

Antislavery in America:
The Press, the Pulpit,
and the Rise of
Antislavery Societies

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We analyze how communications networks and social institutions influenced the growth of the antislavery movement in the U.S. from 1790 to 1840. Communications networks fueled by print media transmitted news about the movement to the public and so helped mobilize a broad base of support. Among social institutions, churches were especially supportive because their emphasis on morality and community was conducive to antislavery activism. Our analysis focuses on the founding of antislavery societies, the formal organizations that underpinned this movement, and makes three contributions to our understanding of social movement organizations in general and antislavery societies in particular. First, we show that the impact of mass media was strong as far back as the early nineteenth century and that the growth of magazines spurred antislavery society formation. Second, we demonstrate that theology, specifically an orientation toward this world or heaven, determined whether religious resources were available to antislavery organizations. This-worldly religions supported abolition organizing, while other-worldly religions undermined it. Third, we resolve an important causal ambiguity in debates about antislavery by showing that the development of the media was the cause, not merely a consequence of or companion to growth of antislavery organizations. ●

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, reform associations proliferated in the U.S. They espoused causes as varied as the abolition of slavery, temperance, reform of seamen, phonetic spelling, and vegetarianism. They made possible a new mode of contention: the modern social movement. Whereas social protests in the early eighteenth century tended to be short-lived outbursts mounted by loosely connected groups that were regionally rooted and emphasized local demands, a century later, social protests were sustained, formally organized, transcended neighborhoods, and aimed at distant targets—often, but not always, the state (Hobsbawm, 1959; Rudé, 1981; Tilly, 1986, 1995; Tarrow, 1998). The birth of the modern social movement was defined by a shift in the repertoires of contention—the set of actions activists use to assert their claims—from parochial, bifurcated, and particular to cosmopolitan, modular, and autonomous (Tilly, 1995). These new repertoires of contention were supported by social movement organizations like antislavery societies, temperance unions, and women's rights associations, which forged extensive, often nationwide networks of reformers and developed flexible routines that facilitated sustained mobilization and protest (Tarrow, 1998). One of the most influential of these early social movements was the antislavery movement. Understanding how these organizations came to be founded reveals the forces driving one of the earliest modern social movements. In doing so, we resolve a persistent causal ambiguity about the conditions that enable social movement formation. The development of the media led to the formation of social movements.

Between 1790 and 1840, the period covered by our analysis, the antislavery movement became modern: it spread across the young nation, from Maine to North Carolina, from Massa-

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chusetts to Ohio; it developed a repertoire of contentious acts, notably petitions, protests, and publications, that could be used by reformers in many different locations; it persisted for decades; and it put increasingly intense pressure on the state. This movement is of particular interest because it catalyzed other important nineteenth-century movements, such as women's rights and temperance (Tyler, 1962; Rendall, 1985). It also transformed politics: after 1830, the use of print media, grassroots organizing, and graphic images—all tactics antislavery advocates helped pioneer—came to define American politics (Newman, 2002).

Antislavery societies, like other social movement organizations, required resources, both tangible (funding, infrastructure, and people) and intangible (expertise, publicity, and organizing templates) (McCarthy and Zald, 1977; Gamson, 1990). To acquire resources, previous scholars have found, social movement organizations often rely on two powerful mobilizing structures: communications networks and established social institutions. Communication networks allow movements to propagate messages that are framed to resonate with and draw in potential supporters; they can also be used to construct perceptions that political opportunities for mobilization are ripe. Mass media can be especially powerful in this regard. By framing a movement's ideals as being compatible with the master logics of society, mass media can mobilize a broad base of support (Kahan, 1999; Roscigno and Danaher, 2001; Koopmans and Olzak, 2004). Our study complements the many historical narratives and ethnographic accounts of how media influence social movement formation (e.g., Gitlin, 1980; Abzug, 1994; Newman, 2002; Nord, 2004). Histories and ethnographies offer a close-up view of micro processes in a few select cases, often the most successful. Many historical works make compelling arguments but are limited in geographical and/or temporal scope. For instance, Newman (2002) provided an insightful overview of antislavery organizing from 1790 until the 1830s, but the study was largely confined geographically to Pennsylvania and Massachusetts.

Affiliations with extant social institutions, such as churches, professional associations, and educational institutions, can also provide important resources to fledgling social movements. To the extent that churchgoers espouse values congruent with those of social movements, they are a receptive audience and are easily brought into movements (Freeman, 1973; Wood, 1999). Activists can also call on churches for funding and for infrastructural support in the form of templates for organizing and practices that reinforce the bonds of group membership (Morris, 1984; Smith, 1996). Young (2006) made an excellent case for the role of evangelism in the antislavery movement, but his study did not examine the effects of churches more broadly and was limited in its temporal scope. Understanding the influence of this movement requires assessing the entire landscape of antislavery organizing, including both those times and places that saw a great deal of antislavery organizing and those that saw little or none.

Previous work on the impact of religious institutions has generally emphasized the strength of religious belief (e.g., Morris, 1984; Smith, 1996), but it is important to understand not just how strongly activists are connected to religious institutions but also which religious ideals activists draw on (Wood, 1999). As McAdam (2003: 290) concluded, "Prior organization and all the resources in the world matter little if their use is not governed by shared meanings and identities legitimating contention." To bring shared meanings and identities into the picture, we refocus attention on theology during the anti-slavery movement. Churches vary in the degree to which their theologies are congruent with the idea that improving society is a moral act (White and Hopkins, 1976; Wood, 1999). Weber (1993: 166–183) distinguished between this-worldly and other-worldly religions. This-worldly churches, whose theologies were focused not just on redeeming souls but also on redeeming society, made it possible for their adherents to visualize the abolition of slavery as a step toward the creation of a purer Christian community. In contrast, other-worldly churches, whose theologies disdained participation in the secular world and demanded a focus on individual salvation, would have discouraged such "meddling" in the secular world—and participation in the anti-slavery movement.

Although social movement organizations have been found to be supported by both mass media and religious institutions, most previous studies cannot disentangle the impact of these causal factors. Mass media support the growth of social movement organizations (Gitlin, 1980). But at the same time, these media benefit from the efforts of social movement organizations, which launch their own newspapers, magazines, and Web sites, and provide other (non-affiliated) media outlets with material that may attract a wide audience (Gitlin, 1980). Moreover, religious organizations provide a foundation for the development of mass media (Nord, 2004; Haveman and King, 2007). It is not clear, in the end, whether media are a cause, a consequence, or merely a companion of social movement organizations. We examine this causal ambiguity in the course of our study of the foundations of anti-slavery societies in the U.S. from 1790 to 1840. To ground our study, we begin by briefly relating the history of the anti-slavery movement, paying special attention to antislavery societies.

THE RISE OF ANTISLAVERY SOCIETIES IN AMERICA

The first antislavery society in America, the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, was founded in 1775 by a group of prominent Quakers. This society, along with the New York Manumission Society, founded in 1785, and the American Convention of Abolition Societies, founded in 1794, constituted the center of the early American antislavery movement. These societies advocated gradual abolition of slavery; their tactics emphasized voluntary manumissions, legal aid for blacks, and petitions to state governments; and their members were prominent white politicians, lawyers, philanthropists, and businessmen, including such notables as Benjamin Franklin and Alexander Hamilton. This style of local legal activism and elite organizing dominated the early years of the antislavery

Antislavery in America

movement (Newman, 2002). In some respects, these early societies supported a premodern social movement, one that depended on the peculiarities of local resources and whose targets were often local slave owners. But in many other respects, these early societies formed the basis of an almost-modern social movement: they were formal organizations that repeatedly used modular tactics—petitions and lawsuits—over extended periods of time and aimed these tactics at state governments (Newman, 2002).

The antislavery movement became fully modern when the American Antislavery Society (AASS) was founded in 1832. Established as a regional association in Massachusetts, the next year, the AASS sought nationwide membership, including blacks as well as whites, and adopted a federated structure comprising nested local, state, and national chapters. This federated model, which first became popular among civic organizations and temperance societies in the 1820s (Mazzone, 2004), enabled a franchise-like expansion; it reduced mobilization and coordination costs by providing a template for organizing and a way to link local groups to a nationwide effort (Schlesinger, 1944; Skocpol, 1997; Skocpol, Ganz, and Munson, 2000).

With organizational changes came changes in ideology and tactics. In contrast to earlier elite-based antislavery societies that sought manumission and gradual abolition, the AASS initiated a popular grassroots campaign to promote immediate abolition (Newman, 2002). Rather than having prominent citizens sign petitions or bring lawsuits, the AASS sought to build widespread support among the citizenry to end slavery through a moral transformation that would turn the entire populace into abolitionists. To that end, the AASS relied on emotive appeals, traveling agents, the propagation of literature, and the formation of local societies. The importance of the pulpit and the press to the AASS can be seen in its constitution (American Antislavery Society, 1838: 6–9), which declared:

We shall organize Antislavery Societies, if possible, in every city, town, and village in our land.

We shall send forth agents to lift up the voice of remonstrance, of warning, of entreaty, and rebuke.

We shall circulate unsparingly and extensively antislavery tracts and periodicals.

We shall enlist the pulpit and the press in the cause of the suffering and the dumb.

We shall aim at the purification of the churches from all participation in the guilt of slavery.

This statement reflects the AASS's goal of transforming society through moral suasion, which would convert a large mass of Americans to the antislavery cause. In short, the AASS propelled antislavery activism from an elite movement to a grassroots one (Newman, 2002).

The number of antislavery societies remained quite small from the 1790s to the 1820s because early antislavery societies had a narrow membership base. There were never more than 20 antislavery societies in the years before 1820 and fewer than 65 before 1830. The number of antislavery

societies grew explosively in the 1830s: from 47 in 1825 to 429 in 1835 and over 1,600 in 1839, at which point the organized antislavery movement peaked. In 1840, the antislavery movement began to fragment over what role women should play and whether abolitionists should engage in political action. This fragmentation happened, in part, because antislavery societies embraced a broad and therefore heterogeneous constituency. After 1840, the antislavery movement never regained its earlier organizational unity.

Antislavery sentiment was as slow to expand geographically as it was to grow in numbers. In 1790, antislavery societies were concentrated in the northeastern and middle Atlantic states. By 1820, organized opposition to slavery had spread to the frontier states of Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee. In the South, 1827 marks the height of the organized antislavery movement. That year, almost half of existing antislavery societies (31 out of 64) were in southern states. The expansion of cotton culture, the political crisis over the legality of slavery in Missouri, and the increasing popularity of calls for immediate abolition made the South increasingly hostile to antislavery organizing (Abzug, 1994; Stewart, 1997). By the mid-1830s, the movement had crystallized along what would become Union-Confederacy lines.

The antislavery movement's success in organizing was uneven. Antislavery societies were most numerous in New York, Ohio, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania; on average, each year between 1790 and 1840, these states hosted 37, 29, 28, and 17 antislavery societies, respectively. Because states varied widely in population, Rhode Island, Michigan, and Massachusetts had the most antislavery societies per capita. No antislavery society was ever organized in such large southern states as South Carolina and Georgia. Dependence on slave labor and the catalyzing power of the AASS's federated structure (Skocpol, 1997; Skocpol, Ganz, and Munson, 2000) partly explain the geographic and temporal pattern of antislavery organizing. But the support of print media and religious institutions also mattered.

The Influence of the Press and the Pulpit

Immediately after the birth of the Republic, there were few resources and little infrastructure to support, sustain, and coordinate social movement organizations. But over the next six decades, many supportive institutions began to flourish: the press exploded, and religious revivals contributed to the largest expansion of organized religion to date. Without the resources and infrastructure provided by these social institutions, organizing for reform would have proved formidable, if not impossible. Yet the tumultuous transformations occurring during this period make untangling causality difficult. Historical accounts have typically focused on either the role of the media (Savage, 1938; Newman, Rael, and Lapsansky, 2000; Newman, 2002; Fanuzzi, 2003; Nord, 2004) or religion (Smith, 1957; Barnes, 1964; Stewart, 1997; Bolt and Drescher, 1980; McKivigan, 1984; Abzug, 1994; Mintz, 1995; Young, 2006). Very few studies have given equal attention to both causal forces, perhaps because the situation is complicated, first by reciprocal interdependence between media and social move-

ment organizations, second by church support for both media and social movement organizations. This complex system of causality makes it impossible to determine, using qualitative historical methods, the answers to two questions: Did media have any non-endogenous influence on antebellum social movements? And to what extent did churches have direct effects on antebellum social movements, net of their indirect effects through church-supported media?

Some work on religion and antebellum social movements has documented the role played by religious revivals—emotionally charged meetings at which fiery preachers thundered at large crowds of believers and potential converts (Smith, 1957; White and Hopkins, 1976; Young, 2006). It is not clear, however, whether the energy released by these revivals translated into institutionalized action through religious communities, with religious congregations mediating the catalyzing effect of revivals. Understanding the influence of organized religion on the antislavery movement is further complicated by the fact that many churches' stances toward the movement changed over time.

The press. Communications media help theorize movements: they make sense of the principles on which movements are built and so can make a movement's goals appear both appropriate and acceptable (Strang and Meyer, 1993). Most basically, media provide a channel through which the general public can learn of the existence, efforts, and contentions of activists (Lipsky, 1968). Beyond this, social movements need media to transmit images and information that push the state and the public to codify what activists do as legitimate protests rather than criminal disturbances (Turner, 1969). Movements' supporters accomplish these ends by framing their goals and tactics as compatible with prevailing cultural elements (Snow et al., 1986; Snow and Benford, 1992). If and when media pick up these frames and transmit them, the potential for mass recruitment materializes. Finally, media allow people to interact despite spatial and temporal distance and so engender social interactions that transcend space and time (Thompson, 1995)—the essential pattern for modern social movements.

Among the many forms of communication media, mass media have more communicative power than point-to-point media, such as letters, because mass media reach many people, while point-to-point media reach few (Lipsky, 1968; Myers, 2000). By weaving invisible threads of connection among their audience members (Starr, 2004), mass media can sustain invisible communities whose members share ideas, values, and principles (Park, 1940). Thus mass media are "a site on which various social groups, institutions, and ideologies struggle over the definition and construction of social reality" (Gurevich and Levy, 1985: 19). They are "a significant social force in the forming and delimiting of public assumptions, attitudes, and moods—of ideology, in short" (Gitlin, 1980: 9). Interpretive work done by movement organizers, media, and audiences may result in a series of transformations and reinterpretations of the messages sent by activists and organizers (Gamson et al., 1992; Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993). Nonetheless, as mass media diffuse facts,

ideologies, and repertoires of action to a far-flung public, they can create a widely shared perception that the political opportunity for activism is ripe (Kahan, 1999). Coverage by mass media can precipitate waves of organizing and protest, involving such varied phenomena as race riots (Myers, 2000), strikes (Roscigno and Danaher, 2001), right-wing protests (Koopmans and Olzak, 2004), and civil-rights sit-ins (Andrews and Biggs, 2006).

Specialized media—those that focus on social reform—are particularly beneficial to social movements because they are likely to be sympathetic toward other reform efforts and because they create and sustain a sense of collective identity among reformers. These outlets are powerful, not just because of their targeted focus (Corzine, 1981) but also because they are more likely than mass media to frame movements' ideals and actions in a way that is consistent with the views of adherents (Fine and Kleinman, 1981). Specialized social-reform media work from inside movements, while mass media (and unaffiliated specialized media) work from outside, "translating" movements to the general public. There is always a good chance that meaning will be lost in translation, but such loss is less likely through media that are allied with reform movements.

We know that mass media are important for contemporary social movements (e.g., Gitlin, 1980; Myers, 2000; Koopmans and Olzak, 2004; Andrews and Biggs, 2006). But were they also important for the earliest modern social movements, those that arose in the late 1700s and early 1800s? If so, we can claim great temporal continuity in causal processes. There is some evidence to support the claim that mass media influenced early social movements. For example, *The Liberator*, published by William Lloyd Garrison, drew thousands to the antislavery cause (Abzug, 1994; Stewart, 1997). Antebellum antislavery organizers themselves recognized the power of the media; for example, Garrison declared that there were a "multitude of journals . . . scattered over the land, thicker than raindrops, and as nourishing to the soil of freedom" (quoted in Fanuzzi, 2003: xi). But historical accounts necessarily focus on a few powerful examples and do not tell us whether early print media in general helped or hindered early social movements, and the claims of contemporary observers must be tested by objective scholarly research. Examining the effect of the media is especially important in this case because opposition to the antislavery movement was also carried through print media.

Although print media were in their infancy in the antebellum era, they were expanding rapidly. Between 1790 and 1840, the period covered by our analysis, the population of the United States increased by a factor of three, from 3.9 million to 17.1 million (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2001), while the number of newspapers increased by a factor of 15, from 92 to 1,404 (Pred, 1973), and the number of magazines increased by a factor of 40, from 12 to 489 (Haveman, 2004). Of course, there was considerable regional and temporal variety in the strength of antebellum media. For example, in the fledgling magazine industry, 12 magazines were published in 1790, primarily in New York City, Philadelphia, and Boston. In

1840, the original centers of magazine publishing—New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania—were strengthened and joined by new hubs in Ohio and Kentucky. Notwithstanding this geographic concentration, magazines spread across the nation, appearing up and down the eastern seaboard and throughout frontier states (Haveman, 2004).

Even in those times and places where they were few in numbers, antebellum media had considerable power to shape social life, which stemmed from the fact that America was a society of strangers, in which people lacked the traditional bonds of family and place (Tocqueville, 2000). A paucity of social ties makes it difficult for the proponents of any cause to cohere into stable groups and retain members, much less attract new ones (Snow, Zurcher, and Ekland-Olson, 1980). In the absence of social ties, a different cohesive force was needed to foster organized efforts to promote social causes. Print media constituted this much-needed alternative social glue for antebellum movements. Another reason why antebellum print media might have had substantial power over social movements: they were quite easy to launch.¹ As one historian noted, “. . . the first half of the nineteenth century was indeed the golden age of regional printing. Almost anyone could set up a printing shop, and publishing was ephemeral, genuinely popular, and virtually uncontrolled” (Hatch, 1989: 144).

Antebellum newspapers and magazines engaged their far-flung readers in repeated interactions, which reinforced social movements’ messages and helped create a sense of collective identity. Newspapers and magazines—not just periodicals published by antislavery societies but also the many non-affiliated, general-interest periodicals—carried announcements about meetings, offered updates on legal initiatives, printed fiery letters to the editor, and published emotion-laden essays, poetry, and fiction describing the horrors of slavery.

Antislavery publications often targeted local media organizations to help them spread their message. One way in which this worked was through antislavery agents, who traveled from town to town espousing the antislavery cause. Agents actively courted the press, particularly local newspapers and magazines, and wrote articles that would appeal to local audiences (Myers, 1999; Newman, 2002) because periodicals could “spread the word farther and faster” than lecturers (Newman, 2002: 162).

Although mass media can give social movement organizations a much-needed boost, these organizations can also support media. By engaging readers, antebellum reform associations helped stimulate the demand for periodicals. More directly, antebellum reform associations seized on periodicals as tools to mobilize the populace. Prominent examples include the AASS’s *Antislavery Record* and the American Temperance Society’s *Journal of Humanity*. Paraphrasing Tocqueville (2000: 494), the press made reform associations, and reform associations made the press. Any analysis that fails to account for this reciprocal influence will generate misleading results. But previous studies of the organized antislavery

¹ We thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing this out.

movement have either ignored the issue of reciprocal causation or have handled it for just a few select cases.

The pulpit. As a central expression of culture, religion provides people with sacred symbols that synthesize their ethos—"the tone, character, and quality of . . . life, its moral and aesthetic mood"—and their world views—"the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are" (Geertz, 1973: 126–127). Because religion frames peoples' beliefs about what society should be, it shapes their cognitive dispositions toward mobilizing efforts (Wood, 1999), as well as other forms of civic and political engagement (e.g., Wilson and Janoski, 1995; Wuthnow, 1999; Beyerlein and Hipp, 2006). Religion also brings people together to demonstrate their shared commitment to values, symbols, and rituals, strengthening members' social bonds. Because of their central concern for morality and community, religious institutions often support social movements (e.g., Morris, 1984; Smith, 1996; Wood, 1999; McAdam, 2003).

Religious institutions have many resources that can be tapped by social reformers. First and foremost, religious institutions have a mass of believers who can be turned into activists. It is easy for activists to appeal to the religious identities of congregants (Wood, 1999) because congregants are imbued with an intense moral energy that can be channeled toward reforming society's ills (Smith, 1957; Mintz, 1995). Because religious culture is, by its very nature, congruent with the ideals of some movements, activists may find it easy to link a movement's ideals to religious beliefs, and churches can therefore be extremely effective mobilizing structures.

Second, religious institutions develop organizing templates and structures that can be adopted by activists, which reduces the costs of organizing reform associations and helps them acquire constitutive legitimacy (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). In this way, religious institutions offer concrete analogies for movements, cultural tools that can be used in many contexts to legitimate movements and ease their expansion (Douglas, 1986: 45–53; Swidler, 1986). Church structures constitute models that activists can adopt, which reduces the costs of organizing by simplifying organizational-design decisions, providing proven leaders, and making social movement organizations seem familiar. The clearest example of this is the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization literally built on the institutional infrastructure of black churches, which catalyzed the civil-rights movement (Morris, 1984).

All churches have resources that can potentially be deployed by social movement organizers, but not all churches support social movement organizing. The extent to which churches' resources will be deployed for reform depends on their theological orientations, notably whether they are this-worldly or other-worldly religions (Weber, 1993: 166–183). This-worldly theologies embrace participation in the institutions of the secular world. The faithful are urged to improve the world, to transform it in line with the tenets of their faith, especially by showing benevolence toward the less fortunate. This-worldly

Antislavery in America

theologies are consistent with the ideals of most social movements, in particular with the belief that improving society is a moral act. Because members of this-worldly churches think like activists, they are predisposed to join social movements. In stark contrast, other-worldly theologies require followers to disdain participation in the secular world and to attend instead to their own salvation. Connection to the world is regarded as acceptance of the world, which is perilous because it alienates congregants from God. Because other-worldly theologies contend that congregants should focus on saving their own souls rather than reforming society, these faiths push congregants to abstain from, even oppose, social-reform movements—unless those movements push for personal (rather than societal) reform, as the temperance movement did in the 1830s and the virginity-pledge movement does today. But ideas, including theologies, aren't always harnessed to action. Theology doesn't make church members join or oppose social movements. Instead, like any coherent set of ideas, meanings, and values, it creates the potential for action, by making adherents more or less likely to conceive of serving or opposing reform as being consistent with their religious beliefs. Theology can thus motivate future action, as well as justify past action (Swidler, 1986).

In the antebellum era, religious institutions became powerful forces in American society. Participation in organized religion nearly doubled between 1790 and 1840 (Finke and Stark, 1992: 15–16). It is not surprising, then, that antebellum churches were critical sites for mobilizing antislavery sentiment. As historians have often noted, antislavery advocates, like many later social reformers, were motivated by religious beliefs (Bolt and Drescher, 1980; Abzug, 1994; Mintz, 1995; Stewart, 1997; Newman, 2002). Antebellum churches pioneered two tactics that were adopted by many social movement organizations (Abzug, 1994; Mintz, 1995): the agency system, a system whereby individuals traversed the country to spread a message, and the publishing society, which produced pamphlets and other printed materials to be distributed for free or reduced cost. The agency system was a tremendous gift from the churches, particularly the Methodists, to the antislavery movement. After its adoption by the AASS, the agency system helped shift the center of the antislavery movement from an urban core to the rural periphery of society (Newman, 2002). Similarly, religious publishers like the American Tract Society, which printed and distributed Bibles and tracts in the hope that reading these would bring people to salvation, also offered organizing templates for antislavery societies (Nord, 2004). For example, the AASS followed management techniques pioneered by the American Tract Society, specifically its formal structure and strategy (Nord, 2004: 110–111).

American churches in the antebellum era embraced widely varying theologies. After the Revolution, the gradual disestablishment of state-supported religion leveled the playing field in the competition for souls. Immigration—notably of Irish Catholics and German Lutherans, Anabaptists, and Catholics in the 1830s—also contributed to religious diversity. Even

more important were religious revivals that swept across America from 1733 to 1776 and again from 1790 to 1845. Revivalists clashed with established religious authorities and founded dozens of new faiths, often in opposition to established churches: evangelical variants of Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches; spin-offs from the Methodist and Baptist churches; assorted Christian, Disciples of Christ, and Christian Connection congregations; small sects like the Adventists, Church of God, and Plymouth Brethren; and utopian communities like New Harmony and the Shakers. Our central concern is with the distinction between this-worldly and other-worldly churches. In the antebellum era, this-worldly churches included Congregational, Disciples of Christ, Dutch Reformed, Episcopal, Mormon, Presbyterian, Quaker, Swedenborgian, Unitarian, and Universalist, while other-worldly churches included Adventist, Baptist, Dunker, German Reformed, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Moravian, Shaker, and Society of the Publick Universal Friend.²

As it is today, religion in the antebellum era was divided along regional lines. This-worldly churches dominated American religion in 1790, constituting almost 60 percent of congregations. Their market share decreased by half over our study period—not because they shrank in terms of absolute numbers but because their growth was outpaced by the explosion in the numbers of other-worldly churches. Other-worldly churches rose from 37 percent of congregations in 1790 to 66 percent in 1840. New England was always a bastion of the this-worldly Congregational Church, although that faith's market share dwindled from 62 percent of congregations in 1790 to 29 percent in 1840; the Congregationalists' stranglehold over New England was gradually usurped by the other-worldly Baptist and Methodist Churches (22 percent and 18 percent of congregations in 1840, respectively). The Middle States always had substantial levels of religious heterogeneity. In the South, the this-worldly Episcopal Church shrank from 20 percent of congregations in 1790 to only 6 percent in 1840, while the other-worldly Baptist and Methodist Churches grew from 30 percent and 9 percent, respectively, to 35 percent and 41 percent. The frontier states evolved from an other-worldly Baptist stronghold in 1790 (over three-quarters of congregations) to a mix in 1840 of other-worldly Methodists and Baptists (38 percent and 32 percent, respectively) and this-worldly Presbyterians (15 percent).

This-worldly churches. This-worldly faiths were concerned with relieving tensions between the divine and the earthly world. As Parsons (1922: lxii) explained, every adherent to this-worldly theologies “seeks mastery over the worldly component of his individual personality, and seeks in principle to extend this mastery to all aspects of the human condition. His goal is to attain mastery over the human condition as a whole.” In other words, this-worldly churchgoers regarded the world as amenable to Christian discipline. Their theologies were undergirded by a principle of disinterested benevolence—that the faithful have a moral responsibility to reform society as a whole—that pushed their adherents to engage in

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As explained in the method section below, we relied on sociological theory (Weber, 1993) and histories of American religion (Ahlstrom, 1972; Hatch, 1989; Mintz, 1995) to classify denominations.

Antislavery in America

social-reform efforts (Butler, 1990; Carwardine, 1993). The leaders of this-worldly churches sought to rid the country of sin because they believed that the American community had a collective covenant with God to act as “a city on a hill,” a pure community that would withstand scrutiny by all observers and serve as a model for the rest of the world. Only in this way would God’s will be enacted. Their determination to reform society was strengthened by their belief that they were but instruments in God’s plan for reordering human society.

The largest this-worldly churches, Congregational and Presbyterian, merit special attention. Members of these faiths “saw no lines of division between an individual’s responsibilities to himself, his church, and the wider world, and recognized the importance of political engagement” (Carwardine, 1993: 123). Because they believed the faithful have a moral responsibility to reform society, these faiths deployed church resources to promote widespread social change, notably by establishing benevolent societies, such as the American Sunday-School Union and the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, that aimed to correct peoples’ failings by propagating religious values and so purifying the nation by ridding it of its collective evils (McLoughlin, 1978; Butler, 1990; Carwardine, 1993; Hirrel, 1998). Many of these church-sponsored benevolent societies shaded into reform associations because their underlying principles could be applied to reform efforts like abolition and temperance; after all, if true virtue consists of promoting the greatest good for all human beings, then slaveholding and drunkenness must be seen as violating moral principles (Hirrel, 1998).

These benevolent societies reflected the “genteel orthodoxy” of the Congregationalists and Presbyterians (Young, 2006: 6). Many Presbyterians and Congregationalists were members of the social and economic elite. Their vast resources allowed these churches to direct massive publishing campaigns, raise enormous sums of money, and develop a nationwide network of auxiliaries. Between 1811 and 1830, Congregationalists and Presbyterians raised over \$2.81 million for their benevolent societies (Young, 2006: 73). In stark contrast, by 1830 the federal government had spent only \$3.59 million on internal improvements since the Revolution (Sellers, 1991). The combination of a particular this-worldly ideology of disinterested benevolence and the organizational resources of this-worldly churches created a powder keg of reform activism.

The principle of disinterested benevolence that undergirded this-worldly religions was often directed toward the abolition of slavery. Influential Congregational theologian Samuel Hopkins, an early abolitionist agitator, popularized this principle. By 1837, fully one-third of Congregational ministers in Massachusetts were members of antislavery societies (Dorchester, 1888: 460). As an editorial in the *Congregational Quarterly* put it, “it should be remembered that leading Garrisonians . . . imbibed their antislavery sentiments . . . from Congregational sources” (quoted in Dorchester, 1888: 461). The key to the antislavery movement may have been Garrison’s drawing a connection between antislavery sentiment and the this-

worldly idea of a national sin (Abzug, 1994: 135).³ In 1817, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church unanimously approved a declaration condemning slavery as “a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of nature” and “utterly inconsistent with the law of God” (quoted in Abzug, 1994: 132). Given these sentiments, it is not surprising that Congregational and Presbyterian benevolent societies supported abolition and temperance societies in many states (Young, 2006; Masters and Young, 2008).

Other-worldly churches. Other-worldly faiths pushed adherents to focus on perfecting their souls and developing personal relationships with God. According to other-worldly theologies, sin and confession were rooted in the individual: personal conversion and confession were the paths to God and morality. Other-worldly churches held that Christians should withdraw as far as possible from all civic and social concerns (Ahlstrom, 1972: 231). The essentially individualistic nature of other-worldly theologies was at odds with Puritan campaigns against public sin. Other-worldly churches held that moral transformation would come about through personal conversion and confession rather than large-scale organizing. Leaders of other-worldly churches viewed the benevolent organizations supported by this-worldly churches as elitist and condescending (Miller, 1965; Butler, 1990; Carwardine, 1993). The rejection by other-worldly churches of organized reform movements was in keeping with their populist nature. Members of other-worldly churches tended to be poor yeomen, rather than the wealthy businessmen who were the backbone of this-worldly churches. As upstart sects, most other-worldly churches had fewer material resources than this-worldly churches, so they had little to offer social movements even if they had been inclined toward reform. For all these reasons, the adherents of other-worldly faiths were unlikely to participate in organized social-reform movements—if anything, they were likely to oppose reform efforts as threatening to pollute their souls.

The biggest other-worldly churches were the Baptists and Methodists. Their official stance toward slavery was neutral. They held that slavery was primarily a political and economic problem, not a moral one, so they concluded that slavery was not within the purview of the church (Loveland, 1966; Butler, 1990). For example, although the Methodist General Conference of 1836 recognized the immorality of slavery, it also forcefully denounced “modern abolitionism,” meaning the actions of the AASS and its affiliates (Ahlstrom, 1972: 661). In the end, the church’s unity depended on its being neutral toward slavery (Ahlstrom, 1972: 662). This is not to say that all Baptists and Methodists were neutral toward or supported slavery. Before the mid 1820s, many spoke against it, even in the slave-dependent southern states (Butler, 1990; Abzug, 1994). But this antipathy did not translate into support for abolition societies; instead, antislavery sentiment was manifested in slave owners’ personal pledges to free their slaves, often when they died (Butler, 1990; Abzug, 1994; Newman, 2002). And after our observation period ended in 1840, Methodist and Baptist officials found that the slave question could not be suppressed. Both these church-

3 Even though he was a Baptist, abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison endorsed clerical influences on the secular world (Abzug, 1994: 137).

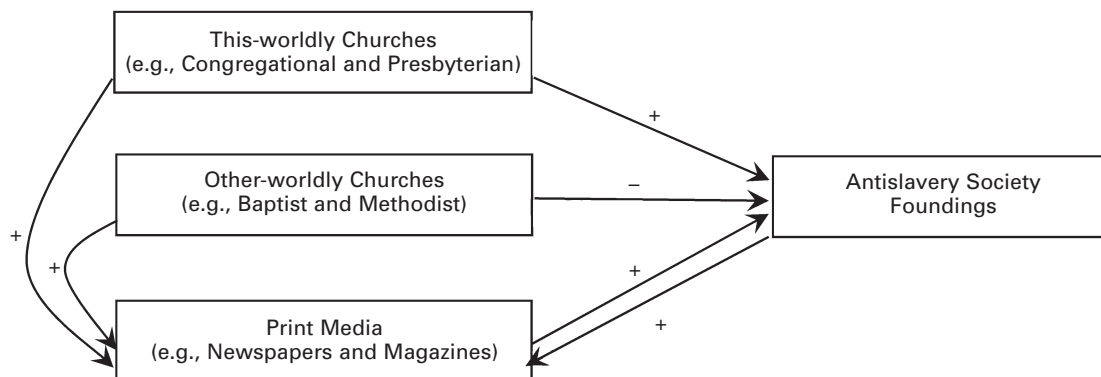
Antislavery in America

es cleaved into two parts (the Methodist Church in 1844 and the Baptist Church in 1845)—one part northern and antislavery, the other part southern and proslavery.

It is important to note that our characterization of the stances of this-worldly and other-worldly churchgoers toward social movements, including antislavery, applies to a particular slice of history, the years prior to 1840. In some regions, religious competition later produced a degree of ideological convergence between this-worldly and other-worldly churches that fundamentally reshaped their relationships with reform associations, including antislavery societies. Indeed, an amalgamation of the intensive confessional protests of the Baptists and Methodists with the extensive organized benevolence campaigns of the Presbyterians and Congregationalists generated a new form of contention in the 1840s (Young, 2006). But our analysis ends just as this process was beginning to unfold.

Figure 1 summarizes the complex interplay of factors that contributed to the rise of the antislavery movement. Antislav-

Figure 1. A model of antislavery society foundings.



ery-society foundings were promoted by print media (newspapers and magazines) and this-worldly churchgoers, while other-worldly churchgoers either undermined antislavery organizing or had no impact on it. Thus religious culture moderated the effect of religious resources, which were differentially distributed among churches. Further complicating the situation was the fact that churches were also “pioneers of print” (Nord, 2004) and contributed significantly to the development of the media. In addition, the relationship between the media and antislavery organizing is endogenous: antislavery societies were both supported by the media and supportive of the media. Antislavery societies supported the media directly by publishing periodicals of their own and indirectly by creating engaging material to fill the pages of unaffiliated periodicals. We assessed the empirical validity of the relationships depicted in this figure through our analyses.

METHOD

To test our predictions, we analyzed the number of antislavery societies founded in each state in each calendar year. The

time frame for our analysis spans the rise of the antislavery movement, ending just as the movement began to splinter, in 1840. Our choice of time frame was driven by historical considerations and by limitations on the availability and reliability of data. Few societies were founded before 1790, and data on some explanatory factors are impossible to obtain before that date, while accurate data on antislavery societies becomes increasingly difficult to find after 1840 because the movement fractured into competing camps.

We used the state as our unit of analysis because it allowed us to control for state-specific factors that may have influenced antislavery society foundings, such as the size of the slave population and the extent of slave-intensive cotton culture. Our analysis includes all 26 states that achieved statehood before 1840: Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Vermont. The original 13 colonies were included in our data set from 1790 to 1840. Newer states were included from the year they achieved statehood to 1840. Our analysis includes virtually all foundings of antislavery societies, except eight founded before 1790.

Data Sources and Measures

Dependent variable. The dependent variable was foundings of antislavery societies. We define an antislavery society to be any organization that worked to limit the spread of slavery to new states and territories or any organization that advocated or worked for manumission, emancipation, or abolition. We excluded colonization societies from our analysis because they had a different ideological disposition, objective, and constituency than antislavery societies: colonization societies sought to “repatriate” slaves to Africa so as to reduce the number of blacks in America. To gather data on antislavery societies, we examined 19 monographs, six dissertations, three bibliographic guides, and a host of primary documents, including annual reports, almanacs, petitions, newspapers, and magazines (a complete list of data sources is available from the first author). We began with the *Annual Reports* of the AASS between 1834 and 1839, which published a detailed list of all auxiliary societies, including their founding dates. Two secondary sources proved especially helpful in locating antislavery societies that were not AASS affiliates; they contained comprehensive lists of organizations founded between 1790 and 1820 (Adams, 1908) and between 1741 and 1830 (Mazzone, 2004). Despite being written almost a century apart, these lists were highly consistent, which increased our confidence in our primary and secondary sources. Several primary sources proved particularly useful, including the *Minutes of the American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, 1809–1821* (Rare Book Collection, Cornell University), *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*, *Herald of Freedom*, *Niles’ Weekly Register*, *The Manumissions Intelligencer*, *Emancipator*, and *The American Antislavery Almanac*. Finally, we pored over the Samuel J. May Antislavery Collection at Cornell University (see

Antislavery in America

<http://dlxs.library.cornell.edu/m/mayantislavery/index.html>), which is one of the world's richest antislavery collections, containing over 300,000 pages of original documents.

In total, we found data on 1,534 antislavery societies. Although our list of antislavery societies is incomplete, the data we have are consistent with counts made by contemporary observers. In 1827, prominent antislavery advocate Benjamin Lundy estimated there were 84 antislavery societies, excluding colonization societies (Finnie, 1969). Our search uncovered 64 societies operating in 1827; hence, our dataset contains almost 80 percent of known abolition societies in 1827. Our data-gathering efforts also yield counts of antislavery societies that either exceed or approximate estimates made by historians. For instance, our dataset approximates the estimates of Locke (1901: 99), who drew on memorials to Congress, *Minutes of the American Convention*, and accounts in newspapers. Our count of antislavery societies also generally exceeds that of Sims (1960: 7), who estimated that there were 198 societies by 1835, 526 in 1836, 1,006 in 1837, and approximately 2,000 in 1840. In contrast, we counted 429 societies in 1835, 837 in 1836, 1,310 in 1837, and 1,454 in 1840.

For each antislavery society, we recorded its name, location, and founding and dissolution dates. If an antislavery society's founding or dissolution date was not available, we used the date of first or last mention in a data source. We could not ascertain the dissolution date for 4 percent of antislavery societies (65 out of 1,534); for these organizations, we estimated the dissolution date, assuming that the society in question had a lifespan equal to the average lifespan of societies founded in the same year. We then counted the number of antislavery societies founded and operating in each state each year.

Print media. To assess the power of mass media, we studied magazines, which are more attractive for our purposes than newspapers. Because their contents and physical media were more permanent than newspapers, magazines were not discarded as quickly and so had a more lasting influence. And because magazines tended to be distributed across larger regions than newspapers, they reached more far-flung audiences. Magazines also devoted more space to editorial comments and letters than did newspapers, and their contents ranged over more subjects than newspapers, which focused primarily on current events (Mott, 1930). Only a minority of magazines—104 out of 2,292—were dedicated to social reform, but many other magazines published long essays, stories, and poems exhorting social-reform causes.

ABI Inform's American Periodical Series Online, which contains digital images of over 1,000 magazines, was our main source of primary data on magazines (for documentation, see Hoonstra and Heath, 1979). To augment these data, we searched the American Antiquarian Society's catalogue and viewed microfilm archives in the Cornell University, Columbia University, and New York Public Libraries. Guided by two standard histories (Mott, 1930; Tebbel and Zuckerman, 1991), we also searched for secondary sources. We used 17 book-

length histories of American magazines; 24 checklists and catalogs; 35 book-length descriptions of specific types of magazines; and 10 articles focusing on particular types of magazines (a complete list of data sources is available from the second author). From these sources, we constructed the life histories of 2,292 magazines published between 1790 and 1840, inclusive. We also flagged 104 magazines devoted to social reform, which allowed us to observe whether specialized social-reform magazines had stronger relationships with antislavery societies than did other kinds of magazines. We then counted the number of magazines and social-reform magazines published in each state in each year. Although we would have liked to pinpoint how far the influence of magazines extended in space, data on magazine circulation by location are almost nonexistent.

Religion. To assess relationships between religious institutions and the organized antislavery movement, it would be ideal to compile state-level time-series data on members of all religions in America from 1790 to 1840, but such data are unavailable. It is possible, though, to gather data on the number of congregations. State-level data on most religions were available in the 1850 census. Two secondary sources provide information for earlier years: Gaustad's (1962: 167) atlas provides very complete data for 1750, while Finke and Stark (1992: 277–288) recorded the number and type of congregations in 1776. An exhaustive search uncovered other data on each denomination in official yearbooks and annual reports. Our study was aided by the fact that "smaller congregations tended to congregate, rather than scatter" (Gaustad, 1962: 163). Thus the smaller faiths for which we have data at the beginning of our study period did not tend to disperse geographically. This fact proved helpful in estimating their trajectories of growth or decline. The Appendix sketches the histories of this-worldly and other-worldly denominations founded before 1840 and describes how we counted congregations. To create annual records, we filled gaps between observed data points by linear interpolation, and we filled gaps between the first observed data points and the start of our analysis period by extrapolating backward to known origin points for each faith. Because the number of churches increased for all faiths during our study period, interpolation yielded reasonable estimates.

We aggregated these data into two categories: this-worldly and other-worldly religions, basing our assessment on readings of Weber (1993), Hatch (1989), Ahlstrom (1972), and Mintz (1995). Classifying any faith as this-worldly or other-worldly requires sensitivity to time and place. Although the Methodist and Baptist Churches were generally other-worldly during the antebellum era, many congregations within these denominations became more this-worldly as they expanded and matured. In the antebellum era, the this-worldly religions were Disciples of Christ, Congregational, Dutch Reformed, Episcopal, Mormon, Presbyterian, Quaker, Swedenborgian, Unitarian, and Universalist; other-worldly religions were the Adventist, Baptist, Dunker, German Reformed, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Moravian, Shaker, and Society of the Publick Universal Friend. Although we gathered data on Jew-

ish and Catholic congregations, we did not include those in our analysis, as both faiths had a very small presence before 1840, and their theologies did not fit neatly into the this-worldly versus other-worldly classification.

Control variables. Our analyses controlled for several factors that might influence both the antislavery movement and the magazine industry: the free and slave populations, urbanization, economic development in each state, and the formation of the American Antislavery Society (AASS).⁴ The slave population is a fine-grained measure of political opportunity: the inhabitants of states that were highly dependent on slave labor should have been more reluctant to support the antislavery movement. Data on the number of slaves per state came from Cramer (1997). We obtained decennial data on state-level population from the census (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2001) and interpolated linearly to create annual data points. The census (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998) provided decennial data on the number of urban residents, defined as people living in municipalities with a population over 4,000. In 1840, the census designation of an urban area changed to 4,200. We obtained data on areas with populations between 4,000 and 4,200 from Moffat (1992). We interpolated linearly to create an annual data series for each state and then calculated the percentage of the state's population that was urban.

The only state-level indicator of economic growth available for the antebellum era is the value of foreign exports, which we obtained from Evans (1976). This allowed us to control for "the market revolution," the rapid expansion of commercial production that occurred between 1815 and 1842 (Sellers, 1991). Data were occasionally missing, so we interpolated linearly between observed data points. Data were not available on foreign exports for several landlocked states (Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, and Tennessee). For these states, we set foreign exports to zero. We adjusted export data for inflation, using a commodity price index developed by McCusker (2001), and calculated exports in constant (1840) dollars. To control for the catalyzing power of the AASS, we created a binary indicator variable equaling zero from 1790 to 1831 (before the AASS was founded) and one from 1832 onward. This indicator varies only over time; it is constant across states.

Finally, we controlled for demographic processes among antislavery societies. Following previous research on organizations in general (Hannan and Freeman, 1989) and social movement organizations in particular (Minkoff, 1997), we expected that the number of extant antislavery societies would affect founding rates. Competition, which deters founding, and legitimacy, which promotes founding, should both increase with the number of antislavery societies operating, but competition should increase faster than legitimacy. The joint impact of competition and legitimacy should yield an inverted-U-shaped relationship between the number of antislavery societies operating and subsequent founding rates. But such a relationship will not be seen if the number of antislavery societies operating does not approach the focal state's carrying capacity. Instead, a positive effect, due solely

4

We would have liked to control for literacy rates, but reliable data are not available before 1840 (Soltow and Stevens, 1981). We know that literacy rates varied across regions and increased over time. Because we controlled for population and economic conditions, which are strongly associated with literacy rates (Soltow and Stevens, 1981), variation in literacy was largely captured in our analyses.

to the legitimating effect of an increasing number of organizations, should be seen. We included both a linear and a squared term for the number of antislavery societies operating, to capture both legitimating and competitive effects.

Methods for Multivariate Analysis

Modeling antislavery society foundings with event-count methods. We sought to understand how many antislavery societies were founded in any given state in any given year. Founding can be understood as an arrival process, in which each new antislavery society is an addition to the focal state during the focal year. We modeled this process using event-count methods (Cameron and Trivedi, 1986), in which the dependent variable is a count of antislavery societies founded in a state in a year, and each observation on each state is assumed to be drawn from a Poisson distribution whose fundamental parameter is λ_{st} :

$$\Pr[Y_{st} = y_{st}] = \frac{\exp[-\lambda_{st}] \lambda_{st}^{y_{st}}}{y_{st}!}, \quad y_{st} = 0, 1, 2, \dots,$$

where y_{st} is the number of antislavery societies founded in state s during calendar year t . We expressed λ_{st} as a multiplicative (log-linear) function of observable explanatory variables ($\mathbf{X}_{s, t-1}$), all of which are measured for each state, each year:

$$\lambda_{st} = \exp[\boldsymbol{\beta}'\mathbf{X}_{s, t-1}].$$

The Poisson model assumes that the dependent variable has equal mean and variance. When this assumption is violated (i.e., when the variance exceeds the mean and the dependent variable is overdispersed), the model generates spuriously small standard errors for explanatory variables and thus artificially inflates their significance levels (Cameron and Trivedi, 1990). Because our data showed substantial overdispersion, we estimated negative-binomial models using the `xtnbreg` procedure in Stata (2005), which corrects overdispersion by rescaling standard errors and recalculating goodness-of-fit statistics. We have more than one observation on each state, and these observations are unlikely to be independent. To account for this non-independence, we estimated models with standard errors clustered on states. To mitigate problems arising from unobserved heterogeneity not captured by our explanatory or control variables, we estimated random effects.

The instrumental-variable technique. To establish that the press was a cause and not a correlate or consequence of the organized antislavery movement, we used the instrumental-variable (IV) technique, which separates the endogenous and exogenous components of the press (Angrist and Krueger, 1991; Bound, Jaeger, and Baker 1995; Greene, 2003: 378–401). We began by estimating a first-stage regression to predict the endogenous variable:

$$W_{st} = \alpha + \beta'X_{st} + \gamma Z_{st} + \varepsilon,$$

where W_{st} is the endogenous variable (here, number of magazines) in state s at time t , X_{st} is a vector comprising counts of this-worldly and other-worldly churches and all control variables in state s at time t , and Z_{st} is the value of the instrument for state s at time t . This first-stage regression purges the endogenous components, producing an exogenous variable—the predicted value of the endogenous variable \hat{W} . We used this new exogenous variable in a second-stage analysis to predict the outcome of interest:

$$Y_{st} = \alpha + \beta'X_{s, t-1} + \delta \hat{W}_{s, t-1} + \varepsilon,$$

where Y_{st} is the number of antislavery societies founded in state s at time t , and all other variables are as defined above.

To be valid and so yield more consistent and less-biased estimates than least-squares estimation, an instrument must meet three criteria: (1) it must be partially correlated with the endogenous variable, to avoid problems arising from weak instrumentation (Bound, Jaeger, and Baker, 1995); (2) it must act only through the endogenous variable, not directly; and (3) it must be exogenous and uncorrelated with the error term (Greene, 2003). The number of post offices in each state meets these criteria. The post office was the main distribution channel for antebellum magazines and newspapers (Mott, 1930; John, 1995); it also distributed tracts published by churches and antislavery societies (Nord, 2004). In this way, the post office supported print media, including magazines, so that it meets the first criterion. A test for the strength of the instrument was statistically significant ($p < .001$). The number of post offices also meets the second criterion. The postal network benefitted antislavery societies, but this impact was indirect, operating through antislavery society publications. For instance, in the mid-1830s, the AASS undertook what it dubbed “the great postal campaign,” which sought to win converts to the abolitionist cause by inundating people with publications. In July 1835 alone, 175,000 tracts, pamphlets, newspapers, and magazines were sent through the mail (Stewart, 1997). By 1837, the AASS had distributed over a million antislavery publications (Wyatt-Brown, 1969: 143). Moreover, because magazines constituted a relatively small portion of the mails (John, 1995), we can be confident that the growth of the magazine industry did not drive postal expansion; instead, causation ran solely from post offices to magazines.

The third criterion can only be assessed theoretically, because there is no statistical test for exogeneity. This criterion could be violated in our analysis by population growth, urbanization, and commercialization. All three factors are associated with the growth of both post offices and antislavery societies. But by including all three variables in our first-stage regression, we avoid violating this criterion. This criterion would also be violated if antislavery societies influenced the allocation of post offices. Placement of post offices was

determined by petitions from communities to Congress. If abolitionists were more adept at petitioning, due to their experience with petitions, the number of antislavery societies could partly determine post-office allocation, which would violate the exclusion assumption. But the historical record suggests otherwise. Prior to 1840, antislavery advocates constituted a small percentage of the population. Even at its peak in 1839, membership never reached 1 percent of the population (*Annual Report of the American Antislavery Society*, 1839; Skocpol, 1999). Antislavery advocates' political strength did not exceed their numbers, at least not before 1840. To the contrary, the government was often quite hostile to the antislavery movement and enacted a series of "gag rules" in the 1830s that prohibited antislavery petitions; there was also a push (ultimately unsuccessful) to prohibit the distribution of antislavery materials through the mails. Because it is doubtful that antislavery societies influenced the location of post offices, we conclude that the post-office variable meets the third criterion for instrument validity.

We obtained counts of post offices in each state from *Annual Reports of the Post Master General to the House of Representatives* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office). Reports were not available for all years; we used reports for the years 1790, 1791, 1796, 1797, 1798, 1803, 1804, 1807, 1814, 1815, 1817, 1825 to 1829, 1831 to 1835, and 1841. We interpolated linearly between observed data points to generate one data point for each state for each year. The number of post offices in each state increased continually, so this interpolation quite accurately approximated the missing data points.

Our dependent variable is a count, so event-count methods are most appropriate (Cameron and Trivedi, 1986), but event-count models are multiplicative, so they violate a core assumption of IV estimation, namely, that unobservables be additively separable from the parametric model (Mullahy, 1997). The solution, then, is to turn a multiplicative model into an additive one. One way to do this is to log the count variable (after adding one to make it possible to generate a real value for zero counts) and estimate the logged variable using an additive model (Mullahy, 1997; Santos and Tenreiro, 2006). Accordingly, we estimated a two-stage feasible generalized-least-squares (GLS) model of the logged number of antislavery societies founded (and a first-stage model of the number of magazines published) using the *xivreg* procedure in Stata (2005).

Including lagged values of the dependent variable and its close derivatives complicates IV estimation (Angrist and Krueger, 2001). One of our control variables, the number of antislavery societies, is a close derivative of the dependent variable. The simplest solution to this problem is to drop this variable and to proceed with the IV technique described above. That is what we did here, but only after ascertaining that dropping this variable does not change the coefficients on the variables of theoretical interest.

As a baseline, then, we estimated negative-binomial models of the number of antislavery societies founded in each state

Antislavery in America

each year. We then estimated GLS models in which the dependent variable was the logged number of abolition societies founded. We compared the results of this linear model to the nonlinear negative-binomial model. Finally, we estimated GLS-IV models, again using as the dependent variable the logged number of abolition societies founded. We finished by comparing the results of the GLS-IV models to the GLS models.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics. Bivariate correlations, which are not shown here to reduce the length of the paper, generally support our hypotheses. Some correlations are quite high, notably between churches and magazines (average $r = .59$) and between the two kinds of churches ($r = .56$). In addition, the free population in the state is highly correlated with the explanatory and control variables (average $r = .73$). This is not surprising, given that most of the factors of interest—population, the money economy, religious institutions, and the press—increased monotonically throughout our study period.

Event-count Models

Table 2 presents our baseline analysis of antislavery society foundings. As predicted, model 1 shows a positive effect of the number of this-worldly churches and a negative effect of the number of other-worldly churches. But only the coefficient on other-worldly churches reached statistical significance. Across all models, the effect of other-worldly churches is strong: on average, if the number of other-worldly churches increased from the mean to one standard deviation above the mean, the founding rate of antislavery societies declined by 66 percent.

Model 2 adds the number of magazines published in the focal state. The effect of magazines is positive and statistically significant. Model 3 shows that social-reform magazines have a similar positive and statistically significant effect. In both models, the coefficients on other-worldly churches remain roughly the same in size and significance level, which indicates that they had a direct influence on antislavery society foundings, net of their indirect influence through print

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Analysis of Founding Rates of Antislavery Societies, 1790–1840*

Variable	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.
No. of Antislavery societies founded	1.51	9.20	0	157
No. of Magazines	7.34	16.0	0	111
No. of Social-reform magazines	0.26	1.11	0	12
No. of Post offices	210.3	273.4	1	1,863
No. of This-worldly churches	196.5	200.9	0	1,305
No. of Other-worldly churches	303.1	313.3	0	1,743
Free population/100,000	4.31	4.36	0.42	29.0
No. of Slaves/1,000	71.1	103.0	0	469.8
Percent urban population	7.47	10.3	0	60.0
Exports (\$1,000,000, 1840)	2.14	3.85	0	33.0
No. of Antislavery societies	8.08	36.9	0	379

* These statistics are based on 989 annual observations of 26 states between 1790 and 1840, inclusive.

Table 2

Negative-Binomial Analysis of Antislavery Society Foundings, 1790–1840*

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Constant	-3.80 ^{***} (.219)	-1.29 ^{***} (.298)	-3.86 ^{***} (.221)	-3.79 ^{***} (.230)
Free population/1,000	.237 ^{**} (.055)	.137 (.107)	.239 ^{***} (.058)	.134 ^{***} (.041)
No. of Slaves/1,000	.461 ^{**} (.154)	.069 (.177)	.398 ^{**} (.154)	.026 (.145)
Percent urban population	.038 ^{**} (.012)	-.003 (.020)	.016 (.014)	.001 (.011)
Exports (\$1,000,000 1840)	-.146 ^{***} (.043)	-.084 ^{***} (.010)	-.136 ^{***} (.004)	-.156 ^{***} (.003)
AASS dummy (= 1 1832+)	1.21 ^{***} (.214)	1.73 ^{***} (.239)	.768 ^{***} (.224)	1.68 ^{***} (.194)
No. of Antislavery societies	.028 ^{***} (.005)	.021 ^{***} (.004)	.020 ^{***} (.004)	.019 ^{***} (.004)
No. of Antislavery societies ² /1,000	-.009 ^{***} (.017)	-.007 ^{***} (.002)	-.007 ^{***} (.001)	-.007 ^{***} (.001)
No. of This-worldly churches/1,000	.614 (1.12)	1.06 (2.21)	.521 (1.16)	1.40 (1.09)
No. of Other-worldly churches/1,000	-2.71 ^{***} (.567)	-2.31 ^{**} (.731)	-2.18 ^{***} (.628)	-2.00 ^{***} (.481)
No. of Magazines		.028 ^{**} (.010)		.014 (.009)
No. of Social-reform magazines			.314 ^{***} (.046)	.200 ^{***} (.052)
χ^2	209.2	476.71	322.1	586.1

• $p < .05$; •• $p < .01$; ••• $p < .001$; two-tailed t tests.

* These random-effects models were estimated on 989 annual observations of 1,534 foundings of antislavery societies in 26 states between 1790 and 1840, inclusive. The dependent variable is the number of antislavery societies founded. Standard errors, which are shown in parentheses below parameter estimates, are clustered within states. All explanatory variables were lagged by one year to ensure temporal priority.

media. In other words, other-worldly-church effects were not mediated by magazines. On average, magazines of any kind increased the founding rate of antislavery societies by 22 percent, while social-reform magazines increased the founding rate by 8 percent. There were few social-reform magazines—104 out of 2,292, or an average of one in every four state-year observations—but each one had a huge impact on antislavery societies. A one-standard-deviation increase in the number of social-reform magazines increased the founding rate fivefold. Moreover, model 4 suggests that the effect of magazines in general is due primarily to social-reform magazines: when both magazine counts are included in the model, only the number of social-reform magazines has a statistically significant effect, showing that social-reform magazines mediated the effect of other kinds of magazines.

Control variables. States with larger free populations experienced consistently more antislavery society foundings. The associations with other population variables—the number of slaves and the percentage of urban-dwellers—were inconsistent, probably because of collinearity (they were correlated with the number of magazines). The negative effect of exports is due to the fact that the slave-intensive cotton industry accounted for over half of all exports between 1830 and 1840 (Evans, 1976). As expected, antislavery society foundings rose after the AASS was founded. Finally, we see density dependence in antislavery society foundings: the coefficient on the linear term for extant antislavery societies

Antislavery in America

is positive and statistically significant, while the coefficient on the squared term is negative and significant. Based on the average of estimates in models 1 and 2, this inverted-U-shaped relationship peaked when the number of antislavery societies operating in a state reached 150, which was far higher than the mean (8.1) but well within the observed range for this variable (maximum = 379). We conclude, therefore, that antislavery societies' relationships were, in large part, mutualistic; there is no evidence of competition except for a very small number of observations, in New York, Ohio, and Massachusetts from 1836 onward.

In preparation for the IV analysis, we reestimated the models shown in table 2 without the counts of antislavery societies, to avoid complications that develop when using the IV technique on models containing derivatives of the dependent variable (Angrist and Krueger, 2001). The coefficients on the remaining variables did not change materially. To conserve space, we do not show these results, but they are available from the first author on request.

Applying the IV technique. Table 3 shows more elaborate investigations of the complex causal relationships between the development of the magazine industry, the expansion of organized religion, and the founding of antislavery societies. This table is divided into two parts. Models 1 and 2 analyze the effect of all kinds of magazines; models 3 and 4 analyze the effect of magazines devoted to social-reform causes.

Table 3

Analysis of Antislavery Society Foundings, 1790–1840: Reducing Endogeneity*

Variable	Model 1 GLS (Magazines)	Model 2 GLS-IV (Magazines predicted using IV)	Model 3 GLS (Reform magazines)	Model 4 GLS-IV (Reform mags. predicted using IV)
Constant	.037 (.026)	-.006 (.147)	.002 (.023)	-.003 (.225)
Free population/1,000	.015 (.011)	-.017 (.024)	.010 (.011)	.003 (.029)
No. of Slaves/1,000	.002 (.019)	.022 (.075)	-.012 (.017)	.004 (.084)
Percent urban population	.002 (.002)	-.007 (.008)	.004*** (.002)	-.004 (.009)
Exports (\$1,000,000 1840)	-.026**** (.005)	-.034**** (.009)	-.023**** (.004)	-.043**** (.011)
AASS dummy (= 1 1832+)	.340**** (.039)	.760**** (.064)	.290**** (.037)	.714**** (.064)
No. of Magazines	.021**** (.003)	.021*** (.007)	.249**** (.026)	.309** (.121)
No. of This-worldly churches/1,000	.207 (.216)	2.09*** (.765)	.723**** (.189)	1.79* (1.08)
No. of Other-worldly churches/1,000	-.300*** (.106)	-.978**** (.225)	-.173* (.101)	-.801**** (.224)
χ^2	404.6	607.1	429.7	613.0

* $p < .10$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$; **** $p < .001$; two-tailed t tests.

* Models were estimated on 989 annual observations of 1,534 foundings of antislavery societies in 26 states between 1790 and 1840, inclusive. The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the number of antislavery societies founded (plus one). All models include random effects and correct for heteroskedasticity. Standard errors, which are shown in parentheses below parameter estimates, are clustered within states. All explanatory variables were lagged by one year to ensure temporal priority.

Models 1 and 3 use simple GLS; models 2 and 4 make use of our IV, the number of post offices, to deal with endogeneity. For all models, the dependent variable is the logged number of antislavery societies founded; this transformation turns the count into a continuous variable. Because we added one to all values before taking the log, when no antislavery society was founded in the focal state in the focal year, we could still calculate a value for the log transformation.

Comparing the results in tables 2 and 3 shows consistency across estimation methods: the parameter estimates on the four variables of central interest are always in the expected direction and, with the exception of this-worldly churches, at least marginally significant. This increases our confidence in the simple GLS models. Comparing the GLS and GLS-IV models shows how correcting endogeneity affects the results. Hausman (1978) specification tests reveal significant differences between the coefficients in the GLS and GLS-IV models (models 1 vs. 2, $\chi^2 = 237.63$, d.f. = 8, $p < .001$; models 3 vs. 4, $\chi^2 = 193.68$, d.f. = 8, $p < .001$), which indicates that the GLS estimators were inconsistent. The effects of the press are about the same magnitude in the GLS-IV models as in the GLS models, but the effects of the pulpit are consistently larger—10 times as large for this-worldly churches, 2.5 times as large for other-worldly churches. In the GLS-IV models, the effects of this-worldly churches are also at least marginally significant. Taken together, the Hausman specification tests and the increased magnitudes and significance levels demonstrate that much of the effects of churches are obscured when the endogeneity of the press is not taken into account.

Comparing the magnitudes of the effects after partialing out the endogenous component of magazines, this-worldly churches had the expected positive effects in both GLS-IV models, increasing founding rates by 46 percent on average. Increasing the number of this-worldly churches by one standard deviation above the mean more than doubled the number of antislavery societies founded. In contrast, other-worldly churches had the expected negative effects in both GLS-IV models, decreasing founding rates by close to 32 percent. Increasing the number of other-worldly churches by one standard deviation above the mean decreased the number of antislavery societies founded by 99 percent. In the GLS-IV models, the effects of magazines, whether we consider all magazines or only specialized reform magazines, remained positive and statistically significant. On average, magazines of all types increased the antislavery-society founding rate by 22 percent. If the number of magazines rose to one standard deviation above the mean, the antislavery-society founding rate rose by 150 percent. On average, the number of social-reform magazines increased the antislavery-society founding rate by only 8 percent, because there were so few social-reform magazines. But each social-reform magazine had great power: if the number of social-reform magazines rose by one standard deviation above the mean, the founding rate increased by a factor of five.

Robustness checks. We assessed the robustness of these results in several ways.⁵ First, we dropped from our analysis

5

To save space, we do not show the results of these robustness checks. They are available from the first author on request.

the four landlocked states for which we could find no data on exports: Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, and Tennessee. The results are identical to the ones reported here, with one exception: in the GLS-IV model corresponding to model 4 of table 3, the coefficient on social-reform magazines was non-significant.

Second, to examine the sensitivity of our results to the rapid growth of the movement after the AASS became a national organization in 1833, we redid the analysis using data for 1834 to 1840. This reduced the number of observations to 176. The GLS-IV models, which are extremely fragile and require a great deal of statistical power, could not be estimated in a meaningful manner. Therefore, we reestimated only the event-count models. In this truncated slice of history, the effects of magazines (both all magazines and social-reform magazines only) were positive and statistically significant, and the effect other-worldly churches was negative and statistically significant. Both effects were in line with our predictions. But the effect of this-worldly churches was negative and statistically significant for the model that counted all types of magazines and non-significant in the model that counted social-reform magazines only. This was unexpected, but these effects were tiny: if the number of this-worldly churches increased by one standard deviation above the mean, the founding rate decreased by less than 0.02 percent. At the same time, the parameter estimates on magazines are three times larger in this later period than in the entire observation period. This indicates that the media became increasingly powerful as time passed, and they grew in numbers and legitimacy.

Third, we conducted more detailed analyses of the impact of particular religious institutions. We could obtain only rough estimates of the number of congregations for many denominations. To improve the quality of the data, we reestimated all models substituting counts of congregations in the largest this-worldly and other-worldly denominations for which we could gather excellent data: Congregationalist, Baptist, and Methodist Churches. The results of this alternative analysis are very similar to the results shown here. In the GLS-IV models, this-worldly Congregational Churches had statistically significant positive effects; other-worldly Baptist and Methodist Churches had statistically significant negative effects. These results reinforce our confidence in the results shown in table 3.

We also probed to see whether it was revivals, rather than religious congregations, that drove the results on churches, to test the alternative hypothesis that revivalism led churches to embrace social reform (Smith, 1957; Young, 2006). We added a binary indicator variable set equal to one in years when the focal state experienced one or more revivals. This variable had consistently positive and statistically significant effects. But adding it to our models did not change the results on churches. We conclude, therefore, that churches and revivals had independent effects on the antislavery movement.

We would have liked to include a measure of social class in our analysis, because it has been shown to be associated with religious beliefs, but data limitations made this impossible. But this possible confound is not really a problem, for two reasons. First, many lower-class and middle-class people were adherents of this-worldly churches, with those classes constituting the majority of members of the this-worldly Disciples of Christ, Dutch Reformed, Mormons, and Universalists, and a large fraction of the Presbyterians and Quakers. By the same token, there were many upper-class adherents of other-worldly churches, especially Dunker, German Reformed, and Lutheran. Second, our analysis of the upper-class Congregationalist Churches versus lower-class Baptist and Methodist Churches pits class extremes against each other, so it should exaggerate any effect of class that is mixed up with theology. As explained above, in the GLS-IV models, Congregationalist Churches had the expected positive effects, while Baptist and Methodist Churches had the expected negative effects. If class were confounded with theological orientation, that confound would show up in this analysis, but it doesn't.

Finally, we reanalyzed the data separately by region: North versus South, using the Mason/Dixon Line as the boundary. We estimated two negative-binomial models for each region: one containing counts of all magazines, the other containing counts of social-reform magazines only. The parameter estimates on most variables of interest remained in the expected direction. Unsurprisingly, though, the effects of many variables were rendered non-significant because the number of observations on each region was low (432 in the South, 557 in the North) and because foundings of antislavery societies in the South were rare events (only 56 in total, and zero in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, and South Carolina). In all models, the effects of other-worldly churches were negative and non-significant. The effects of this-worldly churches were positive and non-significant for three out of four models; they were negative and non-significant in models estimated on the northern sample when the model contained a count of all kinds of magazines. This pattern of results suggests that the reciprocal association between magazines and this-worldly churches, which is especially strong in the North ($r = .87$), may have operated primarily through the discursive potential of the media, which this-worldly churches were crucial in developing. The effects on all magazines and social-reform magazines were positive in all models, but they were statistically significant only in models estimated on the northern sample, which indicates that the media were especially strong in the North. This accords with the historical record: in the South, there was a considerable state-supported effort to suppress abolitionist literature, including attempts to outlaw the distribution of abolitionist literature in the mails and the burning of antislavery publications at post offices.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this paper, we examined the factors that contributed to the rise of the organized antislavery movement between 1790 and 1840. This era saw an efflorescence of reform associa-

tions and the birth of the modern social movement. A growing body of scholarship has examined the burgeoning of associationalism, including organized social-reform efforts, in antebellum America. We contribute to this work by using a powerful case to statistically assess explanations derived from theory and qualitative historical studies. Consistent with arguments advanced by scholars of social movements and civic associations (Tilly, 1986; Tarrow, 1998; Skocpol, 1997; Skocpol, Ganz, and Munson, 2000), we found that both religion and print media influenced the development of antislavery societies. And consistent with Weberian analyses of the impact of religious tradition on civic and political engagement (e.g., Wilson and Janoski, 1995; Hirrel, 1998; Wuthnow, 1999; Wood, 1999; Beyerlein and Hipp, 2006), we found that churches with different theological orientations had different relationships to antislavery societies: this-worldly churches supported them, while other-worldly churches undermined them.

This study has made three contributions to the study of social movements and organizations. First, we extended previous work on the impact of religion on social movement organizations, which has generally emphasized the strength of religious culture (e.g., Morris, 1984; Smith, 1996). We demonstrated that it is important to understand not just how deeply activists are immersed in religious culture but also which religious cultures activists draw on (Wood, 1999; McAdam, 2003; Young, 2006). Our analysis explicitly recognized the divide between this-worldly and other-worldly churches (Weber, 1993: 166–183) and showed that churches whose theologies were focused not just on redeeming souls but also on redeeming society (this-worldly churches) inflamed the antislavery movement by making it possible for their adherents to visualize the abolition of slavery as a step toward the creation of a purer Christian community, while churches whose theologies disdained the secular world (other-worldly churches) inhibited the movement by making their adherents shun involvement in secular matters.

We initially argued that many kinds of social institutions—not just churches but also professional associations, educational institutions, and federated reform structures—can be powerful mobilizing forces, making it possible for activists to unleash the resources in extant organizations. We focused here on religious institutions, arguing that the content of religious culture—this-worldly versus other-worldly theology—created the potential for action by making adherents more or less likely to conceive of serving or opposing reform as being consistent with their religious beliefs. It may be that the content of the other social institutions' cultures—the passion for efficiency in for-profit organizations, the desire to uncover parsimonious scientific truths in research universities, the goal of offering high-quality service in professional associations—could determine whether those institutions' resources can be tapped by social reformers. Just as antebellum antislavery reformers' ability to harness a religious community's resources required congruence between that religious community's theology and the frames antislavery activists used, it may be that contemporary reformers' ability to harness the

resources of corporations, universities, and professional bodies requires congruence between those social institutions' cultures and the frames reformers use to justify their goals and actions (Schneiberg, King, and Smith, 2008; Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Snow et al., 1986; Snow and Benford, 1992).

Our second contribution is to demonstrate the power of mass media, even in an era when those media were not yet mature. Temporal and spatial variation in the development of magazines is strongly associated with temporal and spatial variation in the founding of antislavery societies. Our analysis complements ethnographic studies of media's effects on contemporary social movements (e.g., Gitlin, 1980) and historical accounts of media and antislavery organizing (e.g., Newman, 2002; Nord, 2004) by offering a view of the entire national landscape, rather than a close-up view of micro processes in a few select cases. It may be that early mass media had such strong effects on antislavery organizing precisely because they were in a developmental stage. At this point in history, large institutions had not yet come to control the periodical press, so it was easy for radical activists like William Lloyd Garrison to launch magazines to agitate for the abolition of slavery. Parallels to the present are striking: the dispersed communities of activists involved in early-nineteenth-century magazines are akin to the dispersed communities of activists involved in the newest mass medium, the Internet.

The importance of targeted communications and independent media can be seen by comparing the importance of all types of magazines and specialized social-reform magazines. The aggregate effect of all magazines was far greater than the aggregate effect of social-reform magazines because social-reform magazines were fewer in number than all other types of magazines. But the addition of a single social-reform magazine had a bigger effect on antislavery organizing than did the addition of a single magazine of any type. Moreover, the effect of magazines of all kinds seems to have been mediated by social-reform magazines. This suggests that the power to control social movement frames is critical. Providing information about social movements and generating debate through media are not enough to create a public sphere—a discourse of reform is essential to support social movements.

Third, we resolve persistent ambiguities in causal reasoning about the role of the media in the antislavery movement. Although historians have long recognized the importance of the state, religious institutions, and the media for the development of the antislavery movement, historical analyses have struggled with the complex interplay between these factors. Our analysis disentangled reciprocal causation to determine whether print media are a cause, a consequence, or merely a companion of the formation of social movement organizations. Before partialing out reciprocal causation, it was apparent that both this-worldly churches and mass media supported antislavery organizing, while other-worldly churches undermined it. But after partialing out reciprocal causation, the effects of churches became stronger, while the effect of the press remained about the same. Although

our analysis focused on a single case of an early social movement, the theoretical basis for our predictions is germane to many contemporary social movements, as the press and the pulpit influence all kinds of organizations that seek to fundamentally restructure social life. Our study cleanly traces the ways these institutions can support or suppress social movement organizations and thus how they can encourage or discourage civic engagement.

Print media and churches were critical to the formation of an early social movement that fundamentally transformed American social and political life. The press and the pulpit continue to be important today: we have evidence of their impact on social movements as disparate as civil rights in the U.S. and Poland and anti-apartheid in South Africa (Morris, 1984; Smith, 1996; Andrews and Biggs, 2006). The unvarying influence of the press and the pulpit on social movement formation is remarkable given the enormous social, political, and economic upheavals that have shaken American society. Through civil war, the advent of electricity and telecommunications, two world wars, and the shift away from an agrarian economy, the press and the pulpit remain the bedrock upon which social movements are built. The importance of access to media for social movement formation holds across time. But whether this holds across space, particularly outside the United States, remains an open question. Despite the democratization of the public sphere through the advent of the Internet and decreasing communication costs, there are still considerable differences across countries in media access. How, if at all, interstate variation in access to the media relates to the capacity to form social movements may prove fertile grounds for future research.

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Antislavery in America

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APPENDIX: Sources of Data on This-worldly and Other-worldly Denominations

This appendix describes this-worldly and other-worldly religious denominations and explains how we gathered data to augment the information provided by Gaustad (1962), Finke and Stark (1992), and the census.

This-Worldly Churches

Congregationalists. Excellent data were available from Quint and Cushing (1873: 103–173). Through this publication appeared before 1873, earlier editions do not list the date of establishment for each congregation; instead, they list only extant congregations. We used founding dates given in the 1873 text to calculate the number of churches in each state at ten-year intervals. Although this method undoubtedly suffers from survivor bias because churches that disbanded before 1873 were missing from the records, the Congregational Church experienced continuous growth after the Revolution. Thus undercounting due to lost data on dissolved churches should be minimal. To assess the extent of undercounting, we gathered data from other sources when they were available. Dorchester (1888: 278) records the number of Congregational churches in 1800 in Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York. Sweet (1936: 22–26) contains data on the number of Congregational churches in Tennessee and Kentucky between 1750 and 1850, as well as the number in Indiana in 1834 and Illinois in 1830 and 1836. The statistics reported in these supplemental sources were consistent with the data we constructed using Quint and Cushing, which reinforces our belief that undercounting due to survivor bias is minimal.

Christians/Disciples of Christ/Christian Connection. This network of religious reformers sprang up after 1792 and coalesced into a distinct denomination in the early 1830s. Despite our best efforts, which included corresponding with this denomination's official historian, we were unable to find data on any Christian churches outside of the census. Because they were concentrated in New England, Virginia, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, their impact on antebellum religion is limited to a few parts of the country.

Dutch Reformed. This church took root in America in the early seventeenth century. It was heavily concentrated in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania throughout our study period: as late as 1850, nine-tenths of Dutch Reformed congregations were located in New York and New Jersey (Gaustad, 1962: 97). Because the church did not begin to spread westward until the 1840s, data from Gaustad, Finke and Stark, and the census offer excellent coverage of this faith's evolution.

Episcopalians. This was the official state-sanctioned faith in six of the thirteen original colonies, and it had substantial footholds in most of the others. Data sources are plentiful. The number of Episcopal congregations in 1820 and 1830 are recorded in the *Journals of General Conventions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, 1785–1835*, edited by Perry (1874). Data for most states (Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Delaware, Virginia, New Jersey, and Ohio) came from reports presented at the convention of 1820 (vol. 1: 528–546). We also used data from reports presented at the conventions of 1817 (vol. 1: 462–478) for North Carolina and 1822 (vol. 2: 21–51) for Georgia. Data for most states (New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Mississippi) came from the convention of 1829 (vol. 2: 247–276). We also used data from the convention of 1832 (vol. 2: 382–408) for Maine, Vermont, Pennsylvania,

Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama. Finally, data on all states were reported at the convention of 1835 (vol. 2: 576–606).

Mormons/Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. This sect was born in 1830 in New York. Its adherents moved west to Ohio and Missouri in 1831, Kentucky in 1834, Illinois in 1838, and finally Utah in 1847. We used information from Ahlstrom (1972), Hatch (1989), and official church Web sites to determine the exact dates of the founding and dissolution of Mormon congregations as this sect moved westward.

Presbyterians. By the 1740s, the Presbyterians had built churches in ten of the thirteen original colonies. Most data on Presbyterian congregations came from *Extracts from the Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* for general assemblies held in 1809 and 1819. These data are presented by jurisdictional area (synod and presbytery), rather than by state. We used maps of presbyteries presented in Gaustad (1962: 88) and Sweet (1936: 50), as well as more general maps and histories of presbyteries, to transform the number of churches per jurisdictional area into the number of churches per state. Because jurisdictional areas are sometimes split between states, we divided the number of congregations so as to approximate the land in each state covered by the focal presbytery. To supplement these official church records, Sweet (1936: 48–51) provides data on the number of congregations in Indiana in 1806 and 1837, Michigan in 1816, and Illinois in 1837. Dorchester (1888: 282, 385–388) is the source of data for Virginia and North Carolina in 1800, Alabama in 1830, Florida in 1824, Indiana in 1830, Illinois in 1816, Missouri in 1816 and 1830, and Michigan in 1816 and 1830.

Quakers. This denomination first came to Rhode Island in 1637. After William Penn secured his grant for Pennsylvania in 1682, most Quakers moved there. Around 1740, there were also sizeable Quaker communities in New Jersey, Rhode Island, and the Carolinas. Unfortunately, we could find no data on the number of Quaker congregations after 1776, probably because this denomination's authority structure was highly decentralized.

Swedenborgians/New Jerusalem Church/New Church. This spiritualist faith came to America in 1798, taking root first in Maryland and later in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New York, and other neighboring states. We could find no data on this denomination outside the census, perhaps because it never numbered more than 10,000 adherents (Ahlstrom, 1972).

Unitarians. This faith, which began as a liberal wing of the Congregational Church in 1787, became a separate denomination in 1825. Until the 1830s, Unitarianism was almost totally confined to a single state, Massachusetts (Dorchester, 1888). Allen (quoted in Gaustad, 1962: 126) declared that "A radius of thirty-five miles from Boston as a center would sweep almost the whole field of its history and influence." During the 1830s, Unitarianism started to spread to New York, Washington, DC, Ohio, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, and Louisiana (Gaustad, 1962: 126). We found data on Unitarian congregations for 1835 and 1840 in New England in Dorchester (1888: 635).

Universalists. This denomination appeared in America in 1779. During its early years, it was highly concentrated in New England and Pennsylvania, especially Boston. Data for 1835 and 1840 presented in Dorchester (1888: 628), which were taken from Universalist yearbooks, bear out this fact.

Other-Worldly Churches

Adventists and Millennialists. All of these sects, which began to congregate around 1839, shared a belief that the Second Coming of Christ (the Advent) would occur soon and the world would then end. We found no data on Adventists outside of the census.

Baptists. Although there were Baptist congregations in America from 1637 onward, almost all of this denomination's growth came from evangelism during and after the Great Awakenings of the 1730s–1740s and 1800s–1830s. The 1874 *American Baptist Yearbook* (Philadelphia: Bible Publication Society) contained most of the data used in our study. It reported the number of Baptist congregations in 1812, 1832, and 1840 for all states in the Union. We found complete data for 1790 in Apslund (1792: 5–42). We found two additional sources for the early nineteenth century: Sweet (1931: 24, 26, 27, 34) contained data on the number of Baptist congregations in Kentucky in 1800 and 1820, in Missouri in 1800 and 1840, and in Tennessee in 1802. Armstrong and Armstrong (1979: 111) provided the number of Baptist churches

Antislavery in America

in Virginia in 1800. Because Baptists were heavily concentrated in the South, these sources greatly improved the quality of our data on this denomination.

Dunkers/Tunkers/Church of the Brethren. This German Anabaptist sect first gained a foothold in Pennsylvania in 1719; by 1722, Dunker congregations had been founded in New Jersey and Maryland. Throughout our study period, Dunkers remained concentrated in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Maryland, although they made small inroads into Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky (Mallott, 1954). Dunkers were always few in number. We found data for 1770 in Mallott (1954), which relies on numbers originally reported in John Lewis Gillin's *The Dunkers*. We found no other data, perhaps because as Mallott (1954) notes, this sect did not begin keeping records until 1880.

German Reformed. This church, which sits theologically between the Calvinist and the Lutheran traditions, arrived in America in the early eighteenth century. Between 1740 and 1860, it was concentrated in Pennsylvania and the surrounding states. To augment data from Gaustad, Finke and Stark, and the census, we found data on German Reformed congregations in the Eastern Synod (Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina) for 1820 in Klein (1943).

Lutherans. This denomination was carried to America by immigrants from four different countries to several locations: from Sweden to Delaware and New Jersey in 1638, from Holland to New York in 1649, from Germany to New York in 1708 and Pennsylvania in 1712, and from England to several states in the early eighteenth century. Lutherans remained concentrated in a handful of states. The *American Quarterly Register* (1832: 224) reported in 1832 that "this church is confined almost exclusively to the German population of the country. The congregations, though found in more than half the States, are principally in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Maryland, and North Carolina." Thus data from Gaustad, Finke and Stark, and the census capture most of the growth of this denomination.

Mennonites, Amish, and Swiss Brethren. Almost all members of these three closely related Anabaptist faiths—all German speakers—lived in Pennsylvania from the late seventeenth century to the first decade of the nineteenth century. These denominations spread to Virginia, Ohio, and Indiana over the eighteenth century (Gaustad, 1962: 135). We were unable to find any data on Amish congregations, probably because the Amish, who were far more socially conservative than Mennonites or Swiss Brethren, refused to create any general church organization, which may also explain why the Amish published no magazines before the Civil War. We were also unable to find any data on the number and location of Mennonite and Swiss Brethren congregations outside of the census, which put Swiss Brethren and Mennonites in a single category.

Methodists. This faith began in America in the early 1760s as a revival movement within the Episcopal Church; it became an independent denomination in 1784. The only consistent data we could obtain counted Methodist members, not churches. This is largely a reflection of the Methodist style of organizing, which emphasized the use of circuit riders who traveled from place to place, rather than the establishment of permanent churches. Membership data for 1790, 1800, and 1810 came from *the Minutes of the Methodist Conferences, Annually Held in America from 1773 to 1813, Inclusive*. Membership data for 1832 are reported in the *American Quarterly Register* (1832: 224) and estimated membership data for 1773 (from the first American Methodist Conference) are reported in Gaustad (1962: 75). We have data on both the number of members and number of churches for four states (Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, and South Carolina) in 1810. We used these data to translate from the number of members to the number of churches: on average, there were 343 members per church.

Moravians/Unitas Fratrum. This evangelical branch of Hussites migrated from Germany to Georgia in 1735, then moved to Pennsylvania soon after. The Moravians expanded up and down the Atlantic Coast over the course of the eighteenth century but always remained a small denomination. We found only scattered data on Moravian churches between 1776 and 1850, in *The Quarterly Register and Journal of the American Educational Society* (1829: 182).

Shakers/Society of Believers in Christ's Second Coming. This sect was established in 1774 in New Hampshire. It remained small and concentrated in New England. We found no data on the number of Shaker communities outside of the census.

Society of the Publick Universal Friend. This sect, which closely resembled the Shakers, started in 1776 in Rhode Island, where its members founded a single utopian community. The community moved to New York in 1794 and died out in 1863, when the last member died. At its peak, it had only 200 members. Data on the single congregation came from Ahlstrom (1972).