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THE RELATIONSHIP OF JOHN COTTON
AND ANNE HUTCHINSON IN THE ANTINOMIAN CONTROVERSY

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Preface

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the Antinomian controversy in Massachusetts Bay, in terms of the relationship between the principal figures of the struggle, John Cotton and Anne Hutchinson. A by-product has been an analysis of the controversy in terms of its relationship to the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

All direct quotations have been cited exactly as they appear in the sources, including original grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
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Chapter I - Background

Probably the most important problem in the life of a seventeenth century Puritan, whether in Old or New England, was his means of justification with God. The searching for an answer to this problem brought one of the early, divisive struggles of Massachusetts Bay, commonly known as the Antinomian controversy. Anne Hutchinson, chief of the so-called Antinomians, replied to this question in a manner which varied from the answer propounded by the ministers of the Bay colony. Her deviation from accepted doctrine assumed great importance because of one additional factor: Mrs. Hutchinson spread her ideas to others, and, furthermore, criticized those who disagreed with her. Her concept of salvation differed from that propounded by all the ministers of the colony but two, John Cotton and John Wheelwright.

An understanding of the background of Puritanism is necessary to comprehend the significance of the struggle of 1636 to 1638 and the part played in it by various members of the Massachusetts Bay community. The Church of England had broken off from the Roman Catholic Church under Henry VIII; later in the sixteenth century, during the reign of Elizabeth, it had crystallized into the Anglican establishment. Puritanism was a movement within the Anglican church which held that reform had not proceeded far enough, and that the church should be restored to the "purity" of the first-century church. Because they were unable to realize these ambitions, some of the Puritans
decided to leave England and to migrate to the New World to found a commonwealth in which they could put into practice both their religious and their political beliefs, beliefs which were inextricably tied together. The Puritans were undertaking "to establish a society where the will of God would be observed in every detail, a kingdom of God on earth." The beginning of the mainstream of the Puritan migrants of the Massachusetts Bay Company arrived in the New World in 1630 to found a colony whose purpose was to be an experiment in Christian living.

Puritanism was, in many ways, a part of the seventeenth-century culture of England. About ninety per cent of the Puritan's knowledge, morality, and customs were those of the English upper and middle classes. Puritans had the same intellectual interests, similar manners, and common prejudices with other Englishmen. The Puritans not only generally followed Anglican concepts, but, more basically, they also followed the concepts of Protestantism in their own age. The struggle between the Pope and the reformed churches was still more important than any controversy within the reformed group, and all regarded Rome as the common enemy. Like the Anglican establishment, Puritanism was an heir to the Middle Ages, opposed to enthusiasm, regarded the Church of England as the true church (although it had not moved far enough from Rome to suit Puritan standards), and above all it worked to maintain "a complete harmony of reason and faith, science and religion, earthly dominion and the government of God." Order was the primary goal of both Puritanism and Anglicanism. "Against all forms of
chaotic emotionalism, against all over-simplifications of theology, learning, philosophy, and science, against all materialism, positivism or mechanism, both were endeavoring to uphold a symmetrical union of heart and head without impairment of either. 8

The essential ten per cent which separated the two groups involved their views of the Scriptures. To the Puritan, all practices in any aspect of life should be based on Biblical teaching. Thus, in New England the Puritans hoped to establish a commonwealth in which they could completely govern their lives by the Scripture. To the Anglican, this point of view was rigid; he could not justify or accept such an extension of the power of the Scriptures. 9 To him, the Bible was one illustration of truth; to the Puritan it was the truth. To an Anglican, reason made sense of the Scriptures; to a Puritan, reason was created by the clear sense of the Scriptures. 10

The groups also differed in their estimation of man and his natural capacity for good. The Puritan stated that man needed the aid of God to fulfill his capacity; the Anglican thought that man was capable of accomplishing this himself. 11

The very basis of Puritan theology in Massachusetts Bay was the covenant, also known as federal theology. Three covenants formed the basis of Puritan society and belief: the civil covenant, the church covenant, and the covenant of grace. 12 In actuality, the three compacts were one. "The Church Covenant gave form to the Covenant of Grace, and the Civil Covenant gave power to the Church Covenant." 13 John Cotton, a leading minister, was a primary exponent of covenant theology. 14 A
consideration of the relationship among the three covenants gives an understanding of Puritan society as a whole. Because of this interrelationship which bound all phases of society into an organic whole, Anne Hutchinson fell into trouble. In Puritan New England an issue simply could not have importance in one sphere only; life was not that compartmentalized.

According to the concept of the covenant, God had voluntarily given a pledge to man. Originally, this pledge had been given to Adam in return for man's good works, but man had broken his promise. God then made a covenant with Abraham, in which man did not have to perform a deed, but had to have faith. Man had to believe that Christ would come to be the mediator of the covenant. The concept of works was not discarded, but was included in the covenant of grace. However, works were not a requirement for participation in the covenant; man only needed to believe in God and to surrender himself to him to receive his redeeming grace. Under the old covenant, dependence was placed on man; in the new covenant, dependence was placed on God. Cotton taught that the difference between the agreements was that "in a Covenant of workes God giveth himselfe Conditionally; in that of grace, absolutely." Like the Jews, the Puritans believed that they were God's chosen people. The Jews had failed to uphold their part of the covenant; the Puritans were determined not to repeat this mistake.

Thus God's second covenant, the covenant of grace, is a perpetual covenant. As such, it shows the necessity for a church
to also have such a compact, since the covenant is both a theological and ecclesiastical doctrine.\textsuperscript{22} When a man is born again, he acquires the freedom to fulfill the demands of God. When a group of such men gathers, and each man can satisfy the others that he is a man of faith, the group covenants together to form a church.\textsuperscript{23} The Puritan churches of Massachusetts were organized into a governing system of congregationalism, in which each church had independence of the others, within its own, separate covenant. The American Puritans believed that this was the governmental form required by God.\textsuperscript{24}

The covenant is also political. The three covenants are included in one.\textsuperscript{25} As faith was the requirement for church membership, and because God would bestow grace upon such men, the best rulers for the society would be the men possessing these qualities, the church members.\textsuperscript{26} Massachusetts permitted church members only the right to vote.\textsuperscript{27}

Accordingly, religion became the primary aim of life itself, not merely a phase of social activity. All other institutions were consequently secondary.\textsuperscript{28} This is the single most important concept embodied in the Bay colony, and it was the basic cause of the controversy arising from the doctrines Anne Hutchinson advocated in her discussion groups.

Cotton's view, which can be taken as representing the colony, was that church and state are of the same genus, order; have the same author, God; the same subject, man; and the same end, the glory of God. In one aspect, the institutions
differed; the purpose of the church is salvation of souls; the preservation of justice in society is that of the state. The church was concerned with the inward man, the man who was within the state of grace. The government, concerned with the outward man, ordered him to attend church, whether he was godly or ungodly.29

This system created the problem of the specific spheres of church and state. In order to avoid complete merger of one into the other, the magistrates did not have spiritual power, nor could a church hold a man responsible for his civil opinions. So, although the lines did not dissolve, neither did they diverge; one institution gave its full support to the other whenever necessary.30

Because the Puritan church accepted the congregational form, no machinery was devised for correcting aberrations within a church; the magistrates assumed this function when they thought that the divergence was serious enough.31 Therefore, in the early years of the colony the balance of power became lopsided on the side of the civil authority.32 The church could not act on its own behalf, because its officers had no civil authority, but only spiritual power.33 Thus the state, based on religious principles, became the most important body in Puritan New England, and included both ecclesiastical and civil functions in its duties.

Within this framework, a major influence upon the people came from the sermons they heard. The major intellectual activity of the colony was the preparation and explanation of sermons. Their purpose was both explanatory and utilitarian.34 The
content was Scriptural, for both practical and spiritual matters were completely directed by the teachings of the Bible. The people were constantly exposed to sermons. Ministers preached as frequently as three times weekly, each message lasting one to two hours. Church services were held once or twice on Sundays, and additionally as lectures during the week. Frequently, sermons were preached on special days, such as elections, fast-days, and days of thanksgiving. The entire family attended the church services and later repeated the sermons; the children were questioned on the main points.

Religious value-judgments are implicit in all that was written or thought in the colony. Winthrop, the early leader of Massachusetts Bay, illustrates this fact in his *Journal*. Puritans believed that God's pleasure or anger was manifested in earthly signs, and therefore Winthrop uses the monstrous births of Anne Hutchinson and Mary Dyer, another nonconformist, to show the colony how the wrath of God was being visited upon these women for their dissent.

Religion totally permeated the life of the people. They related everything to the divine.

Everything that has happened, disaster as well as triumph, the minutest event as well as the greatest, has been under divine control. God is not a being of whims or caprices. He is not less powerful at one moment than at another; therefore in a certain sense any event is just as significant as any other. But on the other hand, God regulates the universe for distinct ends; He does not work without purpose, and history should be seen as a long revelation of divine intention.
Chapter II - John Cotton's Theology and Anne Hutchinson's Interpretation

John Cotton, a nonconforming minister in early seventeenth-century England, did not come to New England with the first wave of Puritan settlers in 1630, the year that Winthrop migrated. He was, however, active among English Puritans, and preached a sermon to the first departing group in 1629. In 1633, driven by the intolerable situation in England and by an order to appear before Laud and the Court of the High Commission on a charge of nonconformity, Cotton was forced to flee in order to continue his ministry. He arrived in Massachusetts Bay in the autumn of 1633, and was chosen as teacher of the Boston Church, to assist the preacher of that congregation, John Wilson.

While Cotton was the minister of St. Botolph's Church in Boston, Old England, Mrs. Anne Hutchinson had been an infrequent attender at the services. Anne Marbury Hutchinson was the daughter of an Anglican minister, a domineering man, and the wife of William Hutchinson, a businessman. Her marriage to William was a solid one, but one in which she was definitely the leading partner.

The Hutchison lived about a day's journey north of Boston in Alford, Lincolnshire. On occasion, Mrs. Hutchinson accompanied her husband to Boston on business trips, and thus had the opportunity to hear and to begin to admire John Cotton.
When Cotton was forced to depart from England, it seemed to Anne Hutchinson that her spiritual life had come to a standstill; accordingly, she convinced her family that they, too, must migrate. Late in the autumn of 1634 the Hutchinson family arrived in Boston, and started to make its place in the community, and to attend the Boston church, where Anne could again hear her beloved minister.

The privilege of church membership, however, was denied to Anne Hutchinson for a month after her arrival, because of the testimony of Rev. Zachariah Symmes, who had crossed the Atlantic on the ship with the Hutchinsons and had doubted her orthodoxy. Her husband was accepted into church membership immediately after the arrival of the family in the Bay Colony.

The sermons of John Cotton, which had been found so stimulating by Mrs. Hutchinson, offer an interpretation of salvation in many ways representative of Puritanism. Like the other ministers', Cotton's sermons were based upon the Scripture. Cotton added advice, exhortation, and words of warning. His sermons became so involved, however, that the listener could lose track of the main point in his involvement with minor details.

In accordance with Puritan doctrine, Cotton preached that the Scripture is the sufficient rule of all of man's life. His major theological doctrines correspond to those considered representative of Puritanism. God is three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. God made and governs the whole world; he
rewards both good and evil. God alone is to be worshiped, and worship should be offered to him in accordance with practices laid out in the Scripture. All men have sinned, and man in totally unable to help himself in his sin. Christ redeemed the church by taking upon himself the nature of man. Christ's salvation and redemption are freely given unto all who believe; faith is also freely given so that man may believe. When a man is drawn to Christ by his faith, he is justified by grace. When the seal of his faith is justified, it is also regenerated, but regeneration is imperfect, because man himself is not perfect. On the final day, all men will rise again to be judged according to their works, to go to eternal salvation or eternal damnation.

The teachings in which Cotton's ideas differed from those of the other ministers, the concepts which Mrs. Hutchinson appropriated, relate mainly to his ideas on the covenant and the means of attaining and expressing salvation. These specific doctrines were peculiarly important in a society which concentrated so much on salvation, for an almost egocentric interest in the external expression of salvation necessarily developed.

The basic question with which Anne Hutchinson was concerned was the role of sanctification (or good works) in justification. Cotton preached that although a man were crucified with Christ, yet he lived; it was not he, but Christ living in him. A life of faith assures man's justification. The life of faith brings man to assurance of it. Faith not only brings man pardon of his sin, but assures him of it. Faith can assure man of his justification by giving him a general pro-
mise of mercy for his specific problems, by putting life into prayer, by preparing a man's heart to receive the spirit of grace, and by dispersing the doubts a man may have about his justification.\(^\text{15}\)

Cotton answered the question of how a life of sanctification is lived in faith. Faith gives man the root of his salvation—Christ. Faith both punishes corruption and causes the soul to do holy duties, which are the essence of sanctification. Faith brings man to live a life of sanctification, to do what he should do. Faith demonstrates the laws of God to man.\(^\text{16}\) Consequently, it is the most important aspect of a man's life; "the life a godly man lives in his prosperity is a life of faith."\(^\text{17}\)

These answers to the question of the age, the question of how a man could be justified with God, are fairly orthodox. Cotton, however, emphasized faith rather than good works more than the other ministers did. There is a subtle line between seeing good works as man's sign of justification, or merely as his sanctification. Cotton taught that good works did not justify a man, but that through them a man could know that he was justified.\(^\text{18}\) Cotton said, "Sincere obedience to the word of Christ, is both a certain and evident sign of our blessed Estate in Christ."\(^\text{19}\) This is the closest that he ever came to preaching a doctrine of salvation by works.\(^\text{20}\)

To Cotton, the bases for a life of faith were justification, sanctification, consolation, and glorification.\(^\text{21}\) He preached that justification was the essence of man's spiritual life; it was the pardon for his sins.\(^\text{22}\) Sanctification worked various graces in a man's heart.\(^\text{23}\) Cotton applied this
theology to the life of each individual:

Wouldst thou know whether thou hast life or no? Why hast thou found thy heart affected with joy for Gods goodnesse to them, and yet withall grieved and sorrowfull for thy unkinde dealing with him? These are certain evidences of the life of grace in thee. You may find many affected and comforted with the Word...; but if this joy were of God, it would not vanish away like smoak, but would adminster so much the more sorrow and mourning for sin; though a Christians joy may suddenly vanish, yet it always leaves behind an inward grieving for sin, to keep possession for it.

Cotton illustrated the effects of sanctification as expressed in the Christian life as comparable to the effects of natural life, which are motion, feeding, growth, expulsion of that which is dangerous, and reproduction. Cotton exhorted his congregation to test themselves in terms of these signs; if they were present in them, they were the signs of life; if not, a man had no true sign that he was living the life of grace.

The New Covenant is the earliest extant sermon by Cotton in America. It gives excellent illustrations of his theological beliefs; the views which Anne Hutchinson drew from Cotton are present in it. The text of this sermon is Acts 7:8: "And he gave [Abraham] the covenant of circumcision." Cotton gives many illustrations of the differences of the two covenants.

In the covenant of works, God is the father, Christ the redeemer, and the Holy Spirit the sanctifier. However, this covenant is conceived upon condition of man's works, that he obey God's commands that he have no other gods, and that man should do all that he has been commanded by God. Cotton adds that God would not pardon a man who transgressed this covenant, because the entire covenant is based on man's obedience.
A second difference between the covenants of works and grace is God's conditional gift of himself in the first, as compared to his absolute gift in the second. A third distinction between the two is the duration of the covenant. The justification, adoption, and sanctification in the covenant of works endure only while man obeys; Christ is a conditional redeemer.

The final mark of distinction between the old and new covenants is their mediators. In the old covenant, Moses gave the law as mediator. In the new covenant Christ is the mediator of "a better Covenant established upon better Promises."

Cotton further distinguished the two covenants by the ways in which God brings man into the covenant. He first brings man into a covenant of works, then into a covenant of grace, by the true door, Christ. Although a Christian is under the covenant of grace and not under the covenant of works, he is not free from works, from obedience to the law. His salvation, however, is not conditioned by his obedience. Cotton also stated that true sanctification could not be discerned by either a man himself or by others until he had first discerned the faith which justified him.

Not only did Anne Hutchinson adopt the doctrines of John Cotton, she also pushed them to their farthest limits. At this point, the relationship between the interpretations of Anne Hutchinson and the theology of John Cotton became a problem.
Anne Hutchinson was well-known and well-liked in Boston. She was especially capable in household duties and in nursing care for the sick and pregnant, and so she came to have a large circle of acquaintances in the town. She felt that she could not only be useful to her neighbors in practical matters, but also in spiritual concerns.

She discovered that most of the women of Boston trusted their works as evidences to themselves and to the world of their salvation. They said that they had seen their sins and had repented and become Christian, because of this self-knowledge. So, Anne Hutchinson added to her ministerings to the sick as pointed out to them their spiritual illnesses. She would demonstrate that they were held by legal works which could not possibly offer salvation. "Without a sure sense of justification—an immediate witness of the Spirit—all our sanctifications is no more than dust and ashes."38

Repetition of sermons by the family was a Massachusetts custom; this custom expanded to prayer meetings for the same purpose. Anne Hutchinson, concerned for her neighbors who were laboring under false beliefs, began to hold such meetings in her home. She was a woman of "ready wit and bold spirit" who was endowed with adequate intellectual faculties for this task. Because of her admiration for John Cotton, her conviction that her neighbors were being deluded about their spiritual estates, and her need for self-expression, Mrs. Hutchinson repeated the sermons of Cotton.40
The group met twice weekly, to discuss the Thursday lecture on Thursday afternoons, and to discuss the Sunday sermon on Mondays. Mrs. Hutchinson wanted to teach the people that they could not depend upon their works as the basis for their justification; although the covenant of works brought graces, appearance was deceptive, and good could not really save a man.

In her comprehension, she was thus serving as an aid to Cotton and his ministry. Cotton himself, several years after the affair, also affirmed her aid to the community.

At her first coming she was well respected and esteemed of me,... she did much good in our Town, in women's meeting at Childbirth-Travels, wherein she was not only skillfull and helpfull, but readily fell into good discourse with the women about their spiritual estates,... By which means many of the women (and by them their husbands) were convinced, that they had gone on in a Covenant of Works, and were much shaken and humbled thereby, and brought to enquire more seriously after the Lord Jesus Christ, without whom all their Gifts and Graces would prove but common, and their duties but legall, and in the end wizzen and vanish. All this was well ... and suited the publike Ministry, which had gone along in the same way, so as the private conferences did well tend to water the seeds publikely sowen. ...

... Any many whose spiritual estates were not so safely layed, yet were hereby helped and awakened to discover their sandy foundations, and to seek for better establishment in Christ....

This was not the sum of all of the practices of Anne Hutchinson, however. She moved from repetition of the sermons to explanation of their doctrines, to demonstrate to lost souls the paths which their hearts should follow. In addition, she discussed what other ministers preached. Since she repeated only that which she approved, she was actually a critic of the ministry.

Her discussion groups became very popular.
Men began to attend along with their wives, and the new governor, Sir Henry Vane, joined the group too. By 1636, the year that the issue first became an open controversy, seventy to eighty persons gathered at her home semi-weekly discussions.46

The Antinomian controversy was caused by four factors. First, Anne Hutchinson did not confine herself to repetition of the sermons, but she herself attempted to exige them. Secondly, she criticized the other ministers to the point that she declared that all of them except Cotton and her brother-in-law John Wheelwright were under a covenant of grace.47 Thirdly, her influence was widespread in Boston, where almost the entire church followed her teachings.48 Finally, she rejected a doctrinal teaching of the ministers, that sanctification could be a witness of justification. By her understanding, this concept would lead those under a covenant of works to see the signs of sanctification, and thus justification, in themselves.49 Because a doctrine was tied closely to the civil functioning of Massachusetts society, it was the major cause of the struggle.

A controversy began in the Bay colony which involved both civil and religious authorities. The dispute was not only religious, but also hit the center of the social and political structure of Massachusetts Bay.
Chapter III - Aspects of the Antinomian Controversy

Because all aspects of life in the colony became involved in the Antinomian controversy, both the religious and the secular questions have equal importance. The Puritan concept of life necessitated the development of non-religious factors when any religious questions arose.

From a religious standpoint, when Anne Hutchinson ceased to confine herself to repetition of a sermon and moved into exegesis and criticism, she stepped into trouble. In a society where drastic change had taken place and freedom had been won, the revolutionary spirit had to be controlled when the new order was set up.\(^1\) Obviously, in order to establish a system, licence cannot be tolerated. It is questionable if any society has ever been strong enough to tolerate nonconformity or dissension within itself.

In the eyes of the colonists, Mrs. Hutchinson's dangerous errors were two: she said that a justified person has the Holy Spirit dwelling within him, and that justification cannot be evidenced by sanctification.\(^2\) The first idea contradicted the Puritanic concept that the word of God has been revealed once, forever, by the holy Scripture, and the concept that the minister alone was able to interpret it. Her second error was dangerous because it undermined the covenant theology. If her concept were carried to its logical conclusion, it could lead to a breakdown of all law, for good works or obedience to law would no longer have any importance.
In June, 1636, before the issue became a matter of public controversy, Cotton preached a sermon explaining the covenant. He discussed both old and new promises, and illustrated the acts of the Lord and of the people in each compact. In the old agreement, the covenant of works, God prepared his people, gave them a commandment, required their obedience and observance of it, and threatened to curse them if they failed to keep it. In turn, the people professed their obedience and yielded themselves to be cursed if they failed in obedience.

In the covenant of works, God had prepared the people by a spirit of bondage; he prepared them for the everlasting covenant by a spirit of poverty. When they had become poor in spirit, the Lord promised them Christ, as the agreement, and everlasting communion. He required from the people faith, or a complete yielding of the soul to the Lord; the obedience of faith; a fit frame of spirit in which to receive the Lord; and the forsaking of former evils. When Cotton stated that the people must obey in faith, he qualified the demand by assuring them that obedience was not required as a legal work, but that God would put into the people that which he required of them. "... this is the true meaning of all that the Lord doth require in the Everlasting Covenant; when He doth Command, He doth Promise." The acts required from the people were a confession of their unworthiness and a confession of their lack of strength.

Cotton concluded that the doctrine could be used to teach
a Christian whether he were joined in an everlasting covenant or in a covenant of works. A man under a covenant of works would finally be cursed; one under an agreement of grace would gain the salvation of his soul. A man could apprehend whether he was within the compact of grace, because the Lord is the maker of that everlasting bond.3

During the summer of 1636, the ministers of the colony observed that the doctrines professed by Mrs. Hutchinson were not orthodox. Accordingly, a group of them discussed the matter with Cotton, her teacher.9 He talked with and admonished Mrs. Hutchinson for her divergent practices. She relied upon private meditation rather than the guidance of the minister to strengthen her faith. Although she could not see her sanctification, she felt her justification. Finally, the judgments she passed on the souls of the neighboring women were too harsh.10

Cotton again spoke with the elders, who were unable to produce any witnesses against what they claimed were errors by the Hutchinsonians.11 The ministers, therefore, decided to denounce such beliefs both publicly and privately.12 Whenever they charged that Cotton had publicly refuted what the Hutchinsonians claimed that he said, the dissenters replied that they knew what he spoke to them privately.13 Cotton was not disturbed by the matter; he thought it was cause for only minor concern. The other ministers disagreed.

In the summer of 1636, John Wheelwright, a Puritan minister and brother-in-law of Anne Hutchinson, arrived in Massachusetts Bay. His doctrine was similar to that of Cotton; he saw man
as dependent upon the grace of God, and he rejected the concept that man's work could have any standing in the sight of God.\textsuperscript{14} The members of the Boston church, the majority of whom had espoused Mrs. Hutchinson's doctrines, desired the addition of Wheelwright as a second teacher in the church in the hope that he would offset any influence that Wilson might have. Cotton, who favored the plan, changed his opinion when Winthrop stringently opposed the action.\textsuperscript{15} Winthrop argued that two ministers were sufficient, and that Wheelwright's opinions might lead to dispute.\textsuperscript{16} Wheelwright, therefore, took another church.

Meanwhile, political controversy was brewing. A debate between Winthrop, then serving as a magistrate, and Vane, the young governor, added another factor to the dispute.\textsuperscript{18} Winthrop opposed the Hutchinsonians; Vane was one of them.

In November, 1636,\textsuperscript{17} the ministers submitted to Cotton sixteen written questions concerning his opinions. In answering the questions, Cotton stated that the seal of the spirit was necessary to man's knowledge of his salvation, to serve as a witness. Although the discernment of sanctification could serve a man as an evidence of his justification, he could not be certain until the Spirit of God witnessed directly to him. A person who relied upon his knowledge of his sanctification was distinctively under the covenant of works.\textsuperscript{19} The essence of the problem was the relationship of sanctification to justification, as seen in the covenants of works and grace.

If good works were an evidence of justification, the pious
man and the law-abiding man, the believer and the citizen were equated. Of necessity, a compact of works was the system under which a state must operate. Cotton stated that a man could not press Christ for mercy because of any good works or graces within himself.20

In December, Vane called a meeting of the Court of Deputies, the legislative body of the colony, to request that he might return to England on personal business. When the council appeared adamant, refusing to grant his request, he burst into tears and admitted that his real reason for wanting to return was his fear of the judgment and wrath of God because of the dissension. He regarded himself as the cause of it all, and thought that it would be best if he would depart.21 Finally, after much debate, the deputies granted his request, and called for new elections to be held after the adjournment of the court.22

Various Bostonians, however, could not understand the necessity for the departure of the governor. They persuaded him to remain. When the day appointed for election arrived, the court was adjourned until the meeting of the General Court in May, 1637.23

Also at the December court meeting, the church elders were asked to advise the deputies about the differences of opinion in the churches. When one of the magistrates suggested that each individual declare his opinions which varied from the norm, Vane objected. The previous month the ministers had drawn up a list of questionable doctrines and had instructed Cotton to explain them. Vane was jealous because he had not been consulted in that matter.24
Wilson blamed the new opinions for the division within the colony. He stated that all opposed these doctrines except two of the deputies, the governor, and two of the ministers. When the theological question arose whether evident sanctification could witness justification, both Cotton and Vane denied it. 25

Cotton admonished Wilson, but the great majority of the elders could see no distinction of doctrine. Cotton was then called upon to publicly answer questions concerning his dissenting opinions. In his answers he was able to satisfy all present. They had been condemning him for matters they were unable to comprehend. 26

Because of the dissension, the next meeting of the General Court, March 9, 1637, was appointed to serve as a discussion of the issue. 27 A further result of the December meeting was an interview of the ministers with Anne Hutchinson herself, held at Cotton's home. 28

Winthrop, the deputy governor, 29 was concerned by the dissension. He wrote a statement of opposition to the Hutchinsonians to present his reasons to the people, hoping to make them listen to reason in this manner. First, however, he presented a copy of his statement to Thomas Shepard, the minister at Cambridge. Shepard realized that Winthrop was not a theological match for his opponents, and so dissuaded him from making the document public. 30

No one in the colony was satisfied with matters as they stood, so when the ministers proposed that a synod be called, Cotton assented. 31 He thought that a synod was the proper tool by which the condemnation of a church or a part of it which was in error should be made. This meeting would not be a synod of
of the presbyterian form, but only a gathering of the ministers to share ideas; it would have no legal binding power. With the consent of the deputies, August, 1637 was fixed as the date for the meeting of the synod.33

In preparation for the synod, a fast would be kept in all the churches; the heretical opinions would be assembled so that they could be refuted; and the doctrines taught by Cotton were also to be collected so that he could again be examined about them.34

Cotton himself preached on the fast-day, January 18, 1637, and attempted to pacify and reconcile the Boston congregation.35 Wheelwright also spoke, and implied that the majority of the civil and religious leaders were under a covenant of works because they had not accepted the doctrines which Cotton and he had propounded. His sermon served as encouragement to inflame the congregation into further dissension rather than to reconcile it.36 Not only did he clearly express the feared Antinomian opinions, but the magistrates interpreted his statements as seditious.37

The deputies again met, as planned, March 9, 1637. As soon as theological discussion began, the members split over the issues. The court approved Wilson's speech made at the preceding session. The ministers agreed that no member of the court could be questioned by a church for what he had spoken in the meeting of the legislature, and that the church should have first jurisdiction over doubtful opinions in theology, although if they were "manifest and dangerous to the state," the civil authority could move against them immediately.38
The court had planned to question Wheelwright for his fast-day sermon, which appeared to them seditious. The members of the church of Boston presented a petition questioning this proceeding, but the court answered that when it proceeded judicially, it would be in an open session, and when it proceeded in consultation, it would be private. The court had overruled the objections of the Bostonians. 38

Wheelwright acknowledged to this body the contents of his sermon. The other ministers agreed that their preaching was characterized by what Wheelwright termed a covenant of works. Accordingly, Wheelwright was judged guilty of sedition, and also of contempt, for he had used the fast for purposes other than those for which it had been proposed. Because the Boston church offered another petition which justified Wheelwright's sermon, sentencing was postponed until the next meeting of the court. 40

Obviously, the affair was moving too fast. The first means which had been suggested as a preparation for the colony for the synod had ended in disaster.

Because distinct factions were appearing in Boston, the transference of the next meeting of the court to Newtown was suggested. Although Vane refused to call for the vote on this question, eventually he was overruled. 41

At the May meeting of the legislature at Newtown, Winthrop overruled Vane concerning the reading of a petition from the Boston church. Although its contents were not known, Winthrop stated that the business before the meeting, the election, would have to be settled first. After much debate, the majority
voted to proceed with the election first. Winthrop was elected governor, and almost all of the supporters of Anne Hutchinson were defeated. Political jealousy, however, continued in the colony even though Winthrop had resumed his position of civil leadership. Following the election, the sergeants from Boston refused to act as an escort for the new governor, as was the custom.

Throughout the preceding winter Cotton continued to believe that fundamental religious truths were not the basis of the controversy; he thought that the disagreement arose from personality conflicts rather than from differing theologies. He did not see the controversy through the eyes of the magistrates, who greatly feared its consequences. Whenever the subject was discussed, he attempted to compromise and to maintain peace, mainly because he did not think the situation a great controversy of lasting import. When both Cotton and Shepard preached at the election, the difference in their views seemed minute to a layman. Reconciliation should have been easy. They agreed that justification and sanctification occurred concurrently. A man must first know of his justification in order to see his sanctification. The Spirit always gives a sign to man by which he may recognize his justification.

At the Newtown session of the legislature, a law was passed which prohibited a visitor from remaining in the colony longer than three weeks, unless approved by the magistrates; the purpose of this law was to exclude further sources of contention
from the colony. This measure also could mean that the civil authority could screen all prospective church-members, before their examination by the elders. The balance of church and state was shifting further toward the side of the state.

At this time, Cotton made some tentative plans to leave Massachusetts Bay and to settle at New Haven, in Connecticut. When he discovered, however, that some migrants to the colony who had been refused permission to settle there under the new law, actually had been prohibited on grounds of lack of righteousness and outward evidence of faith, he decided to remain in Massachusetts.

External problems were increasing also. Difficulties with the French which eventually led to war in the mid-eighteenth century were already present. The colonists were frequently in contention with the Pequod Indians. The Newtown meeting had discussed the increased seriousness of these skirmishes. When the battle with the Pequods became especially fierce, members of the Hutchinsonian faction refused to participate in the campaign against the Indians because they believed that Wilson, who was serving as the chaplain of the squad, was under a covenant of works.

A further external problem was the relationship of the colony to the mother country concerning the charter of Massachusetts Bay. Because no meeting place for the governing body of the Massachusetts Bay Company had been specified in its charter, the first migrating members of the Company had brought the
charter with them, thus removing control of the colony from the crown. Therefore, the meeting place for the Company would be in the New World, so that the authorities of the Company could be the authorities of the colony. When complaints were lodged against Massachusetts Bay, Charles I in 1634 granted to several English lords a commission to govern the colony. Those men demanded that Winthrop return to them the letters-patent of the colony. He refused to do so. The ship on which the Hutchinsons had emigrated in 1634 carried the first of such demands; before the banishment of Anne Hutchinson two more demands were made. Thus, although the question was postponed in the confusion of the English civil war, it was a pressing problem to the authorities at the time of the Antinomian controversy.

Furthermore, the moment of the Antinomian controversy was the time at which the colony needed new settlers, but they were being driven away by the strife. Massachusetts Bay had been settled in an attempt to found a Christian community, but its authorities now feared that the mother country would hinder their purpose for either religious or political reasons.

Although the civil government of the colony considered Anne to be Hutchinson dangerous to the community, the synod had not yet met to debate the issue. In preparation for its meeting, the views of the dissenters were collected and published; eighty-two points of division were discovered. In addition, the ministers held a conference with Cotton to determine the specific nature of his doctrines, in the hope of reconciling him and
presenting a united front.

Private meetings lasted three weeks at the commencement of the synod, while the ministers questioned Cotton. His answers were satisfactory to the ministers. The issue which they discussed, however, was the necessity of faith for justification, rather than the role of sanctification in salvation. Cotton stated that union with Christ was not complete before or without faith. Although faith was the instrument by which man received the righteousness of Christ, it was not the instrumental cause. The evidence of justification did not come from the condition of man, but from the grace of God. Faith could be the only qualification that could be a sign of justification; faith itself had the sign of the grace of God shown in Christ. Cotton also refuted the idea that Christ or the benefits of the Christian could be gained from a covenant of works, but stated that they flowed from a covenant of grace.

The elders were satisfied because they thought that Cotton could no longer support any erroneous opinions which they had planned to refute. Cotton realized that erroneous doctrines were floating about in the colony, but he was convinced that they could not be attributed to his congregation. Cotton was cleared of the taint of questionable beliefs. As the synod began, the issue became crystallized around the person of Anne Hutchinson, who was known to hold questionable doctrines. She would be the focal point for the rest of the controversy.
The meeting of the synod opened publicly, August 30, 1637, at Newtown, with a recitation of the eighty-two errors then raging in the colony. Cotton's teachings were the point of departure for almost all of these doctrines. Most of the beliefs in question were founded on the basic Antinomian tenet "that a person who has received immediate assurance from the Holy Spirit stands above the injunction of Biblical law and does not require the evidences of sanctification or of good works to know that he is saved." These errors assumed that enthusiasm in obedience to the law, performance of good works, and fearfulness about the state of one's soul because of sin, placed a person under a covenant of works.

The synod was opened with a declaration that its purpose was to disprove erroneous beliefs rather than to censure individuals. Hooker and Bulkley, two ministers, were chosen as moderators. After the debate over the doctrines which had been brought to the attention of the body, the clergy tried to formulate a compromise with Cotton and Wheelwright. Such an action would leave the dissenters without clerical support.

Cotton noted the precise wording of the statements and took special care that what was condemned actually be an heretical notion. He still assumed that discussion could solve the quarreling, and that theological doctrine was not the basis of the
dispute. He joined the condemnation of those doctrines which he believed to be heretical.8

He became perturbed, however, when he realized that the lay representatives from Boston were not also denying the flagrant errors. Cotton had assumed that the beliefs that he espoused and the beliefs held by his congregation were identical; now that he was on the opposing side, as an attacker, he was amazed to discover that the points which he attacked were defended by his congregation.9 For the first time, Cotton realized that there was a difference between his doctrines and those of the Hutchinsonians.10

Cotton's role in the controversy consequently took on a rigid form for the first time. He later defended his earlier action, stating that the meeting of the synod "was the first time of my discerning a real and broad difference, between the judgments of our Brethren (who leaned to Mistress Hutchinson) and my self."11

Previously, at the pre-synod conference of ministers, Cotton had conceded that "faith must be implanted before justification,"12 but he now said that God could justify a man before the act of faith, and that the effect of justification was faith.13 On the second following day, however, he realized that the apprehensions of the other ministers about this point were based upon a valid interpretation of Scripture, and so he returned to his former, more moderate and more conforming position.14 Eventually, Cotton assented to most of the points which
the other ministers made. Wheelwright remained firm. Since Vane's departure for England early in August and Cotton's change toward a definite position, he was isolated.15

Cotton's differences had been reduced to three. He stated that the soul had no grace within itself before its union with Christ. He continued to maintain that justification could not be evidenced by sanctification. Finally, he maintained that faith was passive rather than active in justification.16

According to one interpretation, Cotton had thus been able to maintain his own beliefs, and had had to change very little.17 Another explanation, however, views the outcome of the synod as an opportunity for the civil authority to proceed against the Hutchinsonians, and as a restriction on Cotton to support his erring congregation.18 In either event, the purpose of the synod had not been to deal with specific persons; it had proposed to deal with specific doctrines, and this it had done. It defined heresy so that the civil court could proceed against the heretics.19 The civil authority would proceed to this matter at the regular meeting of the court in November.

The Great Court session beginning November 2, 1637, again held at Newtown, away from the disturbances of the church at Boston,20 assumed greater importance. Winthrop, the governor, had hoped that the synod would have had sufficient force to quell the controversy. However, since it had proved inadequate, the legislature had to take action; such opposing parties could not remain within the Puritan state without bringing ruin upon it.21 First, Wheelwright's case was settled. Sen-
tencing had been postponed by the December and March courts, but he was now banished from the colony.

With Winthrop presiding over the court, the magistrates next charged Mrs. Hutchinson with disturbing the civil and religious peace of the commonwealth. Winthrop led the attack and attributed the great strife then rampant in the colony to her. Not only had she spread her heresies, she had also criticized the ministers. She had held weekly meetings in her home, an activity which was not suitable to a lady. Although reprimanded, she had continued her practices. Therefore, the court wished that either she change her ideas and come into uniformity with the rest of the community, or else remove into another colony so that she would no longer trouble Massachusetts Bay. To clarify the issues, Winthrop asked her whether she agreed with the mistaken beliefs of Wheelwright who had just been banished. Mrs. Hutchinson evasively justified her teachings of the younger women by a verse in Titus which instructed the elder women to teach the younger.

Testimonies by the various ministers who had taken part in the private conference with Mrs. Hutchinson after the December court of 1636 served as the major proof that she espoused the heresies that had been condemned by the synod. Peters, minister at Salem, provided a typical testimony. He alleged that the ministers had not planned to serve as informers against Mrs. Hutchinson, but that an account of the dissension would be useful to the colony and its posterity. Mrs. Hutchinson, he stated, had caused trouble from the moment of her landing.
in New England. Because of her criticisms of the clergy, their ministry had been less effective. Therefore, the ministers held conferences with Cotton, who had suggested that it was not within the province of the civil authority to deal with her, but that the clergymen should talk with her. Peters reported that at this meeting Mrs. Hutchinson had spoken of the wide difference between Cotton and the rest of the ministers, that Cotton preached a covenant of grace, while the other ministers preached a covenant of works. She had also accused them of not being under the Holy Spirit, and of not being ministers of the gospel. 26

Five other ministers gave similar testimonies, based upon what they had learned of her views in the private conference the preceding December. Each time Mrs. Hutchinson objected to the testimony, because the nature of the conference had been private, and because she had spoken with the ministers as a matter of friendship, and not as testimony. 27

On the following day, Mrs. Hutchinson asked that the ministers who had testified against her be required to take an oath on their testimonies. Again, she cited a Biblical source for her statement, for the Lord had said that an oath would cease controversy, 28 thus throwing the court into argument over procedure. It all seemed to Winthrop to prove the evil that the charges had attributed to Mrs. Hutchinson, for her very presence fomented strife. 29

When Cotton was called as a witness for Mrs. Hutchinson, he stated that he had not recalled the discussion which had
transpired at the conference with Mrs. Hutchinson, because he had not expected to be called as a witness. He stated his regret that Mrs. Hutchinson had compared him with the other ministers. Cotton tried to protect her without agreeing with her, but he accomplished little.30

As the trial seemed to be drawing to an inconclusive closing,31 Mrs. Hutchinson declared that the Lord had guided her, and that she knew of his guidance by an immediate revelation to her.32 This rash statement brought her downfall. The concept of direct revelation from the Lord was obviously heretical to the Puritans. One of the deputies made her claim appear worse by recalling that in England she had also said that before any great thing had happened to her, God had revealed it to her.33 Now, she had opened the way for a new charge to be laid against her.

Winthrop regarded this statement by Anne Hutchinson as a providence of God enabling the court to proceed against her on this further matter. She had made the basis of her heresies the direct revelation of the Spirit; the Puritan saw the holy word as the only source of man's knowledge about God. Mrs. Hutchinson had encouraged the people to look for truth and salvation in revelation rather than in the word of God, as propounded by the ministers. He concluded that this matter had been the source of all problems.34

To the members of the court, the practical and political offenses of Anne Hutchinson were now magnified many times by this heretical doctrine. If this concept were put into prac-
tice, there would be no need for ministers at all. One member of the court stated that although sufficient reason for censure had been present before, now even more reason was manifest, for her doctrine of revelation had been the source of all the strife in the colony. 35

A final effort by one of her supporters to sway the court toward taking a more lenient view of Mrs. Hutchinson's doctrines failed. He claimed that a man could not be both judge and accuser. 36 The trial, however, soon concluded.

Winthrop pronounced the sentence of banishment upon her as "a woman not fit for our society", and ordered her imprisonment until the court would remove her from the colony. Although Anne Hutchinson questioned this punishment, the governor silenced her by stating that the court understood it, and was satisfied. 37

Winthrop subsequently gave a religious interpretation of the event, attributing the success of the Court to God's pleasure with the Bay colony, and his displeasure with Mrs. Hutchinson. Wheelwright had gone and Anne Hutchinson was imprisoned for the remainder of the winter, until she would be able to depart. 38 It seemed that no further dissent could break out, which was a cause for rejoicing by the forces of order in the colony.

Mrs. Hutchinson, who was pregnant, was confined in the home of Joseph Weld, brother of the minister Thomas Weld of Roxbury, a minister who had testified against her. While she was thus confined, only the ministers and members of her family
were allowed to visit her; the elders hoped that she would thus cease to be a trouble to the colony. 39

Also at the November session of the court, all of the men who had signed the petition in favor of Wheelwright were ordered to disarm. 40 The court hoped that this method would also help to restore tranquility to the people of the Bay colony. The basis for this decision by the court was that action which rested on revelation could lead only to violence. 41 The fifty-nine Bostonians involved now stood in an avenue of no escape. If they continued to support Mrs. Hutchinson, they would appear to be rebels, a sufficient cause for the order for disarmament. If they did nothing, their silence would imply assent to the purpose for the order. It would also mean that Mrs. Hutchinson would be tried by the church, to determine whether she should be admonished or excommunicated. 42

Cotton took no part in this action. He had not been able to change the opinion of the court. His parishioners had turned against his views. Mrs. Hutchinson had rejected his effort to aid her. The church court would be his final opportunity to state the beliefs he continued to hold. There he, rather than a civil authority, would be master. He could again attempt to dissuade Mrs. Hutchinson, and she might possibly confess and repent. Hopefully, the colony then would be satisfied. 43

While the civil court was meeting in mid-March, 1638, the church of Boston met to try Anne Hutchinson for heresy. The court of the church read to her the twenty-nine reasons for
which her appearance had been summoned,\textsuperscript{44} including errors she
herself had professed, and others held by her followers and other persons. The major beliefs concerned the questions of the role
of sanctification and direct revelation:

26. Sanctification can be no evidence at all of our
good estate.
27. That her particular revelations about future events
are as infallible as any part of Scripture, and that
she is bound as much to believe them, as the Scrip-
ture, for the same holy Ghost is the author of them
both.\textsuperscript{45}

Mrs. Hutchinson again objected to the proceedings for the
same reason that she had objected during her trial at the General
Court. The issue in her mind was clearly one of privacy. Per-
sonal opinions privately expressed were now being used to con-
demn her.\textsuperscript{46} She argued mostly with Cotton and Davenport, another
leading minister. When the interrogation reached the stage where
she differed on doctrine, Wilson moved for her admonition, which
was pronounced by Cotton, her teacher.\textsuperscript{47}

In his speech of admonition, Cotton thanked the Lord for
bringing the issue to light, and blamed himself for his place in
the controversy. He confessed that he had not believed the re-
ports at first, but that God had now shown him the truth, and
the proceedings would have to go forward. He admonished the
family of Anne Hutchinson, and then the women of the church,
warning them to discard her false opinions, but yet urging them
not to condemn all that they had learned from her, for some of
it had been beneficial.\textsuperscript{43}

When he admonished Mrs. Hutchinson herself, Cotton com-
mended her for her good works in the colony, in bringing some women from unsound beliefs, from building their salvation upon works and obedience to the law. He admonished her, however, to consider the dishonor that she had brought to God by her doctrines, a dishonor that outweighed the good she had accomplished. By her heresies, she had actually tried to destroy faith.

Mrs. Hutchinson interrupted Cotton and stated that before her imprisonment the previous winter she had not believed any of the doctrines now imputed to her. This obviously was not true. Cotton concluded his admonition by stating that she must realize the harm she had done to Christ and the church, and repent in the sight of the Lord so that she could be pardoned.

The admonition had been long and harsh.

The following week, on March 22, the church met in the presence of the ministers of the other churches, and the people of the country. The ministers meanwhile had met with her and prevailed upon her to the point that she acknowledged her mistakes except a few, and wrote a recantation which she gave to the church at the second session of the trial. She then acknowledged her mistakes orally, and said that she had "undermatured" the ordinances of God. She also repented her disrespectful actions to the magistrates in the General Court, and asked the church to pray for her.

The assembled gathering continued to argue over the charges imputed to Mrs. Hutchinson, and over her former statement that Cotton was the only minister under a covenant of grace. As Cotton had admonished her on points of doctrine at the first
session of the church meeting, he now admonished her on points of practice, because this was his duty as her teacher. \(54\)

Wilson, the preacher of the Boston congregation, pronounced the excommunication in harsh terms.

\[
\text{Forasmuch as yow, Mrs. Hutchison, have highly transgressed & offended, & forasmuch as yow have soe many ways troubled the Church with yor Erors & have drawn away many a poor soule, & have upheld yor Revelations: & forasmuch as yow have made a Lyse, &c. Therfor in the name of our Lord Je: Ch: & in the name of the Church I doe not only pronounce yow worthy to be cast out, but I doe cast yow out & in the name of Ch: I doe deliver you up to Sa-than, that yow may learne no more to blaspheme, to seduce & to lyse, & I doe account yow from this time forth to be a Nathen and Publican & soe to be held of all the Brethren & Sisters, of this Congrega-tion, & of others: therfor I command yow in the name of Ch: JH: & of all this Church as a Leper to withdraw yor selfe out of the Congregation; that as formerly yow gave dispisèd & contemned the Holy Ordinances of God, & turned yor Backe one them, soe yow may now have no part in them nor benefit by them.} \(55\)

Following the sentencing of Anne Hutchinson, several of her followers and her husband left the colony for an area in Rhode Island, and bought an island in Naragansett Bay from the Indians. \(56\) Several days after the recess of the court, the governor sent her an order to depart from Massachusetts Bay by the end of the month. On March 28 she left for Naragansett Bay. \(57\)

In this new plantation Anne Hutchinson preached for several years with freedom, but in 1642 she moved with six of her youngest children to Dutch territory at Pelham Bay on Long Island Sound. There in 1643 she and all but one of her children were massacred by the Indians. \(58\)
Chapter V - Evaluation

Changing generations have brought different interpretations of the Hutchinsonian struggle in Massachusetts Bay. In general, the most important aspect of the controversy is the fact that it reveals the very nature of Puritanism in the New World. Politics and religion in the Bay colony were inextricably linked. Everything that man did had religious import, for God directed all the events of the world; men, acting independently, fulfilled his plans. Furthermore, the seventeenth century as a whole was to a great extent an age of religion. For the Puritans, who had been a definite and a persecuted minority in the Old World, argument over doctrine was hardly an intellectual amusement; it was the means by which the Puritan comprehended his existence.

Historians have referred to the peculiar quality of the Bay colony in discussing "the New England way." The Anthonian episode was one element which helped to forge this unity of purpose. John Cotton is credited as being the leader of the colony until his death in 1652, and as being the major spokesman for the New England way. The controversy is only a minor episode in the early years of his American ministry. Its outcome illustrates his stand for "law and order." His political writings reveal more clearly than those that are solely theological that for him, church and state were totally interrelated.
Various civil problems arose in the early years of the colony which made it mandatory that a maximum amount of stability be maintained in all matters in order that external threats could be dealt with effectively. Those problems included danger from the French, the Indians, and England herself. The Puritans had managed to found a new commonwelath in which they could practice their religious principles in the manner which they desired, but the mother country was constantly attempting to bring the dissenters back into the fold of conformity. Furthermore, conditions in England itself were not completely stable, for this episode occurred on the eve of the civil war.

The colonists certainly wanted to present a united front to England, for they wished to continue as they were, and they needed immigrants. In February of 1637, when a group returned to England, both Cotton and Wilson addressed them about the dissension breaking out in the colony. Cotton asked that the English be told that the controversy concerned the magnification of the grace of God, in which one party wished to advance the grace of God within a man, and the other party the grace of God to a man. Wilson added that all of the populace worked to advance the free grace of God in salvation.8

It is significant that during the years 1637 through 1639, while there were a thousand migrants to Boston, only seventy-six members were added to the Boston Church, an increase that was negated by the departure of the Hutchinsonians.

There was also civil discord within the colony. Sir Henry Vane, a youth of twenty-four years, had been elected governor in
May, 1636, shortly after his arrival in the colony. Jealousy over his election followed, which added to the constant envy of Winthrop throughout the years, because he was the obvious leader of the colony. When the order was issued which forbade new immigrants to visit Boston without the consent of the civil authority, Vane and Winthrop debated the point. Vane was too imbued with the enthusiasm of youth to be a good governor for the colony which already had an excess of zeal. The additional factor of his favoring the doctrines of Mrs. Hutchinson did nothing to further the peace of the colony, especially because Winthrop, the acknowledged leader of the people, disavowed them.

Thus, the Antinomian controversy would have led to problems if for no other reason than the fact that the times were already too filled with internal and external pressures. The government was more likely to take steps to crush nonconformity in order to maintain a modicum of stability.

Two interpretations have been given about the action taken against Anne Hutchinson. One explanation views her banishment and excommunication as the result of her beliefs, especially her doctrine of individual revelation by the Holy Spirit, which completely negated the tranquility and safety of the commonwealth of Massachusetts Bay. Both politically and religiously, this concept is valid. Politics were determined by religion; the Puritans had founded the colony because of religion. Furthermore, Puritanism was based on the concept that Scripture has revealed to man all that is necessary for every sphere of his life. The Puritan lived according to Biblical teaching,
and was expected to have no beliefs other than those he could read in the Bible or learn from the interpretations of the Scripture by his minister. By Anne Hutchinson's declarations of whether a person was under a covenant of grace or of works, she was usurping the function of the ministers, a duty which was the foundation of the power they held. In addition, her declarations favoring Cotton and Wheelwright were a ground for the belief that she was playing favorites among the ministers.

Another interpretation of the controversy contends it was a victory for conservatism in New England. It was more than this. Toleration was not the principle upon which the colony had been founded, nor was it a seventeenth century concept. The Puritan state stressed conformity and restriction of heresy for the sake of survival. During the court trial Winthrop stated that the case of Anne Hutchinson was not the concern of the elders alone, but that of the whole country. To the Massachusetts Bay fathers no justification other than the colony's survival was necessary for their actions. In light of their situation in New England, this concept is valid.

As a matter of theology, Anne Hutchinson's views were far from orthodox. Her two claims, of the difference between a covenant of works and a covenant of grace, and of the idea of direct revelation, contradicted major tenets of the Puritan faith. She was stating a contrast between a religion that had already been revealed in history and expressed in an infallible book, and a religion which was based upon a personal relationship between
God and man, with revelation and communication between the two. An individual approach to religion, such as the one propounded by Anne Hutchinson, was dangerous in that it would undermine any sort of set, formal religion.

The establishment feared that because Anne Hutchinson had given no importance to works, a man could sin as he pleased, with spiritual impunity. Such a result would completely destroy society. Only one case of this sort occurred, however, involving John Underhill. It was obvious that such a loophole could not be allowed; it was not difficult to infer that sinning could lead to grace, because works were without meaning, and thus to conclude that a man's soul would be in a better state if he had sinned greatly.

Anne Hutchinson taught that man could not discern his justification by his sanctification (good works), but only by the grace of God. This concept contradicted everything for which New England stood. The Puritan society based its laws, both civil and religious, upon the outward appearance.

The society ... was organized upon the avowed basis of the manifestation of godliness in the outward man. The sad countenance, the Biblical speech, the sombre garb, the austere life, the attendance at worship ... were the marks of sanctification by which the elders knew the saints on earth, for whom they were to open the path to fortune by making them members of the church.

In fact, governmental structure in any society must be based upon a covenant of works: that is, the individual's obedience to law. In Massachusetts, the elders had made this standard theirs in religious and political spheres. Thus, both church
and state were ruled by a covenant of works, and either would have been undermined by an attempt to practice the covenant of grace. 25

The expulsion of Anne Hutchinson was based on a narrow interpretation of a religious principle. This action, however, cannot be criticized; this is the sort of society that Massachusetts Bay was and claimed to be; no action was taken under false pretenses. Anne Hutchinson appeared to the propagators of the status quo as an "anarchist subjectivist." Her doctrines tended to destroy social cohesion. They elevated the individual and his conscience, because they relied on revelation by the Spirit, a purely subjective matter. External, objective authority was bypassed; conduct was unimportant. It was obvious to the rulers that these doctrines could lead to a destruction of social and moral standards; they could completely destroy the power of the authorities. 26

By accepting the Hutchinsonian doctrines, the community would have lost completely its marks of distinction between the good and the bad; it would not have known whom to punish, nor whom to reward. 27 Man was measured not by the inward state of his soul, but by his status in the minds of the members of the community, who could see only the outward manifestations of his soul. 28 In order to become a church member, proof of the regeneration of a man's soul was necessary; it was seen in his outward behavior. "There was a prolonged attempt to make the colonies into a kind of Protestant monastery, with no other walls but public opinion." 29
Church and state were separate; they had different purposes and different persons ruled them. The state aimed at external peace; the church at internal peace, based upon self-knowledge of salvation. Both were guided by Scripture. The church would serve as the bulwark of the state by promoting godliness. The state would uphold the laws of the church, and encourage people in their religious practices.30

This theory, however, did not function in practice. During the first thirty years of the colony, the dominant part of society was definitely the "clerical" element. The General Court always asked for the opinion of the clergy. Their advice was respected in matters of Indian attack or in statements of the civil governing system. Sermons frequently had a political impact. The political leaders of early Massachusetts Bay were its ministers.31

Varied questions have also been raised concerning the fairness of the trials of Anne Hutchinson. Some historians have seen these as illegal, anarchical, and matters of pure expediency. The concept of necessity, offered earlier in this chapter, holds here also. Although no indictment was made at the trial of the General Court, sedition and contempt can be inferred as the charges. "Trauding the ministers" was subversive conduct in a theocracy.32

The role of John Cotton throughout the Hutchinsonian controversy has been a major problem in understanding the episode. Cotton himself stated that his views differed from those of the other ministers. He, however, did attempt to compromise. The question of the similarity of Anne Hutchinson's interpretations
to John Cotton's theological doctrines is another matter. It is clear that points of theology in his sermons could be used as points of departure for almost all the doctrines propounded by the opinionists. Cotton himself certainly did not encourage Mrs. Hutchinson's leanings toward heterodoxy, and he did not realize how far she had gone into error until the meeting of the General Court which tried Mrs. Hutchinson.\(^33\)

Cotton has been accused of swaying with the wind, of giving way as a matter of expediency, of not having the courage of his convictions.\(^34\) Other equally prominent historians have given the opposite interpretation to his actions.\(^35\) A careful study of the man will reveal that he stood always for "stability and authority."\(^36\) He could not countenance a break within the colony; he was totally rooted in the significance of the holy experiment. As her teacher, he attempted to help Mrs. Hutchinson during her trial before the General Court, but she scorned his aid, and he was not able to stem the tide of the other ministers. It is true that Cotton was the instrument by which the condemnation was pronounced, but this was his duty as the teacher in her church. Obviously, the situation was not an easy or a comfortable one for Cotton.\(^37\)

Cotton's written defense of his actions recounts the events as they are told by Winthrop and other records of the time.\(^38\) Robert Baillie, an English pamphleteer, had accused Cotton of aiding the Antinomians, but Cotton had replied that although Mrs. Hutchinson was his friend, she was never too dear to him so that she hindered him from carrying out the will of the Lord.\(^39\)
Another interpretation, however, states that Cotton's answer to Baillie confirms the fact that he was totally defeated concerning the issue of preparation for justification.

Cotton agreed that he had thought of leaving Massachusetts Bay. His purpose in leaving, however, was not to settle a new colony with Mrs. Hutchinson or to propagate the doctrines which she was teaching; he would have departed in order to no longer be a cause of disturbance. Cotton refuted all the charges made by Baillie.

Although several authors have seen the doctrines and actions of Anne Hutchinson as a result of her psychological dependence upon the strong figure of John Cotton, who fulfilled the image of her doctineering father which her husband had not been able to do, it is questionable whether any historian can psychoanalyze a person three hundred years after her death.

Two opposing views of the Puritans have been propagated by historians and popularizers. The first interpretation sees them as attempting to live as an exhibit of Christianity, living in a manner that would be pleasing to God, balanced between emotion and reason. The second interpretation holds that they were Arminian, self-righteous, and overly moralistic and rational.

Proponents of the latter explanation, the "popular view," have criticized the Puritans' treatment of the Anne Hutchinson case. They have objected that she was brutally treated while she was pregnant; that she was mentally bullied; that the court acted in its own self-interest; that the trial was a
legal force; and that the judgment was based on religious intolerance. All of these allegations have been refuted. 45

The Puritans cannot be condemned as wrong or praised as right in their actions against Anne Hutchinson. Judgments made in such a matter would of necessity be value judgments. They would not be valid because they are being made at the vantage point of three hundred years after the controversy. The outcome of the struggle was in accordance with the purpose of the settling of the colony: Massachusetts showed the world a community in which both church and state were able to follow the will of God, as well as human beings could do so. 46 The Puritans also established a visible community elastic enough to meet New World emergencies, an accomplishment which was possible only without rigid opinionists such as Anne Hutchinson.
Footnotes

Chapter I

Chapter II

1. John Cotton, God's Promise to His Plantations (Old South Leaflets, Boston, 1896), III, no. 55, 1 ff.
5. Ibid., 8.
6. Ibid., 12.
7. Ibid., 60.
8. Ellis, Puritan Age, 306; Battis, Saints and Sectaries, 4.
10. Ibid., 24.
15. Ibid., 323 - 327.
16. Ibid., 347 - 357.
17. Ibid., 451.
18. Emerson, John Cotton, 47.
20. Emerson, John Cotton, 47.
22. Ibid., 397.
23. Ibid., 398 - 399.
24. Ibid., 400.
25. Ibid., 401 - 403.
26. Ibid., 404.
27. Emerson, John Cotton, 35.
28. Ibid., 395 - 40.
29. Ibid., 42.
30. Ibid., 42 - 44.
Chapter III

4. Ibid., 10 - 12.
5. Ibid., 12 - 16.
6. Ibid., 15.
7. Ibid., 17.
8. Ibid., 27.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
22. Ibid., 202.
23. Ibid., 202 - 203.
24. Ibid., 203.
25. Ibid., 204.
26. Ibid., 204 - 205.
27. Ibid., 207.
The answers given by Mrs. Hutchinson to the questions of the ministers will be discussed in Chapter IV.
30. Morgan, Puritan Dilemma, 142.
32. John Cotton, Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and Power Thereof, According to the Word of God (Boston, 1852), 22 - 23.
34. Ibid., 46 - 41.
35. Ziff, John Cotton, 123.
36. Battis, Saints and Sectaries, 143.
37. Thomas Hutchinson, "Anne Hutchinson in Massachusetts," Old South Leaflets (Boston, 1907), VIII, no. 173, 5.
39. Ibid., 210 - 211.
40. Ibid., 211.
41. Ibid., 212.
42. Ibid., 215.
43. William Hubbard, General History of New England from 1620 to 1680 (Boston, 1835), I, 244.
44. Winthrop, Journal, I, 216.
45. Ziff, John Cotton, 126.
47. Ibid., 219.
49. Ibid., Emerson, John Cotton, 125.
51. Gertrude Husbs, Antinomianism in English History, with Special Reference to the Period 1540 - 1660 (London, 1951), 151.
53. Ibid., 217.
54. Morgan, Puritan Dilemma, 45 - 46.
56. Ibid., 268 - 270.
60. Husbs, Antinomianism, 150.
61. Battis, Saints and Sectaries, 163.
63. Emerson, John Cotton, 120.
64. Cotton, Way Cleared, 41.
65. Ibid., 42.
66. Ibid., 43.
67. Ibid., 45.
68. Ibid., 46.
Chapter IV

1. [John Winthrop], The Short Story of the Rise, reign, anduine of the Antinomians, Familiars, & Libertines that infected
the Churches of New England (Charles Francis Adams, ed.,
Antinomianism in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, 1636 -
1638, Boston, 1894) (London, 1644), 95 - 124.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 168.
9. Ibid., 133 - 134.
10. Ibid., 134; Emerson, John Cotton, 122.
14. Ibid.,
16. Emerson, John Cotton, 123.
17. Battis, Saints and Sectaries, 172.
22. Ibid., 211, 217.
23. Winthrop], Short Story, 146 - 147.
24. "Examination of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson", Thomas Hutchinson, ed.,
History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts Bay, Lawrence
25. Ibid., 368.
27. Ibid., 371.
28. Ibid., 376.
29. Ibid., 379.
30. Ibid., 381 - 382.
31. Ziff, John Cotton, 139.
32. "Examination of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson", Hutchinson, ed., 383-
384.
33. Ibid., 385.
34. Ibid., 387.
35. Ibid., 388 - 389.
36. Ibid., 389.
37. Ibid., 391.
38. [Winthrop], Short Story, 185 - 186.
41. Ziff, John Cotton, 142.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. [Winthrop], Short Story, 218 - 220.
45. Ibid., 220.
47. Ziff, John Cotton, 144.
49. Ibid., 177 - 178.
50. Ibid., 178.
51. Ibid., 179.
52. Ibid., 180.
53. Winthrop, Short Story, 225.
55. Ibid., 190 - 191.
57. Ibid.
58. Battis, Saints and Sectaries, 248.

Chapter V

1. Miller, Seventeenth Century, 463.
2. Battis, Saints and Sectaries, 254.
3. Ibid., 258.
5. Emerson, John Cotton, 156.
6. Ibid., 158.
7. Ibid., 151.
18. Wertenbaker, Puritan Oligarchy, 222.
20. Rufus Matthew Jones, Spiritual Reformers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (Boston, 1914), 274.
23. Huehns, Antinomianism, 47.
27. Mary Caroline Crawford, St. Botolph's Tomb; An Account of Old Boston in Colonial Days (Boston, 1908), 114.
29. Ibid., 160.
31. Ibid., 23.
33. Cotton, Way Cleared, 43.
35. Especially Battis, Emerson, and Ziff.
39. Ibid., 52.
40. Miller, Colony to Province, 58.
41. Cotton, Way Cleared, 52.
42. Ibid., 52 - 54.
43. Most notably Battis.
44. Smith, Yankees and God, 152.
45. Ibid., 153 - 156.
46. Morgan, Puritan Dilemma, 180.
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Extremely pertinent to this subject; gives the core of Cotton's theology about the doctrine of the covenant.


A good example of one of Cotton's early American sermons.


A hodgepodge of a sermon, and a good illustration of Cotton's theology.
Cotton, John, *A Sermon Preached by the Reverend Mr. John Cotton, Deliver'd at Salem, 1636*. Boston, 1715.

Sermon preached in June, 1636, explaining the covenant concept.


Treatise on the Congregational system.


Of all Cotton's works, this treatise is of most worth in gaining an understanding on his own view of the Hutchinsonian controversy. It was written in answer to Robert Bueilie's *A Dissuasive from the Errors of the Times*, and offers both a chronological account of the controversy, and a refutation to the claims of Bueilie. The only point of doubt concerning its validity is the fact that it was written ten years after Anne Hutchinson had left Massachusetts Bay, and thus Cotton's ideas might have been mellowed by time.


English sermons giving many examples of Cotton's theology.


A treatise by a theologian of the mid-seventeenth century, not involved in the Massachusetts controversy, illustrating the contemporary theological view of the covenant.


History written in the late seventeenth century recounting events in New England during the lifetime of the author. It has a different perspective from Winslow.


This work is included as a primary source because the second volume contains, in its appendix, a record of the trial of Mrs. Hutchinson by the General Court in November, 1637.

Johnson also has written a general account of the events of Massachusetts as he knew it, from a religious perspective.


This is the stenographic record of the church trial of Anne Hutchinson, in March, 1638, discovered almost 350 years later, and published by the Massachusetts Historical Society on 1547.


Winthrop is the best source available for the Hutchinsonian controversy. Although his work may be biased by the personal role he played in the episode, he recounts almost all of the facts, along with his opinions.


This work is also invaluable as a source for the specific occurrences which affected the controversy. Winthrop gives accounts of the trials by the General Court and by Boston Church, but they are not stenographic records, and this entire pamphlet illustrates his prejudicial account of the episode.

Secondary Sources


General history.

This work is a major sourcebook for the Antinorian controversy. In addition to Winthrop's *Short Story* (see list of primary sources); it also contains the record of the court trial, as also given by Hutchinson; the record of the church trial, as found in the *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*; extracts from Cotton's *Bay Cleared*; and an introduction by Adams himself.


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General history.


General history.


General history.


This work is the most complete and most up-to-date study of Anne Hutchinson. Battis' sources are excellent, and his study is totally thorough. He has especially done a great deal of research about the supporters of Anne Hutchinson, and their position in the community. There are few things that Battis has failed to include. Unfortunately, however, he has written from a rather psychological and romantic point of view, and has added a great deal of narrative that is pure fiction. His research is solid, and the factual portions of this work are outstanding, but the over-romanticization has considerably decreased its value.


Includes a chapter on the trial of Anne Hutchinson; not particularly worthwhile.


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