Econ 323
Economic History of the U.S.
Prof. Eschker
Fall 2018
Today’s Topics

• Essay writing
• Discussant Essay Rubric
• Searching for articles
  – Library
    • Search and Locate → Articles and Databases → Economics → \textbf{Econlit}
    • Or Search Site for \textbf{Econlit}
• Rules of good writing
• Examples to edit
  – Prof. Eschker
  – Together
  – Small groups (5 minute paper #5)
The Disposal of Public Properties

You have been hired as a consultant by the newly formed government of Iraq. The government wants your recommendation as to what to do with the land, oil wells, and factories that it owns. Currently over 80% of Iraq’s resources are owned by the government.
Please provide the government with an answer to the following questions. Be sure to include a reason for your answer.

1. What should be the government's goal? (raise revenue, transfer quickly, transfer cheaply, etc.)

2. Should the government rent or sell the resources?

3. Who should be allowed to use the resources? (lottery winner, highest bidder, friends of the Economics Minister?)

4. What should be done about "squatters" who have already begun using the resource?

5. Should speculators be allowed to buy the resources?

6. Can a person sell the resource once she buys it?
Land Growth
http://www.edstephan.org/48states.html
Land Acts

- Land Ordinance of 1785
- Land Ordinance of 1787
- Preemption Act of 1841
- Homestead Act of 1862
- Graduation Act of 1854
Oklahoma, 1889
Clearing Land
Population Distribution by Regions, 1810-1860

Note: West = IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, MI, MN, MO, NE, OH, TN, WI, CA, NV, OR
Economic Incentives for Migration by Region

- Midwest
  - Corn, Wheat, Hogs
  - Cincinnati “Porkopolis”
  - Many German immigrants

- South
  - Cotton pulled people westward to Texas, Mississippi

- California
  - 1848 Gold Rush and Sutter’s Mill
• Migration depended on Economic Incentives
• This is true today
U.S. Public Land Sales and Cotton Prices, 1814-1860

The graph illustrates the relationship between land sales and cotton prices over the years 1814 to 1860. Land sales are shown on the left y-axis in U.S. dollars, with values ranging from 100,000 to 10,000,000. Cotton prices are depicted on the right y-axis in the form of average New York price middling uplands, ranging from 1 to 100 cents. The x-axis represents the years from 1814 to 1860.

Key observations include:
- A significant increase in land sales around 1815.
- Fluctuations in cotton prices with peaks in the mid-1820s and mid-1840s.
- A notable peak in land sales in the mid-1830s, accompanied by a rise in cotton prices.
- A drop in land sales around 1846, correlating with a decrease in cotton prices.
- A sustained period of lower land sales and cotton prices in the late 1850s.

The data suggests a correlation between land sales and cotton prices, with both sectors experiencing boom and bust cycles during this period.