

CHAPTER 19

Drifting Toward Disunion, 1854–1861

- 1. Literary Incendiaries (pp. 409–412)** List two effects cited by the authors of the publication of *Uncle Tom's* _____, written by Harriet _____ in 18____, including the significance of its impact on public attitudes in England and France.
 - (1)
 - (2)
- 2. “Bleeding Kansas” (pp. 412–414)** Although not really suited for plantation agriculture, the South expected a pro-slavery vote in Kansas following the 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act. Outsiders in both New England and the South helped finance settlers who would favor their position on slavery, creating an explosive situation. The most famous and fanatical antislavery outsider was John _____ who, in 1856, massacred some proslavery people at _____ Creek. In a semirigged 1857 election, the proslavery _____ Constitution was passed and sent to Democratic President _____ in Washington, but Democratic Senator _____ (author of the Kansas-Nebraska Act) smelled a rat and blocked approval. What did this whole Kansas mess do to the nationwide Democratic Party?
- 3. Election of 1856 (pp. 414–417)** The enflamed passions of the time were reflected in 1856 when South Carolina Senator Preston _____ blasted abolitionist Massachusetts Senator Charles _____ over the head with a cane on the Senate floor. In the 1856 election, the mediocre Democrat James _____ beat the first candidate of the two-year-old _____ Party, John C. _____ - the western explorer and California hero of the Mexican War. **(Remember, the Republican Party was formed largely of free-soilers and Northern Whigs after the “popular sovereignty” Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed in 1854.)** What do the authors believe (p. 417) might have happened if the Republicans had won and the South had succeeded following the 1856 election?
- 4. 1857: Dred Scott and Financial Crash (pp. 417–419)**
 - a. The slave Dred Scott had been taken to a free territory by his master and therefore sued for his freedom. In 1857, the Southern-dominated Supreme Court, under the leadership of Roger B. _____, ruled 1) that slaves couldn't sue, 2) that slaves were property and could be taken anywhere, and 3) that because property rights were protected by the _____ Amendment, Congress didn't have the power to ban slavery anywhere. This effectively invalidated the _____ Compromise of 1820 and caused deep resentment in the North. *** From a strictly legal perspective, do you see any valid points in the Court's decision in the *Dred Scott* case?

b. Problems were exacerbated by the “Crash of 1857.” (Note again the more-or-less twenty year cycle of economic downturns, so far 1819, 1837, and 1857.) The authors note that _____ prices remained high and the South therefore avoided the full effects of the economic downturn. This, they say, gave the South a false sense that it could prosper economically as a separate country and that it would inevitably gain the support of its major customers, _____ and France. When the Democratic president vetoed a _____ act and Congress failed to raise protective _____, the authors say that what “two surefire economic issues” were handed to the Republicans for the 1860 election?

5. **Abraham Lincoln (pp. 419–422)** In 1858, Lincoln challenged Sen. Stephen A. Douglas to a series of very high-toned debates in their race for his Senate seat. Summarize the subtle differences between Lincoln and Douglas on the issue of slavery in the territories.

(1) Lincoln:

(2) Douglas:

6. **John Brown’s Raid (pp. 422–424)** After abolitionist John Brown’s unsuccessful and fanciful attempt to start a slave rebellion by attacking the federal arsenal at _____ Ferry, Virginia, in 18____, why do the authors say that Brown realized that he would be “worth much more to the abolitionist cause dangling from a rope than in any other way”?

7. **The 1860 Election (pp. 424–427)** This “most fateful election in American history” was the first fought almost exclusively along regional lines. The Democrats split in two, with the Northern Democrats nominating Steven A. _____ and the Southern Democrats nominating John C. _____. The all-Northern Republicans went for the little-known Abraham _____. Look at the chart on p. 425. *** Testing your knowledge of constitutional quirks (Art. II, Sect. I, Clause 2), explain how it is possible that Lincoln could receive only 40 percent of the popular vote but still obtain almost 60 percent of the electoral vote (180 out of 303).

8. **Secession (pp. 427–431)**

a. Before Lincoln could take office in March 1861, seven states led by South _____ had seceded from the Union, formed the _____ States of America, and elected Jefferson _____ as president. Although Lincoln pledged not to interfere with Southern institutions (i.e. slavery), these states felt they had lost all power in Washington. Kentucky Senator James Henry _____ then proposed a last ditch compromise, which would have extended the old Missouri Compromise line (36°30') all the way to California. Lincoln rejected this because at least theoretically it might allow some extension of slavery. *** If you had just been elected president under these

circumstances, would you a) let the southern states go in peace, trusting that they would apply for readmission once they discovered they couldn't make it on their own; b) try to buy time by accepting the Crittenden Compromise; or c) prepare to use force to keep all states in the Union? Why would you choose this course?

b. Southerners felt that they were simply following the principles of the Declaration of Independence in seeking self-determination and freedom from oppression (p. 431). *** Do you buy this argument? What differences or similarities do you see between the two cases?

VARYING VIEWPOINTS

Causes of the Civil War

1. Whether discussing current events or reading history, you always has to be sensitive to the value judgments contained in the words we use and the names we give. The saying goes that history is a story told by winners, not losers. *** With this in mind, put a check by the name for the 1861–1865 conflict that you think would appear today in most history books if the South had won the war.

_____ Civil War

_____ War Between the States

_____ War for Southern Independence

_____ Other:

2. This section summarizes several ways in which historians have viewed the Civil War including:

(1) **Nationalist/Neo-nationalist:** It was an unavoidable clash between regions with differing views about the morality of slavery and the nature of the Union as well as differing economic bases and social values—and the good guys won.

(2) **Progressive:** It was basically an economic struggle between the industrial North and the agricultural South.

(3) **Political:** The war was avoidable and resulted from the breakdown of political institutions within the democracy and the failure of political leaders to act in the best interests of the country.

*** After reading about events leading up to the Civil War in the last two chapters and perhaps constructing a timeline of events, write a few sentences about your thoughts on the essential causes of this massive conflict.

CHAPTER 19 TERM SHEET

Drifting Toward Disunion

Pages 409–412

Harriet Beecher Stowe

Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852)

Hinton Helper (1857)

Pages 412–414

New England Emigrant Aid Company

Henry Ward Beecher

John Brown

Pottawatomie Creek (1856)

Lecompton Constitution (1857)

Buchanan veto

Douglas reservations

Pages 414–417

Sen. Charles Sumner

Sen. Preston Brooks (1856)

1856 election

James Buchanan (Dem.)

John C. Fremont (Rep.)

American (“Know-Nothing”) Party

Pages 417–419

Dred Scott

Chief Justice Roger B. Taney

Dred Scott Decision (1857)

Crash of 1857

Homestead Act

Tariff of 1857

Pages 419–422

Abraham Lincoln

Lincoln-Douglas debates (1858)

The “Little Giant”

“Freeport Doctrine”

Pages 422–424

John Brown

Harpers Ferry (1859)

Pages 424–427

1860 election

Douglas (No. Dem.)

John C. Brekinridge (So. Dem.)

John Bell (Const. Union)

William H. Seward

Lincoln (Rep.)

Pages 427–431

South Carolina secession (December 1860)

Confederate States of America (February 1861)

Jefferson Davis

Sen. James Henry Crittenden

Crittenden compromise attempt