

Panel Proposal, WCBS Meeting, September 2012

Themes and Tensions in British Missionary Publicity, 1799-1850

Panel Chair/Comment: Michael Rutz, Associate Professor (University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh)

Papers:

“Imperial and Military Themes in Anglican Missionary Publicity, 1799-1820,” William C. Barnhart, Professor (Caldwell College)

“Negative Testimony and Native Christian Voices in Baptist Missionary Publications, 1800-1850,” Kelly Cross Elliott, Assistant Professor (Abilene Christian University)

“The Church Missionary Society and the Colonial Episcopacy in the British Caribbean, 1815 – 1835” Kyle Welty, PhD Candidate (Baylor University)

Panel Abstract

Themes and Tensions in British Missionary Publicity, 1799-1850

This panel explores the relationship between British colonialism and the British foreign missionary enterprise. Drawing on Anglican and Baptist missionary publications and archival sources from the first half of the nineteenth century, our papers collectively illustrate the tensions present in British missionary identity and practice in the context of imperial expansion.

Following recent historiography of the British Empire, we find that publicity played an important role in justifying and sustaining the missionary project, and also acted as a venue for the evolution and production of identities. The imperial and military dimensions of missionary rhetoric contributed to British ideas of nationhood, and often emphasized difference between British Christians and the colonized. Missionary literature sought to present a united vision for missionary and British identity, often painting the ideals of Christianity, civilization, and empire as marching forward side by side.

However, as Anglican and Baptist publications show, the British missionary project itself, and the literature it produced, were hardly monolithic. Within the Established Church in the West Indies, Anglican bishops and Church Missionary Society agents clashed repeatedly as their respective agendas for the West Indian church diverged. Baptist periodicals likewise reveal tension within denominational identity, particularly around notions of difference between European Christians and colonized peoples. In particular, the testimony of indigenous Christians within British missionary publications complicates a view of the missionary project as unchallenged cultural imperialism. The panel seeks to reflect the diverse and often contradictory perspectives which appear in missionary literature in order to highlight the contingent nature of religion’s relationship with empire.

First Paper

Imperial and Military Themes in Anglican Missionary Publicity, 1799-1820

William C. Barnhart

This paper will explore the various ways in which Anglican evangelicals used the themes of imperial expansion and war with Revolutionary France to market foreign missionary projects to the British public. In the course of this propaganda campaign, evangelicals specifically drew upon such sub-themes as missions and imperial (and domestic) stability, Britain's status as a chosen nation, and notions of difference that celebrated British moral, religious and cultural supremacy over subject peoples. I will focus on the propaganda efforts of a single foreign missionary society, the Church Missionary Society (CMS), founded in 1799 by Anglican evangelical clergy and laymen, and one of the major foreign missionary societies spawned by the evangelical revival of the late eighteenth century.

Overall, the paper will argue that the conceptualization and marketing of the foreign missionary movement by Anglican evangelicals in Britain during the late eighteenth century, combined with issues of empire and war, became a key feature of imperial sentiment well before the era of the New Imperialism (ca. 1880-1920). The locus of my study is London and to a lesser degree the provinces, where missionary information was disseminated in the form of sermons, pamphlets, magazines and speeches.

Second Paper

Negative Testimony and Native Christian Voices in Baptist Missionary Publications, 1800-1850

Kelly Cross Elliott

Nineteenth-century missionary societies produced a wealth of literature about their efforts in the far corners of the British Empire. Recent historiography views such publication as a venue for the construction of colonized peoples as different from and inferior to European Christians. That is, British missionary literature functioned primarily to craft British identity and control public understanding of the missionary enterprise. However, within publications such as the *Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Missionary Society*, society minutes, letters, and sermons, the testimony of indigenous Christians—though mediated—also appears.

This paper will examine the problems and opportunities such testimony presents, and propose some suggestions towards gleaning the perspective of native Christians from British missionary publications. Complicating broad narratives of British cultural supremacy, the sermons, conversion stories, and letters written by South Asian and West Indian Christians show that converts and missionaries frequently disagreed, and that the missionary gospel was rejected, misunderstood, or reappropriated to serve unexpected ends. Further, missionary assessments of key moments in the history of the Empire—informed by relationship to native Christians—often differed from mainstream interpretations. For example, Baptist publications record Indian

Christian testimony about such widely-publicized events as the Mutiny of 1857 in stark contrast to many contemporary British narratives.

Third Paper

The Church Missionary Society and the Colonial Episcopacy in the British Caribbean,
1815 – 1835

Kyle Welty

The relationship between British colonial expansion and the British foreign missionary enterprise was complicated and varied. Focusing upon the Church Missionary Society's work in the West Indies, this essay will explore one episode in the larger history of British colonialism. The Church Missionary Society (CMS), which was an Anglican missionary society, had been active in the West Indies for more than a decade when the first Anglican bishops were appointed to Jamaica and Barbados in 1824. The Bishops' arrival marked the beginning of a period of tension between the Evangelical CMS and the Colonial Church hierarchy. Dynamics such as the CMS's cooperation with Methodists on Antigua, the Bishop of Barbados's desire to regulate all Anglican activities in his diocese, the Bishop's warm relationship with the plantocracy, and his affiliation with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel created an environment in which traces of rivalry emerged among these members of the Established Church.

Utilizing archival resources and nineteenth century-publications, this essay will explicate this strange episode at the intersection of religion, slavery, and colonialism. By revealing the divergent agendas of and conflict between these two factions within the Church of England, this essay aims to elucidate some of the complexities that characterize religion's relationship with British colonialism.

Michael A. Rutz, Ph.D.

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Academic Positions:

Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, 2008-Present

Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, 2002-2008

Instructor, University of Missouri, St. Louis, 2001-2002

Education:

Ph.D. History, Washington University in St. Louis, 2002

M.A. History, Washington University in St. Louis, 1998

M.A. Education, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1993

B.A. High Honors, History, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1992

Dissertation:

The British Zion: Evangelization and the politics of Dissent in Britain and the Empire, 1790-1850

Dissertation Advisor: Richard W. Davis

Research Interests:

19th and 20th Century Great Britain and Empire: religion and politics, history of Christian Missions, and Cross-Cultural exchange in the British Empire

Teaching Fields:

Early Modern and Modern Britain, The British Empire, Modern Europe and European Colonialism, Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa

Scholarship and Publications:

Book:

The British Zion: Congregationalism, Politics, and Empire, 1790-1850,
Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, March 2011.

Articles:

“Dissenters in the Country: London Organizations and Dissenting Opinion in the 1830s,”
forthcoming in *Journal of the United Reform Church Historical Society*, Spring/Summer 2011.

“‘Meddling with politics’: the political role of foreign missions in the nineteenth century,”
Parliamentary History, Yearbook, Spring 2008.

“The Problems of Church and State: Dissenting Politics and the London Missionary Society in
1830s Britain,” *Journal of Church and State*, Vol. 48, Spring, 2006.

‘The Politicizing of Evangelical Dissent, 1811-1813’, *Parliamentary History*, Vol. 20, pt. 2
(2001).

Reference:

“Reform Bills of 1832 and 1867” in *International Encyclopedia of Revolution and Protest*,
Immanuel Ness, ed., Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.

“Robert Wedderburn” in P. Hinks and J. McKivigan, *Encyclopedia of Antislavery and Abolition*,
Greenwood Press, 2007.

Entries on “Missions” and “Explorers” for John Merriman and Jay Winter, eds., *Encyclopedia of
Europe 1789-1914*, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 2006.

Entry on Nelson Mandela in *Biographical Dictionary of Literary Influences: The Twentieth
Century*. Edited by John Powell and Derek W. Blakeley, Greenwood Press, 2004.

Conference Presentations:

“The State of the Heathen World: Perceptions of the Mission Field in the London Missionary
Society, 1795 – 1815”

Western Conference on British Studies, Austin, TX, Sept. 2010

“Letters to Miss Wills: Jane Philip and the Role of Women in the Early Nineteenth Century
Missionary Movement,”

Western Conference on British Studies, Tempe, AZ, Oct. 2009.

“The London Missionary Society and the Union of South Africa,”

Western Conference on British Studies,” San Antonio, TX, Sept. 2008.

“Dissenters in the Country: The London Organizations and Dissenting Opinion,”

Western Conference on British Studies, Albuquerque, NM, Nov. 2007.

“David Bogue and Missionary Training in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain,”
North American Conference on British Studies, Denver, CO, October 2005.

“Slavery and Emancipation: The Politics of Antislavery in the London Missionary Society.”
Great Lakes History Conference, Grand Rapids, MI, November 2003

“The Problems of Church and State: Dissenting Politics and the Missionary Movement in the 1830s.”
Western Conference on British Studies, Tucson, AZ, October 2003

“‘The Roman, the Briton and the African;’ Mission Politics in the Early Nineteenth Century Cape Colony”
Western Conference on British Studies, Houston, TX, October 2001

“Evangelical Politics and Public Opinion, 1811-1813”
Consortium on Revolutionary Europe 1750-1850, Huntsville, AL, March 2000

“Sidmouth’s Bill: the Sectarian Tide not Turned”
North American Conference on British Studies, Boston, MA, November 1999

“Missionary Fervor: The East India Charter of 1813”
Midwest Conference on British Studies, Lawrence KS, October 1997

Book Reviews:

Review of Michael A.G. Haykin and Kenneth J. Stewart, eds., *The Advent of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities*, in *Anglican and Episcopal History*, Vol. 79, 3 (September 2010).

Review of John Fenwick, *The Free Church of England*, in *Anglican and Episcopal History*, Vol. 75, 1 (March 2006).

Review of Doreen Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches 1500-2000*, in *Albion*, volume 36, 4 (Winter 2004).

Grants and Awards:

Faculty Development Program, Research Grant, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, 2007.

Faculty Development Program, Research Grant, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, 2005.

Faculty Development Program, Teaching Grant, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, 2004

Graduate Online Lecture Summer Fellowship, Washington University, 2001

Graduate Dean’s Dissertation Fellowship, Washington University, 2000-2001

Graduate Research Symposium Prize, Washington University, 1999

Summer Research Grant to South Africa, Washington University, 2000

Summer Research Grant to United Kingdom, Washington University, 1998

Graduate Teaching Fellowship, Washington University, 1996-99, 2001-02

Graduate Fellowship, Washington University, 1995-96

Arthur J. Fondiler Senior Thesis Prize, University of Michigan, 1992

Courses Offered:

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh:

Modern Civilization

Britain, 1485-1714

Britain Since 1714

Modernism and Nationalism

South Africa: 1652-Present

Africa: 1800-Present

Africa Past and Present: Images in Literature and Film

Nonwestern History Seminar – Apartheid

Introductory Honors Seminar – Revolution in Early Modern Britain

University of Missouri, St. Louis:

Topics in European Civilization, 1715-Present

Washington University in St. Louis, University College:

The British Empire in India and Africa

Europe Today: Political, Social and Cultural Change since 1945

Cultural Encounters: British Missionaries in Africa

Western Civilization, Ancient World-1648

Academic Service:

2009-Present – Chair, Department of History Tenure and Renewal Committee, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

2007 – Liberal Education Reform Team

2006-07 – First-Year Experience Committee

2005-07 – Professional Education Council, University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh

2005-07 – University Honors Program Council, University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh

2005-07 – History Department Library Liaison

2004-05 - Department of History, Academic Affairs Committee, University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh

2002-04 - Faculty Advisor, History Club and *Phi Alpha Theta*, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

European Studies Committee, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

African American Studies Committee, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

Professional Memberships:

North American Conference on British Studies

Western Conference on British Studies

WILLIAM C. BARNHART

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EDUCATION

State University of New York at Stony Brook

Ph.D., History, 1998

Dissertation: *A Protestant Empire: Evangelicals and the Foreign Missionary Revival in Britain, 1790-1820*

Advisor: Kathleen Wilson

Old Dominion University

M.A., History, 1991

Siena College

B.A., History, 1989

CURRENT POSITION

Professor, Department of History & Political Science, Caldwell College (2000-present)

Director, Caldwell College Honors Program (2004-present)

PRESENTATIONS / CONFERENCES

Paper, "The Imperial Dimensions of Anglican Evangelical Missionary Publicity, 1799-1820"

American Society of Church History, Spring Meeting. Montreal, April 2009.

Paper, "Evangelicalism, Empire, and National Identity in Late Georgian Britain, 1795-1820." Annual Meeting of the *American Historical Association*, Philadelphia, PA, January 2006.

Panel Organizer: "Empire, Morality and Religion in British Ideas of Nationhood, Ca. 1790-1850." Annual Meeting of the *American Historical Association*, Philadelphia, PA, January 2006.

Paper, "John Ogilvie, the SPG and Imperial Anglicanism in the Mohawk Valley, 1750-63." Symposium, *Plantation Society in Colonial New York*, Johnstown, NY, November 19 2005.

Paper, "Anglican Volunteerism, Ecclesiastical Politics and the Bath Church Missionary Society Controversy, 1817-1818." *Mid-Atlantic Conference on British Studies*, Alexandria, VA, April 9, 2005.

Paper, "Contesting the Double Union of Blood and Grace: Transatlantic Communications and the Foreign Missionary Movement in Britain and America, 1800-1820." *New England Historical Association*, Bentley College, April, 2003.

Paper, "A Protestant Empire: Evangelical Contributions to Imperial Sentiment in Late Hanoverian England, 1795-1820." *New England Historical Association*, Tufts University, April, 2000.

Chair, Session on "The British Home Front: Evacuees and Myths." *World War II: A Fifty Year Perspective*. Siena College, June, 1994.

Paper, "The Road to Reorganization: The First Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia, May 18-25, 1785." *Phi Alpha Theta Regional Conference*, University of Richmond, March, 1991.

PUBLICATIONS

"Anglican Volunteerism, Ecclesiastical Politics, and the Bath Church Missionary Association Controversy, 1817-18," *Anglican and Episcopal History* (March 2008).

** Winner, Nelson R. Burr Prize for best article published in *Anglican & Episcopal History* (2008)

“Evangelicalism, Masculinity, and the Making of Imperial Missionaries in Late Georgian Britain, 1795-1820,” *The Historian* 67 (September 2005).

Curriculum Vitae
Kyle L. Welty
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Education

Baylor University, Waco, TX

Ph.D. Candidate in *Religion* (Christian History)

June 2006 – present

Regent College, Vancouver, BC

Master of Christian Studies in *Christian History*

April 2004

Taylor University, Upland, IN

Bachelor of Arts in *International Studies*

August 1999

Conference Presentations

“Denominational Responses to the Hocking Report.” Chicago, Illinois. *Regional Symposium for: Saving the World? The Changing Terrain of American Protestant Missions, sponsored by the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals* (October, 2010).

“The SPG’s ‘Mission’ in Eighteenth Century Colonial America as Presented in the Mayhew Controversy, c. 1763-1766.” Montreal, Quebec. *American Society of Church History* (April 2009).

“A Folk Theologian’s Forays into Science: John Wesley’s Scientific Thought as Revealed in Select Writings.” Bluffton, Ohio. *Conference on Faith and History* (September 2008).

“Visions of Peace: How Texans Imagined Post-War Life at the Conclusion of World War I.” Coauthored with Christopher M. Rios. Albuquerque, New Mexico. *Southwestern Historical Association* (March 2007).

Grants and Awards

“The World is My Parish United Methodist History Research Grant.” General Commission on Archives and History, United Methodist Church. 2010.

Bridwell Library Fellowship, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University. May – June 2010.

Encyclopedia Articles and Book Reviews

“Geographical Exploration and Christianity,” “Medieval Christian Legends,” “Unitas Fratrum,” “World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh (1910).” In *The Encyclopedia of Christian Civilization*. Oxford: Blackwell-Wiley (forthcoming).

“William Ellery Channing,” “Timothy Dwight,” and “Nathaniel Taylor.” In *Dictionary of Early*

American Philosophers. London and New York: Continuum (forthcoming).

Review of *Disciples of All Nations: Pillars of World Christianity*, by Lamin Sanneh. *Crux* 45, no. 2 (Fall 2009): 29-32.

Kelly Cross Elliott, PhD
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Education

PhD, British history, Florida State University Spring 2010
Dissertation: "*Chosen Race:*" *Baptist Missions and Mission Churches in the East and West Indies, 1795-1875*
M.A., European history, Florida State University Spring 2007
Minor field: India
Thesis: *Baptist Missions in the British Empire: Jamaica and Serampore in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century*
B.A., history, with French minor, Harding University Fall 2005

Publications and Conference Papers

Convener/Panelist, "British Official and Missionary Responses to Obeah in the British Caribbean, 1825-1845." European History Section of the Southern Historical Association Meeting, Baltimore, MD, October 2011.

"Providential History as Divine Metanarrative in Baptist Missionary Publications, 1799-1840." American Society of Church History, Grand Rapids, MI, April 2011.

Review of Xinru Liu, *The Silk Road in World History* in *Chronicle of Historical Studies*, vol. VIII (Spring 2011).

"Indian Responses to Christian Missions in Bengal, 1795-1875." International Conference on Religion and Spirituality in Society, University Center, Chicago, February 2011.

Convener, "Expressions of the Inexpressible:" The Divine in Nature, Poetry, and the Icon. Christian Scholars Conference, Lipscomb University, Nashville, TN, June 2010.

Review of Andrew Porter, *Religion versus Empire? Protestant Missions and Overseas Expansion 1700-1914* in *Journal of Faith and the Academy* (October 2009).

"Scenes of Dissipation: The British Response to Obeah in the Caribbean, 1820-1840." Christian Scholars Conference, Lipscomb University, Nashville, TN, June 2009.

"Identity and the Colonial Encounter: the Baptist Mission in Jamaica, 1838-1850." Gulf Coast Colonialist Colloquium, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, February 2007.

Honors and Awards

Rhinehart Postdoctoral Fellowship, Appalachian State University (declined) 2010
Lynn E. May Research Grant, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives 2009
J. Leitch Wright, Jr. Award for Excellence in Research, 2nd place, M.A. level 2007

Courses Offered

Abilene Christian University, faculty
Integrated, Interdisciplinary Core: Identity
Civilization I
History of Asia
Nineteenth-Century Europe

Fall 2010-present

Florida State University, Instructor
Early Modern World
Nineteenth-Century Europe

Fall 2007-Spring 2010

Florida State University, London Campus, Instructor
Britain in Early Modern World History
Britain in Modern World History

Fall 2009

Professional Memberships

European History Section of the Southern Historical Association
North American Conference on British Studies
American Society of Church History