

How slavery became the economic engine

[Sociology](#), [Slavery](#)



Slavery was the dominating reality of all Southern life. The effects of slavery in the south can clearly be seen politically and economically. Cotton was the cash crop of the south and the government was white. This means that slavery was not going to disappear without a major event in the South that changed everything. In America during that time, a slave was a Piece of property just as our laptops, cars and houses are. This means that they can be bought, traded and loaned just as all of those things are today. The economy in the south at this time was bleeding because not enough cotton could be picked to make a decent profit.

This is because it took a slave a whole day to pick out all of the seeds from a piece of cotton. At this rate slavery was becoming outdated because they were no longer as useful as they had been due to the economy. If this trend continued slaves would eventually become free simply because of the economy. Coincidentally a black man named Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin. This was a machine that separated the seeds from the cotton much faster and safer than any slave could. You might think that this would decrease the needs for slaves because of the efficiency; however this only increased the demands for them due to the rise in cotton demand.

This trend continued until cotton was the main export of the south, even over tobacco and sugar. To a slave owner " Cotton was King", the gin was his throne, and the black bondsmen were his henchmen. " (Bailey, 361)

Southern families were starting to experience their rise, just as the north had with industrialization. Just as the north, the south wasn't satisfied with what they had, they wanted more. Such is human nature. This caused farmers to buy more land, buy more slaves to cultivated the land and receive a better

profit. This cycle continued and eventually doubled the slave population of 1820.

The south was all about slavery, this did not exclude their politics. The Kansas-Nebraska act was a prime example of this. This is the act that divided the Kansas territory into Nebraska and Kansas. The issue of whether or not they were slave states was quickly brought up by southern politicians. It was proposed by Douglas that it be decided by popular sovereignty. This went against the Missouri Compromise, and would effectively nullify it. This enraged Northern politicians and activist alike. It was eventually pushed through and was passed. This led to bleeding Kansas, a time when slavery was debated so much that it led to much bloodshed.

This is only one example of the south's obsession with slavery. Economically the slaves of the south built the southern economy, without them the south would be nothing. This is what led the south to push so hard for slavery and eventually secede from the union and fight the civil war. The main aspect of life in the south was slavery, this was the way the south rose to power and its obsession with it would be the downfall of their power. Without slavery, the south was broken. This paper was completely written by Thomas Christopher DeWaters For APUSH on 1/8/12