

WEB REVIEW: *THE JONATHAN EDWARDS CENTER AT YALE UNIVERSITY* <http://edwards.yale.edu/>

By Rebecca Miller

The theologian Martin Lloyd-Jones called Jonathan Edwards the “Mount Everest of theologians.”¹ This is an apt description in a couple of ways. Edwards was a giant among American theologians, and he was also a very prolific writer. He wrote over 10,000 pages, or about 70 volumes. Compiling and publishing these documents is a task as daunting as climbing Mount Everest.

The Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University has undertaken this task. Yale had published a 26-volume print edition of Edwards’ works. However, this set was far from comprehensive. For Edwards’ remaining works, they decided to do an online version. An additional 47 volumes of unpublished material was published online at the Jonathan Edwards Center website. These documents include sermons, notebooks, essays, letters and personalia by Jonathan Edwards. The website includes nearly all of Edwards’ works, both published and unpublished. The content is close to complete, but work continues on compiling several hundred sermons and documents. The website also includes secondary sources such as biographies, a chronology, audio, video and images.

In addition to being more complete than the print works, the web version is completely searchable, so you can see where Edwards used certain terms. You can also browse through his different writings and sermons. The sermons are indexed both by the date he preached the sermon and the Biblical reference. There is a prominent link to “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” as Edwards’ most famous sermon, although the site decries its negative reputation.

The website has a resource called “FirstSource,” which contains the works of related authors, such as John Calvin, Philip Melancthon, George Whitefield, Benjamin Franklin, and more. Unfortunately, many of the links for FirstSource are currently not working, but the website indicates that it is a beta version. The Center indicates that they would like to create links from Edwards’s footnotes directly to the sources he cites, but this will be a large project.

The content of the Jonathan Edwards website is useful to researchers and students in a number of ways. For example, a class on Edwards at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School has a syllabus with hyperlinks to reading assignments on the Yale website. Researchers working on dissertations and publications are citing the online links to Edwards’s works. The ability to access more obscure, previously unpublished work is particularly useful for original research.

A related website is the Trinity Evangelical Divinity School Jonathan Edwards Center webpage (<http://jecteds.org/>). In 2010, Trinity became one of several worldwide satellite affiliates of the Yale Jonathan Edwards Center. The Trinity website contains reviews of every new book and dissertation that is published on Edwards, which makes it useful for staying current on the latest research.

Overall, the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University is a useful resource for those doing research on Edwards. A few of the features still aren’t working properly (notably FirstSource). Other areas don’t seem to be completed; some of the webpages for secondary sources are mostly blank, or have categories that are not linked. However, the bulk of the site containing the *Works* of Edwards performs well and is useful. It is hoped that continued work will improve the other areas and make the site even more valuable.

¹ Quoted by Samuel Logan, “Global endorsements,” *The Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University*, <http://edwards.yale.edu/Global+Endorsements>



Rebecca Miller is Reference & Instruction Librarian at Trinity International University, Deerfield, Illinois.