The Limits of Gratitude: Lincoln in African American Memory

In 2004, Lincoln scholar Alan Guelzo identified "[O]ne of the most peculiar phenomena in American historical self-understanding: the silent, almost unnoticed withdrawal of African Americans from what was once the great consensus of blacks' admiration for Abraham Lincoln" (I). Guelzo's comment on diminishing black affection for Lincoln raises several questions. When did African Americans begin to doubt Lincoln's greatness? How many did so? Is Lincoln the only president for whom they have lost admiration? Do whites admire Lincoln as much as they did in previous decades? Do we need different explanations to account for white and black beliefs about Lincoln's accomplishments?

Tipping Point

The beginning of African Americans' withdrawal from Lincoln goes back many decades. In 1933, three months after Franklin Roosevelt was elected president, the editor of the *New York Amsterdam News* claimed that "Lincoln rests on fame's pedestal more insecurely than he did in years gone by" (2). Intellectuals, particularly, found Lincoln deficient. Historian Carter G. Woodson marked Negro History Week (his own creation) by measuring Lincoln against Elijah Lovejoy, John Brown, Charles Sumner, and Thaddeus Stevens:

Lincoln should be lauded by the Negro, but he has been often overrated as the savior of the race. At best Lincoln was a gradual emancipationist and colonizationist who hoped by methods of compensation to free all Negroes by 1900 and deport them to some neglected part of the earth. He doubted that the two races could dwell together in peace. Lincoln originally had no more idea of issuing the emancipation proclamation than King John had of issuing the Magna Carta. He was forced to this position (3).

In Woodson's view, Abraham Lincoln had been "forced into glory" (4). Few of the slaves Lincoln emancipated, and even fewer of their chil-

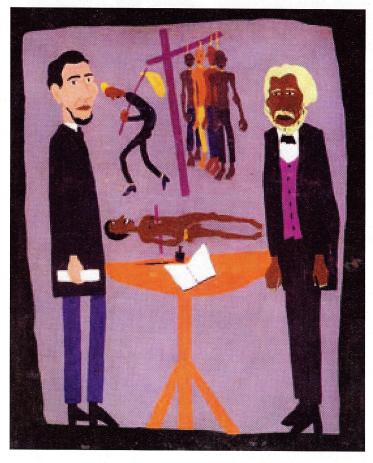


Figure 1. Let My People Free. William H. Johnson, 1945. Oil on paperboard, $38\,1/4$ X 30. (Image courtesy of Smithsonian American Art Museum.)

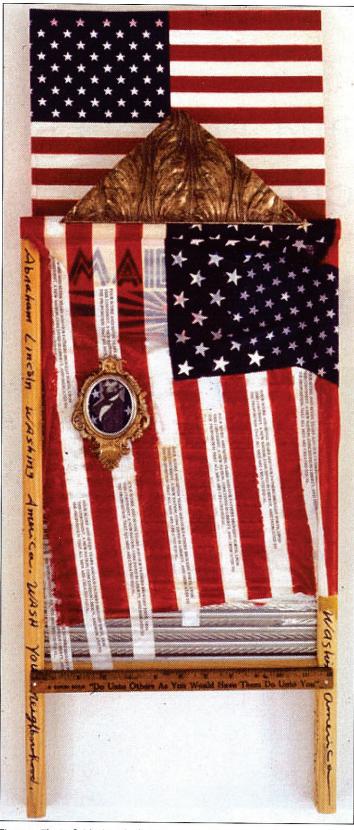


Figure 2. The Unfinished Work of Washing America by Malaika Favorite, mixed media on washboard, 27 x 13. Currently the painting is on tour with "Portraying Lincoln: Man of Many Faces," organized by Michael Fowler, University of South Carolina, Aiken, and sponsored by the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. (Image courtesy of Malaika Favorite.)

dren and grandchildren, the ordinary people of the Depression years, thought much about Lincoln's motives for ending slavery. Franklin Roosevelt was the major reason for the Emancipator's tarnished glory. Two-thirds of the black vote went to Herbert Hoover in 1932, but "It was a kind of religion, reporter Earl Brown observed, to vote for Roosevelt in '36" (5). African Americans transferred to Roosevelt the reverence they had once reserved for Lincoln—but not because they had discovered something about Lincoln they disliked; Roosevelt simply overshadowed him. No president had ever done so much, in a material way, for the African American people. Harold Rome's "F.D.R. Jones," written for the 1938 Broadway musical *Sing Out the News*, captures the look of the new pantheon:

Abraham Lincoln Smith, set yourself right 'down! There's a new hero here, He's the man of the year, Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt Jones! (6).

By 1938, *Chicago Defender* readers noticed a change in their Lincoln Day edition. A front-page story in the early 1930s, Lincoln Day had become back-page news by the end of the decade. In 1945, three months after Roosevelt died, the National Opinion Research Center asked a national sample, "In all the history of the United States, who do you regard as two or three of the greatest men who have ever lived in this country?" Fifty-three percent of blacks named Lincoln; 67 percent named Roosevelt. For whites the corresponding figures were 57 and 61 percent.

Throughout the Depression, then, African Americans continued to admire Lincoln, albeit less strongly than in earlier decades. When organizers considered a new site for Marion Anderson's 1938 Washington, D.C. concert, the Lincoln Memorial was the first to come to mind. The major African American painters of the period, including William H. Johnson, still portrayed Lincoln as the liberator of the black people and standard for judging white justice. In Johnson's *Let My People Free* (1945), Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass stand beside a table bearing ink and pen, but the paper is blank. In the background, hang four lynched black men. Meanwhile, a slave, arms shackled from behind, smiles upon another escaping to freedom. Lincoln symbolizes an emancipation unrealized but progressing.

During the last third of the twentieth century, however, a great wave of anti-Lincoln discourse swelled and broke. "The South was fighting to take slavery out of the Union," wrote Julius Lester in 1968, whereas "the North [under Lincoln] was fighting to keep it in the Union" (7). Dick Gregory, too, dismissed "the myth of emancipation" as one of America's great lies (8). Lerone Bennett expressed the radical perspective more effectively than anyone. His 1968 article, published in the leading African American magazine Ebony, asks "Was Abe Lincoln a White Supremacist?" Bennett believed so: Lincoln had no strong feelings against slavery; only as war crippled it did he make necessity a virtue and decide on emancipation (9). In black newspapers everywhere, editors and commentators congratulated Bennett for his careful research and endorsed his conclusions. Vincent Harding went further. Not only was Lincoln a racist; his Emancipation Proclamation emancipated no one. In the chaos of war, the slaves freed themselves. Credit nevertheless went to Lincoln, who "dreamed of a Haitian island and of Central American colonies to rid the country of the constantly accusing, constantly challenging black presence" (10). As the end of the century approached, the verdict on Lincoln, even for the conservative Atlanta Daily World, became mixed. He "was not actually interested in saving the Negro." For him, personal friendship with blacks was impossible, "but the fact that he could go against the majority feeling

Table 1 Selected Presidents as one of America's "Three Greatest Presidents," by Race

	1956		1975		1985		1991		1999°		2001 ^b	
	White (n=1218)	Black (n=151)	White (n=1362)	Black (n=151)	White (n=1359)	Black (n=181)	White (n=857)	Black (n=147)	White (n=779)	Black (n=119)	White (n=620)	Black (n=89)
Lincoln	64	48	50	37	48	43	47	35	42	28	46	27
Kennedy			48	86	51	79	45	61	32	41	35	51
Roosevelt	63	77	45	48	45	42	32	16	29	13	26	12
Truman	9	42	38	21	29	15	19	8	15	1	9	2
Washington	50	22	26	22	27	17	26	22	27	10	32	2
Eisenhower	33	38	25	14	16	9	14	10	10	8	7	4
Clinton									15	71	14	62
Johnson			8	26	4	14	2	6	*	*	2	10

Source: Gallup Polls, January 6-11, 1956; November 21-24, 1975; June 7-10, 1985; February 7-10, 1991; University of Maryland Survey, May, 1999; September 2001.

to offer freedom . . . to ignorant slaves, places him far above the average human being" (11).

Through the 1990s and the early twenty-first century, many African American newspapers ceased to cover Lincoln Day events regularly. Radical voices became louder. Lerone Bennett's Forced into Glory (2000), the most powerful African American condemnation of Lincoln ever written, swayed the black press and its readers. Louis Farrakhan, standing in front of the Capitol, with the Lincoln Memorial in the distance, greeted his Million Man March by recognizing Lincoln as 'the man who allegedly freed us' and by mentioning his cruelest public statements about blacks. Senator Barack Obama, despite his admiration for Lincoln, wrote: "I cannot swallow whole the view of Lincoln as the 'Great Emancipator.' As a law professor and civil rights lawyer and as an African American, I am fully aware of his limited views on race. Anyone who actually reads the Emancipation Proclamation knows it was more a military document than a clarion call for justice" (12).

Lincoln and the Man on the Street

Lincoln's place in the mind of African American academics, writers, and newspaper editors has faded dramatically since 1930, but we cannot be sure whether these elite judgments coincide with the views of ordinary people. Hostile statements against Lincoln, after all, might distinguish one generation from another, but they do not necessarily characterize that generation. Because anyone searching for positive statements about Lincoln from African Americans can find them, media statements must be supplemented with data drawn from a more representative source.

Nationwide surveys do not replace the richness of historians' and writers' insights, but they do broaden them. As noted, the 1945 survey on comparative prestige showed African Americans recognizing FDR more often than Lincoln. The movement of prestige ratings across the last half of the twentieth century shows this pattern repeating itself: segregation and civil rights have replaced slavery and emancipation as the great issues of the day. The struggle for civil rights is the context for understanding not only Lincoln ratings but also variations around the diminishing prestige of all presidents.

In 1956, during the southern phase of the civil rights crisis, the Gallup Poll asked, "Who do you think were America's three greatest Presidents?" Question wording affects responses, but when the same question is repeated at different points during a 50-year span, the response trend cannot be attributed to differences in phrasing. Almost two-thirds of white respondents compared to 48 percent of black respondents named Lincoln in 1956. In 1975, 50 percent of whites and 37 percent of blacks answering the same question named Lincoln; in 1985, the difference narrowed to five points (48 and 43 percent), probably due to sampling error. In 1991, a wide difference reappeared, with 47 and 35 percent of whites and blacks, respectively, naming Lincoln. The University of Maryland Survey Research Center's 1999 sample shows 42 percent of whites compared to only 28 percent of blacks believing Lincoln to be one of the three greatest presidents. In the last, slightly smaller, Maryland sample, the percentage of whites and blacks naming Lincoln remains similar at 46 and 27 percent (13).

Percentage estimates for African Americans, based on small numbers of cases (never more than 200), produce considerable sampling

^aTotal sample size: 1,001. ^bTotal sample size: 849.

^{*}Johnson designations not listed by respondent ID.

error. But over six separate samples, uniformities become clear: black esteem for Lincoln is not only less than white but also declines faster. The sharpest downturn occurred between 1956 and 1975, but from 1956 to 2001—a forty-five year period—the percentage of whites and blacks naming Lincoln a great president drops 28.1 and 43.7 percentage points respectively. The greatness concentrated in Roosevelt and Lincoln in 1956 is diffused among more recent but less distinguished presidents. Sharp decreases in Lincoln monument and shrine visitation by the general public and a drop in citation counts from newspaper, magazine, and Congressional Record indexes accompany the declines found in national surveys (14).

Indifference toward traditional heroes was common among all people who came of age during the 1960s. Black and white ratings of every pres-

ident listed in Table 1—Washington, Kennedy, Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower—have fallen as steeply as they have for Lincoln. In 1956, when Gallup asked his first question about presidential greatness, he found 77 percent of black respondents still naming Roosevelt a great president. By 2001 only 12 percent named him.

The reasons for changing judgments of Lincoln are evident in comparative presidential rankings. Whites have named Lincoln the best president in every Gallup survey but one (1975, when they placed him three points behind Kennedy). For blacks, Kennedy has occupied a far more exalted place: in 1975, the first survey allowing comparison, blacks placed Lincoln 49 points behind Kennedy; 36 and 26 points behind Kennedy in 1985 and 1991 respectively; 13 points and 24 points behind him in 1999 and 2001. Kennedy has faded rapidly in African American memory, but if a recent president competed successfully with Lincoln for their affection, it was he.

Throughout the last third of the twentieth century, Kennedy appealed to every sector of the population, including the South, but his decision to meet segregation with force caused blacks to see him, not Lincoln, as their champion. The importance of civil rights in judgments of presidential greatness is also evident in assessments of Harry Truman. In 1945, within months of his taking office, 2 percent of black respondents named Truman one of the two or three greatest men in American history. Three years later, Truman ran for president on the first civil rights platform (causing segregationists to form a separate Dixiecrat Party). African Americans remembered Truman's courageous stand. In 1956, 42 percent of African Americans and 9 percent of whites named him a great president. Likewise, few now consider Dwight Eisenhower a civil rights advocate, but as president he enforced the (1954) Brown decision. In 1956, more blacks (38 percent) than whites named him a great president. Lyndon B. Johnson was, by any account, the strongest civil rights president, but by 1975 his reputation had been shattered by the Vietnam War: only 8 percent of whites considered him great,

Table 2
Major Attributions to Abraham Lincoln by Race (percentage one or two mentions)^a

		1999⁵	2001°		
Reputation Categories ^d	White (n=661)	Black (n≔104)	White (N=476)	Black (n=53)	
1a. Great Emancipator	45	50	41	53	
1b. Civil Rights Reformer	11	10	7	8	
2. Savior of the Union	7	2	8	2	
3. Folk Themes	5	1	6	4	
4. Moral Traits	21	10	23	11	
5. Leadership	11	1	12	2	
6. Negative Beliefs	3	6	5	4	

^{*}Excludes all non-responses (those declining to choose a great president and/or assigning no reason for choice) and other Positive Responses (e.g., martyrdom, Gettysburg Address, personal grief, legal ability, president at the time of Civil War, helped the North, outstanding president), which are too disparate for meaningful comparison.

compared to almost 26 percent of African Americans. Ten years later, these figures dropped to 4 and 14 percent respectively; in 2001, they fell further to 2 and 10 percent. The remaining racial gap weakly echoes gratitude for Johnson's civil rights accomplishments. More recently, Bill Clinton has been regarded as the outstanding proponent of African American interests: 71 percent of blacks named him a great president in 1999, while 62 percent did the same in 2001—four times more often than did whites for both years. What we are seeing, then, is not a loss of gratitude for Lincoln but a displacement of sentiment, and probably remembrance, successively from one civil rights president to another (15). The apotheosis of Martin Luther King subtracted further from Abraham Lincoln's prestige. As recent civil rights proponents, black and white, compete for historical recognition, then, Lincoln's prestige diminishes (16).

Lincoln's Greatest Accomplishment

We now turn from the problem of gauging Lincoln's prestige to that of understanding his reputation. The word "prestige" sets one person apart from another on a scale of esteem. One good measure of a president's prestige is the percentage of people including him among the greatest presidents. Reputation refers to the traits and achievements distinguishing one president from another. Derived from the Latin reputare, "to reckon up, think over," reputation refers to the content of personal qualities and achievement.

As freedom's first generation passed away, Edna Greene Medford observes, "its children and grandchildren grew less reverent of [Abraham Lincoln] and more skeptical of his proclamation." Among African American intellectuals, she adds, "the tendency has been to minimize the image of Lincoln as 'great emancipator' and to underscore the efforts of black men and women in their own liberation" (17). We can assess Edna Medford's argument by determining what comes to mind when individuals think of Lincoln. In the 1999 and 2001 national sur-

bTotal sample size: 1,001.

^{&#}x27;Total sample size: 849.

depending on number of non-respondents, Other Positive Responses, and mean number of individual responses.

veys, respondents naming Lincoln one of the great presidents were asked to explain their reasons for doing so, while those who did not believe him to be a great president were nevertheless asked to tell what they thought about him. The two sets of responses turn out to be remarkably similar.

The 1999 survey shows 50 percent of black respondents attributing Lincoln's greatness to emancipation, while almost 10 percent view his policy on slavery a precursor to equal rights, as known today. Fully 60 percent of the responses reflect the concerns of racial justice. Less than 2 percent attribute Lincoln's greatness to saving the Union or to his being a Man of the People, Frontier Youth, or Self-Made Man (identified in Table 2 as Folk Themes) (18). The percentage of blacks tracing Lincoln's greatness to other characteristics, including morality (bravery, integrity, perseverance, religious faith) and leadership ability are 11 and 2

percent. Six percent believe his greatness rests on a foundation of negative traits and achievements. Relatively little hostility toward Lincoln, however, is evident in black responses.

Whites respond to Lincoln similarly, but they are somewhat more likely to see him as Savior of the Union, Man of the People, Frontier Youth, and Self-Made Man. They are also more inclined to assign his greatness to moral traits and to superior leadership (independent of his war policies). White respondents see Lincoln's greatness resting on a wider range of assets than do blacks, but the overall pattern of response is comparable (19).

The smaller 2001 sample displays the same pattern. More than half (53 percent) of African Americans, again, find emancipation to be the distinctive characteristic of Lincoln's presidency; 8 percent see him as a forerunner of civil rights. The white responses are essentially the same as they were in 1999. In neither survey do more than 6 percent of blacks assign negative reasons, such as dishonest or betrayal, for Lincoln's presidential stature. We are observing minor variations on the grand theme of emancipation. Within both cat-

egories of race—and, for that matter, region, age, education, party preference, and ideology—emancipation stands far and above every other reason for Lincoln's prominence (20).

Although emancipation remains Abraham Lincoln's gift to the African American people, new presidents sympathetic to civil rights—namely Roosevelt, Truman, Kennedy, and Clinton—are more relevant to recent generations than an ancient president who opposed slavery. While academics debate Lincoln's racism and his motivation for draft-

ing and signing the Emancipation Proclamation, ordinary black citizens believe in the sincerity of his anti-slavery sentiments but consider them less relevant than the civil rights sentiments of more recent presidents whom, ironically, they also admire in smaller numbers over time.

Indicative of Lincoln's present standing among African Americans is black artist Malaika Favorite's *Washing America* (Figure 2). Her collage of a Lincoln portrait and an American flag folded over a washboard portrays the emancipator as a positive standard for contemporary race relations. Yet, Lincoln's image is hardly noticeable. His secondary place in the collage articulates his diminished place in African American memory.

Conclusion

"The withdrawal from Lincoln by African-Americans," according

to Allen Guelzo, "has moved in step with the emergence of a profound nihilism in the minds of many Americans which sees little meaning in American freedom and little hope for real racial progress Blacks' resentment, despair, and alienation over America's racial future have never been higher" (21). It is difficult, however, to imagine alienated and resentful people expressing such extraordinarily high levels of affection for presidents John Kennedy and Bill Clinton, not to mention recognition of the other civil rights presidents. African Americans have not turned away from Lincoln so much as they have turned toward recent pro-integration presidents. On the other hand, Guelzo's reference to the emergence of nihilism in the American mind warrants attention because it touches on a new strain of our culture.

Every community remembers the national figures most relevant to its interests and values, but some figures retain their relevance longer than others. Abraham Lincoln has worn exceptionally well over the years, but his diminishing prestige among blacks during the last third of the twentieth century is no less important than the relative amount of prestige blacks

attribute to him. The present generation's preoccupation with race leads it to misunderstand the meaning of race differences in assessments of Lincoln. In fact, they are variations on the same, post-heroic, theme: whites and blacks alike recognize Lincoln's contribution to freedom but no longer identify with him (22). Moreover, whites embrace some of the same presidents whom blacks revere, although the former are less preoccupied by their civil rights record.

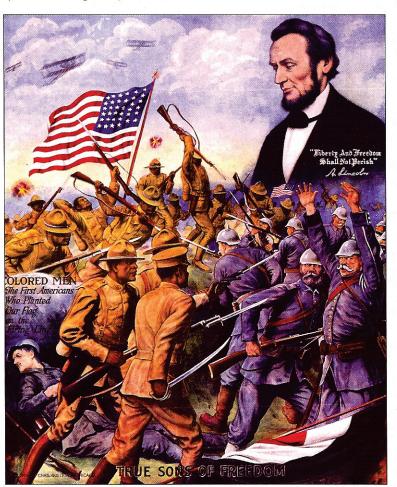


Figure 3. African American soldiers fighting German soldiers in World War I. Abraham Lincoln, at the peak of his renown, looks on from above and says, "Liberty and freedom shall not perish," 1918. (Image courtesy of Library of Congress, LC-USZC4-2426.)

That the media, academy, and the Lincoln community should be especially concerned about blacks' lack of reverence for Lincoln is ironic because almost 60 percent of whites also fail to see his greatness. Understandably, but nonetheless tragically, the majority of the population, white and black, has turned away from the man who saved the Union and laid the foundation for universal inclusion and justice. Abraham Lincoln is now the model for the great men and women who have replaced him. \square

Endnotes

- I. Allen C. Guelzo, "How Abe Lincoln Lost the Black Vote: Lincoln and Emancipation in the African American Mind," Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association 25 (2004):I-22. The case of Abraham Lincoln and African Americans parallels both Napoleon Bonaparte and European Jews and Czar Alexander II and Russian serfs. More than two hundred years ago, Napoleon Bonaparte liberated Jews from the ghettos of the countries he had conquered. His action was a turning point in modern Jewish history, yet, few Jews today are even aware of it. Several decades later, Czar Alexander II liberated 20 million serfs. Although Alexander freed more people than Lincoln, he is remembered by fewer of his beneficiaries' descendants.
- 2. New York Amsterdam News, February 8, 1933, 6.
- 3. Ibid., February 8, 1936, 8. Newspaper editors and columnists were typically ambivalent about Lincoln. He was at once the Great Emancipator and "That Slave Hound from Illinois." See, for example, Chicago Defender, February 10, 1934, 12. His condescending attitude toward Frederick Douglass, the most educated black man he had known, proved Lincoln to be, when all was said and done, an alien rather than friend to blacks. Lincoln's letter to Horace Greeley indicating that "If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it," appeared regularly in Lincoln-Douglass Day editions. See, for one of many examples, Chicago Defender, February 14, 1931, 2. African Americans' growing awareness of their own history, evidenced in Negro History Week, induced black intellectuals to recognize and write about Lincoln's shortcomings more openly and to try to lessen the supposedly naive adoration of earlier decades.
- 4. Lerone Bennett, Forced into Glory: Abraham Lincoln's White Dream (Chicago: Johnson Publishing Co., 2000).
- Nancy J. Weiss, Farewell to the Party of Lincoln: Black Politics in the Age of FDR (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 218.
- 6. Ibid.
- Julius Lester, Look Out Whitey! Black Power's Gon' Get Your Mama! (New York: Dial Press, 1968).
- Richard C. Gregory, "The Myth of Emancipation" in No More Lies: The Myth and the Reality of American History (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 178-197.
- Lerone Bennett, "Was Abe Lincoln a White Supremacist?" Ebony 23 (February, 1968): 36-37.
- 10. Vincent Harding, There is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981), 236.
- II. Atlanta Daily World, February 13, 1975, 1, 4.
- 12. Transcript from Minister Louis Farrakhan's Remarks to the Million Man March, October 17, 1995, http://www.cnn.com/US/9510/megamarch/10-16/transcript/index.html. Senator Barack Obama, "What I See in Lincoln's Eyes," TIME 166 (June 26, 2005): 74. http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0.9171,1077287,00.html.
- 13. The University of Maryland Survey Center produced the 2001 sample unintentionally. Barry Schwartz and Howard Schuman had contracted for an open-ended question about Abraham Lincoln, but the center staff

- mistakenly replicated their 1999 questions. Before the error was caught, 849 individuals had been interviewed. However, interviewers stopped asking questions about the reasons for respondents' choice of Lincoln after the 821st respondent. Although less likely to include individuals normally contacted on the final callbacks, the 85 percent sample is sufficient to represent the general population. After this truncated sample was sent to the author, he had it weighted to match U.S. Census estimates (2000) for race, age, region, education, and gender.
- Barry Schwartz, Abraham Lincoln in the Post-Heroic Era: History and Memory in the Late Twentieth Century (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming 2009).
- 15. Whether Roosevelt, Kennedy, and Clinton, the three most renowned civil rights presidents, deserve more recognition than Lincoln is a separate matter. Given President Kennedy's mediocre relations with Congress, he would have probably failed to force through Congress the 1965-7 civil rights legislation that transformed American race relations. For these accomplishments Lyndon Johnson is responsible, but Kennedy received most of the credit. His death caused more grief among African Americans than any other sector of the population, and for a longer period of time. See Paul B. Sheatsley and Jacob J. Feldman, "A National Survey on Public Reactions and Behavior" in The Kennedy Assassination and the American Public, eds. Bradley S. Greenberg and Edwin B. Parker (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), 149-77.
- Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses
 of History in American Life (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998),
 152-156
- 17. Edna Greene Medford, "Imagined Promises, Bitter Realities: African Americans and the Meaning of the Emancipation Proclamation" in The Emancipation Proclamation: Three Views, eds. Harold Holzer, Edna Greene Medford, and Frank Williams (Baton Rouge, LA: University of Louisiana Press, 2006), 2; Edna Greene Medford, "Beckoning Them to the Dreamed-of Promise of Freedom: African-Americans and Lincoln's Proclamation of Emancipation" in The Lincoln Forum: Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg, and the Civil War, eds. John Y. Simon, Harold Holzer, and William D. Pederson (Mason City, IA: Savas Publishing Company, 1999), 48.
- Great Emancipator, Savior of the Union, Man of the People, Frontier Youth ("First American"), and Self-Made Man are Merrill Peterson's categories from Lincoln in American Memory (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).
- 19. Table I includes those naming no president because the non-response rate, a rough index of apathy, is a necessary part of the denominator of beliefs about presidential greatness. From the reasons people give for naming Lincoln great, non-responses are excluded because nothing would be measured by their inclusion. For further discussion of the present survey data and methods, see Barry Schwartz and Howard Schuman, "History, Commemoration, and Belief: Abraham Lincoln in American Memory, 1945-2001," American Sociological Review 70 (April 2005):183-203.
- 20. Barry Schwartz, Abraham Lincoln in the Post-Heroic Era.
- 21. Allen C. Guelzo, "How Abe Lincoln Lost the Black Vote," 9.
- 22. Ibid

Barry Schwartz is professor emeritus of sociology at the University of Georgia. Schwartz has addressed American identity and collective memory in many articles and books. They include George Washington: The Making of an American Symbol (New York: Free Press, 1987); Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), and Abraham Lincoln in the Post-Heroic Era: History and Memory in the Late Twentieth Century (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming 2009).