

FROM PROCLAMATION TO DIALOGUE:
THE COLONIAL PRESS AND THE EMERGENCE OF AN AMERICAN PUBLIC
SPHERE, 1640-1725

Dissertation

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By

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ABSTRACT

My dissertation explores the output of the colonial American printing press in its formative years, noting a transformation over time that opened doors to wider participation in public affairs. During its first half century, the press was used solely as an outlet for official pronouncements and proclamations that were designed to be passively read and accepted by the people. Beginning in the late 1680s, new presses in rival jurisdictions, religious controversies, and political revolutions provided a new context for authors and printers, who began issuing a greater variety of documents in previously suppressed genres. As authority splintered, multiple perspectives on religious and political matters appeared in dialogue with one another via controversial pamphlets, asking readers to serve as arbiters and participants in shaping public opinion. Such links between communications, public opinion and the rise of democratic institutions are critical to the emergence of the public sphere, a phenomenon once exclusively discussed in the context of the late eighteenth century in Revolutionary Europe and America. Recent scholarship on early-modern England, however, has discovered links between press expansion and religious and political controversies dating back to the sixteenth century. This dissertation takes the excellent models developed in these English studies and uses them to analyze colonial American printing in a new way. By significantly modifying the current understanding of the timing and nature of the rise of the American

public sphere, I argue that it was less a mere outgrowth of the American Revolution and more of an integral part of its complex origins.

This project is significant in several ways. It first allows for a more nuanced understanding of American printing, colonial political development, and the connections between them. It also provides crucial contextual information for better understanding the trans-Atlantic foundations of American traditions of freedom of the press and speech. These fundamental liberties are also linked to the development and protection of democratic culture, a topic of ongoing interest across disciplines in domestic and international perspectives.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my parents, Don and Gladys

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This dissertation would not have been completed without the generous assistance of many individuals who gave their time and energy to help make this project a success. My colleagues among the graduate students at Ohio State were consistently a source of support, new ideas, and valued friendship and I only hope that I was able to contribute to their research as much as they did for mine. The strength and breadth of faculty expertise in early modern studies at Ohio State University made this an ideal place to train for a career in early American and Atlantic history and I thank everyone who had a hand in guiding my studies. Through seminars (and the casual group dinners that followed), classroom collaboration, and individual consultation, I was challenged and encouraged by the early American faculty, especially Randy Roth, Margaret Newell, Richard Shiels, and Saul Cornell. Dale Van Kley first introduced me to the joys and frustrations of working with Habermas and the public sphere and my professional life has never been the same. David Cressy fostered my studies in early modern British history and helped solidify key elements of my trans-Atlantic argument. Alan Gallay always had an ear to lend, different perspectives to offer, and more patience than I deserved in assisting with my prose. I want to offer special thanks to my advisor, John Brooke. He has worked so hard on my behalf since the moment we first met that I could not possibly enumerate all of the things I am grateful to him for. John's unflagging belief in this project and my promise as a

scholar and teacher helped sustain me through the ups and downs of the research and writing process.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: A LONG VIEW ON THE RISE OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE IN THE EARLY MODERN ATLANTIC WORLD

In the summer of 1688 George Keith, a Quaker missionary, arrived in Boston to deliver a challenge to the Congregational churches of New England. Ensuring that his hand-written message was “set up in the most publick place, in the Town of Boston,” he sought a face-to-face debate with the local Puritan ministers. The church leaders flatly refused, suggesting that “If he would have a Publick Audience, let him print.”¹ And this is precisely what Keith did, returning to Philadelphia and publishing a two-hundred-forty page book outlining his challenges to the New England Way. Reluctantly, Cotton Mather responded to Keith’s attack in the name of the broader Puritan ministry. Over the next four years the two religious leaders exchanged blows in a series of locally printed books of attacks, rebuttals, charges and countercharges. This printed debate was carried out in a form of controversial literature driven by a dialogue-like exchange appealing to the rational understanding of the reading public. This style of dialogical pamphleteering was commonplace in metropolitan London, but had been very consciously excluded from the print culture of North America to that point. Keith’s initiative, alongside simultaneously

¹ George Keith, *The Presbyterian and Independent Visible Churches in New-England and Else-where, Brought to the Test, and Examined According to the Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, in Their Doctrine, Ministry, Worship, Constitution, Government, Sacraments and Sabbath Day, and Found to be No True Church of Christ. More Particularly Directed to These in New-England, and More Generally to Those in Old-England, Scotland, Ireland, &c. With a Call and Warning From the Lord to the People of Boston and New-England, to Repent, &c. And Two Letters to the Preachers in Boston; and an Answer to the Gross Abuses, Lyes and Slanders of Increas [sic] Mather and Samuel Norton, &c.* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1689), 205.

released political pamphlets related to the Glorious Revolution in America, broke the mold of previous colonial printing and brought an expanded public sphere to colonial America.

This understanding of George Keith's tumultuous early years in the colonies and the political pamphleteering accompanying the Glorious Revolution challenges the dominant conception of the American public sphere as an exclusively secular discursive space that opened only in the mid-eighteenth century. The prevailing chronology and characterization of the public sphere in early America takes many of its cues from the foundational work of Jürgen Habermas and scholars of early modern European history. Habermas argued that the bourgeois public sphere was strictly limited to rational discussions of economic and political concerns among disinterested participants and that it was first visible in the coffeehouses and voluntary associations of Restoration London, expanding into continental Europe and beyond in the eighteenth century.² Habermas's understanding of the public sphere has inspired a vast literature in early modern European history. Historians of the French Revolution and its origins were among the first to recognize the value of this conceptual tool in understanding the breakdown of the *Ancien Regime*.³ Other scholars then found evidence of an expanding public sphere in other

² Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989, originally published in 1962), 1-26. This English translation, 27 years after the original German edition was published, finally broke the language barrier that prevented an earlier incorporation of the public sphere into Anglo-American scholarship.

³ Some of the most influential of these studies in English include Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Keith M. Baker, ed., *The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture*, vol. 1, *The Political Culture of the Old Regime*

parts of eighteenth-century Europe, often linking it to the advance of the Enlightenment.⁴ Then British historians entered the debates, arguing that there were indeed decisive shifts in political culture evident in the eighteenth century, best seen in the rise of popular nationalism and the importance of networks of sociability and communication.⁵

American historians have similarly adopted Habermas for interpretations of eighteenth-century society and culture. Michael Warner launched American studies of the public sphere with his analysis of the explosion of pamphleteering and pseudonymous newspaper contributions during and after the American Revolution. These imprints initiated a republican public sphere where participants debated political ideas and effected the formulation of public policy.⁶ Others explored the development of American newspapers and the expansion of postal communications networks that made a public

(Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1987); Jack Senser and Jeremy Popkin, eds., *Press and Politics in Pre-Revolutionary France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Mona Ozouf, "Public Opinion at the End of the Old Regime," *Journal of Modern History* 60 (1988): S1-S21; Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); Roger Chartier, *Cultural Origins of the French Revolution* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1991); Sarah Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs: The Causes Celebres of Prerevolutionary France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

⁴ Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992); Anthony J. La Vopa, "Conceiving a Public: Ideas and Society in Eighteenth-Century Europe," *Journal of Modern History* 64 (1992): 79-116; Margaret Jacob, "The Mental Landscape of the Public Sphere: A European Perspective," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 28 (1994): 95-113; James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). Unlike most studies of the public sphere, religion plays a central role in James Bradley and Dale Van Kley, eds., *Religion, Politics, and Enlightenment Europe* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001).

⁵ For nationalism and the public sphere see Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992) and Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture, and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). The networks of communication and debate that laid the backbone for a public sphere are discussed in Marvin Becker, *The Emergence of Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century: A Privileged Moment in the History of England, Scotland, and France* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994); Brian Cowan, "Mr. Spectator and the Coffeehouse Public Sphere," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 37, no. 3 (Spring 2004): 345-366.

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

sphere possible by the late eighteenth century.⁷ Habermas's concept was eagerly adopted next by political and cultural historians of the early republic, who pointed to the active civic culture of American street demonstrations, parades, theaters, taverns and salons, each venue primed with printed matters from the increasingly active American presses.⁸

By contrast, American historians have been much more tentative in exploring the dimensions of Habermas's public sphere in the colonial era. Limited access to printed materials and restrictions on the press precluded public discourse of controversial matters. Elite coteries with access to important political information, relied on manuscripts passed between tightly controlled networks, reserving print as a vehicle for public proclamations that carried the weight of authority and were meant to be accepted and obeyed, not challenged.⁹ David D. Hall, after pioneering extensive studies of print

⁷ The colonial precedents to Warner's examination of the impact of newspapers were examined in Charles E. Clark, *The Public Prints: The Newspaper in Anglo-American Culture, 1665-1740* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). Clark clearly argues that the public sphere significantly expanded at the turn of the century with the opening print run of the *Boston News-Letter*, but the notion seems to have gained little scholarly attention; Richard John, *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995); Paul Starr, *The Creation of the Media: The Political Origins of Modern Communications* (New York: Basic Books, 2004).

⁸ John L. Brooke, "Ancient Lodges and Self-Created Societies: Voluntary Association and the Public Sphere in the Early Republic," in Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert, eds., *Launching the "Extended Republic": The Federalist Era* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996); David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Simon P. Newman, *Parades and Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997); Jeffrey Pasley, *"The Tyranny of Printers": Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001).

⁹ For the manuscript exchange networks see David D. Hall, "The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century," in Hugh Amory and David D. Hall, eds., *A History of the Book in America. Vol. 1. The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) and David D. Hall, "Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century New England: An Introduction and Checklist," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 115 (2005): 29-80. For further discussions of efforts to retain power among a small group "in the know" see Richard Brown, *Knowledge is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700-1865* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Darren Staloff, *The Making of an*

culture and the history of the book, went so far as to assert that he could find no evidence to support the emergence of a public sphere in America during the colonial period, opting instead to describe a network of authors participating in a “republic of letters.”¹⁰ Apart from Charles E. Clark’s discussion of the newspapers of the early eighteenth century, the most prominent discussion of an American public sphere prior to the onset of the imperial crisis is the important article published by T.H. Breen and Timothy Hall, which argued that the nearly simultaneous printed discussions about currency and itinerancy during the 1740s constituted a critical moment in the American experience of public debate. The sudden exposure of American audiences to contested conceptions of religion and money prompted a shift to a liberal marketplace of ideas. Breen and Hall note that authors appealed to the rational self interest of the reader in ways that closely paralleled the rhetorical changes that were critical to Habermas’s model.¹¹ The general consensus of American scholarship thus suggests that a rather limited public sphere operated in colonial America, with the 1740s as its first emergence.

American Thinking Class: Intellectuals and Intelligentsia in Puritan Massachusetts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); and Christopher Grasso, *A Speaking Aristocracy: Transforming Public Discourse in Eighteenth Century Connecticut* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999). Although focusing on the eighteenth century, David Shields has argued that manuscript circulation was an essential part of the expanding public sphere, rather than a hindrance. See David S. Shields, *Oracles of Empire: Poetry, Politics, and Commerce in British America, 1690-1750* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990) and *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

¹⁰ Amory and Hall, eds., *A History of the Book in America, Vol. 1*, 1-12; Hall, *Cultures of Print: Essays in the History of the Book* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), 151.

¹¹ T.H. Breen and Timothy Hall, “Structuring the Provincial Imagination: The Rhetoric and Experience of Social Change in Eighteenth-Century New England,” *American Historical Review* 103 (1998), 1411-1439.

This interpretation rests fundamentally on Habermas's assumption that the public sphere had its origins in secular debates of the long eighteenth century. However, the explosion of new work on the public sphere in early modern England in recent years throws this understanding into considerable doubt. These scholars now argue that an English public sphere can be seen long before the late Restoration and that religious debates were central to its earliest manifestation. David Zaret has been at the forefront of this revision. He wrote a series of essays that were later expanded into a book, *Origins of Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions, And The Public Sphere In Early-Modern England*.¹² Refusing to dismiss religion and religious debates as mere remnants of a pre-rational past, Zaret argued that the interrelated religious and political battles of mid-seventeenth-century England should be seen as the moment of critical change in the opening of the public sphere.¹³ Further, he carefully traced the changes in print culture that provided a foundation for the expansion of appeals to public opinion in religious and

¹² David Zaret, "Religion, Science, and Printing in the Public Spheres in Seventeenth-Century England," in Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 212-235; Zaret, "Literacy and Printing in the Rise of Democratic Political Culture in Seventeenth-Century England," *Research on Democracy and Society* 2 (1994): 175-211; Zaret, "Petitions and the 'Invention' of Public Opinion in the English Revolution," *American Journal of Sociology* 101 (1996): 1497-1556; Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions, and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). Since reading Zaret's *Origins*, David D. Hall has softened his stance on the possibility of a colonial public sphere. See "Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century New England," 40.

¹³ A series of other studies have also refocused attention on the opening of the public sphere in the seventeenth century. See Alexandra Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print: Pamphlets & the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Joad Raymond, "The Newspaper, Public Opinion, and the Public Sphere in the Seventeenth Century," *Prose Studies* 21, no. 2 (1998): 109-140; David Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric, and Politics, 1627-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

political matters.¹⁴ Zaret distinguished between imprints generated from official sources as an extension of a centralized culture of proclamations, and those written with the intent to open or contribute to an ongoing public dialogue. The proclamations were designed to be read and accepted based upon the authority of the author while the dialogical pamphlets were designed to appeal to all readers, the final arbiters of which positions were most persuasive. The English Civil Wars provided an opportunity for the explosion of the dialogical literature because of the breakdown of authority vested in both the church and state and the decline in press censorship, a phenomenon quantified and analyzed carefully by David Cressy.¹⁵ Once the genie of dialogical printing was released from its bottle, it could not be recalled.

Peter Lake and Steven Pincus recently have proposed a new grand synthesis for the understanding of the public sphere in early modern England that persuasively pushes its origins back even further than Zaret's model.¹⁶ They note that religious debate and controversy was not novel to the mid seventeenth-century, but was an ongoing part of

¹⁴ David Zaret, of course, was not the first nor last to highlight the importance of printing to social, political and cultural change in Europe, see Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Roger Chartier, *The Cultural uses of Print in Early Modern France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987). Other scholars have outlined new patterns in public affairs by focusing on public access to information and news culture under the Stuarts. See Brendan Dooley and Sabrina Baron, eds., *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2001), and Alastair Bellany, *The Politics of Court Scandal in Early Modern England: News Culture and the Overbury Affair, 1603-1666* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

¹⁵ David Cressy, "Revolutionary England, 1640-1642," *Past and Present* 181 (November 2003), 59. Cressy expands his argument in part III of *England on Edge: Crisis and Revolution, 1640-1642* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). Also see Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers: Propaganda during the English Civil Wars and Interregnum* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

¹⁶ Peter Lake and Steve Pincus, "Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England," *Journal of British Studies* 45 (April 2006): 270-292. Their ideas in this article were then expanded and elaborated in a recently published collection of essays: Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, eds., *The Politics of the Public Sphere in early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

public life from the early stages of the English Reformation. The public appeals and debates between Protestants and Catholics and among the wide range of Reformed perspectives vying for attention represented a religious public sphere that was solidly in place by the reign of Elizabeth I.¹⁷ Lake and Pincus outline a three stage model of development for the English public sphere. The first stage was comprised of the post-Reformation public sphere, dominated by religious controversies. This public sphere then went through a period of transition during the Civil Wars and Interregnum where discussions and debates about politics rose in importance alongside continuing religious controversy. Finally, the Glorious Revolution opened a third phase, containing the hallmarks of the bourgeois public sphere first traced by Habermas. Secular concerns, particularly matters of public credit and finance, dominate this post-Revolutionary public sphere that thrived on the emerging culture of the coffeehouse, salon and the expansion of English newspapers.¹⁸

These new models for exploring the public sphere in early modern Britain provide a platform for re-evaluating the role of the printing press in shaping public opinion in Britain's North American colonies. To what extent had the metropolitan models

¹⁷ This is a perspective also developed in Peter Lake and Michael Questier, "Puritans, Papists, and the 'Public Sphere' in Early Modern England," *Journal of Modern History* 72, no. 3 (2000):587-627, and Alexandra Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

¹⁸ Lake and Pincus argue that debates of public credit emerge in the Transitional phase of the Civil Wars, but take on even more significance in the Post-Revolutionary public sphere, "Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England," 282-284. See also Michael Kwass, "A Kingdom of Taxpayers: State Formation, Privilege, and Political Culture in Eighteenth-Century France," *Journal of Modern History* 70 (1998): 295-339; David Stasavage, *Public Debt and the Birth of the Democratic State: France and Great Britain, 1688-1789* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

described by Zaret, Lake, and Pincus been rejected, adopted, or modified by printers and authors in the provincial context of early Boston, Philadelphia and New York? With this question in mind, a careful analysis of the colonial imprints produced between 1640 and 1725 reveals two striking elements that force us to revise previous assumptions about early American print culture and its relationship to the development of a public sphere. The first and most critical new argument is that the nature and role of the colonial press went through a dramatic change at the time of the Glorious Revolution, moving from an outlet for official proclamations to a facilitator of public dialogues and debate. At the end of the 1680s, as seen in George Keith's writing, authors of colonial imprints made a clear and abrupt rhetorical shift away from tones of authority meant to be passively accepted and towards more persuasiveness using appeals to readers' rationality. Multiple and competing perspectives on issues of public importance were made available to local readers and competed with one another in an effort to shift public opinion and shape the course of public policy. A careful look at the topics of these colonial debates reveals a second argument central to this study: that the three-stage development of the public sphere seen in early modern England arrived in colonial print culture in one powerfully compressed moment at the end of the seventeenth century. Colonial readers, long accustomed to only receiving authoritative proclamations from the local press, were confronted with locally produced pamphlet controversies relating to religious differences, competing political visions, and the difficulties of financing the seemingly perpetual war efforts of King William's new regime. In each of these subject areas, local authors asked

readers to judge for themselves which arguments were the strongest and most persuasive, setting new agendas for public discussions in churches, taverns, militia musters, town meetings or other gathering places in the newly energized colonial public sphere.

These core arguments of the dissertation are embedded in a predominantly chronological narrative. The opening chapters describe the first half century of printing in colonial America, documenting the establishment of a print culture of proclamations. Chapter two focuses on the first presses established in Cambridge and Boston, both under the watchful eye of the government of the Massachusetts Bay colony. The small scale of that provincial society and the Puritan preference for an active regulatory church and state combined to ensure that only the univocal tones of authoritative discourse were found in the earliest American imprints. These proclamations in print were never intended to spark public discussion or debate, but to be read and obeyed. The third chapter argues that despite the drastically changed political circumstances of the mid 1680s, the preference for proclamatory print styles was not overturned. In fact, the nullification of the Massachusetts charter and establishment of the Dominion of New England led to a clear intensification of a reliance on printed proclamations to bolster state authority. William Bradford established a print shop in the newly founded colony of Pennsylvania, but it was not immediately clear that it would operate any differently than the closely monitored presses of New England.

The next two chapters focus on the critical transitional years between 1689 and 1695. Chapter four describes the explosion of political pamphleteering that accompanied

the 1689 overthrow of the Dominion of New England. Readers in New England were presented with printed arguments for and against resisting the established government as well as multiple visions of what a revolutionary regime could legitimately claim and accomplish. In addition to these political pamphlets, George Keith's challenge to Puritan religious positions and Mather's responses added to the volume and scope of change in colonial print production. The focus of the dissertation shifts primarily to the social and political development in colonial Pennsylvania in the fifth chapter. Beginning in 1692 a series of otherwise simple debates within the Quaker community in Philadelphia became a local catastrophe as George Keith turned his aggressive style of pamphleteering on his co-religionists, courting wider and larger audiences for his positions by making appeals to the reading public through printed attacks. Although Keith's opponents were reluctant to engage him in printed debate, his active pen compensated for it by approximating dialogue in his own writing style, calling on the reading public to judge between the competing sides. At the same time in New England the printing presses remained open to multiple perspectives in matters of public importance. A range of responses to the problems of witchcraft found their way to print alongside a series of competing concerns about political economy as the high costs of funding King William's War at the local level were met with paper money schemes and high rates of taxation by a provisional government with shaky constitutional standing. As the dust settled in the closing years of the seventeenth century, it was increasingly clear that a print culture that had relied so

heavily on printed proclamations from the church and state had been thrown open to public dialogues in matters of religion, politics, and political economy.

The sixth and final chapter is devoted to a more thematic discussion of how these patterns of dialogical printing solidified and expanded in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. George Keith, such a central figure in the religious disputes of the 1690s as a Quaker controversialist, returned to the colonies in the eighteenth century as an Anglican missionary and quickly turned to the press to challenge old foes among the Quakers of Pennsylvania and Congregationalists of New England. Where both religious groups had been hesitant to engage him in print debate before, they quickly and aggressively responded to his pamphlets this time. The press also extended its reach and function by issuing runs of colonial newspapers that offered public news and opinion to an increasingly eager local readership. Within these newspapers, as well as in series of independent pamphlets, local political debates raged in the 1710s and 20s, particularly relating to matters of public taxation and finance. Supporters and opponents of land bank proposals and their connections to factions of local governments often went to press in an ongoing dialogue, hoping to gain groundswells of public support to further their cause in support of specific policy decisions. Ultimately, the types of debates and printed dialogues that were so novel and controversial when initiated in the confusion and instability of 1689 had become commonplace and an accepted part of the colonial public sphere by 1725. Colonial print culture had made its important transition from proclamations to dialogues.

CHAPTER 2: NEW ENGLAND'S PRINT CULTURE OF PROCLAMATIONS

Matthew and Stephen Day must have been aware of the daunting challenges facing them as they were unpacking the printing press and type they brought from England to their new home in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in late 1638. The Days had learned aspects of the printing trade in London before being hired by Jose Glover to bring the useful art to the New World. Glover's untimely death before emigrating left the Days responsible for completing the project and getting the press off the ground by themselves.¹ This was no simple task in a colony not yet a decade old, where settlers were still struggling to build new homes, farms, churches, and towns. Other English colonial projects found it hard enough to simply survive in the new world environment, let alone have the time, resources, or inclination to purchase printed books and sustain a local press. The project was not without its prospects, however. The press was located in Cambridge, its fortunes closely linked to the ambitious plans for the newly founded college designed to provide educated ministers and magistrates for the region. Puritan religious culture also elevated the importance of accessible printing as it was deeply rooted in Protestant traditions of Bible reading, supplemented by printed sermons and devotional texts. Despite its understandably slow start, the press in Cambridge proved to

¹ The story of the early press in Massachusetts can be found in great detail in Isaiah Thomas, *The History of Printing in America: With a Biography of Printers & an Account of Newspapers* (Barre, Mass.: Imprint Society, 1970), 42-295 and in more general terms in Arthur Benedict Berthold, *American Colonial Printing as Determined by Contemporary Cultural Forces, 1639-1763* (New York: B. Franklin, 1970).

be a long term success, steadily increasing its production levels until joined by another print shop in Boston in 1674.

The colonial American press operated under political and cultural circumstances that were very different than those in the metropolitan center from which it sprang. Despite the presence of licensing laws, monopolies for the Stationers Company, and the use of prerogative courts, the English crown was never fully able to shut out all forms of unwanted printing. Illicit presses in London and the provinces along with smuggling from continental Europe softened the edges of what was, in theory, a tightly controlled press issuing only the proclamations of the crown and duly established authority.² The Massachusetts Bay Colony, on the other hand, successfully achieved the elusive English dream of a closely monitored and tightly controlled press devoted to proclamatory purposes. A combination of powerful factors sustained this distinctive print culture of New England. Local printers, on the far edges of the empire, depended on the patronage of the colonial church, state and college to ply their trade. It would have been impossible to successfully print and distribute controversial materials against the will of authorities in this small scale colonial setting without detection and punishment. Reluctant to bite the hands that fed them, the Days, and later Samuel Green and Marmaduke Johnson wisely steered clear of printing materials that would jeopardize their livelihood.

² Scholars of press censorship in England have developed an extensive literature, including Frederick Siebert, *Freedom of the Press in England, 1476-1776* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1952); Bob Harris, *Politics and the Rise of the Press: Britain and France, 1620-1800* (London: Routledge, 1996); Anthony Milton, "Licensing, Censorship, and Religious Orthodoxy in Early Stuart England," *Historical Journal* 41 (1998): 625-52; David Cressy, "Book Burning in Tudor and Stuart England," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 36 (2005): 359-74.

The establishment and maintenance of such a solid proclamatory culture of printing in New England was quite a remarkable achievement. Generations of scholars have carefully reconstructed and analyzed the early colonial history of New England, revealing a series of internal disputes and conflicts among Puritan ministers and magistrates about matters of church polity, theological purity, and political theory.³ Against this backdrop of internal conflict among the leaders of the region, it is all the more remarkable that there were so few traces of controversy in print. This is partially explained by traditions within the English Puritan movement that allowed for a diversity of opinions to be discussed and debated in private meetings of the leadership, to be followed by a unanimous voice in public proclamations in pulpits and the press.⁴ But the record of printed controversies among Puritans in London's press shows that such preferences were more related to the hopes of the leaders than the reality of their experience. In the American context, a ministry and magistracy that found itself nearly as divided as their English counterparts, behaved very differently in their public pronouncements. Apart from a series of pamphlets linked to the baptismal controversies of the Synod of 1662, the printing press in New England was a reliable mouthpiece for

³ Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953); Stephen Foster, *The Long Argument: English Puritanism and the Shaping of New England Culture, 1570-1700* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991); Francis Bremer, *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Puritan Community, 1610-1692* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1994).

⁴ Darren Staloff, *The Making of an American Thinking Class: Intellectuals and Intelligentsia in Puritan Massachusetts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), Christopher Grasso, *A Speaking Aristocracy: Transforming Public Discourse in Eighteenth Century Connecticut* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

the ruling Puritan ministry and magistracy, establishing a pattern of nearly a half-century of proclamatory printing in the New World.

I

Producing only twelve imprints over the course of its first decade of operation, the Cambridge printing press was clearly slow in developing into a powerful force of local culture. In no way did it meet the extensive reading needs of a fast growing immigrant population of book-hungry Puritans. As Hugh Amory and David D. Hall have demonstrated in their project on the history of the book in America, importation of English books was necessary to make up the deficiencies of local production.⁵ The continuing importance of English book importation, however, should not hide the significance of the American press. The colonial press provided opportunities, especially for the local church and state, to provide for domestic reading needs without dealing with the time, expense, and risk associated with sending manuscripts across the Atlantic for publication. Despite the relatively small number of imprints in its early years, important patterns emerged in terms of the types of documents that would come to press and the ways in which American authors would address their predominantly local audiences.

The famed first American imprint, known commonly as the Bay Psalm Book, fit the proclamatory pattern of printing well. Issued by a collective ministry, emphasized by

⁵ Hugh Amory and David D. Hall, eds., *A History of the Book in America. Vol. 1. The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

the lack of acknowledgment to a single translator or editor, it was designed to provide uniformity of worship practices in the congregations and households of New England. The ability to produce and distribute such a complicated translation project also highlighted the enhanced education and religious authority of the Puritan ministry, conversant in Biblical languages well beyond the reach of ordinary settlers. The title page alerted readers that the book was more than just a translation of the psalms, but also included “a discourse declaring not only the lawfulness, but also the necessity of the heavenly Ordinance of singing Scripture Psalmes in the Churches of God.”⁶ The discourse provided scriptural justifications and authoritative interpretations to support the use of psalms in worship and that collection of them in particular. The authors did not invite readers to consider and judge such matters on their own, but rather expected them to read and accept the truths that were presented by the godly ministers. From start to finish, the Bay Psalm Book flowed from and reinforced the authority of the local ministry. This first imprint was then followed by a meager output from the press in the 1640s, including four almanacs, three Harvard graduation programs, a description of Native American treaties and a collection of the Laws passed by the General Court for the Bay Colony.

This early development of a proclamatory print culture was brought to some maturity at the end of the decade with the publication of the Cambridge Platform in 1649.

⁶ s.n., *The vvhole Booke of Psalmes faithfully translated into English metre. Whereunto is prefixed a discourse declaring not only the lawfulness, but also the necessity of the heavenly ordinance of singing Scripture psalmes in the churches of God.* ([Cambridge: Stephen Day], 1640).

As the official report of the clerical synod held in the previous year, its preface described the double purpose of the ministers; the clerics sought to outline their common faith and promote unity and harmony among the churches in New and Old England. The ministers noted with great dismay the divisions between Presbyterians and Independents that were evident among English Puritans, suggesting “the more we discern . . . the unkind, & unbrotherly, & unchristian contentions of our godly brethren, & countrymen, in matters of church-government: the more earnestly doe wee desire to see them joined together in one common faith, & our selves with them.”⁷ To that end the ministers endorsed the Westminster Catechism as a Biblically sound statement of faith and then described the church polity that they understood to best follow Scriptural mandates. Although the authors did not completely hide the divergences of opinion among ministers entering into the synod, the text highlighted the points of consensus that emerged during the course of the meetings, allowing the ministry to present a united front to the reading public. This Platform could then be used as the “last word” on matters of church polity and used as a template to ensure uniformity of practice in New England’s churches. And it was clearly used in just that way, even two decades after its original publication. When news of voting irregularities among church members in Newbury began circulating in the Bay Colony, a clerical council was convened, which reminded the wayward church, “Our brethren are much mistaken in affirming this to be ye Congregationall Way, the contrary

⁷ Cambridge Synod, *A platform of church discipline gathered out of the Word of God: and agreed upon by the elders: and messengers of the churches assembled in the Synod at Cambridge in New England To be presented at the churches and Generall Court for their consideration and acceptance, in the Lord. The eight moneth anno 1649* (Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1649), (1).

to which appears from some few testimonies extracted from ye printed bookes of our Divines in both Englands as ye Platform of Discipline gathered out of ye Word of God Chap 10. sec. 7.”⁸ In this case, the ministers claimed a place for the Cambridge Platform alongside other foundational and authoritative texts of the Atlantic Puritan movement, well beyond the reproach of regular church members and normative for church polity matters.

The Cambridge Platform also clearly reinforced the logic and necessity of using state power to establish a proclamatory public culture for the promotion of uniformity and harmony. When discussing the relationship between the church and state, the ministers reminded magistrates of their role in promoting godliness, suggesting “Idolatry, Blasphemy, Heresy, venting corrupt & pernicious opinions, that destroy the foundation, open contempt of the word preached, prophanation of the Lords day, disturbing the peaceable administration & exercise of the worship & holy things of God, & the like, are to be restrayned, & punished by civil authority.”⁹ With this statement the clergy endorsed active press censorship to eliminate controversial debates and the sources of divergent opinions among the people of New England. This was done with the full knowledge that the press would remain open to the sermons, devotional texts, and pronouncements of the orthodox among them.

Samuel Green took over the operation of the press in Cambridge by 1649 and his efforts doubled the number of local imprints produced in the press’s second decade, but

⁸ Newbury Massachusetts, First Church, Council Minutes, 1669-1670, Congregational Library, 7

⁹ Cambridge Synod, *A Platform of Church Discipline*, 29.

he did not divert from the pattern of making the press available as a mouthpiece for official proclamations. Much of the output of the 1650s was an amplification of genres printed earlier, such as the two hymnals, four almanacs and seven broadsides for Harvard commencement ceremonies. In addition to these, however, came a marked increase in devotional material designed to bolster the doctrinal knowledge of the people, preserving orthodoxy through authoritative teaching. Three catechisms for children appeared alongside the same number of printed sermons. A second press in Cambridge devoted to the production of religious materials for missionary work among the Native Americans further enhanced local production. John Eliot used this press to publish an Algonquian translation of the book of Genesis and Abraham Pierson wrote a treatise demanding that all converts recognize the authority of the Bible in order to come to a true knowledge of God and proper religion. The title page of the latter work highlighted explicit links between the proclamatory function of the press and the expanding Native American mission as it emphasized that the project was “undertaken at the motion, and published by the order of the Commissioners of the United Colonies.”¹⁰ Pierson bolstered his personal authority in this text by calling attention to the active support of the church and state in his ministry.

¹⁰ Abraham Pierson, *Some helps for the Indians shewing them how to improve their natural reason, to know the true God, and the true Christian religion. 1. By leading them to see the divine authority of the Scriptures. 2. By the Scriptures the divine truths necessary to eternal salvation. Undertaken at the motion, and published by the order of the Commissioners of the United Colonies. By Abraham Peirson [i.e., Pierson]. Examined, and approved by Thomas Stanton interpreter-general to the united colonies for the Indian language, and by some others of the most able interpreters [sic] amongst [sic] us* (Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1659).

II

The lack of printed controversy in the American press between 1640 and 1660 was no accident, but consciously preserved through carefully crafted policy and active enforcement of the few productions to roll off of the infant press. The placid record of authoritative pronouncements in New England during this period stands in stark contrast to the explosion of controversial literature associated with England's Civil Wars and Interregnum.¹¹ The decision of many New England authors to engage in the printed dialogues of the metropolitan center made the difference with their provincial experiences clearer. American authors, unable or even unwilling to find local outlets for their controversial works, turned to London's presses instead.

One of the main contexts for such exchanges was the need for the colonial ministry to explain and defend the emerging New England Way to an increasingly divided Puritan movement in the British Isles. Those English clerics who inclined towards Presbyterianism, in particular, were suspicious of the Congregational system that was taking root in the New World. They asked for clarification about polity decisions that were being made through a series of questionnaires sent to their colleagues and

¹¹ Among the many studies of printing and the rise of the public sphere during this era are David Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions, and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); David Cressy, *England on Edge: Crisis and Revolution, 1640-1642* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); and Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers: Propaganda during the English Civil Wars and Interregnum* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

brethren in America. John Davenport composed the ministerial response, which was returned to London in 1639 and found its way into the press in 1643.¹² In that same year, Richard Mather wrote additional materials in defense of New England's Congregational system that were put into print.¹³ Unsatisfied by what they learned, English Presbyterians went to the press in 1644 with John Ball's treatise entitled *A Tryall of the New-church way in New-England and in Old*.¹⁴ Unwilling to concede the debate, the New England ministry published *A defence of the answer made unto the nine questions...against the reply made thereunto by that reverend servant of Christ, Mr. John Ball*, written by John Allin and Thomas Shepard.¹⁵ The matter would rest there for the moment as the Civil Wars ended and the English clergy's energies were consumed by the issue of purifying the English church in the context of the interregnum.

Not only did New Englanders have to defend themselves from external challenges in the press, but they also turned to London's printers to counter charges leveled from a

¹² John Davenport, *An Answer of the elders of the severall churches in New-England unto nine positions, sent over to them, by divers reverend and godly ministers in England, to declare their judgments therein written in the year, 1639 and now published for the satisfaction of all who desire resolution in those points* (London: Printed by T.P. and M.S. for Benjamin Allen, 1643).

¹³ Richard Mather, *Church-government and church-covenant discussed in an answer to the elders of the severall churches in New England to two and thirty questions sent over to them by divers ministers in England, to declare their judgments therein...* (London: Printed by R.O. and G.D. for Benjamin Allen, 1643).

¹⁴ John Ball, *A Tryall of the New-church way in New-England and in Old...by that learned and godly minister of Christ, John Ball of Whitmore; penned a little before his death and sent over to the New England ministers, anno 1637, as a reply to an answer of theirs in justification of the said positions...* (London: Printed by T. Paine and M. Simmons for Thomas Underhill, 1644)

¹⁵ John Allin and Thomas Shepard, *A defence of the answer made unto the nine questions or positions sent from New-England, against the reply made thereunto by that reverend servant of Christ, Mr. John Ball, entituled, A tryall of the new church-way in New England and old wherein, beside a more full opening of sundry particulars concerning liturgies, power of the keys, matters of the visible church, &c., is more largely handled that controversie concerning the catholick, visible church: tending to cleare up the old-way of Christ in New-England churches* (London: Printed by R. Cotes for Andrew Crooke, 1648).

disgruntled voice closer to home. Roger Williams arrived in Massachusetts in 1631 and promptly stirred a variety of local controversies. He refused a call to the Boston church because of its reluctance to announce a clearer break with the Church of England, he spoke out against creeping Presbyterianism in clerical meetings in the colony, and he questioned the legitimacy of land claims inappropriately wrestled away from Native Americans. Already wary of the troubles he had caused, the magistrates finally took action after Williams accepted a pastorate at Salem and began questioning the legitimacy of oaths and the ability of the magistrates to issue civil punishments for religious matters. After calling him before the General Court in 1635 to explain himself, the civil leadership decided that the intransigent Williams would be banished from the colony. He then embarked upon a journey that would lead to the foundation of Rhode Island.¹⁶ This was not to be the last the Massachusetts Bay Colony would hear from Roger Williams. In the next decade he made use of his many connections to dissenting believers in London to publish an attack on the intolerance built into the ties between the Puritan church and state in New England. His book, published in 1644, was entitled *The bloody tenent, of persecution, for cause of conscience, discussed in a conference between truth and peace*.¹⁷ This challenge came at an inopportune time for the orthodox Puritan regime. On the one hand they were still embroiled in the printed controversies with their

¹⁶ Perry Miller provided a classic examination of Roger William's life and legacy in *Roger Williams: His Contribution to the American Tradition* (New York: Atheneum, 1953). A more recent biography can be found in Edwin S. Gaustad, *Roger Williams* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹⁷ Roger Williams, *The bloody tenent, of persecution, for cause of conscience, discussed in a conference between truth and peace*. (London: s.n., 1644).

Presbyterian opponents in England while on the other trying to convince their allies among the Independents that they were not putting undue pressures on liberty of conscience and congregational freedoms. In an effort to counteract the effects of Roger Williams' book, John Cotton sent a manuscript to London that was printed under the title, *The bloody tenent, washed and made white in the blood of the Lambe*.¹⁸ Williams, unwilling to allow the matter to rest there, responded with his book, *The bloody tenent yet more bloody: by Mr Cottons endeavor to wash it white in the blood of the lambe*.¹⁹ As the titles themselves suggest, these imprints follow the conventions for dialogue-driven controversial authorship that had been developing in England since the Reformation. Writers cited specific references to passages and arguments in the opponent's book and refuted them alongside new challenges. Authors and printers expected readers to judge between the competing claims and framed their arguments accordingly.

These exchanges indicate that New England authors of the mid-seventeenth century understood the conventions of printed debating and were adept at using them. However, the record of the opening decades of printing in America show that whenever such a need was felt, the authors exclusively turned to London's printers. This decision seems to have been consciously made in an effort to preserve local authority and

¹⁸ John Cotton, *The bloody tenent, washed and made white in the blood of the Lambe*. (London: Matthew Symmons, 1647).

¹⁹ Roger Williams, *The bloody tenent yet more bloody: by Mr Cottons endeavor to wash it white in the blood of the lambe* (London: Giles Calvert, 1652). Williams made clear that efforts to "wash" the bloody tenent at the expense of dissenters shed the blood of the lamb that was to be found in dissenting believers, making the bloody tenet yet more bloody.

unanimity while still allowing provincial authors to participate in the broader discourse of the metropolitan center.²⁰

III

New England faced one of its most aggressive and sustained public challenges to its reigning orthodoxy when Quaker missionaries began appearing in the colonies in the late 1650s. After keeping England's printed controversies at arm's length through the 1640s, the Puritan leadership found it harder to prevent more direct infiltration of the religious radicalism unleashed during the Interregnum. The story of the Quaker infiltration of New England, especially the harsh penalties patiently suffered by the evangelists of the Inner Light, has been thoroughly reconstructed in other venues.²¹ What has remained relatively unexplored, however, is the connection between the emergence of Quakerism in the American colonies and expanded challenges to the proclamatory culture of print in New England. As Kate Peters has demonstrated, much of Quakerism's success and cohesion as a religious movement in England was linked to its deliberate and persistent use of the printing press.²² Distributing multiple copies of letters, prophetic messages, and the treatises of leading Quakers was an important and effective strategy for missionaries entering new regions seeking converts. The Quakers

²⁰ Phillip Round, *By Nature and by Custom Cursed: Transatlantic Civil Discourse and New England Cultural Production, 1620-1660* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1999).

²¹ Carla Pestana, *Quakers and Baptists in Colonial Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 25-44.

²² Kate Peters, *Print Culture and the Early Quakers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1-12.

who entered New England continued this tradition. The Puritan leadership carefully crafted its response to the missionaries to bolster the authority of orthodoxy and to minimize access to dissenting perspectives.

Puritan magistrates, beginning in late 1656, passed a series of legal regulations designed to protect their society from the “cursed sect of hereticks lately risen vp in the world, wch are commonly called Quakers.” Among the many perceived dangers of the newcomers to the church and state was their sense of being “infallibly assisted by the spirit to speak & write blasphemous opinions.”²³ They mandated penalties against any ship’s captain that knowingly transported Quakers into the region, warned any Quakers to remove themselves from New England or face increasingly severe consequences, and decreed that anyone who “knowingly import into any harbor of this jurisdiction any Quaker bookes or writings concerning their diuillish opinions, shall paye for every such booke or writing.”²⁴ Despite such an early emphasis on stopping the importation of Quaker books, enough found their way into the colony to stage a public burning of “alle such corrupt bookes” as were found in the possession of apprehended missionaries.²⁵ From the very beginning, then, a major component of the Quaker threat was seen as closely related to their desire and ability to use texts, many of them printed, to their advantage in gaining converts. As it became apparent that the force of the original laws was insufficient to drive Quakers away, increasingly severe physical punishments were

²³ Nathaniel Shurtleff, ed., *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England. Vol. IV – Part I, 1650-1660* (Boston: AMS Press, 1968), 277.

²⁴ Shurtleff, ed., *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay, Vol. IV – Part I*, 278.

²⁵ Massachusetts State Archives Collection, Volume 10:234.

authorized for those who returned from banishment, ultimately including execution. Six Quakers suffered this ultimate penalty before it became clear to the magistrates that their efforts were attracting more Quakers, creating a backlash against these harsh measures among their own people, and raising concerns in London at an inopportune time following the Stuart Restoration.

In an effort to counteract the increasingly negative public perception of the Quaker crisis, the Puritan authorities turned to the press. Recognizing their inability to fully prevent the importation and distribution of Quaker pamphlets in 1658, the General Court issued an authoritative response as a blanket refutation of the errors of Quakerism. The records of the court spell out the rationale:

Now, for the further prevention of infection, & guiding of people in the truth, in reference to such opinions, heresies, or blasphemies by them expressed in their bookes, letters, or by words openly held forth by some of them, the Court judgeth meete, that there be a writing or declaration drawne up, & forthwith printed, to manifest the evill of their tenets and dainger of their practices as tending to the subversion of religion, of church order, & civill government.²⁶

The task was delegated to John Norton, one of Boston's pastors. As Norton prepared his commissioned attack on Quakerism, events spiraled towards the scaffold as Quaker missionaries continued to defy banishment, willingly allowing ears to be cut off and holes

²⁶ Shurtleff, ed., *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay, Vol. IV – Part I*, 348.

bored through their tongues. As the sentence of death was passed in the famous case of Marmaduke Stephenson, William Robinson and Mary Dyer in October 1659, the Court ordered a declaration printed and read in all towns justifying their decision and explaining the history of that particular case. The authors explicitly designed the declaration to provide true information to ease the minds of “men of weaker parts” and to “stop the mouths” of “men of perverse principles [who] may take occasion hereby to calumniate us, & render us as bloody persecutors.”²⁷ In both cases, the press was clearly understood to be an effective means to present the public with the official stance of the united ministry and magistracy, intending to provide the last word in these matters.

John Norton opened the Puritan attack with the 1659 publication of *The Heart of New England rent at the blasphemies of the present generation*. He presented the book in true proclamatory style, reminding readers on his title page of his authorized position as a “teacher of the Church of Christ at Boston. Who was appointed thereunto by the order of the General Court.”²⁸ This was a not-so-subtle reminder to all readers that his words carried the backing of both the church and state. His first two chapters offered examples of Quaker teachings which, Norton proclaimed, placed the upstart movement alongside a long string of enthusiasts, heretics and false teachers visible throughout church history. In his third chapter he promised to expose the “destructiveness of the Doctrine, and

²⁷ Shurtleff, ed., *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay, Vol. IV – Part I*, 385.

²⁸ John Norton, *The Heart of New England rent at the blasphemies of the present generation; or a brief tractate concerning the doctrine of the Quakers, demonstrating the destructive nature thereof, to religion, the churches, and the state, with a consideration of the remedy against it. Occasional satisfaction to objections and confirmation of the contrary truth*. (Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1659).

Practice of the Quakers; Unto Religion, the Churches of Christ, and Christian States.”²⁹

The danger to states, however, received the most attention, and was linked to the presence of damning evidence from the Quakers’ own hands. He called on any who doubted this to “witness both their scripts, & behaviour, wherein they deny obedience unto all Christian Magistrates, who are not of their own mind.”³⁰ The fourth and final chapter of Norton’s attack shed more light on contemporary understandings of the use of the press while also providing an outline of the Puritan vision of public order that explains why the Quakers were perceived to be such a significant threat to New England. In a chapter devoted to strategies to resist the lure of Quakerism and overcome the menace, Norton saw the productions of the proclamatory press as a signal asset to the cause. He wrote: “All experience proveth, that the bitter root of heresie, hath never prevailed, where Doctrine, Catechism, and Discipline have been upheld in their purity & vigor But full information is at hand, in diverse elaborate and solid treatises upon that subject lately published.”³¹ If only all New Englanders would heed the warnings of their authorized teachers and respect the catechisms, sermons and doctrines presented to them, they would not be tempted to follow the dangerous path of the Quakers. However, the temptation remained very real and very well known, thanks to the tireless proselytizing of Quaker apostles. It was that active public effort to gain converts that made Quakers so dangerous and the proper subject of civil discipline. Norton defended

²⁹ John Norton, *The Heart of New England rent at the blasphemies of the present generation*, 29.

³⁰ John Norton, *The Heart of New England rent at the blasphemies of the present generation*, 31-32.

³¹ John Norton, *The Heart of New England rent at the blasphemies of the present generation*, 48

the harsh punishments delivered to Quakers in previous years by explaining, “We say Religion is to be perswaded with Scripture-reasons, not Civil weapons: with Arguments, not with punishments. But blasphemies immediate and heresies carried on with an high hand, and persisted in, are to be suppressed with weapons & punishments; where reasons, & arguments cannot prevail.”³² Norton earlier had made a distinction between active and passive heresies, suggesting that it would be inappropriate for state power to punish passive heresies, as they did not expose themselves in public and it would violate freedom of conscience in otherwise peaceable dissenters. The Quakers, however, were different. According to Norton, they sought to create public clamors and disturbed the peace of the church and state. Religious and civil disorders could not be tolerated and the state was not only justified, but required to take action against the perpetrators.

Quakers, obviously cut off from access to the colonial press, turned to London and kept their printers busy for nearly a decade with responses to the treatment of their coreligionists in New England. Francis Howgill printed a direct Quaker response to John Norton, *The Heart of New England hardened through wickedness*. In the same year Howgill added a further blast against the persecution of Quakers in *The Popish inquisition newly erected in New England*.³³ It seemed that every prominent Quaker

³² John Norton, *The Heart of New England rent at the blasphemies of the present generation*, 53.

³³ Francis Howgill, *The heart of New-England hardned through wickednes in answer to a book, intituled the Heart of New-England rent, published by John Norton appointed thereunto by the General Court. The doctrine of the Quakers uindicated [sic], his ignorance manifested, and his lying doctrines brought to light and judged with the word of truth, and truth cleared from his aspersions and slanders. By him that waits to see the throne of righteousness exalted above all deceit*. (London: Thomas Simmons, 1659); Francis Howgill, *The popish inquisition newly erected in New-England whereby their church is manifested to be a daughter of myserie Babylon which did drink the blood of the saints, who bears the express image of her*

leader in England added their own voice to the growing chorus of judgment and condemnation, including George Fox, Isaac Pennington, and Edward Burrough.³⁴ Many of the pamphlets recounted the tales of suffering, issued prophetic warnings against the Puritans, and some included or affixed the letters, papers and final statements of the martyred missionaries to give greater emphasis to the message they gave their lives to deliver. Many of the early imprints were hastily constructed and contained the most sensational details of suffering that had been passed through Quaker information networks. George Bishop, on the other hand, took several years to compile information and issued two different books, totaling nearly 350 pages of material, documenting each

mother, demonstrated by her fruit : also their rulers to be in the beasts power upon whom the whore rideth, manifested by their wicked compulsary laws against the lamb and his followers, and their cruel and bloody practises against the dear servants of the Lord, who have deeply suffered by this hypocritical generation : some of their miserable sufferings for the testimony of Jesus, declared as follows and some of their unjust and vvicked laws set down (London: Thomas Simmons, 1659).

³⁴ George Fox, *The secret works of a cruel people made manifest whose little finger is become heavier than their persecutors the bishops loyns who have set up an image amongst them in New-England ... which may be seen in this short relation of their cruelty, which was presented to the Parliament ...* (London: s.n., 1659); Isaac Pennington, *An examination of the grounds or causes, which are said to induce the court of Boston in New-England to make that order or law of banishment upon pain of death against the Quakers; as also of the grounds and considerations by them produced to manifest the warrantableness and justness both of their making and executing the same, which they now stand deeply engaged to defend, having already thereupon put two of them to death. As also of some further grounds for justifying of the same, in an appendix to John Norton's book ... whereto he is said to be appointed by the General Court. And likewise of the arguments briefly hinted in that which is called, A true relation of the proceedings against the Quakers, &c. Whereunto somewhat is added about the authority and government which Christ excluded out of his Church* (London: L. Lloyd, 1660); Edward Burrough, *A declaration of the sad and great persecution and martyrdom of the people of God, called Quakers, in New--England for the worshipping of God. Wherof 22 have been banished upon pain of death. 03 have been martyred. 03 have had their right-ears cut. 01 hath been burned in the hand with the letter H. 31 persons have received 650 stripes. 01 was beat while his body was like a jelly. Several were beat with pitched ropes. Five appeals made by them to England, were denied by the rulers of Boston. One thousand forty four pounds worth of goods hath been taken from them (being poor men) for meeting together in the fear of the Lord, and for keeping the commands of Christ. One now lyeth in iron-fetters, condemned to dye. Also, some considerations, presented to the King, which is in answer to a petition and address, which was presented unto him by the general court at Boston : subscribed by J. Endicot, the chief persecutor there; thinking thereby to cover themselves from the blood of the innocent.* (London: Robert Wilson, 1661).

and every instance he could find of Quaker suffering in New England. Both parts of his *New England Judged* became the standard martyrology for Quakers in this region.³⁵

Many copies of these pamphlets and books must have been carried by the Quaker missionaries who continued to flow into New England, daring the authorities to continue the repressive policies that brought unwanted attention to the Bay colony. With a growing beachhead of active Quaker meetings in Rhode Island and networks of believers in the Bay colony, Quakers remained the most active force attempting to smuggle subversive books and pamphlets into a Puritan society that prized its control over the press and public access to information.

The Puritan leadership of New England largely chose to ignore this onslaught of Quaker imprints in London, a very different response than when fellow Puritans were in opposition in the 1640s. Part of this lack of response is easily explained by a preoccupation with the new and explosive local controversy concerning access to baptism (discussed below), but the print silence of New England also merged well with the imperatives of the proclamatory culture of printing. With John Norton's attack on Quakerism on record and various orthodox pamphlets available through the local press, the Puritan ministry perceived nothing to be gained by responding further to Quakerism in print. Edward Rawson, colonial Secretary of Massachusetts, released one more

³⁵ George Bishop, *New England judged, not by man's, but the spirit of the Lord: and the summe sealed up of New-England's persecutions being a brief relation of the sufferings of the people called Quakers in those parts of America from the beginning of the fifth moneth 1656 (the time of their first arrival at Boston from England) to the later end of the tenth moneth, 1660* (London: Robert Wilson, 1661); and Bishop, *New England judged. being a relation of the cruel and bloody sufferings of the people called Quakers, in the jurisdiction chiefly of the Massachusetts* (London: s.n., 1667).

broadside defense of New England's policies in London in 1660, stressing that "the Consideration of our graduall proceeding will vindicate us from the clamorous accusations of severity."³⁶ Other than this brief statement, the ministry and magistracy of New England allowed the Quakers to continue in a printed monologue from the distant presses of London throughout the 1660s without issuing a response.

In fact, the next time that Quakerism was touched upon in the colonial press, it came in 1676 and through a very unlikely source: the exiled founder of Rhode Island, Roger Williams. Williams, furiously claiming that George Fox had deliberately ignored his challenge to a public debate during his visit to the colonies in 1672, opted to debate three of his colony's leading Quakers instead. The beleaguered founder of Rhode Island described the live debates, held over the course of three days, as a major fiasco in which he was constantly interrupted by his opponents, heckled by the predominantly Quaker audience, and thoroughly unsuccessful in convincing anyone present to abandon Quakerism. Nevertheless, Williams remained confident that the Scriptures vindicated his religious positions and felt compelled to provide a response to the claims of Fox and other major Quakers in print. He was especially anxious to prove "that [the Quakers'] many Books and writings are extremely Poor, Lane, Naked, and sweld up only with high Titles and words of boasting and Vapour."³⁷ He produced many quotes from the

³⁶ Edward Rawson, *A true relation of the proceedings against certain Quakers, at the generall court of the Massachusetts holden at Boston in New-England October. 18. 1659* (London: A.W., 1660).

³⁷ Roger Williams, *George Fox digg'd out of his burrowes, or An offer of disputation on fourteen proposalls made this last summer 1672 (so call'd) unto G. Fox then present on Rode-Island in New-England, by R.W. As also how (G. Fox slily departing) the disputation went on being managed three dayes*

voluminous Quaker writings in print and held them up to dismissive ridicule. Williams clearly relished the opportunity to mock Quaker writers for their theological inconsistencies, poor grammar, and word choice. By contemptuously refusing to engage Quaker arguments on equal terms, Williams nullified the dialogical opportunities associated with his responses to Quaker imprints. The imprint was also a way for Williams and the Puritan leadership of New England to ensure having the last word, at least for quite a while, as the presses of the Boston area would not be open to local Quakers for a rapid response. These factors suggest that *George Fox Digg'd Out of His Burrows* should be seen less as a part of a dialogue with Quakerism and more as an attempt to provide readers in New England with a locally produced antidote for Quaker poison smuggled into the colonies from European presses. The importance of the task explains the collaboration of Roger Williams and the Puritan leadership he had clashed with in print three decades earlier.

The presence of Quakers in the New World did not immediately or dramatically alter the production patterns of the colonial press. Puritans still prized their local control and used the press to issue proclamations designed to protect the people from heresy and error. Despite being shut out of the local press, however, Quakers successfully planted roots in the region and served as a continuing thorn in the side of a Puritan culture that

at Newport on Rode-Island, and one day at Providence, between John Stubbs, John Burnet, and William Edmundson on the one part, and R.W. on the other. In which many quotations out of G. Fox & Ed. Burrowes book in folio are alleadged. With an apendix of some scores of G.F. his simple lame answers to his opposites in that book, quoted and replied to by R.W. of Providence in N.E. (Boston: John Foster, 1676), 3.

preferred homogeneity and obedience. With the establishment of Pennsylvania and its own press in the early 1680s, the Quakers would play an increasingly important role in the shaping and transformation of print culture in colonial America.

IV

If the Quakers explored stress points in the armor of the proclamatory culture in print, a gaping hole was discovered in the aftermath of the Synod of 1662. That clerical gathering was called to address an increasingly controversial matter related to access to the sacrament of baptism among the rising generation of colonists. It had become increasingly clear by the late 1650s that the children of the original generation of church members were marrying and having children of their own before they were able to become church members themselves. Despite not yet being able to offer an account of the working of grace in their life, the standard for admission to New England church membership, this second generation deeply desired to have their children baptized.³⁸ In the absence of a standardized rule for dealing with such cases, certain congregations began quietly relaxing policies to allow for the baptism of the third generation while others decried such decisions as apostasy from the strict standards of the founding generation. The Synod was called to provide an authoritative ruling on the matter and provide a framework for a return to uniformity of practice and harmony among believers.

³⁸ This innovative requirement for church membership is discussed at length in Edmund Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (New York: New York University Press, 1963).

In a decidedly contentious meeting, the synod ultimately endorsed a policy that was later derided as “half-way” membership. They allowed for the second generation to affirm or “own” their own baptismal covenant, making it possible for their own children to be baptized, while ruling that such an affirmation does not imply or grant access to full membership, which would still be guarded by the strict guidelines already in place.³⁹ As one would expect in the proclamatory culture of New England, the decision of the synod was released to the public through the press, with the intention of closing off further debate and moving forward in unity. Surprisingly, that is not what happened.

The official publication of the synod’s findings is atypical in its hesitancy and recognition of diverse opinions among the clergy even at the close of the gathering. The previous synod that issued the Cambridge Platform recognized the multiplicity of voices entering into the synod, but then issued a forceful proclamation of the final result that largely achieved its goal of cutting off local controversy about the matter of church polity. The authors of the written decision of the synod of 1662 seemed to walk on egg shells, admitting that they expected to be criticized by some for being too lax and others for being too strict with their findings concerning baptism.⁴⁰ Instead of stressing their

³⁹ The entire controversy is carefully described and analyzed in Robert Pope, *The Half-Way Covenant: Church Membership in Puritan New England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969).

⁴⁰ Boston Synod, *Propositions concerning the subject of baptism and consociation of churches, collected and confirmed out of the Word of God, by a synod of elders and messengers of the churches in Massachusetts-Colony in New-England. Assembled at Boston, according to appointment of the Honoured General Court, in the year 1662. At a General Court held at Boston in New-England the 8th of October, 1662. The Court having read over this result of the Synod, judge meet to commend the same unto the consideration of all the churches and people of this jurisdiction; and for that end do order the printing thereof. By the Court. Edward Rawson. Secret.* (Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1662), (2).

authority and reminding readers of their need to submit to the decision as delivered, the authors made a plea for understanding:

How hard it is to finde and keep the right middle way of Truth in these things, is known to all that are ought acquainted with the Controversies there-about. As we have learned and believed, we have spoken; but not without remembrance that we are poor feeble frail men, and therefore desire to be conversant herein with much humility and fear before God and man.⁴¹

Such passages in the preface suggest that the majority writing the opinion fully recognized the extent to which their opposition within the synod was unconvinced by their arguments. Rather than press the issue by stridently proclaiming their position and its endorsement by the synod, they tenderly laid out the new method, hoping the sweeter pill would be more easily swallowed and uniformity preserved under the new formula. They were sorely mistaken.

Perhaps recognizing the weakness of their official pronouncement, supporters of the Synod sought to bolster their position by appealing to the authority of the original generation, posthumously publishing a discourse on infant baptism by Thomas Shepard. Shepard's son offered a preface to the work, bringing it more clearly into the context of the recent controversy. This imprint was more forceful than the synod's own document, yet the younger Thomas Shepard could not resist apologizing for his father's frankness.

⁴¹ Boston Synod, *Propositions concerning the subject of baptism*, (4).

The Reader may please further to mind, that this was not intended by the Reverend Author for the publick view; but was only a private Answer sent to a speciall friend, for his particular satisfaction, relating to some doubts mentioned in a letter of his to my Father concerning this subject: Had he purposed to have Written, and Printed off his thoughts to the World touching this article of Baptisme I question not but he would have been more polite and curious; and the expectations of those who knew him thoroughly satisfied therein.⁴²

Nevertheless, both Shepards emphasized the importance of carefully considering this matter because both Anabaptists and Roman Catholics stood to benefit from confusion and disorder among the Puritan churches of New England. With such high stakes, New England simply couldn't afford to continue to have divergent baptismal practices among its churches. For those who might have missed the more subtle connections that were being made, the young Shepard made it painfully clear: "that this latter [the synod's ruling] is not a principle of innovation, and Apostacy; but as it was the Judgment of the Author of this following Letter . . . so was in the light which others have held forth, who in their time were Stars not of the smallest magnitude, whom we have seen sometimes shining with him in Christs right hand, but are now set, *and shining with that Son of*

⁴² Thomas Shepard, *The church-membership of children, and their right to baptisme, according to that holy and everlasting covenant of God, established between himself, and the faithfull and their seed after them, in their generations: cleared up in a letter, sent unto a worthy friend of the author, and many yeares agoe written touching that subject; by Thomas Shepard, sometimes Pastor of the Church of Christ at Cambridg in New-England. Published at the earnest request of many: for the consolidation and encouragemenr [sic], both of parents and children in the Lord.* (Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1663), (20).

righteousness in another World.”⁴³ Denying the authority of the synod was related to blotting out the shining examples of the generation that had planted the seeds of true religion in the howling wilderness of New England.

But the opponents of the synod had a trump card from the founding generation of their own. John Davenport, champion of the New England Way in the print debates of the 1640s, was still actively serving a flock in New Haven and solemnly took up the standard of New England’s first principles as he *opposed* the synod’s decision. He would return to print debate again, this time in opposition to the innovations of the ruling of 1662. Davenport’s original impulse was to turn to London’s press to register his opposition, which he did, but surprisingly, his essay was also printed in America by Samuel Green, the same person who published the synod’s ruling and Shepard’s defense of it in the previous year. This was uncharted territory in the history of American printing. Davenport and his supporters were well aware of this, and opened the essay with “an Apologetical Preface to the Reader.” In it they emphasized that:

our hearts cannot but mourn and bleed, that ever it should be told in Gath,
or published in the streets of Askelon, that there are any different
Apprehensions among us: And in that respect we could gladly have
forborn the Publication of the ensuing Essay. Yet, when we remember
that Variety of Judgments may stand with Unity of Affections, and that
Disputation is the way to finde out Truth . . . and, that He that judgeth a

⁴³ Thomas Shepard, *The church-membership of children*, (13)

Cause before he hath heard both parties speaking, although he should judge rightly, is not a righteous Judge, We are willing that the World should see what is here presented.⁴⁴

The main body of Davenport's essay then laid out the case for why he felt that baptism should be carefully guarded and only made available to the children of full church members. Recognizing that this was a minority position within the synod, he and his supporters reminded readers that Luther and his early followers were a distinct minority within the church, but they stood on correct principle and were vindicated, hoping the same would be proven for them.⁴⁵ Ultimately, though, opponents of the synod did not see themselves as an isolated minority in the broader scheme of the Puritan movement. Not to be outdone by Thomas Shepard's celestial references about founding generations in New England, Davenport made appeals to arguments that reached back across the Atlantic. "And authors who have been Stars of the first Magnitude, if ever there have been such upon Earth, have made use thereof. We might instance in that Incomparable Champion for the Truth, and for the Non-Conformists, against Prelacy, Mr. Robert Parker: so likewise Ames, Voetius, Hornbeck, Dr. Winters, Mr. Hanmer, etc...."⁴⁶

Although asking readers to deny the authority of the most recent synod, they were

⁴⁴ John Davenport, *Another essay for investigation of the truth, in answer to two questions, concerning I. The subject of baptism. II. The consociation of churches. By John Davenport B. of D. and Pastor of the Church of Christ, at New-Haven, in New-England.* (Cambridge: Samuel Green and Marmaduke Johnson, 1663), 2-3.

⁴⁵ John Davenport, *Another essay for investigation of the truth*, 4.

⁴⁶ John Davenport, *Another essay for investigation of the truth*, 7.

expected to do so only with reference to greater authorities within the history of the church. Davenport's revolutionary pitch was decidedly conservative.

Nevertheless, such public challenges could not go unanswered and defenders of the synod rushed to print their response. John Allin chose to respond to Davenport's attacks, and significantly chose to do so in the American press, unlike the experience of the 1640s. Allin admitted that he was counseled "to let [the opponents' books] pass in silence; conceiving that they would not so take with the People, as to hinder the Practice of the Doctrine of the Synod: and that a Reply would occasion further Disputes and Conflicts. But upon serious consideration of the matter by divers Elders met to that End, the reasons on the other side did preponderate."⁴⁷ Ultimately, the synod's supporters made the pragmatic realization that if their opponents' books went unanswered, it would play into the hands of dissenters and discourage those who tried to implement the practices advocated by the synod. Allin's document closely followed the conventions of dialogical controversy more than any other of the baptismal imprints. It fairly cited and reproduced large sections of his opponents' documents while providing his responses and counterthrusts against their arguments. He also chose not to appeal directly to his own or the synod's authority to justify his claims, but instead made appeal to impartial reason,

⁴⁷ John Allin, *Animadversions upon the Antisynodalia americana, a treatise printed in Old England, in the name of the dissenting brethren in the Synod held at Boston in New England 1662. Tending to clear the elders and churches of New England from those evils and declinings charged upon many of them in the two prefaces before the said book. Together with an answer unto the reasons alledged for the opinion of the dissenters. And a reply to such answers as are given to the arguments of the Synod. By John Allin, Pastor of the Church of Christ at Dedham in N. England.* (Cambridge: Samuel Green and Marmaduke Johnson, 1664), 2.

trusting that “these things weighed over again by the equal Balance of the Sanctuary, and right Reason, I doubt not but the Judicious Reader will see how light they are, and unworthy to sway the Judgments of such as our Brethren are.”⁴⁸ While he deplored the personal invective associated with the controversy to that point, he otherwise seemed to be fully comfortable with placing an open and honest debate before the people, who, if they read and considered the arguments carefully, would make the proper decision in the case. His willingness to break down the print culture of proclamations in favor of open dialogue was not shared by his allies or opponents in New England.

Richard Mather provided another direct refutation of John Davenport’s essay printed in Cambridge. Although the main body of his text followed the format common to dialogical debates, with quoted passages followed by responses, Mather made it abundantly clear that he was profoundly disappointed that the dispute had come to that point. Mather’s preface provided the clearest and boldest defense of proclamatory print culture yet to have been published in America and is worth careful consideration. As Davenport did before him, Mather expressed “How loth we are to enter the Lists of publick Debate with brethren, and such brethren as we love and honour in the Lord, with whom we are Exiles in the same Wilderness for the same Truth.”⁴⁹ And like Allin, he

⁴⁸ John Allin, *Animadversions upon the Antisynodalia Americana*, 49.

⁴⁹ Richard Mather, *A defence of the answer and arguments of the Synod met at Boston in the year 1662. Concerning the subject of baptism, and consociation of churches. Against the reply made thereto, by the Reverend Mr. John Davenport, Pastor of the church at New-Haven, in his treatise entituled, Another essay for investigation of the truth, &c. Together with an answer to the apologetical preface set before that essay. By some of the elders who were members of the synod above-mentioned.* (Cambridge: Samuel Green and Marmaduke Johnson, 1664), 1.

considered letting the matter pass without comment, leaving the truth “unto the Discoveries of Time, and the Readers own further Consideration, rather than to toss the Ball of printed Disputes, or to trouble our selves or others with new Discourses of this kinde.”⁵⁰ But along with Allin, he discerned that it would harm the churches to allow such falsehoods to go unchallenged and that he felt he had a responsibility to pick up the gauntlet that Davenport had tossed. But next Mather lashed out at the impulse that led Davenport to turn to print in the way that he did, strongly defending the culture of proclamations that had served New England so well in the previous years. Mather expressed his explicit understanding of how the ministry was supposed to behave in public after such clerical meetings, however contentious:

we are ready to think, that after our reasons given, and Arguings in a Synod (the most proper place of Publick Disputation where Churches walk in order, Acts 15.7) we should have looked at it as our Duty to sit down in silence, and not to amuse and trouble the People by Printing a Dissent, at least not until some way constrained thereto, and till all other means (as by Verbal or Written Disputes &c.) had been first used to render the Difference among their Leaders as small and little as might be.⁵¹

And it should be no excuse that the decision of the synod would go into print, after all that was the point of having such a mouthpiece for proclamations. Mather then struck at

⁵⁰ Richard Mather, *A defence of the answer and arguments of the Synod*, 1.

⁵¹ Richard Mather, *A defence of the answer and arguments of the Synod*, 1.

the heart of the matter: his sense that common readers were unfit to judge disputes of this nature on their own.

Printing of the Synods Conclusion is necessary, for how else shall the Churches receive the Answer which they sought for in such an ordinance of god? But hasty Printing in oppositum, hath sundry inconveniences in it. It does hastily (and haply needlessly) discover a difference among the Godly learned; It makes the People the judge of the Case, who are incompetent: it stumbles them, in stead of edifying, to see such Write and Print one against another: It raises up and foments Divisions, &c...⁵²

It would be difficult to find a more explicit endorsement of the print culture of proclamations. Thus, Richard Mather presents us with one of history's many paradoxical self-portraits: the print controversialist who despises print controversy.

This series of imprints represents a major breakdown of the mechanisms that had previously prevented dialogical controversy from taking root in the American press. The passionate divisions that emerged in the aftermath of the Synod of 1662 broke down widely shared preferences among the clergy to preserve the proclamatory culture that had been developed in the first several decades of their American experience. Although controversy and division flooded into the American press during this time, it did so in a most unusual way, carried on by reluctant controversialists who felt unfortunately compelled to enter the lists of public debate. Apart from John Allin's contribution, each

⁵² Richard Mather, *A defence of the answer and arguments of the Synod*, 3.

of the controversialists apologized for their efforts and Richard Mather went so far as to destroying the rationale for using the press for such debates in the midst of his own contribution to it. The leadership seemed eager to put the genie of controversial printing back into its bottle as quickly as possible.

V

After the dust settled from the baptismal controversies in the mid-1660s, printing in the American colonies again came to be dominated by official proclamations, predominantly written and authorized by the ministry and magistracy for the instruction of the people. The production of the press was still growing steadily, especially with the addition of a new press in Boston opened by John Foster in 1675. The colonial press released 147 imprints during the 1670s, far advanced from the dozen titles of three decades earlier. Yet the patterns of production were strikingly similar, including 13 almanacs, 9 broadside programs for Harvard graduation ceremonies, 45 government proclamations and a further 45 pamphlets of sermons or sermon collections. The remaining imprints included a few collections of poetry, a handful of documents for the continuing missions among the Native Americans, and a series of biographies and narratives committed to documenting New England's history. With the dramatic controversial dialogues of the previous decade pushed aside, the press moved into the 1670s as an increasingly productive mouthpiece for official proclamations.

One of the striking themes evident in the press production of this period is the growing importance of printed sermons as a means of providing religious instruction. Reinforcing the interconnection between church and state power, fifteen of the sermons that found their way to print during the 1670s were originally preached as election day sermons while five more were preached on officially proclaimed fast days for the colony. Such sermons could and often did contain subtle clues about ongoing political controversies and marked divisions between various ministers or magistrates. This was most often seen in the process of selecting the preacher for such special occasions and which factions may have controlled the process, but the decorum required for such functions and the formulaic nature of the Puritan sermon style made such imprints especially poor venues for scoring controversial points in dialogue. The main themes nearly always focused on the need for order and the qualities expected of the leaders of a godly community. Voters were expected to recognize and affirm those qualities among the candidates available to them, providing an electoral stamp of approval after which they should obediently yield to the leadership of the chosen representatives. Funeral sermons were another genre that often found their way to press, usually hailing the piety of a community leader held up to the public for emulation. With preaching as important as it was to the Puritan movement, it is not at all surprising that prominent preachers would extend the reach of their instruction by turning to the printing press. It also

dovetailed nicely with the needs of a proclamatory culture that sought to provide religious instruction designed to be passively accepted as truth.⁵³

Another connection between the rise in printed sermons and the proclamatory print culture of New England is evident in the increasing reliance upon jeremiads.⁵⁴ With reference to the Old Testament prophet's legacy, jeremiads were sermons designed to warn New Englanders that backsliding and unrepentant sinfulness among the people of New England represented unacceptable breaches of the colonial covenant with God and increased the risk of calamitous judgments engulfing the people. Many ministers found this strategy useful, castigating their congregations and New Englanders in general for turning away from the religious foundations of the region, preferring instead to focus on monetary gain and personal acquisition. Another of the sins often attacked was the lack of respect for the authority of the ministry, often manifested in bitter disputes over salary agreements and housing arrangements. Although a great deal of modern scholarship has been shaped by a healthy skepticism of the accuracy of such ministerial claims, this phenomenon has enduring importance as a part of the rhetorical strategy of the print culture of proclamations.⁵⁵ Whether New Englanders were actually backsliding to the

⁵³ For more on the nature and importance of sermon styles and preaching to the development of culture in New England, see Harry Stout, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

⁵⁴ Perry Miller built much of his reputation as an analyst of Puritan thought and writing upon his recognition of the importance of jeremiads. See *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953).

⁵⁵ Much of the social and cultural history of New England written after 1970 rejected Miller's unswerving focus on intellectual history and moved the field forward by focusing on court records, demographic materials and other sources that allow history to be understood "from the bottom up." Many of these works called into question the extent to which the Puritan ministerial worldview dominated the experience and

degree feared by the ministry, they were undoubtedly treated to a steady diet of such claims through the official mouthpiece of the colonial leadership: the printing press. Jonathan Mitchell's printed sermon, *Nehemiah on the Wall in Troublesome Times*, is a classic example of this jeremiad style and its efforts to bolster the authority of ministers and magistrates. He opened the pamphlet with a letter that set the context for his pointed message:

Christian Reader, the still out-stretched hand of Gods powerful wrath over this poor country, in smiting down our Pillars, plucking up our Stakes, and taking from us the breath of our Nostrils, is a matter so doleful and solemnly awful and tremendous, that we may well sigh out our sorrows, in the words of the lamenting Church, Lam. 5. 16-17.⁵⁶

Given God's displeasure with the region, Mitchell's sermon outlined a corrective course of actions for magistrates, imploring them to be faithful to the church and mindful of the spiritual needs of the covenanted community. After devoting considerable attention to the role of a godly magistracy, he turned forcefully to the duties of the congregation. His directions for regular listeners, and the wider reading audience, were quite clear: "Keep

thinking of colonial settlers. Three groundbreaking studies along these lines include: John Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); Philip Greven, *Four Generations: Population, Land, and Family in Andover, Massachusetts* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970); Kenneth Lockridge, *A New England Town: The First Hundred Years, Dedham, Massachusetts, 1636-1736* (New York: Norton, 1970).

⁵⁶ Jonathan Mitchell. *Nehemiah on the wall in troublesom [sic] times; or, A serious and seasonable improvement of that great example of magistratical piety and prudence, self-denial and tenderness, fearlessness and fidelity, unto instruction and encouragement of present and succeeding rulers in our Israel. As it was delivered in a sermon preached at Boston in N.E. May 15. 1667. being the day of election there. By that faithful servant of Christ, Mr. Jonathan Mitchel, late Pastor of the Church of Christ at Cambridge* (Cambridge: Samuel Green and Marmaduke Johnson, 1671), 2 of preface.

Order: keep in your places, acknowledging and attending the Order that God hath established in the place where you live . . . leave the guidance of the Ship to those that sit at Helm, and are by God and his people set there.”⁵⁷ Mitchell left no wiggle room for public discussion, the people were meant to read and obey.

After years of jeremiads warning New Englanders of an impending disaster without reformation, the ministers were vindicated publicly when King Philip’s War descended on the region in 1675.⁵⁸ To ensure that nobody may have missed the connections, several ministers kept the colonial presses busy, reminding readers of the important lessons to be drawn from the devastating experience. Increase Mather was one of the foremost clerical voices of impending doom immediately prior to the outbreak of war. He pressed his new-found advantage once calamity struck by publishing a trilogy of pamphlets related to the troubles. In *A brief history of the warr with the Indians in New-England*, he provided a narrative of the conflict, making sure that readers explicitly understood the reasons for the destruction: their failure to respond to the warnings of the ministry.⁵⁹ Mather’s *An earnest exhortation to the inhabitants of New-England*, predicted a disaster seven times worse than that just experienced if the people continued

⁵⁷ Mitchell, *Nehemiah on the wall in troublesom [sic] times*, 26.

⁵⁸ Modern accounts of the war can be found in Douglas Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk: New England in King Philip’s War* (New York: Macmillan, 1953); Stephen Saunders Webb, *1676: The End of American Independence* (New York: Knopf, 1984); James Drake, *King Philip’s War: Civil War in New England, 1675-1676* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999); and Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip’s War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Knopf, 1998) .

⁵⁹ Increase Mather, *A brief history of the warr with the Indians in New-England, (from June 24, 1675. when the first English-man was murdered by the Indians, to August 12. 1676. when Philip aliàs Metacomet, the principal author and beginner of the warr, was slain.) Wherein the grounds, beginning, and progress of the warr, is summarily expressed. Together with a serious exhortation to the inhabitants of that land* (Boston: John Foster, 1676).

to neglect godly reformation.⁶⁰ Finally, in 1677 Mather wrote a more comprehensive history that placed the recent war in a broader context of Indian warfare that had plagued New England since its foundation. He still emphasized the importance of a return to faith as a prerequisite for a positive outcome in any violent conflict. After giving thanks for past deliverance, Mather expressed shock and amazement that despite all of the warnings and judgments New England had suffered through, “there are evils prevailing amongst us, which if they be not reformed, the Lords Controversy will not be ended, such as notorious Self-seeking, reigning Pride, shamefull Drunkenness, with the occasions leading thereunto; wofull Apostacy, the blessed Design of our Fathers in coming into this wilderness not being minded and attended as ought to be.”⁶¹ Mather was keenly aware that the insecurities associated with the devastating conflict presented the perfect opportunity to press ahead with a reform agenda led by the ministers.

Mather was not the only voice in print relating to the recent Indian war. Others echoed his basic message. Benjamin Tompson published a poetic lament of the state of New England and the sad circumstances that brought affairs to that dramatic low.⁶²

⁶⁰ Increase Mather, *An earnest exhortation to the inhabitants of New-England, to hearken to the voice of God in his late and present dispensations as ever they desire to escape another judgement, seven times greater than any thing which as yet hath been* (Boston: John Foster, 1676).

⁶¹ Increase Mather, *A relation of the troubles which have hapned in New-England, by reason of the Indians there. From the year 1614 to the year 1675. Wherein the frequent conspiracies of the Indians to cutt off the English, and the wonderfull providence of God, in disappointing their devices, is declared. Together with an historical discourse concerning the prevalency of prayer; shewing that New Englands late deliverance from the rage of the heathen is an eminent answer of prayer* (Boston: John Foster, 1677), 84.

⁶² Benjamin Tompson, *New Englands crisis. Or A brief narrative, of New-Englands lamentable estate at present, compar'd with the former (but few) years of prosperity. Occasioned by many unheard of cruelties practised upon the persons and estates of its united colonyes, without respect of sex, age or quality of persons, by the barbarous heathen thereof. Poetically described* (Boston: John Foster, 1676).

Thomas Wheeler, a militia captain involved in the fighting, took a markedly different approach to the task of documenting the wartime experience. He did not focus obsessively on the carnage of warfare, but instead turned his attention to the ultimate deliverance of the frontier community of Brookfield. His approach dovetailed well with the message emphasized by the many clerical jeremiads. Wheeler recognized that God still required obedience and reformation, as he insisted, “a Person or people in a right thankful frame upon the observation of God’s Benefits, and Bountiful favours toward them, are very Sollicitous what to return to God for them.”⁶³ The ministry was prepared to remind the people of what returns they should make after such a harrowing experience, as evidenced by the thanksgiving day sermon by Edward Bulkley appended to Wheeler’s account. It made clear that obedience and repentance were the keys to securing the advantages recently gained and preventing other attacks and losses in the future. Finally, much like Mather’s third narrative, William Hubbard also published a history of Indian relations reaching back to the opening of English settlement in the region. His title page boasted that the account was “published by authority” in an effort to gain extra credibility.⁶⁴ The multi-faceted approach led by the pamphlets of ministers and war heroes continued until the magistrates issued a call for an official clerical gathering that

⁶³ Thomas Wheeler, *A thankfull remembrance of Gods mercy to several persons at Quabaug or Brookfield: partly in a collection of providences about them, and gracious appearances for them: and partly in a sermon preached by Mr. Edward Bulkley, Pastor of the Church of Christ at Concord, upon a day of thanksgiving, kept by divers for the wonderfull deliverance there* (Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1676).

⁶⁴ William Hubbard, *A narrative of the troubles with the Indians in New-England, from the first planting thereof in the year 1607. to this present year 1677. But chiefly of the late troubles in the two last years, 1675. and 1676. To which is added a discourse about the warre with the Pequods in the year 1637* (Boston: John Foster, 1677).

came to be known as the Reforming Synod. The ministers met in two sessions in 1679 and 1680 and the synod was, in many ways, the complete flowering of the Puritan ministry's leadership in the tradition of the jeremiad.

The official histories of King Philip's War and their direct links to the narratives of declension outlined in the jeremiads before and following the conflict fit neatly with the return to a proclamatory style of printing in the 1670s. Although various factions still remained and disagreed about the management of relations with Native Americans, the differences were not made obvious to the public through controversial imprints the way they did during the previous decade when baptismal controversies escaped the boundaries of the synod of 1662. In fact, the debate over baptism was the only time in the first half-century of printing in colonial America that American readers were presented with a direct challenge to ideas presented in another American imprint. Similar dialogues and debates in print were a staple of London's vibrant print culture, but were all but absent in the provincial productions of the press in New England. Such a phenomenon was no accident, but rather the result of conscious decisions on the part of the Puritan leadership to prevent the appearance of printed controversies from disturbing the peace and unity of local churches and communities. Despite a variety of factions among ministers and magistrates, the proclamatory stranglehold on the press held up remarkably well, as attested by the record of known imprints.

CHAPTER 3: THE PROCLAMATIONS OF THE 1680s: EXPANSION AND TRANSFORMATION

The Puritan ministers and magistrates of New England opened the 1680s with a rejuvenated commitment to the region's print culture of proclamations. They interpreted the carnage and devastation of King Philip's War as a complete vindication of the bold, prophetic warnings issued in their many jeremiads of the previous decade. Armed with vivid evidence of the dangers of questioning their authority, leaders of the church and state turned to the press to push forward an aggressive agenda of religious and social reform. The clergy promptly published the recommendations and statement of faith agreed upon at the Reforming Synod of 1679 and 1680.¹ Despite evidence of divisions and dissent among the delegates during the synod, the public face of the ministry was united in its printed proclamations once votes were taken and determinations made.² There was no repeat of the embarrassments of 1662 when dissenting voices aired the synod's dirty laundry of dissent for all to see in the press. Instead, orthodox authors continued to issue a steady stream of printed proclamations, largely focused on

¹ Each session of the Synod produced one major proclamation of its proceedings. Boston Synod, *The necessity of reformation with the expedients subservient thereunto, asserted; in answer to two questions I. What are the evils that have provoked the Lord to bring his judgments on New-England? II. What is to be done that so those evils may be reformed? Agreed upon by the elders and messengers of the churches assembled in the Synod at Boston in New-England, Sept. 10. 1679* (Boston: John Foster, 1679) and Boston Synod, *A confession of faith owned and consented unto by the elders and messengers of the churches assembled at Boston in New-England, May 12. 1680. Being the second session of that Synod* (Boston: John Foster, 1680).

² Peter Thacher's diary provides a colorful window into some of the divisions among the clergy at the synod. See especially the entry for Sept. 18, 1679, Peter Thacher Diaries, 1679-1958; bulk: 1679-1699, Massachusetts Historical Society, 186.

demonstrating clerical mastery over the interpretation of providential occurrences and continuing to stamp out the dissenting challenges of upstart Baptist and Quaker communities in the region.

Little could the Puritans have known how dramatically the political and religious landscape in North America would shift by the middle of the 1680s. Religiously, William Penn established a new center of Quaker settlement along the banks of the Delaware River. Philadelphia quickly developed into a thriving capital and the nerve center for a revitalized colonial Quaker movement. The monthly, quarterly and yearly meetings of Pennsylvania would soon become the source of missionaries, pastoral letters and steady encouragement for their co-religionists throughout the American colonies. Philadelphia also became a rival print center as William Bradford established a press to meet the anticipated needs of the local community. Politically, the accession of James II to the English throne brought dramatic changes to colonial policy. The implications of these changes were most striking in the reorganization of authority in New England. James II and his counselors struck down independent charters throughout the region and folded those jurisdictions into one large Dominion of New England to be governed by Sir Edmund Andros, a trusted deputy of James II and no friend to Puritans anywhere. Despite these dramatic changes and the vastly different contexts they created for the practice of colonial printing in the 1680s, the record of imprints through the middle of the decade shows that the press remained an effective tool exclusively used for the distribution of official proclamations.

I

Religious themes favored by the ministers of the Puritan establishment continued to dominate colonial printing in the opening years of the 1680s. As with earlier periods, many sermons dealing with pastoral issues and practical divinity made their way into print, offering the readers of New England set answers for the common spiritual concerns of any age. In addition to these typical religious pamphlets, though, were a series of works that revolved around two closely related themes springing from the logic of the jeremiad and the specific concerns of the Reforming Synod. The first was an effort to clearly demonstrate the specialized expertise of the educated ministry in recognizing and interpreting God's mysterious and wondrous providences. The second was using this familiarity with God's messages in nature and history to prod and lead the region in the types of covenant renewal suggested by the recent synod.

As discussed in the previous chapter, King Philip's War was a spur to a flurry of history writing geared towards placing the conflict directly in the context of the ministry's public messages of dire warning against apostasy. The impulse to provide providential interpretations of the war continued into the next decade and took a new turn with the publication of Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative. As riveting as her harrowing tale of capture and survival among the Native Americans was and remains, her story was brought to the press for a very specific purpose made explicit in the imprint's

title. The narrative was not meant to idly entertain or intrigue readers, but rather to highlight “the sovereignty & goodness of God, together, with the faithfulness of his promises displayed.”³ The ministerial endorsement of the narrative in its preface strongly reinforced this focus on the spiritual benefits to be gained from understanding God’s activity in the world. The unnamed pastor suggested that “no Friend of divine Providence will ever repent his time and pains, spent in reading over these sheets, but will judge them worth perusing again and again.” Going further he warned, “Reader, if thou gettest no good by such a Declaration as this, the fault must needs be thine own. Read therefore, Peruse, Ponder, and from hence lay up something from the experience of another against thy own turn comes.”⁴ The sponsors of the Rowlandson narrative made clear that the lessons to be drawn from her experience were self-evident and unquestionable. The authors effectively destroyed the legitimacy of debating the pamphlet’s themes by blaming lazy or ignorant readers for any failures to recognize the clear message of the tract. In this sense, setting aside the uniqueness of the female narrative voice, Mary Rowlandson and the clergy responsible for its printing framed and offered this pamphlet as yet another religious proclamation to be received and accepted, not debated or discussed.

³ Mary Rowlandson, *The sovereignty & goodness of God, together, with the faithfulness of his promises displayed; being a narrative of the captivity and restauration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson. Commended by her, to all that desires to know the Lords doings to, and dealings with her. Especially to her dear children and relations, Written by her own hand for her private use, and now made publick at the earnest desire of some friends, and for the benefit of the afflicted* (Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1682).

⁴ Rowlandson, *The sovereignty & goodness of God*, 5.

Moving beyond the recent narratives of Indian warfare, Increase Mather hoped to seize the moment to produce *the* definitive account of the wondrous working of God's power throughout all of New England's history. His efforts, at the lead of many cooperating ministers, led to the 1684 publication of *An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences*. This nearly 400 page volume brought together natural and supernatural tales from all corners of New England, each designed to display God's providential control over all events and offer insights and instruction based upon the encoded messages they contained. Mather explained that the task of gathering information for the monumental history was largely limited to his ministerial colleagues because "we find in Scripture, as well as in Ecclesiastical History, that the Ministers of God have been improved in the Recording and Declaring the works of the Lord."⁵ To further underscore that the volume represented the consensus view of a united ministry, he noted in the preface that this publication was made available only after careful consultation by a meeting of elders for final approval.⁶ In this way Mather sought to assure readers of the authoritative and comprehensive nature of the volume. This was an effort at ministerial proclamation on a truly grand scale.

The illustrious providences considered by Mather swept across a wide range of sensational experiences. He opened the volume with tales of seafaring mishaps, shipwrecks, and improbable stories of survival in the harsh oceanic elements. He moved

⁵ Increase Mather, *An essay for the recording of illustrious providences, wherein an account is given of many remarkable and very memorable events, which have happened in this last age; especially in New-England*. (Boston: Samuel Green, 1684), 11 of the preface.

⁶ Mather, *An Essay for the recording of illustrious providences*, 13 of the preface.

on to tales of Indian captivity and the unlikely survival of various gruesome accidents such as a little girl who survived a spike penetrating her skull and brain. Mather then provided prolonged attention to the many documented cases of lightning striking homes and individuals throughout New England. He discussed lightning strikes in the context of the still-evolving scientific explanations of the day, but then asserted that the sulphurous smell reported by many survivors was proof of the devil's ability to use the materials he had at hand to attack believers. Furthermore, he warned against finding in science comfort against the providential messages of storms, battling against "the atheism of Epicurus of old (and of some in these dayes) who taught, that inasmuch as Thunder proceeds from natural causes, it is a childish thing for Men to have an awe upon their hearts when they hear that voice, I say such Atheism is folly and wickedness."⁷ Ultimately, he reminded readers that they should be prepared to die at any moment and should trust in God for their salvation in times of trial.

The second half of *An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences* is predominantly devoted to discussions of the supernatural in the forms of apparitions, demon possession, and witchcraft. Mather documented several cases of supposed witchcraft, described the afflictions of individuals thought possessed by demons, and related an extended narrative about the experiences of the Morse family of Newbury inhabiting a haunted house over multiple generations.⁸ After relating the specific tales of New England, Mather took readers on a long journey through Biblical and classical

⁷ Mather, *An Essay for the recording of illustrious providences*, 132-133.

⁸ Mather, *An Essay for the recording of illustrious providences*, 136-155.

histories to prove the reality of such supernatural experiences. In this role, Mather served as a ministerial gatekeeper to the information, providing enough material to prove his point, but retaining enough secrecy to present himself and other ministers as the only legitimate authorities on the subject. He specifically rejected making more information available to the public, writing:

Several other Books there are extant, which do professedly teach the way of Familiarity with Daemons. The Titles whereof, as also the Names of the Authors that have published them, I designedly forbear to mention, lest haply any one into whose hands this Discourse may come, should out of wicked curiosity seek after them to the ruine of his soul.⁹

Mather likely was referring to European witch hunting manuals in print, but obviously was not anxious to allow untrained and overly curious laypeople to be exposed to the frightening world of spiritual warfare with the devil.¹⁰ Similarly, Mather devoted an entire chapter to warnings against turning to magical cures or superstitious protections against witchcraft or demonic powers. These efforts, he sternly warned, would merely invite further troubles as they derived their power from the same satanic sources as the afflictions they sought to divert. What, then, was available to New Englanders to protect themselves from the devil's powers and the uncertainties of life? The answer was clear:

⁹ Mather, *An Essay for the recording of illustrious providences*, 182.

¹⁰ Distinctions between clerical and popular understandings of witchcraft are explored in Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Scribner, 1971); Richard Weisman, *Witchcraft, Magic and Religion in Seventeenth Century Massachusetts* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984); and briefly in the introduction to David Hall, ed., *Witch-Hunting in Seventeenth Century New England: A Documentary History, 1638-1693* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1991), 4-16.

the people of New England had to turn away from their sins, place their faith in the ministers and magistrates to guide them in cultural regeneration, and actively renew their covenanted commitments to God and one another within their churches.

Alongside efforts to prove their superior understanding and knowledge of God's providential messages, the Puritan ministry worked hard to lead the region in a series of covenant renewals that would reinvigorate the churches and provide the magistracy with a fresh impetus for local reform. While much of this work clearly took place within each congregation, the press played an active role in encouraging and shaping its operation. When the Second Church of Boston renewed its covenant on March 17, 1680, the congregation heard rousing sermons from both Increase Mather and Samuel Willard outlining the responsibilities that the congregation was taking on. John Foster printed both sermons and they were doubtless intended to be an encouragement for other congregations to seek similar experiences.¹¹ The church at Salem reclaimed its covenant in April and Samuel Willard's Third Church of Boston followed closely behind. Both of these churches went to the press with copies of their church covenants, providing a template for other congregations seeking guidance on how to proceed with their own

¹¹ Increase Mather, *Returning unto God the great concernment of a covenant people. Or A sermon preached to the Second Church in Boston in New-England, March 17. 1679.80. when that church did solemnly and explicitly renew their covenant with God, and one with another.* (Boston: John Foster, 1680). Samuel Willard, *The duty of a people that have renewed their covenant with God. Opened and urged in a sermon preached to the Second Church in Boston in New-England, March 17. 1679.[]80. after that church had explicitly and most solemnly renewed the ingagement of themselves to God, and one to another.* (Boston: John Foster, 1680).

ceremonies.¹² All of these efforts to stimulate covenant renewal and claim authority over the interpretations of providential events fit well with the patterns of proclamatory printing that had developed during the first half-century of printing in New England. The orthodox ministers had excellent access to the printing press and dissenting voices were nowhere to be seen in print.

II

As the Puritan ministry consolidated its role as Jeremiah, reclaiming their flocks from internal backsliding and general apathy, they also saw a need to go on the offensive against external religious threats, especially those posed by the Quakers and Baptists in the region. As with previous confrontations with dissenters in New England, the voice of the orthodox ministry in the press was univocal, issuing a steady stream of proclamations designed to immunize readers against considering the evangelistic messages of the religious interlopers. The continued presence of these opposition groups, however, served as an important reminder that the Puritan ministry's efforts had only limited success.¹³ Despite the presence of active Baptist house churches and Quaker meetings,

¹² First Church (Salem), *A copy of the church-covenants which have been used in the church of Salem both formerly, and in their late renewing of their covenant on the day of the publick fast, April 15. 1680. As a direction pointing to that covenant of Gods grace in Christ made with his church and people in the holy Scripture.* (Boston: John Foster, 1680). Third Church (Boston), *June, 29. 1680. The church renewed covenant, as followeth* (Boston: John Foster, 1680).

¹³ Carla Pestana provides an excellent narrative of the active presence of these dissenting groups in *Quakers and Baptists in Colonial Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

though, the colonial press in Massachusetts remained completely cut off to any but the orthodox Calvinists of the establishment. Dissenting sermons, correspondence networks, smuggled literature, and missionary activities in specific local communities could be and were met with locally produced pamphlets distributed widely throughout New England with a uniform message attacking such groups as dangerous to the covenanted communities the Puritan ministry was trying to bolster following the Reforming Synod.

The record of imprints in the 1680s shows a serious spike in concern about defending infant baptism against the charges of the trans-Atlantic Baptist community. John Eliot opened the matter in Massachusetts by publishing a response to John Norcott's well-known Anabaptist pamphlet published in London in 1675. It is unclear how many copies of Norcott's pamphlet may have been circulating in New England, but Eliot wanted to provide protection against, "the roaring Lyon, who by all crafty wayes seeketh to devour the poor Lambs of the flock of Christ."¹⁴ Noting that Norcott's main contention was the lack of a Biblical mandate to baptize children, Eliot provided a series of scriptural justifications for the practice and outlined precedents set in church history that are built upon those sections of the Bible. For those who remained unwilling to recognize those passages as normative, Eliot took on a mocking tone: "Are your dark minds and blind eyes the standard by which everybodies light and understanding must be

¹⁴ John Eliot, *A brief ansvver to a small book written by John Norcot against infant-baptisme. This answer is written by John Eliot for the sake of some of the flock of Jesus Christ who are ready to be staggered in point of infant-baptisme by reading his book* (Boston: John Foster, 1679), 1.

regulated? Must all men light their candles at your dim light?"¹⁵ Such disdain for the largely unlettered and less intellectually sophisticated Baptists would be a common refrain in Puritan pamphlets against them. Eliot used this condescending tone to reinforce the contention that central religious doctrines such as the meaning and scope of the sacrament of baptism should only be explored and taught by the ordained ministry.

In the following year, Increase Mather added his voice to Eliot's in a further attack on Baptist principles. Like Eliot, he highlighted the long-standing church tradition of infant baptism and its scriptural basis. Mather provided a long list of continental and English church reformers who all endorsed infant baptism as an important staple of church practice. He made clear

that the Truth we are now to stand up for, hath been so fully vindicated by others, as that hardly anything more needs to be spoken; In which respect, I would have spared this pains, had I not been sensible that the discourses mentioned are in few hands, and not to be purchased; or if they were, some of them are voluminous, and in that as well as on other accounts, not so adapted for vulgar Capacities.¹⁶

This explanation is definitely consistent with Mather's self-perception as a mediator between the scholarly world of his impressive library and the everyday needs of ordinary colonists, but Mather's next line betrayed another reason for appearing in print to

¹⁵ Eliot, *A brief ansvver to a small book written by John Norcot*, 15.

¹⁶ Increase Mather, *The divine right of infant baptism asserted and proved from Scripture and antiquity* (Boston: John Foster, 1680), 2.

vindicate the tradition of infant baptism. “Moreover, Anabaptistical Books are lately scattered among us, whereby not only the Lambs of the Flock are in danger to be lost, but the Sheep some of them are ready to be seduced.”¹⁷ Concerned that smuggled Baptist writings might draw away weak church members, Mather turned to the domestic press to make a targeted defense of the region. Rather than engage in a true dialogue with specific arguments drawn from the Baptists’ work, however, he continued the process of ridicule opened by Eliot in his pamphlet. Mather emphasized the lack of originality among Anabaptist thinkers, accusing them of plagiarizing from ancient heretics and linking them to the excesses of the radical Reformation in Switzerland and Germany in the 1520s. To emphasize that point he called attention to the practice of Baptist churches gladly taking in New Englanders who had been banished from their Congregational churches because of moral failings. He also gleefully highlighted the number of former Baptists who had traveled further into radicalism by becoming Quakers. These points reinforced his main message and sternest warning against denying infant baptism; as Mather proclaimed: “This error is oftentimes the first step of the Lords dereliction; yea departure from God begins here.”¹⁸

Samuel Willard contributed to the chorus of anti-Baptist Puritan pamphlets in the 1680s with his response to the now-lost printed works of John Russell. Rather than making redundant attacks on Baptist doctrinal positions, he instead focused on rescuing New England’s reputation from damaging reports of religious persecution that were

¹⁷ Mather, *The divine right of infant baptism asserted and proved*, 2.

¹⁸ Mather, *The divine right of infant baptism asserted and proved*, 21.

being spread by Baptists in London. Increase Mather provided a prefatory epistle to readers for the pamphlet and continued his condescending tone towards his dissenting opponents: “Many are of the mind, that it is not worth the while, to take notice of what is emitted, by men so obscure and inconsiderable.”¹⁹ Yet he continued to give grudging evidence that such “obscure” opponents were having some success in convincing others to dislike the colonial Puritan commonwealths. Mather defended Willard’s efforts by writing, “had he not been sensible, that by good words, and fair speeches the hearts of the simple are deceived, this pains would have been spared.”²⁰ In many ways this pamphlet illustrates well one of the main aims of the proclamatory culture of print. The Puritan ministry was using the local press to promote official religious positions to protect ordinary colonists from being duped by smooth talking interlopers. As Willard took up the defense of the colonies he did not deny that the church and state meted out penalties against dissenters. He merely argued that such safeguards against heresy and heterogeneity were fully in keeping with the needs of a truly godly covenanted community. To counter Baptist claims that religious liberty was being egregiously violated, Willard provided a shockingly frank assessment of the purpose of New England’s foundation relating to that matter. He argued, “I perceive they are mistaken in the design of our first Planters, whose business was not Toleration, but were professed Enemies of it, and could leave the World professing they died no Libertines. Their

¹⁹ Samuel Willard, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam. Or Brief animadversions upon the New-England Anabaptists late fallacious narrative; wherein the notorious mistakes and falshoods by them published, are detected.* (Boston: Samuel Green, 1681), 2 of preface.

²⁰ Willard, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*, 2 of preface

business was to settle, and (in as much as in them lay) secure Religion to Posterity, according to that way which they believed was of God.”²¹ Implicit in the claim was that their generation must continue the legacy of intolerance to pass on a godly society to their posterity.

Baptists were not the only perceived religious threat to Puritan New England. The growth of Quakerism, both in Rhode Island and in small pockets in Massachusetts, continued to be of grave concern to many orthodox divines. Just as the leaders of the Bay colony opened their presses to anti-Quaker materials written by Roger Williams in the previous decade, Samuel Green used the Boston press to print a refutation of Quakerism penned by Samson Bond, a minister on the island of Bermuda. Bond provided a description of a public disputation held between himself and Quaker leaders on that island, adding more detail to the positions he staked out in the initial debate. Ultimately, he wanted to prove that the Quaker Inner light was a delusion of the devil, and that the Quakers were dangerous to social order by undercutting legitimate churches and rejecting the authority of the Bible.²² Although written for the context of the Bermudian dispute, the ideas echoed Roger Williams’ criticisms and could apply to concerns the Puritans had with New England’s Quakers as well. Increase Mather made a more specific swipe at the

²¹ Willard, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*, 4.

²² Samson Bond, *A publick tryal of the Quakers in Barmudas upon the first day of May, 1678. First, the charge against them was openly read, containing these particulars ... Secondly, the whole charge being proved by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures: was found by the sheriffe, and justices of the peace, a true and just charge. Thirdly, being found guilty, they are here sentenced, and brought forth unto the deserved execution of the presse.* (Boston: Samuel Green, 1682). The complete title, truncated here in the interest of space constraints, outlines the three major charges brought against the Quakers as part of his debate.

local Quaker community by discussing them towards the end of *An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences* alongside his descriptions of demon possession and witchcraft. The headings to open his eleventh chapter were listed as “Concerning Remarkable Judgments Quakers judicially plagued with Spiritual Judgments. Of several sad Instances in Long Island. And in Plimouth Colony. That some of the Quakers are really possessed with Infernal Spirits.”²³ Mather then described stories of supposed sexual improprieties, harmful accidents befalling Quaker converts and even the mysterious deaths of those seeking to escape the sect. He even included similarly sensational stories involving Quakers from England, noting that his efforts “will be a service for the Truth, and may (if the Lord please to add his blessing) tend to reclaim some from the error of their way, and to deter those from Quakerisme who have through the temptations of Satan any inclinations thereunto.”²⁴ There could be little doubt of the conscious effort to link Quakers to witches and other demonic forces threatening New England.

III

In many ways the patterns of printing in the early 1680s were simply a mere continuation of proclamatory themes already established during the first four decades of

²³ Mather, *An Essay for the recording of illustrious providences*, 338.

²⁴ Mather, *An Essay for the recording of illustrious providences*, 347-348.

printing in colonial America. By the mid-1680s, however, two important developments would emerge that would eventually have a profound impact on the colonial American press, laying the groundwork for the important transition from proclamations to dialogues. The first was the establishment of the proprietary colony of Pennsylvania and the rapid emergence of a press there completely outside the jurisdiction of New England's Puritans. The second was the process whereby New England's colonies were stripped of their independent chartered identities and folded into the Dominion of New England. As we shall see, in both regions the press continued to function largely as an outlet for proclamations, but various instabilities in both areas would soon be subject to revolutionary forces that would dramatically shift the role of the press in matters of public importance.

Much is known about the political and religious elements of establishing William Penn's wilderness utopia along the banks of the Delaware River. Historians have provided excellent analysis of the origins of Penn's many drafts of the frame of Government, the vocal emergence of anti-proprietary forces in the colonial assembly, and the unusually peaceful relationship that was established with local Native American communities. Similarly, we know a great deal about the establishment of Quaker meeting structures and the importance of religious toleration to the successful implementation of Penn's Holy Experiment.²⁵ Far less attention, however, has been

²⁵ Among the many excellent titles addressing Pennsylvania's colonial history, see Edwin B. Bronner, *William Penn's "Holy Experiment": The Founding of Pennsylvania, 1681-1701* (New York: Columbia

given to the efforts made in Pennsylvania to ensure that colonists would enjoy the benefits of a locally operated printing press. Recent studies have persuasively argued that the very foundations of Quakerism are inconceivable apart from a close relationship with the use of London's printing presses to help provide cohesion and unity to the religious radicals first attracted to its message.²⁶ Given this important connection, it is not surprising that Quakers moving to Pennsylvania quickly devoted resources to purchase a printing press and that William Bradford, an apprentice to the leading Quaker printer of London, was engaged to travel to the new world and ensure its successful operation. The press churned out its first imprints in Philadelphia by 1685, within four years of the influx of new settlers to the infant colony of Pennsylvania.

Within its first three years of operation, though, it is difficult to gain a clear sense of what patterns of printing would emerge from this new colonial press. With but eight imprints issued, only faint traces of broader patterns are visible. Nevertheless, there is some reason to believe that the Philadelphia press was on a path to become as committed to proclamatory printing as its counterparts in Massachusetts. Aside from three annual almanacs and a blank form for the provincial government of New York, Bradford's press produced four documents that can be seen as proclamations for the local authorities. The first was an advertisement for Pennsylvania and New Jersey designed to attract further settlement from Europe. With this target audience the pamphlet had little domestic

University Press, 1962); Gary Nash, *Quakers and Politics: Pennsylvania, 1681-1726* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968); and Joseph Illick, *Colonial Pennsylvania: A History* (New York: Scribner, 1976).

²⁶ Kate Peters, *Print Culture and the Early Quakers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

function, but its perspective was clearly informed by the rosier projections of the proprietary interest. As the author reminded readers in his preface:

It is to be noted, that the Government of these Countries is so settled by concessions, and such care taken by the establishment of certain fundamental laws, by which every Man's Liberty and Property, both as Men and Christians, are preserved; so that none shall be hurt in his Person, Estate or Liberty for his Religious Perswasion or Practice in Worship towards God.²⁷

This seems calculated to ease fears that may have emerged among any who had heard about the tense standoffs between the assembly and council over local rights during the early settlement of the colony.²⁸ The proprietary interest was further served in this matter when William Bradford printed a collection of historical documents issued under William Penn's name that included concessions of liberties in English history stretching back to Magna Carta and ending with Penn's Charter and the frame of government he established for the colony.²⁹ Finally, two of the imprints were religious epistles brought to the press

²⁷ Thomas Budd, *Good order established in Pennsylvania & New-Jersey in America, being a true account of the country; with its produce and commodities there made. And the great improvements that may be made by means of publick store-houses for hemp, flax and linnen-cloth; also, the advantages of a publick-school, the profits of a publick-bank, and the probability of its arising, if those directions here laid down are followed. With the advantages of publick granaries. Likewise, several other things needful to be understood by those that are or do intend to be concerned in planting in the said countries. All which is laid down very plain, in this small treatise; it being easie to be understood by any ordinary capacity. To which the reader is referred for his further satisfaction.* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1685), 2 of the preface.

²⁸ Nash, *Quakers and Politics*.

²⁹ William Penn, *The excellent priviledge of liberty and property being the birth-right of the free-born subjects of England. Containing I. Magna Carta, with a learned comment upon it. II. The confirmation of*

through the agency of the Quaker Meeting structure. The first was a letter from John Burnyeat, a prominent Friend in Dublin who urged new world Quakers to be faithful to God's Spirit and live in religious harmony with one another. The title page made clear that Burnyeat desired that his message would be widely distributed in the colonies and "which for convenience and dispatch was thought good to be printed, and so ordered by the Quarterly Meeting of Philadelphia."³⁰ In an even clearer case of local proclamation, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting issued a general epistle to believers that outlined the boundaries of their fellowship. With many references to Judas' fall from grace, the Yearly Meeting made it clear that previous standing among Friends would matter little if anyone stepped out of line in the new world. The Meeting emphasized that they "do deny them all, who are wickedly bent and set against the Truth, and live in a factious, rebellious, sensual, loose, vain, and prophane condition, to the dishonour of God, and shame to pure Religion, the good Order and Government of it."³¹ This was not a matter to be debated, but rather a warning to be heeded. So, despite producing such a small number of initial imprints in its opening years, the press in Pennsylvania functioned as

the charters of the liberties of England ... III. A statute made the 34 Edw. I. ... IV. An abstract of the patten granted by the King to VWilliam Penn ... V. And lastly, the charter of liberties granted by the said VWilliam Penn to the free-men and inhabitants of the province of Pennsylvania ... (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1687).

³⁰ John Burnyeat, *An epistle from John Burnyeat to Friends in Pennsilvania; to be disperced [sic] by them to the neighbouring provinces, which for convenience and dispatch was thought good to be printed, and so ordered by the Quarterly Meeting of Philadelphia, the 7th of the 4th month, 1686.* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1686).

³¹ Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, *A general epistle given forth by the people of the Lord, called, Quakers, that all may know, we own none to be of our fellowship, or to be reckoned or numbred [sic] with us, but such as fear the Lord and keep faithfully to his heavenly power* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1686), 6.

another colonial bastion for local proclamations, in this case for the local Quaker authorities and proprietary political interest.

IV

Around this same time in New England major changes were afoot. With King James II ascending the throne in the place of his recently deceased brother in 1685, there was an abrupt shift in English colonial policy. For many years London's merchants and colonial whistleblowers such as Edward Randolph had been fruitlessly complaining about the tendency of New Englanders to violate the Navigation Acts and operate seemingly independent settlements outside of imperial control. This was about to change as each of New England's corporate charters were either immediately vacated or placed under *quo warranto* proceedings in 1686 and folded into the newly created administrative unit known as the Dominion of New England. James II turned to his trusted governor of colonial New York, Sir Edmund Andros, to lead the new conglomeration and bring the region to heel for the benefit of the crown.³² The New England press was not immune to the many changes that were gripping the political, economic, and religious life of the region.

³² The political dimensions of this story are laid out in David Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972) and Richard Johnson, *Adjustment to Empire: The New England Colonies, 1675-1715* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1981).

In many ways, the Dominion of New England was even more committed to proclamatory communications than the Puritan regime that preceded it. Knowing that the officers of the Dominion, the governor and his appointed councilors, were an unpopular imposition over the previously elected colonial government, they laced their public communications with more explicit references to their royally-appointed authority to ensure compliance and the squelching of opposition. Even before Andros arrived from New York to take over the reigns of the government in Boston, the deputy leadership arranged a deal with Richard Pierce to become “Printer to the Honourable His Magesties President and Council of this Government.”³³ Pierce quickly issued a broadside for the government with a bold title announcing “A PROCLAMATION.” The sheet was designed to inform the public of the new political arrangements and sent a clear message to all previous colonial officials: “the said President & Council doe hereby in His Magesties name and by virtue of his said Commission strictly require and command all other persons being or coming upon the place, to forbear the exercise of all manner of Jurisdiction, Authority, and Power.”³⁴ The council next issued a string of other proclamations outlining its authority over a newly formed court system, settling new marriage laws, and clarifying jurisdiction over outlying regions of New England.

³³ Territory and Dominion of New England, *A proclamation by the President and Council of His Majestiy's [sic] Territory & Dominion of New-England in America. Whereas His Most Excellent Majesty our Sovereign Lord James the Second ... hath been graciously pleased to erect and constitute a president and council to take care of all that his Territory and Dominion of New-England ... Given from the Council-house in Boston this 28th day of May: anno Domini 1686.* (Boston: Richard Pierce, 1686). The quote was drawn from Pierce's own description of his authority in providing the publication information.

³⁴ Territory and Dominion of New England, *A proclamation by the President and Council.*

Obviously enough, none of the communications of the Dominion government through the press were meant to be debated, but rather dutifully accepted and obeyed.

Although the Dominion of New England supplanted the political authority in the region relatively quickly, the Puritan religious order was another matter. Without the ability to eject and replace Congregational pastors with reliable Anglicans throughout the region, the Dominion grudgingly allowed services to continue with the previous religious leadership intact. The ministry found itself in a new position, exercising its role at the pleasure of a government that no longer shared its aims or perspective. Religious imprints found their way to the press in 1686 and 1687, but did so with very “safe” themes. Nearly all religious documents in the press were the publication of sermons, some given for special occasions such as funerals and others offering generalized spiritual advice encouraging faithfulness to pure doctrine and pious living. Despite not including strident calls for reforms in the jeremiad style, these sermons did not represent a decisive shift in religious printing. The instruction was still presented in a proclamatory style that eschewed controversy.

The opening years of the 1680s were a period of great importance to American print culture. On the one hand, these years saw a deepening commitment to the proclamatory styles of printing that had emerged in New England over several decades. Yet these years also brought important changes to the political landscape in which colonial printers plied their trade. The establishment of Pennsylvania and the emergence of its press ensured that printing could be conducted under different colonial

jurisdictions. At first this meant that there were simply two different orbits for proclamatory printing, but it also enhanced the possibility that authors from very different perspectives could engage one another in print without fear of being shut out by a press dominated by one party. The formation of the Dominion presented a major disruption to New England's print culture. By dramatically turning the tables of political power, it elevated new and different voices to the public stage of print. If anything, though, this made the tenor of public communications even more committed to proclamations than it was before. But with so many previously significant local leaders sidelined and silenced by an unpopular imposition, this print culture of New England under the Dominion turned out to be a short proclamatory calm before a dialogical storm.

CHAPTER 4: RELEASING THE DIALOGICAL GENIE: EFFECTS OF THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION AND A NEW QUAKER INVASION

Even though the establishment of the Dominion of New England in 1686 actually intensified the region's previous preference for proclamatory printing, such a deep commitment to the use of the printing press for centralized proclamations did nothing to shore up the fundamental instabilities of the unpopular regime. Many colonists stood with the political and religious leaders that had been the hard-line defenders of the previous charter and never flinched from seeing the Dominion as an illegal usurpation of their legitimate government. Even moderate New Englanders who had been willing to compromise on the previous charter were quickly disillusioned by the autocratic tendencies of Governor Andros and the cadre of outsiders he elevated to positions of power on his council. Having few open allies in New England never stopped Andros from aggressively pushing for authoritarian political reform in the face of significant opposition. Local resentments and grievances grew as the Dominion government restructured courts to better assure justice to the crown, severely limited the number and scope of town meetings, and pushed to enhance Anglican worship at the expense of the established Congregational churches. The two Dominion projects that raised the most ire, though, were the raising of taxes without the consent of the General Court and the sweeping invalidation of land titles that could be redeemed only after the payment of a fee and acceptance of potential quitrents to the crown. These intrusions against property

led to immediate protests and civil disobedience, most famously in efforts at Ipswich to resist the collection of taxes without representation. These factors combined to place the Dominion government atop a huge powder keg that was easily lit and blown apart upon the arrival of news of England's Glorious Revolution.

At the precise moment that revolutionary political upheaval was overtaking New England, a new religious dynamic was also released with the arrival in Boston of a vocal itinerant Quaker, George Keith in 1688. With the Dominion government in power and chipping away at the hegemony of the congregational churches, Keith easily entered the city and created enough of a public spectacle to call attention to his religious message. Although he was unsuccessful in staging a full scale public debate with Cotton Mather and other congregational leaders, he was able to open an important print dialogue with those same opponents that lasted for several years. Keith's long standing experience as a controversialist in London's dialogical print culture helped him to use Philadelphia's new printing press to great advantage in presenting the colonial reading public with challenges that Mather found it impossible to ignore.¹

These phenomena, the political dislocations of the Glorious Revolution and George Keith's religious debates with the Puritans, are here analyzed together for the first time in terms of their relationship to the output of the colonial American press. A close examination of the imprints from this era reveals a critical transformational moment in

¹ Most historians have shown little interest in George Keith's career apart from his leadership in the schism among Pennsylvania's Quakers in the 1690s. For information about his life and experiences before and after that event, see Ethyn Kirby, *George Keith, 1638-1716* (New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1942).

the print culture of the American colonies. With presses operating under multiple jurisdictions, and with a weakening of government restraint during a revolutionary crisis, there was a huge expansion in production across multiple genres of printed material. More significantly, the imprints produced in 1689 and after were increasingly likely to be part of an ongoing public dialogue and less likely to be a proclamation issued by the ruling authorities of the church or state.

I

Previous scholars have provided an excellent window into the political experience of the Glorious Revolution in New England, especially in Massachusetts. The calendar of colonial events was driven by factors affecting the trans-Atlantic transmission of the news relating to William and Mary's displacement of James II as king of England.² After receiving distress signals from the Stuart regime in London, Governor Andros released a proclamation in January 1689 to be on the lookout for invasion forces that might try to topple English authority. Little did he know that James had already fled to France after William's triumphant entry into London in the middle of the previous month. By mid-March Andros learned of this disappointment and cut short a military expedition to the frontiers of Maine to return to Boston and preserve what he could of his political

² Steele, Ian K. "Communicating an English Revolution to the Colonies, 1688-1689." *Journal of British Studies* 24 (1985): 333-357. Steele provides an excellent analysis of the routes and timing of ships carrying the latest news from England following the Glorious Revolution.

authority. From that time forward, he made every effort to control access to public information. When John Winslow arrived on a ship from Nevis with news of William's success on April 4, he was quickly thrown in prison for carrying treasonous papers into the colony. But the Dominion leadership simply could not suppress this news forever. As more and more colonists heard reports of the stunning events in England, they increasingly began to wonder why Andros and his councilors kept the information from the public. Conspiracy theories abounded, including rumors that Andros was planning to set the city ablaze and hand the colony over to the French and their Indian allies. To forestall such feared disasters, colonists gathered as a militia on the morning of April 18 and forced the arrest of Governor Andros and his key councilors as well as winning the submission of the castle fort. These actions were led by trusted colonial leaders from the previous charter government who organized themselves as a Committee of Safety to prevent chaos from reigning in the aftermath of their political revolution. Like its counterpart across the Atlantic, this Glorious Revolution was successfully concluded without bloodshed.³

The printing press was drawn into this revolutionary struggle very quickly. The Committee of Safety lost no time in publishing important documents providing the public with the rationale for their activities. The first and most important of these documents was attributed to Cotton Mather and printed under the title: *The Declaration, of the*

³ A more detailed narrative of the events can be found in David Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972) and Richard Johnson, *Adjustment to Empire: The New England Colonies, 1675-1715* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1981).

gentlemen, merchants, and inhabitants of Boston, and the countrey adjacent. April 18th.

1689.⁴ This short statement linked recent efforts of the Andros regime to a broader popish plot against Protestants in general and English liberties in particular. It also pointed out Andros' reliance on New Yorkers in his efforts to despoil New Englanders of their land and money in his arbitrary government. The Declaration recounted the core arguments raised to rally the people behind the effort to overthrow the Dominion in the heat of the revolutionary moment. The committee also printed another letter written on April 18, the arrest warrant issued for Governor Andros that demanded the surrender of his person and governmental authority while ensuring his safety until he could be brought to trial.⁵ Although a brief broadside, it reinforced the rationale for the arrest and made clear to an angry populace that justice was being served despite the lack of a spectacular public humiliation or resort to violence against the former governor. And in a transition away from the Committee of Safety towards a more lasting stabilization of local politics, the revolutionary leaders released a broadside statement informing the residents of the decision by a colonial Convention to offer the reigns of power back to those who had been elected to office under the rules and authority of the previous charter. The imprint informed the public of the acceptance of such an authority by a segment of those previously elected officials. In a note of supreme caution that related to ongoing political

⁴ Cotton Mather, *The declaration, of the gentlemen, merchants, and inhabitants of Boston, and the countrey adjacent. April 18th. 1689.* (Boston: Samuel Green, 1689).

⁵ s.n., *At the town-house in Boston: April 18th. 1689. Sir, Our selves as well as many others the inhabitants of this town and place adjacent ... judge it necessary that you forthwith surrender, and deliver up the government ... promising all security from violence to your self* (Boston: Samuel Green, 1689).

disputes within the colony and in an effort to protect themselves from political retribution in England, these officials made it quite clear that “Upon the Publication hereof, it was Declared by the Gentlemen Subscribers, that they do not intend an Assumption of Charter Government, nor would be so understood.”⁶ In effect, though, revolutionary forces were using the press to communicate their positions and enhance their local authority as they awaited further instructions from England.

Even as they awaited more official instructions, the interim leadership in Boston reprinted communications from England, subtly emphasizing the legitimacy of their revolution by linking it to the rise of William and Mary. They did this at first by reprinting the crucial correspondence between King William III and the Lords assembled at Westminster on January 22, 1689. The letters confirmed William’s position as the new monarch of the realm.⁷ With this information spread publicly by the local press, there could be little doubt or question among the people as to who was settled in positions of authority in England, leading to a more positive view of the efforts in New England to rid themselves of the abusive regime imposed by the disgraced James II. Later, the colonial government printed a much more impressive support for their authority, a letter from William encouraging them to continue in their positions until further notice. As the title

⁶ s.n., *The Answer of the subscribers to the declaration given in by the representatives, of the several towns of the colony of the Massachusetts, which was publicly declared at the town-house. Boston, May 24. 1689. Upon the occasion of the revolution of the late government under Sir Edmond Andross ... We who are of the persons chosen and sworn governour, deputy governour, and assistants (according to charter) in the year 1686. ... do consent to accept the care and government of the people of this colony ...* (Boston: s.n., 1689), 1.

⁷ William III, King of England, *His Highness the Prince of Orange His letter to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal assembled at Westminster in this present convention. January 22. 1688.* (Boston: Richard Pierce for Benjamin Harris, 1689), 1-2.

page of their broadside readily admitted, this letter was “published by order of the governour & Council & representatives, for the satisfaction of His Majesties good subjects in New-England.”⁸ The distribution of such an authoritative statement from the king himself would, they certainly hoped, end all opposition to their course of action and lead to political pacification and an orderly settlement.

To round out the onslaught of revolutionary justifications by its most active participants and supporters, Richard Pierce reprinted Increase Mather’s extended defense of Massachusetts’ actions. Mather’s pamphlet originally appeared in London where he was working feverishly as a colonial agent, seeking to negotiate a charter settlement with the new regime. In London, Mather hoped the imprint would help in securing the most favorable charter possible. In Massachusetts, his pamphlet became a sophisticated and nuanced defense of the Revolution written by a widely renowned local figure who was able to awe detractors by describing his face to face meetings with the king himself. He took the hastily written elements of the April 18th Declaration and turned them into a more substantive catalogue of the abuses of the Dominion government. Mather began by suggesting that the court efforts to annul the original Massachusetts charter were illegally done, making Andros’ original commission as governor illegal. He then went on to complain of the destruction of representative institutions in the colony: “And (as Laws have been established) so Moneys have been raised by the Government in a most illegal

⁸ William III, King of England, *His Majesty's most gracious letter to his government of the Massathusets [sic] Colony in New-England. ... Given at our Court at White-Hall the 12th day August 1689. ... Published by order of the governour & Council & representatives, for the satisfaction of His Majesties good subjects in New-England.* (Boston: Richard Pierce, 1689), 1.

and Arbitrary way, without any consent of the People.”⁹ Next Mather railed against the fees required to secure land titles and rounded out his accusations by mentioning the rumors of Andros’ supposed treachery in alignment with the French government. The pamphlet was reprinted in Boston along with other documents trumpeting the progress of his negotiations and demonstrating the many alliances that could be brought to bear for the settlement of a new charter.

This barrage of printed material from the provisional government, its main supporters, and the new King of England himself were almost certainly designed to provide an aura of authority and legitimacy to a government that technically lacked these key elements. At their heart, then, these pamphlets were less proclamations flowing from authority than they were appeals to the public for the support upon which legitimacy and authority could be exercised at the local level. In a legal sense no such authority could be formalized apart from the negotiations that Increase Mather was conducting in London, but widespread acceptance of the new regime as a legitimate replacement of the despised Dominion government could promote stability and order in colonial Boston and its environs. By issuing proclamations as a settled government, the interim leadership hoped to project an aura of authority that would give their pronouncements persuasive force as a

⁹ Increase Mather, *A narrative of the miseries of New-England, by reason of an arbitrary government erected there. Under Sir Edmond Andross. To which is added, some account of the humble application of the pious and noble Prelate, Henry Lord Bishop of London, with the reverend clergy of the city, and some of the dissenting ministers in it, to the illustrious Prince William Henry, Prince of Orange on Fryday [sic], September 21. 1688. Also the address of the nonconformist ministers (in and about the city of London) to His Higness [sic] the Prince of Orange* (Boston: Richard Pierce, 1689), 3.

settled government. Despite being subtly and technically different than previous printed proclamations, this is hardly the basis for claiming a marked shift in print culture.

A real shift was present, though, and it can be detected in the dramatic rise of anonymous and pseudonymous political pamphleteering and direct dialogues related to the revolution. Despite its bold proclamations and successful efforts to maintain order and peace in Massachusetts the interim government conspicuously lacked a power it had wielded so effectively prior to the advent of the Dominion: control of the printing press. While Governor Andros had limited the local press to a mere 10 imprints in 1687 and only 9 in the following year, the Boston and Cambridge presses produced no less than 52 pamphlets in 1689. This output nearly doubled the next highest yearly tally up to that time, as the political instability following the revolution threw the press open to an unprecedented number of colonists who turned to it like never before to participate in a developing public dialogue about local political affairs. The expansion of anonymous authorship at this time underscored the preference and necessity for writers to appeal to readers on a basis other than public authority (a matter of great ambiguity anyway). Instead of using political or religious titles and affiliations to enhance the authority of printed statements, authors turned to rationality and persuasive rhetoric to carry an argument.¹⁰ This phenomenon accompanied a great increase in the number of pamphlets

¹⁰ All of this tracks closely with elements that Habermas has identified as critical to the establishment of a public sphere. See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989, originally published in 1962). As an expression of political debates rooted in the concerns and sensibilities of the English empire at the time, these pamphlets also link the colonial experience to the second and third stages

that were direct challenges and/or refutations of other printed materials. Writers directed their attention to specific passages and ideas of their opponents, often using quotations and references that followed the dynamic of an ongoing dialogue.¹¹ Authors for the colonial market had to make a fast adjustment to the new reality: their readers would be presented with multiple arguments, and would consider and judge between them as a part of a new style of public deliberations mediated by the press.

Despite enjoying broad-based local support for overthrowing the Andros administration, New England's revolutionaries quickly became aware of a diversity of opinions among themselves about how to structure the interim government. Factions coalesced around three separate positions. Some advocated the retention of the Committee of Safety formed on April 18 until further instructions arrived from England. A second group advocated a resumption of the original colonial charter by recalling the General Court as it was composed in 1686. A third group also advocated a resumption of the old charter, but preferred to hold fresh elections to provide a mandate to a new General Court. Rather than merely discuss the choices among an elite cadre, though, a different dynamic was inserted into this debate as leaders of each position turned to the press to gain public support as leverage in favor of their preferred position. The result

of the development of a public sphere in early modern England as described in Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, eds., *The Politics of the Public Sphere in early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

¹¹ Such dialogues were shown to be of supreme importance to the breakdown of authoritarian discourses and the rise of a public sphere in England at the time of the English Civil Wars. See David Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions, and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

was the first purely political pamphlet dialogue in colonial America. It quickly became clear that it would not be the last.

The dialogue opened modestly with an exchange of single page broadsides discussing the merits of charter resumption with or without holding a new election. Those in favor of recalling the old General Court began the salvo by publishing a letter *From a Gentleman of Boston to a Friend in the Countrey*. The author of the letter, signed N.N., opened by praising God for delivering the region from the Dominion, but also expressing his hope that “so good a work as hath been so successfully begun, may not be endangered by ill management.” The author went on to suggest that one of the greatest threats to proper management came

by differing and dividing Apprehensions among our selves, either by groundless jealousies of each other in the present care for our Safety, or various Opinions about the way and time of settling the government: Two things I find there are in which most sober Men vary: The one is, for making an ELECTION this year: the other, rather for the Re-Assuming our present standing and Adjourned Court: This latter seems most Eligible, for the following Reasons.¹²

The remainder of the letter enumerated nine arguments in favor of that position. Clearly, the author hoped the arguments would carry the day and that the public would unify in support of allowing the previously elected General Court to resume power. But this was

¹² N.N., *From a gentleman of Boston to a friend in the countrey*. (Boston: Samuel Green, 1689), 1.

not to be the only voice raised in the matter. In a broadside, appropriately titled *The Countrey-Man's Answer to a Gentleman in Boston*, its author sought to persuade the reading public that the previous letter had not given the proper due to the strong arguments in favor of calling new elections. The Country-Man's response matched the logical rigor of his counterpart, filling his letter with political justifications for allowing citizens to provide a stamp of approval to the recent revolution through new votes for the faithful defenders of local charter rights. Despite being only two short broadsides, this public dialogue touched sensitive nerves, appearing within weeks of the revolution and seeking to shape public opinion in matters affecting political legitimacy.¹³ A third anonymous pamphlet, an open letter to the public signed by A.B. on June 3, 1689, provided a snapshot of the passions the debate aroused as well as the discomfort experienced by some after witnessing such discord and division creeping into local affairs. The author recognized the two lines of debate already discussed, and admitted that there was a third. As he described the situation:

These two opinions [calling an election or resuming the previous General Court], with a Third, which was for the continuing of their Committee just as it was, filled the Country; and very potent Numbers espoused each of these three opinions; only we all agreed in joyful expectations of having our Charter restored unto us. This Variety of Apprehension, was the

¹³ Richard Johnson makes a persuasive argument that these broadsides very likely first appeared before May 8, 1689, the date an election would have been held under traditional circumstances. The short time frame to decide whether to hold elections at the traditional time must have added to the urgency of the matter for those seeking a new vote. Johnson, *Adjustment to Empire*, 101 footnote 72.

Occasion of much needless Discourse, and of many Heart burnings, that might as well have been spared.¹⁴

Although the revolutionary setting and high stakes of the moment would likely have led to tensions and divisions among the colonial leaders dealing with the aftermath of the successful revolution, it seems clear that the use of the printing press upped the ante in new ways. The ability to quickly mass produce arguments specifically written to appeal to a broad reading public must have contributed to the “excessive discourse” and “heart burnings” that A.B. felt had so needlessly filled the country. But as much as he (and others) might have liked for such discussions to have been avoided, it was too late. How to best deal with the “very potent numbers” of colonists who were entering the public arena through the invitation of printed appeals was one of the new political calculations that had to be made beginning in the spring and summer of 1689.

As frustrating as it must have been for the divisions between supporters of the revolution to be aired so publicly, it was a much deeper embarrassment and sign of the new regime’s weakness when opponents of the revolution were able to bring their perspective to the press. Perhaps the most stunning instance of this was when John Palmer, despite being held as a political prisoner, was able to publish *The present state of New-England impartially considered*.¹⁵ His pamphlet, couched as a letter to the local clergy, was a carefully constructed refutation of the Declaration issued on April 18 and

¹⁴ s.n., *An Account of the late revolutions in New-England; in a letter* (Boston: Samuel Green, 1689), 6.

¹⁵ John Palmer, *The present state of New-England impartially considered, in a letter to the clergy*. (Boston: Samuel Green, 1689). Despite a title page purporting to be printed in Boston, it is believed that this imprint was printed by William Bradford in Pennsylvania and given a false title page.

subsequently printed to justify the Revolution. The heart of Palmer's argument was linked to the sovereignty of the British crown and the duty of all subjects, in whatever territory or dominion of the crown, to obediently heed royal authority. In that context he found it ridiculous that Sir Edmund Andros's commission could have been considered illegal, or that acting upon it was a violation of colonial rights. He called attention to the ambiguity of land titles under the old charter and mocked the notion that an English chartered corporation (the colony) had the authority to grant the power to create its own corporations (towns). In addition to his political arguments, he suggested that the region was hopelessly hypocritical in its religious dealings. Despite Puritan claims of religious repression by Anglicans, Palmer noted:

Tis the Church of England, that have most reason to complain . . . Has not their Minister been publiquely Affronted, & hindered from doing his Duty? What scandalous Pamphlets have been printed to vilify the Liturgy? And are not all of that Communion daily called Papist dogs & rogues to their Faces? How often has the plucking down the Church been threatened?¹⁶

Writing as an imprisoned outcast from power, Palmer had to rely on persuasive rhetoric and appeals to impartial readers. Knowing he had provided a direct response to the Declaration and hoping for continued outlets to discuss the merits of his case, he positively invited a continuation of the dialogue by goading his opponents to engage him

¹⁶ Palmer, *The present state of New-England impartially considered*, 18.

in print. Palmer wrote in his postscript, “I hope you will be so kind to me & so just to your Country, to let me know in the most publick manner you can, wherein I have mistaken the matter either in point of Fact or Judgment.”¹⁷ Whatever plans Palmer may have had to continue the print dialogue were hampered by a specific order issued by the government to the keeper of the jail in Boston on October 9, 1689: “that he be diligent to Observe and hinder their dispersing any papers or wrightings that may tend to disturbance or any Bringing papers or letters to them without his knowledge or allowance and that he discover anything that may tend to disturbance or sedition.”¹⁸

John Palmer was not the only opponent of the revolution to secure access to the press to seek public support. Nathanael Byfield teamed up with William Bradford’s press in Philadelphia to issue his *Seasonable motives. To our duty and allegiance*. This short pamphlet asked its readers to consider the answer to a powerfully loaded question: “whether the seeming government now imposed on us be any wayes lawfull, or such as with our Allegiance and a good Conscience we ought to yield obedience to, or whether it be not in the law meer usurpation and tyranny.”¹⁹ Resting on a constitutional foundation similar to Palmer’s, Byfield made it clear that New England was suffering under a baseless tyranny after the revolution. He was especially wary of claims made in the name

¹⁷ Palmer, *The present state of New-England impartially considered*, 44.

¹⁸ Orders of the provisional government, reprinted in Robert Earle Moody and Richard Clive Simmons, eds., *The Glorious Revolution in Massachusetts: Selected Documents, 1689-1692* (Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1988), 162-163.

¹⁹ Nathanael Byfield, *Seasonable motives. To our duty and allegiance, (by a lover of the peace of New-England) offer'd to the consideration of his neighbours & country-men*. (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1689), 1.

of the people of New England and the democratic impulses that they invoked. Byfield warned, “The vote or Consent of Ten Thousand tho it may give greater force and violence; yet gives no more right or power in law than the vote or Consent of one private person; and therefore there can be no colour of Authority for Government but such as is lawfully derived from the Supream Head.”²⁰ Such devotion to absolutism, though, placed Byfield’s printed argument in a subtle straight jacket. Representing a minority opinion, he could only hope the masses would agree with him and rise in counter-revolution, all in the name of eventually laying their collective power down again under the protective authority of the monarchy (however constitutionally limited). Whatever the logical merits, the appeal went to the public in print. It was joined by another counter-revolutionary pamphlet written in 1689 by Gershom Bulkeley of Connecticut. His main concern with the revolution in New England was that such a momentous decision to overthrow a government was built upon unsubstantiated rumors of Popish plots, French invasions, and Indian conspiracies. The new government, he suggested, was built on a foundation of sand and could fall apart in the face of other similarly baseless rumors. More important to this argument than Bulkeley’s constitutional assertions, however, was the rhetoric in which his claims were couched. He asked more explicitly than any other political author in the colonies until that time for a dispassionate and fair reading from the general public. At the beginning of his pamphlet he wrote:

²⁰ Byfield, *Seasonable motives*, 2.

I shall modestly, and yet freely & plainly, offer a few Considerations to you which respect the present Affaire, desireing you neither to accept nor reject what I say, because it comes from me, but according to its own merit; for the matter in hand seems to me to be of very great weight, and I beseech you to consider and ponder it thoroughly before you engage in it.²¹

Bulkeley was merely making the best case he could in difficult political circumstances, but in the process his efforts helped to further underscore the differences between the emerging post-revolutionary print culture and the proclamatory patterns that preceded it.

The first response to such open and public challenges to the revolutionary regime was to provide a legislative remedy against their continuation. The interim government sought to clamp down on access to the local press in an effort to restore the monopoly on printed discourse enjoyed prior to the onset of the Dominion government. On November 8 the assembly passed a resolution to remedy what they clearly saw as a serious problem: that “many papers have been lately printed and dispersed tending to the disturbance of the peace and the subversion of the government of this their Magesties Collonie.” They then

²¹ Gershom Bulkeley, *The people's right to election or alteration of goverment [sic] in Connecticott, argued in a letter; by Gershom Bulkeley Esq; one of their Majesties justices of the peace in the county of Hartford. Together with a letter to the said Bulkeley, from a friend of his in the Bay. To which is added, the writing delivered to James Russell of Charlestown Esq; warning him and others concerned, not to meet to hold a court at Cambridge, within the county of Middlesex. By Thomas Greaves Esq; judge of their Majesties Inferior Court of Pleas and one of their Majesties justices of the peace within the said county and also his answer to Mr. Broadstreete and the gentlemen mett at the town-house in Boston concerning the same. Published for the information & satisfaction of their Majesties loyall (but abused) subjects in New England.* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1689), 2.

warned that anybody found guilty of “printing publishing or Concealing any such like papers or discourses . . . shall be accounted enemies to their Majesties present government and be proceeded against as such with the utmost Severity.”²² Although these harsh measures were successful in keeping the Boston area presses from producing controversial printed material against the local government, two major problems still remained. The first was that the most divisive pieces of recent opposition pamphleteering were printed outside of their jurisdiction in Philadelphia, a phenomenon that could easily continue despite their repressive local statutes. While the new measures could certainly be construed to include anyone who smuggled such pamphlets into Massachusetts, it remained an exceedingly difficult task for the authorities to completely cut off the flow of such illicit goods (as they would soon learn in the midst of a religious pamphlet war with Quaker itinerant, George Keith.) The second problem that could not be rectified by the new statute was finding a way to undo the damage to the government’s standing that had been caused by the previously circulated pamphlets. Simply wishing the opposition ideas away was not an option; they had to be countered with persuasive responses. The dialogue in print would have to be continued.

John Palmer’s printed attacks drew the most direct fire from defenders of the Revolution. An anonymous pamphleteer took up the argument with him by publishing *The Revolution in New England justified, and the people there vindicated from the*

²² “Representatives as to Inquiry After Publishers of Prints tending to the disturbance of the Peace”, November 8, 1689 reprinted in Moody and Simmons, eds., *The Glorious Revolution in Massachusetts: Selected Documents, 1689-1692*, 172.

aspersions cast upon them by Mr. John Palmer. The centerpiece of the case against Palmer was an attack on his credibility and ability to present impartial evidence. The prefatory letter opened with this theme, claiming, “As for Mr. Palmer his Account which he calls Impartial, he has wrong’d New England thereby.” The letter went on to outline the case that would follow, making clear that ultimately it would be up to readers to become the arbiters of the dispute. The author saw his job as simply laying out the facts of the matter and “By this the Impartial Reader may judge what Ingenuity and Veracity is in Mr. Palmer’s Account.”²³ In continuing with the legal framework of placing readers on the judge’s bench, or in the jury box, the author incorporated as many sworn affidavits as he could into his text that corroborated the claims made by colonists against the Andros regime in their Declaration. Parading local eye-witness testimony against the Dominion government, the author suggested that only self-serving bias led Palmer to dispute the obvious facts. Mocking Palmer’s supposedly disinterested opposition to the revolution, he wrote, “That such a man as Mr. John Palmer should exclaim against it, is not to be wondered at, seeing he was one of the Governors Tools, being of his Council, made a Judge by him, and too much concern’d in some Illegal and Arbitrary Proceedings.”²⁴ Ultimately, this author hoped to win the debate by delegitimizing the opposition through a combination of overwhelming legal evidence offered by the

²³ s.n., *The Revolution in New England justified, and the people there vindicated from the aspersions cast upon them by Mr. John Palmer, in his pretended answer to the Declaration, published by the inhabitants of Boston, and the country adjacent, on the day when they secured their late oppressors, who acted by an illegal and arbitrary commission from the late King James.* (Boston: s.n., 1691), 2-3 of preface.

²⁴ s.n., *The Revolution in New England justified*, 2.

reprinting of affidavits and the undercutting of public confidence in John Palmer's integrity. The case was left, rhetorically, in the hands of a reading public that both sides hoped would, after impartial consideration, side with them.

Other anonymous pamphleteers came forward in support of the revolution. One author wrote *A Vindication of New England* against charges leveled by a group of Anglican petitioners from Boston. He reprinted the contents of the petition only to pillory it: "But if we may Admit that Gentleman's Narration of a Libell (a Lie, because false; and a Bell, because Loud) this whole paper being one Loud Lie." The account took a swipe at John Palmer, whom he described as having been "lately dub'd a judge in New England."²⁵ The *Vindication* relied more heavily on derision than logic and dispassionate appeals to a reading public, but it was part of the ongoing dialogue between supporters and opponents of the recent revolution. Still another anonymous pamphleteer joined the ranks with the publication of *An Appeal to the Men of New England*. Despite the author's reservations about making a public appeal, the divisions of the age forced him to take up the new dialogical style. Drawn into the fight, he followed the expected forms in flattering the reading public and instructing them to carefully consider the arguments: "It has been therefore thought fit (in order to the unity of the People, and healing the present discomposures) to propose the insuing Queries and Cases, upon which 'tis desired every

²⁵ s.n., *A Vindication of Nevv-England, from the vile aspersions cast upon that country by a late address of a faction there, who denominate themselves of the Church of England in Boston*. (Boston: s.n., 1688), 6, 11. The year of publication marked on the title page is clearly incorrect as the contents show it to have been published at some point after April 18, 1689. Citing John Palmer's pamphlet in the text clearly pushes the date of this publication back even farther.

man would exercise his faculty of judging.”²⁶ The divisions and discomposures he so hated were exacerbated by “those ridiculous blades at Charlestown, and those Mischievous ones in Prison, who are scattering about the Country their Scandalous Pamphlets.”²⁷ The printing press was clearly playing a new and recognizable role in the political dislocations of the age.

Some of the best evidence that the role of the printing press and its relationship to the public discussion of political affairs was undergoing dramatic upheaval is to be found in contemporary references decrying the phenomenon. Ironically, these references were often written by authors enmeshed in print dialogues. The anonymous *Appeal to the Men of New England* is the best example of this. Despite its bold title and calls for independent judgment by all readers, the pamphlet opened with a striking complaint that “It is the Unhappiness of this present Juncture, that too many Men relinquish their Stations of Privacy and Subjection, and take upon them too freely to descant upon affairs of the Publick.”²⁸ The author suggested that if only the opposition would have remained in its place and not made efforts to stir up the people with controversial pamphleteering, no such appeals would have been necessary. The press, he pined, could have continued to function as an amplifier of centralized proclamations. Cotton Mather picked up a very similar point in a sermon delivered on March 20, 1690 that was rushed to print to amplify its message and reach as King William’s War escalated in New England. In the face of

²⁶ s.n., *An Appeal to the men of New England, with a short account of Mr. Randolphs papers*. (Boston: s.n., 1689), 1.

²⁷ s.n., *An Appeal to the men of New England*, 11.

²⁸ s.n., *An Appeal to the men of New England*, 1.

military danger from the nearby French colonies and their Indian allies, Mather argued that the continuation of political and social unrest was extremely dangerous to the safety of the region. In his own uncompromising style, Mather taught:

The Disrespect cast upon Government, has been the thing that has made naked those parts of the Country which most of our Disasters have Light upon and those Troublesome and Implacable persons that seek to Enfeeble the Authority into an incapacity of Action at such a time as this, are to be stigmatized as **Men far from seeking the Welfare of the Children of Israel.**²⁹

And what was most symptomatic of the disrespect cast upon the government? For Mather it was linked to ordinary settlers stepping out of their customary stations to comment upon, make bold suggestions about, and even disagree with the colonial leadership on matters of public importance. Those who led such efforts, often in printed discourses capable of disaffecting the masses, were called out most forcefully. But in addition Mather reminded all people of their duties: “Pray, mind the business of your own Station; Pull the Ropes, Ply the Oars, and the Sails, as you are Commanded; but leave the Helm, where tis managed by those that can have no other Interest, but what is

²⁹ Cotton Mather, *The present state of New-England. Considered in a discourse on the necessities and advantages of a public spirit in every man; especially, at such a time as this. Made at the lecture in Boston 20.d. 1.m. 1690. Upon the news of an invasion by bloody Indians and French-men, begun upon us.* (Boston: Samuel Green, 1690), 42. The bold typeface was original to the text, printed in distinctive Gothic typescript that leaped from the page.

yours.”³⁰ Leaders who, out of strict necessity, relied on printed appeals to the public in their effort to oust Sir Edmund Andros and the Dominion of New England were finding it extraordinarily difficult to force the public to allow them to remain in sole control of the helm. Cotton Mather’s efforts on the behalf of the revolutionary government were not to be understood only in a political sense. He knew, perhaps better than anyone else, that the ongoing changes in colonial print culture were not limited to challenges of political authority.

II

Just as the flood-gates were releasing a torrent of political pamphleteering in 1689 that ushered in a new dialogical age in the colonial press, controversial religious printing was on the verge of a similar surge that would reinforce those trends and further expand the boundaries of the public sphere. While the surge in political dialogue was centered in Boston, the explosion of religious pamphleteering would happen in the new colonial print center in Philadelphia as it experienced the upheaval of the Keithian schism among Quakers. Before George Keith would initiate those troubled times in Pennsylvania in the early 1690s, he made an important, and often overlooked, missionary journey into New

³⁰ Cotton Mather, *The present state of New-England*, 43.

England that opened a striking printed religious dialogue with the Puritans that played out alongside the wider political upheaval in the region.

This episode began a year before the outbreak of the revolution when the people of Boston awoke on May 21, 1688 to learn that a new Quaker prophet was in their midst. George Keith was traveling through New England as a Public Friend and visiting the Quaker meetings in that region. During his trip he felt called to deliver a message of judgment against the congregational churches of New England. He wrote up a list of grievances against the church, including the disregard for God's Holy Spirit and Inner Light and the killing and maiming of Quakers that had taken place during previous waves of Quaker missionary activity in Boston and its surroundings. He ensured that his message was "set up in the most publick place, in the Town of Boston." Keith went on to visit Friends's meetings in Rhode Island, returning to Boston on July 12. He announced his desire to hold a public debate between himself and the leaders of the established churches. The ministers, sure that a debate would become a public fiasco, responded with a tersely worded note signed by Cotton Mather, James Allen, Joshua Moodey and Samuel Willard. It read, in part:

If he desires Conference, to instruct us, let him give us his arguments in writing, as well as his assertions; If to inform himself, let him write his doubts: If to cavil and disturb the peace of our churches (which we have

cause to suspect) we have neither list nor leisure to attend his motions: If he would have a Publick Audience, let him print.³¹

In this manner Keith was sent back to the Quaker colonies in the mid-Atlantic without the face-to-face meeting he desired, but with a direct challenge to appear in print that he always found irresistible.³²

George Keith had excellent access to the press run by William Bradford in Philadelphia and wasted little time in creating a two hundred-forty page book entitled *The Presbyterian and Independent Visible Churches in New-England and else-where Brought to the Test*. The book was published in 1689 and reprinted the challenges and responses issued the previous summer and sent a shot across the bow of the New England ministry, reminding them that the Quakers would not be silenced in their concerns about their treatment at the hands of Puritans. Cotton Mather and his ministerial associates were loath to dignify Keith with a response, but justified their rapid answer to the Quaker's challenges with a recognition that "the Quakers among us are some of them so far from being Quietists, that they disturb the Quiet of all that are about them, and go about, seeking whom they may deceive. Tis our duty to warn you against them, Ye Flocks of

³¹ Keith, *The Presbyterian and independent visible churches in New-England and else-where, brought to the test*, 205.

³² Prior to his arrival in the American colonies, Keith had traveled widely throughout the British Isles as a missionary and engaged in many printed disputes on behalf of his fellow Quakers. See Kirby, *George Keith*.

our Lord!”³³ Thus the ministers of Boston were drawn into a full-fledged dialogical controversy in print.

Keith opened his challenge with an announcement of his commitment to the Scriptural message and its overriding importance in determining the outcome of theological disputes. His first chapter was entitled “Concerning the Holy Scripture” and his third appealed to the Scriptures as “Supream Judge and Rule of Controversies of Religion.”³⁴ Aware that his Puritan opponents often claimed that Quakers disregarded the Bible in their elevation of immediate revelations from the Inner Light, Keith intentionally structured his book to provide a counter to what was recognized to be a devastating critique among lay men and women who treasured the Bible and its message to believers. Keith made many direct Biblical references and pointed out ways in which Quaker practices were drawn from the Scriptures. On one occasion he expressed that “this I hope will satisfie all sober and impartial men, to clear the Doctrine of the Quakers, that it is according to Scripture.”³⁵ Much like in his controversial documents produced in England, Keith appealed to the rationality of “sober and impartial” readers in an effort to overcome prejudices and misinformation about Quakerism.

Keith also followed his characteristic pattern of discussing official statements of faith as determinative of the official positions of his opponents. When facing Scottish

³³ Cotton Mather, *The Principles of the Protestant religion maintained, and churches of New-England, in the Profession and exercise thereof defended against all the calumnies of one George Keith, a Quaker, in a book lately published at Pensilvania, to undermine them both* (Boston: Richard Pierce, 1690), 7.

³⁴ Keith, *The Presbyterian and independent visible churches in New-England and else-where, brought to the test*, 1, 20.

³⁵ Keith, *The Presbyterian and independent visible churches in New-England and else-where, brought to the test*, 70.

Presbyterians, Keith leveled withering fire on the Westminster Catechism for the errors he felt were incorporated into its teachings. A great many of these criticisms were re-issued in this attack on the New England ministry. In his initial challenge to debate the Puritans of Boston he informed them that he understood their “doctrine being according to the Catechism and Confession of Faith of the Church of Boston and New England, which I have diligently examined, and find it to be the same, with that published by the assembly of Presbyterians and Independents at Westminster in Old England, about forty years ago, excepting some few small things.”³⁶

Continuing, Keith also provided important evidence about how he used catechisms during live debates. At opportune moments he produced pre-selected sections of these texts to confound his opponents with the details of their statements of faith. He especially reveled in finding passages that contradicted the writings or commonly held beliefs of his adversaries. If they were not aware of the contradictions, Keith gladly pointed to them using the specific wording of the catechisms. In this case he argued that a specific portion of the Westminster Catechism made more radical claims about human perfectibility on earth than Quakers ever suggested was possible. “The which assertions have seemed so gross to divers of their church members, that they could not believe, that their catechism and confession of faith, said any such thing, until I have got the book, & both read & caused them to read the same in their said catechism and confession with

³⁶ Keith, *The Presbyterian and independent visible churches in New-England and else-where, brought to the test*, 203.

their own eyes; and then they were amazed and ashamed.”³⁷ This vignette demonstrates the deep importance of printing to controversial writing and debating. Once positions are made more widely available through multiple copies in print, accuracy could be more carefully guarded and statements could, theoretically, be only explained and not fully retracted or denied.

Finally, Keith used his postscript to make specific references to his opponents’ writings in an effort to call them to account for statements that he felt were unjustified. He provided “A Brief answer to some gross abuses, Lyes, and Slanders, Published some years ago, by Increase Mather...in his book, called, *An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences, &c.* and by Samuel Norton, in his book called, *New England’s Memorial*.”³⁸ As he articulated in his earlier writings in the British Isles, George Keith felt that any unanswered challenge in a print controversy represented an admission of victory for the most recent author. He put the Puritan ministry on notice that their gauntlet had been taken up and that Keith indeed craved a response to continue the dialogue and vindicate his coreligionists in debate.

Keith was so intent on establishing a debate, that he brought his work to a close with a reminder of his expectations of his opponents. Lectures about the rules of print debating are another element of Keith’s controversial writing style developed in the British press in the previous decades. His challenge invoked reason and positively

³⁷ Keith, *The Presbyterian and independent visible churches in New-England and else-where, brought to the test*, 149.

³⁸ Keith, *The Presbyterian and independent visible churches in New-England and else-where, brought to the test*, 216. Keith also made specific reference to Norton in the main body of the text, providing a specific page reference for what he saw as an unfair discussion of a specific Quaker doctrinal position (160).

invited a response to his book. Keith explained: “I require this reasonable demand of you, that seeing ye have said, *Let him Print*, that after it is come to you, ye would seriously read it.” If a careful reading convinced them of his position, he asked that they admit it in print, “but if otherwise, that still ye think ye have Truth on your side, then appear in print openly to defend your cause, not with Railing and Lies, but solid Arguments, if ye can produce them.”³⁹ Not only had he taken up their previous challenges, he laid one of his own. It was not ignored.

Cotton Mather was enraged at what he saw as an attack on his father’s integrity in a period of deep political and social tension in New England. Already preparing a manuscript about the experiences of witchcraft in that region, Cotton Mather included an appendix that acknowledged his familiarity with Keith’s recent attack on the New England ministry. He admitted that he wrote because “Incivilities lately shown to my father...by one Keith, in a sort of thing newly published at Pen-silvania, have made it necessary for me, not only to explain myself, but to defend him, upon the occasion that is now before me.”⁴⁰ In a clear display of the insecurities associated with the ongoing revolutionary struggle, Mather spent less time responding to the substance of Keith’s work than describing his vision of the true reasoning behind his father’s departure from the colony and mission to England. He underlined the deep corruption of the placemen

³⁹ Keith, *The Presbyterian and independent visible churches in New-England and else-where, brought to the test*, 210.

⁴⁰ Cotton Mather, *Memorable Providences, relating to Witchcrafts and possessions a faithful Account of many Wonderful and surprising things, that have befallen several bewitched and possessed persons in New England...with an Appendix, in vindication of a chapter in a late book of remarkable providences, from the calumnies of a Quaker at Pen-silvania* (Boston: s.n., 1689), 1 of Appendix.

associated with the Dominion government and emphasized his father's role in seeking the restoration of the original colonial charter for the Bay Colony.⁴¹ Then turning to a brief dismissal of George Keith's charges against the Puritan ministry of New England, he ended by telling readers that "it is time for me to bid him now, Good Night. I am not willing to contend with him any further."⁴² Yet Cotton Mather and his ministerial associates in Boston were just beginning to contend with George Keith.

In the next year, 1690, Mather led several ministers in the construction of a chapter by chapter refutation of Keith's previous book. Its title proclaimed that their response was designed to uphold and maintain the true principles of Protestant religion and church practice against the calumnies of Keith, who was attempting to tear both down. Each chapter in *Principles of the Protestant Religion Maintained* corresponded directly to Keith's and provided "Reflections" on each of the chapter titles in his original work.⁴³ Unlike Keith's effort, however, the ministers envisioned this as their last contribution to the debate. They suggested in their preface that "we wish that we could with any hopes propound the conversion & Reduction of George Keith, as the end of our present undertaking. But we fear lest his apostacy...hath rendered him incurable...Yet we shall have no returns from him, except those of rage & wrath, which we shall not

⁴¹ Mather, *Memorable Providences*, 7-8 of Appendix. This section suggests that the topic is a very sensitive one to Cotton Mather and perhaps the substance of rumors and discussion far beyond Keith's brief mention of possible impropriety on Increase Mather's part prior to leaving for England.

⁴² Mather, *Memorable Providences*, 13 of Appendix.

⁴³ Cotton Mather, *The Principles of the Protestant religion maintained, and churches of New-England, in the profession and exercise thereof defended against all the calumnies of one George Keith, a Quaker, in a book lately published at Pensilvania, to undermine them both/ by ministers of the Gospel in Boston* (Boston: Richard Pierce, 1690), 7. Keith's first chapter is considered here and each of his others are treated in turn with specific references to sections within the chapters, and in some cases specific paragraphs.

count it worth the while to publish any reply unto.”⁴⁴ They did not hope to see this public dialogue in print continue.

The Puritans agreed with Keith that the proper interpretation of the Scriptural record should be the ultimate arbiter of disputes, but they challenged the interpretations and lessons he drew from the sacred texts. Their main contention was that Keith and his fellow Quakers were disingenuous about their commitment to the Bible. They recognized that “he assures us that *the Scripture is the Touchstone by which the Doctrine is to be tried*; ...Only he spoils all by telling us, *They have a greater proof, viz. the inward testimony of the Holy Ghost*.”⁴⁵ They required specific assurances that these claims would not be used as a trump in religious controversies when the Bible would not offer a solid foundation for Quaker positions. Beyond that, the ministers suggested that Quakers twisted almost every verse out of its proper context, making their references to the Bible invalid. Appealing, as Keith often did, to the rationality of the reading audience, the ministers argued that it simply was not reasonable to allow Quakers to offer interpretations of passages that opposed the plain letter of the Scriptures.⁴⁶

Beyond explaining how Keith’s Biblical interpretations were incorrect, the ministers claimed that his defense and articulation of Quaker positions were questionable because he was not a fully orthodox representative of that tradition. Keith was on the verge of his battle with the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends that would revolve

⁴⁴ Mather, *The principles of the Protestant religion maintained*, 5 of the preface.

⁴⁵ Mather, *The principles of the Protestant religion maintained*, 36.

⁴⁶ Mather, *The principles of the Protestant religion maintained*, 59.

around that precise point, but this was not yet known to anyone in this debate. The ministers brought this assertion to the foreground in their first page, noting that Keith was destined to be shunned by Quakers in the same way Bellarmine and Erasmus were disowned by the Catholic Church.⁴⁷ Appealing to the importance of George Fox to the Quaker movement, they suggested that “if [Keith] speak the judgment of the Quakers, it is certain that G.F. and other Rabbies of that sect were mistaken, for they speak quite another thing.”⁴⁸ Beyond the interest this claim has to anyone seeking the origins of the Keithian Schism in Pennsylvania, this line of attack was more immediately designed to drive a wedge between Keith and other Quakers who might use his work as a foundation for their own assault on Puritan orthodoxy.

George Keith’s response was swift and thorough. He printed another two hundred twenty six pages as *The Pretended Antidote Proved Poyson*, which had a subtitle announcing his response to the Puritan ministry’s *pretended answer to my book*. Keith addressed his opponents directly on the first page, telling them, “I have seen your pretended answer to my Book, which ye call, *The Principles of the Protestant Religion Maintained, &c.* which I have also read and well considered, and I find that upon the matter, ye have left the substance or principal matter of it wholly unanswered.”⁴⁹ He

⁴⁷ Mather, *The principles of the Protestant religion maintained*, 1. The comparison with Erasmus was made with the most clarity, as the ministers argued that despite claiming membership in the Catholic church throughout his life, orthodox Catholics were astounded that his writings could seem so Protestant.

⁴⁸ Mather, *The principles of the Protestant religion maintained*, 2.

⁴⁹ George Keith, *The pretended antidote proved poyson: or, the true principles of the Christian & Protestant religion defended, and the four counterfit defenders thereof detected and discovered; the names of which are James Allen, Joshua Moodey, Samuel Willard and Cotton Mather, who call themselves ministers of the Gospel in Boston, in their pretended answer to my book, called. The Presbyterian and*

defended his assertion with responses to their book labeled on a page by page basis. Not only was he responding to the specific ideas they included in their book, Keith was also back in his familiar didactic role of offering his readers advice and instruction about the proper structure of controversial texts.

Keith took issue with the way his ideas were presented by his opponents. He accused them of great carelessness in the precise doctrines and ideas they attributed to him in his previous book. He announced that much of his book would be devoted to proving that the Puritans' response contained "many very gross mistakes and Perversions of my words, and some absolutely false Quotations and Recitations, alledging Words, and Sayings, and Doctrines to be mine and delivered by me in my Book, which are neither directly nor indirectly to be found there."⁵⁰ These mistakes, Keith fumed, were inexcusable in an age of printing where accuracy could be checked by referring to copies of the original text. In all of his print controversies, he served as a tireless watchdog over the ideas that were attributed to him by others, directing readers to his own words for vindication.

Beyond seeking a fair representation of his previous contributions, Keith provided ground rules for printed debates that highlighted the role of reason in persuading readers to adopt new positions. Above all, he was concerned that all assertions were backed up by evidence, allowing people to come to their own conclusions about whose evidence and

Independent visible churches in New-England, and elsewhere, brought to the test, &c. And George Keith cleared cleared not to be guilty of any calumnies against these called teachers of New England &c. (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1690), 1.

⁵⁰ Keith, *The pretended antidote proved poyson*, 1.

interpretation was strongest. Keith taught that controversial authorship required different standards than the ministers were expected to maintain in other settings. At one point Keith reminded his opponents that their positions “are meerly begged and affirmed, but not in the least proved. Ye should remember, ye are not now in the *pulpits*, where *people* take things on trust for your bare Authority, but that your Book is gone abroad; ye should bring better Proofs than bare Assertions.”⁵¹ Few passages provide as clear a sense that Keith saw the printed word as a distinctive medium in which words and arguments must be carefully chosen because of their distinctive permanence. Beyond that, the evidence brought in defense of positions must be both logical and valid. As with his print debates in Great Britain, Keith was especially sensitive to the many attacks leveled against Quaker straw-men. He pointed this out to his Puritan opponents, telling them “in your imagination ye make a ridiculous thing, and call it a Quaker, and then fight against it, being your own shadow...”⁵² Many of the pages Keith wrote in controversies on both sides of the Atlantic were devoted to counteracting assertions about Quaker beliefs that he saw as deeply unfair and unfounded.

Keith felt that the claim that he was somehow outside of the stream of Quaker orthodoxy was this type of argument without foundation. Pointing to his many years of faithful communion with Quakers in various parts of the world, he was shocked by the brazenness of the Puritans to suggest they knew more about Quakerism than he did. Furthermore, these assertions were no better documented than many of their other claims

⁵¹ Keith, *The pretended antidote proved poyson*, 44.

⁵² Keith, *The pretended antidote proved poyson*, 23.

about his beliefs or those of other Quakers. Keith offered, on the other hand, to provide them with detailed documentary evidence of his compliance with the main currents of Quaker thought. Referring to the suggestion that he was out of step with George Fox, Keith wrote, “And seeing you only mention G.F. but cite none of his words, ye have done as good as nothing; I know not wherein I differ from G.F. in Doctrine . . . If it were needful I could produce plain and evident testimonies from my friends printed Books, long before mine, that my Doctrine is one with theirs.”⁵³ Given Keith’s previous record as an author, there is little reason to doubt that an account would have been given if the debate had continued.

Instead of following the trajectory of the dialogue already opened with Keith, Cotton Mather responded with a book-length pronouncement for all pious New Englanders to turn away from Quakers in general and Keith in particular. His message was part controversial rebuff and part pastoral effort to protect orthodox churches, entitled *Little flocks guarded against grievous wolves*. Mather recognized that Keith had written a response to the ministers’ previous book, but he did not feel compelled to answer it. This is partly disingenuous because this book was nothing if not an answer to that one, and it contains evidence that Cotton Mather had good reason to wish that the controversy might be over. Mather told his readers in thinly veiled anger that he was growing weary of the process that had “spawned one Pamphlet after another, filled with impertinent Reproaches and Calumnies against *The Colledge-Boy of New England*, as

⁵³ Keith, *The pretended antidote proved poyson*, 24.

their Hawkers, they say, please to call me.”⁵⁴ This disrespectful treatment would not have been welcome at any time, but much less in a context of the upheavals of political dislocation, frontier Indian warfare, and witchcraft trials. Beyond the personal slights, Mather suggested that the Quaker meetings of New England were benefiting from the public attention of the debates. Mixing his metaphors at the close of his book, Mather suggested that the wolves of his opening lines had become a fisherman’s bait in its final pages. He originally thought few New Englanders would bite at Quakerism, but was saddened to learn otherwise. He wrote, “I now see so many swallow the Hook, that some Labours and Warnings for your preservation are loudly called for.”⁵⁵ Mather cared less about the controversial rules of engagement so precious to Keith than about producing a document that could signal his end in the discussion, allowing him to concentrate on other priorities.

Mather wrote the first portion of his treatise as five reasons “that George Keith is a person, from whom, they that have any Love or Care for their own souls, are to turn away.”⁵⁶ The first reason was that Keith was not truthful and should not be trusted. Second, Mather proclaimed that Keith’s writings constituted blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. This was a devastating claim in that the New Testament stated that was the only

⁵⁴ Cotton Mather, *Little Flocks Guarded against Grievous Wolves. An address unto those parts of New England which are most exposed unto assaults, from the modern teachers of those misled Quakers. In a letter, which impartially discovers the manifold heresies and blasphemies, and the strong delusions of even the most refined Quakerism; and thereupon demonstrates the truth of those principles and assertions, which are most opposite thereunto. With just reflections upon the extream ignorance and wickedness, of George Keith, who is the seducer that now most ravines upon the churches of this wilderness.* (Boston: Benjamin Harris and John Allen, 1691), 3.

⁵⁵ Mather, *Little Flocks Guarded against Grievous Wolves*, 105.

⁵⁶ Mather, *Little Flocks Guarded against Grievous Wolves*, 26.

sin that could not be forgiven. Next, Mather argued that Keith contradicted himself too much to be believed in any of his assertions. Fourth, Mather told his readers that Keith renounced both religion and the Savior. These were charges often brought against Quakers by members of established churches who faced their aggressive missionary zeal. Finally, Mather argued that Keith's writings were so filled with ignorance and falsehoods that they deserved to be ignored. Each of these claims were elaborated in some detail, but Mather was not eager to call any further attention to any other Quaker writings, so he rarely offered citations or references to be checked.

Mather also provided his Puritan readers with a step-by-step guide to dealing with Quaker evangelists. He saw this as the second great purpose of his book. He wrote, "Having now done with *George Keith*, it remains that I set before you, a little part of that *Spiritual Armour*, which may defend you against the Assaults of *Quakerism*."⁵⁷ The armor consisted of a long series of questions and assertions that could be used to confound any Quakers that might engage a person in religious conversations. Each of the questions reaffirmed traditional Christian beliefs that Quakers had shown reluctance to consider in their books or discussions. Keith often wrote of a reluctance among Friends to discuss issues such as the trinity in anything other than "Scripture terms." Many Quakers argued that theological language not drawn from the Bible should not be forced upon all believers. Mather told his followers that they should assert their beliefs in the trinity in the language of the traditional creeds by asserting their belief that God is "one

⁵⁷ Mather, *Little Flocks Guarded against Grievous Wolves*, 57.

God in three persons.” They should then ask Quakers to either affirm or deny these beliefs, hoping to catch them in contradictions or difficulties.⁵⁸ After nearly forty pages of assertions and questions, Mather warned his readers to be prepared for another set of challenges that they would almost surely face. “But when you have beaten them, every other way, they will fall to Railing at the Country, for putting three or four *Quakers* to Death, between thirty and forty years ago.”⁵⁹ Aware that few Quaker missionaries failed to bring up this episode, emphasizing the cruel lack of Christian charity it displayed, Cotton Mather provided set responses for this as well. Just as John Norton did in 1659, Mather wanted to ensure, to the best of his ability, that every faithful member of the Congregational churches of New England had access to arguments that could help them turn insistent Quaker evangelists away from their doorsteps or public places.

Cotton Mather unequivocally stated that he would give no more attention to any response of Keith’s that might follow. While fully expecting a reply from the Quaker controversialist, Mather explained that he did not wish to participate in an endless cycle of exchanges. He wrote to his readers “I shall not sweat away my short Life in endless Replies unto those that resolve like the Scold, *They will have the last word*; but every stone they throw at me, I will take and wear as a *Pearl* bestowed by my glorious Master, the Lord Jesus Christ; and if I may rescue any one poor soul from the *Snares of Death*, I shall count myself abundantly recompensed.”⁶⁰ Mather was true to his word, printing

⁵⁸ Mather, *Little Flocks Guarded against Grievous Wolves*, 71.

⁵⁹ Mather, *Little Flocks Guarded against Grievous Wolves*, 100.

⁶⁰ Mather, *Little Flocks Guarded against Grievous Wolves*, 107.

nothing more concerning George Keith. Mather bowed out of the debate addressing the faithful of New England: “thus you must give me Leave of you. *I commend you to the Love of God, and the Dislike of Quakerism.*”⁶¹

As one might suspect, George Keith was deeply upset by Mather’s choice to disengage from the dialogue. Although obviously a futile exercise, Keith continued to outline the proper discursive techniques, highlighting the failings of his opponent. Recognizing that Cotton Mather’s book was indeed a direct response to his, he commented upon its inadequacy. Keith explained to readers that Mather “hath greatly changed the matter of Debate betwixt us, in most things wrongly stating things, and calling things our Principles which are not; whereas he should have kept to the *Twelve Articles* I charged them with.”⁶² He pointed out specific passages of his previous books that Cotton Mather had misquoted and asked his audience to return to those previous tracts to see for themselves the truth of what his positions were. Similarly, he upbraided Mather for ignoring the previous record of Quaker controversies in Great Britain. His failure to engage with the full range of documents available was highlighted by his willingness to pass along unsubstantiated claims by Quaker opponents without any hint that Quaker authors had already challenged the accuracy of the statements.⁶³ For Keith, Mather’s technique amounted to reinventing the wheel and returning to ground already covered in the print record. That effort was redundant in a maturing theory of print

⁶¹ Mather, *Little Flocks Guarded against Grievous Wolves*, 110.

⁶² George Keith, *A serious appeal to all the more sober, impartial & judicious people in New-England to whose hands this may come* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1692), 42.

⁶³ Keith, *A serious appeal*, 6.

controversy that relied upon the ability to trust the accuracy of the received record and build from previous contributions across space and time. Mather's conscious decision, however, to disregard these rules show that practicality could always trump theory when specific goals were sought in a print debate.

The sheer volume of controversial pamphlets, both political and religious, that became available to the public beginning in 1689 would have been impossible to ignore to the men and women living within the orbits of the two major print centers in colonial America. Even those unable to read would likely have been well aware of the discussions and debates that were spurred on or reinforced by the ideas in the competing pamphlets. The rhetoric used by controversial authors positively invited such a scenario as they typically called for more expansive participation in public affairs than ever before. Even those New Englanders who were most anxious to return to previous modes of deference to proclamations in print found it necessary to make direct appeals to a broad and rational reading public in efforts to persuade them of the strength of their arguments. It was no longer possible to rely solely on positions of authority to control public affairs. Once that genie of dialogical printing was released from its bottle, no amount of wishful thinking or regressive legislation could restore the old order. Provincial presses were operating in multiple jurisdictions and printers were less subject to the direct controls that were possible in earlier stages of colonial development. Alongside the better known political implications of the Glorious Revolution in America

we must now contend with evidence that colonial print culture also experienced a revolution in 1689 as it made a striking turn away from being the exclusive preserve for printed proclamations and increasingly became a facilitator of public dialogues.

CHAPTER 5: EXPANSION OF THE DIALOGUES: DEBATING WAR, WITCHCRAFT, AND QUAKER SCHISM

Exhausted authors, printers and readers in New England could finally breathe a sigh of relief as the frenetic pace of publication during 1689 and 1690 slowed down a bit in the last decade of the seventeenth century. Much of this deceleration can be linked to a relative settlement of the political situation in Massachusetts. Despite not having a specific charter agreement until 1692, William III granted the provisional government in Boston authority to continue in power as the new charter was being negotiated. The crown felt that political stability was essential to the successful prosecution of King William's War against the French and their Indian allies in North America. The governor and council of the Bay colony, newly confident after receiving the support of the crown, successfully exploited the context of colonial warfare to cut off dissenting opinions from the press in ways reminiscent of their control prior to the onset of the Dominion of New England. The domination of the press was imperfect, however, as snippets of print dialogues broke through the surface calm every few years, most dramatically in 1692 during the traumas of the Salem witchcraft crisis. None of these debates, however, rivaled those of the recent Revolution in size or scope.

At the very moment that the New England presses were cooling down, the print culture of Philadelphia was on the brink of its own explosion of output. William Bradford, operator of Pennsylvania's only press, was clearly not restricted from nor

afraid of dealing with controversial topics. He published the pamphlets of dissidents from New England who had been cut off from their local press as well as issuing George Keith's attacks against the New England ministry. Colonial authorities in Pennsylvania, using the mechanisms of the Quaker leadership structure, officially approved of these efforts to issue print challenges against outside churches and colonial regimes. In 1692, though, Pennsylvania's Quaker leaders in church and state found themselves the object of a seemingly endless stream of locally printed pamphlet attacks in the midst of a debilitating religious schism led by George Keith. Having rejected traditional Quaker norms of private dispute mediation, Keith took his theological battle with the Society of Friends into the public arena of printed controversy. In doing so he deepened the chasm between the opposing sides in Pennsylvania and also initiated a pamphlet battle that further altered the direction of colonial American print culture.

Taken on its own, the prodigious outpouring of controversial imprints during the Keithian schism in Pennsylvania is highly noteworthy. George Keith's pamphlets kept William Bradford's press far busier in 1692 than it had ever been before. The Philadelphia press issued 22 imprints between 1685 and 1691 and then published 24 documents in 1692 alone, 19 of these pamphlets were written by Keith or one of his religious supporters. Beyond a mere increase in volume, though, the controversial imprints of 1692 were composed in a distinctive new format for the local audience. Keith was deeply committed to a rhetorical style that deferred to the rationality of an impartial reading public, imploring them to read and consider the disputed matter carefully before

reaching a decision and supporting it with public action. He already employed this style to good effect in his debates with New England's clergy, but in 1692 Keith was using it to persuade his neighbors to join him in common cause in Pennsylvania. Readers living along the Delaware never before had been invited through the press to serve as public arbiters of a local dispute. The Keithian schism broke new ground in the relationship between the press and public interaction in Pennsylvania.

In a wider context, though, the imprints from the Keithian controversy should be seen alongside the similar explosion of printed dialogues that accompanied New England's Glorious Revolution in 1689. Either of these outbursts of controversial pamphleteering alone would be sufficient evidence of a serious disruption to the established pattern of colonial American printing. Analyzed together, these outbreaks of controversy, occurring within several years of one another, demonstrate more of a seismic shift in the overall trajectory of American printing. After nearly fifty years of experiencing the press only as a tool for disseminating the proclamations of authority, colonial American readers were presented with a dramatic break from this tradition in each of the regions that hosted a functioning press. Between 1689 and 1695 they received their first taste of a local press that presented competing ideas as an ongoing dialogue meant to shape public opinion through persuasion.

The provisional governor and council that displaced the Dominion government in Massachusetts picked up its duties in the midst of military conflict. Sir Edmund Andros was personally leading troops in defense of the frontiers before rumors of potential mischief drove him back to Boston just prior to his imprisonment in April 1689. The new regime inherited control of the ongoing conflict and its escalation as King William's War opened.¹ Records of the provisional government show that the revolutionaries settled into the tasks of leading a military venture: confirming militia officers, purchasing supplies, levying taxes and outlining strategic needs.² These martial concerns decidedly took up nearly all of the government's time and energy for the next several years and set the tone for the public mood.

The threat of attacks or even invasion by the French or their Indian allies placed a clear premium on unity and concerted action on the part of New Englanders. Fostering this sense of unity was especially important because of the recent history of division in the local experience of the Glorious Revolution. Some residents collaborated with the Dominion and resisted the coup while others envisioned a different type of provisional

¹ The North American dimensions of fighting between the English and French empires is explored in Robert Leckie, *"A Few Acres of Snow": The Saga of the French and Indian Wars* (New York: J. Wiley & Sons, 1999). William of Orange cherished his role as a leading defender of the Protestant interests of northern Europe against the expansionist tendencies of Louis XIV. Soon after becoming King of England, William III mobilized the resources of the entire British Empire to attack that of the French. For more on the European background to William III's seeming obsession with war against France see Wout Troost, *William III the Stadholder King: A Political Biography* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), translated by J.C. Grayson.

² The first references to military preparation in the interim government's own records can be found on April 23, 1689, just four days after their takeover, when they reconfirmed militia commanders for specific regiments. On April 24, 1689 they began making orders about gaining intelligence about their Indian enemies. Within one week of the Revolution the government was deeply involved in the war effort. Robert Earle Moody and Richard Clive Simmons, eds., *The Glorious Revolution in Massachusetts: Selected Documents, 1689-1692* (Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1988), 58-60.

government. While the press had helped shape and encourage the public dialogue related to these issues in the months following the Revolution, the ultimate victors in the process hoped that the same press could help them heal the wounds and promote the unity they thought was critical to a successful defense of the colony. After news of devastating frontier attacks arrived in Boston in early 1690, Cotton Mather preached a sermon that was later printed. The title of the pamphlet pulled no punches and made clear that everyone should carefully consider “the necessities and advantages of a public spirit in every man; especially, at such a time as this.”³ The sermon mixed religious injunctions with appeals to patriotism and civic duty in an effort to destroy any remaining chance that a fifth column might hamper the war effort.

The people had to be roused by more than stern warnings and horrifying tales of disaster, though. The government used the press to bolster morale by issuing official accounts of the war effort, highlighting their vigorous preparations and pointing to successful campaigns. To counteract fears of their Native American foes, the government printed copies of treaties and agreements with the powerful Iroquois to remind readers that the English were doing their best to maintain meaningful and effective alliances for their protection.⁴ Colonial leaders even published a journal of the

³ Cotton Mather, *The present state of New-England. Considered in a discourse on the necessities and advantages of a public spirit in every man; especially, at such a time as this. Made at the lecture in Boston 20.d. 1.m. 1690. Upon the news of an invasion by bloody Indians and French-men, begun upon us.* (Boston: Samuel Green, 1690).

⁴ s.n. *Propositions made by the Sachems of the three Maquas Castles, to the mayor, aldermen, and commonalty of the city of Albany, and military officers of the said city, and county in the city-hall, February 25th, 168990.* (Boston: Samuel Green, 1690). The importance the government attached to this

successful expedition to capture Port Royal in April and May of 1690. It described events in vivid detail, including searching the woods to recover goods hidden from the fort by the cowardly French in their retreat. The journal also noted the hero's welcome that greeted the expedition upon its return to Boston, focusing on the canon fire salute from the guns at the Castle.⁵ One can easily detect that this document was one part news report and another part recruitment pamphlet. The government was taking measures to ensure their efforts were widely publicized, a process greatly aided by the technology of the printing press.

With the war and fluid political environment driving up demand for up-to-date and accurate information in Boston, Benjamin Harris teamed with printer Richard Pierce to establish the first newspaper in North America. They published the opening issue of *Publick Occurrences, both Foreign and Domestick* on September 25, 1690. In it they announced their intention to publish the news-sheet monthly, or more often if news was plentiful. The issue presented the editor's rationale for starting the venture, including his desire "that people every where may better understand the Circumstances of Public Affairs, both abroad and at home; which may not only direct their Thoughts at all times, but at some times also to assist their Businesses and Negotiations."⁶ The effort to expand access to information blurred distinctions between public and private roles in society, a

alliance, as well as lingering doubts about it among some settlers, would become clearer in the shut down of the colony's first newspaper.

⁵ s.n., *A Journal of the proceedings in the late expedition to Port-Royal, on board Their Majesties Ship, the Six-Friends, the Honourable William Phipps Knight, commander in chief, &c. A true copy, attested by Joshua Natstock clerk.* (Boston: s.n., 1690), 6, 8.

⁶ *Public Occurrences...* Issue 1: Sep. 25, 1690, p. 1.

distinguishing characteristic of the expansion of the public sphere.⁷ The publication of a newspaper seemed a natural progression for a press that saw such a dramatic expansion of dialogue-driven pamphlets in the previous year. Benjamin Harris clearly hoped to help lead the ongoing public dialogue by ensuring that all interested parties had access to the same accurate information from which to make decisions of public importance.

Harris's dreams for the newspaper did not come to fruition. *Publick Occurrences* only survived for one issue. The newspaper was an instant sensation in and around Boston, which was likely the response Harris had hoped for to call attention to his efforts and gain subscribers.⁸ Unforeseen and unwelcome, however, was the condemnation his effort received at the hands of the Governor and Council just four days after its publication.⁹ The colony's leadership approved a sternly worded statement issued as a printed proclamation:

The Governour and Council, having had the perusal of the said Pamphlet, and finding that therein is contained Reflections of a very high nature: as also sundry doubtful and uncertain reports, do hereby manifest and declare

⁷ Habermas's original outline of the opening of the public sphere talked openly about private individuals coming together to affect public matters. In this case, a newspaper was advocated as a way for public matters to also aid in private business. In both cases the distinctions between public and private affairs were being blurred. See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989, originally published in 1962). The connection between American newspapers and the public sphere is explored in Charles Clark, *The Public Prints: The Newspaper in Anglo-American Culture, 1665-1740* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). Clark's main focus is on the transformative elements of the newspapers in the Revolutionary era. Colonial newspapers, including *Publick Occurrences* are briefly discussed, but only as background to his main argument.

⁸ M. Hasley Thomas, ed., *The Diary of Samuel Sewell* (New York, 1973), 1:267. Sewell noted that the newsheet "gives much distaste because not licensed; and because of the passage referring to the French King and the Maquas."

⁹ Moody and Simmons, eds., *The Glorious Revolution in Massachusetts: Selected Documents*, 275.

their high Resentment and Dissallowance of said Pamphlet, and Order that the same be Suppressed and called in; strictly forbidding any person or persons for the future to Set forth any thing in Print without License first obtained from those that are or shall be appointed by the Government to grant the same.¹⁰

What were these reflections of a high nature? They related to the merging of opinion and reporting regarding a failed military campaign during the war. The newspaper linked the defeat to the failure of their Iroquois allies to fully participate in the battle plans that had been drawn up prior to the engagement. Harris opined, “And if Almighty God will have Canada to be subdu’d without the assistance of those miserable Salvages, in whom we have too much confidence, we shall be glad, that there will be no Sacrifice offered up to the Devil.”¹¹ Relying so heavily upon Iroquois assistance in their war effort, the government could ill afford open discussions of the wisdom or effectiveness of the alliance. As quickly as the prospect of an even greater expansion of the public sphere appeared with the newspaper, the door was decisively shut. The new licensing law would become yet another factor in the decrease of controversial literature in the New England at the close of the century. The government that relied so heavily on public support bolstered by voicing their dissent against the Andros regime in the press during the

¹⁰ Massachusetts. *By the governour and Council. Whereas some have lately presumed to print and disperse a pamphlet, entituled, Publick occurrences, both forreign and domestick: Boston, Thursday, Septemb. 25th. 1690. Without the least privity or countenance of authority. The governour and Council ... order that the same be suppressed and called in.* (Boston: Bartholomew Green, 1690), 1.

¹¹ *Public Occurences...* Issue 1: Sep. 25, 1690, p. 2.

Glorious Revolution was now consolidating its own power and choking off other forms of dissent.

The newspaper was not the only source of potential discord regarding public policy and the war, though. Another focal point for public discussion related to the matter of how a perennially cash-strapped colony could effectively pay for its war effort. The provisional government voted successive rounds of taxation to support the military, but it became increasingly clear that they were attempting to squeeze water from a rock. Many colonists found themselves at an economic breaking point. Diverting ships and sailors to military missions disrupted trade and French pirates further slowed economic activity by raiding the few remaining merchant vessels. Frontier communities were in flames with farms destroyed and families displaced. Those farms still in operation were short-handed with many workers called to service in the militias. To make matters worse, many merchants turned to smuggling, preferring the comforts of a better price to the prospect of provisioning an army without adequate compensation.¹² Facing such a difficult situation the government turned to a measure that had been used with success in England, the issuance of paper money in the form of bills of credit backed by the colonial government. The matter was controversial and hinged on the general population, and specifically the mercantile elites, having faith in the value of the bills and accepting them

¹² Richard Johnson, *Adjustment to Empire: The New England Colonies, 1675-1715* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1981), 175. Johnson argues that news of local factionalism, economic troubles in the fisheries and timber trade, and intimations of further evasions of the Acts of Trade were being heard in London in 1690 and hampering the diplomatic efforts to seek a renewal of the Massachusetts charter.

at their face value and using them in exchange for goods and services. It turned out that such faith was hard to cultivate.

The Government, desperate to move public opinion in favor of using the bills of credit, turned to the printing press. Cotton Mather accepted the task of laying out the argument and created quite a remarkable document. His pamphlet spoke with many voices and seemingly contradictory impulses. He opened with the indisputable observation that the colony lacked the silver supplies necessary to make coins the basis for all economic exchanges. Substitutions were necessary, and bills of credit were as good as any. With his usual disdain for opposition viewpoints, Mather dismissed arguments that the lack of a charter made the colonial government too unstable to be trusted as “foolish conceits.” But then he softened his stance with a gentler appeal to reason and the cosmopolitan ambitions of local traders: “The more sensible part of mankind have thought Banks of Credit on many accounts preferable to silver in their pockets; it is so in Venice, Paris, Leghorn & Amsterdam, and other such trading places.”¹³ If prodding them to be less of a quaint backwater didn’t work, he had yet another trick up his sleeve: questioning the loyalty and patriotism of those who refused to accept the bills. Since the entire scheme was born of military necessity, refusal to accept the bills of credit amounted to a failure to support the troops and a threat to the security of the colony. Mather closed his pamphlet with a plea to local merchants that is truly

¹³ Cotton Mather, *Some considerations on the bills of credit now passing in New-England. Addressed unto the Worshipful, John Philips Esq; Published for the information of the inhabitants.* (Boston: Benjamin Harris, 1691), 18.

remarkable because of its deep resonance with the main elements outlined in Habermas's bourgeois public sphere. Mather suggested:

If but a competent number of men, who Deal much, would now give your selves the trouble of Meeting, to Debate, Agree, Conclude, and Engage upon giving a just Reputation to our Bills, the whole country must and will joyn with them in it. And if they will further give themselves the Trouble of Publishing to the Country, what may Rectifie some common mistakes, and how willing they themselves are to pay and also to take Bills at a due price, doubtless it would much promote the Cure of this Distemper among us.¹⁴

This plan contained a shocking number of concessions to a public sphere that he hoped would never emerge. From the government's weak bargaining position, however, Mather did what he had to. He invited private citizens to come together to use their expertise and judgment to debate a matter of great importance to the public life of the colony.¹⁵ The plan was encouraged in print, and called for the publication of any resolution to help the government as an effective way to carry further waves of public opinion in support of the bills of credit. Mather's plan, of course, did not represent a freely operating public sphere as it was predicated on the meeting and publication agreeing with the government

¹⁴ Mather, *Some considerations on the bills of credit now passing in New-England*, 22.

¹⁵ Not only does this match up closely with Habermas's vision of the bourgeois public sphere, it also shows a full flowering of the discussion of political economy that Lake and Pincus saw as critical to the emergence of the third stage of the development of the public sphere in England. See Lake and Pincus, eds., *The Politics of the Public Sphere in early Modern England*.

position. Ultimately, the plan only remained a theoretical possibility, as no meeting or publication followed.

Against this backdrop of colonial warfare and stretched nerves and resources, the settlers of the Massachusetts Bay colony learned in the Spring of 1692 that they were also in an epic battle with Satan and his powerful witches.¹⁶ The story of the Salem Witchcraft crisis is a familiar one, having generated a great deal of popular and scholarly attention over the years. The episode opened rather innocently. A group of young girls, mainly connected to the household of Salem Village's troubled pastor Samuel Parris, experienced physical torments, visions of menacing specters, and convulsive fits witnessed by their parents and other adults. Parris and his local supporters diagnosed the afflictions as the work of the devil through witchcraft. As the afflictions worsened and spread to others, the victims cried out against those they understood to be at the root of the attacks: witches who had signed the Devil's book, entering into a covenant with the devil to gain supernatural powers in exchange for their souls.¹⁷ As accusations mounted, taking in a quickly widening circle of suspects, colonial authorities established a special

¹⁶ The connections between colonial warfare and the experience of witchcraft was likely not coincidental. Mary Beth Norton's recent monograph makes a persuasive case for a close connection between the terrifying insecurities of King William's War and the upheavals of the Salem Witchcraft episode. Mary Beth Norton, *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002).

¹⁷ For more information about New Englanders' general perceptions and understanding of witchcraft during the seventeenth century, see David D. Hall's *Witch Hunting in Seventeenth Century New England: A Documentary History, 1638-1692* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1991). The gender bias in typical cases of witchcraft is explored in Carol Karlsen, *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: Witchcraft in Colonial New England* (New York: Norton, 1987). Psychological and sociological elements are explored in John Demos, *Entertaining Satan: Witchcraft and the Culture of Early New England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

Court of Oyer and Terminer to hear cases before they were passed on to the Superior Court of Judicature. These courts functioned for nearly a year before being abruptly stopped after fears mounted that justice had been miscarried because standards of evidence had been dropped too low in the panic and frenzy that had consumed the region. When the dust settled, nineteen witches had been executed, one man had been pressed to death for refusing to enter a plea, and local prisons were overflowing with suspects who still awaited their trials.¹⁸ Contemporary authors offered colonial readers interpretations of the disturbing events and instructions for regaining normalcy. Their efforts in 1692 and 1693 left a clear mark on the print record and contain a trace of the dialogical spirit that had been released following the Glorious Revolution.

As it had done with so many other potentially troubling public issues, the colonial leadership scrambled to go to press with a series of authorized accounts of events to justify official actions and undercut dissent. Deodat Lawson, a former minister in Salem Village who was invited back to help fight off Satan's efforts to undermine the church during the opening stages of the troubles, wrote an account of events as he saw them in late March and early April. His small pamphlet, only ten pages long, was filled with

¹⁸ Paul Boyer and Steve Nissenbaum provide a superb analysis of the social tensions developed over many years that lay the foundations for the entire witchcraft episode in *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974). Many more recent narratives focus more heavily on reconstructing the trials themselves and understanding the processes that produced the bulk of remaining evidence about the supposed witchcraft in Salem. See Bernard Rosenthal, *Salem Story: Reading the Witch Trials of 1692* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), Peter Hoffer, *The Devil's Disciples: Makers of the Salem Witchcraft Trials* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), or Frances Hill, *A Delusion of Satan: The Full Story of the Salem Witch Trials* (New York: Doubleday, 1995). Larry Gragg explored the episode through a biography of a prominent participant: Larry Gragg, *Quest for Security: The Life of Samuel Parris, 1653-1720* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990).

sensational detail. He vividly described the afflictions of the victims and portrayed local officials positively in their rapid response in apprehending and questioning early suspects. The account was not merely apologetic for these officials, though. A bookseller's preface added by Benjamin Harris betrayed a keen awareness of the commercial potential of bringing such fresh news of an unfolding drama to the public. Harris wrote: "The Ensuing Narrative being, a Collection of some Remarkables, in an Affair now upon the Stage, made by a Credible Eyewitness, is now offered unto the Reader, as a Tast, of more that may follow in Gods Time."¹⁹ True to his promise, Benjamin Harris oversaw the publication of another pamphlet written by Lawson, a sermon preached at the opening of court proceedings in Salem. While Harris may have hoped for the commercial success of this imprint as well, it included many more of the trappings of an authoritative document in the proclamatory mold. After a full page notice of obtaining proper licensing for publication, Lawson dedicated his work to the judges of the court and Salem's ministers. The list read as a who's who guide of local prestige. He then appended a letter from the leading ministers of the colony to bolster his own credentials. The ministers wrote:

Having Perused this discourse, Entitled, Christ's Fidelity the Only Shield,
against Satans Malignity. We are willing, to shew so much respect, to the
Author, and his Friends; as to signify: That we Apprehend several

¹⁹ Deodat Lawson, *A brief and true narrative of some remarkable passages relating to sundry persons afflicted by witchcraft, in Salem Village: which happened from the nineteenth of March, to the fifth of April, 1692*. (Boston: s.n., 1692), 2 of preface.

Weighty, Profitable, and Seasonable Truths, are therein soberly explained
... And the whole suitable applied to All sorts of persons.²⁰

Having clearly established his authoritative credentials, Lawson offered reflections on Satan's frightening power and the need to rely on God's sovereignty to defend the church. But at the end of the sermon he reminded the magistrates of their responsibilities in a community properly covenanted with God. Lawson suggested that the civil rulers should not bear the sword in vain and encouraged them to aggressively root out Satan's presence from the land.²¹ This document more clearly represented the return of a voice of proclamatory authority seeking to eliminate dissent.

Cotton Mather lent his considerable clout to the process of defending the witchcraft trials in a large volume entitled *The Wonders of the Invisible World*. As an apologist for the colony's courts, he placed the episode in a larger framework as a part of his and his father's continuing efforts to chart the natural and supernatural history of New England and its relationship to the wider world. Although Mather designed the volume to be an exhaustive and authoritative treatise on the matter, his preface betrayed a serious frustration that he and his fellow ministers had not yet been able to dominate the public discourse about witches. He admitted:

I am far from insensible, That at this Extraordinary Time of the Devils

Coming down in Great Wrath upon us, there are too many Tongues and

²⁰ Deodat Lawson, *Christ's fidelity the only shield against Satans malignity. Asserted in a sermon delivered at Salem-village, the 24th of March, 1692. Being lecture-day there, and a time of public examination, of some suspected for witchcraft.* (Boston: Benjamin Harris, 1692), 4 of preface.

²¹ Deodat Lawson, *Christ's fidelity the only shield against Satans malignity*, 74.

Hearts thereby Set on Fire of Hell; that the various Opinions about the Witchcrafts which of later time have Troubled us, are maintained by some with so much Cloudy Fury, as if they could never be sufficiently stated, unless written in the Liquor wherewith Witches use to write their Covenants.²²

As he did when dealing with previous controversial topics, Mather preferred to meet opposition with icy dismissal rather than direct response. He seemed to hold out hope that proclamations of truth from him and other ministers, duly propped by official seals and testimonies (his account was “Published by the Special Command of His Excellency, the Governor of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England”), would be enough to stop dissent in its tracks.²³ But the evidence tells a different story.

Even after the publications of Lawson and Mather, doubts lingered about the justice and prudence of the court’s actions in Salem. These sentiments crept into the press when Samuel Willard became a spokesperson for the respectful opposition, writing a pamphlet that suggested that the growing cycle of accusations, trials and executions might have crossed lines of good judgment. Although his essay was not a blistering attack on the trials or government, the Boston presses turned it away and William Bradford published it for him in Philadelphia. Willard’s choice of genre was important. He couched his arguments in a dialogue between two voices: S and B. Their discussion

²² Cotton Mather, *The wonders of the invisible world. Observations as well historical as theological, upon the nature, the number, and the operations of the devils*. (Boston: Benjamin Harris, 1692), 3 of the preface.

²³ Cotton Mather, *The wonders of the invisible world*, 2 of the preface.

opened with ground rules that Willard certainly hoped would be taken seriously by readers as well. After admitting that passions ran high on both sides of the debate, character B said, “but if you will promise placidly to argue the Case with me, you shall hear what we have to say; and I will as readily entertain any thing from you: and if we can come to a better understanding between us, it will be well.”²⁴ It was never Willard’s intention to steamroll his opposition, but rather to let the discussion play out on terms dictated by thoughtful rationality. His moderate credentials were on display early in the dialogue. Character B, skeptical of the trials from the outset, admitted that he believed in Satan’s power and that witches did indeed exist and could harm believers. He did not reject the court’s authority to preside over cases of witchcraft, he simply offered a caution about the nature of evidence that should be considered when investigating such serious capital crimes. As Character B said, “reason tells us, that the more Horrid the crime is, the more Cautious we ought to be in making any guilty of it.”²⁵ This dictum, he argued, held especially true for witchcraft cases, because if standards of evidence were lowered it would be much easier for Satan to manipulate the witnesses to make false accusations against innocent bystanders. This argument was a subtle, but clear, swipe at the sitting court, implying that their methods of accepting spectral evidence had opened the door to wrongful accusations, convictions and perhaps even executions. Willard’s pamphlet, coming from the respected minister of the Third Church of Boston, shattered any

²⁴ Samuel Willard, *Some miscellany observations on our present debates respecting witchcrafts, in a dialogue between S. & B. By P.E. and J.A* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1692), 2.

²⁵ Samuel Willard, *Some miscellany observations on our present debates respecting witchcrafts*, 4.

illusions that the ministry stood in complete unity in support of the trials. It also provided a respectable focal point for arguments and further discussion in the local public sphere about the wisdom of continuing the trials under the current conditions.

Those leaders who held the fate of the trials in their hands chose to offer an oblique response to Willard's challenge, neither opposing it directly nor accepting the implication that grave injustices were committed. They tapped the revered Increase Mather, recently returned from his long diplomatic mission in London, to write a pamphlet to provide them with a dignified way to bring the saga to a conclusion. Mather, leaning on his deep learning and extensive library, did not disappoint. His *Cases of Conscience* simultaneously co-opted Willard's positions about high standards of evidence and exonerated the Salem magistrates of any wrongdoing during the trials. The judges, Mather assured readers, had carefully followed the law and their consciences and only true witches had been executed. Nevertheless, the jails would be emptied from that point without further executions as he exhorted everyone to recognize that "it were better that Ten suspected Witches should escape, than that one Innocent Person should be Condemned."²⁶ Although it went unacknowledged by Mather and the establishment he spoke for, the arguments of Samuel Willard's character B not only won his debate in the pamphlet, but also in the real world.

²⁶ Increase Mather, *Cases of conscience concerning evil spirits personating men, witchcrafts, infallible proofs of guilt in such as are accused with that crime. All considered according to the Scriptures, history, experience, and the judgment of many learned men.* (Boston: Benjamin Harris, 1693), 66.

After the witchcraft tensions died down, the presses of New England were largely free of controversial content for several years. Most publications during that period were either sermons or collections of recent legislation. The ongoing war effort and expanded oversight by the newly re-chartered and increasingly confident colonial government likely had much to do with the tempered tone of the imprints of those years. A general desire to turn the page from the divisions of the Glorious Revolution and the witchcraft episode were also likely contributors to the relative calm in the Boston press.

II

The placid vision of a New England press slowly being brought back under the control of a government that preferred proclamatory modes of communication only tells a small part of the story of colonial printing in the 1690s. Just as Boston's printers experienced a watershed moment in the Glorious Revolution of 1689, William Bradford's press broke its previous mold with an astonishingly large output of controversial pamphlets during the Keithian schism of 1692. In many ways Philadelphia's experience that year was very much like that of Boston's in 1689. Both regions saw an unprecedented number of imprints linked to the breakdown of the previously functioning mechanisms of press control. Both regions also had deeply polarized populations from

which factions outside of the political power structure turned to the printing press to gain support and shape public opinion in their favor. But the two printing centers had significant differences in their experiences as well. In Pennsylvania the broad expansion of controversial dialogues took on a very odd configuration. Only one of the two main parties of the dispute turned to the press, but they were so committed to dialogical formats that they went to great lengths to simulate a dialogue within their monologue. Secondly, Pennsylvania's spike in press production was not linked to political revolution but rather a religious schism that ended with a bold reassertion of authority by the established leaders of the Quaker meeting and colonial government. The crackdown was so thorough that it did not merely reign in its local press, but completely destroyed it.

The Quaker schism in Pennsylvania was an outgrowth of a series of subtle theological disputes among leading Friends in the summer of 1691. At that time William Stockdale, a Scottish Public Friend of long standing among Pennsylvania Quakers, accused George Keith of heresy by speaking too freely about the existence of two Christs. Keith admitted that he often spoke of both an "Inner" and an "Outer" Christ, but he explained that he only meant that Quaker emphasis on the Inner Light should not be elevated to such an importance that it overshadowed the historical Jesus, or Outer Christ. Enraged by the lack of respect shown for his teaching, Keith reversed the heresy charges. He asked the Yearly Meeting to censure Stockdale for not fully believing in the Scriptural testimony about Jesus' earthly ministry. That September, Friends held six lengthy meetings to settle the dispute, ultimately neither condemning nor exonerating either of

the Public Friends.²⁷ With the matter unsettled, the controversy expanded when Thomas Fitzwater accused George Keith of denying the sufficiency of the Inner Light to salvation in January 1692. Keith again turned the charge on its head, and the Quaker leaders asked to adjudicate continued to wring their hands. Impatient at the lack of support he received from other prominent Friends, Keith turned his wrath against the meeting structure. By March 1692 the meeting of ministers recorded in its minute book their shock that Keith suggested that they “Come here to Cloak Error and Heresie.”²⁸ Outside factors involving the printing press then pushed towards total separation.

To add to the growing storm of controversy, a publication from Boston in early 1692 raised new questions about Keith’s orthodoxy. While traveling through New England on his missionary journey, Keith stepped into a debate already in progress between Friends in Newport, Rhode Island and one of their former members named Christian Lodowick. Unhappy at the outside interference, Lodowick turned his energies to destroying Keith’s character. He wrote a letter to Cotton Mather in Boston claiming to have information that would be helpful to him in his dispute with George Keith and other Quakers. Mather was so pleased with the intelligence that he had the letter printed in Boston.²⁹ Lodowick’s main concern in the letter was to paint Keith as a deceitful character whose true beliefs did not match his public confessions. He assured Mather that personal discussions with Keith revealed that he was using Quakerism to mask

²⁷ Frost, *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, xii-xiii.

²⁸ Frost, *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, 138.

²⁹ Christian Ludovici, *A Letter from the most ingenious Mr. Lodowick Rhode Island, Febr. 1. 1691/2* (Boston: Bartholomew Green, 1692).

deeply speculative and highly unorthodox beliefs about Cabalism and forms of reincarnation, known as the Revolution of Humane Souls.³⁰

These claims would be deeply embarrassing to Keith at any time, but were particularly so in the tense atmosphere of Philadelphia in early 1692. As this attack came to him via the Boston press, Keith was quick to respond in print. He wrote three separate documents to respond to Lodowick's charges. He hoped to silence concerns about his involvement with questionable mystical belief structures and practices by affirming his commitment to the Scriptural understanding of life after death in his pamphlet entitled, *Testimony Against that False & Absurd opinion which some Hold*.³¹ Similarly, Keith attempted to cut off speculation about his connection to the ideas associated with reincarnation in his next piece, *Truth and innocency defended against calumny and defamation in a late report spread abroad concerning the revolution of humane souls*.³² Both of these were designed to preserve his personal reputation as a Christian. The third piece defended the honor of Quakers everywhere by proclaiming their commitment to

³⁰ Ludovici, *A Letter from the most ingenious Mr. Lodowick*, 6-7. For more information about colonial Cabbalism and its connections to George Keith see Elizabeth Fisher, "'Prophesies and Revelations': German Cabbalists in early Pennsylvania," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 109 (July, 1985), 312-315.

³¹ George Keith, *A testimony against the false & absurd opinion which some hold viz. that all true believers and saints immediately after the bodily death attain unto all the resurrection they expect, and enter into the fullest enjoyment of happiness: and also that the wicked, immediately after death, are raised up to receive all the punishment they are to expect: together with a Scriptural account of the resurrection of the dead, Day of Judgment, and Christ's last coming and appearance without us: also, where, and what those heavens are into which the man Christ is gone, and entered into* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1692). Note in the title, his emphasis on Christ coming "without us" as it is a reference to the "outer" Christ as opposed to some spiritualized understanding which sees all of these final judgments and events as some sort of inner process that is entirely subjective.

³² George Keith, *Truth and innocency defended against calumny and defamation in a late report spread abroad concerning the revolution of humane souls: with a further clearing of the truth by a plain explication of my sense, &c.* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1692).

Christian principles. Rather than allow others to cast aspersions on ill-defined Quaker beliefs, Keith and the leaders of the Newport meeting jointly authored a document that outlined eight positive affirmations of faith, backed by specific Scriptural references, which could then be used to defend against charges that Quakers were not true Christians.³³

Keith's efforts to limit the damage of Lodowick's account only furthered the conflict in Pennsylvania. On February 26, 1692 he submitted his publications to the Philadelphia monthly meeting, seeking their approval for printing and further distribution. Yet Keith was not going to receive a simple rubber stamp as he had for his earlier publications. As the discussion heated up, a large party opposed to Keith left the meeting, taking the clerk and his minute book with them. Keith's supporters kept alternative records with a new clerk and adjourned until the next day to consider how to proceed. At the next meeting, in the absence of opposition, Keith's supporters authorized the distribution of his book and issued a condemnation of Stockdale and Fitzwater for their previous heretical statements in challenging Keith. When Keith's supporters attempted to have their deliberations entered into the official minute book of the monthly meeting, they were told their meeting was not recognized as official or authoritative. From that time forward the two groups continued to meet separately and vigorously debated which group represented the true voice of Quakerism in the region.

³³ George Keith, *The Christian Faith of the People of God, Called in Scorn, Quakers*, 6. In good dialogical form, Keith refused to respond to charges already answered in previous books by Friends, he instead referred readers to those books to find refutations that would be truly redundant to print again.

Historians of colonial Pennsylvania have dissected and analyzed the events of this episode from many angles and have offered a wide range of explanations for such a dramatic breakdown of unity in William Penn's Holy Experiment. Early accounts, for obvious reasons, focused heavily on the religious dimensions of the denominational split.³⁴ Others blamed George Keith for being too sophisticated and tightly wound to accept the simple faith and life that most ordinary Quakers sought to pursue in the New World.³⁵ Gary Nash described it differently, focusing instead on the relationship between the feuding sides in the schism and the growing factionalism between proprietary and anti-proprietary political interests in the colony.³⁶ Most of these explanatory threads are woven together in a deftly argued essay by Jon Butler. Butler noted Keith's prickly and divisive personality, but explained that it was only unleashed in force after other Quaker leaders rejected his suggestions for restructuring the levers of power within the Quaker meetings.³⁷ An important factor missing from each of these studies is the importance of Keith's active and insistent use of the printing press to call for mediation and vindication from a wide reading public of Quakers and non-Quakers in Pennsylvania and beyond. His appeals to the public and publication of details about a

³⁴ J William Frost, ed., *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania* (Norwood, PA: Norwood Editions, 1980).

³⁵ Barry Levy, *Quakers and the American Family: British Settlement in the Delaware Valley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988). Levy's arguments are a more explicit formulation of the general assessment offered by George Keith's only biographer. Ethyn Kirby, *George Keith, 1638-1716* (New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1942).

³⁶ Gary Nash, *Quakers and Politics: Pennsylvania, 1681-1726* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968).

³⁷ Jon Butler, "'Gospel Order Improved': The Keithian Schism and the Exercise of Quaker Ministerial Authority in Pennsylvania," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd ser. 31 (1985): 431-452.

dispute that other Quakers preferred to deal with in private channels elevated the stakes for everyone involved and led to starker contrasts and further division. Significantly, Keith's imprints also pushed forward existing trends of dialogical printing that were crucial to the opening of a colonial American public sphere.³⁸

Keith turned to the press after nearly a full year of private deliberations and escalating frustration with the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. In the Spring of 1692 he published *Some Reasons and Causes of the Late Separation That hath come to pass at Philadelphia*. Fully aware that this broke with Quaker tradition by publicly airing the details of private religious disputes within the Society, Keith opened his text with "An Apology for the Present Publication of these Things."³⁹ Keith was well aware of how eagerly Quaker opponents in Old and New England would seize on news of their internal dissensions, but he suggested that silence would be even more damaging to the cause of Friends everywhere in the long run. He insisted that his publication would hardly be the only source of information about the private deliberations of the Quaker meetings, pointing out that "scarce any thing that hath been said or done in a Monthly Meeting for a long time past, but it is soon after publickly known."⁴⁰ Keith preferred to fully lay out the claims that he and his supporters were making in print so that an accurate, objective

³⁸ One of the factors contributing to a historiographical rejection of a colonial public sphere might be the lack of attention to the Keithian schism among scholars of colonial printing. Despite producing an unusually large outburst of imprints in 1692 before leading to legal action that forced out the colony's first printer, the schism hardly received a mention in the most comprehensive recent study of the book trade in colonial America. See James Green, "The Book Trade in the Middle Colonies, 1680-1720," in Hugh Amory and David Hall, eds., *A History of the Book in America. Vol. 1. The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

³⁹ Keith, *Some Reasons and Causes*, 2.

⁴⁰ Keith, *Some Reasons and Causes*, 4.

record of their positions could be open to all. As he had done throughout his career as an author and controversialist, Keith directly appealed to his readers to assess his case without bias or prejudice. He hoped, for instance, that he had satisfactorily explained the reasons for his publication, at least “to all impartial people to whose hands this shall come.”⁴¹

The main body of Keith’s text provided a detailed account of recent events organized into three major causes for the separation of the Quaker meetings. The pamphlet sought to convince readers that although Keith and his supporters did not initiate the separate meetings, they were justified in continuing the schism as their opponents had shown themselves to be unwilling to prove that they adhere to basic Christian principles. Committed to dialogical print forms, but lacking an opponent or partner, Keith chose to improvise a new way of approximating that type of exchange of ideas. He did so through the formatting of his own work, identifying his intentions by writing, “But, that it may appear how weak and insufficient the Reasons are, that were given by the said party at the Quarterly Meeting, why we were no Meeting, we think fit to give an account of them, with our Answers to them.”⁴² Keith made public many of the deliberations of the Quaker meeting structure that were ordinarily hidden from view and retained only in minute books and the collective experience of those present. As sure as Keith was of his own orthodoxy and the righteousness of his cause, he determined to pull back the curtain on the Quakers’ secret deliberations, hoping that public exposure of their

⁴¹ Keith, *Some Reasons and Causes*, 6-7.

⁴² Keith, *Some Reasons and Causes*, 11.

positions would force them to take a stand in favor of orthodoxy to assure the public in Pennsylvania and throughout the Atlantic world that Quakers were indeed good Christians.

Philadelphia's Quaker leadership refused to change course. The Meeting of Ministers, earlier unwilling to rule fully for or against either of the parties in the first stages of the dispute, openly challenged Keith, and used processes of internal discipline to diffuse the increasingly tense standoff. Samuel Jennings entered the stage at this time. Jennings was the son-in-law of Thomas Lloyd, the principal religious and political figure in the colony.⁴³ Jennings often acted as scribe for important Quaker manuscripts and proclamations. He wrote that their meeting on June 4, 1692 was prepared to offer a judgment in the matter between George Keith and William Stockdale, "but were prevented of publishing the same, by reason of *George Keith's* unruly Behaviour, and extream Passion, which abruptly broke up the said Meeting."⁴⁴ Jennings reported that they indeed were willing to admit that Stockdale spoke abusively and should be reproved for doing so, but that Keith was in violation of Gospel Order for the way in which he was accusing prominent Friends in public without first speaking with them privately about his concerns about their preaching. Two more meetings in late June addressed Keith's continuing unwillingness to allow Quakers to conduct their routine church business, and

⁴³ This connection is very important to Gary Nash's political interpretation of the schism in *Quakers and Politics*, 146-161.

⁴⁴ George Keith, *A True Copy of three Judgments given forth by a Party of Men, Called Quakers at Philadelphia, against George Keith and his Friends. With Two Answers to the Said Judgments* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1692), 2. Note that Jennings and his associates were not responsible for publishing these rulings. It was Keith's efforts that brought them to the public in print.

the publication of his recent book. At these meetings, tensions increased as both sides were moving farther from reconciliation than before.

The Meeting of Ministers on June 17 registered in its minutes a variety of disciplinary actions taken against George Keith and his followers. With Keith absent, “it was there unanimously agreed that that a Testimony should be given forth against him for his ungodly speeches, false accusations, rude and un-christian-like behaviour.”⁴⁵ They further resolved that until satisfaction was offered for such offenses, Keith should be prevented from preaching and teaching among them. The participants resolved “that a further Testimony should be given forth against him, for the Breach and Separation he hath made and upheld in this place; and not only against him, but all such as Justify and joyn with him in it.”⁴⁶ Thomas Lloyd, Samuel Jennings, and other leading Friends drafted a written judgment to be approved by the meeting in the coming days. Finally, the minutes included a copy of a letter sent to prominent friends in London, describing events from their perspective and explaining their decisions.

The letter to English Friends presented an alternative account of the entire affair troubling the Quakers of Pennsylvania and the Jerseys. Its authors explained that Keith established his separate meetings among Friends, many of whom “had entertain’d offences and prejudices against friends for Correcting their disorders, or else for some

⁴⁵ Frost, *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, 140.

⁴⁶ Frost, *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, 140.

other cause, or such as never professed truth.”⁴⁷ Leading such a motley band of outcasts, Keith continued to trouble the peace of the colony by making outrageous allegations of misconduct or false belief. They fully understood the central thrust of Keith’s claim against them. They recounted that “his more General charge against us is that we have not a right Faith of Christ, nor do we Preach him rightly.”⁴⁸ Yet after recounting “his pretences for the Separation,” the Philadelphia Public Friends went on to offer their counterparts in London their assessment of the “true reason and Cause of it.”⁴⁹ They suggested that pride in Keith’s heart lead him from one contention to another and finally a spirit of Separation. Those who accompanied him to New England became aware of this as they recognized that “it was his manner to accuse and Challenge most that he mett with or came near both Priest and others that differed from him.” They further suggested that the books Keith produced in this period, despite being approved for publication, had occasioned some concern among local Friends.⁵⁰ It was only a matter of time, they explained, before such a contentious spirit should find fault with something in the practice or belief of faithful Friends in and around Philadelphia. They posited that Keith was deeply upset by the cautious approach local Friends took when discussing his suggestions to improve Gospel Order.⁵¹ From that time forward, Keith seemed

⁴⁷ Frost, *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, 141. Gary Nash makes clear that many of Keith’s supporters carried deep political grudges since they were supporters of Governor Blackwell who were purged from public offices with Thomas Lloyd’s political ascendancy. Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 127-180.

⁴⁸ Frost, *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, 142.

⁴⁹ Frost, *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, 143.

⁵⁰ Frost, *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, 144.

⁵¹ Jon Butler, “Gospel Order Improved,” 431-452.

especially anxious to find fault with the leading ministers who thwarted his reform efforts.

The letter closed with a description of how Keith's use of the printing press changed the dynamic of the ongoing dispute. It revealed a powerful contemporary understanding of the reach and importance of printing in affecting the masses, even beyond the circle of the literate. The Quaker ministers recounted a threat that Keith made against them that "he would publish us not only through America but Europe also."⁵² This suggests that Keith turned to the press with full awareness of the potential of reaching audiences far beyond the immediate environs of the author or his co-religionists. The ministers were further troubled by the way that Keith gained easy access to Philadelphia's press and the consequences of his use of it.

He hath the advantage of the Press having gained the Printer to his party, who will Print anything for him without the knowledge and Consent of friends, and hath lately printed a Book Entitled Some reasons and Causes of the late separation, its full of envy, folly, falsehood, and Contradiction one while justifying the Separation, another while condemning it and laying it at our door; but the Book is the Sport and Entertainment of the loosest and Lewdest of men over their Cups; some of us having been

⁵² Frost, *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, 146.

lately at York found them there dispersed into such hands, when friends
knew nothing of the printing them, nor could they get one of them.⁵³

This description reveals much about the nature and use of pamphlets during this period. Printed materials were read, discussed, and used in the formation of public opinion among wide swaths of the population, even among the illiterate. Pennsylvania's Quaker leaders realized, to their horror, that the printing and distribution of illicit materials could be quickly and surreptitiously carried out right under their noses, carrying materials to far-flung locations in short spaces of time. Perhaps most frustrating to the Public Friends was how easily negative accounts of their actions could fall into the "wrong" hands, raising the possibility of "serious" matters such as religious orthodoxy or public policy, thought to be reserved for the private deliberations of approved Friends or political officials, being discussed jokingly in taverns. Letters received from other Quaker meetings that received word of the divisions through Keith's writings only confirmed their worst fears about this.⁵⁴ In their drive to protect orthodoxy and political stability by limiting access to information and controlling messages, the Quakers exhibited very similar impulses to the Puritan magistracy and ministry in New England. Keith was unsatisfied with it in both places, directly appealing to all readers to become arbiters in

⁵³ Frost, *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, 146.

⁵⁴ Thomas Robbins to George Keith, October 17, 1692 and Maryland Yearly Meeting to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, November 4, 1692. Keithian Controversy manuscripts. Bound Collection of Epistles (Epistles 1691-1692) in Friends Historical Library. Robbins wrote from Barbados, dismayed that Keith's printed works reached him there. He complained at length to Keith about his decision to publish the dispute and expose the divisions of the Quakers to the world. Quakers in Maryland wrote to inform the Philadelphia meeting that copies of Keith's works were received there and that Quakers "had become the song of the drunkards."

the emerging public sphere, using their own understanding to come to decisions independent of the authority of bodies such as the Philadelphia Meeting of Ministers. These issues became increasingly important as Keith turned to the press more often as the dispute intensified.

The committee headed by Thomas Lloyd to draft a written judgment against Keith made short work of their task, returning to the meeting with a document on June 20 that received the approval of the assembled Public Friends. Twenty-eight of them signed the final version of the paper and their condemnation became known as the “Judgment of the Twenty Eight.” The paper opened with an acknowledgment of Keith’s prominent place among them in earlier years, lamenting his recent fall from grace. From the heights of true faith and useful service he had “gone into a spirit of Enmity, Wrath, Self-Exaltation, Contention, and Janglings; and as a person without the fear of God before his Eyes, and without regard to his Christian Brethren, and letting loose the reins to an extravagant Tongue.”⁵⁵ They outlined the case against Keith, recalling his quarrelling over confessions, the establishment of separate meetings, and general disturbance of the peace. They added to the charges that he reviled many Friends and scuttled their reputations “in mixt Auditories of some hundreds, endeavoring to render them and Friends here, *by the Press and otherways*, a Scorn to the Profane, and the Song of the Drunkards.”⁵⁶ Finally, the judgment against Keith was given. George Keith would no longer be received in his public ministry unless he became fully reconciled to the meeting on its terms. Those who

⁵⁵ Keith, *A True Copy of three Judgments*, 3.

⁵⁶ Keith, *A True Copy of three Judgments*, 4. Emphasis mine.

followed Keith in separation were warned to return to the duly constituted meetings or face expulsion. The judgment was sent to the Quarterly and Yearly Meetings in Pennsylvania and the Jerseys so that it could become the standardized decision of each of those bodies in determining the terms under which the schism would be healed.

The response of Keith and his followers was swift and had multiple dimensions. No less than four separate printed responses emerged in the month of July, each orchestrated by Keith himself. Reconstructing the chronology of the responses is challenging, although it is likely that Keith first wrote *The Plea of the Innocent*, followed by the nearly simultaneous release of printed versions of the deliberations of Keithian meetings. These were entitled *An Expostulation with Thomas Lloyd* and *A True Copy of Three Judgments*. Finally, Keith published his *Appeal from the twenty eight judges to the spirit of Truth* in an effort to sway the Quakers of the region to vindicate him during the September Yearly Meeting in Burlington, New Jersey. These efforts only widened the gap between Keith and his opponents and opened a new arena for conflict as some Friends intervened in the struggle as magistrates in the colonial government.

Keith's first response to the Judgment of the Twenty-Eight, *The Plea of the Innocent*, was written quickly enough to be read and approved for publication in a meeting held on July 3, less than two weeks after the judgment was issued. Keith justified his rapid publication, arguing that his opponents unfairly and intentionally neglected to provide a full account of recent events, requiring a supplement to fully

contextualize what was happening in the dispute.⁵⁷ He suggested that the Philadelphia meeting of ministers was afraid to publicize their actions because they were fully aware of the injustice of their cause. Like before, he remained committed to informing the public what was happening behind the closed doors of meetings. Keith produced accounts of the deliberations whenever possible so that questions of fact could be placed before a discerning public. Of the affair with Thomas Fitzwater, the second Friend to charge him with heresy, he wrote, “But whereas some of them say, they have not cleared T.F., let all impartial men, who read their act recorded in their Monthly Meeting Book (a copy of which with great difficulty we have obtained) . . . [decide].”⁵⁸ These were not empty words; Keith quoted directly from the minute book so that readers could decide whether they had or had not seemed to clear Fitzwater in their deliberations.

Keith also provided readers with printed accounts of private discussions and disputes held during the course of the controversy. This context first exposed the connection between Keith’s opponents and their positions of authority in colonial government. He directly accused several of them of attempting to intimidate him with civil punishments and he wondered if it was a sign that their connections to worldly affairs were detrimentally affecting their spiritual lives.⁵⁹ He provided specific names of

⁵⁷ George Keith, *The Plea of the innocent against the false judgment of the guilty, being a vindication of George Keith and his Friends, who are joined with him in this present testimony, from the false judgment, calumnies, false informations and defamations of Samuel Jennings, John Simcock, Thomas Lloyd, and others joined with them, being in number twenty eight: directed by way of epistle to faithful friends of truth in Pennsylvania, East and West Jersey, and else-where, as occasion requireth* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1692), 2.

⁵⁸ Keith, *The Plea of the innocent*, 7.

⁵⁹ Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 153-161.

abusive rulers, singling out Thomas Lloyd, president of the colonial Council, and his close advisors and family members, Samuel Jennings and John Simcock. Keith invited them to emerge from the shadows and join the debate if they felt wronged. To allay the qualms of anxious readers he asked that “none be offended that we name these men’s names . . . besides, some of them have complained that in our Book, *Some Causes of Separation*, we named not names.”⁶⁰ Keith made charges as specific as possible, always careful to provide sufficient evidence to support his claims. He emphasized that his opponents did not reciprocate. He decried the way they cast their charges against him in “bare generals, as his being guilty of Anger, Envy, Cruelty, Treachery . . . but to show, that for want of particular matter against him, they thus labour to defame him so much in bare generals, a way common to all Sophisters & false Accusers.”⁶¹ Here again Keith lectured his opponents about proper discursive techniques. His lessons provided subtle reminders to readers about which disputants were trustworthy and which were relying on deception.

This didactic tendency only intensified as Keith challenged the ministers of Pennsylvania to respond to his works. Referring to the arguments of his previous imprint, Keith reminded his readers of “our Book, *Some Causes of the Separation*, &c., which they have not taken notice of, nor can they contradict; for all the matter therein is

⁶⁰ Keith, *The Plea of the innocent*, 14.

⁶¹ Keith, *The Plea of the innocent*, 8. Later in the document Keith suggests that using only bare generals in disputes is a deceitful practice.

truth...and the matter in that Book lieth at their door to answer, if they be able.”⁶² As in his previous debates in Old and New England, Keith suggested that a challenge that remained unanswered held control of the field of debate. Why would an opponent refuse to respond if they could? Even without a direct and active partner in this dialogue, Keith appealed to the rules of print controversy he embraced during the course of his career. After providing what he could in his own defense, Keith finally appealed first to God, and “next to all faithful Friends and Brethren here in America, and in Old England, Scotland, Ireland, or else-where, to judge betwixt us and them, as the unerring and infallible Spirit shall be found and known to give them a true Judgment and Discerning.”⁶³ Keith felt confident that his cause would be upheld in an impartial court of public opinion within the trans-Atlantic Quaker community. This type of wide-sweeping appeal is difficult to imagine without enlisting the direct aid of the printing press.

The printed minutes of Keith’s supporters also urged their opponents to submit themselves to a more open process of public deliberation through the mediation of the printing press. The meeting of July 3 approved Keith’s *Plea of the Innocent*, convinced that it had completely answered the Judgment of the Twenty Eight. They also decided that the original judgment should be printed so that it could be read and considered by all. The Keithian meeting declared:

⁶² Keith, *The Plea of the innocent*, 20.

⁶³ Keith, *The Plea of the innocent*, 20.

And let both their Publick Papers and ours be impartially weighed in the Balance of Truth, in order to which we are willing that all their papers be printed as well as ours, that have been published on both sides, that to the impartial Readers may have a fair opportunity to judge of both.⁶⁴

There is no reason to think that they were disingenuous. Keith's supporters printed the judgments as promised. Apart from a desire to initiate patterns of open dialogical controversy, there seems to be little reason for Keith and his supporters to be so genuinely committed to ensuring that both perspectives were available in print. William Bradford wrote that if Keith's opponents were concerned that they were not being given a fair hearing in print, it was nobody's fault but their own. Despite his support for Keith's cause, Bradford fought off rumors that he was filtering out anti-Keithian titles. He appended a note to the back page of several of his pamphlets that read:

And whereas it is reported, That the Printer being a favorer of G.K. he will not print for any other, which is the reason the other party appear not in Print as well as G.K. These are to signify that the printer hath not yet refused to print anything for either Party; and also signifies that he doth not refuse, but is willing and ready to print anything for the future that G.K.'s opposers shall bring to him.⁶⁵

This invitation was met by silence from the pens of Keith's opponents, who still refused to go to press in this dispute.

⁶⁴ Keith, *A True Copy of Three Judgments*, 9.

⁶⁵ Keith, *A True Copy of Three Judgments*, 16.

Seven of Keith's supporters agreed to write and publish *An Expostulation with Thomas Lloyd* on July 18. At its core, the document sought to force Keith's opponents to debate the matters of contention in some type of open forum. They asked for a public hearing, but would have been pleased if Thomas Lloyd and those aligned with him took their case to the press. The Keithians asked their opposition not to "lurk in holes and corners, but come out openly and defend your selves."⁶⁶ As the schism and controversy was unfolding, they feared that colonial Quakers were being intimidated into deciding against Keith because of the way the meeting of ministers presented information to them. Keith's supporters complained of efforts to take the unjust decision of the prejudiced judges and "then impose it on all the meetings in these Provinces, when most of the friends thereof are great strangers to the Matter in Controversie, not knowing which party is in the right, but they must take said judgment upon trust from them."⁶⁷ They also intimated that some of the judges wore their magistrate's robes to the meetings when reading the judgment, reinforcing their authority and the importance of accepting their position. These appeals to authority disturbed Keith's followers, a group increasingly committed to open and free dialogical controversies in which rational decision making, not political authority, was the final arbiter of truth. Like the paper offered two weeks earlier, the *Expostulation* made a direct appeal to Keith's opponents to appear in print so

⁶⁶ George Keith, *An Expostulation with Thomas Lloyd, Samuel Jennings, And the rest of the Twenty Eight Unjust Judges and Signers of the Paper of Condemnation against George Keith and the rest of his Friends. And Complaint for a Publick Hearing and Tryal Before all Impartial People* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1692), 5.

⁶⁷ Keith, *An Expostulation with Thomas Lloyd*, 4.

that the debate could be fairly judged by all. They suggested that Lloyd should follow their example:

We are not afraid to bring it to the Test, but willing to appear openly, as hitherto we have done in Print, and not as your Practice is to report false things secretly abroad, which we know not whom to fasten it upon; but what we publish in print remains to be the Authors, whether true or false; if false, why don't you refute it, the Press is free and open for you, as for any?⁶⁸

The challenge was given extra force as William Bradford was one of the seven to affix their names to the paper. The calls for a public dialogue of the religious matters at dispute were becoming more and more insistent.

George Keith added yet another layer to the challenge when he printed *An Appeal from the Twenty Eight Judges*. In this pamphlet he reached beyond the meeting of ministers and directly to the mass of believers who made up the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. He hoped that the consensus of that larger meeting of believers could vindicate his cause by overriding the positions staked out by the meeting of ministers who dominated the monthly and quarterly meetings. This document carefully laid out the case for a full and open debate, both during the upcoming yearly meeting and before and afterwards in the press. Keith suggested that Friends in the New World should not have to submit blindly to their spiritual leaders. He ridiculed his opponents' "Tyrannical

⁶⁸ Keith, *An Expostulation with Thomas Lloyd*, 5.

usurpation over your consciences, as if ye were only to see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and not with without all due examination and trial, by an implicit Faith, Papist-like, from them.”⁶⁹ Instead, Keith reminded his readers that he did not command them to believe him, but rather attempted to persuade them with sound reasoning. Not only that, he had gone above and beyond his own duty in this case to help provide the people with the information they would need to make a decision. He listed all of the material that was in print and reminded them that he and his supporters had made them available so “that ye may have the better opportunity to examine these matters, and impartially and thoroughly to search into them, and judge of them.”⁷⁰ Confident that his cause was fully supported in the printed record, Keith was willing to submit to the judgment of the reading public.

Keith’s *Appeal* also elaborated a critique of the connections that had been forged in Pennsylvania between the Society of Friends and the top positions of leadership in colonial government. Previous pamphlets on this topic related the abuse to the way in which positions of political authority were being used to force compliance with the decisions of the meeting of ministers. Now Keith was openly questioning whether a person could remain true to their faith and still be involved in worldly government in any form. He was especially concerned with the compromises that worldly power imposed on a religious community committed to pacifism. Keith proposed the following general

⁶⁹ George Keith, *An appeal from the twenty eight judges to the spirit of truth & true judgment in all faithful Friends, called Quakers, that meet at this Yearly Meeting at Burlington, the 7 month, 1692* (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1692), 2.

⁷⁰ Keith, *An appeal from the twenty eight judges*, 3.

question for consideration at the yearly meeting: “Whether there is any Example or President [sic] for it in Scripture, or in all Christendom, that Ministers should engross the Worldly Government, as they do here? Which hath proved of a very evil Tendency.”⁷¹ These charges against Quakers in government came at an especially sensitive time as more non-Quakers were moving to Pennsylvania and expressing reservations about the appropriateness of allowing pacifists to control the government, particularly as King William’s War threatened frontier communities.⁷²

Thomas Lloyd and the other Quaker ministers were unmoved by the appeals to express themselves in print on this matter. They were, however, incensed at Keith’s challenge to the political authority of leading Friends and the government they formed. Five local magistrates, who were also noted Friends, signed a warrant on August 24, 1692 for the arrest of William Bradford for printing Keith’s attacks and John McComb for acting as a principal distributor of the material. Samuel Jennings, who also signed the Judgment of the Twenty Eight, affixed his name to the summons.⁷³ The warrant explained that Bradford and McComb were arrested “upon information of Publishing, Uttering & Spreading a Malitious and Seditious Paper entitled, An Appeal from the twenty eight Judges to the Spirit of Truth, &c. Tending to the Disturbance of the Peace

⁷¹ Keith, *An appeal from the twenty eight judges*, 7.

⁷² Alan Tully, *Forming American Politics: Ideals, Interests, and Institutions in Colonial New York and Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 268-269. The criticisms, however, made certain Quaker leaders more insistent upon finding arrangements and alternatives that would allow them to retain control of the government even after the demographics shifted away from Quaker predominance and idealism.

⁷³ Also signing the warrant were Robert Ewer, Arthur Cook, Samuel Richardson, and Humphery Murrey.

and Subversion of the Present Government.”⁷⁴ Refusing to post the required bail, Bradford and McComb were placed in prison to await a hearing. They remained in confinement until the next court of Quarter Sessions, which met in mid-December.⁷⁵ Bradford also had his type confiscated to shut press down until the matter was fully resolved. The next day, August 25, the same magistrates prepared a statement to be read by the town crier that called attention to the danger that George Keith posed to the peace of the community. They asked loyal residents to turn away from him, his followers, and his writings, which “by a wrong Insinuation have laboured to possess the readers of these pamphlets, that it is inconsistent for those who are ministers of the Gospel to Act as Magistrates.”⁷⁶ Conscious of the clamor that would be raised by imprisoning Keith, the magistrates allowed him to remain unrestrained until he, too, would face charges during the December session of the court.

In the meantime, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting convened in September to take up religious matters, obviously dominated by the schism and ongoing tensions associated with it. Keith’s appeal had little positive effect for him or his followers. Rather than overturn the previous judgments against Keith, this body stood behind the Judgment of

⁷⁴ George Keith, *New-England’s Spirit of Persecution Transmitted to Pennsylvania; and the Pretended Quaker found Persecuting the true Christian-Quaker, in the Tryal of Peter Boss, George Keith, Thomas Budd, and William Bradford* (New York: William Bradford, 1693), 4.

⁷⁵ They admit, however, that the confinement was not odious, as the Sheriff allowed them to occasionally leave for home to care for ill loved ones or on other circumstances of need. Keith, *New-England’s Spirit of Persecution Transmitted to Pennsylvania*, 11.

⁷⁶ Keith, *New-England’s Spirit of Persecution Transmitted to Pennsylvania*, 6.

the Twenty-Eight and issued its own condemnation of Keith and his supporters. The minutes recorded that

it was therefore agreed by this Meeting that a Testimony should be drawn up against the said George Keith and those that are gone out from among us, and are joyned with him in his and their Pernicious Separation he Reproach and Scandal of our Holy Professions and Traduceing and [Vilifying] such Friends he Ministry as are approved by us.⁷⁷

Keith's efforts to sway the membership of the yearly meeting in his favor were obviously unsuccessful. Thus George Keith, William Bradford and John McComb faced a double jeopardy of sorts. Already denounced in their religious appeal of last resort in America, they now faced legal proceedings at the hands of judges and juries composed largely of members of the very religious meetings that had already decided against them.

There was little mystery in the outcome of the trials. Keith's account of the proceedings was filled with evidence suggesting that the administration of justice was the last concern of the colonial courts of Pennsylvania. From the very outset, George Keith and his supporters objected to the composition of both the judicial bench and pool of jurors, claiming that both were filled with known antagonists of Keith and his religious ideas. As Keith later described events, each trial began with a similarly futile attempt for redress: "Clark. Dost thou object anything against any of these [jurors and judges]? Prisoner. Yes, I object against all of them that are called Quakers, because they are such

⁷⁷ Minutes of the yearly Meeting reproduced in Frost, *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, 151.

as I know to be deeply prejudiced against G.K. and all that favour him But they would not allow of his exception whereupon the Jury were attested.”⁷⁸ Each of the Keithians placed on trial were found guilty of the charges brought against them, and given light fines. The relatively light sentencing, however, was no consolation to Keith, who was already determined to find ways to vindicate himself and call attention to what he dubbed “a persecuting spirit.” What better way than again turn to the press, which Bradford had relocated to New York once he was released from prison? The move allowed both Bradford and Keith to print freely outside of the jurisdiction of Philadelphia’s Quaker meetings and magistrates.

Keith had already given ample warning that such an account would be forthcoming. Before pleading to the charges against him in trial, he begged leave to address the court briefly. Keith reminded all present that the eyes of the world were upon them, waiting to see if justice would be done in this case. He provided a stern warning that “if ye do anything against us that is not Fair and Just, not only these parts hereaway will hear of it, but Europe also; for if we be wronged (if God permit) we think to make it known to the world.”⁷⁹ True to his promise, Keith teamed up with William Bradford soon after his transplantation to New York to provide his version of events in a pamphlet meant to be distributed widely.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Keith, *New-England’s Spirit of Persecution Transmitted to Pennsylvania*, 15. Samuel Jennings, as judge, and Richard Walker as juror, were singled out in the text as having signed the Judgment of the Twenty Eight.

⁷⁹ Keith, *New-England’s Spirit of Persecution Transmitted to Pennsylvania*, 24.

⁸⁰ A London reprint of Keith’s account became available in the same year, 1693.

Frustrated by his inability to find authors willing to engage him in controversy among the Quakers of Pennsylvania, Keith's reproduction of the trial and final appeal went farther than ever before in artificially creating a dialogue. He recreated much of the trial for his readers in the form of a narrated morality play. The characters were introduced: judges, attorneys, jurors, and defendants. The various positions were outlined in a simple dialogue format, with occasional appeals to the reader to exercise independent judgment on the issues raised. For example, Keith recounted his attempts to show that there was no sound basis for the legal charges against him:

G.K. To call a man Proud and Imperious is not Actionable.

D. Lloyd. Tho' not Actionable, yet presentable.

G.K. If not actionable, not presentable.

D. Lloyd. That is not a good Consequence.

But let all impartial readers judge, whether it be not a good consequence.⁸¹

In this way Keith transported anyone who might have read his account to the jury box, asking them to deliberate and consider who had the better explanations and to decide whether justice or injustice prevailed in the court proceedings. Spurning any process of legal appeals, Keith would rest his hopes in receiving an acquittal from the reading public, whom he trusted to adjudicate the matter fairly after receiving a more complete testimony in his defense as outlined in his pamphlets.

⁸¹ Keith, *New England's Spirit of Persecution*, 27.

At that stage in the early months of 1693, Keith was most likely already preparing to return to London in an effort to receive the vindication of weighty Friends in the Metropolis. Yet before he embarked on his return journey, a final scene was still to unfold, dramatically capturing the extent of the division Keith would leave in his wake. Although meetings had been contentious for the better part of a year, one particular weekly meeting that Spring went farther than any other in showing how contentious meetings had become. The main meeting house in Philadelphia had a slightly raised gallery in which sat the recognized ministers of the meeting, the Public Friends. Keith once sat among these important Quakers and benefited from the elevated position to add authority to the messages he shared with the congregation through the inspiration of the Inner Light. With his fall from grace, however, he was barred from entering the gallery, physically representing the distance that was placed between Keith and the representatives of the Philadelphia Yearly meeting. One Spring morning, Quakers were stunned to learn that a second, make-shift gallery had been erected by Keith's supporters overnight and he was using it to challenge the ministers in the opposite gallery. A shouting match ensued and chaos ruled the day. Although it is unclear when or how it happened, axes were brought into the meeting house and Keith's supporters "cut and tore down the posts, rails, seats, stairs, and bottom of [the main gallery] laying it level with the floor of the Meeting-house."⁸² The bonds of fellowship among Friends in Philadelphia and its environs were clearly frayed by the schism and the tension only grew

⁸² Thomas Ellwood, *A Further Discovery of that spirit of contention & division which hath appeared of late in George Keith, &c.* (London: T. Sowle, 1694), 50.

worse with these aggressive episodes. Keith's return to London later that year opened up a door to reconciliation among Pennsylvania's Quakers, but it would be a long and slow process.⁸³

III

William Bradford's experience as a printer during the Keithian controversy led to the closing of the first chapter of Philadelphia's print history while simultaneously opening a new one for New York City. After his imprisonment and trial, Bradford gladly packed up his press and left the banks of the Delaware to relocate to a region that was anxious to establish its first printing press. New York's importance to England's North American empire was growing rapidly, largely because of its indispensable mediation of the Iroquois alliance, but also as a result of New York City's excellent harbor and mercantile connections.⁸⁴ The establishment of a local printing house was recognized as

⁸³ The story of the long process of reconciliation among Quakers after the Keithian schism is told in Jon Butler, "Into Pennsylvania's Spiritual Abyss: The Rise and Fall of the Later Keithians, 1693-1704," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 101 (1977), 151-170.

⁸⁴ For more about the Iroquois alliance, see Daniel Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992) and Daniel Richter and James H. Merrell, eds., *Beyond the Covenant Chain: The Iroquois and their Neighbors in Indian North America, 1600-1800* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), especially Richard Haan's Chapter 3: "Covenant and Consensus: Iroquois and English, 1676-1760." For more general references to the development of New York City and its relationship to see Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

one among many infrastructural improvements that would facilitate even further growth for the colony.

Surprisingly, given his track record in Philadelphia, Bradford's press in New York largely steered clear of controversy for the remainder of the 1690s and became a reliable mouthpiece for the proclamations of New York's governor and council. In fact, of the 107 documents that Bradford printed between 1693 and 1699, 75 of them were either broadside proclamations or collections of laws officially released by the colonial government. A variety of factors combined to push this outcome. The first was likely the unwillingness of Bradford to risk his livelihood again after the harrowing experience of facing imprisonment and fines for his role in the Keithian controversy. With steady work from the colonial government of New York, he may have found it far safer to ensure that he did not bite the hand that fed him. From the government's perspective, there was a vested interest in carefully monitoring the local press, keeping it free of controversy to promote the healing of the deep political wounds inflicted by that colony's experience of the Glorious Revolution as it played out in Jacob Leisler's Rebellion.

Leisler's Rebellion was a complicated tangle of events that illuminate some of the distinct challenges New York faced in forging a settlement after 1688 in a formerly Dutch colony controlled by England after a coup that saw the English crown go to a Dutch prince. The matter was further complicated by a local clash of misunderstood religious and political interests, lingering ethnic divisions, and larger-than-life personalities. Beginning in 1688 New York's colonial government was folded into the

structure of the Dominion of New England. This was less of a change for New Yorkers than for New Englanders. The Duke of York's proprietary colony had been ruled without an assembly by an appointed governor and council ever since the English takeover in 1664.⁸⁵ Sir Edmund Andros and his most trusted advisors at the head of the Dominion had already served James II faithfully in New York. This familiarity did not necessarily translate into contentment and passive obedience, though. Rather than resisting the Dominion based upon Whiggish political principles, dissent in New York was centered in lower income Dutch households that mistrusted English rule in general and the Catholicism of James II and many of his appointees in particular. These Dutch families identified with an Orangist tradition that was rooted in a virulent anti-Popery that took great pride in the Dutch leadership of the military forces that protected Protestant interests from the overarching threat of French expansion in Continental Europe.⁸⁶ It was from this tradition that Jacob Leisler arose to lead the local overthrow of the disgraced Dominion of New England in late May and June, 1689. After learning of the toppling of the Andros regime in Boston and the imprisonment of its leading members, Leisler placed himself at the head of a local militia and effectively replicated the Williamite

⁸⁵ Except for a brief period during 1683 when the Duke of York, politically weakened by the Popish Plot, allowed an assembly that promptly wrote a charter of liberties to ensure its continuation. The assembly was dissolved and the charter rejected following James' political recovery and accession to the throne. See Randall Balmer, *A Perfect Babel of Confusion: Dutch Religion and English Culture in the Middle Colonies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 29.

⁸⁶ Balmer, *A Perfect Babel of Confusion*, 31. John Murrin also pointed to this as a central element to Jacob Leisler's identity and his appeal to Dutch followers in John M. Murrin, "The Menacing Shadow of Louis XIV and the Rage of Jacob Leisler: The Constitutional Ordeal of Seventeenth-Century New York," in Stanley N. Katz and John M. Murrin, eds. *Colonial America: Essays in Politics and Social Development* 5th ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 2001).

victory in New York. Lieutenant Governor Francis Nicholson fled to England as Leisler and his forces gained control of the main fort in Manhattan and seized leaders of the former regime.⁸⁷ The revolutionaries enthusiastically proclaimed allegiance and submission to William III and announced their intention to hold the colony until further instructions arrived from England. Leisler seemed poised to be lauded as New York's heroic liberator. But it was not to be.

Jacob Leisler's fall from grace had many dimensions. One of the most critical was his inability to widen his base of support to include English settlers and wealthy Dutch merchants. Whether unwilling or unable to stop it, Leisler merely watched on as his supporters ran riot in the streets of New York, vandalizing the homes and shops of the former elite who they blamed for collaborating with James II and repressing them economically. Under these circumstances, it is no surprise that the wealthy and well connected settlers would join together in opposition to Leisler's leadership, which they blamed for the ongoing chaos and instability. This opposition brought out the very worst of Leisler's explosive personality. He fumed and raged against any and all opposition, arbitrarily imprisoning some outspoken critics, linking them to clandestine efforts to topple his government and bring back Catholic rule.⁸⁸ Matters came to a head in the summer of 1690 as Leisler's opponents sought to politically outmaneuver him by refusing to pay the taxes for Leisler's defensive fortifications and writing to the king for

⁸⁷ For a more comprehensive account of the revolution see Jerome R. Reich, *Leisler's Rebellion: A Study in Democracy in New York, 1664-1720* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953).

⁸⁸ Leisler's volatile personality is explored thoroughly in Murrin, "The Menacing Shadow of Louis XIV and the Rage of Jacob Leisler."

relief. Playing up their own commitments to the ascendant Whig political philosophy of the age, they made the king aware of how New York was ruled by a tyrannical and oppressive mob with Leisler at its head. They asked for a new governor and basic political privileges so that the rule of law and prosperity could return to the colony. With the aid of well placed allies and friends, the petition was received favorably by William III, who agreed to send New York a different governor with instructions to restore order through an elective assembly.

Leisler's administration, and life, ended grimly upon the arrival of Governor Henry Sloughter's fleet. In a final tragic comedy of errors, Leisler provoked the newly arriving troops and governor by refusing to surrender the fort to Major Richard Ingoldsby, whose ship was separated from Governor Sloughter's in a storm and arrived in February, well before the new governor could show his commission. Leisler's legally justified, but ill-tempered refusal to concede led to a tense six week standoff with occasional skirmishes leading to deaths on both sides. When Governor Sloughter finally arrived in May 1691 he was incensed to learn that his troops were attacked by Leisler in the preceding weeks. He made common cause with the local elite and brought Jacob Leisler and his leading accomplices to trial for treason. After finding all defendants guilty, the governor reprieved all but Jacob Leisler and his son-in-law, Jacob Milbourne. These two men were hanged, drawn and quartered in public on May 16, 1691. The pendulum of power had clearly swung back to an Anglo-Dutch coalition of elite anti-

Leislerians, but the political culture in New York would remain bitterly factionalized and divisive for many years to come.⁸⁹

Given this backdrop, it is understandable that the colonial leaders in New York preferred to steer clear of public discussions of these troubled times. Any printed references to Leisler or the rebellion were fastidiously avoided for a full seven years after his execution. It was only in one anonymous pamphlet in 1698 that the issue was taken up in the New York press, and only to ensure that the government position held. The pamphlet was written in the form of a letter from an anonymous gentleman of New York who professed an amazement “to hear that some Gentlemen still have a good Opinion of the late Disorders committed by Capt. Jacob Leysler, and his Accomplices, in New York.”⁹⁰ The epistle recounted the events of 1689 to 1691 from the perspective of the anti-Leislerians. The key argument was that a convention of former counselors was in place and ready to proclaim for William and Mary and hold the colony for them when Leisler led a rabble to believe a power vacuum existed and usurped the government for his own purposes. It reminded readers that Leisler was justly executed for his disorderly and treasonous conduct. This letter was met with a rapid response from the press in Boston with another anonymously written pamphlet that claimed to vindicate Leislerians

⁸⁹ Patricia U. Bonomi, *A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 75-82. Bonomi suggests that colonial New York always had a host of political divisions, but that those seen especially between 1691 and 1710 cannot be understood apart from the bitterness brought by Leisler's Rebellion. See also Lawrence Leder, “The Politics of Upheaval in New York, 1689-1709,” *New York Historical Society Quarterly*, XLIV (Oct., 1960) 413-27

⁹⁰ s.n., *Letter from a gentleman of the city of New-York to another, concerning the troubles which happen'd in that province in the time of the late happy revolution*. (New York: William Bradford, 1698), 3.

as loyal defenders of the spirit of the Glorious Revolution. This author repeatedly referred to the original pamphleteer as “the Libeller” and suggested that “had the Author Printed the Letter ten years before, viz. the time of the Revolution, he would have come under the penalty of spreading false News . . . and deserves the death call’d the Maiden.”⁹¹ This author highlighted the illegality of the commissions issued by James II and the unsuitability for office of New York’s many Catholic and crypto-Catholic counselors in the Dominion government and the Dongan administration preceding it. Given this lack of legitimate authority following the collapse of the Dominion, Leisler was presented as the hero that stood up for the Protestant faith and the true legacy of William and Mary’s entrance into England. As such he was wrongfully accused of treason and should never have been taken from office, much less executed. The debate abruptly ended as neither side followed up on these original pamphlets. It is very possible that the authorities in New York had not anticipated a response to their original letter and decided to cut the discussion short rather than risk a continuing dialogue about issues that remained politically sensitive in their jurisdiction.

On those rare occasions when Bradford departed from printing government proclamations, he avoided local controversies by publishing pamphlets to be distributed outside of New York. In the first years of his residency he published several pamphlets

⁹¹ s.n., *Loyalty vindicated from the reflections of a virulent pamphlet called (A Letter from a gentleman of New-York, concerning the troubles which happened in that province, in the time of the late happy revolution) wherein the libellous author falsley [sic] scandalises those loyal gentlemen, who courageously threw off the absolute slavery that province then lay under; and declar'd for His present Majesty, the Protestant religion, and the English laws.* (Boston: John Allen, 1698), 2.

that were the parting shots in the Keithian controversy that chased him out of Philadelphia. The most important of these was George Keith's *New England's Spirit of Persecution*, but it was not the final word in the matter. Bradford also published the works of two of Keith's former followers who left the Quaker fellowship as a result of the schism and its aftermath. Elias Burling wrote in the prophetic tradition, echoing Keith's suggestion that Quakers in the New World had fallen from the purer faith of earlier generations and warned them of the frightening consequences of such backsliding.⁹² Daniel Leeds' pamphlet was more of a self-justification in the face of trans-Atlantic accusations against him and other followers of George Keith.⁹³ These pamphlets were both controversial in that they put forward arguments that stirred the pot of contention that had so recently roiled Pennsylvania. They did not lead to continuing dialogue, though. Quaker leaders in Pennsylvania had no inclination to respond and even if they did, Bradford knew quite well that his services had not been replaced and the Quakers lacked a printer. He may have taken great pleasure in throwing these pamphlet bombs into the yard of those who had been responsible for his imprisonment in 1692.

The New York Press also lobbed a series of print challenges into various parts of New England. Showing that he held no grudges against orthodox Quakers, Bradford

⁹² Elias Burling, *A call to back-sliding Israel, and may be as a necessary word of caution and admonition to the inhabitants of East and West-Jersey, Pennsylvania, &c. as a remembrancer to them to call to mind their former state, and whence they are fallen. With some short account of my leaving a second time that party of them called Quakers, which have condemned [sic] G. Keith, and all that own him, of his testimony for the crucified Jesus, our alone advocate in heaven.* (New York: William Bradford, 1694.)

⁹³ Daniel Leeds, *The innocent vindicated from the falsehood & slanders of certain certificates sent from America on behalf of Samuell Jenings, and made publick by J.P. in Old England.* (New York: William Bradford, 1695).

opened his press to Thomas Maule, a stalwart of the Salem Meeting, who swiped at Puritan beliefs and dredged up controversies relating to the recent witchcraft panic in his home town.⁹⁴ Unwilling to reopen the wounds and divisions of 1692, local authorities in Massachusetts did not respond in the press, but instead brought charges against Maule for distributing his book without a proper license.⁹⁵ A Salem jury found Maule not guilty but he was infuriated by the process and he turned again to New York to have a second book printed: *New England Persecutors Mauled with their own Weapons*.⁹⁶ The piece emphasized the injustices that accompanied colonial efforts to silence critics and stifle access to a free press. Maule was met with more icy silence from Massachusetts print shops, but no further prosecution. A more explicitly political challenge to New England came when Gershom Bulkeley reunited with Bradford in 1694 to issue *Some Seasonable Considerations for the Good People of Connecticut*. He enjoined his fellow colonists to consider their religious and political obligations to be obedient to the King and his laws, especially during a dangerous time of war with France, even if such obedience led to reformulations of their colonial boundaries. The final ten pages of the pamphlet explained why New York's authorities approved of such an intrusion on their neighbors'

⁹⁴ Thomas Maule, *Truth held forth and maintained according to the testimony of the holy prophets, Christ and his apostles recorded in the Holy Scriptures. With some account of the judgements of the Lord lately inflicted upon New-England by witch craft. To which is added, something concerning the fall of Adam, his state in the fall, and way of restoration to God again, with many other weighty things, necessary for people to weigh and consider. Written in true love to the souls of my neighbours, and all men, which includeth that love to them, as to my self* (New York: William Bradford, 1695).

⁹⁵ Maule Thomas, *American National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).

⁹⁶ Thomas Maule, *Nevv-England pesecutors [sic] mauled vvith their own vveapons. Giving some account of the bloody laws made at Boston against the Kings subjects that dissented from their way of worship. Together with a brief account of the imprisonment and tryal of Thomas Maule of Salem, for publishing a book, entituled, Truth held forth and maintained, &c.* (New York: William Bradford, 1697).

political life. Bulkeley endorsed an annexation of Connecticut to New York by systematically refuting a series of hypothetical objections to the merge.⁹⁷ The authorities of Massachusetts, often having their own eye on annexing their western neighbor, opened up their press for a protest against Bulkeley's suggestions. Connecticut's governor and council discussed Bulkeley's pamphlet and decided "it was thought our duty & Interest to give it an answer; and not by silence to be Accessory to our own (so great) wrongs."⁹⁸ John Allyn, speaking for the leadership, suggested that Bulkeley merely wanted to stir up factions and give the colony a bad name so that others might attack its sovereignty. Allyn also repeatedly highlighted that Bulkeley's pamphlet was printed and licensed by New York, suggesting that the ulterior motives of that colony must be considered by impartial readers. The dialogue ended as both sides rested their cases after these opening arguments.

As important as these controversial pamphlets from Bradford's press were to the people of Philadelphia, Salem, and Hartford when they were published, it must be remembered that they were small islands of dialogue in a sea of government proclamations published in New York in the 1690s. In fact, each of the print centers in North America eliminated most dialogical materials from their publications by the middle

⁹⁷ Gershom Bulkeley, *Some seasonable considerations for the good people of Connecticut* (New York: William Bradford, 1694), 51-61.

⁹⁸ John Allyn, *Their Majesties colony of Connecticut in New-England vindicated, from the abuses of a pamphlet, licensed and printed at New-York 1694. Intituled, Some seasonable considerations for the good people of Connecticut. By an answer thereunto.* (Boston: Bartholomew Green, 1694), 3 of preface.

of the decade. New England's government had effectively re-asserted its legal control over the presses of the Boston area. Philadelphia was silenced by the departure of William Bradford and would not have a press again until 1699 when Jansen Reinier arrived in the city of brotherly love. In New York William Bradford forged a relationship with the local government that created the most thoroughgoing culture of political proclamations of any of the colonies. Colonial American print culture had become quite calm by the mid-1690s.

But it must be remembered that the calmness of this era was only the momentary lull offered by the eye of a hurricane. The original stranglehold of proclamatory printing maintained for the first half-century of the press's existence in the colonies had been destroyed by successive waves of intense controversial dialogue in 1689 and again in 1692. The first wave, hitting Massachusetts along with the political upheavals of the Glorious Revolution could still be felt in the early 1690s in ongoing printed discussions about public policies linked to the prosecution of King William's War and the proper defense against the frightful attacks of Satan and his witches. Renewed limits upon the press designed to eliminate dialogue were quickly tested by an ill-fated attempt to establish a newspaper in Boston and the irregular, but continuing appearance of controversial pamphlets relating to religious or political matters. The second wave was centered in Philadelphia and linked to an emotionally charged religious schism within the newly planted Quaker community. Even though only one party to the dispute turned to the press, the steady stream of imprints issued by the partisans in 1692 contained all of

the hallmarks of dialogical literature. Readers were presented with appeals to become impartial judges of the dispute, using their reason to determine whose arguments were the strongest. Such efforts to shape public opinion through the press mirrored those seen in New England in 1689 and were unlike anything that had ever been printed regularly in the colonies before.

The combined force of these two waves of dialogical pamphleteering completely refigured the landscape of American print culture. Despite the seemingly successful efforts to tame the presses again for the proclamatory uses of local governments, important new precedents had been set. Regulators and printers, authors and readers within the cultural orbits of the colonial print centers all shared an experience of the strength and effect of dialogical printing. Powerful forces could then pull in opposition to even the most sweeping regulatory efforts. Colonial readers could press for the return of pamphlets with a greater variety of subjects and which paid them greater respect as rational judges and important members of the public sphere. Authors could seek greater freedom and opportunity by tearing down the restrictions thrown up by the virtual monopolies of “authorized” writers that dominated the culture of proclamations. Printers could gain greater financial returns and wider opportunities to impact public affairs by freeing access to their services to more types of writing. With growing colonial populations, more printers operating in different jurisdictions, and the weight of recent precedents of openness, the new restrictions on printing were not effective for long. The calm of the late 1690s would be broken again with the start of a new century.

CHAPTER 6: DEBATES OF THE NEW CENTURY: CONSOLIDATING A DIALOGICAL PRINT CULTURE

Colonists in British North America welcomed the eighteenth century hard on the heels of revolutionary transformations. Many of these changes have been well documented and explored in various contexts. The political settlements following the Glorious Revolution led to different interactions between colonial governments and a new power structure in London.¹ Religiously, new commitments to Protestant toleration in England provided additional protections to dissenters in the colonies as well.² The arrival of King William also embroiled the nation and its colonies in imperial rivalries with the French that required colonists to mobilize men and money for extended military needs.³ In addition to these recognized forces of change, colonial America had also gone through a revolution in its cultural infrastructure of communications. The printing presses of North America, once a reliable producer of official proclamations, became an outlet for dialogical texts in the era of the Glorious Revolution, but would it remain that way? It quickly became clear that the printed dialogues of the 1690s were not a mere flash in the pan, but rather the opening stages of a permanent transformation in colonial

¹ David Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972) and Richard Johnson, *Adjustment to Empire: The New England Colonies, 1675-1715* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1981).

² Chris Beneke, *Beyond Toleration: The Religious Origins of American Pluralism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 33-35 and Edwin S. Gaustad, *Church and State in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

³ Robert Leckie, *"A Few Acres of Snow": The Saga of the French and Indian Wars* (New York: J. Wiley & Sons, 1999).

print culture. The first quarter of the eighteenth century saw a continuation and expansion of the dialogue-driven printing styles that emerged with the Glorious Revolution.

Not only did printed controversies continue into the new century, but the range and scope of debated topics expanded. Printed religious disputes included matters of church discipline previously left unchallenged. New denominations gained access to the press, such as the Anglicans, while others, including Pennsylvania's Quakers, who had earlier been reluctant to engage in controversies now embraced the new print culture of dialogues. The religious debates of the new century included disagreements within as well as between denominational groups.⁴ Additionally, the number of pamphlets engaged in disputing secular concerns expanded over time. Discussions of electoral politics grew alongside an explosion of interest in monetary policy, a topic that had been only briefly considered in previous American imprints. These expanded discussions of political economy between 1714 and 1721 track closely with Habermas's vision of the bourgeois public sphere and provide the best sustained example of the colonies replicating the third and final stage of development that Britain had passed through in the Glorious Revolution highlighted by Lake and Pincus.⁵ Overall, colonial American

⁴ This coincides closely with what Jon Butler has noted as a period of denominational organization and rejuvenation from the late seventeenth into the eighteenth century, see Jon Butler, *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), chapter 4.

⁵ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989, originally published in 1962) and Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, eds., *The Politics of the Public Sphere in early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

readers in the new century were asked to consider a broader range of religious and secular topics as it became more commonplace to use the press for dialogical purposes.⁶

The increased variety of debated themes was matched by an expanding number of genres for debate. In addition to the many books, pamphlets, and broadsides written in a dialogical style, the web of controversial printing options became denser with the advent of sustainable colonial newspapers. Beginning in 1704 John Campbell, postmaster of Boston, began printing the *Boston News-letter* as a weekly newspaper. Well aware of how *Publick Occurrences* was suppressed after its first issue in 1690, Campbell was careful and focused on international news, local shipping and business information, and a few classified advertisements in each issue.⁷ He steered clear of local controversies in its opening decade and a half of existence. The *Boston News-Letter* gained competition in 1719 when William Brooker was appointed postmaster and promptly established his own newspaper, the *Boston Gazette*. With competing papers, and firmer roots in the communications infrastructure of Boston, the editors began printing more controversial topics and essays in the newspapers during the 1720s. In the midst of the banking and currency debates in Boston, pamphlets were written in direct dialogue with newspaper entries while letters and essays in the *News-letter* and *Gazette* were used to respond to

⁶ Controversies about religion and banking lie at the heart of T.H. Breen and Timothy Hall's effort to draw the discussion of the public sphere's origins into the colonial era by focusing on the 1740s. See T.H. Breen and Timothy Hall, "Structuring the Provincial Imagination: The Rhetoric and Experience of Social Change in Eighteenth-Century New England," *American Historical Review* 103 (1998), 1411-1439. This chapter outlines extensive debates about religion and banking that predate Breen and Hall's by twenty years.

⁷ Campbell and his *Boston News-letter* are the focus of extensive attention in Charles E. Clark, *The Public Prints: The Newspaper in Anglo-American Culture, 1665-1740* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 77-102.

certain pamphlets. Much like their recognized role in Europe, newspapers in colonial America became an important part of the expanding public sphere.⁸

I

The first several sets of colonial American print controversies in the eighteenth century revolved around religious disputes. This is not surprising given the continuing dominance of clerical voices in the print record of early America. Sermons, catechisms, and religious materials far outstripped other genres or topics printed in North America throughout the seventeenth century and into the first decades of the eighteenth. The dominance would become less pronounced over time, but was still firmly in place at the turn of the century. What had changed most dramatically, however, from the middle of the previous century was the variety of clerical voices that gained access to American printing presses. With this variety came conflicting claims to religious truth and occasionally direct challenges that resulted in continuing printed dialogue and debate about the sacred. Following the religious and political changes spurred by the Glorious Revolution, no single religious group could claim exclusive authority to completely shut their opponents out of the public square. Instead, they had to moderate their tone and make rational appeals to readers who held increasingly important positions as arbiters of

⁸ See, Joad Raymond, "The Newspaper, Public Opinion, and the Public Sphere in the Seventeenth Century," *Prose Studies* 21, no. 2 (1998): 109-140. Clark clearly recognized that colonial American newspapers played a role in expanding the public sphere in America, however, his arguments have gained little traction among American scholars of the colonial era. see Clark, *The Public Prints*, 4.

the disputes because of the rise of legitimate choices in their religious experience. Not only could colonists choose among more denominational options with greater protections for dissenters, it became apparent, especially in Boston, that different churches within the same Congregational communion began to offer different religious and social experiences.

Boston's religious life increased its variety with the formation of the Brattle Street Church in 1699. The openly progressive congregation not only became a competitor to the city's more traditional congregations, but became the flashpoint for an open confrontation of ministers in the local press.⁹ This may have happened in any event, but it was made all the more likely as the church's foundation was accompanied by a high profile publication of their core beliefs and organizational principles. Benjamin Colman, the author of their joint declaration, presented the group's innocent intentions: "We think it convenient, for preventing all Misapprehensions and Jealousies, to publish our Aims and Designs herein, together with those Principles and Rules we intend by GODS Grace to adhere unto."¹⁰ Their brief statement affirmed the new congregation's commitments to the theological positions of the Westminster Catechism and the liturgical traditions of New England and the churches of the United Brethren in England. Those innocuous

⁹ The Disputes surrounding the Brattle Street Church must also be seen in the context of growing anxiety among the Mathers and others about the increasing liberalism among Harvard tutors. Such concerns were prime motivating factors in the foundation of Yale College in 1701. See J. David Hoeveler, *Creating the American Mind: Intellect and Politics in the Colonial Colleges* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 42-52. Richard Warch, *School of the Prophets: Yale College, 1701-1740* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).

¹⁰ Benjamin Colman, *A manifesto or declaration, set forth by the undertakers of the new church now erected in Boston in New-England, November 17. 1699.* (Boston: John Allen and Bartholomew Green, 1699), 1.

positions were followed by some more controversial decisions about church organization. The Brattle Street church stated that they would not rely on public testimonies of faith to determine membership, that the traditionally thorny issue of baptismal access would be decided at parents' discretion in consultation with the clergy, and that access to communion while remaining holy, would be determined by private applications to the ministers. Some of these innovations had already been adopted quietly in certain New England congregations, but the new church on Brattle Square changed the dynamic of public debate about these issues by openly trumpeting them through the local press. The Declaration became an instant sensation in Boston, driving local discussion. The published manifesto was so central to the identity of the church that the new congregation was often referred to simply as the Manifesto Church.¹¹

The ministers of the traditional churches, led by the father and son team of Increase and Cotton Mather, orchestrated a series of coordinated responses to the perceived threat inherent in the formation of a liberal church in their midst. They republished the Cambridge Platform as outlined by the synod of 1647. The chosen title for the reprint was calculated to fight against the recent innovations by reminding readers of *The Old Principles of New England*.¹² Increase Mather provided a less subtle swipe at

¹¹ Samuel Sewall uses this designation frequently in his diary and provides strong evidence about the impact of the Manifesto's publication. Sewall recorded expostulating with Mr. Colman about various points of church practice on Dec. 9, 1699 and wryly noted that when the Manifesto church held its first public meeting on Christmas Eve of that year 'Our Meeting was pretty much thin'd by it.' See M. Hasley Thomas, ed. *The Diary of Samuel Sewall* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973), 418-419.

¹² Cambridge Synod, *The old principles of New England. Or, Thirty three articles extracted from, and contrasting of, The platform of church-discipline, agreed, by the renowned synod, of churches from four colonies, assembled at Cambridge, 1647.* (Boston: John Allen and Bartholomew Green, 1700).

the Manifesto church by defending the traditions of New England from declension in either faith or church order. Echoing John Winthrop's famous imagery of the region as a City Upon a Hill, Mather noted that "the Truths which respect Church Order are they which these churches above any other are concerned to maintain: and an Apostacy from them would in New England be a greater Sin and provocation to Christ, than in any Place in the whole world."¹³ In this way he raised the stakes of the dispute from a matter of local concern to one of cosmic dimensions, suggesting that the Brattle Street Church represented a threat to the very heart and soul of the Reformed faith.

Undisturbed by the subtle swipes and allegations of degeneracy, defenders of the new church became more aggressive in defending their cause. A group from the congregation wrote a direct response to Increase Mather which they entitled, *Gospel Order Revived*, using a mocking tone to suggest that Mather's Order of the Gospel was worn and lifeless. When they sought to have the pamphlet published in Boston anonymously, printer Bartholomew Green suggested that such a request would require the permission of William Stoughton, the Lieutenant Governor. Knowing that such permission would not be forthcoming, they turned to William Bradford's press in New York and released their satirical book to the public.¹⁴ Like with the Keithian challenge of

¹³ Increase Mather, *The order of the Gospel, professed and practised by the churches of Christ in New England, justified, by the Scripture, and by the writings of many learned men, both ancient and modern divines; in answer to several questions, relating to church discipline* (Boston: John Allen and Bartholomew Green, 1700), 7.

¹⁴ s.n., *Gospel order revived, being an answer to a book lately set forth by the Reverend Mr. Increase Mather, president of Harvard College, &c. Entitled, The order of the Gospel, &c. Dedicated to the Churches of Christ in New-England. By sundry ministers of the Gospel in New-England.* (New York: William Bradford, 1700).

the 1690s, New Englanders learned that presses outside of their jurisdiction would make it impossible to fully squelch the voices of dissent who could find a colonial print outlet in a fraction of the time it would have taken to have the manuscript sent to London and returned in printed form. In this case Bradford published a mocking rebuttal to the most respected minister in Boston, but attached an advertisement that tried to convince local readers of the extent to which access to the presses of the Boston area were controlled by the Mathers as gatekeepers, a topic that would itself spark further controversy in the press.

Cotton Mather took exception to the most recent imprint and its attacks on his father and jumped headlong into the ongoing debate. In a prefatory letter to his readers, the younger Mather noted, “There is a Pamphlet Entitled, Gospel Order Revived, lately Printed at New-York, of which some say, That If it had been called, The Order of the Gospel Reviled, that had been a very true and proper Title for such a Discourse.”¹⁵ Later in the same epistle to readers, Mather returned to a debating convention that he used against George Keith, suggesting that his opponents required no response before embarking on the supposedly unnecessary response. In this case he expressed confidence in the Christians of New England, writing “Nor is there any fear of our Churches being taken with a pretended answer to the Order of the Gospel, when the Arguments brought against it, are nothing but scoffs, and Flouts, and Foolish Jeers, without so much as one

¹⁵ Cotton Mather, *A collection, of some of the many offensive matters, contained in a pamphlet, intituled, The order of the Gospel revived* (Boston: s.n., 1701), 2.

solid reason throughout their whole Discourse.”¹⁶ Despite his certainty that the churches would ignore the Brattle Street insurgents, he produced nearly twenty more pages of attacks on the upstart congregation and provided rationale to reject their modifications of church discipline in the region. In a broad sweep, he accused the authors of *The Gospel Order Revived* of breaking the third, fifth, and ninth commandments, violating the spirit of Christ’s Golden Rule, and fomenting a plot against the churches of New England which he outlined in twelve steps. When describing this plot, Mather provided insight into his recognition of the effectiveness of using the press to disseminate these dangerous ideas: “Are not these Twelve Points a fair Beginning? And, if the Innovators get these points once to gain in the Countrey, where they disperse their Pamphlets, will they stop at these?”¹⁷ While on the one hand he was frightening readers with the prospect of further innovations, he was also providing further evidence of the importance of the extended reach of ideas amplified by an effective use of the technology of printing.

An important element of this relatively small print debate in Boston was the way in which it drew attention to the power held by those able to control access to the press and its ability to shape public affairs. In the first fifty years of the press’s operation in New England the Puritan establishment in church and state exerted tight and unquestioned control over who was able to publish and what they were able to communicate in that medium. Even as that control was slipping away from would-be

¹⁶ Mather, *A collection, of some of the many offensive matters, contained in a pamphlet, intituled, The order of the Gospel revived*, 4.

¹⁷ Mather, *A collection, of some of the many offensive matters, contained in a pamphlet, intituled, The order of the Gospel revived*, 24.

censors during the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution, there were no explicit defenses of open access to the press like what emerged at the turn of the century relating to the Brattle Street church. When the authors of the *Gospel Order Revived* turned to New York to print their response and attached an advertisement accusing Bartholomew Green of being overawed by the Mathers, it created a firestorm of controversy which ultimately led to legal actions in which depositions were taken in an effort to resolve why the pamphlet was not published in Boston. Previous scholars have treated Green's refusal to print *The Gospel Order Revived* and the legal battle that ensued as "one of those curious side-plays of history unimportant in itself but revealing about the society in which it happens."¹⁸ With a new perspective on the importance of the transition the colonial press was making from a print culture of proclamations to one of dialogues, the matter can be seen less as a side-play and more as a central act in advancing consolidation of the new print culture of dialogues.

The importance of the episode is enhanced by the fact that Bartholomew Green felt it necessary to reprint the depositions of each side in a pamphlet designed to salvage his reputation. The new assumptions relating to press access can be seen in both the concerns expressed by the Brattle Street contingent and the nature of the response tendered by Bartholomew Green. Among those deposed from the manifesto church were Thomas Brattle and Zechariah Tuthill. They testified, and Green confirmed, that there was an initial agreement to print *The Gospel Order Revived* after the first meeting of the

¹⁸ Michael G. Hall, *The Last American Puritan: The Life of Increase Mather, 1639-1723* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), 300.

parties. It was when these same gentlemen returned to the shop that they learned of Green's reticence to print the pamphlet. Brattle and Tuthill testified, "they went to Bartholomew Green's to see if he were ready to Print the Answer to Old Mr. Mather's Gospel order, but he was then unwilling to print it, because (as he said) it would displease some of his Friends; and to the best of their remembrance, he mentioned particularly the Mathers."¹⁹ This unwillingness to print the piece for fear of upsetting the Mathers was especially troublesome to Brattle and Green. They reminded the court that this was not the first instance of closing off the press to dissenting voices, recalling that "they told him, it was a shame so worthy a Minister as Mr. Stoddard must send so far as England to have his book printed, when young Mr. Mather had the press at his pleasure?"²⁰ The gentlemen from Brattle Street were laying out a moral, but not legally binding, case for an open press available to local authors regardless of divergent opinions.

Bartholomew Green did not fundamentally dispute the value of an open press. His printing of the depositions and public airing of the matter suggests that he recognized the importance of fighting off any stigma that might be attached to him or his reputation if he were thought to be a mere tool of the Mathers. In Green's estimation, it was important to verify that he had indeed contracted to print the pamphlet at first, proving that he was not averse to printing whatever came to him. He went on to testify, though, that "when they insisted upon doing it with Secrecy I considered that for ought I knew,

¹⁹ Bartholomew Green, *The printer's advertisement. Whereas there is prefixed unto a late pamphlet entituled, Gospel order revived, printed at New York, an advertisement* (Boston: John Allen and Bartholomew Green, 1701), 4.

²⁰ Green, *The printer's advertisement*, 5.

Good men in the country might be offended at it.”²¹ The line that was crossed, according to Green, was not the pamphlet’s contents, but the desire to publish it anonymously. His concern about causing offense seems to have been well founded. He later testified “After they were gone [Brattle and Tuthill], it came into my mind what great disturbance the Manifesto had made (which I printed very Privately at said Tuthill’s desire) which made me the more thoughtful, lest this might give more Offence.”²² And he had good reason to be concerned about the tightrope he walked. On one side he might fall out of the graces of the public because of mistrust of his independence and good will. On the other he ran the risk of seriously offending people in positions of local power who could strip him of his press. The entire decision about the imprint came down to a very practical matter for him, as he noted, – “In fine, the maintenance of My Self & family of small children, depending under God, upon the good will of them that please to set me on work, I have no intent to provoke or affront any person or order of men; but to oblige them so far as is consistent with clearing of my reputation.”²³ At the very least, Green’s concerns provide additional evidence about how significant these print controversies were in shaping public discourse and attracting the attention of authorities. Knowing that printed material could have that effect on public affairs, debates about expanding access to the press during this period were anything but a side-play.

²¹ Green, *The printer's advertisement*, 1.

²² Green, *The printer's advertisement*, 7.

²³ Green, *The printer's advertisement*, 10.

As the Congregational churches of New England attacked one another in their local press, religious disputes were simultaneously erupting in the mid-Atlantic. As the epicenter for the Keithian schism in the early 1690s, Philadelphia was no stranger to religious tensions finding expression in print. With George Keith's departure for London and the relocation of the colony's press to New York as a part of the legal fallout to the earlier dispute, Quakers in the City of Brotherly Love must have breathed a sigh of relief as the public controversies died down. At the turn of the century one of Keith's former followers, Daniel Leeds, approached printer William Bradford in New York to issue a series of new printed challenges against Quakers in Pennsylvania and East and West Jersey. Unlike their stance during the previous schism, Quakers returned fire from the Philadelphia press of Reinier Jensen, a recent immigrant from the Netherlands.²⁴ The result was an extensive religious debate that laid an even stronger foundation for the print culture of dialogues moving into the eighteenth century.

The debates opened in 1699 with an anonymous pamphlet, later attributed to Daniel Leeds, that effectively resurrected a fifteen year old political dispute with religious overtones. The issue related to political authority in West Jersey, where Quaker arbitrators in England, including luminaries such as George Fox and George Whitehead, were asked to arbitrate a dispute over lines of proprietary ownership and proper authority in the colony. Leeds provided evidence that the leading Friends in London settled the

²⁴ William I. Hull, *William Penn and the Dutch Quaker Migration to Pennsylvania* (s.n.: Kessinger Publishing, 2006), 112-115. This is a reprint of a Swarthmore College Monograph series on Quaker History originally printed in 1935.

matter in favor of Edward Billings and wrote a letter asking that other claimants recognize his position as proprietor and governor of the colony. Samuel Jennings, according to Leeds, flouted this advice and accepted the nomination and election as a locally chosen governor against the express desires of English Quakers. Although no longer governor, but leader of the assembly of West Jersey, Leeds suggested “the same Sam. Jennings being the leading man of that Party, & chief in the Assembly, now sings his old song over again, and affirms the Government to be in the People, thereby encouraging and exciting the People to Rebellion against the present Governour, and other their lawful Rulers, to the great obstruction of the Peace and Prosperity of the Province.”²⁵ He added oft-recurring objections to Quaker political leadership because of their reluctance to allow militia formation or to protect ports from piracy. Samuel Jennings wasted little time coming to his own defense, writing a pamphlet entitled, *Truth Rescued from Forgery & Falshood*. He responded to the charges of the previous pamphlet in a methodical way, noting that he would “now proceed, to touch upon the severall parts of their Libel, as it lyes before me in order,” a technique common to

²⁵ Daniel Leeds, *The case put & decided by George Fox, George Whitehead, Stephen Crisp, and other the most antient & eminent Quakers, between Edward Billing on the one part, and some West-Jersians, headed by Samuells Jenings on the other part, in an award relating to the government of their province, wherein, because not molded to the pallate of the said Samuells, the light, the truth, the justice and infallibility of these great Friends are arraigned by him and his accomplices. Also, several remarks and animadversions on the same award, setting forth the premises. With some reflections on the senseless opposition of these men against the present governour, and their daring audaciousness in their presumptuous affecting an authority here over the parliament of England. Published for the information of the impartial and considerate, particularly such as worship God, and profess Christianity, not in faction and hypocrisie, but in truth and sincerity.* (New York: William Bradford, 1699), 6.

dialogical controversies in England.²⁶ In blistering attacks against the character of the anonymous pamphleteer, he tried to prevent any damage to his reputation by perpetually presenting the anonymous pamphleteer as undeserving of public trust. He also made his case that his willingness to accept the position of governor was not a betrayal of the arbitration of the English Quakers, but instead a reflection on Edward Billings' failure to follow through on promises to relinquish power to colonial settlers once established in the New World.

Daniel Leeds, thought to be the author of the political attack on Samuel Jennings, openly took credit for a broad swipe at the orthodoxy of Quakerism in the same year. His pamphlet, *A trumpet sounded out of the wilderness of America; which may serve as a warning to the government and people of England to beware of Quakerisme* offered a series of passages from Quaker writings designed to show their internal contradictions and general theological confusion.²⁷ It also suggested that the actions of Quakers in government, particularly in Pennsylvania, proved them unfit for public trust, for many of the reasons he alleged against Samuel Jennings in his other pamphlet. When challenged

²⁶ Samuel Jennings, *Truth rescued from forgery & falshood, being an answer to a late scurrilous piece entituled The case put and decided &c. Which stole into the world without any known authors name affixed thereto, and renders it the more like it's father, who was a lyer and murtherer from the beginning.* (Philadelphia: Reinier Jansen, 1699), 4.

²⁷ Daniel Leeds, *A trumpet sounded out of the wilderness of America; which may serve as a warning to the government and people of England to beware of Quakerisme. Wherein is shewed the great contradictions of the Quakers, both in their former and later writings. Also how they deny Jesus of Nazareth to be the Christ. And how in Pensilvania and there-away, where they have the government in their own hands, they hire and encourage men to fight; and how they persecute, fine, imprison, and take away goods for conscience sake. Notwithstanding they formerly exclaimed against the government of England, &c. for the same things. Setting forth likewise these base temporizing with whatever government is uppermost,* (New York: William Bradford, 1699).

publicly in this way by George Keith in the midst of the schism of the 1690s, the Quaker leadership was silent, refusing to turn to the press in self-defense. On this occasion a champion for Quakerism in the New Word emerged with Caleb Pusey and he did not hesitate to use the press to make the Quakers' case before the public.

Pusey wrote a blistering counter to Leeds' pamphlet, initiating a major print dialogue that would continue for the next several years. With his unflinching title, *Satan's Harbinger Encountered*, Pusey marked his willingness to aggressively counter every attack mounted by Leeds or any other opponent of the colonial Quakers. One of the first issues raised by Pusey was one that became a recurrent theme of their many debates: a dispute about the accuracy of the quotations cited by Leeds as representative of Quaker thought. Pusey wrote, "our present adversary Daniel Leeds, who has, hand over head, in a very palpable manner, to his own shame, ventured to abuse our friends at a very shamefull rate, not only by wrong meanings put upon their words and doctrines, but also by false Citations out of their books, thereby endeavoring to make them speak, what they never spoke, nor (I believe) ever thought, in order to represent them to the people greatly contradictory to one another."²⁸ The accuracy of quotations within printed dialogues was a matter of grave concern to George Keith during the 1690s and remained a crucial issue as the print culture of dialogues was expanding. If an author could prove an opponent to be misleading through a verifiable trail of misrepresentations in print, it

²⁸ Caleb Pusey, *Satan's harbinger encountered, his false news of a trumpet detected, his crooked ways in the wildrnesse [sic] laid open to the view of the imperial and iudicious. Being something by way of answer to Daniel Leeds his book entituled News of a trumpet sounding in the wilderness &c.* (Philadelphia: Reinier Jansen, 1700), 2 of preface.

would, in theory, strike a serious blow to their credibility in other claims and render them ineffective in generating public support for their positions.

Daniel Leeds wasted little time issuing his own response in two different pamphlets. The first was a short imprint that argued that Pusey failed to address the core elements of his previous attacks. Leeds deflects Pusey's accusations of misrepresentation by turning them around against the original author. He suggested that Pusey "leaps over 4, 5, or 6 pages at a time with silence; and what he does speak to, he in many places Tares my Sentences to pieces, and leaves out the substance of the Subject, to make me speak what I never intended (the true method of G. Fox) to render me odious."²⁹ To defend his own reputation for honest quotations, Leeds made a bold offer to any who might question the veracity of the quotations he had drawn from the works of William Penn: "I have this book of W Penn by me, and I do desire and intreat all moderate people that want to be satisfied in the Truth of this to come and see it; for I design to keep the Book for that purpose, to discover the baseness of this Caleb Pusey."³⁰ The second pamphlet was a larger one which was essentially an expanded attack on the character of various Quakers living in the colonies. Playing on the analogy of unclean birds that George Fox used to describe members of the Church of England, Leeds asserted that the unclean birds in America were members of the Society of Friends. His goal was to "open the cage and take out the Birds one by one, and open their wings and spread their

²⁹ Daniel Leeds, *A challenge to Caleb Pusey, and a check to his lyes & forgeries, &c.* (New York: William Bradford, 1701), 1.

³⁰ Leeds, *A challenge to Caleb Pusey*, 2.

feathers, to the intent that you may view them, and note their Features and observe their Natures.”³¹ Leeds spread the feathers by exposing tantalizing gossip to tar the reputations of various Quakers, accusing them of abusing their positions of power, sexual impropriety, or some combination of the two. While certainly not making appeals to rationality in the same way as in his previous pamphlet, he had broadened his assault.

The two authors traded two more pamphlets in 1702 and 1703, both revolving around the accuracy of the portrayal of William Penn’s position concerning the human nature of Christ, more specifically whether Penn referred to Jesus as a “finite impotent creature” as Daniel Leeds asserted. Caleb Pusey, after quoting Penn extensively, offered to “leave this matter to the candid and impartial Reader to judge. Whether W.P. there called the Man Christ FINITE IMPOTENT CREATURE.”³² Daniel Leeds similarly believed that his account would be vindicated by a close reading of Penn’s own words: “And therefore I have quoted W.P.’s words as they stand in his book, called *Sandy Foundations*, p. 20-21. That people may judge whether I have wronged W.P. or not.”³³

³¹ Daniel Leeds, *News of a strumpet co-habiting in the wilderness or, A brief abstract of the spiritual & carnal whoredoms & adulteries of the Quakers in America. Delinated in a cage of twenty unclean birds. Purposely published in pitty to the Quakers, to let them see themselves as others see them, because in pag. 47. of their book, called, Satan's Harbinger, (lately printed at Philadelphia by the authority of their meeting of ministers) they pretend they know no such persons amongst them. Otherwise, 'tis more work for the Quakers to use their arts and imploy their press to prop up their two main pillars infallibility & perfection.* (New York: [William Bradford], 1701), 7.

³² Caleb Pusey, *Daniel Leeds, justly rebuked for abusing William Penn and his folly and falls-hoods [sic] contained in his two printed chalenges [sic] to Caleb Pusey made manifest; with some remarks also by way of rebuke on the author of the book called News of a strumpet.* (Philadelphia: Reinier Jansen, 1702), 26.

³³ Daniel Leeds, *The rebuker rebuked in a brief answer to Caleb Pusey his scurrilous pamphlet [sic], entituled, A rebuke to Daniel Leeds, &c. Wherein William Penn his Sandy foundation is fairly quoted, shewing that he calls Christ, the finite impotent creature.* (New York: William Bradford, 1703), 3 of preface. After carefully reading each of the cases it seems that Daniel Leeds has the strongest case for bringing forward the most authentic reading of William Penn’s statement.

Although becoming quite a tedious exercise, both sides were operating from similar assumptions about how to best achieve a victory in a print debate and both knew that victory depended on convincing impartial readers of the accuracy and rationality of their positions.

Following the extensive debate over the interpretation of William Penn's works, Leeds trained his sites on the founder of Quakerism, George Fox in a pamphlet entitled, *The Great Mystery of Fox-Craft Discovered*. Leeds printed what he claimed to be a series of letters from George Fox which exposed his illiteracy and mental inadequacy to be the founder of an orthodox and competent religious movement. Leeds claimed,

these two letters are a confirmation of his Learning; for by the first we see, he could not write the date of the year or spell his own Name right; how then was he capable to write a Book, notwithstanding the many Books the Quakers have so impudently published in his name, especially his journal, craftily drest up by their chief Wits, that People in after times might not suspect the Quakers great Apostle to be such a Buzard as he was.³⁴

Leeds then made a strikingly gendered attack on Quakerism, calling it a female religion with its women prelates and feminine practices. He called all Quakers political

³⁴ Daniel Leeds, *The great mystery of Fox-craft discovered. And the Quaker plainness & sincerity demonstrated, first, in their great apostle George Fox; 2dly, in their late subscribing the oath or act of Abjuration. Introduced with two letter [sic] written by G. Fox to Coll. Lewis Morris, deceased, exactly spell'd and pointed as in the originals, which are now to be seen in the library at Burlington in New-Jersey, and will be proved (by the likeness of the hand, &c.) to be the hand-writing of the Quakers learned Fox, if denied. To which is added, a post-script, with some remarks on the Quaker-almanack for this year 1705.* (New York: William Bradford, 1705), 5.

dissemblers when it came to taking oaths or affirmations of political duty despite knowing that they had no intention of fulfilling responsibilities to preserve the security of a province through the use of arms. The final line of attack led to a direct challenge to Pusey: “Let the Nimble Fingered Miller, C. Pusey, tell us in his next Print, how and which way they can defend the Queen, &c. to the Utmost of their Power, and yet neither do it in Person nor Estate, and that too, as [Defend] is commonly understood; if he can do this, and clear his Brethren from the Guilt of Perjury, I will then be engaged he shall be set in the Legend for a Worker of Miracles along with the great Fox.”³⁵ Leeds had turned more and more to personal invective and less to rational appeals.

The tireless Pusey responded to Leeds’ latest assault in *Some Remarks upon a late Pamphlet*. Noting that the attacks on George Fox’s lack of traditional education were not new, he dismissed them by arguing that his lack of worldly learning only served to emphasize the great work of the Spirit that animated the Quaker movement. He suggested that Fox never made any pretence to great learning or personal glory, but instead gave the glory to the Light working within him and other Friends to bring God’s message to the world. In another reversal of charges, Pusey suggested that it was Leeds who was less learned than he presented himself, with his arguments being largely drawn from an English anti-Quaker tract called *Snake in the Grass*. Pusey called readers’ attention to the fact that Leeds “brought no other authority but the *Snake* for what he said (and he gave no page neither) I told him we could not take him to be good Authority

³⁵ Leeds, *The great mistery of Fox-craft discovered*, 12.

against us; because of his abundantly perverting our friends writings, and packing up divers falsehoods against us.”³⁶ Pusey refused to respond to the specifics of the most recent attack because he claimed that Leeds had altered the subject of the previous debate regarding the proper contextualization of Penn’s writing. Until Leeds addressed those arguments, he would not engage him in new topics of debate. The two had reached a point of writing past, rather than directly engaging one another.

After six long years of debating in the press, exchanging pamphlet for pamphlet, both authors expressed their weariness of continuing the debate and disengaged from the battle. Leeds capitulated first, offering his last pamphlet in late 1705. The bulk of the imprint was a long series of quotations taken from Quaker books designed to expose the confusion and many contradictions among and between them. Anticipating that Pusey would complain about the accuracy of the quotations, Leeds included a testimonial from the leading Anglican missionaries in the Philadelphia area. These ministers wrote, “We, Whose names are underwritten, have at the request of Daniel Leeds, carefully examined the fore-going Quotations, and do testify, That they exactly agree with the Books out of which they are taken.”³⁷ And instead of returning to the press to defend these assertions,

³⁶ Caleb Pusey, *Some remarks upon a late pamphlet signed part by John Talbot, and part by Daniel Leeds, called The great mystery of Fox-craft*. (Philadelphia: Reinier Jansen, 1705), 26.

³⁷ Daniel Leeds, *The second part of the mystery of Fox-craft introduced with about thirty quotations truly taken from the Quaker books, and well attested by men learned and pious; proving all, and more than all the charges in F. Bugg's Bomb of half a sheet, which Mr. Talbot reprinted and sent to the Quakers at their General Meeting at Burlington in 1704. Where he appointed time and place for them to meet him, and promised in F.B.'s stead to prove the said charges against them in the face of the country. But they finding their cause would not bear that test, refused to meet him; but have at last published a bulky book of 14 sheets, entituled, The bomb-searcher, &c. therein denying themselves to be guilty, as by the bomb charged. But it is herein proved, I. That the bomb-searcher (Caleb Pusey) and his brethren who approve his said*

he signaled his desire to rest his case with this pamphlet. As Leeds suggested, “long discourses of Controversy of this nature are becoming tedious, as I see by C. Puseys books, which have therefore exchanged the Monthly Meeting for the Tobacco Shop.”³⁸ Although disengaging from the debate, he was providing a clue about the reading habits of Philadelphians, turning to the local tobacco shop to debate and discuss the latest releases from the press. Pusey provided some response to the quotations offered by Leeds, again suggesting that greater context was needed to better understand the quotations he supplied in his most recent attack on Quakerism, but he did not want to belabor the points. He recognized that the will to continue had flagged with both authors. Pusey wrote, “D.L. by his Title page seems to have done; I shall be well satisfied if he held that mind for I do assure the reader that I love controversy so little that whenever I writ against him, I still very inwardly desired it might be the last.”³⁹ Although probably lying about his feelings about print controversies, Pusey acknowledged that it was time to step away from his public dispute with Leeds. The formulation of his statement, however, left the door open to respond to Leeds in case he was not truly finished with his attacks on Quakerism. Since Leeds was true to his word, this pamphlet turned out to be the final word in their exchange. Although it ended with a whimper rather than a bang,

book, are possest with a lying spirit. II. That they make it their whole business to deceive. III. And that by their denying, excusing and hiding their blasphemous notions and doctrines they are self-condemned. (And therefore I design that this shall end the controversie between them and me.) (New York: William Bradford, 1705), 4.

³⁸ Leeds, *The second part of the mystry of Fox-craft*, 5.

³⁹ Caleb Pusey, *Some brief observations made on Daniel Leeds his book, intituled The second part of the mystery of Fox-craft. Published for the clearing the truth against the false aspersions, calumnies and perversions of that often-refuted author. by Caleb Pusey. With a postscript by Tho: Chalkly wherein D: L: is justly rebuked for falsly citeing [sic] him.* (Philadelphia: Joseph Reyners, 1706), 3 of the preface.

and it delved into personal invective with relatively high frequency, the long standing exchange marked a further continuation of using the colonial press for local controversies that typically involved direct appeals to impartial readers to determine whose arguments were strongest and most persuasive.

With domestic religious disputes keeping the presses of New England and the mid-Atlantic busy in the new century, further printed controversy was assured with the return of George Keith to North America. The circumstances of his second visit were far removed from those of his previous tenure in the colonies. Upon his return to England following the schism in Pennsylvania, Keith was unable to persuade London's leading Friends to accept his explanation of events in the New World and they confirmed the judgments of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and disowned him. Anglican officials in London watched the celebrated case carefully and saw in it an opportunity to strike a blow against the Quakers who had been thorns in their side since their first inception in the 1650s. They approached Keith and convinced him to find a new Spiritual home within the Church of England. As a high profile convert and eager evangelist and controversialist, Keith was seen as an ideal figure to participate in the newly formed missionary wing of the Anglican church, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Keith was sent among the very first group of SPG missionaries bound for the American colonies to help support the beleaguered Anglican community in North

America.⁴⁰ Keith was expected to be especially helpful as an Anglican apologist and controversialist in the press. He did not disappoint, quickly renewing old rivalries with the Congregationalists in New England and the Quakers of Pennsylvania. The print debates he engaged in during the three years he remained in America provide a gauge for measuring how much print culture had changed since Keith first brought his dialogical print experience with him to the New World. In the 1690s, Keith found reluctance to engage with him in print in both New England and in Pennsylvania. With this later visit, the reluctance was gone and writers in both regions took up his printed challenges immediately and vigorously. In essence, the print culture of colonial America had shifted around them and now Keith and his colonial opponents both recognized and accepted the conventions of dialogical printing.

As with his first round of controversies, George Keith's debates began in New England. Keith traveled to Boston and preached on June 14, 1702 at the recently erected Queen's chapel, and found a local press to publish his sermon as a small pamphlet.⁴¹ The sermon's evangelical message tried to win New Englanders back to the Church of England, taking an oblique swipe at the local Congregational churches, but it was not nearly as direct and specific a challenge to Puritan doctrines and practices as Keith laid

⁴⁰ Ethyn Kirby, *George Keith, 1638-1716* (New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1942). Keith's biographer is the only scholar who has shown interest in this phase of Keith's life and career. Even Jon Butler, who wrote about the fortunes of Keith's supporters after his departure in the 1690s has very little to say about Keith's return. Jon Butler, "Into Pennsylvania's Spiritual Abyss: The Rise and Fall of the Later Keithians, 1693-1704." *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 101 (1977), 151-170.

⁴¹ George Keith, *The doctrine of the holy apostles & prophets the foundation of the church of Christ, as it was delivered in a sermon at Her Majesties chappel, at Boston in New-England, the 14th. of June 1702.* (Boston: s.n., 1702)

out in his first visit to the region as a Quaker in 1689. Increase Mather, however, saw Keith's sermon and its printed form as a serious threat to the region. Within weeks he turned to the press with *Some Remarks on a Late Sermon, Preached at Boston in New England, by George Keith*. Despite wasting little time in producing his response, Mather played the coy game of suggesting that he would much rather allow Keith's comments pass by in silence: "Yet inasmuch as many amongst us have not those Books in which his Good Rules in Divinity are abundantly confuted, and discovered to be false ones, and since if nothing should be replied to him, some of his party will be apt to say that his Allegations are unanswerable. We shall therefore make some few Remarks upon them."⁴² This refers directly to Keith's known debating style, taking the silence of the opposition to be capitulation. Mather then went on to provide a learned discourse, with many marginal citations, outlining the case of the Congregational churches against the Church of England. In an amazing stroke of boldness, he even turned the charges of separatism on New England's Anglicans: "But George Keith and his Brethren in separating from the Churches of New England, and setting up other churches in opposition to them, separate from Churches that hold the Fundamentals of the Christian Religion, and in which the word of God is duly Preached, and the Sacraments duly Administred: This no man can deny. Ergo George Keith and his brethren are guilty of

⁴² Increase Mather, *Some remarks on a late sermon, preached at Boston in New England, by George Keith M.A. Shewing that his pretended good rules in divinity, are not built on the foundation of the apostles & prophets* (Boston: Nicholas Boone, 1702), 2.

schism, and of great sin.”⁴³ In this way he sought to counterbalance what he saw as Keith’s efforts “to scatter his Sermon up & down, with a Schismatical Design to make Divisions (if he could) in the Churches of New England.”⁴⁴

George Keith, never one to stand idly by when challenged in print, responded with a pamphlet entitled, *A Reply to Mr. Increase Mather's Printed Remarks on a Sermon Preached by G.K.* This imprint marked Keith’s return to a partnership with printer William Bradford, who was well established in New York City. Keith’s brief response contained several themes that highlight the continuity in Keith’s debating style and preferences. First, he was a careful watchdog over the representation of his arguments that were made by others. Keith warned, “But to make the Second Rule seem false, he quotes again only about two lines and a half of it, as it stands in his Printed remarks, and argues against it; whereas had he argued against the Second Rule, as entirely considered, there would have been no place for his Objections.”⁴⁵ Secondly, Keith rejected arguments that rested solely on assertions of authority, preferring that evidence was provided to prove all assertions under contention. In a characteristic challenge, Keith noted: “He saith, This Argument, though often urged, is not Cogent. But how does he prove that it is not Cogent? Is his bare Authority or Word sufficient Proof against the Rule, which was the main subject of the Dispute, as stated by himself? For I find not that

⁴³ Increase Mather, *Some remarks on a late sermon*, 11.

⁴⁴ Increase Mather, *Some remarks on a late sermon*, 35.

⁴⁵ George Keith, *A reply to Mr. Increase Mather's printed remarks on a sermon preached by G.K. at Her Majesty's Chappel in Boston, the 14th of June, 1702. In vindication of the six good rules in divinity there delivered. Which he hath attempted (though very feebly and unsuccessfully) to refute.* (New York: William Bradford, 1703), 11.

he gives any other proof, only to divert the Reader from the Proper Subject, he tells.”⁴⁶

A third theme, and one of supreme importance to Keith, was that the readers should be appealed to as the final arbiters of the dispute, trusting in their impartiality and intrinsic capacity to serve in that role. In each of his controversial imprints Keith made countless direct appeals to the impartial reader, as when he again challenged Mather for assuming that his bare assertions were enough to refute Keith’s positions without further evidence, reminding his Puritan opponent that “in this he is not to be his own judge, but it is to be left to the more impartial Judgment of Intelligent Readers.”⁴⁷ Unwilling to keep the controversy going, Mather did not respond and this strand of debate closed as a different one opened.

Keith initiated a direct attack on Samuel Willard and his presidency of Harvard College. After attending the summer commencement exercises at Cambridge, Keith was clearly disturbed by the predestinarian Calvinist theology that still dominated the Harvard curriculum. He claimed that the arguments made during the commencement exercises implied that God was the author of sin. He attacked this notion in a pamphlet to which Samuel Willard immediately responded. Keith countered Willard, who refused to continue the dialogue. The debate was conducted on a scholastic plane that likely outstripped the abilities of the vast majority of colonists to comprehend.⁴⁸ Both authors rigorously debated very specific points of theology and logic, making reference to Greek

⁴⁶ George Keith, *A reply to Mr. Increase Mather's printed remarks*, 19.

⁴⁷ George Keith, *A reply to Mr. Increase Mather's printed remarks*, 27.

⁴⁸ Keith rarely wrote in such a purely academic style, typically preferring more accessible rhetoric for wider appeal.

and Latin texts in keeping with the academic traditions familiar to both of these college graduates. Despite the inaccessibility of much of their arguments, they revealed their positions concerning the proper role of the reading public in matters of religious importance. Even as he completed a second pamphlet filled with finely parsed philosophical positions, Keith remained convinced that ordinary readers, if unbiased and critical in their consideration, could judge the matters being disputed. He did not fear but rather encouraged readers to carefully consider all sides of the issue before coming to a judgment. As he wrapped up his second imprint, Keith suggested that “intelligent and impartial readers diligently compare what is writ pro and contra on both sides in our two books, and I doubt not but they will find that the said Doctrine of Gods determining men to sinful actions, so as thereby they do necessarily commit them, is dangerous per se, as many others are, and therefore to be avoided.”⁴⁹ This was polar opposite Willard’s position, which mocked Keith’s willingness to turn to ordinary readers: “the absurdity of which he leaves to good and sincere Christians to judge. But I suppose that all good and Sincere Christians are not fit to judge in such Niceties, or skilled in all the distinctions, which those whose duty it is to convince the gainsayers, ought to be acquainted withal, and are necessitated to make use of, when men by fine words, and insinuating delusions,

⁴⁹ George Keith, *An answer to Mr. Samuell Willard (one of the ministers at Boston in New-England) his reply to my printed sheet, called, A dangerous and hurtful opinion maintained by him, viz. That the fall of Adam, and all the sins of men necessarily come to pass by virtue of Gods decree, and his determining both of the will of Adam, and of all other men to sin.* (New York: William Bradford, 1704), 34.

deceive the minds of the simple.”⁵⁰ In the midst of a dialogical debate, Willard was pining for the proclamatory style. Previously, theological disputes such as this were localized within the confines of colleges and synods where only a “qualified” elite could determine truth and protected their flocks by being the final arbiters of what should be placed before the public in print. Those days of proclamatory printing were gone.

As Keith battled these two fronts in New England, a different flank was attacked by Caleb Pusey, concurrently embroiled in a print debate with Daniel Leeds. Pusey offered withering fire on Keith’s religious integrity. The main thrust of his attack can be discerned in the unwieldy title of his pamphlet: *Proteus ecclesiasticus, or George Keith varied in fundamentalls; acknowledged by himself to be such, and prov'd an apostat, from his own definition, arguments, and reasons.*⁵¹ As he laid out the contradictions between Keith’s previous writings as a Quaker and his newly adopted positions as an Anglican, he did so with an eye towards appealing to the same reading audience that Keith so effectively courted in his controversial works. Pusey intentionally noted that “our appeal is rather to the Truth in the hearts of the unbyass’d, who are willing to see for themselves, weigh matters in the Scales of Justice, and then Judge; we see no reason to

⁵⁰ Samuel Willard, *A brief reply to Mr. George Kieth [i.e. Keith], in answer to a script of his, entitled, A refutation of a dangerous and hurtfull opinion, maintained* (Boston: s.n., 1703), 49.

⁵¹ Caleb Pusey, *Proteus ecclesiasticus or George Keith varied in fundamentalls; acknowledged by himself to be such, and prov'd an apostat, from his own definition, arguments, and reasons. Contrary to his often repeated false pretentions, whereby he hath laboured to deceive the people; telling them he is not varied from any fundamental principle, nor any principle of the Christian faith ever since he first came among the Quakers. With remarks on Daniel Leed's abusive almanack for the year 1703. By way of postscript* (Philadelphia: Reinier Jansen, 1703)

doubt, but that we shall be justify'd in all their Consciences."⁵² Here, for the first time in the American colonies, was a print opponent for George Keith who eschewed shooting over his head by making appeals to intellectual or spiritual authority.

Keith was not long in responding. Although he admitted that he distanced himself from certain Quaker errors at the time of his conversion, he reiterated his claim to have remained unwavering in his commitment to core Christian beliefs. Keith seemed most upset by Pusey's claims that he had been unfair in his quotations drawn from Quaker authors. This was a matter dear to Keith's heart as he often paid close attention to the accuracy of his own and others' quotations. He always asserted that accurate and direct citations were an essential part of the print debating process and that they allowed the reading public to make informed decisions based upon the best information. He struck back at Pusey, writing: "and the Quotations in the broad sheet, called, *The Serious Call*, which he had most unjustly excepted against, I have proved to be true, according to the true correct printed Copies; and that there were no other faults in any of the most uncorrect copies, but were Typographical, and of small moment, is plainly proved."⁵³ In a similar vein he later added: "I desire the reader to view at more length that & several more Quotations made by me in my said *Third Narrative*, p. 6, 7, 8. out of W.P.'s Books,

⁵² Caleb Pusey, *Proteus ecclesiasticus or George Keith varied in fundamentals*, 3.

⁵³ George Keith, *The spirit of railing Shimei and of Baal's four hundred lying prophets entered into Caleb Pusey and his Quaker-brethren in Pennsylvania, who approve him. Containing an answer to his and their book, falsly called, Proteus ecclesiasticus, detecting many of their gross falshoods, lyes, calumnies, perversions and abuses, as well as his and their gross ignorance and infidelity contained in their said book.* (New York: William Bradford, 1703), 3.

and compare them with his Books quoted.”⁵⁴ Knowing that few colonial households held all of the sources needed to do such elaborate cross-referencing, Keith proposed a public debate where the sources could be examined. He chided his opponents in print for refusing: “But, Friendly Reader, Why is it, think ye, that the Quakers neither here nor else-where can be moved to meet me face to face, to debate so much as matter of fact with me, as touching the truth of the Quotations, which they say are false, and I say are true (but the truth can never be so well found out as by having the Authors Books openly produced, and the Quotations publickly read and seen in the presence of both parties?)”⁵⁵

Although not agreeing to a public debate, Caleb Pusey did publish a direct response with a pamphlet entitled, *George Keith Once More Brought to the Test, and Proved a Prevaricator*. He reiterated the charges that Keith was misquoting previous books by Friends, or at least ripping the quotations out of their proper context. He also outlined a different vision for printed texts in public disputes. Rather than use books as part of face to face public disputation, Pusey felt it was more effective to “read them ones self; and take some necessary time to read the context, as well as the texts and to see that we take aright the subject treated on, in order to consider more certain the sense of the[matter]. that we may not miss the Truth nor wrong our neighbor: surely every free and impartial mind will say, this is the most sure way to find whether the things, so

⁵⁴ George Keith, *The spirit of railing Shimei*, 10.

⁵⁵ George Keith, *The spirit of railing Shimei*, 4.

charged against our friends be so or not.”⁵⁶ His vision of the usefulness of printed texts included the ability to read more thoroughly in private to more fully understand the context of the issues under dispute.

Keith, as always, made sure that he got the final word in the debate. He again defended his charges in his previous book and suggested that Pusey’s vision of private reading was a fantasy, especially for the increasing number of non-Quakers living in Pennsylvania that Keith hoped to reach. He reminded his readers: “Now most of the Books out of which these Quotations are made, are very rarely to be found in the hands of any but Quakers, and what of said Books the Qrs. Have they kept close; how then shall the controversie be decided, but by coming face to face in publick, and producing the Books out of which said Quotations are made, and comparing said Quotations with the Books?”⁵⁷ Failing that, he certainly hoped that his willingness to defend himself that way would enhance his credibility among those who had the chance to read his pamphlets. In the end, George Keith allowed the matter to rest with the judgment of the reading public, writing: “Friendly Reader, I judge by what Remarks I have made on C.P.’s Book, I have given sufficient Proof (and more than was needful) what a

⁵⁶ Caleb Pusey, *George Keith once more brought to the test, and proved a prevaricator, containing something of an answer to his book called The spirit of railing Shimei, &c. And shewing, that George Keith in his attempting, to prove the spirit of railing shimei &c. to be entred into Caleb Pusey; hath there by more manifested, that not only the spirit of railing, and envy; but also of confusion, about doctrin's and principles of religion, is entred in to himself.* (Philadelphia: Reinier Jansen, 1703), 29.

⁵⁷ George Keith, *Some brief remarks upon a late book, entituled, George Keith once more brought to the test, &c. having the name Caleb Pusey at the end of the preface, and C.P. at the end of the book.* (New York: William Bradford, 1704), 1.

Prevaricator he is, and how dully, and with what dull sophistry he has laboured, in vain, to prove me what he really is himself.”⁵⁸ On that note, this print debate came to an end.

II

Religious disputes, though numerous, were not the only controversial topics to be found in the colonial American presses of the early eighteenth century. More secular concerns were expressed and debated in a long series of pamphlets dedicated to matters of political economy in New England. Earlier chapters have outlined the links between discussions of political economy and descriptions of the rise of a Public Sphere. The same connections apply in this case and are made all the more salient by how extensive this discussion of the land bank became between 1714 and 1721. The region grappled with an ongoing concern that the amount of silver and gold coin available in the province was simply not enough to transact all of the business necessary to keep the colonial economy functioning. In 1690 the colonial government of Massachusetts experimented with issuing paper money that could be redeemed as payments for taxes and turned to the expedient again in 1711. In both cases, ongoing needs related to funding the war efforts in the Anglo-French imperial rivalry as it played out on New England’s northern frontier. On both occasions the value of the bills slipped by at least one third and the government

⁵⁸ George Keith, *Some brief remarks upon a late book*, 19.

seemed reluctant to take steps to ensure their continued value. Against this backdrop many merchants, lawyers and other concerned colonists with knowledge of finance discussed alternatives to the public bills, specifically a private banking option that could release currency backed by the value of real estate property in the region. As some of the first banking and currency schemes in American history, these proposals have received significant attention from economic historians and political historians tracking the development of factions in the colony.⁵⁹ Less considered is how the issue led to continuing printed controversy as advocates of various positions turned to the press in explicit efforts to shape public policy. Printed debates about banking, linking both pamphleteers and newspaper essayists, marked yet another step in the consolidation of the print culture of dialogues that first emerged in the 1690s.

Supporters of the private land bank were the first to broach the matter in the press, issuing a reprint of a London pamphlet supporting land banks and describing their function and value. The scheme outlined in the original pamphlet was modified by its American editors to more closely match the local needs of the colonists. The most striking element of the pamphlet, however, was how explicitly its author designed to affect the deliberations of local politics. After outlining the disadvantages of a lack of sufficient currency to the colonial economy, the author noted that “a Scheme of a Bank of

⁵⁹ See Andrew M. Davis, *Currency and Banking in the Province of Massachusetts-Bay*, 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1901); Johnson, *Adjustment to Empire*; William Pencak, *War, Politics, & Revolution in Provincial Massachusetts* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1981), 62-76; Margaret Newell, *From Dependency to Independence: Economic Revolution in Colonial New England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

Credit founded upon a Land Security, has been accordingly Projected; and will be humbly offered to the Consideration of the General Assembly, at their next Session.”⁶⁰ Not content to simply present it to the legislature, though, the supporters of the bank decided to develop a groundswell of support for the scheme. The imprint itself reflected this intent as its authors admitted that after deliberating it was “rationally concluded, That such a Bank being made to appear to be of Necessity to us in our present Circumstances, and of great and general Benefit; there is no Publick-spirited Person but will set to his helping Hand, to Promote the Establishment of the Same.”⁶¹ They hoped that fair and public-spirited readers would walk away from the pamphlet with a better sense of the importance and necessity of some new expedient to aid the colonial economy and hoped that this consensus might help steer the proposal through the legislature.

Their hopes went unrealized. The Governor and Council scuttled the private bank plans, printing an open letter to John Burril, the Speaker of the House of Representatives dismantling the rationale for the private bank.⁶² But the administration did not stop there. As the topic was clearly a matter of continuing public interest, they used their close relationship with the colony’s only newspaper to foreclose further public discussion of the matter. In late August, the Council ordered “that the Projectors or Undertakers of any

⁶⁰ s.n., *A Model for erecting a bank of credit; with a discourse in explanation thereof. Adapted to the use of any trading countrey, where there is a scarcity of moneys: more especially for His Majesties plantations in America. Quo communius eo melius.* (Boston: s.n., 1714), 2

⁶¹ s.n., *A Model for erecting a bank of credit*, 2.

⁶² Paul Dudley, *Objections to the bank of credit lately projected at Boston. Being a letter upon that occasion, to John Burril, Esq; speaker to the House of Representatives for the Province of the Massachusetts-Bay, in New-England.* (Boston: Thomas Fleet, 1714).

such Bank do not proceed to print the said Scheme, or put the same on Publick Record, Make or Emit any of their Notes or Bills, until they have laid their proposals before the General Assembly.”⁶³ After Paul Dudley’s public letter, though, there seemed little hope for a legislative approval for the merchants’ proposals.

Undeterred, supporters of the proposed private land bank fired back with two separate anonymous pamphlets defending themselves and providing further details of how the bank would function. They offered *A Vindication of the Bank of Credit Projected in Boston*, as another open letter to John Burril. The pamphlet argued that Dudley’s public letter deliberately misrepresented how matters proceeded regarding the bank proposal. The pamphlet called upon Burril to recall the actual events and compare them closely with the printed record on the matter, imploring the Speaker:

Now sir, if you will please to Consider [Dudley’s] Argument, whereby he would seem and pretend to prove his charge of Contempt, &c. you will find it as unfair and fallacious as his Charge, which is that which you must needs have seen ‘in the Publick News-Paper, or an Order of the Governour and Council passed upon the Occasion of the Projection of the Bank of Credit; whereby the Projectors were directed to proceed no further in that Affair, until the next Session of the General Assembly. . . . Is not this a bold and willful Misrepresentation of the matter? Whereas the Order of

⁶³ *Boston News-Letter*, August 23, 1714, 2.

Council, which the Government Ordered to be Printed in the Weekly News-Letter, is in the Words following.⁶⁴

The authors were not relying on Speaker Burril's memory of events alone, but also enlisting the aid of careful readings of the public record in print. Readers were invited to judge for themselves whose account could be trusted and supported. The pamphlet also sought to enhance support for the private land bank by providing the public with a much more detailed blueprint of how the bank would function. A second pamphlet, *A Letter, from one in Boston, to his Friend in the Country*, addressing the concerns of those outside of Boston, was politically astute as there were many representatives from the countryside and other towns who needed to be swayed to support the bank to overcome the resistance of the Governor and Council. As a nod to the expanding public sphere, the author of the letter admitted "I agree with him [Dudley] also, That it behooves the Government and General Assembly of the Province, and really concerns every man, that has any interest in the Country, with great application to enquire into, and seriously consider the Nature and Consequences of this Bank or Partnership."⁶⁵ Unlike Dudley, however, the author was convinced that anyone who carefully considered the matter would recognize the importance of supporting the private bank proposal. To nudge his friends in the country in support of the bank, the pamphlet provided readers with subtle hints about the conflicts

⁶⁴ s.n., *A Vindication of the bank of credit projected in Boston from the aspersions of Paul Dudley, Esqr. in a letter by him directed to John Burril Esqr. late speaker of the House of Representatives for the province of the Massachusetts-Bay in New-England*. (Boston: s.n., 1714), 6-7.

⁶⁵ F---l B---t, *A letter, from one in Boston, to his friend in the country. In answer to a letter directed to John Burril, Esqr. Speaker to the House of Representatives, for the province of the Massachusetts-Bay in New-England* (Boston: s.n., 1714), 4.

of interest that prevented the Governor and Council from allowing private banks. The public bank provided a wonderful opportunity for graft and corruption to enter government, and the Governor could try to use its revenues to free himself from reliance upon the Assembly for his salary.⁶⁶

Recognizing the increasingly strained aura of the public debate, Cotton Mather took advantage of a pastoral opportunity at a public lecture to diffuse some of the tension. Rather than take any specific position on the proposals, he offered some generalized maxims for successful living relating to personal finance. The main thrust of his argument was for all Christians to be content with the station in life to which they were born and to not enter into unnecessary debts to simply accumulate more goods than they could afford. He included additional advice about how individuals should behave in the midst of contentious public discussions and debates, such as those surrounding the land bank proposal. He reminded everyone to remain civil in their discourse and to be honest and fair with one another at all times. As Mather expressed it, “And now, the Minds of People throughout the Country, are greatly engaged in Projections, how we shall become furnished with such a Medium of Trade, as may prevent an undue Growth of debt among us, I will take the Opportunity to say; My Brethren, I beseech you, Let not this debt be forgotten, To Love one another.”⁶⁷

⁶⁶ F---l B---t, *A letter, from one in Boston, to his friend in the country*, 17-18.

⁶⁷ Cotton Mather, *Fair dealing between debtor and creditor. A very brief essay upon the caution to be used, about coming in to debt, and getting out of it. Offered at Boston-lecture; 5. d. XI. m. 171516*. (Boston: Bartholomew Green, 1716), 27.

Perhaps heeding Mather's advice for calm and moderation, an anonymously written pamphlet published in 1716 offered a measured assessment of the different positions along with a carefully calculated compromise proposal. The author suggested that hard money was the safest route to prosperity, but recognized that the local supply had been carried away from the Province. In practical terms he admitted, "For tho' tis true the needless expence in many respects, as in Silks, fine Cloth, both Linen and Woolen, as also the drinking of so much Wine & Rum, &c. has been a great means of carrying off the Silver, yet this is a Toppick easier to speak to, than to redress; & is a Matter worthy of the Legislators care."⁶⁸ Given the realities of ongoing trade deficits and their tendency to drain the province of currency, he notes the need for some type of bank to issue notes, but saw deep problems with both private and public options. Assessing the schemes proposed for a private bank, he worried that "this Bank seems projected more for the advantage of the bankers, than for the Publick Good." But turning to the public option he admitted, "this has likewise met with Objections; and till the Throne can be secured from a Prince of Arbitrary Principles in all times to come, such a Bank will be dangerous: For how easy will it be for such a Prince to divert such a large revenue to his Use and Pleasure?"⁶⁹ Given these difficulties, the author proposed a third option of allowing the colonial government to loan money to the province's towns in a way that would not require new office holders and would be less likely to be funneled to tyrannical

⁶⁸ s.n., *Some considerations upon the several sorts of banks propos'd as a medium of trade: and some improvements that might be made in this province, hinted at.* (Boston: Thomas Crump, 1716), 3-4.

⁶⁹ s.n., *Some considerations upon the several sorts of banks propos'd as a medium of trade*, 5.

purposes. The plan also called for incentives to boost local manufacturing so that the trade deficit could be eliminated and with it the need to worry about banks because hard money would then flow into the colony and replace paper bills. The pamphlet ended with a modest call for further discussion by any who sought to improve the plan: “And now if any shall object to what is said in order to better the Proposals, for advancing the general good of the Country, or shall add more such better reasons to Enforce what may be said, they would therein do good Service to their Country.”⁷⁰ Unfortunately, we do not know about how the public discussion of this issue may have evolved after this measured compromise proposal and sincere invitation to further discussion. Although not intended to end the dialogue, it became the last word on the matter in the press for the time being.

Ultimately, the governor and his council held fast and did not approve any of the private banking schemes proposed in the course of the debate. Instead, they turned to public financial instruments and issued more notes backed by the public treasury. The fund of paper money quieted the debate in the press for several years, but did not fundamentally alter the economic realities of the province. The inflationary tendencies of the province notes were as strong as ever and therefore did not solve the problem of providing a usable medium of exchange. Within three years the matter once again entered public debate.

As rumors circulated about the need for further injections of paper money into the economy of Massachusetts, two anonymous pamphlets appeared in 1719 chastising New

⁷⁰ s.n., *Some considerations upon the several sorts of banks propos'd as a medium of trade*, 14.

England for its extravagance and called all paper money schemes into question. The first pamphlet, *The Present Melancholy Circumstances of the Province Considered*, placed the blame for the colony's troubles on the mismanagement and extravagance of the people. The author suggested that with such incredible indebtedness and excessive consumerism, "I'm humbly of opinion, that a Thousand Scemes about Banks and paper-Money, wouldn't help us like this."⁷¹ Instead he called upon New Englanders to reduce their dependence upon imported goods and enhance their local manufacturing to meet the basic needs of the people. The second pamphlet was an extension of the first and delved more into a theoretical discussion of how paper currency functioned or should function, noting that bills of credit were undesirable in even the best circumstances. The author expressed deep concern that speculators were hoarding the bills, further increasing the circulation problems of the province and deeply hurting laboring people who had no way of recovering lost wages in the ways that farmers or merchants could by simply raising the prices of their goods.⁷² These pamphlets opened a third front in the debate about currency. The issue was no longer a debate merely between those who supported a private as opposed to a public bank, but now included those who opposed all banks and paper money of any kind.

⁷¹ s.n., *The Present melancholy circumstances of the province consider'd, and methods for redress humbly proposed, in a letter from one in the country to one in Boston* (Boston: s.n., 1719), 10.

⁷² s.n., *An Addition to the present melancholy circumstances of the province considered, &c. March 6th. 1718.9. Exhibiting considerations about labour, commerce, money, notes, or bills of credit* (Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1719), 17, 25.

Against this backdrop of opposition, John Wise wrote an address to the House of Representatives in defense of the public bank scheme and its notes. Wise reminded the House, and colonial readers, of the great good the province bills had accomplished, being used to stimulate local building projects and in the prosecution of a drawn-out war effort against the French. Rather than turning away from paper money, he suggested that more be issued, but incorporating some elements of other proposals, including loaning at 5% to those able to provide security based upon land.⁷³ He also noted that if the plan successfully aided the local economy, manufacturing increases could support exporting surpluses to Europe in exchange for enough hard money to retire all paper bills. In many ways this pamphlet offered a collection of ideas from various stages of the previous debate and brought them together in an effort to convince the Assembly to respond to public pressure.

The public attention given to the issue, though, seemed to reawaken interest in the private bank schemes and its supporters again turned to the press to make their case. They issued an anonymous pamphlet, *Some Proposals to Benefit the Province*, which outlined their plan. Their proposal revolved around the creation of a private bank and of large warehouses where colonists could bring their goods, drawing notes against their value. The pamphlet contained a sample line of credit that might be available to an average farmer in the region, helping them better understand how the bank would affect them. The pamphlet closed with a postscript in which the author compared the

⁷³ John Wise, *The freeholder's address to the Honourable House of Representatives*. (Boston: James Franklin, 1720), 4.

characteristics of a public-spirited man with a selfish, private-spirited one, making a clear claim that the supporters of the bank were thinking about the best interest of the entire colony while its opponents were more concerned with preserving their own self-interest.⁷⁴ John Colman then issued a strong case for the private banking project entitled, *The Distressed State of the Town of Boston &c. Considered*. Colman pulled no punches in attacking the inadequacies of the public bank system that existed: “I believe by this time every body’s Belly is full of the Publick Bank which was Projected, and they must be very short sighted surely, who did not foresee the wretched Consequences which would attend it.”⁷⁵ Inaction, however, was not an option as the continued lack of currency would continue to sap the region of vitality and resources. The only alternative, according to Colman, was to have a private bank that could meet the local demand for a medium of exchange that would not see its value plummet or be hoarded by selfish speculators. In order to enact such reform, he made a direct appeal to voters. He enjoined them to select candidates for the upcoming session of the General Assembly who would understand the problem and help them address it: “I hope our good Friends in the Country will consider our miserable circumstances, & send such men to Represent them next May, as may be Spirited for our Relief, not Sheriffs and Lawyers, who are the only men who are benefited by the straights of their Neighbours, else I fear Ruin and

⁷⁴ J.M. *Some Proposals to Benefit the Province*. (Boston: s.n., 1720), 13-14.

⁷⁵ John Colman, *The distressed state of the town of Boston, &c. considered. In a letter from a gentleman in the town, to his friend in the country* (Boston: s.n., 1720), 3.

Destruction will come upon us.”⁷⁶ Although many of the pamphlets relating to the currency issue recognized the importance of legislative action and sought to place public pressure on representatives, this was the most explicit call yet to translate policy positions into democratic political change.

Colman’s effort spurred a flurry of responses in both the newspaper and traditional pamphlets. The first item to appear was a newspaper essay designed to be a “Country- Man’s Answer” to Colman’s letter printed in the *Boston News-Letter* on April 18, 1720. The letter, written under the pen name Agricola, expressed no surprise that Boston found itself in troubling economic circumstances, “I must needs say, it is no more than I have been afraid of, when I have [seen] your sumptuous Buildings, your gallant Furniture, your Costly Clothing, and the profuseness of your Tables, and the great scandalous Expence at Taverns, besides a great deal of other Extravagance.”⁷⁷ The author chided Colman for assailing the legislature for establishing the public bank at the insistence of the Boston merchants; it was an act of high ingratitude to attack them for implementing their own plans. He closed the letter discussing the upcoming election. “As to your advice about the choice of our Representatives, which seems the main Spring and design of your Letter, we shall endeavour to choose men of a Publick Spirit that understand and design the good of the country . . . men that will take care to ease the debts of the Province.”⁷⁸ John Valentine added a *Postscript* to the message suggesting

⁷⁶ Colman, *The distressed state of the town of Boston*, 8-9.

⁷⁷ *Boston News-Letter*, April 18, 1720, p. 2.

⁷⁸ *Boston News-Letter*, April 18, 1720, p. 2.

that Agricola's response was so strong that there was little left for him to contribute, but he noted that it was astonishing that Colman was so aggressive in his attacks on the public bank. Valentine wondered, "But truly if Men may take upon them to Censure and Expose their Superiors, and Insinuate into the Minds of the People distresses and dangers, and be allowed to vent their displeasure at such Acts and Proceedings of the Government as do not suit their particular humors; What must become of the credit and Reputation of any Government, which is so necessary to preserve it."⁷⁹ This sentiment went against the grain of the development of the print culture of dialogues. It hearkened back to a time with limited ability to express dissent against the government. Rather than engage Coleman's ideas, Valentine pined for the days when dissenters were cut off from the press.

Edward Wigglesworth responded to Colman as part of an ongoing print dialogue using the established conventions familiar to controversialists. Wigglesworth laid out his intentions: "In setting down my thoughts, I shall take notice, 1. First, Of some ill Uses which have been made of our Province Bills, and some Unhappy Consequences of making such evil uses of them. And, 2. Secondly, I shall make some Remarks upon the most observable passages in the Pamphlet it's self."⁸⁰ Wigglesworth made good on his promise and referenced specific pages of Colman's pamphlet and provided direct responses to them. He made a case that the main difficulty for the Province was the

⁷⁹ John Valentine, *The Postscript* (Boston: s.n., 1720), 3.

⁸⁰ Edward Wigglesworth, *A letter from one in the country to his friend in Boston, containing some remarks upon a late pamphlet, entituled, The distressed state of the town of Boston, &c.* (Boston: James Franklin, 1720), 2.

extension of too much credit in general, which led to debts that could not be paid, a problem which would only deepen if a private bank was established that would leverage farm land as well, further endangering poor farmers who would be best served by climbing out of their debts through frugality and more home manufacturing. He also came to the defense of the beleaguered legislators: "Upon the whole, it is the Duty of Civil Rulers to consult the Welfare of the Publick. Our legislators saw the Door, at which all our calamities have broken in upon us, standing wide open: They have pusht it partly to; and so have in some measure checkt the madness of the People, who without Fear or Wit were running into Debt, to their own Ruin."⁸¹ He agreed with Colman in calling for public spirited men to be returned to the legislature in the next election, but suggested that indebted merchants were not a group that should be given public trust in difficult times.

Oliver Noyes responded on behalf of the bank supporters. He offered a different observation of the colonists' sentiments:

I have lately travell'd into divers parts of the Country, and convers'd with many Principle Men there, and find them all to be very different in Opinion from those who have pretended to give Answer to yours in the News-Letter, the 18th of April, and since in a Pamphlet dated 23rd of the same Month, Intitled, *Some Remarks on yours*, and indeed I think the

⁸¹ Wigglesworth, *A letter from one in the country to his friend in Boston*, 12.

Author did well to put in the Word, Some: for those Things which there
was most need of clearing up, he hath not thought proper to touch upon.⁸²

Noyes thought the bank's opponents had not been challenged on the practicality of their proposals. To him it was more likely that the province would stop eating, drinking and wearing clothes altogether before it would completely eliminate trust relationships between creditors and debtors, especially without sufficient currency in the province. He also noted that opponents of the bank rarely provided specific predictions about how the private bank would fail and with what consequences. Noyes ended the pamphlet on a more conciliatory note, though. Despite differences of opinion about matters of public policy, he hoped that "if we would but Unite, and bare with one another in our different Apprehension of Things, debate Matters fairly, and lay aside all Private designs, and Animosities, and believe that every Man's particular Interest is comprised in the general, and study sincerely the Publick Good, I am fully perswaded we might contrive ways to Exctricate our selves out of these Difficulties, and be as flourishing a People as ever."⁸³ As the dialogue progressed, it seemed clear to the participants that presenting a moderated and bipartisan tone was important in gaining readers' trust and potentially effecting public policy.

John Colman offered direct responses to his critics in *The Distressed State of the Town of Boston Once More Considered*. The main point of this pamphlet was to defend

⁸² Oliver Noyes, *A letter from a gentleman, containing some remarks upon the several answers given unto Mr. Colman's, entituled, The distressed state of the town of Boston* (Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1720), 3.

⁸³ Noyes, *A letter from a gentleman*, 13.

the honor of the people of Boston and of mercantile business in general. Colman felt that the workers and residents of Boston had been unfairly attacked as lazy and opulent. He knew them to be hard-working and frugal, struggling to survive under difficult circumstances. Suggestions that workers move to the country for jobs did not consider the difficulties associated with uprooting entire families. Colman defended the merchants and mercantile projects such as establishing banking institutions. Using the people of Holland as an example, he described how an economy based upon trade can flourish if managed wisely and properly. In great detail he showed how the bank would function and expressed astonishment that the people might be swayed by opponents who knew so little about merchants and commerce. He provocatively asserted, "I am sorry the Gentleman hath meddled in an affair, in which he is so ignorant; and made himself a Tool to a party, some of whom perhaps know as little of trade as himself."⁸⁴

Ostensibly stung by claims that he never presented viable alternatives to the private bank, Edward Wigglesworth wrote two pamphlets that provided details to release more public bills while sustaining their value. He suggested that the most important component to preserving the value of additional public bills of credit would be enacting a law to force all people to accept the notes as legal tender for private debts, making it impossible for merchants to hoard currency to purchase silver for export. Frustrated at the increasingly heated rhetoric coming from Colman, the aggrieved Wigglesworth

⁸⁴ John Colman, *The distressed state of the town of Boston once more considered. And methods of redress humbly proposed, with remarks on the pretended country-man's answer to the book, entitled, The distressed state of the town of Boston, &c. With a schaeeme for a bank laid down: and methods for bringing in silver money, proposed.* (Boston: s.n., 1720), 16.

offered a barb vindicating earlier remarks: “If there was a danger of Mr. Colman’s Rhetorick, I think there is not much of this Gentlemans Logick. I suppose he knows that sharp Writing sometimes irritates Men’s passions, and creates Heats and Animosities where there is no just cause for them.”⁸⁵ In his final contribution to the debate, Wigglesworth took a humble approach to gaining readers trust and confidence. He asserted that he never presented himself as an expert in matters of commerce, but “for the Publication of any modest Essay of this Nature, that, tho’ the Thoughts (upon Examination by others) should be found Erroneous or Impracticable; yet many times, even a mistake in one man, proves a means to awaken just and useful Thoughts in others, which at length conduce to Publick Advantage.”⁸⁶ He reminded readers of their own important role in determining the strength of disputed arguments. He felt confident in his arguments and was willing to leave the verdict in the hands of the jury of the reading public: “Thus I think I have stated both Opinions fairly, and let other People Judge who is right. I think enough hath been said on both sides and I am not at all Fond of having the last word.”⁸⁷

As the trail of partisan pamphlets grew longer and wider, many public figures recognized the deep fissures that had developed and sought ways to bridge the gap

⁸⁵ Edward Wigglesworth, *A vindication of the remarks of one in the country upon The distressed state of Boston, from some exceptions made against 'em in a letter to Mr. Colman.* (Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1720), 5.

⁸⁶ Edward Wigglesworth, *A project for the emission of an hundred thousand pounds of province bills, in such a manner as to keep their credit up equal to silver, and to bring an hundred thousand pounds of silver money into the country in a few years* (Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1720), 2.

⁸⁷ Wigglesworth, *A project for the emission of an hundred thousand pounds of province bills*, 14.

through compromise and exploring middle ground. Elisha Cooke, himself no stranger to partisan political rivalries, suggested that it was the excessive use of the printing press that exacerbated differences between competing policy positions.⁸⁸ In a printed dialogue, Cooke's "Gentleman from Boston" responded to a query from a country representative by admitting that the lack of currency was the root of the province's problems and "hence it is that the various Schemes & Projections, and Sentiments of Men (as their particular Interests, and private views have led them) have been exhibited, and almost an infinite number of Pamphlets dispersed thro' the Country; to this are owing, the Contests and Controversies among us, which have been managed with such furious Zeal, and Party warmth, as has ended in Enmity and utter Alienation."⁸⁹ Cooke's assessment was essentially true, but lost much of its moderating influence when his own dialogue took up a partisan position and added to the "almost infinite" list of polemical imprints.⁹⁰ An anonymous pamphlet published in late 1720 offered a different assessment of the problem and solution. The author certainly recognized how acrimonious the debate had become, but he did not blame the press, but rather the uncharitable authors and readers. He observed that most partisans grew incensed in their imprints. He questioned their

⁸⁸ Elisha Cooke's rivalry with Governor Dudley and political battles are described in great detail in Johnson, *Adjustment to Empire* and Pencak, *War and Politics*. Cooke's political disputes also led to a lengthy satirical self defense printed as Elisha Cooke, *Mr. Cooke's just and seasonable vindication: respecting some affairs transacted in the late General Assembly at Boston, 1720*. (Boston: s.n., 1720).

⁸⁹ Elisha Cooke, *Reflections upon reflections: or, More news from Robinson Crusoe's island, in a dialogue between a country representative and a Boston gentleman, July 12, 1720*. (Boston: s.n., 1720), 5.

⁹⁰ Cooke, *Reflections upon reflections*, 6. Cooke revealed himself to be an ally of John Colman and, speaking of Wigglesworth's *Remarks* wondered at "the Author's circular way of Argumentation; I supposed (being immers'd in more sublime Studies) he might imagine himself on some lofty Topick in Metaphysick." The mocking tone did little to move beyond the enmity and alienation he earlier decried.

commitment to the public good: “But this Anger is I think Unreasonable, & without any just occasion; for although these Opinions seem Repugnant, yet if we could be perswaded to consider them (& the reasons by which they are supported) calmly, and be cool in our reflections upon them, we might probably find a way to reconcile them, & shew how they may be understood & improved to that Common Good, which both parties aim at.”⁹¹

Trying to display the potential fruits of seeking common ground the author proposed that paper money, whether from a public or private source, be carefully regulated to hold its value at the same time that the province became more frugal and active in local manufacturing so that the bills could be called in at a later date.⁹²

John Wise took up the call for moderation in a lengthy imprint supporting paper money and banks written under the pseudonym Amicus Patria. As the title of his imprint suggested, Wise hoped to provide *A Word of Comfort to a Melancholy Country*. He proposed to make his case by proving four propositions. The first was that the region need not chastise itself morally, their problems arose from a lack of a medium of exchange and not through excessive consumption. The second and third propositions were related, claiming that trade and commerce were necessary to any flourishing society, and required an ample medium of exchange to carry on its business. Each of these carefully led into the fourth proposition: “This Province can create for themselves, a Sufficient Medium, that shall answer all Points of Business and Profit, better than

⁹¹ s.n., *Reflections on the present state of the Province of Massachuset-Bay in general, and town of Boston in particular; relating to bills of credit and the support of trade by them: as the same has been lately represented in several pamphlets*. (Boston: s.n., 1720), 4-5.

⁹² s.n., *Reflections on the present state of the Province of Massachuset-Bay*, 17.

Money: and that by a Publick or Private Bank of Credit; and either of them will do under the Influence, Patronage, Sanctions, & Awe of the Government.”⁹³ Although personally preferring a private bank, Wise suggested that he was willing to continue working with supporters of the public bank to ensure the success of the local economy. He expanded upon the increasingly familiar litany of local achievements using public bills for the previous thirty years and added expectations of even better returns in the future with the careful and targeted issuing of new bills secured to retain their value. His vision included benefits for the entire province and not just Boston, including the expansion of local manufacturing to reverse the trade deficit. Supporters of the private bank seemed to finally strike a more moderate tone better suited to seeking the support of the public.

At least one opponent of the bank, however, responded with hostility. This anonymous author, somehow linked to Castle William, purchased an advertisement in the February 20th issue of the *Boston Gazette*. He exposed the recently used pseudonym by punning “that Amicus Patria a late Author is a Worldly Wise Man.” The short advertisement then suggested that Wise “has spoke two Words for himself, and not one for his Country.” He claimed that Wise “from Twenty Years long experience . . . has not been able to pay Interest for Money borrowed of Private People, and of Twelve Hundred & Fifty Pounds (of his Miracle working Paper Money) borrowed of the Government by

⁹³ John Wise, *A word of comfort to a melancholy country. Or The bank of credit erected in the Massachusetts-Bay, fairly defended by a discovery of the great benefit, accruing by it to the whole province; with a remedy for recovering a civil state when sinking under desperation by defeat on their bank of credit*. By Amicus Patriae. (Boston: s.n., 1721), 7.

himself and his two Sons, he has yet paid but 250l. of it in again.”⁹⁴ He concluded that paper money schemes were presented by desperate characters who saw them as a way to enrich themselves or pay off personal debts through otherwise worthless paper money.

The newspaper attack led to an immediate outcry in public letters published in support of Wise. A Gentleman in Mount Hope admitted that

upon the arrival of your Last Weeks Gazette, we were (even to a Man,) wonderfully surprised, and filled with just Indignation and Scorn, upon the first reading an Infamous Advertisement, cramm’d into that Gazette, Published by Authority; in which the Shameless Author, takes upon him an uncommon freedom (not to call it impudence,) to Ill-Treat and Villify, a reverend and Worthy Gentleman, whom we ever deemed a true and faithful Friend to his Country.⁹⁵

A separate public letter, addressed to an unnamed clergyman, attacked the general tone of the entire public debate, carried on in “hard words, Impertinence, Impudence, and Nonsense, Deliver’d with a magisterial Air,” and added a postscript identifying the Castle William advertisement as in especially bad taste.⁹⁶ John Wise came to his own defense, protesting that his personal finances were in order and that he did not stand to gain

⁹⁴ *Boston Gazette*, Feb. 20, 1721, 2.

⁹⁵ s.n., *A Letter from a gentleman in Mount Hope, to his friend in Treamount*. (Boston: s.n., 1721), 1.

⁹⁶ s.n., *A Letter to an eminent clergy-man in the Massachusetts's Bay. Containing some just remarks, and necessary cautions, relating to publick affairs in that province*. (Boston: s.n., 1721), 1, 12.

personally from the banking proposals apart from sharing in the generalized prosperity that he supposed they would bring the region.⁹⁷

Not all of Wise's opponents resorted to personal attacks. The final imprint of this lengthy currency debate was, fittingly, a printed dialogue within the larger dialogue penned under the name of Philopatria. The author, identified by bibliographers as Thomas Paine, made it clear that the context for his pamphlet was the upcoming session of the General Assembly, which should respond to the needs of the people and the prevailing matter of public discussion. He was especially concerned that John Wise's pamphlet did not sufficiently address the difficulties facing the province. It severely understated, even ignored, that excessive consumption and debt was an overwhelming problem for many colonists. He felt that Wise did not spend nearly enough time and effort discussing the mechanics of how to preserve the value of paper bills. Echoing one of the themes of the controversial newspaper advertisement, Philopatria suggested, "As to the innate Power of working Miracles, ascribed to our Paper Bills by Amicus Patria, I think it the Product of a too exorbitant Fancy."⁹⁸ Instead of basing the emission of bills upon land values, Paine suggested using the value of the country's produce. In that way, the region could prevent massive problems with foreclosures in the event of a future

⁹⁷ John Wise, *A friendly check, from a kind relation, to the chief cannoneer, founded on a late information, dated N.E. Castle-William, Feb. 1720,21* (Boston: James Franklin, 1721).

⁹⁸ Thomas Paine, *A discourse, shewing, that the real first cause of the straits and difficulties of this province of Massachusetts Bay, is it's extravagancy, & not paper money: and also what is a safe foundation to raise a bank of credit on, and what not, (with some remarks on Amicus Patriae,) & a projection for emitting of more bills of credit on the province. By way of dialogue, tween a representative in said province, and a certain gentleman concerned for the good of his native country. By Philopatria.* (Boston: James Franklin, 1721), 7.

economic downturn. In the end, Philopatria's discourse argued against private banking schemes, and made several practical suggestions for the representatives in controlling the public bank: "1. That you put out but little at a time. . . 2. That you be constant and steady in putting out a suitable quantity. . . 3. That you be punctual to call in the bills at the time appointed."⁹⁹ His dialogue finished with further advice about how bills could be emitted based upon the tax assessments made within each town. This pamphlet was carefully calibrated to offer a working model for legislative action.

The voluminous dialogue in print concerning public credit and banking shows many of the hallmarks of a maturing public sphere as Habermas first envisioned it.¹⁰⁰ The discourse involved private individuals seeking to influence a broader public opinion in an explicit effort to shape policy decisions made by an elected local government. The interaction of this government with royal governors and officials with veto power over their deliberations made the dynamic complex, but did not destroy the importance of local politicians understanding and responding to colonial public opinion. The bulk of the currency imprints relied upon persuasive rhetoric that supported or clashed directly with other ideas previously placed before a wide reading public through the printing press. Authors often turned to anonymity or pseudonymous publication to enhance the reliance on rational debate in lieu of personal authority. The debate also incorporated the

⁹⁹ Paine, *A discourse, shewing, that the real first cause of the straits and difficulties of this province of Massachusetts Bay*, 14.

¹⁰⁰ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*.

new communications infrastructure of regular newspaper circulation as part of the expanding reach of the printed word in public affairs in colonial America.

As dramatic and important as the banking debates between 1716 and 1721 were on their own, they take on even more significance when considered alongside the religious disputes in the first decade of the eighteenth century. Together these dozens of pamphlets and newspaper articles provide a window into the extent to which colonial American print culture had changed from its foundation in the mid-seventeenth century. Where the press had once been the exclusive preserve of the proclamations of authoritative leaders in the church and state, it had become an outlet to debate multiple and competing perspectives in the public square. While the press had once been limited to providing authoritative instruction about what people should believe in religious matters, by the opening of the eighteenth century the faithful could buy and discuss imprints offering choices among varying interpretations of religious truth and ideal church organization. Politically, the changes were equally stark. While imprints once exclusively proclaimed the authoritative decisions of the state, in the eighteenth century pamphlets and newspaper essays tried to sway public opinion in an effort to affect who became elected officials and the decisions they made once in power.

This transformation of print culture was not, however, a uniquely American experience. It was instead a pattern of growth that belatedly replicated a similar progression in British presses. David Zaret was one of the first to recognize that printing

styles during the English Civil Wars and Interregnum could be seen as a part of the broader shift towards dialogical print communication and an important underpinning for democratic reform.¹⁰¹ Peter Lake and Steven Pincus took this and other insights about England's unique religious, political, and cultural history and revised Habermas's entire framework for the opening of the public sphere. They outlined a three stage development that traced its roots to the religious disputes and contentions surrounding the Reformation, shifting through the religious and political turmoil of the English Civil Wars and blossoming into a venue for the effective debates and discussions required to run a thoroughly modern political economy and democratically limited monarchy following the Glorious Revolution.¹⁰² An understanding of this ongoing storyline in British printing provided a brand new vantage point from which to re-evaluate the production of the colonial American printing press. The small shops in Boston where printing first took root in North America proceeded to establish a print culture that was more thoroughly controlled and proclamatory than many European monarchs could have dreamed of possessing. It was not until the dislocations associated with the Glorious Revolution that change flooded into the American presses, seeing England's three stages of transformation compressed into one. Religious, political, and economic dialogues and debates poured from the press in the 1690s, whereas they were previously shut out of print. These new genres and printed dialogues expanded even further and flourished in the early stages of the eighteenth century, showing that the genie of dialogical print

¹⁰¹ Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture*.

¹⁰² Lake and Pincus, eds., *The Politics of the Public Sphere in early Modern England*.

culture could not be put back into the bottle. The American press was coming more into line with its metropolitan center.

Using the latest developments in British studies of the public sphere and re-evaluating early American print culture affords new vantage points from which to examine the opening of an American public sphere. Scholars of the early American Republic have long taken such a public sphere for granted without giving extended consideration to when and how it might have developed over time, often considering it an organic outgrowth of the American Revolution.¹⁰³ T.H. Breen and Timothy Hall broke new ground in the scholarship by discussing colonial origins for an American public sphere, noting the importance of the press in leading debates and dialogue about concurrent crises of religion and banking schemes during the 1740s.¹⁰⁴ These debates were indeed important, but not as revolutionary topics first breaking into the press and public imagination. We now know that religion and banking schemes lay at the heart of a series of robust printed dialogues in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, providing important precedents and frameworks for the later debates to unfold. Those debates at the turn of the century, however, were themselves built upon a foundation of changes in print culture that were laid in the 1690s in the aftermath of America's experience of the

¹⁰³ Michael Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth Century America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990); Jeffrey Pasley, *"The Tyranny of Printers": Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001); John L. Brooke, "Ancient Lodges and Self-Created Societies: Voluntary Association and the Public Sphere in the Early Republic," in Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert, eds., *Launching the "Extended Republic": The Federalist Era* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996).

¹⁰⁴ Breen and Hall, "Structuring the Provincial Imagination."

Glorious Revolution. Scholars already recognize the time period between 1680 and the American Revolution as a period of significant change and maturation in Britain's North American possessions. Some have referred to this as the era in which the colonies "became America."¹⁰⁵ Others have noted that, politically speaking, Americans were making an adjustment to empire, economically they were moving from dependency to independence, and culturally transforming from colonials to provincials.¹⁰⁶ We now know that after 1688 colonial America's public sphere transformed and expanded as its print culture made an important transition from proclamations to dialogues.

¹⁰⁵ Jon Butler, *Becoming America: The Revolution Before 1776* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 1-7.

¹⁰⁶ Johnson, *Adjustment to Empire*; Newell, *From Dependency to Independence*; Ned Landsman, *From Colonials to Provincials: American Thought and Culture, 1680-1760* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1997).

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Leeds, Daniel. *The case put & decided by George Fox, George Whitehead, Stephen Crisp, and other the most antient & eminent Quakers, between Edward Billing on the one part, and some West-Jersians, headed by Samuells Jenings on the other part, in an award relating to the government of their province, wherein, because not molded to the pallate of the said Samuells, the light, the truth, the justice and infallibility of these great Friends are arraigned by him and his accomplices. Also, several remarks and animadversions on the same award, setting forth the premises. With some reflections on the senseless opposition of these men against the present governour, and their daring audatiousness in their presumptuous affecting an authority here over the parliament of England. Published for the information of the impartial and considerate, particularly such as worship God,*

and profess Christianity, not in faction and hypocrisie, but in truth and sincerety.
New York: William Bradford, 1699.

Leeds, Daniel. *A trumpet sounded out of the wilderness of America; which may serve as a warning to the government and people of England to beware of Quakerisme. Wherein is shewed the great contradictions of the Quakers, both in their former and later writings. Also how they deny Jesus of Nazareth to be the Christ. And how in Pensilvania and there-away, where they have the government in their own hands, they hire and encourage men to fight; and how they persecute, fine, imprison, and take away goods for conscience sake. Notwithstanding they formerly exclaimed against the government of England, &c. for the same things. Setting forth likewise these base temporizing with whatever government is uppermost.* New York: William Bradford, 1699.

Leeds, Daniel. *A challenge to Caleb Pusey, and a check to his lyes & forgeries, &c.*
New York: William Bradford, 1701.

Leeds, Daniel. *News of a strumpet co-habiting in the wilderness or, A brief abstract of the spiritual & carnal whoredoms & adulteries of the Quakers in America. Delinated in a cage of twenty unclean birds. Purposely published in pitty to the Quakers, to let them see themselves as others see them, because in pag. 47. of their book, called, Satan's Harbinger, (lately printed at Philadelphia by the authority of their meeting of ministers) they pretend they know no such persons amongst them. Otherwise, 'tis more work for the Quakers to use their arts and imploy their press to prop up their two main pillars infallibility & perfection.*
New York: [William Bradford], 1701.

Leeds, Daniel. *The rebuker rebuked in a brief answer to Caleb Pusey his scurrilous pamphlet [sic], entituled, A rebuke to Daniel Leeds, &c. Wherein William Penn his Sandy foundation is fairly quoted, shewing that he calls Christ, the finite impotent creature.* New York: William Bradford, 1703.

Leeds, Daniel. *The great mistery of Fox-craft discovered. And the Quaker plainness & sincerity demonstrated, first, in their great apostle George Fox; 2dly, in their late subscribing the oath or act of Abjuration. Introduced with two letter [sic] written by G. Fox to Coll. Lewis Morris, deceased, exactly spell'd and pointed as in the originals, which are now to be seen in the library at Burlington in New-Jersey, and will be proved (by the likeness of the hand, &c.) to be the hand-writing of the Quakers learned Fox, if denied. To which is added, a post-script, with some remarks on the Quaker-almanack for this year 1705.* New York: William Bradford, 1705.

Leeds, Daniel. *The second part of the mystry of Fox-craft introduced with about thirty quotations truly taken from the Quaker books, and well attested by men learned and pious; proving all, and more than all the charges in F. Bugg's Bomb of half a sheet, which Mr. Talbot reprinted and sent to the Quakers at their General Meeting at Burlington in 1704. Where he appointed time and place for them to meet him, and promised in F.B.'s stead to prove the said charges against them in the face of the country. But they finding their cause would not bear that test, refused to meet him; but have at last published a bulky book of 14 sheets, entituled, The bomb-searcher, &c. therein denying themselves to be guilty, as by the bomb charged. But it is herein proved, I. That the bomb-searcher (Caleb Pusey) and his brethren who approve his said book, are possest with a lying spirit. II. That they make it their whole business to deceive. III. And that by their denying, excusing and hiding their blasphemous notions and doctrines they are self-condemned. (And therefore I design that this shall end the controversie between them and me.)* New York: William Bradford, 1705.

Ludovici, Christian. *A Letter from the most ingenious Mr. Lodowick Rhode Island, Febr. 1. 1691/2.* Boston: Bartholomew Green, 1692.

Massachusetts. *By the governour and Council. Whereas some have lately presumed to print and disperse a pamphlet, entituled, Publick occurrences, both forreign and domestick: Boston, Thursday, Septemb. 25th. 1690. Without the least privity or countenance of authority. The governour and Council ... order that the same be suppressed and called in.* Boston: Bartholomew Green, 1690.

Mather, Cotton. *The declaration, of the gentlemen, merchants, and inhabitants of Boston, and the countrey adjacent. April 18th. 1689.* Boston: Samuel Green, 1689.

Mather, Cotton. *Memorable Providences, relating to Witchcrafts and possessions a faithful Account of many Wonderful and surprising things, that have befallen several bewitched and possessed persons in New England...with an Appendix, in vindication of a chapter in a late book of remarkable providences, from the calumnies of a Quaker at Pen-sylvania.* Boston: s.n., 1689.

Mather, Cotton. *The present state of New-England. Considered in a discourse on the necessities and advantages of a public spirit in every man; especially, at such a time as this. Made at the lecture in Boston 20.d. 1.m. 1690. Upon the news of an invasion by bloody Indians and French-men, begun upon us.* Boston: Samuel Green, 1690.

Mather, Cotton. *The Principles of the Protestant religion maintained, and churches of New-England, in the Profession and exercise thereof defended against all the calumnies of one George Keith, a Quaker, in a book lately published at Pensilvania, to undermine them both.* Boston: Richard Pierce, 1690.

Mather, Cotton. *Little Flocks Guarded against Grievous Wolves. An address unto those parts of New England which are most exposed unto assaults, from the modern teachers of those misled Quakers. In a letter, which impartially discovers the manifold heresies and blasphemies, and the strong delusions of even the most refined Quakerism; and thereupon demonstrates the truth of those principles and assertions, which are most opposite thereunto. With just reflections upon the extream ignorance and wickedness, of George Keith, who is the seducer that now most ravines upon the churches of this wilderness.* Boston: Benjamin Harris and John Allen, 1691.

Mather, Cotton. *Some considerations on the bills of credit now passing in New-England. Addressed unto the Worshipful, John Philips Esq; Published for the information of the inhabitants.* Boston: Benjamin Harris, 1691.

Mather, Cotton. *The wonders of the invisible world. Observations as well historical as theological, upon the nature, the number, and the operations of the devils.* Boston: Benjamin Harris, 1692.

Mather, Cotton. *A collection, of some of the many offensive matters, contained in a pamphlet, entituled, The order of the Gospel revived.* Boston: s.n., 1701.

Mather, Cotton. *Fair dealing between debtor and creditor. A very brief essay upon the caution to be used, about coming in to debt, and getting out of it. Offered at Boston-lecture; 5. d. XI. m. 171516.* Boston: Bartholomew Green, 1716.

Mather, Increase. *A brief history of the warr with the Indians in New-England, (from June 24, 1675. when the first English-man was murdered by the Indians, to August 12. 1676. when Philip aliàs Metacomet, the principal author and beginner of the warr, was slain.) Wherein the grounds, beginning, and progress of the warr, is summarily expressed. Together with a serious exhortation to the inhabitants of that land.* Boston: John Foster, 1676.

Mather, Increase. *An earnest exhortation to the inhabitants of New-England, to hearken to the voice of God in his late and present dispensations as ever they desire to*

escape another judgement, seven times greater than any thing which as yet hath been. Boston: John Foster, 1676.

Mather, Increase. *A relation of the troubles which have hapned in New-England, by reason of the Indians there. From the year 1614 to the year 1675. Wherein the frequent conspiracyes of the Indians to cutt off the English, and the wonderfull providence of God, in disappointing their devices, is declared. Together with an historical discourse concerning the prevalency of prayer; shewing that New Englands late deliverance from the rage of the heathen is an eminent answer of prayer.* Boston: John Foster, 1677.

Mather, Increase. *Returning unto God the great concernment of a covenant people. Or A sermon preached to the Second Church in Boston in New-England, March 17. 1679.80. when that church did solemnly and explicitly renew their covenant with God, and one with another.* Boston: John Foster, 1680.

Mather, Increase. *The divine right of infant baptism asserted and proved from Scripture and antiquity.* Boston: John Foster, 1680.

Mather, Increase. *An essay for the recording of illustrious providences, wherein an account is given of many remarkable and very memorable events, which have happened in this last age; especially in New-England.* Boston: Samuel Green, 1684.

Mather, Increase. *A narrative of the miseries of New-England, by reason of an arbitrary government erected there. Under Sir Edmond Andross. To which is added, some account of the humble application of the pious and noble Prelate, Henry Lord Bishop of London, with the reverend clergy of the city, and some of the dissenting ministers in it, to the illustrious Prince William Henry, Prince of Orange on Fryday [sic], September 21. 1688. Also the address of the nonconformist ministers (in and about the city of London) to His Higness [sic] the Prince of Orange.* Boston: Richard Pierce, 1689.

Mather, Increase. *Cases of conscience concerning evil spirits personating men, witchcrafts, infallible proofs of guilt in such as are accused with that crime. All considered according to the Scriptures, history, experience, and the judgment of many learned men.* Boston: Benjamin Harris, 1693.

Mather, Increase. *The order of the Gospel, professed and practised by the churches of Christ in New England, justified, by the Scripture, and by the writings of many*

learned men, both ancient and modern divines; in answer to several questions, relating to church discipline. Boston: John Allen and Bartholomew Green, 1700.

Mather, Increase. *Some remarks on a late sermon, preached at Boston in New England, by George Keith M.A. Shewing that his pretended good rules in divinity, are not built on the foundation of the apostles & prophets.* Boston: Nicholas Boone, 1702.

Mather, Richard. *Church-government and church-covenant discussed in an answer to the elders of the severall churches in New England to two and thirty questions sent over to them by divers ministers in England, to declare their judgments therein.* London: Printed by R.O. and G.D. for Benjamin Allen, 1643.

Mather, Richard. *A defence of the answer and arguments of the Synod met at Boston in the year 1662. Concerning the subject of baptism, and consociation of churches. Against the reply made thereto, by the Reverend Mr. John Davenport, Pastor of the church at New-Haven, in his treatise entituled, Another essay for investigation of the truth, &c. Together with an answer to the apologetical preface set before that essay. By some of the elders who were members of the synod above-mentioned.* Cambridge: Samuel Green and Marmaduke Johnson, 1664.

Maule, Thomas. *Truth held forth and maintained according to the testimony of the holy prophets, Christ and his apostles recorded in the Holy Scriptures. With some account of the judgements of the Lord lately inflicted upon New-England by witch craft. To which is added, something concerning the fall of Adam, his state in the fall, and way of restoration to God again, with many other weighty things, necessary for people to weigh and consider. Written in true love to the souls of my neighbours, and all men, which includeth that love to them, as to my self.* New York: William Bradford, 1695.

Maule, Thomas. *Nevv-England pesecutors [sic] mauled vvith their own vveapons. Giving some account of the bloody laws made at Boston against the Kings subjects that dissented from their way of worship. Together with a brief account of the imprisonment and tryal of Thomas Maule of Salem, for publishing a book, entituled, Truth held forth and maintained, &c.* New York: William Bradford, 1697.

Mitchell, Jonathan. *Nehemiah on the wall in troublesom [sic] times; or, A serious and seasonable improvement of that great example of magistratical piety and prudence, self-denial and tenderness, fearlessness and fidelity, unto instruction and encouragement of present and succeeding rulers in our Israel. As it was*

delivered in a sermon preached at Boston in N.E. May 15. 1667. being the day of election there. By that faithful servant of Christ, Mr. Jonathan Mitchel, late Pastor of the Church of Christ at Cambridge. Cambridge: Samuel Green and Marmaduke Johnson, 1671.

N.N. *From a gentleman of Boston to a friend in the countrey. Boston: Samuel Green, 1689.*

Norton, John. *The Heart of New England rent at the blasphemies of the present generation; or a brief tractate concerning the doctrine of the Quakers, demonstrating the destructive nature thereof, to religion, the churches, and the state, with a consideration of the remedy against it. Occasional satisfaction to objections and confirmation of the contrary trueth. Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1659.*

Noyes, Oliver. *A letter from a gentleman, containing some remarks upon the several answers given unto Mr. Colman's, entituled, The distressed state of the town of Boston. Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1720.*

Paine, Thomas. *A discourse, shewing, that the real first cause of the straits and difficulties of this province of Massachusetts Bay, is it's extravagancy, & not paper money: and also what is a safe foundation to raise a bank of credit on, and what not, (with some remarks on Amicus Patriae,) & a projection for emitting of more bills of credit on the province. By way of dialogue, tween a representative in said province, and a certain gentleman concerned for the good of his native country. By Philopatria. Boston: James Franklin, 1721.*

Palmer, John. *The present state of New-England impartially considered, in a letter to the clergy. Boston: Samuel Green, 1689.*

Penn, William. *The excellent priviledge of liberty and property being the birth-right of the free-born subjects of England. Containing I. Magna Carta, with a learned comment upon it. II. The confirmation of the charters of the liberties of England ... III. A statute made the 34 Edw. I. ... IV. An abstract of the pattent granted by the King to VVilliam Penn ... V. And lastly, the charter of liberties granted by the said VVilliam Penn to the free-men and inhabitants of the province of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1687.*

Pennington, Isaac. *An examination of the grounds or causes, which are said to induce the court of Boston in New-England to make that order or law of banishment upon pain of death against the Quakers; as also of the grounds and*

considerations by them produced to manifest the warrantableness and justness both of their making and executing the same, which they now stand deeply engaged to defend, having already thereupon put two of them to death. As also of some further grounds for justifying of the same, in an appendix to John Norton's book ... whereto he is said to be appointed by the General Court. And likewise of the arguments briefly hinted in that which is called, A true relation of the proceedings against the Quakers, &c. Whereunto somewhat is added about the authority and government which Christ excluded out of his Church. London: L. Lloyd, 1660.

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. *A general epistle given forth by the people of the Lord, called, Quakers, that all may know, we own none to be of our fellowship, or to be reckoned or numbred [sic] with us, but such as fear the Lord and keep faithfully to his heavenly power. Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1686.*

Pierson, Abraham. *Some helps for the Indians shewing them how to improve their natural reason, to know the true God, and the true Christian religion. 1. By leading them to see the divine authority of the Scriptures. 2. By the Scriptures the divine truths necessary to eternal salvation. Undertaken at the motion, and published by the order of the Commissioners of the United Colonies. By Abraham Peirson [i.e., Pierson]. Examined, and approved by Thomas Stanton interpreter-general to the united colonies for the Indian language, and by some others of the most able interpreters [sic] amongst [sic] us. Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1659.*

Pusey, Caleb. *Satan's harbinger encountered, his false news of a trumpet detected, his crooked ways in the wildrnesse [sic] laid open to the view of the imperial and iudicious. Being something by way of answer to Daniel Leeds his book entituled News of a trumpet sounding in the wilderness &c. Philadelphia: Reinier Jansen, 1700.*

Pusey, Caleb. *Daniel Leeds, justly rebuked for abusing William Penn and his folly and falls-hoods [sic] contained in his two printed challenges [sic] to Caleb Pusey made manifest; with some remarks also by way of rebuke on the author of the book called News of a strumpet. Philadelphia: Reinier Jansen, 1702.*

Pusey, Caleb. *Proteus ecclesiasticus or George Keith varied in fundamentalls; acknowledged by himself to be such, and prov'd an apostat, from his own definition, arguments, and reasons. Contrary to his often repeated false pretentions, whereby he hath laboured to deceive the people; telling them he is not varied from any fundamental principle, nor any principle of the Christian faith ever since he first came among the Quakers. With remarks on Daniel Leed's*

abusive almanack for the year 1703. By way of postscript. Philadelphia: Reinier Jansen, 1703.

Pusey, Caleb. *George Keith once more brought to the test, and proved a prevaricator, containing something of an answer to his book called The spirit of railing Shimei, &c. And shewing, that George Keith in his attempting, to prove the spirit of railing shimei &c. to be entred into Caleb Pusey; hath there by more manifested, that not only the spirit of railing, and envy; but also of confusion, about doctrin's and principles of religion, is entred in to himself.* Philadelphia: Reinier Jansen, 1703.

Pusey, Caleb. *Some remarks upon a late pamphlet signed part by John Talbot, and part by Daniel Leeds, called The great mystery of Fox-craft.* Philadelphia: Reinier Jansen, 1705.

Pusey, Caleb. *Some brief observations made on Daniel Leeds his book, intituled The second part of the mystery of Fox-craft. Published for the clearing the truth against the false aspersions, calumnies and perversions of that often-refuted author. by Caleb Pusey. With a postscript by Tho: Chalkly wherein D: L: is justly rebuked for falsly citeing [sic] him.* Philadelphia: Joseph Reyners, 1706.

Rawson, Edward. *A true relation of the proceedings against certain Quakers, at the generall court of the Massachusetts holden at Boston in New-England October. 18. 1659.* London: A.W., 1660.

Rowlandson, Mary. *The sovereignty & goodness of God, together, with the faithfulness of his promises displayed; being a narrative of the captivity and restauration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson. Commended by her, to all that desires to know the Lords doings to, and dealings with her. Especially to her dear children and relations, Written by her own hand for her private use, and now made publick at the earnest desire of some friends, and for the benefit of the afflicted.* Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1682.

Salem, First Church. *A copy of the church-covenants which have been used in the church of Salem both formerly, and in their late renewing of their covenant on the day of the publick fast, April 15. 1680. As a direction pointing to that covenant of Gods grace in Christ made with his church and people in the holy Scripture.* Boston: John Foster, 1680.

Shepard, Thomas. *The church-membership of children, and their right to baptisme, according to that holy and everlasting covenant of God, established between*

himself, and the faithfull and their seed after them, in their generations: cleared up in a letter, sent unto a worthy friend of the author, and many yeares agoe written touching that subject; by Thomas Shepard, sometimes Pastor of the Church of Christ at Cambridg in New-England. Published at the earnest request of many: for the consolidation and encouragemenr [sic], both of parents and children in the Lord. Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1663.

Territory and Dominion of New England. *A proclamation by the President and Council of His Majestiy's [sic] Territory & Dominion of New-England in America. Whereas His Most Excellent Majesty our Sovereign Lord James the Second ... hath been graciously pleased to erect and constitute a president and council to take care of all that his Territory and Dominion of New-England ... Given from the Council-house in Boston this 28th day of May: anno Domini 1686. Boston: Richard Pierce, 1686.*

Tompson, Benjamin. *New Englands crisis. Or A brief narrative, of New-Englands lamentable estate at present, compar'd with the former (but few) years of prosperity. Occasioned by many unheard of crueltyes practised upon the persons and estates of its united colonyes, without respect of sex, age or quality of persons, by the barbarous heathen thereof. Poetically described. Boston: John Foster, 1676.*

Valentine, John. *The Postscript. Boston: s.n., 1720.*

Wheeler, Thomas. *A thankfull remembrance of Gods mercy to several persons at Quabaug or Brookfield: partly in a collection of providences about them, and gracious appearances for them: and partly in a sermon preached by Mr. Edward Bulkley, Pastor of the Church of Christ at Concord, upon a day of thanksgiving, kept by divers for the wonderfull deliverance there. Cambridge: Samuel Green, 1676.*

Wigglesworth, Edward. *A letter from one in the country to his friend in Boston, containing some remarks upon a late pamphlet, intituled, The distressed state of the town of Boston, &c. Boston: James Franklin, 1720.*

Wigglesworth, Edward. *A vindication of the remarks of one in the country upon The distressed state of Boston, from some exceptions made against 'em in a letter to Mr. Colman. Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1720.*

Wigglesworth, Edward. *A project for the emission of an hundred thousand pounds of province bills, in such a manner as to keep their credit up equal to silver, and to*

bring an hundred thousand pounds of silver money into the country in a few years. Boston: Samuel Kneeland, 1720.

Willard, Samuel. *The duty of a people that have renewed their covenant with God. Opened and urged in a sermon preached to the Second Church in Boston in New-England, March 17. 1679.[]80. after that church had explicitly and most solemnly renewed the ingagement of themselves to God, and one to another.* Boston: John Foster, 1680.

Willard, Samuel. *Ne sutor ultra crepidam. Or Brief animadversions upon the New-England Anabaptists late fallacious narrative; wherein the notorious mistakes and falshoods by them published, are detected.* Boston: Samuel Green, 1681.

Willard, Samuel. *Some miscellany observations on our present debates respecting witchcrafts, in a dialogue between S. & B. By P.E. and J.A.* Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1692.

Willard, Samuel. *A brief reply to Mr. George Kieth [i.e. Keith], in answer to a script of his, entituled, A refutation of a dangerous and hurtfull opinion, maintained.* Boston: s.n., 1703.

William III, King of England. *His Highness the Prince of Orange His letter to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal assembled at Westminster in this present convention. January 22. 1688.* Boston: Richard Pierce for Benjamin Harris, 1689.

William III, King of England. *His Majesty's most gracious letter to his government of the Massathusets [sic] Colony in New-England. ... Given at our Court at White-Hall the 12th day August 1689. ... Published by order of the governour & Council & representatives, for the satisfaction of His Majesties good subjects in New-England.* Boston: Richard Pierce, 1689.

Williams, Roger. *The bloody tenent, of persecution, for cause of conscience, discussed in a conference betweene truth and peace.* London: s.n., 1644.

Williams, Roger. *The bloody tenent yet more bloody: by Mr Cottons endeavor to wash it white in the blood of the lambe.* London: Giles Calvert, 1652.

Williams, Roger. *George Fox digg'd out of his burrovves, or An offer of disputation on fourteen proposalls made this last summer 1672 (so call'd) unto G. Fox then present on Rode-Island in New-England, by R.W. As also how (G. Fox slily departing) the disputation went on being managed three dayes at Newport on*

Rode-Island, and one day at Providence, between John Stubbs, John Burnet, and William Edmundson on the one part, and R.W. on the other. In which many quotations out of G. Fox & Ed. Burrowes book in folio are alleadged. With an apendix of some scores of G.F. his simple lame answers to his opposites in that book, quoted and replied to by R.W. of Providence in N.E. Boston: John Foster, 1676.

Wise, John. *The freeholder's address to the Honourable House of Representatives.* Boston: James Franklin, 1720.

Wise, John. *A word of comfort to a melancholy country. Or The bank of credit erected in the Massachusetts-Bay, fairly defended by a discovery of the great benefit, accruing by it to the whole province; with a remedy for recovering a civil state when sinking under desperation by defeat on their bank of credit.* By Amicus Patriae. Boston: s.n., 1721.

Wise, John. *A friendly check, from a kind relation, to the chief cannoneer, founded on a late information, dated N.E. Castle-William, Feb. 1720,21.* Boston: James Franklin, 1721.

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