

History 225

Re: Outline of BCF Chaps. ↗

8. Counterrevolution of 1861

- Ask class why McPherson titles this chapter “The Counterrevolution”
Play off my little exercise re: nomenclature. Does language matter? Counterrevolution suggests that there was a revolution brewing

Suggests early on that the South was not unified at the outset over what course to pursue after South Carolina pulled out of the Union.

Mc sees several emergent positions:

1. the red-hots or die-hard secessionist who were not interested in any settlement or resolution of sectional issues.
2. Cooperationists—ultimatimusts who wanted to slap the Lincoln administration with an ultimatum w/ guarantees in order to remain in the Union.
3. cooperationists—those conservative southerners who were willing to test Lincoln’s good faith promises such as those he announced in his inaugural address.

Southern rationale for the justification of secession. Check this against the Wm. Davis arguments. Was secession or the right to secede inherent in the Constitution. See Constitution as a contract.

Some where either for this chapter or the next I have to check w/ Fhreeeling’s essay on the deep South and the Border States. This was the deep fear among the secessionists.

Selling secession on the basis of white supremacy. Knowledge among sountherners that the South was not a monolith. McCurry study of yeoman farmers and antagonism between the planer aristocracy and the nonslaveholding or non-planter elements of the South. Here too (see Alexander Stephens) Mc allows the secessionists to have there say about what there counterevolution was all about—to maintain their slave society and nothing else.

Remainer of the chapter deals with the secession crisis over the winter of 1860-1861

- Buchanan views the crisis/ Star of the West
- Lincoln and the talk of compromise(Crittenden is noted)
- Lincoln and the Sumter Crisis/ question of the first shot

History 225

Re: Outline/ Notes for BCF (Chpt. 8)

Questions about the secession crisis. Ask class.

What does McPherson call the actions of the South “The Counterrevolution of 1861”?

What is your understanding of this? How did the election of Lincoln inspire this action by the deep southern states. What threat did Lincoln pose to the South?

Secessionist southerners argued that the Black Republicans were a threat to the South’s liberties and independence which could only be protected by leaving the Union.

DAVIS ARGUMENT THAT WHAT THE DEEP SOUTH WAS ENGAGED IN WAS A COUNTERREVOLUTION TO PREVENT THE ANTICIPATED REVOLUTION THAT Lincoln And his party would initiate once they took over the White House and controlled the Congress.

Davis would have us believe that what the creation of the Confederacy was was a preemptive-revolution, hence a counterrevolution,

Need explanation about the Border South. Possible discussion about the divisions within the South. South was not a monolith.

Point II The Secession winter crisis

Buchanan and the crisis

Lincoln and the crisis. Lincoln misreads the crisis. Look at the stages. (1850s; 1860 campaign; president-elect; White House).

Point III. Sumter Crisis. Question of the First Shot