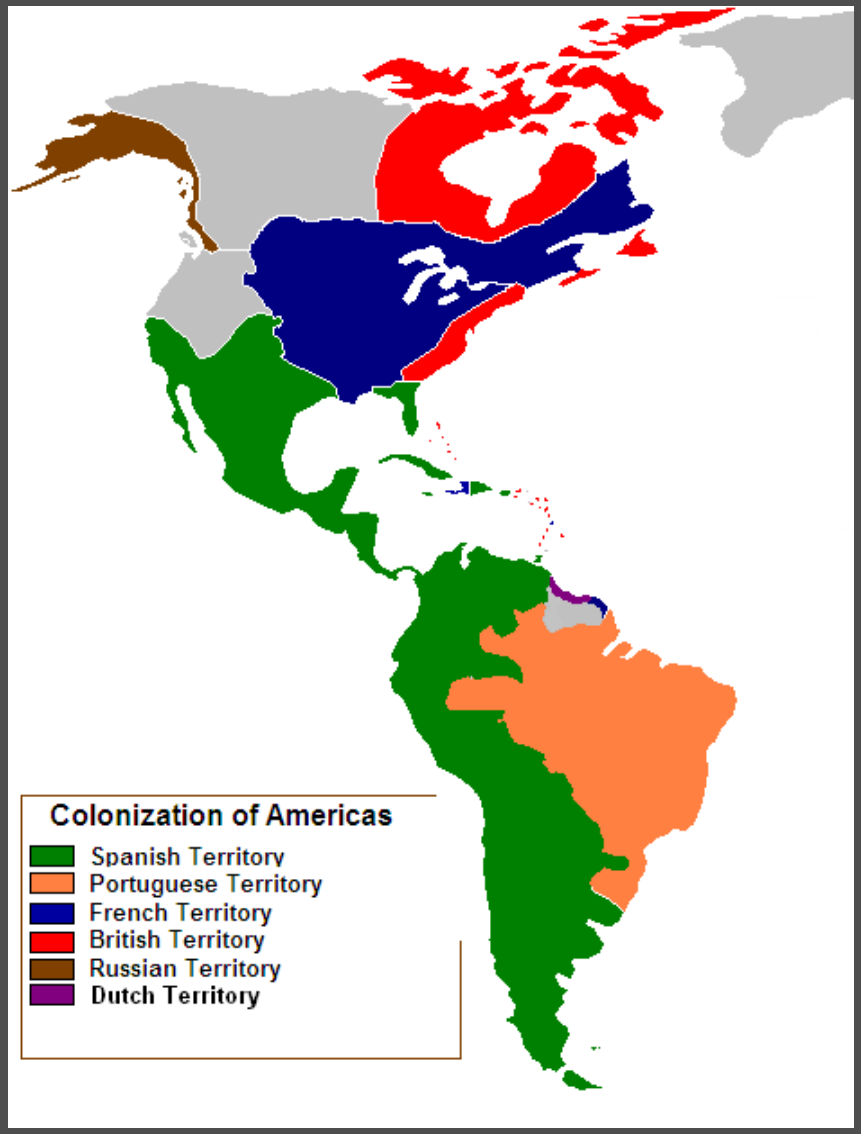
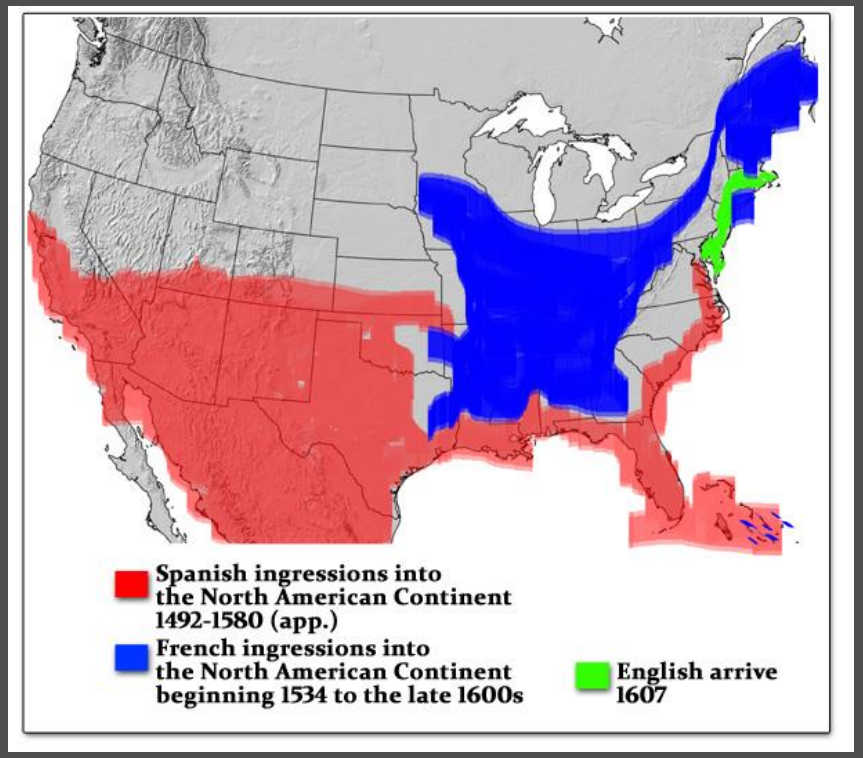

INUIT
TLINGIT
SLAVEY
DOGRIB
INUIT
CREE FEDERATION
CHILCOTIN
BEOTHUK EMPIRE
HAIDA GWAI
SHUSWAP
BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY
HURON SUPREMACY
SALISH
CROW
MI'KMAQ
FLATHEAD
MOHICAN
IROQUOIS CONFEDERACY
CHINOOK
CHEYENNE
PEQUOT
GREAT SIOUX NATION
OJIBWA
UTE
POMO
PAWNEE
SHAWNEE
APACHE EMPIRE
POWHATAN
NAVAJO
CHUMASH
HOPI
CHEROKEE SOVEREIGNTY
CHICKASAW
ANASAZI
COMANCHE
CREEK
AZTEC CALENDAR:THREE ACATL
(APPROX 2015 AD)
AZTEC EMPIRE
OLMEC KINGDOM
ARAWAK
MAYAN EMPIRE


Colonization of Americas
Spanish Territory
Portuguese Territory
French Territory
British Territory
Russian Territory
Dutch Territory


Spanish ingressions into the North American Continent 1492-1580 (app.)
French ingressions into the North American Continent beginning 1534 to the late 1600s
English arrive 1607




New England Colonies: based on religion

Southern Colonies: economic relationship with England



| 1607 | 1620 | 1629 |
|---|---|---|
| Jamestown (Virginia) | Plymouth Colony (Massachusetts) | Massachusetts Bay Company |
| non-religious | religious; separatists | religious; non-separating |
| **John Smith** | **William Bradford** (author of *Of Plimmoth Plantation*) | **John Winthrop** |
| | **Mayflower** | **Arbella** |
| | **Compact**: agreement among the settlers at New Plymouth | **Covenant**: God / the Crown are the supreme guarantors |



In Europe

**Protestantism/Calvinism**

(16th century)

**Martin Luther**, *Ninety-five Theses*, or *Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences* (1517)

**John Calvin** (1509-1564)

## Luther's opposition to Catholic Church

**Corruption** and the **sale of indulgences:** people gave money to the Church in exchange for a reduction of the temporal punishment for sins, either for themselves or for the souls in purgatory. This practice became widespread in the late Middle Ages

**Temporal power:** the political and governmental authority exercised by the Church or the Pope over non-religious matters (territories, laws, and civil administration)

**Authority of the Pope:** Luther believed that the Bible, not the Pope or Church traditions, was the only true source of authority

**Interpretation of the Bible:** Luther argued that all Christians should be able to read it in their own language and understand God's word directly; at the time, only priests could read and interpret the Bible, which was written in Latin.

## Theological principles of Protestantism

**Original Sin**: Humanity inherited a sinful nature from Adam and Eve's disobedience in Eden, making all people naturally inclined to sin

**Atonement**: Jesus Christ's sacrificial death on the cross paid the penalty for human sin, making salvation possible for the elect

**Election / Predestination**: God chooses who will be saved or damned **before** any action; unlike Catholicism, where sin leads to damnation, Protestants believe that **sin, and consequently damnation, reveal our sinful nature**

**Covenant of Grace**: God promises eternal life to the elect as a free, unearned gift, fulfilled through Christ, despite human unworthiness

**Community ("visible sainthood")**: True believers show signs of salvation through a public conversion experience and a life of piety within the church



Henry VIII wanted to divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragon (she hadn't given him a male heir). The Pope refused to grant the divorce, so Henry decided to break away from Rome.

**1534:** Henry declared himself the Supreme Head of the Church of England (**Act of Supremacy**)

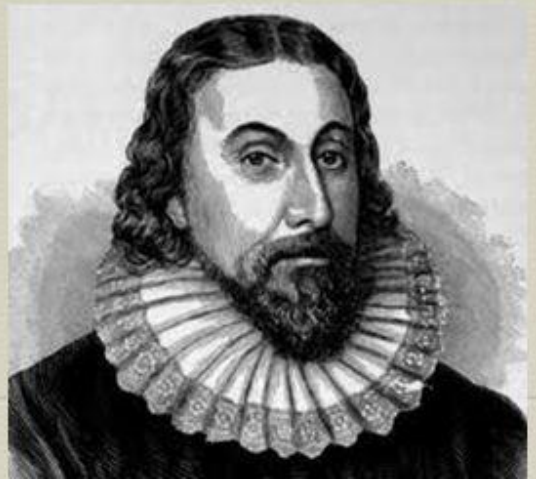
In England: **Anglican** Religion

Henry VIII (1509-1547)
Edward VI (1547-1553)
"Bloody" Mary (1553-1558)
Elizabeth I (1558-1603)
James I (1603-1625)

**Puritans**: Scrooby Congregation (1605-1608)

# John Winthrop, 1630

- "For we must consider that we shall be as a City upon a Hill. The eyes of the people are upon us. [So' that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a byword throughout the world."



## Dissenters

**Anne Hutchinson**: Criticized Puritan clergy and promoted personal revelation; banished for challenging religious authority from the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1638, went to Rhode Island and later to New Netherland (present-day New York). In 1643, she and most of her family were killed in a Native American attack

**Roger Williams**: Puritan dissenter who supported separation of church and state; founded Rhode Island as a haven for religious freedom.

**Arminians**: Opposed strict predestination; emphasized human free will in salvation

**Quakers**: Radical Protestant group believing in the “inner light,” pacifism, and spiritual equality of all people



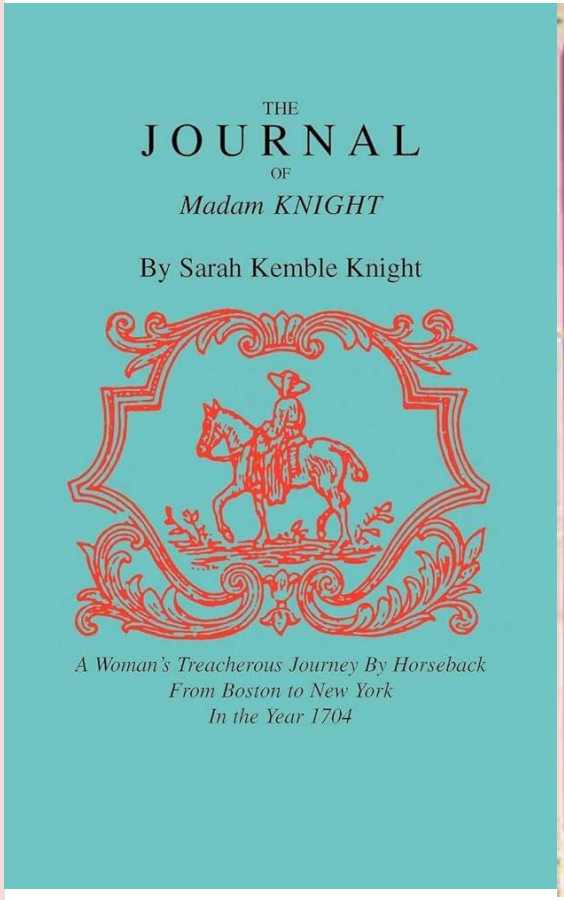
1692. **Salem Witch Trials (video)**

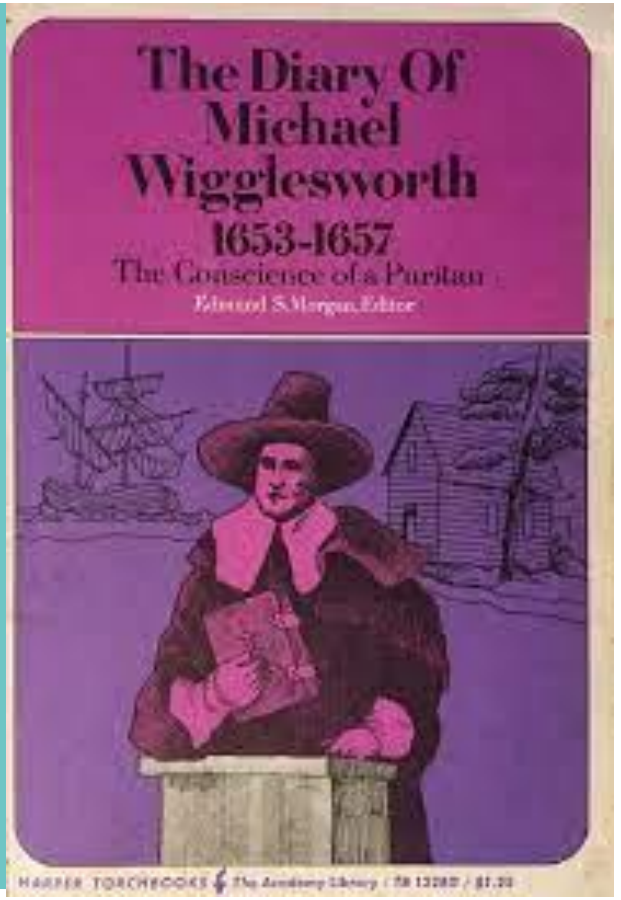
Trials in Salem, Massachusetts, where people (starting with figures like Tituba, an enslaved woman forced to give a confession) were accused of practicing witchcraft

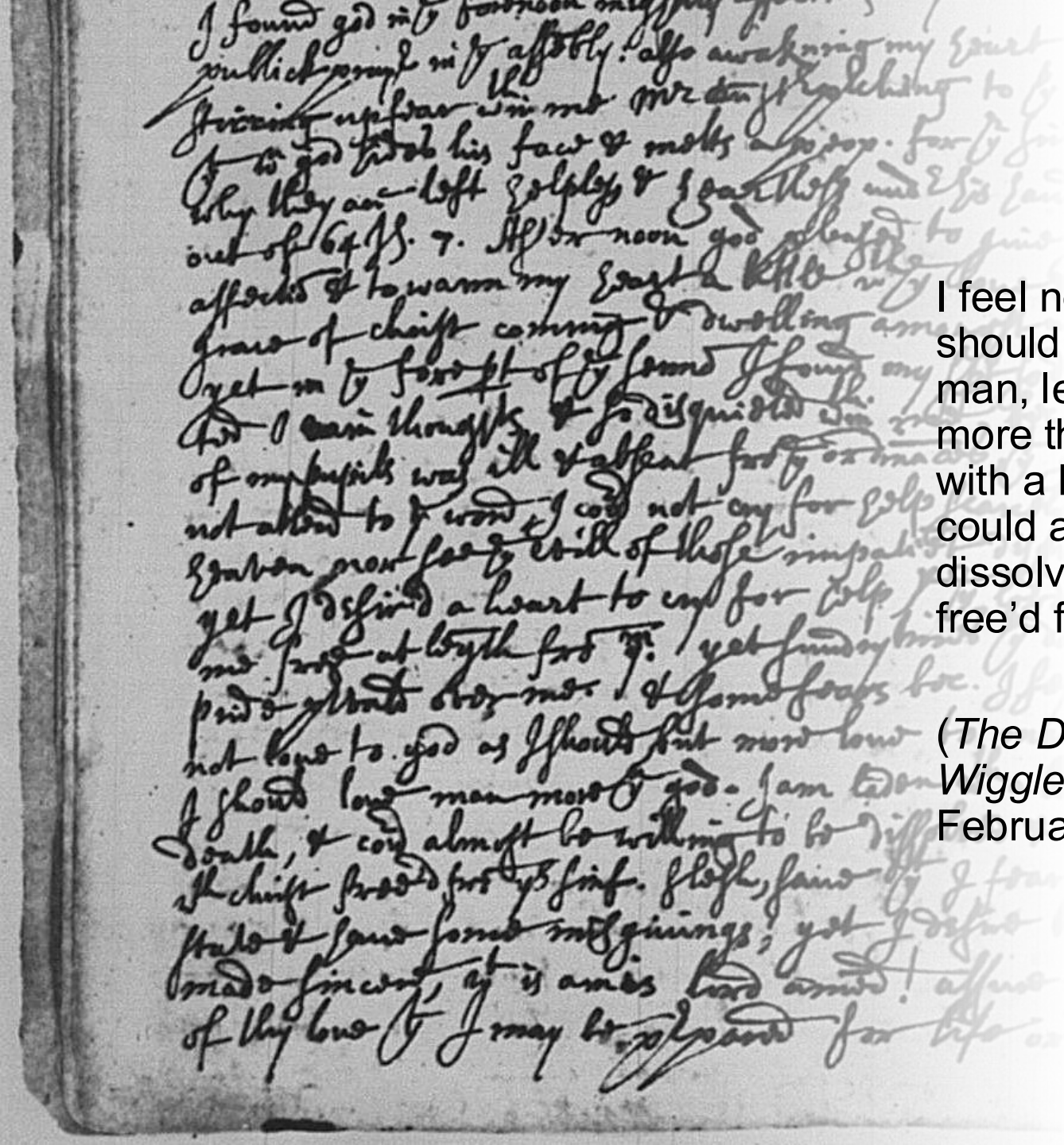
# What did American Puritans write?

Diaries and journals

Michael Wigglesworth
Sarah Kemble Knight





I feel not loue to god as I should, but more loue to man, least I should loue man more than god. I am laden with a body of death, and could almost be willing to be dissolved and be with christ free'd from this sinful flesh.

(*The Diary of Michael Wigglesworth*, February 1653)

## Anne Bradstreet (1612–1672)

Born in England; emigrated to Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630.The first published poet of the American colonies; well educated (unusual for a woman of her time).
***The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America*** (1650)
Poems: “The Prologue,” “To My Dear and Loving Husband,” and “Upon the Burning of Our House”
**Themes**: puritan faith and personal emotion and introspection; women’s roles, family life, spiritual struggles

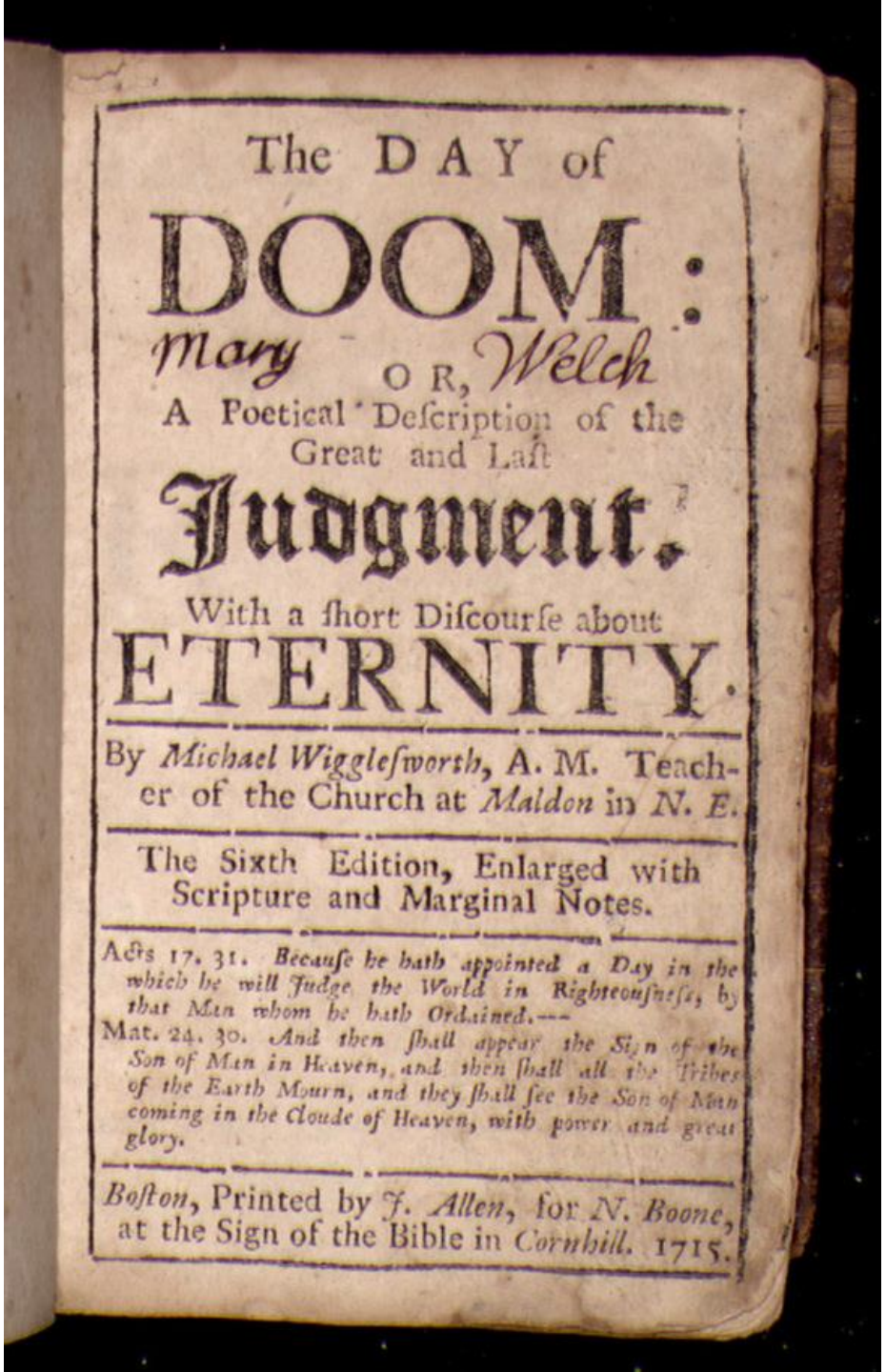
## Michael Wigglesworth (1631–1705)

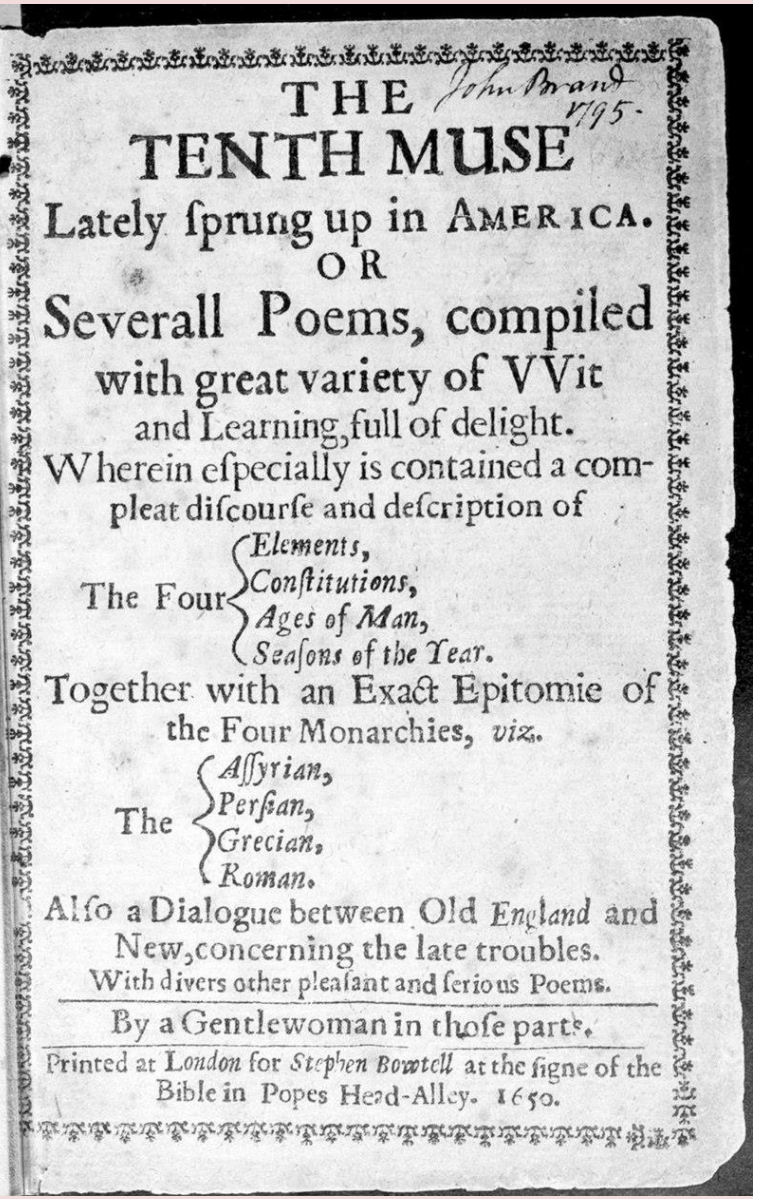
English-born Puritan minister, physician, and poet, emigrated to New England as a child; educated at Harvard College.
***The Day of Doom*** (1662): the first American bestseller; religious poem describing the Last Judgment in vivid, moralistic imagery. It aims to instruct and warn sinners. Written in plain, rhythmic verse for accessibility to all readers.

## What did American Puritans write?

Poetry

Michael Wigglesworth
(1631-1705)


The DAY of
DOOM:
Mary OR, Welch
A Poetical Deſcription of the
Great and Laſt
Judgment.
With a ſhort Diſcourſe about
ETERNITY.
By *Michael Wiggleſworth*, A. M. Teacher of the Church at *Maldon* in *N. E.*
The Sixth Edition, Enlarged with Scripture and Marginal Notes.
Acts 17. 31. *Becauſe he hath appointed a Day in the which he will Judge the World in Righteouſneſs, by that Man whom he hath Ordained.---*
Mat. 24. 30. *And then ſhall appear the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, and then ſhall all the Tribes of the Earth Mourn, and they ſhall ſee the Son of Man coming in the Cloude of Heaven, with power and great glory.*
*Boſton*, Printed by *J. Allen*, for *N. Boone*, at the Sign of the Bible in *Cornhill*. 1715.



THE
TENTH MUSE
Lately ſprung up in AMERICA.
OR
Severall Poems, compiled
with great variety of VVit
and Learning, full of delight.
Wherein eſpecially is contained a compleat diſcourſe and deſcription of
The Four { Elements, Conſtitutions, Ages of Man, Seaſons of the Year.
Together with an Exact Epitomie of the Four Monarchies, viz.
The { Aſſyrian, Perſian, Grecian, Roman.
Alſo a Dialogue between Old England and New, concerning the late troubles.
With divers other pleaſant and ſerious Poems.
By a Gentlewoman in thoſe parts.
Printed at London for Stephen Bowtell at the ſigne of the Bible in Popes Head-Alley. 1650.

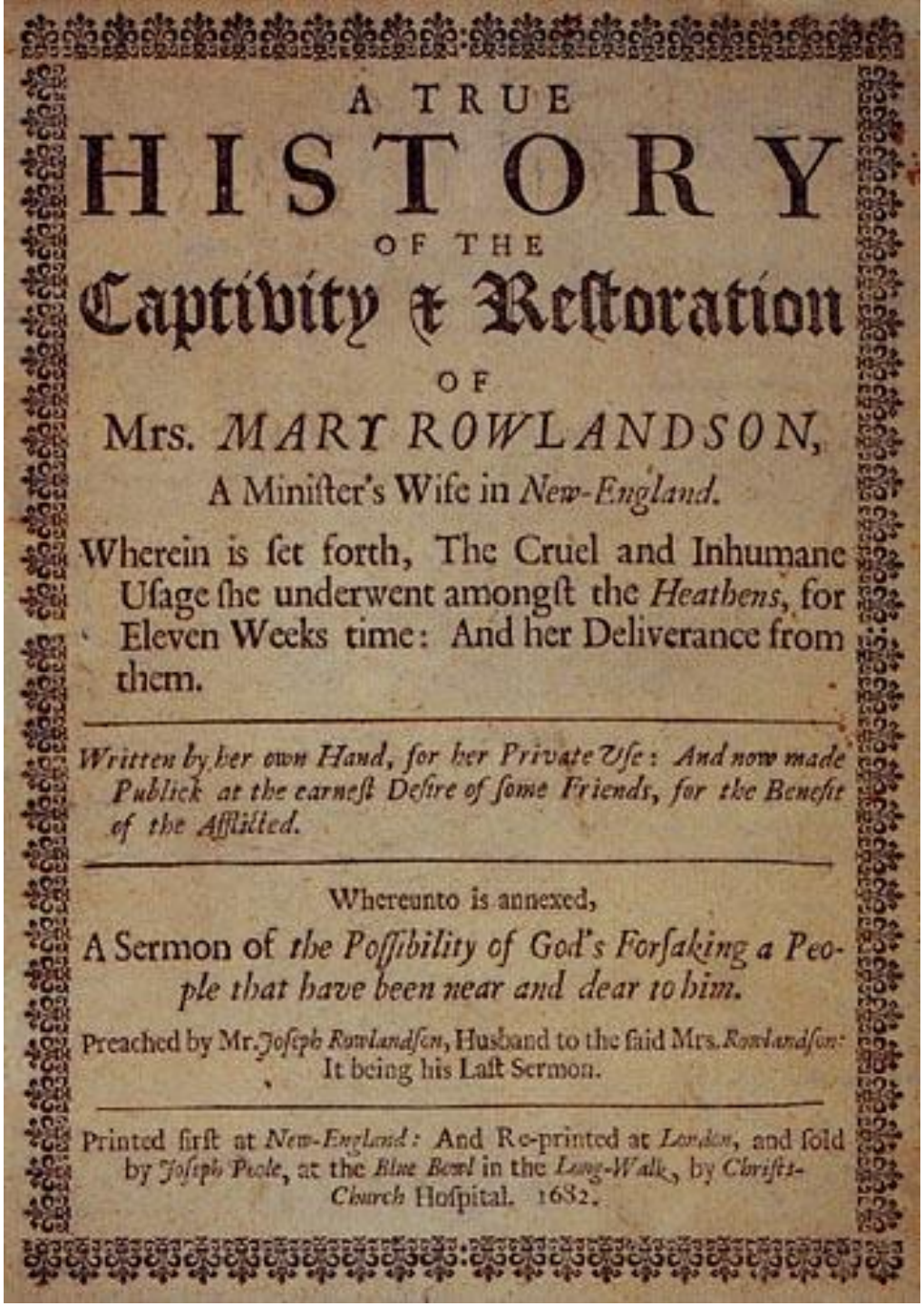
Anne Bradstreet (1612-1672)

“Prologue”
To sing of Wars, of Captains, and of Kings,
Of Cities founded, Common-wealths begun,
For my mean Pen are too superior things;
Or how they all, or each their dates have run,
Let Poets and Historians set these forth.
My obscure lines shall not so dim their worth.
[…]
And oh ye high flown quills that soar the skies,
And ever with your prey still catch your praise,
If e’er you deign these lowly lines your eyes,
Give thyme or Parsley wreath, I ask no Bays.
This mean and unrefined ore of mine
Will make your glist’ring gold but more to shine.

## What did American Puritans write?

Captivity narratives

Mary Rowlandson
(1637-1711)



A TRUE
HISTORY
OF THE
Captivity & Reſtoration
OF
Mrs. *MARY ROWLANDSON*,
A Miniſter's Wife in *New-England*.

Wherein is ſet forth, The Cruel and Inhumane Uſage ſhe underwent amongſt the *Heathens*, for Eleven Weeks time: And her Deliverance from them.

*Written by her own Hand, for her Private Uſe: And now made Publick at the earneſt Deſire of ſome Friends, for the Benefit of the Afflicted.*

Whereunto is annexed,
A Sermon of *the Poſſibility of God's Forſaking a People that have been near and dear to him.*

Preached by Mr. *Joſeph Rowlandſon*, Husband to the ſaid Mrs. *Rowlandſon*: It being his Laſt Sermon.

Printed firſt at *New-England*: And Re-printed at *London*, and ſold by *Joſeph Poole*, at the *Blue Bowl* in the *Long-Walk*, by *Chriſt-Church* Hoſpital. 1682.

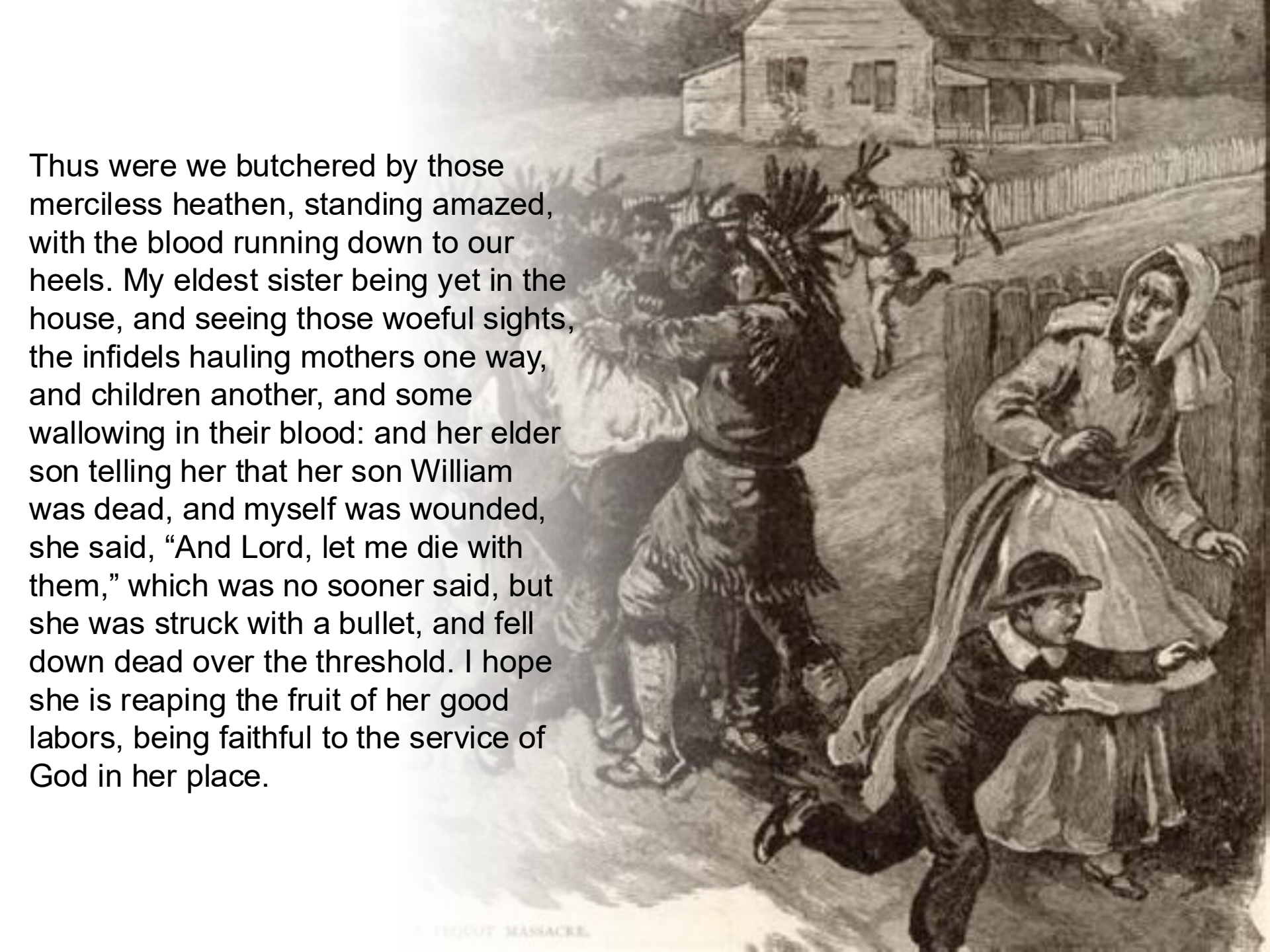
On the tenth of February 1675, came the Indians with great numbers upon Lancaster: their first coming was about sunrising; hearing the noise of some guns, we looked out; several houses were burning, and the smoke ascending to heaven. There were five persons taken in one house; the father, and the mother and a sucking child, they knocked on the head; the other two they took and carried away alive. There were two others, who being out of their garrison upon some occasion were set upon; one was knocked on the head, the other escaped; another there was who running along was shot and wounded, and fell down; he begged of them his life, promising them money (as they told me) but they would not hearken to him but knocked him in head, and stripped him naked, and split open his bowels.

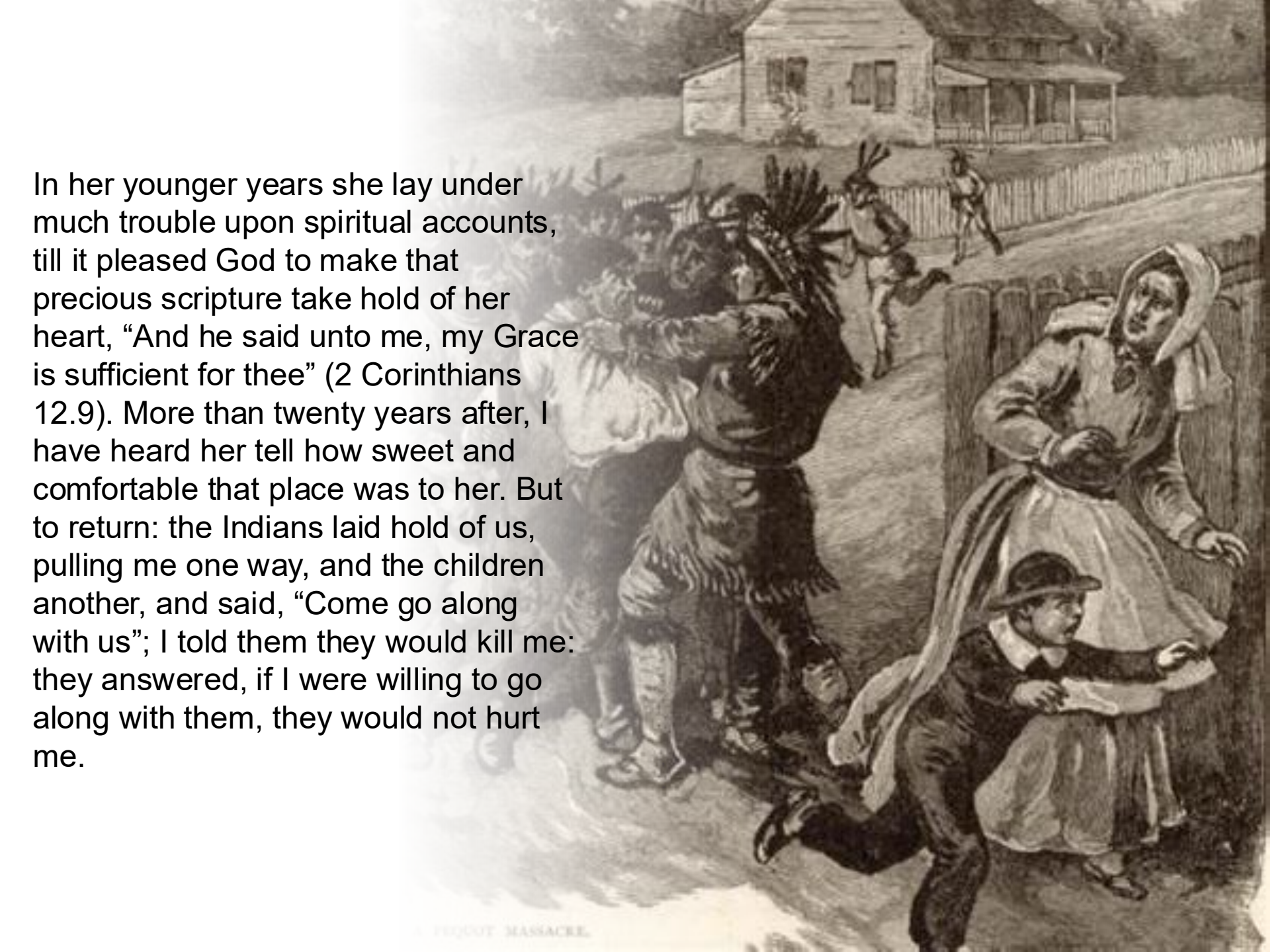


Another, seeing many of the Indians about his barn, ventured and went out, but was quickly shot down. There were three others belonging to the same garrison who were killed; the Indians getting up upon the roof of the barn, had advantage to shoot down upon them over their fortification. Thus these murderous wretches went on, burning, and destroying before them. At length they came and beset our own house, and quickly it was the dolefulest day that ever mine eyes saw. The house stood upon the edge of a hill; some of the Indians got behind the hill, others into the barn, and others behind anything that could shelter them; from all which places they shot against the house, so that the bullets seemed to fly like hail; and quickly they wounded one man among us, then another, and then a third.



Thus were we butchered by those merciless heathen, standing amazed, with the blood running down to our heels. My eldest sister being yet in the house, and seeing those woeful sights, the infidels hauling mothers one way, and children another, and some wallowing in their blood: and her elder son telling her that her son William was dead, and myself was wounded, she said, “And Lord, let me die with them,” which was no sooner said, but she was struck with a bullet, and fell down dead over the threshold. I hope she is reaping the fruit of her good labors, being faithful to the service of God in her place.





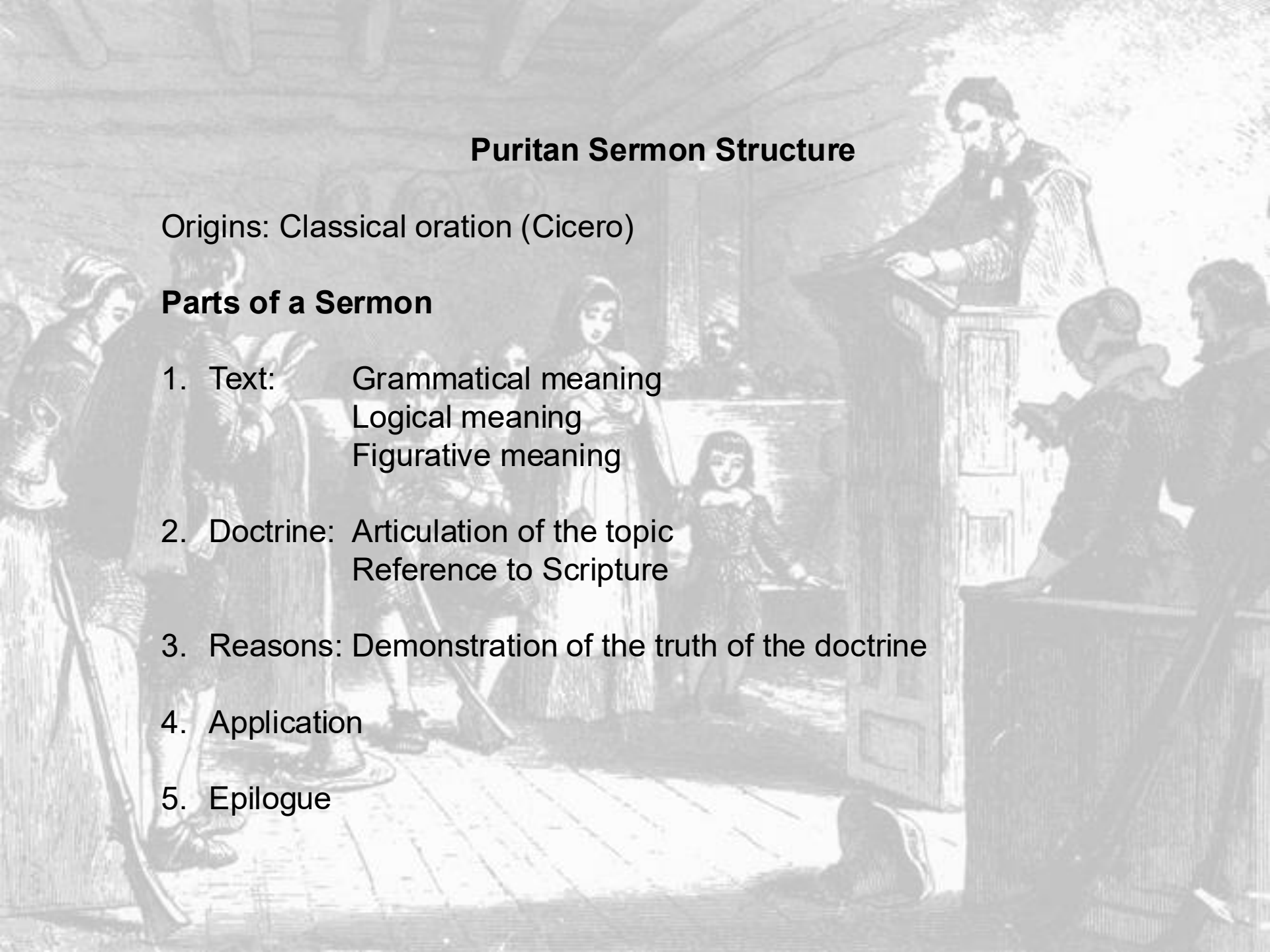
In her younger years she lay under much trouble upon spiritual accounts, till it pleased God to make that precious scripture take hold of her heart, “And he said unto me, my Grace is sufficient for thee” (2 Corinthians 12.9). More than twenty years after, I have heard her tell how sweet and comfortable that place was to her. But to return: the Indians laid hold of us, pulling me one way, and the children another, and said, “Come go along with us”; I told them they would kill me: they answered, if I were willing to go along with them, they would not hurt me.

## What did American Puritans write?

Sermons







## Puritan Sermon Structure

Origins: Classical oration (Cicero)

**Parts of a Sermon**

1. Text: Grammatical meaning
   Logical meaning
   Figurative meaning

2. Doctrine: Articulation of the topic
   Reference to Scripture

3. Reasons: Demonstration of the truth of the doctrine

4. Application

5. Epilogue

**Text:** “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23)

**1. Text (Biblical Text Analysis)**
**Grammatical meaning:** “wages” refers to something earned; “death” is not physical death, but spiritual separation from God. Second sentence: “gift” vs. “wages”, “eternal life” vs. “death”.
**Logical meaning:** the consequences of sin vs. the gift of salvation through Christ.
**Figurative meaning:** “wages” is a metaphor: a worker is paid. Sin earns a result: death. “Gift” implies grace, something unearned.

**2. Doctrine (Theological Principle)**
**Articulation:** Sin leads to death, but salvation is a free gift from God through Jesus Christ.
**Scriptural Support:** Genesis 2:17: “...for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”
Ephesians 2:8: “For by grace are you saved through faith... it is the gift of God.”

**3. Reasons (Why this Doctrine is True)**
**Human experience** confirms that sin brings ruin (guilt, suffering, loss).
**Scripture consistently teaches** that death is the penalty for sin.
**Only God can offer eternal life**, and He does so freely through Christ, not through our works.

**4. Application (How to Live Accordingly)**
To the **unconverted**: You are earning death daily by your sin. Stop sinning and turn to Christ.
To **believers**: Live in gratitude for the gift.
To **all**: Reflect on whether you are relying on wages (your deeds) or grace (God’s gift).

**5. Epilogue (Closing Appeal)**
“You stand at the crossroads: one path leads to death earned by your own hand; the other to life offered by Christ's. Do not delay—choose the gift while it is offered.”

## Puritan Sermon Structure

The Puritan sermon quotes the text and "opens" it as briefly as possible, expounding circumstances and context, explaining its **grammatical meanings**, reducing its **tropes** and **schemata** to prose, and setting forth its **logical implications**; the sermon then proclaims in a flat, indicative sentence the "**doctrine**" contained in the text or logically deduced from it, and proceeds to the first reason or proof. **Reason follows reason**, with no other transition than a period and a number; after the last proof is stated there follow the **uses or applications**, also in numbered sequence, and the sermon ends when there is nothing more to be said. […] the Puritan begins with a reading of the text, states the reason in an order determined by logic, and the uses in an **enumeration determined by the kinds of person in the throng** who need to be exhorted or reproved, and it stops without flourish or resounding climax.

(Perry Miller, *The New England Mind*, 1939)



# What did American Puritans write about?

**Wilderness**: “The New Englanders are a people of God settled in those, which were once the devil’s territories” (Cotton Mather, 1693)

Puritans defined wilderness a dangerous and untamed place that needed to be tamed and controlled. Nature was a test from God and wilderness was a challenging obstacle to overcome. Puritans saw themselves as God's chosen people and believed it was their duty to transform the wilderness into a civilized society.

**Declension/Jeremiad:** usually associated with second generation Puritan sermons. Drawing from the Old Testament books of Jeremiah and Isaiah, jeremiads lament the spiritual and moral decline of a community (=declension) and interpret recent misfortunes as God’s punishment for that decline.



# What did American Puritans write about?

**Self-examination:**

Jonathan Edwards, *The Necessity of Self-Examination* (posthumous in 1788)

7. Am I sinning against the light of my conscience in some way, by going on in known sins?

8. Have I been careful, watchful, and diligent in observing myself for evidence of sin in commission or omission?

9. Have I lived in some way which is inconsistent with my Christian profession, and is not suitable for disciples and followers of Jesus?

10. Have I allowed myself to become blinded by the deceitful nature of habitually gratified sin?

11. Have I invented ways of justifying my sinful practices, calling them by more virtuous titles, or rationalizing them in any way? […]



# What did American Puritans write about?

**Typology:** A method of reading scripture and using it to understand the meaning of past and current events. Typology was to the practice of explicating signs in the Old Testament as foreshadowing events, personages, ceremonies, and objects in the New Testament. According to typological logic, Old Testament signs, or "types," prefigure their fulfillment of "antitype" in Christ. More broadly, typology enabled Puritans to read biblical types as forecasting their own historical situation. Puritans could make sense of their own spiritual struggles and achievements by identifying with biblical personages like Adam, Noah, or Job. Puritans also interpreted their group as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, identifying their community as the "New Israel."

# 18th century

Rise in the population of the American colonies:

**1670**: 111,000 / **1760**: 1,600,000

**Philadelphia** most important city

Migrants from France, Holland, Germany;

Jewish migration to New York and Philadelphia



## Enlightenment (video)

"Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another."
Immanuel **Kant**, "What is Enlightenment?" (1784)

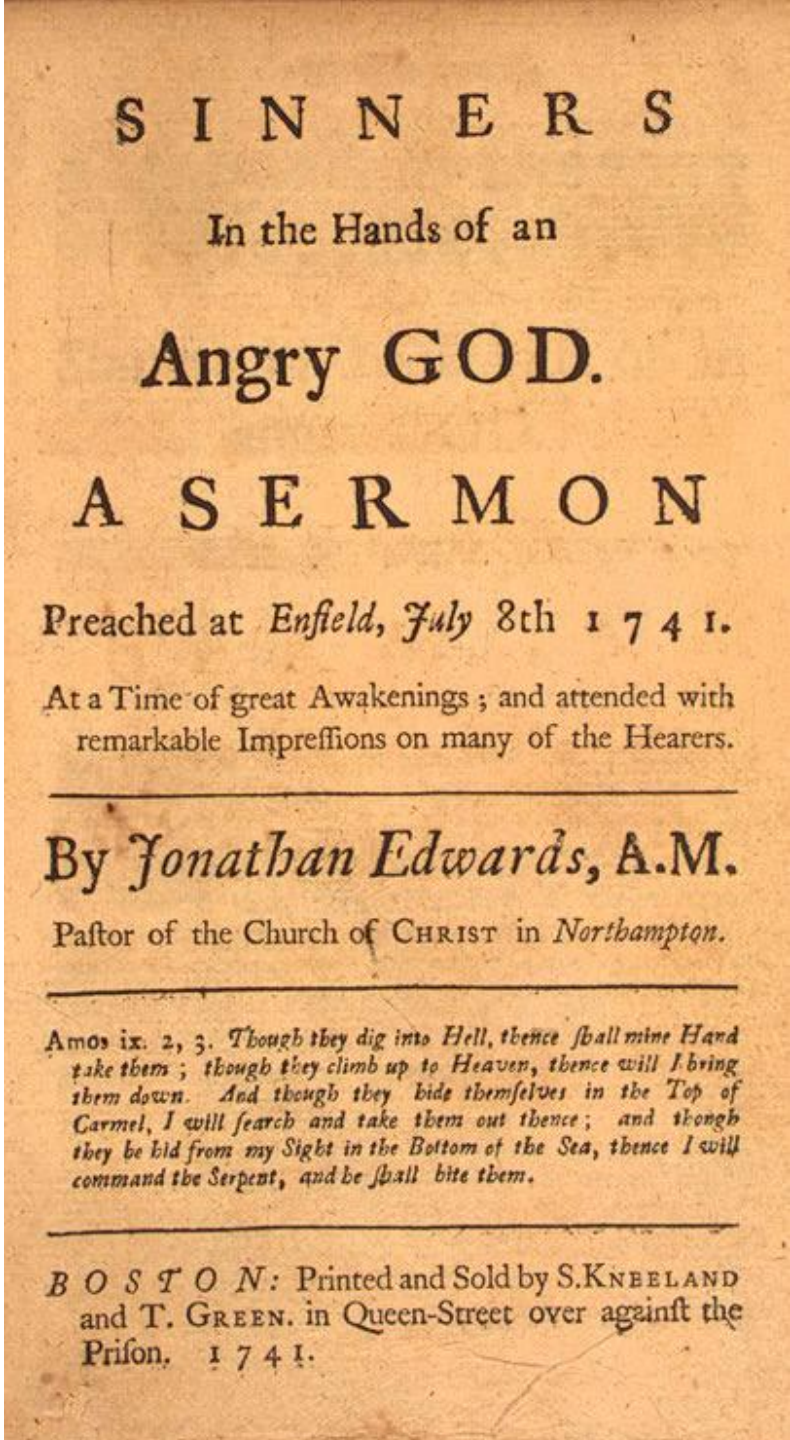
Isaac **Newton**: nature is governed by laws (mathematics and physics). Scientific method

John **Locke**: knowledge was gained through accumulated experience rather than by accessing some sort of outside truth

**Deism**: belief in the existence of a supreme being, specifically of a creator who does not intervene in the universe.

**The Great Awakening (1730-1740)**

Revitalization of spirituality and religious enthusiasm through the American colonies from 1734 until around 1750. Ministers like **Jonathan Edwards** (1703-1758) and other itinerant preachers promoted a “religion of the heart”: converts would experience into an ecstatic condition of spiritual grace.



SINNERS

In the Hands of an

Angry GOD.

A SERMON

Preached at *Enfield, July* 8th 1741.

At a Time of great Awakenings; and attended with remarkable Impreſſions on many of the Hearers.

By *Jonathan Edwards*, A.M.

Paſtor of the Church of CHRIST in *Northampton.*

Amos ix. 2, 3. *Though they dig into Hell, thence ſhall mine Hand take them; though they climb up to Heaven, thence will I bring them down. And though they hide themſelves in the Top of Carmel, I will ſearch and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my Sight in the Bottom of the Sea, thence I will command the Serpent, and he ſhall bite them.*

*BOSTON:* Printed and Sold by S. KNEELAND and T. GREEN. in Queen-Street over againſt the Priſon. 1741.

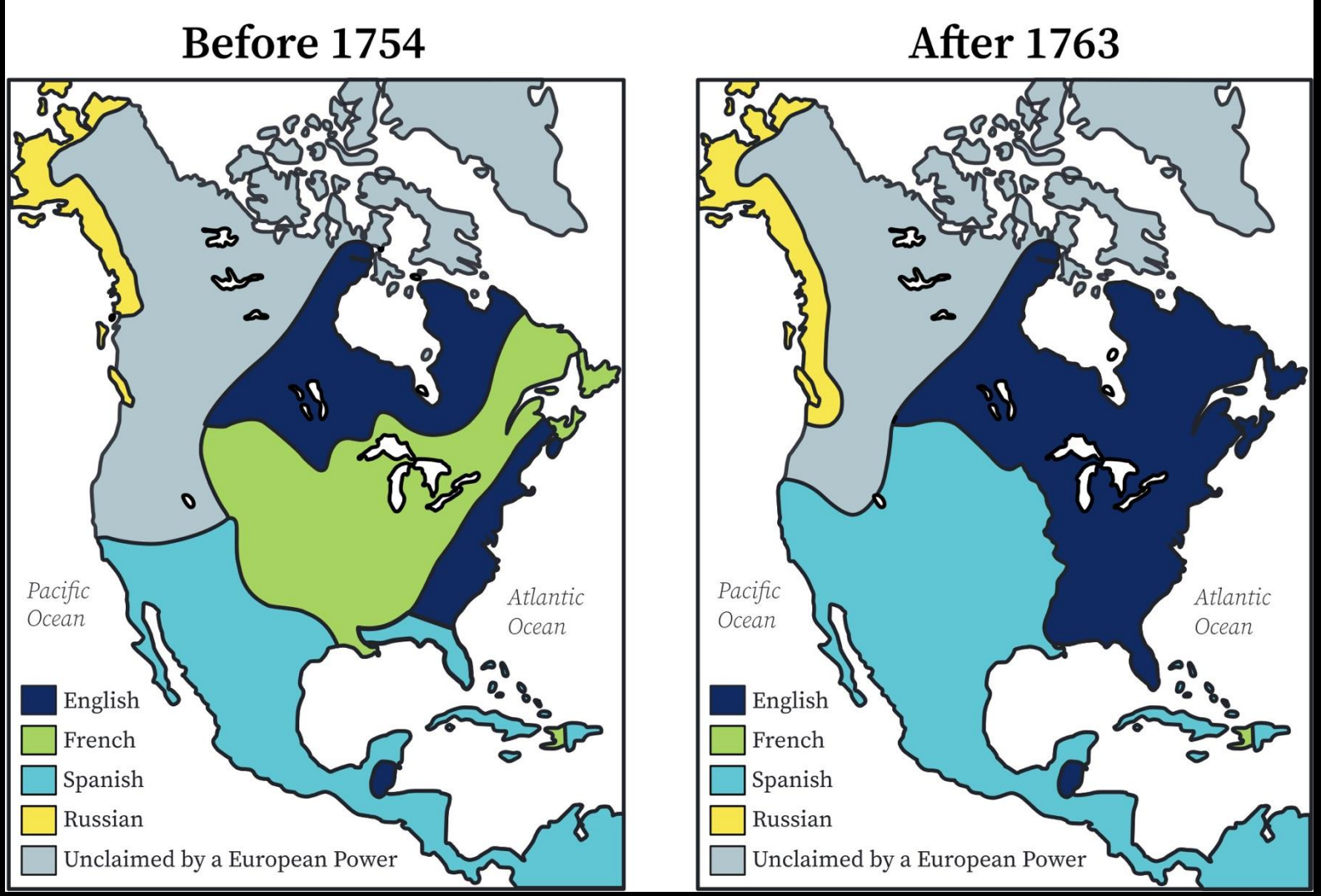
**Jonathan Edwards, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”, 1741**

Your wickedness makes you, as it were, heavy as lead, and to tend downwards with great weight and pressure towards hell; and if God should let you go, you would immediately sink, and swiftly descend and plunge into the bottomless gulf; and your healthy constitution, and your own care and prudence, and best contrivance, and all your righteousness, would have no more influence to uphold you, and keep you out of hell, than a spider’s web would have to stop a falling rock. […] The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much in the same way as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince: and yet, it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. […]

O sinner, consider the fearful danger you are in! It is a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God, whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you as against many of the damned in hell. You hand by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it and ready every moment to singe it, and burn it asunder; and you have no interest in any Mediator, and nothing to lay hold of to save yourself, nothing to keep off the flames of wrath, nothing of your own, nothing that you ever have done, nothing that you can do, to induce God to spare you one moment. […]

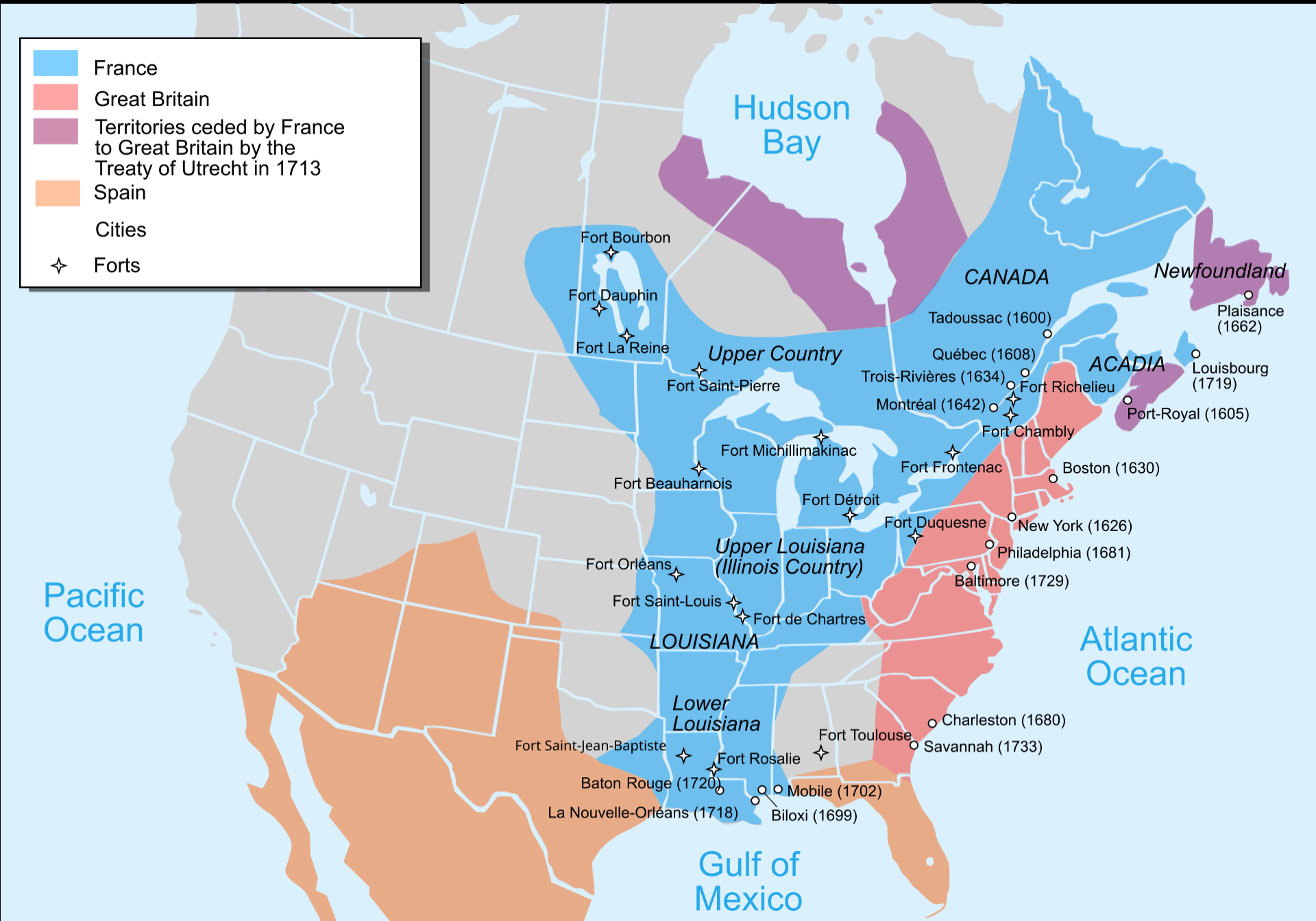
That God will execute the fierceness of his anger, implies, that he will inflict wrath without any pity. When God beholds the ineffable extremity of your case, and sees your torment to be so vastly disproportioned to your strength, and sees how your poor soul is crushed, and sinks down, as it were, into an infinite gloom; he will have no compassion upon you, he will not forbear the execution of his wrath, or in the least lighten his hand: there shall be no moderation or mercy, nor will God then at all stay his rough wind: he will have no regard to your welfare, nor be at all careful lest you should suffer too much in any other sense, than only that you shall not suffer beyond what strict justice requires: nothing shall be withheld, because it is so hard for you to bear.

# North America before and after the Seven Years' War

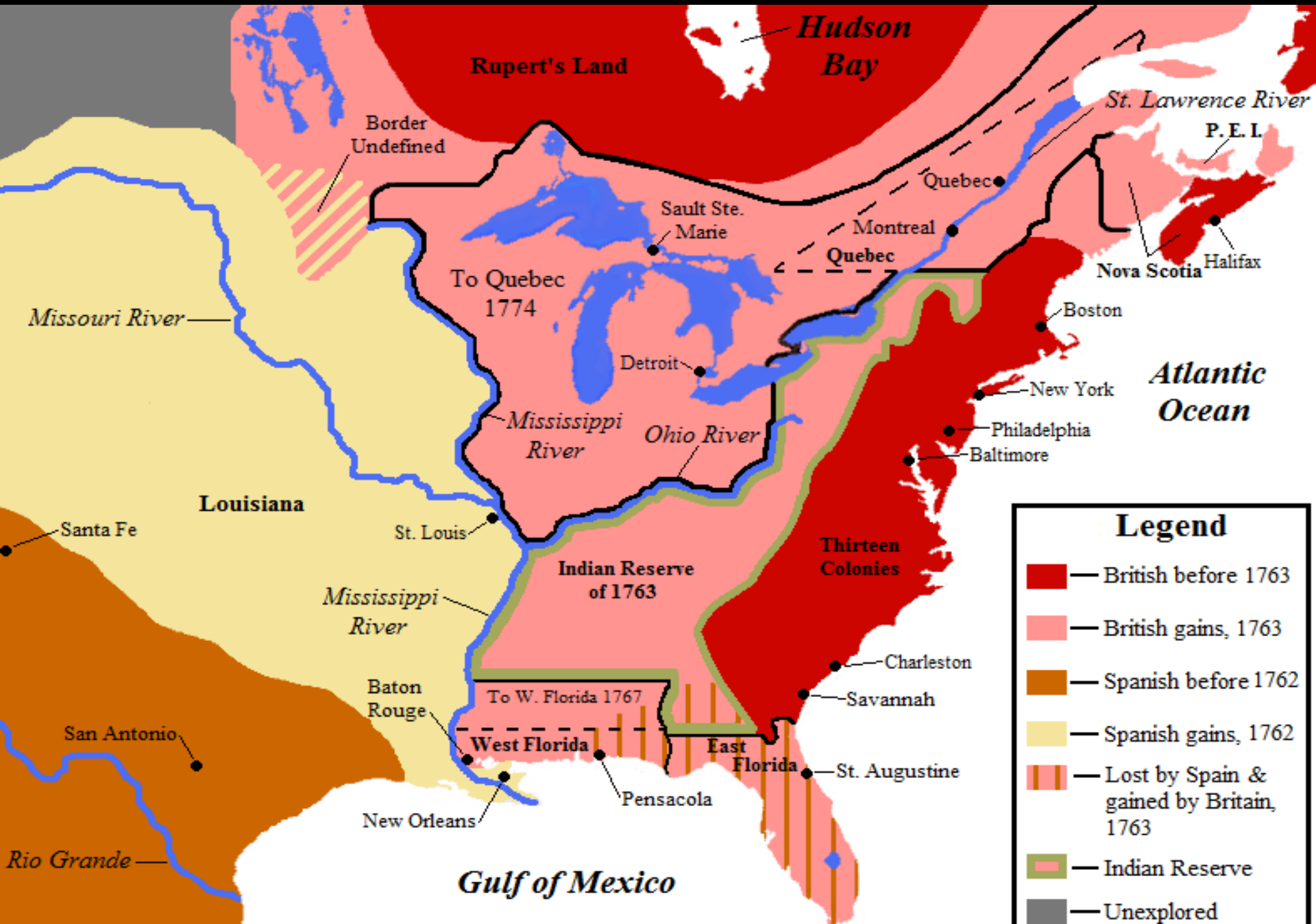



The French and Indian War (1754-63) was the North American part of the Seven Years' War (1756-63), a conflict between major European powers (Britain and France). It centered on control of the Ohio River Valley and ended with Britain's victory and its gain of French territories.

# 1750: North America before the French and Indian War



# 1763: North America after the French and Indian War





## J. Hector St. John de Crèvecœur (1735-1813)

French soldier (French and Indian war), moved to America in 1755

Bought a farm in New York and settled down in 1769

*Letters from an American Farmer* (1782)

American pastoral

Melting pot

***Letters from an American Farmer***

*Letter III. What is an American?*

Here are no aristocratical families, no courts, no kings, no bishops, no ecclesiastical dominion, no invisible power giving to a few a very visible one; no great manufacturers employing thousands, no great refinements of luxury. The rich and the poor are not so far removed from each other as they are in Europe. […] We are all animated with the spirit of an industry which is unfettered and unrestrained, because each person works for himself. […] The meanest of our log-house is a dry and comfortable habitation. Lawyer or merchant are the fairest title our towns afford. […] We have no princes for whom we toil, starve, and bleed; we are the most perfect society now existing in the world. […]

The next wish of this traveller will be to know whence came all these people? they are mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes. From this promiscuous breed, that race now called Americans have arisen. […] In this great American asylum, the poor of Europe have by some means met together, and in consequence of various causes; […] What attachment can a poor European emigrant have for a country where he had nothing? The knowledge of the language, the love of a few kindred as poor as himself […] *Ubi panis ibi patria* is the mott of all emigrants. […] Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. Americans are the western pilgrims who are carrying along with them a great mass of arts, sciences, vigour, and industry which began long since in the East.

## Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)

Born in Boston, worked as a printer with his brother

Moved to New York and to Philadelphia

American minister to France

Contributed to the Peace Treaty with Great Britain

Contributed to the American Constitution

Silence Dogood (*New England Courant*)

Richard Saunders (*Poor Richard's Almanac,* 1732-58)

*Autobiography* (1793)



## *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, 1793

It was about this time I conceiv'd the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection. I wish'd to live without committing any fault at any time; I would conquer all that either natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into. As I knew, or thought I knew, what was right and wrong, I did not see why I might not always do the one and avoid the other. But I soon found I had undertaken a task of more difficulty than I had imagined. While my care was employ'd in guarding against one fault, I was often surprised by another; habit took the advantage of inattention; inclination was sometimes too strong for reason. I concluded, at length, that the mere speculative conviction that it was our interest to be completely virtuous, was not sufficient to prevent our slipping; and that the contrary habits must be broken, and good ones acquired and established, before we can have any dependence on a steady, uniform rectitude of conduct. For this purpose I therefore contrived the following method.

These names of virtues, with their precepts, were:

1. TEMPERANCE. Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.
2. SILENCE. Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.
3. ORDER. Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.
4. RESOLUTION. Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.
5. FRUGALITY. Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e., waste nothing.
6. INDUSTRY. Lose no time; be always employ'd in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.
7. SINCERITY. Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

8. JUSTICE. Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.
9. MODERATION. Avoid extreams; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.
10. CLEANLINESS. Tolerate no uncleanliness in body, cloaths, or habitation.
11. TRANQUILLITY. Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.
12. CHASTITY. Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dulness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.
13. HUMILITY. Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

My intention being to acquire the habitude of all these virtues.

I made a little book, in which I allotted a page for each of the virtues. I rul'd each page with red ink, so as to have seven columns, one for each day of the week, marking each column with a letter for the day. I cross'd these columns with thirteen red lines, marking the beginning of each line with the first letter of one of the virtues, on which line, and in its proper column, I might mark, by a little black spot, every fault I found upon examination to have been committed respecting that virtue upon that day.

*Form of the pages.*

TEMPERANCE.

Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.

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# Thomas Paine (1737-1809)

Moved to America from England in 1774

Independence and democracy:
*Common Sense. Of the Origin and Design of Government in general, with concise Remarks on the English Constitution*, 1776 (pamphlet)

*The Crisis*,1776-1783

Deism:
*The Age of Reason*, 1794-1795

"All national institutions of churches, whether Jewish, Christian, or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit."

Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America, is a strong and natural proof, that the authority of the one over the other was never the design of heaven.

O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose not only the tyranny, but the Tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is over-run with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia and Africa have long expelled her.—Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

(*Common Sense*)

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives every thing its value.

(*The American Crisis*/*The Crisis*, no. 1 / 1776)



## 1770s-1780s

1765: Stamp Act (“no taxation without representation”)

1773: Tea Party

1774: In response to the Tea Party, Britain passed the Intolerable Acts

**4 July 1776: Declaration of Independence**

**1775-1783:** War (ended *de facto* in 1781: British surrender at Yorktown)

1783: Treaty of Paris

**1787:** the Constitution was adopted

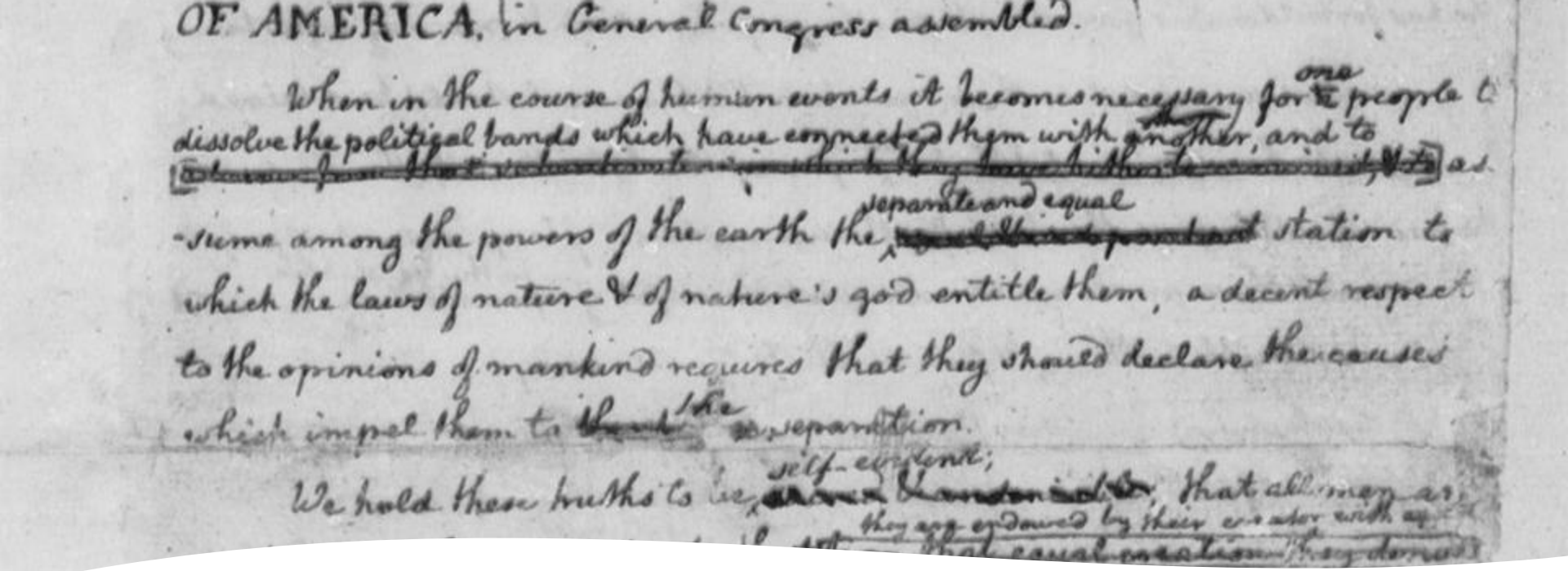
1789: George Washington was elected first president

**1765. Stamp Act:** A law that required American colonists to pay a tax on printed materials (newspapers, legal documents, and playing cards). It was meant to raise money for Britain after the Seven Years' War and angered Americans, sparking protests against "taxation without representation."

**1773.Tea Act:** A British law that let the East India Company sell tea directly to the colonies through selected sellers chosen by the company, cutting out local merchants. The tea was cheaper, but colonists saw it as a way for Britain to control trade and enforce taxation, leading to the Boston Tea Party.

**1773. Tea Party (Boston Tea Party):** A protest by American colonists in Boston against the British tax on tea. They disguised themselves as Native Americans and threw British tea into Boston Harbor to oppose the Tea Act and British control over trade.

**1774. The Intolerable Acts (aka Coercive Acts):** Punitive laws passed by Britain in response to the Boston Tea Party. They restricted colonial self-government and closed Boston Harbor.


OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled.

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature & of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are

**Thomas Jefferson, "Declaration of Independence"(July 4, 1776)**

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

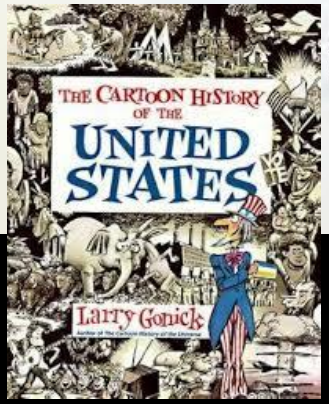
We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these **are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness**; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

START WITH THE SOUTH: GEORGIA, SOUTH CAROLINA, NORTH CAROLINA, VIRGINIA, MARYLAND, DELAWARE... THE LAND OF THE LANDED ARISTOCRACY, THE LAZY PLANTATION ON THE LAZY RIVER... THE LAND OF THE "BIG HOUSE," THE FOX HUNT, THE HORSE RACE, THE GAMBLING DEBT, THE MINT JULEP.




PLANTATION PRODUCTS INCLUDED TOBACCO, INDIGO, JUTE, AND RICE. THE WORK, OF COURSE, WAS DONE BY "SHIFTLESS" SLAVES.






WHEN SLAVERY WAS FIRST INTRODUCED IN THE SOUTH, IT WASN'T EXACTLY LEGAL...

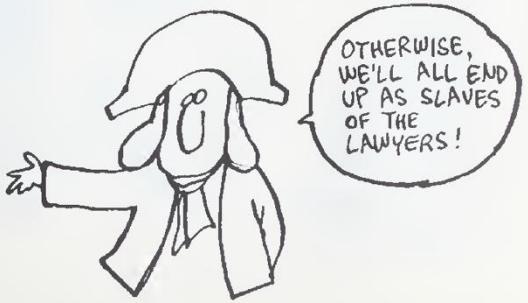



THERE JUST WEREN'T ANY LAWS ON THE BOOKS, AND FOR A LONG TIME, THE SLAVE COLONIES DIDN'T BOTHER TO WRITE ANY.

THIS WAS IN THE GRAND AMERICAN TRADITION OF OPPOSITION TO GOVERNMENT REGULATION, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU'RE DOING SOMETHING UNSPEAKABLE.




BUT THEN THE LAWYERS GOT HOLD OF THE QUESTION... THEY BEGAN A LONG, EXPENSIVE ARGUMENT ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT SLAVES WERE REAL ESTATE (!)... SO THE WHITES DECIDED IT WOULD BE CHEAPER IN THE LONG RUN TO PUT SOMETHING IN WRITING.



THE RESULTING "SLAVE CODES" VARIED FROM ONE COLONY TO THE NEXT, BUT THEY MOSTLY LOOKED LIKE THIS:

IT WAS
## ILLEGAL

FOR SLAVES TO CARRY ANY KIND OF WEAPON

FOR A BLACK TO LIFT A HAND AGAINST A WHITE, EVEN IN SELF-DEFENSE

FOR SLAVES TO MARRY

FOR SLAVES TO HAVE FUNERALS

IT WAS
## LEGAL

FOR A MASTER TO WORK HIS SLAVES 6 DAYS A WEEK, 15 HOURS A DAY—AND THEN MAKE THEM GROW THEIR OWN FOOD ON SUNDAYS

FOR A MASTER TO PUNISH HIS SLAVES IN ANY WAY HE WANTED, INCLUDING DEATH

## MORE?

SLAVES WEREN'T ALLOWED TO HAVE LIQUOR, OR STUDY READING.

A SLAVE HAD NO RIGHT TO A JURY TRIAL... SLAVE PRISONERS WERE DENIED HEAT IN THEIR CELLS (FOR FEAR THEY'D BURN DOWN THE JAIL).

AND "RACE MIXING" WAS ILLEGAL—WHICH ONLY PROVES THAT NOT ALL THE LAWS WERE ENFORCED 100%!






WITH THOUSANDS (LATER MILLIONS) OF SLAVES IN THEIR MIDST, THE WHITE SOUTH WAS NATURALLY NERVOUS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF SLAVE REVOLTS.




"FREEDOM WEARS A CAP WHICH CAN WITHOUT WORDS CALL TOGETHER ALL THOSE WHO LONG TO SHAKE OFF THE FETTERS OF SLAVERY..."
—GOV. SPOTTSWOOD OF VIRGINIA

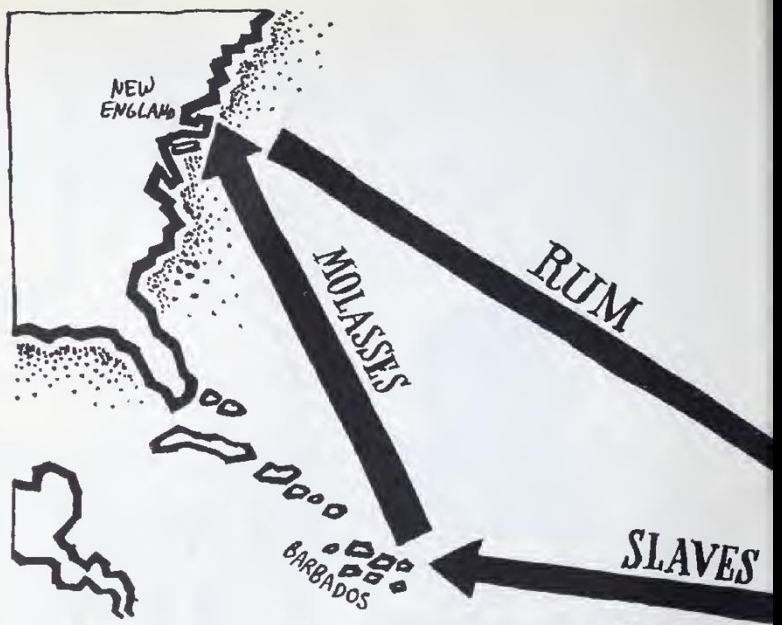
THE FEAR WAS JUSTIFIED BY MAJOR UPRISINGS IN 1663, 1687, 1712, 1720, 1739, 1741, AND LOADS OF MINOR REVOLTS.



(ALL OF THEM WERE PUT DOWN FEROCIOUSLY.)

PERSONAL UPRISINGS — I.E., RUNAWAYS — WERE SO COMMON THAT NEWSPAPERS HAD STANDARD ILLUSTRATIONS FOR RUNAWAY SLAVE ADS.






NOT TO WORRY.. THE RUM WASN'T FOR DRINKING AT HOME... IT WAS IN REALITY ONE LEG OF THE FAMOUS

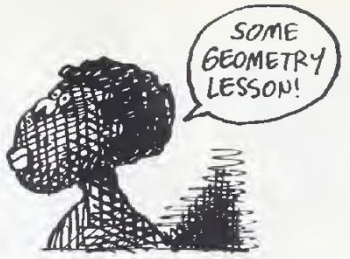
# TRIANGULAR TRADE.

HERE'S THE PICTURE: THE RUM TRAVELS TO AFRICA... IS TRADED FOR SLAVES... THEY GO TO THE SUGAR PLANTATIONS OF BARBADOS... ARE TRADED (AT 1000% MARKUP) FOR MOLASSES... WHICH GOES TO NEW ENGLAND... IS DISTILLED INTO RUM...






THE SLAVE SHIPS WERE AN EXAMPLE OF PURITAN EFFICIENCY GONE MAD... THEY REALLY PACKED THEM IN... TRY TO IMAGINE SPENDING 40 DAYS CHAINED BELOW DECKS IN A SPACE 13 INCHES WIDE AND 18 INCHES HIGH... AND YOU HAVE THE TRIANGLE'S DREAD "MIDDLE PASSAGE."

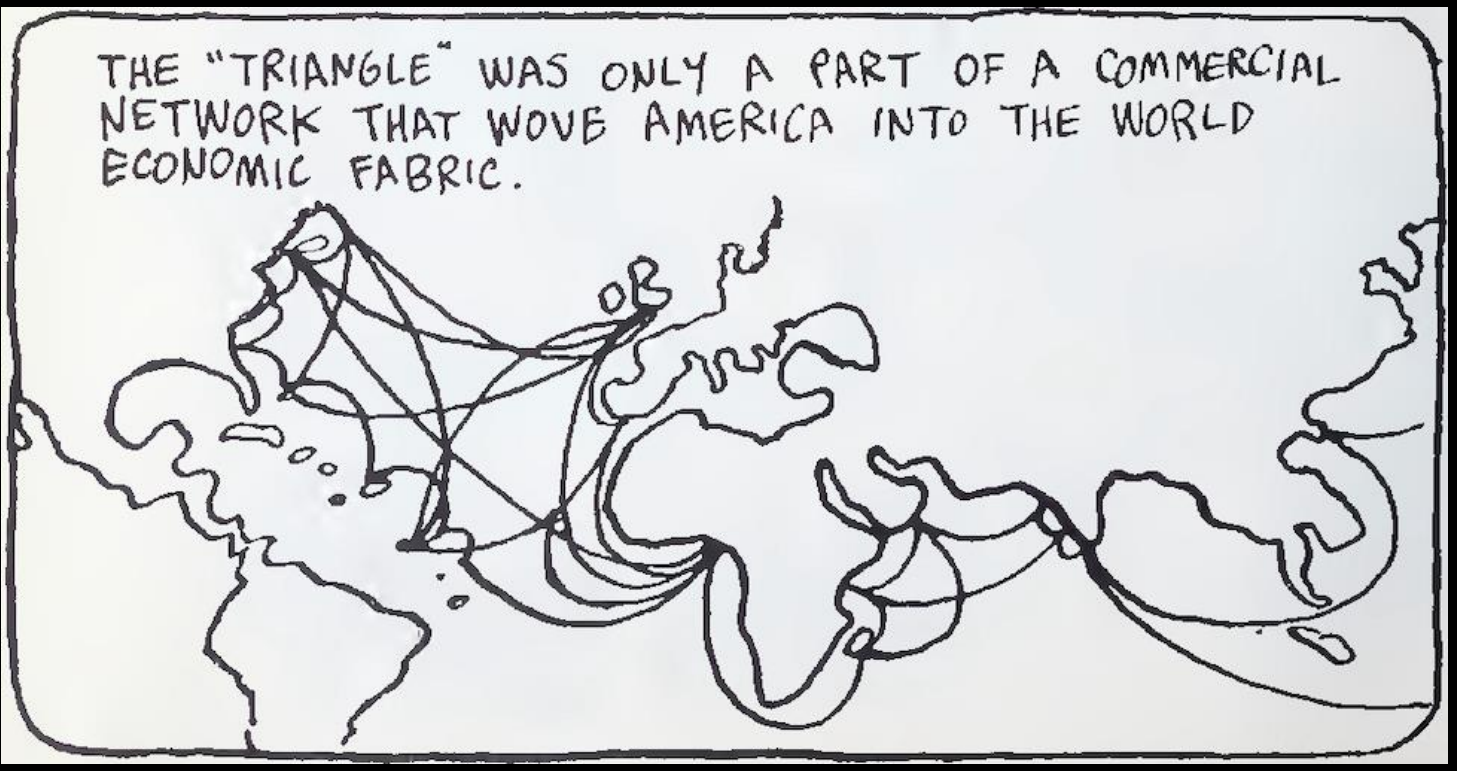


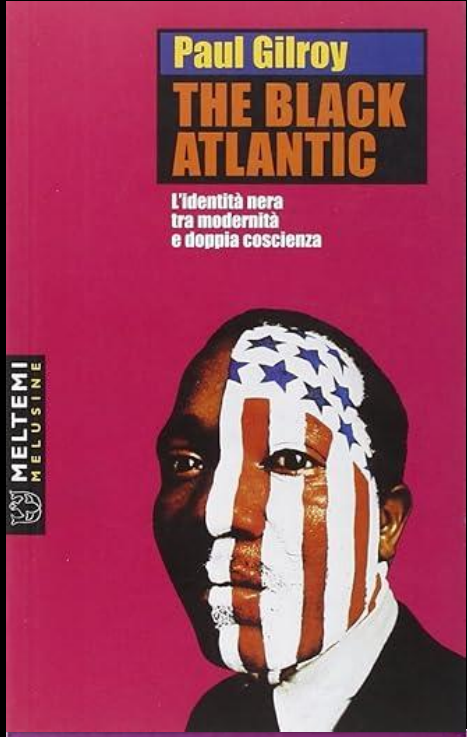


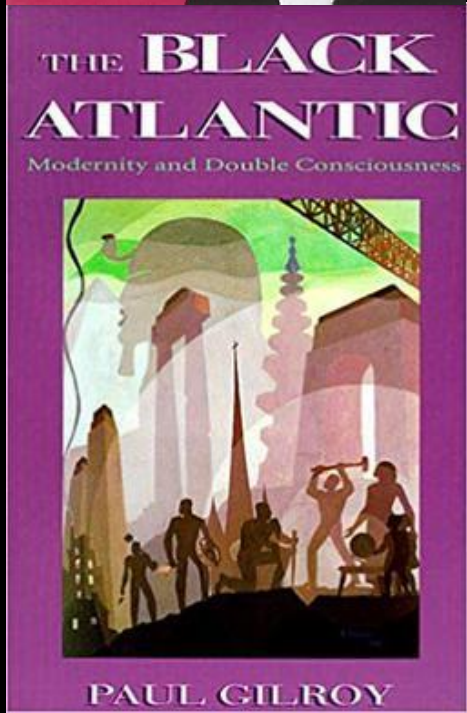


SO... THOUGH THERE WASN'T MUCH SLAVERY IN NEW ENGLAND ITSELF, NEW ENGLANDERS WERE DEEP INTO IT. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO ALL THOSE RUM FACTORIES IF THE SLAVE TRADE DRIED UP?




THE "TRIANGLE" WAS ONLY A PART OF A COMMERCIAL NETWORK THAT WOVE AMERICA INTO THE WORLD ECONOMIC FABRIC.


Paul Gilroy
THE BLACK ATLANTIC
L'identità nera
tra modernità
e doppia coscienza
MELTEMI
MELUSINE


THE BLACK ATLANTIC
Modernity and Double Consciousness
PAUL GILROY

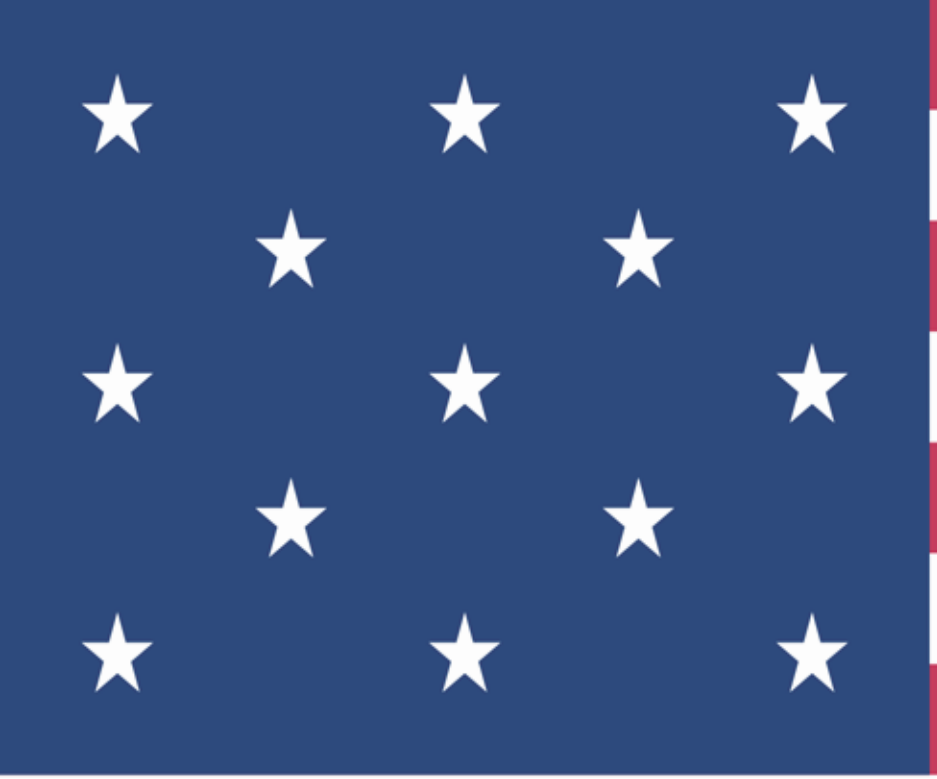


William Turner, "The Slave Ship" (1840)

**Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic. Modernity and Double Consciousness*, London and New York, Verso, 1993**

[…] attempts to rethink modernity via the history of the black Atlantic and the African diaspora into the western hemisphere. (17)

Columbus's pilot, Pedro Nino, was also an African. The history of the black Atlantic since then, continually crisscrossed by the movements of black people […] provides a means to reexamine the problems of nationality, location, identity, and historical memory. They all emerge from it with special clarity if we contrast the national, nationalistic, and ethnically absolute paradigms of cultural criticism to be found in England and America with those hidden expressions, both residual and emergent, that attempt to be global or outer-national in nature (16).

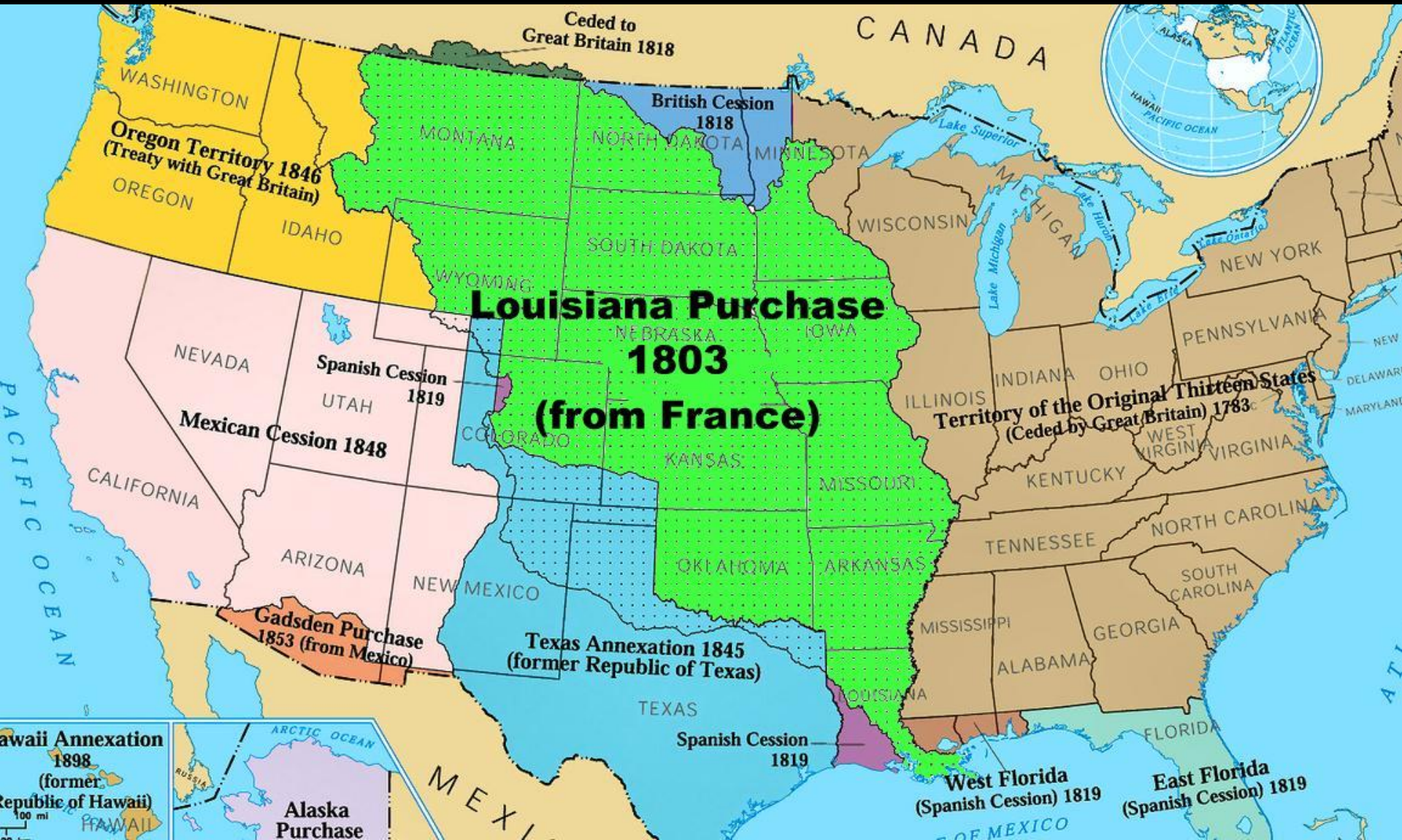


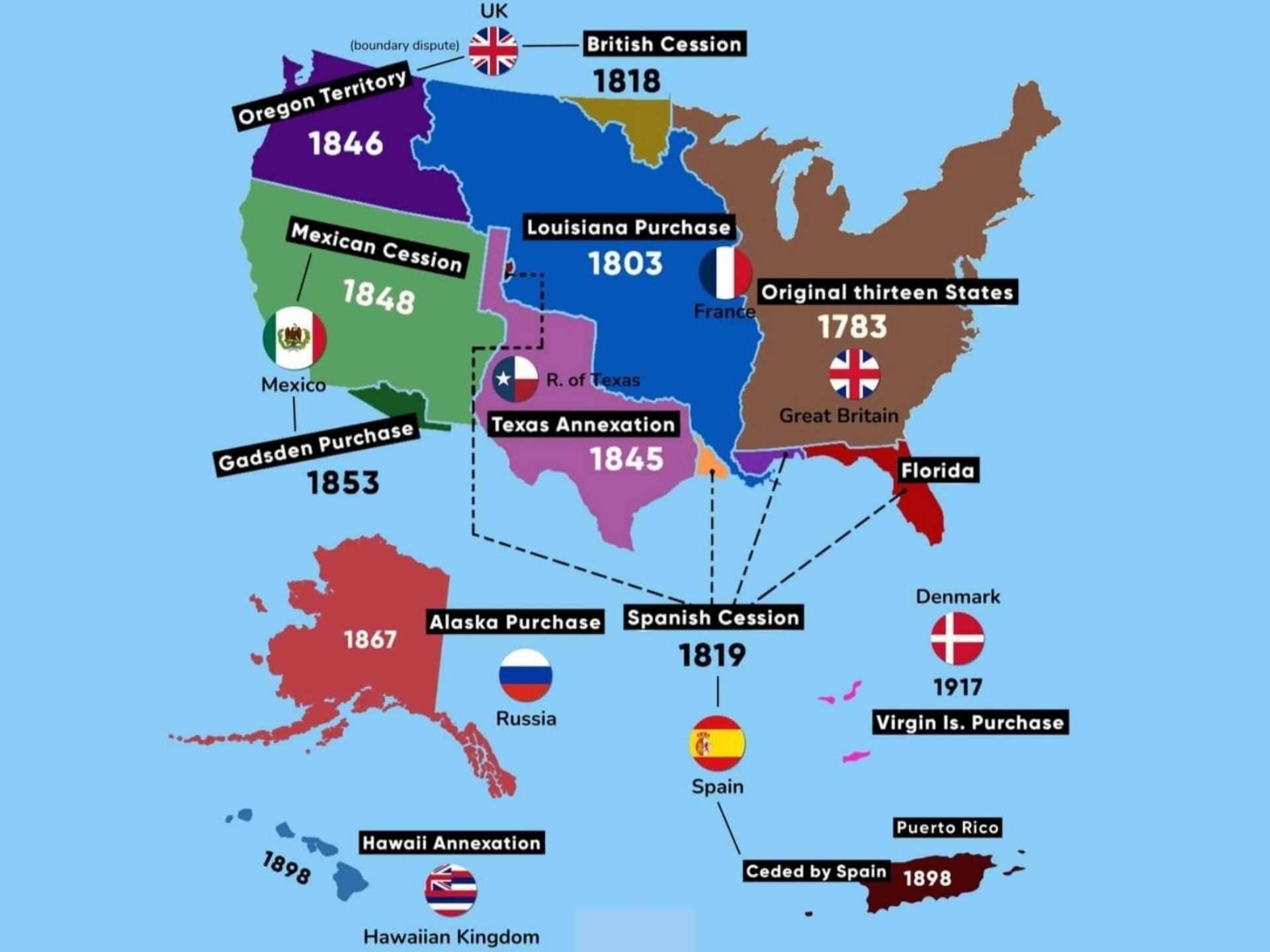
## 18th/19th century

Rise in the population, from the American colonies to the USA:

| | 1800 | 1850 |
|---|---|---|
| Enslaved African Americans | 893,041 | 3,204,313 |
| Free people of color | 108,395 | 434,495 |
| Whites | 4,304,480 | 19,553,068 |
| **Total** | **5,305,925** | **23,191,878** |

# Westward expansion




UK
(boundary dispute)
British Cession
1818
Oregon Territory
1846
Louisiana Purchase
1803
France
Mexican Cession
1848
Original thirteen States
1783
Great Britain
Mexico
R. of Texas
Texas Annexation
1845
Gadsden Purchase
1853
Florida
Denmark
1867
Alaska Purchase
Spanish Cession
1819
1917
Virgin Is. Purchase
Russia
Spain
Hawaii Annexation
1898
Puerto Rico
Ceded by Spain
1898
Hawaiian Kingdom




**1823**: President James Monroe, the "Monroe Doctrine"

Claims of Russia on the northwest coast of North America
Struggle of the Latin American countries for independence

**1828.** Andrew Jackson (Tennessee) elected President:

"A tall, lank, uncouth looking personage, with lots of hair around his face, and a queue down his back tied with an eel skin, his dress singular, his manner and deportment those of a rough backwoodsman."

**1830: Indian Removal Act**: A law signed by President Andrew Jackson that authorized the forced relocation of Native American tribes (the so-called Five Civilized Tribes) from their ancestral lands east of the Mississippi River to territories in the West, opening their lands to white settlement



CHEROKEE



CHOCTAW



MUSCOGEE (CREEK)



CHICKASAW



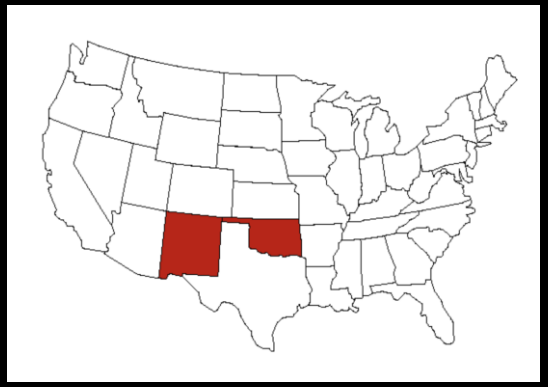
SEMINOLE

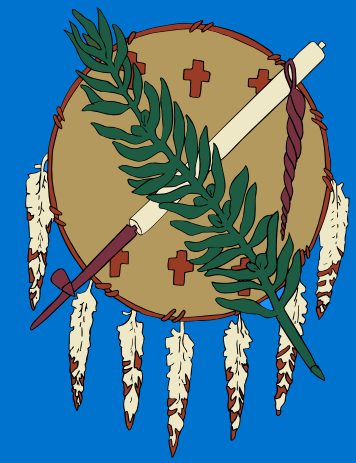



# Trail of tears

The forced march of thousands of Cherokee people from their ancestral lands in the southeastern United States to present-day Oklahoma

flags of US states featuring Native American iconography (Oklahoma and New Mexico)





OKLAHOMA



# The Manifest Destiny and the Frontier

## John O'Sullivan, "The Great Nation of Futurity", 1839

We are **the nation of human progress**, and who will, what can, set limits to our onward march? We point to the everlasting truth on the first page of our national declaration, and we proclaim to the millions of other lands, that the "gates of hell - the powers of aristocracy and monarchy - **shall not prevail against it**".*
The far-reaching, the boundless future will be **an era of American greatness**. In its magnificent domain of space and time, the nation of many nations is ***destined* to *manifest* to mankind the excellence of divine principles**: to establish on earth the noblest temple ever dedicated to the worship of the Most High - the Sacred and the True. Its floor shall be a hemisphere - its roof the firmament of the star-studded heavens, and its congregation an Union of many Republics, comprising hundreds of happy millions.

* Matthew 16:18: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell **shall not prevail against it**."

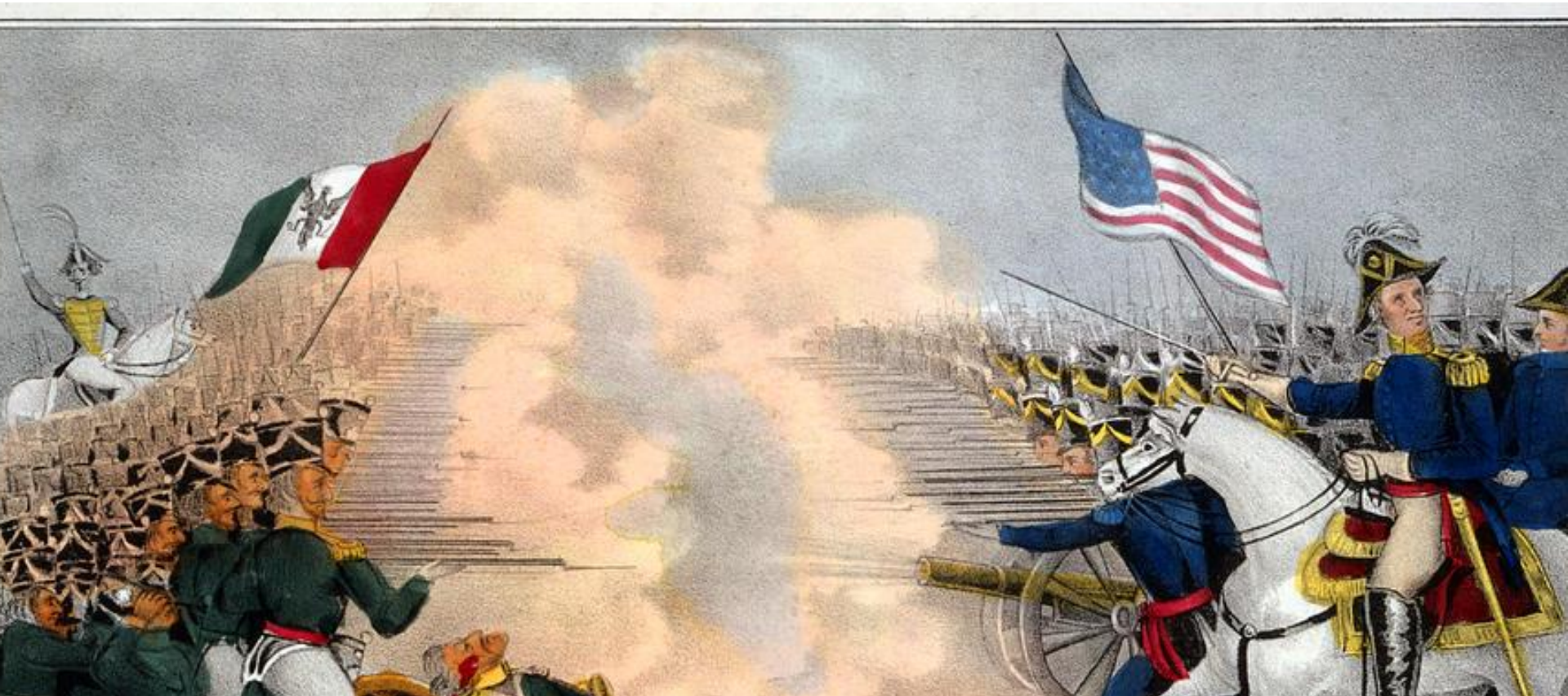
**Frontier**: the **shifting boundary** between settled territories and lands considered unsettled or "wilderness," which moved westward as European American settlers expanded across the continent
**Manifest Destiny**: Territorial expansion is presented as the fulfillment of a divine mission
**American exceptionalism**: the United States is portrayed as a nation chosen by God to spread freedom, equality, and progress

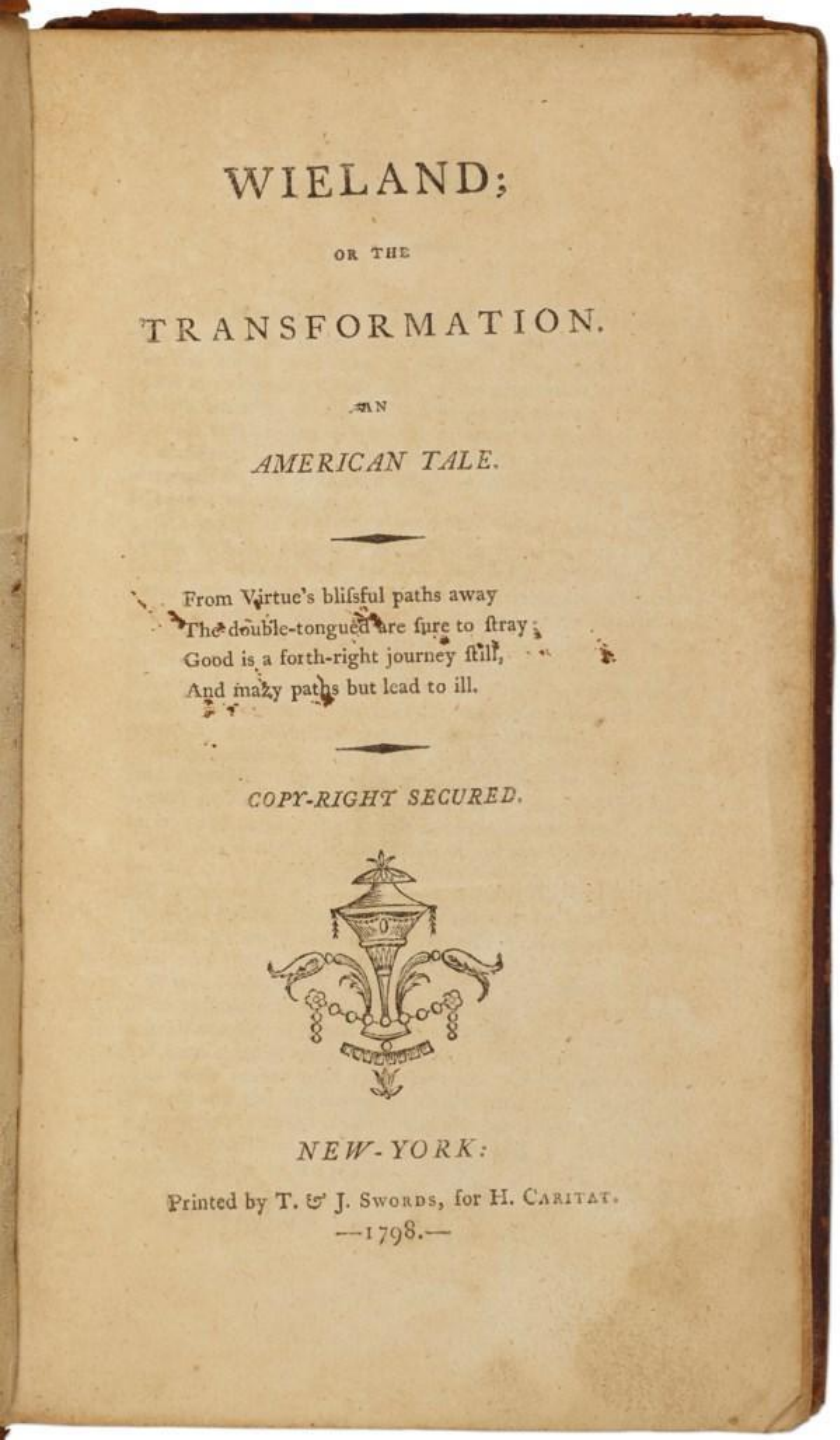


John Gast, *American Progress* (1872)

# The Mexican–American War (1846–1848)

**1845**. U.S. **annexation of Texas**, which Mexico still considered its own territory
President James K. Polk, a believer in Manifest Destiny, sent troops into the area
**1846**. Congress declared war on Mexico in May
The war officially ended with the **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (February 1848)**.
- Mexico recognized the Rio Grande as the southern border of Texas
- Mexico ceded to the U.S. California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, parts of Colorado and Wyoming
- The United States paid $15 million to Mexico




WIELAND;

OR THE

TRANSFORMATION.

AN

*AMERICAN TALE.*

From Virtue's blifsful paths away
The double-tongued are fure to ftray;
Good is a forth-right journey ftill,
And mazy paths but lead to ill.

*COPY-RIGHT SECURED.*

*NEW-YORK:*

Printed by T. & J. Swords, for H. Caritat.
—1798.—

# Charles Brockden Brown (1771-1810)

*Wieland: or, The Transformation: An American Tale* (1798)

One of the earliest and most important examples of **American Gothic fiction**: Theodore Wieland, a deeply religious man, becomes convinced that God has commanded him to murder his family.

Set in rural Pennsylvania, it explores religious fanaticism, psychological instability, and the dangers of irrational belief
**Major themes:** Religious enthusiasm, madness, guilt, supernatural appearances, and the unreliability of human perception.

"Walstein's School of History" (1799)
"The Difference Between History and Romance" (1800) → historical novel

“It is strange; I am known to my judges and my auditors. Who is there present a stranger to the character of Wieland? who knows him not as an husband—as a father—as a friend? yet **here am I arraigned as criminal**. I am **charged with diabolical malice**; I am accused of the murder of my wife and my children!

“**It is true, they were slain by me**; they all perished by my hand. The task of vindication is ignoble. What is it that I am called to vindicate? and before whom?

“You know that they are dead, and that they were killed by me. What more would you have? Would you extort from me a statement of my motives? Have you failed to discover them already? You charge me with malice; but your eyes are not shut; **your reason is still vigorous**; your memory has not forsaken you. You know whom it is that you thus charge. The habits of his life are known to you; his treatment of his wife and his offspring is known to you; the soundness of his integrity, and the unchangeableness of his principles, are familiar to your apprehension; yet you persist in this charge! You lead me hither manacled as a felon; you deem me worthy of a vile and tormenting death!



“Who are they whom I have devoted to death? My wife—the little ones, that drew their being from me—that creature who, as she surpassed them in excellence, claimed a larger affection than those whom natural affinities bound to my heart. Think ye that malice could have urged me to this deed? Hide your audacious fronts from the scrutiny of heaven. Take refuge in some cavern unvisited by human eyes. Ye may deplore your wickedness or folly, but ye cannot expiate it.

"Think not that I speak for your sakes. Hug to your hearts this detestable infatuation. **Deem me still a murderer, and drag me to untimely death. I make not an effort to dispel your illusion**: I utter not a word to cure you of your sanguinary folly: but there are probably some in this assembly who have come from far: for their sakes, whose distance has disabled them from knowing me, I will tell what I have done, and why.

“**It is needless to say that God is the object of my supreme passion**. I have cherished, in his presence, a single and upright heart. I have thirsted for the knowledge of his will. **I have burnt with ardour to approve my faith and my obedience.**

(*Wieland*, ch. XIX)



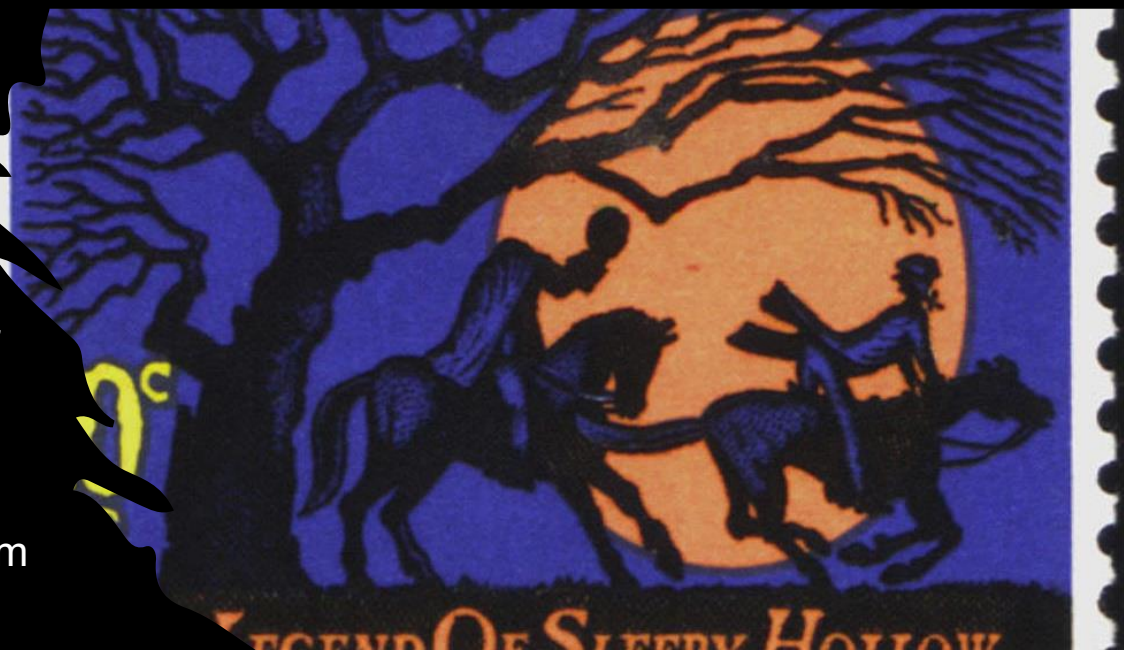
# Washington Irving (1783-1859)

*The History of New* York, as Diedrich Knickerbocker (1809)

The *Sketch-Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.*
(1819-1820), which includes

"Rip Van Winkle" (1819)
Rip Van Winkle, a lazy but good-natured man, falls asleep in the Catskill Mountains and wakes up twenty years later, discovering that the American Revolution has taken place and the colonies have become an independent nation.
"The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" (1820)
Ichabod Crane, a superstitious schoolteacher, competes for the hand of Katrina Van Tassel. One night, he encounters the mysterious Headless Horseman and disappears, possibly the victim of a prank played by his rival, Brom Bones.





## “Rip Van Winkle” (from *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon*)

### A posthumous writing of Diedrich Knickerbocker

The following Tale was found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker, an old gentleman of New York, who was very curious in the Dutch History of the province and the manners of the descendants from its primitive settlers. His historical researches, however, did not lie so much among books as among men; for the former are lamentably scanty on his favorite topics; whereas he found the old burghers, and still more, their wives, rich in that legendary lore, so invaluable to true history. Whenever, therefore, he happened upon a genuine Dutch family, snugly shut up in its low-roofed farm-house, under a spreading sycamore, he looked upon it as a little clasped volume of black-letter, and studied it with the zeal of a bookworm. The result of all these researches was a history of the province, during the reign of the Dutch governors, which he published some years since. There have been various opinions as to the literary character of his work, and, to tell the truth, it is not a whit better than it should be. Its chief merit is its scrupulous accuracy, which indeed was a little questioned on its first appearance, but has since been completely established; and it is now admitted into all historical collections, as a book of unquestionable authority. The old gentleman died shortly after the publication of his work; and now that he is dead and gone, it cannot do much harm to his memory to say that his time might have been much better employed in weightier labors. He, however, was apt to ride his hobby his own way; and though it did now and then kick up the dust a little in the eyes of his neighbors, and grieve the spirit of some friends, for whom he felt the truest deference and affection, yet his errors and follies are remembered “more in sorrow than in anger,” and it begins to be suspected, that he never intended to injure or offend. But however his memory may be appreciated by critics, it is still held dear among many folks, whose good opinion is well worth having; particularly by certain biscuit-bakers, who have gone so far as to imprint his likeness on their new-year cakes, and have thus given him a chance for immortality, almost equal to the being stamped on a Waterloo medal, or a Queen Anne’s farthing.



# James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851)

One of the first internationally successful American novelists; helped establish the historical novel as a major genre in American literature.

**The Leatherstocking Tales**

Five interconnected historical novels following **Natty Bumppo**, a white frontiersman raised among Native Americans, across different stages of his life.

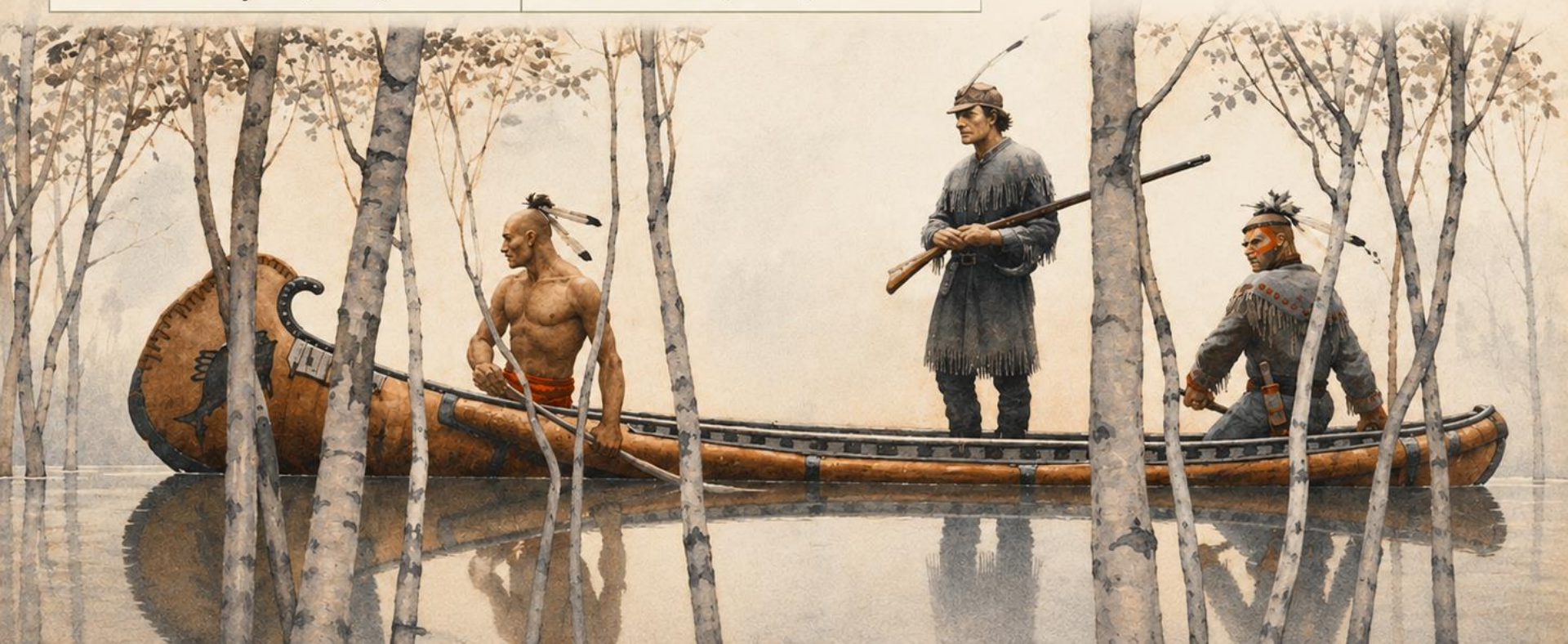
**Other Major Works**

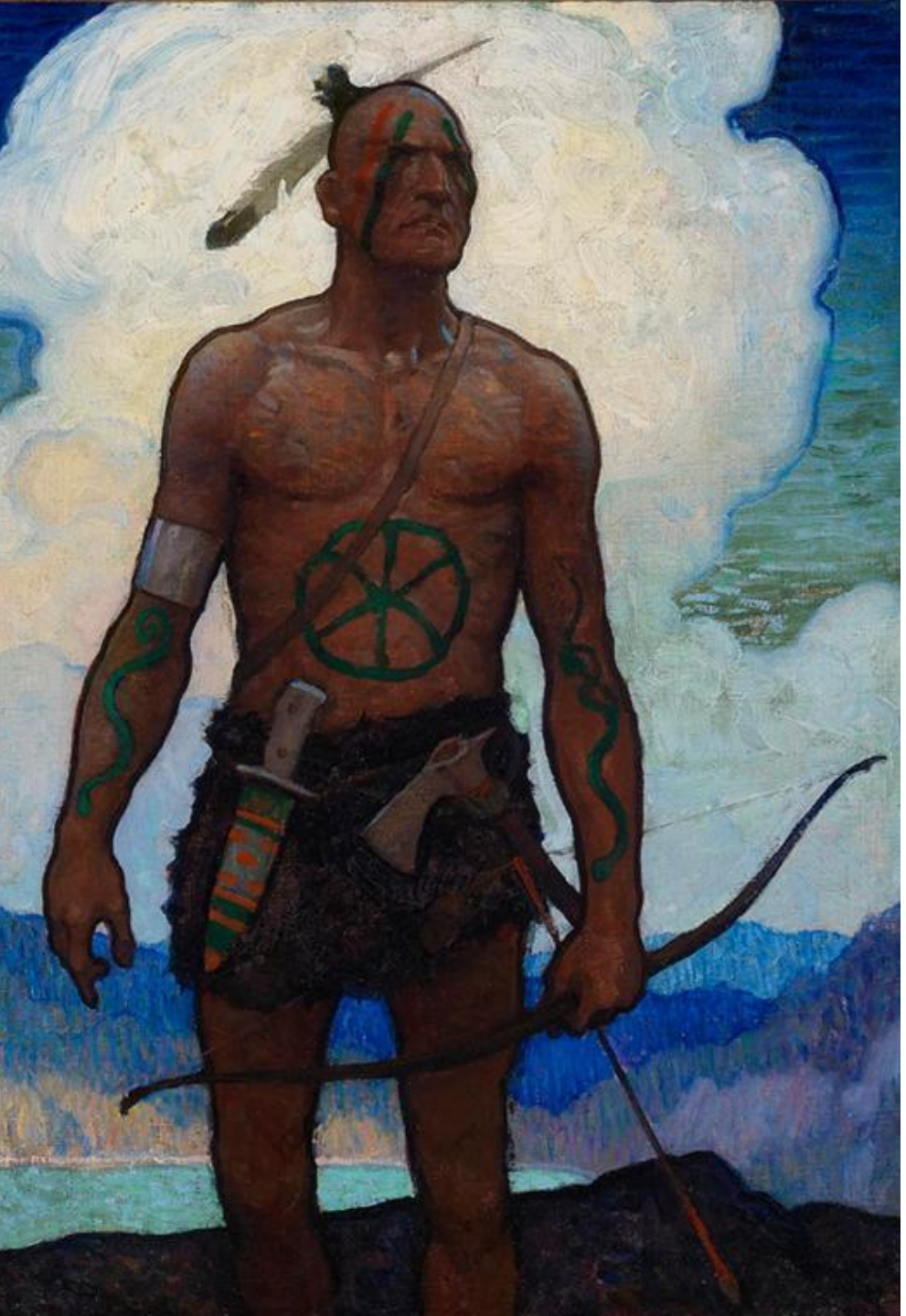
- ***The Spy* (1821):** a historical novel set during the American Revolution; ***The Pilot* (1824):** a pioneering sea novel; ***Notions of the Americans* (1828):** a defense of American society and institutions; ***Home as Found* (1838):** a satirical critique of American society.

# *The Leatherstocking Tales*

| Publication Order | Narrative Order |
|---|---|
| *The Pioneers* (1823) | *The Deerslayer* (1841) |
| *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) | *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) |
| *The Prairie* (1827) | *The Pathfinder* (1840) |
| *The Pathfinder* (1840) | *The Pioneers* (1823) |
| *The Deerslayer* (1841) | *The Prairie* (1827) |

> *"But you have there the myth of the essential white America. All the other stuff, the love, the democracy, the floundering into lust, is a sort of by-play. The essential American soul is hard, isolate, stoic, and a killer."*
>
> D. H. LAWRENCE,
> *Studies in Classic American Literature* (1923)





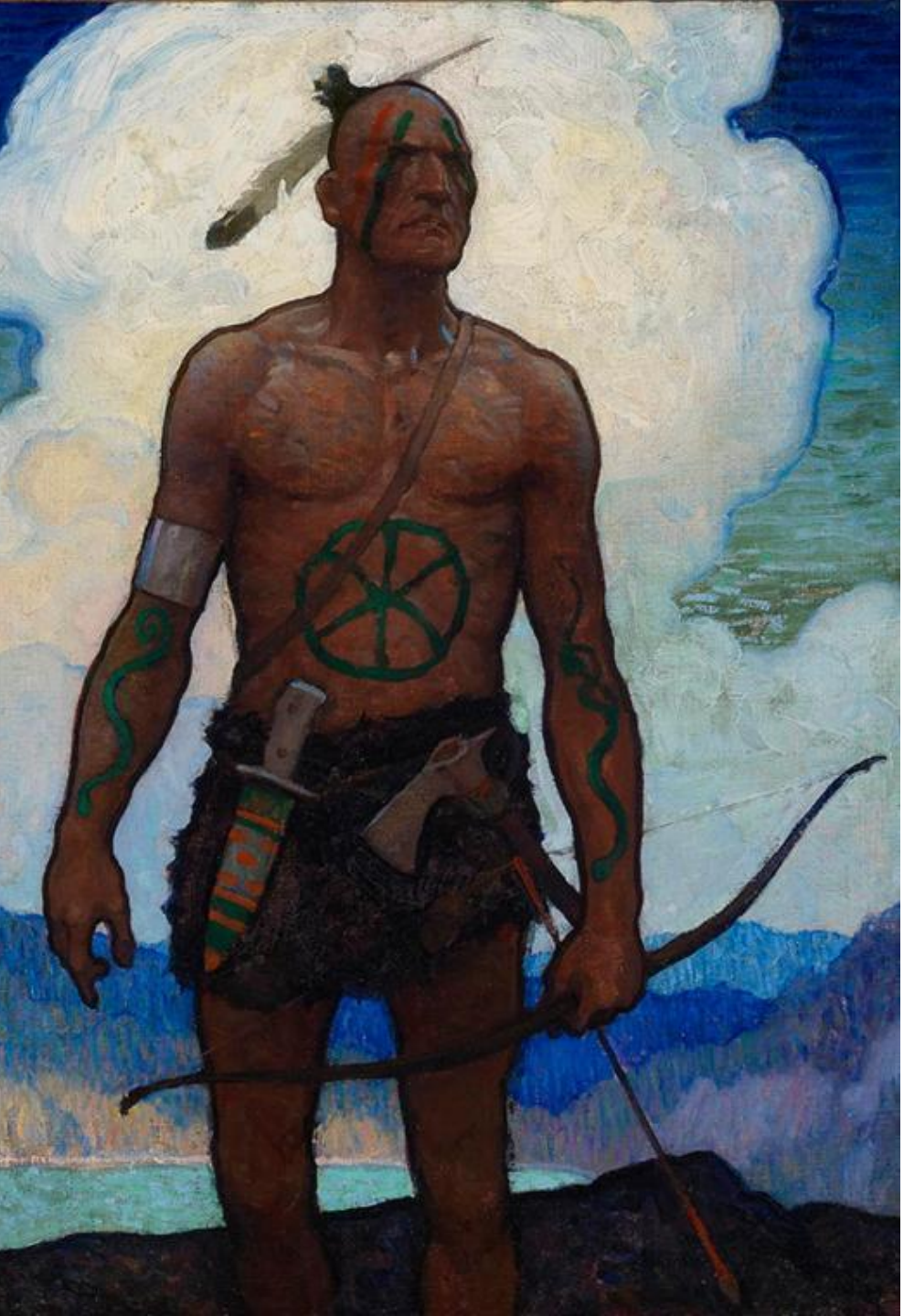
## Main Characters

**Natty Bumppo (Leatherstocking):** the archetypal American frontiersman, partly inspired by figures such as Daniel Boone. A skilled hunter and independent outsider, he lives between white civilization and Native American cultures.

**His names:** Deerslayer, Hawkeye, Pathfinder, Leatherstocking, associated with different stages of his life.

**Chingachgook:** a Mohican chief and Natty's closest friend; their relationship crosses cultural boundaries while reflecting Cooper's idealized representation of Native Americans.

**Uncas:** Chingachgook's son, a young Mohican warrior whose tragic death in *The Last of the Mohicans* symbolizes the supposed disappearance of Indigenous peoples.



## Literary and Philosophical Influences

**Walter Scott:** the historical romance, combining fictional characters with major historical transformations.

**Rousseau and Romantic primitivism:** the idealization of life close to nature, contrasted with the corruption of civilization.

## Central Themes and Contradictions

**Nature vs. Civilization:** the wilderness as a space of freedom and moral integrity, threatened by settlement.

**The Vanishing Indian:** the representation of Indigenous peoples as noble but destined to disappear — a literary myth that naturalizes colonial dispossession.

**The American Hero:** Natty embodies independence and moral integrity, but also the violence and contradictions of frontier expansion.

Yet the Leatherstocking books are lovely. Lovely half-lies.
They form a sort of **American Odyssey**, with **Natty Bumppo for Odysseus**.
Only, in the original Odyssey, there is plenty of devil, Circes and swine and all. And Ithacus is devil enough to outwit the devils. But Natty is **a saint with a gun**, and the Indians are gentlemen through and through, though they may take an occasional scalp.
There are five Leatherstocking novels: **a decrescendo of reality, and a crescendo of beauty**.
1. ***Pioneers***: A raw frontier-village on Lake Champlain, at the end of the eighteenth century. Must be a picture of Cooper's home, as he knew it when a boy. A very lovely book. Natty Bumppo an old man, an old hunter half civilized.
2. ***The Last of the Mohicans***: A historical fight between the British and the French, with Indians on both sides, at a Fort by Lake Champlain. Romantic flight of the British general's two daughters, conducted by the scout. Natty, who is in the prime of life; romantic death of the last of the Delawares.
3. ***The Prairie***: A wagon of some huge, sinister Kentuckians trekking west into the unbroken prairie. Prairie Indians, and Natty, an old, old man; he dies seated on a chair on the Rocky Mountains, looking east.
4. ***The Pathfinder***: The Great Lakes. Natty, a man of about thirty-five, makes an abortive proposal to a bouncing damsel, daughter of the Sergeant at the Fort.
5. ***Deerslayer***: Natty and Hurry Harry, both quite young, are hunting in the virgin wild. They meet two white women. Lake Champlain again.
These are the five Leatherstocking books: Natty Bumppo, being Leatherstocking, Pathfinder, Deerslayer, according to his ages.

(D.H. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature*, 1923)

## *The Deerslayer*, ch. 7

He might have been thus employed a minute, when, happening to turn his face towards the land, his quick and certain eye told him, at a glance, the imminent jeopardy in which his life was placed. **The black, ferocious eyes of the savage were glancing on him**, like those of the crouching tiger, through a small opening in the bushes, and the muzzle of his rifle seemed already to be opening in a line with his own body.

Then, indeed, **the long practice of Deerslayer, as a hunter did him good service**. Accustomed to fire with the deer on the bound, and often when the precise position of the animal's body had in a manner to be guessed at, he used the same expedients here. To cock and poise his rifle were the acts of a single moment and a single motion: then **aiming almost without sighting, he fired into the bushes where he knew a body ought to be**, in order to sustain the appalling countenance which alone was visible. […]



**It was the first instance in which he had seen a man fall in battle** - it was the first fellow-creature against whom he had ever seriously raised his own hand. **The sensations were novel**; and regret, with the freshness of our better feelings, mingled with his triumph. **The Indian was not dead**, though shot directly through the body. He lay on his back motionless, but his eyes, now full of consciousness, watched each action of his victor - as the fallen bird regards the fowler - jealous of every movement. **The man probably expected the fatal blow which was to precede the loss of his scalp**; or perhaps he anticipated that this latter act of cruelty would precede his death. Deerslayer read his thoughts; and he found a melancholy satisfaction in relieving the apprehensions of the helpless savage.

“No, no, red-skin,” he said; “you’ve nothing more to fear from me. **I am of a Christian stock, and scalping is not of my gifts**.” […]

With the **high innate courtesy that so often distinguishes the Indian warrior before he becomes corrupted by too much intercourse with the worst class of the white men**, he endeavored to express his thankfulness for the other's good intentions, and to let him understand that they were appreciated.

"Good!" he repeated, for this was an English word much used by the savages, "good! young head; young heart, too. Old heart tough; no shed tear. Hear Indian when he die, and no want to lie - what he call him?"

"**Deerslayer is the name I bear now**, though the Delawares have said that when I get back from this war-path, I shall have a more manly title, provided I can 'arn one."

"**That good name for boy - poor name for warrior. He get better quick. No fear there," - the savage had strength sufficient, under the strong excitement he felt, to raise a hand and tap the young man on his breast, - "eye sartain -finger lightning - aim, death - great warrior soon. No Deerslayer - Hawkeye -Hawkeye - Hawkeye. Shake hand**."

[…]

“I didn’t wish your life, red-skin,” he said “but **you left me no choice atween killing or being killed**. Each party acted according to his gifts, I suppose, and blame can light on neither. You were treacherous, according to your natur’ in war, and I was a little oversightful, as I’m apt to be in trusting others. Well, **this is my first battle with a human mortal**, though it’s not likely to be the last. I have fou’t most of the creatur’s of the forest, such as bears, wolves, painters, and catamounts, but this is the beginning with the red-skins. **If I was Injin born, now, I might tell of this, or carry in the scalp**, and boast of the expl’ite afore the whole tribe; or, if my inimy had only been even a bear, ‘twould have been nat’ral and proper to let everybody know what had happened; but I don’t well see how I’m to let even Chingachgook into this secret, so long as it can be done only by boasting with a white tongue. **And why should I wish to boast of it a’ter all? It’s slaying a human, although he was a savage**; and how do I know that he was a just Injin; and that he has not been taken away suddenly to anything but happy hunting-grounds. When it’s onsartain whether good or evil has been done, the wisest way is not to be boastful - still, I should like Chingachgook to know that I haven’t discredited the Delawares, or my training!”



# Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

**1809**: born in Boston to a family of actors
**1811**: orphaned at the age of two; raised in Richmond, Virginia
**1815–1820**: lived in Scotland and England
**1826**: briefly attended the University of Virginia; left because of financial difficulties
**1827–1829**: served in the U.S. Army; published his first poetry collection, *Tamerlane and Other Poems* (1827)
**1830–1831**: attended West Point Military Academy but was dismissed
**1830s–1840s**: lived and worked in Baltimore, Richmond, Philadelphia, and New York, as a poet, short-story writer, editor, and literary critic. Earned his living largely through writing, editing, and literary criticism
**1836**: married his 13-year-old cousin, Virginia
**1847**: Virginia died of tuberculosis after several years of illness
Experienced financial difficulties, emotional distress, and problems with alcohol, particularly during his later years
**1849**: died in Baltimore at the age of 40, under circumstances that remain uncertain

**SHORT STORIES**

**Death and Mortality**

The Masque of the Red Death
The Premature Burial
The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar
Berenice
The Oval Portrait
Morella
Ligeia

**Madness and Psychological Horror**

The Tell-Tale Heart
The Black Cat
The Imp of the Perverse
The Cask of Amontillado
Hop-Frog
The Pit and the Pendulum
The Man of the Crowd
William Wilson

**Gothic Mystery and the Supernatural**

The Fall of the House of Usher
The Haunted Palace
The Spectacles
Metzengerstein
The Assignation
Shadow—A Parable

**Detection, Logic, and Rational Thought**

The Murders in the Rue Morgue
The Mystery of Marie Rogêt
The Purloined Letter
Thou Art the Man

**Adventure, Exploration, and the Unknown**

A Descent into the Maelström
MS. Found in a Bottle
The Balloon-Hoax

**Love, Beauty, and Loss**

Eleonora
Ligeia
Morella
The Oval Portrait
The Assignation

**Satire, Humor, and Irony**

The System of Doctor Tarr and Professor Fether
Some Words with a Mummy
The Man That Was Used Up
The Angel of the Odd
Never Bet the Devil Your Head
Lionizing
X-ing a Paragrab

**Crime, Guilt, and Retribution**

The Tell-Tale Heart
The Black Cat
The Cask of Amontillado
Hop-Frog
Thou Art the Man
The Gold Bug

**POEMS**

"The Raven" (video)
"Alone"

**NOVEL**

*The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838)

“Alone”

From childhood’s hour I have not been
As others were — I have not seen
As others saw — I could not bring
My passions from a common spring —
From the same source I have not taken
My sorrow — I could not awaken
My heart to joy at the same tone —
And all I lov’d — I lov’d alone —
Then — in my childhood — in the dawn
Of a most stormy life — was drawn
From ev’ry depth of good and ill
The mystery which binds me still —
From the torrent, or the fountain —
From the red cliff of the mountain —
From the sun that ‘round me roll’d
In its autumn tint of gold —
From the lightning in the sky
As it pass’d me flying by —
From the thunder, and the storm —
And the cloud that took the form
(When the rest of Heaven was blue)
Of a demon in my view —



## *The Philosophy of Composition* (1846)

[…] I prefer commencing with the consideration of an effect. […] I say to myself, in the first place, "Of the innumerable effects, or impressions, of which the heart, the intellect, or (more generally) the soul is susceptible, what one shall I, on the present occasion, select?" […] Most writers – poets in especial – prefer having it understood that they compose by a species of fine frenzy – an ecstatic intuition […] I am aware, on the other hand, that the case is by no means common, in which an author is at all in condition to retrace the steps by which his conclusions have been attained. […] For my own part, I have neither sympathy with the repugnance alluded to, nor, at any time, the least difficulty in recalling to mind the progressive steps of any of my compositions […] If any literary work is too long to be read at one sitting, we must be content to dispense with the immensely important effect derivable from unity of impression – for, if two sittings be required, the affairs of the world interfere, and everything like totality is at once destroyed. […] What we term a long poem is, in fact, merely a succession of brief ones – that is to say, of brief poetical effects. It is needless to demonstrate that a poem is such only inasmuch as it intensely excites, by elevating the soul; and all intense excitements are, through a psychal necessity, brief. […] I should be carried too far out of my immediate topic were I to demonstrate a point upon which I have repeatedly insisted, and which, with the poetical, stands not in the slightest need of demonstration – the point, I mean, that Beauty is the sole legitimate province of the poem. […]

That pleasure which is at once the most intense, the most elevating, and the most pure is, I believe, found in the contemplation of the beautiful. When, indeed, men speak of Beauty, they mean, precisely, not a quality, as is supposed, but an effect – they refer, in short, just to that intense and pure elevation of soul – not of intellect, or of heart – upon which I have commented, and which is experienced in consequence of contemplating the "beautiful." Now I designate Beauty as the province of the poem […] Now the object Truth, or the satisfaction of the intellect, and the object Passion, or the excitement of the heart, are, although attainable to a certain extent in poetry, far more readily attainable in prose. […] Regarding, then, Beauty as my province, my next question referred to the tone of its highest manifestation – and all experience has shown that this tone is one of sadness. […] Melancholy is thus the most legitimate of all the poetical tones. […] Now, never losing sight of the object – supremeness or perfection at all points, I asked myself – "Of all melancholy topics what, according to the universal understanding of mankind, is the most melancholy?" Death, was the obvious reply. "And when," I said, "is this most melancholy of topics most poetical?" From what I have already explained at some length the answer here also is obvious – "When it most closely allies itself to Beauty: the death then of a beautiful woman is unquestionably the most poetical topic in the world, and equally is it beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such topic are those of a bereaved lover." […]

# Transcendentalism

**New England, 1830s**

Emerged in the intellectual and religious circles of Boston and Concord, particularly among younger Unitarian ministers and reformers.

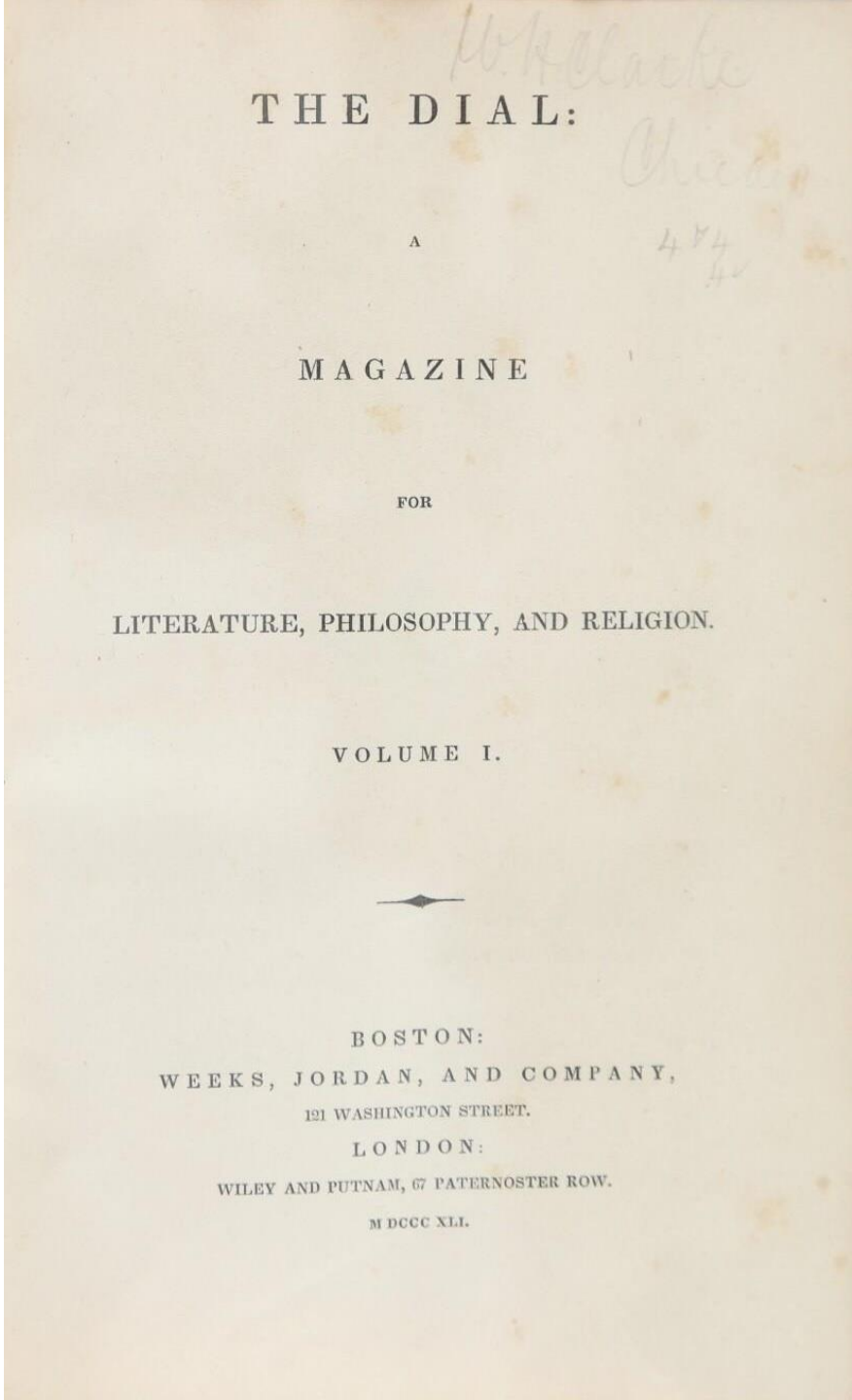
Developed partly as a reaction against religious orthodoxy, the rationalism of established Unitarianism, and philosophical empiricism.

**Ralph Waldo Emerson and the Transcendental Club (1836)**

Emerson's *Nature* (1836) became a foundational text of the movement.

The Transcendental Club, established in 1836, brought together intellectuals including Emerson, George Ripley, Frederic Henry Hedge, and Margaret Fuller.

Rather than a formal organization, it was an informal forum for philosophical, religious, and literary discussion.


THE DIAL:

A

MAGAZINE

FOR

LITERATURE, PHILOSOPHY, AND RELIGION.

VOLUME I.

BOSTON:
WEEKS, JORDAN, AND COMPANY,
121 WASHINGTON STREET.
LONDON:
WILEY AND PUTNAM, 67 PATERNOSTER ROW.
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***The Dial* (1840–1844)**

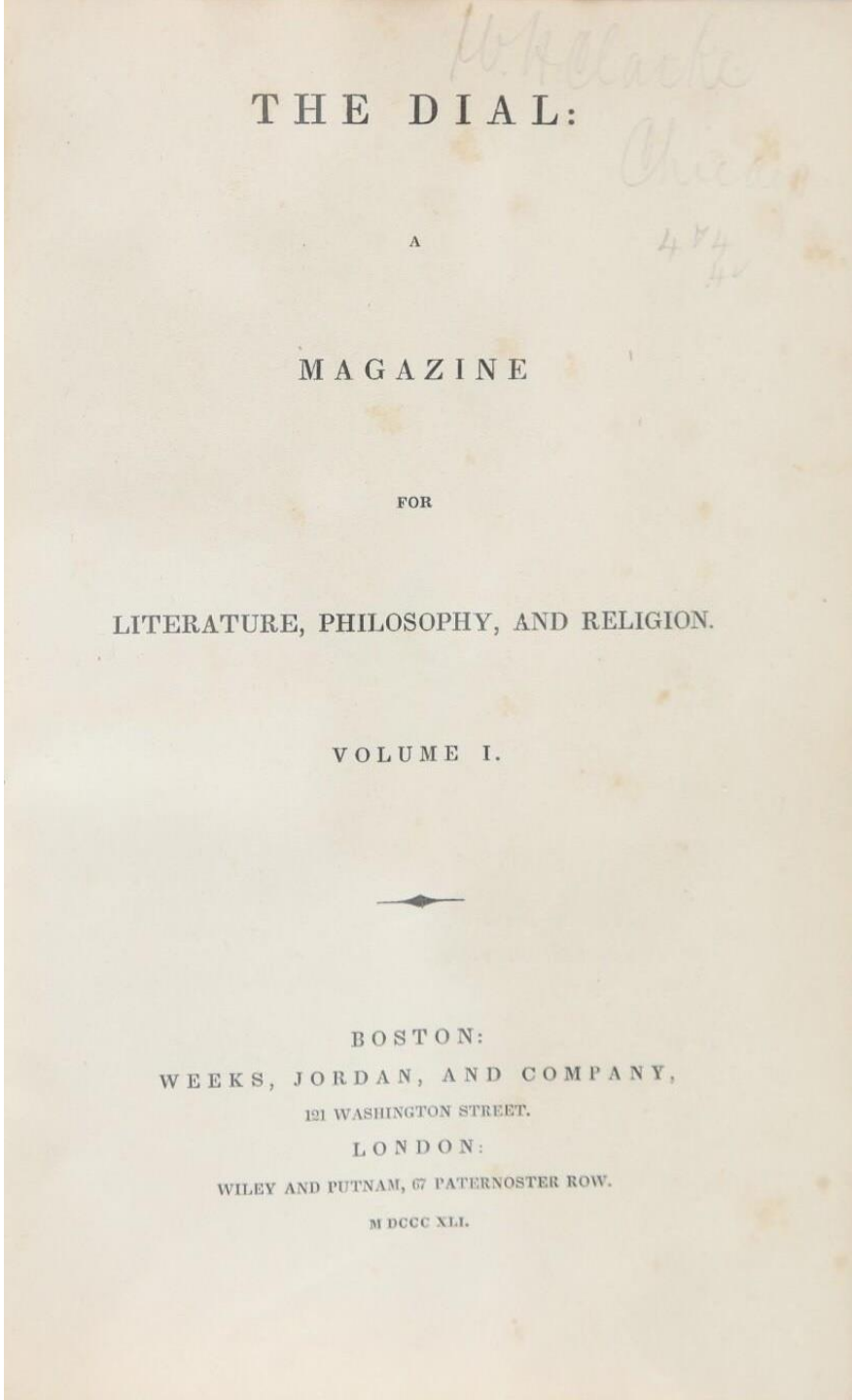
The leading Transcendentalist journal, edited first by Margaret Fuller (1840–1842) and later by Emerson (1842–1844).

Published essays, poetry, literary criticism, and philosophical reflections, providing a platform for the movement's ideas.

**From Religious Reform to Social Experimentation**

**Brook Farm (1841–1847):** an experimental community founded by George Ripley near Boston, seeking to combine intellectual and manual labor with a more equitable social organization.

**Fruitlands (1843–1844):** a short-lived utopian community established by Bronson Alcott and Charles Lane, based on communal living, simplicity, vegetarianism, and spiritual self-sufficiency.



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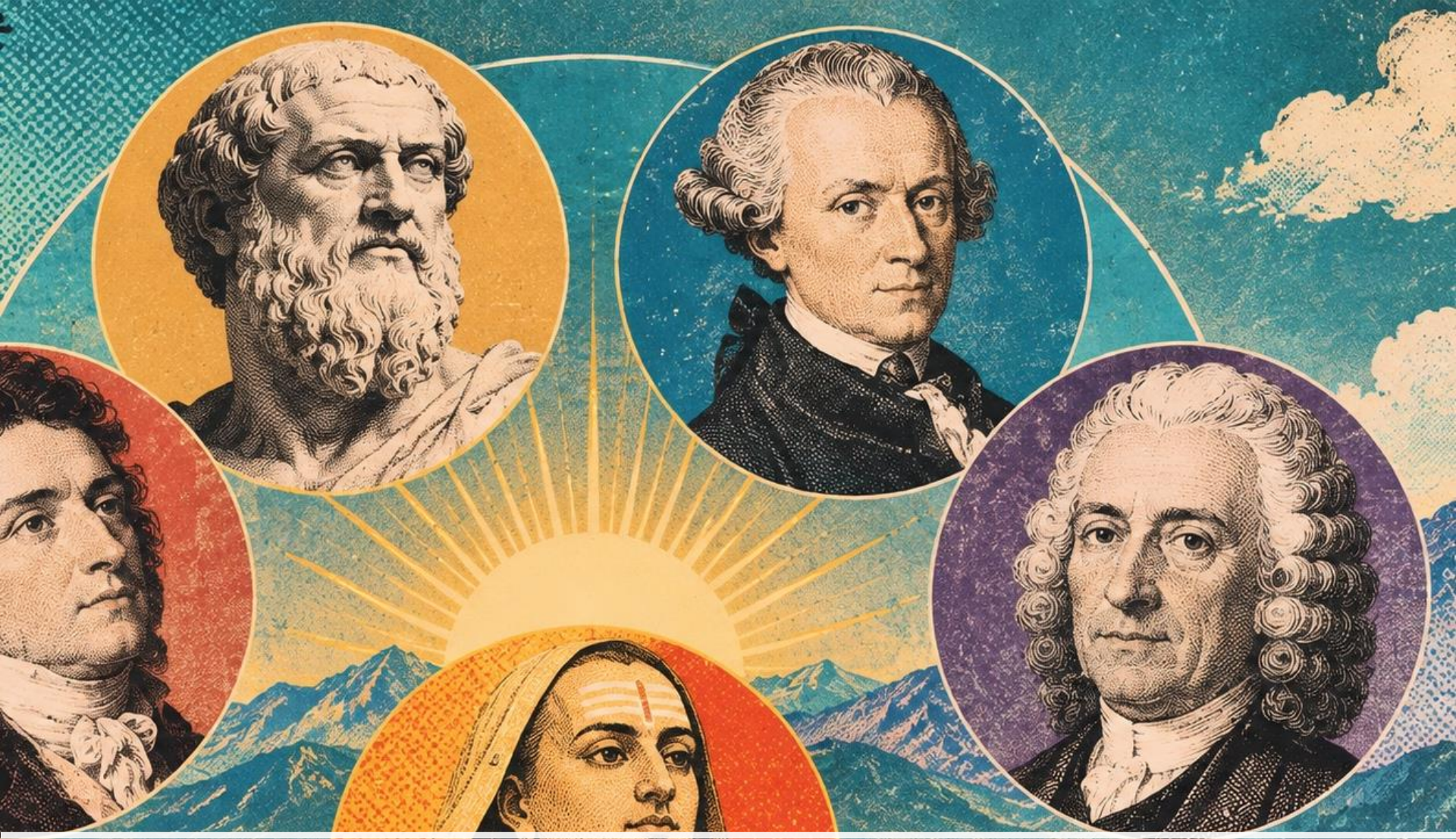
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# Philosophical Foundations of Transcendentalism

## Plato and Neoplatonism

### Plato (427–347 BCE)

**The world of Forms (Ideas):** eternal, unchanging realities that transcend the material world.

The visible world is subject to change, whereas genuine knowledge concerns the intelligible realm of Forms.

**The Allegory of the Cave (*Republic*, Book VII):** the movement from appearances to a higher understanding of reality.

### Neoplatonism — Plotinus (c. 204–270 CE)

**The One:** the ultimate source of all existence, beyond multiplicity and differentiation.

All reality emanates from the One through successive levels of being.

The soul seeks to return to its original spiritual unity.

## Kant and German Idealism

### Immanuel Kant (1724–1804)

**Transcendental philosophy:** investigates the *a priori* conditions that make human experience and knowledge possible.

**The active mind:** knowledge is not the passive reception of sensory impressions; the mind organizes experience through its own forms and categories.

**Phenomena and things in themselves:** we know reality as it appears to us, not as it exists independently of our experience.

### German Idealism (Fichte, Schelling, Hegel)

**Beyond Kant:** challenges the separation between the knowing subject and reality as it exists independently of consciousness.

**Mind and reality:** consciousness is not merely a passive observer but plays a constitutive role in our understanding of the world.

**Nature and spirit:** the material and spiritual dimensions of existence are understood as interconnected rather than fundamentally separate.

**Connection to American Transcendentalism**

The conviction that sensory experience alone is insufficient to understand reality, and that the mind or spirit provides access to deeper dimensions of existence.

## Hegel's Idealism (link)

**Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831):** reason is unlimited: "Was vernünftig ist, das ist wirklich; und was wirklich ist, das ist vernünftig" (*Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*): "What is real is rational, and what is rational is real."
**REASON** (*Vernunft*): the ultimate purpose of reason is to comprehend total unity, break down false or limited distinctions, and resolve conflicts
**SPIRIT** (*Geist*): Spirit is human nature, and specifically our unique sort of consciousness. Human beings alone are capable of self-knowledge. *The Phenomenology of Spirit* is a sketch of the different forms in which Spirit shows itself to us. Some of these forms are higher than others. For instance, our most basic psychological drives are a part of Spirit – a part of human nature – though a very rudimentary part since they are unself-conscious. Spirit also displays itself in the social institutions and laws of society, since these are the creation or projection of human consciousness.



## English Romanticism and Swedenborg

### English Romanticism: William Wordsworth (1770–1850) and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834)

**Imagination:** an active, creative faculty that transforms experience rather than merely reproducing sensory impressions.

**Nature:** not simply a physical environment, but a source of spiritual insight, emotional experience, and moral understanding.

**The individual:** intuition, subjective experience, and personal responses to nature challenge purely rational or mechanical explanations of reality.

### Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772)

**Correspondences:** the physical and spiritual worlds are connected through a system of symbolic relationships.

Natural objects and phenomena express or represent spiritual realities.

The visible world can therefore be interpreted as a manifestation of invisible spiritual truths.

## Hinduism and Vedānta

**The Upanishads:** philosophical and spiritual texts exploring the ultimate nature of reality, the Self, and the relationship between the individual and the universe.

**Brahman:** the ultimate, infinite reality underlying all existence.

**Ātman:** the innermost Self, beyond the individual ego.

**Advaita Vedānta by Ādi Śaṅkara (traditionally dated to the 8th century CE)**

**Non-dualism (*advaita*):** Ātman and Brahman are identical.

The apparent separation between individual beings and ultimate reality results from ignorance (*avidyā*).

Spiritual liberation (*mokṣa*) involves recognizing this fundamental unity.

## Emerson and Thoreau

Emerson engaged with Indian philosophical ideas, particularly in his reflections on the **Over-Soul** and the unity of existence.

Thoreau read Hindu scriptures, including the *Bhagavad Gītā*, and incorporated Indian philosophical ideas into his reflections on nature, self-discipline, and spiritual life.

## Philosophical principles

**Intuition:** spiritual truths are accessible through individual insight, beyond sensory experience and rational understanding alone

**The Over-Soul:** a universal spiritual presence unites humanity, nature, and the divine

**Self-Reliance:** individuals should trust their own conscience and judgment rather than conform to social conventions

**Nature:** the natural world is a manifestation of spiritual truth and a source of moral insight

## Social and political implications

**Abolitionism:** opposition to slavery and the defense of human freedom and dignity.

**Women's Rights:** advocacy of women's intellectual independence and equality, particularly in Margaret Fuller's writings

**Utopian Communities:** experiments in communal living and social reform, such as Brook Farm and Fruitlands.



# Transcendentalism: Key Figures



**Philosophy and Literature**

**Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882):** leading thinker of Transcendentalism; emphasized intuition, spiritual unity, and intellectual independence

**Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862):** explored the relationship between nature, conscience, and society in *Walden* (1854) and "Resistance to Civil Government" (1849)

**Women's Rights and Education**

**Margaret Fuller (1810–1850):** writer, critic, and advocate of women's equality; *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845)

**Elizabeth Palmer Peabody (1804–1894):** educator, publisher, and reformer; promoted progressive education and helped disseminate Transcendentalist ideas

**Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815–1902):** women's rights activist and principal author of the *Declaration of Sentiments* (1848), adopted at the Seneca Falls Convention

**Utopian Experiments and Social Reform**

**Amos Bronson Alcott (1799–1888):** educational reformer and founder of the utopian community Fruitlands (1843)



# Ralph Waldo Emerson
# (Boston 1803 - Concord 1882)

## Religious and intellectual background

**Unitarian minister (1829–1832):** rejected the Trinity; emphasized reason, moral conscience, and the unity of God.

**Break with the Church (1832):** resigned from the ministry, rejecting established religious rituals in favor of direct, individual spiritual experience.

**European Romanticism (1833):** travelled to Europe, meeting Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Carlyle, and engaging with Romantic philosophy.

**Transcendental Club (1836):** helped establish a New England intellectual circle devoted to religious, philosophical, and social reform.

## Foundational works

***Nature*** **(1836):** the manifesto of American Transcendentalism. Nature reveals the divine spirit, allowing individuals to transcend their limited selves and experience spiritual unity.

**"The American Scholar" (1837):** calls for American cultural independence from European models. The true scholar is *"Man Thinking"*, an original thinker who learns from nature, books, and action rather than merely imitating others.



***Essays: First Series*** **(1841)**

**"Self-Reliance":** advocates individual authenticity and nonconformity. Trusting oneself means following one's inner intuition, which connects the individual to universal spiritual truth, rather than asserting an isolated, self-sufficient ego.

**"Compensation"**: presents the universe as governed by a moral law of balance and reciprocity, in which every action has consequences.

**"The Over-Soul"**: explores the universal spiritual unity underlying individual existence, connecting humanity, nature, and the divine.

***Essays: Second Series*** **(1844)**

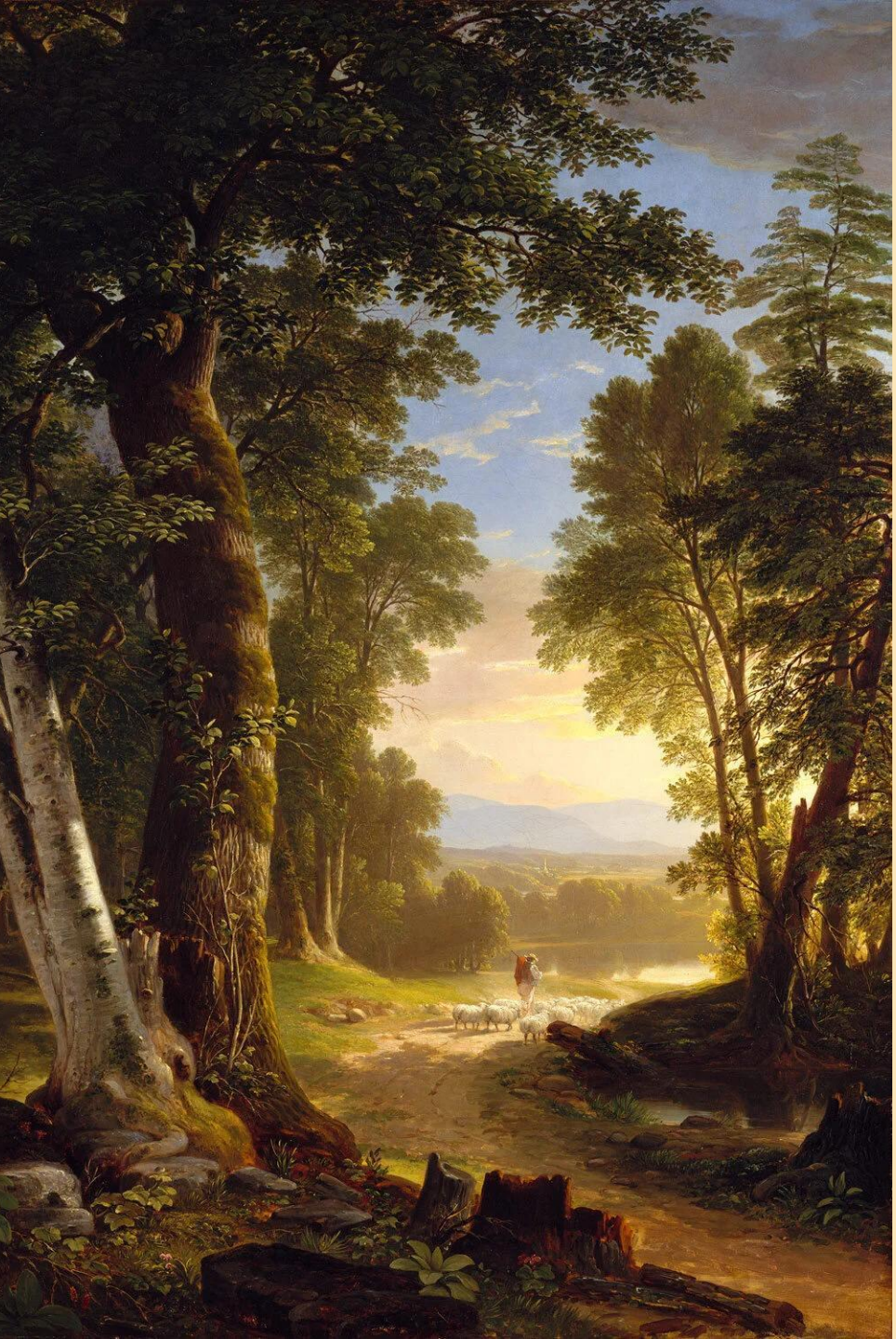
**"The Poet"**: presents the poet as a visionary who reveals the spiritual significance of reality through language and imagination.

**"Experience"**: written in the aftermath of his son's death (1842), questions the possibility of direct access to truth, emphasizing uncertainty, loss, and the limitations of human perception.

***Representative Men*** **(1850)**

Six exemplary figures embody different forms of human genius, but also reveal the limitations of individual greatness:

Plato (philosopher), Swedenborg (mystic), Montaigne (skeptic), Shakespeare (poet), Napoleon (man of the world), Goethe (writer).



# *Nature*

Our age is retrospective. It builds the sepulchres of the fathers. It writes biographies, histories, and criticism. The foregoing generations beheld God and nature face to face; we, through their eyes. **Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the universe? Why should not we have a poetry and philosophy of insight and not of tradition, and a religion by revelation to us, and not the history of theirs?** Embosomed for a season in nature, whose floods of life stream around and through us, and invite us by the powers they supply, to action proportioned to nature, why should we grope among the dry bones of the past, or put the living generation into masquerade out of its faded wardrobe?

**The sun shines to-day also.** There is more wool and flax in the fields. These are new lands, new men, new thoughts. Let us demand our own works and laws and worship.



## “Self-Reliance”

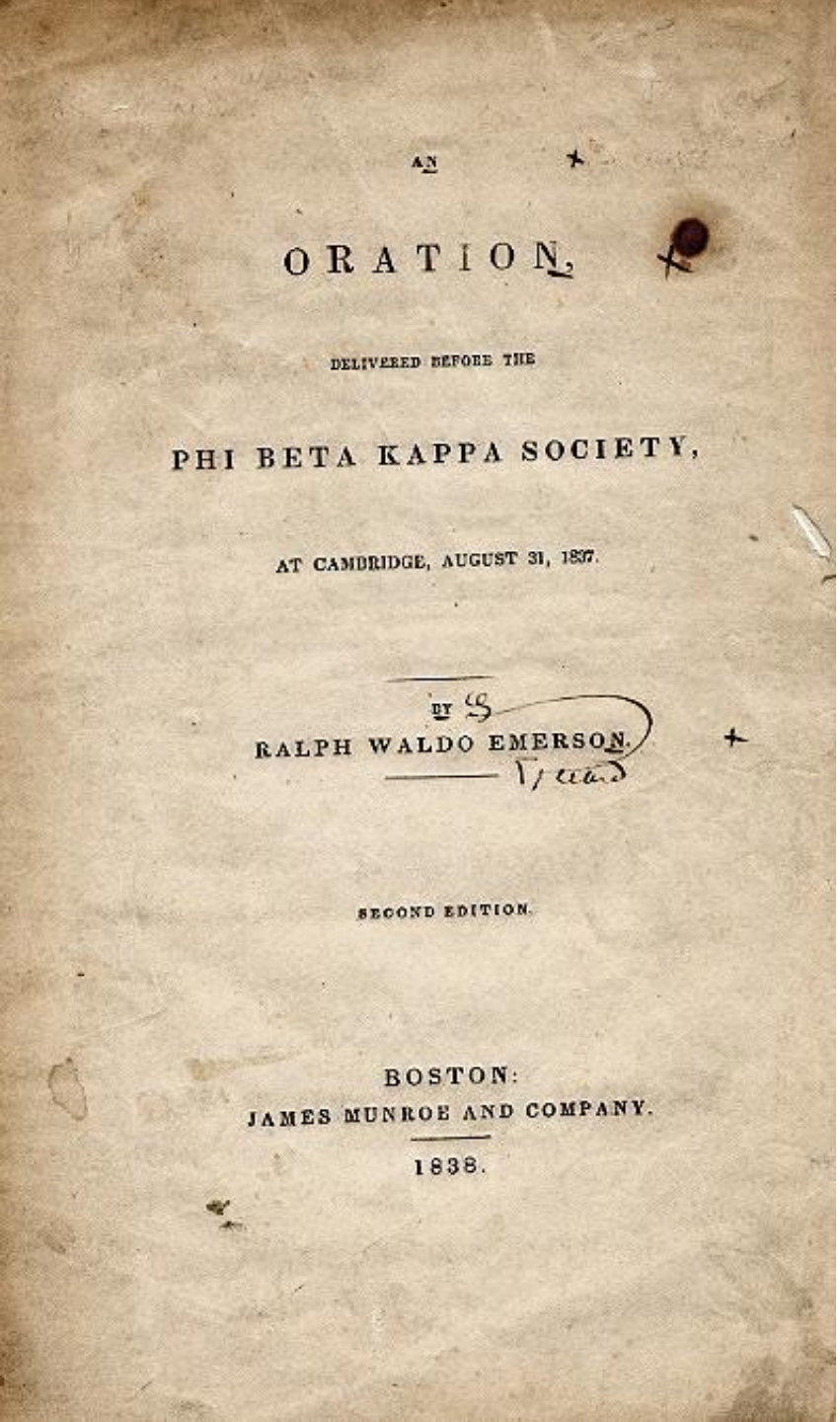
Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and **confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart**, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must **accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny**; and not minors and invalids in a protected corner, not cowards fleeing before a revolution, but guides, redeemers, and benefactors, obeying the Almighty effort, and advancing on Chaos and the Dark.



But why should you keep your head over your shoulder? Why drag about this corpse of your memory, lest you contradict somewhat you have stated in this or that public place? **Suppose you should contradict yourself; what then?** It seems to be a rule of wisdom never to rely on your memory alone, scarcely even in acts of pure memory, but to bring the past for judgment into the thousand-eyed present, and live ever in a new day. In your metaphysics you have denied personality to the Deity: yet when the devout motions of the soul come, yield to them heart and life, though they should clothe God with shape and color. Leave your theory, as Joseph his coat in the hand of the harlot, and flee.



A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Speak what you think now in hard words, and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict every thing you said to-day. — ‘Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood.’ — Is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. **To be great is to be misunderstood.**


AN

ORATION,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY,

AT CAMBRIDGE, AUGUST 31, 1837.

BY

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

SECOND EDITION.

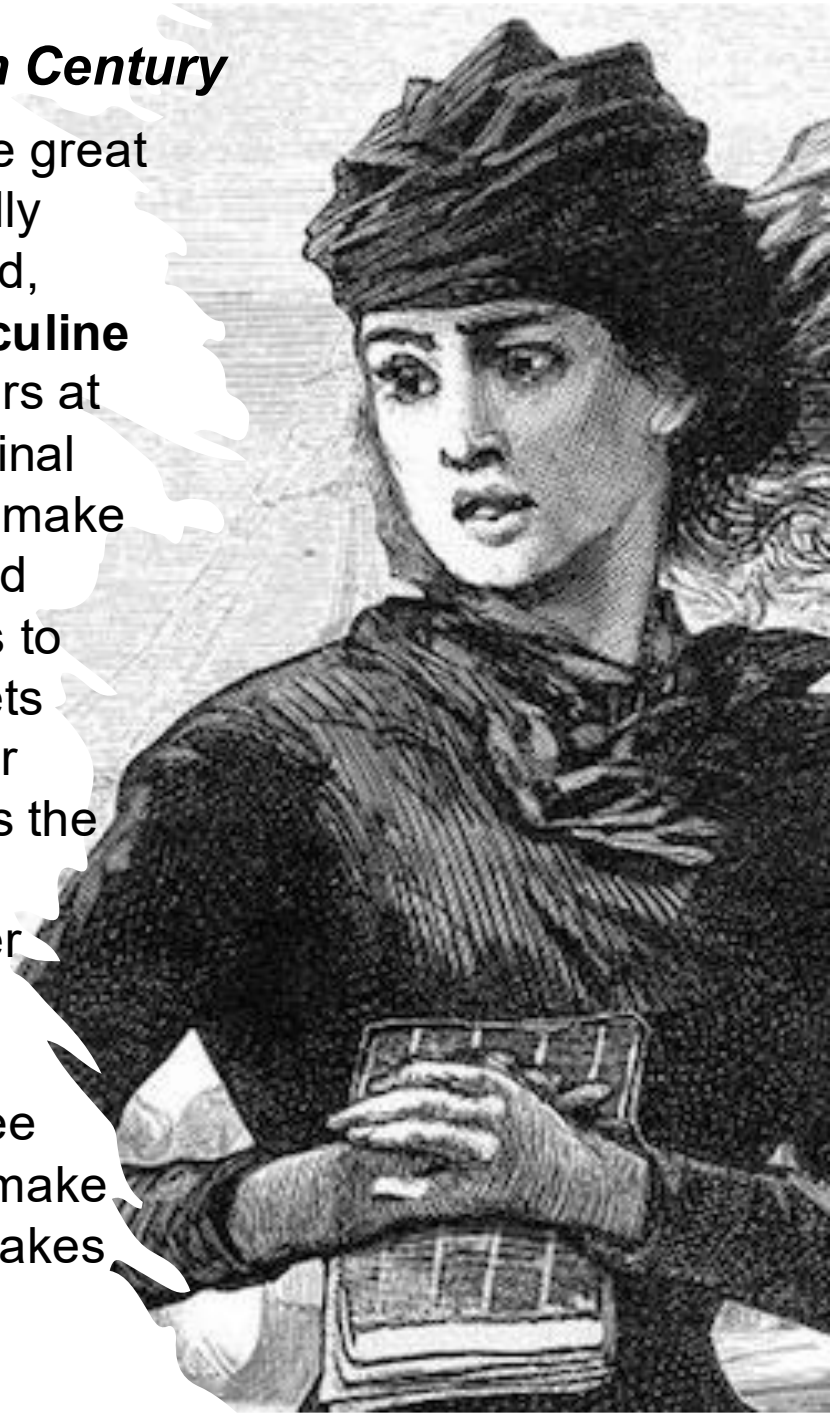
BOSTON:
JAMES MUNROE AND COMPANY.
1838.

# "The American Scholar"

We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe. The spirit of the American freeman is already suspected to be timid, imitative, tame. […] Young men of the fairest promise, who begin life upon our shores, inflated by the mountain winds, shined upon by all the stars of God, find the earth below not in unison with these,—but are hindered from action by the disgust which the principles on which business is managed inspire, and turn drudges, or die of disgust,—some of them suicides. What is the remedy? They did not yet see […] that, **if the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him.** […] **We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds.** Then shall man be no longer a name for pity, for doubt, and for sensual indulgence. The dread of man and the love of man shall be a wall of defence and a wreath of joy around all. A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men.

## Margaret Fuller, *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*

Male and female represent the two sides of the great radical dualism. But, in fact, they are perpetually passing into one another. Fluid hardens to solid, solid rushes to fluid. **There is no wholly masculine man, no purely feminine woman.** History jeers at the attempts of physiologists to bind great original laws by the forms which flow from them. They make a rule; they say from observation, what can and cannot be. In vain! Nature provides exceptions to every rule. She sends women to battle, and sets Hercules spinning; she enables women to bear immense burdens, cold, and frost; she enables the man, who feels maternal love, to nourish his infant like a mother. Of late she plays still gayer pranks. Not only she deprives organizations, but organs, of a necessary end. She enables people to read with the top of the head, and see with the pit of the stomach. Presently she will make a female Newton, and a male Syren. Man partakes of the feminine in the Apollo, woman of the masculine as Minerva.



## Henry David Thoreau
## *Walden, or, Life in the Woods* (1854)

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. **I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life,** to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have somewhat hastily concluded that it is the chief end of man here to “glorify God and enjoy him forever.”

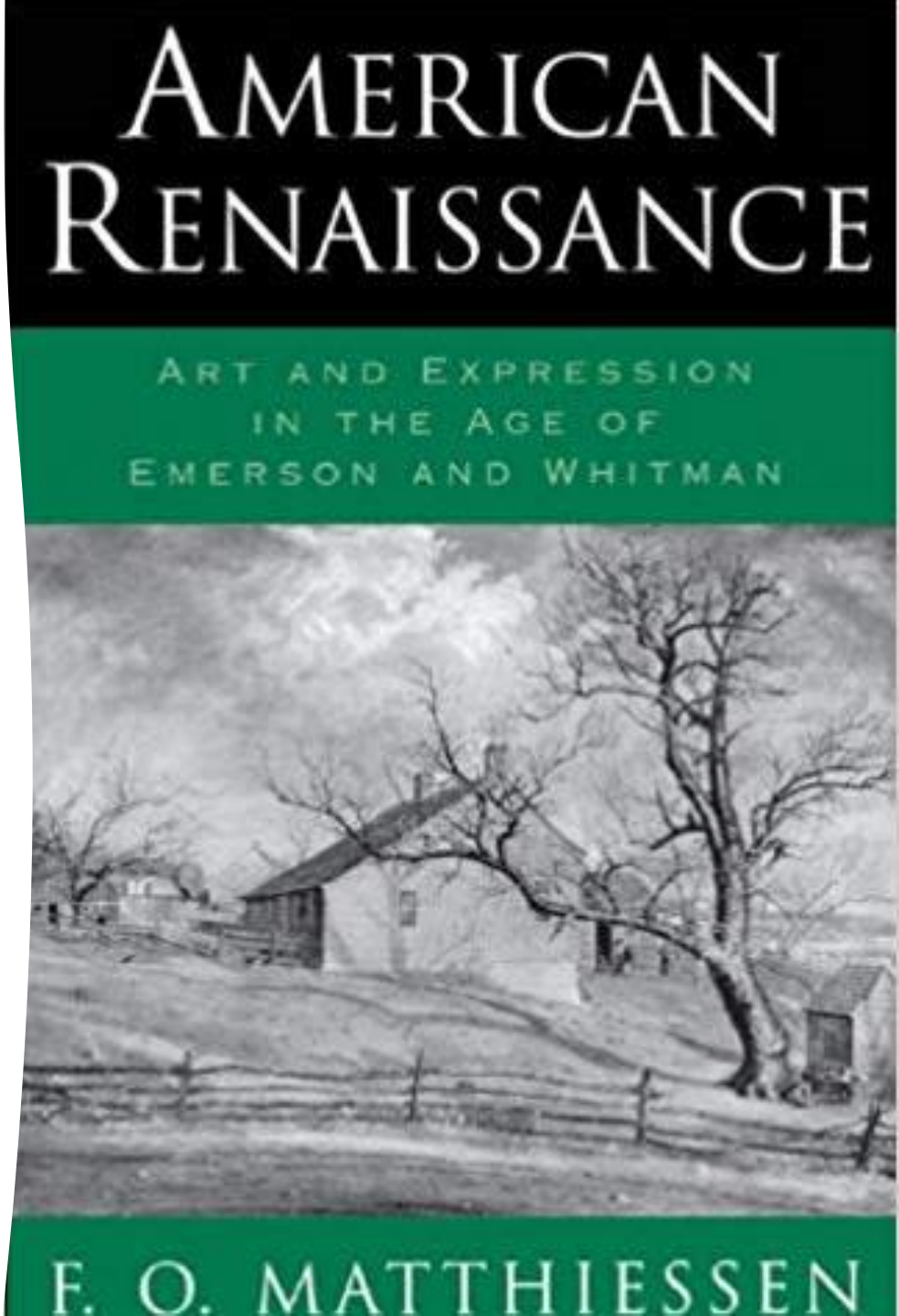
## American Renaissance

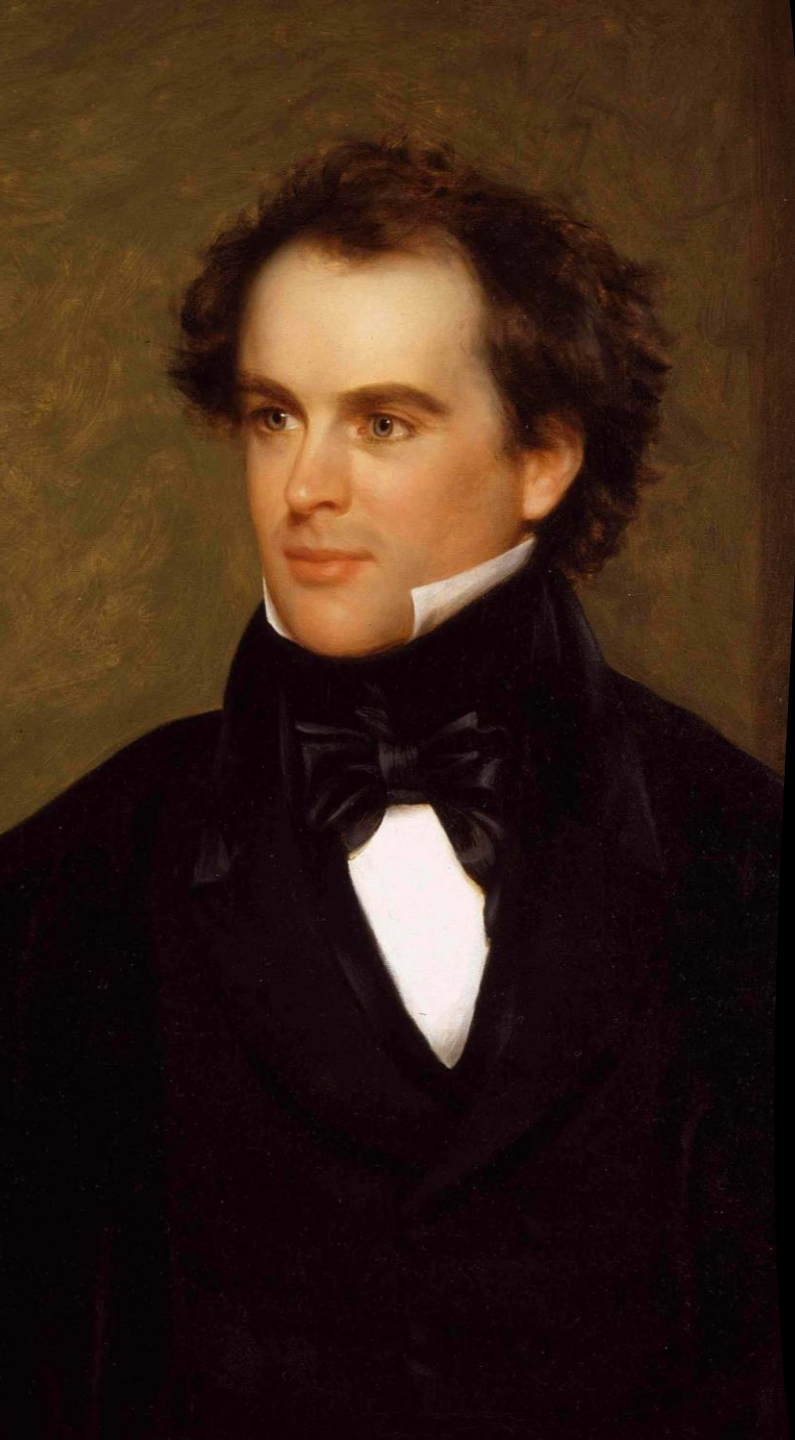
Francis Otto Matthiessen
(1902 – 1950)

*American Renaissance.*
*Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman* (1941)

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)
Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)
Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864)
Herman Melville (1819-1891)
Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

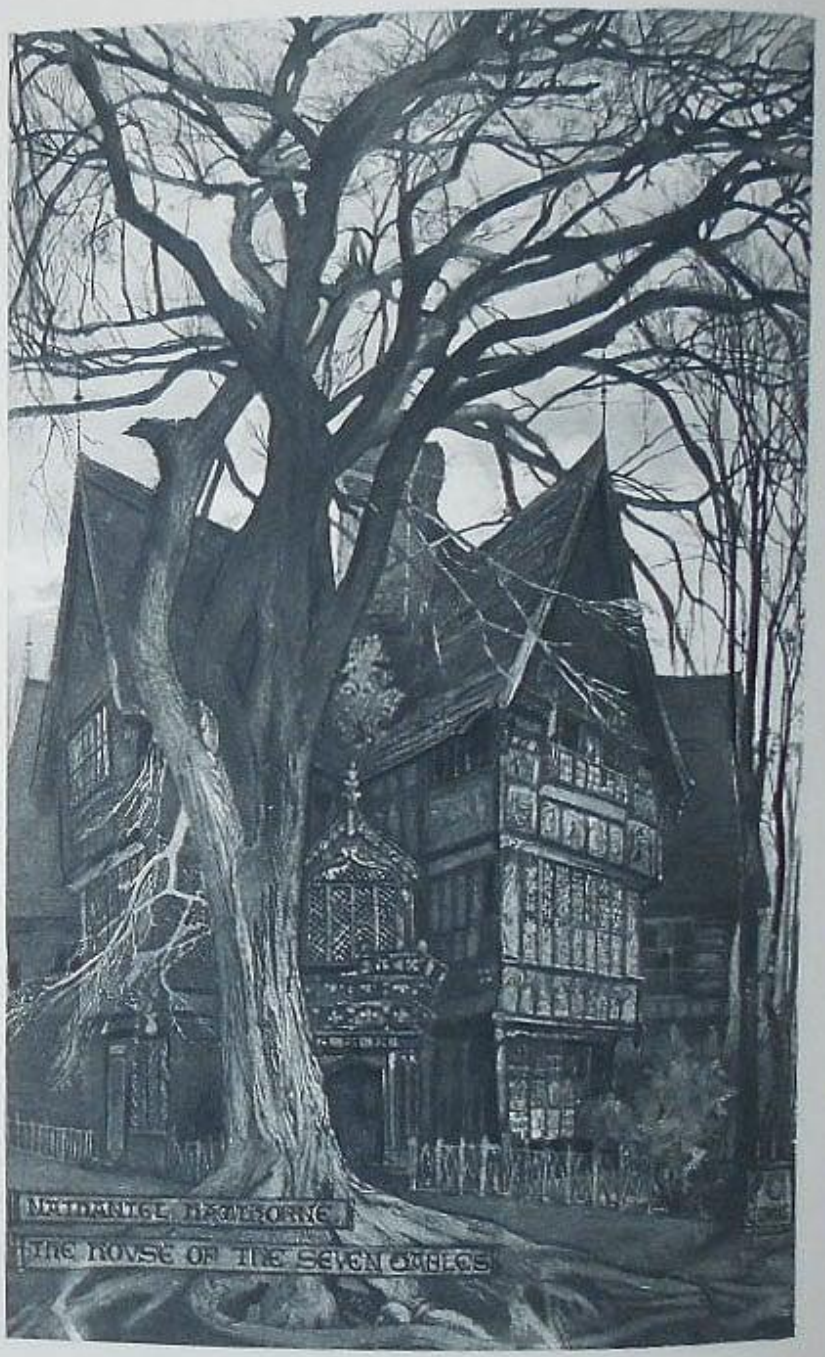
→ The “anti-Brahminic” tradition (Boston upper class, WASP, British-Anglican education)





# Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864)

**1804**: Born in Salem, Massachusetts, as Nathaniel Hathorne. His ancestor John Hathorne was a judge in the Salem witch trials (1692).
**1825**: Graduated from Bowdoin College (Maine) and returned to Salem, where he began his literary career.
**1839-1841**: Worked at the Boston Custom House.
**1841**: Briefly joined Brook Farm, a utopian community associated with Transcendentalism, which later inspired *The Blithedale Romance* (1852).
**1842**: Married Sophia Peabody; the couple settled in Concord, Massachusetts.
**1846-1849**: Worked at the Salem Custom House.
**1850**: Published ***The Scarlet Letter***, preceded by the autobiographical introduction “The Custom-House.”
**1853-1857**: Appointed US Consul in Liverpool following the election of his friend Franklin Pierce as President.
**1858-1859**: Travelled in Italy, particularly Rome and Florence.
**1860**: Returned to the United States.
**1864**: Died in Plymouth, New Hampshire.




## Novels or Romances?

WHEN a writer calls his work a Romance, it need hardly be observed that he wishes to claim **a certain latitude**, both as to its fashion and material, which he would not have felt himself entitled to assume had he professed to be writing a Novel. The latter form of composition is presumed to aim at a **very minute fidelity**, not merely to the possible, but to the probable and ordinary course of man's experience. The former—while, as a work of art, it must rigidly subject itself to laws, and while it sins unpardonably so far as it may swerve aside from the truth of the human heart—has fairly a right to present that truth under circumstances, to a great extent, of the writer's own **choosing or creation**.
(*The House of the Seven Gables*, "Preface")

*Fanshawe* (published anonymously, 1828)
*The Scarlet Letter* (1850)
*The House of the Seven Gables* (1851)
*The Blithedale Romance* (1852)
*The Marble Faun* (1860)

**Collections of short stories**

*Twice-Told Tales* (1837)

*Mosses from an Old Manse* (1846)

Most popular short stories:

“My Kinsman, Major Molineux” (1832)

“The Minister's Black Veil” (1832)

**“Young Goodman Brown” (1835)**
Puritan hypocrisy; spectral evidence

“Wakefield” (1835)

“The Birth-Mark” (1843)

“The Celestial Railroad” (1843)

“Rappaccini’s Daughter” (1844)

“Ethan Brand” (1850)



# CHARACTER MAP of THE SCARLET LETTER

The protaganist of the story. For the sin of committing adultery, she is punished by being required to wear a big scarlet "A" on her chest at all time. Despite her sin being well-known, she refuses to give out the name of her secret lover.



## HESTER PRYNNE



Husband of Hester Prynne. Much older than her. Commited entirely to his study after marriage. After discovering his wife has had an affair, he is determined to find out the identity of her lover and to reveal their sin to the public.

## R.CHILLINGWORTH

despises him for neglecting her after their marriage

forces her to conceal their husband-and-wife relationship



MISTRESS
## HIBBINS

mysteriously too aware of her secrets



## TOWNPEOPLE

despise her at first but eventually accept her

helps them wholeheartedly even being look down upon

unaware, he approaches him with a purpose

discovers that he is the secret lover of his wife

sibiling of

## PURITAN THEOCRACY

demand her to give up custody of Pearl

insists firmly to raise Pearl by herself

daughter of

mother of

secretly the lover of

admires her courage for facing her guilt with a tranquil heart

afraid of disclosing his sin in front of them

very repectful to him



The illgitimate, "elf-like" daughter of Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale. She is the physical embodiment of their love and sin

## PEARL

refrains himself from showing his love to her

awares of him as her father instinctively



A Puritan minister. He struggles to confront his sin. Endlessly tortured by his moral delimma, His health deteriorates by the day. He eventually earns his salvation by making his confession at the scaffold.

## A.DIMMESDALE

doesn't have the courage to confess his sin to them

have complete trust in him



RICHARD
## BELLINGHAM



## JOHN WILSON

Manga Classics™

## *The Scarlet Letter*, ch. XV, "Hester and Pearl"

[…] Her final employment was to gather seaweed of various kinds, and make herself a scarf or mantle, and a head-dress, and thus assume the aspect of a little mermaid. She inherited her mother's gift for devising drapery and costume. As the last touch to her mermaid's garb, Pearl took some eel-grass and imitated, as best she could, on her own bosom the decoration with which she was so familiar on her mother's. A letter—the letter A—but freshly green instead of scarlet. The child bent her chin upon her breast, and contemplated this device with strange interest, even as if the one only thing for which she had been sent into the world was to make out its hidden import.

**'I wonder if mother will ask me what it means?'** thought Pearl.

Just then she heard her mother's voice, and, flitting along as lightly as one of the little sea-birds, appeared before Hester Prynne dancing, laughing, and pointing her finger to the ornament upon her bosom.

'My little Pearl,' said Hester, after a moment's silence, '**the green letter, and on thy childish bosom, has no purport.** But dost thou know, my child, what this letter means which thy mother is doomed to wear?'

‘Yes, mother,’ said the child. **‘It is the great letter A. Thou hast taught me in the horn-book.**

‘Hester looked steadily into her little face; but though there was that singular expression which she had so often remarked in her black eyes, **she could not satisfy herself whether Pearl really attached any meaning to the symbol.** She felt a morbid desire to ascertain the point.

‘Dost thou know, child, wherefore thy mother wears this letter?’

‘Truly do I!’ answered Pearl, looking brightly into her mother’s face. **‘It is for the same reason that the minister keeps his hand over his heart!’**

‘And what reason is that?’ asked Hester, half smiling at the absurd incongruity of the child’s observation; but on second thoughts turning pale.

‘What has the letter to do with any heart save mine?’

‘Nay, mother, I have told all I know,’ said Pearl, more seriously than she was wont to speak. ‘Ask yonder old man whom thou hast been talking with,—it may be he can tell. But in good earnest now, mother dear, **what does this scarlet letter mean?—and why dost thou wear it on thy bosom?—and why does the minister keep his hand over his heart?’**

# Herman Melville (1819 - 1891)

1819: Born in New York City

1832: Lost his father as a child and began working at age 15; worked as a clerk, farmer, and teacher

1841: Joined the whaling ship Acushnet bound for the South Seas

1842: Deserted the ship in the Marquesas Islands
1842–1843: Spent time in Tahiti and Honolulu

1843-1844: Traveled to Europe (England and France)

1847: Settled in Massachusetts and married Elizabeth Shaw

1849-1850: Visited London and Europe again

1850s: Moved to New York City, then to Arrowhead, his farmhouse in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where wrote *Moby-Dick* and other major works

1866: Began working as a customs inspector in New York, a position he held for nearly 20 years

1891: Died in New York City



**1846 - *Typee***: Based on his experiences in the South Seas

**1847 - *Omoo***: Sequel to *Typee*, describing further travels in Polynesia

**1849 - *Mardi***: A turning point in Melville's career: from adventure tales to philosophical and symbolic fiction

**1849 - *Redburn*** and **1850 - *White-Jacket***: Semi-autobiographical novels about life at sea

**1851 - *Moby-Dick***: His masterpiece — a complex allegory about obsession, fate, and the human condition

**1852 - *Pierre; or, The Ambiguities***: A dark psychological novel exploring identity and moral conflicts

**1855 - *Israel Potter***: A historical novel about a forgotten Revolutionary War hero

**1857 - *The Confidence-Man***: A satirical look at American society and deception

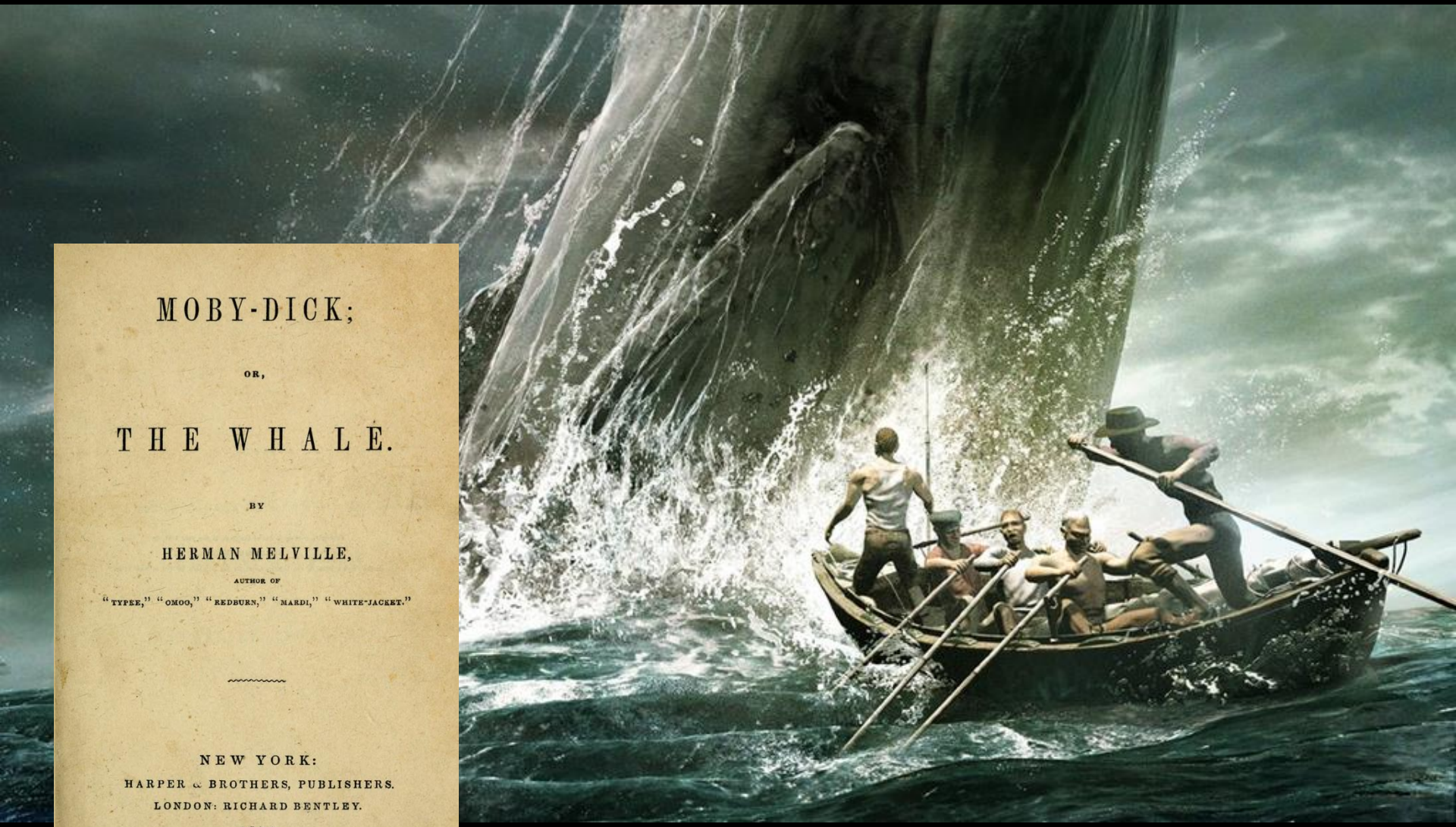
**1891 - *Billy Budd, Sailor*** (published posthumously, 1924)

**1853-1856 - Short stories**: "Bartleby, the Scrivener," Benito Cereno



The term 'Savage' is, I conceive, often misapplied, and indeed, when I consider the vices, cruelties, and enormities of every kind that spring up in the tainted atmosphere of a feverish civilization, I am inclined to think that so far as the relative wickedness of the parties is concerned, four or five Marquesan Islanders sent to the United States as Missionaries might be quite as useful as an equal number of Americans despatched to the Islands in a similar capacity.
(*Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life,* ch. 17)

“if, at my death, my executors, or more properly my creditors, find any precious MSS. in my desk, then here I prospectively ascribe all the honor and the glory to whaling; for a whale-ship was my Yale College and my Harvard.”
(*Moby-Dick*, ch. 24)



# MOBY-DICK;

OR,

# THE WHALE.

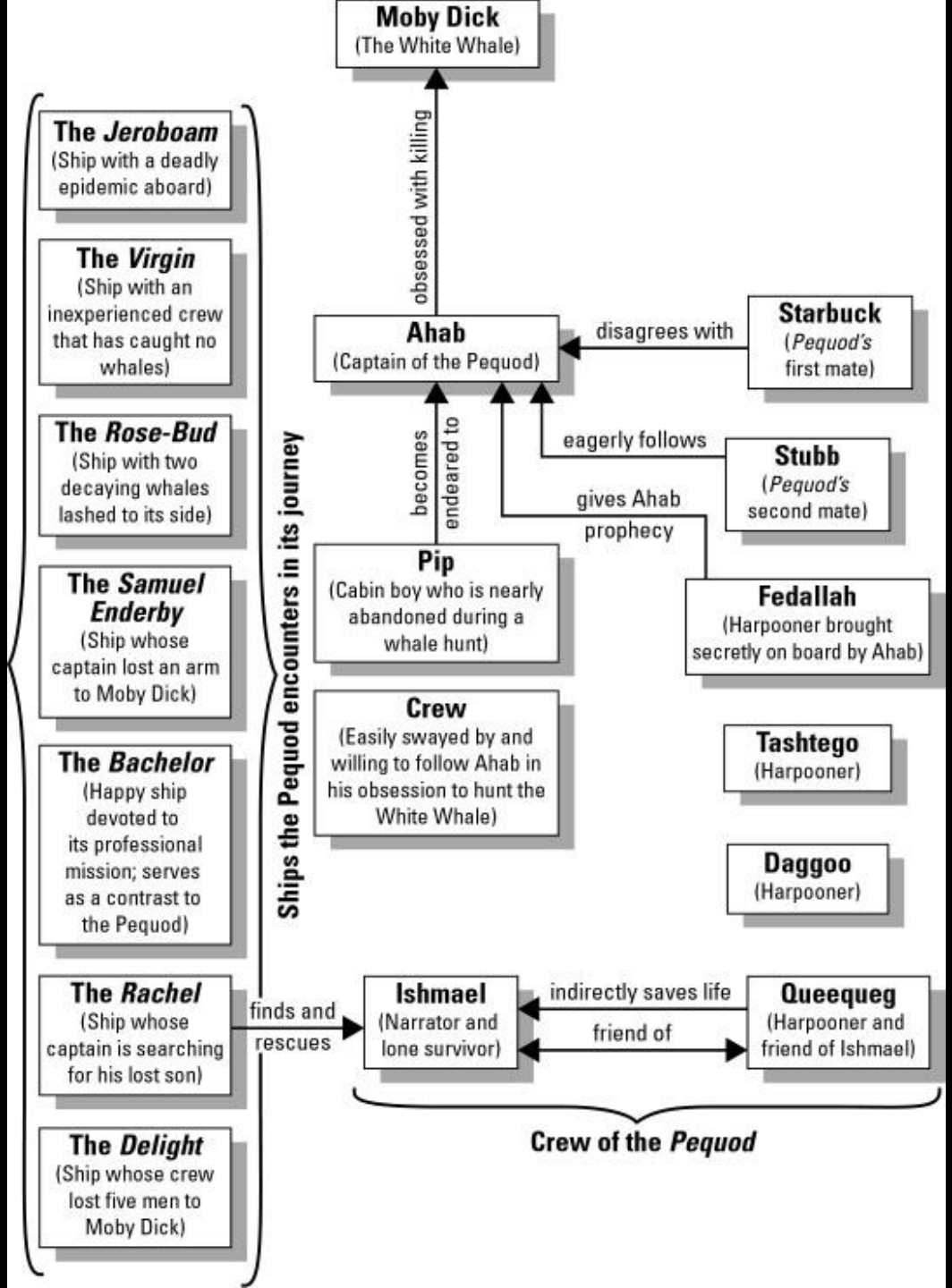
BY

HERMAN MELVILLE,

AUTHOR OF

"TYPEE," "OMOO," "REDBURN," "MARDI," "WHITE-JACKET."

NEW YORK:
HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS.
LONDON: RICHARD BENTLEY.
1851.




*Moby-Dick*'s characters

# ETYMOLOGY.

(SUPPLIED BY A LATE CONSUMPTIVE USHER TO A GRAMMAR SCHOOL.)

THE pale Usher—threadbare in coat, heart, body, and brain; I see him now. He was ever dusting his old lexicons and grammars, with a queer handkerchief, mockingly embellished with all the gay flags of all the known nations of the world. He loved to dust his old grammars; it somehow mildly reminded him of his mortality.

# ETYMOLOGY

"While you take in hand to school others, and to teach them by what name a whale-fish is to be called in our tongue, leaving out, through ignorance, the letter H, which almost alone maketh up the signification of the word, you deliver that which is not true." *Hackluyt.*

"WHALE. * * * Sw. and Dan. *hval.* This animal is named from roundness or rolling; for in Dan. *hvalt* is arched or vaulted." *Webster's Dictionary.*

"WHALE. * * * It is more immediately from the Dut. and Ger. *Wallen;* A.S. *Walw-ian,* to roll, to wallow." *Richardson's Dictionary.*

| | |
|---|---|
| הן, | *Hebrew.* |
| κητος, | *Greek.* |
| CETUS, | *Latin.* |
| WHŒL, | *Anglo-Saxon.* |
| HVALT, | *Danish.* |
| WAL, | *Dutch.* |
| HWAL, | *Swedish.* |
| WHALE, | *Icelandic.* |
| WHALE, | *English.* |
| BALEINE, | *French.* |
| BALLENA, | *Spanish.* |
| PEKEE-NUEE-NUEE, | *Fegee.* |
| PEHEE-NUEE-NUEE, | *Erromangoan.* |

# CHAPTER I.

## LOOMINGS.

Call me Ishmael. Some years ago—never mind how long precisely—having little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the watery part of the world. It is a way I have of driving off the spleen, and regulating the circulation. Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth; whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul; whenever I find myself involuntarily pausing before coffin warehouses, and bringing up the rear of every funeral I meet; and especially whenever my hypos get such an upper hand of me, that it requires a strong moral principle to prevent me from deliberately stepping into the street, and methodically knocking people's hats off—then, I account it high time to get to sea as soon as I can. This is my substitute for pistol and ball. With a philosophical flourish Cato throws himself upon his sword; I quietly take to the ship. There is nothing surprising in this. If they but knew it, almost all men in their degree, some time or other, cherish very nearly the same feelings towards the ocean with me.

There now is your insular city of the Manhattoes, belted round by wharves as Indian isles by coral reefs—commerce surrounds it with her surf. Right and left, the streets take you waterward. Its extreme down-town is the battery, where that noble mole is washed by waves, and cooled by breezes, which a few hours previous were out of sight of land. Look at the crowds of water-gazers there.

Circumambulate the city of a dreamy Sabbath afternoon. Go from Corlears Hook to Coenties Slip, and from thence, by

## Benito Cereno (1855-56)

Chile, 1799

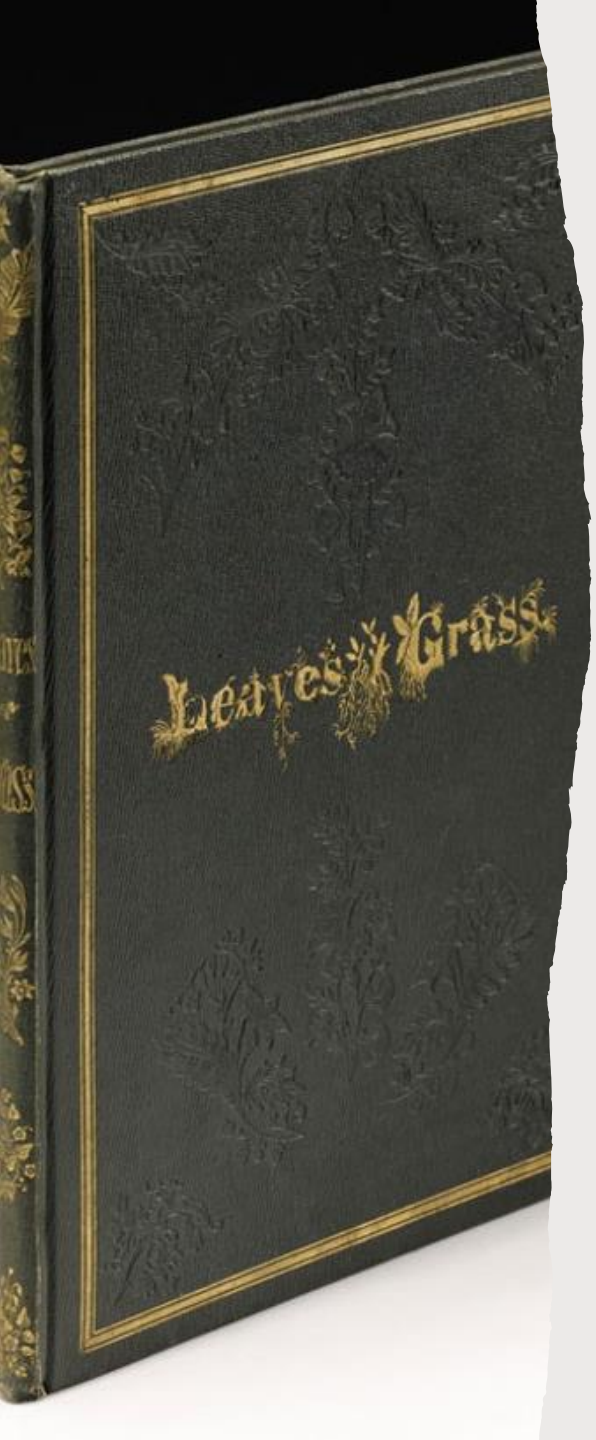
- Amasa Delano → *Bachelor's Delight* (USA)
- **Benito Cereno** → *San Dominick* (Spain)
- **Babo**

**sources:**

- Amasa Delano, *A Narrative of Voyages and Travels, in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres: Comprising Three Voyages Round the World; Together with a Voyage of Survey and Discovery, in the Pacific Ocean and Oriental Islands* (1817) → the *Perseverance* encounters the Spanish slave ship, the Tryal (1805)

- Amistad mutiny, 1839

- Revolution in **Saint-Domingue/Haiti** (1791-1804), especially the War of Knives (1799-1800) between the Haitian revolutionary **Toussaint Louverture** (former slave) and André Rigaud




# Walt Whitman
# (West Hills, NY 1819 - Camden, NJ, 1892)

"This is no book; Who touches this, touches a man"

"Born here of parents born here from parents the same, and their parents the same"
(*Song of Myself*)

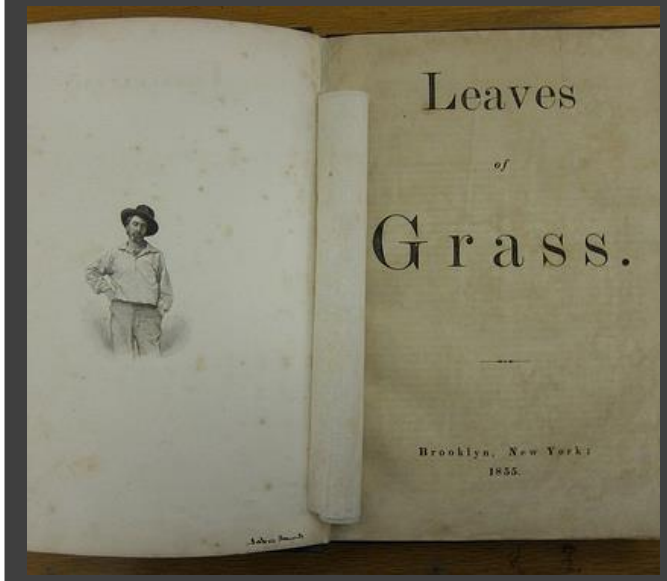
Relocated to Brooklyn, 1823

Working-class family & context

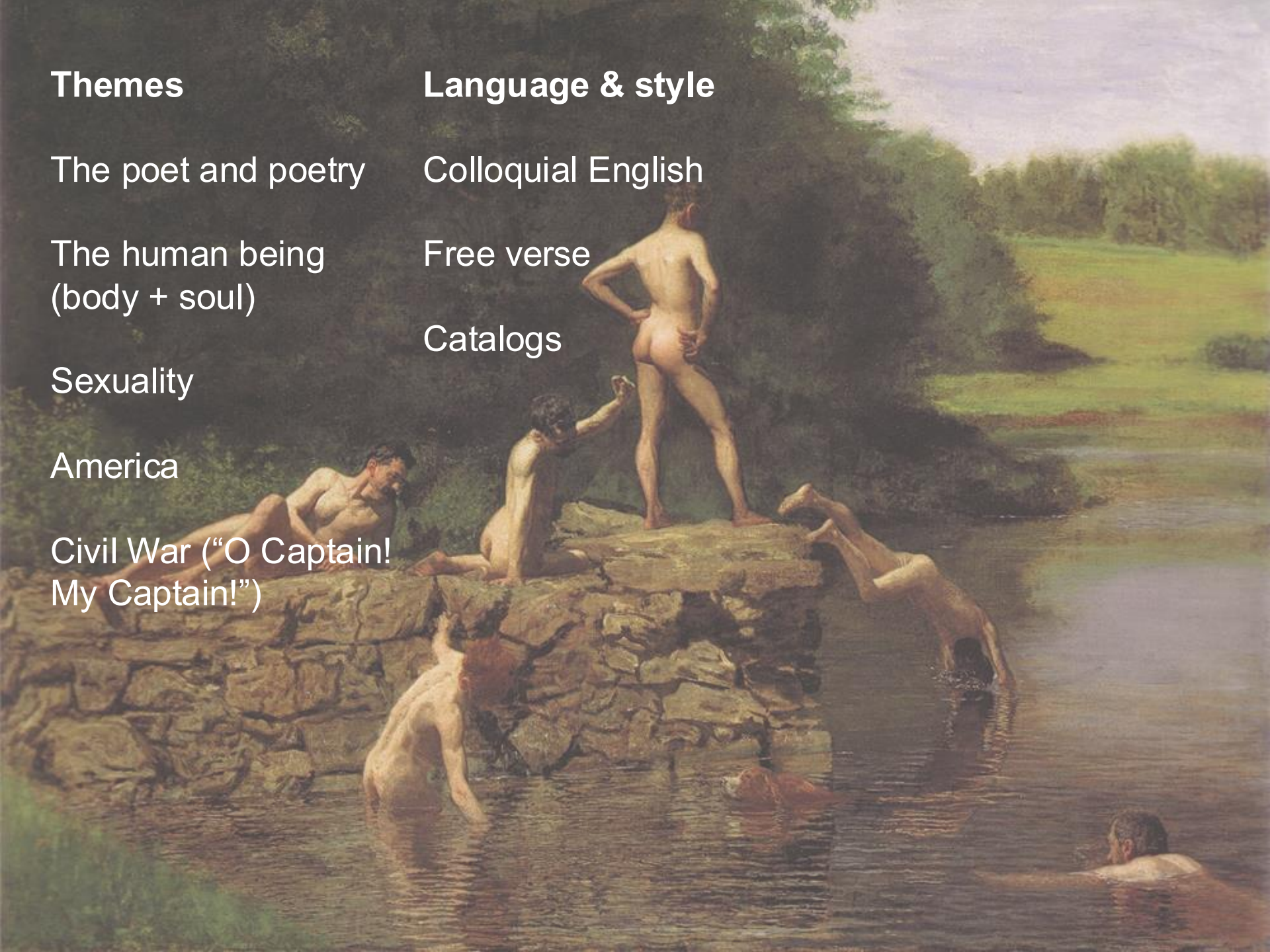
Short stories & journalism: *Long Islander* (1838)

***Leaves of Grass*** (1855)




Leaves
of
Grass.
Brooklyn, New York:
1855.





**Themes**

The poet and poetry

The human being (body + soul)

Sexuality

America

Civil War (“O Captain! My Captain!”)

**Language & style**

Colloquial English

Free verse

Catalogs

1st edition: 1855, New York, 94 pages, 12 poems

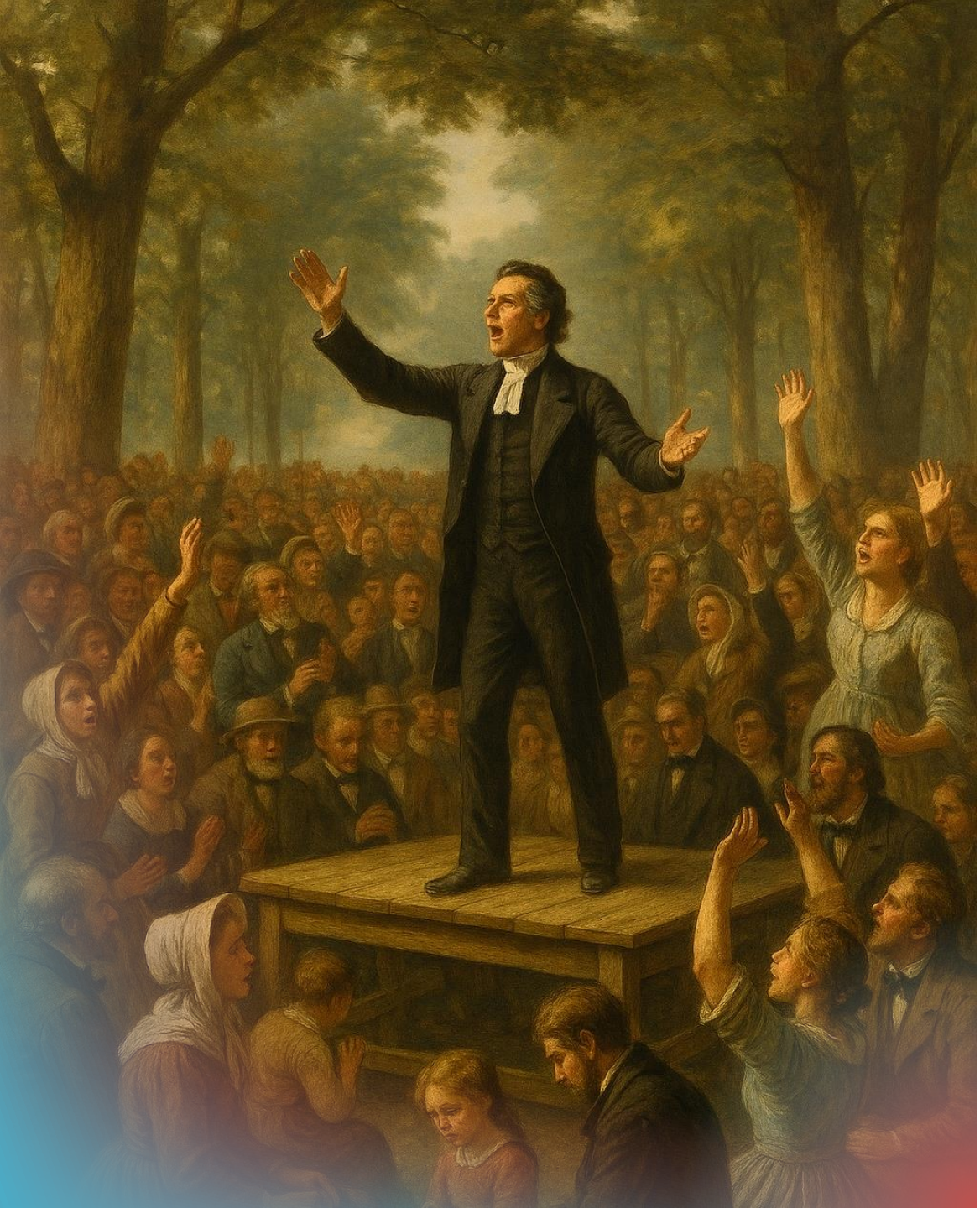
“Deathbed edition”: 1892, 389 poems

**Preface (1855)**

The Americans of all nations at any time upon the earth have probably the fullest poetical nature. The United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem.

Other states indicate themselves in their deputies … but the genius of the United States is not best or most in its executives or legislatures, nor in its ambassadors or authors or colleges or churches or parlors, nor even in its newspapers or inventors … but always most in the common people.

The American poets are to enclose old and new for American as the race of races. Of them a bard is to be commensurate with a people. To him the other continents arrive as contributions...he gives them reception for their sake and his own sake. His spirit responds to his country's spirit....he incarnates its geography and natural life and rivers and lakes. Mississippi with annual freshets and changing chutes, Missouri and Columbia and Ohio and Saint Lawrence with the falls and beautiful masculine Hudson, do not embouchure where they spend themselves more than they embouchure into him. The blue breadth over the inland sea of Virginia and Maryland and the sea off Massachusetts and Maine and over Manhattan bay and over Champlain and Erie and over Ontario and Huron and Michigan and Superior, and over the Texan and Mexican and Floridian and Cuban seas and over the seas off California and Oregon, is not tallied by the blue breadth of the waters below more than the breadth of above and below is tallied by him. When the long Atlantic coast stretches longer and the Pacific coast stretches longer he easily stretches with them north or south.



# Second Great Awakening (early 1800s-1830s)

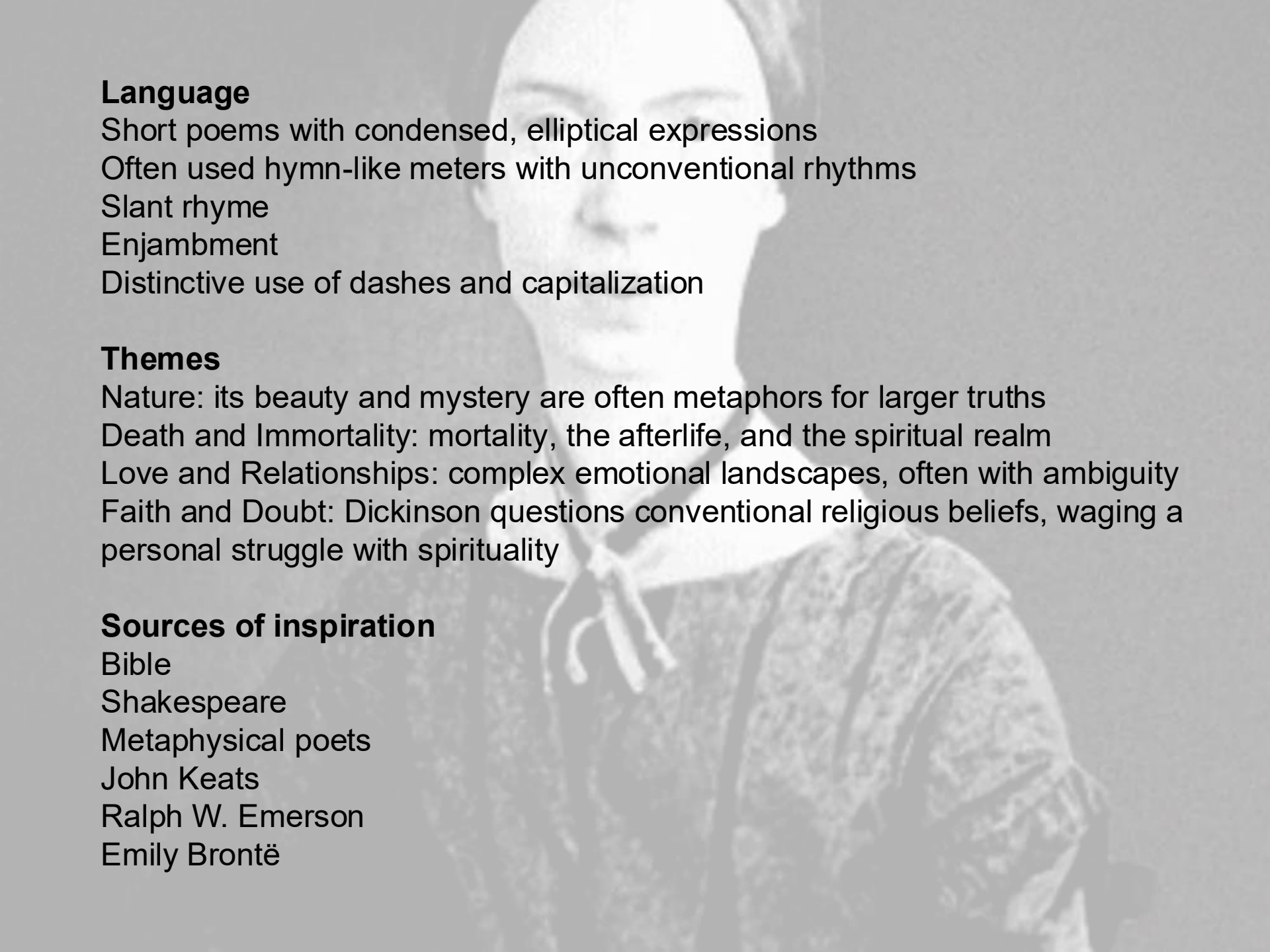
Religious revival especially in frontier areas, marked by large camp meetings and emotional preaching. It emphasized **evangelism**, **personal salvation**, and **moral reform** (e.g., abolition and temperance). It led to the growth of churches like the **Methodists** (who stressed personal faith, social justice, and disciplined Christian living) and the **Baptists** (who emphasized adult baptism by immersion, local church autonomy, and the authority of the Bible)

**Emily Dickinson**
**(Amherst, Massachusetts, 1830-1886)**

This is my letter to the World
That never wrote to Me—
The simple News that Nature told—
With tender Majesty
Her Message is committed
To Hands I cannot see—
For love of Her—Sweet—countrymen—
Judge tenderly—of Me
(J441)

Published about **12** poems
Th. H. Johnson's edition, 1955: **1755** poems
R. Franklin's edition, 1998: **1789** poems





**Language**
Short poems with condensed, elliptical expressions
Often used hymn-like meters with unconventional rhythms
Slant rhyme
Enjambment
Distinctive use of dashes and capitalization

**Themes**
Nature: its beauty and mystery are often metaphors for larger truths
Death and Immortality: mortality, the afterlife, and the spiritual realm
Love and Relationships: complex emotional landscapes, often with ambiguity
Faith and Doubt: Dickinson questions conventional religious beliefs, waging a personal struggle with spirituality

**Sources of inspiration**
Bible
Shakespeare
Metaphysical poets
John Keats
Ralph W. Emerson
Emily Brontë

**J214**
I taste a liquor never brewed –
From Tankards scooped in Pearl –
Not all the Vats upon the Rhine
Yield such an Alcohol!
Inebriate of Air – am I –
And Debauchee of Dew –
Reeling – thro endless summer days –
From inns of Molten Blue –
When “Landlords” turn the drunken Bee
Out of the Foxglove’s door –
When Butterflies – renounce their “drams” –
I shall but drink the more!
Till Seraphs swing their snowy Hats –
And Saints – to windows run –
To see the little Tippler
Leaning against the – Sun –

**J241**
I like a look of Agony,
Because I know it's true –
Men do not sham Convulsion,
Nor simulate, a Throe –
The Eyes glaze once – and that is Death –
Impossible to feign
The Beads upon the Forehead
By homely Anguish strung.

**J324**
Some keep the Sabbath going to Church –
I keep it, staying at Home –
With a Bobolink for a Chorister –
And an Orchard, for a Dome –
Some keep the Sabbath in Surplice –
I just wear my Wings –
And instead of tolling the Bell, for Church,
Our little Sexton – sings.
God preaches, a noted Clergyman –
And the sermon is never long,
So instead of getting to Heaven, at last –
I’m going, all along.

**J 1461**
“Heavenly Father” – take to thee
The supreme iniquity
Fashioned by thy candid Hand
In a moment contraband –
Though to trust us – seem to us
More respectful – “We are Dust” –
We apologize to thee
For thine own Duplicity –

# African American History

- **1619**. Twenty slaves arrive in America in a Dutch ship

- **Middle passage** / Black Atlantic

  Olaudah Equiano (1745-1797), *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa the African* (1789)

- Slavery was 'inherited' through the mother

- Early-mid 19th century: **Underground railroad**: a secret network of routes, safe houses, and people that helped slaves escape from the South

Missouri requested to be admitted to the USA as a slave state. The request threatened to upset the balance between free and slave states in the Senate.

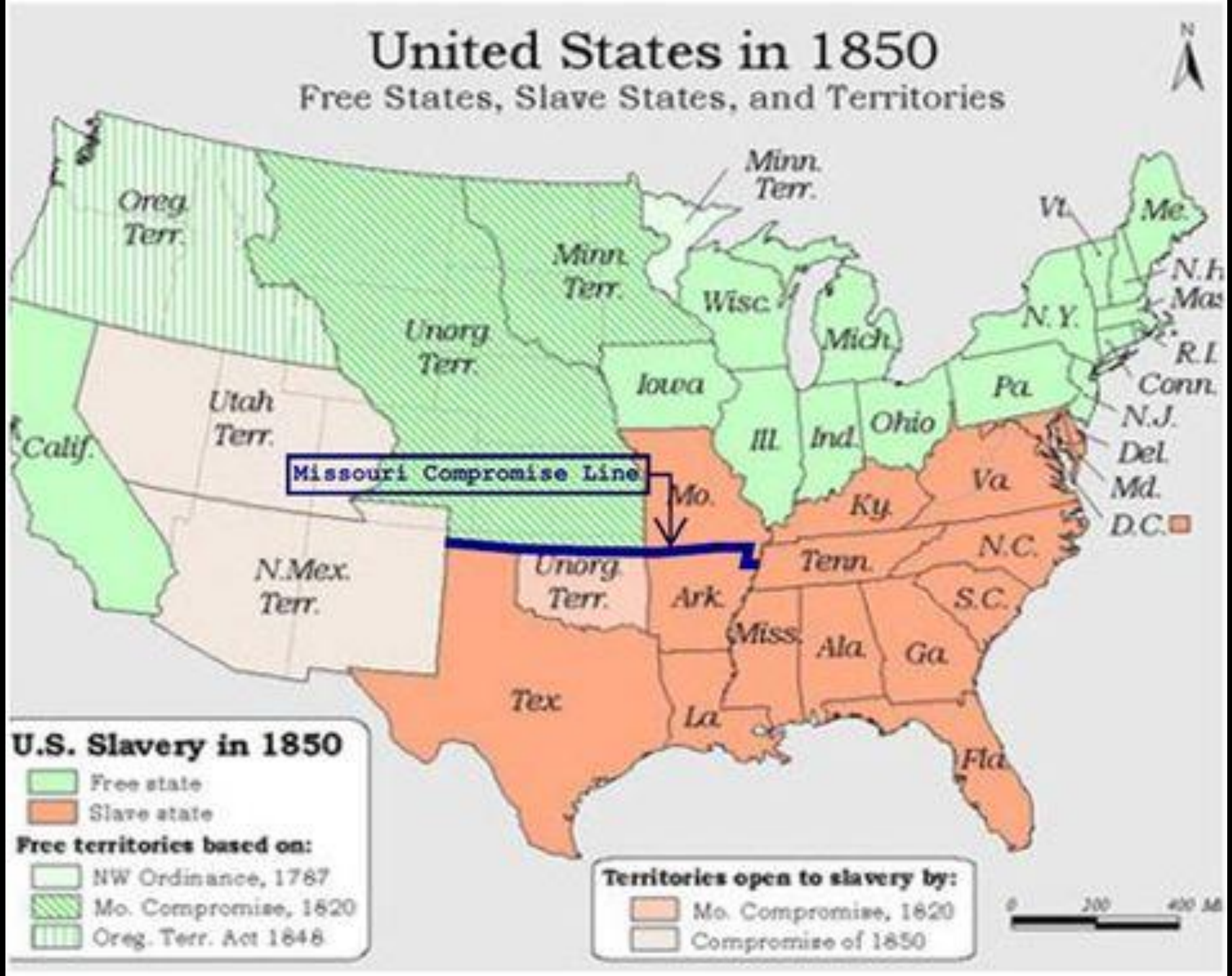
**1820: Missouri compromise**

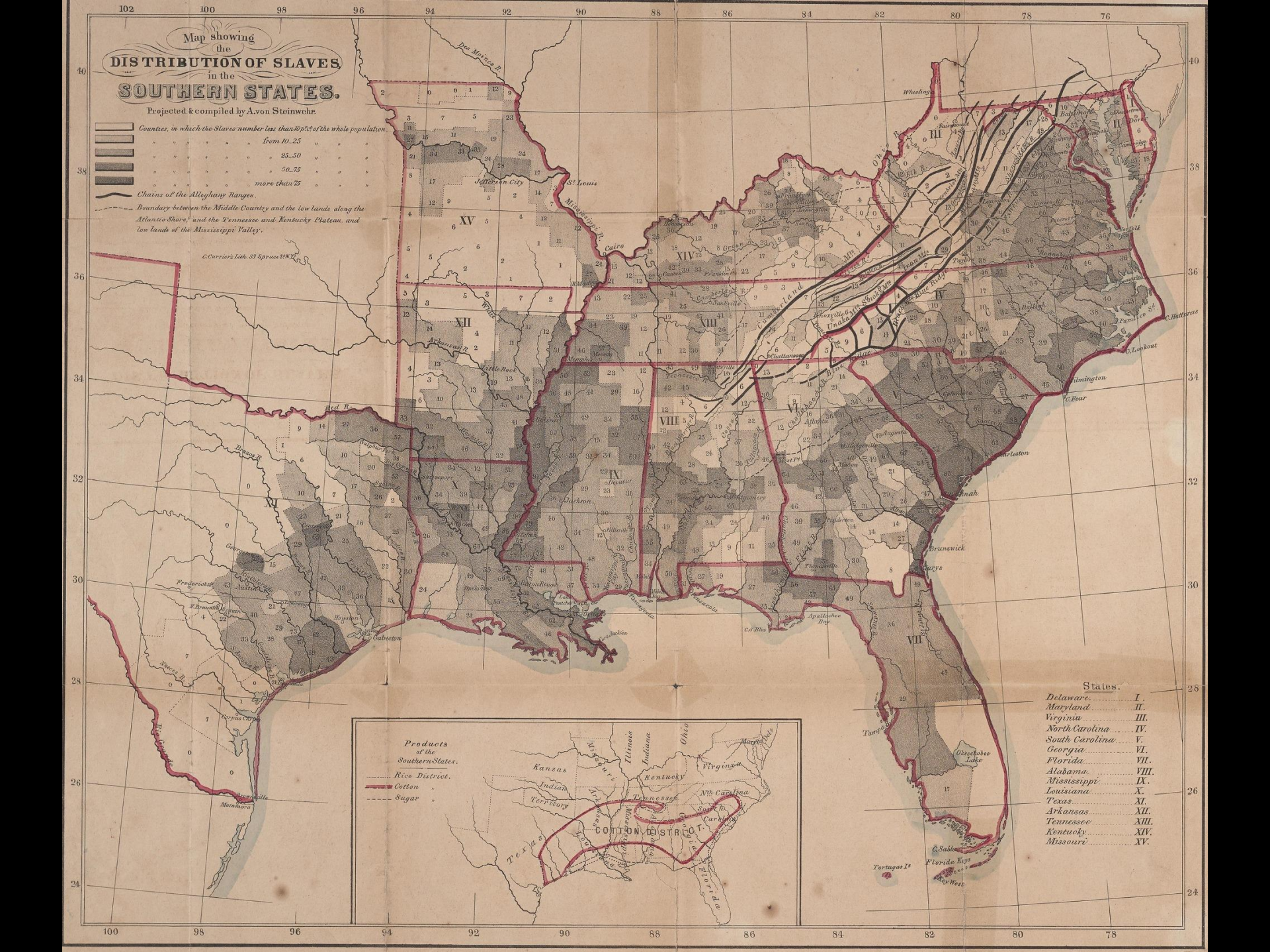
Missouri was admitted to the Union as a slave state.

Maine was also admitted, as a free state, maintaining the balance.

Slavery was prohibited in the remaining territories of the Louisiana Purchase north of the 36°30′ latitude line, except for Missouri.




United States in 1850
Free States, Slave States, and Territories
N
Oreg. Terr.
Minn. Terr.
Unorg. Terr.
Utah Terr.
Calif.
N.Mex. Terr.
Tex.
Missouri Compromise Line
Wisc.
Mich.
Iowa
Ill.
Ind.
Ohio
Ky.
Mo.
Unorg. Terr.
Ark.
La.
Miss.
Ala.
Ga.
Fla.
Tenn.
N.C.
S.C.
Va.
Pa.
N.Y.
Vt.
Me.
N.H.
Mass.
R.I.
Conn.
N.J.
Del.
Md.
D.C.
U.S. Slavery in 1850
Free state
Slave state
Free territories based on:
NW Ordinance, 1787
Mo. Compromise, 1820
Oreg. Terr. Act 1848
Territories open to slavery by:
Mo. Compromise, 1820
Compromise of 1850
0
200
400 Mi

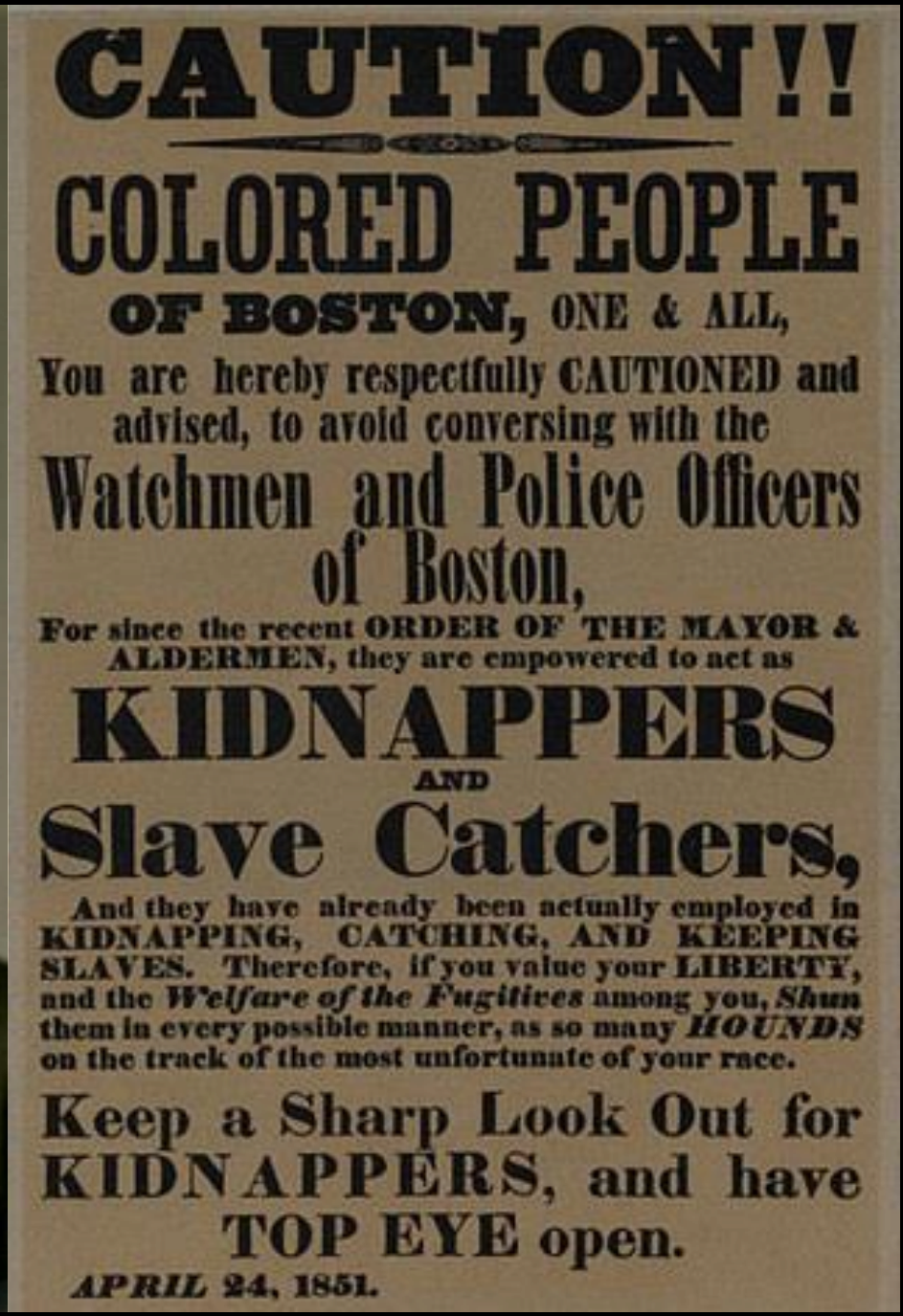

Map showing the
DISTRIBUTION OF SLAVES
in the
SOUTHERN STATES.
Projected & compiled by A. von Steinwehr.
Counties, in which the Slaves number less than 10 pCt. of the whole population.
" " " " " from 10–25 " " "
" " " " " " 25–50 " " "
" " " " " " 50–75 " " "
" " " " " more than 75 " " "
Chains of the Alleghany Ranges.
Boundary between the Middle Country and the low lands along the Atlantic Shore, and the Tennessee and Kentucky Plateau, and low lands of the Mississippi Valley.
C. Currier's Lith. 33 Spruce St. N.Y.
Produces of the Southern States.
Rice District.
Cotton "
Sugar "
COTTON DISTRICT.
States.
Delaware ..... I.
Maryland ..... II.
Virginia ..... III.
North Carolina ..... IV.
South Carolina ..... V.
Georgia ..... VI.
Florida ..... VII.
Alabama ..... VIII.
Mississippi ..... IX.
Louisiana ..... X.
Texas ..... XI.
Arkansas ..... XII.
Tennessee ..... XIII.
Kentucky ..... XIV.
Missouri ..... XV.

1850. California enters Union (1850 compromise)

**1850. Fugitive Slave act** (seizure and return of runaway slaves who escaped from one state into another or into a federal territory)

1857. Dred Scott Decision (Dred Scott claimed that he was free because he had lived in free territory. The Court said that blacks, slaves and or free, were not citizens of the United States)

**1860. Abraham Lincoln (Republican) elected President**



CAUTION!!

COLORED PEOPLE

OF BOSTON, ONE & ALL,

You are hereby respectfully CAUTIONED and advised, to avoid conversing with the

Watchmen and Police Officers of Boston,

For since the recent ORDER OF THE MAYOR & ALDERMEN, they are empowered to act as

KIDNAPPERS AND Slave Catchers,

And they have already been actually employed in KIDNAPPING, CATCHING, AND KEEPING SLAVES. Therefore, if you value your LIBERTY, and the *Welfare of the Fugitives* among you, *Shun* them in every possible manner, as so many *HOUNDS* on the track of the most unfortunate of your race.

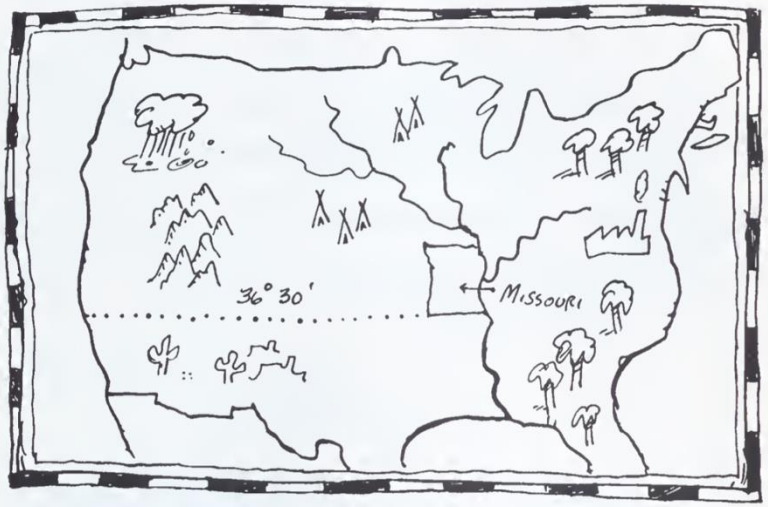
Keep a Sharp Look Out for KIDNAPPERS, and have TOP EYE open.

*APRIL* 24, 1851.

AS USUAL, WHEN THE SOUTH FELT WRONGED, NORTHERNERS AND SOUTHERNERS SCREAMED AT EACH OTHER UNTIL THEIR VOICES GAVE OUT AND THEN ARRANGED THE **COMPROMISE OF 1850**, WHICH —

- ADMITTED CALIFORNIA TO THE UNION AS A FREE STATE...
- OPENED UTAH TO SLAVERY — IF ITS CITIZENS APPROVED...
- BANNED SLAVE MARKETS FROM WASHINGTON, D.C...
- PASSED A TOUGH FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW...
- CHOPPED OFF A PIECE OF TEXAS, AND GAVE IT TO NEW MEXICO.

WHENEVER THE COUNTRY EXPANDED, NORTH AND SOUTH HAD MADE COMPROMISES... THE MOST RECENT HAVING BEEN THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE OF 1820. THIS ADMITTED MISSOURI AS A SLAVE STATE, WHILE LIMITING FUTURE SLAVE STATES TO THE AREA SOUTH OF MISSOURI'S SOUTHERN BORDER. NOW, IN 1850, THE COUNTRY HAD REACHED THE PACIFIC... CALIFORNIA WANTED TO BE A FREE STATE... AND SLAVEOWNERS GASPED AT WHAT WAS LEFT FOR THEM:




...NAMELY, ARIZONA AND NEW MEXICO!

THIS TURMOIL PRODUCED, IN THE NORTH, A NEW POLITICAL PARTY, THE

# REPUBLICANS.

(EVER SINCE JACKSON, THE ORIGINAL JEFFERSONIAN REPUBLICANS WERE CALLED "DEMOCRATS.")

THE REPUBLICANS HAD A SINGLE PRINCIPLE:



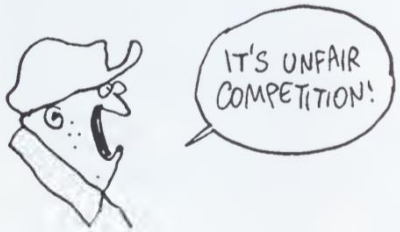

IT WAS: NO SLAVERY IN THE TERRITORIES.

THE REPUBLICANS SUCCEEDED BECAUSE THEY BILLED THEMSELVES AS THE PARTY OF THE

# FREE, WHITE, WORKING MAN.




SLAVERY, THEY SAID, WAS WRONG NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF WHAT IT DID TO BLACKS, BUT BECAUSE OF WHAT IT DID TO THE WHITE WORKER.




THE 4 MILLION SLAVES FORMED A LOW-PAID LABOR POOL, WHICH COMPETED WITH FREE WORKERS. THE SLAVE SYSTEM LOWERED WAGES, RAISED HOURS, ERODED WORKING CONDITIONS, AND DESTROYED THE CONCEPT OF THE

# DIGNITY OF LABOR.

THE WESTERN TERRITORIES WERE SEEN AS THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY FOR WHITE WORKERS. THEREFORE, ARGUED THE REPUBLICANS, SLAVERY MUST BE KEPT OUT OF THEM!!




(THIS LOGIC CARRIED MANY REPUBLICANS EVEN FURTHER — TO THE POINT OF EXCLUDING EVEN FREE BLACKS FROM THE TERRITORIES. AFTER ALL, "EVERYONE KNEW" THAT BLACKS WOULD WORK FOR LOWER WAGES THAN WHITES!)




EVEN BEFORE HE WAS SWORN IN, LINCOLN WAS SWORN AT, MOSTLY BY THE SOUTHERN STATES... WHEN HE DIDN'T SWEAR BACK, THE SOUTH ASSUMED THERE WAS NO FIGHT IN THE MAN... AND THE WHOLE REGION PARTED WAYS WITH THE NORTH.



IT CALLED ITSELF THE **CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA**, A NATION DEDICATED TO THE PRINCIPLE THAT ANY STATE HAD A RIGHT TO SECEDE FROM IT...



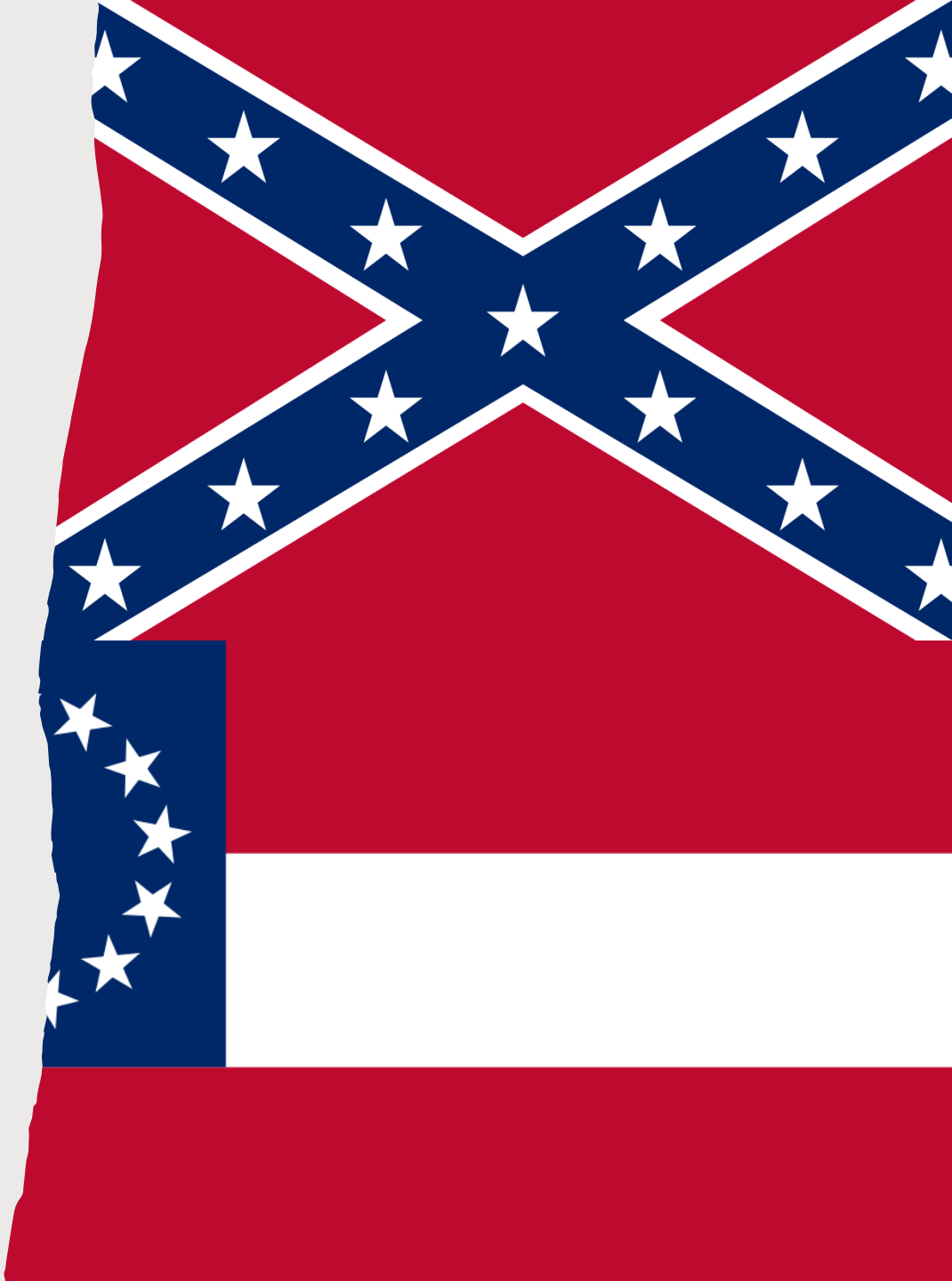
ITS PRESIDENT WAS **JEFFERSON DAVIS** OF MISSISSIPPI, A MAN AS FIRM AS LINCOLN, BUT WITHOUT ABE'S INCREDIBLE ABILITY TO MAKE PEOPLE LIKE HIM...

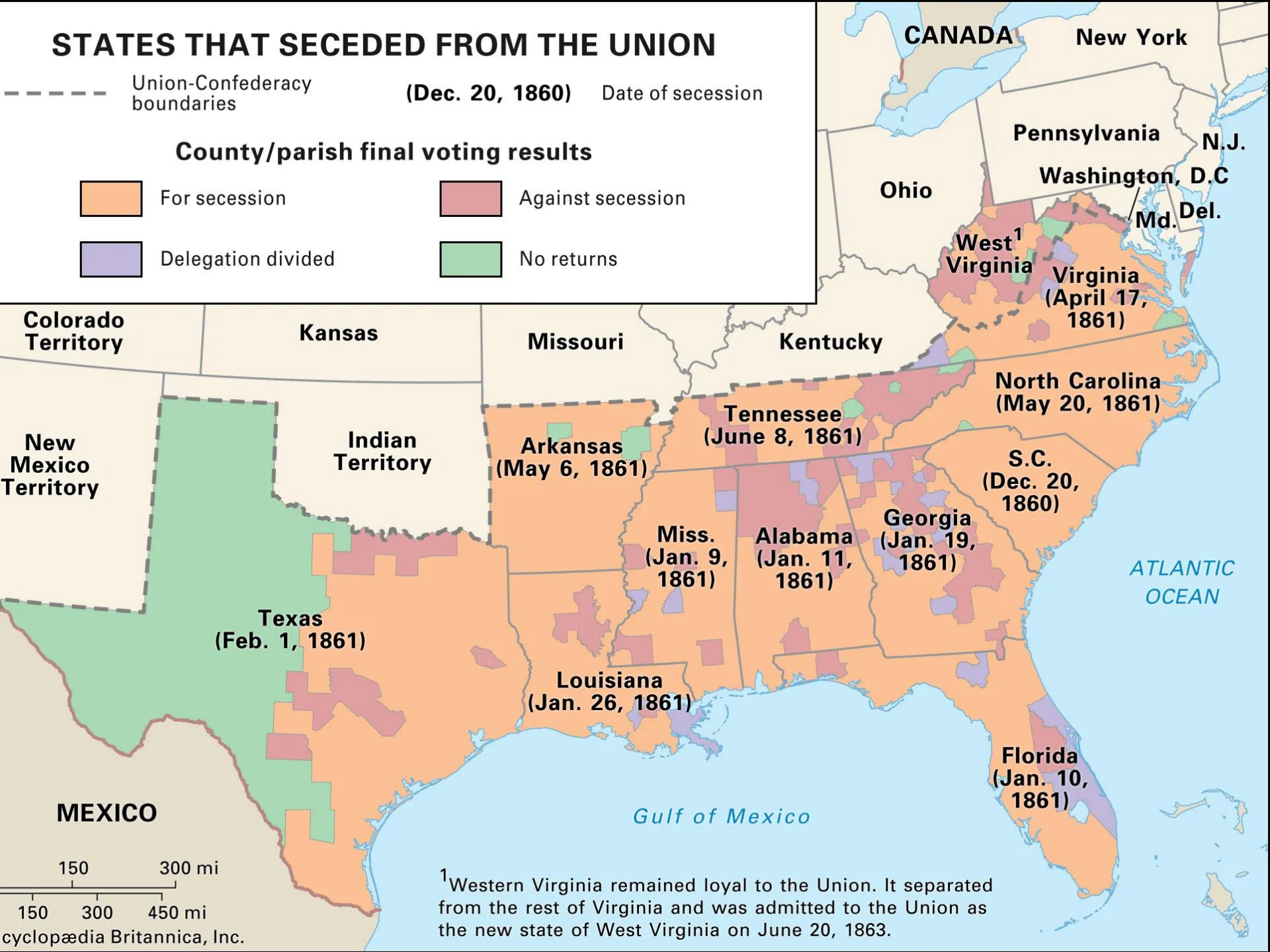
**1860:**
1. South Carolina (December 20)

**1861 (January-June):**
2. Mississippi
3. Florida
4. Alabama
5. Georgia
6. Louisiana
7. Texas
8. Virginia
9. Arkansas
10. Tennessee
11. North Carolina

February **1861**: Provisional Constitution of the **Confederate States of America**

President **Jefferson Davis**




STATES THAT SECEDED FROM THE UNION
Union-Confederacy boundaries
(Dec. 20, 1860)
Date of secession
County/parish final voting results
For secession
Against secession
Delegation divided
No returns
CANADA
New York
Pennsylvania
N.J.
Ohio
Washington, D.C
Md.
Del.
West Virginia[1]
Virginia (April 17, 1861)
Colorado Territory
Kansas
Missouri
Kentucky
North Carolina (May 20, 1861)
Tennessee (June 8, 1861)
New Mexico Territory
Indian Territory
Arkansas (May 6, 1861)
S.C. (Dec. 20, 1860)
Miss. (Jan. 9, 1861)
Alabama (Jan. 11, 1861)
Georgia (Jan. 19, 1861)
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Texas (Feb. 1, 1861)
Louisiana (Jan. 26, 1861)
Florida (Jan. 10, 1861)
MEXICO
Gulf of Mexico
150
300 mi
150
300
450 mi
[1]Western Virginia remained loyal to the Union. It separated from the rest of Virginia and was admitted to the Union as the new state of West Virginia on June 20, 1863.
cyclopædia Britannica, Inc.

| | slaves as % of population | % of free population owning slaves | slaves | total free population |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Alabama** | 45% | 6% | 435,080 | 529,121 |
| **Arkansas** | 26% | 4% | 435,080 | 324,335 |
| **Florida** | 44% | 7% | 61,745 | 78,679 |
| **Georgia** | 44% | 7% | 331,726 | 595,088 |
| **Louisiana** | 47% | 6% | 331,726 | 376,276 |
| **Mississippi** | 55% | 9% | 436,631 | 354,674 |
| **North Carolina** | 33% | 5% | 331,059 | 661,563 |
| **South Carolina** | 57% | 9% | 402,406 | 301,302 |
| **Tennessee** | 25% | 4% | 275,719 | 834,082 |
| **Texas** | 30% | 5% | 182,566 | 421,649 |
| **Virginia** | 31% | 5% | 490,865 | 1,105,453 |
| **Total** | **39%** | **6%** | **3,521,110** | **5,582,222** |



12 April **1861**: the war breaks out

**1863**: Emancipation Proclamation; 3,500,000 slaves set free

9 April **1865**: Battle of Appomatox Court House (Virginia)
(Robert E. Lee, South, v. Ulysses S. Grant, North)

Casualties: 359,000 North / 258,000 South

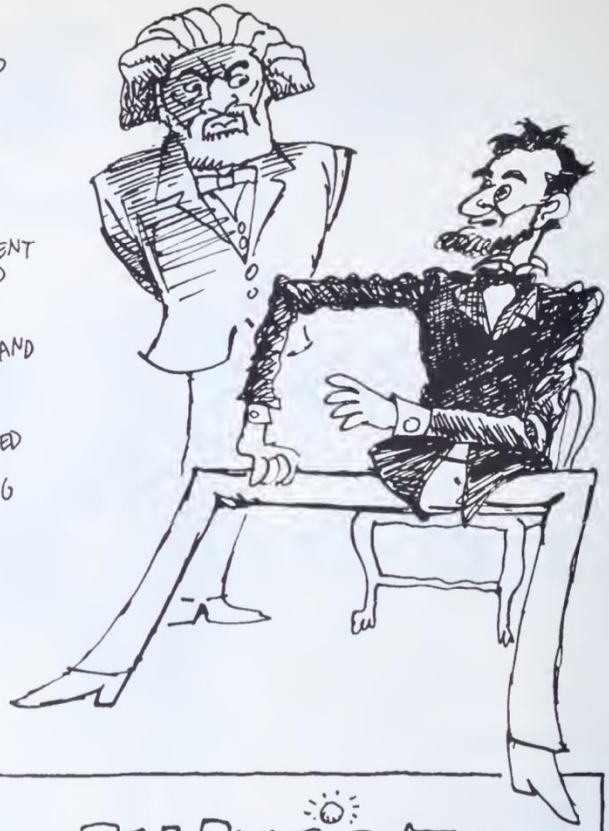
15 April **1865**: Lincoln is killed

LINCOLN INVITED FREDERICK DOUGLASS TO THE WHITE HOUSE. ("I FOUND HIM SEATED WITH HIS FEET IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE ROOM," DOUGLASS WROTE.)

THE ABOLITIONIST ACCUSED THE PRESIDENT OF VACILLATION AND SLOWNESS... HE URGED HIM TO ABOLISH SLAVERY AND ENLIST BLACKS IN THE ARMY...

LINCOLN ADMITTED BEING SLOW, BUT DENIED EVER HAVING WAVERED...

DOUGLASS WAS IMPRESSED... SO WAS LINCOLN...



BY THE END OF 1862, LINCOLN HAD ISSUED THE ⇨ EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION,

WHICH FREED THE SLAVES — IF ONLY IN REBEL-HELD TERRITORIES...




AND ABRAHAM LINCOLN — WHO HAD RISEN FROM POVERTY TO THE PRESIDENCY... WHO BEGAN AS THE CHAMPION OF THE FREE, WHITE WORKER AND BECAME THE LIBERATOR OF THE SLAVES... WHO ADMIRED JEFFERSON ABOVE ALL AND DESTROYED JEFFERSON'S OLD SOUTH... WHO ENDURED BEING ATTACKED AS A BUFFOON, A BABOON, AN INCOMPETENT, AND A TYRANT... WHOSE WONDERFUL SENSE OF HUMOR MASKED A PROFOUND SADNESS... WHO BELIEVED THAT HE HAD BEEN CONTROLLED BY EVENTS... LINCOLN, TOO, BECAME A "FIRST."

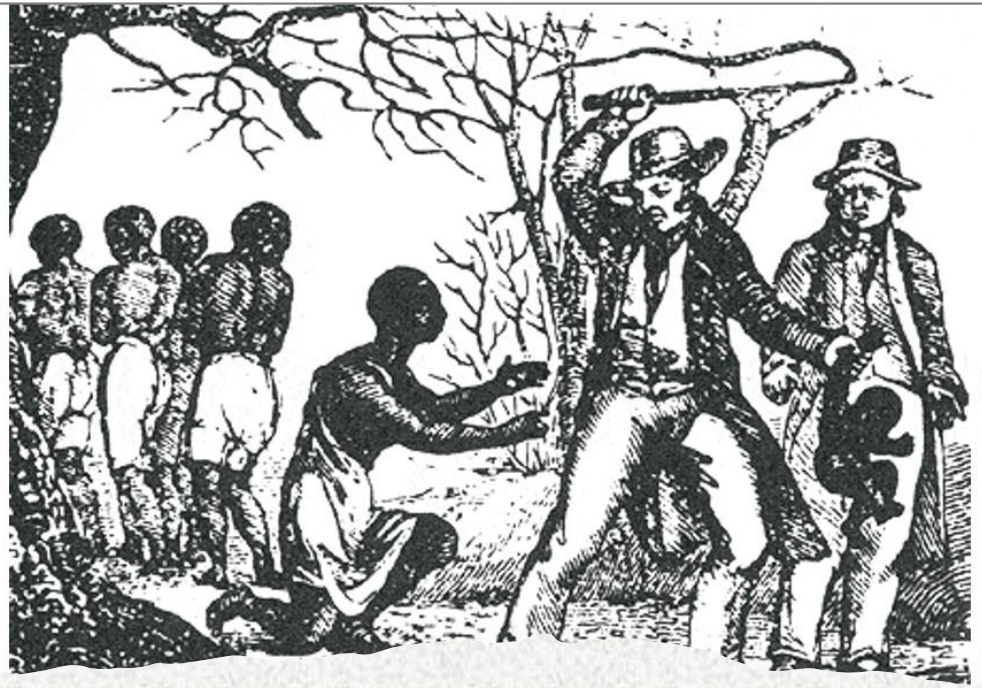


THE FIRST PRESIDENT TO BE ASSASSINATED.



TO BE CONTINUED...








# African American Culture

**Oral tradition**

Folk tales; Spirituals

→ Trickster (video)

→ Signifying

Phillis Wheatley (1753-1784)

Slave narratives

**Tricksters** embody **resistance**, resilience, and **ingenuity**, the power of **intellect** over brute force

They offer ways to subvert oppressive systems

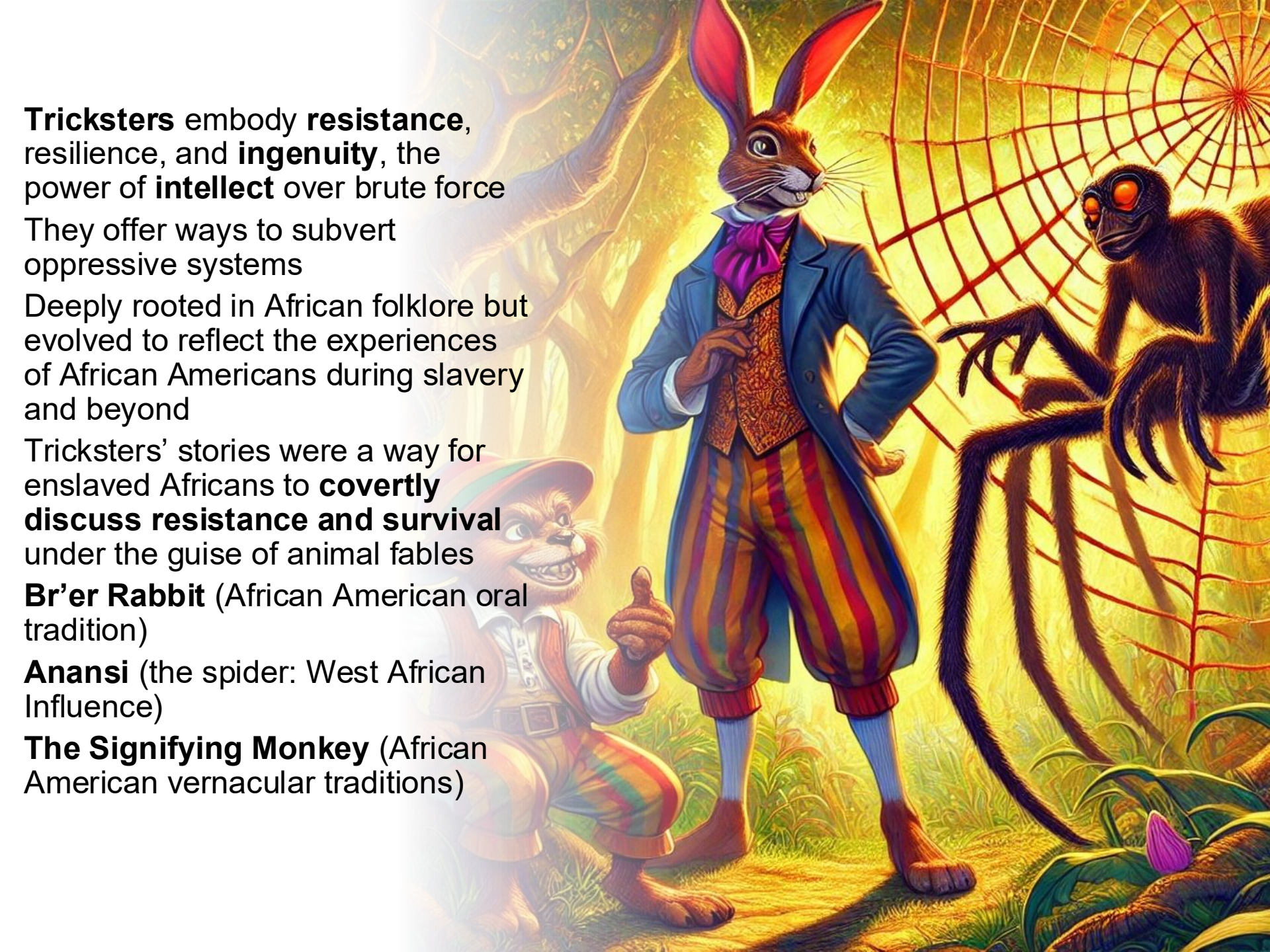
Deeply rooted in African folklore but evolved to reflect the experiences of African Americans during slavery and beyond

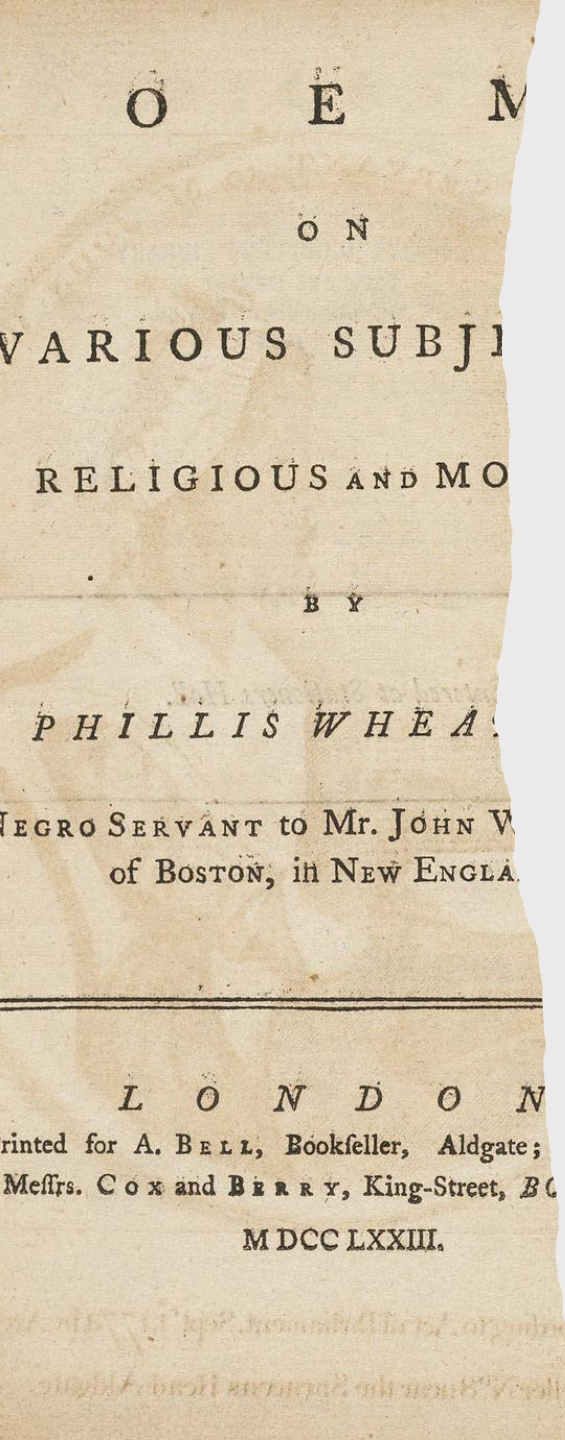
Tricksters' stories were a way for enslaved Africans to **covertly discuss resistance and survival** under the guise of animal fables

**Br'er Rabbit** (African American oral tradition)

**Anansi** (the spider: West African Influence)

**The Signifying Monkey** (African American vernacular traditions)




O E M

ON

VARIOUS SUBJ

RELIGIOUS AND MO

BY

PHILLIS WHEA

NEGRO SERVANT to Mr. JOHN W
of BOSTON, in NEW ENGLA

LONDO N

rinted for A. BELL, Bookſeller, Aldgate;
Meſſrs. COX and BERRY, King-Street, BO

M DCC LXXIII.

## Phillis Wheatley (1753 - 1784)

the first African American woman to publish a book of poetry

Born in West Africa, enslaved and brought to Boston at a young age

The Wheatley family, who purchased her, recognized her talent and gave her education

People did not believe that an enslaved woman could write poetry; prominent Boston figures signed a document ("affidavit") to validate her authorship

*Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* (1773)



“On Being Brought from Africa to America”

’Twas mercy brought me from my Pagan land,
Taught my benighted soul to understand
That there’s a God, that there’s a Saviour too:
Once I redemption neither sought nor knew.
Some view our sable race with scornful eye,
“Their colour is a diabolic die.”
Remember, Christians, Negros, black as Cain,
May be refin’d, and join th’ angelic train.

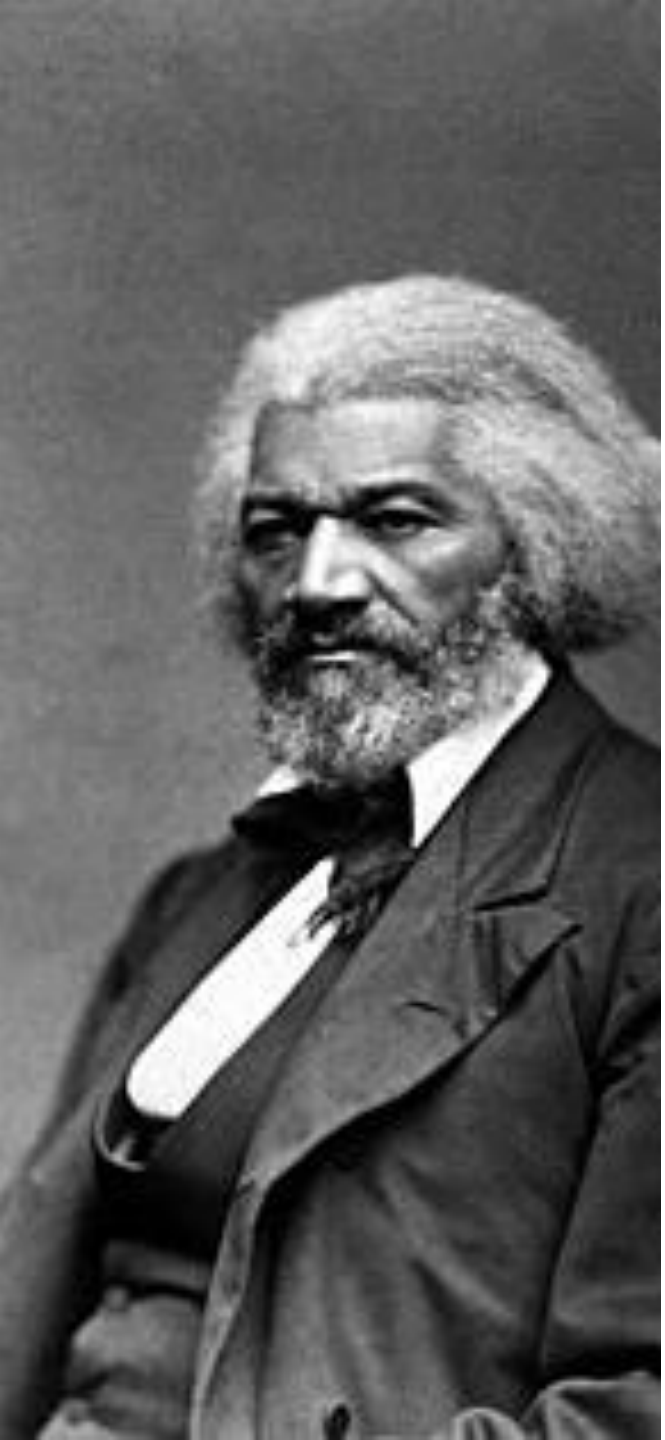
# Slave narratives

Firsthand accounts of the lived experiences of former slaves (18th and 19th centuries)

**Themes**
**Dehumanization**: physical, emotional, and psychological abuses that slaves suffered
**Quest for Freedom**: the journey from enslavement to **freedom**, physically (escaping slavery) and intellectually (**education**, self-awareness)

**Structure**
**Introduction** by a prominent figure: any narratives included a preface or endorsement by white abolitionists to lend credibility to the author and reach a wider audience.
**Childhood** in slavery - **Awakening** to slavery's injustice - Escape and **freedom**
Call to **action,** appeals to support abolitionist causes

**Notable works**
Olaudah Equiano, ***The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*** (1789, insight into the transatlantic slave trade)
Frederick Douglass, ***Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*** (1845)
Harriet Jacobs, ***Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*** (1861, a rare narrative by a woman, focusing on sexual exploitation and motherhood under slavery)
Solomon Northup, ***Twelve Years a Slave*** (1853): account of being kidnapped and sold into slavery, later adapted into a film



# Frederick Douglass (1818-1895)

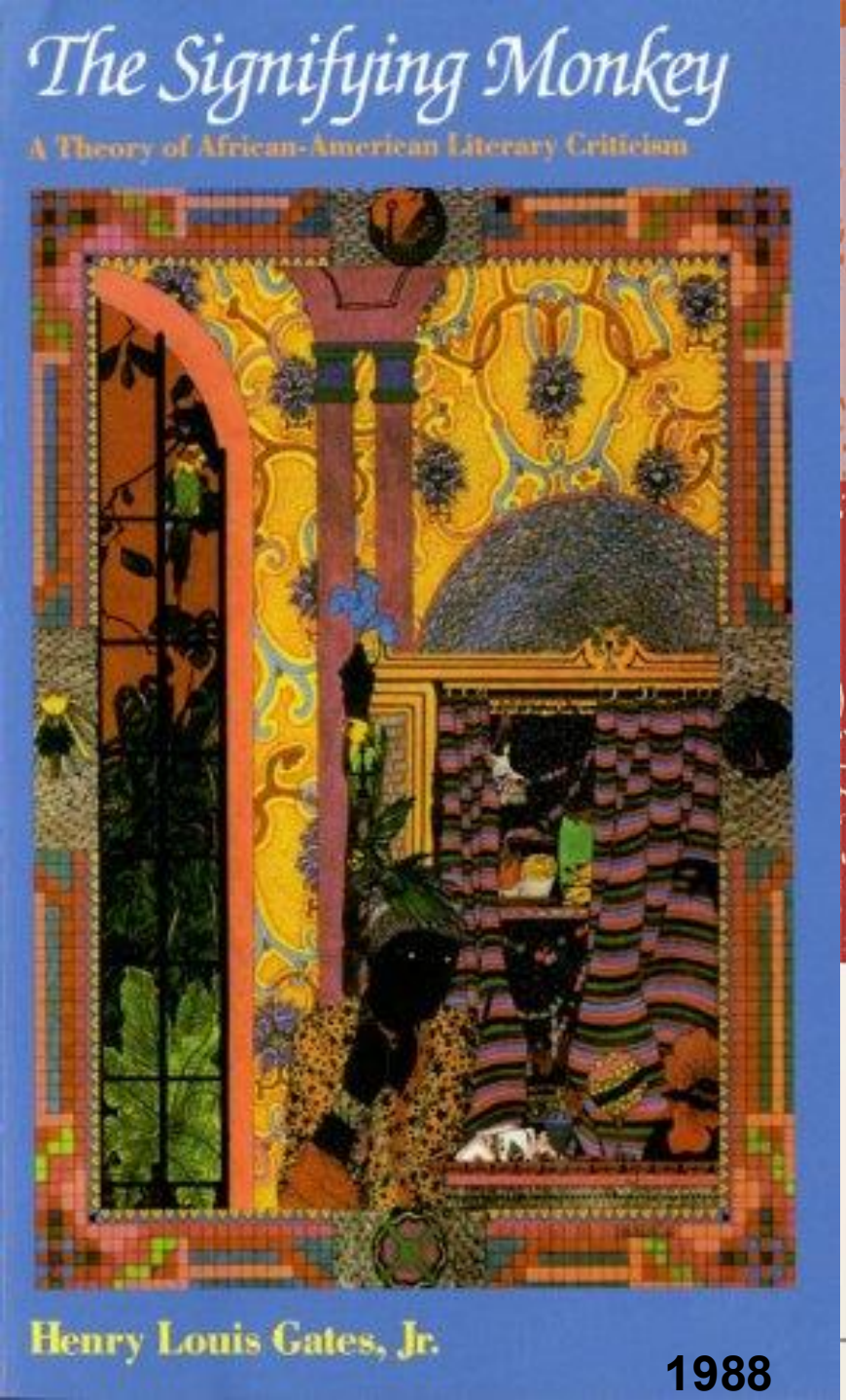
Maryland
New York (1838)

*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845)
*My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855)
*Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (1881-1892)

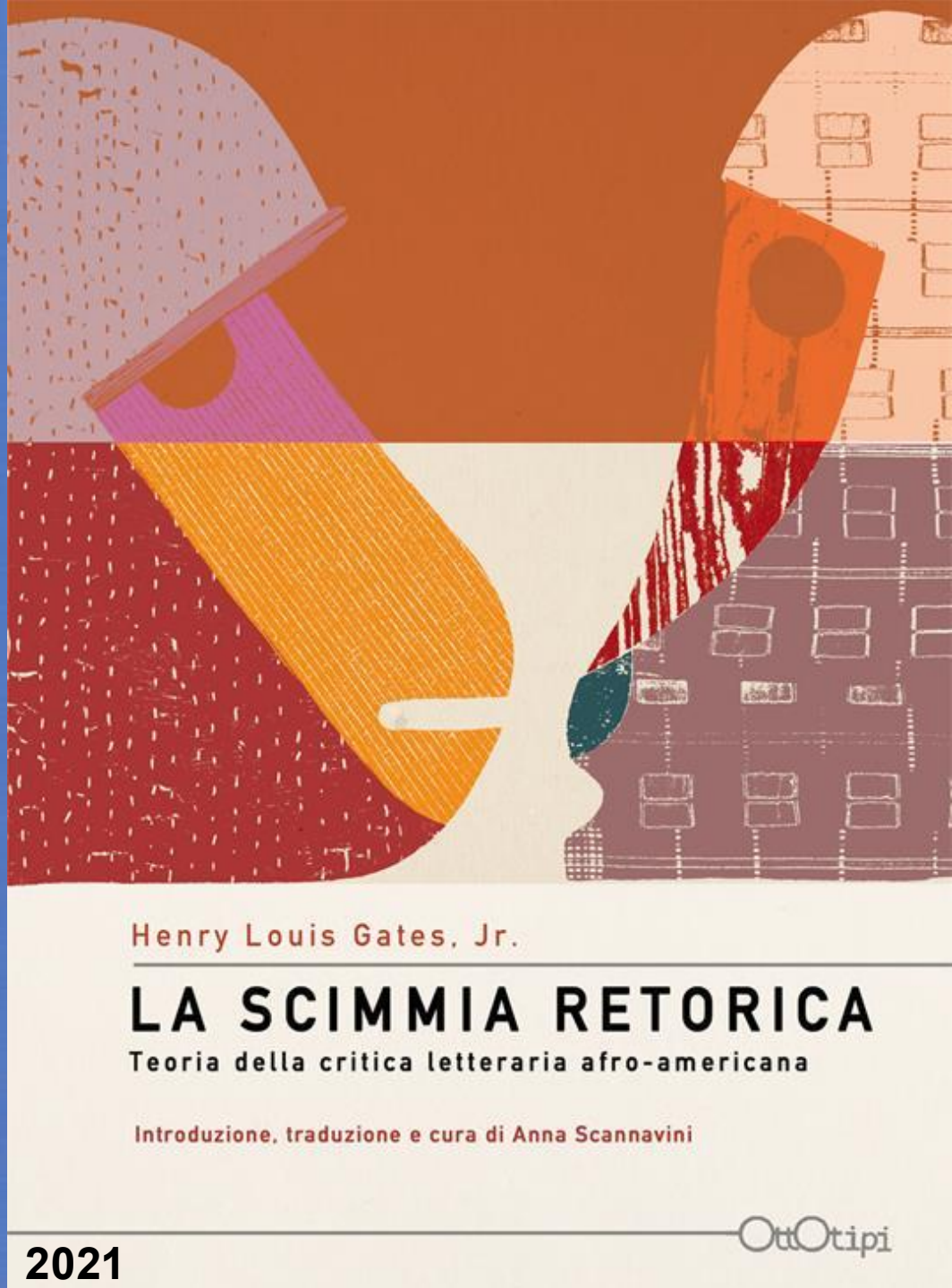
Founder and editor of *The North Star* (1847)

"What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" (1852)

In that instrument [i.e.: the Constitution] I hold there is neither warrant, license, nor sanction of the hateful thing; but, interpreted as it ought to be interpreted, the Constitution is a GLORIOUS LIBERTY DOCUMENT. Read its preamble, consider its purposes. Is slavery among them? Is it at the gateway? or is it in the temple? It is neither.


The Signifying Monkey
A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism
Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

1988


Henry Louis Gates, Jr.
LA SCIMMIA RETORICA
Teoria della critica letteraria afro-americana
Introduzione, traduzione e cura di Anna Scannavini
OttOtipi

2021

# Signifying

Playful, indirect, or layered meanings

It can involve playful insults, wordplay, or double meanings, where the speaker uses language in a way that may seem innocuous on the surface but carries deeper or subversive meanings

African American vernacular and culture, particularly in oral traditions like storytelling, music (such as hip-hop)

It is a form of resistance, that uses humor to challenge dominant or oppressive social structures while not directly confronting them

It strengthens group identity, as participants in a community share an understanding of the code and its meanings

**Henry Louis Gates Jr,** *The Signifying Monkey* signifying is applied to African American literature. Signifying refers to the ways in which African American authors and intellectuals use language to subvert, critique, and engage with dominant (often Eurocentric) discourses. Signifying is a strategy of meaning-making that involves reinterpreting, appropriating, and sometimes parodying the language and symbols of dominant cultures.

What I wish to examine is how the image of reined-in, bound, suppressed, and repressed darkness became objectified in American literature as an Africanist persona. I want to show how the duties of that persona—duties of exorcism and reification and mirroring—are on demand and on display throughout much of the literature of the country and helped to form the distinguishing characteristics of a proto-American literature.
Earlier I said that cultural identities are formed and informed by a nation's literature, and that what seemed to be on the "mind" of the literature of the United States was the self-conscious but highly problematic construction of the American as a new white man.

(1992)

