



HST 201: History of United States F16 (Escobar Meta 20938 23214)

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Forum 2

The Great Awakening

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The Great Awakening

by Joe Escobar - Friday, October 14, 2016, 8:54 PM

This thread is for discussions on the The Great Awakening topic.
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, something that describes which question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: The Great Awakening

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Short-lived revival?

by Judith Pohl - Sunday, October 16, 2016, 11:54 AM

After reading the articles and both views of the Great Awakening I tend to side more with Jon Butler. He made several points but just a couple that I will mention now that really jumped out at me. He mentions that nobody would question the existence of the great awakening if historians described it for what it was a "short-lived revival in the early 1740s." The dates were difficult to know and it only effected SOME of the mainland colonies. There seems to be like a lot of exaggeration in how wide spread the Great Awakening was. In the text book (pg 131) it's said to have "swept across the Protestant world. Within the British Empire...England, Scotland, Ulster, New England, and mid-Atlantic colonies. " Like much of history there seems to be a lot of conflicting information with the Great Awakening that makes me question the validity or just how big of an impact it truly had with the American Revolution. I'm curious to see what the other students have to say in forum this week.

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Re: Short-lived revival?

by Emily Phan - Monday, October 17, 2016, 10:55 AM

A short time ago there were riots in a couple cities in America. Now there are thousands of cities in this country and but few were affected. However I would have to say that everyone was forced to at least consider the issues that caused these riots, even though there may have been no disturbances in their city. I believe there is a parallel here. Though we do find it way easier to communicate in our age, the events that shook up some cites in early colonial times would have spread their influences to other parts of the country eventually. We must realize the impact that Christianity had on the lives of these colonists. It wasn't just a private conviction it was an all pervading lifestyle and the Great Awakening made this lifestyle even more strongly held by many.

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Re: Short-lived revival?

by Judith Pohl - Monday, October 17, 2016, 2:18 PM

Emily, I agree with your two points I do see the parallel here and it makes me wonder how quickly news spread to the unaffected colonies about the revivals. Obviously anything like this happens now everyone's phones, emails, and TVs are going crazy updating on the latest news. This can both be a a blessing and a curse at times. The Great Awakening was very important with toleration and acceptance of many religions.

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Re: Short-lived revival?

by John Casares - Saturday, October 22, 2016, 5:06 PM

I agree with you that this small ripples eventually turn in sort of influential tidal waves in one way or another. I often think that a small influence can be counted as a larger influence when it effects a small group of people all over or vice verse (ex. Large group of people in a small area). These influences cannot go un noted because it people take note and may not change completely but may be swayed to choose sides so I can see how something like that would influence something as divisive as the American Revolution.

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Seeing both sides...

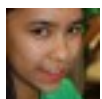
by Judith Pohl - Wednesday, October 19, 2016, 1:15 PM

After reading more about the Great Awakening I read the article again and tried to see Patricia's side. I have to admit at first it didn't stand out as much as Jon Butler's view and that's partially because of the dryness of the article, just my opinion. However in reading again I can also see her side and how the Great Awakening did indeed have a great impact on the Revolution.

She states that "as the Great Awakening broke down social cohesion in America, it simultaneously elevated the individual." This allowed for individual strength, energy, and hope within the people. Which like she said may have broken down social cohesion , possibly initially... but I believe that this energy within so many individuals eventually broke down some of the barriers between the colonies and gave them a sense of unity.

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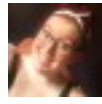
Re: Seeing both sides...

by Emily Phan - Friday, October 21, 2016, 6:34 PM

It's rather disturbing how a sensational story based on sketchy facts will catch more attention and be believed, when another true and important story will be ignored because it isn't very exciting or isn't written in a way to produce empathy or anger. I personally found neither of these articles more or less exciting, so I am not talking about them. I am referring to the news in general.

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How the News Catches Us

by Tyra Potter - Saturday, October 22, 2016, 5:20 PM

I feel that the reason stories that are based on sketchy facts hook readers because we live in a clickbait world. Most people want something that will take them on a ride. I know I like to listen to professors who make the lecture more than a lecture. It is just like when colonists went to listen to preachers. They wanted someone to take them on a spiritual experience, not to just sit quietly and read the bible. They wanted a show, just as people today want to have a side of emotions served with their news.

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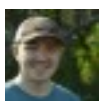
Finding My Side

by John Casares - Saturday, October 22, 2016, 9:00 PM

When Patricia Bonomi stated that “eighteenth-century provincial society at large, the revivalists found their allies among the people. Together they launched a mass movement that made bold assaults on established forms of church government” is kind of where I stood strong with my decision to side with her. If you simply take the word church out of that quote it sounds pretty dang similar to the what the American Revolution was, I mean it was group of people making the boldest assault on government so I can definitely see why a historian like herself would see it as a major influence.

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Re: Short-lived revival?

by Kevin Smolek - Wednesday, October 19, 2016, 5:32 PM

I agree that it is hard to judge just how much of an impact that the Great Awakening actually had. However I feel like if we look at the huge changes that were going on at the time, and shortly afterward, we can't just shrug it off as a fleeting revival. Looking at the social changes that were going on it could be that the religious tolerance and changes to the church structure would have happened eventually without the Great Awakening, and that all it did was shorten the time it

took and spread it far and wide. It may not have impacted every colonies, but I think that even the ones that were left unaffected would have still had to look to their peers and taken some clues from them. It started the movement toward individual liberty above all else, and that I think is a major step towards the America we live in today.

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Re: Short-lived revival?

by Judith Pohl - Friday, October 21, 2016, 11:26 PM

After Escobar's lecture this week on the Great Awakening, videos, and the site link that he added I see your point. I can see the progression of how it spread through the colonies over the years and of course it wasn't an instantaneous, widespread change but it was indeed the beginning of the formation of what we now know as the "bible belt," as stated in the video.

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Re: Short-lived revival?

by Kevin Smolek - Saturday, October 22, 2016, 11:54 PM

I also thought that the trend away from the long held religions was interesting. The website that was posted said:

"Puritans and the Anglicans – eventually began a drastic downward trend in popularity. Although they accounted for about 40% of American congregations as late as 1760, that number eventually dropped to under 2.5% by 1790."

That seems like a radical change in peoples beliefs. I think it points to how much the thinking of the early Americans had changed since they first landed in the new world. They had come so far to practice the freedom of religion, and it led to a thirst for all freedoms.

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One of many but still important

by Emily Phan - Sunday, October 16, 2016, 5:07 PM

I am of the opinion that both of the writers are partially true. The real question for me is who has the bigger slice of the correct idea. I lean more towards Patricia U. Bonomi's opinion.

The Great Awakening did have a decently strong influence on colonist's minds, strong enough to help strengthen the ideas that sparked the revolution. In the essay Bomomi says that the colonists were, "Breaking sharply from a tradition of fraternity and consensus that had governed church life for generations."(pg.6) They were breaking away from the old ideas that any group even the government had the last word on what they ought to think. This idea is quite foreign to us, but back then they were just passing the age where the Divine Right of Kings was a common belief. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divine_right_of_kings) So the colonists were being encouraged to make their own decision for Christ. To believe, "That the individual, standing alone in the sight of God, was the primary vessel of salvation." (pg.6) Soon they would be asked to make a personal decision on whether to support the colonies or Great Britain. They were encouraged not to do what had always been done. They had a, "new spirit of defiant individualism that was one of the most radical manifestations of the Awakening. No longer were consensual values to prevail over individual ones."(pg 5)

Of course the Great Awakening wasn't the only cause of the revolution, not even the primary cause, but discounting it as of little importance would be ignoring an important factor in colonial life.

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Re: One of many but still important

by John Casares - Saturday, October 22, 2016, 11:22 PM

The Divine right of Kings is a great reference and pull for your point. I do agree that they decided to think individually for Christ instead of the former belief of Christ making your goals and decisions and sinners being the people who broke away. These colonists that broke away from the power and grip of the British were the people ready to decide for themselves instead of listening to this so called idea that "the right to rule directly from the will of God" (From the Wikipedia article linked). When you make your own decisions and are ready to split from a group and you see someones else who has previously done it, you of course take note.

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Influential Sparks

by John Casares - Monday, October 17, 2016, 2:05 PM

I believe the Great Awakening was a major key in the start and a great influencing of the American revolution. The American revolution is when a group of people stood against a larger group to separate and create their own identity separated from this previously constant puppeteer. I like to think this rings true for the Great Awakening as well, of course to a lesser extent. These "Awakeners" fought the previous ideas of

religion being a community ideal that relied on the churches doctrine and laws, to change to a more simple emotional and inter personal religious experience. I believe this sentiment of change and breaking away from the overall norm is something that would definitely be a model and spark for something as large and as closely related (time wise) as the American revolution. In the article presented to us Patricia Bonomi states "Once having taken part in the dismantling of old institutions and ' the shaping of new ones, Americans at , every social level would find themselves less hesitant to do it again.". This quote is exactly what I mean when I say that it is a spark. This idea of old ideals and ways of thinking CAN be changed or brought down is something that everyone of the time would take note of and be influenced by.

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Re: The Great Awakening

by Reed Hueter - Monday, October 17, 2016, 7:09 PM

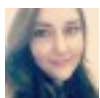
Reed Hueter

US History

I side with Jon Butler for many reasons. To start off the revivals didn't sweep through all of the colonies which for this to be a key in the American Revolution it would of had to of been present in all. Also, the historic leaders as Butler keys did not play as big a role as thought out to be. George Whitefield's presence was strong throughout 1740, and died off because he failed to organize and coordinate integrated colonial revivals as did Jonathan Edwards. Edwards had counted thirty two towns that had revivals in 1734-1735 which is five years before Whitefield even came onto the scene. Another major point that Butler made was that revivalism was never the key to the expansion of the colonial churches. Presbyterianism expanded the same between 1710-1740 as it did 1740-1770. The population in the colonies grew tremendously forcing new towns and churches to be built which is where this misunderstanding comes from.

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Ties to the Revolution are weak

by Heather Shepherd - Monday, October 17, 2016, 9:17 PM

In general I have to agree more with Butler's point of view. His argument seemed solid when he wrote about the revivals being too erratic and in too few colonies to create an anti-British sentiment on its own.He also mentioned the apparent delay between the revivals and the revolution - if they were directly related, why are the two events separated by about 25 years? That seems like a long time for people to take a

new criticism of authority and apply it to Britain. Butler writes that according to the arguments from other historians, revivals should have made church members more willing to complain about church leadership, yet no historian has been able to demonstrate that this actually happened.

To me it seemed Butler's essay was based more upon things that can be harder to argue against, like time and direct quotes. Bonomi's take, while perceptive and definitely possible, is a point of view that can be hard to find solid evidence for. She spoke a lot about the general character of the revivalist movements and preachers and how they worked together to fostered individuality, but she doesn't quite explain how she drew those connections.

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Faith Impacts How We View The World

by Riley Stromvig - Monday, October 17, 2016, 9:33 PM

After reading through the article, I realized really how much it was to take in. There were facts as well as opinions as to how each individual viewed The Great Awakening. Choosing a side that I agree with makes me connect so much more to my heart and what I am convicted by, in regards to my faith, rather than just listening to the facts/evidence that one uses to back up their position. If I had to choose a side that I agree with it would be with Patricia U. Bonomi because of how they (the Reformed pietism) viewed salvation. In my mind, a transformation of the heart is the only way to really be 'converted'. She said, "...in their view a conversion experience that touched the heart was the only road to salvation."

This idea of conversion can be so easily related to our modern world. People are always trying hard to find out what it is they are looking for and how their end goal can be attained. People try so hard to just be 'good people' that they are missing the point of what being converted really is.

She then goes on to talk about the battle between reason and the idea of grace and second chances and how it has been, and still is, a conversation that people wonder so much about. How can an all-powerful God still love someone who has messed up as much as us. Why does he not just make us automatically love Him? These are questions that cannot be backed up with facts. For two reasons: 1) It is a religion. A faith. There are no facts that can prove it to be 100% true, and that's ok. 2) You can't measure love. You can't look into someone's heart and figure out why they love someone so much and why they do the things they do for them. That is the same with God. His grace is everlasting, that I know. Why? I'm not so sure, but I'm not complaining.

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Re: Faith Impacts How We View The World

by Alex Costelow - Saturday, October 22, 2016, 9:59 PM

I completely agree with you. In order to be converted you need a transformation of the heart. This is what really connected me to Bonomi's point of view of the Great Awakening. Also, your middle statement about how 'people are always trying to find out what it is they are looking for' - I strongly believe this is what lead people to stand for what they believe. The drive to break apart from what they were told to be was too tempting. From the website Escobar posted it stated "That the religious spirit of the colonists was a necessary component to the drive for independence is confirmed in the sentiments of those who lived during the period of fighting."

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Road to 1776

by Kevin Smolek - Monday, October 17, 2016, 9:58 PM

The great awakening seems to have had a great impact on the mindset of the colonists, and was a major step towards their independence. The revivals focused on the individual, leading to a independent nature and a fondness for liberty. People also started to move churches looking for one that offered what they were personally looking for. This mindset of making choices for oneself can be seen in how many churches broke up and formed competing churches in an area. They are seen as radicals, in much the same way the revolutionists will be seen towards the end of the century. Sometimes the radicals are just forward thinkers though, and this seems to be the case here. They wanted to make choices for themselves, and that lead to a division of the churches, and the rise of individual thinking.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Religious Rambles and Exaggeration

by Tyra Potter - Monday, October 17, 2016, 10:05 PM

I am more drawn to the essay written by Jon Butler because his style of writing sounded like he had done his research. Butler introduced ideas brought up by other historians and then used his reasoning to prove why the information was exaggerated. I appreciated that he took the time to tell the reader about how little religion played into the American Revolution. Historians think it was mostly between 1740-1745, give or take a few years in only half of the colonies. All the "Great Awakening" truly did was change the preaching style. The sudden increase of new religion in certain areas created slight caution from other religious groups in the communities. Butler states that historians need to lose the title "The Great Awakening" because it distorts the character of eighteenth-century American

religious life and misinterprets its relationship to pre revolutionary American Society and politics.” (10 Butler) When all of the conversion happened regionally and sporadically in such a short period of undetermined time.

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Not Religious Rambles and Exaggeration

by Emily Phan - Friday, October 21, 2016, 6:20 PM

I couldn't find any spot in Butler's essay where he cited the historians you mentioned. I did find spots where he simply stated that *Historians say...* but no specific examples of a historian's opinion. Perhaps I just couldn't find the spot but if these vague illusions to other historians are truly the only other opinions cited, than Butler's essay is no stronger than Bomomi's on this point.

In your post you stated that "All the "Great Awakening" truly did was change the preaching style." How can this be true? Even Butler admits that, "They (the revivals) may have been of some importance in helping colonists make moral judgments about eighteenth-century English politics, though colonists unconnected to the revivals made these judgments as well." (pg11) In this quote Butler points out that the Great Awakening probably had some influence on people's thoughts on politics. These people may have never come to these conclusions without the Great Awakening. So I do not see how the only thing the Great Awakening did was change a style of preaching.

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Really Not Religious Rambles and Exaggeration

by Emily Phan - Friday, October 21, 2016, 6:21 PM

Though the Great Awakening didn't happen in all the areas of the colonies it did occur in many very important areas that would later be centers of the American Revolution. For example, Boston was a center for resistance of the British. The Boston Massacre was there, as was the Boston Tea Party, and the "American Board of Customs Commissioners...was placed in Boston , where resistance to the Stamp Act had been fiercest," (pgs 173. 187. 171. *Liberty, Equality, Power*) In the video our professor provided an interviewee pointed out, "He (George Whitefield) preached to more people... in Boston over a ten day period than were in Boston" (4:11min) Meaning many people from other towns came to Boston. George Whitefield was practically the most important Great Awakening preacher. His momentous speech in Boston which was so incredibly attended had at least some influence on the minds of those that came to hear it. These events took place in the same city and though the amount of influence the one had on the

other is arguable, the influence of George Whitefield's preaching on the people is strong evidence that the Great Awakening helped fund the ideas that lead to the revolution.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Religious Rambles and Exaggeration

by Heather Shepherd - Friday, October 21, 2016, 9:20 PM

Yes, the Great Awakening changed the preaching style by injecting a level of emotion that colonists had not been accustomed to. New evangelist preachers like Whitefield were essentially using theater techniques to draw out a response from the audience. Think about it - "wrestling" the devil back to hell, mesmerizing audiences with just the word "Mesopotamia" - these guys were superb actors. So wouldn't it at least be plausible that others were able to take that style of speaking and apply it instead to a message of independence? After all, it's a fair assumption that in any country that stages a revolution, emotions are running high. What those evangelist preachers did (and later what the revolutionists did) is harness those emotions and turn them into action.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Revised rambles

by Tyra Potter - Saturday, October 22, 2016, 5:06 PM

Not even going to lie, I did not read the entire chapter on the great awakening, I just read the articles needed to reply to this forum. This what my initial gut reaction to those readings. I wasn't making a fully educated opinion, but an opinion rushed by a time crunch to get points. Going back and reading the articles more carefully, reading the chapter more in depth than a skim, and watching the video several times I am stuck in a middle ground of how to feel about the great awakening. I believe that in the few years that were considered the pivotal peak of the great awakening, around 1742, that the power behind preachers like Whitefield lead to the general population believing that they had a voice. I am in awe at the role that Whitefield took on during his time in the colonies. He could draw a massive audience and keep them engaged. He knew how to play to his audience and how to get them to follow exactly what he was saying, even if it was coming from someone simply repeating his words. I have much more reading to do so that I can form a more concrete opinion on this subject.

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Re: Religious Rambles and Exaggeration



by John Casares - Saturday, October 22, 2016, 9:14 PM

While I can see why you are drawn to this article (which did have a lot of fantastic information) I just personally cannot see the Great Awakening not being an influence. At it's core the Great Awakening was a division between old ideals and new ideals, a split that easily could be the model for all following splits. I know there is not concrete evidence saying it did in fact have a hand in starting the Revolution, it is just very good timing and I can only see it as a thought or model lingering in the back of the minds of the people involved with the revolution.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Out with the old...

by Taylor Freeman - Monday, October 17, 2016, 11:23 PM

I agree with Patricia Bonomi that The Great awakening served as a kind of "practice" for the revolution that was to come. I think that for most people (of that time especially) religion is a center point to their lives. When that is overtaken by a radical change then other aspects of ones life are bound to change too. I think of it kind of like a ripple effect. This specific radical change was very rooted in doing away with the old systems of religion and bringing back the heart of the individual. I think the revolution did with government what the great awakening did with religion and there is no denying the effect that one had on the other.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Out with the old...

by Tyra Potter - Saturday, October 22, 2016, 5:09 PM

The more I read about the great awakening the more I am agreeing with Bonomi. I am able to tie more connections between the revolution and the awakening.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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The relation between The Great Awakening and American Revolution

by Moe Uetake - Monday, October 17, 2016, 11:55 PM

I agree with Jon Butler. As he claimed that "Yet even if one were to argue that "the Great Awakening" persisted through most of the eighteenth century, it is obvious that revivals "swept" only some of the mainland colonies (8, pdf)", the Great Awakening happened not in most of the mainland colonies but in only some parts. Therefore it doesn't affect American Revolution which is related to almost all parts of America.

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Re: The Great Awakening

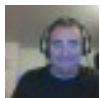
by Alex Costelow - Tuesday, October 18, 2016, 3:15 PM

Overall, which historian's position do you most agree with and why? What specific historical example(s) or fact(s) has he or she used that have had the most influence on your decision? What other data from class lecture, video, or your textbook do you have to substantiate those claims?

I think I'm going to have to agree with Patricia U. Bonomi's position. The Great Awakening had a big part on the American Revolution. It was the beginning to many new things- Bonomi states in her article "the revivalists found their allies among the people. Together they launched a mass movement that made bold assaults on established forms of church government and traditional assumptions about deference and social order." (pg 2, lines 8-10) Bonomi makes many bold points pushing me more towards her side of the argument- but on the other hand, Jon Butler makes some good claims as well. In the past I haven't been taught much on this topic, but Butler states that historians view the Great Awakening in a few different ways- adopting different descriptions along the way. Butler says "The link between the revivals and the American Revolution is virtually nonexistent". (pg 5, line 3-4) And along after reading his follow ups to his claim It's hard to disagree with him. I'm interested to see what others in the class had to say about this topic so I can get a better idea of what I believe to be the truth.

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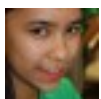
Agreeance

by Eric Devall - Tuesday, October 18, 2016, 9:55 PM

I agree with Jon Butler, professor of American History, because there was not a direct link between the religious revivals of the 18th century, and the start of the American Revolution. I agree with him because his arguement is well founded through various examples, and how the timeline of the awakening and revolution do not concretely coincide.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Agreeance

by Emily Phan - Friday, October 21, 2016, 6:26 PM

What do you mean a "direct link?" Must all events that originate in each other have this "direct link"? I am confused by what you mean here?

What do you mean "his argument is well founded though various examples,"? This statement could apply to both essays for both arguments had a decent foundation and various examples.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Agreeance

by Heather Shepherd - Friday, October 21, 2016, 8:56 PM

I originally had this opinion as well. But I realized that Bonomi wasn't trying to argue that the Revolution was caused by the Awakening, but rather that it created a new feeling of community and criticism of authority among the colonies, and this new mindset gave them the confidence to unite and declare their independence. It was easier for me to piece this connection together after reading the new sources that Prof. Escobar linked. I recommend reading them. For whatever reason it was harder for me to connect with Bonomi's essay.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Colonial Religion and Politics

by Reed Hueter - Wednesday, October 19, 2016, 7:13 PM

Deeper into Jon Butlers essay he starts to talk about how much religion actually changed from the revivals. He states that they did not always uphold the traditional religious order and never radical. When we think of an event that could jump start something as big as the American Revolution you have to have a mass of radicals and motivation. Butler also talks about how the only colony that politically changed prior to the Revolution is Virginia, however even there the Anglicans led the Revolution. In all, the patterns of worship were familiar with previous eras and failed to change causes and effects of the Revolution

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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