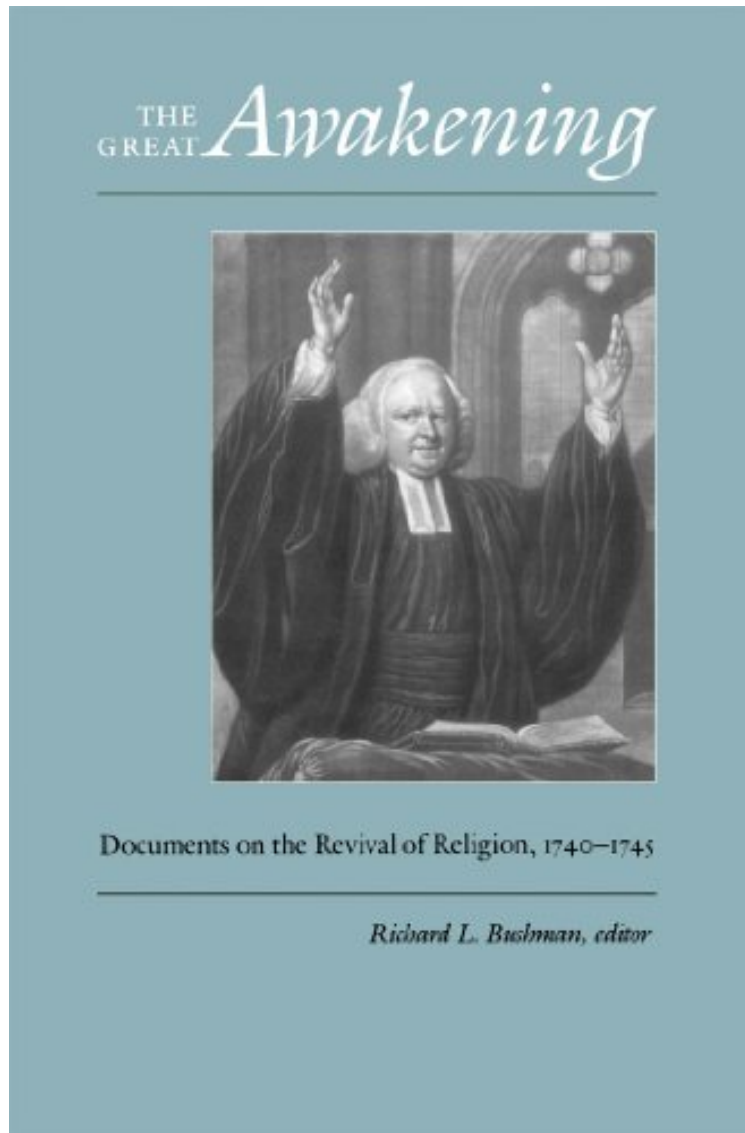


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## **The Great Awakening: Documents on the Revival of Religion, 1740-1745 (Published by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and the University of North Carolina Press)**

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my time, and all praised *The Great Awakening: Documents on the Revival of Religion, 1740-1745* (Published by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and the University of North Carolina Press):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. *Primary Sources Documenting the Great Awakening* By Dr. Marc Axelrod I am doing a paper on the preaching of Whitefield and Edwards during the Great Awakening, so I almost jumped for joy when this book came in the mail! Here you have theological treatises and tracts and narratives from revivalists who witnessed the tremendous workings of God during the time of the TransAtlantic religious revivals. You have Samuel Blair's faithful narrative of the revival in 1744 Pennsylvania, George Whitefield's eyewitness reports from his journals, and even some of the anti-revival literature of Charles Chauncey. You also have the regrettable reports of the extremism encouraged by James Davenport as well as some of Jonathan Edwards' later reflections. The bottom line is that this is a treasure trove of primary source data about the years of revival in the colonies. A must have for those interested in this era of history. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. *Deserves a better presentation with related content* By David Clapp I am the descendant of six nineteenth century American ministers, have some of their papers, several books written by about them, and many sermons. I'm also fascinated by the apparent effects of ministers from the Great Awakening on literacy in New England, the abolition of slavery, women's rights, and the ethical treatment of Native Americans in places like the Brainerd Mission. From that context, this collection was fairly lifeless. I wish more time had been put into presenting the contexts, new ideas, contacts, and involvements of the various ministers recorded. One of my relatives, the reverend Theodore Clapp who operated out of New Orleans, described the horror of listening to the hellfire and fears about death from ministers when a young brother died, and how atheists he encountered often went to their deaths more at peace than Christians he encountered. Unfortunately, I got more of a sense of this negativity from this collection than I did the inclusivity. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. *The Great Awakening* By J. Lindner This documentary history is well organized and seems to have about as many important documents from the era as one could expect. They range from documents that pre-date the events surrounding the awakening (and were probably not read by many in colonial America) to the sermons and the exposes of the principal participants. The documents are not necessarily easy to read, but they are important sources of information for theologians and historians alike. If you are a very serious student of religion or colonial history, then this book has a lot to offer. If you are looking for a basic book on the Awakening events, then you will want to look elsewhere. This book includes sermons and treatises by George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, and others who factored into the religious revival. The collection ranges from sermons to newspaper rebuttals, to treatises. It shows the complexities of the Awakening, not as a unified event, but as a series of revivals that lead to division amongst the different generations alive at the time. Young "New Lights" pitted their experiences against the more traditional "Old Lights" who saw no good happening with the younger generation. In a way, it is the age-old battle of a new generation attempting to establish its purpose against the accepted traditions of the older generation. If you do read this book, it will place a new perspective on the Awakening to show how complex colonial history truly is.

Most twentieth-century Americans fail to appreciate the power of Christian conversion that characterized the eighteenth-century revivals, especially the Great Awakening of the 1740s. The common disdain in this secular age for impassioned religious emotion and language is merely symptomatic of the shift in values that has shunted revivals to the sidelines. The very magnitude of the previous revivals is one indication of their importance. Between 1740 and 1745 literally thousands were converted. From New England to the southern colonies, people of all ages and all ranks of society underwent the New Birth. Virtually every New England congregation was touched. It is safe to say that most of the colonists in the 1740s, if not converted themselves, knew someone who was, or at least heard revival preaching. The Awakening was a critical event in the intellectual and ecclesiastical life of the colonies. The colonists' view of the world placed much importance on conversion. Particularly, Calvinist theology viewed the bestowal of divine grace as the most crucial occurrence in human life. Besides assuring admission to God's presence in the hereafter, divine grace prepared a person for a fullness of life on earth. In the 1740s the colonists, in overwhelming numbers, laid claim to the divine power which their theology offered them. Many experienced the moral transformation as promised. In the Awakening the clergy's pleas of half a century came to dramatic fulfillment. Not everyone agreed that God was working in the Awakening. Many believed preachers to be demagogues, stirring up animal spirits. The revival was looked on as an emotional orgy that needlessly disturbed the churches and frustrated the true work of God. But from 1740 to 1745 no other subject received more attention in books and pamphlets. Through the stirring rhetoric of the sermons, theological treatises, and correspondence presented in this collection, readers can vicariously participate in the ecstasy as well as in the rage generated by America's first national revival.

About the Author Richard L. Bushman is Gouverneur Morris Professor of History Emeritus at Columbia University and author of the award-winning *From Puritan to Yankee: Character and the Social Order in Connecticut, 1690-1765*

and King and People in Provincial Massachusetts.