



Search forums

Forum 2

The Great Awakening

• [Subscribe](#)

◀ [The Great Awakening](#)

[The Great Awakening](#) ▶

Display replies in nested form

Move this discussion to ...

Move



The Great Awakening

by [Joe Escobar](#) – Saturday, October 17, 2015, 11:03 AM

After studying the required materials, address the various questions. To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT – SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Do NOT simply leave it RE: The Great Awakening

Sum of ratings: –

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



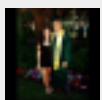
It was significant

by [Jacob Spangler](#) – Sunday, October 18, 2015, 9:46 PM

Being my first forum reply I will be very general here. I believe the Great Awakening was very important in US history. The fact that the colonists had gained enthusiasm in their religion had fueled them to challenge their British rulers late on in history. Without this awaking the nation known as the United States may not have existed today. I do agree with Bonomi that when the colonists had focused more on their individualism it made them think about their own significance in the colonies. Made them wonder if there was more to be had, leading to them challenging the British later on.

Sum of ratings: [1 \(1\)](#)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Re: It was significant

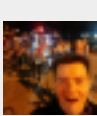
by [Cloyne Welch](#) – Saturday, October 24, 2015, 12:22 AM

Initially, I agreed with Patricia Bonomi's article as well but after rereading and seeing another student's post I had a change of mind. Butler explains that the Great Awakening was surely part of history but was overemphasized and had little to do with the spark of the Revolution. At the end of his article on page 10 he states, " The eighteenth-century colonial wars are more appropriate candidates for the honor. They raised significant legislative opposition to the crown in many colonies and cost many colonists their lives, especially in the last and most "successful" contest, the French and Indian War." He also shows that there was a major time gap from when the Great Awakening was said to have taken place and the spark of the American Revolution. The colonial wars, like the French and Indian War (1754–1763), was closer in time to the American Revolution (1765–1783) which could lead to that war and many others having more of an impact. What do you think?

Sum of ratings: [2 \(1\)](#)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Changed my mind

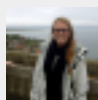


by [Jacob Spangler](#) – Saturday, October 24, 2015, 10:37 AM

After rereading the articles I find that I do now side with Butler. The quote you posted is of course one of the passages that made me change my mind on the subject. Initially I was thinking that with all of this religious revival and inspiration that these colonists would start to focus on their individualism. I thought that inspirational fire would burn a path to the revolution. However one of the other quotes from Butler that made me change my position was “First, revivalism never was the key to the expansion of the colonial churches. Presbyterianism expanded as rapidly in the middle colonies between 1710 and 1740 as between 1740 and 1770. (Butler Pg.9)” What caught my attention in this quote was the fact that the growth was just as rapid in both time periods mentioned. Not to say the revival was not important because it surely was, yet from what I have heard about the awakening I just figured to see at least more church expansion during the revival period. As for the quote you posted I totally agree. The time gap between the revival and the revolution was farther than the time gap of the French–Indian war. That being said I do feel that the French–Indian war was more influential to the Revolution than the Great awakening.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



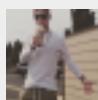
The Great Awakening was Key to the American Revolution

by [Taylor Knox](#) – Monday, October 19, 2015, 12:56 PM

After reading the handout “Was the Great Awakening a key to the American Revolution?” I agree with Patricia Bonomi’s stance supporting the claim that the Great Awakening was key. I felt she set a very good stage of the religious and cultural unease that was felt in the early 18th century. She states “Adding to currents of religious unease in the early eighteenth century were a number of other developments: an accelerating pace of commercial growth; land shortages as well a land opportunities; the unprecedented diversity of eighteenth–century immigration; and a rapid climb in total population” (Page 3). I think this is an important claim to make because it shows how the overall culture and lifestyle was changing during this time along with religious revival. I feel that I side with Bonomi because she focuses on all aspects of life at this time and urges how powerful of an impact the Great Awakening makes on these colonies. She goes on to say “As the Great Awakening broke down social cohesion in America, it simultaneously elevated the individual” (Page 7). This quote shows how the Great Awakening changed how people’s mindsets changed and that the Great Awakening really changed the overall landscape of the colonies and it changed it so much that it was past resolving. The culture of these societies were so far past being able to go back to “normal” that the Great Awakening was a key force driving the American Revolution.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Both Make Sense.

by [Zachery Brown](#) – Monday, October 19, 2015, 7:37 PM

To me, after reading the both of Bonomi and Butler's explanation's to the question, "Was The Great Awakening Key to the American Revolution?" I see great points being made on both sides. As both Jacob, and Taylor had stated, that The Great Awakening certainly played part in opening the mind to colonists and fueled them to question the authority of the British rulers. Although I see some great points being made by Professor Butler. For example when he states, "Obviously, the revivals provided little focus for intercolonial unity in the way some historians have described. They appeared too erratically in too few colonies under too many different auspices to make such generalizations appropriate. The eighteenth–century colonial wars are more appropriate candidates for the honor. They raised significant legislative opposition to the crown in many colonies and cost many colonists their lives, especially in the last and most "successful" contest, the French and Indian War. Nor is it possible to demonstrate that specific congregations and denominations associated with the revivals originated anti–British protest that became uniquely important to the Revolution." (pg. 9–10) These few sentences really stood out to me. It occurred to me that, like stated earlier, they both have made very valid points. Although I think I have to side more with Professor Butler. I do believe that The Great Awakening helped the colonists broaden their minds and help them start to think for themselves, I think that The Colonial Wars took more of a stand and brought more colonists together and on similar terms and beliefs than The Great Awakening did. Thus making The Great Awakening less key to the Revolution.



The Influence of the Great Awakening
by [Carissa Lara](#) - Monday, October 19, 2015, 8:41 PM

Overall, I agree with Jon Butler’s position stating that the Great Awakening was not a key to the American Revolution. His essay was extremely well written in a straightforward manner that presented the facts needed to back up his claim. One aspect of his work that I admired was how he did not discredit the Great Awakening; instead he proved why it was not as strong of an influence as others believe. Butler writes, “Obviously, the revivals provided little focus for intercolonial unity in the way some historians have described. They appeared too erratically in too few colonies under too many different auspices to make such generalizations appropriate”(Page 9). The Revolution was successful because the colonies were united. From what Butler has said, it can be inferred that the Great Awakening did not spur unity amongst the colonists, therefore how could it have had such a strong singular influence on their mindsets? The Great Awakening took place over a period of different times for various places so there was no one religious outlook that took over the colonies all at once. Butler also mentions how less than half of the colonies were a significant part of the Great Awakening. This fact puts the religious movement in a new perspective and we can see that perhaps it was not as influential as we have been told.



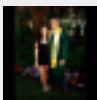
The Greak Awakening: Foundation of the American Revolution
by [Cloyne Welch](#) - Monday, October 19, 2015, 9:28 PM

Although John Butler makes the opposing argument, I would have to agree with Patricia Bonomi that the Great Awakening, in fact, had a major influence on the American Revolution. She simply explains that the 16th century was mainly based on unity whereas later on in the 18th century people were breaking away from the majority and were encouraged to value their individual thoughts over the widely accepted churches "thoughts", so to speak. Bonomi writes "once having taken part in dismantling of old institutions and the shaping of new ones, Americans at every social level would find themselves less hesitant to do it again", thus bringing forth the American Revolution. Bonomi portrays the Great Awakening as more of a "practice model" for the Revolution. Since the new light, or awakening, and the old light were divided and was successful in some cases, they would have no problem with having to divide again if it were necessary. Hence why the thirteen colonies were willing to reject the British monarchy and reinvent themselves in America.



Re: The Greak Awakening: Foundation of the American Revolution
by [Taylor Knox](#) - Thursday, October 22, 2015, 9:06 PM

I also sided with Patricia Bonomi's argument like you did. After reading the articles again and specifically focusing on John Butler's argument I found one quote very interesting. On page 9 he says ""Obviously, the revivals provided little focus for intercolonial unity in the way some historians have described". This changed my perspective a little because in Bonomi's article she recognizes that social unity was breaking down and importance of the individual was increasing in importance. After seeing both authors agree that the revival was breaking down unity it seems more unlikely that the Great Awakening was the foundation of the American Revolution because their was no unity in communities or the colonies as a whole. Does this quote change your or anyone else who sided with Bonomi's perspective at all?



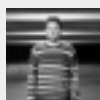
Re: The Greak Awakening: Foundation of the American Revolution
by [Cloyne Welch](#) - Saturday, October 24, 2015, 12:06 AM

Taylor, I didn't pay much attention to that line by John Butler, but I can definitely see what you're saying. I reread both articles and have somewhat of a different view now. After rereading and hearing what you have to say, it seems as if Patricia Bonomi fits into Butler's category of historians overemphasizing what the Great Awakening actually did or did not. It seems that everything Bonomi is saying is true and in fact did happen but may have been blown out of proportion and is over generalized. A perfect example he gave for the generalization was on page 10 where he states, "Nor is it possible to demonstrate

congregations and denominations associated with the revivals originated anti-British protest that became uniquely important to the Revolution." He simply states that the colonial wars had more of an impact and gave multiple examples as to why. I think I might have sided with Bonomi at first because I already had more of a bias reading her article first, so I went in to Butler's article ready to shut it down.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Butler's larger picture provides better view
by [Justin Cox](#) – Friday, October 23, 2015, 12:33 AM

Having read both Professor Patricia Bonomi and Professor Jon Butler’s contrasting essays on the question of whether or not the Great Awakening was a key to the American Revolution, I have concluded that Professor Jon Butler’s arguments for why the so-called Great Awakening was not a major precursor to the American Revolution are stronger.

Professor Butler’s essay painted a thorough picture of the chronology and impact of the revivalist period between 1690 and 1780. He convincingly argued that the ways in which separate regions of colonial America were affected by this movement were highly disparate and had little direct impact on the American colonies as a whole that would have led them towards revolution.

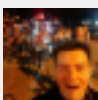
Professor Bonomi’s essay, on the other hand, focused on just a few years in the early 1740’s which seems to have been the height of the Great Awakening movement – the time during which the most recognizable revivalist preachers like Tennet, Edwards and Whitefield were active. She argues that the radical way in which separatists went about their religious revolution within their own churches was the wellspring of the thinking that led the colonies to revolt against England.

Bonomi’s connection between the attitudes of religious separatists and political revolutionaries was weak on its own – she offered no examples of individuals or organizations that were informed by the revivals who went on to play a crucial role in the revolutionary process – and played into Butler’s argument that historians have overhyped the significance of the Great Awakening as a convenient way to lead into the revolutionary war period.

(Edited by [Joe Escobar](#) – original submission Monday, October 19, 2015, 9:55 PM)

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

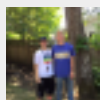


An overhyped event
by [Jacob Spangler](#) – Saturday, October 24, 2015, 11:21 AM

I will admit that I bought into the hype of Bonomi’s article. When I reread Butler’s article I just changed my mind completely. What really made me change my position was Butler had more solid evidence in his article. Like on Page 9 he states “First, revivalism never was the key to the expansion of the colonial churches. Presbyterianism expanded as rapidly in the middle colonies between 1710 and 1740 as between 1740 and 1770. (Butler). Just more solid evidence had made me sign with Butler. Another student pointed out to me that Butler had made the point that events such as the French Indian war likely had much more influence on the revolution than the Great Awakening did. Also that the French Indian war was closer to the revolution years wise starting in 1754 versus that of the Great Awakening starting in the 1730’s.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



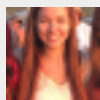
Rivalries among the colonists
by [Troy Grove](#) – Monday, October 19, 2015, 10:35 PM

Upon finishing the handout I came to the conclusion that I agree with Ms. Bonomi that the Great Awakening was a factor that sparked the American Revolution. As she explains on page 3 the large population growth facilitated intensified denominational rivalries. Also the Great Awakening created a situation that actually favored social, political and religious reform. Church separations as well as choices that had not only a religious impact, but a political one also led to the most disruptions of Americans and institutions at the time. In turn many colonists took a bold step and broke away from traditions to create new ones. That being said I believe when it came time to decide whether or not to revolt from the English, they had an easier time grasping the situation because of the successful separation of churches and were more inclined to break away from tradition once again and

overthrow the authority of Great Britain.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

Show parent | Edit | Split | Delete | Reply



Bonomi's Resourceful Viewpoint

by [Lexus Diama](#) – Monday, October 19, 2015, 11:51 PM

The historian that I most agree with is Patricia J. Bonomi. She convincingly proves in a conservative way that religion was critical to both bringing life to the revolution and spreading it. She disagrees with the idea that the other historian, Jon Butler, has, that the Great Awakening was not related to the movement toward the American Revolution. Bonomi's use of sources in her writing help justify my decision in her belief in the Great Awakening as a movement in American Colonial history. She cites sermons that give evidence, for example under the paragraph titled "WHO IS UPON GOD'S SIDE?".

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

Show parent | Edit | Split | Delete | Reply



Re: The Great Awakening

by [Parker Maidlow](#) – Tuesday, October 20, 2015, 6:40 PM

Pietism was one of the key forces in the great awakening (Bonomi, Oxford Unity Press 1986), and according to Wikipedia, it seems the view of Pietism is that congregants are to have a part in the church “spiritual government”, which seems like a strong pro–democracy sentiment, and people coming together to have a say in whether or not the colonies should become independent of Britain seems to have been a driving force in the American revolution

– source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pietism> “founding”:#2

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

Show parent | Edit | Split | Delete | Reply



Re: The Great Awakening

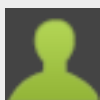
by [Parker Maidlow](#) – Wednesday, October 21, 2015, 8:02 PM

The preaching of and emphasis of the right/ability to forming new congregations if one wants to worship in a different style seems to prop up a positive sentiment for things like the free market and government of checks and balances, which are important in society today. While England may have had these things, the navigation acts and mercantilism imposed on the colonies before the revolution left much to be desired (Liberty, Equality, Power 7th edition, Murrin)...and as far as checks and balances, democracy in the 13 colonies was also somewhat lacking before the revolution (<http://classroom.synonym.com/were-governments-13-american-colonies-20086.html>), but by 1700, England already had a national legislature with a limmitted authority chief executive position (the king) (<http://www.spanishsuccession.nl/englishmain.html>).

Source: Bonomi, Oxford Unity Press, 1986

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

Show parent | Edit | Split | Delete | Reply



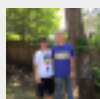
Re: The Great Awakening

by [Parker Maidlow](#) – Wednesday, October 21, 2015, 10:32 PM

* maybe the word "democracy" ought to be substituted for everywhere that "checks and balances" is written... though currently the authority of a publicly elected executive is considered a check/balance to a publicly elected legislature... while before the revolution, the executive (governor) was appointed by the English monarch.

Sum of ratings: (1)

Show parent | Edit | Split | Delete | Reply



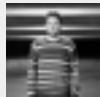
Historical Reinforcing

by [Troy Grove](#) – Saturday, October 24, 2015, 10:43 AM

The historian at the very end of the video clearly states and I quote: “religion can be seen as a kind of backdrop or precause of the American revolution.” (6:32–6:39) Which obviously clarifies that the historians of the video are talking about the Great Awakening from the perspective that it did indeed aid to the cause of the American Revolution. That same historian also says “they overthrow ministers they don’t like” (6:24–6:26) giving the audience a brief foreshadow of events to come (overthrowing the British). Furthermore many of the other historians in the video bring up the elimination of racial, ethnic, gender, and social class barriers and people putting their differences aside and uniting as a whole, something that hadn’t been seen on such scale before. On top of all that Professor Hankins says “The first Great Awakening was that event that began many people on the path to thinking of themselves as a separate people, as a people for the first time because this was the first national event in American history” (5:55–6:08). This not only reinforces my original statements and thoughts I had about the Great Awakening, but even more so solidifies my understanding of the topic itself. The Great Awakening was, without a doubt, a underlying cause of the American Revolution

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Correlation does not imply causation

by [Justin Cox](#) – Saturday, October 24, 2015, 12:05 PM

I think one of the biggest mistakes Professor Bonomi made in her thinking is ignoring the logical rule that is often referred to as “correlation does not imply causation.” Simply put, this rule states that just because two things happened in succession does not mean one caused the other.

This rule is often conveniently forgotten, especially by those with strongly held points of view. For a contemporary example, consider some of the information you may have heard promulgated after recent school shootings. I have personally read numerous articles attempting to link shootings with the use of psychiatric medication. For example:

<http://dailycaller.com/2013/01/16/forbes-withdraws-online-essay-blaming-psychiatric-medications-for-sandy-hook-shooting/>

The argument is simple yet deceptive. It goes like this: ‘A very significant percentage of recent school shooters were on psychiatric meds and therefore psychiatric medication is the likely explanation for why these young men committed mass murder.’ They make this argument in spite of the fact that no scientific studies I am aware of link psychiatric medication use to mass murder behavior.

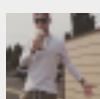
The way Bonomi makes the mistake of confusing correlation with causality is less sinister but just as real. Her argument is that in sum ‘the new lights of the Great Awakening displayed the same attitudes and values of the revolutionary patriots and therefore revolutionary patriots learned those attitudes and values during the Great Awakening.’

I would ask Professor Bonomi if perhaps the attitudes and values of American colonists that led to the Great Awakening and the American Revolution might have been present in their culture long before either of these events occurred. Perhaps these values of independence and liberty were present from the day these communities left Europe and had been present ever since.

Even if Bonomi is correct in arguing that the colonists exercised the same values during the Great Awakening and American Revolution, I would propose that those values were present before the Great Awakening and that the American Revolution would have happened just the same even if the Awakening never had occurred.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Bonmi vs Butler

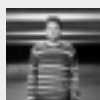
by [Zachery Brown](#) – Saturday, October 24, 2015, 4:22 PM

As I said in my first post, about the if the great awakening was the key to the revolution or not? I still believe that both Butler and Bonomi were right in their own ways. Although I side with one more than the other. Which is of course Butler. I think that Butlers facts and explanations, outdid Bonomi's, "Theories." Like when Bonomi mentioned those in the Revolution getting their mindsets from the great awakening. I see this remark just as a theory because their truly is no way to prove that is true. Maybe I would see it differently if somewhere somehow an old Revolutionists journal was picked up and he had stated that the way they had thought and began to act was an outcome of the great awakening. But as far as I know that has not happened. Although, of course I

definitely think that the great awakening influenced a different mindset then they had by influencing people to begin thinking for themselves. But, I do believe that through that as time goes on there would have been something else that began to influence colonists to think the way that they did whether it being the great awakening or not. Therefore I still think that without a doubt the Revolution would have still taken place. Earlier, Later, the same time? Who knows, but I do believe thats the case. And that the Colonial Wars had a much much more larger impact on the Revolution then the great awakening ever did.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Video has religious bent

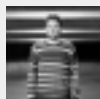
by [Justin Cox](#) – Saturday, October 24, 2015, 4:45 PM

Much of the information provided in the “First Great Awakening video” is similar to what Professor Bonomi provided in her “yes” essay. They, like Bonomi, took a narrower view of the revivals than Professor Butler and, in my opinion, over emphasized their impact.

I think it is important to note that almost all of the interviewees were associated with religious institutions. There were Professors from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Baylor University (Baptist), Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and University of Notre Dame. I only noticed one interviewee not associate with a religious institution (Rhode Island College). Perhaps their religious affiliation has colored their perception of how the events that formed their religion (in the case of Baptists) also might have influenced the American Revolution.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)



Textbook seems to side with Butler

by [Justin Cox](#) – Saturday, October 24, 2015, 8:21 PM

The authors of our textbook Liberty, Equality, Power: A History of the America People are more in line with the arguments of Professor Jon Butler on the subject of the long-term impact of the Great Awakening. They wrote in much greater detail about the variety of events that took place during the Great Awakening than Professor Bonomi, just as Professor Butler did. They also made no mention of the American Revolution anywhere in the section of the textbook regarding the Great Awakening.

There is even a sub-section of Chapter 4 titled “Long-Term Consequences of the Revivals” and in it the authors focused entirely on realignment and popularity of the various denominations of Christianity in the colony after the 1740’s. They make no mention of political ramifications of the Great Awakening.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

[◀ The Great Awakening](#)

[The Great Awakening ▶](#)

[Moodle Docs for this page](#)

[HST 201 F15 \(Escobar CRN 21008\)](#)

[LCC Home](#) | [LCC Student Help](#) | [LCC Faculty Help](#) | [Faculty Moodle Training](#) |