

the divisive politics of slavery

the divisive politics of slavery shaped the social, economic, and political landscape of the United States for decades, fueling passionate debates and conflicts that ultimately led to the Civil War. This article explores how slavery became a central and contentious issue in American politics, dividing states, parties, and communities. Readers will discover the historical roots of slavery's political controversy, the key legislation and events that intensified sectional tensions, and the role of influential figures and ideologies. Through an insightful examination of abolitionist movements, pro-slavery arguments, and the lasting legacy of this era, we will unveil the complexities that made slavery the most polarizing topic in 19th-century America. By understanding the divisive politics of slavery, readers can better appreciate its profound impact on the nation's development and the enduring challenges of reconciliation and equality. This comprehensive guide is designed to inform, engage, and provide a deeper perspective on the historical forces that shaped modern America.

- Historical Origins of the Divisive Politics of Slavery
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Historical Origins of the Divisive Politics of Slavery

The divisive politics of slavery trace back to the earliest days of colonial America. Slavery became a defining institution in Southern states, underpinning their agricultural economy, while Northern states gradually moved toward abolition and industrialization. The moral, economic, and social differences between these regions set the stage for political discord. From the drafting of the U.S. Constitution, compromises were made to appease both slaveholding and free states, such as the Three-Fifths Compromise, which determined representation based on enslaved populations. These foundational choices embedded slavery into the political framework, ensuring its contentious status for generations.

Economic and Regional Differences

Southern states relied heavily on slave labor for their plantation-based economies, producing lucrative cash crops like cotton, tobacco, and rice. In contrast, the North developed a more diversified economy

centered on manufacturing and small-scale agriculture. These economic disparities fueled opposing political interests, with Southern leaders advocating for the protection and expansion of slavery, while Northern reformers and industrialists called for its restriction and eventual abolition.

Political Parties and Sectionalism

The divisive politics of slavery directly influenced the development and realignment of American political parties. As the nation expanded westward, debates over whether new territories should allow slavery intensified sectionalism—loyalties based on region rather than national unity. Political parties became increasingly polarized, with slavery at the center of their platforms and conflicts.

The Rise of Sectional Parties

Initially, parties like the Federalists and Democratic-Republicans skirted the issue of slavery to maintain national cohesion. However, by the 1830s and 1840s, new parties emerged that took explicit stances. The Democratic Party, strong in the South, defended slavery's expansion, while the Whig Party struggled to maintain unity across regions. The formation of the Free Soil Party and later the Republican Party marked a turning point, as they opposed the spread of slavery into the western territories.

- Democratic Party: Supported states' rights and the expansion of slavery.
- Whig Party: Divided over slavery, leading to its eventual collapse.
- Free Soil Party: Opposed slavery in new territories, focusing on "free labor."
- Republican Party: Founded on an anti-slavery platform, attracting Northern support.

Key Legislation and National Debates

Throughout the antebellum period, Congress grappled with legislation designed to address the divisive politics of slavery. Each new law and compromise aimed to preserve the balance between free and slave states, but often deepened the rift. These national debates were marked by passionate speeches, political maneuvering, and public outcry.

The Missouri Compromise

Enacted in 1820, the Missouri Compromise admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state, maintaining sectional balance. It also established the 36°30' line, prohibiting slavery north of

this latitude in the Louisiana Purchase territory. While temporarily easing tensions, it set a precedent for future conflicts.

The Compromise of 1850

This series of laws attempted to settle disputes over territories gained from the Mexican-American War. California entered as a free state, while the fugitive slave law was strengthened, requiring citizens to assist in the capture of runaway slaves. These measures inflamed both pro- and anti-slavery factions, highlighting the persistent divisions.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act

Passed in 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska Act allowed settlers to decide the fate of slavery in their territories through popular sovereignty. This led to violent clashes known as “Bleeding Kansas,” as pro- and anti-slavery groups fought for control, illustrating the explosive nature of the issue.

Abolitionist Movements and Resistance

The divisive politics of slavery inspired powerful abolitionist movements, as activists sought to end the institution through moral, legal, and political means. Abolitionists used newspapers, speeches, literature, and direct action to rally public support and expose the brutal realities of slavery. Their efforts were met with fierce resistance from pro-slavery advocates, often resulting in violence and repression.

Influential Abolitionists

Figures such as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe, William Lloyd Garrison, and Sojourner Truth became national icons in the fight against slavery. Their writings and activism challenged prevailing attitudes and mobilized support across the North and Europe.

Underground Railroad and Civil Disobedience

A network of secret routes and safe houses, the Underground Railroad helped thousands of enslaved people escape to freedom. Abolitionists engaged in civil disobedience, defying laws like the Fugitive Slave Act and risking imprisonment to aid escapees. These acts of resistance highlighted the moral urgency of the anti-slavery cause.

Pro-Slavery Arguments and Southern Defense

Pro-slavery advocates developed a range of arguments to justify and preserve slavery, framing it as a necessary and positive institution. Southern politicians, planters, and intellectuals articulated these defenses in speeches, writings, and public policy.

Economic Justifications

Supporters claimed slavery was essential to the South's prosperity, arguing that the region's agricultural wealth depended on enslaved labor. They warned that abolition would devastate the economy, impoverish white workers, and disrupt social order.

Social and Racial Theories

Many pro-slavery theorists invoked pseudo-scientific and religious beliefs to argue that African Americans were inherently suited for servitude. They portrayed slavery as a benevolent system that provided care and civilization to "inferior" races, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

States' Rights and Constitutional Defense

Southern leaders insisted that the federal government had no authority to interfere with slavery, invoking states' rights and constitutional protections. They viewed abolitionist efforts as a threat to their autonomy and way of life.

The Road to Civil War

The divisive politics of slavery reached a breaking point in the 1850s, as sectional tensions escalated and national compromise became impossible. The election of Abraham Lincoln, who opposed the expansion of slavery, triggered secession by Southern states. The subsequent outbreak of the Civil War was the tragic result of decades of irreconcilable conflict over slavery's place in American society.

Secession and the Confederacy

Eleven Southern states seceded from the Union, forming the Confederate States of America to protect slavery and their perceived rights. The war began in 1861, bringing immense destruction and ultimately leading to emancipation.

Emancipation and National Transformation

During the war, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring enslaved people in rebel states to be free. The Thirteenth Amendment, ratified in 1865, abolished slavery nationwide, fundamentally transforming the nation's legal and moral landscape.

Legacy and Modern Reflections

The divisive politics of slavery left a lasting legacy, influencing subsequent debates on civil rights, race relations, and American identity. The struggle for equality continued through Reconstruction and the Civil Rights Movement, as the nation sought to heal the wounds of slavery. Understanding this history is essential for grappling with modern issues of justice, reconciliation, and the ongoing impact of racial divisions.

Enduring Impact on American Society

Slavery's legacy persists in systemic inequalities, cultural memory, and political discourse. The divisive politics of slavery remain a subject of study and reflection, reminding Americans of the importance of confronting injustice and promoting unity.

Education and Commemoration

Efforts to teach and commemorate the history of slavery help foster awareness and empathy. Museums, memorials, and academic initiatives ensure that the lessons of this era continue to inform future generations.

Questions and Answers about the Divisive Politics of Slavery

Q: What made slavery such a divisive issue in American politics?

A: Slavery was divisive because it represented fundamental disagreements over morality, economics, and states' rights. The Southern economy depended on enslaved labor, while the North increasingly viewed slavery as unjust and unnecessary. These differences fueled political conflict and ultimately led to the Civil War.

Q: How did political parties contribute to the division over

slavery?

A: Political parties became polarized as the issue of slavery intensified. The Democratic Party generally supported slavery's expansion, while new parties like the Free Soil and Republican parties opposed it. Party platforms and regional loyalties deepened sectionalism and undermined national unity.

Q: What were some key laws that intensified the politics of slavery?

A: Major laws included the Missouri Compromise, the Compromise of 1850, and the Kansas-Nebraska Act. These acts tried to balance interests between free and slave states, but often resulted in increased conflict and violence.

Q: Who were some leading abolitionists, and what did they do?

A: Leading abolitionists included Frederick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe, William Lloyd Garrison, and Sojourner Truth. They wrote influential books, gave speeches, published newspapers, and supported efforts like the Underground Railroad to end slavery.

Q: What arguments did Southern leaders use to defend slavery?

A: Southern leaders argued that slavery was essential for economic prosperity, used racial and religious justifications, and claimed that states had constitutional rights to decide the issue without federal interference.

Q: How did the issue of slavery lead to the Civil War?

A: Growing sectional tensions, failed compromises, and the election of Abraham Lincoln—who opposed the expansion of slavery—led Southern states to secede and form the Confederacy, resulting in the outbreak of the Civil War.

Q: What was the impact of the Emancipation Proclamation?

A: The Emancipation Proclamation declared enslaved people in Confederate states to be free, transforming the Civil War into a fight for liberty and setting the stage for the abolition of slavery with the Thirteenth Amendment.

Q: How does the legacy of slavery affect American society today?

A: Slavery's legacy persists through systemic inequalities, ongoing debates about race, and efforts to

achieve reconciliation and justice. Understanding this history helps address modern challenges related to civil rights and equality.

Q: Why is it important to study the divisive politics of slavery?

A: Studying the divisive politics of slavery provides insight into the roots of American conflict, the struggle for human rights, and the importance of confronting injustice in society. It also helps inform discussions about identity, unity, and reconciliation.

Q: What role did the Underground Railroad play in the politics of slavery?

A: The Underground Railroad was a critical form of resistance, helping thousands of enslaved people escape to freedom. Its existence highlighted the moral urgency of abolition and demonstrated widespread opposition to slavery, further intensifying political divisions.

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The Divisive Politics of Slavery: A Legacy of Discord

The legacy of slavery casts a long shadow across human history, leaving behind a complex and deeply divisive political landscape. Understanding this legacy requires examining not only the brutal realities of the institution itself but also the ways in which its existence and abolition shaped – and continue to shape – political discourse, social structures, and economic realities worldwide. This post delves into the multifaceted political ramifications of slavery, exploring its impact on past and present societies, and offering a nuanced perspective on its enduring influence. We'll explore the key political battles it ignited, the lingering social divisions it created, and the ongoing debates surrounding reparations and reconciliation.

H2: The Political Fault Lines of the Antebellum South

The antebellum period in the United States serves as a stark example of how slavery fractured the

political landscape. The "peculiar institution," as it was euphemistically called, was not merely an economic system; it was the very foundation of Southern society and identity. This deeply entrenched system created a powerful political bloc fiercely protective of its interests.

H3: States' Rights and the Defense of Slavery

Southern politicians skillfully used the rhetoric of "states' rights" to defend slavery, arguing that the federal government had no authority to interfere with their internal affairs. This argument, though often cloaked in principles of limited government, served as a powerful tool to resist abolitionist movements and maintain the institution. The inherent contradiction between the ideals of liberty and equality enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and the reality of chattel slavery fueled intense political debate and ultimately contributed to the secession crisis and the American Civil War.

H3: The Abolitionist Movement and its Political Ramifications

The abolitionist movement, while initially small, gained significant momentum throughout the 19th century. This movement, composed of both Black and white activists, challenged the moral and political legitimacy of slavery, generating fierce opposition from pro-slavery factions. Abolitionist activities, ranging from political lobbying to armed resistance, directly confronted the established political order, further exacerbating existing tensions and ultimately playing a significant role in the outbreak of the Civil War.

H2: The Civil War and its Aftermath: A Nation Divided

The American Civil War, a conflict fundamentally driven by the issue of slavery, irrevocably altered the nation's political landscape. The war's outcome, while abolishing slavery through the 13th Amendment, did little to immediately resolve the deeper political and social divisions it had created.

H3: Reconstruction and its Failures

The Reconstruction era, following the Civil War, aimed to rebuild the South and integrate formerly enslaved people into American society. However, its efforts were largely undermined by white resistance, resulting in the rise of Jim Crow laws and the perpetuation of racial inequality. This period highlights the immense difficulty of dismantling a deeply ingrained system of oppression and the limitations of political solutions in the face of entrenched social prejudices.

H3: The Long Shadow of Jim Crow: Continued Political Division

Jim Crow laws, enacted in the post-Reconstruction South, enforced racial segregation and disenfranchisement, effectively silencing Black voices in the political process. These laws cemented a system of racial inequality that lasted for decades, manifesting in widespread political marginalization and social injustice. The political battles fought to dismantle Jim Crow, from the Civil Rights Movement to the Voting Rights Act, demonstrate the enduring political ramifications of slavery's legacy.

H2: The Continuing Debate: Reparations and Reconciliation

The debate surrounding reparations for slavery continues to be a highly divisive political issue. Proponents argue that reparations are necessary to address the ongoing economic and social disparities caused by centuries of exploitation. Opponents often raise concerns about fairness, practicality, and the difficulty of assigning responsibility across generations. This debate underscores the lingering political and social consequences of slavery and the ongoing struggle for racial justice and equality.

H2: Global Perspectives on the Politics of Slavery

The impact of slavery wasn't confined to the United States. Across the globe, the institution has left similar legacies of political division and social inequality. From the transatlantic slave trade's impact on Africa and the Americas to the historical and ongoing struggles against modern forms of slavery, understanding this global context is crucial to grasping the full scope of the issue's political ramifications.

Conclusion

The divisive politics of slavery are not a relic of the past. They continue to shape contemporary political discourse, influencing debates on race, equality, and justice. Understanding the complexities of this legacy is essential to fostering meaningful dialogue and working towards a more equitable future. By acknowledging the profound and lasting impacts of slavery, we can begin to build a society that genuinely lives up to its ideals of freedom and equality for all.

FAQs

1. What were the main political arguments used to defend slavery? Pro-slavery advocates primarily used arguments based on states' rights, economic necessity, and biblical interpretations, often claiming that slavery was a divinely sanctioned institution or a necessary component of their economic system.
2. How did the abolitionist movement impact the political landscape? The abolitionist movement directly challenged the established political and social order, forcing a national conversation about the morality and legality of slavery, ultimately contributing to the escalating tensions that led to the Civil War.

3. What are some examples of the lingering effects of slavery in modern politics? The lingering effects are evident in ongoing debates about racial justice, economic inequality, mass incarceration, and the political representation of marginalized communities, all stemming from the systemic disadvantages created by slavery and its aftermath.

4. What are the key arguments for and against reparations for slavery? Proponents of reparations emphasize the need to address historical injustices and the ongoing economic disparities caused by slavery. Opponents raise concerns about the practical challenges of implementation, fairness, and the difficulty of assigning blame across generations.

5. How can we learn from the past to prevent future instances of oppression and inequality? By studying the historical and political mechanisms that allowed slavery to flourish, we can better identify and counteract similar patterns of oppression and inequality in contemporary society, ensuring that we learn from past mistakes and build a more just and equitable future.

the divisive politics of slavery: The South and the Politics of Slavery, 1828-1856 William J. Cooper, Jr., 1980-06-01 The politics of slavery consumed the political world of the antebellum South. Although local economic, ethnic, and religious issues tended to dominate northern antebellum politics, *The South and the Politics of Slavery* convincingly argues that national and slavery-related issues were the overriding concerns of southern politics during these years. Accordingly, southern voters saw their parties, both Democratic and Whig, as the advocates and guardians of southern rights in the nation. William Cooper traces and analyzes the history of southern politics from the formation of the Democratic party in the late 1820s to the demise of the Democratic-Whig struggle in the 1850s, reporting on attitudes and reactions in each of the eleven states that were to form the Confederacy. Focusing on southern politicians and parties, Cooper emphasizes their relationship with each other, with their northern counterparts, and with southern voters, and he explores the connections between the values of southern white society and its parties and politicians. Based on extensive research in regional political manuscripts and newspapers, this study will be valuable to all historians of the period for the information and insight it provides on the role of the South in politics of the nation during the lifespan of the Jacksonian party system.

the divisive politics of slavery: John Quincy Adams and the Politics of Slavery David Waldstreicher, Matthew Mason, 2016-11-14 In the final years of his political career, President John Quincy Adams was well known for his objections to slavery, with rival Henry Wise going so far as to label him the acutest, the astutest, the archest enemy of southern slavery that ever existed. As a young statesman, however, he supported slavery. How did the man who in 1795 told a British cabinet officer not to speak to him of the Virginians, the Southern people, the democrats, whom he considered in no other light than as Americans, come to foretell a grand struggle between slavery and freedom? How could a committed expansionist, who would rather abandon his party and lose his U.S. Senate seat than attack Jeffersonian slave power, later come to declare the Mexican War the apoplexy of the Constitution, a hijacking of the republic by slaveholders? What changed? Entries from Adams's personal diary, more extensive than that of any American statesman, reveal a highly dynamic and accomplished politician in engagement with one of his generation's most challenging national dilemmas. Expertly edited by David Waldstreicher and Matthew Mason, *John Quincy Adams and the Politics of Slavery* offers an unusual perspective on the dramatic and shifting politics of slavery in the early republic, as it moved from the margins to the center of public life and from the shadows to the substance of Adams's politics. The editors provide a lucid introduction to the collection as a whole and frame the individual documents with brief and engaging insights, rendering both Adams's life and the controversies over slavery into a mutually illuminating narrative. By juxtaposing Adams's personal reflections on slavery with what he said-and did not say-publicly on the issue, the editors offer a nuanced portrait of how he interacted with prevailing

ideologies during his consequential career and life. John Quincy Adams and the Politics of Slavery is an invaluable contribution to our understanding of the complicated politics of slavery that set the groundwork for the Civil War.

the divisive politics of slavery: *Dred Scott and the Politics of Slavery* Earl M. Maltz, 2007 Closely examines one of the Supreme Court's most infamous decisions: that went far beyond one slave's suit for freeman status by declaring that ALL blacks--freemen as well as slaves--were not, and never could become, U.S. citizens, bringing an end to the 1820 Missouri Compromise, while also resulting in the outrage that led to the Civil War.

the divisive politics of slavery: *Wolf by the Ears* John R. Van Atta, 2015-06-30 "In this engaging work, Van Atta . . . provides an in-depth analysis of the 1820 Missouri Compromise, a seminal event on the road to the Civil War." —Choice In *Wolf by the Ears*, John R. Van Atta discusses how the question of slavery surfaced in the divisive fight over Missouri statehood. As Thomas Jefferson wrote at the time, a nation dealing with the politically implacable issue of slavery essentially held the "wolf" by the ears—and could neither let go nor hang on forever. The first organized Louisiana Purchase territory to lie completely west of the Mississippi River and northwest of the Ohio, Missouri carried special significance for both pro- and anti-slavery advocates. Northern congressmen leaped out of their seats to object to the proposed expansion of the slave "empire," while slave-state politicians voiced outrage at the northerners' blatant sectional attack. Although the Missouri confrontation ultimately appeared to end amicably with a famous compromise that the wily Kentuckian Henry Clay helped to cobble together, the passions it unleashed proved vicious, widespread, and long lasting. Van Atta deftly explains how the Missouri crisis revealed the power that slavery had already gained over American nation building. He explores the external social, cultural, and economic forces that gave the confrontation such urgency around the country, as well as the beliefs, assumptions, and fears that characterized both sides of the slavery argument. *Wolf by the Ears* provides students in American history with an ideal introduction to the Missouri crisis while at the same time offering fresh insights for scholars of the early republic. "Van Atta has written the clearest narrative of the Missouri crisis to date." —Louisiana History

the divisive politics of slavery: *American History: A Very Short Introduction* Paul S. Boyer, 2012-08-16 This volume in Oxford's A Very Short Introduction series offers a concise, readable narrative of the vast span of American history, from the earliest human migrations to the early twenty-first century when the United States loomed as a global power and comprised a complex multi-cultural society of more than 300 million people. The narrative is organized around major interpretive themes, with facts and dates introduced as needed to illustrate these themes. The emphasis throughout is on clarity and accessibility to the interested non-specialist.

the divisive politics of slavery: *Slavery's Constitution* David Waldstreicher, 2010-06-15 "A historian finds the seeds of an inevitable civil war embedded in the 'contradictions, ambiguities, and silences' about slavery in the Constitution." —Kirkus Reviews Taking on decades of received wisdom, David Waldstreicher has written the first book to recognize slavery's place at the heart of the US Constitution. Famously, the Constitution never mentions slavery. And yet, of its eighty-four clauses, six were directly concerned with slaves and the interests of their owners. Five other clauses had implications for slavery that were considered and debated by the delegates to the 1787 Constitutional Convention and the citizens of the states during ratification. Slavery was as important to the making of the Constitution as the Constitution was to the survival of slavery. By tracing slavery from before the revolution, through the Constitution's framing, and into the public debate that followed, Waldstreicher rigorously shows that slavery was not only actively discussed behind the closed and locked doors of the Constitutional Convention, but that it was also deftly woven into the Constitution itself. For one thing, slavery was central to the American economy, and since the document set the stage for a national economy, the Constitution could not avoid having implications for slavery. Even more, since the government defined sovereignty over individuals, as well as property in them, discussion of sovereignty led directly to debate over slavery's place in the new republic. Finding meaning in silences that have long been ignored, *Slavery's Constitution* is a vital

and sorely needed contribution to the conversation about the origins, impact, and meaning of our nation's founding document.

the divisive politics of slavery: Becoming Lincoln William W. Freehling, 2018-09-25
Shortlisted for the 2018 Lincoln Prize Previous biographies of Abraham Lincoln—universally acknowledged as one of America's greatest presidents—have typically focused on his experiences in the White House. In *Becoming Lincoln*, renowned historian William Freehling instead emphasizes the prewar years, revealing how Lincoln came to be the extraordinary leader who would guide the nation through its most bitter chapter. Freehling's engaging narrative focuses anew on Lincoln's journey. The epic highlights Lincoln's difficult family life, first with his father and later with his wife. We learn about the staggering number of setbacks and recoveries Lincoln experienced. We witness Lincoln's famous embodiment of the self-made man (although he sought and received critical help from others). The book traces Lincoln from his tough childhood through incarnations as a bankrupt with few prospects, a superb lawyer, a canny two-party politician, a great orator, a failed state legislator, and a losing senatorial candidate, to a winning presidential contender and a besieged six weeks as a pre-war president. As Lincoln's individual life unfolds, so does the American nineteenth century. Few great Americans have endured such pain but been rewarded with such success. Few lives have seen so much color and drama. Few mirror so uncannily the great themes of their own society. No one so well illustrates the emergence of our national economy and the causes of the Civil War. The book concludes with a substantial epilogue in which Freehling turns to Lincoln's wartime presidency to assess how the preceding fifty-one years of experience shaped the Great Emancipator's final four years. Extensively illustrated, nuanced but swiftly paced, and full of examples that vividly bring Lincoln to life for the modern reader, this new biography shows how an ordinary young man from the Midwest prepared to become, against almost absurd odds, our most tested and successful president.

the divisive politics of slavery: Analytic Narratives Robert H. Bates, Avner Greif, Margaret Levi, Jean-Laurent Rosenthal, Barry R. Weingast, 2020-07-21 Students of comparative politics have long faced a vexing dilemma: how can social scientists draw broad, applicable principles of political order from specific historical examples? In *Analytic Narratives*, five senior scholars offer a new and ambitious methodological response to this important question. By employing rational-choice and game theory, the authors propose a way of extracting empirically testable, general hypotheses from particular cases. The result is both a methodological manifesto and an applied handbook that political scientists, economic historians, sociologists, and students of political economy will find essential. In their jointly written introduction, the authors frame their approach to the origins and evolution of political institutions. The individual essays that follow demonstrate the concept of the analytic narrative—a rational-choice approach to explain political outcomes—in case studies. Avner Greif traces the institutional foundations of commercial expansion in twelfth-century Genoa. Jean-Laurent Rosenthal analyzes how divergent fiscal policies affected absolutist European governments, while Margaret Levi examines the transformation of nineteenth-century conscription laws in France, the United States, and Prussia. Robert Bates explores the emergence of a regulatory organization in the international coffee market. Finally, Barry Weingast studies the institutional foundations of democracy in the antebellum United States and its breakdown in the Civil War. In the process, these studies highlight the economic role of political organizations, the rise and deterioration of political communities, and the role of coercion, especially warfare, in political life. The results are both empirically relevant and theoretically sophisticated. *Analytic Narratives* is an innovative and provocative work that bridges the gap between the game-theoretic and empirically driven approaches in political economy. Political historians will find the use of rational-choice models novel; theorists will discover arguments more robust and nuanced than those derived from abstract models. The book improves on earlier studies by advocating—and applying—a cross-disciplinary approach to explain strategic decision making in history.

the divisive politics of slavery: The Politics of Slave Trade Suppression in Britain and France, 1814-48 P. Kielstra, 2000-07-25 Britain's rarely-examined, nineteenth-century diplomatic

efforts for abolition took contemporary pre-eminence over most questions and almost sparked war with France in 1845. Kielstra examines the issue in Anglo-French relations: how conflicting moral, economic, and nationalist pressures and lobby groups affected domestic politics and high diplomacy. To preserve peace and their positions, statesmen had little margin for error as they framed policies which attacked the trade and satisfied mutually incompatible domestic opinions, in a struggle which holds lessons for current efforts to include human rights concerns in foreign policy.

the divisive politics of slavery: Dred Scott and the Problem of Constitutional Evil Mark A. Graber, 2006-07-03 *Dred Scott and the Problem of Constitutional Evil*, first published in 2006, concerns what is entailed by pledging allegiance to a constitutional text and tradition saturated with concessions to evil. The Constitution of the United States was originally understood as an effort to mediate controversies between persons who disputed fundamental values, and did not offer a vision of the good society. In order to form a 'more perfect union' with slaveholders, late-eighteenth-century citizens fashioned a constitution that plainly compelled some injustices and was silent or ambiguous on other questions of fundamental right. This constitutional relationship could survive only as long as a bisectional consensus was required to resolve all constitutional questions not settled in 1787. *Dred Scott* challenges persons committed to human freedom to determine whether antislavery northerners should have provided more accommodations for slavery than were constitutionally strictly necessary or risked the enormous destruction of life and property that preceded Lincoln's new birth of freedom.

the divisive politics of slavery: This War Ain't Over Nina Silber, 2018-11-02 *The New Deal* era witnessed a surprising surge in popular engagement with the history and memory of the Civil War era. From the omnipresent book and film *Gone with the Wind* and the scores of popular theater productions to Aaron Copeland's *A Lincoln Portrait*, it was hard to miss America's fascination with the war in the 1930s and 1940s. Nina Silber deftly examines the often conflicting and politically contentious ways in which Americans remembered the Civil War era during the years of the Depression, the New Deal, and World War II. In doing so, she reveals how the debates and events of that earlier period resonated so profoundly with New Deal rhetoric about state power, emerging civil rights activism, labor organizing and trade unionism, and popular culture in wartime. At the heart of this book is an examination of how historical memory offers people a means of understanding and defining themselves in the present. Silber reveals how, during a moment of enormous national turmoil, the events and personages of the Civil War provided a framework for reassessing national identity, class conflict, and racial and ethnic division. The New Deal era may have been the first time Civil War memory loomed so large for the nation as a whole, but, as the present moment suggests, it was hardly the last.

the divisive politics of slavery: The Long Affair Conor Cruise O'Brien, 1998-04-28 As controversial and explosive as it is elegant and learned, *The Long Affair* is Conor Cruise O'Brien's examination of Thomas Jefferson, as man and icon, through the critical lens of the French Revolution. O'Brien offers a provocative analysis of the supreme symbol of American history and political culture and challenges the traditional perceptions of both Jeffersonian history and the Jeffersonian legacy. The book is an attack on America's long affair with Jeffersonian ideology of radical individualism: an ideology that, by confusing Jefferson with a secular prophet, will destroy the United States from within.—David C. Ward, *Boston Book Review* With his background as a politician and a diplomat, O'Brien brings a broad perspective to his effort to define Jefferson's beliefs through the prism of his attitudes toward France. . . . This is an important work that makes an essential contribution to the overall picture of Jefferson.—Booklist O'Brien traces the roots of Jefferson's admiration for the revolution in France but notes that Jefferson's enthusiasm for France cooled in the 1790s, when French egalitarian ideals came to threaten the slave-based Southern economy that Jefferson supported.—Library Journal In O'Brien's opinion, it's time that Americans face the fact that Jefferson, long seen as a champion of the 'wronged masses,' was a racist who should not be placed on a pedestal in an increasingly multicultural United States.—Boston Phoenix O'Brien makes a well-argued revisionist contribution to the literature on Jefferson.—Kirkus Reviews

O'Brien is right on target . . . determined not to let the evasions and cover-ups continue.—Forrest McDonald, *National Review* The Long Affair should be read by anyone interested in Jefferson—or in a good fight.—Richard Brookhiser, *New York Times Book Review*

the divisive politics of slavery: The Crooked Path to Abolition: Abraham Lincoln and the Antislavery Constitution James Oakes, 2021-01-12 Finalist for the 2022 Lincoln Prize An award-winning scholar uncovers the guiding principles of Lincoln's antislavery strategies. The long and turning path to the abolition of American slavery has often been attributed to the equivocations and inconsistencies of antislavery leaders, including Lincoln himself. But James Oakes's brilliant history of Lincoln's antislavery strategies reveals a striking consistency and commitment extending over many years. The linchpin of antislavery for Lincoln was the Constitution of the United States. Lincoln adopted the antislavery view that the Constitution made freedom the rule in the United States, slavery the exception. Where federal power prevailed, so did freedom. Where state power prevailed, that state determined the status of slavery, and the federal government could not interfere. It would take state action to achieve the final abolition of American slavery. With this understanding, Lincoln and his antislavery allies used every tool available to undermine the institution. Wherever the Constitution empowered direct federal action—in the western territories, in the District of Columbia, over the slave trade—they intervened. As a congressman in 1849 Lincoln sponsored a bill to abolish slavery in Washington, DC. He reentered politics in 1854 to oppose what he considered the unconstitutional opening of the territories to slavery by the Kansas-Nebraska Act. He attempted to persuade states to abolish slavery by supporting gradual abolition with compensation for slaveholders and the colonization of free Blacks abroad. President Lincoln took full advantage of the antislavery options opened by the Civil War. Enslaved people who escaped to Union lines were declared free. The Emancipation Proclamation, a military order of the president, undermined slavery across the South. It led to abolition by six slave states, which then joined the coalition to affect what Lincoln called the King's cure: state ratification of the constitutional amendment that in 1865 finally abolished slavery.

the divisive politics of slavery: The Dred Scott Case Roger Brooke Taney, Israel Washburn, Horace Gray, 2022-10-27 The Washington University Libraries presents an online exhibit of documents regarding the Dred Scott case. American slave Dred Scott (1795?-1858) and his wife Harriet filed suit for their freedom in the Saint Louis Circuit Court in 1846. The U.S. Supreme Court decided in 1857 that the Scotts must remain slaves.

the divisive politics of slavery: Reparations Alfred L. Brophy, 2006-09-14 Publisher Description

the divisive politics of slavery: Armies of Deliverance Elizabeth R. Varon, 2019 In *Armies of Deliverance*, Elizabeth Varon offers both a sweeping narrative of the Civil War and a bold new interpretation of Union and Confederate war aims.

the divisive politics of slavery: Washington Brotherhood Rachel A. Sheldon, 2013-12-16 Traditional portrayals of politicians in antebellum Washington, D.C., describe a violent and divisive society, full of angry debates and violent duels, a microcosm of the building animosity throughout the country. Yet, in *Washington Brotherhood*, Rachel Sheldon paints a more nuanced portrait of Washington as a less fractious city with a vibrant social and cultural life. Politicians from different parties and sections of the country interacted in a variety of day-to-day activities outside traditional political spaces and came to know one another on a personal level. Sheldon shows that this engagement by figures such as Stephen Douglas, John Crittenden, Abraham Lincoln, and Alexander Stephens had important consequences for how lawmakers dealt with the sectional disputes that bedeviled the country during the 1840s and 1850s--particularly disputes involving slavery in the territories. Sheldon uses primary documents--from housing records to personal diaries--to reveal the ways in which this political sociability influenced how laws were made in the antebellum era. Ultimately, this Washington bubble explains why so many of these men were unprepared for secession and war when the winter of 1860-61 arrived.

the divisive politics of slavery: Strange Nation J. Gerald Kennedy, 2016-03-21 After the War

of 1812, Americans belatedly realized that they lacked national identity. The subsequent campaign to articulate nationality transformed every facet of culture from architecture to painting, and in the realm of letters, literary jingoism embroiled American authors in the heated politics of nationalism. The age demanded stirring images of U.S. virtue, often achieved by contriving myths and obscuring brutalities. Between these sanitized narratives of the nation and U.S. social reality lay a grotesque discontinuity: vehement conflicts over slavery, Indian removal, immigration, and territorial expansion divided the country. Authors such as Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, Catharine M. Sedgwick, William Gilmore Simms, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Lydia Maria Child wrestled uneasily with the imperative to revise history to produce national fable. Counter-narratives by fugitive slaves, Native Americans, and defiant women subverted literary nationalism by exposing the plight of the unfree and dispossessed. And with them all, Edgar Allan Poe openly mocked literary nationalism and deplored the celebration of stupid books appealing to provincial self-congratulation. More than any other author, he personifies the contrary, alien perspective that discerns the weird operations at work behind the facade of American nation-building.

the divisive politics of slavery: The War Before the War Andrew Delbanco, 2019-11-05 A New York Times Notable Book Selection Winner of the Mark Lynton History Prize Winner of the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award Winner of the Lionel Trilling Book Award A New York Times Critics' Best Book Excellent... stunning.—Ta-Nehisi Coates This book tells the story of America's original sin—slavery—through politics, law, literature, and above all, through the eyes of enslaved black people who risked their lives to flee from bondage, thereby forcing the nation to confront the truth about itself. The struggle over slavery divided not only the American nation but also the hearts and minds of individual citizens faced with the timeless problem of when to submit to unjust laws and when to resist. The War Before the War illuminates what brought us to war with ourselves and the terrible legacies of slavery that are with us still.

the divisive politics of slavery: Who Owns History? Eric Foner, 2003-04-16 "Who Owns History? testifies to Eric Foner's lifelong personal commitment to writing histories that advance the struggle for racial equality and economic justice." —David Glassberg, The Sunday Star-Ledger History has become a matter of public controversy, as Americans clash over such things as museum presentations, the flying of the Confederate flag, and reparations for slavery. So whose history is being written? Who owns it? Eric Foner answers these and other questions about the historian's relationship to the world of the past and future in this provocative, even controversial, study of the reasons we care about history—or should.

the divisive politics of slavery: The Politics of Fear Ruth Wodak, 2020-10-12 Far-right populist politics have arrived in the mainstream. We are now witnessing the shameless normalization of a political discourse built around nationalism, xenophobia, racism, sexism, antisemitism and Islamophobia. But what does this change mean? What caused it? And how does far-right populist discourse work? The Politics of Fear traces the trajectory of far-right politics from the margins of the political landscape to its very centre. It explores the social and historical mechanisms at play, and expertly ties these to the micro-politics of far-right language and discourse. From speeches to cartoons to social media posts, Ruth Wodak systematically analyzes the texts and images used by these groups, laying bare the strategies, rhetoric and half-truths the far-right employ. The revised second edition of this best-selling book includes: A range of vignettes analyzing specific instances of far-right discourse in detail. Expanded discussion of the normalization of far-right discourse. A new chapter exploring the challenges to liberal democracy. An updated glossary of far-right parties and movements. More discussion of the impact of social media on the rise of the far-right. Critical, analytical and impassioned, The Politics of Fear is essential reading for anyone looking to understand how far-right and populist politics have moved into the mainstream, and what we can do about it.

the divisive politics of slavery: American Political History: A Very Short Introduction Donald T. Critchlow, 2015-01-14 The Founding Fathers who drafted the United States Constitution in 1787 distrusted political parties, popular democracy, centralized government, and a strong executive

office. Yet the country's national politics have historically included all those features. In *American Political History: A Very Short Introduction*, Donald Critchlow takes on this contradiction between original theory and actual practice. This brief, accessible book explores the nature of the two-party system, key turning points in American political history, representative presidential and congressional elections, struggles to expand the electorate, and critical social protest and third-party movements. The volume emphasizes the continuity of a liberal tradition challenged by partisan divide, war, and periodic economic turmoil. *American Political History: A Very Short Introduction* explores the emergence of a democratic political culture within a republican form of government, showing the mobilization and extension of the mass electorate over the lifespan of the country. In a nation characterized by great racial, ethnic, and religious diversity, American democracy has proven extraordinarily durable. Individual parties have risen and fallen, but the dominance of the two-party system persists. Fierce debates over the meaning of the U.S. Constitution have created profound divisions within the parties and among voters, but a belief in the importance of constitutional order persists among political leaders and voters. Americans have been deeply divided about the extent of federal power, slavery, the meaning of citizenship, immigration policy, civil rights, and a range of economic, financial, and social policies. New immigrants, racial minorities, and women have joined the electorate and the debates. But American political history, with its deep social divisions, bellicose rhetoric, and antagonistic partisanship provides valuable lessons about the meaning and viability of democracy in the early 21st century. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

the divisive politics of slavery: This Vast Southern Empire Matthew Karp, 2016-09-12
Winner of the John H. Dunning Prize, American Historical Association Winner of the Stuart L. Bernath Book Prize, Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Winner of the James H. Broussard Best First Book Prize, Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Winner of the North Jersey Civil War Round Table Book Award Finalist for the Harriet Tubman Prize, Lapidus Center for the Historical Analysis of Transatlantic Slavery When the United States emerged as a world power in the years before the Civil War, the men who presided over the nation's triumphant territorial and economic expansion were largely southern slaveholders. As presidents, cabinet officers, and diplomats, slaveholding leaders controlled the main levers of foreign policy inside an increasingly powerful American state. This *Vast Southern Empire* explores the international vision and strategic operations of these southerners at the commanding heights of American politics. "At the close of the Civil War, more than Southern independence and the bones of the dead lay amid the smoking ruins of the Confederacy. Also lost was the memory of the prewar decades, when Southern politicians and pro-slavery ambitions shaped the foreign policy of the United States in order to protect slavery at home and advance its interests abroad. With *This Vast Southern Empire*, Matthew Karp recovers that forgotten history and presents it in fascinating and often surprising detail." —Fergus Bordewich, *Wall Street Journal* "Matthew Karp's illuminating book *This Vast Southern Empire* shows that the South was interested not only in gaining new slave territory but also in promoting slavery throughout the Western Hemisphere." —David S. Reynolds, *New York Review of Books*

the divisive politics of slavery: The Americans, 2005

the divisive politics of slavery: The 1619 Project: A Critique Phillip W. Magness, 2020-04-07
"When I first weighed in upon the *New York Times'* 1619 Project, I was struck by its conflicted messaging. Comprising an entire magazine feature and a sizable advertising budget, the newspaper's initiative conveyed a serious attempt to engage the public in an intellectual exchange about the history of slavery in the United States and its lingering harms to our social fabric. It also seemed to avoid the superficiality of many public history initiatives, which all too often reduce over 400 complex years of slavery's history and legacy to sweeping generalizations. Instead, the *Times*

promised detailed thematic explorations of topics ranging from the first slave ship's arrival in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619 to the politics of race in the present day. At the same time, however, certain 1619 Project essayists infused this worthy line of inquiry with a heavy stream of ideological advocacy. Times reporter Nikole Hannah-Jones announced this political intention openly, pairing progressive activism with the initiative's stated educational purposes. In assembling these essays, I make no claim of resolving what continues to be a vibrant and ongoing discussion. Neither should my work be viewed as the final arbiter of historical accuracy, though I do evaluate a number of factual and interpretive claims made by the project's authors. Rather, the aim is to provide an accessible resource for readers wishing to navigate the scholarly disputes, offering my own interpretive take on claims pertaining to areas of history in which I have worked. -- Phil Magness

the divisive politics of slavery: *The Second Founding: How the Civil War and Reconstruction Remade the Constitution* Eric Foner, 2019-09-17 "Gripping and essential."—Jesse Wegman, New York Times An authoritative history by the preeminent scholar of the Civil War era, *The Second Founding* traces the arc of the three foundational Reconstruction amendments from their origins in antebellum activism and adoption amidst intense postwar politics to their virtual nullification by narrow Supreme Court decisions and Jim Crow state laws. Today these amendments remain strong tools for achieving the American ideal of equality, if only we will take them up.

the divisive politics of slavery: *The Politics of Union*, 1980-01-01 ?The best general account of politics in the North,? as David Herbert Donald calls this book, is also the first one-volume history of its subject. Abraham Lincoln?s single goal of saving the Union required not simply subduing the South but contending as well with divisiveness in the North?with refractory state officials, draft resisters, peace advocates, secret organizations, with Northern Democrats (too often seen only as Copperheads or as traitors to the Union), and with powerful Republicans who often vocally disagreed with Lincoln?s policies. In this account, Radical Republicans represent consensus with Lincoln more than conflict, sectional more than economic interests, and party over faction. Largely, dissent was heard and accommodated; and, if the federal legislation of the time did amount to a Second American Revolution, it emerged from the conflicts, within the North as well as against the South, of a nation at war. The outcome was a nation not only saved but strengthened and slavery ended.

the divisive politics of slavery: *Nationalism: A Very Short Introduction* Steven Elliott Grosby, 2005-09-08 Throughout history, humanity has borne witness to the political and moral challenges that arise when people place national identity above allegiance to geo-political states or international communities. This book discusses the concept of nations and nationalism from social, philosophical, geological, theological and anthropological perspectives. It examines the subject through conflicts past and present, including recent conflicts in the Balkans and the Middle East, rather than exclusively focusing on theory. Above all, this fascinating and comprehensive work clearly shows how feelings of nationalism are an inescapable part of being human.

the divisive politics of slavery: *Race and the Making of the Mormon People* Max Perry Mueller, 2017-08-08 The nineteenth-century history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Max Perry Mueller argues, illuminates the role that religion played in forming the notion of three original American races—red, black, and white—for Mormons and others in the early American Republic. Recovering the voices of a handful of black and Native American Mormons who resolutely wrote themselves into the Mormon archive, Mueller threads together historical experience and Mormon scriptural interpretations. He finds that the Book of Mormon is key to understanding how early followers reflected but also departed from antebellum conceptions of race as biblically and biologically predetermined. Mormon theology and policy both challenged and reaffirmed the essentialist nature of the racialized American experience. The Book of Mormon presented its believers with a radical worldview, proclaiming that all schisms within the human family were anathematic to God's design. That said, church founders were not racial egalitarians. They promoted whiteness as an aspirational racial identity that nonwhites could achieve through conversion to Mormonism. Mueller also shows how, on a broader level, scripture and history may become mutually

constituted. For the Mormons, that process shaped a religious movement in perpetual tension between its racist and universalist impulses during an era before the concept of race was secularized.

the divisive politics of slavery: Where the People Go John D. Roth, 2020-06-30 A barn raising. A quilting bee. A credit union. A socially responsible investment. Where the People Go tells the story of Anabaptist-Mennonite efforts to enable communal forms of sharing. Mutual aid, stewardship, and generosity are deeply embedded in the Christian faith and have been actively nurtured among Anabaptist-Mennonite groups. Spontaneous forms of assistance—a barn raising, a quilting bee, shared meals—are the best-known expressions of such compassion and generosity, but the commitment to “sharing one another’s burdens” has also found expression in more formal structures. Seventy-five years ago, Mennonite Mutual Aid emerged to organize the principle of sharing within a growing Mennonite denomination. A dynamic organization from the beginning, MMA moved quickly from a burial and survivor’s aid plan to include health, property, and automobile insurance. In coming decades, the organization shifted its focus from mutual aid to stewardship and generosity, symbolized by a growing emphasis on socially responsible investment programs, wholistic health, financial planning, and services associated with its member-owned credit union. Always an agency of the Mennonite church, MMA, now known as Everence, has balanced its spiritual commitments with an increasingly complex regulatory environment, the national strains associated with the health-care debate, the shifting sensibilities of its customers, and the organizational complexities of a major corporation. This story of Everence captures the stresses and idealism of a church-related institution committed to mutual aid, stewardship, and generosity during its seventy-five-year history.

the divisive politics of slavery: African Politics Ian Taylor, 2018-09-20 Africa is a continent of 54 countries and over a billion people. However, despite the rich diversity of the African experience, it is striking that continuations and themes seem to be reflected across the continent, particularly south of the Sahara. Questions of underdevelopment, outside exploitation, and misrule are characteristic of many - if not most-states in Sub-Saharan Africa. In this Very Short Introduction Ian Taylor explores how politics is practiced on the African continent, considering the nature of the state in Sub-Saharan Africa and why its state structures are generally weaker than elsewhere in the world. Exploring the historical and contemporary factors which account for Africa's underdevelopment, he also analyses why some African countries suffer from high levels of political violence while others are spared. Unveiling the ways in which African state and society actually function beyond the formal institutional façade, Taylor discusses how external factors - both inherited and contemporary - act upon the continent. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

the divisive politics of slavery: The Politics of Rage Dan T. Carter, 2000-02-01 Combining biography with regional and national history, Dan T. Carter chronicles the dramatic rise and fall of George Wallace, a populist who abandoned his ideals to become a national symbol of racism, and later begged for forgiveness. In *The Politics of Rage*, Carter argues persuasively that the four-time Alabama governor and four-time presidential candidate helped to establish the conservative political movement that put Ronald Reagan in the White House in 1980 and gave Newt Gingrich and the Republicans control of Congress in 1994. In this second edition, Carter updates Wallace’s story with a look at the politician’s death and the nation’s reaction to it and gives a summary of his own sense of the legacy of “the most important loser in twentieth-century American politics.”

the divisive politics of slavery: McDougal Littell the Americans Gerald A. Danzer, 1999-07-23

the divisive politics of slavery: The Cambridge World History of Slavery: Volume 3, AD 1420-AD 1804 David Eltis, Stanley L. Engerman, Keith R. Bradley, Paul Cartledge, Seymour

Drescher, 2011-07-25 The various manifestations of coerced labour between the opening up of the Atlantic world and the formal creation of Haiti.

the divisive politics of slavery: American Nationalisms Benjamin E. Park, 2018-01-11 This book traces how early Americans imagined what a 'nation' meant during the first fifty years of the country's existence.

the divisive politics of slavery: The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party Michael F. Holt, 2003-05-01 Here, Michael F. Holt gives us the only comprehensive history of the Whigs ever written. He offers a panoramic account of the tumultuous antebellum period, a time when a flurry of parties and larger-than-life politicians--Andrew Jackson, John C. Calhoun, Martin Van Buren, and Henry Clay--struggled for control as the U.S. inched towards secession. It was an era when Americans were passionately involved in politics, when local concerns drove national policy, and when momentous political events--like the Annexation of Texas and the Kansas-Nebraska Act--rocked the country. Amid this contentious political activity, the Whig Party continuously strove to unite North and South, emerging as the nation's last great hope to prevent secession.

the divisive politics of slavery: Beside the Bard George S. Christian, 2020-03-13 Whether male or female, loyalist or radical, urban or rural, literati or autodidacts, Scottish Lowland poets in the age of Burns adamantly refuse to imagine a single British nation. Instead, they pose the question of Scotland as a revolutionary category, always subject to creative destruction and reformation.

the divisive politics of slavery: In the Matter of Nat Turner Christopher Tomlins, 2022-06-14 A bold new interpretation of Nat Turner and the slave rebellion that stunned the American South In 1831 Virginia, Nat Turner led a band of Southampton County slaves in a rebellion that killed fifty-five whites, mostly women and children. After more than two months in hiding, Turner was captured, and quickly convicted and executed. In the Matter of Nat Turner penetrates the historical caricature of Turner as befuddled mystic and self-styled Baptist preacher to recover the haunting persona of this legendary American slave rebel, telling of his self-discovery and the dawning of his Christian faith, of an impossible task given to him by God, and of redemptive violence and profane retribution. Much about Turner remains unknown. His extraordinary account of his life and rebellion, given in chains as he awaited trial in jail, was written down by an opportunistic white attorney and sold as a pamphlet to cash in on Turner's notoriety. But the enigmatic rebel leader had an immediate and broad impact on the American South, and his rebellion remains one of the most momentous episodes in American history. Christopher Tomlins provides a luminous account of Turner's intellectual development, religious cosmology, and motivations, and offers an original and incisive analysis of the Turner Rebellion itself and its impact on Virginia politics. Tomlins also undertakes a deeply critical examination of William Styron's 1967 novel, *The Confessions of Nat Turner*, which restored Turner to the American consciousness in the era of civil rights, black power, and urban riots. A speculative history that recovers Turner from the few shards of evidence we have about his life, *In the Matter of Nat Turner* is also a unique speculation about the meaning and uses of history itself.

the divisive politics of slavery: The Americans McDougal-Littell Publishing Staff, 2002-03-04

the divisive politics of slavery: Apostles of Disunion Charles B. Dew, 2017-02-03 Charles Dew's *Apostles of Disunion* has established itself as a modern classic and an indispensable account of the Southern states' secession from the Union. Addressing topics still hotly debated among historians and the public at large more than a century and a half after the Civil War, the book offers a compelling and clearly substantiated argument that slavery and race were at the heart of our great national crisis. The fifteen years since the original publication of *Apostles of Disunion* have seen an intensification of debates surrounding the Confederate flag and Civil War monuments. In a powerful new afterword to this anniversary edition, Dew situates the book in relation to these recent controversies and factors in the role of vast financial interests tied to the internal slave trade in pushing Virginia and other upper South states toward secession and war.