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## INTRODUCTION

The future of Our Motherland, the next day of our population, the honor of our country throughout the world depend on first of all developing, growing, and their way of being perfect human in this life. We should never forget this keen truth.

I.Karimov

Education provides creative inspiration for the spirituality of the people of Uzbekistan. It helps us discover the best ability as of the up and coming generation, while continuously improving the skills of professionals. Education helps, educates and pass down the wisdom and experience of the older generation to the younger. Young people with their budding talents and thirst for knowledge, begin to understand spirituality through education.<sup>1</sup>

In present day Uzbekistan education has become one of the major concerns of the government. In his speech our President I.Karimov said, that government should provide "... assurance of an equal opportunity to general secondary education, to the free choice of occupation and adequate training". He added: "We well have to face the need to develop a new, democratic concept of education which integrates national, historical, intellectual, cultural, traditions, experiences of the Uzbeks and other nationalities living in the territory of the Republic, forming a cohesive system of up bringing and education".

In this modern system of education learning foreign languages is not on the last place. Uzbekistan is in need of highly qualified specialists in the field of foreign languages. Uzbek Republic is integrating into the international world

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1 I.A. Karimov - Uzbekistan the road of independence and progress. Tashkent. p.64

community in such spheres as economy, policy, diplomacy, education trade, technologies, art and science. I.Karimov says in his speech:” State sovereignty along with membership in the United Nations and other international organizations has given Uzbekistan an opportunity to conduct independent foreign policy, search for ways to join the international community and prioritize the goals of international relations.

It is true that all the above mentioned directions of national development are the top significant for the perfection of self individuality of a person. It is for sure that taking various education goes without saying in the process of humanitarian subjects learning especially in the area of foreign languages.

**The subject** of my qualification work is the main focus of “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” showing the humanistic vision of Harriet B. Stowe that African American’s have souls and feelings just like other humans.

**The aim** of my research work encounters the idea that black people had souls just like white people and it was a very novel idea. For the first time it made white people responsible for their actions either to the good or to the bad of their black slaves. Rather than just viewing black people as animals, the slave owners were forced to see their slaves as humans just like them. This is the reason why “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” was so powerful, and ultimately was one small spark that helped to ignite the Civil War between the anti-slavery North and the slave holders of the South.

**The task** of my qualification work is to introduce critical and popular views of both the character and the novel has shifted over time, leading to a shift ‘Uncle tom’ as in the term's use.

**The actuality** is along the way author Harriet Beecher Stowe takes the time to show a typical and all of common occurrence. To Uncle Tom, this doesn’t make sense. He is determined to help the other slaves, even at his own expense. Uncle

Tom helps many of the slaves and he even uses his Bible to preach to them about the God.

**The novelty** is Stowe relied upon images of domesticity, motherhood, and Christianity to capture her nineteenth century audience's hearts and imaginations. In spite of the critical controversy surrounding the book, the characters of Uncle Tom, Little Eva, and Simon Legree have all achieved legendary status in American culture. Often called sentimental and melodramatic, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* nevertheless endures as a powerful example of moral outrage over man's inhumanity to man.

**The theoretical value** is to reveal the goal of Stowe in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" which is to show African American's as people. Her basic argument is that blacks suffer just as much as whites, and therefore it is just as wrong to mistreat them. Throughout the book Stowe approaches the idea of slavery from an unwavering Christian viewpoint. This is not surprising considering that she had a very religious family.

**The practical value** – is to implement such categories of authors as H. Beecher Stowe to be in the process of social matters defenders of the time. Thus, it's fairly reasonable to have the audience to feel the worries for nation and to propagand the achievements and demerits of national and racial no tolerance.

**Structurally** this qualification paper is considering all the necessary information on such a heroic author of her own period as H. Beecher Stowe

Accordingly the introduction part comments of Harriet Beecher Stowe as to be thought as not of the woman herself but of her most famous creation, Uncle Tom's Cabin: Or, Life Among the Lowly (1851-1852). Nearly every American is familiar with this novel's staunch abolitionist stance and the role it had in shaping the antebellum popular imagination. The blatant sentimentality of the book--its flagrantly emotional appeal to popular tastes--and its deft manipulation

of stereotypes in its portrayal of African Americans have served to obscure Stowe's achievements.

Chapter I deals with the data of Stowe's early life, childhood best memories, her family history and the initial steps of the world popular literary works.

Chapter 2 is profoundly investigating the essential viewpoints of social affect of Uncle Tom story in the period of Civil War of races as a pivoting point of that epoch. The difference in historical development between post-civil era and modern times narrates about the great changes in the American racial history and nowadays political and social achievements.

“Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” by Harriet Beecher Stowe is a classic novel that was said to have provoked the American Civil War. By discussing the issue of slavery and showing the cruel aspects of it Harriet Beecher Stowe motivated people to take sides over the issue. The main focus of “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” is to show that African American’s have souls and feelings just like other humans. In her time it was common for white plantation owners and slave holders to view black people as cattle or a degraded species of humans. Slave auctioneers and sellers separated mothers and children on the idea that they couldn’t really feel the loss, at least not like white people. Harriet Beecher Stowe’s goal in “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” is to show African American’s as people. Her basic argument is that blacks’ suffer just as much as whites, and therefore it is just as wrong to mistreat them. Throughout the book Stowe approaches the idea of slavery from an unwavering Christian viewpoint. This is not surprising considering that she had a very religious family, with her father being a famous minister. Pious old Uncle Tom is sold by his well-intentioned Kentucky owner Mr Shelby in financial straits. He is bought first by the idealistic Augustine St Clare. In his New Orleans house, Uncle Tom makes friends with St Clare's daughter, the saintly Little Eva, and her black friend, the impish Topsy. 'Never was born!' persisted Topsy... 'never had no father, nor mother, nor nothin'. I was raised by a speculator, with lots of others.' Tom is sold to Simon Legree, a Yankee and a

brutal cotton plantation owner. Two of his female slaves pretend to escape and go into hiding. Tom will not reveal their whereabouts and Legree beats Tom. A parallel plot centres on Eliza, her child, and her husband George who escape to freedom in Canada using the Underground Railroad. Other important characters are Miss Ophelia St. Clare, a New England spinster, and Marks, the slave catcher.... The religiosity of the story and its dubious conclusion, in which most of the survivors disappear back to Africa to become missionaries, contributed to a shift of attitude. 'Uncle Tom' was used pejoratively, meaning white paternalism and black passivity, undue subservience to white people on the part of black people. When modernist critics argued that literature should not aim to effect social change, Stowe's novel was far from their fields of interest. However, in the 1970s Uncle Tom's Cabin, with its strong female characters, started to attract the attention of feminist critics. Stowe's radical Christian vision, based on matriarchal values, now found defenders. Tom's passivity has been compared to Gandhi's strategy of peaceful resistance.

This is a tale of how slavery has affected America. Uncle Tom, an unlearned, pious slave, lives out the Christianity of which his masters are boasting but not living up to. The author, Harriet Beecher Stowe captures the heart of the abolitionists of her day with this captivating story of a black male slave who would rather die than dishonor his heavenly master, God Himself. He is described as profoundly Christian, and he affects positively all the lives around him. He stands as the embodiment of Jesus' beatitudes of Matthew 5. This book is a literary masterpiece that is comparable to da Vinci's Mona Lisa. While many may consider Uncle Tom a Christian hero and martyr, others believe he is a passive and subservient character created from Stowe's romantic racism. The latter claim does not do justice to the book which also chronicles the courageous escape of a noble Black couple and their son who escapes by means of the famous Underground Railroad. Stowe's own life is a testimony to her stand on slavery issues. She was the daughter and wife of abolitionists, and she herself helped many slaves escape their misery. This very book is the product of the

stance she took against the legal oppressors of the African race in this country. It is a phenomenal American achievement.<sup>2</sup>

Uncle Tom's new life with Augustine St. Clare is not only a big change in his life, but it also marks the start of a new writing theme in the book "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Author Harriet Beecher Stowe uses this relatively peaceful interlude to allow her white characters to have intellectual and philosophical discussions about slavery. There are several key players in these arguments and discussions. One principal character is Augustine St. Clare. He is a fundamentally lazy man, who doesn't like slavery, but can't seem to build up the strength to oppose it. He even purchases slaves for himself because he doesn't want to appear different. In his mind slavery is an institution that he can do nothing to oppose, at least, nothing by himself. Marie St. Clare is Augustine St. Clare's wife. In the story Augustine married her in rapid desperation after receiving the rejection of another woman who he loved. After his marriage to Marie, however, he discovered that the rejection of the other woman was actually fabricated by her relatives who did not want her to marry him. He cannot get along with her, not only because he never really loved her, but also because she is a spoiled woman used to being looked after by men. She does not understand Augustine's dry humor and wit. Marie St. Clare tries to gain Augustine's attentions by constantly complaining of various imaginary ills such as "sick headaches." Marie is very attached to the institution of slavery. In her mind the slaves are there to do her bidding. She takes out her anger and frustration at her husband on the slaves. The third character is Miss Ophelia, Augustine's cousin. Miss Ophelia is from the North, and as such she is fundamentally opposed to slavery. However, she also has a great loathing for the black slaves. She cannot tolerate them touching her, and so she maintains a frigid distance from them. Miss Ophelia also does not like Marie St. Clare. She feels that Augustine could have done much better

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<sup>2</sup> The Mayflower; or Sketches of Scenes and Characters among the Descendants of the Puritans. New York: Harpers and Brothers, 1843.

in choosing a wife, and indeed he could, and should, have. The fourth character that Harriet Beecher Stowe introduces is Augustine St. Clare's brother, Alfred. Alfred is the exact opposite of his brother Augustine. Whereas Augustine feels that slavery is wrong, Alfred's opinion is that slavery is a necessary thing, and that there is nothing wrong with it as long as he is able to dominate the slaves. Augustine does nothing about his feelings, though. Alfred ridicules his brother for being a hypocrite and not doing something to advocate an end to slavery. The fifth player in Stowe's philosophical discussions is Eva, Augustine St. Clare's young daughter. In the story Stowe portrays Eva as an angel of sorts. Eva does not approve of slavery, and she wants her father to free all the slaves. Augustine always laughs when he daughter makes this suggestion, but he admires her innocence. Harriet Beecher Stowe uses these five characters to explore the different views about slavery and the attitudes that people have toward it. In between these discussions Stowe develops a rather heartbreaking plot: Eva develops a wasting disease that gradually kills her. This leaves both Augustine and Marie heartbroken. Soon after Eva's death Augustine also dies, and this leaves Uncle Tom in the ownership of the cruel Marie St. Clare. Marie ends up selling the slaves to another slave trader and moving North.

The novel was very influential and commercially successful, first published in serial form in 1851-1852 and in book version from 1852 onward. An estimated 500,000 copies of the novel itself had sold in the United States and internationally by 1853, including unauthorized reprints. Senator Charles Sumner credited *Uncle Tom's Cabin* for the election of Abraham Lincoln and Lincoln himself reportedly quipped that Stowe had triggered the American Civil War. Frederick Douglass praised the novel as "a flash to light a million camp fires in front of the embattled hosts of slavery". Despite Douglass's enthusiasm, an anonymous 1852 reviewer for William Lloyd Garrison's publication *The Liberator* suspected a racial double standard in the idealization of Uncle Tom: Uncle Tom's character is sketched with great power and rare religious perception. It triumphantly exemplifies the nature, tendency, and results of

CHRISTIAN NONRESISTANCE. We are curious to know whether Mrs. Stowe is a believer in the duty of non-resistance for the White man, under all possible outrage and peril, as for the Black man... Talk not of overcoming evil with good—it is madness! Talk not of peacefully submitting to chains and stripes—it is base servility! Talk not of servants being obedient to their masters—let the blood of tyrants flow! How is this to be explained or reconciled? Is there one law of submission and non-resistance for the Black man, and another of rebellion and conflict for the white man? When it is the whites who are trodden in the dust, does Christ justify them in taking up arms to vindicate their rights? And when it is the blacks who are thus treated, does the God require them to be patient, harmless, long-suffering, and forgiving?

## Chapter I

### Early portrait of Harriet Beecher Stowe

**1.1 Harriet Beecher Stowe** Born on (June 14, 1811 - July 1, 1896) was an American abolitionist and author. Her novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) depicted life for African-Americans under slavery; it reached millions as a novel and play, and became influential in the United States and United Kingdom. It energized anti-slavery forces in the American North, while provoking widespread anger in the South. She wrote more than 20 books, including novels; three travel memoirs, and collections of articles and letters. She was influential for both her writings and her public stands on social issues of the day.

Harriet Elisabeth Beecher being born in Litchfield, Connecticut she was the middle daughter of three of outspoken religious leader Lyman Beecher and Roxana Foote, a deeply religious woman who died when Stowe was only four years old. Her older sister was the educator and author, Catharine Beecher, and her younger sister was Isabella, who married the attorney John Hooker and had a family. They had seven brothers, all of whom became ministers: including Henry Ward Beecher, Charles Beecher, and Edward Beecher.

Harriet enrolled in the seminary (girls' school) run by her sister Catharine, where she received a traditionally "male" education in the classics, including study of languages and mathematics. At the age of 21, she moved to Cincinnati, Ohio to join her father, who had become the president of Lane Theological Seminary.

**Marriage and family** In 1836, she married Calvin Ellis Stowe, a widower and professor at the seminary who was several years older than she was. He was an ardent critic of slavery, and the Stows supported the Underground Railroad, temporarily housing several fugitive slaves in their home. They had seven children together, including twin daughters.

They moved to Brunswick, Maine, where Calvin taught at Bowdon College for several years. Later they lived in Hartford, Connecticut for years, and started wintering in Mandarin, Florida.

In 1850, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Law, prohibiting assistance to fugitives. Stowe was moved to present her objections on paper, and in June 1851, when she was 40, the first installment of her *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was published in the antislavery journal *National Era*. Its emotional portrayal of the impact of slavery captured the nation's attention. It added to the debate about abolition and slavery, and aroused opposition in the South.

Stowe died on July 1, 1896, at age eighty-five, in Hartford, Connecticut. She is buried in the historic cemetery at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts.

**Landmarks related to Harriet Beecher Stowe** The Harriet Beecher Stowe House in Cincinnati, Ohio is the former home of her father Lyman Beecher on the former campus of the Lane Seminary. Her father was a preacher who was greatly affected by the pro-slavery Cincinnati Riots of 1836. Harriet Beecher Stowe lived here until her marriage. It is open to the public and operated as an historical and cultural site, focusing on Harriet Beecher Stowe, the Lane Seminary and the Underground Railroad. The site also presents African-American history.<sup>3</sup>

In the 1870s and 1880s, Stowe and her family wintered in Mandarin, Florida, now a suburb of modern consolidated Jacksonville, on the St. Johns River. Stowe wrote *Palmetto Leaves* while living in Mandarin, arguably an eloquent piece of promotional literature directed at Florida's potential Northern investors at the time. The book was published in 1873 and describes Northeast Florida and its residents. In 1870, Stowe created an integrated school in Mandarin for children and adults. This predated the national movement toward integration by

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<sup>3</sup> *The Mayflower; or Sketches of Scenes and Characters among the Descendants of the Puritans*. New York: Harpers and Brothers, 1843.

more than a half century. The marker commemorating the Stowe family is located across the street from the former site of their cottage. It is on the property of the Community Club, at the site of a church where Stowe's husband once served as a minister.

The Harriet Beecher Stowe House in Brunswick, Maine is where Stowe wrote Uncle Tom's Cabin. She and her husband lived here while he worked at Bowdon College. Although local interest has been strong to preserve the house as a museum, it has long been in private ownership and operated as an inn and German restaurant. It most recently changed ownership in 1999 for \$865,000.

The Harriet Beecher Stowe House in Hartford, Connecticut is the house where Stowe lived for the last 23 years of her life. It was next door to the house of fellow author Mark Twain. In this

5,000 sq ft (460 m<sup>2</sup>) cottage-style house, there are many of Beecher Stowe's original items and items from the time. In the research library, which is open to the public, there are numerous letters and documents from the Beecher family. The house is opened to the public and offers house tours on the half hour.

In 1833, during Stowe's time in Cincinnati, the city was afflicted with a serious cholera epidemic. To avoid illness, Stowe made a visit to Washington, Kentucky, a major community of the era just south of Maysville. She stayed with the Marshall Key family, one of whose daughters was a student at Lane Seminary. It is recorded that Mr. Key took her to see a slave auction, as they were frequently held in Maysville. Scholars believe she was strongly moved by the experience. The Marshall Key home still stands in Washington. Key was a prominent Kentuckian; his visitors also included Henry Clay and Daniel Webster. (Calvert and Klee, *Towns of Mason County [KY]*, LCCN 86-62637, 1986, Maysville and Mason County Library, Historical, and Scientific Association.)

**Legacy and honors** Stowe is ownership with a feast day on the liturgical calendar of the Episcopal Church (USA) on July 1. On June 13, 2007, the United States Postal Service issued a 75 Distinguished Americans series postage stamp in her honor.

In early 2010, Stowe was proposed by the Ohio Historical Society as a finalist in a statewide vote for inclusion in Statuary Hall at the United States Capitol.<sup>4</sup>

**Partial list of works** The Mayflower; or, Sketches of Scenes and Characters Among the Descendants of the Pilgrims (1834)

Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852)

A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin (1853)

Bred, A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp (1856)

The Minister is Wooing (1859)

Agnes of Sorrento (1862) (reading online)

The Pearl of Orr's Island (1862)

Old Town Folks (1869)

Little Pussy Willow (1870)

Lady Byron Vindicated (1870)

My Wife and I (mi)

Pink and White Tyranny (1871)

Woman in Sacred History (1873)

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<sup>4</sup> Berkson, Dorothy. "Millennial Politics and the Feminine Fiction of Harriet Beecher Stowe." *Critical Essays on Harriet Beecher Stowe*. Ed. Elizabeth Ammons. Boston: Hall, 1980.

**The first memorable incident of Harriet's life** was the death of her mother, which occurred when she was four years old, and which ever afterwards remained with her as the tenderest, saddest, and most sacred memory of her childhood. Mrs. Stowe's recollections of her mother are found in a letter to her brother Charles, afterwards published in the "Autobiography and Correspondence of Lyman Beecher." She says:- "I was between three and four years of age when our mother died, and my personal recollections of her are therefore but few. But the deep interest and veneration that she inspired in all who knew her were such that during all my childhood I was constantly hearing her spoken of, and from one friend or another some incident or anecdote of her life was constantly being impressed upon me.

"Mother was one of those strong, restful, yet widely sympathetic natures in who all around seemed to find comfort and repose. The communion between her and my father was a peculiar one. It was an intimacy throughout the whole range of their being. There was no human mind in whose decisions he had greater confidence. Both intellectually and morally he regarded her as the better and stronger portion of himself, and I remember hearing him say that after her death his first sensation was a sort of terror, like that of a child suddenly shut out alone in the dark.<sup>5</sup>

"In my own childhood I remember only two incidents of my mother twinkled like rays through the darkness. One was of our all running and dancing out before her from the nursery to the sitting-room one Sabbath morning, and her pleasant voice saying after us, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, children.'

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<sup>5</sup> Berkson, Dorothy. "Millennial Politics and the Feminine Fiction of Harriet Beecher Stowe." *Critical Essays on Harriet Beecher Stowe*. Ed. Elizabeth Ammons. Boston: Hall, 1980.

"Another remembrance is this: mother was an enthusiastic horticulturist in all the small ways that limited means allowed. Her brother John in New York had just sent her a small parcel of fine tulip-bulbs. I remember rummaging these out of an obscure corner of the nursery one day when she was gone out, and being strongly seized with the idea that they were good to eat, using all the little English I then possessed to persuade my brothers that these were onions such as grown people ate and would be very nice for us. So we fell to and devoured the whole, and I recollect being somewhat disappointed in the odd sweetish taste, and thinking that onions were not so nice as I had supposed. Then mother's serene face appeared at the nursery door and we all ran towards her, telling with one voice of our discovery and achievement. We had found a bag of onions and had eaten them all up.

"Also I remember that there was not even a momentary expression of impatience, but that she sat down and said, 'My dear children, what you have done make mama very sorry. Those were not onions but roots of beautiful flowers, and if you had let them alone we should have next summer in the garden great beautiful red and yellow flowers such as you never saw.' I remember how drooping and dispirited we all grew at this picture, and how sadly we regarded the empty paper bag.

"Then I have a recollection of her reading aloud to the children Miss Edgeworth's 'Frank,' which had just come out, I believe, and was exciting a good deal of attention among the educational circles of Litchfield. After that came a time when every one said she was sick, and I used to be permitted to go once a day into her room, where she sat bolstered up in bed. I have a vision of a very fair face with a bright red spot on each cheek and her quiet smile. I remember dreaming one night that mamma had got well, and of waking with loud transports of joy that were hushed down by some one who came into the room. My dream was indeed a true one. She was forever well. "Then came the funeral. Henry was too little to go. I can see his golden curls and little black frock as he frolicked in the sun like a kitten, full of ignorant joy.

"I recollect the mourning dresses, the tears of the older children, the walking to the burial-ground, and somebody's speaking at the grave. Then all was closed, and we little ones, to whom it was so confused, asked where she was gone and would she never come back.

"They told us at one time that she had been laid in the ground, and at another that she had gone to heaven. Thereupon Henry, putting the two things together, resolved to dig through the ground and go to heaven to find her; for being discovered under sister Catherine's window one morning digging with great zeal and earnestness, she called to him to know what he was doing. Lifting his curly head, he answered with great simplicity, 'Why, I'm going to heaven to find mamma.' "Although our mother's bodily presence thus disappeared from our circle, I think her memory and example had more influence in moulding her family, in deterring from evil and exciting to good, than the living presence of many mothers. It was a memory that met us everywhere, for every person in the town, from the highest to the lowest, seemed to have been so impressed by her character and life that they constantly reflected some portion of it back upon us....."

## 1.2 Uncle Tom's Cabin

Uncle Tom's Cabin or, Life among the Lowly is an anti-slavery novel by American author Harriet Beecher Stowe. Published in 1852, the novel "helped lay the groundwork for the Civil War", according to Will Kaufman.

Stowe, a Connecticut-born teacher at the Hartford Female Academy and an active abolitionist, focused the novel on the character of Uncle Tom, a long-suffering black slave around whom the stories of other characters—both fellow slaves and slave owners—revolve. The novel depicts the reality of slavery while also asserting that Christian love can overcome something as destructive as enslavement of fellow human beings.<sup>6</sup>

Uncle Tom's Cabin was the best-selling novel of the 19th century and the second best-selling book of that century, following the Bible. It is credited with helping fuel the abolitionist cause in the 1850s. In the first year after it was published, 300,000 copies of the book were sold in the United States alone. In 1855, three years after it was published, it was called "the most popular novel of our day." The impact attributed to the book is great, reinforced by a story that when Abraham Lincoln met Stowe at the start of the Civil War, Lincoln declared, "So this is the little lady who started this great war." The quote is apocryphal; it did not appear in print until 1896, and it has been argued that "The long-term durability of Lincoln's greeting as an anecdote in literary studies and Stowe scholarship can perhaps be explained in part by the desire among many contemporary intellectuals ... to affirm the role of literature as an agent of social change."

The book, and even more the plays it inspired, also helped popularize a number of stereotypes about black people many of which endure to this day. These include the affectionate, dark-skinned "mammy"; the "pickaninny" stereotype of

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<sup>6</sup> *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Boston: John P. Jewett and Co., 1853.

black children; and the Uncle Tom, or dutiful, long-suffering servant faithful to his white master or mistress. In recent years, the negative associations with Uncle Tom's Cabin have, to an extent, overshadowed the historical impact of the book as a "vital antislavery tool."

**References for the novel** Stowe, wrote the novel as a response to the 1850 passage of the second Fugitive Slave Act (which punished those who aided runaway slaves and diminished the rights of fugitives as well as freed blacks. Much of the book was composed in Brunswick, Maine, where her husband, Calvin Ellis Stowe, taught at his alma mater, Bowdoin College.

Stowe was partly inspired to create Uncle Tom's Cabin by the autobiography of Josiah Henson, a black slave who lived and worked on a 3,700 acre (15 km<sup>2</sup>) tobacco plantation in North Bethesda, Maryland owned by Isaac Riley. Henson escaped slavery in 1830 by fleeing to the Province of Upper Canada (now Ontario), where he helped other fugitive slaves arrive and become self-sufficient, and where he wrote his memoirs. Stowe eventually acknowledged that Henson's writings inspired Uncle Tom's Cabin. When Stowe's work became a best-seller, Henson republished his memoirs as *The Memoirs of Uncle Tom*, and traveled extensively in the United States and Europe. Stowe's novel lent its name to Henson's home—Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site, near Dresden, Ontario—which since the 1940s has been a museum. The actual cabin where Henson lived while he was a slave no longer exists, but a cabin erroneously thought to be The Henson Cabin was purchased by the Montgomery County, Maryland government in 2006. It is now a part of National Park Service National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program.

*American Slavery As It Is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses*, a volume co-authored by Theodore Dwight Weld and the Grimké sisters, is also a source of some of the novel's content. Stowe also said she based the novel on a number of interviews with escaped slaves during the time when Stowe was living in Cincinnati, Ohio, across the Ohio River from Kentucky, a slave state. In

Cincinnati, the Underground Railroad had local abolitionist sympathizers and was active in efforts to help runaway slaves on their escape route from the South.

Stowe mentioned a number of the inspirations and sources for her novel in *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1853). This non-fiction book was intended to verify Stowe's claims about slavery. However, later research indicated that Stowe did not actually read many of the book's cited works until after the publication of her novel.

**Publication** *Uncle Tom's Cabin* first appeared as a 40-week serial in *National Era*, an abolitionist periodical, starting with the June 5, 1851 issue. Because of the story's popularity, the publisher John Jewett contacted Stowe about turning the serial into a book. While Stowe questioned if anyone would read *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in book form, she eventually consented to the request.

Full-page illustration by Hammatt Billings for *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (First Edition: Boston: John P. Jewett and Company, 1852). The engraving shows Eliza telling Uncle Tom that she has been sold and is running away to save her child.

Convinced the book would be popular, Jewett made the unusual decision (for that time) to have six full-page illustrations by Hammatt Billings engraved for the first printing. Published in book form on March 20, 1852, the novel soon sold out its complete print run. A number of other editions were soon printed (including a deluxe edition in 1853, featuring 117 illustrations by Billings).

In the first year of publication, 300,000 copies of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* were sold. At that point, however, "demand came to an unexpected halt... No more copies were produced for many years, and if, as is claimed, Abraham Lincoln greeted Stowe in 1862 as 'the little woman who wrote the book that made this Great War,' the work had effectively been out of print for many years." Jewett went out of business, and it was not until Ticknor and Fields put the work back in print in November 1862 that demand began again to increase.

The book was translated into all major languages, and eventually became, in the United States, the second best-selling book after the Bible.[6] A number of the early editions carried an introduction by Rev James Sherman, a Congregational minister in London noted for his abolitionist views. Uncle Tom's Cabin sold equally well in Britain, with the first London edition appearing in May 1852 and selling 200,000 copies. In a few years over 1.5 million copies of the book were in circulation in Britain, although most of these were pirated copies (a similar situation occurred in the United States).

**Plot summary. Eliza escapes with her son, Tom sold "down the river"** The book opens with a Kentucky farmer named Arthur Shelby facing the loss of his farm because of debts. Even though he and his wife, Emily Shelby, believe that they have a benevolent relationship with their slaves, Shelby decides to raise the needed funds by selling two of them—Uncle Tom, a middle-aged man with a wife and children, and Harry, the son of Emily Shelby's maid Eliza—to a slave trader. Emily Shelby hates the idea of doing this because she had promised her maid that her child would never be sold; Emily's son, George Shelby, hates to see Tom go because he sees the man as his friend and mentor.

When Eliza overhears Mr. and Mrs. Shelby discussing plans to sell Tom and Harry, Eliza determines to run away with her son. The novel states that Eliza made this decision because she fears losing her only surviving child (she had already miscarried two children). Eliza departs that night, leaving a note of apology to her mistress.

While all of this is happening, Uncle Tom is sold and placed on a riverboat, which sets sail down the Mississippi River. While on board, Tom meets and befriends a young white girl named Eva. When Eva falls into the river, Tom saves her. In gratitude, Eva's father, Augustine St. Clare, buys Tom from the slave trader and takes him with the family to their home in New Orleans. During this time, Tom and Eva begin to relate to one another because of the deep Christian faith they both share.

**Eliza's family hunted, Tom's life with St. Clare** During Eliza's escape, she meets up with her husband George Harris, who had run away previously. They decide to attempt to reach Canada. However, they are now being tracked by a slave hunter named Tom Loker. Eventually Loker and his men trap Eliza and her family, causing George to shoot Loker. Worried that Loker may die, Eliza convinces George to bring the slave hunter to a nearby Quaker settlement for medical treatment.

Back in New Orleans, St. Clare debates slavery with his Northern cousin Ophelia who, while opposing slavery, is prejudiced against black people. St. Clare, however, believes he is not biased, even though he is a slave owner. In an attempt to show Ophelia that her views on blacks are wrong, St. Clare purchases Topsy, a young black slave. St. Clare then asks Ophelia to educate her.

After Tom has lived with the St. Claris for two years, Eva grows very ill. Before she dies, she experiences a vision of heaven, which she shares with the people around her. As a result of her death and vision, the other characters resolve to change their lives, with Ophelia promising to throw off her personal prejudices against blacks, Topsy saying she will better herself, and St. Clare pledging to free Uncle Tom. Cass, another of Legree's slaves, is shown ministering to Uncle Tom after his whipping.

Before St. Clare can follow through on his pledge, however, he dies after being stabbed while entering a New Orleans tavern. His wife reneges on her late husband's vow and sells Tom at auction to a vicious plantation owner named Simon Legree. Legree (a transplanted northerner) takes Tom to rural Louisiana, where Tom meets Legree's other slaves, including Emmeline (whom Legree purchased at the same time). Legree begins to hate Tom when Tom refuses Legree's order to whip his fellow slave. Legree beats Tom viciously, and resolves to crush his new slave's faith in God. Despite Legree's cruelty, however, Tom refuses to stop reading his Bible and comforting the other slaves as best he can. While at the plantation, Tom meets Cassy, another of Legree's slaves. Cassy

was previously separated from her son and daughter when they were sold; unable to endure the pain of seeing another child sold, she killed her third child.

At this point Tom Loker returns to the story. Loker has changed as the result of being healed by the Quakers. George, Eliza, and Harry have also obtained their freedom after crossing into Canada. In Louisiana, Uncle Tom almost succumbs to hopelessness, as his faith in God is tested by the hardships of the plantation. However, he has two visions, one of Jesus and one of Eva, which renew his resolve to remain a faithful Christian, even unto death. He encourages Cassy to escape, which she does, taking Emmeline with her. When Tom refuses to tell Legree where Cassy and Emmeline have gone, Legree orders his overseers to kill Tom. As Tom is dying, he forgives the overseers who savagely beat him. Humbled by the character of the man they have killed, both men become Christians. Very shortly before Tom's death, George Shelby (Arthur Shelby's son) arrives to buy Tom's freedom, but finds he is too late.

**Final section** On their boat ride to freedom, Cassy and Emmeline meet George Harris' sister and accompany her to Canada. Once there, Cassy discovers that Eliza is her long-lost daughter who was sold as a child. Now that their family is together again, they travel to France and eventually Liberia, the African nation created for former American slaves. There they meet Cassy's long-lost son. George Shelby returns to the Kentucky farm and frees all his slaves. George tells them to remember Tom's sacrifice and his belief in the true meaning of Christianity.

Illustration of Tom and Eva by Hammatt Billings for the 1853 deluxe edition of Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Uncle Tom, the title character, was initially seen as a noble, long-suffering Christian slave. In more recent years, however, his name has become an epithet directed towards African-Americans who are accused of selling out to whites (for more on this, see the creation and popularization of stereotypes section). Stowe intended Tom to be a "noble hero" and praiseworthy person. Throughout

the book, far from allowing himself to be exploited, Tom stands up for his beliefs and is grudgingly admired even by his enemies.

**Eliza** A slave (personal maid to Mrs. Shelby), she escapes to the North with her five-year old son Harry after he is sold to Mr. Haley. Her husband, George, eventually finds Eliza and Harry in Ohio, and emigrates with them to Canada, then France and finally Liberia.

The character Eliza was inspired by an account given at Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati by John Rankin to Stowe's husband Calvin, a professor at the school. According to Rankin, in February, 1838 a young slave woman had escaped across the frozen Ohio River to the town of Ripley with her child in her arms and stayed at his house on her way further north.

**Eva**, whose real name is Evangeline St. Clare, is the daughter of Augustine St. Clare. Eva enters the narrative when Uncle Tom is traveling via steamship to New Orleans to be sold, and he rescues the 5 or 6 year-old girl from drowning. Eva begs her father to buy Tom, and he becomes the head coachman at the St. Clare plantation. He spends most of his time with the angelic Eva, however.

Eva constantly talks about love and forgiveness, even convincing the dour slave girl Topsy that she deserves love. She even touches the heart of her sour aunt, Ophelia.

Eventually Eva falls terminally ill. Before dying, she gives a lock of her hair to each of the slaves, telling them that they must become Christians so that they may see each other in Heaven. On her deathbed, she convinces her father to free Tom, but because of circumstances the promise never materializes.

A similar character, also named Little Eva, later appeared in the children's novel *Little Eva: The Flower of the South* by Philip J. Cozans (although this ironically was an anti-Tom novel). To a certain degree, the Little Eva portrayed by Cozans could be the same Eva introduced by Stowe.

**Simon Legree** a cruel slave owner—a Northerner by birth—whose name has become synonymous with greed. His goal is to demoralize Tom and break him of his religious faith; he eventually orders Tom whipped to death out of frustration for his slave's unbreakable belief in God. The novel reveals that, as a young man, he had abandoned his sickly mother for a life at sea, and ignored her letter to see her one last time at her deathbed. He sexually exploits Cassy, who despises him, and later sets his designs on Emmeline.

Unfortunately, the very thing Aunt Chloe feared most happens: Uncle Tom is sold to Simon Legree, an evil man who has a very different view of slaves than Augustine or Mr. Shelby had. Simon Legree works his slaves to death. According to Simon Legree:

I don't go for savin' niggers. Use up, and buy more, 's my way;--makes you less trouble, and I'm quite sure it comes cheaper in the end.... Stout fellers last six or seven years; trashy ones gets worked up in two or three... When one nigger's dead, I buy another, and I find it comes cheaper and easier, every way.

Harriet Beecher Stowe shows Simon Legree as an animalistic man, who sets his slaves against each other, even putting two of the slaves as task masters over the others. Legree encourages the slaves to snitch on each other. To Uncle Tom, this doesn't make sense. He is determined to help the other slaves, even at his own expense. When he notices an older woman struggling to meet her daily quota of cotton he transfers some cotton from his own bag to hers. Uncle Tom helps many of the slaves and he even uses his Bible to preach to them about Jesus.

This captures the attention of Simon Legree and his two black task masters. The last thing Simon Legree wants is for his slaves to have Christian values, a thing he hates himself. Legree is determined to crush this spirit in Uncle Tom. He wants to make Uncle Tom a taskmaster over his slaves. To do this, he needs to get Uncle Tom to start doing things for himself rather than helping others.

Simon Legree commands Uncle Tom to flog one of the slave women for not bringing in her full quota of cotton. Uncle Tom refuses, saying: I'm willin' to work, night and day, and work while there's life and breath in me; but this yer thing I can't feel it right to do; and Mas'r, I never shall do it, never.

Needless to say Simon Legree is outraged. He screams in rage: Well, here's a pious dog, at last, let down among us sinners! A saint, a gentleman, and no less, to talk to us about our sins! Powerful holy critter, he must be! Here, you rascal, you make believe to be so pious, didn't you never hear, out of yer Bible, "Servants obey your masters"? An't yer mine, now, body and soul? Uncle Tom returns: No! no! no! my soul an't yours, Mas'r! You haven't bought it, ye can't buy it! It's been bought and paid for, by one that is able to keep it; no matter, no matter, you can't harm me!

Uncle Tom says that his soul has been bought by Jesus, and that Simon Legree will never get him to leave behind his Christian values. In Uncle Tom's eyes, the ultimate reward of living a Christian life is well worth the pain of anything Simon Legree can do to him.

Simon Legree orders that Uncle Tom be beaten until he obeys. In the end Uncle Tom ends up following in the tracks of Eva. Just like Eva he dies despite being a good person. Harriet Beecher Stowe shows Uncle Tom as winning despite his death. According to her Uncle Tom was a good person so he went to heaven. The reverse of this statement is also true. Stowe hints that Legree's ultimate destination will be the fire of hell. This religious theme would not be nearly as effective today as it was when "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was first published. At the time this idea that black people had souls just like white people was a very novel idea. For the first time it made white people responsible for their actions either to the good or to the bad of their black slaves. Rather than just viewing black people as animals, the slave owners were forced to see their slaves as humans just like them.

This is the reason why “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” was so powerful, and ultimately was one small spark that helped to ignite the Civil War between the anti-slavery North and the slave holders of the South.

I don’t think that “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” as a book is particularly amazing. Neither the plot, nor Uncle Tom’s heavenly escape hatch, are very satisfying. Fortunately, the characters are extremely rich and vibrant, and this makes up for many of the book’s shortcomings. I also feel that “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” is important because it teaches about the slavery that affects thousands upon thousands of Americans in the past. I would definitely recommend “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” as a historical book that all people should read at least once.

**Other characters** There are a number of secondary and minor characters in Uncle Tom's Cabin. Arthur Shelby, Tom's master in Kentucky. Shelby is characterized as a "kind" slave-owner and a stereotypical Southern gentleman.

Emily Shelby, Arthur Shelby's wife. A deeply religious woman who strives to be a kind and moral influence upon her slaves. She is appalled when her husband sells his slaves with a slave trader. As a woman, she has no legal way to stop this, as all property belongs to her husband.

George Shelby, Arthur and Emily's son, who sees Tom as a "friend" and as the perfect Christian. Augustine St. Clare, Tom's second owner and father of Eva. Of the slave-owners in the novel, the most sympathetic character. St. Clare is complex, often sarcastic, with a ready wit. After a rocky courtship, he marries a woman he grows to hold in contempt, though he is too polite to let it show. St. Clare recognizes the evil in chattel slavery, but is not willing to relinquish the wealth it brings him. After his daughter's death, he becomes more sincere in his religious thoughts, and starts to read the Bible to Tom. He plans to finally take action against slavery by freeing his slaves, but his good intentions ultimately come to nothing.

Topsy, A "ragamuffin" young slave girl. When asked if she knows who made her, she professes ignorance of both God and a mother, saying "I s'pect I growed. Don't think nobody never made me." She is transformed by Little Eva's love. During the early-to-mid 1900s, several doll manufacturers created Topsy and Topsy-type dolls.<sup>7</sup> The phrase "growed like Topsy" (later "grew like Topsy"; now somewhat archaic) passed into the English language, originally with the specific meaning of unplanned growth, later sometimes just meaning enormous growth.

Miss Ophelia, is Augustine St. Clare's pious, hard-working, abolitionist cousin from Vermont. She displays the ambiguities towards African-Americans felt by many Northerners at the time. She argues against the institution of slavery yet, at least initially, feels repulsed by the slaves as individuals.

Quimbo and Sambo, slaves of Simon Legree who act as de facto overseers of the plantation. On orders from Legree, they savagely whip Tom, but afterward tearfully repent of their deeds to Tom, who forgives them, as he lies dying.

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<sup>7</sup> *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Boston: John P. Jewett and Co., 1853.

### 1.3 Major themes

"The fugitives are safe in a free land." From the illustrations by Hammatt Billings for *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, First Edition the image shows George Harris, Eliza, Harry, and Mrs. Smyth after they escape to freedom.

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* is dominated by a single theme: the evil and immorality of slavery. While Stowe weaves other sub themes throughout her text, such as the moral authority of motherhood and the redeeming possibilities offered by Christianity, she emphasizes the connections between these and the horrors of slavery. Stowe pushed home her theme of the immorality of slavery on almost every page of the novel, sometimes even changing the story's voice so she could give a "homily" on the destructive nature of slavery (such as when a white woman on the steamboat carrying Tom further south states, "The most dreadful part of slavery, to my mind, is its outrages of feelings and affections—the separating of families, for example."). One way Stowe showed the evil of slavery was how this "peculiar institution" forcibly separated families from each other.

Because Stowe saw motherhood as the "ethical and structural model for all of American life," and also believed that only women had the moral authority to save the United States from the demon of slavery, another major theme of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is the moral power and sanctity of women. Through characters like Eliza, who escapes from slavery to save her young son (and eventually reunites her entire family), or Little Eva, who is seen as the "ideal Christian", Stowe shows how she believed women could save those around them from even the worst injustices. While later critics have noted that Stowe's female characters are often domestic clichés instead of realistic women, Stowe's novel "reaffirmed the importance of women's influence" and helped pave the way for the women's rights movement in the following decades.

Stowe's puritanical religious beliefs show up in the novel's final, over-arching theme, which is the exploration of the nature of Christianity, and how she feels

Christian theology is fundamentally incompatible with slavery. This theme is most evident when Tom urges St. Clare to "look away to Jesus" after the death of St. Clare's beloved daughter Eva. After Tom dies, George Shelby eulogizes Tom by saying, "What a thing it is to be a Christian." Because Christian themes play such a large role in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*—and because of Stowe's frequent use of direct authorial interjections on religion and faith—the novel often takes the "form of a sermon."<sup>8</sup>

**Style** Eliza crossing the icy river, in an 1881 theater poster... *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is written in the sentimental and melodramatic style common to 19th century sentimental novels and domestic fiction (also called women's fiction). These genres were the most popular novels of Stowe's time and tended to feature female main characters and a writing style which evoked a reader's sympathy and emotion. Even though Stowe's novel differs from other sentimental novels by focusing on a large theme like slavery and by having a man as the main character, she still set out to elicit certain strong feelings from her readers (such as making them cry at the death of Little Eva). The power in this type of writing can be seen in the reaction of contemporary readers. Georgiana May, a friend of Stowe's, wrote a letter to the author, saying, "I was up last night long after one o'clock, reading and finishing *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. I could not leave it any more than I could have left a dying child." Another reader is described as obsessing on the book at all hours and having considered renaming her daughter Eva. Evidently the death of Little Eva affected a lot of people at that time, because in 1852 300 baby girls in Boston alone were given that name.

Despite this positive reaction from readers, for decades literary critics dismissed the style found in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and other sentimental novels because these books were written by women and so prominently featured "women's sloppy emotions." One literary critic said that had the novel not been about slavery, "it

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<sup>8</sup> *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Boston: John P. Jewett and Co., 1853.

would be just another sentimental novel," while another described the book as "primarily a derivative piece of hack work." In *The Literary History of the United States*, George F. Whicher called *Uncle Tom's Cabin* "Sunday-school fiction", full of "broadly conceived melodrama, humor, and pathos."

However, in 1985 Jane Tompkins expressed a different view of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* with her book *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction*. Tompkins praised the style so many other critics had dismissed, writing that sentimental novels showed how women's emotions had the power to change the world for the better. She also said that the popular domestic novels of the 19th century, including *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, were remarkable for their "intellectual complexity, ambition, and resourcefulness"; and that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* offers a "critique of American society far more devastating than any delivered by better-known critics such as Hawthorne and Melville."

This view remains the subject of dispute. Writing in 2001, Richard Posner described *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as part of the mediocre list of canonical works that emerges when political criteria are imposed on literature.

**Reactions to the novel** *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has exerted an influence equaled by few other novels in history. Upon publication, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* ignited a firestorm of protest from defenders of slavery (who created a number of books in response to the novel) while the book elicited praise from abolitionists. As a best-seller, the novel heavily influenced later protest literature.

**Contemporary and world reaction** Immediately upon publication, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* outraged people in the American South. The novel was also roundly criticized by slavery supporters.

Acclaimed Southern novelist William Gilmore Simms declared the work utterly false while others called the novel criminal and slanderous. Reactions ranged from a bookseller in Mobile, Alabama who was forced to leave town for selling the novel to threatening letters sent to Stowe herself (including a package

containing a slave's severed ear). Many Southern writers, like Simms, soon wrote their own books in opposition to Stowe's novel (see the Anti-Tom section below).

Some critics highlighted Stowe's paucity of life-experience relating to Southern life, saying that it led her to create inaccurate descriptions of the region. For instance, she had never set foot on a Southern plantation. However, Stowe always said she based the characters of her book on stories she was told by runaway slaves in Cincinnati, Ohio, where Stowe lived. It is reported that "She observed firsthand several incidents which galvanized her to write [the] famous anti-slavery novel. Scenes she observed on the Ohio River, including seeing a husband and wife being sold apart, as well as newspaper and magazine accounts and interviews, contributed material to the emerging plot.'"

In response to these criticisms, in 1853 Stowe published *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*, an attempt to document the veracity of the novel's depiction of slavery. In the book, Stowe discusses each of the major characters in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and cites "real life equivalents" to them while also mounting a more "aggressive attack on slavery in the South than the novel itself had." Like the novel, *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin* was also a best-seller. It should be noted, though, that while Stowe claimed *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin* documented her previously consulted sources, she actually read many of the cited works only after the publication of her novel.

Despite these criticisms, the novel still captured the imagination of many Americans. According to Stowe's son, when Abraham Lincoln met her in 1862 Lincoln commented, "So this is the little lady who started this Great War." Historians are undecided if Lincoln actually said this line, and in a letter that Stowe wrote to her husband a few hours after meeting with Lincoln no mention of this comment was made. Since then, many writers have credited this novel with focusing Northern anger at the injustices of slavery and the Fugitive Slave Law and helping to fuel the abolitionist movement. Union general and politician

James Baird Weaver said that the book convinced him to become active in the abolitionist movement.

Uncle Tom's Cabin also created great interest in England. The first London edition appeared in May 1852, and sold 200,000 copies. Some of this interest was because of British antipathy to America. As one prominent writer explained, "The evil passions which 'Uncle Tom' gratified in England were not hatred or vengeance [of slavery], but national jealousy and national vanity. We have long been smarting under the conceit of America — we are tired of hearing her boast that she is the freest and the most enlightened country that the world has ever seen. Our clergy hate her voluntary system — our Tories hate her democrats — our Whigs hate her parvenus — our Radicals hate her litigiousness, her insolence, and her ambition. All parties hailed Mrs. Stowe as a revolted from the enemy." Charles Francis Adams, the American minister to Britain during the war, argued later that "Uncle Tom's Cabin; or Life among the Lowly, published in 1852, exercised, largely from fortuitous circumstances, a more immediate, considerable and dramatic world-influence than any other book ever printed."

The book has been translated into almost every language, including Chinese (with translator Lin Shu creating the first Chinese translation of an American novel) and Amharic (with the 1930 translation created in support of Ethiopian efforts to end the suffering of blacks in that nation). The book was so widely read that Sigmund Freud reported a number of patients with sadomasochistic tendencies who he believed had been influenced by reading about the whipping of slaves in Uncle Tom's Cabin.

**Literary significance and criticism** As the first widely read political novel in the United States, Uncle Tom's Cabin greatly influenced development of not only American literature but also protest literature in general. Later books, which owe a large debt to Uncle Tom's Cabin, include *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair and *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson.

Despite this undisputed significance, the popular perception of Uncle Tom's Cabin is as "a blend of children's fable and propaganda." The novel has also been dismissed by a number of literary critics as "merely a sentimental novel," while critic George Whicher stated in his *Literary History of the United States* that "Nothing attributable to Mrs. Stowe or her handiwork can account for the novel's enormous vogue; its author's resources as a purveyor of Sunday-school fiction were not remarkable. She had at most a ready command of broadly conceived melodrama, humor, and pathos, and of these popular cements she compounded her book."<sup>9</sup>

Other critics, though, have praised the novel. Edmund Wilson stated, "To expose oneself in maturity to Uncle Tom's Cabin may ... prove a startling experience." Jane Tompkins states that the novel is one of the classics of American literature and wonders if many literary critics aren't dismissing the book because it was simply too popular during its day.

Over the years scholars have postulated a number of theories about what Stowe was trying to say with the novel (aside from the obvious themes, such as condemning slavery). For example, as an ardent Christian and active abolitionist, Stowe placed many of her religion's beliefs into the novel. Some scholars have stated that Stowe saw her novel as offering a solution to the moral and political dilemma that troubled many slavery opponents: whether engaging in prohibited behavior was justified in opposing evil. Was the use of violence to oppose the violence of slavery and the breaking of proslavery laws morally defensible? Which of Stowe's characters should be emulated, the passive Uncle Tom or the defiant George Harris? Stowe's solution was similar to Ralph Waldo

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<sup>9</sup> *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Boston: John P. Jewett and Co., 1853.

*Uncle Tom's Cabin; or Life among the Lowly*. Boston: John P. Jewett and Co., 1852.

Emerson's: God's will would be followed if each person sincerely examined his principles and acted on them.

Scholars have also seen the novel as expressing the values and ideas of the Free Will Movement. In this view, the character of George Harris embodies the principles of free labor, while the complex character of Ophelia represents those Northerners who condoned compromise with slavery. In contrast to Ophelia is Dinah, who operates on passion. During the course of the novel Ophelia is transformed, just as the Republican Party (three years later) proclaimed that the North must transform itself and stand up for its antislavery principles.

Feminist theory can also be seen at play in Stowe's book, with the novel as a critique of the patriarchal nature of slavery. For Stowe, blood relations rather than paternalistic relations between masters and slaves formed the basis of families. Moreover, Stowe viewed national solidarity as an extension of a person's family, thus feelings of nationality stemmed from possessing a shared race. Consequently she advocated African colonization for freed slaves and not amalgamation into American society.

The book has also been seen as an attempt to redefine masculinity as a necessary step toward the abolition of slavery. In this view, abolitionists had begun to resist the vision of aggressive and dominant men that the conquest and colonization of the early 19th century had fostered. In order to change the notion of manhood so that men could oppose slavery without jeopardizing their self-image or their standing in society, some abolitionists drew on principles of women's suffrage and Christianity as well as passivism, and praised men for cooperation, compassion, and civic spirit. Others within the abolitionist movement argued for conventional, aggressive masculine action. All the men in Stowe's novel are representations of either one kind of man or the other.

**Creation and popularization of stereotypes** Illustration of Sam from the 1888 "New Edition" of Uncle Tom's Cabin. The character of Sam helped create the stereotype of the lazy, carefree "happy ducky."

In recent decades, scholars and readers have criticized the book for what are seen as condescending racist descriptions of the book's black characters, especially with regard to the characters' appearances, speech, and behavior, as well as the passive nature of Uncle Tom in accepting his fate. The novel's creation and use of common stereotypes about African Americans is important because Uncle Tom's Cabin was the best-selling novel in the world during the 19th century. As a result, the book (along with images illustrating the book and associated stage productions) had a major role in permanently ingraining these stereotypes into the American psyche.

Among the stereotypes of blacks in Uncle Tom's Cabin are:

The "happy ducky" (in the lazy, carefree character of Sam);

The light-skinned tragic mulatto as a sex object (in the characters of Eliza, Cassy, and Emmeline);

The affectionate, dark-skinned female mammy (through several characters, including Mammy, a cook at the St. Clare plantation).

The Pickaninny stereotype of black children (in the character of Tops);

The Uncle Tom, or African American who is too eager to please white people (in the character of Uncle Tom). Stowe intended Tom to be a "noble hero." The stereotype of him as a "subservient fool who bows down to the white man" evidently resulted from staged "Tom Shows", over which Stowe had no control.

In the last few decades these negative associations have to a large degree overshadowed the historical impact of Uncle Tom's Cabin as a "vital antislavery tool." The beginning of this change in the novel's perception had its roots in an essay by James Baldwin titled "Everybody's Protest Novel." In the essay, Baldwin called Uncle Tom's Cabin a "very bad novel" which was also racially obtuse and aesthetically crude.

In the 1960s and '70s, the Black Power and Black Arts Movements attacked the novel, saying that the character of Uncle Tom engaged in "race betrayal," saying that Tom made slaves out to be worse than slave owners. Criticisms of the other stereotypes in the book also increased during this time.

In recent years, however, scholars such as Henry Louis Gates Jr. have begun to reexamine Uncle Tom's Cabin, stating that the book is a "central document in American race relations and a significant moral and political exploration of the character of those relations."<sup>10</sup>

**Anti-Tom literature** Title page for Aunt Phillis's Cabin by Mary Eastman, one of many examples of Anti-Tom literature.

In response to Uncle Tom's Cabin, writers in the Southern United States produced a number of books to rebut Stowe's novel. This so-called Anti-Tom literature generally took a pro-slavery viewpoint, arguing that the issues of slavery as depicted in Stowe's book were overblown and incorrect. The novels in this genre tended to feature a benign white patriarchal master and a pure wife, both of whom presided over child-like slaves in a benevolent extended-family-style plantation. The novels either implied or directly stated that African Americans were a child-like people unable to live their lives without being directly overseen by white people.

Among the most famous anti-Tom books are *The Sword and the Distaff* by William Gilmore Simms, *Aunt Phillis's Cabin* by Mary Henderson Eastman, and *The Planter's Northern Bride* by Caroline Lee Hentz,[74] with the last author having been a close personal friend of Stowe's when the two lived in Cincinnati. Simms' book was published a few months after Stowe's novel and it contains a number of sections and discussions disputing Stowe's book and her view of slavery. Hentz's 1854 novel, widely-read at the time, but now largely forgotten,

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<sup>10</sup> *Uncle Tom's Cabin; or Life among the Lowly*. Boston: John P. Jewett and Co., 1852.

offers a defense of slavery as seen through the eyes of a northern woman—the daughter of an abolitionist, no less—who marries a southern slave owner.

In the decade between the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the start of the American Civil War, between twenty and thirty anti-Tom books were published. Among these novels are two books titled *Uncle Tom's Cabin As It Is* (one by W.L. Smith and the other by C.H. Wiley) and a book by John Pendleton Kennedy. More than half of these Anti-Tom books were written by white women, with Simms commenting at one point about the "Seemingly poetic justice of having the Northern woman (Stowe) answered by a Southern woman."

**Copyright issues** Given the lax copyright laws of the time, stage plays based on *Uncle Tom's Cabin*—"Tom shows"—began to appear while the story itself was still being serialized. Stowe refused to authorize dramatization of her work because of her puritanical distrust of drama (although she did eventually go to see George Aiken's version, and, according to Francis Underwood, was "delighted" by Caroline Howard's portrayal of Topsy). Stowe's refusal left the field clear for any number of adaptations, some launched for (various) political reasons and others as simply commercial theatrical ventures.

There were then no international copyright laws. The book and plays were translated into several languages; Ms. Stowe saw no money, as much as "three fourths of her just and legitimate wages."

## 1.4 On the plays

All Tom shows appear to have incorporated elements of melodrama and blackface minstrelsy these plays varied tremendously in their politics—some faithfully reflected Stowe's sentimentalized antislavery politics, while others were more moderate, or even pro-slavery. Many of the productions featured demeaning racial caricatures of Black people, while a number of productions also featured songs by Stephen Foster (including "My Old Kentucky Home", "Old Folks at Home", and "Massa's in the Cold Ground"). The best-known Tom Shows were those of George Aiken and H.J. Conway.

The many stage variants of Uncle Tom's Cabin "dominated northern popular culture... for several years" during the 19th century and the plays were still being performed in the early 20th century.

One of the unique and controversial variants of the Tom Shows was Walt Disney's 1933 Mickey's Mellerdrammer. Mickey's Mellerdrammer is a United Artists film released in 1933. The title is a corruption of "melodrama", thought to harken back to the earliest minstrel shows, as a film short based on a production of Uncle Tom's Cabin by the Disney characters. In that film, Mickey Mouse and friends stage their own production of Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Mickey Mouse was already black-colored, but the advertising poster for the film shows Mickey dressed in blackface with exaggerated, orange lips; bushy, white side-whiskers made out of cotton; and his now trademark white gloves.

**Film adaptations** Main article: Uncle Tom's Cabin (film adaptations) Uncle Tom's Cabin has been made into a number of film versions. Most of these movies were created during the silent film era (with Uncle Tom's Cabin being the most-filmed story of that time period). This was due to the continuing popularity of both the book and Tom shows, meaning audiences were already familiar with the characters and the plot, making it easier for the film to be understood without spoken words.

The first film version of Uncle Tom's Cabin was one of the earliest full-length movies (although full-length at that time meant between 10 and 14 minutes). This 1903 film, directed by Edwin S. Porter, used white actors in blackface in the major roles and black performers only as extras. This version was evidently similar to many of the Tom Shows of earlier decades and featured a large number of black stereotypes (such as having the slaves dance in almost any context, including at a slave auction). Still from Edwin S. Porter's 1903 version of Uncle Tom's Cabin, which was one of the first full length movies. The still shows Eliza telling Uncle Tom that she has been sold and that she is running away to save her child. In 1910, a three-reel Vitagraph Company of America production was directed by J. Stuart Blackton and adapted by Eugene Mullin. According to *The Dramatic Mirror*, this film was "a decided innovation" in motion pictures and "the first time an American company" released a dramatic film in 3 reels. Until then, full-length movies of the time were 15 minutes long and contained only one reel of film. The movie starred Florence Turner, Mary Fuller, Edwin R. Phillips, Flora Finch, Genevieve Tobin and Carlyle Blackwell, Sr.

At least four more movie adaptations were created in the next two decades.

<sup>11</sup>The last silent film version came in 1927. Directed by Harry A. Pollard (who'd played Uncle Tom in a 1913 release of Uncle Tom's Cabin), this two-hour movie spent more than a year in production and was the third most expensive picture of the silent era (at a cost of \$1.8 million). Black actor Charles Gilpin was originally cast in the title role, but was fired after the studio decided his "portrayal was too aggressive." James B. Lowe then took over the character of Tom. One difference in this film from the novel is that after Tom dies, he returns as a vengeful spirit and confronts Simon Legree before leading the slave owner to his death. Black media outlets of the time praised the film, but the studio—

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<sup>11</sup> Ammons, Elizabeth. "Heroines in Uncle Tom's Cabin." *Critical Essays on Harriet Beecher Stowe*. Ed. Elizabeth Ammons. Boston: Hall, 1980.

fearful of a backlash from Southern and white film audiences—ended up cutting out controversial scenes, including the film's opening sequence at a slave auction (where a mother is torn away from her baby). The story was adapted by Pollard, Harvey F. Thew and A. P. Younger, with titles by Walter Anthony. It starred James B. Lowe, Virginia Grey, George Siegmann, Margarita Fischer, Mona Ray and Madame Sul-Te-Wan.

For several decades after the end of the silent film era, the subject matter of Stowe's novel was judged too sensitive for further film interpretation. In 1946, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer considered filming the story, but ceased production after protests led by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

A German language version, *Onkel Toms Hütte*, directed by Géza von Radványi, appeared in 1965 and was presented in the United States by exploitation film presenter Kroger Babb. The most recent film version was a television broadcast in 1987 directed by Stan Lathan and adapted by John Gay. It starred Avery Brooks, Phylicia Rashad, Edward Woodward, Jenny Lewis, Samuel L. Jackson and Endyia Kinney.

In addition to film adaptations, versions of Uncle Tom's Cabin have featured in a number of animated cartoons, including Walt Disney's Mickey's Mellerdrammer (1933), which features the classic Disney character performing the play in blackface with exaggerated, orange lips; the Bugs Bunny cartoon Southern Fried Rabbit (1953), where Bugs disguises himself as Uncle Tom and sings My Old Kentucky Home in order to cross the Mason-Dixon line; Uncle Tom's Bungalow (1937), a Warner Brothers cartoon supervised by Tex Avery; Eliza on Ice (1944), one of the earliest Mighty Mouse cartoons produced by Paul Terry; and Uncle Tom's Cabaña (1947), an eight-minute cartoon directed by Tex Avery.

Uncle Tom's Cabin has also influenced a large number of movies, including *Birth of a Nation*. This controversial 1915 film deliberately used a cabin similar to Uncle Tom's home in the film's dramatic climax, where several white

Southerners unite with their former enemy (Yankee soldiers) to defend what the film's caption says is their "Aryan birthright." According to scholars, this reuse of such a familiar cabin would have resonated with, and been understood by, audiences of the time.

Among the other movies influenced by or making use of Uncle Tom's Cabin include *Dimples* (a 1936 Shirley Temple film), *Uncle Tom's Uncle*, (a 1926 Our Gang (The Little Rascals) episode), its 1932 remake *Spanky, the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical The King and I* (in which a ballet called "Small House of Uncle Thomas" is performed in traditional Siamese style), and *Gangs of New York* (in which Leonardo DiCaprio and Daniel Day-Lewis's characters attend an imagined wartime adaptation of Uncle Tom's Cabin).

**Adapted theatrical performances** Adapted theatrical performance of the novel remained in continual production in the United States for at least eighty years. These representations had a lasting cultural impact and influenced the pejorative nature of the term Uncle Tom in later popular use.

Although not all minstrel depictions of Uncle Tom were negative, the dominant version developed into a stock character very different from Stowe's hero. Stowe's Uncle Tom was a muscular and virile man who refused to obey when ordered to beat other slaves; the stock character of minstrel shows became a shuffling asexual individual with a receding hairline and graying hair. To Jo-Ann Morgan, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin as Visual Culture*, these shifting representations undermined the subversive layers of Stowe's original characterization by redefining Uncle Tom until he fit within prevailing racist norms. Particularly after the Civil War, as the political thrust of the novel which had arguably helped to precipitate that war became obsolete to actual political discourse, popular depictions of the title character recast him within the apologetics of the Lost Cause of the Confederacy. The virile father of the abolitionist serial and first book edition degenerated into a decrepit old man, and with that transformation the character lost the capacity for resistance that had

originally given meaning to his choices. Stowe never meant Uncle Tom to be a derided name, but the term as a pejorative has developed based on how later versions of the character, stripped of his strength, were depicted on stage.

Or as Claire Parfait, author of *The Publishing History of Uncle Tom's Cabin, 1852-2002* opines, the many alterations in retellings of the Uncle Tom story demonstrate an impulse to correct the retellers' perceptions of its flaws and "the capacity of the novel to irritate and rankle, even a century and a half after its first publication."

## Chapter II

### Beecher Stowe pierces with bitter words anti black slavery

#### 2.1 'Uncle Tom' as a term... Its root is abolitionism, isn't it?

**Uncle Tom** is a term for a black person who behaves in a subservient manner to white people. As it has been closely cognized it's quite clear from the above chapter the term comes from the title character of Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Critical and popular views of both the character and the novel have shifted over time, leading to the shift in the term's use.

**Uncle Tom** is a derogatory term for a person of color who is overly sub-serviant with authority, or a black person who behaves in a subservient manner to white people. The term comes from the title character of Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Critical and popular views of both the character and the novel have shifted over time, leading to a shift in the term's use.<sup>12</sup>

**Original characterization and critical evaluations** Detail of an illustration from the first book edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* depicts Uncle Tom as young and muscular. At the time of the novel's initial publication in 1851 Uncle Tom was a rejection of the existing stereotypes of minstrel shows; Stowe's melodramatic story humanized the suffering of slavery for white audiences by portraying Tom as a Christ like figure who is ultimately martyred, beaten to death by a cruel master because Tom refuses to betray the whereabouts of two fugitive female slaves. Stowe reversed the gender conventions of slave narratives by juxtaposing Uncle Tom's feminine passivity against the brave daring of three African American women who escape from slavery. The novel was very influential and commercially successful, first published in serial form in 1851-1852 and in book version from 1852 onward. An estimated 500,000

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<sup>12</sup> Crozier, Alice C. *The Novels of Harriet Beecher Stowe*. New York: Oxford UP, 1969.

copies of the novel itself had sold in the United States and internationally by 1853, including unauthorized reprints. Senator Charles Sumner credited Uncle Tom's Cabin for the election of Abraham Lincoln and Lincoln himself reportedly quipped that Stowe had triggered the American Civil War. Frederick Douglass praised the novel as "a flash to light a million camp fires in front of the embattled hosts of slavery". Despite Douglass's enthusiasm, an anonymous 1852 reviewer for William Lloyd Garrison's publication *The Liberator* suspected a racial double standard in the idealization of Uncle Tom: Uncle Tom's character is sketched with great power and rare religious perception. It triumphantly exemplifies the nature, tendency, and results of CHRISTIAN NON-RESISTANCE. We are curious to know whether Mrs. Stowe is a believer in the duty of non-resistance for the white man, under all possible outrage and peril, as for the black man... Talk not of overcoming evil with good—it is madness! Talk not of peacefully submitting to chains and stripes—it is base servility! Talk not of servants being obedient to their masters—let the blood of tyrants flow! How is this to be explained or reconciled? Is there one law of submission and non-resistance for the black man and another of rebellion and conflict for the white man? When it is the whites who are trodden in the dust, does Christ justify them in taking up arms to vindicate their rights? And when it is the blacks who are thus treated, does Christ require them to be patient, harmless, long-suffering, and forgiving? Are there two Christ?

James Weldon Johnson, a prominent figure of the Harlem Renaissance, expresses an ambivalent opinion in his autobiography: For my part, I was never an admirer of Uncle Tom, nor of his type of goodness; but I believe that there were lots of old Negroes as foolishly good as he; the proof of which is that they knowingly stayed and worked on the plantations that furnished sinews for the army which was fighting to keep them enslaved."

In 1949 American writer James Baldwin rejected the emasculation of the title character "robbed of his humanity and divested of his sex" as the price of spiritual salvation for a dark-skinned man in a fiction whose African-American

characters, in Baldwin's view, were invariably either two dimensional stereotypes. To Baldwin, Stowe was closer to a pamphleteer than a novelist and her artistic vision was fatally marred by polemics and racism that manifested especially in her handling of the title character. Stowe had stated that her sons had wept when she first read them the scene of Uncle Tom's death, but after Baldwin's essay it ceased being respectable to accept the melodrama of the Uncle Tom story. Uncle Tom became what critic Linda Williams describes as "an epithet of servility" and the novel's reputation plummeted until feminist critics led by Jane Tompkins reassessed the tale's female characters. According to Debra J. Rosenthal in an introduction to a collection of critical appraisals for the Rutledge Literary Sourcebook on Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin, overall reactions have been mixed with some critics praising the novel for affirming the humanity of the African American characters and for the risks Stowe assumed in taking a very public stand against slavery before abolitionism had become a socially acceptable cause, and others criticizing the very limited terms upon which those characters' humanity was affirmed and the artistic shortcomings of political melodrama.

**Inspiration** A specific impetus for the novel was the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which imposed heavy fines upon law enforcement personnel in Northern states if they refused to assist the return of escaped slaves. The new law also stripped African Americans of the right to request a jury trial or to testify on their own behalf, even if they were legally free, whenever a single claimant presented a sworn affidavit of ownership. The same law authorized a \$1000 fine and six months imprisonment for anyone who knowingly harbored or assisted a fugitive slave. These terms infuriated Stowe, so the novel was written, read, and debated as a political abolitionist tract.

Stowe drew inspiration for the Uncle Tom character from several sources. The best-known of these was Josiah Henson, whose autobiography was originally published in 1849 and later republished in extensively revised editions after the publication of Uncle Tom's Cabin. Henson was born a slave in 1789. He

became a Christian at age eighteen and took up preaching. Henson attempted to purchase his freedom for \$450, but after selling his personal assets to raise \$350 and signing a promissory note for the remainder Henson's owner raised the price to \$1000; Henson was unable to prove that the original agreement had been for a lesser amount. Shortly afterward Henson was ordered on a trip south to New Orleans, and when he learned that he was to be sold there he obtained a weapon and contemplated murdering his white companions, but decided against violence because his Christian morals forbade it. A sudden illness in one of his companions forced their return to Kentucky, and shortly afterward Henson escaped north with his family, settling in Canada where he became a civic leader. Stowe read the first edition of Henson's narrative and later confirmed that she had incorporated elements from it into *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Kentucky and New Orleans figure in both Henson's narrative and the novel's settings, and some other story elements are similar. In the public imagination, however, Henson became synonymous with Uncle Tom. After Stowe's death her son and grandson claimed she and Henson had met before *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was written, but the chronology does not hold up to scrutiny and she probably drew material only from his published autobiography.

**Minstrel stock character. Uncle Tom, from an 1885 magic lantern series**

Both the novel and its title character inspired numerous derivative works during the decade after its release, some of which lampooned and distorted the portrayal of the title character with politically loaded overtones. American copyright law before 1856 did not give novel authors any control over derivative stage adaptations, so Stowe neither approved the adaptations nor profited from them. Minstrel show retellings in particular, usually performed by white men in blackface, tended to be derisive and pro-slavery, transforming Uncle Tom from Christian martyr to a fool or an apologist for slavery.

## 2.2 Abolitionism through the historical dates

**Abolitionism is a movement to end slavery** In western Europe and the Americas abolitionism was a movement to end the slave trade and set slaves free. At the behest of Dominican priest Bartolomé de las Casas who was shocked at the treatment of natives in the new world, Spain enacted the first European law abolishing colonial slavery in the 16th century, although it was not to last. In the 17th century when Quaker and evangelical religious groups condemned it as un-Christian and the 18th century, when rationalist thinkers of the Enlightenment criticized it for violating the rights of man. Though anti-slavery sentiments were widespread by the late 18th century, they had little immediate effect on the centers of slavery: the West Indies, South America, and the Southern United States. The Somersett's case in 1772 that emancipated slaves in England, helped launch the movement to abolish slavery. Pennsylvania passed An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery in 1780. Britain banned the importation of African slaves in its colonies in 1807, and the United States followed in 1808. Britain abolished slavery throughout the British Empire with the Slavery Abolition Act 1833, the French colonies abolished it 15 years later, while slavery in the United States was abolished in 1865 with the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.<sup>13</sup>

Abolitionism in the West was preceded by the New Laws of the Indies in 1542, in which Emperor Charles V declared free all Native American slaves, abolishing slavery of these races, and declaring them citizens of the Empire with full rights. The move was inspired by writings of the Spanish monk Bartolome de las Casas and the School of Salamanca. Spanish settlers replaced the Native American slaves with enslaved laborers brought from Africa and thus did not abolish slavery altogether.

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<sup>13</sup> Foster, Charles H. *The Rungless Ladder: Harriet Beecher Stowe and New England Puritanism*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1954.

In Eastern Europe, abolitionism has played out in movements to end the enslavement of the Roma in Wallachia and Moldavia and to emancipate the serfs in Russia. In East Asia, abolitionism was evidenced in, for instance, the writings of Yu Hyongwon, a 17th-century Korean Confucian scholar who wrote extensively against slave-holding in 17th-century Korea. Today, child and adult slavery and forced labour are illegal in most countries, as well as being against international law.

**Abolitionism in the United States or Antislavery Movement in the United States** Abolitionists played a key role in setting the terms of the debate over slavery and in making it a compelling moral issue. Yet abolitionists had remarkably little influence in the North. Very few Northerners were abolitionists, and many regarded abolitionists as dangerous fanatics. What made their case telling was the South's violent reaction. Extreme Southern responses appeared to confirm abolitionist warnings about a conspiratorial "Slave Power." By the 1850s, however, the escalating sectional conflict had largely taken on a momentum of its own, one that owed less and less to abolitionism.

Abolitionism was never a self-contained or singular movement. It encompassed a bewildering array of national, state, and local organizations, contradictory tactics, and clashing personalities. Abolitionists are commonly portrayed as benevolent white people deeply concerned with the well-being of enslaved blacks, epitomized by such activists as Garrison and Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852).<sup>14</sup> In fact, a great number of abolitionists, including Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth, were African American. Free blacks in the North were stalwart in their dedication to the cause and provided a disproportionate share of the movement's financial support, including a large majority of *The Liberator's* early subscribers.

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<sup>14</sup> Foster, Charles H. *The Rungless Ladder: Harriet Beecher Stowe and New England Puritanism*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1954.

### 2.3 Does or will Abolitionism go on in Racism?

**Racism in the United States** has been a major issue ever since the colonial era and the slave era. Legally sanctioned racism imposed a heavy burden on Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Mexican Americans. European Americans were privileged by law in matters of literacy, immigration, voting rights, citizenship, land acquisition, and criminal procedure over periods of time extending from the 17th century to the 1960s. Many European ethnic groups, particularly American Jews, Irish Americans, and Eastern European and Southern European immigrants, as well as immigrants from elsewhere, suffered xenophobic exclusion and other forms of racism in American society.<sup>15</sup>

**Native American owned slaves** Before removal and "under white influence", some Southern Native American tribes owned African American slaves. The Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickasaw were known to have had slaves. However, "unlike white slaveholders, they encouraged the young black slaves to attend the schools opened for the Indian children. The children they had with black women and men were raised in practical equality with their full blooded offspring." Unlike the United States before Emancipation, African Americans (and European Americans) were allowed to become citizens of their respective Native American nations; however, it was rare for African Americans to become citizens of Native American nations. For example, a small number of "Free People of Color" lived in many Native American nations as Cherokee, Choctaw, or Creek citizens.

**Racism against African Americans** Perhaps the most prominent and notable form of American racism (other than imperialism against Native Americans) began with the institution of slavery, during which Africans were enslaved and treated as property. Prior to the institution of slavery, early African and non-

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<sup>15</sup> *Private Woman, Public Stage: Literary Domesticity in Nineteenth-Century America*. New York: Oxford UP, 1984.

white immigrants to the Colonies had been regarded with equal status, serving as sharecroppers alongside whites. After the institution of slavery the status of Africans was stigmatized, and this stigma was the basis for the more virulent anti-African racism that persisted until the present.

**New Immigrant Africans and African Americans** The rapid growth in African immigrants has come into conflict with American blacks. Interaction and cooperation between African immigrants and black Americans are, ironically, debatable. One can argue that racial discrimination and cooperation is not ordinarily based on color of skin but more on shared common, cultural experiences, and beliefs.

**The first Census** In 1790, when the first U.S. Census was taken, Africans (including slaves and free people) numbered about 760,000—about 19.3% of the population. In 1860, at the start of the Civil War, the African American population had increased to 4.4 million, but the percentage rate dropped to 14% of the overall population of the country. The vast majority were slaves, with only 488,000 counted as "freemen". By 1900, the black population had doubled and reached 8.8 million. In 1910, about 90% of African Americans lived in the South, but large numbers began migrating north looking for better job opportunities and living conditions, and to escape Jim Crow laws and racial violence. The Great Migration, as it was called, spanned the 1890s to the 1970s. From 1916 through the 1960s, more than 6 million black people moved north. But in the 1970s and 1980s, that trend reversed, with more African Americans moving south to the Sun Belt than leaving it.

**Contemporary issues** African Americans have improved their social and economic standing significantly since the Civil Rights Movement and recent decades have witnessed the expansion of a robust, African American middle class across the United States. Unprecedented access to higher education and employment in addition to representation in the highest levels of American government has been gained by African Americans in the post-civil rights era.

The high-profile candidacy of Barack Obama is credited with increasing black turnout on the bill which has been seen as the crucial difference in its passing.

## 2.4 'Uncle Tom' era is just a 'bad-black' memory gone with the wind....

**African Americans** (also referred to as Black Americans or Afro-Americans, and formerly as American Negroes) are citizens or residents of the United States who have origins in any of the black populations of Africa. In the United States, the terms are generally used for Americans with at least partial Sub-Saharan African ancestry. Most African Americans are the direct descendants of captive Africans who survived the slavery era within the boundaries of the present United States, although some are—or are descended from—immigrants from African, Caribbean, Central American or South American nations. As an adjective, the term is usually written as *African-American*.<sup>16</sup>

African-American history starts in the 17th century with indentured servitude in British America and progresses onto the election of Barack Obama as the 44th and current President of the United States. Between those landmarks there were other events and issues, both resolved and ongoing, that were faced by African Americans. Some of these were slavery, reconstruction, development of the African-American community, participation in the great military conflicts of the United States, racial segregation, and the Civil Rights Movement. African Americans make up the single largest racial minority in the United States and form the second largest racial group after whites in the United States.

The popular conception of a race-based slave system did not fully develop until the 18th century. The first black congregations and churches were organized before 1800 in both northern and southern cities following the Great Awakening. By 1775, Africans made up 20% of the population in the American colonies, which made them the second largest ethnic group after the English. During the 1770s, Africans, both enslaved and free, helped rebellious English

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<sup>16</sup> Wilson, Edmund. "Harriet Beecher Stowe." *Patriotic Gore: Studies in the Literature of the Civil War*. New York: Oxford UP, 1962.

colonists secure American Independence by defeating the British in the American Revolution. Africans and Englishmen fought side by side and were fully integrated. James Armistead, an African American, played a large part in making possible the 1781 Yorktown victory, which established the United States as an independent nation. Other prominent African Americans were Prince Whipple and Oliver Cromwell, who are both depicted in the front of the boat in George Washington's famous *1776 Crossing the Delaware* portrait.

By 1860, there were 3.5 million enslaved African Americans in the United States due to the Atlantic slave trade, and another 500,000 African Americans lived free across the country. In 1863, during the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. The proclamation declared that all slaves in states which had seceded from the Union were free. Advancing Union troops enforced the proclamation with Texas being the last state to be emancipated in 1865.

**Post-Civil Rights era** Politically and economically, blacks have made substantial strides during the post-civil rights era. In 1989, Douglas Wilder became the first African-American elected governor in U.S. history. There are currently two black governors serving concurrently; governor Deval Patrick of Massachusetts and governor David Paterson of New York. Clarence Thomas became the second African-American Supreme Court Justice. In 1992 Carol Moseley-Braun of Illinois became the first black woman elected to the U.S. Senate. There were 8,936 black officeholders in the United States in 2000, showing a net increase of 7,467 since 1970. In 2001 there were 484 black mayors.

**On November 4, 2008,** Democratic Senator Barack Obama defeated Republican Senator John McCain to become the first African American to be elected President. At least 95 percent of African-American voters voted for

Obama.<sup>17</sup> He also received overwhelming support from young and educated whites, a majority of Asians, Hispanics, and Native Americans picking up a number of new states in the Democratic electoral column. Obama lost the overall white vote, although he won a larger proportion of white votes than any previous nonincumbent Democratic presidential candidate since Jimmy Carter. The following year Michael S. Steele was elected the first African-American chairman of the national Republican Party.

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<sup>17</sup> Wilson, Edmund. "Harriet Beecher Stowe." *Patriotic Gore: Studies in the Literature of the Civil War*. New York: Oxford UP, 1962.

## Conclusion

This version of Stowe's classic text includes reproductions of original historical documents at the back, literary criticism of the text, and some of the original illustrations. The book is well-made, stands up to the stress of reading (paper is thin but not too thin, like some anthologies).

As for the text-- this is the book that some say caused Abraham Lincoln to write the Emancipation Proclamation. An "Uncle Tom" has come to mean a black person who sells out to the white system-- but in so many ways, that is not at all what Uncle Tom does in the book. Stowe wrote the book to change what she saw as an unjust system, an evil system-- and at times, the text is very didactic (teacherly) and very preachy about religion. It's a fine "sentimental" book- and a fine historical document. It's also a pretty good story. Yes, there are some places where we could just get a tooth ache from the syrup of the overly dramatized scenes (you'll see when you read about Little Eva). But it's a certain style of writing that accomplished Stowe's goal of getting the women who may not have owned slaves but who benefitted from the system (white, northern, wealthy ones) to realize the problems and move to CHANGE them.

Much of what people think about Uncle Tom's Cabin actually comes from the later "Tom shows" that travelled the country-- the minstrel reviews that were not very flattering either to blacks or to Stowe's original texts. Read the book that has everyone all stirred up and make your own judgements. You might not like it-- but don't let someone else make the decision for you.

When Uncle Tom's Cabin was published in 1852, it became an international blockbuster, selling more than 300,000 copies in the United States alone in its first year. Progressive for her time, Harriet Beecher Stowe was one of the earliest writers to offer a shockingly realistic depiction of slavery. Her stirring indictment and portrait of human dignity in the most inhumane circumstances enlightened hundreds of thousands by revealing the human costs of slavery, which had until then been cloaked and justified by the racist misperceptions of

the time. Langston Hughes called it "a moral battle cry," noting that "the love and warmth and humanity that went into its writing keep it alive a century later," and Tolstoy described it as "flowing from love of God and man."

Harriet Beecher Stowe, a prolific writer best remembered today for *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, was born in Litchfield, Connecticut, on June 14, 1811, into a prominent New England family. Her father, Lyman Beecher, was a well-known Congregational minister, and her brother Henry Ward Beecher became a distinguished preacher, orator, and lecturer. Like all the Beechers she grew up with a strong sense of wanting to improve humanity. At the age of thirteen Harriet Beecher enrolled in the Hartford Female Seminary and subsequently taught there until 1832, when the family moved to Cincinnati. In Ohio she was an instructor at a school founded by her elder sister Catharine, and she soon began publishing short stories in the *Western Monthly Magazine*.

Four years later, in 1836, Harriet Beecher married Calvin Stowe, a respected biblical scholar and theologian by whom she had seven children. In order to supplement the family's meager income she continued writing. *The Mayflower*, her first collection of stories and sketches, appeared in 1843. During this period abolitionist conflicts rocked Cincinnati, and Mrs. Stowe witnessed firsthand the misery of slaves living just across the Ohio River in Kentucky. But not until the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 was she inspired to write about their plight. After the family resettled in Brunswick, Maine, when Mr. Stowe was hired as a professor at Bowdoin College, she began working on a novel that would expose the evils of slavery.

First serialized in the *National Era*, an abolitionist paper, in forty weekly installments between June 5, 1851, and April 1, 1852, and published as a book on March 20, 1852, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was an enormous success. Tolstoy deemed it a great work of literature 'flowing from love of God and man,' and within a year the book had sold more than 300,000 copies. When *Uncle Tom's Cabin* appeared in Great Britain Queen Victoria sent Mrs. Stowe a note of

gratitude, and enthusiastic crowds greeted the author in London on her first trip abroad in 1853. In an attempt to silence the many critics at home who denounced the work as vicious propaganda, Mrs. Stowe brought out *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1853, which contained documentary evidence substantiating the graphic picture of slavery she had drawn. *Dred* (1856), a second antislavery novel, did not enjoy the acclaim of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, yet the author had already stirred the conscience of the nation and the world, fueling sentiments that would ignite the Civil War. When Abraham Lincoln met her at the White House in 1862 he allegedly remarked: 'So you're the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war!'

In subsequent novels Stowe shifted her attention away from the issue of slavery. Beginning with *The Minister's Wooing* (1859), and continuing with *The Pearl of Orr's Island* (1862), *Oldtown Folks* (1869), and *Pogonuc People* (1878), she presented a perceptive and realistic chronicle of colonial New England, focusing especially on the theological warfare that underscored Puritan life. In a second and less popular series of novels—*My Wife and I* (1871), *Pink and White Tyranny* (1871), and *We and Our Neighbors* (1875)—she depicted the mores of post-Civil War America. Mrs. Stowe did enjoy success, however, with the controversial *Lady Byron Vindicated* (1870), a bold defense of her friend Anne, Lady Byron, that scandalously revealed Lord Byron's moral delinquency. In addition she became a regular contributor to the *Atlantic Monthly*, which published many of the memorable short stories later collected in *Oldtown Fireside Stories* (1872) and *Sam Lawson's Oldtown Fireside Stories* (1881).

When *Uncle Tom's Cabin; or, Life among the Lowly* was first published in 1852, no one—least of all its author, Harriet Beecher Stowe—expected the book to become a sensation, but this antislavery novel took the world by storm. It was to become the second best-selling book in the world during the nineteenth century, second only to the Bible, and it touched off a flurry of criticism and praise. Stowe had written the novel as an angry response to the 1850 passage of the

Fugitive Slave Law, which punished those who aided runaway slaves and diminished the rights of fugitive as well as freed slaves. Hoping to move her fellow Americans to protest this law and slavery in general, Stowe attempted to portray "the institution of slavery just as it existed." Indeed, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was nearly unique at the time in its presentation of the slaves' point of view.

When most people hear the name Harriet Beecher Stowe, they think not of the woman herself but of her most famous creation, *Uncle Tom's Cabin: Or, Life among the Lowly* (1851-1852). Nearly every American is familiar with this novel's staunch abolitionist stance and the role it had in shaping the antebellum popular imagination. The blatant sentimentality of the book--its flagrantly emotional appeal to popular tastes--and its deft manipulation of stereotypes in its portrayal of African Americans have served to obscure Stowe's achievements. (Adams, 1963) Even Abraham Lincoln's praise for her as "the little woman" who was responsible for the Civil War has a condescending ring to it.

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## **GLOSSARY:**

1. **Persist** - 1to continue to do or say something in a determined way‘ But why?’  
he persisted.persist withThey are determined to persist with their campaign.persist inShe persisted in her refusal to pay.persist in doing somethingWhy do you persist in denying that it was your fault?
2. **Frustration** - 1[countable/uncountable]an annoyed or impatient feeling that you get when you are prevented from doing what you wantfrustration atHe expressed his frustration at not being able to talk openly.in/with frustrationMy friend shouted in frustration, ‘Hurry up!’
3. **Veneration** – kind of skin disease affecting the whole external organism result from frequent nonhygienic physical relations
4. **Twinkle** - 1if someone’s eyes twinkle, they seem to shine because the person is happy or joking his brown eyes twinkled with amusement.
5. **Horticulture**- the activity of growing and studying garden plants
6. **Devour**- to eat something very fast because you are hungry
7. **Persuade**- 1to make someone agree to do something by giving them reasons why they should He did finally come with us, although it took a long time to persuade him. Persuade someone to do something Nobody could persuade her to change her mind.
8. **Permit**- 1[transitive]to allow someone to do something, or to allow something to happen The use of mobile phones is not permitted inside the aircraft. Permit someone to do something We were not permitted to enter the area during the investigation. permit someone something She permitted herself a single bar of chocolate a week.
9. **Bolster**- to make something stronger or more effective The campaign is designed to bolster the government’s image as being tough on crime. His score will bolster his confidence for the next match.

10. **Frolic**- to play in a happy way with a lot of energy and movement
11. **Grave** - 1the place where a dead body is buried in a deep hole in the ground. A tomb is a structure above the ground that contains a dead body He's never even visited his mother's grave.
12. **Mould**- 1[uncountable]green, blue, or white bacteria that grow on food that is not kept fresh or on other things that are not kept clean and dry
13. **Deter**- to make someone decide not to do something deter someone from doing something. The rain didn't deter people from coming to the game.
14. **Contemporary**- 1modern, or relating to the present time contemporary art/music /literature/dance contemporary urban society
15. **Abolitionist**- someone who supports the abolition of something abolitionist noun [countable]abolitionist noun someone who supported the abolition of slavery in the 19th centuryas someone who supported the abolition of slavery in the 19th century
16. **Endure**- [transitive]to suffer something difficult or unpleasant in a patient way over a long periodHe endured solitude and torture for months at a time.endureverb[intransitive]endureverbto last for a long timea[intransitive]to last for a long timetraditions that endure
17. **faithful** - 1continuing to support someone or be their friend, even in a difficult situationa faithful friend/servant/followerHe had always been a faithful friend.
18. **Fugitive**- someone who has done something illegal and is trying to avoid being caught by the police
19. **Erroneous**- not correctreports based on erroneous information
20. **Consent**- permission to do somethingwith/without someone's consentHe entered the building without the owner's consent.consent ofYou cannot go on school trips without the written consent of your parents.consent toBoth the

husband's and wife's consent to the sale is required.give (your) consentThe  
planning authority had previously given consent to the development.withhold  
(your) consentA patient has a right to withhold consent to the treatment.