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What Lincoln Was Up Against: The Context of Leadership

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In the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth, we justly celebrate his character, ideals, and strategies, finding new depths in his virtues. It is tempting to imagine that the halting and hard-won evolution of Lincoln's ideas and strategies on emancipation marked the moral growth of white America during the Civil War. But that story, implict and explicit in many portrayals of Lincoln, embodied in our monuments to him and enscribed in our favorite quotations, underestimates Lincoln's greatest accomplishment.

Abraham Lincoln faced desperate challenges from the moment he took office until the day he was killed. While Union armies in the field struggled for four years against dismayingly effective Confederate forces, Lincoln fought to keep the North from breaking apart. The task proved unrelenting. Abolitionists and Radical Republicans pressed Lincoln to act more boldly against slavery while many Democrats swore, start to finish, that they would not fight a war on behalf of black Americans.

Lincoln could never be confident that the gains he won would long endure—or would even endure through the next election. Despite his eloquence and skill, and despite the Union's growing success on the battlefield, white public opinion in the North refused to consolidate behind Lincoln's leadership on the key issue of black Americans and their future. A wary egalitarianism among some Republicans early in the war grew into genuine respect for black Americans, especially black soldiers, but in turn Democrats developed ever more contemptuous and systematic arguments and rhetoric against black people. The Republicans, as a matter of political calculation if nothing else, talked of

black Americans cautiously and intermittently. The Democrats, by contrast, sneered and raged about "negroes" at every opportunity and found receptive audiences across the North whether events on the battlefield went well or not. The war divided the white North ever deeper even as black freedom grew closer, compromising reconstruction before it ever began.

As much as we would like to imagine that the eloquent words from the Gettysburg Address and the Second Inaugural spoke for a white North made greater and more self-aware through the sacrifices of the Civil War, those words do not seem to have penetrated very deeply into the consciousness of those not already inclined to agree with them. Lincoln's great speeches, when not ignored, were ridiculed and dismissed by his many enemies. His words gained their resonance in decades and generations that followed, when the nation told the story of the Civil War back to itself, trying to make the shattering experience coherent and whole.[i]

None of this diminishes Abraham Lincoln. His actions against slavery, driven by military necessity, outran his commitment to black Americans early on, but his faith and understanding grew as he witnessed the bravery of African American soldiers and as enslaved people made clear their determination to be free, regardless of the cost. Lincoln grew morally over the course of the war and he shared that growing understanding in ever more eloquent words. Lincoln's most important triumph lay, however, in leading the nation to a place many did not choose to go, in navigating through the political, ideological, and emotional minefield that was wartime America. Though Democrats and other opponents fought against white Southerners on the battlefield and believed in the Union, they shared white Southerners' views of black Americans. They did not undergo

a conversion experience in the Civil War, despite the often lonely and brave eloquence of Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln realized better than anyone how much public opinion mattered. "In this age, and this country, public sentiment is every thing," he said. "With it, nothing can fail; against it, nothing can succeed. Whoever moulds public sentiment, goes deeper than he who enacts statutes, or pronounces judicial decisions." If we want a clear sense of Lincoln's actual accomplishments, then, we must deal with public opinion more systematically than we have. There were no opinion polls in the nineteenth century, but votes and words give us a good sense of what changed and what did not.[ii]

Americans—even generals and presidents—understood the larger shape and meaning of the Civil War through printed words. Only a tiny fraction would have seen or heard Abraham Lincoln and most white Northerners would never have seen an enslaved person or a battlefield. The war came in long gray columns of text, chosen and framed by local editors. A new system of telegraph stations, railroads, and press organizations spread words with unprecedented speed and in enormous quantity. Reports from the battlefield poured out in brief messages and long torrents, editorials commenting on every event and utterance. As desperate as the war was, and as bitterly as people disagreed, the Lincoln administration largely allowed the opposition press to say what it wished.[iii]

The bland appearance of the newspapers belied the passions within. The things people wrote about, the words they habitually paired, the ideals they named, the slurs they cast—all were strongly patterned. No matter how passionate they might be, no matter how unique the situation might appear, people returned time and again to the same

words to express themselves. The patterns those key words made became as distinct as fingerprints.

We are just beginning to learn how to use new tools that allow us to see these patterns in the vast amount of text produced in wartime America. An increasing number of newspapers are being translated into digital form and offer exciting new ways to understand some of the most written-about subjects in American history. As we begin to think about what this kind of history might look like, perhaps we can take our bearings from four newspapers based in places that embodied within themselves many of the struggles the nation experienced. Two counties—Augusta in Virginia and Franklin in Pennsylvania—lay about two hundred miles apart in the Great Valley that stood as a major corridor of trade, migration, and war. We know a great deal about those two counties, embodied in a large digital archive, and we know that their experiences and expressions, while unique in their particulars, echoed those used by people across the United States and the Confederacy.[iv]

Each county sustained two newspapers over the era of the sectional conflict. Augusta County supported a paper that had been strongly Unionist before the war and another that had inclined toward secession. Franklin County supported a Republican paper and a Democratic paper. Together, these newspapers staked out the four corners of white public opinion, North and South, before, during, and after the Civil War. Gathering articles from other papers from all over the United States, including those they detested, those papers reflected and shaped their readers' opinions week by week. They carried the ever-changing currents and temperature of public sentiment.

A matrix of the most commonly used key words in the four newspapers, drawn from hundreds of thousands of words across the years between 1859 and 1870, maps the dominant patterns in the language people read week in and week out. [illustration 1] The North and the South shared more than it might seem possible for two warring entities to share. Northerners talked of rebels while Southerners talked of the enemy, but otherwise their newspapers spoke in the same elemental language. They saw the world through the same lenses of the constitution and government. They believed that the people held sacred rights that had to be defended. Protecting those rights was their duty, to be upheld by their honor. They believed they were fighting for freedom.

No obvious cultural differences appear in these papers. Honor appears as at least as much a Northern value as a Southern, freedom as much as Southern value a Northern. Northerners and Southerners framed their Civil War in political terms that became personal terms. They spoke the same language of loyalty and sacrifice. When they spoke of duty they accompanied that word with powerful correlates: imperative, solemn, patriotic, owe, and discharge. When they spoke of honor, they spoke of integrity, glory, sacrifice, and brave. Larger purposes and private purposes became one and the same. They appealed to the same God in an identical language of supplication. They spoke of Almighty God and thanked Him and blessed Him and trusted Him. They begged for His speed and help. They stood before Providence and hoped they might serve as instruments of divine will.[v]

And yet Northerners and Southerners, speaking exactly the same language of war, killed each other in ever-escalating numbers. Precisely because they shared a vocabulary and all the history it embodied, the North and the South hated those on the other side with

a hatred all the deeper for being directed at people so like themselves. The North and the South fought so bitterly because they fought for a shared patrimony.

Most striking and significant are the differences within the North. Franklin County affords a revealing perspective on the internal struggles that determined whether Lincoln would succeed or fail. The Republican paper in Franklin came to be edited by the head of the Republican Party in Pennsylvania, one of Lincoln's earliest and strongest supporters. Franklin County voted for Lincoln in 1860 in exactly the proportion he won across the North: 56 percent. The Democrats' paper, by contrast, spoke very clearly in the distinctive idiom of that party, an idiom heard all across the Union, an idiom of race and outrage against everything Republican. Democrats in Franklin proudly proclaimed their county the boyhood home of former Democratic President James Buchanan and deployed the Democrats' vocabulary of vitriol with force and fluency.

Northern politicians and editors inhabited a world of harsh words, shifting alliances, and desperate gambles. That world had been unsettled throughout the 1850s and Lincoln could win the presidency with a new party because the old parties fractured and exploded. The Democrats split at their convention and put two competitors in the field in 1860; then a new Constitutional Union joined the fight, leaving Lincoln and his fledgling Republican Party to take office with only 40 percent of the votes cast. A map of voting in 1860 shows that not only did voters in the future Confederacy leave Lincoln off their ballots, but men voted against him in large areas of the states, free and slave, that would remain in the Union. In counties across the North, Lincoln often won narrow victories even in states he carried. [ill. 2]

War descended before Lincoln had a chance to win over the Democrats or the Constitutional Unionists, before he had a chance to show what sort of leader he would be. Northern Democrats stood with Lincoln at the beginning of the war when they imagined that a brief conflict would restore the Union. When he issued the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation in 1862, however, the Democrats proclaimed that Lincoln had handed the Confederacy a great gift. The entire white South, they warned, would now be unified as it had never been unified before. Jefferson Davis, the Democrats' paper in Franklin declared, "would have given the last dollar in the Confederate Treasury to have just such a proclamation emanate from the President of the United States." There was truth to the claim. The Confederacy, fractious on the home front, solidified in the face of the Proclamation.[vi]

The local and state elections that followed the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation in 1862 gave voters across the North a chance to express their opinions on Lincoln's policies. Many moderate Republicans accepted the proclamation as the war aim it was. Democrats, by contrast, declared that the election that followed would be "the most important one that has occurred in the history of our country." The issue, as they saw it, was clear: "Abolitionism threatens the overthrow of the Constitution, the disruption of the Union and the elevation of the negro to an equality with the white man." The true men of the Democracy thus had to fight two evils at once. "Whilst the army of the Republic is crushing out Secessionism in the field, do not forget that you have a duty to perform by voting down Abolitionism at the Polls."[vii]

In the state and local elections of 1862 and 1863, the Democrats stormed back. Five of the most important states Lincoln had carried in 1860—New York, Pennsylvania,

Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois—sent Democratic majorities to Congress. The Republicans held on to their small edge in the House of Representatives only because large and loyal Republican majorities turned out in New England and in the border states where the Union army maintained a presence. If the presidency had been at stake in 1862, and if voters had cast ballots for president as they did for state officials, Lincoln would have lost, 127 electoral votes to 86.[viii]

The election returns of 1862 hung as a threat over the coming months. Should the Lincoln administration fail to crush the rebellion, Democrats warned, "the Democratic party will, when it gets hold of the reins of Government, use all power, and all the statesmanship it can muster to its aid, to restore the Constitution in its ancient spirit and vigor." That meant restoring the South to the Union and restoring the constitutional right of slavery. Given the opportunity, the Democrats would seize power and then "reunite our shattered and bleeding Union, as it was before the reckless fanaticism and uncompromising, revengeful spirit of the present day severed the holy bonds which bound us in one brotherhood." The crusade against slavery, in other words, would come to an end.[ix]

The defeats and delays of the United States army in 1862 and the first half of 1863, coupled with a draft, growing taxes, and unpopular laws, threatened to break the North from within. The South smothered its political divisions, but the North paraded its differences in one election after another. The Democrats refused to let up on Abraham Lincoln, refused to soften criticism of generals and their failures, refused to accept that emancipation might become a principal war aim or that the war would be prolonged to bring slavery to an end. The Democrats filled newspapers with their denunciations and

attracted voters to the polls in undiminished numbers despite Republican calls for wartime unity. "Party" was second only to "people" as the word most commonly used in both newspapers of Franklin County.

Lincoln issued a draft call for half a million more men in July 1864. Since the draft came on the eve of important state elections in Ohio, Indiana, and Pennsylvania, conscription threatened the greatest blow yet against the prospects of Union victory. The Democrats smelled blood and went on the attack: "In short his administration has cost the nation one million men and three thousand million dollars, leaving the country in a tenfold worse condition than it was on the day he assumed the chair of State," the party's Franklin paper spat, "and it is fair to presume that four years more of the imbecility, corruption and fanaticism that have prevailed during the last three would result in, not only the complete ruin and exhaustion of the country, but in division, and the total overthrow of republican institutions. Will the people try the experiment? We trust not." By August, prominent Republicans had concluded that Lincoln would be defeated. Their only hope, many believed, was to nominate a different candidate. "Nobody here doubts it," one admitted to Lincoln. "Nor do I see anybody from other states who authorizes the slightest hope of success." [x]

The political parties warred in the North in 1864 while the armies warred on the battlefield. Although the Democrats were profoundly disorganized, hobbled by desperately competing factions, no national leader, and no national patronage, the party found wide support across the North. Not only did many white voters hate the idea of abolition and dread the idea of free black people, but they also hated what they saw as the

tyranny of the Lincoln administration, with high taxes, conscription, and rationing of the news from the battlefields.[xi]

The Republicans managed to submerge their differences long enough to renominate Lincoln, but to signal their central purpose to skeptical voters they changed their name to the Union Party and nominated a former Democrat, Andrew Johnson of Tennessee, for the Vice Presidency. Lincoln held many advantages and he used patronage adroitly to discipline his splintered party. Voters in occupied areas of Kentucky, Maryland, and Missouri, where the Republicans had barely appeared in 1860, voted for Lincoln. So did voters in the new states of West Virginia, Nevada, and Kansas, while popular Republican projects such as the Homestead Act won support for the party in the West. For the first time, too, soldiers in the field voted and about three-fourths of the million who cast ballots voted supported their commander-in-chief.

Despite these advantages and crucial military victories in Georgia and Virginia on the eve of the election, Lincoln won 55 percent of the vote in 1864. That is considered a landslide in American politics, but it nevertheless meant that nearly half of all voters refused to support the president even in the desperation of wartime. Though the election signaled that the North under Lincoln would fight until Confederate surrender, Lincoln's overall share of the vote barely changed between 1860 and 1864. Even after the most important victories in the Civil War and after the Emancipation Proclamation and the Gettysburg Address, even with all the power of the patronage and vast government spending at his command, even in the middle of an enormous war commanding the loyalty of an immense army of soldiers, Lincoln began his second term with nearly half the electorate opposed to him.[xii] [ill. 3]

Lincoln remained as president because the Electoral College created a convincing mandate from a narrow popular difference, just as it was designed to do. He won because the two-party system suppressed fragmentation and dissent and because fixed election cycles prevented his opponents from seizing moments of despair and crisis to launch challenges to him. All across the North, in one county after another, Lincoln won only by a few dozen votes, by a small percentage of the electorate. In 1864 Franklin County, like many others across the North, shifted toward the Democrats even as it stayed in the Republican column. Lincoln won Franklin by 47 votes out of over 7,000 cast, just as he won Pennsylvania by the narrowest of margins. [ill 4]

General histories of the Civil War and biographers of Lincoln acknowledge the challenge of 1864 and the sudden turn at the end, of course, but they emphasize that the victory at the polls removed the Confederates' last hope of a negotiated peace. While true, such a perspective leaves out a crucial part of the story going forward, creating the impression that matters had been settled in public opinion, that the white North had been converted to Lincoln's shifting perspective on the future of black Americans. If we remember the narrowness of Lincoln's reelection, however, and focus on the enduring bitterness and opposition across the North, the tortured history of the next decade is less surprising than it often appears. It was not that the white North converted for an egalitarian moment and then betrayed that conversion. The white North ended the war even more divided than it began.

Throughout the war, start to finish, the language of race provided the most contested and charged words. In the two years before the war began, the papers of Franklin County talked incessantly about "negroes." The constellation of words

associated with "negro" in 1859, 1860, and early 1861 shows that the Republicans talked of slavery in the territories while the Democrats talked of John Brown and Harpers Ferry, trying to saddle their opponents with insurrection. The word "nigger" appears prominently in the Republican paper mainly because that paper quoted and taunted the Democrats for their discouragingly effective fixation on race. "Because of their continual feasting upon their colored brethren, with 'nigger' for breakfast, 'darkey' for lunch, 'cuffy' for dinner, 'woolly head' for desert, and 'sambo' for supper, we have arrived at the conclusion that their true name should be the Nigger Democracy," the Republican paper charged in 1860. "Notwithstanding the nauseating character of the dish, and the frequency with which they thrust the unsavory repast under the noses of their readers, we find that they still rehash the old, mouldy collation." The Republicans preferred to talk of white men instead of black.[xiii] [ill. 5]

Over the course of the war, the Democrats invoked "negroes" over and over again, especially at election time and especially as the end of slavery became ever clearer. The Republicans spoke positively of black soldiers, but they did not dwell on slavery or black people in general until the war had been won and Lincoln reelected. Instead, they talked of the obligations and opportunities of white people. They talked of the necessity of winning the war, of saving the Union. [ill. 6]

The most frequently used words during the war years reveal the priorities of the newspapers of both sides. [ill. 7] Northerners talked the most of "rebels" and Southerners talked the most of the "enemy." Everyone dwelled on the wounds suffered by their neighbors, relatives, and friends. They carefully scrutinized the people of both sides, continually monitoring their opinion, their morale, their determination. They

recognized that opinion in the North crystallized in parties and used "party" as a shorthand way of defining the tendencies they celebrated or deplored. They considered their fundamental rights to be at stake, knew that rights were protected by the government, and owed a duty to protect those rights in every way they could. The language of the war, in other words, focused on war-making and the rights that white people on both sides considered their birthright.

The word "slavery," prominent on the eve of the war, fell into relative disuse by the Republicans as well as the Democrats. As Frederick Douglass complained, "Slavery, though wounded, dying and despised, is still able to bind the tongues of our republican orators," he told an abolitionist ally. "The Negro is the deformed child, which is put out of the room when company comes." Lincoln himself spoke only obliquely about slavery in his famous 1863 speech at Gettysburg and said little about slavery over the following year as the election loomed.[xiv]

Often portrayed as a pivotal event in the nation's history, the Gettysburg Address in fact passed with little notice. The new national cemetery at Gettysburg lay only thirty miles from Franklin's seat, but the Republican paper gave Lincoln's now-famous address only a small share of the attention. Instead, the paper gushed over Edward Everett, "America's greatest living orator," who "for two hours held the crowd in one of the most splendid intellectual efforts of his life." Saying only that "the dedicatory remarks were then delivered by the President, as follows," the paper printed the brief words of Lincoln's speech—as they did of a song by the Baltimore Glee Club—doing what Republican papers across the North did. Democrats, for their part, considered the speech

a campaign maneuver from the outset and treated it with contempt. Any notion that the speech marked a turning point in white opinion is wishful thinking.[xv]

Destroying slavery became United States military policy even though many white Northerners never came to believe that the war was worth fighting to end slavery. Slavery came to an end not because white Northerners changed their minds but because white Southerners forced slavery to be destroyed. As one Republican in Franklin put it, "Slavery is now dying, not by the hands of those who long since favored a prohibitory constitutional amendment, not by the hands of abolitionists so called, not by virtue entirely of the executive proclamation, but by war, cruel war, provoked and made by its friend."[xvi]

Many white Republicans, however, both soldiers on the field and at home, in Franklin as elsewhere, came to understand slavery more fully as they fought against slavery and as they admired black soldiers' bravery. Channels of empathy and human understanding began to open. Some white Northerners became attuned to things they had not been attuned to before, bridges of common humanity. Men and women who came to see the humanity of black Southerners would, in coming years, give much of themselves as teachers, advocates, and allies of the former slaves. But such white Northerners did not dominate public discourse; their heroism grew by action and individual commitment, often in the face of hostility and indifference, not by default.

An issue of the Republican paper in Franklin County in February 1865 shows the depth of new understanding by some whites. One article heralded the end of slavery and the beginning of a new life for black Americans. "At last the Nation is disenthralled from its crowning crime. Slavery, the fruitful parent of all the staggering woes of the

Republic—the deadly foe of the very genius of our free institutions, and the author of the bloody fraternal conflict that has crimsoned our fair fields by the most appalling sacrifices, has, in the fullness of His time, fallen beneath the retributive stroke of Justice," the paper exulted as the Thirteenth Amendment passed. Looking ahead, it spoke paternalistically but with good will. "What may be done with the African race in the future we cannot tell. We know they have capacity, and this being the land of their birth, our duty is with the present. That they have giants among them even in their degraded condition does not admit of a doubt. In this broad land of ours, under the blessing of our Government, they can be made useful to themselves, the country and posterity. Let the effort be fairly made." Such things would not have been said in a Republican newspaper four years earlier, perhaps not even two years earlier.[xvii]

But the Democrats would have nothing of it. When Lincoln was inaugurated for his second term in the spring of 1865, the Democrats' paper in Franklin spoke of the nation's leader with disdain. His Second Inaugural speech, later considered the greatest he ever delivered and the greatest inaugural speech in our history, "has been looked for by the public with less interest than is usually exhibited, even in ordinary times, in regard to a public expression from the pen or lips of a President of the United States. The indifference is attributable, probably, to the fact that the people know too well how utterly his practice has been at variance with the professions he made in his first inaugural, to have any confidence in his utterances now." The editor pretended to think that Lincoln might apologize for violating the Constitution and for his "abandonment of principles which he had solemnly put forth as his rule of conduct. In lieu of any such

attempt, however, he has given us the mere trash to which we refer our readers as unworthy of comment." In sum, "He had nothing to say, and he has said it."[xviii]

It is hard to read these words now. We know that the Democrats were profoundly wrong about the meaning of the history they were living. But we must recognize that many white Americans—the great majority, in fact, if the white South is added to the nearly half of the white North who voted against Lincoln in 1864—would have agreed with them. The aftermath of the war, with its abandoned Reconstruction, reflected a consistent ideological, racial, and political opposition before, during, and after the Civil War.

The words associated with "negro" over the five years following the war give a glimpse of what was to come. The intersection of politics, rights, and race proved to be the most volatile combination in the universe of white American men in the mid-nineteenth century. "Radicals" and "Democrats" replaced "enemy" and "rebel" as the most charged words. Democrats obsessed over any possibility of black voting, talking of suffrage, equality, vote, and supremacy whenever they mentioned the word "negro." [ill. 8] The very things the Democrats had been fighting for—political rights for white men and all the identity as white men that went with those rights—flowed into a toxic and volatile mix. As much as the Democrats had fixated on black people before and during the war, they doubled their obsession after the war ended.[xix]

White Northerners disagreed with each other more deeply at the end of the war than at the beginning. From start to finish, Abraham Lincoln struggled with the most progressive as well as the most retrograde factions. As Frederick Douglass would write a decade later, "Viewed from genuine abolition ground, Mr. Lincoln seemed tardy, cold,

dull, and indifferent; but measuring him by the sentiment of his country, a sentiment he was bound as a statesman to consult, he was swift, zealous, radical, and determined."[xx] In such a context, Abraham Lincoln's leadership lay in capturing what he could from each moment of possibility, of avoiding the worst in each moment of disaster. His leadership lay in doing less than many wanted, later than many wanted, in less dramatic ways than many wanted. He worked at the very edge of public opinion, repeatedly testing its boundaries and its strength. In the end, Lincoln led his nation through an unimaginably costly war to a redemptive outcome, ending the largest system of slavery in the modern world in a victory that many of his fellow white Americans resisted every step of the way.

[i] See Gabor Boritt, *The Gettysburg Gospel: The Lincoln Speech That Nobody Knows* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), pp. 191-2.

[ii] See Menahem Blondheim, "'Public Sentiment is Everything': The Union's Public Communications Strategy and the Bogus Proclamation of 1864," *Journal of American History* 89:3 (December 2002), pp. 869-899. Lincoln quoted on p 869.

[iii] See Blondheim, "'Public Sentiment is Everything," p. 871.

[iv] The evidence analyzed below is within *The Valley of the Shadow: Two Communities in the American Civil War* (http://valley.vcdh.virginia.edu). The Digital Scholarship Lab at the University of Richmond is creating tools to analyze the many hundreds of thousands of words in that archive and in others to follow. Robert K. Nelson of the DSL has devised those tools and I am grateful to him for his remarkable work. Readers may explore these tools and materials on their own at the website of the Digital Scholarship Lab.

Pioneering work in this vein appears in John Riedl's 2006 University of Virginia dissertation, "Language and the Making of Race in the United States, 1827-1900," available at http://wwwlib.umi.com/dissertations/fullcit/3225902. Also see Rogan Kersh, *Dreams of a More Perfect Union* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001).

[v] These correlates appear in the text mining tools in the Digital Scholarship Lab, where the most common pairs can be seen by entering a key word. See illustration 9 below for an example.

Some of the words appearing most commonly in the newspapers bear a strong resemblance to those James McPherson found in the letters of soldiers, described in *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford, 1998). The soldiers from Augusta and Franklin, like the sample in McPherson's book, spoke of honor, duty, and courage. Looking at the homefront as well as at soldiers' letters shows that the communities from which these men came were also absorbed in the language of military duty and honor, that the political issues of the war were thoroughly situated in partisan political struggles, and that the values of duty and honor were broad enough to embrace North and South, Democratic and Republican. These words, so charged and widely shared, clouded more concrete and contested kinds of motivations such as race, party, and military situation. It is no accident that both sides clung to the words of honor and duty in generations following the war, for those words were both true and broad enough to obfuscate other motivations. We need to study the universe of language more broadly and more rigorously to understand how all the pieces fit together.

[vi] *Valley Spiri*t, October 1, 1862.

[vii] *Valley Spirit*, October 8, 1862.

[viii] John C. Waugh, *Reelecting Lincoln: the Battle for the 1864 Presidency* (New York: Crown, 1997), pp. 11-2.

[ix] *Valley Spirit*, May 6, 1863.

[x] *Valley Spirit*, July 20, 1864; Thurlow Weed, quoted in David E. Long, *The Jewel of Liberty: Abraham Lincoln's Re-election and the End of Slavery* (Mechanicsburg, PA.: Stackpole Books, 1994), p. 45.

[xi] For the larger context, see Adam I. P. Smith, *No Party Now: Politics in the Civil War North* (New York: Oxford, 2006), which emphasizes the way that Lincoln used the Republican party but spoke in a patriotic language above party to avoid the limitations of partisan division.

[xii] See Joel H. Silbey, *A Respectable Minority: The Democratic Party in the Civil War Era, 1860-1868* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), pp. 239-40. The unrelenting use of race by the Democrats is a major theme in the newest and most comprehensive account of Lincoln we have: Michael Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

[xiii] *Franklin Repository*, April 25, 1860.

[xiv] Michael Vorenberg, "'The Deformed Child': Slavery and the Election of 1864," *Civil War History* 47 (3): 240-57, quote on p. 240. During the war, the word "slavery" fell to 19th of the 19 key words in both the Republican and the Democratic newspapers of Franklin County.

[xv] *Franklin Repository*, November 25, 1863. Boritt, *Gettysburg Gospel*, 137-47. The most influential portrayal of the role of Lincoln's speech, with its sweeping argument explicit in its subtitle, is Garry Wills, *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992).

[xvi] *Franklin Repository*, February 22, 1865.

[xvii] *Franklin Repository*, February 8, 1865.

[xviii] *Valley Spirit*, March 8, 1865. A recent study by a political scientist has found that presidents' words in general have less impact than we might imagine. See George C.

Edwards III, *On Deaf Ears: The Limits of the Bully Pulpit* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

[xix]
"Negro" as percentage of key words in Northern newspapers

	Northern Republican	Northern Democrat
Prewar	14.3	21.4
War	22.9	24.4
Postwar	30.7	41.7

[xx] Quoted in George M. Fredrickson, *Big Enough to Be Inconsistent: Abraham Lincoln Confronts Slavery and Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), p. 126.