

**When the Fires Die:  
Religious Critiques of Revivalism in the Aftermath of the Second Great Awakening**

A. Stages

- 1820s: conduct & character of revival leaders
- 1830s: conduct & character of revival audiences
- 1840s: quality & consequences of revival religious experience

B. Types of critics

1. Moderates defending revivals against 'excesses'
  
2. Outright opponents, defending 'rationality'  
'orthodoxy'
  
3. Disillusioned ex-practitioners: insiders → outsiders
  
4. Rehabilitators: get it better
  
5. Renegades: find a radical alternative

C. Common Charges

1. "Excitement" – fanaticism – animal passion →
  - spiritual delusion
  - manipulation by leader
  - hunger for more – the logic of extremity
  
2. Pragmatism: utilitarian calculus
  
3. Schism & discord
  
4. Bad theology: Arminian? Or hyper-Calvinist?

D. Common Complaints

1. Too self-absorbed; too fixated upon internal state, resources.
2. Spiritual instability and lack of fulfillment – the revival roller-coaster
3. Problem of authority – who/what to believe amidst innovation and charisma
4. Frustration w/ emotional, intellectual, & aesthetic barrenness, narrowness.

E. Proposed Solutions

1. Community

- high church: Roman Catholic (Brownson)

Anglo-Catholic (Oxford Movement)

Mercersburg

Landmark Baptist

- segmented ‘new religion’: Millerites/Adventist  
Mormons
- immigrant fellowship: e.g., Missouri Synod Lutherans
- nuclear family: Horace Bushnell, Harriet Beecher Stowe

2. Sacraments: objective / external / communal

3. Union with Christ & believers: anchorage

4. Education

5. Confessional substance

6. Historical connection

7. Idiom of organic development

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