Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources


By reading this primary source, it helped me understand what the gag rule really was, and how aggravating it might have been for John Quincy, a quick tempered man, to have to wait for bumbling men to sweep the issue under the carpet. This is a primary source because it was a brief description written at the time of the House meeting, which was recorded at the same time as the meeting was taking place.

Adams, Louisa Catherine. “Founders Online: From Louisa Catherine Johnson Adams to John Quincy Adams, 27 A ...” National Archives and Records Administration, National Archives and Records Administration

This diary entry is important to my research because it involves Louisa Catherine Adams, Adams’ wife, speaking a bit about her friend’s immediate anger when she mentioned the, “Missouri question,” as she calls it. This is a primary source because it was written by Louisa Catherine Adams, wife to John Quincy, and, assumedly, a huge political influence on her husband.

Adams, John Quincy. “John Quincy Adams and John Calhoun Discuss the Compromise, 1820.” Cengage,

By reading this diary entry, it helped me analyze how John Quincy and John Calhoun's previously good relationship deteriorated due to the political fallout of the Missouri Compromise. It also examined his anti-slavery views, and how he cannot comprehend the supporters of slavery’s thought process. This is a primary source because it was written by John Quincy Adams.

Adams, John Quincy. "President John Quincy Adams' Inaugural Address, 1825." Americ, 1825, 8/1/2017, p. 1. EBSCOhost,

This inaugural address helped me learn some of the moral elements that Adams felt was needed in America. He believed strongly in bipartisanship, and thought that unity was the only way to help the country. His diary was often short and stated facts, so this is a nice change. This is a primary source because this is his inaugural address, said when he became president, and recorded at the same time.

This selection of John Quincy’s diary made me understand Adams’ feelings on the topic of the Missouri Compromise, and his relationship with William Pinkney and Henry Clay, both on opposite sides of the spectrum. It also highlighted Adams’ rage with the people who agreed on slavery’s morality being low, but allowing slavery to continue. He writes that he wants people to stand up against this lack of moral character, but what piques my interest is not once does he say that he feels the need to do it himself. This is a primary source because it is written by Adams at the time these events were taking place.


This inaugural address helped me learn the way people used to think of the Dred Scott case, and how they’d brush it off as a slave trying to be dramatic. James Buchanan did not mention his opinion on the case, only that it was “a matter of but little practical importance.” He shared the mindset of most people in this time, and because of the unspoken words, tensions formed, friendships were corrupted, and the country was nudged closer to civil war.

Calhoun, John C. “John C. Calhoun on the Clay Compromise Measures - 1850.” *National Center*

This source is important to my research because it is a speech of one of the biggest pro-slavery forces pushing against the Missouri Compromise, and was John Quincy’s former good friend. This is a primary source because the speech was written by Calhoun, and was recorded down at the time of the speech.


This newspaper article is important to my research because it goes more in depth about the details concerning the duel between Henry Clay and John Randolph. Apparently John Quincy and Henry Clay were insulted by Randolph, and Clay took this as a means to challenge to duel Randolph. Adams never got involved in the duel, and was not even Clay’s second. However, he was insulted by his adversary on the floor, and this needs to be addressed. This is a primary source because it was written a bit after the duel, and was told by a witness to the duel, a colleague of Clay’s.
This source is important to my research because it shows how much disdain that John Quincy Adams had for slavery, and slavery was one of the turning points in his involvement in the Missouri Compromise. It also has the diary entry of Charles Francis Adams, who, at thirteen, witnessed the Missouri debate in the House, and wrote down William Pickney as the perpetrator of the debate. It also states that John Quincy was very involved in his children’s education, and brought them to House meetings in order to further their education. This is a primary source because it was directly written by John Quincy Adams and Charles Francis Adams, and it was written in the time of the Missouri Compromise.


This newspaper article runs a play-by-play of the discussions in the House of Representatives regarding the bill. This is beneficial to my research because I had not explored the house’s side of negotiations, and it is extremely interesting.


This speech by Abraham Lincoln helped me understand that even he was trying to play devil’s advocate while the turbulent news that the Missouri Compromise was deemed illegal ripped through the country. He expressed his opposition to the judge’s ruling, but states that he is not certified to make such judgements. This is a primary source because Abraham Lincoln said these exact words during this turbulent time in American history.

"Lincoln-Douglas Debate Number 1, 1858." Lincoln-Douglas Debate Number 1, 1858, 8/1/2017, p. 1. EBSCOhost,

This debate brought to my attention Abraham Lincoln’s stance on the Missouri Compromise, about thirty years after the fact. He says that he thought it was a bad idea both morally and logically. This also brought the ordeal back into people’s minds.
“Scott v. Sandford.” *LII / Legal Information Institute*, www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/te

This source is important to my research because this is the transcript of the Dred Scott case, which was the case that overturned the Missouri Compromise and aggravated tensions between the North and South even more. This is a primary source because it is a Supreme Court transcript, and it is the exact words that the judges and the lawyers spoke.


This newspaper article written in 1854 helped me understand the Missouri Compromise much more clearly. This newspaper listed speeches and direct quotes from multiple members of Congress defending or supporting the bill.

**Secondary Sources**


This report by a respectable member of a law school at Loyola University helped me understand not only John Quincy’s views on slavery, both morally and objectively, but also on other topics that haunted him during his lifetime, such as abortion, which was a topic of much discussion even two-hundred years ago.


This biography helped me learn more about Henry Clay, the main man behind the Missouri Compromise’s creation and implementation. John Quincy Adams must have encountered him before, and even said that he agrees with his ideas.


This article helped me understand the long-term effects of the Dred Scott case. It helped me understand the southerner’s reasoning for starting the Civil War. They believed that the Supreme court gave them the go ahead, and they just did what they interpreted the ruling meant.
"1852 Franklin Pierce (Democrat) Vs. Winfield Scott (Whig) Vs. John Parker Hale (Free Soil)." Flash Focus: Presidential Elections 1788-2000, 1, Lakeside Publishing Group, LLC, Jan. 2005, p. 60. EBSCOhost

This source brought to my attention the Missouri Compromise of 1850, which was a totally different subject matter. I need to specify that the Missouri Compromise of 1820 is the topic I will be discussing.


This academic journal helped me with my performance by examining Adams’ moral character by reviewing his religious beliefs. This is important, because if I want to convey his feelings, I need to understand his beliefs.


This source helped me see what Abraham Lincoln’s views were on the Dred Scott case, and how they differed to other politicians’ at the time.

"John Quincy Adams." ["Profiles of U.S. Presidents"]. Profiles of U.S. Presidents, 8/1/2017, p. 17. EBSCOhost

By reading this online article, I learned of the other issues plaguing not only the nation, but Adams, at the same time as the Missouri Compromise, such as the debate of the autonomy of states, and the nationalization of finances. This is critical, because John Quincy would have to allude to these issues during the performance.


This source is an encyclopedia entry on John Randolph. I learned that John Randolph was the biggest enemy of John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay, This anger led to Randolph getting into a duel with Clay, in which there were no casualties.
This source made me realize some of the long-lasting effect John Quincy Adams had on the abolitionist society. The author states he Abraham Lincoln, the man heralded as the forth-bringer of abolishing slavery, was rather reluctant about it, and only did it to appease the North. The author also says that John Quincy, while wanting unity, believed slavery was an immoral sin, and should’ve been abolished to begin with. However, he was afraid of his opponents turning his words against him, and was a sidelinier in terms of the abolitionist movement.


This source explained more of the background leading up to the Missouri Compromise, and John Quincy Adams’ lesser known allies in trying to cooperate with the rowdy southern people. This source also has different people’s actions as well, something John Quincy would be very aware of, considering he was Secretary of State at the time.


This resource was important to my research because it had more information about who John Quincy’s accomplices were, how he interacted with them, and also described other events that was going on at the time, such as It gave an insight on not only Adams’ role, but everyone’s role, and how they influenced each other.

“Missouri Compromise Ushers in Senate's Golden Age.” *U.S. Senate: Missouri Compromise Ushers in Senate's Golden Age*, 17 Apr. 2017

This source explains a bit more of the actual details behind the compromise, and the people behind it. It also explains why the senate never got involved, and how Henry Clay snuck past the pro-slavery lawmakers, who wanted the bill to be stopped before it got out of the House.
“Missouri Compromise.” *The Lehrman Institute*, lehrmaninstitute.org/history/missouri-compromise.html.

This source helped my research because it helped me gain an insight on Henry Clay’s past, more specifically, that he was, indeed, a slaveholder. He also was known to be a political agitator rather than pacifier, who had mixed feelings about slavery. He agreed, theoretically, that slavery was wrong, but he also agreed that the federal government doesn’t have the right to decide whether slavery should be banned. It also gave a better look at the limitations set on Adams. He could not speak about the situation, because he was Secretary of State, whose job was to deal with foreign affairs, thus it was none of his concern. His only statements on the issue was found in his incredibly well kept diary.