

Spreading the Gospel in Colonial Virginia: Sermons and Devotional Writings



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Due to a perceived lack of resources, historians of colonial-era Virginia have generally heaped their attention on regional politics and virtually ignored the area's rich religious history. Even at a time of revived interest in Virginia's religious atmosphere, few scholars have opted to examine what is perhaps one of the region's most valuable primary resources: sermon literature.

With an extensive introduction that fully chronicles as well as contextualizes the practice of religion and church activities in early America, Edward L. Bond offers a reappraisal of religion's place in the colonies. Through his compilation of previously unpublished and largely unexamined sermons, he is able to shape a picture of colonial Virginia's religious environment that is unparalleled in both its depth and scope. The sermons appear as they do in the original, with all notes and marginalia intact. Bond's own notes provide definitions of obscure words and terms, explanations of arcane allusions, and references for unattributed citations. His commentary vastly enriches our appreciation not only of the texts, but also of their writers and the important role these clergymen played in shaping the young nation. By bringing together this variety of important sources, some of which are new to even the most established scholars of colonial Virginia, this collection fills a true void in both religious and historical scholarship.

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