

sermons and narrative formed a repertoire that created a scenario of universality ... that was enacted and transmitted in kinesthetic imagination of revival ecstasy' (p. 19)

Reklis contends that, from town to town, revival participants were physically expressing consummation in Edwards's theological vision through 'ecstatic gestures that took on the quality of kinesthetic imagination as the scenario made its way around the Atlantic' (p. 96). Parishioners, quite literally, had a 'way of knowing in their bodies what it meant to be swallowed up in God, to convey that truth to others, and to recognize in others the same consummation' (p. 97). In this manner, 'kinesthetic imagination' is a means of bodily 'thinking through' knowledge, while simultaneously transmitting (possibly reinventing) that knowledge through mere bodily enactment. Overall, Reklis's conclusion regarding an alternative subjectivity fails to convince, primarily because, as a *ressourcement* of Edwards, it misconstrues his theological anthropology. In doing so, her thesis succumbs to the same bifurcation of reason and affection, public and private, which she is seeking to avoid. Edwards endorsed bodily effects insofar as they were an outworking of the united constitution of affection and intellect natural to created humanity. But to place such a full-throated emphasis on kinesthetic imagination actually supplants the synthesis that Edwards was at pains to maintain in *Religious affections*. Embodied affection and rational norms belong together for Edwards. It is a great achievement of Edwards's theological anthropology that he succumbs neither to the danger of uncontested immediate experience, nor to the assumptions of a highly rationalistic and scientific society. As such, the formation of a true Edwardsian alternate subjectivity resists privatisation and 'vain imaginings', as well as capitulation to societal norms. Unfortunately then, Reklis's thesis, if divorced from Edwards's total anthropology, re-inscribes the binary self that she opposes.

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*Jacob Green's revolution. Radical religion and reform in a revolutionary age.* By S. Scott Rohrer. Pp. xiv + 304 incl. 8 figs, 2 maps and 4 tables. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2014. \$79.95. 978 0 271 06421 5  
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Although the title suggests that this is a biography of a person in the 'revolutionary age', it is really a study in contrasts; these contrasts are personified by two radical exponents of drastically different religious beliefs and world views: Jacob Green (1721–90) was raised in Malden, Massachusetts, studied at Harvard, and became a Presbyterian minister in Hanover, a small town in New Jersey. Thomas Bradbury Chandler (1726–90) on the other hand, born too of congregational parents, was the son of a wealthy family, studied at Yale, converted to Anglicanism, and accepted a call by the Anglican congregation at Elizabeth Town, New Jersey. While Green began to advocate a Calvinism that stressed religious voluntarism as well as the need of the truly believing to live up to the high ideals set by him, Chandler advocated high Anglicanism and was one of the most ardent defenders of the idea that an Anglican bishop should be settled in the British colonies in North America. While Green rejected centralising

tendencies within the Presbyterian Church and envisioned a congregation run by the truly converted and elect in order to ‘purify the church’, Chandler preached the tenets of an Anglican state Church that reflected the social gradations of English society. In hindsight it is clear who lost: in 1775 Chandler was forced into exile, while Green, author of the acclaimed pamphlet *Observations on the reconciliation of Great Britain* (1776), in spring 1776 propagated independence from Great Britain, saw in the War for Independence a means to promote his goal of purifying the Church from the sins that he so eloquently described in his pamphlet *A vision from hell* (1770), and in addition to his many functions as a farmer, pastor, miller and physician entered politics and played a significant role in New Jersey’s political and constitutional history.

This is a fine study that profits much from its design as a study in contrast of two radicals; its intelligent structure sharpens the author’s analysis of the nature of opposed religious believers, social concepts and political views. I do have, however, one major problem: Rohrer puts too much emphasis on the supposedly ‘democratic’ notions of Green’s concepts and ignores the fact that his religious concept of purifying the Church was based on his concept of the covenanted few as the religious elite of the true congregation.

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*Nature’s God. The heretical origins of the American republic.* By Matthew Stewart. Pp. ix + 566. New York–London: W. W. Norton, 2014. £20. 978 0 393 06454 4  
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Thomas Jefferson, who put ‘Nature’s God’ into the Declaration of Independence, once wrote to John Adams, who approved the phrase, about a book whose author ‘selects therefore all the facts, and adopts all the falsehoods which favor his theory, and very gravely retails such absurdities as zeal for a theory alone could swallow. He was a man of much classical ... reading, and has rendered his book not unentertaining’ (11 June 1812). The same might be said of Matthew Stewart’s *Nature’s God*. It is ‘not unentertaining’ – in fact, it is written in lively prose, and its author, a ‘man of much classical reading’, gives readers an interesting tour of Epicurean and Enlightenment deist philosophy. Moreover, it takes a novel approach to a perennially important topic, namely, the meaning and place of the religious principles of the Declaration in the American constitutional order. Nevertheless, the book’s central thesis – that ‘Nature’s God’ is, in actuality, Epicurus’ and Spinoza’s pantheistic god, which, in turn, is no god at all – would have astonished Jefferson and Adams (let alone the Declaration’s other fifty-four signatories), and caused them to dismiss its theory as, to say the least, zealous (p. 3). For amidst the book’s entertaining features is this fatal flaw: there is no compelling evidence that the Declaration’s authors believed such a thing themselves, or meant anyone else to believe it.

Stewart is understandably indignant about polemical books that have tried to make the United States out to be an intentionally ‘Christian nation’ at its founding. The first of many troubles is that he directs his indignation (and that of his readers) toward a small group of popularising writers and straw men, and mis-characterises the substantial body of scholarship (some of it by academics with no religious faith) which treats with nuance the religious dimension of the American Enlightenment,