

AP United States History

The Path to Civil War: Slavery

- Wilmot's Proviso: 1846
 - Congress wants to ban slavery in newly acquired Mexico territories
 - South argues that Congress cannot regulate property exchange in territories
 - Passes in the House often (north has more population) but fails in Senate
- Popular Sovereignty
 - Introduced by Northerners (Michigan, Illinois)
 - Concept that territories should decide for themselves whether slavery should be allowed or not
- Compromise of 1850
 - California is a free state, Utah and New Mexico would be admitted under popular sovereignty
 - Tougher Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 enacted (requires assistance to recover slaves)
 - Denied fugitive's right to jury trial
- Consequences of the Fugitive Slave Law
 - Makes more abolitionists revolved to end slavery
 - Underground railroad is more active, peaking between 1850 and 1860
 - Ambivalence on the subject of slavery gave way to definitive opinion
- Kansas Nebraska Act: 1854
 - Popular sovereignty in both territories. Douglas wanted to build a transcontinental railroad to pass through Illinois and wants Nebraska territories to become states
 - Basically repeals the Missouri Compromise, barely passes
 - This leads to Bleeding Kansas: violence between radical abolitionists and pro-slavery. Two Kansas governments, two governments, constitutions.