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PREVIEW

A SENSE OF *PLACE*: JEWS, IDENTITY AND SOCIAL STATUS
IN COLONIAL BRITISH AMERICA, 1654-1831

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Brandeis University

History of American Civilization Program

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by

Holly Snyder

May 2000

PRELIMINARY

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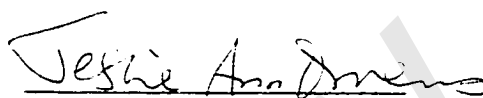
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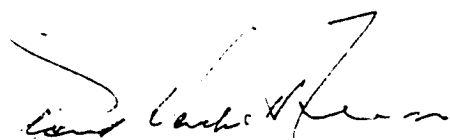
PREVIEW

This dissertation, directed and approved by Holly Snyder's Committee, has been accepted and approved of by the Faculty of Brandeis University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of:

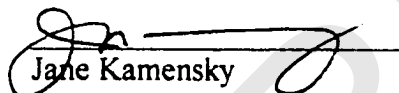
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY


Dean of Arts and Sciences

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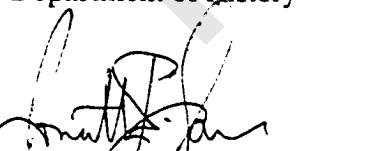
David Hackett Fischer
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and Judaic Studies

DEDICATION

מזכרון בלב שלי
In Loving Memory of

ברפאל גבריאל דויד בן ארי

GAVRIEL DAVID RA'ANAN
(December 30, 1953 - September 28, 1983)

ז-ל
Dear Husband and Treasured Friend

*"O love is the crooked thing,
There is nobody wise enough
To find out all that is in it,
For he would be thinking of love
Till the stars had run away
And the shadows eaten the moon.
Ah, penny, brown penny, brown penny,
One cannot begin it too soon."*

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS
1910

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A work of this type has many midwives, if only one mother. It is in this context that I owe much to the exhortations of my teachers, who throughout my life have opened doors for me which otherwise I might never have found. John Powell Shaw, a dedicated public servant, first opened my eyes to the creative possibilities of historical inquiry, while Merle Drowne introduced me to the different ways of approaching the structure of narrative and the need for a writer to speak from the heart of his or her own experience. Phyllis Palmer and Charles Trout, at Mount Holyoke College, nourished the seed they had planted, and helped to give it life through their own distinctive approaches to the study of American gender and urban history. Laurie Nisonoff, at Hampshire College, by introducing my perfectionistic spirit to the process of editing, pruned it and helped it gain a healthy vitality. And Rabbi Yechiel Lander of Smith College helped to provide the soulful context for a life's endeavor through our many deep conversations on the meaning of being Jewish in the modern world as I prepared for my Bat Mitzvah during the Spring of 1979.

In my graduate studies, I have been fortunate to have had the guidance of excellent teachers who, in their own unique and various manners, have pushed and harangued me toward the achievement of my own goals. At The Catholic University of America, Rosemarie Zagarrri first awakened me to the fertile ground of colonial America; it is to her that I owe my enthusiasm for this period. The openness and encouragement I experienced while a student at Catholic gave me a safe base on which to explore; Jon Wakelyn, then Department Chair, was -- and is -- as fine a mentor as anyone could ask. At Brandeis University, Neil Kamil, Richard Parmentier, Benjamin Ravid, Jonathan Sarna and Jane Kamensky all encouraged and broadened my pursuits. Above all, I was blessed to have the guidance of a sterling committee as I completed work on this project. David Hackett Fischer consistently challenged me to solidify my approach but also maintain an openness to other ways of seeing, and has proved to be a worthy and benevolent adversary whose wise counsel I have increasingly come to appreciate. Jonathan Sarna made sure that I left no "i" undotted and no "t" uncrossed; although I think at times he suspected I was not listening to his spirited critique, I hope the final product will lay those fears to rest once and for all. Jacqueline Jones promptly responded to every draft with comments which highlighted the areas where my reasoning was still less than clear. Above all, Jane Kamensky gave me the road map for transforming my ideas into a full and complete manuscript, while providing moral support at a higher level than any graduate student could expect. I will regard it as the highest

compliment if, in my future career as a teacher, it may truly be said of me that the apple has not fallen far from her substantial tree.

It nearly goes without saying that I am also very much obliged to my colleagues in the historical profession, who have provided constant stimulation and often served as sounding boards for my ideas. I would like to thank the participants in the 1996 International Seminar in History of the Atlantic World at the Charles Warren Center of Harvard University for the light shed on many of the broader issues raised by this study. In particular, I am grateful to Professor Bernard Bailyn for his continuing interest in this project. I also thank Tim Lockley for his suggestions on untapped Georgia manuscript sources and his comments on the initial draft of Chapter Six; Rose Beiler for her very helpful comments on a first reading of the draft which ultimately became Chapter Seven, as well as for suggestions on German religious culture and mercantile behavior in early America; and Wim Klooster for our conversations on the history of the Dutch Atlantic world, which have informed my broader understanding of European imperial ventures and the economies of the Caribbean, and for his many suggestions on new sources for me to explore. I remain singularly indebted to my pal Tony Parker for the use of his splendid collection of primary and secondary sources on Georgia during an all-too-brief visit to St. Andrews, for his friendly inducements to let my mind roam and for several lovely outings to Ma Brown's. David Hancock's comments lent a gloss to my ideas on commerce and the public sphere. Peter Vogt, of the School of Theology at Boston University, generously contributed his time and expertise on Moravian theology and on Jewish-Moravian contacts in the Americas. In Jamaica, Robert Kerr made the long trek to Spanish Town bearable with his insightful conversation on Jamaican history, culture and politics. James Robertson of the University of the West Indies at Mona has generously shared his insights on Jamaican source materials and archival procedures. Eli Faber, of the John Jay College in Manhattan, unselfishly contributed his expertise in the archives of Jamaica, providing helpful contacts and advice that made my research there infinitely easier.

Of all those who have contributed to the insights which may be found in these pages, there is one in particular who merits special recognition. My dear friend and fellow graduate student Mark Rennella saw this project through its difficult infancy, giving support, advice, inspiration and even uncharacteristic criticism (though only when I demanded it of him). Our open scholarly interchange has proved both invaluable and fruitful, and has given me a framework in which to test and refine some of my more creative ideas, which ultimately resounded to the benefit of this project. Mark's writerly eye has caught many a disconcerting misadventure, and helped to lend elegance to my otherwise merely competent use of the English language. Whether by telephone, over coffee or via international email, he made himself available for consultation at almost any hour of the day or night, and helped me to weather the odd moments of acute panic. Despite his own professed lack of interest in colonial history, he has become my true partner in this enterprise. I hope by now he realizes that I would never have made it this far without him.

Financial support for this project came from a number of sources. I am most sincerely grateful to the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, which provided critical support for the writing of the dissertation during 1997-1998. Jane's Travel Grant for Latin American Studies funded a short but significant research trip to Jamaica in May 1996, while a small grant from the Louis, Frances & Jeffrey Sachar Fund helped support a similar trip to Georgia during the summer of 1998. Funding for an extended research trip to the Public Record Office of Great Britain was provided, in part, by a Sachar International Fellowship from Brandeis University. The 1996-1997 Touro National Heritage Fellowship supported three months of research in Rhode Island at The John Carter Brown Library and other Rhode Island repositories, while a Research Fellowship from The John Nicholas Brown Center for the Study of American Civilization assisted in my efforts to expand and finalize the Rhode Island portion of my research. In addition, a Lowenstein-Wiener Fellowship funded a one month residence at The American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati. Last, but certainly not least, the very unofficial Charlotte and Donald Snyder "Parental Fund for the Humanities" generously provided essential support for transportation, information technology and laundry throughout the course of the project.

Of course, this project would also not have been possible without the firm intellectual support provided by many libraries and archives. Bernie Bell and Sam Friedman of the Touro National Heritage Trust, Norman Fiering at The John Carter Brown Library, Joyce Botelho at the John Nicholas Brown Center, Kevin Proffitt at the American Jewish Archives, Daniel Snyder at the Newport Historical Society and Ainsley Henriques of the Jamaica National Heritage Trust and the Jamaica Jewish Genealogical Society have all listened attentively and encouraged my pursuit of this topic. Stephen Grimes at the Rhode Island Supreme Court Judicial Records Center, Ron Potvin and Bert Lippincott at the Newport Historical Society, Rick Stattler at the Rhode Island Historical Society, Robert Behra at the Redwood Library, Dan Slive at The John Carter Brown Library, and Coby Linton and Jessica Burke at the Georgia Historical Society went above and beyond the bounds of duty to locate materials in which I was interested. The respective reference staff at the Houghton Library, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Public Record Office of Great Britain, the London Metropolitan Archives and the Anglo-Jewish Archives provided all the professional assistance any researcher could hope to ask. The particularly helpful staff at the Georgia Department of Archives and History in Atlanta gave me a welcome taste of the hospitality for which the South is justly renowned. I am especially thankful for the professional staff (whose individual names I was unable to learn during my short stay) of the National Library of Jamaica in Kingston, the West Indies and Special Collections at the University of the West Indies in Mona, and, in particular, The Jamaica Archives in Spanish Town, under the direction of Elizabeth Williams, for their great kindness, courtesy and solicitude on my behalf, which made my research experience in Jamaica so very fruitful.

Before closing, I must also recognize a number of people outside of the institutional context for their hitherto unsung contributions to this effort. The late Dvorak T. Katz provided a useful distraction; his personal warmth and attention are sorely missed, and will

never be forgotten. Agnetta Mitchell and Martin Merowitz, my ears in the wilderness, supplied the proverbial "light at the end of the tunnel" during the darkest of dark times. Estelle and Uri Ra'anan provided a cheery home away from home, and the warmth and comfort to sustain me through the long months of research and writing. Roz and Sey Shalek generously included me in their family, and looked forward to the latest news of my progress with genuine interest. Tony Parker was always the friendly presence at just the opposite end of an internet connection. Phil Morgan, Alison Games, Joyce Goodfriend, Mark Peterson, Ruth Herndon, Pat Denault and Gail Flackett have all made their own unintended but not-so-modest contributions over time. I also thank Janet Finlayson, Brenda Francis and Rose Caranfa for their consistent moral support over the years I spent in writing. I am sure each of them feels she or he made no special contribution; but collectively, they helped immensely.

It is, of course, the Dedication of this work which speaks to the most enduring debt of all. On a Friday evening late in October of 1979, while waiting for the start of a very disorganized Kabbalat Shabbat service at Harvard Hillel, I was fortunate to encounter a remarkable young scholar, then completing his Ph.D. in international politics at Tufts University. Like many who are destined not to remain long in this world, Gavy Ra'anan had learned not to waste time, but to play for all the marbles he could get. His enormous passion for poetry and music, his intense appreciation for elegance of style and his ability to find humor in the face of dire adversity appeared to me then, as they do even now, wondrous and rare demonstrations of a very human kind of magic. An assiduous scholar himself, Gavy recognized in me an element of the same and endlessly encouraged me to pursue it. I think it would have pleased him to see the results of his blandishments finally rendered into print, and it is my devout hope that he would be equally proud of the content. Although his reasons have not always been apparent to me, Gavy consistently avowed that he was wholly convinced of my potential. For that, and for so much more besides, I will always be profoundly grateful.

ABSTRACT

**A Sense of *Place*: Jews, Identity and Social Status
in Colonial British America, 1654-1831**

A Dissertation presented to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of
Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts

by

Holly Snyder

This dissertation is a comparative study of the social status of Jews in three colonial British American port towns (Newport, Rhode Island; Savannah, Georgia; and Kingston, Jamaica). In examining how colonial society developed in each place through the Jewish experience, it attempts to address the various contours of religious toleration, race and gender as they evolved in each town between the mid-seventeenth century and the third decade of the nineteenth century. It uses the notion of *place* as a reflection of diverse factors, including geography (both physical and social), public policy, material condition, and Enlightenment thought. It also explores the metamorphosis of cultural ideals for both Jews and Anglo-Americans through the process of transatlantic migration. Ranging in time from the establishment of the British colonies and the Readmission of the Jews into England to the achievement of civil emancipation by the Jews, the study examines the dynamic relationship between the three Jewish communities and the larger sphere of British American society within which they co-existed.

PREFACE

The challenges of migration to the Americas in the early modern era required creative responses. Carried out of their existing cultural contexts, European settlers in the Americas faced not only unfamiliar geographical terrain, but also a "host of strangers" of vastly different linguistic and cultural traditions. The resulting cultural clashes in the Americas, as the wealth of recent work in ethnohistory so clearly reveals, evolved into a series of syncretic, mestizo cultures in which borrowing, resistance, modification, cooperation and invention played key roles.¹ Yet one of the most overlooked ethnographic aspects of the emergence of colonial American cultures is the process by which European groups, formerly segregated from each other, were forced together into a common cause in the New World setting. There are many ways in which sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century Europeans may be described—for example, by religion, by ethnicity, by geographical origin, by profession, by social class. Histories of European settlement of the Americas still largely reduce the complex Euro-American social fabric of the sixteenth,

¹ See Breen, Timothy H., "Creative Adaptations: Peoples and Cultures," in Jack P. Greene and J.R. Pole, Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984, 1988), pp. 195-197; White, Richard, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 1994), pp. ix-xi.

seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to one or two of these descriptors, thus neglecting the full descriptive potential and leaving a picture of colonial societies which is both flat and narrow in its framing.

Outside of the Puritan colonies of Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Hampshire, where both religious and cultural homogeneity were rigidly enforced, each of the colonies in England's New World pantheon took on something of a more cosmopolitan character than the sixteenth century promoters of the English Atlantic empire had originally envisioned.² Faced with multiple practical exigencies – the presence of native peoples and European migrants who obstinately refused to be Anglicized, the necessity to introduce a cheap and controllable supply of agricultural labor which drew from streams of both impoverished indentured servants and enslaved Africans, the desire for the economic benefits which could be achieved through foreign exchange – English settlers in North America and the Caribbean were forced early on to adapt their ideas concerning the society they were creating to tolerate, and in some instances even incorporate, the presence of groups of people whom, in the context of England itself, would have been clearly delineated as the antithesis of Englishness. “English” America, by the middle of the eighteenth century, had taken on the character of

² See Bailyn, Bernard, “The Rings of Saturn,” in The Peopling of British North America: an Introduction. The Curti Lectures at the University of Wisconsin (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), p. 59.

a pluralistic society in which English culture was merely the hegemonic overlay within which a variety of non-English European subcultures flourished.³

This dissertation tells the story of one of these European subcultures, and how its status in British American society shifted from the intolerable non-English “other” at the beginning of the seventeenth century to a mere variant way of being “American” (or, in the Caribbean, British and Jamaican) by the early nineteenth century. I have been asked why I would chose to work on a topic that is of such marginal interest to both American and Jewish history. My response to this question is to challenge the presumption that the experience of Jews in colonial America is insignificant. This premise relies on the idea that it is the absolute proportion of Jews in the population of the mainland colonies upon which the determination historical relevance rests. What is ignored here is an understanding of the manner in which a small number of individuals may influence the development of larger social, intellectual and cultural trends.⁴ Just as Ron Schechter has shown for Revolutionary France,⁵ Jews in British America served a rhetorical importance far beyond their numerical paucity -- as, indeed, they had throughout the course of

³ Fischer, David Hackett, Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 811-812, 816-819.

⁴ This point has been discussed at length by Richard B. Morris. See Morris, Richard B., "Civil Liberties and the Jewish Tradition in Early America," Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, Vol. 46, no. 1 (September 1956), pp. 20-39.

⁵ Schechter, Ronald, "The Jewish Question in Eighteenth Century France," Eighteenth-Century Studies, Vol. 32, no. 1 (Fall 1998), pp. 84-91.

European history.⁶ In a period when, as Richard Hofstadter suggested, religion was a more important aspect of identity in the Americas than ethnicity,⁷ the presence of Jews in British America raised intense philosophical speculation from both sides of the coin on the nature of Britain's empire. Moreover, by including the British Caribbean in this study I am consciously reasserting the historical geography of British America as it was understood by contemporary Britons on both sides of the Atlantic in the period prior to the American Revolution. It is essential that we come to terms with this heritage if we are to understand not only the specific experience of Jews in the British Atlantic world but also the pluralist realities of developing British American society in the period prior to the Revolution of the thirteen mainland colonies. In short, this study aims to address the question of what made the experience of the Jews of British America specifically *American* in the larger sense.

When the English first decided to make an adventure of establishing North American colonies in the late sixteenth century, they were enmeshed in an imperial frame and thus did not -- perhaps even could not -- envision the colonies to be established on the far side of the Atlantic as anything but a re-creation of English society in a wild American setting. Indeed, it was this vision which both initially captured the interest of

⁶ See, e.g., Katz, Jacob, Exclusiveness and Tolerance: Studies in Jewish-Gentile Relations in Medieval and Modern Times (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961).

⁷ Bonomi, Patricia U., Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society and Politics in Colonial America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. vii.

many of the potential colonists and at the same time led to their disappointed expectations in Walter Raleigh's Virginia. Thomas Hariot, for example, noted that some of the planters in the ill-fated Grenville expedition to Virginia in 1585 seemed psychologically ill-prepared for the exigencies of the venture on which they had engaged. "Because," as Hariot wrote, "there were not to be found any English cities, nor such faire houses, nor at their owne wish any of their olde accustomed daintie food, nor any soft beds of downe or fethers," the new colony "was to them miserable."⁸ So strong was this sense of English "civillite" that a number of promoters of the colonization scheme naively thought it would simply rub off onto the native peoples with whom the English came into contact in the New World. "[S]o soone as they shall begin but a little to taste of civillitie," Sir George Peckham suggested, the Indians of Virginia would "take mervailous delight in any garment be it never so simple" and, with the benefit of English instruction, "little by little forsake their barbarous and savage living, and growe to such order and civillitie with us..."⁹ With the example of Ireland before them, Englishmen justified their colonization schemes by invoking ideas of moral and civil duty toward the "barbarous" and "brutish" native inhabitants, arguing for the benefits that English instruction in "vertuous labor and

⁸ Hariot, Thomas, A briefe and true report of the new foundland of Virginia: ... Discovered by the English Colony there seated by Sir Richard Greinuile Knight in the yeere 1585 (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1903; *facsimile of London First Edition of 1588*).

⁹ Quinn, David B. (ed.), The Voyages and Colonizing Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert. Works Issued by the Hakluyt Society 2nd Series, Vols. 83-84 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1938), II pp. 357, 461, *quoted in* Morgan, Edmund S., American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1975). pp. 22-23.

in justice, and ... our English lawes and civilitie” would necessarily bring.¹⁰ Indeed, as Richard Hakluyt suggested in his compilation of *Principall Navigations of the English Nation* (1589), "Englishness" carried with it both the very seed of liberty and the virtuous institutions necessary for liberty's growth and protection. English colonization efforts were therefore certain to inspire the allegiance of any peoples with whom the English came into contact. Thus, despite the setbacks encountered on Raleigh's first venture into Virginia, the promoters of England's scheme for transatlantic colonization persisted in their vision of an English Atlantic empire which could rival that being forged by contemporary Spain.¹¹ In 1596, Raleigh himself contributed the sentiment that the English "need no farther assurances, then we already haue to perswade our selues that it hath pleased our God of his infinit goodnesse, in his will and purpose to appoint and reserue this Empire for vs."¹² Raleigh's vision of an English colonial empire was further expanded by Richard Hakluyt. In carefully documenting the history of English

¹⁰ Canny, Nicholas P., "The Ideology of English Colonization: From Ireland to America," in Katz, Stanley N. and John M. Murrin (eds.), Colonial America: Essays in Politics and Social Development (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983), p.59; reprinted from William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Series, Vol. 30 (1973), pp. 575-598. The quotes given here come from Barnaby Rich's *Allarme to England* (London: 1578) and two letters of Sir Thomas Smith dating from 1572.

¹¹ Oberg, Michael Leroy, Dominion and Civility: English Imperialism and Native America, 1585-1685 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), pp. 12-13, 16-18.

¹² Raleigh, Walter, The Discoverie of the Large, Rich and Bevvtiful Empyre of Gviana, With a relation of the great and Golden Citie of Manoa (which the Spanyards call El Dorado) And of the Prouinces of Emeria, Arromaia, Amapaia, and other Countries, with their rivers, adioyning (London: Robert Robinson, 1596), unpaginated. The quote given here appears at the very end of the work.

explorations into the Western Atlantic, Hakluyt sought to provide the intellectual and moral justification not only for the colonies Raleigh and other Englishmen hoped to establish in the Americas, but also for England's domination of Atlantic trade. But by establishing the historical basis for English claims on the New World, Hakluyt also re-envisioned England as the geographical center of an enlarged imperial enterprise.¹³

This vision of an English overseas empire in the New World motivated much of English colonial rhetoric well into the seventeenth century. In 1673, for example, John Gadbury remarked that "Jamaica was a Country once so populous, that (as History tells) in a few years time, it lost not less than sixty thousand people by the Spaniards; [but it was not then possessed by the Valorous and Victorious English.]" Long after Walter Raleigh had passed from the scene, the Black Legend continued to be employed -- not only to demonize the Spaniards for their barbarity in the New World, but also to provide divine justification for English colonial ventures there, particularly in the Caribbean. With clear echoes of Raleigh, Gadbury argued that "God Almighty had originally designed this Noble Country [of Jamaica], to be, not only Taken, but Possessed, Inhabited, and Improved by the English."¹⁴ It was the "Superiour Warrant of God and

¹³ Armitage, David, "The New World and British Historical Thought," in Kupperman, Karen O. (ed.). America in European Consciousness, 1493-1750 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1995), pp. 53-57, 59.

¹⁴ Gadbury, John, The Jamaica Almanack: Or, An Astrological Diary for the Year of our Lord God, 1673 (London: John Darby, 1672), p. A3. In a subsequent volume, Gadbury noted that this had been not only his own first effort, but also the first known attempt, to create an English Almanack for the West Indies. See Gadbury, John. The West India or Jamaica

Nature," rather than mere "Humane Resolution and Contrivance"¹⁵ which had led to the successful establishment of English colonies in the seventeenth century. By the late seventeenth century, Englishmen like Gadbury who were interested in promoting the English colonial scheme might even excoriate as markedly un-English the feebleness of those who elected to remain in England rather than venture across the Atlantic: "It is a scandal both to Industry, and Ingenuity also," wrote Gadbury,

"that many persons of good parts, both Corporal and Mental, will rather chuse to beg, steal, ore starve, than to travel beyond Sea, or, (as we are wont to say) go out of the Smoak of their Mothers Chimney. Had all people been of this sluggish temper, where had the Discoveryes, or the Honor of the Famous *Colombus* been? How should England have boasted of her ever to be Honour'd *DRAKE*? ... and all this for the promoting of laziness, or fear, not comortable in the least with an *English Generosity* or Spirit."¹⁶

The noble venture of English colonization began to attract many by 1635,¹⁷ and the existing colonies (Virginia, Plimouth, Massachusetts Bay, Barbados, Providence Island) began to grow in earnest. New colonies (Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maryland) were soon established; to which were added Jamaica in 1655, Carolina in 1665, and then Pennsylvania in 1675 and East and West New Jersey in 1676. In the interim, New York

Almanack 1674. It being the second from the Bissextile, or Leap-Year (London: Company of Stationers, no date), p. A3.

¹⁵ Gadbury, John, *The Jamaica Almanack for 1673*, p. A3.

¹⁶ Gadbury, John, *The Jamaica Almanack for 1673*, p. D1.

¹⁷ See, e.g., the comprehensive analysis of the London Port Register of 1635 by Alison Games in her *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1999).

and Delaware were acquired as part of the peaceful resolution of the Second Anglo-Dutch War. England's new colonies varied in their social outlook. On the mainland, groups of English migrants from different regions and religious traditions established colonies according to their own distinctive visions of how society ought to work best. The cultural regions which resulted from these large migration streams differed from each other in significant ways -- particularly with respect to ideas of order, power and freedom, as well as in the common folkways of everyday life. These differences notwithstanding, they shared a common heritage consisting of the English language, Protestantism and a broad commitment to the principles of English law and liberty.¹⁸ In the Caribbean, English colonial culture developed in a more lawless and haphazard fashion -- the result of a military enterprise focused on the development of English strategic and commercial interests, to the detriment of a clear plan for the establishment of a colonial society. Still, English ideas of law and authority, originating in the garrison government established to protect English interests from the threats posed by competing European powers, became the backbone of Caribbean colonial culture.¹⁹

The metropolitan paradigm was to create colonies which were socially and culturally English, which could incorporate by conversion to Englishness (as well as to

¹⁸ Fischer, Albion's Seed, pp. 6-7.

¹⁹ Dunn, Richard S., Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713 (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1973), pp. 12-13, 16-25; Webb, Stephen Saunders, The Governors-General: The English Army and the Definition of the Empire, 1569-1681 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1979), pp. xvii, 151-157.

Christianity) the native peoples and other non-English persons encountered in the colonial setting.²⁰ However, the exigencies of economic demand for market commodities which would provide income and employment for Englishmen at home and the military necessity to have colonies which were large enough and strong enough to repel opposing forces created tensions within the English colonial venture that allowed great opportunities for the intrepid outsider to stick a foot through the proverbial door unwittingly left ajar. Such opportunities were evidently stronger in some colonies than others. The Puritan colonies were arguably even more determined than the metropole that the new English colonies in North America be specifically English in character. To effectuate this end, John Winthrop argued,

“...wee must not content our selues with vsuall ordinary meanes whatsoever wee did or ought to have done when wee liued in England, the same must wee doe and more allsoe where we goe: ... wee shall finde that the God of Israell is among vs, ... when hee shall make vs a prayse and glory, that men shall say of succeeding plantacions: the lord make it like that of New England.”²¹

Only then, when the errand into the wilderness had succeeded in proving not only its Godliness, but its Englishness, could the Puritan venture be said to have succeeded. William Penn took a different tack, and recruited among groups of Pietists in Germany and the Netherlands whose basic beliefs were in harmony with the ideals of the Society of Friends. South Carolina, New York and Georgia offered sanctuary to non-English

²⁰ Oberg, Dominion and Civility, pp. 22, 217.

Protestants suffering religious persecution in Catholic nations on the Continent, and thus accomodated sizeable groups of French Huguenots, Salzburg Lutherans and Swiss Protestants. New York, of course, maintained a population of Dutch Calvinists whose presence had preceded the acquisition of New Netherland by England in 1667. The Caribbean colonies attracted adventurers of all persuasions. And every English colony drew a number of Jews.

It is important to distinguish the Jews of British America from other groups subject to English hegemony at the same time and place. Unlike other non-English European groups -- notably, German pietists, the Huguenot and the Moravians -- who migrated to British America to pursue religious freedoms not available to them in Europe, Jews were not only small in number but entirely outside the scheme of Christianity. Unlike enslaved Africans, whose appearance in British Americas took place under force of arms, Jews migrated to British America of their own free will, and were among the components (even if socially undesirable ones) of a voluntary society. Unlike the native peoples of North America, who maintained their corporate existence by physical separation from the hegemonic English culture, Jews established themselves within the larger framework of the Atlantic port towns. Unlike Africans and African-Americans, who faced prohibitive hardships in establishing communal life but whose vibrant folkways nevertheless permeated the white plantation society surrounding them in ways

²¹ Winthrop, John, "A Modell of Christian Charity," in Hollinger, David A. and Charles Capper (eds.), The American Intellectual Tradition. Volume I (1620-1865) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 14-15.

frequently unacknowledged by the predominant English culture to which they were subordinated,²² Jews were able to separate their cultural existence from English ways and formed their own communal institutions operating outside of the larger English hegemonic culture. Unlike the Africans or Indians in British America, Jews had intimate knowledge of the historical experience of European Christianity and had long developed rhetorical strategies for articulating their grievances within European hegemonic cultures. Insofar as the notion of Jewish inclusion was foreign to the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English mind, I will argue that the larger part of the persuasion toward that goal had to have come from Jews themselves.²³ At the same time, I will explore how Jews, as a subgroup at the margins of the European cultural milieu, were able to reformulate themselves in British America as part of the developing colonial society. That Jews would have made such efforts toward their inclusion in the broader Christian society of British America reflects a different idea of what it meant to be Jewish than it was possible for any Jew to assume in the context of early modern Europe. It reveals a conscious vision

²² See Sobel, Mechal, The World They Made Together: Black and White Values in Eighteenth Century Virginia (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 233.

²³ In making this argument, I follow the work of Frank Felsenstein, who argues that the Jewish "position in English society was viewed as at least anomalous and sometimes pernicious by the majority of the indigenous populace." See Felsenstein, Anti-Semitic Stereotypes, p. 21. On the question of the active role of Jews in arguing for their own political inclusion in the new nation, see, generally, Borden, Morton, Jews, Turks and Infidels (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984). Borden's argument is supported by Jay Eidelman's dissertation on the adoption of republican ideology by Jews in America during the period between 1790 and 1830. See, Eidelman, Jay M., "In the Wilds of America": The Early Republican Origins of American Judaism, 1790 - 1830 (New Haven: Yale University dissertation, 1997).