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NEW BIRTH, NEW WORLD: EVANGELICAL SPACE IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY NEW ENGLAND

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Elizabeth Peck wanted George Whitefield to come back to New England. In a November 7, 1763 letter, two decades after the preacher first toured the British-American colonies, the Boston woman hoped Whitefield would return. Once the hub of revived religion, New England had become a "vally of Dry boons," racked with parish disputes and "amazing Stupidity that seases whole towns." Instead of chasing after "that truer zeal" they once knew, most "had Reather no Reviveal should it there minesters was not used." She desperately wanted her petitions to the "Lord allmighty" to be answered, that all of New England—from its clergy to her own "christless children & Relitives"—would again be "Inclosed in the gosple nett."[1]

Enjoying the benefit of historical distance, we now know much about the "Reviveal" Peck spoke of. By the time of her correspondence with Whitefield, she and numerous other men and women were proud alumni of the British Atlantic evangelical revival. And in the many years since her letter, legions of religious historians have attempted to elucidate the key distinctives of the broader "evangelical" movement that survived the transatlantic awakenings of the mid-eighteenth century. In an 1832 lecture at Andover Theological Seminary, a decade before Joseph Tracy's much-cited book *The Great Awakening: A History of the Revival of Religion in the Time of Whitefield and Edwards* (1842), Presbyterian minister Warren Nichols put forth a brief sketch of the American revivals and the religious impulse it birthed. Once the Lord "began to descend" in Jonathan Edwards's Northampton, people from every rung of society reported "saving mercy," "hopeful conversion," and "great joy." According to Nichols, the awakenings and their various fruits emerged from the arrival of the Holy Spirit and the rekindling of "true religion," most discernible among ministers like Whitefield who no longer neglected preaching the "doctrines of depravity, regeneration, justification by faith alone, and the other peculiar doctrines of the gospel." The defining mark of renewed religion, Nichols declared, was return to proper belief.[2]

[1] For abbreviations used in this article, see page XX.
Elizabeth Peck to George Whitefield, Nov. 7, 1763, Special Collections Department, University of Iowa.

[2] Warren Nichols, "A Narrative of Revivals that Commenced in this Country, and in great Britain, about the Year 1740" [ca. 1832], Andover-Harvard Theological Library (manuscript online at hollis.harvard.edu), 5, 7, 15, 18.

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Many modern writers, though more appreciative of historical complexity than Nichols, have assessed evangelicalism in theological terms, characterizing the movement through its members' chief ideas regarding the Christian life.[3] While newer histories of contemporary evangelicalism have increasingly challenged this approach by presenting "evangelicalism" as a constellation of changing beliefs and practices that delimit and mobilize various social groups, scholars have persistently presented early evangelicalism in theological language.[4] It is commonly called a form of "heart-centered piety" anchored in its high regard for scripture, personal conversion and other spiritual experiences, the redemptive power of Jesus's death and resurrection, and commitment to Christianly action (such as missions). Though it would be a mistake to diminish belief as purely abstract, with no bearing on external expression, I intend to show how awakened men and women forged their movement through more than belief. Specifically, it was through a unique synthesis of ideas and spatial practices that born-again religion found form in the eighteenth-century world.[5]

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[3] Mark Smith, "British Evangelical Identities: Locating the Discussion" in *British Evangelical Identities Past and Present, Volume I: Aspects of the History and Sociology of Evangelicalism in Britain and Ireland*, ed. Mark Smith (Eugene, Oreg.: Wipf & Stock, 2008), 1–2. Like Smith, religious studies scholar Michael Altman has written on "evangelicalism" and its associated, urgent demand for religious and social delineation. The "definitions of 'evangelical' and 'evangelicalism,' " Altman posits, "always come back to identify formation and the lines of who is in and who is out." See Michael Altman, " 'Religion, Religions, Religious' in America: Toward a Smithian Account of 'Evangelicalism' " in *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 31, no. 1 (2019), 81.

[4] For just a few examples of scholars pushing back against theological definitions of evangelicalism, see Daniel Vaca, *Evangelicals Incorporated: Books and the Business of Religion in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2019), 1–4; Timothy E. W. Gloege, *Guaranteed Pure: The Moody Bible Institute, Business, and the Making of Modern Evangelicalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 2–3; Kristen Kobes Du Mez, *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation* (New York City: Liveright Publishing, 2020), see "Introduction"; Peter Choi, *George Whitefield: Evangelist for God and Empire* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2018), 2–4, 8, 14; and Aaron Griffith, *God's Law and Order: The Politics of Punishment in Evangelical America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2020).

[5] Catherine Brekus, *Strangers & Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America 1740–1845* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 38. A number of historians have foregrounded theology in their interpretations of evangelicalism. Perhaps the most celebrated (and contested) is David Bebbington's "quadrilateral," which is paraphrased in the above paragraph. Though historians of the movement have differed in which points they include, exclude, or accentuate, Bebbington's emphases generally underpin theological definitions of evangelicalism. For example, Robert Calhoon has tabbed "proclamation of salvation through faith in Christ," "atonement for human sins through Christ's crucifixion," "Scriptural authority," and "victory of God's Grace over His law" as the movement's defining convictions. Similarly, Catherine Brekus has found "personal relationship with God, the joy of being born again, and the call to spread the Gospel" to be the distinguishing marks of early evangelicalism.
While Susan Juster has valuably highlighted evangelicalism's ability to structure "self and community," she has also deemed it a "theological stance." This is also clearly the position of George Marsden, who has posited that, at its core, evangelicalism is a "style as well as a set of Protestant beliefs about the Bible and Christ's saving work." The brief excerpts included herein do not account for every scholarly perspective on evangelicalism, but they do indicate the common, foundational privileging of theology. See David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London, U.K.: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 2–3; Robert Calhoon, *Evangelicals & Conservatives in the Early South, 1740–1861* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 1; Catherine Brekus, *Sarah Osborn's World: The Rise of Evangelical Christianity in Early America* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2013), 5; Susan Juster, *Disorderly Women: Sexual Politics and Evangelicalism in Revolutionary New England* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1994), viii; George Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism &*

This article argues that space underpinned the emergence of evangelicalism. Through their manipulation of bodies, buildings, and terrain, revivalists manifested new birth religion and invigorated their critique of established Christianity. Awakened believers' shrill, marathon awakenings in fields, streets, and houses functioned less as byproducts of theological convictions, and more as the means by which evangelicalism became legible in lived experience. Born-again men and women spotted "great awakenings" in bodies and spaces, detecting the Lord's work in believers "Continually Crying out" and affective sermons "preached out of Doors." Across the eighteenth-century English-speaking Atlantic, revivalists and their detractors knew this contentious "new Religion" to be a union of conversionist theology and particular spatial occupations. As one anonymous, pro-revivalist New Englander put it in 1741, the "Power of God was so Visible that it was enough to Convince a beast."[6]

Perhaps the most thoughtful appraisal of early evangelicalism's spatial properties to this point has been Timothy Hall's *Contested Boundaries: Itinerancy and the Reshaping of the Colonial American Religious World* (1994). Hall cleverly elucidates how traveling evangelical ministers crisscrossed early America and persuaded black, white, and indigenous men, women, and children to think of themselves as members of an empowering, international revivalist coalition that stretched far beyond their native church communities. Itinerant ministers like George Whitefield offered disparate believers communion with far-off, otherwise unknown co-laborers in Christ. Scandalously disregarding parish lines, pulpit permissions, and cemented authority structures, roving revivalist preachers enabled their audiences—regardless of social standing—to place themselves within a "mobile, dynamic, expansive, and potentially unbounded community" of fellow believers. Though necessary and insightful, *Contested Boundaries* is almost entirely interested in how early evangelicals triumphed over spatial constraints. By forging intercolonial, transatlantic "imagined communities," rambling itinerants unfastened awakened men and women from their native parish boundaries and urged them to "embrace a world far beyond their local horizons." In contrast, this article contends the ways revivalists occupied—rather than transcended—physical space definitively shaped nascent evangelical religion. As I will show, it was through the rearrangement of spaces and bodies that early evangelicals dissented from established religious culture and crafted alternative authority structures, beliefs, and practices.[7]

Evangelicalism (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1991), 2.

[6] Nathaniel Harris to Stith Mead, May 3, 1793, Stith Mead Letterbook, 1792–1795, Virginia Museum of History & Culture; Hannah Hancock to Charles Wesley, April 1742, EMV/501/86, MARC (manuscript accessed online at luna.manchester.ac.uk); Oliver Hart, Journal, Dec. 17, 1769, Oliver Hart Papers, 1741–1961, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina (available online at digital.library.sc.edu); Joseph Carter to Charles Wesley, Nov. 1741, EMV/501/17, MARC (manuscript accessed online at luna.manchester.ac.uk); Samuel Savage, "Extract of a Letter from Piscataqua," n.d., SSP I.

[7] For examples of historians discussing the corporeal, sensate, and spatial characteristics of revival, see Peter Hoffer, *The Sensory Worlds of Early America* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 169; Thomas Kidd, "The Healing of Mercy Wheeler: Illness and Miracles among Early American Evangelicals" in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 63, no. 1 (Jan. 2006): 149; Frank Lambert, *"Pedlar in Divinity": George Whitefield and the Transatlantic Revivals* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), 97; Timothy Hall, *Contested Boundaries: Itinerancy and the Reshaping of the Colonial American Religious World* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1994), 2–7.

More recently, Douglas Winiarski's award-winning history of lived religion in eighteenth-century New England has vividly depicted how early evangelicals' zealous adoption of new birth religion fractured the region's consistent Congregational establishment. Sharply departing from the long-held puritan view that regeneration took place over the course of one's life and alongside regimented devotional practice within one's local parish, Winiarski shows how Whitefieldian men and women embraced itinerant ministries, ardent conversionism, fiery pneumatology, "bodily exercises," and, ultimately, alternative religious structures that "carried them outside the boundaries, both physically and experientially, of New England's parish-based Congregational system." As the Pennsylvania Anglican Richard Backhouse grieved in 1742, evangelical preachers were constantly roaming the countryside, stoking "the Passions" of their listeners, "Boldly Boasting of Intimatly Conversing with our Blessed Lord," and teaching conversion was "Accompanied with Howlings, Tears, Distortions of the Body." Revival had clear spatial and corporeal consequences, reframing religion's geographical and corporeal expectations.[8]

Despite Winiarski's lively portrayal of radical evangelicalism and the destruction of Congregational order, Christine Heyrman posits, he leaves us with an important *question*: what caused such a dramatic trade? Why did colonial New Englanders exchange a centuries-old, prosperous religious culture for evangelicalism's "novel doctrines" and "pulpit pyrotechnics?" I argue that by foregrounding space in our analysis of early evangelicalism we can better attend to such questions stemming from the work of historians like Winiarski and Patricia Bonomi, and refreshingly address why eighteenth-century Christians so willingly swapped entrenched belief and practice for religious radicalism. Evangelicalism did not successfully erupt across New England simply because its riveting conversionism, mysticism, and personal appeal proved more attractive than traditional practical piety. Propelling many men and women to join in the "work" of God—indeed, propelling the "work" itself—was revivalists' vexing choreography of time, space, and religious experience. In reassembling the "outward things" of Christianity, by moving religion from controlled Sabbath-day church services to rowdy outdoor gatherings, revivalists manufactured the spatial scaffolding necessary for the insurgent articulation of New Light thought and practice within existing religious communities.[9]

As readers will see, this study of early evangelical space is set in pre-Revolutionary New England. Given how popular this region has been in the historiography of eighteenth-century evangelicalism, it is important to justify why it—and not the American South, England, Wales, Scotland, or elsewhere—provides the

[8] Douglas Winiarski, *Darkness Falls on the Land of Light: Experiencing Religious Awakenings in Eighteenth-Century New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 159, 509; Richard Backhouse, letter, June 14, 1742, SPG-B10.

[9] Christine Heyrman, "Make the Awakening Great Again" in *Reviews in American History* 46, no. 2 (June 2018): 177–182; Sarah Middleton to Charles Wesley, May 25, 1740, EMV/501/86, MARC (manuscript accessed online at luna.manchester.ac.uk). Decades before Winiarski, Patricia Bonomi urged historians to reconsider the abiding conviction that evangelicalism emerged as a critique of colonial America's languishing religious culture. Arguing instead that pre-evangelical, Congregational America reflected "rising vitality" and "proliferation and growth, Bonomi effectively showed the Great Awakening was not a "brief spurt of piety," but an "unprecedented burst of religious fervor and controversy." See Patricia Bonomi, *Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America*, Updated Edition (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2003), xvii, 6, 131.

geographical boundaries for this research. First, it should be noted that the following analysis could (and should) be applied to any site of early evangelical religion. Across the English-speaking world, evangelical revival always manifested in bodies, land, and open air. Reports of "frightfull Shrieks & groans," "Singing in the Streets," field-preaching, and other "Strange methods" leapt between communities across the British Atlantic world. Early evangelicals necessarily understood the revivals to be a collection of intercontinental awakenings impossible to appreciate apart from their "sense of common cause."[10]

However, despite the movement's international nature, it is important to remember that early evangelicals ultimately gathered, practiced, and believed in local communities. As the Welsh historian Eryn White has shown, evangelicals thought of "God's work in their own soul and in their own locality to be a sufficient source of wonder and rejoicing, without needing to look further afield." Recognizing the awakenings were always global and local, always far-flung and nearby, this article utilizes eighteenth-century New England as a case study for early evangelicalism's physical genesis. This focus allows for an analysis that attends to the stories defining regional evangelical experience, while also cataloging the prominent ideas and habits shared between distant communities. Among the most publicized and influential revivals known to British believers, New England's "Great Meltings" provide a compelling on-ramp for further discussion of space and early evangelicalism.[11]

This article seeks an analysis of emergent American evangelicalism that, as Jeanne Kilde has urged, centers the way spatial arrangements determine the properties of Christian experience.[12] Physical landscapes functioned as crucial instruments

[10] "To the ministers cald methodists," May 31, 1740, EMV/501/144, MARC; JCH, 331; David Ceri Jones, *"A Glorious Work in the World": Welsh Methodism and the International Evangelical Revival, 1735–1750* (Cardiff, U.K.: University of Wales Press, 2004), 14–5; Eryn M. White, "The Eighteenth-Century Evangelical Revival and Welsh Identity" in *British Evangelical Identities Past and Present, Volume I: Aspects of the History and Sociology of Evangelicalism in Britain and Ireland*, ed. Mark Smith (Eugene, Oreg.: Wipf & Stock, 2008), 88.

[11] White, "The Eighteenth-Century Evangelical Revival and Welsh Identity," 88; J. Lee to Eleazar Wheelock, April 20, 1741, #741270, PEW. Many sources underline the notoriety of New England's revivals. In a letter to Benjamin Colman, Englishman Robert Pearsall noted Jonathan Edwards's recent account of Northampton's stirrings "Occasion'd many Thanksgivings & much Joy & Enlargedness of Heart in the People of God on this side the Atlantick Ocean." In an issue of the London-based evangelical periodical *The Weekly History*, one Boston correspondent reported to English readers that Whitefield and Gilbert Tennent's "Flame and Zeal for God" had brought thousands of American "Negroes, little Children, Papists, Quakers, Episparians, yea notorious Sinners of all Perswasions" to regeneration. "This blessed Work," he wrote," was "daily spreading itself thro' all Corners of this Wilderness." South Carolina's newspaper readers heard reports of York's night-and-day awakening frenzy, especially believers' claiming to be "transported to Heaven." Robert Pearsall to Benjamin Colman, April 25, 1739, Benjamin Colman Papers, 1641–1806, MHS (manuscript accessed online at www.masshist.org/collection-guides/); *The Weekly History, or, An Account of the Most Remarkable Particulars Relating to the Present Progress of the Gospel*, Sept. 5, 1741; and "Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman in York," *South Carolina Gazette*, March 6, 1742.

[12] Jeanne Kilde, *Sacred Power, Sacred Space: An Introduction to Christian Architecture and Worship* (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2008), 3. Throughout this piece, I use terms like "space" and "landscapes" to refer to the whole of the eighteenth-century material world, including physical terrain, architecture, and human bodies. Like numerous spatial humanities scholars, I take these and other outward elements to be generative components of religious culture—not just external signs of belief. For just a couple examples of the spatial humanities framework, see Colleen McDannell, *Material Chris-*

for determining what early evangelicalism was and was not, always undergirding revivalists' and antirevivalists' strident criticisms of one another. The "People who are Stiled New Lights" formed their movement by fastening controversial theological revisions to profound reassessments of when and where Christian experience took place.[13]

Working with the conviction that space is always a "medium for the development of culture," this article seeks a more robust appreciation of early evangelicalism's spatial rise and the extent of its outward peculiarities. And as we observe how evangelicals welded together their new birth theology and unorthodox spatial practices, we can better recognize how they redefined religious experience. As awakened believers traded their churches for fields, swapped their deferential silence for loud shouts, and exchanged their day-time Sabbath services for all-night revivals, they radically amended what it meant to be Christian.[14]

"Tokens of the Lord's gracious Presence"[15]

Properly appreciating the relationship between space and the New England revivals first requires an acknowledgment of New Lights' thoughts on "divine presence." They incessantly filled streets, fields, and meetinghouses, ignited with the belief that "Tokens of a divine Power" laid in every corner of the material world, waiting to erupt within the landscape at any moment. As the evangelical minister and publicist Thomas Foxcroft put it in a 1741 letter, successful revivals included the "marvelous Influx of the Divine Comforter."[16] Early evangelical accounts

tianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995), 2; Jeanne Kilde, *When Church Became Theatre: The Transformation of Evangelical Architecture and Worship in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2002), 9–10; and Susan Eyerly, *Moravian Soundscapes: A Sonic History of the Moravian Missions in Early Pennsylvania* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020), 53.

[13] [Merritt?] Smith to William Smith, July 15, 1742, Box 1, Smith and Robert Family Papers, c. 1741–1879, NYHS. There is an ever-growing body of scholarship that helps us attend to the relationship between space and religious conflict. In a recent article, historian John Corrigan has described how theological competition between modern American Christians has "manifested spatially"—not just intellectually. See John Corrigan, "Space, Modernity, and Emptiness: Some American Examples" in *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 83, no. 1 (March 2014): 163.

[14] David J. Bodenhamer, *"Narrating Space and Place" in Deep Maps and Spatial Narratives*, eds. David J. Bodenhamer, John Corrigan, and Trevor M. Harris (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 8–9.

[15] Samuel Buell to Samson Occom, June 9, 1766, Samson Occom collection, c. 1743–1790, Rauner Library, Dartmouth College (manuscript accessed online at www.dartmouth.edu/occom/). As we shall see, revivalists spoke of spiritual "tokens" and visitations across the British Atlantic. The London bookseller Samuel Mason wrote to the famed Welsh evangelical Howell Harris and commended him on the "evident Tokens of the Divine Spirit's working" during his last visit. See Samuel Mason to Howell Harris, July 26, 1740, DDPr 1/56, MARC (manuscript accessed online at luna.manchester.ac.uk); Jonathan Yeager, *Jonathan Edwards and Transatlantic Print Culture* (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2016), 80.

[16] Jonathan Parsons to Benjamin Colman, April 27, 1741, Benjamin Colman Papers 1641-1806, MHS; Thomas Foxcroft to Jonathan Dickinson, Dec. 16, 1741, Charles Robert Autograph Letters Collection, Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford College. Revivalists commonly utilized this language to describe pneumatic movements. Jonathan Edwards's early account of Northampton's stirrings noted "remarkable tokens of God's presence in almost every house." In a 1745 letter to the Branford, Connecticut minister Philemon Robbins, the Yale New Light John Cleaveland bragged about his divinely-attended preaching in Boston. The "Lord has been with me in a Wonderfull manner; Scarcely one Sermon without Some very Visible Tokens of the Divine Presence." See WJEO 4:151; John Cleaveland to Philemon

repeatedly pointed to the shared conviction that God's people—there and then, at that specific point in history—were the inheritors of an exceptional increase of pneumatic presence in everyday life. As Thomas Kidd has shown, New Light clergy and laypeople considered "experience of the Holy Spirit's presence"—along with personal conversion—a trademark of their movement.[17]

In his 1742 testimony of faith the Medfield layman Timothy Sparhawk depicted his awakening moment, remarking that it was after hearing an especially effective sermon on Genesis 3:9 that the "spirit came so powerfully upon me that I could not stand before him." Likewise, the Rochester parish minister Ivory Hovey desperately hoped George Whitefield would visit and bring similar effects, barely able to write his 1747 letter to the roaming Anglican "without a Trembling hand" in anticipation of his flock experiencing "outpouerings of the holy Spirit, & the revival of Religion."[18]Awakened believers, much to the frustration of their critics, consistently claimed they were enjoying an abiding, remarkable union with the Lord in space and time. As skeptics like Boston's famed minister Charles Chauncy critiqued revivalists for their haughty claims of being "favoured with the extraordinary presence of the *Deity*," controversial New Lights like the Grafton clergyman Solomon Prentice rejoiced in witnessing "as much of the Presence of the Lord as I had Ever Seen."[19] And as revivalists claimed and delighted in the Holy Spirit's visitations, they necessarily conceptualized the material world—and Christian experience therein—far differently than their antirevivalist neighbors.[20]

The Northampton revivalist and clergyman Jonathan Edwards provided perhaps the clearest evangelical understanding of the material world in his personal writings and voluminous theological notebooks. Coming to age in a New England where leading thinkers gladly imbibed British Enlightenment thought, Edwards was familiar with the trend of Boston and Cambridge divines embracing the rational optimism of seventeenth-century English naturalists like John Ray and Robert-

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Robbins, Nov. 12, 1745, Correspondence, 1745–1748, John Cleaveland Papers, CL (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main).

[17] Thomas Kidd, *George Whitefield: America's Spiritual Founding Father* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2014), 36. As historian David Hall has shown, New England puritans also perceived the world with a heightened sense of spiritual sensitivity. Though the seventeenth-century godly specifically emphasized the nearness of God's providence rather than the Holy Spirit found in the eighteenth-century, many men and women found sudden illness or a burned-down shed to be a direct sign of the Lord's close proximity. See David Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), 78.

For more on evangelicals' perception of the Spirit, see also Avihu Zakai, *Jonathan Edwards's Philosophy of History: The Reenchantment of the World in the Age of Enlightenment* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003), xiii; Douglas Winiarski, "New Perspectives on the Northampton Communion Controversy II: Relations, Professions, and Experiences, 1748–1760" in *Jonathan Edwards Studies* 4, no. 1 (2014): 118; and Winiarski, *Darkness Falls*, 219–21.

[18] Timothy Sparhawk, relation, March 28, 1742, Relations of faith, 1697–1788, Medfield, Mass. First Parish Unitarian Church, CL (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main); Ivory Hovey to George Whitefield, August 5, 1747, Ivory Hovey Papers, Mattapoisett church records, 1746–1770, CL (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main). See also Winiarski, *Darkness Falls*, 230.

[19] Charles Chauncy, *Enthusiasm Described and Caution'd Against* (Boston, 1742), 3; Ross W. Beales Jr., ed., "Solomon Prentice's Narrative of the Great Awakening" in MHS, *Proceedings*, 83 (1971), 139.

[20] JCH, 328.

Boyle.[21] But instead of completely pledging himself to this emerging strain of the American Enlightenment, Edwards, as Avihu Zakai has put it, made it his intellectual enterprise to assert the "reenchantment of the historical world." While the universe made sense, and all of nature's ornaments certainly related to one another in a rational fashion, he searched for a way to convincingly re-present creation as dependent upon and infused with the "glory of God's absolute sovereignty, power, and will." Edwards, with other revivalists, found the natural world to be something other than an ordinary, predictable, and mechanical container of a remote deity's signposts. As Bruce Hindmarsh has recently shown, Edwards proposed that "[e]very tree was a burning bush, and every cloud a pillar of fire," with divinity "not just deducible from nature" but "perceived in nature."[22]

Such conviction was clear in Edwards's thousands of theological "miscellanies." He posited in one entry that all of creation's objects—from the entire sky to a single caterpillar—"manifest[ed] the power and wisdom of God." The works of nature held tangible power beyond their basic uses and appearances. Love sensed in beautiful gardens, happiness felt before green fields, and awe attached to roaring thunder revealed nature's true function. Because of the fundamental agreement the Lord placed between natural and spiritual things, the above experiences represented divine transmissions from God to humanity, so that when "we are delighted with flowery meadows and gentle breezes of the wind, we may consider that we only see the emanations of the sweet benevolence of Jesus Christ; when we behold the fragrant rose and lily, we see his love and purity. So the green trees and fields, the singing of birds, are the emanations of his infinite joy." It was through these and other features of the terrain that Edwards developed his "God-haunted" view of the natural environment.[23] And while not every revivalist had the means or ability to contribute refined, extensive theological reflections on the connection between God and creation, evangelicals frequently married their various pneumatic experiences to a spiritualized landscape.

New England's New Lights regularly discussed their new birth in relation to an enlivened awareness of God's presence in the natural world. As one witness to the radical York awakenings phrased it, men and women were sometimes "at a Loss, to know whether they were on Earth, or in Heaven." The powerful, converting "impresions of God" experienced by laypeople such as Middleboro's Nathan Eddy commonly went hand in hand with a new appreciation of creation's numinous properties. In Edwards's own Northampton, he noted that after her new birth the

[21] John Corrigan, *The Prism of Piety: Catholick Congregational Clergy at the Beginning of the Enlightenment* (New York City: Oxford University Press, 1991), 6; John Ray, The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of Creation (1691), 35-6.

[22] Zakai, *Edwards's Philosophy of History*, xiii, xiv, 86–8; Bruce Hindmarsh, *The Spirit of Early Evangelicalism: True Religion in a Modern World* (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2017), 131.

[23] WJEO 13:224, 272–3, 278–9; Robert Boss, *God-Haunted World: The Elemental Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (privately printed, 2015), 3. The Durham, New Hampshire revivalist Nicholas Gilman, while not comparable to Edwards as an author, expressed similar views of creation in his diary. A consistent reader of the Northampton minister, Gilman expressed his confusion toward "ungratefull" believers who, after surveying the material world, are somehow "Unmindfull of him." "[W]hen I Behold the Sun Arise, and chase the shades of Night away," Gilman wrote, "Let me only imagine that this glorious orb of Light was just then found on purpose for my Use, to Light me in my way and befriend me in my employments," and to indicate "My Great Creators kindness." See DNG, 108–9.

young Abigail Hutchinson "often expressed a sense of the glory of God appearing in the trees, and growth of the fields." The Connecticut farmwoman and diarist Hannah Heaton similarly recorded in 1741 that on her walk home from an evening sermon she "thot the moon and stars seemd as if they praisd god with me," her "new soul & body both" intensifying her cognizance of creation's simmering spirituality. Likewise, the Middleborough woman Mehetabel Alden related in her 1752 church admission testimony that following her conversion "every thing even the Trees & fields & all the Works of God appeared with a new face."[24] As the Lord's work rained upon the land, revivalists like the Middletown preacher Ebenezer Frothingham came to see that land differently, convinced the Holy Spirit reverberated in every place, "whether it be a public Meeting-House, or a private House, or the open Wilderness."[25] Born-again believers' reenchanted world represented a mystifying theater of the Spirit, brimming with—as Norwich pastor Benjamin Throop put it in a 1741 journal entry—"Strange & unusual Opperations."[26]

These operations and reverberations took many forms across New England and instigated fierce debates between believers. Specifically, revivalists and antirevivalists continually sparred over the necessity of the purported signs and wonders accompanying the awakenings. The assemblies of roving New Lights like Whitefield, Tennent, Samuel Buell, Andrew Croswell, and James Davenport commonly came with news of "Extraordinary Effusions of the Spirit of Grace." According to the Plymouth magistrate Josiah Cotton, these ministers' "incessant indefatigable Endeavours for the Conversion of Souls" came with troubling encouragements to indulge in "immediate Motions which they take to be from the Spirit." Cotton lamented how oftentimes this entailed participation in "Trances, Visions, & Impulses" that "Sway Many & Drive them hither & thither."[27]

The Holy Spirit being "Poured Down" in all places and at all times meant regeneration came suddenly and, in many instances, with "Speciall Impressions of the Divine Spirit." After private exhortations in Northampton, homes filled with crying, collapsing, and convulsing men and women. In Mendon some laypeople

[24] "Extract," *South Carolina Gazette*, March 6, 1742; Nathan Eddy, relation, 1765, Relations and Personal Records, 1724–1865, Middleboro, Mass. First Congregational Church, CL (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main); WJEO 4:195; Barbara E. Lacey, ed., *The World of Hannah Heaton: The Diary of an Eighteenth-Century New England Farm Woman* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2003), 10; and Douglas Winiarski, "All Manner of Error and Delusion: Josiah Cotton and the Religious Transformation of Southeastern New England, 1700–1770" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 2000), appendix a, 389–9.

[25] David Jewett to Benjamin Colman, May 29, 1741, Colman-Jenks Collection, 1651–1804, MHS; Ebenezer Frothingham, *The Articles of Faith and Practice* (Newport, 1750), 342–3, 433. We find this theme—the spatial diffusion of sacrality—in newspaper accounts of George Whitefield's colonial preaching tours. Upon his visit to the middle colonies in December of 1739, one writer noted the itinerant argued against the idea of holy space and time, and that it was the congregation of true believers which "consecrate[d] any Place." See *American Weekly Mercury*, Dec. 20 to Dec. 27, 1739.

[26] Benjamin Throop, "Secret Interviews," 1741–1784, July 19, 1741, CHS.

[27] JCH, 314, 330–1. Douglas Winiarski has convincingly centered New England revivalism's "increasingly radical beliefs and practices, including the bodily presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit, continued revelation, dramatic visionary phenomena," and the like. Lying "at the heart of the Whitefieldian new birth experience" was the "phenomenon of ecstatic spirit possession" and "ecstatic bodies." See Winiarski, *Darkness Falls*, 16–7, 19. See also Douglas Winiarski, "Souls Filled with Ravishing Transport: Heavenly Visions and the Radical Awakening in New England" in *The William and Mary Quarterly* 61, no. 1 (Jan. 2004).

climbed meetinghouse pews to announce their sudden vision of Satan. Parishioners in Hebron "seem'd as it were to See the flames, Smell the Scent" of hell. Granville public officials and deacons woke in the middle of the night and "vewed Jesus Christ." Others in Ipswich went into "what is called a Trance," declaring they "had Seen Heaven & Hell" and experienced a "View of Christ in Glory."[28]

For evangelicals convinced of the Holy Spirit's utter nearness, the physical landscape bubbled with pneumatic potential and, quite regularly, remarkable emissions of divinity. Antirevivalists found such ecstatic practices to be troubling, especially as awakened believers increasingly demanded evidence of each person's "peculiar intimacy with heaven." Longtime Harvard president Edward Holyoke grumbled in a 1744 letter to George Whitefield that awakeners had undercut the "very Vitals of Religion" and perverted orthodox Christian spirituality, "so as to imagine the swelling of their Breasts & Stomachs in their religious Agitations to be the *Feeling of the Spirit of God.*" Other critics of radical revival, such as Congregationalists Timothy Edwards and Charles Chauncy, were disconcerted with evangelicals' tendency to strictly tie true conversion to one having "been Exercis'd with great terrors of Conscience, agonies and Convulsions of Soul." This was the root of revivalism's "Confusion and Division," as Medford minister Ebenezer Turell put it. "Persons laying so much Stress as they do in many Places on *Dreams*, *Trances*, *Visions*, *Revelations* and *Impulses*," he wrote, left a "great Want of *Decency*, Beauty and Order in the *House* of GOD."[29] New Light Christianity was nothing more than heretical madness, infecting bodies with frantic fits and purging believers from proper sites of religious life.

Sharp disputes over theology and natural philosophy reflected more than quarrels over words. They were tethered to heated disagreements over deep-seated, competing perspectives on the physical world and the Christian's place therein. As the Spirit's converting power sprawled over creation, stirring what the Lynn farmer and diarist Zaccheus Collins termed "Exterordenery Commotions," New England's men, women, and children—regardless of age, education, skin color, wealth, or oc-

[28] Nathan Clap to Eleazar Wheelock, Dec. 9, 1742, #742659 and Daniel Humphreys, et al, 1742, #742900.2, PEW; WJEO 16:118; *The American Weekly Mercury*, April 14, 1743; "The Relation of Rachel Root," February, 23, 1736, Box 1, Pomeroy Family Papers, 1735–1817, CHS; Relation of Timothy Robinson [c. 1757], transcribed in Winiarski, "New Perspectives," 143; DDR, Feb. 1, 1741. For other examples of evangelicals reporting radical pneumatic outbursts—including one young woman who asserted the "Devil has Spoke in me" and others claiming to have "Received Light or have Seen Christ"—see Joseph Pitkin diary, 1711–1756, Connecticut State Library, 55, 57–8 (manuscript accessed online at www.collections.ctdigitalarchive.org); Throop, "Secret Interviews," July 19, 1741.

[29] Chauncy, *Enthusiasm Described*, 4; Edward Holyoke to George Whitefield, Feb. 20, 1744, Edward Holyoke Papers, 1737–1744, MHS; Timothy Edwards, notebook, 1738, Andover New Theological Seminary Collection of Jonathan Edwards, BEN, 12–3; Ebenezer Turell, *Mr. Turell's Directions to his People with Relation to the Present Times* (Boston, 1742), 10–3. While this article generally contends that "radical revival" was more typical than not, it is important to note that not every believer who welcomed awakening also embraced every characteristic of revivalism. Some clergy, while agreeing that the "holy Spirit is moving upon the hearts of many," expressed their concern with the "many Sundry things attending this work which are unscriptural and of a dangerous Tendency." Jonathan Edwards's own father, Timothy, served on a ministerial association that declared there should be not be "any Weight . . . Laied upon those preachings, cryings out, fainting and Convulsions, which sometimes attend the terrifying Language of Some Preachers." See Hartford North Association, Records, 1708, I, General Association of Connecticut, CL (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main), 28–9; Winiarski, *Darkness Falls*, 274–5.

cupation—often renounced the traditional material or social arrangements of local religious life. Throughout New England, awakeners boasted of God's boundless reach. According to one Portsmouth spectator, "The Spirit of God don't Seem Confin'd to any, but all in Generall are pertaken: Young & Old, Rich and poor, White & black." The Marblehead shopkeeper and antirevivalist Nathan Bowen, with less celebration, noted the same in his diary. New Lights wreaked havoc, encouraging "fishermen," "Coblers & ye many Labourers," and "women & even Common negros" to make claims of "Extreordanary Gifts" and exhort "their Betters even in the pulpit, before large assemblys." These "Bedlam Freaks" and "Common Rabble," as Bowen termed them, "unhinged the Society & Introduced all manner of Anerchy & Confusion" to orderly Christian life. Colonial New England's early evangelicals found the Spirit and its miraculous gifts in every place, at all times, and among all people. And like their fellow laborers across the British Atlantic world, early evangelicals' prizing of uninhibited pneumatology and personal conversion—"that Deep & Inward Reformation"—signaled (and relied on) dramatic changes in the times, spaces, and sounds of Christianity.[30]

An "Aversion to Duty"[31]

Evangelicals' emphasis on each individual's new birth—undergoing, in a moment, what Ipswich minister John Walley called a *"throrough & saving Change"*—directly correlated to how, when, and why believers occupied space. Nonevangelicals like the Lyme merchant Joseph Higgens took the theological assertion that "Persons are converted Immediately upon their Experiences" as a harsh critique of the customary emphasis on protracted devotional practice within one's native parish church. Thus, as converts like Hebron layman Joseph Porter pursued "good Satisfaction of my conversion," they consequently embraced theology and practice that pried them from the traditional belief, exercise, and placement of New England Christianity.[32]

Evangelicals accomplished the resettlement of Christianity by fundamentally reappraising what Douglas Winiarski has recently called the "godly walk." New England's prerevival Puritans defined Christian life as the lifelong, meticulous "process" of incremental advancement toward regeneration. Devotional practices like scripture reading, prayer, fasting, and Sabbath observance prepared believers for the

[30] Zaccheus Collins diary, Sept. 30, 1741, 1726–1750, CL (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main); Samuel Savage, "Extract of a Letter from Piscataqua," n.d., SSP I; "Extracts from the Interleaved Almanacs of Nathan Bowen, Marblehead, 1742-1755" in Essex Institute Historical Collections, 91 (1955) 164–5, 169–70; and Christopher Wells to Charles Wesley, April 9, 1739, DDPr 1/102, MARC (manuscript accessed online at luna.manchester.ac.uk). Though lacking Bowen's ardor, Boston's Thomas Prince also accounted for revivalists' tendency to upset social order. Radical New Lights like James Davenport stridently judged established ministers "unconverted," urged the "People to Separate," and heartened "illiterate men as Preachers or Exorters." See Thomas Prince to William McCulloch, June 15, 1743, Box 10, Folder 120, Park Family Papers, YUL.

[31] Joseph Fish diary, 1739, 1741–1746, 1851, Silliman Family Papers, YUL (microfilm), 6.

[32] John Walley diary, Oct. 31, 1741, 1742–1751, MHS (microfilm); Joseph Higgins, letter, 1743, R. Stanton Avery Special Collections, NEHGS (manuscript accessed online at www.digitalcollection.americanancestors.org); and "The Relation of Joseph Porter," c. 1730s, Box 1, Pomeroy Family Papers, 1735–1817, CHS.

different phases of conversion, church admission, and participation in "sacramental duty." In deep contrast to the awakening accounts to come, godly walkers like the Haverhill woman Ruth Ayer primarily conceptualized regeneration through pious practice, sacramental engagement, and parish community—all of which depended upon her attending specific spaces, at particular times. Ayer's 1719 testimony lamented how "little Knowledge & Holiness" she had pursued, but expressed her recent realization of "my Duty to God." It was her "great priviledge as well as Duty to partake of the Lord's Supper"—a call to "Obey Christ in So plain a Comand as the Remembring his Death." Once paralyzed with doubt, Ayer desired to "now Offer my Self to God & this Church," hoping the Lord would grow "my knowledge & my Faith & my Repentance; Strengthen my Resolutions & holy Affections; make me Sincere & upright, to prepare me for the holy Comunion; to Enable me to live a Life answerable to my Solemn Engagements."[33]

Conversely, revivalists frequently expressed dissatisfaction with the godly practices and spaces of their parents. As the awakened Hebron parishioner Aaron Hutchinson put it in the 1730s, the "Things of Religion: as Reading [and] hearing" failed to fully convey the "sufistiency of Christ." Mary Cleaveland—wife of Chebacco separatist John Cleaveland—bemoaned in a 1742 diary entry how even though she had "ben to the house of god" that day, she still suffered "unspakable dedness and couldness."[34] While evangelicals still regularly read their Bibles, prayed, and listened to sermons, they also defined their movement against the religious "formalism" they associated with established churches.[35] In a 1744 report, Taunton minister Josiah Crocker celebrated how his town's "late happy Revival" destroyed the "Dregs of *Formality*, *Irreligion*," and the like. Disgruntled Byfield parishioner Benjamin Plumer "absented from the Comunion" in the spring of 1745 because he

[33] Winiarski, *Darkness Falls*, 31, 176, 200; Ruther Ayer, relation, July 12, 1719, Personal records, Haverhill, Mass. First Congregational Church, CL (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main). Historian Stephen Foster has also offered a helpful perspective on the disintegration of the "spread-out Puritan pilgrimage." According to Foster, Whitefieldian revival relied on personal, "extemporary," and "affectionate" religious experience rather than church-bound practical divinity "over the course of a lifetime." See Stephen Foster, *The Long Argument: English Puritanism and the Shaping of New England Culture, 1570–1700* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 293, 295.

[34] "The Relation of Aaron Huchison," c. 1730s, Box 1, Pomeroy Family Papers, 1735–1817, CHS; Mary Cleaveland's diary, 1742–1762, Oct. 24, 1742, John Cleaveland Papers, CL (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main). In her 1764 testimony, the Middleboro woman Eleanor Billington also admitted how she once devoted her life to "Prayer & other Religious Duties, on the account of which I was in hopes God would be mercifull to me." Only further revealing the "Sinfullness of my heart," she noted, such practices were not enough for the "Salvation of my soul." It was only after this revelation that she "heartily submitted to Christ & freely chose him for my Savior & Ruler." See Eleanor Billington, relation, 1764, Relations and Personal records, 1724–1865, Middleboro, Mass. First Congregational Church, CL (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main).

[35] While revivalists surely promoted and prioritized the new birth, they did not wholly discard pious exercises. Conversion moments often came when an individual was "Taking down the bible." Some, like the Middleboro parishioner Deborah Billington, illustrated how after her conversion she "toock grate pleashere in reeding and hearing the word preached." Stephen Williams, Jr., son of the Longmeadow revivalist and relative of Jonathan Edwards, regularly prayed he would be "fitted for the solemn Duties & Services" of the Sabbath. See "The Relation of Aaron Huchison," c. 1730s, Box 1, Pomeroy Family Papers, 1735–1817, CHS; Deborah Billington, relation, 1761, Relations and Personal records, 1724–1865, Middleboro, Mass. First Congregational Church, CL (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main); Stephen Williams Jr. diary, Dec. 25, 1742, Box 1, Folder 1, Stephen Williams Family Papers, 1742–1747, YUL.

was "not Sufficiently Satisfied" with the church's efforts in pursuing the "great Work of Gods Grace." Clergy and fellow congregants had not properly appreciated such an "Un-Speakable Favour to the World as Mr Whitefield, nor for the great Things God has done by him in reforming his Churches from their Deadness & Formality in Religion." As the young Boston furniture-maker Joshua Bowles mentioned in his personal notebook, the incendiary itinerant and former Harvard tutor Daniel Rogers warned Christians of standing on sinking sand. Rogers urged believers to take little comfort in customary duties of the godly walk, whether it be "Religious performances," "Being in church communion," "Baptizeg," "head knowledge of Spiritual things," or being "born of go[d]ly parents & a religious education." Real salvation could come from nothing other than the love of the Father, death and resurrection of Jesus, and stirring of the Holy Spirit. These—not "Moral Vertues" or "Religious duties," Framingham deacon Edward Goddard warned—were the instruments behind authentic awakening.[36]

Early evangelicals increasingly discontented with the "outside of Religion," and progressively desirous of a sudden "Sense of the Love of God" in a numinous world, redefined when and where religion took place.[37] In pursuing personal new birth, chasing sustained intimacy with the Holy Spirit, and diminishing the spaces and exercises emblematic of preparatory devotionalism, evangelicals remodeled religion's tactile anchors. As the Kittery merchant Simon Frost put it in a 1741 report of revival in New Hampshire and Maine, "People are more rouz'd & convinc'd that Religion consists of something more than a Form." Traditional "forms" like meetinghouse services—the hubs of the godly walk—no longer monopolized the space and time of Christianity. As historian Susan Juster has noted, New Lights denied that any "physical barriers were to impede the movement of the Spirit as it passed from soul to soul, church to church, town to town." Revivalists like Lyme's John Lee therefore believed "Every Day is a Sabbath," all time divine, and every place a tabernacle.[38]

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[36] *The Christian History, Containing Accounts of the Revival and Propagation of Religion in Great Britain*, Dec. 8, 1744; Byfield Church Records, 1744–1826, CL, 57 (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main); Joshua Bowles commonplace book, 1737–1766, R. Stanton Avery Special Collections, NEHGS, 60 (manuscript accessed online at www.digitalcollection.americanancestors.org); and Edward Goddard to Nathan Stone, Feb. 17, 1744, Nathan Stone Papers, 1726–1832, MHS. For more on Bowles, see Winiarski, *Darkness Falls*, 153–4.

[37] Williams, diary, Dec. 2, 1742; Isaac Procter, relation, 1764, Testimonials, 1741–1771, John Cleaveland Papers, 1741–1842, CL (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main). The diary of minister Joseph Fish provides a valuable window into the shift described above. The Harvard graduate and pastor to a Stonington, Connecticut, congregation vividly lamented his "Sense of Spiritual Deadness" during the height of the Whitefieldian awakenings. He felt a strange "Aversion to Duty," painfully doubtful of the spiritual power of "all my own Reading, Praying, meditation, hearing Sermons, [and] Conversing." The old outlets of practical piety did not seem to reform his "Dead Soul," or change his "Dead, Low, Lifeless, Pitiful Frame." See Fish, diary, 6, 10–1, 25; Winiarski, *Darkness Falls*, 198–201.

[38] Simon Frost to Samuel Savage, April 15, 1741, SSP I; Juster, *Disorderly Women*, 15, 18; and John Lee to Eleazar Wheelock, May 7, 1741, #741307, PEW. As a note, some awakeners still cherished the sanctity of the meetinghouse. The Harvard graduate and Connecticut clergyman Marston Cabot embraced the "Shaking of late amongst the dry Bones," but also noted his adoration of the "habitation of God's House." See Marston Cabot, "Memorabilia, 1740–1745," Feb. 22 and June 7, 1741, NEHGS.

"In Many Places and Corners of this Country"[39]

New England's revivalists materialized their irritation—and presented their theological and practical alternative—toward traditional religion through space, time, and sound.[40] Within Old and New Light writings, we find evangelical children, women, blacks, and Indians took their rowdy exercises to neighborhoods, private homes, taverns, barns, fields, and shops. Deeply critical of existing demarcations of space and time, born-again New Englanders embraced a Spirit-filled terrain. As Boston's John Loring remarked to his father in a 1741 letter, "God Sends his holy Spirit when & where and on whom he pleases." One Lyme correspondent affirmed Loring's claim of the Spirit's spatial diffusion. In his 1744 report, the town—beyond churches and meetinghouses—was overtaken with meetings to discuss the "great Affairs of Salvation." "In the Streets, in the Fields and in private Houses," even the "Shop, and the *Kitchen*," believers experienced and loudly celebrated "many hopeful Conversions."[41]

By carrying out their meetings in strange places and at odd times, evangelicals sparked their movement and defied nonevangelicals' "acoustic terms" and "spatial logics"—the sounds, spaces, and times that previously structured religious life. Throughout the eighteenth-century British Atlantic, sound and space pronounced and maintained religious order. As a number of spatial humanities scholars have shown, specific constructions of sound and space embody ever-contested sites of authority, where religious communities gain the ability to announce and enforce their theological, social, and practical preferences. This was true of New England's nonevangelical Congregationalists and Anglicans whose meetinghouses and churches generally emphasized clerical eminence, "communal holiness," social organization, and sober piety. Throughout the colonies, worship spaces acted as mediums for the established churches' desired doctrines, practices, and hierarchies.[42]

[39] *The Weekly History*, Jan. 16, 1742, 3.

[40] A number of historians have provided important insights into this characteristic of evangelicalism. Harry Stout has observed how revivalists like George Whitefield, "[b]y sheer location," critiqued "time-honored axioms of social order and hierarchy." Moreover, the "individual experience of regeneration, detached from a particular place and time and existing within the self came to be *the* badge of religiosity and true piety in Whitefield's revivals." More recently, and in a more denominational context, Russell Richey has underlined how early Methodism "prospered in the open air." Engaging unorthodox pulpit sites "became an evangelical necessity." See Stout, *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the rise of modern Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1991), x, xxi, 68, 73, 79, 91; Russel E. Richey, *Methodism in the American Forest* (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2013), 4.

[41] John Loring to Israel Loring, Dec. 9, 1741, Nathan Stone Papers, 1726–1832, MHS; *The Christian History*, July 7, 1744. Sensory historian Peter Hoffer has argued that the eighteenth-century revivals made believers' pious pursuits "more immediately sensate" as conversion "became visible and audible expressions that the minister and everyone else could perceive." See Hoffer, *The Sensory Worlds of Early America*, 169.

[42] Peter Denney, "Clamoring for Liberty: Alehouse Noise and the Political Shoemaker" in *Eighteenth-Century Life* 41, no. 2 (April 2007): 105; Corrigan, "Space, Modernity, and Emptiness," 173–4; Bodenhamer, "Narrating Space and Place," 8–9; Isaac Weiner, "Calling Everyone to Pray: Pluralism, Secularism, and the Adhan in Hamtramck, Michigan" in *Anthropological Quarterly* 87, no. 4 (Fall 2014): 1051; Isaac Weiner, "Sound" in *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art and Belief* 7, no. 1 (2011): 110; Jeanne Kilde, "Space, Place, and Religious Meaning" in *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art and Belief* 3, no. 2 (2007): 277; and Martha Finch, *Dissenting Bodies: Corporealities in Early New England* (New York City: Columbia University Press, 2010), 139–40. As Bruce Hindmarsh has noted, evangelicals held that the "'work' of God was uniquely expanded in space and compressed in time." See

Early evangelicals repeatedly dismantled the "quiet piety" of established churches by taking believing men and women outside of churches and meeting-houses. The controversial itinerant Daniel Rogers noted in his diary that George Whitefield and other itinerants regularly exhorted large crowds "before the Tavern Door" in East Chester, or "from a Waggon" at Staten Island, often imploring white, black, and Indian men, women, and children to participate shoulder to shoulder in the transatlantic work of God. According to the Brookhaven Anglican Isaac Browne the Whitefieldians went about the colonies encouraging "poor illiterate Weaver[s]," "Carpenders," and "common plough Men" to abandon their parish church for itinerant preaching careers. The awakenings, Boston's venerable Anglican Timothy Cutler quipped, took place "whereever there are Mobb enough to abet them." And across New England, evangelical mobs developed a movement so hell-bent on popular access to gifts of the Spirit, and so dissatisfied with the traditional places and practices of Christianity, that it proposed an exhaustive reimaging of the colonial Protestant experience.[43]

Like Brown and Cutler, First Church's Charles Chauncy complained how itinerants such as Whitefield and Gilbert Tennent exhorted people of "*all Occupations*" and of "*small Capacities*" in "*private Houses*; and sometimes in a *Barn*; and sometimes in the *open Air*." Accounts from church councils, ministers, laypersons, and newspapers all noted how black, white, and Indian New Lights would "creep into Houses," go "Singing along Streets and Highways," retire "into an Orchard" for exhortation, and trade pulpits for "Daily field-preaching." Medford's Ebenezer Turell explained in a 1742 antirevivalist tract how evangelicals wrongly prayed in marketplaces and worshiped "about the *Streets* and in *Ferry-Boats*" til "late in the *Night*." Even famed clergy like Jonathan Edwards developed a reputation for outdoors piety, routinely walking through woods, in pastures, and by rivers to "converse with God." Going "from Place to Place & Countrey to Countrey," Plymouth's Josiah Cotton grieved, revivalists repeatedly took their movement beyond pews and pulpits.[44]

Awakeners spurning "any place of orthodox worship," as the Pennsylvania Anglican missionary Richard Backhouse mourned in 1741, often made private homes a standard space for new births and other numinous outpourings. One writer remarked in a 1745 issue of the revivalist periodical *The Christian History* that New England's awakenings came with an explosive increase of "*Private religious Meetings*" in "some of our *most capacious Houses*."[45] From Maine to New York

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Hindmarsh, *The Spirit of Early Evangelicalism*, 51.

[43] Louis P. Nelson, *The Beauty of Holiness: Anglicanism & Architecture in Colonial South Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 6; DDR, Oct. 30 and Nov. 4, 1740; Isaac Browne, letter, June 16, 1741, SPG-B9; Timothy Cutler, letter, June 25, 1745, SPG-B13; and Thomas Kidd, "Daniel Rogers' Egalitarian Great Awakening" in *Journal of the Historical Society* 7, no. 1 (March 2007): 112–4.

[44] "Charles Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New-England* (Boston, 1743) 40–1, 66; Byfield Church Records, 1744–1826, CL, 61 (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main); *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Sept. 2, 1742; *Boston Weekly Post-Boy*, May 17, 1742; Turell, *Mr. Turell's Directions*, 10, 13; Catherine Brekus, *Sarah Osborn's Collected Writings* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2017), 70; WJEO 16:790–1, 793, 794; and JCH, 334–6. See also Douglas Winiarski, ed., "A Picnic on Mount Tom" in *Jonathan Edwards Studies* 2, no. 1 (2012); 61–2.

[45] Richard Backhouse, letter, Oct. 13, 1741 and Alexander Howie, letter, Sept. 29, 1741, SPG-B9; *The*

evangelicals like the Hartford clockmaker Seth Youngs claimed the "Spiret of God seemd presant" in their residential assemblies. Like Youngs, Jonathan Edwards noted in his famous revival account, *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprizing Work of God* (1737), Northampton's "great alteration" came with "remarkable tokens of God's presence in almost every house." In the early 1740s, Grafton's Solomon Prentice led a charged revival in a "*private House*" and declared the "House was filled with His glory: there were but few there but what they tasted the Consolations of God, which are better than wine." The Whitefieldian itinerant Daniel Rogers routinely "pr. at a private House." Sometimes, Rogers noted in his diary, his home revivals in Ipswich and Newbury drew such a "great Number of People" that he had to exhort from windows so all his auditors—inside and outside the home—could hear him. In many instances, his listeners "were much Affected" and "went crying Home in the Street."[46]

The New Hampshire Whitefieldian clergyman Nicholas Gilman also placed awakenings within the home. Gilman, a devoted reader of Whitefield and Edwards, acknowledged in one spring 1741 diary entry that he spent the evening with a "Society of Young men who Met at My house, in religious Exercises." He carried on this practice throughout that fall. "In the Evening," Gilman wrote in November, there "Came in unexpectedly I believe 30 or 40 people from all quarters on a Rumour there was to be a Meeting at My House." With the impromptu gathering on his doorstep, he "prayd," "read Edwards," and "added a Word of Exhortation." Likewise, the journal of Killingly minister Marston Cabot reveals he persistently tried to "exert my Self on all occasions, both in public and in Private!" Between the fall of 1741 and spring of 1742, Cabot "entertained our Young pple with a discourse at a private House," "preach'd to our Young pple in the Neighbourhood," and "preach'd in the Evening at my house to the Young pple." Even the moderate revivalist David Hall, a Sutton clergyman, arranged several residential awakenings. During the winter of 1743 Hall preached privately multiple times, once in a house to a "very Crouded audience," another time "at my house where were great movements."[47]

Evangelicals also regularly disrupted traditional boundaries of sound and time. Reports commonly spoke of the clamorous, extended nature of zealous revival gatherings.[48] Elizabeth Backus, the mother of well-known separatist Isaac Backus,

Christian History, Feb. 9, 1745. Detractors like Chauncy and Josiah Cotton worried about noisy, all-night meetings held in homes and revivalists "wandering *about from House to House, talking, and speaking Things they ought not.*" See Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts*, 42; JCH, 331.

[46] Seth Youngs to Eleazar Wheelock, May 22, 1741, #741322.1, PEW; WJEO 4:150–1; Beales, ed., "Prentice's Narrative," 139; DDR, June 10, Aug. 4, and Sept. 11, 1741. Sutton minister David Hall reflected on the Grafton revival in his private diary, noting he witnessed first-hand "many persons in great Distress." The gatherings were "filled with . . . loud Shreeks and groans from a great number of persons." See David Hall diaries, 1740–1789, Jan. 13, 1743. MHS. For background on Youngs, see Winiarski, *Darkness Falls*, 362–3.

[47] NGD, 180, 219, 226, 229–30; Cabot, "Memorabilia," Sept. 13 and Nov. 22, 1741, Jan. 17, Feb. 28, and March 21, 1742; Hall, diaries, Feb. 7 and 25, 1743.

[48] David Daniels III, a historian at McCormick Theological Seminary, has helpfully illustrated how to analyze Christian revivalists through sound. Much like the early evangelicals discussed here, Pentecostals took on a sonic character that "in many ways was subversive," especially as it overturned "predictable and ordered" sound traditions meant to supply "opportunities for silence." Similarly, religious studies scholar Isaac Weiner has investigated how sound functions to uphold and critique authority. See David Daniels

found there was "conviction & conversion & mettings every day." To her amazement, young people "cried & Screamed out in the dead of the night," while nearby Indians met "twice a week besides Sabaths" and often "till midnight." The Norwich minister Benjamin Throop likewise connected "greatly Revived" religion with noisy and prolonged spiritual outbursts. Awakenings were synonymous with "Some fainting & others Screaming in the Most Heddious Manner" for "Some few hours or Days." Numinous eruptions like the "great Shaking at York," clergyman John Blunt confirmed in 1741, went "Each day and night," regularly lasting "all Night" with the "bitterest Groans that could be express'd." In one letter to Gilbert Tennent, the Boston merchant Samuel Savage shared news of the frontier town's "glorious shower from Heaven," vividly describing how "20 persons cry'd out," "been struct . . . with a Sudden Beam of divine Joy," and "sat up almost all Night in the Churches." According to an anonymous eye-witness of the days-long York revival, hundreds of awakened men and women loudly confessed their sins "in the open Streets" and bellowed "Crys & Intreetes" past midnight, loud enough for the diarist to hear from his "Lodging, ¼ of mile" away. To onlookers like Boston's John Loring, awakenings frequently featured men and women who "Cryed out bitterly" and "were Kept till midnight" for unceasing preaching and intense spiritual experience. Early evangelicalism emerged through booming, late-night revivals.[49]

Samuel Buell, James Davenport, and Andrew Croswell—the "Three most fiery Zealots of the Party," as Josiah Cotton remembered in his memoirs—were some of the colonies' most notorious promoters of this strident revivalism, and they often took it outdoors. While Buell is sometimes less discussed than his contemporaries, he became one of New England's most accomplished itinerants, leading rousing awakenings throughout the colonial northeast for over two decades. As he noted in a 1742 letter to his fellow itinerant Eleazar Wheelock, he enjoyed "Letters and invitations to Preach from all Parts, an affectual Door is open Daily for my Preaching." The *Boston Weekly Post-Boy* reported in spring of 1742 that the "famous Mr. *Buell*" "preached at the Work House" and led a "vast Concourse of People . . . thro the main-Streets" of Boston where they sang hymns. In Grafton, Northampton, and Concord, "Mr. Beuel" held rowdy, marathon revivals where believers worshiped late into the night, for days at a time. One unnamed correspondent witnessed marathon meetings that went as long as "nine nights Successively," filled with "Such wracking Horrer" that the auditors' screams could be "heard far off" and made the "Ears of all that heard to tingle." During one revival in Easthampton, Buell described seeing converted congregants pack the meetinghouse—including the "Pews Alleys Stairs

III, " 'Gotta Moan Sometime': A Sonic Exploration of Earwitnesses to Early Pentecostal Sound in North America" in *Pneuma* 30 (2008): 9–12; Weiner, "Calling Everyone to Pray," 1051; and Weiner, "Sound," 110.

[49] Elizabeth Backus to Isaac Backus, Feb. 3, 1676, Sept. 19–22, 1755, and June 16, 1759, Isaac Backus Papers, 1717–1835, JHL (manuscript accessed online at www.repository.library.brown.edu/studio/); Throop, "Secret Interviews," July 19, 1741; John Blunt to Samuel Savage, Oct. 22, 1741 and Samuel Savage, "Extract of a Letter from Piscataqua," n.d., SSP I; Samuel Savage to Gilbert Tennent, Feb. 2, 1742, SSP II; Douglas Winiarski, ed., "'A Jornal of a Fue Days at York': The Great Awakening on the Northern New England Frontier" in *Maine History* 42, no. 1 (2004): 63–6; and John Loring to Israel Loring, Dec. 9, 1741, Nathan Stone Papers, 1726–1832, MHS. The Portsmouth merchant William Parker also noticed revivals filled with cries and groans "as Deep and Dismal as … from a Dying Man." See William Parker to Richard Waldron, Nov. 28, 1741, Miscellaneous Bound Manuscripts, MHS.

Seats above & below"—with "piercing Cries & Importunities of Sinners for Mercy Mercy Mercy." "Day after Day," Buell explained, one could hear the "most amazing Agonies of Soul & Cries . . . in every House as you walk'd the Streets."[50]

His controversial Charlestown colleague Andrew Croswell did much of the same. During one visit to Plymouth in February 1743, the Harvard-trained minister asserted nearly every present church member remained unsaved, but that, thankfully, the "Spirit of the living God was come or coming down amongst them." For nearly a month, he held meetings with "great Noise & Cryout," leading his distressed assembly "Singing Hymns as they came thro the Streets . . . many times till 11. a Clock at night or past." Benjamin Colman worried in 1742 that Croswell and his Yale compatriot James Davenport often went too far. Shackled with the "Impressions of a heated Imagination," these two itinerants too often resorted to "judging and censuring the spiritual State of Ministers and People . . . singing thro' the Streets to and from the House of God, and favouring Exhorters of no Gifts."[51]

Davenport had an especially ignominious reputation for his outdoor ministry. He commonly preached and sang hymns on hills, streets, and commons. Some, like the Hartford layman Seth Youngs, thought the Connecticut firebrand was the "most wonderfull man I think I ever Se" and must "have Intemate Communion with God." One story from a summer 1742 issue of the *Boston Evening-Post* recounted the New York radical's preaching "in the Fields from Day to Day" and conducting worship "thro' the Streets and High-Ways, to and from the Houses of Worship on Lord's-Days, and other Days." As the New London artisan Joshua Hempstead noted in a 1741 diary entry, he watched the itinerant carry on "mighty works" from numerous locales, including a "broad ally," "on the Rocks," and "under the Trees." According to some observers, like one Groton supporter in 1741, Davenport's boundless ministrations were the "chief Scene of the Operations of God's SPIRIT," at once ushering the conversion of dozens of black, white, and Indian listeners. To others, like the Lebanon minister Jacob Eliot, he only "Occasion'd much Disorder & Confusion." Critics such as Eliot saw Davenport as a contagion, infecting towns with religious fanaticism during his infamous visits. Throughout New England he would preach daily in public spaces, exhorting with thundering howls and bodily jerks. Sometimes going "whole Nights till Day break," he and his followers would claim divine transmissions and yowl for others to join them in

[50] JCH, 331; Samuel Buell to Eleazar Wheelock, April 20, 1742, #742270, PEW; *The Boston Weekly Post-Boy*, April 5, 1742; DDR, April 15, 1742; Anonymous to "Reverend Sir," n.d. [March 31, 1742], Jonas Bowen Clarke Collection, 1742–1810, 1831, CL (manuscript image and transcription viewed at www.douglaswiniarski.com. Accessed Dec. 6, 2019); Beales, ed., "Prentice's Narrative," 136; WJEO 16:120; Copy of a letter from Samuel Buell to Rev. Barber, April 17, 1764, General Collection Manuscript Miscellany, BEN. The Marblehead merchant Nathan Bowen referred to Buell, Croswell, and Davenport as a "Disgrace to the Christian Scheme." The Boston minister and revival correspondent Thomas Foxcroft critiqued radicals like Croswell and Davenport for "filling the Country with Outcries against the Ministry in general as Arminian and Unconverted." See "Almanacs of Nathan Bowen," 167; Thomas Foxcroft to Jonathan Dickinson, Oct. 25, 1742, Charles Robert Autograph Letters Collection, Quaker and Special Collections, Haverford College.

[51] JCH, 329; Julius Herbert Tuttle, comp., "The Glasgow-Weekly-History, 1743" in MHS, *Proceedings*, 53 (1919-1920), 214. For more on Croswell's contentious contributions to early evangelicalism, see Leigh Eric Schmidt, " 'A Second and Glorious Reformation': The New Light Extremism of Andrew Croswell" in *The William and Mary Quarterly* 43, no. 2 (April 1986).

streets, barns, and fields.[52]

However, none of the previous figures matched the "great Preacher" in their spatial violations. As historian Frank Lambert has shown, George Whitefield delivered nearly eighteen thousand sermons throughout the British Atlantic between 1736 and 1770, reached an "ever-expanding audience of anonymous strangers," and helped frame local awakenings as part of a singular, transatlantic revival event. To the joy of believers like the English Wesleyan Elizabeth Sayce, he took his "Lovely Song" to numerous communities throughout the English-speaking world. Whitefield's prodigious and rambling ministry helped center him as the fulcrum of debates regarding the awakenings. He represented everything that was promising and menacing about, as the Lynn farmer Zaccheus Collins termed them, the "Great Comotions about Religion."[53] And when he and his acolytes "went about Preaching from one *Province* and *parish* to another," as Charles Chauncy observed, they repeatedly left traditional church spaces and went "into *private Houses*, or gathered Assemblies in the *Fields*." From his arrival in 1739 to his final colonial tour, Whitefield openly embraced propagating the new birth "in the Fields, or in any Place that can be found most convenient," convinced "no One Place is more Holy than another." As he put it in one letter, outdoor preaching "strikes more than all black gowns and lawn sleeves in the world."[54]

Whitefield's unabated awakenings took place in an array of spaces—especially "open Places" "without the Church Walls." Private and published reports have him preaching to thousands of auditors in the "trainfield at Marblehead," "on the

[52] JCH, 330–1; Seth Youngs to Eleazar Wheelock, July 1, 1741, #741401, PEW; Nathaniel Hunting to Benjamin Colman, May 24, 1743, Colman-Jenks Collection, 1651–1804, MHS; *The Boston Evening-Post*, July 5, 1742; *Diary of Joshua Hempstead, 1711–1758*, Collections of the New London Historical Society, Vol. I (New London, 1901), 379–80; *The Boston Weekly Post-Boy*, Oct. 5, 1741; Jacob Eliot to Eleazar Wheelock and Joseph Meacham, Aug. 25, 1741, #741475, PEW; Chauncy, *Enthusiasm Described*, 4, 6; *The Boston Weekly Post-Boy*, June 14, 1742; and Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts*, 128. For more on Davenport's radicalism, see Harry S. Stout and Peter Onuf, "James Davenport and the Great Awakening in New London" in *The Journal of American History* 70, no. 3 (Dec. 1983).

[53] Collins, diary, July 22, 1740 and Dec. 28, 1741 (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main); Lambert, *"Pedlar in Divinity"*, 3, 8, 66; Elizabeth Sayce to Charles Wesley, May 1742, MARC, EMV/501/126 (manuscript accessed online at luna.manchester.ac.uk); and George Ross, letter, Aug. 4, 1741, SPG-B9. Alongside Lambert are a number of historians who have emphasized Whitefield's relationship to the transatlantic nature of the awakenings. Jonathan Yeager has pointed to how his ministry "formed a bridge between the revivals in Britain in America." Likewise, Thomas Kidd has asserted that Whitefield's American tours cast "local, isolated awakenings" as "linked into a single movement that supporters regarded as a genuine work of God." More recently, Peter Choi has added valuable texture to these discussions by highlighting Whitefield's complicated relationship to the British Atlantic slave trade. As he notes, his "drive for profit and the allure of politics worked alongside his religious zeal, thus coloring his transatlantic activities in the 1750s." See Jonathan Yeager, *Enlightened Evangelicalism: The Life and Thought of John Erskine* (New York City: Oxford University Press, 2011), 34; Thomas Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2007) 92; and Choi, *George Whitefield*, 131.

[54] Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts*, 36, 40; Richard Backhouse, letter, July 25, 1741, SPG-B9; *American Weekly Mercury*, Dec. 20 to Dec. 27, 1739; and George Whitefield to "My Dear Professor," July 14, 1767, GWL. Similar to Whitefield, Gilbert Tennent encouraged Christians to reconsider the material constraints of the "house of God." In one sermon, he explained that the Jewish "material temple or house of God" was the set-apart, special site for God's dwelling. New Testament writers reformed this concept, suggesting the "house of God . . . signifys to us christians the church of God, or the assemblys of his people engagd in publick worship." See Gilbert Tennent, sermon on Psalm 27:4, n.d., Gilbert Tennent Manuscript Collection, Special Collections, Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries.

Common" in Boston, and "on the Green" at Hampton. *The Pennsylvania Gazette* reported in fall of 1739 that his visit to Philadelphia included a sermon "from the Court House Gallery," with an estimated "6000 People before him in the Street, who stood in awful Silence to hear him." A *Gazette* account two weeks later noted his stop in Germantown featured an exhortation "from a Balcony to about 5000 People in the Street." Having little regard for the "Holiness & Reverence due to the House of God," one Anglican critic bemoaned, Whitefield "insisted that there is no more Holiness in a Church than under an Oak Tree."[55]

Importantly, observers repeatedly described Whitefield as they did Buell, Croswell, and Davenport, casting his ministry as an "every Day" pursuit. As one writer put it in a 1739 issue of the *New-York Weekly Journal*, Whitefield was "in the Vineyard" "early and late all the Week long." The Connecticut craftsman Joshua Hempstead once watched Whitefield preach "all day. und ye oak Tree" and hold assemblies "wich Continued every night." The "noisie Mr Whitefield," as the Rhode Island Anglican James Honyman referred to him, repeatedly led his born-again supporters throughout the colonial northeast exhorting day and night. Settlements "infected with the Contagion" were flooded "every Night" with awakened believers "crying out of their Damned Estate" and claiming amazing "raptures & transports of Joy." Portsmouth's Anglican missionary Arthur Browne deplored Whitefieldian revival. It was "overspreading the Country," he noted in a 1742 letter, with awakened men and women "pouring in their Preachers from all Parts," and "carrying on their exercises almost whole nights together." Whitefield infected scores of people with "Enthusiastick & Heterodox Opinions," encouraging them to go "Gadding thro' the Country" and refuse the spatial and theological marks of proper religion. The "wandering Saint Mr Whitefield" pulled Christian experience from churches and meetinghouses and severely undermined established ministers' efforts to instill religious "Decency & Order."[56]

"The True Spirit & Temper of Xianity"[57]

New England's "work of God" was something to be seen and heard, without the temporal constraints typically shaping worship. As it devalued the previous generations' pious practices and protracted journey toward regeneration, early evangelicalism cheapened the spaces, times, sounds, and social expectations that anchored and animated those exercises. When revivalists displaced Christian life

[55] Timothy Cutler, letter, Dec. 11, 1740, SPB-B9; George Whitefield, *What think ye of Christ?* (Philidelphia, 1739), 25; Collins, diary, July 29, 1740 (manuscript accessed online at www.congregationallibrary.org/nehh/main); Benjamin Colman, "Memorandum," Sept. 1740, Benjamin Colman Papers, 1641–1806, MHS (manuscript accessed online at www.masshist.org/collection-guides/); NGD, 142; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, Nov. 15 and 29, 1739; Samuel Johnson, letter, Sept. 30, 1743, SPG-B11. Virginians quickly heard news of Whitefield's tour of the northeastern colonies, reporting in 1739 that in Philadelphia and New York the Anglican itinerant "preach'd in the open Fields to 8 or 10,000 People at a Time." See *Virginia Gazette*, Dec. 14, 1739.

[56] *New-York Weekly Journal*, Dec. 17, 1739; Cleaveland, diary, Dec. 1, 1745; *Diary of Joshua Hempstead*, 447; James Honeyman, letter, Sept. 18, 1740, SPG-B7; Samuel Seabury, letter, Oct. 1764, SPG-B1; William Vesey, letter, Nov. 6, 1740, SPG-B7; Samuel Johnson, letter, June 5, 1741 and Samuel Seabury, letter, June 5, 1741, SPG-B9; Arthur Browne, letter, July 24, 1742, SPG-B10; Richard Backhouse, letter, Oct. 13, 1741 and July 24, 1741, SPG-B9; and James McSparran, letter, Oct. 1, 1740, SPG-B7.

[57] Thomas Colgan, letter, Dec. 15, 1741, SPG-B9.

from all its temporal prescriptions, and thus all the theological and social structures inscribed therein, they re-placed in a redefined landscape. The new birth came with a new world.

Evangelicals spatialized their movement through time and space, through their shrill screams, unceasing worship, and unorthodox occupations of indoor and outdoor spaces. And rather than mere incidental subtleties, these decisions underpinned New Lights' dissent from the region's traditional Protestant cultures and authority structures. By simply accentuating how evangelicals "position[ed] themselves differently in space," we can nimbly—and refreshingly—interrogate the theological, social, and physical distinctives of perhaps the most significant religious movement in the history of the English-speaking world. If we are able to "keep a foot in the material world" as we investigate early America's religious awakenings, we find that revivalists' harsh attacks on Old Light sound, space, and time represented a scandalous strike against essential theological, racial, gendered, and class structures. Their fierce treasuring of the "Power of God" and every individual's "Great waikings" were far more than "disembodied" spiritual values typically associated with evangelicalism. They manifested outwardly, altering when and where Christianity happened, and who was allowed to participate in particular ways. New England's awakenings drew together enthusiastic black, white, and Indian men, women, and children whose embrace of the new birth directly corresponded with exporting Christianity to "fields and Commons." By conducting their all-night "perfect Bedlams" in streets, fields, and homes, revivalists sharply undermined Old Lights' desire for a "more Sober Rational Scheme" of religion and participated in a transatlantic movement to overhaul Christianity's spatial, theological, and practical moorings.

Abbreviations Used in Article

BEN Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

CHS Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Conn.

CL Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, Mass.

DDR Diary of Daniel Rogers (microfilm), Rogers Family Papers, 1614–1950, New-York Historical Society, New York City, N.Y.

GWL George Whitefield Letters, 1739–1769, MS 453, Pitts Theology Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Ga.

JCH Josiah Cotton, "History of the Cotton Family," c. 1728–1755, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. (Manuscript accessed online at ww.colonialnorthamerica.library.harvard.edu)

JHL John Hay Library, Special Collections, Brown University, Providence, R.I.

MARC	The Methodist Archives and Research Centre, John Rylands Library, The University of Manchester
MHS	Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Mass.
NEHGS	New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Mass.
NGD	William Kidder, ed., "The Diary of Nicholas Gilman," MA thesis, University of New Hampshire, 1972
PEW	Microfilm Edition of The Papers of Eleazar Wheelock, together with the Early Archives of Dartmouth College & Moor's Indian Charity School and Records of the Town of Hanover, New Hampshire through the year 1779
SPG-B	The Microfilm Records of the Society for the Propagation of Gospel in Foreign Parts, B Series Letterbooks, 1702–1786. Volume number indicated after "B"
SSP I	Samuel Savage Papers, 1703–1848, MHS
SSP II	Samuel Savage Papers, 1710–1810, MHS
WJEO	*Works of Jonathan Edwards Online*, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
YUL	Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.