



Jonathan M. Yeager. *Jonathan Edwards and Transatlantic Print Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. xix, 234p., ill. ISBN 9780190248062. \$US 74.00

Jonathan Yeager's task in this brief monograph is to correct the portrait of the eighteenth-century divine Jonathan Edwards "as a recluse, working silently in his study for hours as he prepared his sermons and theological treatises for print single-handedly" (27). Instead, we learn of a set of book trades actors who bring Edwards (1703-1758) to a British and American public. Yeager eyes the publishing career both while Edwards lives and posthumously, through the early national period. Not least of these actors is Edwards himself, who cultivated editor-friend Thomas Foxcroft and wrote ad copy to promote his *Humble Attempt*.

After an expository introduction that discusses, in general terms, matters such as popularity and price, the second chapter presents the career of Samuel Kneeland. Kneeland was Edwards's chief printer in Boston from 1731 to 1765. The chapter nicely captures the "rollercoaster ride" of certain Edwards publications, when Kneeland either risks capital as a publisher or fears misgauging his market as a printer (47). It also features a sidelight on printing supplies and bookbinding in Boston. Chapter three focuses on bookseller-publishers Daniel Henschman (in Boston) and John Oswald (in London), the latter assisted by Edwards supporters Isaac Watts and John Guyse. The chapter describes Henschman's social network as well as ministerially-engaged subscription publishing for *The Life of Brainerd*, Edwards's biography of the missionary Daniel Brainerd. Chapter four turns to Edwards's editors, chiefly his trusted New England peer Foxcroft, and to editorial experiences that disappointed the author, such as those with Watts, Guyse, and Benjamin Colman. Yeager wisely observes the impact of the London-based first edition of *A Faithful Narrative* (Edwards's report of the Great Awakening revivals in Massachusetts). It secured Edwards's reputation in Britain, Europe, and



colonial America, even though this 1737 publication shows the author, *qua* author, at his most dependent and most frustrated. The fifth chapter locates an intriguing cast of characters who carry on Edwards's afterlife. These range from John Erskine, the Scottish evangelical who complained about London's costly pricing of Edwards titles, to David Austin, an Elizabethtown, New Jersey pastor who announced that Christ's return would be May 22, 1796. Yeager suggests that the first editions of Edwards's *A History of the Work of Redemption* were motivated by the profitable genre of history writing practiced by Gibbon and Robertson, while later reprints indicate that publishers sought a millennial market at century's end.

A conclusion restates the findings of the previous chapters, wherein is felt some of the missed potential of the work. The description in *Jonathan Edwards and Transatlantic Print Culture* is not always matched by inquiry that might move the needle. How do the kinds of networks shown here redefine "transatlanticism"? What does the Edwards case study illustrate about an evangelical public sphere? Given the richness of chapter five, might the posthumous uses of Edwards in Britain and America make up a deeper study of reception? These arguments aside, however, Yeager mines the archive to shine new light on this New Light.

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