

Chapter 19: Drifting Towards Disunion (1854-1861)

- Slavery was the hottest debate of the 1850s
 - Kansas had violence between anti-slavery and pro-slavery groups
 - Supreme Court passed *Dred Scott* case that protected slavery in all Western territories
- Republican party elected Abraham Lincoln, who was anti-slavery, in 1860
 - Caused the Civil War to begin

Stowe and Helper: Literary Incendiaries

- **Harriet Beecher Stowe was the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), which greatly spoke out against slavery**
 - Written in response to the Fugitive Slave Law (1850) and inspired by the evangelical movements of the Second Great Awakening
 - Wanted to alert people of “the wickedness of slavery by laying bare its terrible inhumanity, especially the cruel splitting of families”
 - Hundreds of thousands of copies were sold in first year, millions sold over time (and in different languages), and it was made into a show
 - Made it perhaps the most politically-influential novel of all time
 - Also popular in Britain and France, and they looked on in approval for the North because it looked like the end of slavery (and these major European powers were already against slavery by then)
 - Persuaded thousands of readers to nullify (ignore) the Fugitive Slave Law
 - Stowe had never experienced slavery directly, but lived in Kentucky where there was a lot of activity with the Underground Railroad and learned about slavery indirectly through its slaves
- ***The Impending Crisis of the South* (1857) by Hinton R. Helper was another anti-slavery book that stirred up a lot of anti-slavery sentiment in the 1850s**
 - He hated slavery and blacks, argued that landless whites suffered from institution of slavery
 - Not very influential among poorer whites in the South, but rather among the wealthy, aristocratic landowners
 - The aristocracy were worried that “the non-slave-holding majority might abandon them”
 - Influence in the South (worry for the aristocracy) caused it to be banned in the South and hated almost as much as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Culture and Society: Through the bestselling books of the 1850s, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Impending Crisis of the South*, slavery was greatly frowned upon by writers and their millions of readers. Rather than being a fight fought solely by politicians, this demonstrated a greater societal movement amongst the commoners as well as the upper-class politicians. This shows the national importance of this problem, and how it permeated daily living as much as broad ideological and economic debates between North and South. The fact that it impacted ordinary people showed that it affected regular people's daily living and therefore would need to be addressed directly as a national problem, rather than being shoved to the side with compromises and “popular sovereignty,” which let the people decide rather than the

politicians, further allowing the national unity to dissolve. These books also stirred up more debate and intensified the conflict, which made the problem even more urgent and threw the nation into more sectional strife.

The North-South Contest for Kansas

- Kansas's position on slavery was to be determined by popular sovereignty (as set by the Kansas-Nebraska Act)
- Some of the settlers to Kansas were from groups funded by abolitionist groups from the North, such as the New England Emigrant Aid Company
 - These abolitionist groups also came to make profit in Kansas
 - They came armed with deadly rifles ("breech-loading Sharps rifles" or "Beecher's Bibles") and were ready to hold off the South's pro-slavery movements
- **Southerners were angry that the North was trying to keep Kansas from becoming a slave state**
 - The understanding during the Kansas-Nebraska Act was that Nebraska was to become a free state and Kansas a slave state (presumably) given their relative locations
 - Nebraska was far North and surrounded by free states, while Kansas was just above the compromise line of the Missouri Compromise and was next to slave state Missouri
 - A few Southerners tried to bring slaves and slavery into Kansas but were unsuccessful
 - Slaves were valuable and Kansas was a territory that might become free, and it was ready to explode with conflict between North and South
- There was controversy over the elections of the first legislature of the Kansas territory
 - The South had many people pour in and vote, winning pro-slavery legislators; however, this was fraudulent
 - The North responded by establishing an "extralegal regime of their own at Topeka" for anti-slavery supporters
- Conflict broke out in 1856 when pro-slavery raiders shot and burned up anti-slavery town of Lawrence

Kansas in Convulsion

- John Brown was a militaristic anti-slavery figure in Kansas
 - In retaliation to the attack at Lawrence, Brown attacked pro-slavery supporters at Pottawatomie Creek (1856)
 - They surprised and viciously killed five men who they supposed to be pro-slavery— this damaged the face of the anti-slavery cause
- Civil War broke out in Kansas in 1856, precursor to main Civil War of 1861-65
 - Damaged millions of dollars of property, slowed economy (agriculture), killed many people
- Kansas applied for statehood in 1857
 - **Pro-slavery supporters wrote the Lecompton Constitution for the state; infuriated the North because it allowed slavery to continue in the state whether or not it was anti-slavery**

- Even if they voted against slavery, current slaveowners in Kansas would be allowed to possess slaves
- Many Northerners boycotted the polls in anger, and the pro-slavery supporters won the vote
- Lecompton Constitution was supported by the new President Buchanan, who was heavily influenced by the South
- Douglas (author of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and champion of popular sovereignty), did not like the “semi-popularity” of the divided Kansas, fought for fair play and the entire Lecompton Constitution to be held to a popular vote (rather than just part of it that would provision another part to be pro-slavery no matter what)
 - Kept Kansas as a territory until 1861, when Southerners left Congress and Kansas was admitted as a free state to the Union
- The Democratic Party was divided when Buchanan antagonized the Democrats of the North (such as Douglas)
 - The Whigs, Federalists, and National Republicans were gone, and the Republicans were sectional; the Democrats were the only powerful, national political party
 - Loss of the Democrats’ unity meant general loss of unity in the U.S. and a strong precursor to the Civil War

Politics and Power: The debate over “Bleeding Kansas” was a series of political power plays between the North and the South. The North abused the Compromise of 1850’s supposition that Kansas would become a slave state because of its proximity to slave state Missouri under the popular sovereignty system by flooding in abolitionist groups that would likely turn Kansas into a free state. The South retaliated by flooding in many people to vote for the first legislators for Kansas, which the North considered fraudulent; then, the North established its own capital of Kansas, Topeka, which had only Northern legislators to balance out the strongly-Southern legislators elected by the people who flooded over the border. When Kansas applied for statehood, the Southerners drafted the Lecompton Constitution, which protected slavery whether or not the vote approved it or not; Douglas, from the North, called the vote against the ideals of popular sovereignty (there was not a large majority of the citizens of Kansas who wanted slavery, and therefore was only “semi-popular”) and thereby held off the statehood of Kansas for a few more years. These alternating movements by both the North and the South formed the first state Civil War in the nation, which was a precursor to the national Civil War a few years later. However, these movements were also highly political and later transitioned into the bloodier state Civil War, which also acted as a microcosm of the many years of convoluted sectional debate between the North and the South over slavery before the actual fighting began during Lincoln’s presidency.

“Bully” Brooks and his Bludgeon

- Kansas was known as “Bleeding Kansas” for the violent factional fights— both politically and militarily— for slavery in the state
- In Congress in 1856, statesmen were fighting dirtily
 - Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts spoke out strongly against the South and the institution of slavery in a speech to Senate; however, he was not very liked in Senate and this did not have great effect

- Congressman Preston S. Brooks of South Carolina beat Sumner with a cane until Sumner was bleeding and unconscious
 - He resigned, but was popular enough with his anti-Northern stance that he was re-elected
 - Sumner was also re-elected after he had healed from his injuries
- In the North, Sumner became somewhat like a hero
 - Brook's actions were viewed as that of a thug, a bully, the South's ruthless defence of slavery
 - Sumner's speech was widely reproduced in the North and was very popular, garnered many votes for the Republicans

Culture and Society: Rather than keeping to civil and normal actions of legislature, even Congress became an uncivil source of fighting fueled by popular societal sentiment. Charles Sumner spoke uncivilly of the South, and Preston Brooks used physical violence to attack Sumner. Despite their rash and vulgar acts for a politician, they were both enthusiastically supported by their respective regions (Sumner from the North and Brooks from the South) and were re-elected into Congress. This represents the new societal norm of violence and sectional antagonism over slavery; there was no real debate raised over the severity of the action, but only clamorous support raised from the raging positions of both sides for (North) or against (South) slavery. This was similar to the case of John Brooks when he went to invade Harper's Ferry: while he was clearly doing an unconstitutional action to try and incite insurgence (which is treason), many Northerners still hailed him as a hero for the motive behind his action — the anti-slavery movement. American culture became more violent and more tolerant of debate, which allowed for the Civil War.

↳ (see also: "John Brown: Murderer or Martyr")

"Old Buck" Versus "The Pathfinder"

- Democratic Convention met again in 1856 to decide on their next choice of leader
 - Pierce was too weak to be president; Douglas was too strong and dynamic
 - They were both especially reproached because of the Kansas-Nebraska Act (Douglas for writing the unpopular act and Pierce for supporting it)
 - James Buchanan ("Old Buck") chosen as the Democratic Party leader in 1856
 - He was in London during the Kansas-Nebraska Act and its aftermath, so he had little to do with it and was blameless relative to it
 - Democrats wanted popular sovereignty to rule
- Republican Convention chose Captain John C. Frémont as their presidential candidate
 - Frémont helped to take control of California during the Mexican-American War (hence his title, the "Pathfinder of the West")
 - Frémont was also blameless in relation to the Kansas-Nebraska Act because he was not involved
 - Republicans were strongly anti-slavery
- **Know-Nothing Party (or "American Party") formed in response to nativist concerns**
 - There was a recent influx of immigrants from Ireland and Germany; controlling immigration (rather than slavery) was their major concern

- The party was created by nativists, conservative Protestants who believed that they should be the ones to rule (hence their slogan, “Americans Must Rule America”)
- They chose President Fillmore (former president as a Whig after Taylor’s death)
- “Mudslinging” (insults) occurred during the election campaign as usual, harming the reputation of each candidate and their regions

The Electoral Fruits of 1856

- **Buchanan (Democrat) won the presidential election of 1856**
- Frémont lost due to a variety of factors
 - His moral character (“honesty, capacity, and sound judgement”) was questioned by the Southerners
 - South was also worried that a sectional party and leader would force the South to secede
 - Many Northerners sought to continue the bond with the Southerners, especially economically, and therefore voted for Buchanan
- The Republicans still had made good grounds in terms of their popularity: they were a new party that had rivaled the old and well-established Democrat Party

Politics and Power: The election of 1856 was a relatively typical two-party election with a minor party. “Mudslinging” occurred between every side, which had been a tradition in the presidential election process that had begun with the two-party system of Jefferson and Hamilton and continued to today, and the question of Frémont’s moral character from this mudslinging may have helped Buchanan win the election. Furthermore (and interestingly), the presidential candidates for the two major parties (the Democrats and the Republicans) were chosen because they were blameless— while they had little political experience in the recent, angry politics of the U.S., especially in Kansas, they also were not to blame for the fighting and the disaster of the slavery debate. Frémont was an explorer in the West, and Buchanan was in Britain during the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the following controversy, making them relatively politically inexperienced compared to more outspoken, more hated-by-the-other-side politicians such as Henry Clay. This shows the potential corruption in American politics and the party system in which the parties only try to get elected, not choose the most politically able presidents.

The Dred Scott Bombshell

- **Dred Scott v. Stanford (1857) was a court decision that greatly damaged North-South relations even further**
 - Dred Scott was black slave who sued his master because he was a slave on free soil (in Illinois and Wisconsin)
 - At the time, the Supreme Court had a majority of Southerners, including the Chief Justice
 - Supreme Court made three main rulings:
 - Scott was property, and therefore could not sue (nor could any other black slaves)
 - Because slaves were simply property, they could be taken to any state and slavery could be continued

- This was on the premise of the Fifth Amendment, which stated that Congress could not take people's possessions unlawfully
 - The Missouri Compromise of 1820 had always been unconstitutional, because the federal government had no right to take away slavery from any state, despite what any territory might want
- Supreme Court rulings greatly surprised and angered Northerners and abolitionists, such as Douglas
 - This greatly increased sectional hate for the South's pro-slavery opinions in the North
 - Many Northerners began to say that the Supreme Court's ruling was simply an opinion that need not be followed
 - Southerners thought Northerners were crazy, not following the Supreme Court's decisions and passing it off for a mere opinion

Culture and Society: The Supreme Court ruling *Dred Scott v. Stanford* demonstrated the Southern opinion of slavery, and it increased the sectionalism between the North and the South by enraging the North with its very pro-slavery rulings. It declared that slaves were only property, and therefore could not vote; that slavery could be continued in any state, free or not (with a slave from a slave state); and that the Missouri Compromise, which had been treated almost like a fundamental law for the Northerners, was unconstitutional. Because of the agricultural culture of the South and its majority in the Supreme Court, these rulings directly represented the Southern view of slavery as necessary and legal in all states and of slaves as chattel. This was in direct opposition to the North, in which there was no slavery and no indication that slavery would exist, because of the abolitionist movements that argued for slaves' freedoms. These rulings therefore greatly angered the North because none of it supported the anti-slavery position of the North using the power of the highest court, which made the North powerless to (constitutionally) deny these new rulings. This anger from the North (in addition to the secessionist sentiment of the South) was another reason that the North decided to fight the South; it was not only the South who wanted to secede because of their differing views of slavery, but the North that wanted to get back at the South for enacting these laws that crippled the abolitionist movement.

The Financial Crash of 1857

- **Panic of 1857 (a financial crisis) broke out**
 - Not as bad economically as Panic of 1837, but its placement just before the Civil War and during the sectional conflict made it unbearable
 - Caused by:
 - Inflation by great amounts of gold from California pouring into economy
 - Financial overspeculation
 - Overstimulation of grain cultivation
 - Led to:
 - The collapse of five thousand businesses
 - Widespread unemployment
 - "Hunger meetings" in cities
 - Affected the North, whose grain growers were especially hard hit

- Didn't affect the South much, because cotton prices were booming abroad and they could continue selling like usual
- Northerners, hard-pressed for money and land, insisted that the government distribute the Western, unsettled lands for free in exchange for the hard work necessary to raise it
 - This was in contrast to the Land Ordinance of 1785, an old land law that established the orderly selling of land to people in the West, which would also give money to the government
 - Encountered opposition by Northern industrialists and Southern plantation owners
 - The former worried that their employees would flock to the cheap land because of their low wages
 - The latter worried that it would benefit mostly the free soilers of the North, because the land size that was called for (160 acres) was too small for plantation farming
 - Buchanan vetoed the homestead act of 1860 that Congress had drafted because of the Southern opposition
- Tariff of 1857 was one of the largest economic causes of the Panic of 1857
 - The Congress had some surplus in its treasury, decided to lower its tariffs to the lowest they had been since the War of 1812 (around 20%)
 - After the tariff was enacted, the government and nation almost immediately started losing money, and the Northern industrialists and grain growers blamed it for their financial misfortunes
 - The Republicans used the need for better economic protectionism through a higher tariff for their presidential campaign

Work, Exchange, and Technology: The financial Panic of 1857 was another financial crisis caused by a change in tariff tax level. Because it *lowered* federal tariffs (rather than *raising* them such as with the “Abominable Tariff” of 1828), it harmed the *North* and benefitted the South—the causes and effects were reversed to the increased-tariff bills. As a result, industry suffered in the North, cotton continued to boom in the South, and the South had better reason to believe that they were more powerful than the North and could sustain themselves and fend off the North if they were to secede. This is shown in South Carolina Governor Hammond’s speech, “Cotton is King!” in which he declares the undefeatable power of the South. This also led to calls in the North for free land in the West (rather than paying the federal government for new land) so that people could more easily survive during the crisis. However, this gave the South a false sense of invincibility that would fail them during the Civil War because the North’s industrial strength, which was only temporarily damaged from this crisis, still prevailed over the South’s agricultural economy.

An Illinois Rail-Splitter Emerges

- Abraham Lincoln was nominated by the Republicans to run for the senatorial seat of Illinois that Douglas had left behind in 1858
 - Lincoln was tall and wiry, with a “sad, sunken, and weather-beaten face”
 - He was born poor, but was self-educated and worked his way up the ranks, also marrying into a wealthier family

- Grew up very humbly in a frontier village, born in a log cabin and was splitting logs for a job when he was younger
- He became one of the better lawyers of Illinois, and was known as “Honest Abe” because he only took cases that he thought fit his moral conscience (he refused those he felt uncomfortable morally to accept)
- He was a Whig politician that was inspired by the Kansas-Nebraska Act to join the Republican Party, and then became one of the foremost leaders of the Republican Party
 - He gained many votes to become the Republican vice president under Frémont’s presidential campaign in 1856

The Great Debate: Lincoln Versus Douglas

- Lincoln challenged Douglass to a round of debates in 1858 for the Illinois Senatorial position in the Lincoln-Douglas Debates
 - Douglas was a very passionate speaker, while Lincoln relied more on logic
 - The debates were eventually won by Douglas, and Douglas won the Senatorial seat
 - However, Lincoln won the popular majority and had won major attention on a national scale
- **One of the Lincoln-Douglass Debates mentioned the Freeport Question (by Lincoln in Freeport, Illinois): “Suppose ... the people of a territory should vote slavery down. The Supreme Court in the Dred Scott decision had decreed that they could not. Who would prevail, the Court of the people?”**
 - **Douglass responded with the Freeport Doctrine: “No matter how the Supreme Court ruled, ... slavery would stay down if the people voted it down. Laws to protect slavery would have to be passed by the territorial legislatures”**
 - In other words, slavery has to be supported by public opinion; if the people do not support it, then the law cannot really be enforced

American and National Identity: The Freeport Question and the Freeport Doctrine exemplified various traits of distinctly American politics. Firstly, they were carried out in a series of debates, much like our current presidential debates, which were civil and governed by logic, not violence. It existed between the two major parties, with Douglas from the Democratic party and Lincoln from the Republican party. The Freeport Question questioned the priority of federal law versus the consent of the people, and the Freeport Doctrine answered that federal law could only be enforced and supported with the consent of the people. This goes directly along with the fundamental Enlightenment principle (which is fundamental to American politics) that the government derives its power from the consent of the governed. This established that while federal laws attempted to stop or protect slavery, it did not have the right to do so unless the people consented. This essentially gave a justification for the Civil War, because half of the nation agreed with one view while the other half did not, and the creation of two different nations with different policies on slavery would adhere to the Freeport Doctrine.

John Brown: Murderer or Martyr?

- **John Brown (who had previously killed pro-slavery men at the Osawatimie Creek) led twenty men to Harper’s Ferry (1859), where he tried to raise an insurgence amongst the black slaves**
 - Killed some innocent people who were guarding the arsenal

- The slaves were largely unaware of Brown's strike and his intentions
- Robert E. Lee (future general of the Confederates) captured Brown
 - Brown was soon sent to his death after a trial that convicted him of murder and treason
- The South was angry about people like Brown — they wondered how they could stay in the Union when “a murderous gang of abolitionists” came down and tried to make them anti-slavery
- The North, on the other hand, had many people who were ignorant of Brown's faults and the deaths that he caused, and he instead went into martyrdom with them
 - Brown's final words were, “this is a beautiful country,” which were heroic and raised patriotism within the Northerners
 - Some Northerners even called him a saint, and some writers (including Emerson) hailed him as a hero

Culture and Society: (see “Bully” Brooks and his Bludgeon” — details there)

The Disruption of the Democrats

- **The Democrat Party was largely divided** at the Democratic Convention in Charleston (1860)
 - Douglas was the main candidate but he was unpopular after his actions with the Lecompton Constitution and the Freeport Doctrine
 - The Southern states left the convention, but Douglas could still not get the $\frac{2}{3}$ vote necessary for nomination
- The Democrats had a second convention in Baltimore for the Northern Democrats, in which Douglas was nominated
 - They wanted popular sovereignty and the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law in the North (in order to appease the South)
- The Southern Democrats had a third convention also in Baltimore
 - They nominated John C. Breckinridge, a pro-slavery moderate from Kentucky
 - They supported slavery and the annexation of Cuba as a slave state
- The Constitutional Union Party was formed from some of the Democrats who were not so strongly sectional (not so much Northern or Southern Democrats)
 - Others called them the “Do Nothing” or “Old Gentleman's” Party because they were relatively unpopular and did not achieve much because they never rose to power
 - Constituted of former Whigs and Know-Nothings, who wanted something of a compromise between the more extreme North and South positions
 - Elected John Bell of Tennessee as their candidate

A Rail-Splitter Splits the Union

- In the Republican Party Convention, Lincoln was chosen as the presidential candidate
 - Out of the Republican representatives, Seward was the best known, but he was too radical and made too many enemies
 - Lincoln, on the other hand, was reputed for his honesty and was relatively new and enemy-less in politics
- **The Republicans were attractive to many different interest groups of people**

- **This included: “for the free-soilers, nonextension of slavery; for the northern manufacturers, no abridgement of rights; for the Northwest, a Pacific railroad; for the west, internal improvements at federal expense; and for the farmers, free homesteads from the public domain”**
- Southerners were repelled by Lincoln because they thought that he was an abolitionist that would split the nation
 - Lincoln hated slavery but was actually not an outright abolitionist
 - Lincoln even pondered creating a law to compensate slaveowners for the loss of slaves, but this never went into action

The Electoral Upheaval of 1860

- **Abraham Lincoln was a “minority” president-elect**
 - He had only won about 60% of the popular vote, which was lower than it was for many of the presidential candidates in the past (all but J.Q. Adams)
 - He was a sectional candidate; he wasn’t even on the Southern ballots
 - There were essentially two elections: one in the North, and one in the South
 - If the Democrats piled all their voters into one candidate, they would have greatly outnumbered Lincoln in terms of popular vote
 - However, Lincoln won by a landslide of electoral votes, and would still have won the Democrats had they placed all their electoral votes in the same person; the electoral vote was 180 to 123, but if the Democrats had placed all their votes together, it would have been 169 (Lincoln) to 134 (Democrats)
- South Carolinians “rejoiced” because Lincoln’s election gave them reason to secede
 - This wasn’t true for all of the Southerners
 - Beckenridge, for example, did not want to leave the Union
 - The South also still had almost half of the number of states (which gave them a strong Senatorial showing) and a majority in the Supreme court
 - **Despite the above reasons to stay, the South Carolinians (who had previously warned that they would secede if Lincoln was elected) held a vote at Charleston in 1860**
 - **The delegates unanimously voted to secede from the Union**
 - This would begin a chain reaction of secession amongst the Southern states

Politics and Power: The Democrats were divided, and the Republicans were growing in strength because of their wide sectional appeal. This transition of power from the powerful Democrats, who had mostly stayed in power since Jackson’s presidency (1828) shows the use of a two-party system: once one of the parties has become unreliable and unpopular, as was the Democratic party, the other party can pick up the slack and take the popular vote. This supports the Freeport Doctrine and popular sovereignty, which are both based on the idea of the consent of the majority population. However, this simple majority did not appeal to everyone: the South, angry that Lincoln had won in this system that benefited the majority when the Southern pro-slavery opinion was a prominent minority, declared secession in South Carolina. Overall, the switch from the national party of the Democrats to the sectional Republican party was too great a change for a nation already teetering on sectionalist debates, and it led to the secession of the Southern states.

The Collapse of Compromise

- **Senator Jordan Crittenden of Kentucky drafted the Crittenden amendments to the Constitution only days after the South Carolinians announced their secession from the Union**
 - Crittenden was essentially a political successor of Henry Clay (who was also from Kentucky and liked compromises)
 - The compromise put forth that no slavery could appear above the 36° 40' line (same as the Missouri Compromise) and that slavery would be protected below the line by the federal government, but future states had the right to choose whether or not they wanted to be admitted as a free or slave state
 - President Lincoln vetoed the proposal, which ended all talk of compromise between the North and the South
 - He stated that the proposal “would amount to a perpetual covenant of war against every people, tribe, and state owning a foot of land between here and Tierra del Fuego” — in other words, it would suppose that slavery could continue indefinitely South, and was therefore morally wrong (it could set a very bad precedent for future Southern states)

The Secessionist Exodus

- After South Carolina, six more Southern states (“Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas”) quickly seceded, and then four more continued in the spring (a total of eleven states)
 - **The eleven states formed a new government and called themselves the Confederate States of America**
 - **They elected Jefferson Davis as their president**
 - Davis was a West Point graduate and recent Mississippi senator
- Lincoln was stuck in the four-month “lame-duck interlude” under Buchanan’s final months
 - A “lame duck interlude” is when an official is still in office when his successor has already been elected; he still has the power but the successor has to wait
 - By the time Lincoln officially ascended to power after four months, the secessionist movement had developed (worsened)
- **President Buchanan was widely criticized for having allowed the Southern states secede; however, the decision was not so simple:**
 - Buchanan was aging and a conservative, surrounded by mostly conservative, mostly Southern advisors
 - He did not find secession lawful as per the Constitution, but nor did he find any military opposition to the secession constitutional as well
 - If he had used military force on South Carolina, it would have ignited war too early, while the Northern strength was still gathering
 - He probably could not have gone the way of Andrew Jackson (who used military force to keep South Carolina from secession), because the military was tiny and weak and was needed to fight off some of the Native Americans in the West
 - Lincoln too continued waiting a little bit into his presidency

Farewell to Union

- **Southern secessionists left for a number of reasons**

- They were worried about how there were more Northern free states than Southern slave states, and therefore national politics would be biased against them
 - They didn't like how a sectional candidate won the presidency without any of their votes
 - They also didn't like how economic laws (such as strongly protectionist tariffs) could be passed that strongly benefited the North and harmed the agricultural society of the South because the North had a majority in politics (which they felt should respect Southern economics)
- "All we ask is to be let alone," said Confederate President Jefferson Davis
- Many secessionists thought that their secession would be unopposed by the North, who they presumed would be too weak to retaliate
 - The North was also heavily dependent on cotton for their own economy, and it would hurt their own economy if they attacked the seceding South
- Nationalism was stirring worldwide, not only in the South
 - Italy, Germany, Poland, and more nations had strong nationalist movements and sentiments
- The Southerners believed that they had the right to self-determination
 - They entered the Union voluntarily and established their own government; now that the government had seemingly made their political position not count, they had the right to establish a new form of government that appealed to themselves
- They likened their secession to the "secession" of the thirteen original American colonies from Great Britain, with the North acting as tyrannical as King George III

American and National Identity: The South (twelve seceded states) declared itself independent from the North. However, this is very American, because the U.S. seceded from Great Britain under similar grievances (an economy that is governed by the government such as high tariffs [which are analogous to Great Britain's high taxes] and unfair representation [because the free states in the North and West were more numerous and therefore controlled the Senate in important decisions]). As a result, the South found nothing wrong with their secession, as the founding of the U.S. had set a historical precedent for their action. Also for this reason, Buchanan felt that it was outside his power to act, because the people had the right to revolution if they felt wronged, and the South created its own government (self-determination). The difference between this and the American Revolution was that the former was amongst equal states and the latter was against a colonial power, and the former is a conflict from just North while the latter is from 3,000 miles away (and therefore greatly weakened Britain's influence in the colonies). These factors increased the North's chances of defeating rebellion.