

HST 201: US History F19 (Escobar)

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The Great Awakening

by [Joe Escobar](#) - Friday, October 18, 2019, 12:29 PM

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At best, regional.

by [Zach Trotter](#) - Sunday, October 20, 2019, 5:11 PM

I agree with the no argument by Jon Butler. Jon uses the example "the revivals "swept" only some of the mainland colonies" and continues on to list only 6 colonies that had a significant impact from the revivals, Jon continues to state that 3 colonies "witnessed few revivals" and also that in the last 4 colonies revivals were "only occasionally important" Jon also says that only certain segments of the population in the colonies were affected. The best example being, "the best example - in Pennsylvania. where there was a sustained affect among English settlers in Presbyterian churches" (all quotes from paragraph 6, pg. 7) This paragraph stuck out to me the most and swayed my decision to agree with Jon's take on the subject. I don't see how the Great Awakening could have been key to the American Revolution if a significant majority of the population was not affected.

"They arose erratically in different times and places across a century from 1690s down to the time of the revolution." (Final paragraph, pg. 10)

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Re: The Great Awakening

by [Emily Fosnight](#) - Tuesday, October 22, 2019, 12:16 PM

I also agree with Jon Butler. I thought it was interesting that Patricia J. Bonomi added to her argument that it "was the first major inter-colonial crisis of the mind and spirit in eighteenth century America," (pg. 5), suggesting that it occurred throughout all of the colonies and somehow brought them together. It seems to be the opposite to me, with the multiple denominations forming creating even more divide within colonies.

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The Great Awakening was so regional

by [Glorianna Whiteman-Reyes](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 3:26 PM

Although we can't discount the effect of religion and the Great Awakening I tend to agree that it was not so widespread that across the colonies that it was a major influence in the lead up to the American Revolution. The easiest point for me to digest, and perhaps the most compelling in that regard was that the revival was fairly regional. The document from John Butler sites the New England colonies of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Jersey, and Virginia as the main places for revival fever. (Documents Page 7)

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Re: The Great Awakening was so regional

by [Glorianna Whiteman-Reyes](#) - Wednesday, October 23, 2019, 3:09 PM

I would like to contradict my own statement by presenting the fact that while the sermons and gatherings of the great awakening were fairly regional, the teachings reached far and wide. With the development of the printing press and its deviation from printing recycled news from London, allowing for awakening news and revelations to reach across the colonies on a weekly basis. (Pg. 106 textbook) The presence of New View advocates in printing, such as Benjamin Franklin, also furthered the cause of the awakening (Pg.107 textbook)

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The Great Awakening Had Little to No Influence on The American Revolution.

by [Eric Shoaf](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 4:38 PM

I agreed more with Butler's essay. As he pointed out, these religious revivals only happened in about half of the colonies, with the other half not seeing very much, if any, of this activity. At first I agreed with the first essay. It made sense, the Great Awakening provided the colonists with a desire for individualism, and that led to them desiring more individuality from Britain. But as Butler states, "They 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."

Now this quote is only referring to moral judgements, but the idea of this can be extended to this idea of individualism as well. What about the colonists who weren't part of some sort of revival? Half of the colonies had little to no religious revival, so how did they gain their sense of individualism and willingness to rebel against the British? The answer is that the Great Awakening didn't actually have as large of an impact on Americans as some say.

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Re: The Great Awakening Had Little to No Influence on The American Revolution.

by [Zach Trotter](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 8:36 PM

I agree, I would also like to point out to you that Butler also stated that the revivals took place over the course of almost a century. So not only did the revivals only take place in about half of the colonies, they also took place pretty spread out over time as well.

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Re: The Great Awakening Had Little to No Influence on The American Revolution.

by [Glorianna Whiteman-Reyes](#) - Friday, October 25, 2019, 12:09 AM

While I agree that the teachings of the Great Awakening may not have had as huge an influence spiritually on peoples outside of designated areas, I suspect that the new paradigms of thinking that overarched the teachings of the Great Awakening reached into the revolution era. Much like what we saw in the puritan videos from the last week, the values and structure of puritan life transcend even into 2019, despite not every colonist being a puritan. The case could then be made that while not every person went to public sermons or participated in grand conversions, the new attitude of individualism and self-management was something shared throughout the colonies. This is especially true when considering the new types of mass communication, such as the printing press.

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Was the Great Awakening influential on the war?

by [Ryan Peel](#) - Friday, October 25, 2019, 7:40 PM

Was the Great Awakening influential during the time of the Revolutionary War? The short answer to that is no, it was not. I've said this before, and I'll say it again. I really do not believe the Revolutionary War was affected by the Great Awakening. It's a war to separate the American colonies from the British Crown.

The Great Awakening was of religious and personal reformation, not political or governmental reform. So, why would something that has religious influence be significant in the time of a grand political separation? But, to be honest, I don't believe there's a right or wrong answer to this question. My answer is the same as yours. It didn't do anything for a person's willingness to fight for freedom, sense of individualism, and rights. I was talking with someone else about whether Bonomi made a connection to the Awakening and Revolution. She didn't make a connection as far as I could see. I've used some of her quotes from the article to prove that there isn't much of a connection, so I won't do that here. But, as far as I can tell? The Great Awakening didn't have a big influence on the American Revolution. My answer is the same as yours.

Sum of ratings: 0 (1) 0[Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**Re: The Great Awakening**by [Matthew Hendricks](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 5:43 PM

The Great Awakening was a grandiosely characterized cultural movement in the mid eighteenth century. The article you have assigned us to read mainly refutes awaking ties to the American Revolution. However the article tends to stick to the concept that the Movement was largely exhausted by the time revolutionary war took place and that revivalist churches are not proven to be linked to the aforementioned war, directly at least. However I think most people could connect a Cultural movement that often centered around individualism to a war for independence. Take the movie "Dead Poets Society" as a loose example of this Idea, while Robin William's character did not facilitate the actions of the teens, he certainly was a big cause of them.

One point in Favor that the Great Awakening was not tied to the revolutionary war was that there were other secular motives more directly attributed to the aforementioned war. However, a point could be made that without the cultural influences of the Awakening, we may not have acted on the those issues, such as taxation without representation and freedom of press, which both can be strongly tied to individualism.

For those reasons I would argue that the article was incorrect in stating that the Great Awakening was not linked to the Revolutionary War.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1) 1[Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**Re: The Great Awakening**by [Emily Fosnight](#) - Tuesday, October 22, 2019, 12:21 PM

I'm a little confused. Are you siding with Patricia Bonomi, saying yes, the Great Awakening was a key factor in the American Revolution? If so, what from her article makes you agree with her?

Sum of ratings: 0 (1) 0[Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**Re: The Great Awakening**by [Tuyen Thanh Diep](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 6:10 PM

In the reading I learnt from The Great Awakening was a religious revival that influenced British colonies in America in the 1730s and 1740s. The movement came at a time when the idea of doctrine was secular rationality is being emphasized, and the passion for religion has become stale. For some historians, the effects of the Great Awakening are beyond religion political field and was included in the American Revolution. Their main experience and their others are to political parties, but these factions always carry an unwarranted signal if they are not actively involved in corruption, and their severity is so strong that no systematic theory of the parties emerges in eighteenth century (The Great Wakening, page 4). Many historians believe that the Great Awakening has a lasting impact on the various Christian denominations and American culture in general. In addition to the great awakening which disrupt social cohesion in the US, it simultaneously enhances individuality (The Great Wakening, page 5). Turning to the other side, Christian leaders often travel from town to town, preaching the gospel, emphasizing salvation from sin and promoting enthusiasm for Christianity. Can this result in a dedication to innovation for religion?

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After reading both the articles I agree with Jon Butler saying the Great Awakening was not a key to the American Revolution. Butler explains how the Great Awakening is almost overrated and wasn't as big a deal as it was made out to be. He explains how "revivals 'swept' only some of the mainland colonies" (Butler, 7) Including Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Virginia. "But New Hampshire, Maryland, and Georgia witnessed few revivals in the same years" (7). He also says that only a limited amount of people were effected by the revivals in the colonies that they occurred. It is hard to believe that the Great Awakening had such an impact if it didn't even reach all the colonies, and only effected segments of the population in the colonies that it occurred. He explains that not everyone supported these revivals or were effected by them at all and that it took a lot of people a long time to even accept these revivals or move towards them.

Sum of ratings: [2 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**The Minority becomes the Majority**by [Luca Belsito](#) - Friday, October 25, 2019, 10:38 PM

Patricia Bonomi, in her article, specifically targets the audience you state are, "a limited amount of people". She states that, "revivalists developed novel arguments defending the rights of minorities" (Bonomi 3) which by definition is "a limited amount of people". By supporting the minorities, she claims that the minorities became a majority in supporting the American revolution. To give an example of such, "congregationalists throughout the North joined Presbyterian thousands... in open rebellion" (Bonomi 4).

Sum of ratings: [1 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**Religious Inspiration of Revolution**by [Abraham Millan](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 6:32 PM

Though Professor Escobar has made it clear religion does a play a significant role in history of the Colonial America it does not reflect American Revolution. The Great Awakening in America was a reformation of religious ideology not of government. Great Awakening leaders such as George Whitefield and Thomas Shepard were imploring for changes of personal and religious changes in peoples lives. None of these sermons included radicals for change or reform its governance. It was instead calling for reformation and for people to repent their "sinful" ways.

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The Great Awakening -Butler's Point of View

by [Curtis Nordquist](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 6:50 PM

I would have to agree with Butler's perspective on the supposed connection between the revivalists and the Revolution being not as connected as some historians (like Bonomi) believe. While Bonomi attempts to make connections to the revolution, most of her article is about the differences between the old religion/church and the separatists/revivalists; Bonomi doesn't provide a lot of evidence that makes the causal connection. Butler does, however, make clear that these two events are simply coincidental. Butler says that many historians argue about when the Great Awakening time of revivalists even happened, but they DO know that it wasn't directly leading to the time of the Revolution (p6). Butler points to the changes in the churches/religion came from varying sources anyhow, not just revivalism (or the Great Awakening) such as population changes, diversity (like Armenian influence) with international arrivals who settled in new communities that weren't so religious (p8). I felt that Butler's three points about the timing being off (by almost a quarter of a century), the fact that the revivalist groups really didn't expand much (mostly PA), and the fact that the Revolution was mostly political (p9) was key to his argument. Butler then outlined the revival's main features in the "four part model" (p9) by saying: 1) only about half the colonies really even participated in revivalist activities, 2) those that did were "western" and often made up of international societies, 3) the revivalists actually called FOR (not argued/avoided) order and authority, and 4) a lot of the Revolutionary leaders were Anglican aristocracy, not revival separatists. Butler seems to be maintaining that many historians are using the faulty causality fallacy of thought, while he shows his readers that those two events are simply coincidental. The book (sect 4-4, p114) states that the revivalist movements "peaked during the American Revolution and for a few decades after it" --carefully worded so as NOT to make a connection to the Revolution, just that it happened during that same time. Seemingly, these two events happened near each other, and yes the revivalist movement, the Great Awakening, had influence, but influence over religion, not the politics that was mostly the reason for the Revolution.

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A New Outlook!

by [Ryan Peel](#) - Thursday, October 24, 2019, 8:47 PM

I see! I wasn't all that sure about whether or not the Awakening was a key to the Revolution. I didn't really think it was. However, your points arguing that it wasn't, gave me a fresh look on this. I didn't really see much that told me the Great Awakening played a big part in the revolution. In fact, I'm going to borrow another student's words here... They said that it was just a time for religious reformation, not of government reformation. A time for repentance for peoples' sinful ways. (Abraham Millan's post) You

have also mentioned that Bonomi never made a connection to the Awakening and the Revolution, I'm inclined to agree here. I don't see a connection either, casual or concrete. Here's a quote I find strange "since the Awakeners began as an insurgent minority in every church, they could advance their religious ideology only by overturning the orthodox majority, or, when that failed, by withdrawing from or by bringing down the institutional structures that sheltered orthodoxy and forfeited its authority." (Great Awakening doc, page 3) That doesn't make a clear connection to this event and the revolution, as well as saying that the colonists could contest their own people for religious advancement. Not really something I find to be all that important in a war for independence. This line from Bonomi make much sense to me either "as the Great Awakening broke down social cohesion in America, it simultaneously elevated the individual." (Great Awakening doc, page 4.) So, to win a war such as the Revolutionary War, you want everyone to be on the same side right? Not trying to outdo or elevate themselves against their neighbors, right? So, I don't think she made much of a connection to the Awakening being a key event in the Revolution.

Sum of ratings: [1 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**Re: The Great Awakening**by [Jay Elmore](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 6:51 PM

I agree with the second speaker, Jon Butler, in saying that the Great Awakening was not a key to the American Revolution. Butler does not question the fact that the Great Awakening was a historical event, although he phrases it as "a short lived Calvinist revival in New England in the early 1740's." This description should already begin to show Butler's personal opinion on the subject, one which states that the events of the time period were not important enough to spark a revolution. Another point made in support of the Great Awakening being marginally influential in rebellion is that it only occurred in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Rhode Island, and New Jersey, only six of the thirteen colonies at the time. And even in these places revivalism was not always overwhelming. An example of this is in Pennsylvania where Butler says, "The revivalists there only had a sustained effect on settlers in Presbyterian churches where many of the laity and clergy also opposed them. The Baptists, who were so important in the New England revivals, paid little attention to them." Not only does this point out that it was not entire communities falling under this Great Awakening, but it wasn't even full religious groups. This is shown through the Baptists being active in New England under the revival movement, while in Pennsylvania they were not involved until much later. Through these points it feels safe for me to say that the Great Awakening, although it did unify many groups in rebellion against common theory and religious practice, was not a large enough event to have played a key role in the American Revolution.

Sum of ratings: [2 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**Butler's Main Arguments**by [Marcus Jackson](#) - Saturday, October 26, 2019, 6:12 PM

I also agree with Jon Butler that the Great Awakening was not a primary factor in the American Revolution. I think that you highlight some of the crucial points that he made very well. Especially the fact that the majority of the 13 colonies were not even affected by the short lived Calvinist revival as Butler describes it (Textbook 131). All while those affected states were not even fully taken over by the revival, with many different groups not even accepting or acknowledging the movement (Butler 7). One thing that

you didn't mention that I personally found very illustrative was the fact that the immense population growth in America at the time would make even fairly minor religious denominations see seemingly huge expansion (Butler 8). Which while not a primary point in Butler's argument was a good point.

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The Colonial Americas New Freedoms

by [Trevor Mejia](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 8:08 PM

First off, I would like to start with the major themes/takeaway from the Great Awakening.

- All people are born sinners.
- Sin without salvation will send a person to hell.
- All people can be saved if they confess their sins to God, seek forgiveness, and accept God's grace.
- All people can have a direct and emotional connection with God.
- Religion shouldn't be formal and institutionalized, but rather casual and personal.

While the movement unified the colonies and brought an increase of Church growth, it may have also caused division among those who supported it and those who rejected it. Patricia U. Bonomi believes that the Great Awakening influenced the Revolutionary War by encouraging the notions of nationalism and individual rights. This started because they felt that God was working within the American colonies in a special way. While the movement helped unify the colonies and boosted Church growth, it also caused division among those who supported it and those who rejected it. The Great Awakening influenced the Revolutionary War by encouraging the notions of nationalism and individual rights. When the Great Awakening took place, it could have helped prepare the Colonists for the American Revolution by encouraging ideas of liberty, equality, and self-reliance. For example, the effect of the Magna Carta in England.

The Magna Carta limited the power of the King as well as establishing the principle that everyone is subject to the law, even the King. This is the same as the Great Awakening because it meant that people could make the laws that everyone else had to listen to. Some believed that others had lost their religious faith and this is apparently what spurred the Great Awakening. This could have been brought on by the fewer amounts of organized churches in new lands that were forming whole new civilizations.

In all, the Great Awakening contributed to the development of an "independent spirit" among American Colonists because of how it was able to reduce the power of hierarchical religious sects. It contributed to a situation in which people thought more for themselves about issues of religion rather than just listening to what was the King said was best for them. Which could be seen as the first step as to listening their own voice over that of the king. Personally I feel these could have been the first steps in history for moving away from the King's rulership, but I also feel as if much more had to happen after to truly start the revolutionary war.

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**Re: The Great Awakening**by [Emily Fosnight](#) - Tuesday, October 22, 2019, 12:40 PM

Didn't revivalism end with more religious denominations than when it started? And wasn't there little religious toleration in early America? Isn't this dividing Americans more than unifying them?

I disagree mainly with the statement that the movement unified the colonies. How could revivalism unify the colonies if it didn't even really effect them all? It was a major deal in maybe half of the colonies. And didn't even effect everyone in those colonies, it effected only a certain population.

Sum of ratings: [0 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**Re: The Great Awakening**by [Trevor Mejia](#) - Wednesday, October 23, 2019, 8:35 AM

I was more referring to the fact that everything had to start with something. Altho something had to put the gear in motion, before that someone had to make that gear. Here we see for the first time people are blatantly voicing opinions against the crown. This is not the birth of the revolutionary war, but the first steps to understanding that they have a voice. These people would have never seen the revolutionary war coming for the time, due to it still being a new frontier, but this small step to religious freedom helped gain courage and strength that was used in the near future.

Sum of ratings: [1 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**Re: The Colonial Americas New Freedoms**by [Eric Shoaf](#) - Wednesday, October 23, 2019, 9:16 PM

There is a really great quote from Butler's essay that I'd like to bring to your attention:

"They 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."

Not all of the colonists were affected by these revivals, but they still decided to revolt against the British. So the idea that the Great Awakening contributed to the formation of an "independent spirit" is somewhat misguided. Any kind of spirit that it created wouldn't have been a major factor in causing the American Revolution. Especially if you consider the fact that these awakenings took place only in six out of the 13 colonies.

Sum of ratings: [1 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**Re: The Colonial Americas New Freedoms**by [Trevor Mejia](#) - Thursday, October 24, 2019, 12:58 PM

In the most recent video clips, the first one in particular. We see many historians actually state how, the individual grace of god helped people speak up, this led to creating more American individualism and American independence. All these things together I would claim to be the independent spirit. They would speak out over things such as, pastors and sermons. How is this not independent Spirit? Independent spirit is classified as having a willingness to speak out about concerns or dislikes. Also, Multiple video clips talk about George Whitfield who was a famous preacher who used aspects of stage acting to help boost his ability to speak to large crowds. His small tips and tricks with pronunciation essentially made him the first Radio host. With over 10 million people from both the United states and Great Brittan listening to his sermons. With one history even saying "He could make one weep by the way he pronounced Mesopotamia." George Whitfield traveled and preached at all the colonies. So, although it seems like an only 6 colonies where involved all colonies were affected. Whether it was by word of mouth, the newspaper, or people like George Whitfield who take it upon themselves to share his grace of god with the other colonies. Every Colony still heard about it and was present to the items happening. Obviously, this wasn't the case for the American Revolution. And like I said before, it's the first step, the revolution was people speaking up and demanding what they want when they couldn't before. I see this to be one of the first steps down a long road leading to the revolutionary war.

Sum of ratings: [2 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**Relation to the Magna Carta**by [Marcus Jackson](#) - Saturday, October 26, 2019, 6:09 PM

I find your comparison with the Magna carta in England odd. The Magna Carta was a legal and constitutional document and was not related to a religious movement so I'm not quite sure I understand the basis of the comparison beyond the vague link in the weakening of the power of the crown. I also do not understand you saying that the Great Awakening led to laws "that everyone else had to listen to". The Great Awakening merely refers to a shift in the views on religion and the role of the church in parts of the colonies and not any particular legal changes in said colonies, so I am confused by the connection that you are making between the two concepts.

Sum of ratings: [0 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**The Great Awakening's Affect, or Lack Thereof, on American Politics**by [Marcus Jackson](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 9:47 PM

I agreed more with Jon Butler than Patricia Bonomi on the effects, or lack thereof, the Great Awakening had on America and the latter revolution. Overall I felt that Butler made better points about the relative affect outside of the religious theory and communities that the Great Awakening influenced. Whereas Bonomi's arguments seemed to focus too much on individual situations, and trying to apply them to the rest of the people in the colonies making it seem overly general and somewhat unsupported.

One particularly interesting example that Butler brings up is that due to growth in the colonies from fewer than 300,000 to over 2,000,000 from 1700-1770 that even fairly modest denominations would appear to have great growth. Especially considering the fact that many new communities did not have previously

established religious institutions. Another related statistic that Butler put forward was the fact that Presbyterianism expanded as rapidly between 1710-1740 as it did between 1740-1770 in the middle colonies (Butler 8). Both the facts qualify the supposedly whirlwind growth of religious upheaval that Bonomi suggested in her paper, and give you a better idea of this growth in reality. Both Butler and the textbook agree that the Great Awakening did not have a universal effect with largely only the mid-Atlantic and New England colonies being "swept" up in it (Textbook 131). Butler highlights the Pennsylvania colony as an example of the many groups not particularly affected by the religious revival, including the Baptists, Quakers and Germans, who all paid little attention to the event until much later on (Butler 7). Which fairly succinctly leads to the final point that Butler makes, namely that its quite odd that such a supposedly monumental religious upheaval would seemingly not have any political effects on the country until a quarter century later with the American Revolution, with even those supposed effects being tenuously linked at best to the Great Awakening (Butler 9). All of this information leads me to believe that there is too much of a connection being made between the Great Awakening and the American Revolution by Bonomi in her paper.

Sum of ratings: [3 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**Re: In Favor of the American Revolution**by [Caleb Willis](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 10:08 PM

The Great Awakening was caused by many reasons which led to the American Revolution. Americans desired to strive for justice and independence. Religion changed as Americans broke away from the social orders which was dictated by England where Americans had fled from. In time, new faiths emerged with much more democracy, allowing people to experience religious freedom. According to Patricia U. Bonomi *"The Hosannas of the Multitude": The Great Awakening In America*, provided independence, but did break down unity in America. Revivals affected God fearing Americans, and their actions and decisions were to be somewhat ignored to others, but rather to affect individuals personally. An example is Gilbert Tennent's sermons. They were described as "terrible and searching." It appears, the independence Americans had a taste of, was now becoming difficult due to religious revivals and the consequences of not being on "God's Side." This was certainly one factor which led to the American Revolution. Basically, religion caused such a division or separation of unit between those who had fled for independence. Sadly religion revivals, did indeed make people fearful enough to fight for independent rights.

Sum of ratings: [2 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**I don't believe the Great Awakening had an impact**by [Ryan Peel](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 10:15 PM

I don't believe the Great Awakening had an impact on the Revolutionary War. For one reason, it's difficult to date according to Professor Butler. (Great Awakening doc, page 6) So, if we can't even pinpoint what the actual date of effect is, why count it as an event that had such significance? Mr. Butler also states that "Calvinism never dominated the eighteenth-century revivals under the Great Awakening label." (Great Awakening doc, page 6.) So, if one of the biggest Puritan religions didn't really follow under this big label, then, it must not have had a lot of pull during this time. This big religion that never really had much power during this time. A statement of Bonomi's that I would like to analyze is this one: "Religion has always been considered a likely agent of radicalism" (Great Awakening doc, page 3) If it was the agent of this war, then

why wasn't it felt during the battles? Perhaps the soldiers looked to Him after the battles? Why look at something as large an event that wasn't felt during the time of the war? The textbook goes to mention that the revivals "shattered the unity of New England and the Congregational Church." (Textbook page 114) A religious schism during this wondrous time, that's not really something that would help it along. In fact, wouldn't you want the sides to have harmony? Where the New Side and Old Side of presbyterianism existed during this time, wouldn't you want just One Side? One thing the Awakening did do was set in motion new colleges such as Princeton, Brown, Rutgers, and Columbia, the awakening gifted us those institutes of learning. But, did scholars have such an effect on a war? I'm not so sure about that. Although, we can now look back at it and ask these very questions.

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The Great Awakening with Patricia U. Bonomi's point of view

by [Sidney Axtell](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 10:40 PM

I personally agree with Patricia U. Bonomi's point of view, just because I feel she looked specifically at not only the religious argumentation, but the series of religious events that helped stoke the flames of revolution in late colonial America.

A quote from her reading states "Religion has always been considered a likely agent of radicalism. Nor is there reason to doubt that the tremendous stir of the Great Awakening altered the social and political equilibrium of colonial life. Just as the revival marked a significant divide in popular thought and practice, so too it would supply the most pertinent and usable model for radical activists in the years that lay ahead. Many features of the Awakening foreshadowed what was to come."

She goes into strong detail that religion was critical to both igniting the fire of revolution and spreading it. Also that the religion in question was defined specifically by its hostility to anything to do with Catholic religious or political theory.

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Re: The Great Awakening with Patricia U. Bonomi's point of view

by [Tuyen Thanh Diep](#) - Tuesday, October 22, 2019, 5:41 PM

I also agree with Patricia U. Bonomi's point of view. Moreover I'm just stating my personal view of America's The Great Awakening regarding colonies and religions, but it also makes a lot of sense. Insightful about the American revolution in the following years. But it can be said that religion also has a light influence. Most Americans say religion plays a "very important" role in their lives. Religion is also sometimes a way to resolve revolutionary conflicts in the United States. "The Great Awakening has changed the political and social equilibrium of colonial life." To sum up, religion is raised as a tool to quell the fires of conflict. No religion will be worse, more importantly, how it has been propagated and morally formed for people.

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Supporting the rights of Minorities

by [Luca Belsito](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 10:59 PM

Patricia U. Bonomi's stance asserting that the Great Awakening, "represented a rehearsal for the colonists' political assault on English rule" is one that I stand by. She argues in her article that, "The Great Awakening created conditions uniquely favorable to social, political, and religious reform to usher in a new age of contentiousness." stating that it created the ideal situation for reform to happen. One such group identified in the Great Awakening was one that already challenged the authority, Bonomi states, "revivalists ... defended the rights of minorities as they characterized the authority against which they were rebelling as illegitimate." This support of minorities is one that represents the majority of the early colonies, being that the majority of the population in the colonies were minorities of the English Isles.

Bonomi supports this idea further by separating the revivalists from those who oppose it stating, "the Old Sides admonished, preachers would teach their flocks 'to love God, love your Neighbour, obey them that have Rule over you.'" Completely contrary to the New Lights whom supported the challenging of their governments and leaders because it was for, "the greater Good of our poor Souls."

Sum of ratings: [2 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**The Dividing Spirit Carries On**by [Logan Yetts](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 11:10 PM

There are countless factors and events that led up to and contributed to the American Revolution. If any one of those events had happened differently or not at all, there is no telling how the story would have turned out and what the impact would be. I think without a doubt one of the factors that contributed to the American revolution is the Great Awakening. For such a major World event to have happened so relatively close in time and place, even though the revolutionaries would have had no first-hand experience in it, there must have still been strong reverberations rippling from the Great Awakening through the culture and thought of the people during the Revolution.

Seeing the effects of the Great Awakening, the greater focus on the individual, separation from rituals and traditions, and the radical changes in thought must have left an irreversible impact on the culture that would be passed down through generations. Such a massive departure from the establishment had really never been seen before, but "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." (Patricia Bonomi, pg. 5)

The Great Awakening opened the floodgates for such revolutions to take place. Although the actual ideals of the Great Awakening might not have had a major direct impact on the American Revolution, it is more the "dividing Spirit" that, as the Reverend William Shurtleff aptly predicted, "would be manifested everywhere after mid-century in the proliferation of religious and political factions." (pg. 5)

Sum of ratings: [3 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**Re: The Dividing Spirit Carries On**by [Max Birch](#) - Tuesday, October 22, 2019, 7:13 PM

Although in my first post I stated that I agree with Butler in that the Great Awakening was not a key in the American Revolution, I can completely see where you are coming from. It is impossible to know what would have happened without the Great Awakening no matter how big or small it really was. The Great Awakening was a huge step forward and definitely influenced tons of people. It set the groundwork for

many advances in many different categories of life, and pushed forward many new ideas that may have never been developed without it. I'm sure that the Great Awakening was not the only, or even the main thing that sparked the American Revolution, but it definitely had a huge influence.

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Re: The Dividing Spirit Carries On

by [Tuyen Thanh Diep](#) - Tuesday, October 22, 2019, 9:56 PM

I think these new interpretations of religion will work to divide America from Europe. Besides the Enlightenment ideas, colonists developed a culture and their own identity. This development, separated from Europe, will help reinforce colonial identity as something different from Europeans. Indeed, great awakening will not be the only way to write on historical pages, but it has a significant impact on humanity.

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"[the revivals] arose erratically in different times and places..."

by [Emily Fosnight](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 11:12 PM

The historian's position with which I agree with most is Jon Butler's. No, the Great Awakening was not a key to the American Revolution. The major historical fact that had the most influence on my decision is that the "...revivals 'swept' only some of the mainland colonies." On page 7 of the summary, he says, "They occurred in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Virginia with some frequency at least at some point between 1740 and 1770... The revivals also touched only certain segments of the population in the colonies where they occurred." According to the book, "England, Scotland, Ulster, New England, the mid-Atlantic colonies, and, for a time, South Carolina responded warmly to emotional calls for a spiritual rebirth," (Book, pg. 113). Also, according to the book in the section titled "Origins of the Revivals" it only talks about a few mainland American colonies, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut (book, pg. 113).

Actually, there's a piece from Patricia J. Bonomi's "'The Hosannas of the Multitude': the Great Awakening in America" that I'd like to include. She quotes Richard Hofstadter, "The first major intercolonial crisis of the mind and spirit in eighteenth-century America," (summary, pg. 5). Here, she's implying that it brought the colonies together, but I don't see that in my history book. As I understood the reading, the churches were splitting into even more denominations, therefore dividing them further, within their own colony even. Whereas Butler states, "...the revivals provided little focus for intercolonial unity... They appeared too erratically in too few colonies under too many different auspices to make such generalizations appropriate," (summary, pg. 9). Here, he's saying the revivals may have taken place among the colonies and in different regions, but in no way did it bring the colonies together, and I agree with that.

Another piece from Butler I really liked was, "... the prerevolutionary revivals should be understood primarily as regional events that occurred in only half the colonies... Revivals appear to have arisen when three circumstances were present - internal demands for renewal in different international Christian communities, charismatic preachers, and special, often unique, local circumstances that made communities receptive to elevated religious rhetoric," (summary, pgs. 9-10). This revivalism was not apparent in all colonies, it majorly affected half of them, nor did it all of a sudden pop up in the 1730's. "They arose erratically in different times and places... Their leadership was local and, at best, regional..." (summary, pg 10). Butler states that revivalism takes place across a century from the 1690's (summary pg. 10) which the book seems to support this statement in this sentence, "This 'Great Awakening' shattered some denominational loyalties in the colonies and enabled the Methodists and Baptists to surge ahead of all protestant rivals after 1780," (book, pg. 113).

Sum of ratings: [3 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**The Great Awakening and Colonial Unity**by [Marcus Jackson](#) - Saturday, October 26, 2019, 6:14 PM

I think that your second paragraph made very interesting and unique points. Particularly the discussion of the effect that the Great Awakening had on colonial unity. With Bonomi somewhat implying a shared experience and opinion throughout the colonies (Bonomi 5). While Butler comes very much against this so called generalization. Which he thinks is not appropriate considering how erratic and sparse the movement and its effects were (Butler 9). I think that this is a very important aspect to nail down in regards to the Great Awakenings relationship, or lack thereof, with the American Revolution. As said revolution relied on colonial cooperation in many ways, and if the Great Awakening had really led to more colonial unity it would make the argument for its significance much stronger. However the evidence does not seem clear or prevalent enough to make this assumption comfortably in my opinion.

Sum of ratings: [1 \(1\)](#) [Permalink](#)[Show parent](#)[Edit](#)[Split](#)[Delete](#)[Reply](#)**RE: I agree with professor Jon Butler**by [Hunter Schultz](#) - Monday, October 21, 2019, 11:38 PM

Just to start off I'm not understanding this era super clearly so from what I gathered from both sides of this subject, I sided with No! I think The Great Awakening was not a key to the American revolution. Religion has to do with everything especially in the great awakening time period. religion affects most of all things debatable now days. Now I think professor Jon Butler is correct me basing this off that I understand his reasonings better. He states "No one would seriously question the existence of "the Great Awakening" if historians only described it as a short-lived Calvinist revival in New England during the 1740s." I think this statement is correct saying there is so much stated trying to prove single points and just based off that we don't know the 100% truth of all that was given out by professors because history is biased. Even professor Escobar can agree with that somewhat as he calls out little mistakes seen in our textbooks and videos we study from. This professor also states that its difficult to date "the Great Awakening" because certain events are scattered through a predicted time period. like as he says revivals are stated to have flourished from 1740 to 1743 but ultimately ending in 1745 but then somewhat reappears a decade later. thus showing that

dates are hard to conclude. and he states that most historians say 1740 was the start just based off Whitefield's first appearance. stating again we don't thoroughly know exactly what happened. Jon Butler states more shown wrongs made by historians and clearly describes his reasonings.

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Re: Change of Mind (Not a cause)

by [Caleb Willis](#) - Wednesday, October 23, 2019, 11:22 PM

After re-reading Jon Butler's views on whether the Great Awakening was a key to the American Revolution, I realize, there are valid points which makes me believe, No, The Great Awakening, was not responsible for the revolution based on much larger religious revivals, causing wide-spread fear and conflict. In my opinion, neither the colonists or England, truly understood the other. The views and concerns leading to actions which increased steadily until it escalated into war, would appear to me as stated by Jon Butler (pg.9), "the revivals provided little focus for intercolonial unity." Not all colonies were affected by religious revivals, but those which were likely affected depending on who was presenting "facts" vs "fiction?" There were several congregations as well as ministers bringing their own beliefs. Doing so, many widespread inconsistencies in religious movements would have made it impossible for specific and truthful information to be spread. With the first revival taking place a quarter of a century before the Revolution began while population and colonial expansions had grown, it does not seem likely that the "Awakening swept across the mainland colonies." Butler (pg.6). Revivals influenced several colonies, but many colonies were not. Rather, the Revolution began due to a cause and effect relationship of actions and reactions.

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Re: The Great Awakening

by [Max Birch](#) - Thursday, October 24, 2019, 8:55 PM

Although I initially agreed with Butler's article stating that the Great Awakening was not a key in the American Revolution, after rereading Bonomi's article my opinion changed a little. The Great Awakening caused people to think more for themselves rather than others, along with causing people to reflect on themselves and learn about themselves more than ever before. Bonomi says "In exhorting their followers to make personal decisions for God, and then to act on those decisions regardless of their effect on the larger society, the revivalists gave sanction to a new dynamic in human relationships" (Bonomi, 4). People thought with more originality and creativity due to this new individual thinking mindset. This new dynamic changed human relationships forever and definitely had an effect on the American Revolution. It's hard to say what would have happened without the Great Awakening or if the American Revolution would have happened without it. Overall it provided people with a much more progressive mindset and changed how people thought forever. Without this flow of creative thinking and self reflection it would have taken the colonies a much longer time to progress.

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Maybe not spread everyone but still impactful

by [Matthew Hendricks](#) - Thursday, October 24, 2019, 9:41 PM

I don't think it would be correct to say that because the Awakening was not ubiquitous in Colonial America that it was not impactful. The choice of Colonial America to declare Independence itself was not a ubiquitous act of Colonial America. Some colonists remained loyal to the British crown and were considered "loyalists" <http://www.ushistory.org/us/13c.asp>

Think of other movements in History that we're not accepted in every community of their respective nation. For example the Civil Rights movement of the 1960's, Many state governments did not accept this movement whatsoever and tried to stop it, even by using brute force, however it had a huge Impact obviously on American Society.

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Re: Maybe not spread everyone but still impactful

by [Logan Yetts](#) - Friday, October 25, 2019, 1:09 PM

I really like what you are saying here. I don't know why it has to be so black and white. It just seems so oversimplified to say that just because all or even the majority weren't a part of it that it didn't have any impact. There are many cases where minor movements have had large impacts in history and we may not always even be able to see the impact. To say that it didn't have any impact at all seems very presumptuous and dismissive.

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Re: Maybe not spread everyone but still impactful

by [Matthew Hendricks](#) - Friday, October 25, 2019, 8:31 PM

Yea I think it was be an oversimplified and superficial view of the matter to just come to a conclusion based on ideas like that.

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Re: Relative levels of impactfullness

by [Matthew Hendricks](#) - Friday, October 25, 2019, 8:28 PM

I disagree that the Great Awakening not happening everywhere, at the same time, and clearly not being the only contributor to Revolutionary actions is reason to discredit the idea that it was impactful to a certain degree. I make this claim under the impression that the question is was the Great Awakening impactful at setting the stage for the American Revolution. I am not under the impression that we are discussing whether or not the Great Awakening was the primary cause of the Revolution, if that was the case I would agree with John Butler on the issue.

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Re: The Great Awakening Key to the Revolution



by [Caleb Willis](#) - Friday, October 25, 2019, 11:58 PM

I believe the videos not only "hinted" toward Evangelist, George Whitefield being an important and influential man, but one who "had the power to move masses of people through a single sermon" (113) textbook, chapter 4. A religious revivalism had begun and now reached a much broader group of people who were willing to listen to him preach, 2, 3, 4 hrs or even an entire day. Even more impressive, he had the ability to "attract 30,000 people people, twice Boston's population." (113) textbook, chapter 4. He certainly was able to stimulate religious excitement and mania in a large sense to all classes. Now it wasn't aimed at the elite, but working class and the middle class. His message was basically that everyone should have a personal individual relationship with God. This personal responsibility had a "ripple effect." (video 4)

Heyrman, Christine. I was extremely convinced that her interpretation of knowledge around Whitefield's ideals, lead me to believe he stirred and encouraged Americans to "awaken" from previous religious teachings, therefore encouraging maybe not purposefully, but the key to The Great Awakening leading to the American Revolution. People were strongly encouraged to hear a gospel which widened the opportunity to religious upheaval if it was challenged. George Whitefield preached individualism, and this was not going to be "shattered," by those who disagreed. Historians mentioned in our textbook, give Whitefield a lot of "attention" as to his responsibility in stirring the pot.

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The Great Awakening is NOT a key to American Revolution

by [Tuyen Thanh Diep](#) - Saturday, October 26, 2019, 8:44 PM

I totally agree with Butler- The Great Awakening is not a key to the American revolution. As I researched, The Great Awakening had a significant impact on Christianity. Beside that, it was a cause of religious revival in the United States, and it did not cause any effect political reform. But I am not going to deny, it was one of the movement that brought forth ideas into the American culture in the future. In contrast, the American Revolution was a huge event of democracy and equality. This was a war of independence for 13 colonies in North America against the British Empire. Exploding drastically before the absurd taxes of British colonialism that weighed heavily on the economy of the North American colonies

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Final Post! Taking a look at the other side!

by [Ryan Peel](#) - Saturday, October 26, 2019, 9:35 PM

My final post for this subject! We're taking a gander at saying yes to the Great Awakening and the American Revolution! Yes, it had a profound impact! Yes, this big event is connected! Basically, saying yes to everything. Now, all of my other posts have said that the Great Awakening had no impact or influence on the Revolution, and I still stand by that viewpoint. This post is just to take a look at what would be said for the other side, the side that says yes, it did. Let's get started. The first quote of Bonomi's that I'd find to support this is where it says that "religion has always been considered a likely agent of radicalism." (Great Awakening doc, page 3) So, to use that quote in a way to make sense is that I'm saying the energy from the Great Awakening spurred on the Revolution to fever pitch. I'm not quite sure about that, but it is possible that's something that happened. Let's take a look at another quote of hers. "A central issue separating supporters of the revival from its opponents concerned the divisibility, or as some argued the indivisibility of

ecclesiastical authority." (Great Awakening doc, page 3) If the Great Awakening did indeed have an impact on the American Revolution, then it would serve as the first order in separating the American church from the British church, yes? I'm not quite sure how that would work, but let's go with it. To be honest, I don't think this event did much for the revolution, but, it was entertaining to see what arguments I could put together for saying that it did.

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