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Unpublishing Religion: How Anglo-Protestant Printing Constrained Public Speech in Early America

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**UNPUBLISHING RELIGION: HOW ANGLO-PROTESTANT
PRINTING CONSTRAINED PUBLIC SPEECH IN EARLY AMERICA**

Michael Baysa

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Abstract

This dissertation explores how Anglo-Protestant authority was crystalized through the publishing process in colonial and early British-America. It engages with book history, media studies, literary studies, religious studies, and American religious history to illustrate how contingency, as a framework, could reveal how Protestant power operated where and when it may have been deemed weak or absent. In five chapters, I examine both constraints on religious printing beyond censorship and opportunities to reach audiences through manuscript publication. The stories of eighteenth-century manuscripts and their authors who aspired to publish demonstrate the limits of the public sphere framework to describe print as media for dialogue. It was too embedded in Anglo-Protestant logics that imagined Anglo-Protestant readership for published translations, discouraged non-English religious publications through mechanical limits on the printing press, and sustained the mediatory capacity of ministers to speak to and on behalf of a religious public. Far from being an accessible platform, print publishing preserved the Anglo-Protestantism character of public religion at a period when ministers' political influence waned and print was the ascendant medium for public discourse.

Given print's constraints, writers continued to rely on manuscripts to reach a broader audience. Manuscript circulation and scribal publication were not only comparable alternatives to the highly curated publishing process, but survived as a practice into eighteenth-century because of how well it facilitated conversation among communities that publishers never served. Whatever exceptional texts or literary firsts occurred in print paled in comparison to the religious pluralism that thrived through manuscripts. More importantly, this dissertation encourages more dynamic readings of manuscript and print mediums to better understand the complex worlds that they not only generated, but also were made and unmade to inhabit.

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Introduction

Sometime in June 1787, one of the most controversial and a very widely translated texts across Europe and the early United States, *An Account of conversion of the Reverent Mr. John Thayer, lately a Protestant minister, at Boston in North-America, who embraced the Roman Catholic religion at Rome* (1787), was first published in London. In the text, the newly ordained Catholic priest recounted that he “was brought up [in Boston] in the Protestant Religion” and that he “was made a Minister of the Puritan sect, and exercised [his] functions for two years, applying [himself] to the study of Holy Scripture, and to preaching.”¹ He narrates his journey through Europe, his eventual conversion to Catholicism after his visit to Rome, and his sole mission to spread Roman Catholicism, as he writes, “to my own country, in hopes, notwithstanding my unworthiness, to be the instrument of my countrymen.”² Everywhere Thayer travelled in Europe after the initial London edition, friends and allies ensured that it would be translated and see the printing press. The following year *An Account of Conversion* was published in Paris where, Thayer recalled, he was “strongly solicited by some friends, to send it to the press, for the edification of Christians, and for the greater glory of God.” He continues, “Yielding to their reasons, and their authority, I now, *by their advice*, give it both in English and French, in favor of those who only understand one of these languages.” That same year, more editions would be published in Quebec, Lisbon, Manchester, Barcelona, and Munich, translated in German, Latin, Portuguese, and Spanish.³ In the newly formed United States, printing presses in predominantly Catholic Baltimore and port-city Wilmington, North Carolina would also reprint the London

¹ John Thayer, *An Account of conversion of the Reverent Mr. John Thayer, lately a Protestant minister, at Boston in North America, who embraced the Roman Catholic religion at Rome*, the fifth edition (Baltimore: Reprinted from the [London Edition] and sold by William Goddard, 1788), 3-4.

² Thayer, 16.

³ Pulled from the Paris edition quoted from Percival Merritt, *Bibliographical Notes on Account of the Conversion of the Rev. John Thayer*, (Cambridge: John Wilson and Son, The University Press, 1923). For a list of editions of Thayer’s publication, see Merritt and Joseph Sabin, *Bibliotheca Americana: A Dictionary of Books Relating to America, From its Discovery to the Present Time*, Vol. 25, (New York: Joseph Sabin, 1868), 86-92.

editions for English American readers. With such a widespread and international appeal for such a text, one might expect that the early American print centers in New England, might find it a salable text for readers always ready to consume the next religious controversy. Indeed, it would require little from them to reprint a text already existing in many English editions. Yet, as far as we know, there is little evidence that American publishers wanted to publish his conversion to their Anglo-Protestant readers.

Although scholars may rely on broader market logics and literary trends in the wider English transatlantic public sphere to explain how Thayer's texts circulated, there were material and regional considerations that determined how and why *An Account of Conversion* circulated except in major American print centers. Thayer was first published in London because the author had access to English connections. His friends in predominantly Catholic Paris and Lisbon, whom he likely met during his travels, assisted with its translation into French, and these editions could have traveled across the Atlantic to Quebec. The Catholic public sphere extended into Baltimore, where bishop John Carroll resided and appointed Thayer to serve in parishes in New England, Virginia, and finally Kentucky. In contrast, New England Congregationalists familiar with Thayer probably had little reason to celebrate his conversion. Famous publisher Benjamin Franklin had heard about the infamous Thayer who had "chang'd his Presbyterianism for the Catholic religion" and could only joke, "It would be pleasant if a Boston man should come to be Pope. Stranger things have happened."⁴ John and Abigail Adams met Thayer in Paris and learned of his plan "to return to America in a year or two, to see if he could not convert his Friends and acquaintance." They were completely repelled by Thayer's attempts to convert them after he had "rail[ed] at Luther and Calvin," prompting a defense from John Adams "that his Religion [be] a

⁴ Benjamin Franklin to Jane Mecom, Sept 13 1783, Belknap Papers Sixth Series Vol IV, CSM, 260.

matter that he did not look upon him self accountable for, to any one, but his Maker.”⁵ Given the Adamses’ and Franklins’ broad network of correspondents spanning New England and Philadelphia, it should be no surprise that Thayer found little welcome among publishers residing in those regions. Even in Philadelphia, where the famous Catholic printer Matthew Carey published a “Catholic Manual” in 1774 and printed the first American Roman Catholic Bible in 1789, printers were reluctant to compromise their standing among esteemed Anglo-Protestant figures by publishing on the Catholic convert. Thayer probably knew about the narrow Anglo-Protestant market served by American publishers and so arranged for safe shipping of the “ablest controversial works” to accompany him in America.⁶ As demonstrated by Thayer’s conversion narrative, regional considerations weighed on publishers’ decisions to reproduce and distribute increasingly popular Catholic texts.

Despite the reluctance of American publishers, the self-proclaimed “Catholic Missionary” knew and exploited Anglo-Protestant conventions to get published at home.⁷ Reminiscent of the 1740s Great Awakening revivals and the 1780s itinerancy of Universalist preachers like John Murray and Elhanan Winchester across the New England countryside, Thayer sensationalized and heralded his arrivals through letters and correspondences.⁸ Boston newspaper *Independent Chronicle* and Philadelphian newspaper *Freeman’s Journal* played right into Thayer’s hands, publishing the contents of his letter to the unsuspecting public: “Mr. John Thayer, late a protestant minister of the puritan sect, in Boston... is shortly expected to arrive at Boston, in the character of Popish Bishop.” Editors added that Thayer “is become very near the

⁵ Abigail Adams to John Shaw, Auteuil January 18, 1785, Adams Family Digital Collection

⁶ On the nature of these texts, see Peter Guilday, *The Life and Times of John Carroll, Archbishop of Baltimore (1735-1815)*, (New York, The Encyclopedia Press, 1922), 260.

⁷ John Thayer to Jeremy Belknap, Belknap Papers, 546.

⁸ On the marketing activities of transatlantic itinerants like George Whitefield, see Frank Lambert, *Inventing the Great Awakening*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

Pope, and all the ecclesiastics of the See of Rome” and publishers attached commentaries from anonymous contributors: “The very methods which induced him to apostatize from the religion of his country, will prove but feeble, very feeble arguments to induce his brethren to follow his example.” Asserting the Protestantism of the United States, one author assured readers that “Americans are much enlightened to be easily imposed upon by the dogmas of Rome... *martyrdom-inquisition-and pontifical tyranny!*”⁹ Thayer’s campaign worked. Some of his opponents gave him the name “John Turncoat” to highlight how Thayer’s conversion to Catholicism betrayed America’s Protestantism.¹⁰ He further fed the controversy when he advertised his own Catholic itinerancy:

Mr. Thayer, Catholick Priest of Boston... offers himself to preach on the evenings of the week-days, in any of the neighbouring towns. If any person desire to hear the exposition of the Catholick Faith (of which the majority of Americans have so mistaken an idea) and will furnish any place for the accommodation of the hearers, Mr. Thayer will be ever ready to attend them. He will also undertake to answer the objections of any gentleman would wish to make either publicly or privately to the doctrine he preaches.¹¹

New Hampshire minister George Leslie answered Thayer’s challenge, but he was slow to respond in print and may even have been pressured into silence by his peers. With no answer, Thayer proudly declared himself the victor, writing. “I have expected your reply for a full year; and, as none has appeared, I have a right to conclude that you do not find the Catholic doctrine on this point totally unscriptural and absurd.”¹² Thayer’s public controversies attracted criticism from his peers who described the New England priest as “contentious, erratic, and a trouble to

⁹ *Independent Chronicle*, 4 Sept. 1788, and Philadelphia, Freeman’s Journal, September 24, 1788. All newspaper references draw from the *America’s Historical Newspapers* digital database.

¹⁰ It appears in Richard J. Purcell’s “Father John Thayer of New England and Ireland,” *An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 31, No. 122 (Jun 1942), 171-184 and in Guilday, 424 but his citation from Merritt and the *Independent Chronicle* does not yield the title itself.

¹¹ *Columbian Centinel*, November 24, 1790.

¹² John Thayer, *Controversy between the Rev. John Thayer, Catholic Missionary of Boston, and the Rev. George Leslie, Pastor of a Church in Washington, New Hampshire*, (Philadelphia: Printed by Richard Folwell, no. 33 Arch-Street, 1793), 40-41.

Bishop Carroll.”¹³ Carroll himself wrote of Thayer to his correspondents in the region, “I am very sorry to not have here a clergyman of amiable, conciliatory manners, as well as of real ability.” Some Catholics quickly drew a connection between Thayer’s public persona and his former Protestantism, noticing that it was as if “not a little of the uncompromising Puritan spirit clung to him to the end.”¹⁴ Franklin had made a similar observation about New England ministers who approached the printing press with the confidence that they are “in possession of all truth, and that those who differ are so far in the wrong.”¹⁵ Thayer’s Catholicism appeared in the public sphere precisely because of how well the author leaned into Anglo-Protestant expectations, forms, and genres for published religious speech.

American publishers’ indifference towards a transatlantic Catholic public sphere, Thayer’s reliance on Anglo-Protestant conventions to publish his works in New England, and American Catholics’ resentment of the Thayer’s Puritan performances all illustrate the continuing influence of Anglo-Protestant culture on early American religious publishing. Far from being a completely secular or areligious enterprise, publishing continued to be influenced by what printers and booksellers still imagined as the Anglo-Protestant reader. Thayer was familiar with these print dynamics, having spent his early years learning from New England ministers, attending their schools, and preaching in different congregational settings. Therefore, he knew that to be published, one must hail the Anglo-Protestant reader through religious controversy but under terms already familiar to this target audience. He sensationalized his own arrival in American newspapers, resembling British revivalists during the Great Awakening revivals. He used the printing press as a platform for clerical controversy which reminded

¹³ “Rev. John Thayer The First New England Convert Priest,” *The American Catholic Historical Researches, New Series*, 7, no. 2, April 1911, 97-99.

¹⁴ Guilday, 425

¹⁵ Benjamin Franklin, *Franklin’s Autobiography*, ed. Frank Woodworth Pine, (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1916), 126-127.

readers of the recently concluded Universalist fracture among Boston clergymen. In the same way that these largely print events registered to American publishers as generating salable productions for the Anglo-Protestant market, they could see some promise behind Thayer's Protestant performances of American Catholicism.

Unpublishing Religion explores the myriad of ways that Anglo-Protestant culture shaped, curated, and excluded texts from print publication. The term “unpublishing” emphasizes contingency as an important framework when analyzing the relationship between discourse and its mediums. Specifically, this project invites scholars to consider how Protestant power operated through the publication process and crystalized through the very mechanical capabilities of media technologies like the printing press. While we could look at Thayer as a success story of someone who broke into the American public sphere after fashioning his Catholicism for American Protestant consumption, many eighteenth-century heterodox and racialized authors did not fare as well. Confronted with the daunting prospect of working a manuscript through Anglo-Protestant publishing, some settled to leave their works unprinted. Many others, however, relied on traditional modes of manuscript circulation and scribal publication to reach a broader audience. These examples evidence the general inaccessibility of the printing press; the technology most celebrated for facilitating revolutionary ideals and ushering the democratization of religion at the birth of the new nation. Ministerial censorship defined our histories of the seventeenth-century colonial printing press and teleologies of progress have led scholars to proclaim the printing press' freedom from religious curation by the end of the eighteenth century. Stories about the liberation of the printed medium were certainly echoed by ministers, publishers, politicians, and authorities who were invested in promoting the capabilities of the technology to their contemporaries. However, if we take into account the perspectives of

religious actors beyond these central figures, we can begin to see the countless stories of successes and failures by writers who aspired to publish their works through the printing press. They reveal the power and influence of intermediaries whose criteria for Anglo-Protestant consumption determined what the publishing process could and could not produce, circulate, and distribute. Even without the political power to censor texts, ministers and missionary organizations could nevertheless replicate its effects through various cultural mechanisms to preserve the Anglo-Protestantism of the public sphere well into the next century.

In terms of approach, this dissertation treads both history and literary studies to better understand how religion shaped the public sphere in the eighteenth century. More specifically, it complicates how scholars think about texts produced by the colonial printing press and what they evidence about their authors, their connections, and the publishing worlds they inhabited. It is important that we take a critical approach towards the technological determinisms echoed by Anglo-Protestant ministers, missionaries, and publishers who described the printing press through the ways it transcended culture, and consider more seriously the ways the technology was embedded in Protestant relations and materiality. Therefore, printed speech was always situated within matrices of material production, historical contingency, and local networks of power, in a way that complicates interpretations of them as merely public forms of literary or religious expression. This takes seriously David Hall's call towards a "lived religion" approach to the study of print which moves scholars away from uncritically reading "popular" or "public" onto printed texts and encourages them to consider how cultures mediated by networks of relations, constraints on the material production of texts, and the ideas mediated by communities of discourse all constituted the social life of texts, whether in manuscript or printed form.¹⁶

¹⁶ See David Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989). Hall himself was invested in shifting scholars' view about print

Furthermore, avoiding the print-promotive narratives by Anglo-Protestants opens up the broader universe of public-making manuscripts, conversations, and other genres of speech and text authored by figures, often less-covered by histories of American religion, to scholarly relevance. Many of them remain undercovered due to the tendency of previous generations of historians to deem certain authors from marginalized communities as inconsequential, private, and therefore irrelevant to their broad and sweeping narratives. *Unpublishing Religion* invites scholars to imagine new literary, political, and religious histories through sources that, as this dissertation argues, were just as public, just as political, and just as important to our histories of religion.

This introduction provides a general overview of the key concepts, frameworks, and scholarly conversations in which the dissertation engages. I hope this will speak to scholars in history, literary studies, and religious studies in a way that contributes to questions relevant to each field that engages with the sources I cover. The first section situates my methodological approach alongside trends in the field of literary studies that incorporate book history and media studies to the way they read religious sources closely and critically. The second part presents the broader implication of my study on histories of religion in America. I close the introduction with an outline of the chapters ahead. While by no means exhaustive in terms of print-mechanical constraints, languages the printing press struggled to produce, and manuscripts that aspired towards publication, this dissertation nevertheless provides a glimpse into instances that illustrate the cultural challenges to entry into the public sphere.

from a signifier of what was “popular” towards communities’ “lived experience” with the text itself. Given his broader projects around book history and material culture, Hall never entirely moves away from print as a source for scholars – rather he was inviting nuance to the way they write about the social lives of texts, as if the ideas they contain transcend the local and the material.

Methodology

Unpublishing Religion's methodology draws on the broader scholarship of literary studies which has wrestled with the relationship between eighteenth-century print literature and the public sphere. However, rather than using printed texts to access the broader culture around the medium, I examine the material circumstances around textual production and the alternative mediums that functioned alongside or in place of it. Contingency is an important framework for this project because it is the result of my dissatisfaction with the representative politics of scholars who readily celebrate the entry of non-Anglo Protestant writers into print as evidence of the democratic nature of the public sphere. Recruiting the voices of colonized and enslaved peoples in this manner continues to privilege Anglo-Protestant literacy as the primary means of measuring communication, public making, and political engagement of writers and orators. Doing so risks replicating the logics held by eighteenth-century ministers' and missionaries' that non-Anglo Protestant writers, thinkers, and participants who engage outside of Anglo-Protestant civilizing mediums were not literate, critical, or political under their own community's terms. My project attends to these shortcomings by provincializing the English public sphere, highlighting limits on access to it, and demystifying the processes that actively managed it. Indeed, if print either facilitated the space for public discourse or allowed for the subject formations from which the public sphere and liberal democracy emerge, then this project questions the extent to which print was free to do so and whether other mediums were capable of doing that same political work.

Theorist Jurgen Habermas' *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962) continues to cast a long shadow on scholars of the eighteenth-century. Whether intentionally or not, Habermas has framed many projects at the intersection of the eighteenth-century explosion

of transatlantic print publications in the anglophile world, the transformation of theological genres into its more modern iterations (the political, literary, and secular), and the emergence of a distinctly American national identity using this notion of the public sphere. This emerging public, Habermas argues, was an “abstract counterpart of public [state] authority” which asserts a “public concern regarding the private sphere of civil society [that] was no longer confined to the authorities but was considered by the subjects as one that was properly theirs.”¹⁷ The “public sphere” offers a framework whereby ideology, as a function of communication, could energize political and material revolution. However, casting the eighteenth-century as the “golden age” of the public sphere because of the ways nineteenth-century mass media compromised print’s ability to transcend consumerist culture points to some of the limits of this framework. Habermas himself did not foreclose the possibility that spaces such as saloons and coffeehouses could function in a similar way, but later scholars like Michael Warner built on Habermas’ print-centric framework by proposing that it was through the medium’s ascendance in the eighteenth century that the anglophile world could begin to realize new kinds of formations, subjectivities, and nationalities. Using Benedict Anderson’s conception of an “imagined community,” Warner in *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America* (1990) interrogates the necessary discourses and subject formations that lie behind Habermas’ “public sphere” which enabled the disinterested, rational, and “disembodied public subject” to engage in conversation with others. On this front, Warner’s project focuses on the ways emergent literary technologies in eighteenth-century print participated in the process of conditioning readers to imagine themselves part of this national collective. Warner’s proposal resists the technological determinism implicit within Habermas’ framework which treats “literate

¹⁷ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 23

elites as rising with writing and falling with printing – an exchange that appears to have taken place independent of contingent social relations, actions, and representations.”¹⁸ Instead, he argues that print itself was caught in the very currents it sought to emancipate its users from, that “the practices of technology, in other words, are always structured, and their meaningful structure is the dimension of culture.”¹⁹ Therefore, print was a repository for the cultural transformations conditioned by republicanism and evidenced by the creation of the literary genre, the novel. The question that Habermas posed and Warner took up ultimately revolves around how mediums create the conditions for dialogue, whether they create the space for dialogue itself or they condition individuals to see themselves as participants who could imagine themselves entering that space. It continues to shape how scholars think about the public sphere and its utility as a framework for describing media and forums where belonging is negotiated and contested between the state and among citizens.

However, Habermas and Warner raised an important question for me with regards to print: are we taking print’s cultural power for granted? Warner, I believe, correctly identified the ways in which print does not transcend cultures it inhabited. However, the processes he outlined nevertheless began with the already-existing printed text as the starting point for possibility: the relations it mediated, the discursive spheres it fostered, and the counterpublics it invited. Writing about print in this manner unintentionally narrated the self-importance of printed texts’ without delineating its own contingency and alternatives. Sandra Gustafson took up this critique by situating Warner’s work within broader currents in the field of literary studies in the 1980s through the 2000. As she observed, “Warner’s argument in *Letters of the Republic* about the print origins of the public sphere appeals to literary scholars seeking to shore up our cultural

¹⁸ Michael Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 6.

¹⁹ Warner, 10

authority in the age of the electronic ‘global village.’”²⁰ With the ascendance of the internet, Warner’s optimism about print’s ability to produce publics and counterpublics attached “literary reading to civic activity.” For Gustafson, print’s association with the public sphere was the problem, not the starting point, because interpreting published texts as signifying the broader phenomenon of print’s ascendance might not actually have allowed for the counterpublics Warner proposed or the space for dialogue/conversation Habermas recruited print to do: “Did the printed word in general, and literature in particular, have a privileged role in the formation of publics and counter-publics in the history of the U.S.? Does it continue to do so today?” Gustafson asked.²¹ In her own work, Gustafson argued for rhetoric and oratory as important analogues to print in fostering civic and public life.²² As she wrote, “*Eloquence is Power* shares with a handful of critical works the emphasis on speech as a practice and signifier of an emerging national identity while expanding the focus from Euro-America to include the heterogenous and mutually influential traditions of oratory within the colonies and the early republic.”²³ However, what she modeled was a way of reading printed texts as being able to signify different modes of civic participation, reading authors as orators and readers as listeners, whose relations were mediated through varying degrees of intimacy, performativity, aesthetic, and affect, but still all ultimately revolved around print. It was a more inclusive approach to studying the different media print could signify compared to Warner’s narrow analysis of print signifying text-reader relationships. Subsequent scholars have followed Gustafson’s lead by using methods from book history and material culture to examine the wide arrays of cultures one

²⁰ Sandra Gustafson, “American Literature and the Public Sphere,” *American Literary History*, vol 20, no. 3 (Fall 2008), 465-477, 473.

²¹ Gustafson, “American Literature and the Public Sphere,” 475.

²² See Sandra Gustafson, *Eloquence is Power: Oratory and Performance in Early America*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

²³ Gustafson, *Eloquence is Power*, xvii.

could access through the printed form.²⁴ Warner himself grappled with similar questions regarding orality and print in colonial sermons, likely prompted by the many responses to his work.²⁵ Many of these formulations examined the worlds printed texts created through their readers and the ways readers in-turn engaged with the work, creating the dialogic model of liberal democracy that energized Habermas' initial inquiry.

One of the ways scholars continued to build on public sphere research was through Habermas' notion of the counterpublic, both an entryway into treating marginalized writers as political actors and as a form of critique that raised questions around access, representation, and exceptionalism in studies about the public sphere.²⁶ Counterpublics has allowed scholars like Joanna Brooks and Hilary Weis to foreground literary and political significance of writings by marginalized authors like Phyllis Wheatley and Samson Occom against an earlier generation of scholars who have rendered them peripheral or insignificant to broader literary and political trends: "The Habermas-Warner model fails to investigate fully the racialization of the public sphere, especially in relationship to questions of property that were crucial to the capitalization of the emergent middle class (leading) the intellectual and political potential energies of eighteenth-century African American writing [to] have been consistently underestimated."²⁷

While I agree with the sentiment behind Brooks' critique that Warner too readily "dismissed the possibility of early black print culture," I believe his argument about print's feature as having

²⁴ For a sampling of works: Matthew Brown, *Pilgrim and the Bee: Reading Rituals and Book Culture in Early New England*, (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007); Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770-1870*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); Michael Millner, *Fever Reading: Affect and Reading Badly in the Early American Public Sphere*, (University New Hampshire Press, 2012); and Meredith Neuman, *Jeremiah's Scribes: Literary Theories of the Sermon in Puritan New England*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013). The scholar most relevant to my own work and figures covered is Joanna Brooks' "The Early American Public Sphere and the Emergence of the Black Print Counterpublic," *The William Mary and Quarterly*, Jan. 2005 vol 62. No. 1 (Jan 2005), 67-92.

²⁵ Michael Warner, "The Evangelical Public Sphere," A.S.W. Rosenbach Lectures in Bibliography, (Van Pelt Library, University of Pennsylvania, 23-26 March 2009).

²⁶ See the essays in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992).

²⁷ Brooks' "The Early American Public Sphere," 86.

“constituted and distinguished a specifically white community” stands. Brooks, as many others who saw the value of counterpublics as a framework, correctly argued that readers and authors both participated in shaping the meaning of a text for itself and sometimes within discursive communities. However, when such claims are made about printed sources, it contributes to the ways the medium could narrate its own self-importance as “the embodiment of enlightenment, revolution, and political progress.”²⁸ Such treatments of printed texts as evidencing a counterpublic implicitly flattens important distinctions between literacy, writing, and print.²⁹ The notion of a counterpublic was certainly valuable in attending to the ways earlier generations of scholars too readily dismissed the works by marginalized writers, but it leaves uninterrogated how print itself, as a human and cultural process, participated in the phenomenon that rendered authors like Phyllis Wheatley and Samson Occom “exceptions” in Warner’s terms. As Joseph Rezek argued, much of the scholarship that simplify printed media into evidence of reading, literacy, and agency, often fails “to acknowledge the contingent processes through which [print] acquired and sustained specific ideologies through use.”³⁰ It is my contention that colonized peoples’ appropriation of print did not guarantee emancipation from the broader ideologies that underwrote the medium in the eighteenth-century. Even the very notion of a “counterpublic” as a framework, whether it described an alternative discursive space or communities’ actualized posture towards dominant discourse, still continued to center white, Anglo-Protestant discourse

²⁸ Joseph Rezek, “The Racialization of Print,” *American Literary History*, vol 32, no. 3, (August 2020), 417-445, 418.

²⁹ See Brooks. A similar slippage appears in Hilary Wyss, *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity, and Native Community in Early America*, (University of Massachusetts Press, 2000); Hilary Wyss, *English Letters and Indian Literacies: Reading, Writing, and New England Missionary Schools*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); Jennifer Monaghan, *Learning to Read and Write in Colonial America*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005); and Philip Round, *Removable Type: Histories of the Book in Indian Country, 1663-1880*, (University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

³⁰ Rezek, 418.

as constituting “the public” whether or not it appropriately represented the many peoples that the emergent United States would govern.

Bearing these critiques in mind, this project joins a new approach to the study of printed texts among literary scholars, which focuses on the ways print production conditioned the kinds of space or counterpublics such texts invite. Much of the scholarship that has followed from Warner continued to privilege the printed text-reader interaction, even when writing about print’s interactions with other media, because of the ways they do not attend to author-publisher relations that immersed print within the cultural conditions it could not transcend. Addressing the ways in which literary scholarship has upheld an approach that continued to privilege print-centric study of texts, Rachel Scarborough King argued that while such approaches seem to “foreground the interaction of print with other media, they locate manuscript and orality under the rubric of ‘print culture.’” Indeed, much of the scholarship on print echoes the broader sentiments that appear in the Multigraph Collective’s *Interacting with Print*: “Rather we seek to formulate new ways of understanding the centrality of print in our period.”³¹ But if printed texts were at the center of our subjects’ discursive worlds, political possibilities, and imagined communities, then should we make of texts that were never published? What have we foreclosed as possible by focusing primarily on that which was already determined for us to be worth appearing in print form and which text-reader relations could we not realize? If these questions showcase the limits of Warner’s text-reader emphasis, then could print truly bear the weight of Habermas’ public sphere? In addressing these questions, *Unpublishing Religion* joins the works of scholars like King and Rezek in excavating the material dimensions of literary texts to treat “both print and manuscript as continually contingent, in flux, and in conversation with each

³¹ Rachel Scarborough King, editor, *After Print: Eighteenth-Century Manuscript Cultures*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2020), 2.

other.” It is an approach that resists the print-ascendant narratives that have limited the ways scholars think through the public sphere and more broadly considers other eighteenth-century media as potential spaces for the kinds of conversations/dialogues Habermas imagined.³² Part of this process requires flattening the asymmetry between print and manuscript as signifying public and private spheres respectively.

In terms of method, this project 1) provincializes the print medium against its self-narrative claims to breadth by entertaining the notion that material distribution, publisher networks, and local markets limit as much as they expand reach. Part of this approach compares and contrasts texts across different print markets, with particular attention to media differences between London and colonial productions of Hebrew and Spanish. This form of critique showcases the spatial and imagined boundaries of the American public sphere and interrogates the ways its non-English language productions were conscripted into the Anglo-Protestant internationalism undergirding the public sphere, as was the case with authors like Judah Monis and Santiago de Puglia. 2) It also extends the work of public making, which we’ve assumed to be true of print, to circulating manuscripts and scribal copies by highlighting their reach and their ability to situate readers as members of a broader discursive community. Drawing on the works of scholars David Hall and Harold Love, the project flattens differences between print and manuscript in terms of scope and takes seriously alternative and equally viable modes of public making.³³ In the case of black authors like Phyllis Wheatley and heterodox writers like Judith Sargent Murray, manuscript circulation and scribal publication were just as viable of a means for public engagement. This approach opens room for us to consider the political and ideological

³² King, 9. Also see Rezek, “The Racialization of Print.”

³³ See David Hall, *Ways of Writing: The Practice and Politics of Text-Making in Seventeenth-Century New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008) and Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth Century England* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1993).

work of texts outside of the printing press, in a manner and medium that closely resembles the dialogic aims of Habermas' public sphere and complicates some of the subject-formation processes that Warner outlines. 3) *Unpublishing Religion* considers the author-publisher relation as equally important to the reader-text encounter when it comes to contextualizing the meaning a text proffers. The print publication process cannot be simplified to writers simply bringing their manuscript to a willing printer on the promise that it might sell. Authorship required that writers publish within the confines of networks of relations, with printers and booksellers who worked closely with ministers, missionary organizations, and local authorities. Much of what kept print from transcending the material and local relations that made up the publishing process was it was fragile, expensive, and inaccessible. Its survival depended on powerful colleges and institutions to finance its wares, ministers to promote the medium to their congregants, and powerful connections to maintain local shops' connections to the broader public sphere. Hence, it would be difficult to reduce printed texts for merely authorial expression or communication – they were imbricated with intentions, resources, networks, and interests of various intermediaries. Altogether, these considerations allow us to move past the trappings that religious printing is evidence of what was popular and to look critically at the ways its promoters narrate the medium's own importance.

Beyond merely critiquing the self-importance of print, *Unpublishing Religion* offers a different way of reading print in colonial America. Gustafson, I believe, correctly identified how emergent digital media forms and the democratization of the Internet from the 1980s through the 2000s may have encouraged some scholars to read the emergence of print in the eighteenth-century under the same light. Looking back historically from the present moment of the early 2020s, however, invites more nuance towards interactions between different media forms. The

many mediums of communication available in the eighteenth century, from manuscript circulation, scribal publication, oral communication, and even non-English literate forms of public making, resemble the explosion of media options and formation of different discursive communities in the present, in a way that suggests that print may have functioned simply as one platform for speech alongside others. It was no more or less broad in its scope than other media forms nor more important as a cultural signifier of the public than manuscripts or oral culture. However, what lends print its authority were the Anglo-Protestant institutions and networks of power that allowed it to narrate its own self-importance over and above other mediums. Reading print as a medium in this manner allows us to critique the kinds of readers it creates, the relationships it attempts to obscure, and the power it attempts to materialize. Perhaps it was the promise that speech could be legitimized by institutions that authors aspired to be published by the printing press.³⁴ It was also under these terms that some authors found themselves disappointed in the universal promise of print. Their speech's reach was not only quite local, but that it had reached an audience that was ultimately still narrowly Anglo-Protestant.³⁵

Historiography

Unpublishing Religion also tracks a transformation in ministerial authority that bridges the curatorial practices of ministers in the seventeenth century and the explosion in Protestant authority formations by the nineteenth century. Traditional narratives charted a declension narrative of ministers and missionaries' influence on British colonial institutions and the printing press. It was through the public sphere's freedom from clerical power that religion would

³⁴ The role of institutions in shaping author-reader interactions was already explored in Caroline Eastman, *A Nation of Speechifiers*, (Chicago, Ill.: The University of Chicago Press, 2009). However, while her study focuses moreso on how institutions created the conditions for author-reader interactions, I'm proposing a study on how institutions were also an important factor in shaping author-publisher interactions and that it was this connection that print could narrate its own exceptional quality over and against other forms of speech.

³⁵ On the locality of print as a medium, see Loughran, *The Republic in Print*.

flourish alongside the creation of the new nation. To put it in a way that resuscitates the revivalist-tenor behind historians' narrative chronology, it was religion's public irrelevance or absence that reenergizes it to public relevance, social change, and ascent in cultural power. However, *Unpublishing Religion* complicates these narratives by offering a story of transformation and continuation. Ministerial authority survived through the very mechanisms by which the religious public sphere sustained Anglo-Protestant dominance throughout the eighteenth century. This phenomenon helps explain the ease with which print facilitated Protestant sectarianism and formations of new authorities by the early nineteenth century.

An important starting point for trends in American religious history has been the role of Anglo-Protestant genres and texts in the formation of a distinctly American national identity. Perry Miller's *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (1953) accessed this shared communal theological American identity, a "New England Mind" primarily through the printed sermons of New England's most eminent divines and New England's most prominent institutions. Sacvan Bercovitch's in *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (1975) more explicitly calls attention to the literariness of Miller's sources through his exploration of the intersection of literary and biblical rhetoric in New England Puritan thought. Much like Miller, Bercovitch attempts a genealogy of an "American-self" through New England's key literary figures: Cotton Mather, Jonathan Edwards, Benjamin Franklin, Henry David Thoreau, and Herman Melville, all of whom attempted to resolve Puritan theological contradictions they inferred from the foundational Puritan myth.³⁶ Implicit within this narrative was a shift from some imagined religious past towards the formation of a secular, political self, as evidenced by a shift in what earlier intellectual historians have argued to be the canon from ministers' sermons

³⁶ See Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953) and Sacvan Bercovitch, *The Puritan Origins of the American Self*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975), 185.

in the seventeenth century toward political tracts and literary works by the time of the American Revolution.³⁷ Historians like George Marsden, however, challenged these historical trajectories by extending religion's influence on American thought well into the mid-to-late eighteenth-century through a closer study of figures like George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards. Later scholars would attempt similar projects by locating Anglo-Protestant religion's influence throughout the American Revolution and into the Early Republic.³⁸

The most notable work that participated in this project was Nathan Hatch's seminal work, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (1989). In part a response to historian Richard Hofstadter's *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (1963), Hatch took seriously religious publications in the early nineteenth-century which previous generations of historians had deemed mere "stalwarts of enthusiasm and anti-intellectualism" and painted an Early Republic filled to the brim with a vibrant and flourishing religious print culture.³⁹ These movements were defined by the anti-traditionalist and anti-formalist impulses of populist preachers such as Elias Smith, Lorenzo Dow, and Richard Allen whose works, in many ways, neatly paralleled similarly political democratizations in the period.⁴⁰ The printed works of these figures represented for Hatch the "ordinary folk [who] came to distrust leaders of genius and talent and to defend the right of common people to shape their own faith and submit to leaders of their own choosing."⁴¹ Hatch marshalled the term "democratization" to align these Second Great Awakening events and figures with the democratic impulses of a new nation such as those detailed in more politically-

³⁷ For a chart outlining this phenomenon, see Appendix One in *A History of the Book in America: Volume I*, ed. Hugh Amory and David Hall (517-518). The imprints count shows the declining dominance by Cotton Mather (which very much informed Miller's own declension narrative), the ascendant popularity of George Whitefield and its decline, and the later literary dominance of Thomas Paine and Noah Webster by the 1770s-1790s.

³⁸ See Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972).

³⁹ Nathan Hatch, *Democratization of Christianity*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 11.

⁴⁰ Hatch., 5-9, also see footnote 5.

⁴¹ Hatch, 14.

oriented works by historians like Gordon Wood and Sean Wilentz., though subsequently he would prefer the term “popularization.”⁴² This was not lost on critics of Hatch who had read these printed sources with less optimism because of the inherent ministerial-laity dynamics they preserved and the undemocratic tendencies they sustained. Perhaps the most notable critique came from Amanda Porterfield. In *Conceived in Doubt* (2015), Porterfield situated populists’ authority-contestations within the economic and political anxieties of a new nation. In conjunction with these anxieties, the laity’s skepticism towards religious establishments grew in the years leading up to and after the publication of Thomas Paine’s *Age of Reason* (1794). Rather than simply channeling and embodying these liberating forces, however, preachers weaponized people’s doubts so as to establish their own authorities to speak to religious doubts. Thus, Porterfield interpreted the growth of new religious movements in Early Republic print not as evidence of the democratization of American Christianity, but as Protestant leaders’ wrangling of democratizing impulses already manifesting in the populace through their shared doubt over religious and institutional authorities. In terms of their methodology, Hatch did not want historians to “foreclose [a] broad range of questions about popular Christianity” and leave “a vast array of popular [printed] sources gathering dust and has masked the broad cultural ferment over the meaning of freedom.”⁴³ Porterfield, however, showed the importance of highlighting the role of political contexts and institutions to the documents that Hatch had brought to bear. Hatch’s attempts to bracket “the specifics of polity and governance and more with the incarnation of the church into popular [print] culture” gestured towards a kind of technologically deterministic

⁴² See footnotes 5, 6, and 7 of the first chapter in Hatch, 245. Many of his interlocutors for the term “democratization” hearken back to classical works of political history that explore the origins of a democratic ethos, whether it was an idea from elites that filtered onto the masses or whose genesis was always-already exercised by the masses but merely cemented in print and restrained by political elites. Hatch seems to lean towards the latter and positions his religious sources as evidencing that historiographical tradition. Hatch’s use of the term flags for political and economic historians a similar democratizing impulse among religious groups. On “popular” see Hatch 136-139.

⁴³ Ibid., 225.

reading of print that Porterfield's study avoided; namely that the printing press stood outside of the complex matrices of human relations and culture to liberate society.⁴⁴

Between the two histories Hatch and Porterfield's established, there stands a wealth of scholarship that tackled the myriad of relationships Protestant communities built with and around printed texts. Most notably, scholarship on the histories of the material Bible followed after Hatch's work on print in the early republic, with particular attention to the institutions, cultures, and Bible-adjacent genres that the mass circulation of the Bible generated.⁴⁵ Religious historians crafted their own projects with the intent of locating the ways in which cultures around bibles shaped larger political and social currents. These more recent works argued for a reading of scripture that shapes history through historical actors, but with the text itself as a lens that stands outside of it. "Throughout the colonial period the Bible sanctified all manner of public speech" Noll argued, but often, "that sanctification occurred as ministers preached sermons based on a biblical text and filled with biblical quotations, but intending to read the circumstances of their lives with the Scriptures in hand."⁴⁶ Critics of this approach, along the vein of Porterfield, have approached histories of the Bible by interrogating how the medium of print itself undergirded the universe of performances, utterances, and signifying that allow the bibles to function as a culturally-embedded, authorizing text.⁴⁷ Since print did little to actually open a discursive space

⁴⁴ Ibid., 9.

⁴⁵ See Peter Wosh, *Spreading the Word: The Bible Business in Nineteenth-Century America* (Cornell University Press, 1994); Paul Gutjahr, *An American Bible, The History of the Good Book in the United States*, (Stanford University Press, 1999); David Paul Nord, *Faith in Reading: Religious Publishing and the Birth of Mass Media in America*, (Oxford University Press, 2004); and Candy Gunther Brown, *The Word in the World: Evangelical Writing, Publishing, and Reading in America, 1789-1880* (North Carolina Press, 2004).

⁴⁶ Mark Noll, *In the Beginning was the Word* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 4-5. Similar approaches to scholarship on the Bible appear in James Byrd, *Sacred Scripture, Sacred War*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013) and John Fea, *The Bible causes of the American Bible Society*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

⁴⁷ See Seth Perry, *Bible Culture and Authority in the Early United States*, (Princeton University Press, 2018).

for religious democratization and in most cases merely reconfigured authority formations, then were these formations novel to American printing or did they rely on important precedents?

Scholarship covering the eighteenth century readily attributed religion's declining influence on intellectual culture to print's ascendance in the period. These narratives replicated the technological determinism that Warner and many other authors cautioned against. Two works exemplified this trend: Christopher Grasso's *A Speaking Aristocracy: Transforming Public Discourse in Eighteenth Century Connecticut* (1999) and Richard Brown's *Knowledge is Power* (1989). The history Grasso outlined was that of the declining influence of religion due to print-pluralization in a post-Great Awakening world. Meanwhile, Brown identified the proliferation of what he terms "secular oratory" in the years leading up the Revolutionary Era which supplanted religious public discourse in sermon imprints.⁴⁸ What resulted from such histories of decline was the surprise of historians who then had to account for the seeming rupture of Protestant ascendance in American print at the start of the nineteenth-century.⁴⁹ Historians like Jon Butler and Susan Juster, on the heels of both the social and cultural turn in history, turned to the religious practices and experiences of the laity rather than the clergy to seemingly bridge a gap in how religion appeared in public.⁵⁰ Butler attended to the persistence of religion through the "secular revolution" through late eighteenth-century revivals, military

⁴⁸ Richard Brown, *Knowledge is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700-1865*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 12-13.

⁴⁹ Two works by notable historians evidence this sense of surprise about Protestant ascendance, but nevertheless considered the role of religion in their narratives thanks to Hatch: Sean Wilentz, *The Rise of American Democracy: Jefferson to Lincoln*, (W.W. Norton & Company, 2005) and Daniel Walker-Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848*, (Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁵⁰ See Hall, *Days of Wonder*, and Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990). It is worth noting that these scholars operate from different views on what "popular" denotes. For Butler, popular consists of "religious behavior of laypeople" as a way of defining "clientele rather than theology." (Butler, 4) In other words, it is a positioning of his historical focus away from the intellectual histories that have often fixated on elites. For Hall, however, "popular" denotes a methodology to ascertain the cultural authority of lay people (the operative word being authority) as mediated by print culture (Hall, 70). On the gap, also see Jon Butler, "Jack-in-the-Box Faith: The Religion Problem in Modern American History," *Journal of American History*, vol. 90, 4 (March 2004), 1357-1378.

chaplaincy, and the formation of new denominations. However, in moving between institutions, public rhetoric, and demographics, Butler left open how specific mediums themselves may have been complicit in contributing to the gaps he identified in scholarship about religion's presence or absence in public spaces.

Two works that attended to the ways mediums shaped historical narratives about religious decline were Harry Stout's *New England Soul* (1986) and Douglas Winiarski's *Darkness Falls on the Land of Light* (2017). Through the sheer number of manuscripts Winiarski covered, he implicitly argued for a reading of a historical event as "popular" not through the printing press, but through the networks and connections created by manuscripts, correspondences, and letters. It was through the proliferation of conversations, shared ruminations, and experimentation in seemingly private sources that the laity created discursive communities that more resembles Habermas' "public sphere" without falling into the technological determinism that marred earlier studies. For Winiarski, it was the persistence of religious rhetoric through manuscripts that bridged the authority formations from the First Great Awakening to the Second despite gaps in the published record.⁵¹ Stout's *New England Soul* drew more explicit attention to media forms in a way that more directly linked to *Unpublishing Religion*. His aptly titled book, a play on Miller's *The New England Mind*, illustrated how print itself lead historians to interpret sources as evidencing a declension in public religion, but unpublished manuscripts, in the form of ministers' sermon notes and weekday unprinted sermons, revealed the orally delivered religious framings that sacralized revolutionary public rhetoric in the late-eighteenth century. Even though Stout locates religious culture in orality, it

⁵¹ It is worth noting that I don't think Winiarski himself is arguing for the privatization thesis for eighteenth-century religion because the texts he covered were far from private in the cultures created around them.

gestured towards the ways printed texts manifest narratives of religious decline without having to actually signify popularity or demand.

Building on the ways public religion thrived through eighteenth-century orality and manuscripts, and tracking how Protestant authority was transformed in religious printing between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, *Unpublishing Religion* examines how ministerial influence persisted in and through the publication process. Rather than examining Protestant cultures through the texts that were published, however, this project considers how Anglo-Protestant power stifled or inhibited religious publications in this period. This dissertation attributes whatever decline or absence in public rhetoric about religion, not to the shifting demands or tastes of a general populace (as Stout, Butler, and Winiarski have already demonstrated), but through the very Protestant influences on the printing press which constrained any potential for religious pluralism in the public sphere. Part of this story considers the role of publishers, not as neutral arbiters whose main concerns were strictly market-driven, but as themselves religious actors whose ministerial connections determined which texts they can publish and envision for Anglo-Protestant consumption. Therefore, what Hatch observed as the emergence or sudden explosion of religious culture by the nineteenth-century unintentionally understated the century-long print challenges experienced by non-Anglo Protestants in their bid to enter the purportedly open marketplace for religion.

Chapter Overview

Chapter one explores some of the Protestant conditions that usually accompanied non-English publications for Anglo-American publishers through the publication histories of missionaries Experience Mayhew *Indian Converts* (1727) and Andrew Williams' *The Morning and Evening Prayer...Translated into the Mohaque Indian Language* (1715). Both texts

translated Christianity to and from Native languages, but the occasion of their publication for Anglo-Protestant consumption was almost always tied to Protestant anxieties, whether about the declining financial and political support for missionary endeavors or international Protestant sectarianism. These were likely because publishing language encounter was only possible with institutional support of transatlantic Protestant denominations who envisioned the average English reader as wanting to see fruits of their investment. These dynamics foreshadowed some of the earliest difficulties by authors attempting to break into the American public sphere.

Chapter two continues the analysis of publishers and their Protestant networks through the difficulties of printing Hebrew and Spanish through the colonial printing press. It explores how non-English print productions enabled Anglo-Protestant readers to imagine the users of Hebrew and Spanish as always already foreign to the linguistic and religious character of British colonial America. Hebrew was a language of an imagined people group in the past that Anglo-Americans replaced as spiritual heirs to God's promise and Spanish represented the greater Catholic Americas which Anglo-Americans saw as objects of religious and political conversion for the nation's hemispheric ambitions. This chapter takes the phenomenon from chapter one and examines how these dynamics contributed to the ways colonial printing presses lagged behind European Hebrew and Spanish productions, specifically through the publication histories of Jew-converted-Protestant Judah Monis' Hebrew textbook *Dickdook Leshon Gnebreet: A Grammar of the Hebrew Tongue* (1735) and Philadelphian Spanish translator Santiago F. Puglia's *El Desengaño del Hombre* (1794). This was not solely for lack of demand among American colonists since diasporic Jewish communities regularly relied on imports of Hebrew and Spanish texts. Rather, it was the ways Protestant institutions and publishers struggled to imagine

domestic markets as anything but Anglo-Protestant, despite the plurality of religiosities and languages to express them within the territories that will become the United States.

Building on earlier chapters that explore the roles of denominational networks and mechanical constraints, chapter three examines the mediating functions of religious leaders on what could and could not be published. All three instances in this chapter illustrate the overlap between publishers' market considerations, local authorities' alignment of public morality with clerical authority, and religious leaders' shifting attitudes towards the printing press. This thread runs through the material histories of Mohegan minister Samson Occom's manuscript which remained unpublished due to missionary Eleazar Wheelock's own experiences with publishers; the publishing controversy surrounding the writings of deist William Beadle and the Connecticut Assembly's close working connections with local ministers; and the print-reluctant cultures that Jemima Wilkinson's fostered within the Universal Society of Friends. Even without the active ability to censor works, meddling ministers could nevertheless produce the same effect through a variety of means and circumstances so as to stifle manuscripts expecting print publication.

The second half of the dissertation explores the relationship between manuscript and print as different modes of publication. Chapter four explores this in depth through Boston minister Charles Chauncy's circulating heterodox manuscript and its eventual print publication. Chauncy makes for an important case study because of his unique career in New England history. He was an ardent defender of New England orthodoxy in print, even serving as an informal editor to antirevivalists during the events of the Great Awakening. At the same time, he was also subverting that very orthodoxy through more discreet modes of publication: manuscript circulation, scribal publication, and conversations. Over the course of thirty years, he grew a following of like-minded ministers whose openness to his theological innovations staged how his

ideas would be received once they were published through the printing press. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Chauncy had the luxury of freely choosing between different modes of publication – a position that was not afforded to most New England clergy, let alone many aspiring authors. He was experienced in all manners of publication and it was his insight into these nuances that helps to delineate the stakes in preferring one medium over another.

Chapter five continues the study into the relationship between manuscript and print. However, it explores these dynamics beyond the progression that the last chapter implied, which was that manuscript's primary function was to merely precede print as a form of publication. Many non-Anglo Protestant authors relied on circulating manuscripts at all stages of the printing process: before, during, and even after. In some instances, manuscripts helped authors gather an expectant audience for the printed work. As an alternative form of publication, manuscripts also afforded others a much more convenient and flexible way of reaching markets that publishers never imagined targeting, thereby extending their publics beyond the print market. These examples challenge the ways Anglo-Protestants have privileged print as the primary medium of speech for writers to gather a wide audience and it takes seriously the important political work by non-printed writings authored by heterodox and racialized authors. Further building on the last chapter, while Chauncy's manuscript strategies demonstrated how mediums differed in terms of their effects on readers, this chapter proposes that mediums also differed in the kinds of intermediaries they engage, and by extension the community and networks they eventually gather. In a way, the very impersonality of print has less to do with the ways they allow the author to transcend the local, but rather the sense of alienation of the reader from the author, and vice versa, by virtue of the layers of mediations that interrupt the dialogic processes that Habermas had envisioned the public sphere facilitating.

PART 1: PRINT'S ANGLO-PROTESTANT AUDIENCE

Chapter 1

Translating Protestant Difference into Published Christianity

Sometime between 1718 and 1720, missionary to the Wampanoag on Martha's Vineyard Experience Mayhew approached bookseller Samuel Gerrish to publish a sermon he had delivered on November 23, 1718. Eventually titled *A discourse shewing that God dealeth with men as with reasonable creatures* (1720), it reminded readers that humanity had a unique responsibility to God and that they were imbued with reason to govern how they might proceed to follow his commandments: "Right Reason will then Influence and Govern us; and GOD's way of treating us as Reasonable Creatures, will have a good Effect upon us."⁵² The message was neither novel nor controversial to its listeners. Indeed, there has been a long sermon tradition within New England Calvinism where ministers wrestled with the tension between human responsibility and God's providence. Yet for Mayhew, this message was different. In front of an audience consisting of Anglo-Protestant congregants, when he talked about how "God taught Men more than the Beasts of the Earth," promised listeners that if they "are willing and obedient, [they] shall eat the good of the Land," and discussed the problem of drunkenness among "Reasonable Creatures," he was extending his audiences' Christianized notions of humanity to the Wampanoag on Martha's Vineyard whom he would describe as "Exemplary Christians" in the printed text.⁵³ However the implied message registered to the congregation, given continuing conflicts between Native groups and English colonists less than a decade after Queen Anne's War and the decline in market demand for literary tropes like the "Praying Indian" which painted

⁵² Experience Mayhew, *A discourse shewing that God dealeth with men as with reasonable creatures*, (Boston: Printed by B. Green, for Samuel Gerrish, at his Shop, 1720), 34.

⁵³ Mayhew, 2, 27-28. Also see Experience Mayhew, *A Brief Account of the State of the Indians on Martha's Vineyard* (Boston: Printed by B. Green, for Samuel Gerrish, at his Shop, 1720), 6. It accompanied *A discourse shewing* appearing as the last twelve pages of the text.

converted Natives under a more sympathetic light, they nevertheless prompted and supported its publication as a way of commemorating the famous missionary's visit.⁵⁴ Gerrish connected Mayhew with famous printer Bartholomew Green to print the work. Green had been the primary printer for Mayhew's Wôpanâak translations of English religious texts, most notably the *Massachusetts Psalter* (1709) which was described as "An Introduction for Training up the Aboriginal Natives, in Reading and Understanding the HOLY SCRIPTURES."⁵⁵ Eight years after Gerrish published *A discourse shewing*, Mayhew approached the bookseller with another project: a translated compilation of Native American conversion narratives. Unlike his sermon, however, this piece did not commemorate his visit to a local church nor did it seem to have a religious message that hailed Anglo-Protestant readers; both of which were considerations that might convince publishers to take on theological publications. Without these elements which had helped ensure the publication of Mayhew's previous works, Green would not publish Mayhew's conversion narratives and Gerrish would have had to find some other way to print the text.

Mayhew's story brings to light how publishers' and other intermediaries' considerations about the imagined Anglo-Protestant readers shaped much of what they decide to produce and distribute in the eighteenth-century. Forecasts about cost and revenue certainly influenced booksellers' and printers' decisions, but as this chapter will explore, rarely were those decisions reducible to strictly market forces. Pressures came from different parties; from local clergy with whom publishers established years-long working relationships, local authorities with religio-political interests, and theological institutions whose financial capital influenced much of what

⁵⁴ See Laura Leibman, "Introduction" in *Experience Mayhew's Indian Converts: A Cultural Edition*, (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008). She makes a similar case and highlights how *Indian Converts* was exceptional in preserving that trope well past King Philip's War. For more on views around these literary trends and the historical conflicts that shaped their popularity and reception, also see Kristina Bross, *Dry Bones and Indian Sermons: Praying Indians in Colonial America*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004).

⁵⁵ *The Massachusetts Psalter: or, Psalms of David with the Gospel according to John, in columns of Indian and English*, (Boston: Printed by B. Green and J. Printer, for the Honourable Company for the propagation of the Gospel in New-England, 1709).

might be considered publishable or unpublishable. These stakeholders were beholden to an Anglo-Protestant vision of the public sphere which affected how printers operated their trade, imagined readers for their works, and understood the local nature of their market. Scholars of print culture have explored these dynamics in more depth in the seventeenth century when ministers' theological commitments more explicitly intersected with political and economic dimensions of English colonial printing. It was a period when ministers had the political power to actively manage, curate, and censor printers' productions. By starting this story in the early eighteenth-century, this chapter examines how Anglo-Protestant concerns continued to shape the public sphere well into a period when ministerial political authority was supposed to be waning. Through various cultural mechanisms, publishers continued to be subject to the influence of ministers and missionary organizations who arbitrated what they can and cannot publish based on what an imagined Anglo-Protestant reader may expect.

This chapter ties print's Anglo-Protestantism to three phenomena: the printing press' active linguistic commitments to English, religious intermediaries' interventions in the publishing process, and the ways texts encouraging English literacy were products of Protestant denominational differences. By linguistic commitments, this chapter explores British colonial printing's resistance to printing in Wôpanâak and Mohawk despite missionaries consistently underscoring demand for such works from non-Anglo Protestant readers. It was far from accidental that English continued to be the primary language of the colonial printing press (in other words, it was not just because there were only Anglo-Protestants who resided in the colonies). The ways publishers managed the emergent religious public sphere constrained it to function primarily for Protestant rhetoric. Focusing on the activities of numerous intermediaries encourages a way of thinking about the publishing process as grounded in local and material

networks, despite ministers and missionaries' rhetoric about the technology in transcendent terms like the ways it spoke to "the world" or "the public." In other words, asking questions relevant to media analysis allows us to provincialize Protestant publics, printing, and rhetoric as merely one mode of gathering a discursive community: how was this mode of communication financed, which audiences did printed texts anticipate, how did institutions decide how they were to circulate, and who truly spoke through translations? Indeed, there have been many scholars that examined the numerous forms of indigenous literacies beyond the printed text. Scholars like Lisa Brooks have argued for signs and mediums more familiar to Native practices that did not need English forms of publication to communicate and form discursive communities around written texts.⁵⁶ Building on frameworks that recognize the alternative modes of public-making within Native American groups, scholars like Sarah Rivett have examined how these two separate systems not only developed alongside each other, but also influenced and created new modes of interactions between seemingly different discursive spheres.⁵⁷ This chapter joins these efforts to provincialize the Anglo-Protestant public as simply one discursive community that Native writers could choose to either engage or ignore. Hopeful missionaries believed that print could allow them to break into these discursive spaces, only to be frustrated that their medium of choice would only further reveal the shortcomings of their own ideological conceptions of what it means to be literate.

This chapter explores print's participation in the broader process of Christian colonialism by publishing translations. Often, printed translations for Anglo-Protestant consumption has less

⁵⁶ See Lisa Brooks, *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

⁵⁷ See Sarah Rivett, *The Science of the Soul in Colonial New England*, (Omohundro Institute and the University of North Carolina Press, 2012) where she began this project observing how Native American conversions reformulated Calvinist missionary philosophies and practices through Jonathan Edwards' works, and she expands this framework into American Literature writ large. See Sarah Rivett, *Unscripted America: Indigenous Languages and the Origins of a Literary Nation*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

to do with bridging seemingly linguistic and cultural divides for a shared understanding, and more to do with the social process of creating new discursive communities from texts or speech that were originally created for a completely different purpose and audience. At times, published translations render texts accessible, familiar, and subject to critique. Sometimes, they also reinscribe their inaccessibility, foreignness, and altogether incompatibility with the audience they were translated for. Whether such efforts succeed or fail, they create new communities around a text. In the middle of the translation process were various intermediaries tasked with imagining, determining, and hailing new publics for translations. Indeed, the stakes for the medium become more apparent not only when we investigate texts that were published, but also examine the contingencies around print production itself; what might we learn about print from manuscripts that expected to be published and struggled to be published through the printing press? These are the stories that will begin this dissertation.

The first section continues the story set in the opening paragraph when Mayhew tried to publish *Indian Converts* (1729). It would eventually reach publication with the assistance of Thomas Prince, whose addendum to the conversion narratives refocused readers' attention away from Native American spiritual agency and towards the long history of the Mayhew's missionary successes in New England. However, Green's reluctance and Prince's attempts to anticipate incorrect readings not only evidence their attempts to strategize around the shifting market for this genre, but also suggests their shared concerns about the inherent untranslatability of Native American Christianity for Anglo-Protestant consumption. Indeed, Prince and Green correctly assessed that Mayhew too readily embraced Wampanoag speech and spirituality in ways that believed would not land among what they imagined as the broader English literate public which did include the English literate Native Americans across New England. The second section of the

chapter uses the publication history of the Mohawk prayer book (1715) to explore the ways in which published texts for English literacy were produced by interdenominational Protestant politics. When the SPG and Anglican missionaries like William Andrews opted to publish translations of denominational-specific texts like the Book of Common Prayer to encourage English literacy among the Mohawk, the printing press became a tool for asserting the appropriate form of Christianity over and against the Congregationalists in New England and the Quakers in Philadelphia. This becomes even more true when the very process of publication was possible only in and through the very denominations and institutions to finance and facilitate such projects. Whatever freedom publishers like Andrew Bradford may have wanted to assert about their trade, it continued to be constrained and dependent on Protestant networks. Hence, the Protestantism of print was not reducible to mere demographics. Rather, it the ways the publication process itself relied on the strength and coherence of denominational networks who were altogether invested in the civilizing and Christianizing work of missionary translations for Anglo-Protestant consumption.

Translating Wôpanâak

Ministerial connections played a crucial role in facilitating the publication of texts for public consumption. Such was the case with Mayhew and his text *Indian Converts*, which was eventually published in London thanks in large part to fellow minister Thomas Prince and bookseller Samuel Gerrish. Even if texts promised little by way of financial return for both parties, they could nevertheless participate in elevating the Anglo-Protestant character of the public sphere for the imagined Anglo-Protestant reading public. In the case of *Indian Converts*, Prince leveraged Mayhew's earnest attempts to publicize Native American Christianity as something that, at times, escapes even New England ministers' totalizing and universalizing

means of managing their converts. Instead of merely allowing Mayhew to share his findings and redirect attention towards his ministry at Martha's Vineyard to fellow New England ministers, Prince saw an opportunity to perform for London readers the successes of the broader colonial project in New England. The famed historian cared little for whether the capacity and ability Wampanoag of Martha's Vineyard themselves could be captured as part of the region's history he was crafting, yet it was ultimately thanks to him and his connections that Native Americans' experiences with Christianity, which Mayhew recognizes as uncapturable and trackable at times, nevertheless were made translatable and readable for a London audience.

The original intention behind *Indian Converts* began in the 1720s when New England ministers grew anxious about the state of missionary support to Native Americans. Complaining about the state of affairs, the ministers appended their grievance to the attestation to Mayhew's *Indian Converts* (1727): "It is what more particularly calls for our Lamentation, that the Churches of the Reformation have done so little for the Propagation of a Faith, which emancipates Mankind from the worst of Slaveries and Miseries, and has a fair and sure Tendency to make us happy in both Worlds" while at the same time the Jesuits, "the Missionaries of Antichrist are more than can be numbers, and the Bigots are at prodigious Pains to propagate the Romish Idolatries."⁵⁸ One of the key areas where funding had also declined for the propagation of the faith, however, was in the translation and production of texts in transliterations of Native American languages. Some ministers were nostalgic for the previous decades when the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England (NEC) fully supported efforts like Eliot's

⁵⁸ "An Attestation by the United Ministers of Boston" in Experience Mayhew's *Indian Converts, or Some account of the lives and dying speeches of a considerable number of the Christianized Indians of Martha's Vineyard, in New England*, (London: Printed for Samuel Gerrish, Bookseller in Boston in New-England; and sold by J. Osborn and T. Longman in Pater-noster Row, (1727). Subsequent page numbers will refer to Liebman's cultural edition.

Indian Library which “exhibited a Collection of Examples, wherein the glorious Grace of [their] great REDEEMER has appeared to, and the Indians of New-England.” While they have historically relied on print to publish successes and solicit funds from different congregations, skepticism nevertheless prevailed around the value of acculturating Native communities through conversion.

To revitalize excitement around the project, ministers looked to Mayhew’s efforts with the Wampanoag on Martha’s Vineyard and likely with the weight of the entire New England missionary enterprise on his work, he began collecting accounts of Native conversions at Martha’s Vineyard to be published for the local board for NEC.⁵⁹ Mayhew himself was the fourth generation of Mayhews to occupy Martha’s Vineyard and was part of a second wave of attempts by New England missionaries to revitalize public interest in their projects.⁶⁰ The Mayhew family’s enterprise began when Thomas Mayhew secured property on the island in 1641 and his son, Thomas Mayhew Jr., began Christianizing the Wampanoag. By 1652, they boasted 283 converts, a school for Wampanoag children, and successfully implemented meetings among Natives after Sabbath. In addition, among the many missionaries sponsored by the NEC, Mayhew was one of the most print published scholars in the colonies, though most of his works had been mere translations of Cotton Mather’s sermons for print and circulation among the

⁵⁹ It’s likely that Mayhew began collecting accounts around 1722. In an entry for Jacob Sockakonit, Mayhew remarked that he had mistimed his recording and thus had missed his death. See Mayhew, 119. Also see footnote 37 for Monaghan, “*She Loved to Read in Good Books*”: *Literacy and the Indians of Martha’s Vineyard, 1643-1725* (History of Education Quarterly Vol. 30, No. 4, Special Issue on the History of Literacy (Winter 1990), 492-521, 502).

⁶⁰ Also worth noting that he was part of a second wave of missionary efforts to Native Americans. See Linford Fisher, *Indian Great Awakening: Religion and the Shaping of Native Cultures in Early America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 9. This second wave also parallels a shift in missionary emphasis in New England from the sympathetic trope of the “praying Indian,” in the wake of Metacom’s War to “Indian converts” which Mayhew aptly captured in his title. For more on the Indian tropes deployed by missionaries to garner support overseas, see Leibman, Bross, and also Laura Stevens, *The Poor Indians: British Missionaries, Native Americans, and Colonial Sensibility*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

inhabitants of Martha's Vineyard.⁶¹ By the 1720s, the Christian Wampanoag population on the island had decreased from 1500 when his grandfather first settled on the island to about 800. Observing that the Christian population among the Wampanoag on Martha's Vineyard had been declining due to both illness and interest in missionizing efforts, Mayhew joined the lamentations of the New England ministers and turned to print in 1727, publishing *Indian Converts* to revive interest in Native conversions.

Much like other missionaries before him, Mayhew was optimistic about the power of the printed word to resolve some of the missionaries' concerns with the Wampanoag. In a letter published in Cotton Mather's *India Christiana* (1721), Mayhew complained that agricultural responsibilities distracted children from their English education, alcohol continued to plague the community, and theological education slowed owing to the "little Learning" of the preachers leading the congregations on the island. The root of the issue, however, was the absence of printed Indian Bibles available to Natives. Given that they better understood their Nope dialect over English, he observed their "want of *Indian BIBLES*, having now but very few among there. Nor are there any to be had; the last Edition now gone. These *Indians* are therefore very desirous of another Impression of the BIBLE, if it might be obtained."⁶² However, skeptical Englishmen continued to doubt the "sincere Religion or Godliness" of Wampanoag on Martha's Vineyard who might otherwise stand to benefit materially, culturally, and diplomatically from further financial investments.⁶³ Some even argued that missionizing was an impossible task owed to their perception of the insurmountable civilization gap between Britain and "the Indians, whom

⁶¹ Charles W. Akers, *Called into Liberty: A Life of Jonathan Mayhew, 1720-1766*, (Harvard University Press, 1964, 7-10. For more on the beginnings of the Mayhew presence in Martha's Vineyard, also see Lloyd Custer Mathew Hare, *Thomas Mayhew: Patriarch to the Indians, 1593-1682*, (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1932), chapters 3-5; and Neal Salisbury, "Prospero in New England: The Puritan Missionary as Colonist," in *Papers of the Sixth Algonquian Conference* (Ottawa, Canada, 1975), 253-273.

⁶² Cotton Mather, "Appendix," *India Christiana. A discourse, delivered unto the Commissioners, for the Propagation of the Gospel among the American Indians*, (Boston: Printed by B. Green, 1721).

⁶³ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, xxi.

God hath not done so much for.” Thus, Mayhew resolved to publish accounts of Wampanoag Christian faith through sermons, oral histories, and dying speeches demonstrating their capacity to learning and internalizing scripture despite their lack of books and other educational resources enjoyed by colonists.⁶⁴ While the content of the text was different, the project was similar to previous print publication projects: they were a means of demonstrating the success of missionary work with the hopes of receiving further financial support.

While the goals for the project were clear, Mayhew’s strategy to foreground the spiritual capacity of Native Christians on Martha’s Vineyard may have done more to alienate rather than gather support for its publication. Across the four chapters covering the conversions of twenty-two ministers, elders, and deacons “that have been esteemed Religious” and “appeared to be truly pious,” Mayhew translated, scripted, and narrated their accounts.⁶⁵ At many points throughout, however, Mayhew also notes occurrences which he could not capture for this project, whether because of his own or his audience’s linguistic limitations. These instances delineate for readers where Mayhew’s voice appears and where Native Christianity escapes the narrator. In one account, for example, he detailed a supernatural deathbed experience of a Native Christian Kesohtaut. He presents the story not as “Proof of [Kesohtaut’s] sincerity, but proposed to the Learned for their Thoughts on it.” At Kesohtaut’s death, her sister was so distressed that she heard a voice repeating multiple times “*Wunnantinnea Kanaanut*” which Mayhew translated to mean “Indian, There is Favour now extended in Canaan.” However, even with his best efforts, he noted how English simply cannot capture its emphatic tone. Doing so has an important effect of preserving the cultural differences with which missionaries and ministers believed that literacy, translation, and print publication could bridge. Through these utterances

⁶⁴ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, xxii.

⁶⁵ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, xxii.

privity strictly to Kesoehaut's sister and fellow Native Christians, a "Ministry of Angels" had ensured Kesoehaut's sister's salvation in a language that would escape the most literate of the English public. Indeed, such a speech was never intended to be published or read for Anglo-Protestant consumption, yet including its inaccessibility to the reader, at least for Mayhew, substantiates the ways Native Christians have adopted facets of the religion under their own terms. Closing the account, Mayhew recounts how the sister spoke to Kesoehaut, as translated by Mayhew: "Now, Sister, you are going into everlasting Happiness."⁶⁶ Mayhew's attempts to narrate his own limits as narrator was itself an attempt to surface Native agency and independence from Anglo-Protestant governance. However, it was a rhetorical strategy that ran contrary to the broader genre of conversion narratives where the lines between minister and convert were often blurred so as to allow the former to preach through the former. As Catherine Brekus observed that in publications that seemed to gesture towards women authorship in the eighteenth-century, ministers who facilitated their printing "seemed less interested in affirming women's religious authority than in shoring up their own."⁶⁷ Certainly, Mayhew's peers expected similarly from his projects, yet his accounts resisted this impulse.

In addition to their capacity to exercise and speak theologically, Mayhew also signals to readers the communal independence of Native Christians from Anglo-Protestant publics to practice their religion. He accomplishes this through the ways he identifies discursive communities outside of his immediate audience for *Indian Converts* and his dependence on their orally-circulating conversion accounts for some parts of his report. This was the case with Native convert Jerusha Ompan. Noting how little he actually knew about her, he credits much of what he can ascertain to a third-party: "I am informed by a Person very worthy off Credit, that

⁶⁶ For the full account, see Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 144-148.

⁶⁷ Catherine Brekus, "Writing Religious Experience: Women's Authorship in Early America", *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 92, No. 4 (October 2012), 482-497, 483.

[Ompan] was deeply concerned how she might approve her self to God under a sore Trial wherewith she was for some time exercised.” Narrating his own limitations, he confesses: “What her Trial in particular was, I think not convenient to relate, only will say it was what was no Fault in her.” Mayhew’s self-effacing probably did little to assuage fellow ministers and missionaries doubts about Ompan’s conversion. However, the missionary continued ask his readers to take seriously the community comprised of “both *English* and *Indians*” who could attest to Ompan’s “great Integrity, she to her Word, just and honest in her Dealings, and of a most obliging Carriage and Temper.” This move demarcates an already existing public outside of the English public sphere against which his English critics must position their doubts. This discursive community, whom he describes as “others worthy of Credit” also attested to the ways Ompan actively sought God and “exhorted her relations and Visitors to be diligent Seekers of God, and to depart from all Iniquity.” One of these sayings was a prayer which Mayhew translated to English for his Anglo-Protestant readers:

I Beseech thee, O my God, to pardon all my Sins before I die; for I now know that I shall not recover, and live any longer in this World; nor are my Desires after any of the things here below; but I do most earnestly crave thy pardoning Mercy, thro’ the Death of thy Son Jesus Christ. For verily thou Death, I Christ, is sufficient for the Salvation of my Soul from Death, when the time of my Death cometh. And when I die I beseech thee, O my Redeemer, to receive my Soul, and raise it up to thy heavenly Rest. Thus have Mercy on me, O my God; and then I know when my time ends in this world I shall be exceedingly happy in thine House for ever.”⁶⁸

One could certainly argue that Mayhew’s translation made Ompan’s prayer accessible to his English-speaking audience. Yet, the many mediations between Ompan and the English readers, something Mayhew and his readers recognized all too readily, challenges the individualistic means of translation itself. Instead, whatever authenticity an Anglo-Protestant audience might glean from this performance Mayhew likely desires to be a confirmation about the authority of

⁶⁸ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 178.

the community of Native Christians to speak about their own religiosity. It was within this framework that Mayhew ends Ompan's account, equally dependent on the testimony of other Native Christians: "Several persons that were with her in the two or three last Days of her Life, do, with one Consent, assure me, that she enjoyed much consolation in her Soul, and declared her Willingness to leave her *earthly House of this Tabernacle*, and go to that *not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens*."⁶⁹ Whether Mayhew's efforts registered for his readers or not, he nevertheless sought to foreground Martha's Vineyard Christian communities in his accounts.

Despite Mayhew's efforts, however, the public sphere has had very little room for attempts to foreground the Native voices and authority to speak to Anglo-Protestants. New England ministers had long been reluctant to support printing Native speech to an Anglo-Protestant public, which makes for a stark comparison to ministers and missionary support for English performances of linguistic mastery of Native American dialects. This history extends back into the seventeenth century when famous missionary John Eliot viewed his transliterations of English texts into Wôpanâak with high regard but approached his printing of Native voices in English with little fanfare. Eliot's *The Dying Speeches of Several Indians* (1653) exemplified the publishing world's broader sentiments towards Native agency. After being inspired by a deathbed Native profession of faith, then-Boston magistrate Daniel Gookin approached Eliot to translate and publish an account. Eliot may not have been able to refuse, since he later confessed that he had these accounts printed "not so much for publishment, as to have charge of writing out copyes for those that did desire them."⁷⁰ By "publishment," he was drawing a comparison between the celebration around his Wôpanâak transliterations of Protestants texts and English accounts translating Wôpanâak conversions, further suggesting his desire to distance himself

⁶⁹ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 175-179.

⁷⁰ John Eliot, *The Dying Speeches of several Indians*, (Cambridge, MA: Printed by Samuel Green, 1685).

from Gookin's initiative. Eliot's reluctance bears out in the title page of his work. While almost all of Eliot's projects readily credited the famed missionary in bold letters, he strangely omitted his own involvement with the project. An extant copy with the New York Public Library only contained twelve pages of accounts with incomplete information about the printer, translator, and place of publication, features uncommon to Eliot's other publications. Another text, Eliot's *Brief Narrative of the Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England* (1670), read almost like a magistrate's account of missionary and congregational jurisdiction. Part of Eliot's own reluctance could be owed to the events of Metacom's War when there was an increased reluctance to depict Native Americans as anything but savage.⁷¹ In many ways, publishing Native voices risked inviting scrutiny from benefactors who found such works to be too sympathetic to their enemies, especially as continuing conflicts such as King William's War (1690-1697) and Queen Anne's War (1702-1714) continued to pit the English against the French, the Spanish, and their Native allies.

Both Mayhew's initiatives to foreground Native agency by provincializing English publics and the literary politics around Native conversions that read too sympathetic to opponents of English colonization likely made for reluctant publishers for *Indian Converts*. It was unlikely that Mayhew could have approached Green directly and more likely that he worked through bookseller Samuel Gerrish. Green had gained the reputation of being "the most distinguished printer in this country, and did more business than any other of the profession; yet he worked chiefly for the booksellers."⁷² Furthermore, Green's connections with esteemed

⁷¹ See Bross and David Silverman, "Review of Dry Bones and Indian Sermons: Praying Indians in Colonial America," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 110, No. 4 (October 2005), p. 1161 Bross and Stevens highlight literary shifts in genre that were ended by Metacom's War that while convincing, does not account for the function of print itself as a distinct medium that was evidenced a sustained relationship between the NEC (and eventually SPG and SPCKK), printers, magistrates, and ministers.

⁷² Isaiah Thomas, *The History of Printing in America: With a Biography of Printers Vol I*, 2nd ed. (Burt Franklin, New York: 1874), 86-87.

ministers and important political figures had colored him with the reputation of avoiding “publishing any thing offensive, light or hurtful.”⁷³ Indeed, the texts he printed for Mayhew and Gerrish supported this view. Sermons that were already supported by a congregation like Mayhew’s *A discourse shewing that God dealeth with men as with reasonable creatures* (1718) or backed by esteemed ministers like Thomas Foxcroft who famously presided over the First Church in Boston like Mayhew’s *All mankind, by nature, equally under sin* (1725) aligned with the printer’s risk-averse strategies. Green also assisted with Wôpanâak translations of works by famous preachers like Cotton Mather’s *India Christiana* (1721) with sufficient support from organizations like the Commissioners for the Propagation of the Gospel among the American Indians. However, for an individual project with little support like *Indian Converts*, it may have worried the esteemed printer. Indeed, not only was a standalone work by someone like Mayhew, whose main print appearances were almost always attached to other famous ministers, a risky investment, but the project may not have registered as directly addressing Anglo-Protestant readers whom Green had serviced. Given the different factors surrounding Green’s brand among his clientele and among regular consumers of his productions, one cannot simply conclude that *Indian Converts* failed to publish for strictly market considerations grounds: his reasons were religious, political, literary, and economic all at the same time.

Without Green’s name to the project as a way of legitimizing it to Anglo-Protestant readers and institutions, Gerrish pursued a different course of action: gain a readership for it through London instead. This project might compromise some of Mayhew’s more local aspirations for the project, namely, to bring congregants’ attention to the spiritual growth and plight of Martha’s Vineyard Wampanoag Christians. Without such changes, however, the project may never reach the printing press. Gerrish likely circulated the manuscript to authors he’s

⁷³ Thomas, *The History of Printing in America*, 91.

worked with and fortunately, one of his contacts saw some merit to the project: historian and minister Thomas Prince. Indeed, Gerrish had been assisting Prince with his own publications, from *A Sermon delivered by Thomas Prince* (1718) and *Civil rulers raised up by God to feed his people* (1728), and the bookseller himself would assist with the historian's magnum opus: *A Chronological History of New England in the Form of Annals* (1736). Prince agreed after assessing the historical significance of Mayhew's account of Natives to his larger body of work on the history of New England. *Indian Converts* even became an advertisement for Prince's own ambitions: "If I had Leaisure enough, and could think it a great thing to the Public, I should be inclined to draw up a complete and regular *History of the New-England Indians*, as far as has come to our Knowledge, from the Beginning."⁷⁴ With their converging interests in ensuring the publication of *Indian Converts*, this partnership promised future successes of reaching the Anglo-Protestant public even without the name of the famous publishers like Green's.

Prince's amendment to *Indian Converts* reconfigured Mayhew's project from highlighting Native agency and independence from anglophile publics to underscoring the tireless, generations-old efforts of the Mayhew family to illustrate the value of New England to British missionizing efforts. Prince bemoaned Mayhew's "commendable Modesty" for highlighting Wampanoag voices without attributing their conversion directly to his family's missionizing efforts on Martha's Vineyard. Instead, he provides an alternative "Account of those more principal English Instruments, which Heaven has been pleased to qualify, and inspire with Zeal for this difficult employment, and then to crown and honour with such Successes." This history celebrates the generations of Mayhews "who have chiefly laboured in this Evangelick

⁷⁴ Thomas Prince, "SOME ACCOUNT OF THOSE ENGLISH MINISTERS Who have successively presided over the Work of Gospelizing the Indians on the Vineyard, and adjacent Islands: By whose special Care and Labour it was first begun, and has been carried on and continued down to this day," in *Experience Mayhew's Indian Converts*, 355-382, 381.

Service, and by whose Care and Pains” led to the conversion of the Wampanoag on Martha’s Vineyard.⁷⁵ He portrays the Mayhews as God’s “English Instruments” for the conversion of the Wampanoag and the publication itself as an occasion to celebrate and strengthen Protestant skill and authority over their converts. Laura Liebman goes as far as to say that against Mayhew’s depictions of Wampanoag religiosity as something achieved “through God’s help and their own spiritual strivings,” Prince was invested in placing “the agency of Wampanoag conversion squarely in the hands of the Mayhews.”⁷⁶

Prince’s addendum titled “Containing an Account of several Indian MINISTERS, both Pastors, Ruling Elders, and Deacons who have been justly esteem’d godly persons” not only reflected his expectations of what London readers’ may want to read about Native conversions, but also reframed Native spirituality and independence as ultimately situated within and dependent on Anglo-Protestant literacy and publics. Prince accomplished this by providing a history of missionary endeavors to Native American Christianities in a way that suggested to readers that whatever falls outside of missionary oversight itself might not constitute the genre of history itself.⁷⁷ Whereas Kesoehaut’s sister’s vision, her eventual conversion, and its untranslatability originally evidenced Wampanoag’s spiritual agency, Prince instead reminded readers that for Mayhew “The *Indian Language* has been from his Infancy natural to him, and he has been all along accounted one of the greatest Masters of it that has been known among us,” therefore shifting readers attention towards missionaries’ skill and ability to make what could not be linguistically understood legible for other English readers. Indeed, any of Mayhew’s attempts at self-effacing had less to do with his, English’s, or print’s shortcomings and more to do with

⁷⁵ Prince, 355, 379-380.

⁷⁶ Liebman, *Experience Mayhew’s Indian Converts*, 23.

⁷⁷ See Kathryn Gin Lum, “Historyless Heathen and the Stagnating Pagan: History as Non-Native Category,” *Religion and American Culture*, Vol 28, Issue 1 (June 2018), 52-91.

Mayhew's continued performances of modesty.⁷⁸ Prince's history of the Mayhews' preaching and lectures similarly argued for the centrality of English speech to the longer tradition of Wampanoags having "embraced the Motion of forsaking their false Gods, and adoring the true one." Put another way, it was because of Mayhews' persevering desire to "express [their] great Concern and Pity for their *immortal Souls*" that Native Christians could realize true and saving faith.⁷⁹ Hence, the seemingly distinct discursive communities that formed around Jerusha Ompan's religious experiences were nevertheless still managed by Mayhew's "prudential Care and Oversight of five or six *Indian Assemblies*; to whose Service he has been wholly devoted, and to one or other of which he has constantly preached for above these *thirty two years*."⁸⁰ To London readers, there was still only one universalized religious public sphere whose terms for entry was still Anglo-Protestantism and that Native Christians were only fortunate to have a presence in this space thanks to the mediating work of missionaries like the Mayhews.

Indian Converts' publication in London evidenced both persistent constraints on British colonial printing and colonial authors' continued dependence on transatlantic connections to enter the public sphere. Given Mayhew's track record of working with Green to produce texts for the Wampanoag on Martha's Vineyard, he would have looked inexperienced authoring texts for a broader Anglo-Protestant public. Many ministers signed an attestation that claimed, "Several Things written by [Mayhew] have by the Press been heretofore conveyed into the World, and found a favourable Reception," yet their optimism would have done little to convince a close-knit network of Boston publishers in a still burgeoning print market who associated Mayhew with the occasional translation of Mather's work into Wôpanâak or the occasional commemorative sermons which themselves were much more local in their reach. After Green

⁷⁸ Prince, 379.

⁷⁹ Prince, 357.

⁸⁰ Prince, 379.

had likely turned down Gerrish's offer to partner for Mayhew's project, London would have been an appealing alternative. Generations of Mayhews had been publishing letters and reports about their work with the Wampanoag through London publishers instead of colonial ones, though for good reason: missionary organizations like the NEC supported both the project and the subsequent publications afterward. On the contrary, *Indian Converts* was dedicated to the "Honourable Company for the Propagation of the Gospel in New-England, and Parts adjacent in America" for funding the project, though it's clear from the title that the primary intermediaries who arranged for its publication was Mayhew through the Boston bookseller. Hence, London promised some sort of readership that may have already been familiar with the Mayhew name, even if the text was not directly sponsored by the NEC or the SPG. Prince himself attempted to leverage this point this when he reminded readers in his addendum, that instead of re-narrating the fuller and longer histories about the Mayhew that he preferred to "refer the Reader for *those matters* to the four *Letters* of Mr. *Thomas Mayhew* junior above-said, printed so many several times in London... *Matthew Mayhew* Esq; and published in both *New-England* and *Old*."⁸¹ Yet even if it was appealing, it was a much more cumbersome process, likely taking months for manuscripts to travel across the Atlantic and little opportunity for Mayhew to proofread and oversee its publication compared to the accessibility of publications when they're produced by colonial printers (as the next section will illustrate). Nevertheless, a much larger and more accessible print market in London ensured that *Indian Converts* would reach the printing press.

The cold reception to *Indian Converts* in the colonies only proved Green's gamble and the inability of Native agency to generate excitement among New England readers. Anticipating *Indian Converts*' arrival from London, Green nevertheless ran advertisements for it throughout October 1727 in *The Weekly News-Letter*. Perhaps he changed his mind about the project after

⁸¹ Prince, 381.

turning down the offer from Gerrish or Mayhew, or maybe he wanted to appease those who attested to Mayhew's work and advertising *Indian Converts* might allow him to play a part in seeing through Boston clergymen's prediction that it would find a "*favourable Reception*" in the colonies. However, advertisements only ran for one month, evidencing that there may not have actually been much demand for such a work. Printer Samuel Kneeland similarly advertised the work on the October 16, 1727 edition of *New England Weekly Journal*, but no more after that.⁸² Similarly, there were no reprints of the work at the time. As Liebman suggests, "*Indian Converts* was not a best seller in his own day. Few of his contemporaries refer to it; it was not used as a model for documenting other Native communities... and it was not reprinted until the Second Great Awakening (1820s-1840), when its four chapters were published individually in 1829 and 1830," suggesting a generally cold reception.⁸³ In a way, Green may have been correct with his initial assessment: the Anglo-Protestant New England public was simply not interested in purchasing a text about the conversions of the Wampanoag on Martha's Vineyard. Even with tremendous support from the clergy who sufficiently allowed it to reach publication, it was not enough to ensure that *Indian Converts* would gain a broad readership, at least in New England.

Even with *Indian Converts*' inability to gather a wide readership and its conflicting messages around Native agency and how it should register to the broader anglophile market, it nevertheless reached the printing press. Connections like Gerrish and Prince translated Mayhew's attempt to provincialize the English public sphere into a story about what English literacy and the Protestant rhetoric was able to produce among Native Christians. On this front, it was a success and ensured that even through less direct means, *Indian Converts* could represent

⁸² *The Weekly News-Letter*, No. 41 (October 5-12, 1727), Printed and sold by Green, Boston, 1727 and *New England Weekly Journal*, No. 30, Monday October 16, 1727, Printed and Sold by S. Kneeland & T. Green, Boston 1727.

⁸³ Liebman, 25-26.

the efforts of the Mayhews on Martha's Vineyard to the London market. Perhaps Mayhew recognized that this was a crucial part of the process of making Native voices consumable for English audiences and it was necessary to help secure more support for his missionary endeavors. Whether he received support or not, one could certainly interpret *Indian Converts*' failure to gather excitement among English readers as reifying what English literacy could not understand, translate, and make popular, despite publishers and intermediaries' best efforts to ensure the printing press could live up to the universalizing expectations of New England clergymen and missionaries.

Publishing Mohawk

For Mayhew's *Indian Converts*, print publication refashioned speech intended for non-English discursive communities for Anglo-Protestants' universalizing ambitions. In colonial New York, print publication wrapped English literacy efforts within broader concerns by Anglican intermediaries invested in asserting the superiority of their Protestantism over the Congregationalists in New England and the Quakers in Philadelphia. The Mohawk's English literacy itself may not have been the intended desired goal. Nevertheless, the medium of print and the politics of translation became a battleground for competing colonial Protestant factions to assert Anglicanism, Congregationalism, or Quakerism as representing a universalized Christianity that could speak to and for "the world." In this manner, the distinctly Protestant purposes for the printing press did little to actually facilitate conversion or acculturation among the Mohawk. Even into the eighteenth-century, the platform continued to be too enmeshed in Euro-Protestant religious conflict to be useful for Native American speech and use.

The mission to the Mohawks began with Protestant factionalism. Looking down on the American colonial efforts to propagate religion among fellow colonists, London preachers

lamented in their sermons “the many Thousands there in our Plantations” who have become “almost as rude and ignorant as to Religion, as the Very Heathens [Indians] themselves.”⁸⁴ Spurned by what they perceived as Anglicanism’s declining state in the colonies, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG), a separate London-based missionary organization from the NEC, sought to correct the situation. Targeting the Mohawks near Albany, New York, the SPG commissioned missionary William Andrews. He arrived at the outpost with very little knowledge of the language itself and required the assistance of a much larger team of translators. The first was Dutch translator Laurens Claesse Van Der Volgen who learned Mohawk after he was taken during a raid as a child and learned the language in captivity. However, since Van Der Volgen only knew how to translate between Mohawk and Dutch, local magistrates also assigned a John Oliver to translate between Dutch and English for Andrews.⁸⁵ Altogether, this group of missionaries and translators would hope to bring Anglicanism to the Mohawk to try and revitalize religion among both Natives and colonial Protestants.

However, Andrews and the SPG held significant differences when it comes to the importance of English literacy itself to converting Mohawks into Anglicanism. Much like his contemporaries, Andrews believed in the universalizing promise of print technology to facilitate conversion. He lobbied the SPG for books, arguing that the Mohawk “would learn much better if we had printed Books for them” and with texts, the children’s parents might even “be induced to let them learn English and indeed some might be very serviceable for Translating or Interpreting since they are so scarce in the Countrey.”⁸⁶ However, the SPG expressed some reluctance with

⁸⁴ Monaghan, 144.

⁸⁵ Claesse became fluent in Mohawk after he had lived among them for ten years after he was kidnapped as a child. While his language skills allowed him to become the official interpreter for the local magistrates, he himself was not fluent in English. For more on Claesse, see John Wolfe Lydekker, *The Faithful Mohawks*, (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 34, footnote 2.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 36

Andrews' request because the missionary requested texts in the Mohawk language. Andrews believed that the most effective way to encourage assimilation was that Mohawk children be first taught English customs and Anglicanism in their own Native language before being expected to exercise English literacy. Furthermore, Andrews realized that as a tool, English literacy may erode Mohawk dependency on the mediating work of missionaries. In his letters to the SPG, he couched this concern behind the caution that English literacy might enable Mohawk children to speak with merchants "so to learn their Vices" and the soldiers nearby who "are given too much to Swearing & prophane Discourse, which are enough to corrupt these Indians."⁸⁷ In a way, neither the SPG nor Andrews saw English literacy as necessarily expanding the agency of Mohawk converts. Rather, they worried about opening up the range of discursive communities that Native Americans could begin to develop for themselves. Indeed, at a time when political alliances between European and Native American powers were tenuous and always in flux, questions around "vices" and "Swearing" carried with them immense stakes for the broader project of colonialism itself. It mattered to the SPG that it was British Anglicans and not the Dutch, French, or other European powers who were securing the acculturation of the Mohawk.

The centrality of Anglicanism, rather than a general Anglo-Protestantism, appeared most readily in the texts that the SPG allowed Andrews to translate and publish in Mohawk: a translation of the Book of Common Prayer and portions of its catechisms.⁸⁸ Instead of first printing texts like the hornbook which would have more readily aided with English acculturation of the Mohawk, the commissioners charged Andrews to print instead the Book of Common Prayer and catechisms, texts that would more readily register to other colonists as Anglican. Historically, the 1549 Book of Common Prayer was a product of the English Reformation when

⁸⁷ Andrew Williams to the SPG, March 9, 1712, (37). Also see Sept 7, 1713 letter.

⁸⁸ William Andrews to Sec, July 12, 1715, SPG Papers, ser. A, 10-185-86 (RH) and "Invoyce of Goods sent to Mr Andrews."

the Church of England separated from the Roman Catholic Church. Subsequent editions would continue to carry the sense that it was a distinctly English form of religio-political self-determination at a time when other European powers negotiated different ways of relating to their Catholic past and the political independence offered by the Protestant Reformation. Hence, what would be produced in print very much reflected these investments in drawing clear distinctions within a broader Anglo-Protestant identity while also portraying oneself as the one and true form of Christianity to potential converts. So even though in New England, Eliot's project to translate a bible into Wôpanâak might seem to be a strictly Anglo-Protestant move, his reliance on the Genevan edition which contained Calvinist annotations reflected the very Puritan project behind its publication. Along the same vein, Anglicans used print as a battleground for ultimately European conflicts to assert the centrality of texts like the Book of Common prayer to true Christianity.

Image redacted due to copyright concerns.

*Figure 1.1: The Morning and Evening Prayer (1715)
in Mohawk from Evans Digital Collection*

As a translation project, however, the Mohawk Prayer book was a strange combination of texts and skills for its production. It draws its translation from the 1662 edition of the Book of Common Prayer which was likely the still approved edition by the SPG for missionary use. It contains a variety of texts: prayers to be recited in both the morning and the evening throughout the calendar year; the church catechism which consists of the Apostle's Creed, a recitation of the Ten Commandments from Exodus, the Our Father, and various question and answer responses regarding the sacraments; and some translations of passages from scripture. However, it was unlikely that the manuscript was original to Andrews himself. By the time Andrews arrived, Claesse and Dutch Reformed minister Dominie Bernardus Freeman had already transcribed Mohawk into the Roman alphabet and translated into Mohawk the liturgy of the Church of England, the Gospel of Matthew, and several other chapters of the Bible.⁸⁹ So despite the SPG's initial reluctance to publish the texts, it may have helped Andrews' case to show that most of the translating labor had already been done. After reviewing the translations, the missionary organization approved with printing the Mohawk Book of Common Prayer in New York.

Much in the same way that the primary texts that will be available to the Mohawk will evidence Anglicanism, so too did the publication process rely on a network of pro-Anglican publishers and magistrates. The SPG likely connected Andrew with printer William Bradford in the summer of 1715. By that time, the printer had already garnered the reputation of being one of the most controversial printers in the British colonies. After being trained by English Quaker printer Andrew Sowle, Bradford was commissioned to print for the Philadelphia Quakers in

⁸⁹ Also worth noting that Freeman's texts were familiar to Boston ministers as well. See Cotton Mather, *Another Tongue Brought in, to Confess the Great Saviour of the World. Or, Some communications of Christianity, put into a tongue used among the Iroquois Indians, in America*, (Boston: Printed by B. Green, 1707). It borrowed extensively from Freeman's translations of the Book of Ezekiel in Mohawk. See "Books and Tracts in the Indian language," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, footnote on pg. 59-60. It suggests that Reverend Thorowgood Moor who after various encounters with the Mohawk and clergy in NJ, traveled back to Boston and likely having obtained some copies of Freeman's work. Also see Monaghan, 169-173. Also see Freeman, "Letters from Mr. Freeman to the Secretary, 10 October 1712," SPG Papers, Rhodes House, Oxford. A.7:203-204.

1682.⁹⁰ Upon arriving, however, Bradford operated his press independently of their oversight, often inviting controversy and reproach from the Quaker leaders. After several conflicts, Bradford left for New York.⁹¹ There, he was commissioned to print for New York governor Robert Hunter and received a sufficient salary to avoid prints that would offend his benefactors. It likely helped that Hunter was a member of the SPG and Bradford himself attended the Anglican Trinity Church and was a vestryman there in 1703.⁹² His favor with Anglicans would continue to grow by 1706 when he was commissioned by the SPG to print *The Book of Common Prayer*, consisting of 300 pages (35 sheets). Local missionaries offered to not only promote these texts to their parishes, but they also advanced part of the cost of the paper without interest. While the endeavor did not result in a lucrative return on the publication of these texts, they nevertheless evidence his favorable relationship with Anglicans. Furthermore, attempts to establish the Anglicanism of New York over and against broadly Quaker Philadelphia and Congregationalist New England in print was certainly something not lost on both the governor and Bradford. Hence, it was within this Anglican print network that Bradford took on printing the largely uncontroversial Mohawk translation of the Book of Common Prayer in 1715 for the promotion of Anglicanism among the Mohawk near Albany, NY.

⁹⁰ See James Green, "The Book Trade in the Middle Colonies," in *The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*. Vol. 1. A History of the Book in America, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 199-223, 200.

⁹¹ One of the final circumstances that led to Bradford leaving was his involvement in Quaker George Keith's publication of *The Christian Faith of the people of God, called in scorn, Quakers in Rhode Island* (1692). Keith which advocated for Quakers to rely more heavily on scripture and a historical Jesus, challenging Quaker doctrinal emphasis on the self-evident revelation of God. Although Bradford played both sides of the controversy by printing for both supporters and opponents of Keith, the Philadelphia Quakers nevertheless felt betrayed because just the year prior, they contracted Bradford in order to keep him from returning to London and depriving Philadelphia of a printer. The Philadelphia Quakers eventually released Bradford from his contract in April 1692, accusing him of driving and favoring the schism among the Friends rather than printing works that bridged the factionalism: "The Printer hath not yet refused to print any thing for either party; and... he is willing and ready to print any thing for the future that G.K.'s Opposers shall bring to him." For more on this controversy and Bradford's other run-ins with Quaker authorities, see Green, "The Book Trade in the Middle Colonies," 200-210.

⁹² See Lydaker, 42, footnote 2. Also see Alexander J. Wall, Jr. "William Bradford, Colonial Printer: A Tercentenary Review," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 73 (1963): 361-384, 371.

Printing in Mohawk was difficult, much in the same way that Eliot faced tremendous labor difficulties printing in Wôpanâak. Andrews was simply ill-equipped to assist with the translation and hence likely had to ask both Claesse and Oliver to help him oversee the production in Bradford's shop.⁹³ While it was common for printers and typesetters to be familiar with several languages to assist with producing texts for classically trained ministers familiar with Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, it was unlikely Bradford could have had the proper training to properly review, edit, and correct transliterated Mohawk. Andrews himself shared his struggles learning the language in a letter to the SPG, noting that "The Mohocks Language is Extream hard to be learnt and the Interpreter [Claessen] says that he thinks it almost impossible for any to learn it perfectly except they begin with it when Children." He complained about the length of their words, the "Narrowness" of the terms' meanings which required numerous contexts, and unlike other indigenous languages, seemed to Andrews "imperfect in Adverbs conjunctions [and] interjections."⁹⁴ Andrews helped in whatever way he was able to. For example, he observed that the transliterated family prayers "would have been too long for the Indians in their own Language" and likely may have made some slight alterations. Nevertheless, printing the Mohawk prayer book relied extensively on not just a broad Anglican network backed by the SPG, but also the assistance of translators like Claesse and Oliver who ensured that Protestants could perform in print some level of mastery over a transliterated version of Mohawk.

Despite returning from New York with 200 Mohawk prayer books, 150 catechisms, and a small "Spelling book for the Children [to] learn before they have their larger books to prevent

⁹³ On the details around his trip, see Monaghan, 174. Given that the Eliot Bible needed the presence of native translators, Claesse likely accompanied Andrews to New York. Andrews's dependence on Claesse translated to Claesse having to accompany Andrews wherever he needed to. See Daniel Richter, "'Some of them... Would Always Have a Minister with Them': Mohawk Protestantism, 1683-1719," *American Indian Quarterly*, 16., no. 4 (Autumn 1992), 471-484, 479.

⁹⁴ Williams, pulled from Lydakker, 38.

their spoiling them to much at their first entrance,” Andrews made very little progress with English acculturation.⁹⁵ Mohawk attendance for Williams’ lessons dropped to six or seven attendees, and even those that continued to learn under Andrews. “come so seldom they make but little Thing on it.” The more Mohawk texts Andrews supplied to the children, the less they seemed to want to learn English. The declining demand among the Mohawk for education may have resulted in Andrews canceling a request to the SPG to have even more catechisms and vocabulary printed.⁹⁶ By 1717, Andrews lamented the declining attendance to his school and chapel, concluding “These Indians have but little Esteem for Learning.” By October 1718, Andrews requested the SPG to relocate him and the following year, they acquiesced, and he was moved to Virginia. Before he left his station, he received a gift of five English Bibles sent directly by the Archbishop of Canterbury for the chapel. The texts could not have served any purpose in a declining ministry except perhaps as a token of recognition from the SPG for Andrews’ work.⁹⁷ It was as valuable of a gift to Andrews as it was for the Mohawk children when he first pursued the publication of the Mohawk prayer books.

Anglo-Protestant publishing networks defined much of what could be considered publishable and unpublishable in the early eighteenth-century. Even if ministers themselves were no longer actively censoring texts, their perceptions about a singular English-literate, Protestant public nevertheless informed how printers and booksellers operated the printing press. Hence, even if missionaries expressed demand for texts in Wôpanâak and Mohawk from English literates outside this demographic, Anglo-Protestant networks resisted or were reluctant even though such promises might allow the printing press could live up to the universalizing

⁹⁵ William Andrews to Sec, July 12, 1715, SPG Papers, ser. A, 10-185-86 (RH); “Invoyce of Goods sent to Mr Andrews,” London, June 20, 1714, SPG Papers, ser. A, 9:72 (RH)

⁹⁶ William Andrews to Sec., July 12, 1715 SPG Papers, ser. A, 11:317-19, 323 (RH)

⁹⁷ William Andrews to Sec., Apr. 23, 1717, SPG Papers, Ser. A, 12:310 (RH), Lydekker, 51.

ambitions of Protestants who want to convert the greater Americas. Ultimately, dynamics survived into the eighteenth-century thanks in large part to the lasting bonds between Protestant ministers, missionaries, and publishers to collectively imagine an Anglo-Protestant public.

Chapter 2

Mechanical Limits on the English Printing Press

On June 29, 1721, Sephardic Jew Judah Monis confidently wrote a letter to Harvard college offering his services “to facilitate the Instruction of Youth in the Hebrew Language.” The Protestant-dominated faculty was no doubt surprised that a Jew would offer to teach Hebrew at Harvard. Monis himself even arrived with a manuscript for a textbook he drafted, showing his mastery of the language in ways that could not be rivaled by anyone else in New England. An excited Cotton Mather, the famous Boston minister who had been attempting to convert Jewish merchants into Protestantism for decades, remarked: “a Jew rarely comes over to us, but he brings treasures with him.”⁹⁸ However, the college was ill-prepared to support Monis’ methods of teaching Hebrew. Whereas students would usually receive copies of the textbook for their own reference, Monis’ unpublished manuscript required students to copy down the lessons verbatim onto their own blank notebooks. Frustrated students complained to faculty and administration and after several years, the college finally agreed to support Monis’ publication. What they did not anticipate, however, was the inability of the colonial printing press to produce a text with as extensive amount of Hebrew as Monis’ textbook. Reflecting on the long, arduous, and costly process of fitting the Protestant printing press for Hebrew printing, Monis remarked: “I thought therefore to facilitate said Instructions, it was necessary to Compose One more full and correct [Hebrew Grammar]; But for want of Hebrew Types in these remote parts of the World, it could not be Accomplished till now.”⁹⁹ The Hebrew instructor’s remarks shed light on a continuing problem with the colonial printing press which was imbued with the weight of

⁹⁸ Cotton Mather, *Diary 1709-1724*, ed.; Clifford Shipton et al., *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Seventh Series* (Boston, Massachusetts Historical Society, 1892), 741.

⁹⁹ Judah Monis, “Preface,” In *Dickdook Leshon Gnebreet: A Grammar of the Hebrew tongue: being an essay to bring the Hebrew Grammar into English*, (Boston: Printed by Jonas Green, and are to be sold by the author at his house in Cambridge, 1735).

Protestant universality to carry the Gospel message to everyone within its reach: it was not sufficiently equipped to produce a text for those outside the publics it imagined.

Mechanical deficiencies have long been a part of the history of the colonial printing press. It began with the *Bay Psalm Book* (1640), earliest text produced by the Cambridge Press, the first printing press brought to the English colonies by Elizabeth Glover. The source text from which it was copied was a Hebrew translation of Psalms and so the authors of the *Bay Psalm Book* sought to retain some key words in Hebrew like “psalms,” “hymns,” and “blessings.” However, rather than import text-types from London, the operators of the Cambridge Press Matthew and Stephen Day opted to carve specialized wooden Hebrew types. These temporary measures implied the impermanence of Hebrew characters to English colonial printing. This philosophy towards material productions of language reflected the operators and ministers’ assumptions that theological rhetoric “should by God’s ordinance be extant in the mother tongue of each nation.”¹⁰⁰ For New England colonists, this language was English alone and therefore constrained the ways the technology could be mobilized for purposes outside of speaking to an imagined Anglo-Protestant public.

The linguistic limits of the printing press would be tested when famous missionary John Eliot tried to publish his Indian Library, which consisted of Wôpanâak translations of key English religious texts like the Genevan Bible for purportedly Native American use. Linguistic and typographical gaps between printing English and a phonetic *version of* Wôpanâak required famed missionary John Eliot to order an additional eighty extra pounds of type from London, likely extra Ks and Qs, and specialized type “oo” to capture sounds and consonants more common to Wôpanâak than English. The scale and demand of the project broke the printing

¹⁰⁰ Preface, *The Whole Booke of Psalmes Faithfully Translated into English Metre*, (Cambridge Press), 1640.

press several times over the course of the production of Native texts: Green charged the New England Company (NEC), the primary funder of the project, twice, once in 1662 to “hide for the presse being broken” and once again in 1664 “To expense about the Presse for mending it; making New Chases twenty seven skins for balls &c.”¹⁰¹ Without the substantial institutional and financial support to allow for such mechanical considerations, the printing press would not have been able to produce any text in transliterated Wôpanâak. Nevertheless, these moments of accommodation and frustration evidence the initially narrowly Anglo-Protestant design and function of the colonial printing press.

Given how these frustrations shaped the limitations of the printed medium in the seventeenth century, one should expect that the expanded print market of the eighteenth century should have expanded the press’ capabilities. However, not much changed in terms of designing the printing press for non-Anglo Protestant productions. Missionary efforts to print texts in Native American languages had mostly ceased, with many ministers preferring that converts be acculturated to English so as to be captive audiences for English authors.¹⁰² These constraints created similar barriers for colonial Jews and Catholics who may have wanted to publish texts in the colonies, but were confronted with the printing press’ inability to produce the Hebrew or Spanish language in quantities comparable to European productions. Instead, they continued to import texts from London, Lisbon, and Amsterdam instead of turning to publishers within their own town or city. What little Hebrew text-types were available and whatever skillsets printers had to properly set the type were sufficient only for Protestant use. As with Hebrew, printing Spanish was an expensive endeavor, particularly since it required specialized types with accent marks and tildes. The absence of these characters in English colonial printing made for

¹⁰¹ *Records of the Colony of New Plymouth, in New England: Acts of the Commissioners of the United Colonies of New England, 1643-1679*, (Boston: Press of W. White, 1859), 278.

¹⁰² See Bross.

remarkable differences between colonial printing's accommodations and London-based productions.¹⁰³ These differences were far from incidental and instead reflected the embedded Anglo-Protestant assumptions around the public sphere that mobilized the printing press for its universalizing project but never sought to realize its democratic capabilities beyond English texts, authors, and audience. What little non-English productions by Anglo-Protestants were available may have actually done more to display their ability to perform language for English-speakers instead of actually gathering a non-English audience. Such constraints persisted through the eighteenth-century in a way that lends the British colonial public sphere its distinctly Anglo-Protestant character.¹⁰⁴

This section explores two case studies whereby attempts to produce non-English works in colonial America were hindered by the assumptions about who could use the printing press and the kinds of publics they can generate. Indeed, these restrictions played an important role in casting languages like Hebrew and Spanish, and the linguistic communities around them, as “ancient” and “foreign” compared to English, despite the growing presence of Hebrew-literate and Spanish-speaking Jews and Catholics migrants in the colonies. Even without having to censor Catholic or Jewish texts in a predominantly Protestant public sphere, the mechanisms of the press nevertheless reflected the sense that these languages stood outside of what might be deemed regularly publishable, thereby constraining non-Protestant domestic productions at least well into the 1800s. Furthermore, this chapter examines how the English emphasis of the American printing press and its subsequent linguistic constraints privileged Protestant forms of speech as the primary mode of public religious expression. It reinforced for publishers and

¹⁰³ A note about my using “Spanish” in this text: I use it quite loosely to refer to the family of dialects that could be conversant across each other. Some of the Spanish that Santiago de Puglia speaks, for example, is Castellano while those spoken by Sephardic Jews have also been called Ladino.

¹⁰⁴ One crucial exception to this would be German printing around Philadelphia.

readers the notion that the eighteenth-century public sphere was designed primarily to facilitate conversations between and among Anglo-Protestants. The first half of the chapter explores the narrowly Protestant purposes for producing Hebrew in the colonies through Harvard instructor Judah Monis. A Jew-turned-Protestant, Monis initially believed that the colonial printing press could produce a text with significant Hebrew, much like those in London and Amsterdam. However, insufficient amounts of Hebrew text-types reflected Anglo-Protestant views about Hebrew, not as a contemporary language like English, but as signifier of an ancient, inaccessible scripture beyond the English bibles their congregants already possessed. With Hebrew being deployed to primarily lend ministers' publications a kind of orientalist flair to bolster their own interpretive authority, the colonial printing press would not be considered as a technology that speaks to and for colonial Jews despite their demand for texts in Hebrew. The second half of the chapter examines similar dynamics with how Protestants cast the earliest Spanish-language publications as a signifier of the greater Americas for English readers, without necessarily allowing the printing press to generate a domestically produced Spanish-literate public. Santiago de Puglia's difficulties publishing in Philadelphia and his unprinted manuscript on Catholicism further illustrates the distinctly Anglo-Protestant audience for the printing press. Indeed, his attempts were hampered by the financial costs for English printing to publish in foreign languages, needing to accommodate different types and often requiring skilled speakers who could set type in that language. What little Puglia was able to publish through *El Desengaño del Hombre* (Man Undeceived, 1794) more closely aligned with the hemispheric ambitions of ministers like Mather who performed Spanish for Anglo-Protestant readers in order to signify its foreignness to the English public sphere. Both stories demonstrate how seemingly financial barriers to publishing in a language foreign to English ultimately reflected and manifested

political and religious barriers to public expression and speech. The eighteenth-century emerging American print market continued to reflect the Anglo-Protestant assumptions behind the purposes of publication itself and these would affect the material and labor considerations around what should constitute the public sphere. It explains the dissonance between the Anglo-Protestant character of printed texts circulating and comprising public rhetoric in early America, and the multilingual and increasingly diversifying population of the new nation itself.

Printing Hebrew

Since the Protestant Reformation, Hebrew had been an important feature of Anglo-Protestant print productions. Many scholarly projects were energized by Christian primitivism which pursued a text that Protestants could claim to have been unencumbered and untainted by centuries of Catholic influence throughout the Middle Ages. These interpretive methods constructed meaning through Protestant notions of biblical time, which argued that the meaning original authors of the Bible intended for the original audience could transcend their historical context. Yet despite this history, the limited amount of Hebrew produced by descendants of New England Protestants gestured towards a much narrower function. For English-speaking congregants, Hebrew created situations of interpretive dependence on ministers by aesthetically signaling an imagined, inaccessible ‘original’ text which laity were not privy to understand.¹⁰⁵ Protestant Hebrew, a term that describes between how Protestants deployed Hebrew characters in a matter distinct from how it functioned as a language by Jewish practitioners, helps to explain Monis’ frustrations with the limited amount of Hebrew available for colonial printing presses.

¹⁰⁵ For more on the seventeenth-century history of print in colonial British America, see Maxwell Whiteman, “The Introduction and Spread of Hebrew Type in the United States,” *Printing History*, 13-14, no. 1-2, (1990-1992): 41-58; Wilberforce Eames, “On the Use of Hebrew Types in English America Before 1735,” *Studies in Jewish Bibliography and Related Subjects in Memory of Adolph Solomon Freidus (1867-1923)*, (New York: The Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, 1929), 481-502; and J.K. Mikliszanski, “First of Hebrew Printing in America,” *Hebrew Studies*, 1976, Vol. 17 (1976), 100-109, 101.

His textbook, which likely drew on some of his rabbinic training in Europe, tested the capabilities of the printing press and brought to the surface the ultimately Protestant purposes that made it costly and frustrating to produce. The entire experience would only prove that Hebrew learning and printing in the colonies was never intended to bridge the religio-linguistic gap between Protestants and Jews.

Image redacted due to copyright concerns.

Figure 2.1: Most of the Hebrew characters that appear in the Bay Psalm Book (1640) appear in the Preface, from the Evans Digital Collection

The earliest histories of Hebrew printing in the colonies evidence the centrality of Protestant interpretation and authority to their production, and set the stage for Monis' many difficulties in producing a textbook "to facilitate the Instruction of Youth in the Hebrew Language." Elizabeth Glover, who would eventually marry the first president of Harvard University Henry Dunster, and locksmiths Matthew and Stephen Day brought the first printing

press to New England from London in 1638, along with wooden Hebrew types to meet demands in Protestant productions. The first text they printed, the *Bay Psalm Book* (1640), was an original translation by New England ministers of the Hebrew Psalms. Despite claims that the goals of the project of translation to be that “the books of scripture should by God’s ordinance be extant in the mother tongue of each nation,” it preserved some Hebrew characters scattered throughout the preface with at most nineteen letters on a page. However, its use of Hebrew seemed more decorative than communicating with those who might understand it.¹⁰⁶ For example, ministers who penned the preface showcased specific Hebrew words like “psalms,” “hymns,” “spiritual songs,” “God,” and “blessing,” followed immediately by its English translation. Furthermore, there was little guidance for Protestant lay readers to recite these Hebrew words since not only were they untrained in reading Hebrew, but that the Hebrew text-types were unpointed.¹⁰⁷ Hence, readers were left trusting and relying on ministerial translations. Such uses of Hebrew – to create situations of interpretive dependence by aesthetically signaling inaccessible meaning – evidenced the ways Hebrew characters lent the texts an orientalist flair which visually signified Protestant ministerial skill and training. In other words, it was not simply that ministers were invested “in translating the hebrew words into English language.”¹⁰⁸ It was for these Protestant purposes that printers produced Hebrew text-types.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ “Preface,” *The Whole Booke of Psalmes*.

¹⁰⁷ Pointed Hebrew is a way of signaling to reciters of the text which vowel to pronounce to accompany the consonant. Those familiar with Hebrew might be able to read based on consonants alone if they’re familiar with the text, though such expertise among the Protestant laity was unlikely. For an example of printed Hebrew, see Inscription of *Mahzor Sefaradim le-Yamim Nora'im* (Amsterdam, 1689) Michael Gratz collection.

¹⁰⁸ “Preface,” *The Whole Booke of Psalmes*.

¹⁰⁹ For more on the seventeenth-century history of print in colonial British America, see Maxwell Whiteman, “The Introduction and Spread of Hebrew Type in the United States,” *Printing History* Vol. 12-14, 1990-1992, 41-58; Wilberforce Eames, “On the Use of Hebrew Types in English America Before 1735,” *Studies in Jewish Bibliography and Related Subjects in Memory of Adolph Solomon Freidus (1867-1923)*, (New York: The Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, 1929), 481-502; and J.K. Mikliszanski, “First of Hebrew Printing in America,” *Hebrew Studies*, 1976, Vol. 17 (1976), 100-109, 101.

Image redacted due to copyright concerns.

*Figure 2.2: The few Hebrew characters that appear in George Keith's *The New England Spirit of Persecution Transmitted to Pennsylvania* (1693), from the Evans Digital Collection*

Similar dynamics around Hebrew appeared in seventeenth-century Philadelphia. In 1693, Philadelphian printer William Bradford controversially published Quaker George Keith's *New England's Spirit of Persecution Transmitted to Pennsylvania*. The text summarized accusations levied by the Philadelphia Quaker governing body against both the author and printer, but framed it around Keith's interpretation of the events that unfolded. For context, it was but one episode in a long series of conflicts whereby Keith regularly dissented from the Philadelphia Quakers' governance while Bradford regularly defied the authorities' expectations that he should only print for them by publishing for Keith as well.¹¹⁰ Bradford had likely not printed Hebrew

¹¹⁰ For more on the years' long controversy involving George Keith, William Bradford, and the Philadelphian Quakers, see Jim Green, "The Middle Colonies, 1680-1720," *A History of the Book in America: The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*, ed. Hugh Amory and David D. Hall, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 199-223. In general, Keith advocated for Quakers to rely more heavily on scripture and a historical Jesus, challenging Quaker doctrinal emphasis on the self-evident revelation of God. Critics accused Bradford of playing both sides of the controversy by printing for both supporters and opponents of Keith. It also did not help that just a year prior, the Philadelphia Quakers contracted Bradford in order to keep him from returning to London and

before this point, but he did have enough supplies to accommodate Keith's publication. Whether or not this move was in jest, Keith used approximately twenty-three Hebrew characters to explain why "impudent rascal" was an appropriate term to mention during a public assembly.¹¹¹ The author defended his use of the term as he believed it accurately described a fellow Quaker and so he presented a brief study into the history of term, dating all the way back to its Latin and Hebrew Bible roots. Several other scriptural citations appeared throughout the text, but what little Hebrew Bradford printed appeared to only support of Keith's case against the governing body. This suggests that it may have been deliberate: the authority and weight of both history and scripture sided with Keith's defense instead of his Quaker accusers.

Protestant Hebrew also signaled the primary audience for ministerial speech: other Anglo-Protestants. Printed Hebrew produced by colonial presses rarely, if ever, attempted to speak to Jewish communities most proximate to New England's print centers: both the Barbadian Jews who settled in Newport, Rhode Island as early as the 1670s – less than 100 miles south of Boston – and the South American Jews who settled in New Amsterdam in the 1650s.¹¹² Even outside of these communities, Jews found ways to settle across New England despite being legally barred from doing so. Illustrating the porousness of Puritan governance, town records showed Jews living alongside Puritans, from "David the Jew" who was reportedly fined for trading goods and was listed in town records by 1670 as an "inhabitant" to an Iberian trader

depriving Philadelphia of a printer. The Philadelphia Quakers eventually released Bradford from his contract in April 1692, accusing him of driving and favoring the schism among the Friends rather than printing works that bridged the factionalism: "The Printer hath not yet refused to print anything for either party; and... he is willing and ready to print anything for the future that G.K.'s Opposers shall bring to him."

¹¹¹ George Keith, "Preface," *The New England's Spirit of Persecution Transmitted to Pennsylvania*, (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1693), 8.

¹¹² Worth noting that after leaving Philadelphia, Bradford would move to New York and print for the pro-Anglican governor.

Solomon, a “malatta Jew” who was caught violating the Puritan Sabbath in 1668.¹¹³ Protestant clergy certainly hoped for their conversion. As famous Puritan minister Cotton Mather wrote in his journal, “I lifted up my cries: For the conversion of the Jewish nation, and for my own having the happiness... to baptize a Jew, that should by my ministry be brought home to the Lord.”¹¹⁴ However, given much of their writings were in English with the occasional Hebrew flair, such texts did not seem to anticipate or expect to actually reach Jews. Indeed, it was likely that English was not their primary language, nor would the amount of Hebrew printed in Mather’s text look familiar enough for them to have been in the same genre as their texts.¹¹⁵ It was clear that the primary audience for Hebrew production by Protestant ministers was other Protestants.

Since Protestant Hebrew spoke primarily to Anglo-Protestants who may have already lived alongside Jews, it also performed an important function: it helped Anglo-Protestant readers and listeners imagine communities of Jews in the Americas who were open to conversion if only they could see Protestant ministers’ performances of the Hebrew language. Hebrew scholar Shalom Goldman observed that Protestant Hebrew not only differed significantly from the rabbinic Hebrew of the Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jewish communities, but that it was also a very modern invention. Preferring the term “Divinity School Hebrew,” Shalom argued that Protestants created an “original language of the text sacred to Protestants,” supposedly “created by a ‘primitive people,’ Jews, who were of little contemporary relevance except for millennial

¹¹³ See Jacob Rader Marcus, “Light on Early Connecticut Jewry,” *American Jewish Archives*, 1, no. 2 (January 1949), 3-12, 5 and Edgar McManus, *Law and Liberty in Early New England: Criminal Justice and Due Process, 1620-1692*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993), 21.

¹¹⁴ Cotton Mather, *Diary of Cotton Mather, 1681-1724*, ed. Worthington Chauncey Ford (New York: Ungar, 1957), 137.

¹¹⁵ While it is important to note that as merchants from Barbados, they did need to be conversant with those in the colony who did speak English, their status as Sephardic Jews and Rabbi Haim Carigal’s visit to them in the eighteenth-century suggests that they may have spoken mostly Ladino. For more on this community, see George M. Goodwin and Ellen Smith, *The Jews of Rhode Island*, (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2004).

groups.”¹¹⁶ The operative word here is “imagine” because the receptive, English-literate Jewish congregant eager to convert, save for some Hebrew performances by protestant ministers, was far from representative of a majority of Jews in the Americas. Many Jews used Hebrew as a way of maintaining a diasporic identity after fleeing the Inquisition. They created transatlantic networks whereby they circulated and distributed unauthorized prayer books, hand-copied texts, bible substitutes, and history books, thereby facilitating Hebrew textuality discreetly from the watchful gaze of the Catholic church.¹¹⁷ Some rabbis in the Americas were even recorded to have even kept entire libraries of printed imported kabbalistic texts from Europe.¹¹⁸ For communal practices, Sephardic Jews in Amsterdam regularly supplied Jews in the French West Indies, Barbados, and French Guiana with hand-written scrolls of the law.¹¹⁹ It was within this robust transatlantic Jewish network that in 1646, Recife rabbi Isaac Aboab de Fonseca authored one of the first Hebrew texts written in the Americas. The manuscript poem communicated to the broader Jewish public sphere the Dutch’s and Jews’ military resistance to the Portuguese forces in Brazil. The loss of the colony to the Portuguese would eventually lead to the migration of Brazilian Jews to North America.¹²⁰ These Hebrew productions operated separately from the Protestant Hebrew produced by colonial English presses.

¹¹⁶ Shalom Goldman, *God’s Sacred Tongue: Hebrew and the American Imagination*

¹¹⁷ On Crypto-Jews in the early-modern period, see David M. Gitlitz, *Secrecy and Deceit: The Religion of the Crypto-Jews*, (Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996). Gitlitz surveys some of the genres of texts that ensured the survival of Jewish textuality into the sixteenth and seventeenth century Spain through their creative uses of books that the Church itself would sanction as permissible for Catholics. Specifically, see Gitlitz, 425-441.

¹¹⁸ A copy of kabbalistic text *Sefer Shefa Tal* (Hanau, 12) was owned by Jacob Franco Lugarto, a rabbi of a congregation in Tamarica, Brazil. The text is likely dated to either 1643 or 1648. A photocopy of the manuscript and notation appears in Yosef Goldman, *Hebrew Printing in America 1735-1926: A History and Annotated Bibliography*, (YG Books, 2006), 1160.

¹¹⁹ For more on the Jewish communities throughout the Americas, see Arnold Wiznitzer, *Jews in Colonial Brazil*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960) and Marcus Jacobs, *The Colonial American Jew, 1492-1776*, Vol. 1, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970).

¹²⁰ See M. Kayserling, “Isaac Aboab: The First Jewish Author in America,” *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, 1897, No. 5 (1897), 125-136.

These two different approaches to Hebrew would manifest in Monis' encounter with the colonial printing press. When Monis initially wrote to Harvard college on June 29, 1721, he was welcomed with much fanfare, though perhaps moreso for his purported promise to convert than necessarily his expertise. As Mather remarked, "a Jew rarely comes over to us, but he brings treasures with him."¹²¹ Considering New England ministers' continued failed attempts to recruit Jewish converts, Monis' conversion was a godsend. Whether or not Monis had actually offered to convert, news spread so quickly that Monis' baptism the following year was "attended by a considerable part of the Church in this town, and as numerous an Assembly as the place would admit."¹²² To further lend credibility to Monis' status as a Jew-turned-Protestant, newspapers advertised Monis as having been "formerly of Leghorn, Italy and Amsterdam," and that he was a "rabbi of the synagogue in Jamaica, and afterwards in New York."¹²³ Ministers commemorated the event in a publication titled *A Discourse Had in the College-Hall* (1722). Prefaces by ministers Benjamin Colman and Increase Mather attested to the veracity of Monis' conversion. The combination of ministerial support for the publication and the emerging steady market for commemorative publications likely convinced famed bookseller Daniel Henchman about its salability.¹²⁴ Furthermore, Henchman was probably enticed by the increasing popularity of Jewish conversion narratives among London publishers.¹²⁵ With the assistance of printers

¹²¹ Mather, *Diary 1709-1724*, 741.

¹²² *New England Courant*, March 1722 weekly

¹²³ Ibid., See pamphlet, footnote 6 (34 in Goldman)

¹²⁴ Rollo Silver, "Publishing in Boston, 1726-1757: The Accounts of Daniel Henchman," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 1956 (20). As Silver also points out, "sermons in earthquakes and on execution of criminals, particularly female, sold quite readily and in greater quantity." It is likely that the Protestant baptism of a Jew, especially with ministers and local newspapers outlining the event itself, would have fascinated potential buyers.

¹²⁵ Henchman worked with London agent John Rowe on a reprinting job on February 1750. It is not too far of a stretch to say he was familiar with the book trade in London as well. See Silver, 27. On the connection between Kneeland and D. Henchman, see Thomas, "History of Printing" (107). He observed that "Kneeland and Green printed, principally for Daniel Henchman, an edition of the Bible in small quarto." Kneeland proceeding with the project "privately" suggests a certain level of trust between the bookseller and the printer, particularly as the publication of the "first Bible printed, in America, in the English language" would have warranted "prosecution

Samuel Kneeland and Timothy Green, both of whom had printed the sermons of Boston's most esteemed clergy, Monis' conversion narrative finally made its way to print.

What Colman described as Monis' "poor performance" of narrating his conversion nevertheless sufficed for a largely Protestant audience. First, Monis recruited anti-Catholic rhetoric as a way of validating his Protestantism. He professed the sufficiency of scripture and that he had learned "not to depend upon the Explication of any Man whatsoever (as the Church of *Rome* does, i.e. to the Pope)"; averred that Catholics "deny the Law and the Prophets"; pointed to "the Manner and Way in which [Jews] have been treated by sundry Princes of Christendom, with Fire and Sword, as in the Kingdoms of *Spain* and *Portugal*, contrary to the Laws of Nature"; and highlighted the way in which "a great Stumbling-Block to the *Jewish Nation's* Conversion" had in part been owed to "the worshipping of Images by the Papists."¹²⁶ Second, Monis participated in imagining a beleaguered Jewish community open to conversion with himself as the projected representative of that community. Throughout the text, he addressed "the *Jewish Nation*," as a group that could be addressed in contemporary time but he constructed through the Protestant imaginary of Biblical time. The English narrative, however, betrayed any intention to speak to the broader Jewish community in British colonial America, and instead spoke to a largely Anglo-Protestant audience for Monis' conversion.¹²⁷

from those in England and Scotland, who published the Bible by a patent from the crown." England was wary about allowing the colonies to print Bibles. As to whether there was an actual full English Bible printed by Kneeland and Green and Henschman remains unanswered. It was common for colonial printers to circumvent licensing and copyright issues as it related to printing English Bibles by including other texts so that they are never read as the authoritative Bible or are merely seen and read in the "family" of Bible genres. See Perry, 19-39. Nevertheless, Thomas' note about the relationship between the printers and the rumors that spread around it is still noteworthy.

¹²⁶ Monis, "The Truth," iv, 13; Monis, "The Whole Truth," 2; Monis, "Nothing but the Truth," 3. On this trope within Protestant transatlantic literary spheres, see Thomas Kidd, *Protestant Interest: New England After Protestantism*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).

¹²⁷ Scholars have long debated the sincerity of Monis' conversion. Some like G.A. Kohut pointed to the survival of Jewish customs such as Monis' observance of Saturday, instead of Sunday, as the sabbath as evidence that Monis "remained loyal to Israel at heart, while apparently devoted to Christianity.... He changed his faith in name only, in order to reach the object of his ambitions. It is evident that Monis, though converted, was a Jew at heart, and a Christian in public life." See G.A. Kohut, "Judah Monis," *The American Journal of Semitic Languages*

Monis may have been satisfied having performed an Anglo-Protestant conversion for his new community, but his attitudes towards Hebrew printing nevertheless created important divisions between the two. English and limited Hebrew, the terms of print publication, dictated the terms for Monis to engage publicly. For most of their short history, New England Protestants had been content with the small number of Hebrew-text types. Meanwhile, Monis grew dissatisfied with the state of Hebrew printing in the Americas, especially after having seen its absence in both Jamaica and New England. For his conversion narrative, he complained about having been “obliged to give [it] in English” and that he had to work around the absence of Hebrew letters using instead “English letters, as he apprehends will best convey the sound of the *Hebrew Word*.” This only created awkward accommodations for the instructor who confessed to only having barely mastered English: “The Author Hopes that the English reader will afford the following Discourses his Candour, and Excuse any want of Accuracy in the English Idiome, (& punctuation,) considering the English Tongue is what he has not been very long used to, and for that reason does not pretend to be a compleat Master of.”¹²⁸ Even if he was hoping that whatever Hebrew he could muster could perhaps speak to the Spanish-speaking Sephardic Jews in

and Literatures, 14, no. 4 (Jul 1898): 218-219. Others like Arthur Herzberg have argued that Monis’ conversion was “genuine,” tied to an actual appreciation for New England Puritanism’s tenets and practices, especially over and against Catholicism. See Arthur Herzberg, *The Jews in America: Four Centuries of an Uneasy Encounter*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 43. Some have even gone as far as to doubt Monis’ authorship of the work (Jacobs, 1099). Most scholars have, however, remained ambivalent. Shalom Goldman argued that the retention of Jewish practices does not necessarily signal Jewish identity formation. (Goldman, *God’s Sacred Tongue*, 41) Some have opted to historicize the anxieties around the conversion itself by Monis’ own contemporaries. See Michael Hoberman, *New Israel/New England: Jews and Puritans in Early America*, (University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), 47-48. Hoberman’s broader point gestures towards what I believe are the stakes for the conversion, not necessarily the driving motivation: “Monis’s arrival was timely insofar as it coincided with a broadly based appeal in the part of the Harvard authorities to revive the spirit of the fathers by reasserting the power of individual conversion experience as a communal spectacle.” (89). The spectacle flags what I believe has been missed in these approaches. The question of sincerity and proper conversion are difficult to answer within the various networks of relationship that determined the form and meaning of the printed text. This was especially true for Monis’ conversion which relied on Benjamin Colman and Increase Mather’s prefaces, bookseller Daniel Henchman, the printers Henchman entrusted with his project and ran newspaper ads for the project, and Harvard college which ensured some kind of return for cost and risk of selling the text. Whether we can ascertain Monis converted, it’s clear from what was printed that they were very much invested in it to be so.

¹²⁸ Monis, “Advertisement” in *A Discourse Had in College Hall*, 1722.

diaspora across colonial America, prefaces by fellow ministers helped to frame Monis' conversion for the benefit of Anglo-Protestant readers for whom Hebrew could signify ministerial authority and skill.

Monis' frustrations with the state of Hebrew printing also affected his teaching. Likely dissatisfied with the quality of Hebrew education with Harvard's imported textbooks from London, Monis opted to teach the language from his own manuscript textbook titled *Dickdook Leshon Gnebreet: A Grammar of the Hebrew Tongue* (1735). His lessons consisted of asking students to make manuscript copies of his lesson rather than simply practicing reciting and taking notes on their own notebooks.¹²⁹ Since his students were used to being supplied with London-produced Hebrew textbooks designed for Anglo-Protestant instruction, this method garnered complaints from students and peers, the latter of whom would describe it as "so tedious as to be discouraging to many."¹³⁰ It was not clear if this approach was derived from Monis' own rigorous Hebrew training in Europe or if it was entirely his own. Indeed, the prospect of hand copying an entire textbook over the course of the semester may not have actually facilitated the Hebrew mastery professors would have wanted to see. Nevertheless, it was as much his fault as it was the limited capacities of British colonial printing presses. As he would write, "I thought therefore to facilitate said Instructions, it was necessary to Compose One more full and correct [Hebrew Grammar]; But for want of Hebrew Types in these remote parts of the World, it could

¹²⁹ Worth noting that by the 1720s, Harvard was considering printing its own textbooks instead of importing them from London, but had not yet entertained importing types for their production.

¹³⁰ Clifford Shipton, *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Vol. 16*, (Boston, Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1925), 506. While one could argue that this practice was a form scribal publication, the extent to which it was common practice to do so for an entire textbook when previously, printed copies were supplied, may have resulted in students' grievances. On scribal publication, see David H. Hall, "Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century New England: An Introduction and a Checklist," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 115, no. 1 (2006), 29-80.

not be Accomplished till now.”¹³¹ For someone familiar with the state of Hebrew printing in Europe, the state of New England’s Hebrew printing was certainly disappointing.

The costs and difficulties of producing more Hebrew-intensive texts only continued to illustrate the implicit Anglo-Protestant design behind English colonial printing. Both the growing number of complaints about Monis’ teaching and Harvard’s own investment in Monis’ success led to the board approving Monis’ project to bring more Hebrew text-types for the college’s use. On April 1726, English benefactor Thomas Hollis sent to Harvard “font of Types Greek and Hebrew” for use by the college, with Hollis hoping to see the institution “flourish in all the Sciences and have able Professors and Tutors among [them] well supported,” given that they are “the only one [he] knows of in the World” to be founded on and supported by “congregational discipline.”¹³² Upon review, however, the types were not of the highest quality nor the sufficient quantity. Monis described them as “unhappily proving imperfect” and that the project “could not go forward till the Reverend Corporation sent for more Hebrew Types to Complete such a good and desirable design.”¹³³ The disconnect between the actual amount of Hebrew Monis needed and Hollis’ seeming generosity to assist New England scholarship only further highlights how much the Anglo-Protestant view towards the Hebrew as ornamental or somehow less pragmatic to English as the linguistic mode for religion constrained its production in the colonies. Hence, for a second, time, the printing press found ways to frustrate Monis’ desire to treat Hebrew as a language that was just as deserving of attention from the publication process as English.

After this second attempt, the college finally decided to support the project in its entirety. It was not clear what moved them, whether they’ve pragmatically accepted Monis’ project to

¹³¹ Monis, *Dickdook Leshon Gnebreet*, “Preface.”

¹³² Letter from Thomas Hollis to Edward Wigglesworth, February 10, 1725, also see Thomas Hollis to Benjamin Colman, February 10, 1725, CSM.

¹³³ Monis, *Dickdook Leshon Gnebreet*, “Preface.”

print Hebrew texts or discarded their Anglo-Protestant predisposition towards the Hebrew language itself. Perhaps they realized that they were the only ones who could make such a project like this possible in the British American colonies. Indeed, the entire process of producing a Hebrew textbook for a largely English-speaking student body was so demanding that Harvard decided to order of “so many Hebrew Types & Points, as are necessary to compleat ye Sett sent us by ye worthy Mr Hollis, according to the direction of Mr President, Mr Flynt, and Mr. Monis.”¹³⁴ With so much financial support behind the project, Harvard proactively oversaw the textbook’s creation. The task wore on for so long that more problems arose. While Monis was able to gain support for importing Hebrew text-types, he was struggling to raise funds for the printing job itself. Furthermore, the text had to undergo so many revisions that Harvard grew increasingly reluctant to proceed with the project, citing a lack of success on many fronts.¹³⁵ In order to see the project through, Harvard voted “the Treasurer advance to mr Monis so much money as necessary for ye printing a thousand coupes in Quarto, two hundred of ym to be stitched & cover’s with Paper immediately after they are printed; the 1000 copies deliver’d into ye Treasurer’s hands, and yet there be a Computation made of ye prime cost of each book.”¹³⁶ In other words, not only did the board secure the necessary Hebrew-types, but they were also the primary customers for the textbook. By September 9, 1734, the textbook was in the press and the college recommended that every sophomore should purchase it. With the connections and

¹³⁴ Shipton, 564. On the amount Monis requested, he provided a tally of how many of each Hebrew character he would need to the college for ordering. See Judah Monis Collection, Mr. Monis’s daggishes, [ca. 1728]. HUG 1580.5 Box 1, Folder 4, Harvard University Archives.

¹³⁵ Shipton, CSM, 562. “The Corporation desired Mr. Monis to correct his Hebrew Grammar fit for ye Press, & bring it to Mr. President & Mr. Flynt to peruse; and also yt a sheet half in he Paradigms be printed, whereby there may be an Estimate made of ye charge in printing ye whole Grammar, in case the Corporation should think proper to Incurage ye Printing of it. And yt this be done so as to be laid before ye Corporation at their meeting in September next.” It’s important to note the shifting tone after two years, that even with Hebrew text-types and if Monis makes the proper provisions, the board was revisiting the question of whether it is “proper to Incurage ye Printing” of the text itself.

¹³⁶ Shipton, 625.

financial support of the college behind him, Monis published the first Hebrew text in the British colonies through the English printing press.

As illustrated by Harvard's successful importation of Hebrew text-types, popular demand among Anglo-Protestants was far from the only means by which Hebrew text-types could have made their way into the colonies. Indeed, it was not outside of the realm of possibility that Jews in Newport might have engaged with printer Ann Smith Franklin, who survived husband James Franklin and relative of famed Philadelphia printer and founding father, Benjamin Franklin, to take on the project. Franklin (the widow) was proactive in the trade business, operating from her shop in Newport to publish for the Rhode Island General Assembly and the occasional ministerial sermon by famed local preachers like Cotton Mather. Newport Jews, many of whom were merchants by trade, certainly had the financial means as they readily secured property for a graveyard and construct a synagogue by 1763. One might expect for them to publish Hebrew prayer books for high holy days or even robust published debates among European rabbis had also energized the London markets. Jews residing in London have had the benefit of publishers producing rabbis' sermons, calendars, contracts, and various other texts throughout most of the eighteenth-century.¹³⁷ Yet even if there were no rabbis in the colonies to facilitate much of Jewish textual life around Hebrew, *hazzans* nevertheless led communities in worship and possibly even facilitated language education that could have benefitted from published Hebrew.

¹³⁷ For a collection of Spanish publications for London Jews, see Cecil Roth, "The Marrano Typography in England," *The Library*, 5th ser., 15 (1960), 118-128.

Image redacted due to copyright concerns.

Figure 2.3: Some Hebrew texts circulating in the Americas - (Left) An engraved ketubbah, or wedding contract (1751) for Hayman Levy (1721-1789) and Sloe Myers (1728-1811) and (Right) an inscription in Sefer Hekhalha-Kodesh, a kabbalistic volume which was owned by Monis.¹³⁸

The Anglo-Protestant design and audience for the colonial printing press were similarly apparent for itinerant Jews in the eighteenth-century. Itinerant rabbi Haim Carigal, who hailed from Hebron near Jerusalem, arrived in Newport to visit the Jewish community. His May 28, 1772 exhortation to the Newport congregation asked them to “not be discouraged but persevere... [that their] sufferings were not Evidence of their being forsaken by God – that Adversity and Judgments were the common Lot of all Nations, Kingdoms, and Countries.”¹³⁹

¹³⁸ Descriptions from Goldman, *Hebrew Printing in America 1735-1926*, 1160-1161.

¹³⁹ Ezra Stiles, *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles: Volume I, Jan. 1, 1769-Mar. 13, 1776*, ed. Franklin Bowditch Dexter, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), 376.

Minister Ezra Stiles was a part of the audience and ascertained that it was delivered in a mixture of Spanish and Hebrew. Jewish attendees deliberated over printing his sermon, but when they asked for his permission to translate the text to English and publish it through the printing press, Carigal refused. He argued that “none but Rabbies preached, and they usually preached on all the Holidays, but not ever Sabbath, & always without notes.”¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, the rabbi “had nothing written when he preached at the Synagogue – but that he had *sealed* [the sermon] first in his head and so delivered it.”¹⁴¹ Carigal’s objections likely stemmed from the way he interpreted print’s function beyond simply publication. A printed sermon preached outside of the marked time, made material demands of its author which Carigal was reluctant to do, and likely hailed an audience beyond the Jewish audience. Eventually, it was published with the title *A Sermon Preached at the Synagogue in Newport, Rhode-Island, called “The Salvation of Israel:” On the Day of Pentecost or Feast of Weeks* and advertised in Newport and New York newspapers, leading some scholars to contend that the publishers likely targeted Anglicized second-generation Jews in New York and Newport.¹⁴² However, perhaps the most remarkable omission was the absence of Hebrew characters in the printed edition, despite the oral sermon being replete with Hebrew, at least according to Stiles. It suggests that the translators, likely members of the community, treated the language much like any other which required translation. Again, such an approach differed from Protestant Hebrew which adorned English with Hebrew characters with an orientalist flair, whether or not it registered as a contemporary language to its English audience. Within the broader context of printing in the English colonies, this discrepancy illustrates how the press did not truly function outside of its Anglo-Protestant purposes.

¹⁴⁰ Stiles, 378.

¹⁴¹ Stiles, 378.

¹⁴² Liebman, “Holy Land to New England Canaan: Rabbi Haim Carigal and Sephardic Itinerant Preaching in the Eighteenth Century,” *Early American Literature*, 44, no. 1 (2009): 71-93.

This would remain true for most of the rest of the eighteenth century, despite Monis' best attempts to show the possible compatibility between the two languages.¹⁴³ After its production, *Dickdook Leshon Gnebreet* was not received well. Extant copies of Monis' textbook evidence corrections from readers who questioned Monis' lessons from grammar to word-choice for corresponding vowel sounds between Hebrew and English words. For example, one copy owned by Mohican minister Samson Occom, contained corrections that the "o" sound in the Hebrew *hollem* should be closer to the "o" in "open" rather than the one in "proper."¹⁴⁴ This led to the inclusion of an ERRATA whereby Monis asked, "The courteous Learner is desired to correct the following Errors, which accidentally escap'd a timely Observation."¹⁴⁵ Stephen Sewall, Monis' student who would eventually succeed his post teaching Hebrew at Harvard, called Monis' grammar "a very bad one," a stance shared by much of the contemporary scholarship on Monis' textbook.¹⁴⁶ With support from the college, Sewall proceeded with the publication of another Hebrew grammar book titled *A Hebrew Grammar, collected chiefly from those of Mr. Israel Lyons, teacher in the University of Cambridge* (1763) which quickly replaced *Dickdook Leshon Gnebreet* with the assistance of the types that Monis acquired for the college. Whatever failure could be ascribed to Monis' work, however, he blamed on the project of the book itself: translating Hebrew for English-reading students and faculty. He wrote:

I found in all my Travels, all the Learned in this Tongue that I conversed with, among the Europeans (English excepted) do pronounce it the same way also; and why the English differ from the rest, proceeds only (as I take it) from the various ways they have pronouncing the Vowels, in which the other Nations are more conformed to one another, as it is well known to all observing Travelers and

¹⁴³ On Monis' attempts at hybridity, see Rachel Wamsley, "A Pure Language (or Lip): Representing Hebrew in Colonial New England," *Studies in American Jewish Literature*, 37, no. 2 (2018): 117-144.

¹⁴⁴ Samson Occom's Hebrew textbook, with notes and exercises in his hand, *Dartmouth College Collections*. A similar correction appears in the photocopy in Evans.

¹⁴⁵ Monis, *Dickdook Leshon Gnebreet*, "Preface."

¹⁴⁶ Quoted from Whamsey, 8.

Linguists; and therefore in Conformity to the English Pronunciation ONLY, I have Spelt the Words in English Characters as I have done.¹⁴⁷

For Monis, who was multilingual and whose initial language was Spanish, the primary source of frustration with communicating Hebrew in print was English itself – the manner he may have been expected to transliterate Hebrew simply did not accord with his experience in how Hebrew was spoken elsewhere. The frustration Monis felt and the students’ increasing disinterest in learning Hebrew led to the college’s decision to make Hebrew an optional part of the curriculum by 1787.¹⁴⁸ Attempts to introduce Hebrew to the largely Anglo-Protestant colonies only further clarified the differing functions and expectations around Hebrew between Anglo-Protestants and Jews that encounter Protestant Hebrew.

Monis’ frustrations with constraints on Hebrew production in the British colonies was not shared by Jewish converts to Protestantism in London. Indeed, had he converted to Christianity earlier in their life, Dutch merchant Solomon Franco may have experienced the same constraints on Hebrew printing that Monis did. In 1668, Franco published his conversion from Judaism to Protestantism in a piece titled *Truth Springeth out of the Earth* (1668). Franco’s publication was not unique in London since after the city lifted its restrictions on Jewish settlement, printers rushed several publications by various Jewish-authored conversion narratives to Protestantism.¹⁴⁹ However, had such a conversion taken place in New England where Franco had found himself earlier in his career, it would have been exceptional. In 1649, the Franco ran into a payment

¹⁴⁷ Monis, *Dickdook Leshon Gnebreet*, “Preface.”

¹⁴⁸ Prior to this point, most students begrudged studying Hebrew but because it was a requirement, they had no option and the board continually thought of ways to make learning it more tolerable for them. For more on Hebrew at Harvard, see Robert H. Pfeiffer, “The Teaching of Hebrew at Colonial America,” *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, 45, no. 4 (April 1944): 363-373 and Meyer, “Hebrew at Harvard.”

¹⁴⁹ A brief list of Jewish conversion texts published in London appears in Joseph Jacobs and Lucien Wolf, *Biblioteca Anglo-Judaica: A Bibliographical Guide to Anglo-Jewish History*, (London, 1888). Some notable texts that appeared along the same time as *Truth Springeth from the Earth* includes Isaac Israel’s *Christ Jesus, the true Messiah, delineated in three oeconomics agreed on all sides* (London, 1682); Alexanderson, *A Declaration of the Christian Faith, with a Letter to those of his own nation from the Syriac*, (London, 1688); and John Alexander, *God’s Covenant displayed by John Alexander, a converted Jew* (London, 1689).

dispute with Boston officials and because of that, was allowed “sixe shillings per week out of the treasury” that would allow “for six weeks for his subsistence till he can get passage into Holland.”¹⁵⁰ The merchant would not be converted in Boston and eventually return to Holland, and from there make his way to London where he would teach Hebrew.¹⁵¹ But even if Franco had been converted to Christianity by New England Protestants, he would not have been able to publish *Truth Springeth out of the Earth* in Boston. Since Franco had little mastery over English, he relied on his Hebrew to make up for what he described as his inability to “attain that fluent Eloquence of the English tongue.” He confessed, “in these plain rude words my Sincerity may be discovered, which is all I aim at present; and also, that the Jews may understand, that it was not without great reason that I embraced Jesus Christ.”¹⁵² Across more than seventy pages of the text, there are only a handful of pages where Hebrew did not appear. While New England ministers were constrained to print only an occasional Hebrew word that required at most, twenty or so text-types, Franco’s text, which was mostly in English, typed out entire scripture verses in Hebrew followed by a translation. The opening page alone types out in entire Hebrew Deuteronomy 31:12 and Deuteronomy 4:19, and were likely citations from Hebrew copies of the Tanach among London Jews and in an amount not yet produced in the colonies. Compared to London, New England printing was ill-equipped to meet the publication needs of Jewish converts like Franco who published their conversion under their own linguistic considerations.

¹⁵⁰ Records of the Governor and the company of the Massachusetts bay in New England (Boston: W. White, 1853-1854).

¹⁵¹ On the connection between the merchant Franco who arrived in Boston and author of *Truth Springeth*, I rely on Jacobs, *The Colonial American Jews*, (300-301). He charted Franco’s movement whereby Franco returned to Holland in 1649. Three years afterward, Franco appears in London teaching Hebrew.

¹⁵² Solomon Franco, “Epistle to the Reader,” *Truth Springeth out of the Earth: That is, The Truth of Christ Proved out of the Earthly Promises of the Law*, (London: Printed by J. Flesher for the Author, 1668).

Image redacted due to copyright concerns.

Figure 2.4: Truth Springeth out of the Earth (1668) by Solomon Franco, Image from Early English Books Online, Courtesy of Burke Library, Union Theological Seminary

Monis' frustrations and his peers' cold reception towards the textbook would only foreshadow future failures in attempting to bring Hebrew types into the colonies, even for primarily Anglo-Protestant uses. On January 24, 1764, a fire destroyed most of Harvard College's supply of Greek and Hebrew-types.¹⁵³ There seemed to have been little urgency to replace the types, likely aided by the stress of the growing political and economic tensions between the colonies and Britain.¹⁵⁴ Protestant ministers who needed Hebrew had to resort to

¹⁵³ It was possible that the types may have survived because the Hebrew types may have been with the printers while the Drapers produced Sewall's text. The absence of extant domestic Hebrew productions in the British colonies between the fire and Thomas' importing Hebrew text-types in 1785 suggests that they may have been lost.

¹⁵⁴ Amory, "The New England Book Trade," 332-333.

sending their manuscripts to London for printing and then import them back to the colonies.¹⁵⁵

Hoping to match printing in London, printer Isaiah Thomas procured types from London typefounder William Caslon II in 1785.¹⁵⁶ Thomas' efforts supplied Hebrew for the second edition of Sewall's book in 1802 (but completely revised to skip over Hebrew points) and Dartmouth language professor John Smith's *A Hebrew Grammar, without points: designed to facilitate the study of the Scriptures of the Old Testament* (1803).¹⁵⁷ Although there would be were several attempts at establishing foundries for casting metal types, particularly "type of every kind" that included Hebrew, Greek, Samaritan, and Arabic fonts in the United States, none would reach significant success until after 1800.¹⁵⁸ Until there was a successful type foundry in the United States that could provide Hebrew text-types, authors would not have been able to engage American printers to publish texts with significant amounts of Hebrew.

Printing Spanish

Similar to non-Protestants who could have used Hebrew, Spanish speakers in the British colonies struggled to publish texts for typographical reasons. Although Hebrew had played an important role in shoring up Anglo-Protestant minister's authority among congregants, Spanish had little purchase among colonial publishers who expected to produce texts primarily for

¹⁵⁵ See Edward Griffin, *Old Brick: Charles Chauncy of Boston, 1705-1787*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980). Boston Minister Charles Chauncy's *Mystery Hid from Ages and Generations* (1784) and *Five Dissertations* (1785) likely needed to be printed in London with printer Charles Dilly, in part because there were no Hebrew or Greek text-types in the New England. In contrast, his text *Benevolence of the Deity* (1785) was printed in Boston because it was entirely in English.

¹⁵⁶ See Isaiah Thomas, *A Specimen of Isaiah Thomas's printing types. Being as large and complete an assortment as is to be met with any one printing-office in America. Chiefly manufactured by that great artist, William Caslon, Esq. of London*, (Worcester, MA: Printed by Isaiah Thomas, 1785). For the Greek and unpointed Hebrew types, see page 29.

¹⁵⁷ Also, worth noting that Vermont printer David Carlisle was apprenticed by Thomas and was part of his broader network of printers/booksellers across the Atlantic coast of the United States. See David Emblidge, "Isaiah Thomas Invents the Bookstore Chain," *Publishing Research Quarterly*, 28, (2012), 53-64. It was likely this connection that gave him access to the types.

¹⁵⁸ In particular, John Baine of Boston and Philadelphia operated a foundry, and Adam Gerard Mappa, who was credited with being the first typefounder in New York City. For a brief overview, see Maurice Annenberg, *Type Foundries of America and their Catalogs*, (Baltimore and Washington: Maran Printing Services, 1975), 34-36.

English speaking authors and readers. Yet despite these expectations, Spanish-speaking colonists, from Sephardic Jews to Catholics, not only settled and built communities across British colonial America, but were active participants in its public life, even if the terms of their engagement in the public sphere continued to be dictated by the terms set forth by English publishers. Print constraints were experienced as early in American religious history as Mather who aspired to reach a Spanish-speaking Americas with *La Fe del Cristiano*, though his audience for such works was more locally situated and English-literate than the text may have let on. When read alongside his attempts at French and Wôpanâak translations of his work, these performances seemed more invested in showcasing Protestant multilingualism made possible by printers' flexible use of their wares to carve accent marks. Perhaps more earnestly, however, was the case with Spanish translator Santiago F. Puglia whose interest in gathering an audience for his works in New Spain from Philadelphia attempted to bring the religio-political tenets of the European enlightenment to spaces colonized by the Spanish Inquisition. Whether he succeeded or not, the project proved to his American supporters the universal import of their revolutionary ideals while at the same time making very little room for Santiago's Catholic-inspired theologies in the public sphere. It was under these terms that Santiago may have realized the persistent Anglo-Protestant quality of the public sphere.

One of the earliest attempts to publish a text in Spanish was marred by Protestants' lackadaisical desire to convert Jews and Catholics under the Inquisition across the Americas. Mather first recorded his efforts in an April 1699 recorded entry where he sought to convert to New England Puritanism Jewish merchants Solomon and Joseph Frazon. Among the New England elite, the Frazon brothers were known for having introduced to them "the *Spanish Bible*," (which was likely a copy of the Hebrew Testament translated in Spanish called the

Ferrara Bible, which was first printed in 1553), for being a “Scholar to the learned *Yeosuah Da Sylva* in *London*,” and for educating them on “*Jews* [who] were formerly very numerous in the *Dutch Plantations in Brasil*.”¹⁵⁹ New England minister’s decision to call it “bible” likely signaled a confident proximity to their own scripture that fed Mather’s desire to see their conversion. Placing his hopes that his published writings in Spanish and Hebrew addressed to the Frazons would not only confirm “*Christians* in [their] faith” but also “mightily confound the *Jewish Nation*,” he went ahead and sent them a letter of his request for them to convert. As he described in an entry in his diary for that month: “I this day renewed my Request unto Heaven for [the conversion of Jews]. And writing a short letter to the Jew, wherein I enclosed my *Faith of the Fathers*, and, *La Fe del Christiano*, I sent it to him.”¹⁶⁰ It was not clear from Mather how the Frazon brothers received the gesture, though it was certainly possible that the brothers themselves assisted Mather with the necessary Hebrew or Spanish training to even attempt the project. Nevertheless, Mather’s aggressive opening to establish Protestant supremacy over colonial Jews betrays any attempt at amicability. As he opens *Faith of the Fathers*, “Be amazed, O ye Rebellious & Rejected People of our Great Lod Messiah; We Christians, have by the Wonderful Work of God, been brought unto the *Faith of the Fathers*; but you are fallen from that *Faith* & under *Strong Delusions*, you are *Pining away in your Iniquities*. *Return, O backsliding*

¹⁵⁹ Samuel Sewall, *Phaenomena quaedam apocalyptica ad aspectum novio rbis configurata*, (Boston: Printed by Bartholomew Green and John Allen, And are to be sold by Richard Wilkins, 1697). On the note about the Spanish Bible, see Kirsten Silva Gruesz, *Cotton Mather’s Spanish Lessons: A Story of Language, Race, and Belonging in the Early Americas*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2022), 72. Gruesz argues that “Sewall is disingenuous about the *Spanish Bible*,” which can only have been a copy of the *Biblia en Lengua Espanola Traducida Palabra por Palabra en Verdad Hebrayca* (Bible in the Spanish Language Translated Word for Word from the True Hebrew).” I think the link is strong and it would make sense that Hebrew translations of the Tanach would continue to circulate among Sephardic Jews across the Atlantic. Comparing European productions to British colonial print culture establishes the latter’s distinctly Protestant identity which was slow to accommodate non-Protestant textual productions.

¹⁶⁰ Mather, *Diary, 1709-1724*, 298-300.

Israel!”¹⁶¹ The rest of the twenty four pages reads like a catechism which posed questions ranging in topic from Christian theologies “Can there be One God in Three Persons?” to mapping the Catholic Inquisition onto Protestant constructions of biblical time: “After the Four Monarchies Exhibited in the Visions of Daniel are Ended, and Particularly the Papal Empire, which is the Fourth, in the Last Form of it, comes to its End, shall the Nation of Israel, be Advanced into a great Condition of Power and Glory?”¹⁶² Scholars have debated whether Mather’s rhetoric should be understood as either a sincere attempt at their conversion or a performance for his fellow Protestants that models how they should talk about converting Jews.¹⁶³ Regardless, the Frazons did not convert and instead, Mather was reported to have had a “*Pretended Vision*, to have converted *Mr. Frazier, a Jew*, who had before conceiv’d some good Notions of Christianity.” While Mather’s initial attempt may have damaged the Frazons’ impression of New England ministers, the delusion only made the broken relationship irreparable. After having heard about Mather’s confession that he did, in fact, imagine such a scenario, the brothers “would never be persuaded to hear any more of Christianity.”¹⁶⁴ However, regardless of whether Mather’s conversion of the Frazon brothers succeeded or not, it nevertheless enacted some New England ministers’ aspirations for the conversion of the greater Americas and part of that vision required the ability to perform language in a way that would

¹⁶¹ Cotton Mather, *The Faith of the Fathers. Or, The articles of the true religion, all of them exhibited in the express words of the Old Testament*, (Boston: Printed by B. Green and J. Allen, 1669), 4.

¹⁶² Mather, *Faith of the Fathers*, 5, 23.

¹⁶³ Jacob Marcus reads the texts’ primary audience being other New England ministers and Hoberman contends that the text also functioned as a jeremiad for the laity of the Congregationalist, as a means of galvanizing them towards adopting Mather’s own views about the conversion of the Jews. Hoberman’s reading is helpful in situating Mather’s writings within broader ministerial anxieties in the wake of the Glorious Revolution and New England’s shifting goals in relation to Great Britain. Despite Mather sending a copy of the text to the Frazon’s, the printing of the text indicates a wider audience supports the audience being mostly ministers and Congregationalists, not Jews themselves. See Hoberman, 75.

¹⁶⁴ Sewall, 80.

register to them (and likely their peers in London, much like they did with the Wôpanâak Bible) the capacity of their Gospel to reach the entire western hemisphere.

Mather's *La Fe Del Christiano* embodied New England ministers' dual overconfidence in the universality of Protestant genres and the printing presses' ability to translate the superiority of Anglo-Protestant theologies over Catholicism for all Spanish-speakers, both Catholics and Jews. The text opens:

La Fe del Christiano: En Veyntequatro Articulos de la Institucion de *CHRISTO*. Embiada A LOS ESPAÑÓLES, Paraque abran sus ojos, y paraque fe Conviertan de las Tinieblas a la luz, y de la potestad de Satanas a Dios. Paraque reciban por la Fe que es en JESU CHRISTO, Remission de peccados, y Suerte Entre los *Sanctificados*.

The Faith of the Christian: In Twenty-Four Articles of *CHRIST'S* Institution. Sent out TO THE SPANISH, so they might open their eyes, and turn from the darkness to the light, and from Satan's power to God's: So they may receive through the faith that is in JESUS CHRIST, remission of sins, and be [counted] among the Elect.¹⁶⁵

The themes and topics covered in *La Fe Del Christiano* announced New England Puritanism's ideological triumph over Catholic theology writ large. For example, entry XXIII titled "On the sacraments of the church" argued that there are only two sacraments, baptism (citing Matthew 12:18-19) and holy communion (citing 1 Cor. 11:23-26), compared to the seven established in the Catholic Church after the Council of Trent in the 1540s. The text also offered a Protestant interpretation on the sacrament of communion. Mather's translation not only asserted the symbolic nature of the act, contrary to Catholic teachings on transubstantiation or the literal transformation of the bread into Christ's body, but he also preserved the King James Version's

¹⁶⁵ English translation from Griesz, 256. An original copy of the text also appears in Evans Early American Imprints. For the translation, it adhered closely to Griesz's except that I changed the translation of "Suerte" a conjugation of the verb "Sortear" from its more direct translation from "sorted" to "counted," the latter of which I believe adheres closer to Calvinist phrasing around the notion of election and better communicates the Protestant nature of this text. The tenor is clear for both, however, in that it communicates predestination, in that it is God who determines the final destination of an individual's soul.

rendition of 1 Cor. 11:25 which preserved the *sola scriptura* translation of “New Testament” in the script as if the literal Protestant bible itself was the primary focus of the verses: “In the same way he took the cup also, after having Dined, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my Blood: Do this every time you drink it, in memory of me. For in doing this, we proclaim the death of the Lord until he should come again.”¹⁶⁶ In a later section, Mather also argued that “Jesus Christ is the only Head of his church; and there is no other Sovereign over the Consciences of Christians” in a direct commentary to Catholics’ views on the pope as Christ’s appointed head of the church. Indeed, concerns about the papacy not only united Protestants across the Atlantic, but shaped much of what they understood to be the proper exercise of religion.¹⁶⁷ Betraying any attempt at conciliatory dialogue, Mather concluded about the papacy, “The Pope in Rome is the Antichrist; and the man of Sin, described and predicted in the word of our Lord Jesus Christ. II THESSAL. Chap. 2 3-8.”¹⁶⁸ By translating ultimately Anglo-Protestant rebuttals against key Catholic doctrines, Mather exuded a confidence in Protestant logics and genres that could speak and address all Spanish speakers.

However, the material circumstances around *La Fe Del Christiano*’s production and circulation suggested that even as it was produced in different language, the primary audience for it was still other Protestants. While one might expect it to have traveled along printers’ and booksellers’ transatlantic networks to eventually reach publishers in New Spain, it was more likely that Mather packaged them himself and hand-delivered bundles of copies to parishioners and peers.¹⁶⁹ This was how the Frazons secured their copy but there was little evidence that *La*

¹⁶⁶ Mather, *La Fe del Christiano en veyntequatro articulos de la institucion de Christo embiada a los espanoles, paraque abran sus ojos y paraque se conviertan de las Tinieblas a la Luz* (Boston: Printed by B. Green and J. Allen, 1699), 9. Translation also provided from Gruesz, 260.

¹⁶⁷ See Kidd, *Protestant Interest*.

¹⁶⁸ Mather, *La Fe del Christiano*, 9.

¹⁶⁹ Gruesz, 178.

Fe Del Christiano reached the broader Americas. However, Mather did receive an anonymous letter from a correspondent in London reporting that his “*Spanish Faith* is gone further, than it may be, [Mather] thought for” and was received well by a “*Spanish, or Portuguese* Proselyte” (presumably to Protestantism) residing in Holland. Mather records, “This *Portuguese* Proselyte, is of a very good family, in his own Countrey, and was in orders there. And he does declare, that *Portugal* is very ripe for Reformation, if it were well sett afoot there.”¹⁷⁰ Taking this account seriously (given Mather’s history of imagining conversions, it would be good to take this account with some suspicion), it suggested that even in Europe, the intended audience for this text were fellow Protestants.

In addition, its low production quality underscored how little English publishers actually valued Spanish as a language for even Protestant uses. Certainly, it paled in comparison to the decorated Eliot Bible which celebrated New England Puritans’ performance of Wôpanâak in London or even Wôpanâak translations of Mather to New England congregants. *La Fe Del Christiano* was produced by an anonymous Boston printer whose accommodations reflected a shoddy approach to printed Spanish. The title and subtitles were not aligned properly, the tilde in Spanish characters had to be crudely added to “Ns”, and even appending the off-line “o” to the end of Mather’s name, as if translating his own name into Spanish might perform his Spanish-speakers’ otherness to his otherwise English audience. As Kirsten Silva Gruesz remarks about the text’s material history, “These flaws suggest an unusually hurried job, a journeyman’s work, a project struggling to justify the time and expense it cost.”¹⁷¹ One can surmise from this that whatever little Spanish was valued by Anglo-Protestant ministers paralleled and influenced the

¹⁷⁰ Mather, *Diary, 1709-1724*, 402.

¹⁷¹ Gruesz, 21.

extent to which English colonial publishers may see any potential future for the language through their printing presses.

Image redacted due to copyright concerns.

Figure 2.5: La Fe del Christiano (1699) by Cotton Mather, Image from Early American Imprints, Evans Digital Collection

The earliest moments of English Spanish production ensured the persistent Anglo-Protestant character of eighteenth-century colonial publications, despite the presence and public life of multilingual colonial Jews and Catholics who lived alongside English Protestants. By the 1770s and 1780s, there were estimated to have been anywhere from 1000 to 2500 Jews and anywhere around 20,000 Catholics in the British colonies.¹⁷² Indeed, many of them learned and practiced English alongside other languages so as to maintain transatlantic connections across Europe and the Americas. The Sephardic Jews in Newport shared Spanish as a shared language with Karigal and it signaled to them a connected Jewish diaspora persisting despite the Inquisition and Protestant conversion cultures in London and the colonies. Similarly, Ashkenazi Jews like Abigail Franks leaned into both Hebrew and Spanish to negotiate her family's

¹⁷² Figures on Jews were drawn from Jonathan Sarna, *American Judaism: A History, Second Edition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 31. On Catholic figures, see Leslie Woodcock Tentler, *American Catholics: A History*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020), 58. Most figures estimate anywhere between 20,000 and 35,000, but the best estimate might be from a 1788 letter from bishop John Carroll by totaling his estimates of Catholics in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. See John Carroll to Cardinal Antonelli, Mar. 1, 1785, Carroll Papers, vol. 1, 179-180. It is worth mentioning that while it's likely most Sephardic Jews spoke Spanish (compared to the Ashkenazi Jewish migrations from eastern Europe in the nineteenth-century, colonial American Catholics differed widely in their native language, comprising French, English, and German for example.

increasing assimilation to Anglo-Protestant New York and the formation of their own Jewish identity within transatlantic contexts.¹⁷³ Indeed, throughout the 1730s the *hazzans* at Congregation Shearith, from Moses Lopez de Fonseca through David Mendez Machado, taught the children attending synagogue Hebrew, Spanish, and Portuguese as well.¹⁷⁴ In her letters to her son Naphtali in London, Franks proudly recounts the education of her daughter Phila, likely as a reminder to her son of his own as well: she “Learns French Spanish Hebrew and writing in the morning... [Her instructor Mr. Lopas] Tells me he is Surprised at her advancement in ye Spanish.”¹⁷⁵ Franks herself incorporates some of the Spanish she learned from the Sephardic Jews in her congregation, despite persistent divisions between the Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews which marred her experience at Congregation Shearith Israel in New York. In another letter to her son describing the death of an acquaintance’s husband, she recounts the phrase “dolor de Codo Y: dolor de Esposo Devello mucho mas duro poco,” (could be translated to an idiom the pain of an elbow and pain of a spouse hurts a lot, but lasts a short time) which she connects to a passage in Genesis 38:12, an account of the biblical character Judah when he “lost his wife and was Comforted.”¹⁷⁶ These lived instances of Spanish among diasporic communities provided an important foil to how Spanish was produced by and for Anglo-Protestant ministers.

Much like Harvard’s investment in its students learning Hebrew, Spanish was similarly promoted by American educational institutions, seemingly for strictly English uses and

¹⁷³ For more examples illustrating the role of Spanish and Portuguese in establishing and maintaining these connections across New York, Newport, Philadelphia, Barbados, Jamaica, and Charleston, see R.D. Barnett, “The Correspondence of the Mahamad of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation of London during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” *Transactions (Jewish Historical Society of England)*, vol. XX (1964).

¹⁷⁴ See David and Tamar de Sola Pool, *An Old faith in the New World; portrait of Shearith Israel, 1654-1954*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955).

¹⁷⁵ Abigail Bilhah Levy Franks to Naphtali Franks, October 7, 1733. Digital versions of the letters were published in *The Lee Max Friedman Collection of American Jewish colonial correspondence: the letters of the Franks family, 1733-1748*, ed. Leo Hershkowitz and Isidore S. Meyer, (Waltham, MA: American Jewish Historical Society, 1968).

¹⁷⁶ Abigail Bilhah Levy Franks to Naphtali Franks, October 30, 1748.

enjoyment of the language. Benjamin Franklin's *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pensilvania* (1749) counted Spanish among one of the important modern languages that would assist colonists (at the time) to be counted among the "Learned Men in all Countries" and promises that they "in their Industry (be) sharpen'd in the Acquisition of them."¹⁷⁷ The Public Academy of the City of Philadelphia's Constitution (later the University of Pennsylvania) would implement Franklin's charge later that year: "the trustees shall with all convenient speed, endeavor to engage persons capable of teaching the French, Spanish, and German languages" and by 1766, appoint Paul Fooks as Professor of both French and Spanish.¹⁷⁸ William and Mary would similarly pursue a professor of Spanish in 1779.¹⁷⁹ The limits of American interests in Spanish writ-large, however, was evident in the quality of Spanish productions by the colonial printing press. This was most evident in comparing the American (1797) and London (1798) editions of the earliest Spanish-language education texts, Rev. Don Felipe Fernandez's *A new practical grammar of the Spanish Language*.

Image redacted due to copyright concerns.

Figure 2.6: London Edition of the tilde (left) vs. American version of the tilde (right), from Gale Primary Sources, Eighteenth Century Collections Online

¹⁷⁷ Benjamin Franklin, *Proposals Relating to the education of the youth in Pensilvania*, (Philadelphia: Printed in the Year 1749).

¹⁷⁸ Quotes from Thomas Harrison Montgomery, *A History of the University of Pennsylvania from its Foundation to 1770*, (Philadelphia: G.W. Jacobs & Company, 1900), 49.

¹⁷⁹ For more on this history, also see Sturgis E. Leavitt, "The Teaching of Spanish in the United States," *Hispania*, 44, no. 4 (Dec. 1961): 591-625.

Comparing the two images above, the colonial printing press was still compromising n-types to print the tilde instead of ordering specialized ñ-type which appeared in the London edition.

However there were scattered appearances of the ñ-type in the American edition, they were quite rare and might indicate the unique access American printers Thomas and William Bradford had to English wares and markets.¹⁸⁰ These differences appeared even more starkly when considering the intended audiences for each edition. The London edition expected both British students and “Spaniards” as readers of the textbook, as indicated in the title “*The whole in Spanish and English, and calculated to render the Spanish Language easy, comprehensive, and entertaining.* TO WHICH IS PREFIXED An ENGLISH GRAMMAR, FOR THE USE OF SPANIARDS.”

The combination of the Spanish textbook and the English grammar served as a kind of bridge between two linguistic communities. In contrast, the American edition not only removed “FOR THE USE OF SPANIARDS” from the title, but also cut out the entirety of “An ENGLISH GRAMMAR” which comprised of an entire fifty pages to assist non-English speakers. In many ways, the London edition seems to expect a much wider audience for its Spanish productions than does the American edition.

¹⁸⁰ Indeed, they published for English philosopher Joseph Priestly, who was also worked closely with Benjamin Franklin, and English political pamphleteer William Corbett. It was likely that it was these English connections that may have helped them secure text-types. Given the absence of a type-foundry in the United States until 1815, it was common in this period for printers to try and procure types from London like Thomas did. See footnote 55.

Image redacted due to copyright concerns.

*Figure 2.7: The London Edition (left) compared to the American Edition (right),
from Gale Primary Sources, Eighteenth Century Collections Online*

The persistent Anglo-Protestant and predominantly English-literate audience for whom Spanish was produced by the English colonial printing press would shape the frustrations and failure of Santiago Puglia's attempts to enjoin Spanish into the American public sphere. Puglia was famously known as a Spanish translator to Thomas Jefferson, though in his narrative he confessed that he was actually Italian and hailed from Genoa: "*Aunque ninguna confesion se me pide, no puedo dexar de decir en primer lugar que soy Genovés.*" (Even though no confession has been asked of me, I cannot help but say in the first place that I am Genoese). Yet despite the contradictions in how others might perceive him and what he was known for, he nevertheless saw Spanish as a way of committing more fully to the new American government which aligned with his own political views. As he wrote, "*muy al contrario siendo su único objeto de probar que no es Espanol. Un alma que tiene democrática disposicion niega y aborrece su Patria, si*

tiene otro Gobierno menos del popular.”¹⁸¹ (On the contrary, his sole objective being to prove he is not Spanish. A soul that has a democratic disposition denies and hates its homeland if it has another government more popular). To put it another way, Puglia was not invested in asserting the authenticity of his Spanish experience, but rather he was a self-fashioned Spanish-speaker who embraced America through its political ideals. He did not provide a clear answer as to his decision to opt for Spanish over Italian, providing only the following defense: “*Probablemente preguntarán porque en Castellano y no en Italiano? mas sin quermarme la sangre replico que no me dió la regaladisima gana: si esta respuesta no llegáre á quadrarles, acudan á Salamanca por otra mayor.*” (You will probably ask, *why [write in] in Castilian Spanish and not in Italian?* Without growing angry, I reply *that I simply do not want to*: and if that answer does not square with you, go to Salamanca for something better).¹⁸² Puglia would sometimes insert Italian or Latin alongside Spanish when struggling to translate certain words. While such accommodations frustrated his peers’ attempts to map language onto clear national identities, on the whole it sufficed for his connections that he understood a language they needed to translate.¹⁸³

In addition to his self-fashioned identity, Puglia recruited his performances of American democracy in a similar manner to Anglo-Protestant critiques of Spanish Catholicism. *El Desengaño del Hombre* (Man Undeceived) was a religio-political tract that strove to “undeceive” its Spanish readers about the Catholic Church and the Spanish empire. It relied on Protestant

¹⁸¹ Santiago F. Puglia, “Prologo,” *El Desengaño del Hombre, compuesto por Santiago Felipe Puglia, Maestro de la Lengua Castellana en Esta Metropoli* (Philadelphia: Francisco Bailey, 1796), iv. Translations from Puglia’s texts are my own unless otherwise stated.

¹⁸² Ibid., v

¹⁸³ See Emily Garcia, “Interdependence and Interlingualism in Santiago Puglia’s *El Desengaño del hombre*,” *Early American Literature*, 53, no. 3 (2018):745-772. Garcia adopts the term interlingualism which signals Puglia’s own resistance to clear categories of English, Italian, and Spanish in his own work: “to abandon our notion that they move monolithically from Europe to the Americas, from east to west, and from north to south.” In short, Garcia celebrates the unwieldiness and awkwardness of Puglia’s identity which baffled both his readers and scholars alike. My preference for the framework “self-fashioning” parallels some of her moves, but with a particular attention to his interplay of democracy and Catholicism.”

genres of talking about scripture, using phrases like “*fuera preciso examinar por extenso las Escrituras Sagradas*” (it would be accurate to examine the sacred scriptures), “*la simple lectura de la mencionada Biblia no da lugar a estudio o interpretacion...*” (the simple reading of the mentioned Bible does not lead to a study or interpretation), and “*Si la Sagrada Escritura (mi guia y norte en esta obra) puede hacer autoridad...*” (If the sacred Scripture [my guide and direction in this work] can be authoritative...) and footnotes exegeting Bible verses, whether or not his imagined audience of Catholic priests actually used scripture to justify the authority of their religious offices.¹⁸⁴ His goal was to salvage Catholicism from its association and role in justifying the despotism of the Spanish monarchy and church, appropriately titling a chapter in his text, “*Sacudir el Yugo del Despotismo no Ofender Las Maximas de Religion.*” (Shaking off the yolk of despotism does not offend the maxims of Religion), by differentiating religious institutions, roles, and other functions altogether from governing society writ large. Drawing on the works of famous Enlightenment thinkers like Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Thomas Paine, Puglia argued that religion should be treated as a distinct sphere from political discourse and institutions, a solution all-too familiar to his American contemporaries: “*he aqui la Religion mezclada con el seglar, lo spiritual con lo temporal, lo santo con lo profane, y de esta suerte todo se Vuelve confusion, guerras, y destrozos... Las distinciones (entre la religion y el seglar) les matan, la luz les ciega, y la evidencia les atiza una rabia interna sin desahogo,*” (Here religion mixes with the secular, the spiritual with the temporal, the sacred with the profane, and from all this results confusion, war, and destruction... Distinctions [between religion and secular] kills them, the light blinds them, and evidence stirs up in them an internal rage without relief or rest).¹⁸⁵ Puglia’s views on religion were far from original and only reflected American

¹⁸⁴ Puglia, *El Desengaño*, 10, 15, 32.

¹⁸⁵ Puglia, *El Desengaño*, 69.

views towards disestablishment. Mirroring Jefferson's and many other Founding Fathers' writings on the matter which would set the precedent for the idea of the "wall of separation of church and state," Puglia argued: "*La Religion no tiene otro objeto que Dios, esto es amarle, servirle y adorarle, por la contra el Gobierno politico procura el bien publico, la paz, Departamento, y Felicidad del Estado.*" (Religion has no other objective than to God, this is to love him, serve him and adore him, and on the other hand the political Government seeks the good of the public, the peace, advancement and happiness of the State).¹⁸⁶ Given that the primary object of his critique were the political roles the clergy continued to play within the Spanish empire, his critique of Catholicism and his push for an individualized religiosity, unencumbered by the mediating role of clergy in both divine and political matters, resembled the American Protestantism already familiar to his audience: "*El Gobierno spiritual no tiene absolutamente que ver con el temporal, y si los Clérigos con religiosos influxos procuraren entremeterse en ellos, os aseguro que es la mayor impocison que un Pueblo libre puede tolerar.*" (The spiritual Government has absolutely nothing to do with the temporal, and if the Clerics with religious influence try to interfere in them, I assure you that it is the worst imposition that a free people should tolerate).¹⁸⁷ Puglia himself professes to not be religious, "*no soy religioso,*" but the contradictions stemming from his investments in an individualized Catholicism likely resonated with the long-standing American Protestant critique of Spanish Catholicism such as the ones as echoed by Mather in *La Fe Del Christiano*.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ Puglia, *El Desengaño*, 70.

¹⁸⁷ Puglia, *El Desengaño*, 108.

¹⁸⁸ It is worth noting that his sense of being "religious" within a Catholic framework leaves much room for spirituality that is not tethered to a particular religious office (much like how secular priests are those unaffiliated with a specific religious order, so too does Puglia seem to be championing a religious identity that could claim to be independent of another institution). However, it is also possible that Puglia's adoption of this framework says much more about his admiration of other Enlightenment thinkers than it does about a solution from Catholicism. Despite his admiration for Paine, *Age of Reason* was published at around the same year as *Desengaño* and so it makes one wonder how he might have written this if it considered Paine's own personal views on religion.

Much like Mather's text, the most interested audience for Puglia's self-fashioning was his Anglo-American peers. Having just finished writing *El Desengaño*, he needed subscriptions from Philadelphians who valued a project that aspired to extend the ideals of the American Revolution to the Spanish Americas. He proceeded to publish a short English extract of a chapter from *El Desengaño* relying strictly on the ways he attached it to the broader American project: "The Author conceives that the great part of the Friends of Liberty in this country having no knowledge of the Spanish, will become Subscribers merely to encourage the publication."¹⁸⁹ The shorter edition titled *A short extract (concerning the rights of man and titles) from the work entitled Man Undeceived. Written in Spanish by James Ph. De Puglia* was distributed for free in Philadelphia, yet after one month had only secured him three subscriptions.¹⁹⁰ His appeal to Protestants appeared in how he carefully curated the excerpt. Puglia foregrounded the section which best obscured his desire to reform Spanish Catholicism under the guise that his true intentions were to reassert American views on democracy and aristocracy. While *A Short Extract* failed to secure him many subscribers among the broader American public, his close network of powerful political figures, consisting of founding fathers like Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, nevertheless saw merit in the work and subscribed to its publication. One benefactor's tremendous financial support behind the project ultimately allowed Puglia to publish his performance of a Spanish-American argument for Catholic democracy.¹⁹¹ Why they subscribed, we can only guess. However, the broader context of growing American interests in securing Spanish territories in what is now Louisiana, Florida, and Mississippi, Puglia's publication

¹⁸⁹ Puglia, *A Short Extract (concerning the rights of man and titles) from the work entitled Man undeceived*, 1793.

¹⁹⁰ Drawn from a footnote citing Charles Evans in Vol IX of his *American Bibliography* (Chicago: Columbia Press, 1925). See footnote 16 from Merle E. Simmons, *Santiago F. Puglia: An Early Philadelphia Propagandist for Spanish American Independence*, (The University of North Carolina Press, 1977).

¹⁹¹ Simmons draws a connection between Citizen Genet's ambitions in Spanish-owned territories and arrival in the American colonies, with Puglia's publication. See Simmons, 21-22.

promised to be an important literary weapon to gather support in those territories against the Spanish empire. Nevertheless, Puglia's attempts to gather the attention of fellow Protestants fell on deaf ears, likely because a Spanish-language text promised little to the average Anglo-Protestant Americas reader.

Image redacted due to copyright concerns.

Figure 2.8: A comparison of the two works, (Left) the English extract meant to solicit support for the (Right) the full work.

Even with support from key political figures in Philadelphia, then the capital of the United States, the printing press remained ill-prepared for literary weapons in service of American ambitions of empire. There was certainly little trouble printing the excerpted version. However, there were significant challenges publishing the longer form text entirely in Spanish. Publishers delayed for months with processing the manuscript, in part because of the 1793 Yellow Fever which led to the departure of many publishers from Philadelphia, but also the demands of printing another language entirely. As Philadelphian printer Francisco Bailey

explained why he delayed Puglia's text from publishing in June to November, he pinned it on *las dificultades que naturalmente acarrea una impression in un Idioma extranjero.*" (the difficulties that naturally accompany a print job in a foreign language).¹⁹² By this, Bailey likely referred to both mechanical and labor components of publishing. He did not have someone literate in Spanish to both set the types and proofread the pages. These linguistic constraints had long been shaping what the colonial printing press could and could not produce since John Eliot first relied on Native American ingenuity and skill to produce the Eliot Indian Bible in Wôpanâak, a language in which he had little expertise. Given the skilled labor and effort needed to produce the text, Puglia reluctantly volunteered to set the types and review the pages for corrections. It was a difficult task for Puglia, as he recounted in his work, "*Por no haberse criado en esa arte, figurósele de pronto un obstáculo insuperable, mas considerado que volenti nihil difficile empenóse en la impression, continua con perseverencia, y es resuelto de no pararse hasta que la ponga a la vela.*" (Despite not having been trained in that art, he quickly learned that it was an insurmountable obstacle, but considering that 'nothing is impossible' he proceeded with printing, continuing with perseverance, and he was determined not to stop until the candle burned out).¹⁹³ The arduous process left such an impression on him that he felt it necessary to explain to the reader that any shortcomings to the text be considered in light of the fact that he was a writer-turned printer: "*Repara, Lector, los atajos que encuentran las empresas de un Pobre, y no extrañarás de ver que la necesidad haya vuelto un Escritor en medioimpresor.*" Take account, reader, of those shortcuts taken by the company of the poor man,

¹⁹² Puglia, "Prologo," *El Desengaño*, ix.

¹⁹³ Puglia, "Prologo," *El Desengaño*, iv. There wasn't a clear translation for *volenti nihil difficile* because it was italicized, suggesting it may have been non-Spanish, maybe Italian or Latin. However based on the context that he was invested in persevering, this was the closest approximation I could surmise from parsing and breaking down what the text could literally mean.

and you will not be surprised to see that the need has made a Writer into a Printer.”¹⁹⁴ Puglia’s explanations and effort might seem circumstantial, but when framed within the many decades-long struggle by the colonial printing press to produce non-English texts, such frustrations should be seen as a feature rather than a fault of the printing press itself.

Even after all his effort to ensure that the text would be printed, *El Desengaño del Hombre* was not received well by both his English interlocutors and the Spanish readers he hoped to reach. The following year, Puglia’s publications had already been banned by Spanish Inquisition before it even reached readers in New Spain. Shortly after Puglia published his tract, an Inquisition broadside appeared in Mexico City which drew attention to *El Desengaño del Hombre*. After calling the author “*orgullosa, altivo, inobediente, blasfemo, traidor..*” (proud, haughty, disobedient, blasphemous, traitor), the drafters of the broadside proceeded to frame Puglia’s message as ultimately wanting to incite rebellion against religion and empire: “*despues de destronar á la Católica Religion, de su divina Autoridad, e institucion, calificandola de fanatismo, han emprehendido ultrajar, hacer odiosa, y aun arrancar desde los cimientos la Autoridad, y Magestad Real.*” (after dethroning the Catholic Religion from its divine Authority and institution, qualifying it as fanaticism, they proceeded to outrage, make hateful, and even tear from the foundations the royal authority and majesty). Puglia may not have disagreed altogether with how they read his text since it implied his Spanish critics correctly discerned his political aspirations. But given that his readers understood the text well, they were also able to use Puglia’s confession about being Genoese to bolster their case against his self-fashioning. They attacked his claims to being a “*Maestro de la lengua Castellana en este Metropoli*” (Teacher of Castilian Spanish in this city) by questioning what right he has to speak in and address Spanish speakers. They also critiqued Puglia’s own claims to expertise in the language:

¹⁹⁴ Puglia, “Prologo,” *El Desengaño*, x.

“y este el empeño del Autor, que desde un rincon del Orbe, toca sur onca trompeta, para excitar a la revelion mas infame, a la mas enorme traycion, y a una horrenda Anarquia a los fieles Pueblos de la Nacion Española, escribiendoles en su idioma, que el mismo ignora.” (and this is the commitment of the Author, who from this corner of the globe, blasts his trumpet, to incite the most infamous rebellion, the most enormous betrayal, and a horrendous anarchy to the faithful People of the Spanish Nation, writing in a language which he himself does not know).¹⁹⁵ It was unlikely that residents of Mexico City were even familiar with the text referenced in the broadside before the Inquisitors published its dangers.¹⁹⁶ In a way, Puglia’s performed humility and self-fashioning in print only translated to Spanish readers as anything but modest nor worthy of celebration. On the American front, there did not seem to be much excitement surrounding *El Desengaño*. However, one of its biggest supporters, Philadelphian printer Matthew Carey, would republish *El Desengaño del Hombre* in 1822 but this time without much of the biographical detail that appears in the 1794 version. Carey likely saw the merits of Puglia’s attempts to illustrate Catholicism’s amenability to American democracy. However, whether he saw Puglia’s self-fashioning itself as a distraction or as an opening for opponents to discredit the work altogether as the Inquisition did, Carey decided against allowing the author’s self-framing to distract from his broader arguments.

At the turn of the decade, Philadelphian publishers began printing more and more Spanish-language texts after Puglia’s *El Desengaño del Hombre* with the intention of breaking into a different market altogether: the Spanish Americas book trade. This interest could be

¹⁹⁵ Tribunal de la Inquisicion en Mexico, “Nos los inquisidores apostolicos contra la Heretica pravedad, y apostasia en la ciudad de Mexico, Estados, Y Provincias de esta Nueva-Espana,” (Mexico City, 1797). 10095.F Zinman, Library Company of Philadelphia.

¹⁹⁶ Simmons was able to trace the merchant connections that led to a copy of Puglia’s text making its way to Inquisitors – suffice to say, it did not even make it to Mexico City before it was already outrightly banned. See Simmons, Chapter III.

attributed to the growing number of Spaniards who either passed by or settled in Spain. As historian Simmons observed, “Philadelphia became for Spanish and Spanish American expatriates second only to London as a center for their political and literary activities.”¹⁹⁷ Texts like *Reflexiones sobre el comercio de Espana con sus colonias en tiempo de Guerra* (1799) and *Sobre lo que debe hacer un principe que tenga colonias a gran distancia* (1803) followed from *El Desengaño del Hombre*, with the same target audience in mind for a similar message: to demonstrate the superiority of America to Spain to the Spanish colonies.

Image redacted due to copyright concerns.

Figure 2.9: Specimen Type for Binny & Ronaldson, showcasing Hebrew and Greek Productions (courtesy of archive.org)

By 1812, publishers likely had more access to different types after Scotsmen Archibald Binny and James Ronaldson established the first permanent type-foundry in Philadelphia, named Binny & Ronaldson. It promised to match the productions and abilities of “the first Founderies of

¹⁹⁷ Simmons, 56.

Europe.” The specimen book showcased the abilities to print in French, German, Greek, and Hebrew. While it did not display Spanish in the same way, the preface assured readers that “All their Founts, from double pica downwards, are furnished with accents used in the Spanish language; and they will be added to those of a larger size if it should be found necessary.”¹⁹⁸ With little difficulty printing in non-English languages, publishers could begin to imagine other markets for their productions. Hence, the anglophile print market could no longer claim to any particular universality, at least when it comes to international relations. However, while publishers could imagine a large segment of Spanish speakers outside of the United States as a new potential target market for their wares, the logic similarly renders Spanish as a language that was always outside or external to the nation’s sense of itself as well. In other words, these new mechanical developments were recruited for the internationalism of the United States without having to recognize the already-present multilingualism of the domestic markets.

Puglia likely realized this to be the case which explained his attitudes towards print after publishing *El Desengaño del Hombre*. While he originally conceived of publishing the rest of his works in Spanish, he opted to publish them in English instead. This move shifted his intended audience away from the broader Spanish America and towards the Philadelphian English-literate public. In *El Desengaño del Hombre*, he named six manuscripts that he had already finished writing by 1795 and had hoped to publish, but never did. One of them, which he originally titled *La Pena Capital*, would eventually appear entirely in English in the Philadelphian newspaper *The Democratic Press*. Another was a philosophical work that used geometry and mathematics to describe “*una nueva máquina para medir la agitacion del viento, contribuye muchisimo al conocimiento del camino que puede hacer el Globo en qualquiera tiempo.*” (a new machine to

¹⁹⁸ *Specimen of Printing Types, From the Foundry of Binny & Ronaldson*, (Philadelphia: Fry and Kammerer, 1812), 1-2.

measure the agitation of the wind, contributing greatly to the knowledge of the path that it can take on the Earth at any time) which would remain unpublished.¹⁹⁹ But perhaps the work that seemed the closest to his own was another text titled *Discursos Sobre el Sacramento de la Penitencia* (Discourses on the Sacrament of Penance) which he describes as “*Obra Teologica en la qual se propone al Almo Christiano el simple y recto modo de buscar Segura tranquilidad de conciencia*” (A theological work of which is proposed to the Christian the simple and correct way of finding the safe tranquility of conscience). *Discursos* most clearly illustrated his continuing investment in Catholicism and finding ways for it to align with broader ideological, political, and theological trends in the Early Republic. Yet, for various reasons revolving around the publication troubles of *El Desengaño* and the occasions for publishing Spanish in Philadelphia at the time, such a Catholic innovation never saw the printing press.

Both Monis and Puglia aspired to publish more texts in different languages within the Anglo-Protestant public sphere. Unfortunately for these authors, mechanical constraints around the printing press not only made their projects expensive and unfeasible, but persistent ideologies around what the printing press could and should produce thwarted their attempts to infuse more Hebrew and more Spanish for non-Anglo Protestant consumption within the British colonies. In a way, limitations like the availability of text-types and of skilled labor to set the types erected a barrier to entry that cordoned the British colonial public sphere as a space for strictly Anglo-Protestant discourse, despite its authors’ many performed attempts to signal the universal, international, or timeless through the printing press. In a way, the public sphere was only as public as it needed its authors to perform their universalizing ambitions, and accessible only insofar as one agrees to adhere to its Anglo-Protestant rules of engagement.

¹⁹⁹ Puglia, “Prologo,” *El Desengaño*, xviii.

Chapter 3

Printing and Meddling Ministers

On November 28, 1765, Samson Occom wrote a short autobiography that he intended to publish but it never reached the printing press. The text was brief. It opened: “Since there is great miss Representations by Some Concerning my Life and Education; I take this opportunity to give the World in a few Words, the true account of my Education.”²⁰⁰ Its author recounted that he “was born a Heathen in Mmoyanheecunnuck alias Mohegan in N. London North America” and that his conversion came when “there was a great Stir of Religion in these Parts of the World both amongst the Indians as well as the English.”²⁰¹ At age seventeen he learned to read English and continued his education studying with minister Eleazar Wheelock. Occom closed his account reassuring his readers that “this is the true account of my Education.” Three years later, Occom drafted an expanded second version of his autobiography. In a tone much bolder than before, he reiterated his desire to publish his account: “Tho’ it is against my mind to give a History of myself & publish it Whilst I am alive, Yet to do Justice to my Self, and to those who may desire to know Something concerning me – and for the Honor of Religion, I will Venture to give a Short Narrative of my Life.”²⁰² Unfortunately, neither drafts would reach the printing press thanks in large part to his dependence on Anglo-Protestant ministerial channels and connections.

Seventeenth-century religious printing in the British colonies often passed through the curatorial eye of ministers. From New England to Virginia, the printing press was used primarily for religious and political authorities to publish edicts, sermons, or commemorate important

²⁰⁰ Joanna Brooks, *The Collected Writings of Samson Occom, Mohegan: Literature and Leadership in Eighteenth-Century Native America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 51-52

²⁰¹ Ibid. Occom was likely referring to the Great Awakening revivals in the 1740s. See Thomas Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009) and more recently, Douglas Winiarski, *Darkness Falls on the Land of Light: Experiencing Religious Awakenings in Eighteenth-Century New England*, (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017). On the Great Awakening among Native American Christians, see Fisher, *The Indian Great Awakening*.

²⁰² Samson Occom, “Autobiography, undated,” TOC.

events. Since print was associated with governing institutions and bodies, it was common for ministers to participate in the production process, sometimes to censor works and other times to act as editor. One famous example was Mary Rowlandson's *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God: Being a Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (1682). It was attested to have been "written by her own hand, for her private use" and then "now made public at the earnest desire of some friends and for the benefit of the afflicted," although the tenor and style evidence the imprint of famous Puritan minister Increase Mather. Rowlandson likely wrote to reflect on her experiences as an English captive of the Wampanoag traversing through the forests of New England. As Mather assured his readers in the preface, "This Narrative was Penned by this Gentlewoman her self, to be to her a Memorandum of Gods dealing with her, that she might never forget, but remember the same, and several circumstances thereof, all the dates of her life." The Boston minister used Rowlandson's account about her exemplary piety as a way to preach to readers about the important role ministers played in New England spirituality. As the preface continued, "read, therefore, peruse, ponder, and from hence lay up something from the experience of another, against thine own turn come: that so thou also through patience and consolation."²⁰³ Mather's invitation for readers to preparing themselves tethered readers to the words and authority of ministers like himself. As Catherine Brekus noted about this dynamic, "[Ministers] used women's writings to strengthen religious institutions, to provide models of self-effacing piety for others to emulate, and to reinforce restrictive ideas about gender."²⁰⁴ By and large, religious publications were a way for ministers to buttress their public authority and extends for readers the role they played within their own congregations.

²⁰³ Mary Rowlandson, "Preface," *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. May Rowlandson*, (1682).

²⁰⁴ Brekus, "Writing Religious Experience: Women's Authorship in Early America," 483.

By the eighteenth century, the proliferation of printers opened room for more authors to enter the public sphere without the curatorial influence of ministers. At least, that was what should have happened. Certainly, a larger market of publishers opened opportunities for aspiring authors to circumvent ministerial curation. At the same time, however, ministers' imprints on religious publications never entirely went away. They persisted, especially manuscripts written by racialized and heterodox authors. Many aspired for their works to reach the printing press but instead, their works were either edited heavily or rejected from printing altogether thanks to meddling religious leaders. Ministers continued to be seen by their peers, government officials, and publishers as important intermediaries between aspiring public figures and the moral fiber of society. In addition, booksellers and printers likely saw new authors as risky investments and ministerial support for religious publications hedged against financial losses. Indeed, ministers had the ability to speak on behalf of a congregation and often possessed a network of peers who could subscribe to the project. In the same way this power might facilitate publications by authors coming from marginalized authors, so too could it erect barriers to entry. This chapter covers some of these instances whereby religious leaders curated or discouraged manuscripts from appearing in print. They illustrate the different ways seemingly secular literary and market contingencies actually revolved around religious concerns. Ministers mediated the relationship between authors and publishers in ways that highlight important continuities between active ministerial censorship in seventeenth-century print and curatorial practices in the eighteenth century which managed which texts should be read by the broader religious public.

This chapter examines three ways religious leaders stifled religious publications in the late eighteenth century, the period most celebrated for the convergence of print technology and the democratic ideals of the American revolution. In using the word "stifle," I am focusing

specifically on cultural barriers to entry. It produced the same effect as censorship by managing which texts should be appropriate for publication without being entirely reducible to authorial autonomy or self-censorship. The first example illustrates how Anglo-Protestant expectations for Native American publications frustrated attempts by aspiring authors like Mohegan minister Samson Occom to reach a broader audience. While scholars might believe that Occom was free to publish his autobiography whenever and wherever he wanted, the Mohegan minister wrote and aspired to publish within a broader network of Anglo-Protestant ministers whose decisions to speak publicly were regularly constrained by their peers. This section contextualizes Occom's unpublished autobiography within his relationship with missionary Eleazar Wheelock and the latter's own limited encounters with the printing press. The second example explores political authorities' dependence on Anglo-Protestant ministers on matters related to public morality. Specifically, this section analyzes the relationship between the Connecticut General Assembly and a group of Connecticut ministers who deliberated over publishing the controversial writings by deist William Beadle. Beadle was infamously covered by local newspapers for having committed a murder-suicide of his family. His writings clearly anticipated a broader level of readership and it was ultimately at the discretion of ministers to appropriately contextualize and censor whatever sections they deem printable for public consumption. The third section examines how print reluctance becomes a form of religious adherence for new religious movements, as illustrated through conflicts between prophet Jemima Wilkinson, follower Abner Brownell, and the broader Society of Universal Friends. Despite wanting to publish on behalf of Wilkinson and the broader community, Brownell could do little without the express approval and consent of his peers. He was only able to publish as an author after severing ties with Wilkinson and even then, the prophet found ways to intervene in the publication process. Instances such as

these created a culture of print reluctance among the Society. It disincentivized further publications from subsequent members to either correct the public record on their beliefs or to provide timeless doctrines for later generations. Through these various means, ministers and leaders of new religious movements stifled religious publications in ways that preserved the dominance of Anglo-Protestant speech in the public sphere.

Mediating Ministers

Occom's unpublished manuscript illustrates the power of ministers as intermediaries between authors and the printing press. Indeed, much of what kept Occom's manuscript unpublished was fellow missionaries' particular own approach to print as a way of asserting the success of their acculturating projects to their financiers. Wheelock's regular reports on Moor's Charity Indian School should have been an appropriate vehicle for Occom to publish his first work. Indeed, Wheelock had already been publishing letters of Mohegan and Mohawk students as evidence of Native English literacy. However, without experience or direct access to Wheelock's connections to assist, Occom could only trust Wheelock to decide how to best address the broader public with regards to his manuscript. The relationship between the two missionaries would ensure that it would remain unpublished. Such was the influence of mediating ministers and the social influence they exert among each other's decisions to publish through the printing press.

Occom wrote his autobiography with every intention of publishing it. He initially conceived of the text as a defense of his own credentials as a Mohican minister: "Since there is great miss Representations by Some Concerning my Life and Education; I take this opportunity to give the World in a few Words, the true Account of my Education."²⁰⁵ Occom's credentials came under question after Wheelock commissioned him to fundraise for Moor's Charity Indian

²⁰⁵ Occom, "Autobiography first draft, 28 Nov 1765," TOC.

School in London after determining that they needed more funds for “three Missionaries Eight School Masters, and two Interpreters.... Together with the necessary supplies for the School which now consists of Twenty [students].”²⁰⁶ However, the members of the Boston board for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel questioned the Mohegan ministers’ qualifications, raising the possibility that Occom may have never been converted, that he was always “bro’t up Regularly and a Christian in all [his] days,” and that he may not even be capable of speaking a Native language.²⁰⁷ The attacks challenged Occom as much as it also critiqued Wheelock’s printed claims about his success in cultivating English literacy among Native communities. Expecting them to publish a more official statement, Occom wrote to Wheelock: “The Adversaries Stand at a Distance Like Shemei, But they don’t Speak a Loud as they did, they not Contrive their Projects in Secret, and it is Supposed they are preparing whips for us (Letters) to Send to Europe by the Same Ship.”²⁰⁸ The only appropriate response would be to correct the public record through the printing press.

For a time, Wheelock agreed that Occom should represent himself in public. In the text, Occom credited Wheelock for much of his training: “and then I went to Revd Mr Wheelocks to learning, and Spent four years there, and was very Weakly most of the Time; this is the true account of my Education.”²⁰⁹ Indeed, Wheelock had been directing and overseeing the Mohican missionary’s appointments for much of his Christian life. In this capacity, he regularly mediated between Occom and the missionary organizations in New England. Knowing this, Occom saw an opportunity to voice his own defense through the printing press. In December 1765, Occom sent a copy of his autobiography with the hopes that Wheelock would include it in that year’s updates

²⁰⁶ Wheelock, “Recommendation,” 15 November 1765, TOC.

²⁰⁷ Occom to Wheelock, 6 December 1765, TOC.

²⁰⁸ Samson Occom, “Journal, 1765, 3,” TOC.

²⁰⁹ Occom, “Autobiography first draft, 28 Nov 1765,” TOC.

on Moor's Charity Indian School. At least for a while, Wheelock considered including it. He prepared an official announcement for "the public Prints" responding to rumors that deny the "Representation made that Mr. Samson Occom an Indian Minister, was bread a Heathen, 'till he had arrived near or quite to the State of Manhood." In the statement, he copied down the Mohegan minister's defense verbatim: he began with "I was born a Heathen in Mouayauhecunnak, alias Mohegan in New London – my Parents were altogether Heathens" and closed, "I do now certify the publick of the Truth of that Matter by giving you his own account of it which he Sent to me from Boston, on hearing the false reports made of that matter and injurious Reports made of that matter just before his Embarkation for Europe."²¹⁰ By January 1766, at least a month after Wheelock received a copy of Occom's autobiography, it was clear that both of them agreed it must be published.

Unfortunately for Occom, his fellow missionary changed his mind. Wheelock decided that perhaps it would be best to defend Occom's reputation, and Moor's Charity Indian School, using his own voice and the reputations of fellow Anglo-Protestant ministers whose affiliations had lent credibility to his efforts of educating Native American children. On February 1766, he wrote a short update regarding Occom's reputation: "false Reports of Peters Coming & of Mr Occom Rectified in the public prints – Feby. 1766." By rectified, he was not referring to Occom's defense but rather what he included in *A Brief Narrative of the Indian Charity-School* (1766) which was published in London later that year. Seeing the board's attack on Occom as an attack on Moor's Charity Indian School, Wheelock filled the publication with attestations by Sir William Johnson, a powerful British colonial official who was closely affiliated with the Mohawks; Governor of Connecticut Thomas Fitch; and several lists of signatories and ministers who signed, "We do therefore most heartily recommend the said [Moor's Charity Indian School]

²¹⁰ Eleazar Wheelock, "Announcement, 20 February 1766," TOC.

as the most probable Method, under the Favour of God, which we can conceive of, for promoting Christian Knowledge among the Heathen Natives of the Country.”²¹¹ Addressing Occom’s credentials more directly, he included a section titled “*Recommendations of the Rev. Mr Occom*” whereby Wheelock replaced the Mohegan minister’s defense with his own account of Occom’s education which was attested by Johnson, fellow ministers, county clerks, and missionaries who spoke about the Mohegan missionaries’ “Pattern of Good Works,” “most catholic Spirit,” and “of good standing in the Presbytery.”²¹² Instead of allowing Occom to speak for himself, Wheelock stepped into the public sphere to assert the integrity of his school in print.

There were many reasons for Wheelock’s decision and an important context was his own strained relationship with the printing press. Despite his title of being the “chief intelligencer of revival news,” his close connection to revivalists like George Whitefield, and the popularity of his hundreds of sermons which he’s preached over the course of the Great Awakening revivals, Wheelock was not as well published as his New Divinity contemporaries like Jonathan Edwards, who continued to publish works like *A Treatise concerning religious affections, in three parts* (1746) and *A Careful and Strict Enquiry into The Modern Prevailing Notions of that Freedom of the Will* (1754), or minister Joseph Bellamy with *True Religion delineated; or Experimental Religion* (1750) and *Sermons upon the following subjects, viz. The divinity of Jesus Christ* (1758). In fact, Wheelock’s first publication was not a thesis on theological matters but a commemorative sermon at the ordination of his good friend and fellow teacher at Moor’s Charity School Benjamin Trumble titled *The Preaching of Christ an expression of God’s great love to sinners*,” (1761). This genre of sermons were almost always requested by the congregation from the printer directly and it was often the case that the speaker was uninvolved with its production

²¹¹ Wheelock, *A Brief Narrative of the Indian Charity-School in Lebanon in Connecticut, New England*, (London: Printed by J. and W. Oliver, 1767), 10.

²¹² Wheelock, *A Brief Narrative of the Indian Charity-School*, 24-29.

outside of providing the manuscript. This context shed light on Wheelock's theological and literary activities as almost always falling outside of the printing press, whether through itinerancy, oral delivery of sermons, or correspondences.²¹³ At least compared to his contemporaries, Wheelock was largely unpublished.

At around the time Wheelock started Moor's Charity Indian School, which he established in 1754 for the express purpose of "Christianizing the Natives of this Land [as] expressly mentioned in the Royal Charter granted to the Colony," he began circulating written updates to his correspondents to raise funds for the school.²¹⁴ In a 1759 update to Whitefield, he shared news about his four students at the school, Occom's ordination, and updates from other revivalists. He also sent his correspondents samples of students' writings to illustrate his success despite the difficulty of operating a school: "I have been put to Difficulty to get a good writing Master The Boys I now have are not equal in their writing to some parts of learning however, I send you a Specimen such as it is."²¹⁵ These elements would become the convention for Wheelock's publications; he would engage with the printing press only insofar as it was related to Moor's Charity Indian School. Perhaps more broadly, print was a medium that he came to associate with celebrating the success of his missionizing and it was there that he commemorated the Anglo-Protestant relationships that made it all possible. Outside of these purposes, Wheelock had very little engagement with the printing press.

Nowhere was Wheelock's approach to print more apparent than in his first print publication on Moor's Indian Charity School. With the assistance of several ministers, Wheelock

²¹³ On sermons, see James Dow McCallum, *Eleazar Wheelock: founder of Dartmouth*, (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Publications, 1939) and for Wheelock's correspondence networks and letters, see John Fea, "Wheelock's World: Letters and Communication of Revival in Great Awakening New England," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, Vol. 109, No. 1, 1999, pgs. 99-144.

²¹⁴ Eleazar Wheelock, *A Plain and Faithful Narrative of the Original Design, Rise, Progress, and present state of the Indian Charity-School at Lebanon, in Connecticut*, (Boston: Printed by Richard and Samuel Draper, 1763), 12.

²¹⁵ Eleazar Wheelock to George Whitefield, 3 November 1759, TOC.

printed his first update in 1763 titled *A Plain and faithful narrative of the original design* with the aim of giving “the Publick a short, plain, and faithful Narrative of the Original Design, Rise, Progress, and present state of the Charity-School... to justify the Undertaking, and all the pains and Expense there has been.”²¹⁶ What likely convinced printers to proceed with its publication was the overwhelming support for the project as evidenced by several letters of recommendations accompanying the text. One letter was addressed to the printers and signed December 31, 1762 by ministers Benjamin Pomroy, Elijah Lothrop, and Nathaniel Whitaker who tried to convince Boston printers Richard and Samuel Draper of the value of Wheelock’s publication: “And we can’t but hope that a recommendatory letter... may serve to satisfy the World, That the charitable Design which that Gentleman is pursuing is, in the judgment of his Neighbors, who are well acquainted with him, and with the affair of his school, neither selfish nor enthusiastic.”²¹⁷ Some letters also promised financial return for the printers to take on the task: “And we having consulted several of the Subscribers who join us... in desiring that the said Letter might be published at the End of said Narrative; that so far as the Credit and Reputation of the Clergy in this neighborhood will influence thereto... to encourage and promote so noble and important an Undertaking.”²¹⁸ All in all, about thirty ministers subscribed to the publication. They all attested to Wheelock’s character and proper financial oversight of Moor’s Charity Indian School: “we look upon it our Duty as Christians... to give our Testimony, That, as we verily believe, a disinterested Regard to the Advancement of the Redeemer’s Kingdom, and the Good of his Majesty’s Dominions in America were the governing Motives which at first induced

²¹⁶ Wheelock, *A Plain and Faithful Narrative*, 10.

²¹⁷ It is worth noting the shift in printers from the Kneelands to Draper. Even with the substantial support for publication, Draper, who was born in Martha’s Vineyard, may have been more open to printing texts on Native education given their proximity to the Mayhew’s education of Natives there but that’s mostly speculation. See Isaiah Thomas, *History of Printing in America*, 147.

²¹⁸ Wheelock, *A Plain and Faithful Narrative*, 52.

the Reverend Mr. Wheelock to enter upon the great Affair.” For Wheelock’s publication, these letters did not only promise potential buyers for the printed text, but they were what Wheelock needed in order to voice his own request to the public on the platform of print.

While Wheelock’s publications celebrated Anglo-Protestant success, they did little to quell dissenting voices that doubted the merits of Moor’s Indian Charity School and the qualifications of its Mohegan ambassador. After hundreds of copies of Wheelock’s 1766 *A Brief Narrative* were printed and circulated in London, attacks on Ocom only continued. One particular penny presses in London published an account that sought to “expose the [Moor’s Charity School] & good Mr Ocom in particular.” Even though some of Ocom’s supporters read them as “A very low Affair... & utterly below Notice,” it nevertheless demonstrated the limits of *A Brief Narrative*’s attempt at protecting Ocom’s reputation in the presses. Wheelock himself, who was initially reluctant to enter “into publick Quarrel with those Gentlemen” at the Boston board of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, grew outraged upon hearing that they did not cease to attack Moor’s Charity Indian School. As he wrote in a letter to the board, “And I now assure you, sirs, that I apprehend there is not one material Article narrated in that [Letter] that is true, excepting that Mr. Ocom was a Mohegan, which I never yet heard denied, and which I had long before your said letter, published in my narrative, 1700 Copies of which (if I mistake not) were printed at Boston, and sent into all your Country round about you.”²¹⁹ Upon his return from London on September 1786, Ocom drafted a second autobiography.²²⁰ With every intention to resolve what Wheelock’s publication could not, Ocom hoped to defend his and the mission’s reputation in the printing press.

²¹⁹ Wheelock to London Commissioners in Boston, 7 Oct 1767, TOC.

²²⁰ Wheelock, *A Continuation of the Narrative of the INDIAN Charity School in Lebanon in Connecticut, New England*, (London: Printed by J. and W. Oliver, 1769), 144.

Given his own inexperience, Occom styled his second draft in a manner more closely resembling the published texts that were the most accessible to him: Wheelock's regular publications on Moor's Indian Charity School.²²¹ Indeed, Occom read and studied these texts closely, even providing regular corrections to its author. In one instance, he wrote: "I am very Sorry to See a mistake in your last Narrative." The minister was referring to Wheelock's *A continuation of the narrative* (1765) which was published just a few months ago and incorrectly recounted missionary Samuel Kirtland's mission to the Senecas. When compared together, Wheelock's and Occom's narratives contained similar structures and elements. In the same way that Wheelock's narratives began with an explanation for its need to be published, Occom's opened with an explanation for his autobiography: "Having Seen and heard Several Representations, in England and Scotland, made by Some gentlemen in America, Concerning me, and finding many gross Mistakes in their Account, - I thought it my Duty to give a Short Plan and Honest Account of myself, that those who may hereafter see it, may know the Truth Concerning me." Mirroring Wheelock's brief history of Moor's Charity School in his 1763 edition, Occom supplied a history of his own project, his mission, and his teaching methods. Whereas Wheelock underscored the unique offerings of Moor's Charity School compared to other missionary enterprises, Occom argued for the strength of his methods over and against his Anglo-Protestant counterparts: "My Method in the School was, as soon as the Children got together, and took their proper Seats, I Prayed with them, then began to hear them, I generally began (after Some of them Could Spell and Read) With those that were yet In their Alphabets."

²²¹ On autobiography, see Eileen Razzari Elrod, *Piety and Dissent: Race, Gender, and Biblical Rhetoric in Early American Autobiography*, (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008). Elrod reads Occom alongside Jonathan Edwards' own *A Faithful Narrative*, which allows her to trace how Occom plays with the conventions of autobiography to contrast his experiences with those of his Anglo-Protestant counterparts, so as to craft "a religious self-decentered through cultural contact, a cultural self who refused the subordinating effects of that contact, and a community whose identity is contradicted by the story." (37) While I'm a bit wary of using autobiography as a proper genre/framework for comparing Occom's narratives to those of his contemporaries, I do agree with her broader emphasis on Occom's self-fashioning in his work.

Given the many barriers to entry for print, it was possible that Occom understood certain ways of narration to be more publishable than others. He may have even believed that the brevity and format of his first autobiography kept Wheelock from considering it for publication which leading him to expand upon it using a narrative structure much closer to Wheelock's.

However, Occom also deviated from Wheelock's narrative whenever he saw it fit to do so. In the second autobiography, Occom contrasted Moor's Charity School's financial outline in the 1765 edition with the Mohegan minister's financial hardship. Both texts hoped to illustrate how well their authors' missions succeeded despite the lack of support from the Boston board. However, whereas Wheelock's accounting display demonstrated his financial handling and prudence, Occom focused on the imbalanced financing between him and other missionaries: "Now You See What difference they made between me and other Missionaries; they gave me 180 Pounds for 12 years of Service, which they gave for one years Service in another Mission." Both texts also concluded their narratives in different ways. Wheelock closed his report with triumphant attestations and letters evidencing his students' successful literacy education. However, Occom, as a result of his financial hardship, predictably lamented its effects on his family and his mission as a whole: "So I am ready to Say, they have usd thus, because I cant Instruct the Indians so well as other Missionaries, but I Can assure *them* I have endeavoured to teach them as well as I know-but I must say, I believe it is because I am poor Indian. I can't help that God has made me So; I did not make my self So."²²² Occom's decision to play with conventions in Wheelock's regular updates further evidenced his desire to eventually see his autobiography published. Hoping that Wheelock might be able to include the text, Occom rushed the second version to completion before Wheelock had even began working on his next update.

²²² Occom, "Autobiography, undated," TOC. Also could be pulled from Brooks, *The Collected Writings of Samson Occom*, 52-58.

For the second time, Wheelock refused to publish Occom's account. *A Continuation* (1769) was printed in London, with the assistance from the same connections that Occom and Whitaker had built for Wheelock. We do not know if Occom had sent the draft to Wheelock like he did with the first, but some of Wheelock's concerns about the Mohegan missionary hinted at his decision to keep the autobiography unpublished. Upon the Mohican minister's arrival, Wheelock worried that Occom's fame in England has had "a Sad Effect to make him aspire after Grandure & Ease, and prevent his future usefulness, at least in a great Measure."²²³ Some of Wheelock's peers shared a similar concern, with a London correspondent writing to Wheelock that "... the poor Indian hath been so caress'd & Such respect shown him over by the great and noble that I have been afraid the good man Some times hath almost forgot what he was – it is a great mercy to be kept Sitting at the feet of Jesus."²²⁴ Anglo-Protestant missionaries and ministers across the Atlantic were so worried about Occom's growing fame that they celebrated when he grew ill, believing it was divine intervention to humble him: "[Occom's] sails were too high in his Tour & he was well high overset byt God has mercifully I hope taken a course with him to recover him... he Seems to be humbling himself & walking softly."²²⁵ Given Wheelock's attitudes towards Occom's growing public presence, he kept the autobiography unpublished. Instead, he included in *A Continuation* a September 27, 1768, letter which Occom wrote to a London merchant and revivalist, Robert Keen. It celebrated Occom's reappointment after his return to New England: "I have been to several Places of Indians this Summer round about here, and they all receive me with Gladness and tender Affection – They are very thankful to hear the benevolent Disposition of Christians over the mighty Waters, by freely contributing of their

²²³ "Eleazar Wheelock to John Thornton, 25 August 1768," TOC.

²²⁴ "Eleazar Wheelock to Samson Occom, 6 December 1765." Also see "Eleazar Wheelock to Messrs. Moses Peck, Mason, and Austin, 5 November 1766," TOC.

²²⁵ "Eleazar Wheelock to John Thornton, December 23, 1768," TOC.

Substance towards the Instruction of the poor Indians in *North America*.” Wheelock also appended a call to action from its readers: “If any Persons are pleased to assist in this Work by contributing Books for the Schools, or for the Libraries of the Indian Missionaries, they are hereby desired to send their Books.”²²⁶ This time, not only did Wheelock continue to rely on his and his Anglo-Protestant connections’ authority to defend himself in print, but he also used Occom’s voice to foreground his own successful management of the missionary’s assignments. All of these attempts at showcasing his own achievements came at the expense of publishing Occom’s autobiography.

It was not clear if Occom considered publishing his narrative outside of Wheelock’s oversight, but what was clear was that he expected it to already be published in some form. In a 1768 letter, he snuck a mention of its existence in a correspondence with someone from London: “I am now writing a short Narrative of my Life.”²²⁷ Its brief mention should have generated some expectation about its publication. When *A continuation* was published, nothing about Occom’s narrative could be found. It was clear that his connection to Wheelock had impeded his aspirations to publish his grievances against the Boston board to a print audience. However, knowing that Wheelock was responsible to his network of financiers and supporters, Occom likely realized that he also needed proper support from similarly print-established Anglo-Protestant authors or a larger community of esteemed clergymen to lend credibility behind the proposal to print. Occom had hoped that Wheelock would prove to be that connection. Yet, time and time again, the esteemed founder of Moor’s Charity School failed to fulfill this role for the Mohegan minister. Even so, Occom’s instincts were not incorrect. Eighteenth-century American printing was not yet as accessible for non-Anglo Protestant authors in British America as it

²²⁶ Wheelock, *A Continuation*, 144-145.

²²⁷ Occom, *A Continuation*, 144.

would be by the nineteenth-century or even eighteenth-century London just across the Atlantic, in large part due to its dependence on intermediary ministers. A Native American minister could not simply bring a manuscript to a printer and have them publish it. Without the proper connections or names to back the project, there was little guarantee for publishers that it would be a safe or fruitful project to undertake.

Occom would eventually become the first print published Native American author in the British colonies fellow Anglo-Protestant ministers encouraged the publication of *A Sermon Preached at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian* (1772). A few years after severing ties with Wheelock, he was invited to deliver an execution sermon for Moses Paul, a Native American man who was condemned for having “made an Assault in And upon one Moses Cooke of Waterbury,” despite the possibility that it was in self-defense.²²⁸ Occom delivered the sermon and the crowd was captivated by the Mohegan minister’s ability to calm Paul before his execution. The *New London Gazette* reported with amazement that Paul “behaved with Decency and Steadiness and appeared to be in the Exercise of fervent secret Prayer all the Way from the Goal to the Gallows.” The publisher added that despite the stormy weather, “there was a great Concours of People” who were just as “excited to hear Mr. Occom preach” as “to see the Execution [since] there has not been one in this town since the Year 1749.”²²⁹ There was much to speculate about why they had taken on the project, especially given their close connections to Connecticut political authorities. However, what was clear was the overwhelming support for its publication from Anglo-Protestant ministers. *A Sermon Preached* sold well and gave Occom a newfound celebrity. What registered for his peers, and for later editions, was that Occom performed exactly what the reading public had been expecting out of Native American writers

²²⁸ "A Grand Jury Warrant, dated December 16, 1771," New Haven Superior Court, Papers by Subject, 1712-1900, Jurors 1712-98, RG 3, box 321, Connecticut State Library, Hartford.

²²⁹ *New London Gazette*, September 11, 1772, 3.

since the earliest publications of Native American print: it displayed Anglo-Protestant superiority and upheld print as the space for the colonialist imperatives of missionaries and ministers. It was likely on these grounds that fellow ministers were willing to champion his writings in a way that Wheelock never considered doing for his fellow missionary.

Consulting Clergymen

Ministers were not just intermediaries between authors and the printing press. At times they consulted on matters pertaining to matters of public morality as well. This was certainly the case with deist William Beadle and his unpublished letters. Beadle was merchant who resided in Westersheld, Connecticut where he lived with his wife and four children, and his infamy grew when newspapers reported on his murder-suicide. As authorities looked into the incident, members of the Connecticut Assembly solicited local ministers for their opinions about publishing his letters given a growing public demand for their publication. Ministers who gained access to these letters published parts or excerpts for their sermons as a way to illustrate the dangers of deism and atheism to their congregations. However, no matter how much members of the public wanted to read them nor whether posthumously the author expected a broad readership for his works, ministers kept them unpublished out of fear of their effects on the broader public. This case illustrates that even with the increasing availability of printers, ministers still wielded the ability to deem texts too dangerous to publish.

Before Beadle's own words could speak for himself, newspapers and ministers' sermons had already framed the entire episode around his deism. Minister John Marsh delivered the first public message on the matter when he delivered the funeral sermon for the Beadles titled *The great sin and danger of striving with God* (1782). His sermon showed the dangers of deism and fatalism, the belief that "men to be meat machines, and God the author of all their actions in such

a sense as to exclude the possibility of sin in the world.”²³⁰ Printers of the *Connecticut Courant* did not deem the Beadle incident worthy of front-page news, yet their December 17, 1782 report still invited shock from readers on the murder-suicide: “On the morning of the 11th instant, about sunrise, at Wethersfield, a deed was perpetrated, of the most extraordinary and astonishing nature... With the utmost secrecy, unperceived by any, [Beadle] destroyed a worthy and beautiful wife, in the midst of life, and four pleasant children, sleeping in their beds.”²³¹ The same day, the *Massachusetts Gazette* reported, “The deliberate manner in which this unaccountable murder was perpetrated is perhaps unparalleled in the annals of history.”²³² Printers could only speculate over the cause, initially believing that Beadle committed these acts because of his failing business. However, Marsh’s anti-deistic framing eventually made its way to their reports: “His business, which was that of a trader, declining some years since, he betook himself more to books than usual, and was unhappily fond of those esteemed Deistical; of late he rejected all Revelation... Having discarded all ideas of moral good and evil, he considered himself, and all the human race, as mere machines; and that he had a right to dispose of his own and the lives of his family.”²³³ The anti-deist framing would only continue to grow and come to define the public’s fascination with Beadle.²³⁴

As news about Beadle circulated across New England, ministers and members of the Connecticut General Assembly found a variety of ways to signal the dangerous content of the letters without actually having to publish them. A member of the Connecticut General Assembly,

²³⁰ John Marsh, *The Great Sin and Danger of Striving. A sermon preached at Wethersfield, December 13th, 1782*, (Hartford: Printed by Hudson and Goodwin, 1783), 21.

²³¹ *Connecticut Courant*, December 17, 1782, pg 3

²³² *Massachusetts Gazette*, December 17, 1782, 3

²³³ *Connecticut Courant*, December 17, 1782

²³⁴ As Grasso would observe, this initial account would be republished in Boston and in Providence newspapers. A poem would eventually circulate the next month commemorating the heinous event. See the broadside, *A Poem, Occasioned by the most shocking and Cruel Murder* with the Connecticut History Society. For more context on deism writ-large, see Grasso, “Deist Monster: On Religious Common Sense in the Wake of the American Revolution,” *The Journal of American History*, 95, no. 1 (Jun 2008): 43-68.

Stephen Mix Mitchell, used some of the contents from Beadle's letters to publish an anonymous narrative of events titled *A Narrative of the life of William Beadle* (1783) which was based on some of the contents of the letters. Of the many potential authors for the piece, Mitchell was the most qualified as the intended addressees for Beadle's letters and therefore was entrusted with initial review.²³⁵ Mitchell ascertained that Beadle had been planning the murder-suicide since as early as 1777, six years before the incident and that Beadle's wife had grown more anxious about her family as the day drew nearer.²³⁶ Regarding Beadle's motives, Mitchell could only express his frustration at its lack of clarity. He complained, "Mr. Beadle lest [sic] sundry letters directed to his acquaintance, and one laboured treatise in justification of his conduct; they contain many inconsistencies. He professes himself a Deist, but reprobates Atheism. While in life and prosperity, he claim'd to be a Christian, and offered two of his children in baptism."²³⁷ In other words, while newspapers and ministers in their sermons were quick to attribute it to his deism, his letters do not prove that it was necessarily the case; they seem way too inconsistent. Even if they might be confusing and unclear, however, Mitchell resolved that it would not be prudent to publish the letters for an increasingly demanding public to read. As he wrote, "Much has been said in favour of publishing his writings by those who have not seen them; those who have perused them have doubted the propriety of such a measure; not because his reasonings against revelation were in any degree unanswerable, but lest they might have some effect on weak and melancholy minds."²³⁸ Perhaps Mitchell published *A Narrative of the Life of William Beadle* (1783) to appease those who wanted Beadle's letters published. However, by mediating between readers and the writer, Marsh and Mitchell merely stoked further demand for Beadle's unedited

²³⁵ See entry from Stiles, December 25, 1782.

²³⁶ Stephen Mix Mitchell, *A Narrative of the Life of William Beadle, of Wethersfield, In the state of Connecticut*, (Hartford: Printed and sold by Babil Webster, 1783), 14-16.

²³⁷ Mitchell, 16.

²³⁸ Mitchell, 16.

words. In the *Connecticut Gazette*, printer Thomas Greene published an anonymous letter to the editor whereby this “humble Professor of Christianity” complained about Beadle’s unpublished writings: “if his doctrines have any foundation in reason or religion in them, why should not the public have the benefit of them? If they have not, why should those good gentlemen be afraid of any bad tendency? It is plain his doctrines have destroyed himself and deprived the public of five valuable subjects; the public therefore have the right to satisfaction.”²³⁹ Recognizing that members of the assembly and ministers were serving in an intermediary and curatorial capacity, readers grew even more dissatisfied by the unpublished state of Beadle’s writings.

Ultimately, it was ministers who weighed on the moral implications of publishing Beadle’s writings to the broader public. In response to growing public demand for his letters, members of the Assembly, Mitchell and Coronel John Chester, consulted Connecticut ministers James Dana, Chauncey Whittlesey, and Yale President Ezra Stiles.²⁴⁰ They likely chose them because of the long-standing relationship between Connecticut Congregationalist ministers and the Assembly. During the Great Awakening revivals antirevivalists like Charles Chauncy successfully lobbied for the Assembly to impose and enforce restrictions and penalties against itinerant preachers, whose travels harmed local congregations. Even after many congregations fractured and gave way to Anglicans and Baptists, the relationship between the established clergy and members of the Assembly continued well into the nineteenth century.²⁴¹ Whittlesey, a minister in New Haven, Connecticut, and Dana, who presided over a congregation in Wallingford, Connecticut, both preached election sermons before members of the Assembly and whose support ensured that they would be published: Whittlesey’s *The importance of religion in*

²³⁹ *Connecticut gazette*, January 3, 1-2

²⁴⁰ See entry from Stiles, 50 December 25, 1782.

²⁴¹ See Robert J. Imholt, “Connecticut: A land of Steady Habits,” *Disestablishment and Religious Dissent*, ed. Carl H. Esbeck and Jonathan J. Den Hartog, (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 2019), 327-350.

the civil ruler, considered. A sermon preached before the General Assembly of the state of Connecticut (1778) published by Thomas and Samuel Green, and the following year Dana's *A Sermon preached before the General Assembly of the state of CT* (1779) published by Hudson and Goodwin.²⁴² Stiles was slated to deliver the election sermon in 1783, the same year that news about Beadle exploded in New England newspapers. In addition to the Connecticut clergy's connections, the three ministers were also very close friends. They each have preached funeral sermons for each other's relatives. Dana preached the funeral sermon for Whittlesey's father in 1764 and it was published in *The character and reward of the good and faithful servant, death of Charles Whittlesey, Esq.* (1764). Whittlesey delivered the funeral sermon for Stiles' father in 1760, in a sermon titled *A Brief Discourse Deliver'd at North-Haven Funeral of Rev. Isaac Stiles* (1760) and Stiles was invited to preach at Whittlesey's own funeral in 1787, in a sermon titled *A Funeral Sermon, delivered at the internment of the reverend Mr. Chauncey Whittlesey, Pastor of the First Church* (1787). Their proximity to political power and their Congregationalist connections positioned them to be the best consultants on religious matters pertaining to the Connecticut public.

Upon reading Beadle's letters, the ministers agreed against publishing them. Beadle's letters did not provide clear instructions on how he wanted them to be published and left it up to recipients like Mitchell and Chester to decide. However, he had hoped that they might reach a wider audience. As he expressed in his writings, he believed that his letters might "someday give some new Ideas to a new Speculative Genius like [him]self that may prove beneficial to

²⁴² Worth mentioning that Dana was also an antirevivalists, like Charles Chauncy, and later in his life expressed much more "liberal sentiments" that grouped him with the famous Boston minister in Timothy Dwight IV's poem *The Triumph of Infidelity*. See Timothy Dwight, *The Triumph of Infidelity: a poem*, (Hartford, Printed in the world, 1788).

him, though it appears like the worst poison to others.”²⁴³ Dana, the first of the three ministers to receive the packet, published a sermon titled *Men’s sins not chargeable on God, but on themselves* (1783) which drew from the contents of the letter.²⁴⁴ With more details around Beadle’s thoughts, he used the incident as a cautionary tale to his listeners and readers about the dangers of unbelief: “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God... The late monster of a man had explicitly renounced all the religions of the world. As the consequence of his scepticism, he destroyed his bosom friend, four lovely children and himself!”²⁴⁵ He avoided quoting extensively from Beadle’s letters, yet nevertheless took advantage of the opportunity to publish on the murder-suicide shortly after reading his contents. On Christmas Day of 1782, just three days after Dana preached *Men’s sins not chargeable on God* to his congregation, Stiles received Beadles’ letters. In his diary, he described it as a packet “containing Copies of the Will, Letters & Writings left by the unhappy Mr William Beadle... containing about Twenty or 25 Pages in Folio. They [include] Letters to Col. Chester, & Mr Mitchel.”²⁴⁶ Instead of attending Christmas service, Stiles stayed at home to read through Beadle’s letters and gleaned from them that they were, indeed, unpublishable. Sharing Mitchell’s frustration over the letters, he recorded his thoughts: “[Beadle’s writings] asperse Congress, Assembly, Revelation & Clergy – they defend Suicide & shew the deliberate Reasons for his Resolution, on acco[un]t of reduced Circumstances to end the misery of an amiable Family – they exhibit great Sensibility, Malice, Revenge, Benevolence, Superstition, Self-Conceit, Pride of Wisdom, Contempt of all mankind except a few Deistical sublime Souls.”

²⁴³ “Extracts from Mr. Beadles Letters,” pulled from Grasso, 185, 179, 67.

²⁴⁴ On the date of its publication, see *Connecticut Courant*, March 22, 1783, when it was advertised as “just published.”

²⁴⁵ James Dana, *Men’s Sins not chargeable on God, but on themselves: A discourse delivered at Wallingford, December 22, 1782*, (New Haven: Printed by T.& S. Green, 1783), 25-26.

²⁴⁶ Stiles, *Diary of Ezra Stiles*, 50.

Unable to make sense of Beadle's writing, he could only conclude that it was "a Mixture of a temporary Insanity quoad hoc."²⁴⁷ Stiles wrote down excerpts that most captivated him and they would reflect the turbulent experience of reading them. In one instance, Beadle would remark on his deism, writing "The Xtian Rel. is the most benevo System & would produce grand Effects if it was really believed & universall practiced... That thereis some wonderful Power or Powers that make me & all &c -&c- I have no doubt. But where there is one Being or only one Million of Being no man can judge" only to then follow it up with his murderous intentions: "I mean to close the Eyes of six persons thro' perfect Humanity, & the most endearing fondness and Friendship. For never did mortal father feel more of these tender Ties than myself. I really believe that the true G[o]d supports me!... my Intentions are of the purest kind."²⁴⁸ Later that week, Stiles would share his thoughts and deliver the package to Whittelsey, but not before making sure that he copied down some excerpts for his own personal records.²⁴⁹ Given his readings of Beadle's writings as "a confused mixture," Stiles decided against its publication.

Without public ministerial support for its publication, the assembly likely hid the packet containing his letters, intending that it never see the light of day. However, that was not to say that they were entirely successful. Parts of Beadle's will made its way to the *Newport Mercury* where it published instructions for Beadle's land after his death and how he wanted his family buried: "The place I live on belongs to the public and may be called common ground, I therefore beg that a hole may be dug in the grass lot before the garden, large enough to contain the box that contains us, let us be covered up."²⁵⁰ Stiles was the likely leaker to Newport printer Henry

²⁴⁷ Stiles, *Diary of Ezra Stiles*, 50.

²⁴⁸ Stiles, *Diary of Ezra Stiles*, 53.

²⁴⁹ Stiles noted on January 1 that he attended a New Year's service where "All the Ministers attended & Mr. Whittelsey preached Mat[thew]." On January 4, he noted, "Copyg Beadles Letters." 51-52

²⁵⁰ *Continental Journal*, January 16, 1783, 3. It would be republished in the *Boston Continental Journal* and *Massachusetts Gazette*, January 28, 1783.

Barber, given that he presided over the congregation there prior to moving to New Haven and that the will may have seemed harmless enough of a document to reach the broader public. Another portion of the will was leaked, again likely by Stiles because the section that was published came from an excerpt he copied onto his diary, which stated Beadle's intentions: "I mean to close the eyes of six persons through perfect humanity and the most endearing fondness and friendship."²⁵¹ After reading this section, an anonymous contributor to the *Connecticut Courant* borrowed the quote and wrote to the printers, "Please do allow the following a place in your paper and you will oblige at least one of your readers."²⁵² Borrowing the language that Stiles had copied for his own records, this contributor preached from the newspaper: "Such is the fruit of Infidelity! -to such tragical ends is its natural tendency; and there is not an infidel of them all, if left destitute of that divine restraint."²⁵³ A third leak appeared as a letter "sent to Dr. Farnworth by the girl belonging to the family of the late Mr. William Beadle" published in the *Massachusetts Spy* on January 30, 1783, which was a letter dated December 11, 1782 and signed by Beadle himself. It did not say much regarding his motivation, but it did contain a tidbit that revealed his careful plans for his letters. Addressing Dr. Farnworth, he wrote, "If you should enter our house first [after the murder-suicide], be very careful in the confusion of the packet directed to Col. Chester."²⁵⁴ It was not clear whether these small excerpts satisfied the public, but these leaks evidenced the curatorial power of ministers in curating which information could reach the public regarding Beadle's motivations and beliefs.

²⁵¹ *Providence Gazette*, January 4, 1783, also republished in the *New-Hampshire Gazette*, January 18, 1783.

²⁵² *Connecticut Courant*, January 14, 1783, 3.

²⁵³ I wonder if the author was Timothy Dwight IV who would publish in four years, *Triumph of Infidelity* which makes a similar argument but names more explicitly the Universalists as well as Deists. The only possible evidence was that unlike the soft tone Dana, Whittelsey, and Stiles took, those who were privy to the manuscript, and Mitchell's non-theological approach, and that the entry could have been submitted entirely derivative of what was published in the *Providence Gazette*, that Dwight would be a likely candidate.

²⁵⁴ *Massachusetts Spy*, January 30, 1783, 3.

Even into the eighteenth-century, ministers still found ways to influence what could be deemed publishable religion, especially whenever they're consulted as authorities on public religion. It was likely that their decision to keep Beadle's text unpublished disincentivized publishers from agreeing to print works by deist authors like Ethan Allen. Allen struggled to publish *Reason the Only Oracle of Man* (1784) and so resolved to have "cursed the printers' moral cowardice in declining the offer." He would have to borrow funds from friends and acquaintances to publish it in Vermont, where newcomer printers Haswell & Russell reluctantly agreed to publish it after being paid for their service upfront.²⁵⁵ Whether or not Allen's treatise on deism succeeded or not, the printers must have felt the need to assert their own willingness to publish for orthodox ministers as well, following up Allen's text with republications of titles such as *The believer's triumph over death* (1784) and *The Deist reclaimed. Being a True Account of the Happy Conversion of Lady Anne Piercy* (1786).²⁵⁶ They also turned to republishing older and more popular texts which were much safer investments compared to works proposed by heterodox writers like Allen. These strategies evidence the legacy of this early moment in American deism, whereby orthodox ministers leveraged their authority on public religiosity to stifle heterodox publications through the printing press even without the power to outrightly censor them.

Print Reluctance as Religious Practice

Much in the same way that Anglo-Protestant ministers curated and stifled religious publications, so too did leaders from new religious movements. Such was the case with Jemima

²⁵⁵ Grasso makes this connection. See Grasso, "Deist Monster," 61

²⁵⁶ There wasn't much on these printers in Thomas' history, but some of their earliest publications were for the general assembly of Vermont and then subsequently followed up by almanacs. It's hard to say how much demand there may have been for printing in Vermont, but Haswell & Russell's decision to publish for Allen if he were to upfront the cost, and then followed it up with orthodox works, suggests their attempt to balance both drawing readers while also establishing themselves as capable of printing for local clergy.

Wilkinson's Universal Society of Friends. Conflicts between the embattled prophet and follower Abner Brownell evidence the ways several groups attached the notion of print reluctance to religious adherence. Wilkinson, also known to followers and the broader public as the "Public Universal Friend," was a Quaker dissenter with exceptional prophetic claims that went against some of their teachings, although the Friend retained many of the Quaker theologies. Many would remark that it was "in resemblance of the ancient Friends or Quakers" or that even their preaching and praying "were wholly in the method of Friends or Quakers."²⁵⁷ However, what most caught the attention of critics in the presses was the ways the Friend eschewed traditional gender norms. The way print sensationalized Wilkinson did much to shape the group's reluctance to engage with the already-decided print public that cast the Society more as a spectacle than the harbingers of religious truth on the same level as preachers like George Whitefield, and it was these very dynamics that would cause a rift between Brownell and Wilkinson, and set the precedent that adherence to the Public Universal Friend's message meant remaining unpublished.

Over the course of Wilkinson's ministry, the printing press sensationalized the prophet and the movement, likely with the express goal of distancing or estranging the Society from the more rational and literary reading public. The author of an entry in the *Freeman's Journal* prefaced his article on the Universal Society of Friends with: "Altho all religious controversy should be excluded from a news-paper, yet there does not appear any impropriety in publishing manifest heresy, or religious imposture." The term "fanaticism" would only invite further reports on what the Boston newspaper *Herald of Freedom* described as "a sect in Rhode island." These accounts were far from neutral and were quick to both misgender Wilkinson and describe the

²⁵⁷ Abner Brownell, *Enthusiastical Errors Transpired and Detected in a Letter to his Father, Benjamin Brownell*, (New London: Printed for the author by Timothy Green, 1783), 11. Also see *The Freeman's Journal*, March 14, 1787.

Friend's revelations as "pretend." One contributor described the prophet as one who "pretends to foretel future events, to discern the secrets of the heart, and to have the power of healing diseases." Another for the *American Mercury* published a short blurb whereby a clergyman asked Wilkinson about having "pretended to have been in heaven" and after the Friend responded that they saw St. Paul, the minister quipped, "That must be a mistake, *for he forbid women to preach.*"²⁵⁸ Readers were also alerted to the spectacle of the Society's itinerancy. Wilkinson usually arrived with a carriage emblazed with the title "Universal Friend of Mankind."²⁵⁹ The Baltimore-based *Telegraph and Daily Advertiser* republished a report whereby Wilkinson ordered "her confident to dress herself in *sack-cloth*, which had previously been drawn through ashes, and, mounting a pure white mule, rode off to the Cherokee nation, accompanied on foot by this penitent devout." The editors commented on "the strangeness of the dress" and concluded from the spectacle, "In reality, her sole object is to form a sect, and, to accomplish this she is as ready to sacrifice truth, or to sanction iniquity, as was the most ambitious adventurer that was ever attempted."²⁶⁰ These descriptions that highlighted the strange events around Wilkinson aimed to estrange them further from Anglo-Protestant readers without actually having to take seriously their broader theological claims.

Given that the public sphere was suspicious and antagonistic towards Wilkinson and the Society, debating anonymous contributors, editors, and printers within the space risked legitimizing their discourse and space as much more universal and encompassing than the message proclaimed by the Public "Universal" Friend. For all these reasons, there was very little cause to correct an already-decided public. Indeed, even without properly representing

²⁵⁸ *American Mercury*, April 2, 1792.

²⁵⁹ *Herald of Freedom*, June 5, 1789, Boston, 3. Newspapers across New England, like the *Osborne's New Hampshire Spy* based out of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and the *Cumberland Gazette* from Portland, Maine, republished the same report that same week.

²⁶⁰ *Telegraph*, October 14, 1800.

themselves through the printing press, Wilkinson and the Society still drew followers. Brownell first encountered Wilkinson in 1778 when he “heard of a remarkable Person of a Female Preacher from a back town of Providence...she was a Person that was said to had been dead for the Space of an Hour, and by the mighty Power of God had been rais’d immediately to a State of Health, and had an immediate call to appear in public Testimony to preach to the People.”²⁶¹ He attended one of their meetings and Brownell was so taken by the Friend’s eloquence, which he described: “she exhorts in a pathetic Manner, with great Confidence and Boldness, and Confirmation of her being right, and all others to be wrong.” He continued attending the meetings and was captivated by the Friend’s teachings that he was inspired to publish on their behalf. With access to someone who might be able to engage with publishers, the Society pondered the utility of finally entering the space by 1779.

Despite their popularity among dissenting Quakers, the Universal Society of Friends rarely engaged the printing press to publish about themselves to the broader public. Their only two productions, *Some Considerations, propounded to the Several Sorts and Sects of Professors of this Age* (1779) and a pamphlet *The Universal Friend’s Advice* (1784) were distributed among followers of Wilkinson and their production histories illustrated goals that did not anticipate much readership outside of the community. *Some Considerations* was a blatant act of plagiarism that merely affirmed how much of the Friend’s theology drew from already published Quaker works. Brownell recounted the moment the prophet asked to publish *Some Considerations*. He had just borrowed a book from Quaker Isaac Pennington and had copied parts of it for his own notes. Upon seeing his notes, Wilkinson asked Brownell to “make some alterations in it, and have it printed in the manner as it was, without making quotations to the author; for she said it would have the greatest effect upon the people; as it was, she said, applicable to the present

²⁶¹ Brownell, *Enthusiastical errors*, 5.

dispensation, and she said it would be best only to put her name, that she call'd herself by...by a universal Friend”²⁶² Brownell did as he was told. He created a text that plagiarized the works of English Quakers Isaac Pennington and William Sewel’s *The History of the Rise, Increase, and Progress of the Christian People called Quakers* (1722, English edition). With financial support from other members of the Universal Society of Friends, Brownell brought the text to Providence printer John Carter to proceed with its publication. *Some Considerations* was heavily criticized by Quaker correspondents in London as a blatant act of plagiarism. However, as an ardent follower of Wilkinson, Brownell could only accuse them of missing the larger revelation of Wilkinson’s teachings over a minor point about proper accreditation. As he wrote back to them, “I told them I was sorry to see them so ignorant and superstitious, as to strain at a gnat and yet swallow a camel, and not know it.”²⁶³ To the followers, the text uplifted the community to each other regardless of whoever the writer was, and its ability to do so allowed them to recruit it as authored by the Universal Friend.

Similar dynamics appeared in *The Universal Friend’s Advice*. The eight-page pamphlet was printed and advertised by Philadelphian printer-bookseller Francis Bailey, likely as a way of commemorating the Friend’s visit new converts among Quaker dissenters in Philadelphia. Since Wilkinson was returning to New England, the pamphlet provided them with instructions on how they must conduct themselves during services and among the community.²⁶⁴ It promoted harmony by restricting members inquiring “after news, or the public reports of any one” and cautioned readers to “be careful not to spread *yourselves*.” Despite being published, it seemed

²⁶² Brownell, *Enthusiastical errors*, 40.

²⁶³ Brownell, *Enthusiastical errors*, 41.

²⁶⁴ On this point, Christopher Marshall, Jr. noted in his diary that there were about three to four hundred that attended her meetings. See Herbert Wisbey, *Pioneer Prophetess: Jemima Wilkinson, the Public Universal Friend*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964), 84. Note that the text was not so much published for wide distribution but moreso for the community in Philadelphia to have words of Wilkinson that remained with them. This is most evident in the way the text was later distributed. Christopher Marshall sent copies to Jemima Wilkinson by Thomas Hathaway.

printed strictly for the Universal Society of Friends in Philadelphia and followers sent copies to New England, likely not expecting or desiring that it be circulated further by its printer. As was stated on the published edition: “Recommended to be read in their public meetings for divine worship.”²⁶⁵ The Society’s goal of these texts was not so much to publish about themselves to those who do not yet follow Wilkinson, but rather to leverage the ability of the printing press to reproduce texts at a faster rate. At the heart of these two approaches was a concern about how printing could benefit the Society if publication was treated as a strictly communal and internal-facing form of speech.

This approach to print production paralleled Quaker approaches to print whereby “public acts” must be approved by consensus, though procedurally by the Quaker Board of Overseers, because of the way printed texts represent and speak to other Quakers. In short, publications were never just about the author. We could get a glimpse of how they approached print through the conflict involving Quaker merchant John Smith and the Board.²⁶⁶ On November 1, 1747, Smith received news about preacher and revivalist Gilbert Tennent preaching in Philadelphia. After listening to the itinerant preacher, Smith himself was so “moved at the deceit and quirks” in Tennent’s tract that he was determined to give “an Answer.”²⁶⁷ Smith spent a little over a week venting frustration to his brother who promptly gave him feedback, but also undertook to writing a publishable response. Upon completion, Smith proudly sent the 17-page manuscript to Israel Pemberton, Jr, son of Israel Pemberton, Sr., a member of the Overseers of the Press for the Quakers of Philadelphia, for “correction & amendment.”²⁶⁸ The process was arduous and

²⁶⁵ Jemima Wilkinson, *The Universal Friend’s Advice to Those of the Same Religious Society*, (Philadelphia: Printed by Francis Bailey, 1784).

²⁶⁶ Two works stand out that have tried to draw out Quaker approaches to print: Frederick Tolles, “John Smith: A Literary Quaker,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 65 (1941): 300-333 and Frost, “Quaker Books in Colonial Philadelphia,” *Quaker History*, 80, no. 1 (1991): 1-23.

²⁶⁷ John Smith Diaries (1747-1752), November 1, 1747, Yi2.7417, vol 32, HSP.

²⁶⁸ John Smith Diaries (1747-1752), November 8, 1747, Yi2.7417, vol. 32, HSP.

required many steps for review. While most texts would not pass the test, it pleased Pemberton, Jr. who wrote to Smith that he believes it as “vindicated our principles so well” and that he could read that Smith’s only motive “was the cause of Truth.” He even went as far as to recommend the text to other Quaker teachers. Yet despite his praise, the text needed multiple more reviews before it was ready to be reviewed further and sent for publication. In the same letter, Pemberton wrote that he decided not to have his father review the text as he will “have another opportunity of giving his sentiments” before its actual publication. Furthermore, he advised Smith to write the revisions on a larger paper with broader margins, perhaps anticipating further comments from the texts’ future editors. All of these remarks served as a reminder for Smith that the decision for publication rested not on one author, his family members, or his friends, but on the decision of the Overseers of the Press who spoke on behalf of and to the community writ large.²⁶⁹ As William J. Frost argued, “The committee also could refuse or delay publication.” In a much less successful example, Quaker John Woolman’s *Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes* took seven years before it was published and as Frost speculated, Woolman “may have believed he had no chance of getting the Overseers’ approval.” These same dynamics likely made their way to Universal Society of Friends who were similarly reluctant to publish one individual member as a representative voice who could speak on behalf of the entire Society to outsiders.²⁷⁰

The communal dimension to Wilkinson’s approach to print might help explain the Society’s views on plagiarism. When accusations of plagiarism were levied against the Universal Society of Friends for their unoriginal reproduction of Pennington’s work, the Friend’s followers responded: “Could not the Spirit dictate the same words [through Wilkinson] as it did to

²⁶⁹ John Smith Diaries (1747-1752), November 11, 1747, vol 3, 19, HSP.

²⁷⁰ Politics of quaker printing, see Tolles and Frost.

Isaac?”²⁷¹ This move attempted to dissolve the singular idea of the author, whether Pennington or Wilkinson, over and above other voices, and therefore performed the dual role of speaking for and addressing the community. This approach clashed against the idea of print as a form of privileged speech that places the speaker on a platform to captivate listeners and readers, the style and format more akin to Congregationalist dynamics whereby the minister’s pulpit preserves the unidirectionality of speech. Instead, Wilkinson insisted that any form of representation was a communal act. Whatever truths could be found Isaac Pennington’s publication were never his to begin with because truths from God were never something attributable or possessed by individuals. In arguing this point, Wilkinson implied the scriptural quality of Pennington’s writings whereby all possible things readers could interpret as truth to be scripture, universally citable and always “applicable to the present dispensation.” What these dynamics represented was a way of proffering communal discourse instead of singular authorship, and in doing so complicated the idea of an authoritative religious voice for the Universal Society of Friends, even if Wilkinson’s was exceptionally so.

It was on the communal politics of publication that caused problems for aspiring authors like Brownell who would go on to publish his revelations in *The Worship of God According to True Christian Divinity* (1782). Brownell was beginning to receive regular visions which he had been sharing with other followers. Unfortunately, his “Exhortations were not much appoav’d of amongst Some of those that [he] Assembled with for Worship and Especially their Leader.”²⁷² Despite their disapproval, he wanted to publish his views “for all to see, and for ever one to judge of it for themselves whether it was agreeable to the truth or not.”²⁷³ He knew that proceeding with its publication would go against the Society’s approach to print but despite the

²⁷¹ Moses Brown to Thomas Eddy, July 5, 1822.

²⁷² Brownell, Abner, Diary, 1779-1787, 1:19, American Antiquarian Society.

²⁷³ Brownell, *Enthusiastical Errors*, 35.

“thought it [his] duty to consult her and her adherents about the publishing of it,” he began engaging with printers about it. Brownell resolved “not to inform [the Friend] about it until it was published, that all might see [his] principles... and also it would bring all those matters upon a clear trial.” After approaching New-London printer Timothy Green and soliciting his correspondents for potential subscribers, news leaked to the Society that Brownell was publishing his visions. Wilkinson sent two followers, James Parker and Mehetabel Smith as “a committee to treat with [Brownell].” They interrogated the author about details surrounding its publication, from his intentions to whether he had “consulted the Best-Friend (as they called Wilkinson) about it?” Knowing that the Friend would not approve of his publication, Brownell rushed the manuscript to Green for publication. He told Parker and Smith he “could no ways be willing to stop the printing, neither did [he] see it [his] duty [to do so].” The pair asked for his consent to approach the printer about it. Perhaps to prove his innocence towards any accusations of secrecy or overconfidence that they could not do anything to the manuscript, he signed a letter allowing the printer to show the manuscript to Smith and Parker. They were allowed to peruse the manuscript but after Parker complained that “there were some things in it I am not satisfied about,” they requested to keep the copy until the next day which the printer permitted. To Brownell’s dismay, Parker and Smith ran off with the manuscript to give it to Wilkinson. As he recounted, “I was informed from the printer the copy was gone from him, and he was much disturbed about it, and talk’d of advertising Mehetabel who carried it off, and to send an officer after her, but he didn’t know where she was.”²⁷⁴ After asking the printer for his account of the story, Green shared with him a letter left by Smith and Parker explaining the circumstances around the manuscript.

²⁷⁴ Brownell, *Enthusiastical Errors*, 28-33.

I acknowledge thy kindness and bless my God, that gave me favour in thy sight, so as to attain what I sought. I desired Abner to stop the publication of them books a few days, and I would pay for all damages or disadvantage; and he would not be interested. And now I will do as I believe is most for the glory of God; being under no promise when to return the papers I receive of thee.²⁷⁵

With the looming threat that Brownell might involve public authorities, Wilkinson instructed Smith's brother to return the manuscript to Green after the Friend had read its contents. The entire occasion resulted in a significant delay that prevented Green from finishing its printing according to their original schedule, illustrating the contingencies of print production and how conflicts over the religious value of the printing press could hinder a manuscript's publication.

Unfortunately for Brownell, the incident did not stop there. Even after Green received the manuscript to proceed with its publication, the author continued to be chastised by the Society of Universal Friends. After Wilkinson read the manuscript, she sent Smith to gather other followers to pressure Brownell even further. While he could have refused their offer to discuss, he knew the matter would not rest: "if I didn't go, that I had conducted so that I could not answer to it and was ashamed to be seen, &c. but I knew myself to feel the contrary, therefore I went up." He agreed to meet with the Society and provide a defense. Describing the scene, he wrote, "there was I believe about twenty of [the Friend's] adherents with her, and no body else allowed to be in the room; and they set a chair for me in the middle of the room, like a criminal, and they all around me, not knowing that I had any evidence about it, only just my bare word."²⁷⁶ Despite their accusations, the only one he continued to assert was his right to publish: "But I reply to the first charge thus, that what I had done was all to public view; as to what I had wrote, it was for everyone to see and judge for themselves, and I have them the reasons why I could not stop the

²⁷⁵ Brownell, *Enthusiastical Errors*, 36-37.

²⁷⁶ Brownell, *Enthusiastical Errors*, 33-34.

printing and acquiesce in their request.”²⁷⁷ While it was not clear if Wilkinson’s followers could have destroyed the manuscript or found more coercive means of preventing the text’s publications, Brownell ensured that he would be covered legally, at the very least. He asked for a deposition from the printer and it was likely after presenting this document to the friends during his interrogation that ceased the whole affair. The informal trial with Wilkinson and the Society was likely the last straw. Brownell disavowed the group altogether and cut ties with the entire community. He went ahead and published a first-hand account of his experience with the Society in *Enthusiastical Errors, Transpired and Detected* (1783). As he concluded in account of the entire episode: “And feeling all these things as I have observed relating to what I have discovered of [the Friend] and her adherents, of their principles, practice and conduct, and treatment with me, it gave me fully an occasion plainly and flatly to deny any further connexion with her and her adherents, whilst they imbibe such principles.”²⁷⁸ With a first-hand account of how the Society of Universal Friends approached print publications as a communal act, Brownell made official his departure from Wilkinson.

The episode with Brownell would shape how the Society approached controversies in the presses surrounding the group. At the end of Wilkinson’s ministry, the Society of Universal Friends had fractured and despite several arrests, betrayals from within the group, and even promptings to correct the public record, the Society continued to abstain from publication. The most notable attacks on the prophet were charges of blasphemy for claiming to be Jesus Christ. While a county court could not indict Wilkinson on charges of blasphemy, the defectors, mostly men, nevertheless continued publishing attacks on those who remained faithful to Wilkinson. Others also attempted to wrestle property away from the Society and even then, the Friends

²⁷⁷ Brownell, *Enthusiastical Errors*, 34.

²⁷⁸ Brownell, *Enthusiastical Errors*, 37.

fought back and secured their rights. Many of these accusations culminated in a publication *The History of Jemima Wilkinson, a Preacheress of the Eighteenth-Century* written by David Hudson, one of the attorneys who fought against the Society of Universal Friends for their property. Hudson did not feign any kindness or charity towards the Friend: “To this melancholy account of enthusiasm, delusion, and imposture, we are not about to add another instance in the History of Jemima Wilkinson. Whether the character of this woman, and her doctrines and career, resembled those of former pretenders, is not a matter of any consequence.”²⁷⁹ Although it merely joined the chorus of attacks against the society, it angered one of Wilkinson’s disciples William Turpin enough for him to draft a response with every intention of publishing it. A piece titled “The Love of Money” attempted to rebut the claims by discrediting Hudson. Explaining the piece in a letter, Turpin shared how convicted he was by “the falsehoods published about [their] dearly beloved Friend” and was even further inspired by the lack of responses. However, true to the ways Wilkinson’s followers conducted themselves, they relied on their actions rather than publishing words: “I have through Life, truest to my own uniform conduct, to do away with any falsehood that at any time might be attend against me... better than for me to have entered into a detail of defense.”²⁸⁰ Although one could interpret this as a form of self-censorship, it would be difficult to say it was entirely on Turpin. As evident in the incident with Brownell and the limited texts published by the Society of Universal Friends over the course of their ministry, publishing was simply not an act condoned by Wilkinson. Even after the Friend died (for a

²⁷⁹ David Hudson, *History of Jemima Wilkinson: A Preacheress of the Eighteenth Century; Containing an Authentic Narrative of her Life and Character*, (New York: Printed by S.P. Hull), 1821.

²⁸⁰ “The Love of Money,” Jemima Wilkinson Papers, Cornell University 357, YCHC; “William Turpin to Benedict Robinson, April 3, 1822,” Jemima Wilkinson Papers, Cornell University, 357.

second time) in 1819, these ways of approaching the printing press set an important precedent for the group that silenced followers and carried the desire of the prophet to remain unpublished.²⁸¹

Despite losing their ability to directly curate the printing press as their seventeenth-century counterparts, clergymen and religious leaders nevertheless still found ways to prevent texts from reaching the public sphere. Beyond outright censorship, they functioned as intermediaries between aspiring authors and publishers, especially for those new to the process like Ocom. Clergymen were also often consulted by political authorities on matters deemed important for some notion of public morality. In the case of Beadle, ministers curated what could make its way to newspapers and successfully kept deists' writings from reaching the printing press. For Wilkinson, religious communities themselves also created a culture of unpublishing that stifled any printing without the express consent or directive from their leader. All of these instances illustrate the prevailing influence of religious authorities on print by the eighteenth-century. However, contrary to the notion that print was merely driven by demand and that religion's growing insignificance in print was owed to declining interest among readers, perhaps ministers may have done more to curate religion out of the public sphere. As this chapter has illustrated, they successfully stifled Native American-authored sermons, private letters of deists, and defenses of the beliefs of new religious movements, perhaps contributing to this sense that religion had grown increasingly private by the eighteenth century.

²⁸¹ There were many comparisons between Wilkinson and Shaker leader Mother Ann Lee. Much like with the Society of Universal Friends, some of the earliest publications were those who left the group, notably Thomas Brown's *An Account of the People Called Shakers* (1812) and William J. Haskett's *Shakerism Unmasked, or the History of the Shakers* (1828). In it, he recounted an instance whereby Shaker elders were also restrictive with publishing hymns for broader public consumption at risk of litigation. Nevertheless, he found ways to publish them.

PART II: THE RELIGIOUS PUBLIC BEYOND PRINT

Chapter 4

Manuscript, Pudding, and Printing

What is “pudding”? For Americans, it’s a dessert, conjuring images of sweet delicacies and savory textures. For eighteenth-century colonialists, “pudding” was unimpressive, commonplace, impressing upon the imagination notions of everyday convenience and availability. Eighteenth-century Minister Charles Chauncy’s pudding, however, was both. It was sweet to the refined tastes of the educated intellectuals and the elite, while also invoking tradition and familiarity of quotidian needs. But the “pudding” was also many other things: a written manuscript circulated among a close circle of friends; an idea, a theology about the universal salvation of the entirety of humanity into eternal happiness; a pseudonym meant to maintain the secrecy of the ideas written in the manuscript; and a discourse that revolved around the material text. Chauncy’s pudding was all these things and none of these things. Scholars of Chauncy readily assumed its referent without understanding the term and the text to which it referred to, in part because there was no surviving manuscript.

Through the many ways Chauncy imagined publics for his works through the codename “pudding,” he revealed how print, oral, and manuscript publication differed beyond the private-public spectrum. At least in terms of circulation and reach, these different modes of publishing were similar. Chauncy makes for an important case study because of his unique public position. As Baptist minister Isaac Backus remarked, Chauncy had “published more, for thirty years, to uphold the Congregational establishment in New England than any other man.”²⁸² However, even with his reputation as one of the most well-respected and esteemed Anglo-Protestant

²⁸² Isaac Backus, *An Abridgement of the Church History of New England from 1602 to 1804* (Boston: Printed for the Author, by E. Lincoln, 1804), 202.

ministers, Chauncy was both a defender of tradition in his writings, his sermons, and in print, and also a heterodox author who proliferated his ideas through circulating manuscripts, discreet conversations, and growing scribal communities. In many ways, it was his reputation which afforded him an array of different publication options: manuscript circulation, oral preaching, and print distribution. During the Great Awakening revivals of the 1730s and the 1740s, Chauncy published against supporters of revivalists. His most notable piece, *Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England* (1743), gave him newfound fame and positioned him to become an informal editor to other ministers opposing the revivalists. As he recounted in a letter to Stiles, “There is scarce a piece against [the Great Awakening] but was sent to me and I had the labour sometimes of preparing it for the press, and of always correcting the press.”²⁸³ By the 1750s, Chauncy began publishing his heterodox views through scribal publication and manuscript circulation. Over the course of three decades, he had been transforming theologies of his peers from the Calvinism they inherited from their New England Puritan forefathers towards a more theologically liberal position of universal salvation. At the same time he was inaugurating theological change among the clerical elite, Chauncy continued to rely on the printing press to assert New England clerical autonomy against Anglicans like Thomas Bradbury Chandler who supported the idea of an Anglican bishop presiding over colonial religious affairs. For most of his life, Chauncy had been experimenting with different mediums, learning about the different publics they could gather, and strategizing around the best approach to introduce theological innovations in an unrevolutionary manner. One could certainly describe Chauncy’s life as resolving the tensions between defending the merits of tradition while also establishing a new theological order in New England.

²⁸³ Charles Chauncy, “A Sketch of Eminent Men in New England, In A Letter from the Rev. Dr. Chauncy to Dr. Stiles,” *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society First Series, Vol. 10* (Boston, Mass: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1809), 73. (Hereafter cited as “A Sketch of Eminent Men”)

This chapter tracks important differences between the different publication options available to Chauncy as it related to the different discursive communities around universal salvation. Through manuscript circulation, discreet conversations, and print production, Chauncy strategically published his heterodox views and demonstrated the stakes behind each option. The first section argues against the notion that manuscripts were strictly private or secret documents through the ways they circulated, were copied, and generated discourse around their ideas. There were certainly many instances of manuscripts escaping their author's intended audience to gather a much broader readership than even publishers might imagine. However, their capacity to facilitate theological change relied on a sense that despite their wide circulation, manuscripts were seen as an intimate form of mediation that expected from readers trust and charitability towards the ideas they contain. The second part explores the ways oral preaching, as a form of publication, was weighted with the responsibility of New England congregationalist expectations and the Great Awakening revivals in the 1740s to operate strictly as an orthodox form of publication. These contexts suggest that the medium for ministers was far from an open forum for communicating ideas and that more intimate modes of orality like conversation and code better captured sites of negotiation, contestation, and experimentation for new and novel ideas. The final section examines the role of print as a form of commemorating and materializing ministerial authority in the public sphere. Chauncy had done much of the work of transforming the beliefs of his peers outside of the printing press. By the time universal salvation was published through the printing press, it certainly could have transformed the minds of those who were not privy to the manuscript. Yet, readers were fascinated with the ways he performed his ideas in the text rather than necessarily how he positioned his ideas and engaged its readers in a strictly disinterested, and rational fashion, as Michael Warner originally suggested about the

medium. How Chauncy's ideas traveled across different mediums illustrates the interplay between different modes of publication and complicates the neat progression for ideas from the privacy of manuscripts towards the increasing publicity that print afforded.

Public Manuscripts

The mid-to-late eighteenth-century saw a growth in adherents to universal salvation, the Protestant tenet that God had predestined all of humanity to eternal happiness in heaven, in British colonial America. Historians of the Universalist movement have pointed to the arrival of Murray in the 1770s as inaugurating the establishment of some semblance of a denomination. They underscore the growing number of disparate followers, comprised mostly of non-clergymen, from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to Gloucester, Massachusetts.²⁸⁴ However, decades before Murray arrived in the colonies and years before his mentor James Rely published *Union; or a Treatise of the Consanguinity between Christ and Church* (1759), the foundational text for Murray's universal salvation, Chauncy arrived at the conclusion that all of humanity was destined for eternal salvation. While he was not the first in North America to reach this conclusion, Chauncy's turn was nevertheless pivotal in the history of undermining the long-standing hold of Calvinism over New England, which for decades has stressed that God had only destined a select handful of his elect to salvation.²⁸⁵ His eventual publication, titled *The Mystery Hid*, established the legitimacy of universal salvation for the Puritan-descended clergy in Boston and across New England.

²⁸⁴ Murray was a student of Rely in London and would become the minister for a group of Universalists in Gloucester, MA who had separately encountered Rely's text. On this history as the starting point for Universalism, see George Hunston Williams, "American Universalism: A Bicentennial Essay," *Journal of the Universalist Historical Society* 9 (1971), 23; and Russel Miller, *The Larger Hope: The First Century of the Universalist Church in America*, (Boston, Mass.: Unitarian Universalist Association, 1979)

²⁸⁵ George de Benneville, a universalist preacher and physician, arrived in Philadelphia sometime in the 1740s. See Ann Lee Bressler, *The Universalist Movement in America, 1770-1880*, (New York Oxford University Press, 2001).

According to an April 14, 1754 letter to his cousin Nathaniel Chauncy, Charles Chauncy “made the Scriptures [his] whole study” in 1752 and his labor gave him “a clearer understanding of them than [he] ever had before.” Though initially excited by his findings which he inscribed onto a manuscript, Chauncy hesitated to send them to his cousin. Rather than risking his discoveries falling into wrong hands, he instead invited Nathaniel to come see the discoveries on Paul’s Epistles in-person. [Charles] Chauncy believed that by showing his cousin what had “escaped the notice of so many who have written on the Apostle’s Epistles,” Nathaniel’s mind would be opened “into an entirely new set of thoughts.” Chauncy’s discoveries rendered other commentaries’ on Paul’s Epistles “commonly received opinions” that were too “remote from the truth.”²⁸⁶ While he did not disclose the content of his discovery in the letter, the fact that he had materialized his views was significant. As early as 1754, there existed a written document that Chauncy intended to share with others: in other words, Chauncy’s views were published.²⁸⁷

For five more years [Charles] Chauncy pored through various commentaries on Paul’s Epistles.²⁸⁸ In a 1768 letter to Newport, RI minister Ezra Stiles, Chauncy boasted about having scoured every available text in the colonies. He “read everything that [he] could hear of in any of the libraries [in Boston] or at Cambridge.” Dissatisfied with what little resources were available to him in the colonies, Chauncy requested from England “a considerable number of [works by] writers recommended by Doct. Doddridge,” an English Congregationalist minister, author of the

²⁸⁶ William Chauncey Fowler, “President Charles Chauncy and his ancestors and descendants,” (Boston, 1856-1857), 335.

²⁸⁷ David Hall, *Ways of Writing: The Practice and Politics of Text-Making in Seventeenth-Century New England*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 33. Here Hall proposes a less rigid standard for publication: “Any text that existed in one or more handwritten copies can be considered published. This definition encompasses a text in an author’s handwriting that he shared with others as well as what Harold Love has named ‘user’ publication, the making of copies (perhaps no more than one) by someone else.”

²⁸⁸ Charles Chancy, “A Sketch of Eminent Men in New England,” Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS) Collections. 1st Ser., 10 (1809), 154-165. In this letter to Ezra Stiles, Chauncy mentioned that he had spent seven years studying Paul’s Epistles. If by 1754 Chauncy had already spent two years working on a study of Paul’s Epistles, then that would mean Chauncy had worked at the very least five more years after his letter to Nathaniel. Thus, it’s likely that Chauncy did not finish his study until closer to 1759.

book that Chauncy likely referenced titled *Lectures on Preaching and The Several Branches of the Ministerial Office*.²⁸⁹ *Lectures* contained a list of “the most celebrated ministers among dissenters and in the establishment” which provided Chauncy with a bibliography of “commonly held opinions” on Paul’s Epistles. Having read as widely as he could, Chauncy reached out to Stiles’ for “judgment and advice.”²⁹⁰

By 1768, four different manuscripts comprised Chauncy’s “large parcel of materials.” The first, a quarto volume which Chauncy had completed for “some years,” was described to have been written “with too much freedom” and had already been circulated among some of Chauncy’s closest friends. They suggested that he send it to London to be printed anonymously, but Chauncy, perhaps either humbly or vainly, confessed that he has not decided on whether to print the text or “order its being committed to the flames” because the work had cost him much time and labour.²⁹¹ It is likely that the finished quarto volume would be the one printed with the title *The Mystery Hid From Ages and Generations* (1784). The second work, an octavo volume that contained three dissertations – on Adam’s innocence, Adam’s lapsed state, and the posterity of Adam – was “written from the scripture account of these matters, and not from any human scheme.” Comprised of “dissertations” and centered on a detailed study of Adam, the manuscript was likely the draft for what would eventually be printed as *Five Dissertations* (1785), the last of the three parts of Chauncy’s printed work. Together, the quarto volume’ and octavo volumes’ emphases on scripture made them the likely candidates for the drafts of *Mystery Hid* and *Five Dissertations* respectively: both were eventually printed in London due to the absence of Greek

²⁸⁹ Charles Chancy, “A Sketch of Eminent Men in New England,” 162. On Doddridge, see Edward M. Griffin, *Old Brick: Charles Chauncy of Boston, 1705-1787*, (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1980), 203, n5. He argues that this reference to Doddridge was probably referring to his text “Lectures on Preaching,” Doddridge’s *Works*, ed. E. Williams and E. Parsons (Leeds: Edward Baines, 1802-1805), V, 428.

²⁹⁰ Chauncy, “A Sketch of Eminent Men in New England,” 163.

²⁹¹ Chauncy, “A Sketch of Eminent Men in New England,” 158.

and Hebrew text-type in the colonies. Despite Chauncy's concern over the octavo volume's heterodox claims, similar to the quarto volume, he remained "persuaded that it [also] contained real truth." Yet, Chauncy resolved to leave the details of its printing up to Providence, the "allwise Governor of all things," in response to his friends' insistence for him to print his works.²⁹²

The third work, which Chauncy called "a key to the New Testament" intended to "prepare the mind for reading and understanding the New Testament writings," might not have ever been published. However, multiple references to dissenting English minister John Taylor of Norwich's "Key to the Apostolic Writings," and John Locke's commentary on Paul's Epistles appeared in the beginning of *Mystery Hid*.²⁹³ While Chauncy's citations do not ultimately point to a "key" original to him, Chauncy devoted a large section at the end of *Mystery Hid* addressing potential misinterpretations of his Universalism. Perhaps in the absence of his own original "key to the New Testament" to guide readers towards a Chauncean reading of Paul's Epistles, he may have simply combined this manuscript "key" with the quarto volume draft of the *Mystery Hid*. This hypothesis is supported by *Mystery Hid*'s outline of Chauncy's own exegesis. *Mystery Hid* provided detailed descriptions of its author's borrowed methodologies for parsing chapter sequences, drawing verse parallelisms, and interrogating syntax via Greek conjunctions that may have accomplished similar goals as an official "key." The fourth work, a moderate octavo volume upon "the benevolence of God, its nature, illustration, and consistency with evil both natural and moral," was likely the draft for *The Benevolence of the Deity* (1784).

²⁹² Chauncy, "A Sketch of Eminent Men in New England," 163.

²⁹³ Charles Chauncy, *The Mystery Hid from ages and generations, made manifest by the gospel-revelation: or, The salvation of all men the grand thing aimed at in the scheme of God, as opened in the New-Testament writings, and entrusted with Jesus Christ to bring into Effect*, (London: Printed for Charles Dilly, 1784), xi-xii.

At the end of his letter, Chauncy hoped that he would have time to finish “the above mentioned *Dissertations* and the *Divine Benevolence*,” suggesting that *Mystery Hid* may have been the only manuscript advanced enough in its completion to be circulated among his friends.²⁹⁴ Furthermore, among the four different projects that made up the “parcel of materials,” the finished quarto volume was most likely the manuscript that Chauncy alluded to in his letter to Nathaniel and what eventually garnered the pseudonym “pudding.” Hence, the manuscript and its decades-long circulation evidenced Chauncy’s Universalism as early as the 1750s, decades before more famous itinerant Universalists Elhanan Winchester and John Murray came to their own views about universal salvation.

Placing Chauncy’s Universalism first challenges theological chronologies that began Chauncy’s descent into heterodoxy with shifts in either his views about God’s benevolence or Adam’s original sin. Universal salvation in New England was not merely the consequence of gradual theocentric innovations, but was a rupture into Chauncy’s orthodoxy by which his notions about God’s benevolence and humanity’s original sin naturally followed. As Chauncy demonstrated, his thesis about humanity’s salvation and eternal happiness stemmed from his exegetical work drawing a perfect parallelism between Adam and Christ in Paul’s Epistle to the Romans. This new chronology not only evidenced the ways Enlightenment thought shaped New England religious formation by reformulating existing exegetical methods, but it also suggested the liberalism of New England Puritan religion came from within a *sola scriptura* logic that was valued, yet perhaps never exercised, by eminent New England Congregationalist ministers.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁴ Chauncy, “A Sketch of Eminent Men in New England,” 164.

²⁹⁵ For a brief overview of Greek and Hebrew taught at Harvard, see Harry Stout, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 92-93. It’s likely that ministers by the mid-eighteenth century, while having language training, may not have exercised it during their regular sermon preparation as evidenced by the correspondences between ministers John Eliot, Charles Chauncy, and Jeremy Belknap.

The primacy of universal salvation in *Mystery Hid*, not original sin in *Five Dissertations* or the privileging of God's benevolence over his other attributes in *Benevolence of the Deity*, would be illustrated in the sequence Chauncy printed his works. Rather than beginning with the more readily printable *Benevolence of the Deity*, Chauncy risked logistical and reputational inconvenience by printing *Mystery Hid* first.²⁹⁶ Not only was the printing of *Benevolence of the Deity* in Boston more convenient, but its claims may have been more acceptable to his orthodox peers so as to ease the New England clergymen to his more controversial views. Furthermore, the final section of *Mystery Hid* anticipated many of the arguments that Chauncy laid out in *Benevolence of the Deity* suggesting the ways Chauncy wrote *Benevolence of the Deity* to follow naturally from *Mystery Hid*.²⁹⁷

Universal salvation first appeared in Chauncy's March 1770 letter to London Unitarian minister Richard Price. Having read Price's *Four Dissertations* (1767) where he contended that "ultimate restoration of all mankind....is by no means reconcilable to the language of scripture,"²⁹⁸ Price's was an annihilationist who believed that the state of future punishment as "the loss or deprivation of being." Chauncy disagreed with his intellectual superior, asking kindly "Will you dear Sir, permit me to ask. Is it indisputably evident from Scripture, that there shall not be this ultimate restoration?" Perhaps this punishment that Price outlined may have been intended to be disciplinary and "intended for the good of the sufferers" so as to "render them meet, fit, prepared" for eternal happiness. Using 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 that "Christ shall not deliver up the Kingdom to the Father, till all enemies are subdued," Chauncy, perhaps unable

²⁹⁶ Due to *Mystery Hid* having to be sent to England due to the absence of Greek and Hebrew text-type, it's striking that Chauncy decided to publish this first, even before *Benevolence of the Deity* which was eventually published in Boston. Even more interesting is that Chauncy did not send *Five Dissertations* until the following year which also needed to be printed in London. The logistical choices suggest attention to the sequence, which may have been frustrated by actual inconveniences suffered due to delays.

²⁹⁷ Michael Baysa, *Locating Scriptural Authority in Charles Chauncy's Universalism*, 2016, Boston University, MA Thesis. *OpenBU*, <https://open.bu.edu/ds2/stream/?#/documents/169884/page/1>, 33.

²⁹⁸ Charles Chauncy to Richard Price, 22 March 1770, MHS.

to help himself, argued that sin, being that enemy, can then be subdued through the free exercise of the moral agency made possible by the very goodness of God. This promise allowed the fulfillment of scripture's promise that every human being will ultimately be brought to life and that this scheme would be "more honorary to God" and reflected "more glory on the great work of redeeming grace" of Jesus Christ. This logic was a succinct summary of Chauncy's argument in *Mystery Hid*, which he ended by revisiting his initial point of departure from Price, that as someone "employed on the subject of ultimate restoration" Chauncy disagreed that universal salvation was discounted by scripture. He confessed that his goal in sharing his Universalism wasn't so much to "dispute with one so much [his] superior" but to let Price, whom Chauncy considered "the best qualified person," examine the strength of Chauncy's logic. The letter ended with a tease for the reader(s): "I could have greatly enlarged, especially upon the office of an ultimate restoration; but I would not be too tedious. I fear I have been too troublesome already."²⁹⁹ While Price may not have seen the manuscript until Boston minister John Eliot – under the direction of Chauncy – delivered the draft to London in 1784, he nonetheless received the best summary of *Mystery Hid* directly from Chauncy himself. Others would not receive such a personal service from Chauncy as he grew the quarto volume's readership by sharing it among those who Chauncy's community deemed to be sympathetic to their radical views.

Intimacy and Pulpit Rhetoric

As the manuscript circulated among New England clergymen, Chauncy wanted to constrain the proliferation of conversations, rumors, and other audible publications that came out of a haphazardly traveling manuscript. He turned to the term *pudding*. Eliot explained that "the

²⁹⁹ Chauncy to Price, 22 March 1770, MHS.

pudding is a word which he uses when persons are nigh not acquainted with [their] sentiments, thus styling the MSS.” When Chauncy wanted to know if someone might be amenable to potentially reading his manuscript, he would often ask readers, “Doth he relish the pudding?”³⁰⁰ There’s little clarification from Chauncy or his readers as to why he used the term *pudding*. However, the abundance of food metaphors to describe the experience of reading the manuscript gestures towards its effect on the material senses. After savoring the *pudding*, Eliot wondered if Chauncy really should consider “the propriety of feeding the palate of the populace with this rich & dainty food.”³⁰¹ In contrast, Eliot called Rely’s *Union* “as compleat a dish of hodge podge as most other essays upon mystical subjects.”³⁰² Such metaphors might at times be in jest, but they perform an important work. *Pudding* signified both the idea of universal salvation and the manuscript containing Chauncy’s views on the matter. Universal salvation was a topic that both readers and non-readers of the manuscript could discuss together as a discursive community. However, the term obscured for non-readers the contents of the manuscript which generated the discussion. In a way, *pudding* preserved the reader/non-reader binary and refocused discussions around the manuscript as the foundation for Chauncy’s community.

Secrecy was paramount for Chauncy’s manuscript. After showing it to fellow Ebenezer Gay sometime before the mid-1760s, Chauncy was asked if Jonathan Mayhew, fellow Congregationalist minister and one of Chauncy’s closest friends, had seen it. Mayhew would not live to see it because Chauncy believed he could not keep a secret. “I am not yet ready or determined to publish it; but if [Mayhew] sees it, such as his frankness, that all the world will

³⁰⁰ Eliot to Belknap, February 1781, Belknap Papers, 207.

³⁰¹ Eliot to Belknap, 26 January 1780, Belknap Papers, 175.

³⁰² Eliot to Belknap, 31 July 1781, Belknap Papers, 211.

soon know it.”³⁰³ Despite Chauncy’s close curation of his manuscript’s audience, however, news about his group’s Universalist views leaked. At various points in the manuscript’s circulation, the material text found ways to frustrate Chauncy’s desire for secrecy.

John Eliot, not to be confused with the missionary to the Native Americans, was first exposed to Universalism through the writings of English Universalist James Rely and his student John Murray who migrated from England to the American colonies in 1770. Eliot’s initial impression of Universalism was that it stemmed more so from “brilliancy of imagination than strength of genius.”³⁰⁴ At the same time that he was encountering Murray and his followers, however, Eliot was also preaching at First Church of Boston where Chauncy resided. Young preachers were invited to preach regularly at various New England churches due to what Eliot observed about the state of New England religion: “vacant parishes are so numerous, and candidates so few.”³⁰⁵ Eliot found this advantageous since it provided them the option to choose their weekly congregation, but also destabilized ministerial jurisdiction and in some cases led to feuds between churches’ ministers. Preaching at First Church exposed Eliot to Chauncy’s views on Universal Salvation. Much like Price, Eliot was an annihilationist who he interpreted the “second death” mentioned in the Book of Revelations as the soul being wiped from existence, a more merciful alternative to the traditional model where souls would enter into eternal pain and misery. Scriptural references to eternal torment were merely alluding to eternal nonexistence.³⁰⁶

At first, Eliot was not privy to the manuscript. Instead, his knowledge about universalism grew from various conversations with Chauncy and Minister John Clarke, Chauncy’s successor

³⁰³ Quoted from Alden Bradford, *Memoirs in the Life and Writings of Rev. Jonathan Mayhew, D.D. Pastor of the West Church and Society in Boston, From June 1747, to July 1766* (Boston: C.C. Little & Co., 1838), 479.

³⁰⁴ John Eliot to Jeremy Belknap, 18 February 1775, Belknap Papers, *Massachusetts Historical Society Sixth Series, Vol. IV*, 82.

³⁰⁵ Eliot to Belknap, 17 July 1777, Belknap Papers, 123.

³⁰⁶ Explanations of Eliot’s annihilationist scheme is scattered across most of the conversations between Eliot and Belknap. For the best example, see Eliot to Belknap, 26 January 1780, 174-176.

at First Church of Boston. When Eliot inquired for more details about the scheme, Chauncy would simply quote from Jesus in the New Testament: “I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now.”³⁰⁷ By 1779, Eliot had come to believe that Chauncy’s Universalism, in contrast to Murray’s, was amenable to not simply his own annihilationist views but to New England Calvinism at large. Its rational scheme led Elliot to hypothesize that perhaps many more ministers around New England might actually be secret Universalists than what Chauncy had originally imagined. Eliot’s hypothesis was tested later that year.

While Chauncy had been diligent in keeping his views a secret among a close group of friends, information about the growing community of Universalist sympathizers leaked to outsiders. Wells, Maine minister Moses Hemmenway had learned that “such a universal redemption of mankind as shall issue in universal salvation has been contended for by some, and has of late especially been favoured by numbers in different parts of this country.”³⁰⁸ Whereas Murray arrived in Gloucester, MA in 1774, however, this Universalism seems to have spread among the New England ministers closer to 1779 when Hemmenway penned the letter to Belknap. Underscoring the recency of this heterodoxy, Hemmenway writes: “The contrary doctrine (limited salvation), you know, has been received with so general a consent among us, that, amidst all the doctrinal disputes that have been moved, this seems scarce to have been called in question lately.”³⁰⁹ Despite his reservations against the scheme, Hemmenway expressed some sympathies toward those who adhered to it, that he shared in their “hope that all will be finally happy and holy, [but only] if [he] could reconcile it with the Scriptures.” A benevolent God remained a powerful draw for Hemmenway himself, so-much-so that he “doubt not but that

³⁰⁷ Eliot to Belknap, 31 July 1779, Belknap Papers, 145.

³⁰⁸ Moses Hemmenway to Jeremy Belknap, 20 December 1779, Belknap Papers, 160-161.

³⁰⁹ Hemmenway to Belknap, 20 December 1779, Belknap Papers, 161.

good men may be very favourably disposed toward it.”³¹⁰ Maintaining his orthodoxy however, Hemmenway preferred that the souls of the wicked be annihilated rather than for them to be happy unto eternity. Thus, Hemmenway wrestled with the implications of universal salvation despite having “read nothing that has been written in favour of it” or having “had no conversation upon the subject with any of that persuasion, or that appeared to understand the matter well.”³¹¹ Within his own theological orthodoxy, he not only positions annihilationism as a natural progression from limited salvation towards universal salvation, but also expressed a flicker of desire for universal salvation to be true as a scheme with benevolent implications.

Universalism’s failure to abide by Chauncy’s desire for its secrecy may be owed to carelessness by those who he entrusted with the manuscript. In January 1780, Chauncy finally allowed Eliot to study the manuscript. In preparation for this moment, Eliot offered to directly copy down for Belknap any “passages [he] desired and anything else [he] may hereafter peruse”. Practices that compromised secrecy, however, did little to grow the manuscript’s readership and to make converts of them succeeded. Chauncy’s work converted annihilationist-Calvinist readers into Universalists by leveraging their desire for a benevolent God who would not condemn human souls to eternal torment. In Eliot’s case, the manuscript forced Eliot to consider what happened after the second death, after the souls of the wicked suffer non-existence. Considering this point, Eliot wrote, “I suppose that the annihilators understand the second death which is the punishment of sinners as preparatory to their non-existence. The punishment lasts as long as necessary to subserve the purposes of God’s moral government, and then they are eased of it.”³¹² Furthermore, manuscript reflected Chauncy’s mastery of the New Testament in its original language. Eliot shared Hemmenway’s and Price’s reservations about universal salvation as a

³¹⁰ Hemmenway to Belknap, 20 December 1779, Belknap Papers, 173.

³¹¹ Hemmenway to Belknap, 20 December 1779, Belknap Papers, 161.

³¹² Eliot to Belknap, 29 March 1780, Belknap Papers, 181.

scheme that lacked support from scripture. He waited “to have the matter set in a Scriptural view” and wanted to be persuaded by arguments so convincing that if Eliot were to read the Greek Testament himself, he should also come to the same conclusion about universal salvation as Chauncy.³¹³ Perhaps anticipating the codename Chauncy would later adopt for his manuscript, Eliot described the sharing in Chauncy’s scheme as “the propriety of feeding the palate of the populace with this rich & dainty food, however luscious it may be to [their] teste.”³¹⁴

After reading the manuscript, Eliot was convinced: “I have read Dr. Chauncy upon *you know what*. I think it unanswerable.”³¹⁵ Yet its logic is so rigorous that it required some “degrees of faith” to which Eliot’s was “not so strong.” In addition, Eliot had been privy to Chauncy’s manuscript of Romans 5 on justification. This manuscript would likely be the last section from *Five Dissertations* which Chauncy eventually titles “A SUPPLEMENTAL DISSERTATION on Romans, Chap. V. from the 12th to the 20th Verse” which he will publish as the last of the three parts of his scheme on universal salvation. Having read both pieces, Eliot concluded that Chauncy “is certainly a masterly reasoner & a great critic.” In May 1780, Belknap accused Eliot of being attached to his annihilationist by the mere “baby of [his] affections.” Eliot maintained his own annihilationist views insofar as they were compatible with universal restitution, but ultimately confessed that his own views about salvation “are similar to the Doctor’s.” Chauncy’s Universalism transformed Eliot’s annihilationism from “second death” to merely serving as a temporary measure to destroy all wickedness and sin, for the benefit of human souls who will ultimately be subjected to Christ’s rule, the conclusion of Chauncy’s scheme.³¹⁶

³¹³ Eliot to Belknap, 26 January 26, 1780, Belknap Papers, 174.

³¹⁴ Eliot to Belknap, 26 January 26, 1780, Belknap Papers, 175.

³¹⁶ Eliot to Belknap, 23 May 1780, Belknap Papers, 191.

Belknap also converted to Chauncy's universal salvation after having read the manuscript. However, Belknap struggled to keep it a secret. In one incident, while he was preaching a sermon in front of an association of ministers, Belknap apparently threw "out so many heretical hints" that he merited some reproof from the ministers. Hearing of this incident, Eliot and Chauncy chastised Belknap to "be ye wise as serpents," that it will "not do to vent these sentiments at present." By sentiments, Eliot meant universal salvation: "You know what I mean, the *pudding*, as Dr. Chauncy calls it." The standing Congregationalist ministers had grown to resent Murray's itinerant preaching of Universalism so much that they had become suspicious of universal salvation altogether, and had only reinforced for Chauncy, and his readers, the value of secrecy. Unfortunately, Belknap's miscues continued. Not only did he almost reveal his Universalist views but he had delayed in returning Chauncy's manuscript to its author. At the direction of an increasingly impatient Chauncy, Eliot urged Belknap to "send them to him by the first opportunity."³¹⁷ Belknap eventually returned the manuscript to Chauncy the following year.

That same year, businessman and publisher Ebenezer Hazard requested from Eliot Chauncy's manuscript. Due to financial constraints, Eliot was not able to travel and obtain it for Chauncy.³¹⁸ Belknap, however, was not only available but may have hinted to Eliot that he wanted a second look at the manuscript. A "Mr. Thayer" held the manuscript, likely referring to John Thayer, a Boston clergyman who would later on convert from Calvinism to Catholicism. Chauncy probably knew that Thayer was departing for France later that year making Belknap's retrieval of the document a much more urgent task. Thayer grew under the canopy of New England Congregationalism and had attended Yale where he received an honorary AB degree in 1779. A year prior to graduation, Thayer was admitted into Chauncy's church of First Church of

³¹⁷ Eliot to Belknap, 10 December 1780, Belknap Papers, 201.

³¹⁸ Eliot to Belknap, 10 July 1781, Belknap Papers, 209.

Boston. Thayer likely met with Chauncy and on occasion was able to preach in multiple churches like Eliot, though may have never held an actual position as minister. During his affiliations with First Church of Boston, not only was it likely that Thayer worked with Chauncy but he may have also been allowed to read Chauncy's manuscript, at least until Belknap retrieved it from him. Upon his arrival in Rome, Thayer converted to Catholicism and aspired to return to New England with the hopes of being "the instrument of the conversion of [his] countrymen."³¹⁹ His arrival was anticipated by the publication of his personal narrative which invited the ire of Congregationalists like Belknap with whom Thayer feuded.³²⁰ By the time Thayer arrived, however, Chauncy had died and the manuscript had been printed.

The earliest stages of Chauncy's material manuscript's circulation was rife with successes and frustrations. On the one hand, the transportability of the manuscript allowed Chauncy to share his manuscript with Eliot and Thayer whose transient presences in Boston moved the document across the vast geographies of New England orthodoxy. At the same time, however, this material feature of the manuscript also compromised its author's intentions of secrecy. New England Divines like Hemmenway caught wind of Chauncy's growing set of followers. Belknap could not help but almost reveal Universalist sympathies to unsuspecting ministers. And Thayer himself could have escaped to France with the document. In many ways the technology of the written manuscript that both proliferated the ideas of and endangered the reputation of its author, thereby suggesting the distinctiveness of the text from the intentions of the author. In other words, Chauncy's manuscript, as a published work, exercised its own agency within the discursive spaces it inhabited. In Latourian fashion, the text acted upon its holders. With Eliot, the text imparted to its reader a desire to share its content with ministers outside of

³¹⁹ John Thayer, *The Conversion of The Reverend John Thayer*, 21.

³²⁰ John Thayer to Jeremy Belknap, 1793, Belknap Papers (1891), 539-546..

Chauncy's circle like Hemmenway. With Belknap, the manuscript so demanded rigorous study that it required time that an impatient Chauncy would not afford to Belknap. With Thayer, the document imposed burdens on Belknap and Eliot on its journey back to its author. Hence, the material agency of the text frustrated Chauncy's own designs for it to be kept a convenient secret. This paradox required a solution and for Chauncy and Eliot, it began with the pudding.

Although Chauncy had been circulating his manuscript of *Mystery Hid* as early as the mid-1750s, the "pudding" pseudonym did not appear until the 1780s. His correspondences with his cousin Nathaniel, Ezra Stiles, and Richard Price did not mention the term. None of Chauncy's surviving documents referenced his views on universal salvation as "pudding."³²¹ Rather, "pudding" first appeared in a February 1781 letter between John Eliot and Jeremy Belknap when Eliot explained to Belknap the nature of the code: "The pudding is a word which he uses when persons are nigh not acquainted with our sentiments, thus styling the MSS. A word that happen[ed] to come uppermost once when he wanted to know the sentiments of an absent gentleman - Doth he relish the pudding?"³²² Eliot hinted at this name in earlier letters, but it's likely that the code "pudding" was conceived as a result of the leaks involving Hemmenway and Belknap.³²³

Coding secrets in Revolutionary America was not unusual. Belknap himself named his satirical piece on the New Hampshire state constitutional convention a *hen* and the incomplete

³²¹ Chauncy left no personal papers or notes. However, both his printed materials and unprinted materials don't evidence the existence of "pudding" prior to 1781. See Charles Chancy, "A Sketch of Eminent Men in New England," Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS) Collections. 1st Ser., 10 (1809) and William Chauncey Fowler, "President Charles Chauncy and his ancestors and descendants," (Boston, 1856-1857).

³²² Eliot to Belknap, February 1781, Belknap Papers, 207.

³²³ Hemmenway to Belknap, 26 January 1780, Belknap Papers (1891), 174-175. On the larger claim about the pudding's appearance, it's hypothetical on my part. I base it on the timing of the pudding's appearance in the Belknap Papers. The term's first appearance in the Belknap Papers may only point to the moment during which Eliot was introduced to the pseudonym "pudding." I lean a bit away from this interpretation, although it's the stance assumed by most scholars, because of its absence in correspondences between Chauncy and Stiles/Price, both of whom learned about Chauncy's heterodoxy prior to 1770 yet were never introduced to the "pudding" moniker.

constitution egg.³²⁴ In these moments, ideas, particularly ones materialized and published (in Hall's sense of the word), were coded in letters with pseudonyms. But Chauncy's decision to code his manuscript "pudding" demand speculation: why pudding? One possibility might be that Chauncy named the manuscript after Pudding Lane, a street in Boston that was previously called Crooked Lane and eventually came to bear the name of its counterpart in London. Some suggested that the street earned its name from the aroma of famous hasty puddings baked at the nearby Blue Anchor Tavern where discussions about politics abounded.³²⁵ Famous Boston printer Thomas Fleet, who printed Mother Goose's Melodies for Children, had operated his business on Pudding Lane. Fleet also printed many of Chauncy's sermons and tracts, most notably his much derided *Salvation for all Men* (1782).³²⁶ In 1760, a fire destroyed many of the buildings on Pudding Lane. The street would eventually be renamed Devonshire Street in honor of Bristol merchant Christopher Devonshire who provided financial aid to the victims of the fire.

Pudding was also a common food item in colonial America – in particular hasty pudding. "Much of the food of the average New Englander consisted of corn-meal, boiled meats and vegetable and stews. Every well-equipped household had its spits for roasting and many had gridirons, but the usual diet of the average family was 'hasty pudding' – cornmeal mush and milk – varied by boiled meat or fish served in the center of a large pewter platter and surrounded by boiled vegetables."³²⁷ Although it's not pudding, Chauncy himself had a personal connection with pies. In a short biography of his great grandfather Harvard President Charles Chauncy,

³²⁴ Russell Lawson, *Ebenezer Hazard, Jeremy Belknap, and the American Revolution*, No. 22, in *The Enlightenment World: Political and Intellectual History of the Long Eighteenth Century Series* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011), 2-3.

³²⁵ "The Names of Streets" in the *Fifth Report of the Record of Commissioners*, revised version (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill City Printers, 1887), 31, and Perry Walton, *Devonshire Street: A Collection of Facts and Incidents*, (Boston: Walton Advertising & Printing Co., 1912), 10.

³²⁶ See bibliography for printed materials in Griffin, *Old Brick*, 219-227.

³²⁷ George Francis Dow, *Every Day Life in Massachusetts Bay Colony*, (New York: Dover Publication, 1988), 41.

Chauncy recounted the arduous quest for his ancestor's papers. As the eldest of his father's sons, he expected to have inherited his great grandfather's papers. However, they were ultimately bequeathed to another family who, due to unfavorable financial circumstances, placed them in the hands of a North-Hampton Deacon who made a living making and selling pies. To Chauncy's dismay, he discovered that the papers "were put to the bottom of the pies, and in this way brought to utter destruction."³²⁸ Chauncy was both "greatly moved" but also "riveted in [his] mind a determination" to burn his papers after he dies, just so that his own papers might not suffer the same horrific fate. Perhaps this incident contextualized Chauncy's "pudding" within the broader anxieties about the fate of manuscripts: either burn them so as to hide their contents but risk wasting the time and labor of materializing what authors deemed to be worthy thoughts, or publish the manuscript so as to immortalize the author's thoughts and work, but risk derision from a broader public for its contents. For Chauncy's great grandfather, and perhaps for Chauncy himself, "pudding" and "pies" may be the fates they anticipated for their indecision to commit to either destiny for their papers.

Nevertheless, Chauncy's followers embraced "pudding" and even weaponized it to mock the scheme of Murray's Universalists. Eliot, after having finally read Rely's *Union*, compared it to the "pudding" by calling it "as compleat a dish of *hodge podge* as most other essays upon mystical subjects."³²⁹ For Eliot, *Union* suffered from a false dichotomy between the materiality of vice & sin and the immateriality (or in his terms, the abstraction) of virtues. Devaluing the material, and by extension the present, weakened incentives for society to uphold moral and civil virtues, especially if the rewards for virtuous lives are themselves also mere abstractions into a future state. Not only was this the primary flaw in Rely's scheme that Chauncy's corrected, but

³²⁸ Chauncy, "Life of President Chauncy," MHS Collections, 179

³²⁹ Eliot to Belknap, 31 July 1781, Belknap Papers, 211.

it also outlined the danger in Murray's Universalism. As Chauncy wrote about Murray's theology in the preface of *Salvation for All Men*:

According to this *preacher* [Murray], a man may go to heaven, notwithstanding all the sins he has been guilty of in the course of his life. Such a doctrine looks very like an *encouragement* to *Libertinism*, and falls in with the scheme of too many in this degenerate age, who, under pretence of *promoting religion*, *undermine it at the very root*. It is certainly fitted to this end, and has already had this effect upon many, especially of our younger people, who, by means of it, have lost all sense of religion, and given themselves up to the most criminal excesses! If this kind of preaching is encouraged, it may prove as hurtful to *civil society* as to *religion*.³³⁰

Despite Chauncy and Rely sharing Universalist views, the societal goals for their views created a theological chasm between Murray's and Chauncy's followers.

The "pudding" had a shorter cultural lifespan (1781-1784) compared to the long-durée of Chauncy's manuscript (1754-1784), suggesting that its conception was more remedial than being entirely preventative from the beginning. In response to the community's secrets leaking to those like Hemmenway, the "pudding" was meant to limit the damage those leaks created.

Unfortunately, the code failed to prevent future close calls. During Minister-elect Oliver Everett's ordination at New South Church, Chauncy had almost spilled the secrets of the "pudding." After Everett had read his confession, a deacon asked him about the godhead of Jesus Christ to the surprise of the ministers present. Other deacons and laypeople joined in the debate that subtly accused Everett of Unitarianism. Chauncy was outraged. He called one of the deacons a fool and another he insulted saying the deacon "knew nothing, & was fit only to lift up his

³³⁰ Charles Chauncy, *Salvation for all Men, illustrated and vindicated as a Scripture Doctrine, in Numerous Extracts from a Variety of Pious and Learned Men, who have purposely writ upon the subject*, (Boston: T&J Fleet, 1782), ii.

hand, which was all any body expected from him.”³³¹ Eliot later remarked that if the session had gone on, those present “might have been obliged to eat the pudding, bag & all.”³³²

Why would Chauncy conceive of a term “pudding” to patch up leaks if he would eventually publish it in three years? This timeline for the “pudding” portrayed Chauncy as short-sighted, reactionary, and validated descriptions of him having a “warm temper [that] lead him into mistakes.”³³³ The discourse around the “pudding” seemed to reinforce this view because ultimately, no one ever knew if or when Chauncy was actually going to publish. Chauncy himself ruminated on this question as far back as his first letter with his cousin in the 1750s and continued to pose the question to Stiles in 1768. Eliot and Belknap debated the merits of Chauncy printing now versus printing later.

After tasting the pudding, Eliot grew increasingly resistant towards printing whereas Belknap became more convinced that the “pudding” should be printed. Eliot maintained the unreliability of the public’s mind, both in its not being “ripe enough” and that Murray has only worsened the situation by turning their learned peers against Universalism altogether.³³⁴ Belknap disagreed, arguing that there is more social good to be gained from printing because truth was on their side, independent of the consequences. At the root of his confidence was a belief in the public’s reception of Chauncy’s scheme. Whereas Eliot and Chauncy objected to being associated with Murray’s “young, gay, volatile” followers, Belknap asserted that the “men of thought... who made Holy Scriptures their study” would see otherwise.³³⁵ Despite their success in “bringing “over many of [the ministers] to the faith of an universal salvation,” and a strong commitment to Jesus’ call in “opening the eyes of the people, instructing them in the knowledge

³³¹ Eliot to Belknap, 1 February 1782, Belknap Papers, 225.

³³² Eliot to Belknap, 1 February 1782, Belknap Papers, 225.

³³³ Hazlitt to Price, November 15, 1785, MHS.

³³⁴ Eliot to Belknap, December 10, 1780, Belknap Papers, 201.

³³⁵ Eliot to Belknap, February 1781, Belknap Papers, 204.

of the truth,” Eliot remained afraid of what this might do for their reputation among the New England clergy.³³⁶ He ultimately justified his and Chauncy’s position as one that exercises the utmost caution towards the world.

Eliot also entertained an eschatological question for Universalists: why evangelize if everyone is already destined eternal happiness? “But the future restitution of all things explained in the MS is not thus necessary to be known. For we certainly allow that many shall sit down in the kingdom of Christ who are ignorant about the present system, as we were when we knew no more than what is delivered in the Assembly’s Catechism.”³³⁷ For Chauncean Universalists, however, a mind enlightened to the reality of Universal salvation attained earthly happiness which made the endeavor itself worthwhile. Evangelization into Universalism was an act of benevolence towards society. And perhaps this was at stake for Chauncy to eventually print his work. However, in 1781, Chauncy may have yet to see the benefit in printing as he believed that “men’s minds are too much absorbed in politics to attend unto anything else.”³³⁸ With the fate of the pudding still left up to Providence, the historical contingencies surrounding Chauncy’s manuscript, the code remained necessary as Chauncy’s circle ruminated on the merits of printing and when they should do so.

A few months after Chauncy scolded the deacons during Reverend Everett’s ordination and after Belknap and Eliot debated the merits of printing the manuscript, Chauncy finally boiled the pudding, though not in its entirety. In August 14, 1782, Eliot alerted Belknap to this fact: “Dr. Chauncy’s MS is in the press.”³³⁹ Chauncy decided to print this work anonymously and as a shortened version was meant to address Murray’s Universalism. However, Eliot described this

³³⁶ Eliot to Belknap, February 1781, Belknap Papers, 204.

³³⁷ Eliot to Belknap, February 1781, Belknap Papers, 205.

³³⁸ Eliot to Belknap, February 1781, Belknap Papers, 207.

³³⁹ Eliot to Belknap, 14 August 1782, Belknap Papers, 234.

version as a “meer castrated edition of the whole work” and expressed concern that it might “admit of more bad than good consequences at such a time & in such a manner.”³⁴⁰ For Belknap, this document was simply “a scouting party, to make discoveries and try the temper of the public.”³⁴¹ Both responses evidenced surprise from both Eliot and Belknap, and will ultimately lead to disappointment at what the “pudding” would become.

Chauncy did not reveal the decision to print to anyone but his successor John Clarke. Perhaps this explained why the printed text, *Salvation for All Men, illustrated and vindicated as a Scripture doctrine*, read less like Chauncy’s manuscript and more like a project Clarke compiled in a short period of time. Instead of displaying the strengths of Chauncy’s mastery over the Greek New Testament, *Salvation for All Men* cited heavily from Universalist divines like Jeremy White and Joseph Nicol Scott. *Salvation for All Men* wanted to assert the strength of its arguments through sheer reputation rather than Chauncy’s exegesis of scripture which was what his adherents admired about the manuscript.³⁴² It failed to demonstrate Universal salvation as a scheme derived from scripture, the very concern held by Eliot and Hemmenway. Eliot was so embarrassed by the entire affair that he considered leaving Boston for a few years to avoid the torrent of criticisms. “If I could run away from Boston, I would be content not to see the place for 7 years, & heartily repent of my setting down here in the ministry. We must not be continually exposed to the fury of storms & hurricanes.”³⁴³

Despite the cold reception to *Salvation of All Men*, however, the “pudding” showed signs of success as a code meant to obscure the contents of its referent. The only group of people

³⁴⁰ Eliot to Belknap, 14 August 1782, Belknap Papers, 234.

³⁴¹ Jeremy Belknap to Ebenezer Hazard, 19 December 1782, *Massachusetts Historical Society Fifth Series, Vol. II*, Belknap Papers, 172.

³⁴² See Conrad Wright, *The Beginnings of Unitarianism in America*, (Boston: Starr King Press, 1955), 192 and Griffin, *Old Brick*, 174.

³⁴³ Eliot to Belknap, 30 September 1782, Belknap Papers, 236.

satisfied with *Salvation of all Men* were Murrayites, the very sect Chauncy criticized with his publication. Murray read “a great many good things” in the pamphlet despite its attempt to maintain a veneer of Puritan “fire and brimstone.”³⁴⁴ In celebration of *Salvation of all Men*, Murrayites not only ventured guesses as to the author but also anticipated a follow-up publication from the author on Divine Benevolence as the next work. Perhaps they suspected that this work would be a more complete version of the Universalism that *Salvation of All Men* introduced to the reading public. Despite his disappointment in *Salvation of all Men*, Eliot cheekily remarked that the Portsmouth Murrayites “mistook [the rumor about Divine Benevolence] for the Pudding.”³⁴⁵ He continued, “Let them hug their mistake: perhaps it will increase the number of people to encourage the work.” This minor victory for Chauncy’s followers illustrated the pseudonym’s success in concealing the true content of the “pudding.”

Regardless of the failures of Chauncy and Clarke’s scouting party, discourse around the manuscript utilizing the “pudding” thrived. While ministers discerned the authors of *Salvation of All Men* to be Chauncy and Clarke, the contents of the manuscript remained obscure to the broader public. This minor success proved at the utility of the “pudding” as a pseudonym. Within Chauncy’s community’s discourse, “pudding” was both a concept and a manuscript. As the written draft for *Mystery Hid*, it compromised the very intentions of its author’s secrecy insofar as material texts invited reading, enabled copying, and encouraged discourse around the text. These actions centered the agency of a text through its capacity to act upon its readers independent of the author’s intentions for it. As a concept, the idea of universal salvation also created discourses around which readers and non-readers of the manuscript could participate.³⁴⁶

³⁴⁴ John Murray, *Letters and Sketches in Sermons, 3 Vols*, Vol 2 (Boston: Joshua Belcher, 1812-1813), 94.

³⁴⁵ Eliot to Belknap, 18 September 1783, Belknap Papers, 236.

³⁴⁶ For more on texts and their publics, see Michael Warner, *Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

Deploying the pseudonym “pudding,” however, obscured for non-readers the nature of the manuscript around which the discourse developed. It preserved the reader/non-reader dichotomies that authors invested in secrecy would want to maintain. Perhaps more broadly, pseudonyms controlled participation within a community culture around a text and in doing so, limited texts’ capacities to invite non-readers into an already-existing community of discourse. In Chauncy’s case, the pseudonym “pudding,” by detaching the discourse around Chauncy’s Universalism in *Salvation of all Men* from the content of the manuscript itself, created two groups of readers who know about Chauncy’s Universalism: those who’ve read the manuscript and those who have not. “Pudding” restricted the appropriate discourse around the manuscript on the Universal salvation to those within Chauncy’s community, despite the numerous leaks, close calls, and even failed reveals.

Publishing Through Printers and Booksellers

In 1780, Murray and minister Elhanan Winchester preached the tenets of universal salvation across New England. In response, printers and booksellers introduced some universalist texts to a domestic market; from reprints of London texts like Rely’s *Union* to British-American productions like Judith Sargent Murray’s catechism on universal salvation.³⁴⁷ Reminiscent of the revivals in the 1740s, ministers like Isaac Backus responded in print, publishing works like *The Doctrine of Universal salvation Examined and Refuted, Containing, a Concise and distinct answer to the writings of Mr. Rely and Mr. Winchester, upon that subject* (1781) to challenge itinerants’ growing popularity among their congregants. For the clergy, print was tied to the “public,” an imagined extension of the congregation whose beliefs they represent and the

³⁴⁷ A reprint of James Rely’s *Union* was produced by Providence printer John Carter. Similarly, Connecticut printer John Trumbull printed Judith Sargent Murray’s catechism, even advertising it alongside Backus’ *The Doctrine of Universal Salvation* in the summer issues of *The Norwich Packet* in 1782.

projection of the audience their speech would hail. Their responsibility towards this public was to both represent their orthodoxy in print and perform for this public the ministers' "possession of all truth, and [argue] that those who differ are so far in the wrong."³⁴⁸ To assure printers that there was demand for their works, ministers promised a receptive audience that needed this production and a public that this text would gather after its production.³⁴⁹ These technologies reflect the ideologies of print itself and the ways ministers strategized around the requirements of print production so as to shape the reception of those who would come to read these texts. Ministers defending the standing orthodoxy of their Puritan forefathers relied on print to assert the veneer of some orthodox consensus against largely non-print published itinerants and Chauncy's decision to print commemorated his success in converting ministers through his circulating manuscript.

On July 22, 1783, politician Edmund Jennings reported to then-U.S. diplomat John Adams about a "religious dispute on Matters" in Boston that he assessed did "not tend to render Men wiser or better or more happy."³⁵⁰ Likely referring to the controversy surrounding Chauncy and Clarke's publication of *Salvation for All Men*, Jennings's critical remarks about the pamphlet skirmishes was not unique to him. Chauncy himself anticipated that the publication of the Universalist views would result in controversy that might destabilize the Congregationalist order. Given that any social instability resulting from theological fights between ministers might have worsened an already politically-fraught situation for the young nation in the wake of the American Revolution, might Chauncy have waited to publish for purely political reasons?

³⁴⁸ Franklin, *Franklin's Autobiography*, 126-127.

³⁴⁹ See Warner, *Letters of the Republic*. Warner draws heavily on Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (New York: Verso Books, 1983).

³⁵⁰ Edmund Jennings to John Adams, 22 July 1783, Adams Papers Digital Edition, Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS).

In the absence of Chauncy's personal papers, scholars of Chauncy grappled with a key question about Chauncy's pudding: "Why did Chauncy wait about three decades before printing his views?" Different methodologies yielded different theses. The prevailing explanation argued that political events like the American Revolution detracted from Chauncy's attention to his Universalism, particularly between the years 1770 and 1782. Support for this context can be found in Chauncy's arguments (via Eliot) against Belknap's proposal to publish the manuscript as soon as possible. "Dr. Chauncy says that the present is the worst time which could ever happen, for men's minds are too much absorbed in politics to attend unto anything else."³⁵¹ Further strengthening this argument was Chauncy's increasing attention toward political matters from the years after the Great Awakening to the end of the Revolutionary War. The threat of the establishment of Anglican bishops in the colonies may have led Chauncy to "set the pudding aside" as early as 1760 and anticipated the increasingly fraught relationship between England and the British colonies for the next two decades.³⁵² Printing a document that revealed controversial views held by one of the most prominent ministers in Boston would not only be untimely, but dangerous for the political unity that war required.

Others have also proposed institutional barriers that hindered Chauncy publicizing his Universalist views. As long Chauncy's senior minister at First Church of Boston Thomas Foxcroft, a stringent Calvinist who supported Jonathan Edwards during the revivals, was alive, then Chauncy printing his heterodox views might further strain their relations given their differing positions on the revivals. Controversy might even compromise Chauncy's ministerial there.³⁵³ While all of these factors may have been true for the secrecy of Chauncy's views, its

³⁵¹ Eliot to Belknap, February 1781, Belknap Papers, 207.

³⁵² Griffin, *Old Brick*, 127. For more on Chauncy's delay, also see Charles Lippy, *The Seasonable Revolutionary: The Mind of Charles Chauncy*, (Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, 1981), 108.

³⁵³ Oakes, *Conservative Revolutionaries*, 91-94.

publication into a circulated manuscript as early as the 1750s and a nearly completed version as early as the late 1760s requires explanations related to the nature of the manuscript itself. Conrad Wright hinted at a similar observation that tied the delay in printing to the material conditions of the manuscript itself within the context of the political events in New England: “A practical consideration was the fact that, so long as the war lasted, the book could not be printed, since it required certain fonts of Greek and Hebrew type which were not available in Boston.”³⁵⁴ Perhaps the material conditions for printing the “pudding” were simply not available until the 1780s, and even then it was simply too financially costly and logistically difficult.

Benevolence of the Deity was printed in Boston in 1784. In many ways, it should have been the least logistically challenging to print of the three manuscripts. Unlike *Mystery Hid* and *Five Dissertations*, *Benevolence* contained no Hebrew and Greek text and so did not require to be printed outside of Boston. Furthermore, it was perhaps one of the least controversial of the three documents given its boldest claims merely provide a theocentric re-framing for an otherwise anthropocentric thesis in *Mystery Hid* and *Five Dissertations*. God structured creation with human eternal happiness in mind and tethers it to the maximization of his glory precisely because benevolence, not justice or mercy, is His primary attribute. “Benevolence is that ingredient in his character which exhibits him to our view as amiably perfect, and worthy of our warmest love, and entire confidence. His other attributes, separate from this, are insufficient to inspire these affections; nor are they indeed at all suited to such purpose.” Chauncy concluded, “Tis goodness that finishes the idea of God, and represents him to us under a lovely character of

³⁵⁴ Wright, *The Beginnings of Unitarianism*, 188.

the best as well as greatest Being in the universe”³⁵⁵ Yet despite these claims, logistical issues plagued the printing of *Benevolence*.

Eliot worried that Chauncy’s essay on Divine Benevolence might “not obtain sufficient subscribers to make it worth to pursue the work – for the printers I mean.”³⁵⁶ Chauncy may have shopped his manuscript to other printers around Boston and in the process, revealed the contents of *Benevolence of the Deity* to those outside of his circle and this may have leaked the news about its publication to the Murrayites in Portsmouth.³⁵⁷ This also explained Chauncy’s decision to print with Powars & Willis, a new printer with whom he had not previously had printed his documents instead of printing with Thomas and John Fleet, Kneeland and Adams, or Thomas Leverett. It is also likely that Chauncy’s subscriptions may have just dropped after the controversy with *Salvation of all Men*. The following month, Belknap asked Eliot about the status of Chauncy’s manuscript. He expressed concern about printing in Boston because “subscribing business is very dull” and feared whether Chauncy would meet “any encouragement, or sufficient, for the essay on Divine Benevolence.”³⁵⁸ Belknap guessed that the “Pudding will be boiled in England.”³⁵⁹ Regardless of whether the issue was particular to Chauncy or was symptomatic of a broader publishing trend in Boston, Belknap was right, though not for the lack of printing in Boston. The “pudding” was printed in London because of the absence of Greek and Hebrew text-type in Boston.

Printing the “pudding” in London presented its own challenges. The primary issue was the distance. Voyages between Boston and London took anywhere from six weeks to as long as

³⁵⁵ Charles Chauncy, *The Benevolence of the Deity Fairly and Impartially Considered in Three Parts*, (Boston: Powars & Willie, 1784), iii-iv.

³⁵⁶ Eliot to Belknap, 18 September 1783, Belknap Papers, 263.

³⁵⁷ Eliot to Belknap, 18 September 1783, Belknap Papers, 263.

³⁵⁸ Belknap to Eliot, 22 October 1783, Belknap Papers, 265.

³⁵⁹ Belknap to Eliot, 22 October 1783, Belknap Papers, 265.

three months. Some ships' routes might even take passengers go through Africa or the Caribbean first as part of an intermediary passage. This presented a significant lag in both communication and material delivery. Although Chauncy had sent Eliot to London to deliver the manuscript to Price in early 1784, there was no news about the manuscript by the early summer.³⁶⁰ Belknap had "been waiting for the publication of Dr. Chauncy's book, and it is not printed and coming over in the same ship in which [he] expect[s] [his] brother Eliot every day." In August, Eliot, after having returned to Boston, complained that "Dr. Chauncy's Restitution book is not yet come over." He speculated that the printer Charles Dilly may have sold off "the impression" that was meant to be sent to the colonies.³⁶¹ Nevertheless, transatlantic communication networks were constrained by the material conditions that made vulnerable letters, books, and goods to destruction and delay. Whereas the *Mystery Hid* continued to delay somewhere in the Atlantic, *Benevolence of the Deity* was published that same year and Eliot was confident that he could procure Belknap a copy.³⁶² By the summer of 1784, one of Chauncy's three main works was in circulation.

Involvement of middle-men often increased the risk of logistical inconveniences, particularly when it came to the printing process. Chauncy likely sent Eliot to London deliver the manuscript and with Price's assistance, had it printed by Charles Dilly.³⁶³ Price was reluctant at first because he was "apprehensive of [the pudding's] unpromising influence on the morals of the people" and had thus replied back to Clarke about his concerns.³⁶⁴ Fortunately for Chauncy, English essayist William Hazlitt learned of Price's hesitation and intervened on Chauncy's

³⁶⁰ Belknap to Hazard, 24 May 1784, Belknap Papers, 347-348.

³⁶¹ Eliot to Belknap, 26 August 1784, Belknap Papers, 275-276.

³⁶² Eliot to Belknap, 26 August 1784, Belknap Papers, 276.

³⁶³ On Price's involvement with the pudding, see Joseph Palmer to John Adams, 29 September 1784, Adams Papers Digital Edition, MHS and Richard Cranch to John Adams, 12 August 1784, Adams Paper Digital Edition, MHS.

³⁶⁴ Hazlitt to Richard Price, 19 October 1784, MHS.

behalf. Having traveled throughout the colonies, Hazlitt clarified that Chauncy's scheme was a necessary corrective to the itinerant Universalist John Murray and whose views gained some influence in the colonies. "There is another doctrine circulating in this country, and received with great avidity by many persons, which the Doctor's book will have a tendency to overthrow."³⁶⁵ Hazlitt's defense of Chauncy came from the "great civility and friendship" with which Chauncy and other American ministers treated him during his visits to the colonies.³⁶⁶ While Chauncy had strived to keep the "pudding" a secret, news about it has spread overseas and while it has harmed his reputation among certain New England circles, it also helped in certain moments of the pudding's publication.

With *Mystery Hid* in print, rumors about its claims and arguments traveled across transatlantic networks to Chauncy's favor. The year *Mystery Hid* was being published, legislator Richard Cranch alerted John Adams, who was in London at the time, about the pudding's publication: "I also want you to read a Piece of Divinity that is like to make a great Noise in the World, written by Doctr. Chauncy of this Town, but printed in London this Year, by Dilly.... The old Gentleman has favour'd me with the reading of one of them that was sent over to him by Doctr. Price."³⁶⁷ Cranch assessed that Chauncy's discovery "is great, and benevolent; and, I think, supported in a masterly manner."³⁶⁸ The following month Abigail Adams, eventual first-lady and wife of John Adams, was also notified about Chauncy's work. Attorney Joseph Palmer wrote to her "that there is a new publication, in London, on the Salvation of all Men; I wish You and Yours to See it, for I think You will be charm'd with the Spirit, and manner; and believe you will think the Subject, and the reasoning thereon, worthy of Serious attention. Doctr. Chauncy is

³⁶⁵ Hazlitt to Richard Price, 19 October 1784, MHS.

³⁶⁶ Hazlitt to Richard Price, 19 October 1784, MHS.

³⁶⁷ Cranch to Adams, 12 August 1784, Adams Paper Digital Edition.

³⁶⁸ Cranch to Adams, 12 August 1784, Adams Paper Digital Edition.

the Author.”³⁶⁹ Much like Cranch, Palmer mentioned to the Adamses that they could obtain a copy from Price directly. Both letters identified the ways the audience for Chauncy’s *Mystery Hid* grew through the discourse around the text itself. And what moved discussions about the text through these letters within communities of political discourses was the positive reception of Chauncy’s rigorous study and logic.

By the end of 1784 with *Mystery Hid* and *Benevolence of the Deity* in print and circulation, and with *Five Dissertations* soon to follow, John Clarke finally responded to Price’s letter of concern. Chauncy’s work on Universal Salvation, contrary to Price’s original concerns, was “universally esteemed a monument of the author’s ingenuity.”³⁷⁰ Others have even considered it comparable to other canons of divinity. Mary Cranch, wife of legislator Richard Cranch, wrote to Abigail Adams that Chauncy’s book “has been much talk’d of [in New England]” but instead of making much “noise as it was thought it would” (in reference to Richard Cranch’s description of it), it instead “silenc’d every body.” The work was so admirably done that no one could even attempt to answer it.³⁷¹ Even the New Divinity men would not be able to respond as quickly as they did to *Salvation of All Men*. Jonathan Edwards Jr.’s response eventually came to print but by the time that it did, Chauncy had been dead three years.³⁷² Once all three tracts were finally in circulation, John Adams wrote to Chauncy “I hope to have the Pleasure of reading your new Work which has a great Reputation and is upon a most interesting Subject.”³⁷³ Businessman Ebenezer Hazard took several weeks to read it he “cannot help thinking [Chauncy’s] system not only rational, but Scriptural, and that it reflects more honor on

³⁶⁹ Joseph Palmer to Abigail Adams, 29 September 1784, Adams Paper Digital Edition, MHS.

³⁷⁰ John Clarke to Richard Price, 11 April 1785, MHS.

³⁷¹ Mary Cranch to Abigail Adams 12 April 1785, Adams Papers Digital Edition, MHS.

³⁷² Griffin, *Old Brick*, 176.

³⁷³ John Adams to Charles Chauncy, 27 April 1785, Adams Papers Digital Edition, MHS.

the divine character than [he has] ever met with.”³⁷⁴ John Quincy Adams, son of John and Abigail Adams, found the topics covered in Chauncy’s work so riveting that it “pleased [him] more than cards, or dress or scandal” despite not actually having read the book.³⁷⁵ Yet, the “pudding’s” reputation and the discourse it created among the broader public rendered Quincy Adams to “admire every thing that tends to inculcate” the principles of universal salvation. And so the pudding boiled and it was met with much acclaim by both those who read about it and those who simply heard about its bold claims supported by rigorous logic and detailed exposition of the scriptures.

In Palmer’s letter to Abigail Adams, he added an interesting detail about *Mystery Hid*. While the first edition of *Mystery Hid* was printed anonymously, Chauncy’s “name will be affixed to the Second edition.”³⁷⁶ The transition away from anonymity signaled various moves on Chauncy’s part. Generally speaking, anonymity in early America didn’t simply hide the author, but it invoked a nameless author whose authority could be universalized. But fixing an author’s name onto a previously anonymous work was perhaps a conscious attempt to discard that posture of authority-making. It is staking a claim.³⁷⁷ Clarke mentioned to Price that writing had become “intolerable” for Chauncy. He now relied heavily on Clarke for most of his correspondences. “By my pen” Clarke writes, “[Chauncy] will answer any letters which you may send him in future and I shall think it an honour to have it so employed.”³⁷⁸ A year after, Clarke provided

³⁷⁴ Ebenezer Hazard to Jeremy Belknap, 13 November 1874, Belknap Papers (1877), 406-407.

³⁷⁵ John Quincy Adams diary entry, January 20, 1786, Adams Papers Digital Edition, MHS.

³⁷⁶ John Quincy Adams diary entry, January 20, 1786, Adams Papers Digital Edition, MHS.

³⁷⁷ On anonymity, see Michael Warner, *Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 81 and 87-88. Warner detected a tension in Franklin, between “the desire for acknowledgment as author” and an attempt to universalize one’s otherwise personal authority that while Franklin may have held in tandem, Chauncy resolved for himself: acknowledgment and perhaps his public legacy was more important.

³⁷⁸ Clarke to Price, 11 April 1785, MHS.

further updates on Chauncy's health. "Dr. Chauncy enjoys his health, but his mind is much impaired. He is but the shadow of his former self."³⁷⁹ It was perhaps within this context that Chauncy's materialization of his ideas best served him. In the same year that Chauncy passed away, Mary Cranch wrote to Abigail Adams about Chauncy's legacy. Despite Chauncy being "very near his end. he has render'd himself immortal by his writings."³⁸⁰ The decision to append his name to later editions of *Mystery Hid* represented attempts to not just claim ownership over the pudding, but also its own agency during a nascent American-Universalist print-culture. While American Universalisms' earliest histories were comprised of Murray and Winchester's preaching circuits around rural New England and unprinted confessions by Calvinist-turned-Universalists like Connecticut Minister Joseph Huntington, Chauncy laid claim to the introduction of a native Universalism to the broader American print culture, and to the nascent American public.³⁸¹ And he would do so through the theological pillars of his Puritan forefathers: reason and scripture.

The history of the pudding's difficult journey to print was ultimately masked by the success of its printed version. Chauncy suffered numerous frustrations, from practices that compromised the manuscript's secrecy to the logistical inconveniences printing abroad. Yet despite multiple inconveniences, the manuscript reached its destination. Its namesake "the pudding" preserved what little secrecy Chauncy expected from it and shielded it from later controversies resulting from Chauncy's own "warm temper [that] leads him into mistakes."³⁸² Hence, while the text functioned in ways separate from Chauncy, it never could sever its

³⁷⁹ Clarke to Price, 18 July 1786, MHS.

³⁸⁰ Cranch to Adams, 9 February 1787, Adams Papers Digital Edition, MHS.

³⁸¹ For Huntington, see Joseph Huntington, *Calvinism improved; or, The Gospel illustrated as a system of real grace, issuing in the salvation of all men. A posthumous work of the late Reverend Joseph Huntington, D.D. Minister of the First Church in Coventry, (Connecticut)*, (New London, CT: Samuel Greene, 1796)

³⁸² Hazlitt to Price, 15 November 1785, MHS

connection to Chauncy. Perhaps the pudding had always been boiling because Chauncy never ceased wrestling with the texts' material realities, always negotiating his own capacity to communicate himself through and against the text's agency. And this is perhaps the material reason for the delay itself. By materializing his ideas, Chauncy had to grapple with what it meant to have a published document but not a printed one. The historical contingencies of secret keeping, managing leaks, and balancing reputations continually raised the stakes in both printing and not printing. The pudding's history became more than just a story about Chauncy's blundering encounter with the power and demands of print culture. It was also about Chauncy attempt to negotiate the boundaries of the public and private that print culture created, and what a secret manuscript containing heterodox views could mean for New England's literary future.

Chapter 5

Publishing Beyond the Printing Press

On a 1778 trip to Portsmouth, New Hampshire to visit universalist minister Noah Parker, essayist Judith Sargent Murray was surprised by her newfound celebrity among friends, acquaintances, and strangers. As she recalled, people “absolutely seem to regard me as a being of a superior order.” Her reaction was warranted because even though she had been a prolific writer, Sargent had not yet sent her works to printers for publication.³⁸³ Indeed, she would not publish her first work, a universalist catechism, for another four years and it would take another twelve before she printed her famous essay *On the Equality of the Sexes* (1790). For most of her literary life, Sargent had associated celebrity with authors who published through the printing press. However, she was satisfied just receiving regular praises from some of her closest friends who received hand-written copies of her work. Unbeknownst to the author, recipients of her poems and essays found ways to publish them to new audiences. Some read Sargent’s poems out loud in a larger group setting. Others created copies of Sargent’s works and sent them along correspondence networks. Readers may have also re-circulated the copies they received from Sargent among any of the Portsmouth universalists who wanted to read them. Regardless of how they may have distributed Sargent’s work outside of the printing press, the author was greeted by strangers interested in her work. Some of them even inquired the author for more samples of her writing. Thinking back on the moment, she beamed, “I receive the deference due to talents which few believe I possess.”³⁸⁴ To all extents and purposes, even without the printing press, Sargent had been published thanks to the efforts of her scribal community.

³⁸³ From here on forward, I will be referring to Judith Sargent Murray as “Sargent” in order to avoid confusion with Murray, who was her second husband after surviving her first husband, John Stevens.

³⁸⁴ For quotes, see Judith Stevens to John Murray, 26 August 1779. 20 December 1780, Letter Book 1: 75, 149, 220, 317, and for more context also see Judith Stevens to John Murray, 8 October. 1779, Letter Book 1: 237. For more on Sargent, see Sheila L. Skemp, *First Lady of Letters: Judith Sargent Murray and the Struggle for Female Independence*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), Chapter 2.

Sargent's situation was not unique. Scribal publication and manuscript circulation were two of the main modes to publish works without relying on printers, booksellers, and various other print intermediaries. This was especially true in seventeenth-century New England when printing was reserved for local authorities. Print had not yet been "enclosed within modern-day assumptions about [its] 'revolutionary significance'" and books often consisted of both printed and handwritten codices.³⁸⁵ In this period, historian David Hall argued, "any text that existed in one or more handwritten copies can be considered published."³⁸⁶ In one notable example, clergyman John Cotton (1585-1652) marveled that a private letter he sent from New England to London would reach such a broad audience due to scribal publication. After writing to his correspondent on the matter of Christian damnation, Cotton received a letter from a minister who presided over a congregation sixteen miles away from his correspondent. Somehow, this minister received a copy of Cotton's letter and grew so frustrated by Cotton's beliefs regarding Christian salvation that he took it upon himself to critique and supplement the minister's work. Cotton reflected on the moment and in his diary wrote, "Little did I think, that a private letter of mine written to a very friend, should ever have been divulged abroad. But it seemeth some got copies of it; and in process of time, one copy multiplied another."³⁸⁷ This chain of letter copying ensured that Cotton's letter would be published to audiences well outside of the author's original intended recipient. The shared surprise between Cotton and Sargent evidence one of the many ways scribal publications allowed texts to gather publics.

This chapter builds on the claims of the former by examining the relationship between manuscripts and printed texts beyond the assumed progression from the former to the latter. It

³⁸⁵ Hall, *Ways of Writing*, 31

³⁸⁶ Hall, *Ways of Writing*, 33

³⁸⁷ John Cotton, *The Way of the Churches Cleared in Two Treatises. In the former, from the historical aspersions of Mr. Robert Baylie, in his book, called, A dissuasive from the errors of the time*, (London: Printed by Matthew Simmons, for John Bellamie, at the signe of the three Golden-Lions, in Cornhill, 1648), 34.

focuses on the manuscript publications that preceded, coincided with, and followed after the print publications of authors like Judith Sargent Murray, Jupiter Hammon, Joseph Huntington, and Phyllis Wheatley. As literary scholar Rachel Scarborough King's encouraged scholars to consider about the different mediums in the eighteenth century, it is important to consider "both print and manuscript as continually contingent, in flux, and in conversation with each other" and that print's seeming "fixity and authority was the result of hard work on the part of printers over centuries."³⁸⁸ In addition to printers, I would even add the cadre of religious intermediaries as well. Recognizing print's own arguments for its importance, many authors from marginalized communities continued to rely on scribal publication and manuscript circulation to publish their texts. In some instances, they were simply a more convenient way for gathering wide readership by relying on authors' and correspondents' extensive networks which spanned distant geographies. Perhaps more importantly, however, these modes of publication troubled the private and public binary that scholars assumed were the primary distinctions between manuscript and print, respectively. This chapter challenges the ways Anglo-Protestant print has been privileged as the primary way for writers to speak to a broader public and takes seriously the publics that heterodox and racialized authors gathered for their works. Untethering print from the notion of the public also invites scholars to consider the cultural significance of the medium more critically beyond its self-description as being more capable of reaching broader audiences. For many eighteenth-century authors, publication was very much about intermediaries and the networks they leveraged to distribute and circulate copies of texts they produced, and it was in consideration of these dynamics that many strategized around the medium of print without necessarily receding into privacy or secrecy.

³⁸⁸ King, *After Print*, 9.

The first section examines how manuscript and print networks co-existed in the earliest Universalist and African-authored printed texts in the British-American colonies. It contrasts the publics that Judith Sargent Murray's universalist catechism *Some Deductions From the System Promulgated in the Page of Divine Revelation* (1782) and Jupiter Hammon's various works gathered with who publishers targeted and marketed for these works through print production and distribution. Histories of the material production of both texts showcased the ways scribes and distributors blurred the distinction between scribal and print publication so as to complicate interpretations of manuscripts as strictly private documents. However, there were important distinctions that shaped how and when authors engaged with the printing press, namely a difference between the community of readers that scribes and printers imagined. In other words, intermediaries did not simply publish texts into the "air" but rather almost always participated in the process of making the publics that these texts reached by determining the channels by which they could travel. These considerations over intermediaries and distribution may have been what allowed manuscript circulation and scribal publication to thrive in a period when print was seen as ascendant in the British colonies.

While the first section of this chapter examined the co-existence of manuscripts and printed copies of texts, the next section explores how scribal publication functioned before and after a text was printed. Scribal copies often performed much of the intellectual labor in shaping the public's thoughts before texts were printed and even after being reproduced by the printing press, scribes made printed content accessible to those outside of booksellers' more local operations. In the case of universalists like Philadelphian physician John Redman, he circulated handwritten excerpts of printed texts to publish the tenets of universal salvation to those who might not be able to access Connecticut printers. Similarly, handwritten copies of Phyllis

Wheatley Peter's poems evidenced the author's strategy of creating a public for her works prior to their print publication.³⁸⁹ Scribal networks connected her with ministers whose encounter with her manuscript poems likely influenced their attestation of her authorship over the printed work. This labor was crucial since their support legitimized the text at a time when printers and readers alike were skeptical of enslaved peoples' fluency and literacy in English. These illustrations highlighted the ways scribal publications allowed religious communities to construct publics in ways that did not rely on the printing press and allowed their works to, at times, exceed what print technology and networks could do for heterodox and racialized communities.

Scribal Networks and their Print Counterparts

Publication was not just about reaching a broader audience. It often consisted of choosing which intermediaries could best reproduce and distribute material texts. The publication history of Sargent's *Some Deductions From the System Promulgated in the Page of Divine Revelation* (1782) illustrated how printed objects could be made to function in different ways when distributed across a variety of channels. Texts published through scribal communities often suggested for readers a use that accorded more readily with its genre: catechism was a way of teaching theological tenets to younger readers and families. On the flipside, printers and booksellers utilized *Some Deductions* to stir theological controversy for financial gain. This disparity had little to do with difference in form nor reach. Instead, it was about the how the text was made to work by the intermediaries that distributed it. It was on this front that scribal

³⁸⁹ On adding "Peters" to Phillis Wheatley's name, I take the cue from recent scholarship that wanted to echo the author's decision to append the last name of her husband John Peters to her own. In many ways, it surfaces her relationships with other enslaved and freed Africans over and against her enslavers. On this trend, see Honoree Fannone Jeffers, *The Age of Phillis*, (Wesleyan University Press, 2020) and Cornelia H. Dayton, "Lost Years Recovered John Peters and Phillis Wheatley Peters in Middleton," *The New England Quarterly*, 94, no. 3 (2021): 309-351. From here on out, I will be referring to her as Peters while I reserve Wheatley for Nathaniel and Susanna Wheatley.

communities may have promised more for non-Anglo-Protestant communities than whatever print networks could offer.

Sargent's journey to universalism was largely a product of her community's own turn towards universal salvation. When an English merchant arrived sometime in the early 1770s bearing texts from London, an unsuspecting Gloucester community encountered one of the most famous universalist texts from England: Welch minister James Relly's *Union, or a Treatise of the consanguinity and Affinity between Christ and his Church* (1759). Sargent and her then husband merchant John Stevens gathered a community of universalists to study Relly's text on a regular basis. With a growing number of universalist sympathizers among their midst, Sargent and Stevens began inviting universalists to preach at the Gloucester First Parish Church. Their most notable invitee was John Murray who also converted to universalism in London after reading *Union*. The preacher initially studied the text and even attended Relly's services to learn how to refute universal salvation. Constant exposure to Relly's message eventually led Murray to accept its tenets, resulting in his expulsion from George Whitefield's church in London. He then resolved to "bury [himself] in the wilds of America" where he believed "no one shall hear from [him], nor of [him]."³⁹⁰ When Murray arrived in Gloucester, he preached orthodox sermons to the larger congregation but was more forthcoming with his universalist leanings in more intimate settings. Over the course of his visits, Sargent became an avid admirer of Murray. She described his message as having "emancipated" her from the traditions of Calvinism into the more reasonable tenets of universal salvation.³⁹¹ The universalists so admired the preacher that they made several attempts to install Murray as the minister of First Parish Church but with little success. They eventually defected in 1779 and established their own church with Murray as its

³⁹⁰ Murray, 131.

³⁹¹ Stevens to John Murray, 30 October 1785, Letter Book 3: 24

helm. With the financial support of the Sargents, the universalists of Gloucester began their first services later that year.

From her conversion to her first publication, Sargent grew her correspondence networks by circulating her manuscripts. Although she was immersed in literary culture and confident in her writings, she had been wary of publishing any of her works either through speech or the printing press. She wrote of herself as “not calculated to figure in conversation” and only expressing herself when “the pen is in [her] fingers.”³⁹² Indeed, she likely had finished a draft of *On the Equality of the Sexes* by the 1770s and was already circulating it among like-minded readers and thinkers, yet Sargent would wait many more years before publishing through print. Despite her reluctance, however, she was very much a public figure. Her public life was created through scribal communities who received and distributed her works within their local networks. It was her growing reputation among these readers that allowed her to print her first text: a universalist catechism she originally wrote for just her nieces. By 1781, family members had been reading and admiring the piece. Normally they would have asked Sargent for more handwritten copies to distribute along their universalist networks. However, it would likely have been an arduous enough task to hand-produce several copies of a thirty-eight-page text. As Sargent explained: “When [the author’s thoughts] appeared in the form of the following essay, they were shewn to several friends, who signified their approbation, by earnestly requesting copies; to avoid the trouble of furnishing, which I have consented it should be published.”³⁹³ Despite the many intermediaries needed to print the text, Sargent’s correspondents likely found it so helpful as a teaching tool that they encouraged her to proceed with it anyway. They likely

³⁹² Judith Stevens to John Murray, 28 March 1776, 13 August 1779, Letter Book 1: 92–3, 202–3.

³⁹³ Judith Sargent, *Some Deductions from the System Promulgated in the Page of Divine Revelation: Ranged in the Order and Form of a Catechism Intended as an Assistant to the Christian Parent or Teacher*, (Portsmouth: Daniel Fowle, 1782), iv.

knew that it needed an established minister's support for its publication so before Sargent could even decide to publish through the press, they reached out to Parker about the catechism who then reached out to Sargent for her permission to publish it. She initially declined, arguing that much of the text was merely derivative from Murray's teachings. However, an insistent Parker and mounting pressure from her fellow universalists convinced the author to prepare a manuscript under the condition that the printers publish it anonymously. Sargent was so reluctant to publish it that she asked Murray if he would be open to claiming authorship over it since she believed it was a work derived mostly from his teachings. He declined every time she asked.³⁹⁴ With broad support from other universalists who have either read her work or were familiar with Sargent's growing fame, she printed her first piece.

Some Deductions was in large part a text published for the benefit of the universalist community despite the preface which anticipated a broader audience by virtue of it being printed. Sargent's opening remarks hinted at these dynamics when she expected that it might be read by a New England audience where Anglo-Protestant men dominated the public sphere: "WHEN A FEMALE steps without the line which custom hath circumscribed, she naturally becomes an object of speculation: the public eye is very incompatible with the native modesty in which our sex are enshrined."³⁹⁵ Such an opening would read strangely to her universalist correspondents who already saw her as a prominent public figure. While it was possible that she felt these very constraints from readers of her manuscripts, she seemed especially attentive to the possibility that her texts could reach unintended audiences. This included those who might accuse the author with a "cry of heterodoxy" from readers outside of her universalist network; nevertheless,

³⁹⁴ Judith Stevens to Winthrop Sargent, 5 April 1780, to Mr. Sewall, 15 July 1781, Letter Book 1:271, 339; to Mr. Parker, 31 January 1782, to John Murray, 28 June 17[82], to Winthrop Sargent, 12 October 1782, Letter Book 2: 1, 36, 70

³⁹⁵ See Brekus, "Women Writing and Religious Authority"

she resolved that she would take comfort in her community and performing the work of “genuine, divine Philanthropy” in publishing the piece.³⁹⁶ Prefaces that expect a broader public were certainly common among printed objects, so much so that *Some Deductions* seemed to merely be abiding by print conventions. Sargent was definitely sincere in voicing her concerns that the text might reach a different audience despite the fact that it specifically spoke to children of universalist communities. Yet this dissonance between the text’s narrow audience and the public she anticipated for it spoke to the ways print expected a particular kind of public performance from authors. Even her decision to publish anonymously, despite the fact that most of her scribal community could guess her authorship from the first few lines, aligned with the ways men like Benjamin Franklin asserted a universal voice through anonymity.³⁹⁷ These literary conventions in printed texts helped explain an interesting disparity between what Sargent expected print to do to her text and how it was actually materially distributed among its readers.

Sargent was very much aware of what publication itself signified for readers despite the fact that her work was distributed along scribal networks. Her poem “Upon Printing My Little Catechism,” which she wrote briefly after printing *Some Deductions*, reflected on the potential praise and critique from strangers. She worried that “The Critic’s eye – and his more potent hand” will reveal “Errors in style, in grammar may appear.” Recognizing the seeming permanence of published texts, she could not fix those issues and only “wash them with a tear.” But perhaps the primary cause for her anxiety was the ever-growing distance between her and the text itself: “And then – quoth Conscience – it is not your own, the *sentiments* will by each sight be known.” By these “sentiments,” she acknowledged that readers’ engagement with her

³⁹⁶ Sargent, *Some Deductions*, iii-iv.

³⁹⁷ On anonymity, see Michael Warner, *Letters of the Republic*. His reading of Franklin’s use of anonymity to wield public authority seemed to be at play here as well.

work and whatever meanings they derived from it will nevertheless be attributed to her. Closing out her sense of distance from the text itself, she returned to the fact that the text nevertheless began with her: “What though *your language* hath these truths arraigned Yet still the views – But as you please – it said.”³⁹⁸ By describing the process of publication as an increasingly mediated process between Sargent and the reader, she was expressing a sentiment that held true whether an object was distributed along scribal communities or print networks. Indeed, despite being printed, *Some Deductions* was circulated in a manner that more closely resembled manuscripts traveling along scribal networks than an author publishing through print networks. Sargent’s husband, who she described as “ever indulgent” of her works, was the primary distributor after ordering a hundred copies.³⁹⁹ Yet even though it circulated like a manuscript along universalist circles, it was met with both praise and critique as if it was distributed by publishers, especially when it received a cold reception from some of the author’s family members.⁴⁰⁰ In many ways, the only difference between the publication of *Some Thoughts*’ and Sargent’s poems was the technology that reproduced them: the former was printed and the latter was handwritten. Outside of that, both kinds of publications traveled through hand delivery, correspondences, and intimate exchanges, ensuring that Sargent’s catechism would gather a broader universalist and non-universalist public across New England.

Printer Daniel Fowle likely published *Some Deductions* with little intention of distributing it himself. Several clues, most notably the absence of paratextual material, the lack of advertising, and the printer’s own history, might shed light on his uneasiness with the text

³⁹⁸ Version of the poem pulled from Sheila Skemp, *Judith Sargent Murray: A Brief Biography with Documents*, (Bedford Books, 1998), 132-133.

³⁹⁹ Judith Stevens to Mr. Parker, 9 June 1782.

⁴⁰⁰ Skemp notes that her brother was initially receptive to universal salvation but had since distanced himself from Murray’s brand of universalism. See Skemp, *First Lady of Letters* and Winthrop Sargent, 12 October 1782, Letter Book 2: 14, 55, 70.

itself. Parker was likely connected to the printer and brought Sargent's work to him for publication. Fowle previously operated his business in Boston before he was charged with publishing libel against the Massachusetts government and was subsequently arrested and imprisoned. After his release, the printer moved to Portsmouth, New Hampshire to publish for the local government. There was little business outside of the print centers Boston and New-London, but Fowle's business survived through his newspaper *The New Hampshire Gazette* and support from local officials. In Portsmouth, the growing number of universalists may have exerted some pressure on the printer to publish the work despite Fowle's client base from Boston being comprised of established Congregationalist clergymen for whom he would continue to publish during American Revolution after Boston's print market suffered. In other words, Fowle's propensity to balance his economic and ideological interest, the latter of which printer Isaiah Thomas described as his more "liberal sentiments," may explain the absence of some paratextual materials from the text.⁴⁰¹ The Portsmouth edition of *Some Deductions* did not include the publishers name, a practice uncommon to his other productions, and appeared with only with the year and location of its publication: Portsmouth, New-Hampshire. Fowle also decided not to advertise the text in *The New Hampshire Gazette* which meant that it gathered demand strictly through word of mouth among Sargent's and Stevens's universalist network. There was very little in the text itself to suggest that other printers and booksellers would want to publish the text outside of the universalist communities it was originally designed to catechize.

Although Fowle saw little value in promoting *Some Deductions*, scribal networks published the text to opportunistic printers who stoked the flames of controversy for financial benefit. Norwich, Connecticut printer John Trumbull likely received a copy of the text from someone within Sargent's universalist network. Unlike the Portsmouth edition, Trumbull's was

⁴⁰¹ On Fowle, see Thomas, *The History of Printing in America*, 205-206.

printed with an attachment titled “An HYMN on Colossians i. 19: *For it pleased, that in him should all Fulness dwell*” which likely accompanied the original text he received. When the hymn was read together with the catechism, the Norwich edition celebrated the eternal salvation of humanity. This suggested that the original owner of Trumbull’s copy of *Some Deductions* found the theological claims of the catechism to accord with scripture and likely believed that learning the catechism should be accompanied by worship rather than a scathing critique.⁴⁰² Compared to Fowle’s silence in *The New Hampshire Gazette*, Trumbull was not shy advertising *Some Deductions* in his newspaper *The Norwich Packet*. Advertisements ran for two months between July and August 1782. Trumbull even reprinted the preface verbatim on the front cover of the newspaper on one of the July editions so as to draw even more attention to the text’s authorship and its universalist claims. Trumbull likely wanted to capitalize on the brewing universalist controversy after Murray and fellow universalist Elhanan Winchester itinerated along the New England countryside that same year. Advertising *Some Deductions* with texts like Issac Backus’s *The Doctrine of Universal Salvation Examined and Refuted* (1782), a direct refutation of Murray’s theology, drew further attention to the heterodox preachers, their growing number of followers, and a demand for a proper response to the region’s increasing heterodoxy.⁴⁰³ It was not clear if Trumbull’s gamble paid off, though there were many precedents wherein colonial printers played both sides of a religious controversy for financial gain.⁴⁰⁴ Nevertheless, the Norwich printer reframed the text: it was not simply an educational

⁴⁰² Judith Sargent Murray, *Some Deductions from the System Promulgated in the Page of Divine Revelation: Ranged in the Order and Form of a Catechism Intended as an Assistant to the Christian Parent or Teacher*, (Norwich, Connecticut: Printed by John Trumbull, 1782), 39-40.

⁴⁰³ For a brief overview on Trumbull’s operations in Norwich, see Thomas, 192-193.

⁴⁰⁴ Two notable examples come to mind. The earliest was Andrew Bradford who had published texts playing both sides of a Quaker controversy in seventeenth-century colonial Philadelphia. For more on this, see Hall and Amory, *A History of the Colonial Book in America*, 201. Another example closer to this period are the

tool “intended as an assistant to the Christian parent or teacher,” but rather a bold and public assertion that universal salvation needed a refutation from an established minister.

The printed form’s many mediations may have also shaped Murray’s own reluctance to engage with the printing press. For most of his life, the itinerant preacher had been the author, publisher, and distributor of his own brand of universal salvation, and relied little on intermediaries to relay his message to others. The situation changed when Murray could no longer travel after suffering a debilitating stroke in 1809. After much convincing, Murray accepted that print was a medium by which he could continue preaching. As explained in the editorial preface, he sought an alternative means of communicating the tenets of universal salvation “to the sons and daughters of humanity.” However, the final product titled *Letters and Sketches of Sermons in Three Volumes* (1812) reflected less the preacher’s desire to minister to the public and more the intentions of editors who wanted to commemorate the itinerant preacher. The preface, which was likely penned by Sargent herself who by that time had married Murray, reflected a desire to publish Murray’s sermons and letters so as to commemorate their author for the burgeoning Boston universalist community: “[Preaching universal salvation] was the primary design. But it was believed that among the numerous friends of the author, many would wish to retain a picture of the character of his mind, upon occasions less important, and less generally interesting, and this idea has induced the compiler to depart in some few instances from the plan first contemplated.”⁴⁰⁵ Given Murray’s newfound reliance on the many mediations by Sargent and the community of universalists, it was their vision that would be reflected in the final product. They worked with Boston printer Joshua Belcher whose struggling business could only

numerous printers printing texts for both revivalists and anti-revivalists, particularly as printing sermons by Whitefield were sure to be best-sellers.

⁴⁰⁵ Murray, *Letters, and Sketches of Sermons, Volume I*, Preface.

stand to benefit from printing the work for an increasingly influential and established community of universalists within the city.⁴⁰⁶ In many ways, even though *Letters and Sketches* included Murray's sermons, it did more to publish the community's admiration for the author himself. Perhaps Murray knew that this is what print publication entailed. Print, at best, was a negotiation between author and intermediaries, and at worst a misrepresentation of the author's intentions. Instead of converting a reading public, *Letters and Sketches* commemorated the Murray already-converted universalists wanted to remember.⁴⁰⁷

The influence of intermediaries on how texts were distributed, edited, and received defined the primary distinction between scribal and print publication for religious communities. Although *Some Deductions* was technically printed thereby limiting copying errors and various other contingencies attached to handwritten copies, it nevertheless traveled and functioned similar to a manuscript published through scribal publication. It gathered a receptive audience of universalists who valued the catechism for what Sargent had intended. On the other hand, printers and booksellers marketed texts like *Some Deductions* in ways that reframed its intended purpose. Given intermediaries' outsized role on how texts were distributed and received, authors approached the medium with caution, sometimes preferring to publish texts through networks of correspondences over print publication.

Jupiter Hammon's Publication Networks

⁴⁰⁶ For more on Belcher, see Rollo Silver, "Belcher & Armstrong Set Up Shop: 1805" *Studies in Bibliography*, 4 (1951-1952), 201-204. Belcher likely took on the job given the Universalists' financial resources which may have promised to sustain the otherwise unprofitable business of printing in Boston. His former business partner, Armstrong, likely had similar ambitions but succeeded: he would eventually become mayor of Boston.

⁴⁰⁷ What happened to Murray was not unusual, at least when it comes to the relationship between writers and booksellers. See David Hall, "Learned Culture in the Eighteenth-Century," *A History of the Book in America*, Vol 1: The Colonial Book and the Atlantic World, (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 411-433 and David Hall, *Cultures of Print: Essays in the History of the Book*, (University of Massachusetts Press, 1996). What was unique about Murray's situation, however, was the additional editorial choices made on his behalf because of his condition. Coupled with his preferred method of communicating universal salvation, one could argue that Murray himself was print censoring his message to avoid these very complexities in print production.

The earliest examples of African American literature were similarly published through scribal networks. While most know Jupiter Hammon from his broadside *An Evening Thought Salvation by Christ* (1760) and *An Address to the Negroes in the State of New York* (1787), many of his works were copied and exchanged along correspondence networks. The author was part of the third generation of enslaved families under Henry Lloyd, who operated a trading business in Boston. In 1711, the merchant moved his household to a remote manor on a peninsula connected to the mainland of Long-Island New York.⁴⁰⁸ Although the location was quite remote, Hammon found opportunities to connect with prospective readers for his work across the island as evidenced by an extant manuscript of his poem “Dear Hutchinson Is Dead and Gone.”⁴⁰⁹ The handwritten text appeared on one large sheet folded in half, with one set of stanzas written on one side and the rest written on the back two halves. The poem honored seventeenth-century Puritan Anne Hutchinson who famously accused Boston ministers of preaching improper theologies in an event known as the Antinomian Controversy. It celebrated Hutchinson’s wisdom and piousness despite her trials, mourned her death as a reminder of the reader’s mortality, and reminded readers that she was ultimately chosen and saved. While Hammon was clearly the author of the original text, the extant copy was inscribed by a different hand: “Composed by Jupiter Hammon, A Negro belonging to Mr. Joseph Lloyd of Queens Village on Long Island, August the 10th 1770” and signed by a “Phebe Townsend.” Phebe was a member of the Townsend household which resided on Raynham Hall on Oyster Bay, Long Island. She was likely the scribe working from an original manuscript which Hammon had circulated among his community of readers. This was evidenced by her mistakes. In one instance, she was three lines

⁴⁰⁸ Cedrick May, *The Collected Works of Jupiter Hammon: Poems and Essays*, (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2017), xxi-xxii

⁴⁰⁹ For more on his geographical location, see Jean B. Osann, *Henry Lloud’s Salt Box Manor House*. (Lloyd Harbor Society, 1982).

into copying the next stanza before realizing she was mistakenly rewriting the previous one. Phebe caught her mistake and opted to cross it out.⁴¹⁰ It was unlikely that she would make this mistake if Hammon had been slowly reciting the text to her or if she was drawing the poem from memory. Instead, she may have simply lost her place as she glanced back and forth between her copy and an original manuscript. There was little evidence that Phebe may have distributed this particular copy to her own correspondence networks. Nevertheless, the idea of a circulating manuscript which was not intended to be Phebe's private copy illustrates one of the many ways Hammon published his writings to reach a broader readership.

Image redacted due to copyright concerns.

Figure 5.1: *Jupiter Hammon, Poem on Anne Hutchinson, 1770, New York Historical Society*

Similar to Sargent, Hammon's publications relied on connections like Phebe who read his manuscripts and encouraged the author to print. As he would recount in his famous *An Address to the Negroes of the State of New-York* (1787): "When I was at Hartford in Connecticut, where I lived during the war, I published several pieces which were well received, not only by those of my own colour, but by a number of the white people, who thought they might do good among their servants. This is one consideration, among others, that emboldens me now to publish what I

⁴¹⁰ Jupiter Hammon, "poem on Anne Hutchinson, 1770," Townsend family papers, 1746-1864. On other facets of the poem, see May's footnotes.

have written to you.”⁴¹¹ Indeed, some of those “white” readers likely included members of the Townsend household. Two of the published pieces he mentioned referred to *A Winter Piece: Being a Serious Exhortation With a Call to the Unconverted* (1782) and *An Evening’s Improvement. Shewing the Necessity of beholding the Lamb of God* (~1780). Both were printed in Hartford, Connecticut where many Long Island families fled because of the American Revolution, as the titles of his publication read: “Written by JUPITER HAMMON, a Negro Man belonging to Mr. John Lloyd, of Queen’s Village, on Long-Island, now in Hartford.”⁴¹² The first title, *A Winter Piece*, simply preached the Christian gospel to its readers: “My Brethren, I shall endeavour by divine assistance, to shew what is meant by coming to the Lord Jesus Christ labouring and heavy laden, and to conclude, I shall contemplate on the death of Jesus Christ.”⁴¹³ *An Evening’s Improvement* followed up from *A Winter Piece* after the former’s positive reception. He wrote, “My brethren, since I wrote my Winter Piece it hath been requested that I would write something more the advantage of my friends, by my superiors... I had an invitation to give a public exhortation but did not think it my duty at that time; but now my brethren, by divine assistance, I shall endeavor to shew the necessity of beholding the Lamb of God.”⁴¹⁴ His address to “brethren,” “friends,” and “superiors” suggested that he anticipated both enslaved people and enslavers, like the Lloyds and Townsend families, as readers. Even with the war disrupting local connections, Hammon’s network of correspondents survived and perhaps even grew as he was relocated to Hartford. The author likely frequented St. John’s Episcopal Church

⁴¹¹ Hammon, *An Address to the Negroes In the State of New-York*, (New York: Printed by Carroll and Patterson, 1787), 6.

⁴¹² Hammon, “An Evening Thought. Salvation by Christ with Penetential Cries,” (New York, 1760).

⁴¹³ Hammon, *A Winter Piece: being a serious exhortation, with a call to the unconverted: and a short contemplation on the death of Jesus Christ*, (New York: Printed by Carroll and Patterson, 1782), 1.

⁴¹⁴ Hammon, *An Evening’s Improvement. Shewing, the necessity of beholding the Lamb of God.: To which is added, a dialogue, entitled, The kind master and dutiful servant*, (Hartford: Printed for the Author, by the Assistance of his Friends, 1790).

in Stamford, the church the Lloyds attended for many years, and may have even continued to grow his connections in Connecticut with the aid of other attendees. It was through these connections that Hammon would print both pieces. As the printer attested in both publications, “Published by the AUTHOR with the Assistance Of his Friends” in *A Winter Piece* and “HARTFORD: Printed for the Author, by the Assistance of his Friends” in *An Evening’s Improvement*. Both texts foregrounded the many relationships Hammon had built, likely through manuscript circulation and scribal publication in the years prior to the war. As he grew this community of readers, print became a much more viable option for the author despite the ways the war may have disrupted print networks.

Although Hammon was likely aware that print and handwritten manuscripts represented different forms of publication and distribution, he seemed to expect that they would hail the same kinds of audiences. Hammon’s signature “Composed By Jupiter Hammon A Negro Man belonging to Mr John Lloyd Queens-Village on Long Island” readily appeared on both his printed and unprinted writings. His earliest publication, a broadside titled *An Evening Thought. Salvation By Christ with Penetential Cries* (1760) may have established this convention: “Composed by Jupiter Hammon... on Long-Island, the 25th of December 1760.”⁴¹⁵ This form of ephemera published a holiday reminder to friends and neighbors that “Salvation comes by Jesus Christ alone.” The author continued the practice all the way through the last unprinted manuscript titled *An Essay on Slavery, with submission to Divine providence, knowing that God Rules over all things* which he signed with: “Composed by Jupiter Hammon.... Long Island – November 10th 1786.” There were two explanations for Hammon’s decision to use his long-form signature for both print and manuscript: either he had planned for both to be printed and therefore styled them with the appropriate attribution for the printer, or he treated his unprinted

⁴¹⁵ Hammon, “An Evening Thought.”

manuscripts as functioning the same manner as his printed works. Given that most writers rarely aspired to publish all of their manuscripts, it was more likely that he treated his manuscripts, like “Dear Hutchinson Is Dead and Gone,” as a kind of publication that others would copy and circulate. For Hammon, the distinction between print and manuscript may have had little to do with the form the text took since whether it was handwritten or printed through the press, it needed the same authorial information demanded of any text that might be considered published

For Hammon, much like with Sargent, there was an important distinction between scribal and print publication that was tied to distribution, intermediaries, and how they made the text function. Neither *A Winter Piece* nor *An Evening’s Improvement* named the publisher but they were likely printed by Hannah Hudson who operated the *Connecticut Courant* from Hartford, Connecticut. After her husband George Goodwin died, Hudson inherited a struggling print business which suffered even further after a fire burned the accompanying Manchester paper mill that supplied its operations. In order to salvage the business, she appealed to the Connecticut Assembly to help finance the operations.⁴¹⁶ The precarity of the printer’s operations shed some light on the significance of Hudson advertising Hammon’s *A Winter Piece* and *An Essay on the Ten Virgins* in the *Connecticut Courant*: it promised some return from the affluent merchant families like the Lloyds and Townsends that supported the author’s work. Yet despite Hudson’s more local ambitions, Hammon’s distribution targeted a much broader public who could neither afford a copy of his text nor travel to Hartford to purchase a copy from the printer. An extant copy of *A Winter Piece* with the Connecticut Historical Society and Museum and Library contains a dedication to Reverend William Lockwood, a minister at a church in Orange, Connecticut forty miles south of Hartford. Written by Hammon himself, it reads, “For the Revd

⁴¹⁶ See the *Connecticut Courant*, February 3, 1778. For more on Watson, see Thomas, *History of Printing*, 191 on Ebenezer Watson.

William Lockwood, from His friend & humble Servt The Author~.”⁴¹⁷ The difference between Hudson’s and Hammon’s publics sheds light on one of the benefits of scribal communities. Although correspondence networks were associated with a more intimate way of distributing texts, at times they went beyond the more localized operations of printers and booksellers.

Perhaps the most important consideration for authors when it came to print publication was the influence of printers on the finished text. Scribal publication certainly opened room for copyists like Phebe to alter the text prior to distribution, whether intentionally or by mistake. However, printers’ decisions about what to include and exclude from a text proffered a more authoritative version for public consumption. Such was the case with Hammon’s unprinted “An Essay on Slavery” which he intended to publish alongside *An Address to the Negroes of New York*. Most of Hammon’s publications up to that point had consisted of two parts: prose and an accompanying poem. *A Winter Piece* was printed with the accompanying poem “A POEM for Children with Thoughts on Death” and *An Evening’s Improvement* included “A Dialogue, intituled, The Kind Master and the Dutiful Servant.” Furthermore, the close timing between the publication of *An Address* and “An Essay on Slavery” strengthens the connection between the two works. As Cedrick May argued, “[An Essay on Slavery] was intended by Hammon to be published at the end of his essay, in the same way that his other previous essays/sermons were followed by a poem written by him.”⁴¹⁸ Despite the author’s intentions to publish both works together, intermediaries like printers had other plans.

New York printers Carroll and John Patterson likely excluded it because printing the poem risked compromising their position as the official printers for local institutions of power

⁴¹⁷ From Cedrick May and Julie McCown, “‘An Essay on Slavery,’ An Unpublished Poem by Jupiter Hammon,” *Early American Literature*, 48, no. 2 (2013), 457-471, 462.

⁴¹⁸ May, *The Collected Works of Jupiter Hammon*, 76. Also see May and McCown, “An Essay on Slavery.” Perhaps to add to the argument, he treated the text the way that “Hammon originally intended for it to appear to the public.”

like Congress and the Baptist Association. Hammon's *An Address* asked members of the African Society in New York to bear with slavery if it meant securing their salvation through Christianity: "Let me beg of you dear African brethren, to think very little of your bondage in this life, for your thinking of it will do you no good. If God designs to set us free, he will do it, in his own time, and way; but think of your bondage to sin and Satan, and do not rest, until you are delivered from it."⁴¹⁹ His conciliatory tone may not have caused problems, but in contrast Hammon's poem risked offending some of slavery's most ardent supporters among the printers' clientele. Whereas *An Address* proposed that slavery may have been part of God's will, "An Essay" made clear that it was a product of human actions: "Although we are in slavery, Bound by the yoke of Man, We must always have a single Eye And do the best we can."⁴²⁰ Printers' interventions appeared even more readily in the letter accompanying *An Address*. They wrote, "As this Address is wrote in a better Stile than could be expected from a slave, some may be ready to doubt the genuineness of the production... The manuscript wrote in his own hand, is in our possession. We have made no material alterations in it, except in the spelling, which we found needed considerable correction."⁴²¹ Such corrections were not unique to this text, but printers' mediating voice to assure readers about the text's authenticity nevertheless foregrounded the image of an incapable Hammon. Some scholars contended that whatever misspellings Hammon may have committed was likely negligible and should have been evident in the unprinted "An Essay," which actually only proved the author's literary abilities. On this front, printers' biases were very much a reflection of their cultural contexts and were likely brought to bear by their own perceptions of the market for texts authored by enslaved Africans.

⁴¹⁹ Hammon, *An Address*, 19.

⁴²⁰ Hammon, "An Essay, Stanza," 16, November 1786. For more on this, see May, *The Collected Works of Jupiter Hammon*, 82.

⁴²¹ Hammon, *An Address*, iv.

What was important, however, was that the printers were the final arbiters who decided how these texts would appear and it was their accusatory tone that sought to cast doubt on Hammon's unmediated literary abilities. In other words, authors were likely well aware that publishers did not merely facilitate the printing of texts but themselves were social actors who shaped the ways texts appeared, were reproduced, were distributed, and spoke to readers.

For many aspiring authors in this period, publication was not reducible to reaching a broader audience or the material text taking a different form. Rather, to publish a text was to choose which intermediaries could reproduce and distribute on the author's behalf. Hence, scribal publication and manuscript circulation should not be equated with print avoidance. Authors likely strategized around what each medium offered and decided which audiences to reach for their works. Publishers like printers and booksellers often fitted texts for market purposes that shaped what it meant for a text to be printed. These material considerations challenge the notion that texts were simply published "in the air" and instead evidenced the complicated manner by which intermediaries directed texts in ways to reach certain audiences and create the publics publishers imagined for them. It consisted of contestations and negotiations between all parties involved in the process of textual production, and that in order to understand the significance of a text in its time, one must consider how it was made to be so.

Scribal Publication Before and After Print

Although scribal publication and manuscript circulation could be seen in competition with print, two mediums also complemented each other in a variety of ways. This section examines the role of scribal networks before and after the manuscript was published. As Sargent's and Hammon's texts have shown, scribal communities distributed printed texts along their correspondence networks in ways that extend its audience from the publishers' local reach.

These was true even for popular works that sold well and therefore were exchanged regularly among booksellers. Such was the case with the posthumous publication of minister Joseph Huntington's *Calvinism Improved* which received much attention from publishers but nevertheless reached new audiences through scribal publication. Moreover, circulating manuscripts and scribal communities may actually have done most of the intellectual labor of convincing readers of its contents before the text even reached the printing press. In Phillis Wheatley Peter's case, circulating copies and excerpts of her manuscripts secured support from New England's most esteemed ministers which allowed her to publish *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious, and Moral* (1773) through the printing press. These practices of publishing continued to thrive at a time when Anglo-Protestants relied more and more on the printing press to reach a broader audience for their works. From the experience of authors and their scribal community, print technology was just as materially constrained as the use Anglo-Protestants imagined for it, despite claims and promises about its universalizing abilities and reach.

Scribal publication extended the audience for texts even after it was printed. One such example was the posthumous publication *Calvinism Improved* (1796) written by Connecticut minister Joseph Huntington. For most of his life, he had preached the orthodox tenets of Calvinism to his congregation. He narrated in his text, however, that over time he grew concerned about the growing contradiction between "the infinite fullness and all-sufficiency of Christ to save sinners" and the idea that "Many sinners, many alas! Are left out of the covenant of redemption; many for whom Christ never died."⁴²² Yet despite his changing views, Huntington maintained the "public performances" of Calvinism while keeping his views about universal salvation hidden from his congregation.⁴²³ He decided to write a manuscript for

⁴²² Huntington, vii.

⁴²³ Huntington, v.

Calvinism Improved to lay out his argument that God's infinite power must allow for universal salvation. The three-hundred-page text provided several commentaries on scripture and anticipated potential objections by its readers. However, Huntington did not publish the manuscript in any form fearing that his closest friends and connections "will probably be more wounded by this publication, or at least more aggrieved, than any other persons on [his] account."⁴²⁴ His suspicions were probably correct since after his death, a New York newspaper reported that "efforts were made to persuade his widow to destroy the Manuscript."⁴²⁵ His text survived "the malevolence of the Herods" who wanted to "suppress the manuscript" but nevertheless reached New London printer Samuel Green.⁴²⁶ Huntington's wife and surviving son, also named Samuel, likely inherited the manuscript, and sent it to Green for printing with hopes that it might earn him some funds for his exodus West.⁴²⁷ Given Huntington's politically well-connected family (his brother was governor of Connecticut and another brother Benjamin was a signer of Declaration of Independence), Green likely agreed to publish the heterodox text as a way of commemorating the author.⁴²⁸ These connections played a crucial role in making it possible for the text to be printed and distributed posthumously.

Calvinism Improved survived its author by both being printed and traveling through scribal publication. Philadelphian physician and universalist John Redman received a copy of

⁴²⁴ Huntington, xvi.

⁴²⁵ *New York Herald*, March 9, 1796, Page 1

⁴²⁶ *New York, Minerva*, October 3, 1796, 3. Also appeared in *Connecticut Courant* October 17, 1796, 6.

⁴²⁷ Brown, Jeffery P. "Samuel Huntington: A Connecticut Aristocrat on the Ohio Frontier." *Ohio's Western Reserve*, ed. Lupold, Harry F. and Haddad, Gladys (Kent State, Ohio. Kent State University Press, 1988), 421.

⁴²⁸ On these connections, see Allen Guelzo, *Edwards on the Will: A Century of American Theological Debate*, (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2008), 141. The Greens were famous for printing for local officials. In 1713 New London, Timothy Green was invited by then Connecticut Governor Gurdon Saltonstall to print for colonial affairs and in exchange, they would their salary and supplied paper for his craft. On the Green Family's operations printing for colonial authorities, see William Kiessel, "The Green Family: A Dynasty of Printers," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, (Boston, MA: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1950), 104. This connection is even more likely as Green's sons never saw printing in New London as a lucrative business being situated between New York and Boston. Thus, it is likely that they returned from Boston for more familial and political reasons rather than for financial gain. See Amory, "The New England Book Trade," *A History of the Book in America*, Vol 1: The Colonial Book and the Atlantic World, 314-346.

Huntington's printed text and admired that it was more "infinitely comprehensive, than anything [he] had before met with on this important subject."⁴²⁹ He made this remark at a time when more famous universalists like Charles Chauncy and John Murray in New England, and Hosea Ballou and Elhanan Winchester in Philadelphia had established their views in the public sphere.

Newspapers across New England, New York, and Charleston advertised *Calvinism Improved* from 1796-1797 signaling that it may have reached some level of popularity among readers. Yet despite its increasing reach, Redman did not, or perhaps could not, obtain a copy to distribute to fellow universalists in Philadelphia.⁴³⁰ Fortunately, the physician had cultivated the practice of handwriting excerpts of texts as a practice. He sent these as a way publishing texts like *Calvinism Improved* to correspondents like fellow physician Benjamin Rush who likely did not have access to these texts or would have little reason to come across them.⁴³¹ At a time when the domestic print trade seemed to promise the proliferation of print in the Early Republic, scribal publication continued to thrive among religious communities.

In addition to circulating contents of printed texts across correspondence networks, the intimacy of scribal publication gathered widespread support to convince printers about the merits of printing the manuscript. In some instances, much of the intellectual work that printed texts performed on readers occurred before they even reached the printing press. This was certainly the case with Phyllis Wheatley Peters' *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*. While much scholarly attention has focused on locating the author's voice within her published poems, few have attended to the ways the author published through scribal networks and circulating

⁴²⁹ Redman to Rush, November 14th, 1796, Rush Collection.

⁴³⁰ Upon a quick search for "Calvinism improved" in the American Historical Newspapers database, it did not seem that Philadelphia newspapers advertised the work despite the fact that from 1796-1797, it was continually advertised and sold across the colonies including New England, New York, and Charleston.

⁴³¹ More than ten pages of extracts are found in Benjamin Rush's correspondences. See Rush Correspondence, Vol. 22, MS 22, Library Company of Philadelphia.

manuscripts, thereby blurring distinctions between private and public texts. It was important for authors like Peters to gather reading communities for her works through correspondences first before asserting her authority on political and religious matters to an imagined Anglo-Protestant audience through the printing press.

Peters established many of her connections early in her literary career. On July 11, 1761, she arrived in Boston on the slave ship *Phillis*, the chosen namesake for her by the Wheatleys. In her earliest years, Peters was steeped in a culture of print that was used to advertise enslaved peoples like her, placed warrants of arrest for those who escaped their enslavers, or sold commercial goods which profited immensely from commodified bodies in the transatlantic slave trade. Peters, however, benefitted from the Wheatley's preferential treatment of her over other enslaved workers in their household. She was introduced to the wealthy Wheatley's connections throughout the city and it was likely then that she began to build her connections which she would sustain through correspondence.⁴³² Furthermore, she received regular religious instruction from Susannah Wheatley and was eventually baptized at Old South Church in Boston. Around the 1760s, she began writing and circulating theological poems among her correspondents. Being immersed in religious publications, Peters likely recognized that adopting Protestant rhetorical conventions allowed her to speak to her correspondents in ways that read to them as publishable. Many scholars have commented on the ways that Peters "employed evangelical Christianity as both the means and the ends for getting into print."⁴³³ However, their analysis often overlooks

⁴³² Bernard Page to the Countess of Huntingdon, 19 March 1773, Cheshunt Foundation, Westminster College, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

⁴³³ Vincent Carretta, *Phillis Wheatley: Biography of a Genius in Bondage*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 44. Also see Elrod, *Piety and Dissent*; Cedrick May, *Evangelicalism and Resistance in the Black Atlantic*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008); Joanna Brooks, *American Lazarus: Religion and the Rise of African-American and Native American Literatures*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). Scholars have also looked for subversive readings of her seemingly deferential language in these texts. Also see Antonio T. Bly, "On Death's Domain Intent I Fix My Eyes: Text, Context, and Subtext in the Elegies of Phillis Wheatley," *American Literature*, 53, no. 2. (2018): 317-341.

the question: for whom would Peters' theological rhetoric register as publishable? It mattered who she made an audience for her work and the means by which she circulated her poems to gather support for her manuscripts. Being affiliated with evangelical Christianity alone would not have sufficed: proper attention to the power of intermediaries was precisely what helped Peters print her works.

Peters' earliest works traveled through scribes whose copies published the author's works along their own channels for years before Peters published them through newspapers or broadsides. One of the earliest came by the way of Portsmouth minister Jeremy Belknap who received a copy of what he described as "'Phillis Wheatley's first Effort.'" ⁴³⁴ Dated to 1765, it was a short poem dedicated to the Thatchers, a famous multigenerational Congregationalists family in Boston. It was likely that Belknap did not know from the manuscript if it was prose or poem since he copied the text twice: once as if it was prose and another as if it was poetry. What was notable about the poem that Belknap transcribed, however, was that the text he copied from was likely not even written from Peters' own hand. Instead, it likely belonged to his uncle, New England poet and minister Mather Byles. Byles was a Boston minister who presided over Hollis Church in Boston. He would eventually be discredited by his Congregationalist peers for his loyalist stance during the war. ⁴³⁵ Prior to the revolution, however, he ranked among some of the most esteemed clerical circles. As an intermediary, Byles could be seen as taking on the role of a

⁴³⁴ "Jeremy Belknap Diaries, 1770-1775," Belknap Papers, MHS, Ms. N-1827

⁴³⁵ Many of Belknap's' correspondents' mention of Byles grew more antagonistic by the time of the American Revolution. His correspondence with Eliot reflected as much when Eliot wrote, "Notwithstanding I despise Dr. Byles as much as man can hold another in contempt." (106) It's not clear if Belknap himself would hold these views, yet he probably still worked within them.

scribe through which Peters' poems traveled well beyond the author's originally intended recipient for her work.⁴³⁶

Similar dynamics would appear in her other works as well. The Massachusetts Historical Society has two manuscripts of Peters' poems on atheism: "An Address to the Atheist, By. P. Wheatley at the age of 14 years, 1767" and "Atheism, Boston July 1769." Although there were notable variances between the texts, they were expressing the same sentiments. Both opened with the lines "where shall I begin this specious field, to tell what curses unbelief doth yield?" It was likely that the 1769 edition was an updated version and was the manuscript that was included in *Poems*. While these copies likely stayed close to Boston, other manuscript copies likely made their way across the colonies. Philadelphian Quaker poet Hannah Griffiths (1727-1817) likely received a copy of the 1767 version of Peters' manuscript and upon receipt handwrote a copy for her own records. Currently with the Library Company of Philadelphia, a headnote attested to her scribal handwork: "The following Lines are said to be Composed by a Native of Africa, about 15 years of age, -& who a few Years ago Could not Speak one word of English, she belong'd to John Wheatley of Boston."⁴³⁷ It was unlikely that Griffith distributed her copy to others. Nevertheless her attestation evidenced that Peters circulated manuscripts for recipients to copy either for themselves or for further distribution.

For Peters, many of these circulating copies did important work in establishing herself among Boston and Philadelphia's clerical and literary elite. Julia Stockton Rush, spouse of the physician Benjamin Rush, also had copies of "Atheism" which she may have also transcribed

⁴³⁶ Caretta posited this connection given Belknap's connection to Byles, his admiration of him, and Byles' own influence on Wheatley's poetry. He wrote, "An amateur poet in his youth, Belknap imitated Byles in his own early attempts at poetry." On the question of Wheatley's authorship, see Caretta, 49.

⁴³⁷ Mss of Hannah Griffiths, Library Company of Philadelphia 7423. F 1-125, Poems, Essays, and Extracts (F.81-90), HSP.

like Griffith.⁴³⁸ Her husband likely read some of these earlier versions which introduced him to her print published works by the time he wrote his praises of the author. In a footnote to his publication *An Address to the inhabitants of the British Settlements in America upon Slave-keeping*, he wrote "There is now in the town of Boston a Free Negro Girl, about 18 years of age, who has been put 9 years in the country, whose singular genius and accomplishments are such as not only do honor to her sex, but to human nature. Several of her poems have been printed and read with pleasure by the public"⁴³⁹ But perhaps the most important work these manuscripts did was to convince clergymen of her authorship over the poem she had been circulating and were beginning to appear in print. Byles, who had transcribed Wheatley's work for Belknap, was also one of the eighteen ministers who attested to Wheatley's authorship over her poem. His name signed off on the following attestation: "We whose Names are under-written, do assure the World, that the Poems specified in the following Page were (as we verily believe) written by PHILLIS, a young Negro Girl, who was but a few Years since, brought an uncultivated Barbarian from Africa, and has ever since been, and now is, under the Disadvantage of serving as a Slave in a Family in this Town."⁴⁴⁰ While the preface gave the impression that what may have taken place seemed closer to a courtroom of judges, it may have been more likely that not only were the attestations gathered by Wheatley herself, but that the work of convincing them about her authorship had been an ongoing project for several years.⁴⁴¹ Similar to Hammon who gathered a broader readership for his works prior to publication, Wheatley likely also gathered

⁴³⁸ Rush Papers: Yi 27406, Folio 39, LCP and Rush Papers: Yi 27423, Folio 83, LCP.

⁴³⁹ Benjamin Rush, *An Address to the Inhabitants of the British Settlements in America Upon Slave-keeping*, (Philadelphia, Boston: Reprinted by John Boules for John Langdon, Opposite of the Post-Office in Cornhill, 1773, 17

⁴⁴⁰ Phillis Wheatley, "Preface," *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, London: Published According to Act of Parliament by Arch'd Bell, 1773).

⁴⁴¹ See Joanna Brooks, "Our Phyllis Ourselves," *American Literature*, vol 82.1, (2010), 1-28. Many scholars have moved on from Gates' original depiction of the attestation as that of a rigorous courtroom and placed much of the initiative about the attestation on Peters herself.

supporters, some of whom included esteemed clergymen like Byles, through scribal publication and manuscript circulation. These methods of publication seemed like they could gather a public without the intermediary meddling of printers and booksellers who regularly doubted the literary abilities of black writers.⁴⁴² Perhaps nothing could convince a British colonial printer about the salability of a text like the support of New England's most esteemed figures.

Although Peters' individually print published poems would help grow her reputation, they were insufficient when it came to gathering enough support to print *Poems*. Indeed, her first print publication may have done more for the publisher than for the poet herself. "On Messrs. Hussey and Coffin" was published in the December 21, 1767 edition of the *Newport Mercury*. It recounted an incident involving two merchants Nathaniel Coffin (1725-1780) and George Hussey (1694-1782) who "narrowly escaped being cast away on Cape-Cod, in one of the late Storms." Peters, who was "tending table, heard the Relation, from which she composed the following Verses."⁴⁴³ Printers Samuel Hall and Anne Franklin, sister-in-law of the founding father Benjamin Franklin, likely took on the project given Susanna's Wheatley's connections to Newport revivalists like Sarah Osborne.⁴⁴⁴ However, Peters' poem may have interested publishers as well because it provided a literary account of the late-December storm that validated Hall's and Franklin's recent publication delays. As they recounted immediately before Peters' poem: "Last Monday Night, we had a most violent Gale of Wind at S.E. S.W. and W. The Shipping in the Harbor received considerable Damage; several vessels sunk at the Wharves, and some Boats were beat to Pieces" and right after: "The Severity of the Weather, and the late

⁴⁴² See Hammon, "To the Public," *An Address*.

⁴⁴³ *Newport Mercury*, December 21, 1767, 3.

⁴⁴⁴ Caretta makes this argument and while I think it has merit, there was also a more immediate context for why it may have been printed. Caretta 64. For more on the Franklins and Samuel Hall, see Thomas, 194-196.

Arrival of the Western Mail, have prevented the Publication of this Paper at the usual Time.”⁴⁴⁵

Whether Peters or Wheatley thought it was timely or Hall and Franklin were opportunistic, their interests nevertheless coalesced into the author’s first print publication.

These mutually beneficial relationships between intermediaries were not always so successful, however. A less successful venture followed with Peters’ elegy on Whitefield after the Wheatleys engaged newcomer printer-bookseller Ezekiel Russell. After Peters’ poem had caught the attention of several newspapers across New England, the Wheatleys chased its success to publish an edited compilation of her poems in what would be *Poems on Various Subjects*.⁴⁴⁶ They ran a transatlantic campaign publishing proposals for subscriptions in newspapers like the *Boston Censor* and *London Magazine: Or, Gentleman’s Monthly Intelligencer*. It promised “A Collection of Poems, wrote at several times, and upon various occasions, by PHILLIS, a Negro Girl, from the strength of their own Genius... This Work will be put to the Press as soon as three Hundred Copies are subscribed for, and shall be published with all Speed. Subscriptions are taken in by E. Russell, in Marlborough Street.”⁴⁴⁷ Even with Peters’ poems being printed across New England and Wheatleys’ attempts to solicit support abroad, the printer failed to secure enough support. As one subscriber wrote to his brother whom he promised a copy of the printed text, “Its above two months since I subscribed for Phillis’s poems, which I expected to have sent you long ago, but the want of Spirit to carry on any thing of the kind here has prevented it, as they are not yet publish’d.”⁴⁴⁸ Peters herself was ill during the campaign and may not have had the opportunity to write to her correspondents during this

⁴⁴⁵ *Newport Mercury*, December 21, 1767, 3

⁴⁴⁶ It first appeared in the *Boston News-Letter* on October 11, 1770, and was one of two that was published. Even more elegies on Whitefield followed from a variety of authors and poets. By October 19, 1770, the *New-Hampshire Gazette* and *Historical Chronicle* also published Peters’ poem.

⁴⁴⁷ See *Boston Censor*.

⁴⁴⁸ Andrews-Eliot Ms N-1774, #12, MHS.

time. Furthermore, Russel himself did not have much success. After a failed business venture in Portsmouth, he moved to Boston where he printed “nothing of more consequence than pamphlets, which were small.” He would eventually hop around various New England towns trying to re-establish his print operations and would finally find success returning to Boston after the war when most of the established printing operations were still recovering.⁴⁴⁹ Despite Peters’ successful entry in print, her newfound public fame and subsequent campaigns through the printing press could not secure her the appropriate support to print her edited collection.

Instead, what helped Peters print her edited collection were her circulating manuscripts. Before the Wheatleys pursued printing the edited collection, Peters had been corresponding with Selina Hastings, the Countess of Huntingdon in London. Hastings was an avid supporter of the transatlantic revivals during the 1740s and similarly backed the publications of enslaved and freed Africans like Olaudah Equiano. Peters had been sending her manuscript copies of her work, from her elegy on Reverend Joseph Sewall who died on July 4, 1769 to her “few lines on the decease of [the] worthy Chaplain, the Rev’d Mr. Whitefield.”⁴⁵⁰ Hastings solicited further information from her correspondents about Peters. One such response confirmed the quality of writing that Hastings had already been privy to: “And I myself saw her write several lines and then took the opportunity to watch her narrowly; by which, I found she wrote a good & expeditious hand. She frequently made use of a quarto Dictionary: and well she deserves the use thereof: for I’ll delineate her in few words: Her aspect, humble serene & graceful: her Thoughts, luminous & sepulchral, ethereal & evangelical and her Performances most excellent, year almost inimitable.”⁴⁵¹ Hastings then brought the project to London publisher Archibald Bell who had printed several works by revivalists for her. Given Hastings’ questions around Peters’ authorship

⁴⁴⁹ Thomas, 155. On the timeliness, see Hall and Amory

⁴⁵⁰ Letter from Peters to Huntingdon, October 25, 1770.

⁴⁵¹ Bernard Page, Letter March 19, 1773, taken from Caretta, 92.

over her works, both the author and the Wheatleys began gathering attestations for the edited collection. As one observer described it, “In regards to Phillis’s poems they will originate from a London press, as she was blam’d by her friends for printg them here...she has had a paper Drawn up & signed by the Gov. Councils, Ministers & most of ye people of note in this place, certifying the authenticity of it.”⁴⁵² Many of these ministers, however, had received Peters’ work and corresponded with her. Byles was transcribing her poems as early as the 1760s and she had been in regular correspondence with Chauncy, having sent her copies of texts like Thomas Amory’s *Daily Devotion Assisted and Recommended, in Four Sermons*.⁴⁵³ Resisting the image that the attestations were a result of a trial rather than Peters’ own disconcerted effort to gather support among her correspondents, Brooks wrote: “[Peters] devised the attestation as part of a months-long strategy to secure the London publication of her *Poems*, obtaining signatures from prominent Boston citizens at a town meeting on 28 October 1772.”⁴⁵⁴ The history of Peters’ publication of her works through manuscript circulation and scribal publication illustrates how she strategized around the printing press. *Poems* could only reach the print medium thanks to the manuscripts she had already been publishing through New England and London networks.

Through the experiences of marginalized, we catch a glimpse of the publics their circulating manuscripts and scribal networks created, the intellectual work they performed on readers, and how these publications differed from their printed counterparts. These methods of distribution should not be relegated to the private sphere nor should the activities of their authors be deemed less public than those of their male and orthodox Protestant counterparts. Sargent, Murray, Huntington, Hammon, and Peters all operated publicly in ways that did not involve the printing press and for a variety of reasons: the inconvenience of the printing press, its limited

⁴⁵² Andrew-Eliot MS N-1774 #16, MHS.

⁴⁵³ T. Wallcut Microfilm P-391, MHS; Thomas Wallcut Papers, 1671-1866, Reel 2 of 3, MHS.

⁴⁵⁴ Brooks, “Our Phillis, Ourselves”

reach even into the eighteenth-century, and perhaps even its implicit Protestantism that made it difficult to engage. Perhaps it might be more accurate to the experiences of these authors if the printing press was read, not as the primary means of being public, but as a convenience for reproducing texts, but nevertheless an alternative to more readily accessible forms of publication.

Conclusion

In a 1715 letter to the SPG, missionary Elias Neau wrote a letter requesting editions of the Lord's Prayer in the African languages of "Carmentie and Mandingo."⁴⁵⁵ Much like many missionaries before him, Neau believed in the power of print to facilitate the conversion of non-Anglo Protestants and in the universality of both his Protestant-Christianity and the mediums by which it could be communicated. Neau himself was evidence of this possibility. He was a French Huguenot who, despite linguistic and cultural differences with Anglo-Protestants, found much more in common with New York Anglicans than French Catholics. His narrative, *A Short Account of the Life and Sufferings of Elias Neau* (1749) recounted instances of him resisting French Catholic pressures for him to convert. By successfully resisting these efforts and holding strong in his Protestantism, Neau became a popular figure among the English and, at least among readers of his publication, a fellow Christian.⁴⁵⁶ With his own experience validating how non-English languages could facilitate people's conversions into a universalized Protestantism and that Protestant experiences could be published to transcend linguistic differences, surely the same could be done for the enslaved Africans in New York.⁴⁵⁷

However, because the language in question was Coromantee, Neau's requests for Protestant texts translated into another language was rebuffed. Despite many efforts to translate Anglo-Protestant texts into Native American languages like Wôpanâak or Mohawk, there were very few attempts for languages spoken by enslaved Africans. Part of it might be owed to the timing of Neau's request. Just three years before Neau formally requested for editions of the

⁴⁵⁵ Elias Neau to Secretary (1715) Rhodes Library, SPG Letters A 10:162-164

⁴⁵⁶ See Elias Neau, *A Short Account of the Life and Sufferings of Elias Neau, Upon the gallies, and in the Dungeons of Marseilles; for the constant Profession of the Protestant Religion*. Trans. John Christian Jacobi (London: Sold by John Lewis, Printer and Publisher in Pater-Noster-Row, near Cheapside), 1769, 19.

⁴⁵⁷ Much of this account appears in Graham Russel Hodges, *Root & Branch: African Americans in New York & East Jersey, 1613-1863*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999) 53-63 and for background on Neau's catechizing, also see Katherine Gerbner, *Christian Slavery: Conversion and Race in the Protestant Atlantic World*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018).

Lord's Prayer in Coromantee, New York minister John Sharpe reported to the SPG that "Some negroes slaves here of the Nation of the Carmantee and Pappa, plotted to destroy all the whites."⁴⁵⁸ Sharpe was describing the infamous 1712 slave insurrection where twenty to thirty enslaved peoples were condemned for killing nine whites and wounding several others. Two of the accused attended Neau's school. This incident fed European broader concerns about Coromantee as a language for revolt throughout the colonies and that as a people group, the Coromantee were prone to lead slave revolts against their enslavers.⁴⁵⁹ Any attempts to grant legitimacy to any African language would likely be squashed under the premise that the printing press should not encourage such revolutionary potential if it were not realized under the terms set by the English. Hence, it would be sensible that Coromantee would not only remain outside the printing press, but could continue to find little interest in the institutions of literary and religious power. Furthermore, it was logical that ministers, missionaries, and publishers would find little demand for texts that did not directly address Anglo-Protestants, even if there were tens of thousands of enslaved Africans in British America who might be able to use such texts. As Sharpe continued, the Coromantee "kept their conspiracy secret that there was not the least suspicion of it."⁴⁶⁰ The notion of "conspiracy" and "secret" also hinted at the explicit exclusion of Anglo-Americans and Europeans as the audience for these discussions and the success with which they remained inaccessible for Anglo-Protestants who might otherwise want to govern and manage how enslaved peoples spoke, discussed, gathered, and even acted publicly. With these dynamics in play, neither the colonial printing press nor English literacy could help enslaved peoples realize revolution from their English enslavers and colonizers.

⁴⁵⁸ Elizabeth Donnan, ed. *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, vol 1 (Washington, DC: Carnegie Institute of Washington, 1930), 398.

⁴⁵⁹ See John Thornton, "The Coromantees: An African Cultural Group in Colonial North America and the Carribbean, *The Journal of Caribbean History*, vol 32, issue 1 (Jan 1998), 161-178.

⁴⁶⁰ John Sharpe to the Secretary, June 23, 1712, RHL SPG Letters, A7/216.

The dynamics of language, translation, intermediaries, communication, media, and audiences that shaped the relations and possibilities for Neau, New Yorkers, and the Coromantee are the main preoccupations of this dissertation. Applying the levels of critical analyses from several chapters raises the mediums of discourse for non-English, non-Protestant peoples in the Americas to the same political relevance, scope, and scale as the non-universalized, market-specific, intermediary-dependent and ultimately curated English public sphere. To return to the Coromantee example, Neau embodied Protestant confidence in both his concept of the universality of religion and the medium that could facilitate it. His reliance on Anglican networks to publish in a language infamous to European colonizers demonstrates the limits of print as a medium for expression and literacy. Coromantee fell outside of Protestant expectations for the printing press to speak primarily to Anglo-Protestants. Yet even without access to the printing press, enslaved peoples had African languages like Coromantee to facilitate a “linguistic community” which formed the basis for “social community,” out of which “developed a national feeling that could be found in all colonies and throughout the whole time period, and which manifested itself in a variety of national organizations, meetings, burial associations, and the like.”⁴⁶¹ In other words, a public sphere. Even without the printing press, the language facilitated the kinds of relations made possible by public speech, both in manuscript and in print, in a way that should flattens any asymmetry across mediums and impact by virtue of speakers, writers, and authors’ proximity or ability to exercise Anglo-Protestant literacy and publishing networks.

Unpublishing Religion invites scholars to approach the printing press in a more critical matter, lest we replicate the confidence of eighteenth-century Anglo-Protestants who saw the English colonial printing press in dangerously universalizing and totalizing terms. It takes seriously the political power and geographical reach of manuscripts that never made their way

⁴⁶¹ Thornton, 168-169.

through publishers' technologies and networks. It grounds published discourse within the material and local relations that make up the social life of any text. And it illustrates how Protestant power could operate underneath and through concepts that others might readily describe as the market, the secular, the literary, the public sphere, and the political: by managing, governing, curating, and excluding spaces that could otherwise bear criticism to bear on how Anglo-Protestantism crystalized itself within processes like print publication.

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Smith Family Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), Philadelphia, PA.
The Occom Circle (TOC), Dartmouth College Library Collections, Hanover, NH.
The Price Papers, Electronic Enlightenment, University of Oxford, Cambridge, UK.
United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Papers (SPG), Rhodes House, University of Oxford, Cambridge UK.

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