



# The Influence of Uncle Tom's Cabin

## The Influence of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Harriet Beecher Stowe's anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is arguably the most influential novel ever written. It changed the course of U.S. history (For more on the influence of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, see the video, *David Reynolds: Harriet Beecher Stowe: Uncle Tom's Cabin*). In "Articulating Uncle Tom's Cabin," Jim O'Loughlin argues that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was so popular and influential because Stowe reflected "existing tropes and public concerns in a compelling narrative form" (O'Loughlin, 2000, p. 594). Moreover, Stowe created powerful images that took on a life of their own, evolving into racist stereotypes.

Summarize O'Loughlin's argument in two to three pages (excluding title and reference pages). In what ways did Stowe reflect her culture, and in what ways did she influence it? In what ways did *Uncle Tom's Cabin* positively influence American culture, and in what ways did it negatively influence American culture? Be sure to cite specific passages from the texts to support your interpretation.