

# Orestes Augustus Brownson

## 1803-1844

Orestes Augustus Brownson was born in Stockbridge, Vermont in 1803. He was one of a set of twins. His twin sister's name was Daphne Augusta Brownson. Orestes' father died when he was only two years old. His mother was so poor she had to send Orestes to live with neighbors. He didn't get a chance at a formal education, but he loved to read. Orestes read mostly religious books. He was six feet tall and had a good sense of humor. Orestes married Sally Healy and had eight children.

Orestes liked to write and study about religion. At one time Brownson thought Christianity should be abolished. He identified with the laboring classes. Orestes wanted to establish a connection between government and religion. He spoke against capital punishment, imprisonment for debt, and slavery. Brownson endorsed women's rights and education. He believed in order to achieve liberty we need to seek, not only equality, but also justice between man and government.

Later his attitudes and writings began to show connection between religion and political conservatism. He converted to Catholicism later in life, shocking the political world and his peers. He thought the constitution extended freedom and equality to all inhabitants of the United States, regardless of their religious creeds. Orestes Brownson acknowledged the weakness and shortcomings of democracy, while being a friend and supporter of it as well. Today Brownson's ideas and theories are widely accepted and appreciated in the area of human rights and among educators.