Reviving His Work: Social Isolation, Religious Fervor and Reform in the Burned Over District of Western New York, 1790-1860

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Abstract
This thesis examines revivalism and reform movements in rural areas of western New York. The bulk of literature on this region in the Second Great Awakening concentrates on middle class, urban people. This thesis argues that revivalism and evangelical fervor was carried to rural portions of the region by migrants from western New England. Evangelical Christianity and revivalism provided emotion succor for rural people grappling with negative social conditions, such as isolation, poverty, crop failure and alcoholism, in the New York frontier. Religious adherence became especially important for women, who were more isolated than men. Religious adherence and revivalism allowed rural evangelicals an opportunity to "purify" society from sinful behavior. Revivalism waned as social conditions improved in rural areas, but the tradition of societal "purification" remained. In this way, rural evangelicals, as well as Quakers and Spiritualists, engaged in moral reform, to eradicate institutions and behaviors they perceived as sinful from society.

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and the southern Methodists had split with their northern brethren over human bondage (Presbyterians split). The secession of the southern churches foreshadowed the secession of the southern states. A Desert Zion in Utah. The smoldering spiritual embers of the Burned-Over District kindled Joseph Smith, a rugged visionary, who reported that he had received some golden plates from an angel.