

1850s on the eve of the Civil War

Four views of Slavery on the eve of the Civil War (not just for or against)

- **Abolitionist**---Harriett Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 1852 (influenced Gov't policy in both the U.S. and in Europe)--- Abe Lincoln called her "the little lady who started and finished the Civil War"
*Abolitionist movement not always effective if viewed as too aggressive or violent
(e.g. William Lloyd Garrison and John Brown)
- **Southern Pride**---Hinton Helper's *The Impending Crisis of the South*, 1857 (hatred toward slavery and blacks)----- thesis was that non-slave owning whites were the ones who suffered the most
- **Racist/White Man's Burden**---"Positive Good"
*blacks were seen as inferior, never could co-exist with whites, and slavery was an institution that was best for the well being of blacks
- **Economic**---necessary for the survival of the Southern Economy
("Necessary Evil")

Bleeding Kansas

- Result of the Kansas-Nebraska Act (see supporting document, reading, etc.)
- Anti and pro slavery forces poured into Kansas to alter popular sovereignty and the voting results
- Erupted in 1856 as a result of the Pottawatomie Creek Massacre (John Brown)
- Results (Failure of Popular Sovereignty, Dress-rehearsal for the Civil War)

Sumner (Mass. Senator) vs. Brooks (S.C. Representative in the House)---1856

- Sumner gave a speech titled "The Crime Against Kansas" where he specifically targeted Brooks' uncle (Senator Butler of S.C.)
- Brooks took this as an attack on Southern Pride as well as his family and beat Sumner unconscious with his cane on the Senate Floor (could not return to work for 4 years)
- Sumner was seen as a martyr by the north to the barbarism of the South
- Brooks was seen as a hero to the South but was eventually forced to resign from the House

1856 Election

- Buchanan (Democrat) wins (one of the worst Presidents ever---leaves Lincoln a mess in 1861)
- Fremont (Republican) really had no chance (integrity issues and not a strong candidate)
- Many people shyed away from voting Republican for fear that the South would secede but most Northerners would have allowed the South to go peacefully in 1856 (not the politicians)
*Politicians scared the public about the dire consequences of Southern secession

Dred Scott (huge victory for the South---around the same time as "King Cotton")---1857

- See supporting document, readings, etc.
- Slave sued for freedom on grounds that he had been living in free territory for a period of time
- Slaves defined as property thus no access to courts
- Decision struck a blow to the abolitionist cause and declared MO. Compromise null and void (in other words, slaves remain property regardless of whether they are in "free" or "slave" territory)

Panic of 1857

- **Causes:**
 - Gold Rush in California causes inflation
 - over speculation in land
 - over speculation in railroads
- **Effects:**
 - thousands of failed businesses
 - unemployment
 - North was the hardest hit
 - South barely hurt by the crisis and rode it out with its cotton ("King Cotton")
 - *contributed to Southern Pride/Nationalism and gave the south a false sense of security about their economy
 - *furthered the belief that the North and Great Britain could not survive without southern cotton