**Beginning in the late 15th century, European nations, especially Spain & Portugal initiated exploration & colonization of the New World hoping to enrich themselves with gold & spices. (background/context)  Even though the English entered this exploration late, they nevertheless had established two thriving colonies by the 1630’s.  Interestingly, the English settlers in 1607 who arrived in the Chesapeake region, an area consisting of Virginia & Maryland (definition of unclear terms), and those who landed two decades later in New England, namely Massachusetts, RI & CT(def. terms) originated from the same area near London.  But, within a century they had developed radically different colonies. (thesis) These differences resulted from the *diverse religious philosophies*, from their *distinct geographical locations* which impacted on their economic production, and finally, from their *unique family networks* (categories w/ explanation) and the resultant urban-rural settings that emerged in the two colonial regions.  Indeed, the differences between the Chesapeake & New England regions became so pronounced that by the 1850’s Virginia & Massachusetts separated from one another & a great Civil War ensued.  Perhaps nothing accounts for the differences between colonies like Massachusetts & Virginia more than their divergent religious philosophies.(transition to 1st body paragraph)**