Why the Civil War Happened
And What We Can Learn From It

WHAT WE’LL COVER IN THIS COURSE
- Day One: Setting the stage: - the late 1790s through the 1830s or so
- Day Two: 1840 through mid-1850s
- Day Three: Late 1850s-spring of 1861

Really Three Questions
- Why didn’t the US have a civil war before 1861?
- Why did the 1861 crisis lead to war?
- Should preservation of the union have been the primary goal of the early 19th century in America?
GEORGE WASHINGTON’S FAREWELL ADDRESS

1. Importance of unity among states
2. Dangers of sectionalism
3. Major change through Constitutional amendments
4. Dangers of political parties

5. Importance of religion, morality, and education
6. Avoidance of debt
7. Maintenance of neutrality with other nations
8. Importance of free trade

GEORGE WASHINGTON’S FAREWELL ADDRESS – SELECTED PORTIONS

1. Importance of unity among states
2. Dangers of sectionalism
3. Dangers of political parties
GEORGE WASHINGTON’S FAREWELL ADDRESS – UNITY

“These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind and exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of patriotic desire.”

GEORGE WASHINGTON’S FAREWELL ADDRESS – SECTIONALISM

“. . . discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.”

GEORGE WASHINGTON’S FAREWELL ADDRESS – POLITICAL PARTIES

“[Factions] are likely . . . to become potent engines by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.”
GEORGE WASHINGTON’S FAREWELL ADDRESS – POLITICAL PARTIES

“It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, foments occasionally riot and insurrection.”

THE HISTORY TRAIN

- Economic Change
- Social Change
- Political Change
- WAR

KARL MARX AND JAMES MADISON HAD IT ABOUT RIGHT

- Eliminate Causes (Marx)
- Limit Freedom
- Property is the source of factions
- Equalize Property
- Control the Effects of Factions (Madison)
- Checks and Balances, Separation of Powers
ECONOMIC CHANGES: INDUSTRIALIZATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>COTTON GIN</td>
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<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>INTERCHANGEABLE PARTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>THE FACTORY SYSTEM</td>
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<tr>
<td>1807</td>
<td>STEAMBOAT</td>
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<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>ERIE CANAL</td>
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<td>1831</td>
<td>McCORMICK REAPER</td>
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<td>1837</td>
<td>STEEL PLOW</td>
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<tr>
<td>1800-1830</td>
<td>TURNPIKES</td>
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<tr>
<td>1828-1860</td>
<td>RAILROADS</td>
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<td>1844-1860</td>
<td>TELEGRAPH</td>
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SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHANGES:
SLAVERY & COTTON

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1790</th>
<th>1830</th>
<th>1860</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td># SLAVES</td>
<td>698,000</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td># SLAVE STATES</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>COTTON PRODUCTION</td>
<td>4,000 bales</td>
<td>720,000 bales</td>
<td>5 million bales</td>
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</table>

Karen McPherson
Fall 2018

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES:
SLAVERY OR “STATES’ RIGHTS?”

- Alexander Stephens (CSA VP) March 1861 “Cornerstone” Speech:
  - Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite idea; its . . . cornerstone rests upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery subordination to the superior race is his natural and normal condition. This . . . government is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great . . . truth.
  - Any other historical interpretation is “revisionist” history,
Social and Cultural Changes

▪ Westward Expansion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Land Area (sq. mi.)</th>
<th>Density (Persons per sq. mi.)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>3,929,214</td>
<td>864,746</td>
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<td>1800</td>
<td>5,308,463</td>
<td>864,746</td>
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<td>1810</td>
<td>7,205,861</td>
<td>1,581,625</td>
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<td>1820</td>
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<td>1830</td>
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<td>1840</td>
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<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>23,191,876</td>
<td>2,040,042</td>
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<td>1860</td>
<td>31,443,321</td>
<td>2,569,640</td>
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LAND ORDINANCE OF 1785

- Set the basis for a land survey system that would endure until the 1862 Homestead Act.
- Townships, 36 square miles.
- Land sold by section, half section, quarter section
- Section 16 reserved for public education
NORTHWEST ORDINANCE OF 1787

- Established the process for the creation of new states from the region.
- Limited form a government before the population of a territory reached 5,000: A governor, a secretary, and three judges appointed by Congress
- Population reaches 60,000 it could apply for statehood and would be admitted to the union on an equal footing with the original thirteen states.

- And oh yeah – No slavery