Technology and Politics

Telegraphy and the 1860 Election

By

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation has incorporated digital modes and methods of research to answer the question “Did telegraphy aid in the rise of the Republican Party and the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860?” My assessment is that telegraphy affected Lincoln's ability to consolidate the North into a Republican voting bloc ultimately securing his election to the presidency. I came to that conclusion by examining the locations (states and counties) where telegraph offices existed and compared them with locations that provided the most support for Lincoln in 1860. I have also, to some extent, examined telegraphy's impact on the rise of the Republican Party, the political organization that carried Lincoln to victory. The digital tool used for this examination was ArcGIS. I used ArcGIS to map and then to digitally analyze the data and other information collected during this research process. By 1860, most major newspapers used telegraphy to gather and disseminate information so I have also included a discussion and some information about newspapers. Local newspapers, such the Charleston Mercury, had sections labeled “Latest By Telegraph.” National newspapers, such as the New York Herald, also had sections labeled “News By Telegraph.” These columns were dedicated to publishing news very rapidly. I used the digital newspaper repository www.newspapers.com and the Library of Congress's Chronicling American newspaper database. These digital newspaper databases made it possible to keyword search thousands of newspapers to see where information appeared at certain times. Though the databases may not represent an exhaustive listing of newspapers, they did provide a snapshot of some of the places information appeared and when it was published. The focus of this dissertation has been narrowed to focus primarily on an examination of the Republican Party's role in the election of 1860. The analysis has centered on comparing the locations that provided the highest density of support for the Republican Party in 1860 with the locations that had the greatest amount of telegraph office locations. The “public” portion of this dissertation is represented in the creation of a public website (www.edbeason.com) that contains maps and other graphical displays along with data collected during the project.

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Introduction

When Samuel Morse commenced construction on the world's first long-distance telegraph line in early 1844, he may have been the first human being to experience first-hand the spacealtering phenomenon of instant communication. Morse had secured federal funding in 1843 allowing him to proceed with the construction of an experimental telegraph line connecting Washington, D.C. to Baltimore, Maryland. Congress approved Morse's request specifically to "test the practicability of establishing a system of electromagnetic telegraphs by the United States."[1] Securing Congressional funding for the telegraph project had been a major ordeal. Morse had approached Congress five years earlier in 1838 but failed to convince elected leaders the project was worthy of public money. Even as Congress debated the funding in 1843, Cave Johnson of Tennessee ridiculed Morse's proposal of long-distance communication by saying if Congress funded electromagnetic telegraphy it might as well fund the "science" of mesmerism. George S. Houston of Alabama said funding Morse's proposal would be equivalent to funding the Millerites, a religious sect that had predicted the second coming of Christ in 1844. Congress funded Morse's proposal but by the slim majority of 89 to 83.[2] To get the project underway, Morse hired a superintendent to oversee construction. He hoped to have the job completed by the following spring when presidential election campaign would commence so he could prove telegraphy worthy of Congressional investment.

Once construction on the line began, Morse regularly conversed with the superintendent overseeing the project via the completed sections. By communicating over the line, Morse intended confirm the line was working properly and also to exchanged updates and project details. Morse said in some of the conversations "he sometimes forgot himself, and was about to speak as though [the superintendent] were present, forgetting he was talking with a man eleven or twelve miles

[1] *Senate Journal.* 27th Congress, 3rd Session, March 03, 1844, 283.
[2] *Congressional Globe,* 27th Congress, 3rd Session, February 23, 1843, 443.

distant."[3] Several years later, this same space-altering phenomenon materialized as "employees of the American Telegraph Company between Boston and Calais, Maine held a meeting by telegraph after hours." Hundreds of operators from approximately thirty-three different telegraph offices attended along a 700-mile stretch of telegraph line. This meeting played out in a similar manner as a modern group text-message meeting as "each speaker tapped out his words in Morse Code so that 'all of the offices upon the line received his remarks at the same moment, thus annihilating space and time, bringing together the different parties, in effect, as near to each other as though they were in the same room."[4] Though separated by vast distance, telegraphy allowed people to perceive themselves in the intimate setting of a room.

This dissertation is devoted to understanding the political implications of telegraphy during the critical period leading to the 1860 election. When Morse selected Washington, D.C. and Baltimore as the target cities for his experimental telegraph line, he had done so specifically because of the political events that were to transpire in Baltimore in 1844. He planned to connect Washington, D.C., the political power center of the nation, with Baltimore because both major political parties—the Democratic and Whig parties—had announced their nominating conventions were to be hosted in Baltimore in May 1844. When the Whig Party met and nominated Henry Clay as the Whig presidential candidate in on May 01, Morse's line had made to within fifteen miles of Baltimore. In order to report on the Whig convention, Morse set up a temporary telegraph office in the basement of the Capitol building while, Alfred Vail, a Morse telegraph partner, traveled to the terminus of the line and set up a makeshift telegraph office. Though most political leaders waited to confirm Clay's nomination via the Baltimore train, "telegraphic news of Clay's nomination had been

[3] A.S. Abell & Co, "Professor Morse's Telegraph," *Baltimore Sun,* Baltimore. Saturday April 20, 1844. 20 Apr 1844, 1 - The Baltimore Sun at Newspapers.com.
[4] Tom Standage. *The Victorian Internet: The Remarkable Story of the Telegraph and the Nineteenth Century's OnLine Pioneers* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2007), 132.

in circulation throughout Congress for a full hour and a half before the train from Baltimore arrived."[5] That came as no surprise as Clay had been a key player in Whig Party politics for over twenty years. In the announcement of Clay's nomination, Vail had also included information about Theodore Freylinghuysen being nominated as the Whig vice-presidential candidate. The *Philadelphia Public Ledger* ran an article saying, "Morse's new electric telegraph, which has now reached within fifteen miles of Baltimore, transmitted to Washington the nomination of the Hon. Theodore Freylinghuysen an hour and a half before the cars got along with it." It was astonishing, the author said, that such information had "traversed the whole 22 miles and back again—making 44 miles—in no perceptible part of a second of time."[6]

The Democratic Party convened in Baltimore on approximately three weeks later on May 27. By that time, Morse had successfully completed the construction of the telegraph line connecting Washington, D.C. with the city of Baltimore. As a matter of fact, three days prior to the Democratic Party's convention on May 24, Morse had sent the famous "What hath God wrought" telegraph message announcing the completion of the world's first intercity telegraph line. The Democratic Party convention actually provided Morse with a better opportunity to prove the utility of telegraphy as a viable mode of long-distance communication than had the Whig Party convention. The Democrats faced a contentious nomination process because of issues related to Manifest Destiny. Martin Van Buren, who had served as Andrew Jackson's vice-president and who had succeeded Jackson as president in 1837 but lost the 1840 election, was a heavy favorite among northern Democrats. Van Buren, however, opposed annexing Texas, which most everyone understood to be an area conducive to slavery. Southerner slaveowners, as a result, opposed Van Buren as the party's

[5] Robert Luther Thompson, *Wiring A Continent: The History of the Telegraph Industry in the United States, 18321866* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), 23.
[6] Swain, Abell, & Simmons, "Rapid Transmission of News," *Philadelphia Public Ledger,* May 07, 1844. 07 May 1844, Page 2 - Public Ledger at Newspapers.com

presidential nominee. Ultimately, party delegates passed over Van Buren and nominated James K. Polk. Polk was a protege of Andrew Jackson and pledged to annex not only Texas but Oregon and California along with most of the rest of the American Southwest. When the convention began, Polk's name had not even been floated as a possible presidential candidate. The nomination, therefore, came as a shock to almost everyone, including Polk himself. Almost immediately after Polk's nomination, Vail telegraphed the news to Morse in Washington. Morse then informed the nation's power brokers of this unexpected development. Most of the elected leaders refused to believe it opting to wait on official word to arrive via the Baltimore train.

In an attempt to placate the Van Buren wing of the party, the delegates hoped to nominate Silas Wright as the vice-presidential candidate. Wright held similar views on the issue of Texas annexation as Van Buren but he was not at the convention. Wright was in Washington, D.C. serving as a sitting Senator from Van Buren's home state of New York. The Democratic Party delegates approached Alfred Vail in Baltimore and asked if he could communicate the offer to Wright via the telegraph line. Vail immediately telegraphed Morse with the offer. Morse then presented the information to Wright who politely refused. Within a few minutes, Morse telegraphed Wright's response back to Baltimore. The delegates were “astonished to receive a telegraphic message from Wright respectfully declining the nomination.” Some in the convention hall “utterly disbelieved the fact that communication could have been established with Washington and an answer returned in the few minutes that had elapsed since the nomination had been made.” As a result, “the convention was adjourned to await the report of a committee sent to the Capitol to wait upon Senator Wright.”[7] The committee traveled via train to Washington, D.C. and then back to Baltimore taking the better part of a day to ultimately confirm the news Morse had delivered via his telegraph machine within a few minutes. Had the delegates accepted Wright's telegraphic refusal, the convention could have

[7] Thompson, 25.

moved on with nominating someone else and the convention would have most likely concluded many hours earlier than it did. Political developments, in other words, would have been able to move much faster.

Morse's demonstration proved that telegraphy could be used as a viable means of communicating critical information over long distances. Newspaper correspondents had been astounded by the telegraphic conversations between Morse and Vail during the political conventions of 1844. An article from the *Whig Standard* in Washington, D.C. said, "It appears almost incredible, previous to witnessing the facility with which the communication is held by telegraph, that such an annihilation of space could be accomplished by any human effort; but such is the facility, and the confidence entertained by the public in the success of the experiment." That same article noted how the telegraphic communication between Baltimore and Washington produced the "same-room" phenomenon Morse had experienced as the construction process played out. It said, "Yesterday a large assemblage was in attendance at the Capitol in Washington to receive intelligence from Baltimore. So constant was the communication, that those attending at the Capitol may almost be said to have been in attendance at all the conventions in Baltimore."[8] Morse had not only reported information about the convention, but had the delegates been willing to accept the information he had produced Morse could have conducted the business of the convention via telegraphy though separated from the convention by approximately forty miles.

The telegraph system expanded exponentially after 1844 and eventually became an organized system of telecommunications. As a matter of fact, "by 1860 a complete transformation had taken place in the telegraph industry." Robert Luther Thompson argued, "Instead of dozens of little uncoordinated units operating under rival patents, there was one great telegraph fraternity—

[8] John T. Towers. "Morse's Telegraph," *The Whig Standard,* May 28, 1844, 28 May 1844, 2 - The Whig Standard at Newspapers.com

the North American Telegraph Association—whose members ruled the nation's communications."[9] As a result of the ubiquitous nature of telegraphy in American society and the organization within the industry, the "same-room" effect described above began to play out through entire sections of the country in a metaphorical sense. It became such a phenomenon that Abraham Lincoln very famously described the entirety of the American population as being in a house—more specifically a "house divided"—casting the entire country within the political framework of the same-room metaphor. Lincoln gave a speech in March 1860 where he took the same-room allegory even further casting slavery as a "venomous snake" in bed with a group of children. In a speech to the residents of New Haven, Connecticut, Lincoln said, "If I saw a venomous snake crawling in the road, any man would say I might seize the nearest stick and kill it; but if I found that snake in bed with my children, that would be another question. I might hurt the children more than the snake, and it might bite them."[10] By that point, telegraphy had such a space-annihilating effect that northerners perceived the distance traditionally separating then from slavery no longer mattered.

Telegraphy, along with transportation developments like the trains, canals, and turnpikes, allowed people to perceive the vast expanse of the United States in terms of a "house" or, at the very least, a smaller, more intimate community setting. In terms of physical space, the United States in 1860 represented an area more than three-times the size it had been in 1787. Major land acquisitions, such as the Louisiana Purchase (1803) and Mexican Cession (1848), along with smaller land acquisitions, like Florida (1819), Texas (1845), the Oregon Country (1846), and the Gadsden Purchase (1853), all added up to a radical expansion of American political landscape. The advent of telegraphy in the mid-1840s, however, radically altered human perceptions of space allowing Americans to almost eliminate geographic space as a factor of separation. That had a profound

[9] Thompson, 442.
[10] Harold Holzer, *Lincoln at Cooper Union: The Speech that Made Abraham Lincoln President* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), Kindle, LOC 3249.

impact on the way people perceived political developments. When the United States acquired large territories in the aftermath of the Mexican-American War in 1848, for example, southerners sought to quickly introduce slavery into the new areas. Northerners almost viewed that development as if southern slaveowners had directly proposed introducing slavery into New York or Ohio. By annihilating the concept of space, instant communication made it very difficult to speak of North, South, or West as totally separate political entities where political developments in one section of the country had no bearing on any other.

Though the United States had radically expanded, the space-annihilating effects of telegraphy set the diametrically opposed concepts of slavery *and* free-soil on a collision course by the mid-1850s. Neither concepts were new at the time. Many of the Framers of the Constitution had supported Congressional legislation outlawing slavery in the Northwest Territory in 1787. By 1820, there were also representatives, such as James Tallmadge of New York, who espoused the free-soil position by opposing the expansion of slavery into the Louisiana Purchase area. The free- soil position can, therefore, be traced at least to the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. Slavery predated the adoption of the Constitution and obviously persisted up to the time of the Civil War. Though the political positions of free-soil and slavery were not new going into the 1850s, telegraphy represented a new phenomenon that brought these two concepts metaphorically into the same room. The slavery debates that tore the nation apart emerged in the context of an established telegraph system that metaphorically forced large parts of the American population into the same room where the egregious injustices of slavery could no longer be ignored. Abolitionists had been arguing for decades that slavery was morally reprehensible. As telegraphy allowed people to perceive the nation as more of a "house," political moderates like Abraham Lincoln had to face the tangible realities of the South's cruel and inhumane slave system.

As telegraphy metaphorically brought the United States into the same room, northerners

like Abraham Lincoln found it impossible to say southerners could perform the morally reprehensible practice of slavery on one side of the room while being forced to watch the intricacies play out in plain view. It became untenable for northerners to simply say they did not engage in the practice and, therefore, they were absolved of any association with slavery. If northerners found slavery to be morally wrong, something had to be done to eliminate it. Technology forced northerners—whether abolitionists or moderates—into an intimate up-close-and-personal setting where the practice of slavery seemed to be in much closer proximity and, therefore, more personal. Abolitionists had been arguing that slavery was a "sin" against all humankind at least since the 1830s. As telegraphy became more ubiquitous in American society and the telegraph system became more organized during the decade of the 1850s, even non-abolitionists were confronted with the horrors of slavery they had previously been able to ignore. It may be impossible to prove that telegraphy *caused* the intensity of the slavery debates during the decade of the 1850s. The slavery debates may have intensified to the point of causing a civil war eventually even without telegraphy. It can be said with certainty, however, the slavery debates were not new in the 1840s when telegraphy emerged but those debates intensified in lock-step with developments in the telegraph system designed to make the system more efficient. As the telegraph system expanded, telegraphy became more effective at brining more of the population into the metaphorical "sameroom" and the slavery debates escalated almost precisely with those developments with such ferocity that in just over a decade the United States was engaged in the Civil War over the issue.

By the mid-1850s, telegraphy had emerged in the North as a pervasive telecommunications network but the South lagged significantly behind. The South had a telegraph network but it was not pervasive enough to allow for the formation of the kinds of political networking that had swept the North. In the North, the pervasive telegraph system allowed for the formation of "new networks that vaulted over vast geographic distances." Those networks essentially "voided the physical

separation that had shielded local idiosyncrasies." Tom Wheeler argued, "No group was more sensitive to this reality than political representatives from southern states practicing the 'peculiar institution' of human slavery."[11] When northerners voiced opposition to slavery, southerners cried foul. Abraham Lincoln said southerners essentially took the position that "if one man would enslave another, no third man should object."[12] By 1854, the networking phenomenon in the North had resulted in the emergence of the Republican Party. That new party espoused a truly national vison of the United States. Most Republicans believed North and South shared an inseparable national destiny that had to be directed by the federal government. As Lincoln espoused it in his house-divided speech, Republicans at least considered Americans—both North and South—to be locked in the same building and that decisions in one section very much affected the other. Major issues like the slavery issue, therefore, had to be worked out on the national level. The non- pervasive nature of the South's telegraph system had not wrought such a collective national vision on that section. Southerners, for the most part, espoused ideals of states' rights and local sovereignty at the expense of Lincoln and the Republican Party's federal vision of the United States. The South never developed a political organization even remotely close to the Republican Party—not even the Confederate government after the Civil War began in 1861. The lack of a pervasive instant communication system in the South allowed southerners to perceive themselves in the traditional manner as a distant separate entity from the North and, to some degree, even from fellow southerners.

The explanation for the intensity of the slave debates typically runs along the lines of James McPherson's argument in *Battle Cry of Freedom*, "When in the 1840s, the [slavery] controversy

[11] Tom Wheeler, *From Gutenberg to Google: The History of Our Future* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2019), 110.
[12] Holzer, LOC 2409.

began to focus on the expansion of slavery in new territories it became irrepressible."[13] This dissertation will not take issue with the fact that slavery itself was very divisive. It will also not take issue with the fact that slavery's expansion into the western territories became extremely divisive. It will point out, however, the emergence of a pervasive telecommunications network in the North allowed antislavery advocates to form networks that forcefully advocated the antislavery position with specific intentions of creating networks of people that adhered to their political position. They intended to convert the entire nation—including southerners—by using the powers of communication to bring the entire population into their "room." By 1854, those antislavery advocates had created the Republican Party and by 1860 that networking power had ushered the Republican Party into near total control of the government. Southerners considered themselves to be separate and apart from "the ambitious, designing and corrupt demagogues and traitors" of the Republican Party. They admitted, "We have never lost sight of the fact that the Black Republican organization is a strong and powerful party, composed, to a great extent, of ignorant and deluded fanatics who know not what they do."[14] The Republican Party, southerners understood, had become powerful because the party's platform and message had been "echoed and re-echoed far and wide."[15] This dissertation will argue the echoing and re-echoing of the Republican Party's message had profound implications for American politics during the decade of the 1850s as the North networked itself into a singular political entity while the South refused to join that network.

I have sought to assess the impact of technology on the trajectory of American society during what is probably the most critical period in American history. I have evaluated the impact of instant communication on American politics and society leading to the American Civil War. The research

[13] James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 40.
[14] E. Barkdsdale, Ed. "The Resources of the South," *The Semi-Weekly Mississippian,* November 18, 1856, 18 Nov 1856, Page 2 - Semi-Weekly Mississippian at Newspapers.com.
[15] Lumsden, Kendall, & Co. "Conciliation," *The Daily Times Picayune,* October 23, 1856. March 17, 2022, 23 Oct 1856, Page 2 - The Times-Picayune at Newspapers.com

has focused the emergence of the Republican Party in 1854 and on the party's rise to national power in 1860. For this study, I have chosen to focus almost exclusively on the Republican Party because the party represented a new phenomenon in American politics going into the election of 1860—the most important election in American history. The party had engaged in but one presidential election campaign in 1856 before it captured national power and, with few exceptions, dominated the American political landscape until 1933. The Republican Party emerged in 1854 as the Kansas-Nebraska Act looked certain to become law. This historic moment came just as efforts to consolidated the telegraph system had begun in earnest. *Western Union* emerged after the Civil War as the telegraph conglomerate that controlled telecommunications throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century. The efforts to create *Western Union,* however, began in early 1853 as efforts got underway to create what was called the American Telegraph Confederation. This dissertation, therefore, has sought to determine if the early mergers that resulted in *Western Union* had played into the emergence of the Republican Party the next year and then, subsequently, on into the election of 1860.

The call for a great telegraph convention in 1853 materialized because the telegraph company principals sought to create some kind of organization within the relatively new telegraph industry. They sought to introduce a system of operation into an industry that had been in existence for just less than a decade. By introducing organization into the industry, the major players within the telegraph companies sought to introduce more efficiency and to make telegraph service more reliable. An article in the *Charleston Daily Courier* reporting the call for a convention among the telegraph companies noted that telegraphy had "been made useful to the press, but as yet is has not been made the medium in aid of general business that it should be." The article also said, "This convention may do much by interchange of sentiment; by comparing the various modes of conducting business; by adopting what has been tried by one company and found to be

advantageous, and by rejecting that which works unfavorably." The purpose idea behind the convention The American Telegraph Confederation, however, represents one of the first major restructuring efforts within the emerging telegraph industry. The principals involved in this effort After the emergence of the *Associated Press,* national newspapers embraced the new technology of telegraphy as their primary means of gathering and distributing news. The Republican Party, therefore, emerged at almost the same historic moment telegraphy and the newspaper industries had become and intertwined organization allowing information to flow at an unprecedented speed and volume. There is no doubt the substance of the slavery debates as represented in the Kansas-Nebraska Act served as *the* impetus for the Republican Party's emergence but this dissertation contends the telegraph-powered newspaper system in the United States served as the vehicle through which the slavery debates became public discourse. Newspapers that had adopted telegraphy as their primary means of gathering and distributing news reported the issues rapidly allowing politicians and the public to respond almost immediately. The issue of slavery may have eventually consumed the national discourse, but telegraphy allowed the debate—and political developments—to advance very rapidly.

I have examined the emergence of the slavery debates going into the 1850s and juxtaposed that with the emergence of the telegraph network and developments in telegraphy as the decade progressed. I have ultimately sought to understand how the advent of instant communication affected the slavery debates and whether it altered the political landscape in a way that allowed for the emergence of the Republican Party in 1854 and Abraham Lincoln's ultimate victory in 1860. I have also sought to assess whether telegraphy hastened the secession crisis after Lincoln captured the presidency. In modern times, social media has been credited with fomenting uprisings in places like North Africa during the so-called Arab Spring of 2011-2012. Killian Clarke and Korhan Kocak argued, "Early accounts of the Arab Spring uprisings granted social media a central role; at points

these movements were even dubbed ‘Facebook revolutions' or ‘Twitter revolutions'.” They argued, “Social media platforms Facebook and Twitter helped significant numbers of otherwise isolated activists and citizens to identify each other, form networks and relationships, and coordinate their actions (pre-emptively and in real time) to stage the successful protests.”[16]

Comparisons can be made between the effects of modern social media and those of telegraphy in the 1850s. Tom Standage has argued the telegraph system of the late 19th century can absolutely be compared to the internet (thus, the title of his book *The Victorian Internet*). He argued that much like social media in the modern landscape, telegraphy served as a major tool for political democratization during the latter part of the 19th century. He said that because telegraphy eliminated geographic space as an obstacle to the creation of networks and organizations, people of like mind could connect regardless of where they were located. This phenomenon emerged in the United States much earlier than the era Standage examined in his work. This dissertation contends the phenomenon of connecting people of like mind emerged during the critical years of the 1850s and resulted in the emergence of the Republican Party as ideas about antislavery connected people of like mind across the geographic space of the North. Telegraphy provided northerners outraged by the Kansas-Nebraska Act the ability to create an entirely new political party and to grow that party in order to capture national power within six years. The South lacked a pervasive telegraph system blunting the ability of antislavery advocates to spread their message throughout the region. Lincoln, in particular, could not articulate the nuances of his position on slavery to the southern population the way he could to northern audiences. As a result, he decided to focus his campaign in 1860 on shoring up the crucial areas that were connected by telegraphy and, thus, areas where he could reasonably be expected to at least be given a fair hearing.

[16] Quotes from Killian Clarke and Korhan Kocak, “Launching Revolution: Social Media and the Egyptian Uprising's First Movers,” *British Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 3 (December 2018): Launching Revolution: Social Media and the Egyptian Uprising's First Movers | British Journal of Political Science | Cambridge Core

The topic of telegraphy's impact on American politics in the 1850s has not been studied in depth. There are certainly frequent mentions of telegraphy among Civil War historians but mainly in the context of how the Lincoln administration—or Lincoln himself—utilized telegraphy *during* the Civil War. There is almost no in-depth studies that attempt to synthesize the impact telegraphy had on the 1860 election or the emergence of the Republican Party in 1854. Most studies of the 1860 election focus on the substance of the political discourse rather than the avenue by which political information became public. Most of the books written on the subject have concentrated on the issue of slavery or other major Civil War topic. Eric Foner's *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men* is considered a seminal work on the Republican Party and its ideology. David Donald's *Lincoln* also chronicled the evolution of the Republican Party's ideology to some degree through the biographical sketch of Lincoln's life. James McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom* spent the first 307 pages of its mammoth 861 pages discussing the political crisis of the 1850s, including the rise of the Republican Party and the election of 1860. James Oakes's *The Scorpion's Sting* discussed the development of the Republican Party's ideology and its strategy to eliminate slavery through peaceful means. Bruce Chadwick's *Lincoln For President* focused on Lincoln's 1860 presidential election campaign. There are many other works that have examined aspects of the Republican Party's ideology, its position on slavery, the question of slavery in the territories, the party's organization after 1854, its position on other relevant political issues, and even the election of 1860. None of these works, however, have centered their focus on telegraphy's impact on Lincoln's election as president in 1860.

Scholars of telegraphy, by contrast, have not focused on telegraphy's impact on the election of 1860. These scholars almost all note that telegraphy had an impact in politics but there is no real in-depth studies of telegraph's impact on the election of 1860. Most scholarly treatments of telegraphy consider the critical years 1844-1866 a precursor to the rise of *Western Union* in 1866. With few exceptions, most of the scholarly treatment of telegraphy has centered on the post-1866

period. David Hochfelder's *Telegraphy in America,* Tom Standage's *The Victorian Internet,* Roland Wenzlhuemer's *Connecting the Nineteenth-Century World,* James Schwoch's *Wired Into Nature,* David Paull Nickles's *Under the Wire,* Simon Muller's *Wiring the World,* and Robert Luther Thompson's *Wiring A Continent* are all great works that examine various aspects of telegraphy. Hochfelder examined how the Lincoln administration's adoption of telegraphy became central to managing the Union war effort. He argued the Union war effort demonstrated the innate organizational powers of telegraphy essentially serving as the impetus for the creation of a large-scale private corporations during the Gilded Age. Tom Standage focused on telegraphy as precursor to the internet. He too discussed the phenomenal networking and organizational powers inherent in rapid long-distance communication but focused on the last third of the nineteenth century when *Western Union* had made telegraphy almost ubiquitous in American society. Roland Wenzlhuemer and Simon Muller each centered their studies on how Victorian-Era British administrators used telegraphy to expand and maintain the British empire during the last third of the nineteenth century. James Schwoch focused on how Americans used telegraphy to expand their borders into the frontier between 1865 and 1890.

Some of these scholarly treatments of telegraphy have addressed the political debates leading up to the 1860 election but they did not focus on how telegraphy contributed to the rise of the Republican Party nor to how telegraphy aided in Lincoln's election in 1860. Schwoch, for example, provided some context for the transcontinental telegraph line connecting California to population centers on the East Coast. He also argued the military telegraph system allowed the American state to assert sovereignty over Native American tribes in the West 1865 and 1890. David Paull Nickles examined telegraphy's impact on international diplomacy between 18531917. He essentially argued the increased speed of diplomacy had a catastrophic impact beginning with the Crimean War of 1853 and culminating in the diplomatic calamity that led to World War I in 1914.

Robert Luther Thompson focused on the creation of a consolidated telegraph network during the 1850s but centered on the mechanics of constructing the telegraph network only referencing the political impact on the periphery. Allan Pred's *Urban Growth and the Circulation of Information: The United States System of Cities, 1790-1840* provided an excellent analysis of communication flows during the pre-telegraph era and his *Urban Growth and the City Systems in the United States, 1840-1860* provide an excellent analysis of the communication networks that emerged after telegraphy burst onto the scene. All of these works have contributed to this dissertation but none of them provided a quantifiable link between the communication revolution and the electoral success of the Republican Party in 1860.

Because newspapers adopted telegraphy almost immediately after its introduction, it is also important to account for scholarly treatments of journalism and the newspaper press. Those works, likewise, have not provided a measurable link between the press and the electoral success of the Republican Party. Jonathan Silberstein-Loeb's *The International Distribution of the News: The Associated Press, Press Association, and Reuters, 1848-1947* examined the role the *Associated Press* played in gathering and distributing international news between 1848 and 1947. Alfred McClung Lee's *The Daily Newspaper in America: The Evolution of a Social Instrument,* as the title suggests, deals with the social aspects of the rise of the daily newspaper. *News Over the Wires: The Telegraph and the Flow of Public Information in America, 1844-1897* by Menahem Blondheim showed how the *Associated Press* essentially established itself as a monopoly over public information. Blondheim's work also traced the rise of *Western Union* and laid out the impact of consolidation in the newspaper industry. J.L. Crouthamel also published *Bennett's New York Herald and the Rise of the Popular Press* as a chronicle of James Gordon Bennett, editor of the highly-influential *New York Herald.* The *New York Herald* was an original member of the *Associated Press* so Crouthamel's work provides insight on a specific actor and the need for cooperation among the

press. R.R. John's *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse* examined press and the flow of public information in the United States prior to the rise of telegraphy and P. Starr's *The Creation of the Media: Political Origins of Modern Communication* provided some insight on the merger of technology, media, and politics. *Media and the American Mind: From Morse to McLuhan* by Daniel Czitrom also examined the impact of technology on the American newspaper press.

Methods

Technological Determinism

Because this research is devoted to examining the social and political effects of a technology, it is very important to address what historians of technology call technological determinism. Arguments about new technologies, whether railroads, telegraphs, social media, or other technologies, should make clear to their readers that people "did" things and not the technology itself. Scholars of the history of technology, particularly members of the Society of the History of Technology (or SHOT), are generally very critical of those who suggest, for example, the printing press *caused* the Protestant Reformation or that telegraphy *caused* the rise of the Republican Party. Barbara Hahn at Texas Tech University has defined technological determinism as "the idea that tools and inventions drive change, rather than humans."[17] David Edgerton at the Center for Science, Technology, and Medicine at Imperial College London, has said, "Technological determinism has been routinely defined as something along the lines of 'technical change causing social change.'" He said, "Technological determinism |is|.. .the interesting notion that society is determined by the technology it uses."[18] Edgerton, Hahn, and the entire SHOT organization reject ideas of

[17] Barbara Hahn, "The Social in the Machine: How Historians of Technology Look Beyond the Object," *Perspectives on History*, March 2014.
[18] Edgerton, David. "Innovation, Technology, or History: What is the Historiography of Technology About?" *Technology and Culture.* Volume 51. Number 3. July 2010, p. 689-696.

technological determinism.

Technological determinism essentially imbues technology with a teleological effect usually associated with Marxism. That essentially means technology predetermines the establishment of specific systems or societal developments even if people object to them. Seth Rockman at Brown University has argued, for example, "Many of the fundamentals of Marxism appear equally teleological, especially a stadial theory of history that predetermines."[19] Darwin Stapleton at the University of Massachusetts has argued, "Karl Marx has always been in the background [for technological determinists] since he posed many important criticisms of the machine."[20] Barbara Hahn basically said in order to argue telegraphy or any other technology caused something to happen the object has to possess the ability to intervene in society with no aid from human beings. Hahn said such a position is akin to ascribing agency to an artifact in a museum and "many.. .likely would hesitate before imbuing objects with agency." These scholars essentially argue that if technology is deterministic human beings are effectively passive spectators in their own history. To say, "Telegraphy *caused* the rise of the Republican Party," for example, is very different than saying, "Telegraphy aided anti-slavery advocates in creating the Republican Party." The first phrase suggests an independent force greater than humanity created the Republican Party without regard to the will of human beings living at the time. The Republican Party, in this scenario, is simply imposed onto humanity by an external force. The latter phrase illustrates how people used technology to create an organization that served the purpose of aiding in the construction of the world in which they wanted to live.

By ascribing causal forces to human beings, technology becomes a tool people use to build

[19] Seth Rockman. "What Makes the History of Capitalism Newsworthy?" *Journal of the Early Republic* 34, no. 3 (2014): 443. https://muse.jhu.edu/ (accessed July 06, 2021), 447.
[20] Darwin Stapleton, "The Discipline of the History of American Technology: An Exchange," *The Journal of American History,* March 1982, 899.

their own societies. Approaching the historical effects of technology from this viewpoint—what scholars have called the social construction of technology (or SCOT) theory—technology itself does not drive social change but that human beings create specific technologies within particular historical contexts in order to shape their societies in particular ways. In fact, the Society for the History of Technology's released a general statement saying technology should be "broadly understood as material artifacts or assemblages of artifacts used by humans to reconfigure social, political, economic activity."[21] I am not a technological determinist and I have taken pains in this dissertation to ascribe causal actions to people. My position is that people possess agency and serve as the driving force in society. Human beings decide, for example, what technologies to develop within their specific historical circumstances and how those technologies can be used within their specific societies. Some technologies, however, do have unintended consequences that allow people to do things that may have previously been inconceivable prior to the advent of that technology. As such, new technologies can have altering effects on politics and society in the hands of the right person.

When Thomas Edison invented the phonograph, for example, he fully intended the device to serve as a practical communications device. Edison wrote an article for *North American Review* in 1878 where he said, "The practical application of this form of phonograph for communications is very simple. A sheet of foil is placed in the phonograph, the clockwork set in motion, and the matter dictated into the mouthpiece without other effort than when dictating to a stenographer." He said, "It (the foil) is then removed, placed in a suitable form of envelope, and sent through ordinary channels to the correspondent for whom designed. He, placing it upon his phonograph, starts his clockwork and listens to what his correspondent has to say."[22] In other words, rather than sending a

[21] "Historical Perspectives on Technology, Culture, and Society, last modified 2022, Historical Perspectives on Technology, Culture, and Society - Society for the History of Technology (SHOT).
[22] Thomas Edison, "The Phonograph and its Future," *North American Review,* May/June 1878. p. 527.

hand-written letter, Edison believed the phonograph would make it practical for the sender of a message to send a sheet of foil so the recipient could hear the voice of the sender rather than simply reading their writing. The phonograph, however, was almost never used like Edison described. In fact, the phonograph had very little impact on the field of telecommunications. Two years before Edison's article appeared in *North American Review,* Alexander Graham Bell introduced the telephone allowing people to speak in real-time rendering Edison's idea of sending snippets of conversations via foil completely inadequate.

With improvements from other inventors, Edison's phonograph did, however, allow for the development of the commercial music recording industry. Edison only off-handedly mentioned recording music in the *North American Review* article but never in the context of creating a fullscale industry. Edison said, "A friend may in the morning call and sing us a song which shall delight an evening company, etc." He clearly did not conceive the phonograph as a device that would revolutionize popular culture and serve as the foundation for the modern entertainment industry. When Edison first introduced the phonograph the year prior to the appearance of *North American Review* article, he did not express any ideas about the phonograph being used to record music. Within a few years, several companies emerged with designs on using the phonograph to create a market for recorded music. William Howland Kenney pointed out in his *Recorded Music in American Life,* "The Columbia Phonograph Company... pioneered the recording of popular musical entertainment.. .[when] the first commercial recordings went on the market in 1890"[23] Very soon afterwards, Edison himself jumped into the field of recorded music. The cynic will no doubt point out that Edison jumped into the field of recorded music because he saw that money could be made by marketing recorded music. That may be true. But it also illustrates how the phonograph, a device

[23] William Howland Kenney, *Recorded Music in American Life: The Phonograph and Popular Memory, 1890-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 25.

of Edison's own mind, eventually altered his thinking about how the device could be used and the impact it could have on society.

The development of the phonograph allowed people—including Thomas Edison who invented the device—to conceive of new ways and modes of using the device once that technology was introduced. Leo Marx and Merritt Roe Smith have cautioned that some scholarly works "convey a vivid sense of the efficacy of technology as a driving force of history: a technical innovation suddenly appears and *causes* important things to happen." Their main criticism is that sometimes "an invention, once introduced into society, is thus depicted as taking on a life of its own."[24] Throughout this dissertation, I have taken careful consideration to ascribe causation to people and not to technology itself. For example, I have made it a point to say people *used* technology to *do* certain things or to accomplish certain feats. There is a sharp distinction between saying, "The phonograph *created* the music industry," versus saying, "The phonograph *allowed for* the rise of the commercial music recording industry." The major difference between those two statements is that the first ascribes agency to the device itself whereas the second statement ascribes agency to the people who used the device to create the commercial music industry. The device itself, however, did allow people to conceive of an industry because it illustrated the concept of recording in general. My interpretation, thus, is that technology does not predetermine societal outcomes; it does not have the teleological attributes typically associated with Marxism. Technology can, however, alter human perceptions and serve as an influence on the direction people decide to pursue for their given society.

This dissertation will argue that Samuel Morse's development of telegraphy as a long-distance communication tool had ramifications Morse nor anyone else could have envisioned at the time. Morse fully intended for his electronic telegraph to provide people with the ability to

[24] Quotes from Leo Marx and Merritt Roe Smith. *Does Technology Drive History? The Dilemma of Technological Determinism*. Cambridge. MIT Press, 1994.

communicate immediately over great distances. Morse could not have foreseen that political conventions would convene in Baltimore, one of the cities where his line had a terminal, the very month he completed the line between that city and Washington, D.C. The Whig Party convention allowed Morse to demonstrate the utility of his device to the political capital of the United States. He also could not have foreseen the massive importance the Mexican War would bestow on his telegraph device. People in the eastern population centers demanded timely information about events transpiring on the warfront. The combination of the political conventions in 1844 and the Mexican War, which ended in 1848, increased demand for the creation of a telecommunications network. Even so, I have made a conscious effort in this dissertation to describe telegraphy as a phenomenon Samuel Morse introduced to American society. I have also made a conscious effort to ascribe causal effects to "Republican Party advocates" or other human beings. This has been a delicate task because the purpose of the dissertation has been to examine the effects of instant communication. Because the issues carried via the telegraph network were very explosive in nature, they have tended to overshadow the implications telegraphy introduced as a phenomenon in its own right. This dissertation has been designed to try to uncover at least some of those implications while being careful to ascribe causal actions to human beings who telegraphy.

Digital Determinism

Another facet of determinism that must be addressed with this dissertation is digital determinism. This dissertation has employed digital modes and methods of research to answer broad humanities questions. Though digital research can provide humanities scholars with powerful modes of analysis, the digital technologies should never predetermine the outcome of the research. Digital tools essentially represent a toolkit for researchers that can and, in some cases, should be used to answer specific questions. Theodore Roszak, Professor Emeritus at California State University, cautioned as far back as the 1980s that researchers can sometimes allow "smart machines" to

dominate the research process and supplant human observation. Roszak said, "In contrast to strong machines, whose status has always been that of beasts of burden (hence we measure their strength as 'horsepower'), smart machines have been treated with far more respect." Roszak specifically worried that researchers were adopting computers and digital technologies with the explicit intent of altering the human understanding of the physical world. He was especially apprehensive about researchers using computer-generated data models and adopting digital tools that perform analytical functions. He said digital tools can have "a seductive appeal to the scientific imagination" and fretted that scholars could potentially "fall prey to technological idolatry, allowing an invention of our own hands to become the image that dominates our image of ourselves and all nature around us."[25]

Digital tools are very specifically designed to analyze statistical data or location data devoid of human interpretation or observation. Research that incorporates digital tools as part of the research process, therefore, cannot provide insight on the human experience, which is central to the humanities field. The research presented in this dissertation is a humanities project that utilized digital tools to answer specific questions, such as which states and counties had the highest percentage vote for Abraham Lincoln in 1860 and which states and counties had the highest number of telegraph offices in 1860. My job as the researcher was to observe this information and interpret it for the reader. The digital analysis allowed me to determine specific areas for further examination but it was my job as the scholar to explain how the flow of information potentially impacted the voting public during the period under investigation. The digital tools aided in the analysis of large amounts of quantitative data but it was my job as the researcher to synthesize the information produced by the digital analysis in order to provide an understanding of the human experience going into the election of 1860. For this project, I utilized ArcGIS very heavily. I also utilized OmniPage,

[25] Theodore Roszak, *The Cult of Information: The Folklore of Computers and the True Art of Thinking,* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 40.

an optical character recognition software, in order to capture voter data from Michael Dubin's *United States Presidential Elections, 1788-1860.* Ultimately, however, as the researcher/scholar I have drawn the conclusions and made judgments about the direction of the research.

Digital methods of research complimented the incorporation of digital tools with this project. In some cases, I allowed the results of a digital analysis to drive the research process forward. For example, when I completed the collection of all the telegraph office location data and the 1860 voter data, one of the initial analyses performed in ArcGIS was designed to determine which state provided the highest percentage of votes for Abraham Lincoln in 1860. This analysis used the total votes cast in all the states with Lincoln's vote taken as a percentage of that total. I then performed two analyses to see which state had the highest density of telegraph offices. The first considered the size of the state in square mileage divided by the number of telegraph offices in order to get the density per square mile. The second considered the population of the state as reported in the 1860 Census and divided by the number of telegraph offices in order to get a telegraph office per population. This line of analysis was designed so I could compared the state (or states) with the highest popular vote for Lincoln with the state (or states) with the highest density of telegraph offices. Those analyses showed that Lincoln received the highest vote in Vermont and that Vermont also had the highest density of telegraph offices per square mile and per population. The correlation between those analyses naturally drew my attention to Vermont for further observation and interpretation. Subsequent analyses drew my focus to other states and counties for deeper observations and interpretation related to those locations. In that sense, I have incorporated “digital methods” by allowing digital tools and analyses to assist in driving the research forward. Even so, decisions to use specific tools, such as ArcGIS and OmniPage, decisions regarding which specific analyses were most relevant, and the questions asked of the data all came from myself as the researcher.

The research presented in this dissertation has consisted of data collection related to telegraph office locations and voter data from the 1860 election. The data has been digitally analyzed with ArcGIS to determine whether the states and counties providing the greatest support for the Republican Party in 1860 were the same locations that had the highest density of telegraph offices. Data from the 1856 election has also been used but mainly for comparative purposes. The main focus for this research has been directed at analyzing the 1860 election and the emergence of the Republican Party. The purpose has been to understand whether a link can be established between locations that had the highest density of telegraph offices and the locations that supported the Republican Party in 1860. The number of telegraph offices and voter total rosters provided quantitative metrics by which information flow and Republican Party support can be measured. The data was collected, digitized, and then digitally mapped in ArcGIS as a means of visualizing and analyzing the massive amount of data collected. I collected other data, such as newspaper office location data and newspaper circulation data from the *Livingston Law Register*, a legal publication that published the information in 1852. I also collected voter tallies for the 1856 election.

The constraints of time, however, prevented a great deal of use of the newspaper data. I plan to build on this project in the future with that data to show trends between 1856 and 1860 and to compare newspaper circulation and newspaper office locations with telegraph office locations and support for the Republican Party in 1856 and 1860. When I have quoted the circulation numbers for newspapers, I have aggregated the numbers listed in the *Livingston Law Register*. For example, if a newspaper is listed as being published weekly with an additional publication every third week, I have aggregated those numbers and only listed them once. The *State Guard* in Coosa County, Alabama, for example, is listed as having a circulation of 800 with an additional publication that is issued tri-weekly with a circulation of 200. For the circulation numbers listed in the paper, I have taken the tri-weekly edition numbers and dividing those numbers by three in order in order to

approximate a weekly number. That number was then added to the weekly number. In this case, the *State Guard's* weekly circulation number was 800 and the tri-weekly number was 200. The circulation figure I would cite for this paper is 867.

For this dissertation, I specifically examined locations (states and counties) and their telegraph office locations and compared them with the voter data from 1860. I did some closer analyses of locations that contained high numbers of telegraph offices and that also provided a high density of support for the Republican Party in 1860. I have also quoted specific newspaper reports that illustrated specific content when appropriate allowing newspaper reports from the time period under scrutiny to compliment the location research. The newspaper reports along with the location data comprise the original research for this project. The analysis provided has been based on the conclusions drawn from the location data and the published newspaper reports. My assumption is that areas that contained high numbers of telegraph offices were also the areas that would have had the highest number of newspaper offices. As will be pointed out later, the newspaper and telegraph industry became highly dependent on each other by the mid-1850s. In order to confirm this assumption, more research will need to be completed using the newspaper office location data collected from the *Livingston Law Register*. Another assumption for the research presented here is that areas with the highest number of telegraph offices also had the highest newspaper circulation per capita and, therefore, would have been able to make information available to large swaths of the public very rapidly. Even if that is not the case, the location analysis provided in this research shows that areas providing heavy support for the Republican Party in 1860 were the same areas that had been brought into a network via telegraphy. It is very difficult to say voters voted for the Republican Party *because* of telegraphy but the research presented in this dissertation will show there was a direct correlation between locations with the most telegraph offices and the locations that provided a high density of support for Abraham Lincoln in 1860.

One of digital methods of analysis employed within ArcGIS to provide useable information for this project came in the form of the "Summarize Within" feature. After plotting the telegraph locations on the digital map, I utilized the "Summarize Within" tool to produce statistical information related to the telegraph lines and telegraph offices that could then be used to make determinations on which states had the highest mileage of telegraph wire and the highest density of telegraph offices. States and territories are projected in ArcGIS as separate polygons. The "Summarize Within" tool summarizes information contained within those polygons. To use the "Summarize Within" feature, first ArcGIS must be told which polygons to analyze and then which features to summarize. To get the mileage of telegraph lines in each state, for example, I instructed ArcGIS to analyze the entire digital map (meaning all the polygons at once) and then to summarize the line feature created when I had initially traced the telegraph lines from the Charles Barr map. To summarize the telegraph offices, I told ArcGIS to analyze the entire digital map and then to summarize the number of points within each state. This information was then compared with the voter tallies for each state to determine if a correlation existed.

The data collected for this dissertation came from digital map scans at the Library of Congress, census data, and *The Livingston Law Register* journal. Johanna Drucker, Professor of Information Studies at UCLA, has pointed out that humanities scholars should be extra diligent when working with data because data can sometimes be mistaken for an event or phenomenon itself when it is more accurately a representation of an event or phenomenon. Drucker said, "Data pass themselves off as mere descriptions of *a priori* conditions.. .rendering observation (the act of creating a statistical, empirical, or subjective account or image) as if it was the same as the phenomena observed."[26] Data, in other words, cannot represent the lived experience. Drucker's point was that data analysis has been borrowed from the empirical sciences, which do use *a priori*

[26] Johanna Drucker, "Humanities Approach to Graphical Display," *Digital Humanities Quarterly.* 5, no. 1. 2011.

deductive reasoning very specifically to remove any hint of human subjectivity. The very process of discerning meaning from a set of data requires historians and other humanities scholars to engage with that data and then to provide their interpretation, which almost by definition includes some measure of subjectivity. Alan Munslow pointed out in *Deconstructing History,* "The scientific method works on the assumption that data are connected by universal explanation." Munslow argued this is simply not true. The same data can be analyzed and interpreted to make various points, therefore, it cannot be construed as a universal explanation for a phenomenon in and of itself. Historians, in particular, interpret, analyze, and even curate those facts in order to understand the human condition. Munslow argued, "The process of contextualization is undertaken by the historian as part of the process of interpretation as he/she relates masses of apparently unrelated data with an eye to produce meaning." He argued, "The inference of meaning emerges as we organize, configure and emplot the data," noting that "it does not.just turn up or suggest itself as the only or most likely conclusion to draw."

The heart of the humanities field builds its foundation on information that explains the human condition and is, therefore, emphatically dissimilar to the empirical sciences. Historians collect data and other information to study the past. Historians specifically interpret data and other information to provide historical contextualization and meaning to otherwise disassociated events, places, and fact. In many cases, facts and data are not necessarily self-explanatory but rather rely on human interpretation to provide meaning and understanding. Researchers and scholars certainly ask questions that can be answered by examining data but both Drucker and Munslow argue that data in and of itself cannot provide answers for humanities questions. Munslow even argued, "*The* past and *written history* are not the same thing." No matter how much data a scholar collects or how many facts a scholar amasses *the past*—an event as it transpired—is at best incomplete. Munslow said some approach history with the notion that "the more carefully we do it, like experienced

craftsmen and women, the more accurate we can become, and the closer we get to...knowing history as it actually happened." He rejected such an approach arguing that by applying the reductionist principles used by the empirical sciences to remove human perception, interpretation, and analysis were designed to generate repeatable scientific experiments. He said the very elements removed by deductive reasoning are the precise elements historians seek to provide. Munslow, therefore, argued, "History cannot claim to be straightforwardly scientific in the sense that we understand the physical sciences to be because it does not share the protocol of hypothesis-testing, does not employ deductive reasoning, and neither is it an experimental and objective process producing incontrovertible facts."[27]

Graphical Displays

Digital tools can produce graphical representations of certain elements of knowledge within the humanities discipline. Drucker pointed out that most humanities scholars, including historians, use data to construct graphical displays, such as maps, graphs, and other visual displays, as a means of condensing large datasets into a more manageable format. For this project, I have collected data mentioned above and used digital tools like ArcGIS to produce maps and data tables for illustrative purposes. The construction of those maps and tables, therefore, represent information I as the researcher have created to make specific points about the data. As pointed out above, I chose to run the analyses that generated answers to specific questions I as the researcher asked of the data. As such, the graphical displays presented in this research are, in and of themselves, interpretations and must be understood to be objects designed to convey meaning. Digital historians and other historians using quantitative data should view and use data the same way conventional historians use "facts"—as a means of constructing specific interpretations and providing meaning. Michel Roth Trouillot

[27] Quotes from Alun Munslow, *Deconstructing History* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 5.

rhetorically asked in *Silencing the Past,* "If meaning is totally severed from a referent 'out there,' if there is no cognitive purpose, nothing to be proved or disproved, what then is the point?" He said, "Facts.. .become facts only because they matter in some sense, however minimal."[28] Trouillot and Munslow both agreed, "Facts are literally meaningless in their unprocessed state.evidence is turned into 'facts' through the narrative interpretations of historians." Data is no different.

The creation of graphical displays even when based on "hard data" is done through an act of interpretation and does not represent a set of *a priori* conditions. Humanities scholars produce graphics, such as maps and charts, very specifically to represent some form of meaning. For the humanities scholar, the graphic produced is at least as important—perhaps even more important—than the data itself because the end-user does not see the underlying data but the graphic is produced in the research for the reader to digest. For that reason, Drucker argued, "The representation of knowledge is as crucial to its cultural force as any other facet of its production." She cautioned humanities scholars to be very critical of graphical displays precisely because they are, by definition, interpretations and not objective facts. Drucker, Munslow, Trouillot, and many other scholars do not reject the idea of using data or even graphical displays as a means of displaying knowledge within the humanities field. These scholars argued, however, digital humanists, such as digital historians, should be as critical of data and graphical displays as humanists in conventional fields are of primary source materials. Otherwise, as Drucker argued, data can become "a kind of intellectual Trojan horse, a vehicle through which assumptions about what constitutes information swarm with potent force."[29] For this dissertation, I have been very careful to explain the nature of my data and to be as transparent with the data as possible. In fact, the "public" part of this

[28] Quotes from Michel Roth Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History,* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 13 and 28.
[29] Drucker, Johanna. "Humanities Approach to Graphical Display." *Digital Humanities Quarterly.* Vol. 5. No. 1. 2011.

dissertation has been the creation of a website where the data is hosted and where other scholars can access with the idea of furthering the research.

The telegraph office location data provided in this dissertation were taken from a digital map scan from the Library of Congress. (See Figure 1) The firm of Charles Barr produced this map in 1853 as a telegraph directory for the people of Pittsburg but it shows the known locations of telegraph offices as of the date of publication. The map is part of the Library of Congress's digital map collection but the map is not a truly digital map. The Barr map is a high-definition scan of a conventional paper map. Part of the work that went into this dissertation included digitizing the Barr map. Very little external information exists related to the Barr map itself other than the map is obviously a reference for telegraph lines and offices in 1853. Robert Luther Thompson's *Wiring A Continent* (1947) displayed the map very prominently in the center of the book and the map has been deemed significant enough to be cataloged by the Library of Congress. There is a statement at the bottom of the map saying the map was “entered according to Act of Congress as of the year 1853 by Cha' B. Barr in the Clerk's office of the Western District County of Penn.” I assume this time and place information related to copyright. Since the map was published in such

close proximity to the completion of the final reports from the Census of 1850, I also assume a great deal of the information about telegraph offices and telegraph lines in the map either came directly from, or was extrapolated from, the returns from the Census of 1850.[30] The map simply says it was "compiled from reliable sources by Cha[s]. Barr, Pittsburgh, PA." [31]

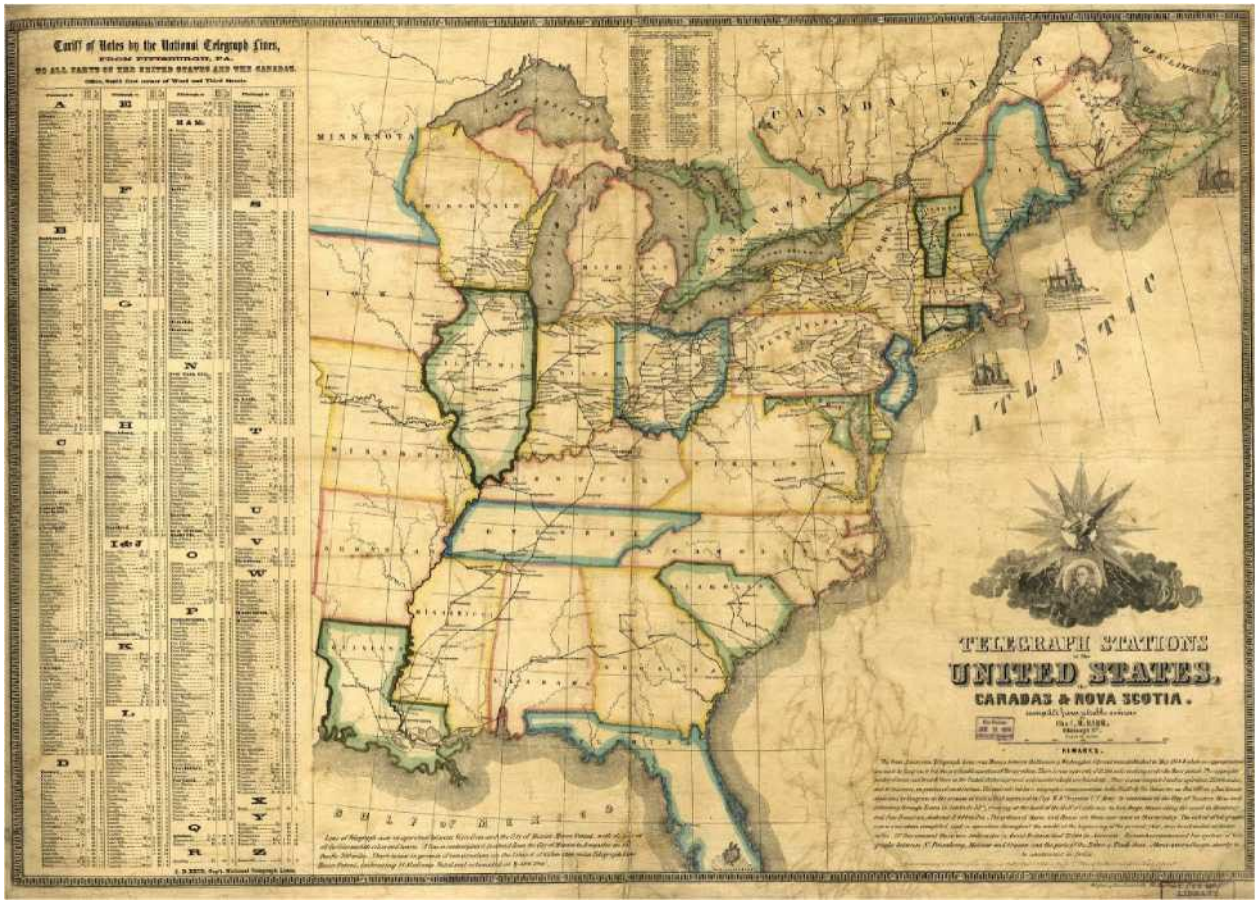

Figure 1: Telegraph Stations in the United States, the Canadas, and Nova Scotia, 1853. Produced by the firm of Charles Barr. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

The information to the left is an alphabetical listing of the telegraph office locations in the "United States, the Canadas, and Nova Scotia" as of the 1853 publication date. This information consists strictly of a list of telegraph office locations. The most that can be said of the list of locations

[30] One of the final reports from the Superintendent of the Census related to the 1850 Census said, "On the 1st of December, 1851, an abstract report was presented to Congress of the population of the States, except California, with other particulars. On the 1st of December 1852, a second abstract report was presented to Congress, entering into more details, and embracing the aggregate of States; of Nativities; of Deaf and Dumb, Blind, Insane, and Idiotic; of Churches, etc.; of Agriculture, etc.About the middle of June [1853] the printing of the present volume was begun, as early as the printers desired; and about the 20th of November [1853] the last form was completed and put to press."
[31] Barr, Chas. B. *Telegraph Stations in the United States, the Canadas, and Nova Scotia.* [S.I, 1853] Map. https://www.loc.gov/item97683602/.

is that at least one telegraph office existed in the municipality depicted on the map. From this information alone, it is impossible to determine if there was more than one telegraph office in the municipalities listed. For the purpose of this dissertation, it is not necessary to know the number of telegraph offices in each municipality. I have been most concerned with knowing the locations information could have been sent or received via telegraphy. Simply knowing that it was possible to send information via telegraphy from Cincinnati, OH to Columbus, OH then on to New York, for example, was sufficient for the research presented in this dissertation. I wanted to know where the telegraph network created connections and knowing that one telegraph office existed in a specific location provided confirmation that information could have been transmitted to and through that location.

The telegraph office location data was manually extracted from the Barr map and then georeferenced in order to display point data on the digitized map in ArcGIS. In order to display the location data, I collected latitude and longitude data for each town and properly formatted that information so it was recognizable in ArcGIS. The latitude and longitude information came from Google Maps. The location information is, therefore, a representation of the city or town rather than the specific address of a telegraph office. Even so, the location data presented in this research approximates original Barr map. The Barr map illustrated cities within reach of the telegraph network and the price a Pittsburg resident could expect to pay to transmit information to that location. A statement at the top of the map said it represented the "tariff rates by the national telegraph lines from Pittsburgh, PA to all parts of the United States and the Canadas." Specific addresses for telegraph offices were not included in the original Barr map so the digitized map should provide a similar degree of accuracy as the original. This list of locations contributed heavily to the research presented in this dissertation because it allowed me to determine which states and counties had the highest number of locations outfitted with telegraph offices. The analysis provided

throughout the dissertation is based off the data and the analyses provided by ArcGIS.

I also collected some location data related to the location of newspaper offices. When this project began, I thought I could do an all-encompassing impact of telegraphy on "the news" and on American politics. For a project like this dissertation, however, there was simply not enough time to complete that kind of task. Therefore, I quickly narrowed the focus of the research to telegraphy and the election of 1860. As mentioned above, the newspaper location data came from the *Livingston Law Register*. I collected the titles of individual newspapers and the city or town location as they appeared in the *Livingston Law Register* in 1852. The *Livingston Law Register* specifically said the original data had been "compiled from the U.S. Census returns for 1850, expressly for this work." The *Livingston Law Register* journal was published in New York "at the office of the U.S. Law Magazine." The edition I used to gather the data for this project was published in 1852. The journal said it contained a "list of newspapers in the United States, showing how often each is published along with the locality, character, and circulation of each." It is known that Abraham Lincoln had a copy of this specific journal in his law office when he practiced law in Springfield, Illinois.[32] When I collected the data, the purpose was to map the newspaper locations and compare them with the telegraph office locations and the voter data from 1860.

Another area for future research could focus on mapping the newspaper office locations as presented in the *Livingston Law Register* in order to do this comparison.

The information in the *Livingston Law Register* also showed the publication frequency and approximate publication number. I have not figured out how to meaningfully display the frequency of publication. The location data can illustrate where the newspapers were located and the publication numbers can show the places where I can also illustrate the places that would have been

[32] See John Livingston, *Livingston's Law Register* (New York: Office of the U.S. Law Magazine, 1852). Accessed at httDs://digital.librarv.illinois.edu/items/b224283Q-Qd92-Q135-23f6-QQ5Q569601ca-9.

the most saturated with newspapers. As of now, I have not figured out how to meaningfully illustrate the "Frequency" column. That column did not give a number by which the data could be easily quantified and then neatly displayed in ArcGIS. The frequency data referenced how often a work was published (daily, weekly, bi-monthly, etc). The location data, by contrast, allowed for plotting points and could be displayed in much the same manner as the telegraph offices are displayed for this research. The publication numbers represent quantities and could, therefore, be displayed in much the same manner as the voter data for both 1856 and 1860. Until I figure out how to represent frequency in ArcGIS, I am thinking future research focused on the newspaper data would be focused on location and publication information rather than frequency.

The research conducted for this dissertation has been designed to assess the impact of the increased speed of communication and information flow going into the 1860 election. As such, some selected information published in newspapers, either by Republican Party operatives, proslavery advocates, or other information determined to have had a coalescing effect for the Republican Party, has been quoted. This has been done in order to examine when and where information first appeared along with where and how quickly the information spread from location to location and to illustrate either proslavery reactions to the Republican Party or Republican Party reactions to proslavery actions. The purpose for showing the information in this fashion has been to show that, in addition to the content surrounding the issue of slavery, the mode of information exchange had an effect on the political situation going into the 1860 election. The newspapers articles quoted in this research came predominantly from www.newspapers.com although I have also consulted the Library of Congress's Chronicling America as well. In some cases, I have quoted articles or political speeches published in newspapers and then illustrated the places they subsequently appeared in other newspapers.

By 1860, most newspapers had columns similar to the *New York Herald's* "News By

Telegraph" or the *Charleston Mercury's* "Latest By Telegraph." Most newspapers received national political information either from press associations like the *Associated Press* or from individual national or local newspapers. In most cases, the information received by telegraph in a particular newspaper was clearly indicated by virtue of its appearance in the designated "telegraph" column. When I have illustrated the speed of information traveling in newspapers, I have made sure the information arrived at the newspaper via telegraphy and, thus, would have been transmitted very rapidly. I have quoted some articles to illustrate the political positions taken by proslavery southerners or Republican Party leaders or adherents in the North. When I have done that I have not specifically quoted from the "telegraph" columns. I have also used newspaper articles to illustrate how the flow of information hastened the speed of events, such as the onset of "Bleeding Kansas" and the secession crisis.

Digital Mapping

Readers and researchers alike should be aware that the use of maps as sources for research and as a method of display are full of interpretation. Like the discussion related to data above, researchers must also be very critical of maps and not take them to represent an objective reality. Mark Monmonier pointed out in *How to Lie with Maps* there is literally no way for a conventional flat two-dimensional paper map to represent objective reality because the earth is a threedimensional sphere and a paper map is a two-dimensional flat cartographic plane. Monmonier pointed out, for example, the Mercator projection map, one of the most widely-used world maps, wildly distorts the world's landmasses and is, therefore, full of interpretation. In fact, Monmonier argued, like Drucker, Munslow, and Trouillot argued in reference to data above, that information must be curated and interpreted in order to make a map meaningful. Monmonier said in order to project the round earth as a square, the latitudinal meridians must be elongated in the northernmost and southernmost regions of the globe. The transition from a circle to a square does not require a change to the equator

but does require elongating every other latitudinal meridian. In the extreme north and south the meridians must be elongated the most and, by definition, that requires the introduction of a great deal of distortion to the landmasses associated with those meridians. Northern landmasses, such as Greenland and Russia in the north and Antarctica and Australia in the south, for example, are drastically enlarged on a Mercator map. (See Figure 2) The image to the left represents the earth as a flat circle with the equator serving as the widest point. I have illustrated the necessary elongation to the meridians in red. It is obvious the northern and southern meridians are shorter than the equator. On the Mercator map to the right, however, the meridians are constant and include distortions to the landmasses.

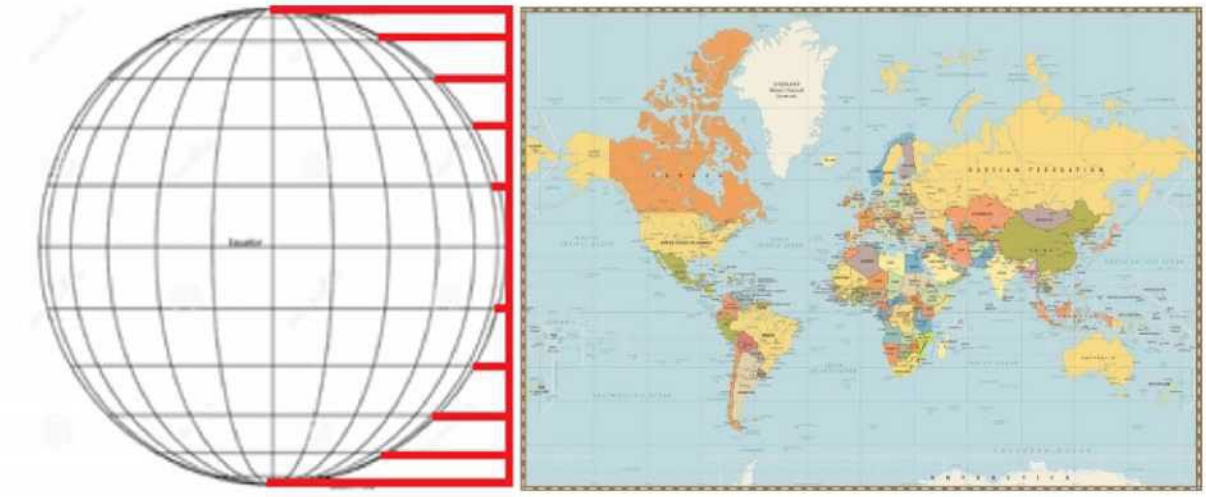

Figure 2: At right, transition from a circle to a square requires elongation at the northernmost and southern most poles. At left, the Mercator Projection map.

It is evident the elongation and, therefore distortion, is the most pronounced in the northernmost and southernmost regions. Monmonier pointed out that on a Mercator projection map, Greenland, for example, appears approximately the same size (or maybe slightly larger than) South America when in reality Greenland is only about one-eighth the size of South America. Russia, Canada, and other areas also appear much larger on a Mercator map projection than they are in reality. The earth is also not really a *perfect* sphere. There are a variety of features on the earth's surface (mountains, valleys, etc.) that cannot be captured with a perfectly smooth flat paper surface.

The overall point Monmonier made was that when cartographers create maps, they make them for specific purposes and, therefore, must include some information and exclude other information. The Mercator projection map, for example, was designed very specifically as a navigation tool during the post-1492 Age of Discovery. It was designed to aid mariners determine direction, time, and distance. The distortions inherent in the Mercator map limited its accuracy on time and distance but it served the purpose of aiding mariners in determining direction. The Barr map from the Library of Congress from which I collected the telegraph office data was very clearly created to illustrate the telegraph system in the United States and should be taken as an interpretation for that purpose alone and not assumed to represent anything other than its stated purpose.

Researchers must be aware of distortions within maps and datasets because those distortions can allow lead to biased or distorted conclusions. Monmonier pointed out that the Mercator projection map was used very successfully during the Cold War for political purposes to provide support for containment policy. Figure 3 below shows the Mercator projection of Russia (represented in grey) juxtaposed with a representation of the actual square mileage of the Russian landmass (represented in blue). In this picture, the Mercator projection is juxtaposed with the square mileage of Russia's landmass as it would be recorded at the equator where very little distortion would occur. Clearly, the Mercator map distorts the size and scale of Russia. Even so, Monmonier said, "The John Birch Society and other political groups warning of the 'red menace' commonly shared the stage with a massive Mercator map of the world with a cartographically enhanced China and Russia printed in a provocative, symbolically rich red."[33] In Monmonier essentially argued containment policy advocates used the Mercator projection map to vastly overstate the communist threat. The distortions in the Mercator projection map were eventually used to convince the American public that U.S. military actions in Korea in the 1950s and in Vietnam in the 1960s and

[33] Mark Monmonier, *How to Lie With Maps,* 3rd ed (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 107

1970s were necessary to contain the massive Russian threat.

Figure 3: Russia as illustrated on the Mercator Projection map versus the size of Russia at the Equator.

Monmonier also pointed out that maps have been particularly effective in garnering sympathy. In the 1970s, German historian Arno Peters published a new world map designed to correct the flaws of the Mercator map. Because the Peters map adopted principles very similar to those described by the Reverend James Gall in 1855, the map became known as the Gall-Peters projection. (See Figure 4) That projection, however, is also a rectangle rather than a sphere and includes as many distortions as the Mercator map. By correcting the flaws of the Mercator map, Peters had to include distortions elsewhere. The most noticeable distortion in the Peters map was the elongation of (and, therefore, more prominent) areas along the equator. Areas like the Caribbean, Indonesia, the African continent, and the Indian subcontinent take are noticeably more prominent in the Peters map than in the Mercator map. When the Gall-Peters projection map was published in the 1970s, it resonated with advocates for decolonization and developing nations because the same areas that appeared most prominent had recently received their independence in the aftermath of World War II. Most of those countries were also seeking money from more developed nations through the

United Nations. Monmonier pointed out that, at least partially as a result of the Gall-Peters map, UNESCO and the World Church International organizations gained disproportionate representation from Africa and Latin America because those organizations typically seek funds for previously colonized areas.

Figure 4: The Gall-Peters Projection Map.

Distortions in maps are not specific to paper maps. Part of the process of transferring the information from the Barr map used in the research for this dissertation meant "georeferencing" the Barr map scan to to a TIGER line map created by the U.S. Census Bureau. To make the Barr map into manipulatable digital map, I imported the original scanned map into ArcGIS as raster data and then georeferenced it to an 1860 TIGER line map produced by the National Historic Geographic Information System (NHGIS). Georeferencing simply means lining up obvious features in the Barr map to the same features of the TIGER line map. For example, points like the intersection of state lines, particular cities, the tip of Florida and Texas, along with other prominent features were aligned in order to trace the telegraph lines as they existed on the Barr map onto the TIGER line map. (See Figure 5 below for reference on how the Barr map was georeferenced to the TIGER line map of 1860.)

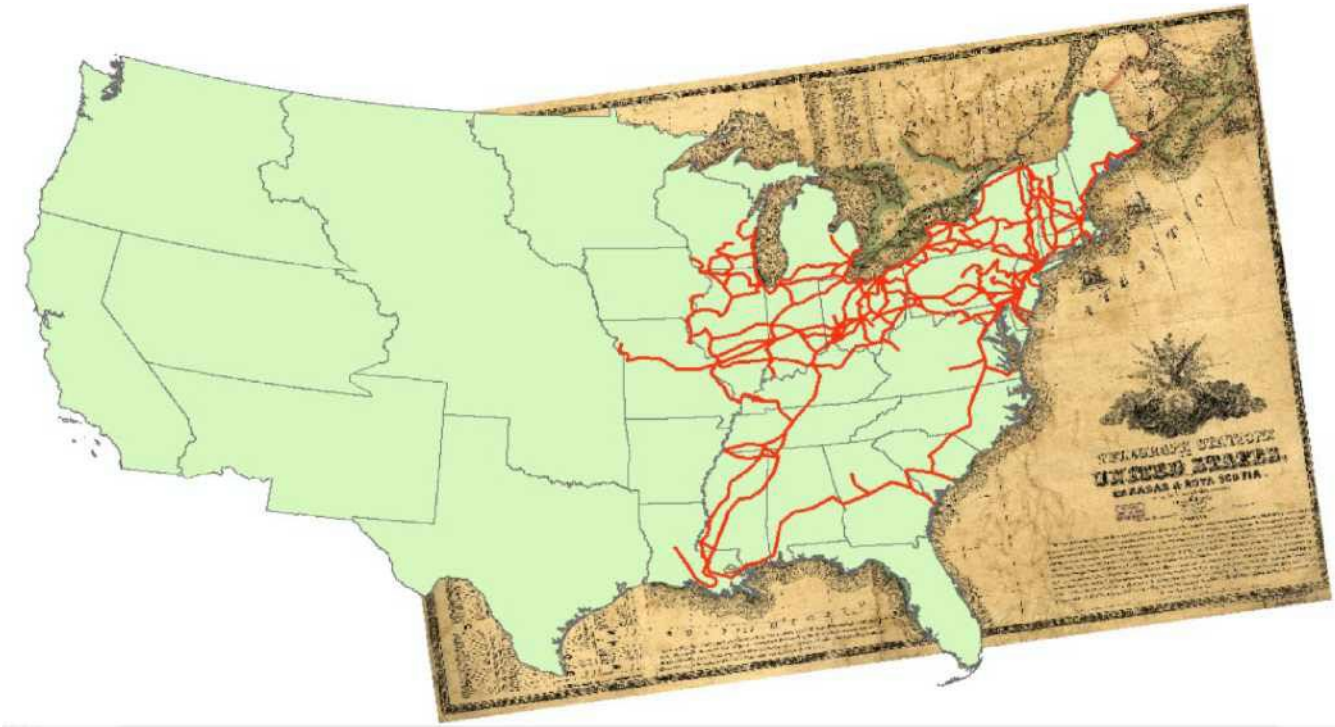

Figure 5: Georeferenced Barr map from the Library of Congress overlaid with the NHGIS 1860 map along with the digital representation of telegraph networks.

Georeferencing requires a great deal of judgement. By definition, georeferencing required introducing distortions to the original Barr map. As you might imagine, the Barr map, which is a hand-drawn map from the 1850s, did not align perfectly with the modern digitally-produced GIS shapefile. Even with the most adroit attention to detail, it is near impossible to match the maps perfectly. Even so, digital mapping scholars have pointed out that, like when using flat paper maps, scholars can produce useable information from digital maps even when they include distortions. Bethanie Nowviskie said people sometimes assume "solid, real-world referents underlie everything we see in maps."[34] Much like Monmonier, she argued, even the best maps—including digital maps—include subtle inaccuracies and a high degree of interpretation. Nowviskie basically argued digital maps cannot represent objective truth because they are produced by people who are specifically tasked with producing representations of the earth and/or specific locations. In much

[34] Ruth Panofsky and Kathleen Kellet, Ed. *Cultural Mapping and the Digital Sphere* (Alberta: University of Alberta Press, 2015), 108.

the same way Munslow argued *the past* is not the same thing as *written history*, Nowviskie argued the earth is not the same thing as a digital map. Rather, a digital map, she argued, is a representation of the earth and, as such, is full of interpretation. She essentially argued that interpretation has to be incorporated into digital maps in order for them to make sense. Monmonier argued specifically related to flat paper maps, "To portray meaningful relationships for a complex, three-dimensional world on a flat sheet of paper or a screen, a map must distort reality." He said, "To avoid hiding critical information in a fog of detail, the map must offer a selective, incomplete view of reality."[35] Trouillot argued this is also true of history itself. He said a historical narrative "fully comprehensive of all facts.would be incomprehensible."[36] Information has to be curated and interpreted for it to make sense.

Because there are inherent distortions in both paper and digital maps (and even history itself), Nowviskie argued humanities scholars should not be afraid to play with digital maps in order to produce meaningful representations of information that can be used as an epistemological device. Kevin Kee's *PastPlay* argued digital researchers should play with all digital tools in order to maximize the information that can be extracted from data, maps, and other sources. Kee's work included essays from several digital humanities scholars arguing that playing with digital technologies can allow digital humanities scholars to extrapolate meaningful information even if distortions are created. Stephen Ramsay, for example, argued in "The Hermeneutics of Screwing Around" learning history should be an exercise in "screwing around" where scholars play with computer algorithms and other digital tools, such as digital maps, in order find the best methods of discovering and displaying relevant historical information. Ramsay essentially argued vast amounts of information has been digitized over the last twenty years with that trend accelerating dramatically

[35] Monmonier, *How to Lie with Maps,* 1.
[36] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past,* 50.

within the last ten years. For that reason, he argued digital humanities scholars are almost required to "screw around" with digital technologies find and analyze specific information related to their research.

Once the Barr map from the LOC had been georeferenced as closely as possible to the TIGER line map from 186Q, I created a feature layer within ArcGIS and traced the telegraph lines illustrated on the Chas Barr map onto the digital map. The telegraph lines I produced within the ArcGIS map most certainly contain distortions. Even so, these distortions are not material to the information analyzed in this project. The idea behind illustrating the telegraph lines in this context is to visualize the connections made via telegraphy and to get an approximate mileage of telegraph wire per state. The mileage numbers, no doubt, are not precise. However, they are as approximate as the original Barr map. They are at least approximate enough to say one particular state had more telegraph wire mileage than another or approximately the same amount of telegraph lines based on the cities and towns that were connected via the telegraph network. Though the numbers are approximations, the purpose here has been to map the telegraph lines and then be able to compare states and regions of the country. For this purpose, the approximations will serve the purpose.

One area of future improvement that could be made to this project is to take the telegraph lines as I traced them from the georeferenced Barr map and make them into individual networks. When I completed telegraph line tracing, my intent was to examine the "telegraph lines" in the United States. At that point in the research process, I had not yet concluded that a "consolidated" telegraph network made a difference in the efficiency with which information flowed in the 185Qs. Since this dissertation began, however, I have concluded that consolidations within the telegraph system in the United States allowed information to flow faster and, therefore, had a greater impact on political debates as illustrated by almost every consolidation effort coinciding almost perfectly with a major development in the political arena. By consolidating the telegraph lines into six large

companies by 1860, for example, the telegraph lines became more efficient at sending and receiving information across the vast expanse of the United States. Improving this aspect of the project would improve the digital portion of the project because it could illustrate how individual telegraph networks were joined in order to create larger networks.

The data available from Dr. William Thomas's Railroads and the Making of Modern America (unl.edu) depicts the railroads as individual networks. When the railroad map is projected in ArcGIS and a segment is clicked, an information screen appears explaining who owned that segment of the railroad. In the future, I plan to apply a similar approach to the telegraph networks. It may even be possible to create an animation of the consolidation process between 1852 and 1860. That could very much aid in visualizing the progression of consolidation and the impact consolidation had on reducing the time needed to communicate over great distances. There are also three more maps available at the Library of Congress that could be digitized for further research related to this dissertation project. These maps could be compared to the Barr map to provide a comparison of the telegraph network during various years. They could probably also be used to create an animation within ArcGIS to show a progression of the telegraph network over time. Because of the constraints of time for this project, I was not able to utilize those maps but I may do so in the future.

Telegraphy and the Newspaper Press

The Flow of Information

By the time Abraham Lincoln ran for president in 1860 most of the major national newspaper presses had adopted telegraphy as the primary means of gathering and reporting news. That development had major political ramifications because it was through the national newspaper press that “the communications revolution gave a new urgency to social criticism and to the slavery

controversy in particular."[37] Because telegraphy divorced transportation from the communication process, reporters could rapidly gather news from distant places and transmit that information to press offices for publication. By 1848, the newspaper press had built a truly national news apparatus that could not only gather news on an unprecedented scale but that could also distribute reports simultaneously to multiple local newspapers across the country. The ability to send information virtually to multiple outlets at once revolutionized the flow of news in the United States. When travel limited the flow of information "news of an event spread outward in a slowly- growing circle, like a ripple in a pond, whose edge moved no faster than a galloping horse or swiftsailing ship."[38] That simply meant "an individual city['s] inhabitants were more likely to be exposed to non-redundant or new information from the places, normally nearby, with which contact frequency was high."[39] News originating in Louisville, for example, most likely appeared in a nearby city, such as Cincinnati, before it appeared (or *if* it appeared) in a distant city like New York. Alan Pred said this model of information flow usually resulted in "the geographic concentration of publication." He said that gave most information a "spatial bias" rather than a national character. After 1848, leading national newspaper editors used telegraphy to build a national news enterprise completely that obliterated the spatial bias paradigm.

When the Mexican War erupted in 1846, national newspaper directors turned to telegraphy to overcome the distance between the warfront and domestic information hubs. The 2,700 miles across the North American continent separating New York City, for example, from Vera Cruz and Mexico City made rapid information dissemination impossible. Because wartime developments can move fast "enterprising journalists" recognized telegraphy could allow them "to get the news to the

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37 Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 7.

38 Standage, *The Victorian Internet,* 1.

39 Alan Pred, *Urban Growth and the Circulation of Information, 1790-1840* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 16.

public promptly."[40] As a result, "the newspapers quickly enlisted the telegraph in their quest to gather and distribute information."[41] Frederic Hudson, a former business manager for the *New York Herald,* said, "With these brilliant conflicts on the Rio Grande the telegraphic era of the press really began. What a commencement! What a Revolution!"[42] The newspaper editors themselves were probably the people most astonished by the scale and speed with which news could be published. On January 05, 1848, approximately sixteen months after the Mexican War's outbreak, the *New York Herald* ran an article with the headline "Modern Miracle—The *New York Herald* and Electric Telegraph." The article said, "We present a wonder—a miracle—a phenomenon—in the *New York Herald* of this morning, to the American people, and the civilized world." It said, "Today, nearly ten columns of highly-important news, received by electric telegraph for this office, last evening, [were published] from various distant cities of the Atlantic and Western States, the aggregate distances being nearly 1,400 miles."[43]

Telegraphy could obviously be used for much more than reporting tactical developments from the front of the Mexican War. The *New York Herald* article quoted above noted that the content included "important commercial and political intelligence.|including| the important debate in Congress yesterday, and particularly in the Senate, where Mr. Calhoun made one of his greatest speeches." It also included "a full report of the message of the Governor of the state of New York, together with the market reports from different cities.all down to the latest moment." By 1848, therefore, the national newspaper press could gather and distribute more information over much greater geographic areas at a faster pace than at any previous time in American history. The enlarged

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40 See Thompson, *Wiring A Continent,* 217 & 218.

41 Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 4.

42 Frederic Hudson, *Journalism in the United States: From 1690-1872.* New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1873, 600.

43 James Gordon Bennet, Ed, "Modern Miracle—the *New York Herald* and Electric Telegraph," *New York Daily Herald,* January, 05, 1848, 05 Jan 1848, 2 - New York Daily Herald at Newspapers.com.

scale of production required newspaper executives to expand their operations. Initially, newspaper office directors thought they could simply send reporters to local telegraph offices to glean reports from telegraph operators. It quickly became obvious, however, "the employees in the telegraphic offices could not be expected to collect news at important points, and forward it. Their occupation confined them to the immediate duties of their offices."[44] If the New York City newspaper editors wanted information from Mexico or other distant places for publication in a timely manner, they would have to hire their own "telegraph reporters" and incur the expenses of sending them into the field. The telegraph reporters would have to gather their own specific reports and transmit them back to the office for publication.

The Mexican War had commenced on April 25, 1846 and within a month New York's six largest newspapers, the *New York Tribune, New York Daily Herald, New York Courier & Enquirer, New York Sun, New York Express,* and the *New York Journal of Commerce,* embarked on a joint venture to streamline the costs and process of the emerging field of telegraphic reporting. They created the *New York Associated Press* very specifically "to secure the transmission of news from the South, and particularly from the seat of War in Mexico, in advance of all ordinary channels."[45] By creating the *New York Associated Press,* therefore, the New York press principals had created "the 'first' press association for telegraphic newsgathering."[46] They designed the *New York Associated Press* almost exclusively "for the handling of telegraphic dispatches."[47] The goal was "to share the costs of obtaining telegraphic news, formalizing arrangements for telegraphic newsgathering"[48] and to "cooperate in receiving news.to share all news that came in and split the

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[44] Alfred McClung Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America: The Evolution of a Social Instrument* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), 494.
[45] Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 4.
[46] Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America,* 495.
[47] McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 13.
[48] Hochfelder, *The Telegraph in America,* 182.

expenses evenly." [49] Rather than all the newspapers having to individually bear the expense of sending reporters to the field or each paper having to paying steam ship charges to deliver reports to New York, the *New York Associated Press* could operate as a single news-gathering entity for all the partner newspapers obviously making it cheaper for each paper. The press association model also streamlined the news-making process. Rather than having to focus on gathering *and* reporting the news, the *New York Associated Press* gathered the news and distributed reports to the partner papers allowing the editors to focus on preparing the reports for publication.

In the beginning, the *New York Associated Press* was conceived "with no more ambitious pretension than to provide its six founders with telegraphic intelligence."[50] Very quickly, however, local newspapers lacking the means to create their own press associations sought access to the New York press association's content. As high-stakes events played out in Mexico, newspapers with up-to-the-minute information became the most popular. Largely because of the promise of additional revenues, the *New York Associated Press* started selling subscriptions to local newspapers soon after its organization. There was also talk beginning to circulate about the construction of a new telegraph line between New York and Halifax, Nova Scotia. The *Brooklyn Evening Star* excitedly reported, "There is to be an electric telegraph between Calais (Maine) and Halifax to connect with the line at Portland (Maine) so that we shall soon have our foreign news immediately upon the arrival of the steamer at Halifax."[51] European ships could steam to Halifax and then telegraph news to New York approximately three days faster than steaming directly to New York. A direct line between New York and Halifax, therefore, would cut the time lag for European news. In anticipation of the Halifax line and to expand the appeal of the subscription service, directors of the *New York Associated Press*

[49] Stephen Shmansky, "News as a Public Good: Cooperative Ownership, Price Commitments, and the Success of the Associated Press," *The Business History Review,* Vol. 60, No. 1 (Spring, 1986): 8.
[50] Thompson, *Wiring A Continent,* 226.
[51] E.B. Spooner, "Telegraph to Halifax," *Brooklyn Evening Star,* June 03, 1848, 03 Jun 1848, Page 2 - Brooklyn Evening Star at Newspapers.com

restructured the organization in 1848 with the deliberate goal of making the organization more national in scope. International news entering the United States from a Halifax line could be distributed via telegraphy to subscribing papers throughout the country. In a clear sign the directors sought to make the association more national, they dropped the words "New York" from the name and called reorganized institution the *Associated Press.*

The telegraphic model of reporting that emerged with the press association gave "the news" a more national character. A statement from the *Associated Press* a few years later said by virtue of "the *Associated Press*...ha[ving] its origin in the necessity occasioned by the introduction of a new system of procuring news by telegraph.. .the leading papers of New York... came together and formed an association and organized a system by which. general news was to be received daily."[52] Bruce Chadwick noted, "The creation of the *Associated Press.*meant that stories from Illinois that formerly took a week to reach New York now made it in minutes." Chadwick said the "new technology.enabled large New York newspapers, such as Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune,* to reach a national readership, selling thousands of copies in various states beyond New York."[53] James McPherson said, "The telegraph vastly increased the influence of |national| newspapers, the country's principal medium of communication."[54] Americans historically received most of their news from local newspapers—not from national newspapers. Allan Pred said, "Despite their near-monopoly on non-local public information, as well as their mounting number and total circulation, |national| newspapers had a very limited number of subscribers and direct purchasers throughout the pre-telegraphic age." National newspaper circulation dramatically increased after the advent of

[52] "The European News at Halifax: Statement of the New York Associated Press to the Public," *New York Times,* August 10, 1859, 10 Aug 1859, Page 3 - The New York Times at Newspapers.com. The term "general" here is akin to referencing the "general government" (federal government) as opposed to a state government. It is a statement of how the *Associated Press* was specifically designed to gather and report national rather than local news.
[53] Chadwick, *Lincoln For President,* 57.
[54] McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 12

telegraphic news reporting but a great deal of the population continued to receive news through local newspapers. Regardless of which newspapers people read, "newspapers were the only regular.communications medium through which news of distant origin could be made locally available in the form of public information."[55] [56] Even if most Americans were reading local newspapers, the *Associated Press* subscription service "increased the volume of news wired to small-town dailies."[2Q] "The news" after 1848, therefore, became much more national in its tone than prior to the press association subscription model of reporting.

Through its subscription service, the *Associated Press* essentially "turned news into a commodity, which could be sold in competition and monopolized like any other."[57] The partnership between the press and the telegraph industry eventually "created a double-barreled monopoly that controlled the nation's telegraph lines and franchised news."[58] Alfred McClung Lee said, "The expansion of the telegraph system was increasing the scope of.newsgathering agencies, and the newspapers and press associations in turn promoted the extension of the wire network."[59] By the 1870s, the *Associated Press* controlled almost all franchised news in the United States and *Western Union* controlled the means of distributing that news. Daniel Czitrom observed, "Through an aggressive policy of acquiring various telegraph properties and patents... *Western Union* grew into America's first great industrial monopoly." The telegraph monopoly, in turn, "aided the establishment of a news monopoly through mutual-benefit contracts with the *Associated Press*." Congress even investigated the monopolistic practices of the two industries and "emphasized the dangers inherent in the alliance." The Congressional report said the telegraph companies had "so

[55] Quotes from Pred, *Urban Growth and the Circulation of Information, 1790-1840,* 2Q.
[2Q] Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America,* 5Q2.
[57] Daniel Czitrom, *Media and the American Mind From Morse to McLuhan* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 159.
[58] Czitrom, *Media and the American Mind,* 159.
[59] Lee, *The Daily Newspaper in America,* 501.

hedged themselves in alliance with the press associations that no new.journal can have the use of the telegraph at rates not absolutely ruinous." In turn, the report noted, "Many journals.are in the absolute power of the telegraph companies." The monopolistic practices of *Western Union* and the *Associated Press* are usually topics of the Gilded Age but, as Daniel Czitrom pointed out, "By 1860, the.New York dailies comprising the *Associated Press*.were in total control of America's domestic and foreign news gathering, obtaining the news they wanted and settling all questions of policy."[60]

Though the formation of *Western Union* did not officially occur until 1866, consolidations among the group of telegraph companies the eventually created *Western Union* set their sights on monopolizing the telegraph industry in the mid-1850s. In an effort to streamline their services, these companies set out to "bring about a closer union and concert of action among.the member companies." In 1857 the six largest telegraph companies in the United States signed the so-called Treaty of the Six Nations (the "six nations" being the companies themselves) creating a "new alliance aimed at nothing less than a monopoly of the nation's telegraph business."[61] The American Telegraph Company, the Atlantic and Ohio Telegraph Company, the New York Albany and Buffalo Telegraph Company, the Western Union Telegraph Company, the New Orleans and Ohio Telegraph Company, and the Illinois and Mississippi Telegraph Company all became signatories. The next year (1858), the Montreal Telegraph Company in Canada joined with the American companies to form the North American Telegraph Association. These consolidations were driven, for the most part, by the national newspaper press's demand for more efficient services. The "double-barreled monopoly" may not have officially emerged until the 1870s, but David Hochfelder argued, "Since about the mid-1850s, the fortunes of the newspaper press and the telegraph industry had been tightly woven together."[62] As the *Associated Press* and the North American Telegraph Association

[60] Quotes form Czitrom, *Media and the American Mind,* 23-26.
[61] Thompson, *Wiring A Continent,* 316 and 324.
[62] Hochfelder, *The Telegraph in America* 43.

institutionalized their respective industries, news became more national in scope allowing national issues to be debated with much more urgency than previously possible. Daniel Walker Howe argued, "With the communications revolution it became possible to wage a nationwide contest over public opinion."[63] Developments in public information flow, in other words, directly affected the political climate of the United States. The emergence of the North American Telegraph Association in 1857, therefore, represented a serious development in American journalism *and* politics just three years prior to the election campaign of 1860.

As an organization dedicated to reporting news via the telegraph network, the *Associated Press* emerged in the North where the telegraph network was the most pervasive. The *Associated Press* was obviously headquartered in New York and from the very outset of its creation, the group "was to be under the direction of a general agent in New York City who would be responsible for the management of the office."[64] All the member companies of the North American Telegraph Association except the New Orleans and Ohio Telegraph Company were also headquartered in the North. That company was headquartered in Louisville, KY just across the Ohio River from Indiana but all of its major stock holders were northerners.[65] The Illinois and Mississippi Telegraph Company headquarters were located in Peoria, Ill and the rest of the telegraph companies were headquartered in New York. As pointed out previously, the consolidated telegraph system represented a predominantly sectional phenomenon. National news was also distributed across the country from New York. The North American Telegraph Association *and* the *Associated Press* with its reliance on the northern telegraph system represented northern monopolies that controlled the content and flow of news in the United States by 1857. Southern newspapers as well as northern

[63] Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 230.
[64] Thompson, *Wiring A Continent,* 225.
[65] The major stockholders of the New Orleans and Ohio Telegraph Company were Samuel F.B. Morse (Massachusetts) at $4,000, Amos Kendall (Massachusetts) at $5,500, and James D. Reid (New York) at $5,750.

newspapers relied on the information made available by the *Associated Press* but the content of the news was almost totally in control of northerners. *The Daily Constitutionalist and Republic* in Augusta, Georgia lamented the fact that southern newspapers had to rely on northerners for content saying, "The extortions of the combination in New York, known as the *Associated Press,* upon the newspapers and other patrons of the monopoly throughout the country, are producing a spirit of restlessness and discontent." It said, "The New York company monopolizes the news.[and].sends over the wires a quantity of trash, gossip, and nonsense."[66] By virtue of publishing such articles, the *The Daily Constitutionalist and Republic* understood it itself to be reliant on the northern monopoly of the news represented by the *Associated Press.*

The Political Implications of Telegraphy

In 1848, the very same year the *Associated Press* emerged, the United States acquired vast tracts of land in the American Southwest with the close of the Mexican War. That development set off a national debate about whether slavery should expand into the new territories. That issue practically consumed the national political dialogue throughout the 1850s. The substance of this issue is typically cited as *the* cause of the debates related to slavery in the territories. It may be impossible to determine with certainty whether this debate would have carried the potency it did materialized when it did without the emergence of telegraphic news reporting. It can be said with certainly, however, telegraphic news had emerged by 1848 and the issue of slavery in the territories very directly led to a political realignment. Proslavery southerners thought they should be able to spread slavery into the new lands acquired from Mexico and free-soil advocates hoped to forbid the expansion of slavery westward. Abraham Lincoln, himself an advocate for preventing the spread of slavery into the west, said to stop slavery's march into the west it was imperative to place slavery

[66] James Gardner, "Impositions of the Telegraph," *Daily Constitutionalist and Republic,* March 22, 1856, 22 Mar 1856, 2 - The Daily Constitutionalist and Republic at Newspapers.com

"where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in course of ultimate extinction."[67] Free-soil advocates, in other words, had to dominate the "public mind" if they wanted to control the political destiny of the United States. There was really only one way to do that in 1860— forceful advocacy of political ideas in the newly-emergent national telegraphic newspaper press.

The nationalization of the news through telegraphic reporting immediately placed southerners, who had a very limited telegraph system, at a major disadvantage in what essentially became an idea war. Northerners used their superior newspaper press to dominate the "public mind" and ultimately settled "all the major issues that had divided the early Republic and led to civil war.for at least the next century."[68] When leaders were negotiating the end of the Mexican War in 1848, David Wilmot, a Congressman from Pennsylvania, proposed adding what has become known as the Wilmot Proviso to any treaty between the two nations that included acquisition of land by the United States. Wilmot opposed the expansion of slavery into any western territories and proposed the following proviso to enshrine the free-soil position into law; "Provided that as an express and fundamental condition to the acquisition of any territory from the Republic of Mexico, by the United States, by virtue of any treaty which may be negotiated between them, and to the use by the Executive of the monies therein appropriated, neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall exist in any part of said territory except for crime whereof the party shall be first duly convicted."[69] This seventy-one-word rider captured the essence of the political realignment that struck the American political system in 1848 and represented one of the central drivers of the North-South divide until the close of the Civil War. The Wilmot Proviso clearly struck at the issue of slavery in the territories but it also implied the federal government—Congress in particular— had the power to restrict

[67] Quoted in Mackey, *A Documentary History of the American Civil War Era,* 19-26.
[68] Robert Francis Engs, *The Birth of the Grand Old Party: The Republicans' First Generation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2QQ2), 1.
[69] David Wilmot, *Wilmot Proviso,* National Archives, wilmot-proviso.pdf (archives.gov).

slavery in the territories. That almost immediately exposed fractures within the Democratic Party. Mainstream Democrats, for the most part, supported extending slavery into the territories in 1848. Wilmot served in Congress as a Democratic representative from Pennsylvania. Southern Democrats, like John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, however, outright rejected the federalist approach and the limitations that would have been imposed on slavery's expansion in the western territories had the Wilmot Proviso become law.

As is well-known, during the 185Qs, southerners became extreme champions of states' rights. Calhoun, the most ardent defender of this position, gave a speech on the Senate floor specifically denouncing the Wilmot Proviso in 1847 saying, "The territories belonging to the United States are the joint and common property of the United States." Calhoun argued, "Congress, as the agent of all the states, has no right to make any law.which would deprive the citizens of any state from emigrating with their property into any territory of the United States."[70] That is essentially a statement of the classical states' rights position; the states are sovereign and the federal government merely serves as the agent of the states. Martin Van Buren, one of the most prominent Democrats in the country, agreed with Wilmot and ultimately bolted from the Democrats heading the Free-Soil Party during the presidential election that year. The Democratic Party remained intact but the split between the northern and southern factions clearly illustrated the issue of slavery in the western territories had caused strains within a major national political party in 1848. The Democratic Party ultimately split over this very issue in 1860 as party leaders like James Buchanan and Stephen Douglas debated the Lecompton Constitution. The issue emerged in 1848, however, with the rise of the telegraphic press association model of news distribution and only became more potent as developments in telegraphy made distribution of the news more efficient as the decade progressed.

[70] John Youngman & Son, "From Washington," *The Sunbury Gazette,* February 27, 1847, 27 Feb 1847, 2 - The Sunbury Gazette at Newspapers.com

In 1848, the Free-Soil Party platform adopted a federalist position on the issue of slavery in the territories saying "the only safe means of preventing the extension of slavery into territory now free, is to prohibit its extension in all such territory by an act of Congress." In a direct challenge to the Democratic Party platform of that year, the Free-Soil Party platform said prior to the Mexican War "it was the settled policy of the nation not to extend, nationalize or encourage, but to limit, localize and discourage slavery."[71] Van Buren's defection from the Democratic Party represents a major plank of the political realignment that emerged in 1848. Van Buren had been instrumental in organizing the Democratic Party in the 1830s. The party had emerged in support of Andrew Jackson but "Martin Van Buren.. .made himself the party's strategist, tactician, and official apologist."[72] By the early 1840s, however, Van Buren had aligned himself with the so- called "Barnburners" of his native New York who were at odds with the so-called "Hunkers" of the state. The two factions split over the expansion of slavery in the territories. Van Buren and the Barnburners "campaigned for the Wilmot Proviso between 1846 and 1848," thus, obviously opposing the expansion of slavery into the territories.[73] The Hunkers supported slavery's extension into the territories as did most mainstream Democrats in 1848. Mainstream Democrats, the Hunkers in particular, had derisively labeled Van Buren's faction "Barnburners" because they were said to be so radical, especially on the issue of slavery, they would burn down their own barn to get rid of a rat infestation. Loosely translated, that meant the Barnburners would align themselves with abolitionists—radicals who would destroy the country—in order to stop the spread of slavery into the western territories.

Because Van Buren came from New York and because the Barnburner and Hunker factions of the Democratic Party were located in New York, this fracture within the Democratic Party is

[71] Both party platforms quoted in Joel H. Sibley, *Party Over Section: The Rough and Ready Presidential Election of 1848* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2009). See Appendix A "Democratic National Platform, 1848" and Appendix C "Free Soil National Platform, 1848."
[72] Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 489.
[73] See Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men,* 236 and 59.

sometimes characterized as solely a New York phenomenon. James McPherson, however, argued, "The Barnburner convention provided the spark for an antislavery political blaze."[74] The Whig Party also came under strains in 1848 due to the issue of slavery in the territories. So-called "Conscious" Whigs in the North in 1848, so named because it was said they were conscious of the plight of enslaved people of the South, opposed slavery's expansion into the western territories whereas the "Cotton Whigs" of the South supported slavery's extension into the western territories. Charles Sumner, who became a leading voice of the Republican Party after 1854, is generally considered to be one of the most prominent Conscious Whigs opposing slavery's expansion. Antislavery Democrats and Conscious Whigs made up the foundational pillars of the Free-Soil Party in 1848. The party emerged in Buffalo, New York and the Barnburner/Hunker split came in New York, precisely where the *Associated Press* was headquartered and where all but two of the major telegraph companies had their headquarters. New York also had the most telegraph offices of any state in the Union with 93. It appears more accurate to say that what originated as a local issue in the early 1840s, had been projected nationally by 1848 as the New York newspaper press deliberately reorganized the *New York Associated Press* with the specific intent of nationalizing the content focus and expanding the subscription service in order to reach more local newspapers.

Issues related to the Wilmot Proviso consumed press reports in 1847. The lead story in the *Richmond Enquirer* on April 20, 1847 had the headline, "The Wilmot Proviso," and said, "We had supposed that no southern man, Whig or Democrat, could be found, who would not commit himself against any proposition which so vitally concerned the South, as does the Wilmot Proviso." The article, however, announced there had been a few southern politicians who had dared not to denounce the Wilmot Proviso. The *Enquirer* said, "We are prepared to denounce any and every southern politician, be he Democrat or Whig, who will not stand up to the support of the South in

[74] McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 60.

her right to claim as a slave territory all that may be acquired" because "heresy, deadly heresy abounds in.sophisms on the Wilmot Proviso."[75] The *Charleston Mercury* ran an article saying, "The Wilmot Proviso aims a blow at the sovereignty and independence of the slaveholding states" because "it assumes for Congress a power that the South can never yield—the power to settle by majority vote the compromises of the Constitution." In fact, the *Mercury* article argued, "Once adopted as the settled policy of the government, the South would become the vassal of the North as completely and effectually as Ireland is the vassal of the British crown."[76] By 1847, southerners interpreted federalism to, almost by definition mean, opposition to slavery. The Wilmot Proviso addressed both slavery and federalism and representing a concrete symbol of how federal power might be used to curtail the spread and influence of slavery.

Issues related to federalism represented a central tenet of the political realignment that emerged in 1848. Eric Foner argued, "When the major parties divided over the slavery issue in 1847 and 1848, many Conscious Whigs and Barnburner Democrats called for the divorce of the federal government from slavery." Foner said Salmon P. Chase of Ohio had written the Free-Soil Party platform in 1848 and he believed that "freedom is national; slavery only is local and sectional." Chase believed slavery had been invented by state law but that in places where the Constitution alone served as the direct authority—such as in territories of the United States—it guaranteed freedom and not slavery. Foner noted that "freedom national became the rallying cry of the Republican Party."[77] This issue became a central driving force in the political reorganization that emerged in 1848 as illustrated by the strains within the Democratic and Whig parties. James McPherson and other historians have argued the Wilmot Proviso essentially politicized the issue of

[75] William and Thomas Ritchie, Jr., "The Wilmot Proviso," *Richmond Enquirer,* April 20, 1847, 20 Apr 1847, 1 - Richmond Enquirer at Newspapers.com.
[76] John. E. Carew, "The Wilmot Proviso: The Remedy," *The Charleston Mercury,* September 27, 1847, 27 Sep 1847, 2 - The Charleston Mercury at Newspapers.com
[77] Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men,* 82-83.

slavery in the territories forcing the issue of slavery's expansion to the fore of American political discourse. The substance of the debate is almost always cited as causing the explosion of the slavery issue going into the 1850s. The revolutions in the newspaper press brought on by telegraphy, however, allowed these issues to be projected to national audiences and allowed for the emergence of truly national political campaigns focusing on such broad issues. The substance is obviously very important but the medium through which the debates occur dramatically impacted the character of the debates.

Federalism had been debated in the past but it did not consume national politics the way it did after the emergence of a nationalized newspaper press. With few exceptions—the Nullification Crisis being one of the most obvious exceptions—federalism had been debated in abstract terms. As debates emerged over the Kansas-Nebraska Act in late 1853 and early 1854, however, federalism took centerstage in the American political scene. The Kansas-Nebraska Act proposed eliminating the Missouri Compromise, which had served as a federal prohibition on the extension of slavery into the western territories. Since 1820, the Missouri Compromise had served as a Congressional prohibition on the extension of slavery into Kansas, Nebraska, and other lands within the Louisiana Purchase area north of the 36° 30' latitudinal parallel. The large amounts of land acquired as a result of the Mexican War changed the calculus of the issue of slavery in the territories. Southerners sought to repeal the Missouri prohibition on the grounds that the federal government did not have the power to prohibit slavery in the west. The mere existence of the Missouri prohibition required at least a tacit acknowledgement that Congress did have the power to eliminate slavery in the western territories. The concern was, of course, that Congress might pass a similar law prohibiting slavery in the Mexican Cession, Texas, or other western territory. The Wilmot Proviso along with the emergence of the Free-Soil party in 1848 had made clear there was an appetite in the North for just such a federal action and, if the Congressional power to prohibit slavery remained intact, the

Constitution did not impose limits on where the federal government could prohibit slavery. The larger concern, of course, was that Congress might pass a law abolishing slavery throughout the United States.

Even among southerners, it was generally understood that national governments had the power to either allow or disallow slavery. Southerners had sought—and ultimately won—federal protections for slavery during the Compromise of 1850 with the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law. They had used federal powers to protect slavery. The trend among international governments, however, had been to eliminate slavery. Mexico abolished slavery in 1829, the British Empire did so in 1833, and the French abolished slavery in 1848. The size and scope of Britain's emancipation, however, had major ramifications for the United States. British emancipation represented a "sweeping plan of gradual emancipation that would free 800,000 slaves over five years."[78] It also became obvious that "by the mid-1830s Great Britain had emerged as one of the most strident antislavery governments in the world." The British were so dedicated to the cause of abolition that "soon the British were using their position as the world's most preeminent naval power to pressure other countries to follow suit." Prior to the American annexation of Texas, for example, the British had tried to "strong-arm Texans into abandoning slavery." It was well-known that "Great Britain abolished the Brazilian slave trade through naval force."[79] By turning Texas into a free labor area, British leaders believed they could "secure a free labor source of cotton that would enable them to abandon their reliance on the slave-holding American South, striking blows for both Britain's manufacturing and global abolitionism."[80]

Texas did not become a free labor area in the early 184Qs, but southerners were alarmed

[78] Andrew Torget, *Seeds of Empire: Cotton, Slavery, and the Transformation of the Texas Borderlands* (Cahpel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 189.
[79] Simon Lewis and David T. Gleeson, *The Civil War As Global Conflict: Transnational Meanings of the American Civil War* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2014), 23.
[80] See Torget, *Seeds of Empire,* "Creating A Cotton Nation," *188*-213.

that the South might possibly be totally surrounded by abolitionist societies. With the Atlantic representing an antislavery area patrolled by the British navy to the east and the North's increasingly hostility to slavery, if Texas had abolished slavery the South would have been almost completely surrounded by anti-slave societies. James Oakes pointed out that would have been very problematic for slaveowners because societies relied on the force of law to protect slavery. The existence of free societies enticed the enslaved population to escape as is clearly illustrated by the emergence of the Underground Railroad during the 185Qs. Edward Rugemer said southern slave owners were outraged because of "the welcome [fugitive slaves] received." He said, in many instances, fugitive slaves "found free black communities of radical abolitionists who established systems of support for the fugitives, and in some cities there were even vigilance committees that would fight off slave catchers." That is precisely the reason southern slaveowners had pushed for a harsher fugitive slave law in 185Q. When the British eliminated slavery within the British Empire in 1833, Parliament passed the Emancipation Act of 1833 setting stage for the end of slavery within the empire. The British Emancipation Act set forth an apprenticeship period and provided for some compensation to slaveowners, but the British Parliament simply acted on its own power to end slavery throughout the British Empire. Southerners were cognizant of how that had materialized and they were also very aware of the effects British emancipation had on the abolitionist movement in the United States. Proslavery southerners intended to prevent a similar episode from playing out in the United States by preemptively stripping that power from the national government.

Southerners understood they were becoming a minority within the federal system and that slavery was becoming a pariah on the international scene. As a result, southerners became very defensive of the South's slave system. In such an atmosphere, they magnified issues northern refusals to return runaway slaves and northern opposition to the spread of slavery into the western territories. Until the 1840s, American abolitionism remained an almost exclusively social concern

wielding very little political power or influence in American politics. Rugemer said, "The second party system kept abolitionism out of mainstream politics and endowed slaveholders with the political stability that facilitated the expansion of the slave economy." He argued, "Each political party—Democrats and Whigs—required support in the South to win national elections and congressional majorities to carry out their policy goals, so neither party could countenance abolitionism."[81] As it became clear the slave system was becoming extremely unpopular in the North where the overwhelming majority of the population resided, however, southerners realized if the northern population coalesced into a united political organization—like the Republican Party—it was possible for the North to dominate the federal government. The *Charleston Mercury* ran an editorial in September 1854, as the Republican Party was materializing in the North, at least partially blaming the emergence of the party on "British abolitionism." The article said, "If British abolitionism, on its first advent into our country, had been called to a stern account for its misdeeds.we would not now have seen a large portion of the people of Connecticut, Vermont, and Massachusetts in open rebellion against the Constitution, laws, and authority of the United States." It said, "If Connecticut, Vermont, Massachusetts, Western New York, and the Ohio Reserve will continue to be the dupes of British policy.[they will] force upon the country a dissolution of the Union."[82]

Gale Kenny argued Britain's abolition of slavery had a tremendous impact on the antislavery movement in the United States. Kenny said, "The 1833 passage of the Emancipation Act in Great Britain" served as a "major factor contributing to the coalescing abolitionist movement in the United States." Antislavery advocates in the United States very quickly started "to organize local abolitionist organizations and to organize petitions against the peculiar institution." They also used

[81] Lewis, *The Civil War As Global Conflict*, 25.
[82] Robert Barnwell Rhett, Jr.,"The Slave Trade and the Union," *Charleston Mercury,* September 06, 1854, 06 Sep 1854, 2 - The Charleston Mercury at Newspapers.com

the national newspaper press to spread word about their cause as a means of trying to convince the masses that "whenever immediate emancipation has taken place it has been attended with peaceful and prosperous results."[83] It should be noted the anticipated Nova Scotia Telegraph Company opened its doors for business in October 1849. The *New York Daily Herald* ran an article on October 04, 1849 saying, "The Halifax papers of September 30 announce that the telegraph to that place will be completed by the 10th of the present month."[84] Newspaper accounts from the *Charleston Mercury, Brooklyn Evening Star,* and others seem to confirm the line was actually completed on October 13, 1849. The political antislavery movement may have benefitted from increasing the rate and flow of foreign news—particularly British news—into New York where it could then be distributed mainly across the North. Efforts had been made to turn abolitionism and antislavery to politics prior to the 1850s. Foner pointed out that antislavery radicals throughout "the 1830s and 1840s.strove to introduce the antislavery into political debate." He said, "They seized every opportunity to exacerbate the sectional cleavages which lay beneath the placid surface of politics in the early 1840s."[85] Antislavery, however, did not materialize as a political phenomenon in the United States until after the emergence of telegraphy and the national newspaper apparatus nationalized the flow of information in the United States. The addition of the Halifax line in October 1849 presents another very interesting line of inquiry that could serve as an avenue for future research. Kenney, Foner, and others do not mention the emergence of telegraphy and the newspaper press as a central driver of those political debates. The substance of slavery and territorial expansion had been debated previously but the major difference by 1850 was that the United States had a mechanism in the form of the national telegraphic newspaper press to debate such issues on a

[83] Quotes from Gale L. Kenny, *Contentious Liberties: American Abolitionists in Post-Emancipation Jamaica, 1834-1866.* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010), 6 and 193.
[84] James Gordon Bennet, "The Halifax Telegraph Line," *York Daily Herald,* October 04, 1849, 04 Oct 1849, 2 - New York Daily Herald at Newspapers.com
[85] Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men,* 112.

national scope.

Northerners continually argued slavery rested squarely on political power alone. The *New York Evening Post* ran an article on June 27, 1846 saying, “The existence of slavery depends alone upon political power; take that away and the whole fabric falls.” The article continued on to say, “It has no foundation in morals or religion, or in the common sympathies of the people.” That same article said that if the Mexican War resulted in the acquisition of wester lands the paper would not object as long as Congress adopted the Wilmot Proviso. It said, “We have no objections to annexing California, and even the whole of Mexico, with this proviso, that ‘slavery shall not be admitted.' Let the word be passed along the lines, and let the motto be written on the back of every man's vote when the question arises: ‘No more slave territory.'”[86] Many Southerners blamed the increase in opposition to slavery's expansion, at least indirectly, on the influence of Britain's emancipation schemes. William Lloyd Garrison's *The Liberator* published a letter from Gerrit Smith, who ran as the Liberty Party's candidate in 1848, saying, “When the glorious missionary, William Knibb, had seen the slaveholders tear down and burn a large share of the chapels in Jamaica, he set sail for Great Britain. Scarcely had he landed, ere began the cry, ‘Slavery is incompatible with Christianity.'” Smith's letter continued, “He went over his native land uttering this cry. A mighty cry it was. The walls of British slavery felt its power as certainly as did the wall of Jericho, the shout by which it was prostrated.”[87] The point, of course, was that no political position is impenetrable. Though slaveowners in Jamaica had built what they hoped were impenetrable political positions in regards to slavery, ultimately enough support had emerged within the British Parliament to overrule the slave interests.

[86] William Cullen Bryant, “The True Policy of the West,” June 27, 1846, 27 Jun 1846, Page 2 - The Evening Post at Newspapers.com
[87] William Lloyd Garrison, “Gerrit Smith to Stephen C. Phillips,” November 2Q, 1846, 2Q Nov 1846, Page 2 - The Liberator at Newspapers.com

Southern slaveowners understood the metaphor very clearly. As the Republican Party began its ascent began its ascent in 1854, southerners understood the party's advocacy of federal control over the western territories to mean the possibility of the same thing occurring the West as had transpired in Jamaica. It should come as no surprise then that slave owners reacted very viscerally to the very emergence of the political antislavery movement in the United States. David Atchison, a proslavery Senator from Missouri wrote a letter to Virginia's Robert M.T. Hunter saying, "We are playing for a mighty stake." Atchison told Hunter, "The game must be played boldly.. .If we win we carry slavery to the Pacific Ocean, if we fail we lose Missouri, Arkansas, Texas, and all the territories."[88] Even as southerners counted three-fifths of their enslaved population for representation purposes in the House of Representatives, the Wilmot Proviso passed in the House but was defeated in the Senate. The proviso also carried the day in the House by an entirely sectional vote. That meant the northern delegation in the House outnumbered the southern delegation. The Senate was not based on population and Presidents Franklin Pierce and James Buchanan were both friendly to slavery. Southerners, however, understood the northern population represented approximately three-times that of the South. If the northern population could be united on an anti-slavery-in-the-territories platform it was clear the North could elect a president even without any southern votes. For that reason, as the political debates took on a more national tone, southerners suddenly understood federalism to mean the United States government could take a play from the British and pass its own emancipation act. Federalism, therefore, suddenly represented a very tangible threat to slavery.

The Emergence of the Republican Party

When the Kansas-Nebraska Act came up for consideration at the beginning of 1854, playing

[88] McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 145.

the game boldly as David Atchison had said, required southerners to rely on any means necessary to extend slavery into the western territories. Southerners almost immediately proposed eliminating the Missouri Compromise prohibition on slavery when the Kansas-Nebraska bill came up for consideration. Most northerners were aghast at the Kansas-Nebraska bill because, they understood, "If we pass this law, we shall be called upon to pass a law repealing the Missouri Compromise." A January 31, 1854 article in the *Chicago Tribune* noted that if the repeal of the Missouri Compromise were not removed from the text, the Kansas-Nebraska Act essentially "opened to slavery every inch of the territory possessed by the United States." Even though the political discussion of slavery is almost always couched in terms of slavery's expansion, the real issue at stake for both North and South was whether or not slavery would be totally abolished or whether it would be accepted all across the United States. The *Chicago Tribune* Article said, "If we admit slavery into Nebraska we must also legalize it in Minnesota and Oregon."[89] Almost by definition, nationalizing an argument means making it more general in nature rather than local. "The news" had become so national in scope by 1854 it was almost impossible to discuss slavery in terms of *only* allowing it to expand to Kansas or Nebraska. The context of the issue almost always took on the more general tone of whether or not slavery would expand westward. Though slavery and free-soil had existed side-by-side since the founding of the country, the nationalization of the news and the political system by the mid 1850s meant that within this idea war there had to be a winner and the victor would ultimately extend their political ideals over the national domain.

Salmon P. Chase's arguments opposing the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 almost single-handedly provided the substance for the political antislavery movement as he made arguments in opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854. Chase gave a speech on the floor of the Senate on

[89] Henry Fowler & Co., "The Agitation Revived," *Chicago Tribune,* January 31, 1854, 31 Jan 1854, 2 - Chicago Tribune at Newspapers.com.

Friday February 03, 1854 saying, "If the Missouri Prohibition.shall be repealed, abrogated, broken up, thousands will say, 'Away with all compromise; they are not worth the paper on which they are printed.'" If the Missouri Compromise were repealed, Chase said the only logical path forward was that federal policy "return to the old principles of the Constitution.the ancient doctrine that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, by the legislation of Congress, without due process of law." He warned southerners that such a return to Constitutional principles would most likely result in the complete abolition of slavery. He said, "Carrying out that principle into its practical application.slavery shall cease to exist wherever it can be reached by the constitutional action of the government." He bluntly said repealing the Missouri Compromise would "hasten the inevitable reorganization of parties.[and].light up a fire in the country which may, perhaps, consume those who kindle it."[90]

Newspapers picked up Chase's speech very quickly. The *Baltimore Sun* ran a commentary under its "By Magnetic Telegraph" column saying, "The Senate galleries and lobbies are crowded to excess this morning." The paper even noted, "The women, against all rule and propriety, were permitted to occupy nearly all the seats and the reporters' gallery, where, above all other places, silence out to be maintained." The *Boston Transcript* ran an article discussing the speech the day after Chase delivered it. The *Transcript* article said, "Mr. Chase proceeded to combat the assertation that the Missouri Compromise was superseded by th[e Compromise of] 1850, declaring it to be, historically and in fact, without foundation." The full text of Chase's speech appeared in *The New York Herald* (300 miles) and the *Boston Evening Transcript* (460 miles) the next day (Saturday February 4). The following Monday February 06, 1854 synopses of the speech appeared in the *Louisville Courier-Journal* (607 miles), the *New York Times* (300 miles), the *New York Daily Herald*

[90] Salmon P. Chase, *Maintain Plighted Faith: Speech of Hon. S.P. Chase of Ohio, In the Senate, February 03, 1854, Against the Repeal of the Missouri Prohibition of Slavery North of 36° 30'.* (Washington: John T. and Lem. Towers Press, 1854), 28-29. Accessed at Internet Archive.

(300 miles), *The Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* (283 miles), the *Daily National Era* (Washington D.C.), the *Fayetteville Weekly Observer* (316 miles), the *Gettysburg Compiler* (86 miles), the *Louisville Daily Journal* (607 miles), the *Baltimore Sun* (40 miles), *Pittsburg Gazette* (245 miles), and the *Pittsburgh Daily Post* (245 miles).[91]

Figure 6: Locations Salmon P. Chase's "Maintain Plighted Faith" Speech first appeared.

As was the case with almost all the antislavery arguments, the telegraph system and national news-reporting apparatus allowed Chase's speech to spread over a much larger geographic area in the North than it did in the South. Because of the pervasive nature of the telegraph network in the North, news could be distributed to many more small-town dailies there than it could in the South. Since the majority of the American population resided in rural areas that meant a great deal more of the North's superior population could be reached much faster than the South's. Using the assumption borrowed from Thomas's *The Iron Way* that a day's travel would have been 15 miles and that none of the information would have been forwarded on via telegraphy (which it most assuredly would

[91] This information was gleaned from searching www.newspapers.com and from the Library of Congress's *Chronicling America* for the dates listed.

have), Figure 7 below illustrates the counties Chase's speech would have been able to have reached within a day of the speech appearing in the newspaper reports mentioned above. The counties within fifteen miles of the original newspaper locations is represented below:

Figure 7: Counties reached by Chase's "Maintain Plighted Faith" speech.

The newspapers where Chase's speech appeared had a much greater circulation than those of the South and, therefore, would have reached many more people in the North. Of the papers mentioned above, only the *Fayetteville Weekly Observer* in Fayetteville, North Carolina fell into a state that seceded to join the Confederacy. That paper had a circulation of 1,600. By contrast, the *New York Herald* had a circulation of 32,640, the *New York Times* had 12,000, Washington, D.C.'s *National Era* 15,000, the *Gettysburg Compiler* 700, the *Pittsburg Gazette* 5,800, and the *Pittsburg Post* had a circulation of 3,600. The combined grand circulation of the northern papers was approximately 70,000. This is a clear case of the North's superior telegraph system providing the antislavery message with a major advantage over the South. Chase's speech appeared all across the northern newspapers within days mobilizing support for the antislavery position and bringing

inordinate political attention to this issue. Eric Foner pointed out it was at this moment in 1854 that "a full political reorganization took place and a mass antislavery party began to emerge." Historians across the board acknowledge the Republican Party emerged as a result of the Kansas- Nebraska act. Foner argued the emergence of the Republican Party in 1854 actually signaled something even more profound. He said the political realignment that led to the emergence of the Republican Party meant "the collapse of the second American party system [had begun] between 1854 and 1856."[92] Robert Luther Thompson pointed out that a major consolidation in the telegraph system had just been executed between 1852 and 1854. That consolidation had been designed, like the later reorganization in 1857, of streamlining the telegraph industry at least partially as a means of offering better service to the national newspaper press. Telegraph companies called for a convention among the telegraph companies in 1852 and they established the American Telegraph Confederation in March of 1853. A year later, in February 1854, the initial buyouts and consolidations were executed that eventually resulted in *Western Union* in just over a decade. For that reason, it seems does not seem too strong to suggest that efforts at making the telegraph service more efficient contributed to this political realignment. At the very least, the telegraphic news reporting apparatus in the United States became more efficient and more consolidated as the Republican Party emerged.

Organization Within the Telegraph Industry

Thompson pointed out the telegraph industry expanded so rapidly during the Mexican War and shortly thereafter that a fragmented and disorganized system had emerged by 1850. He argued by 1852 it was clear "organization within the industry.had not kept pace with this remarkable expansion program." As a result, he said, "The American Telegraph Convention was assembled in Washington, D.C. [on March 05, 1853].to unify the telegraph system." This convention ultimately

[92] Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men,* 125.

resulted in the formation of the American Telegraph Confederation. Though he argued this confederation ultimately proved ineffective as a long-term solution—thus the need to reconvene in 1857—Thompson said the American Telegraph Confederation that emerged in 1853 introduced a spirit of cooperation between the various telegraph companies. Within two years, serious efforts to consolidate the telegraph industry emerged as illustrated in the initial mergers and buyouts that led to *Western Union* in just over a decade. Thompson said in "February 1854.the New York Telegraph and Mississippi Printing Telegraph Company.embarked upon a career of conquest which has seldom been equaled in corporate history."[93] By 1866, this effort had resulted in the formation of *Western Union*, the industrial behemoth that monopolized the telegraph system throughout the remainder of the 19th century. As was pointed out above, the very emergence of the telegraphic reporting apparatus as exemplified by the *Associated Press* and its subscription service, coincided with the political realignment of the Democratic and Whig Parties in 1848. The fact that it happened again in 1854 lends credence to the argument that the improvements to telegraphy may have had some causal effects for these political developments. At the very least, telegraphy provided an efficient means for generating political pressure for specific issues. Whether or not that is the case, it can absolutely be said that the Republican Party emerged in 1854 the after a major consolidation effort in the telegraph industry had been executed.

After Chase delivered his speech, calls for political action came quickly and with potent force. By February 1Q, 1854, just seven days after Chase's speech to the Senate, an editorial in William Lloyd Garrison's *The Liberator* called for "a state convention of Massachusetts men.to meet in Faneuil Hall.to consult upon measures to prevent the consummation of this great political and

[93] Thompson, *Wiring A Continent,* 259 and 275. Thompson said the New York and Mississippi Printing Telegraph Company "reincorporated.in the spring of 1856.as the Western Union Telegraph Company." By 1866, Western Union had consolidated almost the entirety of the nation's telegraph network. The point here is that major efforts were afoot to consolidate the telegraph industry.

moral evil."[94] The *Wisconsin State Journal* said, "Every newspaper in Chicago is opposed to the Nebraska bill." It also said, "A call for a meeting to give public expression of their dissent has been called by the citizens of Chicago, Whigs, Democrats, and Free Soilers."[95] It can be argued the political ground was very ripe for a new political party, like the Republican Party, to emerge in the North. The Whig Party essentially collapsed after 1852, Foner argued, "When the potent slavery question was reintroduced into the political scene in 1854 [and] traditional party alignments all but collapsed."[6Q] That meant only the Democratic Party remained intact nationally. As has been pointed out, there were defined elements of the Democratic Party in the North and the remnants of the now-collapsed Whig Party that did not support slavery's extension into the western territories. Once the Whig Party collapsed, the former Conscious Whigs had no representation because the national Democratic Party officially espoused a program opposing federalism and platform of proslavery in the west. As Foner pointed, the Second American Party system buckled under the strains of the slavery question. More specifically, however, it can be argued that the wide distribution of arguments, like the ones made by Salmon P. Chase in opposition to the Kansas- Nebraska Act in 1854, galvanized political opposition to slavery in record time and with unparalleled potency. Chase gave his rousing denunciation of the Kansas-Nebraska Act on February 03 and within a week meetings were being organized among those who vehemently opposed the law.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act became law in May 1854 and popular sovereignty became the order of the day. Stephen Douglas from Illinois served on the powerful Committee on the Territories in the Senate and had adopted popular sovereignty for Kansas but also intended to use it as a model for determining the status of slavery as territories were organized in the future. Douglas had been

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[94] William Lloyd Garrison, "No Slavery in Nebraska! Freedom for All the North!" *The Liberator,* February 1Q, 1854, 1Q Feb 1854, Page 3 - The Liberator at Newspapers.com.
[95] David Atwood, "Assembly Matters," *Wisconsin State Journal,* February W, 1854, 1Q Feb 1854, 2 - Wisconsin State Journal at Newspapers.com.
[6Q] Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men,* 236.

instrumental in the passage of the Compromise of 1850 and had adopted the popular sovereignty model for the Utah and New Mexico Territories. Popular sovereignty essentially allowed people who moved into the territories to determine whether to allow slavery within a specified territory. As such, the new system ostensibly served as an open invitation for both proslavery and free-soil advocates to move into the west with the promise that a vote would be taken at the appropriate time to determine the status of slavery. The people who moved to Kansas, therefore, would determine whether slavery could expand into the Kansas Territory—not Congress. That had placated southerners because they intended to send people to Kansas in order to make it into a slave-sanctioning territory. That was troubling for northerners because Kansas lay in the lands where the Missouri Compromise had specifically eliminated slavery in 1820.

Kansas, therefore, took on a symbolic importance. Northerners may have lost the Missouri Compromise with the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act but a grass-roots effort among the northern population sought to ensure Kansas would never be made into a slave state. Northern free-soil advocates would simply have to outnumber southern proslavery advocates when the vote was held to determine the status of slavery.

For almost obvious reasons the North had an overwhelming advantage in such a contest. As pointed out, the North had a much larger population from which Kansas emigrants could be drawn. The newspaper press powered by the telegraph network also allowed advocates to reach a much greater portion of the population very rapidly allowing for the organization of companies like Eli Thayer's New England Emigrant Aid Company designed specifically to send free-soil people to Kansas. The popular sovereignty vote in Kansas came in March 1855 but it quickly became obvious southerners had stolen the election. Charles Sumner said in his *Crime Against Kansas* speech just over a year later, “In Kansas.the shrines of popular institutions.have been desecrated, where the ballot box.has been plundered.” He said, “The populous North, stung by a sharp sense of outrage,

and inspired by a noble cause, poured into the debatable land, and promised soon to establish a supremacy of numbers." He said, "Then was conceived the consummation of the crime against Kansas.What could not be accomplished peaceably was to be accomplished forcibly."[96]

In light of this development, it appeared to northern free-soil advocates like Sumner and Salmon P. Chase the repeal of the Missouri Compromise had been a political scheme contrived by the proslavery lobby as a means of forcing slavery not just into the west but onto all the nation. Abraham Lincoln said ostensibly popular sovereignty seemed to be "declared indifference" but he said, "I think [it represents] covert real zeal for the spread of slavery."[97] Sumner said, "All efforts were now given to the dismal work of forcing slavery on free soil.In flagrant derogation of the very popular sovereignty, whose name helped to impose this bill upon the country, the atrocious object was not distinctly avowed." Sumner said the proslavery forces in Kansas had three goals: "First, by outrages of all kinds to drive the friends of freedom already there out of the territory; secondly, to deter others from coming; and thirdly, to obtain the complete control of the government." Sumner used David Atchison of Missouri as a classic example of the proslavery attitude. Atchison had said, "I went over with a company of men. My object was not to vote. I had no right to vote, unless I had disfranchised myself in Missouri.My object in going was not to vote, but to settle a difficulty between two of our candidates." Sumner quoted Atchison as saying, "The abolitionists of the north said, and published it abroad, that Atchison was there with bowie knife and revolver; and by God it was true. I never did go into that territory.without being prepared."[98] Sumner said Atchison had even bragged that he could "kill every God-damned abolitionist in the Territory."[99]

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[96] Charles Sumner, *The Crime Against Kansas. The Apologies for the Crime, The true Remedy. Speech of Hon. Charles Sumner. In the Senate of the United States 19th and 20th May, 1856* (Washington: Buell & Blanchard, Printers, 1856), 1.
[97] J.B. McClure, ed., *Abraham Lincoln's Speeches Complete* (Chicago: Chicago, Rhodes, and McClure, 1891), 91.
[98] Sumner, *Crime Against Kansas,* 8-12.
[99] McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 146.

National politics, in this case, had been acutely brought to bear on the North. Unlike southerners who preferred to adopt states' rights, northern free-soil advocates viewed it as their solemn duty to organize the northern voting public as a means of capturing the reigns of power in the federal government with specific designs on limiting the power of the political forces promoting slavery. They certainly understood they had the population to do so but at some level they must have also understood they had the means of advocating their political ideas and organizing an opposition. The states' rights position taken by southerners appears to have been at least a tacit admission of defeat on this point. Had the North not possessed such an organized means of publication, there is no guarantee the speeches given by Chase and Sumner would have had the impact they did. David Paull Nickles argued that during crisis situations, such, as during the situation had had emerged in Kansas, time lags in information reporting "can significantly affect public opinion.. .because of the often-temporary nature of emotional shock."[100] Before the emergence of a reporting apparatus like the *Associated Press* and the emergence of the American Telegraph Confederation, it may have taken months for information from Kansas to travel across the North to places like Bangor, Maine. James McPherson pointed out that prior to the emergence of the train system "to travel from Cincinnati to New York took a minimum of three weeks."[101] Daniel Walker Howe said, "To get from New York to Cincinnati on the other side of the Appalachians took nineteen days in 1817."[102] Even with a very efficient postal system, on the cusp of the telegraph age in 1841 Allan Pred said it generally took information ten days to travel from New York to Detroit, eleven days from New York to St. Louis, and fifteen days from New York to Menominee, Illinois. In fact, Pred pointed out, "A time lag of seven days occurred between George Washington's death on December 14 in Alexandria,

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100 David Paull Nickles, *Under the Wire: How the Telegraph Changed Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003). Kindle, LOC 948.

101 McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 11.

102 Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 40.

VA and publication of that news in New York City."[103] The culminating result was that "slow travel restricted communication.making it difficult to receive news.or organize a timely protest against a government action."[104]

The development of railroads during the 1830s and 1840s increased the speed of travel and, thus, the flow of information as reporters could board trains to distant places, gather news, then ride a train back the newspaper office in order to publish their reports. Even so, most publications were disseminated to the local population within a reasonable distance from the newspaper office. James McPherson pointed out in *Battle Cry of Freedom,* trains had begun to augment that situation because "fast trains carried weekly editions of metropolitan newspapers (like Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune*) to farmers a thousand miles away."[105] Prior to the emergence of telegraphy, however, communication (and, thus, the publication of "news") was very much limited by the constraints of travel. In the South, this situation persisted as information remained limited, at least somewhat, by the constraints of travel. The limited nature of the telegraph system restricted where information could be distributed. Most telegraph offices in the South were located in cities. Information could be delivered to those locations via telegraphy but then it would have had to be hand-delivered either by train, on horseback, or on foot to rural areas where the majority of the population resided. As a result, information simply could not spread over a comparable geographic area and, thus, could not reach a comparable number of people in the South.

Telegraphy had been so incorporated into the national newspaper press by mid-1856, it had begun to obliterate space on a societal level. The same phenomenon Morse had experienced conversing with the construction superintendent as construction had progressed on the nation's first telegraph line materialized making Kansas feel much closer to places like New York and

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103 Alan Pred. *Urban Growth and the Circulation of Information, 1790-1840,* 13.
104 Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 40.
105 McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 12.

Massachusetts. For that reason, events in Kansas elicited highly-emotional reactions across the North. Sumner cited the "concurring reports of the public press" saying the situation in Kansas "breaks forth in the irrepressible outcry.. .of a people determined to be free, and unimpeachable as the declarations of a murdered man on his dying bed against his murderer."[106] Sumner obviously included a great deal of hyperbole in the speech but the hyperbole illustrates the emotional nature of his response. The rapid nature of the press reports allowed northerners to perceive themselves as under attack.

The newspaper reports about Lawrence appeared in the North very rapidly. Reports like the *Boston Evening Transcript* said, "A telegraphic dispatch.received this morning states that Lawrence was attacked on Wednesday, and the hotel, printing office, destroyed together with several lives." The report said the events in Kansas were "infinitely worse than anything which caused the American Revolution."[107] The day after the attack, the *New York Times* ran an article on the cover page with the headline "Important from Kansas, General Reign of Terror" saying, "From the nature of the telegraphic dispatches.there is too much cause to anticipate that a bloody conflict may have already taken place."[108] The *Buffalo Daily Republic* copied the *New York Times* article verbatim and ended by saying there was a "painful anxiety for further news."[109] The same reports appeared in the *Hartford Courant* in Connecticut, the *Burlington Free Press* in Vermont, the *Carbondale Transcript and Lackawanna Journal* in Pennsylvania, the *Rockford Herald* in Indiana and the *Wisconsin State Journal* in Madison, Wisconsin within two days of the Lawrence attack. All of the aforementioned papers sensationalized the situation by characterizing it as "a general reign of terror in the [Kansas]

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106 Sumner, *Crime Against Kansas*, 8.

107 Daniel N. Haskell, "Bloodshed and Destruction in Kansas!" *Boston Evening Transcript,* May 26, 1856, 26 May 1856, 2 - Boston Evening Transcript at Newspapers.com.

108 Henry Jarvis Raymond, *"*Important from Kansas, General Reign of Terror*, " New York Times,* May 22, 1856, 22 May 1856, Page 1 - The New York Times at Newspapers.com.

109 Benjamin Welch, Jr., "Important from Kansas," *Buffalo Daily Republic,* May 22, 1856, 22 May 1856, Page 3 - The Buffalo Daily Republic at Newspapers.com.

territory."[110]

The fact that proslavery ideologues had attacked the idea of free-soil—something that could be transported via the telegraph lines—allowed northerners to identify personally with the people in Lawrence, Kansas whether or not they actually knew them personally. Even though the attack had occurred halfway across the North American continent, northerners who had never been to Kansas began calling for war. The *New England Farmer* in Boston ran a report on Saturday May 24, two days after the attack saying, "Men who, with principles as pure and a patriotism as lofty as inspired by our fathers in 1776, went into the new territory to find homes, and to build up a free, prosperous and Christian state." In response, the report continued, southerners had "brought down the whole power of our government upon their heads, backed up by legions of that reckless mobocracy which is found wherever slavery exists."[111] On Monday May 26, 1856—five days after the Lawrence attack—the *Burlington Free Press* in Vermont called for emigrant aid societies to send "not only emigrants, but volunteers by companies and by regiments, determined to stand by the oppressed and maintain the cause of freedom."[112] These calls were eventually answered and Kansas exploded into civil war.

Telegraphy and the national newspaper press allowed Republican Party organizers to project their outrage all over the North almost immediately. The Lawrence Raid commenced on Wednesday May 21, 1856 and it only took two days for the *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier* in Maine to report the attack. It took just two days for news of the Lawrence attack to travel over 1,700 miles. That would have been impossible without the emergence of an efficient telegraphic news reporting

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110 Quoted in Thomas M. Day, "Late from Kansas," *Hartford Courant,* May 22, 1856, 22 May 1856, 3 - Hartford Courant at Newspapers.com.

111 Joel Nourse,"Kansas Matters," *New England Farmer,* 24 May 1856, 2 - New England Farmer at Newspapers.com.

112 C.W. & G.G. Benedict, "Volunteers or Emigrants for Kansas," *Burlington Free Press* May 26, 1856, 26 May 1856, Page 3 - The Burlington Free Press at Newspapers.com.

apparatus in the United States. Even using the train network that had emerged by the mid-1850s, news could not have been gathered and distributed over such a vast geographic distance so quickly. Thomas's *The Iron Way* said one business man had been astonished at the speed of a train because the "train made a run of 282 miles in eleven hours." At that rate, with a direct route between Lawrence, Kansas and Bangor, Maine with a train running non-stop it would have taken three days to deliver information over the more than 1,7QQ miles. Almost all trains, however, had scheduled stops along their routes; rail lines generated the most of their revenue by serving as many depots as possible.[113] There was also no direct rail route between Lawrence and Bangor. As a result, in the absence of the telegraph network as it existed in 1856, information related to the attack on Lawrence would most likely have taken weeks to appear in such distant places as Bangor, Maine. The system of gathering and disseminating news via telegraphy that had been developed by the *Associated Press*, however, allowed the information to appear in New York the next day and Bangor the following day.

The publication of such alarming information all across the North—the most populous section of the country—generated legions of followers for the Republican Party. The swift rise of the Republican Party between 1854 and 1856 startled most southerners. The very fact that southerners were attempting to steal elections and use any means necessary rather than democratic processes clearly illustrates most southern leaders understood the potency of the Republican Party. In June 1854 just as the Republican Party first began to coalesce around opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the *Charleston Mercury* ran an editorial saying, "The abolition party appears now upon the field stronger than ever before. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise has stuck a chord in the Northern heart, whose echoes of abolitionism will ring from one end of the land to the

[113] See Thomas, *The Iron Way* companion website at Railroads and the Making of Modern America | Search (unl.edu). All of the railroad timetables show stops along the way between distant cities.

other."[114] The

Natchez Daily Courier in Mississippi said, "All parties, all factions in the North are preparing to rush into antislavery and convulsion.all parties in the North will shape themselves, more or less, to the antislavery platform." The writer noted the Republican Party was galvanizing so fast at that point "our southern friends will wake up from their dreams.to meet a combined assault upon the institution of slavery which may drive them to the fearful hazards of secession and revolution."[115] One of the ironies here is that "one of the most important factors explaining the broadening of antislavery views was opposition to the undemocratic actions of political leaders invested in protecting slavery."[116] By taking such extreme stances, southerners provided the Republican Party with one of its most powerful galvanizing forces.

After Sumner delivered his speech he was brutally attacked in the Senate chamber. Reports of Sumer's beating were distributed to a great deal of the North's population immediately and almost continuously. The limited size and scope of the telegraph system in the South meant these reports and the reports about the Lawrence attack had muted effects in the region. Roland Wenzlhuemer noted, "Unevenly integrated communication networks.can distort the relation between communications and geographic space."[117] Large sections of the North read about how Preston Brooks, a representative from South Carolina had brutally attacked Sumner with a gutta percha walking cane for harshly criticizing southerners in his "Crime Against Kansas" speech. Sumner delivered that speech on Thursday May 22, 1856 and reports appeared as far away as New Orleans—some 1,100 miles away—the next day. An article appeared in the *New Orleans Times Picayune*

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114 Robert Barnwell Rhett, Jr., "Slavery Agitation," *Charleston Mercury,* June Q3, 1854, Q3 Jun 1854, 2 - The Charleston Mercury at Newspapers.com

115 Giles M. Hillyer, "General Pierce's Administration - Its Fatal Effects Upon the Country," *Natchez Daily Courier,* February 09, 1854, 09 Feb 1854, Page 3 - Natchez Daily Courier at Newspapers.com.

116 Lewis, *The Civil War As Global Conflict,* 25.

117 Roland Wenzlhuemer, *Connecting the Nineteenth-Century World: The Telegraph and Globalization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), LOC 1023.

under the "Telegraphed to the *New Orleans Picayune*" section with the headline reading, "Fracas in the Senate." The telegraph column in the *Times Picayune* noted the information had been telegraphed from "F.A. Abbott, reporter, 70 Wall Street, New York."[118] Headlines appeared in the *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier* in Bangor, Maine, the *Daily Free Democrat* in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and many other newspapers throughout the North.[119] In South Carolina, the *Edgefield Advertiser* was just reporting the event on Wednesday May 28—almost a week after the event had transpired. The paper wrote that it had just learned "that the Hon. Preston S. Brooks, a representative from South Carolina, inflicted a most summary and no doubt well-deserved chastisement on Senator Sumner."[120] By that time, the *New England Farmer,* a comparable Boston newspaper, said events related to Kansas, including the attack on Senator Sumner, had "taken complete possession of the public mind this week, to the exclusion of everything else.[they] have been the themes of every tongue."[121]

The northern public had clearly been incensed at the brazen attack on Senator Sumner before the information had even reached smaller publications in the South like the *Edgefield Advertiser*. When this event played out in the spring of 1856, the Republican Party was mobilizing to engage in its first presidential election campaign that would be held in the fall of that year. David Paull Nickles argued in *Under the Wire*, "A more agitated public" typically makes it easier "for political leaders to rally public support."[122] The ability to report information like the attack on Sumner along with

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118 Lumsden, Kendall, & Co., "Fracas in the Senate," *New Orleans Times-Picayune,* May 23, 1856, 23 May 1856, Page 4 - The Times-Picayune at Newspapers.com.

119 See S.M. Booth, "Border Ruffianism in the Senate," *Daily Free Democrat* (Milwaukee), May 23, 1856, 23 May 1856, Page 2 - Daily Free Democrat at Newspapers.com and Wheeler and Lynde, "Border Ruffianism in the Senate - Brutal Attack on Mr. Sumner," *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier,* May 23, 1856, 23 May 1856, 3 - Bangor Daily Whig and Courier at Newspapers.com for the reports in Bangor and Milwaukee.

120 W.F. Duroise and Son, "Mr. Brooks' Chastisement of Senator Sumner," *Edgefield Advertiser,* May 28, 1856, 28 May 1856, Page 2 - Edgefield Advertiser at Newspapers.com

121 Joel Nourse, "Review of the Week," *New England Farmer,* May 31, 1856, 31 May 1856, 2 - New England Farmer at Newspapers.com.

122 Nickles, *Under the Wire,* LOC 948.

the wider events that played out in Kansas via telegraphy and the national newspaper press to vast swaths of the voting public in 1856 helped mobilize support for the Republican Party that year and in the subsequent campaign in 1860.

The pervasive telegraph network of the North along with the national newspaper organization allowed the antislavery movement to vault over geographic space in order to connecting like-minded people across the North regardless of the degree of geographic separation. Later in the 19th century, British diplomats stationed in foreign lands were able to establish telegraphic connections over even greater geographic distances in order to form networks of people across the British Empire. In some cases, they preferred connections over the telegraph network to connecting with people within their immediate vicinity. Tom Standage point out in *The Victorian Internet,* for example, "Thomas Stevens, a British telegraph operator stationed in Persia, shunned the local community in favor of telegraphic interaction with other Britons."[123] It absolutely may have been the case that Thomas Stevens was either racist or ethnocentric and wanted to connect with other Britons rather than to create interactions with the local community. Even if that is the case, it illustrates the power of telegraphy to connect like-minded people across geographic space. In the North, the antislavery movement vaulted over geographic space connecting people who supported the Republican Party mainly through the newspaper press that utilized the powers of telegraphy very heavily. If the telegraph system had been more established in the South going into the election of 1860, Lincoln might have been in a better position to have placed bets on reaching pro-Union southerners. It would certainly have been more possible to connect with likeminded pro-Union (or even antislavery) southerners.

During the presidential election of 1856, the Republican Party called for a convention in Philadelphia and invited all "who are opposed to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise." Party

123 Standage, *The Victorian Internet,* 132.

leaders made it very clear they intended to "prohibit in the territories those twin relics of barbarism—polygamy and slavery."[124] John C. Fremont, a former military officer and explorer of the West, became the party's nominee but lost the election to Democrat James Buchanan. Fremont, however, garnered 114 electoral votes to Buchanan's 174 electoral votes. Buchanan had carried nineteen states and Fremont eleven. In less than two years since its inception, the Republican Party had proven itself to be a potent political force that had the potential to capture the reigns of power in the United States. After the 1856 election, Republicans aggressively pursued the consolidation of a friendly newspaper press. Between 1856 and 1860 "the Republicans managed to buy up or control hundreds of daily and weekly newspapers, almost as many as the Democrats, and used them in a saturation campaign about.their candidates."[125]

Abraham Lincoln "openly promoted himself to newspapers, frequently sending them articles about current issues and urging them to publish them." Bruce Chadwick said Lincoln "was a voracious reader of newspapers and magazines" and used the stories he read in the newspapers "to connect himself to the people in his audiences."[126] David Donald said Lincoln was "an assiduous reader of the newspapers" and "devoted as much time as he could with newspaper reporters and editors.in an effort to earn publicity for himself." [127] Chadwick argued Lincoln even gathered non-political stories from newspapers and found opportune moments to presented them to audiences in order to "sew together the idea of Abraham Lincoln as a man of the people, not just a politician looking for a vote."[128] Lincoln, in other words, understood the power of connecting his audiences on a personal level. He used the newspapers to study his audiences and then when speaking either

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124 Mackey, *Documentary History of the American Civil War Era,* "1856 Republican Party Platform," 11-14.
125 McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 12.
126 Chadwick, *Lincoln for President,* 49-56.
127 Quotes from David Donald, *Lincoln* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2011), Kindle, LOC 101 and Chadwick,
Lincoln for President, 96.
128 Chadwick, *Lincoln for President,* 49.

in official public speeches or in one-on-one situations with individual voters he could recall information he had read about a particular place as a method of connecting with his listeners on a personal level.

The Telegraph Network in 1860

The emergence of a pervasive consolidated telegraph network revolutionized the American political landscape. Robert Luther Thompson argued in *Wiring A Continent*, "The impact of the telegraph upon the political.life of the nation was profound." [129] Telegraphy revolutionized communication because "the electric telegraph forever liberated communication from transportation" allowing political ideas to be transmitted almost immediately across vast expanses of geographic space.[130] As telegraphy morphed into a pervasive consolidated network, it meant politicians could "commit a constituency or the country to some kind of goal." In 1972, a former communications consultant to President John F. Kennedy argued, "The widespread split-second communications network available to American political office-seekers" had led to a "renovation of the American political system." Alexander almost certainly meant television. The point, however, was that "effective communication is a vital element in the political process" and "those who win elections in the United States are successful.because they effectively communicate."[131] Because communication and politics are so closely intertwined, it was almost inescapable that a revolution in communication portended major ramifications for the political landscape. Newspapers adopted telegraphy their primary means of gathering and reporting the news very quickly allowing politicians like Abraham Lincoln and other Republican Party leaders to rapidly distribute political ideas and positions to great swaths of the American population.

It is not beyond the scope of imagination to assert that an advancement in communication could have revolutionized the political landscape in the United States. The printing press is almost always characterized as "a revolutionary technology" because it allowed ideas to be transmitted much faster than any previous era.[132] Frederic Barbier even argued, "Printing brought one period, the Gothic/medieval period, to an end and initiated

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129 Thompson, *Wiring A Continent,* 442.

130 Quote from David Hochfelder, *The Telegraph in America, 1832-1920* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 2.

131 Herbert Alexander, "Communications and Politics: The Media and the Message," in Robert Agroff, ed. *The New Style of Election Campaigns.* The Holbrook Press, Inc., 1972.

132 See John N. King. "The Light of Printing: William Tyndale, John Foxe, John Day, and Early Modern Print Culture." *Renaissance Quarterly.* Vol. 54, No. 1, 2QQ1. pp. 52-85.

another, which would be called the Renaissance."[133] Tom Wheeler from the Brookings Institute argued in *From Gutenberg to Google,* "The printing press created the first mass information economy." He said, "More books were printed in the first fifty years after Gutenberg's discovery than had been copied by all the scribes in Europe in the previous thousand years." Wheeler said, "The book-fed Renaissance, Reformation, and the age of inquiry stimulated economic dynamism and recast the patterns of life."[134] Martin Luther used printing to unite Protestants in their opposition to the Catholic Church, people of science used print to promote the Scientific Revolution, and others printed ideas that helped usher in the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, and other major cultural developments. Printed pamphlets like Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* even helped unite the American colonists during the American Revolution because "the pamphlet is always short and unbound, it can be produced much more quickly than a book, and in principle.can reach a bigger public."[135]

Several scholars have drawn parallels drawn between the advent of the printing press in the 15th century and the emergence of telegraphy in the 19th century. Tom Standage, for example, argued, "The telegraph unleashed the greatest revolution in communications since the development of the printing press."[136] David Hochfelder said, "The telegraph.sparked social changes [that] proved as significant to the human experience as.the printing press of early modern Europe."[137] Telegraphy actually advanced the print revolution because it allowed for the "virtualization of information." In doing so, it laid "the technological groundwork for the network that now defines the human experience. "[138] Telegraphy allowed events and political issues to be reported in newspapers almost instantly without regard to the distance separating the event from the publication office. There is no doubt the printing press dramatically accelerated publication and that, in turn, allowed information to be disseminated as fast as it could be carried from place to place. Telegraphy, however, almost

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133 Frederic Barbier, *Gutenberg's Europe: The Book and the Invention of Western Modernity* (Malden, Mass: Polity Press, 2Q17), 1.
134 Quotes from Wheeler, *Gutenberg to Google,* 15-2Q.
135 Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Belknap Press, 2Q17), 2.
136 Standage, *Kindle* LOC 7Q.
137 Hochfelder, *The Telegraph in America,* 2.
138 Wheeler, *From Gutenberg to Google,* 15.

completely removed the obstacle of geographic space allowing information to flow almost instantly over great distances regardless of terrain and weather.

Telegraphy had to emerge in network form before it could have major implications for the American political system. The superintendent's report for the Census of 1850 said the telegraph system in the United States had become very pervasive by that year. The report said, "The telegraphic system in the United States is carried to greater extent than any other part of the world, and the numerous lines are now in full operation for a network over the length and breadth of the land." It also said telegraph system was not "confined to the populous regions of the Atlantic coast, but extend far into the interior, climb the sides of the highest mountains, and cross the almost boundless prairies."[139] That had major ramifications for a country that had dramatically expanded over natural geographic barriers like the Ohio River and the Appalachian Mountains. There is no doubt the reason the Census superintendent noted telegraph system traversed such geographic boundaries was to note that information could be exchanged very rapidly. Most people living at the time understood information only to travel at the speed at which a person could physically carry it. They may have even known that "when information moved on horseback, it traveled at about four miles per hour." They most likely would not have understood that "measured in terms of data throughput, this was about 0.03 bits per second." With the emergence of a pervasive telegraph network "a talented telegraph operator could transcribe at the rate of around three bits per second making information instantaneously available everywhere at a speed 100 times faster than delivery by horse."[140]

By making information available everywhere almost simultaneously, telegraphy symbolizes the emergence of the first mass communication systems. Mass communication is a central part of political organization and committing constituencies to particular goals. By virtualizing information, an idea or event could originate in a single location and immediately be transmitted wherever the telegraph lines reached. In

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139 Quotes from "Telegraphs" in J.B.D. DeBow, *Report of the Superintendent of the Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1853), 106.

140 Wheeler, *From Gutenberg to Google,* 22.

1860, the majority of the United States population resided in rural areas—not in the cities.[141] The Census of 1860 also noted that most of the American population resided in the North. The states that eventually joined the Confederacy had a white population of 5,628,322 along with 3,953,760 enslaved people. The North, by contrast, had a total white population of 13,323,609.[142] The North, therefore, had approximately three times the number of potential voters as the South. Any effective political organization, therefore, had to make rural residents a central component and it had to have a major focus on the North. Historians have routinely noted these facts but mainly in various other contexts. The population of the North in 1860 is typically cited in the context of the Civil War as evidence that when the Civil War became a war of attrition it became evident the South would lose the war. The rural nature of the

population is usually cited by historians who write about the emergence of the United States as a predominantly urban nation after 1920. As a shrewd politician, it is very probable that Abraham Lincoln understood this dynamic when he ran for the presidency in 1860.

The Presidential Election Campaign of 1860

Abraham Lincoln won the 1860 presidential election in a totally sectional vote. Lincoln won all the northern states, except New Jersey, and received almost no votes in the southern states. In the Electoral College, Lincoln won in a landslide but the popular vote reveals that Lincoln's election was anything but guaranteed. Lincoln only won approximately 40% of the national popular vote in 1860. Bruce Chadwick pointed out that switching just a few votes in 1860 would have cost Lincoln the election. He said, “The Republicans did not win by much. They only took 50.7% of the vote in Illinois, 51.1% in Indiana, and 52.3% in Ohio.They did take the critical six states in the Northwest, but only by a grand total of 6%. A switch of only 36,000 votes in those six states would have resulted in the loss of all them.” Chadwick also pointed out, “A switch of just 2,500 votes in

[141] The population of the United States remained predominantly a rural population until the 1920 Census, which showed for the first time more people lived in cities than in rural areas. See “Number and Distribution of Inhabitants,” *Report of the Superintendent of the Census,* 1920.

[142] See “Introduction” in Joseph C. G. Kennedy, *Population of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eight Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), xxxiii.

Illinois or 3,000 in Indiana would have lost those states [and] any combination of losses in states barely won would have lost the election."[143] As a result, the Lincoln campaign had to be focused on uniting the northern states, such as Illinois, Indiana, and Pennsylvania, that Fremont had lost in 1856. Figure 8 below shows the popular vote for Abraham Lincoln in 1860.

[143] Quotes from Bruce Chadwick, *Lincoln For President: An Unlikely Candidate, An Audacious Strategy, and the Victory No One Saw Coming* (Napierville: Sourcebooks Press, 2009), 114, 115 and 309.

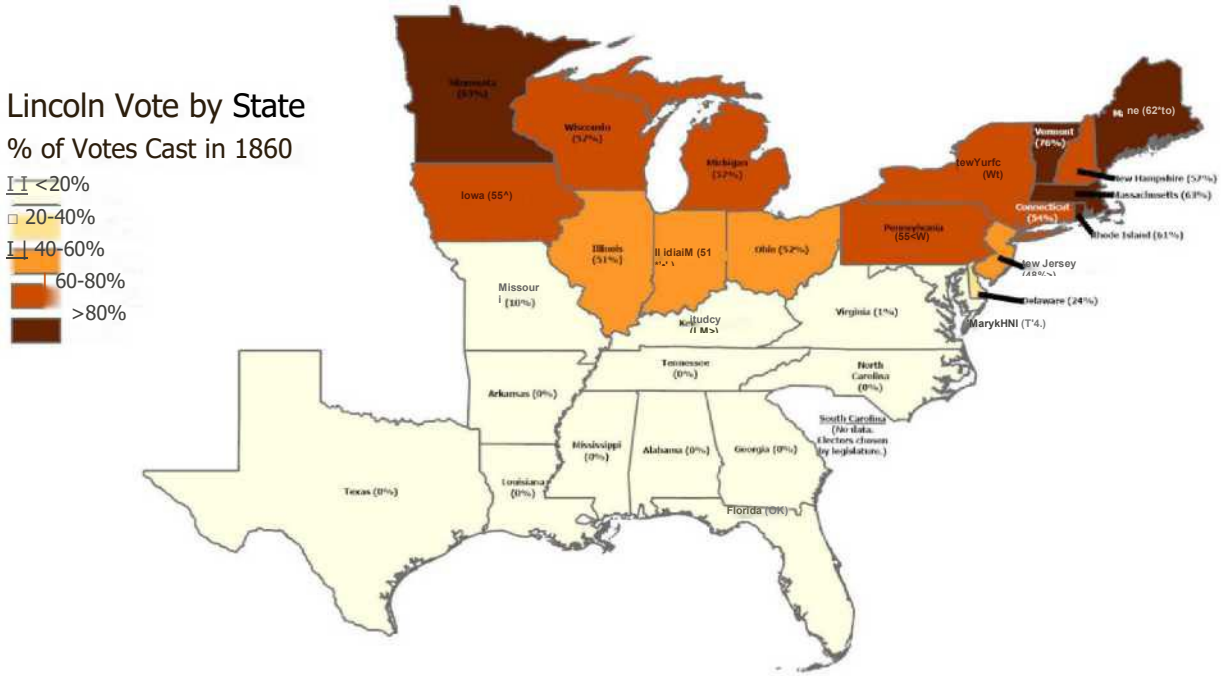

Figure 8: Lincoln's popular vote percentages in 1860.

The sectional vote, therefore, did not materialize by some mysterious twist of fate. Lincoln consciously pursued a sectional campaign because he "saw it as his best chance, perhaps his only chance, for victory." When the Democratic Party split between northern and southern wings of the party and the Constitutional Union Party emerged in the South, Lincoln decided to forego "the

usual campaigns to win regional newspaper support.. .in the South."[144] At the bare minimum, any political observer could see the South would have a crowded field. The Democratic Party had a candidate in the field and the Constitutional Union party also intended to campaign in the South.

The southern wing of the Democratic Party nominated John C. Breckenridge from Kentucky, who ran a proslavery campaign, and the Constitutional Unionists nominated John Bell from Tennessee, who ran a pro-Union campaign. As the candidate opposed to the spread of slavery in the West, all

Lincoln could offer the South was another pro-Union candidacy. Lincoln ran as a pro-Union in the

North so theoretically it may have been possible for him to compete in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia where John Bell won. In such a case, however, the pro-Union vote would have been split between Lincoln and Bell and may have provided an opportunity for the Democrats to win those states. Even without the issue of splitting the pro-Union vote, Lincoln understood "he was seen as Lucifer in the Southern states." Without a better telegraph system through which to engage the southern population directly, Lincoln understood most southerners would never vote for a Republican candidate who had called for halting the march of slavery into the western territories.

144 Quotes from Chadwick, *Lincoln for President,* 309.

A more pervasive telegraph system in the South would have allowed Lincoln more of an opportunity for direct engagement with the southern population and, along with it, the possibility of converting southern voters to the Republican cause. In the early days of the campaign, Lincoln insisted he might be able to "count on the independent voters in the South that the Republicans had been successful in rounding up in the last election."[145] It is well-known that Lincoln had previously served in Congress as a member of the Whig Party. He had been first elected to Congress in 1846 as a Whig and had "worked closely with Southern Whigs like [Alexander] Stephens."[146] At the start of the campaign, Lincoln thought he might be able to win the remnants of the Whig Party and other Union-loving voters in the South. John Bell, the Constitutional Unionist candidate in 1860, had also previously been a Whig and centered his campaign on Whig unionism. Given that circumstance, Lincoln concluded the best he could do was split the pro-Union vote in an handful of southern states. At some level he also had to understand the absence of an extensive telegraph network in the South meant he could not reach the vast majority of southern voters without physically travelling over the area and/or sending surrogates over the vast geographic area of the South. Such a campaign would have cost the Lincoln campaign an

[145] Chadwick, *Lincoln for President,* 114.

[146] Alexander Stephens served as the Vice-President of the Confederacy but had worked closely with Lincoln and other northern Whig on divisive issues, such as the issues associated with the Wilmot Proviso.

exorbitant amount of time and resources with little to be gained even if he won all the states the Constitutional Unionists won in 186Q. That kind of campaign really did not make sense, especially given that Lincoln and the Republican Party were reviled in the South and that Lincoln needed every single vote he could muster in the North among his own party base. The telegraph system as it existed in the United States in 1853 is illustrated in Figure 9 below.

Figure 9: The telegraph system in the United States as of 1853.

Figure 1Q below shows the states Lincoln won in 186Q along with the places where the telegraph system existed. It is clear Lincoln's vote came from the places where the telegraph system represented a pervasive network.

Figure 10: The vote for Abraham Lincoln in 1860 with a view of the telegraph system. It is clear there is a correlation between where Lincoln won votes and the places where telegraphy was the most pervasive.

Lincoln understood very clearly the North had a pervasive telegraph network in 1860 and that the South did not. In practical terms, that meant Lincoln and his Republican acolytes could blast information out to a great deal of the northern population—even in the rural areas—without having to expend the time, energy, and resources of physically traversing the entirety of the North. Lincoln "devoted as much time as he could with newspaper reporters and editors, even those from Democratic papers, in an effort to earn publicity for himself."[147] David Donald even said, "Lincoln and his fellow lawyers began to try [a legal proceeding] in the newspapers" to garner popular support for their. case.[148] As a sheer means of organization, Bruce Chadwick said, "Lincoln kept up constant communications with his men in the field in the different states, knowing almost daily how the political winds were shifting." Chadwick said, "This responsiveness enabled him (Lincoln) to make moves almost instantaneously. "[149] The newspaper press and its fusion with the telegraph system allowed

147 Chadwick, *Lincoln for President,* Kindle, LOC 101.
148 See Donald, *Lincoln,* 90-91.
149 Chadwick, *Lincoln for President,* 272.

Lincoln and other Republican Party advocates to keep their finger on the pulse of the Republican Party and to disseminate political messages very widely in the North. As a result, Lincoln relied heavily on the newspaper press to spread the Republican message during the presidential election of 1860.

It is known that Lincoln owned a copy of the *Livingston Law Register,* which showed the location, political leanings, and circulation numbers for newspapers in the United States.[150] The very fact Lincoln had this publication as a reference is good evidence he absolutely stayed abreast of the newspaper presses and their ability to influence politics. The Charles Barr map used to gather data for this dissertation had also been publicly available for seven years when the 1860 election began so Lincoln would most likely have known about that map. As someone with a vested interested in how to best communicate a message there is no way Lincoln would not have known the North had a much more extensive electronic communication network than the South. Whether or not Lincoln had specifically been exposed to the Barr map, he understood very well he could "lobby northern newspaper editors and circulate his campaign literature" more effectively "in the northern section of the country."[151]

Lincoln was very effective at the art of projecting himself in the newspaper press. The *Hartford Courant* ran an article in June 1860, in the middle of the presidential campaign, saying, "Abe Lincoln.. .has the magnetism of genius in him.. .is genial and dignified, his wit is natural and unaffected, and he drops in the most casual way some of the most terse and epigrammatic expressions that ever fell from human lips." During that particular speech, the *Courant* article noted, "Mr. Lincoln delighted all who heard him and he fascinated all who conversed with him."[152] Lincoln became a master at crafting easily-publishable in-person speeches. Harold Holzer argued in *Lincoln at Cooper Union,* "Lincoln became wise not only in the ways of enthralling crowds,

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150 The University of Illinois has a copy of *Livingston's Law Register* that Abraham Lincoln owned. This publication included a "List of Newspapers in the United States, How Often Each is Published, and the Locality, Character, and Circulation of Each, Compiled from the U.S. Census Returns for 1850."

151 Chadwick, *Lincoln for President,* 114.

152 David Over, "Spirit of the Press," *The Bedford Inquirer,* June 01, 1860, 01 Jun 1860, 1 - The Bedford Inquirer at Newspapers.com

but in creating prose that could also be usefully reprinted in party-affiliated newspapers." Holzer said Lincoln accepted the invitation to speak at the Cooper Union in February 1860, arguably one of the most important speeches Lincoln delivered prior to becoming president, because he understood New York served as not only a political power center but also as the center of the national newspaper press. Other scholars have argued, for example, "The Gettysburg Address was telegraphic in the sense that it was a handful of lines with carefully-chosen words, with incredible impact."[153] The brevity of the address meant it could be printed without taking up an inordinate amount of newspaper ad space. That meant the speech could be rapidly disseminated allowing Lincoln to define the meaning of the war on his own terms.

Lincoln understood the implications of telegraphy for effective communication. Charles A. Tinker, a telegraph operator in the War Department during the Civil War, said he first met Lincoln in March 1857 while on a stay at the Tazewell House Hotel in Pekin, Illinois. At the time, Tinker was working as a telegraph operator at the Tazewell House and Lincoln observed Tinker writing down an incoming message just by listening to the clicks of the telegraph machine's Morse Code. Almost immediately, Lincoln approached Tinker and asked him to explain the nature of this mysterious communication system. Tinker said he was struck that "Lincoln seemed to be greatly interested in his explanation.and comprehended quite readily the operation of the telegraph."[154] Lincoln had always been "fascinated by technological innovations, even receiving a patent in 1849 for 'a new and improved manner of combining adjustable buoyant chambers with steam boats.'"[155] That technical proclivity may have been why Lincoln so readily understood Tinker's explanation of telegraphy. Whatever the case, by the time of the 1860 campaign Lincoln effectively used the organizational powers of telegraphy to build the Republican Party into an entity that effectively organized the northern population and committed it to the program of arresting the spread of slavery in the western territories. It was clear "Lincoln appreciated the

153 Lincoln at Gettysburg film.

154 David Homer Bates, *Lincoln in the Telegraph Office: Recollections of the United States Military Telegraph Corps During the Civil War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 4.

155 Foner, Eric. *The Fiery Trial,* 38.

power of the telegraph to spread his ideas." In fact, his campaign "relied on the new electronic media to expose him and his message to the nation at large."[156]

That kind of campaign Lincoln waged in the North would have been practically impossible in the South. Of the 762 telegraph office locations in the United States listed on the 1853 Charles Barr map, 629 (or 83%) were located in the states Lincoln won in 1860. Those states also contained 11,588 miles of the nation's telegraph wire representing 71% of all the nation's telegraph wire.[157] By 1860, seven years after the publication of the map, the telegraph stations listed on the Barr map would have been well-known to the public. Their connections to specific newspapers and other outlets should also have been known by that time. The locations on the Barr map should, therefore, represent areas where the effects of telegraphy would have been mature enough for newspaper managers and telegraph office managers to have formed dependable business relationships and partnerships allowing information to readily flow from telegraph offices to newspaper offices and vice versa. Connections among telegraph offices and newspaper offices would have been crucial to mass communication. The Barr map made clear the greatest telegraph network lay in the North. Figure 9 below shows the North's telegraph infrastructure as it existed in 1853.

The extensive telegraph system in the North allowed Lincoln to rapidly circulate information in northern newspapers and engage the North's population. The North, like the South, had a crowded field in 1860. Rather than shying away from the competition, however, Lincoln actually accelerated his campaign in the North. Gerritt Smith of New York ran an abolitionist/pro- Union campaign and Stephen Douglas, the northern Democrat, ran on the platform of popular sovereignty. Lincoln also ran a pro-Union candidacy and called for halting the spread of slavery in the west. Gerritt Smith's abolitionist platform certainly called for stopping the spread of slavery

156 Wheeler, *From Gutenberg to Google,* 32.

157 To get the telegraph offices per state, I used the "Summarize Within" tool in ArcGIS.

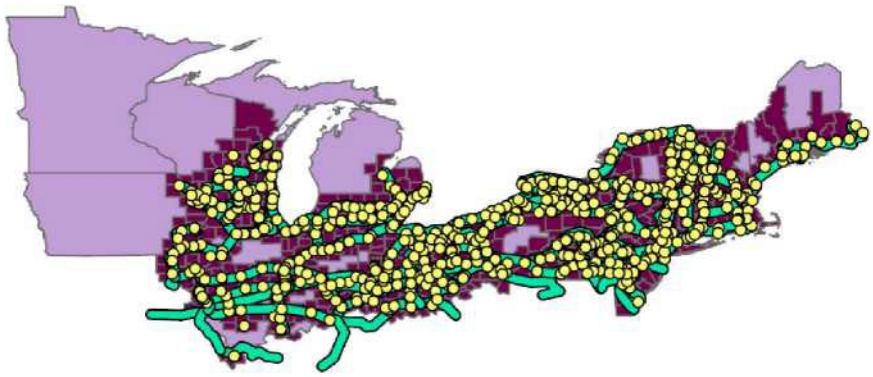


Figure 11: The North's telegraph system, 1853.

in the west along with its elimination in the states where it already existed. Lincoln took the fight to Smith and the abolitionists arguing that a president could not unilaterally end slavery in the United States. Lincoln could engage in such nuanced campaigning in the North because the telegraph system there represented a pervasive system that reached into to the deepest recesses of the northern landscape. Lincoln understood very well spreading specific messages and engaging the northern population provided the opportunity to introduce more people to the Republican Party's message and, therefore, provided a chance to win their votes. He also understood that if he won all the states in the North he could capture the necessary electoral votes to carry him to victory in 1860.

The South did not have a comparable telegraph network and did not cover as vast a geographic area as the North. If Lincoln had decided to mount a campaign in the South, he would have had a very difficult time engaging the southern population. He would not be able to rely on the ability to communicate electronically, which meant he would have had to hire an army of campaign agents to physically traverse the South. Even then, he would not have been able to change course and communicate nuanced details in real-time the way he could in the North. The former Confederate states contained a grand total of 88 (or 12%) of the nation's telegraph offices and 3,481 miles (or 21%) of the nation's telegraph lines. The North's 11,588 miles of telegraph line represented approximately 3.5 times the amount of telegraph lines. The telegraph offices, however, represent the places where information was either gathered or disseminated and the North's 629 offices represented almost seven times the amount of telegraph offices as the South.

Figure 12 below shows the former Confederate states along with the telegraph network in those states.

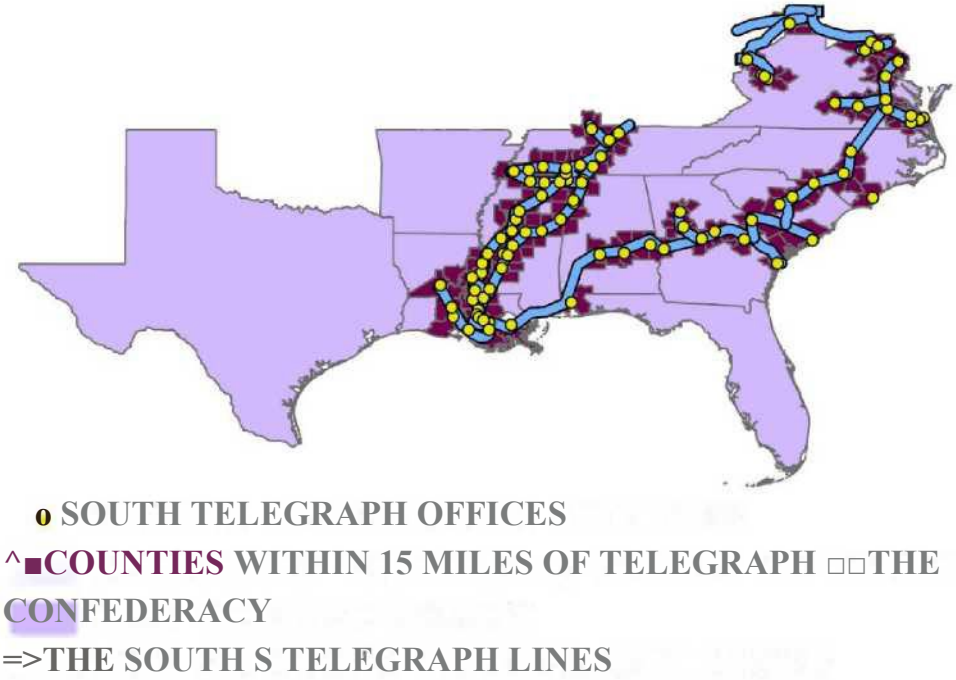
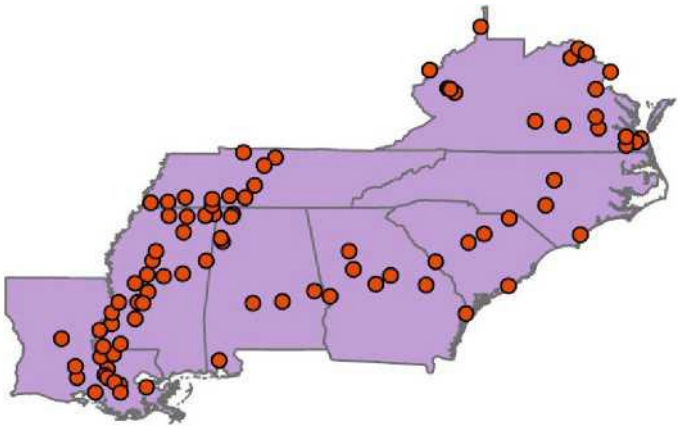


Figure 12: The South's telegraph infrastructure, 1853.

In terms of area covered, the states of the former Confederacy with telegraph offices covered an area of 390,777 square miles. See figure 13 below for reference.



- **TELEGRAPH OFFICES**

Figure 13: Former Confederate states with telegraph offices, 1853. Note, Florida, Texas, and Arkansas had no telegraph offices.

The North, by contrast, had fifteen states covering 471,242 square miles. On this single point, the North and South were comparable. Many of the states in the South were geographically larger than those of the North. The New England states of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts are all, of course, very small in comparison with the states of the South. Even so, the North still had a larger geographic area covered with telegraphy by approximately 80,000 square miles. As pointed out above, however, the North had approximately three times the population of the South. The sheer number of telegraph offices represented in the North allowed information penetrate almost every crevice of that section where large sections of the South were completely devoid of electronic communications. Figure 14 below represents the telegraph offices in the North.

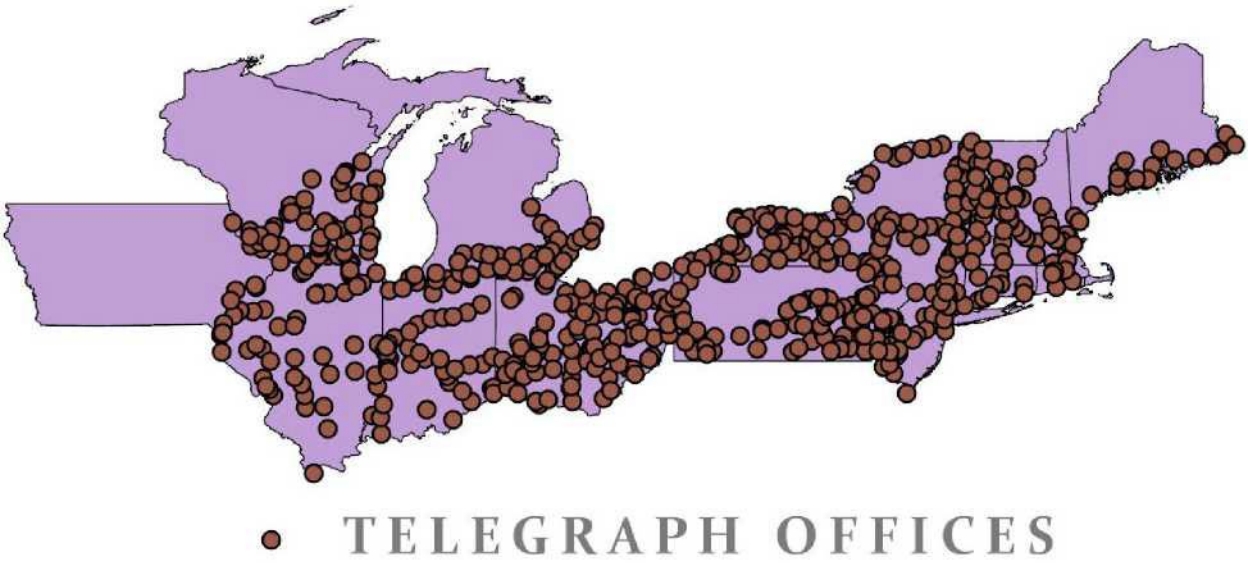


Figure 14: States with telegraph offices in the North, 1853. Minnesota is not listed because the state had no telegraph offices as of 1853.

The Reach of the Telegraph System

A county-level examination of the square mileage covered with telegraphy in each section of the United States reveals the considerable advantage the North had over the South in terms of disseminating information. Within the southern states, only 80 counties contained telegraph offices representing a grand total of 55,390 square miles.[158] See figure 15 below for counties within the former Confederate states that contained telegraph offices.

[158] See William Thomas, *The Iron Way: Railroads and the Making of Modern America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011). Thomas's research indicated that most people who utilized specific railroad depots resided within fifteen miles of that depot. The assumption here is that those who lived within a fifteen-mile radius of a telegraph station would most likely be exposed to information coming into that depot. I have adopted that assumption with the idea being people could travel to a telegraph office or people at a telegraph office could gather information from the office and take it to places within fifteen miles in a day.

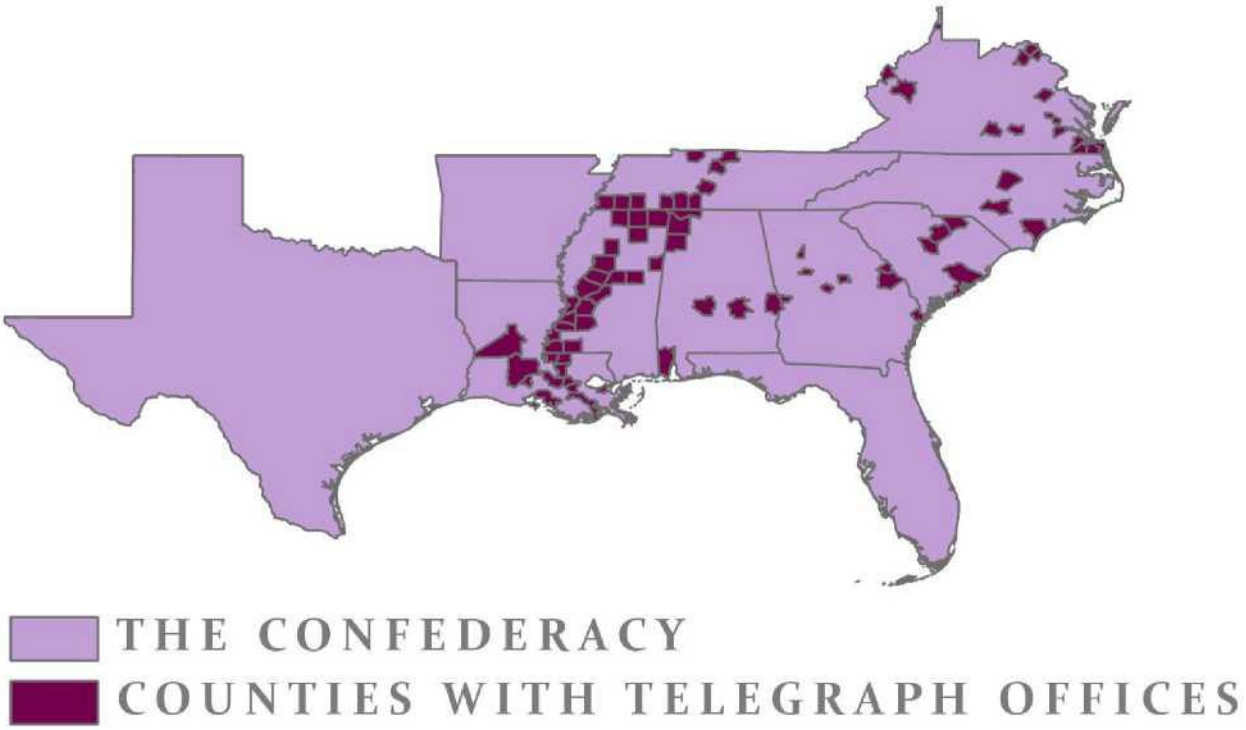


Figure 15: Counties within the former Confederacy that had telegraph offices.

With twenty telegraph offices, Mississippi had the most counties of any former Confederate state outfitted with telegraphy. Virginia had the second-most with sixteen and the rest of the southern states only had a handful of counties with telegraph offices. The North, by contrast, had 342 counties—approximately 4.5 time the amount as the South—with telegraph offices representing a grand total of 211,873 square miles. Both the amount of telegraph offices and the square mileage represented in the North were approximately quadruple that of the South. See Figure 16 below for the North's counties that contained telegraph offices.

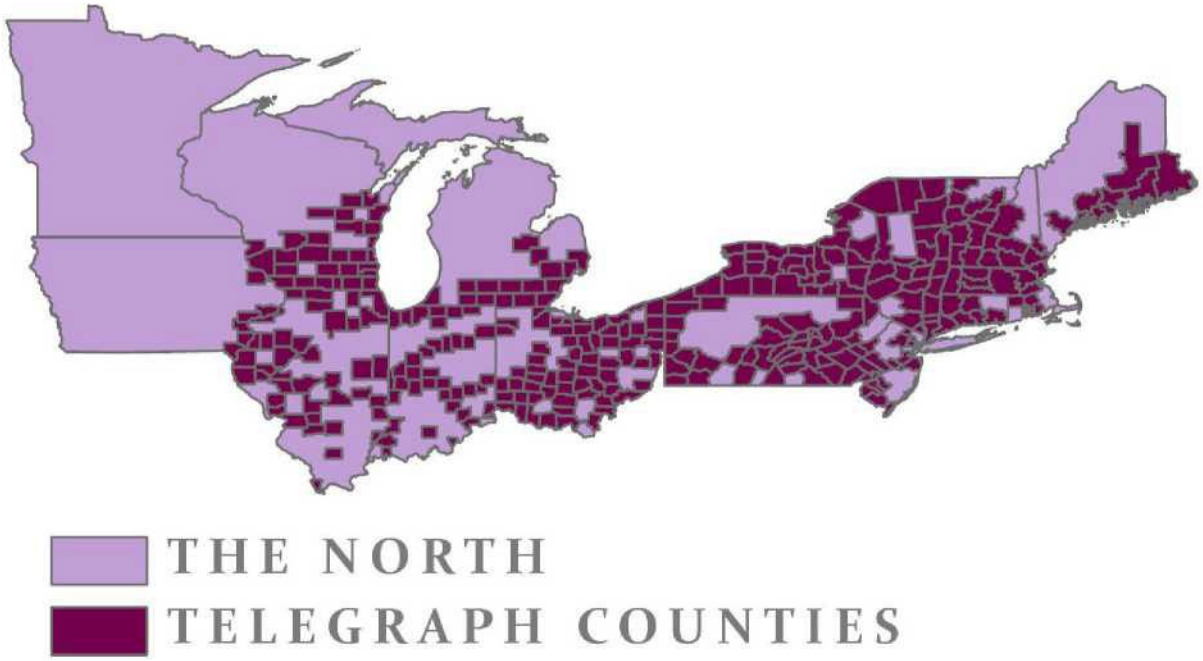


Figure 16: Counties in the North containing telegraph offices.

William Thomas's research on the impact of railroads for *The Iron Way* used a fifteen-mile buffer zone around railroad depots because, Thomas said, fifteen miles represented a typical "day's journey to an access point."[159] Using the assumption that individuals could travel fifteen miles in a day and that Lincoln and his campaign would have wanted to disseminate information to as many people as he could in 1860, the pervasive telegraph network in the North would have allowed the Lincoln campaign to engage entire populations of states just by crafting well-received messages. Messages that resonated with people were picked up by friendly newspapers and reprinted across the country. Well-received messages also would have motivated people to spread that message to others. Anyone receiving Lincoln's campaign information could have taken the message on foot to neighboring counties. Figure 17 below illustrates a heat map of areas that would have been covered within a fifteen-mile radius of the telegraph offices.

[159] See William Thomas, *The Iron Way: Railroads, the Civil War, and the Making of Modern America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 344 footnote 27 for an explanation of some of the assumptions for the research.

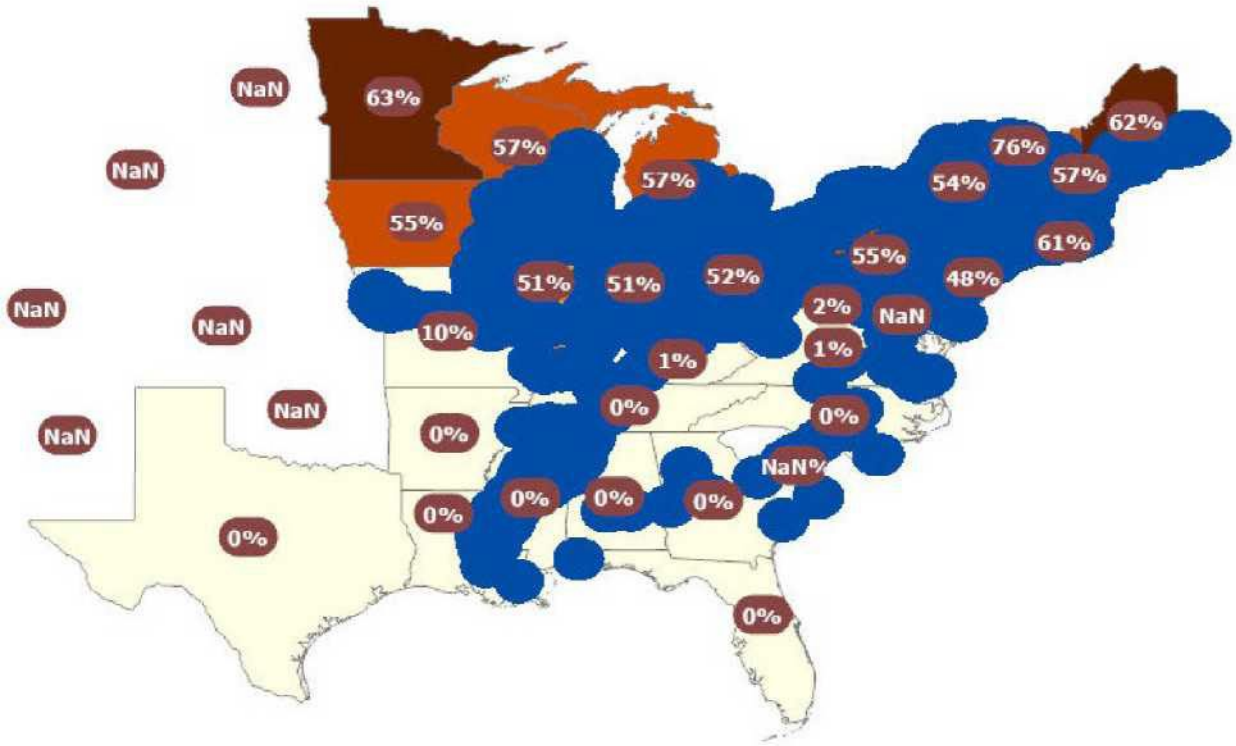


Figure 17: Heat map showing areas in the United States within a fifteen-mile radius of the telegraph offices.

Ultimately, Lincoln would have been interested in winning the vote in counties, which, in turn, meant winning states. Winning state, of course, translated to Electoral College votes. A quick look at the counties covered within fifteen miles of a telegraph office shows just how much more pervasive the telegraph system was in the North than in the South. Figure 18 below shows counties in the North that contained telegraph offices along with the counties that lay within a fifteen-mile radius of a telegraph office.

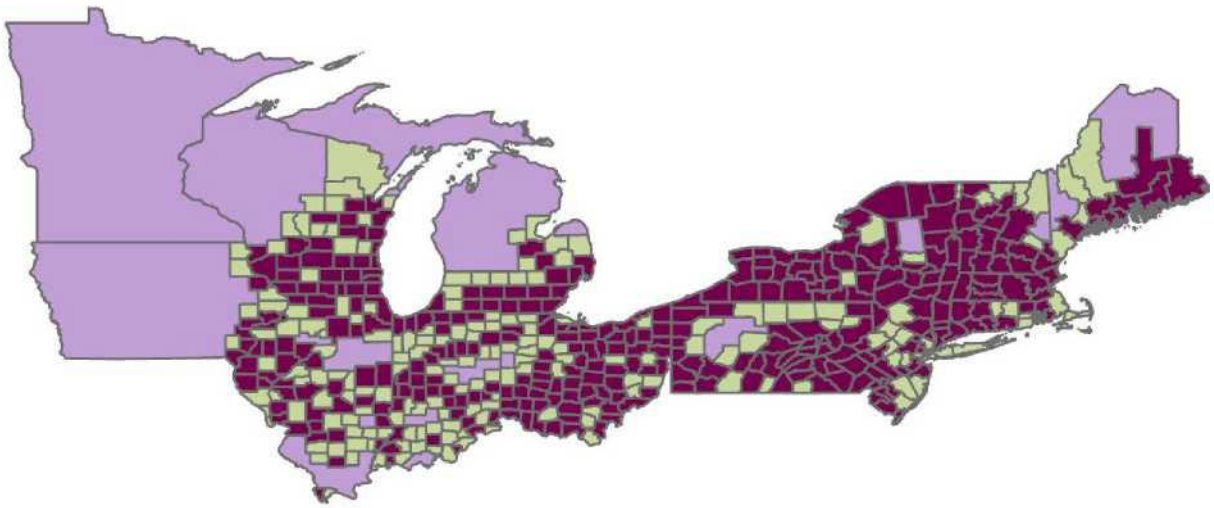


Figure 18: Counties in the North containing telegraph office and also counties within a fifteen-mile radius of a telegraph office.

□"| THE NORTH
^■COUNTIES WITH TELEGRAPH OFFICES
| | COUNTIES WITHIN 15 MILES OF A TELEGRAPH OFFICE

The counties in the North containing telegraph offices added to counties within a fifteen-mile radius of a telegraph office represents a grand total of 531 counties and 318,331 square miles. Presidential candidates spend a great deal of time examining county-specific dynamics like this precisely winning or losing groups of counties can mean an ultimate victory or loss of an election. As an adroit politician who succeeded in his presidential campaign, Abraham Lincoln certainly would not have missed the fact that he could publish campaign information and saturate the North with his message and that the South's population would have been almost impossible to reach in a meaningful way that could change hearts and minds.

The pervasive nature of the telegraph network had tangible effects for Lincoln and the Republican Party during the election of 1860. The Lincoln campaign utilized telegraphy to saturate the northern newspaper press in almost every town and village throughout the North. The specifically targeted the rural areas in order to galvanize the antislavery movement across the North in to a viable political voting bloc. As a testament to Lincoln's effective use of the telegraph system and the newspaper press in the North, Eric Foner said it was actually the rural areas—not the big cities—in the North that responded to the Republican message. Foner said, "In general, radical Republican districts were concentrated in rural small-town New England, and in the areas of rural New York, Pennsylvania, and the West settled by New England migrants." In fact, he noted, "Vermont, a state almost entirely rural, was generally considered the most radical in the North."[160] Rural areas, almost by definition, are separated by vast geographic distance. Telegraphy, therefore, gave Lincoln direct access to people in the hinterlands of the North. The South's telegraph network, by contrast, predominantly connected major cities—not rural areas where most of the population resided. That would have

[160] Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 107.

made it impossible for Lincoln to directly reach the places where the majority of the population resided in the South. As a result, he did not campaign there at all and that allowed a great deal of misinformation, such as the assertation that Lincoln intended to use military force to end slavery in the South, to go unchecked. See figure 19 below for an illustration of the telegraph offices along with Lincoln's voter per county in 1860.

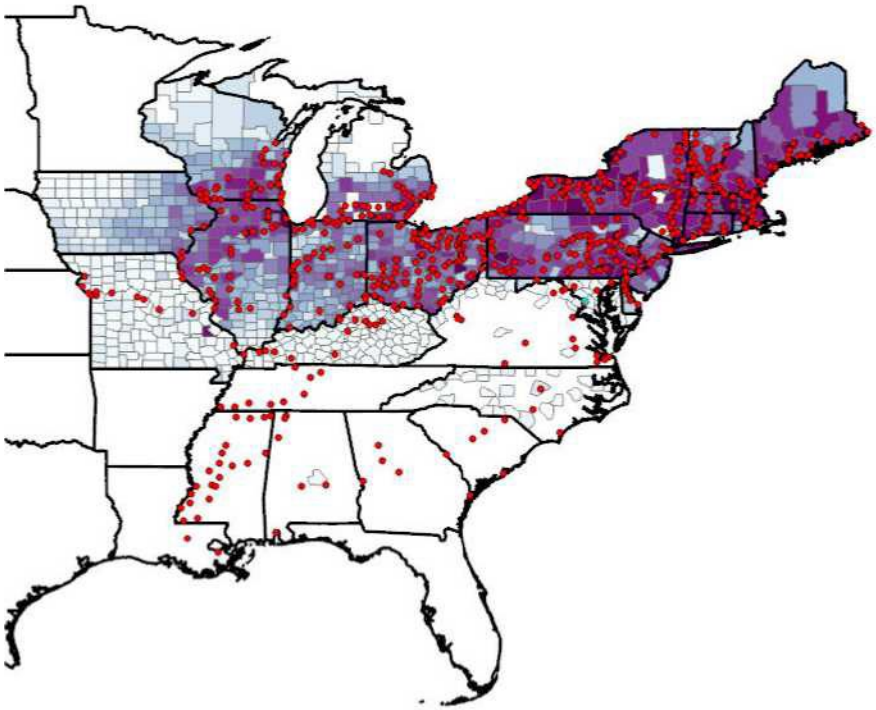


Figure 19: Lincoln's vote along with the telegraph offices as they existed in 1853.

As mentioned previously, in addition to containing 83% of the nation's telegraph offices, the North also contained 71% of the nation's telegraph wires. The five states with the highest mileage of telegraph wire were Ohio (2,106 miles), New York (2,033 miles), Illinois (1,596 miles), Pennsylvania (1,532 miles), and Indiana (1,037 miles). The southern states only contained 21% of the nation's telegraph wire with Mississippi (810 miles), Virginia (495 miles), Louisiana (470 miles), Alabama (449 miles), and Tennessee (410 miles) having the most wire mileage.[161] These statistics paint an unmistakable picture; the North had a much more extensive and pervasive telegraph system than the South. The political implications were also unmistakable; politicians like Lincoln could create more robust political networks in the North much easier than the South. Whether Lincoln actually knew the specifics laid out above, he must have known at some level that the dynamics the communication network meant engagement with the populations of both North and South. He placed his bets on the North's overwhelming technological advantage as a means of

[161] The Border States of Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, and Missouri contained the remaining 8% of the telegraph lines. Also, note the disparity between Mississippi and the rest of the southern states. That is a direct result of a race between two companies to New Orleans in order to get news from the front of the Mexican War front first.

disseminating the Republican message.

Several recent works have suggested that because southerners incorporated railroads and telegraphy—engines of modern capitalism—into the slave system, the South's slave system should be given credit for laying the foundations for modern American capitalism. Sven Beckert's *Empire of Cotton,* Edward Baptist's *The Half Has Never Been Told*, and Daniel Rood's *The Reinvention of Atlantic Slavery*, and Walter Johnson's *River of Dark Dreams* and *Soul By Soul,* have argued scholars should "recognize slavery as integral, rather than oppositional, to capitalism" because the South incorporated the technologies that gave rise to capitalism, specifically telegraphy and railroads, into the slave system.[162] Baptist and Beckert, for example, essentially argued that slave labor served as the bedrock for the emergence of a powerful American economy. Beckert said, "Slavery enabled the stunning advances of industry, and the accompanying profits."[163] Baptist said, "The idea that the commodification and suffering and forced labor of African Americans is what made the United States powerful and rich is not an idea people are happy to hear. Yet it is the truth."[164] Daniel Rood also essentially argued telegraphs and railroads in the South allowed slaveholders to develop an integrated logistics system that served as the foundation of the emergent capitalist system.

The United States, however, did not surpass Great Britain as the world's preeminent industrial economy until 1890—almost a quarter century after the end of slavery.[165] For that reason, the argument could be made that the end of slavery actually laid the groundwork for the explosion of the American economy that led to the emergence of the industrial behemoth that emerged during the Gilded Age. In fact, slavery ended, at least partially, because northerners—Republicans in particular—perceived slavery as a threat to the development of labor capitalism both in the West and even in the North.[166] The emergence of

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162 Quote from Seth Rockman, "What Makes the History of Capitalism Newsworthy?" *Journal of the Early Republic* 34, no. 3 (2014): 443. https://muse.jhu.edu/ (accessed March 06, 2022).

163 Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014), 244.

164 Edward Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told. Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), Kindle, LOC 324.

165 See "When UK GDP Last Outstripped the U.S." at BBC NEWS | UK | When UK GDP last outstripped the US.

166 See Foner's *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men* for a detailed discussion of the Free-Soil issue in the West.

the United States as a great industrial power during the so-called Gilded Age has been attributed, at least partially, to the Republican Party's promotion of business interests. Joyce Appleby noted in *The Relentless Revolution* how "consumer capitalism came on quickly [after the Civil War] pushed forward by the marvels of electricity and telegraphy."[167] The Republican Party promoted capitalism as a replacement for the labor system of the South. The 1872 Republican Party platform said the party would "promote the industries, prosperity, and growth of the whole country." The 1880 Republican Party platform said, "Industries should be further promoted, and that the commerce already increasing should be steadily encouraged."[168] Republicans won both elections; Ulysses S. Grant won in 1872 and James Garfield won in 1880. Republican presidents and congressional leaders supported protectionist tariffs and other measures designed to promote business.

These works also essentially argue southern slaveowners harnessed the powers of telegraphy and railroads as instruments of mass exploitation and oppression. For example, Beckert argued, "The most modern technologies made the most brutal exploitation of human labor possible."[169] Baptist essentially equated telegraphy in the South to what Michel Foucault called an "organ of surveillance"[170] because, he said, it "allowed slaveholders to send descriptions running faster than the fugitives they named."[171] Walter Johnson said, "Slave holders could fill space—or segment it in as many directions as there were roads, rivers, and telegraph wires—with information."[172] These works miss the central driving factor in Abraham Lincoln's decision to pursue a campaign only in the Northern states, which is that the South did *not* have a sprawling telegraph network. None of these works even addressed the extent of the telegraph network in the South in terms of mileage of wire, telegraph office locations, counties covered, or any other measurable

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167 Joyce Appleby, *The Relentless Revolution: A History of Capitalism* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2010), 260.
168 Mackey, *Documentary History of the American Civil War Era,* "1872 Republican Party Platform," 169-172.
169 Beckert, *Empire of Cotton,* 108.
170 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Random House, 1977), 95.
171 Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told,* 345.
172 Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 224.

attribute. They all implied the South had such an extensive network of telegraphy that it allowed southern slaveowners to chase down runaway slaves, oppress the slave population on a mass scale, and lay the foundations for the modern capitalist state. It is no doubt true slave owners oppressed the enslaved population and that they expended every resource to retrieve runaway slaves. It is also surely true that individual incidents occurred where southern slave owners used telegraphy or railroads to chase down specific individual runaway slaves. The South, however, did not have a sprawling integrated telegraph network during the 1850s that would have given rise to capitalism. If railroads and telegraphy serve as the bedrock of capitalism, there is no doubt the North had the bulk of both.

Beckert argued Mississippi was central to the creation of capitalism because "Mississippi produced more cotton than any other southern state." Beckert said, "Mississippi [had a] surge of cotton freight [that] turned New Orleans.. .into the key American cotton port." He said that was made possible, at least partially, because "by the 1840s telegraphs began connecting cottongrowing, -trading, and consumption centers, [and] merchants had.immediate access to crucial information."[173] Though Mississippi had the most telegraph offices of any other southern state, that development had not been driven by the desire for cotton in the state. It certainly could have helped foster the explosion of cotton in Mississippi in the late 1840s and during the decade of the 1850s; improvements in telecommunications is routinely cited as allowing for the rise of big business during the Gilded Age. Mississippi's development in telegraphy came as a result of the demand for information during the Mexican War. When the Mexican War broke out in 1846, three separate companies engaged in a heated race to connect the population centers in the East with New Orleans. One company built a line along the Atlantic and Gulf seaboard, while two competed in the Mississippi Valley. The Washington and New Orleans Telegraph Company built the seaboard line proceeding from Washington, D.C. through Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, southwest through Georgia and Alabama to Mobile, then almost due west through Mississippi, and then almost due south to New Orleans.

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[173] Quotes from Beckert, *Empire of Cotton,* 73 and 103.

(See Figure 20 below.)

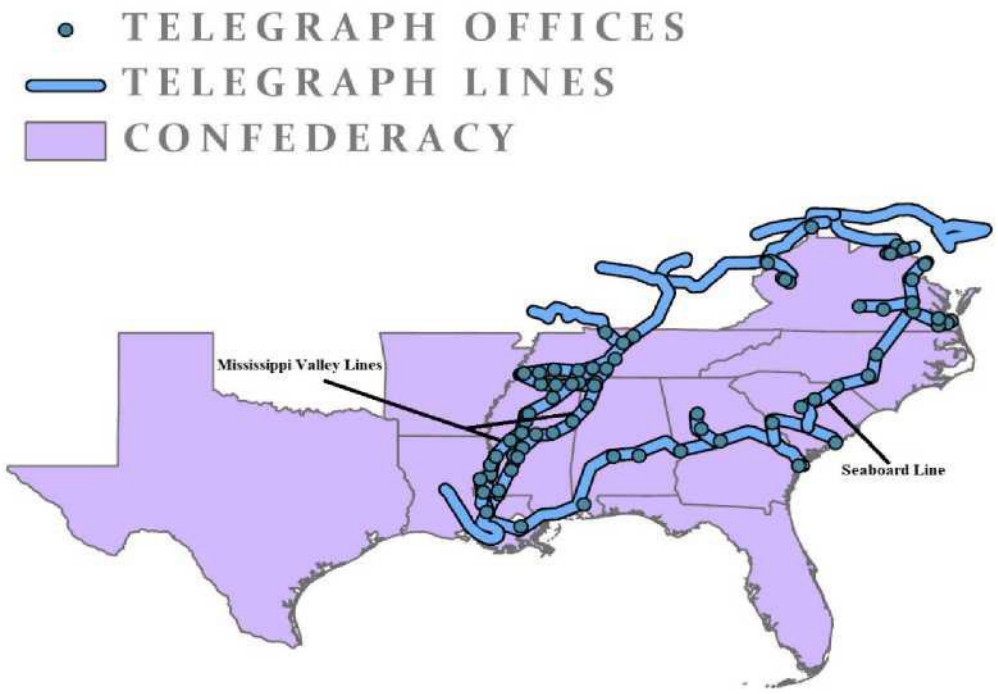

Figure 20: The Mississippi Valley and Seaboard Line, 1853.

The two lines in the Mississippi Valley were built by two separate rival companies—the New Orleans and Ohio Company and The People's Telegraph Company. Both the lines began in Ohio and traversed a path southward through Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and then to New Orleans. The New Orleans and Ohio Telegraph Company was a subsidiary of Samuel Morse and his associates. The People's Telegraph Company was headed by Henry O'Reilly, who had been shut out by Morse and his business partners. O'Reilly hoped to beat Morse and his associates to New Orleans, incorporate the Bain system of coding rather than Morse Code, and, therefore, undercut the entire Morse system. The Bain coding system, however, very quickly faded into obscurity because it was more cumbersome than Morse Code. The O'Reilly line, however, remained in Mississippi and eventually a new company assumed control of it and adopted Morse Code. The state, therefore, wound up with two separate lines in the Mississippi Valley.

Even if telegraphy did contribute to Mississippi's cotton boom and to New Orleans becoming the major port for cotton, this argument actually supports the assertion that the North laid the foundations for the emergence of capitalism. With 22 telegraph offices, Mississippi did not compare with most northern states. The entire former Confederacy had a grand total of 88 telegraph offices. By contrast, the individual states of New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania each had more telegraph office locations than the entire confederacy. New York had 123 telegraph offices, Ohio had 103, and Pennsylvania had 101 telegraph offices. If, as historians like Joyce Appleby and others argue, modern telegraphy and the railroads allowed for the rise of capitalism,

the North had overwhelming numbers of each clearly making the North the section of the country that fostered the rise of capitalism.

Much like the situation with telegraphy, the North had a much larger railroad network than the South did in 1860. William Thomas argued that because the South's population was smaller than the North's the South did not need as much railroad mileage in order to fully network its citizens. He said, "The southern railroad network reached its more densely populated areas and, relative to the North, it brought proportionately more of its residents into contact with the railroads." [174] James McPherson disagreed with that assessment in his *Battle Cry of Freedom* saying, "By an index of railroad mileage per capita and per thousand square miles, the North remained more than twice as well supplied with rail transportation in 1860."[175] The 1860 Census report said there were 30,598.77 miles of railroad track in the United States and that 19,806 miles (or 65%) lay in the North and 10,712 (or 35%) lay in the South. Though the South vigorously pursued railroad construction during the 1850s, the railroad report for the Census of 1860 noted "the southern States.[were still].behind the northern in their public [railroad] enterprises."[176] Thomas himself even noted, "In the 1850s, railroad work became the fastest growing non-farm occupation in the northern economy."[177] The North's share of aggregate railroad mileage dropped from 75% in 1850 to 65% in 1860 but the North maintained a much larger railroad network than the South did in 1860.

The Turn-Around from 1856

Whatever the case, in 1860 Abraham Lincoln used the technological might of the North— telegraphy in particular—to pull off a spectacular turn-around from the 1856 electoral outcome. He specifically targeted critical states the Republican candidate had lost in 1856 and they ultimately carried him to victory. John C. Fremont, the Republican Party candidate in the previous election, had won popular vote majorities in only the

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174 Thomas, *The Iron Way,* 28.
175 McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 95.
176 Joseph C.G. Kennedy, "Railroads in the United States," *Statistics of the United States Compiled from the Original Returns and Being the Final Exhibit of The Eighth Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1866), 323.
177 Thomas, *The Iron Way,* 48.

extreme northernmost tier of states. (See Figure 16 below) Note that Fremont won popular vote majorities in only Wisconsin, Michigan, Connecticut, Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Maine. He received votes in other states but did not win those states. Lincoln understood very well that he had to add the crucial states of Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and New York to the Republican column in 1860 if he intended to be a serious contender. The relatively new states of Illinois and Indiana had experienced explosive growth since about 1830 and, therefore, commanded much more attention in 1860 than they had in previous elections. Though New York and Pennsylvania were older states, they had always commanded a great deal of attention from presidential candidates simply because they were two of the most populous states in the country.

Figure 21: Popular vote for John C. Fremont, 1856.

Fremont had won a commanding majority in New England. Lincoln could certainly not afford to lose New Enland in 1860 but there was never really a threat of that. Like Fremont in 1856, Lincoln won commanding majorities in the New England states. In fact, Lincoln won a larger popular vote

majorities in New England as a region than any other region in the country.

Table 1 below shows the percentage of the popular vote Lincoln received by region when the totals of the states in those regions are combined:

State	% of 1860 Total Cast for Lincoln
New England	61.6%
Middle States	53.4%
Midwest	52.3%
Western States	62%

Table 1: Lincoln's popular vote percentage by region.

The New England states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont provided Lincoln 61.6% of their combined popular vote. Figure 22 below shows New England and the percentage of the vote Lincoln received in 1860 in each state.

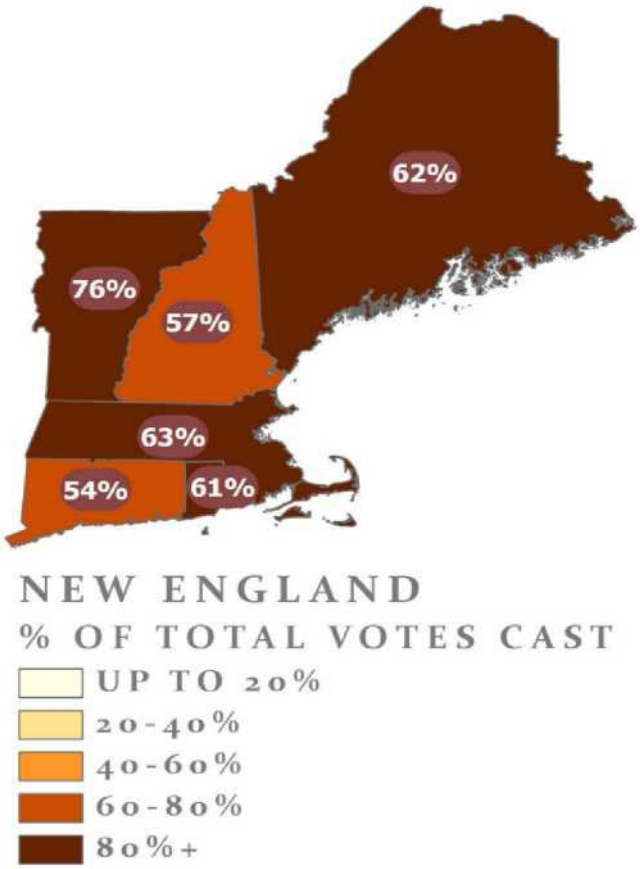

Figure 22: New England states and their popular vote for Lincoln in 1860.

Vermont provided Lincoln the highest percentage of the total votes cast of any state in the Union. Vermont provide Lincoln 76% of its popular vote in 1860. Vermont also had the highest density of telegraph offices per population of any state in the Union. The state had 26 telegraph offices and a population of 315,098 in 1860. Vermont, therefore, had one telegraph office per every 12,119 residents in the state. Vermont also had the third-highest density of telegraph offices per square mile behind the District of Columbia (the highest density per population) and Delaware (second-highest density per population). Vermont consists of 9,623 square miles and with 26 telegraph offices the state had an average of one telegraph office per 370 square miles. Vermont had also provided the highest percentage of popular vote for the Republican Party in 1856 with 78% of the total votes cast for John C. Fremont. In 1860, Lincoln carried every county in the state by at least 67% of the total votes cast.

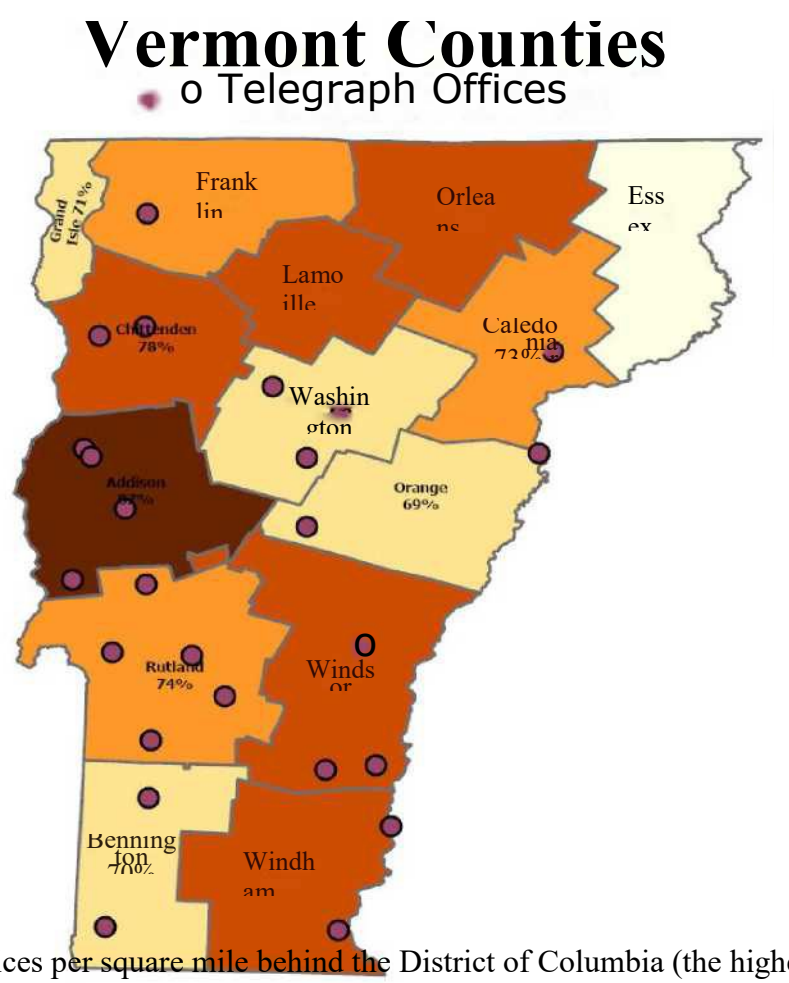

Figure 23: Vermont counties and telegraph offices.

The population density of Vermont was comparable to Tennessee in the South. Vermont had 315,098 people residing within 9,623 square miles equating to an approximate average

population density of 33 people per square mile. Tennessee had a population of 1,109,801 residing within an area of 42,181 square miles giving the state an overall approximate population density of 26 people per squre mile. Obviously, Tennessee had a larger area and a larger overall population but both states were rural states and comparable in their population densities. Tennessee also had the South's third-highest telegraph offices per population density and per square mile behind Mississippi (detailed above) and Virginia (detailed below). Tennessee had 19 telegraph offices meaning the state had an average of one telegraph office per 123,311 people and one telegraph office per 3,834 square miles. Tennessee also lacked enthusiasm for secession when the secession crisis came. The state was the last to secede and the first state to be officially be recognized as "reconstructed" after the Civil War. The state rejoined the Union in July 1866 even while Reconstruction lingered on for more than a decade.

The Prospect of Southern Voters for Lincoln

With a more pervasive telegraph system during the 1860 election campaign, Lincoln may have been able to make inroads into Tennessee. James McPherson noted that when Tennessee voted to secede, "the voters of mountainous east Tennessee cast 70 percent of their ballots against secession." McPherson said those "thirty counties of east Tennessee.rejected secession by more than two to one."[178] Eventually, Governor Isham Harris worked with the Confederate leadership to declare martial law in East Tennessee because of the intransigence of unionism in the region. General Felix Zollicoffer moved into east Tennessee essentially to ensure a new state could not be formed the way it had in Virginia. When Unionists revolted in east Tennessee just after the state voted for secession, "Zollicoffer.declared martial law, ordered the arrest of Unionist leaders, and directed the disarming of all Unionists."[179] With a more pervasive telegraph system that would have allowed direct communication with the public, Lincoln may have been able to bypass the Confederate leadership and speak directly to the people in places like east Tennessee. If he had done so during the campaign, he may have been

[178] McPherson, 283.

[179] Kent Dollar, Larry Whiteaker, and Calvin Dickinson, *Sister States, Enemy States: The Civil War in Kentucky and Tennessee* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2009), 103.

able to cultivate voting bases throughout the south in such places.

A more pervasive telegraph system in the South may have allowed Lincoln more direct access to greater swaths of the southern population and, with that, the ability to cultivate a voting base across the region. He may have even been able to convince non-slaveholders in the South to support the Republican Platform. Several scholars have pointed out what Jennifer Eichstadt and Stephen Small noted in *Representations of Slavery,* "In 1860, there were about 385,000 masterenslavers, distributed among 1,516,000 free families. Thus, nearly 75 percent of all free southerners had no connection with slavery through either family ties or direct ownership."[180] A more pervasive telegraph system in the South might have afforded Lincoln the ability to appeal directly to that population. Though small in number, "slaveholders, who accounted for 25 percent of the population, owned 93.1 percent of the [South's] agricultural wealth."[181] With no economic ties to the slave system, non-slaveholding white southerners had no vested interest in the South's slave system. As a result, the planter elite employed racism as *the* means of convincing average white southerners to support the plantation system. George Frederickson argued, "The urgent need to ensure the loyalty of the non-slaveholding class white majority caused [the planter elite] to

[180] Jennifer Eichstadt and Stephen Small, *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2002), 27.
[181] Eichstedt, 29.

emphasize [racism] increasingly as they mobilized the southern states for secession and civil war. [54]

Lincoln understood the planter elite and those with a vested interest in slavery controlled the flow of information in the South. Southern editors like Robert Barnwell Rhett of the *Charleston Mercury* continually ran articles telling southern voters "the torch of the Abolition incendiary shall make bonfires of their homes, [be] excited to murder, and destroy their property." That article even told southern men their "wife and children were being murdered through the instrumentality of the Black Republicans of the North."[182] [183] In his speech at the Cooper Institute in February 1860, Lincoln spoke directly to the information gatekeepers of the South saying, "You will grant a hearing to pirates or murderers, but nothing like it to the 'Black Republicans." He said, "In all your contentions with one another, each of you deems an unconditional condemnation of 'Black Republicanism' as the first thing to be attended to. Indeed, such condemnation of us seems to be an indispensable prerequisite—license so to speak—among you to be admitted or permitted to speak at all."[184] Pro-Republican newspapers, such as Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune,* were "by early 1860.. .already being routinely turned away at southern post offices."[185] It is not known when Lincoln formally decided to forego a campaign in the South but the fact that he would have to first fight to even be heard in that section undoubtedly sealed the decision for him.

One of the central charges against the Republican Party emanating from the South was that the party was sectional. The charge of sectionalism especially irritated Lincoln because the

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[182] George Frederickson, *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 161.

[183] Robert Barnwell Rhett, Jr., "Letter from a Tourist," *Charleston Mercury,* October 04, 1860, 04 Oct 1860, 1 - The Charleston Mercury at Newspapers.com.

[184] Quoted in T.C. Mackey, *A Documentary History of the American Civil War Era: Volume 2, Political Arguments.* "Lincoln, Cooper Union Speech, February 27, 1860," (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2013), 29-44.

[56] J.B. McClure, ed., *Abraham Lincoln's Speeches Complete*, 92.

[185] Harold Holzer, *Lincoln at Cooper Union: The Speech that Made Abraham Lincoln President* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), Kindle, LOC 2647.

[58] Quoted in T.C. Mackey, *A Documentary History of the American Civil War Era: Volume 2, Political Arguments.* "Lincoln, Cooper Union Speech, February 27, 1860," (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2013), 29-44.

implication was that southern interests—slavery in particular—were national. Lincoln always maintained the Republican Party's principles were national. In his Cooper Union address, Lincoln spoke directly to southern leaders saying, "You say we are sectional. We deny it.. .Our party has no existence in your section.. .[because it] gets no votes in your section." He painstakingly argued in that speech the Republican Party was the direct heir of the national doctrines promoted by the Founding Fathers. The founding principles, Lincoln believed, appealed to all Americans—both North and South. He even believed non-slaveholding white southerners might vote Republican if the party could reach them. He said, "In case we should, without change of principle, begin to get votes in your section, we should thereby cease to be sectional." Lincoln believed Republicans might actually win over average southern voters through direct engagement. He had a sneaking suspicion southern elites also believed the Republican Party could appeal to southern voters as evidenced by their devotion of so much time and effort to painting himself and the Republican Party as wild-eyed radicals. He told them, however, "You cannot escape this conclusion.. .you will probably soon find that we have ceased to be sectional, for we shall get votes in your section this very year."[186]

With a more pervasive telegraph system in place Lincoln may have been able to directly engage the southern population the same way he did the northern population. Had he done so, he may have been able to combat the tactics employed by southern elites. He could have engaged in the same kind of "propaganda campaign," as Eric Foner called it, as he and his Republican allies waged in the North. A closer look at the states of Virginia and Tennessee show that with the right information infrastructure in place, it is possible that Lincoln may have even been successful in some areas of the southern states. With the exception of Mississippi (discussed above), of all the states that seceded to join the Confederacy, Virginia had the highest density of telegraph offices per population and per square mile. The state had a population of 1,596,318 and 19 telegraph offices.

[186] J.B. McClure, ed., *Abraham Lincoln's Speeches Complete*, 92.

That equates to one telegraph office per 84,017 people. The closest northern state in telegraph office per population would have been Rhode Island with one telegraph office per 58,207 people. The area of Virginia is 42,775 square miles. With 19 telegraph offices, that equates to one telegraph office per 2,251 square miles. The most comparable northern state would have been Maine with one telegraph office per 1,862 square miles. States like Vermont, Delaware, Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania had the most in terms of telegraph offices per square mile but Virginia was comparable to the lower tier of northern states. Virginia also represents the only state to split over the issue of secession. When Virginia voted to secede on April 17, 1861, voters in the northwestern section of the state rejected the secession ordinance by a margin of approximately three to one. Very quickly, a new state emerged from those dissenting counties and was simply called West Virginia. The new state emerged precisely because that section of Virginia did not support secession and voted to rejoin the Union.

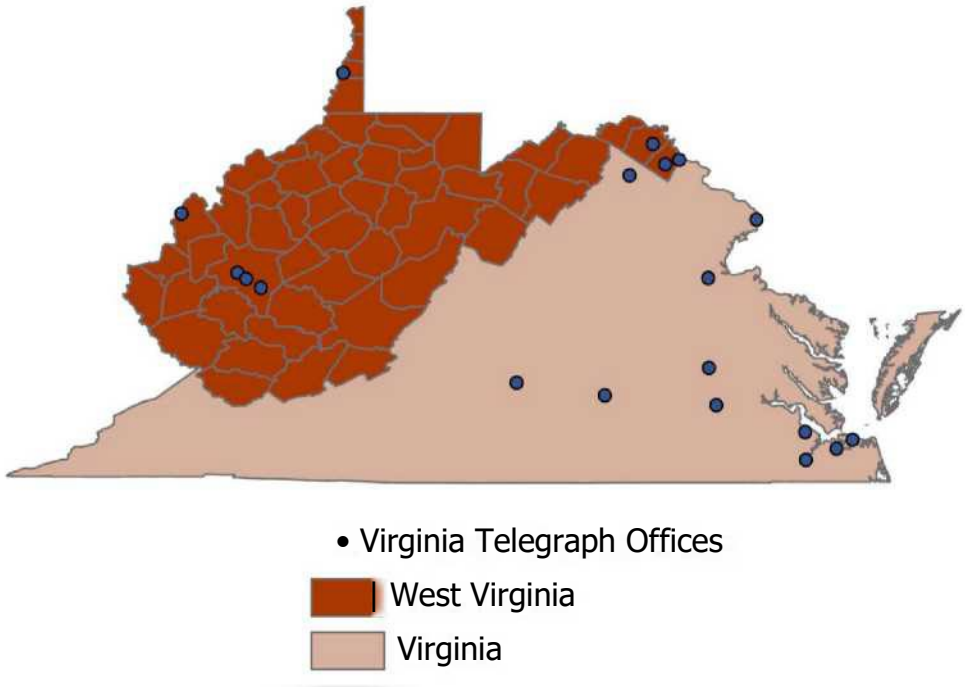


Figure 24: Virginia and the new state of West Virginia along with the telegraph offices in each state.

Virginia also did not join the southern states in the first round of secession. Secession essentially came in two waves: one right after Lincoln's election and one right after the new president was sworn into office. Virginia joined the latter chorus of secession. In fact, almost all the states that seceded first had the fewest telegraph offices per square mile and per population. South Carolina, the first state to secede, was next to last in the density of telegraph offices per square mile and was third-to-last in terms of telegraph offices per population. Table 3 below shows the date of secession along with each state's rank in telegraph per population and per square mile. With few exceptions, the states with the lowest telegraph offices per population and per square mile seceded first. The notable exceptions were Mississippi and North Carolina.

State	**Rank in Population**	**Rank in Square**	Date of Secession
South Carolina	24	25	12/20/1860
Florida	28	28	1/10/1861
Alabama	22	23	1/11/1861
Mississippi	10	16	1/19/1861

Georgia	25	24	1/19/1861
Louisiana	27	21	1/26/1861
Texas	28	28	2/01/1861
Virginia	17	17	4/17/1861
Arkansas	28	28	5/06/1861
North Carolina	26	27	5/20/1861
Tennessee	20	20	6/08/1861

Table 3: Telegraph Offices per population and square mile along with date of secession.

Delaware had the second-highest density of telegraph offices per population but it had the highest density of telegraph office locations per square mile. Though Lincoln did not win Delaware in 1860, the vote for John C. Fremont in 1856 was a mere 2% of the total votes cast. Lincoln, by contrast, won 24% of the total votes cast in the state. The 22% increase in support for the Republican Party in Delaware represents the single most extraordinary popular vote shift toward the Republican Party between 1856 and 1860. Figure 25 below shows the percentage of the popular vote John C. Fremont in Delaware during the 1856 election campaign. It also shows the telegraph office locations:

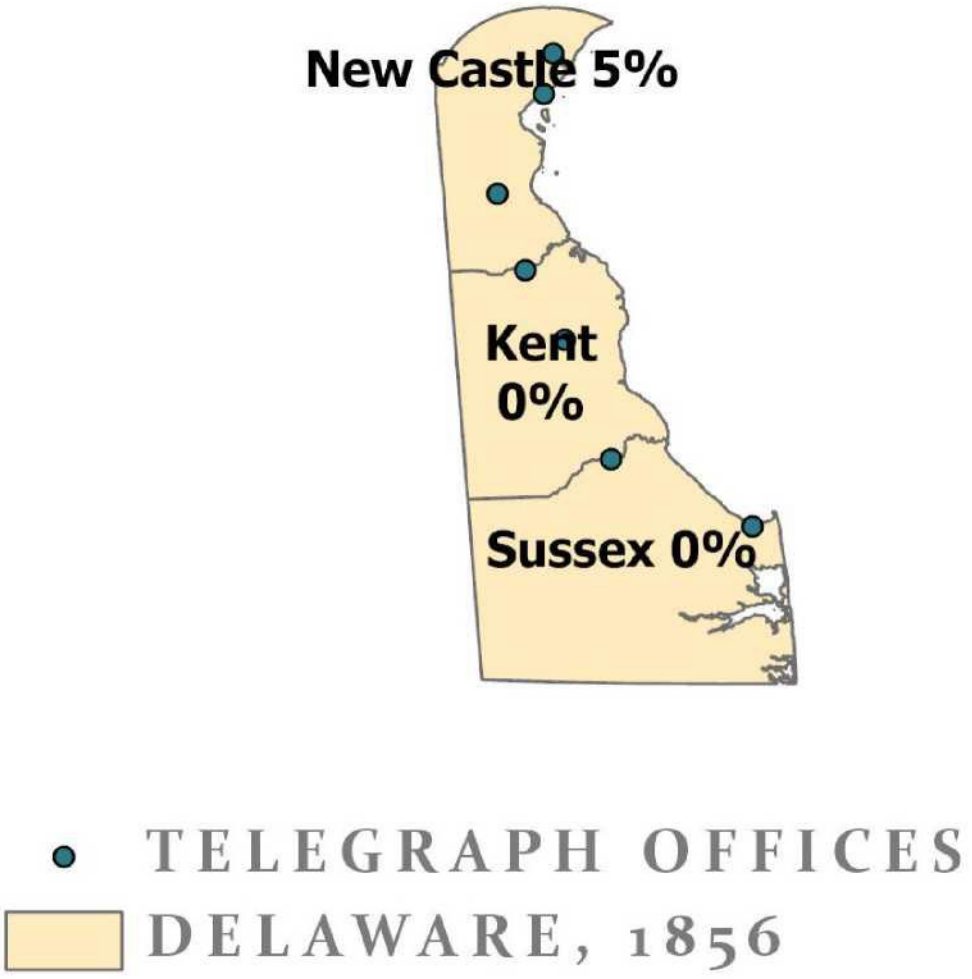


Figure 25: Delaware counties and telegraph offices, 1856.

Figure 26 below shows the vote Lincoln received in Delware in 1860 along with a heat map showing the concentration of telegraph office locations:

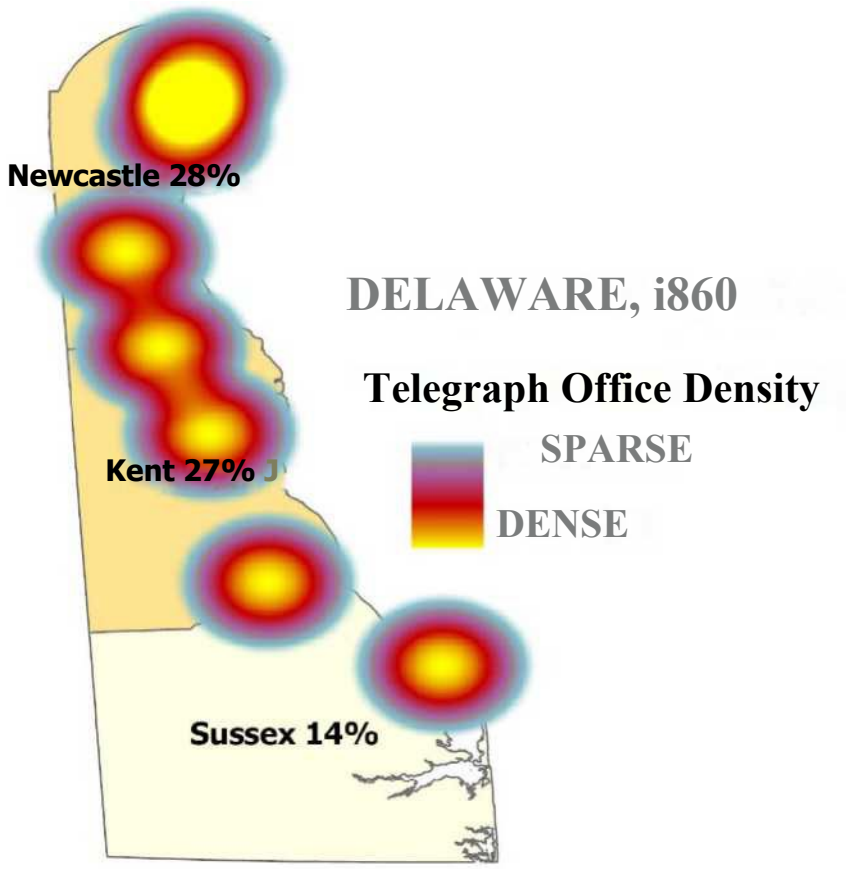


Figure 26: Delaware counties and telegraph offices, 1860.

The largest shift came in New Castle and Kent counties in northern Delaware. Kent county saw the largest improvement. In 1856, Kent County did not provide John C. Fremont with any votes. By contrast, the county provided Lincoln with 27% of the popular vote (or 1,075 votes) in 1860. New Castle county in the center of the state provided John C. Fremont with 5% (or 303 votes) of the popular vote in 1856. Lincoln by contrast received with 27% (or 2,073 votes) in 1860. It should be noted the northern section of Delaware represented by Kent and New Castle counties also contained the majority of the state's telegraph offices.

Delaware and Vermont represent the two states with the highest density of telegraph offices per

square mile and telegraph office location per person. Vermont also represents the outright largest percentage of the popular vote Lincoln received in any state and Delaware represents the single largest shift in the popular vote in favor of the Republican Party between 1856 and 1860 for any state. Table 1 below shows the states with the highest density of telegraph offices per square mile.

State	Area in	Telegraph	State	People Per	Density in
Delaware	2,491	7	112,216	16,031	356
Vermont	9,623	25	315,098	12,604	385
Rhode Island	1,212	3	174,620	58,207	404
Ohio	44,825	91	2,339,511	25,709	493
Pennsylvania	46,055	87	2,906,215	33,405	529

Table 2: States with the highest density of telegraph offices per square mile.

In addition to Delaware and Vermont, Rhode Island voted for the Republican Party by large margins in both the 1856 (58%) and 1860 (61%) elections. Ohio improved moderately from 48%-52% between 1856 and 1860. That improvement, however, made the difference between miniority and majority status. Pennsylvania, however, represents the second-largest shift toward the Republican Party between 1856 and 1860. In 1856, John C. Fremont received a mere 34% of the total votes cast in Pennsylvania. In 1860, Lincoln received 55% of the total votes cast in Pennsylvania, an impressive 21% increase. Delaware's increase was only a single percentage point more than the increase in Pennsylvania. The next-biggest shift came in New Jersey. Fremont had only carried 29% of the vote in New Jersey where Lincoln captured 48% in 1860, a nother impressive 19% shift toward the Republican Party. There were also double-digit increases in Illinois and Indiana. Fremont had received 40% of the total votes cast in both Illinois and Indiana where Lincoln received 51% in both, an increase of 11% in each state. Figure 23 below shows a "heat" map of the telegraph office locations. The "hot spots" for telegraph office locations in the United States clearly shows a higher coverage for the same general vicinities mentioned above. One of the hot spots is in New England where Lincoln outright won the highest amount of support per the total votes cast, one is in the Pennsylvania/Delaware/New Jersey corridor where Lincoln improved the most significantly between 1856 and 1860, and the other is in the midwestern areas of Ohio/Indiana/Illinois where Lincoln

made impressive gains needed to win in 1860.

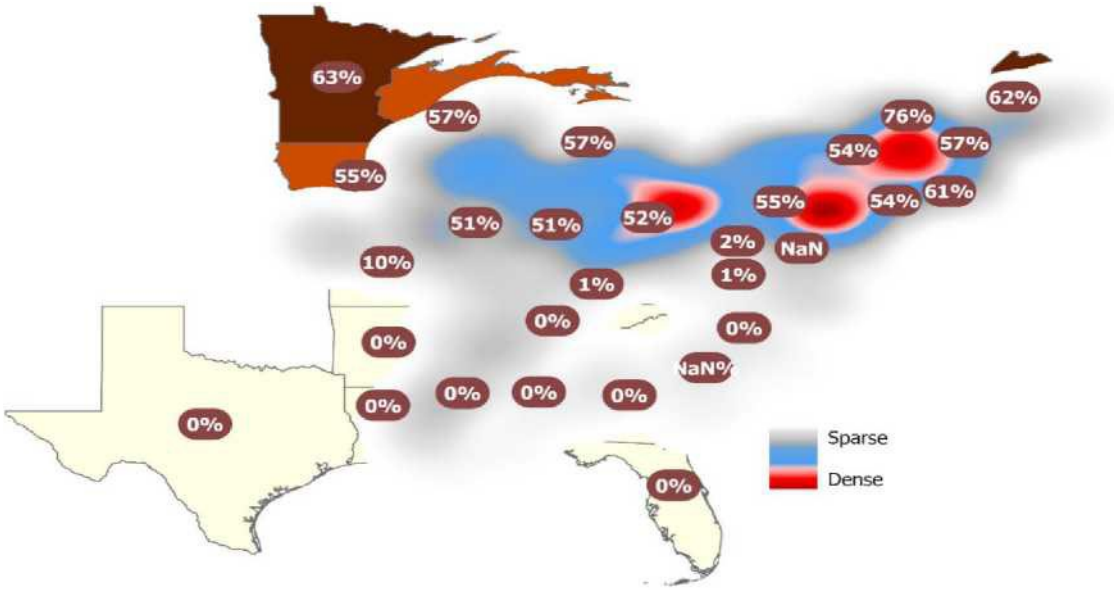


Figure 27: Heat map of telegraph offices showing the hot spots of New England, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, and the Midwest as "hot spots" for telegraph offices.

Pennsylvania's 21% swing materialize predominantly in the counties outfitted with the most telegraph offices. Figures 28 and 29 below illustrate county-level maps of Pennsylvania showing the 1856 and 1860 elections allowing for side-by-side comparison. Fremont clearly won the western Pennsylvania counties of Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, and Butler. Bradford County is the ony other place Fremont won a majority.

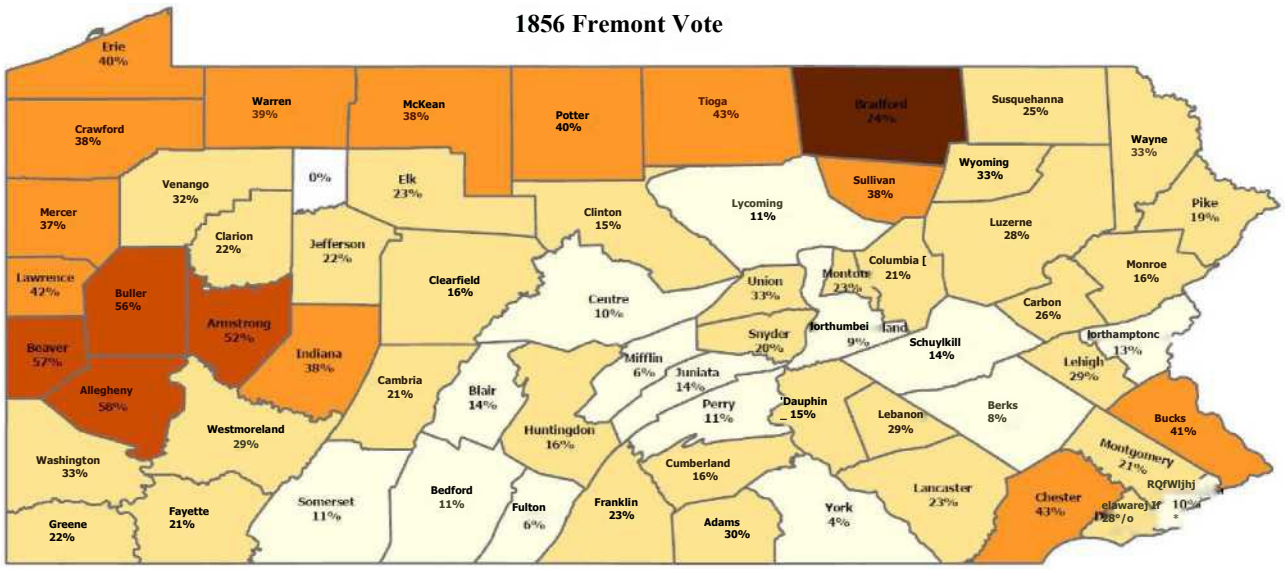


Figure 28: Pennsylvania counties and the John C. Fremont popular vote in 1856.

The most pronounced difference between 1856 and 1860 in Pennsylvania came in the center of the state.

Counties like Perry and Lycoming counties, for example, both witnessed 46% swings.

Central Pennysylvania experienced the most pronounced shift toward the Republican Party.

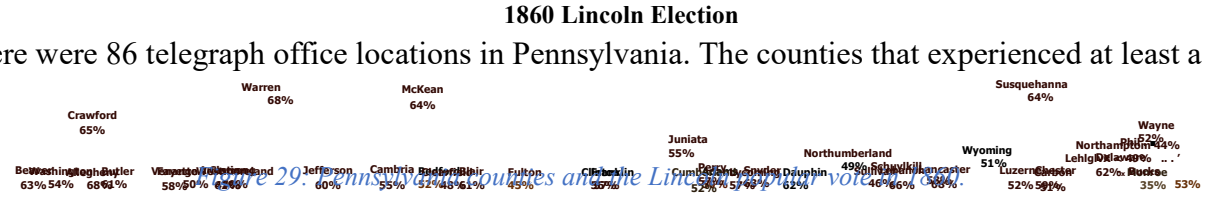


Figure 29: Pennsylvania counties and the Lincoln popular vote in 1860.

shift toward the Republican Party between 1856 and 1860 contained 34 of those telegraph office locations. The counties that shifted by at least a 40% margin, therefore, contained approximately 40% of the telegraph office locations. Figure 30 below shows the counties in Pennsylvania that experience at least a 40% shift toward the Republican Party between 1856 and 1860 along with the telegraph office locations in the state of Pennsylvania.

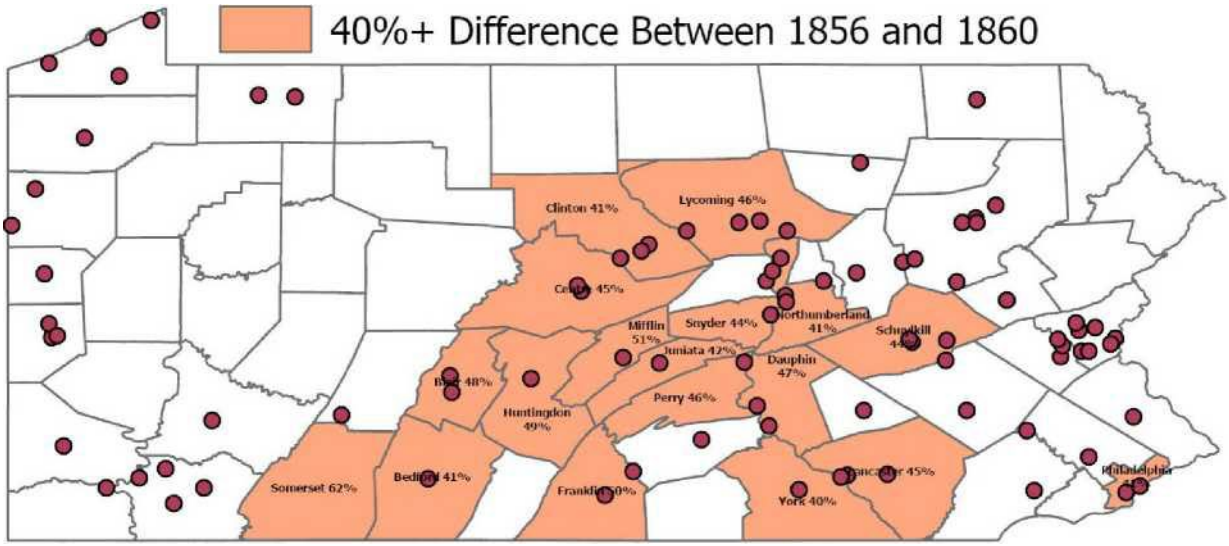


Figure 30: Counties in Pennsylvania that shifted at least 40% in favor of the Republican Party between 1856 and 1860.

Counties that experienced at least a thirty-percentage-point swing toward the Republican Party contained 55 telegraph locations, or 64% of the telegraph offices in Pennsylvania. Below is a map of the counties that swung toward the Republican Party by at least thirty points along with a "heat" map of the telegraph office locations in Pennsylvania:

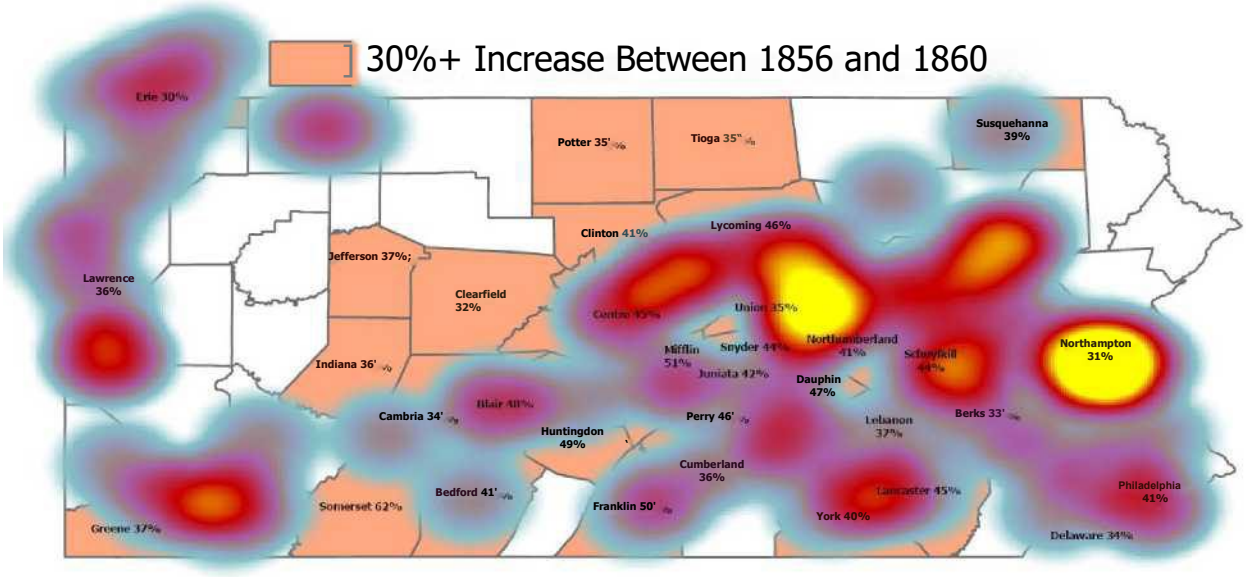


Figure 31: Counties in Pennsylvania that shifted at least 30% toward the Republican Party between 1856 and 1860 along with a heat map of the telegraph offices.

The most remarkable shift toward the Republican Party in Pennsylvania came from Somerset County. Somerset County provided John C. Fremont with 11% of the popular vote in 1856. Abraham Lincoln, by contrast, received 73%, a remarkalbe 62% shift toward the Republican Party. Though Somerset County did not have a telegraph office specifically within its boundaries, every county bordering Somerset County had telegraph locations, including Fayette County with four telegraph offices, placing Somerset County well within an area where information could have easily flowed into and out of the county. Figure 32 below shows Somerset County and the adjoining counties along with the telegraph offices in those counties.

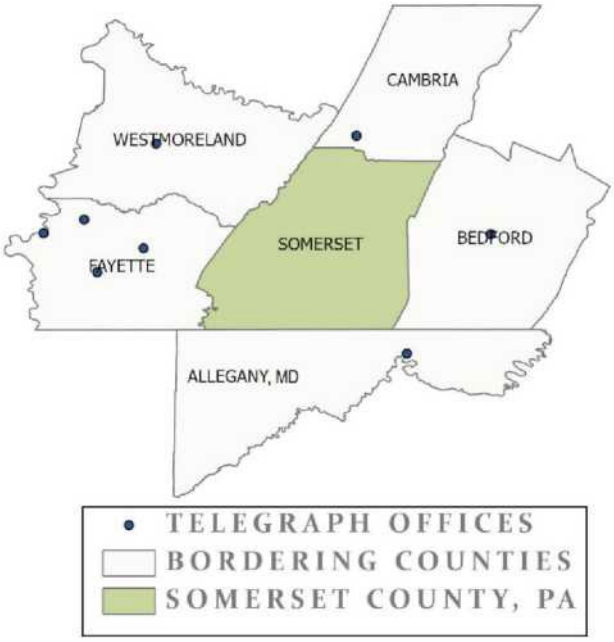


Figure 32: Somerset County, PA along with the adjoining counties and their telegraph offices.

Faytette and Cambria counties in Pennsylvania along with Allegany County, Maryland had a telegraph office within the 15-mile "day of travel" radius of Somerset County. (See Figure 29).

Taken as a whole, Somerset County had a total of eight telegraph offices within a two-day travel distance.

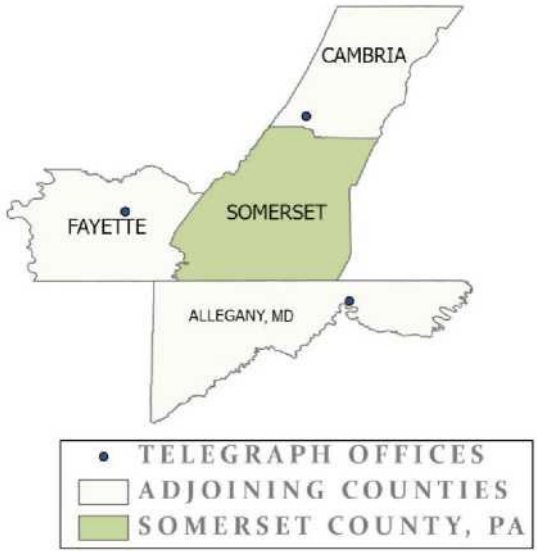
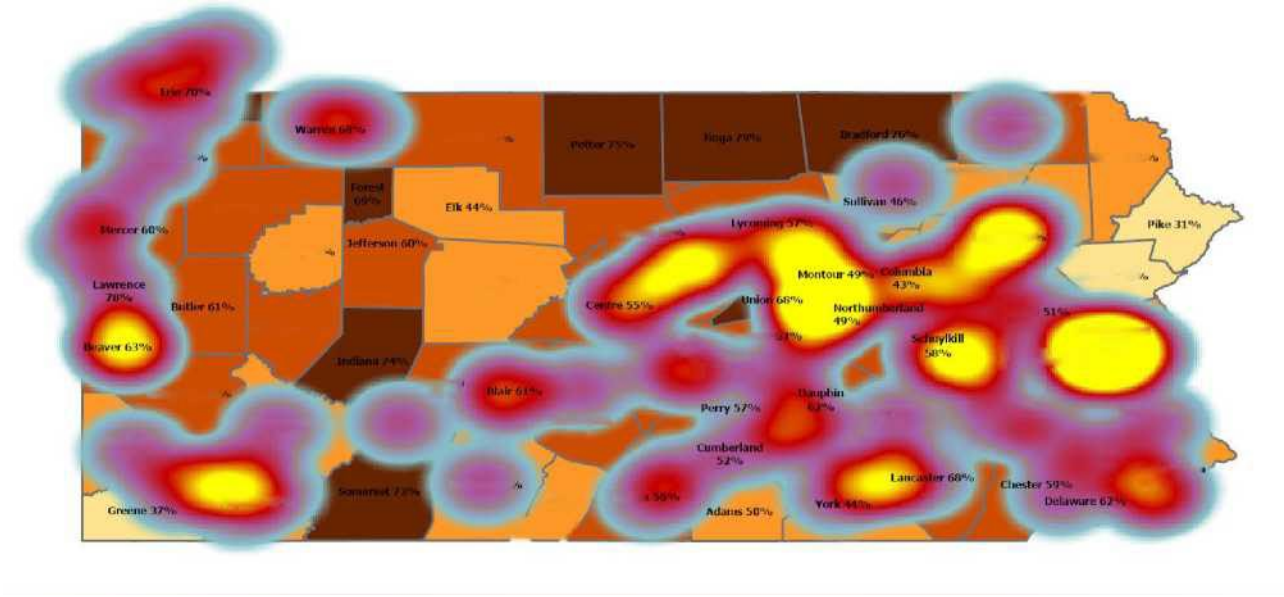


Figure 33: Somerset County, PA and the adjoining telegraph offices within a "day's travel" distance of fifteen miles.

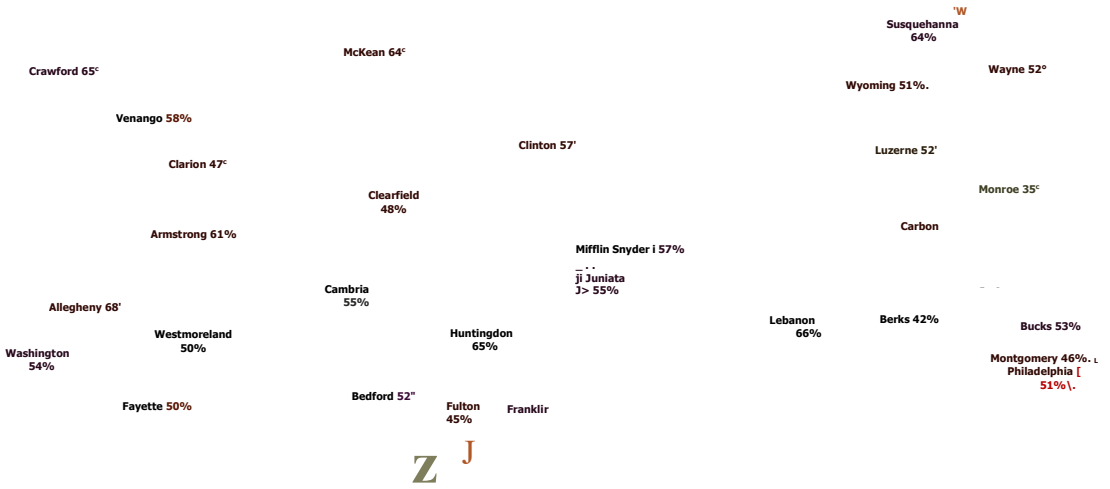
Mifflin County represented the second-higest turn toward the Republican Party in Pennsylvania between 1856 and 1860. In 1856, Mifflin County provided 6% of the total votes cast for John C. Fremont while Abraham Lincoln carried 57% of the total votes cast in that county in 1860, an increase of 51%

support for the Republican Party. Northumberland County also shifted significantly toward the Republican Party. Northumberland County provided 9% of the popular vote for John C. Fremont in 1856 but 49%



support for Abraham Lincoln in 1860, a 40% increase for the Republican Party.

All of the counties in Pennsylvania and Delaware where the largest shift toward the Republican



Party occurred represent a swath of counties saturated with telegraph offices. This trend held true even on

Figure 34: Pennsylvania vote for Lincoln in 1860 along with a heat map of telegraph offices.

the national level. The states with the highest number of telegraph office locations were New York (93), Ohio (91), Pennsylvania (87), Illinois (42), and Indiana (40). With the exception of Ohio (which only

increased by 4%), those same states witnessed the most significant shift toward the Republican party between 1856 and 1860. That information coupled with the fact that Vermont and Delaware represent the highest density of telegraph offices per square mile and the highest density per population with Vermont providing the hightest popular vote for Lincoln and Delaware providing the highest shift toward the Republican Party between 1856 and 1860, suggests telegrapy and support for the Republican Party were connected at some level. The general conclusion that can be drawn from the sample taken here is that a high density of telegraph offices translated into support for the Republican Party. It can also be said the most dramatic shift in voter support for the Republican Party between 1856 and 1860 came in states and counties that had the most telegraph office locations.

Telegraphy and Secession

The Non-Pervasive Southern Telegraph System

The notable place Lincoln could not connect with voters was in the South. The lack of a pervasive telegraph network prevented Lincoln and other Republicans from communicating the nuances of the Republican Party's platform to the southern population in 1860. That had major ramifications because most southerners believed the Republican Party was a radical organization that had plans to wage war against the South to end slavery. Even in the North, Lincoln had an uphill battle to clearly define himself as a moderate within the Republican Party. He had to convince the voting public he *only* opposed the *spread* of slavery and not slavery's abolition. He was able to accomplish that in the North via the telegraph-powered newspaper press. The South's lack of a pervasive telegraph network meant Lincoln would have only been able to reach a small portion of the South's population directly. In order to make the nuanced arguments he did, direct exposure to the population would have been absolutely critical. The Democratic Party's platform in the South was very straightforward and there was little need for a nuanced explanation; slavery is a “positive good” and its extension into the west a net plus for the nation.

Lincoln had to explain the relatively new position about slavery and the territories in a way that

broke with the historical precedent of slavery's expansion. Slavery had been a staple in American society since the founding of the republic and southerners had been arguing for its expansion since at least 1820 when the Missouri Compromise divided the lands of Louisiana Purchase. The straightforward nature of the Democratic Party's platform along with its deep historical roots meant Lincoln and the Republicans would have to explain their position in order convert voters to their program. Except for the House Divided speech, Lincoln had always said he opposed slavery's expansion into the west but did not oppose slavery itself. He had said in his Cooper Union Address in February 1860, "Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation."[187] Lincoln, however, had also said he opposed the expansion of slavery into the western territories was because "I cannot but hate...the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world—enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites."[188] Lincoln, therefore, had to explain—even to northerners—how he could view slavery to be such an abhorrent and immoral institution that the mere extension of it into the western territories would taint the entire nation and its influence abroad but then say he could accept the existence of slavery in the South in perpetuity.

To make such a clear demarcation between himself and abolitionists in the North, Eric Foner said Lincoln and his surrogates "engaged in an extensive propaganda campaign."[189] A "propaganda campaign" in 1860 meant extensive engagement with the telegraph-powered newspaper press. Lincoln fully understood he could not engage southerners in such a campaign so he had chosen not to campaign there. By doing that, he ceded the message to proslavery southerners who almost always characterized the Republican Party as the "Black Republican Party" to denote the party's affiliation with abolitionism. When Lincoln won the election in 1860, it became painfully obvious most southerners had not been exposed to

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187 Quoted in T.C. Mackey, *A Documentary History of the American Civil War Era: Volume 2, Political Arguments.* "Lincoln, Cooper Union Speech, February 27, 1860," (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2013), 29-44.

188 J.B. McClure, ed., *Abraham Lincoln's Speeches Complete*, 92.

189 Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men,* 93.

the nuances of Lincoln's position on slavery. Had Lincoln engaged in a southern campaign, he may have been able to at least blunt the calls for secession and civil war. It is also possible—as Lincoln himself calculated— he may have lost the election.

The South's telegraph network covered less than half the geographic area of the North's. The counties in the South with telegraph office locations along with the adjoining counties within fifteen miles of a telegraph office (a day's travel) represented a total of 241 counties and a total land area of 153,002 square miles. Figure 35 below shows the southern counties outfitted with a telegraph office along with the counties within a day's travel of a telegraph office.

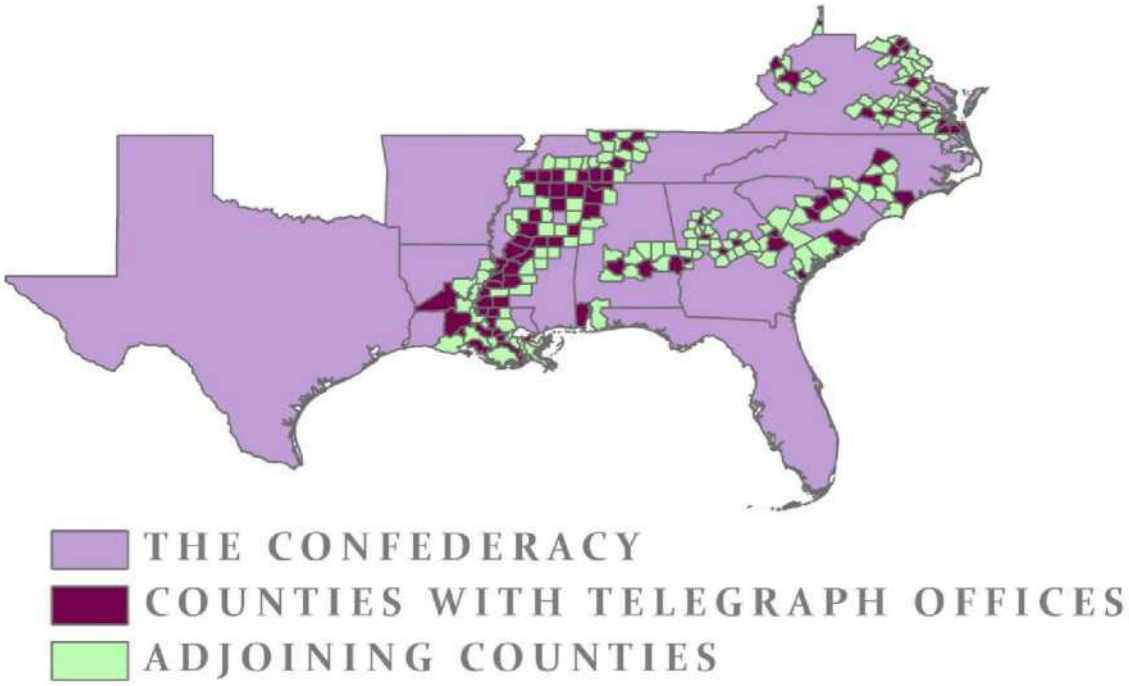
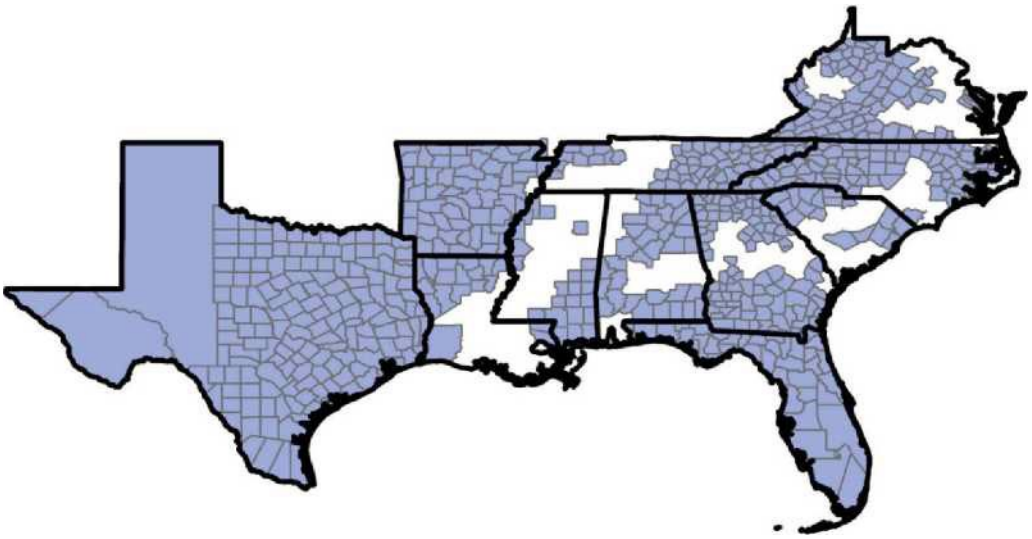


Figure 35: Southern counties within a day's reach of the South's telegraph offices.

The entire states of Texas, Arkansas, and Florida were completely devoid of any electronic communication. Large sections of other states also lacked a telegraphic communication system. Much of Middle and East Tennessee, western North Carolina, southeastern Virginia, northeastern Alabama, and South Georgia were simply not accessible via telegraphy. There may have been trains, canals, or roads that allowed information to eventually reach those areas but it most likely would not have happened within a day's time. Those areas certainly could not be reached in the same manner—and thus as thoroughly engaged by a political candidate—as areas in the North where the *Associated Press* and its telegraphic

reporting apparatus spread news and campaign information almost everywhere immediately.

It is also instructive to view the areas in the South not accessible within a day's travel to a telegraph office. The South had an area of 612,706 square miles outside the 15-mile radius of a telegraph office. Figure 36 below shows the areas in the former Confederacy not accessible by telegraph within a day's time.



□ AREAS ACCESSIBLE WITHIN A DAY'S TIME □□AREAS NOT ACCESSIBLE WITHIN A DAY'S TIME

Figure 36: Areas in the South not accessible within a day's travel of a telegraph office.

The North, by contrast, had an area of 225,207 not accessible within a day's travel of a telegraph office (See Figure 30 below). The inaccessible area of the South, in other words, was approximately 3 times that of the North. It is also worth pointing out that the state of Minnesota, which had an area of 86,935 square miles, was brand new at the time of the 1860 election. Minnesota had been added as a state in May of 1858 and, therefore, had only been in the Union for just over two years when the election of 1860 was held in November 1860.

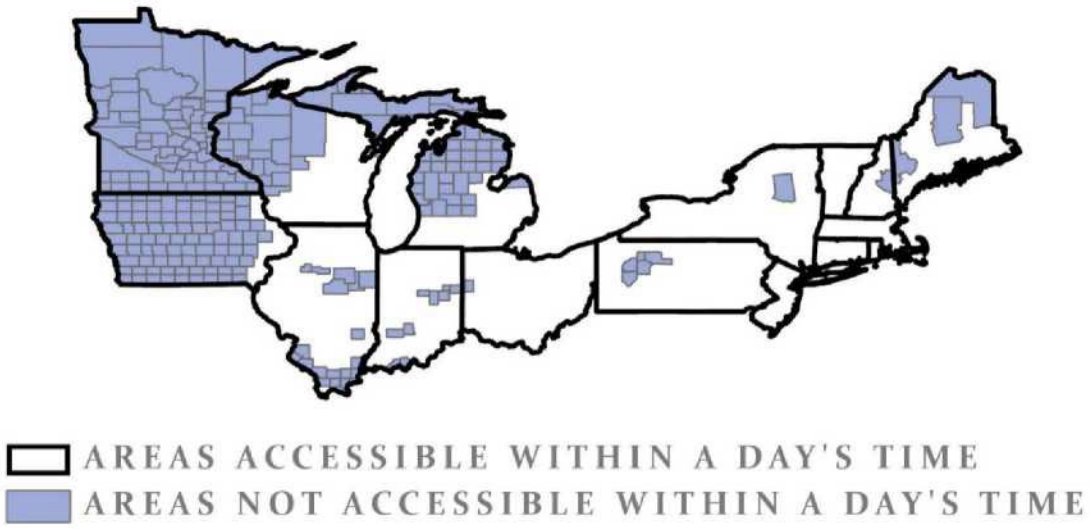


Figure 37: Areas in the North not accessible within a day's travel from a telegraph office.

If the area of Minnesota is factored out of the square mileage of the North (because the state was so new at the time), the area of the North not covered within a day's travel from a telegraph office is reduced to 138,272. The Confederacy's 612,706 represents almost five times the inaccessible area of the North. The South did not have any new states at the time of the 1860 election. The last southern state added was Texas in December of 1845.

Even in the Border States of Missouri, Kentucky, and Maryland where John Bell won on a pro-Union platform, Lincoln decided to forego a campaign because he did not think he would able to reach the population in those areas. It is clear from Figure 31 he most likely calculated correctly. Figure 39 shows the counties in the Border States that had telegraph offices.

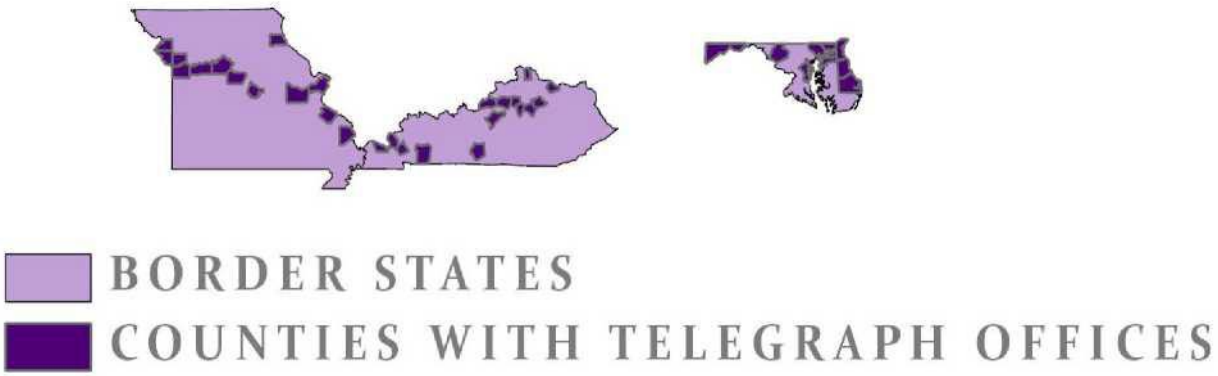
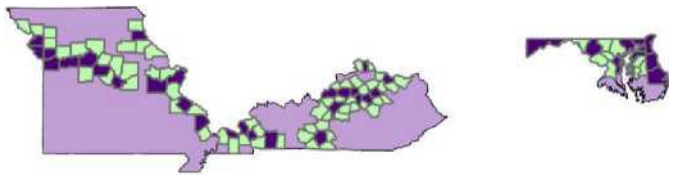


Figure 38: Border State counties with telegraph offices.

The Border State counties with telegraph offices and the counties within a fifteen-mile radius of a telegraph office are illustrated below in Figure 36. Southern Missouri and southern Maryland along with eastern Kentucky and parts of western Kentucky would not have been reachable within a day's time.



^COUNTIES WITH TELEGRAPH OFFICES ^COUNTIES WITHIN 15 MILES OF TELEGRAPH OFFICE O BORDER STATES

Figure 39: Border State counties with telegraph offices and counties within a ffteen-mile radius of a telegraph office.

Even Mississippi, the southern state with the most telegraph offices, did not represent the kind of telegraph network present in most of the northern states. As Lincoln sought to build a network capable of convincing the public to vote for him and his platform, sending physical representatives all across the Deep South, the Border States of Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, and even Virginia, along with devoting the resources needed to effectively seek out those voters in the South would almost surely have distracted from shoring up the voters Lincoln desperately needed in places like southern Illinois and Indiana, Pennsylvania, and New York. Lincoln, therefore, decided to "concentrate his campaign on the Northern states, especially those near the Great Lakes" because he could court friendly newspaper editors and

circulate information to fewer newspapers and then let other Republican-friendly newspapers pick up the stories to in order to amplify the campaign's message across the North. When he won the election in a totally sectional vote, however, it created a panic among the southern population precisely because southern voters did not understand the nuances of Lincoln's position on slavery.

The Inability to Connect with Southerners

The day after Lincoln's election on November 06, 1860 noted Civil War diarist Mary Boykin Chestnut said she was on the streets of Charleston, South Carolina when an associate "touched me on the shoulder.. .and said: 'Lincoln's elected.'" Because the presidential election had literally been held the previous day, Chestnut naturally asked, "How do you know?" It had always taken days or even weeks for enough poll counts to circulate widely enough that an overall tally could be made and a winner declared with any degree of certainty. In 1840, for example, fully seven days after the polls had closed all the *Charleston Mercury* could report was that "in the present state of our information, we can scarcely form any satisfactory opinion.we are apprehensive of the result of the present election, one way or the other."[190] In 1860, as Chestnut stood there on the street in Charleston, her associate pointed and said, "The man over there has a telegram." By 1860, the telegraphic reporting apparatus of the *Associated Press* had become so efficient that Lincoln's victory had been declared in less than a day. Chestnut said almost immediately "the excitement was very great.. .everybody was talking at the same time." She said, "One [man]. stood up and said despondently, 'The die is cast; no more vain regrets; sad forebodings are useless; the stakes are life and death."[191]

The *Charleston Mercury* also reported the next day (November 07), "There was great excitement in the neighborhood of the newspaper offices and the telegraph office last night (election day)—a large

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190 Robert Barnwell Rhett, Jr., "The Presidential Election - Astounding Intelligence and Astounding Excitement," *The Charleston Mercury,* November 10, 1840, 10 Nov 1840, 2 - The Charleston Mercury at Newspapers.com.

191 Isabella Martin, Myrta Avery, ed. *A Diary From Dixie as Written by Mary Boykin Chestnut.* (Glouster: D. Appleton and Co., 1905), 1.

number of enthusiastic gentlemen having congregated, anxiously awaiting the result of the presidential election." The article continued, "From early evening on Tuesday (election day), until two o'clock the next morning, the *Mercury* office was crowded with anxious expectants of the news from New York."[192] The *Associated Press* confirmed the news of Lincoln's election for the *Charleston Mercury* the very day the election had been held. The report confirming Lincoln's election in the *Mercury* said, "The agent of the *Associated Press* telegraphed that Lincoln's election was certain, and that trifling details are unnecessary."[193] The *Wisconsin State Journal* said in its edition that day, "At a quarter past three o'clock this morning the telegraph announced that the great Empire State of New York.had declared for Abraham Lincoln."[194] Presumably, this was approximately the time word would have reached the *Charleston Mercury* office because both dispatches came from the same source. They both announced that New York had gone for Lincoln, thus, confirming the Republican victory.

Southerners had good reason to be concerned. Southerners and northerners alike understood the Republican victory in 1860 to be a triumph over the political power of southern slave owners. A great many northerners thought slave owners viewed themselves as "public stipendiaries who.. .regard the spoils of government as their hereditary possession." An editor for the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* in New York said southerners really had not cared about popular sovereignty because they intended to promote slavery regardless of any popular votes. The paper ran an article saying slave holders "considered any outside interference as an impertinence, and instead of demeaning themselves as public servants, amenable to their employers, lorded it after the manner of the inheritors of the sacred prerogative of divine right."[195] Charles Francis Adams, son of former President John Quincy Adams and grandson of John Adams, believed

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192 Robert Barnwell Rhett, Jr., "The News of Lincoln's Election," *The Charleston Mercury,* November 08, 1860, 08 Nov 1860, 1 - The Charleston Mercury at Newspapers.com.

193 Robert Barnwell Rhett, Jr., "The Presidential Election," *The Charleston Mercury,* November 07, 1860, 07 Nov 1860, 2 - The Charleston Mercury at Newspapers.com.

194 Atwood, Rublee, & Reed, "Abraham Lincoln. The President-Elect," *Wisconsin State Journal,* November 07, 1860, 07 Nov 1860, 1 - Wisconsin State Journal at Newspapers.com.

195 I. Van Anden, "The Republican Triumph and its Causes," *The Brooklyn Daily Edge,* November 07, 1860, 07 Nov 1860, Page 2 - The Brooklyn Daily Eagle at Newspapers.com.

Lincoln's election represented a "great revolution.[because] the country has once and for all thrown off the domination of the Slaveholders."[196] As is evidenced by the reaction on the streets of Charleston and the secession movement that followed, southerners interpreted Lincoln's victory to represent a Republican triumph over slavery but the situation took on a very powerful urgency in the South.

Southerners, however, viewed Lincoln as a radical who, as commander-in-chief, intended to call on the army to lead a charge into the South to end slavery. Lincoln may have even inadvertently contributed to that perception. Lincoln had framed his House Divided speech, for example, in terms that suggested slavery had to be defeated entirely lest the entire northern population become enslaved. When Lincoln delivered the House Divided speech, David Donald said it "sounded very radical" and, indeed, "was the most extreme statement made by any responsible leader of the Republican Party."[197] This speech characterized the issue of slavery as more than just a dispute over slavery's limitations in the western territories. Lincoln said very clearly, "Either the opponents of slavery, will arrest the further spread of it.or its advocates will push it forward until it shall become alike lawful in *all* the states, old as well as new—North as well as South."[198] The implication was very clear; the issue of slavery is an all-or-nothing, zero-sum game. Either northerners unite themselves behind the Republican Party in for a complete defeat of the southern slave system or prepare to submit to slavery themselves. Five months later, however, William Seward said the issue of slavery was leading to an "irrepressible conflict" because "the principle of the [slave] system is, that labor in every society, by whomsoever performed, is necessarily unintellectual, groveling and base; and that the laborer, equally for his own good and for the welfare of the state, out to be enslaved." Seward said outright, "The white laboring man.is not enslaved, only because he cannot, as yet, be reduced to bondage."[199] For a great many southerners, they had not been exposed to Lincoln nor

196 Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 223.

197 Donald. *Lincoln,* 209.

198 Quoted in Mackey, *Documentary History of the American Civil War Era,* "Lincoln, House Divided Speech, June 16, 1858," 19-26. '

199 William Seward, "Irrepressible Conflict" speech quoted in William Jennings Bryan, *The World's Famous Orations,* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1906), 177-185.

Seward enough to distinguish between the two. "Irrepressible conflict" sounded like a Republican president might commandeer the army to as a means of ending slavery in the United States.

Lincoln's and Seward's speeches were delivered after the Supreme Court had handed down the *Dred Scott vs. Sanford* decision declaring limitations on slavery in the territories to be unlawful. Eric Foner said, "Republicans did not generally adopt the argument that there was danger of slavery spreading to the North until after the *Dred Scott* decision of 1857." The *Dred Scott* case had alarmed a great many northerners because they believed "the logic of *Dred Scott* [was that] slavery could not be barred from a state."[200] James McPherson said, "The New York legislature denounced the [*Dred* Scott] doctrine that 'a master may take his slave into a Free State without dissolving the relation of master and slave" saying this "will bring slavery within our borders, against our will."[201] It is no doubt true the content of the *Dred Scott* case alarmed many northerners. It should be pointed out, however, the last of the major telegraph consolidations had just been executed in 1857—the same year the Supreme Court handed down the *Dred Scott* ruling. The Treaty of the Six Nations had been signed in 1857 and the North American Telegraph Association emerged in 1858 that included the Canadian telegraph companies streamlining the flow of foreign news into the United States via Nova Scotia. In light of the situation in 1848 when the Democratic and Whig political realignments surfaced just as the *Associated Press* first emerged, the collapse of the Whig party along with the emergence of the Republican Party between 1852 and 1854 just as the organization of the American Telegraph Federation emerged, it does not seem to be a mere coincidence that the slavery debates became more potent and more nationalized with each development in the telegraph network. In that context, it seems plausible to suggest that in 1858 in the aftermath of the *Dred Scott* case and the emergence of the North American Telegraph Association, the national newspaper press and its ability to report more efficiently on the subject may have contributed as much to the nationalization of the

200 Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men,* 97.
201 McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 180.

issues as the content of the case itself.

The general consensus among historians is that the *Dred Scott* case nationalized the issue of slavery. By the Supreme Court making it illegal to outlaw slavery in the west, many northerners—including Lincoln himself—thought it was only a matter of time before a similar ruling made it illegal to outlaw slavery in an existing state. Northerners, therefore, felt there was little they could do to eliminate the appearance of slavery in the northern free states except to vote for Republicans like Lincoln who promised to use federal power to limit the political power wielded by those who sought to extend slavery. In the House Divided speech, Lincoln said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free. It will become *all* one thing or *all* the other."[202] By framing the argument that way, Lincoln had essentially said there simply was not enough room in the "house" for both slavery and freedom. Lincoln argued, "Unless the power of the present political dynasty shall be met and overthrown, we shall lie down pleasantly dreaming that the people of Missouri are on the verge of making their state free; and we shall awake to the reality, instead, that the Supreme Court has made Illinois a slave state." He firmly believed that by declaring limits on slavery unconstitutional, the Supreme Court had made it possible to extend slavery not just into the western territories but into the North where slavery had never existed. He also knew such a statement, while not advocating the abolition of slavery, would appeal to northerners who felt threatened by the expansion of slavery.

The House Divided speech had been devised to strategically position Lincoln within the Republican Party. David Donald argued, "Its purpose was clear: to show Republicans, both in Illinois and the East, that [Stephen] Douglas could not be trusted and must be defeated."[203] Douglas had been too eager to compromise with the proslavery during the Kansas-Nebraska negotiations and that had resulted in the

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202 Quoted in Mackey, *Documentary History of the American Civil War Era,* "Lincoln, House Divided Speech, June 16, 1858," 19-26. '

203 Donald, *Lincoln,* 209.

repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Since the repeal of the Missouri Compromise had removed all restrictions on slavery's expansion, northerners had been concerned about slavery expanding not just into the west but into the free states. The *Green Mountain Freeman* said just after the Missouri Compromise had been repealed in 1854, "Several southern planters are now at the North looking out for the purchase of summer residences on the Hudson or other desirable locations in New England in confident anticipation (founded on the success of the slave party in the triumph of the Nebraska outrage) of the legalization of slavery in the Free States."[204] Lincoln's House Divided speech was designed to address the political forces propelling the expansion of slavery. Lincoln said, "To meet and overthrow the power of that dynasty, is the work now before all those who would prevent that consummation."[205] Where Seward's speech couched the issue of slavery in terms of "conflict," Lincoln had focused exclusively on taking on the proslavery political establishment.

The nuances of the Republican Party platform and the different players within the Republican Party were lost on southerners as news reached Charleston that Lincoln had been elected. Southerners simply knew Lincoln belonged to the Republican Party and thought the Republicans viewed slavery as immoral and that they had couched the issue of slavery in terms of an "irrepressible conflict." It is true "the new [Republican] party was fueled by the hundreds of antislavery societies, the abolitionist movement, and the publication of numerous antislavery books, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*."[206] There is also little doubt that, as James Oakes pointed out in *The Scorpion's Sting,* the Republican Party had warned southern leaders that federal powers could be used to end slavery in the event of war. Lincoln, however, never proposed leading a military charge into the South to end slavery. Even Seward never proposed such an action. Seward simply thought the conflict over slavery was

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204 D.P. Thompson, "The Next Step Already in Progress," *Green Mountain Freeman,* June 01, 1854, 01 Jun 1854, 2 - Green-Mountain Freeman at Newspapers.com.

205 "Lincoln, House Divided Speech, June 16, 1858," quoted in Mackey, *Documentary History of the American Civil War Era*19-26.

206 Chadwick, *Lincoln for President, xiii.*

progressing toward an inevitable conflict. Even the most radical Republicans like Thaddeus Stephens firmly "endorsed the federal consensus.that the national government had no power under the Constitution to abolish slavery in a state where it already existed."[207] Stephens had said, and most Republicans agreed, "We claim no right to interfere with the institutions of foreign nations, or with the institutions of the sister States of this Republic."[208] As recently as February 1860, Lincoln himself said, "[Thomas] Jefferson did not mean to say, nor do I, that the power of emancipation is in the federal government."[209] Even though international governments had not hesitated to adopt policies of emancipation, even the most radical Republicans in 1860 had conceded the American federal government did not have the power to end slavery in the United States.

Like northerners when the town of Lawrence, Kansas had been attacked, southerners reacted very emotionally when news of Lincoln's election reached Charleston dramatically exacerbating the situation. One of the unfortunate effects of instant communication was that "the telegraph encouraged instant reaction."[210] State Department historian David Paull Nickles said "instant reaction" almost always meant emotional reaction. Nickles argued, "Emotional reactions to dramatic events makes compromise more difficult in the aftermath of a crisis." He said, "The adoption of telegraphy by diplomats.invited more emotional and less creative decisions on the part of statesmen." Nickles specifically examined international disputes and noted that one of the defining characteristics of diplomacy by telegraph "was the rapid speed at which international disputes.could escalate." When the U.S. Navy intercepted the British mail ship *RMS Trent* in November 1861, for example, both Great Britain and the United States sought to slow—or even completely stop—communication between their respective capitals. The American ship discovered two

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207 James Oakes, *The Scorpion's Sting: Antislavery and the Coming of the Civil War* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2014), 24.

208 Oakes, James. *Scorpion's Sting: Antislavery and the Coming of the Civil War.* New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2014. p, 22.

209 "Lincoln, Cooper Union Speech, February 27, 1860," quoted in Mackey, *A Documentary History of the American Civil War Era,* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2013), 29-44.

210 Standage, *The Victorian Internet,* 157.

Confederate envoys on board the British ship attempting to evade the U.S. naval blockade. It was clear the British were intentionally smuggling the Confederates through the Union's naval blockade. Secretary of State William Seward "believed that slowing down the crisis facilitated his diplomacy."[211] His British counterpart also "believed delay gave Americans time to weigh the dangers of war with Britain." Both sides agreed that "delays in diplomacy.. .provided time for tempers to cool and peacemakers to go about their work."[212] At the time, there was no transatlantic telegraph cable so communication relied on steam ships.

Misinformation During the 1860 Campaign

Many southerners believed the new president secretly intended to wage a John-Brownstyle-war on the South. John Brown's raid on the arsenal at Harper's Ferry, Virginia in October 1859 and the subsequent newspaper reports about the incident had sent shockwaves across the South. Brown led the raid on October 16, 1859 and news of it reached as far away as Burlington, VT the next day. On October 17, the *Burlington Free Press* reported, "A dispatch just received from Frederick, MD dated this morning states that an insurrection has broken out at Harper's Ferry where an armed band of abolitionists have full possession of the government arsenal."[213] A quick search of www.newspapers.com shows a keyword search of "Harper's Ferry" shows nine matches in New York, two matches in Massachusetts, and one match in Connecticut, Indiana, Maryland,

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211 Quotes from Nickles, *Under the Wire,* LOC 82, LOC 838, and LOC 2208. Nickles noted that messages took approximately one month to traverse the Atlantic Ocean. There was no functioning transatlantic cable in late 1861 when the *Trent* affair played out. The first transatlantic cable had been completed in 1858. President James Buchanan had sent messages to Queen Victoria over that cable but the first transatlantic cable failed within three weeks of its completion because of issues with the gutta percha insulation. The permanent transatlantic telegraph cable was not completed until 1866.

212 Nickles, *Under the Wire,* LOC 956.

213 George W. and G.G. Benedict, "Excitement at Baltimore," *Burlington Free Press,* Monday October 17, 1859, 17 Oct 1859, Page 3 - The Burlington Free Press at Newspapers.com.

Virginia, and Vermont. Figure 40 below shows how the information appeared the day after the raid on Harper's Ferry (October 17) and how far that information spread the following day (October 18). The map on the left is an illustration of October 17, 1859 and the map on the right

is an illustration of October 18, 1859.

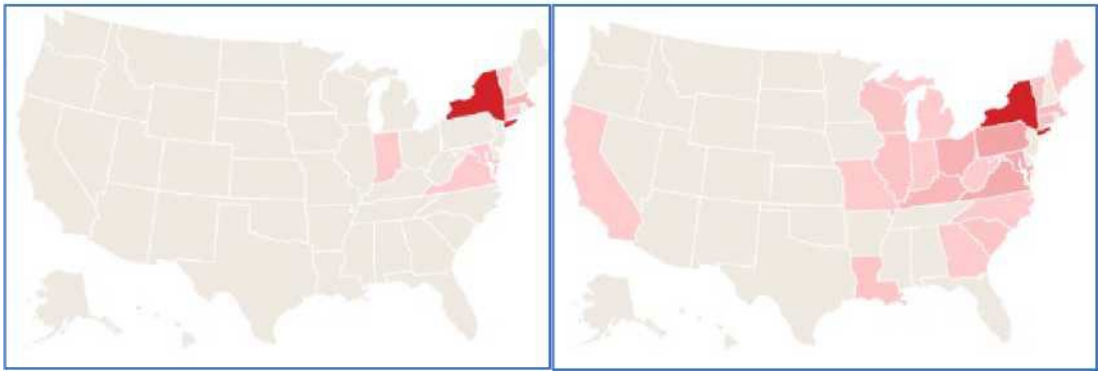

Figure 39: Illustration of where "Harper's Ferry" appeared in newspapers on October 17(left) & 18(right), 1859. It is worth noting on the maps above, New York had the most hits on both days largely because the *Associated Press* was located there and most of the telegraph companies had headquarters in New York. New York had 9 keyword matches for "Harper's Ferry" on Monday October 17, 1859, which was more than all the others combined. On Tuesday October 18, New York had 27 hits then Pennsylvania (7), then Maryland (6), Virginia (6), and Ohio (5).

When Lincoln won the election in 1860, southerners essentially equated him with John Brown, at least partially, because of the "irrepressible conflict" rhetoric associated with the Republican Party through William Seward. In their estimation, Lincoln's victory surely meant the irrepressible conflict was upon them. James McPherson said, "Several historians have compared the [South's] mood to the 'Great Fear' that seized the French countryside in the summer of 1789 when peasants believed that the 'King's brigands are coming' to slaughter them."[214] Five days prior to the election in 1860, the *New York Daily Herald* ran an article saying the Republican Party intended "to establish a reign of terror as terrible as the days of the French Revolution." It said, "The raid of John Brown at Harper's Ferry was but a small

[214] McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 212.

example of the atrocities that would be perpetrated everywhere on this continent if this party be allowed to come into power."[215] The day before the election, the *Vicksburg Weekly Citizen* carried a letter from the noted agriculturalist Charles Peabody saying that in late 1859 he had travelled to "the great northwestern den of abolitionism, and whilst there, the telegraph brought the startling news of the Harper's Ferry affair." Peabody said, "When news of the Virginia outbreak arrived, the abolition joy was intense."[216] A great many southerners, therefore, understood the Republican Party to represent an electorate that would rejoice with the onset of a military engagement.

Most of the southern population had been fed a steady diet of misinformation from their elected leaders with the proslavery newspaper press deliberately characterizing the Republican Party as a group of wild-eyed maniacs. As a result, when news started spreading on the streets of Charleston the day after the election, Mary Chestnut recorded the scene in her diary, saying she overheard people saying, "Now that the black radical Republicans have the power I suppose they will Brown us all."[217] Within a month, *DeBow's Review* proclaimed, "Doubtless, the factious leaders of the abolition party are sufficiently incendiary in inclination, to renew throughout the fair savannahs of the South the scenes of Harper's Ferry."[218] South Carolina's secession ordinance echoed that sentiment saying, "A sectional party.will take possession of the government.that has announced.that a war must be waged against slavery until it shall cease throughout the United States."[219] As Lincoln headed to Washington, D.C. in February 1861, he made a stop in Philadelphia where he gave a speech and tried to alleviate those fears. Lincoln said in Philadelphia, "In my view of the present aspect, there is no need of bloodshed and war. There is no necessity for it. I am not in favor of such a course, and I may say in advance, there will be no blood shed

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215 James Gordon Bennet, "Mob Violence of the Black Republicans," *New York Daily Herald,* November 01, 1860, 01 Nov 1860, 10 - New York Daily Herald at Newspapers.com.

216 J.P. Pryor, "Reasons for Supporting Douglas," *The Vicksburg Weekly Citizen,* November 05, 1860, 05 Nov 1860, Page 3 - The Vicksburg Weekly Citizen at Newspapers.com.

217 Martin and Avery, *A Diary From Dixie as Written by Mary Boykin Chestnut,* xxv.

218 J.B.D. DeBow, "Editorial Miscellany," *DeBow's Review,* 29, no. 6, Dec. 1860, 795-800.

219 Mackey, *Documentary History of the American Civil War Era,* "South Carolina Ordinance of Secession, December 20, 1860," 74-77.

unless it be forced upon the government." He specifically said, "You charge that we stir up insurrections among your slaves. We deny it; and what is your proof? Harper's Ferry! John Brown!!" Lincoln emphatically said, "John Brown was no Republican."[220]

Lincoln understood his election had generated a highly-emotionally reaction in the South. In his first inaugural address, delivered a little more than two weeks after the Philadelphia address, Lincoln cited "passion" as the catalyst for the secession movement. He said, "Though passion may have strained it must not break the bonds of our affection." He reassured southerners that "the government will not assail you. You can have not conflict without being yourselves the aggressors." He appealed to the "better angels of our nature" in hopes of calming the situation and averting a civil war. Lincoln knew southerners who had never even seen him give a campaign speech were calling for defensive measures to protect slavery in anticipation of the federal assault they were sure was coming. This situation exploded even though Lincoln—and even radical Republicans—were on record saying the federal government did not have the power to end slavery in the South and had certainly never suggested a John-Brown-style raid to do so. He reiterated in the first inaugural address, "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the states where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so."[221]

The immediate reporting of Lincoln's election in Charleston caused a shock in the city. In a complete reversal of the Kansas situation, it was the South now that "confronted decision makers with a more agitated public," thus, making political organization easier.[222] Charleston had historically been one of the few Deep South cities with significant access to news. Allan Pred said between about 1820 and 1840 "almost all of the Deep South had levels of news accessibility that did not measure up to half of New York's." The notable exceptions for this trend was in Charleston and New Orleans. Pred said, "Only the

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220 J.B. McClure, *Abraham Lincoln's Speeches Complete*, 315.

221 Mackey, *Documentary History of the American Civil War Era,* "First Inaugural, Abraham Lincoln, March 4, 1861," 237-246.

222 Nickles, *Under the Wire,* LOC 949.

vicinities of Charleston and New Orleans, where the daily press had established a firm foothold, could be characterized as islands of moderate accessibility in a sea of low accessibility."[223] Charleston also clearly had a telegraph office in 1860. Like most other cities in both North and South, however, information was typically filtered to the public through the local newspaper office. The *Charleston Mercury,* from which the initial reports about Lincoln's victory appeared to the public, was an ardently proslavery paper that quickly promoted secession in the wake of Lincoln's election.

Most newspapers in the United States during the decade of the 1850s were heavily biased. In fact, most "newspapers of the 1850s and 1860s were owned and run by opposing political parties."[224] They "were the organs of a political party, existing to propagate its point of view."[225] Robert Barnwell Rhett, who owned two large plantations and a great many slaves, also owned the *Charleston Mercury.* The paper was, therefore, ardently secessionists in its publication character. The night of Lincoln's election, the *Charleston Mercury* ran a report saying, "The greatest excitement prevailed, and the news spread with lightning rapidity over the city." The reporter seemed almost giddy that "the crowd gave expression to their feelings by long and continued cheering for a southern confederacy." The next day an editorial in the paper said, "The tea has been thrown overboard—the revolution of 1860 has been initiated." The *Mercury* report announcing Lincoln's election said "trifling details are unnecessary." When the goal is pushing a political agenda, "trifling details" can obscure the message. At the very least, the failure to report "trifling details" did not provide a complete understanding of the situation. All the residents of Charleston needed to know, according to the *Mercury* report, was that "in the election of Lincoln, emancipation and insurrection, or revolution is now before you... and soon will dawn upon you the great Southern Confederacy!"[226] Information could be forwarded to other locations via telegraph but it was then filtered

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223 Pred, 67.
224 Chadwick, *Lincoln for President,* 56.
225 Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 4.
226 All quotes from Robert Barnwell Rhett, Jr., "The News of Lincoln's Election" and "The Presidential Election," *The Charleston Mercury,* November 08, 1860, 08 Nov 1860, 1 - The Charleston Mercury at Newspapers.com.

through similarly biased newspapers. The *Alabama State Sentinel* in Selma, Alabama, for example, ran a report much like many others in the days following Lincoln's election saying, "It is well understood, that in no case, or under no circumstances, can a sectional Black Republican president rule the slave states."[227]

When news of Lincoln's victory was reported in Charleston it had immediate and very tangible effects. As panic swept the city, South Carolina Governor William Gist essentially had to defend some of the blustering speeches he had recently given in reference to the 1860 presidential election. Gist had had been calling for "the reorganization of the militia, and preparations for the defense of the state" in the event of Lincoln's election. The governor had given a speech to the South Carolina legislature saying, "In the event of the election of Abraham Lincoln to the

presidency.I respectfully recommend a thorough reorganization of the militia so as to place the whole military force of the state in a position to be used at the shortest notice."[228] When news arrived that Lincoln had won the election, Charlestonians and others in South Carolina looked to Governor Gist to defend them from the John-Brown radical Republican Party army that would surely be coming to invade the state. The governor was forced to either follow through with his bluster or be completely humiliated as Lincoln's election called his bluff. Secession came by December 20 and, of course, the Civil War began in South Carolina as the state militia attacked Fort Sumter, the federal fort in Charleston Harbor.

Secession materialized predominantly because southern leaders clearly recognized they were on the defensive and that a galvanized Republican Party represented an existential threat to slavery. South Carolina's secession ordinance very clearly stated the reason for secession was that "on the 4th day of March next, this [sectional] party will take possession of the government. It has announced.that a war must be waged against slavery until it shall cease throughout the United States."[229] Southern leaders understood

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227 John Hardy, "The Fearful Condition of the Country," *Alabama State Sentinel,* November 21, 1860, 21 Nov 1860, 1 - Alabama State Sentinel at Newspapers.com.

228 Lewis M. Grist, "Executive Department," *Yorkville Enquirer,* November 08, 1860, 08 Nov 1860, 2 - Yorkville Enquirer at Newspapers.com.

229 Mackey, *Documentary History of the American Civil War Era,* "South Carolina Ordinance of Secession, December 20, 1860," 74-77.

very well "the Republicans were a majority party in 1860 because of their opposition to slavery." Though many Republicans, including Abraham Lincoln, officially represented more moderate positions on slavery within the Republican Party, southerners did not pick up on the nuanced views of the party. Historians have pointed out, "The Republicans could couch their views on slavery in as moderate a fashion as they wanted, but everybody knew it was the single driving issue that brought their party into creation and made it strong."[230] There is no doubt about that, however, Lincoln nor any other serious Republican contender in 1860 called for a war against the South to end slavery. That idea arose directly from misinformation related to Seward's "irrepressible conflict" speech and the John Brown raid in 1859. With a better information infrastructure in the South, it may have been possible to draw sharper contrasts between the Republican Party and John Brown and between Lincoln and Seward among the southern population. Had that been the case, it is possible the calls for secession and civil war may not have carried the emotional punch they did.

Secession and the emergence of the Confederacy are sometimes cast in terms of "southern nationalism." Information flow in the South, however, can be more accurately described as an oligarchy. The few places that did have access to telegraphy were dominated by the southern proslavery newspaper press. If there was a nationalism that permeated the South during the secession crisis, it was the realization that the North had "enlisted its press.until the whole popular mind of the North is excited and inflamed with prejudice." This "prejudice" had coalesced into the Republican Party, which had "recently obtained control of the government.and destroyed the last expectation of living together in friendship and brotherhood."[231] Southerners, in other words, sought to defend the status quo of slavery. They never went on the offense with the idea of spreading a message designed to convince non-adherents to join the proslavery cause the way Republicans had done in the North. They simply intended to maintain the status

230 Quotes from Chadwick, *Lincoln for President,* Kindle, LOC 114 and LOC 177.

231 Timothy B. Smith, *The Mississippi Secession Convention: Delegates and Deliberations in Politics and War, 1861-1865* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2014), Appendix 3: Mississippi Ordinance of Secession, 227228.

quo by gunpoint if necessary.

Conclusion

The data collected for this research project suggests the emergence of telegraphy and the telegraphic newspaper reporting system in the North, symbolized by the *Associated Press* and its subscription service along with the uneven nature of the telegraph system in the United States at the time, dramatically accelerated the sectional conflict of the 1850s. The analysis of the Charles Barr map from 1853 provided in this dissertation clearly shows that by the time the Republican Party emerged in 1854, northerners had a dramatic advantage in the information war that exploded over slavery and territorial expansion. Historians have regularly acknowledged that "newspaper editorials both reflected and helped shape the outlook of politicians and voters."[232] As the newspaper press adopted telegraphy as the primary means of gathering and disseminating information, however, it completely redefined the nature and character of the news. The marriage of the newspaper press and the telegraph industry allowed Republican Party advocates like Salmon P. Chase, Charles Sumner, William Seward, and Abraham Lincoln to make speeches, campaign circulars, and other political information directly available to readers. The reaction of those readers allowed the politicians to then recalibrate their messages to fit the mood of the electorate. The size and scale of political organization that allowed the Republican Party to emerge in early 1854 would have been virtually impossible in the South because the region lacked a pervasive telegraph network.

Throughout most of the 19th century the newspaper press fostered a sense of national identity. Daniel Walker Howe argued, "Newspapers played an essential role in.fostering among the citizens a sense of American nationality beyond face-to-face politics of neighborhoods."[233] Benedict Anderson has also argued that by disseminating the same (or at least very similar) information through organizations like the

232 Quote from Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men,* 324.
233 Howe, 228.

Associated Press and its subscription service, populations begin to perceive themselves as part of an "imagined political community."[234] Anderson argued when one person reads a newspaper "and [then] at the same time, the newspaper reader, observing exact replicas of his own paper being consumed by his.neighbors, is continually assured that the imagined world is visibly rooted in everyday life." As information becomes ubiquitous, in other words, it more easily becomes accepted wisdom. Even if information is false, Anderson argued the mere act of exposing large amounts of people to the same information introduces a framework for understanding events or other developments—political or otherwise— laying the foundation for a common societal understanding of observed phenomena. False information, he said, simply becomes a "fiction [that] seeps quietly and continuously into reality, creating that remarkable confidence of community."[235]

By 1860, the idea of "community" literally described the character of the North. Population charts from the Census of 1860 show the North had approximately double the amount of people moving west as the South did.[236] The Census noted the high numbers saying, "From many of the older states, one-third to one-fourth of all the native-born have removed to other parts of the country." The states with the highest number of people leaving were Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee. The people who left Ohio settled predominantly in Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri. The people who left New York predominantly settled in Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Ohio. The people who left Pennsylvania predominantly moved to Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa. The people who left Tennessee predominantly moved to Missouri, Arkansas, Texas, and Illinois. In true Manifest Destiny form, the movement of people in the United States followed the paradigm of westward movement. The Census of 1860 clearly showed that people moving from the North moved to the Northwest and people moving from the South moved to

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234 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1983), 6.

235 See Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 8 & 35.

236 According to Census numbers, approximately 3,574,378 people migrated within the northern states and approximately 1,729,652 emigrated within the southern states.

the Southwest.

The 1860 Census report also noted, "Very extensive families of one section have relatives living in another section.. .so that the whole people are bound together, link to link, in the ties of consanguinity."[237] The assertion here is that family links equated to the existence of an extended political community. By having family in other sections of the country, the author of the Census report made the argument that the country was knitted together. The author also acknowledged the nature of the movement westward by saying, "The almost universal law of internal emigration is that it moves west on the same parallel of latitude." Family connections, therefore, can be more accurately be described as sectional rather than national. Rather than "the whole people" being "bound together, link to link, in the ties of consanguinity," the flow of emigration clearly suggests a sectional flow. By virtue of the North having double the number of "family members" moving west, northerners may have literally viewed the entire North as an extended community and demanded an improved telegraph system in order to stay connected.

Nationalist visions of the United States predate the telegraphic era. Earlier versions of nationalism, however, focused almost singularly on maintaining the federal union. The "godlike Daniel," as admirers liked to call Daniel Webster, captured this strand of nationalism in his "Second Reply to Hayne" when he said, "When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once- glorious Union, on states dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched.in fraternal blood."[238] Henry Clay had also proposed what he called the American system, which was a national system of "internal improvements, a national bank, and tariffs." Clay had proposed that system as "part of a democratic economic program that would raise wages, reduced unemployment, and bring prosperity to a broader class

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237 Population of the United States in 1860: Introduction (census.gov)

238 Daniel Webster's "Webster's Reply to Hayne" quoted in Robert P. St. John and Raymond L. Noonan, Ed, *Landmarks of Liberty: The Growth of American Political Ideals as Recorded in Speeches from Otis to Hughes* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1922), 142-151.

of citizens"[239] Andrew Jackson also famously took on nullifiers like John C. Calhoun rejecting the argument that South Carolina could ignore federal legislation. During the Nullification Crisis, Webster, Clay, and Jackson all argued the federalist position. Nationalism had never really prevailed across the board. Clay's American System was soundly defeated in 1832 when Clay had forcefully promoted the re-charter of the national bank and Andrew Jackson vetoed it in favor of a state banking system.

The Republican Party emerged on a stated platform of nationalism and even took the idea of federalism much further by demanding a certain level of moral conformity with their ideals. They famously promised in the 1856 party platform they would use federal powers "to prohibit in the territories those twin relics of barbarism—slavery and polygamy."[240] Protestant abolitionists like William Lloyd Garrison had argued for decades slavery was "a national sin.[that] bespeaks a national calamity." In Garrison's view, the United States could either abolish slavery or an Old Testament-like judgment would surely befall the United States. In the third publication of *The Liberator* in 1831, Garrison said, "The curse of slavery is upon us. It is a foul.heaven-daring stain upon the land."[241] In 1850, William Seward, outraged by the Fugitive Slave Act, said, "When people are perplexed by the action of the State, it is our solemn duty to examine the ground of its origin, and the relations it sustains to the higher law of our nature—the voice of God in the soul of man—before we consider how its.enactments comport with [human] law." Seward said, "Civil governments exist by the will of God" and government absolutely "should be devoted to the destruction of this engine of oppression, and the driving back of its director and inspirer to his native hell." In his concluding remarks, Seward said, "If you wish for the cause of God to prevail, you must enroll yourself among the active opponents of every institution and effort designed to support or extend the cause of sin, and labor earnestly.for the righteous victory."[242] When Lincoln was elected, therefore, southerners

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239 Adam-Max Tuchinsky. *Horace Greeley's New York Tribune: Civil War Socialism and the Crisis of Free Labor,* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 136.

240 Mackey, *Documentary History of the American Civil War Era,* "1856 Republican Party Platform," 11-14.

241 William Lloyd Garrison, "Spirit of Vermont," *The Liberator,* February 05, 1831, 05 Feb 1831, Page 1 - The Liberator at Newspapers.com.

242 William Seward's "Higher Law" speech quoted in Haven Gilbert. *National Sermons: Sermons, Speeches and Letters*

believed the president-elect viewed their region as a modern- day Babylon.

In addition to the lack of a pervasive telegraph system, the South also generally had lower literacy rates than the North. Daniel Walker Howe said even going back to the 1830s "few books were published south of the Potomac, where population was dispersed and literacy rates lower."[243] That simply meant information could not be disseminated as rapidly in the South and fewer southerners were reading the information that was distributed in the region. The printing press is generally cited as having democratizing effects in Europe *because* it fostered the rise of a literate population. Scholars have pointed out that by increasing the literacy rate in Europe the demand for information in vernacular—or common—languages dramatically increased. The implication here is that "printing undermined central authority because it encouraged the recipients of the printing message to think for themselves about the issues in dispute, and it provided the means—printed Bibles especially—by which each person could become his or her own theologian."[244] Frederick Barbier even said, "Archives [emerged as] the site of a 'bourgeois memory', largely in the vernacular constructed in opposition to the 'noble memory' constituted by the cartularies preserved in castles and religious houses."[245]

Telegraphy had democratizing effects on the slavery debates in the United States during the 1850s. There had already been a push for universal manhood suffrage in the 1830s. Howe argued during that decade, "The widespread change in the concept of the suffrage [in the 1830s], from a privilege bestowed on an independent-minded elite to a right that should be possessed by all male citizens, reflected in part the success of the American Revolution and general acceptance of its natural-rights ideology."[246] As telegraphy became more ubiquitous in northern society it set in motion "network revolutions.[that]

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on Slavery and Its War: From the Passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill to the Election of President Grant (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1869), 1-32.

243 Howe, *What Hath God Wrought, 231.*

244 Mark U. Edwards, *Printing, Propaganda, and Martin Luther* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), Kindle, LOC 132.

245 Barbier, *Gutenberg's Europe*, 15.

246 Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 490

gradually form[ed] an economy and society of mass."[247] In the political arena, that meant political candidates had to appeal to the most voters in order to win elections. The emergence of a politics of mass generally culminated in the extension of suffrage to various groups. By 1920 women gained suffrage rights through the 20th Amendment but it should be noted the Seneca Falls movement had been held in 1848—the same year the *Associated Press* emerged—and women's suffrage advocacy persisted until the passage of the 20th Amendment. After the end of slavery in 1865, Radical Republicans like Thaddeus Stephens and Charles Sumner also promoted full suffrage for formerly enslaved people.

Though historians have rarely cited the emergence of telegraphy as a major contributor to the emergence of the Republican Party, they almost always cite the critical issues carried via the telegraph system that had made the organization of the party possible. Telegraphy afforded political leaders, newspaper editors, and other influencers the ability to convey information— political ideas in particular—to vast swaths of the American population. This dissertation has pointed out that in at least three defined periods—1848, 1854, and 1858—major developments emerged in telegraphy and/or telegraphic news reporting. In each case, major political developments followed. Through the voter data and telegraph office location data, I have also pointed out that when Lincoln won the election in 1860 he did so by winning in states and counties where telegraph offices allowed information to flow the fastest. It is, therefore, inconceivable that the emergence of telegraphy had no bearing on American politics. To the contrary, the development of the telegraph system and telegraphic new reporting completely revolutionized American the nature of news reporting between 1848 and 1860 thereby nationalizing the political system. That had dramatically altered the nature of the political debates as politics took a more national tone.

Historians have routinely pointed out that Lincoln used telegraphy during the Civil War to bypass the military chain-of-command sending direct orders to field commanders rather than through top generals. David Hochfelder argued in doing so, Lincoln mostly likely preserved civilian authority at a time when

247 Wheeler, *From Google to Gutenberg,* 15.

military affairs consumed almost all of American life. Hochfelder pointed out that in mid-1861 as war mobilization took center stage, the Union's newly-appointed superstar general, George McClellan, wrote to his wife, “Were I to win some small success now I could become dictator or anything else that might please me.” Recognizing the inordinate influence of the military, Hochfelder said, “Secretary of War Edwin Stanton ordered the [telegraph] lines removed from McClellan's headquarters and connected them instead to the War Department offices.” He said, “For the remainder of the war, Stanton controlled the army's communications.” A War Department clerk later recalled an officer saying, “Mr. Stanton's telegrams were so frequent, preemptory, and regardless of hours that he never lay down in his tent or quarters at night without a mental picture of the Secretary of War watching his every movement.”[248] Lincoln, however, used telegraphy and the newspaper press efficiently enough that it can be comfortably asserted he understood the implications of the new media landscape during the presidential election campaign of 1860.

By 1860, telegraphy and the newspaper press had become so efficient a projecting ideas across time and space that there simply was not enough room for both slavery and freedom. William Seward specifically said, “A new and extended network of railroads and other avenues.is rapidly bringing the states into a higher and more perfect social unity or consolidation.” Though Seward specifically mentioned the “network of railroads,” he also acknowledged “other avenues” of technological development having the similar effect of “bringing the states into a higher and more perfect social unity or consolidation.” Seward mirrored Lincoln's House Divided speech arguing the United States was no longer big enough to accommodate “antagonistic systems [that] are continually coming into closer contact, and collision results.” By “closer contact,” Seward did not mean the physical distance separating the two systems had shrank. He said the reason “collision results” was that “in states where the slave system prevails, the masters, directly or indirectly, secure all political power, and constitute a ruling aristocracy.” By contrast,

248 Hochfelder, *The Telegraph in America,* 14-16.

he said, “In states where the free-labor system prevails, universal suffrage necessarily obtains, and the state inevitably becomes, sooner or later, a republic or democracy.” The two “systems,” in other words, were opposing political ideals. Telegraphic dissemination of news allowed these ideals to collide in the newspaper press bringing the United States as a political entity into the allegorical “same room.” By 1858, technology had so connected the country intellectually that no amount of physical expansion could provide enough space to separate the two systems. In his description of the “irrepressible conflict,” Seward said, “An irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces” was coming where “one or the other system must exclusively prevail .”[249]

When Lincoln won the election in 1860, the Republican Party's ideals became national policy. When Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation he essentially adopted the Protestant vision of abolition. That policy, however, required a major expansion of the war powers by forcing Lincoln to accept “the expansion of the [Civil War] into civilian life.”[250] The text of the Emancipation Proclamation said the federal government would “recognize and maintain the freedom of [slaves] and.do no act or acts to repress such persons...in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.”[251] Recognizing and maintaining the freedom of slaves theoretically could mean federal soldiers could be used against southern slaveowners who refused to cede ownership of enslaved persons. That created problems for Lincoln because northerners and southerners alike had defined “notions about the citizenry's relationship to the government, as well as the wartime and peacetime influence of federal institutions—namely the army—on civil society.”[252] Lincoln almost surely understood “his burden was not merely to overturn the longstanding tradition of American statecraft.[but] he seemed to need to realign the laws of civilized warfare with the moral progress

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249 Bryan, *The World's Famous Orations*, 177-185.

250 John Fabian Witt, “Civil War Historians and the Laws of War,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 4, no. 2 (June 2014): 168.

251 “The Emancipation Proclamation.” *Emancipation Proclamation (Primary Source Document) 1. Points of View Reference Center,* EBSCO*host (Accessed November 17, 2021.).*

252 Andrew F. Lang, "Republicanism, Race, and Reconstruction: The Ethos of Military Occupation in Civil War America," *The Journal of the Civil War Era* 4, no. 4, 2014, 573.

of slavery's abolition."[253] Emancipation presented an even more fundamental challenge to the Republican Party because "the very essence of republicanism was tied directly to the will of the people, not the muzzle of a rifle."[254]

Lincoln ultimately justified the federal movement for abolition in terms of Protestant morality. In his second inaugural address, he said, "Slavery is one of those offenses, which in the providence of God.He now wills to remove and.give to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came."[255] With that line, Lincoln essentially restated the Protestant abolitionist language invoked by people like William Lloyd Garrison in 1831; God had brought the calamity of the Civil War to the United States as punishment for the national sin of slavery. His House Divided speech had made very clear that, in principle if not explicitly stated, he agreed with Seward that the United States had been so knitted together by technology— railroads and telegraphy in particular—that there was no feasible way for the country to proceed without the elimination of one or the other of the two systems. Subsequent generations of Protestant reformers used federal emancipation as a blueprint for targeting Mormon polygamy in Utah, "obscenities" sent through the postal service, and prohibition. Prohibitionist reformers, in particular, "saw the abolition of liquor consumption as the linchpin in an effort to protect vulnerable women and children."[256] Like the slave masters of old, these reformers believed, "The liquor traffic put private profit above human welfare and fed upon the helpless and the masses."[257]

The emergence of a strong federal government is generally attributed to the Union's victory in the Civil War. The groundwork for the dramatic expansion of federal powers, however, can be traced directly to the emergence of the telegraph network and the emergence of the Republican Party itself. Lincoln and other pivotal players understood that telegraphy allowed for the direction of mass organization, whether

253 Witt, "Civil War Historians and the Laws of War." 163
254 Lang, "Republicanism, Race and Reconstruction," 569
255 Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address - Lincoln Memorial (U.S. National Park Service) (nps.gov)
256 McGirr, 9.
257 McGirr, 29.

in politics or government. As the national newspaper press gathered and published information on an ever-increasing national scale, people were required to think and process information on the national—rather than local—level. In turn, that lent itself nicely to the expansion of federal powers at the expense of local sovereignty. As the telegraph system became more international in tone, in other words, so too did the tenor of American life. By the 1866, a transatlantic cable connected Europe directly with the United States making the United States increasing the scale of information flow once again. By the end of the 19th century the United States became much more international in tone as is evidenced by the Spanish-American War of 1898. The United States absolutely became international in tone by the early twentieth century. Technology and the media have, therefore, played a pivotal role in the political development of the United States.

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