

E NLIGHTENMENT ENTHUSIASMS AND THE SPECTACULAR FAILURE OF THE PHILADELPHIAN SOCIETY

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Good *English* folk, come shake both Sides and Head;
For after all her Vaunt Poor *Philly's* Dead.
Who in this Nation made such a fearful riot,
Folks could not eat and drink their common Dyet,
Nor play, nor fight, nor go to Church at quiet.
Whose notions soard above the starry Sky-Balls,
Beyond the reach of dim, and clearer Eye-Balls.
Icrus like she flew to[o] near the flame,
Melted her waxen wings, and down she came.

*An Elegy, Upon the Philadelphian Society: With the
False Oracles, Last Speech, and Confession* (1703), lines 1–9

In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689), a text now generally understood to be among the most important early formulations of the philosophy of empiricism, John Locke states that he wants to find “the Horizon . . . which sets the Bounds between the enlightened and dark Parts of Things.” My essay focuses on a millenarian group active in Locke’s London, a group concerned, as he was, with the bases for human knowledge, but with areas of inquiry he deemed “not comprehensible by us.”¹ The Philadelphian Society for the Advancement of Divine Philosophy was a London-based congregation with branches in continental Europe. Followers of German mystic Jakob Böhme (1575–1624), the Philadelphians held that divine wisdom was derived from mystical contemplation rather than reliance on Scripture, and they saw the established

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church as one in which “all the Extraordinary Stirrings of the Divine Spirit are too generally Slighted.”² The society can be traced back to the Interregnum, to the communal household of one-time Anglican minister John Pordage (1607–1681), who was expelled from the church in 1654. Pordage was one of the earliest English commentators on Böhme, whose works were widely read in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England and elsewhere in Europe.³

The leader of the society during its most public phase in England, from 1695 to 1703, was Protestant mystic Jane Lead (1623–1704). After Pordage’s death, Lead assumed leadership of their congregation, edited Pordage’s *Theologia Mystica* (1683), and immediately began publishing her own works. Over the next twenty-three years, Lead published at least seventeen books and tracts, including her three-volume, 2,500-page spiritual diary, *A Fountain of Gardens, Watered by the Rivers of Divine Pleasure* (1696–1701). The stream of works that she produced would make her one of the most prolific English women writers of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In 1694, after reading her works in German translation, English nonjuror Francis Lee sought Lead out and introduced her to Anglican minister Richard Roach. From this time on, this septuagenarian female mystic would have two Oxford-educated scholars to help transcribe her visions and shepherd them into print.

In 1695, the Philadelphians embarked on a mission to proclaim their cause to the world. They began printing keynote publications, and in 1697, holding public meetings—addressing their message of “Universal Love” and the unification of Christian churches to “all Nations and Languages and Kindreds.”⁴ The flood of texts that the society produced during the period 1695–1704 would make them a prime example of the intersection of millennial aspirations and mass marketing that Jonathan Swift was contemporaneously satirizing in *A Tale of a Tub* (begun 1696, printed 1704). Yet in 1703, the group suddenly stopped holding their public meetings, announcing in further publications that their intentions had been misrepresented. In particular, they claimed that they had been smeared with the “*Imputation of Madness and Enthusiasm thrown at Adventure before the Case be distinguish’d and understood.*”⁵ The two-hundred-line *Elegy, Upon the Philadelphian Society* delighted in the spectacle of the Philadelphians’ apparent failure: “For after all her Vaunt Poor Philly’s Dead.” Calling on “Good English folk” to “shake” with laughter, this broadside ballad anticipates at the popular level the most important early-eighteenth-century work dealing with claims to divine inspiration or “private revelation,” the third Earl of Shaftesbury’s *Letter Concerning Enthusiasm* (1708), which advocates ridicule as the best antidote to the social “disease” of new religious groups claiming an unmediated relationship with God. The appearance in London in 1706 of the Camisard refugees, or “French Prophets,” would encourage the Philadelphians to reemerge briefly, but the society never really recovered from the textual and physical attacks that they endured during this period—or from the death of their leader, Jane Lead, in 1704. In 1725, one surviving Philadelphian would look back on this most “public” phase in the society’s history, observing that since this time, the “Power and Spirit of the Rising Kingdom has been carried on in Single or *Private Persons*, Retir’d and Hid, as *Slain Witnesses* in their Graves.”⁶

Given the survival today of large numbers of Philadelphian books, tracts, and manuscripts in highly trafficked archives such as the British Library, the Bodleian Library, and Dr. Williams's Library, one is prompted to ask, What happened to this prolific writing community, not only in the eighteenth century but also in the literary history of the twentieth? Jane Lead's works circulated in her own time in theosophical circles in three languages (English, German, and Dutch), yet today they are largely unknown even by feminist scholars. By the end of the eighteenth century, Philadelphian works were read by Pietists and Quietists in Scotland, Germany, and America; the Swedish contemporaries of Emanuel Swedenborg (whose own mysticism influenced William Blake); and Scottish mystic Richard Cheyne. English nonjuror William Law, author of *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, was charged by a contemporary with having read these works "with . . . the same . . . Veneration . . . that other People read the Scriptures."⁷ Widely discussed in theosophical circles in the eighteenth century and widely available on microfilm in ours, Lead's writings and those of the other Philadelphians appear to have been rendered nearly invisible to literary historians and cultural critics of this period. One question this essay attempts to answer is *Why?*

In this paper I use the example of the Philadelphian Society's "spectacular failure" to argue that the late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century reaction against certain kinds of speech, writing, and intellectual inquiry associated with religious "enthusiasm" continues to affect what now counts as the object of English literary study. Despite postmodernist critiques of Enlightenment claims and frames, dominant interpretive frameworks in current eighteenth-century literary and cultural studies remain rooted in those epistemes—with significant implications for literary historiography. In a series of articles proposing "a new history of the Enlightenment," John Bender suggests that until recently, the field of eighteenth-century literary studies was blinded by Enlightenment assumptions: "Anglo-American investigation . . . proceeded largely within deep-rooted postulates . . . that fundamentally reproduced Enlightenment assumptions themselves and therefore yielded recapitulation rather than the knowledge produced by critical analysis."⁸ But revisions of critical assumptions that feminism, new historicism, and cultural materialism made in the 1980s have "changed the frame of reference," Bender suggests. Critical theory has "denaturalized and transformed into historical phenomena a range of assumptions fundamental to mid-twentieth-century Anglo-American literary study" ("Eighteenth-Century Studies," 81). Yet despite these valuable critiques, the theoretically informed literary and cultural studies Bender commends may not have come as far in practical terms as he implies. While postmodernist critics now routinely question Enlightenment claims and values, they often reduce those claims and values to a simple, univocal, and "successful" program. Religion and Enlightenment were mutually implicated, but as Dale K. Van Kley points out, "[T]he European eighteenth century still maintains its identity as the century of the Enlightenment, while the obscurity that this 'light' has supposedly dispelled is precisely that of religion."⁹ Throughout this period, the greatest volume of print production continued to consist of religious and didactic works. As J. Paul Hunter states: "Religious in subject matter, didactic in intent. That description fits most published writings and an astonishing amount of private discourse in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries

in England—so fully so as almost to constitute a definition of taste, desire, and habit.”¹⁰

Yet while revisionist historians increasingly argue for the continuing centrality of religion as a social and cultural force,¹¹ literary studies and cultural criticism remain strikingly unaffected by these developments. Despite a few promising signs, religious writing remains marginalized in our literary histories and cultural studies models, its place in our field of vision directly inverse to its actual importance in the period we study. The occlusion of explicitly religious writings, especially those associated with “enthusiasm,” is not a matter of anachronistic definitions of literature that would restrict eighteenth-century “fine writing” to poems, plays, and novels.¹² Nor is this a critical conspiracy of silence, as some would undoubtedly suggest. Rather, the marginal status of these texts “with a palpable design on us”¹³ is a matter of how we as a discipline deal with works that do not fit dominant critical models of intelligibility and value. Although critics no longer take for granted “reason” and “Enlightenment” and the progressive teleology often folded into these terms, the absent presence in our histories of prolific writing communities like the Philadelphians suggests that significant work still remains to be done in interrogating the late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century critique of enthusiasm, in calculating its legacy, and especially in penetrating *behind* the stereotypes to the diverse and complex groups to whom the terms referred.¹⁴ The Philadelphians are only one instance of what feminist scholars, cultural critics, and others stand to gain by paying closer attention to religious writings.

Yet in England, the earliest critiques of enthusiasm came not from radicals or freethinkers, but from conservative Anglicans who viewed claims to private revelation as a threat to the established social order. How then did the critique of enthusiasm come to be associated with what we now think of as “Enlightenment” ideas? The orthodox polemic against enthusiasm indeed formed a key aspect of Restoration culture, but by the turn of the century a wide variety of critics had joined in the cause with divergent aims. John Locke condemned “Enthusiasm” in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*¹⁵ as part of a program for separating church and state, while the Earl of Shaftesbury indicted “vulgar” enthusiasm and articulated a new, gentlemanly form as part of a “philosophical programme for modernity.”¹⁶ The orthodox response to enthusiasm also underwent subtle transformations during this period (a reminder that in England, “Enlightenment” existed in clerical and conservative forms). Orthodox as well as heterodox critics increasingly relied on a new conception of individual human reason “alongside, if not instead of, Scripture” as a response to enthusiasm. Indeed, Michael Heyd proposes, “[T]he debate with the enthusiasts may well have been a leading cause for the increased emphasis on reason in the theological discourse of that generation.”¹⁷ While some Anglican theologians would persist in seeing enthusiasm like Lead’s as being of “pernicious consequence”¹⁸—that is, socially and politically dangerous—other religious critics echoed Shaftesbury in understanding enthusiasm as a matter for ridicule and/or medical treatment rather than prosecution. Shaftesbury’s proposal that the “enthusiasm” of the Philadelphians’ sometime collaborators, the French Prophets, was a matter of private folly rather than national concern and that individuals should exercise their own

autonomous reason in judging the enthusiasts is typical of what Heyd describes (with some overstatement) as “the growing secularization of the problem of enthusiasm.”¹⁹ The critique of enthusiasm was initially a conservative religious one. Yet as Heyd proposes and Lawrence E. Klein and Anthony J. La Vopa concur, “The reaction against enthusiasm in the early modern period had a formative role in the changes of outlook that, for better or worse, are often summed up in the term ‘secularization,’ a key aspect of the discourses of the Enlightenment as well.”²⁰

What then can the example of the Philadelphians tell us, not only about these larger cultural shifts in eighteenth-century England, but also about the particular indigestibility of “enthusiastic” religious writings today? In advancing the thesis of this essay not by arguing for the Philadelphians’ “real success” but rather by analyzing the phenomenon of their apparent failure, I follow the strategy of critical legal theorist Peter Goodrich in his essay on the history of English common law. Goodrich focuses not on the ideas that succeeded, but on those that appear to have failed. He asks, “Which possible disciplines . . . fell by the way-side, . . . beyond the custody of institutional transmission? Who interpreted them out of existence, and why?” Adapting from Michel Foucault, he suggests that these possibilities in fact live on as the “positive unconscious of knowledge.” The “failed” history maps a possibility that also can be followed as a site of criticism: “To trace the underside of a discipline—to ask what it cost—is to recuperate the specific motive fears that underlie . . . any science conceived as truth. . . . The failures, the other history of a discipline, provide a ground for reinterpretation.”²¹



The Philadelphian Society’s Interregnum emergence may be contextualized in terms of what David Zaret has characterized as the growth of a “public sphere in religion” in England—one that cultivated many of the same critical intellectual habits that Jürgen Habermas locates in the world of politics and letters.²² The Philadelphians’ sudden, full-scale move into print in 1695 may be understood in terms of the history of the press. The 1695 lapse of the Licensing Act marked the end of prepublication censorship and the explosion of the print trades, and the newly available tool of print allowed the Philadelphians, like their contemporaries the Quakers, to make a “spectacle” of their heterodox views. The society began printing keynote publications, the most important of which was Lead’s *Fountain of Gardens*. Lead’s “Great Diary,” as her followers called it, records her mystical visions and spiritual development over the period 1670–1686. Two months after Lead was widowed in 1670,²³ Wisdom or Sophia, the feminine divine principle of Hebraic theology and early Christian Gnosticism, appeared to her in a dream, announcing: “Behold, I am God’s Eternal Virgin-Wisdom, whom thou hast been enquiring after; I am to unseal the Treasures of God’s deep Wisdom unto thee, and will be as Rebecca was unto Jacob, a true Natural Mother; for out of my Womb thou shalt be brought forth after the manner of a Spirit, Conceived and Born again” (*Fountain*, 1:18). Rich in theosophical and alchemical imagery such as the “Fountain” and “Gardens” of its title (the garden symbolizing the matrix in which the spiritual plant grows, the fountain the transforming substance that purifies and gives life, and the blossoming of the

spiritual plant the attainment of divine wisdom), Lead's diary would become the most important text of the Philadelphian movement.

One of the many Philadelphian texts, both print publications and manuscript letters, in which Lead's diary was discussed was the society's collectively authored periodical, *Theosophical Transactions* (1697). A shared space for theosophical and cabalistic commentary, poetry, music, and correspondence from within England and abroad, with "issues" ranging up to seventy pages, *Theosophical Transactions* may be seen as a counterpart to the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society.²⁴ The Philadelphians also published a spate of millennial and doctrinal pamphlets, such as *A Message to the Philadelphian Society, Whithersoever dispersed over the whole Earth* (1696) and *Reasons for the Foundation and Promotion of a Philadelphian Society* (1697). They sponsored the printing of eleven new works by Lead and prepared new editions of her spiritual self-help guide *The Heavenly Cloud Now Breaking* (1681; 2d ed. 1701) and *The Revelation of Revelations* (1683; 2d ed. 1701), her commentary on the apocalypse.²⁵ The first edition of *Heavenly Cloud*, they explained, had already had been "Translated into *High Dutch*; and soon after into *Low Dutch*: and there have been Three Impressions of it already in *Holland*" (HC, A1v). As Lead's audience grew, the society began using her name as a marketing tool. The title page of *Revelation of Revelations* touts it as "Published by J. L. the Author of the *Heavenly Cloud*." At one point, Lead's name acquired so much cultural capital that one enterprising contemporary started printing it on books Lead did not write. From this point on, a four-page catalogue of "Books Written by J. Lead" accompanied her works. Today the prefaces to Lead's books, with their promotional puffs written by devoted followers, bring to mind the strategies of Swift's hack in *A Tale of a Tub*, who uses his first publication as an opportunity to advertise other forthcoming works, such as "A Critical Essay upon the Art of Canting" and "An Analytical Discourse upon Zeal."²⁶

Philadelphian debates on the "AEternal Invisibles" may seem otherworldly to us, but in fact they provide a distinct perspective on the emerging rationalist and empiricist philosophies of their time. In her earliest publications, Lead critiqued the "Rational Sense" as interfering with spiritual growth, defended the validity of private revelation, and rejected what she saw as her materialist contemporaries' obsession with "Creaturely Evidence" (RR, 31). Her mystical style makes it difficult to know exactly which contemporary currents of thought she was responding to, yet it is tantalizing to contemplate the intellectual life of this elderly woman then living in an almshouse, who argued in her own works that the new emphasis on "Mechanical Knowledge" and ratiocination was death to spiritual regeneration and a godly life.

Heavenly Cloud Now Breaking and *Revelation of Revelations* were among Lead's most highly regarded publications in her lifetime. What these two very different works have in common is that both advance a case against what we moderns might call "instrumental Reason" and "rationalization." Lead held that the human ratiocinative faculty is inevitably linked to Self and interferes with revelation and the growth of faith—this at a time when many of her more powerful contemporaries were holding forth with enormous confidence for supposedly "public" reason, against supposedly "private" (individual) revelation. (Although

Lead of course could not have known it, the same year that she published her *Revelation of Revelations*, Locke began revising notes for *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, with its now-famous chapters on “Faith and Reason and their distinct Provinces” and “Enthusiasm.”²⁷) Lead’s argument that reason is dangerously flawed by Self anticipates William Blake’s rejection of Deist arguments in works like *There Is No Natural Religion* (1788). Blake observes, “He who sees the Infinite in all things sees God. He who sees the Ratio only [*Latin*, reason + calculation] sees himself only.”²⁸ Reason, Lead warned, was increasingly worshiped by her contemporaries as “a grand Idol, set up in the room of God.” The new “Man of Reason” viewed “the *Rational Life*” as “a Wise, Sober, and Righteous Life, and therefore not to be laid aside, being as a King that would govern the whole concerns of the Soul, both as to the heavenly and earthly Things” (*HC*, 10, 13).

Lead wrote *Heavenly Cloud* and *Revelation of Revelations* at the time of the Exclusion Crisis, when Whig members of Parliament were attempting to keep James, Duke of York, from the throne on the basis of his religious views. Although at first glance, Lead’s visionary philosophy may appear to be concerned exclusively with the spiritual world, her diction betrays a keen awareness of contemporary religiopolitical events. Drawing on memories of the execution of King Charles I, she proposed that it was not temporal kings but the new “Rational Spirit” that must be “executed” or “deposed.” In advancing what she calls her “Case” against the Man of Reason, Lead adopted the aggressive language of Whig parliamentarians then taking Charles II to task. She wrote, “[H]ere is a first and second Charge brought in against him [the Man of Reason]” (*HC*, 10). Alluding to efforts to place James Scott, Duke of Monmouth, on the throne, she linked enlightenment not with reason but with revelation: “[N]one, but a high enlightened, and well-instructed Soul in God, can have a right discerning of *this great Supplanter*” (*HC*, 10, my italics). While contemporary radicals and freethinkers valued reason for its ability to emancipate, Lead saw the new emphasis on a ‘rational faith’ as a suspect move in a daring political bid for a new social order. Reason, like a “Treacherous Counsellor,” might carry “an appearance for God, and Eternal Things, and that with Zeal too.” Yet worldly interests, not godly ones, would inevitably rule, for “[t]here is such a near alliance to the worldly Interest, and earthly Property, as there will be a holding fast in the mixed Property, by putting heavenly Things in one Scale, and earthly Things in the other: if they can go upon even ballance, then the Rational Spirit carries all smoothly, as wise in his Generation; not being willing to lose his part, either for Spirituals, or Temporals. But the worldly Interest shall be sure followed close” (*HC*, 10–11). “Wise Rationality” is thus “a Spirit not to be trusted” (11). Alluding once more to the execution of Charles I, Lead urged, “[W]e must shut out Reason as a Treacherous Counsellor. And there is no way, but to give him up for Spiritual Martyrdom, for the sharp Ax of the Spirit to do Execution upon him” (11). Lead conceded that executing reason might initially seem too severe a verdict: “[Y]ou will say . . . he may be regenerated, and made *subordinate* to the Life of Faith” (12) (rather as Locke would ostensibly propose). Evoking the serpent reasoning with Eve, tempting her to eat from the Tree of Knowledge, Lead declared, “[K]now it, from the Lord . . . the Serpent lies more hid in *this*” than anywhere else, “the

main of the *Serpent's* Strength having always lain in the Craft and Subtilty of Reason" (RR, 10, 25). Lead knew that efforts to make faith "reasonable" had far-reaching sociopolitical implications. Her insistence in her 1681 work *Heavenly Cloud* that faith cannot be subordinated to reason immediately anticipates John Dryden's argument in *Religio Laici* (1682): "They who wou'd prove Religion by Reason, do but weaken the cause which they endeavour to support: 'tis to take away the Pillars from our Faith, and to prop it onely with a twig."²⁹

For Lead, real wisdom lay in revelation, not reason. While the new Deism was proposing that revelations should be measured by the inchmarks of reason and that most revelations had ceased in apostolic times, she assured her readers of "the continued run of the Spirit throughout all Ages." The Lord had not abandoned moderns, for "This would be a sad and deplorable thing, if God should since that Age cut off the *spring* of *Revelation* from its original, so that the Sheep and Lambs of Christ's flock should no more expect to be fed from the fresh springing Pastures" (RR, 128). Beginning, as we have seen, with *A Fountain of Gardens*, Lead's works detail her own thirty-year relationship with the Virgin Wisdom, who came to play a more central role in her theosophy than did Jesus Christ. Over the years, as she learned to open her mind to revelation, Lead's visionary relationship with Wisdom deepened: "I have learned to observe her Times and Seasons, I witness her opening as in the twinkling of an Eye, a pure, bright, subtil, swift Spirit, a working Motion, a Circling Fire, a penetrating Oil" (*Fountain*, 1:27). Against the empiricist view that sense experience is the only valid source of knowledge, Lead urged her readers not to let sense perception "choak" faith with doubts, for "nothing is more prejudicial to the growing and springing Life and Light, than to give way to Incredulity, and an evil Suspicion raised from the dark Mists of Sense and worldly Wisdom" (HC, 11, A2v). The "dark Mists" of sense perception cloud vision, not enhance it (a position that again directly anticipates Blake's). Members of the Royal Society would justify their empiricist investigations as motivated by a pious desire to glorify God by understanding his works, and the Philadelphians acknowledged that great scientific and philosophical discoveries had been made in their time: "[I]t cannot be denied, but that of these late years, Mechanical Knowledge hath been brought up to a very great Height" (*Fountain*, vol. 1, "Editor to the Reader," A1v). But as Jonathan Swift did in *Gulliver's Travels*, the Philadelphians warned that excessive human pride could be dangerous: "This is an Age that thinks it self to excel all that have ever went before it, in the Discovery and Improvement of Truths," yet "*the Veil is still before their Eyes.*" Not even "the most Acute and Vulturous Eye of the Greatest Rationalist" could derive the bases for real wisdom from ratiocination. Thus Philadelphian works attempt, at the time of the inception of a discipline, to challenge the paradigm that is being established and to suggest that cognitive modes based in scientific observation and/or reason will always give us only a fragile hold on human experiences and needs.



From the time that the Philadelphians publicly announced their millennial mission, they were subject to discursive and physical attacks. In contrast with the persecutions of the seventeenth century, the English eighteenth century is usu-

ally represented as an age of tolerance, when freedom of worship for Protestants prevailed. William and Mary's 1689 Act of Toleration theoretically protected the religious rights of groups like the Philadelphians, and members of the society referenced this act in defending their meetings: "We made use of the Liberty which the Law allows" (*The Vindication and Justification of the Philadelphian Society*, 1702). But the Philadelphians' experiences at the hands of their critics suggest that although the laws had changed, prejudices against heterodox religious groups remained firmly in place. From the beginning, the Philadelphians claimed, their public meetings were disrupted by hostile parties who "raise[d] Tumults against the Publishers of the approaching New Kingdom; and . . . curse[d] and blaspheme[d] where we have been met together to bless God."³⁰ In the society's view, it was not their meetings, but the disruptions that were illegal—"an *Unpresidented Prophanation* and *Barefac'd Affront* to all *Religion*, and to the *Scriptures* themselves."³¹ At one point, Philadelphian writings claim, these attacks grew so bad that the society made "Application to a Chief Magistrate" of London urging him to uphold the new laws. But in 1702, Anglican magistrates were not quick to defend heterodox religious groups' freedom of worship. According to the Philadelphians, instead of offering the society his protection, the magistrate to whom they had applied "[r]equir'd them . . . to Purge themselves of those Evil Reports that were Generally Dispers'd . . . concerning Them." Accordingly, in a series of passionate yet carefully argued publications, the Philadelphians worked to clarify what they believed and "to Demonstrate to the World, how We have been Misrepresented" (*Vindication*).

The Philadelphians did not position themselves as radicals or even as nonconformists. Indeed, some English Philadelphians saw themselves as exemplary members of the Church of England. Richard Roach was an Anglican minister, and nonjuror Francis Lee was always careful to position himself and the other Philadelphians in a conciliatory manner toward the church. The Philadelphians insisted that their weekly worship meetings at sites such as Westmoreland House, Hungerford Market, and Lorimer's Hall supplemented rather than displaced Anglican services: "[W]e meet publickly for Religious Worship, on the Afternoon of the Lord's Day . . . but not in the Mornings, as looking on these to be the proper Time for Church-Communion, wherein we leave every one Free" (*Vindication*). The group repeatedly argued that it was not trying to set up a new church: "[T]he Design of our Assembling is not to Divide, but to Unite."³² Their concerns were spiritual, not political, their goal being "to Retrieve and Revive the Spirit of Primitive Christianity, by pressing the more Spiritual (and much Neglected) part of Religion" (*Vindication*). Their policy toward "all Religions and Churches" was one of "Universal Love," without "any Narrowness, Partiality, or Particularity of Spirit" (*Propositions Extracted from the Reasons for the Foundation and Promotion of a Philadelphian Society*, 1697, 8, 4). But in advancing arguments based on a policy of "Universal Love," the Philadelphians actually provided support for their critics' charges that they were a threat. At a time when an English king was removed from his throne because he was Catholic, English subjects were not supposed to endorse "Civil or Ecclesiastical Rights" for all or to "freely Imbrace as many as are Christians indeed, or Seek to be so, where-ever We find them."³³ Paradoxically, in England in 1700, the Philadelphians' most immediately threatening doctrine was their belief in the "*Eternity and Universality of the Divine Love*."³⁴

Furthermore, Jane Lead did push the policy of universal love to a radical extreme, endorsing the doctrine of “universal salvation” and rejecting the notion of a permanent hell. God’s love was all-powerful and could redeem anyone, even the fallen angels; therefore, hell torments were not eternal. Lead offers a defense of the doctrine of universal salvation in *A Revelation of the Everlasting Gospel-Message* (1697), using as her key text 1 Corinthians 15:22: “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Lead was intensely aware that she departed from Böhme on this point, and she anticipated objections from fellow Behmenists. She explained that God had revealed to her some “Secrets” that he had not revealed to Böhme. God revealed his wisdom incrementally, according to what each age could comprehend, and seventy-four-year-old Lead represented herself not as Böhme’s disciple but as his successor: “Jacob Behmen . . . was a worthy Instrument in his Day. But . . . God has in every Age something still to bring forth of his Secrets, to some one Gift, to some another, as the Age and Time grows ripe for it” (*REGM*, 25). Eighteenth-century England, she hoped, was readier than Böhme’s sixteenth-century Germany had been for a critical reevaluation of the notion of hell. Today, Lead’s rejection of “an eternity of hell-torments” may seem to us one of her most “enlightened” ideas, but most of her contemporaries (including many Philadelphians) saw the doctrine of universal salvation as potentially disastrous. Henry Dodwell, an Anglican nonjuror who read *A Revelation of the Everlasting Gospel-Message* as soon as it was published, wrote to Francis Lee to express horror at Lead’s views: “In this age of licentiousness, there is hardly any doctrine of hers of more pernicious consequence than that of her pretending Divine revelation for her doctrine concerning the finiteness of hell torments.” He also expressed concern for Lee’s soul, urging him to sever his ties with this “seducing Spirit”: “God extricate you out of the snares of Enthusiasm and seducing Spirits wherein you are engaged.”³⁵

Direct, pointed commentary like Dodwell’s on Philadelphian ideas is hard to find, for few critics bothered to distinguish specific Philadelphian practices and beliefs. Discursive attacks on the Philadelphians tend to fall into two main categories: a small number of sustained critiques by scholar-theologians like Dodwell, who had read Philadelphian works and were genuinely alarmed at their ideas, and a larger group of indiscriminate attacks by persons who may not have come into immediate contact with the Philadelphians but who quickly linked these new “enthusiasts” with a wide range of heterodox groups. The practice of “eliding or conflating error”³⁶ was a standard one among critics of enthusiasm, who did not hesitate to link perceived “heretics” who in fact held widely differing beliefs. As we will see, the Philadelphians were linked with groups ranging from the Quakers (who emphasized revelation) to the Deists (who rejected revelation), as well as with the reputedly licentious Family of Love. Seventeenth-century heterodoxy gave rise to many fears, but a newer kind of fear the Philadelphians evoked was alarm concerning their manipulation of print. With an estimated London membership of one hundred, the Philadelphians were a tiny group compared to the Quakers, whose tracts spread throughout Great Britain and Ireland, continental Europe, and the American colonies by 1700. Yet for a time, the Philadelphians’ own publicity efforts were also strikingly effective. As one contemporary observes, “[T]he Discourse of them has made a great noise, and is much talked of.”³⁷ Lead

addressed her texts to members of the “Philadelphian Fold . . . scatter’d throughout all Nations,”³⁸ and eventually, these grand ambitions caught the attention of a wider public. In 1697, the Philadelphians themselves published *The State of the Philadelphian Society. Or, The Grounds of their Proceedings Consider’d*, in which one “Philalethes” observes: “Upon occasion of those *Philadelphian Papers*, and *Theosophical Transactions* that fly about, we are often ask’d in the City. . . . What these *Philadelphians* are; this new Sect with a hard Name? What are their peculiar Principles or Practices? . . . Why do they sep[a]rate from us, and affect singularity and a particular Title?” (1). Calling on his fellow Philadelphians to explain themselves “before they alarm the World,” “Philalethes” then works to clarify the society’s beliefs (3). Six years later, in celebrating the Philadelphians’ sudden retreat from public life, the satiric *Elegy, Upon the Philadelphian Society* suggested that it was precisely these highfalutin publicity efforts (“all her Vaunt”) that provoked intensified backlash and so ultimately contributed to the group’s “demise.” Like the mythic Icarus, who escaped from Crete on waxen wings but flew so close to the sun that his wings melted, casting him into the sea, the Philadelphians “flew to[o] near the flame” of publicity: “Melted her waxen wings, and down she came” (lines 8–9).

The Philadelphians were also subjected to a more conventional satiric formula: religious enthusiasm plus women equals sexual license. As Clement Hawes, Phyllis Mack, and others have shown, “[I]t is precisely the relative relaxation of gender hierarchy within the enthusiastic milieu . . . that becomes, in the orthodox backlash against enthusiasm, an especially favored marker of its social threat and degradation.”³⁹ Women were a strikingly visible presence in sectarian, millenarian, and later, revivalist movements, and the Philadelphians’ support of female spiritual authority, promotion of women and women’s causes, and especially, mixed-sex meetings were all grounds for confusion and concern.⁴⁰ *An Elegy, Upon the Philadelphian Society* satirized the male Philadelphians’ attendance on a female leader, referring to Philadelphian gentlemen as “gallants” and to septuagenarian Lead as their “Doxie,” or whore (line 34). Targeting the Philadelphian policy of universal love, the author demanded (with a jab at Queen Anne):

Where *Female’s Head* oth’ Church, tho Vessel weaker,
Who dares aver a Woman may’nt be Speaker?
Whose Arguments both strong and softly move:
Who can deny when such invite to love? (lines 55–8)

During the same years, Jonathan Swift was satirizing the mixed-sex meetings of “enthusiasts” in *A Tale of a Tub* and *A Discourse Concerning the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit* (1696–1704). The section of *Tub* on “the Learned *AEolists*” (“All Pretenders to Inspiration whatsoever,” 150 n) notes that the practices of “*Modern AEolists*” are encouraged in “*Female Priests* . . . who are agreed to receive their Inspiration . . . like their Ancestors, the *Sibyls*” (157). (Swift adds in a footnote: “Quakers, who suffer their Women to preach and pray,” a group with whom the Philadelphians were often confused [157 n].) Although there is no evidence that Swift knew of the Philadelphians as a distinct group, separate from other any other contemporary religious group with a high level of female leadership, the Philadelphians’ most “public” phase—the period of Jane Lead’s most

visible leadership (1695–1704)—is identical to the period of the evolution and publication of these works, in which Swift critiques “enthusiasm” and “fanaticism” and links them with “revolutions of government” and “Female Priests.”

Swift proposes that the origins of enthusiasm lie in sexual desire. He alludes in *Tub* to the mixed-sex meetings of groups like the Philadelphians, and he takes those groups as one of his central themes in *Mechanical Operation*. Swift’s dominant rhetorical strategy in that work is to suggest that all “enthusiastic” groups are fundamentally the same. Although it is not lengthy, *Mechanical Operation* purports to offer a history of “*Fanaticks, in all Ages,*” including “*several among our selves, such as the Family of Love*” (286, my italics). (The Family of Love, a sixteenth-century spiritualist group, was no longer extant as an organized sect, suggesting that Swift may actually have been thinking of the Philadelphians here.) Swift suggests that “Fanatics in all Ages” have one thing in common: “the *Community of Women*” (286). Although Swift means *communal* women, or women shared among men, other critics of enthusiasm did fear female “Community” in the sense of new female groups or bonds. In 1702, the third Earl of Shaftesbury wrote a satire titled *The Adept Ladys Or The Angelick Sect*, which links religious and sexual ‘deviance’ and hints at some kind of threatening female bonding inimical to men. The satire consists of an account of a “Sicken[ing]” and “nauseous” visit to “two Elderly she-Instructresses,” one of whom is an elderly “Heavenly-inspir’d Doctress, and Femall Saint” whose “Sybilline Oracles, and Letters Extraordinary [are] Scatter’d abroad from the Cell of our Prophetess and convey’d . . . to sovereign Princes.”⁴¹ The Philadelphians repeatedly addressed concerns regarding the involvement of women in their cause. They had no “base and sinister Aims,” as some had accused them; there were no “Crimes or Immoralities” committed. Adopting the strategies of their empiricist contemporaries, they called on their attackers to support accusations of sexual scandal with *proof*: “We do most earnestly Invite every one, if they can Charge Us . . . with any such Crimes or Immoralities, they would not fail to do it; and We shall be Heartfully Thankful to ‘em for this their Information, and shall immediately proceed to such a Censure thereupon, as the Nature of the Case deserves” (*Vindication*). In 1710, Richard Steele would satirize the Philadelphians in the *Tatler*, continuing the popular confusion of the group with the Family of Love and perpetuating now-tired stereotypes of sexual scandal. In a satire on proliferating religious sects, Steele describes a waxwork show featuring all the sects of England. Of particular interest is one group with a high membership of “both sexes” who “called themselves the Philadelphians, or . . . Family of Love” (no. 257, 30 November).

The Philadelphians’ emphasis on spiritual inquiry and growth; on sober, unaffected behavior; and on a new generosity of spirit toward “all Religions and Churches” made them different from the more “outrageous” religious sects of their own and previous eras.⁴² Yet by the eighteenth century, cultural critics like Steele would have had to penetrate a wall of stereotypes to see these differences—and most did not. The contemporary confusion of the Philadelphians and the Quakers is a case in point. Although the Philadelphians and the Quakers shared printers⁴³ and there was ideological and programmatic overlap between the two groups (most notably the principle of a “light within”), these two groups in fact defined themselves *against* one another. Late-seventeenth-century Quakers ex-

plicitly rejected various tenets of Behmenism, while the Philadelphians rejected Quaker ways as affected: “As to [the Philadelphians’] difference from the *Quakers*, . . . [we are] not so silly as to place Religion in *Thouing* and *Theeing*, in keeping on [our] Hats, or in a *sad Countenance*” (*State of the Philadelphian Society*, 2). Although these two groups saw themselves as different in essential ways, their critics saw all such “enthusiasts” as fundamentally the same. The author of *An Elegy, Upon the Philadelphian Society* equated the Philadelphians and the Quakers despite obvious sartorial differences between them: “*Phil* no Green Apron wore, nor Prim Peakt hood,/But superfine was *Quaker A la mode*” (lines 20–1). Critic John Cockburn, in “exposing” French mystic Antoinette Bourignon, linked the Philadelphians not only with the Quakers but also with European Quietists and Pietists (all movements notable for celebrating female spiritual inspiration). Cockburn warned, “Our Quakers and Philadelphians, as well as the Quietists and Pietists Abroad, are of the same Kidney, and do all stand upon the same Foundation, so that what overturns one, overturns all.”⁴⁴ Propagandist Charles Leslie linked the Philadelphians, Quakers, and Deists, warning that although the Church had regained control after the Restoration, “we have since seen a large *Crop* of them [enthusiasts] Rising up again. Not yet so Many in *Number*, but *Greater* in *Wickedness* than any of the Former.” These dangerous enthusiasts ranged from “*Camisar-Quakers* who . . . say He [God] speaks by moving their *Organs*” to “Professed *Deists*, who throw off all *Revelation*.” But the most alarming of them all was the “Mother of the *Philadelphians*,” Jane Lead: “None then said that he had been in an Higher *Heaven* than that into which *Christ* has Ascended, as I have heard *Jean Leads* the Mother of the *Philadelphians* say.”⁴⁵

In June 1703, in the sixth year of their public worship meetings, the Philadelphians suddenly had a “prophetical manifestation” that the next year should be a time of rest.⁴⁶ Although several members continued to meet in private homes after Lead’s death the following year, the consensus of the group was that their first “*Public Testimony to the Kingdom*” was “finish’d.”⁴⁷ The delighted author of *An Elegy, Upon the Philadelphian Society* immediately represented this retreat as a failure or “death”:

Phil Loudly talkt too of Deaths dark gate:
But proves the *First* that enters thereat.
Kindly she falls her self the *Sacrifice*;
And leaves her triumphs to her Enemies. (lines 73–6)

The Philadelphians, however, understood it not as a failure, but rather as a temporary setback that paradoxically confirmed their eventual success. In their own three-hundred-line verse response, *The Counterpart of the Elegy on the Philadelphian Society: In Answer to the Scoffers* (London, 1703), they explained:

If *Love’s Embassadress* for Love has *Died*,
She’s Nail’d but to Her *Masters* Bleeding Side.
Then Lower your Triumphs, Scornful Enemies,
You rise to fall; while She but *falls* to *Rise*. (lines 5–8)

In a letter of 1706, Richard Roach records further meetings “at Stocking Weavers Hall held after ye Philadelphian manner,”⁴⁸ and in his study of the French Proph-

ets Hillel Schwartz has briefly but suggestively explored the Philadelphian Society's joint meetings with this group during the period 1706–11. Roach himself remained ardently committed to the Philadelphian cause until his death in 1730; in 1725, he represented this mission (the “Spirit and Power of the Rising Kingdom”) as still alive, though beleaguered (Richard Roach, *The Great Crisis: Or, The Mystery of the Times and Seasons Unfolded*, 1725, 99). In the 1730s, England's most influential “enthusiastic” religious movement, Methodism, would begin gathering strength under the leadership of John Wesley (whose own links to the French Prophets Hillel Schwartz has also explored). And in the 1790s, private revelation would be presented as the basis for radical politics by millenarian groups such as the followers of Joanna Southcott. Yet we still lack any detailed synthetic study of the development and continuity of enthusiastic religious movements and writings over the course of the long eighteenth century, and accordingly, only further research will reveal whether the Philadelphians really “failed”—or whether, as my own initial research suggests, they served as important carriers of an underground intellectual tradition that extends from Böhme to Blake.

J. G. A. Pocock has described enthusiasm as the “Antiself of Enlightenment.”⁴⁹ While in the Restoration, the critique of enthusiasm functioned as a way to asperse habits of religious affiliation that were considered a threat to the existing social order, in the eighteenth century this critique increasingly functioned not so much to counter heterodoxy as to constitute new forms of order—new disciplines based in reasoned debate by gentlemen in the public sphere. Locke's insistence that faith must be reasonable helped earn him a posthumous place in the “pantheon of the Enlightenment,”⁵⁰ while the Earl of Shaftesbury's influential *Letter Concerning Enthusiasm* promoted a new “sociable” variety of enthusiasm linked to gentility and civic virtue. Revisionist historians have rightly reasserted the religious idiom of Deist, radical, and freethinking authors such as Shaftesbury and Locke.⁵¹ Yet while Shaftesbury was arguably a deeply spiritual man, his *Letter* was received as the dangerous proposition of a freethinking scoffer.⁵² And while Locke was a committed Christian of the reformed church, his scathing indictment of enthusiasm nevertheless played a significant role in “the development of an enlightened skepticism towards religion. . . . Whatever his private beliefs, his uncompromising subordination of revelation to reason had revolutionary implications.”⁵³ These and other “religious” critiques of enthusiasm had different implications than did earlier critiques. Furthermore, as Heyd suggests, conservative Anglicans modified their own “ideological arsenal” in response to enthusiasm: “[T]he issue of enthusiasm . . . may have been an important motivating force for the adoption of more secular and ‘rationalist’ views by the religious establishment itself on the eve of the enlightenment.”⁵⁴

Eighteenth-century reactions to enthusiasm helped shape the new “polite” public sphere in the world of letters. As Klein and La Vopa have observed, “Claims about reason, philosophy and Enlightenment were not used simply to define what constituted knowledge; they identified who could claim knowledge, who had cognitive authority, who could speak and write, and what kind of speech and writing were normative in the public world.”⁵⁵ The distinctive style of visionary authors like Lead—with its mystical and alchemical imagery, dense Biblical references, quasi-ecstatic states, and sibylline utterances—was increasingly asso-

ciated with the upheaval of the Civil War and served as an advance marker of threatening views. As early as 1700, Lead's editor and loving son-in-law feared that the "stile and manner" of her writings—not their content—would "not [be] suitable to the Genius of this Polite Age."⁵⁶ Yet Francis Lee urged those suspicious of mystical modes not to reject Lead's "Parabohical," "Emblematical," and "Figurative" texts solely on the basis of their initial strangeness. For to do so would be the critic's loss: "It is no other . . . than as if one should condemn *Euclid* for Writing *Jargon*, and for being the Author of a company of Extravagant Whim-sies in the *Mathematicks*; without having ever Thoroughly Read, or Comprehended the very first Definitions and Postulates, which are the Foundation to the whole Art" (HC, A1v).

Writing at the end of a century of enormous religiopolitical upheaval, Augustan arbiters of taste rejected previously widespread discursive modes as immoderate, incomprehensible, inelegant, or simply "vulgar." Less understandably, twentieth-century literary scholars have often followed suit, without questioning the ideologies, assumptions, and fears at work. What Clement Hawes has called the "English tradition of anti-enthusiastic invective" (*Mania and Literary Style*, 107, n. 20) still persists in current-day criticism—and persists most damagingly, this study concludes, in pushing outside of our field of vision discourses and debates that mattered deeply to an entire age. Targeting what he describes as our "present-day prejudice against the didactic," J. Paul Hunter suggests that "our very enlightenment" has become a "source of . . . blindness" (*Before Novels*, 228). The status of explicitly religious writings in our literary histories may be a matter of disciplinary discomfort not only with particular discursive modes, but also with nonsecular ways of making sense of the world. As Dipesh Chakrabarty observes, "A certain kind of intellectual bankruptcy, a paralysis of [the] imagination, and a certain spell of reductionism have often attended attempts . . . to understand religious practices. . . . We do not have analytical categories in academic discourse that do justice to the real, everyday and multiple 'connections' we have to what we, in becoming modern, have come to see as 'non-rational.'"⁵⁷ As Jane Lead's career as the "Mother of the Philadelphians" shows, however, eighteenth-century religious debates were for the "untutored" as well as the learned a vast canvas for the exercise of critical inquiry and the imagination. As a mystical author writing in the "Age of Reason," Lead's seventeen books and tracts do not fit the grand narratives that still shape our literary histories of her period. Yet by braving that imaginary "Horizon . . . which sets the Bounds between the enlightened and dark Parts of Things" and by studying those ideas that "failed" (or "Retir'd and Hid") as well as those that succeeded, we may begin to recognize groups like the Philadelphians as the "positive unconscious" of the "Age of Reason"—and perhaps, to see Lead's otherwise "invisible" thousands of pages of writings.

NOTES

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1. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 1.1.7.
2. Anon. [Francis Lee?], "Preface of the Publisher," in Jane Lead, *The Wars of David, and the Peaceable Reign of Solomon* (London, 1700), A3r.
3. For further information on Pordage and Behmenism in England, see B. J. Gibbons, *Gender in Mystical and Occult Thought: Behmenism and Its Development in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1996); Nigel Smith, *Perfection Proclaimed: Language and Literature in English Radical Religion, 1640–1660* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); and Nils Thune, *The Behmenists and the Philadelphians* (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksells, 1948).
4. *A Message to the Philadelphian Society* (London, 1696), 76.
5. *The Vindication and Justification of the Philadelphian Society* (London, 1702), single-sided broadside, my italics. The term "enthusiasm," stemming from the Greek *enthousiasmos*, the in-breathing of the divine, has a complex history dating back to the ancient world. On the history of the term in the period under consideration here, see Michael Heyd's monumental study, "*Be Sober and Reasonable*": *The Critique of Enthusiasm in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), as well as Lawrence E. Klein and Anthony J. La Vopa, eds., *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650–1850* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1998) and R. A. Knox, *Enthusiasm: A Chapter in the History of Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950; reprint 1987). Phyllis Mack's *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1992) illuminates the historical association of enthusiasm, women, and the category of the feminine, while Clement Hawes's groundbreaking *Mania and Literary Style: The Rhetoric of Enthusiasm from the Ranters to Christopher Smart* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1996) begins to suggest the complex development of enthusiastic literary traditions from the Civil War period through the mid-eighteenth century.
6. Richard Roach, *The Great Crisis: Or, The Mystery of the Times and Seasons Unfolded* (London, 1725), 99. On the relationship between the Philadelphians and the Camisards, see Hillel Schwartz, *The French Prophets: The History of a Millenarian Group in Eighteenth-Century England* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1980).
7. *The Works of the Reverend William Law, M.A.*, ed. G. Moreton, 9 vols. (vols. 1–5 Brockenhurst; vols. 6–9 Canterbury, 1892–3), 6:313. Law of course denied this charge, but it is nonetheless certain that he read Philadelphian writings with great care. On the circulation and influence of Philadelphian writings, see Gibbons, *Gender in Mystical and Occult Thought*; Désirée Hirst, *Hidden Riches: Traditional Symbolism from the Renaissance to Blake* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1964); Joanne Magnani Sperle, "God's Healing Angel: A Biography of Jane Lead," Ph.D. diss., Kent State University, 1985; Thune, *The Behmenists and the Philadelphians*; and D. P. Walker, *The Decline of Hell: Seventeenth-Century Discussions of Eternal Torment* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1964). For feminist scholarship on Lead, see my own *The Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics, and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace, 1678–1730* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998) and the articles by Catherine Smith listed in my bibliography.
8. John Bender, "Eighteenth-Century Studies," in Stephen Greenblatt and Giles Gunn, eds., *Rereading the Boundaries: The Transformation of English and American Literary Studies* (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1992), 79–99. See also Bender, "A New History of the Enlightenment?" in *The Profession of Eighteenth-Century Literature: Reflections on an Institution*, ed. Leo Damrosch (Madison, Wisc.: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 62–83.
9. Dale K. Van Kley, "In Search of Liberalism's Lost Ancestors: Religion, Enlightenment, and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe" (paper presented for the Sawyer Conference at the National Humanities Center, Research Triangle, N.C., 29 October 1999), 1.
10. J. Paul Hunter, *Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (New York: Norton, 1990), 225.
11. Individual arguments are now too numerous to list here, but among the earliest and most influential (if also the most strident) is J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1688–1832: Ideology, Social Structure, and Political Practice during the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985).

12. Such a definition of literature, for instance, would not exclude the under-studied religious writings of “enthusiastic” author Elizabeth Singer Rowe, whose poetry and prose went into more than ninety editions by 1840 (Henry F. Stecher, *Elizabeth Singer Rowe, the Poetess of Frome* [Bern and Frankfurt: Herbert Lang and Peter Lang, 1973]).

13. Hunter coins this phrase in his chapter on didactic writings in *Before Novels*.

14. Shaun Irlam’s *Elations: The Poetics of Enthusiasm in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford Univ. Press, 1999) performs a welcome service in drawing attention to the continuing importance of enthusiastic modes of expression throughout the eighteenth century and by teaching us new ways to read the poetry of James Thompson and Edward Young. Regrettably, however—and further illustrating the point I am trying to make here—Irlam avoids *any* direct encounter with seventeenth- or eighteenth-century religious enthusiasm by focusing on the polite poetic *rehabilitation* of enthusiasm and by declining the opportunity to link this literary phenomenon to the broader history of enthusiasm. (Irlam limits himself instead to a recapitulation of the now well-known and overwhelmingly critical “image of enthusiasm in the polemical writings of the period” [36].)

15. See especially book 4, chapter 19.

16. Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, ed. Lawrence E. Klein (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999), xxxi. In 1741, David Hume would attack the twin menaces “Of Superstition and Enthusiasm,” continuing the freethinking challenge to the authority of the priesthood and laying out a new “science” of ethics (in David Hume, *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller [Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, rev. ed. 1987], 73–9).

17. Heyd, “*Be Sober and Reasonable*,” 10, 176. Whether there is any competition between, or epistemological hierarchy of, reason and revelation is of course an issue on which eighteenth- and twentieth-century authors alike disagree. For a painstaking study of the complementary parts played by reason and faith in the religious and moral writings of this period, see Isabel Rivers, *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment: A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England, 1660–1780*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991–2000); for a provocative exploration of the contradictions inherent in the Anglican reliance on reason and Scripture, see J. G. A. Pocock, “Within the Margins: The Definitions of Orthodoxy,” in *The Margins of Orthodoxy: Heterodox Writing and Cultural Response, 1660–1750*, ed. Roger D. Lund (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995), 33–53.

18. Henry Dodwell letter to Francis Lee. Quoted in Christopher Walton, *Notes and Materials for an Adequate Biography of . . . William Law* (London, 1854), 193.

19. Heyd, “*Be Sober and Reasonable*,” 191.

20. Klein and La Vopa, *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment*, 2.

21. Peter Goodrich, “A Short History of Failure: Law and Criticism, 1580–1620,” in *Languages of Law: From Logics of Memory to Nomadic Masks* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1990), 15–52, 15–7. Foucault’s phrase is from *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Random House, 1970), xi.

22. David Zaret, “Religion, Science, and Printing in the Public Spheres in Seventeenth-Century England,” in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), 212–35.

23. Lead referred to her husband of twenty-six years, William Lead, only infrequently in her writings—once as “that First Husband who so long hindered my Marriage with the Lamb” (*A Fountain of Gardens, Watered by the Rivers of Divine Pleasure and Springing Up in All the Variety of Spiritual Plants*, 3 vols. [London, 1696–1701], 1:71). All further references to this text will be cited parenthetically as *Fountain*.

24. Five issues were produced from March to November of 1697. European correspondents include German Philadelphians Johann and Joanna Petersen and possibly François Mercure van Helmont (see Walker, *Decline of Hell*, 225). *Theosophical Transactions* is notable for its support of women writers; in addition to Lead’s books it advertises Lady Conway’s *Principles of the most Antient and Modern Philosophy* (1692) and the just published second part of Mary Astell’s proposal for women’s education, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* (part 1, 1694; part 2, 1697).

25. The full titles of these works, discussed below, are *The Heavenly Cloud Now Breaking: Or, The Lord Christ's Ascension Ladder, Sent down, To shew the way to reach the Ascension, and Glorification, through the Death and Resurrection* and *The Revelation of Revelations Particularly as an Essay Towards the Unsealing, Opening and Discovering the Seven Seals, the Seven Thunders, and the New-Jerusalem-State*. All further references will be cited parenthetically as HC and RR, respectively.

26. Jonathan Swift, *A Tale of A Tub To Which Is Added The Battle of the Books and the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit*, ed. A. C. Guthkelch and D. Nichol Smith (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1920; 2d ed. 1958), 2. All further references will be cited parenthetically as *Tub* and *Mechanical Operation*.

27. On the timing of Locke's revisions, see Nidditch, xiv.

28. *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, rev. ed., ed. David V. Erdman (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1982), 2.

29. *Works of John Dryden*, vol. 2: *Poems 1681–1684*, ed. H. T. Swedenberg and Vinton A. Dearing (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1972), 100–1.

30. *The Declaration of the Philadelphian Society* (London, 1699), 5.

31. *The Protestation of the Philadelphian Society; With a Declaration of the Reasons and Grounds for their Finishing at this Time their First Testimony* (London, 1703), 2.

32. *Propositions Extracted from the Reasons for the Foundation and Promotion of a Philadelphian Society* (London, 1697), 8.

33. *The State of the Philadelphian Society. Or, The Grounds of their Proceedings Consider'd* (London, 1697), 9; also, *Vindication*. Later in the *Vindication* the Philadelphians acknowledge English prejudices against Catholicism and strategically assure the authorities, "[O]f our Members some are of the Church of England, . . . some are of other Protestant Societies, but not any one that is a Roman Catholick."

34. Anon. [Francis Lee?], "Prefatory Epistle of the Editor," in Jane Lead, *A Revelation of the Everlasting Gospel-Message*, (London, 1697), A3v. All further references to this text will be cited parenthetically as REGM.

35. Walton, *Notes and Materials*, 193; Dodwell to Lee 23 August 1698, Dr. Williams's Library MS 24.109.9. Lead's belief in universal salvation cost her the support of leading German Behmenist Johann Georg Gichtel, who discusses her ideas in numerous letters dating from 1695 (later published in his *Theosophia Practica* [Leiden, 1722]). While Gichtel ultimately parted ways with the Philadelphians, "[T]he fact . . . that he reverts so often to Mrs. Leade and her writings in his letters indicates that these writings had begun to attract a relatively profound interest in Germany" (Thune, *The Behmenists and the Philadelphians*, 112).

36. Lund, *The Margins of Orthodoxy*, 6.

37. *The Principles of a People Stiling themselves Philadelphians* (London, 1697), 1.

38. Jane Lead, *Messenger of An Universal Peace: Or A Third Message To The Philadelphian Society* (London, 1698), 2.

39. Hawes, *Mania and Literary Style*, 12; see also Mack, *Visionary Women*.

40. The Quakers had long since abandoned mixed-sex meetings for separate men's and women's meetings.

41. Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, "The Adept Ladys Or The Angelick Sect In a Letter to a Brother An: Dom: 1701/2," in *Complete Works*, ed. Gerg Hemmerich and Wolfram Benda (Salzburg: Frommann Holzboog, 1981), 1:1:376–431. The quotes here are from 378, 418, 394, and 398, respectively.

42. The Philadelphians' association with the French Prophets was relatively short lived. Within a few years of their first encounter, Richard Roach urged the society to dissociate itself from the Camisards, "as being of an Inferior Ministration to that of the Love into w^{ch} I was Born" (Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson D833, fol. 31).

43. Many of Lead's works were published by the great Quaker printers Andrew and Tace Sowle (father and daughter), who also printed the writings of "Philadelphian" founder William Penn.
44. John Cockburn, *Bourignonism detected: or the delusions and errors of Antonia Bourignon, and her growing sect* (London, 1698), A2v.
45. Charles Leslie, *The Rehearsal*, 17 January 1707. Lead had in fact died in 1704.
46. Richard Roach, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson D833, fol. 55.
47. Roach, *Great Crisis*, 99, my italics. See also *The Protestation of the Philadelphian Society*, 2.
48. Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson D833, fol. 29.
49. J. G. A. Pocock, "Enthusiasm: The Antiself of Enlightenment," in Klein and La Vopa, *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment*, 7–28.
50. The concluding phrase of John Marshall's *John Locke: Resistance, Religion and Responsibility* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994), 455.
51. One of the central goals of J. A. I. Champion's *The Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken: The Church of England and Its Enemies, 1660–1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1992), for instance, is to revise what he describes as "the commonplace historiographical description of the radical tradition as a secularistic and modern project" (23).
52. In her own response to Shaftesbury's *Letter Concerning Enthusiasm*, Mary Astell scorned his self-positioning as a Christian and compared his suggestion that "Good Humour is . . . the best security against enthusiasm" to spitting on Jesus: "A Wit has told us, that we cannot *examine Religion with too much Freedom and Familiarity, provided we treat it with Good Manners*. . . . The Jews, who spit upon our Saviour, *Ridicul'd Him with a Purple Robe, a Reeden Sceptre, a Crown of Thorns, bowing the Knee before Him, and Hailing Him King of the Jews*, may it's like be thought to have treated Him with *Good Manners*, by those extraordinary *Good Men* and Christians, who are for putting Christianity to the Test of the *sharpest Ridicule*" (Shaftesbury, *Letter Concerning Enthusiasm*, in Klein, *Characteristics*, 4–28, 13; Astell, *Bart'lemy Fair: Or, An Enquiry after Wit; In which due Respect is bad to a Letter Concerning Enthusiasm, To My Lord* *** [London, 1709], 35).
53. David Wootton, "New Histories of Atheism," in Michael Hunter and David Wootton, eds., *Atheism from the Reformation to the Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 13–53, 47–8.
54. Heyd, "Be Sober and Reasonable," 16.
55. Klein and La Vopa, *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment*, 4.
56. *Wars of David*, A4r.
57. Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Radical Histories and [the] Question of Enlightenment Rationalism: Some Recent Critiques of Subaltern Studies," *Economic and Political Weekly* 8 April 1995, 751–9, 752–3.