

## **The Great Awakening: A Reflection of the European Enlightenment**

So often the ideas of eighteenth-century European philosophers are linked to constitutionalism, republicanism, and other political theories. Philosophers such as Locke, Montesquieu and Rousseau were known for their interpretations on political structure and their contributions to the development of the United States and its democratic ideas. However, the European Enlightenment had a far reaching impact, particularly on religion. It was during the mid-eighteenth century that the Great Awakening captivated the imaginations and hearts of the public in both the American colonies and England. But the Awakening was not just a religious movement; it also reflected the ideas of freedom and tolerance championed by enlightened philosophers. Taking into account the Enlightenment's emphasis on reason, this work seeks to explore the question—how did the liberal, yet secular Enlightenment; influence the religious life of early America and England? I will seek to further explore the liberal roots of the Great Awakening and argue that it may be viewed not necessarily as a reaction to the Enlightenment, but more so a compliment to Enlightened thought. Special attention will be given to key figures of the period, such as George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards.

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