

Kansas and nebraska act

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



The Kansas and Nebraska Act was introduced in 1854 by Senator Stephen A. Douglas. Douglas was a Democrat well liked in the South. He didn't really care too much about slavery because he was looking toward the development of the new Western country between the Missouri River and California. Specifically, he wanted a transcontinental railroad that went through Chicago, which was his home town. Building this road would involve grants of public land. The south, on the other hand, wanted it to go to the Pacific coast by way of Texas and New Mexico.

In order to get southern support he decided to make a bill to create the territories of Kansas and Nebraska. In the bill he proposed popular sovereignty, which meant that each territory could choose between being a free state or a slave state. He also included repealing the Missouri Compromise which stated that: " Missouri could come into the union with Slavery, but that in all the remaining part of the territory purchased of France, which lies north of 36 degrees and 30 minutes north latitude, slavery should never be permitted".

Democrats and Whigs fought for the chance of having a northern slave state. The North became enraged that the Missouri Compromise had been tampered with. This caused more tension between the North and South. The Kansas-Nebraska act ended up being the demise of Whig and Democratic parties. The southern Whigs united with Southern Democrats against their northern counterparts for the first time in history.

They were never able to reunite and the democrats survived, but northern democrats lost over half their seats in congress that year. Once the Act was passed, thousands of people moved into the territory. Missouri sent over its

Border Ruffians who threatened people and casted illegal votes. New England sent rifles, known as Beecher's Bibles, because Reverend Henry Ward Beecher had said, " There might be spots where a gun is more useful than a bible". By 1855, everything had gone downhill.

Pro-Slavery and Anti-slavery patrols clashed with each other, houses were burned down, people were lynched, random shootings occurred, and people were murdered. The free-soil settlement in Lawrence was burned down and in retaliation John Brown and his followers murdered 5 southerners near Pottawatomie Creek. Elections would go nowhere because each side would accuse each other of rigging it. Even far from Kansas, Senator Charles Sumner from Massachusetts addressed the Senate and accused Congressman Preston Brooks of beating him with his cane.