

Source Based Test

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The arguments put forward in defense of slavery were unreasonable, even by the standards of the time.

During the time of the Civil War, slavery was a very large issue and there were normally two sides taken, for and against the idea. The sources E, A, and B, in order of priority, all support the claim that the arguments for slavery were unreasonable even during that time period by saying that it was all horrible aspects, God's will to free them, and it was mockery. However, sources D and C, in order of priority as well, dispute the idea that supporting slavery was unreasonable at that time by saying that they bettered the country and it was God's will to have slaves.

Source E agrees with the idea that the arguments put forth to defend slavery were unreasonable even at the time by showing both sides. Source E shows the reasons why slavery was a bonus to the country first, then disputed it at the end by saying it was the worst aspects of capitalism that made slavery work. By taking the emotions of the time out of consideration and focusing solely on the facts shown, the historian takes a very reliable stand on the issue. However, the fact that he/she was not around during the time of slavery and is in fact a modern historian instead of someone who lived through and felt the emotions regarding slavery can be troublesome as he/she doesn't not know the actual nature of how the arguments over slavery was. The information held within the source is very reliable and valid information. THE fact that the historian gave both sides to the matter and was able to show how each side of the argument felt shows that they did the research needed and is in fact quite knowledgeable on the times. The tone of the source is mostly detached until you get to the last sentence showing that he as very little emotion, yet still has some over the topic. With little emotion comes the fact that they're will be a possibility for opinionated information, which would in turn drop down the reliability of the source. The information and lack of emotional words coincide with source D, however they are on opposite sides of the argument. Both show little emotional words as opposed to sources B and C, yet their position on the topic is still clear to see. The fact that the source says that the government was reluctant to shut slavery down when they looked at the powerful ties produced with the free market is not entirely true. While the market could have possibly created strong ties, the government didn't hesitate to get rid of the slave trade industry in Washington DC, the capital city. The information presented in this source, source E goes to support the claim that the defense of slavery at the time was unreasonable even by those standards.

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Source A is another source that supports the statement that the defense of slavery was unreasonable. The speech given by Seward, a Northern Senator from New York, uses the idea of God to support his view point. Seward is known for being very anti-slavery and is also called "The Higher Power" for his view on God's role. These facts factor in and cause question for those looking at the information present. While it is full of opinion and his view points, it is a speech to the senate, and not one to a random group of abolitionists. The audience in this situation is a factor to look at as well because there are different tones and words a person uses when giving a formal speech rather than a speech to a random group proving it to be of a higher reliability than source B, one that is chock full of emotion. The

information inside this source is very little. The lack of facts and statistics show that it is just a persuasive speech given after the Compromise of 1850 was created. For a Northerner who is against slavery, the compromise would not be too favorable to them as the Fugitive Slave Act forces them to take a certain role in slavery. This can lead to emotions coming out as seen in this speech. The weight of emotion in speeches can sometimes limit it to where the actual information is not as prevalent, as seen in source B. This source, A, helps to support the statement that the defense of slavery was unreasonable even during the times of the Civil War.

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The last source that supports this claim is source B. It too shows that the defense of slavery was unreasonable, but it did it in a unique way. Frederick Douglas, a former slave and a man who went to great measures to ensure his freedom, is giving a speech filled with passion. As a source, Frederick Douglas is a man one can go to and get factual information on slavery and what it was like to be a slave in regards to the fact that he once was a slave and then worked to end slavery for all. However, given his very close ties to the matter, his opinion will clearly show through as a slave would not speak highly and positively about slavery and things that they went through. When you add in the fact that the day that he gave his speech, Independence Day, it adds to the air in which he will speak. A day that represents freedom in most American's eyes does not hold any significance to the slaves at all as they do not have the freedom that all of America is rejoicing about. By bringing those points to his speech, it creates a very moving and emotional speech with little fact at all. Douglas' tone and choice of words helps to add to the persuasive factor of his speech. By speaking to Rochester, New York, a major Northern city, one that is most likely filled with people who have read Harriet Beecher Stowe's book, Uncle Tom's Cabin, he is making a persuasive speech to help get more and more people to look at why slavery is a 'great injustice and cruelty.' When comparing this speech to the other speeches present, A, C, and D, this is most like source C when one looks at the tone and conviction. Both use very powerful words, many of them are opinionated and, look to persuade their audiences of their side. Source B helps to support the idea that the defense of slavery was unreasonable during the time period.

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However, source D refutes the claim that the arguments in defense of slavery were unreasonable. In fact, the president of the Confederacy actually gives reason why slavery has been a boon to the country. As the president of the Confederacy, there is going to be some obvious opinion on slavery as the South was seceding with that as a main argument. The time of the speech is also a key factor in determining the reliability because it is given after the Civil War had actually started. The Deep South had seceded and many things were moving swiftly with the war, so the president is bound to be worked up and emotional. His emotions aren't shown through immature word choice like B and C, however it is in what he says. While what he says is not entirely false, it is not entirely true as well. However, the fact that his speech is being delivered to the Confederate Congress shows the importance and persuasion used with in the speech. He would not talk about how slavery is a bad thing, and how it is unreasonable to the Congress of a country that recently went into war over the matter. This source and source A are most similar, although they do not agree on any matters, as they both try and show their sides point of view on the matter, yet they don't use derogatory words. Yet, some information in E and D do in fact match up and support each other. The fact about that is that both sources support the opposite side of the claim that arguments for slavery were unreasonable, yet their information matching helps to prove the

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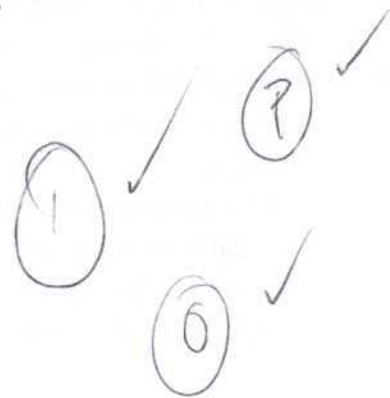
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validity of each source. Source D clearly does not support the claim that the arguments in defense of slavery were unreasonable, even during the times.

Source C is the other source that supports the idea that the argument in defense of slavery were in fact not unreasonable, and instead were supported by God. Alexander Stevens, like William Seward in source A, uses God to support his point of view saying that God made it so that they had slavery and that was how it was to stay. This source is full of emotion and opinionated sway to the information, and thus is not a reliable source to look at. A Confederate Vice President is using God to support his speech to Savannah, Georgia. THE Deep South had already seceded by that time, and so the tensions before the Civil War were heating up. His opinion and lack of substantial fact in his speech do little in helping to raise his credibility. While Stevens was not considered an extremist like William Seward and John Brown, he did indeed use their 'Creator' to support his point of view. By saying things like the Negroes would never be equal and that they were inferior, and then saying that this was how God intended possible got more people to support the idea, not of slavery, but of the fact of going to fight for it. At that time before the Civil War, much of the country was religious and believed in God, and so if they believed that their higher power was making something this way, then there was a reason for it. Whether it was a speech tactic, or just something that they believed, source A and C both used a very powerful tool to get their audiences' support, their God. Source C does not support the idea that arguments in defense of slavery were unreasonable, rather that to oppose slavery was the unreasonable side.

During the time leading up to and during the Civil War, slavery was a big conflict with two separated sides. THE claim that the arguments made in defense of slavery were unreasonable was supported by sources E, A and B all showing their view in different ways. However, sources D and C did not support the claim, rather they said that to argue against slavery was unreasonable.



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