

## CHAPTER 2

### DOCUMENT SET 2

### Witchcraft at Salem: The Social and Cultural Context

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One of the key developments outlined in your textbook was the extension of Puritan settlements in the mid-seventeenth century. As the New England towns grew, the congregational principle and the town system contributed to rising tensions over group autonomy and access to land and resources. One result of an orderly pattern of expansion was the mutual watchfulness described in your text. By encouraging centers of settlement, Massachusetts Bay authorities forced close interaction among settlers that, in turn, facilitated the preservation of community values.

By the 1670s, however, the enforcement of close control was breaking down as new communities emerged. Worse yet, many Puritans were distressed by an awareness that the Puritan mission, as defined by the founders, had failed. After the Restoration, the Puritans increasingly turned inward, afflicted by a sense that history had passed them by.

Some scholars view the outbreak of the witchcraft phenomenon in 1692 as a symptom of that sense of failure. The bizarre episode began when several adolescent girls exhibited hysterical behavior following a fortune-telling session with a West Indian slave. Their accusations of witchcraft drew a supportive and increasingly alarming response from adult relatives and friends, resulting in the involvement of the local minister, Samuel Parris, whose home had been the scene of the beginning of the outbreak. With his encouragement,

the accusations escalated, trials were held, and more than twenty accused witches were executed.

Historians have explained this grisly affair in a variety of ways, including the rise of materialism, adolescent psychology, intergenerational tension, and religious fervor. More recently, scholars have focused attention on the social and economic conflicts present in Salem village and its larger neighbor, Salem town. Differences between rural Salem village and commercial Salem town surfaced, together with sharp conflicts over the pastorate and leadership of Samuel Parris. Similarly, tensions over the autonomy of the more distant settlements were evident in the social and religious alignments that were formed.

The following documents provide evidence to support a number of interpretive positions on the origins of this episode. As you examine the transcripts of the interrogation, the deposition and confession of accuser Ann Putnam, Samuel Parris's sermon, and the later findings of the Council of Elders, be alert to the social and psychological roots of the Salem crisis. Evaluate the written record in the light of statistical material detailing the generational and demographic (geographic) bases for conflict. Finally, relate the social divisions and religious differences that emerge to your textbook's discussion of rising materialism and the failure of the New England Way.

#### Questions for Analysis

1. What do the maps and charts reveal about the identities of the parties to the conflict over the witchcraft issue in Salem? How do you account for the support for and opposition to the militant position taken by Samuel Parris?
2. What is the connection between the witchcraft episode of 1692 and the economic and religious trends described in your textbook? What motives and concerns lay behind the Parris sermon? What threat did witches pose, according to Parris? How could they be identified? What was the social significance of their alleged presence?
3. What do the charts that identify accusers and accused by age group reveal about the origins of the witchcraft episode? What is the significance of family relationships in understanding the Salem episode? What does the statistical evidence suggest with regard to the accusers' possible motives?
4. What does the Salem situation in 1692 suggest about social classes and economic change in late seventeenth-century New England? What was the significance of the economic differences between Salem village and Salem town? What evidence is provided by the documents to clarify the changes under way at this moment in Massachusetts history?
5. Do the documents shed light on the relations between the sexes in seventeenth-century New England? Examine Martha Corey's testimony for evidence of gender tension. How would you explain her viewpoint?

6. Given the world view, religious environment, and belief systems of the seventeenth century, to what extent does the serious attention devoted by the community to witchcraft accusations seem irrational? What was the meaning of the witchcraft episode to Puritan divines and political leaders? Search the documents for evidence of their concerns.
7. One might argue that a focus on a single community's experience distorts our understanding of colonial history. In the case of Salem, do you agree or disagree? Why? What is the significance of this microcosm in interpreting New England history in the seventeenth century?

## 1. Samuel Parris Sets a Tone, 1692

### Christ Knows How Many Devils There Are (1692)

27 March 1691/92, Sacrament day.

Occasioned by dreadful Witchcraft broke out here a few weeks past, and one Member of this Church, and another of Salem, upon public examination by Civil Authority vehemently suspected for she-witches, and upon it committed.

John 6:70. "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a Devil." . . .

Doctrine: *Our Lord Jesus Christ knows how many Devils there are in his Church, and who they are.*

1. There are devils as well as saints in Christ's Church.
2. Christ knows how many of these devils there are.
3. Christ knows who these devils are.

Proposition 1: There are devils as well as saints in Christ's church. Here three things may be spoken to: (1) Show you what is meant here by *devils*; (2) That there are such devils in the church; (3) That there are also true saints in such churches.

(1). What is meant here by *devils*? "One of you is a devil." Answer: By *devil* is ordinarily meant any wicked angel or spirit. Sometimes it is put for the prince or head of the evil spirits, or fallen angels. Sometimes it is used for vile and wicked persons—the worst of such, who for their villainy and impiety do most resemble devils and wicked spirits. Thus Christ in our text calls Judas a devil: for his great likeness to the devil. "One of you is a devil": i.e., a devil for quality and disposition, not a devil for nature—for he was a man, etc.—but a devil for likeness and operation (John 8: 38, 41, 44—"Ye are of your father the devil.")

(2). There are such devils in the church. Not only sinners, but notorious sinners; sinners more like to the devil than others. So here in Christ's little Church. (Text.) This also Christ teacheth us in the parable of the tares (Matth. 13:38), where Christ tells us that such are the children of the wicked one—i.e., of the devil. Reason: Because hypocrites are the very worst of men—*corruptio optimi est pessimi*. Hypocrites are the sons and heirs of the devil, the free-holders of hell—whereas other sinners are but tenants. When Satan repossesseth a soul, he becomes more vile and sinful (Luke 11: 24–26). As the jailer lays loads of iron on him that hath escaped. None are worse than those who have been good, and are naught; and might be good, but will be naught. . . .

Proposition 2: Christ knows how many of these devils there are in his churches. As in our text there was one among the twelve. And so in our churches God knows how many devils there are: whether one, two, three, or four in twelve—how many devils, how many saints. He that knows whom he has chosen (John 13: 18), he also knows who they are that have not chosen him, but prefer farms and merchandise above him and above his ordinances (2 Tim. 4: 10). . . .

Use 1. Let none then build their hopes of salvation merely upon this: that they are church members. This you and I may be, and yet devils for all that (Matth. 8: 11–12—"Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down, etc. And however we may pass here, a true difference shall be made shortly, etc.").

Use 2. Let none then be stumbled at religion, because too often there are devils found among the saints. You see, here was a true church, sincere con-

verts and sound believers; and yet here was a devil among them.

Use 3. Terror to hypocrites who profess much love to Christ but indeed are in league with their lusts, which they prefer above Christ. Oh! remember that you are devils in Christ's account. Christ is lightly esteemed of you, and you are vilely accounted for by Christ. Oh! if there be any such among us, forbear to come this day to the Lord's table, lest Satan enter more powerfully into you—lest while the bread be between your teeth, the wrath of the Lord come pouring down upon you (Psalm 78: 30–31). . . .

Use 5. Examine we ourselves well, what we are—what we church members are. We are either saints or devils: the Scripture gives us no medium. The Apostle tells us we are to examine ourselves (2 Cor. 13: 5). Oh! it is a dreadful thing to be a devil, and yet to sit down at the Lord's table (1 Cor. 10: 21). Such incur the hottest of God's wrath (as follows—v. 22). Now,

if we would not be devils, we must give ourselves wholly up to Christ, and not suffer the predominancy of one lust—and particularly that of covetousness, which is made so light of, and which so sorely prevails in these perilous times. Why, this one lust made Judas a devil (John 12: 6, Matth. 26: 15). And no doubt it has made more devils than one. For a little pelf [money], men sell Christ to his enemies, and their souls to the devil. But there are certain sins that make us devils; see that we be not such:

1. A liar or murderer (John 8: 44)
2. A slanderer or an accuser of the godly
3. A tempter to sin
4. An opposer of godliness, as Elymos (Acts 13: 8 etc.)
5. Envious persons as witches
6. A drunkard (1 Sam. 1: 15–16)
7. A proud person

## 2. Martha Corey's Testimony, 1692

"Mr. HATHORNE: You are now in the hands of authority. Tell me, now, why you hurt these persons.—I do not.

"Who doth?—Pray, give me leave to go to prayer.

"(This request was made sundry times.)

"We do not send for you to go to prayer; but tell me why you hurt these.—I am an innocent person. I never had to do with witchcraft since I was born. I am a gospel woman.

"Do not you see these complain of you?—The Lord open the eyes of the magistrates and ministers: the Lord show his power to discover the guilty.

"Tell us who hurts these children.—I do not know.

"If you be guilty of this fact, do you think you can hide it?—The Lord knows.

"Well, tell us what you know of this matter.—Why, I am a gospel woman; and do you think I can have to do with witchcraft too? . . .

"(CHILDREN: There is a man whispering in her ear.)

"HATHORNE continued: What did he say to you?—We must not believe all that these distracted children say.

"Cannot you tell what that man whispered?—I saw nobody.

"But did not you hear?—No.

"(Here was extreme agony of all the afflicted.)

"If you expect mercy of God, you must look for it in God's way, by confession. Do you think to find mercy by aggravating your sins?—A true thing.

"Look for it, then, in God's way.—So I do.

"Give glory to God and confess, then.—But I cannot confess.

"Do not you see how these afflicted do charge you?—We must not believe distracted persons. . . .

"You charge these children with distraction: it is a note of distraction when persons vary in a minute; but these fix upon you. This is not the manner of distraction.—When all are against me, what can I help it?

"Now tell me the truth, will you? Why did you say that the magistrates' and ministers' eyes were blinded, you would open them?

"(She laughed, and denied it.)

"Now tell us how we shall know who doth hurt these, if you do not?—Can an innocent person be guilty?

"Do you deny these words?—Yes.

"Tell us who hurts these. We came to be a terror to evil-doers. You say you would open our eyes, we are blind.—If you say I am a witch. . . .

"You say you are no witch. Maybe you mean you never covenanted with the Devil. Did you never deal with any familiar?—No, never.

“What bird was that the children spoke of?

“(Then witnesses spoke: What bird was it?)

“I know no bird.

“It may be you have engaged you will not confess; but God knows.—So he doth.

“Do you believe you shall go unpunished?—I have nothing to do with witchcraft. . . .

“Do not you believe there are witches in the country?—I do not know that there is any.

“Do not you know that Tituba confessed it?—I did not hear her speak.

“I find you will own nothing without several witnesses, and yet you will deny for all.

“(It was noted, when she bit her lip, several of the afflicted were bitten. When she was urged upon it that she bit her lip, saith she, What harm is there in it?)

“(Mr. NOYES: I believe it is apparent she practiseth witchcraft in the congregation: there is no need of images.)

“What do you say to all these things that are apparent?—If you will all go hang me, how can I help it? . . .

“What book is that you would have these children write in?—What book? Where should I have a book? I showed them none, nor have none, nor brought none.

“(The afflicted cried out there was a man whispering in her ears.)

“What book did you carry to Mary Walcot?—I carried none. . . .

“Who is your God?—The God that made me.

“What is his name?—Jehovah.

“Do you know any other name?—God Almighty.

“Doth *he* tell you, that you pray to, that *he* is God Almighty?—Who do I worship but the God that made [me]?

“How many gods are there?—One.

“How many persons?—Three. . . .

“Do not you see these children and women are rational and sober as their neighbors, when your hands are fastened?

“(Immediately they were seized with fits: and the standers-by said she was squeezing her fingers, her hands being eased by them that held them on purpose for trial.

“Quickly after, the marshal said, ‘She hath bit her lip;’ and immediately the afflicted were in an uproar.)

“[Tell] why you hurt these, or who doth?

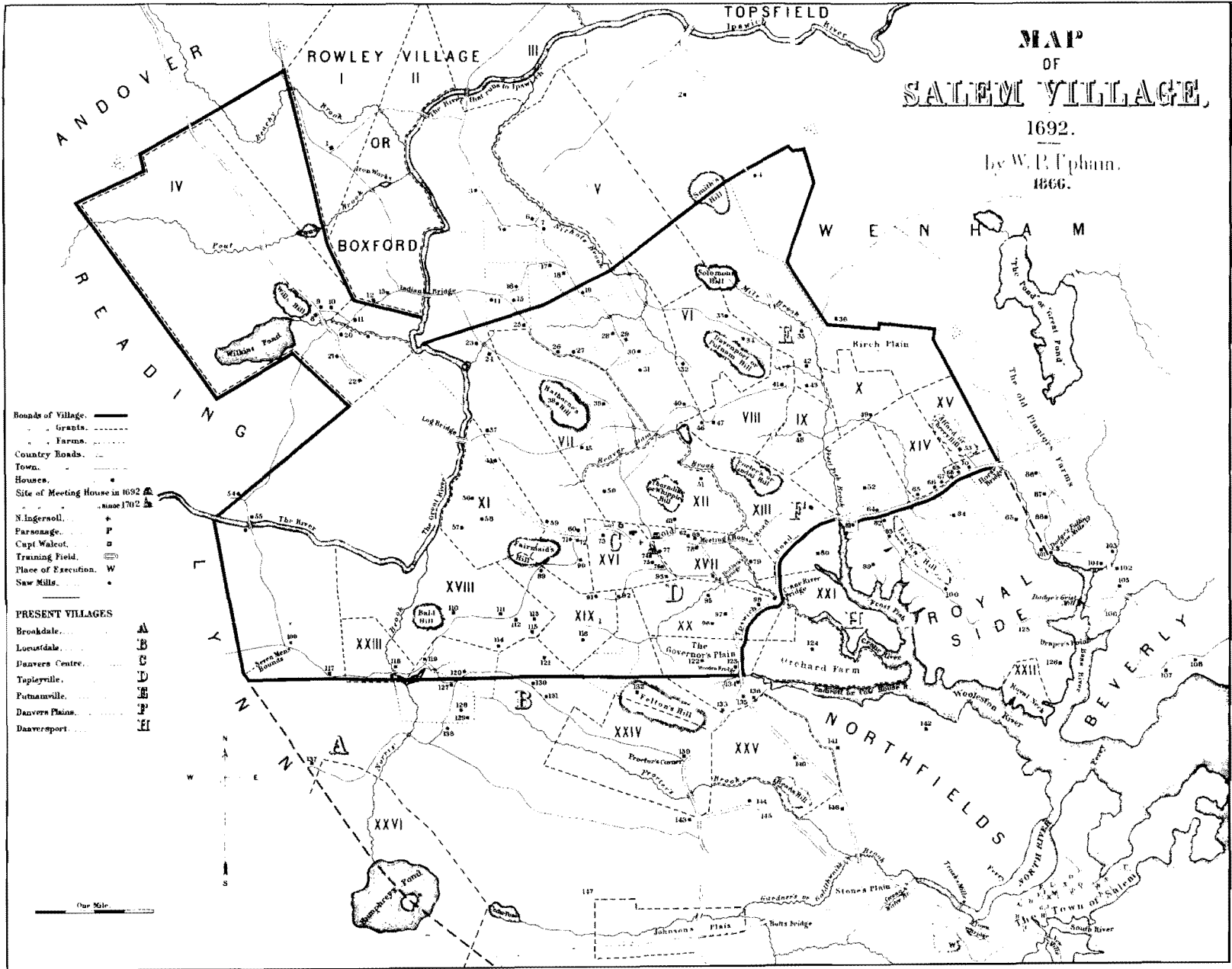
“(She denieth any hand in it.)

“Why did you say, if you were a witch, you should have no pardon?—Because I am a woman.” . . .

### 3. Ann Putnam’s Deposition, 1692

Who testifieth and saith that on 20th of April, 1692 at evening she saw the Apparishton of a minister at which she was grievously affrighted and cried out oh dreadfull: dreadfull her is a minister com, what are Ministers wicthes to: whence com you and What is your name for I will complaine of you tho you be a Minister: if you be a wizzard. . . . and Immediately I was tortured by him being Racked and almost choaked by him: and he tempted me to write in his book which I Refused with loud out cries and said I would not writ in his book tho he tore me al to peaces but tould him that it was a dreadfull thing: that he which was a Minister that should teach children to feare God should com to perswad poor creatures to give their souls to the devill; oh, dreadfull, dreadfull, tell me your name that I may know who you are; then

again he tortured me and urged me to writ in his book; which I refused and then presently he tould me that his name was George Burroughs, and that he had had three wives: and that he had bewitched the Two first of them to death; and that he had kiled Miss T. Lawson because she was so unwilling to goe from the village, and also killed Mr Lawson’s child because he went to the eastward with Sir Edmon and preached to the souldiers and that he had made Abigail Hobbs a wicth and several wicthes more: and he has continwed ever sence; by times tempting me to write in his book and grievously tortoring me by beating, pinching and almost choaking me severall times a day and he also tould me that he was above a wicth he was a conjuror. . . .

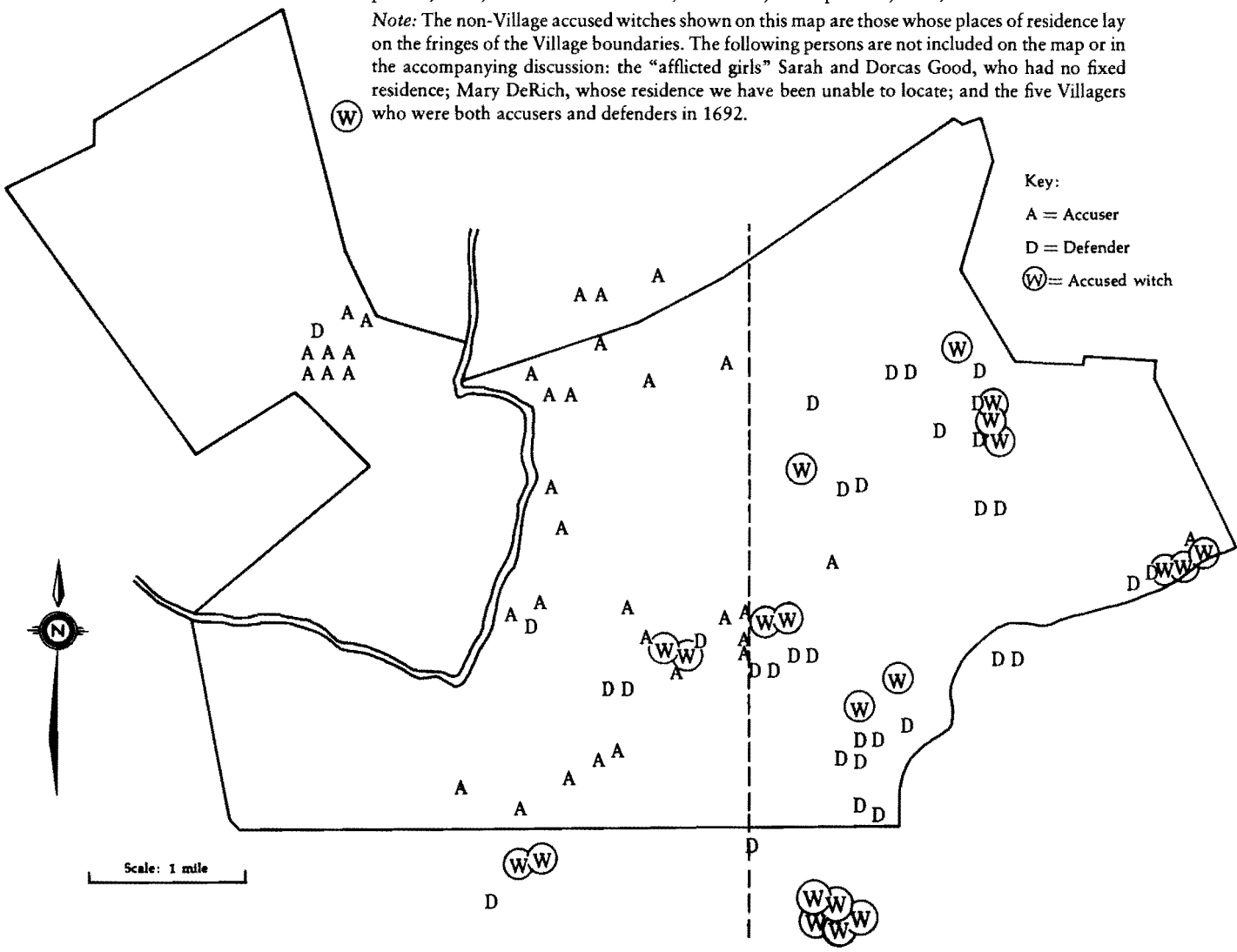


4. Salem Village, 1692

## 5. The Geography of Witchcraft in Salem Village, 1692

*Sources:* Residential map of Salem Village in 1692 included as a frontispiece to volume one of Charles W. Upham, *Salem Witchcraft*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1867); W. Elliott Woodward, *Records of Salem Witchcraft Copied from the Original Documents*, 2 vols. (Roxbury, Mass., Privately printed, 1864; reissued in one volume, New York, Da Capo Press, 1969).

*Note:* The non-Village accused witches shown on this map are those whose places of residence lay on the fringes of the Village boundaries. The following persons are not included on the map or in the accompanying discussion: the "afflicted girls" Sarah and Dorcas Good, who had no fixed residence; Mary DeRich, whose residence we have been unable to locate; and the five Villagers who were both accusers and defenders in 1692.



## 6. Factionalism and Wealth in Salem Village, 1695

<i>Amount of 1695–96 tax</i>	<i>Number of householders in each tax bracket</i>		<i>Percentage of householders in each tax bracket</i>	
	<i>Pro-Parris (average tax: 10.9 shillings)</i>	<i>Anti-Parris (average tax: 15.3 shillings)</i>	<i>Pro-Parris</i>	<i>Anti-Parris</i>
	Under 10 shillings	31	15	61
10–20 shillings	16	12	31	34
Over 20 shillings	4	8	8	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

*Sources:* Tax list, Village Records, Dec. 13, 1695; pro-Parris and anti-Parris petitions as transcribed by Samuel Parris in the Village Church Records preceding the entry for June 2, 1695.

## 7. Witchcraft in Salem: Analysis by Age and Sex, 1692

### Accused Witches

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Male	42	Single	8	29	37	Under 20	6	18	24
Female	120	Married	15	61	76	21–30	3	7	10
		Widowed	1	20	21	31–40	3	8	11
Total	162					41–50	6	18	24
		Total	24	110	134	51–60	5	23	28
						61–70	4	8	12
						Over 70	3	6	9
						Total	30	88	118

### Young Witches

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Male	5	Single	5	23	28	Under 11	0	1	1
Female	29	Married	0	6	6	11–15	1	7	8
		Widowed	0	0	0	16–20	1	13	14
Total	34					21–25	0	1	1
		Total	5	29	34	26–30	0	1	1
						Over 30	0	4	4
						Total	2	27	29

## Witnesses

Sex	Total	Marital Status	Male	Female	Total	Age	Male	Female	Total
Male	63	Single	11	3	14	Under 20	3	2	5
Female	21	Married	39	16	55	21-30	13	4	17
		Widowed	3	1	4	31-40	14	6	20
Total	84					41-50	18	7	25
		Total	53	20	73	51-60	11	1	12
						61-70	2	1	3
						Over 70	2	0	2
						Total	63	21	84

## 8. Ann Putnam's Confession, 1706

"I desire to be humbled before God for that sad and humbling providence that befell my father's family in the year about '92; that I, then being in my childhood, should, by such a providence of God, be made an instrument for the accusing of several persons of a grievous crime, whereby their lives were taken away from them, whom now I have just grounds and good reason to believe they were innocent persons; and that it was a great delusion of Satan that deceived me in that sad time, whereby I justly fear I have been instrumental, with others, though ignorantly and unwittingly, to bring upon myself and this land the guilt of innocent blood; though what was said or done by me against any person I can truly and uprightly say, before God and man, I did it not out of any anger, malice, or ill-will to any person, for I had no such thing against one of them; but what I did was igno-

rantly, being deluded by Satan. And particularly, as I was a chief instrument of accusing of Goodwife Nurse and her two sisters, I desire to lie in the dust, and to be humbled for it, in that I was a cause, with others, of so sad a calamity to them and their families; for which cause I desire to lie in the dust, and earnestly beg forgiveness of God, and from all those unto whom I have given just cause of sorrow and offence, whose relations were taken away or accused.

[Signed]

"This confession was read before the congregation, together with her relation, Aug. 25, 1706; and she acknowledged it.

"J. GREEN, *Pastor*.

## 9. The Conclusions of the Massachusetts Bay Elders, 1695

The elders and messengers of the churches—met in council at Salem Village, April 3, 1695, to consider and determine what is to be done for the composure of the present unhappy differences in that place,—after solemn invocation of God in Christ for his direction, do unanimously declare and advise as followeth:—

I. We judge that, albeit in the late and the dark time of the confusions, wherein Satan had obtained a more than ordinary liberty to be sifting of this plantation, there were sundry unwarrantable and uncomfortable steps taken by Mr. Samuel Parris, the pastor

of the church in Salem Village, then under the hurrying distractions of amazing afflictions; yet the said Mr. Parris, by the good hand of God brought unto a better sense of things, hath so fully expressed it, that a Christian charity may and should receive satisfaction therewith.

II. Inasmuch as divers Christian brethren in the church of Salem Village have been offended at Mr. Parris for his conduct in the time of the difficulties and calamities which have distressed them, we now advise them charitably to accept the satisfaction which he hath tendered in his Christian acknowledg-

ments of the errors therein committed; yea, to endeavor, as far as 'tis possible, the fullest reconciliation of their minds unto communion with him, in the whole exercise of his ministry, and with the rest of the church (Matt. vi. 12–14; Luke xvii. 3; James v. 16). . . .

V. Having observed that there is in Salem Village a spirit full of contentions and animosities, too sadly verifying the blemish which hath heretofore lain upon them, and that some complaints brought against Mr. Parris have been either causeless and groundless, or unduly aggravated, we do, in the name and fear of the Lord, solemnly warn them to consider, whether, if they continue to devour one another, it will not be bitterness in the latter end; and beware lest the Lord be provoked thereby utterly to deprive them of those which they should account their precious and pleasant things, and abandon them to all the desolations of a people that sin away the mercies of the gospel (James iii. 16; Gal. v. 15; 2 Sam ii. 26; Isa. v. 4, 5, 6; Matt. xxi. 43).

VI. If the distempers in Salem Village should be (which God forbid!) so incurable, that Mr. Parris, after all, find that he cannot, with any comfort and service, continue in his present station, his removal

from thence will not expose him unto any hard character with us, nor, we hope, with the rest of the people of God among whom we live (Matt. x. 14; Acts xxii. 18).

All which advice we follow with our prayers that the God of peace would bruise Satan under our feet. Now, the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means.

INCREASE MATHER, *Moderator*.

JOSEPH BRIDGHAM.  
SAMUEL CHECKLEY.  
WILLIAM TORREY.  
JOSEPH BOYNTON.  
RICHARD MIDDLECOT.  
JOHN WALLEY.  
JER: DUMMER.  
NEHEMIAH JEWET.  
EPHRAIM HUNT.  
NATHLL. WILLIAMS.  
SAMUEL PHILLIPS.  
JAMES ALLEN.  
SAMUEL TORREY.  
SAMUEL WILLARD.  
EDWARD PAYSON.  
COTTON MATHER.

## Chapter 2: Document Set 2 References

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"Map of Salem Village, 1692 by W. P. Upham," 1866, in Upham, Vol. 1, frontispiece.
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7. Witchcraft in Salem, Analysis by Age and Sex, 1692.  
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8. Ann Putnam's Confession, 1706.  
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## CHAPTER 3

### DOCUMENT SET 1

#### Deistic Evangelist: Elihu Palmer's Expression of Enlightenment Values

Enlightenment thought originated in Europe during the seventeenth century and spread to the “fertile soil” of colonial America in the eighteenth. Many people contributed to its origin, but John Locke (1632–1704) and Isaac Newton (1642–1727) were the guiding lights. Through his work in political philosophy, Locke focused attention on natural reason and ordinary sense-experience. Newton, by synthesizing the work of predecessors such as Galileo, provided evidence of an ordered, designed, and mechanical universe that obeyed natural law. He thereby encouraged belief in the existence of a Creator-God and confidence in the ability of humans to know natural law and explain the world. As noted in your textbook, Enlightenment thought put mystery, authoritarianism, and supernaturalism on the run, substituting in their place empiricism, reason, and naturalism.

In America, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Ethan Allen, Thomas Paine, and many others were influenced by the new world-view. Efforts to popularize it were largely unsuccessful, however, and in most instances, it was adopted consciously only by the elite. An exception was Elihu Palmer (1764–1806), a non-elite churchman who became an evangelist of Enlightenment thought. Palmer converted from the Protestant ministry to Deism, a religious manifestation of the Enlightenment, and, although blinded by yellow fever in 1793, spent the rest of his life spreading Deism and

Enlightenment thought among the masses. He helped form Deistical societies in New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Newburgh, N.Y.; edited Deistical magazines; worked to build a Temple of Nature; and in 1802 published his most systematic philosophical statement, *Principles of Nature*. The following documents include selections from Palmer's *Principles of Nature* and from the “Principles of the Deistical Society of the State of New York.” Together, they present a clear, positive statement of American Enlightenment thought.

As you analyze these source materials against your textbook background on culture, religion, and politics, the themes of the American Enlightenment should become apparent. Some historians argue that Enlightenment thought contributed to the coming of the American Revolution in 1775; the French Revolution in 1789; and to the rise in America of freedom of thought, individualism, materialism, secularism, scientism, democracy, republicanism, capitalism, and an optimistic philosophy of history. Test these assumptions by identifying the elements of the Enlightenment world-view that might have contributed to the onset of these historical events and the development of these social ideals. Note the view of human nature presupposed by the Enlightenment world-view and contrast it with the Puritans' view. As you review the evidence, focus on the broader influence of Enlightenment values.

#### Questions for Analysis

1. What was Palmer's attitude toward the human mind and the exercise of human reason? Provide evidence for your answer from the source materials. Do you think he overemphasizes the power of the human mind? Why or why not?
2. What was Palmer's attitude toward nature and science? Use evidence from the documents to support your position.
3. Based on your study of the selections from Palmer's *Principles of Nature* and the eleven Deistical principles, identify Palmer's end-values (that which is believed for its own sake). Rank the end-values in the order of their importance to Palmer. Explain how you arrived at your answers.
4. Palmer not only represented American Enlightenment thought, but was also an avid Deist. Outline and briefly discuss the central principles of Deism. Which do you find attractive and which unattractive? Explain your evaluation.
5. Given the selection from Palmer's book, discuss the Enlightenment philosophy of history. In your analysis, think of the philosophy of history as speculation about where human history, broadly conceived, has been and is going. In Palmer's view, what institutions have suppressed human advancement? What institutions will fuel it? How does Palmer interpret the significance of the Protestant Reformation? Why was the art of printing such an important historical development?

6. Intellectual historian Herbert Schneider once wrote that the American Enlightenment is "the heart of our heritage as a people." How have the values of Enlightenment thought influenced the development of American political, economic, and cultural history?

## 1. Elihu Palmer on the Authority of Nature, 1801

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The sources of hope and consolation to the human race are to be sought for in the energy of intellectual powers. . . . The strength of human understanding is incalculable, its keenness of discernment would ultimately penetrate into every part of nature, were it permitted to operate with uncontrolled and unqualified freedom. . . .

Man! if thou wouldst be happy, thou must come home to Nature, admire her splendid beauties, develop truth from the permanence of her laws, cultivate real virtue, improve and exalt thy character, extend the sphere of thy utility, and invariably adhere to the practice of a pure and genuine morality. . . .

It is the light of science alone that can destroy such causes of human wretchedness: science opposes its own strength to the injurious effects of error and prejudice, and in proportion as the former shall increase, the latter will decrease; so that the hopes of the human race rest upon the diffusion of knowledge, and the general cultivation of science. . . .

The nineteenth century opens to the human race with prospects of a most extraordinary and astonishing nature. . . . The history of mankind has, in general, consisted either of uninteresting details, or a frightful picture of universal carnage and military ferocity. During the last century, however, something more valuable and important has been combined with a mass of historic matter, and amidst the unjust and destructive wars which the poison of monarchy is still generating in the very bosom of the community, there is to be seen a splendid display of those philosophic principles which sustained the universe, and direct the operations of the physical world; of those moral ioaxms [axioms] which are essentially interwoven with intelligent life, and by which it is rendered susceptible of universal amelioration; of those political laws whose essence is at war with tyranny, and whose final effects will shake to the centre the thrones of the earth.

It has been during the last century that these things have been accomplished; the force of intellectual powers has been applied to the development of principle, and the combination of human labours already constitutes a colossus, against which the storms

of unequal and aristocratic governments may dash in vain. The art of printing is so universally known, or rather the knowledge of it is diffused in so many countries, that it will henceforth be impossible to destroy it. The present moment exhibits the most astonishing effects of this powerful invention in the hands of nations, by that universal diffusion of principle and collision of thought, which are the most substantial guarantee of the future scientific progress of the human race. An effectual stand has been made, and resuscitated nations at this moment bid defiance to the double despotism of church and state.

The nineteenth century opens with lessons awfully impressive upon kings and tyrants; with lessons, the truth of which has already penetrated into the sacred recesses of ecclesiastical wickedness and spiritual domination in high places. America, France, Switzerland, Italy, Holland, Germany, and England, are in a high state of intellectual fermentation; if the government in some of these countries acts in opposition to the spirit of improvement, this circumstance will constitute only a partial drawback on the rapidity of the progress; the general agitation is national, the power of thought has become vastly impulsive in all these countries. The printing-press is operating, and if it be in some measure restrained, it will, nevertheless, gradually undermine, and eventually subvert the thrones of civil despots, and teach the hierarchy of every country, that the time is fast approaching in which, if they pretend to speak in the name of Heaven, they must exhibit unequivocal proofs of their celestial authority; it is this pretended intercourse with Heaven that has subverted every thing rational upon earth. . . .

The meek and humble character of Christianity in its origin, the fanatic zeal of its partizans, and the pretended renunciation of worldly grandeur, led to a conclusion, that every attempt of uniting with political tyranny would be pointedly discarded by the votaries of this new and supernatural religion. The subsequent history of the Church has, however, placed an indelible stamp of error upon this opinion, and proved that the intimate associates of the celestial Jesus were willing also to become the associates of

terrestrial lords, for the purposes of acquiring the support and strength of tyrannical governments. Those who declared that their kingdom was not of this world, were soon discovered to be willing to unite with the kings of the earth, justly considering that earth and heaven united would be competent to every object, even the universal subjection and slavery of the human race. Such was, in a high degree, the effect, when Christianity was embraced by the strong arm of the Roman government. This holy religion at first sought for simple protection from the mistress of the world: but no sooner was this accomplished, than a new and more impulsive desire was perceived to be the ruling sentiment of the Church, and it claimed from the civil power toleration in all religious and ecclesiastical concerns. This new success was followed with a new exhibition of ambitious views, and the open disclosure of a bolder confidence in the ultimate triumph of the then infant church of Christ. Spiritual domination, and the ruling of nations with absolute despotism, which at first constituted no part of the feeble hopes of Christian believers, was at length attempted, and the success of the attempt was completely satisfactory to the most ardent hopes of the new hierarchy.

Thus it was that the meek, the humble, and the poverty-struck followers of the meek and humble Jesus were transformed into what sectarian secession has since denominated, *the scarlet whore seated upon the throne of the Cæsars*. This event was followed by many centuries of Christian barbarism, in which the spirit and principle of the Gospel triumphed over and subverted every species of science, and buried beneath its despotic weight the intellectual energies of the intelligent world. This long period has been justly denominated the night of ignorance, and may, with equal propriety, be denominated the pure and uncontaminated reign of the Christian religion; because it was at that period that the authority of the church was complete, and the civil power was subjected to its absolute will; because at that time the ecclesiastical dominion was believed to be essentially incorporated with the purest directions of the founder of that holy religion; and because every subsequent secession has, in the estimation of the mother Church, been considered as a damnable heresy, and an awful departure from the true faith.

These secessions from the original Church have constituted a cause which has been gradually operating for the amelioration of the human species, and which must ultimately terminate in the triumph of reason over the compound despotism of the world. The Church of Christ received its death wound by the

conduct of two bold and fanatic leaders of the two grand sectaries which first protested against the unqualified authority of the Roman Catholic Church. Luther and Calvin, with more fervent zeal and holy piety than those whom they opposed, nevertheless, laid the foundation of subsequent events, calculated to overturn every species of ecclesiastical dominion, and bury in one common grave the various branches of celestial tyranny, which for many ages had held the world in bondage.

The spirit of sectarianism spread itself far and wide, dividing and diversifying the opinions of the Church, and each new sectary seemed to be endowed with a new portion of that rancorous malignity, which has so universally marked the conduct of those whose pride and folly have led them to conclude, that they spoke in the name of heaven, and were the favourites of the Most High. Such sectarian altercations, however, were destined eventually to destroy each other. Men of contemplative minds began at length to suspect the divine originality of a religion, which branched itself into so many different species of doctrines, and generated amongst its professors endless wars.

Another consideration still more powerful, accelerated the progress of moral improvement, and constantly diminished the force of attachment toward the Christian system. Every new sect discarded some of the absurdities of that from which it had separated, and passed a general sentiment of condemnation upon all those who were in the rear of this long and religious train. Luther and Calvin hurled their religious thunderbolts against the power and absurd tenets of the Church of Rome, and especially against the Pope, by whom this Church was governed. The Armenians, the Arians, the Socinians, and the Universalists, successively followed, with a purifying hand of reason, pruning and lopping off the decayed branches of the old theological tree, approaching still nearer to the source and principles of nature, till at length, by regular progression, the human mind discovered, that moral principle was placed upon a more solid foundation than the reveries of sectarian fanaticism. It has been in this manner that some portion of society has once more obtained a true idea of the religion of nature, or of that which may be denominated pure and simple Deism.

It is this religion which, at the present period of the world, creates, such frightful apprehensions in the household of faith, and threatens to shake to the centre the chief corner stone on which the Church is built. These apprehensions are daily disclosed by Christian professors, and they depict in such strong

colours the fatal effects of Deism, that ignorant fanaticism believes it to be an immoral monster, stalking with gigantic strides over the whole civilized world, for the detestable purpose of producing universal disorder, and subverting all the sound principles of social and intelligent existence. Such are the horrid ideas which the enemies of this pure and holy religion are every where propagating amongst their credulous and deluded followers. This circumstance renders it necessary, that the true idea of Deism be fairly stated, that it may be clearly understood by those whose minds have hitherto been darkened by the mysteries of faith.

Deism declares to intelligent man the existence of one perfect God, Creator and Preserver of the Universe; that the laws by which he governs the world are like himself immutable, and, of course, that violations of these laws, or miraculous interference in the movements of nature, must be necessarily excluded from the grand system of universal existence; that the Creator is justly entitled to the adoration of every intellectual agent throughout the regions of infinite space; and that he alone is entitled to it, having no co-partners who have a right to share with him the homage of the intelligent world. Deism also declares, that the practice of a pure, natural, and uncorrupted virtue, is the essential duty, and constitutes the highest dignity of man; that the powers of man are competent to all the great purposes of human existence; that science, virtue, and happiness, are the great objects which ought to awake the mental energies, and draw forth the moral affections of the human race.

These are some of the outlines of pure Deism, which Christian superstition so dreadfully abhors, and whose votaries she would willingly consign to endless torture. But it is built upon a substantial foundation, and will triumphantly diffuse happiness among the nations of the earth, for ages after Christian superstition and fanaticism have ceased to spread desolation and carnage through the fair creation of God.

In surveying the history of man, it is clearly discovered, that the miseries and misfortunes of his existence are, in a high degree, the result of his ignorance and his vices. Ignorance renders him savage and ferocious; while science pours into his mind the benign sentiments of humanity, and gives a new colouring to his moral existence. Reason, which every kind of supernatural theology abhors; reason, which is the glory of our nature, is destined eventually, in the progress of future ages, to overturn the empire of superstition, and erect upon its ruins a fabric, against which the storms of despotism may beat in vain,

against which superstition may reek her vengeance without effect, from which she will be obliged to retire in agonizing tortures. . . .

The science of the world has been, in some measure, diminished by the propagation of an opinion, that there are only a few human beings who are possessed of what is called genius, to the exclusion of all the rest. This looks too much like mystery, and seems to include in it the idea that man is sent from heaven, to occupy for a short time a miserable and material tenement, and then return to its native home. It ought to be recollected that earth is the abode of man, and that of this the materials of his existence are composed, all are confined to this place of residence, and to the amelioration of sensitive and intelligent life all his labours ought to be directed. He should learn to respect, and not despise his reason. He should learn to consider moral virtue as the greatest good, as the most substantial joy of his existence. In order, however, to be eminently good, a full scope must be given to the operation of intellectual powers, and man must feel an unqualified confidence in his own energies.

The double despotism of Church and state has borne so hard upon human existence, that man is sunk beneath its dreadful weight; but resuscitated nations are about to teach kings and tyrants a lesson awfully impressive, in regard to the destiny which awaits the aggregate injustice of the world. The period is at hand, in which kings and thrones, and priests and hierarchies, and the long catalogue of mischiefs which they have produced, shall be swept away from the face of the earth, and buried in the grave of everlasting destruction. Then will arrive the era of human felicity, in which the heart of unfortunate man shall be consoled; then will appear the moment of national consolation, and universal freedom; then the empire of reason, of science, and of virtue, will extend over the whole earth, and man, emancipated from the barbarous despotism of antiquity, will assume to himself his true predicament in nature, and become a standing evidence of the divinity of thought and the unlimited power of human reason. . . .

The highest intellectual joy consists in the discovery of truth; a knowledge of this truth will constantly tend to the practice of an exalted virtue; this virtue will serve as the stable foundation of human happiness, the immortal guarantee of the felicity of the intelligent world. Reason anticipates a progress, which all the powers of superstition can never arrest. Let reason then perform her faithful duty, and ignorance, fanaticism, and misery, will be banished from the earth. A new age, the true millennium will then commence; the standard of truth and of science will

then be erected among the nations of the world, and man, the unlimited proprietor of his own person, may applaud himself in the result of his energies, and con-

template with indescribable satisfaction the universal improvement and happiness of the human race.

## 2. The New York Deistical Society Program, ca. 1800

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. . . At a time when the political despotism of the earth is disappearing, and man is about to reclaim and enjoy the liberties of which for ages he has been deprived, it would be unpardonable to neglect the important concerns of intellectual and moral nature. The slavery of the mind has been the most destructive of all slavery; and the baneful effects of a dark and gloomy superstition have suppressed all the dignified efforts of the human understanding, and essentially circumscribed the sphere of intellectual energy. It is only by returning to the laws of nature, which man has so frequently abandoned, that happiness is to be acquired. And, although the efforts of a few individuals will be inadequate to the sudden establishment of moral and mental felicity; yet, they may lay the foundation on which a superstructure may be reared incalculably valuable to the welfare of future generations. To contribute to the accomplishment of an object so important, the members of this association do approve the following fundamental principles:—

1. That the universe proclaims the existence of one supreme Deity, worthy the adoration of intelligent beings.

2. That man is possessed of moral and intellectual faculties sufficient for the improvement of his nature, and the acquisition of happiness.

3. That the religion of nature is the only universal

religion; that it grows out of the moral relations of intelligent beings, and that it stands connected with the progressive improvement and common welfare of the human race.

4. That it is essential to the true interest of man, that he love truth and practise virtue.

5. That vice is every where ruinous and destructive to the happiness of the individual and of society.

6. That a benevolent disposition, and beneficent actions, are fundamental duties of rational beings.

7. That a religion mingled with persecution and malice cannot be of divine origin.

8. That education and science are essential to the happiness of man.

9. That civil and religious liberty is equally essential to his true interests.

10. That there can be no human authority to which man ought to be amenable for his religious opinions.

11. That science and truth, virtue and happiness, are the great objects to which the activity and energy of the human faculties ought to be directed.

Every member admitted into this association shall deem it his duty, by every suitable method in his power, to promote the cause of nature and moral truth, in opposition to all schemes of superstition and fanaticism, claiming divine origin.

### Chapter 3: Document Set 1 References

1. Elihu Palmer on the Authority of Nature, 1801.  
Elihu Palmer, *Principles of Nature: Or a Development of the Moral Causes of Happiness and Misery Among the Human Species* (London: 1801, reprinted and published by R. Carlile, 1819), pp. 5, 50, 172, 192–200, 206.

2. The New York Deistical Society Program, ca. 1800.  
Elihu Palmer, “Principles of the Deistical Society of the State of New York,” in G. Adolf Koch, *Religion of the American Enlightenment* (New York: rep. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1968), pp. 78–79.

## Chapter 3

### DOCUMENT SET 2

### Religious Enthusiasm and Revolution

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The dramatic religious revivals known as the Great Awakening, amply described in your textbook, reverberated through the colonies in the eighteenth century. Although it spanned the period from the 1720s until the 1770s, the Awakening's most intense manifestation occurred in the 1740s when itinerant preacher George Whitefield often spoke to massive crowds (purportedly 30,000 once on Boston Common in 1740). Whitefield and other itinerants used new, highly emotional rhetoric, spawning imitators who also spread the gospel. They typically preached at out-of-parish, open-air meetings and emphasized the need for new-birth conversion.

The Awakening was a "psychological earthquake" that "reshaped the human landscape." The masses experienced religious renewal while the established churches, splintered by dissent over the revivals, expressed fear and opposition, as did alarmed civil authorities. Missionary activity, religious conversions, and church attendance increased; and new churches, sects, and colleges were created, including Princeton, Columbia, Brown, Rutgers, and Dartmouth. Baptists became the Awakening's chief beneficiaries, whereas the Congregationalists and Presbyterians were torn apart by internal disagreements between proponents (New Lights) and opponents (Old Lights) of the revivals. Out of the rancor and schisms, the New Lights emerged dominant. Insistent upon pure churches that limited membership to the regenerate (those who could testify

to a new birth), they contributed to the growth of voluntarism and the separation of church and state in America.

The Awakening had important social and political effects, detailed in your textbook reading. The Protestant evangelical tradition, a powerful social force in nineteenth-century America, was established. Moreover, some historians argue that the Awakening contributed to a shift from a collectivist, organic social order to an individualistic, atomistic one, promoting among the nonelite a disregard for authority and social status. As you examine the evidence, think about the relationship between this popular preference for democracy and egalitarianism and the origins of the American Revolution.

The following documents include excerpts from the journals of George Whitefield and Charles Woodmason. Whitefield, an Anglican cleric and leading proponent of the Awakening, recounts his visit to Charleston in 1740, including a conversation with Alexander Garden, the Bishop of London's Commissary for South Carolina. Woodmason, an upper-class Anglican cleric and opponent of the New Lights, describes his experiences in the South Carolina backcountry in 1768. In reviewing the documents, note the contrasting views and attitudes of the two clerics toward religious enthusiasm, and look for signs of social tension in South Carolina.

#### Questions for Analysis

1. One characteristic of New Light ministers was a tendency to judge and criticize the established clergy. What evidence of this inclination do you find in the excerpt from Whitefield's journal? Even Woodmason acknowledged that there were problems with Anglican clergymen in South Carolina. What charges did he make against them? What other criticisms might have been made against Old Light ministers?
2. While in Charleston, Whitefield preached at two different meetinghouses and attended church elsewhere. Using the documents, describe Whitefield's ministerial experiences during his stay in Charleston. What evidence suggests that the Great Awakening was under way in Charleston?
3. Woodmason committed himself to what seemed the thankless task of extending civilization and true, genuine Christianity to the backcountry. What evidence do the documents provide of the difficulties he experienced? How would you account for the resistance he faced?
4. Not all of Woodmason's problems were traceable to the dissenters or to the enthusiasts. Of the difficulties you noted in problem three, identify only those that concerned dissenters. How did Woodmason attempt to deal with these problems? How successful was he? Is there evidence to suggest that Woodmason may have exaggerated his criticism of the dissenters? Explain.

5. Do the documents contain evidence to suggest that there was social conflict in eighteenth-century South Carolina? Explain. What factors in addition to religious disagreements may have been involved in the conflict?
6. Some historians believe that the Great Awakening was a stimulus to the American Revolution, in that it conditioned people to reject hierarchical authority, ignore social distinctions, and appreciate individualism and egalitarianism. In what ways do Whitefield's or Woodmason's journals support or disprove this thesis? Explain. What characteristics of the Awakening's enthusiastic New Light religion might have promoted these behavioral tendencies?
7. Using both textbook and documents, compare colonial religious experience with the meaning of religion in our own time. What do the documents suggest about the place of religion in the lives of eighteenth-century Americans?

## 1. The Reverend George Whitefield in South Carolina, 1740

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*Friday, March 14.* Arrived last night at *Charleston*, being called there to see my Brother, who lately came from *England*, and had brought me a Packet of Letters from my dear Friends. . . . Waited on the Commissary, with my Brother and other Companions, but met with a cool Reception. . . . He charged me with *Enthusiasm* and *Pride*, for speaking against the Generality of the Clergy, and desired I would make my Charge good. I told him, I thought I had already; but, as yet, I had scarce begun with them. He then asked me, Wherein were the Clergy so much to blame? I answered, they did not preach up *Justification by Faith alone*; and, upon talking with the Commissary, I found he was as ignorant of it as any of the rest. . . . He charged me with breaking the Canons and Ordination vow; And notwithstanding I told him I was ordained by Letters Dismissory from the Bishop of *London*. Yet in a great rage he told me, if I preached in any publick church in that Province, he would suspend me. I replied, "I shall regard that as much as I would a Pope's Bull. . . . [I said to him,] "But if you will make an application to yourself, be pleased, Sir, to let me ask you one Question: have you delivered your Soul by exclaiming against the Assemblies and Balls here?" "What, Sir," says he, "must you come to catechise me? No, I have not exclaim'd against them; I think there is no Harm in them." "Then, Sir," said I, "I shall think it my Duty to exclaim against you." "Then, Sir," replied he, (*in a very great Rage*) "get you out of my House." Upon which I made my Bow, and, with my Friends took my leave, pitying the Commissary, who I really tho't was more noble than to give such Treatment. . . .

*Saturday, March 15.* Breakfasted, sung a Hymn,

and had some religious Conversation on board my Brother's Ship. Preached in the *Baptist Meeting-House*, and was much pleased, when I heard afterwards, that from the same Pulpit, a Person not long ago, had preached, who denied the Doctrine of Original Sin, the Divinity and Righteousness of our dear Lord, and the Operations of God's blessed Spirit upon the Heart. I was led out to shew the utter Inability of Man to save himself, and the absolute Necessity of his depending on the rich and sovereign Grace of God in Christ Jesus, in order to be restored to his primitive Dignity. Some, I observ'd, were put under concern, and most seem'd willing to know, whether those Things were so. In the Evening I preach'd again in the *Independent Meeting-House*, to a more attentive Auditory than ever; And had the Pleasure afterwards of Finding that a Gentlewoman, whose Family has been carried away for some time with Deistical Principles, began now to be unhinged, and to see that there was no Rest in such a Scheme, for a fallen Creature to rely on. . . .

*Sunday, March 16.* Preached at Eight in the Morning at the *Scotch Meeting-House*, to a large Congregation; visited a sick person; went to Church; heard the Commissary represent me under the Character of the *Pharisee*, who came to the Temple, saying, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other Men are." But whether I do what I do out of a Principle of Pride, or Duty, the Searcher of Hearts will discover 'ere long, before Men and Angels. Found myself very sick and weak at Dinner. Went to church again, and preached about Five, in the *Independent Meeting-House Yard*, the House itself not being near capacious enough to hold the Auditory. . . .

*Monday, March 17.* Preach'd in the Morning at the *Independent Meeting-House*, and was more explicit than ever, in exclaiming against Balls and Assemblies, to which the People seem'd to hearken with much Attention.

Preached again in the Evening, and being excited thereto by some of the Inhabitants, spoke on Behalf of my poor Orphans. God was pleased to give it his Blessing, and I collected upwards of *Seventy Pounds Sterling* for them, the largest Collection I ever yet made on that Occasion. A further Earnest to me, that we shall yet see great things in *America*, and that God will carry on and finish the Work, begun in his Name at *Georgia*.

*Tuesday, March 18.* Preached twice again today, and took an affectionate Leave of, and gave Thanks to, my Hearers for their great Liberality. Many wept,

and my own Heart yearn'd much towards them. For I believe a good Work is begun in many Souls. Generally every Day several came to me, telling me with weeping Eyes, how God had been pleas'd to convince them, by the Word preach'd, and how desirous they were of laying hold on, and having an Interest in the compleat and everlasting Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Numbers desired privately to converse with me. Many sent me little presents as Tokens of their Love, and earnestly entreated that I would come mongst them again. Invitations were given me from some of the adjacent Villages, and People daily came to Town more and more from their Plantations to hear the Word. . . . The Congregations grew larger on the Week Days, and many Things concurred to induce us to think that God intended to visit some in *Charlestown* with his Salvation.

## 2. The Reverend Charles Woodmason in the South Carolina Backcountry, 1768

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. . . 'Tis these roving Teachers that stir up the Minds of the People against the Establish'd Church, and her Ministers—and make the Situation of any Gentleman extremely uneasy, vexatious, and disagreeable. I would sooner starve in England on a Curacy of 20£ p ann, than to live here on 200 Guineas, did not the Interests of Religion and the Church absolutely require it—Some few of these Itinerants have encountered me—I find them a Sett of Rhapsodists—Enthusiasts—Bigots—Pedantic, illiterate, impudent Hypocrites—Straining at Gnats, and swallowing Camels, and making Religion a Cloak for Covetousness Detraction, Guile, Impostures and their particular Fabric of Things.

Among these Quakers and Presbyterians, are many concealed Papists—They are not tolerated in this Government—And in the Shape of New Light Preachers, I've met with many Jesuits. We have too here a Society of *Dunkards*—these resort to hear me when I am over at Jacksons Creek.

Among this Medley of Religions—True Genuine Christianity is not to be found. And the perverse persecuting Spirit of the Presbyterians, displays it Self much more here than in Scotland. It is dang'rous to live among, or near any of them—for if they cannot cheat, rob, defraud or injure You in Your Goods—they will belye, defame, lessen, blacken, disparage the most valuable Person breathing, not of their Communion in his Character, Good Name, or Reputation

and Credit. They have almost worm'd out all the Church People—who cannot bear to live among such a Sett of Vile unaccountable Wretches.

These Sects are eternally jarring among themselves—The Presbyterians hate the Baptists far more than they do the Episcopalians, and so of the Rest—But (as in England) they will unite altogether—in a Body to distress or injure the Church establish'd.

Hence it is, that when any Bills have been presented to the Legislature to promote the Interests of Religion, these Sectaries have found Means to have them overruled, for the leading Men of the House being all Lawyers, those People know how to grease Wheels to make them turn.

If Numbers were to be counted here, the Church People would have the Majority—But in Point of Interest, I judge that the Dissenters possess most Money—and thereby they can give a Bias to things at Pleasure.

The Grand Juries have presented as a Greivance, the Shame and Damage arising from such Itinerant Teachers being suffer'd to ramble about—They have even married People under my Eye in defiance of all Laws and Regulations—And I can get no Redress—I do all the Duty—take all the Pains. If there is a Shilling to be got by a Wedding or Funeral, these Impudent fellows will endeavour to pocket it: and are the most audacious of any Sett of Mortals I ever met with—They beat any Medicinal Mountebank.

Such is the General State of Religion in these Parts delegated to me, and yet, when it is laid out into Parishes, and all Ferments subside, I query if I get a Parish or Settlement among them—for, so far from being thanked for my Labours, many, even of our Clergy, say, I do too much—My Activity displays their Indolence. None yet among them ever went out of his Parish, nay not even round his Parish to baptize—and I have seen in Charlestown, Children brought to the font to be baptized, and the Minister put them off till another Day, because he was going to Dinner, or Tea, or Company. If such cannot forgo a Meal for an Hour, how would they go without any Sustenance save Indian Meal and Water, or Bacon and Eggs for a Month, and that but once in 24 Hours? Or taste nothing better than Water for 6 Months together, and ride 200 Miles ev'ry Week, or Month?

I must freely say, that it has been owing to the Inattention and Indolence of the Clergy, that the Sec-taries have gain'd so much Ground here. . . .

I have not as yet been over above half my Dis-trict—Have not been able to get over Broad River, where never yet a Church Minister has been seen—and for want of whom, they are devour'd by Swarms of different Teachers. A very large Body of People lye East of me, whom I've never as yet seen—There are 50 or 60 Adults to baptize, and 3 or 400 Children—Between them and me lyes a sandy barren Desert 40 Miles over, without Tree, Bush, Water, House or In-habitant . . . .

They have now got a Schoolmaster at this Place. An old Presbyterian fellow, or between that and a Quaker—They send their Children to him readily, and pay him, tho' they would not to me, who would have educated them Gratis. Such is their attachment to their Kirk:—Some call me a Jesuit—and the Liturgy the Mass—I have observ'd what Tricks they would have play'd on Christmas Day, to have disturbed the People. I will mention another.

Not long after, they hir'd a Band of rude fellows to come to Service who brought with them 57 Dogs (for I counted them) which in Time of Service they set fighting, and I was obliged to stop—In Time of Ser-mon they repeated it—and I was oblig'd to desist and dismiss the People. It is in vain to take up or commit these lawless Ruffians—for they have nothing, and the Charge of sending of them to Charlestown, would take me a Years Salary—We are without any Law, or Order . . . .

Another Time (in order to disappoint me of a Con-gregation, and to laugh at the People) they posted a Paper, signifying, That the King having discovered the Popish Designs of Mr. Woodmason and other Romish Priests in disguise, to bring in Popery and

Slavery, had sent over Orders to suspend them all, and to order them to be sent over to England, so that there would be no more preaching for the future. This was believed by some of the Poor Ignorants, and kept them at home. . . .

What I could not effect by Force—or Reason—I have done by Sarcasm—for at the Time when they sent the fellows with their Dogs, one of the Dogs followed me down here—which I carried to the House of one of the principals—and told Him that I had 57 Presbyterians came that Day to Service, and that I had converted one of them, and brought Him home—I left the Dog with Him—This Joke has made them so extremely angry that they could cut my Throat—But I've gained my Aim, having had no dis-turbance from them since . . . .

Whom but an Heart of Oak could bear up Firm against such Torrents of Malice, Bigotry, and Impu-dence! Sustain their Calumnies and bear with their Insolence—Which I pass over with that Christian Meekness and Compassion becoming my Function—and the Contempt and Derision befitting a Gentle-man.

I am exactly in the same situation with the Clergy of the primitive Church, in midst of the Heathens, Arians, and Hereticks—and endeavour like them to make my Life and Converse agreeable and unexcep-tionable (tho' its next to an impossibility) and to be all things to all Men that I may gain some; and yet I cannot please All. To engage the Dissenters I give an extempore prayer before Sermon, and sometimes an extempore Discourse—but this disgusts the Church People, and made severals with draw. . . .

The open profanation of the Lords Day in this Povince is one of the most crying Sins in it—and is carried to a great height—Among the low Class, it is abus'd by Hunting fishing fowling, and Racing—By the Women in frolicing and Wantoness. By others in Drinking Bouts and Card Playing—Even in and about Charlestown, the Taverns have more Visitants than the Churches. . . .

Great Insolencies are now committed by those fellows who call themselves *Regulators*—They are [ever?] wanton in Wickedness and Impudence—And they triumph in their Licentiousness. Its said that above two thousand Presbyterians from North Carolina are coming down to join them—We have but 2 or 3 Magistrates who are Episcopalians in this Vast Back Country—And these they have threatened to Whip for issuing Writs against some of their Lawless Gang. They have actually whipped all the Constables and Sheriffs officers took and tore the Kings Writs—and Judges Writs. Silenced the Constables—Stopp'd payment of all Public Taxes—and We are now with-

out Law, Gospel, Trade, or Money. Insulted by a Pack of vile, levelling common wealth Presbyterians In whom the Republican Spirit of 41 yet dwells, and who would very willingly put the Solemn League and Covenant now in force—Nay, their Teachers press it on them, and say that [it] is as binding on the Consciences of all the Kirk, as the Gospel it Self, for it is a Covenant enter'd into with God, from which they cannot recede. . . .

It will require much Time and Pains to New Model and form the Carriage and Manners, as well as Morals of these wild Peoples—Among this Congregation not one had a Bible or Common Prayer—or could join a Person or hardly repeat the Creed or Lords Prayer—Yet all of 'em had been educated in the Principles of our Church. So that I am obliged to read the Whole Service, omitting such Parts, as are Repetitious, and retaining those that will make the different Services somewhat Uniform—Hence it is, that I can but seldom use the Litany, because they know not the Responses.

It would be (as I once observ'd before) a Great Novelty to a Londoner to see one of these Congregations—The Men with only a thin Shirt and pair of Breeches or Trousers on—barelegged and barefooted—The Women bareheaded, barelegged and barefoot with only a thin Shift and under Petticoat—Yet I cannot break [them?] of this—for the heat of the Weather admits not of any [but] thin Cloathing—I can hardly bear the Weight of my Whig and Gown, during Service. The Young Women have a most uncommon Practise, which I cannot break them off. They draw their Shift as tight as possible to the Body, and pin it close, to shew the roundness of their

Breasts, and slender Waists (for they are generally finely shaped) and draw their Petticoat close to their Hips to shew the fineness of their Limbs—so that they might as well be in Puri Naturalibus—Indeed Nakedness is not censurable or indecent here, and they expose themselves often quite Naked, without Ceremony—Rubbing themselves and their Hair with Bears Oil and tying it up behind in a Bunch like the Indians—being hardly one degree removed from them—In few Years, I hope to bring about a Reformation, as I already have done in several Parts of the Country. . . .

Thus You have a Journal of two Years—In which have rode near Six thousand Miles, almost on one Horse. Wore my Self to a Skeleton and endured all the Extremities of Hunger, Thirst, Cold, and Heat. Have baptized near 1200 Children—Given 200 or more Discourses—Rais'd almost 30 Congregations—Set on foot the building of sundry Chapels Distributed Books, Medicines, Garden Seed, Turnip, Clover, Timothy Burnet, and other Grass Seeds—with Fish Hooks—Small working Tools and variety of Implements to set the Poor at Work, and promote Industry to the amount of at least One hundred Pounds Sterling: Roads are making—Boats building—Bridges framing, and other useful Works begun thro' my Means, as will not only be of public Utility, but make the Country side wear a New face, and the People become New Creatures. And I will venture to attest that these small, weak Endeavours of mine to serve the Community, has (or will) be of more Service to the Colony, than ever Mr. Whitfield's Orphan House was, or will be. . . .

### Chapter 3:

#### Document Set 2 References

1. The Reverend George Whitefield in South Carolina, 1740.  
George Whitefield, *A Continuation of the Reverend Mr. Whitefield's Journal: From a Few Days After His Arrival in Georgia to His Second Return Thither from Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: B. Franklin, 1740), pp. 14–21.
2. The Reverend Charles Woodmason in the South Carolina Backcountry, 1768.

Charles Woodmason, *The Journal of the Rev. Charles Woodmason: "Journal of C. W. Clerk. Itinerant Minister in South Carolina 1766, 1767, 1768,"* in Richard J. Hooker, ed., *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution: The Journal and Other Writings of Charles Woodmason, Anglican Itinerant* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953), pp. 42–47, 54–55, 61, 63.

## CHAPTER 4

### DOCUMENT SET 1

#### **Crises and Responses: The Concept of Intercolonial Unity**

The colonial legislatures, each jealously guarding its own powers, were slow to find common ground for resisting parliamentary authority. As your textbook indicates, even the reality of frontier insecurity was not enough to move the suspicious assemblies toward intercolonial cooperation when Benjamin Franklin advanced his ill-fated Albany Plan of Union in 1754. Over the next twenty years, however, Parliament's encroachment on cherished British liberties stimulated colonial cooperation in a series of ventures that climaxed in the disruption of the British Empire. Focusing on three crises, the following documents trace the development of greater intercolonial unity following the Seven Years' War. When you analyze the evidence, concentrate on the reasons why colonial attitudes changed.

Confronted with a heightened Indian threat in 1754, delegates from seven colonies gathered at Albany to discuss the common danger. Although the conference produced mixed results, its plan for a colonial union represented the first serious effort to bridge differences among Englishmen in North America. Study the excerpts from the plan, together with Franklin's later assessment of its unrealized potential. Try to determine why the proposal was rejected by both the crown and the colonial legislatures.

Eleven years later, mutual suspicions were overcome as colonists coped with the consequences of Grenville's economic program. Review the Stamp Act's

provisions with an eye to the relationship between the tax liabilities of British subjects in both England and North America (see your textbook for background and details). Then, as you examine the resolutions adopted by the Stamp Act Congress in October 1765, identify the issues, fears, and concerns that prompted the colonies to take concerted action in opposition to this particular revenue measure.

In this instance political resistance, mob action, and British economic interests combined to bring about repeal of the stamp tax; more significant, however, was the Declaratory Act, which reasserted parliamentary legislative authority over the colonies. Reread your textbook account of the escalating symbolic struggle over imperial and colonial prerogatives, a conflict that resulted in a significant step toward intercolonial union in 1774. By 1774, colonists had developed more sophisticated retaliatory techniques for dealing with parliamentary initiatives. Moreover, the concept of united resistance moved toward political collaboration when the Continental Congress was established. Analyze its Declaration of Rights and Grievances and its pledge made by the 1774 "Association" for evidence of a stronger tendency toward intercolonial unity.

These documents are linked by an underlying concern with the relationship among separate entities within the imperial structure. In your search for evidence of developing ties between the colonies, think about the principles of federalism.

#### **Questions for Analysis**

1. As you review the escalating tensions after 1763, identify the mechanisms employed by the colonial resistance to coordinate actions in the separate colonies. What do the documents reveal about the functions of the nonimportation agreements, the Stamp Act Congress, the Committees of Correspondence, the Continental Congress, and the Continental Association? What was their legal authority? How did these networks and gatherings contribute to the onset of rebellion against England?
2. What was the eighteenth-century meaning of the term *rights of Englishmen*? In what way do the documents reflect colonial insistence upon those rights? Were colonial rights and obligations identical with those of British subjects living in England? Explain.
3. Approach the documents from an eighteenth-century British perspective. What were the key issues and why did the British authorities react as they did to the Albany Plan, Stamp Act Congress, and Continental Congress? How did the imperial and colonial conceptions of the British Empire and the relationships between its constituent parts differ?
4. Search the documents for the use of terms such as *liberty*, *tyranny*, *republic*, *constitution*, *conspiracy*, *equality*, and *rights*. To what extent was colonial reliance