

CHAPTER 12

AP® FOCUS & ANNOTATED CHAPTER OUTLINE

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Period 5: 1844–1877

AP U.S. History Key Concepts

- 5.1 An expansionist foreign policy connected the United States to the world and made it a destination for migration.
- A desire for territorial expansion resulted in war, the creation of new markets, territory acquisition, and ideological conflicts.
 - Westward expansion, increased migration, and the end of slavery shaped boundaries and led to conflicts.
- 5.2 Debates over slavery and other economic, cultural, and political issues led to civil war.
- Sectionalism intensified.
 - Attempts at political compromise failed to calm tensions over slavery, leading to the secession of southern states after the election of 1860.
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ANNOTATED CHAPTER OUTLINE

The following annotated chapter outline will help you review the major topics covered in this chapter.

I. A Divisive War, 1844–1850

- A. The U.S.-Mexico War roused bitter sectional conflict. Northern Whigs, or conscience Whigs, opposed the war on moral grounds and accused Polk of waging the war to add new slave states and increase slave-owning Democrats' control of the federal government
- B. "Free Soil" in Politics
1. Whigs gained control of Congress through the 1846 election.
 2. Antislavery Democrats supported the Wilmot Proviso (1846), a plan intended to prohibit slavery in any new territories acquired from Mexico; the Senate killed the proviso.
 3. Slavery in the Mexican Cession
 - a. "Conscience Whigs" viewed the U.S.-Mexico War as a conspiracy to add new slave states in the West.
 - b. To reunite Democrats before the election, Polk and Buchanan abandoned their expansionist hopes for Mexico and agreed to take only California and New Mexico.
 - c. In the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), the United States agreed to pay Mexico \$15 million for Texas north of the Rio Grande, New Mexico, and California.
 - d. The establishment of the Oregon Territory and the acquisition of New Mexico and California in 1848 seemed to have fulfilled Manifest Destiny.
 - e. Debates over expansion dominated the election of 1848. The Senate's rejection of the Wilmot Proviso revived charges that southern politicians were leading a "slave power" conspiracy to dominate the federal government.
 - f. The Free Soil Party, organized in 1848, viewed slavery as a threat to republicanism and to the Jeffersonian ideal of a freeholder society (and not, as the Liberty Party believed, a sin against the natural rights of African Americans).
 - g. The free soil movement attracted much popular support, including Frederick Douglass, the foremost black abolitionist. However, radical abolitionists such as William Lloyd Garrison opposed the Free Soilers' emphasis on whiteness.
 4. The Election of 1848
 - a. Democrats nominated Senator Lewis Cass of Michigan as their presidential candidate for the election of 1848; Cass was an avid expansionist who proposed squatter sovereignty, which allowed settlers in each territory to determine whether its status should be free or slave.
 - b. The Free Soilers, including northern Democrats, nominated Martin Van Buren for president.

- c. The Whigs nominated General Zachary Taylor, a war hero and slave owner who was firmly committed to the defense of slavery in the South but not in the territories, a position that won him support in the North.
- d. Taylor and his running mate Millard Fillmore won the election, but the electoral margin was thin because the Free Soil ticket took New York's vote.

C. California Gold and Racial Warfare

1. Even before Taylor took office, workers for John A. Sutter in the Sierra Nevada foothills of California discovered flakes of gold in January of 1848.
2. By January 1849, sixty-one crowded ships had left northeastern ports to sail around Cape Horn to San Francisco; by May, twelve thousand wagons had crossed the Missouri River bound for the goldfields. By the end of 1849, more than 80,000 people, mostly men—the so-called forty-niners—had arrived in California.
3. Forty-Niners
 - a. American miners treated alien whites fairly but limited Indian, Mexican, and Chilean access to goldfields and called for laws to expel Chinese miners from California.
 - b. Few miners became rich, but instead they faced disease and death, and many returned home penniless.
 - c. Most miners eventually found themselves working for wages for companies that engaged in hydraulic or underground mining; many others turned to farming.
4. Racial Warfare and Land Rights
 - a. Farming required arable land, which was owned by Mexican grantees or occupied by Indian peoples.
 - b. The subjugation of the Indians came first. In 1848, there were about 150,000 Indians in California; by 1861, there were only 30,000.
 - c. European diseases took the lives of thousands of Native peoples. But in California, white settlers also undertook systematic campaigns of extermination, and local political leaders did little to stop them.
 - d. Congress abetted these assaults by repudiating treaties that federal agents had negotiated with 119 tribes and had provided the Indians with 7 million acres of land. Instead, in 1853, Congress authorized five reservations of only 25,000 acres each and refused to provide the Indians with military protection.
 - e. Some settlers simply murdered Indians to push them off nonreservation lands. Other white Californians turned to slave trading.
 - f. The Mexicans and Californios who held grants to thousands of acres were harder to dislodge. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo guaranteed that Spanish and Mexican land grants would be “inviolably respected.”
 - g. Although many of the 800 grants in California were either fraudulent or questionable, the Land Claims Commission created by Congress upheld the validity of 75 percent of them.
 - h. In the meantime, hundreds of American squatters, rejecting the notion that so much unoccupied and unimproved land could be held by a few families, set up farms on these grants. They successfully pressured local land commissioners and judges to void suspect grants and encouraged landowners to sell at bargain prices.
 - i. In northern California, farmers found that they could grow most eastern crops. Ranchers gradually replaced Spanish cattle with American breeds, which found a ready market as California's population shot up to 380,000 by 1860 and 560,000 by 1870.
 - j. Wheat and barley farmers cultivated hundreds of acres, using the latest technology and scores of hired workers to produce huge crops, which San Francisco merchants exported to Europe at high prices. The gold rush gradually turned into a wheat boom.

D. 1850: Crisis and Compromise

1. The California gold rush and subsequent influx of settlers revived the national debate over free soil; in November 1849, Californians ratified a state constitution that prohibited slavery.
2. Constitutional Conflict

- a. John C. Calhoun warned of possible secession by slave states and advanced the doctrine that Congress had no constitutional authority to regulate slavery in the territories.
 - b. Many southerners and some northern Democrats were willing to extend the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific Ocean, guaranteeing slave owners access to some western territory.
 - c. A third choice, squatter (popular) sovereignty, placed decisions about slavery in the hands of local settlers and their territorial governments.
 - d. Antislavery advocates were unwilling to accept any plan for California that might involve the expansion of slavery in the territories and urged federal authorities to restrict slavery within its existing boundaries and eventually extinguish it completely.
3. A Complex Compromise
- a. Whigs and Democrats desperately sought a compromise to preserve the Union and organized the Compromise of 1850.
 - b. The Compromise included a new Fugitive Slave Act to mollify the South; it admitted California as a free state and abolished the slave trade (but not slavery) in the District of Columbia, to satisfy the North; and finally, it organized the rest of the lands acquired from Mexico into the territories of New Mexico and Utah on the basis of popular sovereignty.
 - c. The Compromise averted a secession crisis in 1850, but resulted in special conventions in the South; in exchange for support of the Compromise, moderate southern politicians agreed to support secession in the future if Congress abolished slavery anywhere or refused to grant statehood to a territory with a proslavery constitution.

II. The End of the Second Party System, 1850–1858

- A. Antislavery northerners refused to accept the legitimacy of the Missouri Compromise and demanded freedom for fugitive slaves and free soil in the West, while proslavery southerners plotted to extend slavery into the West, the Caribbean, northern Mexico, and Central America.
- B. The Abolitionist Movement Grows
1. Under the terms of the Fugitive Slave Act, federal magistrates in the northern states determined the status of alleged runaway slaves. The law denied accused blacks a jury trial and even the right to testify, and it allowed the re-enslavement of about 200 fugitives (as well as some free blacks).
 2. The plight of runaway slaves and the appearance of slave catchers aroused popular hostility in the North and Midwest, and free blacks and abolitionists defied the new law.
 3. Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), which evoked sympathy for slaves and outrage against slavery throughout the North, increased northern opposition to the Fugitive Slave Act.
 4. Northern legislatures enacted personal liberty laws, and in *Ableman v. Booth* (1857), the Wisconsin Supreme Court said the act violated the Constitution.
 5. The U.S. Supreme Court in 1859 upheld the constitutionality of the Fugitive Slave Act, but by then, the act had become a "dead letter."
- C. The Whig Party's Demise
1. The Whig Party chose General Winfield Scott as their presidential candidate for the 1852 election. Democrats were divided at their convention and settled on a compromise nominee, Franklin Pierce.
 2. The Democrats swept the election because the Whig Party had split into sectional wings, fragmented over slavery.
 3. Proslavery Initiatives
 - a. Pierce pursued an expansionist foreign policy to assist northern merchants; he secured railroad rights in northern Mexico with the Gadsden Purchase to mollify southern planters.
 - b. Pierce's acceptance of the Ostend Manifesto (1854) that suggested the seizing of Cuba from Spain to satisfy southern expansionists infuriated northern Democrats and revived fears of a "slave power" conspiracy.
- D. Immigrants and Know-Nothings
1. While conflict over slavery intensified, outside the South foreign immigration rose sharply in the 1840s and 1850s. Newcomers arrived almost entirely from northern Europe—England, Ireland, the German states and Scandinavia.
 2. The Irish Famine

- a. Most Irish farmers, working as tenants for English landlords, were required to send their grain crops to England. Therefore, the poorest third of households ate little but potatoes.
 - b. A potato blight in 1845 destroyed almost the entire crop of potatoes. Between 1845 and 1851 over one million people died of malnutrition or diseases that preyed on the hungry, including dysentery and cholera.
 - c. The famine refugees, largely in family groups, emigrated, mostly to the United States, to escape starvation. Over 1.5 million, or one-sixth of Ireland's population, emigrated.
 - d. As early as the 1850s, some began to send positive reports to kin back home. Like many later groups, the Irish developed a pattern of chain migration.
3. Hostility Toward Immigrants
- a. The scale of immigration prompted a political backlash. Many native-born Americans disliked the crowded tenement districts that housed low-paid Irish factory workers. They also feared the erosion of wages, since employers repeatedly used immigrants to break strikes and reduce pay.
 - b. Much of this era's nativism stemmed from anti-Catholicism. Viewing the pope as authoritarian, some Protestants argued that Catholics could not develop the independent judgment that would make them good citizens.
 - c. Labor issues merged with anti-Catholic sentiment; mobs of workers attacked Catholics, blaming them for high unemployment and low wages.
 - d. Some German immigrants were radicals fleeing oppressive governments after the failed European revolutions of 1848. They provoked anger with their socialist ideals.
 - e. By 1850, with immigration swelling, various local nativist societies banded together as the Order of the Star-Spangled Banner. The following year they formed the American, or Know-Nothing, Party.
 - f. In 1854, voters elected dozens of American Party candidates to the House of Representatives and gave the party control of the state governments of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania.
 - g. The Whig Party began to fracture after the creation of the Know-Nothing Party. At that same moment, Illinois Democrat Stephen Douglas proposed a new application of his idea of popular sovereignty, furthering the Whig Party's collapse and sending the Union spinning toward disaster.

E. The West and the Fate of the Union

- 1. The Missouri Compromise prohibited new slave states in the Louisiana Purchase north of 36°30', and it remained Permanent Indian Territory.
- 2. Douglas wanted to open western Indian territory, allowing a transcontinental railroad to link Chicago to California. In 1854, he proposed to extinguish Native American rights on the Great Plains and create a large free territory called Nebraska.
- 3. To win the support of southern politicians, Douglas amended the Kansas-Nebraska Act so that it explicitly repealed the Missouri Compromise, potentially enabling slavery to extend further west in new areas.
- 4. Douglas also agreed to the formation of two territories, Nebraska and Kansas, raising the prospect that settlers in the southern one, Kansas, would choose slavery.
- 5. Emergence of the Republican Party
 - a. The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 jolted the political system by simultaneously crippling the Democratic Party and galvanizing northern Whigs.
 - b. In 1854, northern "anti-Nebraska Democrats" denounced the Kansas-Nebraska Act and joined ex-Whigs and Free Soil supporters to form the Republican Party.
 - c. Meanwhile, thousands of settlers rushed into the Kansas Territory, putting Douglas's concept of popular sovereignty to the test.
 - d. In 1855, the Pierce administration recognized the controversial territorial legislature in Lecompton, Kansas, which had adopted proslavery legislation.
 - e. Free Soilers rejected the legitimacy of the territorial government; proslavery and antislavery sides turned to violence, including the Pottawatomie massacre led by John Brown.
- 6. Buchanan's Failed Presidency
 - a. The Republican Party counted on anger over "Bleeding Kansas" to boost its fortunes and nominated Colonel John C. Frémont, a free soiler who had won fame in the conquest of Mexican California, as its presidential candidate.

- b. The American Party split into sectional factions over slavery; the northern faction endorsed Frémont, and the southern faction nominated Millard Fillmore.
 - c. The Democrats reaffirmed their support for popular sovereignty and the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and they nominated James Buchanan.
 - d. James Buchanan won, and the Republicans replaced the Whigs as the second major party.
 - e. Republicans had no support in the South, however; if they were to win in the next presidential election, it might prompt the southern states to withdraw from the Union. President Buchanan was left to devise a way of maintaining the nation.
7. Dred Scott: Petitioner for Freedom
- a. In *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857), the U.S. Supreme Court opined that a slave's residence in a free state did not make him a free man.
 - b. Chief Justice Taney declared that, contrary to state laws recognizing the citizenship of free blacks, African Americans were not citizens and therefore could not sue in a federal court. Taney also claimed that the provisions of the Northwest Ordinance and the Missouri Compromise that prohibited slavery had never been constitutional, and he also declared that Congress could not give to territorial governments any powers that Congress itself did not possess.
 - c. Taney thereby endorsed Calhoun's interpretation of popular sovereignty: only when settlers wrote a constitution and requested statehood could they prohibit slavery.
 - d. The Court had declared the Republicans' antislavery platform to be unconstitutional; Republicans countered by accusing the Supreme Court and President Buchanan of participating in the slave power conspiracy.
 - e. In 1858, Buchanan recommended the admission of Kansas as a slave state; by pursuing a proslavery agenda—first with *Dred Scott*, then in Kansas, and also in supporting the purchase of Cuba—he had helped to split his party and the nation.
8. The Mormon War
- a. When the United States had acquired Mexico's northern territories in 1848, Salt Lake Mormons had petitioned Congress to create a vast new state, Deseret, stretching from Utah to the Pacific coast.
 - b. Congress established the Utah Territory in 1850 and named Brigham Young its governor. Young and the territorial legislature resisted federal law to maintain autonomy of the church.
 - c. President James Buchanan was afraid that if he tried to eliminate polygamy it might set a precedent that could be used to end slavery. However in 1858, he sent a small army to Utah contributing to the short-lived "Mormon War."

III. Abraham Lincoln and the Republican Triumph, 1858–1860

A. Lincoln's Political Career

- 1. Abraham Lincoln came from an impoverished yeoman farming family in Illinois; in 1831, he rejected the farmer's life and became a store clerk.
- 2. Lincoln was an ambitious man: he was admitted to the bar in 1837, married the more socially prominent Mary Todd in 1842, and served four terms as a Whig in the Illinois assembly.
- 3. An Ambitious Politician
 - a. In 1846, Lincoln won election to Congress, where he had to take a stand on the issue of slavery; he believed that slavery was unjust but did not think that the federal government had the constitutional authority to tamper with it.
 - b. Lincoln argued that prohibiting the expansion of slavery, gradual emancipation, and the colonization of freed slaves were the only practical ways to address the issue.
- 4. The Lincoln-Douglas Debates
 - a. Lincoln abandoned the Whig Party and joined the Republicans; he soon emerged as their leader in Illinois.
 - b. In his "House Divided" speech, Lincoln predicted a constitutional crisis over slavery.
 - c. In the 1858 duel for the U.S. Senate, Stephen Douglas declared his support for white supremacy, and Lincoln, put on the defensive by Douglas, advocated economic opportunity for blacks but not equal political rights.

- d. Douglas's Freeport Doctrine asserted that settlers could exclude slavery by not adopting local legislation to protect it; this upset proslavery advocates and abolitionists.
- e. Douglas was reelected to the Senate, but Lincoln had established a national reputation.

B. The Union Under Siege

1. Southern Democrats divided into two groups: the moderates ("southern rights" Democrats) pursued protection of slavery in the territories, and the fire-eaters, who repudiated the Union and actively promoted secession. Northern antislavery radicals called for stronger action.
2. In October 1859, John Brown led a raid that temporarily seized the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia; his purpose was to supply the arms for a major slave rebellion that would end slavery.
3. Brown was charged with treason, sentenced to death, and hanged. He was a martyr to abolitionists, which horrified southerners.
4. The Election of 1860
 - a. In 1860, northern Democrats rejected Jefferson Davis's proposal to protect slavery in the territories, so the delegates from eight southern states quit the meeting. Southern Democrats nominated as their candidate John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky. Meeting separately, northern and midwestern delegates nominated Stephen Douglas.
 - b. Republicans chose Lincoln as their candidate for his moderate position on slavery, his appealing egalitarian image, and his important Midwest political base.
 - c. The fourth candidate was John Bell, a former Tennessee Whig, who was the nominee of the compromise-seeking Constitutional Union Party.
 - d. Lincoln received only 40 percent of the popular vote but won a majority in the electoral college by carrying every northern and western state except New Jersey; Douglas won electoral votes only in Missouri and New Jersey; Breckinridge captured every state in the Deep South as well as Delaware, Maryland, and North Carolina; John Bell carried the Upper South states.
 - e. The Republicans had united the Northeast, the Midwest, and the Far West behind free soil.
 - f. To many southerners, it seemed their constitutional order of slavery was now under siege, and they had to rethink their future.

IV. Secession Winter, 1860–1861

- A. Following Lincoln's election, secessionist fervor swept through the Deep South. By February of 1861, jubilant secessionists met in Montgomery, Alabama, to proclaim a new nation, the Confederate States of America.
 1. Secessionist fervor was less intense in the Middle South (Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas), where there were fewer slaves, and white opinion was especially divided in the four border slave states (Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky, and Missouri).
 2. The legislatures of Virginia and Tennessee refused to join the secessionist movement and urged a compromise.
 3. Buchanan declared secession illegal but, in line with his states' rights outlook, claimed that the federal government lacked authority to restore the Union by force. Buchanan's timidity prompted South Carolina's new government to demand the surrender of Fort Sumter and cut off its supplies.
- B. In his March 1861 inaugural address, Lincoln carefully outlined his positions.
 1. Lincoln promised to safeguard slavery where it existed but vowed to prevent its expansion.
 2. Equally important, the Republican president declared that the Union was "perpetual"; consequently, the secession of the Confederate states was illegal. Lincoln asserted his intention to "hold, occupy, and possess" federal property in the seceded states and "to collect duties and imposts" there.
 3. If military force was necessary to preserve the Union, Lincoln would use it. The choice was the South's: return to the Union or face war.
- C. Two days after the South's attack on Fort Sumter, Lincoln called 75,000 state militiamen into federal service for ninety days to put down an insurrection.
 1. For millions of loyal Unionists outside the South, secession and the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter automatically meant war.
 2. Northerners were confident of their superior numbers and power if war came. For their part, southerners argued that cotton was "King," giving them extraordinary economic and political leverage, including likely aid from Britain and France.