience. These five Indians speak together, not as a single voice, but as a collection of overlapping voices creating a network of religious feeling that knits them together with the reader. This affective weaving at the textual level will come to bear on our understanding of the mobile religious lives and political investments of Copway and Apess in the next section.

Geographies of the Heart

Earlier, I deployed Mary Louise Pratt's concept of the "contact zone." It is worth returning to that phrase and its definition in order to understand some of the key valances of Copway and Apess's work. Pratt writes that contact zones are "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today."[233] The meeting place of American Indians and Euramerican expansionism is obvious as a contact zone but the point that might be forgotten here is that the foundation of a contact zone is a "social space." It is not just people and the power dynamics of colonialism or imperialism but the geographies in which those charged power dynamics occur.[234] In order to understand most fully how Copway and Apess deploy evangelicalism for their particular ends it's important to see them as itinerant preachers, as men who upon coming to evangelical Christianity through the Methodist tradition actively took part in circuit riding and itinerancy as means of creating a new, sacred geography in the era of Indian removals and reservations.

To do so, let us first consider briefly the history of Methodism in the U.S. and the role of the circuit rider. Indeed, there could be no Methodism in the early U.S. without these mobile figures, knitting together disparate and geographically dispersed people under the banner of Methodism. Although almost all religious denominations had a hand in Indian mission work, the Methodists were best suited for reaching out to American Indian communities. This is due in large part to the denomination's history and practice on the continent. As Carolyn Haynes writes,

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[233] Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone," *Profession 91*. New York: MLA, 1991, 33-40, 1.

[234] David Harvey's recent work, *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009) calls for a deeper engagement with geography in order to understand colonialism, post-colonialism, and progressive politics in the globalist age. This portion of the chapter is indebted to Harvey's central thesis and attempts to bring the specifics of land, its history and resources as a way to better understand the political projects of Apess and Copway.

the Methodist "emphasis on the availability of salvation to all people (regardless of race, sex, or class), their nontraditional and spirited practices of worship, and their willingness to evangelize to nonwhite peoples" set them apart from other Protestant denominations.[235] It is the Methodists, along with a handful of other religious groups, that Nathan O. Hatch claims facilitated what he calls the "democratization of American Christianity."[236] Along with this understanding of the egalitarianism of early Methodism I argue that Methodist circuit riding offered a possibility of community linked to a concept of sacred geography that Apess and Copway deploy in their activism on behalf of American Indians.

Methodism was originally a religious practice within the Anglican Church and had no original aspirations to form their own denomination. And even after the break with Anglicanism, Methodists did not form themselves into stable, church-based religious communities. As Russell Richey notes, Methodists, after splitting from the Anglican Church in 1784, did not model themselves on the patriarchal and hierarchical model of the Anglican Church.[237] Rather, the Methodist model was based on affiliation. Circuit riders were certified to preach not to specific churches, but to regions of the country. This distinction separated the Methodists from other forms of church governance and organization, but the difference has larger consequences for our understanding of affective affiliation in the early United States. Circuit riders were not tied to a

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[235] Carolyn Haynes, "'A Mark for Them All to…Hiss At': The Formation of Methodist and Pequot Identity in the Conversion Narrative of William Apess," *Early American Literature*, 31 (1996) 25-44, 26. Apess understands the Methodists in terms similar to Haynes's characterization. When the he first learns of the Methodists he writes, "Now the Methodists and all who attended their meetings were greatly persecuted. All denominations were up in arms against them, because the Lord was blessing their labors and making them (a poor, despised people) his instruments in the conversion of sinners." In Apess, *Own Ground*, 19.

[236] Along with Hatch's book, Sydney E. Ahlstrom, in his *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), titles his discussion of antebellum evangelicalism as "The Goldren Day of Democratic Evangelicalism" and Russel E. Richey argues that "republican" discourse was one of the key facets to Methodism in his book *Early American Methodism* (1991). Though I have elsewhere cautioned about the over-investment in this democratization thesis, in the case of Methodism in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century it seems to hold true.

[237] Russell E. Richey, *Early American Methodism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 56.

local community or congregation, but moved among various groups of people throughout the year. These circuits were not defined by traditional borders between states and peoples, but limited only by the breadth of possible travel within a year's circuit. As a result, Methodists connected with one another through the circuit riders who created their own sense of geography throughout the continent. Circuit riders had a distinct conception of continental geography, one that elided states, territories and regions, but knit together communities of faith through the circulation of Methodist theology and practice. In both of their works, Copway and Apess reflect this spiritual geography and make it central to both their religious work and their memoirs.

Keeping this in mind, I would like to turn to one of the more contentious passages in Apess's *A Son of the Forest*. In it, Apess gets lost in a swamp while traveling from Bozrah (in Connecticut) where he was recently baptized, back to visit his family in Massachusetts. Apess gets turned around and can't find his way back to the main road. He describes the swamp as a "labyrinth of darkness" in which he becomes "more and more entangled."[238] Each attempt to find his way out seems to only take him further into the swamp and Apess writes, "I was shut out from the world and did not know but that I should perish there, and my fate forever remain a mystery to my friends."[239] He prays to God and shortly after finds the solid ground to extract himself from the swamp.

Ron Welburn rightly characterizes this moment as Apess turning the swamp into a traditional site of Christian trial, where Apess turns not to the natural landscape in order to understand his situation, but to prayer, where God's deliverance supersedes the natural world. Welburn writes, "the physical entanglements become props warning him to avoid traditional

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[238] Apess, *Own Ground*, 42.
[239] Apess, *Own Ground*, 42.

culture's lore in order to better experience this darkness and rely on his new faith."[240] Welburn sees Apess's description of the swamp moment as a site of opposition—Apess had the choice to understand the swamp as a Native American or as a Christian. Surveying maps of the region from the period of Apess's journey, Welburn concludes that this swamp is a writerly invention and that it rhetorically "adheres to the period's Romantic and evangelical conventions."[241] Welburn's criticism requires Apess's identity (at least as it manifests itself in prose) to be irreconcilably fractured; the indigenous conception of the earth is *not* the Christian geography, and Apess has made his choice. But as Haynes points out, "Apess's subjectivity is comprised of a variety of dimensions…which are not closed, fixed, distinct, or even perpetually in competition with one another."[242] Following Haynes and our earlier discussion of cosmopolitan comparitivism, I wish to move beyond an oppositional model and read Apess's experience in the swamp not to map out the various identities onto it, but to understand what it reveals about the Christian rhetoric he chooses to deploy here.

In understanding this swamp moment, it's important to consider that it takes place in a circulation among intimate communities. Apess is in Bozrah for his baptism, which he decides is necessary after preaching in public for the first time and taking part in a "joyful" camp meeting where "at least one hundred sinners were reclaimed."[243] From Bozrah, Apess is going home to the family that he lived away from as a young boy. In fact, the inability to grow up with his parents animates much of the memoir, as Apess frequently describes to his readers any chance he has to return to them, either when running away (from the family he is indentured to) or returning from fighting in the War of 1812. If Apess's new Christian discourse characterizes the

[240] Ron Welburn, *Roanoke and Wampum: Topics in Native American Heritage and Literatures* (New York: Peter Land Publishing Inc., 2001), 87.
[241] Welburn, *Roanoke*, 84.
[242] Haynes, "A Mark for Them All," 26
[243] Apess, *Own Ground*, 42.

swamp as an impediment, this same Christianity also links him both to the large body of Methodists he now belongs to as well as his Baptist father, with whom he "had a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."[244] All of this is facilitated by the certificate he gets from his Methodist society, a certificate that attests to his standing in the Methodist community that he can use to join up with other communities throughout his journey.[245]

Welburn sees this Christianized reimagining of the swamp as a symbol of Apess's alienation from his Indian identity. But such readings create a discourse in which Apess's writing is forced to stand in for a holistic Indian identity unavailable to him in nineteenth-century New England. The lands of the Pequot Indians were already reinscribed by decades of colonial development and Apess did not grow up in a holistic Pequot environment (having lived among whites much of his young life). Welburn also assumes that any affective response to geography outside of the positivist must be a sign of an internalized colonial logic. But Apess's move from terror at being trapped and lost to holy joy (believing God helped him out of the swamp) maps an affective response generated within and because of this geography. And this response is so seemingly important that Apess felt the need to share this moment as a central experience in his memoirs.What Apess's loss in the swamp can point us to, then, is how Methodism allowed Apess and other Indians to reinscribe that landscape once again, not in a discourse completely separate from American colonial influence, but one that returns spirituality and community to the continental landscape.

Toward the end of *A Son of the Forest* Apess writes of his desire to become a missionary. Enlisted to sell religious books to make a living, he combines this work with his own self-styled

[244] Apess, *Own Ground*, 43.
[245] Apess, *Own Ground*, 42.

missionary work. He writes, “I concluded to travel, and the Lord went with me.”[246] Apess then narrates his travels across the Northeast. Over the next few pages he lists traveling to Albany, Boston, Nantucket, Salem, Providence, Portland, and others. Though not a circuit officially sanctioned by the Methodist church (Apess did battle with the Methodists to get a preaching license), Apess creates his own circuit, traveling where he feels called and needed and preaching all the way. This extended trip leads to the conclusion of the text. Though not explicitly linked, Apess concludes his narration of his travels by claiming, “I can truly say that the spirit of prejudice is no longer an inmate of my bosom.”[247] He goes on to write “look brethren, at the natives of the forest—they come, notwithstanding you call them ‘*savage*,’ from ‘the east and from the west, the north and the south,’ and will occupy seats in the kingdom of heaven before you.”[248] Beyond the self-affirmation Apess draws from his conversion and his travels, this conclusion to the memoirs also speaks to a broad Indian community, across the whole of the continent, who in coming to Christianity also place themselves central to Christian experience. Apess’s travels reaffirm a pan-Indian community and geography that is both sacred and central.

In *Fugitive Poses*, Gerald Vizenor writes of the medieval “mappamundi,” maps that weren’t meant to merely reflect accurately the geography of the earth (they didn’t), but to articulate concepts about the planet. Vizenor writes, “there is no commensurate *mappamundi* of the native world; however, the native stories of creation, totemic visions, and sacred documents are comparable to the spiritual inspiration of cathedral windows.”[249] To add to this, I would argue that the Indian conversion narratives of Apess and Copway speak to the same desire to map a spiritual and cultural significance onto the land. Apess spiritualizes the landscape as a

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[246] Apess, *Own Ground*, 48.
[247] Apess, *Own Ground*, 51.
[248] Apess, *Own Ground*, 51.
[249] Gerald Vizenor, *Fugitive Poses: Native American Indian Scenes of Absence and Presence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 175.

place of trial and faith he experiences during the process of reconnecting with his various spiritual and Indian communities.

Perhaps more than any Indian text at this period, Copway's *Memoirs* can give us the most insight into Vizenor's mappamundi of the Indian world in antebellum North America. Though Copway is interested in ignoring or eliding doctrinal differences, his career is shaped by his affiliation to Methodism and the circuit riding culture they so aggressively developed.[250] He adopts and appropriates these circuits, using them to reintegrate and weave together the increasingly fractured Indian communities throughout the American continent.

Copway's life began in British Canada, but his conversion brings him more fully into the U.S. missionary fold. After he decided to become a preacher, Copway traveled the U.S. along these Methodist circuits, preaching and seeking support for missionary work among the Indians. In one description of his travels he writes, "at Chicago I embarked in a schooner for Buffalo; but getting tired of this, left it at Detroit, and took steamboat for Buffalo just about daylight."[251] Following this, Copway goes to Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, and onto New York. In this one trip (of many) Copway traverses a substantial portion of the U.S. He even begins to take on the voice of a travel writer: "Boston is much overrated; there are very few pretty spots; the rest is crooked and narrow. It is far behind New York, Philadelphia, and perhaps Baltimore, and new [sic] Orleans."[252] His ability to rank and assess the various capitals of the United States is the product of this Methodist circuitry.

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[250] He writes, "In that country [Indian country], we ought not to know each other as Presbyterians, Methodists, or Baptists, but only as missionaries of the cross." In Copway, *Life, Letters*, 152.
[251] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 120.
[252] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 122.

These descriptions invite the more immediate comparison to Fanny Kemble or Frances Trollope, outsiders touring and describing the United States to a home-bound readership. But Copway's prose goes beyond the level of description as these travels are linked to the spiritual and material support he gets along the way. He arrives in Buffalo without any money, having lost it on the steamboat ride (his hat, containing the money, had blown into the water). He writes, "here I was, moneyless, friendless, and hatless, and in a strange land!"[253] The joke about the hat belies the difficulty of an Indian with still limited English language skills traveling cross-country. However, Copway finds a friend in the city when he chooses to stay at a "Temperance Hotel" run by James Madison, a fellow Methodist. Later that night he "accompanied him to the prayer meeting, where he told a Brother Copeland my circumstances. They made up the whole amount of my loss, and gave me a dollar over. I could now visit the East as I had purposed before my loss."[254] This example of good fortune is also about the network of spiritual affiliation that binds Copway to a larger evangelical community of feeling. This is one more network of feeling engendered by antebellum evangelicalism. The affective bonds of print, feeling, circuit riding, and the increasing mobility of the United States create networks of feelings based on volitional religious affiliation.

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For both Copway and Apess, these issues coalesce around their political ambitions on behalf of American Indians. Though both maintain a sense of their original national affiliations (Ojibwa and Pequot respectively) each come to embrace larger pan-Indian communities in their

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[253] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 120.
[254] Copway, *Life, Letters*, 120.

political struggles. Apess takes part in the Mashpee "rebellion" in the 1830s and Copway uses his celebrity and publications to advance a pan-Indian reservation project. Each makes use of evangelical rhetoric, U.S. political discourse, and a commitment to a broader and inclusive Indian identity to suture the fragmented lives and communities of Indians within the American political scene. Though I will argue that their appropriation of Methodist circuitry and evangelicalism deeply inform their political goals, I am cautious not to overly privilege that mode as the defining feature of their ideologies. What both men take from their Methodist itinerancy and revival experiences is not about conversion or faith exclusively, but about a model of community affiliation that privileges the affective intimacies that bound communities and groups together.

For Apess the issues arise when he chooses to work with the Mashpee Indians of Massachusetts.[255] The Mashpee occupied a community on Cape Cod that since 1763 had been governed based on a model imposed by the Massachusetts colonial government. In this form, the community was lead by five overseers (two of whom had to be English), a town treasurer (also English), and at least one constable serving as a police force. The level of English involvement waxed and waned over time and with an absence of white involvement the Mashpee developed their own political autonomy. But beginning in the 1830s the white overseers began to exert more authority over the community and the Mashpee pushed backed against this encroachment on their autonomy.[256] At the same time, they were struggling with minister Phineas Fish, a man appointed to the community by a bequest from Englishman William Williams in 1711 for the purposes of Christianizing the Mashpee. The community was frustrated by Fish's seeming

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[255] Though known historically as the Mashpee Indians, at the time they were called the "Marshpee" Indians and this will go uncorrected in all direct quotations from the *Indian Nullification*.
[256] Jack Campisi, *The Mashpee Indians: Tribe on Trial* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1991), 101.

indifference to both their spiritual and material well-being and sought to regain control of the meeting house left to his control by the Harvard trustees who oversaw the Williams bequest. Apess's involvement, including barring whites from outside of the community from taking lumber from Mashpee lands and confronting both Fish and representatives of the Massachusetts government at the Mashpee meeting house, lead to his arrest.

It is important to recognize that the conflict between the people of Mashpee and the trustees of Harvard is fundamentally created by the logic of missionary work among Indians that was charted earlier in this chapter. Williams's bequest reads, "I give the remainder of my estate to be paid yearly to the College of Cambridge, in New England, or to such as are usually employed to manage the blessed work of *converting the poor Indians* there."[257] Williams's trust sets up a protector relationship where the white trustees of Harvard are given the responsibility of caring for the spiritual well-being of the Mashpee Indians. The Indians are rendered politically passive by the absence of control they have over the funds and, importantly, the choice of minister among them. The institutionalized paternalism of Indian missionary work sets the stage for the Mashpee rebellion in the nineteenth-century.

Though more modest, the Mashpee rebellion mirrors the more famous conflict between Georgia and the Cherokee Indians happening conterminously.[258] Though treaties with the Indians following the American Revolution treated each tribe as an independent nation and therefore gave the federal government the sole authority of engaging politically with Indian nations, the state of Georgia began to chafe at this restriction as settlers demanded access to

[257] Apess, *Own Ground*, 253.
[258] In a document to the trustees of Harvard outlining their grievances, the Mashpee use the conflict in Georgia to their own rhetorical advantage: "Perhaps you have heard of the oppression of the Cherokees and lamented over them much, and thought the Georgians were hard and cruel creatures: but did you ever hear of the poor, oppressed, and degraded Marshpee Indians in Massachusetts, and lament over them?" In Apess, *Own Ground*, 175.

Cherokee land.[259] This conflict led to two Supreme Court cases; *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* and *Worcester v. Georgia*. Though the courts ultimately ruled in favor of the Cherokee Nation, that decision could not sway the opinion of Andrew Jackson and, with a small faction of the Cherokee people supporting a removal treaty, beginning in 1836 Cherokee Indians began moving to their reservation in present-day Oklahoma. The Cherokee issue was still essentially unresolved at the time of the Mashpee conflict and many partisans in the events saw parallels between the two cases.

Apess and many other individuals from the Mashpee Indians created a document outlining their grievances, published as *Indian Nullification of the Unconstitutional Laws of Massachusetts Relative to the Marshpee Tribe; or, The Pretended Riot Explained* in 1835. Unlike the autobiographical tradition we have seen throughout this chapter, *Indian Nullification* is an unwieldy and poly-vocal text. Though Apess is a strong presence throughout the text, as O'Connell points out, "it is the work of many hands."[260] It is that quality of the text that makes it so significant politically and rhetorically both to American Indian literature and to this project. What Apess and the rest of the Mashpee community do in *Indian Nullification* is create a text that mirrors the collectivist politics of the Mashpee community. No one voice speaks on behalf of the Mashpee, no one person claims a heroic role in the conflict, no one individual claims ownership of the community or its political aims. Much like *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians*, Apess et.al. put together a document that reflects a community of readers and writers and attempts to bring the community's lived practice into a writing practice. As such, the affective and communal dimensions of evangelicalism that we have been discussing throughout

[259] For a fuller discussion of Indian nations and U.S. policy, see Petra T. Shattuck and Jill Norgen's *Partial Justice: Federal Indian Law in a Liberal Constitutional System* (New York: Berg, 1991). This portion of my discussion is indebted to their work, particularly chapter one, which deals with the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century, and addresses the situation of the Cherokees in Georgia fully.
[260] Apess, *Own Ground*, 165.

this dissertation in part helps shape the text's distinctive qualities. But beyond the aesthetics of the document, *Indian Nullification* reflects a lived political practice at odds with the benevolent paternalism imposed by the Williams bequest, the authority of the Harvard trustees, and the politics of the state of Massachusetts.

This community politic is reflected in Apess's own adoption into the Mashpee community. Apess came to the Mashpee people as an itinerant preacher after hearing from some outside the community that they were unhappy with Fish, the white minister appointed to the community by the Harvard trustees. Apess finds that Fish's ministry has been good for the surrounding white population but that "the little red children were virtually bidden to stand aside."[261] Seeing this inequality, Apess both preaches to the community and then asks about their wellbeing. The Mashpee all make clear to him their unhappiness with the situation and Apess decides to help them with the Harvard trustees and the state. But Apess acknowledges that in order to act on behalf of the Mashpee, they must adopt him. He writes, "then our rights and interests would become identical."[262] Once adopted, all those present at the community meeting where Apess is speaking agreed to a document, sent to the Harvard trustees, claiming that Apess and his family now belonged to the tribe and would forever. In this gesture, the Mashpee absorb Apess and his family into the community not only because of a commonly shared Indian heritage but because of shared political and religious sentiments. The Mashpee tribe brings Apess into the fold in a volitional model of community (parallel to the Methodist community so important to Apess) that does not erase their identity as the Mashpee Indians, an identity to be preserved all the more aggressively as their numbers dwindled and U.S. federal policy towards Indians became increasingly hostile. When responding to a newspaper article that claims Apess was an

[261] Apess, *Own Ground*, 171.
[262] Apess, *Own Ground*, 173.

outside agitator the Mashpee responded, again in a unified voice, that "he is only one of us, and has no more authority over the tribe than any other member of it. He has been adopted into the tribe, according to the Indian custom; and as long as he deserves our confidence, we shall regard him as a friend."[263]

This collective identity animates much of the public and official writing of the Mashpee throughout the conflict. In a statement to the Harvard trustees, the Mashpee declare their unhappiness with Fish as their minister and write, "we do say, as the voice of one, with but few exceptions, that we as a tribe, for a long time, have had no desire to hear Mr. Fish preach."[264] This quote is interesting as a model of the collective writing practice of the Mashpee community. They both take on a unanimous position while also acknowledging that that unanimity is not completely comprehensive ("with but few exceptions"). Modeled both on U.S. political discourse (the unified voice found in documents such as the *Declaration of Independence*) but importantly rooted to a particular community and ethos, the Mashpee find a voice that acknowledges difference while speaking with the strength of a united people.

As Apess initially comes to the community as an itinerant and that one of the battles they are fighting is about religious autonomy, the rhetoric of missions to the Indians has a complex resonance in the text. In a prose moment that is clearly Apess writing, he describes a revival meeting that was held during the conflict: "twelve Indians were redeemed from sin, and during the eighteen months that I have known them, the power of God has been manifested in the conversion of some thirty. God forbid I should glorify myself; I only mention the circumstances to show that the Marshpees are not incapable of improvement, as their enemies would have the

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[263]Apess, *Own Ground*, 218-219.
[264]Apess, *Own Ground* , 175.

world suppose."[265] Like so many white missionaries, Apess makes the claim that Indian conversions to Christianity reveal something about Indian character, that conversion proves the Mashpee capable of "improvement" by white standards. But elsewhere in the text the writers use the rhetoric of Indian conversion in surprising ways, frequently reversing the logic of mission work back onto whites as a way of exposing the illogic of white missions to the Indians. At one point they write of white missionaries, "no doubt, many of them have done much good; but I greatly doubt that any missionary has ever thought of making the Indian or the African his equal. As soon as we begin to talk about equal rights, the cry of amalgamation is set up, as if men of color could not enjoy their natural rights without any necessity for intermarriage between the sons and daughters of the two races."[266] Here Apess and the Mashpee do not reject Christianity, but reject white, racist Christianity and expose the racist hypocrisy at the center of most white missionary projects (including the one they are attempting to extricate themselves from). The Mashpee use the occasion of their political and religious disenfranchisement to reflect their religious commitments while also calling out the failures of white missionary work and the refusal of white Christians to embrace racial and social equality.

As for George Copway, his pan-Indian community ethos, though forged in similar circumstances to Apess, takes him down a path more troublingly informed by the assimilationist logic of white missions to the Indians. Apess does not argue the need for a new minister or laws under the guise of Indian "improvement" but deploys the rhetoric of political liberty and his evangelical commitment to racial equality to place the blame on white forces intruding on Indian rights. Copway's plan, outlined in the *American Whig Review* in June of 1849, imagines an idealized, pan-Indian reservation in the Northwest Territory. He first lists the myriad failings of

[265] Apess, *Own Ground*, 190.
[266] Apess, *Own Ground*, 230.

earlier attempts at Christianizing and assimilating the Indians, mainly drawn from long-standing assumptions such as the language barrier, Indian love of hunting over farming, and the negative influence of certain exploitative white Americans.

Copway's most distinct addition to American removal policy is the erasure of national differences by uniting all Indians within the same, large, reservation space. Copway claims that the various Indian nations remain isolated among themselves because U.S. policy continues to treat them as distinct nations: "this will be perpetuated as long as the American government addresses them as distinct tribes. It should, instead of this, treat them as one nation. Not till they amalgamate, will they lose the hostile feelings they now have for each other."[267] Though the U.S. policy of dealing with Indians as nations had been the bedrock of the famous case of *Cherokee Nation v. State of Georgia*, Copway wishes to see this policy undone on behalf of all Indians. Though aware that there are distinct national conflicts among the various Indian groups, Copway believes that forced cohabitation and amalgamation will undo these tensions in a relatively quick period of time.

Beyond this erasure of tribal differences, Copway believes that a reservation, suitably removed from white encroachment, will facilitate a reformation of manners among the Indians. Each family would be given a parcel of land that will naturally lead to an agricultural lifestyle: "when they have land that they can call their own, and limited, so that the scarcity of game will oblige them to till the soil for a subsistence, then they will improve, and the sooner this state of affairs is brought about the better."[268] At this juncture it is worth returning to a quote from missionary John Pietzel cited earlier: "in the school and in the field, as well as in the kitchen, our

[267] George Copway, "The American Indians," *American Whig Review* 9, no. 18 (June 1849), 631-638; 635.
[268] Copway, "American Indians," 633.

aim was to teach the Indians to live like white people."[269] Copway adopts a similar logic to white missionaries throughout the nineteenth-century, arguing for a settled, agricultural lifestyle that, when combined with Copway's pan-Indianism, will erase Indian national characteristics and social formations.

Along these lines, and in keeping with his earlier claims to interdenominational accord, Copway encourages various missionary societies to open schools and churches on this reservation, but to ignore all doctrinal differences and conflicts. He writes, "I would not have one dollar of the money which the generosity of the government should give, go towards perpetuating discordant elements. No! I want to make the great family of the Indians ONE, should I live long enough—*one* in interest, *one* in feeling, *one* while they live, and *one* in a better world after death."[270] Copway imagines an idealized space in which denominational conflict will be absent for the betterment of the Indians—his reservation Utopia is both pan-Indian and pan-Christian and ignores the deep commitments of all involved.

Compared with Apess and his involvement with the Mashpee, Copway's plan is both utopian and colonialist, and argues for a political and evangelical intervention meant to erase Indian communities for the sake of their both temporal and eternal salvation. The comparison of these political projects is not meant to simply valorize the affective, communitarian politics of the Mashpee community by holding it in contradistinction to Copway's plan; rather, it is to highlight the difficulties in appropriating an evangelical conversion discourse that privileges silencing Indian lives through conversion and assimilation. Copway and Apess both exceeded the confines of evangelical conversion logic, taking on the mobility of itinerancy over the

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[269] Pietzel, *Lights and Shades*, 57.
[270] Copway, "American Indians," 637.

resignation inherent in the conversion ideal best exemplified by Catherine Brown. But Apess wedded that mobility to a more horizontal deployment of religious affect in with the community at Mashpee while Copway ultimately takes that rhetoric up whole cloth and reimposed white missionary logic back onto Indian communities.

Chapter Four

"All Good Men Pray Alike:" Evangelicals, Anti-Catholicism, and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *The Minister's Wooing*.

In a poem written for the *New York Evangelist* in 1844, Harriet Beecher Stowe performs a veneration of the Virgin Mary in verse form. The poem narrates the life of Christ through Mary's experiences of it. When it comes to the crucifixion she writes,

> Now by that cross though takest the final station,
>
> And sharest the last dark trial of thy son;
>
> Not with weak tears, or woman lamentations,
>
> But with high, silent anguish, like his own.[271]

Stowe grants Mary an almost co-equal status with the suffering Jesus, as she "sharest the last dark trial" and that her "silent anguish" is "like his own." Stowe's Mary enacts a form of sympathetic bonding, where Mary's holiness is increased by her ability to absorb and feel the sufferings of her son. And the poem engages in a kind of Mariolatry, one that informs the characterization of so many of Stowe's female heroines.

Though not antithetical to Protestant conceptions of Mary, Stowe's poem is an example of her rich and complex engagement with Catholic iconography and practices and hints at her future interest in Catholicism. This chapter charts Stowe's relationship to Catholicism and

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[271] Harriet Beecher Stowe, "Mary at the Cross," *New York Evangelist,* 28 November 1844: 15, 48.

particularly the space of the nunnery in her fiction, most notably in *The Minister's Wooing* (1859). Important to this discussion is the heated anti-Catholic environment in which Stowe is writing. I argue that a key facet of anti-Catholicism in this period is that displacement of enthusiastic religion onto Catholicism and away from the ecstatic religious practices of the nineteenth-century awakenings we have been considering in previous chapters. This displacement frequently centers on women's emotional susceptibility, which is imagined through the escaped nun's tale and Protestant panics around the nunnery. In recuperating the space of the nunnery along with ecstatic religious feeling, Stowe's fiction can be read as a key intervention in this discourse by reimagining the Scudder home within the terms of the Catholic nunnery and attempts to work out the problem of this perceived tension between Catholics and Protestants on American soil.

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In a letter to his daughter Catherine as she sheparded a revival at her Hartford Female Seminary in 1826, Lyman Beecher writes, "the very high state of excited feeling, though extremely natural among young Christians, and powerful in its effects while it lasts, is too hazardous to health to be indulged, and necessarily too short-lived to answer in the best manner the purpose of advancing a revival."[272] For Beecher, emotions do a temporary work, but do not lead to long-term piety and may even harm the body. He instead urges her to encourage an emotional state "which does not ruffle the passions, and is compatible with the most cool and collected state of mind, both for planning and for action, and, at the same time, predisposes for

[272] Beecher, *Autobiography*, 44.

earnest prayer, and for speaking to stupid and awakened sinners a word in season."[273] Both Catherine Beecher as revival leader and the students as objects of the revival need to maintain a "cool and collected state of mind," one that sees emotionalism as dangerous to the long term goals of revivals. In a letter that same year to his son Edward, Lyman praises his congregation during a revival for being "so full and solemn."[274]

Perry Miller argues that this moderated form of New England revivalism is a result of the lingering images of the First Great Awakening: "New Englanders had been severely scarred by criticisms of the First Awakening…and were resolved never again to let emotions get so out of control as to provoke ridicule."[275] To New England ministers, the eighteenth-century revivals reminded some evangelicals of a dangerous affective practice that revivalism could incite. The institutional figures of evangelicalism escalated the discussion and battles around the embodied religious behaviors of revival practice, and leaders across the mainstream denominations frequently shared the same belief in a more organized, institutionalized, and less affectively rich revival experience.

Published in 1843, Jon Williamson Nevin's *The Anxious Bench* articulated many of the concerns institutionalized Protestantism had surrounding the new methods of revivalism (such as the "anxious bench" of the title). Like Beecher, Nevin is not against revivalism as such—he makes pains to articulate the difference between good measures like protracted meetings (which has scriptural history and authority behind them) and the dangerous new measures like the bench. Nevin writes, "it is a serious thing to profane the worship of God, by offering upon his altar strange fire," reminding us that the fire that consumed the famed "Burned-Over District"

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[273] Beecher, *Autobiography*, 44.
[274] Beecher, *Autobiography*, 45.
[275] Perry Miller,*The Life of the Mind in America, from the Revolution to the Civil War* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1965), 6.

was not universally understood by evangelicals as a positive conflagration. This “strange fire” is the burning enthusiasm of revival participants incited by new and “unscriptural” methods of religious practice.[276]

Nevin offers traditional criticisms of these new revivals—“false conversions,” theatricality, and “spiritual delusion.”[277] Most telling among his criticisms is his comparison of the anxious bench to Catholic ritual. Nevin argues that, theoretically, the anxious bench might save souls, but that too much is spiritually and theologically lost in such saving work. To make his point, he draws a comparison to “monkery:” “monkery was to many in fact the means of conversion and salvation. And to this hour an argument might be framed in its favor, under this view, not less plausible, to say the least, than any that can be presented for the use of the Anxious Bench.”[278] Nevin’s more specific concerns go as such: “the Romish Church has always delighted in arrangements and services, animated with the same false spirit. In her penitential system, all pains have been taken to produce effect by means of outward postures and dress, till in the end, amid the solemn mummery, no room has been left for genuine penitence at all.”[279] Those who deploy the anxious bench or other ritualized revival activities are returning back to the highly ritualized and embodied practices of Catholicism. These “postures” are Catholic practices and rituals that offer a visual and embodied shorthand for religious truths. For Nevin, such public performances and their attendant emotional responses, despite their popularity and efficacy, have returned American Protestantism back to the excesses of the Catholic Church.

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[276]John Williamson Nevin, *The Anxious Bench: A Tract for the Times* (Chambersburg,: Weekly Messenger, 1843), 23.
[277] Nevin, *Anxious Bench*, 36, 55, 88.
[278] Nevin, *Anxious Bench*, 39.
[279] Nevin, *Anxious Bench*, 39.

Horace Bushnell was another minister troubled by the innovations and ethos of contemporary evangelical practice. His *Christian Nurture* (1847) encouraged American Protestants to turn to the model of the Christian home, in which children are trained up by benevolent but authoritative parents into the spirit of Christianity, so that revivals and moments of intense conversion are trained out or rendered obsolete by Christian parental authority. Bushnell turns away from the revival and towards the home, to a "domestic godliness" that returns privacy and moderation to the Christian life.[280]

Christian Nurture begins first as a critique of the underlying ideology of revivalism. He writes that "conversion is nearly everything with us" and that revivalism is predicated on "extreme individualism."[281] The danger of such an outlook is that "we idolize such scenes, and make them the whole of our religion. We assume that nothing good is doing, or can be done at any other time. And what is even worse, we often look upon these scenes, and desire them, rather as scenes of victory than of piety."[282] These scenes lead to a total exhaustion: "we strain every nerve of motion, exhaust every capacity of endurance, and push on till nature sinks in exhaustion."[283]

Similar to Nevin, Bushnell likens the absence of Christian nurture to convent life: "hence, it is that monks have been so prone to persecution. Not dwelling with children as the objects of affection, having their hearts softened by no family love, their life identified with no objects that excite gentleness, their nature hardens into a Christian abstraction, and blood and doctrine go together."[284] Claiming a direct affinity between blood and doctrine isn't to move away from a

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[280] Bushnell, *Christian Nurture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 98.
[281] Bushnell, *Nurture*, 47, 21.
[282] Bushnell, *Nurture*, 47.
[283] Bushnell, *Nurture*, 48.
[284] Bushnell, *Nurture*, 48.

sense of embodied religious life; it is to fear that embodiment. Bushnell's turn isn't towards a more abstracted conception of religious embodiment but rather a more regimented and domesticated one. And to operate outside of the normative discourse of the Christian family is to become like the hardened monks of Catholicism. In both of these instances, Catholicism is held up as the end point of what Bushnell and Nevin see as the dangers of ecstatic evangelical practice. The turn away from Christian domestic development invokes the monastery and the turn towards ritualized revival practice is parallel to the rituals of Catholicism that the Protestant Reformation ostensibly excised.

Couching these objections to revivalism in terms of the Catholic Church helps to shed light on the wave of anti-Catholic discourse that emerges in the antebellum period. As these passages reveal, anti-Catholicism (for all its complexity) is part and parcel of the institutionalization of evangelicalism and the rejection of religious enthusiasm is displaced onto the practices and spaces of Catholicism. Not only does the increase of Catholics in this period threaten the notion of a Protestant nation, but Catholic religious practice relies on an affective model that, as we will see, mirrors the religious practice of evangelicalism in this period. As evangelicals move towards a more institutional, less affectively rich process of Christianizing the American people, Catholics and Catholic converts remind many evangelicals of an affective ritualism they were actively trying to disavow.

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Beginning in the 1830's ministers and the public at large began to fret more loudly about the growing specter of Catholicism in the U.S. Increased immigration combined with increased

suffrage caused many evangelicals and Protestants in general to fear that a growing Catholic presence would annihilate their chances to Christianize the nation in their own image. Several things happened around this time to make this decade fruitful for a growing anti-Catholic sentiment. In 1829, Bishop Fenwick of Boston encouraged assistance from Europe to help support Catholicism in the United States. This lead to the formation of the Leopold Association, an Austro-Hungarian charitable organization that sent funds to struggling parishes in the United States; this was followed in 1832 by the Association for the Propagation of the Faith in Lyons, France, who also sent some financial support to the U.S.[285] The notion of foreign governments supporting the growth of Catholicism in the United States outraged many; for the first time, the work of converting Americans was no longer the sole project of Protestant traditions (with a certain amount of ecumenical infighting). The roles were reversed—Protestants became objects of conversion, and back-sliders and unbelievers would now be fought over with the added complication of a "foreign" church vying alongside of them. As such, a large body of evangelical writers funneled their energy towards fighting the growing Catholic menace.

Perhaps no one was more integral to this dense body of anti-Catholic writing than Samuel B. Smith. An ex-priest who became a minor celebrity through the anti-Catholic cause, Smith was best known for his magazine, *The Downfall of Babylon; or, the Triumph of Truth over Popery*. Smith's magazine, along with his books and pamphlets, set a standard for the particularly heated, gothic rhetoric that would define much anti-Catholic discourse. Although sometimes interested in doctrinal and political conflicts related to Catholicism, Smith's greater interest lay in the private and often sexual corruptions of the Catholic Church.

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[285] Billington, *The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860: A Study of the Origins of American Nativism* (Chicago: Quadrangle Press, 1964), 121.

After explaining his own relationship to Catholicism, Smith devotes most of the first four issues of *The Downfall* to his experiences with nunneries, specifically the convent at Bardstown, Kentucky, where he was a confessor. In introducing the convent to his readers, Smith turns to the standard tropes of Catholic spaces that have been used since the Gothic novels of the eighteenth century. It is telling that Smith initiates his magazine with a Gothicized image of a U.S. nunnery. Though anti-Catholic discourse does a tremendous amount of cultural work, I would like to suggest here that part of its utility is the projection of sentiment gone awry away from evangelicalism and onto the Catholic Church and specifically, women within the Church. The gothicized convent as women's prison becomes the most powerful location to perform this imagery of irrational and dangerous sentiment.

In his discussion of sympathy in the eighteenth century, David Marshall argues that sympathy and seduction share an intimate relationship and to illustrate this, he turns to Diderot's *La Religieuse* (written in 1760 but not published until 1796). In the novel, Suzanna Simonin, the heroine, finds that in moments of sympathetic identification, she becomes the victim of seduction, most shockingly, with the mother Superior of Saint-Eutrope. Marshall writes that the novel "raises the possibility that the effects of sympathy might be disturbingly similar to the effects of seduction."[286] Though Marshall's analysis is not particularly interested in the consequences or valences of anti-Catholicism in Diderot's work, *La Religieuse*, like Anne Radcliffe's *The Italian* (1797) and Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), gets to the central anxiety that imbues much anti-Catholic discourse; that the private, intimate, spaces of Catholicism—spaces like the convent and the confessional—are places where sympathy and its affectively charged intimacy almost helplessly devolve into seduction. This gave anti-Catholic writers an

[286] David Marshall, *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy: Marivaux, Diderot, Rousseau, and Mary Shelly* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 86.

established genre and ideology surrounding Catholicism to deploy when addressing Catholic institutions in the United States.

Part of this perceived threat of Catholicism also came in the form of schooling. Across the country, though mostly in New England and along the eastern seaboard, Catholic schools increased and many Protestants, particularly those with money, found such educations a marked improvement over the alternatives. The idea of Catholics taking Protestant children into the seemingly isolated and gothic confines of the convent initiated a backlash against such schools. The most infamous instance was the burning of the Ursuline Convent at Mount Benedict, in Charlestown, Massachusetts. The Charlestown convent's school, established in 1820, had modest success generating students from the wealthy Protestant families of the Boston area. In the summer of 1834, gossip surrounding the story of a mysterious woman who had escaped the convent became big news, and citizens, particularly working-class Scotch Presbyterians, began an aggressive campaign to expose the convent, and ultimately (though perhaps unintentionally), destroy it.[287]

The story of the escaped nun from the Charlestown convent echoed the earlier story of Rebecca Reed, though she would not officially publish her personal narrative until the following year. Her *Six Months in a Convent* became a sensation and a kind of Ur-text for the escaped nun's tale in the United States. Reed was a Protestant woman who entered the Ursuline Convent in 1831 as a charity case unable to afford the tuition. She claimed to have escaped the convent having witnessed the horrors and secret dealings of the religious order. Reed's book caused a stir

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[287] For a full narrative of the conflict, and a reading of the events in terms of class tensions surrounding the alignment of wealthy Protestants and Catholics against a working-class ethnic Protestant background, see Nancy Lusignan Shultz's *Fire and Roses: The Burning of the Charlestown Convent, 1834* (New York: The Free Press, 2000).

upon its publication, confirming the suspicions of its many readers that the convent was a place of secrecy and depravity.

Reed's "true" narrative begins with a long preface from the publishers, situating her story within the larger concerns about convent education.[288] The introduction claims that the question of convent education is "a grave question how the future ornaments to our most refined society, the future accomplished mothers of American citizens, shall be educated."[289] For Americans in the East fearful of growing Catholic influence, daughters were the most in need of protection. In this way, young women become (in the anti-Catholic imagination) the entry-point of Catholic control over the United States. Despite women's lack of political authority in this period, the sense is that "mothers of American citizens" need to be the most safely guarded, not only due to their influence over American men, but implicitly, as the most susceptible to influence and conversion.

Many readers wanted to know why a Protestant woman would *choose* to enter into convent life, a decision that implied to many some kind of irrationality or delusion. But Reed explains her behavior in the loss of maternal structure and sympathy: "after my mother's decease, while residing with my father, my sisters being absent, Miss H. came to our house and begged me to keep her as a domestic a little while, as she had no place."[290] Their maid, Miss H., is the Catholic interloper into the Reed house and Reed's first introduction to Catholicism. Reed says Miss H. "found me in great trouble and grief, in consequence of the absence of my two

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[288] Throughout this discussion of the escaped nun's tale, I move freely between fictions like Sherwood's *The Nun* and purported non-fiction like Reed's narrative. We have legitimate reasons to believe that the narratives of Reed, Monk, and others, even under the guise of "true tales" were ghost-written or fabricated by those within the anti-Catholic milieu. I'm not interested in debating the truth value of such texts, and I include them alongside purely fictional representations only because all of these texts taken together display fully the logic of the escaped nun's tale.

[289] Rebecca Theresa Reed, *Six Months in a Convent and Supplement*. (Arno Press: New York, 1977), 6-7.

[290] Reed, *Six Months*, 58.

younger sisters, whom I very dearly loved, and who had gone to reside with my sisters in Boston."[291] Now that the Reed home is devoid of proper female role models and community, Miss H's ability to influence the impressionable Reed becomes more possible. And finding Miss H. praying with her rosary beads begins Reed's fascination with Catholicism.

Reed's justification for her mistake is about the absent center of maternal feeling in her home. This is a common trope in the escaped nun's tale, in which the failures of the traditional home allow for the possibility of Catholic intervention. The English author Mrs. (Mary Martha) Sherwood wrote the anti-Catholic novel *The Nun*, first published in the U.S. in 1834. Sherwood's novel was quite popular in the United States and could perhaps be linked as an inspiration to Maria Monk and others. Like Reed, Sherwood's fictional heroine is drawn to Catholicism and the convent because of her own fractured home: "I was left an orphan in very early life; and the loss of an only and very dear sister, which took place about the time I came of age, acted so powerfully on my mind, that I felt myself strongly inclined to become a religieuse, or rather, I should say, a nun."[292] It is specifically the loss of women in the family that draws young women to the convent and these early, influential narratives (whether "true" or fictional) create a template in which most escaped nun's tales invoke the traumatic maternal absence as their entry point into convent life.

This makes the figure of the Mother Superior a powerful target for anti-Catholic rhetoric. Often, the Mother Superior (or abbess, or other similar title) willingly takes on the role of replacement mother. In *The Nun,* when the narrator first comes to the convent, the Mother Superior embraces her and says, "my daughter,…you are an orphan, I understand, and are

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[291] Reed, *Six Months*, 52-53
[292] Mrs. Sherwood, *The Nun*. (Princeton: Moore Baker, 1834), 2.

willing to seek a mother in me. Believe me, my arms and my heart are open to you; many doves have fled from the cruel and dangerous world to find shelter within these sacred walls, where they enjoy a peace with the world cannot give…."[293] The narrator's vulnerability allows the Mother Superior to ingratiate herself into the young girl's life and to use her role as replacement mother to manipulate and dominate the young girl.

Of course, such maternal replacements always fail—the "mother" of "Mother Superior" always standing ironically in the text. In broad strokes then, the Superior figure becomes a dark mother, controlling the thoughts and freedom of these young women. Although licentious priests are a common trope in anti-Catholic narratives, the Mother Superior is an object of particular scorn and paranoia and its worth considering the significance of such women within anti-Catholic discourse. To do so, Nancy Lusignan Schultz's characterization of the real Mary Ann Moffat, Mother Superior to Rebecca Reed, is instructive. Schultz describes Moffat as an intelligent woman with ambitions—ambitions that could best be fulfilled, somewhat paradoxically, within the confines of convent life. Schultz writes, "the convent's hierarchical structure promised the opportunity for ever-increasing authority and responsibility. Convent vows that were framed as self-imposed limitations in some ways gave nineteenth-century women their best chance for a life of self-expression and fulfillment."[294] It is not hard to imagine that given the limitations of women in the American public sphere, the convent might seem like a potentially liberating space. In this way, discrediting and villainizing the mother Superior is a way for anti-Catholic discourse to once again rob women of such agency. In her narrative, Reed willingly characterizes herself as a naïf, seeking out some kind of female authority in the absence of mother and sisters. But the authority she finds in Sister St. George is the polluted, corrupted

[293] Sherwood, *The Nun*, 11.
[294]Nancy Lusignan Schultz. *Fire and Roses,* 19.

power of the Catholic Church. Suspecting that Reed harbors reservations, "in private confession to the Superior, she appeared determined to know my thoughts, and put many questions to me that were hard to answer. I would here remark, that this is the practice at auricular confessions."[295] When Reed admits that she finds the paltry diet of the convent too hard on her body, the Superior "replied that a Religieuse should have no *choice*, and that I should have left my feelings in the world."[296] Instances like these show up throughout Reed's narrative and can stand representatively for many of the escaped nun's tales of anti-Catholic writing. If the convent is a space that allows women possibilities for more freedom (as Schultz suggests), these texts portray such women as corrupt emblems of a corrupt church, embodiments of the perversions of Catholicism.

As the example from Reed shows, it is through the act of confession that the Mother Superior takes her power. The Superior uses the confessional to search out Reed's thoughts, in order to control her all the better—the openness of the confessional is a coercive intimacy. Anti-Catholic writers saw this private space as the location where Catholic power was wielded with the greatest success, each person entering into the confessional left powerless to reveal themselves entirely to the priest. William Hogan writes, "if I can satisfy Americans that *Auricular Confession* is dangerous to their liberties; if I can show them that it is the source and fountain of many, if not all, those treasons, debaucheries, and other evils, which are now flooding this country, I shall feel that I have done an acceptable work, and *some service to the State*."[297] Hogan's statement is nicely inclusive of many the fears generated by the confessional—political persuasion, secret crimes, and, sexual transgressions. Anti-Catholic

[295] Reed, *Six Months*, 92.
[296] Reed, *Six Months*, 92.
[297] William Hogan. *Popery! As It Was and As It Is. Also, Auricular Confession; and Popish Nunneries*. (Hartford: Silas Andrus and Son, 1854), 232-33.

writers claimed that through the confessional, the conscience of every Catholic could be bent to the will of the priest and by extension, the Pope and women when confessing were subject to the sexual advances of a priesthood already corrupted through its celibacy.

Susan Griffin reads this panic about women and Catholicism (particularly the escaped nun's tale) as something more specific about the changing role of women in Protestant churches. She writes that the narratives of Catholic women's seduction and confinement "disclose misgivings about the new generation of daughters and their influence in the remaking of American religious practices" and the "tale that the runaway nun tells *is* a seduction story, but it is a spiritual seduction story that attempts to define and control women's religion."[298] I agree with Griffin that the escaped nun's story is about restoring women to the domestic sphere, but her argument is predicated on Ann Douglass's reading of antebellum religious culture in *The Feminization of American Culture.* Like Douglass, she sees the gendered terms of religion in this period as a union of ministers and women's culture, to the detriment of both theology and women's rights. But as we have seen, the turn to domesticity in the religious life of this period is also about a different type of control and institutionalization, that of reining in the ecstatic practices of revivalism and ecstatic religion. The turn to the domestic as a model for American Protestantism is about institutionalizing Protestant religion in an era when such ministers and churches became establishment figures within the broader culture.

The logic of Douglas's feminization model breaks down when looked at in light of anti-Catholicism. I agree that the institutionalization of post-Calvinist religion in many ways extended the power of men within religious communities and sometimes to the detriment of

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[298] Susan M. Griffin. *Anti-Catholicism and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 50.

female participants. The domestic models we see in writers such as Horace Bushnell are a return to a self-contained and male-regulated household, a household modeled on the church. But as Griffin writes, "while the escaped nun's story cannot claim the central place in nineteenth-century American culture that 'woman's fiction' can, it nonetheless constitutes an alternative plot of some importance."[299] I would like to take her point one step further—that the escaped nun's story is a response to "woman's fiction," a counternarrative that seeks to rob all-female spaces of their recuperative and political possibilities by turning back to the seduction tale. When Nina Baym writes that "the disappearance of the novel of seduction is a crucial event in woman's fiction, and perhaps in woman's psyche as well" she might not have been considering works like *Awful Disclosures* or *Rosamond*.[300] What Griffin sees in the escaped nun's story is a panic about female religious freedom turned into imprisonment that warns women against turning away from both the family and Protestantism. This aligns with Susan Juster's argument that evangelicalism's institutionalization was predicated on an ordering of women within the faith. Of this nineteenth century institutionalization she writes, "the language of evangelicalism was about a more masculine identity. This displaces sin onto the category of women and authority back into the hands of men."[301] I would add that the unwieldy performance of affect is also displaced onto women, onto the increasingly gendered conception of feeling in the nineteenth century.

Therefore anti-Catholic discourse speaks not only to the concerns about a growing Catholic minority, but also the regulatory aims of evangelicalism within itself, a regulation that happens here on female participants. The chaste, Victorian women who populate woman's fiction, who eschew marriage and sexuality, are shadowed by the nun, who in unnaturally

[299] Griffin, *Anti-Catholicism*, 30.
[300] Nina Baym, *Woman's Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and About Women in America, 1820-1870*. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press), 26.
[301] Susan Juster, *Disorderly Women: Sexual Politics and Evangelicalism in Revolutionary New England*. (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994), 112.

sacrificing sex and heterosexual marriage sets a boundary for female religious community and affective bonding.

This means that the sentimental woman's novel of the period cannot be seen as a simple adjunct to what Griffin calls the "feminization of American religion."[302] As her earlier quote alludes to, woman's fiction and evangelical discourse can be at odds in different manifestations. I would like to extend this argument and say that the institutionalization of evangelicalism becomes an occasion for evangelical novelists to reimagine and reappropriate the variety of practices and politics that are part of the movement. And to this end I would argue that these sentimental writers engage in this project by an appropriation of what figures like Charles Grandison Finney and Bushnell attempted to excise—the affective power of evangelicalism. Early American evangelicalism found its voice and success through an affective, sentimental model harmonious to the sentimental discourse of the eighteenth century. But in early revivals, such affective energy operated outside of authoritative structures, creating new possibilities. Later evangelicals and revivalists attempted to subdue these possibilities as part of legitimizing evangelicalism's role in the public discourse of nineteenth century America. But these religious experiences were sentiment enacted and embodied, the behaviors found in much writing of the antebellum period lived out as a variable social process. As such, this energy maintained itself, in part, through the evangelical, sentimental novels of the period. Although writing about the domestic sphere and more private, intimate communities, writers such as Harriet Beecher Stowe engaged a specifically evangelical affectivity to reach their audiences, and to maintain their own visions of evangelicalism, sentiment, and affective practice.

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[302] Griffin, *Anti-Catholicism*, 50.

We can best understand this process by turning specifically to Stowe and her own novelistic engagements with Catholicism—*The Minister's Wooing*.

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The Beecher family had its own deep involvement with the anti-Catholic movement, beginning with the family move to Cincinnati when Lyman Beecher became first president of Lane Theological Seminary. Beecher was shocked by the challenges of life in the West (as Ohio was considered at that time) as well as its profoundly unsettled quality. The Western territories were spaces with heterogeneous populations, lacking the religious and educational institutions Beecher valued so much in New England. This made the move to Lane (and the Second Presbyterian Church where he was pastor) perhaps his greatest evangelical field. But it also meant profound uncertainty—the millennial prospects of the West were in no way secure, particularly because the specter of Catholicism loomed large on the plains.

Beecher toured New England churches pleading the cause of the Western states in sermons that were collected as *A Plea for the West*. In it, Beecher states, "it is …clear, that the conflict which is to decide the destiny of the West, will be a conflict of institutions for the education of her sons, for purposes of superstition, or evangelical light; of despotism, or liberty."[303] Beecher sets education as the field of battle on which this war is to be fought. Anti-Catholic rhetoric has a long history of associating Catholicism with "superstition" and "despotism" but evangelical ministers like Beecher viewed their faith(s) as having the ability to defend American liberty. Far from the notion of the separation of church and state, Beecher, like

[303] Beecher, *Plea*, 12.

many evangelicals, saw the church as the foundation of American liberty. "Evangelical light" and "liberty" were two sides of the same coin, embodied in Protestant education. For Beecher, this education would not only counter the encroaching forces of Catholicism, but would help educate and moderate the public in an era of increasing suffrage. So when Beecher came to the Boston area in 1831, a year before the publication of Reed's *Six Months in a Convent* and three years before the burning of the Charlestown Convent, his characterization of the Catholic threat in the West paralleled the concerns about the Mount Benedict convent.

Twenty years later Lyman's son Edward wrote his own book on the subject, *The Papal Conspiracy Exposed, and Protestantism Defended, in the Light of Reason, History, and Scripture* (1855). Like his father, Edward claims that Rome "is organizing seductive and proselyting [sic] systems of education, and aims by means of them to corrupt and enlist in their vast schemes the children of Protestant parents"[304] It should be noted that Edward describes Catholic education as "seductive," a word that marks the evolution of anti-Catholic discourse from Lyman in the 1830s to Edward in the 1850s. Between these two men are texts like those we have already discussed that conflate the intimacies of the convent and the confessional with seduction. For Edward Beecher, the antidote is a turn to the family, whose domestic intimacies stand in opposition to the unnatural celibacy of the Catholic Church. Jenny Franchot writes that at the heart of Edward's Beecher's book "lies an evangelical, sentimental theology of marriage and domesticity in which Protestant familial love appears in its historical posture of provocative vulnerability to the antidomestic evils of Catholicism, calamities generated by the original sin of celibacy."[305] Beecher's elevation of the family as a key trope for American Protestantism mirrors the work of

[304] Edward Beecher, *The Papal Conspiracy Exposed, and Protestantism Defended, in the Light of Reason, History, and Scripture*. (Boston: Stearns and Co., 1855), 15.
[305] Jenny Franchot, *Roads to Rome: The Antebellum Protestant Encounter with Catholicism*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 131.

Horace Bushnell in *Christian Nurture* and the larger project of domesticating evangelicalism in the Unites States. Christian domesticity becomes the rallying force of evangelicalism against both ecstatic religious practices as well as the threats of Catholicism.

It is within this context that we can see Harriet Beecher Stowe's *The Minister's Wooing* for its engagement with this anti-Catholic discourse. Though Stowe's novel is most frequently studied for its engagement with abolition and the novel's rejection of Calvinism, recent works by John Gatta, Marianne Noble, and Dorothy Z. Baker have helped situate the novel in more complex relations to theology, psychological theory, and visual culture respectively. Set at the end of the eighteenth century, the novel centers on the Scudder family, Mary and her mother, and the real life minister Samuel Hopkins who boards with them. Hopkins is wooed twice over: first to the cause of abolition, and second, by the charms of young Mary Scudder, who agrees to marry him after she believes her true love, James, has died at sea. This loss animates the novel, not only because of the failed marriage of Hopkins and Mary, but because the grief surrounding the perceived loss of James is the impetus for the different character's rejection of Calvinism and the "hard doctrines" of election and conversion. More subtly, the novel addresses many of the issues around Catholics in the antebellum period and to understand this work, I would like to focus not only on the Scudder home as a kind of convent space, but on what Susan K. Harris calls the "minor plot" of the novel, that of the intimate friendship between Mary and the Catholic Virginie de Frontignac.[306] In the relationship between Catholic Virginie and Puritan Mary, the novel imagines an ecumenical community of feeling, one structured around the motif of the convent. If anti-Catholic writers used images of female power gone awry to warn American Protestants of the Catholic Church's encroachments on the country, Stowe rehabilitates the

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[306] Susan K. Harris, "The Female Imaginary in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *The Minister's Wooing*," *New England Quarterly* 66:2 (1993): 179-198, 182.

convent space, and reconfigures the New England home within its terms. Rebecca Reed's sensitive emotional state lead her into the Catholic heart of darkness by women who manipulate her sympathies. But the emotional union of Virginie and Mary stands to defend just such sympathetic bonding and offers an alternative vision of the possibilities of ecumenicalism within American Protestantism. And as anti-Catholicism in this period is motivated by the same people and forces as evangelicalism, Stowe uses *The Minister's Wooing* to intervene in Protestant anti-Catholic discourse through an affective, sentimental language that itself structures evangelical feeling. Beyond a eulogy for a bygone Puritanism, Virginie and Mary enact a possibility to extend the porous bonds of evangelical feeling towards Catholics, deploying its affective ethos in order to bridge the two religious traditions.

Virginie enters the world of the Scudders through Aaron Burr, another historical figure in the novel. Visiting the Newport area, he is immediately struck by the "Puritan" charms of Mary. He visits the Scudders, along with Virginie, her husband, and the Abbé Léfon, who is going to tutor Mary in French. But Virginie, immediately charmed by Mary and the Scudder household, rejects this and volunteers to teach Mary. Virginie's role as French tutor sets up the key Catholic trope that the novel recuperates from the anti-Catholic tradition; the convent and the interfaith education of women.

As Virginie becomes a regular figure in the Scudder home, a reciprocal relationship based on both education and affection bonds her to Mary. It is important that the two women come together to educate one another; Mary is the American Protestant girl improved by a Catholic, and Virginie learns the charms and skills of a New England womanhood. The parallels between Virginie and Mary's reciprocal education with Catherine Beecher's model at the Hartford Female Seminary are worth considering. But what these women also create, and in the

process recuperate, is the ideal of convent life and education. Virginie brings particular skills from her own convent education and her reasons for entering the convent are similar to those of the escaped nun's tale. She was sent to the convent after he mother died, but this loss bonds her to the other nuns without the tribulations of the escaped nun's tale: "the sisters loved me, and I loved them; and I used to be so pious, and loved God dearly."[307] Convent life was Virginie's ideal time in that she was both the most loved and the most holy while there. In a reversal of the escaped nun's tale, entering into the world through marriage is what proves to bring about hardship and the threat of seduction for her. She can only reclaim these original feelings when she and Mary come together in the convent-like Scudder home. Together they share in the practices and skills valorized by Protestants justifying sending daughters into convent life—art, French, needlework, reading. Even Miss Prissy, with her own prejudices against Catholics, cannot help desiring to be taught needle working skills from Virginie. Implicitly, the Scudder room mirrors the ideal of convent education.

Stowe more explicitly valorizes the convent as a space of female work and creativity in her 1862 novel *Agnes of Sorrento*. *Agnes* is a romance of medieval Italy, where the pious heroine must choose between her desire to join a convent or the love of a disgraced Italian nobleman, all set against the tumult Alexander VI's papacy. Agnes is raised by her grandmother Elsie, an Italian, but with all the behaviors and attitudes of one of Stowe's New England matrons—sensible, hardworking, and reserved when it comes to most forms of intimacy. With her parents dead and only Elsie to raise her, Agnes often finds herself in the care of the local nuns, with whom she feels most at home. Stowe not only presents an idealized picture convent life, but explains the utility of the convent in troubled times: "convents in the Middle Ages were the

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[307] Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The Minister's Wooing*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1999), 223.

retreats of multitudes of different natures, who did not wish to live in a state of perpetual warfare and offence, and all the elegant arts flourished under their protecting shadows."[308] The convent is the place for those who do not want to take part in the barbarity of medieval European culture, but this is particularly true for women, who are most at risk in this world. Stowe writes, "if the destiny of woman is a problem that calls for grave attention even in our enlightened times, and if she is too often a sufferer from the inevitable movements of society, what must have been her position and needs in those ruder ages, had not the genius of Christianity opened for her weakness refuge made inviolable by the awful sanctions of religion?"[309] Although discussing a medieval convent, Stowe invokes the present day and argues that the convent is not only a space where artistic and spiritual natures can flourish, but where women can legitimately seek refuge from the inequalities of their lives. This image of the convent stands as a direct corrective of the escaped nun's tale and its images of depraved convent life.

Agnes also sets the convent in opposition to traditional marriage. Despite sending Agnes to the convent, Elsie has no intention of her granddaughter becoming a nun; she wishes to see Agnes as a wife and mother in a respectable home, thereby securing her own peace in old age. While Elsie creates a fantasy home space predicated on her granddaughter's marriage, Agnes consistently tells her grandmother that she will not get married and desires to become a nun, and her grandmother insists that such a decision is not possible. Elsie's concerns echo those of the anti-Catholic texts we have discussed, where convent life takes women away from their proper social role but Stowe defends the convent precisely because of this function—the volatility of the social world makes convent life all the more necessary. One can say that Stowe sees the convent as a sphere outside of the separate spheres, a chance to remain in the realm of the private and

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[308] Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Agnes of Sorrento.* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1900), 77.
[309] Stowe, *Sorrento*, 49.

affective, while still removing oneself from the domestic. The convent absorbs many of the pleasures of the domestic that Stowe values, but is also a space defined by a more fluid concept of the family.

But we cannot treat the Scudder home's relationship to the nunnery trope too allegorically. What Mary and Virginie share is exceptionally private and little influenced by Mrs. Scudder or Dr. Hopkins. In fact, the narrator quietly jokes about Mrs. Scudder's anti-Catholicism early in the novel. When likening Mary to images of the Madonna, the narrator makes clear that the provincial Mrs. Scudder would brook no such comparison: "But Mrs. Scudder was thinking of no such Popish matter, I can assure you,—not she! I don't think you could have done her a greater indignity than to mention her daughter in any such connection."[310] And though known as a religious authority figure in the community, Mrs. Scudder does not inhabit the role of Mother Superior one might expect to find. Though she welcomes Virginie into their home and is part of the safe, ecumenical space the novel valorizes, she leaves Virginie to the care of Mary. When Miss Prissy expresses concerns about Virginie's potentially dubious morals (as both a French woman and a Catholic), Mrs. Scudder replies, "Mary has not said much about her state of mind….Mary is such an uncommon child, that I trust everything to her."[311] Mrs. Scudder's lack of participation in Virginie's spiritual life is about the trust she has in her daughter and quietly abdicates the responsibility of Virginie's spiritual guidance to Mary. She becomes both a novice like Virginie and the Mother Superior to her at the same time. The intense intimacy of their friendship happens predominantly in Mary's secluded room; a room, to borrow a phrase from *Agnes of Sorrento* quoted above, that acts as a refuge "opened for her weakness." It is here that Virginie finds Mary, confesses her sorrows to her, and where they pray together.

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[310] Stowe, *Wooing*, 14.
[311] Stowe, *Wooing*, 253.

Beyond their shared recuperation of the convent, both novels also engage in a kind of hagiography, where each heroine is likened to her spiritual namesake. As Agnes is often compared to the patron saint of the same name, Mary is frequently compared to the Virgin Mary. Early in the novel Mary stands in the kitchen doorway, bathed in sunlight and her "statuesque beauty" and "tremulous, half-infantine expression" reminds the narrator of "some old pictures of the girlhood of the Virgin."[312] Elsewhere she is likened to Catherine of Siena.[313] But these early comparisons to the female icons of Catholicism are deepened when everyone is convinced James has died at sea. After this news arrives, the narrator tells us Mary becomes "a sanctified priestess of the great worship of sorrow."[314] Sorrow is the affect that Mary works through in order to fully embody the nature of the Virgin Mary. Like the poem "Mary at the Cross" cited at the beginning of this essay, Mary's deeply felt grief elevates her holiness and makes her the spiritual center of the Scudder household. Mary quietly works through her grief about James and the narrator tells us that "sorrow is godlike," a sorrow legibly written on her face and through her body: "in her eyes, there was that nameless depth that one sees with awe in the Sistine Madonna,—eyes that have measured infinite sorrow and looked through it to an infinite peace."[315] Through this sorrow Mary more fully transforms into the Virgin Mary because she transcends sorrow into the realms of peace. Like the Virgin Mary, she becomes an icon that other women in the community can turn to for spiritual help and intercession. James's mother, Mrs. Marvyn, comes to Mary and confesses her doubts about Calvinism and the possibility that an unregenerate James will be in hell. She is tentative and even ashamed about questioning Calvinist doctrine and Mary is the only

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[312] Stowe, *Wooing*, 13-14.
[313] In her article on *Agnes of Sorrento*, Gail K. Smith astutely points out that Agnes is not just compared to the saint of the same name, but artistic representations of Agnes, arguing that Stowe is interested in the Catholic aesthetic tradition, as much as the ascetic tradition. The same conclusions could also be applied to Mary.
[314] Stowe, *Wooing*, 220.
[315] Stowe, *Wooing*, 210.

people she can talk to about these potential heresies. We do not get Mary's response in this moment, but the narrator tells us (invoking Luke 2:19) "Mary kept all things and pondered them in her heart."[316]

The link between the sorrow coursing throughout the novel and the failures of Calvinism are best articulated by Candace in the wake of James's death. As Mrs. Marvyn sinks deeper into a despair that the narrator writes "was just verging on insanity," Candace enters the room (having been listening through the door).[317] She demands that Dr. Hopkins console Mrs. Marvyn and when he seems unable, it is Candace who takes on the responsibility. Candace then provides Mrs. Marvyn with the consoling words she seems to need, telling her about the Lord's love for her and for James. She ends her monologue saying "he died for Mass'r Jim,—loved him and *died* for him,—-jes' give up his sweet, precious body and soul for him on de cross! Laws, jes' *leave* him in Jesus's hands! Why, honey, dar's de very print o' de nails in his hands now!"[318] Candace cuts through the theological wrangling of Calvinism to the heart of evangelical Christianity to reach Mrs. Marvyn in an immediate and affective way.

Candace's turn to an evangelical culture of feeling is also about the way she uses her body with Mrs. Marvyn to effect the catharsis the mourning mother needs. The narrator writes, "[Candace] gathered the pale form to her bosom, and sat down and began rocking her, as if she had been a babe."[319] It is Candace's combination of an evangelical belief in the "feeling" of Christ's love and the actual practice of physical feeling that when combined, provide the necessary comfort and relief Mrs. Marvyn has been seeking and that Calvinism could not provide. Following Candace's intervention the "flood-gates were rent; and healing sobs and tears

[316] Stowe, *Wooing*, 207.
[317] Stowe, *Wooing,* 201.
[318] Stowe, *Wooing*, 201.
[319] Stowe, *Wooing,* 201.

shook the frail form" and "all in the room wept together."[320] It is Candace's fully embodied version of evangelical intimacy that facilitates the catharsis of Mrs. Marvyn and the entire room. There is nothing "cool and collected" (to return to Lyman's advice to Catherine) about this moment—it is a purposefully excessive scene of shared, collective grief animating the Scudder home and its inhabitants. As Stowe's critique of an out-dated Calvinism, Candace's revolution in theology and feeling happens through an embodied religious sentiment that, as discussed above, was increasingly criticized within mainstream evangelical Protestantism.

As such, Candace's spirituality acts as both a critique of Calvinism as well as the contemporary evangelical moment. Earlier in the same chapter the narrator writes of both the good and the bad of eighteenth-century Calvinism. Praising the piety of men such as Jonathan Edwards and David Brainerd, the narrator finds fault in the fact that other individuals could not handle the severity of such piety, but also how "the clear logic and intense individualism of New England deepened the problems of Augustinian faith, while they swept away all those softening provisions" that were also part of Edwardsian theology.[321] It is not only the "dread" animating Calvinism, but what Stowe sees as a dangerous individualism of the tradition. And that is why it is so important that Candace's gestures towards Mrs. Marvyn do not just affect the grieving mother but the whole room. And though theologians like Bushnell might claim that revivalism also fostered an "extreme individualism," Stowe rejects this by portraying faith in its most affectively charged form as always enveloping the larger community.

Both Mary and Candace's ability to connect with Mrs. Marvyn through their common sorrow returns us back to Mary's relationship with Virginie. While Mary grieves for James,

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[320] Stowe, *Wooing*, 201.
[321] Stowe, *Wooing*, 198.

Virginie goes through her own conflict. Though married, she is hounded by Burr (who the novel explicitly refers to as a "Lovelace") and loves him, despite knowing it is wrong. Marianne Noble recognizes the significance of Burr in the novel's philosophy of empathy and identification in her essay "The Courage to Speak and Hear the Truth." She points out that Burr is characterized by a "natural" sympathy, but one that is ultimately tarnished by his egoism.[322] I agree with this assessment, but would like to think about Burr instead as a trigger for another type of psychological model—what I would like to call an affective catalyst in the novel. Stowe takes pains to write Burr as the novel's "Lovelace," aligning him with the most famous seducer of Anglo-American readership. But Burr never effects his seduction and never serves the narrative influence that Lovelace does in *Clarissa*, rather operating on the fringes of the text, offering both his historical presence and his synecdotal relationship to the dangerous, seductive energy of Lovelace. Burr's function then is affective and productive, generating an energy in the text that is transmitted to other narrative arenas. Most specifically, Burr, like the presumed dead James, is a progenitor of sorrow in the novel, specifically for Virginie. Through Burr's attempts to seduce her, his narrative presence allows her and Mary the opportunity to commune with one another through that sorrow. She comes to Mary seeking refuge from Burr and tells her, "I came to confess to you."[323] Mary's sympathetic ear is transformed into a kind of confessional, one (unlike the Mother Superior of anti-Catholicism) where the confessional is emblematic of the ideal of sympathetic bonding, a bonding forged through the affect of sorrow. Virginie confesses that she was toyed with by Burr and the narrator says "she enacted before her this poetry and tragedy of real life, so much beyond what dramatic art can ever furnish."[324] It is significant that

[322] Marianne Noble, "The Courage to Speak and Hear the Truth: Sympathy and Genuine Human Contact in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *The Minister's Wooing*," *New England Quarterly* 81:4 (December 2008): 679.
[323] Stowe, *Wooing*, 222.
[324] Stowe, *Wooing*, 226.

Virginie's confession is *enacted*, literally embodied, and that this is the means of the full, sympathetic communication that happens between the two women. As with Candace and Mrs. Marvyn, a physical outpouring of sorrow creates the affective bonds that give birth to the convent-like reconfiguration of the Scudder home.

But this sorrow is integral to the erasure of religious difference and the tensions between Catholics and Protestants. The narrator says of the Scudders, as they pray for James's soul, "the truly good are of one language in prayer. Whatever lines or angles of thought may separate them in other hours, when they pray in extremity, all good men pray alike."[325] Stowe's answer to the religious tensions of the era is to locate the universal truth of Christianity in a physical practice of religious suffering, an embodiment of a grief that unites people of different faiths. In valorizing the affective and social behaviors that animate nineteenth-century revivalism, Stowe's work in turn reclaims the convent from anti-Catholic discourse and attempts to create an ecumenical community of feeling that engages directly with the religious tensions of antebellum America.

John Gatta, in his essay "The Anglican Aspect of Harriet Beecher Stowe" writes that Stowe "came to regard the Anglican-Episcopal ethos as peculiarly conducive to Christian training and the spiritual nurture of young people. She also came to value its sacramental emphasis, which inspired a search for 'outward and visible' signs of 'inward and spiritual grace,' because it envisioned divine love as an outgrowth—not a denial—of natural human affections."[326] This ethos helps explain Stowe's educational work with Catherine and the encouragement of her children to join the Episcopal Church. The Episcopal Church also stands

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[325] Stowe, *Wooing*, 185.
[326] John Gatta, "The Anglican Aspect of Harriet Beecher Stowe." *New England Quarterly* 73:3 (September 2000): 412-433, 415.

in a position to Catholic iconography and liturgy that allows Stowe access to the elements of Catholicism we see valued in *The Minister's Wooing* and elsewhere. Part of Stowe's interest in Catholic iconography came from her European tour and Gail K. Smith has argued for this influence on the novel *Agnes of Sorrento*.[327] But as Dorothy Z. Baker writes, "although her experience of Italian and Flemish art and her observation of French women deepened her belief that the female body was an instrument of spirituality, her American Calvinist tradition had already instilled that conviction in her."[328] Baker goes on to list exemplars such as Sarah and Jonathan Edwards, and this linking of Catholic imagery and evangelical religious ecstasy helps us understand Stowe's relationship to the anti-Catholic debates of her own time. Revivalism was a more ecstatic manifestation of Christian practice, one in which collective groups of Christians, sometimes of various denominations, would be moved together physically and emotionally, coalescing around feelings like love, grief, and shame. Conversion and regeneration were processes that happened in and on the body, revivalism's answer to "outward and visible signs"—the same kind of bodily legibility that unites Mary and Virginie in their sorrow and in their spiritual transformation. And while Lyman Beecher and others attempted to silence these ritualized and embodied practices, Stowe gives them a central place in her ecumenical, evangelical framework.

Of course, ecumenical community formation is not an uncommon trope in Stowe's work, the most notable being the Quaker community that shelters Eliza and George in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Rachel Halliday becomes a mother for the anxious Eliza, awaiting news about George. Rachel calms her with the words "my daughter," words that "came naturally" from her lips, "for

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[327] Gail K. Smith, "Art and the Body in *Agnes of Sorrento*," in *Transatlantic Stowe: Harriet Beecher Stowe and European Culture*, ed. Denise Kohn, Sarah Meer, and Emily B. Todd (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2006).
[328] Dorothy Z. Baker, "French Women, Italian Art, and Other 'Advocates of the Body' in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *The Minister's Wooing*." *New England Quarterly* 83:1 (March 2010): 69.

hers was the face and form that made 'mother' seem the most natural word in the world."[329] Rachel and Eliza cross religious and racial lines in the Quaker community, another kind of Ur-domestic space. Though the Quaker community is about a model of Christian community and abolitionist sentiment, it is also the space where George begins to overcome his own resistances to gospel Christianity. When George sits as an equal at a white man's table, the moment of equality leads to a moment of conversion: "This, indeed, was a home,—*home*—a word that George had never yet known a meaning for; and a belief in God, and trust in his providence, began to encircle his heart, as, with a golden cloud of protection and confidence, dark, misanthropic, pining, atheistic doubts, and fierce despair, melted away before the light of a living Gospel, breathed in living faces, preached by a thousand unconscious acts of love and good will, which, like the cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple, shall never lose their reward."[330] Though the outlines of the Quaker community and the Scudder home share the common ideals of abolitionism, domesticity, and Christian piety, the fact that the Quaker community in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* links a revolution in feeling to a revolution in faith is a significant difference from *The Minister's Wooing*. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* condemns George's impiety through Eliza's concerns for his soul but nowhere in *The Minister's Wooing* do we see Catholicism linked to incorrect beliefs or a need for conversion. Virginie needs a revolution of the heart, but that change does not affect her faith. When Mary and Virginie come together, the novel takes pains to articulate an ecumenical form of bonding: "there they were, the Catholic and the Puritan, each strong in her respective faith, yet melting together in that embrace of love and sorrow, joined in the great communion of suffering."[331] I would argue that the novel's refusal to characterize the convent as a prison is concomitant with its refusal to see Virginie as an object of

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[329] Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company), 117.
[330] Stowe, *Cabin*, 122.
[331] Stowe, *Wooing*, 228.

conversion. To convert Virginie would be to lose the novel's ties to Catholic iconography and its reparative relationship to anti-Catholic discourse.[332]

It's important to note that although I argue for the novel's investment in Catholic iconography and spaces, this investment is a specifically gendered one and does not exempt Stowe from other modes of anti-Catholicism. Stowe does imagine the possibility of Catholicism for men but her interests lie primarily in the female rituals and icons of Catholicism.[333] However, like her father and brother (and numerous other Protestants), Stowe took part in anti-Catholic debates in the *New York Evangelist*, the same publication that printed her poem "Mary at the Cross," which I cited at the beginning of the essay. In 1846 she wrote a review of German historian Leopold Von Ranke's *History of the Popes*. In Stowe's words, Ranke argues that the Catholic Church reasserted its dominance in post-Reformation Europe through education, specifically through the work of the Jesuits. Stowe translates this situation to the U.S. and the West, much as her father did in his *Plea for the West.* She assumes the American public is unaware of this situation, writing, "do they know that in the great Western metropolis, the political power is already in the hands of the Catholics…."[334] There isn't need to look at Stowe's concerns about Jesuit education in the American West, but we must consider how an author who I argue is so committed to recuperating the possibilities of the convent and the veneration of Mary and other female saints, could so unreservedly take on the rhetoric of anti-Catholicism.

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[332] This also relates to Noble's claim that Stowe's model of sympathetic identification "blends a generous willingness to identify with what another feels with a frank acknowledgment of that other's difference," 701.

[333] Similar to Mary, Reverend Hopkins is another character the novel can imagine as being productively changed via a Catholic aesthetic. Stowe writes: "But there way lying in him, crude and unworked, a whole mine of those artistic feelings and perceptions which are awakened and developed only by the touch of beauty. Had he been born beneath the shadow of the great Duomo of Florence, where Giotto's Campanile rises like the slender stalk of a celestial lily, where varied marbles and rainbow-glass and gorgeous paintings and lofty statuary call forth, even from childhood, the soul's reminiscences of the bygone glories of its pristine state, his would have been a soul as rounded and full in its sphere of faculties as that of Da Vinci or Michel Angelo [sic]" (92).

[334] Harriet Beecher Stowe, "What Will the American People Do?" *New York Evangelist,* 5 February 1846: 17.

Part of this is perhaps the thirteen years separating these two texts. But we must also consider the fact that Stowe is concerned with the "political power" that Jesuit education leads to. Stowe's investment in the nunnery is similar to her investment in the ideology of separate spheres. Ultimately, women are not called to direct political engagement in Stowe's literary worldview at this time.[335] Like Mrs. Bird in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a woman's political influence comes from her moral, domestic influence. The danger of the Jesuits is in their infiltration into the political life of the United States, a concern that doesn't affect women from the standpoint of separate spheres. If Jesuits sought to sway the political life of the nation, we must keep in mind Stowe's characterization of the convent as a "refuge" for women throughout history. Catholicism, as manifested in the convent space, takes us out of the world of the political.

Likewise, if Stowe's novel critiques the representations of nuns, nunneries, and other Catholic imagery, *The Minister's Wooing* still operates under the structural logic on the escaped nun's tale. Mary and Virginie bond through "the great communion of suffering" but Virginie's time in the Scudder home is restorative, not a permanent alternative to marriage or the marriage plot which is ultimately the engine of the novel. The narrator states that "the domesticating of Madame de Frontignac as an inmate of the cottage added a new element of vivacity to that still and unvaried life."[336] But this domestication, though wallowing almost luxuriously in the female world of love and ritual, turns out to be a stopover for Virginie. In the Scudder home she is cured of her passions for Burr—passions that almost ruined her marriage—but as Mary eventually weds the still-alive James (reports of his death were greatly exaggerated), so Virginie returns to her husband. Although Virginie is not rescued from her convent experience, as in the escaped

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[335] This will change in the period following the Civil War, as Joan D. Hedrick charts in her biography of Stowe and in Stowe's later novel, *My Wife and I* (1871). In Joan D. Hedrick *Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 353-379.
[336] Stowe, *Wooing*, 232.

nun's tale, she ultimately returns to the world of normative heterosexual relations. The bonds of sorrow that unite her to Mary cannot exist forever and the Scudder home takes on the role of a nunnery as it perhaps applied to Protestant families educating their daughters—a place to learn arts and education, where daughters would leave more refined, educated, and ideally, more marriageable.

But the novel's final scenes are concerned not with the marriages of either woman, but with the wasted life of Aaron Burr. Virginie (now a mother) and Mary exchange letters about Burr's duel with Alexander Hamilton and his wasted potential. Virginie's sorrow returns as a result, so much so that she tells Mary that her son Henri "saw by my face, when I read your letter, that something pained me."[337] Burr triggers a sorrow that cannot be contained and the book's final image is of his grave, "a plain granite slab," placed there not by Virginie, but years later, by her son Henri.[338] Virginie's return to married life ultimately cannot control the affective energy generated by her relationship to Burr. The sorrow that unites her to Mary, that creates a reformulation of Protestant-Catholic relations, continues on through her son, who remembers his mother's sorrow from years past and memorializes Burr as a result. Henri's gesture of filial love and responsibility is also a recognition of the affective channels that are the common ground of the sentimental novel and evangelical experience, but that, even with the institutionalization of that discourse, cannot always be contained or structured. The privately shared sorrow of Mary and Virginie spills over, its power and excess a means to its continued utility and transmissibility.

[337] Stowe, *Wooing*, 330.
[338] Stowe, *Wooing*, 332.

This affective transmission brings us back to Noble's essay. Noble argues that the novel can be read for its prescient model of sympathetic identification, one that prefigures recent work by Jessica Benjamin and D.L. Winnicot, that "in contrast to the Freudian model of a monadic self as formed within a nuclear family" the novel presents "a fluid, intersubjective identity [that] is forged within a complex web of relationships."[339] This fluidity is something I have been charting not only in this novel, but as a key function of antebellum evangelicalism more broadly. But she goes on to write, "we need not evoke theories of cultural work to value Stowe's writing. We need not focus solely on world politics to take stock of her achievement. We need not abandon our supposedly modern taste for subtle observation, judicious thought, and a profound assessment of human psychology to appreciate her fiction."[340] Noble attempts to revise the critical history of Stowe, a history that often ignores or elides the aesthetic and psychological complexity of her novels in order to read them in their more (ostensibly) compelling historical and cultural interventions. But although Noble offers a deeply nuanced reading of the affective model the novel outlines, her attempted reparation throws out the proverbial baby with the bathwater. As I have attempted to show, the psychological *is* the historical—they are not oppositional modes of scholarship, but deeply imbricated. To think through the novel's affective model, one that privileges a more generative affective contagion, the social and therefore the historical return to us. The sorrow created by Burr, that connects Mary and Virginie in their temporary, idealized convent space, that transmits to the son even after the return to the normative marital structure, implies that these feelings move freely and unpredictably. And with this model in mind, we can understand the novel as intervening in history through psychology,

[339] Noble, "Courage to Speak," 678.
[340] Noble, "Courage to Speak," 701.

addressing the anti-Catholic imagery of American evangelicals through that psychology, through a readership that connects with, transmits, and reshapes the sorrow that animates the novel.

Conclusion

The Circuit Rider Comes Home: Fiction, Practice, and the Institutionalization of Evangelicalism

In the previous discussion of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *The Minister's Wooing* I considered the importance of Scudder family servant Candace and the way her embodied response to Mrs. Marvyn's grief is meant to both wipe the slate clean of Calvinism's failures and point Mrs. Marvyn and the readers towards an evangelical culture of feeling. In her tear-filled embrace, Candace brings the immediacy of the evangelical conversion moment to bear on Mrs. Marvyn's troubled soul and body, allowing her catharsis and offering her the immediate presence of Christ in her time of trial. Reminiscent of the interracial bonding through a common piety found in Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Candace's heart-filled gesture of interracial community feeling around Christ's love can be read as a template of the sentimentalized black body of evangelical Christianity that dominates much antebellum abolitionist rhetoric.

It is worth keeping Candace in mind as we consider one of the other Beechers, Harriet's famous younger brother, the minister Henry Ward Beecher. Though the centrality of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in American Studies has given us tremendous insight into Stowe's influence on abolitionism and the coming of the Civil War, Henry Ward Beecher's own contributions to the cause have gone under-recognized and under-theorized among scholars of the nineteenth-century United States. I would like to turn to Beecher here as a way to understand the shifting dynamics of evangelicalism around the Civil War. Through his preaching on abolitionism as well as his turn to the novel form (with 1868's *Norwood*) Beecher represents both a culminating point in U.S. evangelicalism's deployment of the body as spiritual evidence as well as its turn towards the written word as a symptom of the regimentation of community practices among mainstream

evangelicals in the antebellum period. Reading *Norwood* alongside of Miriam Fletcher's novel *The Methodist* (1859), we will see that the institutionalization of evangelicalism in the nineteenth-century along with the increasing privileging of print over public ritual marks a turn away from social and affective intensity as part of the mainstreaming of evangelicalism in the antebellum period.

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Upon meeting Harriet Beecher Stowe, Abraham Lincoln reportedly stated "so this is the little lady who started this great war." But according to Beecher biographer Debby Applegate, Robert E. Lee damned Henry Ward Beecher with comparable praise. She writes that Lee "believed that were it not for *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Beecher's speeches, the Confederacy would have secured diplomatic recognition by England and France, whose material and moral aid would have tipped the war to the Rebels."[341] Both anecdotes dramatically simplify the nature of the conflict while speaking to the centrality of Stowe and Beecher in the Civil War as popular spokespeople and lightning rods of controversy. The speeches Lee was referring to were part of Beecher's tour of Europe in 1863. Though the tour was not ostensibly for the Union, in England the topic could not be avoided, and Beecher took up the cause ably. These speeches were part of Beecher's long career as an abolitionist spokesperson in the pulpit and press.

Beecher began his ministerial career in the "West," where Lyman Beecher moved the family to take on his job at Lane Theological Seminary in Ohio. Henry's first two pulpits were in Indiana—Lawrenceburgh and Indianapolis respectively—and like his father, Beecher had a

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[341] Debby Applegate, *The Most Famous Man in America: The Biography of Henry Ward Beecher* (New York: Doubleday, 2006), 348.

somewhat ambivalent response to slavery at this time. This is best understood by the fact that the New School Presbytery, of which Beecher's congregation was a part, passed a resolution in 1840 calling for its ministers to preach an anti-slavery sermon at least once a year; it took him three years to finally fulfill this obligation.[342] But when Beecher finally did something seemed to have resonated with him and this sermon began his long career of speaking out openly and aggressively against slavery. When Beecher accepted a call to Plymouth Church in Brooklyn in 1847, he took his newly-energized abolitionism with him to his new, liberal congregation of well-to-do suburbanites.

Plymouth Church is where Beecher made his fame and where he preached until his death in 1887. Access to larger crowds and the newspapers and publishing houses of New York gave Beecher the ability to become a nationally recognized figure on matters religious and political (the Beecher name probably helped too). But his most public contributions were around abolitionism; Plymouth Church took on a central role in the abolitionist cause and became a stop along the Underground Railroad.[343] Among Beecher's abolitionist work, what I would like to focus on specifically are the mock-slave auctions he held several times in the decade preceding the Civil War. In these auctions, Beecher brought up slaves, usually fair-skinned women, and burlesqued the conceits of the slave auction as a way to convince his affluent parishioners to buy the freedom of these doomed women. It is worth considering these spectacles of benevolence within this dissertation's interest in the role of affect in evangelical practice. Beecher's auctions do not engage in the traditional revivalist exercises of conversion and regeneration but deploy the logic of revivalism on behalf of the slaves on display. These auctions converted the altar into the slave block and the suffering Christian into the helpless slave. As we will see, these

[342] Applegate, *Most Famous*, 148.
[343] Applegate, *Most Famous*, 248.

transformations speak to the changes in mainstream evangelicalism's relationship to revivalism in the antebellum period.

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Before considering the mock-slave auctions, it is worth spending a moment on Henry Ward Beecher's own persona as a minister as well as the way Plymouth Church as a physical space played into his performative evangelical ethos. Though the son of America's most famous Calvinist, Beecher moved further and further away from the family's original New England Congregationalism towards a distinct form of liberal evangelical piety. Beecher can and has been read as a model of theological degeneracy in this period.[344] But rather than see Beecher as the degenerate end point of American intellectual Christianity, I would like to read him as the culmination of a tradition begun in the colonies with George Whitefield. Beecher became the mainstream apotheosis of ecstatic preaching in the antebellum period, a minister who deployed a combination of sentimental rhetoric with an embodied religious performance meant to disseminate among crowds of believers and spectators.

To say that Beecher developed a cult of personality in his preaching is not meant to be dismissive, but to recognize that his particular brand of embodied sermonizing was a purposeful means to effecting change in his auditors. Beecher describes how he came to understand the role of preaching as a young minister: "preaching was a definite and practical thing. Our people needed certain moral changes. Preaching was only a method of enforcing truths, not for the sake of the truths themselves, but for the results to be sought in *men*. *Man* was the thing. Henceforth

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[344] Douglas, *Feminization*,131-134.

our business was to work upon *man*; to study him, to stimulate and educate him. A sermon was good that had power on the heart, and was good for nothing, no matter how good, that had no moral power on man."[345] Beecher understood his methods as "stimulating" the individual not toward spiritual truths but towards moral and behavioral reforms. Beecher understood these reforms as effected by a work upon the hearts of his auditors and in this way he and Harriet Beecher Stowe both understood the utility of a sentimental ethos in moral reform projects. Beecher did such work not through studied or formal sermonizing but through a preaching style that privileged immediacy and intimacy between minister and auditor. Fellow minister William M. Taylor described Beecher's sermons as "thoroughly spontaneous," not "the result of the soul-travail of laborious effort."[346]

Plymouth Church became perhaps the best space in which to perform this spontaneity. The congregation purchased and remodeled a new building in 1850 that would create a space conducive to the preaching style of Beecher. As William C. Beecher and Samuel Scoville describe it in their biography (published one year after Henry's death), the new sanctuary "was plain even to bareness" but built for the "purpose of enabling as many as possible to hear the Gospel."[347] To this end, the sanctuary was built in a circle, with the pulpit the central feature that all could view equally and allowed Beecher to address his congregation "with great ease" and "an opportunity for the cultivation of that feeling of homeness and fraternity that always characterized the gatherings of this church with its pastor."[348] According to Applegate this

[345] William Constantine Beecher and Samuel Scoville, *A Biography of Rev. Henry Ward Beecher* (New York: Charles L. Webster and Company, 1888), 188.
[346] Lyman Abbot and S.B. Halliday, *Henry Ward Beecher: A Sketch of His Career: With Analyses of His Power as a Preacher, Lecturer, Orator, and Journalists, and Incidents and Reminiscences of His Life* (Hartford: American Publishing Company, 1887), 68.
[347] Beecher and Scoville, *Biography*, 225.
[348] Beecher and Scoville, Biography, 226.

design was the specific wish of Beecher himself.[349] The architecture of Plymouth Church can be understood as a kind of structured revival space, one that brings the egalitarian crowd formations of the camp meeting into the respectable bourgeois architecture of suburban Brooklyn. With no impediments such as pillars or other supports to interrupt the view and without the linear hierarchy of more traditional church models, the circle of spectators could each engage with the performative body and sentimental posture of Beecher.

And in this way they could also engage in the mock slave auctions that garnered Beecher so much praise and infamy. It seems Beecher staged such performances at least three times in his career, with the case of the Edmonson sisters in 1848 being one of his earliest and most prominent interventions. The sisters were part of a slave escape from New Orleans, taking the ship *Pearl* to Washington D.C. but caught along the way and doomed to be returned south with the other slaves. Beecher heard of the sisters' plight and preached on their case at Plymouth Church.[350] The sisters were absent from this performance (being held in Alexandria awaiting their forced return south) and it's unclear from the narrative provided by Beecher and Scoville's biography whether he intended to take on the performance of an auctioneer or whether it was simply a manifestation of that "thoroughly spontaneous" quality Taylor described. Whatever the case, when Beecher later recalled the "sale" he claimed, "I think that of all the meetings that I have attended in my life, for a panic of sympathy I never saw one that surpassed that."[351] Beecher's linking of the conventional "sympathy" with the more unpredictable "panic" of it all

[349] Applegate, *Most Famous*, 237.
[350] Jason Stupp, "Slavery and the Theatre of History: Ritual Performance on the Auction Block," *Theatre Journal* 63 (2011), 61-84, 73. For more on the case of the *Pearl* see Josephine F. Pacheco, *The Pearl: A Failed Slave Escape on the Potomac* (Chapel Hill: University of North Caroline Press, 2005).
[351] Beecher and Scoville, *Biography*, 293.

reveals something of the volatile energy in the church that night, an energy Beecher sought to harness and heighten in subsequent performances.

In the winter of 1860, as the sectional crisis was growing more heated, Beecher staged another mock slave auction on behalf of a nine-year-old slave girl named Pinky. Like the Edmonson sisters, Pinky was a fair-skinned young woman, and Beecher deployed the rhetoric and spectacle of the Edmonson case with the added benefit of bringing Pinky to the "stage" in order to move his congregants all the more powerfully. With Pinky on stage, Beecher deployed a second-person assault on his audience similar to the rhetorical work of Whitefield during the eighteenth-century awakenings. While dwelling on the fairness of her skin, the innocence of her character, and the implicitly sexual nature of a young woman's position in the slave economy Beecher preached, "what will you do now? May she read her liberty in your eyes? Shall she go free? Christ stretched forth his hand and the sick were restored to health; will you stretch forth your hands and give her that without which life is of little worth? Let the plates be passed and we will see."[352] The author Rose Terry, who couldn't give money, provided a ring off of her finger. Finding it in the collection plate Beecher removed the ring, placed it on Pinky, and said "remember that this is your freedom-ring."[353] The next day Beecher took Pinky to the artist Eastman Johnson, who painted Pinky gazing reverently at the ring.[354]

After recounting the stories of Beecher's mock auctions and his fundraising to purchase freed slaves, Beecher and Scoville note that in going through Beecher's papers, they were confronted with multiple photos of the slaves freed by Beecher's collections. These photos bear

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[352] Beecher and Scoville, *Biography*, 298.
[353] Beecher and Scoville, *Biography*, 296.
[354] Applegate, *Most Famous*, 317.

the images of slaves, "white faced, flaxen-haired children born under the curse of slavery."[355] Beecher's collections were always geared towards light-skinned slave women and played upon the abolitionist trope of the tragic mulatto. This requires us to consider the fraught racial dynamics of Beecher's slave auctions, as Jason Stupp has so ably done. He writes that "while claiming to celebrate freedom, [Beecher's] performances simultaneously reinforced white superiority and situated white spectators as moral redeemers who could participate in the horrors of slavery without endangering their religious beliefs."[356] We can assume a predominantly white audience, bourgeois in economic composition, enthusiastically heaping piles of money and jewelry into collection plates on behalf of the absent Edmonson sisters and the absently present Pinky. Beecher's seemingly calculated decision to choose fair-skinned young women to "auction off" not only conformed to the conventions of the tragic mulatto but also allowed the white audience, as Stupp argues, to confront "'one of their own'—a white person—in the role of a slave."[357] Beecher's mock auctions are spectacles of sameness, taking part in the sentimental commitment to equivalence that erases the subjectivity of enslaved people by playing to the desires for commonality among a white audience.

But this performance also allows us insight into the shifting affective dynamics of antebellum evangelicalism. We have considered the role of Finney's "anxious bench" in chapter two and its symbolic relationship to the increasingly limited role of promiscuous and charged bodies in the revival space. Pinky's part in the slave auction parallels this development in evangelicalism. Beecher and Scoville write that Pinky "rose from the adjacent seat, and, ascending the steps, sank down, embarrassed and apparently overcome by her feelings, in the

[355] Beecher and Scoville, *Biography*, 300.
[356] Stupp, "Slavery," 72.
[357] Stupp, "Slavery," 74.

nearest chair."[358] Pinky's prostrate body, overcome with feeling, sits silently while Beecher harangues his audience about the evils of slavery and the necessity to do good. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Pinky's own story and even her ability to tell it are subsumed under the authority of the charismatic Beecher. The silencing of her particularity and the silencing of her body go hand in hand in both the theatrics and politics of the moment. And here it is worth considering again the space of Plymouth Church as an institutionalized revival space. Though revivals often took place, in part or in full, within churches, the desire of Beecher and his congregants to maintain the openness of public preaching with the middle-class security of the respectable sanctuary reflects the increasing limitations placed on the ecstatic and legible body. Pinky's silence mirrors the overall silencing of communicative bodies and their myriad affective possibilities within evangelical publics. This is distinctly different than the role of Candace in *The Minister's Wooing*. Candace is not a passive vehicle for white benevolence, but a catalyst for affective and theological change. Her body communicates her previously unspoken criticism of Hopkins's theology and allows others to do the same. But Pinky is rendered mutely symbolic. Her body's ability to speak, and to therefore move out of the confines of the tragic mulatto rhetoric are denied her in Beecher's performances. Despite securing her freedom, Beecher reinscribed her body in the same way an actual slave auction would have—by rendering her exclusively as the object of the white gaze and white economic intervention.

Pinky's experience reflects the tension that race brought to the ecstatic bodily practices of evangelicalism. Whereas the participants at Cane Ridge segregated white and black bodies to effect this solution, Pinky's role in the mock auction parallels the story of Catherine Brown in chapter four as well as so many people of color who were asked in the nineteenth-century to take

[358] Beecher and Scoville, *Biography*, 298.

on a representational pose on behalf of white reform initiatives. But rendering Pinky's body and embodied experiences of slavery mute is part of a larger project of the institutionalization of evangelicalism, which, as we have seen particularly in chapter four, played out among many levels of evangelical experience in the nineteenth-century. This process marginalized the affective ecstasy of evangelicalism in favor of well-regulated church communities. As we will see, evangelical fiction was both constitutive and reflective of this process.

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If Beecher's public preaching can be seen as the culmination of a preacher style inaugurated by Whitefield in the eighteenth-century as well as the successful implementation of evangelicalism's regulatory aims when it came to revival energy and the politics of race, we must also consider how Beecher's role as one of the most celebrated ministers in nineteenth-century America signals a shift away from the affective preaching and communication practices inaugurated with the emergence of evangelicalism in Whitefield's time. This has less to do with the shifts in theology that happened over the century in question and more about the modes of communication privileged in this period. In particular, the rise of the religious novel signaled a move in evangelical culture towards imaginative religious community formation away from the lived practices that helped evangelicalism move into the mainstream.[359]

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[359] This conclusion can be seen as a meeting point of Neihbur's thesis in *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*, Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities" and Jurgen Habermas's argument about print and the rise of the bourgeois public sphere, especially chapter seven of part 2 in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994). By this I mean that the move from sect to denomination is a process of becoming bourgeois and as both Anderson and Habermas argue, print is always a part of this process.

Richard D. Brown's *Knowledge is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700-1865* (1989) sheds light on this substantial change in communication networks. Take for example his description of the communication networks at work in Whitefield's preaching tours: "without printed handbills or organized publicity, face-to-face encounters had brought word of Whitefield's spiritual celebrity into the houses of Yankee farmers. Whether inland or at New London they were provincial people no doubt, but they were not isolated rustics encapsulated in a timeless agrarian idyll."[360] As I discussed in chapter one, Whitefield was no stranger to the power of print, developing his own publicity machine and publishing both sermons and his journals. But as Brown argues above, it was the face-to-face networking of information that helped assure word of Whitefield's exploits and travels would disseminate throughout the colonies. Oral and written communication worked hand-in-hand, but in an era of less literacy and less access to the printed word, social networks of information and communication did much of the labor in generating excitement around Whitefield's preaching tours. In fact, we should consider these interpersonal moments of communication as part and parcel of the affective energy taking place in Whitefield's outdoor preaching. Before participants ever saw Whitefield they had already caught a bit of his fire through family, neighbors, and community information sharing. A writer celebrating the efficacy of the *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* in 1801 described the public/print relationship this way: "it has been already read & will continue to be read in religious meetings and conferences. Those who read it will converse of it to others; one pious friend will hand it to another, and thus its usefulness will become more and more extensive."[361] In this early nineteenth-century example, much like the communication style of the 1740s, the writer to an evangelical publication knew that private reading was actually

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[360] Richard D. Brown, *Knowledge is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 139.
[361] A.Z. "Address to the Editors," *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*, October 1800, 121-125.

only a small part of the overall work of publishing—the text was meant to be shared publicly and socially.

But Brown also charts a shift toward print throughout the nineteenth-century. He writes, "in 1775 word-of-mouth transmission together with signed, handwritten messages furnished the primary means of spreading information, with print—newspapers and broadsides—playing only a secondary role. But by 1865 changes in society, coupled with the development of the telegraph, had made print so swift, authoritative, and ubiquitous, that is assumed a primary role. The age of impersonal mass communication had arrived."[362] Brown's argument speaks broadly across the United States and print culture, but its pertinence to our discussion of evangelicalism needs to be considered more specifically. Evangelicalism, as I have been arguing throughout this dissertation, is first and foremost a social, embodied practice embedded within a revised Protestant theology. This means that Brown's argument about the turn to, and eventual primacy of, print must have dramatic consequences on a religious ethos built so strongly around the power of interpersonal communication. Earlier print (from the 1740s to the early nineteenth-century) served more to spark evangelical publics—to see for themselves and to spread the word. But as it became more ubiquitous and available, print came, in part, to be a replacement of public pieties.[363] We can't stretch such conclusions too thin. Church attendance did not diminish in this time period and revivals and camp meetings continue to today. But if we consider this turn toward print alongside the mainstreaming of revivalism that happened within the major evangelical denominations (which I discussed in chapter four), the shift toward more static and

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[362] Brown, *Knowledge*, 247.

[363] In this regard I disagree with Spinoza's understanding of the affects and imagination. In the *Ethics* he writes, "An affect toward a thing which we know does not exist in the present, and which we imagine is possible, is more intense, other things equal, than one toward a contingent thing." Spinoza, *Ethics*, 122. Spinoza believes that the power of the possible enhances the affects in play and though that can be true, it is important to understand, particularly in the context of this dissertation, that the very real accumulation of bodies together is the most immediate and powerful way to transmit affect.

regimented evangelical public dynamics twinned with the turn to religious fiction and imaginary community formation becomes clearer.[364]

With this in mind we can return to Beecher and his foray into novel writing, *Norwood: or, Village Life in New England* (1868). Beecher was solicited by Robert Bonner of the *New York Ledger* in spring of 1865 to write a novel. Though he was initially hesitant to undertake a novel, Bonner's staggering offer of twenty-four thousand dollars seemed hard to resist.[365] The novel centers on the titular New England town in the years leading up to the Civil War. Though the romantic plot centers on Rose Wentworth and her love for Barton Cathcart, whose courtship is interrupted by the war, the novel's theological center is town doctor Rueben Wentworth, Rose's father. Dr. Wentworth's theology mirrors Beecher's own and reflects Beecher's increasingly dramatic turn away from his Calvinist roots toward a liberal, naturalist theology. In a conversation with the Calvinist Reverend Buell, Wentworth outlines his own theology, one he practices often while meditating and strolling in his garden: "God does not live in a book. Man does not live in a book. Love, Faith, Joy, Hope, do not, cannot live in a book. For the living truth we must go outside of the Bible which is but to religion what Botany is to the gardens, meadows, and all their flowers."[366] Wentworth offers a romantic and even transcendentalist understanding of God as embodied in nature in opposition to Buell's stuffy Calvinism.

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[364] This argument parallels Christopher Castiglia's recent work *Interior States: Consciousness and the Inner Life of Democracy in the Antebellum United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008). He writes "While some institutions in antebellum America (as in our own day) enhanced citizens' quality of life in beneficial ways (one could think of lending libraries, public schools, or abolition societies, for instance), the *theory* of institutionality diminished citizenship and democratic participation in crucial ways," 61. Though my own project is less interested in a rhetoric of *democratic* participation, there are distinct affinities between the changes manifesting in mainline Protestant denominations that I have been charting and Castiglia's own argument about institutionality across the antebellum period.

[365] Applegate, *Most Famous*, 353.

[366] Henry Ward Beecher, *Norwood: or, Village Life in New England* (New York: Charles Scribner and Company, 1868), 60.

But with this theology in mind, Wentworth doesn't reject the power of revivalism. Instead he offers a theory of revivalism that he claims is aligned with his naturalist sympathies. Speaking to Judge Bacon on the subject, he argues, "in every department of life men are moved in masses, and, as it were, with social contagions. Few men in any thing act alone. They kindle themselves in the simplest employments by social contact. Social enthusiasms have characterized the progress of the race in every department of society."[367] Here Wentworth aligns revivalism not with a particular spiritual dispensation but with a theory of human social development that extends to all branches of society. In this way Beecher is in line with our contemporary notions of social transmission but out of step with the revival theology of previous generations of ministers and participants. When Judge Bacon presses him on this very issue Wentworth responds

> I do not the less believe that a divine influence is experienced because it pursues the channels of established law. Men account for phenomena by natural laws, as far as their knowledge goes, and then they ascribe whatever is left over, beyond their knowledge of causation, to superior beings. The higher ranges of human experience are the most complex and subtle, and seem mysterious, because the lines of causation are finer and more spiritual. But the profoundest mysteries of human experience will one day be found to furnish the most admirable illustrations of the universality and constancy of natural laws.[368]

Speaking through Wentworth, Beecher both valorizes revivalism and de-sacralizes it, explaining away participants' belief in God's divine intervention as a mere ignorance of natural law.

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[367] Beecher, *Norwood*, 263.
[368] Beecher, *Norwood*, 264.

Though Wentworth believes nature to be God's law, he evacuates the important quality of a special divine intervention that animates the revival energy of so many of participants.

After Wentworth and the judge have finished their conversation the narrator takes over, concluding the discussion thusly: "the indirect effects of those moral experiences called revivals, in vivifying the moral sense, elevating the sentiments, and giving to daily life a larger moral element—in bringing over secular things the shadow of the Infinite, are so important that they should be accounted great benefits, quite independently of the special personal reformations which they work."[369] Beecher's novel is part of a long tradition of theorizing the method and means of revivalism (it seems that one of revivalism's key features is the ever-present reflection in print about itself). But the novel context of Wenthworth's ideas signals a change in the culture's understanding of the relationship of print and practice. Earlier texts were meant to influence ministers and lay people, be read in class meetings and in homes, and to animate participants to take part in revivals with the right spiritual frame of mind. But in *Norwood*, the discussion of revivalism is couched within a novel that, like *The Minister's Wooing*, represents a bygone era. Though not reaching as far back as Stowe's novel, *Norwood* pines for the years before the Civil War disrupted the tiny New England town and its isolated and idiosyncratic character.[370]

In a similar vein, Miriam Fletcher's novel *The Methodist; or, Incidents and Characters from Life in the Baltimore Conference* (1859) presents the public religious practices of Methodism as curios of the past. The novel centers on the family of Colonel Hunter, wealthy Episcopalians in Virginia who must deal with their spiritual states when the Colonel's widowed

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[369] Beecher, *Norwood*, 265.
[370] In this way *Norwood* is part of a post-bellum local color tradition that would be so significant a part of American literary culture beginning in the 1870s.

daughter, who converted to Methodism, returns home with her only son Harry. Colonel Hunter is an Episcopalian in form only and finds the Methodists "too zealous."[371] He is hesitant when daughter Sophy returns to the family home for fear her enthusiastic religion will cause conflict. And indeed it does. The aristocratic Hunter family and its surrounding community are frustrated by Sophy's piety and her rejection of dancing and other social activities that define Southern, aristocratic sociality. But the greater conflict comes in the form of her son Harry, who Colonel Hunter wishes to groom as heir to the family estate. Harry is fully converted to Methodism at a camp meeting near their home and chooses to become a circuit rider instead of taking over responsibility for the family estate. But all of these issues become background noise to the marriage plot involving Harry, the vain and social Rose Carter and the pious Susan Allington.

The prefatory materials to the novel highlight the tension between print and practice that reaches its apex in this period. In his introduction to the novel, publisher W.P. Strickland writes, "we hesitate not to say, that no Christian, of whatever denomination, can rise from the perusal of this book without realizing a quickening of spiritual emotion, and no Methodist can read it without feeling a reawakening of the zeal and devotion that characterized the early ministers and members of the Church."[372] Strickland imagines an affective response from readers, no doubt because of the novel's detailed scenes of camp meetings, class meetings, and quarterly conferences. But the author's preface seems to point us in a different, conflicting direction. Fletcher writes "it cannot be denied that the peculiar and graphic features of Methodism are rapidly fading, and will soon disappear from among us. They may still linger, perhaps, on the remote frontier of our country; but we who sit at home, surrounded by the enfeebling influences

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[371] Miriam Fletcher, *The Methodist: or, Incidents and Characters from Life in the Baltimore Conference* (New York: Derby and Jackson, 1859), 36.
[372] Fletcher, *The Methodist*, xi.

of refined and wealthy Methodism, need to be reminded of the early struggles and privations of our missionary fathers."[373] Whereas Strickland imagines the novel igniting "zeal" in readers, Fletcher sees the novel as a monument to a Methodist experience that has passed out of mainstream Methodism altogether. She projects nostalgia for a lost past, isolating the "peculiar and graphic features of Methodism" as relics of its early history or at best, residual practices of frontier life. Like Beecher, Fletcher admires the social practices of evangelicalism but seems uninterested in projecting them into the future. Rather, both novels encase those rituals in an ever-receding past.

This marginalization of social religious practices is furthered by the novel's narrative structure. Though much time is given to Harry's conversion, camp meetings, and Methodist piety, the novel is ultimately driven by a conventional nineteenth-century romance plot. Harry proposes to Rose Carter after she experiences a (false) conversion at a camp meeting. Before they can get married, Rose returns to her life of dancing and socializing and refuses to take part in Harry's austere circuit-riding lifestyle. This leaves Susan Allington, whose sincere Methodist conviction makes her the perfect bride for Harry. Or rather, Harry's conversion to Methodism makes him the perfect husband for Susan. Seeing Harry after his conversion, "the cherished scenes of the camp-meeting passed rapidly before her. She felt that he was changed, yet the same. The sparkling buoyancy of early youth was giving place to a chastened benignant gravity. The seal of a noble Christian manhood was on his brow, and she felt, rather than thought, that he was one on whose uprightness and strength the weak might lean."[374] Though many pages separate this initial spark from their ultimate marriage, it is worth noting that in the logic of the novel, Harry's conversion is meant to drive the text's romantic plot. And in the end, with his

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[373] Fletcher, *The Methodist*, v-vi.
[374] Fletcher, *The Methodist*, 199.

grandfather's death, Harry and Susan inherit the family estate. The result is that Harry must give up his circuit riding duties in order to take on his domestic ones. Though giving up the privations of circuit riding for the responsibilities of a genteel Virginia farmer might seem a rejection of God's calling for Harry, Susan reassures him that taking over the family estate and ministering to its slave population must also be a call from God.[375] Like *Norwood*, *The Methodist* ultimately valorizes an ideal of domestic Christianity. Fletcher's novel places camp meetings and other social practices of Methodism not only in the historical past, but in the past of its romantic leads, who take on the role of benevolent Christians aristocrats whose mission field does not extend past their own fences.

More than once, the evangelical novel has been damned by scholars for its very success. Both Ann Douglas and David S. Reynolds made arguments for the supplanting of theology by the popularity of religious fiction.[376] There is much truth to these arguments, but more recent historical scholarship reveals that the turn towards fiction was perhaps more a symptom than cause of the changing nature of evangelicalism in the antebellum period. In his book *The Way of the Cross Leads Home: The Domestication of American Methodism* (1993) Gregory A. Schneider argues that beginning in the 1830s, Methodism went through "a process of consolidation."[377] Built upon circuit riding, camp and class meetings, and affiliations across cultures and classes, Methodism became increasingly bourgeois and domestic. As Schneider writes, Methodists "celebrated the new eminence and respectability of their church and its members but also lamented its loss of simplicity and zeal."[378] This is best encapsulated in

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[375] Fletcher, *The Methodist*, Volume II, 357.
[376] Ann Douglass, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Knopf, 1977) and David S. Reynolds, *Faith in Fiction: The Emergence of Religious Literature in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981).
[377] Gregory A. Schneider, *The Way of the Cross Leads Home: The Domestication of American Methodism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 149.
[378] Schneider, *Way of the Cross*, 149.

Fletcher's novel and though Methodism might be the most dramatic instance of evangelicalism's move toward the mainstream, it is representative.[379]

I am not interested in seeing "domestication" and the antebellum turn toward the home as social model as the problem here. As we saw in chapter four's discussion of *The Minister's Wooing*, the domestic sphere offers its own affective and recuperative powers, at least within the more fluid conception of home outlined by Stowe.[380] But the domesticity pictured by Fletcher echoes the tension we have seen throughout this dissertation between the unpredictable affective power of evangelicalism as a promiscuous social phenomenon and the more regimented and institutional aims of evangelicalism. In the years around the Civil War, the scales tip in favor of institutionality. This is not just the enfolding of previously marginalized denominations into mainstream U.S. life but the ways this enfolding literally reorganized bodies within religious spaces. Slave woman Pinky's body converted into silent spectacle and Finney's anxious bench are two such symptoms of this shift; the decline in circuit riding among the Methodists and the turn to organized parishes is another.[381] And the ascendency of the evangelical novel can be understood within this process as well. Print has always been a significant part of evangelicalism, but the novels of the antebellum period often times served to replace the public rituals of evangelical practice. When the chance to coalesce as an evangelical public in a true public space (and not merely an imaginative public sphere) gives way to print as a replacement of those public

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[379] The Congregational and Presbyterian churches seem less significant in this context given their long-standing, New England respectability. But Susan Juster's *Disorderly Women: Sexual Politics and Evangelicalism in Revolutionary New England* (1994) makes a similar case for Baptists in New England in the post-Revolutionary period.

[380] And it is worth remembering at this moment Amy Kaplan's essay "Manifest Domesticity" are her important revision of our contemporary understanding of the logic of separate spheres. Amy Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity," *American Literature*, vol. 70 no 3 (1998): 581-606.

[381] Though I have relied on Schneider's work to articulate this change, a similar analysis can be found in Richey's *Early American Methodism*.

ecstasies, then something is lost as far as real community formation or, in the case of Apess and Copway, political formation.[382]

The ability for varied bodies to collect together made for an affective intensity that, as I have been arguing, helped propagate evangelicalism across the colonial and American landscape. This intensity brought its own unpredictability (or “surprise,” to return us back to David Marshall’s phrase) that created individuals like James Davenport, William Apess, and the excessive and shamed participants of Cane Ridge and the surrounding revivals. The institutionalization of evangelicalism attempted to retain the large numbers of converts this ecstasy helped create but minimize the possibility for such unpredictability.

This dissertation has charted this tension over the course of roughly a century and although I argue that the years around the Civil War see a significant regimentation of evangelical affective practice, this is hardly the end of the story. Revival practice continued after the Civil War and to the present day. But a brief glance into the turn of the twentieth-century helps understand the significance of the institutionalization that this dissertation has charted. One obvious figure to consider is Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899), founder of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago and one of the most prominent evangelical revivalists of the postbellum period.[383] But what some consider the “Third Great Awakening” involves not only Moody and other more mainstream figures but the rise of Pentecostalism. Emerging at the end of the nineteenth-century, predominantly out of the Methodist and Baptist traditions, the Pentecostals

[382] Another example of this institutional turn can be found in the Fulton Street revivals of New York City in 1857-58. A revival among New York businessmen precipitated by financial panic, this “great awakening,” as author Samuel I. Prime called it, occurred on lunch breaks during the business day. The distance of these revivals from Whitefield or Cane Ridge is telling. See, Samuel I. Prime. *The Power of Prayer: Illustrated in the Wonderful Displays of Divine Grace at the Fulton Street and Other meetings in New York and Elsewhere, in 1857 and 1858* (New York Scribner, 1858).

[383] For more on Moody see Bruce .J. Evensen*, God’s Man for the Gilded Age: D.L. Moody and the Rise of Mass Evangelicalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

saw themselves as heirs to the eighteenth-century awakenings as well as Charles Grandison Finney and his holiness movement.[384] Known for traditional revival activities as well as the re-emergent phenomena of faith healing and speaking in tongues, the fact that Pentecostalism was a movement outside of the mainline denominations while catering to working-class people across regions and ethnicities is telling. Those who claimed to be heirs to the history of awakening practice and theology did not affiliate with established denominations but formed new ones outside of mainline Protestantism. It might be argued that the institutional turn of those denominations earlier in the nineteenth-century made a return to ecstatic religious practice within their confines difficult, if not impossible.

But the fact that the social, affective intensity of evangelical feeling found new channels reminds us, once again, of the autonomy of affect that Brian Massumi has argued for. This causes us to recognize the affective excess moving through history, animating bodies anew, while also recognizing that revival practitioners turned to the revival legacy in order to structure and understand those experiences. The centrality of those embodied religious experiences, from falling exercises to faith healing, points us toward focusing scholarly work on the still under-theorized understanding of the body as the center of evangelicalism in American culture.

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[384] Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 1-2.

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