

Jonathan Edwards and Theology in Enlightenment

Programme:

Date	Theme	Edwards Text(s)	Other Text(s)
Sept 18	A prejudice against prejudice? Constructing 'Enlightenment'	[None]	Kant, 'What is Enlightenment?'
Sept 25	'You gave her Pompey – a slave – and eleven children...': Introducing Jonathan Edwards	<i>Diary</i> §' At Yale College'; 'On Sarah Pierpont'; 'Personal Narrative'; Letter 230, 'to the Trustees of the College of New Jersey'; Letter 20, 'Draft Letter on Slavery' Letter 85, 'To Sarah Pierpont Edwards' all in <i>WJE</i> 16	[None]
Oct 2	'Poor country Berkley at Yale'? Physics and metaphysics after Newton (with a little bit of entomology)	'Of Being' (<i>WJE</i> 6); 'Of Atoms' (<i>WJE</i> 6) Supplementary: 'Of Insects' (<i>WJE</i> 6)	George Berkeley, <i>Of the Principles of Human Knowledge</i> Pt I, §§I-XXV
Oct 9	'God's love shone in sun, moon, and stars': Epistemology and conversion after Locke	'A Divine and Supernatural Light' (<i>WJE</i> 17)	Pascal, <i>Pensées</i> , §4, 'Of the Means of Belief' (S242-290)

Oct 16	The very benches used to quake': Defending, and questioning, revival	<i>Faithful Narrative</i> § 'A new awakening begins'; <i>Distinguishing Marks</i> § 'Negative signs'; <i>Some Thoughts</i> Pt IV § 'Some particular errors' (all in <i>WJE</i> 4); <i>Religious Affections</i> Pt I 'Concerning the Nature of the Affections' (<i>WJE</i> 2)	William Hogarth, <i>Credulity, Superstition, and Fanaticism: A Medley</i> — see Krymanski's article for detail and interpretation
Oct 23	NO SEMINAR (ILW)		
Oct 30	'We know how the world will end': Purpose and prophecy (University Sustainability Week)	Two Dissertations 1: Concerning the End for Which God Created the World Introduction & ch. 1 (<i>WJE</i> 8); Tractate on Rev. 16:12, & 'Account of Events Probably Fulfilling the Sixth Vial' (both in <i>WJE</i> 5)	[none]
Nov 6	'Delight in the Great Being': Theorising Ethics	Two Dissertations: 2: The Nature of True Virtue chh.1-2	[tbc]
Nov 13	'The abolished will': Defending Calvinism	Freedom of the Will Pt I §§1-3 & 5; Pt 3 §§2-3; Pt 4 §§2-4 (all in <i>WJE</i> 1)	Daniel Whitby, <i>Discourse IV of VI Discourses</i>
Nov 20	'Hell's orgiastic torments': <i>that</i> sermon...	'Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God' (in <i>WJE</i> 22)	Benjamin Colman, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God'
Nov 27	'Studies that have swallowed up my mind': Concluding discussion	[None]	[None]

Where to find the texts:

Edwards: the Yale University Press *Works of Jonathan Edwards* is the standard critical edition, and freely available [online](#). There are typesetting problems from time to time, and it has irritatingly different conventions between individual volumes concerning how it groups material on a single webpage, but we don't often get critical editions for free!

Kant: available [here](#), or [here](#). German original [here](#).

Hogarth: Good quality reproductions of the print are ubiquitous – just search for it. Bernd Krymanski's 2022 article, '[We See a Ghost...](#)' is a useful interpretation of the print.

Colman's sermon, '...a fearful thing...' is [here](#).

Whitby's Six Discourses are on [Google Books](#).

Pascal's *Pensées*: Simply, use the ET [here](#) (which also contains a preface by T.S. Eliot). More fully, the publishing history is a nightmare (the MS has come down to us complete, but on individual sheets of paper). Essentially, there are presently two – rather different – orderings that are followed; most French editions follow the Lafuma numberings (L), whereas most English translations follow Sellier (S). I've given references to Sellier above. If you are *really* interested, there is [an astonishing website](#) with images of every individual page, full text, both S & L numbers, and notes on the editorial questions at stake.

Berkeley: [this edition](#) is fine, although lacks any editorial annotation.

The weekly seminar titles, incidentally, are drawn from three poems about Edwards, all worth reading. Unsurprisingly, Robert Lowell reflected on Edwards' legacy, in both '[Jonathan Edwards in Western Massachusetts](#)' (the poem is over several pages – use the L/R arrows on the screen) and '[Mr. Edwards and the Spider](#)'. In a rather more comic vein, Phyllis McGinley outlined a somewhat dyspeptic view of '[The Theology of Jonathan Edwards](#)'.

Note concerning language and themes:

Edwards will, unsurprisingly, use eighteenth-century language to describe African-Americans and Native Americans, much of which would be regarded as offensive now. As will be clear from the programme, on Sept. 25th we will be facing the issue of chattel slavery, including a defence of the practice from Edwards.