

# Unit 6: *A Divided Union*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Lecture 6.1 • *The Abolition Movement*

- The idea that slavery was morally wrong grew out of two different sets of beliefs or principles:

**political** - The Constitution says that, “All men are created equal.”

**religious** - Some Christians (esp. Quakers) pointed out that the Bible says, “All men and women are equal in the eyes of God.”

- By the 1840s, the cause of abolition especially in the North.
- Some of the most famous abolitionists were:

**Frederick Douglass** - an escaped slave and passionate public speaker

**William Lloyd Garrison** a white Northerner and newspaper publisher

**Harriet Tubman** an ex-slave, and “conductor” on the Underground Railroad

The **Underground Railroad** was a network of secret routes for escaped slaves leading from the Deep South, into the North. The “railroad” began operating around 1838.

**Harriet Beecher Stowe** a writer, and the author of ...

*Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852) was the first real examination of American slavery that many Northerners and Europeans were exposed to. The graphic detail of the book led hundreds of people to join the anti-slavery cause, and abolition became a major political crusade in the North. It was the best selling novel of the 19th century world-wide.

- But as the abolition movement grew, many Southerners, even non-slave owners, began to think that the abolitionists wanted to destroy not only slavery, but the entire Southern economy, and even the basic way of life in the South.



**Andrew Jackson will soon be replaced on the \$20 bill by what abolitionist?**

### Personal Reflection:

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**abolition:**  
formally put to end a system, practice, or institution

## Lecture 6.2 • *Another Compromise*

### *New Ideas & Feelings*

- Many politicians thought the debate over slavery in the Congress was pointless. They preferred the idea of **popular sovereignty**.
- In other words, a state's slavery status should be decided by the people of that state ... not the Congress or any other part of the federal government.
- While most Northern politicians tried desperately to keep the Union (the U.S.) from falling apart, Southern politicians defended the idea of **states rights**.
- As the debate continued year after year, a feeling of **sectionalism** spread across America. Sectionalism is a feeling of loyalty to one's own state or section of the country instead of to the whole country.
- Instead of considering themselves to be "Americans", many people began to think of themselves as "Northerners" or "Southerners".

### *The Compromise of 1850*

- In 1850, **California** asked to be admitted to the Union as a free state.
- California isn't part of the Louisiana Purchase lands, so its status wasn't dictated by the Missouri Compromise line. Again, the voting balance in the Senate was threatened.
- The solution was a group of three new laws called the **Compromise of 1850**:
  1. California and Utah were admitted as free states.  
advantage: **NORTH**
  2. Popular sovereignty would decide the slavery issue in any new states made from the Mexican Cession.  
advantage: **NEITHER**
  3. a national **Fugitive Slave Law** was passed  
advantage: **SOUTH**
- Either side could have blocked the passage of any of the Compromise laws that they opposed, but at the urging of the president, and to keep the country at peace, congressmen on both sides simply **abstained** from voting.



**Is it ever OK to abstain from voting?**

#### **Personal Reflection:**

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**popular sovereignty:**  
decision-making based on the local will of the people instead of federal authority

**states' rights:**  
the idea that each state should have the right to govern itself

**sectionalism:**  
a feeling of loyalty to one's own region or section of the county instead of to the whole county

**abstain:**  
to formally decline to vote for or against something



## Lecture 6.4 • *A Sign of Things to Come*

### *Rising Resentments*

- The passionate feelings about slavery and the West, feelings once thought calmed by the Compromise of 1850, were rekindled by the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act.
- After the Act was passed, a new political party – the **Republican Party** – was formed with the specific goal of keeping slavery out of the West.
- Many northern, anti-slavery Whigs left their struggling party and joined the new Republican Party.
- In Congress, Representative Preston Brooks (D, SC) openly attacked Senator Charles Sumner (R, MA), and beat him with his cane. The assault drove even more politicians to join the Republican Party.

### *The Battle for Kansas*

- From the start, the South was in favor of the Kansas-Nebraska Act because they were confident that pro-slavery groups in Missouri might be able to “influence” the pending vote in Kansas.
- Abolitionist had the same idea however, and over 1,000 of them from across the East, moved to Kansas. They were nicknamed “**free soilers**”.
- When the day of the vote finally came, many pro-slavery border ruffians came over from Missouri and voted illegally.
- As a result, Kansas went pro-slavery.
- But not to be outdone, the Free Soilers set up their own territorial government.
- Pledging allegiance to two separate, rival governments, free-soil “**jayhawkers**” (abolitionist guerillas), and Missouri “**bushwhackers**” (pro-slavery guerillas) turned on each other.
- A group of bushwhackers **sacked** the town of Lawrence ...  
... while a fanatical Free-Soil abolitionist named **John Brown** carried out the murder of five Southern settlers.
- Kansas was in complete chaos! By 1856, over 200 people had been murdered in the conflict, and the territory became known as “**Bleeding Kansas**”.



**What is the mascot of the University of Kansas?**

### **Personal Reflection:**

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**sack:**  
plunder and destroy a town or settlement

## Lecture 6.5 • *Adding Fuel to the Fire*

### *The Dred Scott Decision*

- Dred Scott was a Missouri slave who, over the years, lived with his master in various Northern free states. After his master died, Scott sued his master's widow for his freedom, claiming that living in the free states entitled him & his family to their emancipation.
- The case eventually went to the U.S. Supreme Court, and in 1857, the Court passed down the **Dred Scott Decision**, which said that ...
  1. Dred Scott was still a slave.
  2. Slaves can't file lawsuits; they are property, not citizens.
  3. It was unconstitutional for Congress or any state to declare slavery illegal anywhere in the U.S. because it denies slave owners their right under the 5th Amendment to own property.
- The Court's decision infuriated abolitionists, who accused the Supreme Court of being under the control of wealthy southern cotton planters.
- Any hopes that the abolitionists had of getting help from the government vanished when the Supreme Court said the federal government couldn't interfere with slavery in any way.

### *Harper's Ferry*

- In 1859, the radical abolitionist **John Brown**, led a group of 22 fellow abolitionists on a raid against a federal army arsenal (storehouse of weapons) at **Harper's Ferry**, VA.
- They planned to use the weapons to start a local slave revolt that they hoped would spread across the South.
- Eventually, federal troops captured the raiders. John Brown was found guilty of treason and hanged to death.
- To many abolitionists and northerners, Brown was a hero and a martyr.
- To most southerners though, Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry was proof that northern abolitionists were more than willing to use violence to destroy their way of life.



**Who is this?**

### **Personal Reflection:**

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**emancipate:**

to set free from slavery

**arsenal:**

a storehouse of military weaponry

## Lecture 6.6 • *The Union Asunder*

- In 1860, with the Democrats divided between three different candidates, the Republican Abraham Lincoln is elected president in a landslide, and without winning any southern state.
- To Southerners, Lincoln's election means that the South has lost all of its voice in the national government, and that they have no other option but to secede (withdraw politically) from the U.S.
- In December of 1860, under the banner of "states rights", South Carolina secedes from the Union. Over the next two months, six more southern states join them.
- Together, the seven states form a new country which they call the Confederate States of America.
- They elect Jefferson Davis as their first president, and choose Richmond, Virginia as their capital. They begin printing their own money, design their own flag, and even send ambassadors abroad.
- Washington D.C. refuses to acknowledge the Southern states as a true nation, but President Lincoln pledges that there won't be any violence unless the Confederacy attacks the Union first.
- Unwilling to allow the U.S. to maintain forts and naval bases inside its borders, the Confederates begin to seize the outposts of their now "foreign" neighbor to the north.
- One of these federal outposts is Fort Sumter, located off the coast of Charleston, South Carolina.
- On April 12, 1861, 40 long years of accumulated mistrust, political disagreement, fear, and loathing finally become too powerful, and the Confederates open fire on Fort Sumter.
- The shots fired at Fort Sumter are the first shots of the American Civil War ... the four bloodiest years in all of American history.



**This is the Secession flag flown by what state in December of 1860?**

### **Personal Reflection:**

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### **secede:**

to formally withdraw from membership in a political union