The Profitability and Viability of Plantation Slavery in the United States

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In the United States, the roots of this viewpoint go back at least to Frederick Law Olmsted’s writings. During his travels to the slave states in the 1850s, Olmsted produced numerous publications arguing that slavery made the South inefficient and economically backward in comparison to the North. These arguments informed...
The Republican Party’s view that free labor was superior and more productive than slavery. Much writing on slavery has focused on the profitability of slave agriculture. The slave trade, however, was also a significant source of income for both Southerners and international traders. Smith, Mark M. “Time, Slavery and Plantation Capitalism in the Ante-Bellum American South.” Past & Present No. 150 (Feb. 1996): 142-68. Slavery in the United States was the legal institution of human chattel enslavement, primarily of Africans and African Americans, that existed in the United States of America in the 18th and 19th centuries. Slavery had been practiced in British America from early colonial days, and was legal in all Thirteen Colonies at the time of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. It lasted in about half the states until 1865, when it was prohibited nationally by the Thirteenth Amendment. As an economic system An animation showing when United States territories and states forbade or allowed slavery, 1789-1861. Peter, a man who was enslaved in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1863, whose scars resulted from violent abuse by a plantation overseer. The majority of slaveholders were in the southern United States, where most slaves were engaged in an efficient machine-like gang system of agriculture, with farms of fifteen or more slaves proving to be far more productive than farms without slaves.[citation needed] Also, these large groups of slaves were thought to work more efficiently if guarded by a managerial class called overseers. to ensure that the slaves did not waste a second of movement.