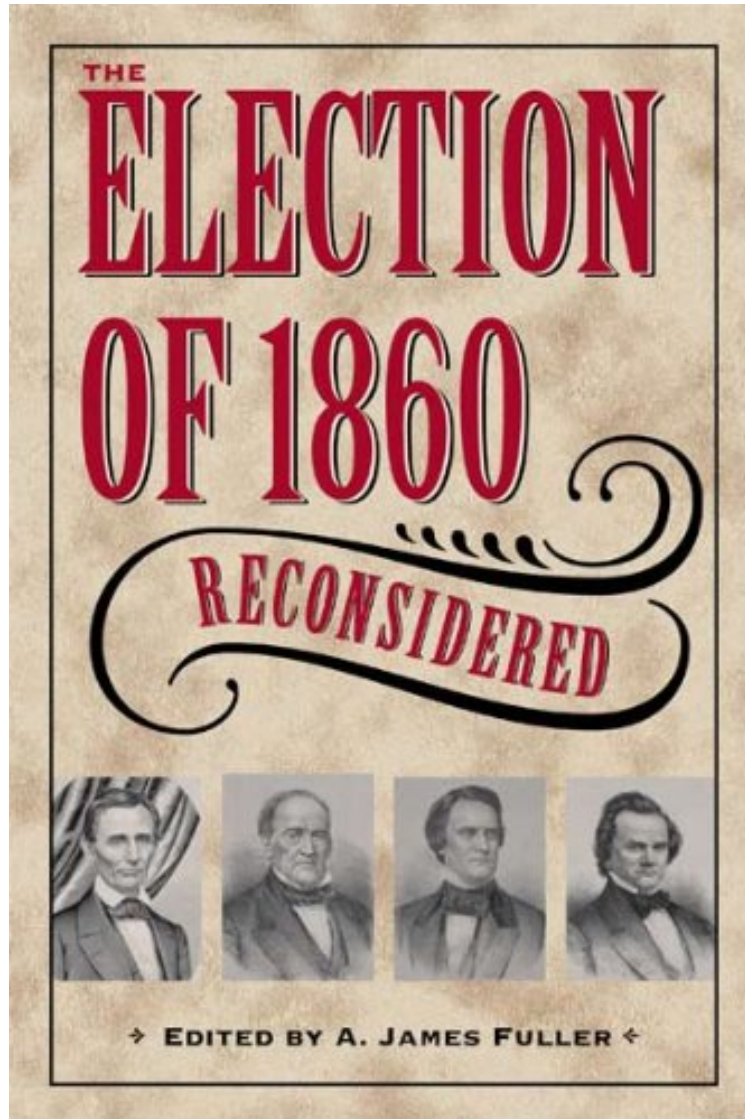


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From Brand: Kent State Univ Pr : The Election of 1860 Reconsidered (Civil War in the North) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Election of 1860 Reconsidered (Civil War in the North):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Refreshing Read for Historians, Students, and the LaypersonsBy John MarshallA. James Fuller of the University of Indianapolis has compiled a great assortment of nine essays (20-30 pages in length) about specific aspects of the all important presidential election in 1860. This is the election in which Abraham Lincoln was elected President and set into motion the Secession Crisis of 1860-61 in which the Deep South

states dissolved the Union of the United States and established the Confederate States of America. Fuller wrote the introduction to the book and contributed his authorship to three of the book's essays. What is refreshing about *The Election of 1860: Reconsidered* (Kent State University Press, 2013) is how the election, the candidates, and the inevitable analysis and historiography are presented in a 'fresh' light. Nine essays cover nine aspects of the election and collectively deliver what can be either a great introduction to the dynamics of the election or an updated look at it. Fuller writes in the introduction that in the 150 years since the Civil War erupted "surprisingly few works have been dedicated exclusively to the presidential contest itself. Most explanations of the campaign appear in general histories or in biographies of Abraham Lincoln or the other presidential candidates....[S]cholarship on the election of 1860 remains relatively rare. The sesquicentennial anniversary of the election offered an opportunity to fill this gap in the literature." Fuller adds that his book "reconsiders the election and offers fresh insight" (Fuller, 1). Overall, the book is a little over 250 pages. A map in the introduction readily assists the reader to visually comprehend the popular and electoral votes. Each essay has some kind of illustrations or photographs to enhance the reader's understanding of the candidates, issues, and the campaign. The political cartoons are wonderful and quite humorous in a sophisticated way that is sadly lacking in today's political cartoons. The captions for each cartoon give a retelling of what each person is saying because the cartoons are a bit too small for the human eye to read them (Google them! The artwork is incredible.) Each essay centers on a theme and sticks to it. There is no overwhelming the reader with too much political content. As the Republican Party's moderate candidate, Abraham Lincoln's success in the campaign comes from himself as being the greatest asset of the campaign. Stephen A. Douglas was the Northern Democratic candidate and is portrayed as the first modern presidential campaigner who actually campaigned and gave speeches all over the North and the South. When Douglas began to see the writing on the wall that Lincoln was to become the next President, he toured the South a second time and focused his speeches and energies on saving the Union. The Southern Democratic candidate, John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky, is seen through the eyes not as a "fire eater" or hot-headed Southern secessionist but as one who represented Southern honor and gentlemanly conduct with some military meddle, even though he knew his bid for the White House was a forlorn effort. Finally, John Bell of the Constitutional Union Party is represented as the last true Whig who passionately believed in the Henry Clay style of political compromise when it was necessary in saving the Union from the treacherous issue of slavery. Other essays add to the reader's understanding of the election through the eyes of abolitionist Frederick Douglass, European ambassadors, political leaders, and newspapers, and through a case study in Indiana and an analysis of its political realignment. The best essay is "Saving the Republic: Turnout, Ideology, and Republicanism in the Election of 1860" by Thomas E. Rodgers because I am enrolled in an Origins of the American Civil War course at a local university and it summed up the essence of that course with its focus on that nineteenth century American ideology known as republicanism. It was not slavery nor states' rights that prompted the Civil War, it was the North and South's different interpretations of freedom, liberty, corruption, and tyranny that cause the war (that's my argument, not Fuller's or the essay's author). Overall, *The Election of 1860: Reconsidered* is a lighter political read anyone with a general knowledge and passion for the Civil War would enjoy. It is a one-stop shop introduction to one of the larger topics related to the coming of the Civil War. I highly recommend it.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Enlightening and a good read
By David Marshall
The presidential election of 1860 was a turning point in American History. Ultimately, the election of Abraham Lincoln was the result of sectional differences and led to secession of Southern States in December 1860 and the start of the Civil War in 1861. This collection of nine essays by seven scholars offers academics and students of Abraham Lincoln and the election of 1860 fresh understanding on the campaign for the presidency. Douglas Gardner expertly surveys the historiographical tradition regarding the election, observing that scholars since the election have concentrated on Republican Abraham Lincoln and Northern Democrat Stephen A. Douglas, with little or no attention given to John Bell or John Breckinridge or to other related topics. Two other essays fall into the scholarly tradition with Michael Green pointing out that Lincoln played the role of master politician during the campaign, and James Huston contending that Douglas's southern speaking tour was unusual for presidential candidates but failed to change the results in the election. Significant new insights are elucidated by the writers in that the election is much more than Lincoln's victory and Douglas's loss. Important analyses appear throughout this that deal with perspective of the other candidates, the view from Europe, abolitionist perspectives and close examination of voter turnout and the presidential election at the state level. Possibly the most important theme of this volume is political biography. In addition to Green and Huston writing about Lincoln and Douglas, A. James Fuller offers compelling chapters on the other major candidates for President, the Southern Democrat John Breckinridge and the Constitutional Union candidate John Bell. John McKivigan explores the election focusing on Frederick Douglas as he cautiously leads students through the shifting attitudes and contradiction of the abolitionist standpoint. In reviewing the lives of individuals, the academics validate that this important presidential competition in 1860 was connected to and stemmed from the lifetime experiences of the studied historical characters. Another essential subject that resonates throughout this solid collection of essays is ideology. James Huston's section chronicles the ways in which the Northern Democrats struggled with the main areas of democracy, while McKivigan's Frederick Douglas had differences with abolitionist philosophies when put into actual practice. Ideology is the focus of Thomas Rogers's paper as he scrutinizes the challenged method of

figuring out the election numbers. Contrasts between the professors bring about insight into the differences with the impetus and significance of this topic. Beyond the above mentioned main topics, this solid title offers readers interdisciplinary studies and new ideas on the election of 1860. Lawrence Sondhaus's research deals with the Europeans view of the election and concentrates on the English, French, German and Austrian leaders, finding surprising little interest in the election and their failure to predict its long term effects. The Kent State University Press has published a collection of essays that provides an outstanding survey of the historical literature on the election. The historians engage the different interpretations and explain to interested individuals through the different historiographical issues involved. The essayists challenge old viewpoints and provide a new reconsideration to the important 1860 presidential election. Thirty four helpful illustrations, useful notes, an index and the contributor's biographies are included in this publication though neither a bibliography nor maps were contained in the work. In conclusion, this reviewer recommends this effective study. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fresh Light on the Most Portentous Election in American History By A. A. Nofi A summary of the review on StrategyPage.Com: 'Historian Fuller (Indianapolis) gathers six of his colleagues to take a fresh look at the most important election in American history. Essays look at Lincoln as political organizer, Douglas's personal campaigning, Breckinridge's goals, John Bell and the last gasp of Whigism, the perspective of Frederick Douglass and other abolitionists, ideology and turnout, a case study of Indiana, the European perception, and the historiography of the campaign. These essays help throw new light on the dynamics of the election, and on the evolution of presidential campaigns.' For the full review, see StrategyPage.Com

The election of 1860 was a crossroad in American history. Faced with four major candidates, voters in the North and South went to the polls not knowing that the result of the election would culminate in the bloodiest conflict the United States had ever seen. Despite its obvious importance, surprisingly few studies have focused exclusively on this electoral contest itself. In *The Election of 1860 Reconsidered*, seven historians offer insightful essays that challenge the traditional view of the election, present fresh interpretations, and approach the contest from new angles. In engaging treatments of the main presidential candidates, the authors employ biography to explain the election. Michael S. Green deftly analyzes Abraham Lincoln and effectively overturns the view of the Republican as a passive candidate. James L. Huston provides an innovative reconsideration of Stephen A. Douglas in defeat with an insightful look at the Little Giant's campaign tours of the South. Using the lens of honor, A. James Fuller scrutinizes John C. Breckinridge in an enlightening study of the Southern Democratic candidate's campaign. In another groundbreaking essay, Fuller reconsiders Constitutional Unionist John Bell as a Whig who stood for the Republican principle of compromise. The biographical theme continues in John R. McKivigan's splendid examination of Frederick Douglass as he carefully guides the reader through the changing attitudes and ambivalence of the abolitionist perspective. As Douglas G. Gardner demonstrates in his fine exposition of the historiographical themes involved with the election, *The Election of 1860 Reconsidered* includes interdisciplinary concerns and new lines of inquiry. Addressing matters of interest to political scientists as well as historians, Thomas E. Rodgers takes up the issue of voter turnout in a sophisticated analysis that emphasizes ideology. Political culture and context allow A. James Fuller to make revealing interdisciplinary connections while using the state of Indiana as a case study to test and refute realignment theory. Turning to observations from across the Atlantic, Lawrence Sondhaus offers a new approach to the election in his penetrating study of how Europeans viewed and misunderstood the U.S. presidential race. This remarkable collection breathes new life into political history and will serve as a primer for a generation of scholars interested in understanding the most important election in American history.

"In *The Election of 1860 Reconsidered*, editor A. James Fuller has assembled a handy collection of essays that outline what historians have told us about the fateful election that ushered Abraham Lincoln into office while charting new and fruitful paths of study. The nine essays in this collection center on three themes: political biography, ideology, and political culture. ... The collection ends with a thorough historiographical essay by Douglas G. Gardner, who lucidly lays out the major interpretations that historians have offered for this election. The essay is a fitting coda to this strong collection. ... Scholars will enjoy this thorough reexamination of an important American election. --*The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* 111(4), Autumn 2013 Christopher Childers About the Author A. James Fuller is associate professor of history at the University of Indianapolis. Among his many publications are *Chaplain to the Confederacy: Basil Manly and Baptist Life in the Old South, 1798- 1868*; *America, War and Power: Defining the State, 1775-2005* (coedited with Lawrence Sondhaus); and *Soldiers of Christ: Selections from the Writings of Basil Manly, Sr., and Basil Manly, Jr.* (coedited with Michael Haykin and Roger Duke).