

Examine each of the following sources (or excerpts, if provided) from the antebellum period. You are looking, specifically, for evidence of how the authors of these documents felt about the regional divides that were affecting the country at the time, and the possibility that they would lead to Civil War.

*For each source, indicate:*

- (a) who created the source (names, what positions they held in society that made them influential, which states they were from)
- (b) whether they seemed to think that civil war was inevitable, or that it was something that could be prevented
- (c) whether they saw the prospect of civil war as a desirable or an undesirable outcome (and why!)

Provide brief quotes to back up your answers to (b) and (c).

*The sources:*

1. Daniel Webster's "Liberty and Union" speech (January 26, 1830)  
<https://www.usapatriotism.org/speeches/dwebster1.htm>
2. The Compromise of 1850  
<https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/compromise-of-1850>
3. John C. Calhoun's speech on the Compromise of 1850 (March 4, 1850)  
[https://college.cengage.com/history/ayers\\_primary\\_sources/calhoun\\_speech\\_compromise\\_1850.htm](https://college.cengage.com/history/ayers_primary_sources/calhoun_speech_compromise_1850.htm)
4. Frederick Douglass's "The Meaning of July Fourth to the Negro" speech (July 5, 1852)  
[https://masshumanities.org/files/programs/douglass/speech\\_complete.pdf](https://masshumanities.org/files/programs/douglass/speech_complete.pdf)
5. John Brown's "Speech to the Court" (November 2, 1859)  
<https://www.gilderlehrman.org/sites/default/files/inline-pdfs/t-05508-051.pdf>
6. Abraham Lincoln's "First Inaugural Address" (March 4, 1861)  
[https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th\\_century/lincoln1.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/lincoln1.asp)

Because we know that the Civil War did happen, we are looking to better understand the developments that led it — the causes of the war. But, as historian David Blight reminds us, for people living through the antebellum period the Civil War was anything but inevitable. And while some of them tried tirelessly (and unsuccessfully) to prevent it, others wanted desperately for it to come. Though it is unlikely that any wanted it to bring the amount of death and destruction that it did.

Once the war did come, it is worth paying attention to what it meant for different people, and in different parts of the country.