



NEVADA
HUMANITIES

THE CHAUTAUQUA

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READER

Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War

Lincoln and the Civil War Without Lincoln

When we began to conceive this year's Chautauqua, we decided—first—not to try to seek a Lincoln. Lincoln pretenders are legion, especially now in the bicentennial of the 16th president's birth, but in my experience most of them are all top hat and no soul. We decided to explore and celebrate and challenge and *come to terms* with Lincoln by way of people around him, and by concentrating on what he wrote and said rather than how he looked. We believe that in doing so—in letting Lincoln's absence speak more eloquently than any presence could achieve—we will get closer to the heart of his achievement and his greatness than if some look-alike tried to embody that which has eluded all but the great original and—often enough—even him.

One Short Thought on Lincoln

by Clay Jenkinson



Endorsed by the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission

When I travel to Washington, D.C., I always make my pilgrimage to the Jefferson Memorial, where I am inspired



Thanks to Jeff Hickman, Reno Gazette-Journal political cartoonist, for creating the 2008 Nevada Humanities Chautauqua logo.

them. When I go to the Vietnam Memorial I feel the tragedy and futility of Imperial America.

But all of those great monuments are diminished by the Lincoln Memorial. Jefferson is a great man, but he is not nearly so great a man as Abraham Lincoln. Jefferson wrote some of the finest words in American history, but they are just words in the shadow of the Second Inaugural Address

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to know more, to be a better citizen, to bring neoclassical symmetries to my life, to write more lucidly, to demand more of myself and much more of my republic. When I go to the Washington Monument I never think of George Washington. It's an impressive structure, but it does not in any way get into my heart. I feel proud to be a citizen of so great a nation with so splendid a national capital. The flags that ring the monument actually turn me off. They take the concept of patriotism too far; the Washington Monument would be more beautiful without

HUMANITIES AT WORK IN NEVADA

Engaging Nevadans with history and the humanities is a major purpose of Chautauqua. This includes fostering civic reflection and discussion that is both informed and civil.

Unfortunately, as we all know, anger and prejudice mar much of the national debate on political, social and economic issues. For many of our citizens, it is not enough to disagree but to vilify those who hold other views. The social fabric frays, and the nation along with it. We must find a better way.

So Nevada Humanities has determined to do what it can to build a more measured discussion based on factual information and goodwill, gathering people wherever possible to find common interests and to create a better future. We hope to do this by restoring the humanities to a central place in American life, to do what they have done historically—provide a beneficial foundation for life and thought.

Through the grants we fund and through our own programs, we want to bring history alive—not just the past and what we can learn from it, but “living history” as well—the problems and aspirations of this generation as voiced by its leading thinkers and doers—and to bring them to bigger audiences through radio, television and the Internet, as well as large functions such as this one.

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ONE SHORT THOUGHT continued

of Lincoln. Jefferson embodies the cadences of the Enlightenment, but Lincoln, with his muted Biblicism, got to the dark rich heart of the American experience. When I go to the Jefferson Memorial I am inspired. When I go to the Lincoln Memorial I am moved.

One of my professors at the University of Minnesota, David Noble, used to say that in the American secular trinity George Washington is God the Father; Jefferson is the Holy Spirit; but Abraham Lincoln is God the Son, the redeemer who gave his life to save the Idea of America.

Lincoln had faults. He was imperfect. He was no saint. He was, to put it lightly, for many years ambivalent about racial equality. But for all of that there is nobody in our history who represents what America can be so fully as Lincoln.

Some people doubt that Lincoln said, "God must have loved the common people. After all, he made so many of them." If he didn't say it, it nevertheless embodies his core philosophy as much as "that government is best which governs least," embodies Jefferson, even though no document has been found which fixes those most Jeffersonian words to Jefferson.

Dedication

The 17th Nevada Humanities Chautauqua is dedicated to sound man extraordinaire Larry Kirk. For 16 years Larry provided sound services at the Chautauqua tent at Rancho San Rafael Regional Park. Just like a mail carrier, Larry made sure that neither rain, nor heat nor dark of night kept him from his appointed rounds.



NEVADA
HUMANITIES

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Nevada Humanities is one of 56 state and territorial humanities councils affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities.

THE CHAUTAUQUA READER

HUMANITIES AT WORK continued

We plan to continue the summer outdoor Chautauqua, which for 17 years has presented historic figures "in the flesh"—but we also want to find ways to bring more of these "scholar-actors" to students with question-and-answer sessions that can enrich the students' understanding of both past and present. We want to involve young people in Young Chautauqua and in other ways as well in order to help them, and us, create a better world when they come of age.

We want to use literature and art and all the other aspects of culture to illuminate and enrich our lives. We hope to work with other cultural organizations to expand the reach of all of us, for instance, we recently brought Elizabeth Lynn, director of the Project on Civic Reflection at Valparaiso University in Indiana, to Reno to present a broad spectrum of concepts and programs related to civic engagement.

And we will continue building the Online Nevada Encyclopedia—a little over one year old now—to make available for the first time an easy-to-access history of Nevada in all its aspects, from the Virginia City mines and rural ranching to modern gaming and the nuclear age. We will explore the stories and accomplishments of Nevadans, the never-ending battles over water, the rich tradition of our literature and art, and the vast reach of the land itself—the mountains and deserts that help make us who we are.

Through the encyclopedia, we will work to preserve Nevada history by supporting oral histories and similar community-generated activities. When it is complete, we envision a world in which any person with a laptop computer can instantly learn about any place he or she happens to be—every town, every monument, every hot spring, anywhere in the state. We envision this encyclopedia also as a resource for marketing the state to prospective businesses, and as an invaluable asset for tourism.

But we cannot do this alone. We need your support. Any suggestions you have would be most welcome. But of course we need your financial support too. Most importantly, we ask you to join our new Friends organization to broaden community support and involvement in these projects. There is a great deal to be done, and with your help we can do much to build a better tomorrow.

Nevada Humanities Board of Trustees

Suggested Readings

Lincoln & The Civil War

David Herbert Donald. *Lincoln*, (Paperback), 1996. Donald's *Lincoln* is an original portrait of Lincoln's life and presidency.

Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*, 2008. The American Civil War was the first modern war, and as Faust vividly demonstrates, its unprecedented carnage overwhelmed society's traditional ways of dealing with death.

Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*, 2006.

Team of Rivals doesn't just tell the story of Abraham Lincoln. It is a multiple biography of the entire team of personal and political competitors that he put together to lead the country through its greatest crisis.

James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, 2003. Published in 1988 to universal acclaim, this single-volume treatment of the Civil War quickly became recognized as the new standard in its field.

Gary Wills, *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America* (Paperback), 1993.

By examining both the Gettysburg Address and Lincoln in their historical moment and cultural frame, Wills breathes new life into words we thought we knew, and reveals much about a president so mythologized but often misunderstood.

Complete Chautauqua Schedule

Sunday, June 22: *An evening of Young Chautauqua: Battle Born, 1840 – 1900, Civil War, Statehood, Westward Expansion.* Free Event.
Music: Biggest Little Bluegrass Band

Monday, June 23: Frederick Douglass (Charles Pace); Anna Ella Carroll (Nicole Piechocki), Young Chautauqua performance
Music: Second Baptist Church Choir

Tuesday, June 24: Mary Todd Lincoln (Selene Phillips) & Jefferson Davis (Doug Mishler)
Music: Chris and Danita Bayer—*Light and Airy, Celtic tunes on fiddle and whistle*

Wednesday, June 25: Ulysses S. Grant (Frank Mullen), Jesse Benton Fremont (Rose Hodges), Young Chautauqua performance
Music: Great Basin Brass Quintet

Thursday, June 26: John Hay (Clay Jenkinson)
Music: Shiloh

Evening programs begin at 6 p.m. with lively music and the Chautauquans come on stage at 7 p.m.

Tickets: General Admission for chairs and lawn: **\$15**; Reserved seats: **\$30** (only available online). Tickets will be available at the gate or online at www.nevadahumanities.org



Sign Language Interpretation provided

Free Community Events

Coffee with the Chautauquans
Tuesday–Friday, 7:30–9 a.m.
Sundance Bookstore
1155 West Fourth Street, Reno, Nevada

Young Chautauqua Performances
Monday – Thursday,
9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Robert Z. Hawkins Amphitheater,
Bartley Ranch Regional Park

Movies with Chautauquans, 1 p.m.
Tuesday: *The Red Badge of Courage*,
South Valleys Library, moderated by
Frank Mullen (Gen. Grant)
Wednesday: *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*,
Sparks Library, moderated by Selene
Phillips (Mary Todd Lincoln)
Thursday: *Glory*, Northwest Reno
Library, moderated by Charles Pace
(Frederick Douglass)

Community Forums with Clay
Jenkinson, 1:00 p.m.
Truckee Meadows Community College
Sierra Bldg, Rm. 108
Tuesday: *Lincoln and the West*
Wednesday: *Lincoln and Politics*
Thursday: *The American Soldier:
From the Civil War to Iraq*

Exhibits during the month of June.
Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday,
Noon to 3:00 p.m.
Docent tours.
*Frederick Douglass from Slavery to
Freedom: the Journey to New York City
and
Black Nevadans*
Bethel African American Cultural
Center, 220 Bell St, Reno

Nevada Humanities wishes to thank its generous donors and partners: Robert Z. Hawkins Foundation, Sierra Pacific Resources Foundation, Wachovia Securities, Intuit, Washoe County Parks and Recreation, VSA arts of Nevada, Washoe County Library, Truckee Meadows Community College, The Media Center, Sundance Bookstore, Bethel African American Cultural Center, Harrah's Reno, Charter Communications, and our many volunteers.



Lincoln's Favorite Poem

Abraham Lincoln loved literature, poetry, and theater. It provided him with solace when the troubles of the world crowded in. During the dark days of the Civil War, Lincoln sought respite from the cares of the day by attending the theater frequently. Shakespeare was Lincoln's favorite playwright and *Macbeth* was his favorite play. "I think nothing equals *Macbeth*. It is wonderful," Lincoln wrote. On the boat ride back to Washington the week before he was murdered, a visitor wrote: "[W]e were proceeding up the Potomac. That whole day the conversation turned on literary subjects. Mr. Lincoln read aloud to us for several hours passages taken from Shakespeare."

His favorite poets were Shakespeare, Robert Burns, Edgar Allan Poe, and William Knox. According to a fellow lawyer in Illinois, Lincoln "could quote Burns by the hour." Lincoln scholar Douglas Wilson wrote that "one of the truly remarkable things about Lincoln as president is the extent to which he resorted to literature."

Excerpt from Lincoln's favorite poem, *Mortality* by the Scotsman William Knox (1789-1825).

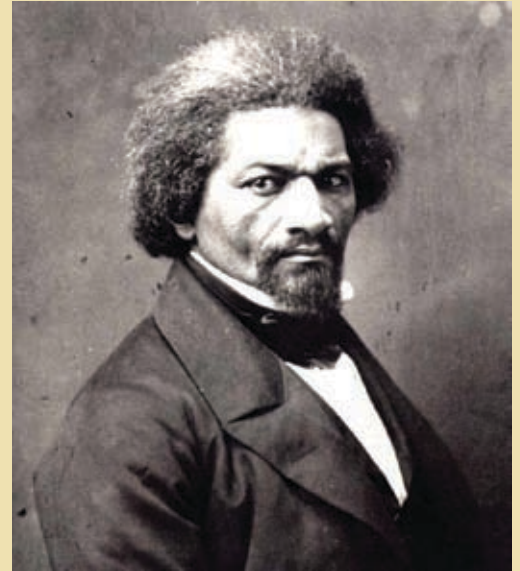
Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
He passes from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,
Be scattered around, and together be laid;
And the young and the old, the low and the high,
Shall molder to dust, and together shall lie.

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.

My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that.

Abraham Lincoln
Letter to Horace Greeley, August 22, 1862



Frederick Douglass, about 1866. photo: collection of the New York Historical Society

Frederick Douglass (1818-1895)

by Charles Everett Pace

Frederick Douglass was the most outstanding black American of the 19th century. In September 1838, while enslaved in Baltimore, Maryland, he escaped to freedom, married freeborn Anna Murray and settled in New Bedford, Massachusetts.

In August 1841, Douglass became an anti-slavery lecturer with William Lloyd Garrison's American Anti-Slavery Society. In 1841, he published his first of three autobiographies, lectured for two years throughout England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales and soon became the most famous black man in the world.

After British friends purchased his freedom, Douglass returned to the United States in August 1847 and moved to Rochester, New York. He began publishing *The North Star*, his abolitionist and women's rights newspaper. He soon broke with Garrison's "moral suasionist" abolitionists and joined up with Gerrit Smith's political abolitionist wing.

He helped organize the first two Northern Civil War Negro units, the Massachusetts

54th and 55th Regiments, with two of his three sons as his first recruits.

After the Civil War, and now a very successful professional lecturer on the Lyceum circuit, Douglass still attracted his share of controversy. His advocacy for the vote for black men, rather than for a universal franchise, conflicted with some of his friends in the Woman's Rights Movement, of which he was a co-founding member. However, after the passage of the 15th Amendment he worked until the day he died to secure the vote for women.

Douglass held several Presidential appointments including: Chief United States Marshall for the District of Columbia, Recorder of Deeds for the District, and Minister Resident and Consul General to the Republic of Haiti. Frederick Douglass died on February 20, 1895 in his Washington, D.C. home as he and Helen, his second wife, (Anna died in 1884) prepared to depart for a women's rights rally. He lies buried in Mount Hope National Cemetery in Rochester, New York.

Charles Everett Pace is a veteran of the Great Plains Chautauqua who has developed numerous characters including York of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Langston Hughes. He holds a master's degree in American studies and anthropology from Purdue University.



Charles Pace has portrayed Frederick Douglass throughout the United States. photo: Steve Davis

Douglass's Impact on Lincoln's Policies

By Charles Everett Pace

In *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, his third autobiography, Douglass states: "From the first, I, for one, saw in this war the end of slavery, and truth requires me to say that my interest in the success of the North was largely due to this belief." President Abraham Lincoln, on the other hand, said that the purpose of the war was to save the Union, rather than to free the slaves.

Thus, Douglass's central problem was to convince the President that unless slavery was abolished, there would be no Union.

In making his abolitionist case, Douglass pressed for three major changes in Lincoln's policy. The first was that since the South was using slave labor to further secessionist goals, Lincoln should recruit free blacks as soldiers for Unionist goals. This argument was complicated, however, by the belief among military officers that under combat conditions blacks would be so consumed with fear, they would not fight. Once military necessity forced Lincoln to issue his Emancipation Proclamation, with its provision for the recruitment of black troops, battlefield experiences proved the truth of Douglass's claims about the military valor of black men.

Yet, the solution of one set of problems opened the door to still others. Douglass, in the first of his three meetings with President Lincoln, argued that the U. S. Military should alter its unequal policy and extend equal treatment in rank, pay, and protection of black warriors. Also, since Jefferson Davis had stated that any captured black soldiers would not be treated as prisoners of war, but would either be executed or sold into slavery, the President should respond in kind. Lincoln had already issued the order that for every black soldier sold into slavery a captured Rebel soldier would serve time at hard labor.

And, finally, after the War was over, Douglass pressed Lincoln to grant the vote to black men. After Lincoln's murder, Douglass argued that Lincoln would have come to accept the wisdom of granting the franchise to black men as the only practical way of carrying out the War's freedom mission, as well as guaranteeing a black Republican voting constituency in the South.

Thus, as James Oakes convincingly argues, the story of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln is, in part, the story of how a radical became a Republican and how a Republican became a radical.

Suggested Readings

James Oakes, *The Radical and the Republican: Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, and the Triumph of Antislavery Politics*, 2008. The perennial tension between principle and pragmatism in politics frames this engaging account of two Civil War era icons.

Frederick Douglass, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, Dover edition, 2003. Written in later life, this memoir covers "his life as a slave, his escape from bondage, and his complete history."



Daguerreotype of Frederick Douglass taken between 1848 and 1852 by Samuel J. Miller.

Mary Todd Lincoln's White Almond Cake

Ingredients

¼ lb. blanchéd whole almonds
3 c. sifted cake flour
1 tsp. baking powder
½ lb. unsalted butter
2 c. sugar
1 c. milk
1 tsp. vanilla
12 tsp. almond extract
6 egg whites
pinch salt

"Best I ever ate." Abe Lincoln

Mary Todd's family obtained the recipe from a Lexington, Kentucky caterer named Giron, who had created the recipe in 1825 on the occasion of Lafayette's visit to Lexington. Mary served the cake often during the Lincoln's Illinois days and later at the White House.

Directions:

Grate enough almonds for 1 cup.
Cream the butter until very light.
Add 1 ¾ cups sugar gradually, creaming until fluffy. Stir in vanilla and almond extract.
Sift flour and baking powder.
Add to butter mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with the dry ingredients.
Beat egg whites until stiff with pinch of salt.
Fold whites gently but thoroughly into the batter.
Pour into a well-buttered and floured 9-inch tube pan.
Bake at 350 degrees for an hour or until cake begins to pull from sides of pan.
Cool cake upright in its pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes.
Loosen cake around edges of pan and turn out on a rack.
Cool thoroughly before cutting.
No frosting is needed.



Mary Todd Lincoln brought a sense of style and fashion to the White House. She had a lavish wardrobe, with one gown costing over \$2,000.

Mary Todd Lincoln (1818-1882)

by Selene Phillips

Mary Todd Lincoln, who was born into a prominent Lexington, Kentucky family, may have been one of the most educated and politically astute women of her time, but this did not protect her from tragedy.

She lost her mother at the age of eight. Her father remarried sixteen months later. Her poor relationship with her step-mother could have been why she boarded during the week at a school across town. In 1842 after a tumultuous courtship, Mary Todd married Abraham Lincoln, a young self-schooled attorney, despite her family's protest against a union with a man beneath her social class. She later suffered the loss of three children. The first was Eddie, who was born in 1846 and died at the tender age of four.

The Lincoln White House years were full of war, death, and controversy. While men died, the First Lady spent lavishly on decorations much to her husband's chagrin. She visited wounded Union soldiers but did not let the public know. Because she was from the South, Southern sympathizers thought her a traitor. Unionists did not trust her. On the geographic edge of the Civil War, Kentucky pitted brother against brother. The Lincolns mourned the

death of step brothers and brothers-in-law. When their second son, Willie, died in 1862, Mary ceased entertaining and went into deep mourning. Overcome with grief, Mary became known for berating people in public, including her husband, and was accused of shirking her social obligations.

Just as the Civil War was ending, the Lincolns began to see a light at the end of the tunnel. Future dreams were shattered as Mary watched her husband's assassination, from which she never recovered. Many believed Mary was behind Abraham Lincoln's success. Together they were a powerful political team. But without her partner, Mary fell apart.

In 1871, the third son to die was Tad, her primary care giver. Her mental health deteriorated, perhaps due to diabetes. Mary accused Robert, her only son who lived to adulthood, of stealing from her. Eventually he initiated action which resulted in an Illinois court committing her to an insane asylum.

About another woman, Mary wrote, "We can only wish her health and happiness all her days, knowing full well, by experience, that power and high position, does not ensure a bed of roses."

This strong Southern belle experienced war and public scorn. Mary watched her sons die and her husband's assassination. At 63, she collapsed on July 15, 1882, the anniversary of Tad's death. She died the next day in the same home she was married in, wearing her well-worn wedding ring that stated, "Love Is Eternal."

The Southern Belle loved flowers. She wore them in her hair and on her dresses. But adoring flowers did not always bring her sunny days.

Selene Phillips has portrayed Sacagawea at numerous sites for the Great Plains Chautauqua. She appeared as Sacagawea in Public Broadcasting's nationally televised Kids' Quest, The Lewis and Clark Adventures. Selene is a member of the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe Nation. Her Ph.D. is in Native American studies, communication law and journalism; she teaches at the University of Louisville.

Mary Todd and Lincoln

by Selene Phillips

Love may be eternal, but it is not often without its ups and downs. By most accounts, the Todd-Lincoln courtship had a rocky start. Upon her second trip to Springfield in 1839, Mary met the 30-year-old rising lawyer and politician Abraham Lincoln at a dance. He went up to her and said, "Miss Todd, I want to dance with you the worst way." The next evening he called on Mary.

In 1840, the couple became engaged for the first time. On January 1, 1841, they broke up, but eventually they decided to get married in the fall of 1842. Before the wedding, Lincoln visited a jewelry shop and ordered a gold wedding ring with "Love is Eternal" engraved inside.

On November 3, 1842, Lincoln visited Reverend Dresser's home and said, "I want to get hitched tonight." Later he met Ninian Edwards and told him the plans. Edwards said that since he was Mary's guardian, she must be married at the Edwards home. But a previously scheduled sewing meeting at the Edwards' home delayed the wedding one day.

The couple married at the Edwards' home on a rainy Friday evening, November 4, 1842. One week later Lincoln wrote his friend Samuel D. Marshall, "Nothing new here, except my marrying, which to me, is a matter of profound wonder."

Lincoln was elected to the House of Representatives, so they moved to Washington, D.C. in 1847. In 1858, Mary campaigned for Lincoln during the Lincoln-Douglas debates. The politically savvy Mary instilled confidence in her husband. He in turn calmed her dramatic nature. They made good political partners. In 1860, Lincoln was elected the 16th president. He left the Springfield telegraph office to tell his wife, "Mary, Mary we are elected!" The Lincolns took up residence in the White House in 1861.

On the day of Lincoln's assassination, with the Civil War behind them, the couple made plans to travel and enjoy the future. John Wilkes Booth ended those hopes at Ford's Theater.

After Lincoln's death, Mary slept on one side of the bed to leave room for the president. She died with the message "Love is Eternal" on her finger.

Suggested Readings

Jean H. Baker, *Mary Todd Lincoln: A Biography*, 1987. This is a richly documented and sympathetic biography of the much-maligned Mary Todd Lincoln who is usually portrayed as a shrew of doubtful sanity.

Mark E. Neely, Jr., and R. Gerald McMurtry. *The Insanity File: The Case of Mary Todd Lincoln*. 1986. "[This book] combines the discipline of historical writing with the forward march of a detective story." *Chicago Tribune*



This daguerreotype photograph of Mary Todd Lincoln was taken in 1847 when she was 29 years old.

“A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half *slave* and half *free*. 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.”

Abraham Lincoln

Springfield, Illinois, June 16, 1858

“I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence.”

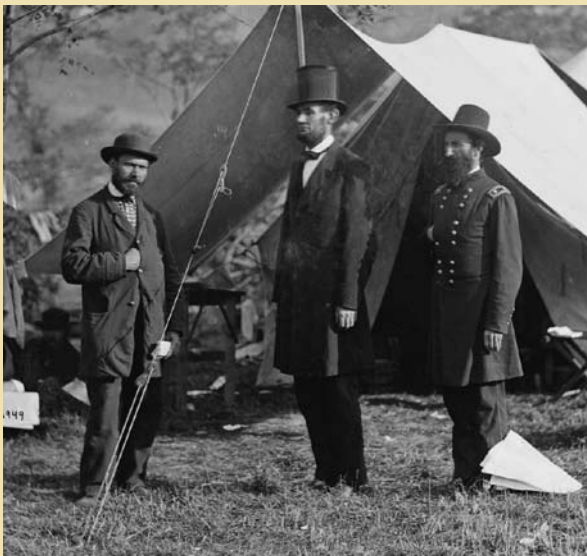
Abraham Lincoln

Address in Independence Hall, February 22, 1861

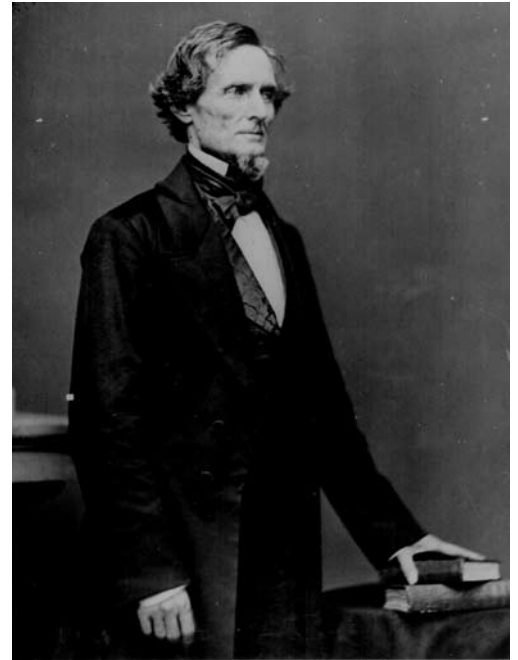
“I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within [the Confederate] States. . . are, and henceforward shall be free; and that the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.”

Abraham Lincoln

Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863



President Abraham Lincoln, between his bodyguard Major Allan Pinkerton (left) and General John A. McClernand, at the Antietam battlefield, October 3, 1862, by Alexander Gardner.



Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, ca. 1860, Mathew Brady Collection. National Archives and Records Administration

Jefferson Davis (1808 – 1889) Patriot or Traitor?

by Doug A. Mishler

Vilified in the American South for decades as a coward and tyrant who lost the war for General Lee, damned for a century as the quintessential evil slave owner and one of America’s great traitors, Jefferson Davis is a character who has always generated more passion than insight. Actually, Davis was a remarkably devoted American who went from patriot to traitor all without ever altering his fundamental ideals.

Davis graduated from West Point, fought in the Mexican American War, was Franklin Pierce’s Secretary of War, initiated the transcontinental railroad, and supported Manifest Destiny. He also served as U.S. Senator for Mississippi and, of course,

became President of the Confederacy in 1861. For that latter unrequested honor he was accused of aiding and abetting Lincoln's assassination, and was the only southern leader to spend two years in prison for treason.

Ever a man of principle, after his release from prison Davis remained unrepentant and refused all presidential pardons. Though he ultimately urged reconciliation with the North—"they are our brethren"—he never reconciled to the north's betrayal—"the south was not conquered, it was cheated." For Davis, the sacred Constitution gave each state the right to order its own society, and each individual the right to his own property. Those rights were betrayed by Lincoln and the North in a war of fanatic aggression.

One of the most intriguing aspects of Davis's life was his relationship to his 100 slaves and other African-Americans. He believed that African-Americans were inferior and that slavery helped civilize them. Yet he also built "my people" (he never used the term slave) a hospital and a church, educated many (though it was against the law), and even established a court system run by the slaves themselves. He was openly ridiculed in the South for treating slaves leniently, even supposedly widening the cotton rows to "accommodate his slave women's hooped skirts." His African-American overseer Pemberton was treated like family.

Jefferson Davis is a terrifically simple man. He believed in the Constitution and broke from the union over its "betrayal." Is he a patriot or a traitor?

In the last fifteen years Doug Mishler has brought "history to life" in well over 500 Chautauqua presentations and one-man shows. His other characters include P. T. Barnum, Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Ford, and Ernie Pyle. Doug holds a Ph.D. in American cultural history and teaches at University of Nevada, Reno.

Davis and Lincoln

by Doug A. Mishler

Though such polls are notoriously biased, Lincoln is habitually listed as America's greatest president. No slouch himself as chief executive, Theodore Roosevelt maintained that Lincoln's service as President was immeasurably superior to other presidents, as he guided a divided nation through its greatest crisis.

In many ways, Lincoln created the modern presidency by embracing an activist approach that did not just follow legislative impulse—it led Congress into reshaping the nation. More importantly, Lincoln's personal and political evolution on the race question helped foment a sea change in American race relations.

Jefferson Davis would have been appalled at the Lincoln legacy for many reasons, though arguably race would not be one of them. Davis, as a fervent small government/states' rights man, found the aggrandizement of the federal power anathema to American society. He believed that starting down the path of enlarging the central government's control over local and state government would only lead to the enslavement of the people and a loss of personal liberty. Not only would "The Peculiar Institution" be eradicated, but the precedent would enable the government to reach into all sorts of local questions. This would be a similar sentiment echoed by George Wallace or Ronald Reagan or many conservative politicians today.

Davis detested the fact that Lincoln declared martial law in certain places, thus further overstepping his constitutional authority. Then, too, he found the Emancipation Proclamation nothing more than a desperate act which flouted the Constitution. Davis saw all of Lincoln's actions as demonstrating his personal leadership of northern forces that sought to stomp on the sacred Constitution. He saw him ruthlessly and illegally vote to take away a man's property with a de facto law ending slavery. To Davis, the violation of due process was intolerably un-American. To say that Davis despised Lincoln is not an overstatement.

Though he found Lincoln's murder appalling, Davis thought that with the dictator gone the country might right itself from the shameful Lincoln legacy of large government and a too powerful executive branch.

Suggested Readings

William J. Cooper, Jr. *Jefferson Davis, American*, 2000. Cooper reminds us in his comprehensive biography, Davis "saw himself as a faithful American ... a true son of the American Revolution and the Founding Fathers."

William J. Cooper, Jr. *Jefferson Davis: The Essential Writings*. 2003



Doug Mishler as Jefferson Davis



Confederate dead behind the stone wall of Marye's Heights, Fredericksburg, Virginia, killed during the Battle of Chancellorsville, May 1863. Photographed by Capt. Andrew J. Russell.



A later portrait of President Ulysses S. Grant, ca. 1869 – 1885.

“I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours, to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of Freedom.”

Abraham Lincoln

Letter to Mrs. Lydia Bixby on the loss of her five sons in battle, November 21, 1864

“With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.”

Abraham Lincoln

Second Inaugural Address, March 4, 1865

Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885)

by Frank X. Mullen

Hiram Ulysses Grant was a failure in civilian life, but as a general he saved the nation and was twice elected its president.

The son of an Ohio tanner, Grant reluctantly attended West Point, gaining the mistaken middle initial “S.” He served in the Mexican War from 1846 to 1848. Back in the States, he married Julia Dent, and was assigned to garrison duty. Capt. Grant resigned the Army in 1854 after his commander saw him drunk. He drank when he was lonely or bored, and rumors of alcoholism dogged him for the rest of his life.

As a civilian he tried farming and business, but failed in both. After seven years, he was reduced to selling firewood on the streets of St. Louis and eventually became a clerk in his father's shop in Galena, Illinois.

When the Civil War began in 1860, he organized volunteers. After several rejections, he obtained a colonel's commission. As Union generals were defeated in the East, Grant won victories in the West. At Fort Donelson, he answered the Confederate general's request for terms: "No terms except unconditional and immediate surrender can be accepted. I propose to move immediately upon your works."

He became "Unconditional Surrender" Grant, but after the carnage of Shiloh, he was called "Butcher Grant" in newspapers. In 1864, Grant took command of all the armies of the republic. His victories were glorious; his casualties appalling. But his strategy of total war led to Lee's surrender in 1865.

Hailed as the greatest man in the nation, he served two terms in the White House (1869-1877). His administration was rife with corruption and he failed to enforce Reconstruction. In 1884, a con artist partner reduced Grant to bankruptcy. Disgraced and ruined, he was diagnosed with inoperable throat cancer within months.

Then came his last battle. He raced death to complete his memoirs. The book eventually brought \$500,000 to Julia Grant, restoring the family's fortune.

Frank Mullen is a senior reporter with the Reno Gazette-Journal; he also teaches at the University of Nevada, Reno's Reynolds School of Journalism. He has portrayed numerous Chautauqua characters including Henry VIII, Babe Ruth, Benedict Arnold, and populist politician Huey Long.

Grant and Lincoln

By Frank X. Mullen

Ulysses S. Grant said Abraham Lincoln was the greatest man he ever knew.

A little more than a year elapsed between their first meeting and Lincoln's death, but they trusted each other. Both were Westerners of humble origins who had risen to the peak of their ambitions. Each believed the Civil War could not be ended without the destruction of Robert E. Lee's army.

In the first years of the war, Lincoln shuffled his generals and was repeatedly disappointed. George McClellan had "a case of the slows." Henry Halleck worried more about his position than Lee's. Pope and Burnside braggad and blundered. George Mead failed to follow-up his victory at Gettysburg.

Lincoln remarked he had yet to find a general who could face the terrible arithmetic needed to win. Then Grant, fresh from his wins in the West, was given command.

Grant understood the arithmetic.

He liked Lincoln because the chief executive stayed out his way. Lincoln liked Grant because the general was a bulldog in attack and, unlike others in the job, didn't involve himself in political maneuvers.

The two men saw eye-to-eye on slavery. Grant, who was ambivalent on the issue before the war, became convinced the institution should be outlawed. Grant also agreed with Lincoln on another matter: "By arming the Negro we have added a powerful ally," he wrote Lincoln. "They will make good soldiers, and taking them from the enemy weakens him in the same proportion they strengthen us."

To Grant, Lincoln was partly a father figure. To Lincoln, Grant seemed to be a surrogate son. The president was quick to show his respect for his general: "You were right and I was wrong," he wrote Grant after Vicksburg fell. Grant's greatest regret was that he had not accompanied Lincoln (as had been announced) to Ford's Theatre the night he was shot, because he might have been able to put himself between his friend and the gun.

In Lincoln, Grant found a boss who appreciated results and let him run his army. In Grant, Lincoln had found his terrible, swift sword.

Suggested Reading

Jean Edward Smith, *Grant*, 2002. Smith integrates Grant's career and achievements in what is by far the best comprehensive biography to date of a man who remains an enigma.

Ulysses S. Grant, *The Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant*, (paperback) 2006.



Frank Mullen as Ulysses S. Grant

What You Need to Know About John Hay (1838-1905)

by Clay Jenkinson

John Hay is not one of those American historical figures (like Clarence Darrow or Robert E. Lee) you hear about from time to time. He lived his extraordinary life mostly below the radar. That's exactly how he liked it. He would not have minded being remembered as a great writer, in the league of Henry James, William Dean Howells, or Samuel Clemens, or even his friend Henry Adams, but he came to understand that he was not destined for the Mt. Rushmore of American letters. He did not wish to be noticed whatsoever in his capacity as a public servant.

He was a "bridge" figure in American history. He spent most of his life squarely in the 19th century, but in his last years, as the 20th century opened, he helped ease (sometimes drag) the United States into the world arena.

He worked for two of the greatest presidents of the United States. As a young man, almost a boy, he served as one of Abraham Lincoln's two personal secretaries, had his bedroom in the White House, had more access (and more intimate access) to America's greatest president than almost anybody else. The fruit of that experience was the ten-volume (!) biography he co-wrote with Lincoln's other personal secretary John Nicolay. Theodore Roosevelt read all ten volumes, praised Hay to the stars, and said he would try to be as patient, wise, and, above all, forgiving as Lincoln.

Hay matters as a Chautauqua character because he can speak authoritatively about both Lincoln and Roosevelt, because he was America's premier diplomat (at home and abroad) during the period when the United States became a world power, and because he was the diplomatic engineer of the Spanish-American War and the Panama Canal. It was Hay who famously characterized the conflict with Spain as a "splendid little war."

In 1898, President William McKinley appointed John Hay Secretary of State. He was perfectly suited to the task. He was erudite, patient, cosmopolitan, quiet, and intensely loyal. Then McKinley was assassinated, on



President Lincoln sits with his two personal secretaries, John Hay (right) and John Nicolay. This photograph was taken eleven days before Lincoln delivered his Gettysburg Address. Photographed by Alexander Gardner in Washington on November 8, 1863.



John Hay was named U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom in 1897 when William McKinley became president.

September 6, 1901. At this point Hay would like to have retired—he was exhausted, and consumed with grief—but Theodore Roosevelt asked him to stay on to maintain continuity in the government at so critical a time. Hay persisted as Secretary of State, partly out of a sense of duty, and partly because he had been a friend and admirer of TR's father Thee. But he was pretty skeptical about the very young man whom Mark Hanna had called "that damned cowboy," who was suddenly an "accidental" president of the United States.

Hay came to respect TR and even to feel a deep affection towards him. President Roosevelt tended to stroll over to Hay's house on Lafayette Square after church on Sunday mornings for a predictable but unscheduled chat. Compared to elderly and thoughtful Hay, Roosevelt was a whirling dervish, but he valued Hay's advice and his many years of diplomatic service abroad, and managed—somehow—to sit still long enough to learn geopolitical intricacies from his father's friend. Before Roosevelt's inauguration in 1904, when he came into the presidency in his own right, Hay gave TR a ring containing a lock of hair cut from Lincoln's head at the time of his assassination in April 1865. Roosevelt was profoundly moved. Nothing anyone could have done would have affirmed him more at this critical juncture of his life. Hay had known and loved Lincoln,

who was TR's favorite president. Hay and TR's father and hero, Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., "the greatest man I ever knew and the only man I ever feared," had been close friends. That lock of Lincoln's hair was for Roosevelt a talisman of presidential greatness. Hay's gift of the ring symbolized for TR what John F. Kennedy meant when he said, in his first inaugural address, that "the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans."

About the same time, Hay, who was 20 years older than TR but seemed twice his age, wrote an ode to the president that contains the following beautiful tribute:

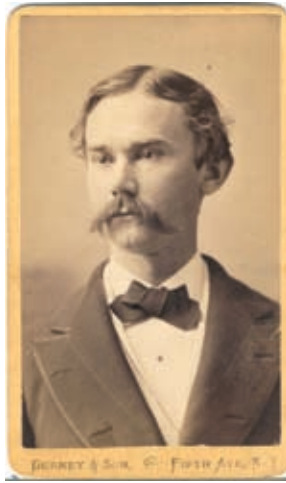
Be yours—we pray—the dauntless heart of youth,
 The Eye to see the humor of the game—
 The scorn of lies, the large Batavian mirth;
 And—past the happy, fruitful years of fame,
 Of sport and work and battle for the truth
 A home not all unlike your home on earth.

Note that in the last line Hay imagines that heaven looks a good deal like the family home of Theodore Roosevelt. Could there be higher praise than that?

For a couple of months, Hay served in the Union Army during the Civil War. After the war, he served in diplomatic missions in Paris, Vienna, Madrid, in Turkey and Poland, culminating in his tenure in the most coveted of all diplomatic posts, American Ambassador to Britain. He was for many years one of the editors of Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune*. He was married to Clara Stone, a wealthy and socially prominent woman from Cleveland, but for much of his adult life he maintained a secret love affair with the wife of Henry Cabot Lodge, Anna (Nannie) Lodge. Probably the hyper-monogamous Theodore Roosevelt never knew of this. It is hard to believe he would have maintained a friendship with a man who was sleeping with his best friend's wife.

Hay distinguished himself as a diplomat and government functionary, but his real passion lay elsewhere. All of his life he regarded himself as a poet and man of letters. Hay's massive biography of Abraham Lincoln is no longer read, not even by most of Lincoln's biographers. His novel *The Bread-Winners* (1883) is sometimes taught but seldom read. His *Pike County Ballads and Other Poems* (1871) are regarded as a minor landmark in the history of American vernacular literature. Today it is Hay's White House diary (1861-65) that receives the most attention. One historian has called it "the most intimate record we have or ever can have of Abraham Lincoln in the White House."

At first the young Hay was skeptical of the awkward storyteller from Illinois. He called him the "Tycoon" or "The Boss," and he regarded him as a country bumpkin suddenly forced to preside over the greatest crisis in American history. It didn't take long for Hay to fall in love with Lincoln and to cherish the Tycoon's genius for idiosyncratic leadership, to enliven the White House with the warmth and friendship and



John Hay began serving as Lincoln's private secretary at age 23; he also served as a colonel in the Union Army.

even love that Mary Todd Lincoln could not, and to protect his chief against the parade of self-seekers who found their way to the president's office.

A single passage from Hay's diary will indicate its importance as an insider's portrait of the Lincoln presidency. On November 13, 1861, Hay recorded an almost unbelievable story in his diary about Lincoln's relations with the Union's top general George B. McClellan:

"The President, Governor Seward and I went over to McClellan's house tonight. The Servant at the door said the General was at the wedding of Col. Wheaton at General Buell's, and would soon return. We went in, and after we had waited about an hour McC. came in and without paying any particular attention to the porter who told him the President was waiting to see him, went up stairs, passing the door of the room where the

President and Secretary of State were seated. They waited about half-an-hour, and sent once more a servant to tell the General they were there, and the answer came that the General had gone to bed."

And what was the response of the President of the United States?

"Coming home I spoke to the President about the matter but he seemed not to have noticed it specially, saying it was better at this time not to be making points of etiquette & personal dignity."

Hay died in office at the age of 66 on July 1, 1905. Roosevelt wrote, "As secretary of state, Hay occupied a unique position. To a high standard of personal integrity, which made him expect and believe that the nation should observe the same standard of national integrity, he added a fastidiousness of temper, of taste, of refinement, which was a very real benefit to American public life when exhibited in high public place. . . . Hay's services as secretary of state were great; but it may be doubted whether his services as Lincoln's biographer were not even greater."

Clay Jenkinson is the artistic director of the Nevada Humanities Chautauqua, the co-founder of the modern Chautauqua movement, and a former board member of Nevada Humanities. He has performed as Thomas Jefferson at the White House and on Capitol Hill.

Suggested Readings

Michael Burlingame and John R. Turner Ettliger, *Inside Lincoln's White House: The Complete Civil War Diary of John Hay*, 1999. Hay's war diary provides fascinating and revealing portraits of Lincoln's presidency and, especially of the president himself.

Warren Zimmermann. *First Great Triumph: How Five Americans Made Their Country a World Power*, 2002.

Young Chautauquans Take the Stage

Young Chautauqua performances are a popular feature of Chautauqua. These exceptional young people begin developing their characters in January and perform throughout in the community in the spring. During Chautauqua there are many opportunities to see young scholars. The theme for 2008 is *Battle Born—1840 – 1900, Civil War, Statehood, Westward Expansion*.

Young Chautauqua Schedule

Sunday, June 22: *An evening of Young Chautauqua*, free event.

Music: Biggest Little Bluegrass Band



Biggest Little Bluegrass Band

Daytime Performances

Monday – Thursday, 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Robert Z. Hawkins Amphitheater, Bartley Ranch

Lincoln and the Civil War

Monday, June 23: Anna Ella Carroll (Nicole Piechocki)

Wednesday, June 25: Jesse Benton Frémont (Rose Hodges)

Anna Ella Carroll (Nicole Piechocki)

Anna Ella Carroll, possibly the most influential woman in nineteenth-century American politics, was born in Maryland in 1815. She was personally acquainted with some of the most prominent politicians of the day, and slipped easily into the world of political affairs. As a writer, she produced influential political pamphlets; as a military strategist, she conceived the successful Tennessee River Campaign; and as a political advisor, she counseled Lincoln and four other presidents. In the words of Secretary Edwin



Engraving of Anna Ella Carroll, courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society

Stanton, “She did the great work that made others famous.”

Nicole Piechocki has been “bringing history to life” for the past six years, portraying such characters as Jacqueline Cochran, Anne Frank, and Hedda Hopper. Nicole is also a Girl Scout and a freshman at McQueen High School. She plays classical violin and viola and provides fiddle and harmony vocals for The Biggest Little Bluegrass Band.

Jessie Benton Frémont (Rose Hodges)

Jessie Benton Frémont was much more than the wife of famous explorer, presidential candidate, and Civil War General John Charles Frémont. Her father, Senator Thomas Hart Benton, prepared her well for life by educating her like a son, and having her behave like a lady.

At the beginning of the war, the Frémont’s strong abolitionist stand put them in direct conflict with Lincoln, who was more concerned with preserving the union than ending slavery. She confronted presidents and royalty, campaigned for her husband, bore and raised his children, and supported him always.

Rose Hodges is a fourth year Chautauquan, whose previous characters include Nathaniel Bowditch, Harriet Chalmers Adams, and William Wilberforce. She is a Christian who is active in her church, participates in some activity almost every day of the week and loves working with children. Rose is a 10th grade homeschooler, and a writer-in-training.



Jesse Benton Frémont, New York, 1876, age 52 years.

Special thanks to Bob Piechocki and Nita Jameson, the co-directors of Young Chautauqua. From the beginning, this has been a parent and volunteer led program. When founding director Susan Tchudi retired several years ago, we wondered what direction the program would take. We shouldn’t have worried. In short order Bob and Nita took the reins of Young Chautauqua and made sure that it grew and prospered.

Portrait of Abraham Lincoln

Adapted from the White House biography.

The son of a Kentucky frontiersman, Abraham Lincoln had to struggle to live and learn. Five months before receiving his party's nomination for President, he sketched his life:

"I was born Feb. 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—second families, perhaps I should say. My mother, who died in my tenth year, was of a family of the name of Hanks.... My father ... removed from Kentucky to ... Indiana, in my eighth year.... It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There I grew up.... Of course when I came of age I did not know much. Still somehow, I could read, write, and cipher ... but that was all."

Lincoln made extraordinary efforts to attain knowledge while working on a farm, splitting rails for fences, and keeping store at New Salem, Illinois. He was a captain in the Black Hawk War, spent eight years in the Illinois legislature, and as a lawyer rode the circuit of courts for many years. His law partner said of him, "His ambition was a little engine that knew no rest."

He married Mary Todd, and they had four boys, only one of whom lived to maturity. In 1858 Lincoln ran against Stephen A. Douglas for Senator. He lost the election, but in debating with Douglas he gained a national reputation that won him the Republican nomination for President in 1860.

Lincoln warned the South in his Inaugural Address: "In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you.... You have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to preserve, protect and defend it."

Lincoln thought secession illegal, and was willing to use force to defend Federal law and the Union. When Confederate batteries fired on Fort Sumter, South Carolina, and forced its surrender, he called on the states for

75,000 volunteers. Four more slave states joined the Confederacy but four remained within the Union. The Civil War had begun.

As President, he built the new Republican Party into a strong national organization. Further, he rallied most of the northern Democrats to the Union cause. On January 1, 1863, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation that declared forever free those slaves within the Confederacy.

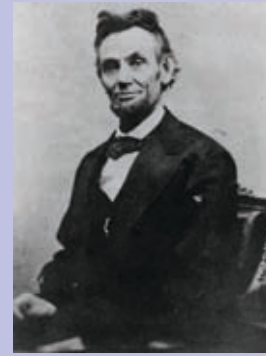
Lincoln never let the world forget that the Civil War involved an even larger issue. This he stated most movingly in dedicating the military cemetery at Gettysburg: "that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Lincoln won re-election in 1864, as Union military triumphs heralded an end to war. In his planning for peace, the President was flexible and generous, encouraging Southerners to lay down their arms and join speedily in reunion.

The spirit that guided him was clearly that of his Second Inaugural Address: "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds...."

On Good Friday, April 14, 1865, Lincoln was assassinated at Ford's Theatre in Washington, DC, by John Wilkes Booth. The opposite was the result, for with Lincoln's death, the possibility of peace with magnanimity died.

President Lincoln died at 7:22 the next morning. Following a funeral at the White House, his casket was viewed by millions as it was carried on a special train back to Illinois. He was buried May 4 in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield.



Last photograph of President Lincoln, taken April 10, 1865



The May 6, 1865, edition of *Harper's Weekly* includes this touching portrait of President Lincoln, and his son Tad. This issue was published shortly after the President's assassination.

Interesting Facts

- Did you know that Abraham Lincoln: had a dog named Fido.
- was the tallest president at 6'4".
- was born in Kentucky.
- was the first President born outside of the thirteen colonies.
- worked as a railsplitter, store clerk, and lawyer.
- kept letters, bills, and notes in his stovepipe hat.
- was born in a one-room cabin.
- helped found the Republican Party.
- had four sons.
- was asked to grow his beard by a girl named Grace Bedell.
- is the only president ever to receive a patent for a device that lifts boats above shoals.
- piloted flatboats.
- was attending the play *Our American Cousin* when he was assassinated.
- was a captain in the Black Hawk War.
- loved the works of Edgar Allan Poe.
- and that:
- his son Robert Todd Lincoln was present for the dedication of the Lincoln memorial.
- his favorite sport was wrestling.
- his favorite poem was *Mortality* by William Knox.
- his favorite dessert was White Almond Cake.
- his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, died of milk poisoning.

Chautauqua and Ecclesiastes There Is a Time For All Things

by Clay Jenkinson

For three or four years I have been trying to quit Chautauqua. When I was just starting out, two decades ago (more, really) I read *The Education of Henry Adams* by Henry Adams, the great grandson of John Adams. In it, Adams says that “no man, however strong, can serve ten years as schoolmaster, priest, or Senator, and remain fit for anything else.” Surely this should be read to include judge, scholar, and Chautauquan. I believe very strongly that people tend to hang on too long in whatever they are doing. Fresh blood is the basis of creativity, progress, and the health of institutions. I know for a fact that I have stayed too long. I would have stopped earlier, but the truth is that I just love the program, the people of Reno, my colleagues, the tent, the sunsets, the laughter, and the sense that ideas can matter in a playful arena.

I helped to create the modern humanities Chautauqua movement up on the Great Plains. But MY Chautauqua has been in Reno, and I have loved every minute of it, except when a performer/character fired a musket (with blanks) on stage in front of 1000 people. Two decades ago I wrote an essay called, “The Magic of a Tent Show.” I still feel that magic every time I stand by the guy ropes watching the audience spill out onto the grass, with lawn chairs, blankets, wine, seafood pasta, and sharp black coffee. Chautauqua is, to my mind, the perfect embodiment of what a public humanities program should be: playful, serious, improbable, populist, entertaining, insightful, un-stuffy, celebratory, and festive.

The form was invented by my mentor Everett C. Albers of North Dakota. It has been an honor to be a part of something that has shaped, even revolutionized, the state humanities programs. I hate to think of the year (next year) when I don’t get to say farewell, at the end of the week’s program, quoting the advice of Ms. Reed of the Donner Party: “Don’t take no cutoffs, and get along just as fast as you can.”

Time to go. But how I will miss it. How I will miss all of you.

I remember when my parents were young and my father was being transferred from one North Dakota town to the next. Their base for a number of years had been the village of Dickinson, where they had made good friends. My father was transferred one spring. There was a big going away party with lots of gifts and toasts and tributes. Then, suddenly, the transfer was canceled and we stayed. Later that year the transfer was renewed. There was a second going away party but it did not have the oomph of the first one, and someone at the party actually said, “You’d better really go this time. You are using up your fund of good will.”

This is approximately the third time I have announced that it is time to go. This time I mean to see it through.

What could be better than to go out on the theme of Lincoln? I’ve never spent much time reading about Lincoln until this year. But to study Lincoln is to be re-awakened to the possibility that America can be what we dream of when we say “America” in a self-conscious rather than pro forma way. It is possible for men (and women) to grow in office. It is possible for America to live up to its ideals and at times to invent or discover new, deeper, more inclusive ideals.

You may know, too, that this is Judy Winzeler’s last Chautauqua. She has announced her retirement for late 2008 as the Executive Director of Nevada Humanities. Chautauqua in Reno is her program as much as mine—more, because she is the one who has kept it alive in good years and bad, in flush times and on tight budgets. I have respected and admired and loved Judy Winzeler for a significant portion of my life. When I moved to Reno long ago, it was Judy who said, “Let’s try Chautauqua here.” I cannot imagine the humanities in Nevada without her careful good-humored leadership, and I certainly cannot conceive of my participating in a Chautauqua that does not have Judy as its guiding spirit.

So, with pride in what we have accomplished, but with great sadness, I announce unequivocally, that this is my last Chautauqua.

Thank you for the generosity you have all shown for nearly two decades now to a humanities project that began in a 20x30 orange and brown funeral tent in small villages in North Dakota in 1976.

Who would have thought? What a long strange trip it’s been.

As Whitman put it, “Hail and farewell!”

Excerpt from *Making Hay While the Sun Shines* by Clay Jenkinson

For the complete article visit:

http://nevadahumanities.org/chautauqua_articles.html

People often ask me how I choose the characters I portray. There is a back story for each of the characters I have taken on—Meriwether Lewis, Jefferson, John Wesley Powell, Rousseau, Francis Bacon, William L. Shirer, Theodore Roosevelt, Jonathan Swift, John Calvin, J. Robert Oppenheimer, and John Steinbeck. These stories of how I came to take on X or Y as a Chautauqua character would seem tedious to anyone else, but they matter a great deal to me, because they amount to a sort of intellectual autobiography or a map of my mental journey in the course of a strange and wayward life. In thinking about my encounters with Swift or Calvin or Powell I can remember where I lived, what was going on in my life, how I chose the character, what difficulties it presented, and how the character influenced my thinking and—in the case of some—my life.



First Chautauqua, 1992



Meriwether Lewis, 1994



J. Robert Oppenheimer, 1999



Theodore Roosevelt, 2004



Thomas Jefferson, 1995