

Abraham Lincoln and the Arts: Creation of a Leader

**A master's thesis submitted to the Jackson College of Graduate Studies at the
University of Central Oklahoma in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in History**

**Candice Fields
University of Central Oklahoma
Edmond, Oklahoma
December 2024**

Abraham Lincoln and the Arts: Creation of a Leader

By Candice Fields
University of Central Oklahoma

A Thesis

Approved for the Department of History and Geography

December 9, 2024

By 
Dr. Marc Goulding, Committee Chairperson


Dr. Chelsea Ball, Committee Member


Dr. Andrew Magnusson, Committee Member

Abstract

Master's Thesis by Candice Fields

Jackson College of Graduate Studies

University of Central Oklahoma

December 2024

Works of art illuminate our lives. They are vital to human experience and assist leadership development. I demonstrate research that reveals a relationship between the arts and leadership. The arts played a role in Lincoln's ability to lead the country through the cataclysm of the American Civil War. Culture surrounded Lincoln's life's journey. This thesis examines the life of Abraham Lincoln, researches the arts he experienced, and his growth as a leader. It examines art's potential to foster leadership qualities and explores the arts that permeated his life. We can learn from the culture that surrounded Abraham Lincoln. The examination and analysis of the association between art and leadership adds to evidence of the role the arts play in human experience: mentally, physically, and spiritually. I use a mixed methodology of analytical and qualitative research, studying primary resources of Lincoln's original work, his correspondence, private conversations, memos, speeches, as well as his published poetry, letters, and statements. I study his leadership development through the eyes of those who knew him. I examine oral histories, journals, diaries, and first-hand observations of Abraham Lincoln's friends, relatives, and colleagues. I examine the works and papers of friends, members of his cabinet, secretaries, law partners, and fellow politicians. I examine the literature, performing arts, and visual arts that encompassed Abraham Lincoln. I read the prose Lincoln read, recite the poetry Lincoln spoke, and listen to the music that enveloped his ears, to experience the arts as he experienced them. This study finds evidence that art in Lincoln's life was a significant component to his leadership

growth and assisted in his overall well-being. The arts are integrated in his achievements, concepts, and constitution. The arts acted as a support mechanism to help him mentally survive bitter losses, persevere despite poverty, abuse, poor physical and mental health, and nourished his daunting journey to become a profound intellectual, astute litigator, political animal, and arguably the most consequential president in our nation's history. Culture is consequential and has the power to transform lives. This study expands scholarship on Lincoln's leadership abilities, as well as leadership itself. Future studies on historically strong leaders and the arts they experienced would further this field of research.

Acknowledgements

I thank God for giving me the ability to write this thesis. I would like to thank my thesis committee chairperson, Marc Goulding, for leading me on this journey of scholarship and growth. You have encouraged me from day one. I appreciate your wisdom, support, and guidance. I want to thank my thesis committee members, Katrina Lacher, Patricia Loughlin, Andrew Magnusson, and Chelsea Ball. You have given me unwavering support and solid instruction. Without your mentorship in my educational journey, this study would not have been possible. I want to thank Stanley Adamiak for giving me inspiration and the tools needed to be an effective historian. I am thankful for my parents, Tom and Kristy Smith. You are my eternal cheerleaders. Your strength and encouragement have been vital for me to survive and thrive through unimaginable adversity. I want to thank my son, Eli Muller. You endured countless nights of take-out meals while I pursued my dream. You are my sunshine and my heart. Thank you, Brooke Lowe, for being a great friend and keeping me sane. I also want to thank my boyfriend, Steve Kelley. You have been my solid foundation and without you, I would have lost my way.

Table of Contents

Introduction	7
Historiography.....	12
Chapter I. Art and Leadership: Kindred Spirits in the Creation of Leaders	25
Chapter II. Lincoln's World: Early Interaction with the Arts.....	35
Chapter III. Whippersnapper: Discovery of a New World.....	57
Chapter IV. Free Man: Testing the Waters.....	72
Chapter V. Leader and Artist: A Rich Tapestry.....	97
Conclusion.....	120
Bibliography.....	124

Introduction

This thesis examines the life of Abraham Lincoln, researches the arts he experienced, and his growth as a leader. This study analyzes the contribution of the arts and the cultural environment from which he emerged. It questions if the arts were integrated in his achievements, concepts, and constitution. In Lincoln's simple, early life, he had examples of art surrounding him, and he was taken with it. I argue that the arts were a support mechanism, allowing him to mentally survive bitter losses, persevere despite poverty, abuse, poor physical and mental health, and nourished his daunting journey to become a profound intellectual, astute litigator, political animal, and arguably, the most consequential president in our nation's history.

Lincoln faced a division the country had never seen, left on his plate by his predecessor. The enormous task he faced required skillful politics and powerful cognitive abilities. I study his development through the eyes of those who knew him, as well as his writings and speeches. According to his contemporaries, Abraham Lincoln had impeccable timing, reasoning, and persuasive skills. Those who knew him say he had the unequivocal talent to understand people, patterns, and effectively predict collective thought. Historians have noted his skillful ability to express himself clearly to the common man and inflect humor to produce his desired effect. I search for a relationship between the arts influence and Lincoln's transformation into the able president who kept the country together on the brink of collapse. I explore an association between the culture that surrounded Lincoln and his growth as a leader.

Art is a personal expression of the human experience of imagination, intellect, and aesthetic content that opens the mind to new ideas and enriches our lives. It is proven to alleviate

depression and rework established neural pathways which lead to a new way of thinking.¹ It can develop inner emotional resilience, lower stress hormones, enhance mood, and boost self-confidence.² The stimuli of the arts leads to non-linear thought and requires the participant to create solutions.³ It provides the skills to learn, envision, critique, and possess self-reflection.⁴ Through culture, humans translate experiences and instill values while engaging all the senses. Art can heal and provide a brief escape from one's reality.⁵ It is a medium to express, grow, and reason in an unstable world.⁶ It can teach problem-solving skills and inspire risk-taking.⁷ Works of art illuminate our lives.

Its importance can be seen in the instance of the desperate mob waiting on the docks of New York City in 1841. Swarms of anxious people gathered to wait for the trans-Atlantic ship carrying the final installment of Charles Dickens' *The Old Curiosity Shop*.⁸ Art transports us to another time and place where we experience raw emotion, energy, and a reflection of ourselves. The arts are not limited to traditional confines but can be seen in a pioneer woman reading a Bible to her children, the sermon of a country preacher, and in comedic impersonations given on the stump of an old oak tree. What constitutes as art cannot be neatly delineated. Art is the result of a creative endeavor that causes the artist and their audience to experience an aesthetic,

¹ Ernest Harms, "The Development of Modern Art Therapy," *Leonardo* 8, no. 3 (1975): 241–244.

² Ellen Winner, *How Art Works: a Psychological Exploration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 212-216.

³ Marjorie Manifold and Enid Zimmerman, "'Everyone Needs an Art Education: Developing Leadership Through Positive Attitudes Toward Art Methods Courses,'" *Art Education* 64, no. 6 (2011): 33–39.

⁴ Manifold and Zimmerman, "Everyone Needs an Art Education," 33–39.

⁵ Winner, *How Art Works*, 211-212.

⁶ Winner, *How Art Works*, 211-212.

⁷ Manifold and Zimmerman, "Everyone Needs an Art Education," 33–39.

⁸ Charles Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop* (New York: Open Road Media Integrated Media, 2015), 1-544. Quoted in Winner, *How Art Works*, 1.

emotional, or reflective response. Art is elemental to mankind, and our engagement in art is primal.

Lincoln's life was filled with vast cultural influences. It is not widely known that Lincoln was an aesthete, spending much of his time reading literature and poetry. He wrote his own poetry, sang sorrowful ballads, participated in the performing arts of comedy, public speaking, storytelling, and took the art of photography to a new level. He listened to the music of the Marine Band on the grounds of the Capitol and reveled in theater performances of Shakespeare. Lincoln filled his mind with the arts and engaged in them until his death.

By evaluating the arts' effect on Lincoln and his leadership development, we can draw from this analysis a correlation and contribution, while acknowledging our present limitations. We may not know with certainty the full extent of the arts' impact on Lincoln, but we can perceive the evidence and observe what comes to light. The artistic activity of an esteemed president is significant because it illuminates the benefits of the arts and its relation to leadership skills. Until now, this analytical approach has been wholly unexplored. This thesis argues that art, in all its forms, played a role in Lincoln's leadership skills and assisted him in leading the country in an unparalleled time. This scholarship provides fresh inquiry in Lincoln academia and advances leadership. By examining Abraham Lincoln, the artist, we can view his work in a new light. Lincoln's storytelling, poetry, performance impersonation, and comedy hold the key to his artistic persona that has remained underexamined. The artistic skill with which he crafted his speeches and engaged in the new technology of the camera lens, carved an innovative path to lead the country. By exploring his poetry, use of humor, and the words he chose when conveying his ideas, we can mine for the base elements of his intellect, reasoning, and collaborative agility. This thesis questions artistic influences' possible provision of emotional intelligence, which

Lincoln needed to develop adept concepts that draw a nation together and move it forward. A wealth of information lies within primary sources that have never been examined for an art and leadership correlation. The examination and analysis of the connection between art and leadership attempts to answer exigent questions about the role the arts play in human experience: mentally, physically, and spiritually.

I approach this interdisciplinary study with a mixed methodology of analytical and qualitative research. Primary resources of Lincoln's original work, his correspondence, private conversations, memos, speeches, as well as his published poetry, letters, and statements are the foundation of my study. I examine oral histories, journals, diaries, and first-hand observations of Abraham Lincoln's friends, relatives, and colleagues.

Abraham Lincoln did not keep a journal, but many of his close friends did. I examine the works and papers of friends, members of his cabinet, secretaries, law partners, and fellow politicians. I experience the literature, performing arts, and visual arts that encompassed Abraham Lincoln. I read the prose Lincoln read, recite the poetry Lincoln spoke, and listen to the music that enveloped his ears, to experience the arts as he did. I look for evidence of art's influence in his management of stress and adversity. I search for correlations between the arts he experienced and the accumulation of leadership qualities he acquired throughout his life.

My work details the difficulties he experienced and how he dealt with his afflictions. I ask if art was a factor in the emotional buoyancy needed for the most stressful job at the most consequential time in American history. I assess records of his friends, family, and associates for evidence of the influence of the arts. In this study, patterns in Lincoln's artistic influences and in his own art are highlighted. Lincoln's own words, thoughts, and intentions are analyzed for any connection between his physical and mental state and the aesthetic response. I interpret the

patterns, stimuli, and response, as well as provide discernment in Abraham Lincoln's experiences with the arts.

The examination of Abraham Lincoln's history is vital to the origination of his leadership abilities. Most historians attempt to pinpoint the source of his genius. Thousands of works about Abraham Lincoln exist, and many outline knowledge to be gained from Lincoln's leadership. This study proposes that the arts fueled Lincoln's mind, enabling him to excel in leadership. I seek evidence of the arts influence on intellectual acuity, mental health, and the development of leadership skills.

Lincoln's experience with the arts and its effects have not been previously contemplated. In a time when the humanities are largely marginalized, the study of the arts and how they are linked to a widely admired president is a worthwhile study. This thesis is an unconventional and innovative approach to understand the cultural influence in Lincoln's life and pursues evidence of its assistance in his life's journey. It serves to enhance Lincoln scholarship, while investigating the impact of the arts. This examination explores the concept that culture is consequential and has the power to transform lives.

Historiography

An interdisciplinary study of Abraham Lincoln's leadership growth and his participation in the arts has never been performed. I blend research in disciplines of leadership, the arts, and history. This approach breaks from convention and produces fresh scholarship. Research in the field of leadership is essential to develop accomplished future leaders. As the fields of art neuroscience and art psychology are budding, it is vital to make the association between the arts and its multitude of benefits. The arts are devalued at a huge cost for future generations. Current scientific breakthroughs allow us to investigate deeper into historically strong leaders and pursue evidence of an art leadership connection. This study examines the art leadership connection through the life of Abraham Lincoln and his formidable leadership skills.

Leadership qualities have been considered since Plato's *Republic* in 375 BCE.⁹ Renowned leadership scholar Ralph M. Stogdill challenges the popular notion that leaders possess similar characteristics in "Personal Factors Associated with Leadership: A Survey of Literature."¹⁰ Stogdill reviews leadership studies that focus on attributes and distinctive elements of leaders.¹¹ His study concludes that by merely having traits of a leader, one does not automatically become a leader.¹² A varying degree of factors determine the outcome of leadership: such as the collective situation and makeup of the group.¹³ The leader must be able to identify the group's problems, compose and methodize solutions to carry out the group's mutual desires. The group must see the leader's superior leadership characteristics and their ability to carry out tasks toward a goal that the individuals within the group could not themselves attain.

⁹ Plato, *Republic*, ed. G. R. F. Ferrari, trans. Tom Griffith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 1-377.

¹⁰ Ralph Stogdill, "Personal Factors Associated with Leadership: A Survey of Literature," *The Journal of Psychology* 25, no. 1 (1948): 35-71.

¹¹ Stogdill, "Personal Factors Associated with Leadership," 35.

¹² Stogdill, "Personal Factors Associated with Leadership," 64.

¹³ Stogdill, "Personal Factors Associated with Leadership," 65-66.

Leadership scholar, Bernard M. Bass furthers Stogdill's research on leadership in Bass & Stogdill's *Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research & Managerial Applications*.¹⁴ Bass returns to the leadership trait theory by examining leadership studies, parting from Stogdill's earlier belief, citing that personal characteristics do separate leaders and followers.¹⁵ Bass reports that possession of leadership traits lend to the probability of ascendancy to power.¹⁶ Traits alone do not account for all leaders but are equally dependent upon situational variations and the group environment.¹⁷ Bass notes that there is abundant evidence that certain personality traits produce leadership.¹⁸ Traits such as resolve, self-assurance, diligence, and a strong psyche is present in leaders.¹⁹ Ego strength is of particular importance as it allows the individual to manage hardships, mentally heal from personal failures, and handle adversity in a healthy manner.²⁰ It preserves mental balance and assists the individual to navigate with fortitude.²¹ Creative individuals who actively pursue life with originality materialize as leaders.²² Bass reports traits of creative intelligence and eminent memorization skills are shared amongst executive leaders.²³ Individuals with a vast memory can capture concepts and use them to create unconceived solutions.²⁴ People who possess social adeptness and the ability to recall names and faces

¹⁴ Bernard M. Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications* (New York: Free Press, 1990), vii-1182.

¹⁵ Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 87.

¹⁶ Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 87.

¹⁷ Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 87.

¹⁸ Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 87.

¹⁹ Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 87.

²⁰ R. C. Curtis "Self-Defeating Behaviors," in *Encyclopedia of Human Behavior* (New York: Elsevier Inc, 2012), 3:307-313.

²¹ Mohammad Ali Besharat, Somayeh Ramesh, and Elham Moghimi, "Spiritual Health Mediates the Relationship between Ego-Strength and Adjustment to Heart Disease," *Health Psychology Open* 5, no. 1 (2018): 1-8.

²² Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 88-89.

²³ Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 99-101.

²⁴ Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 101.

manifest as leaders.²⁵ He also finds that leaders are empathetic, perceptive to the designs of others, excel in communication, and can instantly adapt to new circumstances.²⁶

Donald T. Phillips explores the origination of leadership in *Lincoln on Leadership for Today: Abraham Lincoln's Approach to 21st-Century Issues*.²⁷ He argues that leadership proficiency can be cultivated by examining Lincoln's principled life. Phillips juxtaposes methods Lincoln used to handle the issues of his day to our current political issues and hypothesizes Lincoln's views of our present-day affairs. The author focuses on Lincoln's love of people, his faith in God, and his intrinsic integrity as the key to his powerful leadership and infers those values should guide us as a nation.²⁸

President Dwight D. Eisenhower has a similar assessment of Lincoln in his contribution to *Abraham Lincoln 150th Anniversary* in "Lincoln's Leadership."²⁹ Eisenhower's essay is a combination of speeches he gave at Hodgenville, Kentucky on April 23, 1954 and at Columbia University on February 12, 1949.³⁰ He acknowledges Lincoln's powerful leadership abilities, methods, and his moral compass.³¹ Eisenhower agrees that Lincoln's kindness and humanitarian values are core factors of his successful leadership.³² Eisenhower himself possessed many of Lincoln's talents. As the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force in Europe

²⁵ Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 101, 109.

²⁶ Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 122.

²⁷ Donald T. Phillips, *Lincoln on Leadership For Today: Abraham Lincoln's Approach to 21st-Century Issues* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017), 1-324.

²⁸ Phillips, *Lincoln on Leadership For Today*, 1-324.

²⁹ Dwight Eisenhower, "Lincoln's Leadership," in *Abraham Lincoln 150th Anniversary* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1958), 1-3.

³⁰ Eisenhower, "Lincoln's Leadership," 1-3.

³¹ Eisenhower, "Lincoln's Leadership," 1-3.

³² Eisenhower, "Lincoln's Leadership," 1-3.

during World War II, he was able to construct an effective fighting force out of fractious, pugnacious generals.³³

Doris Kearns Goodwin agrees with President Eisenhower and Phillip's assessment of Lincoln. Kearns Goodwin's *Leadership in Turbulent Times* examines the leadership of four presidents: Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Lyndon Johnson. The author states that Lincoln's genius in leadership lies within his relationship with the American people. He routinely heard the concerns of the average Joe and considered it his job to hear them out. She notes that great leaders reflect their constituents and act as a mechanism of the people. The author argues that Lincoln's desire to lead resided within his love for his community and his intention to improve their lives while gaining their respect. The author also comments that it is Lincoln's morality and compassion that drew the country together and left a legacy of presidential leadership for others to follow.³⁴

Author and political scientist, James David Barber concurs with Kearns-Goodwin's assessment. He points out in *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House* that Abraham Lincoln's valuable quality as a leader was his sincerity and ability to connect with the common man.³⁵ Barber notes that an individual's character is a primary indicator of what type of leadership they will produce.³⁶ How the individual confronts challenges, how they see the world, and the way in which they react to life's hardships predict their performance as a leader.³⁷ Barber argues against the theory that one must look at

³³ Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millett, *A War to Be Won: Fighting the Second World War* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2000), 272, 301.

³⁴ Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Leadership in Turbulent Times* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2018), 1-473, 368, xvi, 4.

³⁵ James David Barber, *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1992), 450.

³⁶ Barber, *The Presidential Character*, 1-576.

³⁷ Barber, *The Presidential Character*, 6-8.

personality traits to interpret leadership capability, but instead should look at the individual's tendencies.³⁸ All people have varying degrees of the same desires that drive human behavior.³⁹

Erwin Hargrove's *Presidential Leadership: Personality and Political Style* has the opposite opinion.⁴⁰ Hargrove studies factors that allow for successful leadership in a presidency and notes that certain personality traits are essential to the office of the presidency.⁴¹ He acknowledges that situation does play a part in success, but the previously honed skills and characteristics are vital.⁴² Hargrove finds that presidents who hustle have the strongest leadership and possess pragmatism and adaptability.⁴³ The author states that the best presidential leaders are personally fulfilled by the position, truly believe in their purpose, and are political animals.⁴⁴

There has been much analysis of the benefits of the arts. Ellen Winner's *How Art Works* examines if art can be defined and how art is experienced.⁴⁵ Winner has been studying the art and mind connection for over thirty years. She argues that almost everyone engages in art in some form, whether it is as an artist or a spectator.⁴⁶ She explains that art is a culturally contrived conceptualization which allows for the definition of art to constantly evolve.⁴⁷ There is no straightforward or rigid definition of art.⁴⁸ According to numerous psychological studies and experiments, art is linked to emotion, and it produces a biological response.⁴⁹ Art cannot be

³⁸ Barber, *The Presidential Character*, 7

³⁹ Barber, *The Presidential Character*, 7.

⁴⁰ Erwin C Hargrove, *Presidential Leadership: Personality and Political Style* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1966) 1-153.

⁴¹ Hargrove, *Presidential Leadership*, 5.

⁴² Hargrove, *Presidential Leadership*, 151-152.

⁴³ Hargrove, *Presidential Leadership*, 142-146.

⁴⁴ Hargrove, *Presidential Leadership*, 142-146.

⁴⁵ Winner, *How Art Works*, 1-245.

⁴⁶ Ellen Winner, *Invented Worlds: The Psychology of the Arts* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982), 1.

⁴⁷ Winner, *How Art Works*, 237.

⁴⁸ Winner, *How Art Works*, 238.

⁴⁹ Winner, *How Art Works*, 212-216.

firmly delineated, and it can be studied in a multidisciplinary approach.⁵⁰ The author explains the healing power of art and how art alters the perspective of negative experiences and transforms them into beneficial experiences.⁵¹ Art is a therapeutic conveyance of human expression that allows participants to ameliorate life's scars.

Invented Worlds: The Psychology of the Arts, also by Winner, explores the meaning of self-expression and its influence.⁵² Art has traditionally been seen as an expansive abstraction without parameters.⁵³ Winner argues that art must possess aesthetic qualities, such as communicating or embodying emotion.⁵⁴ It may constitute as a work of art for the observer, but not for the creator, or the other way around.⁵⁵ Her study attempts to answer art's influence on the artist and the observer. She states the artists use reasoning, analysis, and critical thinking skills as they create art, and the observer unconsciously extracts meaning through those same problem-solving skills.⁵⁶ Cognitive psychologists have come to these conclusions by studying how people comprehend and construct varying elements of art, rather than the work in its entirety.⁵⁷

Cognitive psychologist Scott Barry Kaufman and Carolyn Gregoire join Winner in the study of creativity in *Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind*.⁵⁸ Kaufman and Gregoire examine the neuroscience and psychology of individuals engaged in art, the origin of individual creativity, and character traits of history's creative souls. The authors argue the importance of creativity and believe brilliance can be measured in alternate ways, aside

⁵⁰ Winner, *How Art Works*, 238, 245.

⁵¹ Winner, *How Art Works*, 211-216.

⁵² Winner, *Invented Worlds*, 1-431.

⁵³ Winner, *Invented Worlds*, 5.

⁵⁴ Winner, *Invented Worlds*, 8.

⁵⁵ Winner, *Invented Worlds*, 8.

⁵⁶ Winner, *Invented Worlds*, 386.

⁵⁷ Winner, *Invented Worlds*, 385.

⁵⁸ Scott Barry Kaufman and Carolyn Gregoire, *Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind* (New York: Perigee, 2015), xi-252.

from IQ tests.⁵⁹ Kaufman's research leads to intriguing findings. He discovers that creativity emerges from minds that are disordered, yet cognizant, flexible, and visionary.⁶⁰ Creative individuals, those who can conceive and experiment with non-existent ideas, have complicated minds.⁶¹ They are not confined by convention, but can adventurously experiment with new concepts while having the fortitude to withstand adversity and failure.⁶² Individuals who are reflective and mindful, yet allow their consciousness to drift, tap into their creativity and envisage complex thought.⁶³ The authors explain that artistic activity involves the entire brain in a complicated synergy.⁶⁴ When engaged in creative activities, the human brain experiences an intricate cognitive dance that sets the mind into a state of total immersion.⁶⁵

Neuroscientist G. Gabrielle Starr adds to the scholarship of art and creativity in *Feeling Beauty: The Neuroscience of Aesthetic Experience*.⁶⁶ Starr details the significance of art and aesthetics, as well as the role it plays in our lives. She explains at the neurological level, aesthetic experience changes our understanding and interaction with the world.⁶⁷ The author argues that art has a physical influence by mobilizing integral cognitive systems which forms our sense of self, allows us to contemplate ourselves, and the world around us.⁶⁸ It also enlightens our

⁵⁹ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind*, xxiii-xxvi.

⁶⁰ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind*, xxiv-xvi.

⁶¹ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind*, xix-xxix.

⁶² Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind*, 164-165.

⁶³ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind*, 42-43.

⁶⁴ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind*, xxvi.

⁶⁵ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind*, xxix.

⁶⁶ G. Gabrielle Starr, *Feeling Beauty: The Neuroscience of Aesthetic Experience* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015), vii-259.

⁶⁷ Starr, *Feeling Beauty*, 28.

⁶⁸ Starr, *Feeling Beauty*, 66.

awareness and value of aesthetic experience.⁶⁹ Aesthetic awareness bridges our conceptualization and our interactions throughout our life's journey.⁷⁰

Paul Armstrong maintains the importance of interdisciplinary study between the arts and neuroscience. He documents the neurological processes that occur when we experience art in *How Literature Plays with the Brain: The Neuroscience of Reading and Art*.⁷¹ The brain's dualistic nature is captured by neuroaesthetic study and unveils its versatility and malleability.⁷² Armstrong clarifies that neuroscience and aesthetic experience correspond and interconnect.⁷³ Cognitive science explains irregularity in the aesthetic experience.⁷⁴ The author establishes that the arts and culture shape our brain.⁷⁵ Neurological and psychological processes, as well as motor skills, are set into motion by exposure to a cultural milieu.⁷⁶ Science has proven the arts spur a multitude of skills that would have never occurred without its influential environment.⁷⁷ Armstrong goes on to explain that reading creates a second state of consciousness.⁷⁸ This duplicating effect presents to the reader with alternative beliefs, ideas, and a completely different mindset.⁷⁹

According to Neuroscientist Anjan Chatterjee, during the aesthetic experience, there is an interplay of various brain regions that process memories in the structures that is responsible for

⁶⁹ Starr, *Feeling Beauty*, 66.

⁷⁰ Starr, *Feeling Beauty*, 148.

⁷¹ Paul B. Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain: The Neuroscience of Reading and Art* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), ix-221.

⁷² Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 182.

⁷³ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 7.

⁷⁴ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 3.

⁷⁵ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 131.

⁷⁶ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 131.

⁷⁷ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 131.

⁷⁸ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 136.

⁷⁹ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 136.

forming memories and experiencing pleasure.⁸⁰ Chatterjee enhances aesthetic science with his work, *The Aesthetic Brain: How We Evolved to Desire Beauty and Enjoy Art*.⁸¹ He asserts that it is common for art to have aesthetic properties, but says aesthetic properties are not necessarily art.⁸² The author maintains the definition of art is illusive, with no real properties to identify it.⁸³ He admits that art can produce unconscious complex emotions and autonomic arousal, such as increased heart rate, perspiration, and pupil dilation.⁸⁴ Yet the author contradicts himself in saying that art is not instinctual, as most experts suggest.⁸⁵ The definition of instinct is a natural, involuntary reaction to stimuli. Chatterjee believes that we have an instinct for beauty, but all beauty is not art. He argues that art develops from culture and historic events accidentally and without design.⁸⁶

Lincoln's tumultuous environment is chronicled in Eric Foner's *A House Divided: America in the Age of Lincoln*. Foner explains the dichotomy of a country that professed to value liberty yet allowed millions of people to endure continual inhuman bondage. As George Washington predicted, the two halves of the country were growing apart. The author explains the nation's justification of slavery and how it was deeply engrained in all components of government, theology, and legislation. Westward expansion and industrialization fed the division between the North and the South. Foner explains that new land was the life blood of slavery. The

⁸⁰ Chatterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 142.

⁸¹ Anjan Chatterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain: How We Evolved to Desire Beauty and Enjoy Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), vii-217.

⁸² Chatterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 116.

⁸³ Chatterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 118-121.

⁸⁴ Chatterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 133.

⁸⁵ Chatterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 184.

⁸⁶ Chatterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 184.

Dred Scott decision was the spark that fulminated the rupture of the nation from which Lincoln emerged.⁸⁷

The origin of leadership and the effects of the arts play a profound role in the examination of the life of Abraham Lincoln, yet this has been ignored by Lincoln scholar Michael Burlingame. He creates one of the most comprehensive works on Abraham Lincoln in the twenty-first century, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life*.⁸⁸ Burlingame focuses on Lincoln's life as a whole and uses primary sources that have been overlooked by previous biographers. He outlines Lincoln's effectiveness as a leader and gives an interpretation of Lincoln's personal life. Like many historians and leadership experts before him, he attributes Lincoln's success as a leader to his character and his command of language.⁸⁹ Burlingame briefly touches upon Lincoln's experiences in various avenues of art, such as poetry and literature, while listing the works Lincoln read without seriously contemplating its effect. The artistic content that entered Lincoln's mind has not been properly investigated. This thesis builds upon Burlingame's work with analysis into the influence of the artistic realm.

William H. Herndon provides the most consequential information about Abraham Lincoln ever recorded. Herndon, Lincoln's friend of more than twenty years and law partner of seventeen years, aimed to write a biography of his dear friend and bring to life the real man, not just the symbolic rail-splitter. Herndon was determined to give an accurate accounting of Lincoln. He interviewed Lincoln's family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues in Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, and Virginia, gathering a plethora of oral testimony over a two-year period.⁹⁰ Herndon interviewed a diverse group of over 250 individuals who had personal recollections of

⁸⁷ Eric Foner, *A House Divided: America in the Age of Lincoln* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1990), 1-179.

⁸⁸ Michael Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life*, 2 vols. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2008), 1-1034.

⁸⁹ Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln*, 2:833-834.

⁹⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, xv.

Lincoln.⁹¹ He poked and prodded until he was satisfied that he had the true account. He wrote letters to those he could not visit. The testimonies detail Lincoln's childhood through his adult life in Springfield. Herndon discovered how little he knew of Lincoln's early life once he began collecting histories. The information that Herndon gathered contains invaluable evidence of how Abraham Lincoln materialized. One hundred ten years later, historians Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis published the raw material Herndon used for his book in *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements*, making available this treasure trove of first-hand accounts for the first time.⁹²

Herndon's interviews vividly capture not only personal statements, but the interviewees' behavior, their surroundings, and his personal impressions of them. For instance, in a remarkable interview with Lincoln's stepmother, Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln, Herndon notes that she has trouble breathing. He fears she would have nothing to offer because of her age and incoherent manner. He begins by asking her simple questions, when she suddenly becomes lucid and focuses her large blue eyes on her stepson's friend. Herndon stays for dinner after the interview and notes Mrs. Lincoln's hearty appetite. As Herndon leaves, she holds his hand, breaks into tears, and sends her love to Mrs. Mary Lincoln and her children.⁹³

The details in Herndon's records are of incredible historic value. Historians of previous decades discounted the importance of oral history, citing it as shaky evidence, though modern-day historians understand the value of oral history. Much of what we know about Abraham Lincoln comes from personal recollections. Earlier historians disregarded Herndon due to influential Lincoln scholar James G. Randall. Randall scoffed at Herndon and thought his

⁹¹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, xvii.

⁹² William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), vii-827.

⁹³ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 109.

interviewees' reminiscences were an unreliable historic record. Randall's heavy bias against Herndon can be seen in *Lincoln the President: Springfield to Gettysburg*.⁹⁴ He argues that Herndon's informants had been mentally manipulated and were under suggestive influence.⁹⁵ Randall infers that Herndon was hypnotizing his interviewees and soliciting testimony.⁹⁶ Randall calls Herndon a "self-made psychoanalyst" and his Lincoln testimonies "psychoanalytical conjecture."⁹⁷ He states that Herndon's work cannot be trusted.⁹⁸ Randall's personal vendetta against Herndon stained his reputation.

Pulitzer-Prize winning historian Don E. Fehrenbacher and Virginia Fehrenbacher argue that oral histories of Lincoln should not be rejected in his oral history on Lincoln, *Recollected Words of Abraham Lincoln*.⁹⁹ They state that historians must carefully evaluate the validity of personal accounts, which is not an exact science.¹⁰⁰ Uniform testimony can be a strong indicator of sound evidence.¹⁰¹ A great number Herndon's informants' histories overlap into a robust record of Lincoln in his early years. The authors note that blended oral histories would not vary greatly from Lincoln's works.¹⁰²

Historians Michael Burlingame, Albert Beveridge, and Rodney O. Davis have researched Herndon's materials and recognize them as a valuable, valid historical record. Burlingame calls Herndon's testimonies a "gold mine."¹⁰³ I find Herndon's oral history to be sound, as the

⁹⁴ J. G. Randall, *Lincoln the President: Springfield to Gettysburg* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1945), 1:x, 2:325.

⁹⁵ Randall, *Lincoln the President*, 2:325.

⁹⁶ Randall, *Lincoln the President*, 2:325.

⁹⁷ Randall, *Lincoln the President*, 1:x.

⁹⁸ Randall, *Lincoln the President*, 1:ix.

⁹⁹ Don E. Fehrenbacher and Virginia Fehrenbacher, *Recollected Words of Abraham Lincoln* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), li.

¹⁰⁰ Fehrenbacher and Fehrenbacher, *Recollected Words of Abraham Lincoln*, li.

¹⁰¹ Fehrenbacher and Fehrenbacher, *Recollected Words of Abraham Lincoln*, lii.

¹⁰² Fehrenbacher and Fehrenbacher, *Recollected Words of Abraham Lincoln*, liii.

¹⁰³ Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln*, 2:840.

interviewees corroborate their remembrances of Lincoln. This thesis relies greatly upon Herndon's interviews as they are abundant in rich details and are the only available record of Lincoln's early life. Oral histories give credence to individuals who have been overlooked by historians such as Randall.

The disciplines of leadership, art neuroscience, art psychology, and history are rapidly evolving. Scientific studies in art and leadership show evidence of the arts assisting the development of leadership qualities and attributes. Within this study, I meld the results of scientific research regarding the arts and leadership and apply it to my history of Abraham Lincoln's experience with the arts and his evolution into a leader. My history is drawn from primary sources with firsthand accounts of those who personally interacted with Lincoln. I search for patterns of change in Lincoln's history and examine them in their historical context. This scholarship blends the academic work of scholars and applies it in a new way to better understand Lincoln, our culture, and ourselves. Quotes from original sources retain original grammar and spelling, except when noted. Quotes from texts Lincoln read authenticate the art that entered his mind. This thesis is my historical interpretation of Abraham Lincoln's experience with the arts and his rise to become a supreme leader.

Chapter 1

Art and Leaders: Kindred Spirits in the Creation of Leaders

Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition. Whether it be true or not, I can say for one that I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow man, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. How far I shall succeed in gratifying this ambition, is yet to be developed. I am young and unknown to many of you. I was born and have ever remained in the most humble walks of life. I have no wealthy or popular relations to recommend me. My case is thrown exclusively upon the independent voters of this county, and if elected they will have conferred a favor upon me, for which I shall be unremitting in my labors to compensate.¹⁰⁴

Abraham Lincoln, March 9, 1832
First speech as a political candidate

Those who knew Abraham Lincoln personally commented on his deep, burning ambition. According to Lincoln's law partner, William H. Herndon, ambition burned within his soul and was the fire that drove him.¹⁰⁵ Lincoln's artistic creations and legacy reflect that fire. Art is the nucleus of society and is the essential language through which we communicate.¹⁰⁶ It is an expression of personal emotion, inner thoughts, and a reflection of the soul. Art is also our cultural bond to express our remembrance of an important past, our present emotions, and dreams for our future. Ellen Winner, a specialist in the psychology of art, writes that art has a peculiar influence over humanity.¹⁰⁷ Its effects upon the human body have not been completely understood until recently. Science has proven that the arts affect us physically and mentally. Neuroscience has entered the world of the arts. Denis Dutton, philosopher of art, notes that one of the purposes of art is to induce neurological growth.¹⁰⁸ Neuroscientist Semir Zeki originated

¹⁰⁴ Abraham Lincoln, "Communication to the People of Sangamo County," *Sangamo Journal*, March 9, 1832, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), 1:5-9.

¹⁰⁵ William Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln: The History and Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln as Originally Written By William H. Herndon and Jesse W. Weik* (Cabin John: Wildside Press, 2008), 304.

¹⁰⁶ Lev Vygotsky, "The Psychology of Art" In *Art and Its Significance: An Anthology of Aesthetic Theory*, ed. Stephen David Ross (Albany: State University Press, 1984), 518.

¹⁰⁷ Winner, *Invented Worlds*, 386.

¹⁰⁸ Winner, *How Art Works*, 10-12.

the term neuroaesthetics, which is scholarship that analyzes the connection of art with the processes of the brain.¹⁰⁹ Perception and comprehension are analyzed in multidisciplinary, neurological studies involving the entire spectrum of arts.¹¹⁰ The human brain contains 100 billion neurons which are interlinked with 100 trillion synapses.¹¹¹ The interaction of these cells give us the ability to reason and have intellectual thought.¹¹² Every thought, emotion, and dream is connected to our central nervous system.¹¹³ Our brains' ability to be malleable is what makes individual humans distinctly unique.¹¹⁴ The synapses collect and incorporate new intelligence because of its ability to grow and modify. Learning different skills causes the brain to physically change.¹¹⁵ The brain's flexibility allows us to quickly adapt to the inconstancy of our lives.¹¹⁶ Synaptic connections will expand or diminish in response to alterations in our environment despite our age.¹¹⁷ Fred Gage and fellow scientists of the Salk Institute discover in a 1997 study that the brain cells in mice tripled when they lived in a varied, stimulative habitat.¹¹⁸ Their environment affects the biological growth and cognitive development. Cultural stimulation directly affects our minds and abilities. Learning from our environment and cultural influences is intrinsic.¹¹⁹ When we engage in new experiences, our brain sends neuromodulators to modify synaptic connections.¹²⁰ Our brain responds to our environment by increasing or decreasing the

¹⁰⁹ Chatterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 127.

¹¹⁰ Starr, *Feeling Beauty*, xiv.

¹¹¹ John Paul Eberhard, *Brain Landscape: The Coexistence of Neuroscience and Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), xiii.

¹¹² Eberhard, *Brain Landscape*, xiii.

¹¹³ Chatterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 124.

¹¹⁴ Eberhard, *Brain Landscape*, 125.

¹¹⁵ Chatterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 124.

¹¹⁶ Eberhard, *Brain Landscape*, 181.

¹¹⁷ Eberhard, *Brain Landscape*, xiv.

¹¹⁸ "An Enriched Environment Stimulates an Increase in the number of Nerve Cells in Brains of Older Mice," Salk Institute for Biological Studies, Salk News, accessed on December 13, 2023, <https://www.salk.edu/news-release/an-enriched-environment-stimulates-an-increase-in-the-number-of-nerve-cells-in-brains-of-older-mice/>.

¹¹⁹ Chatterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 124.

¹²⁰ Eberhard, *Brain Landscape*, 31-32.

number of neurons in one area.¹²¹ The developing brain is heavily shaped by its environment, and the environment instills our core values and beliefs.¹²²

Our emotional response to art affects us neurologically.¹²³ We connect to art through physiologically, behaviorally, and subjectively. Gestalt psychologist Rudolph Arnheim, studies visual processing and finds that the aesthetic experience is demonstrated in the brain through synergy of neural connections that process awareness, interpretation, and mood.¹²⁴ MRI and magnetoencephalography are able to track the neurological activity of people who are engaged in art.¹²⁵ We respond to art through brain structures that are involved with the brain reward system.¹²⁶ The effect of the art response is more complex than basic pleasure.¹²⁷ The art response involves synaptic connections with cognition, emotion, and sensation.¹²⁸ Our brain is fed and nurtured by stimulation consonance and incongruity, which is the neurological response to the arts.¹²⁹ It takes root and burgeons.¹³⁰ Neuroaesthetic studies prove that art is absorbed by the brain and is imprinted in our neurological structures.¹³¹ Art is the impetus that creates divergent abstract thought, strengthens critical thinking skills, and advances social intelligence, empathy, and challenges the brain with different perspectives of the human condition.

A series of studies provide evidence as to how music enhances higher brain function and improves spatial and creative reasoning. Frances H. Rauscher, Gordon L. Shaw, and Katherine

¹²¹Eberhard, *Brain Landscape*, xiv.

¹²² Eberhard, *Brain Landscape*, xiii.

¹²³ Chaterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 132.

¹²⁴ Chaterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 138.

¹²⁵ Chaterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 127.139-140.

¹²⁶ Chaterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 142.

¹²⁷ Chaterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 181.

¹²⁸ Chaterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 183-184.

¹²⁹ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, x.

¹³⁰ Chaterjee, *The Aesthetic Brain*, 185.

¹³¹ Chiara Cappelletto, *Embodying Art: How We See, Think, Feel, and Create* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2022), 54.

N. Ky conducts an experiment noting the improvement of research participants' visualization, comprehension, and problem solving after listening to Mozart.¹³² Neural patterns are mapped, and the findings show that music assists in assembling neuronal firing patterns in the cortical area that involves association and operational conduct.¹³³ Music trains the brain and improves reasoning.¹³⁴ When the brain is occupied in creating art, there is a complex coordination of multi-neurological systems at work. When the brain is performing problem-solving, logistic, and critical thinking, the creative areas of the brain are active.¹³⁵ The development of these neural connections are vital for empathy, communication, and reasoning.¹³⁶ This is where creativity is born. When the brain is engaged in art, these dispersed, intricate neural connections are at work throughout the brain.¹³⁷ Our brains crave the sequence of repetitive stimulation and discordance that art provides.¹³⁸ The brain needs consistency and pliability.¹³⁹ The arts expand our collaborative faculties and enhances group cohesion skills, which are key characteristics of great leaders.¹⁴⁰ It feeds the mind and improves cognitive abilities necessary for leadership and management.

Art and goal directed behavior are intertwined. Cognitive processes produce creative thoughts to plan for the future, analyze data, and respond effectively.¹⁴¹ The neurological processes that organize and assess information engage the neural connections that generates

¹³² Frances H. Rauscher, Gordon L. Shaw, and Katherine N. Ky, "Listening to Mozart Enhances Spatial-temporal Reasoning: Towards a Neurophysiological Basis," *Neuroscience Letters* 185, no. 1 (1995): 44-47.

¹³³ Rauscher, Shaw, and Ky, "Listening to Mozart Enhances Spatial-temporal Reasoning, 44.

¹³⁴ Rauscher, Shaw, and Ky, "Listening to Mozart Enhances Spatial-temporal Reasoning, 47.

¹³⁵ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create*, xxvii.

¹³⁶ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create*, xxviii.

¹³⁷ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 12.

¹³⁸ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 14.

¹³⁹ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 84.

¹⁴⁰ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 172.

¹⁴¹ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create*, xxviii.

unique concepts and conceive solutions to daily tasks.¹⁴² Scientists are able to map the neurobiological art response by scanning brains of participants while being absorbed in art.¹⁴³ The results show that art allows us to organize multiple veins of reasoning.¹⁴⁴ The arts augment imagination, emotional intelligence, focus, motivation, curiosity, and tenacity.¹⁴⁵ Art influences diverse ideas, unusually multifaceted qualities, and molds the brain. It is impactful beyond what is visible to the human eye. Art requires the artist and the viewer to think critically, creatively, and view their perspective within the world. The artistic mind is flexible, malleable, open-minded, inquisitive, and has a sense of self-possession and high-risk tolerance.¹⁴⁶ Fearlessness and taking risks in artistic expression leads to unconventional, novel concepts and new ways of thinking.¹⁴⁷

Much insight has been gained regarding the artistic mind. A 2014 study by Dutch psychologist Matthijs Baas tests mindfulness skills to see if they predict creativity.¹⁴⁸ The study finds that focus and mindfulness are connected to the production of creativity.¹⁴⁹ Those who have a keen awareness have greater mental agility, which lends to pronounced problem-solving skills as they process varied thought patterns.¹⁵⁰

Research goes back further. In 1958 psychologist Frank Barron, creativity researcher, joins famed psychologist Donald MacKinnon, Office of Strategic Services spy analyst, to

¹⁴² Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create*, xxix.

¹⁴³ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create*, xxix.

¹⁴⁴ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create*, xxix.

¹⁴⁵ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create*, xxx-xxxiv.

¹⁴⁶ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create*, xxiv-xxv.

¹⁴⁷ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create*, 166-168.

¹⁴⁸ Matthijs Baas, Barbara Nevicka, and Femke S. Ten Velden, "Specific Mindfulness Skills Differentially Predict Creative Performance," *Sage Journals* 40, no. 9 (May 23, 2014): 1092-1106.

¹⁴⁹ Baas, Nevicka, and Ten Velden, "Specific Mindfulness Skills Differentially Predict Creative Performance," 1092-1106.

¹⁵⁰ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create*, 120.

perform a study at Berkeley's Institute of Personality Assessment and Research.¹⁵¹ Barron's field of study integrates the arts, religion, and philosophy within the study of the creative mind.

Barron's aim is to examine creative personalities and see what makes them prosperous.¹⁵² Truman Capote and William Carlos Williams are among the artistic participants in the study.¹⁵³ Barron and MacKinnon find that the artistic group are adventurous freethinkers.¹⁵⁴ They accept unorthodoxy and disorder, and they use disorder to create palatable structure.¹⁵⁵

Leadership, like art, is a ubiquitous experience.¹⁵⁶ Ralph Stogdill, scholar in leadership studies, notes that it necessitates motion and creation.¹⁵⁷ British Psychologist, Charles Bird, identifies traits that are associated with leadership: initiative, sense of humor, extraverted, sympathetic, self-confident, fairness, enthusiastic, and high intelligence.¹⁵⁸ Leadership begins with ambition, a sharp memory, a solid sense of self, and knowledge that they can hold their own intellectually, verbally and socially. Studies reflect that people who become leaders have a high intellect, but not to the extreme.¹⁵⁹ Leaders need to be able to connect with their followers and meet their needs. The ability to manage, organize, and conduct communal belief is essential.¹⁶⁰ Stogdill emphasizes that leaders must be relevant to followers and share similar characteristics and goals.¹⁶¹

¹⁵¹ Colby McDonald, "Spying the Secrets of Creativity," *California*, December 14, 2023.

¹⁵² McDonald, "Spying the Secrets of Creativity," December 14, 2023.

¹⁵³ McDonald, "Spying the Secrets of Creativity," December 14, 2023.

¹⁵⁴ Frank Barron, *Creativity and Psychological Health: Origins of Personal Vitality and Creative Freedom* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand, 1963), 215-224.

¹⁵⁵ Barron, *Creativity and Psychological Health*, 215-224.

¹⁵⁶ Ralph Stogdill, *Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: A Survey of Theory and Research*, ed. (New York: Free Press, 1981.) 5.

¹⁵⁷ Stogdill, "Personal Factors Associated with Leadership: A Survey of Literature," 64.

¹⁵⁸ Charles Bird, *Social Psychology* (New York: D. Appleton Century Company, 1940), 379-380.

¹⁵⁹ Stogdill, *Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 51.

¹⁶⁰ Ruth Brennan and Dan F. Hahn, *Listening for a President: A Citizen's Campaign Methodology* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1990), 74.

¹⁶¹ Stogdill, "Personal Factors Associated with Leadership," 64-65.

Leadership scholar Bernard M. Bass notes that leaders tend to possess a remarkable ability to communicate their ideas, have clear rationality and can quickly attune to changing situations.¹⁶² Leaders are alert to their surroundings, possess a depth of empathy, and are socially insightful.¹⁶³ They appraise conditions and create original solutions.¹⁶⁴ Studies suggest that leaders tend to be more competent than the follower.¹⁶⁵ Alexander Hamilton once said General George Washington's mere appearance produced calm in times of uncertainty and energized his army.¹⁶⁶ Like Washington, effective leaders are reflective and sensitive, while possessing originality.¹⁶⁷ Leaders have high social intelligence, the ability to read their audience, and predict future emotions and behavior. An effective leader is ambitious, distinctive, and steadfast.¹⁶⁸ President John Kennedy notes that courage is required in the leader to make needed decisive and disliked decisions.¹⁶⁹

Leadership is situational, as varying skills are needed in different arenas.¹⁷⁰ Bass argues that personality traits do play a role in forming leaders.¹⁷¹ The qualities must be present when the situation arises. Doris Kearns Goodwin cites in her book *Leadership in Turbulent Times* that resilience in the midst of adversity is the single most important factor of leadership.¹⁷² She discusses presidents Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Lyndon Johnson. Describing the presidents, she says they possess diverse qualities and become leaders as

¹⁶² Bernard M. Bass, *Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1973), 166-167.

¹⁶³ Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 66.

¹⁶⁴ Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 66.

¹⁶⁵ Bass, *Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior*, 19.

¹⁶⁶ Robert Shogan, *The Double-Edged Sword: How Character Makes and Ruins Presidents from Washington to Clinton* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999), 21.

¹⁶⁷ Bass, *Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior*, 178.

¹⁶⁸ Bass, *Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior*, 438.

¹⁶⁹ John Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2003), 17.

¹⁷⁰ Stogdill, *Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 73.

¹⁷¹ Bass, *Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior*, 17-18.

¹⁷² Kearns Goodwin, *Leadership in Turbulent Times*, xiii.

they mature their talents through determination and tenacity.¹⁷³ Bernard M. Bass's *Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior* states that numerous studies have found intelligence, swift decision-making, unique thought, and flexibility in changing circumstances is the key to being an apt leader.¹⁷⁴ Professor Erwin C. Hargrove of Vanderbilt University examines presidential leadership in *Presidential Leadership: Personality and Political Style*.¹⁷⁵ He states leadership requires skillful knowledge in the balance of social power.¹⁷⁶ Leadership studies show that leadership stems from a connection between the leader and their associates, in which the leader gains stature by exhibiting the ability to precipitate and accomplish a collective mission.¹⁷⁷ Bass reports that leadership is fortified by traits and personal habits, such as sensitivity, enterprise, grit, alertness, intuition, reliability, tenacity, and self-assurance.¹⁷⁸

Political Scientist James David Barber finds that character is primarily developed during childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood.¹⁷⁹ He emphasizes that character is the stimulus that creates a person's personal approach and perception.¹⁸⁰ The brain is influenced by its surrounding culture, which influences its character. Character is the driving force that propels us forward throughout life.

Leadership is required from the artist, and the leader is an artist. The purpose of the leader and the artist is to construct fresh concepts from their convictions, set them in motion, and create a bond with their audience to advance new ideas. Molded by their aesthetic environment, leaders and artists set the pace, create change, remain flexible, and dare to build from an internal

¹⁷³ Kearns Goodwin, *Leadership in Turbulent Times*, xii.

¹⁷⁴ Bass, *Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior*, 167.

¹⁷⁵ Hargrove, *Presidential Leadership*, 1-153.

¹⁷⁶ Hargrove, *Presidential Leadership*, 2.

¹⁷⁷ Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 77.

¹⁷⁸ Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, 77.

¹⁷⁹ Barber, *The Presidential Character*, 10.

¹⁸⁰ Barber, *The Presidential Character*, 485.

vision. They seek to capture the attention of their audience and seek participation in their original concepts. Leaders effectively solve problems, just as artists do throughout the creative process. They have a purpose and are risktakers, betting that their plan will be successful. They touch the discontented and reinvigorate ideas to ignite change.¹⁸¹ Leaders and artists visualize their plan and trust their instincts to the natural development of their works. They visualize the outcome before actions have brought their thought to reality. Both practices require patience to allow events to unfold and their work to develop.¹⁸² Both disciplines require patience to let their ideas develop and settle upon the audience. Abraham Lincoln once told an abolitionist that we must gradually remove slavery and not try to force it.¹⁸³ Like the ripened fruit of a pear tree, it would eventually fall.¹⁸⁴

The artist and leader bring their audience with them on their journey of creating a new reality. They have hope for a new future and are confident in their vision.¹⁸⁵ Both imagine what is possible and elicit emotion from the audience. This connects the pleasure of the viewer, much like the follower drawn to the leader.¹⁸⁶ The artist and leader analyze their surroundings and manifest important concepts.¹⁸⁷ Their outcome is a commentary and interpretation of their world.¹⁸⁸ Both practices require emotional and cognitive maturity, reasoning, and critical thinking skills. Both disciplines involve creativity, empathy, communication, critical thinking,

¹⁸¹ James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 137.

¹⁸² Winner, *How Art Works*, 12.

¹⁸³ Phillips, *Lincoln on Leadership For Today*, 245.

¹⁸⁴ Phillips, *Lincoln on Leadership For Today*, 245.

¹⁸⁵ Ronald G. Cook, "Profile in Leadership: A Hermeneutic Phenomenological Examination of Abraham Lincoln's Leadership during the Civil War Years." (PhD diss., Regent University, 2012), 41.

¹⁸⁶ Winner, *How Art Works*, 10.

¹⁸⁷ Alex Danchev and Debbie Lisle, "Introduction: Art, Politics, Purpose," *Review of International Studies* 35, no. 4 (2009): 775.

¹⁸⁸ Danchev and Lisle, "Introduction," 775.

and grit.¹⁸⁹ They provide an outlet to be direct and unapologetic.¹⁹⁰ Both disciplines require ego strength and independence. Artists and leaders open themselves up to criticism, baring their souls for the betterment of humanity. Striving for authenticity and listening to their inner voice, they withstand criticism, mocks, and jeers. Leadership and art allow us to see ourselves, provide an evaluation of our priorities, and provoke thought and inspiration.¹⁹¹ Strategy and design are essential for each to achieve their goals. Both disciplines engage the public in a conversation about our world and our future. They participate and exchange ideas to further humanity as they unite people with one common belief. The artist and the leader have a singular purpose to propel their ideas to their audience, to make the intangible tangible, and transport them to unknown parts. Much can be learned from an interdisciplinary historical analysis. A cohesive study from a historical perspective can shed new light on the conception of leadership skills honed through the arts. The arts have the capacity to change the world.

¹⁸⁹ Ulrik Juul Christensen, “How Art Helps Leaders Shift Thinking in a Rapidly Changing World,” *Forbes*, May 05, 2021.

¹⁹⁰ Christensen, “How Art Helps Leaders Shift Thinking in a Rapidly Changing World,” May 05, 2021.

¹⁹¹ Michael O’Malley, “Every Leader is an Artist,” *Harvard Business Review*, August 24, 2012.

Chapter 2

Lincoln's World: Lincoln's Early Interaction with the Arts

Abraham Lincoln emerged on this earth next to an unusual landform, a karst window, on Sinking Spring Farm in LaRue County, Kentucky, on February 12, 1809. A karst window is a sinkhole that opens to a subterranean river. The distinctive geomorphology is apropos for the birth of an unusual child. This child would go on to lead the United States on the precipice of collapse. Abraham Lincoln was born into a crude world that would not sugar-coat its rough edges. Lincoln would have to scratch, claw, and fight for everything he achieved. There were no wealthy relatives to grease the path to success. There wasn't an educated parent to give him advice on how to move beyond extreme poverty. Lincoln summed up his early life with a verse from Thomas Grey's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" as "the short and simple annals of the poor."¹⁹²

The Lincolns were impoverished at a time when the average household was primitive, at best. The future president was clothed in buckskin, linsey woolsey, a rough homespun twill,¹⁹³ and coon, fox, or possum skin caps.¹⁹⁴ Abraham's hard and abusive father, Thomas Lincoln, embraced his failures rather than admit his poor judgement. Thomas was a stout, gifted storyteller, and his trade was primarily carpentry and joinery, subsisted by farming.¹⁹⁵ He was

¹⁹² Thomas Grey, *Elegy Written in a Country Church Yard* (New York: Heritage Press, 1951), 8. Quoted in Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 57.

¹⁹³ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 35.

¹⁹⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 121.

¹⁹⁵ William Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln: From the Letters and Papers of William H. Herndon*, ed. Emanuel Hertz (New York: Blue Ribbon Books, Inc, 1940), 280.

blind in one eye and had only slight vision in the other.¹⁹⁶ Abraham Lincoln and his sister, Sarah, did not have proper clothing and went hungry many nights. The family had no utensils with which to eat, and the children seldom had shoes to wear.¹⁹⁷ The family hunted wild game, which was plentiful, to survive.¹⁹⁸

In 1811, Thomas Lincoln was forced to leave Sinking Spring Farm for a piece of land nine miles away, near Knob Creek, due to a defective land title.¹⁹⁹ This would be young Lincoln's home from the age of two to seven.²⁰⁰ Lincoln recalled to a friend that this is where his earliest memories were formed.²⁰¹ The fact that this child could rise to become the president of the United States was a true miracle. Education was virtually inaccessible on the Western frontier and was viewed as unnecessary. Life was hard on the frontier, and there was no room for anything but the essentials for survival.

At the age of seven in the fall of 1816, Thomas moved his family to the new state of Indiana for better opportunity, due to his bad luck in occupying land that was inaccurately surveyed and titled.²⁰² Thomas advanced the route to his new farm, felling trees to reach it, in the densely forested state.²⁰³ Thomas and Nancy loaded their children and spare belongings upon two horses and made the harrowing five-day 102-mile journey into the Indiana wilderness.²⁰⁴ The Lincolns crossed the Ohio River on the Thompson's Ferry and settled seventeen miles

¹⁹⁶ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 126.

¹⁹⁷ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 28-29.

¹⁹⁸ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 279.

¹⁹⁹ Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln*, 1:6.

²⁰⁰ Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln*, 1:6.

²⁰¹ Abraham Lincoln to Samuel Haycraft, July 4, 1860, Abraham Lincoln, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), 4:69-70.

²⁰² Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln*, 1:6.

²⁰³ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 111.

²⁰⁴ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 278.

northwest of the ferry along Pigeon Creek.²⁰⁵ Cousin Dennis Hanks, ten years Abraham's senior, assisted in the move and helped Thomas Lincoln build a rough shelter in a single day.²⁰⁶ Ironically, as a woodworker, Thomas did not provide a floor, doors, or windows for the family home.²⁰⁷ The bearskin hung in place of a door, was the only barrier between the Lincoln family and the wild animals that prowled the woods.²⁰⁸

Lincoln's harsh existence became even more dire when he lost his beloved mother and witnessed her agonizing death on October 5, 1818.²⁰⁹ It is thought that she died of "milk sickness" which is contracted from consuming meat or dairy from a cow that ate poisonous white snake root.²¹⁰ Thomas sealed the coffin with wooden pegs, and Nancy Lincoln's body was transported to the cemetery on a sled hitched to a horse.²¹¹ Young Lincoln wrote to David Elkin, a minister the Lincolns knew in Kentucky, to preach at his mother's funeral.²¹² In time, Elkins arrived and carried out the ceremony, noting that he came at the young man's request.²¹³ Cousin Dennis Hanks' foster parents, Aunt Elizabeth "Betsy" Sparrow and Uncle Thomas Sparrow, died of the same illness shortly before Nancy Lincoln's passing.²¹⁴ The Sparrows raised Nancy as their own child, and young Lincoln considered them to be his grandparents.²¹⁵ Dennis moved in with the Lincolns. Thomas soon left the homestead in search of a new wife.

²⁰⁵ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 278

²⁰⁶ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 278

²⁰⁷ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 29.

²⁰⁸ William Wilson, "There I Grew Up," *American Heritage*, October 1966.

²⁰⁹ Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln*, 25.

²¹⁰ *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 26.

²¹¹ J. T. Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln; Presenting Many Interesting Facts, Reminiscences and Illustrations* (Dayton: The Otterbein Press, 1909), 19; Albert J. Beveridge, *Abraham Lincoln, 1809-1858* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co, 1928), 48.

²¹² J. T. Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 20.

²¹³ J. T. Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 20.

²¹⁴ Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln*, 25.

²¹⁵ Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln*, 25.

On December 2, 1819, Thomas married widow Sarah “Sally” Bush Johnston, whom he knew from childhood.²¹⁶ The new Mrs. Lincoln was a Godsend for Lincoln. She was kind, affectionate, and immediately filled the maternal void. Sarah understood the importance of an education.²¹⁷ When she returned from Elizabethtown, Kentucky with Thomas Lincoln, she found the Lincoln children in desperate condition. The new Mrs. Lincoln reported, “I dressed Abe and his sister up” so they “looked more human.”²¹⁸ She brought precious books with her from her former home in Elizabethtown and insisted that Thomas install a proper floor, door, and windows.²¹⁹ The Lincoln log home was also chinked to protect the family from the fierce weather of the frontier.²²⁰ The new Mrs. Lincoln also brought utensils, furniture, and feather beds from her former home.²²¹

What gave young Lincoln the confidence and ability to rise to an unimaginable level? The arts in this raw, early America, were absorbed by Abraham Lincoln and may have shaped his developing mind. G. Gabrielle Starr explains in *Feeling Beauty: The Neuroscience of Aesthetic Experience* that an experience in the arts involves complex interconnected cognitive systems that work together to create malleable structures which provide alternate perspectives of the world.²²² Art is essential to our being and changes our view of the world, expectations of life, and ability to create what is seemingly impossible. The neural network of synapses that involve our personal identity, emotion, memory, ability to envision future possibilities, and read the emotions of

²¹⁶ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 106-107.

²¹⁷ *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 30.

²¹⁸ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 107.

²¹⁹ *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 29.

²²⁰ *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 29.

²²¹ *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 28-29.

²²² Starr. *Feeling Beauty*, xv.

others are constantly being reinforced and refined through the arts.²²³ The experience of art creates new neural pathways that allow us to imagine new ideas, perceive experiences in new ways, and change us to become something we weren't before.²²⁴ Not only are we changed neurologically, but those engaging in art are also changed physiologically. Science proves that experiencing art produces biomarkers, indicating an altered biological state.²²⁵ Appreciating the arts is also a learned skill that requires pattern recognition, analysis, and interpretation.²²⁶

The arts Lincoln encountered in his humble emergence in the world allowed him to begin his journey as a leader and mature his emotional stamina to withstand hardship and adversity. We can see in each experience Lincoln had with the arts, he grew to be more confident and refined in his leadership skills. Lincoln did not have the typical route of an aesthete. Lincoln told his law partner and friend, William Herndon, that his mother was extraordinarily intelligent, and Lincoln thought he got his inherent abilities from his mother, Nancy Lincoln.²²⁷ Lincoln said his mother had a "weather-beaten appearance in general."²²⁸ He gave her credit for any accomplishments he achieved in life.²²⁹ Neighbor William Wood agreed, noting her high intelligence.²³⁰ Another neighbor, Nathaniel Grigsby, noted "She was a brilliant woman."²³¹ Cousin Dennis Hanks said Nancy Lincoln was astute, highly intelligent, and had sound reasoning.²³² William Herndon, friend, law partner, and biographer said, "Nancy Hanks was as far above Thomas Lincoln as an

²²³ Starr, *Feeling Beauty*, xv.

²²⁴ Starr, *Feeling Beauty*, 148-149.

²²⁵ Wolfgang Tschacher, Steven Greenwood, Volker Kirchberg, Stéphanie Wintzerith, Karen van den Berg, and Martin Tröndle, "Physiological Correlates of Aesthetic Perception of Artworks in a Museum," *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* 6, no. 1 (February 2012): 96-103.

²²⁶ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 26.

²²⁷ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 139.

²²⁸ Abraham Lincoln to Eliza Browning, April 1, 1838, Abraham Lincoln, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), 1:118.

²²⁹ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 55.

²³⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 124.

²³¹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 113.

²³² Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 276.

angel is above mud.”²³³ Nancy Hanks exposed her son to art as she taught him to read from the Holy Bible. It belonged to Nancy’s first cousin, Dennis Hanks, which was purchased by Dennis Hanks’ parents in Philadelphia around 1801.²³⁴ Neighbor William Wood said she was “a Christian of the Baptist persuasion.”²³⁵ Lincoln’s mother read him bible stories.²³⁶ After his mother’s death, Lincoln fondly remembered her tender voice as she read.²³⁷ In this first experience with art, he could visualize the stories and feel empathy for the characters. This could possibly have strengthened his abstract thought and empathy.

Stimulation from the environment allows intellectual functions to flourish.²³⁸ Lincoln’s mind was hungry for intellectual stimulation. He was so inquisitive that when he saw a stranger passing by their homestead, he would be the first person to ask a question.²³⁹ Angered by his child’s blunt curiosity, Thomas Lincoln would strike his son with such force he would fall to the ground.²⁴⁰ The chastised child silently took his punishment for his natural inquisitiveness.²⁴¹

According to Dennis Hanks, he wanted to teach his younger cousin to learn to write with an eagle feather quill.²⁴² Dennis’ rifle missed its mark, but he was successful in killing a buzzard.²⁴³ With the homemade quill, Dennis put Lincoln’s hand in his and taught him to write.²⁴⁴ This began his journey into the arts.

²³³ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 208.

²³⁴ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 276-277.

²³⁵ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 124.

²³⁶ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 276.

²³⁷ Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln*, 1:26.

²³⁸ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 131.

²³⁹ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 24.

²⁴⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 24.

²⁴¹ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 24.

²⁴² Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 276.

²⁴³ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 276.

²⁴⁴ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 276.

Lincoln had a thirst for art, literature, and knowledge. After his first exposure to reading, Lincoln began to read any book he could find, borrowing books and newspapers from anyone he knew. His father, Thomas, would pummel him for studying instead of performing his chores.²⁴⁵ Cousin Dennis Hanks said that Thomas Lincoln couldn't pull young Lincoln away from reading.²⁴⁶ He thought his son was lazy and was determined to strip away his indolence. Despite the abuse, Lincoln devoured books. This exposure to books opened the world to young Lincoln, possibly laying the foundation of his complex cognitive skills. Lincoln's stepmother said he read incessantly.²⁴⁷ Reading could have mitigated the abuse of his father, their impoverishment, and might have been an escape from his brutal reality.

Neighbor and friend Henry Brooner said he would ride horseback with Lincoln sixteen miles to Huffman's Mill on Anderson Creek, and Lincoln would talk for hours telling Henry what he had read.²⁴⁸ Perhaps the works Lincoln read inspired him to better himself and provided instruction that he was sorely lacking. Childhood friend, David Turnham, said Lincoln was diligent, always studying.²⁴⁹ Lincoln sporadically attended school but had little more than one year of formal education.²⁵⁰ Thomas Lincoln didn't think education was important. He would keep his son out of school so he could assist in providing for the family. According to Turnham, any education he received was emblazoned in his memory and inscribed on his soul.²⁵¹ When he was allowed to attend school, he always arrived early and constantly studied when not at

²⁴⁵ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 280.

²⁴⁶ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 41.

²⁴⁷ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 107.

²⁴⁸ J. T. Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 19.

²⁴⁹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 121.

²⁵⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 32-33.

²⁵¹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 121.

work.²⁵² His classmate, Nathaniel Grigsby, said Lincoln was rigorous in his studies and quickly passed his schoolmates.²⁵³

At the age of ten, he displayed early leadership skills and stood out amongst his classmates at school, settling their disputes.²⁵⁴ Schoolmate Nathaniel Grigsby reported, “He read and thoroughly read his books whilst we played- hence he was above us and became our guide and leader.”²⁵⁵ Family friend, William Wood, recalled Lincoln encouraging his classmates to stop being boys and behave as men.²⁵⁶ Lincoln mind was absorbing instruction and maturing emotionally.

Lincoln’s sporadic formal education took place in his tenth, fourteenth, and seventeenth year.²⁵⁷ Later in life, Lincoln complained of the lack of training in schoolteachers.²⁵⁸ Lincoln saw that he was at a major disadvantage. He wanted to live a life unlike his father and achieve great things. He knew it would require hard work to overcome a deficient education. Lincoln later said he was forced to educate himself because it would be obtained no other way.²⁵⁹ Sarah, Lincoln’s stepmother, said that he wrote phrases down that struck him as important.²⁶⁰ If he didn’t have paper or slate, he would write it on a board. Later, with paper in hand, Lincoln would preserve it in a book he bound himself.²⁶¹ He had to understand everything and repeat it until it was

²⁵² Herndon, *Herndon’s Life of Lincoln*, 32.

²⁵³ Herndon, *Herndon’s Life of Lincoln*, 32.

²⁵⁴ Herndon, *Herndon’s Life of Lincoln*, 32.

²⁵⁵ Herndon, *Herndon’s Life of Lincoln*, 114.

²⁵⁶ Herndon, *Herndon’s Informants*, 124.

²⁵⁷ Herndon, *Herndon’s Life of Lincoln*, 33.

²⁵⁸ Abraham Lincoln to Jesse W. Fell, December 20, 1859, in Abraham Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), 3:511.

²⁵⁹ Lincoln to Fell, December 20, 1859, 3:511.

²⁶⁰ Herndon, *Herndon’s Informants*, 107.

²⁶¹ Herndon, *Herndon’s Informants*, 107.

engrained in his mind.²⁶² He would read and reread until the books' contents were fixed in his memory.²⁶³

Lincoln remembered one of the first books that opened the world to him. Lincoln told his law partner, William Herndon, that "Murray's English Reader was the best schoolbook ever put into the hands of an American youth."²⁶⁴ Author Lindley Murray carefully chose examples of prose and poetry of high quality that clearly expresses ideas in an artful way.²⁶⁵ Lindley comments that students should regularly study art because it will create a desire for greatness, and train the mind to reason proficiently and communicate effectively.²⁶⁶

These works captured the attention of Lincoln and were cemented in his mind. The author emphasizes the importance of studying the arts.²⁶⁷ Through habitual study, the student will develop high emotional intelligence and complex cognitive skills.²⁶⁸ Murray is ahead of his time. What he explains in the introduction of his 1822 work, scientists are proving more than two hundred years later. The introduction contains the secrets of an effective and animated public speaker: careful calculations to control volume, tone, speed, pauses, emphasis, modulation, energy, and distinctness.²⁶⁹ Murray gives instruction on how to be heard and how to keep the audience's attention. Murray explains that a speaker conveys meaning by simply choosing which words to emphasize and the tone in which they are delivered.²⁷⁰ By merely having the correct pause and timing of breath, the speaker gives the audience a greater depth of understanding.²⁷¹

²⁶² Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 107.

²⁶³ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 107.

²⁶⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 34.

²⁶⁵ *The English Reader; Or Pieces in Prose and Poetry*, ed. Lindley Murray (Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822), III

²⁶⁶ *The English Reader*, III.

²⁶⁷ *The English Reader*, V.

²⁶⁸ *The English Reader*, XII.

²⁶⁹ *The English Reader*, V-XV.

²⁷⁰ *The English Reader*, VIII-XI.

²⁷¹ *The English Reader*, XII-XIV.

He advises students not to let themselves be affected by the subject matter so they can deliver their message in a smooth, polished manner.²⁷² Murray elucidates, if the speaker abides by these principles, their message will be filled with grace, refinement, and vitality.²⁷³ This gave Lincoln the direction he needed to guide him in his quest to become a masterful speaker.

Lincoln must have taken this instruction to heart because he and his fellow students read passages aloud. As he walked along, he would recite verses in a loud, clear voice. This method became the way Lincoln learned and used throughout his life. Lincoln's stepmother recalled him repeatedly verbalizing things he read until it was etched in his memory.²⁷⁴ Herndon also recounted Lincoln's habit of always reading aloud when they shared a law office, much to Herndon's displeasure.²⁷⁵ Lincoln told him, "When I read two sentences aloud, two senses catch the idea: first, I can see what I read; second, I hear it, and therefore I can remember it better."²⁷⁶ This method reinforced his intellectual processes, verbal skills, and memory. As Murray correctly surmises, repetition and habitual study strengthened Lincoln's mind.

Lincoln and his classmates were introduced to poet, politician, writer, and playwright Joseph Addison in the essay "The Importance of a Good Education."²⁷⁷ Addison, author of *Cato, a Tragedy* and a close friend of Jonathan Swift, begins by comparing education with Aristotle's theory that a beautiful work of art is encased within a lump of marble.²⁷⁸

I consider a human soul, without education, like marble in the quarry: which shows none of its inherent beauty, until the skill of the polisher fetches out the colors, makes the

²⁷² *The English Reader*, XII.

²⁷³ *The English Reader*, XII.

²⁷⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 107.

²⁷⁵ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 268.

²⁷⁶ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 268.

²⁷⁷ Joseph Addison, "The Importance of a Good Education," in *The English Reader*, ed. Lindley Murray (Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822), 54-55.

²⁷⁸ Joseph Addison, *Cato, A Tragedy* (Edinburgh: John Wood, 1700), 1-60; Addison, "The Importance of a Good Education," 54.

surface shine, and discovers every ornamental cloud, spot, and vein, that runs through the body of it.²⁷⁹

This essay underscores the role of education in carving the life of a young man. Lincoln might have understood that an education would be required to achieve his dreams. Addison emphasizes that reason is the way to reach your audience.²⁸⁰ This was invaluable information for Lincoln. His future as an attorney and politician, depended upon his ability to use reason to sway a jury, judge, or voters. Addison's advice might have influenced Lincoln. Lincoln's law partner, William H. Herndon, noted that Lincoln's power of persuasion was in the expression of his reasoning.²⁸¹ Lincoln would plainly dissect an argument and compel the listener to follow his reasoning.²⁸² He presented his determination and explained how he came to that conclusion. This is how he constructed his arguments and cleanly laid out the facts.²⁸³

The public speeches of Marcus Tullius Cicero's during the government corruption trial of Gaius Verres oriented Lincoln on how to properly structure an argument, provide evidence of his reasoning, and to persuade his audience.²⁸⁴ The influence of Cicero's prose cannot be overlooked. Like the future Lincoln, Cicero was known as one of the greatest orators, lawyers, and politicians of all time. Cicero had much in common with Lincoln. He held a political office at the youngest age allowed, 30. Lincoln won a seat in the Illinois House of Representatives at the age of 25 on August 4, 1834. Lincoln had his first major legal case at the age of 28 on October 12, 1838. Cicero's first legal appearance was at the age of 26. Cicero's speeches

²⁷⁹ Addison, "The Importance of a Good Education," 54.

²⁸⁰ Addison, "The Importance of a Good Education," 54.

²⁸¹ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 167.

²⁸² Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 268.

²⁸³ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 268.

²⁸⁴ Marcus Tullius Cicero, "Cicero Against Verres," in *The English Reader*, ed. Lindley Murray (Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822), 121-123.

impressed the value of leadership and could have given him the opportunity to imagine himself as the counselor in the trial.

The English Reader goes on to give examples of powerful, productive arguments from the master of written discourse, Scottish minister and orator, Hugh Blair.²⁸⁵ An essay from one of his sermons could have been directed at Lincoln himself.

Your character is now, under Divine Assistance, of your own forming; your fate is, in some measure, put into your own hands. Your nature is yet pliant and soft. Habits have not yet established their dominion. Prejudices have not preoccupied your understanding. Whatever impulse you now give to your desires and passions, the direction is likely to continue. It will form the channel in which your life is to run; nay, it may determine its everlasting issue. Consider then the employment of this important period, as the highest trust which shall ever be committed to you; as in a great measure decisive of your happiness, in time, and in eternity.²⁸⁶

The introduction of Hugh Blair is significant. Blair impresses upon students the importance of decisions made in their early years. He implies that the burning fire behind ambition is the secret pathway to success. Blair's speech might have edified Lincoln in the pursuit of a better life for himself. He could become more than his father. His future was his to create. Blair gives hope to achieve a life of greatness. Lincoln's ambition, character, good nature, and above average intellect would provide the means to a future that was seemingly impossible.

Another cornerstone public speech is that of William Murray, first Earl of Mansfield, an attorney, politician, and powerful judge in Great Britain in the late eighteenth-century. According to legal historians, Lord Mansfield is considered the greatest judge Great Britain has ever produced, and his arguments had a lasting impact on the philosophy of law.²⁸⁷ Lincoln's schoolbook detailed Lord Mansfield's 1770 argument before the House of Peers, an upper house

²⁸⁵ *The English Reader*, 77-80.

²⁸⁶ Hugh Blair, "An Address to Young Persons," in *The English Reader*, ed. Lindley Murray (Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822), 132-35.

²⁸⁷ Julian S. Waterman, "Mansfield and Blackstone's Commentaries," *The University of Chicago Law Review* 1, no. 4 (March 1934): 549.

of Parliament, against members of parliament's privilege.²⁸⁸ Murray exemplifies how to outline the bones of a compelling argument. It mirrors the structure and method Abraham Lincoln used as an attorney and politician. Mansfield begins by explaining the importance of the matter in clear, simple language. He emphasizes a basic axiom. He makes friends with his opponents, plays to their vanities, and acknowledges their intent to carry out justice. Murray focuses on the importance of precedence. He clarifies why the current situation has changed and clearly demonstrates with solid evidence the reason to move away from precedent. He explains why the law would be beneficial for the present and future. Murray stresses the importance of making decisions from the heart and not from popular consent. He circles back to the argument and points out the precedent and the reasoning behind it. Murray confers changes in present circumstances. He presents each benefit that logically agrees with the foundational baseline truth. In his self-deprecating way, he acknowledges their justness and gives his assurance that they will do the right thing. He closes by embedding egalitarianism into his argument. He tells the audience that liberty can only be achieved when all residents receive fair administration of the law.²⁸⁹ Murray exemplifies courage, boldly stating his belief in equality.

An important factor is Lord Mansfield's historic opinion on the morality and legality of slavery. He heard the first case challenging slavery in England. In the ruling, he quoted the Latin phrase "Fiat justitia ruat caelum, let justice be done whatever the consequence."²⁹⁰ This is a truth that Lincoln would live by as president as he sought to unite the country and end the injustice of slavery, regardless of the heavy price to be paid. Mansfield ruled in the 1772 *Somerset vs*

²⁸⁸ William Murray, "Lord Mansfield's Speech in the House of Lords, 1770, On the Bill for Preventing the Delays of Justice, by Claiming the Privilege of Parliament," in *The English Reader*, ed. Lindley Murray (Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822), 128-132.

²⁸⁹ Murray, "Lord Mansfield's Speech in the House of Lords," 128-132.

²⁹⁰ "Somerset vs. Stewart," *Commonwealth Legal Information Institute*, accessed January 4, 2024, commonlii.org/int/cases/EngR/1772/57.pdf

Stewart case that the slave, James Somerset, could not be removed against his will by the man who purchased him in America with the intent to ship him to Jamaica for sale as chattel.²⁹¹ He noted that it was repulsive, and nothing can defend it.²⁹² This landmark case was notable because it questioned the validity of slavery. Lord Mansfield displayed to Lincoln the grit required to argue for justice and the value of morality. Mansfield illustrates a well-organized and compelling argument. Lincoln would later go on to study and absorb the work of Mansfield's friend and associate, William Blackstone, in his *Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England*.²⁹³

Lincoln encountered the world of poetry in the *English Reader*.²⁹⁴ The author gives a variety of verses to give examples of poetic construction. The sampling exhibits similarities in public speaking, as it connotes meaning through accentuation, rhyme, and meter.²⁹⁵ The rhyme, meter, line length, and stanza length sets the mood, pace tone, and imagery.

Poetry strengthens the ability to read others' emotions and view life from another perspective. It offers the opportunity to feel the emotions of the subject and see the world through another's eyes.²⁹⁶ Henry James's *Theory of Fiction: Henry James* articulates the expansion of exposure reading provides. He explains that art creates a mirage we have inhabited another soul and experienced life in another body, expanding our chops.²⁹⁷

²⁹¹ "Somerset vs. Stewart," commonlii.org/int/cases/EngR/1772/57.pdf

²⁹² "Somerset vs. Stewart," commonlii.org/int/cases/EngR/1772/57.pdf

²⁹³ William Blackstone, *Blackstone's Commentaries on English Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 1-4.

²⁹⁴ *The English Reader*, 182-263.

²⁹⁵ Harriet Staff, "Poetry Suits the Unconscious, Says Frontiers," Poetry News, February 22, 2017, <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet-books/2017/02/poetry-suits-the-unconscious-says-frontiers>.

²⁹⁶ Armstrong, *How Literature Plays with the Brain*, 135.

²⁹⁷ Henry James, *Theory of Fiction: Henry James*, ed. James E. Miller, Jr (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972), 93.

Lincoln was then introduced to William Cowper's "The Nightengale and the Glow-worm."²⁹⁸ William Cowper was an English poet, hymnwriter, abolitionist, and friend of John Newton, author of the hymn "Amazing Grace."²⁹⁹ The poem's intent is to encourage peace, and not to fight your fellow man.³⁰⁰ God gave the nightingale and the glow-worm diverse gifts and talents, which should be respected by one another.³⁰¹ This echoes Lincoln's first inaugural address "We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it, it must not break our bonds of affection."³⁰²

In the narrative section of poetry, *The English Reader* exhibits scholar and English poet James Merrick in the "The Bear and the Bees."³⁰³ Merrick uses Balliol rhyme scheme AABB to tell the story of this ancient fable. The simple, doggerel verse is easily understood by children and gives a clear moral. Merrick issues the dangers of immorality, and the price to be paid for sin.

So when experience opes our eyes,
Away the fancied pleasure flies.
It flies, but oh! Too late we find,
It leaves a real sting behind.³⁰⁴

The English Reader includes moral influences, like holy scripture, which Lincoln used in many of his speeches. One such example is from the seventh debate with Stephen Douglas on October 15, 1858.³⁰⁵ Lincoln professes, "This is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these

²⁹⁸ William Cowper, "The Nightengale and the Glow-worm," in *The English Reader*, ed. Lindley Murray (Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822), 194.

²⁹⁹ John Newton, *Amazing Grace* (New York: Hyperion, 1991), 1-56.

³⁰⁰ Cowper, "The Nightengale and the Glow-worm," 194.

³⁰¹ Cowper, "The Nightengale and the Glow-worm," 194.

³⁰² Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 4:271.

³⁰³ *The English Reader*, 193.

³⁰⁴ *The English Reader*, 193.

³⁰⁵ Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 3:315.

two principles-right and wrong- throughout this world.”³⁰⁶ This reference is from 1 Corinthians 4:8, “Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.”³⁰⁷ Lincoln’s “A House Divided” speech also stems from the Bible in Mark 3:25, “And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.”³⁰⁸

Another poem of importance is “Picture of a Good Man” attributed to Edward Young.³⁰⁹ Young, a colleague of the poet William Blake, was an eighteenth-century philosopher and English poet. Young, a trail blazer of romanticism, philosophized about men with genius versus men with an education.³¹⁰ His *Conjectures on Original Composition*, 1759, states that there is a prodigy that requires an education to illuminate him.³¹¹ “Picture of a Good Man” eerily sets the stage of Lincoln’s future life.³¹² “Picture of a Good Man” describes a man seated above the chaos of the earth watching “earth’s genuine sons, the sceptered and the slave.”³¹³ Young provides Lincoln with instruction on virtue and presents the sacrifices of public service:

When public welfare calls, or private want, they give to fame; his bounty he conceals. Their virtues varnish nature, his exalt. Where they see mountains he but atom sees; an empire in his balance, weighs a grain. His hopes immortal blow them by, as dust, That dims his sight and shortens his survey, which longs in infinite, to louse all bound. Title and honors (if they prove his fate) He lays aside to find his dignity; His true existence is not yet begun. His glorious course was, yesterday complete: Death, then, was welcome; yet life still is sweet.³¹⁴

³⁰⁶ Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 3:315.

³⁰⁷ 1 Corinthians 13:8 (KJ).

³⁰⁸ Mark 3:25 (KJ); Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, “A House Divided,” Republican State Convention, Springfield, Illinois, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), II:461-469.

³⁰⁹ (Edward Young?), “Picture of a Good Man,” in *The English Reader; Or Pieces in Prose and Poetry*, ed. Lindley Murray (Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822), 217-218.

³¹⁰ Edward Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition*, 1759 (Leeds: Scholar Press, 1966), 30-31.

³¹¹ Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition*, 30-31.

³¹² Young, “Picture of a Good Man,” 217-218.

³¹³ Young, “Picture of a Good Man,” 217-218.

³¹⁴ Young, “Picture of a Good Man,” 217-218.

Perhaps influenced by his introduction to poetry, Lincoln began experimenting with it himself. Joseph C. Richardson, Lincoln's classmate, recalled a verse Lincoln himself wrote as a young man.

Good boys who to their books apply
Will all be great men by and by.³¹⁵

Lincoln's stepmother, Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln, kept a book he bound himself to contain his thoughts and schoolwork. Inside Lincoln had copied a portion of the hymn "The Shortness of Life and Goodness of God" by Isaac Watts, a Congregational minister:

Time, what an empty vapor 'tis,
And days how swift they are:
Swift as an Indian arrow-
Fly on like a shooting star.
The present moment just is here,
Then slides away in haste,
That we can never say they're ours,
But only say they're past.³¹⁶

The rhythm and language are phonetically and visually striking. Lincoln was examining verse outside of the classroom. He was learning to express himself through verse. This is the path that led to his lyrical writing and creation of his own distinctive rhetorical style.

Between the ages of twelve and eighteen, Lincoln's desire for literature and instruction grew. He consumed Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, *The American Spelling Book: Containing the Rudiments of the English Language, for the Use of Schools in the United States* by Noah Webster, *The Life of George Washington* by David Ramsay, George Prentice's *Biography of Henry Clay*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Lessons in Elocution*, and his favorite, *Fables of Aesop and*

³¹⁵ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 37.

³¹⁶ Isaac Watts, "The Shortness of Life and the Goodness of God," Hymnary.org, Accessed November 24, 2024, https://hymnary.org/text/time_what_an_empty_vapor_tis?extended=true. Quoted in Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 37.

*Others: Translated into English.*³¹⁷ He was diligent in his studies and was said to be constantly reading and writing.³¹⁸ Fishing partner and classmate David Turnham noted Lincoln's remarkable mind, and said he always remembered everything he read.³¹⁹

Neighbor William Wood stated that Lincoln often would bring him prose or poetry that he had written.³²⁰ He was particularly impressed by a piece Lincoln wrote on temperance at the age of eighteen or nineteen after studying a temperance newspaper Wood owned.³²¹ Wood showed Reverend Aaron Farmer and Attorney John Pitcher the political piece, and they were astonished that a local boy would be capable of such eloquence. Pitcher asked Wood if he could take it so it could be published in a newspaper that promoted temperance.³²² Wood remembered a poem he wrote which was titled "Neighborhood Broil."³²³ Unfortunately, such works of Lincoln have been lost. As Lincoln wrote poetry, he experimented with language, expressed his emotions, and philosophized about the world around him. Lincoln also took advantage of William Wood's subscription to Ohio newspapers, and he took them home to peruse and brought them back to

³¹⁷ Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (New York: Heritage Press, 1930), 1-299, in William Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln: The History and Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln as Originally Written By William H. Herndon and Jesse W. Weik* (Cabin John: Wildside Press, 2008), 36; Noah Webster, *The American Spelling Book: Containing the Rudiments of the English Language, for the Use of Schools in the United States* (Hartford: Hudson & Goodwin, 1809), 1-168, in Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 41; David Ramsay, *The Life of George Washington* (London: Luke Hartford & Sons, 1807), 1-464; George Prentice, *Biography of Henry Clay* (Hartford: S. Hanmer, Jr. & J.J. Phelps, 1831), 1-312; John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress* (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1917), 1-119, in Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 112; William Scott, *Lessons in Elocution: or, A Selection of Pieces in Prose and Verse, For the Improvement of Youth in Reading and Speaking* (Boston: Isaiah Thomas, Jun, 1811), 1-407, in Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 129; Samuel Croxall, D.D., *Fables of Aesop & Others: Translated into English with Instructive Applications Before Each Fable* (London: C. Dilly & Others, 1798), 1-329, in Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 112.

³¹⁸ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 280.

³¹⁹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 120-121.

³²⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 124.

³²¹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 124.

³²² Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 124.

³²³ Abraham Lincoln, "Neighborhood Broil," (unpublished poem, 1827-1828), in Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 124.

discuss the ideas and issues within.³²⁴ Lincoln was testing his ideas and conceptualizing a better nation.

In 1829, Lincoln borrowed Weems' *The Life of Washington* from frontier neighbor Josiah "Blue Nose" Crawford.³²⁵ The treasure was ruined when rain seeped through a crack in the logs of the Lincoln cabin.³²⁶ Lincoln explained the unfortunate incident and repaid the steep debt of seventy-five cents by gathering Crawford's fodder, which is bundling dried blades of corn for mule feed.³²⁷ The price was worth it to Lincoln. He was riveted.³²⁸ Lincoln took in Washington's greatness and yearned to be a great man like the founding fathers.³²⁹ He told his best friend, Josh Speed, that he had an inextinguishable yearning to do something significant with his life and perform a great service for his countrymen that will be remembered for all time.³³⁰

Lincoln spoke of his love of this book and the massive impact it made on him as a young boy when he was addressing the New Jersey Senate at Trenton New Jersey on February 21, 1861.³³¹ "I remember all the accounts there given of the battle fields and struggles for the liberties of the country, and none fixed themselves upon my imagination so deeply as the struggle here at Trenton, New-Jersey. The crossing of the river; the contest with Hessians; the great hardships endured at that time, all fixed themselves on my memory more than any single revolutionary event."³³² Lincoln recalled thinking that liberty must have been spectacularly

³²⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 123.

³²⁵ M. L. Weems, *The Life of Washington: with Curious Anecdotes, Equally Honourable to Himself and Exemplary to Hist Young Countrymen* (Philadelphia: Lippencott, 1800), 1-244, in William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements about Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press), 1998, 125.

³²⁶ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 36.

³²⁷ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 36.

³²⁸ Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 4:235-236.

³²⁹ Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 4:235-236.

³³⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 197.

³³¹ Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 4:235-236.

³³² Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 4:235.

important for them to have made that magnificent fight.³³³ He told the New Jersey Senate that liberty is worth the fight.³³⁴

Weems' work is filled with knowledge that would be of great value to an ambitious young man. Written immediately after Washington's death, Weems relies upon first-person accounts of George Washington. He emphasizes that the work is to be an example for the youth of the nation.³³⁵ Weems explains that a man's character can only be judged by his private actions and beneath the legend lies the true character of a man.³³⁶ He emphasizes that glorifying Washington's public deeds will not enable future generations to follow in his footsteps, but in explaining his private virtues, all young men have an opportunity to grow into a man like Washington and display the same work ethic, honor to the nation, humble attitude, and worldly esteem.³³⁷ Weems shouts these words. He explains that virtues are the source of greatness.³³⁸ Lincoln was listening, absorbing Weems' notions which possibly inspired thoughts about his own character and virtues. Weems notes that future generations may not have an opportunity to liberate their countrymen, direct a major conflict, or deliver an imperative address to congress.³³⁹ He believes putting Washington on a pedestal will set future generations up for failure, and they will never live up to such greatness.³⁴⁰ Weems was wrong. Thomas Lincoln had such a child who studied men like Washington and in time, would take on a monumental task not seen since the founding of the nation.

Through Weems' entertaining prose, a seed was planted in Lincoln. Service to one's country and self-sacrifice in the face of extreme adversity is worth the effort, as it benefits the

³³³ Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 4:236.

³³⁴ Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 4:236.

³³⁵ Weems, *The Life of Washington*, 3.

³³⁶ Weems, *The Life of Washington*, 5-9.

³³⁷ Weems, *The Life of Washington*, 9.

³³⁸ Weems, *The Life of Washington*, 8.

³³⁹ Weems, *The Life of Washington*, 8-9.

³⁴⁰ Weems, *The Life of Washington*, 5-9.

nation and future generations to come. The author wrote that Washington told his men just before the conflict to bear in mind the reason for their struggle.³⁴¹ The look in his eyes and the bravery in his voice inspired men to march unflinchingly into battle.³⁴² Lincoln was learning the value of leadership. If he was to be a great man and leader, he needed to be an inspiration to others so they can persevere and withstand incredible hardship for a greater cause. Perhaps the most important aspect of Lincoln's education lies in Washington's Farewell Address:³⁴³

The unity of government, which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence; the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee, that from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth. The name AMERICAN, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. You have, in a common cause, fought and triumphed together. Here every portion of our country find the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole. In this sense it is, that your union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other. To the efficacy and permanency of your union, a government for the whole is indispensable.³⁴⁴

Washington speaks of the dangers of civil strife for seven pages. He was clearly concerned about union and the inestimable value of unity.³⁴⁵ It is reminiscent of Moses warning the Israelites upon their entrance into the promised land. Washington could not be any clearer. The union of the states is vital to allow the nation to endure. Washington's fear would become Lincoln's reality. Weems emphasizes that if the states were to separate, the government would

³⁴¹ Weems, *The Life of Washington*, 94.

³⁴² Weems, *The Life of Washington*, 94.

³⁴³ George Washington, *Washington's Farewell Address: Delivered September 17, 1796* (New York: Appleton & Company, 1861), in M. L. Weems, *The Life of Washington: with Curious Anecdotes, Equally Honourable to Himself and Exemplary to His Young Countrymen* (Philadelphia: Lippencott, 1800), 157-176.

³⁴⁴ Washington, *Washington's Farewell Address*, in Weems, *The Life of Washington*, 160-164.

³⁴⁵ Washington, *Washington's Farewell Address*, in Weems, *The Life of Washington*, 162.

have to stand up to such treachery and crush the rebellion.³⁴⁶ If the United States couldn't rule themselves, it would be proof to dictatorships that democracy was unachievable.³⁴⁷ Weems describes the horrors of civil conflict that Lincoln would unfortunately be forced to confront.³⁴⁸ Lincoln was studying for his future, potentially instilling a confidence of justness in ending a rebellion of the states. Lincoln received practical instruction while dreaming of greatness.

Neighbor Elizabeth Crawford recalled Lincoln's sister, Sarah, jokingly ask her brother what would become of him, and he replied that he would be elected as the United States president.³⁴⁹ Lincoln often told this to her and her husband Josiah Crawford with an intense look in his eye.³⁵⁰ Elizabeth Crawford remembered that at a young age, he knew he was destined for greatness and fantasized about it.³⁵¹ Lincoln had ambition and drive. All he needed was time.

³⁴⁶ Weems, *The Life of Washington*, 237.

³⁴⁷ Weems, *The Life of Washington*, 239.

³⁴⁸ Weems, *The Life of Washington*, 237.

³⁴⁹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 126-127.

³⁵⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 127.

³⁵¹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 127.

Chapter 3

Whippersnapper: Lincoln's Early Interaction with the Arts

Josiah and Elizabeth Crawford generously lent Lincoln *The Kentucky Preceptor*, as they did with many of the works in their library.³⁵² Crawford took immense pride in his books and was locally known as “the book man.”³⁵³ His name is inscribed on the back cover with the date October 6, 1819. It holds prose and public speeches with complexities of morality and reasoning, from which Lincoln would recite at school exhibitions.³⁵⁴ The author of the work stresses the importance of children receiving a good education at a young age.³⁵⁵ The orations and dialogues were chosen to engage and stimulate the mind of the youth.³⁵⁶ It includes an antislavery narrative “The Desperate Negro.”³⁵⁷ The narrative is a violent tale of a slave, Quashi, whose master is his childhood playmate.³⁵⁸ He strives to please his master, but the master is quick to accuse Quashi of misbehavior.³⁵⁹ He is to be cart-whipped for a trifle that was not committed.³⁶⁰ Quashi makes his escape, only to be discovered by his master.³⁶¹ Quashi begins to run, with his master following quickly behind.³⁶² The master overtakes Quashi, but soon Quashi has the upper hand.³⁶³ Sitting on his master's chest, he withdraws a sharp knife.³⁶⁴ Quashi confesses his love

³⁵² Teacher, *The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking* (Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812), 1-225. Quoted in Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 42.

³⁵³ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 124.

³⁵⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 126.

³⁵⁵ *The Kentucky Preceptor*, 4

³⁵⁶ *The Kentucky Preceptor*, 4

³⁵⁷ “The Desperate Negro,” *The Portfolio of Amusement and Instruction in History, Science, Literature, the Fine Arts, Etc.*, no. 130 (1828): 211-212.

³⁵⁸ “The Desperate Negro,” in *The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking*, ed. by A Teacher (Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812), 42-44.

³⁵⁹ “The Desperate Negro,” 42-44.

³⁶⁰ “The Desperate Negro,” 42-44.

³⁶¹ “The Desperate Negro,” 44.

³⁶² “The Desperate Negro,” 44.

³⁶³ “The Desperate Negro,” 44.

³⁶⁴ “The Desperate Negro,” 44.

for his master and his effort to be a productive and loyal servant.³⁶⁵ Quashi pleads his innocence and refuses to be punished for something he did not do.³⁶⁶ Quashi then took the knife and used it against himself, slitting his throat, covering his master in blood.³⁶⁷ This violent tale embeds the unfairness of slavery. Lincoln identified with slaves, as he felt he was his father's slave. When Thomas fell upon hard times, he would loan Lincoln out to neighbors. He never personally profited from any work he performed. Lincoln said it plainly in a speech at the Illinois statehouse, "I used to be a slave."³⁶⁸ This narrative acts as fuel toward the unjustness of slavery.

Another important essay lay ahead: "On Elocution."³⁶⁹ No author is named, but the comically stern advice about oratory skills is sound. The author explains to be successful as a speaker, one must satisfy visually and phonically.³⁷⁰ If the crowd is pleased, they will be persuaded by the speaker's argument.³⁷¹ The author encourages speakers to be genteel and graceful.³⁷² The best speakers speak emphatically and in a direct manner.³⁷³ The author tells of the absurdity of speaking in incomprehensible mumbling.³⁷⁴ He warns against speaking too quickly or having the incorrect emphasis.³⁷⁵ Speakers must open their teeth to speak clearly and elude incoherent murmur.³⁷⁶ In preparation for the speech, read it aloud slowly to correct the deplorable manner of fast speech.³⁷⁷ The author tells the reader that this should be their pursuit

³⁶⁵ "The Desperate Negro," 44.

³⁶⁶ "The Desperate Negro," 44.

³⁶⁷ "The Desperate Negro," 44.

³⁶⁸ John E. Roll, "Reminiscences of John E. Roll," *Chicago Times-Herald*, August 25, 1895.

³⁶⁹ "On Elocution," in *The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking*, ed. by A Teacher (Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812), 52-54.

³⁷⁰ "On Elocution," 53.

³⁷¹ "On Elocution," 53.

³⁷² "On Elocution," 53.

³⁷³ "On Elocution," 53.

³⁷⁴ "On Elocution," 53.

³⁷⁵ "On Elocution," 53.

³⁷⁶ "On Elocution," 54.

³⁷⁷ "On Elocution," 54.

and their delight to speak properly.³⁷⁸ This work built upon Murray's public speaking instruction and gave Lincoln a directive to master the art of public speaking and become a skillful orator.

Another important reading is "Character of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham."³⁷⁹ Again, there is no author listed. The reader is appraised of the virtues of the Whig leader and prime minister of Great Britain. He was an extraordinary politician, and like Lincoln, a political animal. William Pitt was a man of the arts and used his knowledge to his advantage. Like Lincoln, William Pitt was original, and his inner ambition lit his eyes.³⁸⁰ The author notes the intuitiveness of his political actions and the incorruptibility of his character.³⁸¹ Pitt was a genius rhetorician who displayed skill in the musicality and authority of his speech.³⁸² The author explains his reasoning by his mind's intensity could be felt by his audience.³⁸³ Pitt could transform beliefs of others and resonate globally.³⁸⁴ This gave Lincoln an example of exquisite composition.

Next is the profound speech by Founding Father Gouverneur Morris. On July 14, 1804, he delivered General Alexander Hamilton's funeral oration.³⁸⁵ Morris, an old friend of Hamilton, master orator and politician, wrote the Preamble to the Constitution.³⁸⁶ Morris, who wore a prosthetic peg-leg, spoke out against slavery in the Philadelphia Convention in August 1787.³⁸⁷

³⁷⁸ "On Elocution," 54.

³⁷⁹ "Character of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham," in *The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking*, ed. by A Teacher (Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812), 68-69.

³⁸⁰ "Character of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham," 68.

³⁸¹ "Character of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham," 68-69.

³⁸² "Character of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham," 69.

³⁸³ "Character of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham," 69.

³⁸⁴ "Character of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham," 69.

³⁸⁵ W.P. VanNess, "The Funeral," *New-York Evening Post*, July 17, 1804.

³⁸⁶ Meredith Hindley, "Confessions of Gouverneur Morris: An Interview with Melanie Randolph Miller," *HUMANITIES* 40, no. 2 (Spring 2019), <https://www.neh.gov/article/confessions-gouverneur-morris>.

³⁸⁷ James Madison, *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution, as Recommended by the General Convention at Philadelphia in 1787. Together with the Journal of the Federal Convention, Luther Martin's letter, Yate's minutes, Congressional Opinions, Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of '98-'99, and Other Illustrations of the Constitution*. United States, ed. Jonathan Elliot. (Washington: Jonathan Elliot, 1836), 5:27.

He believed a slave could not be both a man and property.³⁸⁸ Morris, known for his captivating speeches, does not disappoint the attendees of Hamilton's funeral.³⁸⁹ Like the future Lincoln, he effectively uses self-deprecating humor, tempo, rhythm, and brevity.³⁹⁰ Morris states that Hamilton emerged on the scene of the revolution as though he were specifically created to handle the task and rescue his country.³⁹¹ Morris makes it clear that Hamilton thought the constitution did not adequately preserve the union or prevent the country from insurrection and tyranny.³⁹² Hamilton did not shrink from confrontations and made his beliefs known, causing him great criticism.³⁹³

Hamilton's concerns about the strength of the constitution were legitimate. Lincoln would come to recognize the fragility of the nation under immense stress of internal strife. Hamilton recognized the founding fathers foresaw trouble in the nation's horizon: one that Lincoln would himself have to solve. Morris says Hamilton's fellow authors of the constitution trusted the American people and God to the fate of the nation.³⁹⁴ Little did Morris know that a young, backwoods boy with exposed, bony shins would read his words and save the very thing for which the founding fathers fought. Morris explains that General Washington chose Hamilton to be the first secretary of treasury because of his pure integrity.³⁹⁵ Morris speaks of Hamilton's

³⁸⁸ James Madison, *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution*, 5:27.

³⁸⁹ VanNess, "The Funeral," *New-York Evening Post*, July 17, 1804.

³⁹⁰ Hindley, "Confessions of Gouverneur Morris," *HUMANITIES*, <https://www.neh.gov/article/confessions-gouverneur-morris>.

³⁹¹ Gouverneur Morris, "Funeral Oration," in *The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking*, ed. by A Teacher (Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812), 70.

³⁹² Morris, "Funeral Oration," 70.

³⁹³ Morris, "Funeral Oration," 71.

³⁹⁴ Morris, "Funeral Oration," 71.

³⁹⁵ Morris, "Funeral Oration," 71.

public service and his ministrations as a statesman.³⁹⁶ Morris' oration induces desire for greatness in the public sector and the honors of making government policy.

The next section of interest is Union College President Eliphalet Nott's commencement speech from May 1, 1805.³⁹⁷ It holds valuable advice for enterprising young men. Nott, a Presbyterian minister, also had much to say upon the death of General Alexander Hamilton. Nott gave a sermon on July 29, 1804, speaking of Hamilton's integrity, his selfless public service to the nation, and dangers of participating in a duel.³⁹⁸ Nott, inventor and president of Union College, tells the young graduates to continue to learn throughout their lives. He advises them to be continually on a path toward knowledge.³⁹⁹ Though Lincoln never shared the feeling of graduating from a scholarly education, he implemented Nott's truth and continued to educate himself until the day of his death. Lincoln wrote of his education in his third-person campaign autobiography, "What he has in the way of education he has picked up."⁴⁰⁰ This speech possibly reinforced his decision to be on a quest for knowledge. Lincoln memorized these speeches, reinforcing his oratory skills and mental conditioning.

A selection of poetry is nestled in *The Kentucky Preceptor*.⁴⁰¹ A poem that evidently impacted Lincoln was Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Church-Yard."⁴⁰² He quoted a

³⁹⁶ Morris, "Funeral Oration," 72.

³⁹⁷ Eliphalet Nott, "An Address," in *The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking*, ed. by A Teacher (Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812), 92-99.

³⁹⁸ Editor of Saturday Evening Post, *With Comments Together with Various Orations, Sermons, and Eulogies, that Have Been Published or Written on His Life and Character* (New York: Hopkins and Seymour, 1804), 104-134.

³⁹⁹ Eliphalet Nott, "An Address," 92-99.

⁴⁰⁰ Abraham Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Francis D. Tandy Company, 1905), 10.

⁴⁰¹ *The Kentucky Preceptor*, 216-217.

⁴⁰² Gray, "Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard," in *The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking*, ed. by A Teacher (Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812), 216-219.

line when preparing his campaign autobiography.⁴⁰³ “Why Scripps, it is a great piece of folly to attempt to make anything out of my early life. It can all be condensed into a single sentence, and that sentence you will find in Gray’s *Elegy*: ‘The short and simple annals of the poor.’”⁴⁰⁴

Lincoln savored poetry that featured the brevity of life, such as Gray’s.

Written after the death of a friend, Thomas Gray expresses the fate of all: rich or poor, royalty or commoner.⁴⁰⁵ The narrator begins as he sits in a churchyard surrounded by graves underneath the customary yew trees.⁴⁰⁶ The sun is setting, and the work of the living is near the end.⁴⁰⁷ He contemplates the lives of those who now lie in deathly prisons: industrious housewife, proud farmer, brave soldier, a mute poet who couldn’t share his talent, and wealthy kings.⁴⁰⁸ The narrator concludes that all come to the same end. Riches cannot bring back those who lie in garishly ornamented graves.⁴⁰⁹ They paid for an expensive headstone engraving, but the engraver misspelled their names and dates of life.⁴¹⁰ The narrator ponders if those same people ever thought of their inevitable end.⁴¹¹ The narrator acknowledges that the living still remember the dead, once full of life and then suddenly gone.⁴¹² Despite our inevitable destiny, the narrator reminds the reader that all lives are important, even though fame and recognition may not be achieved.⁴¹³ Gray makes this point in the following verse:

⁴⁰³ John. L. Scripps to William Herndon, June 24, 1865, in William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 57.

⁴⁰⁴ Scripps to Herndon, June 24, 1865, 57; Gray, “*Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard*,” in *A Teacher*, 217.

⁴⁰⁵ Gray, “*Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard*,” 216-219.

⁴⁰⁶ Gray, “*Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard*,” 216.

⁴⁰⁷ Gray, “*Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard*,” 216.

⁴⁰⁸ Gray, “*Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard*,” 216-218.

⁴⁰⁹ Gray, “*Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard*,” 217.

⁴¹⁰ Gray, “*Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard*,” 218.

⁴¹¹ Gray, “*Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard*,” 218.

⁴¹² Gray, “*Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard*,” 218.

⁴¹³ Gray, “*Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard*,” 218-219.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
 The dark unfathom'd caves of Ocean bear:
 Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
 And waste its sweetness on the desert air.⁴¹⁴

Lincoln was exposed to literature, speeches, and poetry. Suddenly, he encountered events at another time and place in history, envisioning the vastness of the world beyond rural Indiana. He witnessed avenues to be explored and other means to earn a living. He observed the virtues and tools needed to be a great politician, the importance of human life, and the necessity of continuous learning. Lincoln was instructed on the craft of public speaking, linking poetic prose with reason, and the art of exquisite composition. He might have infused these moral rights and wrongs with his own expanding thoughts on the world. Lincoln's classmates and family recall him memorizing these speeches by reading aloud, a habit he continued throughout his life. Lincoln's law partner, Herndon, believed this education strengthened his mind and allowed him to develop his acute analytical ability.⁴¹⁵ The introduction to literature and debate had the power to embed reason into Lincoln's mind and nurture the beginnings of greatness.

Lincoln borrowed his first law book, *The Revised Laws of Indiana: Adopted and Enacted by the General Assembly at their Eight Session*.⁴¹⁶ The owner of the book, David Turnham, six years Lincoln's senior and local constable, said Lincoln quickly consumed his first law book, and this led to his desire to have a profession in the law.⁴¹⁷ The law book includes the Declaration of

⁴¹⁴ Gray, "Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard," in *A Teacher*, 217.

⁴¹⁵ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 37-39.

⁴¹⁶ Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 30; Indiana General Assembly, *The Revised Laws of Indiana: Adopted and Enacted by the General Assembly at their Eight Session* (Corydon: Carpenter and Douglass, 1824), 1-458.

⁴¹⁷ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 40; David Turnham to William H. Herndon, October 12, 1865, in William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 138.

Independence and the U.S. Constitution.⁴¹⁸ It could have been Lincoln's first reading of that which protects the promise of freedom. The study of law suited his sense of fairness, sound reasoning, and great ambition in life. The description of equality in the Declaration of Independence is hollow at the time of Lincoln's reading. The document promises American citizens the right to pursue their dreams and be free. He understood all people in this great country were not treated as equals. Lincoln was lit on fire.⁴¹⁹ He was given a playbook for his future, and it didn't involve gathering fodder.

After his introduction to speeches, poetry, and great works of art, Lincoln became obsessed with public speaking. He would go to community work events and would begin telling jokes and stories, putting into practice the public speaking instruction he received.⁴²⁰ Dennis Hanks remembered, "All would stop, gather around Abe, and listen, sometimes crying and sometimes bursting their sides with laughter. He would sometimes mount a stump, chair, or box and make speeches- stories and stories, anecdotes, and suchlike things; he never failed here."⁴²¹ Lincoln's stepmother, Sarah, recalled that he would attend church and later would gather children, mount a stump, and repeat the sermon verbatim, only amusingly.⁴²²

Lincoln's youngest stepsister, Matilda Johnston Moore remembered sometimes when their parents were away attending church, Lincoln would take the Bible off the shelf, read from it, and then preach a sermon identical to the one he heard six days prior.⁴²³ The Johnston children would mockingly "do the crying," and occasionally Lincoln "would join the "Chorus of

⁴¹⁸ Indiana General Assembly, *The Revised Laws of Indiana*, 7.

⁴¹⁹ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 40.

⁴²⁰ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 282.

⁴²¹ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 282.

⁴²² Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 107-108.

⁴²³ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 109-110.

Tears.”⁴²⁴ Friend David Turnham remembered in 1827, when Lincoln was eighteen, he recited a sermon by Jeremiah Cash with precision.⁴²⁵ All who were around him would stop their toil and gather to hear comedic relief.⁴²⁶ Lincoln became the most popular individual in the county. The fun would end when Thomas Lincoln would see the commotion and tell young Lincoln to get back to work.⁴²⁷ Lincoln was learning to speak publicly and express his thoughts through humor. Later in life, the future president would tell famed sculptor, Leonard Volk, ““The fact is, I don’t like to hear cut-and-dried sermons. When I hear a man preach, I like to see him act as if he were fighting bees.””⁴²⁸

Music on the frontier was a form of amusement and a diversion from daily toil. It would be present at community events, such as log-rollings, house-raising, cornshuckings, and weddings. According to classmate David Turnham, Lincoln enjoyed music.⁴²⁹ Dennis Hanks agreed that Lincoln enjoyed singing but was a mediocre singer.⁴³⁰ Friend Nathaniel Grigsby remembered them singing romantic and sensual songs.⁴³¹ Dennis Hanks recalled singing bawdy, field songs. One couplet is “Hail Columbia, happy land, If you ain’t drunk I will be damned.”⁴³² Elizabeth Crawford recalled Lincoln repeatedly singing a political campaign song:

Let auld acquaintance be forgot
And never brought to mind
May Jackson be our president,

⁴²⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 109

⁴²⁵ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 123.

⁴²⁶ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 110.

⁴²⁷ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 110.

⁴²⁸ Abraham Lincoln, *Lincoln Talks: An Oral Biography*, ed. Emanuel Hertz (New York: Bramhall House, 1986), 77.

⁴²⁹ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 40.

⁴³⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 49.

⁴³¹ Nathaniel Grigsby to William H. Herndon, January 21, 1866, in William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements about Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press), 1998, 168-169.

⁴³² Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 49.

And Adams left behind.⁴³³

“Barbara Allen” was an immensely popular folk song.⁴³⁴ Anglo-American folk hymns were the prevailing music on the frontier in the early nineteenth-century.⁴³⁵ Songs were modeled after English hymns but were liberally expanded.⁴³⁶ Spirituals were sung without instrumentation and were committed to memory, as song books were often not available in rural America.⁴³⁷ Songs were sung at home, as well as in church.⁴³⁸ Hymns spoke of their devoted relationship with God, poor conditions of this earth, glories of heaven, and torment of hell.⁴³⁹ Folk spirituals usually told a story in first person warning others of the dangers of worldliness and sin.⁴⁴⁰ Tunes were passed down as oral history.⁴⁴¹ Some songs were created and put to secular tunes, such as “Barbara Allen” and many other time-honored ballads.⁴⁴²

Folk hymns were from the progressive Protestant evangelical movement that flourished in early colonial America.⁴⁴³ Lincoln and most of the community also enjoyed hymns from English Congregational minister Isaac Watts and American Baptist minister Stark Dupuys.⁴⁴⁴ Turnham said one of Lincoln’s favorites was a spiritual ballad, “The Romish Lady” which dates to the Protestant Reformation.⁴⁴⁵ Though numerous people claim to be the author, the true author

⁴³³ Herndon, *Herndon’s Life of Lincoln*, 49.

⁴³⁴ Theodore Raph, *The American Son Treasury: 100 Favorites* (New York, Dover, 1986), 20-22; Herndon, *Herndon’s Life of Lincoln*, 49.

⁴³⁵ William A. Owens, *Texas Folk Song* (Southern Methodist University Press, 1976), 161-169.

⁴³⁶ George Pullen Jackson, *Spiritual Folk Songs of Early America: Two Hundred and Fifty Tunes and Texts* (Locust Valley: J.J. Augustine, 1953), 5-6.

⁴³⁷ William A. Owens, *Texas Folk Song* (Southern Methodist University Press, 1976), 161-162.

⁴³⁸ Jackson, *Spiritual Folk Songs of Early America*, 5-6.

⁴³⁹ Jackson, *Spiritual Folk Songs of Early America*, 5.

⁴⁴⁰ Jackson, *Spiritual Folk Songs of Early America*, 5.

⁴⁴¹ Jackson, *Spiritual Folk Songs of Early America*, 6.

⁴⁴² Raph, *The American Son Treasury*, 20-22; Jackson, *Spiritual Folk Songs of Early America*, 6.

⁴⁴³ Jackson, *Spiritual Folk Songs of Early America*, 5-6.

⁴⁴⁴ Herndon, *Herndon’s Informants*, 121.

⁴⁴⁵ William Walker, *Southern Harmony & Musical Companion: Containing a Choice Collection of Tunes, Hymns, Psalms, Odes, and Anthems Selected from the Most Eminent Authors in the United States and Well Adapted to Christian Churches of Every Denomination, Singing Schools, and Private Societies*, ed. Glenn C. Wilcox (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987), 82; Herndon, *Herndon’s Life of Lincoln*, 48-49.

is unknown. The tale of “The Romish Lady” testifies to parental tyranny.⁴⁴⁶ A young lady is brought up in the Catholic faith of her mother. The young lady decides for herself that she doesn’t believe Catholic precepts are what God requires. She confronts her mother with her beliefs. She is forced to hide her Bible and study her faith in secret. When the maiden explains her disagreements concerning the Catholic faith to her mother, she notifies the Roman clergy who promptly confine the young girl. The clergy attempt to intimidate her and take her valuables. One final attempt is made to convert her. The punishment for her denial of the Catholic faith was being burned at the stake. In a public execution, the maiden looks toward heaven and professes her faith. She tells spectators not to worry about her soul, but to worry about their own. The mother runs to her daughter with pictures of gold framed idols. Lincoln can identify with the young maiden and her fight against parental tyranny. Lincoln did not have a good relationship with his father and wanted to be free of his will. Augustus H. Chapman, Dennis Hanks’ son-in-law, testified to Thomas Lincoln’s poor treatment of his son.⁴⁴⁷

Instead of taking the idols, the young maiden requests her Bible, which contains the precepts of her faith. She asks her mother why she is determined to be eternally tormented. She renounces her double-crossing mother just before she submits to death. The clergy bind her with chains and stoke the fire. Like Jesus Christ on the cross, she asks God why she is forsaken and asks God to forgive her executioners. Despite the risk of death and disappointing her mother, the young maiden decides to do what she thinks is right. This was a sound principle for Lincoln. The maiden defies her mother and follows her own conscious. She takes her religious education in her own hands, by studying the Bible and worshiping her God. Lincoln would do the same to

⁴⁴⁶ Walker, *Southern Harmony & Musical Companion*, 82.

⁴⁴⁷ A.H. Chapman to William H. Herndon, September 28, 1865, in William Herndon, *Herndon’s Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements about Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press), 1998, 134.

his father. He would reject the life his father led and create his own destiny. Lincoln would grasp his own power by giving himself the education his father failed to provide.

In August 1826, Lincoln's sister, Sarah Lincoln, married Lincoln's schoolmate, Aaron Grigsby. The Lincolns held an old-fashioned infare, as was the custom.⁴⁴⁸ An infare was a dinner reception for a newly married couple that included celebratory feasting and singing. The Lincoln family sang "Adam and Eve's Wedding Song" by William H. Bozarth, 1818.⁴⁴⁹ The last verse reads:

The husband is commanded
To love his loving bride;
And live as does a Christian,
And for his house provide.
The woman is commanded
Her husband to obey,
In everything that's lawful,
Until her dying day.⁴⁵⁰

Lincoln would argue that Aaron was not the most loving husband, and Sarah's dying day came too soon. In time, Sarah became pregnant. She had complications during the birth, and sadly, at the age of twenty, Lincoln's beloved sister and her baby died.⁴⁵¹ Josiah Crawford's nephew, Captain John W. Lamar, was with Lincoln when he heard the news.⁴⁵² Lincoln sobbed in devastation.⁴⁵³ Lincoln and Sarah had a tight bond, and he was overwhelmed with grief. Lincoln felt it was the Grisby family's fault and that her health was neglected.⁴⁵⁴ There was no doctor present, only a midwife.⁴⁵⁵ A wedge formed between the Lincolns and the Grigsbys.

⁴⁴⁸ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 42; Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 22.

⁴⁴⁹ William H. Bozarth, "Adam and Eve's Wedding Song," Hymnary.org, 1818, accessed February 20, 2024, https://hymnary.org/text/when_adam_was_created_he_dwelt_in_edens_instances; Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 43.

⁴⁵⁰ William H. Bozarth, "Adam and Eve's Wedding Song," Hymnary.org, 1818, accessed February 20, 2024, https://hymnary.org/text/when_adam_was_created_he_dwelt_in_edens_instances.

⁴⁵¹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 100.

⁴⁵² Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 24.

⁴⁵³ Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 24.

⁴⁵⁴ Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 24.

⁴⁵⁵ Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 22.

Fifteen months after the death of Sarah Lincoln Grigsby, an event took place that caused Lincoln to use his sharp literary wit against his foe. A double wedding for the Grigsby brothers, Reuben Jr. and Charles, took place.⁴⁵⁶ Josiah Crawford helped with the old-fashioned reception at Reuben Grigsby Sr.'s home.⁴⁵⁷ Due to the animosity between the families, the Lincolns were not invited.⁴⁵⁸ There was much speculation over what happened when the party ended. It was said in Gentryville that the brides ended their evening earlier than the grooms and were led to their bridal suites.⁴⁵⁹ Later, the servers led the grooms to their rooms, only they did not contain the correct bride.⁴⁶⁰ The rumor was that they crawled into bed, and the mistake was soon discovered, causing both grooms to shoot out of bed and run smack into each other.⁴⁶¹ The community of Gentryville, with the exception of the Grigsby family, took great pleasure in this tale. Reuben Grigsby Jr.'s bride, Elizabeth Ray Grigsby "Aunt Betsy," said that the story was a tale John Johnston, Lincoln's stepbrother, made up and spread throughout the community.⁴⁶² In Johnston's story of the Grigsby wedding, it was insinuated that Lincoln had something to do with the mishap.⁴⁶³

Lincoln saw his opportunity to add to their insult. Lincoln was smarting over the *Life of Washington* incident, Sarah's death, and the exclusion of the party.⁴⁶⁴ He had become adept at writing and wrote an infamous satire about the Grigsby clan's incident.⁴⁶⁵ When William Herndon interviewed Lincoln's neighbors after Lincoln's death, all fondly remembered Lincoln's gift of satire and the infamous poem the "Chronicles of Reuben" that recorded the wedding

⁴⁵⁶ Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 27.

⁴⁵⁷ Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 27.

⁴⁵⁸ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 119.

⁴⁵⁹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 151.

⁴⁶⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 151-152.

⁴⁶¹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 151-152.

⁴⁶² Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 26-27.

⁴⁶³ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 119.

⁴⁶⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 119.

⁴⁶⁵ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 44-48.

mishap. Elizabeth Crawford thought the satirical poem was racy.⁴⁶⁶ Even the butt of the joke laughed years later.⁴⁶⁷ He purposely dropped it while walking down the road, knowing it would be found.⁴⁶⁸ The poem spread like fire on a prairie and made the community aware of his exceptional abilities.⁴⁶⁹ One of the new brides, Elizabeth Ray Grigsby, reported seeing Lincoln at Reuben Grigsby Sr.'s home two days after the wedding.⁴⁷⁰ Whether his presence was to apologize for his stepbrother's part in the incident, we will never know. The new Mrs. Grigsby did report, "He was not a good-looking young man."⁴⁷¹ Years after the event, Josiah Crawford's wife, Elizabeth, blushinglly recited the "Chronicles of Reuban" from memory.⁴⁷² The spelling in this satire has been corrected for easier comprehension:

I will tell you a joke about Jouel & Mary
 It is neither a joke nor a story
 For Reuben & Charles have married two girls-
 But Billy has married a boy
 The girls he had tried on every side
 But none could he get to agree
 All was in vain
 He went home again
 And since that he is married to Natty

So Billy & Natty agreed very well
 And Mamma's well pleased at the match
 The egg is laid but Natty's afraid
 The shell is so soft that it never will hatch
 But Betsy she said You cursed bald head
 My suiter you never can be
 Besides your low crotch proclaims you a botch
 And that never can answer for me⁴⁷³

⁴⁶⁶ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 127.

⁴⁶⁷ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 114.

⁴⁶⁸ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 120.

⁴⁶⁹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 120.

⁴⁷⁰ Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 27.

⁴⁷¹ Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 27.

⁴⁷² Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 127.

⁴⁷³ Elizabeth Crawford to William H. Herndon, January 4, 1866, William H. Herndon, in *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 152.

Lincoln found the means to express his emotions through art. He joined in joyous song at the wedding of his beloved sister. He vented his frustration, anger, and sadness from his mother and sister's death in the form of sharp satire, while his speeches of folly demonstrated good humor and wit. Lincoln was finding himself and learning how to navigate his way, apart from his father. Art was a way for him to begin healing from emotional pain and lighten the burden of life's realities. Lincoln, himself, stated that he used humor to relieve his emotional burdens.⁴⁷⁴ His friend, Judge David Davis, remembered Lincoln using artistic humor to overcome his sorrow.⁴⁷⁵ The enormous pain from the loss of loved ones combined with a restrictive life with an abusive father would make anyone feel alone in the world. Lincoln turned to literature, music, humor, speechmaking, and poetry to overcome adversity. He learned from artists and became an artist, taking risks and exposing his vulnerabilities.

Years after Lincoln's death, Governor Richard J. Oglesby, a fast friend of Lincoln, wrote to William Herndon after reading Herndon's lecture on Lincoln. Oglesby was struck by Herndon's last sentence, "Sometimes it appeared to me that Lincoln's soul was just fresh from the presence of its creator."⁴⁷⁶ Oglesby had that very same thought about his friend Lincoln.⁴⁷⁷ Oglesby went on, "He submitted to adversity and injustice with as much real patience as any man I ever knew- because he had an abiding belief that all would yet come out right or that the right would appear and justice finally be awarded to him."⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁴ F. B. Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln: The Story of a Picture* (North Charleston: CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2016), 153.

⁴⁷⁵ Henry C. Whitney, *Life of the Circuit with Lincoln: With Sketches of Generals Grant, Sherman and McClellan, Judge Davis, Leonard Swett, and Other Contemporaries* (Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1892), 171.

⁴⁷⁶ Richard J. Oglesby to William H. Herndon, January 5, 1866, William Herndon, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 152-153.

⁴⁷⁷ Richard J. Oglesby to William H. Herndon, January 5, 1866, 152-153.

⁴⁷⁸ Richard J. Oglesby to William H. Herndon, January 5, 1866, 152-153.

Chapter 4

Free Man: Testing the Waters

The winds of change burst upon the Lincoln homestead. In 1830, Thomas Lincoln decided to pull up stakes and move to Illinois.⁴⁷⁹ Sarah Lincoln wanted to be closer to her daughter, Elizabeth, Dennis Hanks' wife. All the Gentryville community came to say goodbye to the Lincolns.⁴⁸⁰ They began their two-week journey in homemade wagons pulled by ox teams. One team was driven by twenty-one-year-old Lincoln. After the arduous journey, Lincoln helped Thomas, John Hanks, and Dennis Hanks fell the trees, clear the ground, and build a cabin north of the Sangamon River, ten miles west of Decatur.⁴⁸¹ A field was cleared, and a crop of corn was planted to be harvested that year.⁴⁸² One day, a Democratic candidate entered the village of Decatur to debate the political topics of the day.⁴⁸³ As Lincoln was plowing in a field, he heard a commotion and decided to investigate.⁴⁸⁴ He and John Hanks saw standing on a tree stump in front of the log courthouse on the town square, John F. Posey, raving against the ““Old Line Whigs.””⁴⁸⁵ Lincoln strongly agreed with Whig views, and after the speech was over, he jumped upon the stump to refute the charges.⁴⁸⁶ Sarah Powers Durfee remembers Lincoln's unusual appearance.⁴⁸⁷ He cut a tall, lean figure in a straw hat with worn fringe on one side and a black string around the crown to keep it intact.⁴⁸⁸ He wore a striped ““hickory”” shirt, and tight, short,

⁴⁷⁹ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 11.

⁴⁸⁰ Hobson, *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln*, 32-33.

⁴⁸¹ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 11.

⁴⁸² Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 12.

⁴⁸³ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 456.

⁴⁸⁴ Jane Martin Johns, *Personal Recollections of Early Decatur, Abraham Lincoln, Richard J. Oglesby, and The Civil War*, ed. Howard C. Schaub (Decatur: Decatur Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution, 1912), 61.

⁴⁸⁵ Johns, *Personal Recollections of Early Decatur, Abraham Lincoln, Richard J. Oglesby, and The Civil War*, 60-61.

⁴⁸⁶ Johns, *Personal Recollections of Early Decatur, Abraham Lincoln, Richard J. Oglesby, and The Civil War*, 61.

⁴⁸⁷ Johns, *Personal Recollections of Early Decatur, Abraham Lincoln, Richard J. Oglesby, and The Civil War*, 61.

⁴⁸⁸ Johns, *Personal Recollections of Early Decatur, Abraham Lincoln, Richard J. Oglesby, and The Civil War*, 61.

coarse linen pants, exposing his ankles and bare feet.⁴⁸⁹ Lincoln made his first bona fide political speech and expressed his views clearly and succinctly. Durfee noted his only hint of discomfort was in his shifting feet. He spoke about a subject near to his heart: the navigation of the Sangamon River.⁴⁹⁰ Lincoln believed the government should provide internal improvements, making the Sangamon River navigable. He mentions it in his first campaign speech in New Salem, Illinois. Lincoln began, “I believe in the improvement of the Sangamon River, to be vastly important and highly desirable to the people of this county; and if elected, any measure in the legislature having this for its object, which may appear judicious, will meet my approbation, and shall receive my support.”⁴⁹¹ Hanks reported that Lincoln demolished his competitor.⁴⁹² After Lincoln finished his speech, the crowd went wild.⁴⁹³ He was cheered for his zeal and courage.⁴⁹⁴ John Posey was astounded at this young man’s clear reason and strong argument.⁴⁹⁵ He took Lincoln aside and asked where he got his education and sharp debating skills.⁴⁹⁶ Lincoln told him what books he read and the method with which he learned.⁴⁹⁷ Posey encouraged him to keep at it.⁴⁹⁸ Lincoln passed his first test as a politician.

Denton Offut, an entrepreneur, requested John Hanks, Nancy Lincoln’s first cousin, to take provisions for him on a flat boat from Beardstown to New Orleans.⁴⁹⁹ He introduced

⁴⁸⁹ Johns, *Personal Recollections of Early Decatur, Abraham Lincoln, Richard J. Oglesby, and The Civil War*, 60-61.

⁴⁹⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 456.

⁴⁹¹ Lincoln, “Communication to the People of Sangamo County, New Salem, Illinois, March 9, 1832, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), 1:5-9.

⁴⁹² Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 456.

⁴⁹³ Johns, *Personal Recollections of Early Decatur, Abraham Lincoln, Richard J. Oglesby, and The Civil War*, 60-61.

⁴⁹⁴ Johns, *Personal Recollections of Early Decatur, Abraham Lincoln, Richard J. Oglesby, and The Civil War*, 60-61.

⁴⁹⁵ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 456.

⁴⁹⁶ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 456.

⁴⁹⁷ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 456.

⁴⁹⁸ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 456.

⁴⁹⁹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 456.

Lincoln and Hanks to Offut, and the three made the trip to Sangamon County in a canoe, and walked to Springfield, Illinois, to meet their employer.⁵⁰⁰ Offut didn't hold up his end of the bargain, as he didn't have a boat for the party to carry the goods.⁵⁰¹ He hired the men to fell the trees and build a flatboat.⁵⁰² In April 1831, the boat was finished, the foursome set off for New Orleans with their load of hogs, corn, and barrels of pork.⁵⁰³ As they reached New Salem, Illinois, the boat got hung on James Rutledge's mill dam.⁵⁰⁴ Lincoln knew what to do. He had the men unload the boat of hogs and corn, roll the barrels forward, and he then drilled a hole in the in the other end, releasing the trapped water and freeing the boat.⁵⁰⁵ Offut was impressed with Lincoln's innovation, and he offered Lincoln a job as a clerk for Offut's store and mill.⁵⁰⁶ Lincoln agreed.

In July 1831, Lincoln was finally his own man, and the village of New Salem would become his university, preparing him for his future. James Short, a resident of New Salem, recalled his first sight of Lincoln in a blue round coat and pale blue twill trousers that hung two inches above his thick, leather ankle boots.⁵⁰⁷ Short was impressed by his intellect and exuberance.⁵⁰⁸ Another resident noted that the moment Lincoln entered New Salem, he was full of life and energy.⁵⁰⁹ He made friends immediately. While waiting for Offut to come back from Springfield, Lincoln met New Salem residents.⁵¹⁰ He was on the street during a general election, and the schoolteacher, William Mentor Graham, asked Lincoln if he could write so he could fill

⁵⁰⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 456.

⁵⁰¹ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 13-14.

⁵⁰² Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 14.

⁵⁰³ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 457.

⁵⁰⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 457.

⁵⁰⁵ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 457.

⁵⁰⁶ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 14-15.

⁵⁰⁷ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 72.

⁵⁰⁸ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 72.

⁵⁰⁹ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 105.

⁵¹⁰ Thomas P. Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem* (Petersburg: Old Salem Lincoln League, 1927), 20.

in for the election clerk.⁵¹¹ Lincoln answered that he could “make a few rabbit tracks.”⁵¹² During the course of the election day, he entertained the crowd with stories and jokes.⁵¹³ One resident remembered him saying,

An itinerant preacher, dressed in jeans pantaloons with flap in front, held on by a single button on his shirt and linsey-woolsey shirt fastened at the collar with one button, stepping into the pulpit announces as his text, “I am the Christ, whom I shall represent today.” Just as he started his sermon, a small green lizard crept up his baggy leg. With one hand gesturing the strong points of his sermon and the other seeking to stop the upward advance of the unwelcomed [sic] stranger, the even flow of his discourse went on. Being unable to arrest the lizard’s progress, he opened the button of his pantaloons and, with one sweep and a kick, freed himself therefrom. However, the lizard by this time, was making its way up his back, opening the shirt button at his throat, he divested himself of this garment also- the flow of his eloquence uninterruptedly marching on. At this juncture, an old lady in the rear of the house, arose, and pointing an accusing finger at the preacher, in a piping voice, said: ‘I just want to say that if you represent Jesus Christ, sir, then I am done with the Bible.’⁵¹⁴

The art of storytelling and humor lifted his heart when he engaged with his audience. The comic relief of telling stories and jokes lifted his mental depression and gave him an inner resilience to handle the heartbreak of the past. Isaac Arnold, Lincoln’s close friend, once remarked that humor was Lincoln’s lifeline.⁵¹⁵ The future President Lincoln kept humorous works on his desk so he could escape with relief from depression and weariness.⁵¹⁶ One time a visitor was not in the mood for the president’s humor. Lincoln shut him up quickly by telling him to sit down and explained if it ““Were not for this occasional vent, I should die.””⁵¹⁷

Brian Rosebury, an expert in psychology and humanities, writes in *Art and Desire* that the desire for art is psychologically valuable.⁵¹⁸ It creates emotion and encompasses human experience. He states that art’s sentiments affect how we interact and maneuver through the

⁵¹¹ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 20-21.

⁵¹² Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 21.

⁵¹³ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 21.

⁵¹⁴ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 21.

⁵¹⁵ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 152.

⁵¹⁶ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 152.

⁵¹⁷ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 153.

⁵¹⁸ Brian Rosebury, *Art and Desire: A Study in the Aesthetics of Fiction* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1988), xi.

world.⁵¹⁹ We desire art because it fulfills the need to better understand ourselves and unites us with the community around us. Not only artists, but also the art audience benefits, as it is a communal pact.⁵²⁰ Our minds are integrated with the mind of the artist. In Paul B. Armstrong's *Stories and the Brain*, he notes that culture gives us the capacity to traverse our life's journey.⁵²¹ Lincoln benefited from telling humorous stories and jokes just as much as his audience. Stories have the power to cognitively reshape how our minds and bodies respond and navigate the world.⁵²²

In the winter of 1831, Lincoln joined the local debating club, which was run by James Rutledge.⁵²³ This gave Lincoln the opportunity to get one step closer to his goal as a lawyer and politician. He could hone his public speaking and debate skills amongst a community of supportive friends. James Rutledge recalled Lincoln's first speech at the club.⁵²⁴ The crowd was ready for him to say something humorous, but they were surprised by what followed.⁵²⁵ ““As he rose to speak, his tall form towered above the little assembly. Both hands were thrust down deep into the pockets of his pantaloons. He opened up the discussion with splendid style, to the infinite astonishment of his friends. As he warmed to his subject, his hands would forsake his pockets and would enforce his ideas by awkward gestures; but would very soon seek their resting place. He pursued the questions with reason and argument so pithy and forcible that all were amazed.””⁵²⁶ James Rutledge later told his wife ““There is more than wit and fun in Abe's head.””⁵²⁷ All members of the debate club recognized he was a remarkable speaker. James

⁵¹⁹ Stephen Davies, *The Artful Species* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 11.

⁵²⁰ Davies, *The Artful Species*, 52.

⁵²¹ Armstrong, *Stories and the Brain*, 178.

⁵²² Armstrong, *Stories and the Brain*, 178.

⁵²³ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 31.

⁵²⁴ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 31.

⁵²⁵ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 32.

⁵²⁶ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 32-33.

⁵²⁷ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 33.

thought Lincoln just needed culture to achieve greatness.⁵²⁸ Rutledge knew that Lincoln only lacked the polish that the arts could provide. He had the raw talent to articulate his ideas but needed refinement.

Lincoln was eager for his new life and ready to do whatever it took to succeed. He and his co-worker slept on the same cot in the store.⁵²⁹ Co-worker, William Greene, let Lincoln borrow his book on surveying.⁵³⁰ Green said he began to study immediately.⁵³¹ Next, Lincoln borrowed John T. Stewart's law books, including William Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England*.⁵³² This work holds key advice for a president in the time of a civil war. In the seventh chapter under "Of the King's Prerogative" Blackstone advises that during a rebellion that threatens the government, the leader must act and not be afraid of restricting liberty to preserve the nation.⁵³³ This passage describes the king's flexibility in extreme circumstances when the preservation of the country is at stake. This is precisely what Lincoln did when he suspended the writ of habeas corpus to preserve the Union. He learned by Blackstone's example that it is critical in times of extreme crisis for the supreme leader to remain ready to pivot and be willing to restrict the rights on citizens to protect the entire nation. He was upholding his oath to perpetuate the constitution by creating new solutions to a situation the country had never experienced. He acted on Blackstone's maxim when he abandoned the writ of habeas corpus when the rebellion threatened to destroy every fiber of the constitution.

⁵²⁸ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 33.

⁵²⁹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 17-18.

⁵³⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 18.

⁵³¹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 18.

⁵³² Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 18; Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, 1-473.

⁵³³ Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, 1:238.

In New Salem in early 1833, Lincoln decided he needed to learn proper grammar and asked Mentor Graham where he could find a grammar book.⁵³⁴ Graham responded that there was no grammar book in the village, but there was one owned by John Vance six miles away.⁵³⁵ Lincoln was eating breakfast at the time of the conversation, and immediately after, he stood up and walked to John Vance's place and came home with the prized book, *English Grammer* by Samuel Kirkham.⁵³⁶ Kirkham's work was made for Lincoln, as he knows the importance of writing and speaking proper English. Kirkham begins,

YOU are about to enter upon one of the most useful, and when rightly pursued, one of the most interesting studies in the whole circle of science. I will endeavor to convince you, before I close these lectures, that this is not only a pleasing study, but one of real and substantial utility; a study that directly tends to adorn and dignify human nature, and meliorate the condition of man. Grammar is a leading branch of that learning which alone is capable of unfolding and maturing the mental powers, and of elevating man to his proper rank in the scale of intellectual existence; of that learning which lifts the soul from earth, and enables it to hold converse with a thousand worlds.⁵³⁷

Lincoln certainly desired mature mental powers. He yearned for education and scholarship.

Lincoln came from undistinguished circumstances and was determined to open doors that would be forever shut without an education. He recognized that knowledge had the power to elevate him to another station in life and allow him to use his mind to earn a living, rather than through his hands. Kirkham tells the reader to not be discouraged if they ever do not understand the meaning of a word or a sentence, but to persist in their quest for knowledge. Kirkham emphasizes the reader should learn to think systematically so their mind can capture new information and expand their knowledge.⁵³⁸ Kirkham gives good council. Thinking methodically

⁵³⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 10.

⁵³⁵ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 10.

⁵³⁶ Samuel Kirkham, *English Grammer in Familiar Lectures: Accompanied by a Compendium Embracing A New System of Punctuation, Exercises in False Syntax, and a System of Philosophical Grammer in Notes: To Which Are Added An Appendix, and a Key to the Exercises Designed for the Use of Schools and Private Learners* (Baltimore: Plaskitt & Co, 1835), 228; Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 10.

⁵³⁷ Kirkham, *English Grammer in Familiar Lectures*, 10.

⁵³⁸ Kirkham, *English Grammer in Familiar Lectures*, 15.

builds critical thinking skills and fosters problem solving skills. Lincoln is known for his structured reasoning skills. As an attorney and as a politician, he would dissect issues and examine them from all angles. He would meticulously analyze data and have an inquisitiveness to completely grasp the issue. This gave him an advantage in law and politics as he understood the issue from all sides and predicted his opponent's arguments.

Kirkham goes on to tell the reader that they live in a country where they are free, the fight for freedom has passed, and no more blood is to be shed. This is where the author is wrong. More blood was to be shed, and independence still had not been achieved for four million souls in bondage. Kirkham sternly advises the reader to serve their country by getting an education. He reminds the reader that an education is powerful, and you can never be subjugated if you possess knowledge. The education of America's youth is vital to the country's future freedom.⁵³⁹

It is as if Kirkham is speaking only to Lincoln with personal advice. His education and future duty to his country would affect millions of people in his lifetime, as well as the unified nation. Lincoln understood that the key to escaping poverty was through education. He felt that he had been enslaved by his iron-fisted father, as he was used for physical labor without profiting from it himself and was denied an education. Lincoln's long-time friend, John E. Roll, recalled Lincoln confessing this in a speech at the Illinois State House.⁵⁴⁰ Kirkham is predicting the future. Liberty and the nation did indeed depend on young Lincoln's intelligence and ability to self-educate. Lincoln listened to Kirkham's call to become educated and focus on self-improvement to fulfill his ambitions. Lincoln was committed to doing his duty to his country and persevering for a better life, and he now had a plan.

⁵³⁹ Kirkham, *English Grammar in Familiar Lectures*, 15.

⁵⁴⁰ Roll, "Reminiscences of John E. Roll," August 25, 1895.

The years of literature, public speaking, music, story-telling, and comical impersonations built Lincoln's confidence and developed an avenue to manage adversity. His mental power matured, and his reasoning skills were sharpened. He was able to speak well, make a clear argument, and insert humor to make a point. Lincoln had overcome extreme poverty, death, and hardships with the tools of culture and community. He was ready to begin his political career using the tools he acquired on his path of self-education. On March 6, 1832, Lincoln announced his candidacy for the state legislature.⁵⁴¹ Lincoln published his first speech in the *Sangamo Journal* on March 15, 1832.⁵⁴² His platform was internal improvements, usury, and education.⁵⁴³ Lincoln greatly desired to improve the Sangamo River to make it more navigable for transportation and trade.⁵⁴⁴ He argued a law was needed to set a limit on unreasonably high interest rates.⁵⁴⁵ Lincoln also thought every citizen ought to have a free education which would benefit the entire community, and he wanted to play his part in bringing about those changes.⁵⁴⁶ He wanted everyone to have an opportunity learn to read and write and have a formal education he never had. Twenty-six years later, in 1858, Lincoln gave a speech indicating his belief in literacy's importance:

Writing- the art of communicating thoughts to the mind through the eye- is the great invention of the world. Great in the astonishing range of analysis and combination which necessarily underlies the most crude and general conception of it- great, very great in enabling us to converse with the dead, the absent, and the unborn, at all distances of time and of space; and great, not only in its direct benefits, but greatest help, to all other inventions.⁵⁴⁷

⁵⁴¹ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 33-34.

⁵⁴² Lincoln, "Communication to the People of Sangamo County," 1:5-9.

⁵⁴³ Lincoln, "Communication to the People of Sangamo County," 1:5-9.

⁵⁴⁴ Lincoln, "Communication to the People of Sangamo County," 1:5-9.

⁵⁴⁵ Lincoln, "Communication to the People of Sangamo County," 1:5-9.

⁵⁴⁶ Lincoln, "Communication to the People of Sangamo County," 1:5-9.

⁵⁴⁷ Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, 3:359-360; Rosebury, *Art and Desire*, 8.

The residents of New Salem remember Lincoln singing well-known songs but changing the words into ludicrous parodies.⁵⁴⁸ In the difficult world the New Salemites lived, humor and culture were priceless. Dennis Hanks recalled Lincoln's love of music.⁵⁴⁹ Neighbors say he was not blessed in musical talent, but he enjoyed making the crowd laugh at his ridiculous tunes. He would sing "Legacy" from *The Missouri Harmony* and would replace the words "red grape" with "Old Grey."⁵⁵⁰

When in death I shall calm recline
O bear my heart to my mistress dear,

Tell her it liv'd on smiles and wine,
Of brightest hue while it linger'd here.

Bid her not shed one tear of sorrow
To sully a heart so brilliant and light;

But balmy drops of the red grape borrow
To bathe the relict from morn till night.⁵⁵¹

Lincoln's boss, Offut, though enthusiastic, was not much of a businessman.⁵⁵² The store failed within a year.⁵⁵³ In April 1832, Lincoln volunteered to fight in the Black Hawk War and much to his pleasure, he was elected captain.⁵⁵⁴ It was a personal milestone, and no other success would ever trump that satisfaction.⁵⁵⁵ According to William Greene, Lincoln's co-worker from Denton Offutt's store, his men idolized him.⁵⁵⁶ It was his first elected leadership role. He served for three months.⁵⁵⁷ He displayed his confidence and leadership abilities to his regiment. A

⁵⁴⁸ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 31.

⁵⁴⁹ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 282.

⁵⁵⁰ Allen D. Carden, *The Missouri Harmony: Or a Choice Collection of Psalm Tunes, Hymns, and Anthems, Selected From the Most Eminent Authors and Well Adapted to All Christian Churches, Singing Schools, and Private Societies Together with an Introduction to Grounds of Music, the Rudiments of Music, and Plain Rules for Beginners* (Cincinnati: Morgan and Sanxay, 1834), 148; Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 31.

⁵⁵¹ Carden, *The Missouri Harmony*, 148.

⁵⁵² Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 9.

⁵⁵³ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 16.

⁵⁵⁴ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 16.

⁵⁵⁵ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 16-17.

⁵⁵⁶ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 18.

⁵⁵⁷ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 16.

Native American came upon their camp and surrendered himself.⁵⁵⁸ He carried with him a note validating his good character.⁵⁵⁹ The soldiers wanted to kill him, but Lincoln refused.⁵⁶⁰ One of the soldiers called Lincoln a coward.⁵⁶¹ Lincoln stood at his full height and welcomed the test of courage.⁵⁶² He told the soldier to choose his weapon.⁵⁶³ Instead, the soldier cowered in response.⁵⁶⁴

Lincoln had confidence in his abilities and new-found knowledge. When Lincoln returned, he began his campaign for Illinois House Representative.⁵⁶⁵ New Salem friend, James Herndon recalled Lincoln's campaign speech on the banks of Richland. Lincoln, the lone politician at a public sale, laid out his platform in simple terms:

Fellow citizens, I have been solicited by many friends to become a candidate for the legislature. I presume you all know who I am. My name is Abraham Lincoln. My politics is short and sweet, like the old woman's dance. I am in favor of a national bank, high protective tariffs, and the internal improvement system. If elected, I will be thankful. If beaten, I can do as I have been doing, work for a living.⁵⁶⁶

In August, Lincoln lost the election, but 277 of the 284 people in his precinct voted for him. At this point in his life, he was without a job and would need to wait two years before running again.⁵⁶⁷ Lamenting his lack of education, he became owner of a store through credit and got deeper in debt when, in Lincoln's words, the store "winked out."⁵⁶⁸

⁵⁵⁸ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 18.

⁵⁵⁹ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 18.

⁵⁶⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 18.

⁵⁶¹ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 18.

⁵⁶² Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 18-19.

⁵⁶³ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 19.

⁵⁶⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 19.

⁵⁶⁵ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 17.

⁵⁶⁶ James A. Herndon to William Herndon, May 29, 1865, in William Herndon, in *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 16-17.

⁵⁶⁷ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 17.

⁵⁶⁸ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 18.

Lincoln did not give up. Instead, he leaned into literature. Lincoln was chosen to be New Salem's postmaster. With this position, he was able to read all he desired. He was introduced to the writings of Shakespeare, which he quickly memorized, and the poetry of Robert Burns and Lord Byron.⁵⁶⁹ These would become his favorites.⁵⁷⁰ Friend William Green noted that Lincoln had a dubious nature, which make these artworks perfect for his consumption.⁵⁷¹ Both authors use themes of hypocrisy in their works to showcase human nature.

Lincoln said of Burns, "Burns never touched a sentiment without carrying it to its ultimate expressions and leaving nothing further to be said."⁵⁷² Robert Burns, a Scottish poet and lyricist, created works ranging from humor to serious issues, such as inequality and slavery.⁵⁷³ Burns and Lincoln had similar experiences. Like Lincoln, Burns sought relief from brutal farmwork and depression through poetry, music, reading, and discussions with friends.⁵⁷⁴ Burn's poverty-stricken father was much like Lincoln's, always thinking something was better over the horizon. He penned the popular New Year's Eve song "Auld Lang Syne."⁵⁷⁵ James H. Matheny, who was to be Lincoln's best man in his wedding, remembered Lincoln quoting "Holy Willie's Prayer" with joy.⁵⁷⁶ He would read it aloud with a cheerful Scottish accent. The work is a satire about the hypocrisy of those who are chosen to ascend to heaven.⁵⁷⁷ Willie believes he was

⁵⁶⁹ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 284.

⁵⁷⁰ Herndon, *The Hidden Lincoln*, 284.

⁵⁷¹ William G. Greene to William H. Herndon, May 30, 1865, William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 21.

⁵⁷² John Hay, *At Lincoln's Side: John Hay's Civil War Correspondence and Selected Writings*, ed. Michael Burlingame (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 136-137.

⁵⁷³ Robert Crawford, *The Bard: Robert Burns, A Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 11-12, Hoopladigital.

⁵⁷⁴ Crawford, *The Bard*, 30, Hoopladigital.

⁵⁷⁵ Robert Burns, *Auld Lang Syne* (New York: Lovell Company, 1900), 1-15.

⁵⁷⁶ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 251; Robert Burns, *Holy Willie's Prayer, Letter to John Goudie, Kilmarnock, and Six Favourite Songs: Vix Duncan Gray, The Lass That Made the Bed to Me, A Man's Man for a' That, Of a' the Airt's the Win' Can Blaw, Now Westlin Winds, I Gaed a Waefu' Gate Yestreen* (Glasgow: Stewart & Meikle, 1799), 2-5.

⁵⁷⁷ Burns, *Holy Willie's Prayer, Letter to John Goudie, Kilmarnock, and Six Favourite Songs*, 2-5.

assigned a place in heaven, so he has a pass to sin freely.⁵⁷⁸ He points out the sins of others as he gets inebriated and seduces a woman.⁵⁷⁹ Others should be punished for their sins, but he is excused from his.⁵⁸⁰ The last four stanzas read:

Lord, hear my earnest cry and pray'r,
Against that Presbyt'ry o' Ayr;
Thy strong right hand, Lord mak it bare
Upo' their heads;
Lord visit them, an' dinna spare,
For their misdeeds.

O Lord my God! that glib-tongu'd Aitken,
My vera heart an' flesh are quakin,
To think how we stood sweatin, shakin,
An' pish'd wi' dread,
While he, wi' hingin lip an' snakin,
Held up his head.

Lord, in Thy day o' vengeance try him,
Lord, visit them wha did employ him,
And pass not in Thy mercy by them,
Nor hear their pray'r,
But for Thy people's sake destroy them,
An' dinna spare.

But, Lord, remember me an' mine
Wi' mercies temporal and divine,
That I for grace an' gear may shine,
Excell'd by nane,
And a' the glory shall be Thine,
Amen, Amen!⁵⁸¹

Years after he was first introduced to the poetry of Robert Burns, Lincoln would also continually take comfort in his works. James Matheny said Lincoln worshiped Burns' works. Matheny and many others feared Lincoln's suicidal tendencies, particularly in 1842. During this

⁵⁷⁸ Burns, *Holy Willie's Prayer, Letter to John Goudie, Kilmarnock, and Six Favourite Songs*, 2-5.

⁵⁷⁹ Burns, *Holy Willie's Prayer, Letter to John Goudie, Kilmarnock, and Six Favourite Songs*, 2-5.

⁵⁸⁰ Burns, *Holy Willie's Prayer, Letter to John Goudie, Kilmarnock, and Six Favourite Songs*, 2-5.

⁵⁸¹ Burns, *Holy Willie's Prayer, Letter to John Goudie, Kilmarnock, and Six Favourite Songs*, 2-5.

time, Matheny remembered he ruminated on Burns' poetry for days on end in his shabbily furnished Springfield office, above the federal courtroom. He remarked that Burn's poetry was a religion for Lincoln. During Lincoln's lows, literature acted as a balm for his troubled mind. It gave him solace when life overwhelmed him.⁵⁸²

Burns often ruthlessly utilizes satire to make his point. Satire was in Lincoln's veins. Throughout Lincoln's career as a legislator, attorney, and politician, he would employ satire to confront his opponent and skillfully use humor to win an argument. His best friend, Joshua F. Speed, recalled one such incident a few days before the 1836 state legislature election. George Forquer, an ex-Whig and new member of the Democratic party, derided Lincoln after Lincoln's campaign speech. Speed noticed Lincoln's wrath was aroused. Forquer was an elderly man who had recently built a home in Springfield and erected upon it the town's first lightning rod. Lincoln replied,

"The gentleman has seen fit to allude to my being a young man; but he forgets that I am older in years than I am in the tricks and trades of politicians. I desire to live, and I desire place and distinction; but I would rather die now than, like the gentleman, live to see the day I would change my politics for an office worth three thousand dollars a year, and feel compelled to erect a lightning rod to protect a guilty conscience from an offended God."⁵⁸³

In 1833, newspapers, poetry and history were Lincoln's focus.⁵⁸⁴ He often read the *American Military Biography* by Amos Blanchard.⁵⁸⁵ A friend remembered him reading aloud

⁵⁸² Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 251

⁵⁸³ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 137-138.

⁵⁸⁴ Nathaniel William Branson to William H. Herndon, August 3, 1865, in William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 90.

⁵⁸⁵ Nathaniel William Branson to William H. Herndon, August 3, 1865, in Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 90; Amos Blanchard, *American Military Biography: Containing the Lives and Characters of the Officers of the Revolution, who were Most Distinguished in Achieving Our National Independence, Also The Life of Gilbert Motier La Fayette, Major-General in the Continental Army-Marshal of France and Commander-In-Chief of the National Guard* (Cincinnati: E. Walters, 1830), 1-615.

while sprawled out.⁵⁸⁶ Blanchard's work showcases prominent officers in the American Revolution and their roles in the fight for freedom.⁵⁸⁷ Blanchard ends the work with melodramatic flair as Major General Baron De Steuben gives his last dollar to Lieutenant-Colonel Cochran, a Black man, so he can secure safe passage for his family.⁵⁸⁸

To feed himself and survive, he became a surveyor by studying Robert Gibson's *The Theory and Practice of Surveying; Containing All the Instructions requisite for the skillful practice of this Art* and Abel Flint's *A System of Geometry and Trigonometry with a Treatise on Surveying*, and purchasing the necessary equipment.⁵⁸⁹ Mentor Graham's daughter remembers waking late at night and seeing her father and Lincoln working out a surveying problem next to the fire.⁵⁹⁰ With Mentor Graham's help, Lincoln mastered surveying skills within six weeks, and he was ready to begin work.⁵⁹¹ Times were lean for Lincoln. He had a massive debt from his business ventures. His partner from the last enterprise died, leaving Lincoln to pay it all.⁵⁹² Lincoln did not have the means to pay. Creditors sued and won judgements against him.⁵⁹³ Lincoln's books, horse, saddle, bridle, and surveying tools were sold at the Sheriff's auction.⁵⁹⁴ He was left with nothing to improve his future. He was not present at the auction, but his friend, James Short, was.⁵⁹⁵ He purchased Lincoln's items for \$120 and returned them to Lincoln.⁵⁹⁶

⁵⁸⁶ N.W. Branson to William H. Herndon, August 3, 1865, in Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 90.

⁵⁸⁷ Amos Blanchard, *American Military Biography*, 1-615.

⁵⁸⁸ Amos Blanchard, *American Military Biography*, 613-614.

⁵⁸⁹ Robert Gibson, *The Theory and Practice of Surveying; Containing All the Instructions requisite for the skillful practice of this Art* (New York: Evert Duyckinck, 1814), 1-184; Abel Flint, *A System of Geometry and Trigonometry with a Treatise on Surveying; Comprising Various Methods of Taking the Survey of a Field, with Directions for Protracting and Finding Areas in which, also, the Principles of Rectangular Surveying, by which Areas may be Accurately Calculated without Plotting, are Fully Explained with a Complete Series of Mathematical Tables and the Necessary Explanations* (Hartford: Cooke and Co., 1833), 1-100. Quoted in Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 18.

⁵⁹⁰ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 61.

⁵⁹¹ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 62.

⁵⁹² Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 74.

⁵⁹³ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 74.

⁵⁹⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 74.

⁵⁹⁵ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 74.

Lincoln told him, “Uncle Jimmy, I will do as much for you sometimes.”⁵⁹⁷ Years later, Lincoln discovered Uncle Jimmy was having hard luck, and as president, he gave him an appointment as an Indian agent.⁵⁹⁸ After this event, Lincoln began studying the law and surveying with new vitality.⁵⁹⁹ He read every newspaper he came across, absorbing any politics he could. When people passed him on the street, he was reading, memorizing what he read, and always absorbed in information.

Lincoln fully grasped William Blackstone’s *Commentaries on the Laws of England* Blackstone, and in the spring of 1834, he ran again for the state legislature.⁶⁰⁰ He began his campaign, canvassing the countryside and asking people for their support.⁶⁰¹ He would help them chop wood, watch the children while their mother cooked dinner, carry water, mow grain, split rails, and pitch hay.⁶⁰² He became friendly with everyone in the countryside, telling stories and jokes.⁶⁰³ Barrett, a Whig supporter, saw Lincoln and didn’t think much of his appearance.⁶⁰⁴ After Lincoln’s speech, he exclaimed, “Lincoln knows more than all the other candidates put together.”⁶⁰⁵ In August 1834, he finally saw his dream realized as he was elected to the state legislature with the largest margin.⁶⁰⁶ Lincoln earned every single vote. With encouragement from Major John T. Stewart, who was also a state legislator, Lincoln designed to become a lawyer.⁶⁰⁷ He studied law books provided by Stewart in every spare moment.⁶⁰⁸

⁵⁹⁶ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 74.

⁵⁹⁷ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 65-66.

⁵⁹⁸ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 65-66.

⁵⁹⁹ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 20.

⁶⁰⁰ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 71; Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, 1-473.

⁶⁰¹ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 71.

⁶⁰² Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 73.

⁶⁰³ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 73.

⁶⁰⁴ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 73.

⁶⁰⁵ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 73.

⁶⁰⁶ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 18-19.

⁶⁰⁷ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 19.

⁶⁰⁸ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 19.

In December, he borrowed \$200 to pay his debts, get proper attire for his new career, and to pay the travel expenses to the state capital, Vandalia.⁶⁰⁹ Dressed in a suit of butter-nut jeans, he left to fulfill his dream.⁶¹⁰ It was bittersweet because he was leaving someone behind. After the Black Hawk War, Lincoln began boarding at the Rutledge Inn.⁶¹¹ During this time of self-education and self-discovery, Lincoln found love. Miss Ann Rutledge, the daughter of the owner, James Rutledge, was beautiful, intelligent, philosophical, and had a quick wit.⁶¹² The New Salemites remembered her as an angel.⁶¹³ Perhaps, Ann reminded Lincoln of his mother's qualities. In the course of time, the two became engaged.⁶¹⁴ Ann wanted to attend school for one year in Jacksonville, and Lincoln was weighed down with debt.⁶¹⁵ It was decided that they would marry in 1836 if Lincoln were re-elected as a legislator.⁶¹⁶

In late summer 1835, Ann became sick with a fever, which steadily grew worse.⁶¹⁷ An hour before her passing, Lincoln was by her bedside.⁶¹⁸ He left the room sobbing and grief-stricken. Ann Rutledge died on August 25, 1835.⁶¹⁹ Once again, someone who held a special place in Lincoln's heart was taken from him. Lincoln had a complete mental breakdown. The trauma was too much for him, and he could not care for himself. His friends feared for his sanity and took him to Bowling and Nancy Green's home so he could recover and keep ward over him.⁶²⁰

⁶⁰⁹ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 73.

⁶¹⁰ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 73.

⁶¹¹ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 48.

⁶¹² Lynn McNulty Greene to William H. Herndon, July 30, 1865, in William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 21.

⁶¹³ Greene to Herndon, May 30, 1865, 21.

⁶¹⁴ Greene to Herndon, July 30, 1865, 80.

⁶¹⁵ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 75.

⁶¹⁶ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 51.

⁶¹⁷ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 75.

⁶¹⁸ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 76.

⁶¹⁹ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 76.

⁶²⁰ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 77.

Lincoln's anguish grew worse when the weather turned to rain or snow. He told William Greene that he was tortured when bad weather hammered her grave.⁶²¹ Robert B. Rutledge, Ann's brother, noted that Lincoln was in complete misery, and his friends thought he might lose his sanity.⁶²² His friends protectively watched over him. Lincoln found solace by reading his favorite literature and poetry, including *Commentaries on the Laws of England* day and night.⁶²³

Prior to Ann's death, Lincoln was melancholy and his friend, Jason Duncan, brought his attention to a poem.⁶²⁴ Lincoln cut it out of a newspaper and carried it in his pocket until it could be completely memorized.⁶²⁵ The poem was "Mortality," by William Knox.⁶²⁶ It meant so much to Lincoln that twenty-nine years later, he could recite that poem word for word, stating that it was a favorite.⁶²⁷ Artist Francis B. Carpenter, best known for his painting *First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation*, accompanied the president to an office in the Treasury Department which was being used as a temporary studio for him and the sculptor William Swayne.⁶²⁸ He remembered Lincoln quoted the entire poem:

Oh! Why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Oh! Why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of lightening, a break of the wave,
He passeth from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of oak and the willow shall fade,
Be scattered around, and together be laid;
And the young and the old, and the low and the high,

⁶²¹ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 77.

⁶²² Robert B. Rutledge to William H. Herndon, November 1, 1866, in William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 383.

⁶²³ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 441; Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, 1:1-473.

⁶²⁴ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 54.

⁶²⁵ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 54.

⁶²⁶ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 55; William Knox, "Mortality," in *The World's Great Religious Poetry*, ed. Caroline Miles Hill (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1973), 621-623.

⁶²⁷ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 54.

⁶²⁸ Francis B. Carpenter, *First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation*, 1864, oil on canvas, United States Capitol; Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 44-48.

Shall moulder to dust, and together shall lie.

The infant a mother attended and loved;
 The mother that infant's affection who proved;
 The husband, that mother and infant who blest,-
 Each, all, are away to their dwelling of rest.

The maid on whose cheek, on whose brow, in whose eye,
 Shone beauty and pleasure,-her triumphs are by;
 And the memory of those who loved her and praised,
 Are alike from the minds of the living erased.

The hand of the king that the sceptre hath borne,
 The brow of the priest that the mitre hath worn,
 The eye of the sage, and the heart of the brave.
 Are hidden and lost in the depths of the grave.

The peasant whose lot was to sow and to reap,
 The herdsman, who climbed with his goats up the steep,
 The beggar, who wandered in search of his bread.
 Have faded away like the grass that we tread.

The saint who enjoyed the communion of Heaven,
 The sinner, who dared to remain unforgiven,
 The wise and the foolish, the guilty and just
 Have quietly mingled their bones in the dust.

So the multitude goes- like the flower or the weed
 That withers away to let others succeed;
 So the multitude comes- even those we behold,
 To repeat every tale that has often been told.

For we are the same our fathers have been;
 We see the same sights our fathers have seen;
 We drink the same stream, we view the same sun,
 And run the same course our fathers have run.

The thoughts we are thinking; our fathers would think;
 From the death we are shrinking, our fathers would shrink
 To the life we are clinging, they would also clink;-
 But it speeds from us all like a bird on the wing.

They loved- but the story we cannot unfold;
 They scorned- but the heart of the haughty is cold;
 They grieved- but no wail from their slumber will come;
 They joyed- but the tongue of their gladness is dumb.

They died- ay, they died;- we things that are now,
 That walk on the turf that lies over their brow,
 And make in their dwellings a transient abode,
 Meet the things that they met on their pilgrimage road.

Yea! Hope and despondency, pleasure and pain,
 Are mingled together in sunshine and rain;
 And the smile and the tear, the song and the dirge,
 Still follow each other, like surge upon surge.

‘Tis the wink of an eye-‘tis the draught of a breath-
 From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,
 From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud:-
 Oh! Why should the spirit of mortal be proud? ⁶²⁹

Knox presents the reader with the futility of life. The subjects are gratified with their accomplishments, yet death will come to all. He emphasizes life’s brevity and cyclical nature. This work demonstrates our agendas, occupations, joys, and sorrows are a temporary pastime before the finality of death. This poem seemed to console Lincoln. Knox’s work is reminiscent of Lincoln’s beloved Thomas Gray. Lincoln used works such as these to contemplate the macabre, the meaning of life, and the randomness of the universe. He was scarred from death, and verse dealing with our inevitable fate might have helped heal his wounds. Dwelling upon dark verse could have helped Lincoln cope with the deaths that have littered his life.

A couple days prior, on March 25, 1864, Carpenter entered Lincoln’s office to capture his likeness when Lincoln immediately ceased his work and began to quote a portion of Oliver Wendell Holmes’ “The Last Leaf.”⁶³⁰ This work is another melancholy poem concerning mortality.⁶³¹ Lincoln said he found this work indescribably moving.⁶³² Lincoln quipped, ““There is nothing finer than those six lines in the English language.””⁶³³

The mossy marbles rest
 On the lips that he has prest
 In their bloom;
 And the names he loved to hear
 Have been carved for many a year

⁶²⁹ Knox, “Mortality,” 621-623.

⁶³⁰ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 54; Oliver Wendell Holmes, “The Last Leaf,” in *The Pocket Book of American Poems*, ed. Louis Untermeyer (New York: Pocket Book Publishing, 1948), 126.

⁶³¹ Holmes, “The Last Leaf,” 126.

⁶³² Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 55.

⁶³³ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 55.

On the tomb.⁶³⁴

Shakespeare was also his constant companion. He once said to James H. Hackett that he read and reread *King Lear*, *The Life and Death of King Richard III*, *Henry VIII*, *Hamlet*, and *Macbeth*.⁶³⁵ *Macbeth* was his favorite.⁶³⁶ Artist Francis Carpenter remembers in 1864 in a sitting with President Lincoln, he began speaking about his love of Shakespeare.⁶³⁷ He stated “‘There is one passage of the play of ‘Hamlet’ which is very apt to be slurred over by the actor, or omitted altogether, which seems to me the choicest part of the play. It is the soliloquy of the king, after the murder. It always struck me as one of the finest touches of nature in the world.’”⁶³⁸ Lincoln began quoting the king’s post murder scene in its entirety from memory.⁶³⁹ His performance was so spectacular that the astonished artist threw aside his tools and burst into applause.⁶⁴⁰ Carpenter told the president that he chose the wrong profession.⁶⁴¹ Throughout Lincoln’s life, art seemed to refresh his soul and gave him respite from life’s pressures and his depressive tendencies. In a letter to actor James Hackett, President Lincoln’s buoyant energy bounces off the page:

The first presentation of Falstaff I ever saw was yours here, last winter or spring. Perhaps the best compliment I can pay is to say, as I truly can, I am very anxious to see it again. Some of Shakespeare’s plays I have never read, while others I have gone over perhaps as frequently as any unprofessional reader. I think nothing equals *Macbeth*.⁶⁴² It is wonderful. Unlike you gentlemen of the profession, I think the soliloquy in *Hamlet* commencing ‘Oh my offense is rank’ surpasses that commencing ‘To be or not to be.’ But

⁶³⁴ Holmes, “The Last Leaf,” 126.

⁶³⁵ William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, in *Complete Shakespeare with Temple Notes*, ed. F.J. (New York: The World Syndicate Publishing Company, 1930), 860-892; William Shakespeare, *The Life and Death of King Richard III*, in *Complete Shakespeare with Temple Notes*, ed. F.J. (New York: The World Syndicate Publishing Company, 1930), 561-596; William Shakespeare, *Henry VIII*, in *Complete Shakespeare with Temple Notes*, ed. F.J. (New York: The World Syndicate Publishing Company, 1930), 597-627; William Shakespeare, *Hamlet: Prince of Denmark*, in *Complete Shakespeare with Temple Notes*, ed. F.J. (New York: The World Syndicate Publishing Company, 1930), 945-980; William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, in *Complete Shakespeare with Temple Notes*, ed. F.J. (New York: The World Syndicate Publishing Company, 1930), 922-944.

⁶³⁶ Abraham Lincoln to James H. Hackett, August 17, 1863, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), 6:392; William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, 922-944.

⁶³⁷ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 44-48.

⁶³⁸ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 45-48.

⁶³⁹ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 45-48.

⁶⁴⁰ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 44-48.

⁶⁴¹ Carpenter, *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln*, 48.

⁶⁴² William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, 922-944.

pardon this small criticism. I should like to hear you pronounce the opening speech of Richard the Third. Will you not soon visit Washington again? ⁶⁴³

After the death of Ann, Lincoln confided to Mentor Graham that he often had suicidal thoughts.⁶⁴⁴ He said he thought his life was for a higher purpose, but he didn't know how that would transpire.⁶⁴⁵ Mentor Graham had had conversations with Lincoln about religion in the past. Lincoln came to him in 1833 with a manuscript he wished to publish concerning Christianity.⁶⁴⁶ Graham remembered he built his argument on the Bible verse I Corinthians 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."⁶⁴⁷ Lincoln thought Adam's sins were satisfied by Christ, believing in universal salvation.⁶⁴⁸ Lincoln was not taking the Bible at face value. Graham said Lincoln used clear logic and clearly expressed his theological theory.⁶⁴⁹ He was using his reasoning to theorize fundamental concepts in the Christian faith. Pioneers in the 19th century were deeply religious, and it was scandalous to question scripture. Graham recalled that a subsequent letter was written about the idea, and it was so shocking that the letter was burned.⁶⁵⁰

His love, Ann Rutledge, would often sing to Lincoln the folk hymn "Death's a Warning."⁶⁵¹ She, too, must have been taken with dark and contemplative art. The first stanza begins:

Vain man thy fond pursuits forbear;

⁶⁴³ Abraham Lincoln to James Hackett, August 17, 1863, MS-BC-485, John G. Nicolay and John Hay Papers, Manuscript Collection, Manuscript Collection, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

⁶⁴⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 243.

⁶⁴⁵ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 74.

⁶⁴⁶ William Mentor Graham, *Springfield Journal*, May 16, 1874. Quoted in Thomas P. Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem* (Petersburg: Old Salem Lincoln League, 1927), 56-57.

⁶⁴⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:22 (KJ), in Thomas P. Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem* (Petersburg: Old Salem Lincoln League, 1927), 56-57.

⁶⁴⁸ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 56-57.

⁶⁴⁹ Graham, *Springfield Journal*, May 16, 1874.

⁶⁵⁰ Graham, *Springfield Journal*, May 16, 1874.

⁶⁵¹ J. Hart, "Death's a Warning," in John Lair, *Songs Lincoln Loved* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce; Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1954), 11; Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years and The War Years* (New York: Galahad Books, 1993), 40.

Repent, thine end is nigh
 Death at the farthest, can't be far;
 O think before thou die.⁶⁵²

The author is begging the sinner to repent before it is too late. Perhaps Ann knew of Lincoln's religious beliefs and feared for his soul. Lincoln was not a member of any church, and this posed a problem in 19th century politics. John T. Stuart said that Lincoln was a heretic and was on the fringe of disbelief, which was appalling to him.⁶⁵³ James Matheny said he knew Lincoln was an unbeliever, as he argued against the Bible.⁶⁵⁴ John T. Stuart said that the Reverend Smith tried to convert him but was unsuccessful.⁶⁵⁵ This topic plagued Lincoln throughout his political career.

In July 1846, he felt compelled to issue a handbill that stated his defense against the charge of infidelity.⁶⁵⁶ Lincoln was running a seat in the U.S. House Representatives against Reverend Peter Cartwright, a Methodist preacher and politician. Cartwright was an evangelist bully: loud and intimidating. President Andrew Jackson, General Jackson at the time, once walked into Cartwright's congregation after the service had already begun.⁶⁵⁷ Murmurs of his surprise appearance caused Cartwright to exclaim, "Who is General Jackson? If he don't get his soul converted, God will damn him as quick as he would a Guinea negro!"⁶⁵⁸ Cartwright started a whispering campaign against Lincoln alleging that he was a deist, an infidel, and not fit to be a U.S. representative.⁶⁵⁹ Lincoln responded with a handbill. It states that he has never been disrespectful of religion and has not scoffed at Christianity.⁶⁶⁰ He admitted in his early years, he

⁶⁵² Hart, "Death's a Warning," 11.

⁶⁵³ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 576.

⁶⁵⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 576.

⁶⁵⁵ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 576.

⁶⁵⁶ Abraham Lincoln to William H. Bissell, Jesse K. Dubois, and James Miller, May 28, 1859, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), 1:381-382.

⁶⁵⁷ Peter Cartwright, *Autobiography of Peter Cartwright: The Backwoods Preacher*, ed. W.P. Strickland (New York: Carlton & Porter, 1857), 192.

⁶⁵⁸ Cartwright, *Autobiography of Peter Cartwright*, 192.

⁶⁵⁹ Reep, *Lincoln at New Salem*, 55.

⁶⁶⁰ Lincoln to Bissell, Dubois, and Miller, May 28, 1859, 1:381-382.

believed the “Doctrine of Necessity.”⁶⁶¹ Since that time, he has agreed with Christian denominations.⁶⁶² Lincoln, surprisingly doesn’t just deny this claim, but honestly expanded on his earlier thoughts on salvation. He ended by saying that he wouldn’t vote for anyone who was derisive of religion.⁶⁶³ He insisted it is wrong to spread rumors and falsely charge an individual when they are blameless regarding the issue.⁶⁶⁴

Lincoln attended a religious service of Cartwright’s.⁶⁶⁵ Cartwright bellowed, “All who desire to give their hearts to God, and go to heaven, will stand.”⁶⁶⁶ A few people in the congregation stood.⁶⁶⁷ “All who do not wish to go to hell will stand.”⁶⁶⁸ Everyone in the congregation stood, except for Lincoln.⁶⁶⁹ Cartwright said in a grim voice, “I observe that many responded to the first invitation to give their hearts to God and go to heaven. And I further observe that all of you save one indicated that you did not desire to go to hell. The sole exception is Mr. Lincoln, who did not respond to either invitation. May I inquire of you, Mr. Lincoln, Where are you going?”⁶⁷⁰ Lincoln stood and said,

I came here as a respectful listener. I did not know that I was to be singled out by Brother Cartwright. I believe in treating religious matters with due solemnity. I admit that the questions propounded by Brother Carwright are of great importance. I did not feel called upon to answer as the rest did. Brother Cartwright asks me directly where I am going. I desire to reply with equal directness: I am going to Congress.⁶⁷¹

Lincoln did just that. He beat Cartwright by double the majority.⁶⁷²

⁶⁶¹ Lincoln to Bissell, Dubois, and Miller, May 28, 1859, 1:381-382.

⁶⁶² Lincoln to Bissell, Dubois, and Miller, May 28, 1859, 1:381-382.

⁶⁶³ Lincoln to Bissell, Dubois, and Miller, May 28, 1859, 1:381-382.

⁶⁶⁴ Lincoln to Bissell, Dubois, and Miller, May 28, 1859, 1:381-382.

⁶⁶⁵ Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years and The War Years* (New York: Galahad Books, 1993), 84.

⁶⁶⁶ Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln*, 84.

⁶⁶⁷ Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln*, 84.

⁶⁶⁸ Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln*, 84.

⁶⁶⁹ Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln*, 84.

⁶⁷⁰ Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln*, 84.

⁶⁷¹ Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln*, 84.

⁶⁷² Abraham Lincoln to John Coulter, September 4, 1860, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), 4:109.

The years of preparation finally paid off. Lincoln again won the 1836 state legislature election.⁶⁷³ Also in the fall of 1836, Lincoln obtained his long-sought-after license to practice law.⁶⁷⁴ The years in New Salem exposed him to the cultural landscape that he needed to strengthen his intellectual and spiritual faculties. Lincoln's early life was unstable, but he overcame hardships with shared camaraderie in a close community and the culture it provided. Lincoln demonstrated his growth as a leader while being completely absorbed in the arts. On April 15, 1837, he left New Salem on a borrowed horse, to begin a new life in Springfield.

⁶⁷³ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 19.

⁶⁷⁴ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 19.

Chapter 5

Leader and Artist: A Rich Tapestry

Lincoln's friend, John T. Stewart, accepted him as a partner in his well-established law practice and enlightened him on the mastery of the law.⁶⁷⁵ During his time as a state representative, Lincoln gained confidence in his leadership, reasoning, and debate skills. He had acquired confidence to voice his opposition to slavery on March 3, 1837. Lincoln and a fellow representative presented a protest to the House announcing their belief that the institution of slavery was an atrocity established on injustice.⁶⁷⁶

In the following years 1838 and 1840, fellow legislators saw Lincoln's leadership qualities and nominated him to be house speaker. Since he was in the minority, he was defeated.⁶⁷⁷ In 1840, Lincoln chose not to run for re-election but acted as a delegate in William Henry Harrison's presidential campaign in 1840.⁶⁷⁸ He became known as the "rising prairie lawyer."⁶⁷⁹ Politics and the law were now his life, but that was about to change.

Lincoln was a co-host of a Cotillion party for state legislators on December 16, 1839 in the newly built American House hotel.⁶⁸⁰ In the extravagantly decorated ballroom of Turkish design, he met Ms. Mary Todd of Kentucky.⁶⁸¹ Mary was dressed stylishly in a pink and white

⁶⁷⁵ Robert L. Wilson to William H. Herndon, February 10, 1866, in William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 205.

⁶⁷⁶ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 20.

⁶⁷⁷ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 21-22.

⁶⁷⁸ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 22.

⁶⁷⁹ Noah Brooks, *Washington in Lincoln's Time* (New York: Century Co., 1896), 1.

⁶⁸⁰ Daniel Mark Epstein, *The Lincolns: Portrait of a Marriage* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2008), 12-13.

⁶⁸¹ Epstein, *The Lincolns: Portrait of a Marriage*, 12-13.

lace and organdy gown with pink satin slippers.⁶⁸² She made eye contact with the politician dressed in black satin stock and waistcoat.⁶⁸³ Mary's sister, Emilie Hardin Helm, remarked that Mary could see the poetry in his grey eyes.⁶⁸⁴ Lincoln approached her saying, "'Miss Todd, I want to dance with you in the worst way.'⁶⁸⁵ Later, Mary would tell her cousin, Elizabeth Todd, that he did just that.⁶⁸⁶ He asked to call on her the next day.⁶⁸⁷ Lincoln met his intellectual match. She was a vivacious, cultured young woman.

Highly educated and noted for her brilliance, Mary loved prose, poetry, music, and spoke impeccable French.⁶⁸⁸ She was raised in an ambitious climate of intellectual conversation that held politics and all art forms with paramount importance.⁶⁸⁹ From a very young age, Mary adored poetry and would recite it often.⁶⁹⁰ As a thirteen-year-old, Mary told family friend, Henry Clay, she wished to live in the White House someday.⁶⁹¹ Her sights were set on marrying a man who had the potential to be president. She could have chosen any man in Springfield, but she chose the promising Abraham Lincoln.

During their courtship, Lincoln sang one of his favorite ballads a cappella, "William Riley."⁶⁹² In keeping with Lincoln's sorrowful taste, the ballad is a dark tale of a poor young man falling in love with a wealthy man's daughter. The unlucky beau finds himself imprisoned on

⁶⁸² Katherine Helm, *The True Story of Mary, Wife of Lincoln; Containing the Recollections of Mary Lincoln's Sister Emilie (Mrs. Ben Hardin Helm), Extracts from Her War-time Diary, Numerous Letters and Other Documents now First Published* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1928), 73-74.

⁶⁸³ Helm, *The True Story of Mary, Wife of Lincoln*, 72-74.

⁶⁸⁴ Helm, *The True Story of Mary, Wife of Lincoln*, 74.

⁶⁸⁵ Helm, *The True Story of Mary, Wife of Lincoln*, 74.

⁶⁸⁶ Helm, *The True Story of Mary, Wife of Lincoln*, 74.

⁶⁸⁷ Helm, *The True Story of Mary, Wife of Lincoln*, 74-75.

⁶⁸⁸ Epstein, *The Lincolns: Portrait of a Marriage*, 6; Jean H. Baker, *Mary Todd Lincoln: A Biography* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008), chapt. 3, sec. 44, Kindle.

⁶⁸⁹ Helm, *The True Story of Mary, Wife of Lincoln*, 85-86.

⁶⁹⁰ Helm, *The True Story of Mary, Wife of Lincoln*, 32.

⁶⁹¹ Helm, *The True Story of Mary, Wife of Lincoln*, 5.

⁶⁹² Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 215; Epstein, *The Lincolns: Portrait of a Marriage*, 7; "William Riley." John Lair, *Songs Lincoln Loved* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce; Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1954), 5

false accusations. The two also enjoyed listening to her sisters play the piano on Sundays and reciting the poetry of Byron and Burns.⁶⁹³

After a tumultuous courtship, which included a broken engagement, the two married in an intimate ceremony on Friday, November 4, 1842, during a raging thunderstorm.⁶⁹⁴ The newlyweds attended concerts and parties in their first year. Over the years of 1843 to 1853, four sons were welcomed to the Lincoln family: Robert Todd, Edward Baker, William Wallace, and Thomas “Tad” Lincoln III.⁶⁹⁵ With the help of Robert Todd, Mary’s father, they moved into a home of their own in April 1844 at Eighth and Jackson in Springfield, Illinois.⁶⁹⁶ Much has been written about Lincoln’s domestic life, but Henry C. Whitney, a fellow attorney for 7 years, testified that Lincoln loved his wife.⁶⁹⁷ He was away for months at a the time riding in central Illinois on the Eighth Judicial Circuit. Attorneys and judges traveled to each county seat for court sessions. That same year, Lincoln started his own law practice with junior partner, William Herndon.

Lincoln now had everything he had worked for: a family, a home, a law practice, and a political career. Even after he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives on August 3, 1846, he still felt a void. He wrote his best friend, Joshua Speed, “Being elected to Congress, though I am very grateful to our friends, for having done it, has not pleased me as much as I expected.”⁶⁹⁸ Lincoln began to write his own poetry, putting emotions to paper. Lincoln didn’t

⁶⁹³ Epstein, *The Lincolns: Portrait of a Marriage*, 13-14.

⁶⁹⁴ Helm, *The True Story of Mary, Wife of Lincoln*, 95.

⁶⁹⁵ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 22.

⁶⁹⁶ Epstein, *The Lincolns: Portrait of a Marriage*, 83-85.

⁶⁹⁷ Whitney, *Life of the Circuit with Lincoln*, 97.

⁶⁹⁸ Abraham Lincoln to Joshua Speed, October 22, 1846, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), 1:391.

think of himself as an author.⁶⁹⁹ Lincoln sent the poem “Mortality” to friend, Andrew Johnston, and said he “would give all I am worth, and go in debt, to be able to write so fine a piece.”⁷⁰⁰

In the fall of 1844, Lincoln was campaigning for his idol, Henry Clay, for president in Indiana.⁷⁰¹ He returned to his mother and sister’s graves in Gentryville, where he once lived fifteen years prior.⁷⁰² He felt moved to write the following verse:

My childhood’s home I see again,
And sadden with the view;
And still, as memory crowds my brain,
There’s pleasure in it too.

O Memory! Thou midway world
‘Twixt earth and paradise,
Where things decayed and loved ones lost
In dreamy shadows rise,

And, freed from all that’s earthly vile,
Seem hallowed, pure, and bright,
Like scenes in some enchanted isle
All bathed in liquid light.

As dusky mountains please the eye
When twilight chases day;
As bugle-notes that, passing by,
In distance die away;

As leaving some grand waterfall,
We, lingering list its roar-
So memory will hallow all
We’ve known, but know no more.

Near twenty years have passed away
Since here I bid farewell
To woods and fields, and scenes of play,
Playmates loved so well.

Where many were, but few remain
Of old familiar things;
But seeing them, to mind again

⁶⁹⁹ Abraham Lincoln to Andrew Johnston, April 18, 1846, in Abraham Lincoln, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953) 1:378.

⁷⁰⁰ Lincoln to Johnston, April 18, 1846, 1:377-378.

⁷⁰¹ Lincoln to Johnston, April 18, 1846, 1:378.

⁷⁰² Lincoln to Johnston, April 18, 1846, 1:378.

The lost and absent brings.

The friends I left that parting day,
How changed, as time has sped!
Young childhood grown, strong manhood gray,
And half of all are dead.

I hear the loved survivors tell
How nought from death could save,
Till every sound appears a knell,
And every spot a grave.

I range the fields with pensive tread,
And pace the hollow rooms,
And feel (companion of the dead)
I'm living in the tombs.⁷⁰³

Lincoln expresses his anguish at the desolation he feels when he visits his childhood home.

Cherished memories begin to torment him as he contemplates life's fleeting moments.

Everywhere there was once life, now contains graves. He is surrounded by death and decay,

which leaves him with the feeling of total desolation. Lincoln's poetry contains elements of

Thomas Gray, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and Edgar Allen Poe. Each poet shares Lincoln's starless

temperament, deep longing, and sorrow. William Herndon, Lincoln's law partner, once said

Lincoln's "melancholy dripped from him as he walked."⁷⁰⁴ Death and mortality haunted him.

When Lincoln broke off his engagement with Mary on January 1, 1841, he fell into a deep depression.⁷⁰⁵ He wrote to John T. Stuart, "I am now the most miserable man living. If what

I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face

on earth. To remain as I am is impossible; I must die or be better."⁷⁰⁶ Lincoln's handwriting

almost goes completely flat with these words. Seven months later, Lincoln traveled to the home

⁷⁰³ Lincoln to Johnston, April 18, 1846, 1:378-379.

⁷⁰⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 473.

⁷⁰⁵ Abraham Lincoln to John T. Stuart, January 23, 1841, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), 1:229-230.

⁷⁰⁶ Lincoln to Stuart, January 23, 1841, 1:229-230.

of his best friend, Joshua Speed in Louisville, Kentucky.⁷⁰⁷ Joshua Speed's mother, Lucy Speed, understood Lincoln's ever-present pain. She presented him with a Bible and told him it would bring him solace.⁷⁰⁸ He was so touched by the gift that twenty years later, as president, he would mention it in a note he sent Lucy Speed.⁷⁰⁹ Lincoln spoke with Speed about his suicidal thoughts.⁷¹⁰ Lincoln had a burning desire to improve someone's life and that is what kept him from taking his own.⁷¹¹ He sadly told Speed that he had not achieved anything remarkable in his life.⁷¹²

Lincoln clung to his favorite literature. While riding the circuit, his friend, John T. Stuart recalled Lincoln carrying around Edgar Allen Poe's work, as well as Burns and Shakespeare.⁷¹³ Stuart said Lincoln loved Poe because of its dreary nature.⁷¹⁴ Poe was the same age as Lincoln and dwelled in the macabre. Like Lincoln, the love of his life, Virginia Poe, died young and sent him into a deep depression. He connected thoughts of mortality and lost love in many of his works, such as "The Sleeper," "Lenore," and "Annabel Lee."⁷¹⁵ Stuart said Lincoln loved "The Raven" and would recite it repeatedly.⁷¹⁶ Henry B. Rankin, a law apprentice in Lincoln's and Herndon's law office, recalled, "He would become absorbed in reading some favorite author, as Burns's poems, or one of Shakespeare's plays, for him to begin reading aloud it some choice

⁷⁰⁷ Joshua Speed to William H. Herndon, January 12, 1866, in William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 158.

⁷⁰⁸ Speed to Herndon, January 12, 1866, 158.

⁷⁰⁹ Speed to Herndon, January 12, 1866, 158.

⁷¹⁰ Speed to Herndon, February 7, 1866, 197.

⁷¹¹ Speed to Herndon, February 7, 1866, 197.

⁷¹² Speed to Herndon, February 7, 1866, 197.

⁷¹³ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 519.

⁷¹⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 519.

⁷¹⁵ Edgar Allan Poe, *Edgar Allan Poe: Sixty-seven Tales, One Complete Novel and Thirty-one Poems*. (New York: Random House, 1985), 713-743.

⁷¹⁶ Poe, *Edgar Allan Poe*, 707-710.

character or principle had appealed to him, and he would then continue on to the end of the act, and sometimes to the end of the play or poem.”⁷¹⁷

One day after *Leaves of Grass* was published, several of the apprentices and other men who worked in the building were discussing Walt Whitman’s poetry.⁷¹⁸ After the group when back to work, Lincoln picked up the work and read intensely.⁷¹⁹ Law apprentice Henry Rankin said Lincoln was revitalized when reading Whitman’s verse aloud.⁷²⁰ Rankin remembered, “His rendering revealed a charm of new life in Whitman’s versification. He commended the new poet’s verses for their virility, freshness, unconventional sentiments, and unique forms of expression, and claimed that Whitman gave promise of a new school of poetry.”⁷²¹ Lincoln predicted he would write more great works.⁷²²

Lincoln loved William Shakespeare, Robert Burns, and Walt Whitman.⁷²³ Rankin said he read with great emphasis, just as Lindley Murray instructed him years before.⁷²⁴ He took the work home, much to Mary’s dismay. The next day he laid it on Herndon’s desk having “barely saved it from being purified in fire by the women.”⁷²⁵ Whitman’s anaphoric verse was shockingly erotic for the nineteenth century. It was like no other poetry they had read.

Law apprentice, Henry Parker, said Lincoln relished the writings of humanitarian abolitionists Theodore Parker, Catharine Beecher, and John Greenleaf Whittier.⁷²⁶ Like Lincoln,

⁷¹⁷ Henry B. Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1916), 125.

⁷¹⁸ Henry B. Rankin, *Intimate Character Sketches of Abraham Lincoln* (Philadelphia: Lippincott Company, 1924), 55; Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (New York: James and Andrew Rome, 1855), 1-95.

⁷¹⁹ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 125-126.

⁷²⁰ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 126.

⁷²¹ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 126.

⁷²² Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 127.

⁷²³ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 141.

⁷²⁴ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 126.

⁷²⁵ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 124.

⁷²⁶ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 130.

John Greenleaf Whittier was heavily influenced by Robert Burns.⁷²⁷ He detested farm-work and decided to use his intellect for his living.⁷²⁸ He produced abolitionist poetry and acted as a lobbyist for the cause.⁷²⁹ One of Whittier's remarkable abolitionist poems was "The Slave Ships," a true story of the French slave ship, *Le Rodeur*.⁷³⁰ The ship sailed from Nigeria in 1819 with one hundred sixty slaves.⁷³¹ The slaves were only given 6 ounces of water per day and were soon afflicted with pink eye, eventually resulting in blindness.⁷³² The blinded slaves, now damaged goods, were thrown overboard.⁷³³ The disease spread to the ship's crew, leaving only one person with their vision intact.⁷³⁴ "The Slave Ships" narrates the horror at sea, the inhumanity of slavery, and a mocking God.⁷³⁵ Several issues are notable. Whittier was a devoted Quaker, and the notion of God's curse is in glaring opposition to his beliefs. Whittier was also color blind, yet he uses colorful, visual imagery within his work.⁷³⁶ The last three stanzas read:

In the sunny Guadeloupe
A dark hull'd vessel lay-
With a crew who noted never
The night-fall or the day.
The blossom of the orange
Was white by every stream,
And tropic leaf, and flower, and bird
Were in the warm sun-beam.

And the sky was bright as ever
And the moonlight slept as well,
On the palm-trees by the hill-side,
And the streamlet of the dell;
And the glances of the Creole

⁷²⁷ Edward Wagenknecht, *John Greenleaf Whittier: A Portrait in Paradox* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 5.

⁷²⁸ Wagenknecht, *John Greenleaf Whittier*, 19.

⁷²⁹ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 130.

⁷³⁰ John Greenleaf Whittier, *Voices of Freedom* (Philadelphia: T.S. Cavender, 1846), 47-52.

⁷³¹ Whittier, *Voices of Freedom*, 47-52.

⁷³² Whittier, *Voices of Freedom*, 47-52.

⁷³³ Whittier, *Voices of Freedom*, 47-52.

⁷³⁴ Whittier, *Voices of Freedom*, 47-52.

⁷³⁵ Whittier, *Voices of Freedom*, 47-52.

⁷³⁶ Wagenknecht, *John Greenleaf Whittier*, 19.

Were still as archly deep,
And her smiles as full as ever
Of passion and of sleep.

But vain were bird and blossom,
The green earth and the sky,
And the smile of human faces,
To the ever darken'd eye;
For, amidst a world of beauty,
The slaver went abroad,
With his ghastly visage written
By the awful curse of God!⁷³⁷

According to Rankin, Abolitionist Harriet Beecher Stowes' work, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, deeply affected Lincoln.⁷³⁸ Lincoln also enjoyed reading Nathaniel Hawthorne, James Russell Lowell, and Jacob Abbot.⁷³⁹ Rankin said Lincoln discerned literature by the writer's expression of artful technique and intensity.⁷⁴⁰ He earnestly looked for great literature and often met with other literary minds in the State Library.⁷⁴¹ He absorbed newspapers: *Charleston Mercury*, *Richmond Inquirer*, *Daily Louisville Journal*, and *Illinois State Journal*.⁷⁴² He also enjoyed perusing the *Southern Literary Messenger*, which once employed Edgar Allan Poe as editor, writer, and critic.⁷⁴³

Lincoln was a reflective person. Rankin noted his ability to become completely absorbed in thought which allowed him to quickly pinpoint the crux of a case.⁷⁴⁴ Lincoln's apprentices were amazed at his expeditious mental faculties.⁷⁴⁵ Herndon was impressed with Lincoln's aptitude to be fully immersed in politics, yet still completely master the intricacies of his

⁷³⁷ Whittier, *Voices of Freedom*, 47-52.

⁷³⁸ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 130; Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (London: John Casseli and Ludgate Hill, 1852), 1-391.

⁷³⁹ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 130.

⁷⁴⁰ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 130.

⁷⁴¹ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 130.

⁷⁴² *Charleston Mercury*, www.charlestonmercury.com; *Richmond Inquirer*, 1804-1877; *Daily Louisville Journal*, www.courier-journal.com; *Illinois State Journal*, www.sj-r.com; Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 137.

⁷⁴³ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 137; *Southern Literary Messenger*, 1834-1864, 1939-1945.

⁷⁴⁴ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 143.

⁷⁴⁵ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 143.

lawsuits.⁷⁴⁶ Lincoln would focus on one task and block out everything else. According to Rankin, Lincoln was a profoundly deep thinker.⁷⁴⁷

On August 3, 1846, Lincoln won the U.S. House of Representative election.⁷⁴⁸ Before he and his wife made their way to Washington City, they had their first portrait made. Lincoln was intrigued with the new technology of daguerreotype photography, which was introduced in 1839. He had their photographs taken by N.H. Shepard in 1846 in Springfield in companion portraits.⁷⁴⁹ During his lifetime, Lincoln would take more than one hundred thirty photographs, which was highly unusual for anyone living in the nineteenth century.⁷⁵⁰ In his first photograph, Lincoln looked as if Mary had groomed him. Every hair was in place and his attire was pristine. Later photographs would show Lincoln's natural demeanor with hair tousled, clothing askew, and a slightly wrinkled white, linen suit from a long day in the courtroom.

He grasped photography's importance. In a letter to James F. Babcock, Lincoln refers to a photograph which was taken in Chicago in February 1857 by Alexander Hesler.⁷⁵¹ "The original of the picture you enclose...was taken from life, and is, I think, a very true one; though my wife and many others, do not. My impression is that their objection arises from the disordered condition of the hair."⁷⁵² Lincoln knew his appearance was unusual, and he would use that to his advantage. Photography was a perfect avenue to project yourself onto the main stage. As an ambitious politician, Lincoln used this art to spread his image and remain in the public memory. Lincoln knew how to court the press. He took part in a powerful new medium, projecting his

⁷⁴⁶ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 144.

⁷⁴⁷ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 139.

⁷⁴⁸ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 22.

⁷⁴⁹ Epstein, *The Lincolns: Portrait of a Marriage*, 99.

⁷⁵⁰ Richard S. Lowry, *Photographer and the President: Abraham Lincoln, Alexander Gardner, and the Images That Made a Presidency* (New York: Rizzoli Ex Libris, 2015), 2.

⁷⁵¹ Abraham Lincoln to James F. Babcock, September 13, 1860, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), IV: 114-115.

⁷⁵² Abraham Lincoln to James F. Babcock, September 13, 1860, IV: 114-115.

likeness into the minds of millions of voters, making an enormous impact on his political career. Lincoln's law partner, William H. Herndon, noted that those who think Lincoln sat around waiting to be elected are seriously mistaken.⁷⁵³ Herndon said Lincoln was constantly planning his next political move and would industriously use his leadership skills to gain an edge in political advancement.⁷⁵⁴

Lincoln had agreed to serve one term in Congress, as the service was split between his Whig friends.⁷⁵⁵ As General Zachary Taylor was being sworn in in March 1849, Lincoln was disappointingly on his way out of Washington.⁷⁵⁶ During his time in Congress, he professed his belief that the President Polk had unconstitutionally started the Mexican War by sending General Taylor into Mexico and induced the first act of warfare.⁷⁵⁷ Lincoln actively canvassed for General Taylor in 1848 presidential campaign.⁷⁵⁸ Upon President Zachary Taylor's death in 1850, Lincoln was in Chicago on business. He attended a memorial service for Taylor, and he gave a loving eulogy.⁷⁵⁹

He indulged in no recreations, he visited no public places, seeking applause; but quietly, as the earth in its orbit, he was always at his post. Along our whole Indian frontier, thro' summer and winter, in sunshine and storm, like a sleepless sentinel, *he has watched*, while we have *slept* for forty long years. How well might the dying hero say at last "I have done my duty, I am ready to go."⁷⁶⁰

He ended by reciting his favorite poem, William Knox's "Mortality."⁷⁶¹

⁷⁵³ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 304.

⁷⁵⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 304.

⁷⁵⁵ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 22.

⁷⁵⁶ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 22.

⁷⁵⁷ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 23-25.

⁷⁵⁸ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 26.

⁷⁵⁹ Whitney, *Life of the Circuit with Lincoln*, 488-489.

⁷⁶⁰ Abraham Lincoln, "Eulogy on Zachary Taylor: On the Life and Services of the Late President of the United States," on July 25, 1850, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), II:89-90.

⁷⁶¹ Whitney, *Life of the Circuit with Lincoln*, 488-489; Knox, "Mortality," 621-623.

Lincoln was still in mourning himself. On December 11, 1849, Lincoln's three-year-old son, Eddie, became ill. The dawning of February 1, 1850, brought intense grief into the Lincoln household. Edward Baker Lincoln passed away. Lincoln wrote to John D. Johnston, his stepbrother, three weeks later, saying, "We lost our little boy... We miss him very much."⁷⁶² February 7, 1850, a poem entitled "Little Eddie" was published in the *Illinois State Journal* without authorship.⁷⁶³ The last line of the poem was engraved on the young boy's tombstone. If Lincoln were not the author, it is still a fitting poem to memorialize their sweet child and pain at his passing.

Those midnight stars are sadly dimmed,
That late so brilliantly shone,
And the crimson tinge from cheek and lip,
What the heart's warm life has flown-
The angel of Death was hovering nigh,
And the lovely boy was called to die.

The silken waves of his glossy hair
Lie still over his marble brow,
And the pallid lip and pearly cheek
The presence of Death avow.
Pure little bud in kindness given,
In mercy taken to bloom in heaven.

Happier far is the angel child
With the harp and the crown of gold,
Who warbles now at the Savior's feet
The glories to us untold.
Eddie, meet blossom of heavenly love,
Dwells in the spirit-world above.

Angel Boy-fare thee well, farewell
Swee Eddie, We bid thee adieu!
Affection's wail cannot reach thee now
Deep though it be, and true.
Bright is the home to him now given
For "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."⁷⁶⁴

⁷⁶² Abraham Lincoln to John D. Johnston, February 23, 1850. Lincoln, Abraham. *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy P. Basler (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953), 76-77.

⁷⁶³ "Little Eddie," *Illinois State Journal*, February 7, 1850.

⁷⁶⁴ "Little Eddie," *Illinois State Journal*, February 7, 1850.

Kaufman and Gregoire in *Wired to Create* say art can be a distraction from painful trauma.⁷⁶⁵

Diverting our focus to something positive allows for original thought to emerge.⁷⁶⁶ Lincoln seemed to use the arts to ease his pain and express his broken heart. The juxtaposition of death and life are constant themes in Lincoln's poetry and in the poetry he admired. He leaned into the arts after each blow life dealt him.

Lincoln threw himself into his law practice with a new zeal.⁷⁶⁷ He campaigned for General Winfield Scott in the presidential election of 1852, as he had done for many presidential elections and was continually honing his skills as a writer and public speaker.⁷⁶⁸ Only when the Missouri Compromise was repealed in 1854, was he awoken with a fury.⁷⁶⁹ Lincoln reignited. He called it a complete violation of trust.⁷⁷⁰ He wrote to his best friend and slave owner, Joshua Speed, recalling the steamboat trip they took from Louisville to St. Louis where they saw a dozen slaves chained together.⁷⁷¹ He could no longer keep quiet and gave Speed a tongue lashing.⁷⁷² Lincoln was enraged.

That sight was a continual torment to me... That Kansas will form a slave constitution, and, with it, will ask to be admitted into the Union, I already settled a question; and so settled by any court, North or South, every negro taken to Kansas is free; yet... that beautiful Legislature gravely passes a law to hang any man who shall venture to inform a negro of his legal rights... If, like Haman, they should hang upon the gallows of their own building, I shall not be among the mourners for their fate... Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation we began by declaring that '*all men are created equal*.' We now practically read it '*all men are created equal, except negroes*.' When the Know-Nothings get control, it will read '*all men are created equal, except negroes, and foreigners, and Catholics*.' When it comes to this, I should prefer emigrating

⁷⁶⁵ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create*, 157.

⁷⁶⁶ Kaufman and Gregoire, *Wired to Create*, 157.

⁷⁶⁷ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 27.

⁷⁶⁸ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 27.

⁷⁶⁹ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 27.

⁷⁷⁰ Abraham Lincoln, "Speech at Springfield, Illinois," Illinois State Journal, June 29, 1857, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), II: 405.

⁷⁷¹ Abraham Lincoln to Joshua Speed, August 24, 1855, in William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 52.

⁷⁷² Lincoln to Speed, August 24, 1855, 52.

to some country where they make no pretense of loving liberty- To Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure and without the base alloy of hypocrisy.⁷⁷³

Lincoln lost the bid for the Senate in 1855. Lincoln did not cower in defeat. At the Bloomington Anti-Nebraska Convention on May 29, 1856, men in opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act gathered.⁷⁷⁴ Henry Whitney said the atmosphere was electric with excitement, and everyone was astonished at the current state of the nation.⁷⁷⁵ According to those present, Lincoln gave the speech of his life.⁷⁷⁶ Herndon said his grey eyes were glowing and had the zeal of proselytizing evangelist.⁷⁷⁷ He was empowered to use his abilities to right a deplorable wrong. He spoke with clarity and logic, igniting outrage at the disgraceful practice of slavery. Unfortunately, no one bothered to write it down.⁷⁷⁸ One newspaper, Alton Weekly Courier, had a brief report of the “Lost Speech.”⁷⁷⁹ “He was ready to fuse with anyone who would unite with him to oppose slave power. It must be ‘Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable.’”⁷⁸⁰

That evening, Lincoln returned to his shared room with Judge T. Lyle Dickey. Upon the sight of Lincoln he exclaimed, “What in God’s name could induce you to promulgate such an opinion?”⁷⁸¹ Dickey is referring to Lincoln’s concept of no longer existing half slave and half free. He thought this was wrong and treacherous.⁷⁸²

⁷⁷³ Lincoln to Speed, August 24, 1855, 52-54.

⁷⁷⁴ Herndon, *Herndon’s Life of Lincoln*, 312.

⁷⁷⁵ Henry Clay Whitney, *Lincoln the Citizen: February 12, 1809, to March 4, 1861* (New York: The Current Literature Publishing Co., 1907), 259.

⁷⁷⁶ Herndon, *Herndon’s Life of Lincoln*, 312-314.

⁷⁷⁷ Herndon, *Herndon’s Life of Lincoln*, 312.

⁷⁷⁸ Herndon, *Herndon’s Life of Lincoln*, 313.

⁷⁷⁹ Alton Weekly Courier, June 5, 1856, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), II:341.

⁷⁸⁰ Alton Weekly Courier, June 5, 1856, II:341.

⁷⁸¹ T. Lyle Dickey to William Herndon, December 8, 1866, in William Herndon, *Herndon’s Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 504-505.

⁷⁸² Dickey to Herndon, December 8, 1866, 504.

Lincoln responded, "Upon my soul Dickey. I think it is true."⁷⁸³ Dickey argued that he would pry the North and South apart with speeches such as that and would quickly bring forth a war.⁷⁸⁴ Lincoln then promised Dickey that he would not speak of this concept the remainder of the 1858 campaign.⁷⁸⁵

The day after the convention adjourned, Lincoln was overwhelmed with delegates at the Illinois Central Railroad.⁷⁸⁶ Everyone wanted to shake his hand.⁷⁸⁷ He was on fire.

The Republican Party was born from the Anti-Nebraska Convention, and Lincoln, having realized he needed to make a change, became a leader of the new Republican party in 1856 and a nominee for vice president.⁷⁸⁸ He gave over fifty speeches over the course of the presidential campaign for John C. Fremont.⁷⁸⁹ That fall, Lincoln campaigned for Richard Yates's congressional campaign.⁷⁹⁰ Yates was speaking out against the Kansas-Nebraska Act and Lincoln did likewise. Lincoln was a ferocious opponent. Lincoln and Douglas spoke at the State Agricultural Fair in Springfield.⁷⁹¹ Friend Samuel C. Parks noted that Lincoln's first reply to Douglas was ruthless.⁷⁹²

People were starting to pay attention as Lincoln canvassed all over the state.⁷⁹³ After the presidential election of 1856, Lincoln's political reputation had grown beyond Illinois.⁷⁹⁴ By this

⁷⁸³ Dickey to Herndon, December 8, 1866, 504.

⁷⁸⁴ Dickey to Herndon, December 8, 1866, 505.

⁷⁸⁵ Dickey to Herndon, December 8, 1866, 505.

⁷⁸⁶ Whitney, *Lincoln the Citizen*, 261.

⁷⁸⁷ Whitney, *Lincoln the Citizen*, 261.

⁷⁸⁸ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 311.

⁷⁸⁹ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 28.

⁷⁹⁰ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 27-28.

⁷⁹¹ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 28.

⁷⁹² Samuel C. Parks to William Herndon, March 25, 1866, in William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 239.

⁷⁹³ Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*, 27.

⁷⁹⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 319.

time in his career, his leadership skills had advanced innumerable. His time as a state and U.S. representative, an attorney, as well as the head of a new political party, culminated his ability to balance social power, connect with his audience, and communicate unique solutions plaguing the common man. His leadership competence is evident in a letter to General William T. Sherman on December 26, 1864.⁷⁹⁵ Sherman just presented Lincoln the city of Savannah, one hundred fifty heavy guns, ammunition, and twenty-five thousand bales of cotton as Christmas gifts.

Many, many thanks for your Christmas gift, the capture of Savannah. When you were about leaving Atlanta for the Atlantic coast, I was anxious, if not fearful, but feeling that you were the better judge, and remembering that nothing risked, nothing gained, I did not interfere. Now the undertaking being a success. The honor is all yours; for I believe none of us went further than to acquiesce. And taking the work of General Thomas into count, as it should be taken, it is indeed a great success. Not only does it afford the obvious and immediate military advantage; but in showing to the world that your army could be divided, putting the stronger part to an important new service and yet leaving enough to vanquish the old opposing force of the whole Hood's army. It brings those who sat in darkness "to see a great light." But what next? I suppose it will be safe, if I leave General Grant and yourself to decide. Please make my grateful acknowledgement to your whole army, officers, and men.⁷⁹⁶

Lincoln was able to approve one of the riskiest military maneuvers in U.S. history. He acknowledged his team's capabilities while crediting their accomplishments. He also provided motivation to continue progress. Further evidence is in his proclamation to the country on May 9, 1864.⁷⁹⁷ Lincoln called for the country to join together and thank God for their blessings. He encouraged the country to continue to rely upon God because our efforts are useless without him. As president, he reassured an unstable country that the U.S. was still strong, and advancements were being made. He also encouraged the communal purpose to unite and pray for their country.

⁷⁹⁵ Abraham Lincoln to General Sherman, December 26, 1864, MS-BC-485, John G. Nicolay and John Hay Papers, Manuscript Collection, Manuscript Collection, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

⁷⁹⁶ Lincoln to Sherman, December 26, 1864, MS-BC-485, John G. Nicolay and John Hay Papers, Manuscript Collection, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

⁷⁹⁷ Abraham Lincoln, "Lincoln Proclamation," May 9, 1864, MS-BC-485, John G. Nicolay and John Hay Papers, Manuscript Collection, Manuscript Collection, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

In a letter to Major General Halleck on October 16, 1863, he encouraged the attack of Lee.⁷⁹⁸ “If General Meade can now attack him on a field no worse than equal for us, and will do so with all the skill and courage which he, his officers and men possess. The honor will be his if he succeeds, and the blame may be mine if he fails.”⁷⁹⁹ As a leader, he approved and affirmed the actions of his team while acknowledging a negative outcome would fall upon him.

Lincoln once again made a public statement when the Dred Scott decision was announced. The Dred Scott versus John F.A. Sanford decision was announced in March 1857, ruling that Black people of African descent, the “unhappy race,” are not U.S. citizens and do not have the rights of U.S. citizens. Chief Justice Roger Taney’s decision said Scott wasn’t a citizen of any state and could never become a U.S. citizen. Taney argued the creators of the constitution never intended for people of African descent, who were sold as slaves, to be considered citizens. Taney said that they have been seen as a subordinate race, and they did not deserve the privilege to interact with whites in society or politics. They did not have individual rights. Taney goes on to say that Blacks should be slaves because it is for their own good. They should be seen as property and nothing more. The founders of our country considered those of African descent as barbaric and were to be property of the white man so they can produce a profit.⁸⁰⁰

Lincoln rebutted Judge Stephen Douglas’ speech when he spoke two weeks prior. He laid out his argument against Douglas’ logic regarding Kansas and Utah. He stated that the Dred Scott decision was made upon the basis of lies. Free Blacks did have the right to vote in five of the thirteen colonies. Lincoln believed the Declaration of Independence’s promises encompassed all people: Black and white. He also argued that people of African descent should have liberty

⁷⁹⁸ Abraham Lincoln to Major General Halleck, October 16, 1863, MS-BC-485, John G. Nicolay and John Hay Papers, Manuscript Collection, Manuscript Collection, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

⁷⁹⁹ Abraham Lincoln to Major General Halleck, October 16, 1863, MS-BC-485, John G. Nicolay and John Hay Papers, Manuscript Collection, Manuscript Collection, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

⁸⁰⁰ Dred Scott v. Sandford, 60 US 393 (1857).

and the ability to profit from their own labor. Lincoln stated that Blacks deserved the same human rights that he had. He emphasized that the designers of the nation intended all people to be free, noting that the Declaration of Independence's idea that all men are equal had nothing to do with gaining independence from Great Britain. Its only purpose was to secure a future where all people were free.⁸⁰¹

Lincoln framed his argument just as Lord Murray did, in clear simple language, emphasizing a basic axiom that all can agree upon. He focused on the importance of precedence. He circled back to the argument and pointed out the precedent and the reasoning behind it. He presented that his proposal logically agrees with the basic axiom. On June 26, 1857, Lincoln explained in a speech at Springfield, Illinois, "Its authors...meant it to be...a stumbling block to those who in after times might seek to turn a free people back into the hateful paths of despotism. They knew the proneness of prosperity to breed tyrants, and they meant when such should re-appear in this fair land and commence their vocation, they should find left for them at least one hard nut to crack."⁸⁰²

The years of preparation had come to fruition. The culmination of the arts in Lincoln's mind and soul brought him to the threshold of his dreams. In April 1858, Lincoln was already seen as the leader of the Republican party and was already their choice for the senate seat previously occupied by Stephen Douglas.⁸⁰³ He needed a speech to capture the core issue and drive home the crisis. Over the years, Lincoln's writing became poetic. Charles Sumner marveled at Lincoln's ability to write with such beauty and have so little formal education.⁸⁰⁴ He noticed

⁸⁰¹ Lincoln, "Speech at Springfield, Illinois," II:398-410.

⁸⁰² Lincoln, "Speech at Springfield, Illinois," II:398-410.

⁸⁰³ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 324.

⁸⁰⁴ Richard Hanser, "Lincoln and the Poets," in *Abraham Lincoln: a New Portrait*, ed. Henry B. Kranz (New York: Putnam, 1959), 108.

Lincoln's writing permeated with lyrical tones.⁸⁰⁵ His future Second Inaugural Address, Gettysburg Address, and letter to Mrs. Bixby equaled aesthetic versification.⁸⁰⁶ Carl Schurz, German American patriot, compared the end of the Second Inaugural Address to divine verse.⁸⁰⁷ Lincoln's writing is lyrical.⁸⁰⁸ As he emphasized words in letters and speeches, he underlined them, sometimes twice. A letter he wrote July 26, 1862, exemplified his clear and concise writing style and logic. Lincoln wrote to Maryland Senator Reverdy Johnson on July 26, 1862, with tenacious expression:

You are ready to say I apply to *friends* what is due only to *enemies*. I distrust the *wisdom* if not the *sincerity* of friends, who would hold my hands while my enemies stab me. This appeal of professed friends has paralyzed me more in this struggle than any other one thing. You remember telling me the day after the Baltimore mob in April 1861, that it would crush all Union feeling in Maryland for me to attempt bringing troops over Maryland soil to Washington. I brought the troops notwithstanding and yet there was Union feeling enough left to elect a legislature the next autumn which in turn elected a very excellent Union U.S. Senator.

I am a patient man- always willing to forgive on the Christian terms of repentance; and also to give ample time for repentance. Still I must save this government if possible. What I cannot do, of course I will not do, but it may as well be understood, once for all, that I shall not surrender this game leaving any available card unplayed.

Yours truly
A. Lincoln⁸⁰⁹

In firm and clear prose, he uses comparison and contrast throughout the letter. He refers to friends vs. enemies, trust vs. deceit, political suicide vs. political victory, forgiveness vs. repentance, capability vs. unwillingness, and participation in the game vs. surrender. Lincoln's comparative reasoning rationalized his decision to stand firm in his resolve to save the Union.

Lincoln also refined his public speaking skills. His early education in public speaking is the bones of his personal style. He gave public speaking advice to his friend, James Conkling,

⁸⁰⁵ Hanser, "Lincoln and the Poets," 108.

⁸⁰⁶ Hanser, "Lincoln and the Poets," 108.

⁸⁰⁷ Hanser, "Lincoln and the Poets," 108.

⁸⁰⁸ Hanser, "Lincoln and the Poets," 108.

⁸⁰⁹ Abraham Lincoln to Senator Reverdy Johnson, July 26, 1862, MS-BC-485, John G. Nicolay and John Hay Papers, Manuscript Collection, Manuscript Collection, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois.

and noted the importance of speaking slowly.⁸¹⁰ He had been working on a secret speech for months, memorizing it to perfection.⁸¹¹ Lincoln read his prepared speech to his law partner, and Herndon questioned the wisdom of the declaring such bold proposals.⁸¹² Lincoln replied, “That expression is a truth of all human experience, ‘a house divided against itself cannot stand.’”⁸¹³ He wanted to make his point with common speech.⁸¹⁴ He simply stated that he would rather keep those words in his speech and lose than win by omitting them.⁸¹⁵

Before the speech was to be delivered, Lincoln read it to a dozen of his friends seated around a round table in the Library Room of the State House.⁸¹⁶ After asking their opinion, they expressed dismay at the proposition.⁸¹⁷ Herndon sat quietly while the others concurred that the speech was before its time.⁸¹⁸ Leonard Swett thought it was completely unsuitable.⁸¹⁹ Christopher C. Brown remembers wincing.⁸²⁰ Lincoln told his friends that this idea should be brought forth, and he was willing to lose for speaking the truth and advocate for those who had no voice.⁸²¹ Lincoln felt the timing was right and was determined to deliver it even if it meant his political peril.⁸²²

After pondering for some time, Herndon leapt to his feet said, “‘Lincoln, deliver that speech as read and it will make you president.’”⁸²³

⁸¹⁰ Rankin, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, 128-129.

⁸¹¹ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 324.

⁸¹² Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 325.

⁸¹³ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 325.

⁸¹⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 325.

⁸¹⁵ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 325.

⁸¹⁶ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 326.

⁸¹⁷ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 326.

⁸¹⁸ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 475.

⁸¹⁹ Leonard Swett to William Herndon, January 17, 1866, William Herndon, *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 162-163.

⁸²⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 438-439.

⁸²¹ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 326.

⁸²² Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 441-442.

⁸²³ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 326; Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 575.

He did deliver it on June 16, 1858, the last day of the Republican State Convention at the State House in Springfield, Illinois, after accepting the Republican nomination for the U.S. Senate.⁸²⁴ Lincoln stood, towering over others, draped in loose garments and perusing the audience with his sad, grey eyes.⁸²⁵ Hands behind his back and slightly leaning forward, Lincoln began in a piercing voice.⁸²⁶ He stood firmly, even-toed, and expressed his thoughts in four points: where are we in history, how are we handling our current events, what should we do, and how can we accomplish it?⁸²⁷ Lincoln explained they are in the fifth year since the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and emphasized the Republican goal to end enslavement.⁸²⁸ He surmised the spread of slavery wouldn't stop until some great catastrophe.⁸²⁹ He unclasped his hands and let them fall as he spoke from the heart.⁸³⁰ "I do not expect the Union to be *dissolved*- I do not expect the house to *fall*- but I *do* expect it will cease to be divided. It will become *all* one thing, or *all* the other."⁸³¹

Lincoln relaxed as his eyes sparkled with conviction. His voice became smooth and exuded grace, as he pointed out the need for Republicans to convince the public that slavery must end, stop it from spreading, or it would become legal everywhere.⁸³² He told of the origination of the slavery system, how it prospered and was administered.⁸³³ Early in 1854, slavery was not permitted in half of the states, but at the repeal, self-government was enacted.⁸³⁴

⁸²⁴ Lincoln, June 16, 1858, "A House Divided," 461-469.

⁸²⁵ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 332.

⁸²⁶ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 331.

⁸²⁷ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:46; Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 333.

⁸²⁸ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:461.

⁸²⁹ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:461.

⁸³⁰ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 332.

⁸³¹ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:461; Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 332.

⁸³² Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 332; Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:461-462.

⁸³³ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:462.

⁸³⁴ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:462

No one could now object to a man owning a slave.⁸³⁵ A majority voted for slavery by electing President Buchanan.⁸³⁶ Lincoln recalled Douglas making a speech at the capital, endorsing the Dred Scott verdict and denouncing anyone who believed differently.⁸³⁷ President Buchanan also endorsed the decision and expressed surprise that an opposite outcome would even be considered.⁸³⁸

He told of Douglas' faux indifference to slavery and his ruse of popular sovereignty.⁸³⁹ Gesturing with his head, Lincoln said the fundamental argument is that a Black slave or his descendant could never gain citizenship in the United States.⁸⁴⁰ Congress nor the Territory Legislature could exclude slavery.⁸⁴¹ If a Black were held in a free state, their fate would be decided by the court of the slave state.⁸⁴² In the present situation, Scott's master might do whatever he wanted with him or a thousand slaves in any state.⁸⁴³ Herndon recalled that Lincoln's stiffness evaporated, leaving only natural self-possession.⁸⁴⁴

He asserted that people were free and only subject to the constitution before the Dred Scott decision, but after it, there was no liberty.⁸⁴⁵ Lincoln ultimately named the guilty parties who colluded to end freedom for the Black man and built a house of slavery: Stephen Douglas, Roger Taney, Franklin Pierce, and James Buchanan.⁸⁴⁶ He unfolded the grim situation: a doctrine decided by the people would open doors to all states permitting slavery.⁸⁴⁷ With righteous

⁸³⁵ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:462.

⁸³⁶ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:462.

⁸³⁷ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:463.

⁸³⁸ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:463.

⁸³⁹ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:464.

⁸⁴⁰ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:464; Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 332.

⁸⁴¹ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:464.

⁸⁴² Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:464.

⁸⁴³ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:464.

⁸⁴⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Life of Lincoln*, 332.

⁸⁴⁵ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:465.

⁸⁴⁶ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:465-466.

⁸⁴⁷ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:467.

indignation he exclaimed, “To meet and overthrow the power of that dynasty, is the work now before all those who would prevent that consummation.”⁸⁴⁸

He restated the Republican goal and asked how it could be achieved.⁸⁴⁹ Lincoln reasoned that Douglas did not care about slavery, so he had no reason to end it.⁸⁵⁰ Electrified, he vehemently exclaimed, “For years he has labored to prove it a *sacred right* of white men to take negro slaves into the new territories...and done everything in his power to reduce the whole question of slavery to one of a mere *right of property*.”⁸⁵¹ Lincoln reminded the crowd of the formation of the Republican party, saying, “Of strange discordant, and even hostile elements, we gathered from the four winds, and formed and fought the battle through under the constant hot fire of a disciplined, proud, and pampered enemy. We shall not fail- if we stand firm, we shall not fail.”⁸⁵²

John Armstrong, fellow Republican, recalled that a few days after the revolutionary speech, a friend, Dr. Long, came into Lincoln’s law office saying, “Well, Lincoln, that foolish speech of yours will kill you...and probably all offices for all time to come.”⁸⁵³

Lincoln looked up from his work with a look of affronted nobility, and said “Well Doc, If I had to draw a pen across and erase my whole life from existence and all I did; and I had one poor gift or choice left, as to what I should save from the wreck, I should choose that speech and leave it to the world unerased.”⁸⁵⁴

⁸⁴⁸ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:467.

⁸⁴⁹ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:467.

⁸⁵⁰ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:467.

⁸⁵¹ Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:468.

⁸⁵² Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1858, II:468.

⁸⁵³ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 575.

⁸⁵⁴ Herndon, *Herndon's Informants*, 575.

Conclusion

Lincoln was in Peoria, Illinois, in 1858, campaigning for the U.S. Senate. Roderick M. Cole requested him to come into his photography gallery so he could photograph the renowned senate candidate. Lincoln replied, ““I cannot see why all you artists want a likeness of me unless it is because I am the homeliest man in the state of Illinois.””⁸⁵⁵

Lincoln was an artist himself: delving into every avenue afforded him. The arts appeared to engage his mind as he grew into a leader. Despite dire circumstances, Lincoln became more than anyone could ever imagine: a brilliant politician, shrewd litigator, profound scholar, staunch human rights advocate, and revered U.S. president. Lincoln’s leadership skills matured, and he possessed toned reasoning. The arts he experienced can be seen in his writings, policies, and accomplishments that shape our world today. In Lincoln’s rudimentary sphere, he grasped his surrounding culture. Literature, the performing arts, and visual arts captivated him. Lincoln’s life illuminated creative forms of expression that presented new opportunities for him.

The arts appeared to ease the pain from the deaths of his mother, sister, fiancé, and beloved sons, Eddie and Willie. He would read, sing, recite poetry, and debate the issues of the day as he grew up in an abusive and impoverished home life. When all his earthly belongings were sold as a young man, Lincoln still held the arts in his sharp memory. Lincoln needed stability in an unstable world, and he turned to his beloved poetry and literature. The arts were present during his deep valleys of depression, and the topic of poetry or the theater perked him up at the end of a long day. Lincoln was deeply engaged in the arts during his career lulls. The arts seemed to offer a restorative repose. Lincoln’s culture had the ability to shape how he

⁸⁵⁵ Charles Hamilton and Lloyd Ostendorf, *Lincoln in Photographs: An Album of Every Known Pose* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 29.

navigated the world. His behavior suggests that the arts affected his emotions, behaviors, and perception. The arts had the power to influence his relationships or sustain an emotional equilibrium.

Emotional intelligence played a part in Lincoln's early leadership roles. Lincoln's intellectual processes, language skills, and executive functions were honed. He displayed complex cognitive skills, a large memory capacity, and effective public speaking skills. Colleagues noticed his deep mental concentration and solid reasoning skills. He formed productive arguments, made logical decisions, and produced unique works. To those who knew him, he exhibited ethics and integrity. Lincoln took risks and exposed his vulnerabilities, such as the decision to make a revolutionary speech and say what others did not have the courage to utter. He approved General William T. Sherman's risky 1864 venture into the Georgia with 65,000 soldiers, 35,000 animals, and no supply line. Lincoln created original solutions and considered new possibilities.

As he was developing these skills, he read works that contained themes of morality, which he embraced. His friends reported his enjoyment in the beauty of music, the vastness of literature, and works that emphasized the power of reason. Poetry appeared to allow an avenue to vent his emotions and philosophize. Lincoln participated in spirited debates with his local community. Lincoln memorized long passages of poetry and read works by well-known statesmen. He poured over histories and biographies of national leaders and political figures. Lincoln frequently used satire to castigate his foe. Those who witnessed his grey eyes lit with laughter from storytelling and fellowship noticed his burdens were lifted.

Lincoln lived his life steeped in the arts. We know the cultural landscape from which he grew. The evidence points to art as a diversion and an instrument with which to pivot in a new

direction when life's cruelty grew too intense. Based on the evidence of Lincoln's life, we can speculate that grammar and poetry contributed to his ability to write lyrically with beauty and distinctive style. Most historians agree that the art of photography aided Lincoln's political career and made his face synonymous with American integrity. With each affliction Lincoln suffered, he demonstrated the arts lift him out of despair. He appeared to lean into the arts as a supportive element of his being.

Aesthetic pleasure and appreciation for the arts instills meaning in human experience and lifts humanity into a new realm of innovative thought. Culture is consequential and has the power to transform lives. Lincoln united the nation at an unprecedented time in American history when leadership was desperately needed. By evaluating the arts' effect on Lincoln and his leadership development, we can draw from this analysis a correlation and contribution, while acknowledging our present limitations. We may not know with certainty the full extent of the arts' impact on Lincoln, but we can perceive the evidence and observe what comes to light. Evidence suggests that the arts were relevant to the development of his critical and creative reasoning skills, abstract thought, communication skills, empathy, and social intelligence. The arts played an important role in Lincoln's life as he began to excel in his leadership skills. Based on patterns in Lincoln's life, it is a fair assertion to make that the arts played a part in the cultivation of his leadership skills. The arts seemed to challenge him and aid his tenacity in the face of extreme adversity.

I argue that Lincoln's culture constructed leadership skills, such as decisiveness, ability to pinpoint and harness his team's strengths, and manage divisive infighting. Lincoln's behavior in response to the arts signals the possibility that each exposure to the arts laid the foundation for his leadership growth. This study finds evidence that art in Lincoln's life was a significant

component to his leadership growth and assisted in his overall well-being. His confidence grew as he progressed into a masterly speaker, delivering speeches that were easy for his audience to digest. Lincoln developed the grit to withstand unimaginable criticism. He learned to form clear arguments so his thoughts could frame a concept he believed. He was inspired by brave authors, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe, who boldly acted despite the consequences. He acquired the ability to express his emotion and write lyrically through poetry and song. Lincoln effectively predicted collective reasoning, revealing his “House Divided” speech and the Emancipation Proclamation at the exact moment needed.⁸⁵⁶ Lincoln changed over time into the leader he aspired to become.

As an artist and leader, Lincoln created new concepts and set them into motion. He visualized his plans and trusted his core instincts. Art appeared to hone his interpersonal relations and powerful social faculties to create allies. Lincoln exhibited the capacity of the arts to be an integral part in the progression of leadership. His progression as a leader indicates that the arts enhanced his capacity to self-critique and self-reflect, giving him the power to conceptualize something better for America: a just nation where all men are considered equal and endowed “certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”⁸⁵⁷

Abraham Lincoln enjoyed the arts up until the moment his flame went out. Art was the spark that lit his burning ambition.

⁸⁵⁶ Lincoln, June 16, 1858, “A House Divided,” 461-469.

Abraham Lincoln, *Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation*, September 22, 1862, in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953), V:433-436.

⁸⁵⁷ Lincoln, “Speech at Springfield, Illinois,” II:398-410.

Bibliography

Primary Sources:

Books

Addison, Joseph. *Cato, A Tragedy*. Edinburgh: John Wood, 1700.

Blackstone, William. *Commentaries on the Laws of England: Book the First*. Vols. 1-4. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1765.

Blanchard, Amos. *American Military Biography: Containing the Lives and Characters of the Officers of the Revolution, who were Most Distinguished in Achieving Our National Independence, Also The Life of Gilbert Motier La Fayette, Major-General in the Continental Army-Marshal of France and Commander-In-Chief of the National Guard*. Cincinnati: E. Walters, 1830.

Bunyan, John. *Pilgrim's Progress*. Boston: Ginn & Company, 1917.

Burns, Robert. *Auld Lang Syne*. New York: Lovell Company, 1900.

Burns, Robert. *Holy Willie's Prayer, Letter to John Goudie, Kilmarnock, and Six Favourite Songs: Vix Duncan Gray, The Lass That Made the Bed to Me, A Man's Man for a' That, Of a' the Airt's the Win' Can Blaw, Now Westlin Winds, I Gaed a Waefu' Gate Yestreen*. Glasgow: Stewart & Meikle, 1799.

Carden, Allen D. *The Missouri Harmony: Or a Choice Collection of Psalm Tunes, Hymns, and Anthems, Selected From the Most Eminent Authors and Well Adapted to All Christian Churches, Singing Schools, and Private Societies Together with an Introduction to Grounds of Music, the Rudiments of Music, and Plain Rules for Beginners*. Cincinnati: Morgan and Sanxay, 1834.

Carpenter, F. B. *Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln: The Story of a Picture*. North Charleston: CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2016.

Croxall, Samuel Croxall, *Fables of Aesop & Others: Translated into English with Instructive Applications and a Print Before Each Fable*. London: C. Dilly & Others, 1798.

Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe*. New York: Heritage Press, 1930.

Dickens, Charles. *The Old Curiosity Shop*. New York: Open Road Media Integrated Media, 2015.

Editor of Saturday Evening Post. *With Comments Together with Various Orations, Sermons, and Eulogies, that Have Been Published or Written on His Life and Character*. New York: Hopkins and Seymour, 1804.

- Flint, Abel. *A System of Geometry and Trigonometry with a Treatise on Surveying; Comprising Various Methods of Taking the Survey of a Field, with Directions for Protracting and Finding Areas in which, also, the Principles of Rectangular Surveying, by which Areas may be Accurately Calculated without Plotting, are Fully Explained with a Complete Series of Mathematical Tables and the Necessary Explanations*. Hartford: Cooke and Co., 1833.
- Gibson, Robert. *The Theory and Practice of Surveying; Containing All the Instructions requisite for the skillful practice of this Art*. New York: Evert Duyckinck, 1814.
- Grey, Thomas. *Elegy Written in a Country Church Yard*. New York: Heritage Press, 1951.
- Herndon, William. *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln*. Edited by Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998.
- Herndon, William. *Herndon's Life of Lincoln: The History and Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln as Originally Written By William H. Herndon and Jesse W. Weik*. Cabin John: Wildside Press, 2008.
- Herndon, William H. and Jesse William Weik. *Herndon's Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life*. 2 vols. Springfield: Herndon's Lincoln Publishing, 1888.
- Herndon, William H. *The Hidden Lincoln: From the Letters and Papers of William H. Herndon*. Edited by Emanuel Hertz. New York: Blue Ribbon Books, Inc, 1940.
- Hobson, J. T., *Footprints of Abraham Lincoln; Presenting Many Interesting Facts, Reminiscences and Illustrations*. Dayton: The Otterbein Press, 1909.
- Jackson, George Pullen Jackson. *Spiritual Folk Songs of Early America: Two Hundred and Fifty Tunes and Texts*. Locust Valley: J.J. Augustine, 1953.
- Kirkham, Samuel. *English Grammer in Familiar Lectures: Accompanied by a Compendium Embracing A New System of Punctuation, Exercises in False Syntax, and a System of Philosophical Grammer in Notes: To Which Are Added An Appendix, and a Key to the Exercises Designed for the Use of Schools and Private Learners*. Baltimore: Plaskitt & Co, 1835.
- Lair, John. *Songs Lincoln Loved*. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce; Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1954.
- Lincoln, Abraham, *Lincoln Talks: An Oral Biography*, Edited by Emanuel Hertz, New York: Bramhall House, 1986.

- Madison, James. *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution, as Recommended by the General Convention at Philadelphia in 1787. Together with the Journal of the Federal Convention, Luther Martin's letter, Yate's minutes, Congressional Opinions, Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of '98-'99, and Other Illustrations of the Constitution.* United States. Edited by Jonathan Elliot. 5 vols. Washinton: Jonathan Elliot, 1836
- Owens, William A., *Texas Folk Song*. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1976.
- Poe, Edgar Allan. *Works of Edgar Allan Poe: Sixty-seven Tales, One Complete Novel and Thirty-one Poems*. New York: Random House, 1985.
- Prentice, George. *Biography of Henry Clay*. New York: S. Hanmer, Jr & J.J. Phelps, 1831.
- Ramsay, David. *The Life of George Washington: Commander in Chief of the Armies of the United States in the War Which Established Their Independence and First President of the United States*. London: Luke Hanford and Sons, 1807.
- Rankin, Henry B. *Intimate Character Sketches of Abraham Lincoln*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1924.
- Rankins, Henry B. *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*. New York: Putnam, 1916.
- Raph, Theodore, *The American Son Treasury: 100 Favorites*, New York, Dover, 1986.
- Reep, Thomas P. *Lincoln at New Salem*. Petersburg: Old Salem Lincoln League, 1927.
- Scott, William. *Lessons in Elocution: Or, A Section of pieces in Porose and Verse, for the Improvement of Youth in Reading and Speaking*. Boston: Isaiah Thomas, Jun., 1811.
- Shakespeare, William. *Complete Shakespeare with Temple Notes*. Edited by F.J. New York: The World Syndicate Publishing Company, 1930.
- Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. London: John Casseli and Ludgate Hill, 1852.
- Washington, George. *Washington's Farewell Adress: Delivered September 17, 1796*, New York: Appleton & Company, 1861.
- Whitman, Walt. *Leaves of Grass*. New York: James and Andrew Rome, 1855.
- Whitney, Henry C. *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln: With Sketches of Generals Grant, Sherman and McClellan, Judge Davis, Leonard Swett, and Other Contemporaries*. Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1892.
- Whitney, Henry Clay. *Lincoln the Citizen: February 12, 1809, to March 4, 1861*. New York: The Current Literature Publishing Co., 1907.
- Young, Edward. *Conjectures on Original Composition, 1759*. Leeds: Scholar Press, 1966.

Collections

John G. Nicolay and John Hay Papers, Manuscript Collection. Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois. MS-BC-485.

Congressional Records

Illinois General Assembly, House of Representatives. *Journal of the House of Representatives of the Tenth General Assembly of the State of Illinois, at Their First Session in the Town of Vandalia*. 10th General Assembly, 1st sess. (1836-1837).

Library of Congress. *Abraham Lincoln Papers*. Washington, D.C.: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, 1947.

U.S. Congress. *Journal of the Senate of the United States*. 37th Cong., 1st sess. (July 4, 1861). https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/SERIALSET-01111_00_00-001-0000-0000.

Edited Collection

Knox, William. "Mortality." In *The World's Great Religious Poetry*, edited by Caroline Miles Hill, 621-623. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1973.

Government Documents

Indiana General Assembly, *The Revised Laws of Indiana: Adopted and Enacted by the General Assembly at their Eight Session*, Corydon: Carpenter and Douglass, 1824.

Memoirs

Cartwright, Peter. *Autobiography of Peter Cartwright: The Backwoods Preacher*. Edited by W.P. Strickland. New York: Carlton & Porter, 1857.

Hay, John. *At Lincoln's Side: John Hay's Civil War Correspondence and Selected Writings*, Edited by Michael Burlingame. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000.

Helm, Katherine. *The True Story of Mary, Wife of Lincoln; Containing the Recollections of Mary Lincoln's Sister Emilie (Mrs. Ben Hardin Helm), Extracts from Her War-time Diary, Numerous Letters and Other Documents now First Published*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1928.

Lincoln, Abraham. *The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln*. New York: Francis D. Tandy Company, 1905.

Lincoln, Abraham. *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*. Edited by Roy P. Basler. 8 vols. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953.

Walker, William. *Southern Harmony & Musical Companion: Containing a Choice Collection of Tunes, Hymns, Psalms, Odes, and Anthems Selected from the Most Eminent Authors in the United States and Well Adapted to Christian Churches of Every Denomination, Singing Schools, and Private Societies*. Edited by Glenn C. Wilcox, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987.

Webster, Noah. *The American Spelling Book: Containing the Rudiments of the English Language for the Use of Schools in the United States*. Hartford: Hudson and Goodwin, 1809.

Weems, M. L. *The Life of Washington: with Curious Anecdotes, Equally Honourable to Himself and Exemplary to His Young Countrymen*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1800.

Whittier, John Greenleaf. *Voices in Freedom*. Philadelphia: T.S. Cavender, 1846.

Newspapers:

Charleston Mercury

Daily Louisville Journal

Graham, Mentor. *Springfield Journal*, May 16, 1874. Reep, Thomas P. *Lincoln at New Salem*. Petersburg: Old Salem Lincoln League, 1927.

Illinois State Journal

Lincoln, Abraham. "Communication to the People of Sangamo County." *Sangamo Journal*, March 9, 1832. *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*. New Brunswick: Rogers University Press, 1953.

"Little Eddie," *Illinois State Journal*, February 7, 1850.

Richmond Inquirer

Roll, John E. "Reminiscences of John E. Roll." *Chicago Times-Herald*, August 25, 1895.

VanNess, W.P. "The Funeral." *New-York Evening Post*, July 17, 1804.

Painting

Carpenter, Francis B. *First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation*. 1864. Oil on canvas. United States Capitol.

Readers

Addison, Joseph. Excerpt from "The Importance of a Good Education." In *The English Reader*, edited by Lindley Murray, 54-55. Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822.

Blair, Hugh. Excerpt from “An Address to Young Persons.” In *The English Reader*, edited by Lindley Murray, 132-135. Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822.

Cicero, Marcus Tullius. Excerpt from “Cicero Against Verres.” In *The English Reader*, edited by Lindley Murray, 121-123. Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822.

Cowper, William. Excerpt from “The Nightengale and the Glow-worm.” In *The English Reader*, edited by Lindley Murray, 194. Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822.

The English Reader; Or Pieces in Prose and Poetry. Edited by Lindley Murray. Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822.

Excerpt from “Character of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham.” In *The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking*, edited by A Teacher, 68-69. Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812.

Excerpt from “The Desperate Negro,” In *The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking*, edited by A Teacher, 42-44. Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812.

Excerpt from “On Elocution.” In *The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking*, edited by A Teacher, 52-54. Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812.

Gray, Thomas. Excerpt from “Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard.” In *The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking*, edited by A Teacher, 216-219. Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812.

The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking. Edited by A Teacher. Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812.

Morris, Gouverneur. Excerpt from “Funeral Oration.” In *The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking*, edited by A Teacher, 92-99. Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812.

Murray, William. Excerpt from “Lord Mansfield’s Speech in the House of Lords, 1770, On the Bill for Preventing the Delays of Justice, by Claiming the Privilege of Parliament.” In *The English Reader*, edited by Lindley Murray, 128-132. Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822.

Nott, Eliphalet. Excerpt from “An Address.” In *The Kentucky Preceptor: Containing a Number of Useful Lessons for Reading and Speaking*, edited by A Teacher, 92-99. Lexington: Maccoun, Tilford & Co., 1812.

Young, Edward, Excerpt from “Picture of a Good Man.” in *The English Reader; Or Pieces in Prose and Poetry*, edited by Lindley Murray, 217-218. Exeter: John J. Williams, 1822.

Secondary Sources:

Anthology

Holmes, Oliver Wendel. "The Last Leaf." In *The Pocket Book of American Poems*, edited by Louis Untermeyer, 126. New York: Pocket Book Publishing, 1948.

Vygotsky, Lev. "The Psychology of Art." Excerpt from *Art and Its Significance: An Anthology of Aesthetic Theory*, edited by Stephen David Ross, 518. Albany: State University Press, 1984.

Books

Armstrong, Paul B. *How Literature Plays with the Brain: The Neuroscience of Reading and Art*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013.

Baker, Jean H. *Mary Todd Lincoln: A Biography*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008. Kindle.

Barber, James David. *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1977.

Barron, Frank. *Creativity and Psychological Health: Origins of Personal Vitality and Creative Freedom*. Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1963.

Bass, Bernard M. *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications*. New York: Free Press, 1990.

Bass, Bernard M. *Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1973.

Beveridge, Albert. J. *Abraham Lincoln, 1809-1858*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co, 1928.

Bird, Charles. *Social Psychology*. New York: D. Appleton Century Company, 1940.

Brennan, Ruth M. Gonchar and Dan F. Hahn. *Listening for a President: A Citizen's Campaign Methodology*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1990.

Burlingame, Michael. *Abraham Lincoln: A Life*. 2 vols. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2008.

Burns, James MacGregor. *Leadership*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979.

Cappelletto, Chiara. *Embodying Art: How We See, Think, Feel, and Create*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2022.

Chatterjee, Anjan. *The Aesthetic Brain: How We Evolved to Desire Beauty and Enjoy Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

- Crawford, Robert. *The Bard: Robert Burns, A Biography*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- Davies, Stephen. *The Artful Experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Eberhard, John Paul. *Brain Landscape: The Coexistence of Neuroscience and Architecture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Epstein, Daniel Mark. *The Lincolns: Portrait of a Marriage*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2008.
- Fehrenbacher, Don E. and Virginia Fehrenbacher. *Recollected Words of Abraham Lincoln*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996.
- Foner, Eric. *A House Divided: America in the Age of Lincoln*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1990.
- Fox Keller, Evelyn. *Reflections on Gender and Science*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.
- Goodwin, Doris Kearns. *Leadership in Turbulent Times*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018.
- Goodwin, Doris Kearns. *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005.
- Hamilton, Charles and Lloyd Ostendorf. *Lincoln in Photographs: An Album of Every Known Pose*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963.
- Hargrove, Erwin C. *Presidential Leadership: Personality and Political Style*. New York: Macmillan Company, 1966.
- Iser, Wolfgang. *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1978.
- James, Henry. *Theory of Fiction: Henry James*. Edited by James E. Miller, Jr. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972.
- Kaufman, Scott Barry and Carolyn Gregoire. *Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind*. New York: Perigee, 2015.
- Kennedy, John F. *Profiles in Courage*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2003.
- Lowry, Richard S. *Photographer and the President: Abraham Lincoln, Alexander Gardner, and the Images that Made a Presidency*. New York: Rizzoli Ex Libris, 2015.
- Murray, Williamson and Allan R. Millett. *A War to Be Won: Fighting the Second World War*. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2000.

Newton, John. *Amazing Grace*. New York: Hyperion, 1991.

Phillips, Donald T. *Lincoln on Leadership For Today: Abraham Lincoln's Approach to 21st-Century Issues*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017.

Plato. *Republic*. Edited by G. R. F. Ferrari. Translated by Tom Griffith. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Randall, J. G. *Lincoln the President: Springfield to Gettysburg*. 2 vols. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1945.

Rosebury, Brian. *Art and Desire: A Study in the Aesthetics of Fiction*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988.

Sandburg, Carl. *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years and The War Years*. New York: Galahad Books, 1993.

Shogan, Robert. *The Double-Edged Sword: How Character Makes and Ruins Presidents from Washington to Clinton*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1999.

Starr, G. Gabrielle. *Feeling Beauty: The Neuroscience of Aesthetic Experience*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2015.

Stogdill, Ralph. *Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: A Survey of Theory and Research*, edited by Bernard Bass. New York: Free Press, 1981.

Wagenknecht, Edward. *John Greenleaf Whittier: A Portrait in Paradox*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1967.

Winner, Ellen. *Invented Worlds: The Psychology of the Arts*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Winner, Ellen. *How Art Works: a Psychological Exploration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.

Dissertations and Theses

Cook, Ronald G. "Profile in Leadership: A Hermeneutic Phenomenological Examination of Abraham Lincoln's Leadership during the Civil War Years." PhD diss., Regent University, 2012.

Edited Collection

Curtis, R. C. "Self-Defeating Behaviors." In *Encyclopedia of Human Behavior*, Vol 3, 307-313. New York: Elsevier, 2012.

Eisenhower, Dwight. "Lincoln's Leadership." In *Abraham Lincoln 150th Anniversary*, 1-3. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1958.

Hanser, Richard. "Lincoln and the Poets." In *Abraham Lincoln: a New Portrait*, edited by Henry B. Kranz, 108-117. New York: Putnam, 1959.

Journals

Baas, Matthijs, Barbara Nevicka, and Femke S. Ten Velden. "Specific Mindfulness Skills Differentially Predict Creative Performance." *Sage Journals* 40, no. 9 (May 23, 2014): 1092-1106.

Besharat, Mohammad Ali Besharat, Somayeh Ramesh, and Elham Moghimi. "Spiritual Health Mediates the Relationship between Ego-Strength and Adjustment to Heart Disease." *Health Psychology Open* 5, no. 1 (2018) 1-8.

Danchev, Alex and Lisle. "Introduction: Art, Politics, Purpose." *Review of International Studies* 35, no. 4 (2009): 775-79.

"The Desperate Negro." *The Portfolio of Amusement and Instruction in History, Science, Literature, the Fine Arts, Etc.*, no. 130, 1828): 211-212.

Harms, Ernest. "The Development of Modern Art Therapy." *Leonardo* 8, no. 3 (1975): 241-244.

Hindley, Meredith. "Confessions of Gouverneur Morris: An Interview with Melanie Randolph Miller." *HUMANITIES* 40, no. 2 (Spring 2019). <https://www.neh.gov/article/confessions-gouverneur-morris>.

Manifold, Marjorie and Enid Zimmerman. "'Everyone Needs an Art Education:' Developing Leadership Through Positive Attitudes Toward Art Methods Courses." *Art Education* 64, no. 6 (2011): 33-39.

Rauscher, Frances H., Gordon L. Shaw, and Katherine N. Ky. "Listening to Mozart Enhances Spatial-temporal Reasoning: Towards a Neurophysiological Basis." *Neuroscience Letters* 185, no. 1 (1995): 44-47.

Stogdill, Ralph. "Personal Factors Associated with Leadership: A Survey of Literature." *The Journal of Psychology* 25, no. 1 (1948): 35-71.

Tschacher, Wolfgang, Steven Greenwood, Volker Kirchberg, Stéphanie Wintzerith, Karen van den Berg, and Martin Tröndle. "Physiological Correlates of Aesthetic Perception of Artworks in a Museum." *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* 6, no. 1 (02, 2012): 96-103.

Waterman, Julian S. "Mansfield and Blackstone's Commentaries." *The University of Chicago Law Review* 1, no. 4 (March 1934): 549-571.

Magazines

- Blumenthal, Sidney. "On How Lincoln Played the Political Game to Win." *Newsweek*, October 15, 2012. <https://www.newsweek.com/sidney-blumenthal-how-lincoln-played-political-game-win-65437>.
- Christensen, Ulrik Juul. "How Art Helps Leaders Shift Thinking in a Rapidly Changing World." *Forbes*, May 05, 2021. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ulrikjuulchristensen/2021/05/05/how-art-helps-leaders-shift-thinking-in-a-rapidly-changing-world/?sh=13ed66bd4077>.
- McDonald, Colby. "Spying the Secrets of Creativity." *California*, December 14, 2023. [www.https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/spying-secrets-creativity#:~:text=And%20for%20three%20days,%20this%20small%20group%20of%20writers%20-](https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/spying-secrets-creativity#:~:text=And%20for%20three%20days,%20this%20small%20group%20of%20writers%20-).
- O'Malley, Michael. "Every Leader is an Artist." *Harvard Business Review*, August 24, 2012. <http://hbr.org/2012/08/every-leader-is-an-artist>.
- Wilson, William. "There I Grew Up." *American Heritage* 17, October 1966. <https://www.americanheritage.com/there-i-grew>.

Websites

- Bozarth, William H. "Adam and Eve's Wedding Song." Hymnary.org. 1818, Accessed February 20, 2024, https://hymnary.org/text/when_adam_was_created_he_dwelt_in_edens_instances.
- Salk Institute for Biological Studies. "An Enriched Environment Stimulates an Increase in the number of Nerve Cells in Brains of Older Mice." Salk News. Accessed on December 13, 2023. <https://www.salk.edu/news-release/an-enriched-environment-stimulates-an-increase-in-the-number-of-nerve-cells-in-brains-of-older-mice/>.
- "Somerset vs. Stewart." Commonwealth Legal Information Institute. Accessed January 4, 2024. commonlii.org/int/cases/EngR/1772/57.pdf.
- Staff, Harriet. "Poetry Suits the Unconscious, Says Frontiers." Poetry News. February 22, 2017. <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet-books/2017/02/poetry-suits-the-unconscious-says-frontiers>.
- Watts, Isaac. "The Shortness of Life and the Goodness of God." Hymnary.org. Accessed November 24, 2024. https://hymnary.org/text/time_what_an_empty_vapor_tis?extended=true.